

## Second Housing Survey Sets Stage For New Development

■ Tribal members looked at "homeland" issues while most newer Tribal members failed to respond.

By Ron Karten

Five years ago, Portland-based Western Economic Services conducted the first survey of Tribal housing needs in Grand Ronde. It came before the Tribal Housing Authority had built Elder housing or the community housing project now going up. It made a case for these Tribal housing projects here in Grand Ronde.

The latest survey makes a case for more affordable housing for Tribal members and affirms the current Tribal plan to build market-rate housing in Grand Ronde. The need for recreational development also surfaced through the survey.

A number of questions still need to be answered, however. Those who responded to the study, for example, were overwhelmingly from the membership group that helped establish the Tribe and fought for Restoration. More than 75 percent of the responses came from Tribal members enrolled before 1994 with another 11 percent from members enrolled between 1994-96.

"It's hard for me to understand what the newer members want if they don't respond to the survey," said Carina Kistler Ginter, Director of the Tribal Housing Authority.

In addition, according to the survey, a larger number of young Tribal members see the need for more Elder housing than Elders who see the need. Although the study did not seek reasons for this disparity, Robert M. Gaudin, Director of Research and Planning for Western Economic Services, said that the numbers might indicate that more Tribal members believed in the idea of Tribally funded Elder housing than saw an actual need.

The study showed overwhelming support for the Tribe to con-

tinue helping Tribal members with their housing needs (87 percent), but a little less support for the Tribe's effort to re-establish a homeland here in Grand Ronde

At the same time, Tribal members uniformly favored meeting Tribal member housing needs outside of Grand Ronde. For those responding from the six-county area,

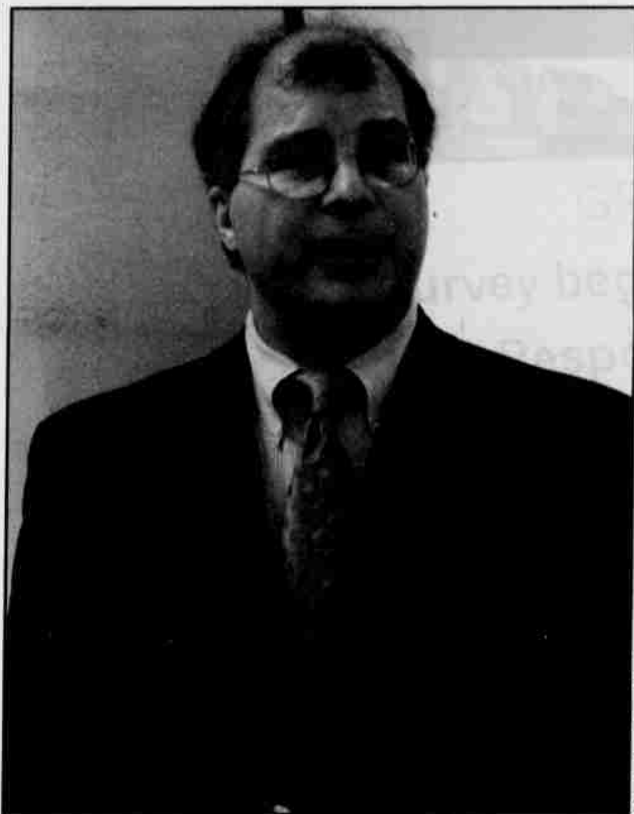
*"We're going to grow and keep on growing. To get a handle on it, we need to do strategic planning."*

~ Carina Kistler Ginter

Director of the Tribal Housing Authority

(69 percent vs 91 percent five years ago).

With one-third of the respondents indicating that they didn't know what to say about the Tribe's effort to establish a homeland, the result points to "a lot of confusion or uncertainty," said Gaudin.



Robert M. Gaudin, Director of Research & Planning for Western Economic Services

Photo by Ron Karten

The results were almost identical for a follow-up question about whether the Tribe should continue building new housing as part of the effort to establish a homeland.

57percent favored housing efforts beyond the Grand Ronde area. For those responding from outside of Grand Ronde, the number jumps to 73 percent.

With only 45 percent of individuals responding to the survey compared with almost 64 percent five years ago, it is important to learn what the lack of response means, according to Gaudin.

For statistical purposes, the survey assumed the results reflect the feelings of the entire Tribe while recognizing that the statistical extrapolation may not be accurate.

"Something changed in the perception of those responding," said Gaudin.

Tribal staff and council members had some observations:

"Hundreds who want housing here already work here," said Larry Leith, Rental Housing Coordinator for the Tribal Housing Authority, "but there is no housing available."

Others won't move here because the schools are not seen as adequate, said Kistler Ginter.

"There are more (entertainment) activities in Salem," said Leith. "I hear that a lot."

Tribal Council member Angie Blackwell said that decisions about the future of Grand Ronde depend on "how do we define 'quality of life'?"

"We're going to grow and keep on growing," said Kistler Ginter in an interview after the presentation. "To get a handle on it, we need to do strategic planning."

Tribal home owners and renters expressed a need for housing services like emergency mortgage assistance and assistance with utility payments among both those living within and outside of the six-county area. Unfortunately, these are areas where there is not enough money to go around.

The survey also revealed, however, that services currently offered by the Tribe, with money available, were among those that homeowners and renters said they need. It was not clear from the survey, however, whether these respondents had already taken advantage of the Tribal services and still needed more, or whether they had fallen through the cracks.

Gaudin called this "a disconnect" between the statistics and the Tribal reality.

Many drew the conclusion that from this "disconnect" that the Tribe needs better outreach efforts to keep Tribal members informed about available services and to teach them how to access those services.

Kistler Ginter said that the Housing Authority frequently advertises these services in *Smoke Signals* and regularly takes a booth at pow-wows to keep Tribal members informed.

The study found that 62 percent of Tribal members live in single-family housing and that 78 percent prefer this type of housing. This is in line with a national trend, said Kistler Ginter.

Tribal efforts may be making a difference in the household income of Tribal members, according to the survey.

Five years ago, more than 30 percent of Tribal households had annual incomes below \$20,000. Today, it is only 23.2 percent. Five years ago, 23.5 percent of Tribal households had annual incomes over \$50,000, and now 31 percent are in the category. Households with incomes over \$75,000 increased from 7 percent five years ago to nearly 13 percent today.

And in addition, 72 percent of respondents liked the idea of "giving back" to the Tribe in the form of volunteerism in return for the Tribe's housing support.

## Country Superstar And Movie Actor Plays To A Full House



Photos by Toby McClary

### Jam Session —

Dwight Yoakam, who has won countless awards as a musician, also wanted to try his hand in acting. Yoakam appeared on TV before hitting the big-screen in the early 90s. He has acted in many movies including "Chasers" and "Painted Hero." Yoakam received critical raves for his performance as an abusive alcoholic in the Oscar-winning film, "Slingblade."

