



CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING
Monday, September 29, 2025 @ 6:00 PM
Snoqualmie City Hall, Council Chambers,
38624 SE River Street & Zoom

MAYOR & COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mayor Katherine Ross

Councilmembers: Ethan Benson, Cara Christensen, Catherine Cotton, Bryan Holloway, Jo Johnson, Louis Washington, and Robert Wotton

This meeting will be conducted in person at Snoqualmie City Hall and remotely using Zoom.

Join by Telephone: To listen to the meeting via telephone, please call **253.215.8782** and enter Webinar ID **813 0614 8787** and Password **1800110121** if prompted.

Join by Internet: To watch the meeting over the internet via your computer, follow these steps:

- 1) Click this [link](#)
- 2) If the Zoom app is not installed on your computer, you will be prompted to download it.
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*Please be advised that while this is an open public meeting,
there will no opportunity for public comments or participation.*

CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

AGENDA APPROVAL

SPECIAL BUSINESS

1. Strategic Plan with BERK Consulting

ADJOURNMENT

Accommodation: Requests for assistance or accommodations can be arranged by contacting the City Clerk by phone at (425) 888-8016 or by e-mail at cityclerk@snoqualmiewa.gov no later than 3:00 pm the day of the meeting.

MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 24, 2025

TO: Mayor Ross and Members of Council

FROM: Brian Murphy and Maddie Immel

RE: City of Snoqualmie Strategic Plan Working Draft 09-24-2025

Together with this memo, we are sharing the City of Snoqualmie Strategic Plan Working Draft 09-24-2025. We look forward to discussing this draft document with you on Monday, September 29.

During that worksession, we will be prepared to:

- Share a very brief recap of the strategic planning purpose and process to date, including key points of discussion at the August 15 Council Retreat.
- Review key points of context and the logic of current the draft strategic plan.
- Facilitate Council review and revision of the current draft. We will accomplish this by giving Council the opportunity to mark up the draft content on large posters.
- Discuss next steps, including further revision of the draft and opportunities to gain input from key stakeholder groups and members of the public.

Strategic Plan: 2026-2030

City of Snoqualmie | **Working Draft September 24, 2025**

This is a working draft of the City of Snoqualmie Strategic Plan, developed for discuss at the Council Study Session on September 29. At that session, we will review and revise the draft content contained here. Next steps, following September 29, include:

- Council review of full draft plan: October 13.
- Public and stakeholder review of draft plan: schedule TBD.
- Council review and adoption of final plan: anticipated November 10.

Introduction

This Strategic Plan is a five-year guide for the City of Snoqualmie. This plan was developed with community input and analytic work with the goal of guiding and aligning Council and staff decision-making. It is a flexible tool intended to clarify the vision of the Council and serve as a roadmap to achieving those goals, rather than a rigid list of instructions.

This Plan as structured as follows:

- **Role of the City of Snoqualmie.** Describe the role of the City and the values that guide how we operate.
- **Vision for Snoqualmie's Future.** Narrates our aspirations for the future of the Snoqualmie community.
- **Context.** Outlines Snoqualmie's recent history and key elements of the context for this Strategic Plan, highlighting current.
- **Strategic Focus.** Establishes three Strategic Initiatives designed to address the challenges and constraints, opportunities, choices, and tradeoffs, described in the Context section.
- **Implementation Framework.** Describes how we will tie this Strategic Plan to ongoing decision making and reporting.

Role of the City of Snoqualmie

Our Mission

We steward public resources and our natural and built environment to create a connected and complete community for our residents, businesses, and visitors.

Our Guiding Principles

Council and staff are guided by shared the following Guiding Principles for how we choose to act:

- **Engage openly and honestly** with residents, seeking input on choices and tradeoffs to be made, being responsive to that input, and seeking continuous improvement in our efforts.
- **Serve as trusted leaders in managing public resources** by making transparent, accountable decisions that respond to community priorities.
- **Foster an inclusive community** by welcoming and valuing all people.
- **Plan proactively for the future** by anticipating long-term challenges and opportunities.
- **Collaborate across city government and with regional partners** to coordinate efforts and achieve shared goals.

