



City of Corvallis 2009 Report Card



Special Edition

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Message from the City Manager

I am pleased to present the City's Report Card for 2009. In these pages, you will find information about each department's performance and citizen ratings about City services compared with other communities across the nation. The information is framed around Corvallis' 2020 Vision Statement.

Citizen Survey

The City has conducted a statistically valid survey of randomly selected Corvallis voters since 1993. In 2008, we chose to participate in the National Research Center's (NRC) National Citizen Survey so that Corvallis could benchmark itself with communities across the nation. The City participated in this national survey again in 2009. This time, the survey sample was drawn from Corvallis residents, rather than from registered voters.



"I hope this special issue of "the City" is informative about how your tax dollars are spent. Your questions and feedback are welcome. Please feel free to contact me at 541-766-6901 or city.manager@ci.corvallis.or.us."

The National Citizen Survey is a collaborative effort between the NRC and the International City/County Management Association (ICMA). The objective is to identify community and service strengths and

weaknesses, and to provide useful information for planning, resource allocation, performance measurement, and program and policy evaluation. Evaluating the results helps the City improve services, increase civic involvement, strengthen public trust, and improve the quality of life in Corvallis. The full survey, including methodology and comments from survey participants, can be viewed on the City's Web site at www.ci.corvallis.or.us and in hard copy at the Library's Reference Desk.

Performance Measurement

The City's budget document includes a large number of performance indicators for City funds and departments. The indicators show how well City services compare to prior years and/or other local governments. Over the past three years, the City has increased its focus on performance measurement, in part due to our partnership with the ICMA Oregon Consortium for Performance Measurement (CPM).

The fiscal year 2009-10 budget contained an enhanced presentation of performance measures, linking the measures to both Council values and the objectives to be accomplished. The document is available in hard copy at the Public Library and online through the Finance Department link on the City's Web site at: www.ci.corvallis.or.us. Ongoing information about actual results versus targets is also available in quarterly operating reports published online.

This year's report card includes a financial overview on the funding challenges we face in developing the Fiscal Year 2010-11 budget. More information is available at www.ci.corvallis.or.us/budget.

Citizen survey and performance measurement results continue to be used by elected officials, advisory board members, and City staff when making decisions on City services.

*Sincerely,
Jon Nelson, City Manager*

BENCHMARKS

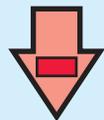
The Report Card charts include symbols that compare Corvallis' results on the Citizen Survey with other cities with populations in the 35,000 to 70,000 range.



Corvallis scored above other cities



Corvallis scored similar to other cities

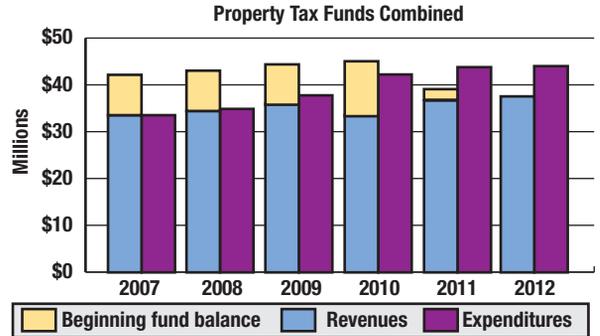


Corvallis scored below other cities

The City's Financial Outlook

The City's financial outlook has changed markedly from a year ago, with projected budget shortfalls for property tax supported services for the next several years. While largely due to structural issues with how local governments are financed, the outlook is worsened by the current financial environment.

The City is taking a multi-year approach that will call upon current and future City Councils, Budget Commissions, City staff, and the community to find solutions.



Property Tax Revenues vs. Expenditures

Some City services, such as City utilities, generate portions of their own funding, while others rely heavily on tax support. Property tax supported services such as public safety, parks, recreation, library, and land use planning are highly impacted by the changed financial outlook.

For revenues:

- Property tax fund revenues are projected to remain flat. This is due in part to pending appeals of large value properties, and a significant decrease in private development.
- Franchise revenues are declining due to energy and water conservation and the move away from landline telephones.
- Ambulance revenues are expected to decrease due to lower Medicare reimbursement rates.

For costs:

- Salaries and benefits, which comprise more than 50% of the operating budget, continue to increase as medical insurance and labor agreement costs increase.
- PERS retirement plan rates are projected to increase significantly starting July 2011.
- Material costs, such as chemicals and fuel, are increasing.

