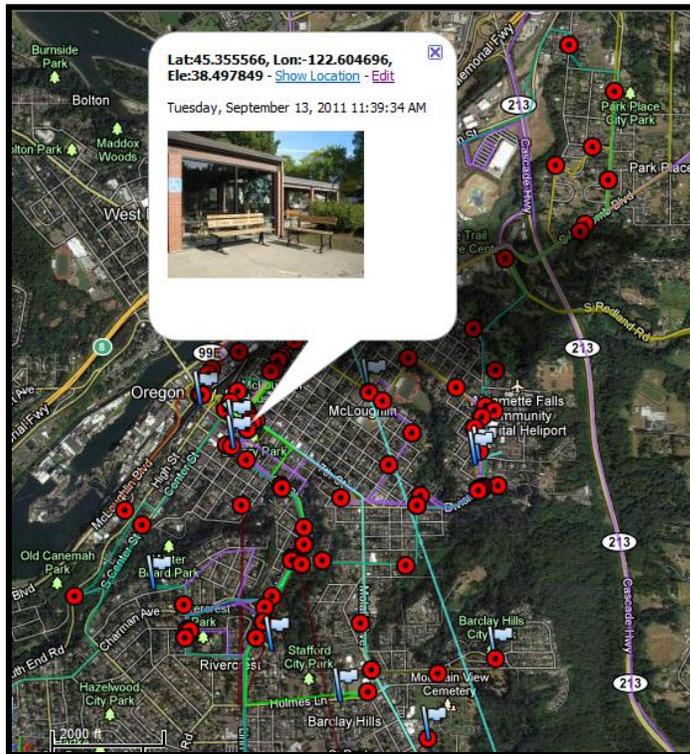


Oregon City *engAGE in Community* MAPPS Report

Oregon City, the Clackamas County seat with a population of 31, 859¹, is located at the union point of the Clackamas and Willamette River approximately 13 miles south of Portland. The weather is mild in the area with an average monthly low temperature of 35°F and a high of 82°F. The average annual precipitation is 47.06 inches. The city has a rich history and has many places of interest including: the McLoughlin House, The Museum of the Oregon Territory, The End of the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center, and the Stevens Crawford House. Recreational opportunities include parks, a swimming pool, and nice trails throughout the city.²



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 Oregon City Community *engAGE in Community* MAPPS activities.

Relevance for Oregon City Community

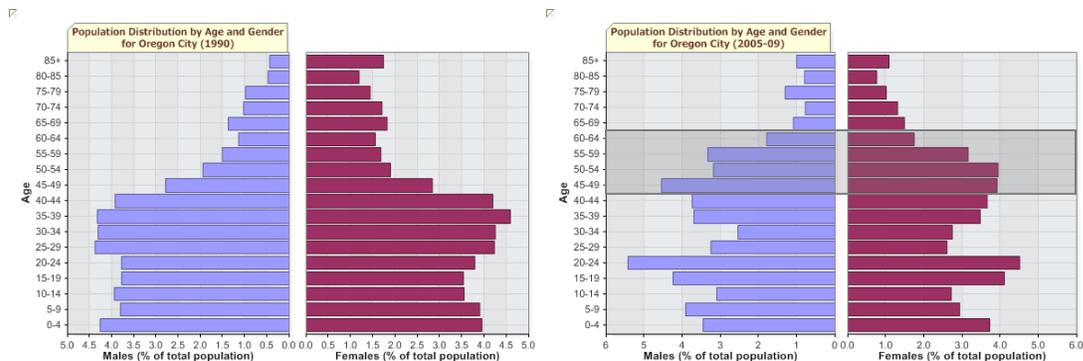
Clackamas County and County communities are aging, which may burden the current individual, family, and community resources and affect the ability of County residents to

¹ U.S. Census Bureau: State and County 2010 QuickFacts

² <http://www.orcity.org/>

age actively and successfully in their residence and/or community of choice. In Oregon City it is no different; since 1990 the percent of residents, both women and men, between the 40 and 59 years of age who live in the community has increased significantly. Estimates are that by 2015 more than 40 percent of adults living in Clackamas County and County communities will be over the age of 50.³ Planning for an older population in the future requires local input with an understanding of the current community supports and barriers to place-based aging as well as a commitment to the 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 Oregon City for 1990 vs. 2005-09



⁴ Source: Oregon Communities Reporter

Methods and Preliminary Themes

An *engAGE MAPPs* team (n=8) comprised of local residents with an interest creating a more 'age-friendly' Oregon City 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 Oregon City residents. Over 125 photographs were taken. Together, the Oregon City *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. Approximately 15 local residents and community stakeholders attended and participated in a community conversation held at the Oregon City Pioneer Center in October 2011. 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

³ U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census.

⁴ Oregon Communities Reporter

supporting or hindering one's capacity to live and thrive in the community regardless of age or ability.

