SNAPSHOTSEATTLE

A survey for an accurate picture of Seattle's LGBTQ Community

Seattle LGBT Commission Report of Needs Assessment Survey 2010

June 2011

Seattle Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual
and Transgendered Commission

Prepared By: Dane Boog, Lillie Cridland, Michael Villanueva,
Eleazar Juárez-Díaz, Joel Ballezza

Seattle LGBT Commission
seattle.gov/lgbt

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II. Executive Summary

The Seattle Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Commission advises the Mayor, Council and departments about sexual minority issues, recommends policies and legislation, brings the LGBTQ communities together with the larger Seattle community, and ensures that City departments equitably address LGBTQ concerns as individuals and as a protected class.

In June 2010, the Commission launched Snapshot Seattle, a research project to assess the needs of Seattle's LGBTQ community on issues including housing, education, health, public safety and community involvement. Without data in hand, it was hard to describe the LGBTQ community in Seattle, making it difficult to influence policy or funding decisions.

The project began with a 6-week online survey consisting of open-ended and multiple choice questions which were developed in collaboration with community organizations. Nearly 1,600 people participated in the survey from June 18 through July 31, 2010. After initial analysis, the Commission gathered additional qualitative information through forums and interviews, focusing on demographics that were underrepresented in the survey. The Commission also reviewed and included other surveys and reports to supplement Snapshot data.

Key issues identified in the survey included marriage equality, hate crime/violence, health care and lack of jobs. In meetings and forums, people generally agreed with these concerns and developed numerous suggestions for action by the City and nonprofit organizations. One common recommendation was to develop an LGBTQ Center that could centralize resources and provide services. The Commission recommends that the City support the planning of this project, as the work of a Center could address many of the issues identified in the survey.

The Snapshot identified four key subgroups within the LGBTQ community that are more vulnerable and face greater challenges: seniors, youth, people of color, and transgender individuals. In particular, housing, health care and economics emerged as significant challenges. The Commission recommends increased training and education throughout City government about the results of the Snapshot so that City departments can better address the needs of these vulnerable communities and evaluate any new policies or procedures using this additional knowledge.

The Commission recognizes that this report does not capture the entirety of the LGBTQ community, and we urge the City and other organizations to increase their data gathering of LGBTQ statistics so we can continue to build a more complete picture of the LGBTQ community in Seattle. It is our hope that Snapshot Seattle creates a better conversation between City government, nonprofit organizations and community groups about making Seattle the best city in the country for LGBTQ people.

II. Glossary of terms

Expanding public awareness of Seattle's lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community is at the heart of the mission of the Seattle LGBT Commission. Our community is very diverse, and the terms we use to refer to the different groups reflect that diversity. As you read on, keep in mind that these terms are always evolving.

Bisexual: Sexual behavior or orientation involving physical or romantic attraction to both males and females.

FTM: Female to male transgender.

Gay (broad): A person who has a sexual or romantic attraction to a person of the same sex.

Gay (male): A male who is emotionally and sexually attracted to other men.

Gender identity: A person's identity, expression, or physical characteristics, whether or not traditionally associated with biological sex or one's sex at birth. Gender identity includes transsexual, transvestite, and transgendered, as well as a person's attitudes, preferences, beliefs, and practices pertaining to gender identity.

Gender Queer and inter-gender: Catch-all terms for gender identities other than man and woman.

Lesbian: A female who is emotionally and sexually attracted to other women.

LGBTQ: Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer. This term is used to describe the out community in one acronym.

MTF: Male to female transgender.

Queer: An umbrella term for non-heterosexual, hetero-normative, or gender-binary.

Questioning: Refers to people who question their gender, sexual identity or sexual orientation.

Sexual orientation: Actual or perceived male or female heterosexuality, bisexuality, or homosexuality. Sexual orientation includes a person's attitudes, preferences, beliefs and practices.

Transgender An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from the sex they were assigned at birth. The term includes but is not limited to transsexuals, cross-dressers and other gender-variant people. Transgender people may identify as female-to-male (FTM) or male-to-female (MTF). Use the descriptive term (*transgender*, *transsexual*, *cross-dresser*, FTM or MTF) preferred by the individual. Transgender people may or may not decide to alter their bodies hormonally and/or surgically.

Source Sites:

http://www.ftmguide.org
http://wordnetweb.princeton.edu/
http://www.infoplease.com/us/census/data/washington/seattle/
City of Seattle Municipal Code
http://www.glaad.org/reference

II. Introduction

Snapshot Seattle is the culmination of a two year process. It includes the findings of a 1,600 participant survey and key informant interviews and focus groups. The report is the first step to take count and assess the needs of Seattle's LGBT community. It was prepared by the Seattle Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Commission (Seattle LGBT Commission) at the request of LGBT organizations, individuals and elected officials serving the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) community in Seattle. This report found that LGBT people in Seattle live and own homes throughout the city, have families with children and committed relationships, and are concerned about a broad array of issues beyond those commonly thought of as LGBT concerns. In addition the report finds that harassment against LGBT people is grossly underreported and that LGBT homeless youth and elders need services. The report includes recommendations to improve the quality of life of Seattle's LGBT residents. The top five recommendations include:

1. **Support for an LGBT Community Center on Capitol Hill.**
2. **Support for transgender individuals to achieve financial self-sufficiency through stable employment in jobs providing a living wage and benefits, with opportunities for advancement.**
3. **Funding for LGBT homeless youth-specific services.**
4. **Funding for LGBT-specific senior programs.**
5. **Re-evaluation of public safety to encourage reporting of harassment and discrimination.**

III. Background

Forty years after the birth of the modern gay civil rights movement, LGBT individuals and families still lack basic civil rights and protection from discrimination in housing and employment in most of the country. In Seattle, the lack of consistent data makes it difficult to determine the size of the LGBT community and results in an incomplete picture of the community's overall needs. This lack of information also impacts the LGBT Commission's ability to make policy and budget recommendations to City of Seattle elected officials and department directors, as well as the ability of LGBT community organizations and non-profits to seek funding for grants, services and opportunities.

Despite these limitations; researchers and policy makers have identified, studied and attempted to address a number of issues in the LGBTQ community:

- The unmet health needs of LGBT people from childhood through later years ("The Health of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender People: Building a Foundation for Understanding").
- Transgender Discrimination ("Injustice at Every Turn: A Report from the National Transgender Discrimination Survey, National Gay and Lesbian Taskforce").
- Issues for LGBT people of Color ("At the Intersection: Race, Sexuality and Gender, Human Rights Campaign").
- LGBT Homeless Youth Issues ("An Epidemic of Homelessness, National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Policy Institute, National Coalition for the Homeless").

- Demographic data inclusive of gender expression and sexual orientation (Williams Institute).

Some studies have found that problems such as the limited access to living wage jobs are experienced across the broader population, though experienced differently within the LGBT community. National reports completed by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force and the National Center for Transgender Equality indicate that transgender and gender variant study participants were nearly four times more likely to have a household income of less than $10,000/year compared to the general population[1]. The same report found that 47% of transgender and/or gender non-conforming people had been fired, not hired or denied a promotion at work. Seattle's Ingersoll Gender Center reported only 52% full-time employment of transgender people in a 2008[2] report. Some cities have started to address these issues. The City of San Francisco started a Transgender Economic Empowerment Initiative in 2007 to address the high rates of unemployment and underemployment in the transgender community.

Other issues target LGBTQ people based on their status. A growing body of research and study estimates that one out of every five homeless youth (20 percent) is LGBTQ-identified. The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Policy Institute found that "one third of youth who are homeless or in the care of social services experienced a violent physical assault when they came out, which can lead to youth leaving a shelter or foster home because they feel safer on the streets."[3]

Top concerns for the LGBTQ community

In 2008, then-Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels gathered community stakeholders and LGBT Commission members to participate in a round-table discussion on LGBTQ community needs, issues, and engagement. Many participants provided thoughtful ideas and perspectives but there was a lack of data to support this anecdotal information, and the Mayor asked for more concrete information about how the City could engage the LGBTQ community. After speaking with multiple organizations and community members, the Commission decided that a needs assessment was necessary to better understand the issues impacting the LGBTQ community. Acting on its advisory role to elected officials and City departments, the Commission created an online needs assessment survey to begin compiling information about Seattle's LGBTQ community.

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[1] The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force and the National Center for Transgender Equality, (2/3/2011), "Injustice at Every Turn". http://www.thetaskforce.org/reports_and_research/ntds (accessed on 5/31/11).

