

# **Karen Guzak**

**Resident of Snohomish since 1993**

**Small Business Owner**

**Community Volunteer**

**Member, Chamber of Commerce**

**Design Review Board from 2001 to 2007**

**City Council, elected in 2008, third term 2016 to 2020**

**Mayor: 2010-2017**

**Member of Snohomish County Tomorrow**

**Member of Snohomish Health District Board**

**Co-Chair Highway 9 Coalition**

**Member of the Alliance for Housing Affordability**

**Co-Chair Eastside Trailways Alliance**

## **Approaches to Leadership:**

- Approaches her work as Councilmember and Mayor with grace, humor, energy, and enthusiasm.
- Has strong team building skills, and works within the community.
- Maintains an inclusive approach with Councilmembers and citizens regarding her role as Mayor and Councilmember.
- Supports economic growth and development in a scale appropriate to Snohomish
- Strongly supports sustainable community development and redevelopment to maintain our historical roots.
- Has an innately entrepreneurial and practical solutions approach to city government and community development.
- Enjoys collaboration with community groups, citizens, boards and commissions, regional leaders and staff.
- Supports staff and works collaboratively with staff for successful community outcomes
- Interpersonal skills working with diverse citizens, regional organizations, elected leaders and others.
- Strongly supports affordable improvements for parks and other projects.
- Excellent facilitator and chairs Council meetings with continual efforts to encourage citizen input into decision-making.
- Understands the value of and works tirelessly to expand the role of the City in regional affairs of the County and state.
- Always keeps an aesthetic eye toward improving City projects.
- Engages vigorously with the community, meets with any citizens who have interest in city government and attends many, many meetings to make herself available to citizens on a wide range of topics.

## Talked About Issues:

**Apodments** Council supported citizen concerns regarding a proposed apodment project in a residential area, and voted for a city wide zoning change to prohibit apodments in our city.

**Cell Towers** responding to community concerns opposed the cell towers in public parks and voted for a policy change to prohibit Cell Towers in public parks.

**Marijuana** Council supports an initiative that puts a citizen advisory vote on the November 2017 ballot regarding marijuana businesses in the city. If such businesses are allowed by a future Council, zoning these businesses is a strong option so that our schools, parks, and residential areas are not impacted.

**Pilchuck Planning District.** Council created the process, in partnership with a grant from Forterra to go through a 2 year community planning process to create an area of the city for future redevelopment and revitalization that will foster a more livable, walkable, family friendly part of our city. Single family and town homes are encouraged as well as three stories mixed use buildings in certain areas. Greater density to four or five stories is allowed in limited areas if a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) is applied to save forest and farm land in our county. This plan encourages more folks to live close to transportation and city services, including access to sewer, water, police, parks, library, the Senior center and Boys and Girls club.

## Other Issues:

**City manager's Salary** Our City Manager salary is competitive with other City Managers and City Administrators for a city our size. Council reviews the Manager's performance yearly and has confidence in his ability to manage the city.

**Garbage Contract:** A city wide survey revealed positive input with our current provider, Republic Services. As it was time for a new contract, Council directed staff to negotiate a lower rate with our existing provider. That lower rate was compared to other providers in the area and found to be highly competitive. Council approved this contract while lowering rates for our citizens.

**Open Government:** Council championed the concept to create a Citizen's Open Government Committee designed to enhance two-way communications and citizen engagement regarding City decision-making, resulting in improvements to our City website, City weekly newsletter, more opportunities for citizens to speak to Council, Coffees with the Mayor, our quarterly City Magazine, and continues to work to improve communication.

**Pioneer Cemetery** Council is committed to maintaining the Pioneer Cemetery and works with the tribes to honor those who were buried there decades ago.

## Council Priorities:

**Economic Development** After the first Strategic Plan, Council authorized the hiring of the City's first Economic Development Manager to support the ongoing growth and success of community businesses and to increase City sales tax revenues.

**Sound Financial Management** Council and staff worked hard to make some difficult decisions that sustainably reduced City expenses during the Great Recession of 2008, while developing budget-saving options for the City Council that saving nearly \$500,000 annually for the City's budget.

### Healthy Parks:

**Centennial Trail** Council supported the acquisition of federal funding to purchase land, design and construct the Centennial Trail.

**Ludwig Road 10 acres**: Karen was a key supporter on Council for the purchase of a ten-acre parcel on Ludwig Road at low cost for future park expansion to serve the growing residential areas west of Bickford Avenue, aligning this with the Long Range Park Plan.

