

Sweet Home Park System Master Plan

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Subject: **DRAFT** Community Profile and Demographic Trends

OVERVIEW

Located in Linn County, Sweet Home is within the western foothills of Oregon's Cascade Range. Sweet Home sits adjacent to the South Santiam River and west of Foster Reservoir. The Santiam Highway (U.S. Route 20) and the Halsey-Sweet Home Hwy intersect at the west end of Sweet Home to form Main Street, which bisects the city from the southwest to the northeast. The city is 45 miles northeast of Eugene and 50 miles southeast of Salem.

Sweet Home is located 20 minutes west of the Willamette National Forest and has access to the South Santiam River. The city is located within the South Santiam Watershed. The city sits on alluvium soil, which is made up of gravel, sand, and silt. Along the South Santiam River, there are upper and lower terrace deposits made up of gravel, sand, silt, and clay.¹ The average precipitation in Sweet Home is around 69 inches per year with most rain occurring in the winter. The average temperature is 50.8 °F, with the hottest month being August, and the coldest being December.² Today, the City has roughly 10,097 residents and encompasses a contiguous area of about 5.30 square miles. Sweet Home has 7 primary land use zones: Commercial Central, Commercial Highway, Industrial, Residential Low-Density, Residential Medium-Density, Residential High-Density, and Mixed-Use Employment.

This memo provides a snapshot of the community profile and demographic trends for Sweet Home in 2023.

¹ Jason D. McClaughry, "Preliminary geologic map of the sweet home 7.5' quadrangle, Linn County, Oregon," State Library of Oregon, (n.d.), <https://digital.osl.state.or.us/islandora/object/osl:890>.

² "Climate-data," 2021, <https://en.climate-data.org/north-america/united-states-of-america/oregon/sweet-home-124498/>.

LOCAL CONTEXT

Before Sweet Home became an incorporated city in 1893, the Santiam Kalapuyans resided in that area. Their livelihood consisted of hunting, fishing, foraging nuts, berries, and fruits seasonally. Trade was specialized from tribe to tribe, with Kalapuyans specializing in camas and wapato. Because of their location, Kalapuyan tribes were part of a network that distributed products from the Columbia Gorge area to southern coastal tribes. Before European immigrants and missionaries came to the Willamette Valley, it is believed that this population reached 15,000³ but dwindled to 600 by 1849 due to diseases brought by explorers and traders. With the Willamette Valley Treaty in 1855, the Kalapuyan tribes were removed to the Grand Ronde Reservation located about 18 miles east of Lincoln City, Oregon. The first settlers arrived in Sweet Home in 1851, and then in 1852 the Ames family settled and started a sawmill business. Soon after, more settlers came into town and staked their land claim. Businesses started opening, with the first hotel being built in 1860, and the first subdivision in 1878.⁴ During this time, the economy depended on trade, farming, livestock, and small businesses. As time progressed, there was a high influx of people due to the high demand of lumber in the 1940's. The most recent boom in their economy was in 1962-1963 during the construction of Green Peter Dam. In the 1980's, many timber mills were closed, causing a decline in Sweet Home's population. Since then, Sweet Home received a federal grant in the 1990's to help small businesses. More recently, the Oregon Jamboree annual music festival was created in Sweet Home, boosting their economy.

In the last thirty years, Sweet Home has focused on various planning efforts and improvements. The City undertook a downtown revitalization project in the 1990s, and has recently been working on improvements for Sankey Park, their wastewater treatment plant, and undertaking their 'Paint the town' project to repaint buildings in their downtown. Additionally, the City is expanding its focus on recreation opportunities as a source of economic growth. The Oregon Jamboree was founded as an economic development project and brings approximately 10,000-12,000 people to town during the first weekend of August. Currently, the annual music festival occurs at Sweet Home's Sankey Park. The City is looking to expand support for the Jamboree in the future by adding a large park property along the South Santiam River.

DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

Trends in population growth, age, housing, race, and ethnicity are all key to understanding a community's composition. The following data is from Portland State University's Population Research Center and the U.S. Census Bureau. Current population data and forecasts from PSU are provided for 2020 and onward. Data from American Fact Finder is drawn from the most current data available. The American Community Survey (ACS) collects information such as age, race, income, and other important data. The ACS produces 3-year estimates annually for geographic areas with a population of 20,000 or more. In 2010, the Census Bureau began releasing 5-year estimates for small areas. In the case of Sweet Home, ACS data is available for the period of 2010-2020, hence referred to as 2020 data.

³ Don Macnaughtan, "Kalapuya: Native Americans of the Willamette Valley, Oregon", Lane Library, September 22, 2023, <https://libraryguides.lanec.edu/kalapuya>.

⁴ "Sweet Home's History," Sweet Home's History | Sweet Home Chambers of Commerce and Visitors Center, (n.d.), <https://www.sweethomechamber.com/sweet-homes-history/>.

Population Growth

Sweet Home’s current population is 10,097 residents (2022). Table 1.1 summarizes historic and projected future populations.

Table 1.1. Sweet Home Historical and Future Population Forecast ⁵

Year	2010	2020	2022	2030	2040
Population	8,925	9,828	10,097	10,455	11,010

Linn County’s current population is 131,194 residents (2022). Table 1.2 summarizes historic and projected future populations.

Table 1.2. Linn County Historical and Future Population Forecast ⁶

Year	2010	2020	2022	2030	2040
Population	116,672	128,610	131,194	139,090	146,130

Oregon’s current population is approximately 4,281,851 (2022). Table 1.3 summarizes historical and projected future populations.

Table 1.3. Oregon Historical and Future Population Forecast⁷

Year	2010	2020	2022	2030	2040
Population	3,831,074	4,237,256	4,281,851	4,721,060	5,100,899

Growth is anticipated overall in the City, County, and State. Sweet Home itself is predicted to grow at a steady pace alongside other jurisdictions in the region. Population growth in Sweet Home and neighboring communities suggests a need to accommodate this growth as it pertains to parks and recreation facilities and amenities.

Age

It is important for parks systems to meet the recreation needs of residents of all ages. Analyzing the population by age group can be used to adjust planning efforts for future age-related recreational trends. Tables 1.4, 1.5, and 1.6 summarize the 2020 population age distribution of Sweet Home, Linn County, and Oregon.

⁵ Portland State University (PSU), Population Research Center, 2023, <https://www.pdx.edu/population-research/>.

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Table 1.4. Age Distribution of Sweet Home⁸

Age	0 to 4	5 to 19	20 to 24	25 to 44	45 to 64	65 and Over
Population	340 (4%)	1,824 (19%)	466 (5%)	2,356 (24%)	2,775 (29%)	2,002 (21%)

Table 1.5. Age Distribution of Linn County⁹

Age	0 to 4	5 to 19	20 to 24	25 to 44	45 to 64	65 and Over
Population	7,658 (6%)	23,688 (19%)	7,246 (6%)	32,409 (26%)	32,572 (26%)	23,643 (19%)

Table 1.6. Age Distribution of Oregon¹⁰

Age	0 to 4	5 to 19	20 to 24	25 to 44	45 to 64	65 and Over
Population	228,314 (6%)	737,402 (18%)	265,800 (6%)	1,154,049 (28%)	1,055,849 (25%)	734,932 (18%)

Sweet Home’s largest percentage of residents are between the ages of 45 to 64 (29%) while the smallest percentage of the population is between ages 0 to 4 (4%). The second largest percentage of residents are people ages 25 to 44 (24%). Linn County largest percentage of residents by age fall between 45 to 64 (26%) while the smallest percentage are ages 20 to 24 (6%). The second largest group are residents ages 25 to 44 (26%). Oregon’s largest percentage of residents are ages 25 to 44 (28%) while the smallest percentage of the population are ages 0 to 4 (6%). The second largest population are people ages 45 to 64 (25%). In comparing all three scales, Sweet Home has similar trends as Linn County with having the highest population in ages 45 to 64 and the second highest population in ages 25 to 44. Sweet Home and Oregon share the lowest percentage of population ages 0 to 4. These trends show a diversified population where various park planning activities are needed to serve a community of all ages.

