

**BENTON COUNTY
VOTERS' PAMPHLET**



**SPECIAL ELECTION
MARCH 12, 2002**

PUBLISHED BY THE
BENTON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Please RECYCLE this pamphlet with your newspapers



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

408 SW Monroe Ave., Suite 111

P.O. Box 3020

Corvallis, OR 97339-3020

(541) 766-6800

FAX (541) 766-6893

Dear Benton County Voter:

On March 12, 2002, an election will be held in Benton County. As a voter, you will have an opportunity to exercise your right to vote on important issues for the County.

For this election, the Board of Commissioners publishes this **Benton County Voters' Pamphlet** to provide information concerning a Countywide ballot measure and a general obligation bond measure for the Alsea School District.

Please remember that all ballots, whether mailed or delivered, must be **received no later than 8:00 p.m. on March 12, 2002.** Ballots should be mailed or delivered to:

- The Benton County Elections Office, located in the basement of the historic Courthouse at 120 NW 4th Street in Corvallis


OR

- One of the official ballot drop sites located throughout the County. A list of ballot drop site locations is included in this Voters' Pamphlet.

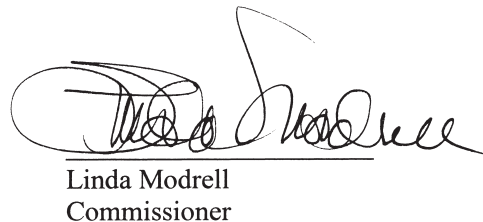
This Voters' Pamphlet contains the text of the measures, with explanatory statements, and any paid arguments favoring or opposing those measures. You will also find information on voting, registering to vote, updating your voter registration, and applying for absentee ballots.

We hope this Voters' Pamphlet will help you to become better informed about the issues in this election as you prepare to make your decisions.

Sincerely,


Annabelle Jaramillo
Chair

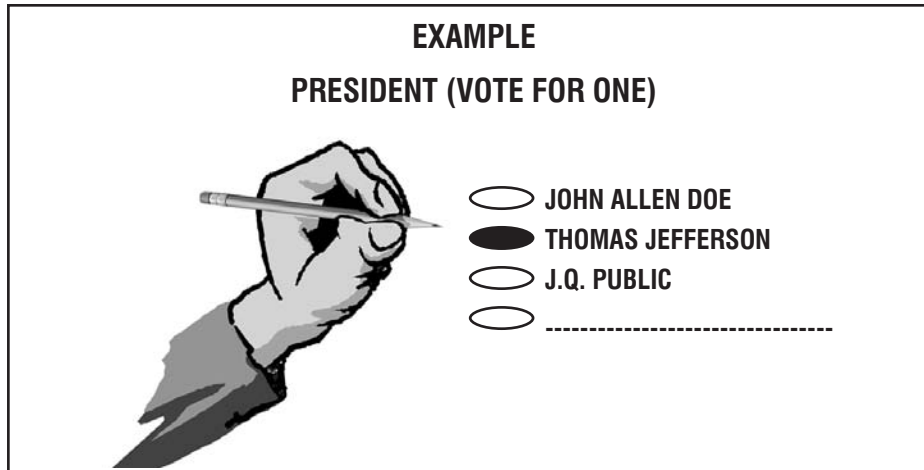

Jay Dixon
Commissioner


Linda Modrell
Commissioner

REMEMBER TO VOTE

VOTING INSTRUCTIONS

1. TO VOTE YOU MUST USE A PENCIL TO BLACKEN THE OVAL (●) TO THE LEFT OF THE CANDIDATE OR RESPONSE OF YOUR CHOICE.
2. TO **WRITE-IN A NAME** — BLACKEN THE OVAL (●) TO THE LEFT OF THE DOTTED LINE AND WRITE-IN THE NAME ON THE DOTTED LINE.



WHO MAY REGISTER TO VOTE?

Anyone who is:

- ◆ A resident of Oregon;
- ◆ A United States citizen; and
- ◆ 18 years of age or older.

