

OREGON ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
“GERVAIS COMMUNITY SURVEY”

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SURVEY METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS

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I. INTRODUCTION

This document reports the results of a random sample telephone survey of 222 adults in the City of Gervais, Oregon, conducted by the University of Oregon Survey Research Laboratory (OSRL) March 17 – 20, 2000. The survey’s purpose was to assess low-moderate income thresholds in Gervais and to provide the community with public opinion data on community centers.

Working closely with Mary Baker of the Oregon Economic and Community Development Department (OECDD), OSRL planned, pretested and implemented this survey. This report summarizes the survey methodology and results.

II. SURVEY METHODOLOGY

A. Survey Instrument

The survey’s goals were to obtain valid and reliable information from adults in the City of Gervais, 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. **Opinions on Gervais's community service facilities**, including what type of community service facilities people prefer and the preference for housing these facilities in one building or separate buildings.

The survey questions on household/family size and family income thresholds replicate those OSRL has used in previous community income surveys completed for OECDD. The community service questions OSRL developed, tested, and implemented specially for this project.

The survey instrument was programmed into OSRL's computer-aided telephone interviewing (CATI) system and pretested. A facsimile of the survey instrument is provided in Section 2 of this documentation. All interviews were completely anonymous, and human subjects approval was obtained.

B. Sample

OSRL employed random digit dialing (RDD) to select the sample for this survey. Gervais's official estimated population is 1,535 residents in approximately 566 households. OSRL randomly generated and called a total of 1,221 telephone numbers in the Gervais community. A screening question at the beginning of the survey ensured that all survey respondents resided in Gervais: "*Do you live in the city of Gervais? (PROBE: Do you vote in the City Council election in Gervais?)*"

Of all 1,221 telephone numbers generated, 826 were ineligible (non-working, non-residential, disconnected numbers, not in Gervais). The status of 126 could not be confirmed (repeated busy signals, no answers).

It is important to note that households without telephones were necessarily excluded from the sample. According to the 1990 U.S. Census, those without telephones were 4.8 % in Marion County (see <http://venus.census.gov/cdrom/lookup/914976490>) and 11.6% in Gervais (<http://venus.census.gov/cdrom/lookup/915054213>). The 1990 figure, however, is based upon a population of 992, and the number of residents in Gervais has increased significantly in the intervening 10 years to 1,535¹. With the proliferation of household telephone numbers for all kinds of purposes, it is highly likely that a much larger proportion of Gervais's population now has a residential telephone number than 10 years ago.

¹ "Final Population Estimates for Oregon, and Incorporated Cities: July 1, 1999," Center for Population Research and Census, Portland State University, December 17, 1999

C. Data Collection

Interviewer training was conducted on March 16, 2000. Interviewing was conducted at all times of the day March 17 -20, 2000 until the target sample size was achieved. Altogether, OSRL interviewers made 2,262 telephone calls to complete 222 interviews with adults age 18 and over. Up to 20 calls were made to each valid telephone number. Interviews averaged 3—5 minutes. Overall, OSRL achieved a 74% response rate and 6% refusal rate.

Interviewers experienced an unexpectedly large number of Spanish-speaking households. Not anticipating this, OSRL did not keep close records. However, we have confirmed records of 45 interviews completed in Spanish and possibly 61 in all. Interviews conducted in Spanish averaged 1 – 1.2 minutes longer than English interviews.

Although OSRL interviewers completed 222 interviews, 16 respondents refused to answer the key income question, for n=206. At this sample size, the confidence interval around a .50 result is $\pm 5.1\%$ at the 95% confidence level. (NB: In presenting results for income thresholds, we use data for n=206. For all other results, we use n=222.)

III. SURVEY RESULTS

A. Household and Family Size

Respondents were asked: *“How many people live in your household at this point in time, including yourself?”* Interviewers typed in the exact number. Interviewers defined household members for respondents using standard U.S. Census conventions, that is:

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)

Respondents’ answers represented 889 persons in all (including themselves). All persons were distributed across household sizes as follows (single-family and multiple-family combined): 2.4% in one-person households, 8.4% in two-person households, 13.6% in three-person households, 19.4% in four-person households, 18.8% in five-person households, 17.8% in six-person households, and 17.7% in seven-person households and larger.