[2] Ingersoll Gender Center, (1/9/2008), "Perspectives Northwest Survey Report". http://www.ingersollcenter.org/Research (accessed on 5/31/11).

[3] LGBT Youth Homelessness, The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force and the National Center for Transgender Equality, 2006.

The survey asked respondents to identify the biggest issues impacting them personally. Choosing from a multiple choice list of answers, participants' top three answers were healthcare (52%), marriage equality (49%), and lack of jobs/economy (43%). Among the list of 22 options, only education (23%) also garnered more than 20% of responses. While economic and healthcare concerns are likely to be of high importance to all people, it is important to note that LGBTQ people share different healthcare concerns, including the impact on job security due to employment discrimination, access to health insurance for domestic partners, access to LGTBTQ-appropriate healthcare providers, etc.

The survey also asked people to evaluate the top three issues needing attention within the LGBTQ community in Seattle. Choosing from the same list of multiple choice answers, participants' top three responses were marriage equality (56%); hate crime violence/harassment (39%); and healthcare (32%). Other issues commonly identified included issues around HIV/AIDS (25%), lack of jobs/economy (24%), youth issues (22%), and drugs (22%).

Key Findings

Community forums and other qualitative data reflected these common themes. Several people discussed the disparity in access to jobs within the LGBTQ community and particularly within the transgender, youth, and homeless communities. Many people noted that stable employment could be the solution to multiple problems identified in the survey, including access to healthcare and housing.

In free response sections, many survey respondents indicated that they would like community clinics for LGBTQ people or other means for increasing access to LGBTQ-focused care. The need was identified for both health services and substance abuse treatment programs. Several people also noted that this was a particularly acute issue for transgender people and that more work needed to be done to educate health care and service providers about the needs of transgender people.

The 2007-2008 City of Seattle budget supported better healthcare for the city's lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender residents by earmarking $107,000 toward funding a successful agency in a competitive Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process to provide training to healthcare and social service providers about how to effectively work with LGBTQ individuals. Similar efforts are needed to meet other needs of the LGBTQ community.

Recommendations to address the top concerns of the LGBTQ community

- Support community efforts to create and maintain an LGBTQ Community Center.
- Create and implement a program similar to the Transgender Economic Empowerment Initiative passed in the City of San Francisco in 2007.

- Educate healthcare and other service providers about the needs of transgender people and support inclusive LGBTQ medical care, mental health care and substance abuse treatment programs.

IV. Methodology

Snapshot Seattle planners developed this survey after examining over thirteen other needs assessment surveys across the United States. In order to obtain the broadest measurement of the community, the survey contained many different types of questions. The 53-question survey touched on demographics, socio-economic status, housing and family status, priority issues for the City of Seattle, human services, workplace environment, health care accessibility, harassment and civic engagement. This report provides basic summaries of each section; raw data will be made available to the public for further analysis.

Two methods were used to compile survey data: an online survey plus personal interviews or roundtable discussions with non-governmental organizations representing communities of color, the LGBTQ community, and City departments. The Commission felt this was necessary to address racial equity and the history of institutionalized racism in the LGBTQ community. Commissioners reached out to LGBTQ communities of color and ethnic diversity, transgender, homeless, youth, and elderly community organizations to ensure that issues faced by these communities were accurately reflected in our report. The survey was launched in the last week of May 2010 and remained live through the second week of July 2010. Nearly 1,600 people participated in the survey. In-person interviews and roundtable discussions were conducted in May/June 2011. The survey and this report are intended as a starting point for continued conversation and collaboration among the Commission, City officials, City departments and community stakeholders to address the needs of Seattle's LGBT community.

V. Findings

A. Demographics

This section of the report provides descriptive information for the population that participated in this survey. The lack of detailed demographic information on the LGBTQ population of Seattle presented a challenge in the design of the survey. Without baseline data, a survey representative of the entire LGBTQ population in Seattle is just not possible. Given that representative population surveys such as the US Census do not capture sexual orientation and gender identity, it is not useful to compare our demographic data to the Census demographic data. Since the cultural norm assumes that Census respondents are heterosexual, this report includes graphic comparisons to provide a frame of reference when comparing the LGBT population to that of the general (heterosexual) public. Despite this, a broad cross-section of the LGBT community is represented here.

Figure 1: Respondents' residence by zip code in city limits

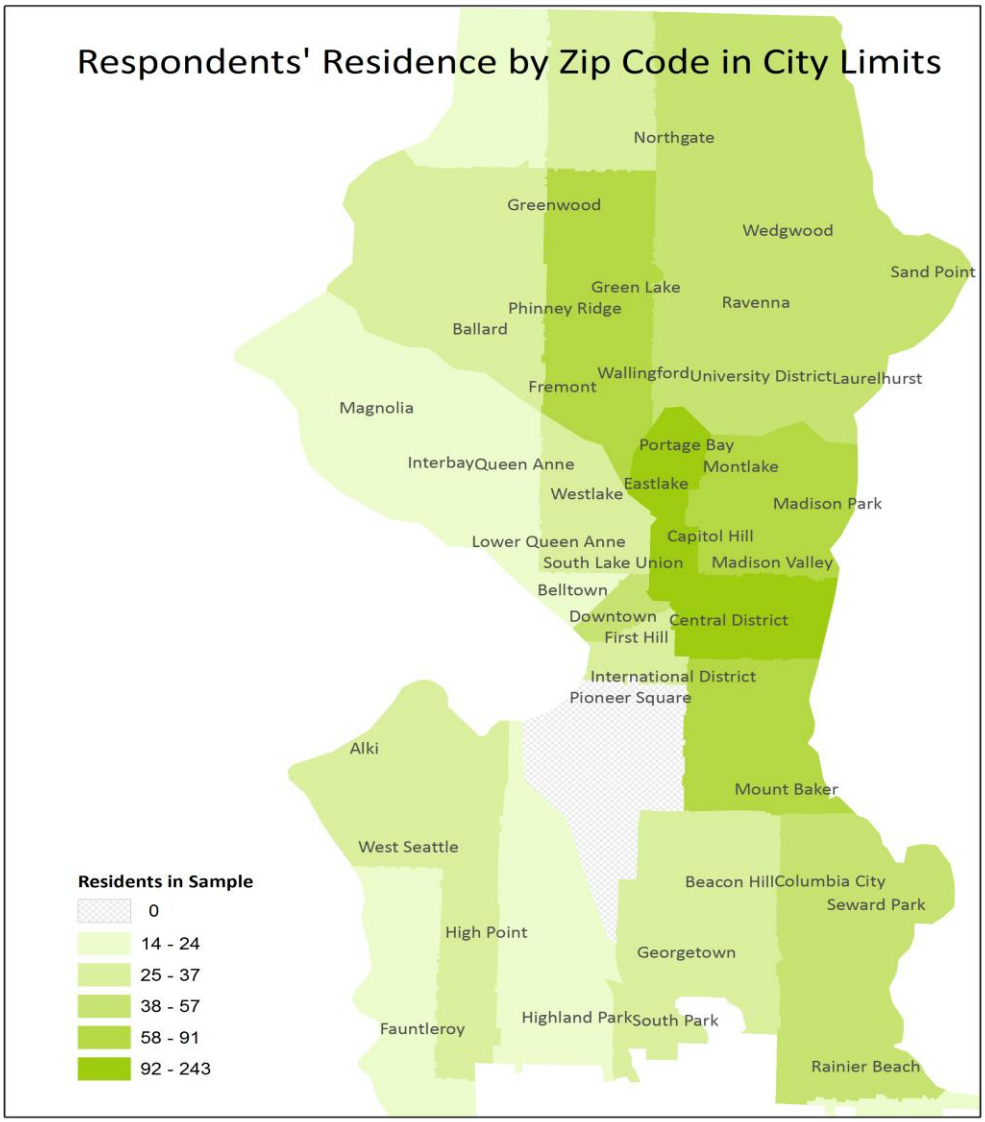

Figure 1 shows where survey respondents live. The largest participation was from participants in the Central District, Capitol Hill, and Eastlake neighborhoods. There were no survey participants from the Pioneer Square district.

LGBTQ individuals reside everywhere in the city, not just on Capitol Hill. During qualitative data gathering, older respondents noted the importance of transportation and its impact on their ability to access services and programs. Many LGBTQ organizations are located on Capitol Hill, but seniors can face difficulty getting to these locations.

