



NEWS RELEASE

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Sax proposes increase to developer traffic mitigation fees through the ten year comprehensive plan update

[*Everett, Wash.*] Snohomish County Councilmember Jeff Sax has requested that an increase in traffic mitigation fees paid by new development be considered during the county's update of its Comprehensive Plan this fall.

"Traffic Mitigation Fees have not been updated for inflation to the cost of construction since 2002 when this Council increased fees by 30%", said Sax. He noted that prior to the 2002 action, traffic mitigation fees had not been adjusted since 1992. He continued, "Prior Council majorities have refused to look at the fees and to adjust them upward. This Council had the courage to engage the development community and not only bring them to the table, but to get agreement to support the increase."

The Ten-Year update of the Comprehensive Plan is the way local government plans for new population under the Growth Management Act (GMA) as well as identifies funding sources for future infrastructure and to catch up for the lack of existing infrastructure. "This increase in fees will provide an assured funding stream going forward, allowing the County to make solid decisions on growth while balancing the thirteen goals planning GMA requires," replied Sax.

The Department Public Works (DPW) has proposed that the council increase fees by 18%, generating approximately \$13 million over the 20 year planning period, which reflects the projected increases in construction cost from 2003 – 2010. The average increase to a single family residence would be 8% or \$2,348. Sax comments "DPW has proposed an 18% increase to recover cost through 2010. I will ask the Council to consider the 18% increase versus a smaller increase reflecting 2002-2005 changes and adding policy language to the Comprehensive Plan that will direct the Council to evaluate fees on a reoccurring basis to debate fee levels on a recurring basis, perhaps annually or every two years."

The recurring review would allow future Councils to receive updated mitigation fee reports from DPW, hold public hearings and to debate whether the fees should be adjusted, without tying their hands by a decision today.

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