

SNOHOMISH COUNTY *courts*

Voices

Strengths

Needs

Actions

- Why assess now?
- Who participated?
- What did we do?
- What did we find out?
- How have we shared the information?
- How will this information be used?

Snohomish County Counts

- Last assessment conducted in 1995 – needs-focused
- Community-wide assessment that identifies growth, changes, strengths and community concerns
- Focus on perceptions and opinions
- Provides a resource for local organizations, individuals, and the public
- Will help build a community plan

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Participants

- Healthy Communities for Snohomish County
- Snohomish Health District
- Snohomish County Human Services
- United Way of Snohomish County
- More than 40 people representing all sectors of community life

Financial Sponsors

- ◆ City of Everett Human Services
- ◆ Community Services Advisory Council of Snohomish County
- ◆ Everett Rotary Club
- ◆ Healthy Communities for Snohomish County
- ◆ Human Services Council of Snohomish County
- ◆ Providence Everett Medical Center
- ◆ Snohomish County Human Services
- ◆ Snohomish Health District
- ◆ Starbucks
- ◆ The Herald
- ◆ United Way of Snohomish County
- ◆ Verizon Foundation

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Assessment tools

- Random telephone survey of 1,200 county residents
- Survey of 72 non-English-speaking residents
- 27 focus groups of special populations
- Mail survey of 2,000 community leaders
- Inventory of 3,000 community assets
- Data from existing sources

- Data collected late September through mid November 2001

What we found: Strengths

How would you rate SC as a place to live?

General Population

- Excellent (21%)
- Good (63%)

Community Leaders

- Excellent (36%)
- Good (53%)

Non-English Speaking Respondents

- Excellent or Good (69%)

Telephone Survey

- Sample size of 1,200 = $\pm 2.8\%$ overall margin of error for results
- County divided into 3 regions
 - Everett, Marysville and Highway 99 corridor
 - North and East region
 - West and South Central region
- Regions reflect different population densities, poverty levels and urbanization
- 400 respondents per region = $\pm 5.0\%$ margin of error

What we found: Strengths

Best Things About Your Community

General Population

- Friendliness/people get along (38%)
- Accessibility/location/neighborhood (33%)
- Environment – air, water, clean, quiet (29%)
- The area – beauty, geography, mountains, trees (27%)
- Quality/pace of life (21%)
- Safe place to live (13%)
- Recreation/access to parks, family activities (8%)

What we found: Concerns

Concerns About Your Community

General Population

- Traffic (20%)
- Development/planning issues (12%)
- Crime/safety (11%)
- Population/growth (9%)
- Social/health issues (7%)
- Schools/education (6%)
- No concerns (8%)

What we found: Concerns

Concerns About Your Household

General Population

- Enough money to pay bills, keep up, taxes (28%)
- Health problems (mental/physical) (14%)
- Employment/finding a job (12%)
- Housing – getting, keeping, fixing (10%)

Non-English Survey

- 72 respondents
- 5 languages: Arabic, Cambodian, Russian, Spanish, Vietnamese
- Relates opinions and perspectives of only those persons interviewed
- Not random and therefore not statistically comparable with telephone survey

What we found: Strengths

Best Things About Your Community

Non-English Speaking Respondents

- Geographic beauty of area (25%)
- Clean environment (24%)
- Friendliness of people (21%)
- Affordability of living here (21%)

What we found: Concerns

Concerns About Your Community

Non-English Speaking Respondents

- Crime and safety (24%)
- Cost of living (15%)
- Lack of jobs (14%)
- Traffic (11%)
- Population growth (11%)

What we found: Concerns

Concerns About Your Household

Non-English Speaking Respondents

- Employment (36%)
- Enough money to pay bills (33%)

Community Focus Groups

- 27 Focus groups = 219 individuals
- Voices not captured by telephone survey
- Homeless individuals and families, youth, senior citizens, tribal members, gay men, parents of disabled children, intravenous drug users, and more
- Asked about community strengths and concerns, family/household concerns, and ideas for community improvement

What we found: Strengths

Best Things About Your Community

Focus Groups

- Community involvement/Collaboration/Norms
- Agencies that provide supportive services
- Recreation options
- Individuals
- Supports for children and youth
- Schools/education/training options
- Consumer conveniences
- Services

What we found: Concerns

Concerns About Your Community

Focus Groups

- Services—inadequate, unfunded, unskilled workers
- Discrimination
- Children/Youth issues
- Medical/Dental care
- Education/Schools
- Employment—security
- Transportation
- Cost of Living

What we found: Concerns

Concerns About Your Household

Focus Groups

- Isolation/lack of supports
- Children/Youth issues
- Safety concerns
- Family supports
- Health services/issues
- Money—not enough
- Basic needs—clothes, food, housing
- Mental health issues/services

