



Puget Sound Regional Council

2024 FHWA REGIONAL COMPETITION: PROJECT SPONSOR FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

AGENCY: Snohomish County

PROJECT: North Creek Trail Phase 2: Waxen Road to 183 St SE

Question #1: Please provide clarification on the intersection improvements that would be built under this project.

Answer #1:

The intersection improvements to be built under this project include:

- Waxen Road & 192nd Street SE: A new 12-foot-wide ADA ramp will be constructed at the NE corner of the intersection, along with signage directing users to the new trail.
- 13th Ave SE Crossing: A new crossing will be provided, featuring a new 12-foot-wide ADA compliant landing on each side of the road, a marked crosswalk, and proper signage to alert motorists of the trail crossing and trail users of an upcoming road.
- 9th Ave SE & 183rd Street SE: At the northern terminus of the trail, improvements will include a marked crosswalk and a new 12-foot-wide ADA landing, along with signage informing trail users.

Question #2: Please identify the HOP typology associated with your project's location along with the policies that currently exist that fall under the 3 categories (Supply, Stability, and Subsidy) for this typology.

Answer #2:

The Housing Opportunities by Place (HOP) typology most aligned with the North Creek Trail Phase 2 project is: Increase Access to Single Family Housing.

These communities are considered to have higher access to opportunity and lower displacement risk.

The Snohomish County Growth Management Act Comprehensive Plan provides policy direction for ongoing and future county planning efforts and development regulations. This direction comes from the county's Vision Statement; the goals, objectives, and policies; the level of service and other programming; and maps such as the Future Land Use Map (FLUM). The Snohomish County Vision Statement guides the development of the Comprehensive Plan and is informed by the regional vision - VISION 2050 - and Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs).

The Plan also implements the general policy guidance of the multicounty planning policies (MPPs) and Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) that represent regional and countywide priorities. The MPPs are found within VISION 2050, adopted by the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), and the CPPs are guided by Snohomish County Tomorrow (SCT) and adopted by County Council.

The Plan is composed of 12 elements that together meet the requirements of a GMA comprehensive plan and guide population and employment growth for the county. The 12 elements include: Population and Employment, Land Use, Housing, Transportation, Parks and Recreation, Capital Facilities and Utilities, Economic Development, Natural Environment, Interjurisdictional Coordination, Climate Change, Urban Core Subarea Plan, and Tribal Coordination. Per the Growth Management Act (GMA) (chapter 36.70A RCW), the county is required to comprehensively review and update the Plan as needed every 10 years. The planning horizon for the Plan is between 2024 and 2044 and review of the draft Comprehensive Plan by the Planning Commission is underway.

Demographics of note that inform strategies and policies as it relates to housing:

- Between 2010 and 2020, the population of Snohomish County increased by 17 percent, and the demographics indicate that the county became more diverse. More specifically, the white population decreased from 74 to 64 percent of the overall county population between 2010 and 2020, whereas the population of Black or African American residents in the county increased by 64 percent. The percentage of Asian residents increased by 60 percent, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander residents increased by 62 percent, and the Latino or Hispanic residents increased by 49 percent (see Figure 4). The biggest increase was in the category of residents identifying as two or more races, which increased by 123 percent between 2010 and 2020. The percentage of residents identifying as American Indian and Alaska Native decreased by 5 percent between 2010 and 2020.
- Access to safe and affordable housing is fundamental to the success of our communities, and Snohomish County is in an affordability crisis. The median home price in the County increased by 117 percent between 2000 and 2021,

whereas the median household income only increased by 9 percent. One major contributor to the rising cost of housing in Snohomish County is a shortage in supply. The PSRC estimates that the region (Snohomish, King, Kitsap, and Pierce counties) currently needs an additional 50,000 homes, and that by 2050 Snohomish County alone will have a deficit of 187,000 homes if the county does not plan for an increased supply of housing.

The Housing and Land Use Elements aim to address the affordability crisis by incentivizing a wide variety of housing types and densities in the urban areas. Two elements of the Comprehensive Plan – Housing and Land Use - are specifically relevant to ensuring sustainable housing opportunities within the North Creek Trail Phase 2 project area. Relevant policies are both in place and in amendments under present consideration.

Snohomish County policy aligns with “encourage development of moderate density (missing middle) housing types in residential areas throughout your city to increase housing choices” given its emphasis on introducing a variety of housing types into predominantly single-family residential areas. Snohomish County policy encourages the development of missing middle housing due to several benefits:

- **Increased Housing Choices:** By offering a wider range of housing options, cities can accommodate different household sizes, lifestyles, and income levels. This helps create more inclusive and diverse communities.
- **Affordability:** Missing middle housing tends to be more affordable than single-family homes or large apartment complexes. This affordability can open up housing opportunities for individuals and families who might otherwise be priced out of desirable neighborhoods.
- **Walkable Communities:** Higher densities created by missing middle housing can support walkable neighborhoods with access to local amenities, services, and public transit. This can reduce dependence on cars and promote a healthier, more sustainable lifestyle.
- **Preservation of Neighborhood Character:** By integrating missing middle housing into existing single-family neighborhoods, cities can maintain the overall character and scale of the area while still accommodating growth and demand for housing.
- **Reduced Displacement:** Allowing for a mix of housing types within single-family neighborhoods can help prevent displacement by providing housing options for residents at different income levels. This is especially important in areas experiencing rising home prices.