

# Whatcom County Priorities for 2025 Legislative Session

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COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

NOVEMBER 6 2024





# Whatcom Specific

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1. Lummi Island Ferry
2. Swift Creek Cleanup
3. Nooksack Basin Water Rights Adjudication
4. Affordable Housing and Economic Development (wetland bank, UGA infrastructure)
5. Behavioral Care Center – Prosecutorial Division Program



# Behavioral Health Partnership Asks

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- Youth Co-Occurring Treatment Facility
- Regulatory Framework and Operating Funds for Crisis Relief Center
- Increase Medicaid Reimbursement Rates for Providers
- Fund Medicaid Eligibility Waiver in Jail
- Housing Policy Modernization for Individuals with Severe Behavioral Health Conditions
- Strengthening 911 and 988 System Coordination
- Improving Involuntary Treatment Act (ITA) Legal Framework



# Unmet Statewide Needs

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- Funding for Indigent Defense
- Food Security



# Technical/Policy Legislation Supporting Treasurer and Assessor's Work

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- Personal Property Exemption
- REET Technology Fee Increase
- Cost-Recovery Mechanism for Treasury Services



# Key State Funding Buckets

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- Foundational Public Health Services (FPHS)
- Floodplains by Design (FbD)
- Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO)
- Brian Abbott Fish Passage
- Model Toxics Control Act Capital Fund (cleanup of Plantation Rifle Range)
- Continued state support for Response Systems Division: LEAD, ART, GRACE and Co-Responder



# Priority Issue Areas

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- Policy and funding for Search and Rescue
- LAMIRD Reform
- Opioid response and behavioral health
- Housing affordability, homeless services, and severe weather shelter (e.g. smoke, heat, cold)
- Broadband, including hybrid deployment
- Fully funding implementation of medical examiner accreditation requirements
- State support for high-needs school districts and junior taxing districts reliant on timber revenue
- Preservation and maintenance funding for the county transportation system.



# Upcoming Policy Discussions

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Affordable Housing REET

Local revenue options

Short-term internet rental tax

Rent stabilization



# Questions?

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