



Memorandum

TO: Satpal Sidhu, County Executive

FROM: Erika Lautenbach, Director

RE: Opportunity Council – Housing Case Management Contract Amendment #11

DATE: **MARCH 29, 2024**

Attached is a contract amendment between Whatcom County and Opportunity Council for your review and signature. This amendment adds \$256,842 in targeted eviction prevention funds to support case management and assistance in navigating social and financial services with the goal of reducing the need for future housing assistance. This amendment also updates the contractor's indirect rate, invoicing requirements and target outcomes for the eviction prevention program.

Funds added by this amendment are part of the Targeted Eviction Prevention fund, which is a component of the Consolidated Homeless Grant and which have been anticipated by Whatcom County since the previous amendment. These additional funds allow for operation of the Targeted Eviction Prevention program through the remainder of the contract's term (through 12/31/2024). Number of households served is increased accordingly.

■ **Background and Purpose**

Housing Case Managers provide assistance to households to access housing, prevent housing loss, improve housing stability and reduce homelessness through joint efforts between the Whatcom Homeless Service Center (WHSC) and the Community Services Division of the Opportunity Council (OC). The WHSC serves as the fiscal hub for Whatcom County's rental assistance programs. When local agencies, including the OC's Community Services Division (the OC's Case Management Department), connect clients with a program that uses rental assistance, they coordinate with the WHSC to print rental assistance checks and mail them directly to landlords. Having a single payer of rental assistance ensures that landlords are not collecting rent checks from more than one agency.

This contract provides funding for expanded case management, eviction prevention services, and supportive services to the OC's Community Services Division clients who are experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness, or who are newly housed, in order to improve housing stability and reduce homelessness in Whatcom County.

■ **Funding Amount and Source**

Funding for this contract period, in an amount not to exceed \$1,488,823, is provided by local document recording fees, the Veterans Assistance Fund, the Washington State Department of Commerce Emergency Housing Fund (ALN 21.027) and the Washington State Department of Commerce Consolidated Homeless Grant (CHG). These funds are included in the 2024 budget. Council authorization is required as this amendment increases funding by more than 10% of the amount last authorized by Council on 12/05/2023.

- **Differences from Previous Contracts**

Section	Differences
Exhibit A – Scope of Work	Increase outcome targets for the Eviction Prevention Program
Exhibit B – Compensation	Adds \$256,842 in CHG targeted eviction prevention funds and updates the Contractor’s indirect rate and invoicing requirements
Exhibit K	Adds Commerce’s email regarding Federal vs State EHF Grant Funds
Appendix I	Adds the Contractor’s Federally approved Nonprofit Rate Agreement

Please contact Christopher D’Onofrio, Housing and Homeless Services Supervisor at 360-778-6049 (CDonofri@co.whatcom.wa.us) if you have any questions.