

Snohomish County Civic Assembly on AI

Final Report

FINAL REPORT

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INTRODUCTION

We, the Snohomish County Civic Assembly on AI, are a randomly selected group of volunteers who applied to participate in this process through Civic Genius, a part of the National Civic League for a civic engagement. The group represents the diversity and demographics of Snohomish County adults, who are not subject matter experts on this topic but who have lived experience.

Over the course of three weekends – a cumulative 1,160 hours – the group followed the process presented by the Civic Genius, to address AI usage by the Snohomish County local government. Through a democratic and iterative process guided by participant's questions and feedback, we listened to presentations by multiple panels of experts (civic, vendor, academic, political leaders, etc. -formal list of all experts available) and participated in Civic Theater. Civic Theater offered hypothetical situations where participants experienced different points of view and was the basis for ongoing discussions.

The group's goal was, through spirited discussions, and a great diversity of viewpoints, to generate recommendations to the Snohomish County Council on AI use that will be formally presented to the council and that they will formally respond to. Time and process limitations did affect our ability to have fuller discussions on certain topics. [A presentation of things that were discussed and agreed upon.] The process maintained human involvement and oversight throughout all stages. The group wanted to maintain the Human in the Loop process from the very beginning on AI implementation.

We aim to have a just, fair, and equitable government that inspires trust and confidence within the community and fosters an environment of transparency, inclusiveness, civic responsibility, and economic vitality for all.

THE ASSEMBLY

BY THE NUMBERS

35

*Recommendations
with strong consensus*

20

*More with
broad support*

8

Themes

100 %

*Of headline
recommendations
reached 80%+*

3

*Weekends of
deliberation*

1,160

Cumulative hours



OUR VALUES

01

Human Experience

As a duly-convened representative panel of Snohomish County residents, our work has centered human experience as the north star of our recommendations.

Our priority is how humans interact with AI-led systems. The dignity of humans must be preserved and AI-led systems should have a clear benefit to the community.

There must be a human in the loop (HITL) as part of any AI-led system to preserve accountability and because we should never cede human authority and decision-making to a non-human entity.

02

Self-determination

Residents have the right to be free of AI-led interference within the county. Our ability to determine policy and guardrails, from the end user, up to government and business, rather than having conditions imposed upon us by expedience or influence. This is the same process as the founding of our nation and we are proud to continue that tradition.

03

Transparency

Transparency is key to trust in government and its systems. With regards to AI-led systems, we need to ensure the language is understandable by those without deep technical knowledge.

04

Accountability

The county government holds responsibility for the outcomes of AI-led systems. We do not accept that any algorithm is an explanation or excuse. People have designed and implemented these systems and they need to accept responsibility.

05

Precaution

AI-led systems demand integrated and proactive oversight at all levels of county government and services. The potential for harm is documented and real. We want staff to feel empowered to speak up on behalf of those served.

06

Equity

Our body affirms that artificial intelligence has uses that will expand service and effectiveness, but that corporate or political expedience can have outsized and disparate impact on historically underserved communities. Therefore, justice is the priority in the deployment of AI-led systems and services.

07

Stewardship

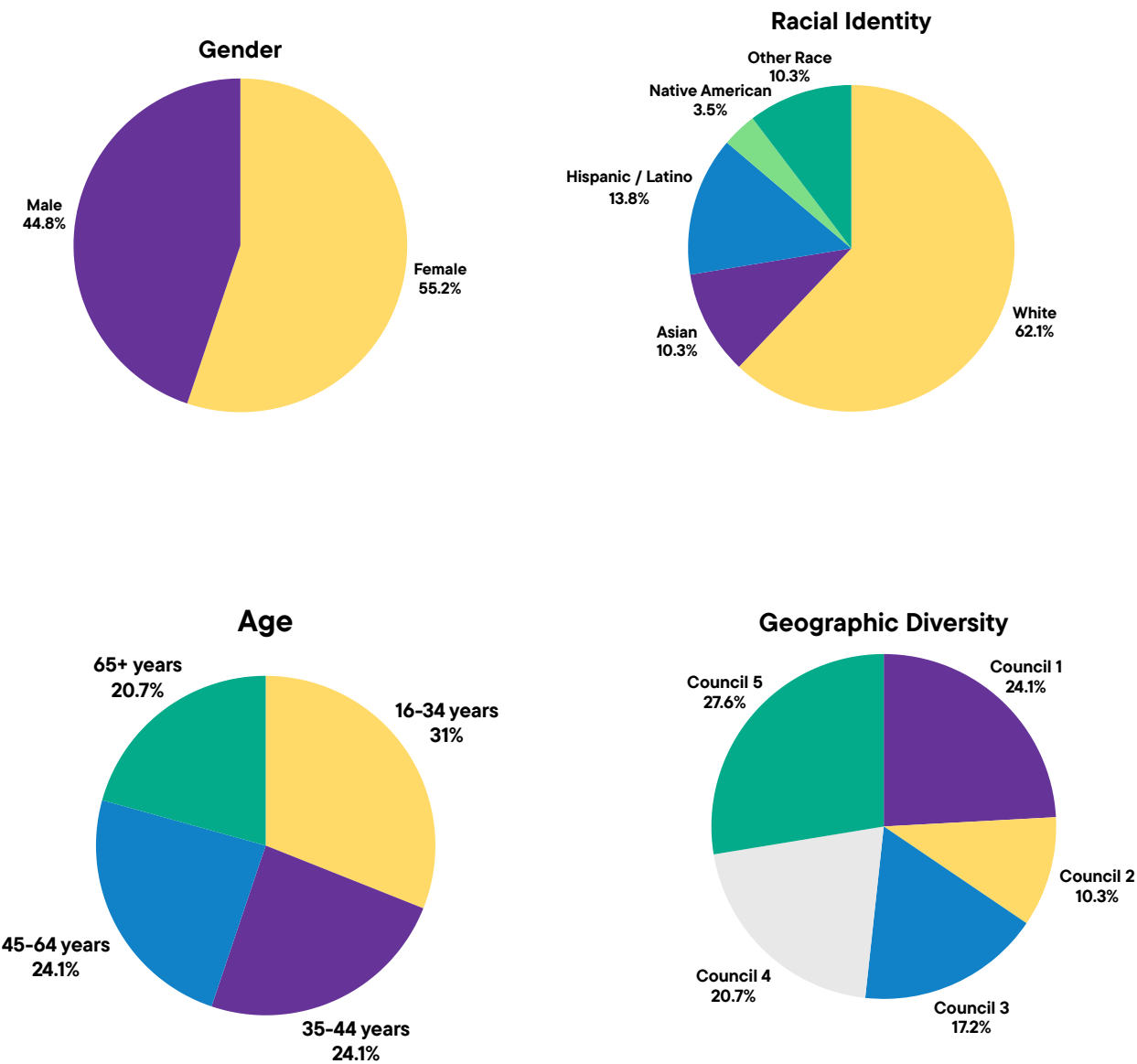
Living in a beautiful and natural environment, we affirm that every innovative attempt must be made to preserve and expand our natural lands and resources.