Next, respondents were 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?”* For respondents who asked, interviewers defined family as follows:

Definition:

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

In Gervais, 23 respondents answered the above question “no,” representing 110 individuals (including themselves). That is, 10.4% of households contained more than one family. The average number of persons in multi-family households was 4.8. But 177 respondents answered the above question “yes,” meaning that 79.7% of households contained one family. The average number of persons in one-family households was 4.3. Single-persons were skipped past the above question. They comprise 9.9% of households. Combining single-person, single-family, and multiple-family households, there were, on average, 4.0 persons per household in the Gervais survey sample.

B. Family Income Threshold

In the telephone survey, respondents were asked: “*Was your total family income from all sources in 1999 above or below _____,*” a specified amount, which was contingent upon family size. Interviewers defined family income as:

Definition:

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

For Marion County, Oregon, the low-to-moderate family income thresholds by family size were defined by OECDD in a memorandum dated March 14, 2000 as shown in Table 1.

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

<u>Family Income</u>	<u>Family Size</u>
\$24,500	1
\$28,000	2
\$31,500	3
\$35,000	4
\$37,800	5
\$40,000	6
\$43,400	7
\$46,200	>7

OECD requires income information on *persons within families*. OSRL extracted the needed data from banner tables and specially-constructed cross-tabulations. These data are summarized below in Table 2. Income information was available in 206 interviews covering 827 persons in families in the City of Gervais (see the bottom row of Table 2). More specifically, OSRL collected income data on 20 persons in one-person families, 711 persons in one-family households, and 96 persons in the respondent's own family in multi-family households.² (See the column labeled "All Persons.")

Table 2: Persons Below Low-Moderate Income Thresholds, Gervais, Oregon, March 2000

Low-Moderate Income Threshold	Number Persons in Family	Persons Above	Persons Below	All Persons	% Persons Below	Don't Refuse Resp'ts	Number Survey Respondents
One Person Families							
\$24,500	1	10	10	20	50.00%	2	22
One Family Households							
\$28,000	2	38	24	62	38.71%	1	32
\$31,500	3	60	51	111	45.95%	1	38
\$35,000	4	88	56	144	38.89%	2	38
\$37,800	5	45	95	140	67.86%	3	31
\$40,000	6	42	78	120	65.00%	3	23
\$43,400	7		21	21	100.00%		3
\$46,200	>7	8	105	113	91.67%		12
Respondent's Family in Multiple-Family Households							
\$28,000	2	4	4	8	50.00%	2	5
\$31,500	3	0	3	3	100.00%	2	3
\$35,000	4	0	20	20	100.00%	1	6
\$37,800	5	5	10	15	66.67%	0	3
\$40,000	6	6	18	24	75.00%	0	4
\$43,400	7	0	0	0	0	0	0
\$46,200	>7	0	26	26	100.00%	0	2
		306	521	827	63.00%	62	222

Table 2 shows that 63.0% of all persons in families in Gervais had family incomes below the low-to-moderate thresholds in 1999 (521 persons out of 827). The confidence interval for this percentage is $\pm 5.26\%$ percentage points. Taking into account the confidence interval, we can be 95% sure that the true population result (if we had interviewed all families in Gervais) would be between 57.74% and 68.26%. This result is above the 50% level required to qualify for desired OECD loans or grants, even taking into account confidence intervals.

² Those who refused to report or did not know their family income are excluded.

C. Opinions on Community Service Facilities

As a service to the Gervais community, OSRL included two questions in the survey related to community service facilities. The first question was:

Which of these following community service facilities would you like added to your community?

*COMMUNITY CENTER
SENIOR CENTER
YOUTH CENTER
NONE OF THE ABOVE*

Respondents could answer affirmatively to any of the answer categories. Fully 89% responded that they would like one or more of these service facilities added to the City of Gervais; only 11% said “none of the above.” Slightly over half of the respondents, 51.4%, selected more than one community service facility to be added. Altogether, 67.2% selected the Community Center, 45.5% selected the Senior Center, and 80.5% selected the Youth Center.

Respondents who selected more than one community service facility were asked another question:

"Would you prefer separate community service facilities or one multi-use facility?"

The results show that a greater proportion of respondents prefer a multi-use facility than separate facilities for each service: 61.0% prefer a multi-use facility, while 36.9% prefer separate facilities, and 2.1% “don’t know.”

IV. CONCLUSIONS

This survey’s main purpose was for OSRL to assess low-to-moderate family income levels in the City of Gervais, Oregon, for OECDD. As a courtesy to the community, OSRL also included two questions about community service facilities.

The results indicate that the community does meet the 50% low-to-moderate family income level required to qualify for desired OECDD loans or grants. Even if households without telephones were included, and even if persons who refused the income question or did not know the answer to it were included, our estimates suggest that the final result would not have been different.