RCC deferred maintenance projects to start soon

The Rogue Community College Redwood Campus will soon become a construction zone.

Work on nearly $4 million in Oregon stimulus package projects is set to begin May 1, with most of the construction affecting the campus near Grants Pass. Projects also are scheduled at the Illinois Valley Learning Center in Kerby, the Riverside Campus in Medford, and the Table Rock Campus in White City.

The Oregon Legislature approved an economic stimulus package totaling more than $72 million aimed at reducing the state’s high unemployment rate and improving the economy. RCC’s share is $4 million. "The intent of this money is to get as many people working as possible," said Lynda Warren, chief financial officer and dean of College Services.

The Redwood Campus, which was originally constructed in the early 1960s as a Job Corps Training facility, will get the lion’s share of upgrades. These include replacing windows, air conditioners, installing new paving and road striping, replacing wooden decks and sidewalks, reroofing several buildings, replacing seating in the Rogue Building auditorium, upgrading communication network wiring, and adding safety lighting throughout the campus.

Repairs to plumbing, electrical, windows and other upgrades would be made at the Illinois Valley Learning Center in Kerby. More than 99,000 square feet of carpet will be laid district wide, while aging network and communication infrastructure will be upgraded at the Redwood, Table Rock and Riverside campuses, along with roof replacement and HVAC upgrades.

The RCC Board of Education passed an emergency declaration in February allowing the college to enter contracts for the $4 million in projects without competitive bidding. An “overwhelming response” from local contractors delayed the contracting process, according to Warren. The RCC Board held a special meeting April 9 to extend its emergency declaration another 60 days.

Overall, the college had interest from 115 contractors for the 11 major projects and some 70 smaller projects. About 97 percent of the contractors submitting proposals are from Josephine or Jackson counties while the remaining proposals are primarily from Klamath County contractors.

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