

# *Debt Affordability Report*



*Lane County, Oregon*



As of June 30, 2020



Prepared by:  
*Financial Services*  
*County Administration - Operations*

# Lane County, Oregon

## Debt Affordability Report

### For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2020

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## ***Introduction***

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Lane County, County Administration-Operations, Financial Services issues the Debt Affordability Report annually in accordance with debt policy as stated in Administrative Procedures Manual (APM) Chapter 2, Section 21, Lane Manual Debt Policies 4.025-4.030, and Oregon Revised Statutes 287A, “Local Government Borrowing.” The report provides information regarding the County’s outstanding debt and presents selected indicators of the County’s debt position to inform debt-related decisions and to identify areas that require enhanced monitoring.

Large capital projects can be funded through large one-time fee increases, by accumulating resources over a period of time, or through the use of long-term debt financing. A primary benefit of debt financing is that it encourages payment equity by spreading costs over time among all users of a financed asset during its useful life. The offsetting impact of financing an asset is an increase in outstanding debt balances. The debt balance associated with that asset will decrease over time as payments are made and principal is amortized.

This report presents both a broad view of changes and accomplishments related to overall Lane County debt as well as detailed information regarding specific categories of debt. There is no one single indicator that effectively describes the County’s debt profile, and broad-stroke comparisons may provide an incomplete picture of the County’s financial health and sustainability. Indicators that look at specific categories of debt provide more useful information regarding revenues supporting the debt, year-over-year changes, and the health and specific risks associated with a given category of debt. It is also important to recognize that changes in policy, major capital requirements, and economic conditions may have varying impacts on different categories of debt.

The report is intended to provide a method for evaluating the current debt position and proposed new issues in the context of legal constraints, the County’s ability to service the debt, and the impact of the debt on the County’s credit rating. Decisions regarding issuance or refinancing of debt should give consideration to the availability of County resources as well as the capital needs of the County.

The report provides an analysis of County debt compared with benchmarks in the following areas:

- Statutory limits - Legal constraints imposed by Oregon Revised Statutes
- Affordability measures - Indicators of the County’s ability to service the debt within current or projected cash flow levels and citizens’ affordability based on local economic conditions
- Bond rating - Indicators of how debt issues impact the County’s ability to maintain a strong credit rating

Establishing an acceptable range for the selected indicators allows the County to monitor its financial and debt position, and provides a framework for evaluating the impact of proposed debt issues.

The County’s fiscal year is July 1 through June 30. Unless otherwise noted, all figures in this report are as of June 30, 2020.

## ***Current Debt Position***

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As of June 30, 2020, the County had limited tax bonded debt outstanding of \$66.0 million and no General Obligation (GO) bonds outstanding. The County had \$4,240,655 in notes payable outstanding as of June 30, 2020.

Excluded from this report are:

- Notes payable and lines of credit of \$21.4 million (non-bonded debt) used to finance construction projects for Homes for Good (a discretely presented component unit of Lane County).

The County issues limited tax bonds and are backed by the full faith and credit of the County, within the limitations of Article XI of the Oregon Constitution, and are to be repaid from existing revenue sources. Descriptions of outstanding limited tax bonds are as follows:

*Full Faith and Credit Obligations, Series 2002A* - Original issue amount \$7,615,000 used to refund the 1998 Municipal Loan Agreement issued to finance public improvements to the County fairgrounds. In June 2011, all but \$1,170,000 was refunded with the issuance of Series 2011R. Remaining annual principal and semi-annual interest payments range from \$110,450 to \$115,500 per year (increasing) with final payment scheduled on June 1, 2022. Payment of principal and interest was originally insured by MBIA, and the policy is now held by the National Public Finance Guarantee Corp (NPDFG).

*Full Faith and Credit Obligations, Series 2003B* - Original issue amount \$5,655,000 used in part to refund the Special Obligations, Series 1993 and Limited Tax Revenue, Series 1995 bonds issued to finance public improvements to the County courthouse and jail, and to finance new costs of a facility for the County Elections division and the plaza/free Speech area at the County courthouse. Remaining annual principal and semi-annual interest payments are \$216,338 in fiscal year 2021 and then average \$221,304 per year thereafter with final payment scheduled on June 1, 2023. Payment of principal and interest was originally insured by MBIA, and the policy is now held by NPDFG.

*Limited Tax Pension Bonds, Series 2002* – Original issue amount \$71,408,377 (\$14,853,377 in deferred interest bonds and \$56,555,000 in current interest bonds) used to finance a portion of the estimated unfunded actuarial liability with the Oregon Public Employees Retirement System. Remaining annual principal and semi-annual interest payments fluctuate from \$8.1 million to \$11.2 million per year (increasing) with final payment scheduled on June 1, 2028. Payment of principal and interest is insured by AMBAC.

