



Memorandum

TO: Satpal Sidhu, County Executive

FROM: Charlene Ramont, Interim Director

RE: Opportunity Council – Housing & Essential Needs Contract Amendment #1

DATE: OCTOBER 9, 2025

Attached is a contract amendment between Whatcom County and Opportunity Council for your review and signature. This amendment updates eligibility requirements in accordance with statewide Housing and Essential Needs (HEN) updates effective July 1, 2025, increases funding, and revises outputs and reporting requirements. Funding is being increased to the full HEN budget available in the 2025-2027 Consolidated Homeless Grant, as previously, there was not enough spending authority available in the County budget to include the full amount.

■ Background and Purpose

The purpose of this contract is to provide rapid rehousing and homelessness prevention case management, rental assistance, utility assistance, and essential needs items to Housing and Essential Needs (HEN) and HEN Foundational Community Supports (FCS) Bridge- eligible households, whose eligibility is determined by the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS). HEN is a program within Washington State Department of Commerce's Consolidated Homeless Grant (CHG) and funding is passed through the County to the Opportunity Council for housing support (rent and utility assistance), essential needs items, and case management services for recipients whose eligibility is determined by the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS). This is a sole source contract with the Opportunity Council as the administrator of the Whatcom Homeless Service Center and Community Resource Center.

■ Funding Amount and Source

Funding for this two-year contract, in an amount not to exceed \$2,611,906 in year one and \$2,611,906 in year two, is provided by the CHG. These funds are included in the 2025 budget and will be included in the 2026-2027 budgets. Council authorization is required per WCC 3.08.100, as the additional funding provided by this amendment exceeds 10% of the amount last authorized by Council.

■ Differences from Previous Contracts

Section	Differences
Exhibit A – Scope of Work	Updates eligibility requirements, program outputs, and reporting requirements
Exhibit B – Compensation	Increases funding for years one and two

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

Encl.