As the City looks for stable funding for tax supported services, some options include:

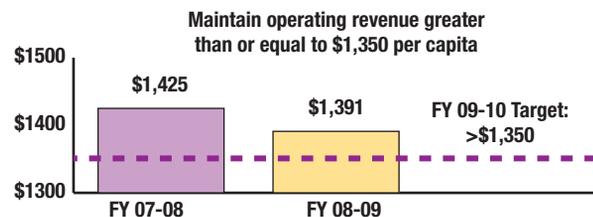
- Exploring alternative revenue sources such as service specific taxing districts or a new cost-recovery user fee.
- Borrowing to fund pending capital projects.
- Seeking legislative relief for state and federally mandated costs.
- Continued exploration of service levels and cost-saving efficiencies.
- Reducing services and programs.

For more information, or to provide budgeting feedback, visit the City's Financial Outlook and Budget Web pages at www.ci.corvallis.or.us/budget or call Finance at 541-766-6990.

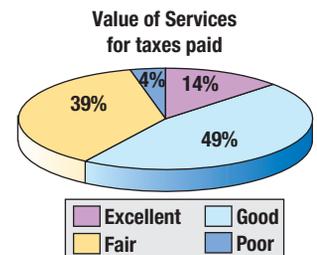
Finance Department

The Finance Department coordinates the budget process and monitors revenues and expenses. Citizen Survey respondents were asked to rate the overall value of services funded by their tax dollars.

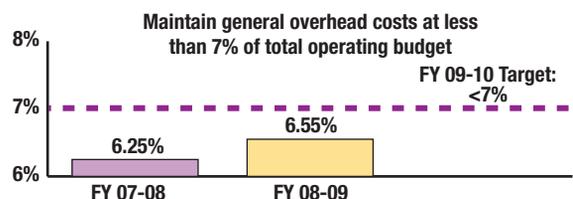
Operating revenues per capita and overhead costs are two reflections of how well the department is meeting its objectives.



The amounts represent the minimum needed to cover budgeted operating costs.



The Department also tracks overhead to ensure that City resources are primarily spent on operations that provide services directly to citizens.



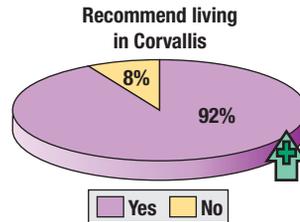
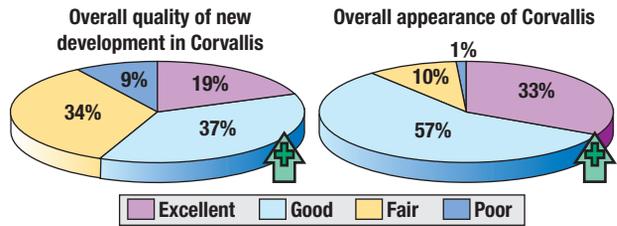
Where People Live

Corvallis in 2020 has balanced and diverse mixed-use neighborhoods incorporating pedestrian scale, diversity, and the public realm

Corvallis Neighborhoods and Livability

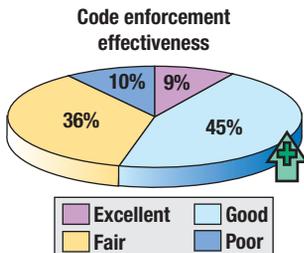
Respondents believe Corvallis is a good place to live, raise children and retire; 92 percent would recommend living in Corvallis.

Respondents also rated the overall appearance of Corvallis quite high. While only 56% rated the overall quality of new development as good or excellent, that rates above other similarly sized cities. The Corvallis Comprehensive Plan update was implemented in January 2007. We anticipate there will be a greater level of citizen satisfaction as new developments are built to meet the new, more pedestrian-friendly Land Development Code standards.



Code Enforcement

In 2007, the City Council's community livability initiative implemented a formal code enforcement program to address nuisances such as garbage and abandoned vehicles. Service ratings are expected to improve as the program matures.



"I'd like to compliment the work that has and is put into this city to make Corvallis a safe and beautiful place."
 — Citizen Survey response

Safety From Crime

The number of respondents giving positive safety ratings increased compared to last year's survey.



Survey results indicate that residents feel dramatically safer from violent crime than from property crime. Due to staffing constraints, the Police Department continues to prioritize clearing violent crimes above property crimes.