This reflects the placement, density, synergies, use, and prevalence of AI infrastructure, services, benefits, and costs.

WHO WAS IN THE ROOM

DEMOGRAPHICS

Assembly members were selected by lottery and are a broadly representative cross-section of Snohomish County’s population across age, gender, race and ethnicity, and geography. Members were not chosen for expertise on AI; they were invited as residents, and they brought their lived experience to every session.





FROM THE ASSEMBLY

Members deliberating across three weekends at the Snohomish County Civic Assembly on AI.

01

SECTION ONE

RECOMMENDATIONS

35 recommendations reached strong consensus, 80% or higher.
20 more reached broad support, between 50% and 79%.

01 Public Need & Burden

Use AI only when it clearly serves the public

02 Human Oversight

Keep people responsible and reachable

03 Transparency

Tell residents when and how AI is used

04 Data Protection & Fairness

Protect resident data and prevent bias

05 Auditing & Remedies

Check AI regularly and fix harms

06 Vendor Control

Keep vendors under public control

07 Community & Human Empowerment

Give residents and staff the power to oversee AI

08 Environmentalism & Community Impact

PUBLIC NEED & BURDEN

Use AI only when it clearly serves the public.

STRONG CONSENSUS

80% or higher support

RECOMMENDATIONS

93%



27 yes · 2 no

1.1

The County should first announce to the public the use case for the application.

Why this matters. If these systems are not implemented with care, the public will end up bearing the burden.

86%



25 yes · 4 no

1.2

The County should perform a dedicated AI environmental impact study that considers all environmental impacts and unnecessary burdens to the public when considering the feasibility of Data Centers.

Why this matters. If data centers are not implemented with care, the public and environment will end up bearing the burden.

96%



28 yes · 1 no

1.3

The County should, consider the current and future budget implications and how they affect the constituents of the county.

Why this matters. If the current and future budget are not considered in this way, it will cause a financial burden to its residents.

100%



29 yes · 0 no

1.4

The County should only use AI if, after considering the scale of the problem or the efficiency, accuracy, and accountability, the tool is the best solution.

Why this matters. If this is implemented with care then the benefits would measurably benefit the public and increase trust in these systems.

90%



26 yes · 3 no

1.5

The County should, before a full scale implementation of AI, create measurements, quantify metrics for success, and beta test for a reasonable amount of time.

Why this matters. If these systems are not implemented with care, the public will end up bearing the burden.

HUMAN OVERSIGHT

Keep people responsible and reachable.

STRONG CONSENSUS

80% or higher support

RECOMMENDATIONS

83%



24 yes · 5 no

2.1

The County shall ensure that AI models never have the final say. A human should always be part of the decision and implementation process.

Why this matters. Human oversight provides accountability and a pathway for remediation to ensure the wellbeing of Snohomish County residents which is the goal of county government.

96%



28 yes · 1 no

2.2

The County shall ensure that when the outcome of an algorithm has an adverse impact to a resident (e.g. denial of county services) then a county employee shall manually verify the outcome and provide an avenue for appeal.

Why this matters. Human oversight will ensure a more equitable distribution of county services.

83%



24 yes · 5 no

2.3

The County shall, when using AI to respond to constituent email, indicate that the response is AI generated.

Why this matters. Reinforces transparency.

93%



27 yes · 2 no

2.4

The County shall ensure human auditing of AI systems, uses and outcomes. A different AI system cannot be the sole auditor or final decision maker of another AI system.

Why this matters. Human oversight is important because AI is not infallible.

BROAD SUPPORT

These recommendations received support from 50% - 79% of assembly members but did not reach consensus.

72%

21 yes · 8 no

The County shall create an advisory board with residents from each council district.

Why this matters. Public boards reinforce transparency and increase accountability.

69%

20 yes · 9 no

The County shall ensure that when AI is used as the initial contact, it should be identified up front with an option to transfer to a human as available with a callback option. Additionally, prior to auto-disconnecting, caller gets sent to a human representative.

Why this matters. Some people are not comfortable interacting with AI, and often the limitations of AI phone trees will not provide all of the services needed.

TRANSPARENCY

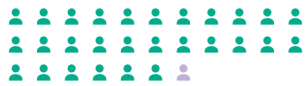
Tell residents when and how AI is used.

STRONG CONSENSUS

80% or higher support

RECOMMENDATIONS

96%



28 yes · 1 no

3.1

The County should immediately disclose to residents, through plainly stated language or an obvious banner, that they are interacting with an AI-based communication system.

Why this matters. People should be aware of the fact that they are speaking to a computer rather than an individual for complete transparency, especially as not all demographic groups are aware of the transition to AI-based communication systems and/or able to differentiate between them and human-based systems.

86%



25 yes · 4 no

3.2

The County should create accountability within departments that are using scored predictive AI. Those outcomes should be disclosed as AI generated and be contestable with recourse.

Why this matters. To ensure the public is aware of who is making decisions regarding the data and its usage and the county can provide a defense of their decision making.

90%



26 yes · 3 no

3.3

The County must maintain a publicly accessible database/ registry and glossary of terminology of AI implementations which includes vendor name, details of the tool and its use, any relevant definitions, and contact info of the responsible party within the county, and provide an avenue for the public to provide feedback, ask questions, and receive follow-up from staff.

Why this matters. In the spirit of full transparency and accessibility, people of all knowledge levels of AI and its various parts or meanings can gain equal footing to understand what the county is using and how.

90%



26 yes · 3 no

3.4

The County should publicize their data safety/audit plan.

Why this matters. To allow the public to be aware of the current procedures ensuring data protection and preventing breaches and allowing for the ability to review those procedures as technology advances.

93%



27 yes · 2 no

3.5

If Council or department adopts a predictive AI, then it must make the parameters that contribute to the score public, transparent, and auditable.

