

GOAL IV: CARING COMMUNITIES

“Together we can be sustained by the conviction that we have the resources – material, intellectual, and spiritual -- to assure that every American family can expect its children to grow up with hope in their hearts and a realistic expectation that they will participate in the American dream. Together we can share, and together we can achieve, our Common Purpose.”

Lisbeth Schorr

Indicator Summary

Goal IV Indicators	Data Source	Oregon Benchmark	County Relative to State	County Trend
Percent of Oregonians who feel they are part of the community NOT AVAILABLE	OPB (OPS)	✓	NA	NA
Voter turnout	OSS-ED	✓	☹	☹
Voter registration	OSS-ED		NA	☹
Community involvement	survey		NA	☹

☺ = good, positive trend ☹ = about the same, neutral, unclear trend ☹ = bad, negative trend NA = not available/not applicable

Local Factors Affecting the Data or Planning Analysis

- Multitude of local planning bodies with different mandates or charges, different planning frameworks, different timelines makes it difficult to coordinate
- Because of geographic constraints, not all areas, people, groups are included in planning or community-wide efforts
- Lane County has a diverse and plentiful number of private providers that are child, youth and family focused

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STRENGTHS AND ASSETS

- Community-based prevention coalitions
- Reformation plan for each youth taken before youth court
- Peer Courts in Florence, Bethel, Cottage Grove, Oakridge, and Churchill High School
- Voter support for the new youth campus
- Neighborhood associations
- Summit Summer Program
- Resource guides and directories
- Family Resource Centers
- Community Safety Net program
- Grass roots organizing
- Active citizenry
- Kids sports programs
- Parks and recreation facilities and programs

GAPS AND BARRIERS

Children

- Community support for social services to at risk children more than 8 years old
- Children's exposure to media violence

Family/Community

- Community climate that supports reductions in services
- Parenting and education support as the norm
- Mistrust in government and other people
- Stigmatism
- Building family input into collaborations, planning
- Limits to time available for community involvement

Cultural

- Community support for culturally appropriate services
- Limited non-English speaking services

Gender

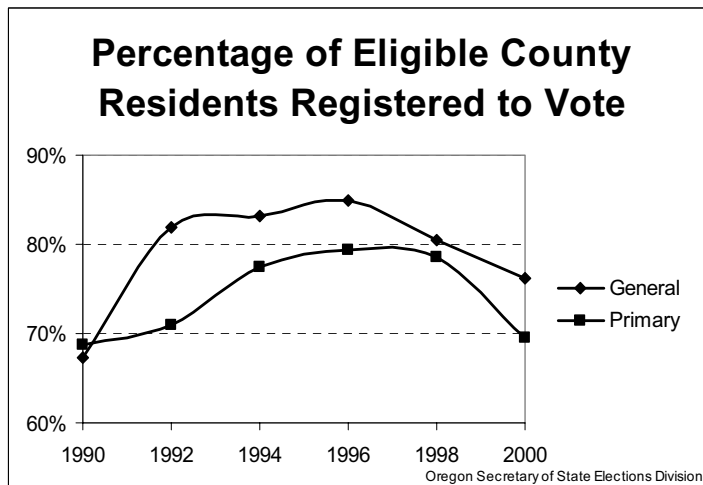
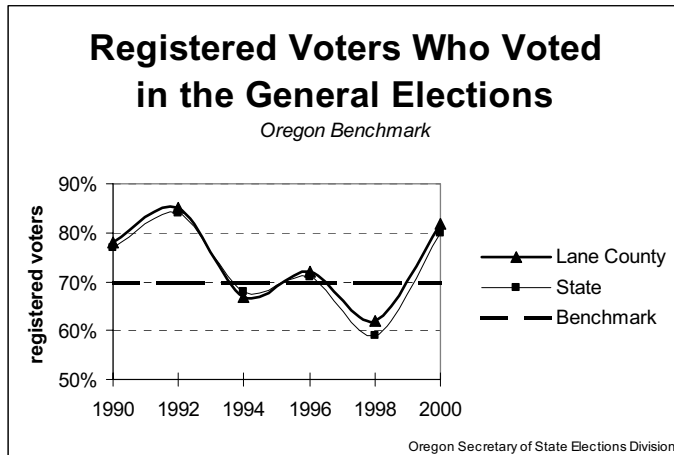
- Community support for gender specific services

Rural

- Location of services

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DATA



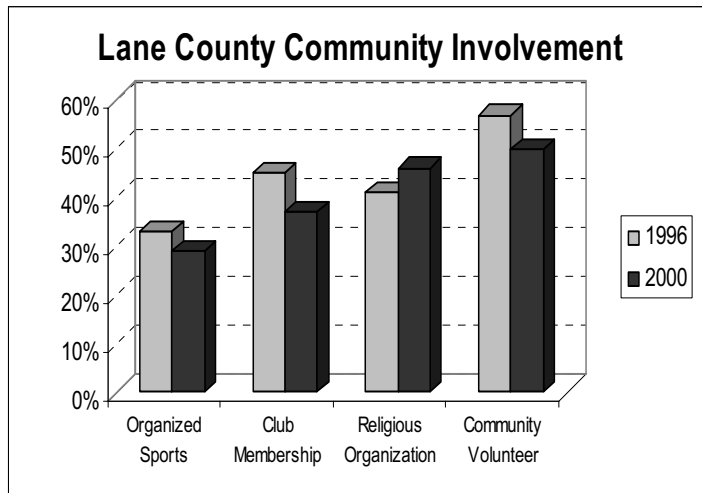
ANALYSIS

Voter Turnout

The percent of registered voters who actually vote in an election gives some indication of the level of engagement in a community. But as the trends indicate, it is also a measure of the controversial nature of a particular election year. For example, presidential election years, particularly when an incumbent is not running for re-election, are high voter turnout years.

