



**Snohomish County**  
**County Executive's Office**

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## Reardon to move immediately on specific proposals in Citizens Cabinet economic report

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*“Expanding the economic winner’s circle for  
Snohomish County families and business”*

Snohomish County Executive Aaron Reardon today released *A Blueprint for the Economic Future of Snohomish County*, pledging to work quickly to enact specific recommendations included in the final report by his Citizens Cabinet on Economic Development.

“I am committed to expanding the economic winner’s circle for Snohomish County families and businesses,” Reardon said. “What the Citizens Cabinet has done in its final report is identify both the assets and liabilities of doing business here. Its members have created a strategic plan for the future that focuses on removing barriers to economic growth.

“My administration will now move forward to implement the Citizens Cabinet’s recommendations.”

The final report is available on-line at [www.co.snohomish.wa.us](http://www.co.snohomish.wa.us). It can be accessed by scrolling down to the Featured Contents portion of the website and clicking on the link *Snohomish County Citizens Cabinet final report*.

The 19-member Citizens Cabinet – chaired by Washington State University regent Connie Niva and Sonus Pharmaceutical, Inc., president and CEO Michael Martino – identified a series of competitiveness issues of concern in the County. During seven months of work, the Cabinet committees produced recommendations in four areas:

- Regulatory reform;
- Taxes and fee structure;
- Physical infrastructure; and,
- Human capital.

Recommendation highlights include speedier permit processing; a litigation risk assessment on pending land-use actions; tougher scrutiny of County legal challenges to the State’s Growth Management Act; coordinating the County’s tax structure with cities; initiating passenger service at Paine Field to attract and retain high-tech businesses; allowing recreational uses for agricultural lands so long as the land can be returned to farm uses; reviewing work force training strategies; and, bringing a four-year college or university to the County.

Niva and Martino praised the work of the volunteer group, which is drawn from a wide spectrum of the county’s manufacturing, agricultural, labor, small business, educational, legal and bio-technology sectors.

“Executive Reardon challenged us to produce a document that will expand economic opportunities in Snohomish County – and I believe that this Citizens Cabinet report can do just that,” Martino said. “This is more than a short-term economic stimulus package. It calls for improvements to our existing regulatory climate to increase efficiencies and reduce costs. It calls for measures to stabilize our County’s budget and expand the tax base. It seeks to maintain infrastructure and lift the skills of our children and our work force.

“There are clear benchmarks here that can be systematically revisited and updated to maximize competitiveness.”

Said Niva, “These recommendations are a reflection of what Cabinet members understand clearly. In order for Snohomish County’s economy to grow, in order for us to provide the sort of jobs and communities that enhance our quality of life, there are investments in our citizens and in our infrastructure that we must be making.”

Reardon said he is committed to implementing the Citizen Cabinet findings, either through executive order, through instructions to departments or by working with the Snohomish County Council where necessary. He added that he is ready to work with the State Legislature and work cooperatively with cities, schools, port districts and other governments in Snohomish County to achieve results.

“I also look forward to meeting with the Citizens Cabinet in 2005 to check our progress,” Reardon said. “The work they have done so far has been outstanding. There were certainly times when members disagreed on issues. Often times members came from very different perspectives. But they resolved to work out their differences.

“I regard that as one of the strengths of the Cabinet’s report.”

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