



Oregon City, Oregon

(Population 32,220)

Situated in a lush valley between the Willamette and Clackamas rivers, Oregon City is recognized throughout the Pacific Northwest for its natural beauty and friendly residents. The city is also known for its livability and inviting economic climate. It is an impressive place to live, work and play. With a population of 32,220, this medium-sized municipality is split between the Willamette River and natural bluffs where a large, municipal elevator connects the two.

Oregon City has its own cultural amenities such as the Ermatinger House, Living History Tea & Textile Museum, the Clackamas Repertory Theatre, the New Century Players, the Haggart Observatory, and concerts in the park. For those who like abundant city life, Portland is less than 30 minutes to the north and offers many opportunities for fine dining, sports venues, and the arts. Portland's international airport provides direct connections to major hubs throughout the United States and non-stop flights to Canada, Japan, Mexico and the Netherlands. If you prefer the outdoors, it is

hard to find a better place than Oregon City. On a clear day, Mounts Hood, St. Helens and Rainier can all be seen from the bluffs. Hiking and biking trails are plentiful and the Pacific Ocean is less than two hours west. If you are a fisherman, Oregon City is the place to be. Trout and sturgeon are found in abundance, fly-fishing is world class, and during the salmon run, it is common to see 200 to 300 sport fishing boats below the falls.

Of course, when you work here, you will want to live here. Housing prices are reasonable. The average home costs about \$225,000 and an exceptional home can be purchased for \$350,000 to \$400,000. Oregon City is a great place to raise a family: the schools are among the best in the state, people are friendly and helpful, and crime is low. Its residents embrace the City's past, while having a sense of urgency about moving into the future. For example, an old mill sitting on 22 acres and overlooking the Willamette Falls, has gone bankrupt. The City, County Metropolitan

Planning Authority, and State are working together to make the site attractive to those who would like to turn it into a mixed use development. It will be exciting to be part of this re-birth of Oregon City.

History

The Willamette River Falls have been a center of human activity for over 3,000 years. Archeologists have uncovered evidence of Native American culture predating 1,000 B.C. which evolved without interference until white immigration forever altered its course. In its pre-European days, Native Americans from the region gathered at Willamette Falls to catch salmon and eels and to trade goods from their tribes.

In the early 1800s, fur traders explored the Willamette Valley and surrounding areas. Dr. John McLoughlin, Chief Factor of the Hudson's Bay Company at Fort Vancouver, ordered the construction of three log houses at Willamette Falls to establish a British foothold south of the Columbia River. Native Americans, resenting this incursion, burnt the homes. In 1832 Dr. McLoughlin returned to the falls and constructed a sawmill and flour mill, making the first use of water power. In 1841, Methodist missionaries who had found the local native population indifferent to their efforts established a milling company on an island below the falls, across from McLoughlin's.

By 1842 American settlers had begun to arrive in large numbers, overland from the east or by ship around Cape Horn. To forestall an American claim, Dr. McLoughlin named the growing town Oregon City and hired Sidney Moss in 1842 to create a plat map of the town.

McLoughlin's efforts were too late, as in 1843 American settlers met together at Champoege and voted to establish a Provisional Government, naming Oregon City as the seat of government. George Abernethy, one of the original Methodist missionary companies, was elected governor. With the influx of settlers over the Oregon Trail, Oregon City was replatted in 1844 and was incorporated as the first city in the Oregon Territory under the Provisional Government.



Over the next decade, Oregon City continued to grow and was the site of several firsts in the territory. The Oregon Spectator, the first newspaper, began publication in 1846 and the first Masonic Lodge west of the Mississippi was chartered the same year. In 1848 a group of businessmen established a mint under the Oregon Exchange Company and began producing \$5 and \$10 coins from gold found in the California gold rush.

The United States Congress passed a bill in 1848 admitting Oregon as a U.S. territory, two years after settling the boundary dispute with Great Britain along the 49th parallel. General Joseph Lane of Indiana was appointed Governor by President Polk. Lane arrived in Oregon City by boat in March of 1849 and was inaugurated at Rose Farm, the home of the Holmes family. Oregon City continued as the capitol of the new territory until 1852 when political factions in the territory forced a vote to move the capitol to Salem.

Oregon City's position as the hub of the Territory declined in the 1850s as the capital was moved to Salem and the city of Portland surpassed it as a population and shipping center. In the 1860s, its economy became firmly rooted in manufacturing. The Imperial Flour Mills were built in 1863-1864 and the Oregon Woolen Mills were established in 1864. The first paper mill in Oregon was later built in 1866. Finally, the railroad arrived in 1869 and opened the Willamette Valley to shipping ports to the north.

By 1880, the population was nearing 1,400. Commercial businesses developed to accommodate the growing number of residents, as did educational, religious and social organizations. In 1889, the Willamette Falls Electric Company made history when it transmitted the first electricity over long distance power lines to Portland. The timber and wood products industries developed into major contenders and by 1913 were the largest employers in Oregon City and the county.

