

Major Challenges for our Community

Economy

The local economy expanded steadily in the last decade, led by robust job growth in newer industry clusters like creative services and high tech manufacturing. Although still high, Multnomah County's poverty rate responded, moving from 14% in 1996 to 12% in 1999. While this is a positive development the community continues to face the challenge of providing economic opportunity and skills training to those who have not as yet enjoyed the benefits of our economic success. This takes on even more importance in light of recent economic slowing both here and nationally.

Urban Vitality

The livability of our region attracts many new residents who contribute to the richness and diversity of our community. This population growth puts demands on our transportation, energy, housing, water, and other services that are reaching the limits of their capacity. Healthy growth ensures that all residents can live in affordable housing, in caring communities, with efficient transportation and parks and open spaces nearby. Residents rating neighborhood livability as good or very good increased from 78% in 1994 to 85% in 1999. However, a growing percentage of homeowners and renters are reporting problems with housing affordability, and commuters driving 30 minutes or less to work decreased through the 1990's.

Education

The Oregon Educational Act for the 21st Century sets standards of student achievement and goals for what we teach our children. Yet we face grave concerns in our community about the funding to achieve this vision. Sustaining adequate and stable funding is essential for local schools to succeed. However, local school districts have suffered significant cuts in their funding over the past decade. In addition, families with school-age children are migrating out of Multnomah County, further reducing available school funds. Post-secondary education funding must also be sufficient to provide for the changing skills and research needed in today's increasingly knowledge-based economy.

Environment

Our region is endowed with a wealth of natural resources - rivers, ocean, clean air, forests, mountains, desert. The city of Portland was the first city in the United States to adopt a carbon dioxide reduction strategy to protect and preserve this endowment. Our community is also the first major urban area in the nation directly affected by the Endangered Species Act. The decline in salmon and steelhead populations here, and throughout the Pacific Northwest, is the result of many activities that are part of our daily lives - electricity from dams, forestry, agriculture, roads, industry, and urban development. This is a challenge for all of us to share in solutions to preserve our natural riches.

About the Progress Board

The Portland Multnomah Progress Board was established in 1993 to develop a vision for our community and establish benchmarks that measure our progress toward that vision. The board tracks benchmarks representing issues such as:

- **Economy**
- **Education**
- **Environment**
- **Governance & Civic Participation**
- **Health & Families**
- **Public Safety**
- **Urban Vitality**

In addition to regular updates on benchmark trends, the Progress Board conducts more in-depth analyses of particular benchmarks. These studies are intended to provide a deeper understanding of the forces affecting our community. By identifying the best strategies for improving benchmarks we can achieve a better community.

Previous reports include:

- Children's Readiness to Learn: Strategies for Improvement.* October, 1998
- Salmon Restoration in an Urban Watershed: Johnson Creek, Oregon.* April, 2000
- Educational Success for Youth: Aligning School, Family, and Community.* May, 2000

These reports can be accessed on our website:

<http://www.p-m-benchmarks.org>

The Portland Multnomah Progress Board

The Portland Multnomah Progress Board is comprised of community leaders from local government, business, education, and non-profit organizations.

- Co-Chair Vera Katz, Mayor, City of Portland
- Co-Chair Diane Linn, Chair, Multnomah County Commission
- Daniel Bernstine, President, Portland State University
- Jesus "Jess" Carreon, President, Portland Community College
- Sho Dozono, President, Azumano Travel
- Marilyn Holstrom, City Administrator, City of Fairview
- David Lohman, Director of Policy and Planning, Port of Portland
- Lawrence J. Norvell, President, United Way of Columbia-Willamette
- Nina Regor, Assistant City Manager, City of Gresham
- Charles Rosenthal, Principal, Engineering Consultants
- Luther Sturtevant, Pastor, Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon
- Duncan Wyse, President, Oregon Business Council
- Joseph Zelayeta, Executive Vice President, LSI Logic
- Superintendent, Portland Public Schools (vacant)

Staff

- Gary Blackmer, Auditor, City of Portland
- Scott Stewart, Research Director
- Bob MacKay, Research Associate

Further information about our benchmarks, our organization, and our community can be found on our website:

<http://www.p-m-benchmarks.org>



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Are we making progress?

Where is our community going?

We want a thriving region that allows our citizens to lead fulfilling lives in safe and caring communities. The job of the Portland Multnomah Progress Board is to help achieve that vision.

How do we measure our progress?

The Portland Multnomah Progress Board, established in 1993, created a set of indicators, or "benchmarks" that gauge the conditions in our community. We measure the benchmarks to assess progress toward our community's vision.

