



## Snohomish County Council

**Committee:** Committee of the Whole

**Analyst:** Ryan Countryman

**ECAF:** 2023-0744

**Proposal:** Motion 23-273

**Date:** June 27, 2023

### **Consideration:**

Motion 23-273 would appoint Karl Niemela to the Snohomish County Planning Commission. The appointment is to complete a partial first term representing Council District 5 and would expire on July 1, 2026.

### **Background**

The Planning Commission is an advisory body to the County Council and Executive. Terms on the commission are four years. (More details about the Planning Commission are on page 3). A commissioner representing District 5 resigned from a term expiring in July 2026.

Karl Niemela has applied to serve on the commission. He is a resident of Council District 5 with experience as a business owner and several volunteer boards. Councilmember Sam Low is nominating Karl Niemela to complete the unexpired term. Karl's experience would bring a new perspective and maintain balance on the Planning Commission.

The Planning Commission has eleven positions, and ten current members.

### **Current Proposal**

*Scope:* Motion 23-273 would appoint Karl Niemela to the Planning Commission.

*Effective Dates:* Karl Niemela's term would be effective upon passage and would expire on July 1, 2026.

*Fiscal Implications:* No impact

**Handling:** Expedited to allow the appointment to become effective before an important July 25 briefing that Planning and Development Services is giving to the Planning Commission.

**Request:** Briefing in COW to set time and date for a public hearing. Suggested time and date is Wednesday, July 19, 2023, at 9:00 a.m.

**Exhibit A – Planning Commission Membership Table**

<b>Planning Commission Membership – May 8, 2023</b>			
<b>Representing</b>	<b>Commissioner</b>	<b>Term</b>	<b>Term Expiration</b>
Council District #1	Merle Ash	Second	July 1, 2024
	Mark James	Second	July 1, 2027
Council District #2	Raymond Sheldon, Jr.	Second	July 1, 2027
	Kimberly Busteed	First	November 30, 2026
Council District #3	Robert Larsen, Chair	Third	July 1, 2027
	Christine Eck	First	June 29, 2026
Council District #4	Tom Campbell	First	November 24, 2025
	Neil Pedersen	First	January 4, 2027
Council District #5	Rosanna Brown	First	January 12, 2026
	<b>Vacant*</b>		
At-Large	Angie Sievers	First	July 1, 2025
<b>* Karl Niemela nominated for appointment by this motion</b>			

## **Exhibit B – Composition and Requirements of the Planning Commission**

The Snohomish County Planning Commission is an advisory body to the County Council and County Executive. The commission holds public hearings and provides recommendations on proposed changes to the county's comprehensive plan and development regulations. The commission has positions for eleven members, two from each council district and one at-large member nominated by the executive, which serve four-year terms and may not serve more than two complete consecutive terms.

Snohomish County Code ([2.03.060](#) and [2.08.080](#)) provides that the council appoints planning commission members. Requirements are that commissioners:

1. Not be county employees
2. Have sufficient time to attend all scheduled meetings, and
3. Not serve on more than two boards or commissions at the same time (ad hoc or advisory committees do not count against the limit).

County code also provides that nominees should possess attributes including a background in one or more of the following:

- Architecture
- Law
- Farming
- Recreation
- Finance
- Real estate
- Environment
- Construction
- Fisheries
- Engineering
- Appraisal
- Land use planning
- Education
- Related backgrounds, or job knowledge or interests

Nominees should also have knowledge of land use theories and growth management legislation, minimal potential for conflict of interest, a demonstrated interest in the welfare of Snohomish County, and should add balance to countywide representation on the commission.