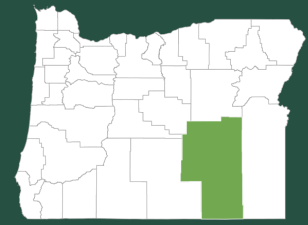# HARNEY COUNTY

Oregon Voices Data Summary

County Total Population

**7,310**

## About the Summary

Oregon Voices began in summer of 2021 when The Ford Family Foundation invited 18,000 randomly selected households — 500 in each Oregon county — to complete a survey online or by mailing back a paper response. We then reached out to Ford Family friends and partners, encouraging them to participate and invite others to do the same. In total more than 4,300 Oregonians from all walks of life responded to the survey, generously sharing their honest reflections on the question we posed: *What is it like to live in your corner of the state?*

The following report provides a high-level summary of the survey data received from those who responded in Harney County. Here the number of random household respondents outnumbered the Ford Family respondents. For clarity, the two data sets have been combined in the visualizations below, even though the two samples show differences in demographics and response patterns. Please interpret the findings with this in mind. Data have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

**Total number of Harney County respondents: 88**
Random household sample: 73, Ford Family sample: 15

## Key Highlights

- Harney County respondents describe a friendly, hard-working community where neighbors help and support each other.
- Respondents note that while they see evidence of available jobs, the lack of available housing means that people can't move to Harney County to fill those positions.
- Respondents express frustration with the poor quality internet service available in their area.
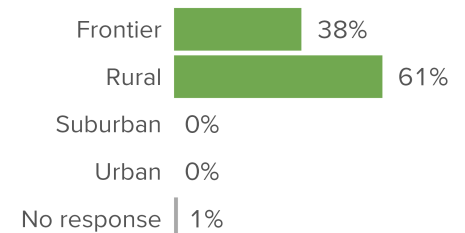
### All reporting zip codes
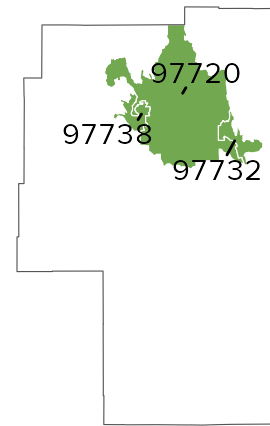
97720
97738
97732

### Top 3 reporting zip codes

1. 97720
2. 97738
3. 97732

### Rural/Urban

How respondents described their community, the immediate area where they live

| | |
|---|---|
| Frontier | 38% |
| Rural | 61% |
| Suburban | 0% |
| Urban | 0% |
| No response | 1% |

Two of the early survey questions asked people to name something they appreciate or that concerns them about where they live. Their open-ended responses were coded into categories. These are the top two results for Harney County.

## What respondents **APPRECIATE** most about where they live

**Community, People**
Culture, relationships conflict, size, leadership, change

**Natural Environment**
Beauty, recreation, public land, parks, water, disasters, climate

## What **CONCERNS** respondents most about where they live

**Community, People**
Culture, relationships conflict, size, leadership, change

**Services/Economy**
Housing, infrastructure, healthcare, education, jobs, industry, businesses, shopping, cultural events

*Respondent Demographics*

### Age of respondents

| Youngest | Average Age | Oldest |
|---|---|---|
| **26** | **63** | **87** |

### Gender

| | |
|---|---|
| Male | 34% |
| Female | 63% |
| Other identity | 0% |
| No response | 3% |

### Race/Ethnicity

| | |
|---|---|
| American Indian/Alaska Native | 6% |
| Asian | 0% |
| Black/African American | 1% |
| Hispanic/Latino | 3% |
| Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander | 0% |
| White | 86% |
| Other | 3% |
| No response | 8% |

Percentages may sum to more than 100 if respondents selected multiple options.

"I really love the access to diverse outdoor opportunities. I have what I need but not really anything extra. I hope my community stays mostly the same, but I would like social issues addressed (child neglect, substance abuse, housing)."