Police response times to top priority calls (violent crime, imminent danger, or possibility of major property loss) strongly correlate to residents' feelings of safety. The average response time in Fiscal Year 2008-09 was 316 seconds, a marked decrease from the prior two years. The Department continues to strive for an average response time of 300 seconds (5 minutes) or less.

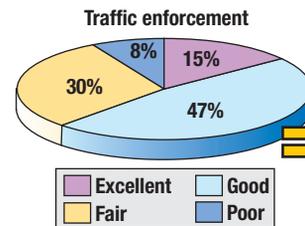
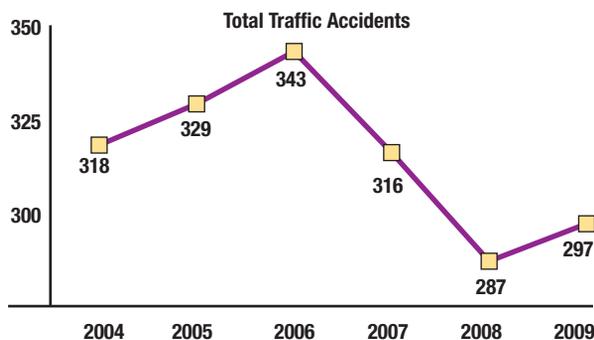
Of the respondents who said they had been a victim of crime, only 58% indicated they had reported it to the police. This is a lower percentage compared to other cities.

To provide an easier method for reporting minor incidents, the Department recently implemented an on-line self-reporting system called *CopLogic* that allows crime victims to electronically report crimes without waiting for an officer to become available. Visit www.ci.corvallis.or.us/police and click on the File a Police Report link.

Traffic Safety

Neighborhood traffic safety and accident reduction has long been a primary mission of the Police Department's Motorcycle Traffic Unit. The team's focus on public education and accident reduction at the ten most dangerous intersections in Corvallis has yielded positive results. In Fiscal Year 2008-09, there were 26% fewer accidents at these targeted intersections, far exceeding the goal to reduce by 10%.

In addition to the top ten intersections, overall traffic accident reduction continues to be a priority of the Traffic Management Plan. As shown in the graph below, accidents have trended downward since 2006, with a small increase in 2009.



Corvallis in 2020 has high quality educational opportunities and a comprehensive network of health and human services available to all residents

Health

Overall, respondents expressed satisfaction with health services in Corvallis.

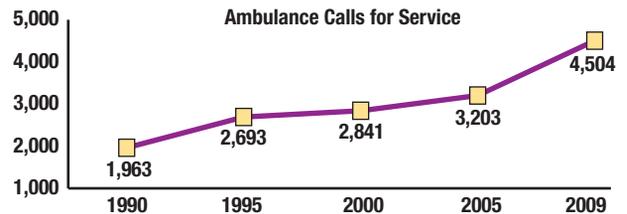


The City actively works with others to improve the health of residents. This year, a partnership between Parks and Recreation, the Benton County Health Department, and the Benton County Healthy Communities Coalition was awarded funding from the

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities program. The four-year project will focus on reversing the childhood obesity epidemic through a comprehensive network of services and educational programs.

Ambulance Services

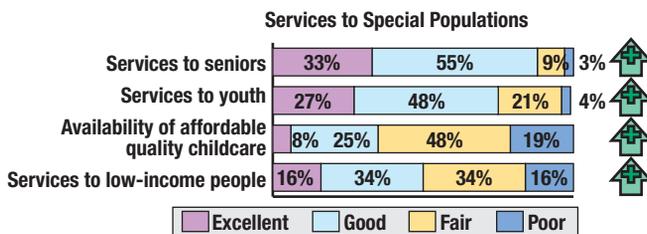
The demand for ambulance services has continued to rise due to a number of factors, including population growth, changing views about when it is appropriate to call an ambulance, the aging of a significant segment of the population, and a perception that emergency services are the only health care alternative – especially during challenging economic times.



Social Services

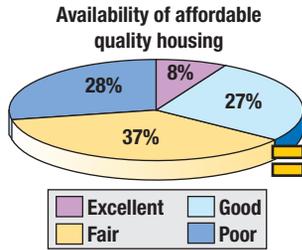
Since 1987, the City has set aside funds each year to assist local non-profit agencies. In Fiscal Year 2009-10, the City will distribute \$432,250 to over 16 agencies, with priority given to services that address emergency and transitional needs, such as Community Outreach, Inc., which will receive \$214,400 this year.

Survey respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with services to three special populations: seniors, youth, and low-income residents.

