

CITY OF CARLTON SURVEY
OREGON ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

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SURVEY METHODS AND RESULTS



OREGON SURVEY RESEARCH LABORATORY
5245 UNIVERSITY OF OREGON
EUGENE, OR 97403-5245
TELEPHONE: 541-346-0824
FACSIMILE: 541-346-5026
E-MAIL: OSRL@oregon.uoregon.edu
WEB: <http://OSRL.uoregon.edu>

BY PATRICIA A. GWARTNEY, PH.D., DIRECTOR/PROFESSOR
AND JUYEON SON, MA, PROJECT DIRECTOR

I. INTRODUCTION

This document reports the results of the “City of Carlton Survey,” a random-digit-dial sample telephone survey of 234 adults in Carlton City, Oregon conducted by the University of Oregon Survey Research Laboratory (OSRL) May and June, 2003. The survey’s purpose was to assess low-moderate income thresholds in Carlton City and to provide the community with public opinion data on community improvements.

Working closely with David Kavanaugh of the Oregon Economic and Community Development Department (OECDD), OSRL planned, pretested and implemented the survey. This report summarizes the survey methods and results.

II. SURVEY METHODS

A. SURVEY INSTRUMENT

The survey’s goals were to obtain valid and reliable information from adults in Carlton City, Oregon on the following topics:

1. **Household and family size**, including the presence of multiple families within households;
2. **Family income threshold**, with family income from all sources falling above or below specified levels contingent on family size, as provided by OECDD, treating multiple families within the same household separately;
3. Opinion on **the one best thing about living Carlton community**, and
4. Opinion on **how the Carlton community could be improved** to make it a better place to live.

The key survey questions on household/family size and family income thresholds replicate those used in several previous community income surveys that OSRL has completed for

OECD (although the exact income thresholds vary over time and from community to community). OSRL developed, tested, and implemented the community improvement question especially for this project.

Project Director Juyeon Son programmed the survey instrument into OSRL's computer-aided telephone interviewing system (WinCATI) and research assistants pretested it. A facsimile of the survey instrument is provided in Section 2 of this documentation. All interviews were completely *anonymous*, and Human Subject's approval was obtained.

B. SAMPLE

OSRL employed random digit dialing (RDD) to select the sample for this survey. Census 2000 reported Carlton City's official population as 1,514 residents in approximately 540 households. Project Director Juyeon Son randomly generated 1,687 telephone numbers for the Carlton community, using Genesys Sampling Systems software, and loaded it into WinCATI. Section 4 of the report binder contains a complete sample report and telephone call disposition report.

This volume of telephone numbers may seem large proportional to the number of households in Carlton. It is, but the sample required such a volume because no single telephone prefix applies to Carlton solely. This also meant that OSRL interviewers needed to screen households for geographic location before proceeding with interviews. OSRL had no way to predict in advance how much screening would be needed.

To ensure that all survey respondents resided in Carlton City, the following question directly followed the survey introduction:

“Do you live in Carlton [of Yamhill County]?”

PROBE: “Can you vote in city elections for mayor or city council?”

Census 2000 indicated that over 99% of Yamhill County households had telephones, compared to 95% statewide. Households without telephones were necessarily excluded from this study's sample, and poor persons most often lack home telephones, but the proportion is too small to have any chance of affecting this study's results.

C. DATA COLLECTION

Only experienced OSRL interviewers conducted this survey. Section 3 of the report binder provides example Interviewer Instructions used in project-specific training. Interviewing was conducted between 9 AM and 9 PM from May 26 to June 6, 2003 until the target sample size was achieved. Up to 20 calls were made to each valid telephone number. Altogether, OSRL interviewers made 4,409 calls telephone calls to complete 234 interviews with adults age 18 and over. Of those, 1 was conducted in Spanish. Interviews averaged 3 minutes. Overall, OSRL achieved a 74% response rate and 2.5% refusal rate.

Respondents completed 234 interviews, but eight respondents did not know their family income or refused to answer. One person refused to answer household size, on which the family income question is contingent. Thus, the sample size for the key income question is effectively n=226. However, 226 exceeds the minimum sample requirements for standard 95% confidence intervals by one.¹ In presenting results for income thresholds, we use data for n=226. For all other results, we use n=234.