Figure 2: Age distribution of survey participants

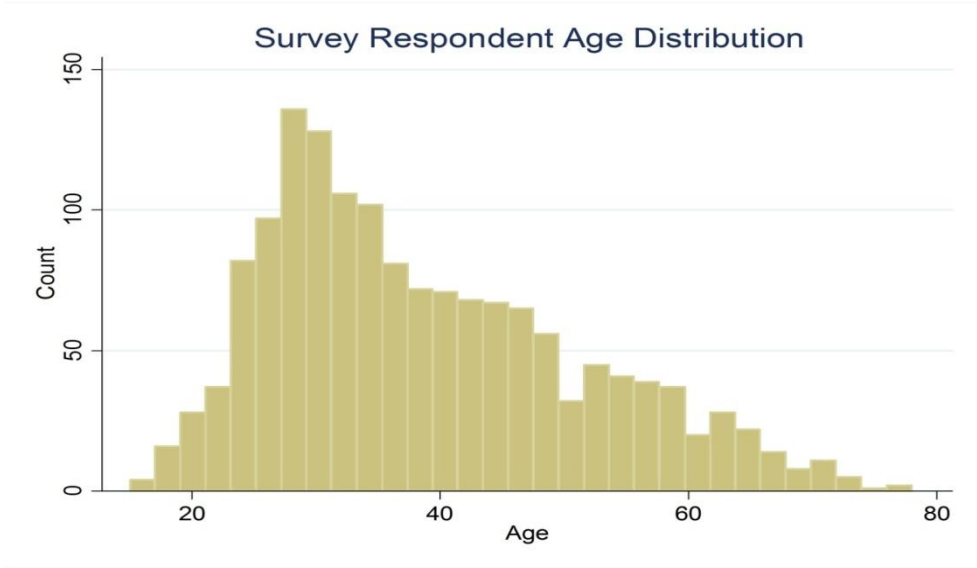

Figure 2 reports the age distribution of survey participants. The highest participation was from respondents 24-38 years old.

Figure 3: Ethnic background of survey respondents

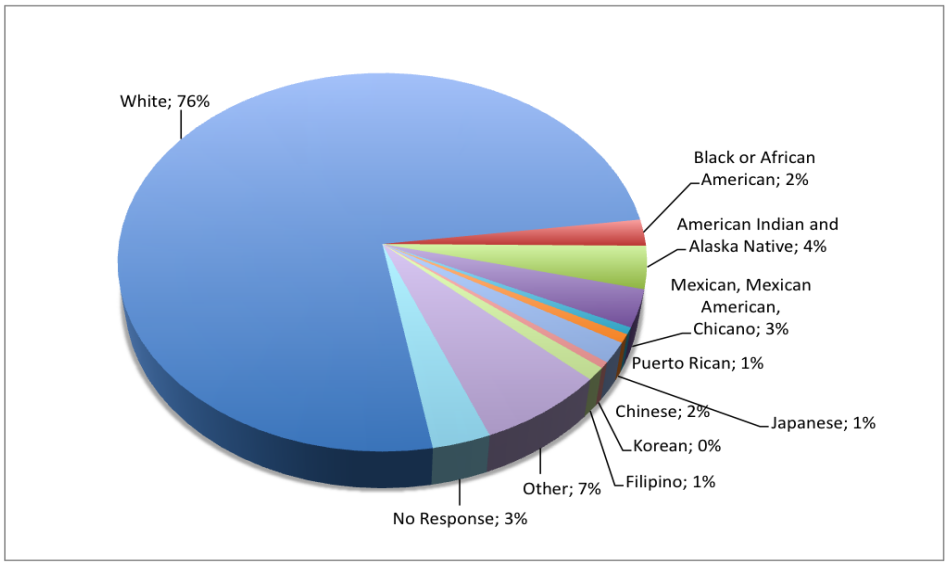

Figure 3 shows the racial identities of respondents. Three quarters of survey respondents identified as white. The largest communities of color identified as American Indian / Alaskan Native and Mexican or Mexican American or Chicano (4% and 3% percent respectively). The remaining minorities identified as Black, African American, Asian or other. The "other" category represents independent responses to "other" – Cuban, Asian Indian, Vietnamese, Native Hawaiian, Guamanian or Chamorro communities. Responses less than 1% of survey participants were grouped in this category.

Figure 4: Gender identity of survey respondents

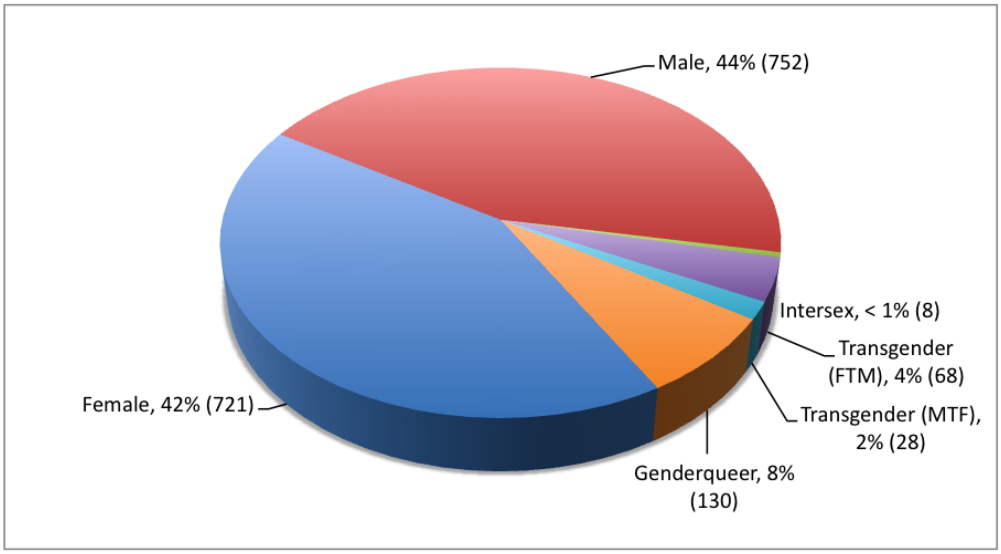

Figure 4 shows the gender identity of survey respondents. The ratio of female to male was approximately equal (752 males and 721 females). 5.6% identified as transgender (including MTF and FTM). Less than 1% identified as intersex (8 respondents).

Figure 5: Sexual orientation of survey respondents

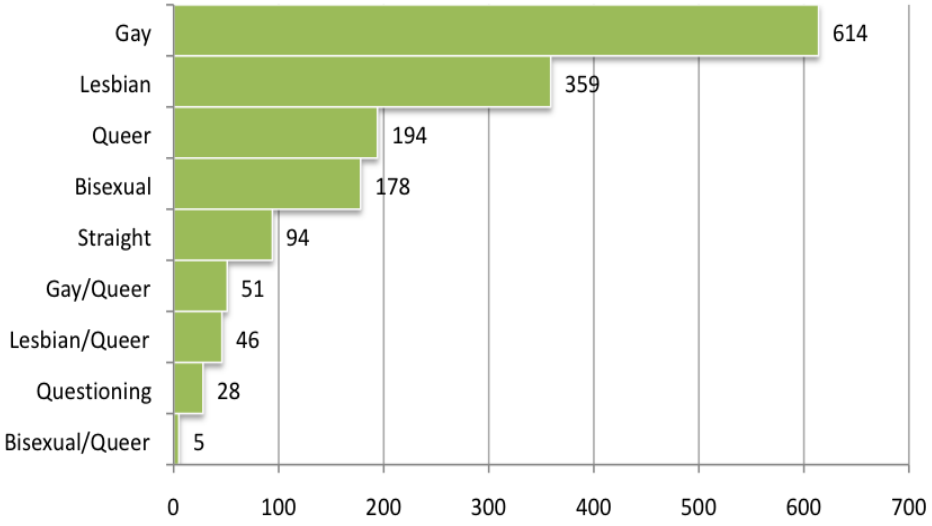

Figure 5 shows the sexual orientation of survey respondents. Gay white men represented the largest number of respondents (614). Lesbians were second highest (359).