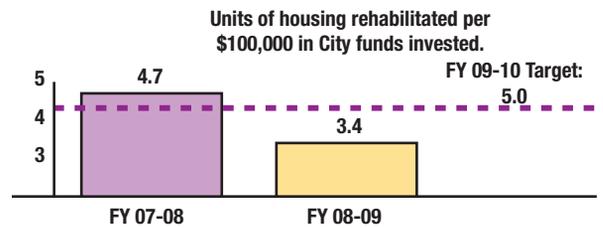
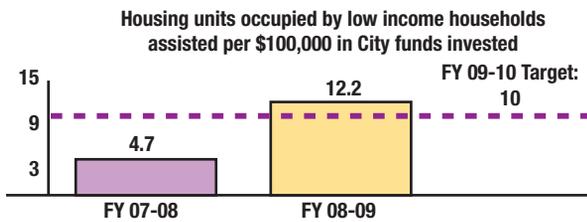


Housing

Community Development Department's Housing Division facilitates the creation of affordable housing for lower-income residents.

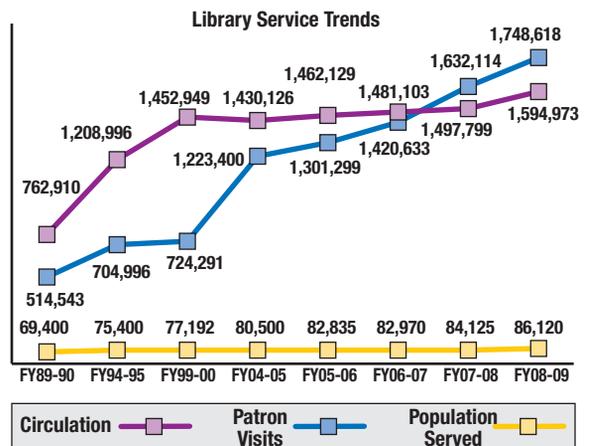
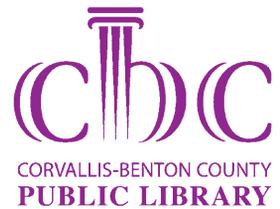


The Division also works to maintain the quality of low income housing in a cost-effective manner.



Corvallis-Benton County Public Library

The Corvallis-Benton County Public Library is a community gathering place offering educational, cultural, and leisure resources and activities for people of all ages. Open seven days a week, the Corvallis Library hosts thousands of visitors each day – through its doors and through its online services. Patron visits and circulation numbers continue to grow.



Governing and Civic Involvement

Participation

Eighty percent of respondents said they voted in the last general election; this exceeds benchmarks from other cities. Eighty-two percent said they interact with neighbors at least once per month – a level that matches the comparison benchmark. The survey asked about other channels for participation:

Corvallis in 2020 has citizen participation in all aspects of community decisions

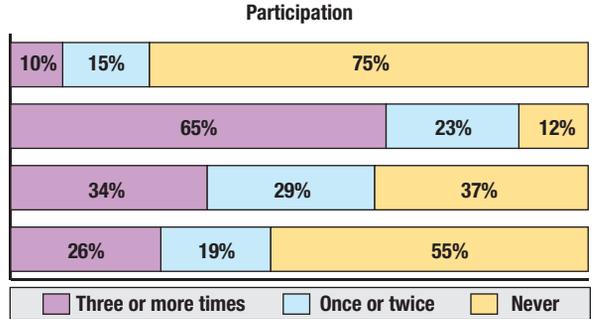


Attended a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting

Read "the City" newsletter

Visited the City of Corvallis Web site

Participated in a club or civic group in Corvallis

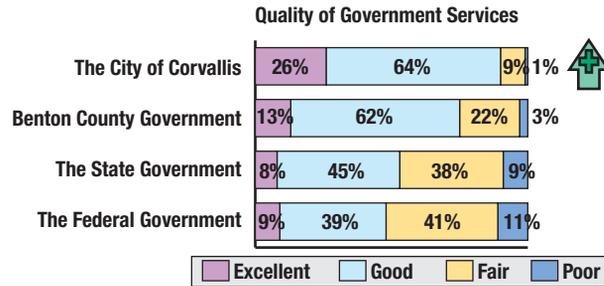


Quality of Government Services

When asked about the overall quality of government services, survey respondents gave the highest evaluations to those provided by the City.

