

Douglas County as a Sustainable Community

I. Introduction

Sustainability: The ability of a community to meet the basic needs of all the people without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own life-sustaining needs.

In 1999 The League of Women Voters of the Umpqua Valley began a study of "What makes a community sustainable?" The study committee began by looking at sustainability studies done by others, including other Oregon Leagues, and selecting a set of indicators of sustainability. To inform League members and the public, we held five public meetings featuring community leaders addressing the topics outlined below.

This report is intended to form the basis for a public dialogue on the preferred future for Douglas County and the actions necessary to reach that preferred future.

II. County Overview

Population

1990	2000	% change 1990-2000
94,649	100,399	+ 6%

Increases in population are mainly from in-migration primarily in the 65-plus age group. About 43% of the county's population is aged 45 or older, compared to about 33 percent for the U.S. as a whole.

	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>
Number of households	35,872	39,821

	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>
Owner-occupied housing (%)	69	72

	<u>1990</u>	<u>1997</u>
Per capita income as % of U.S.	76%	75%

III. Economy and Business

	<u>1995</u>	<u>1998</u>	
Net job growth per 1,000 population	9.8	3.0	
Employment (%)	<u>1978</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1998</u>
Manufacturing	34	32	23
Services	12	16	22
All Other	54	52	55

The majority of jobs in the manufacturing sector are in the lumber and wood products and related industries. These jobs have historically paid very high wages (average pay per worker of \$33,837 in 1998). The service sector has been the highest growing sector, but these jobs tend to pay less (average pay per worker of \$21,066 in 1998).

Reduction in employment 1985-1998	-18%
Increase in annual payroll 1985-1998	10% (less than inflation over this period)

Average unemployment rate (%)	<u>1992</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>2000</u>
	11.9	8.0	9.3	7.8 (prelim.)

- Although the timber harvest in Douglas County declined 67% between 1985 and 1998, employment in lumber and wood products declined only 18% in this same period.
- Employment in the lumber and wood products industry remains high at 17%.
- Due to productivity increases, it took only 2.3 workers in 1999 to produce a million board feet down from 4.5 workers per million board feet in 1980. (Source-Western Wood Products Association)
- The number of lumber and wood products places of employment fell from 244 in 1985 to 199 in 1998 reflecting the consolidation of the industry, the closing of small mills, and the increase in the number of plants producing engineered wood products.

IV. Natural Resources

Land Use

Change in farm acreage (1987-1997)	-8.3% (loss)
Acres of county parks per 1,000 country residents (2001)	32.5

Surface Water Quality

Table 1. Seasonal Average Oregon Water Quality Index Results for the Umpqua Basin

Site	Water Year 1986-1995	WY 1989-1998*
S. Umpqua R. @ Days Ck. Cutoff Rd.	83 **	+2.5
Cow Ck. @ Mouth (Riddle)	79	NA
S. Umpqua R. @ HWY 42 (Winston)	80	+2.9
Deer Ck. @ HWY 138 (Roseburg)	47	NA
S. Umpqua R. @ Stewart Park Rd. (VA Medical Center - Roseburg)	82	+6.8
S. Umpqua R. @ Melrose Rd.	62	+10.0
N. Umpqua R. @ Garden Valley Rd.	89	+3.3
Calapooya Ck. @ Umpqua	79	+3.7
Umpqua R. @ Umpqua	85	NA
Umpqua R. @ Elkton	87	NA
Elk Ck. @ Drain	72	NA
Elk Ck. @ Elkton	86	NA

Waste Management

Solid waste sent to landfill (1999)	1,713 pounds per capita
% recovered	26%

* Shows improvement in Water Quality Index over the 10 years shown.

** Scores of 0-59= Very poor, 60-79=Poor, 80-84=Fair, 85-89=Good, 90-100=Excellent

NA means not available.

Forestry

Harvest Levels by Source
(Millions of Board Feet)



- After spiking in the 1980s, harvests from public land have dropped dramatically.
- Harvests from industrial lands have also fallen by almost 50%.
- Harvests from both public and industrial lands have fallen 66% since the 1980s and will not return to those higher levels.

