

COLUMBIA COUNTY

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT FOR COUNTY VOTERS' PAMPHLET

Ballot Title Caption: Fee for General Fund staffing, programs and services

Measure Number (if known):

Word Total (500 Max): 398

Statement

Background

The City projects a budget shortfall for FY 26/27 in the amount of \$2,214,000 to maintain the current level of service provided by the General Fund for staffing, programs, and services. The general fund pays for staffing, programs and services of police, library, parks, recreation, community development, administration, information technology (IT), and municipal court.

The City of St. Helens is referring a ballot measure for voter approval of a ten-year General Services fee for the above listed general fund staffing, programs and services. Without additional revenue, the City will likely need to cut staffing, programs and services related to police, library, parks, recreation, community development, administration, information technology (IT), and municipal court.

What are the voters being asked to approve?

Voters are asked to approve a General Services Fee in the monthly amount of \$24.00 per equivalent dwelling unit (EDU), indexed annually.

A single family-residence is one EDU. A duplex with one meter is two EDU's. The number of EDU's in an apartment complex is calculated based on the total number of apartment units. The number of EDU's in an RV park is calculated per hook up. A commercial use is charged per office space, per meter, so that one office space with one meter is one EDU.

If approved by a majority of the city voters, the fee will be in place for ten (10) years, starting July 1, 2026, expiring June 30, 2036. After five years, the Budget Committee will review the fee and make a recommendation to City Council about its continuation. The proposed General Services Fee Ordinance 3322, adopting Chapter 13.34, can be found at the City of St. Helens website at: <https://sthelensoregon.gov/ordinances>.

The City will track General Services Fee collected and expended in a dedicated general ledger account and report that information quarterly to City Council in a public meeting. The General Services Fee will be used for police, library, parks, recreation, community development, information technology (IT), administration and municipal court staffing, programs and services. The City's annual audit will include review of the appropriate collection and use of the General Services Fees.

What happens if the voters do not approve the General Services Fee?

Without additional revenue, the staffing, programs and services for police, library, parks, recreation, community development, administration, information technology (IT), and municipal court will likely be reduced to ensure the City adopts a balanced budget required by law.

Person responsible for the content of the Explanatory Statement:

Ashley Wigod (representing the City of St. Helens)
Name


Signature

City Attorney
Position

March 18, 2026
Date signed

Instructions

- The explanatory statement shall be typed
- Word total: not to exceed 500 words
- Signature: signed by the person responsible for the content of statement and to include name of the government body that person represents.
- Deadline: the statement filing deadline is the same deadline as that of filing the Notice of Measure Election (5pm)
- Note: the County Clerk shall reject any referred measure submitted without an explanatory statement.