

Agenda

Community Action Board of Directors

Thursday, April 25, 2024, 5-6:30 pm

Zoom Link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89792326464?pwd=bzdsZ1FxMVZpb2swTmxXUUbzdSQT09>

Meeting ID: 897 9232 6464

Passcode: 955279

Phone: +1 (253) 215-8782

Welcome/introductions/sharing

5:00 pm

Consent Agenda				5:05 pm
Item	Action	Description		
2	Minutes	Information	Minutes from the March 26 Board of Directors Meeting	
3	Correspondence	Information	Kulshan View Letter of Support: MV City County	
			Kulshan View Letter of Support: Skagit Commissioners	
			Kulshan View Letter of Support: City of Mount Vernon	
			Kulshan View Letter of Support: Rep Ramel, (40 th District)	
			Kulshan View Letter of Support: Mount Vernon School District	
			Kulshan View Letter of Support: Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce	
4	Division Reports	Information	Reports from Melissa Self, Jazmin Flores, Sandi Phinney, Philip Prud'homme, Michele Metcalf & Elizabeth Jennings	
5	Motions	Approve	Motion to approve Minutes of March 26 Board meeting	
		Approve	Motion to approve April Finance Report (thru February 2024)	

Discussion Agenda

Item	Action	Description	Responsible	Time		
		Board Exec & Board Planning & Engagement	Discussion	Planning a June Board mini-retreat	Davidson; Bennett; Phinney	5:15
6		Personnel Committee	Motion	Pay transparency proposal (6a), and overview of HR dashboard (6)	Reed; Engstrom	5:30
7		State of the agency	Briefing	Highlights from agency dashboard	Henkel	5:45
		Housing Work Group	Discussion	Phasing Kulshan View, capital strategy, and updated timeline	Brocksmith; Metcalf; Henkel	6:00
		Donor Development	Discussion	Reflecting on Spirit of Hope – and building on relationships our participants!	Bennett; Prudhomme	6:15
		Adjourn				6:30

Equity-Informed Decision-Making Questions

Broad Questions:

- How might this disproportionately affect people of color?
- Is it positive, negative, or neutral in dismantling system racism?

Specific questions for Committees to consider:

- **Equity:** What are the equity questions we should be asking about this decision?
- **Voice:** What do the people impacted have to say about this? What do our staff say? Who should be at the table?
- **Gaps:** What is our most vulnerable population, or what population isn't being served?
- **Data:** What does the data tell us? What don't we know, and how do we find out?
- **Asset map:** What are our partners doing? What do they think our role should be?



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

April 2024

CLIENT SECTOR MEMBERS		Term Ends
LAC CREAT	KATI ORTIZ Skagit Valley College (360) 421-4400 kati.ortiz@skagit.edu	Dec 2024
CREAT Donor Develop LAC	CHRISTINA SOLTERO Burlington-Edison School District (360) 421-0704 csoltero@be.wednet.edu	Dec 2025
CREAT Housing Develop	JAMIE THORNBERRY Veterans Advisory Board of Skagit County (360) 503-9485 thornjb242@gmail.com	Dec 2026
	HEATHER WALLACE Head Start Policy Council (360) 202-5895 heatherhelpsall@gmail.com	Dec 2025
PUBLIC SECTOR MEMBERS		Term Ends
Bd Plan & Engmt Donor Develop Finance Housing Devel	RICHARD BROCKSMITH Mount Vernon City Council Member (360) 826-2094 richardb@mountvernonwa.gov	Dec 2024
TREASURER CREAT Executive	DANNY HAGEN Skagit County Assessor (425) 275-1947 hagen.danny@outlook.com	Dec 2026
Housing Devel	TINA TATE Hospital District 304 Commissioner (360) 708-2144	Dec 2025
Bd Plan & Engmt	RON WESEN Skagit County Commissioner (360) 336-9300 ronw@co.skagit.wa.us	Dec 2023
PRIVATE SECTOR MEMBERS		Term Ends
VICE PRESIDENT Donor Develop	KATE BENNETT True North Consulting (360) 395-8727 bennettrk@comcast.net	Dec 2025
PRESIDENT Donor Develop Executive	GREGG DAVIDSON (360) 708-2292 gregg-davidson@msn.com	Dec 2024
Finance CREAT	CAROLYN MOULTON Lautenbach Recycling (360) 472-0335 cymoulton@gmail.com	Dec 2026
SECRETARY Bd Plan & Engmt Executive LAC	SILVIA REED Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce (360) 395-2944 silvia@mountvernonchamber.com	Dec 2025



Important Upcoming Dates: All are Invited

If you would like to get added to Committee Communications, please reach out to the following people:

- **Finance Committee:** Ayumi Orthmeyer, ayumio@communityactionskagit.org
- **Board Planning & Engagement:** Sandi York, sandiy@communityactionskagit.org
- **Donor Development Committee:** Philip Prud'homme, philipp@communityactionskagit.org
- **Housing Work Group:** Michele Metcalf, michelem@communityactionskagit.org
- **Latinx Advisory Committee:** Isabela Ordonez, isabelao@communityactionskagit.org
- **Skagit Housing Consortium:** Matt Johnson Money: matthew@skagit.org

Monday April 22, 3-4:30 pm, Board Finance -Rescheduled

- **Zoom:** <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84112278237?pwd=iEJcAAcMb61EJ0iq2u5mU1aGM65LLW.1>
- **Meeting ID:** 841 1227 8237
- **Passcode:** 657785
- **Phone:** +1 (253) 215 8782

Tuesday April 23, 3:30-5:00 pm, Donor Development Committee

- **Zoom:** <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/9436029776?pwd=Y1U1bWQxdXVodHJiczEzb0lSeTNEUT09>
- **Meeting ID:** 943 602 9776
- **Passcode:** 2023
- **Phone:** +1 (253) 215-8782

Thursday April 25, 5-6:30 pm, April Board Meeting

- **Link:** <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89792326464?pwd=bzdsZ1FxMVZpb2swTmxxYUubzdSQT09>
- **Meeting ID:** 897 9232 6464
- **Passcode:** 955279
- **Phone:** +1 (253) 215-8782

Wednesday May 1, 9-10 am, Brunch & Learn

- **Link:** <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85985412986?pwd=bGNJSFdjZGRLOVF4KzBSWnBGd20rdz09>
- **Meeting ID:** 859 8541 2986
- **Passcode:** 359781
- **Phone:** +1 (253) 215 8782

Wednesday May 1, 3-4 pm, CREAT Committee- with guest Mayor Donovan

- **Link:** <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87174559991?pwd=SFxOOGpKS1dwZHI0c2xaOUNucWhCOT09>
- **Meeting ID:** 871 7455 999
- **Passcode:** 450580
- **Phone:** +1 (253) 215-8782