Figure 6: Relationship status of survey participants

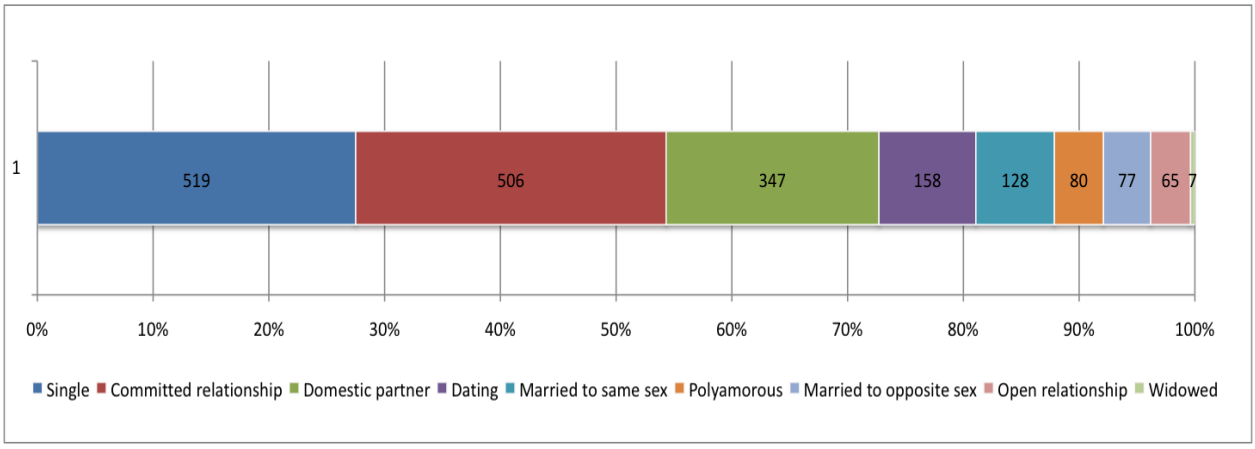

Figure 6 shows the relationship status of respondents. The number of respondents in single and committed relationships is proportional (519 single and 506 committed relationships). Domestic partnerships are the third most common relationship among respondents.

Recommendations: Demographics

- Gather census data on LGBTQ populations to greater inform businesses and the community of demographic changes in the City of Seattle. Stronger data collection can help LGBTQ organizations receive grant funding for projects and help subsidize community projects and health and human service benefits and programs currently being cut within the City's budget.

- Procure public and private funding to further investigate the demographics of the LGTBQ community within the City of Seattle.

- Fund programs that promote intergenerational activities for the senior and aging LGBTQ community with the LGBTQ and heterosexual communities.

B. Public Safety

In the 1960s the City of Seattle's tolerant reputation drew an increasing number of gay and lesbians. Despite the general atmosphere of tolerance towards the LGBTQ community in Seattle, there have been recorded instances of homophobic hate crimes, particularly in Capitol Hill (the center of LGBTQ life in the city) and in open public spaces such as Volunteer Park. In 1966, a Seattle Times headline stated, "*Tolerant Reputation: Seattle homosexual problem reported to be 'out of hand.'*" This article stated the Seattle police wanted to suppress the LGBTQ community, partially by revoking gay bars' liquor licenses. In January 2009, eleven gay bars and clubs in Seattle received letters threatening attacks. Although the City of Seattle has taken steps to address harassment, hate crimes and discrimination against its LGBTQ residents, 58% of Snapshot Seattle respondents indicated they had experienced discrimination or

harassment in the past seven years. The survey also found that violent incidents are grossly underreported. – 89% of people did not report the harassment or discrimination that did occur.

A 2006 report documented bias crimes in Seattle by type and neighborhood. A follow-up 2008 report by the City Auditor contained seventeen recommendations to improve and/or increase the City of Seattle's:
1) Response to bias attacks;
2) Awareness and education about bias attacks; and
3) Interdepartmental and interagency responsiveness to victims and communities affected by bias attacks.

Of the seventeen recommendations in the 2008 audit report, nine have been fully implemented (all by the Seattle Police Department [SPD]), three have been partially implemented, and five have not been implemented. One is being considered for implementation with the cooperation of the Seattle Office for Civil Rights and the Seattle Human Rights Commission. SPD modified its electronic data system to improve the data it collects on bias attacks. This allowed the City to better understand, respond to and report on the incidence of bias attacks in Seattle. These actions are significant and demonstrate to the public that Seattle has no tolerance for bias attacks. The City has not yet implemented the recommendation to produce regular reporting on bias crimes and incidents and coordinated outreach and education about bias crimes.

State and county laws clearly define the criminal behaviors that the SPD has power to address: property damage, threats, assault and murder. Behaviors such as refusing service, employment or housing, name calling and offensive language directed to a person because of LGBTQ status, can be addressed under the City of Seattle's anti-discrimination laws, which enforced by the Seattle Office for Civil Rights. According to a recent study, approximately 20% of lesbians, gay men and bisexual people experienced a crime against their property or person based on their sexual orientation over their lifetime; 50% experienced verbal harassment.[4]

A national survey of transgender people conducted by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force found that one fifth (22%) of respondents who have interacted with the police reported harassment by the police, with much higher rates for people by color. A Human Rights Campaign national report on LGBT people of color found that 95% of respondents ranked protecting people from individuals who commit violence against LGBT people their most important concern.[5]

It is positive news that only 2% of respondents indicated feeling 'Unsafe' or 'Very Unsafe' in Seattle. Nearly two-thirds of respondents (63%) felt "Safe" or 'Very Safe,' but 34% felt only 'Moderately Safe,' indicating that there remains room for improvement within the City

[4] G. M. Herek, "Hate Crimes and Stigma-Related Experiences among Sexual Minority Adults in the United States: Prevalence Estimates from a National Probability Sample," Journal of Interpersonal Violence (2009).

[5] At the Intersection: Race, Sexual Orientation and Gender, Human Rights Campaign, 2009.

Figure 11: How safe do you feel in Seattle as a LGBTQ identified person?

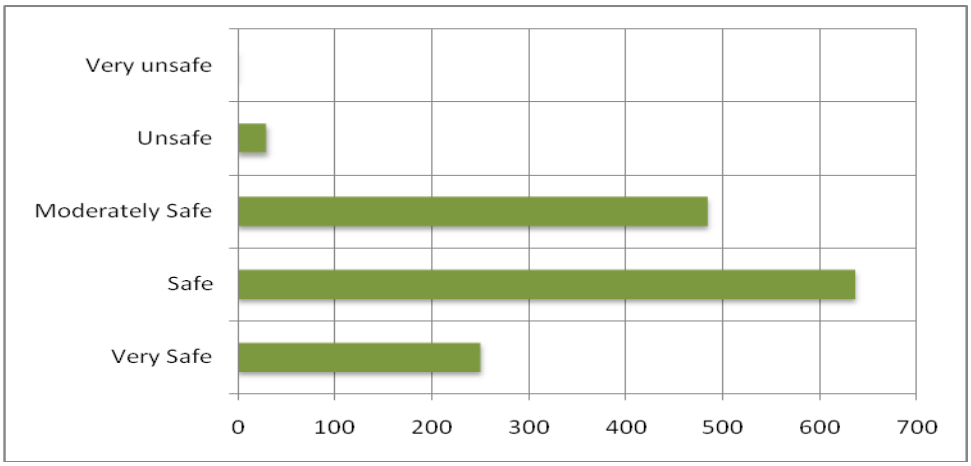

Figure 11 shows that 18% feel very safe within Seattle, 45% feel safe, and 34% feel moderately safe within the city. Less than 2% feel unsafe or very unsafe.

Perceptions of safety vary greatly. Transgender individuals described feeling at much higher risk for violence and experienced frequent harassment. A forum of Latina women indicated that there was a significant lack of information and outreach in other languages, specifically around issues such as contacting the police, hate crimes and LGBTQ harassment or discrimination.

Alarmingly, 89% of people did not report the harassment or discrimination that did occur. There is clearly a need to increase outreach to the LGBTQ community about reporting safety and civil rights concerns. An important question not addressed by this survey is why people are not reporting incidents of harassment and discrimination. Perhaps many people are unaware of what constitutes harassment and therefore may be reluctant to involve the police. Further research is needed to determine if mistrust of police plays a role in the under-reporting of harassment. More work needs to be done to evaluate the trust level of the LGBTQ community with SPD and to identify ways to improve that relationship.

Often, minor incidents that may not rise to the level of a criminal act go unreported to police or authorities. The ability to track the number of harassment and discrimination incidents and the circumstances surrounding them (i.e. location, time, type of harassment) would give the Commission, SPD, and other organizations valuable information about the safety of LGBTQ individuals. For example, a rise in verbal harassment may signify an upcoming rise in physically violent incidents; a spike in activity in a certain neighborhood may indicate the need for a targeted response, etc. In addition to creating a mechanism for people to report incidents of harassment, it is also apparent that there needs to be an immediate effort to educate the LGBTQ community about what constitutes a hate crime and how to report a hate crime.

