Welcome to the 1st Snohomish County 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update Newsletter!

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

Newsletter Contents:
- 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update
- Public Participation
- Light Rail Communities
- Parks Visioning Survey Results
- Buildable Lands Report
- Docket XXI

Quick Links:
- Communications Preference Survey (deadline extended to July 31): bit.ly/SnoCo2024Survey
- Email: 2024Update@snoco.org
- Project Webpage: bit.ly/2024Update

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. Because the Plan acts as a blueprint for development in the county, it impacts neighborhoods, businesses, traffic, the environment, and you. It is also meant to reflect the vision and priorities of Snohomish County communities and residents, while meeting requirements of state and federal law.

Between now and June 2024, the Plan will go through an update (the “2024 Comprehensive Plan Update,” or “2024 Update”). When adopted, the Plan will be in effect from 2024 to 2044 with minor updates.

Please explore the 2024 Update website for more information such as the five components of the comprehensive plan, the 14 GMA planning goals, and the 10 elements of the General Policy Plan.
How Does the 2024 Update Impact Me?

The Snohomish County population is estimated to grow by roughly 350,000 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.

Public Engagement Opportunities

The goal of public participation for the 2024 Update is to equitably and inclusively engage a diverse population so that the resulting Comprehensive Plan is well informed. We need your voice so that the County can understand what is most important to you and your communities!

Communications Preference Survey

The population and employment landscapes are changing in Snohomish County as more people choose to live, work, and play here. Your voice will help shape our community’s future and help us understand the most important topics of today. To begin to understand what topics are most important to you, and how best to communicate with you going forward, the county has created an initial 2024 Update Survey. It takes about 5-10 minutes to complete, and the survey is open through July 31st.

Take the survey now at https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SnoCo2024survey.

Not enough time for a survey? Feel free to send us an email at 2024Update@snoco.org to provide comments, ideas, and suggestions for the 2024 Update. 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. For instance, do you want sidewalks in your neighborhood, more public art, more diversity in housing options, or safer areas to play? Let us know!
Light Rail Communities Project
Incorporated into 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update

Light rail service is expected to start in unincorporated Snohomish County in the mid-2030s. While this seems like a long way into the future, Snohomish County began planning for light rail’s arrival back in 2015. A lot of thought and public input has gone into this project already, and more work and public engagement will continue to occur as this project is incorporated into the 2024 Update!

The first phase of the Light Rail Communities Project focused on station area locations, and led to the County Council passing an ordinance where the county stated their locally favored station locations. These favored locations relied heavily on public engagement and several studies. The Station Area Plan was completed in 2020, and can be found on the Light Rail Communities Project website.

The second phase of the Light Rail Communities Project will result in an Urban Core Subarea Plan, which will be included as an element of the 2024 Update. A subarea plan is a document that guides future planning decisions within a specific area, and aims to provide more certainty to residents, property owners, developers, and the community at-large.

This Urban Core Subarea Plan includes unincorporated areas of Snohomish County between Everett, Mukilteo, Lynnwood, and Mill Creek. The Plan will consider changes to zoning, and development regulations such as those related to allowed uses in certain areas (such as if residential and commercial uses need to be separated or if they can mix), the allowed height for buildings, and other design standards.

It is important to note that Snohomish County’s planning efforts do not include the design of the light rail stations, construction, mitigation, operation or maintenance of light rail - those are the responsibility of Sound Transit. Final decisions on the actual station location and alignment will be made by Sound Transit in 2025.

Stay tuned for an upcoming survey to help Snohomish County plan for possible changes to the development regulations within the Urban Core Subarea.
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?

Snohomish County has a land area of 2,087 square miles. That’s larger than the state of Rhode Island which is 1,212 square miles! Learn more at www.census.gov.
Parks Visioning Survey Results

Snohomish County is working to update our long-term vision for parks. This vision will be used to help guide decisions about the kinds of facilities we build, how we operate our parks, and generally where we should put our focus to achieve this vision.

We received great feedback from 1,815 people during our recent Visioning Survey that was open between April 22\textsuperscript{nd} and June 1\textsuperscript{st}, 2021.

View full results at [https://snohomishcountywa.gov/889/Planning](https://snohomishcountywa.gov/889/Planning)

These results will help inform the upcoming Park and Recreation Visioning Plan (see the progress of the plan update at the Parks Planning website), as well as the Parks and Recreation Element (PRE) of the 2024 Update. The PRE will provide goals, objectives and strategies for providing park services through 2044.

If you did not get a chance to weigh in on the Visioning Survey or have more ideas to share, please reach out through 2024Update@snoco.org!

**What do you like to do most in parks and outdoor spaces?**

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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Icon Representation</th>
<th>n=1,815 Survey Respondents</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Be surrounded by nature (wildlife habitat, etc.)</td>
<td>![Nature Icon]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical activity</td>
<td>![PhysicalActivity Icon]</td>
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<td>Health &amp; well-being benefits (physical and psychological)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gathering with family, friends, and social groups</td>
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<td>Play with pets</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>![OtherIcon]</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Attend events &amp; experience arts and culture</td>
<td>![EventsIcon]</td>
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The Buildable Lands Report (BLR), a requirement of the State Growth Management Act, is an essential input to the 2024 Update. The BLR reviews all existing urban land within Snohomish County and then calculates the urban densities currently being achieved, in order to estimate any capacity for additional urban growth. The report ultimately determines if there is an adequate supply of urban residential, commercial, and industrial lands to accommodate the population and employment growth projected to come to the county by the year 2035.

If the results of the review determine that urban densities and growth are not being achieved consistent with the Comprehensive Plan’s original objectives, or that there are deficiencies in the buildable lands supply within our urban areas, the county and cities must take corrective actions without expanding the urban growth boundaries. Actions could include, for instance, changing policies and development regulations to allow for increased infill development or redevelopment. Although the BLR’s purpose is to evaluate the 2035 growth targets, the information it generates provides a comprehensive land use baseline for evaluating plan and zoning changes needed to accommodate the county’s urban growth to the next planning horizon – the year 2044.

To learn more about the BLR and to read the current draft, please visit: [https://snohomishcountywa.gov/1352/Buildable-Lands](https://snohomishcountywa.gov/1352/Buildable-Lands)
Docket XXI

The Comprehensive Plan embodies our whole community’s priorities as well as policies that guide decision-making in Snohomish County. Outside of the major updates that occur every eight years, docket applications can be proposed by community members to amend the Comprehensive Plan.

The deadline for new docket applications to be included in the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update occurred last October of 2020, and PDS received 24 applications (View maps depicting locations in districts: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5). These 24 applications are collectively known as Docket XXI (21) and PDS provided initial recommendations on each proposal to the County Council in April of 2021. The County Council will hold a public hearing in January 2022 to determine which of the 24 proposals should be placed on a final list for further consideration and final action as part of the 2024 Update of the Comprehensive Plan.

Of the 24 applications, PDS recommended adding three to the final docket. By Fall of 2021, new 2044 growth targets, a Buildable Lands Report, and updated Countywide Planning Policies will be available. With this new information, PDS will reevaluate all 24 docket proposals and this may result in several revised recommendations to the County Council. To learn more about the docketing process, please follow this link.

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. One such planner is Sarah Titcomb. Sarah is a principal planner who has been diligently working for the people of Snohomish County since 2016. She is now leading public engagement efforts for the long range planning division and the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) process for the 2024 Update. She is one member of the team listening to your comments and incorporating them into the 2024 Update. Outside of work Sarah enjoys playing ultimate frisbee and is a board member of the non-profit DiscNW.

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.
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.