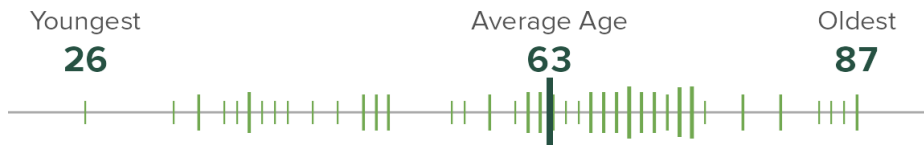"I like the continued training of community values that are held in the Burns and Hines area."

"The people are wonderful, the air is clean, the land is vast, the community works together."

"It's a wonderful community. It's not very big yet with enough to do. Compared to larger towns, it was reasonably affordable prior to pandemic."
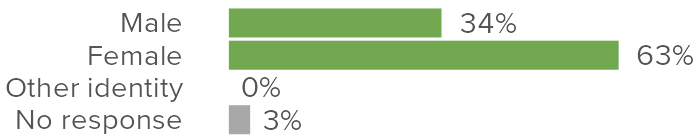
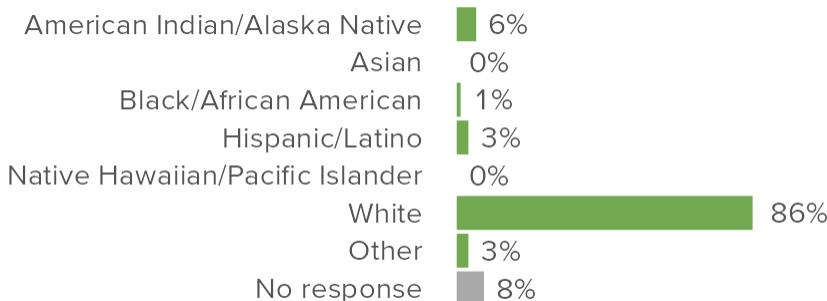"I like the rural slower-paced life with friendly community."

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## Years living in Oregon

**77%**

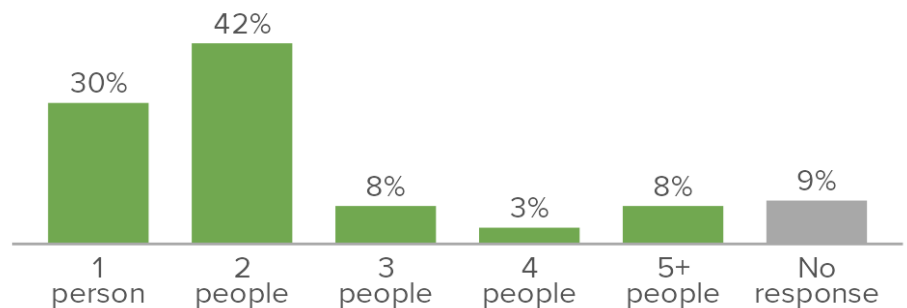of all respondents report living in Oregon for their whole life or 20 years or more

| < 2 years | 2-9+ years | 10-19+ years | 20+ years | My whole life | No response |
|-----------|-----------|--------------|-----------|---------------|-------------|
| 3% | 13% | 6% | 44% | 33% | 1% |
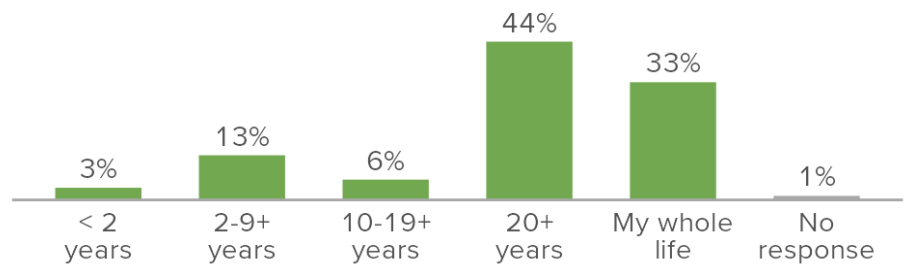
## Homeownership

