

SNOHOMISH COUNTY COUNCIL
Snohomish County, Washington

MOTION NO. 22-097

REFERRING PROPOSED NEW POLICIES RELATED TO BROADBAND
TO THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES AND
SNOHOMISH COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION FOR CONSIDERATION AND
RECOMMENDATION DURING THE 2024 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

WHEREAS, the County Council wishes to obtain a recommendation from the Snohomish County Planning Commission regarding proposed new policies on broadband in the General Policy Plan (GPP) during the process for the 2024 Update to the Snohomish County Growth Management Act Comprehensive Plan (GMACP); and

WHEREAS, the policy changes during comprehensive plan updates are Type 3 legislative actions pursuant to Chapter 30.73 SCC; and

WHEREAS, SCC 30.73.040 provides that the Planning Commission shall hold a public hearing on a Type 3 proposal referred to it by the county council within 90 days or within a time specified by the County Council; and

WHEREAS, RCW 36.70A.130 requires that the next periodic review of the GMACP be complete by June 30, 2024; and

WHEREAS, Planning and Development Services (PDS) is the lead department for the 2024 Update project and PDS may need to seek and receive input on the proposed policy amendments from other county departments; and

WHEREAS, the County Council is open to input from PDS and other departments on any issue or idea related to the proposed policies;

NOW, THEREFORE ON MOTION, the County Council hereby refers the potential new GPP narrative and policies, attached as "Exhibit A", to the Department of Planning and Development Services (PDS) for input as follows:

1. Pursuant to Chapters 2.08 and 30.73 SCC, the County Council refers the potential code revisions to the Director of PDS as both the head of the lead department and as acting in the capacity of Secretary to the Snohomish County Planning Commission for its review, consideration, and a recommendation to the Council.

2. The County Council understands that the proposed amendments will not be part of the baseline “no action” alternative studied in the 2024 Update; however, the proposed amendments, including possible refinements suggested by the departments, shall be part of at least one action alternative.
3. The County Council does not specify a date for a response and instead requests that the Planning Commission hold a public hearing and make its recommendation on the proposed policies back to the County Council as part of the commission’s overall consideration of the 2024 Update.

DATED this 23rd day of March, 2022.

SNOHOMISH COUNTY COUNCIL
Snohomish County, Washington



Council Chair

ATTEST:



Asst. Clerk of the Council

EXHIBIT A – PROPOSED BROADBAND NARRATIVE AND POLICIES

What is the proposed policy amendment?

Amend the Utilities chapter of the General Policy Plan to add a new section with narrative, a new goal, objectives, and policies.

Broadband

Access to reliable broadband is an essential need for many businesses and an expectation for daily life of many Snohomish County residents. Provision of broadband continues to evolve. Most of the densely populated parts of the county are well-served. It is also apparent that market forces alone are not providing equal access to all parts of the county. Appropriate public sector responses can help restore or maintain equitable broadband access. Doing so would support other policies in this plan, including those related to economic development, provision of public services and promotion of a better jobs-to-housing balance throughout the county.

Goal UT 6 Improve broadband access in all parts of Snohomish County.

Objective UT 6.A Coordinate with other jurisdictions, utilities, nonprofits, and private sector actors on broadband efforts when appropriate.

Policy UT 6.A.1 Adopt and maintain permitting and design standards that are compatible with those of other jurisdictions and agencies to help streamline regulatory processes.

Policy UT 6.A.2 Seek grant opportunities to upgrade provision of broadband, especially in underserved parts of Snohomish County such as rural areas, small cities and towns, and tribal reservations and trust lands.