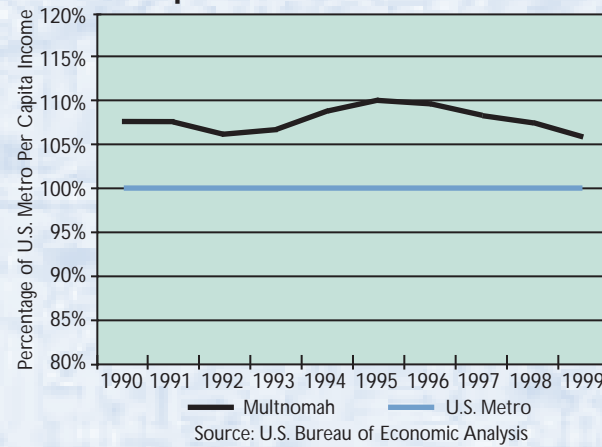
<http://www.p-m-benchmarks.org>



Our Thriving Region

Multnomah County's per capita income continues to increase steadily, but at a slower rate than the U.S. Metro average. In the early 90's Multnomah's per capita income increased faster than average, peaking at 110% of the U.S. Metro in 1995. With the slowing regional economy we have lost ground relative to other urban areas, reaching 106% in 1999. This downturn in part reflects the troubled economic times of our Asian trading partners.

#1. Multnomah County Income Compared to U.S. Metro Income



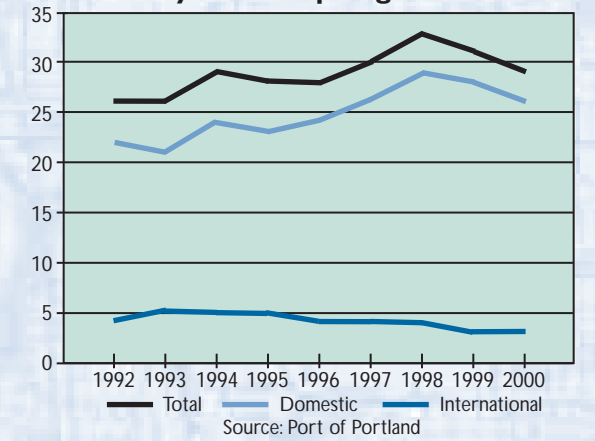
In 2001, the City of Portland and Multnomah County adopted a joint Local Action Plan on Global Warming that sets a goal of reducing local carbon dioxide emissions to 10 percent below 1990 levels by 2010. In the past decade, however, emissions of carbon dioxide in Multnomah County increased 7%. Transportation accounts for over one third of total carbon dioxide emissions in the County. In the 1990s, per capita vehicle miles traveled increased by nearly 12%. During the same period, however, per capita energy use in Multnomah County declined by 3% (Benchmark #70).

#67. Total Carbon Dioxide Emissions in Multnomah County, 1990-1999



Portland International Airport (PDX) has recently seen a 12% decline in the number of metropolitan airports served by direct, non-stop service. This trend may continue as Delta ended non-stop service between Portland and Japan on April 1st, 2001. In the past year air freight also declined by 7%. The number of passengers using PDX, however, continued to climb to nearly 14 million in 2000. In addition, Portland-Vancouver was one of seven major metro areas which expanded exports by \$1 billion or more between 1998 and 1999 (Benchmark #10).

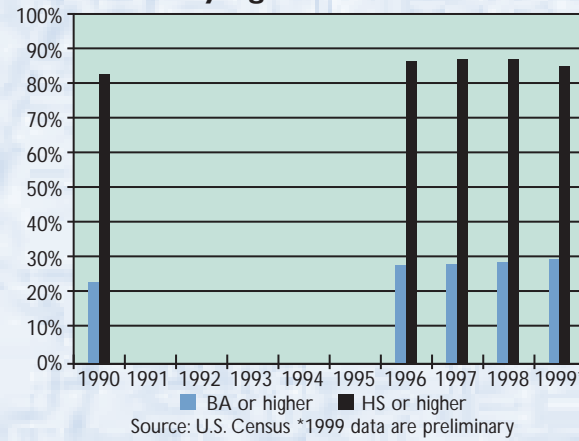
#16. Metropolitan Airports Served by Non-Stop Flights



Fulfilling Lives

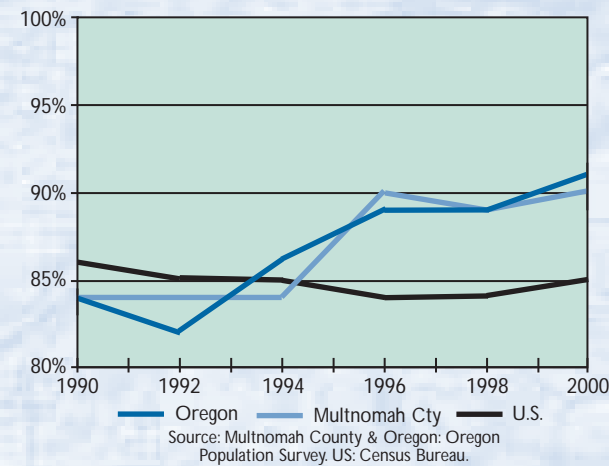
Multnomah County residents with college degrees increased from 28% in 1996 to 30% in 1999. In-migration played a role in the increase. For instance, in 1998 recent arrivals to Multnomah were about 50% more likely to have a college degree than long-term residents. County residents with at least a high school degree declined slightly in 1999.