Road density in Umpqua National Forest=3-4 linear miles per square mile

Restoration work needed in UNF \$300-400 million

V. Education

Children

Children entering school ready to learn 1997
58%

Smart Reading Program 2000/2001
750 students/20 schools

High school dropout rate (%)	<u>1996/97</u> 6.7	<u>1998/99</u> 7.0	<u>1999/2000</u> 6.4%
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Post K-12

Illiteracy rate (2001) 18%

Adults with high school (or GED) or greater education (%)	<u>1980</u> 68	<u>1990</u> 75
Number of GEDs earned in county (UCC/Jobs)	<u>1995/96</u> 364	<u>1999/2000</u> 395
High school graduates going on to college (%) (~25-35% go to UCC)		<u>2001</u> 63
Adults age 25 and above who have completed a Baccalaureate degree or more (%)	<u>1980</u> 10	<u>1990</u> 12
	<u>1995</u>	<u>2000</u>
UCC AA Degrees awarded (Transfer)	79	106
UCC AS Degrees awarded (Transfer)	28	30
UCC AAS Degrees awarded (Prof./Technical)	123	143

VI. Community Well Being

	<u>1990</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>2000</u>
Households with income below the poverty level (%)	14.6	16.5	14.6
Female heads of household w/children below poverty level	52%		
Economically disadvantaged (per 1,000)	202.7		
		<u>1998</u>	
Food stamp recipients		103.3	
	<u>1995</u>	<u>2000</u>	
Persons leaving welfare for employment (Jobs Program)	1,084	980	
	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1995</u>
Pregnancy rate of females ages 10-17 (per 1,000)	22.8	16.8	21.5
Abused or neglected children under age 18 (per 1,000)		14.5	13.0
			<u>1998</u>
			16.8
			12.2

Studies show that girls who are abused or live in poverty, abuse drugs, drop out of school are more likely to become pregnant. It appears that teen pregnancies are on the decline in Douglas County in part due to social service and volunteer programs targeted to youth.

	<u>1996</u>	
Births to unmarried mothers	36.4%	
	<u>2001</u>	
Number of Homeless persons	238	
Emergency food from 4 food pantries and 6 kitchens		<u>2000</u>
Food boxes for 69,034 household members		21,972
Meals served		134,204

Law Enforcement & Courts

Circuit Court Felony Case Filings	<u>1995</u>	<u>1998</u>
Controlled substance offenses	514	535
Assault	27	78
Total	1,339	1,572
Misdemeanor Filings		
Driving while under influence	260	363
Total	1,219	1,244
Juvenile arrests per 1,000 juveniles	62.6	78.0
Domestic violence per 1,000	<u>1997</u>	5.3

Libraries

	<u>1990</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>2000</u>
Library outlets	12	12	11
Number of registered borrowers	56,306	69,964	61,640
Annual attendance at facilities	217,880	868,122	494,042
Annual public service hours	18,356	17,510	16,786
Cataloged books, periodicals, etc.	97,425	116,567	227,432
Periodical subscriptions	924	1,103	1,097

VII. Health

Infant mortality rate (per 1,000)	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>1998</u>
	8.6	7.2	3.5	10.6
Douglas County Mental Health—Unduplicated Clients Served			<u>95/96</u>	<u>99/00</u>
			2,877	4,289
Active physicians-total				<u>2001</u>
				148
Number of residents on OR Health Plan				11,072
Number of emergency room visits				35,856

Lower household income may reflect lower primary care use and higher critical care utilization.

VIII. Governance

Voter participation in general elections (%)	<u>1992</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>2000</u>
	83	60	75.5

By age	18-24	25-44	45-64	over 65
	25.6%	46.5%	69.1%	77.4%

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Telephone Interviews:

Douglas County Individual Practice Association
Douglas County High Schools
Douglas County Parks Department
Douglas County Registrar's Office
Mercy Medical Center
Project Literacy
Umpqua Community Action Network