**8 out of 10**

respondents own their home

## Household size

**2.2**

average number of people who live in the respondent's household

| 1 person | 2 people | 3 people | 4 people | 5+ people | No response |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|-------------|
| 30% | 42% | 8% | 3% | 8% | 9% |

## Household annual income

**34%**

of respondents reported household incomes falling under $65K

| | |
|---|---|
| $100K or more | 16% |
| $65K to $99,999 | 25% |
| $45K to $64,999 | 10% |
| Less than $45K | 34% |
| No response | 15% |
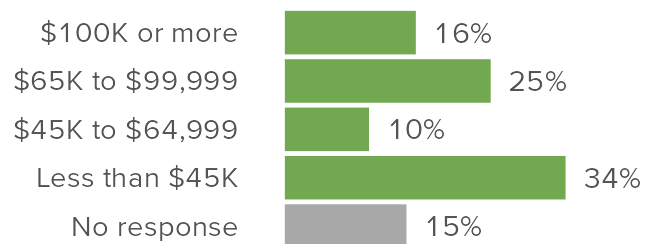
## Emergency funds

**17%**

of respondents would find it "difficult" or "very difficult" to get $1,000 to pay for an emergency

## Trouble making ends meet

**50%**

of respondents "agree" or "strongly agree" that "families are having trouble making ends meet"

## Homelessness

**26%**

of respondents "agree" or "strongly agree" that "homelessness is a problem" in their community

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## 6 out of 10

respondents
**LOVE** where they live

### Community participation

*"People can prioritize pride in traditions over research and progress."*

*"Everyone in our small town knows or are related to each other. We are not hesitant to speak or help one another."*

*"Good hearted people making efforts to help others, especially in community health and the Senior Citizen Center."*

**Respondents indicated the extent to which they perceive that people where they live participate in their community in the following ways:**

Results below 5% are not labeled due to space constraints.

**STRONGLY AGREE**                                    **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

**Take care of each other during hard times**

| 36% | 44% | 10% | |
|-----|-----|-----|---|

**Come together to solve community problems**

| 14% | 47% | 22% | 8% | 6% |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|

**Attend community events**

| 23% | 52% | 19% | |
|-----|-----|-----|---|

**Go to church**

| 9% | 14% | 41% | 32% | |
|----|-----|-----|-----|---|

**Welcome newcomers**

| 6% | 13% | 27% | 34% | 9% | 11% |
|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
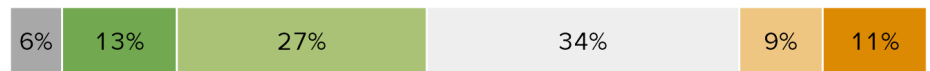
### Community traditions

## 69%

of respondents participate in community traditions or annual events

### Pride in community

## 76%

of respondents are "often" or "always" proud to tell others where they live

### Voting

## 82%

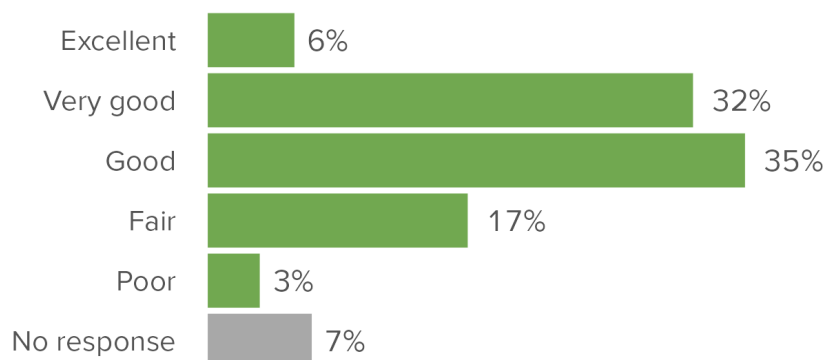of respondents report that they "always" vote