Verbal or physical harassment have been present in multiple locations. The largest number of incidents occurred on the street (43%). Harassment in public places, as the most prevalent incidents and most within the City's purview, needs to be addressed in partnership with City of Seattle departments, the Seattle Police Department and members of the community. Community policing and neighborhood watch groups are models that should be explored as

well as the possibility of increasing police presence in areas and times when harassment is occurring. To further this effort, the Commission and SPD need to collect and evaluate data on harassment so that resources can be directed effectively.

Figure 12: Location of harassment

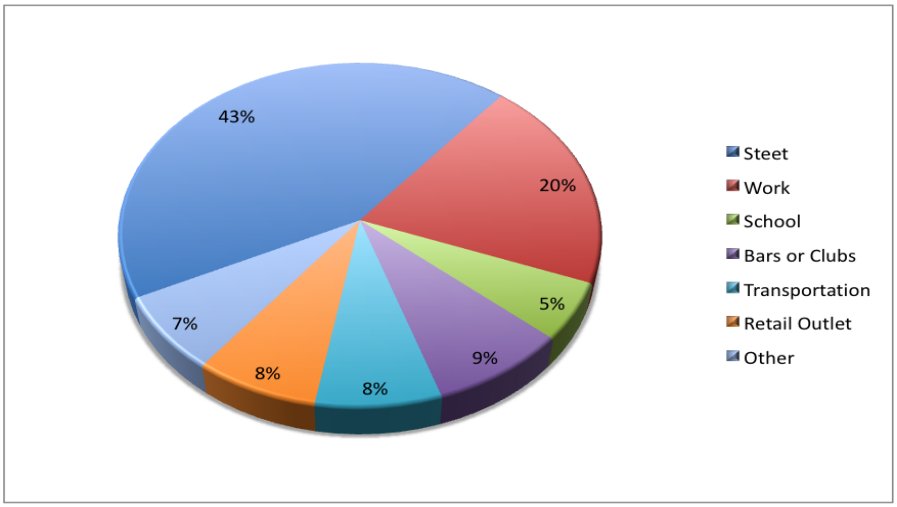

Figure 12 shows generic locations where survey participants experienced verbal or physical assaults. Over 43% of participants experienced verbal or physical harassment while walking or driving around Seattle. Twenty percent of respondents experienced verbal harassment primarily within the workplace, and 37% in other community institutions.

Figure 13: Harassment form by sexual orientation

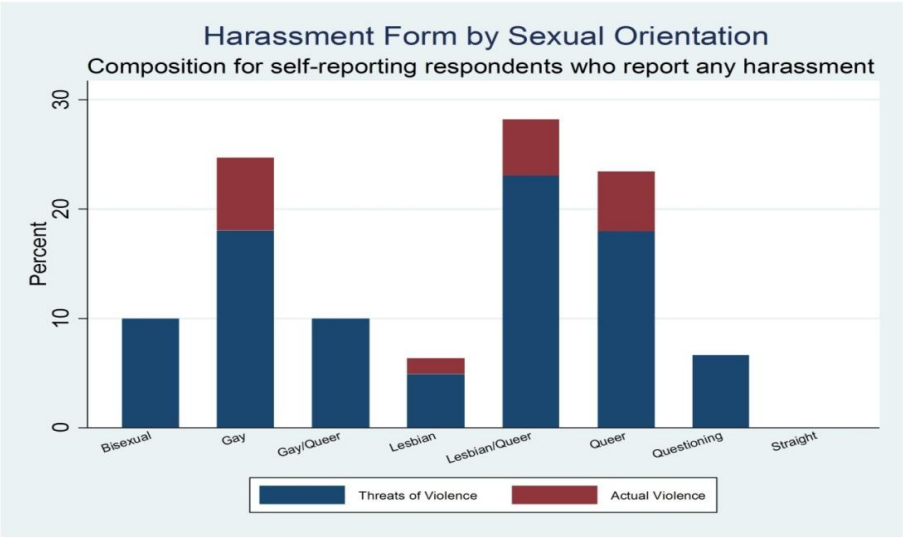

Figure 13 shows harassment by form of threats of violence or actual physical violence. Lesbian/queer respondents reported the highest rate of harassment as threats (25%), while gay men identified the highest rates of actual violence or physical harassment (7%).

Figure 14: Harassment reporting by sexual orientation

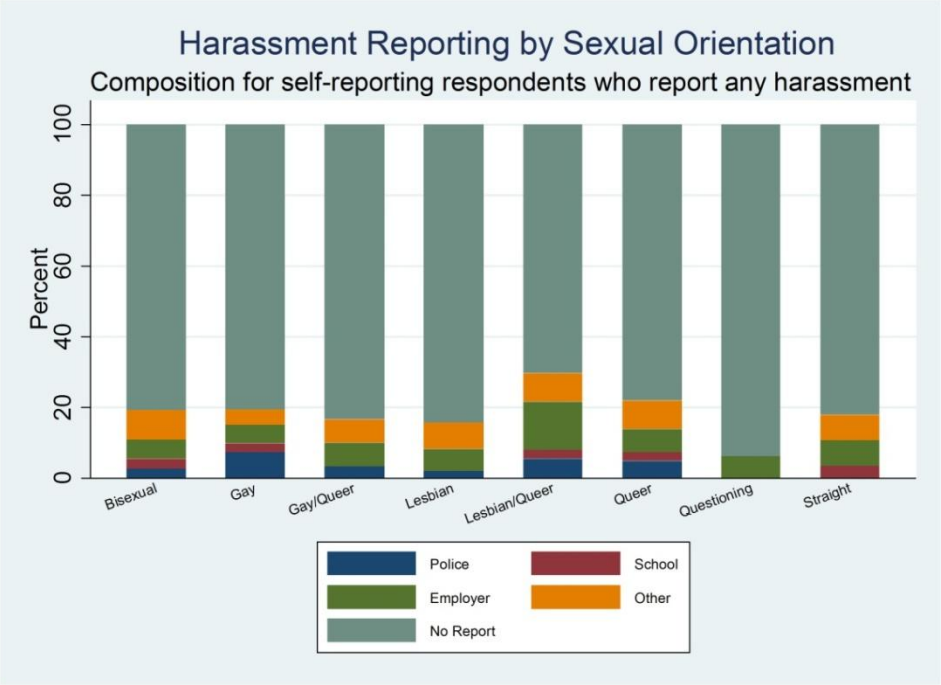

Figure 14 shows the reporting of harassment. Survey participants report less than 20% of all incidents of harassment. The next highest proportion of harassment is reported to other people outside of participants' police department, school, or employer.

Youth Safety

Harassment of youth has become an increasing concern. Recent media coverage of several high-profile suicides among LGBTQ youth has significantly increased the awareness, concern and impact of bullying and harassment on youth. National statistics are astounding: according to the GLSEN National School Climate Survey conducted in 2009, nine out of ten LGBTQ students (86.2%) experienced harassment at school; three-fifths (60.8%) felt unsafe at school because of their sexual orientation; and about one-third (32.7%) skipped a day of school in the past month because of feeling unsafe.[6] Lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth are up to four times more likely to attempt suicide than their heterosexual peers.[7]

The survey's results indicated that harassment is indeed a problem among youth respondents. Our survey indicated that 5% of respondents reported being harassed at school.

[6] 2009 National School Climate Survey. (September 14 ,2010). Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network. Retrieved on March 13, 2011 at http://www.glsen.org/cgi-bin/iowa/all/library/record/2624.html

[7] The Trevor Project. (March 14, 2011). Suicidal Signs and Facts. Retrieved on March 14, 2011 at http://www.thetrevorproject.org/suicide-resources/suicidal-signs.

Safety of general population

The incidence of harassment is postulated to be higher among the LGBTQ community. In this survey, respondents were asked to report if they have experienced physical or verbal harassment.

The survey's multivariate analysis includes 1,521 responses and reports the relative odds of experiencing any form of harassment when compared to the reference groups.

