

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

Snohomish County community partners collaborated on a multifaceted approach to assess the needs and assets of Snohomish County. To collect information from Snohomish County residents and community leaders, four types of surveys were conducted between September 20 and November 7, 2001. The primary survey was a population-based random telephone survey of 1200 Snohomish County residents. A non-random survey of a small number of non-English speaking residents was done and a non-random, mailed survey was sent to community leaders and key informants. The results from these three surveys are summarized below. A fourth survey method using focus groups was conducted in populations that would be under-represented (e.g., low income, elderly, homeless, etc) in the random telephone survey, but these results are presented in a separate report.

Most population-based surveys are conducted at only the county level. Collection of data at the sub-county level is usually not done because to obtain statistically valid results larger sample sizes are needed which means increased costs and requires more complex analyses. However, an important aspect of the Snohomish County Counts survey is data were sampled and collected in three regions to allow comparisons and identification of regional variations. The three regions were: Everett, Marysville and the Highway 99 corridor; the North and East area of the county; and the View and South Central area. For brevity of this executive summary, only the more important regional differences are described. To view specific results by region, refer to the detailed results. The majority of survey questions asked respondents to reply on a 7-point scale, with 7 indicating “strongly agree” to 1 indicating “strongly disagree”. Respondents were asked questions from both a community and a household perspective.

Snohomish County General Population Section

Community Viewpoints

Community

At the beginning of the survey “community” was defined to respondents as the area where they lived. Snohomish County residents clearly have a positive perception of their community in general; 83% said it was an excellent or good place to live. This positive perception was reflected in their opinions toward two social indicators of the community’s strengths: only 9% strongly disagreed that there is trust between community members; and 10% strongly disagreed that people help each other when needed.

Environment

Snohomish County residents have a fairly high opinion of their community’s environment. As can be expected, perception variables tend to get higher marks than variables measuring experience (often people remember the one time when something wasn’t perfect). The impression of the water being clean and safe and the air quality (66% and 67% respectively) were the two variables that received the highest scores in the environmental section. Other variables obtained similar or slightly lower ratings: 61% strongly agreed that the sewage/septic system is not a problem in their community and only 10% strongly believed is a problem; 51% strongly agreed noise is not a problem, but 19% strongly disagreed with them; 51% strongly agreed water drainage or flooding is not a problem while 15% strongly believed it is a problem; and 47% strongly agreed garbage dumping is not a problem as opposed to 19% who strongly disagreed with them. Even though 43% of residents strongly agreed that their community has enough parks and green space, 18% strongly disagreed. The North/East Region believed that drainage or flooding, sewage failure, and dumping of garbage was more of a problem than the other regions.

Cultural Entertainment

Only 18% of household respondents strongly agreed that their community offers “interesting cultural entertainment such as museums, theater and music”; 33% strongly disagreed. The View/South Central region recorded the highest proportion in strong agreement (22%); while the North/East region had the highest proportion in strong disagreement (44%). Older respondents, those with lower incomes and those without college degrees were more likely to consider locally available cultural entertainment as interesting.

Economic Development

Less than one-fourth (23%) of household respondents strongly agreed that they would support expansion of commercial and industrial business in their community; 39% strongly disagree, meaning they would not support it. Agreement was higher among males, those who had lived in their home for a shorter period of time, renters and those who had needed financial assistance in the past 12 months.

Transportation

Although 41% of respondents would welcome more options to facilitate commuting (more carpools, vanpools and HOV lanes), results indicated a third of those responding had a very favorable perception of Snohomish County's general transportation system (adequacy of local roads: 32%, and public transportation: 39%). However, 23% strongly disagreed local roads are adequate and well maintained and 19% strongly disagreed public transportation served the community well. More respondents in Everett strongly agreed public transportation served the community well (43%), while the North/East strongly disagreed the community needed more carpools, vanpools or HOV lanes (28%).

Safety

Opinions were equally divided between those who strongly agreed (26%) and those who strongly disagreed (25%) that crime is a concern in their community. Close to half of the respondents (49%) strongly agreed that police respond rapidly to emergencies when called. Respondents indicated that abuse of the elderly or disabled and abuse of children are rare in their community: 33% and 24%, respectively. However, for both questions, a sizeable proportion of respondents said they did not know (abuse of elderly and disabled: 28%, and abuse of children: 36%).

Social

Respondents generally have positive feelings about the social aspects of their community, although there are segments of concern. Only 9% strongly agreed that language barriers prevented people from communicating. Similarly, only 13% strongly agreed discrimination occurred in the community. Also, 43% of residents strongly agreed that racial or ethnic tension rarely happens in their community. Thirty-one percent had no strong feeling on discrimination. Finally, 17% strongly agreed with the statement that parents in their community lack adequate parenting skills, although 21% said they didn't know. The North/East Region more frequently believed that discrimination, racial tension, and language barriers were not a problem in their community.