Vision for Snoqualmie's Future

As we advance this Strategic Plan, it is important that we establish and work towards a shared vision for the future of the Snoqualmie community.

Our Vision is that ***Snoqualmie is extraordinarily genuine in its beauty, people, and quality of life.***

We aspire to the following characteristics of our desired future:

- **A welcoming and safe place** to live, work, and visit, where people at every stage of life can thrive.
- **Strong physical and social connections** that bring the community together through trails and transit, as well as cultural and civic life.
- **A small-town character enhanced by natural beauty, historic roots, and local arts**, with growth managed in a balanced and thoughtful way.
- **Opportunities for health and well-being**, supported by parks, recreation, and access to the outdoors.
- **A resilient local economy** with thriving businesses and commercial districts that strengthen both the community and the region.
- **City services that are efficient, high quality, and financially sustainable**, aligning with community priorities while delivering strong value.
- **Collaboration with neighbors and regional partners**, seeking mutually beneficial goals and coordinated action benefit Snoqualmie our neighbors.

Context and Strategic Focus

This Strategic Plan has been developed to advance the aspirational Vision described on the previous page by addressing constraints and challenges, advancing key opportunities, and identifying important choices and tradeoffs that will need to be made.

Once the fastest-growing city in Washington, Snoqualmie experienced rapid expansion during the 1990s and 2000s, transforming from a small town to a thriving community. That period of growth has since slowed, with **limited undeveloped land remaining for additional single-family housing or commercial development**. Given this constraint, the City is focusing on infill and redevelopment; strengthening existing neighborhoods; efficient land use strategies that balance growth with community character, and potential opportunities to augment our land supply and leverage City- and partner-owned properties.

These strategies will contribute to **a varied housing mix with opportunities for people from many different walks of life; increased services, amenities, and employment opportunities for local residents; and a more robust tax base to support the delivery of quality city services**. These are part of the foundation of what makes Snoqualmie an attractive place to live, contributing to its extraordinarily genuine beauty, people, and quality of life:

- **Housing.** Communities across the country and throughout Washington are struggling to facilitate access to housing options for a wide range of current and potential residents. Snoqualmie shares this challenge, which is likely to increase given our constrained developable land supply. High housing costs and limited product types create barriers for people who work in the local economy, young families, seniors, and others, reducing the City's ability to achieve our vision of a welcoming community.
- **Economic development.** Snoqualmie's economic development opportunities are limited by its small population size, limited commercial property inventory, and location on the eastern edge of the Puget Sound. These constraints leave the community reliant on travelling to regional retailers and employers located elsewhere. The City is working to support commercial redevelopment and the success of local-serving businesses. Anchored by Snoqualmie Falls and nearby outdoor recreation, tourism offers another economic development opportunity and could play a larger role in supporting local businesses and diversifying the tax base.
- **Sustainable city services.** Residents, business owners, and visitors value the outcomes produced by City services, including access to a stunning natural environment, high-quality parks, public safety, family-friendly character, and support for regional human services. Structural challenges created by Washington's tax climate, unfunded mandates for cities, and inflation, contribute to fiscal challenges for all communities. City of Snoqualmie expenditures are projected to outpace revenues beginning in 2029. While the City will continue to focus on efficient and responsive service delivery and economic development opportunities that may defer or diminish these challenges, long-term trends suggest that tradeoffs between service levels or new revenue sources may be required in the future.

It is important to consider how we'll advance the work described above.

- **We will work for and with our community members.** Residents care deeply about Snoqualmie's future, and inclusive engagement will ensure decisions on housing, economic development, and

fiscal sustainability reflect community values and priorities. Together, we will address challenges, navigate tradeoffs, and advance our shared vision for the future of the community.

- **As a small city with finite resources, Snoqualmie can benefit partnerships with our neighbors when they share similar goals or face similar challenges.** We will continue to seek mutually beneficial partnerships with individual and collective municipalities, organizations, and peoples.

