




MEMORANDUM

TO: Whatcom County Council
Whatcom County Executive

FROM: Jill Nixon, Legislative Coordinator II 

DATE: October 29, 2025

RE: IPRTF Recommendation to County Council

At the October 27, 2025 regular meeting of the Incarceration Prevention and Reduction Task Force, the Task Force voted to approve a motion to endorse an amended version of the Behavioral Care Center (BCC) Workgroup recommendation as shown below:

BCC Workgroup Recommendation (as amended and approved by the IPRTF): The IPRTF BCC Workgroup recommends adoption of the Behavioral Care Center model as outlined in the draft document, developed as part of an integrated behavioral health campus providing inpatient, therapeutic, community-based care as an alternative to incarceration, rather than an in-custody model with the new jail. The model incorporates four legal entry points agreed by courts, prosecutors, and defenders; a facility that allows for sufficient capacity to accommodate priority diversion referrals, eligibility for individuals charged with behavioral health-driven offenses; and integration with crisis response and in-custody behavioral health supports. The workgroup further recommends the IPRTF and the Finance and Facilities Advisory Board advance this model to the County Council for inclusion in justice project planning and cost analysis, with data measures, models, and staffing roles refined as implementation planning proceeds.

The motion carried 21-0-1 by the members present. **Aye**: Alexis Hahs, Arlene Feld, Barry Buchanan, Berdi Safford, Dan Hammill, Deborah Hawley, Donnell Tanksley, Eric Richey, Eric Peterson, Heather Flaherty, Jake Wiebusch, Kim Lund, Maia Vanyo, Malora Christensen, Peter Frazier, Rebecca Mertzig, Rodger Funk, Rosa Hunter, Scott Korthuis, Tami Bennett, Kayla Schott-Bresler (proxy for Satpal Sidhu). **Abstain**: Raylene King.