"The Mayor and City Councilors are very accessible to the public."
— Citizen Survey response

Respondents rated other aspects of government performance and all were above the benchmark.

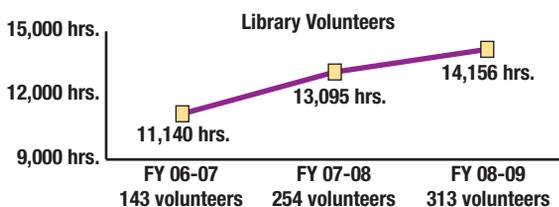


Government Performance



Volunteering

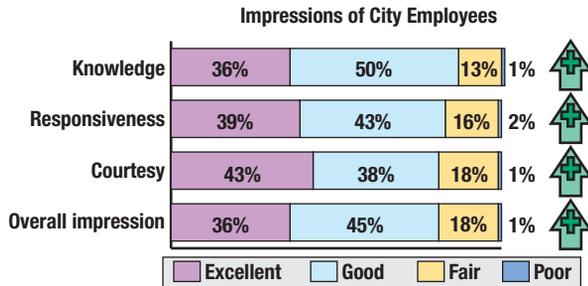
Each year, volunteers donate almost 90,000 hours to city programs; an equivalent of about 43 full-time positions.



Parks and Recreation volunteers worked more than 28,600 hours last year.

City Employees

The quality of City services is heavily influenced by the City employees who deliver them. Respondents had higher ratings for City employees than the average in other similarly sized cities.



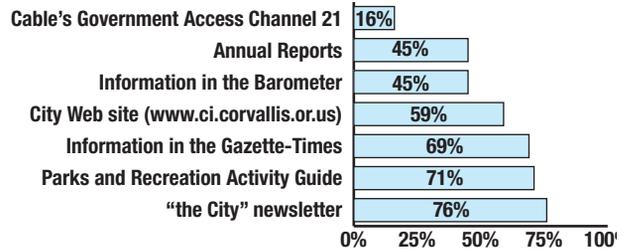
Communication & Outreach

The City keeps citizens informed in a variety of ways. Seventy-seven percent rated public information services as good or excellent, which is above the comparison benchmark.

Citizens interested in talking to a City Councilor can visit Government Comment Corner, held most Saturdays from 10 to 12 noon at the Library. Ward meetings provide forums for residents to discuss ward-specific and citywide issues with City Councilors and City staff. For more information about ward meetings, call 754-766-6901.

The City's Web site is an increasingly important part of communication and outreach. The City adopted a Web plan this year to work on enhancements to the site.

Preferred sources of Information about the City



Web-based services rated as essential or very important

Geographic information	78%
E-Business	67%
Submit a service request, report a problem, give feedback	76%
Frequently Asked Questions	78%
Class registration	59%
Calendar	79%
Sign up for electronic alerts	46%
Board and Commission documents	42%
Dynamic transit information (when will my bus arrive)	54%



Economic Vitality

The City explores ways to increase economic vitality, with an eye toward encouraging environmentally friendly business development. Examples include the City/County Enterprise Zone around the Airport Industrial Park, which contains 49 acres of land that is on the Governor's Certified "Shovel-Ready" List.

The Prosperity That Fits Plan includes priority actions chosen to strengthen and expand existing business. The City also invests in microbusiness development support through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program.

Corvallis in 2020 has a vibrant economy anchored by key strategic industries and complemented by a wealth of diverse, environmentally friendly businesses



Economic vitality

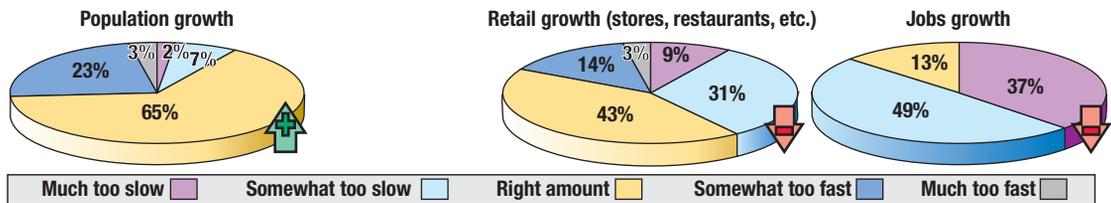


Last year the City Council allocated 52% (\$602,560) of the City transient room (hotel) tax to economic development funding to support job creation and retention, infrastructure development, and support services such as employment training and housing.

