



SKAGIT COUNTY  
 BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
 1800 Continental Pl.  
 Mount Vernon, WA 98273

# 2023 STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

## FUNDING REQUEST

### Skagit County Crisis Stabilization Center (SCCSC)

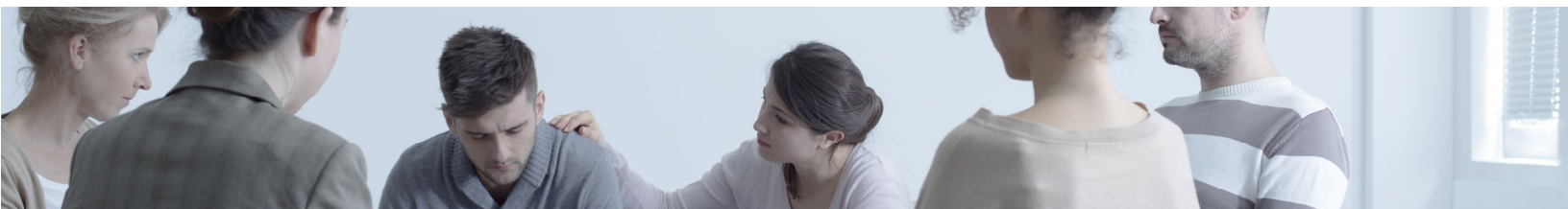
In 2022, Skagit County opened its new Evaluation and Treatment Center—completing Phase 1 of the Skagit County Stabilization Campus. Funded by a Washington State Department of Commerce grant and local dollars, this 16-bed facility provides inpatient mental health services to adults experiencing acute psychiatric symptoms, providing 24-hour support, and preparing individuals to return home, or to other community-based programs as appropriate.



A recent gap analysis identified a shortage of 115 beds in the North Sound region devoted to crisis services. Currently, there are no available crisis stabilization beds in Skagit County. From 2005-2015, the need for intensive inpatient care in Skagit County increased by 349%, while residential treatment options remained stagnant. To help alleviate these shortfalls, Skagit County is requesting capital funding for Phase II of the Stabilization Campus: the Skagit County Crisis Stabilization Center (SCCSC).

Phase II would add 16 crisis stabilization beds, as well as 32 co-occurring treatment and acute detox beds. The SCCSC will be developed in partnership with local law enforcement, Emergency Medical Services, local hospitals, and other crisis response services to ensure that the program design and service offerings meet the appropriate level of patient needs to reduce the use of emergency departments and jails for such individuals.

Funding Components	Amount
Planning & Design	\$2,119,043
Architecture & Engineering	\$1,764,711
Construction Management	\$138,954
Construction	\$13,895,364
Equipment	\$1,350,000
Sales Tax	\$1,222,792
<b>Project Total</b>	<b>~\$20.5 million</b>
Commerce Grant	\$5.8 million
County funds for planning and design	\$2 million
<b>2023-2025 Legislative Request</b>	<b>\$12.7 million</b> (\$5M for FY '23-24; \$8.7M for FY '24-25)



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# REQUESTS FOR SUPPORT & FUNDING INITIATIVES

## Support salmon recovery efforts utilizing a collaborative approach

The Skagit Watershed holds some of Washington's most important fish rearing habitat and is recognized statewide as a critical site for salmon recovery and habitat improvement. Skagit County has made significant investments in salmon recovery efforts, both individually and with local and state partners; notably, the County has replaced 55 culverts and has another 11 culvert removal projects in design. Legislature has considered proposals to expand salmon recovery efforts in the past; however, many of these proposals had potential to significantly impact Skagit County's constituents, implementation of government functions, and key industries. Moving forward, Skagit County asks the Legislature to consider the following items:

### Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP)

Skagit County supports voluntary habitat improvement programs, such as the VSP, which protect and enhance riparian habitat while providing ecological benefit to private landowners. A study funded by the 2022 Legislature found that these programs have been widely underfunded, inhibiting the effectiveness of implementation. Skagit County supports full funding of the VSP and other local voluntary habitat enhancement programs.

### Include Local Partners

Skagit County is a proud partner of the state in salmon recovery efforts and boasts subject-matter experts responsible for planning and implementing on-the-ground habitat restoration efforts. The County urges the Legislature to utilize this knowledge and include local partners when developing legislative strategies to improve fish habitat.

### Implementation Funding

Skagit County asks that additional planning responsibilities, required updates, and implementation costs associated with new responsibilities are fully funded by the Legislature.

## Support public safety and reduce court backlog

Communities in Skagit County have encountered considerable public safety challenges within the past year, including increased crime rates, workforce shortages, and significant court backlogs due to lingering effects of COVID and the Blake decision. Counties lack budgetary flexibility to respond to these issues due to the cost of providing state-mandated law and justice services, including indigent defense. Skagit County asks the Legislature to adopt and invest in solutions aimed at enhancing community safety, accountability, equity, and reliability of County justice functions, including:

- Address the [State v. Blake decision](#): Expand funding for treatment and diversion opportunities, and ensure that simple possession statutes offer a swift, accountable, and direct pathway to readily available treatment;
- Offer [incentives/solutions to attract and maintain](#) public safety personnel;
- Provide [funding to mitigate district and superior court backlogs](#) and increase funding for court alternative models (community, drug, and mental health courts);
- [Fully fund indigent defense](#), providing more equitable justice and allowing counties to invest in other public safety initiatives, including behavioral health, substance use disorder treatment, and diversion programs.