You may register to vote before your 18th birthday or before you are sworn in as a US citizen. In order to register under these conditions, you must turn 18 or be sworn in as a US citizen during the 20-day period immediately before the election. Please call your county elections officer for details if you believe you qualify for this registration process.

DO I HAVE TO REGISTER BY PARTY?

No. If you do not want to be affiliated with a political party, you may check the box that states *Not a member of a party*. You may not designate or change a party affiliation after the 21st day before the primary election.

I WILL BE OUT OF TOWN WHEN BALLOTS ARE MAILED. HOW DO I GET A BALLOT?

Absentee ballots are available 45 days before the election. You may request an early absentee ballot from your county election official either in person, by mail, or by fax. You will need to include your name, signature, residence, address and, if different, your mailing address.

WHAT IF MY BALLOT DOESN'T COME?

If you have not received your ballot within a week after they are mailed, call your county election office. They will check that your voter registration is current. If it is, they will mail you a replacement ballot.

WHAT IF I HAVE MOVED AND HAVE NOT UPDATED MY REGISTRATION?

If you are registered to vote by the 21st day before the election but now have a different address and:

- ◆ You have moved within the same county, contact the county election office. They will instruct you on the process to follow to qualify for a replacement ballot.
- OR
- ◆ You have moved to a different county, go to the election office in your new county.

WHAT IS A PRIMARY ELECTION?

- ◆ Major political parties (Democratic & Republican) nominate their candidates at a primary election, which is held on the third Tuesday in May of each even-numbered year. Only a voter who is registered as a member of either political party may vote for that party's candidates at the primary election unless the party opens its primary to voters registered as *Not a member of a party*. If this is the case, voters who are *Not a member of a party* must request major party ballots from their county election office.
- ◆ All nonpartisan offices (i.e. judges and district attorneys) are also on the primary election ballot. Any registered voter may vote for those candidates, regardless of the voter's political party affiliation.

BENTON COUNTY

Measure No. 02-14

BALLOT TITLE

VEHICLE REGISTRATION FEE TO MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE ROADS AND STREETS

QUESTION: Shall County impose a \$15 annual local vehicle registration fee to finance transportation systems' preservation, safety and capacity improvements.

SUMMARY: This measure would impose a local vehicle registration fee. The fee would be equal to the amount imposed by the state. For passenger vehicles, the current fee of \$30 every two years would increase to \$60 every two years.

Use of the fee increase would be restricted to maintenance and improvement of roads and streets within the County. Fee revenue is proposed to be distributed to Benton County (\$250,000), Adair Village (\$15,000) and Monroe (\$15,000) as a fixed amount per year. Distribution of the remainder is based on current population estimates: Corvallis (approximately \$630,970), Albany (approximately \$63,550) and Philomath (approximately \$49,575).

Benton County and Corvallis would use the funds on specific projects. Examples include 35th Street and Highway 34 turn lanes, Harrison and 35th Street turn lanes, and approximately 25 miles of asphalt overlay.

The fee increase would raise an estimated \$1,034,000 the first year. The fee would be collected by Department of Motor Vehicles when the state registration fee is collected every two years.

The fee increase would sunset no later than 2012.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Purpose

This measure would provide additional funds for the County and cities within the county for maintenance and improvement of roads and streets. Under Oregon law, expenditure of funds generated is restricted to road and street maintenance and improvement purposes. Increased revenue would maintain planned system improvements and maintenance projects.

Need

Historically, the majority of funding for road and street maintenance and construction has come from the state gas tax, truck weight-mile fees and registration fees. These fees have not increased since 1991. Since 1991, vehicle miles traveled within Benton County have increased about 32% with corresponding increases in traffic congestion and pavement wear. Inflation for the same period was 28%. In Corvallis, street system funding has also come from property taxes. Relying on existing revenues would result in delayed maintenance projects that would increase vehicle operating costs and future road repair costs, and in delayed improvements, increasing congestion and decreasing vehicle safety.