Table 1.7. Sweet Home Population by Age Estimate, 2010-2020¹¹

Year	0 to 4	5 to 19	20 to 24	25 to 44	45 to 64	65 and Over
2010	650 (7%)	1,657 (19%)	308 (4%)	2,221 (25%)	2,152 (25%)	1,781 (20%)
2020	340 (4%)	1,824 (19%)	466 (5%)	2,356 (24%)	2,775 (29%)	2,002 (21%)

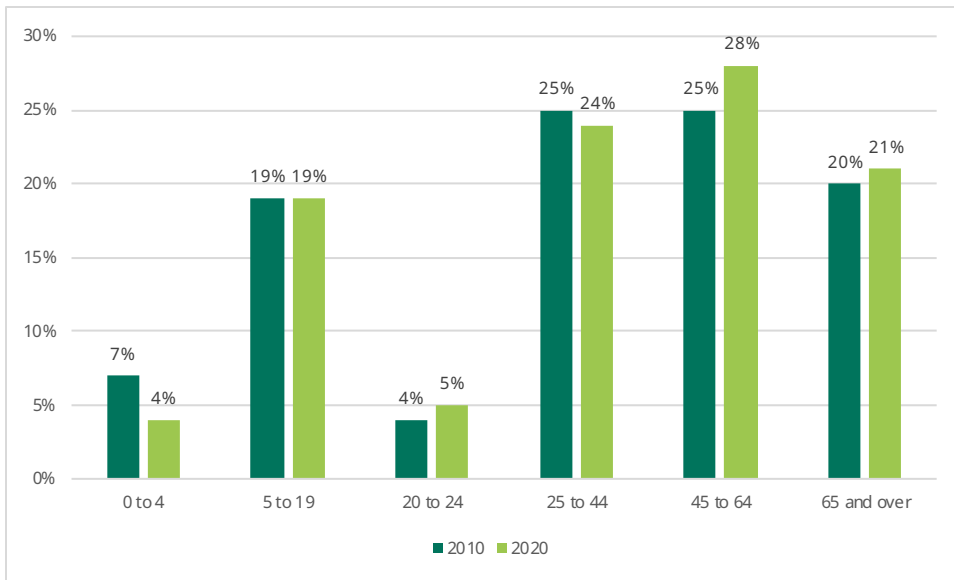
⁸ United State Census Bureau, 2023.

⁹ United State Census Bureau, 2023.

¹⁰ United State Census Bureau, 2023.

¹¹ United State Census Bureau, 2021.

Chart 1.1. Sweet Home Population by Age Estimate, 2010-2020¹²



Race & Ethnicity

The racial composition of Sweet Home has increased in diversity. As shown in Table 1.8, in 2010 93% of the population identified as White alone, while the second largest population was split between individuals who identified as Latinos (5%) and individuals with two or more races (3%). In the 2020 census, 86% of the population identified as White alone, while the second highest population identified as biracial (9%). In 2020, Black Americans, American Indian, Asian, and Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander residents made up over three percent of the population. In addition, per Table 1.9, residents identifying as Hispanic or Latino increased one percent between 2010-2020 to 6% of the total population. It is likely that Sweet Home, and its surrounding regional community will increasingly diversify over the next 20 years following national, statewide, and regional population trends. Sweet Home will need to adapt its park and recreation facilities to meet the needs of residents from diverse backgrounds.

¹² Portland State University (PSU), Population Research Center, 2021.

