



Memorandum

TO: Satpal Sidhu, County Executive
FROM: Erika Lautenbach, Director
RE: Lake Whatcom Residential & Treatment Center – Behavioral Health Support Services Contract
DATE: NOVEMBER 21, 2023

Attached is a contract between Whatcom County and Lake Whatcom Residential & Treatment Center (LWRTC) for your review and signature.

▪ **Background and Purpose**

This contract provides funding for LWRTC to provide seven day per week, prevention, intervention, resource referrals, and stabilization strategies that reduce risks for substance use, declining mental health conditions, and related needs at the downtown Bellingham Public Library, to impacted community members and library staff. Over 1,000 individuals come into the downtown Bellingham Public Library each day. In June of 2023, the monthly census was over 32,000 individuals.

This contract is awarded as a result of RFP 23-64 and LWRTC was selected because of their history of providing care to similar populations, preparedness to mitigate potential pitfalls to service delivery, and an awareness of the current local needs.

Whatcom County Health and Community Services (WCHCS) supports the development of healthy youth, families, schools, and communities by reducing risks associated with substance use, mental health conditions, and other behavioral disorders. In addition to reducing risk, integrative protective factors, resilience, and measurable hope into services is essential. These factors help to ‘buffer’ individuals from risks by fostering individual attachment to peers, family members, schools, and communities. Individuals who feel connected and ‘bonded’ in those domains experience less likelihood for using drugs, committing crimes, joining gangs, and a range of other unhealthy behaviors.

▪ **Funding Amount and Source**

Funding for this contract, in an amount not to exceed \$185,000, is provided by the Behavioral Health Program Fund (50% of costs, not to exceed \$110,000) and the City of Bellingham (50% of costs, not to exceed \$75,000). These funds are included in the 2024 budget. Council authorization is required as funding for this contract exceeds \$40,000.

Please contact Hannah Fisk, Program Specialist at 360-820-7212 (HFisk@co.whatcom.wa.us) or Kathleen Roy, Financial & Administrative Manager at 360-778-6007 (KRoy@co.whatcom.wa.us), if you have any questions.

Encl.