Housing

Only 13% of respondents strongly agreed that too many homes in the community are in poor condition. While 12% of respondents strongly agreed they see homeless people on the street or living in their cars, 65% strongly disagree. On a yes/no basis, 89% of respondents said they would welcome development in their community of senior housing, 62% welcome supervised group homes for people with physical or mental disabilities, and yet, only 46% welcomed more affordable housing options. The Everett/Hwy 99 Region is more often likely to welcome group homes and affordable housing.

Education

Many respondents (19% to 36%) said they didn't know enough about these questions to give a rating. There was no clear consensus on perceptions of adult training and youth employment opportunities. Only 9% strongly agreed there are too many people in the community who are unable to read or do basic math and 36% simply don't know.

Youth

A number of questions were asked about youth and the results are presented within the topic area of the question. However, because youth is an important category, special sections were added to summarize all youth related questions regardless of topic. Thus, results under the youth sections will also be reported in other sections of the report.

Respondents were divided about the adequacy of jobs and activities for youth. Only 22% strongly agreed there are enough after school activities for youth, while 19% strongly disagreed and 22% don't know. Similarly, 25% strongly agreed and 29% strongly disagreed there are too many teenagers on the streets without positive things to do. Twenty-two percent (22%) strongly agreed there are adequate youth employment opportunities in the community, although 15% strongly disagreed, and 19% don't know.

A significant proportion of respondents (36%) didn't know enough to have an opinion about the frequency of child abuse; however, 24% strongly agreed that physical and sexual abuse of children is rare in their community and 14% strongly disagreed. Youth substance abuse and teen pregnancy had similar responses: 23% strongly agreed that alcohol and drug abuse among youth is a widespread problem in the community (18% don't know), and 18% strongly agreed that teenage pregnancy is an issue (31% don't know).

Just 5% of respondents mentioned schools as the best thing about their community (ranked 9th), and 6% mentioned education or schools as their top concern (ranked 6th). A significant majority (75%) said they'd be willing to pay more taxes for schools (ranked 2nd), but only 2% said they'd be willing to pay more for children/youth/teen/after-school programs (ranked 8th).

Health

One-quarter of the respondents (26%) strongly agreed that alcohol or drug abuse poses a threat to the community; and 23% strongly agreed that alcohol and drug abuse among youth is a widespread problem in the community. Sexually transmitted diseases and teenage pregnancy are issues in the community (18% each). For teen pregnancy, 31% of respondents did not know if it was an issue. Seventeen percent (17%) strongly disagreed there is adequate accessibility to

care for people with mental/emotional problems; but it should be noted that 36% said they didn't know.

Community Impressions

To get a general idea about community perception, respondents were asked to list in their own words what they liked best about their community and their major concerns.

- **Community Assets:** Friendliness, accessibility or location, and environmental issues were the top three mentions (38%, 33% and 29% respectively). The North/East region rated the beauty of the area as the second highest asset as opposed to accessibility or location which ranked fifth.
- **Concerns:** The top three concerns about the community were traffic (20% of mentions), the development of the county (12%) and safety issues (11%).

To obtain additional information on the community's willingness to support increased taxes and to identify the best methods to reach people additional questions were asked.

- **More taxes:** Respondents reported they are willing to support tax increases for public safety, i.e., police and fire protection, (79%), schools (75%), parks/recreation facilities (65%), and public health services (65%).
- **Information sources:** Clearly, print media appeared to be the best source of information on the community (daily newspapers: 32%; local newspapers or magazines, 20%). Only a small proportion reported using websites (8%) or email (3%) to get information on the community.

Snohomish County General Population Section

Household Viewpoints

Household Economics

Snohomish County residents seem to have a fairly positive attitude toward the household economic issues that were measured. Close to half of the respondents (48%) strongly agree that their job is secure, while 16% strongly disagree; 14% were either not employed or retired. Two-thirds (64%) said no one in their household had tried to find work in the last 12 months; among those who had, 29% felt that finding a job was very hard. In general, most households were able to pay for basic necessities such as food or housing, although 14% strongly agreed that expenses related to such necessities had been difficult to meet in the past year. A larger proportion (22%) strongly agreed that paying the rent or mortgage left their household with less than needed for other necessities. Residents of the Everett / Hwy 99 region were more likely to say that someone in the household had looked for work, that food and housing costs had been difficult to meet or that the rent/mortgage left them with less than needed for other necessities.

Transportation

Two transportation elements were evaluated: the impact of traffic congestion on daily activities and the receptiveness toward public transportation development. While more than one-third (38%) of the respondents strongly agreed traffic congestion makes it difficult to shop or reach essential services 24% strongly disagreed. Thirty-three percent (33%) agreed they would use public transportation to commute to work if it were more available and reliable.

Household Safety

The impression of household safety in Snohomish County is generally positive. More than half of the respondents strongly agreed they feel safe enough to walk at night and would welcome greater diversity in the community (54% and 52%, respectively). In case of an earthquake emergency, 44% of residents have stored food and other basic necessities. Seventeen percent (17%) strongly agreed someone close to them in their community has experienced violence in their home in the past 12 months. Nearly half (47%) of Snohomish County residents strongly disagreed a household with a handgun or firearm is safer.

