



# City of Kirkland Home-Based Business Survey

## Final Report

November 2023



## Executive Summary

In Q3 of 2023, OneEastside was hired to develop an online survey of Kirkland residents who maintained a home-based business within the city. The purpose of the survey was to gather feedback on existing business conditions for these businesses, and to learn current ideas for support and future expansion plans.

OneEastside utilized the Survey Monkey system to design the survey. The survey went live in late August, with responses beginning through the City of Kirkland batched e-mail promotion to home-based businesses licensees on August 21<sup>st</sup>. The survey closed on October 30<sup>th</sup>.

**308** total responses were collected, with a **68% completion rate**. The survey took on average 11 minutes for responders to complete. The survey originally rolled out only available in English but three languages translations became available in September – Spanish, Portuguese and Chinese Simplified. Almost 98% took the survey in English, with one taking the survey in Spanish and one in Portuguese. Recommended additional languages selected by surveyed constituents included French by one respondent and Arabic, Hebrew, and German by one respondent.

Based on survey results, Kirkland home-based businesses exist in almost all of the 21 Kirkland neighborhoods (and a few more not listed), with the largest number of home-based businesses being located in Finn Hill (25), North Juanita (23), Other (18), and Central Houghton (16). Within the Other Category, Kingsgate was a top listed location.

Interestingly, industries listed for the home-based businesses vary. While professional, scientific and management industries do make up almost 24% of the survey results, 11 additional industries are represented as well as 17.82% in the Other category. Almost 60% indicate that the home-based business is their “Main occupation,” and almost 69% state that a room inside their home serves as their primary office location.

The respondents clearly indicate their interest in remaining in their home, with 86.7% noting they plan to do so. However, almost 6% did indicate they may expand and seek a new space in the future and about 7% of respondents indicated they were unsure or gave other answers. Cost and convenience are chosen as the top main reasons for continuing to operate from the home.

Regarding experiences with the local and state governments, many respondents indicated they received their necessary approvals very quickly or do not remember, would like more opportunities for networking and community engagement, lower taxes and fees, and overall have mostly positive feedback about doing business in the City of Kirkland.

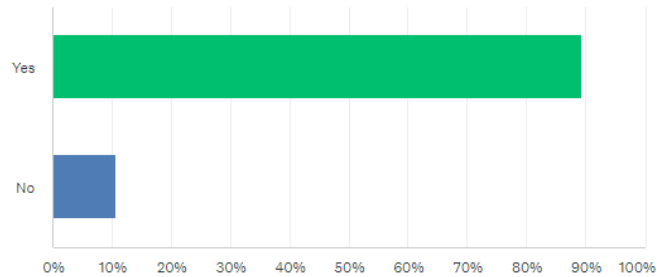
Respondent demographics data indicate that approximately 55% of respondents identified as Girl/Woman, 37% as Boy/Man and 6% in Other with some feedback about the options. The age range of 45-54 saw the highest percentage of respondents at 28.9% (57), with 55-64 at almost 25% and 65+ at almost 22%. Interestingly, the 25-34 and 35-44 age brackets had the lower percentages of respondents. Approximately 78% of respondents listed as White, with 15% Asian. About 88% of the respondents selected “No” to being part of the LGBTQIA community with 7% stating “Yes.” For the household income question, the top three responses were 31% who preferred not to answer, 28% who indicated a household income of \$250,000 or more and 10% who indicated an income of between \$100,000 - \$149,000.

The following pages will show responses to all 24 questions, including individual responses to several of the questions.

### Q1: Do you operate a business out of your home?

Do you operate a business out of your home?

Answered: 308 Skipped: 0

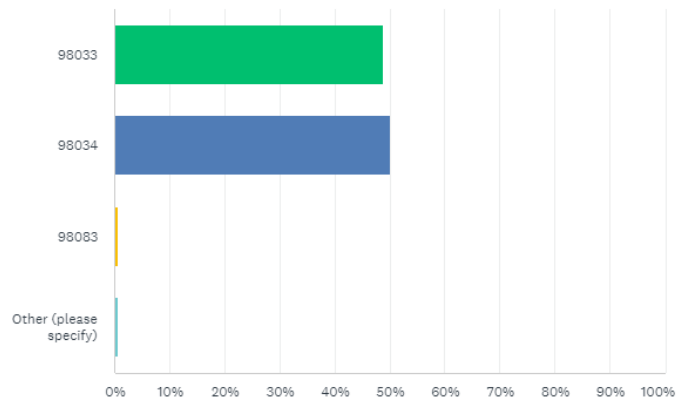


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Yes	89.29%	275
▼ No	10.71%	33
TOTAL		308

### Q2: Which City of Kirkland zip code do you live in?

Which City of Kirkland zip code do you live in?

Answered: 174 Skipped: 134



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ 98033	48.85%	85
▼ 98034	50.00%	87
▼ 98083	0.57%	1
▼ Other (please specify)	Responses 0.57%	1
TOTAL		174

**Q3: Which neighborhood do you live in?**

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ Bridle Trails	1.15% 2
▼ Central Houghton	9.20% 16
▼ Everest	2.30% 4
▼ Feriton	0.00% 0
▼ Finn Hill	14.37% 25
▼ Firloch	0.57% 1
▼ Highlands	4.02% 7
▼ Lake Park	1.15% 2
▼ Lakeview	1.15% 2
▼ Manitou	0.00% 0
▼ Market	2.87% 5
▼ Moss Bay	6.32% 11
▼ Norkirk	10.34% 18
▼ North Juanita	13.22% 23
▼ North Rose Hill	5.17% 9
▼ Oskams Corner	0.00% 0
▼ South Juanita	5.75% 10
▼ South Rose Hill	3.45% 6
▼ Sweetbriar	0.00% 0
▼ Totem Lake	8.62% 15
▼ Other (please specify) <span>Responses</span>	10.34% 18

Additional responses under “Other”: Juanita Country Club, Bellevue, Kingsgate (10), Goat Hill, Education Hill, 1 block from Bell Elementary, Juanita, Evergreen Hill, and Lendmain.

