

Snohomish County Executive  
**AARON REARDON**



Priorities in Action



Latest News & Upcoming Events

Friday, November 2, 2007

[www.snoco.org](http://www.snoco.org)

 **Reardon's proposal to support affordable housing project approved**

On Friday, October 26, 2007, County Executive Aaron Reardon submitted a proposal to the Snohomish County Council to provide needed support for a new affordable housing initiative sponsored by Housing Hope, Snohomish County's largest affordable housing agency. The County Council unanimously approved Executive Reardon's proposal on Monday, October 29, 2007.

The County's support will enable Housing Hope to develop Lincoln Hill Village. The affordable housing development will be located on approximately 1.5 acres in the Stanwood area, and will consist of twenty-four (24) units of affordable housing for very low-income families (at or below 50% of the area median income). Nine units will be three bedroom apartments targeted to large families with children. The sixteen remaining units will be two bedroom apartments for low income families with children. Five of these units will serve homeless families with children as part of the Sound Families Initiative.

Ed Petersen, Executive Director of Housing Hope, thanked Executive Reardon for his support. "This is a powerful endorsement, which I expect will yield dividends on several fronts," said Petersen. "The most important is securing funding approvals from the Housing Finance Commission and CTED."

The County will provide a low interest, 30-month loan of \$842,500 to Housing Hope. This loan will in turn make the project eligible for nearly \$2.8 million in tax credit financing from the Washington State Housing Finance Commission and funding in the amount of \$842,500 from

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**How are we doing?**

Did you know that you can track how well the County is meeting its performance goals?

The SnoStat system tracks how well the County is delivering services, the costs of those services, and the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery.

the State Housing Trust Fund, thus enabling Housing Hope to repay the County's short term loan. Funding for the short term loan will come from the \$2.9 million in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds on account in the Federal Treasury. These are funds the County has awarded to local projects and programs but have not yet been drawn down.

In response to Council's questions, Executive Director Deanna Dawson explained that this loan would not jeopardize any other projects in line for funding, in that the loan can be called in at any time within the 30 month period of the loan. The loan will be secured by an irrevocable letter of credit, and backed by Housing Hope's Capital Reserves. Upon hearing Executive Director Dawson's explanation of the loan process, the council voted unanimously to approve Executive Reardon's proposal.

Executive Reardon thanked the Council for their support. "Tackling the challenges of providing affordable housing to our working families and to our most vulnerable residents will require partnerships," said Reardon. "I look forward to working closely with council on other innovative ways to create and preserve affordable housing in Snohomish County."

Executive Reardon's 2008 budget includes funding to partner with the Housing Consortium of Everett and Snohomish County in an eight month effort that will result in an Affordable Housing Action Plan. "Snohomish County is a highly desirable place to live and the demand for land and housing is high," said Executive Reardon. "Through partnership with the Consortium and its member agencies including nonprofit housing developers and social service providers, for profit developers, lenders, realtors, and government agencies, we will develop a detailed plan of action that engages community stakeholders in proactive solutions and results in better alignment of resources with community need."



**Fire Marshall reminds residents:  
Change Your Clock, Change Your Battery**

Simply visit our [SnoStat website](#).

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**Contact me:**

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Everett, WA 98201

Phone: 425.388.3460  
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Or, [send me an email](#).

And please be sure to [visit me on the web!](#)

Sincerely,

Aaron Reardon

Eighty-three percent of all civilian fire-related deaths are a result of home fires, and on average, nearly three children a day die in these fires. An early warning can provide critical extra seconds to escape, smoke alarms double your family's chance of getting out of a home fire alive — but only if they work.

To save lives and prevent needless injuries, Snohomish County has joined Energizer® and the International Association of Fire Chiefs for the 20th year of the ***Change Your Clock Change Your Battery***® campaign. The program urges all Americans to adopt a simple, lifesaving habit: changing smoke alarm and carbon monoxide detector batteries when changing clocks back to standard time each fall.

“Take time **to test your smoke alarms** to ensure proper working order,” urges Snohomish County Fire Marshal Tom Maloney. “It’s a good time to also develop and practice your **residential escape plan**. Having an escape plan provides the proper life saving steps in case of an emergency.”

To make it easier for residents to participate, the County placed this information on its website [www.snoco.org](http://www.snoco.org), keyword: **Fire Marshal**.

Help keep your family and friends safe by encouraging them to adopt a simple lifesaving habit. When you turn your clocks back, make a lifesaving change in your household — change the batteries in your smoke alarms.

This simple habit takes just a moment but it’s the best defense your family has against the devastating effects of a home fire.

For more information about fire safety, call the Office of the Snohomish County Fire Marshal at 425-388-3557, visit the County web site [www.snoco.org](http://www.snoco.org) or the ***Change Your Clock Change Your Battery***® hotline at 314.995.3939, extension 104.

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 **Executive Reardon launches Snohomish County Agriculture Sustainability Project**

Snohomish, WA – Oct. 30, 2007 – Snohomish County Executive Aaron Reardon today announced the County’s Agriculture Sustainability Project, a community-based initiative to enhance and strengthen the County’s agricultural economy and its critical land base at a press conference at The Farm, a 125-acre working family farm along the Snohomish River.

The Snohomish County Agriculture Sustainability Project is the result of farmers, agriculture agencies, advocates and government coming together for the preservation and prosperity of Snohomish County’s rapidly changing agriculture industry.

“Snohomish County has set a course to enhance and revitalize the county’s agricultural economy through the next century, said Executive Reardon. “A diverse and prosperous agricultural industry is vital to the health and future of our entire region, just as it was 100 years ago.”