Friday May 3, 9:30- 10:30 am, Rental Housing Advisory Team

- **Zoom:** <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88626093860?pwd=qc9Bi3oVh7PX5sjYDbb5NoyPMslQuE.1>
- **Meeting ID:** 886 2609 3860
- **Passcode:** 218802
- **Phone:** +1 (253) 215 8782

Wednesday May 8, 7:30-9 am, Board Executive Committee

- **Link:** <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84754093621?pwd=elh5QjhVL2tEblIRVaGRXK1BQQTJ1dz09>

Wednesday May 8, 5-8 pm, Robert M. Gates Lecture

- **Location:** McIntyre Hall, 2501 E College Way, Mount Vernon, WA 98273
- [Purchase Tickets Here!](#)
- **About:** Skagit Valley College Foundation and Community Action of Skagit County proudly present an exciting, educational, and engaging event featuring Dr. Robert M. Gates, former U.S. Secretary of Defense. Join us for this Fireside Chat and Q&A with Dr. Robert M. Gates, moderated by Dr. Christopher Villa, President of Skagit Valley College, as they discuss veterans, higher education, and current affairs.

Thursday May 9, 8:30-9:30 am, Latinx Advisory Committee

- **Link:** <https://zoom.us/j/91488283677?pwd=aXpmdVNPpPa0FraF1Q3lrUUQ4cStMz09>
- **Meeting ID:** 914 8828 3677
- **Passcode:** 022650
- **Phone:** +1 (253) 215-8782

Wednesday May 15, 3-4:30 pm, Board Finance

- **Zoom:** <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84112278237?pwd=iEJcAAcMb61EJ0iq2u5mU1aGM65LLW.1>
- **Meeting ID:** 841 1227 8237
- **Passcode:** 657785
- **Phone:** +1 (253) 215 8782



Important Upcoming Dates: All are Invited

Friday May 17, 9:30 - 10:30 am, Housing Work Group

- **Link:** <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86951287129?pwd=VXhnTVRENUdKZldCMHBFSjZqdEM0QT09>
- **Meeting ID:** 869 5128 7129
- **Passcode:** 407622
- **Phone:** +1 (253) 215-8782

Monday May 20, 4:30-5:30 pm, Board Planning and Engagement

Zoom: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83551235291?pwd=dGpuL3gvlZJvRIBPd2s0RW5hUk9wdz09>

- **Meeting ID:** 835 5123 5291
- **Passcode:** 168564
- **Phone:** +1 (253) 215-8782

Tuesday May 23, 5-6:30 pm, March Board Meeting

- **Link:** <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89792326464?pwd=bzdsZ1FxMVZpb2swTmxYUlubzdSQT09>
- **Meeting ID:** 897 9232 6464
- **Passcode:** 955279
- **Phone:** +1 (253) 215-8782

Tuesday May 28, 3:30-5:00 pm, Donor Development Committee

- **Zoom:** <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/9436029776?pwd=Y1U1bWQxdXVodHJiczEzb0lSeTNEUT09>
- **Meeting ID:** 943 602 9776
- **Passcode:** 2023
- **Phone:** +1 (253) 215-8782

2023 Board Retreat





330 Pacific Place
 Mount Vernon, WA 98273
 (360) 416-7585
www.communityactionskagit.org

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING

Tuesday, March 26, 2024, 5pm

By Zoom

In attendance:

Members of the Board:

Public Sector:

Richard Brocksmith – present

Ron Wesen – present

Danny Hagen – present

Tina Tate – present

Private Sector:

Kate Bennett – present

Carolyn Moulton – present

Silvia Reed – present

Gregg Davidson - present

Client Sector:

Jamie Thornberry – not present

Kati Ortiz – present

Heather Wallace – not present

Christina Soltero – not present

Guests: n/a

Staff: Bill Henkel, Ayumi Orthmeyer, Sandi Phinney, Melissa Self, Jazmin Flores, Michele Metcalf,

I. CALL TO ORDER

Board President Gregg Davidson called the meeting to order at 5:02pm.

QUORUM PRESENT

II. CONSENT AGENDA

Minutes from the February 22, 2024 Board of Directors Meeting

March Finance Report (through January)

Correspondence: SVH County awarded grant to identify land for affordable housing; Community Action's Resource Centers/CDBG Request to MV City Council

Division Reports

Motion to pass the consent agenda made by Tate, second by Bennett, passed unanimously.

III. DISCUSSION AGENDA

Board President: Davidson

To illustrate what he means by “getting back to the basics,” Gregg presented a form of a visual scorecard, which uses the visual analogy of architecture of a house, and is based on research on how successful companies operate. When Gregg refers to getting back to basics, he is referring to organizational capacity. Do we have the right people in the right place with the right tools to achieve what we want to achieve? Ultimately, we want high customer satisfaction and financial sustainability. Though it uses the language of “getting back to the basics,” we also need to have an outcome of growth. So, how do we improve our services to our clients and grow to meet their need?

With the substantial transformation involved with Care Coordination, as well as our Cascade Landing, coming online, and in the wake of losing the Coordinated Entry contract, we need to make sure we have the staff and the tools to drive our success. In the wake of major changes, we are spending significant time and energy on organizing, building and sustaining our spent on organizational capacity. We are hitting the reset button. But this also makes it hard to spend time on the strategic expansion and forward vision. If we want to get this right and get ourselves to the place we want to be, we need to make sure we do this right.

Given the importance of these questions and this moment in our organization’s life, we would like to do a mini Board retreat in June to more deeply discuss this. What does this mean for the Board and how it affects us? How do we best govern in a time of change? How do we ensure that the right tools, people and practices are in place while keeping our eye on the strategic horizon?

6. State of the Agency: Henkel

Bill began with a review of advocacy news. At the federal level, federal energy assistance (LIHEAP) not only was able to maintain current funding in this hectic federal funding environment, it received a \$25 million increase. We are proud of our Energy & Utilities Program Manager, Misty Velasquez, who was asked to lead a delegation from Washington State to DC to spearhead advocacy efforts.

At the state level, CREAT will host two leaders from our state Community Action coalition, WSCAP, to discuss the impact on low income populations of the potential repeal of the Climate Commitment Act (and Capital Gains Tax), both of which will appear on the November ballot. At the end of the short state legislative session in Olympia, Document did receive a \$59 million increase to help backfill the significant decrease in those revenues that fund a wide array of homeless prevention and housing efforts. Though the request was \$70m, we still consider this a win. The Housing Trust Fund also received a significant increase, which is remarkable news in a short session, even though most of that money is categorical and may not help a project like ours at Kulshan View this round.