III. SURVEY RESULTS

A. OPINIONS ON COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENTS

As a service to the Carlton City community, OSRL included two open ended questions in the survey related to the community as the first interview questions. The exact questions and probe were:

COMMUN1

In your experience, what is the one best thing about living in Carlton?

COMMUN2

If there were one thing about living in Carlton that you could change or improve, what would that be?

PROBE: Please think of something that could make the community a better place to live for everyone.

Interviewers recorded respondents' open-ended answers verbatim. Section 6 of the report binder provides these answers. OSRL was not asked to categorize or code these narrative answers. But they should prove very useful to community members and their representatives.

The survey instrument then turned to the important part of the study – family income keyed to household and family size.

B. HOUSEHOLD AND FAMILY SIZE

In order to ascertain household and family sizes, interviewers first asked:

“How many people live in your household at this point in time, including yourself?”

Interviewers typed in the exact number. The survey instrument defined household membership using standard U.S. Census conventions, that is:

¹ For more detail, see OSRL's "Sampler" at <http://osrl.uoregon.edu/papers/sampler/>.

Definition:

Include everyone who usually lives there half time or more, including: family, boarders, roommates, foster children, live-in employees, newborn babies still in the hospital, children at boarding school, persons with no other home who stay there, persons temporarily away (business, vacation, military service, or in a general hospital).

Exclude everyone who usually lives somewhere else, persons in institutions [prison, nursing home, mental hospital], military personnel who live elsewhere, people who stay somewhere else most of the week while working, and college students who live at college during the school year.

Definition:

A family is defined as people who are related by blood or marriage.

In Carlton City, the number of persons in households ranged from one to eight, with one person refusing.

Respondents' answers represented 701 persons, including themselves, comprising 46% of the Carlton population reported by Census 2000. All persons distributed across household sizes as follows: 4% in one-person households, 22% in two-person households, 18% in three-person households, 31% in four-person households, 16% in five-person households, 7% in six-person households, 0% in seven-person households, and 2% in eight-person households.

Only respondents with more than one person in the household were asked the next question (89% of respondents); those in single-person households were skipped past. The next question asked:

“Are all of these people in your household members of your family?”

Or, if only one other person was in the household,

“Is the other person in your household a member of your family?”

If needed, interviewers invoked the same family definition as in the previous question.

All respondents answered this question “yes,” indicating that no households contained more than one family.

Combining single-person and multi-person families, Carlton families averaged three persons per family. These sample estimates closely match Census 2000 reports for household and family composition.

C. FAMILY INCOME THRESHOLD

To establish low-to-moderate family incomes, the telephone survey asked respondents:

“Was your total family income from all sources in 2002 above or below _____?”

A specified amount contingent upon family size automatically appeared on each interviewer’s computer screen.² The survey instrument defined family income as:

Definition:

Money from jobs (wages, salary, tips, bonuses, commissions), interest, dividends, child support, alimony, welfare, social security, disability, unemployment, and retirement payments, net income from a business, farm or rent, rent, royalties, trust, or estate; and any other money income regularly received by members of your family. Do not include lump-sum payments, such as money from an inheritance or sale of a home.

For Yamhill County, Oregon, the 2002 low-to-moderate family income thresholds by family size were defined by OECDD as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Low-Moderate Income Thresholds, by Family Size

| <u>Family Size</u> | <u>Family Income</u> |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| 1 | \$36,850 |
| 2 | \$42,100 |
| 3 | \$47,400 |
| 4 | \$52,650 |
| 5 | \$56,850 |
| 6 | \$61,050 |
| 7 | \$65,250 |
| ≥8 | \$69,500 |

OECDD requires income information on *persons within families*. OSRL extracted the needed data from specially constructed cross-tabulations using SPSS. The information also can be gleaned from the banner tables in Section 5 of the report binder. Table 2 summarizes the results.

The data in Table 2 are presented in panels for each family/household type, as Column 1 defines: one-person families, multi-person families, and respondents’ families in multi-family households (although no Carlton respondents fit the latter category). The bottom panel provides pertinent column totals. Column 2 shows the low-to-moderate income thresholds for families of specified sizes. Column 3 shows the number of persons in

² The sole respondent who refused to answer household and family size was necessarily skipped past the income questions.

families. Column 4 shows the number of respondents who answered each combination of family/household type and number of persons in families.

