



**Snohomish County
County Executive's Office**

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Aaron Reardon

County Executive

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Executive Reardon praises County Council for adopting dedicated funding for County arts initiative

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*Approved ordinance creates unique public/private
partnership to fund the arts in Snohomish County*

Snohomish County Executive Aaron Reardon today thanked the County Council for passing an ordinance that establishes funding to support the arts in Snohomish County.

“I am grateful of the Council’s support for enhancing the arts in our community,” Executive Reardon said. **“Today’s action marks a milestone in promoting the creative vitality that makes Snohomish County attractive to our citizens, businesses and visitors.”**

Ordinance 06-026 amends Snohomish County Code to require a contribution to the Arts fund for County construction projects (excluding roads, surface water management, airport airfield or airport lease related structures) costing at least \$100,000. The contribution is equal to one-half of 1%, with an additional one-half of 1% available to match funds from non-County sources.

“This new arts program is exciting,” Executive Reardon said. **“It directly supports my priorities to increase economic vitality and enhance educational opportunities for local children and adults through arts and culture.”**

In praising the County Council for their support of the new arts program, Executive Reardon specifically thanked Chairman Sievers and Councilmen Gossett and Somers for their efforts in finding a compromise to move the proposed 1% for the Arts concept forward.

After the ordinance’s passage, former County Council chair and current Snohomish County Arts Commission chair Barbara Cothorn Hawksford said, **“I would like to express my**

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sincere appreciation to the County Council and Executive Reardon for their support of funding the arts. The public can be assured that these funds will be used responsibly to promote the arts in Snohomish County.”

ArtsUnited, a Snohomish County private sector group that provides funding to local arts organizations, has found that support of the arts and culture within our community translates into a return of double and triple the original dollar invested.

“Public art is a tangible demonstration that the community cares about itself and its citizens,” Janet Prichard, ArtsUnited chair, said. Just last month, the privately funded ArtsUnited granted \$81,000 to Snohomish County arts organizations.

An investment in the arts today will:

- Make our community a more attractive location to start-up and relocating businesses.
- Boost economic demands through artist’s creative activity, both upstream and downstream.
- Generate economic activity from cultural tourism. Cultural tourism is a growing and lucrative segment of tourism, with cultural tourists spending 40% more than other tourists.

“The Economic Vitality Index has demonstrated that communities with a healthy and vibrant arts culture have much stronger economies because of that investment in art,” Executive Reardon said. **“Strong companies and skilled workers are attracted to communities in which art is alive. Schools in communities with a health arts climate benefit and teach children to appreciate their community. Citizens who live and work where art is present take pride in their communities.”**

“I am an ardent believer that the private sector has an essential role in funding the arts,” Prichard said. **“To be successful, a vital public/private partnership is necessary.”**

“An active partnership between the County, the private sector and the arts community will help us make Snohomish County a destination to be proud of,” Executive Reardon said.

Funds generated by the program will be designated toward the acquisition of visual and performing works of art such as drawing, tapestry, weaving, painting, mural, fresco, sculpture, mosaic, photography. They also may include structural or functional elements of a building or structure such as benches, beams and lighting.

Art works will be selected based upon recommendations to the County Executive by the Snohomish County Arts Commission for County Council approval. The Arts Commission will also provide periodic reports on recommended acquisitions; public sites at which to install, display, mount or perform any work of art; and advise on the maintenance, conservation, removal and relocation of public art owned by or loaned to the County.

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