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Snohomish County Executive Dave Somers Proposes Budget for 2021

Budget priorities: public safety, social justice, community health, economic development, climate action

SNOHOMISH COUNTY, Wash., September 29, 2020 – Today, Snohomish County Executive Dave Somers submitted his proposed 2021 budget to the County Council. His proposed General Fund budget is \$264 million. The total of all funds is \$1.045 billion, a decrease of approximately \$55 million from 2020's adopted budget.

You can access the Executive's proposed 2021 budget [here](#).

"In the midst of the global COVID-19 pandemic, a major economic downturn, and the largest civil rights movement in our lifetimes, we are prioritizing the county's essential functions and finding ways to move our community forward in spite of the challenges," said Snohomish County Executive Dave Somers. "Across our community, people are struggling, and we have responded with compassion and resilience. We don't know what 2021 may bring, but we are prepared."

"Snohomish County has done vital work this year, responding to the pandemic, speeding resources to those who are most in need, and keeping our budget balanced," said Snohomish County Council Chair Nate Nehring. "I look forward to reviewing the Executive's proposed budget and working with my Council colleagues on preparing for our 2021 spending plan."

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting economic downturn, Snohomish County has been committed to cutting costs and reducing expenditures to meet revenue projections. These cost-cutting measures include: across the board General Fund budget reductions, a hiring freeze, furloughs, and the cancellation of most discretionary spending.

The Snohomish County Sheriff's Office remains the largest single part of the proposed general fund budget, representing 42% of spending for their law enforcement and corrections functions combined. The entirety of the County's law and justice system—including the Courts, Sheriff's Office, Prosecuting Attorney, Public Defense, Clerk, Emergency Management, and the Medical Examiner—represents about 75% of the proposed General Fund budget. The other 25% is directed toward all other essential county functions.

Highlights of the Executive's proposed budget include:

- The proposed investment in body cameras for law enforcement officers will improve transparency, maintain accountability, and allow quicker resolution to citizen complaints.
- The merger of existing county roles into a new Department of Natural Resources and Conservation to better align environmental sustainability missions and advance our work on climate change. This proposal would merge the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism, with Surface Water Management, our Environmental Sustainability Office, and our Agriculture Office.
- Maintain public safety as a top county priority, while simultaneously making progress on social justice.
- Continue our response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Focus countywide efforts with our city partners on the housing crisis that will almost certainly be worse in 2021.
- Continue efforts to diversify our local economy, strengthen our workforce training system, speed economic recovery, and identify innovative ideas to support job growth.

The Snohomish County Council will now consider the Executive's proposed budget. They are expected to approve the 2021 budget by the end of November.

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