Bill also shared briefly a recent publication from Skagit’s Population Health Trust, outlining our community’s emerging collective planning to address food security. Our Food Distribution Center is a significant part of that effort. He also shared briefly about our Kulshan View project. The Housing Work Group will share more deeply in the coming months with Finance and the full Board, but it does appear we will likely take on the project in two phases, because of the realities of financial resources, with approximately 24 units per phase. Parking is still a limiting factor on this site. We will be seeking a direct federal support through Congressman Larsen’s office, and we will also be approaching Senators Murray and Cantwell for the same. We hope to have a number of support letters in place from partners.

Bill also mentioned that we learned from Ron and our county partners that there may be an RFP in the future for East County services (something we’ve managed since the inception of the East County Community Resource Center). In talking with Keith Higman, the Public Health director, it was clarified that the county intends to with community conversations and needs assessment in East County, with a strong focus on expanding behavioral health and shelter services to those communities. We want to emphasize that we were strong partners at the inception of East County, the Food Distribution Center, and Coordinated Entry, and we were central in establishing

them and growing the services and network of partnerships and funding around those and other key pieces of community infrastructure. Though we understand the need and right of funders to explore options and get the highest and best impact from their investment, we'd caution that sometimes collaborative planning is most effective, and sometimes RFP can produce collateral damage in terms of straining partnerships and sewing a certain level of confusion, in addition to the impact on organizations and the time and energy it takes that can be often better invested in solutions. In East County, we are committed to continuing to be there and be a part of building up behavioral health and shelter supports upriver – this is exactly the type of partner and resource building work we've done through the decades, and in strong alignment and partnership with the county and other partners.

Ron said that he believes he and his cohorts at the County want to remain good partners. And also the county needs to make sure we're spending tax dollars wisely and effectively. Are we providing the services that clients and community members want? In terms of Community Action, we need to talk about what you're doing and why it's a great thing for the community. Making sure we have proof that you're using that money efficiently.

Services Update: Flores; Phinney; Self

Jazmin talked about what we mean when we say that we "walk alongside" our clients. This means being there with and as an ongoing support of our clients on their journey. It often involves building connections and relationships of trust over time, especially with people facing significant barriers. In the process, our goal is to assess needs, and help clients focus and define their own goals, and steer them to the right resource and program – both internally and externally.

We are also re-defining our role internally and with our partners and clients on our role in housing and homeless services. Though we are no longer the Coordinated Entry lead, we still provide significant help with Coordinated Entry assessments. We continue to host and offer several forms of housing and rental assistance, and remain a leader locally in that. Many of these require a referral through Coordinated Entry, though our work in Care Coordination and through Foundational Community Supports significantly widen our ability to "walk alongside" clients facing homelessness. Additionally, our partnership and contract with the North Sound Accountable Communities of Health allow us the flexibility to support an even broader array of clients who might be facing some level of housing or other crisis, but are not Medicaid eligible (a pre-requisite for FCS services). Melissa add that as hard as Care Coordination and FCS has been to implement, we are so relieved to have followed that path, as its given us so much added flexibility to continue and deepen our impact, especially in providing what has traditionally been called "case management" services, a key to long term success for people faced with the crisis of homelessness.

Jazmin also responded to a question: are all services the same at resource centers? She said we've done a lot of work to make sure that all locations have access to the same services. There was also a question on how we ensure that we're not duplicating services. Are we doing the work to make sur that programs aren't duplicative? Jazmin and Liz said we spend significant time and work on collaborating with other partners.. Staff, management and leadership participate on countless coalitions, and often we are the ones to host and facilitate these coalitions of partners, such as the Community Resource Coalition, which is an effort for local human service providers to constantly share updates about their services and resources. Other examples include the LAC, the Food Bank Coalition, and the Asset Building Coalition, among many others. Our goal is to keep as up to date as possible on services in our community, provide quality soft hand offs for our clients, and align, not duplicate, services, wherever possible.

Spirit of Hope Update: Bennett

Kate provided an overview of this Thursday's Spirit of Hope, and said there was much to be excited about. We are encouraged that a lot of our silent auction items are already selling well, as this is a new element for our event, and that the tables are mainly filled, with perhaps room for another 15 or 20 people. Thanks everyone for contributing and helping us invite in friends and supporters. We still need 5 teams to sell hearts. The real focus for Thursday's event is telling our story in as compelling a way as possible. We're so grateful for Philip and Emily!

IV. ADJOURN: Meeting adjourned at 6:26 pm.

BOARD REVIEW & APPROVAL:

Approved as submitted

Approved with changes noted
below

x _____

Board Secretary

Acting Board Secretary

Date Signed

March 28, 2024

Congressman Rick Larsen
Senator Patty Murray
Senator Maria Cantwell

Subject: Support Letter for Community Action of Skagit County's Kulshan View project

Dear Congressman Larsen, Senators Murray and Cantwell:

Please accept the City of Mount Vernon's strong support of Community Action of Skagit's (Community Action's) request for federal FY2025 Community Projects Funding for its Kulshan View Housing Development in Mount Vernon, WA.

Mount Vernon and Skagit County consistently rank among the lowest rental housing availability of any county in the state of Washington – in a state and region afflicted with a crisis in housing availability and affordability. The development of housing that is attainable for people who live and work in our community is a high priority for the City of Mount Vernon, and we are actively engaged in solving this issues, and in partnering with Community Action and others to do so. Please note our planning department and city council already approved a rezone application on this property, from R-3 to R-4, to allow the project to hit its target density.

The project is next door to our LaVenture Middle School in Mount Vernon. It would create approximately 48 mostly 2- and 3-BR apartment units over two phases, with 24 units created in each phase. We especially appreciate that Community Action's project will focus on housing at-risk students and their families, in partnership with the Mount Vernon School District. We know that housing stability for young students is intricately tied to their educational and later career success, and can be instrumental in breaking the cycle of poverty. The additional component of housing low-income student teachers who are seeking their teaching certificates through Skagit Valley College also holds promise for a generational impact – while supporting our district's goal of developing a workforce that more closely reflects the demographics of their student populations. That in itself can drive academic success and help build a healthier community for all.

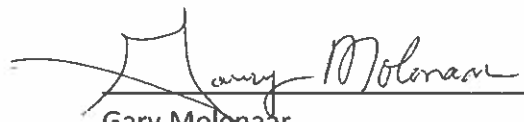
Our community needs creative, collaborative projects like this, just as we are desperately in need of more housing units affordable and attainable for the people who live, study and work

in our community. We're proud to partner with Community Action in this effort, and to endorse this vital project.

