

1 SNOHOMISH COUNTY COUNCIL
2 Snohomish County, Washington

3
4 ORDINANCE NO. 26-____

5
6 AN ORDINANCE PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO THE SNOHOMISH
7 COUNTY CHARTER AFFIRMING THE COUNTY'S AUTHORITY TO
8 ESTABLISH A HEARING EXAMINER SYSTEM AND TO LIMIT THE COUNTY
9 COUNCIL'S ROLE IN SAID SYSTEM

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11 WHEREAS, Snohomish County voters have elected a Charter Review
12 Commission to review the charter and propose charter amendments as provided
13 in Article 8 of the Snohomish County Charter; and

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15 WHEREAS, the Charter Review Commission submitted five (5) charter
16 amendment proposals to the Council on May 29, 2026; and

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18 WHEREAS, Article 8 of the Snohomish County Charter provides for
19 charter amendment proposals to originate from the County Council through
20 passage of an Ordinance with four (4) affirmative votes by the members; and

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22 WHEREAS, ordinances proposing charter amendments are not subject to
23 the veto power of the County Executive; and

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25 WHEREAS, the County Council desires to memorialize the County's
26 existing authority as a Charter County to establish a hearing examiner system
27 and limit the County Council's role in said system.

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30 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED:

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32 Section 1. Pursuant to Section 8.80 of the Snohomish County Charter,
33 the County Auditor, as the officer in charge of holding elections, is directed to
34 submit to the voters of Snohomish County, for their approval or rejection, at the
35 general election to be held on November 3, 2026, a proposition amending the
36 following sections of Snohomish County Charter:

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38 **Amended Sections**

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40 **Section 2.20 Powers**

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42 All powers of the county, not reserved by the people or vested in specific offices
43 by this charter, shall be vested in the county council. The county council shall
44 exercise its legislative power by adoption and enactment of ordinances,
45 resolutions and motions. It shall have the power:

- 46 1. To levy taxes, appropriate revenue and adopt budgets for the county;

- 47 2. To establish the compensation to be paid to all county officials and
48 employees and to provide for the reimbursement of expenses, except as
49 provided in Section 6.120;
- 50 3. Except as otherwise provided for herein, to establish by ordinance
51 executive departments and to establish their powers and responsibilities;
- 52 4. To adopt by ordinance zoning regulations and other land use and
53 development regulations, including improvement plans for the present and
54 future development of the county;
- 55 5. To employ legal counsel as allowed by the laws of the state of
56 Washington;
- 57 6. To confirm or reject without cause nominations of members of all county
58 boards and commissions, provided, the county council shall have concurrent
59 authority with the county executive to nominate members of the Snohomish
60 county planning commission;
- 61 7. To approve contracts or establish by ordinance methods by which any
62 type of contract shall be approved;
- 63 8. To set collective bargaining guidelines to be followed by the county
64 executive and to approve any and all collective bargaining agreements
65 negotiated by the county executive.
- 66 9. To adopt by ordinance a hearing examiner system to hear and issue
67 decisions in quasi-judicial matters, provided that the council shall not have
68 jurisdiction to hear appeals of hearing examiner decisions in quasi-judicial
69 land use or environmental proceedings unless required by state law.

70 The enumeration of particular powers shall not be construed as limiting the
71 powers of the county council.

72 **Section 2.140 Motions**

73 The county council may pass motions to confirm or reject nominations or
74 appointments, to adopt comprehensive plans, to approve interfund loans, to
75 organize and administer the legislative branch, to perform other administrative
76 acts, to issue rulings in quasi-judicial proceedings ~~((except rezone actions,))~~
77 within its jurisdiction, and to request information from any other agency of county
78 government. Motions shall not be subject to veto or the requirements for the
79 introduction, consideration and passage of ordinances.

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81 Section 2. The Clerk of the Council shall certify this proposition to the
82 County Auditor for submission to the voters in substantially the following form,
83 subject to such additions, deletions, or modifications as may be required by the
84 Prosecuting Attorney:

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The Snohomish County Council adopted Ordinance No. 26-____ proposing an amendment to the Snohomish County Charter concerning appeals from hearing examiner decisions. This amendment would reauthorize the County Council’s existing charter authority to adopt a hearing examiner system but eliminate the Council’s jurisdiction over appeals from hearing examiner decisions in certain quasi-judicial proceedings involving land use or environmental proceedings.

Should this proposition be enacted into law:

YES
NO

Section 3. If the proposition provided for in this ordinance is approved by a majority of the voters voting on the issue the amendment shall be effective ten days after the results of the election are certified, as provided in Section 8.50 of the Snohomish County Charter.

PASSED by vote of ____ yeas to ____ nays this ____ day of June, 2026.

SNOHOMISH COUNTY COUNCIL
Snohomish County, Washington

Chairperson

ATTEST:

Clerk of the Council

() APPROVED
() EMERGENCY

124 () VETOED

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132 ATTEST:

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137 Approved as to form only:

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Approved as to form only:

 6/5/2026

Deputy Prosecuting Attorney

DATE: _____

County Executive