



MEMORANDUM

TO: Councilmember Megan Dunn, Council Chair, District 2
Councilmember Nate Nehring, Council Vice-Chair, District 1
Councilmember Strom Peterson, District 3
Councilmember Jared Mead, District 4
Councilmember Sam Low, District 5

VIA: Darren Groth, Acting Director
Planning and Development Services

FROM: Terri Strandberg, Principal Planner

SUBJECT: Alderwood Water and Wastewater District – General Sewer Plan Amendment

DATE: July 15, 2026

This memo serves as a cover for the attached County Council Motion (Exhibit A) which, if adopted, would approve a sewer plan amendment for Alderwood Water and Wastewater District (AWWD, or the District). This amendment revises AWWD's 2017 General Sewer Plan (GSP) to include sewer planning within the recently expanded Urban Growth Area (UGA) in the Maltby Rd. area within the County's Southwest Urban Growth Area (SWUGA). State law requires updates to District utility comprehensive plans prior to incurring debt for major infrastructure improvements. This amendment addresses extension of the sewer system into the SWUGA expansion area.

A. ALDERWOOD WATER AND WASTEWATER DISTRICT – BACKGROUND

The District provides sanitary sewer service to a large portion of southwestern Snohomish County, including portions of the cities of Lynnwood, Bothell, Mukilteo, and Mill Creek, as well as surrounding areas of unincorporated Snohomish County. As development continues throughout the region, several areas within the District's existing service boundary remain unsewered. These areas present both near-term challenges and long-term opportunities for coordinated planning to ensure the efficient extension of sewer service, protection of public health and water quality, and consistency with regional growth management objectives.

B. SEWER PLAN AMENDMENT SUMMARY

This amendment focuses on the recently adopted Snohomish County UGA expansion located in the southeastern portion of the District, which was not previously included in the adopted 2017 GSP and requires updated evaluation of service area boundaries, wastewater demand, system capacity, and capital improvement needs. This amendment is intended to supplement the District's adopted 2017 GSP and does not replace or reissue the full GSP, addressing only those elements of the GSP that are affected by the recent UGA expansion.

The UGA expansion area is centered on Maltby Rd and 45th Ave SE, extending north to 188th St. SE and south to 216th St. SE. The area is primarily designated for urban residential and public institution (Ruby Bridges Elementary School). The UGA expansion area lies within AWWD's existing corporate boundary; an annexation of this area into the District will not be necessary.

This amendment anticipates development of two new lift stations, two new force mains, upsizing of existing downstream gravity flow facilities, and installation of full conveyance improvements within the buildout area. The estimated cost in 2026 dollars is \$32.6 million. This is in addition to the capital improvement plan set forth in the 2017 GSP. Project implementation and funding mechanisms will be determined through the District's development review and capital planning process. The proposed amendment is included as Exhibit B to this staff report.

C. CONSISTENCY REQUIREMENTS

C.1 Criteria for approval by the local legislative authority (RCW 57.02.040(3)).

The Department of Planning and Development Services finds the amendment to be consistent with the planning criteria of RCW 57.02.040:

- 1) The proposed action is consistent with the county comprehensive plan.
- 2) There is no separate state-approved basin-wide system plan for this area.
- 3) There is no separate county general plan for water and wastewater systems covering Alderwood Water and Wastewater District's service area.

The District's analysis evaluates a much greater level of development capacity than anticipated by the county under the current future land use and zoning designations for that area and thus models a very intensive future growth scenario for their sewer planning purposes.

C.2 State Environmental Policy (RCW 43.21C).

Adoption of this GSP amendment constitutes a non-project action under SEPA, RCW 43.21C. SEPA requires governmental agencies to consider the environmental impacts of a proposal before making decisions. A SEPA checklist was prepared by the District reflecting the expanded service area and evaluating the potential impacts of expanding the sewer service area to include the new UGA. As a result of the analysis conducted by the District, a determination of nonsignificance (DNS) was issued. Future sewer infrastructure projects identified in this amendment will undergo separate, project-level SEPA review as required.

C.3 Growth Management Act -State, Regional, Countywide and Local Policies.

