2024 Supplemental Questions
Department of Information Technology

Strategic Goals

1. Provide your 2024 strategic goals; how are they different from 2023? In what way, if at all, are your strategic changes demonstrated in your budget request?

The IT strategic plan is currently in year three of a three-year plan and we have seen evolutions of the plan over these three years as we continue to review the plan annually. Given the pace of change in the industry, this allows us to make adjustments as needed. Our budget proposal for this year continues to align the requests with the strategic initiatives across each ask.

The reader will also note that the projects-by-initiative has evolved over the last three years. For example, in prior years, we have requested increased investment in for example *Security, Data Management,* and *Innovation*. We are seeing an increased output in each of these areas, and this demonstrates that the department continues to ensure that our future focused budget asks are delivered on at an operational level – fully aligned with the strategic plan.

Secondly, ensuring that the IT strategies are also aligned with the broader county mission and vision as communicated by the Executive Office is another element of our budget asks and corresponding projects that is important part of our approach.

Finally, the significant year-over-year increase in IT demand is important to note. Continued focus on prioritization is a critical management team focus for the IT leadership team.

Further comments include:

a. *The 2021 updated **3-year strategic plan** provides deeper insight into the IT plan*
b. *The department conducts **annual check-in** of the initiatives connected to the strategic plan to ensure that our dynamic and fast-paced industry is accounted for in our plan*
c. *The **8 strategic goals/initiatives** are actively operationalized and continue to advance into 2024 and beyond*
d. *Each of IT's **active & planned projects** are mapped to each strategic initiative. As of the end of Q3, this mapping looks as follows:*

Initiative	YEAR		
	2021	2022	2023
Digital Workplace	34	45	73
Portfolio Modernization	30	55	53
Security, Privacy and Data Protection	20	48	50
Civic, Resident and Community Engagement	13	31	24
Digital Government	12	20	31
Data Management	8	21	23
Workforce Development	5	3	4
Innovation	2	5	8
Operations	20	21	21
Grand Total	**144**	**249**	**287**

Year over Year Project Demand
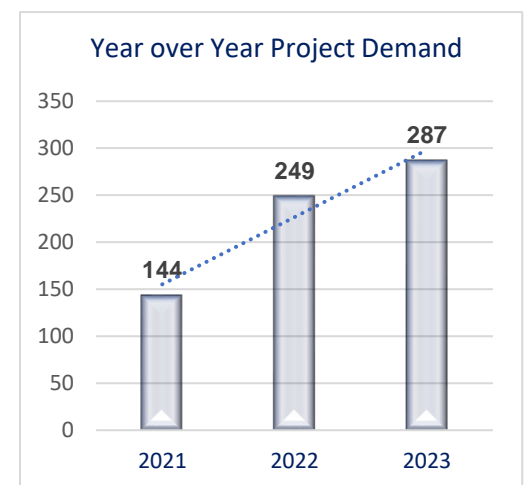
e. **8 Strategic initiatives** *for IT are found on the* <u>last page</u> *of the strategic plan and pictured below*

INITIATIVE #1
Civic, Resident and Community Engagement
Through county IT solutions and services, the public will have additional access to information, tools, and have a better understanding of how to best engage with various county departments, offices, and courts

INITIATIVE #2
Portfolio Modernization
Modernize and simplify the county technology portfolio across devices, applications, vendors, and infrastructure

INITIATIVE #3
Security, Privacy and Data Protection
Increased expectations require the County to be ready to deliver and receive digital information and services anytime, anywhere and on any device. It must do so safely, securely, and with fewer resources

INITIATIVE #4
Data Management
As Snohomish County expands its digital footprint exponentially, data creation must be tied to coordinated plans for access, retrieval, retention, and protection. Data created every day directly affects the lives and future of our residents, while also creating the County's history. Through active data management, we serve not only today's residents, but those yet to come, ensuring critical business data is organized, readily accessible, and preserved, organized, readily accessible, and preserved

INITIATIVE #5
Digital Workplace
Snohomish County workforce depends on digital solutions to provide services to residents and employees. This will require a continued emphasis on building, buying and implementing solutions that supports the ability to work in a digital and paperless environment

