

## **2023 Budget Supplemental Questions**

*Please answer the following questions in a word document and return to Council. The answers to these questions will be provided to council as supplemental information. While not part of the physical budget presentation to Council, departments should be prepared to answer questions Council may have on these supplemental questions. If you feel that you have provided an answer in a previous question, please don't repeat your answer, simply refer to the earlier question/answer.*

### **Strategic Goals**

1. Provide your 2023 strategic goals; how are they different from 2022? In what way, if at all, are your strategic changes demonstrated in your budget request?

At a high-level, in 2023, the Executive Office will continue to support the implementation of our mission, vision, and values throughout Executive Departments and more broadly as we address needs and opportunities across the County. We are working to build a Snohomish County where we meet the opportunities and needs of Snohomish County's residents efficiently, equitably, creatively, and collaborative.

Throughout the Executive's 2023 budget proposal, you will find that Executive Somers has prioritized funding for: prioritizing public safety; strengthening economic revitalization and job creation; improving public health; investing in human and social services; supporting conservation; combatting climate change; expanding access to government services; and creating a more inclusive and welcoming community through our diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives.

The Executive Leadership Team, Office of Recovery and Resilience, Office of Trade and Economic Development, and our Office of Social Justice all play vital roles in ensuring we meet our strategic goals.

### **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 2023 and beyond? What is your plan to leverage the opportunity or mitigate the risk? What support do you need?
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?

The Executive's Office continues to enjoy the collaborative relationship we have with the County Council around creating and advocating for shared priorities, since we are all working for the residents of Snohomish County. This year, we anticipate working together to address behavioral health, public safety, housing, expansion of trade and

economic and workforce development, continued support for our new Afghan and Ukrainian neighbors, sports facility feasibility study, urban planning, and infrastructure needs. We believe 2023 offers an opportunity to leverage federal, state, and local relationships to make progress on our goals. In particular, we believe the opioid crisis, housing crisis, need for significant investments in roads, and other key needs for resources would benefit from federal and state investments.

## **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?

The Office of Recovery and Resiliency reports to the Executive Office and is tasked with managing \$160 million in ARPA funding. The Office of Recovery and Resiliency will provide a separate presentation providing an overview on their expenditures to-date and proposed plans for next year.

2. What new programs are you launching for 2023? What need or efficiency is that new program addressing? How is that program funded for sustainability? What metrics are in place to determine effectiveness?

N/A

3. If different than #2, 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?

As you know, Snohomish County continues to grow. With this growth, our challenges and opportunities have grown as well. In response, in 2022, the Executive Office took steps to reorganize our structure to ensure we can respond to these needs and challenges appropriately and in a timely manner.

To effectively do so, we are differentiating between the Executive Office Administrative and Leadership Team, Office of Recovery and Resiliency, Office of Social Justice and Office of Trade and Economic Development.

Examples in which these changes have allowed the Executive Branch to be more responsive to community needs and challenges include:

- Direct Executive Office participation in the **COVID-19 response and recovery**. Our current staffing allowed us to provide operational support and policy direction to staff in real-time while working on the ground and alongside our other employees.
- Direct Executive Office participation in the **Bolt Creek Fire response**. Our current staffing allowed our office to provide on the ground support both in the ECC and Command Post from an operational and policy perspective. This allowed a more rapid response, direct connectivity to elected officials in the impacted areas, and regular updates to impacted parties and the broader community.
- Direct Executive Office participation in response to the **growing homelessness and drug epidemics**. Our current staffing allows our office to provide operational and policy direction in real time as we continue to work collaboratively with Council, law enforcement, human services, public works, DCNR, public health, and other stakeholders to address one of the more complex issues of our time.
- Direct Executive Office participation in **legislative affairs and advocacy**. Our current staffing allows the Executive Office to directly engage in legislative matters with a dedicated employee. Previously, this responsibility was shared between several people in addition to full-time roles. This dedicated staff member will help to ensure that Snohomish County is well positioned to achieve our legislative goals.

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?

The Executive Office is in the process of recruiting and hiring key leadership positions including the Public Advocate, Health Department Director, and DEM Director.

We are currently in the interview process for each of these roles and believe we have strong and qualified candidates to consider. However, the recruitment and hiring process has taken longer than anticipated as our office has experienced

the same challenges as departments and other agencies in attracting a large and diverse candidate pool.

3. Please provide a list of all vacant position titles, position codes, date vacated, and date first posted. This should be a separate page or spreadsheet attachment.

We do not have any vacancies currently.

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.)

N/A

## **Successes**

1. Take this opportunity to share one significant success in your department over this past year. What made it a success?

Reorganizing our department has allowed the Executive Office to become more responsive, flexible, and active in how county government responds to opportunities and disasters. As a result of our efforts to restructure as growing community faces new opportunities and growing new and old challenges, we've been able to:

- Actively respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and ensure a strong structure is in place as we continue to recover.
- Actively respond to the growing homelessness and drug epidemics. Our participation in this work has created a culture and expectation of collaboration and strengthened our advocacy efforts.
- Actively respond to the Bolt Creek Fire. Our new structured provided the staffing needed to work on the ground addressing the rapidly changing situation, actively and effectively communicate with impacted elected officials and community leaders and provide information to the County Executive to ensure we made critical decisions in a timely manner.
- Receive national recognition to our response to humanitarian crisis resulting in an unprecedented influx of people seeing refuge from Afghanistan and the Ukraine. Executive Office staff engagement allowed the County to attract millions of dollars in funding. This funding supports the operation of the Welcoming Center, helps individuals and families to obtain stable housing,

assists individuals in securing family wage jobs, benefits, transportation, food, and more.

- Strengthened the County's ability to advocate for our interests at the federal, state, and local levels