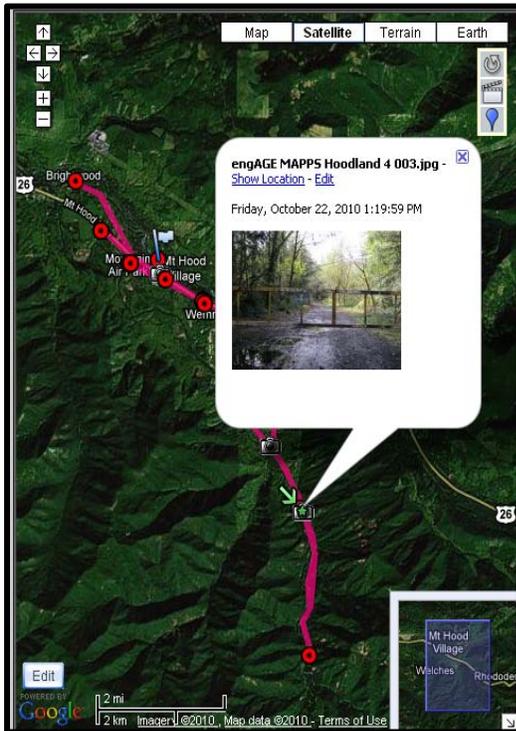


Hoodland Community engAGE MAPPS Report

The Villages at Mount Hood consist of the unincorporated communities east of Sandy and west of Government Camp along Highway 26. The communities sit at the foot of Mount Hood, in Clackamas County near the Sandy River. The centralized community of Welches is located roughly 45 miles southeast Portland. Weather is mild in the area, with the average monthly low temperature of 35°F and high of 82°F. The area receives around 47” of precipitation annually. The adjacent Mount Hood National Forest offers plenty of recreational opportunities, including: hiking, fishing, camping, and mountain climbing.¹



engAGE in Community Clackamas County Social Services and Extension Family and Community Health have partnered with communities across the County to assess resources and residents’ perceptions of current and future resources required to improve the livability or ‘age-friendliness’ of communities within Clackamas County. Information gathered from and by local residents will be used to develop an *engAGE in Community* strategic plan. Within local communities, the project objectives are to (1) provide data to inform ‘age-friendly’ multi-sector planning efforts, (2) assess and increase community capacity, resources, and relevance for evidence-based ‘age-friendly’ practices, (3) provide basis for current and future actions, and (4) share results with community audiences. This report is a brief summary of the Hoodland Community *engAGE in Community* MAPPS activities.

Relevance for Hoodland Community

Clackamas County and County communities are aging, which may burden the current individual, family, and community resources and affect the ability of County residents to age actively and successfully in their residence and/or community of choice. In the Villages at Mt. Hood it is no different; since 1990 the percent of residents, both women and men, between 40 and 64 years of age who live in the community has increased significantly. Estimates are that by 2015 more than 40 percent of adults living Clackamas County and County communities, including the Hoodland community, will be over the age of 50 (see chart 2, page 3)². Planning for an older population in the future requires local input with an understanding the current community supports and barriers to place-based aging as well as a commitment to change – increasing supports and removing barriers so that all community residents have the choice to live well and age in their residence and community of choice.

Population Distribution by Age and Gender for Villages at Mt. Hood for 1990 vs. 2005-09