#13. Educational Attainment, Multnomah County Ages 25 and Older



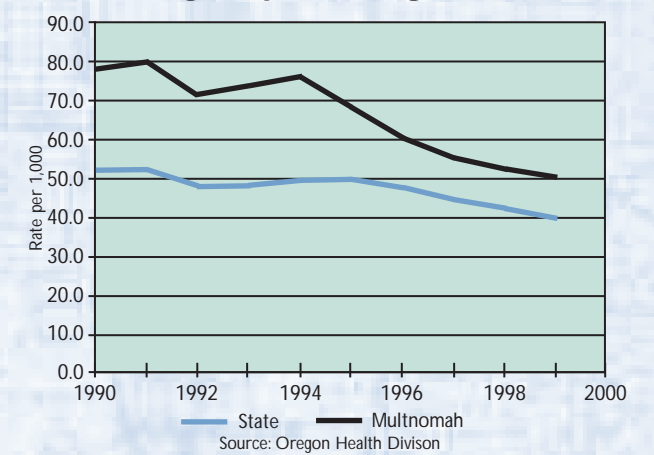
Health Insurance coverage has improved throughout Oregon. This is due in large part to the Oregon Health Plan, which extended coverage to 300,000 of the State's poverty-level families. Since the Plan's inception in 1994 Multnomah County's insured percentage has risen seven points to 91% in 2000, five points above the national average. The County's low unemployment rate and the presence of larger employers likely contributed to the increase.

#44. Residents with Health Insurance



Multnomah County's pregnancy rate for females ages 15 to 17 has been steadily declining in the past decade, mirroring both state and national trends. Even though the County's rate remains higher than Oregon's, in the 1990's it declined faster than the State by ten percentage points.

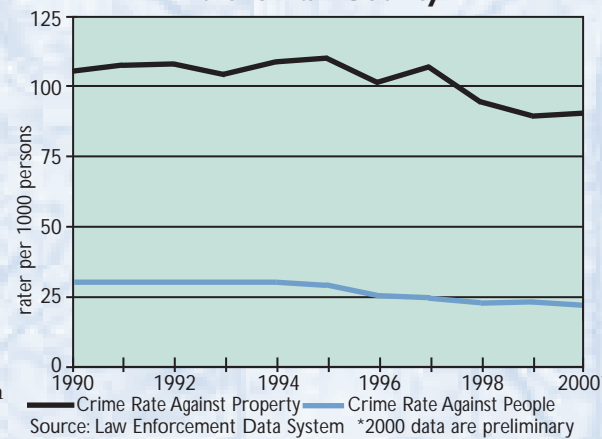
#26. Pregnancy Rates, Ages 15 to 17



Safe and Caring Communities

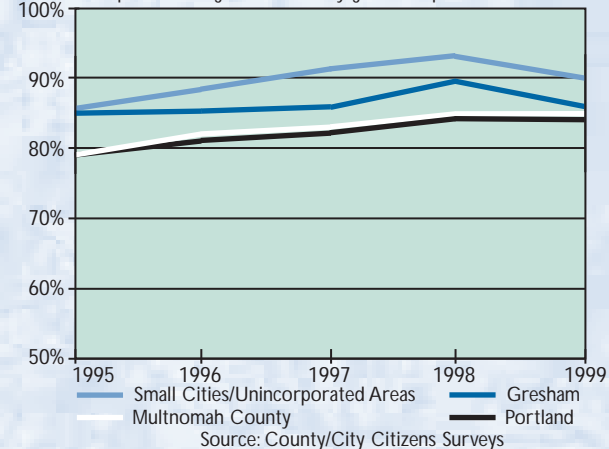
Citizens are generally safer, and they feel safer, in our community. Over the past decade in Multnomah County, the rate of crimes against people declined by 27%. In the same period the rate of crimes against property declined by 14%. In Portland, youth gun murders declined from 20 in 1996 to 3 in 2000. Citizens have felt increasingly safe walking alone on downtown and neighborhood streets, day or night (Benchmark #84).

#87. Reported Crime Rates in Multnomah County



In 1999, neighborhood livability ratings of either "good" or "very good" by Multnomah County citizens remained constant at 85%. This number, however, is driven by the population of Portland, which masked a slight decline in livability ratings in Gresham and the smaller cities of East County. The percentage of citizens rating the cleanliness of their neighborhood streets as either "good" or "very good" has also held steady around 65% (Benchmark #104).

#61. Neighborhood Livability Ratings
percent of "good" and "very good" responses



Capital spending is a community's long-term investment in projects like sewers, jails, libraries, school buildings, airport expansion and mass transit. Total per capita spending by all local governments doubled for Portland residents in the 1990's. Among the larger projects were sewer construction aimed toward improvement of Willamette River water quality, and the extension of light rail through Portland's West Side.

#24. Capital spending per capita in Portland
(includes County, schools, other local governments)

