



**Date of Issuance:** November 1, 2021

**Deadline for Comments:** November 30, 2021

**Lead Agency:** Snohomish County Planning and Development Services

**More Information:** <https://bit.ly/SnoCo-SEPA-Scope>

3000 Rockefeller Ave., M/S 604  
Everett, WA 98201-4046  
(425) 388-3311  
[www.snoco.org](http://www.snoco.org)

**Dave Somers**  
*County Executive*

## **DETERMINATION OF SIGNIFICANCE AND REQUEST FOR COMMENTS ON SCOPE OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (EIS)**

### **Snohomish County 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update**

#### **Description of Proposal**

Snohomish County is updating the Snohomish County Growth Management Act Comprehensive Plan (“the comprehensive plan”) consistent with the Growth Management Act (GMA; RCW 36.70A). The comprehensive plan is designed to help the County meet its long-term vision for land use and growth management in unincorporated areas of the county. The comprehensive plan:

- allocates population, and employment growth to various areas of the county, with a majority of growth occurring in Urban Growth Areas (UGAs);
- reduces sprawl in rural areas and maintains rural character;
- addresses housing needs of all economic segments of the population;
- supports economic development;
- conserves agricultural, forest, and mineral lands of long-term commercial significance;
- protects open space, cultural, and scenic resources;
- provides for parks, recreation, and capital facilities and utilities; and
- develops a transportation network necessary to serve the population and employment.

The comprehensive plan is required to be consistent with the Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) developed through Snohomish County Tomorrow (SCT), and with regional plans such as the Puget Sound Regional Council’s (PSRC’s) Vision 2050 which contains the Multi-county Planning Policies (MPPs). Snohomish County is required to complete its update of the comprehensive plan by June 2024.

The current comprehensive plan applies through the year 2035, and Snohomish County’s 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update is now planning for additional growth to a new horizon of 2044. The County is considering three land use and growth alternatives that include a no action and two action alternatives for the unincorporated county. All three alternatives assume the same growth in Cities and Towns consistent with Initial 2044 Targets developed through SCT and adopted by the County consistent with the PSRC’s Vision 2050. Vision 2050 allocates to Snohomish County population growth of approximately 308,000 individuals countywide from 2020 to 2044.

1. **Alternative 1, No Action: Adopted Plans – Lower Growth:** This alternative assumes no changes to the future land use designations currently shown on the County’s Future Land Use Map, and there will be no policy, zoning, or regulation changes associated with this alternative. Unincorporated UGA subareas build to capacity or Initial 2044 Targets, whichever is less, and rural area accommodates no more than 8.5% of county population growth. The transportation network is as described in the current comprehensive plan’s adopted transportation element plus possible new projects to accommodate growth occurring between 2035 and 2044. This alternative accounts for the possibility that the population growth could be lower than the Vision 2050 population allocation for the county.

2. **Alternative 2, Medium Growth: Focus on High-Capacity Transit Communities:** This alternative is consistent with the Vision 2050 total population and employment allocations for Snohomish County. It accommodates a large share of growth in the core of the Southwest UGA with emphasis around high-capacity transit stations. It also encourages a wider variety of housing types in single family neighborhoods within the existing UGA and re-designates and rezones some locations from Urban Low Density Residential to Urban Medium Density Residential on the Future Land Use Map in unincorporated areas that are within the unincorporated High-Capacity Transit (HCT) Communities regional geography adopted in the Vision 2050. This alternative may include minor UGA adjustments. The rural area accommodates 4.5% of county population growth. This alternative relies on a multi-modal approach to transportation.
3. **Alternative 3, Higher Growth:** This alternative accounts for the possibility that population growth could be higher than the Vision 2050 population total for the county. Like Alternative 2, this alternative would focus a large share of growth in the core of the Southwest UGA near high-capacity transit stations, encourage a variety of housing types in single family neighborhoods, and allow for more medium density zoning within the existing UGA. This alternative factors in additional growth in the Southwest UGA near high-capacity transit stations. This alternative would include any UGA expansion proposals that are added to the final docket for consideration as amendments to the comprehensive plan. Higher total county growth associated with UGA expansions would be assumed. The rural area accommodates 4.5% of county population growth. This alternative relies on a multi-modal approach to transportation, with new road projects to extend service to any UGA expansion areas.

### Primary components of the Snohomish County 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update and EIS:

1. **General Policy Plan (GPP):** In past updates of the comprehensive plan, the GPP was a separate document that provided objectives, goals, and policies for the elements of population and employment, land use, housing, transportation, parks and recreation, capital facilities, utilities, economic development, natural environment, and interjurisdictional coordination. The GPP has also included the Future Land Use Map and other supporting maps. For Snohomish County’s 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update, all elements that were previously within the GPP, as well as the broader elements discussed below, will be incorporated into one comprehensive plan document, and each element will include goals, objectives, and policies. The EIS scope may include potential revisions to each element to implement any of the three land use alternatives.
2. **Transportation Element:** The Transportation Element of the comprehensive plan includes an inventory of the county’s transportation facilities, establishes level-of-service standards for county arterials and transit routes, and includes transportation improvement projects necessary to support the needs of 2044 growth. The EIS scope may include potential revisions to level-of-service standards and the list of multimodal transportation improvement projects.
3. **Capital Facilities Plan:** The Capital Facilities Plan contains an inventory of public facilities and utilities within Snohomish County, establishes level of service standards necessary to support development, and prioritize facilities needed to support the needs of the projected 2044 population. The EIS scope may include potential revisions to level-of-service and prioritizations.
4. **Park and Recreation Element:** The Park and Recreation Element includes level-of-service (LOS) and concurrency standards for parks and recreation facilities. The EIS scope may include potential revisions to current LOS and concurrency standards.
5. **Urban Core Subarea Plan:** The Urban Core Subarea Plan will be a new element within the comprehensive plan as part of the 2024 Update. The Urban Core Subarea Plan will encapsulate ongoing efforts to plan for light rail in unincorporated Snohomish County. The EIS scope may evaluate different growth concepts, policies, or development regulations in the Urban Core Subarea Plan to implement any of the three land use alternatives.