INITIATIVE #6
Digital Government
To continue building for the future of Snohomish County the Department of Information Technology must lead the effort to create a Digital Government strategy that fosters innovation, improves data and the quality of services delivered to the residents and employees of Snohomish County

INITIATIVE #7
Workforce Development
Leverage IT capabilities to create a simple, secure, and seamless work experience for the Snohomish County workforce. Grow the IT skillsets to support initiatives

INITIATIVE #8
Innovation
As one of the fastest growing counties in the nation IT leads the identification and adoption of innovative practices and technologies to support our residents and employees

National, state and local landscape:

1. **What are the federal, state and local issues facing your work? What risks or opportunities does that create for you in 2024 and beyond? What is your plan to leverage the opportunity or mitigate the risk? What support do you need?**

    a. ***Broadband focus*** *at a federal level and the associated local deliverables is an* ***opportunity*** *for the county to leverage large federal funding contributions in a way that benefits our local community directly. The Department of IT has been directly involved in driving the work for broadband investments by leading the project work through project management and planning addressing both access and affordability of broadband for the community. We continue to be invested in ensuring that these deliverables support improvements in the digital equity needs for our county residents.*

    b. ***Data Privacy and protection****; Since adopting an intentional focus on data management in 2021, the department has grown its competence in this area by continuing the work on both people, process, and technology in this discipline, along with supporting policies. This year we elevated the job responsibilities of the records supervisor, hiring a Data Steward and Privacy Supervisor to aid the county in the areas of privacy and data protection. We continue to believe that adherence to current and anticipated legislation related to privacy and protecting county and resident information is a core responsibility of our department and therefore we continue invest here. This includes defining county policies in the privacy field, ensuring monitoring and adherence to these policies; training and guidance for county workforce on data privacy and protection; and partnering with IT technical staff to ensure technology solutions are acquired as well as configured to provide the proper level of data protection.*

  c. ***HIPAA*** *is a complicated area, and with the merge of the Health Department last year, we have included in our 2024 budget request a 3rd party evaluation of the County HIPAA and Hi-Tech compliance surrounding security, privacy and policies.*

  d. *County departments, offices and courts frequently face **funded and unfunded mandates** that can impact prioritization, workload and support of our service delivery. To mitigate, IT will continue to work closely with each to develop a strategy, timeline, resources, prioritization, etc.*

  e. *If and when legislation related to **consumer privacy** is implemented, we may have to nimbly react. Our Enterprise Data Management division is well set up to support this eventuality.*

  f. ***Cybersecurity*** *risks that may influence federal and state requirements may influence our need to further invest in security solutions and resources.*

2. **What, if any, new mandates do you have impacting your work? Are they funded or unfunded? What is the plan for accomplishing the work?**

  a. *Broadband [RCW 43.330.536](#) deals with the timeline for broadband speeds. See below, Programs 1.a and 1.b on the county response and actions. These are funded programs via Federal Grants.*

  b. *New FBI mandated adoption of advanced authentication measures. Starting in October 2024, under [Security Policy CSP 5.9.2](#), any entity seeking access to its CJIS (Criminal Justice Information System) database under any conditions must be resistant to unauthorized access, hacking, etc. The Department of IT is working with our CJIS departments to identify option to comply with this requirement.*

Programs

1. **List programs, projects and services within your department funded through federal COVID/ARPA funds. What, if any, of those programs are you recommending ongoing funding for and what is the source of ongoing funding?**

  a. *IT has partnered with the Office of Recovery and the Executive Office on several projects:*
   i. *$5M investment in projects focused on **expansion of broadband** into our underserved areas of the county.*
   ii. ***SR530 Corridor Project**, $16.7M Washington State Broadband Office (WSBO) grant.*
   iii. *Building and releasing a **data dashboard** leveraging the latest cloud-technologies for the Office of Recovery to community the ways that the ARPA funds have been invested into the community [COVID-19 Recovery Dashboard | Snohomish County, WA - Official Website (snohomishcountywa.gov)](#)*

  b. *As the focus on broadband continues, we are cognizant of the ongoing need to support these projects, and we may be in a situation where increased people-investments may be needed to support the work.*