Housing

Seven percent (7%) of residents say that their home currently needs major repairs that they cannot afford; and an equally small proportion (7%) has received financial assistance from sources such as family, friends or organizations to help pay the rent or mortgage in the past year. Residents of the Everett/Hwy 99 region were more likely to have said yes to both questions.

Education

Residents were asked their perceptions of the quality of public K-12 education. While over one-third (35%) strongly agreed that they are satisfied with the quality of public K-12 education, 17% said they didn't know enough to provide a rating.

Social Issues

Snohomish County residents were asked about two important social concerns: (1) availability of childcare and (2) finding help for the elderly and people with disabilities. About one in ten respondents (11%) have had to look for childcare in the last 12 months. Of these, 27% found childcare easy to find and 27% found it hard to find. Seventeen percent (17%) of respondents say they or someone they know had to look for help for an elderly person or a person with disabilities who was trying to live independently. Of these, one-quarter (28%) found it very hard to find. Finally, 14% of the residents say that they had an older person or adult child living in their household for financial reasons in the last 12 months.

Youth

Fully 35% of respondents strongly agreed that they are satisfied with the quality of public K-12 education in their community. Eleven percent (11%) of respondents had looked for childcare in the past 12 months, and those who had were evenly divided about the difficulty of finding it (27% each strongly agreed and strongly disagreed). Fourteen percent (14%) of respondents reported that someone in their household had been without medical insurance in the past year; 29% said the uninsured was a child. One-third (34%) of respondents indicated that someone in their household had been without dental insurance in the past year, and 23% indicated that person had been a child. One-fourth (25%) of respondents said someone in their house has a physical disability that limits participation in normal work or play activity—6% of those reported it was someone under age 18. School concerns ranked 6th (6%) and childcare ranked 11th (2%) in household concerns.

Health Care

Respondents were asked a series of questions about health insurance coverage and related issues, dental visits, physical and developmental disabilities and substance abuse.

Almost one-quarter (23%) said someone in their home went without health care coverage in the last 12 months. Money is the main reason given for not having coverage (37%). One in five (20%) said their employer doesn't offer this benefit and an additional 20% lost their employment and the health insurance that went along with it. A small minority (6%) of respondents reported not getting medical care when needed over the last 12 months, primarily because of cost, and 10% had trouble paying for prescriptions. Residents of the Everett / Hwy 99 region were more likely to say they had difficulty getting medical care and paying for prescriptions.

One-third (33%) said at least one person in their home went without dental care coverage in the past year. The majority of respondents reported having seen a dentist during the past year (77%). Of those who haven't gone to a dentist recently, cost is the main reason (28%), closely followed by the fact that they felt they did not have any reason to go (26%).

One-quarter (25%) of respondents countywide said they had someone at home with a physical disability that limited participation in normal work or play activity, and 4% said there was someone at home with developmental disabilities. Finally, one in five (21%) said there has been someone close to them in this community who has alcohol or drug problems.

Community Issues

Four variables measured perceptions of the Snohomish County community from a household perspective. One-fifth of respondents (21%) considered the county an excellent place to live. Five out of six (84%) rated it as either excellent or good. A majority of respondents (80%) felt they have "at least a little" opportunity to change how things happen in their community whereas 36% consider they have "some" opportunity and 13%, "a lot." Forty-five percent 45% of respondents volunteered in their community, reporting an average of 3.8 hours a week or 199 hours per year.

Residents were also asked what most concerned them in their household during the course of last year. The most common concern mentioned was having enough money to pay the bills and keep up with taxes (28%).

At the end of the interview, respondents were asked to share their notion of "community". Community meant one of two things for the residents: a neighborhood (35%) or a city or town (32%). The third and fourth most frequent response was region or county (12%) and church or religious group (7%). The North/East region was less likely to define community as neighborhood (30%) than Everett/Hwy 99 (37%) and View/S. Central (38%).

Perceptual Effect of September 11th on Responses

Since the survey started the week after the September 11th events, respondents were asked how they thought these events influenced their responses, if at all. Only 8% of Snohomish County respondents feel that their responses were affected significantly by the events and 21% admit a small effect. These results should be interpreted with care since people tend to minimize exterior influences on their perceptions.

Community Leaders Section
Comparison to General Population

Please note that because the community leader survey was a non-random mailed survey with only a 25% response rate, **the results cannot be interpreted as representative of the all community leaders.**

Community

Overall, community leaders in Snohomish County have a positive perception of their community. Leaders rated it as an excellent or good place to live slightly more often (89%) compared to the general population (83%). Leaders were slightly less likely to strongly agree that people in the community trust each other (20%) compared to the general population (35%). The proportion of those who strongly disagreed was about the same (9% and 10%), respectively. Leaders were less likely than the community to strongly agree that people help each other than the community, 28% and 33%, respectively. However, leaders were twice as likely (11%) to not know if people help each other compared to the community (5%). More leaders (73%) reported volunteering in their community compared to household respondents (45%).