Growth

When asked about the rate of population growth, 65% of respondents felt that growth is occurring at a good rate—a level of satisfaction above the benchmark cities.

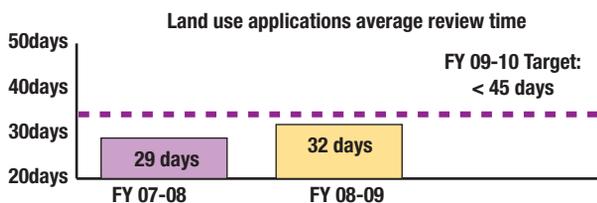
However, 40% said retail growth was too slow, and 86% felt that job growth was too slow. The levels of satisfaction in these areas were below the benchmark cities.



Land Use and Planning

An important aspect of economic vitality is timely review of land use applications. Community Development Department strives to meet or exceed the State requirement for administrative land use application review time, which is 45 days or less.

The quality of new development was rated as excellent or good by a majority of respondents, and there is a 5% improvement in excellent/good scores from last year's survey.



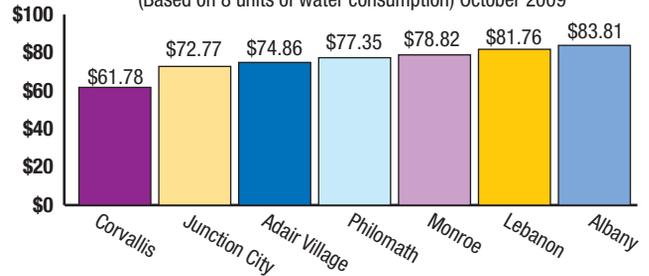
Utility Rates

Lower utility rates contribute to making Corvallis an attractive place to live and do business. City residents enjoy lower utility rates than neighboring municipalities.



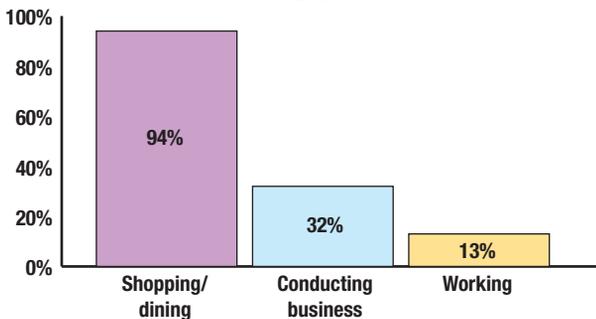
Comparison of Average Residential Monthly Utility Bills Among Surrounding Communities

(Based on 8 units of water consumption) October 2009



A vibrant downtown serves residents in many ways. The Citizen Survey asked respondents about their downtown visits.

What brings you downtown?



Total of categories exceeds 100% because respondents could choose more than one reason.



Corvallis in 2020 has a Central City that is the vibrant commercial, civic, cultural and historic heart of the county

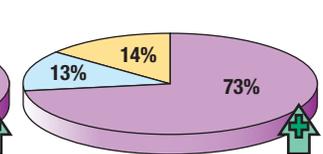
Safety

A safe downtown draws people to it for both daytime and evening activities. Corvallis residents continue to rate their feelings of safety above the benchmark.

Downtown area during the day



Downtown area after dark



"I wish the city would encourage the building of condominiums downtown that are affordable and conducive to senior citizen needs."

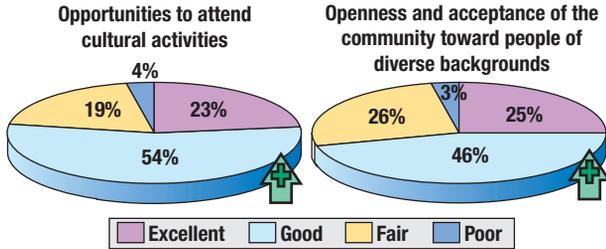
— Citizen Survey response

Cultural Enrichment

The City Council recently created an Arts and Culture Commission. The Parks and Recreation Department is administering this new Commission and the Mayor is appointing nine voting members from a variety of backgrounds. For more information, call Parks and Recreation at 541-766-6918.