*Full Faith and Credit Obligations, Series 2009A* – Issued in the amount of \$27,930,000 on November 2, 2009 and used to refund a majority of the Series 2000 obligations and to finance the purchase and improvements to the Public Health Facility, the purchase of the Riverstone Health Clinic building, additional AIRS conversion costs, and upgrades to the heating and air conditioning system at the County correctional facility. In May 2017, all but \$4,935,000 was advance refunded with the issuance of Series 2017 bonds. Before the refunding, the annual principal and semi-annual interest payments were approximately \$2.3 million through 2021, and dropped down to \$1.9 million in 2022 and thereafter. After the refunding, remaining annual principal and semi-annual interest payments are \$1.6 million through fiscal year 2020 with final payment scheduled on November 1, 2020 for \$476,625. The bonds are not insured.

*Full Faith and Credit Obligations, Series 2011* – Issued in the amount of \$10,345,000 on March 30, 2011 and used to finance improvements to the Riverstone Health Clinic building, Richardson Park Marina, the Public Works Customer Service Center, the Lane Events Center Convention Center roof, and the Public Services Building steam conversion. Annual principal and semi-annual interest payments are approximately \$751,000 with the final payment scheduled on June 1, 2031. The bonds are not insured.

*Full Faith and Credit Refunding Obligations, Series 2011R* – Issued in the amount of \$4,945,000 on June 2, 2011 and used to refund a majority of the Series 2002A obligations. Remaining annual principal and semi-annual interest payments average \$575,000 with the final payment scheduled on June 1, 2022. The bonds are not insured.

*Full Faith and Credit Refunding Obligations, Series 2017* – Issued in the amount of \$8,870,000 on May 31, 2017 and used to advance refund a majority of the Series 2009A obligations. Annual principal and semi-annual interest payments are \$1,048,056 in fiscal year 2021. Thereafter, remaining annual principal and semi-annual interest payments are approximately \$1.05 million with the final payment scheduled on November 1, 2029. The bonds are not insured.

Limited tax bonds outstanding as of June 30, 2020 are as follows:

<u>Limited Tax Bond</u>	<u>Ending Balance</u>
Limited Tax Full Faith & Credit Bonds, Series 2002A	\$ 210,000
Limited Tax Full Faith & Credit Bonds, Series 2003B	605,000
Limited Tax Full Faith & Credit Bonds, Series 2009A	465,000
Limited Tax Full Faith & Credit Bonds, Series 2011	6,565,000
Limited Tax Full Faith & Credit Bonds, Series 2011R	1,085,000
Limited Tax Full Faith & Credit Bonds, Series 2017	8,870,000
Limited Tax Pension Bonds, Series 2002	48,150,000
Total limited tax bonds	<u>\$ 65,950,000</u>

The County also issues notes to finance construction projects in governmental activities. Descriptions of outstanding notes payable are as follows:

*Oregon Department of Energy's Small Scale Local Energy Loan Program* – Original issue amount of \$2,080,000 to finance machinery, equipment, and improvements to the regional computer data center that will provide energy savings to the County. The note terms required the County to transfer its Qualified Energy Conservation Bond (QECB) authority of \$2,041,695 to the State which the Oregon Department Energy used to finance the notes. Although the QECB's are not issued in the County's name, the County is responsible to apply for the interest subsidy with the Internal Revenue Service. Annual principal and semi-annual interest payments are approximately \$200,000 per year with final payment scheduled on October 1, 2029. Notes payable are backed by the full faith and credit of the County and are to be repaid from existing revenue sources. In fiscal year 2020, the County made one principal payment of \$125,000 and two interest payments on the loan in the amount of \$69,131 and received interest subsidy in the amount of \$42,660. Application for interest subsidy for fiscal year 2021 has been made with the Internal Revenue Service.

*Wilson Investments, LLC* - Original issue amount of \$2,800,000 to finance the purchase of real property and all improvements at 2699 Roosevelt Boulevard in Eugene, Oregon during fiscal year 2020. The purchase price of \$3.1 million, less the down payment and earnest money, was secured by a promissory note payable over 20 years at a five percent interest rate. Annual principal and semi-annual interest payments are \$221,745 per year with final payment scheduled on January 1, 2040. Notes payable are backed by the full faith and credit of the County and are to be repaid from existing revenue sources. The County has the right to prepay the note after five years of payments at a cost ranging from 10 percent and declining to 2 percent of the remaining note balance in addition to the actual remaining note balance. In fiscal year 2020, the County made principal payments of \$34,345 and interest payments of \$58,048.

