Welcome to the 2nd Snohomish County 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update Newsletter!

In this newsletter you’ll learn more about the Comprehensive Plan and the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update. There will be many opportunities for public engagement throughout the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update process, and this newsletter will highlight upcoming efforts.

Newsletter Contents:
- Public Participation and Survey Results
- SEPA Scoping and Consultant
- Transportation Element
- Countywide Planning Policies
- Capital Facilities and Utilities Element

Quick Links:
- Email: 2024Update@snoco.org
- Project Webpage: bit.ly/2024Update

Public Engagement Opportunities
- 2024 Update Video
- Visioning Comment Form
- Public meeting engagement calendar (Page 10)
- January 19 Public Hearing: Docket XXI

2024 Comprehensive Plan Update

Snohomish County is planning for a resilient, vibrant, and inclusive future. One of the main ways the county can plan for this future is through periodic updates to its Comprehensive Plan.

The Comprehensive Plan (the "Plan") is a document that guides Snohomish County decisions on a wide range of topics and services over a 20-year time period. Between now and June 2024, the Plan will go through an extensive update. When adopted, the Plan will be in effect from 2024 to 2044 with minor annual updates, as needed.

Please explore the 2024 Update website for more information on the current Comprehensive Plan, the Update process, and opportunities to provide your input.
How Does the 2024 Update Impact Me?

The Snohomish County population is estimated to grow by roughly 308,000 people* between now and 2044. This presents opportunities as well as some challenges. With new faces and voices, the county’s economic opportunities, choices, and diversity will expand. At the same time, the county must prepare for this growth to ensure it occurs in a way that is in line with our values, goals, and quality of life.

The Comprehensive Plan plays a role in a wide variety of things that can impact you on a daily basis. Everything from if there is a sidewalk between your home and a local cafe, to protecting natural areas in your neighborhood. While the final decisions concerning the policies and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan will be made by the County Council, county staff want to hear from you so that we can provide the full context to the Council. By incorporating the hopes and desires of the public, the 2024 Update will be centered on your direct feedback and reflect the benefits that are important to you and your communities.

*A according to WA Office of Financial Management estimates, subject to revision.

A Vision for Snohomish County

Once finalized, the comprehensive plan will be in effect from 2024 to 2044 and will play a role in daily life activities and overall quality of life, it affects how we commute, our housing choices, where we recreate, and our access to local food products. We would like to hear about your vision for the future. The focus of this video is to provide information on the 2024 Update and to get your vision for Snohomish County in 2044.

The questions at the end of the video touch on some of the areas that the comprehensive plan covers. The form to respond to the questions will be live until February 25, 2022 at this link.

Not enough time to answer specific questions? Feel free email us at 2024Update@snoco.org to provide comments, ideas, and suggestions for the the vision of Snohomish County or the 2024 Update more generally. Don’t worry about putting your comments into specific planner terminology. We really want to hear about the things that are most important to you in your own words.
Upcoming Engagement Opportunities

Comment Forms: Tell us about your vision for the county online via our Visioning Comment Form. Please share your thoughts on what Snohomish County should look like in 2044.

Public Meetings: The following are public meetings where you can learn more and provide feedback about decisions being made by Planning Commission, County Council, and other county representatives. *Note: All meeting topics are subject to change, please click the link to the agenda page for update information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting</th>
<th>Time and Date</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Meeting Link</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public Hearing: Docket XXI (County Council)</td>
<td>January 19, 2022, 10:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Council consideration of 21 non-county initiated Docket XXI applications to revise the Comprehensive Plan</td>
<td>2024 Update Event Calendar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning Committee (County Council)</td>
<td>January 18, 2022, 10:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Meeting of County Council—Planning and Community Development Committee; tentative discussion of growth targets</td>
<td>County Council Meeting Calendar</td>
</tr>
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Who’s Listening?

Thousands of people work for Snohomish County government, hundreds work for Planning and Development Services (PDS), Parks and Recreation, and Public Works, and dozens are specifically focused on the 2024 Update. The staff member featured in this newsletter is Hilary McGowan (she/her), a Planner on the Long Range Planning Team. You may have heard Hilary’s voice on the radio from her show on KSER or on the new video about the Comprehensive Plan featured in the newsletter. In addition to being a former radio host, Hilary is a musician and artist who has played shows throughout Snohomish and King Counties. Hilary is a part of the public participation team and is excited to continue working towards a more equitable and inclusive future.

