

June 2, 2004

Tom Hauger
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Re: Health Indicators Obesity, Diabetes and Asthma in Seattle

Dear Mr. Hauger.

Introduction: Health Indicators Obesity, Diabetes and Asthma in Seattle

The following information is provided in support of placing human health indicators in the City of Seattle Comprehensive Plan. The two indicators considered are obesity, which is linked to diabetes as well as other diseases, and asthma. The link between environment and human health is extensively documented.

The main elements of the City of Seattle Comprehensive Plan, Land Use, Transportation, and Environment all influence the health and well being of the residence of Seattle. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has done extensive research linking the transportation and the built environment to human health (see - <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/>).

CDC recognizes several significant health issues that are related to land use and transportation, including—

- Physical Activity
- Respiratory Health & Air Pollution
- Children's Health & the Built Environment
- Injury
- Mental Health
- Social Capital
- Accessibility
- Elders' Health & the Built Environment
- Water Quality

Additional information on each of these areas is available at the CDC web site (<http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/>).

Health Indicators for Seattle

The following data represent Seattle zip codes, several of which cross into North King. The data source is from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Washington, State Department of Health and Centers for Disease Control and prepared by: Public Health- Seattle & King County, EPE, 5/04 (many thanks to Ann Glusker).

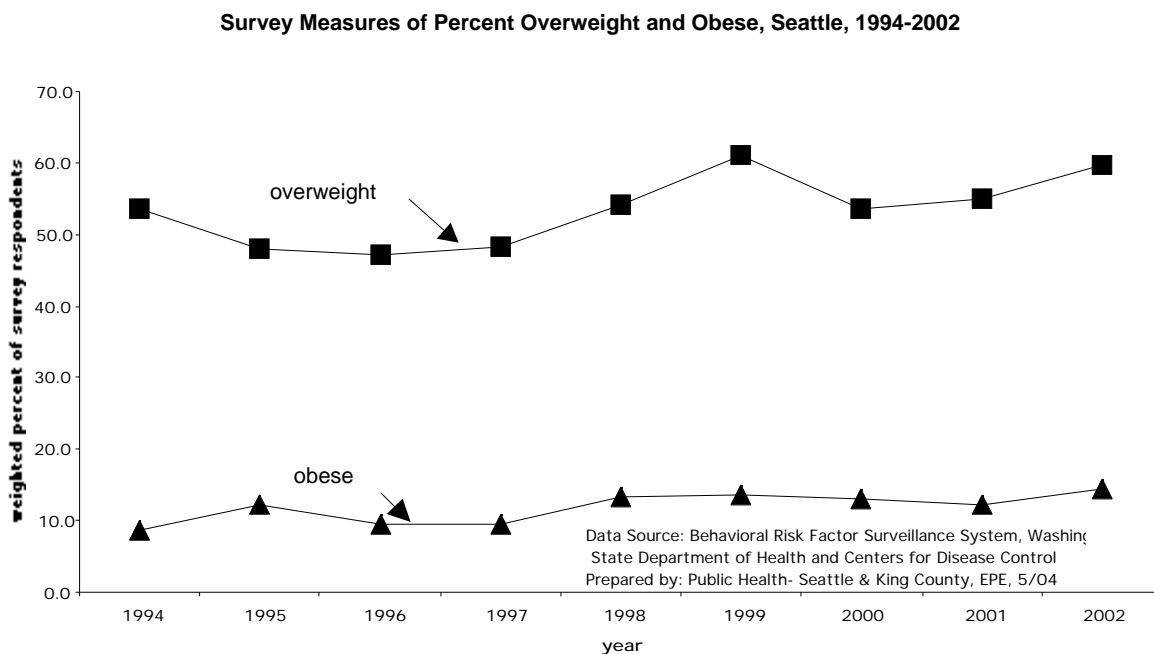
Obesity and overweight citizens

It is estimated to 59.8% adult Seattle residents are overweight and 14.6% of all Seattle residents are obese. Note, that these data do not take into account children who are also increasingly overweight and even obese. Excess weight is related to a wide range of human health conditions including heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes and cancer. It is estimated that 4.5% of Seattle residents have some form of diabetes (see figure 2 below). There is concern that diabetes is increasing in children who are overweight.

