



## **Community Strength**

**Summary of Valued Conditions 94**

**Neighborhood Social Cohesion 95**

**Involvement in Community Organizations 97**

**Institutional Support for Community Service 99**

**Ease of Access to Shops and Services 101**

## Valued Conditions Expressed by King County Residents

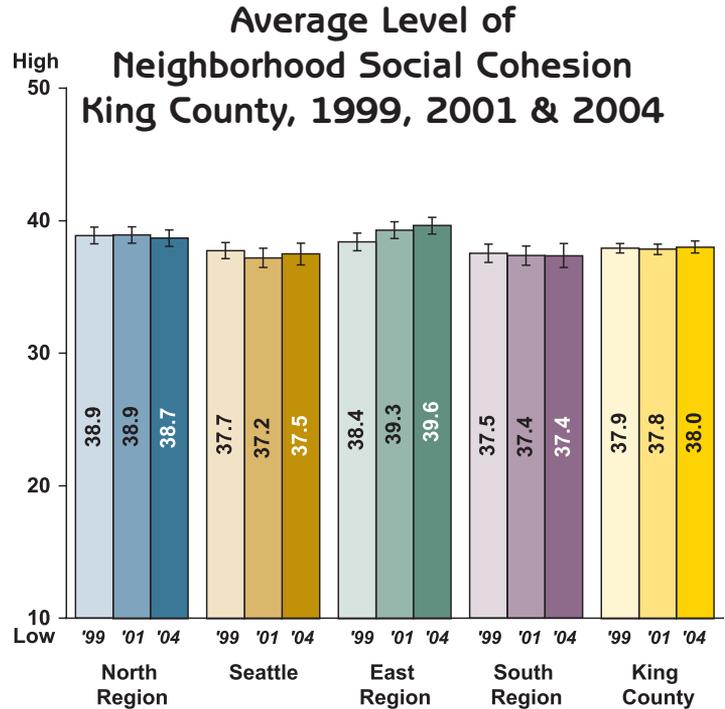
- Everyone feels included; no one is isolated. Neighbors know each other's names and get together often. A lot of talk between neighbors.
- People show respect for and interest in others who are of different ages, educational, social and ethnic backgrounds.
- Neighbors depend on each other: borrowing and lending, watching out for each other's children, homes, gardens, and pets. There is trust.
- People organize within the community/neighborhood: block watches, neighborhood directories and associations.
- People invest in the community: keeping it clean, organizing mentoring and other youth development activities, supporting public parks, libraries, community centers.
- People are informed and engaged in their community: volunteering, staying aware and well-informed of community issues, planning and attending community events.
- People are active participants in community events and the political process. They believe that what they do can make a difference in community life.
- Organizations and individuals provide financial support for the arts: music and arts programs in schools, public art in communities.
- People enjoy artwork and music: buy recordings and artwork of local musicians and artists and purchase books from locally-owned bookstores.
- People honor and show interest in the cultural/religious heritage of others.
- People share their common heritage and interests: language, religious observance or cultural practice. They have opportunities to gather with people who are like them.
- People of different generations frequently interact and do things together.
- Immigrants receive assistance to improve their knowledge of English. Immigrants are empowered in other ways—training, involvement in community organizations, etc.
- The impact of development and environmental degradation is not disproportionately felt by poor communities (the siting of and regulations for airports, freeways, landfills, toxic waste dumps, etc., is carried out so that health and economic impacts are not disproportionately felt by poor communities).
- Communities retain natural surroundings.
- There are many public places, well-maintained, for recreational use.
- People walk, bicycle or bus in order to obtain most of their daily needs.
- People trust in the police and courts to give fair treatment. Justice is delivered regardless of race/ethnicity, income, gender, religion, age, sexual orientation.
- There is diversity in neighborhoods: elderly and single people living among families, single family dwellings among multi-family dwellings; shops among residences, low cost housing among higher cost housing.

The valued conditions came from citizen opinion expressed as values and concerns in the telephone survey, focus groups, and in the civic and public forums. The valued conditions are expressed as "ideal" conditions—based on the vision of what residents want for themselves, their families and communities.

