



Memorandum

TO: SATPAL SIDHU, COUNTY EXECUTIVE

FROM: Ann Beck

DATE: 1/14/23

RE: Presentation from Housing Team regarding 2023 work plan and local homelessness program

This presentation will give an overview of the work planned to address homelessness in 2023 as well as a discussion of ongoing opportunities and challenges related to homelessness in Whatcom County.

As Whatcom County's housing challenges have grown over the last few years, the health department has made investments to limit the harm that homelessness creates in our community. Pandemic-related funds from state and federal agencies provided significant resources to prevent and respond to the immediate crises that impacted Whatcom households, but many of the factors that contribute to homelessness are expected to persist. The Health Department's housing team will share how homelessness is impacted by adjacent systems and how our homelessness response system is managing the crisis. We will also discuss our work towards permanent solutions and where challenges will likely be found in the coming years.

This high-level overview will help to inform Council about local efforts, partnerships, and new opportunities. It will also help bring attention to areas that lack sufficient resources and are expected to be long-term challenges associated with the structure of the regional and national housing environment, which include upcoming financial cliffs as COVID related funding ceases. Council will have opportunity to express values and preferences to guide the direction of local resource and service development, as well as learn about policies that could impact access to housing statewide and/or inform decisions that could be made at the local level.

Please call Ann Beck at 360-778-6055 if there are any questions. Thank you.