Why this matters. To avoid bias and discrimination and maximize available resources in the implementation of public policy for day to day operations, disaster preparation, and community allocations.

BROAD SUPPORT

These recommendations received support from 50% - 79% of assembly members but did not reach consensus.

55%

16 yes · 13 no

The County should only use data models where the training source data is traceable and available for public review.

Why this matters. To eliminate the risk of bad actors and illicit use, violations of public data privacy laws, consumer protections, and ensuring data integrity.

59%

17 yes · 12 no

The County should maintain a publicly available database which includes data use details, any relevant judgment metrics of each model deployed, cost/benefit analysis data, program data safety concerns evaluated, and any alternative programs considered.

Why this matters. The public should be able to review county data safety practices, what guided the deployment of a specific AI, and review any budgetary considerations.

DATA PROTECTION & FAIRNESS

Protect resident data and prevent bias.

STRONG CONSENSUS

80% or higher support

RECOMMENDATIONS

93%



27 yes · 2 no

4.1

The County should ensure that all data accessed by, processed by, or input into AI systems is subject to the highest protections/safeguards.

Why this matters. Data/privacy protection is critical to residents.

96%



28 yes · 1 no

4.2

Snohomish County should adopt privacy protection ordinances such as GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) prior to implementation of any AI integration systems or products.

Why this matters. Data is valuable, government works for us.

83%



24 yes · 5 no

4.3

Snohomish County should establish a high threshold (which is made publicly known) for acceptable AI accuracy, in order to flag bias or misinformation. Manual review of edge cases and bias.

Why this matters. No one wants misinformation or bias in our government. Continually checking for misinformation and bias in anything created by generative AI models ensures equity. Human oversight ensures AI is not reviewing other AI and bias/misinformation does not continue unaddressed & unremediated. It's important to make threshold/margin of error/deviation publicly known. It's required in research papers, and it's important here too.

96%



28 yes · 1 no

4.4

The County should not enter into any agreements that indemnify vendors. Residents must have legal recourse if their data is leaked.

Why this matters. People suffer permanent, irreversible damage from data exposure, so vendors need to be held accountable for data leaks or misuse of residents' data.

BROAD SUPPORT

These recommendations received support from 50% - 79% of assembly members but did not reach consensus.

66%

19 yes · 10 no

The County should ensure that any LLM (large language model) AI systems are trained using a curated set of fact-checked data to limit bias and error in the AI model.

Why this matters. Limits misinformation and bias while respecting differing human values. If an LLM AI system is trained using faulty data, its outputs will be unreliable in the same way the training data was. If the original training dataset contains, for example, racial bias, the AI will carry that bias forward into all its operations. If an AI is told that the Earth is flat, it will treat that as a fact and perpetuate misinformation. To prevent bias and factual errors (hallucinations) in the model, the best practice (according to our tech experts from Weekend 2) is to curate a set of data that you know is bias-free; this is the only ethical way to operate any LLM AI. Note that, while it would be ideal to publicly disclose the data that an AI model is/ was trained upon, it is likely not feasible due to the large mass of data; hence, curated datasets that incorporate and represent diverse viewpoints are the best approach.

BROAD SUPPORT

These recommendations received support from 50% – 79% of assembly members but did not reach consensus.

59%

17 yes · 12 no

The County should, in order to protect the most private / high-risk individual data, grant residents perpetual copyright protection of their own likenesses, including their faces, voices, and biometric body data, specifically to fight AI-generated deepfakes.

Why this matters. It would make deepfaking illegal, which would also prevent the creation of deepfake porn and child sexual abuse material.

59%

17 yes · 12 no

The County should immediately discontinue use of any AI product or system that is found to express bias that has a negative public outcome, and renegotiate the contract with the company responsible for the AI model.

Why this matters. No member-written rationale was recorded for this proposal in the plenary draft; a short rationale should be supplied before publication.

AUDITING & REMEDIES

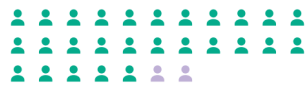
CHECK AI REGULARLY AND FIX HARMS.

STRONG CONSENSUS

80% or higher support

RECOMMENDATIONS

93%



27 yes · 2 no

5.1

The County should establish a “Human Oversight Board” for the use and governance of all AI systems implemented by the County. This board should be comprised of independent technical experts, community members, and County employees.

Why this matters. AI systems are complex. Evaluating their efficiency and efficacy requires varied knowledge and expertise.

86%



25 yes · 4 no

5.2

The Human Oversight Board should classify implemented or proposed AI systems within a risk-based framework (e.g. minimal, limited, high, unacceptable). This framework should be the basis for reporting, auditing and remediation standards.

Why this matters. AI systems present different risks to the County and/or the community based on their use and output. There needs to be a standard to evaluate AI systems, which currently does not exist.

96%



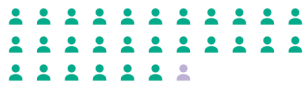
28 yes · 1 no

5.3

The County should ensure that people affected by AI-led or AI-assisted decisions have a clear path to appeal, contest, and seek remediation.

Why this matters. AI-led or AI-assisted decision-making technologies are not guaranteed to be accurate or reliable. Residents need recourse in the event of error.

96%



28 yes · 1 no

5.4

The County should audit AI systems at a frequency determined by the system's risk-based classification. Audits should document and evaluate a system's accuracy, reliability, efficiency, and transparency.

Why this matters. AI-led or AI-assisted decision-making technologies are not guaranteed to be accurate or reliable. The County deserves the same level of recourse as its residents.

BROAD SUPPORT

This recommendation received support from 50% – 79% of assembly members but did not reach consensus.

79%

23 yes · 6 no

The County should maintain recordings or transcripts of phone calls where AI is used. These records should be stored in accordance with established document retention standards.

Why this matters. Providing recourse for AI errors necessitates having a record of such errors.



Members at work during a weekend session.

VENDOR CONTROL

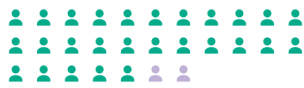
Keep vendors under public control.

STRONG CONSENSUS

80% or higher support

RECOMMENDATIONS

93%



27 yes · 2 no

6.1

The County should require a defined proposal that enumerates anticipated cost/benefits before deploying new or proposed AI-based systems.

Why this matters. The public should know that their tax money is being used efficiently and beneficially.

90%



26 yes · 3 no

6.2

The County should make a pilot program and an ongoing audit schedule plan before full-scale implementing an AI- based system.

Why this matters. The county needs to ensure a tool they are using/plan to use works and continues working as intended.