# Neighborhood Social Cohesion

Social cohesion refers to mutual trust among neighbors combined with willingness to intervene on behalf of the common good. There is evidence that rates of violence are lower in neighborhoods with higher social cohesion.

- Social cohesion was measured by asking King County adults 5 questions about trust in their neighborhood and 5 questions about the likelihood that their neighbors could be counted on to intervene in problem situations. Answers were added to create a social cohesion scale with a possible score between 10 (Low) and 50 (High).
- In 2004 the average (mean) social cohesion score for adults in King County was 38. There were no significant changes in social cohesion levels between 2001 and 2004.
- The social cohesion levels reported in 2004 by residents of East Region (39.6) were significantly higher than by residents of South Region (37.4), Seattle (37.5) and King County (38).

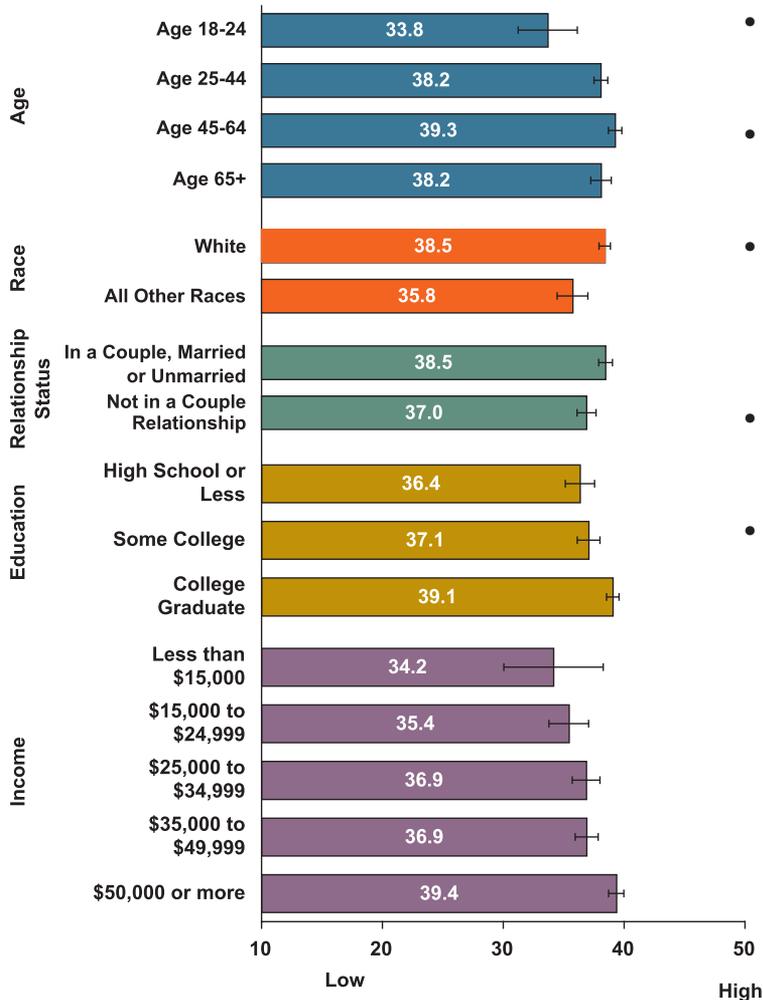


## Percent of Adults Who See High Social Cohesion (Trust and Control) in Their Neighborhoods, King County, 1999, 2001 & 2004

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements:	Percent Answering Strongly Agree or Agree														
	North Region			Seattle			East Region			South Region			King County		
	'99	'01	'04	'99	'01	'04	'99	'01	'04	'99	'01	'04	'99	'01	'04
...This is a close-knit neighborhood.	53%	53%	57%	54%	49%	47%	55%	55%	61%	55%	57%	57%	55%	53%	54%
...People in this neighborhood can be trusted.	85%	89%	86%	78%	78%	80%	81%	86%	90%	77%	74%	77%	79%	79%	82%
...People around here are willing to help their neighbors.	84%	86%	89%	83%	82%	82%	82%	86%	90%	79%	81%	80%	81%	83%	84%
...People in this neighborhood do not share the same values (reversed for scale).	18%	22%	19%	24%	25%	20%	16%	21%	14%	20%	26%	29%	20%	24%	22%
...People in this neighborhood generally don't get along with each other (reversed for scale).	5%	5%	5%	5%	4%	7%	6%	6%	4%	8%	9%	11%	6%	6%	8%