Table 1.8. Racial Composition of Sweet Home, 2010-2020¹³

	White	Black	American Indian	Asian	Native Hawaiian	Two or More	Some Other Race Alone
2010 Population	8,330 (93%)	23 (.3%)	120 (1%)	72 (1%)	12 (.1%)	267 (3%)	101 (1%)
2020 Population	8,470 (86%)	32 (.3%)	147 (2%)	68 (1%)	13 (.1%)	928 (9%)	170 (2%)
Percent Change	+2%	+39%	+23%	-6%	+8%	+248%	+68%

Table 1.9. Racial Composition of Hispanic/Latino Identity in Sweet Home, 2010-2020¹⁴

	Hispanic Latino
2010 Population	418 (5%)
2020 Population	574 (6%)
Percentage Change	(+37%)

Table 1.10. Racial Composition of Linn County, 2010-2020¹⁵

	White	Black	American Indian	Asian	Native Hawaiian	Two or More	Some Other Race Alone
2010 Population	105,669 (91%)	534 (1%)	1,488 (1%)	1,111 (1%)	162 (.1%)	3,820 (3%)	3,888 (3%)
2020 Population	107,700 (84%)	681 (1%)	1,727 (1%)	1,477 (1%)	295 (.2%)	12,014 (9%)	4,716 (4%)
Percent Change	+2%	+28%	+16%	+33%	+82%	+215%	+21%

¹³ United State Census Bureau, 2020.

¹⁴ United States Census Bureau, 2020.

¹⁵ United State Census Bureau, 2020.

Table 1.11. Racial Composition of Hispanic/Latino Identity in Linn County, 2010-2020¹⁶

Hispanic Latino	
2010 Population	9,127 (8%)
2020 Population	12,571 (10%)
Percentage Change	+38%

Table 1.12. Racial Composition of Oregon, 2010-2020¹⁷

	White	Black	American Indian	Asian	Native Hawaiian	Two or More	Some Other Race Alone
2010 Population	3,204,614 (84%)	69,206 (2%)	53,203 (1%)	141,263 (4%)	13,404 (.4%)	144,759 (4%)	204,625 (5%)
2020 Population	3,169,096 (75%)	82,655 (2%)	62,993 (2%)	194,538 (5%)	19,204 (.5%)	443,339 (11%)	265,431 (6%)
Percent Change	-1%	+19%	+18%	+38%	+43%	+206%	+30%

Table 1.13. Racial Composition of Hispanic/Latino Identity in Oregon, 2010-2020¹⁸

Hispanic Latino	
2010 Population	450,062 (12%)
2020 Population	588,757 (14%)
Percentage Change	+31%

In the 2010 census, Sweet Home had a higher demographic of White population (93%) compared to the County (91%) and State (84%) data. In 2020, Sweet Home experienced a decrease in the overall makeup of the largest demographic (White, 86%). Sweet Home also experienced the largest percentage change (+248%) with a population of two or more between 2010 and 2020 compared to County and State. In both 2010 and 2020 Latinos made up the largest minority population across the City, County, and State. Overall, Sweet Home is experiencing an increase in almost all minority populations, following trends at the County and State level. Additionally, between 2010-2020, Sweet Home’s Some Other Race Alone population experienced a higher

