



# Moving from Managing Community Issues to Solving Them

**Addressing homelessness has been a priority for Skagit County for some time now. For years, more and more services and resources have been used to support a growing population of individuals experiencing homelessness and behavioral health issues.**

For too long, we've tried to tackle the same problems in each of our jurisdictions, and too many of our community members continue to suffer. Our first responders and service providers are stretched thin. Our systems of care are fragmented, and people aren't getting the long-term care they need to thrive.

In July 2022, Skagit County Commissioners and the Mayors of Anacortes, Burlington, Mount Vernon, and Sedro-Woolley established North Star, joining forces to coordinate and share dollars, services, and people to create effective care and expand housing options for those experiencing chronic homelessness.

Instead of managing community issues, we're working together across jurisdictions to solve them. It's more effective. It costs less. It gets people the support and services they actually need, when they need it.

## Our Progress

**North Star is a long-term effort. We're starting by creating safe, stable housing and providing better care for those who are suffering the most.**



### Safe, stable housing for everyone

Skagit County is a special place. We want it to be affordable for everyone to call home.

As a first step, we've kicked off a cross-sector, cross-jurisdictional effort to build more affordable housing by:

- Identifying public parcels and considering ways to streamline processes.
- Coordinating funding for priority projects.
- Using more housing vouchers.
- Improving Coordinated Entry to ensure that accessing housing is quick and easier for those experiencing homelessness.



### Effective, coordinated community-based system of care

Community members experiencing chronic homelessness and behavioral health issues deserve the care they need to thrive.

To accomplish this, we're creating a coordinated and aligned system that:

- Allows first responders and health care professionals to coordinate and share information by launching an easy-to-use information system (Julota).
- Effectively connects people to appropriate resources and services that support recovery, rather than jail or the emergency room.

## Join Us

**Our actions around housing and coordinated care are part of our big vision for Skagit County: a thriving community for everyone. You can be a part of this public-private partnership to improve the health of the full Skagit community. For more information about North Star, visit [www.skagitcounty.net/northstar](http://www.skagitcounty.net/northstar).**