Would you say it is very likely, likely, unlikely, or very unlikely that your neighbors could be counted on to intervene or do something if:	Percent Answering Very Likely or Likely														
	North Region			Seattle			East Region			South Region			King County		
	'99	'01	'04	'99	'01	'04	'99	'01	'04	'99	'01	'04	'99	'01	'04
...children were skipping school and hanging out in the neighborhood?	65%	65%	62%	55%	50%	55%	65%	63%	70%	63%	60%	59%	61%	57%	60%
...children were spray-painting graffiti on something in the neighborhood?	89%	91%	89%	83%	80%	83%	89%	90%	91%	84%	85%	85%	85%	85%	86%
...children were showing disrespect to an adult?	66%	65%	61%	55%	52%	52%	62%	64%	64%	60%	62%	61%	59%	59%	59%
...a fight broke out in front of their house?	86%	83%	81%	79%	75%	79%	83%	85%	86%	83%	78%	81%	81%	79%	82%
...the fire station closest to their home was threatened with budget cuts?	65%	74%	75%	67%	66%	68%	65%	69%	69%	60%	66%	65%	64%	67%	68%

## Average Level of Neighborhood Social Cohesion By Age, Race, Relationship Status, Education and Income, King County, 2004



- People who are in the youngest age group (18-24 years) see less social cohesion in their neighborhoods than older residents.
- People who are white see more social cohesion in their neighborhoods than people of other races.
- People who have a couple relationships (either married or unmarried) see higher social cohesion than those who are separated, divorced, widowed or never married.
- People who have completed college report higher levels of cohesion than others with less education.
- People with incomes of \$50,000 or higher report higher levels of social cohesion in their neighborhoods.

### Data Source, Definition, and Limitations

The neighborhood social cohesion measures are from the King County Community Health Survey, 1999, 2001 and 2004, which used questions on trust and informal social control from the study, "Neighborhoods and Violent Crime: A Multilevel Study of Collective Efficacy" (Robert J. Sampson, Stephen W. Raudenbush, and Felton).

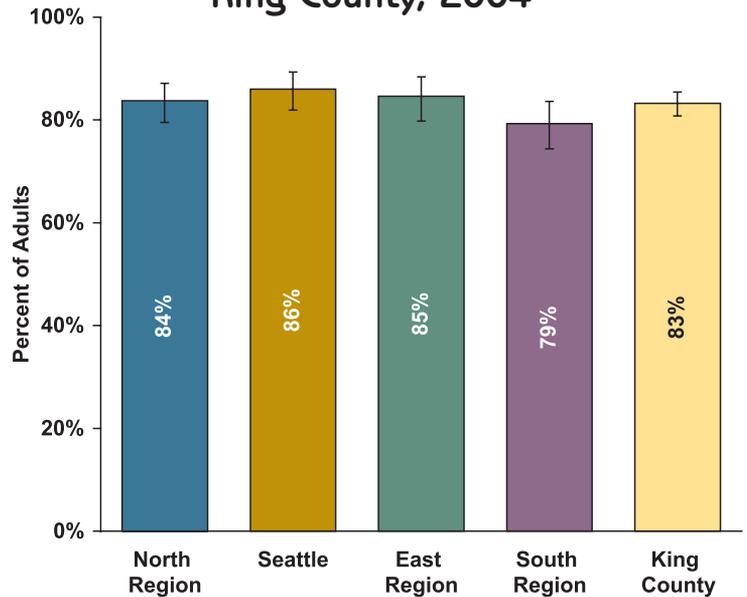
The limitations of an English-only telephone survey include the following: a) people who do not have a telephone are missed, b) people who do not speak English do not participate, c) people who have less education and lower incomes tend to be under-represented.