The original city area, bounded by the Willamette River and the towering bluffs on two sides, and limited by the falls to the south and a flood plain to the north, evolved as an industrial and commercial center, limiting the available space for homes. A number of new subdivisions were platted between 1888 and the mid-1910s and growth began in earnest on the bluff overlooking the river. The City water system and fire department were expanded and improved. Electric lights and sidewalks were installed and street improvements began.

The first automobile arrived in Oregon City in 1903 when C.G. Miller established his automobile dealership. Roads and highways soon followed. In 1913, the first municipal elevator in Oregon City was constructed. Water-powered, the elevator made the trip between the downtown and bluff easier for residents and supported the locating of residential neighborhoods on the upper terraces overlooking the downtown focal point for commercial and governmental business. In the 1930s a new "superhighway" was built along the former Water Street, following the edge of the river on the west side of downtown. In 1954 the municipal elevator was replaced with a concrete structure that continues in operation today as the only "vertical street" in North America.

After World War II, new residential neighborhoods expanded eastward to the third terrace above the river as newfound prosperity allowed many to buy their own homes. With the growth of the paper industry in the 20th century, the original town site at the falls evolved into an industrial area covering the first eight blocks of the city plat.

Oregon City today incorporates two historic districts, Canemah to the south and the McLoughlin neighborhood on the second level, and an historic Main Street. Through preservation efforts, these areas are a blend of homes and businesses dating from the mid 19th century through modern construction.

The city has grown to over eight square miles, adding neighborhoods and businesses to the east and south on the third level and in the Park Place neighborhood to the north.

New opportunities for growth and redevelopment continue to present themselves in Oregon City today. Following the failure of the Blue Heron Paper Company in 2011, the industrial area at the falls is now available for redevelopment. An Urban Renewal district at the north end of the city presents opportunities for new construction on a man-made cove off the Clackamas River and on the site of a closed garbage dump.

Commerce

Although forestry dominated Oregon City’s economy in the past, it has all but disappeared. It has been replaced by manufacturing, retail, health care, construction, and service industry firms. The City’s commitment to a vibrant economy embodies the city’s theme: “Pioneering Creative Solutions for a More Livable Community”. Oregon City promotes a welcoming environment to business owners. The Census Bureau estimated that in 2007, the City had

2,714 businesses, of which women owned 34.7%. Some of the more notable companies include Benchmade, a leading manufacturer of high-end cutlery, and Medrisk, LLC, a major insurance brokerage in the Northwest. In 2006, Anderson Vending Inc. chose Oregon City as its new headquarters. (The City’s largest tax payers are listed in Table I.)

Geography

The City is located in Northwest Oregon, about 20 miles south of Portland, and covers 9.2 square miles. It is divided into lower and upper areas: the lower area is on a bench next to the Willamette River, and the upper area sits atop a bluff. The Willamette forms the boundary between Oregon City and West Linn; the Clackamas river serves as the boundary between Oregon City and Gladstone. Interstate 205 and State Highways 99E and 213 provide links to Portland, Salem, Canby, and Clackamas County.

Demographics

With a population of almost 32,000, Oregon City is the 17th largest city in the state. According to the U.S.

Table I: Oregon City’s Principal Tax Payers

Rank	Taxpayer	Assessed Value
1	Portland General Electric Company	\$ 20.2 Million
2	Quantum Mangement (apartments)	\$ 18.1 Million
3	Metropolitan Life Insurance Company	\$ 16.0 Million
4	Trails End Oprego Investors LLC (real estate)	\$ 15.8 Million
5	Northwest Natural Gas Company	\$ 14.6 Million
6	Icon Construction (real estate)	\$ 12.1 Million
7	Qwest Corporation (utility)	\$ 11.9 Million
8	BILP Refi LLC (real estate)	\$ 11.4 Million
9	Deloitte & Touche LLP (real estate)	\$ 10.6 Million

Source: Oregon City 2009 CAFR

Table II: Temperatures and Precipitation in Oregon City

Source: Weatherbase

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Year
Average High °F	47.0	51.3	56.6	61.4	67.9	73.5	80.5	81.1	75.8	63.8	52.7	45.5	63.1
Average Low °F	35.8	36.3	39.7	43.2	48.7	53.7	57.9	58.0	53.2	46.1	40.5	35.2	45.7
Precipitation Inches	4.88	3.66	3.68	2.73	2.47	1.70	.64	.66	1.47	3.00	5.64	5.49	36.01
Sunshine Hours	86.8	118.7	192.2	222.0	275.9	291.0	331.7	297.6	237.0	151.9	78.0	65.1	2,347.9

2010 census, 91.7% of the population are White, 1.3% are Asian, while the remainder are from other races not noted. 5.8% of the total population is of Hispanic ethnicity. 2009 Census data estimated the median household income to be \$56,668. (See Table II.)

