



Snohomish County Council

NEWS RELEASE

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Council Completes Plan for County Energy Efficiency Block Grant

Snohomish County is putting the final touches on a list of energy efficiency projects that will create jobs in the county and reduce fossil fuel emissions. Funding for the projects will come from a \$4.8 million Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant received from the Department of Energy as part of the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. "This grant offers an exciting opportunity for Snohomish County to create local jobs while improving the quality of life for our residents," said Council Vice Chair Dave Gossett.

Last month the County Council adopted a motion that provided direction to the County Executive on how the grant money should be spent to provide the greatest benefit. Since that time staff from the Council and Executive Offices have been working together to refine a list of projects that meet the Council's goals of job creation and providing a measurable reduction in the county's energy usage. "We are pleased by the cooperation that has gone into developing this list," said Council Chair Mike Cooper. "Everyone understands how important this is for the long-term health and stability of the county."

The projects slated to receive the greatest portion of the grant funding include the installation of energy efficiency upgrades to county facilities; upgrading lighting in county parks, fairgrounds, transfer stations and streetlights; conducting home energy audits to help homeowners reduce their energy bills; and creating a revolving loan program to assist cities and other entities with their energy conservation efforts. "Setting aside the maximum allowed by the Department of Energy for loans and grants will encourage partnerships that will benefit communities throughout the entire county," Cooper added.

Other projects identified for funding include construction of solar carports and creating an internship program to provide training on alternative fuel vehicles; installing solar panels on county facilities; and establishing a county Office of Sustainability/Energy to oversee and coordinate the county's efforts to reduce energy consumption. The final project list which must be approved by the Department of Energy will be submitted later this month. The county could begin receiving money within approximately 120 days.

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