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**County Council**  
Brian Sullivan, Chair  
Stephanie Wright, Vice Chair  
Terry Ryan  
Sam Low  
Nate Nehring

## Snohomish County Council Adopts 2018 County Budget

On November 21, 2017, following months of budget analysis and deliberations, the Snohomish County Council passed a 2018 operating budget without a property tax increase for year 2018.

“The financial challenges before us are two-fold. First, it’s imperative that we protect and enhance the County’s long term financial health and stability while maintaining appropriate and essential public services,” stated Council Chair Brian Sullivan. “Second, Snohomish County, like other counties, has limited resources and this body must exercise fiscal responsibility of taxpayer dollars.” Council member Sullivan also stated that “I have clearly heard from our citizenry about the ever increasing tax burden faced by hard-working property owners.”

Highlights of the adopted budget include the following;

- Funding to hire five Sheriff deputies; this matches what was included within the Executive’s recommended budget;
- funding to hire one additional Code Enforcement officer to help with a regional drug/gang task force;
- \$100,000 to provide for nuisance property abatement;
- \$100,000 from CDMH funds for the Snohomish County Health District to help address opiate addiction and treatment on demand; and
- \$1,000,000 one-time funding from REET 2 for homeless housing projects as allowed by recently passed legislation.

Fellow councilmembers shared concerns about increasing the County’s share of property taxes at a time when residents will be seeing large tax increases next year.

“We created a budget that focuses on priorities like public safety and core services, while recognizing the economic realities our constituents are facing,” said Vice Chair Stephanie Wright. “My district will already see increases for Sound Transit and McCleary, and our citizens need tax relief.”

“I’m glad Council was able to unanimously approve the 2018 budget,” said Councilmember Ryan. “Some of the original proposed cuts were fiscally irresponsible. I’m pleased we were able to compromise and all agree on the best use of tax payer’s dollars.”

“This budget balances county needs with fiscal responsibility,” said Councilmember Sam Low. “I am especially pleased with our investment in transportation projects and Take The Next Step in Monroe, which provides great services to our most vulnerable citizens in the Sky Valley.”

“Taxpayers are going to be overwhelmed by the McCleary school funding tax, Sound Transit taxes and car tabs, and other local tax increases next year,” said Councilmember Nate Nehring. “This budget states loud and clear that we hear residents’ concerns and remain committed to limiting the tax burden on our constituents.”