



# Whatcom County

COUNTY COURTHOUSE  
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(360) 778-5010

## Agenda Bill Report

File Number: AB2024-114

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<b>File ID:</b>	AB2024-114	<b>Version:</b>	1	<b>Status:</b>	Adopted
<b>File Created:</b>	01/25/2024	<b>Entered by:</b>	MMiterko@co.whatcom.wa.us		
<b>Department:</b>	Finance Division	<b>File Type:</b>	Ordinance		
<b>Assigned to:</b>	Council Finance and Administrative Services Committee			<b>Final Action:</b>	02/20/2024
<b>Agenda Date:</b>	02/20/2024	<b>Enactment #:</b>	ORD 2024-010		
<b>Related Files:</b>					

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Primary Contact Email: kschoffb@co.whatcom.wa.us

### TITLE FOR AGENDA ITEM:

Ordinance establishing a 23-Hour Crisis Relief Center Fund and establishing an initial project based budget for the 23-Hour Crisis Relief Center Project

### SUMMARY STATEMENT OR LEGAL NOTICE LANGUAGE:

The 23-Hour Crisis Relief Center Project fund seeks an initial budget of \$1,000,000 as described in Exhibit A. The completion of the 23-Hour Crisis Relief Center will fulfill one of the first priorities identified in the Justice Project Needs Assessment Implementation Plan by providing behavioral health urgent and crisis services to individuals in Whatcom County.

### HISTORY OF LEGISLATIVE FILE

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<b>Date:</b>	<b>Acting Body:</b>	<b>Action:</b>	<b>Sent To:</b>
02/06/2024	Council	INTRODUCED	Council Finance and Administrative Services Committee
		Aye: 7 Nay: 0	Buchanan, Byrd, Donovan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremler
02/20/2024	Council Finance and Administrative Services Committee	RECOMMENDED FOR ADOPTION	
		Aye: 3 Nay: 0	Byrd, Galloway, and Donovan
02/20/2024	Council	ADOPTED	
		Aye: 7	Buchanan, Byrd, Donovan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremler

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Nay: 0

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**Attachments:** Staff Memo, Proposed Ordinance, Exhibit A

**ORDINANCE NO. 2024-010**

**ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING THE 23-HOUR CRISIS RELIEF CENTER FUND AND  
ESTABLISHING A PROJECT BASED BUDGET FOR THE 23-HOUR CRISIS RELIEF  
CENTER PROJECT**

**WHEREAS**, the local continuum of behavioral health services is inadequate to meet the needs of individuals in crisis; and

**WHEREAS**, on July 11, 2023, the Whatcom County Council adopted Ordinance No. 2023-039 to approve the Justice Project Needs Assessment Implementation Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, "build a 23-hour Crisis Relief Center" is identified as an initial project in the Implementation Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, the County is now ready to begin pre-development of a 23-hour Crisis Relief Center, as established in Chapter 433, Laws of 2023, State of Washington; and

**WHEREAS**, the State of Washington has awarded \$9,000,000 to grant to Whatcom County for this project; and

**WHEREAS**, the County and the Washington State Department of Commerce must enter into contract for this grant; and

**WHEREAS**, the County can utilize its behavioral health fund to begin pre-development work on the project and accelerate the project timeline; and

**WHEREAS**, Section 6.80 of the Whatcom County Home Rule Charter allows for project-based capital budget appropriation ordinances that lapse when the project has been completed or abandoned or when no expenditure or encumbrance has been made for three (3) years; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED** by the Whatcom County Council that a new fund is hereby established titled 23-hour Crisis Relief Center Fund. This fund shall be used to account for the revenues and expenditures of the capital project mentioned above; and

1 **BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED** by the Whatcom County Council that the 23-hour  
2 Crisis Relief Center Fund is approved with an initial project budget of \$1,000,000 as  
3 described in Exhibit A.  
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5  
6 **ADOPTED** this 20th day of February, 2024.  
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9  
10 ATTEST:

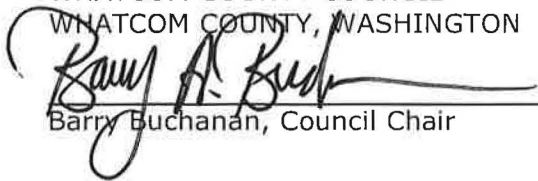
11   
12 \_\_\_\_\_  
13 Dana Brown-Davis, Clerk of the Council  
14

15  
16 WHATCOM COUNTY EXECUTIVE  
17 APPROVED AS TO FORM:

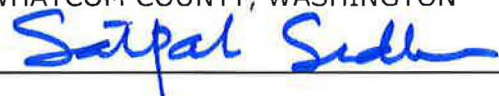
18  
19 Christopher Quinn (Jan 16, 2024)  
20

21 Civil Deputy Prosecutor  
22

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL  
WHATCOM COUNTY, WASHINGTON

23   
24 \_\_\_\_\_  
25 Barry Buchanan, Council Chair  
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WHATCOM COUNTY, WASHINGTON

