

Snohomish County Town Hall Summary



Across Landscapes

What characteristics of the community are you proud of?

- **Snohomish county balances a diversity of landscapes and land uses including economically and ecologically valuable wetlands, lakes, rivers and Puget Sound shorelines; productive and sustainable agricultural lands and forests; historic and vibrant downtown urban and residential areas for all people; and beautiful scenery.**
- **People in Snohomish county are committed to taking a regional view to enhance the quality of life for all of us. For example:**
 - **Communities in Snohomish county have come together to make salmon recovery possible.**
 - **People in our communities are particularly proud of and concerned about passing the Wild Sky Wilderness proposal.**
 - **Our communities are made up of friendly, open, hardworking, responsible people who care about the vitality and future of their communities and are willing to commit time and energy to stewardship of community resources.**
- **Snohomish county has benefited from wise and cooperative planning for public spaces, parks, and trails that have maintained our access to natural areas and recreation opportunities. This has allowed our communities to provide an educational environment and opportunity for people to experience the environment, natural resources, and recreation which enhances our quality of life.**

What characteristics of the community worry you?

- **Unsustainable land management, poorly planned growth and excessive development that fails to consider impacts to water quality, riparian areas, and hydrologic functions. Including:**
 - **Timber management that results in monoculture re-growth forests**
 - **Transition of forest timber lands to residential lands and development.**
 - **Continued loss of trees and vegetation that increases flooding.**
 - **Deterioration of water quality and stream system health**
 - **Hydrologic modifications of rivers such as channeling stream beds, dikes, and levees.**
 - **Loss of access to natural areas and recreation opportunities.**
 - **Sprawl that leads to a lack of large, open and intact natural areas.**
- **Lack of communication among various stakeholders in our community. Especially worrisome is the antagonism and polarization between development and environmental interests that inhibit our ability to come together behind a common regional vision and act on it.**
- **Inconsistency in government regulations and policies.**

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- **The challenge of maintaining viable agriculture and forest lands within our changing economy.**
- **Lack of accessible, usable, and well-maintained urban parks, forests, and trails.**
- **Lack of funding for public works, protection, restoration, and management.**

What characteristics about the community do you wish to maintain for your grandchildren?

- **Communities that are designed to provide more options for where and how to live including communities where homes, businesses, recreation, and natural areas are located in one place and connected by public transportation and natural areas.**
- **Economically sustainable communities, farms, and forest lands.**
- **Protection of natural resources and processes, with the recognition that these are fundamental to the area's survival, economic vitality, and quality of life.**
- **Clearly defined boundaries between urban lands and natural areas, as well as wildlife corridors and intact wilderness lands that provide a unique sense of place.**
- **Publicly accessible shorelines, lakes and rivers for recreation such as swimming, boating, walking, fishing, and shellfish harvesting.**
- **Communities where people:**
 - **have both interest and opportunities to care for lands, trails, parks and other community resources**
 - **feel safe, trust one another, and communicate.**

What steps do we need to take to improve the well-being of our community?

- **Incorporate economics, ecology and sustainability into our planning efforts. Make sure to balance the need for local economic opportunities and the environment.**
- **Create affordable and livable urban areas to minimize development in rural undeveloped areas. Improve the quality of life in urban areas by focusing on community lands and urban areas as part of conservation planning.**
- **Conserve natural resources, beautiful landscapes and pleasant urban areas to provide economic benefits by increasing the area's quality of life.**
- **Adopt watershed scale thinking, planning and management for growth, development and conservation.**
- **Involve the private sector in cooperative efforts to conserve and protect natural resources.**
- **Develop government, regulations, and policies that reflect community values.**
- **Hold "Dialogues" type conversations in every community.**
- **Involve young people in schools in stewardship and in creating a community vision.**

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- **Fund natural resources protection, conservation, and management.**

What are some of the important principles that should shape our community?

- **The long-term economic health of our region is tied to the conservation of our natural resources and a healthy environment. Conservation of native biodiversity, thriving ecosystems, and connected landscapes should be a priority.**
- **Regional planning and management should be driven by community values that balance economic and ecological principles; build cooperative partnerships among leaders and stakeholders; and are strategic and proactive.**
- **Cooperative planning efforts should emphasize partnerships and occur at multiple levels from local to regional and over short and long time frames. Our progress should be measured at each step toward our goal.**
- **All people in Snohomish county should equally share the responsibilities, costs, and benefits of maintaining a high quality of life in the area.**

Waters Landscape

What characteristics of the community, especially the “Waters Landscape”, are you proud of?

- **Snohomish county has healthy, clean and clear fresh waters and beautiful shorelines along Puget Sound.**
- **Communities in Snohomish county have come together to make salmon recovery possible.**
- **People in Snohomish county can find peace in the place where they live.**

What characteristics of the community, especially the “Waters Landscape”, worry you?

- **Growth and development that fails to consider its impacts to water quality, riparian areas, and hydrologic functions.**
- **Continued loss of trees and vegetation due to increased development and unsustainable logging that increases flooding.**
- **High impact construction and unsustainable logging practices.**
- **Hydrologic modifications of rivers such as channeling stream beds, dikes, and levees.**
- **Antagonism and polarization between development and environmental interests inhibit our ability to come together behind a common goal and act on it.**
- **Competition for resources and funding.**
- **Inconsistency in government regulations and policies.**
- **Feeling at a loss to control our impacts on the environment and natural resources we depend on.**

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What characteristics about the community, especially the “Waters Landscape”, do you wish to maintain for your grandchildren?