### Community service

## 53%

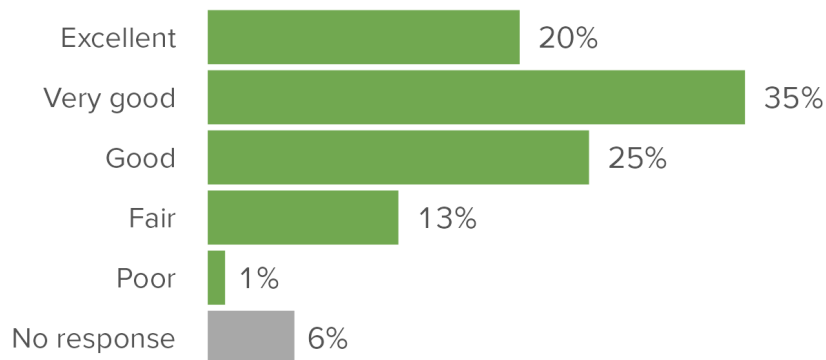of respondents report that they volunteer at least once a month

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## Physical health

### 73%

of respondents rated their physical health as "good" or better

| Rating | Percentage |
|--------|-----------|
| Excellent | 6% |
| Very good | 32% |
| Good | 35% |
| Fair | 17% |
| Poor | 3% |
| No response | 7% |

## Mental health

### 81%

of respondents rated their mental health as "good" or better

| Rating | Percentage |
|--------|-----------|
| Excellent | 20% |
| Very good | 35% |
| Good | 25% |
| Fair | 13% |
| Poor | 1% |
| No response | 6% |

## Medical and dental care

### 33%

of respondents "agree" or "strongly agree" that they have "enough medical and dental providers" in their community

**STRONGLY AGREE**     **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

| | 8% | 25% | 20% | 28% | 16% |
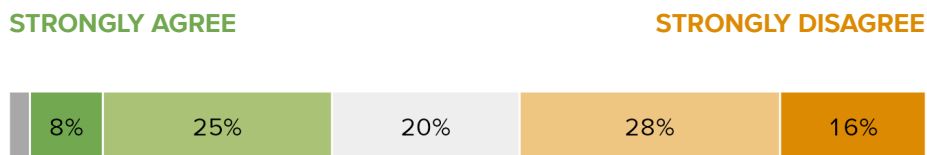
Results below 5% are not labeled due to space constraints.

## Child abuse and neglect

### 30%

of respondents "agree" or "strongly agree" that "child abuse and neglect is a significant problem" in their community"

## Substance abuse

### 65%

of respondents "agree" or "strongly agree" that their community has "many residents struggling with substance abuse"

## Mental illness

### 44%

of respondents "agree" or "strongly agree" that their community has "many residents struggling with mental illness"
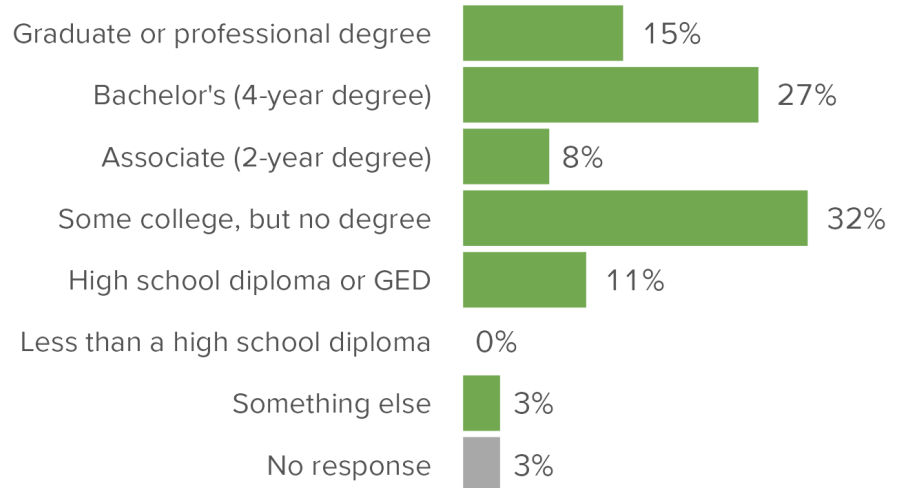
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## Education