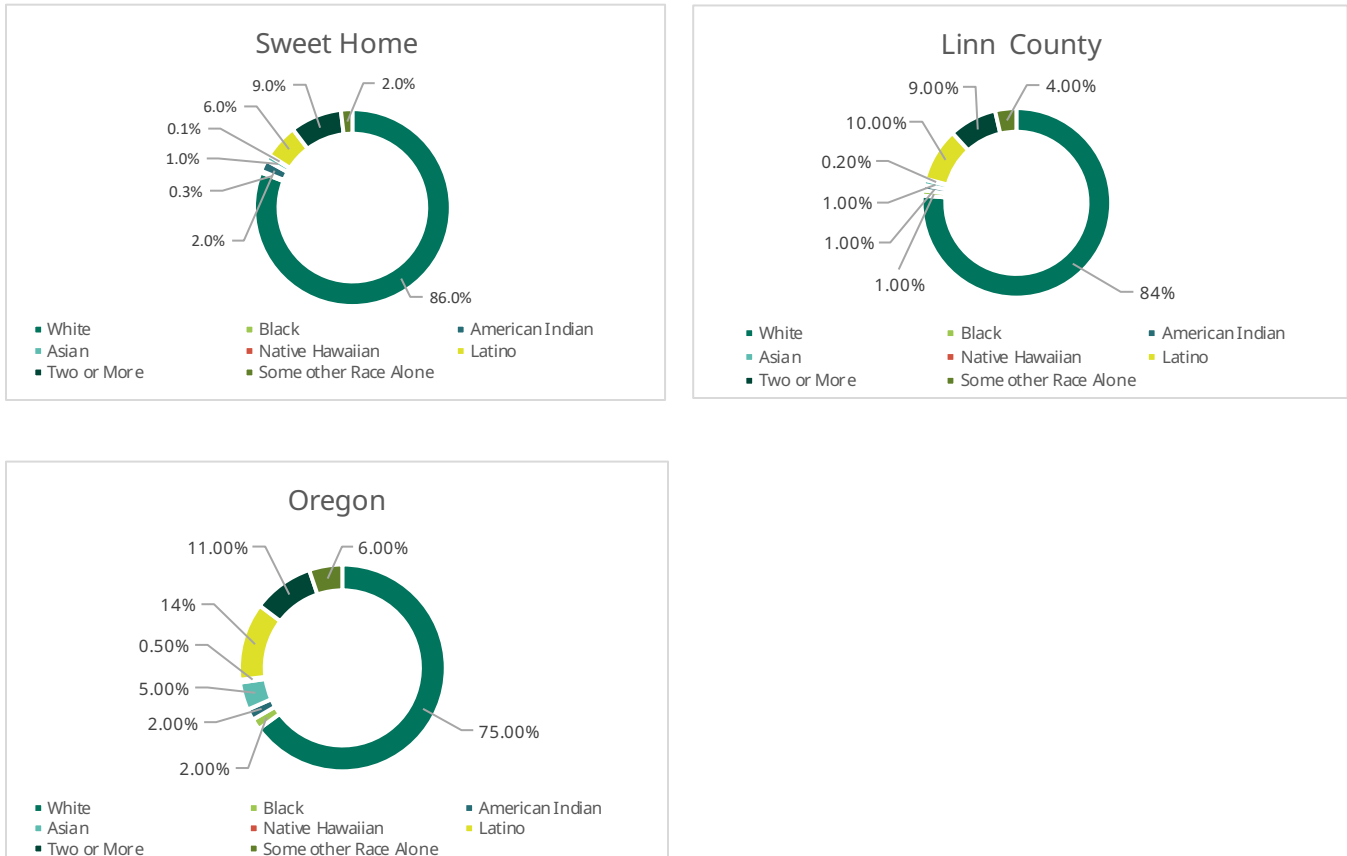
¹⁶ United States Census Bureau, 2020.

¹⁷ United State Census Bureau, 2020.

¹⁸ United States Census Bureau, 2020.

percentage change (+68%) compared to County (+21%) and State (+30%). These trends show growth for a more diversified population where a variety of park planning activities are needed to serve current and future community members.

Chart 1.2. Racial Composition by City, County, and State, 2020¹⁹



¹⁹ United States Census Bureau, 2020.

Family Makeup

Review of household type, housing tenure, and recent housing construction provides critical information for meeting park and recreation needs. This data assists with planning for the development of new parks and identifying potential funding sources, such as System Development Charges (SDCs). In addition, housing trends provide a snapshot of the type of housing being added to a community, where it is being added, and the type of homes that are being constructed.

In 2020, 67% of Sweet Home households were family households (individuals related by birth, marriage, or adoption) while 33% were non-family households (individuals living alone or with non-relatives). Of this 33% of non-family households, 24% live alone. As shown in Chart 1.6, Sweet Home has similar family occupancy to Linn County, yet more family households (67%) than the state (63%). Sweet Home also has slightly more non-family households than the County (32%), yet less than the State (37%). This percentage of non-family households who live alone highlights opportunities for the City to meet the needs of non-family households, some of which are older residents living alone. The high percentage of family households highlights the need to provide activities and opportunities across a wide age spectrum for families.

