

# PRESS RELEASE



County Council

22 August 2008

Mike Cooper  
Dave Gossett  
John Koster  
Dave Somers  
Brian Sullivan

## Three County Budget Community Forums Scheduled **County Council Wants to Hear From Citizens**

*'What are Your Priorities?'*

Faced with declining revenues and the need to produce the county's first two-year, biennium budget, the county council has scheduled three community forums early in September to solicit citizens' priorities for county government.

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"When putting together a two-year budget, it is critical that we get it right," said council chair Dave Somers. "So much can change in that time frame and with the economy still slowing, revenue predictions have to be accurate."

The county council's budget forums will be held beginning Sept. 3 at the Stillaguamish Senior Center in Arlington, followed a forum Sept. 10 in the county parks department headquarters at Willis D. Tucker Community Park, near Snohomish. The third forum will be held Sept. 15 at the Edmonds City Council Chambers – details follow.

"Sales tax and real estate excise tax collections are already down significantly," said Somers, "and we have to be prepared to make tough decisions. That's why we need to hear what peoples' priorities are."

"We simply can't fund everything in this year's budget," he said. "Local governments can't run on a deficit."

County Executive Aaron Reardon is predicting a \$9.3 million shortfall is this year's budget alone, but the council won't know his predictions for the 2009-2010 biennium until he delivers his proposed budget on September 4<sup>th</sup>.

Once the council receives Reardon's budget request, Somers said, the council gets down to crunching his numbers and evaluating his proposals before producing the final budget late in November.

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Citizens who can't attend the forums are urged to send their budget priorities to the council by e-mail or letter.

### Community Forums Schedule

<b>North County</b> Wednesday, Sept 3 at 6:30 PM Stillaguamish Senior Center 18308 Smokey Point Blvd., Arlington	<b>Central &amp; East County</b> Wednesday, Sept. 10 at 6:30 PM Willis D. Tucker Community Park 6705 Puget Park Drive, Snohomish	<b>Southwest County</b> Monday, Sept. 15 at 6:30 PM Edmonds City Council Chambers Public Safety Complex 250 5th Avenue North, Edmonds
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