



August 16, 2019

To: Jack Louws, Whatcom County Executive  
Whatcom County Council Members

From: Greg Winter, Opportunity Council Executive Director

Re: East Whatcom Regional Resource Center expansion plans and funding

On behalf of East Whatcom Community Council and other stakeholders in the Columbia Valley and the Foothills, I would like to thank you for your support for the expansion of the County's East Whatcom Regional Resource Center.

We are writing to ask you to consider adding \$172,000 to the County's earlier \$415,000 commitment to this important project.

**PROJECT OVERVIEW:** For those unfamiliar with the project, Opportunity Council has leased and operated the EWRRRC since 2011. The EWRRRC "Phase 2" expansion includes two new, multi-purpose, community facility buildings being added to the County's first building on the nine-acres owned by the County at 8251 Kendall Road/WA HWY 547.

Construction of the second EWRRRC building began in early 2019: a 4,900 square-foot, one-story facility for multiple community uses, including a food bank distribution center with refrigerated storage space, as well as multi-purpose meeting and activity rooms.

The third EWRRRC building will start construction as soon as funding is secured: a 6,000 square-foot covered outdoor area with a 23-foot-high shed roof and open sides. This outdoor covered area will provide a much-needed recreational area to accommodate basketball and other healthy activities for youth, and the same space will double as a community gathering place for a variety of uses including outdoor movie nights and other community-led programs.

Opportunity Council will manage all three buildings as part its Agreement with the County for the lease and management of the EWRRRC property.

**CURRENT FUNDING AND REMAINING GAP:** Opportunity Council has raised \$2,705,000 so far (toward the \$2,877,000 project budget for the second building), including \$415,000 that the County has invested from REET funds. Opportunity

#### Community Action

A Community Action Agency  
serving Whatcom, Island and  
San Juan Counties since 1965

Whatcom County  
1111 Cornwall Ave., Suite C  
Bellingham, WA 98225  
(360) 734-5121  
(800) 649-5121  
Fax (360) 671-0541

Island County  
1791 NE 1st Ave.  
P.O. Box 922  
Oak Harbor, WA 98277  
(360) 679-6577  
(800) 317-5427  
Fax (360) 679-2440

San Juan County  
(800) 649-5121

[www.oppco.org](http://www.oppco.org)

Council and its allies leveraged \$5,500 from other sources for every \$1,000 from REET. Our challenge now is to secure \$172,000 to complete the EWRRRC's second building. After this second building is completed, we will raise the remainder of Phase 2 funding, an additional \$580,000 for the third building and additional parking. We appreciate County REET being considered for the \$172,000 gap for Building 2.

**UPDATE ON CONSTRUCTION:** In September 2018, Opportunity Council invited construction bids from general contractors. The bid opening in late September was disappointing because all bids were well above the pre-bid estimated construction costs. All bidders were notified that OC would be considering the apparent low bidder's submittal and intended to offer that bidder a contract, pending further review.

From October through December, Opportunity Council and the low bidder looked for cost savings that would bring down the costs of construction. Cost savings were identified, with the largest being the decision to postpone the third building, the outdoor, covered recreation space. By early January, OC and the GC had arrived at a contract scope of work that reduced the proposed costs of construction. In mid-January, Opportunity Council and the general contractor signed a construction contract, after receiving a green light from County Executive's Office. Note that the County is not a party to the construction contract. Construction will be completed by December 2019.

Again, we appreciate the County's willingness to work with Opportunity Council to help meet the needs of residents in the Columbia Valley and the Whatcom Foothills. I look forward to talking with you about how to proceed.

Sincerely,



Greg Winter  
Executive Director

**East Whatcom Regional Resource Center Phase 2 Expansion Project**

**Funding sources secured**

East Whatcom Regional Resource Center expansion funding		
Whatcom County REET	\$	300,000
WA Department of Commerce CDBG	\$	750,000
Chuckanut Health Foundation	\$	50,000
Whatcom Community Foundation	\$	100,000
Whatcom Community Foundation	\$	50,000
McEachren Charitable Trust	\$	50,000
WA Department of Commerce BCF	\$	500,000
WA Department of Commerce	\$	125,000
Whatcom Community Foundation	\$	150,000
Whatcom County REET	\$	115,000
Mount Baker Foundation	\$	425,000
Whatcom Community Foundation	\$	90,000

**Total Secured to Date as of 8/1/2019** \$ **2,705,000**

**Project costs**

Building 2	\$	2,877,000	Includes current contract plus backup generator
Building 3, if added to general contractor's contract	\$	330,000	Needs new estimate, esp. if a separate project
Other priorities not included in the current GC's contract	\$	250,000	Additional parking

**Total Phase 2 costs** \$ **3,457,000**

<b>Estimated funding needed to complete total Phase 2 projec</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>752,000</b>
<b>Funding needed to complete building 2 component</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>172,000</b>

Phase 2 Total Project Cost Estimate split by type of source		As a % of amount secured to date		
		Aug '19	As a % of entire Phase 2 cost estimate	
Total private sector contributions	\$	915,000	34%	26%
Total public local contributions (County REET)	\$	415,000	15%	12%
Total public state contributions (BCF, Supp. budget)	\$	625,000	23%	18%
Total public federal contributions (CDBG)	\$	750,000	28%	22%
Additional funds needed	\$	752,000	NA	22%
	\$	3,457,000	100%	100%