



# THE COMMUNITY & THE COUNTY

Marion County, Oregon, is a vibrant community located in the heart of the Willamette Valley, one of the most fertile and agriculturally productive regions in the world. The area is dotted with cities, farms, and forests and is considered one of the most livable areas of the country, offering a low cost-of-living, quality schools, and mild weather.

The county covers 1,194 square miles and has a population of approximately 333,950. There are 20 incorporated cities and 37 unincorporated communities. Salem, the county seat and the state capital, is one of the valley's oldest cities and the third largest city in Oregon. Principal industries are agriculture, government, food processing, lumber, manufacturing, education, and tourism. Marion County has both private and public schools, pre-school through university level. There are four universities and two community colleges within a 30-mile radius.

Marion County is rich with parks, rivers, lakes, and recreational activities, including hiking, fishing, biking, boating, equestrian trails, organized children's sports and activities, Saturday artisan markets, theatre, museums, art fairs, music fairs, the Marion County Fair and the Oregon State Fair. A short driving distance to the east there is world class skiing in the Cascade Mountains. To the west are many beautiful public beaches on the Pacific Ocean. To the north is Portland, Oregon's cultural hub and largest city, and to the south are the rivers and canyons of the beautiful Rogue Valley and the annual Shakespearean Festival in Ashland.

The three members of the Board of Commissioners are the elected representatives of all persons residing in Marion County and set policy for the administration and operation of county government. The county's chief administrative officer carries out the board's directives with the assistance of county department heads and other county elected officials. The county employs 1,700 FTE employees, most of whom are represented by one of five bargaining units.

Marion County government provides community programs and services including property assessment and tax collection, children and family resources, elections, licensing and recording, justice courts, district attorney's services, public and behavioral health, juvenile programs, public works, jail, and law enforcement services.

