

**WHATCOM COUNTY
EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE**

County Courthouse
311 Grand Avenue, Suite #108
Bellingham, WA 98225-4082



Satpal Singh Sidhu
County Executive

Memorandum

To: Whatcom County Council
Through: Satpal Sidhu, County Executive
From: Jed Holmes, Public Affairs Manager
Date: November 10, 2025
RE: Request for motion on legislative agenda for 2026 legislative session

Background

The County Executive's Office, with the assistance of Columbia Policy Advisors, has been engaged in discussions with state legislators on County priorities for the upcoming legislative session. Given the new economic reality facing the State, it is clear that we have entered a period of reduced funding opportunities. The Council was briefed in September and October on the current state of affairs, and our recommendation is to focus on a limited number of opportunities where Whatcom County has specific and unique needs.

Proposed Priorities

The draft legislative priorities are presented in tiers: 1) key objectives, 2) other priorities, and 3) areas of general interest. The key objectives, which are specific to the interests of Whatcom County, include:

- Legislation Enabling Whatcom County to Consider Formation of Ferry District
- Increased Flexibility for State Capital Allocation for Behavioral Health Facility
- Superior Court Funding for Adjudication Needs

The other priorities discussed in the document reflect a continuation of items prioritized in recent years.

Request for Motion

The Executive's Office is requesting that the Council pass a motion confirming the legislative priorities. The purpose of this motion is to document alignment of the County Executive and County Council across a range of issues and objectives. The County Executive retains the right to add or adjust his legislative priorities in the service of the County Administration's needs and objectives. The County Executive also welcomes any future input and guidance from the Council as new opportunities and needs arise during the course of the upcoming legislative session.