# Involvement in Community Organizations

Communities are strong when many people are engaged in activities that benefit more than themselves as individuals. Working together for the common good of neighborhoods, faith communities, schools or a political cause creates civic responsibility and a sense of reciprocity.

- Involvement in Community Organizations was measured by asking King County adults how actively they had participated in 6 specific types of activities in the past 12 months. The number of activities was added for each respondent. Since these questions were asked and coded differently in 2004 than in previous years, the data are not directly comparable with those from 1999 or 2001.
- In 2004, 83% of King County adults were “very active” or “somewhat active” in at least one activity in the community.
- There were no significant differences in community involvement levels by region of the County.

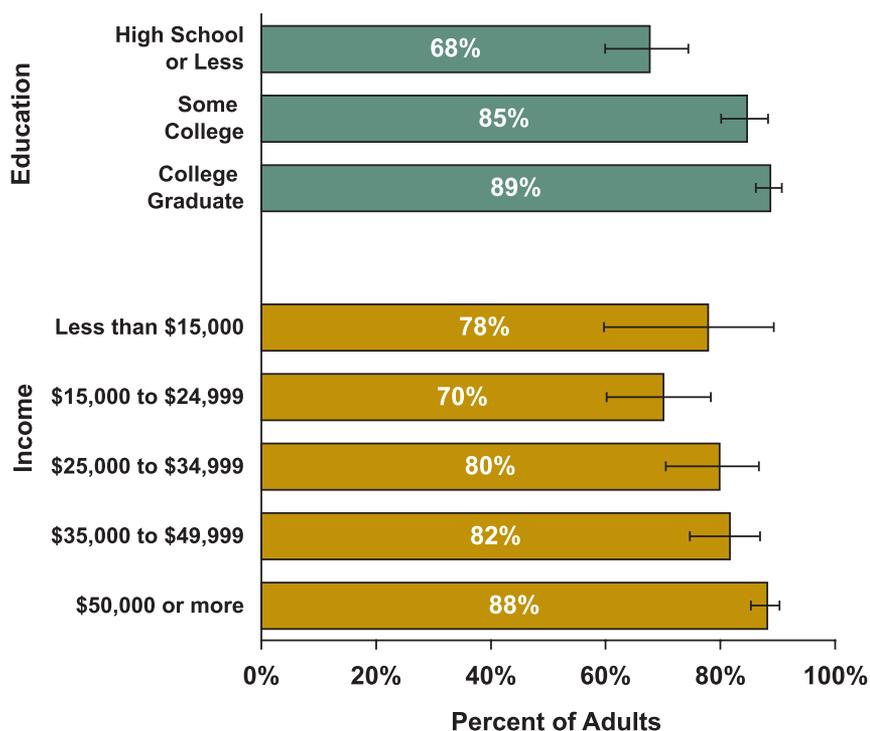
**Percent of Adults Who Are Very or Somewhat Active in One or More Community Organizations King County, 2004**



**Percent of Adults Who Are “Very or Somewhat” Active in Specific Community Organizations, King County, 2004**

In the past 12 months, how active have you been in:	North Region	Seattle	East Region	South Region	King County
...a political group?	26%	37%	23%	21%	27%
...a civic group such as the Kiwanis, NAACP or the Japanese American Citizen’s League?	14%	13%	11%	13%	13%
...a youth group or youth sports organization?	33%	21%	33%	34%	29%
...an arts, culture, music or theater group?	25%	36%	31%	24%	30%
...a school or educational organization	46%	41%	46%	42%	43%
...a religious group or congregation?	46%	39%	45%	48%	44%
...a neighborhood organization or block club (any type of group that exists for people right in your neighborhood)?	24%	24%	28%	26%	25%

**Percent of Adults Who Are Very or Somewhat Active  
in One or More Community Organizations  
By Education and Income  
King County, 2004**



- People with a college education are more active than those with a high school education or less.
- People with household incomes of \$50,000 or higher are more involved in community activities than those earning between \$15,000 and \$24,999.