**Q4: What type of business do you operate from your home? Please describe below.**

Business Type	Number of then
A mobile business of french crepes and galettes	
A rental property at another Kirkland property	
Accounting	
Accounting	
Investment advisor, the other is a publisher of a finance-related membership website.	
Ad-based Mobile App	
Advertising	
Aesthetic pruning	
Alpha Executive Coaching	
Architectural Servicee	
Architectural services	
Architectural services	
art classes online and consultations in person	

Artist Studio	
AT YOUR SERVICE HOME APPLIANCE REPAIR	
Bookkeeping	
business consulting	
Candles	
Ceramics	
Certified Professional Organizer	
Child care	
Coaching	
Commercial janitorial services	
Commercial Real Estate Investment Advisory and Property Management	
computer software	2
Condominium Management Company and Sales & Marketing of imprinted apparel	
Consultancy	25
Cosmetology	
Court reporting & legal video	
CPA/Tax Services	2
Custom software development	
Daycare	
Digital Games and other digital media (podcast, streaming, e-books)	
Digital Services	
E-commerce	2
Editing services	
Education	
Educational (ESL) and Language Services (Interpreting/Translation)	
educational website	
Engineering services	
Esthetician/Spa	
Etsy shop/selling my own art	
Event planning	
Family Office Support and Daily Money Management	
Floral	
freelance art & online retail	
Freelance Editing	
Freelance photography	

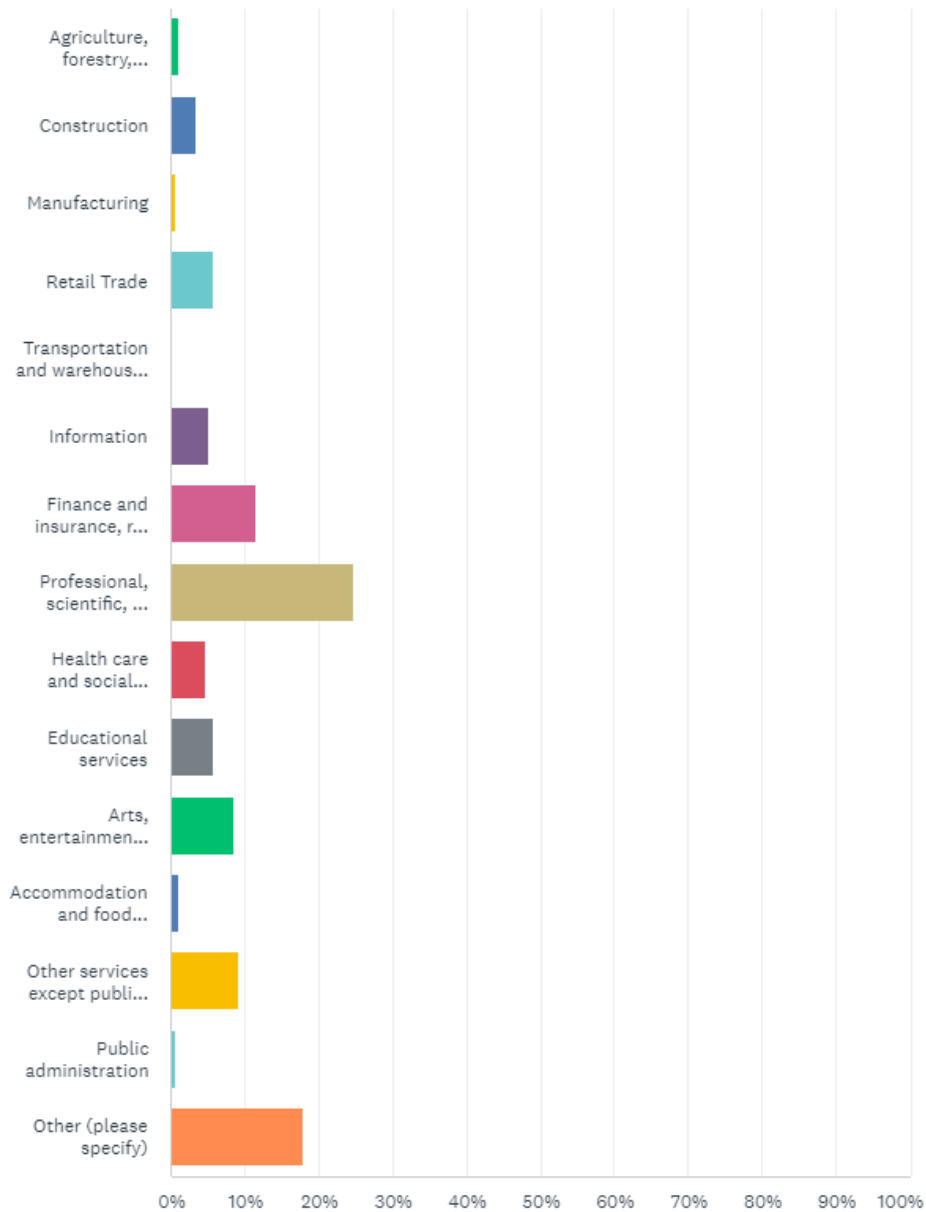
garden design	
Graphic designer/sole proprietor business	
Hair salon	
Half day preschool	
Health care	
Horseracing partnership	
I freelance as a writer. Companies pay me to write their website, blog, ads, etc.	
I operate a website where I publish and sell self-guided fly fishing experiences	
I run a blog	
I run a Swim Lesson business	
I teach piano, giving piano lessons to individuals	
I work as a freelance writer and editor. Services only, no products	
Importer	
In home childcare	
Independent contractor - intellectual property (patents)	
Interior Architect	
Interior Design	3
Internet - software as a service	
Internet mail order	
Jewelry	2
Land Use Planning Consulting	
Law firm	4
Life Coaching	
Manage a rental home in Kirkland	
Management consulting	
Market research and insights consulting	
Marketing	3
Medical	
Microscope service and repair	
Mobile Physical Therapy	
mushroom eco-tours, mushroom education & publications	
none at the moment	
Office only for the two owners, online only, no customer visits	
Online mobile game	