Community leaders were asked a series of questions relating to their perception of collaboration among various community groups. About one-quarter of community leaders strongly agreed that community groups collaborate to address local concerns (26%), community groups work together with mutual respect (29%), families and individuals are invited to be involved in community issues (28%), and faith communities work together to address social issues (26%). However, a larger proportion of leaders (17%) did not know if faith communities work together compared to the other questions (10% to 11%). Leaders more often strongly agreed that the community promotes good relationships among people, regardless of gender (39%) or age (32%), than for race (29%) or culture (26%). Community leaders were less optimistic that community groups and organizations work together (19% strongly agreed), collaborate to improve the lives of residents (19% strongly agreed), or share a common vision for the future of the county (13% strongly agreed).

Environment

Community leaders were more likely than the general population to strongly agree that the water is clean and safe (77% strongly agreed compared to 66% of the general population). Leaders and community respondents were similar in their strong agreement that the air quality is acceptable (69% compared to 67% of the general population) and that the community has enough parks and green spaces (46% and 43%, respectively). Also, neither group felt sewage or septic system failure was a problem in their community (61% each strongly disagreed that failure of these systems is a problem). However, 13% of leaders did not know if sewage or septic system failure was a problem compared to 9% of the community. More than half (55%) of the leaders strongly disagreed that dumping of garbage is a hazard in their community (compared to 47% of the general population). On the issue of water drainage or flooding, the general

population (51%) was more likely to strongly disagree that there is a problem than were the community leaders (37% disagreed strongly). Both groups disagreed strongly that the community is noisier than they would like (43% of the community leaders, 51% of the general population).

Cultural Entertainment

Community leaders were somewhat more likely to strongly agree that the community offers interesting cultural entertainment (25%) than was the general public (18%); they were also less likely to strongly disagree (23%) with the same statement than the general public (33%). However, fully 51% voiced no strong opinion either way.

Economy and Economic Development

Whereas only 23% of the general public would strongly support expansion of commercial and industrial business in their communities, 43% of the community leaders strongly agreed and were clearly in favor of such expansion. Supporting this desire for more businesses in the community, one-quarter (26%) of the leaders strongly disagreed that there are enough jobs that provide an adequate or livable salary in their community. Community leaders are less sure of the level of job training in their community. While 14% strongly agreed that people are adequately trained for the jobs available, 15% strongly disagreed and 59% had no strong opinion either way; another 12% said they didn't know.

Transportation

Fifty-one percent (51%) of community leaders strongly agreed there is a need for more carpools, vanpools and HOV lanes as compared to 41% of the general population. They were less likely to strongly agree local roads and streets were adequate and well maintained (26%) as compared to the general population (32%) or that public transportation served their community well (19%) compared to the general population (39%).

Safety

Similar to the general population, community leaders were split on the issue of crime. One-quarter (25%) strongly agreed and 19% strongly disagreed that crime is a concern, while in the community population, 25% strongly agreed and 25% strongly disagreed. Both groups strongly agreed the police response is rapid (46% of community leaders and 49% of the community population). Twenty-seven percent (27%) of community leaders strongly disagreed child abuse is rare in the community compared to 14% of the general public. A sizable proportion of each group, however, was uncertain about the incidence of child abuse (23% of community leaders said they don't know compared to 36% of the general population). Community leaders were also more likely to strongly disagree (20%) abuse of the elderly or disabled is rare in the community,

compared to the general population (12%). However, each group was equally likely to say they didn't know how often such abuse takes place (30% of community leaders and 28% of the general public).

Social

Community leaders consistently saw more social challenges than did the general population. They are more likely to strongly agree (35%) than the general population that there are too many teenagers on the street than the general population (25%). The leaders are also more likely to think that parents lack parenting skills (27%) than did the general population (17%). In the opinion of the community leaders, discrimination is more likely to occur in the community (27% strongly agreed) than the general population (13% agreed strongly). Community leaders are also less likely to strongly agree (28%) that racial or ethnic tension is rare whereas almost half (43%) of the general population agreed strongly that such tension is a rarity in the community. The community leaders are more likely to strongly agree (12%) that language differences lead to communication problems than the general population (9%). However, fewer community leaders than the general population strongly disagree 42% versus 57% that language differences lead to community problems.

Housing

Community leaders were more likely (17%) than the general population (12%) to see homelessness as an issue, and were equally likely (13% of each group) to think there are too many houses in poor condition in the community. Both groups similarly welcomed more senior housing to the community (92% of community leaders and 89% of the general public) and more group homes for people with disabilities (64% and 62%, respectively). Community leaders were slightly more likely than the general population (56% compared to 46% of the general population) to welcome affordable housing options. Thirty percent (30%) of community leaders disagreed that home heating is affordable. (The general population was not asked about home heating affordability.)

