



Snohomish County
Dave Somers
County Executive

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Snohomish County Releases Housing and Behavioral Health Capital Fund to Create 700 Units of New Housing

\$114 Million in Investments to Preserve and Build Affordable Housing and Behavioral Health Facilities Over Five Years

Snohomish County, Wash., September 21, 2023 – Snohomish County Executive Dave Somers today released the County’s Housing and Behavioral Health Capital Fund, which is a plan for investments to preserve and build affordable housing and behavioral health facilities. This new revenue source will allow the County to invest approximately \$114 million over five years to create 550 new units of affordable housing plus an additional 150 units of emergency bridge and permanent supportive housing. Funding will also be available to help expand the number and type of locally available behavioral health facilities.

“One of the foremost challenges we face as a state – and nation – is the housing crisis. Across our region, housing costs have risen astronomically over the last two decades, resulting in displacement and – in the worst circumstances – individuals and families entering street homelessness,” said Executive Somers. “A crisis of this scale and human impact requires urgent, bold action. That’s why we are using our one-time federal pandemic recovery funding and this new revenue to make significant capital investments to increase our affordable housing and behavioral health capacity.”

For no household to spend more than 30 percent of their income toward housing, Snohomish County will need 143,182 additional affordable housing units by 2044 to accommodate pent up demand and this projected growth. Additionally, 32.4 percent of Snohomish County households are housing cost-burdened with a substantially larger percentage of renters being cost-burdened than homeowners.

“These new investments will allow us to make significant progress to increase the availability of affordable housing across our county,” said Snohomish County Council Chair Jared Mead ([District 4](#)). “By increasing affordable housing and behavioral health options for our most vulnerable residents, we can create a safe, healthy, and thriving community for all.”

In the Housing and Behavioral Health Capital Fund, the County plans to invest nearly \$93 million over five years in the acquisition, rehabilitation, construction, and operations and maintenance of affordable, emergency bridge, and permanent supportive housing. These investments will create approximately 550 new units of affordable housing, and 150 additional units of emergency bridge and permanent supportive housing.

In compliance with state law, these new units will serve individuals and households with incomes below 60 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI) who are living with mental illness and/or disabilities, families with children, unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness, survivors of domestic violence, veterans, and seniors.

“We are so pleased and grateful to see this plan come to fruition. So many people are really struggling right now. Having a home they can afford will provide a huge boost to thousands of people in the County,” said Mark Smith, Executive Director, Housing Consortium of Everett and Snohomish County.

Additionally, the County plans to invest \$10 million for the construction of behavioral health facilities and match this investment with more than \$3 million from the Chemical Dependency/Mental Health sales tax to leverage existing funding sources to broaden and sustain efforts.

A reserve fund will be maintained for unanticipated costs including potential cost increases caused by inflation and other broader economic factors.

After proposing a draft version of the plan in December 2021, Snohomish County Human Services conducted community engagement to further refine the plan based on the public's priorities. The department engaged with service providers, affordable housing developers, people with lived experience, local elected officials, and constituents as part of that engagement.

Anyone interested can review the full [Housing and Behavioral Health Capital Fund report here](#).

The County Council will consider the Housing and Behavioral Health Capital Fund as part of the County's 2024 budget, which Executive Somers will transmit to the Council next week.

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