90%



26 yes · 3 no

6.3

The County should have an approved “safety plan,” which considers data use, logic of the algorithm, and what type of human oversight is required before any planned implementation of a tool that uses citizen data.

Why this matters. Resident data/personal information needs to be safeguarded, and resident rights must be protected.

83%



24 yes · 5 no

6.4

The County should have and retain dedicated staff trained in AI and digital safety.

Why this matters. This matters so that the public has confidence that a professional is overseeing AI tools and is able to report to the public on said tools.

83%



24 yes · 5 no

6.5

The County should have a method to determine accuracy of AI generated data, and to reserve the right to revisit a contract if too many errors are found.

Why this matters. This ensures that the county is able to catch and discontinue using a tool that may not be accurate, or may have poor outcomes.

93%



27 yes · 2 no

6.6

The County should not enter into contracts that allow the vendor to sell or give data to entities, or individuals, without a proper warrant.

Why this matters. This allows the safeguarding of data to be in place, and security of resident data.

83%



24 yes · 5 no

6.7

The County should review and require long- term price guarantees in vendor contracts.

Why this matters. The county won't be hit with a sudden price increase without having the opportunity to review/ renew a contract that may include a price increase. The concern is that you will be brought into a contract at a low price, and then without a lock in price guarantee, the price would jump substantially.

83%



24 yes · 5 no

6.8

The County should require vendors to have tools to create data that is portable in a non-proprietary file format.

Why this matters. Prevent vendors from locking data or essential services into their proprietary system, without giving you tools to export your data should a contract with a different company be made.

86%



25 yes · 4 no

6.9

Snohomish County should ensure that contracts with AI vendors provide access to and participation in clear and auditable change and access logs for any data or updates maintained to the programs or algorithms.

Why this matters. Prevent vendors from locking data or essential services into their proprietary system, without giving you tools to export your data should a contract with a different company be made.

BROAD SUPPORT

These recommendations received support from 50% - 79% of assembly members but did not reach consensus.

76%

22 yes · 7 no

The County should require a sign-off of the data safety plan, pilot plan, quality assurance (QA) audit schedule, cost/benefit proposal, and vendor terms by a qualified AI/DATA SAFETY SPECIALIST before finalization of the plans and implementation of relevant AI tool.

Why this matters. This matters because it helps the public be confident that someone who knows what they are doing signs off.

79%

23 yes · 6 no

The County should not request data from a program/system which has been banned in Snohomish County from other jurisdictions or agencies.

Why this matters. This ensures that your personal data stays local to specifically help the local area being served.

62%

18 yes · 11 no

The County should require technology companies to disclose the geographic location of servers, location of programmers and staff.

Why this matters. People may be more confident in the county's AI contracts if they are ensured that data and development is not happening overseas.

76%

22 yes · 7 no

The County should disclose whether a tool was made in-house or by a vendor.

Why this matters. If a tool was made by a vendor, they may reserve the right that only they can make changes or amendments to it. Whereas an in-house tool can be dissected and reviewed line by line.

76%

22 yes · 7 no

The County should require the vendor to disclose, as part of the contracting process, whether an AI tool can be fixed/repared in house, or only by the company the contract is through.

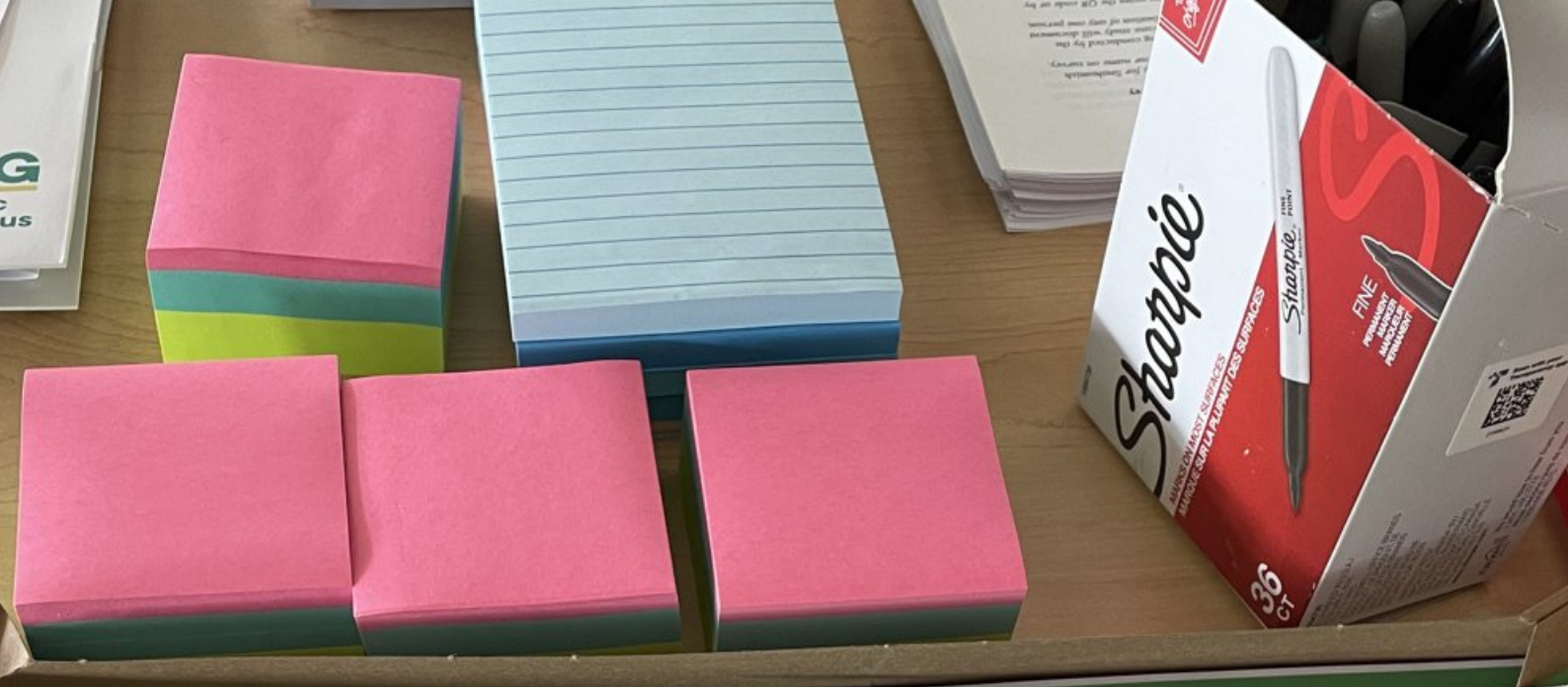
Why this matters. If an AI tool can be repaired in- house, it might be much more customizable, and more affordable, rather than going back to the technology company and asking them to make repairs.