2. **For programs funded by COVID/ARPA funds, detail the plan to close out and/or transition those programs to an ongoing funding source in 2025 and beyond.** *N/A*

3. **What new programs are you launching for 2024? What need or efficiency is that new program addressing? How is that program funded for sustainability? What metrics are in place to determine effectiveness?**

   a. ***One-time HIPAA Analysis*** *– The addition of the Health Department as a county-department has increased the awareness of the importance of the management and control of sensitive data, including HIPAA. Currently the Director of IT is designated as the Compliance Officer per County Code. This request is to engage with HIPAA consultant(s) to create and implement measures to protect data and align with HIPAA's security standards. The County's current HIPPA posture has not been reviewed for many years, and with the addition of the Health Department, it is time to review.*

   b. ***Establish a platform for managing Retired Application Data*** *- The request supports the decommissioning of applications and software where the data must be preserved for records retention and disclosure purposes. This platform will be designed to permit the county to retire aged software applications and avoid associated costs for accessing County data while meeting records management compliance*

   c. ***Intern program*** *– The department has a multi-year engagement with local educational institution enabling us to expose the opportunities for STEM students to take on government careers. This year we are increasing the focus in this area by adding in a formal internship program. The request represents the cost of salary/benefits for two half-time temporary FTEs to be filled by interns. The Snohomish County Internship Program provides work experience for community college and bachelors programs.*

   d. ***ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning)*** *– As presented to the Public Works and Infrastructure Committee on Sept 5, 2023, the need to invest in a future-focused ERP system is integral to the county's long term operational stability. This year there is an initial request to begin funding a new ERP System. This will be a significant and long term investment for the county, and will ensure that county operations stay are maintained, and risk is reduced.*

   e. ***Replace Skype with Teams*** *– Requesting IT fund balance for 2 project FTE, software, and consultative assistance with this large-scale countywide project. The county's current on-premises Skype for Business phone system will go end of life in 2025, with the product line being fully deprecated. The transition to the Teams Voice cloud-based telephone system will require comprehensive planning and design, hardware and software evaluation and assessment, implementation and testing, organizational change management, and employee education. This is a lengthy and complex project that will touch everyone who utilizes the county's telephone system.* [Skype to Teams Project (sharepoint.com)](#)

   f. ***WSU Hackathon*** *–For three years the department has supported the hackathon at WSU Everett and have driven engagement of both the county executive and elected council members and other elected leaders in this effort. This demonstrates that the county IT department is not just community connected, but also helping support our county educational institutions. We are requesting use of IT fund balance to sponsor a hackathon for students at WSU Everett Campus for the third time and will drive engagement and support from our primary vendor Microsoft.*

   g. ***UW Capstone*** *– As with the WSU Everett engagement, we are also continuing our engagement with the UW College of Engineering. The UW engineering students have*

participated in capstone projects for three years demonstrating that outside student-led projects not only improve our county operations but also build and strengthen these partnerships whilst addressing ongoing business problems. This project provides a high-level engagement opportunity to access student talent.

4. **If different than #3, what are your areas of significant investment? What are you not doing because of that investment?** *N/A*

Internal Operations

1. **What is your department doing to streamline processes or deliver services in a new way? How do your budget allocation requests play into these innovations? Are there ways which a different budget approach, e.g., several departments sharing a resource, could achieve the same or better results in a more cost-effective way?**

   a. ***PDS and IT are actively sharing*** *a temporary IT Support FTE. Both departments have staff on FMLA, and this collaboration provides both departments with support necessary to support the increasing demand of service delivery.*

   b. *Operational Excellence (OpEx) work closely together on at least a 1/3 of the project demand across the county and region. IT has created an internal **real-time interactive dashboard** for all county projects, including status, priority, strategic and department alignment. They are viewable off the SnoCo Connect IT Hub here:* https://snoco.sharepoint.com/sites/IT/SitePages/IT-Projects.aspx