Notes payable outstanding as of June 30, 2020 is as follows:

<u>Governmental Activities</u>	<u>Ending Balance</u>
Oregon Department of Energy	\$ 1,475,000
Wilson Investments, LLC	2,765,655
Total Notes Payable Outstanding	<u>\$ 4,240,655</u>

Overlapping debt represents the amount of property tax-backed debt issued by other agencies within the County. Lane County is not obligated by this debt, but it has been included as an indicator of the total debt burden on taxpayers within the County, and provides insight as to how much debt the community can afford.

**Net Overall Property Tax Backed Debt Outstanding for the Year Ended June 30, 2020**

Type of Debt	Outstanding at June 30, 2019	Additions	Reductions	Outstanding at June 30, 2020
Limited tax bonds - Direct Debt	\$ 72,928,058	\$ 261,942	\$ 7,240,000	\$ 65,950,000
Plus deferred amounts:				
issuance premiums, net of discounts	1,302,518	-	211,020	1,091,498
Less self-supporting limited and unlimited tax supported debt	(1,900,000)	-	(605,000)	(1,295,000)
Plus notes payable	1,600,000	2,800,000	159,345	4,240,655
Net direct debt	73,930,576	3,061,942	7,005,365	69,987,153
Overlapping debt	987,076,852	-	40,644,522	946,432,330
Net overall property tax backed debt	\$ 1,061,007,428	\$ 3,061,942	\$ 47,649,887	\$ 1,016,419,483

***Arbitrage Rebate Calculations***

The federal government requires that the County monitor and provide periodic reporting regarding the use and investment of tax exempt bond proceeds. Investment earnings on bond proceeds that exceed specific levels determined by the federal government must be returned to the federal government as “arbitrage rebate.” The County is in compliance with all rebate calculation requirements as of June 30, 2020. The County was not required to rebate any arbitrage earnings to the federal government during FY20.

## County Bond Ratings

A bond rating is an indicator of credit quality, assigned by an independent rating organization that monitors and reviews the County’s ability to repay debt. In July 2019 (the most recent review), Moody’s Investors Service upgraded Lane County, Oregon’s issuer rating to Aa1 from Aa2, and also upgraded to Aa1 from Aa2 the County’s rated full faith and credit obligations. Moody’s highlighted Lane County’s “strong finances, prudent management and low debt” as strengths that led to its decision to upgrade the County’s rating. In its credit analysis, released on July 15, 2019, Moody’s stated that Lane County’s “five year operating history was unusually strong for 2014-2018” due to prudent financial management. It also noted: “The fiscal 2020 budget marks the third consecutive budget without draws on reserves to support operations, and did not include layoffs or service reductions” and “employee healthcare benefit costs remain in-check for the fourth consecutive year.”

Lane County’s General Obligation Limited Tax (GOLT) bond rating of Aa1 is the highest of its kind in Lane County’s history, an improvement in the County’s general credit profile and a reflection of its long-term financial stability. An Aa1 rating identifies an organization with a very high grade credit. A high bond rating allows Lane County to reduce costs to taxpayers when refinancing existing debt and for financing public projects. It is considered a reflection of an organization’s quality financial management, lower credit risk and increased capacity to meet financial commitments.

Moody’s provides credit ratings and risk analysis of commercial and governmental entities around the world. When evaluating an organization’s credit profile, Moody’s reviews many factors of financial health, including: the local economy/tax base; finances/fund balances; management; and debt/pensions. For more information about Moody’s rating methodology, visit [www.moody.com](http://www.moody.com).

The ratings by Moody’s Investor Service on the County’s limited tax bonds are as follows:

