

This non-partisan report was prepared by volunteer members of the League of Women Voters of Lane County.

Measure 20-384

Willamalane Local Option Levy

Official Title: Preserve park safety, recreation, and ongoing maintenance with five-year levy

Referral: The measure was referred to voters by the Willamalane Park and Recreation District.

Question: Shall Willamalane preserve park safety, maintenance, recreation programs and wildfire prevention with 25-cents per \$1,000 assessed in a five-year levy, beginning 2026-2027? This measure may cause property taxes to increase more than three percent.

Financial Impact

The measure would add taxes in the amount of \$0.25 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value, increasing the tax on a home assessed at the median rate of \$196,803 by about \$49 per year. It would raise between \$1,571,484 and \$1,803,314 per year, for a total of \$8,427,029 over five years for parks and recreation district operations.

Note: Assessed value (AV) is the value used to calculate property tax. It is shown on the property tax statement. It is NOT the same as real market value (RMV), which is the market price of the home.

Probable Result of a “Yes” Vote

If passed, the measure would raise approximately \$1.6 million annually for five years through a property tax levy of \$0.25 cents per \$1000 of assessed value, which would allow the District to maintain current service levels.

Probable Result of a “No” Vote

If the measure does not pass, taxes will not increase.. The district will have to address an estimated 10% gap in its operating budget, resulting in reduced maintenance, hours, programs, and services across the district.

Background

Willamalane relies primarily on property taxes and user fees to fund parks, facilities, and programs. These have been sufficient to fund costs since the permanent tax rate for Willamalane was established in 1997. The District's revenues have not kept pace with the rising costs for labor, utilities, materials, and contracted services over the last three years, however, creating a gap between costs and maintaining current services.

The proposed tax levy is one of several measures the Willamalane Board of Directors proposed to cover this gap. The District is reducing costs wherever possible, including reducing the budget last year by over \$1 million. To raise revenue, the District has put increased focus on sponsorships, grants, and donations, including legacy gifts. It is also focused on new revenue from recreation services, programs, events, and improved programming.

The proposed operational levy would allow the District to keep current service levels in place for these programs while alternate revenue streams come online. Without the proposed tax levy, service reductions would include reduced trash pickup at parks, less wildfire prevention, full-day closures at the swim center, weekday closures at Splash, and fewer swim lessons and fitness classes. Programs that may see reductions include after-school programs for middle school youth, preschool programs, youth camps, community and senior services, and community events such as Concerts in the Park and Children's Celebration.

Proposal

As the District works to build alternative revenue streams, Willamalane Park and Recreation District is seeking approval for a tax levy to maintain and preserve current services, programs, and staffing levels, including

- Trash pickup and reduction of illegal dumping
- Ranger patrols to improve park safety
- Parks and natural area maintenance
- Removal of dead, down, overgrown vegetation and brush
- Protection of wildlife habitat and water quality
- Safe public river and pool access for recreation
- Affordable summer camps and preschool
- Recreation and wellness programs for seniors
- Community events
- Daily restroom cleaning
- Recreation facility and pool hours

Supporters Say:

- Willamalane is a vital part of Team Springfield alongside the City and the School District.
- This levy will:
 - Maintain clean parks and trails with daily trash pickup and restroom cleaning.
 - Keep parks safe with park ranger patrols, including weekend response
 - Reduce wildfire risk with continuing programs
 - Keep essential programs for kids, families, and seniors

Opponents Say:

- Raising taxes this year adds to the burden of working families while costs of energy and food are also increasing.
- Many who use the services are on fixed incomes and can't afford an increase in taxes.

There is a PAC in

support: https://secure.sos.state.or.us/orestar/sooDetail.do?sooRsn=105615&OWASP_CSRFTOKEN=KOSD-BHLS-F2L8-300K-Q631-D8IR-6YW4-MJOL

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

<https://www.klcc.org/politics-government/2026-01-20/willamalane-leaders-to-consider-may-levy>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LjcMubVsATU> [City Club of Springfield]