# 50%

of respondents report
having completed
an associate degree or above

## Students

# 1%

of respondents identified
as a current student

## Respondents' highest level of education completed

| Category | Percentage |
|---|---|
| Graduate or professional degree | 15% |
| Bachelor's (4-year degree) | 27% |
| Associate (2-year degree) | 8% |
| Some college, but no degree | 32% |
| High school diploma or GED | 11% |
| Less than a high school diploma | 0% |
| Something else | 3% |
| No response | 3% |

## Employment

## Wages

# 49%

of respondents "agree" or
"strongly agree" that "jobs
do not pay enough" in
their community

## Perception of unemployment

# 56%

of respondents "agree" or
"strongly agree" that "a lot
of people are unemployed" in
their community

## Self-employment

# 25%

of respondents identified
as self-employed

## Employment status of respondents

| | |
|---|---|
| **Employed** | **49%** |
| Full-time | 42% |
| Part-time | 7% |
| **Unemployed** | **6%** |
| Looking for work | 0% |
| Not looking for work | 1% |
| Unable to work due to disability | 5% |
| **Other** | **42%** |
| Homemaker/manage your home | 5% |
| Retired | 35% |
| Something else | 2% |
| **No response** | **3%** |

Due to rounding, percentages in grouped rows may differ from the sum of the individual rows below it.

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## Services

*"We need high speed internet badly."*

*"A visiting physician might help us."*

*"Less expensive fuel? The closest town is 115 miles away."*

*"We have very limited resources to raise local funds due to the lack of large businesses or employers."*

*"We need housing; people are living in motels around here. We have a housing shortage. We have a lot of people coming in, and I don't know where they are living."*

*"We have the ability to deal with natural disasters or other disasters."*

*"There is a good paying job for anyone willing to work. Most people are friendly, hard workers."*

**Respondents who reported they "agree" or "strongly agree" the following services are available where they live:**
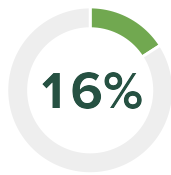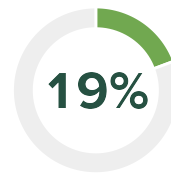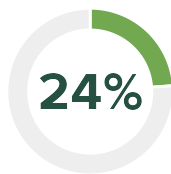
Good schools
**45%**
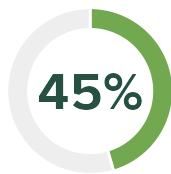
Enough places to shop
**23%**
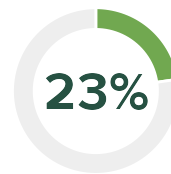
Affordable housing
**16%**

Good streets and roads
**19%**

Reliable internet
**24%**

Community-wide cell service
**40%**
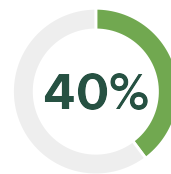
**Healthy food**

**61%**

of respondents "agree" or "strongly agree" that they have easy access to healthy foods

**Top 3 places respondents get food for weekly meals**

1. Grocery stores
2. Backyard or local garden
3. Restaurants

**Lack of child care**

**44%**

of respondents "agree" or "strongly agree" that "child care is hard to find"

**Lack of places for youth to hang out**

**51%**

of respondents "agree" or "strongly agree" that "youth do not have places to hang out"

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For data summaries for each county in Oregon,
more research and to explore the data on your own, visit

**orvoices.org.**

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Research conducted in partnership with ECONorthwest and
the Regional Research Institute for Human Services at Portland State University

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