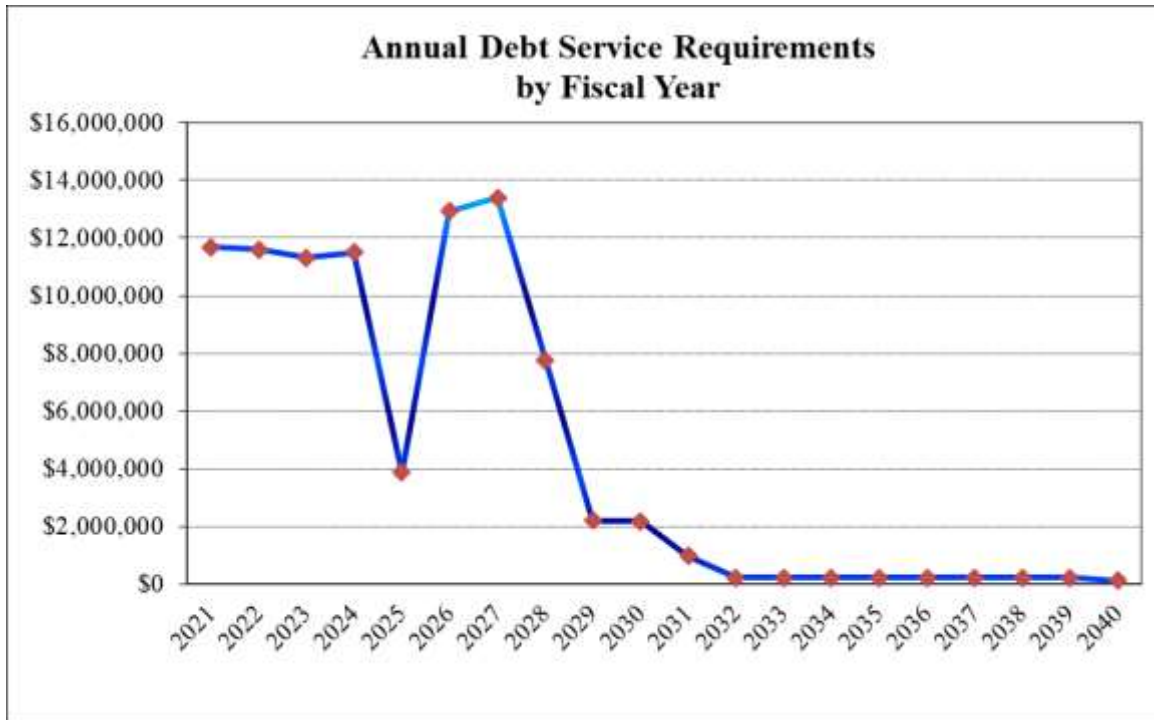
<b>Limited Tax Bond</b>	<b>Rating</b>
Limited Tax Full Faith & Credit Bonds, Series 2002A	Aa1
Limited Tax Full Faith & Credit Bonds, Series 2003B	Aa1
Limited Tax Full Faith & Credit Bonds, Series 2009A	Aa1
Limited Tax Full Faith & Credit Bonds, Series 2011	Aa1
Limited Tax Full Faith & Credit Bonds, Series 2011R	Aa1
Limited Tax Full Faith & Credit Bonds, Series 2017	Aa1
Limited Tax Pension Bonds, Series 2002 (Oregon Local Governments Pool)	Aa2

### Moody's Rating Key

Highest grade credit	Aaa
Very high grade credit	Aa1, Aa2, Aa3
High grade credit	A1, A2, A3
Good credit grade	Baa1, Baa2, Baa3, Baa4
Speculative grade credit	Ba1, Ba2, Ba3
Very speculative credit	B1, B2, B3
Substantial risks - In default	Caa1, Caa2, Caa3, Ca

## Future Debt Service Requirements

Future fiscal year principal and interest bond and notes payable payments as of June 30, 2020 are as follows:



Note: The debt service decline in 2025 is due to an early redemption of pension obligation bonds of \$8 million as follows: \$6.5 million in December 2007 and \$1.5 million in June of 2010. The debt service decline in 2029 to 2031 is due to the payoff of the pension obligation bonds. Notes payable continues from 2033-2040.

Future fiscal year payments on bonded debt, including future interest payments, as of June 30, 2020 are as follows:

Year Ending June 30	Bonded Debt Payments					
	Limited Tax Bonds, excluding Limited Tax Pension Bonds		Limited Tax Pension Bonds		Total Limited Tax Bonds	
	Principal	Interest	Principal	Interest	Principal	Interest
2021	\$ 2,520,000	\$ 659,080	\$ 4,800,000	\$ 3,298,274	\$ 7,320,000	\$ 3,957,354
2022	2,145,000	563,231	5,515,000	2,969,475	7,660,000	3,532,706
2023	1,540,000	478,582	6,290,000	2,591,697	7,830,000	3,070,279
2024	1,375,000	418,750	7,140,000	2,160,833	8,515,000	2,579,583
2025	1,435,000	363,050	-	1,671,743	1,435,000	2,034,793
2026-2030	8,065,000	926,884	24,405,000	3,080,446	32,470,000	4,007,330
2031	720,000	30,600	-	-	720,000	30,600
	<u>\$17,800,000</u>	<u>\$ 3,440,177</u>	<u>\$48,150,000</u>	<u>\$15,772,468</u>	<u>\$65,950,000</u>	<u>\$19,212,645</u>



Future fiscal year payments on notes payable, including future interest payments, as of June 30, 2020 are as follows:

