

# Council creates joint measures aimed at justice system, crime

Measure 20-05 would allocate \$49 million for safety and justice programs

By Felicity Ayles  
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The community and the county are working together to create a pair of sister measures designed to help the justice system in Lane County.

Measure 20-05 and Measure 20-06 are joint measures in Lane County that consist of a levy and a bond, respectively, to improve community safety and the justice system in Lane County.

The difference between a levy and a bond is that a levy provides funds for programs and a bond provides funds for actual physical improvements, such as construction, said Mike Moscovitz, Lane County public information officer.

These measures will help the county to do a better job with juveniles and adults who are committing crimes in the community,

said Lane County District Attorney Dan Harclerod.

"We've had big county problems and small county solutions," he said.

The idea for the measures began with a council meeting of the Public Safety Coordination Council formed by citizens of Eugene.

These 35 people meet once a month to discuss public safety issues, Moscovitz said. After determining that the city needs more money for justice system programs, the group debated for months between expanding jail space and developing crime-prevention programs for children, he said.

The disagreements continued. Some people wanted to put all of the money into preventive programs, and others said the city needed more jail spaces.

The group compromised and

then came up with a balanced program for both youth programs and the development and improvement of jails.

Measure 20-05 consists of a levy that would allocate \$49 million for safety and justice system programs. The levy would fund the opening and operation of the new Juvenile Justice Center, approved by voters in the 1995 elections.

The levy would also modernize the criminal justice computer system and create alternative school programs for at-risk youth in danger of being expelled, according to the county public information officer.

A major aspect of the levy would help police spend less time in intake centers, where suspects are taken to be booked. This can take up to two hours, and that means officers are not on the streets patrolling, Moscovitz said.

The new proposed levy would add more officers in the intake center, thus allowing the patrolling officers to get back to the

street faster, he said.

The levy would also create a program called Healthy Start for families with newborn babies. Social workers would visit every new mother in Lane County and decide if she needs services, he said.

The second part of this duo is Measure 20-06, a \$5.1 million bond. This part of the package pays for the physical improvements to the justice system. According to the county public information office, the bond issues funds that the county will use to acquire land and construct and furnish a jail. The bond also increases the jail intake center measure from 35 beds to 100 beds, Moscovitz said.

This center would make it possible for people to be held for up to 72 hours and evaluated for alcohol and drug use and mental illness.

"The bond itself is a small amount of money," Moscovitz said. "It's a relatively minor cost

to taxpayers."

Both measures are individually important, but Moscovitz said they need each other to survive on the ballot.

"The levy is the important part, and the bond must pass for the physical improvements," he said.

The measures are unique because this is the first time the county is addressing prevention programs, he said.

"Ballot measures most often deal with punishment and criminal justice components," Moscovitz said.

But these measures have a youth and early intervention focus, he said.

Moscovitz said that as of now there is no known opposition to the measures. Harclerod agreed, saying there is a general opposition to a raise in taxes, but there is no opposition to these specific measures.



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