Strategic Focus

Given the above context, three Strategic Initiatives will focus City efforts for the coming five years:

- I. **Invest in a trusted community relationship**
- II. **Provide responsive and fiscally responsible City services**
- III. **Proactively increase housing options and economic vitality**

These Initiatives are described in greater detail on the following pages.

I. Invest in a trusted community relationship

- A. **Identify and maximize partnerships with community organizations to serve as trusted intermediaries. [Recommended Early Focus]**
 - Grow partnerships that help gather feedback from groups often underrepresented in government to ensure a range of voices shape City decisions.
- B. **Explore pressures and tradeoffs in two-way engagement with community members.**
 - Implement a “meet people where they’re at” model of community engagement by joining community events and attending standing community meetings.
 - Use the Citizen's Academy to explore these issues more deeply and to develop the next generation of local leaders.

II. Provide responsive and fiscally responsible City services

- A. **Make efficient use of resources. [Recommended Early Focus]**
 - Catch up on deferred investments before adding new assets.
 - Continue to audit revenue accounts.
 - Extend the lifecycle by evaluating replacement schedules for vehicles and other assets.
 - Explore regional partnership opportunities.
 - Continue to calibrate staffing and City services with community priorities and the evolution of the community.
- B. **Seek to maintain current service levels aligned with community priorities.**
 - Identify current service levels and establish community-driven targets.
 - Maintain accreditation of the Snoqualmie Fire Department.
 - Maintain human services contributions.
 - Maintain and improve road and trail connections.
- C. **Evaluate community needs for expanded services and support for revenues necessary to address inflation and support service delivery.**

III. Proactively increase housing options and economic vitality

A. Support infill development and redevelopment. [Recommended Early Focus]

- Update the Future Land Use Map and Zoning Map.
- Engage downtown residents, businesses, and property owners in discussing the future of the city, including locations for infill housing and commercial development.
- Engage the ROA in discussing opportunities for accessory dwelling units in all of Snoqualmie Ridge.
- Use City infrastructure and amenity investments, as well as other tools, to support desired development.
- Leverage City- and partner-owned properties for efficiency and desired outcomes.
- Continue to explore possible annexation opportunities.

B. Diversify housing options. [Recommended Early Focus]

- Advance implementation of the 2023 Housing Strategy Plan to incentivize new and diverse types of housing, reduce development barriers, and expand affordability.
- Work with regional partners to enhance workforce housing.

C. Grow the community's economy and tourism sector.

- Continue to support tourism with development of the Riverwalk, public uses such as the Model Train Museum, and additional commercial activity.
- Enhance events and programming that drive community connection and foot traffic.
- Work with regional partners to promote investment in the region and raise awareness of infill development opportunities.

Implementation Framework

The City's Implementation Framework describes how we will tie the Strategic Plan to ongoing decision making. Key elements include:

Clear Roles

- The **City Administrator** is responsible for maintenance of and reporting on the Strategic Plan.
- The City's **Leadership Team** will collectively review progress and manage implementation.
- **Leads or co-leads** will be established for each major area of focus, along with supporting roles, resource needs, and target milestones or outcomes. This information will be captured in an internal Implementation Plan.

Planning and Implementation Cycle

The City is on a biennial budget cycle with full budget development occurring every other year. The schematic on the following page demonstrates how the City will identify strategic plan priorities for the coming biennia, develop the City's budget and workplans with them in mind, and implement this focus in the coming two years. Non-budget years feature an interim budget update and will include a refinement of identified two-year priorities.

Key features of this cycle include:

- Providing **regular updates at Council meetings** and sharing **regular updates with staff**.
- Tracking and reporting on **milestones, outcomes, and performance metrics**.
- Publishing an **annual report** linking Strategic Plan implementation and organizational outcomes, including performance measures.

Biennial Planning and Implementation Cycle

Note: We'll continue to revise this graphic based on feedback from the City. 2026 will be a preparatory year, without significant budget availability to support Strategic Plan priorities. That said, significant work can begin during this time. An internal workplan will be developed for items determined to be an area of **Early Focus**.