Year Ending June 30	Notes Payable Payments	
	Principal	Interest
2021	\$ 210,402	\$ 201,256
2022	219,771	192,164
2023	229,364	182,269
2024	239,192	171,663
2025	249,267	160,316
2026-2030	1,407,023	604,865
2031-2040	1,685,636	439,421
	<u>\$4,240,655</u>	<u>\$1,951,954</u>

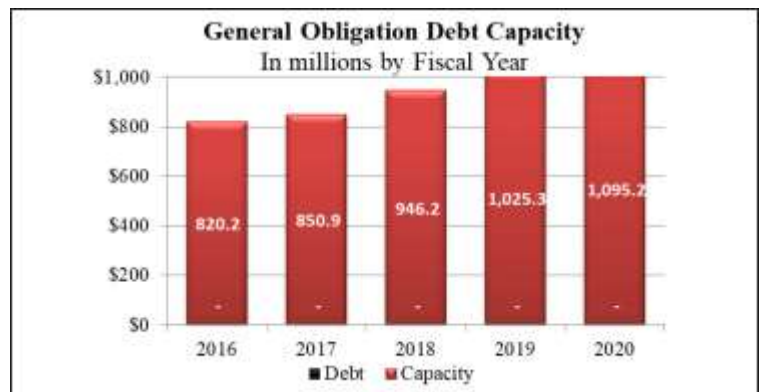
**Debt Payment Record**

The County has promptly met principal and interest payments on outstanding bonds and other indebtedness when due. Additionally, no refunding bonds have been issued for the purpose of preventing an impending default.

**Benchmarks**

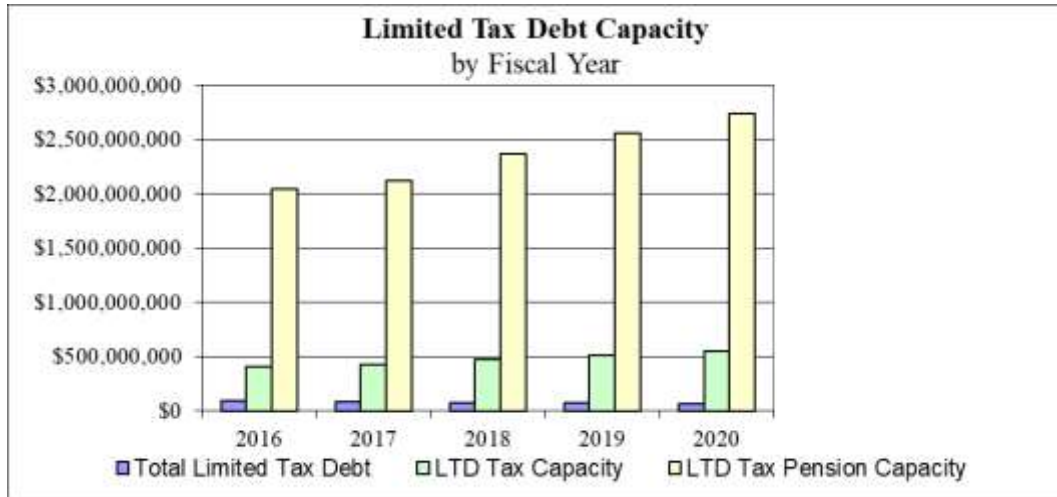
**Debt Limitation**

*General Obligation Bonds.* ORS 287A.100 establishes a limit on bonded indebtedness for counties. Counties may issue an aggregate principal amount up to **two percent of the Real Market Value** of all taxable properties within the county if the county’s voters approve the general obligation bonds. General obligation bonds are secured by the power to levy an additional tax outside the limitations of Article XI, Sections 11 and 11b. Lane County has no general obligation bonded debt outstanding.



It should be noted that the County’s limited use of debt supported by property taxes is an important consideration for the rating agencies when evaluating the County’s credit strength. The County does not, and should not, strive to utilize its full debt capacity within the County’s policy limits. It is prudent for the County to retain borrowing capacity to limit overexposure to debt, to maintain sustainable cash flows, and to protect capacity in the event of need during catastrophic or emergency events.

*Full Faith and Credit Obligations/Limited Tax Obligations.* Local governments may issue limited tax bonds that are secured by the issuer’s full faith and credit and taxing power within the limitations of Article XI, Sections 11 and 11b. Article XI, Section 10 of the Oregon Constitution imposes a debt limit on Oregon Counties of \$5,000, but allows the Oregon Legislature to authorize bonded indebtedness in excess of that limit. Per ORS 287A.105, the Oregon Legislature has authorized counties to issue limited tax bonds for general county purposes in an amount that does not exceed **one percent of the Real Market Value** of all taxable properties within the county. Current County limited tax bonded debt is at 3.23 percent capacity for limited tax bonds.