**Data Source, Definition, and Limitations**

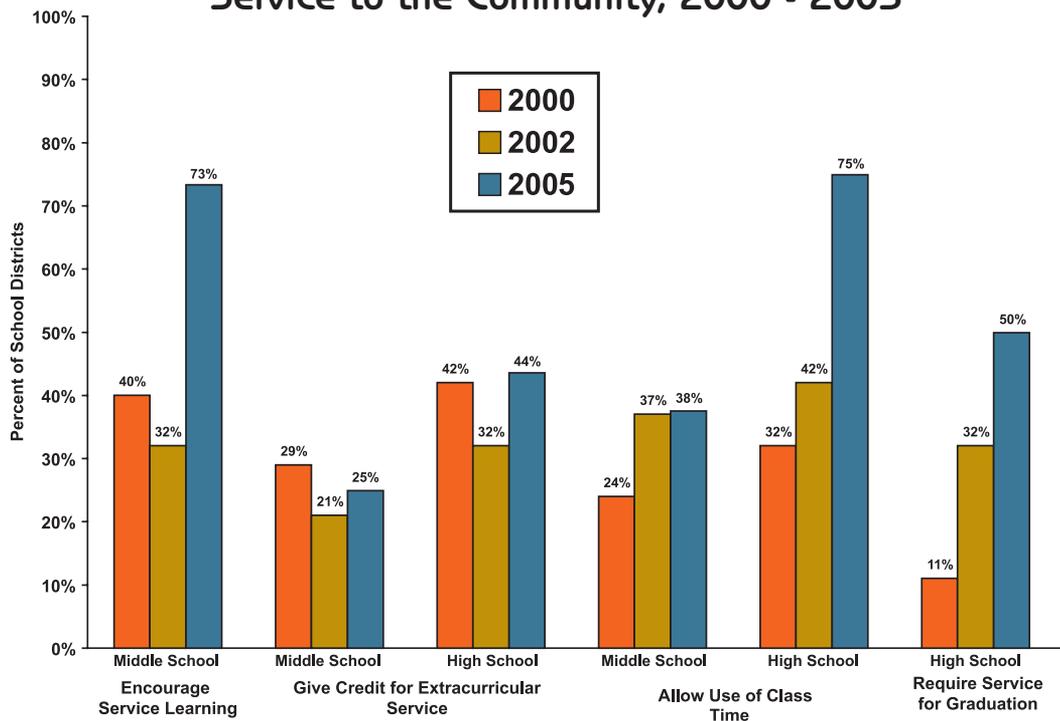
The involvement in community organizations measures are from the King County Community Health Survey, 2004.

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# Institutional Support for Community Service

Services to other and to the greater community is something most people value but not everyone participates in. The ethic of service – giving our time and talents for the sake of the common good – is developed within families, and is often reinforced in faith communities, youth organizations and schools. The demands of school and work, however, make it hard to find time for volunteer activities. If schools are able to support service to the community, it is possible that more people, young and old, will participate.

Percent of King County School Districts that Encourage Student Service to the Community, 2000 - 2005



- Among the 17 school districts that participated in a survey of district policy, the general trend between 2000 and 2004 is increasing support for student involvement in community service projects.
- In a 2004 survey of school administrators, three quarters of King County public school districts reported that they encourage their teachers to offer service learning opportunities. Fewer than half reported giving students credit for extracurricular community service. Use of class time is allowed by a majority of districts for high school students but fewer allow time for middle school students. Half of the school districts require community service for graduation.
- The practices of each school district are summarized on the following page.