Agriculture is a \$126.9 million industry in Snohomish County. Today, there are approximately 1,600 farms in Snohomish County of which 70% are family or individually owned farms.

“The Snohomish County landscape is changing,” said Dave Remlinger, Chair of the Snohomish County Agricultural Advisory Board and a Monroe-area farmer. “Urbanization has increased the pressure to convert farmlands to non-farm uses. This pressure will continue to grow as the County’s population continues to grow. We need to act now to determine public support and vision to preserve farmland and a viable agriculture industry in Snohomish County before it’s too late.”

The Agriculture Sustainability Project will begin this fall with a series of community engagement meetings in which the public will be asked to create priorities and a long-term vision for agriculture in Snohomish County.

In addition, the Agriculture Sustainability Project will deliver:

- A comprehensive inventory of lands with existing or potential agricultural activities outside of the County’s

- designated agricultural lands;
- Environmental regulations analysis and recommendations affecting agricultural activities;
  - Recommendations for measures to protect the County's critical agriculture land base;
  - Feasibility assessment of agribusiness economic opportunities;
  - Recommendations and action items to pursue agribusiness economic opportunities.

This groundbreaking project will result in a community-owned vision of how the farming community and the general public envision local agriculture to look and function for the next 100 years, coupled with practical approaches and strategies to achieve that vision.

Executive Reardon envisions this initiative to be a business plan for agribusiness in Snohomish County that will take the County into the next century as a productive, progressive agricultural community.

The County's eleven member Agricultural Advisory Board and four community members will oversee the project and coordinate activities through the County's Office of Economic Development.



*(Left to Right: Steve Pottle, Snohomish County Office of Economic Development; Executive Aaron Reardon and Dave Remlinger, Agricultural Board Chair)*

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## **Snohomish County Focus on Farming Conference IV**

"From Soils to Sales," the fourth annual Snohomish County Focus on Farming conference, gets underway at 8 a.m. Thursday, November 29, 2007, at the Lynnwood Convention Center. The conference will feature nationally recognized agricultural leaders, a broad range of subject-specific breakout sessions and a trade show exhibition.

Presenters of note include Snohomish County Executive **Aaron Reardon**, Washington State Congressman **Rick Larsen**; keynotes **Chad Kruger**, BIOAg educator for Washington State University's Center for Sustaining Agriculture & National Resources, and **Dr. Fred Kirschenmann**, Distinguished Fellow, Iowa State University's Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture; Charles Kuperus, New Jersey's Secretary of the Department of Agriculture; Claire Thomas of The Root Connection, Washington state's oldest Community Supported Agriculture program; and Dave Robb, General Manager of Tuscarora Organic Growers Cooperative in Pennsylvania which provides produce for Washington, DC as well as other mid-Atlantic states.

"Our partnership with farmers across the region has allowed us to identify innovative ideas and proven strategies to promote agriculture," said Snohomish County Executive Aaron Reardon. "This year's Focus on Farming line-up draws on the expertise of national leaders to invigorate and sustain our farm economy."

The annual conference, initiated by Executive Reardon and Snohomish County farmers in 2004, has experienced growing attendance and participation from a broad sector, including new rural residents with an interest in farming, government agencies, and individuals interested in food and sustainability and other advocates for regional agriculture.

"Our farms are a key part of Snohomish County's quality of life and the successful diversification of our economy,"

Executive Reardon continued. “We must do what we can to ensure their success. The conference agenda offers strategies relevant to every farmer throughout Puget Sound.”

This year’s focus, “From Soils to Sales,” will give farmers more resources to meet the demands of a changing marketplace and shifting environmental conditions. Conference workshops will include the latest research, methodology and techniques for on-farm efficiency and will explore trends in local and organic farm to market; alternative grains; environmentally-friendly nursery technology and bio-energy.

WSU’s Chad Kruger will present the morning keynote, “Climate Change Impacts on Regional Agriculture.” Mr. Kruger currently serves as the Director of Outreach for the Climate Friendly Farming™ Project, which is researching agricultural practices and technologies that reduce agricultural greenhouse gas emissions and provide renewable, biomass substitutes for fossil fuel-based products.

Dr. Kirschenmann, renowned for his work with national and international sustainable agriculture, will present the lunchtime keynote, “Meeting Agriculture’s Challenges in a Rapidly Changing World.” Dr. Kirschenmann recently completed a five-year term on the US Department of Agriculture’s National Organic Standards Board and manages his family’s 3,500-acre certified organic farm in North Dakota. A professor of religion & philosophy at Iowa State, he has written extensively about ethics and agriculture, earned numerous awards including a Rockefeller Fellowship and sits on many food and agriculture-related boards across the country.

As in previous years, participants will feast on a delicious gourmet lunch created by top regional chefs using farm-fresh local products. A tasting reception with Puget Sound wines and artisan cheese makers will end the day.

**Cost:** \$30 prior to November 15; \$40 after November 15 and at the door

Cost includes two keynote addresses, workshops, lunch and

a wine & cheese tasting

For information, contact Laura McLeod, Snohomish County, 425.388.6465 or visit [www.focusonfarming.org](http://www.focusonfarming.org).

*The Focus on Farming Conference is a project of Snohomish County's Office of Economic Development. Presenters and key sponsors include King County, Washington State University Snohomish County Extension, Northwest Agriculture Business Center, Flower World, Inc., and Northwest Farm Credit Services.*

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***Thank you very much for taking the time to read my electronic newsletter.***

***If you would like to send me your comments and feedback, or if you would like to unsubscribe, simply reply to this message.***

***You may also contact me directly by phone at 425.388.3460.***