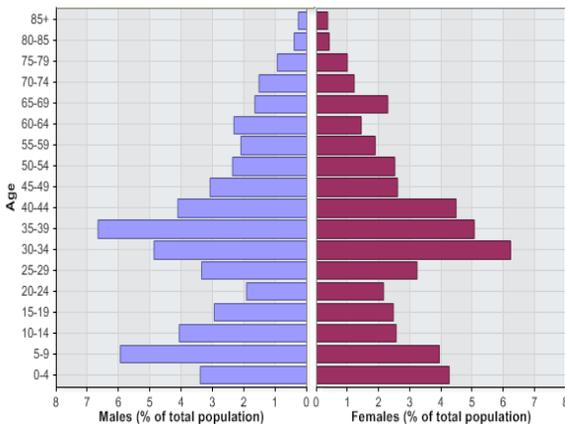


Chart 1
Source: Oregon Communities Reporter³

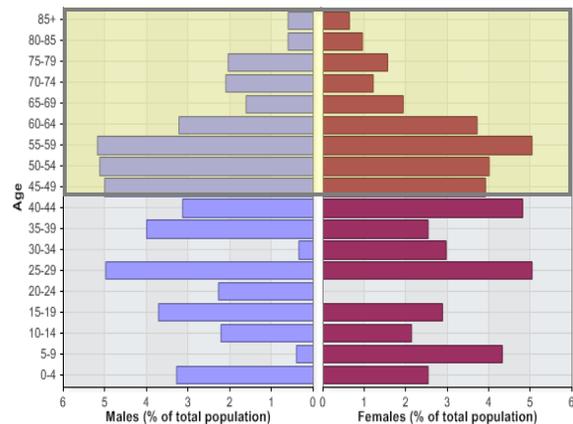


Chart 2

Methods and Preliminary Themes

An engAGE MAPPS team (n=7) comprised of local residents with an interest creating a more ‘age-friendly’ Hoodland community volunteered to individually photograph and map the features of the area that they perceived as either opportunities for or obstacles to place-based aging for Hoodland residents. Over 125 photographs were taken. Together, the engAGE MAPPS team discussed the photographs during a focus group meeting and the most relevant 50 photographs were mapped and included in the presentation for the larger community conversation. Over 50 local residents attended and participated in a community conversation held at the Lions Club on a rainy evening in December 2010. The conversation was facilitated by Dr. Deborah John, OSU Extension faculty in Clackamas County. During the 2.5 hour dinner and conversation, each of the photographs were displayed; participants discussed the community feature in terms of its ‘age-friendliness,’ that is as supporting or hindering one’s capacity to live and thrive in the community regardless of age or ability.

Physical Environment – 99 references

The physical environment is rich with natural amenities with built environment features that because of a strong economic emphasis on the mountain tourist industry provide year round residents a plethora of community supports, such as restaurants, conservation areas, developed parks and trails, and housing developments, which may not be available in other rural places in Clackamas County. Despite conditions that may influence the tourist economy, Hoodland is a relatively prosperous rural place.

Transportation 20 total references/15 barriers

- One of the immediate indicators of a physical environment challenge is the route map created by the MAPPS team. The route maps (see Figures 1-4, pages 6-7) capture, in a visual way, how residents navigate the local community in their daily lives. Each of the

routes were almost exactly the same, and along the major transportation thoroughfare – Hwy 26, indicating a strong dependence on a personal automobile and limited active transportation (walking/bicycling) routes.

- When faced with the inability to drive one self, older residents (and others) encounter less than optimal or no viable transportation choices, which makes living in the Hoodland community more difficult across the life cycle. Transportation barriers included no or limited transportation options beyond senior center bus and medical cab, which restricted time and destination options for older residents and others who do not/cannot drive themselves.

Housing 27 total references/15 barriers

- Affordable assisted living and/or foster homes are desired, a community feature that when absent results in disturbed family and social networks when a community member is no longer able to live independently.
- Residents offered differing opinions as to the desirability of manufactured homes as affordable, accessible housing options and regarding policies regarding long-term living in resort communities.
- Transient nature of seasonal workers affects availability of affordable year-round housing and perceived climate regarding residents' long-term investment in local community.

Outdoor Spaces and Build Accessibility 23 total references/16 barriers

- Accessibility and walking safety were the most frequently reported barriers across all outdoor spaces and buildings.
- Additional concerns were resourcing new/improvements to outdoor spaces and buildings, like community garden and adult/senior community center.

Social Environment – 72 references

The social environment emerged as the most important asset within the Hoodland community, connecting people in community to place despite the absence of physical and service environment supports. The word cloud on page one clearly demonstrates a strong emphasis on people, place, and community with social environment supports that are perceived as great and as 'good as family.'

Respect and Inclusion (36 total references/15 barriers)

- Cost of living and accessibility emerged as key factors that excluded some community members from full participation/high quality of Hoodland community life.

Social Participation (49 total references/7 barriers)

- Transient nature of tourist and tourism workers and a perceived shortage of social participation opportunities specifically targeted toward older adults.

Civic Engagement and Employment (34 total references/9 barriers)

- Tourist economy and summer seasonal workers limit year round employment opportunities and employer stability.
- Much of the ‘work’ is done by volunteers via community organizations, such as faith groups, clubs, local sponsorships, and individuals. Volunteer training and support were identified as areas for improvement.

Service Environment – 124 references

The service environment was referenced more frequently with more identifiable barriers to aging-in-place than either of the physical or social environments, indicating that while the Hoodland community does have a strong sense of community and commitment to volunteerism, the community recognizes that its location at the “end of the county service area” provides a challenge for many community residents across most service areas.

Health Care and Necessary Services (70 total references/50 barriers)

- Absence of local health care and health-related services, like medical, dental, health therapy, vision, pharmacy, ambulance, and alternative health services
- Limited and less convenient transportation to health care and necessary services from community to locations providing necessary services (e.g., Sandy, Oregon City)
- Support services other than health services that are necessary for high quality community life, such as postal service, utilities, county services, food assistance programs, emergency shelters, structured exercise/therapy programs, grocery stores, police, and automobile maintenance are sparse, limited in availability, or provided at (perceived) higher cost in comparison to other Clackamas County communities.
- Service districts (property tax base) provide resources for some desired services, such as library and parks.

Communication and Information Networks (35 total references/14 barriers)

- Informal communications supported by community organizations and volunteer networks seem to work effectively in times of distress, such as extended power outage; formal communication plan/network is needed (i.e. hotline) to support information sharing. Plan to include communication plan in proposed community center, which will serve a larger audience that currently serving.

References

1. Wikipedia, retrieved on February 13, 2011
2. U.S. Census Bureau, 2005-2009 American Community Survey
3. Oregon Communities Reporter, retrieved on February 15, 2011 from <http://oe.oregonexplorer.info/rural/OregonCommunitiesReporter>