For more information that further describes Snohomish County’s 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update and EIS Scope, please visit <https://bit.ly/SnoCo-SEPA-Scope>. Contact staff listed below to request a printable PDF or translated version of the content.

### Proponent

Snohomish County

### Location of Proposal

The proposal encompasses all of unincorporated Snohomish County. Snohomish County is located on Puget Sound, between Skagit County to the north and King County to the south. It contains approximately 2,090 square miles.

### Lead Agency

Snohomish County Planning and Development Services

## EIS Required

The lead agency has determined this proposal is likely to have a significant adverse impact on the environment. An environmental impact statement (EIS) is required under RCW 43.21C.030 (2)(c) and will be prepared.

The lead agency has identified the following areas for discussion in the EIS:

- Earth/Soil/Erosion,
- Air Quality/Climate Change,
- Water Resources,
- Fish/Wildlife/Vegetation/Wetlands,
- Land and Shoreline Use,
- Plans and Policies,
- Population/Housing/Employment,
- Environmental Justice,
- Cultural Resources,
- Transportation,
- Energy and Natural Resources,
- Public Services,
- Utilities, and
- Parks and Recreation.

The EIS will share countywide, UGA, High-Capacity Transit Community subarea, rural and resource area, and transportation system conditions and environmental implications. For each topic, the affected environment, impacts, mitigation measures, and significant unavoidable adverse impacts will be identified. The EIS will be comparative in nature and include quantitative and qualitative approaches such as models (e.g. transportation) or adopted standards (e.g. stormwater low impact development practices, public service levels of service, etc.) to determine the effect of the alternatives. By EIS topic and equity and climate resilience performance metrics, the EIS will identify mitigation best practices, advances in environmental protection, and sustainability tools that could be addressed in alternatives or programmatic mitigation.

## Scoping

Agencies, affected Tribes, and members of the public are invited to comment on the scope of the EIS. Review comments will be accepted on:

- alternatives,
- mitigation measures,
- probable significant adverse impacts, and
- licenses or other approvals that may be required.

**Comment period:** November 1 – November 30, 2021. Submit comments no later than **5:00 pm November 30, 2021**. Send written comments to:

Sarah Titcomb  
Principal Planner  
Long Range Planning Division  
Snohomish County  
Planning and Development Services  
425-388-2128

Snohomish County Planning and Development Services  
3000 Rockefeller Ave. M/S 604  
2nd Floor, Robert Drewel Building  
Everett, WA 98201  
425-388-3872 (fax)

[sarah.titcomb@snoco.org](mailto:sarah.titcomb@snoco.org) or [2024update@snoco.org](mailto:2024update@snoco.org)

**For more information on this process, and to submit comments directly to the Comprehensive Plan Update team, please consider attending our virtual public meetings.**

**Two public scoping meetings are scheduled for:**

**November 9, 2021 6:00-8:00 pm, Zoom Webinar Link:** <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81847973286>  
Dial In: (253) 215 8782 or (301) 715 8592, Webinar ID: 818 4797 3286

**November 15, 2021 6:00-8:00 pm, Zoom Webinar Link:** <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81881286133>  
Dial In: (253) 215 8782 or (301) 715 8592, Webinar ID: 818 8128 6133

At these meetings you can ask questions, learn more about the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update and Alternatives, the EIS process, and submit written comments. A presentation and interactive session will start at 6:00 pm. Participants will be able to learn more about the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update, the EIS process, upcoming milestones, and opportunities for comments on key issues and concerns. If the meeting links above fail to work, please find updated meeting information at: <https://bit.ly/SnoCo-SEPA-Scope>.

**Title VI and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Information:** It is Snohomish County's policy to assure that no person shall on the grounds of race, color, national origin, or sex as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be discriminated against under and County sponsored program or activity. For questions regarding Snohomish County Public Works' Title VI Program, or for interpreter or translation services for non-English speakers, or otherwise making materials available in an alternate format, contact the Department Title VI Coordinator via e-mail at [spw-titlevi@snoco.org](mailto:spw-titlevi@snoco.org) or call 425-388-6660. Hearing/speech impaired may call 711.

Comuníquese con el Coordinador del Título VI del Departamento, al correo electrónico [spw-titlevi@snoco.org](mailto:spw-titlevi@snoco.org), o al teléfono 425-388-6660 para servicios de interpretación o traducción para los no angloparlantes.

### **Responsible Official**

Mike McCrary, Director  
Snohomish County Planning and Development Services  
3000 Rockefeller Ave. M/S 604  
2nd Floor, Robert Drewel Building  
Everett, WA 98201

Date: Oct 25, 2021

Signature:   
michael mccrary (Oct 25, 2021 10:42 PDT)