Education

One-third (32%) of the community leaders strongly agreed there are adequate opportunities for adult training (compared to 25% of the general population) and 17% strongly agreed there are adequate youth employment opportunities compared to 22% of the general population. More community leaders (14%) strongly agreed there are too many people in the community unable to read and do basic math than did the general population (9%).

Youth

One-third of community leaders (32%) strongly agreed that the Snohomish County community promotes good relationships and participation from residents of all ages.

Community leaders were slightly less likely (18%) than the general public (22%) to agree that there are enough after school activities for youth: 30% of community leaders strongly disagreed that there are enough after school activities and programs (compared to 19% of the general population).

Community leaders were more likely (35%) than the general population (25%) to strongly agree there are too many teenagers on the street without positive things to do. Community leaders rated adequacy of youth employment opportunities about the same as the general population: 17% strongly agreed that there are adequate youth employment opportunities (22% of the general population), and 23% strongly disagreed (15% of the general population).

Community leaders felt more strongly than the general population about health issues which affect children and youth: 14% strongly agreed that child abuse is rare (24% of general population) and 27% strongly disagreed (14% of general population); 31% strongly agreed the abuse of alcohol and drugs among youth is widespread in the community (23% of general population); and 23% strongly agreed teen pregnancy is an issue (18% of general population).

Schools ranked 6th (11%) on community leaders' list of best things about their community, and 10th (3%) on their list of biggest concerns. In the general population just 5% mentioned schools as the best thing about their community (ranked 9th), and 6% mentioned education or schools as their top concern (ranked 6th). More child/youth/teen/after-school programs were the 3rd most mentioned (14%) way community leaders would resolve their number one concern. Community leaders were also asked if the community were to focus efforts and support for one group of people which group it should be: children 10-17 were the top group (32%) and children under 10 ranked 3rd (14%). Schools were the top community service for which community leaders would be willing to pay more taxes (76%).

Health

Overall, community leaders were more inclined than the general population to strongly agree that health related issues were problematic. Leaders were more likely to strongly agree that drug and alcohol abuse poses a threat to the community (43% compared to 26% of the general population). They were also more likely to think the abuse of alcohol and drugs among youth is widespread in the community (31% of leaders and 23% of general population, respectively). Leaders were also more likely to say teen pregnancy is an issue (23% compared to 18%). They were also more likely to strongly agree that they are concerned about sexually transmitted diseases in the community (24%) than was the

general population (18%). Community leaders were much more likely to strongly disagree (43%) that there is adequate access to mental or emotional care than did the general population (17%).

Community Issues

In proportions similar to the general population, community leaders identified the best things about their community as the accessible location, the friendliness of the people, the quality of life and the environment (29% to 32% for each mention). Community leaders named their biggest concerns as traffic and social and health concerns (24% each). While the general population also mentioned traffic as their top concern it accounted for fewer responses (20%). The second most frequent concern for the general population was growth and development (12%). Not surprisingly, community leaders saw the resolution of their concerns as better transportation planning (27%) and more social and health services (24%). The leaders would like to see a focus of effort and support going to children ages 10 to 17 (32%). Low-income residents and children under 10 years of age were the next most frequently mentioned group to focus efforts on, 23% and 14%, respectively.

Increased Tax Support

Community leaders were willing to pay more taxes for schools (76%), for better roads (69%), for public transportation (68%) and for parks and recreation (64%). Public health services (57%) and libraries (51%), while items lower on the list, were still supported by over half of the leaders. Interestingly, the top choice of the general population, public safety, i.e., police and fire protection (79%), was not offered to the community leaders as an option for increased taxes. The general population also supported increases in taxes for schools (75%), parks (65%) and public health services (65%).

Collaboration

More than half (54%) of the community leaders strongly agreed that their organization often collaborates with other community groups. Almost as many (48%) strongly agreed that their organization is effective in its collaboration with other organizations and one-third (34%) are satisfied with the role their organization has in those collaborative efforts. The leaders had no strong opinion when asked if they have strong personal influence in shaping community decisions, with only 20% strongly agreeing and 21% strongly disagreeing.

Meaning of Community

Community leaders defined community first as a city or town (52%) and second as a region, such as county (22%). The general population defined community as a neighborhood (35%) and then a city or town (32%). "Neighborhood" was not offered as an option to the community leaders in their survey.

Effect of September 11

Similar to the general population, only a small proportion of community leaders said the events of September 11 had a significant effect on their responses to the survey (5% compared to 8% of the general population). Most leaders (81%) said the September 11 event had no effect.

Non-English Speaking Respondents Section

Community Viewpoints

Community Viewpoints

Because the non-English speaking population was not a random sample and only 72 interviews were conducted, results cannot be interpreted as representative of the non-English speaking population. Also, because this population more frequently did not know the answers to questions compared to the general population, results are often presented as an average score versus as a percentage of agreement. When comparing survey results of different populations when the proportion of don't knows varies, an average score is a more appropriate measure as it excludes the don't know responses.

