



Snohomish County

County Council

Nate Nehring, Chair
Megan Dunn, Vice-Chair
Sam Low
Jared Mead
Strom Peterson

County Executive

Dave Somers

TO: Independently Elected Officials and Department Heads

FROM: County Council Chair and County Executive

DATE: October 28, 2025

RE: Fiscal Stewardship and Budget Expectations for the Biennium

Amid significant external pressures, including unfunded mandates, diminishing federal support, rising costs of goods and services, and unpredictable sales tax revenues, Snohomish County is facing significant fiscal challenges. Other counties across the region are facing similar issues—King County anticipates a General Fund deficit of approximately \$35 million, while Pierce County is working to reduce planned General Fund spending by about \$20 million annually.

We want to express our sincere appreciation for the thoughtful and often difficult work our county leaders are doing to remain within their budget appropriations. We recognize the ripple effects these decisions can have on staff, residents, and overall morale. It is clear, however, that we must continue to take deliberate steps to curb discretionary spending, identify efficiencies, and make the difficult but necessary choices required to maintain fiscal stability.

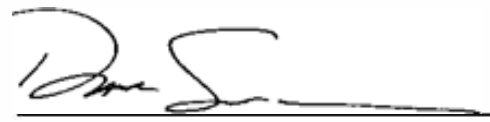
As we move further into this biennium, we must all remain vigilant and proactive in managing expenditures. At some point in the future, departments will receive the balance of their proportional departmental salary and benefit dollars currently housed in Non-Departmental. In past years, the County Executive has recommended, and the County Council approved, additional end-of-year budget adjustments for departments that exceeded their appropriations. Given the fiscal constraints we now face, departments should not expect to receive end-of-biennium adjustments. The shared expectation is that every possible effort be made to stay within your approved budget – including slowing the pace of spending, identifying opportunities for savings and continuing to find creative and efficient ways to deliver services. Not only is this our duty as county leaders, but our responsibility in accordance with RCW 36.40.130 – Excess of expenditures, liability.

We simply do not have the fiscal capacity to accommodate additional appropriations. Maintaining discipline now will help us preserve stability and avoid deeper cuts later.

We are grateful for your continued partnership and commitment to prudent fiscal management. Thank you for your leadership and dedication as we work together to sustain Snohomish County's financial health and service excellence.



Nate Nehring
Council Chair



Dave Somers
County Executive

cc: Vice-Chair Megan Dunn
Councilmember Sam Low
Councilmember Jared Mead
Councilmember Strom Peterson
Deputy Executive Kent Patton