online sales	
Online sustainable baby clothing -retail and wholesale	
painting	
Pet sitting & dog walking	
Photographer, events, headshots, product shots	3
Physical therapy	
Piano School - Mostly administrative work	
Plumbing shop	
Private Cello teacher	
Product Management Consulting	
Professional Assistant	
Property Management	3
Public relations	
Real Estate/rentals	8
Remodel contractor	
Rental of my condo Longterm	
Rental properties	
Resume Services	
Retail fine art photography - sell at art shows.	
Retail Violin Shop	
Retirement consulting	
Room rental (long term), Uber driving	
Service Industry - Home repairs and renovation	
Social media	
software consultancy/development	4
Teach Spanish in a creative way using movement .	
Technical book author	
technology	
Telehealth Mental health	
Training and Consulting	
Transportation consultant	
Veterinary teleradiology consulting	
Voiceover Artist	
Wellness Coaching and Meditation teacher	
Writing/Consulting	
Yacht Deliveries	
Yoga & Health Coach (Alternative Medicine)	

**Q5: What industry would you say your home-based business falls under?**

What industry would you say your home-based business falls under?

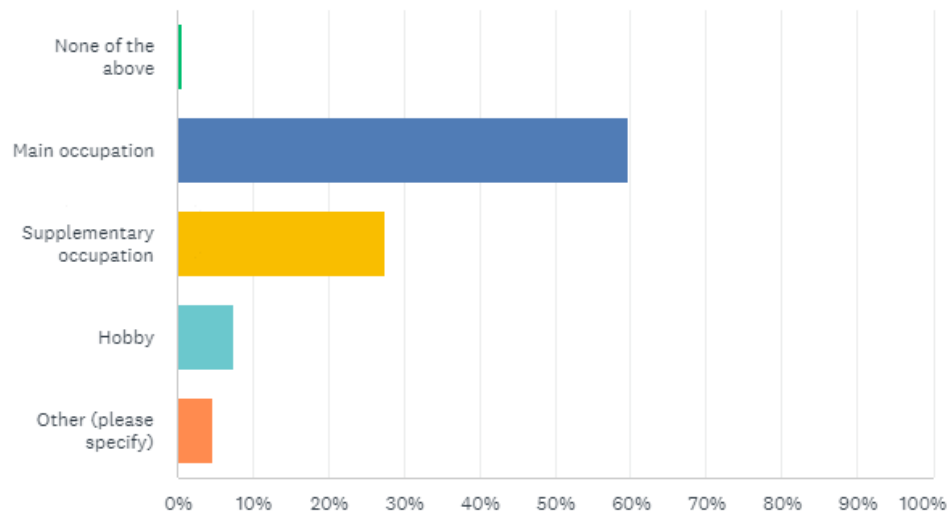
Answered: 174 Skipped: 134



**Q6: Which of the following best represents your home-based business?**

Which of the following best represents your home-based business?

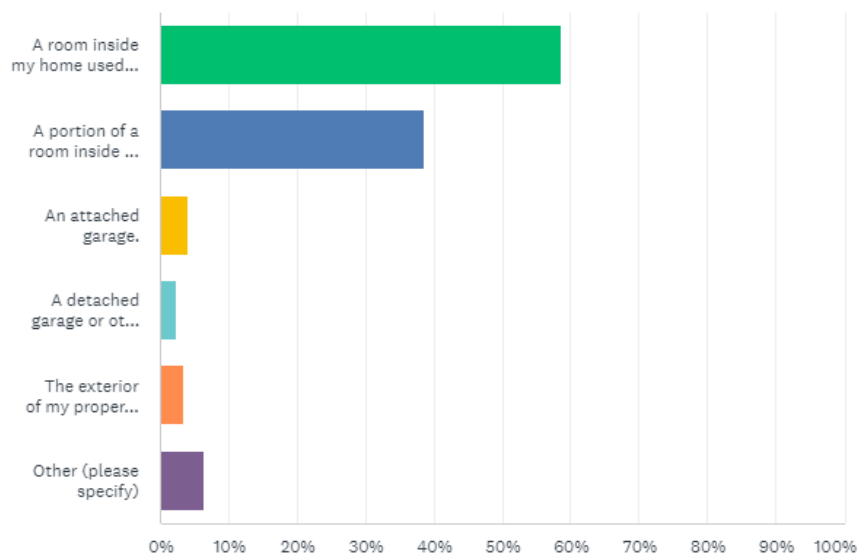
Answered: 174 Skipped: 134



**Q7: What best describes the physical space you use to complete tasks for your home-based business (Check all that apply.)**

What best describes the physical space you use to complete tasks for your home-based business? (Check all that apply.)