Corvallis in 2020 enjoys a cultural life which is rich in the arts and recreational opportunities, and celebrates the diverse talents and cultures of our community

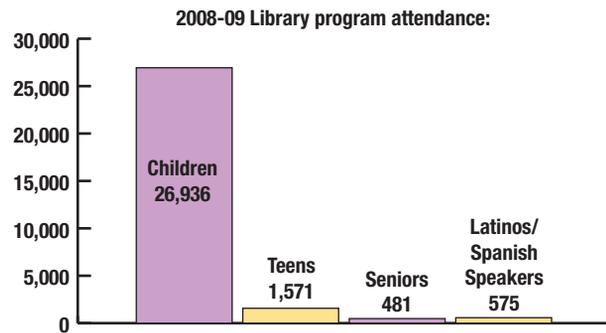
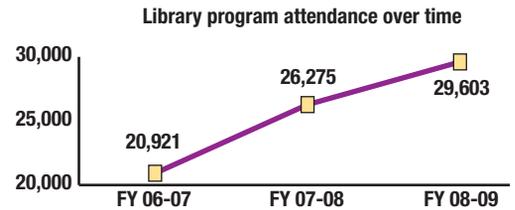
The City continues to implement the diversity provisions added to the Charter by Corvallis voters in 2006. The survey shows that citizens continue to believe residents are open and accepting of people from diverse backgrounds.



Library Programs

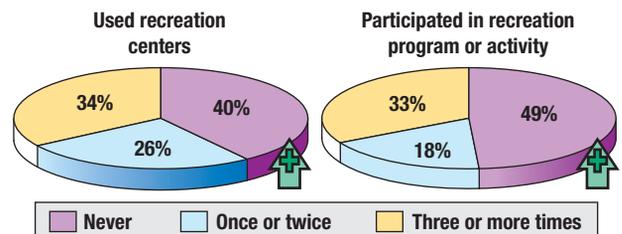
The Corvallis-Benton County Public Library offers a variety of programs for all ages, many in conjunction with Oregon State University, Linn-Benton Community College, Old Mill School, The Arts Center, Commission on Children and Families, Corvallis Youth Theatre, and other local organizations. 81% of survey respondents used the library or its services. Corvallis' library ranked number one compared with other cities who participated in the survey, with 90% rating library services as excellent or good.

Library programs continue to be extremely popular, offering a wide variety of programs that reflect Benton County's diverse population. The performance measure below captures program attendance for some of those groups.



Recreation

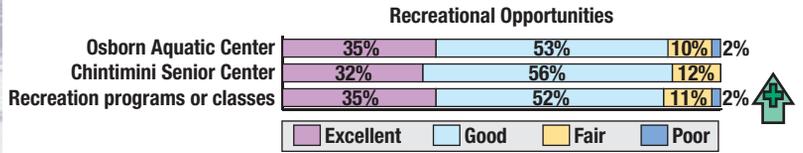
The majority of survey respondents said they had used Corvallis' recreation centers and participated in a recreation program or activity at least once.



Cultural Enrichment and Recreation



Recreational opportunities in Corvallis were rated as excellent or good by 81% of survey respondents, which is above the benchmark for other cities with a similar population. Last year, Parks and Recreation Department offered more than 1,000 opportunities to be involved and more than 34,000 people participated in its programs.



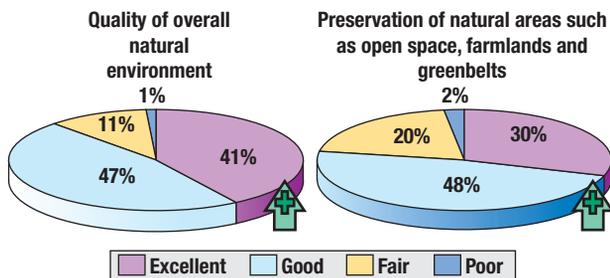
Protecting Our Environment



Corvallis in 2020 has successfully integrated its economic and population growth with the preservation of its scenic natural environment, open space, clean air and water, wildlife habitat areas, and recreational opportunities

In December 2006, the City implemented comprehensive Land Development Code provisions for the protection of natural features. Although City standards apply only to areas within the City limits, they are based on an inventory that encompassed the entire Urban Growth Boundary. Because of this, the standards can be applied consistently as new areas are annexed.

Respondents gave high marks to the quality of the natural environment in Corvallis. The responses indicate that planning in Corvallis over time has contributed to a community that is attractive to its citizens.



