



Snohomish County

County Council

Megan Dunn, Chair
Jared Mead, Vice-Chair
Stephanie Wright
Sam Low
Nate Nehring

County Executive Dave Somers

February 28, 2022

Rep. Timm Ormsby
Chair, House Appropriations
Committee
PO Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504

Sen. Christine Rolfes
Chair, Senate Ways and Means Committee
PO Box 40423
Olympia, WA 98504

Rep. Drew Stokesbary
Ranking Member, House
Appropriations Committee
PO Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504

Sen. Lynda Wilson
Ranking Member, Senate Ways and Means
Committee
PO Box 40417
Olympia, WA 98504

SENT VIA E-MAIL

Dear Operating Budget Writers:

On behalf of Snohomish County, thank you for your work on the proposed 2022 Operating Budgets. We are appreciative of the significant investments made in our community and across our state, funding critical needs like behavioral health, housing, and homelessness. In a time of state prosperity, these proposed budgets make strong investments in ensuring all residents have equitable access to basic needs.

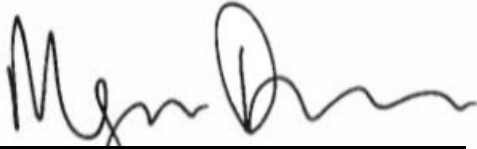
Snohomish County is proud to be a partner to the state in aiding some of our most vulnerable communities. In 2021, Washington State began welcoming thousands of individuals and families evacuating from Afghanistan. The County has been at the forefront of resettlement efforts: using local and federal dollars, Snohomish County opened a Welcoming Center for refugees entering the state, offering centralized access to services, resources, and providing immediate and long-term housing placement. Staffed by the County and community organizations, the Welcoming Center has served over 450 individuals since opening in October and receives approximately 120 visitors a week. In addition to housing placement, the Welcoming Center provides a suite of services and resources, including culturally appropriate food, clothing, hygiene supplies, medical and dental care, prayer services, rental assistance, immigration assistance, employment and educational assistance, state and federal benefit enrolment, and more.

Snohomish County is operating a successful model and can employ this funding immediately. As you finalize the 2022 Operating Budget, **we ask that you include the \$5.558 million allocated in the proposed Senate**

Operating Budget for Snohomish County to continue delivering these services. Funding will allow the County to continue center operations – including housing assistance – for 12 months. This funding will ensure that approximately 500 individuals at risk of housing instability remain securely housed.

Thank you for your consideration of this urgent need.

Sincerely,



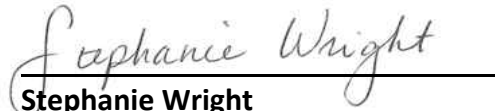
Megan Dunn
Council Chair



Dave Somers
County Executive



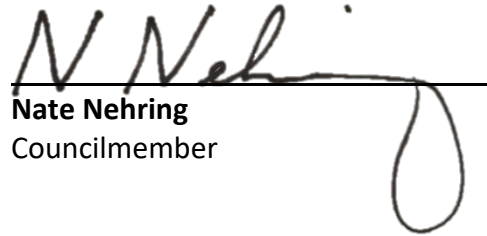
Jared Mead
Council Vice-Chair



Stephanie Wright
Councilmember



Sam Low
Council Vice-Chair



Nate Nehring
Councilmember