

Sense of Community

A set of 3 questions examined the sense of community in Cary. The first question examined the importance of having a sense of community with your neighbors (Table 71). A 9-point scale from not important at all (1) to very important (9) was used. Having a sense of community was a much desired neighborhood aspect for the respondents as evidenced by the high mean of 7.76. Notice that 87.5% of the responses were on the “important” side of the scale above 5 versus only 3.1% on the “not important” side below 5.

The respondents were then asked if they actually felt a sense of community with their neighbors (Table 72). A 9-point scale that ranged from no sense of community at all (1) to a very strong sense of community (9) was utilized. The mean was 6.64 with 70.1% on the “strong” sense of community side versus 15.4% on the “weak” side. This indicates a relatively strong neighborhood sense of community was perceived by most the respondents.

Table 71. Importance of Having a Sense of Community.

Year	Mean	Not Important At All 1	2	3	4	Neutral 5	6	7	8	Very Important 9	% Above 5
08	7.76	1.0	0.7	0.7	0.7	9.2	7.4	14.9	13.6	51.6	87.5

Table 72. Perceived Strength of the Sense of Community Actually Felt with Neighbors.

Year	Mean	No Sense of Community at All 1	2	3	4	Neutral 5	6	7	8	A Very Strong Sense of Community 9	% Above 5
08	6.64	1.7	3.0	6.0	4.7	14.5	9.2	19.7	17.0	24.2	70.1

Finally, the respondents were asked how often they interact with their neighbors from just saying hello to visiting them to exchanging favors (Table 73). This appears to be a relatively common practice. The most common interactions were once or twice a week (44.3%) or everyday (31.9%). A further breakdown of the respondents who perceived a weak sense of community reveals they had limited interaction with neighbors (43.5% indicated only once or twice a month), more likely to be in the 18-25 age group, and lived in apartments. Overall, the respondents felt a strong sense of community is very important. Most of the respondents generally perceived a relatively strong sense of community in their neighborhoods. In addition, they had frequent interactions with their neighbors usually once/twice a week or everyday.

Table 73. How Often Interact with Neighbors from Just Saying Hello to Visiting Them to Exchanging Favors.

Year	Never	Once or Twice a Year	Once or Twice a Month	Once or Twice a Week	Everyday
08	1.5	3.5	18.8	44.3	31.9

Sense of Community Crosstabulations

The crosstabulations examined for sense of community were age, children in household under 18, education, gender, housing type, income, internet access, language, literacy, race, and years in Cary. Tables B404-B414 shows the crosstabulations for importance of having a sense of community with neighbors. The highest levels of importance for sense of community was for over 65 age group (7.98), households with children (7.96), over \$100,000 income level (7.96), and 56-65 age group (7.96). The subgroups that rated the lowest importance for a sense of community were those without internet access (6.50), apartment dwellers (6.73), townhouse/condo dwellers (7.43), \$20,001-\$30,000 age group (7.46), and 18-25 age group (7.56).

The crosstabulations for strength of sense of community actually felt with neighbors are shown in Tables B415-B425. The highest sense of community with neighbors was perceived by over 65 age group (7.13), 56-65 age group (6.88), \$70,001-\$100,000 income level (6.86), and over 10 year Cary residents (6.83). The lowest sense of community with neighbors was for apartment dwellers (5.10), 18-25 age group (5.52), and \$20,001-\$30,000 income level (5.62). There was also a somewhat lower sense of community for the 2-5 year Cary residents (6.20), \$30,001-\$50,000 income level (6.24), \$50,001-\$70,000 income level (6.35), and townhouse/condo dwellers (6.43).

The crosstabulations for interacting with neighbors are shown in Tables B426-B436. The most frequent interaction with neighbors (once or twice a week and everyday percentages combined) was for over 65 age group (82.7%), \$70,001-\$100,000 income level (80.2%), Asians (80.0%), townhouse/condo dwellers (80.0%), 6-10 year Cary residents (79.8%), over 10 year Cary residents (79.4%), and households with children (79.2%). The lowest levels of interaction (never percentages) were for apartment dwellers (16.1%), households with no internet access (12.5%), African-Americans (7.7%), and \$20,001-\$30,000 income level (7.7%).