

VVC

Projects moving forward with Measure JJ bond funding

Music building being renovated, new health science building coming

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VICTORVILLE • Plans to renovate one of Victor Valley College's oldest existing buildings are underway with Measure JJ bond funding approved by local voters in 2008.

The college has spent approximately \$106 million in Measure JJ funds, which will reach close to \$300 million when the entire bond series is sold, according to VVC records.

VVC Director of Facilities Construction and Contracts Stephen Garcia said the college's music instruction building that dates to 1962 will be renovated by adding new offices and bathrooms and completing asbestos abatement. The building will be brought into Americans with Disabilities Act compliance, he said. The cost of the renovations is estimated at \$3.8 million and the updates are expected to modernize the way music is taught within the department, he said.

"We have to make sure we are meeting the needs of students for not only today, but 15 years down the road," Garcia said.

In six to eight months, Garcia said plans will begin for VVC's Vocational Complex to be renovated. A new diesel mechanics shop will be added as well as upgrades to the welding shop, he said. Costs are estimated at \$6.5 million.

In addition to renovations, the main campus will get a brand new combined health science building costing \$14.4 million. Construction is expected to break ground by September 2014, Garcia said. Crews will begin with completing parking lots near the site on the main campus this winter, he said. The science side of the building will include new chemistry and biology labs, while the health side will have new demonstration labs and practical labs.

"There will be mock hospital and mock patient rooms," Garcia said, "literally just like a hospital where the students can go in and learn with computerized mannequins."

The new building will take approximately 16 months to finish and is expected to be done by the fall semester of 2015.

VVC's planned Workforce Development Center will not be built for 12 to 15 years, VVC Vice President and Chief Financial Officer G.H. Javaheripour said.

The college purchased 55 acres of land on Main Street just east of Highway 395 in Hesperia to build the off-campus facility, but the project was put on hold until the economy improves and they can sell enough bonds to fund it, he said. So far only \$136.7 million of the \$297.5 million Measure JJ bond program has been sold.

The new Regional Public Safety Training Center in Apple Valley that was completed last year with Measure JJ funds currently houses half of the college's three public safety programs. Javaheripour said once the college clears its accreditation status, 100 percent of the classes would be allowed to be held at the site. He said local law enforcement officials were interested in conducting training at the site and the college would have to consider denying some of their future contract requests in order to accommodate the incoming students.

"We know this facility is going to be used a lot more, so we have to be very, very careful to the commitments we are making to outside agencies to use this as a training center," he said.

The Measure JJ Citizens' Bond Oversight Committee is charged with reviewing bond funded expenditures and is currently made up of six members. They include Richard Greenwood, Christelle Rocha, Edward Rodarte, Don Nelson, Dawn Serbus and Diane Uli. VVC is taking applications for a student representative for the committee and a taxpayer advocacy group representative, according to Greenwood, the committee chair. The taxpayer advocate seat was left vacant on June 19, he said.

For more information about Measure JJ and the bond oversight committee, visit www.vvc.edu/measurejj .

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DAVID PARDO, PRESS DISPATCH

Members of the Victor Valley College Measure JJ Citizens' Bond Oversight Committee meet at the Regional Public Safety Training Center in Apple Valley Wednesday.



DAVID PARDO, PRESS DISPATCH

Prior to Victor Valley College's Measure JJ Citizens' Bond Oversight Committee meeting on Wednesday, the committee took a tour of the Regional Public Safety Training Center in Apple Valley.