Sincerely,



Melissa Beaton
City Councilmember



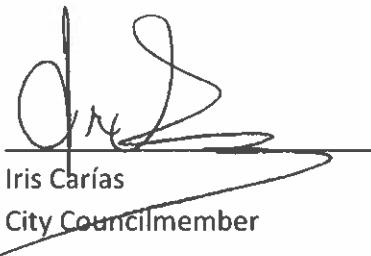
Gary Molenaar
City Councilmember



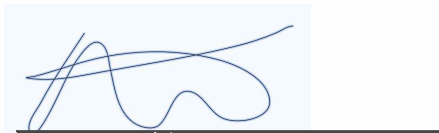
Richard Brocksmith
City Councilmember



Navor Tercero
City Councilmember



Iris Carías
City Councilmember



Andrew Vander Stoep
City Councilmember



Mary Hudson
City Councilmember



Skagit County Board of Commissioners

Ron Wesen, First District
Peter Browning, Second District
Lisa Janicki, Third District

March 27, 2024

The Honorable Rick Larsen
2930 Wetmore Avenue, Suite 9F
Everett, WA 98201

RE: Community Action of Skagit County Kulshan View Project

Congressman Larsen,

The Skagit Board of County Commissioners writes to support Community Action of Skagit County's request for \$1,000,000 in FY2025 Congressional Community Project funding for the Kulshan View housing project. Skagit County consistently has one of the lowest rental housing availability rates of any county in Washington state. The development of attainable housing for people who live and work in our community is a high priority for Skagit County.

The project would create approximately 48 apartment units, largely two and three bedrooms, over two phases, with 24 units created in each phase. We appreciate Community Action's focus on providing housing to at-risk students and families, in partnership with Mount Vernon School District. We know housing stability for young students is intricately tied to their educational and later career success and can be instrumental in breaking the cycle of poverty. Community Action also intends to house low-income student teachers seeking to complete their teaching certificate through Skagit Valley College. This will have a generational impact on the teacher's life, while supporting our local school district's goal of developing a workforce that more closely reflects the demographics of their student populations. Ensuring instructor diversity for a community will help drive academic success for the student body.

We are in full support of Community Action's application for FY25 Congressional Community Project funding. We recognize the continual need for new affordable housing in Skagit County and we are excited for the opportunity to partner with the Mount Vernon School District to support their students and teachers.

Sincerely,

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

 A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Peter Browning".

Peter Browning, Chair

 A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Lisa Janicki".

Lisa Janicki, Commissioner

 A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ron Wesen".

Ron Wesen, Commissioner



March 28, 2024

Congressman Rick Larsen
 Senator Patty Murray
 Senator Maria Cantwell

Subject: Support Letter for Community Action of Skagit County's Kulshan View project

Dear Congressman Larsen, Senators Murray and Cantwell:

Please accept the City of Mount Vernon's strong support of Community Action of Skagit's (Community Action's) request for federal FY2025 Community Projects Funding for its Kulshan View Housing Development in Mount Vernon, WA.

Mount Vernon and Skagit County consistently rank among the lowest rental housing availability of any county in the state of Washington – in a state and region afflicted with a crisis in housing availability and affordability. The development of housing that is attainable for people who live and work in our community is a high priority for the City of Mount Vernon, and we are actively engaged in solving this issues, and in partnering with Community Action and others to do so.

Please note our planning department and city council already approved a rezone application on this property, from R-3 to R-4, to allow the project to hit its target density.

The project is next door to our LaVenture Middle School in Mount Vernon. It would create approximately 48 mostly 2- and 3-BR apartment units over two phases, with 24 units created in each phase. We especially appreciate that Community Action's project will focus on housing at-risk students and their families, in partnership with the Mount Vernon School District. We know that housing stability for young students is intricately tied to their educational and later career success, and can be instrumental in breaking the cycle of poverty. The additional component of housing low-income student teachers who are seeking their teaching certificates through Skagit Valley College also holds promise for a generational impact – while supporting our district's goal of developing a workforce that more closely reflects the demographics of their student populations. That in itself can drive academic success and help build a healthier community for all.

Our community needs creative, collaborative projects like this, just as we are desperately in need of more housing units affordable and attainable for the people who live, study and work in our community. We're proud to partner with Community Action in this effort, and to endorse this vital project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P. Donovan".

Mayor Peter Donovan
 City of Mount Vernon

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
40th LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT
ALEX RAMEL
MAJORITY WHIP

State of
Washington
House of
Representatives



ENVIRONMENT & ENERGY
FINANCE
TRANSPORTATION
RULES

April 2, 2024

Congressman Rick Larsen
Senator Patty Murray
Senator Maria Cantwell

Subject: Support Letter for Community Action of Skagit County's Kulshan View project

Dear Congressman Larsen, Senators Murray and Cantwell:

Please accept my strong support of Community Action of Skagit's (Community Action's) request for federal FY2025 Community Projects Funding for its Kulshan View Housing Development in Mount Vernon, WA.

I serve as state Representative to the 40th District of Washington State, which includes part of Skagit County, which consistently ranks among the lowest rental housing availability of any county in the state of Washington. The development of housing that is attainable for people who live and work in our community is a top priority for our state legislature, and for me personally. I and my colleagues appreciate the partnership we have with the federal government and our community action agencies in working to solve these issues.

Last year, I sponsored a successful WA State Local & Community Projects appropriation of \$309,000 to support the project's design and pre-development expenses, and I and the state are eager to seek ways to continue to support its project until it is successfully completed. We can do our part, but we need partnership and financial support like yours for full success.

The project is next door to our LaVenture Middle School in Mount Vernon. It would create approximately 48 mostly 2- and 3-BR apartment units over two phases, with 24 units created in each phase. We especially appreciate that Community Action's project will focus on housing at-risk students and their families, in partnership with the Mount Vernon School District. We know that housing stability for young students is intricately tied to their educational and later career success and can be instrumental in breaking the cycle of poverty. The additional component of housing low-income student teachers who are seeking their teaching certificates through Skagit Valley College also holds promise for a generational impact – while supporting our district's goal of developing a workforce that more closely reflects the demographics of their student

populations. That in itself can drive academic success and help build a healthier community for all.

Our state needs creative, collaborative projects like this, just as we are desperately in need of more housing units affordable and attainable for the people who live, study and work here. We're proud to partner with Community Action in this effort, and to endorse this vital project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alex Ramel". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Representative Alex Ramel
State of Washington

Administration

March 28, 2024

Congressman Rick Larsen
Senator Patty Murray
Senator Maria Cantwell

Subject: Support Letter for Community Action of Skagit County's Kulshan View project

Dear Honorable Congressman Larsen, Senators Murray and Cantwell:

Please accept Mount Vernon School District's strong support of Community Action of Skagit's (Community Action) request for federal FY2025 Community Projects Funding for its Kulshan View Housing Development in Mount Vernon, Washington.

