

Cuts: Measure 5 already streamlined University's budget

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"We're going to do our best to protect the essential core of the University."

However, any revenue loss to the University is speculative at best right now, ASUO President Matthew Scotten said. Because of this, students shouldn't panic or think badly of the state, he said.

"There's still a lot of questions to be answered," he said. "It would be kind of foolish for us to respond."

The measure passed because Oregonians were dissatisfied with their tax levels, said Bill Sizemore, the measure's author. This

wasn't a reaction against students, he said.

Nevertheless, many students have felt targeted by the measure, he said. Measure 47 was opposed mostly by areas around the University and Oregon State, he explained.

"There tends to be a lot of socialism caught in these universities," Sizemore said. "The universities are apparently fostering a philosophy that higher taxes are good for Oregon. That's a misguided philosophy."

The next state legislature will decide where the cuts will be made. However, it is not scheduled to convene until January.

The state could lose \$1 billion in property tax revenue because of the Measure.

However, this figure includes revenue expected to come in as a result of property tax inflation, Sizemore said.

Because of this, he said \$500 million is a more accurate estimate.

The University already has streamlined its budget because of Measure 5, Scotten said. That measure also limited property taxes.

"You can only cut fat so deep before you hit bone," he said. "We've already cut off all the fat."

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— Matthew Scotten
ASUO president

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Eugene prepares for the effects of Measure 47

■ **REACTION:** One goal of the city is to preserve the money already in the city's general fund

By Jennifer Schmitt
Community Editor

Large projected city-revenue losses due to Measure 47 have Eugene city officials searching for ways to reduce expenses and save money.

"The reductions that need to take place are so large that there is not one city category or service that will be unscathed," said Warren Wong, administrative services director. "Every year out it gets worse and worse."

The first round of cuts will eliminate an estimated \$10 million to \$16 million from the city's general fund. In five years, the estimated loss will have climbed to \$40 million a year, Wong said.

Although 65 percent of Eugene citizens voted against Measure 47 in the Nov. 5 elections, the measure passed, forcing cities to brace themselves for drastic cuts, said Linda Norris, interim city manager.

The current goal of the city is to try to preserve the money already in the general fund and try to continue increasing the cash flow in the next few months, Wong said.

In an effort to preserve cash, the city is looking at current services that can be cut back or eliminated.

"Our goal is to preserve as much cash as possible in order to give the council and the city a chance to decide on solutions," Wong said.

Several temporary steps have been taken to preserve city funds.

A hiring freeze on city positions, with the exception of public safety officers, has already been implemented and city officials also have suspended major equipment purchases.

A suggestion was made that the

City Council look at construction projects around the city and decide if any can be postponed or canceled.

City officials are working to make decisions quickly in order to try to lessen the negative impact when Measure 47 takes effect.

"We need to make some decisions soon," said Councilor Barbara Keller. "We really need to let the community know early on what is happening."

One of the long-range solutions city officials have considered is an increase in the privatization of city services.

"I had a meeting with a representative from animal control," said Mayor Ruth Bascom. "One option we are considering and will continue to look at is privatizing things like this."

The measure could also have detrimental effects on intergovernmental relations.

As the measure begins to take effect, some of the intergovernmental contracts may be severed as communities are forced to cut programs.

"The critical issue here is to have elected officials from area communities get together and decide what proportion each government should bear from the cuts," said Councilor Shawn Boles. "It's time for elected government to roll up its sleeves and get to work."

City employees are another casualty of Measure 47.

"We are looking at an estimated loss of 150 city employees, and it is critical to realize the amount of loss personally and professionally to the employees," said Councilor Laurie Swanson-Gribskov.

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