



Skagit County – North Star Project Guiding Principles

Integrated & Coordinated System

The North Star Project is aimed at system change and therefore will use a systems-approach. That includes strengthening county-wide governance, developing strategically coherent initiatives, addressing root causes, and building long-term stability. Fine-grained process improvement is desirable but not a primary focus at this stage.

Vital Conditions

To improve community health and well-being, we can't provide support only when people are sick and in crisis. We need to pay attention to people's individual needs – and to the conditions that affect *everyone's* well-being. We will focus on building our Civic Muscle and utilize the Vital Conditions framework to ensure the proper balance is met between vital conditions and urgent services in order to advance a collaborative, cross-sector approach to improve community health and well-being.

Learn, Listen, and Focus on Root Causes

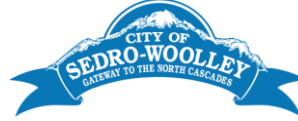
We will concentrate on solutions that address root causes, alleviate disparities, and offer measurable results. Skagitonians who have struggled and suffered in the current system will help to shape and evaluate proposed solutions. We will build learning and adaptation into all plans so changes can address the on-going needs of the community to include affordable housing.

Sustainable Funding

Program funding must be diverse and sustainable. We will actively pursue funding sources that align with our strategic initiatives. Local funding should be prioritized for services that state and federal entities do not have a responsibility to fund.

Robust Workforce

A well-resourced, well-trained, and resilient non-profit sector with sufficient capacity and competency and ready access to good data is central to the success of the North Star Project. We believe in the power of a workforce not only with compassion and cultural competency to serve this vulnerable community, but with lived experience. In light of this, we will invest in recruiting and ongoing training, especially those that are in our community.



Collaboration over Independence

We will approach this work from a county-wide perspective, understanding that needs vary from city to city and between unincorporated areas of the county. It is in the collective interest of all jurisdictions to support and invest in global solutions that show the most promise for the county as a whole. We will address our concerns and needs through the governance system developed rather than abandoning our collective commitment to each other.

Recovery Oriented System of Care

We will focus on developing a coordinated network of community-based services and supports that is person-centered and builds on the strengths and resiliencies of individuals, families, and communities to achieve abstinence and improved health, wellness, and quality of life for those with mental health and/or substance use disorders.

Prioritize Populations

We will dedicate resources and funding to populations with the greatest need. Our shelter, outreach, stabilization, and rent assistance programs will focus primarily on the most vulnerable to experiencing harm without housing and services for all shelter and rental assistance programs.