Table 1. Multivariate logistic regression: experienced any form of harassment

	N (1,521)	Odds Ratio	(95% CI)
Race			
White	1,288	*Ref*	
Other than white	233	1.51	(1.11 to 2.05)
Gender Identity			
Male or Female	1,306	*Ref*	
Identified as other than male or female[8]	215	2.07	(1.45 to 2.95)
Decade of birth			
1930s	8	*Ref*	
1940s	83	1.27	(0.28 to 5.82)
1950s	182	1.54	(0.35 to 6.80)
1960s	288	1.71	(0.39 to 7.44)
1970s	432	1.99	(0.46 to 8.63)
1980s	480	2.10	(0.48 to 9.12)
1990s	48	3.37	(0.69 to 16.58)
Sexual Orientation[9]			
Straight	111	*Ref*	
Bisexual	175	3.60	(2.15 to 6.02)
Gay	635	3.08	(1.98 to 4.79)
Lesbian	385	3.94	(2.48 to 6.25)

Queer	187	3.45	(2.03 to 5.84)
Questioning	28	2.66	(1.10 to 6.41)

Based on the survey data, people who identify as a race other than white have 1.51 times the odds of experiencing harassment. Likewise, those who identify as a gender other than male or female have just over twice the chance of experiencing harassment.

The decade of birth was not significantly associated with the odds of experiencing harassment after controlling for other covariates, although a trend to higher odds among younger people can be observed.

Individuals who identify their sexual orientation as something other than straight have significantly higher odds of experiencing harassment. The odds ratios ranged from 2.66 among people who reported their sexual orientation as questioning, to a higher rate of 3.94 among lesbians.

Recommendations: Public Safety

- Fully implement the City Auditor's seventeen recommendations to improve and/or increase the City of Seattle's:
  1. Response to bias attacks;
  2. Awareness and education about bias attacks; and
  3. Interdepartmental and interagency responsiveness to victims and communities affected by bias attacks.
- Develop a mechanism to track incidents that do not fall under the current bias crimes, harassment or anti-discrimination laws to identify hot spots where incidents are occurring and prevent them from escalating to more serious acts.
- Investigate the policies of City departments (such as Parks, Neighborhoods and Human Services) concerning the public spaces that youth inhabit and the protections in place for keeping them safe, and ensure that the Mayor's Youth and Families Initiative includes the needs of LGBTQ youth.
- Develop and implement a training module on LGBTQ discrimination for City employees, and share the training with the Seattle School District and other institutions.
- Create SPD materials and conduct outreach to diverse communities, including materials in different languages, to build trust with SPD, increase awareness of LGBTQ rights in the City, and educate people about reporting incidents of harassment.

C. Housing

In the United States, 20-40% of the estimated 1.6 million homeless American youths in 2007 identified as LGBTQ. Twenty six percent of homeless LGBTQ youths were driven from their homes by family members. Some reported experiencing physical, sexual, and emotional abuse. Those who sought refuge through shelters reported being menaced, humiliated, and assaulted by staff members[10].

In a 2011 survey conducted by One Night Count, over 1,753 homeless people were on the streets in the City of Seattle. Of those counted, 39% were youth and 20% of those youth were LGBTQ.[11] This is supported by national and state reports from 1988-2006 stating that 15 to 25% of homeless youth identify as LGBTQ.[12]

Figure 7: Survey respondents' housing arrangements

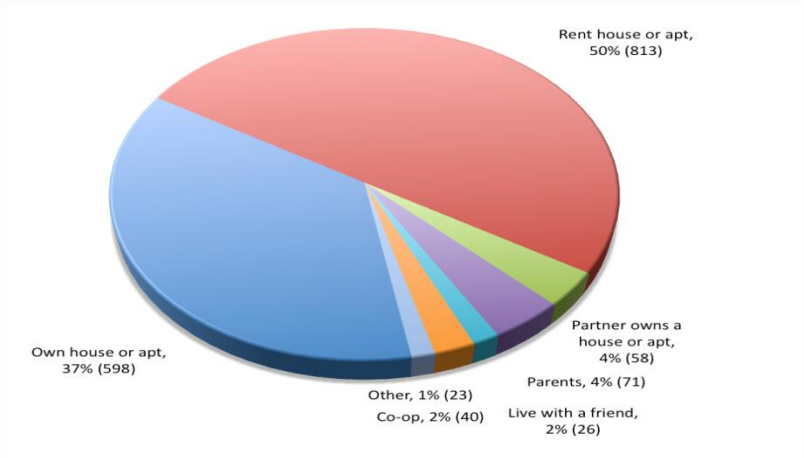

Figure 7 details survey respondents' housing arrangements. Housing situations for respondents are dominated by two large groups: 50% renters and 37% owners. The remaining 13% of participants live with family, friends, within a co-op, or other. 10% of survey participants believe that affordable housing is one of the top three issues that the city should address. Homelessness, emergency housing, and shelter accounts for 1% of the population represented by survey participants.

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[10] National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, "Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Youth: An Epidemic of Homelessness", (1/30/07), http://www.thetaskforce.org/reports_and_research/homeless_youth (accessed on 5/31/11).

[11] Seattle/King County Coalition on Homelessness. "2011 One Night Count" (1/28/2010) http://www.homelessinfo.org/one_night_count/2011_results.php (accessed on 5/31/11).

[12] National Alliance to End Homelessness. "Incidence and Vulnerability of LGBTQ Homeless Youth" (12/8/08) http://www.nyacyouth.org/docs/uploads/LGBTQ-Homeless-Youth-Incidence-and-Vulnerability-2009.pdf (accessed on 5/31/11).

The State of Fair Housing , HUD, 2009

Figure 8: Survey respondents' household composition

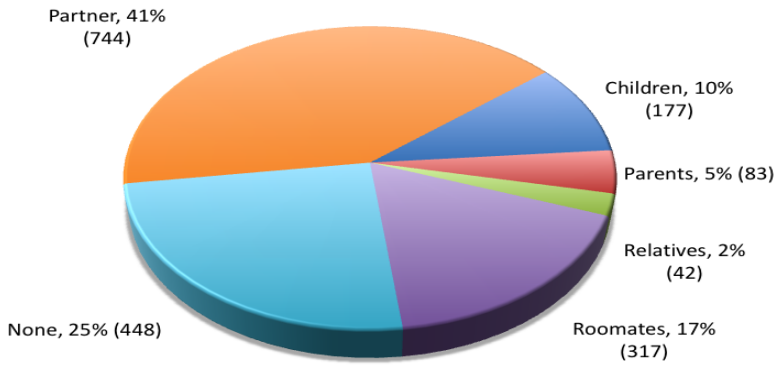

Figure 8 reports on the residents within survey respondents' households. The largest group are people who live with their partner (744). The second largest group of respondents lives alone (448). Forty-one percent of survey participants identified as partnered; 10% have children. Seven percent live with their parents or family. The remaining 18% live with roommates.

Recommendations: Housing

- Mandate that City agencies offering residential services ensure that their programs are free from violence and harassment.
- Provide equal treatment and integration based on individuals' gender identity in shelter placement determination, the use of bathrooms and sleeping arrangements, and personal safety.
- Evaluate how City departments can create safer spaces for homeless youth in parks, shelters, etc. and reach out to this group with targeted services.
- Train in-home care providers about LGBTQ health concerns. Senior and aging LGBTQ individuals face difficulties finding assisted living arrangements that are welcoming of LGBTQ individuals and knowledgeable of their needs.
- Develop a non-discrimination clause for all assisted living establishments that receive funding from the City of Seattle.
- Fund training programs for healthcare facilities and in-home care providers regarding the unique needs of LGBTQ seniors. A program called Rainbow Train did perform that function and receive funding from the City in previous years. Several respondents specifically asked for the revival of Rainbow Train or a similar program.

D. Education and Outreach

According to a Human Rights Watch report, LGBT youths are a uniquely vulnerable population in America's schools. Because they suffer at a higher rate than many of their peer groups from

physical violence, bullying, anxiety and depression, LGBT youths are more prone to exhibit high-risk behaviors such as substance abuse, sexual risk-taking and running away from home.[13] The US Department of Education Office for Civil Rights recently released guidance on protection against harassment in education settings based on gender, which includes gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, and transgender individuals. The guidance, which was sent to schools, colleges and universities, explains educators' legal obligations to protect students from harassment based on racial and national origin, gender and disability.

More than half of survey respondents indicated that they have had at least some formal education in a university or community college. Of the respondents, 15.5% reported having attended some college, 31.5% reported having completed a bachelor's degree and 29.9% indicated that they have a graduate degree. Data suggests that the level of post-secondary education is higher within the LGBTQ community than the general population.