Skagit County consistently has one of the lowest rental housing availability of any county in the state of Washington – in a state and region afflicted with a crisis in housing availability and affordability. The development of housing that is attainable for people who live and work in our community is a high priority for Skagit County.

The project is next door to our LaVenture Middle School. It would create approximately 48 mostly 2- and 3-Bedroom apartment units over two phases, with 24 units created in each phase. We especially appreciate that Community Action's project will focus on housing at-risk students and their families, in partnership with our School District. We know that housing stability for young students is intricately tied to their educational and later career success, and can be instrumental in breaking the cycle of poverty. The additional component of housing low-income student teachers who are seeking their teaching certificates through Skagit Valley College also holds promise for a generational impact – while supporting our district's goal of developing a workforce that more closely reflects the demographics of our student population. That in itself can drive academic success and help build a healthier community.

Our community needs creative, collaborative projects like this, as we are desperately in need of more affordable and attainable housing units for the people who live, study and work in Skagit County. We're proud to partner with Community Action in this effort, and to endorse this vital project.

Sincerely,



Ismael Vivanco, Ed.D.
Superintendent



April 9, 2024

Congressman Rick Larsen
Senator Patty Murray
Senator Maria Cantwell

Subject: Support Letter for Community Action of Skagit County's Kulshan View project

Dear Congressman Larsen, Senators Murray and Cantwell:

Please accept the Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce's strong support of Community Action of Skagit's (Community Action's) request for federal FY2025 Community Projects Funding for its Kulshan View Housing Development in Mount Vernon, WA.

The Mount Vernon Chamber has focused on the critical issue of workforce housing for some time now, including launching our own housing task force, and participating actively in the Skagit Housing Consortium. We also value our long partnership with Community Action.

As you may know, Skagit County consistently ranks among the lowest rental housing availability of any county in the state of Washington – in a state and region afflicted with a crisis in housing availability and affordability. The development of housing that is attainable for people who live and work in our community is the highest priority for our Chamber, as it directly impacts the viability of local businesses, and the stability of our local workforce.

The project would create approximately 48 mostly 2- and 3-BR apartment units over two phases, with 24 units created in each phase. In addition to the project focus on housing at-risk students and their families, we especially appreciate the additional component of housing low-income student teachers who are seeking their teaching certificates through Skagit Valley College. This holds promise for a generational impact – while supporting our local school district's goal of developing a workforce that more closely reflects the demographics of their student populations. That in itself can drive academic success and help build a healthier community for all.

Our community needs creative, collaborative projects like this, just as we are desperately in need of more housing units affordable and attainable for the people who live, study, and work here. We're proud to partner with Community Action in this effort, and to endorse this vital project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew T. Mayer', is positioned below the 'Sincerely,' text.

Andrew T. Mayer, President & CEO

Division Director Report- Melissa Self – Community Services

March 2024

Mount Vernon and Whidbey WIC and Infant/Young Family Case Management

Wende Dolstad - WIC Manager, Jhaveena Broadnax – Site Supervisor

No report available at this time. Will include March in April's report.

Skagit Food Distribution Center

Madeline McGonagle, Food Access Manager

Achievements:

- In the last week of March, we received ~108,000 pounds of commodities from the WSDA. This was a huge amount of food to move through our warehouse in only a week. The staff at the distribution handled it extremely well and we were very happy to provide a large supply to our partner food pantries and meal programs.

Challenges:

- Even with our funding to purchase local food it has been a struggle to consistently provide enough food for each of our partner organizations. We are doing the best we can to at least supply a consistent amount of food to them so they can plan accordingly when doing their own purchasing or grocery rescue. We anticipate this to be an ongoing challenge as visits to the foodbanks continues to steadily increase but the food pantries are doing a great job at diversifying their food sources.

Emerging trends, opportunities or threats:

- Spring is here and summer is approaching which means there is more fresh food available locally so we are looking forward to getting more fresh produce in the near future.
- The WSDA has allocated more EFAP (Emergency Food Assistance Program) funding to Skagit and San Juan county to be spent before the end of June, 2024. We are currently working with our EFAP sub agencies to determine how these funds will best serve the county as a whole.
- There is a new round of Resiliency Grants open for applications that address critical needs of hunger relief organizations across the state. We are hoping to collaborate with some of our partner organizations on projects that would benefit their organizations as well as ours.

Senior & Disabled and Transportation Services

Julie Meyers – Mobility & Senior Services Manager

Accomplishments :

- The Volunteer Services Program (VSP) is grateful for our extremely dedicated volunteer drivers who provide seniors and disabled adults with transportation to medical care within Skagit County and beyond. Volunteer drivers have recently provided multiple local seniors with transportation to medical appointments and procedures in Bellingham, Marysville, Kirkland, and Everett.
- In mid-March I (Julie Meyers) convened a group of Community Action staff from diverse programs and positions to provide input on a draft plan for purchase and use of WSDOT funded vehicles. Their input will inform a WSDOT Grant implementation proposal that I will submit to Core Team in April.

Challenges:

- The Volunteer Services Program continues to have limited capacity to expand with only one employee managing client and volunteer communications and coordination. We are pleased to welcome a Skagit Valley College Human Services Intern to the program for spring quarter and possibly longer.
- We have recently received requests for volunteer support beyond the scope of what our volunteers are able to provide and for which we are unable to offer a referral to another agency/resource. These requests include help with deep cleaning an apartment that failed a landlord inspection, and tree removal.
- It has been a challenge to come up with a proposal for use of WSDOT funding that aligns Community Action Staff needs for reliable transportation to bring resources to clients with WSDOT grant guidelines which that grant funded vehicles be primarily used to provide transportation services.

Emerging trends:

- We are following and making an effort to support Skagit Transit's Long Range Travel Plan (LRTP) planning process by encouraging staff and clients to complete their community survey and participate in their listening sessions. <https://www.skagittransit.org/lrtp/> . The LRTP will impact the direction of Community Action's transportation program in the coming years.
- Over the past couple of months, we have received increasing requests for medical transportation to appointments or procedures in Snohomish County as well as for transport from East County to Mount Vernon. We are concerned about the impact of the mileage reimbursement for these trips (@\$0.67/mile) on our program budget. We will continue to track volunteer mileage and reimbursement to evaluate the need to secure additional program funding or require use of agency vehicles for longer trips.

