



Memorandum

TO: SATPAL SIDHU, COUNTY EXECUTIVE

FROM: Ann Beck, Human Services Manager

DATE: 5/5/22

RE: Presentation from Human Services Division regarding Homeless Housing Programs

The housing needs and available resources in Whatcom County have increased significantly over the last two years, creating strains and opportunities for residents and service providers alike. County staff will share what has changed and provide a brief look at the system's current functions and some of the key challenges ahead.

Homeless Housing programs have continued to provide services throughout the pandemic while facing workforce shortages and staff burnout. Whatcom County housing staff has provided a variety of supports across the housing system while also managing distribution of the unprecedented state and federal dollars that have enabled partners to meet emergent needs. With a wide spectrum of housing programs to support, staff work has included a focus on interim shelters, permanent supportive housing, eviction prevention programs, and more recently the development of affordable housing opportunities. Each of these areas relies on restrictive funding and requires personnel support, contract monitoring, and maintenance of complex systems and relationships. County staff have an ever-increasingly important role in the overall support and development of the housing system.

With continued growth in the system, as well as on-going maintenance of pre-existing programs, staff see opportunities for improvements as well as challenges ahead. This brief presentation will explain what is happening in the system, how it works, and the county's role in supporting and steering the various components. There will also be an overview of some the challenges and opportunities ahead, as well as time for questions and comments.

Please call Ann Beck, HS Manager at 6055 if there are any questions. Thank you.