

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE | MAY 1, 2017**

**Puget Sound millennials... *Surprise!* They own cars and they use them to...drive. Though less than other adults and with greater willingness to use mass transit — where it exists.**

*First-of-its-kind survey across King, Snohomish and Pierce counties polls nearly 1,200 young adults*

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Stories about millennials often note their aversion to owning a car — or even holding a driver’s license. But Puget Sound millennials are overwhelmingly car owners, and fully 95% have a license.

These are among the transportation-related findings in the [Livability Survey for Puget Sound Millennials](#) conducted last fall by Forterra, a regional sustainability nonprofit, together with EMC Research, a pollster. The survey garnered input from 1,168 local millennials [300 interviewed by phone; 868 who filled out an online survey.\* By way of comparison, a recent [national poll](#) by the Pew Research Center surveyed 617 millennials in total.]

With roughly 240,000 millennials, King County [is second only to Brooklyn](#) in percentage of young adult residents. It’s also second among big counties nationwide in the percentage of people who moved in the past year from another state.

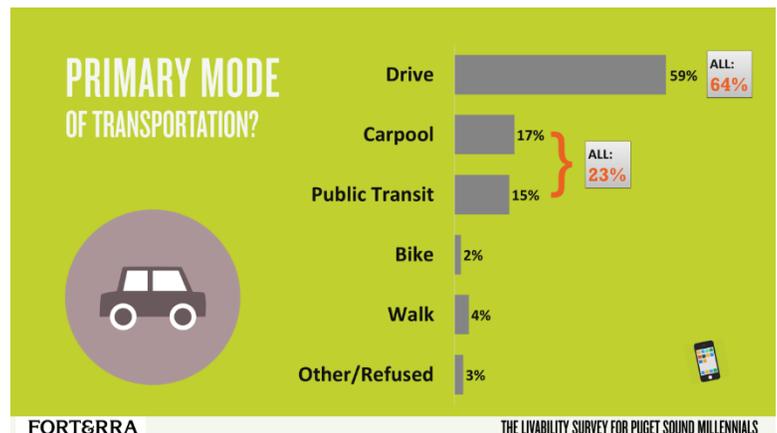
Other transportation-related findings (see rich detail in the accompanying slide deck):

**WHEN I SEE RED, IT’S LESS ABOUT THE TAILLIGHTS**

Traffic. It’s the number one concern for voters of all ages. But not among millennials — who put it at #5. Greater sources of upset: the high cost of living and racial inequality.

**THE STORIES OF MY CAR-LESSNESS ARE GREATLY EXAGGERATED**

- More than three-quarters (78%) of local millennials own a car.
- 59% use their car as their primary mode of transportation (slightly lower than the rest of the populace).
- 32% either carpool or use public transit (slightly higher than the rest of the populace).



- Millennials in Seattle drive less and take more public transportation. But they still own cars.
  - *Millennials who are new to the area are especially likely to take public transportation. But they are also more likely to live in Seattle and be well-served by transit.*
- “Nothing will replace my car as my main mode of transportation,” say 55% of those surveyed. Women, Snohomish county residents, and millennial parents are especially likely to say this.

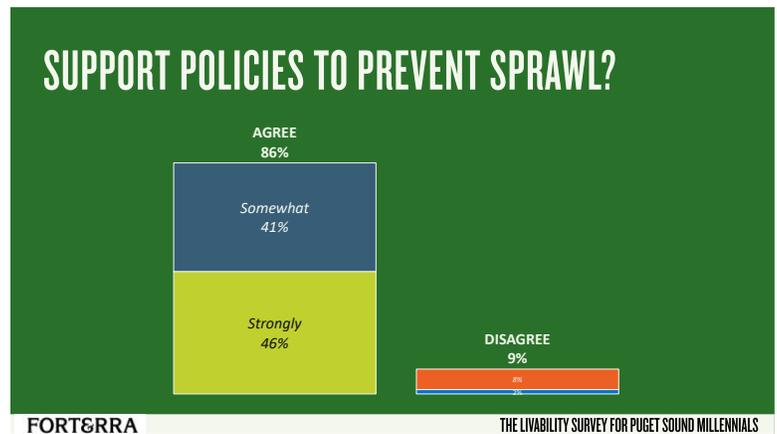
**KEEP IT SHORT...**

- Having a short commute to work or school — as well as having easy access to public transportation — rank as much higher priorities for millennials than living within walking distance of a bar or a café.
- This craving for short commutes and access to public transit is roughly double what adults across the country feel.
- Millennial transplants prioritize short commutes and easy access to public transit over native millennials (slide 24).
- And short commutes aren’t just a priority for millennials living in the cities. Suburban and rural millennials rank having a short commute as a very important attribute for the place they want to live (slide 25).



**...EVEN IF I LIVE WAY OUT**

- 76% of native millennials (slide 18) and 43% of newcomer millennials (slide 19) are willing to live farther from the city center if it means they can own a home. And millennials who are parents are even more willing to make this trade-off.
- Well over 80% of area millennials support policies to prevent sprawl into forests and farmland.



**Implications of the findings.** *Gene Duvernoy, president of Forterra, observes that:*

“Millennials have the same need for mobility as everybody else — and also a higher willingness to use public transit where it’s available. Yet we also know that increasing numbers of millennials are worried about being priced out of the city’s core, sending them either to the suburbs or out of the region entirely. These pressures will be even greater for millennials who become parents.

Millennials relocating to the suburbs won't always find a robust transit infrastructure — at least not yet. So they will probably rely more on cars — which, our survey makes clear, they do own and do drive.

This may spell a near-term future of worsening congestion. But careful planning could avoid the worst, for example by quickly establishing new express bus-lines and park-and-ride facilities where traffic chokepoints could emerge. Meantime we all need to continue pushing hard for a mass-transit infrastructure that serves the whole region.”

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**This is the fourth and final parcel of data released by Forterra about Puget Sound millennials.**

- The [first parcel](#) looked at how the progressive stronghold of Puget Sound is about to get even more that way, given the values espoused by young adults in the region, many of them new here.
- The [second parcel](#) detailed area millennials' feeling about the area's increasingly high cost of living, and what it may mean for their future here.
- The [third parcel](#) considered millennials relationship to the land and environmental protection — including their pessimistic take on climate change.

Find further information about the study as well as video reflections by local millennials [here](#).

**A METHODOLOGICAL NOTE:** We surveyed millennials in two ways: via phone and via the web.

- The phone millennials are a scientific sample. Based on the demographic data they supplied, we know that these millennials were mostly born in the local area; are more likely to be living with their parents (compared to their peers across the country); and/or are more likely to own a home.
- The web millennials are a convenience sample, taking part on an opt-in basis. These millennials are mostly newcomers from another state, are more likely to be living with their significant others (compared to their peers across the country), and are also overwhelmingly more likely to be renters.

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