*Pension Bonds.* ORS 238.694 authorizes counties to issue full faith and credit obligations to finance pension liabilities in an amount that does not exceed **five percent of the Real Market Value** of all taxable property in the county. Pension bonds are not general obligations as defined under State law and the County is not authorized to levy additional taxes to make pension bond payments. Current County limited tax bonded debt is at 1.76 percent capacity for limited tax pension bonds.

**Lane County Debt Capacity  
As of June 30, 2020  
Real Market Value \$54,759,767,694**

Bond Type	Debt Limit (% of RMV)	Total Debt Capacity	Outstanding Debt Subject to Limit	Remaining Legal Capacity	Percent of Capacity Issued
General Obligation Bonds	2.0%	\$1,095,195,354	-	\$1,095,195,354	0.00%
Limited Tax Bonds	1.0%	\$ 547,597,677	\$17,694,369	\$ 529,903,308	3.23%
Limited Tax Pension Bonds	5.0%	\$2,737,988,385	\$48,150,000	\$2,689,838,385	1.76%

***Affordability Measures***

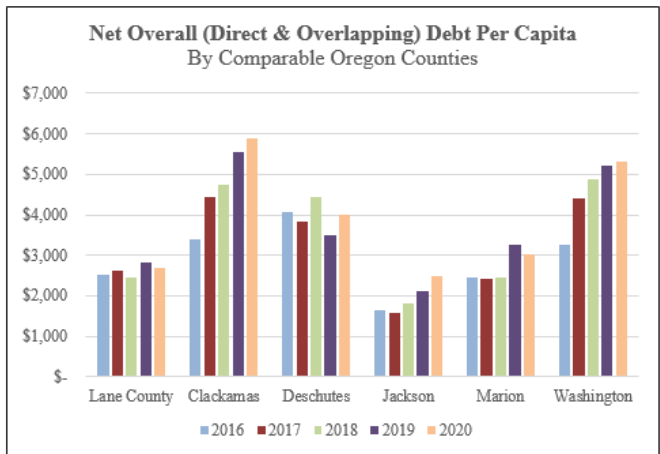
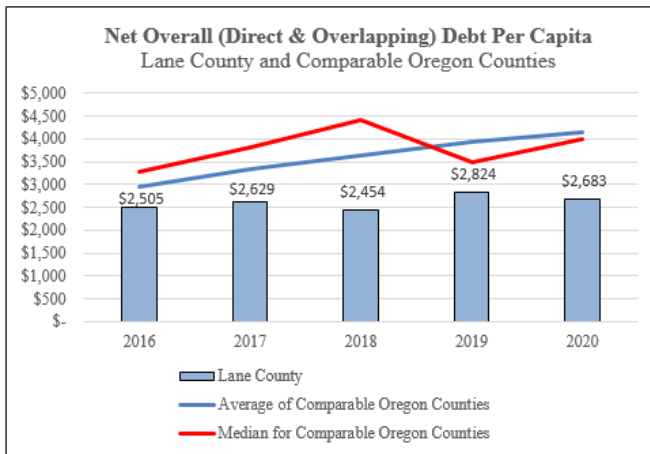
Debt per capita is a measure of the net overall debt burden on each individual residing within the county. This measure includes overlapping debt of other agencies in the county to provide an indication of the ability of the taxpayers to carry the debt. The following table presents information regarding the County’s net direct debt and the estimated portion of the debt of overlapping taxing districts allocated to the county’s property owners.

Debt Information*	As of June 30, 2019		As of June 30, 2020	
	Net County Debt	Net Overlapping Debt	Net County Debt	Net Overlapping Debt
County Net Direct Debt	\$73,930,576	\$1,061,007,428	\$69,987,153	\$1,016,419,483
Debt as % to RMV	0.14%	2.07%	0.13%	1.86%
Debt Per Capita	\$193	\$2,824	\$185	\$ 2,683