Answered: 174 Skipped: 134



**Q8: How long have you operated your business from home?**

Less Than 1 Year: 13%

1-3 Years: 26%

4-10 Years: 26%

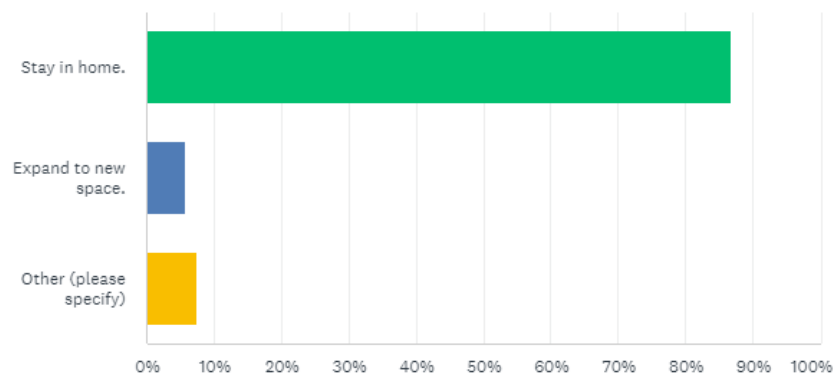
10+ Years: 35%

(Note – if this question is asked again in a future survey, one lesson learned would be to make this a selective range rather than manual, individual write-in. Range could be Less than 1 year, 1-3 years, 4-10 years, 11+ years). Do not recommend asking for date started, as many cannot recall and question could be skipped.)

**Q9: Do you plan to continue to operate your business from your home or do you plan to seek a new space?**

Do you plan to continue to operate your business from your home or do you plan to seek new space?

Answered: 174 Skipped: 134



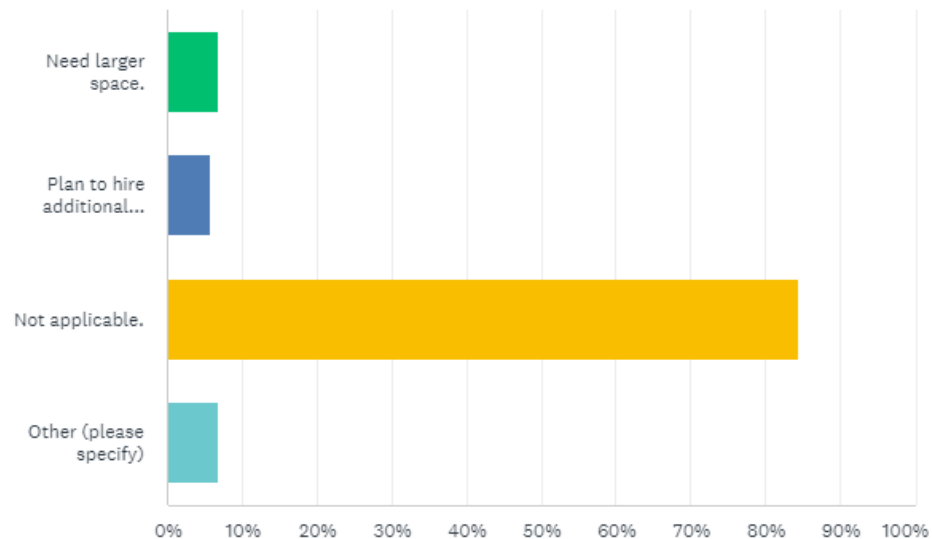
**“Other” answers included:**

- We might expand to a new space if there was something like a co-working space nearby.
- May rent space and work from home.
- We intend to keep this house operating as a long term rental for the foreseeable future.
- Services will mainly take place at other people’s homes, gyms, offices.
- Depending on need right now it’s just me.
- I have a property manager in the Kirkland area. I do not live in the home.
- End the business as quickly as possible.
- I would like to move into a space like Pop Shops on Main in Bothell. I will probably have to stay working from home.
- Uncertain (3).
- I do NOT plan to continue to operate business from home.

**Q10: If you need new space, why do you need it? Check all that apply.**

If you need new space, why do you need it? Check all that apply.

Answered: 174 Skipped: 134



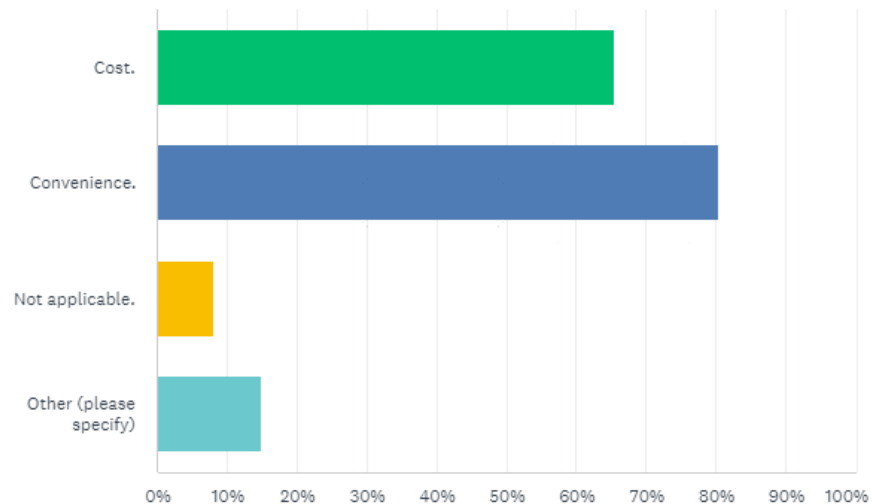
**“Other” answers included:**

- I need bigger space to hold wellness workshops.
- Meeting space.
- To offer clients in-person services.
- Small Commercial room.
- Tired of working alone from home.
- Want business address not associated with home.
- To grow and gain more exposure with in person customer interaction.
- Take-away space in Kirkland.
- More privacy.
- Business image and suitable for clients, privacy.
- I would like to have a private office space as opposed to working from my dining table.

**Q11: If you plan to keep your business in your home, why? Check all that apply.**

If you plan to keep your business in your home, why? Check all that apply.