Climate

Oregon City's climate is temperate with mild, damp winters and relatively dry, warm summers. Heat waves occur in July and August, with temperatures rising over 100 °F. Winter temperatures average in the 40s and 50s °F. Cold snaps are generally short-lived, and snowfall occurs no more than a few times per year. Spring can be rather unpredictable ranging from warm spells, to thunderstorms rolling off the Cascade Range. (The yearly average temperatures are listed in Table II.)

The Government

Oregon City is a charter municipality organized under the Council/Manager form of government. The City is governed by a Commission composed of a Mayor and four Commissioners elected at large. They set policy and appoint a professional City Manager to oversee day to day operations. The Commission Members serve staggered four year terms and are limited to a maximum of two terms in a ten year period. The Commission works well together and is focused on doing the right thing, with the best interests of the City at heart. All are progressive in their efforts to find ways to move the City forward.

Oregon City is a full service city and has approximately 178 FTEs (230 employees overall). The general fund budget for 2011 – 2012 is \$17.6 million and the total budget is \$88.1 million (down about 2% from 2010 – 2011). In addition to the General Fund, the City has almost 40 other funds ranging from storm-water to library, code enforcement to cemetery. The City's maximum allowed millage is 5.0571, and its actual millage currently sits at 4.1590.

Table III: Age Breakdown – Oregon City

Age Bracket	Population	Percentage
Under 5	2,072	6.7 %
5 to 15	4,160	13.4 %
15 to 25	5,244	16.9 %
25 to 35	3,673	11.9 %
35 to 45	4,515	14.6 %
45 to 55	4,885	15.8 %
55 to 65	3,217	10.4 %
65 to 75	1,494	4.8 %
75 to 85	1,128	3.6 %
Over 85	595	1.9 %
Total	30,983	100.0 %

Median Age	35.8
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Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The Finance Department provides financial support to the City, as well as to the South Fork Water Board and the Oregon City Urban Renewal Agency. Its services include: Accounts Receivable, Accounts Payable, Payroll, General Ledger, Computer Records, Debt Placement and Debt Service, Internal Controls, Budget Preparation and Compliance, Utility Billing and Collections, Audit Preparation, Purchasing, and Business Licensing. The Department's budget for 2011-2012 is \$1,948,721. It has fourteen employees overall. In addition to the Director and the receptionists, four employees support the Finance function directly. Four others work in Utility Billing and four support the Municipal Court. All are motivated and self-driven.

The Challenges

While Oregon City is not under the same level of economic stress many cities are facing, resources are tight and must be used wisely. After 18 years under the same management, it is expected that the next Director will review the operation from top to bottom. The current Finance Director is well respected and it is not that any particular concerns exist. The City simply wants to confirm that it is not missing any opportunities to improve its finances and its operations. Finally, the City wishes to move to a biennial budget and to compete successfully for Government Finance Officers Association awards for Budget Presentation and Financial Reporting. That will involve a great deal of preparation and work.

The City does not have any internal candidates. In fact, the City is creating a new position for an Assistant Finance Director and is waiting for the new Director to fill that position.

The Ideal Candidate

The ideal candidate will be an experienced, achievement-oriented, proven professional. The individual will be a CPA and a technical expert who



recognizes the importance of being methodical with numbers and time. This position provides service and information to the City Commission, City Manager, other departments and the public.

Customer service will be important both internally and externally. At times the Director will have to enforce rules, and say "no." At the same time, the individual will strive to find other, legal and permissible ways to achieve the same end. He/she will serve as a principle advisor to the City Commission and the City Manager. The individual will have outstanding presentational and communications skills and will be comfortable making presentations to high powered executives while also being able to communicate effectively with people of little or no education. The ideal candidate will be someone who is responsible, sets high standards, and hold his/her staff accountable. The Finance Director will be serious about the work but also be a people person and have a good sense of humor. The individual will recognize potential and act as a mentor bringing out the best in all of the Department's employees.

The candidate must possess a Bachelor's degree, preferably in Administration or Finance, and a CPA. He/she will have seven years progressively responsible experience in municipal financial operations and three years in a managerial role. Experience working with fund accounting and automated information systems is a must.

Compensation

The starting salary range is \$100,000 to \$125,000. Benefits are excellent.

How to Apply

Applications including resumes should be submitted online to the following link: [Oregon City Jobs](#), by March 03, 2012. Neither printed and mailed resumes nor faxed resumes, will be accepted. Questions should be addressed to Colin Baenziger of Colin Baenziger & Associates at (561) 707-3537.

Confidentiality

All candidate applications will be treated as confidential; no names will be released without the candidate's permission.

The Process

Candidates will be screened between February 25th and April 2nd, when the City will select finalists. Interviews are planned for April 19th and a selection made shortly thereafter. The next Finance Director is expected to start work in June.

Other Important Information

Oregon City is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

COLIN BAENZIGER  ASSOCIATES
EXECUTIVE RECRUITING