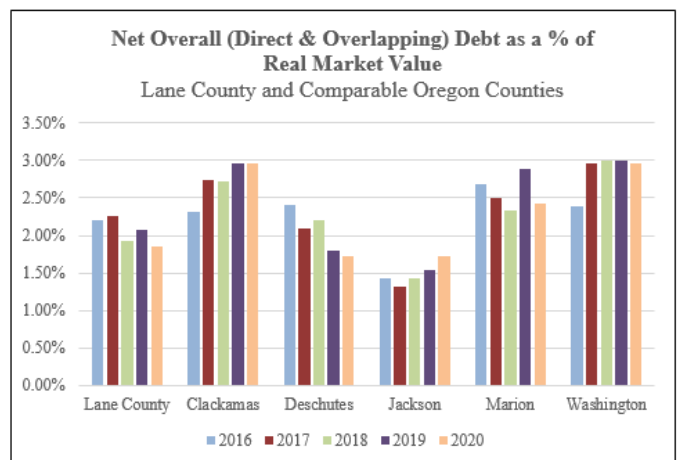
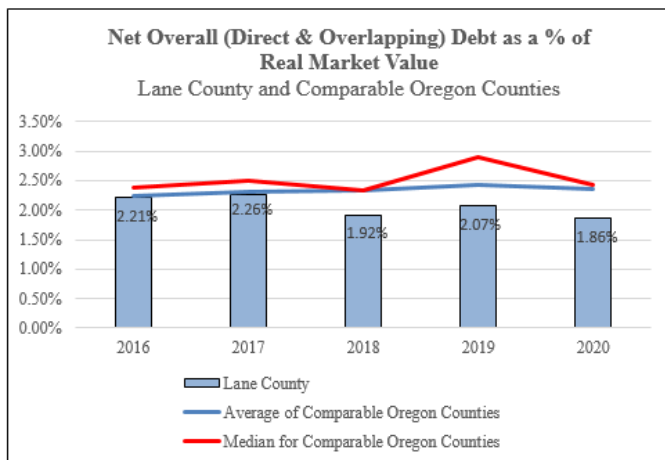
\*Net Debt does not include self-supporting limited and unlimited tax supported debt (revised).

As of June 30, 2020, Lane County’s net direct debt per capita decreased to \$185 and the net overlapping debt per capita also decreased to \$2,683. Net overall debt as a percentage of real market value of taxable real property located within the county provides an indication as to citizen affordability based on property ownership. As of June 30, 2020, Lane County’s ratio decreased slightly to 0.13 percent while the overlapping debt ratio decreased to 1.86 percent.

Lane County debt per capita for both direct and overlapping debt is benchmarked in the graphs below with the average and median for comparable Oregon counties<sup>1</sup> and illustrated by County.



Lane County debt as a percent of real market value is benchmarked in the graphs below with the average and median for comparable Oregon counties<sup>1</sup> and illustrated by County.



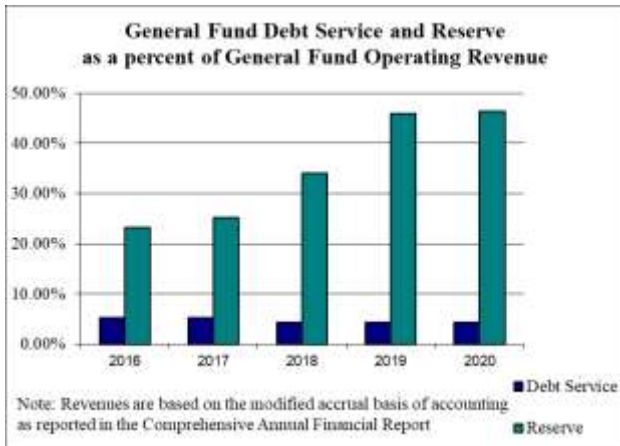
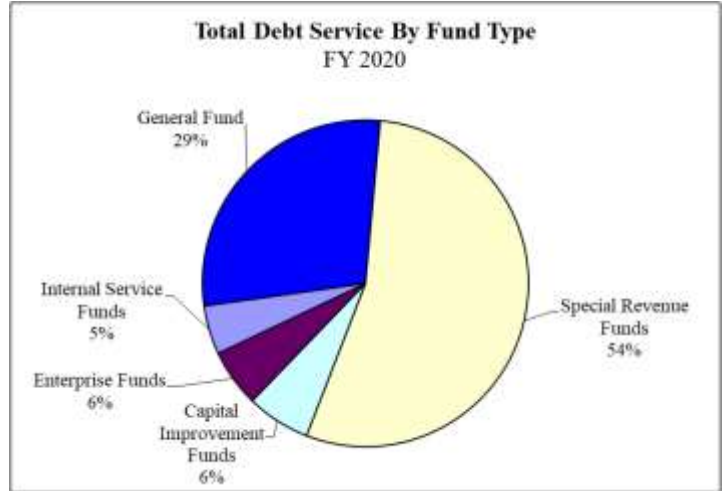
<sup>1</sup> Counties included are Clackamas, Deschutes, Jackson, Marion, and Washington.  
 Source: Oregon State Treasury, Municipal Debt Advisory Commission. Overlapping Debt Reports

**General Fund Analysis**

A portion of the County’s bonded debt is serviced by General Fund resources, depending on the original use of the debt proceeds. For example, the limited tax bonded debt includes \$48.2 million in pension bonds that are serviced by a payroll assessment on all funds containing budgeted positions. In fiscal year 2020, the General Fund paid 27 percent of the payroll assessment.