Based on a 2001 Oregon Department of Transportation report, Oregon charges the least amount of automobile-related taxes and fees compared with bordering states. The cost in Oregon for gas taxes, registration fees, ad valorem taxes, and sale taxes on vehicles is equivalent to 27.1 cents per gallon. The cost in Washington, California, Idaho and Nevada ranges from 52.0 cents to 75.9 cents per gallon.

Fee Collection and Allocation

The fee would be collected when the State registration fee is collected, on a biennium basis. The State would forward the revenue generated by the the local fee directly to the County, less an administration charge, estimated at \$11,000 per year.

Under Oregon law, some vehicles would be exempt from the fee. Exemptions would include, but are not limited to, trucks over 26,001 pounds GVW, school buses, government vehicles, snowmobiles, farm vehicles, travel trailers and motor homes.

Fee revenue is proposed to be distributed to Benton County (\$250,000), Adair Village (\$15,000) and Monroe (\$15,000) as a fixed amount per year. Distribution of the remainder is based on current population estimates: Corvallis (approximately \$630,970), Albany (approximately \$63,550) and Philomath (approximately \$49,575).

The fee would sunset no later than 2012.

Use of Funds

Revenue generated by the fee would be used to complete projects currently in transportation system plans, capital improvement programs and pavement maintenance programs. High priority projects would include those that improve safety or preserve an existing investment. In Corvallis, funds would be used for maintenance, and improvement that are not development-related improvements; a public hearing will be required to add or delete projects.

From the County's current list of priorities, proposed Benton County projects that would be funded from this new revenue include Springhill, Walnut, Harrison, Airport and Fern Roads. Proposed Corvallis projects include Western, 53rd, Grant, 35th, Walnut, Harrison and Van Buren Roads. Benton County would resurface about 19 miles. Corvallis would complete 16 resurfacing and reconstruction projects, nine capacity or safety improvement projects and continue the sidewalk ramp program. Other cities within the county will determine their road projects.

*(Submitted by Annabelle Jaramillo, Chair
Benton County Board of Commissioners.)*

BENTON COUNTY

Measure No. 02-14**ARGUMENT IN FAVOR****Measure 02-14: An Economically Sound Approach: VOTE YES!**

The proposed increased in vehicle registration fees asks those who use roads to assume more responsibility for their upkeep. It is a user fee; if you don't have a car on the road you don't pay it.

Why have a local vehicle registration fee? First, our existing roads and bridges are in trouble. Those cracks and potholes you see in many of our roadways indicate serious damage from water penetration followed by pavement failure. Roads and bridges in disrepair pose safety hazards.

Second, money available for repairs is decreasing. Some of the funds for roadway repairs are general-fund property-tax dollars.

Third, there is inflation. None of the revenue sources for roads are indexed to inflation. If you think your personal budget is tight now, consider what it would be like if your income were that of ten years ago. That is what has happened to road funding.

Fourth, consider the rise in prices of materials purchased from private suppliers. Roadway materials now cost 30 percent more than 10 years ago. A \$50,000 project now costs \$17,000 more. Costs for the suppliers have also increased, including wages.

We are facing ever-increasing roadway repair costs and a budget doing just the opposite – going down.

Without passage of the measure, pressure on general dollars will increase, leaving roadway and other budgets even smaller than now. Let's support a dependable source of revenue that will provide money for roadways and some relief for other services that depend on general fund dollars. Those services are going to be hurt enough in our coming financial crisis. **VOTE YES** for measure #02-14 to maintain our roads and bridges through a user fee.

MEASURE 02-14 SUPPORTED BY:

Pete Bober, member, Corvallis Parks & Recreation Advisory Board
 Susan Christie, chair, Corvallis Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Commission
 Robert Lowry, member, Corvallis Citizens Advisory Commission on Transit
 Phyllis Mix, chair, Corvallis-Benton County Public Library Board

(This information furnished by Committee to Secure the Vision)

The printing of this argument does not constitute an endorsement by Benton County, nor does the County warrant the accuracy or truth of any statement made in the argument.

