

These observations are the work of the Community Partners (the community members who conducted the assessment), as they took a high level look and did some preliminary analysis of the findings of Snohomish County Counts. The Community Partners offer this summary as a starting point to encourage other community members to engage in their own analysis of the information gathered by Snohomish County Counts.

Community Strengths

Overall, people view Snohomish County as a good place to live

- Friendly
- People get along
- Welcoming of greater diversity
- Environment, natural beauty, clean air/water

Citizens experience this as a safe place to live

- Police respond quickly
- Emergency (earthquake) preparedness
- People willing to pay more taxes for a safe place to live (police, schools, public health, fire)

Economy

- High sense of job security
- Taxes – essential community services

Accessibility

- Well-located
- Neighborhood-based services

Recent and Ongoing Changes – Top Concerns

Population Growth

- Heaviest in North County
- Increasing Diversity
- Rapid growth (30% in past 10 years)

Housing

- 8th most expensive housing market in U.S.
- Housing costs rising more rapidly than incomes

Transportation

- One-third of county labor force commutes to another county
- Increased traffic congestion
- Twice as many vehicles driving twice as many miles as state average

Economy

- Rising unemployment (2nd highest in nation)
- Fewer \$\$ for essential services

Surprises – what have we found in our analysis that we didn't expect?

- Perceptions don't match data, i.e., economy and job security
- Accessibility is positive, but traffic is a concern
- Education issues didn't rise to the top
- Willingness to pay more taxes is a strength
- Single parent families didn't rise up as an issue

Other Themes – ideas that arose as we were analyzing but are not directly linked to our data

- Stalemate in state legislature re: representative v. referendum
- Transportation – better/more roads v. developing a transportation system
- Living wage jobs v. preserving the environment/quality of life
- Lack of support for commercial and industrial expansion
- Ability of young families to enter/become established in Snohomish County – and lack of supports for that

Parking Lot – unresolved questions/issues

- “Accessibility” is undefined
 - Accessible to what?
 - What was included when grouping answers into this category? How does it differ from traffic and transportation?
- Should we update our reports with information to cover the “gaps”?
- How should we integrate the focus group information with our other work?
- Do we want to create a Feedback Form about assessment information?
- Do we want to form a Speakers' Bureau re Snohomish County Counts?
- Do we need a more concise Summary Report?

Gaps – what have we left out of our analysis of the community?

- Health/social issues
 - Meth labs
 - STDs
- Education – need more info
- Environment
- Youth
- Economy as it is today – no current stats
- Focus Groups not represented in Report [Note: This has been corrected, see website.]
- Seniors
- US Navy/Boeing – continuing community impacts?
- Racial/Ethnic tension / Diversity issues and perspectives
- Differences between Community Leaders and General Population responses
- Differences between General Population and Non-English responses
- Regional differences in responses