## Policies/Practices of King County School Districts Supporting Student Community Service, 2004

School District	Encourage Service Learning	Give Credit for Extracurricular Service		Allow Use of Class Time		Require Service for Graduation
	Middle School	Middle School	High School	Middle School	High School	High School
Auburn	No Response	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Bellevue	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes
Enumclaw	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Federal Way	No Response	No Response	No Response	No Response	No Response	No Response
Highline	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Issaquah	No Response	No Response	No Response	No Response	No Response	No Response
Kent	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Lake Washington	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mercer Island	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
Northshore	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
Renton	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Riverview	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No
Seattle	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Shoreline	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
Skykomish	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Snoqualmie Valley	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No
Tahoma	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
Tukwila	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
Vashon Island	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Total Positive Response	11	4	7	6	12	8
Total Response	15	16	16	16	16	16
Percent Positive 2004	73%	25%	44%	38%	75%	50%
Percent Positive 2002	32%	21%	32%	37%	42%	32%
Percent Positive 2000	40%	29%	42%	24%	32%	11%

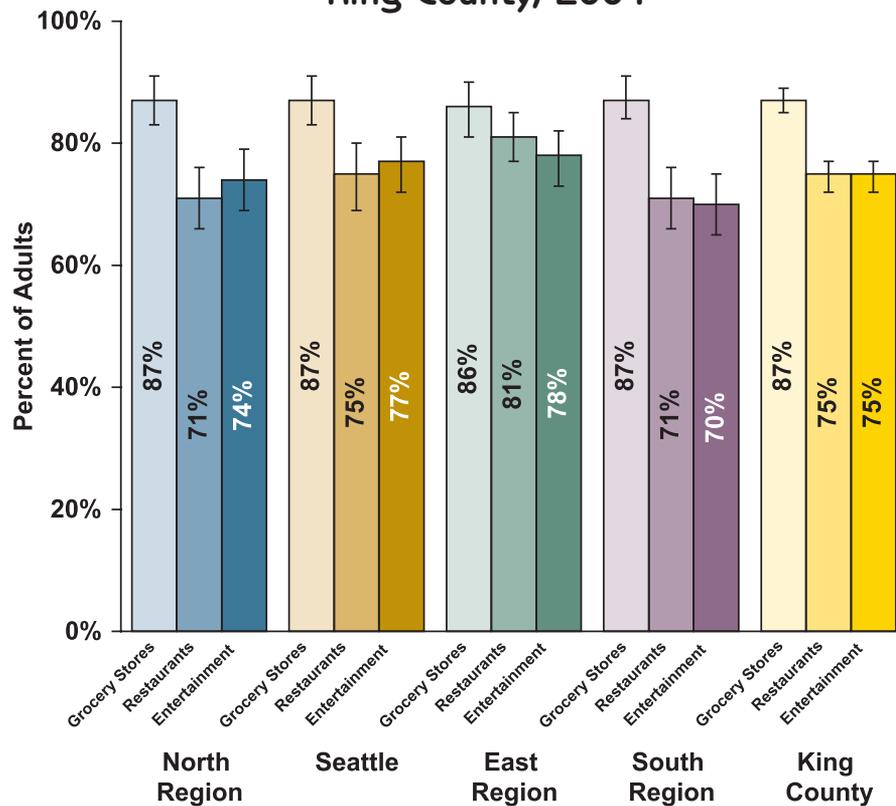
### Data Source, Definition, and Limitations

School data are from a 2000, 2002, and 2004 email/mail survey sent to administrators in King County's 19 school districts. Because support for community service may vary by schools within a district, there may be some inaccuracy in the reports provided by district level administrators.