Figure 9: What is the highest education level completed by survey participants?

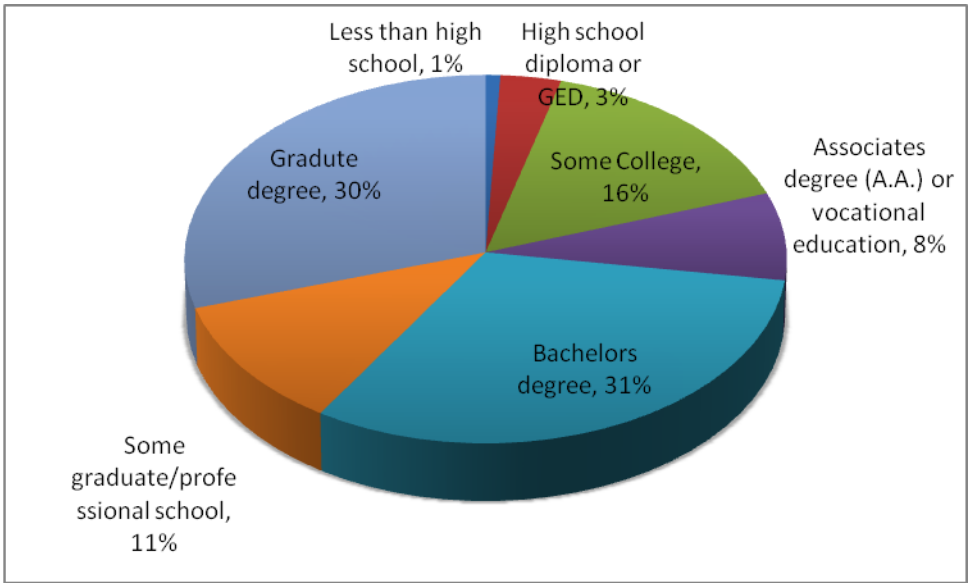

Figure 9 reports the levels of education among survey participants. There is almost a proportionate number of participants with advanced or bachelor's degrees.

[13] Bochenek, M. & Brown, A. W. (2001). Hatred in the hallways: Violence and discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students in U.S. schools. New York: Human Rights Watch.

Community Outreach

In 2009 the National the Hebrew Union College's Institute for Judaism and Sexual Orientation and Jewish Mosaic conducted a national survey of nearly 1,000 congregations to assess outreach practices towards the LGBT community. The survey found that institutions need to explicitly invite and reach out to LGBT people, otherwise they do not feel and as a do not engage in activities life through these institutions.[14] Best practice models developed by the National Alliance to End Homelessness to serve LGBT Youth also support this practice.

Figure 10: How much do you agree or disagree with the statement: LGBTQ organizations in Seattle adequately address issues of racial justice, economic justice, gender equality and disability/accessibility?

The survey results for each category are as follows:

Racial justice:	Uncertain = 33%, Disagree = 27.4%, Agree = 25.2%
Economic justice:	Uncertain = 31.9%, Disagree = 29.7%, Agree = 24.1%
Gender equality:	Agree = 41.1%, Uncertain = 24.2%, Disagree = 19.6%
Disability/access:	Uncertain = 33.8%, Agree = 29.8%, Disagree = 23.3%

Participants were asked whether LGBTQ organizations in Seattle adequately address racial justice, economic justice, gender equality and accessibility for disabled members of the community. Under all four categories, people who were uncertain or disagreed far outweighed those who agree that organizations were addressing these issues. This is not necessarily a

[14] Jewish Mosaic, "Preliminary Results from 2009 Synagogue Survey on Diversity and LGBT Inclusion," (7/31/09), (Accessed on 5/31/11).

reflection of the work of Seattle LGBTQ organizations, but more a reflection on how visible this work may be to the greater community.

Traditionally, when speaking of gender equality, the terminology refers to a binary identity of either male or female. We recommend further study of the inclusion and leadership opportunities provided to transgendered people within LGBTQ organizations – perhaps to be undertaken by Human Services Department as a funder to these organizations.

The remaining three categories of racial justice, economic justice and disability/access scored approximately the same for each subject: 33%, 31.9% and 33.8% uncertain, respectively. The projected median income in Washington State is $55,379 and $66,398 in King County (www.ofm.wa.gov). The largest income bracket noted by respondents fell in the range of $50,000 – $74,599, which is slightly higher than King County's projection. Survey respondents noted that they lived, worked and played in the areas of Capitol Hill, Downtown, Queen Anne, Magnolia, Fremont and Lake Union, neighborhoods that are not as ethnically or economically diverse as South and Southeast Seattle (i.e. Beacon Hill, Rainier Valley or Columbia City). In addition, 86.6% of respondents stated that they had no disability. Respondents' income levels, neighborhoods and absence of disability may explain why respondents showed uncertainty about racial justice, economic justice and disability/access with regards to LGBTQ organizations.

Approximately 13% of respondents stated that they had a disability. Of the eight different categories listed in the survey, psychological/emotional disability was the most common type of disability (6.0%), followed by chronic/acute health (4.2%), neurological/nervous (2.5%) and mobility (2.2%). The U.S. Census Bureau's 2008 American Community Survey (ACS) and Cornell University's Employment and Disability Institute have estimated that 12% of Washingtonians report having a disability.[15] Snapshot respondents are only slightly above this rate, but there are still many unanswered questions about the difficulties faced by LGBT people with disabilities.

Recommendation: Education and Outreach

- Continue to analyze policies with the Race and Social Justice Toolkit and further efforts to recognize intersectional representation within race, gender, and disability.

E. Health and Wellbeing

Participants responded to a variety of questions about access to appropriate health care and their own health needs. While many respondents indicated that they had some form of insurance through their employer, partner, parents, or individual policy, nearly 13% of those surveyed had no insurance or benefits. One factor contributing to a lack of insurance coverage among LGBTQ individuals is that some employers don't offer health benefits to domestic partners. When asked if their employer covered partner benefits, 18% indicated no and 23%

[15] Erickson, W., Lee, C., von Schrader, S. (2010, March 17). Disability Statistics from the 2008 American Community Survey (ACS). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Disability Demographics and Statistics (StatsRRTC). Retrieved Mar 11, 2011 from www.disabilitystatistics.org

were unsure. Additionally, several respondents indicated that even though their employer covered or partially covered a domestic partner, they had to pay taxes on that benefit as if it were income, effectively driving up their cost of insurance.

Only 11% of respondents felt that they had been treated poorly by health care provider or refused care based on their sexual orientation; 7% felt that their gender expression had led to poor care or refusal of service.

Forty percent of respondents indicated that they felt their "health care provider needs more education/awareness about the healthcare needs of the LGBTQ population." Responses to a follow-up question indicated that 26% of respondents feel that it is difficult to access LGBTQ-competent health care services in Seattle. While respondents may not experience poor care due to their orientation or gender identity, these results clearly indicate that many LGBTQ people believe there could be better and more appropriate care.

Respondents also were asked if they "had any major health problems or concerns." Just over half of the survey respondents skipped this question. Of the 784 people who did respond, 44% identified depression as an issue followed closely by anxiety at 37%. Additionally, 13% of respondents indicated that suicidal thoughts and suicidal attempts were significant issues.