76%

22 yes · 7 no

The county should prioritize vendors which are more energy efficient and environmentally friendly.

Why this matters. To minimize resource usage and environmental harm by data centers.



CONVERGENCE SHEET

3-2-1 STATION CARD

Station

3 FACTS I LEARNED	2 SURPRIS
1. _____	1. _____
2. _____	2. _____
3. _____	

Print it. Pack it. Ship it.



Station materials on the table.

COMMUNITY & HUMAN EMPOWERMENT

Give residents and staff the power to oversee AI.

STRONG CONSENSUS

80% or higher support

RECOMMENDATIONS

86%



25 yes · 4 no

7.1

Snohomish County should create a formal challenge mechanism the community can engage with that allows community members to express concern to a proposed AI/Data expansion or usage, before implementation.

Why this matters. Community members should have options to express concerns about data centers, AI cameras, etc. being used or placed in their communities and this allows a formal process for them to engage with and have their voices heard.

90%



26 yes · 2 no

7.2

Snohomish County should create and maintain clear guidelines for staff on how AI tools and data are used, and the employee's role in the process.

Why this matters. This matters because the people using the tools should know how they are being used, and should feel empowered to own their part of the process. This helps establish that humans need to be a part of the process, even when AI is being used.

96%



28 yes · 1 no

7.3

Snohomish County should require that any employee accessing county systems that use AI or Personally Identifiable Information (PII) complete mandatory training on the system prior to its usage.

Why this matters. Employees should be educated in the programs they are using, enough to be able to explain how they work to the public, and be able to be held accountable for their usage of the program.

83%



24 yes · 5 no

7.4

Snohomish County should, when deciding to utilize a particular form of AI, engage in substantive public outreach to educate residents about the AI tool and why the County considers adopting it. Public concerns and questions should be addressed by a government representative.

Why this matters. Public feedback and input is critical and concerns should be addressed by a person in the county government.

BROAD SUPPORT

These recommendations received support from 50% – 79% of assembly members but did not reach consensus.

79%

23 yes · 6 no

Snohomish County should establish an “AI + Data Board” board similar to the Parks Advisory Board composition. We recommend regular meetings, at least quarterly, to review, examine, and take public feedback on the current proposed AI + Data tools used by the county government with public reports of findings and give recommendations to be presented to the county council.

Why this matters. This matters because it establishes an appropriate channel for community complaints and recommendations, while encouraging civic engagement.

79%

23 yes · 6 no

Snohomish County should seek community feedback before selecting a new AI system or tool if it will be affecting or using community member data and incorporate the feedback into the final decision.

Why this matters. This matters because the community is always a stakeholder, and this allows engagement prior to impact of a tool. This also matters because community members have a right to privacy and to know how their Personally Identifiable Information (PII) can or will be used.

66%

19 yes · 10 no

Snohomish County should create and implement generalized training for all county employees, regardless of position, that covers the definition of AI, types of AI that exist, ways it is used both publicly and privately, and the ethical usage of it as an individual and public employee.

Why this matters. AI is powerful and pervasive, and knowledge is the best tool the county has against misuse. Even if an employee is not actively using all tools, overall knowledge will protect them and the public from accidental misuse or mishandling.

79%

23 yes · 6 no

Snohomish County should utilize AI as a tool for employees, not as a means of replacing an entire department or position class.

Why this matters. The county should not look at AI as an excuse to reduce jobs, but as a way to better improve the work that is being produced by the staff.

ENVIRONMENTALISM & COMMUNITY IMPACT

BROAD SUPPORT

These recommendations received support from 50% - 79% of assembly members but did not reach consensus.

79%

23 yes · 6 no

Snohomish County shall provide documentation (a separate / dedicated environmental impact report regarding AI specifically) that assesses immediate and future risks to the environment and the community — before entering into any contract with an AI service provider.

Why this matters. Could limit environmental racism / classism. Data centers could affect power costs for Snohomish County residents, especially those in nondominant social groups (low-income households, people of color, etc.).

72%

21 yes · 8 no

Data centers and any related enterprises that have vested interest in AI wage and advancement should be restricted from receiving tax breaks or exemptions. New ordinance and policy on a county and municipal level should be enacted, as well as fees and taxation to pay for the resources they utilize, to prevent financial burden on the public.

Why this matters. This proposal came from the assembly's data-center discussions; no single member-written rationale was recorded, so a short rationale should be supplied before publication.

nd 2: Saturday

your questions to your conditions.

Weekend

From you

REAL

- not understanding to help community
- DISSENTIVE: time from class
- resident working accountability
- Council focused on control of
- common could not include
- working community to all
- sharing and social action being
- did not have information
- they did not know
- they were able to have their
- was made

I saw

- not equal representation
- for families & community
- they don't explain
- see the truth
- workable spending time

FROM THE ASSEMBLY

Residents at work across three weekends of deliberation.

02

SECTION TWO

ON THE RECORD

Beyond the recommendations: positions and ideas individual members wanted on the record.

01 **Minority Report**

Positions that received less than 50% support or did not receive a vote

02 **Individual Statements**

Personal views and reflections from assembly members

MINORITY REPORT

One proposal received less than 50% support.

Data Protection & Fairness

One proposal received less than 50% support from assembly members.

34.4%



10 yes · 19 no

Snohomish County should assign or hire an ethics professional to create an ethics charter that will approve the use of any data/information by any AI service.

Why this matters. We need to ensure that AI is used in a way that benefits humans. Our data is valuable and needs to be protected as such. This is an ethical responsibility that the government owes to its people.

Environment

Some participants supported five additional proposals related to environmental sustainability, although the assembly did not have time to fully consider these proposals.

NOT VOTED

5+ agreed to add these

Data centers shall be required to supply their own independent power infrastructure(s) and shall be restricted from utilizing public utility resources in any manner that diminishes service quality or increases costs for residential customers. Should any data-center operations cause an increase in constituents' electricity bills, the utility company shall pay the additional costs incurred (e.g., 3x the overage amount) on all affected residents in full within ninety (90) days.