Rating Your Community

These respondents have a positive impression of their community with 69% saying it is an excellent or good place to live. This was a lower proportion than reported by the general population survey (83%). About one-third (32%) strongly agreed the community comes together to help each other out when they have a problem; this was similar to the general population (33%). However, only 22% strongly agreed that people in the community trust each other compared to the general population (35%). It is noteworthy that between 11% and 18% of the respondents failed to give a rating to each of the questions asked, either by saying they didn't know or they did not respond to the question.

Environment

Non-English speaking respondents are less positive about the environment in Snohomish County than the general population. Less than half (44%) strongly agreed that the water is clean and safe to drink and only 42% think the air quality is acceptable. This compares to 66% of the general population who strongly agreed that the water is clean and 67% who agreed the air quality is acceptable. Non-English respondents were more likely to have no strong feeling about water drainage or flooding problems in their community (40% compared to 30% of the general population). The same could be said about their reactions to the sewage or septic system, where 39% of non-English speaking respondents have no strong feeling (16% in the general population), and the level of noise in the community, where 57% of the non-English speaking respondents have no strong feeling (29% in the general population). Half of the general population (47%) strongly disagreed that dumping of garbage is a hazard in their community while 35% of the non-English speaking respondents strongly disagreed. One area where these respondents were more positive than the general population was with regard to parks and green spaces. Fifty percent (50%) strongly agreed their

community has enough parks, while only 43% of the general population said the same thing.

Cultural Entertainment

Non-English speaking respondents gave the same average rating (3.6) as the general population with regard to interesting cultural entertainment, such as museums, theater and music, offered in the community, however, 18% said they didn't know, compared to only 5% of the general population.

Economic Development

On the subject of their support for expansion of commercial and industrial business in the community, non-English speaking respondents gave a similar average rating as the general population (3.7 and 3.5 respectively); however, non-English speaking respondents were much more likely to not venture an opinion either by saying don't know or not answering the question (18% compared to 3% of the general population).

Transportation

Respondents' answers closely mirror the general population on transportation issues. Non-English speaking respondents are slightly more likely to agree that streets and roads are well maintained (39%, compared to 32% for the general population). The general population was more likely to agree public transportation serves their community well (39%, compared to 24% in non-English speaking respondents). Non-English speaking respondents were slightly less favorable toward more carpools, vanpools and HOV lanes (36%) than the general population (41%).

Safety

Non-English speaking respondents were similar to the general population in their responses on safety issues. They were somewhat more concerned about crime in the community (4.4) than the general population (4.1). They also strongly agreed that police respond rapidly when called (51%); as did 49% of the general population. Both groups gave similar average ratings (4.3 in non-English speaking, and 4.4 for the general population) saying that child abuse rarely happens: 36% of each group said they didn't know how to rate the incidence of abuse. With regard to abuse of the elderly or disabled, an even higher proportion of non-English speaking respondents said they didn't know how rare the abuse is (46% compared to 28% of the general population). Non-English speaking respondents were less likely to strongly agree that the abuse rarely happens (14% compared to 33% of the general population).

Social

Non-English speaking respondents views on discrimination, racial tension, and communication tend to differ from the general population to a greater degree than other issues. Non-English speaking respondents were more likely to agree discrimination occurs (3.9 compared to 3.2 from the general population) and, as reflected by a lower average rating, were less likely to agree racial or ethnic tension is rare in the community (3.8 compared to 4.8 from the general population). In fact, on the topic of racial tension, only 13% strongly agreed it rarely happens as compared to 43% of the general population. Three-quarters (76%) of non-English speaking respondents expressed some level of agreement that language differences are a problem while only 39% of the general population felt that way. Non-English speaking respondents were also more likely to agree that there are too many teenagers on the streets (4.5 compared to 4.0 in the general population) and that parents lack adequate parenting skills (4.2 compared to 3.9 in the general population).

Housing

Of the general population, 44% strongly disagreed that too many homes in the community are in poor condition. In comparison, only 24% of the non-English speaking respondents felt that way. Two-thirds of the general population (65%) strongly disagreed that they see homeless people in the community, while 32% of non-English speaking respondents gave a similar response. Asking respondents for a yes/no response, interviewees were asked several questions about their acceptance of allowing various types of housing in their community. Non-English speaking respondents were much less likely to feel that supervised group homes for the disabled would be welcome in the community (22% said yes compared to 62% of the general population) or that senior housing would be welcome (46% said yes compared to 89% of the general population). They are equally likely to feel that affordable housing would be welcome (42% compared 46% of the general population). However, 24% of the non-English speaking respondents either said they didn't know or didn't answer this question about housing (supervised group homes, affordable housing and senior housing) compared to only 2% of the general population.