Table 1.14. Makeup of Households, 2020²⁰

	Family	Non-Family
Sweet Home	2,649 (67%)	1,286 (33%)
Linn County	32,784 (68%)	15,506 (32%)
Oregon	1,034,877 (63%)	607,702 (37%)

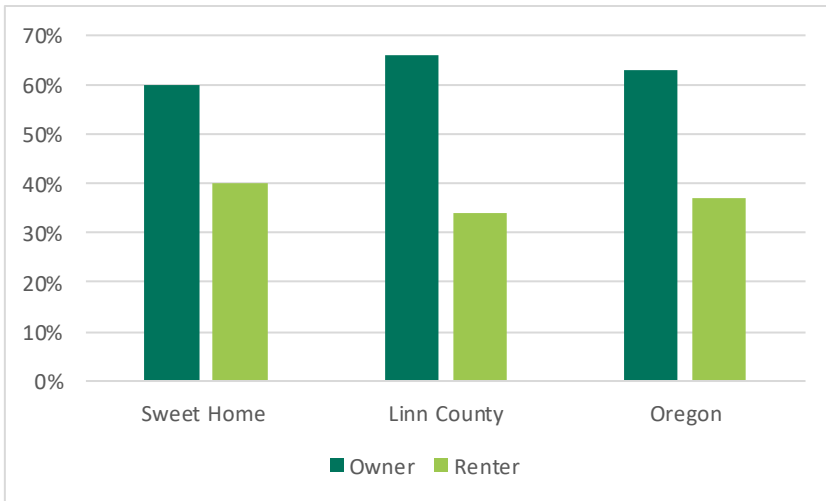
In 2020, Sweet Home had 3,935 housing units within its city limits. Roughly 60% of residents own their homes, while 40% are renters. As shown in Chart 1.7, overall, Sweet Home had a lesser percentage of owners in comparison to Linn County (66%) and Oregon (63%).

²⁰ United States Census Bureau, 2020.

Table 1.15. Housing Tenure, 2020²¹

	Owner	Renter
Sweet Home	60%	40%
Linn County	66%	34%
Oregon	63%	37%

Chart 1.3. Housing Tenure City, County, and State, 2020²²



Residential Building Permits

Evaluating the residential growth of Sweet Home is useful in determining park system priorities and improvements. Residential building permits have fluctuated over the last couple of years but the permits issued last year in 2022 (45 permits) reflect a 40% increase from 2020 (32 permits). This may indicate an increase in residential development in Sweet Home and the potential for residential development to remain elevated in the coming years.

Table 1.16 Recent Residential Development Permits Per Year²³

Residential building permits	
2020	32
2021	47
2022	45

²¹ United States Census Bureau, 2020.

²² United States Census Bureau, 2020.

²³ City of Sweet Home, 2023.

ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

Income

A community’s support of, desire for, and willingness to pay for park and recreation services are directly related to the strength of its economic base. Understanding the economic characteristics of Sweet Home is a critical step in determining priorities for park and recreation services. This understanding will also aid the City in preparing grants and applying for alternate funding sources to help pay for park projects. Table 1.17 presents income and poverty information for Sweet Home, Linn County, and Oregon in 2020.

Table 1.17. Income and Poverty; Sweet Home, Linn County, and Oregon, 2020²⁴

	Sweet Home	Linn County	Oregon
Median Household Income	\$45,424	\$59,547	\$65,667
Median Family Income	\$52,246	\$68,860	\$80,630
Per Capita Income	\$20,539	\$27,820	\$35,393
Percent of Families below Poverty Level	9.6%	7.6%	7.8%
Individuals 18 and older below Poverty Level	23.8%	13%	13%

In 2020, Sweet Home’s median household income (\$45,424), median family income (\$52,246), and per capita income (\$20,539), were lower than both Linn County and Oregon. Sweet Home also has a higher percentage of families living below the poverty level (9.6%) than Linn County (7.6%) and Oregon (7.8%). The percentage of individuals 18 and over living below the poverty level is greater in Sweet Home (24%) than in Linn County (13%) and Oregon (13%). Poverty and income are important considerations in the parks planning process, as they influence residents’ willingness and ability to pay for higher levels of service and new facilities.