Title VI / ADA Information

Interpreter and translation services for people with limited English proficiency, and accommodations for persons with disabilities are available upon request. Please make arrangements by emailing the project contact at 2024Update@snoco.org. For questions regarding Public Works’ Title VI Program, contact the Title VI Coordinator via e-mail at spw-titlevi@snoco.org, or phone 425-388-6660. If you have a hearing or speech impairment call 711.
What is SEPA?
The State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) is a law that helps state and local agencies identify environmental impacts that could likely result from projects and decisions such as issuing permits, adopting regulations and policies, comprehensive plans, and critical area ordinances.

What is an EIS?
An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is prepared as a part of the SEPA process. It identifies and analyzes probable adverse environmental impacts, reasonable alternatives, and possible mitigation.

How can I participate?
The EIS process provides opportunities for the public, local, state, federal agencies, and tribal governments to participate. The process begins with scoping, then the draft EIS is prepared and submitted for review and comment. At this point, a Final EIS is used for decision making. Learn more at The WA Department of Ecology website.

SEPA Scoping and Consultant
With County Executive Dave Somers signing Motion number 21-278, Snohomish County completed a four-month process to hire a consultant to complete the SEPA review required for the 2024 Update. Berk Consulting, Inc. (Berk) will lead the consultant team through 2023 to conduct SEPA scoping and generate a draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in conjunction with County staff.

Overall, the SEPA process identifies and analyzes potential environmental impacts associated with three different future scenarios that are identified during the SEPA scoping process. These future alternatives are developed utilizing the expertise of county staff, public input, elected officials, and the experience of the consultant. The public was invited to provide input in November on the scope of the environmental analysis including the potential environmental impacts as well as ways to mitigate those impacts.

An EIS is an informational document that provides the County, public, and other agencies with environmental information to be considered in the decision-making process. It also allows residents, businesses, and other government agencies to comment on alternatives. The EIS will examine the existing conditions of the county, analyze three potential future land use alternatives that could occur in the county, determine the potential environmental impacts of each, and ways to mitigate these impacts.

To view recordings of the two public scoping meetings, and learn more about the scoping process please visit the 2024 Update project website. A Scoping Report will also be posted on the project website in early 2022. The Draft EIS is expected to be completed in the Summer of 2023 and will then be released for a public comment period that will help to formulate the Final EIS due in Spring of 2024.
2024 Comprehensive Plan: Transportation Element

The County’s Comprehensive Plan focuses a lot on land use (with topics like housing types, density, and zoning), although one of the other major elements of the plan is transportation. Planning for land use and transportation go hand in hand. In fact, the first US cities that actively planned, such as New York City, did so by drawing the road network first, and then the buildings were built up around them. Snohomish County’s transportation systems need to effectively serve our neighborhoods and commercial areas, both today and as our county grows.

Snohomish County builds and maintains approximately 1,600 miles of roadway and over 200 bridges throughout the county, inside and outside of the urban areas. The Transportation Element of the County’s Comprehensive Plan provides the vision, strategy, and policy basis for the County’s transportation system, and also identifies the projects needed for developing and maintaining the County’s transportation system over the next 20 years.

Major changes are happening in our area over the next 20 years, especially around transportation. Link light rail will expand into Snohomish County towards Everett, and new Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), such as Community Transit’s Swift and Sound Transit’s Stride, will be built throughout the county. A large part of the Comprehensive Plan Transportation Element update will focus on planning for access to those transit facilities, as well as helping to make nearby neighborhoods more walkable and bikeable.

As we work on updating the Transportation Element, Snohomish County will continue to reach out to members of the public to get input on proposed changes. In our outreach efforts, we will give updates on various topics, including proposed changes to:

- County Roads
- Access to transit
- Bicycle and pedestrian facilities
- Level of Service (LOS) standards for measuring transportation performance
- Climate change
- Environmental protections, including fish passage and water quality
- Equity
- Freight
- Emerging trends in transportation such as: teleworking, electric and autonomous vehicles, and shared mobility
Capital Facilities and Utilities Elements

As the county grows in population and employment, it is essential that the public facilities and services necessary to support development are planned for accordingly. A key part of this planning includes the Capital Facilities and Utilities Elements of the Comprehensive Plan which include an inventory of existing facilities, funding, and a forecast of future needs for services and facilities. Some of these facilities and services include: public water and waste facilities, public schools, surface transportation, surface water management, and the County Airport. The 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update will use new estimates for population and employment growth to 2044 to update and adjust all elements including the Capital Facilities and Utilities Elements.

A component of the Capital Facilities and Utilities Elements is the County’s annual Capital Improvement Program (CIP), which is a 6-year fiscal plan for proposed projects and programs for each County department. The CIP helps to track, on an annual basis, the status of the County’s infrastructure projects and programs identified in the Comprehensive Plan. The CIP also includes an assessment for those specific services and facilities that are needed to serve our growing population.