**Stocker Farm 20 acres**: Karen enthusiastically worked with Snohomish County to secure funding to purchase of 20 acres with county Conservation Futures grant funds. In addition, we worked with State Rep. Hans Dunshee for a state Fish and Wildlife Department grant for the construction of a new boat launch and future riverside park owned by the City.

### Public Safety

**Contract with the Snohomish County Sheriff's Department** Council acted six years ago to contract with the Snohomish County Sheriff to provide police services with the same number of officers, and additional access to the expertise of the Sheriff's Department, saving approximately \$400,000 a year for the 5 year contract (recently renewed).

**City's Public Safety Commission**, Council strongly supported the creation of the incorporating police and fire services in working with a citizen-based committee;

### Treating our Sewer:

**Agreement with the Department of Ecology** Karen was a key player in negotiations with Ecology, resulting in formal release from Agreed Order requirements for a \$44 million Everett wastewater treatment option from the Department of Ecology;

**Lowered sewer rates 10%**. Council made the decision to lower sewer while working toward future rate reductions

## Following the Strategic Plan:

Karen was co-chair of the City's first five-year strategic plan, a broad-based citizens committee who titled the plan "**Imagine Snohomish Promoting Vitality and Preserving Character;**" The plan is evaluated semiannually to keep on track with the goals. Council authorized the second five-year strategic plan, again with a broad-based citizens committee with the same focus: "**Promoting Vitality and Preserving Character;**"

## Improving and Maintaining Streets:

**Transportation Benefit District** (TBD) Council worked to help pass a ballot proposition approved to create a sales-tax-funded TBD that generates \$760,000 annually for street maintenance and intersection improvements:

**Street Overlays:** Since the 2011 TBD approval, nearly **3 miles of streets** have been overlaid or rebuilt;

**Maximizing our Local Dollars:** By leveraging the TBD revenues as matching funds for grants, some **\$4.6 million in state and federal grant funds have been acquired** for asphalt overlays, better intersections, and two intersection projects at 15<sup>th</sup> and Avenue D (the Roundabout) and the 30<sup>th</sup> Street and SR 9 lane additions .

**Avenue D/15th St. Roundabout** Council endorsed the design and construction of the Avenue D & 15<sup>th</sup> Street Roundabout, constructed with substantial grant funding;

## Community Connections:

**Snohomish Senior Center** Council endorsed staff's work with the Senior Center for development of their facility with private funds on City-owned property and once constructed, Karen taught yoga classes there.

**Snohomish Affordable Housing Group (SAHG)** Council and staff worked SAHG to construct 21 units of affordable senior apartments on City-owned property adjacent to the Senior Center.

**Snohomish Garden Club** Council provides City funds to assist the Garden Club to purchase and maintain flower baskets downtown.

**Snohomish Community Food Bank** Karen Volunteers at the Food Bank and served on the Board.

## Regional Connections

Karen supported the City's role as a regional leader through as a leader at **Snohomish County Tomorrow**; a member of the **Economic Alliance Snohomish County**, and the **Snohomish County Cities Association**; **Snohomish County Health Board** (ended term in 2015); **North County Mayor's** group,

Karen was the co-chaired the **State Route 9 Coalition**, with cities of Lake Stevens, Marysville and Arlington, travelling to Olympia many times to obtain commitments from the state legislature to fund \$142 million to construct a second bridge on HWY 9 over the Snohomish River; Important help was provided **by State Senator Steve Hobbs**.

## **Future Plans:**

**Hal Moe Pool Site** Supports the work of the Hal Moe Committee in their evaluation of several options and cost estimates for the site and their final recommendation to tear down the building and start planning for a range of park uses to serve the community.

**Historic Carnegie Library** Supports Council's directions to staff to make the historic Carnegie Library a publicly funded project that will remove the 1968 annex in favor of an in-city Veteran's Park, and restore the original facade of the Carnegie so that it may be used for community purposes.

**Snohomish County Shop Site.** Karen and the City Initiated discussion for the future planning and development of the 9-acre former County shop site on Avenue D near 13<sup>th</sup> Street in coordination with Snohomish County's vision and priorities.

**Alliance for Housing Affordability.** The City of Snohomish is a member of this Alliance, and Karen is the sitting member. The Alliance was formed 4 years ago to help cities and the County create affordable housing of all types. Karen is advocating for a site in Snohomish, as many in our community are burdened by high rents.