- Clean water as a basic resource for our survival, economic vitality, recreation, agriculture, energy, and ecosystems.
- Biodiversity of fish and aquatic resources.
- Floodplains around rivers that allow for the natural functioning and migration of stream beds.
- Natural wildlife corridors along riparian areas of rivers.
- Clearly defined boundaries between urban lands and natural areas.
- Publicly accessible shorelines, lakes and rivers for recreation such as swimming, boating, walking, fishing, and shellfish harvesting.

What steps do we need to take to improve the well-being of our community?

- Maintain clean water as a basic resource on which other aspects of a healthy economy rely such as energy, industry, recreation, tourism, and agriculture.
- Adopt watershed scale thinking, planning and management for growth, development and conservation.
- Create affordable and livable urban areas to minimize development in rural undeveloped areas.
- Involve the private sector in cooperative efforts to conserve and protect water resources.
- Develop government, regulations, and policies that reflect community values.
- Increase public access to shorelines and waterways.

What are some of the important principles that should shape our community?

- Preservation, restoration, and stewardship of riparian and natural river systems should be a priority in all land use planning as it will sustain our economy.
- Cooperative planning efforts should emphasize partnerships and occur at multiple levels from local to regional and over short and long time frames. Long-term planning creates solutions while short-term planning creates problems.
- Our progress should be measured at each step toward our goal.

Cascades Landscape

What characteristics of the community, especially the “Cascades Landscape”, are you proud of?

- Snohomish county has unique ecological areas in the Cascade mountains that maintain biodiversity and critical habitats.
- People in our communities are particularly proud of and concerned about passing the Wild Sky Wilderness proposal.
- Snohomish county supports sustainable working forest lands.

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- People in Snohomish county have access to connected trails and natural areas at low elevations and in urban areas as well as in our high mountain regions.
- Our communities provide an educational environment and opportunity for people to experience the environment, natural resources, and recreation which enhances our quality of life.

What characteristics of the community, especially the “Cascades Landscape”, worry you?

- Transition of forest timber lands to residential lands and development.
- Excessive and unsustainable forestry as well as monoculture re-growth forests.
- Deterioration of water quality and stream system health due to development and unsustainable forestry.
- Challenge of maintaining viable agriculture and forest lands within our changing economy.
- Loss of access to natural areas and recreation opportunities.
- Increasing crime, such as midnight dumping.

What characteristics do you wish to maintain for your grandchildren?

- An intact forested wilderness that creates a unique sense of place for people.
- Protection of forested landscapes for wildlife and people.
- Access to open spaces and forests for recreation.

What steps do we need to take to improve the well-being of our community?

- Maintain natural resources jobs.
- Enhance tourism and recreational opportunities.
- Educate elected officials on land use issues.
- Balance the need for local economic opportunities and the environment.

What are some of the important principles that should shape our community?

- The long-term economic health of our region is tied to the conservation of our natural resources and a healthy environment.

Communities

What characteristics of the community, especially the “Communities Landscape”, are you proud of?

- Snohomish county balances a diversity of landscapes and land uses including economically and ecologically valuable rivers and waters; productive and sustainable agricultural lands and forests; historic and vibrant downtown urban and residential areas for all people; and beautiful views and scenery

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- Snohomish county has benefited from wise and cooperative planning for public spaces, parks, and trails that have maintained our access to natural areas and recreation opportunities.
- People in Snohomish county are friendly, open, hardworking, responsible people who care about the vitality and future of their communities and are willing to commit time and energy to stewardship of community resources.
- People in Snohomish county are committed to taking a regional view to enhance the quality of life for all of us.

What characteristics of the community, especially the “Communities Landscape”, worry you?

- Sprawl and unsustainable development that increases the amount of pavement and leads to a lack of large, open and intact natural areas.
- Lack of accessible, usable, and well-maintained urban parks, forests, and trails.
- Lack of funding for public works, protection, restoration, and management.
- Lack of communication among various stakeholders in our community.
- Lack of a regional vision and sense of responsibility.
- Increasing fear about population growth and its impact on our quality of life, especially the safety of our communities.

What characteristics do you wish to maintain for your grandchildren?

- Beautiful natural areas, open lands, parks, and vibrant urban areas.
- Communities that are designed to provide more options for where and how to live including communities where homes, businesses, recreation, and natural areas are located in one place and connected by public transportation and natural areas.
- Economically sustainable communities, farms, and forest lands.
- Long-term, integrated planning and management that considers the entire landscape and follows a shared community vision.
- An environment that is conducive to learning about and experiencing the outdoors, ecology, and environment.
- Communities where people have both interest and opportunities to care for lands, trails, parks and other community resources
- Communities where people feel safe, trust one another, and communicate.

What steps do we need to take to improve the well-being of our community?

- Conserve beautiful landscapes and urban areas to provide economic benefits by increasing the area’s quality of life.
- Incorporate economics, ecology and sustainability into our planning efforts.
- Focus on community lands and urban areas as part of conservation planning.

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- **Adopt a vision that each neighborhood and business community should have a green and open natural area as a central focal point.**
- **Hold “Dialogues” type conversations in every community.**
- **Involve young people in schools in stewardship and in creating a community vision.**
- **Fund natural resources protection, conservation, and management.**
- **Invest in sustainable economic development in each community.**

What are some important principles to this community?

- **Conservation of native biodiversity, thriving ecosystems, and connected landscapes should be a priority.**
- **Regional planning and management should be driven by community values that balance economic and ecological principles; build cooperative partnerships among leaders and stakeholders; and are strategic and proactive.**
- **People and communities should be aware of, communicate about, and care for shared community resources.**
- **All people in Snohomish county should equally share the responsibilities, costs, and benefits of maintaining a high quality of life in the area.**