# Ease of Access to Shops and Services

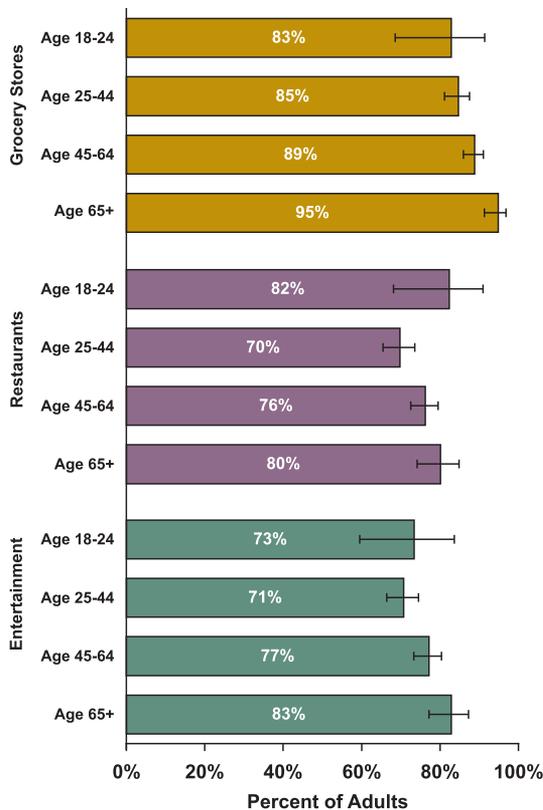
Easy, quick trips to grocery stores and services such as libraries and senior centers, as well as satisfaction with access to restaurants and entertainment, make people’s daily life less stressful. Being able to reach shops and services on foot, bike, or short bus ride may free up time for more important or satisfying activities, and help to reduce automobile congestion on freeways and more local highways and streets.

**Percent of Adults Who Are Satisfied With Neighborhood Access to Grocery Stores, Restaurants and Entertainment King County, 2004**



- In a 2004 survey, King County adults were asked their level of satisfaction with access to grocery stores, restaurants, and entertainment in their neighborhood. In general, three-fourths of respondents were satisfied with their access to these amenities.
- Satisfaction with access to grocery stores tended to be higher than with access to restaurants or entertainment.
- East Region residents were more satisfied with access to restaurants than residents of the South or North Regions.

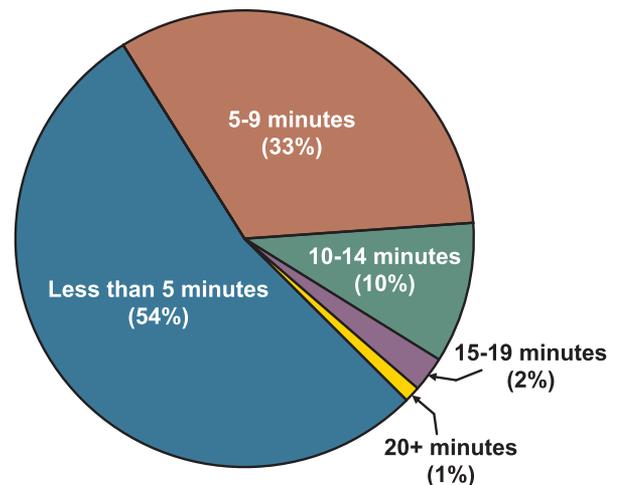
## Percent of Adults Who Are Satisfied With Their Access to Grocery Stores, Restaurants and Entertainment, by Age, King County, 2004



- Those aged 65 and older expressed more satisfaction with their access to grocery stores than those aged 25-64, and more satisfaction with their access to restaurants and entertainment than those aged 25-44.
- Those with a high school education or less expressed more satisfaction with their access to restaurants than those with more education (data not shown).

- In a 2001 survey, King County adults were asked how many minutes it takes them to get to the nearest grocery store by car, bus, walking or bicycling. 87% said that they are within 10 minutes of a grocery store by car, one third (34%) within 10 minutes by bus and 23% within 10 minutes by walking or riding a bicycle (data not shown).
- More than half reported that they can reach the nearest grocery store in less than 5 minutes. One third could reach a grocery in 5-9 minutes, 10% in 10-14 minutes, and 2% in 15-19 minutes.
- Residents who have household incomes of \$50,000 or higher have significantly better access by car to grocery stores than people who have very low incomes--less than \$25,000 (data not shown).

## Percent of Adults Living Within Minutes By Car to Grocery Store King County, 2001



### Data Source, Definition, and Limitations

The measures of satisfaction with neighborhood access to grocery stores, restaurants and entertainment are from the King County Community Health Survey, 2004, and were adapted from the "Neighborhood Quality of Life Survey", Frank, L., Sallis, J. and Saelens, B. The measure of minutes to the grocery store is from the King County Community Health Survey, 2001.

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