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\_\_\_\_\_

Approved ( ) Denied

Date Signed: 2/22/24

# Exhibit A

## Supplemental Budget Request

*Status:* Pending

**Health**

**Community Health**

*Suppl ID #* 4554

*Fund*

*Cost Center*

*Originator:* Ann Beck

**Expenditure Type:** One-Time

**Year 2** 2024

**Add'l FTE**

**Add'l Space**

**Priority** 1

**Name of Request:** 23 Hour Crisis Center

	<p style="font-size: 1.5em;">1/16/24</p>
<p><b>Department Head Signature (Required on Hard Copy Submission)</b></p>	<p><b>Date</b></p>

<i>Costs:</i>	<i>Object</i>	<i>Object Description</i>	<i>Amount Requested</i>
	6190	Direct Billing Rate	\$125,000
	6630	Professional Services	\$875,000
	8301	Operating Transfer In	(\$1,000,000)
	<b>Request Total</b>		<b>\$0</b>

**1a. Description of request:**

In 2023 the County was awarded a \$9,000,000 grant from the Washington State Department of Commerce for the purposes of opening a 23 Hour Crisis Stabilization Center in Whatcom County. The total anticipated capital outlay is approximately \$16,000,000. Health and Community Services anticipates that the County Council will accept the grant in the second quarter of 2024 or earlier and is requesting spending authority to support the pre-development phase of this project. The pre-development phase of this work will begin in 2024 and will use local Behavioral Health funds. This project, when complete, will fill an important gap in the continuum of care for behavioral health services and supports within the county and, as such, is a high priority when compared to other Department needs.

**Anticipated Expenditures:**

Project Management \$125,000  
 Facility Consultant \$600,000  
 Architectural Preliminary work \$250,000  
 Wetlands Work \$25,000

**1b. Primary customers:**

Funds will be used for predevelopment work for a 23-hour crisis stabilization center. By design, these centers serve anyone, regardless of income, experiencing a crisis secondary to a substance abuse or mental health disorder, either diagnosed or not. As an adult-only facility, however, customers must be over the age of 18 prior to admittance.

**2. Problem to be solved:**

Under the current continue of care, residents experiencing a behavioral health crisis have limited resources for stabilization: (1) While the Anne Deacon Center for Hope provides some stabilization support it is not designed to meet the immediate needs of individuals experiencing a crisis – currently wait lists are 14 or more hours and there is a capacity of 16 people at any time. (2) The local emergency department, while often able to take individuals immediately do not have the staff necessary to support individuals experiencing a behavioral health crisis. (3) Law enforcement sometimes uses the jail, which is less trauma informed than the 23 hour facility will be, when the individual experiencing crisis is a danger to self or others and no other options are available.

**3a. Options / Advantages:**

As indicated above a 23-hour crisis stabilization center is an important part of the continuum of care for individuals experiencing a behavioral health crisis. While other options, such as the Anne Deacon Center of Hope, the Alternative Response Team (ART), The Ground Level Response and Coordinated



# Supplemental Budget Request

Status: Pending

## Health

## Community Health

Suppl ID # 4554

Fund

Cost Center

Originator: Ann Beck

Engagement (GRACE) program, the Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) program and Mental Health Court are all important and necessary programs, they are not sufficient to meet all of the needs across the continuum of care.

### 3b. Cost savings:

While this work is at its most preliminary states in predevelopment, a review of the literature suggests that the County can expect to see significant savings across multiple sectors including a reduction in the number of psychiatric hospitalization and emergency room referrals (c.f. Gillig, et al., 1989 ; Francis et al., 2000 ; Thinn et al., 2015 ). Additionally, we anticipate a reduced cost to the court system, the jail, and other Department-run behavioral health programs.

### 4a. Outcomes:

The global outcome of this work is the reduction of the number of individuals experiencing a behavioral health crisis in Whatcom County that are hospitalized secondary to their crisis. To achieve this outcome, the County will begin the project in 2024 and complete the following activities in 2024:

1. Predevelopment and design work, coordinated by Facilities with support from the Executive's Office and the Department of Health and Community Services.
2. Design and release of an RFP to solicit a service provider to support the design process, and eventual facility programming, coordinated by the Department of Health and Community Services.
3. Design and release of an RFP for Architectural and Engineering Services, coordinated by the Facilities with support from the Executive's Office and the Department of Health and Community Services.

### 4b. Measures:

We will establish base-line data of hospitalizations, emergency drop-offs, and law enforcement referrals for behavioral health crises and will compare those to similar data once the 23-hour crisis stabilization center begins operations.

### 5a. Other Departments/Agencies:

Executive's Office is involved in the planning but does not need spending authority.

Whatcom County Emergency Medical Services may be involved in the planning but does not need spending authority.

Whatcom County Facilities Management will be involved in the capital phase of this project and will use the spending authority requested here for staff time and other pre-development costs.

### 5b. Name the person in charge of implementation and what they are responsible for:

Kayla Schott-Bresler, from the Executive's Office will be responsible for coordinating with County departments, including legal and fiscal, during the implementation.

Rob Nye, Hans Howard, and Rusty Noble will be responsible for the construction management aspect of this project.

Other individuals, such as Mike Hilly from Emergency Management Service may be involved in planning aspects.

Perry Mowery and Eric Chambers from Health and Community Services will be responsible for planning and representing the Department's interest.

### 6. Funding Source:

Behavioral Health Fund- via interfund-see companion