Education

Non-English speaking respondents were less likely to strongly agree there are adequate training opportunities for adults 3.7 compared to 4.3 of the general population but many said they didn't know or they didn't answer--29% compared to 20% of the general population. Non-English speaking respondents were much more likely than the general population to feel that too many people are unable to read and do basic math (4.4 compared to 3.0, with 29% and 36% respectively who said they didn't know or did not answer the question).

Youth

As in the general population section, questions specifically about perceptions of youth are summarized here.

Non-English speaking respondents were not quite sure about the adequacy of youth employment opportunities and were more likely than the general population to not know or not answer the question (32% compared to 19% for the general population). Non-English speaking respondents who expressed an opinion about adequacy of youth employment opportunities were less willing to express strong agreement that the opportunities are adequate (4.0 compared with 4.3 for the general public. Many non-English speaking respondents (31%) didn't know or didn't answer the question, compared to 19% of the general public.

Non-English speaking respondents were less likely to strongly agree there are enough after school programs or activities for youth (15% compared to 22% of the general population)

Health

Non-English speaking respondents were more likely to agree that there is adequate access to mental health care (4.6 compared to 4.0 for the general population). Non-English speaking respondents were also more likely than the general population to respond that alcohol or drug abuse pose a threat to the community (4.7 compared to 4.1), that drug and alcohol abuse is widespread among the youth (4.4 compared to 4.2 in general population), that teen pregnancy is an issue (4.1 compared to 4.0 in general population), and that sexually transmitted diseases in the community concern them (4.1 compared to 3.4). A range of 15% to 35% of the non-English speaking respondents, and 8% to 36% of the general public said they were unable to answer these questions on health.

Best Things About Community

In general the same assets were mentioned by this group of respondents as for the general population but the order was different. The geographic beauty of the community and the clean environment are the best things about the area (25% and 24%, respectively). These assets were the third and fourth most frequent mention for the general population. Also high on the list are the friendliness of the people (the most frequent mention of the general population) and the affordability of living in the area (both mentioned by 21% of the non-English respondents). Affordability was only mentioned by 5% of the general population.

Concerns About the Community

Crime and safety, including lack of police or 911 services is the most frequently mentioned concern among the non-English speaking respondents (24%). This is more than twice as often as the general population mentioned safety (11%). Cost of living (15%) and lack of jobs (14%) were also frequent mentions, much more often than by the general population (3% and 2% respectively). Traffic, which was the number one concern for the general population, is tied for fourth along with population growth (11% each) for the non-English speaking population.

Willing to Pay More Taxes

While half or more (54%-79%) of the general population expressed willingness to pay more taxes for a variety of public services, less than one third of the non-English speaking respondents were willing to say yes to more taxes for any of the same services (6%-29%). With these comparatively low proportions in mind, non-English speaking respondents were willing to pay more in taxes for schools (29%), for public transportation (28%), public health services (26%), public safety, i.e., fire and police (24%), and parks and recreation facilities (18%). Libraries (10%) and local roads (6%) were low priorities for more tax money among non-English speaking respondents. However, 63% of the general population was willing to pay more taxes for libraries and local roads.

Sources of Information

Local TV (47%) is the primary source of information for non-English speaking respondents, with word of mouth next at 13%. As expected, the daily newspaper, which is the number one choice of the general population, is used by less than one in ten non-English speaking respondents (8%) and neighborhood newspapers or magazines are read by even fewer (3%) compared to being the second choice among the general population at 20%.

Non-English Speaking Respondents Section

Household Viewpoints

Economy

Job security was much more of a concern to non-English speaking respondents than to the general population. Only 7% strongly agreed that their job is secure for the foreseeable future compared to 48% of the general population. In similar fashion, non-English speaking respondents had a much lower level of disagreement with the statement that their household had difficulty paying for necessities such as food and housing. While 69% of the general population strongly disagreed that they have difficulty paying for necessities, just 24% of non-English speaking respondents disagreed. More than two in five (42%) non-English speaking respondents strongly agreed that having enough money left after paying rent is a concern: among the general population 22% strongly agreed with this concern. More non-English speaking respondent households (47%) have had at least one adult trying to find work in the past 12 months than in the general population (35%), and only 3% of non-English speaking respondents said it has been very easy to find work (compared to 26% of the general population). Conversely, 68% said it was very hard to find work compared to just 29% of the general population.

Transportation

With agreement among 29% and 33%, respectively, non-English speaking and general population respondents agree that traffic congestion affects their ability to shop or reach essential services. If public transportation were more available and reliable, non-English-speaking respondents would be more likely to use it (43%) than would the general population (33%).

Safety

Non-English speaking respondents were less likely to say they have stored food and other basic necessities in case of an earthquake (29% versus 44% of the general population). Non-English speaking respondents reported being more likely to know someone that has experienced violence in their home (mean of 3.1, compared with 2.5 among the general population). Over one-third of the non-English speaking respondents, however, said they didn't know or did not answer this question about knowing someone who experienced violence (36% compared with 12% of the general population). While 54% of the general population feel safe walking alone at night, only 22% of non-English speaking respondents agreed strongly. Non-English speaking respondents are also less likely to disagree that a household with a gun is a safer home (28% disagreed compared to 47% of the general population), and less likely to agree they would welcome greater diversity in the community (4.7 compared to 5.4 for the general

population). About one-third (31%) of the non-English speaking respondents said they didn't know or did not answer the question.

