



# Memorandum

**TO:** Satpal Sidhu, County Executive  
**FROM:** Erika Lautenbach, Director  
**RE:** City of Bellingham – GRACE Program Interlocal Agreement  
**DATE:** NOVEMBER 25, 2024

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Attached is an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and City of Bellingham for your review and signature.

- **Background and Purpose**

The City of Bellingham will provide 40% of the total costs for the Ground-Level And Coordinated Engagement (GRACE) Program that are not covered by other funding sources, up to the amounts specified below. GRACE Program activities are intended to increase public safety, reduce use and cost of emergency and criminal justice systems, and improve the health and well-being of these individuals.

Health and Community Services' GRACE Program is designed to provide intensive case coordination services to individuals who frequently use the crisis system and law enforcement responses in ineffective ways. Care coordination activities are coupled with other necessary services from relevant service providers to create comprehensive intervention and care plans. The overarching GRACE program goals are to reduce First Responder calls, Emergency Department visits, arrests, and jail admissions while improving the health, well-being, and stability of these individuals.

- **Funding Amount and Source**

The City of Bellingham will provide \$403,698 in 2025 and \$415,358 in 2026. These funds will be included in the 2025 and 2026 budgets. Council authorization is required per WCC 3.06.010 for grants exceed \$40,000.

- **Differences from Previous Agreements**

This agreement includes a \$35,056 increase over two years from the amount contributed by the City of Bellingham in the agreement ending on 12/31/2024 (WC Contract #202212007).

Please contact Malora Christensen, Response Systems Manager at 360-746-9045 ([MChriste@co.whatcom.wa.us](mailto:MChriste@co.whatcom.wa.us)), if you have any questions.

Encl.