Additional information on the health effects as well as more extensive data analysis on King Count is available at the following:

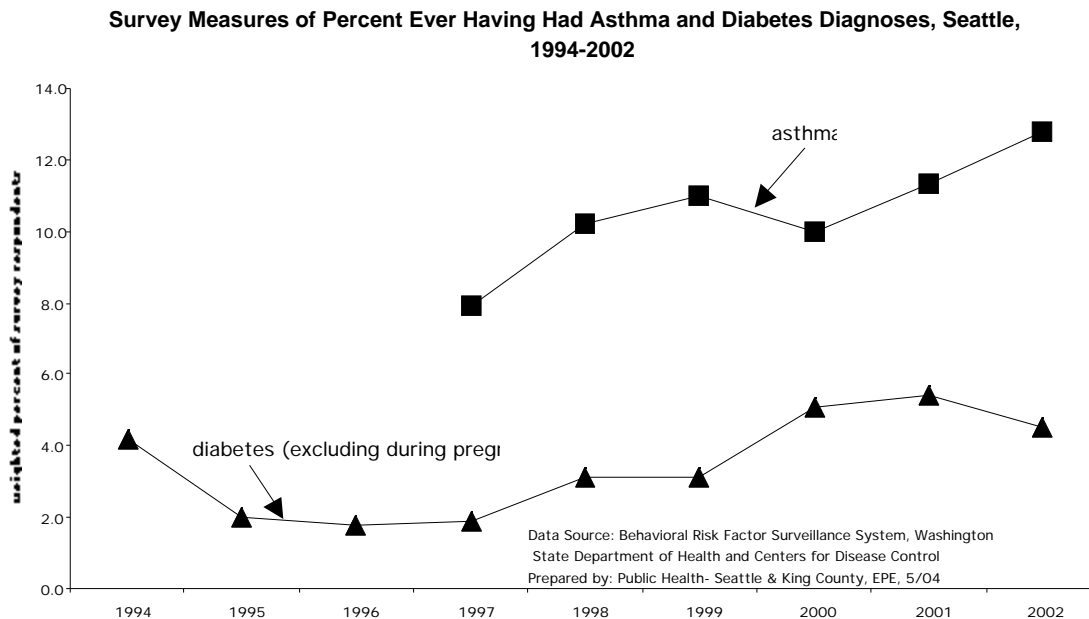
[Overweight and Obesity in King County March 2002 report](#)

"The percentage of King County residents who are overweight or obese has risen rapidly over the last 15 years. By 2001, one in every two King County adults were either overweight or obese. Obesity increases the risk of developing diabetes, hypertension (high blood pressure) and heart disease. After smoking, excessive weight-for-height is the second leading cause of preventable death."



Asthma

Childhood asthma is a serious health condition that negatively affects a child's quality of life and can be life threatening. In 2000 the child prevalence of asthma was estimated to be 9.2%, which is almost 1 out of 10 children. In 2002 adult Seattle residents reporting ever having an asthma diagnosis was 12.8%. Several studies, including the Health Homes study by King County have investigated the increases in asthma particularly in children. The increase in reported cases of asthma among adults and children is clearly of concern. Note only are there increased health care costs but also a substantial reduction in quality of life for asthma sufferers. How do we construct an environment that reduces the incidence of asthma for our children?



Proposed Action

It is proposed that City of Seattle Comprehensive Plan include targets of health indicators. The following should be given careful consideration:

- Obesity

The City of Seattle will coordinate efforts across departments to reduce the estimated percentage of Seattle residents considered overweight to less than 50% and those considered obese to less than 10%.

- Diabetes

The City of Seattle will coordinate efforts across departments to reduce the estimated percentage of Seattle residence considered to have diabetes to less than 2%.

- Asthma

The City of Seattle will coordinate efforts across departments to reduce the estimated percentage of Seattle residence with asthma to less than 5%.

References

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Healthy People 2010. 2nd ed. With Understanding and Improving Health and Objectives for Improving Health. Vol. 1, Part 7. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office 2000 Nov. Available from URL: <http://www.healthypeople.gov/Document/HTML/volume1/07ED.htm>

Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Washington, State Department of Health and Centers for Disease Control and prepared by: Public Health- Seattle & King County, EPE, 5/04 (many thanks to Ann Glusker).

Public Health Data Watch Reports - Key Health Indicators for King County, Washington State - <http://www.metrokc.gov/health/datawatch/>

Overweight and Obesity in King County - Public Health Data Watch Report (Vol 5 No. 1, March 2002) - Key Health Indicators for King County, Washington State - <http://www.metrokc.gov/health/datawatch/obesity.pdf>

Sincerely,

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cc. John Owen