What we found: Action

Ideas for Community Improvement

Focus Groups

- Human services – need more, funding
- Transportation improvements
- Children/Youth services—increase, improve
- Schools/Education opportunities
- Educate community about issues
- Social/Cultural opportunities
- Community involvement
- Health/Dental services—affordable

Community Leader Survey

- Mail survey to 2,000 community leaders
- Included business, labor, government, faith, education, neighborhood, nonprofit, and other groups
- Asked about community strengths and concerns, organizational influence and effectiveness
- 19% response rate

What we found: Strengths

Best Things About Your Community

Community Leaders

- Accessibility/location/neighborhood (32%)
- Friendliness/people get along (30%)
- Quality of life/pace/relaxed (29%)
- Geography/beauty/mountains/trees (29%)
- Environment: air, water, quiet, clean (18%)
- Recreation/access to parks (12%)
- Schools/quality (11%)

What we found: Concerns

Concerns About Your Community

Community Leaders

- Traffic (24%)
- Social/health concerns (24%)
- Cost of living going up (8%)
- Development/planning (6%)
- Employment/lack of jobs (6%)
- Public transportation (5%)

What we found: Action

How to Resolve Number One Concern

Community Leaders

- Better transportation planning (27%)
- Social and health services (24%)
- Child/youth/teen programs (14%)
- Better growth management/planning (11%)
- Bring in more jobs/better jobs (9%)
- Other (19%)

What we found: Action

If you had to focus support for one population, to improve the overall quality of life in SC... (closed set of answers)

Community Leaders

- Children, 10-17 years old (32%)
- Low income (23%)
- Children, under 10 years old (14%)
- Elderly (5%)
- A racial/ethnic group, nonspecific (4%)
- People with disabilities (3%)

Community Assets Inventory

- Inventoried 3,000 community resources
- Businesses, labor organizations, faith communities, associations, not-for-profit organizations
- Asked about resources available to the community, services provided, and areas of current and future community involvement
- 214 responses

What we found: Strengths

Top Areas of Current Community Involvement

Community Assets Inventory

- Promoting volunteerism (102)
- Promoting good health (95)
- Fostering community networks (85)
- Preparing people for jobs (63)
- Connect neighbors who need help w/ people who help (56)
- Increasing availability of recreation opportunities (51)

What we found: Strengths

Top Areas of Future Community Involvement

Community Assets Inventory

- Promoting volunteerism (75)
- Promoting good health (64)
- Fostering community networks (58)
- Building neighborhood trust (44)
- Connect neighbors needing help w/ people who help (43)

Secondary Data

- Collected data from existing sources, like Snohomish Health District, various Washington State offices, Puget Sound Regional Council, school districts
- Topic areas: Demographics, Economy, Education, Health, Leisure Activities, Safety, Transportation, and Housing
- Did not include 2000 U.S. Census

What COUNTS to you

How does it all add up?

- People like living in Snohomish County—it is friendly, beautiful, accessible, fun, safe
- Traffic is the #1 issue
- Followed by concerns about development planning and housing, health and social issues, economy and living wage jobs

What COUNTS to you

Themes throughout our findings:

- Traffic and transportation
- Regional framework for many issues, including jobs, economy, traffic, communication, leisure, higher education (4 year institutions), media market
- Population growth and changes

Action

How we are sharing *Snohomish County Counts*?

- Herald insert (March 14, 2002)
- Community presentations throughout Snohomish County (May 2002)
- Community Leaders' Summit (June 14, 2002)
- Web site: <http://www.uwsc.org/assessment>
- Assessment reports and data available on CD-rom
- Building a data base of community assets

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Action

How will this information be used?

- To complement the 2000 U.S. Census (hard data) with local perspectives and opinions
- Inform community leaders and decision makers
- Help plan health and human services
- Substantiate grant requests
- Learn more about local communities and inspire them to work together

Action - Community Leaders' Summit

Snohomish County Assets/Strengths

- Willingness to collaborate
- Growing diversity
- Wealth of resources
- Strong workforce
- Untapped workforce
- Volunteers
- Proactive stance toward change
- Families

Action - Community Leaders' Summit

Snohomish County Challenges

- Diversity – changing population, embracing and celebrating differences
- Focus on children and youth – education, juvenile justice
- Income disparity – worker issues, livable wage, hidden poverty, quality of life
- Affordable housing
- Public education – tax issues
- Community – connections, celebrations, call to action, empowerment to not rely on government
- Focus on seniors – healthcare, poverty
- Healthcare – accessibility, prescriptions
- Traffic

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