NOT VOTED

5+ agreed to add these

Public utilities shall not be expanded, rerouted, or upgraded through eminent domain for the purpose of meeting private industrial energy demand, and any entity found to have benefited from such a taking shall be liable for a civil penalty equal to three times (3x) the independently appraised value of each parcel, acre, or lot condemned under that premise. Data centers and AI-related facilities shall be required to construct and maintain independent power-generation or power-delivery systems on land they already own or voluntarily acquire.

NOT VOTED

5+ agreed to add these

Data centers and other high-consumption facilities shall be required to operate under strict daily and seasonal electric- and water-use limits to prevent depletion of local aquifers and public water supplies or increased utility cost/consumption. Any facility exceeding these limits shall be subject to mandatory reductions and fines.

NOT VOTED

5+ agreed to add these

The County shall prohibit industrial (data center) development on designated agricultural lands to protect food production, rural character, and long-term environmental stability. Any proposed conversion or rezoning must undergo a public review process and demonstrate an unavoidable public necessity, not private convenience.

NOT VOTED

5+ agreed to add these

High-risk industrial facilities shall not be sited in areas vulnerable to flooding, wildfire, landslides, or other climate-related hazards to safeguard residents and reduce long-term public-safety costs. Proposed developments in moderate-risk zones must include certified mitigation plans and carry full liability for environmental damages.

INDIVIDUAL STATEMENTS

A LETTER TO THE READERS ON EQUITY

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. DEI. Three words that have been radicalized by political talking heads across the spectrum. Spoken not to dismantle the boundaries of success, but to minimize the accessibility provided to the community. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Throughout this process of compiling the guiding principles and recommendations for the efficient and effective use of AI within Snohomish County, the undercurrent of who has been left out of the room has remained an invisible presence.

Our assembly values have been notated, reviewed, and approved through democratic process and yet, the policing of vocabulary arose when the use of “equity” is suggested. Justice, equality, or fairness have been recommended as substitution- an act which would erode the very heart of equity.

In a room of highly educated people who have enjoyed the benefit of participation, we must ensure that members of our community, who are not present, may very well be the part

of our community that is more greatly affected by changes brought on by this technological evolution. Our recommendations must invoke a sense of responsibility to underrepresented populations; they must act as a reminder that through its ever-evolving nature, AI often acts as a tool for dehumanizing the people it is meant to serve.

Equity mustn’t evoke politics, fear, or anger. It must evoke the most empathetic nature of our humanity that dwells within us; the humanity that recognizes ability, age, race, gender, and other factors as experiences that shape our interactions with the world. Equity is not race. Equity is not gender. Equity is braille, American Sign Language Interpretation Services, Wheelchair Access, TTY, Social Services, and Disability Placards.

As you read, judge, agree, disagree, or codify these recommendations, keep the community at the forefront of your decision-making, for it is those who rely on community services the most who were not in the room when this happened.

Govt shouldn’t legally be allowed to sign NDA (as part of company contract with the AI company/data center) / withhold inf from the public wrt any AI that affects.

Equity is should be at the crux of new and integrated policiest; it’s one of our values; it’s a semantic sticking point because the word equity has been politicized. But we don’t want to erase its importance.

The County government should consider additional advisory participation from the Tulalip Tribes, Coast Salish peoples, and other groups. People from underrepresented/minority groups often have to work harder to get their thoughts recognized by governments. They are our community members, and they deserve to have feedback and input on the process as much as any other Snohomish County residents. Examples: The Village in Casino Road, Communities of Color Coalition, Snohomish Heritage Committee, etc.

Snohomish County should carefully consider the needs, benefits, costs and time implications for engaging with any of the Generative AI platforms. Given the landscape will change in the near term, the practicality of designing, purchasing and implementing Generative AI system(s) is limited. At this time, supplier contracts for Generative AI need to be prescriptive (well-defined) and short-term. Cost controls should be incorporated into any contract negotiations. This writer recommends pausing development of any Generative AI projects that are using new or unproven technologies. A full ROI on the purchase and use of any Gen AI platform should be produced prior to any such undertaking.

Secondary subject: Contracting. Snohomish County should recognize that advanced AI programs are rapidly evolving and the market is in its nascent stage. Change and growth will be rapid, and industry leaders all say it is unpredictable what platforms will gain more universal usage.

Cost was difficult to discuss because we did not have access to local government budget plans, facts, or tangible figures of any sort re: cost.



"People First", drawn by a participant.

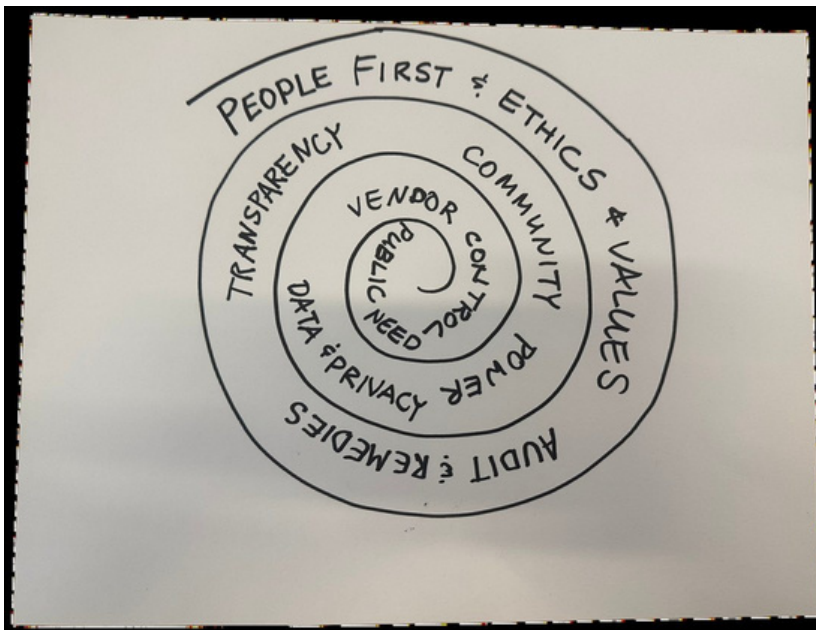
Questions to expert speaker were required to be written and submitted to the facilitator. Many questions were never asked, were answered weeks later, or in some cases never at all. This compounded the difficulty of trying to make good recommendations.

General statement, acknowledging that there wasn't time to bring certain topics up. While the recommendations in this document were peer-reviewed by our entire group, we must acknowledge that our recommendations are not all-inclusive or exhaustive.