   c. [***IT Service Desk***](#) *team continues to streamline processes, tracking metrics to improve service desk phone and IT Support Portal availability and response. In addition, tiered triage of incoming customer requests for assistance enables the right IT professionals to respond quickly to user and department requests. Business Operations team continues to improve contract development timelines and remain committed to streamlined procurement.*

   d. *We remain dedicated to advance our work related to **continuous improvement** with the goal in 2024 to tie the continuous improvement work more directly into our ITIL Framework. ([ITIL](#) = Information Technology Information Library – an industry standard IT framework for planning and operating an IT Organization).*

   e. ***Governance and IT communities****. Not all IT professionals across the County are in the Dept. of IT. Through maturing our IT Community model this allows us to interact with technical staff across county departments to ensure we stay close to their business needs and evolve our IT model to support the business needs. Look to the IT Hub for more information* [IT Governance - Home (sharepoint.com)](#)

   f. ***2023 budget appropriation result:*** *In 2023 IT was appropriated funds and we are requesting additional funds in 2024 to continue the **IT Project Innovation program***. *The program is designed to provide the opportunity to empower business-led IT innovation, with a rapid implementation cycle, and to drive improvement within the current year vs a future-year project implementation. To date there are several options IT and the requestors are exploring including enhancing ADA needs with closed captioning web sessions, campus security enhancements, improved tools for Animal Control officers in the field and more* [IT Rapid Innovation Fund (sharepoint.com)](#)

g. *2023 budget appropriation result:* **Cybersecurity and Operational Improvements**

   i. ***Email Threat Protection*** *– a service that allows the county to address advanced threats at the moment risk enters our environment. [Email Security Enhancements (sharepoint.com)](sharepoint.com)*

   ii. ***24/7 Security Operations Center*** *– A 24x7 Security Operations Center (SOC) provides many crucial benefits to the county. IT has partnered with the State of Washington (WaTech) to identify a vendor to implement this center that will continuously monitor the network and respond more rapidly to potential security incidents. Vendor negotiation is in process.*

   iii. ***Security [Penetration Testing](#)*** *- Penetration testing (which is also sometimes called pen testing or ethical hacking) refers to the security process of evaluating an organization's computing environment for vulnerabilities and susceptibility to cyberattacks. Vendor testing and analysis are in process.*

   iv. ***Security Zero Trust Segmentation*** *- Ransomware and cyberattacks need to move laterally within an organization to be successful. To reduce this risk, organizations commonly employ a security strategy called Zero Trust which treats all networks as compromised and assumes that threats — both external and internal — are always present. Acquisition and implementation planning are in process.*

h. *2023 budget appropriation result: We are in the process of acquiring a **Drone Mapping** platform for communication with the public regarding the use of Drones/Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS). This supports state and local governments as they build and manage their UAS community*

i. *2023 budget appropriation result: After a rigorous competitive purchasing process, the mailroom partnered with facilities and a vendor to build out and install **an automated Parcel Locker solution**. This will allow mail carriers to deliver directly to the dedicated locker room area (Lower Level of Admin W by the Mailroom and Print Center) and scan in packages to store in the lockers. Once these packages are scanned into the system, contacts throughout the county will get automated notifications about the arrival of their package as well as instructions for retrieval. This will allow staff from across the campus to retrieve packages when convenient and with little-to-no in-person interaction. The solution is fully automated and carrier agnostic meaning that several companies can use the lockers such as USPS, UPS, DHL, FedEx, and more.*

j. *2023 budget appropriation result: **Intelligent Imaging** – Actively adding additional capabilities to expand the document management Platform, OpenText. This platform provides a way for the county to move toward paperless services for internal and community services and provides a secure environment for vital county records to be safely stored and retrieved when needed.*

k. *2023 budget appropriation result: **Data Inventory Classification Study** – Actively engaged with one of our external partners and several departments and offices to analyze and classify data. Better understanding what, why and where our information is stored advances our security posture, reduces duplication and releases additional burden on the infrastructure as it relates to storage, backup, etc. This effort is initially focused on our Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)*