Physical Environment—57 references

The physical environment was referenced more frequently with more identifiable barriers to aging-in-place than either of the social or service environments, indicating that while Oregon City has a rich history and is aesthetically pleasing, served by Tri Met and Amtrak, offers aspects of the physical environment, which includes transportation, housing, and accessibility of outdoor spaces and buildings are experienced as obstacles for many members of the community. Residents identified a need for improvements to walkability, including more and continuous sidewalks, sidewalk repair and maintenance, as well as housing.

Transportation (21 total references/12 barriers)

Transportation supports in Oregon City include: adequate parking downtown, Amtrak platform that is well used and handicap accessible, Tri-Met bus transit, and some improvements to crosswalks and intersections. Valet parking at Providence Medical Center was mentioned as an asset.

Transportation barriers include: a lack of sidewalks and sidewalk continuity, lack of shelters and seats at transit stops, unsafe pedestrian conditions at intersections and crosswalks, a lack of crosswalks, and a lack of trail connectivity and destinations. Traffic congestion and business accessibility due to traffic congestion and parking were also noted.

Housing 8 total references/7 barriers

While Oregon City has an abundance of housing options, the housing attributes that were identified as barriers to Oregon City's age-friendliness include: absence of enough affordable and accessible housing to support the current and future needs of an aging society; absence of safe and clean rental options, and a need for multi-family and mixed-use residential neighborhoods. Participants also expressed a desire for energy efficient housing improvements to make rentals more cost effective.

Outdoor Spaces and Buildings 27 total references/16 barriers

Outdoor spaces and buildings, or 'built environment' aesthetics that support age-friendly livability in Oregon City were identified: city-supported parks, a historic library building, art installations, downtown shopping district, and community gardens. Also mentioned as supportive, age-friendly features were the Pioneer center, including accessible senior services, and walking paths and trails, including the Clackamas Community College walking path and downtown pedestrian elevator.

Outdoor spaces and building features that were identified as barriers to community livability for all ages include: a lack of continuous sidewalks and connectivity to walk to destinations, lack of crosswalks and signage, which discourages pedestrians from crossing the street, sidewalks that need maintenance and are inaccessible for people with mobility differences or disabilities, pedestrian safety, a lack of seats and shelters at transit stops, parks and outdoor spaces that are inaccessible for older adults and others who use mobility assistance devices, such as walkers, strollers, and/or chairs/scooters. Another building feature mentioned as a barrier to age-friendly community living was the small size of the current library, which was noted as a being beautiful.

Social Environment—27 references

Though community members desire to see more social opportunities in Oregon City, the community is well established with a community center, theatre, and symphony. Residents are proud of Oregon City’s history and the many historical sites. Volunteer organizations and opportunities for civic engagement through volunteerism were cited as valued and necessary resources.

Respect and Inclusion (4 total references)

Oregon City residents reported that their experience of the City is one of respect and inclusion. There are many areas of the city that are readily accessible and inclusive for older adults and others with mobility differences. However, some areas are not as easily accessible for older adults and others with mobility differences, specifically parks and walking paths, which may exclude or discourage participation in some outdoor social activities.

Civic Engagement and Employment (2 total references)

Participants acknowledge the importance of civic engagement and discussed the need for more and easier access to volunteer opportunities for older people who are not working in order for them to stay active and engaged in community life. Residents recognized that certain businesses in the community support local charities.

Social Participation (17 total references/8 barriers)

Participants expressed a desire for more social opportunities for older adults and seniors, including night life activities. The community has a few social events and opportunities, which include the Clackamas Repertoire Theatre and the Willamette Falls Symphony. Some barriers to social participation included: inaccessibility of facility hosting the event, costs associated with fee-based recreational programs and facilities, city policies and safety regulations, such as lighting restrictions and seating limitations for some restaurants. Another barrier to social participation was noted as instability of social venues, citing businesses such as Weatherfords, which open and then close because they are not economically viable.

Service Environment—35 references

Oregon City's service environment seems to be well resourced in the area of healthy lifestyle services, including many supports that are 'pet friendly.' Other supportive services include affordable dining, valet parking, and various active recreational opportunities such as the community pool. Barriers were identified as availability of affordable grocery stores and access to communication networks and information channels, which negatively influenced the ability of residents to navigate community life.

The only references to **Health Care and Medical Services** were made in the context of the valet parking service at Providence Medical Center, which was noted as an asset. Other health services, such as food assistance programs (Meals on Wheels), diabetes care, older adult exercise classes, and senior transportation services available through the Pioneer Center were reported as available and under-resourced (when compared to current and future need). **Communication and Information Networks** were cited only slightly more frequently (**3 total references/2 barriers**) with participants commenting that park signs are outdated and certain traffic advisory signs are difficult to see and/or read. The bus schedules posted at bus stops are difficult to read because the print is small and lighting is poor or non-existent.

References

1. U.S. Census Bureau: State and County 2010 QuickFacts. Retrieved on Nov. 22, 2011 from <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/41/4155200.html>
2. U.S. Census Bureau, 2005-2009 American Community Survey
3. Wikipedia, retrieved on May 3, 2011
4. Oregon Communities Reporter, retrieved on May 15, 2011 from <http://oe.oregonexplorer.info/rural/OregonCommunitiesReporter>