Figure 15: Major health problems or concerns of survey participants

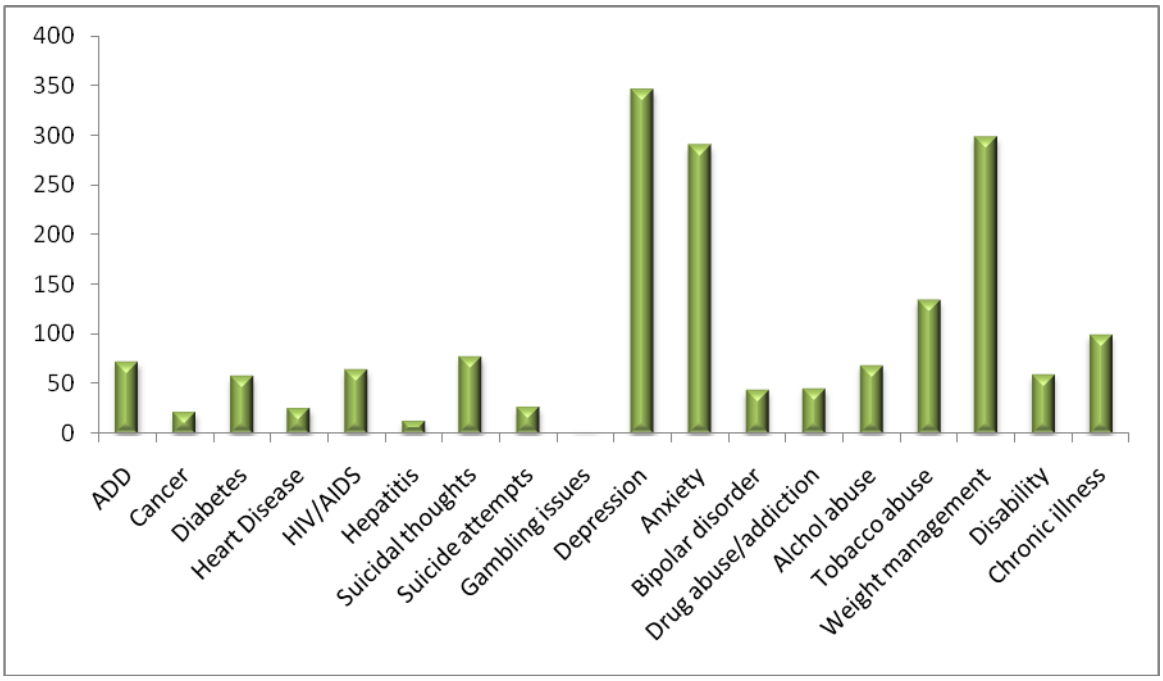

Figure 15 shows the different health problems and concerns that survey participants have within the City of Seattle. The highest rates of health concerns were related to depression (44%), anxiety (37%), weight management (38%), and tobacco abuse (17%). Weight management was also a significant concern at 38%. No other health issues ranked remotely close to these responses; tobacco use was the fourth most prevalent issue at 17%. The prevalence of depression and anxiety were remarkably high.

These results indicate that there is a significant need in the LGBTQ community for mental health services and support. Follow-up needs to be conducted to evaluate whether these needs are being met, and if not, how to improve services.

Transgender individuals' healthcare needs vary greatly from those of lesbian, gay and bisexual individuals. Several respondents' write-in responses indicated that their medical costs were significantly higher, often due to inadequate coverage for transgender health issues under their insurance policies.

Several people commented in the survey and in public forums that finding LGBTQ-appropriate healthcare was very difficult if there was the additional challenge of finding a provider who spoke an individual's native language. This can result in individuals' not receiving appropriate care or not seeking care at all.

Recommendations within Health and Wellbeing

- Advocate for the passage of the U.S. Senate's Bill S. 2521, the Domestic Partnership and Obligations Act.
- Continue to support efforts to include coverage of transgender health care services in the health insurance package for City of Seattle employees.
- Examine the use of medical translators for LGBTQ individuals who wish to receive LGBTQ-appropriate care but who face a language barrier. Create a registry of LGBTQ-friendly interpreters and care providers searchable by specialty, language skills, geographic area, price, insurance accepted, etc. Create a certification program that providers could go through (including training and creation of a nondiscrimination policy) so that they could be listed as LGBTQ-friendly.

F. Community Involvement

In the past and often still today, LGBTQ people have not been acknowledged as valuable members of their local communities. LGBTQ community members often feel discouraged from taking part in local community decision-making for fear that their voices will not be welcomed and will not be heard. Seattle still has a long way to go to create effective civic engagement strategies for the LGBTQ community.

Many cities have addressed this issue by developing LGBTQ spaces where community members feel welcome and free to participate in many types of civic engagements activities. Community centers across the country create opportunities to engage people to stand up and advocate for themselves and the LGBTQ community. Activities range from Town Hall meetings, voter registration drives, lobby day organizing and more. With the third largest LGBT population in the country, Seattle is the only city of its size without an LGBTQ Community Center.

A majority of survey participants were not sure or did not know whether existing services in Seattle met the needs of the LGBTQ community. Twenty-six percent said that needs were not being met and only 21% felt that existing services did meet the needs of the community. These

numbers are alarming and reflect the need for outreach and education about services available to the LGBT community and the organizations that provide those services. This data also points to possible gaps in services that need further investigation.

Participants were asked "If funding were available, what do you feel are the three most important services needed by LGBTQ persons in Seattle?" The top three responses were services for LGBTQ youth (44%), mental health services (36%), and advocacy to the state legislature (34%). Several other health-related services were ranked highly including sexual health education/ STD prevention (27%), substance abuse services (24%) and physical health services (24%) indicating a clear need for more LGBTQ-focused health programs. These concerns align fairly closely with initial questions about the most important issues facing the LGBTQ community. There is clearly a need to increase work with LGBTQ youth and to better address the health needs of the LGBTQ community.

Nearly a quarter of respondents indicated that they would like to see funding directed towards the creation of an LGBTQ Center. When asked what services or amenities they would like to see in such a center, participants were asked to check all answers that apply from a list of 10 options. Of those choices, all but two had more than 50% support. These include meeting space for groups and organizations (77%), youth drop-in & social events (68%), information about resources for LGBTQ people (65%), health services (62%), support groups (62%), classes and educational offerings (61%), social events for adults (58%) and programs for children of LGBTQ parents (52%). Many cities across the country have centers that host programs and services such as these, and are often built or maintained through public-private partnership.

The survey data reflects a high level of community engagement within Seattle's LGBTQ community. It is important to note the active role taken by so many LGBTQ people in Seattle regarding the issues they care about. A high number of respondents have recently engaged in political advocacy, mainly through signing petitions (90%), donating money to an organization or cause (75%), or contacting a public official (67%). The vast majority (84%) of respondents had voted in the past four years, with 81.5% of those people indicating that they 'always' or 'most of the time' voted for candidates based on their attitudes toward the LGBTQ population. This speaks highly to the civic engagement and voting power of the LGBTQ community. Many participants also engage in more time and energy consuming activities such as donating (75%), contacting a public official (67%), volunteering (55%), marching or attending a rally (64%), and planning advocacy efforts (23%),

Recommendations: Community Involvement

- Work with LGBTQ businesses and organizations to develop an LGBTQ Center that could supply career information for the LGBTQ community, provide a safe space for youth, and deliver informational resources to visitors and residents of Seattle. Services and programs could include a safe space for youth, social and educational programs for seniors, provision of basic mental and physical health services, etc.

- Make efforts to tap into the civic engagement of the LGBTQ community. Providing meaningful LGBTQ volunteer and advocacy opportunities could leverage the work already being done by the City and other organizations.

Summary of recommendations from the LGBT Commission:

Top concerns of the LGBTQ community

- Support community efforts to create and maintain and LGBTQ Community Center.
- Implement a program like the Transgender Economic Empowerment Initiative passed in the City of San Francisco in 2007.
- Educate health care and service providers about the needs of transgender people and support inclusive LGBTQ Medical Care, Mental Health Care and Substance Abuse Treatment programs.

A. Demographics

- Gather census data on LGBTQ populations to greater inform businesses and the community of demographic changes in the City of Seattle. Stronger data collection can help LGBTQ organizations receive grant funding and help subsidize other projects and programs.
- Use public and private funding to further investigate the demographics of the LGTBQ community within the City of Seattle.
- Fund programs that promote intergenerational activities for the senior and aging LGBTQ community with the LGBTQ community and the heterosexual community.

B. Public Safety

- Fully implement the City Auditor's seventeen recommendations to improve and/or increase the City of Seattle's:
  1) Response to bias attacks;
  2) Awareness and education about bias attacks; and
  3) Interdepartmental and interagency responsiveness to victims and communities affected by bias attacks.
- Develop a mechanism to track incidents that do not fall under the current bias crimes, harassment or anti-discrimination laws to identify hot spots where incidents are occurring and prevent them from escalating to more serious acts.
- Investigate the policies of City departments (such as Parks, Neighborhoods and Human Services) concerning the public spaces that youth inhabit and the protections in place for keeping them safe, and ensure that the Mayor's Youth and Families Initiative includes the needs of LGBTQ youth.
- Develop and implement a training module on LGBTQ discrimination for City employees, and share the training with the Seattle School District and other institutions.
- Create SPD materials and conduct outreach to diverse communities, including materials in different languages, to build trust with SPD, increase awareness of LGBTQ rights in the City, and educate people about reporting incidents of harassment.

C. Housing

- Mandate that City agencies offering residential services ensure that their programs are free from violence and harassment.
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