Answered: 174 Skipped: 134



**“Other” answers included:**

- We wish to avoid Covid infections.
- Formal clinic setting not needed.
- I meet all my clients virtually.
- Since it's just me and a computer, it's easy unless I have staff.
- It's convenient for now.
- Cost of the licenses is very high.
- It's not big enough to need space.
- Only admin work is done from home.
- It's a single-person business and the nature of the business is purely online.
- Would wait until business grows.
- My business is totally remote.
- Because I have for 23 years.
- Managing a rental home doesn't require too much space.
- I go to clients house for meeting.
- My work as a consultant is fully remote, so I don't need an office space.
- City of Kirkland has too many fees/costs that prohibit expansion outside my home.
- Not needed.
- Go to clients onsite.
- Uncertain economic future.
- I am semi-retired.

**Q12: How can the City of Kirkland help you maintain or expand your business in your home and beyond?**

174 surveyed responded to this question with a wide variety of answers. Top responses included:

- Reduce/don't raise taxes and fees.
- Support home-based businesses through marketing and promotion – events.
- Develop co-working spaces with conference/meeting spaces.
- Make a directory of services or incentives for using local providers.
- Make the permitting process accessible/faster to home-based businesses.
- Grants, incentives.
- Develop educational programming, technical support.
- Ensure reliable, high-speed internet and electricity.
- Make it easier to discover contracting opportunities from city government and local businesses.

The full list of responses is located on Page 19 of this report.

**Q13: About how long did it take you to receive all necessary approvals from government entities before you could begin operating your home-based business?**

The 174 responses ranged from “Immediately, not long and no delays,” to “2-4 weeks” and “a couple months.”

(Note – if this question is asked again in a future survey, one lesson learned would be to make this a selective range rather than manual, individual write-in. Range could be Less than 1 week, 2-4 weeks, 2-3 months, More than 3 months).

**Q14: What challenges do you experience as a home-based business?**

Feedback from the 174 responses include 57 responding “None,” fees and taxes and understanding the tax requirements, internet reliability, marketing/attracting clients, feelings of isolation and lack of networking opportunities, noise, administrative tasks take up too much time.

**Q15: what could local, county and/or state government do to reduce those challenges?**

Reduce taxes and fees, create more markets, shore up the electric grid, provide informative and engaging educational webinars, develop meeting spaces, public clear guidance for starting a business and required documentation and fees.

**Q15: Any other thoughts on how the City of Kirkland can support your home business?**

Responses were mostly no or covered by previous questions. Some appreciated being asked. Continued interest in markets and pop-ups to sell their products, lowering of taxes, offering of grants and incentives, offering of networking events and educational programming.

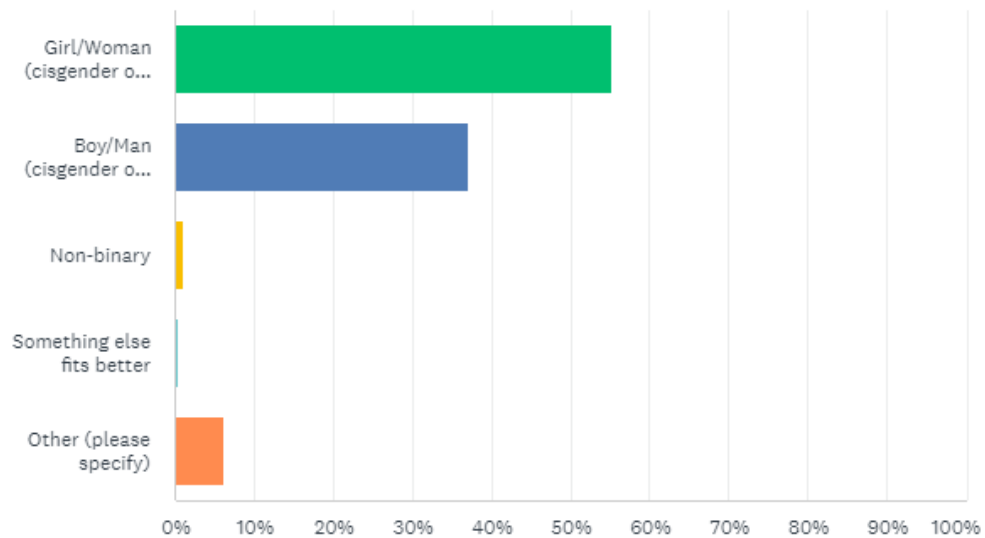
**Q16: What language do you prefer to use for future surveys?**

English was the preferred language for 97.7% of the respondents. 1 selected Spanish, 1 selected Portuguese, 1 selected French and 1 selected Arabic, Hebrew, and German.

**Q17: To which gender identity do you most identify?**

To which gender identity do you mostly identify?

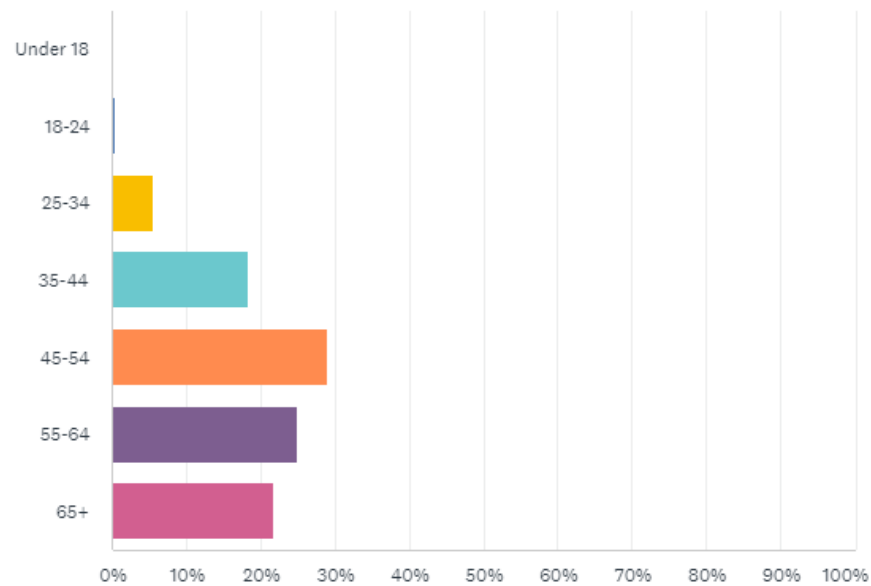
Answered: 194 Skipped: 114



**Q18: What is your age?**

What is your age?

