

PRESS RELEASE

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CITY OF LEWISTON PROPOSES \$25 MILLION BOND FOR WATER, STORMWATER, AND WASTEWATER INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADE

The City of Lewiston is providing information on a proposed \$25 million general obligation bond measure for voter consideration on May 20, 2025. If approved, the bond would fund coordinated upgrades to aging underground water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure to maintain service reliability and meet regulatory requirements. It would also fund street repairs impacted by construction. Rather than tackling these issues in piecemeal fashion—leading to multiple disruptions, potential rising costs, and inefficiencies—the proposed project is designed as a coordinated effort.

“Our community depends on underground pipes that work — every day, without a second thought,” said Mayor Dan Johnson. “Much of this infrastructure has served us well for over 100 years, however, making proactive investments now can help avoid costly emergency repairs in the future.”

A recent assessment by Welch-Comer Engineers and GGLO Architects identified infrastructure in need of replacement or upgrades. Many of Lewiston’s underground pipes have been in service since World War I, exceeding their expected lifespan of 50 to 100 years, depending on the material. Aging pipes can lead to leaks, service disruptions, and increased maintenance costs.

In recent years, the City has invested in water and wastewater treatment plant upgrades, but the underground pipes connecting to these facilities remain outdated.

“Infrastructure is often out of sight, but it's one of the most critical services the City provides,” said Dustin Johnson, Public Works Director. If approved, the bond would provide funding for the replacement and upgrade of deteriorating pipes that deliver clean drinking water, manage stormwater, and transport wastewater for proper

treatment with the intent of improving service reliability and extending the lifespan of the system.”

The City plans to use existing budgeted revenues to repay the bond. The City’s annual budget process accounts for future capital projects by allocating annual revenues and maintaining reserves for critical repairs. As a result, the City does not anticipate an additional charge on tax or utility bills for this specific project. The bond ensures comprehensive funding for these necessary upgrades and allows the City to secure funding to complete the project in the short-term at favorable, tax-exempt rates; thus, avoiding future inflation and escalating construction costs.

If these revenues are not sufficient to make future bond payments, the estimated maximum tax impact of a \$25,000,000, 30-year bond is \$36.15 per \$100,000 of taxable assessed value per year (before any homeowner’s exemption).

If voters do not approve the bond, the City would need to explore alternative funding which could include exploring another vote to increase property taxes, a utility rate adjustment or phased project implementation which could increase the overall costs and prolong construction disruptions to businesses and traffic.

The City will offer opportunities for residents to learn more about the proposed bond measure through public meetings, informational materials, its website and other online resources. The first public open house is scheduled for Wednesday, March 19, 2025, at the Lewiston City Library, in the Second Floor Event Space, 411 D Street, Lewiston, Idaho 83501, from 5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

Taxpayer Information

The City currently has outstanding indebtedness of \$25,679,694, payable solely from sewer system revenues and outstanding indebtedness of \$39,521,044, payable solely from water system revenues. The anticipated interest rate on the proposed bonds is 3.75% per annum. The total proposed principal amount to be repaid over the 30-year life of the bonds is \$25,000,000; the total interest anticipated to be paid over the life of the bonds is \$17,192,750; the total amount to be repaid over the life of the bonds is \$42,192,750. The City intends to use existing savings and water and sewer revenues to minimize or eliminate the need for a tax levy. However, if the full tax levy is needed to pay for the debt payment on the bond, the following disclosure will apply.

The estimated average annual cost to the taxpayer on the proposed bond levy is a tax of \$36.15 per \$100,000 of taxable assessed value, per year, based on current conditions.