Housing

Non-English speaking respondents were much less sure about whether their home needs major repairs than was the general population (28% said they didn't know compared to less than 1% of the general population). One in five (18%) said their home needs major repairs they cannot afford, compared to 7% of the general population. Fifteen percent (15%) of non-English speaking respondents have received financial assistance in the past year to pay for the rent or mortgage (7% of the general population).

Education

Non-English speaking respondents were less satisfied (average rating of 4.3) with the quality of public education than is the general population (average rating of 4.7). Almost one-fourth of each respondent group said they didn't know or did not answer the question. Twenty-nine percent (29%) of non-English speaking respondents strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the quality of public K-12 education compared to 35% of the general population.

Social

Non-English speaking respondents (14%) were about as likely as the general population (11%) to say they have looked for childcare in the past year; however, they said don't know (7%) or didn't answer (8%) more than the general population (0% don't know/no answer). Forty percent (40%) of non-English speaking respondents who looked for childcare found the search "very hard", compared to 27% of the general population. Non-English speaking respondents were less likely (11%) than the general population (17%) to have looked for elder or disabled care. Among those non-English speaking respondents who did look for such care, most (87%) said the search was "very hard" (compared to 28% of the general population). One in five (19%) had an older adult or an adult child living in their home for financial reasons (compared to 14% of the general population).

Health

Half (51%) of non-English speaking respondents reported no family members without health care coverage in the past year, fewer than the general population (76%). The reasons most frequently mentioned by non-English speaking respondents for not having coverage was that their employer didn't offer it (25%), they lost their job and therefore their insurance (21%), and they were turned down by an insurance company (21%). Cost or the inability to afford insurance, the general population's number one reason (37%) for lacking health insurance, was mentioned by 17% of non-English speaking respondents. Uninsured non-

English speaking respondents most often sought medical care at a hospital clinic (21%); whereas, the general population most often went to a doctor's office (47%). One-third of non-English speaking respondents needed medical care and were unable to get it (compared to 6% of the general population). Cost was the primary reason both groups cited for not being able to get medical care when needed. Close to one-third (29%) of non-English speaking respondents had difficulty paying for prescriptions (compared to 10% of the general population), 36% had no dental coverage (compared to 65% of the general population), and many (60%) have been to the dentist in the past year (77% of the general population). Once again, cost was the primary reason both groups gave as a reason for not seeing a dentist. Of non-English speaking households, 22% included a person with a physical disability (25% in the general population), 24% had a person with a developmental disability (4% in the general population), and 26% had a person with a drug or alcohol problem (21% of the general population).

Community

Top ranked household concerns of Non-English speaking respondents in the past year were employment (36%) and having enough money to pay the bills (33%), as compared to the general population's top concerns of having enough money to pay the bills (28%), health problems (14%), and employment (12%). Non-English speaking respondents were less likely to volunteer (22%) compared to 45% of the general population and more likely to feel they have no opportunity to change the community (32%, compared to 17% of the general population). They defined "community", in the same way as the general population, as the neighborhood (33%) or the city or town where they live (24%). Only 8% of non-English speaking respondents rated Snohomish County as an "excellent" place to live (21% of the general population did) and 57% said "good" (compared to 63% of the general population). Non-English speaking respondents were more likely to say the events of September 11th affected their survey responses—15% compared with 8% of the general population. One-third (33%) said the events had no strong effect (compared to 70% of the general population). Almost one-quarter (21%) said they didn't know what effect the events had on their responses.

Demographics

Because the selection of non-English respondents was not random, the distribution of their demographic characteristics **cannot** be interpreted to be representative of their populations. The following information simply reflects those non-English speaking individuals who provided responses for the survey results. Non-English speaking respondents tend to live in slightly larger households (70% have 3 or more people living in the home) than the general population (76% have 2-4 people in home). These additional members are likely to be children under 18 (63% of non-English speaking respondents, 44% of general population). Non-English speaking respondents are less likely to be

employed (54% as compared to 68% of general population) and 50% have not attended school beyond high school, as compared with 33% of general population. Non-English speaking respondents are more likely to rent (54%) than own (31%) their homes (24% and 73% of general population, respectively), and are equally likely to be married (60%, compared with 65% of general population). Five non-English language groups were interviewed. Of the 72 respondents, 22% were originally identified to speak Spanish, 10% Vietnamese, 18% Cambodian, 29% Russian, and 21% Arabic. In the course of the interview, 30% identified their race as Asian or Pacific Islander and 24% reported they were of Hispanic origin. Average income of non-English speaking respondents was \$24,938; while in the general population average income was \$57,655.

