



MEMORANDUM

TO: Whatcom County Council

THROUGH: Satpal Sidhu, County Executive; Kayla Schott-Bressler, Deputy Executive

FROM: Hans Howard, Special Projects Manager

RE: Opioid Settlement Funding Budget Supplemental

DATE: October 25, 2024

Background

On July 11, 2023, the Whatcom County Council adopted Ordinance No. 2023-039 to approve the Justice Project Needs Assessment Implementation Plan. One of the first priorities contained in this Plan is for the County to build a 23-hour Crisis Relief Center, which will provide behavioral health urgent care and crisis services to individuals in Whatcom County.

The attached budget supplemental transfers Opioid Settlement dollars from the General Fund to the Project Based Budget and assists in securing full funding security for the project.

The total project costs for a base facility are estimated to be approximately \$16 million including design and programming, permitting and construction and start-up costs.

A table of current funding sources follows:

Source	Amount	Status
Behavioral Health Fund	\$1,000,000.00	Committed
Washington State Commerce	\$11,229,500.00	Committed
City of Bellingham	\$1,000,000.00	Interlocal Agreement in Progress
Opioid Settlement Funding	\$1,000,000.00	Proposed budget supplemental
Further Fundraising	\$1,770,500.00	In Progress
Total	\$16,000,000.00	

Full Maximization of Site

Beyond the above, an additional \$2.5M in capital funding would need to be secured to accommodate a maximum site plan (total cost of \$18.5M). This would accommodate a larger floor plan for growth and provision of ancillary services that support the rapid assessment, treatment, stabilization and proactive discharge of individuals in crisis. Additional services could include more clinical space, pharmacy and/ or office space for designated crisis responders. This would allow maximum utilization of the land/project side. The County could consider including this request on its 2025 legislative agenda.

An alternative would be for the County to build a "shell" for a portion of the project site, which likely could be accommodated within existing budget.

Current Project Schedule

The Executive's Office, Facilities, health and Community Services, Finance, and the PA's office have established a project team for the project. The Opioid Settlement dollars will be used to contract with the Architect and Engineer team. The RFQ for Architect and Engineer Services is scheduled to be advertised for in November 2024. The approximate overall timeline is outlined below:

Work Item	Responsible Dept	Goal Timeline
Hire service modeling consultant	WCHCS	January 2024
Model operational costs	WCHCS	Q1 2024
RFP for Service Provider	WCHCS	Q1 2025
RFQ for Architect and Engineer	Facilities	Q4 2024
Design	Facilities	Q4 2024 - Q2 2025
Permitting	Facilities	Q3 2025
RFP for General Contractor	Facilities	Q3 2025
Build	Facilities	Q4 2025 - Q3 2026
Stakeholder outreach and service design	WCHCS	Q1 2024 – Q3 2026

The Administration is looking forward to bringing this critical community resource online. Please contact Hans Howard at x5391 with any questions.