EDUCATION ANALYSIS

Attainment

The educational attainment of its residents also influences a community’s economic base. Understanding the educational background in Sweet Home helps further understand economic factors. Table 1.18 presents educational attainment for Sweet Home, Linn County, and Oregon in 2020.

In 2020, 58% of adult residents in Sweet Home had a high school diploma, and 5% had a bachelor’s degree or higher, the latter of which is lower than both Linn County and Oregon. High school diploma attainment was higher in Sweet Home (58%) compared to Linn County (46%) yet lower than the State (66%). Educational attainment and subsequent earning potential are important considerations in the parks planning process, as they influence residents’ ability to pay for higher service levels and new park facilities.

²⁴ Source: United States Census Bureau, 2020.

Table 1.18. Educational Attainment; Sweet Home, Linn County, and Oregon, 2020²⁵

Educational Attainment	Sweet Home	Linn County	Oregon
High School Diploma	58%	46%	66%
Bachelor’s Degree or Higher	5%	14%	25%

TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS

Commuting

Understanding Sweet Home's access to public parks via public or personal transportation is a critical step in determining priorities for accessibility to parks and recreational services. This understanding will also aid the City in preparing grants and applying for alternate funding sources to help pay for park projects. Table 1.9 presents commuting characteristics for Sweet Home, Linn County, and Oregon in 2020.

When comparing residents across the City, County, and State, 44% of residents in Sweet Home 16 years and over live in households with access to 3 or more vehicles, which is less than Linn County (46%), and more than Oregon (37%). Sweet Home had the highest percentage with access to at least 1 vehicle (23%), behind Linn County (16%), and Oregon (20%). Most Sweet Home residents have access to a vehicle, yet it is important to recognize the need to have accessible green spaces within walking distance for those who do not have means of transportation.

Table 1.19. Commuting Characteristics; Sweet Home, Linn County, and Oregon, 2020²⁶

Commuting Characteristics	Sweet Home	Linn County	Oregon
No Vehicle Available	2%	1%	3%
1 Vehicle Available	23%	16%	20%
2 Vehicles Available	32%	36%	40%
3 or More Vehicles Available	44%	46%	37%

Table 1.20. Disability Statistics; Sweet Home, Linn County and Oregon, 2020²⁷

Health	Sweet Home	Linn County	Oregon
Ambulatory Difficulty	13%	9%	7%
Cognitive Difficulty	16%	8%	6%
Hearing Difficulty	8%	6%	5%

²⁵ Source: United States Census Bureau, 2020.

²⁶ Source: United States Census Bureau, 2020.

²⁷ Source: United States Census Bureau, 2020.

Vision Difficulty	5%	3%	2%
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Disability Analysis

Understanding the status of disability in Sweet Home compared to Linn County and Oregon is an important factor that should be analyzed to best accommodate and provide adequate and accessible outdoor spaces. This understanding can also aid the City in preparing grants and applying for alternate funding sources to help pay for more accessible amenities. For this analysis, four disability categories were examined to understand the level of need for more inclusive design and planning efforts: ambulatory, hearing, vision, and cognitive. Ambulatory difficulty is defined as someone who has difficulty walking or climbing stairs.²⁸ Cognitive difficulty is defined as someone with serious difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions because of physical, mental, or emotional conditions.²⁹ Hearing difficulty is defined as someone who experiences serious difficulty hearing. And vision difficulty is defined as someone who experiences blindness or difficulty seeing, even when wearing glasses.³⁰ Chart 1.8 represents disability characteristics for Sweet Home, Linn County, and Oregon from the 2020 American Community Survey.

Within the disability statistics profile, Sweet Home exceeded both Linn County and Oregon in all four categories (ambulatory, cognitive, hearing, and vision). The greatest disabilities present in Sweet Home are ambulatory (13%) and cognitive (16%) difficulty. Given the high percentages of individuals experiencing disabilities in Sweet Home, there is a high priority to accommodate and create public spaces that are inclusive and accessible.

²⁸ United States Census Bureau, 2020.

²⁹ United States Census Bureau, 2020.

³⁰ United States Census Bureau, 2020.