



CITY OF SNOHOMISH

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For Immediate Release

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Real Estate Exchange Agreement between Snohomish County Fire Protection District No. 4 and the City of Snohomish

Snohomish, Wash. January 2, 2019 – Snohomish County Fire Protection District No. 4 (Fire District) and the City of Snohomish (City) are working together on a Real Estate Exchange Agreement that will effect three jointly owned properties within the City. The property exchange will streamline Fire District services and reduce operational costs. The three properties include:

- Approximately 1.6 acres located at 1525 Avenue D, which includes the Fire Headquarters Station #43 facility, known as the “*Headquarters Station #43 Property*”;
- About 0.5 acres located at 1330 Ferguson Park Road, which includes a Fire District storage building and the Snohomish Community Food Bank (“*Food Bank*”), known as the “*Rear Parcel*”.
- About 0.4 acres located at 427 Maple Avenue, which includes Fire Station #41 building, known as the “*Fire Station #41 Property*”

As part of its long-term planning, the Fire District began analyzing options to upgrade the Headquarters Station facility that was built 35 years ago in 1984. As a part of this planning process the District has also been evaluating what the needs of the operation are in relation to future revenues. In doing so District Staff has determined that the *Fire Station #41 Property* on Maple Avenue, located about 1.5 miles southeast of the Headquarters is not a sustainable facility. Fire Chief Ron Simmons stated that “this facility (Fire Station #41) was built in consideration of a workforce that no longer exists in the City Limits, the Volunteer Firefighters. The continued attempt to operate from all four of our stations financially does not work.”

The Snohomish Community Food Bank has a lease dated March 5, 1990. The exchange of properties will not impact food bank operations. The parties acknowledge that the Food Bank has given notice of intent to exercise its option to renew for the entire 99-year lease period. The parties agree that the continuing operation of the Food Bank is a public benefit supported by both parties and deemed by both parties to be within the scope of their long-term community and emergency preparedness missions.

If approved, the agreement would give the Fire District sole ownership of both the *Headquarters Station #43 Property* and the *Rear Parcel*. Combined, these two parcels are about 2.1 acres. As part of the exchange, the City would receive sole ownership of the *Fire Station #41 Property*, about 0.4 acres. In addition, the expectation is that the value of the two proposed Fire District properties will exceed the value of the City’s proposed parcel. The party receiving the higher valued property(ies), most likely the

Fire District, would pay the difference in valuation to the party receiving the lower valued property, very likely the City, in cash at closing.

The agreement will establish the procedures by which the relative values of the exchanged properties may be determined. The City and Fire District would jointly commission an appraisal of each of the properties. If the parties are unable to agree upon the values, the transaction will terminate, and the City and Fire District would continue to jointly own the three properties. Upon agreement of the values by both the Fire District and the City, and conducting additional feasibility and due diligence, it is expected that a final closing of the properties could occur in late summer 2019.

“We value the partnership between the City and the Fire District as we both strive to best serve our Snohomish community now and into the future. We see this property exchange as a potential win-win situation for both parties and our citizens”, stated Snohomish Mayor John T. Kartak. Fire District No. 4 Chairman Mark Hintz commented, “This agreement will allow the Fire District to continue our long-term planning which is paramount to our mission to protect and serve, and always be guided by the principle that each and every person that we contact will receive our very best available service.” Mayor Kartak and Chairman Hintz also issued a joint statement; “Our agencies have met with the Snohomish Community Food Bank on several occasions in preparation for this proposed real estate exchange. Both the City Council and the Board of Commissioners place a tremendous value in the Food Bank and the vital service it provides in meeting our community and emergency preparedness missions.”

Tentative Schedule for the Real Estate Exchange:

- Approval by the Fire District Board of Commissioners (Unanimously approved on Dec. 10, 2018);
- Action by the Snohomish City Council – Scheduled for the Tuesday, January 15, 2019;
- Hire Appraiser
- Receipt of Appraiser’s Report – Late Spring, 2019
- Agreement on Relative Property Values
- Due Diligence by each Party (90 days) – Summer, 2019
- Property Closing (Tentative) – Late Summer to early Fall, 2019
- After the scheduled action by the City Council on January 15, the City would begin preliminary discussions of possible uses for the *Fire Station #41 Property* on Maple Avenue.

For more information, please contact Steve Schuller at schuller@snohomishwa.gov or (360) 282-3194 or Fire Chief Ron Simmonds at 360-568-2141.

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Photos:

- Google Bird’s Eye Map of Fire Headquarters Parcel (*Headquarters Parcel.pdf*);
- Fire Headquarters Building (*FD4 HQ.jpg*)
- Food Bank Building (*Snohomish Food Bank.jpg*)
- Fire Station #41 Property (*Maple Avenue Fire Station.pdf*)