Utility Assistance Program

Misty Velasquez – Energy Program Manager

Accomplishments:

- The Utility Assistance Program is expecting \$1.1-1.3 million in additional funds from PSE Help in an amendment soon.

Challenges:

- Energy will be closing down on April 18 and 19 to pack for the move back to Pacific Place building will re-open for services on April 23.

Emerging Trends:

- Energy LIHEAP Program is out of money until Commerce issues amendments that we are expecting, since the federal budget passed. At which time we will assess how many more appointments we will be able to schedule in June, along with how many A/C Units we will be able to give away to our clients.

Division Report

Sandi Phinney, Chief Strategy Officer

Accomplishment: We had a successful All Staff Meeting in which we spent time analyzing our communication styles and how they worked together, announced that we will move forward with leading with racial equity and will develop a work plan, let staff dig into disaggregated data and learn from it, and gave them the opportunity to highlight how they walk alongside each other as we do this important work.

Challenge: Identifying who is responsible for messaging, marketing, and how to do it well is a challenge right now.

Education and Employment

Marissa Davison, Education and Employment Manager

What accomplishment are you most proud of?

- We are proud of our efforts to increase WFTC assistance, increasing accessibility to financial education classes for Spanish speakers, and begin the first stage of offering benefits planning for SSI and SSDI clients.

What challenge are you currently facing?

- Staffing has been a potential challenge. We are down a staff member in Employment, which affects our ability to promote and train others in financial education.

What emerging trends, opportunities, or threats are you watching?

- We are aware of the opportunity to bridge the gap between housing and employment. We are starting to have discussions with housing to develop a strategy to approach this opportunity.

Equity:

- We have noticed a difference in access since moving to Education and Employment's own storefront. It has increase accessibility for people interested in adult education and employment services by offering walk ins compared to previously, only allowing discussions on an appointment only basis due to the accessibility limitations.

East County Resource Center/Concrete Community Center

Stephanie Semro, East County Manager

What accomplishment are you most proud of:

- Having a space where anyone feels welcome, can find assistance and leaves with more hope than they did when they entered our doors.

What challenge are you currently facing?

- Trying to get older seniors out of their homes to the meal program so they can have some social interaction/connection, give them a sense of community, and a nutritious meal.

What emerging trends, opportunities, or threats are you watching?

- We are seeing an increase in transit utilization but do not have the funds to fully provide support in this area, which makes it increasingly harder for people to access services downriver or try to find work. I foresee more people being priced out of their homes and having to relocate but not having the funds to do so. We are looking forward to Sunrise Health coming into our office to do behavioral health assessments.

Reducing Barriers:

- We working with Mount Baker Blessings Center to transport residents from Marblemount to Concrete on foodbank days so they can receive food from the Concrete Foodbank, have access to the shower trailer, services that we provide and access to the local grocery stores.

DATA

Megan Breedlove-Speece, Data and Assessment Manager

What accomplishments are you most proud of this month?

- All Staff Data Activity

What challenge are you currently facing?

- Rapid changes in the agency means a lot of meetings and a lot of time spent trying to understand how best to adapt EmpowOR to new program compositions.

What emerging trends, opportunities, or threats are you watching?

- I'm keeping a close eye on Outcomes metrics. It's the last hurdle we're still working to get over in terms of clean and accurate data collection.

Equity/Access:

- I'm currently working on redesigning the intake to capture the demographic information we want, and will be working on trying that in with a digital version for tablets in the lobbies for easy client access.

March 2024
Division Director Report – Jazmin Flores

Care Coordination

Jazmin Flores, Care Coordination Director

Accomplishments:

- Direct service number as well as data efforts have improved, and the Resource Center team and Housing team have demonstrated their adaptability by smoothly adjusting to new supervision and structural changes with minimal disruptions in services. Outreach is in the early stages of incorporating a street medicine service to provide basic medical care. Steven Simmons is leading meditation and mindfulness sessions to help individuals practice techniques for reflection and positive social interactions. The Service Screener interviews were great! Resulting in the selection of two applicants for hire. Furthermore, the training for new Care Specialists has commenced, and Dulce Vasquez delivered an impressive speech at the City of Mount Vernon City Council public hearing for CDBG funds. Overall, the CC team as a whole continues to find success with direct services. The team's resilience and collaborative efforts are commendable.

Challenges:

- The Resource Center team continues to adapt to the loss of Coordinated Entry and the shift to a new service model.
- Looker reports from VOA require additional steps to process and identify qualifying referrals. Concentrated efforts are underway to enhance and improve this with the county and VOA.

Emerging Issues:

- The Mount Vernon Resource center is currently experiencing an emerging issue where several unhoused clients are unable to access or may not want to access day centers and remain in the lobby for a significant amount of time. Steven is collaborating with the Outreach team to find solutions to this issue.
- FCS eligible clients are pending to move on to caseloads until new service screener staff is hired, candidates have been identified.
- Collaborate with Rental Assistance/ Housing Team to assure that all care specialist have a full caseload.

Street Outreach and Recovery Navigator Program

Steven Simmons, Outreach Program Manager

Accomplishments:

- Hiring went well! We have two case managers starting in the next month, and have made a hire for an Outreach Specialist. We were able to make 2/3 hires for folks with lived experience with being unhoused and incarceration, with one of them being a current participant of Skagit County Drug Court. We are really excited that one of them already has their Peer Counseling Certification, as that is a huge savings in our time budget for training. We have also brought on two new practicum students from the Skagit Valley College Human Services program, and they bring their own lived experience to the table to assist clients as well. We were awarded \$20k from Peace Health for outreach supplies.

March #'s:

Number of Individuals Served 117

Number of service interactions: 211

Narcan Kits distributed 43

Number of reported OD reversals: 20

Challenges:

- We somewhat just worked through the storming/norming period of our previous hires, but we are hoping that this time it will be easier, as we will be fully staffed.
- RNP workers in other counties earn substantial more money than folks on our team do, and our contact at NS-BHASO brought it to my attention again this last check-in. We are looking forward to hearing that the reclassification/pay transparency effort has gone through. Especially since, it has been shared with staff that Compensation Committee is closer to making the official wage adjustments. We hope this significantly improves staff retention efforts.

Emerging Issues:

Summertime is coming.

- We need to move some of our inventory around and move to lighter clothing/sleeping bags/etc.
- Bottled water is a huge need for partners and ourselves.

Equity Highlight:

I am working with HR on reviewing guidelines around hiring for applicants with conviction histories.

- I hosted a meeting with staff either who had conviction histories, or who were interested in increasing access.
- I took those notes and made a slideshow with some proposals for a cohort of 4 members of the CORE team.
- Mindy and I will be meeting to hammer out some of these ideas into practice guidelines in the coming weeks.