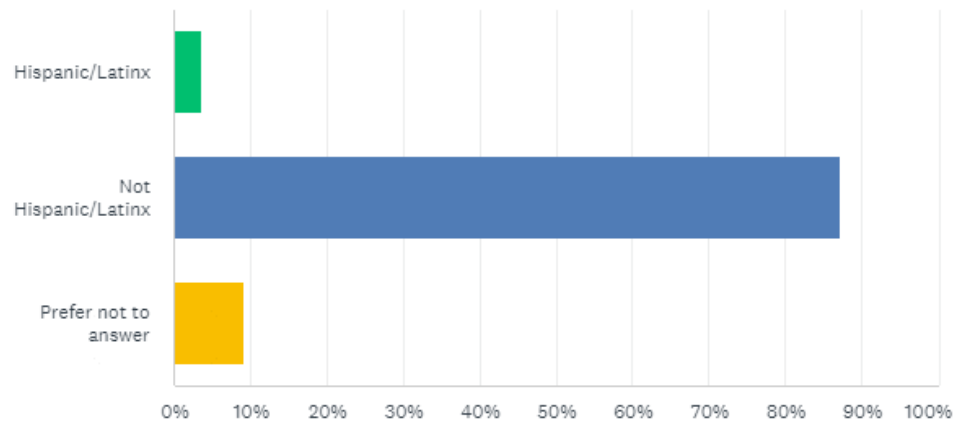
Answered: 197 Skipped: 111



**Q20: What is your ethnicity?**

What is your ethnicity?

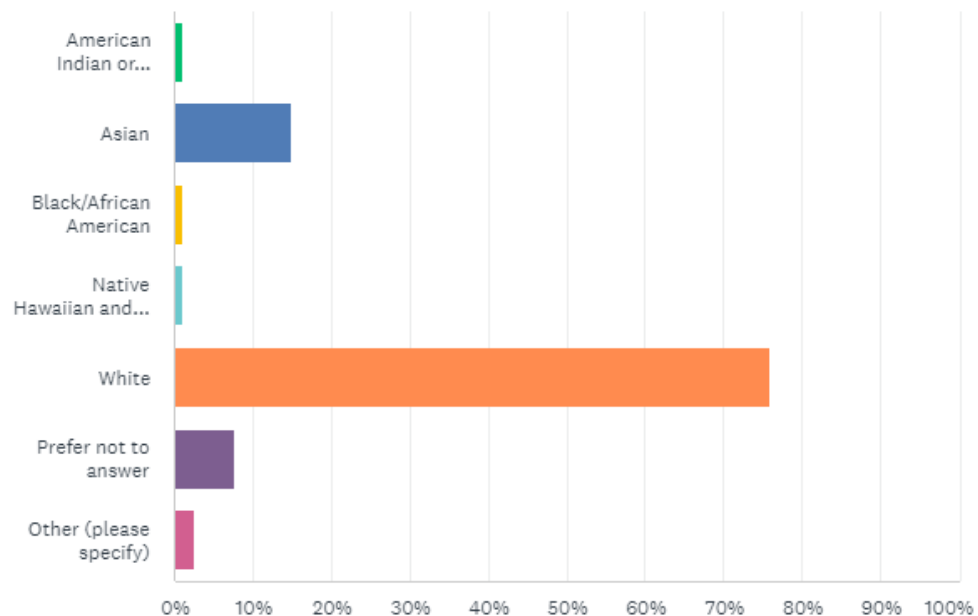
Answered: 196 Skipped: 112



**Q21: Do you consider yourself...(Please select all that apply.)**

Do you consider yourself...(Please select all that apply.)