I. ***2023 budget appropriation result: Data Inventory Classification Study***: *Enterprise Print Server Management* – *IT has rolled out this new hosted service to over 50% of the printers across the county. This new solution, PrintLogic, enables every employee easy mouse-click access to install and view floor plans of where printers and copiers are. This effort has already reduced the burden on department NAGS and the Dept of IT [PrinterLogicEnduserVideo.mp4 (sharepoint.com)](PrinterLogicEnduserVideo.mp4)*

2. **What, if any, hiring challenges are you experiencing? How is that affecting your level of service or internal operations? How are you mitigating those operational challenges and/or what is your plan for recruitment?**
   a. *None currently (knock on wood)*

   b. *Some of the positions in IT experience high turnover. Specifically, our Service Desk team is subject to high turnover. This is driven by the reality that IT Service Desk positions are not as well paid as those in departments providing department specific IT support. Therefore, it is very common that after a period of learning and skills-gain in IT, employees seek employment in those departments. The work Human Resources and the Executive Office have worked toward will aide in addressing this gap.*

3. **To help inform Council on experiences around hiring and retention, please provide a list of all vacant position titles, position codes, FTE amount (1.0, 0.5, etc.), date vacated, and date first posted. Template spreadsheet attached for convenience and conformity; if already tracking information in another format, that is acceptable as well. Please list each vacancy separately.** *See Excel spreadsheet detailing three vacant positions under recruitment.*

4. **What effect has the increase of inflation and/or supply chain issues had on your department? What, if any, services, or projects have you had to adjust to accommodate for this? (i.e. moving to outside contracted services, delaying of project starts and/or purchasing, redistribution of workload, etc.)** *Large production and supply chain delays continue to impact computer parts and sometimes result in unpredictable costs for audio and visual equipment, servers, workstations, networking gear, etc. Swaths of products are being discontinued; technology is a volatile marketplace right now. Inflation is causing vendors to increase maintenance and support fees by approximately 5 to 8% when pricing must be renegotiated. Hardware costs for PCs, laptops and peripheral items are increasing in cost by double digit percentages. IT is recompeting equipment and searching for volume discounts through larger cooperative purchasing agreements (with greater buying power) when possible and negotiating contracts with existing vendors, using fixed pricing for longer terms where reasonable.*

5. **When was the last time your department implemented a fee increase? Do you have any plans to increase fees?** *Annually IT adjusts interfund rates. Every year the department works closely with Finance and Executive to ensure there are adequate IT rates to cover the increasing demand and appetite for technology and services. IT begins gathering information and metrics surrounding the anticipated demand in January/February of every year and uses an established and mature rate model to formally set rates, and then communicates that information in advance of budget proforma.*

6. **Do you have any plans to do a rate/fee study? Are your current fees established based on a full cost recovery model?** *The IT rate model is well established in the county. We review the rate model in preparation for each budget and continually monitor and observe how the industry changes could impact how we look at delivery of IT services. At this time, we do not see a need*

to adjust the model.   The model is a cost-recovery model and aims to ensure that IT deliverables are funded by the departments through assessments aligned with value-added services that improve county operations.

Successes

Take this opportunity to share one significant success in your department over this past year. What made it a success? *Integration with the Snohomish Health District. The Department of IT took fifth place in the National Digital Counties NACo Award and is recognized as one of the topic digital counties in the nation. As described on the Government Technology award web site, "One of the outstanding accomplishments was the Health District integration. County IT completed a major undertaking in the last year with the reorganization of the Snohomish Health District into a department in county government. County IT completed 12-18 months of work in just 137 days, with tasks including onboarding nearly 200 employees, assessing 37 contracts and 18 IT solutions, and a host of other requirements. The transition was effectively completed by Jan. 1 of this year."*

FYI links

- ***Internal IT Hub home*** *page* Information Technology - Home (sharepoint.com)

    - ***Current IT org chart*** *Your County IT Team (sharepoint.com)*

    - *List of all the **external customers** the department provides services to across the county Information Technology - Snohomish County IT External Customer List.pdf - All Documents (sharepoint.com)*