Mount Vernon and Anacortes Resource Centers

Dulce Vazquez-Cruz, Resource Center Manager

Accomplishments:

- For the month of March, we were able to help 6 households obtain housing through our Diversion program. Care Specialists are continuing to screen for FCS/ACH, and we have gotten some referrals from Housing Authority of families that are interested in engaging with ongoing support. ARC received a generous donation of baby supplies from the Anacortes Soroptimist! Supplies included were diapers, wipes, crocheted sweaters and beanies, and other baby essentials! Resource Coordinator is working with Anacortes service providers to get the word out about the supplies and for ongoing support.

Challenges:

- MVRC – It has been difficult for staff to meet with their caseload since we are understaffed. Currently all three Care Specialists are covering the front while we continue our search for Service Screeners. Our lobby has not had much traffic.
- ARC – We are still trying to get Safeway onboard to establish a charge account so we can issue gas and hygiene vouchers. Resource Coordinator followed up and is waiting for a reply from upper management or their finance department.

Emerging Issues:

- MVRC – We have not been able to screen as many client as we would like for FCS/ACH due to not a lot of clients coming in the lobby.
- ARC – promoting the RC

Equity Highlight:

What are barriers or bottlenecks that make it hard for some people/populations to have access to the services you provide?

- MVRC and ARC – Not enough staff to serve clients and to actively promote services.

Housing/ Rental Assistance Program

Kathleen Morton, Housing Program Manager

Accomplishments:

- We worked with the county to determine how to improve our success with referrals and have been utilizing the prevention linker—we are projected to completely spend out our HEN contract, CHG Contract as well as TBRA Commerce Contract. We continue to strategize with care specialists on how to improve engagement with clients as well as identifying barriers to obtaining/maintaining housing. Staff have been adjusting to the changes with Care Coordination and supervision well.

Challenges:

- Presently I would say our biggest challenge at this time has been navigating the financial aspects of the program. Prior to the departure of our last CFO there was a delay in receiving reports and I have been relying on internal tracking to determine the remaining budget. However, it can be challenging to track wages as this varies from month to month. I am hoping to meet with our new Finance Director before I depart from the agency in order to set-up the next HPM for success.

Emerging Issues:

- We need to utilize our TBRA Home grant and make referrals into this program however, our current care specialists are close to capacity and the number of referrals would not be able to equal 1 FTE care specialist. We will need to determine how best to balance fully utilizing our grants and staff expenses for the program.

Equity Highlight:

Provide an example of something you have done or changed in order to reduce a barrier or increase access?

- We have been collaborating with the Department of Commerce on a client situation where they are unable to stay where they are currently residing due to the unit not being in habitable condition. We have reached out to the County they would have more social supports and have begun to facilitate transferring of services. We have also been looking at additional services for mental health and case management to support client when they move down there. This type of transfer is rare in our programs and we have worked to identify how this household who has physical limitations can live independently.
-

2024 Fundraising Progress January 1, 2024 - March 31, 2024

2024 Fundraising Goal & Progress

As of March 31, 2024 we have raised **\$221,146** which is about **31%** our goal.

Breakdown of Distribution

\$198,437	Greatest Need
\$8,500	Maternity Support Services
\$4,784	Seniors & Disabled
\$2,000	WIC
\$2,000	Housing Development
\$1,500	Veterans
\$1,270	SFDC
\$1,050	East County
\$604	Mountain of Hope
\$1,000	Anacortes Resource Center/Point-in-Time-Count

Raised YTD

\$221,146

2024 Goal

\$715,000

\$- \$200,000 \$400,000 \$600,000 \$800,000

Count of Donors by Giving Levels

- \$1-499
- \$500-999
- \$1,000-4,999
- \$5,000-9,999
- \$10,000-40,000

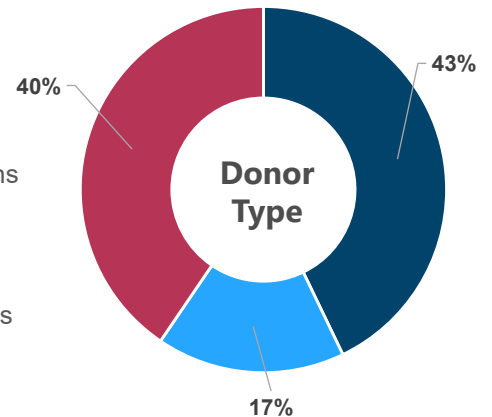
145 Donors



■ Individuals (\$94,776)

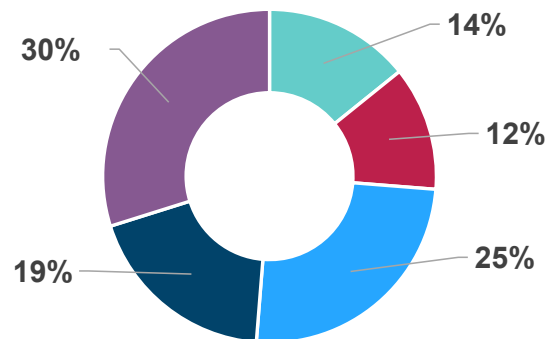
■ Corporations (\$36,814)

■ Foundations (\$89,556)



Amount Raised by Giving Level

- Level \$1-499 (\$31,421)
- Level \$500-999 (\$26,650)
- Level \$1,000-4,999 (\$55,308)
- Level \$5,000-9,999 (\$41,767)
- Level \$10,000-40,000 (\$66,000)



\$221,146
Raised YTD

227
Active Donors

56
New Donors

\$100
Median Gift Amount

Special thanks to our amazing Donor Development Committee!

Kate Bennett
Ray Horak

Jill Rohrs
Gregg Davidson

Darlene Mindrum
Richard Warsinske

2024 March Highlights

Spirit of Hope Updates

- Total Raised - \$114,527
- Amount Raised by Activity:
 - Raise the Paddle - \$56,900
 - Raffle Purchase - \$10,974
 - Auction Item - \$7,153
 - Ticket/Table Purchase - \$10,350
 - Sponsors - \$28,000
 - Other Donations - \$1,150
- 233 attendees of which 70% gave)
- 42 new donors gave \$5,875

Donor Heart eNewsletter Results

- Headline - You're Invited to Spirit of Hope 2024
- Topics - Spirit of Hope
- Sent - 1732
- Open Rate - 44.8%
- Click Rate - 2.8%

Grants Program Updates

- Last month, the Development Team submitted a total of 5 grants requesting support from the following:
 - Fisher Service Award
 - Haggen Foundation
 - Wells Fargo
 - Key Bank
 - Upper Skagit
- In progress requests include:
 - Murdock Charitable Trust
 - American Family Insurance
 - Ameriprise
 - Kroger Foundation
 - US Bank

An Evening With Dr. Robert Gates event coming up on May 8th at McIntyre Hall.