To learn more about these Elements, please see this overview that was presented to the Planning Commission on August 24, 2021.

To read about the Executive recommended Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for 2022-2027 click here.

The image to the left is a map from the Executive recommended Capital Improvement Program (CIP) found on page 19. This maps illustrates recommended improvement projects for Paine Field and Airport Facilities.
Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs)

CPPs provide the framework for comprehensive planning in Snohomish County. Generally, CPPs are formed from multicity planning policies (MPPs) that are developed by the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), the planning agency for the Central Puget Sound Region. The MPPs can be seen in VISION 2050, and are applicable to all jurisdictions within the region, while the CPPs apply more specifically to Snohomish County and all cities and towns within the county. This coordination among and between the region and the County is mandated by the Growth Management Act (GMA), and is essential to ensure a high quality of life for all.

To learn more about PSRC and Vision 2050, adopted in October 2020, please follow this link. Some highlights of Vision 2050 include a greater focus on topics such as climate change, environmental justice, and social justice. As a result, the updated CPPs for Snohomish County also have a heavier emphasis on these important topics. For instance, the updated CPPs add equity and inclusion as a central principle overarching all policies, and introduces a new subchapter that includes policies intended to address climate change. One CPP that displays this new focus in particular includes:

CC 6: The County and cities should support the achievement of regional greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets through adoption of policies and implementation of actions including identification of emissions reduction goals in local plans and providing support for land use, transportation, and development policies that reduce vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions from transportation.

The 2021 update to the CPPs was an interjurisdictional planning effort between Snohomish County jurisdictions, guided by the Snohomish County Tomorrow (SCT) and the Planning Advisory Committee (PAC). The update process began in early 2020, CPPs were reviewed by the SCT Steering Committee in July 2021, and they were recently adopted by County Council on September 29, 2021.

To review the new CPPs please follow this link. The next step in the process is to incorporate any new or revised policies into the 2024 Update. This will help form the objectives, goals, and policies of each element, such as Land Use, Housing, and the Natural Environment, which then help in the creation of new or amended codes to implement these goals.
Communication Preferences Survey Results

What we heard from you!

From the results of the communication preference survey, we heard that you are very interested in:

- Balancing growth and housing needs with the protection of the natural environment
- Preserving and enhancing existing parks
- Strategies for accommodating population growth
- Variety in the types of housing
- Conserving agricultural, forest, and other resource and open space lands

Results:

A summary of what we heard about the land use element in particular is provided below. You can view a summary of the results on our webpage here.
Photo Corner

We ❤️ Snohomish County and showing our appreciation in pictures! Is there a part of our wonderful county that you’d like us to feature in our upcoming newsletters? Email them to us at 2024Update@snoco.org with a description of where it is and why you love it. We are eager to share as many photos as we can to spread the love of our county!

Snohomish County — Did you know?

Paine Field, Snohomish County’s Airport, was originally constructed in 1936 as a Works Progress project. These 640 acres then became a military base during World War II.

The airport was named after Second Lt. Topliff Olin Paine (1893-1922), who flew for the Army Air Corps and then became a commercial pilot. Paine became a top flying pilot with the then experimental Air Mail Service who received nationwide recognition of many of his treacherous flights. In 1941, the American Legion in Everett suggested the field be renamed in honor of Second Lt. Paine.

Second Lt. Topliff Olin Paine
2024 Comprehensive Plan Update

**LAND USE** - Outlines a broad vision for development in urban and rural areas, which includes setting guidelines for area density and determining where various uses (e.g., residential, commercial, industrial) will be allowed.

**TRANSPORTATION** - Sets a plan for transportation facilities and services, including for freight, public transit, vehicles, cyclists, and pedestrians, to support the needs of current residents and projected population in 2044.

**PARKS** - Establishes a plan for park and recreation facilities and services to promote access and opportunity for Snohomish County residents to enjoy open space.

**HOUSING** - Sets the goals and policies for the preservation, development, and renovation of housing for current and future county residents of all income levels.

**CAPITAL FACILITIES** - Conducts an inventory and development of a long-term plan for public facilities in Snohomish County, both those provided by the County and by non-County service providers.

**NATURAL ENVIRONMENT** - Establishes a framework to protect the natural environment, including water quality and habitat, and to respond to potential impacts of climate change.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** - The combination of jobs, services, facilities, urban design, and other features that contribute to the ability to make a living wage, and the desire to want to live and work in Snohomish County.

**COUNTYWIDE TOPICS** - Broad planning topics or themes that span multiple elements of the Comprehensive Plan or apply to the entire county generally.