Voter Registration

While the voter turnout has been variable since 1990, the rate of registration of eligible voters has been decreasing since 1996.



Community Involvement

Questions about levels of community involvement were replicated in the *Community Survey* from a parallel OSRL survey from 1996. Four questions were asked of respondents: (a) if they had ‘taken part in any form of organized sports activities in the past year’, (b) if they ‘belonged to any other clubs or organizations in their community’, (c) if they ‘regularly take part in any church, synagogue, or religious organization’, and (d) if they had ‘ever worked with others in their community to try to solve community problems.’ Between 1996 and 2000, levels of participation fell in all categories except ‘participation in a religious organization.’

The ***Community Survey 2000*** also asked respondents for their perceptions of community safety for children and youth. Respondents were asked to think about youth and teenagers walking around your community at night and during the day, and overall, how safe they think they are. At night, only 16% thought youth and teenagers would be ‘very safe’, 45% ‘somewhat safe’, 24% ‘not very safe’, and 10% not very safe at all.’ During the day, 52% thought they would be ‘very safe’, 41% ‘somewhat safe’, and only 3% ‘not very safe’, and 1% ‘not safe at all.’

The ***Success by Six Parenting Norms Survey*** asked respondents to evaluate their neighborhood as a place to live and raise children. 29% felt their neighborhood was ‘excellent’, 43% ‘good’, 18% ‘fair’, and 8% ‘poor.’

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PRIORITIES	STRATEGIES	RATIONALE
<p>A) Strengthen opportunities for involvement in community-based partnerships and activities</p>	<p>A1) Work to strengthen Family Resource Centers, Community Safety Nets, and Community Coalitions</p>	<p>A1) A beginning infrastructure exists in communities through out the county to provide opportunities for citizens to engage in efforts to support children and families in their own communities. For the most part, these are under-funded, understaffed, and have not been linked as well as they could. These structures already exist in many rural communities, as well as the metro area, and by design require the engagement of local community members in order to be successful. In addition to fostering general community engagement, this strategy has the added benefit of engaging the community specifically in support of meeting the needs of children and families.</p>
	<p>A2) Initiate a 5-year strategy to strengthen neighborhood associations, in collaboration with cities and other partners.</p>	<p>A2) Neighborhood associations exist in some part of Lane County, and not in others. These are a key place for individuals to engage in a process that is close-to-home, and can serve to strengthen local networks where children live. The first step will be to specifically map the neighborhood associations in the county, and develop a strategy for strengthening this system.</p>
	<p>A3) Educate and involve community members to contribute resources in a manner that supports children and families.</p>	<p>A3) Lane County includes a large and varied system of supports for children and families, all of which rely on community support, including volunteer hours and donations. A key opportunity for involvement in the community is to step forward in support of children and families in a variety of ways: voting, providing match resources for grants, donating time and money.</p>
<p>B) Increased “volunteerism” by both youth and adults.</p>	<p>B1) Focus on strengthening easy entry points for youth and adults to become engaged in volunteering, including partnering with schools for youth opportunities.</p>	<p>B1) United Way research demonstrates that long-term engagement in community volunteering often starts with easy-to-access, small commitments of time that grow over time. This strategy is to foster a vareity of these access points, and to help educate youth and adults about simple ways to engage and to make a difference in the community.</p>

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<p>B2) Support a community “Call to Action,” publicizing to the community a wide range of ways to become involved in helping the community.</p>	<p>B2) This strategy builds on efforts currently underway to educate community members about the needs in the community, and about the variety of ways that each person can step forward and make a difference. This will provide materials to help with “the ask” in highlighting the importance of getting involved, and will support people in finding ways that they can become involved in the community.</p>
<p>B3) Enhance retention of volunteers by increasing opportunities for them to experience influence and/or success</p>	<p>B3) Those people who do step forward and volunteer, are more likely to continue to engage when they believe that their contribution makes a difference. This strategy will focus on retention of volunteers.</p>
<p>B4) Engage with the Chambers of Commerce and the Lane Workforce Partnership to increase the number of workplaces who support their employees’ ability to take time to volunteer in the community.</p>	<p>B4) Some members of the community would like to engage in community volunteer efforts, but workplace policies restrict their ability to take time to do that. If additional workplaces adopted policies that supported their employees to volunteer, that will not only increase the ability of those particular employees who already volunteer, but will serve to help establish a norm that volunteering in the community is an important aspect of living in Lane County. Additionally, the process of working to change these policies provides an opportunity to educate the community about the importance of volunteering.</p>