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

The Benton County Democrats urge you to VOTE YES on Measure 02-14, Benton County's Vehicle Registration Fee initiative.

Benton County local government performs valuable services for our citizens. Due to the impact from Measure 5, 47 and 50, our ability to fund local services is increasingly difficult. Our School District feels these impacts most dramatically. Benton County has been unable to provide adequate road maintenance for many years. The City of Corvallis faces a significant budget shortfall over the next eight years if new sources of revenue are not identified. The Oregon tax system is not working for citizens and we must work at the local and state level to address this issue.

Because of this situation, we support this initiative for several reasons.

A YES VOTE provides for a means to charge road users a fee for road usage. Revenue from the registration fee will be applied to road maintenance and repair.

A YES VOTE provides a revenue source that is not property tax based. With the property tax limits imposed by Measure 5, 47 and 50, we need to reduce local governments reliance on property taxation.

For the City of Corvallis, a YES VOTE provides a means for the corresponding amount of general fund dollars currently going to road and street improvements can now be used to support local parks, libraries, fire, police and community planning.

It's time to get Benton County on the road to a more progressive taxation system and to a better road maintenance program. VOTE YES on Measure 02-14.

(This information furnished by the Benton County Democrats.)

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BENTON COUNTY

Measure No. 02-14

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

VOTE YES on 02-14 to improve streets and bike paths and maintain valued local services!

A “**yes**” vote will provide more than \$1 million in dedicated funds annually to improve Benton County roads, streets and bike paths.

The funds will come from a new \$15 annual local vehicle registration fee. Oregon’s current vehicle registration fee of \$30 every two years is one of the lowest in the nation.

The revenue gained from the vehicle registration fee will be proportionately divided among Benton County and the cities within it. There is a sunset clause that will discontinue the local fee after 10 years.

And, in Corvallis, a “**yes**” vote also means that the corresponding amount of general fund dollars currently going to road and street improvements can be used to support local parks, libraries, and other valued services in a time of declining property tax revenues.

Benton County and cities such as Corvallis have already identified the specific road projects these dedicated dollars will fund, so you’ll know exactly how your fees are used.

Since 1991, vehicle miles traveled within Benton County have increased about 32%, causing more wear and tear on roads. However, the corresponding fees to maintain roads have not increased since 1991.

Cities within Benton County face similar problems. In Corvallis, for example, property tax revenues for street improvements have seen a steady decline throughout the 1990s, while inflation of 28% during the same period makes road projects increasingly expensive.

The result? Delayed maintenance and improvements, increased congestion and decreased vehicle safety.

We can’t afford the high costs tomorrow by being negligent today. Now is the time to look ahead and take responsible action. **Vote Yes on 02-14.**

Committee to Secure the Vision

(This information furnished by Committee to Secure the Vision)

The printing of this argument does not constitute an endorsement by Benton County, nor does the County warrant the accuracy or truth of any statement made in the argument.

ALSEA SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 7J

Measure No. 02-15

BALLOT TITLE

ALSEA SCHOOL DISTRICT GENERAL OBLIGATION BOND AUTHORIZATION

QUESTION: Shall the District be authorized to contract a general obligation bonded indebtedness in an amount of not more than \$1,165,000? If the bonds are approved, they will be payable from taxes on property or property ownership that are not subject to the limits of sections 11 and 11b, Article XI of the Oregon Constitution.

SUMMARY: This measure may be passed only at an election with at least a 50 percent voter turnout. The District is seeking approval of this measure to allow it to finance a new gymnasium facility and related costs. The gymnasium facility is expected to include locker rooms, a classroom, concessions, office space, public restrooms and storage. Related costs include parking and site work. The bonds will mature over a period of not more than 31 years.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

FOR THE ELECTION OF: MARCH 12, 2002

Alsea School District No. 7J General Obligation Bonds

Alsea School District is asking its voters to approve a general obligation bond measure to finance a new gym.