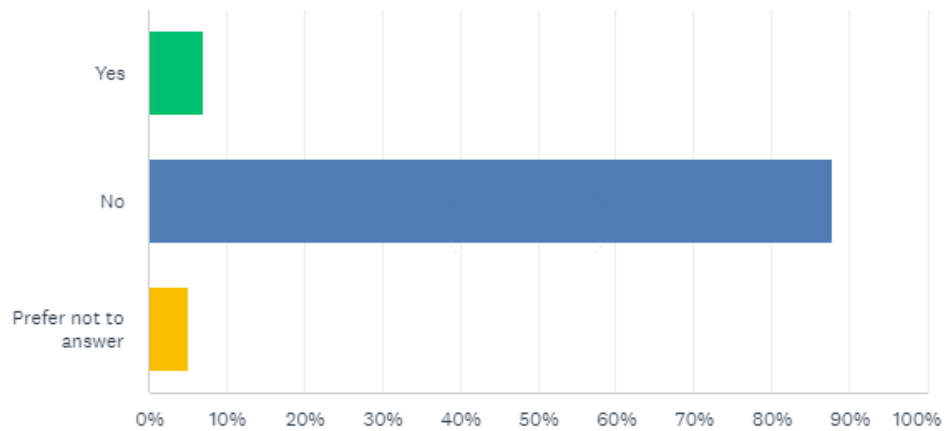
Answered: 195 Skipped: 113



**Q22: Are you part of the LGBTQIA+ Community?**

Are you part of the LGBTQIA+ community

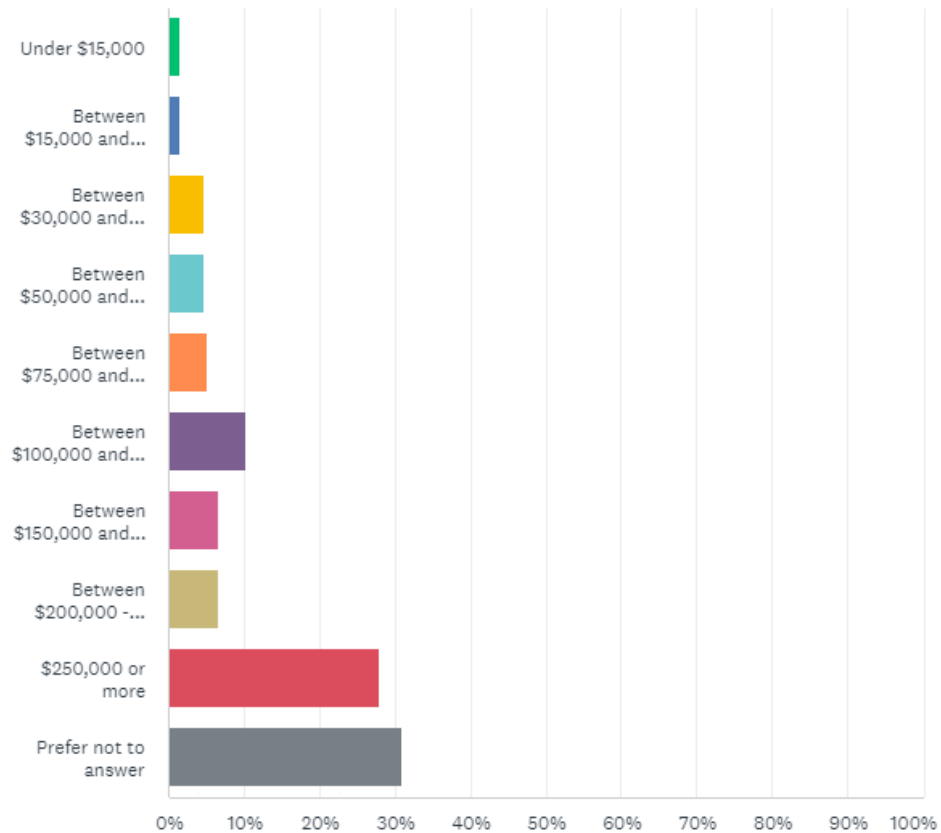
Answered: 196 Skipped: 112



**Q23: What is your household income?**

## What is your household income?

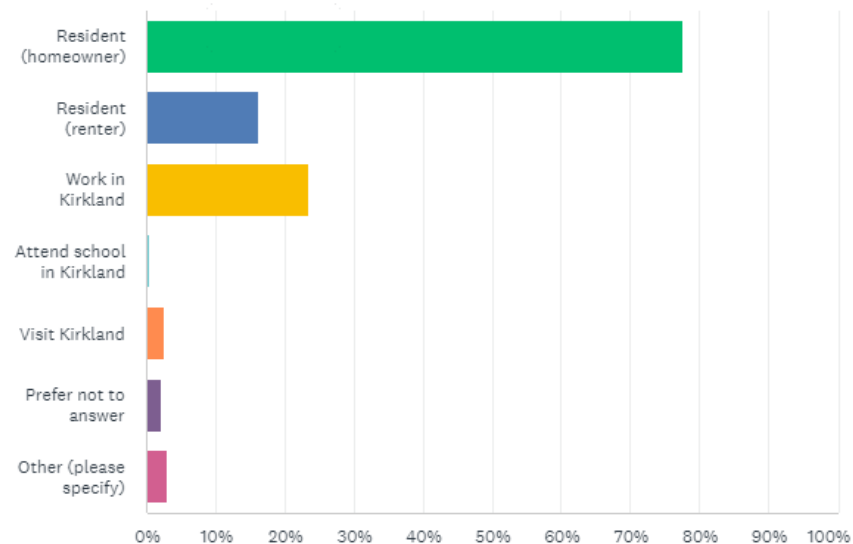
Answered: 194 Skipped: 114



**Q24: Last Question! What is your relationship to Kirkland? (Please select all that apply).**

Last question! What is your relationship to Kirkland? (Please select all that apply.)

Answered: 197 Skipped: 111



“Other” responses include:

- Homeowner and previous resident; kids attend school in Kirkland, Visit Kirkland.
- Employer of employees home-based in WA.
- Homeowner.
- Own a rental home in Kirkland.
- Business owner in Kirkland.

