

Chamber says Yes on Measure J:

Support higher education and job development in Tulare

Recognizing that quality education is critical to the future of our community, the Tulare Chamber of Commerce officially supports Measure J, a bond measure on the November ballot that will lead to a permanent college center in Tulare, if passed.

If approved, Measure J will generate local funds so that College of the Sequoias can receive state money to build a college in Tulare and provide programs in Corcoran and Lindsay. The

total bond amount can't exceed \$60 million, and all funds will be used for construction or improvement of facilities, with none funding salaries.

If approved, highlights of the Tulare campus will include:

- 93,000 square feet of academic buildings in phase one, built with nearly \$60 million in state funding. It will offer general education and vocational education, and allow students

to gain certificates, degrees or transfer to a four-year university.

- Parking, library, food service and other student services funded with nearly \$13 million in local funds. This is the local match required for the academic buildings, noted above.
- A Vocational Education Complex to be built in phase two, funded with \$27 million in state funds, and \$2.7 million in local match. Courses here will focus on training students



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for high-demand jobs such as welding and farm equipment repair. All vocational education programs from the Visalia COS campus will eventually be moved to this location.

- A Farm Animal Complex built with \$14 million in state funds and a \$13 million local match.

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- The Tulare Ag Pavilion, a venue for events and competitions, which is fully state funded.
- Classrooms and farm animal buildings, funded by the bond, housing ag career training courses including animal science and diagnostics, equine science, ornamental horticulture, dairy science and plant science.
- The bond includes computers and health education programs for Lindsay, and, in Corcoran, renovated science labs, equipment for the new Technology Learning Center and a correctional officer training program.

"With Tulare's population continuing to grow and the Visalia campus of COS becoming more and more impacted, it is now more critical than ever that we pass this measure to bring a much-needed higher education campus to Tulare," said Chamber vice chair of government relations Lance Morris.

In addition to serving a need for Tulare students, having a campus in Tulare would also support local economic development and job creation efforts.

"Although Tulare is an attractive location in many ways, the one thing that many potential employers see as a drawback when they are considering us as a location is our lack of access to higher education facilities," says Chamber President and CEO Jennifer McCoun. "Having a new campus here by 2012 would go a long way in helping to attract new industry, and new jobs, to our community," she continued.

Measure J will cost property owners \$24.71 per \$100,000 valuation, or an average of \$31.53 per year – a small price to pay to ensure that our residents have access to affordable higher education in the future.

The Chamber encourages our members to vote yes on Measure J in November, and help to secure the positive future of our community.