Columns 5 and 6 provide the number of respondents who answered their family income above the low-to-moderate income threshold (n=106) and below it (n=120), respectively. The total demonstrates that the income data represent 226 families in Carlton.

Columns 7 and 8 show this study's key statistics: the number of *persons in respondents' families* above and below the low-to-moderate income thresholds specific to family size. Column 9 sums Columns 7 and 8 by row. Column 9's total demonstrates that the income data represent 677 persons in families in Carlton. Somewhat surprisingly in Column 9, the likelihood of having incomes below the low-to-moderate threshold did not increase as family size increased.

Note that these key columns exclude respondents who "did not know" or "refused" to answer the family income question; Column 11 indicates how many respondents answered "dk/ref". Column 12 shows the number of family members represented by the respondents who failed to answer the income question. Altogether, 8 families, representing 28 persons, answered the family income question in this manner. Taking into account those with missing income data, the data represent 701 persons.

Table 2: Persons in Families below Low-Moderate Income Thresholds, Carlton City, Oregon, May-June 2003

| 1. Family / Household type | 2. Low-moderate income thresholds | 3. Number of persons in families | 4. Number of survey respondents* | 5. Respondents above income threshold* | 6. Respondents below income threshold* | 7. Persons in families above income threshold* | 8. Persons in families below income threshold* | 9. Total persons in families* | 10. Percent of persons in families below income threshold* | 11. Respondents who don't know or refuse income | 12. Persons in families who dk/ref income | 13. Total persons in families (including dk/ref) |
|---|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|--|--|--|-------------------------------|--|---|---|--|
| Formula | | | | | | (3*5) | (3*6) | (7+8) | ((8/9)*100) | | (3*11) | (9+12) |
| One person families | \$36,850 | 1 | 26 | 11 | 15 | 11 | 15 | 26 | 57.7% | 0 | 0 | 26 |
| One family, with multiple persons | \$42,100 | 2 | 77 | 35 | 40 | 70 | 80 | 150 | 53.3% | 2 | 4 | 154 |
| | \$47,400 | 3 | 42 | 17 | 25 | 51 | 75 | 126 | 59.5% | 0 | 0 | 126 |
| | \$52,650 | 4 | 55 | 29 | 24 | 116 | 96 | 212 | 45.3% | 2 | 8 | 220 |
| | \$56,850 | 5 | 23 | 10 | 11 | 50 | 55 | 105 | 52.4% | 2 | 10 | 115 |
| | \$61,050 | 6 | 8 | 3 | 4 | 18 | 24 | 42 | 57.1% | 1 | 6 | 48 |
| | \$65,250 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | \$69,500 | 8 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 8 | 8 | 16 | 50.0% | 0 | 0 | 16 |
| | \$69,500 | Refused | 1 | 0 | 0 | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - |
| Respondent's family in multiple family households | \$36,850 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | \$42,100 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | \$47,400 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | \$52,650 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | \$56,850 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Totals | | | 234 | 106 | 120 | 324 | 353 | 677 | 52.1% | 8 | 28 | 705 |

* Numbers exclude respondents who did not know (dk) or who refused (ref) the income question.

In all, 52.1% of all persons in families in Carlton City had 2002 family incomes that were below the low-to-moderate thresholds (353 persons out of 677), as Table 2 demonstrates clearly. The confidence interval for this percentage based on persons is $\pm 2.8\%$ percentage points (see <http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~osrl/papers/misc/sampler.html>). Taking into account this confidence interval, we can be 95% sure that the true population result (if we had interviewed the entire population of families in Carlton) is between 49.3% and 54.9%.

The 52% result is well within these confidence intervals, thus qualifying Carlton for OECDD-administered Community Block Development Grant, at least in part.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

This representative, scientific survey indicates that Carlton, Oregon, exceeds the 50% low-to-moderate family income level required to qualify for an OECDD-administered Community Block Development Grant. The report demonstrates that the sample estimates are robust and well within standard statistical confidence intervals

While OSRL's main purpose was to assess low-to-moderate family income levels in the Carlton, as a courtesy to the community, OSRL also included two open-ended questions concerning what citizens like most about their community and what improvements they would like to see. We hope that Carlton's governing bodies find good use for the detailed and careful answers the citizens provided.