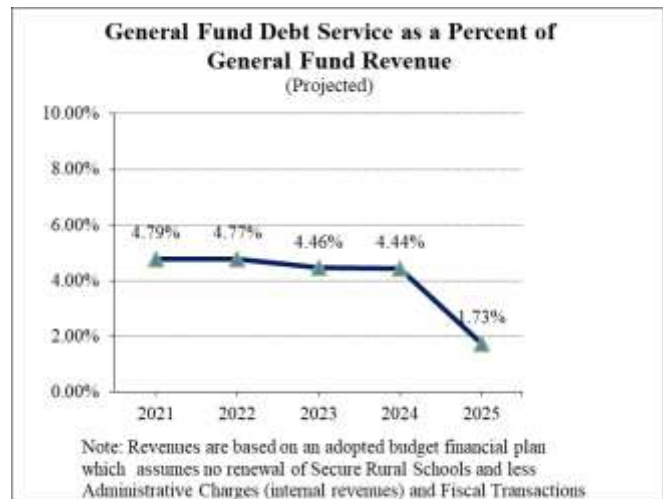
To analyze the ability of the General Fund to support additional debt, the following charts reflect an estimate of the total debt service obligation of the General Fund (including an allocated portion of limited tax bonded debt). General Fund resources serviced 29 percent of the County’s debt service in fiscal year 2020.

The percentage of General Fund revenues dedicated to meet debt service requirements is an indicator of the County’s capacity to meet its debt obligations. For the fiscal year ended June 30, 2020, General Fund debt service requirements were 4.35 percent of General Fund operating revenues.



The current trend in the General Fund reserves and the General Fund debt service as a percent of General Fund revenues are positive. The General Fund reserve policy establishes and strives to maintain a minimum 20 percent reserve of anticipated operating revenues, to ensure adequate cash flow, a strong standing with bond rating agencies, and protection of service levels to the community in the event of unforeseen events, revenue volatility, or economic downturns. The increase in General Fund reserves can be directly linked to budget actions that strengthened the reserve levels to help smooth the transition away from reliance on Secure Rural Schools funding.

Another measure of particular interest to rating agencies is the projected level of General Fund debt service as a percentage of revenue over the next five year period. Lane County’s projections average a low 4.04 percent over the next five year period. The one-time decrease in 2025 is due to an early redemption of pension obligation bonds for that year.



### ***Payout Levels***

The debt payout indicator reflects how quickly the County expects to repay outstanding debt. A more rapid repayment period reduces risks associated with future loss of revenue and is an indicator of repayment strength. Rapid repayment also allows debt capacity to be released and made available for future capital needs. Five-year and ten-year payout levels represent the percentage of outstanding principal that will be repaid within five and ten years. For this calculation, the pension obligation debt has been excluded. The pension obligation debt repayment period matches the underlying PERS liability amortization period.

Lane County current payout of principal within 5 years	43%
Moody's 5 year median	25%
Lane County current payout of principal within 10 years	86%
Moody's 10 year median	50%

### ***Conclusion***

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The County's current level of debt appears manageable and well within established benchmarks. A close analysis is merited prior to issuing any additional debt. External factors outside the County's control also affect the affordability of debt. These include fluctuation in the state's economic indicators, debt issued by other municipalities in the County, and local per capita income.

The County continues to manage within its financial resources and without reliance on unplanned debt issuance. Metrics related to debt issuance have remained within healthy, historical norms. Future debt payments are not expected to outpace the revenue streams that support the various categories of County debt. When compared to industry benchmarks, comparative rating information, and debt service coverage capacity, the County's debt position is favorable.

Responsible use of debt financing spreads costs of County infrastructure over the usable life of an asset, allows the County to accommodate large capital needs, provides management control over cash flows and expenses, and contributes to a healthy government financial system. This report provides a helpful presentation of key information the County uses to monitor and maintain stable and sustainable County debt programs.

### ***Requests for Information***

Questions concerning any of the information provided in this report or requests for additional financial information should be addressed to:

Robert Tintle, County Treasurer/Financial Services Manager  
Lane County Financial Services  
125 East 8th Avenue  
Eugene, OR 97401

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Website: [www.lanecounty.org/finance](http://www.lanecounty.org/finance)