While the opportunity to work with other residents was valuable and should continue to be utilized, the full resource of the community intelligence of the assembly members was not fully resourced as small table assignments and passive listening plenary sessions resulted in some assembly members never having had the opportunity to work together.

Using AI programs for predictive data analysis is more straightforward. SnoCo's primary considerations need to be in protection of its residents' PII. Secondly, cost controls over the term of the contract need to be in place. Cost increases that are outside the County's control should be borne or shared with the vendor.

It would have been more relevant to have information about how AI is working within our local geographic area instead of having to rely upon references relating to national and international sources as a basis for building our recommendations.



"Spiral", drawn by a participant.



CONCLUSION

We have, as a group of directly-affected constituents, worked exhaustively to examine and consider the realistic feasibility and scope of these recommendations without compromising the essential values we've collectively agreed upon.

It is **vital** that legislation crafted in response be done so in the same spirit stated above.

Going forward, when considering the implementation of tools or vendor partnerships that fundamentally change government processes, systems, lines of communication, or delivery of public services, any decision-making authority must prioritize:

- 1) The rights, agency, and diverse needs and values of the people in our communities, especially marginally disadvantaged groups.
- 2) Careful planning, which incorporates affected constituents and relevant experts in meaningful, impactful ways.
- 3) Transparent and easily accessible communication with the public surrounding any proposed changes, including ongoing implementation details, and results/ effects of these changes.

We were tasked with crafting guidelines surrounding tools with largely unknown scope and possibility. If our well-being, insight, opinions, and preferences are indeed valued, constituent input **must not end here.**

The assembly was able to meet, discuss, and examine this new and emerging topic across diverse voices representative of the residents of Snohomish County.

This gave us the benefit of being able to see the topic from many points of view, and come to what we consider a well-rounded and satisfying conclusion.

Our unique viewpoints and experiences allow decision- makers to see problems and solutions that might otherwise be overlooked, allowing time and opportunity for course-correction, better and more useful government, and higher public satisfaction and trust.

We expect the council to leverage this framework as guardrails in the evaluation of any potential system implementation, and if not implemented, give the public a reason for refusal.

Thank you for providing us the opportunity to be involved in this process. Our assembly met for three weekends, sacrificing our time and our energy, and putting great effort into educating ourselves and each other on this matter. We hope you recognize the investment of our labor as proof that this topic matters and deserves due consideration.

The use of AI in government is a powerful tool that has extremely far reaching implications for everyone, so we expect to see the thoughtful implementation of our thoughtful input.



FROM THE ASSEMBLY
Members at work during a weekend session.

APPENDIX

FOR REFERENCE

Every proposal the assembly considered at a glance.

APPENDIX · FOR REFERENCE

ALL PROPOSALS AT A GLANCE

Strong consensus is 80% or more (green); broad support is 50% to 79% (purple).

PUBLIC NEED & BURDEN

- 93% 1.1 The County should first announce to the public the use case for the application.
- 86% 1.2 The County should perform a dedicated AI environmental impact study that considers all environmental impacts and unnecessary burdens to the public when considering the feasibility of Data Centers.
- 96% 1.3 The County should, consider the current and future budget implications and how they affect the constituents of the county.
- 100% 1.4 The County should only use AI if, after considering the scale of the problem or the efficiency, accuracy, and accountability, the tool is the best solution.
- 90% 1.5 The County should, before a full scale implementation of AI, create measurements, quantify metrics for success, and beta test for a reasonable amount of time.

HUMAN OVERSIGHT

- 83% 2.1 The County shall ensure that AI models never have the final say. A human should always be part of the decision and implementation process.
- 96% 2.2 The County shall ensure that when the outcome of an algorithm has an adverse impact to a resident (e.g. denial of county services) then a county employee shall manually verify the outcome and provide an avenue for appeal.
- 83% 2.3 The County shall, when using AI to respond to constituent email, indicate that the response is AI generated.
- 93% 2.4 The County shall ensure human auditing of AI systems, uses and outcomes. A different AI system cannot be the sole auditor or final decision maker of another AI system.
- 72% The County shall create an advisory board with residents from each council district.
- 69% The County shall ensure that when AI is used as the initial contact, it should be identified up front with an option to transfer to a human as available with a callback option. Additionally, prior to auto-disconnecting, caller gets sent to a human representative.

TRANSPARENCY

- 96% 3.1 The County should immediately disclose to residents, through plainly stated language or an obvious banner, that they are interacting with an AI-based communication system.
- 86% 3.2 The County should create accountability within departments that are using scored predictive AI. Those outcomes should be disclosed as AI generated and be contestable with recourse.
- 90% 3.3 The County must maintain a publicly accessible database/registry and glossary of terminology of AI implementations which includes vendor name, details of the tool and its use, any relevant definitions, and contact info of the responsible party within the county, and provide an avenue for the public to provide feedback, ask questions, and receive follow-up from staff.
- 90% 3.4 The County should publicize their data safety/audit plan.
- 93% 3.5 If Council or department adopts a predictive AI, then it must make the parameters that contribute to the score public, transparent, and auditable.
- 55% The County should only use data models where the training source data is traceable and available for public review.
- 59% The County should maintain a publicly available database which includes data use details, any relevant judgment metrics of each model deployed, cost/benefit analysis data, program data safety concerns evaluated, and any alternative programs considered.

DATA PROTECTION & FAIRNESS

- 93% 4.1 The County should ensure that all data accessed by, processed by, or input into AI systems is subject to the highest protections/ safeguards.
- 96% 4.2 Snohomish County should adopt privacy protection ordinances such as GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) prior to implementation of any AI integration systems or products.
- 83% 4.3 Snohomish County should establish a high threshold (which is made publicly known) for acceptable AI accuracy, in order to flag bias or misinformation. Manual review of edge cases and bias.
- 96% 4.4 The County should not enter into any agreements that indemnify vendors. Residents must have legal recourse if their data is leaked.
- 66% The County should ensure that any LLM (large language model) AI systems are trained using a curated set of fact-checked data to limit bias and error in the AI model.
- 59% The County should, in order to protect the most private / high-risk individual data, grant residents perpetual copyright protection of their own likenesses, including their faces, voices, and biometric body data, specifically to fight AI-generated deepfakes.
- 59% The County should immediately discontinue use of any AI product or system that is found to express bias that has a negative public outcome, and renegotiate the contract with the company responsible for the AI model.

