

It's just that simple

The Orange County Board of Supervisors has settled on a \$3 million bond-issue for the November ballot. The bond issue deserves your support.

Three million dollars is a lot of money, but think of the benefits.

First, the bonds would pay up to \$1 million for an industrial park. Orange County needs an industrial park to help attract industry in an orderly way. The 1991 election clearly demonstrated that the people of Orange County recognize the need for employment and, at the same time, want to preserve the rural character of the area. The industrial park answers both of those concerns.

An industrial park concentrates industry in one area. It makes it easier and cheaper to provide utility and road service for many businesses. It makes it easier to concentrate housing and business to support the workforce of the industrial park. It keeps industry from scattering randomly across the rural landscape. Industry will be attracted by the low cost and convenience of an industrial park and the county will benefit with more jobs and more tax revenue.

The second item on the bond issue is \$500,000 for a library somewhere in eastern Orange County. A library is a valuable resource for everyone -- it offers education, entertainment, and valuable information about our world.

The fact is that the current library building is just not adequate. It is bursting at the seams. Moreover, the building is located in the Town of Orange, miles away from the growing population centers in Locust Grove. Even so, the demand on the existing library just keeps growing. On one day this summer, almost 800 items were checked out. The library needs to expand to meet this huge demand.

Our Opinion

Of even greater concern is the fact that, if Orange does not build a new branch library, the state may cut off funding for the existing library. The state requires at least one extra branch for a library system serving more than 25,000 people. Orange now has more than 21,000 people. We need to get moving on the new library or face losing the state's contribution of \$40,000 per year.

Finally, the bond issue will provide \$1.5 million to close the old landfill next year and open the new landfill. The state absolutely requires that the old landfill be closed in accordance with expensive regulations. Opening the new landfill requires a huge investment of money in permits and design fees. Yet it must be done now, or you won't have anywhere to put your trash in 1994.

Let's face it -- Orange County needs these items. They are all things that must get done, one way or the other. You have two choices:

If you pass the bond issue, you will allow the county to borrow money now and pay it back little-by-little over the years. That would cost you just a few extra cents on the tax rate each year to pay back the debt.

If you reject the bond issue, you will force the county to pay for these things up-front. That may sound like a good thing, but consider this: for every penny the supervisors add to the tax rate, the county receives an extra \$114,000. If the county had to raise \$3 million all at once, it would cost you more than 26 extra cents on the tax rate.

Are you ready to pay more than 81 cents per \$100 value on your real estate? If you are, then vote against the bond issue. If you're ready to keep your taxes at about their current level, which is the lowest in Central Virginia, then approve the bond issue. It's that simple.