

PRESS RELEASE



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County Council

Tune in to your government

County Council's Public Budget Panels Start

Mike Cooper
Dave Gossett
John Koster
Dave Somers
Brian Sullivan

Over the next four weeks the county council will hold a series of at least 10 public panel discussions leading up to the council's formal adoption of the county's 2009-2010 biennial budget in November. The public can attend these panel meetings or view them live on the web. These webcasts will also be archived and can be easily viewed anytime.

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"County revenue forecasts continue to get worse as we receive up-to-date tax receipt data from the state," said Council Chair Dave Somers. The budget submitted by the County Executive Aaron Reardon projected sales tax revenues to only grow by 7%, to about \$47 million, said Somers. But the most recent estimates reported by the state indicate a continuing decline in sales tax revenue that could mean the county will see \$4 million less than projected by the executive. Significant reductions in the real estate excise due the declining home and property sales will further impact county revenues, he said.

"Clearly, the council's budget will include serious service and personnel cuts," he said. "Getting to a balanced budget will be a difficult challenge but one that we will meet. We truly welcome the public's participation. We value everyone's suggestions and priorities."

Budget Panels Defined & Scheduled

The council, said Somers, is approaching their budget-building responsibilities under the broad theme of "**Sustaining & Enhancing the Quality of Life for Snohomish County Residents.**" The three panels reflect the elements of that goal.

Panel 1: "Mobile, Livable & Sustainable Communities," chaired by Councilmember Mike Cooper, will deal with the issues of transportation, mobility, infrastructure, growth management and sustainable communities, as represented by county road services, planning and development services, county facilities, parks and playgrounds, solid waste services, surface water management services, the county airport (Paine Field), information services, the Boundary Review Board and the county's equipment rental and revolving fund, more commonly known as fleet management.

- **Panel 1 Meeting Schedule:** 9 am - 12 pm: Oct. 7, Oct. 14, Oct. 21 & Oct. 28 – this last panel will focus on transportation.

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Panel 2: “Safe & Healthy Communities,” chaired by Councilmember Dave Gossett, will deal with the issues of public safety, security, public health, affordable housing, economic development and environmental health, as represented by police, court, prosecution and corrections services, indigent legal services, the medical examiner, human services and emergency services.

- **Panel 2 Meeting Schedule:** 1 - 4 pm: Oct. 8, Oct. 15 & Oct. 22.

Panel 3: “Public Accountability,” chaired by Councilmember John Koster, will deal with the issues of long-term fiscal health, mandated versus discretionary spending, building strong county financial reserves, government accountability, and capital improvement plans, as represented by finance and risk management services, human resources, auditor and assessor services, and legislative and executive services.

- **Panel 3 Meeting Schedule:** 9 am - 12 pm: Oct. 9, Oct. 16 & Oct. 23.

All the panel meetings will be held in the **Henry M. Jackson Board Room**, located on the 8th floor of the **Robert J. Drewel Building**, on the County Campus at 3000 Rockefeller Ave, Everett. Please call 425-388-3494 to confirm meeting schedules.

Contact the Council

Citizens can also send comments on the budget directly by e-mail to Contact.Council@snoco.org, or by letter to Snohomish County Council, 3000 Rockefeller Ave. M/S 609, Everett, Washington 98201.

Comments on the 2009-2010 biennial budget may also be submitted through the council’s budget commentary web form which can be found by going to the county’s homepage at www.snoco.org and entering “**comment of the budget**” into the “**Search For**” box located in the middle top of the homepage. Then click on [Comment on the 2009-2010 Recommended Budget](#), fill out the information requested and enter your comments.

Comments about the 2009-2010 proposed county budget will be made a part of the public record, which includes your name, address, city, state, and zip code.

All Council Meetings and Hearings Are Webcast Live

To view all county council meetings and hearings live or archived go to the county’s homepage at www.snoco.org and enter “[Council Webcasts](#)” into the “**Search For**” box located in the middle top of the homepage

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