**Q12: How can the City of Kirkland help you maintain or expand your business in your home and beyond?**

Ensure best internet always available
Nothing/None
Secure an effective co-working and/or conference/meeting space.
Let businesses know I can help them with business consulting! And provide resources and information!
Would also love potential excise tax deductions for business purchases or for conducting business in Kirkland. That would be a massive incentive to continue operating here in the city.
not charging fees! I have no store front, not a single customer is visiting my home. I am not happy paying Kirkland a fee for my type of business that could happen anywhere and not getting any benefits for working in my home office.
Avendor show of in-home businesses so people know what other small businesses exist right next door or in their neck of the woods. ways for us to advertise or get more exposure w/o breaking the bank.
Limit unnecessary taxes. Reduce excessive overhead and licensing fees. 3
To make the process of adding on to a home easy and quick.
Policies that continue to allow us to rent the property safely, and allow us to continue to find and rent to great tenants as a small time landlord in the long term rental space.
Maybe a directory of services or incentives for using local providers
Not sure. Make it easy for clients to be seen in various locations? Allow me to build separate room attached or not to my home? If needed in future? If it's allowed.
Help subsidize the costs associated with running a small business (i.e. obtaining permits/licenses from Kirkland are a burden for small businesses)
Create more makers markets, incentivize businesses to host makers.
Keep the permitting process accessible to home-based businesses.
I'd like to contact Home schooling groups to offer this classes. If you have any information about locations or phone number/email I'd appreciate it very much.
Promoting my business. 3
What can I do to help the city of Kirkland
Provide small business subsidies, or UBI, or reimbursement for industry-specific business development/marketing resources. Reduce the financial pressure on getting started and learning adequate, industry-relevant skills. (I guess you already sort of do this with health insurance support.) I don't really expect that, and it's the thing that feels like it would be currently most supportive. Or! Start a program where Kirkland provides small business owners with some amount of monthly money that can only be spent at other Kirkland small businesses, along with a list of said businesses. That's kind of like a subsidy and marketing support rolled together. Promote things like <a href="https://www.shoplocalkirkland.com/">https://www.shoplocalkirkland.com/</a> more, both to business owners and to consumers.
It has been challenging to find affordable business locations that is between 500-800 sqft for a small business like mine. Always wish to find a shared flex space to lease.
Maybe provide a list, like a directory of businesses to contact. If possible, create a monthly network gathering.
Faster permitting process

Cellular coverage and internet access. For example, I need a special device to use my cell phone in my home because coverage isn't adequate through Verizon.
Grants income for new businesses.
The high taxes in this entire state make moving to Texas pretty enticing (if it weren't for all the Texans)
Building an indoor pool would be very helpful. I know the city of Kirkland would benefit and I'm currently commuting to Bellevue Aquatic 3 days a week.
Purchasing advertising in AAA products across America.
Have a retail store that sells local goods that could be provided wholesale or sold on consignment
Provide reliable, high speed internet access.
More networking events, special interest group Happy hours
Little to no taxes until I am able to pay my self a living wage. The model of the Pop Shops on Main in bothell seems to be helpful. More marketing opportunities. Vendor events that only charge a small fee if you sell. Or a small percentage of sales. Ways to create community with other small business owners. An online marketplace that is for the sellers. Etsy charges their sellers unfair amounts and hold them to the standard of being their own employees. But they do not provide us all the things an employer should. Small business owners are exploited by them because they are our only option. I would love to see the government in charge of running a fair online marketplace.
Possibly advice tailored to sole proprietorship consulting businesses. I operate a s-corp and have only two clients...but always wondering if I have the best accounting and tax advice setup for my size and business model.
support me in finding a nice space for my step 2 development support me financially regarding this space communication
By not making radical or sweeping changes to the current laws. My business earns a gross income of about \$30k per year, and if the laws change such that I have to pay more fees or taxes, my business would quickly become unsustainable.
Process my license renewal on time without glitches - when I applied and when I renewed, the city did not take any action until I escalated and emailed. Very frustrating.
Mainly with a space for promotional efforts, or a directory... something like that.
Love how supportive Kirkland is of small businesses.
I would love more support for the Chamber of Commerce; they do great work to support small businesses in Kirkland.
Advertising
Support quality high speed internet and cell service in my area. Support increased reliability of electricity.
Keep City business licensing fees low/affordable.
don't penalize home business development by adding additional taxes and requirements
Not raise taxes. And keep us in mind when making decisions to close our roads, shut off water, it effects my business. Thank You
Overall the City of Kirkland has been very supportive to my small business. Early on, as a new business owner, it would have been helpful to have a list of all of the places I need to apply/sign up for business licenses.
Make building codes simpler

-Make it easier to get permits for detached offices. -Charge less for employees working at home based businesses. I pay for 3 employees. I'm the only full time, the others come to my home-office 6 times a year as they work remotely from home part-time.
Clarity on taxes and requirements
We are currently looking to move our business out of Kirkland due to excessive fees.
Lower fees.
access to grants, Technical support, get government contracts
Make business license costs reasonable. Help make high speed Internet reliable and affordable. Improve the reliability of power supplies. We lose power frequently during wind and snow storms though our immediate area had no above ground wires.
small business classes
Provide conference rooms for free or for rent or allow more people to come to your home-based business for depositions so that I can host them here. There's a minimum of four to five participants for in-person depositions.
Make it easier to discover contracting opportunities from city government and local businesses in Kirkland.
Reinstating masking requirements for indoor spaces would make me feel comfortable participating in public art markets, especially indoor markets
I don't need to expand my business.
Help relax laws on building ADUs and potentially enable some tax benefits from adding square footage to create office space.
Better office spaces in Kirkland
Small business grants
I would expand outside my home if there was a free co-working location in the city limits of Kirkland. Also a free or subsidized MakerSpace or would provide convenient access to tools which would allow me to expand my business.
Remove the headcount tax for small businesses
Encourage mixed use neighborhoods. Regulate landscaping noise.
Make it easier to build a DADU or extend my home.
Allow us to stay in home without crazy fees.
Reduce all business taxes-- between state and city its difficult to grow business. If they were reduced we could expand business and increase tax revenue.
Lower fees for home businesses
Bring Biotech companies to Kirkland
Lower annual fee
Ban gas leaf blowers! (I know it's controversial but you asked.) Bury power lines or otherwise keep the power on all year. Ability to file and pay everything online (including alarm permit)
Our cal de sacs is very dark in the evening, and specifically in winter time when clocks are on winter schedule, the motion system lights we have that only provides some small area around my house is not helping much and I always concern for parents with children when it's dark and rainy outside and they are asking if anything can be done on our street with lights, please let me know if you can help us with this issue, thank you!
One-on-one mentoring as I move from a sole proprietor to an LLC.
Lower the cost of business registration