



# Snohomish County Council News

Councilmember Terry Ryan



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## Budget Update - October 22, 2015

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**Snohomish County Council**



### County Budget Update

The Snohomish County budget process begins with the Executive proposing a budget to the County Council. The Council can approve the budget, make changes to it or rewrite the entire budget before adopting it. The Snohomish County Charter gives the final authority to the County Council, not the Executive.

The Executive's 2015 budget was unsustainable. He proposed taking \$5,000,000 of the courthouse money and using it for other expenses. If the County Council had approved the Executive's 2015 budget, it would have created an \$8,000,000 hole in the 2016 budget with no money to fill the gap. That would have pushed us over a financial cliff. Ultimately, the Council approved its own budget which safeguarded the \$5,000,000 the Executive wanted to spend.

Seeking to avoid this situation in the 2016 budget, the County Council met with the Executive several months ago to discuss our budget priorities. This was a goodwill gesture to help us avoid the budget dilemma that transpired one year ago.

Unfortunately, the Executive left the Council out of the budget process since that meeting. We have now received the

proposed 2016 budget from the Executive's office. There are several areas of concern with the Executive's budget that are reminiscent of his unsustainable 2015 budget that the Council rejected.

As one example, the Executive's proposed 2016 budget would take \$845,426 additional money out of the county road fund and use it for other purposes. (This number is right out of the Executive's proposed budget). This will negatively impact our road fund by \$1,690,852 in 2016. (We usually get matching money for our road fund through grants and mitigation so  $\$845,426 \times 2 = \$1,690,852$ ). Pro-rating this number out over our Six Year Transportation Improvement Program, we would have \$10,145,112 less money to spend on County roads. This is simply unsustainable. It would be better to use the money for its intended purpose: improving roads, intersections, new paving or adding turn lanes at key congestion points here in the south county where we have absorbed most of the county's population growth.

The Council's financial analysts are going through the proposed budget and will report back to the Council with their findings. I will share their findings with you in my next update.

I hope you found this eNEWSLETTER informative and useful. You can make it even more valuable by suggesting topics and issues for future newsletters. Please contact me at 425-388-3494, or e-mail [Terry.Ryan@snoco.org](mailto:Terry.Ryan@snoco.org). If you would like to share this newsletter, select the **Forward email** link below.

Sincerely,

**Terry Ryan**, Snohomish County Council