The district's existing facilities do not provide enough room for all of the middle school teams and high school teams to practice at reasonable times. During the rainy season and winter activities, teams come very early in the morning to practice, and the wrestling team has been practicing at the Alsea Grange. With a new gym, all of the teams would be able to practice at reasonable times, and the district would be able to use the proposed new gym for home games and activities.

There are not any "extras." Originally, a weight room and wrestling room were included. However, the board felt very strongly that the district should minimize the cost of the new gym. Therefore, the weight room and wrestling room were taken out of the proposed gym plan.

The new gym will provide seating for 425 people, and will include locker rooms, a classroom, concessions, coach's office space, public restrooms, storage and parking. The principal amount of the bonds will not exceed \$1,165,000, and the bonds will mature over a period of not more than 31 years.

*(Submitted by Clark Bray, Superintendent
Alsea School District 7J.)*

**NO ARGUMENTS FOR OR AGAINST
THIS MEASURE WERE FILED.**

ABSENTEE APPLICATION



BENTON COUNTY ELECTIONS DIVISION
120 NW 4TH ST RM 13
CORVALLIS, OR 97330
Tel: (541)766-6756 Fax: (541)766-6757
Website: www.co.benton.or.us/elections
E-mail: bcelections@co.benton.or.us

ABSENTEE BALLOT APPLICATION

Please select the category(ies) that applies(y) to you:

Military Overseas Snowbird Student Other

I am applying for an absentee ballot for:

- This election only _____ (mth/day/yr)
 All future elections until _____ (mth/day/yr)
 I will be away from _____ (mth/day) till _____ (mth/day) yearly
 I will be in Benton County from _____ (mth/day) till _____ (mth/day) yearly
 This will continue to happen until _____ (mth/day/yr)

Name (Last, First, Middle)	Date of Birth
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Absentee Address Line 1

Absentee Address Line 2 (if needed)

City, State, Zip / COUNTRY

Benton County Residential Address

City, State, Zip

Signature:	Date:
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Note: An original signature is required.

PLEASE PRINT

BENTON COUNTY ELECTIONS BALLOT DROP SITES

**24 HOUR OUTSIDE BALLOT DROP
BOXES IN CORVALLIS:**
**Wells Fargo Bank in Timberhill
Shopping Center at 2543 Kings Ave. &
the Courthouse at 180 NW 5th Street**

CITY OF ADAIR COMMUNITY CENTER

6030 NE William R. Carr Ave. - Adair Village
 Mon. thru Fri. 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM*
 745-5507

CORVALLIS PUBLIC LIBRARY

645 NW Monroe Ave - Corvallis
 Mon. thru Fri. 9:00 AM to 9:00 PM
 Sat. 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM
 Sun. 12:00 NOON to 6:00 PM
 757-6926

MONROE CITY HALL

664 Commercial St. - Monroe
 Mon. thru Fri. 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM*
 847-5175

O.S.U. MEMORIAL STUDENT UNION

Mon. thru Thus. 7:00 AM to 11:00 PM
 Fri. 7:00 AM to 12:00 MIDNIGHT
 Sat. 7:30 AM to 12:00 MIDNIGHT
 Sun. 10:30 AM to 11:00 PM
 (When college is in session)
 737-2416

NORTH ALBANY MIDDLE SCHOOL

815 Thornton Lake DR NW - Albany
 Mon. thru Fri. 7:00 AM to 4:00 PM*
 967-4541

PHILOMATH PUBLIC LIBRARY

1050 Applegate - Philomath
 Mon., Thus. Fri. & Sat. 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM
 Tues., Wed. 10:00 AM to 8:00 PM
 929-3016

SENIOR CITIZENS CENTER

2601 NW Tyler Ave - Corvallis
 Mon. thru Fri. 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM*
 766-6959

BENTON COUNTY ELECTIONS DIVISION

Basement, County Courthouse
 120 NW 4th St. - Corvallis
 Mon. thru Fri. 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM*
 766-6756

*All ballot sites open until 8 PM Election Day

ELECTION QUESTIONS?
WEB PAGE - www.co.benton.or.us/elections
Email - bcelections@co.benton.or.us
Office Phone: 541-766-6756