Extension of sewer service into the newly expanded SWUGA, as proposed by this GSP amendment is consistent with Growth Management Act (GMA) principles to provide urban services within the UGA. This amendment is consistent with GMA goals (1) and (12) in RCW 36.70A.020:

- (1) Urban growth. Encourage development in urban areas where adequate public facilities and services exist or can be provided in an efficient manner.
- (12) Public facilities and services. Ensure that those public facilities and services necessary to support development shall be adequate to serve the development at the time the development is available for occupancy and use without decreasing current service levels below locally established minimum standards.

The amendment is also consistent with the corresponding regional, countywide and local policies as follows:

Vision 2050 Multi-county planning policies (MPP) for public services (P):

MPP-PS-10 Serve new development within the urban growth area with sanitary sewer systems or fit it with dry sewers in anticipation of connection to the sewer system. ...

MPP-PS-11 Replace failing septic systems within the urban growth area with sanitary sewers or alternative technology that is comparable or better.

Countywide Planning policies (CPP):

PS-11 The County and cities shall permit new development in urban areas only when sanitary sewers are available with the exception of where sewer service is not likely to be feasible for the duration of the jurisdiction's adopted plan. *(Note: Currently identified exceptions include unsewerable enclaves, as well as the Darrington, Gold Bar, and Index Urban Growth Areas.)*

Snohomish County policies in the Capital Facilities and Utilities Element (CUE) under Goal CUE 14 and Objective CUE 14.A:

Goal CUE 14 Ensure a resilient wastewater collection and treatment system consistent with the future land use map.

OBJECTIVE CUE 14.A Utilize wastewater system plans as a basis for orderly development or expansion within UGAs in accordance with the Countywide Planning Policies.

C.4 Growth Management Act - Urban Growth Areas

The GMA requires that urban services such as sewer service be provided only within the UGA unless there are extenuating circumstances as described in the state law. This amendment is consistent with requirements in RCW 36.70A.110.

D. REVIEW BY COUNTY ENGINEER

RCW 57.16.010(7) requires approval of sewer system plans and amendments by the County Engineer. The Snohomish County Engineer submitted a letter of approval on July 7, 2026. The approval letter is included in Exhibit C to this staff report.

E. APPROVAL BY WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

Under state law, sewer plans, engineering reports and specifications must be reviewed and approved by the Washington State Department of Ecology (RCW 90.48.110 and RCW 57.16.160). Ecology issued an approval letter dated May 26, 2026, included in Exhibit C to this staff report.

F. STAFF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATION

As shown in Section C.3 above, the proposed amendment to the GSP is consistent with the County's GMA comprehensive plan as required under RCW 57.16.010(7), including obtaining the necessary approval from the County Engineer as described in Section D above. The proposed amendment to the GSP also meets the planning approval criteria set forth in RCW 57.02.040(3) as shown in Section C.1 above. Therefore, the Planning and Development Services Department recommends approval of the proposed GSP amendment.

G. PROCESS AND TIMING FOR REVIEW

This amendment to the District's general sewer plan was prepared under RCW 57.16.010. Amendments to sewer system plans must be submitted to the county legislative authority for review and approval pursuant to RCW 57.16.010(7) and WAC 246-290-100.

The amendment was formally submitted to the County Council on July 14, 2026. Consistent with state statute, Council action must occur no later than October 12, 2026, unless a public hearing is held. When a public hearing is held, final action must be taken within 30 days of the hearing when the hearing is held within 90 days of plan submission. However, extensions of these deadlines are possible if the Council and District mutually agree, or if the Council makes a finding that there is insufficient time to review the amendment.

The general sewer plan, or amendments thereto, shall be approved, conditionally approved, or rejected by the County Council pursuant to the criteria in RCW 57.02.040, and shall not provide for the extension or location of facilities that are inconsistent with the requirements of RCW 36.70A.110. The motion of the legislative body that rejects the sewer plan amendment, or a part thereof, shall specifically state how the plan amendment fails to meet these criteria.

Exhibits: A – County Council Motion 26-____
 B – Alderwood Water and Wastewater District – General Sewer Plan Amendment
 C – Approval Letters
 D – Schedule for *Alderwood General Sewer Plan Amendment*

cc: Mike McCrary, Executive Director
 Tom Teigen, Executive Director
 Darren Groth, Acting Director, PDS
 Samantha Wangsgard, Acting Long Range Planning Manager, PDS
 Deborah Bell, Council Legislative Analyst