AUDITING & REMEDIES

- 93% 5.1 The County should establish a "Human Oversight Board" for the use and governance of all AI systems implemented by the County. This board should be comprised of independent technical experts, community members, and County employees.
- 86% 5.2 The Human Oversight Board should classify implemented or proposed AI systems within a risk-based framework (e.g. minimal, limited, high, unacceptable). This framework should be the basis for reporting, auditing and remediation standards.
- 96% 5.3 The County should ensure that people affected by AI-led or AI-assisted decisions have a clear path to appeal, contest, and seek remediation.
- 96% 5.4 The County should audit AI systems at a frequency determined by the system's risk-based classification. Audits should document and evaluate a system's accuracy, reliability, efficiency, and transparency.

- 79% The County should maintain recordings or transcripts of phone calls where AI is used. These records should be stored in accordance with established document retention standards.

VENDOR CONTROL

- 93% 6.1 The County should require a defined proposal that enumerates anticipated cost/benefits before deploying new or proposed AI-based systems.
- 90% 6.2 The County should make a pilot program and an ongoing audit schedule plan before full-scale implementing an AI-based system.
- 90% 6.3 The County should have an approved "safety plan," which considers data use, logic of the algorithm, and what type of human oversight is required before any planned implementation of a tool that uses resident data.
- 83% 6.4 The County should have and retain a dedicated staff member trained in AI and digital safety.
- 83% 6.5 The County should have a method to determine accuracy of AI generated data, and to reserve the right to revisit a contract if too many errors are found.
- 93% 6.6 The County should not enter into contracts that allow the vendor to sell or give data to entities, or individuals, without a proper warrant.
- 83% 6.7 The County should review and require long-term price guarantees in vendor contracts.
- 83% 6.8 The County should require vendors to have tools to create data that is portable in a non-proprietary file format.
- 86% 6.9 Snohomish County should ensure that contracts with AI vendors provide access to and participation in clear and auditable change and access logs for any data or updates maintained to the programs or algorithms.
- 76% The County should require a sign-off of the data safety plan, pilot plan, quality assurance (QA) audit schedule, cost/benefit proposal, and vendor terms BY A qualified AI/DATA SAFETY SPECIALIST before finalization of the plans and implementation of relevant AI tool.
- 79% The County should not request data from a program/system which has been banned in Snohomish County from other jurisdictions or agencies.
- 62% The County should require technology companies to disclose the geographic location of servers, location of programmers and staff.
- 76% The County should disclose whether a tool was made in-house or by a vendor.
- 76% The County should require the vendor to disclose, as part of the contracting process, whether an AI tool can be fixed/repaired in house, or only by the company the contract is through.

- 76% The county should prioritize vendors which are more energy efficient and environmentally friendly.

COMMUNITY & HUMAN EMPOWERMENT

- 86% 7.1 Snohomish County should create a formal challenge mechanism the community can engage with that allows community members to express concern to a proposed AI/Data expansion or usage, before implementation.
- 90% 7.2 Snohomish County should create and maintain clear guidelines for staff on how AI tools and data are used, and the employee's role in the process.
- 96% 7.3 Snohomish County should require that any employee accessing county systems that use AI or Personally Identifiable Information (PII) complete mandatory training on the system prior to its usage.
- 83% 7.4 Snohomish County should, when deciding to utilize a particular form of AI, engage in substantive public outreach to educate residents about the AI tool and why the County considers adopting it. Public concerns and questions should be addressed by a government representative.
- 79% Snohomish County should establish an "AI + Data Board" board similar to the Parks Advisory Board composition. We recommend regular meetings, at least quarterly, to review, examine, and take public feedback on the current proposed AI + Data tools used by the county government with public reports of findings and give recommendations to be presented to the county council.
- 79% Snohomish County should seek community feedback before selecting a new AI system or tool if it will be affecting or using community member data and incorporate the feedback into the final decision.
- 66% Snohomish County should create and implement generalized training for all county employees, regardless of position, that covers the definition of AI, types of AI that exist, ways it is used both publicly and privately, and the ethical usage of it as an individual and public employee.
- 79% Snohomish County should utilize AI as a tool for employees, not as a means of replacing an entire department or position class.

ENVIRONMENTALISM & COMMUNITY IMPACT

- 79% Snohomish County shall provide documentation (a separate / dedicated environmental impact report regarding AI specifically) that assesses immediate and future risks to the environment and the community before entering into any contract with an AI service provider.

- 72% Data centers and any related enterprises that have vested interest in AI wage and advancement should be restricted from receiving tax breaks or exemptions. New ordinance and policy on a county and municipal level should be enacted, as well as fees and taxation to pay for the resources they utilize, to prevent financial burden on the public.

MINORITY REPORT

34% DATA PROTECTION & FAIRNESS

Snohomish County should assign or hire an ethics professional to create an ethics charter that will approve the use of any data/information by any AI service.

ENVIRONMENTALISM & COMMUNITY IMPACT

- NV Data centers shall be required to supply their own independent power infrastructure(s) and shall be restricted from utilizing public utility resources in any manner that diminishes service quality or increases costs for residential customers. Should any data-center operations cause an increase in constituents' electricity bills, the utility company shall pay the additional costs incurred (e.g., 3x the overage amount) on all affected residents in full within ninety (90) days.
- NV Public utilities shall not be expanded, rerouted, or upgraded through eminent domain for the purpose of meeting private industrial energy demand, and any entity found to have benefited from such a taking shall be liable for a civil penalty equal to three times (3x) the independently appraised value of each parcel, acre, or lot condemned under that premise. Data centers and AI-related facilities shall be required to construct and maintain independent power-generation or power-delivery systems on land they already own or voluntarily acquire.
- NV Data centers and other high-consumption facilities shall be required to operate under strict daily and seasonal electric- and water-use limits to prevent depletion of local aquifers and public water supplies or increased utility cost/consumption. Any facility exceeding these limits shall be subject to mandatory reductions and fines.
- NV The County shall prohibit industrial (data center) development on designated agricultural lands to protect food production, rural character, and long-term environmental stability. Any proposed conversion or rezoning must undergo a public review process and demonstrate an unavoidable public necessity, not private convenience.
- NV High-risk industrial facilities shall not be sited in areas vulnerable to flooding, wildfire, landslides, or other climate-related hazards to safeguard residents and reduce long-term public-safety costs. Proposed developments in moderate-risk zones must include certified mitigation plans and carry full liability for environmental damages.

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The use of AI in government is a powerful tool that has extremely far reaching implications for everyone, so we expect to see the thoughtful implementation of our thoughtful input.

From the assembly's conclusion