“Keep the riverfront with a small town atmosphere.”
 — Citizen Survey response

Alternative Fuels

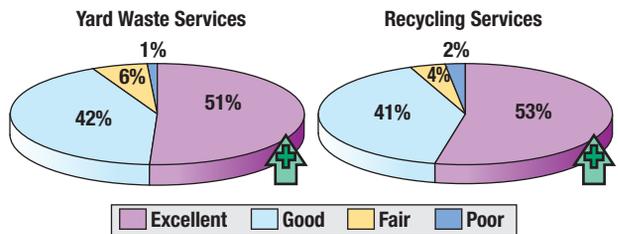
Public Works Department's heavy equipment fleet operates 100% on biodiesel, reducing emissions created from work activities. The International City/County Management Association (ICMA) collects and reports data for jurisdictions across the U.S. Of the 106 reporting jurisdictions, only nine operate their heavy equipment with 100% alternative fuels.



Green Waste

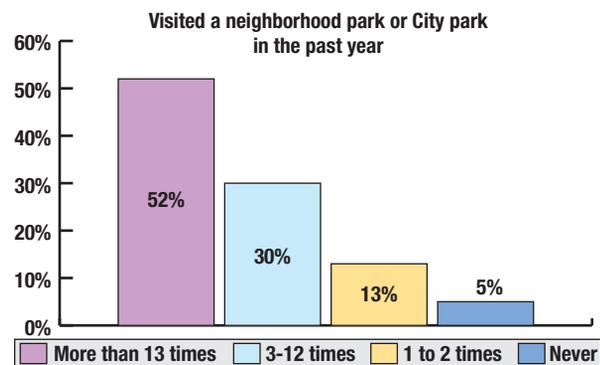


In 2009, the City's agreement with Allied Waste was amended to provide curbside collection of green food waste. Corvallis is the first city in Oregon to enact a green food waste program and has plans to implement a full organics collection program in the future. As shown in the chart below, most citizens are pleased with yard waste and recycling services.



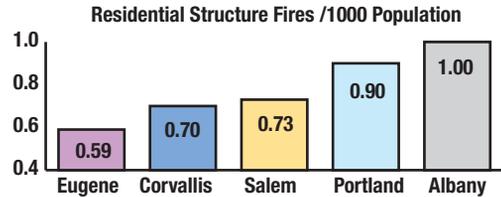
Natural and Recreational Areas

Parks and Recreation Department strives to maintain and improve the ratio of natural and recreational areas per population. Corvallis has more than 1,600 acres of parks and natural areas containing miles of trails, pathways, and boardwalks through a variety of habitats. Giving citizens an opportunity to be active and to have easy access to the natural environment promotes both personal wellness and preservation of open spaces.



Residential Fire Safety

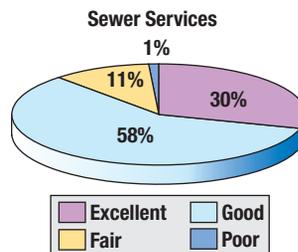
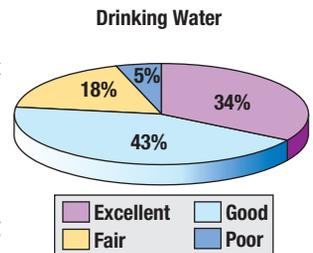
Frequency of residential structure fires per 1,000 residents is used to measure the effectiveness of fire prevention efforts. Corvallis has historically enjoyed a relatively low number of residential fires.



Clean Water



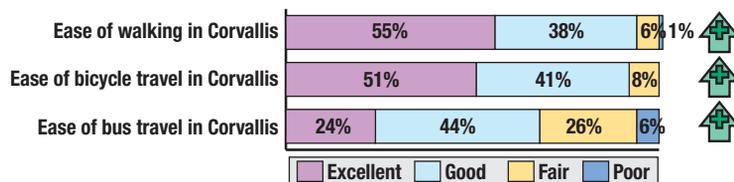
The City operates two water treatment plants to ensure the nearly 3 billion gallons of water produced for the community is safe to drink. In 2009, Corvallis' water system was designated "Outstanding" by the Oregon Department of Human Services Drinking Water Program.



It is equally important that water treated by the Wastewater Treatment Plant meets environmental regulations. In 2009, the Corvallis Wastewater Plant received a Platinum award from the National Association of Clean Water Agencies for 100% compliance with pollutant discharge regulations for five consecutive years.

Alternative Transportation

Corvallis has robust programs for alternative transportation modes. The City is designated a Gold-Level Bicycle Friendly Community by the League of American Bicyclists and ranks among the top 13 bicycle-friendly communities in the U.S.



The City
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Corvallis, OR 97339-1083

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