Join us! Reach out to Philip Prud'homme for more information at PhilipP@CommunityActionSkagit.org.

Last Month's Generous Gifts

- 35 donors at the SOH made gifts of \$1,000 or more

Additionally:

- Anacortes Elks Lodge #1204 gave \$1,000
- Linda and Dennis Jones gave \$2,000
- Kiwanis Club of Mount Vernon gave \$7,500
- Ranten Family Charitable Trust gave \$1,000
- Charlie and Terri Shultz gave \$6,200
- Skagit Community Foundation gave \$14,094

Thanks and Acknowledgements

- If you are interested in personally thanking our donors or requesting a social media acknowledgement, please reach out to the Development Team at: Donations@CommunityActionSkagit.org

\$221,146
Raised YTD

227
Active Donors

56
New Donors

\$100
Median Gift Amount

**Special thanks to our amazing
Donor Development Committee!**

Kate Bennett
Ray Horak

Jill Rohrs
Gregg Davidson

Darlene Mindrum
Richard Warsinske

Housing Projects Director Report- Michele Metcalf

April 15, 2024

Cascade Landing

Cascade Landing has undergone significant improvements, resulting in enhanced resident satisfaction and operational efficiency. Residents have provided positive feedback on various aspects, including increased parking availability and safety, improved groundskeeping, and enhanced interior upkeep. The implementation of stricter policies has bolstered security measures and reduced unauthorized access to the facility.

We are delighted to share that the Community Manager now resides onsite and remains easily accessible during business hours in the Cascade Landing Management office. Tammy, our dedicated Community Manager, has played a pivotal role in these improvements. Her presence onsite has facilitated around-the-clock support, leading to cost reductions in janitorial and security services.

Tammy has been actively engaged in reconciling tenant accounts and assisting residents with overdue balances to establish payment agreements. Her efforts have significantly contributed to maintaining financial stability within the community.

In March, we introduced a guest parking policy, providing each resident with a guest parking pass for their visitors. To enforce this policy, stricter parking measures have been implemented, including scheduled towing patrols to monitor unauthorized vehicles starting May 1. Residents have been informed of these measures through notices, emphasizing compliance with designated parking areas and regulations.

With several lease renewals approaching, the Housing Project Director and Community Manager have conducted a thorough review of market rates and regulatory guidelines. Considering rising utility costs and the absence of rent increases in 2023, we propose an 8% rent increase for all units. This adjustment aligns with market conditions and regulatory recommendations. Rent increase notices are scheduled to be issued to all residents on May 1, with changes taking effect on July 1, allowing ample time for adjustment.

To refine our financial projections, the Housing Project Director will collaborate closely with Coast Property Management. Additionally, we are exploring the transition of the Community Manager's role from full-time to part-time to optimize operational efficiency.

We are pleased to report that Cascade Landing is nearly fully occupied, with occupancy standing at 97% as of April 2024. Currently, only two studios remain vacant on the market, with lease terminations pending for two households.

CA Rental Housing Advisory Committee

The CA Rental Housing Advisory Team convened on April 5th to strategize the resident Community Meeting schedule for the remainder of 2024 and outline the agenda for the April 18 Cascade Landing Community meeting. Elizabeth Jennings, our Community Engagement Director, joined the discussion to

share insights from the first community meeting and propose engagement strategies for the upcoming months.

The April 18 Cascade Landing Community Meeting will center on the theme "Resident Empowerment: Your Voice at Cascade Landing." The agenda will include a recap of the previous meeting, highlighting resident suggestions that have been implemented, and providing guidance to residents on procedures for reporting concerns to property management and the RSC program.

Our next CA Rental Housing Advisory Team meeting is scheduled for Friday, April 5, from 9:30 to 10:30 AM.

Kulshan View

On April 8, Community Action collaborated with GS Consulting and project experts to refine the design for the Kulshan View development. This project is structured as a 48-unit build, organized into two phases, with each phase comprising 24 units. The primary goal of the meeting was to discuss design elements and determine necessary adjustments that would allow Paul Woodmansee to begin cost estimation.

A key decision made during the meeting involved a significant redesign of one of the three-bedroom units. To better serve the needs of the community, part of this unit will be converted into a small office space and a backup laundry area, transforming it into a one-bedroom unit. Mel has been tasked with updating the plans to incorporate these changes. These adjustments will also involve the creation of suitable private outdoor patio areas and the incorporation of 100 square feet of outdoor common space per unit, amounting to a total of 4,800 square feet across the project, to comply with Mount Vernon code requirements.

Additionally, Community Action submitted applications for federal funding to support infrastructure development for the Kulshan View project. On March 24, 2024, applications were submitted to Larsen's office for Community Projects funding, followed by Cantwell and Murray's Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) Request Forms on March 29 and April 3, 2024, respectively. The requested federal allocation amounts to \$1 million to support infrastructure needs for Kulshan View.

Once Mel completes these revisions, the updated plans will be sent to Paul for cost estimation. The team is scheduled to reconvene on April 18 to review the cost estimates and discuss subsequent steps.

Housing Work Group

During the March 15 Housing Work Group (HWG) meeting, significant attention was dedicated to the Kulshan View project. Mel Maertz from M2 Architects presented an updated project plan, outlining a phased approach. Each phase will consist of two buildings accommodating 12 units per floor, resulting in a total of 24 units per phase and 48 units overall.

The upcoming April 19 HWG session will center on reviewing the comprehensive feasibility study conducted by Ginger Segal of GS Consulting and Philippa Nye of Ally Community Development. This study covers essential aspects of the project, including its goals, target population, project concept, financing, and schedule.

Furthermore, the HWG will discuss the process for seeking Board approval of the financing plan and obtaining authorization to pursue funding from various sources.

The next Housing Work Group meeting is scheduled for May 17, from 9:30 to 10:30 AM.

Resident Service Coordination Programs

Throughout the month of March, our Resident Service Coordination (RSC) programs have been focused on enhancing coordination efforts and improving services for our residents.

One of our key initiatives has been updating our referral and deactivation processes for coordination services. This ensures that RSCs are promptly informed of any new move-ins or move-outs at their respective sites, allowing for more efficient service delivery.

We've also made significant strides in streamlining the release of information between RSCs and Property Managers. This improved communication protocol has enabled us to better coordinate services and provide more seamless support to our residents.

At Mount Vernon Manor sites, efforts have continued to streamline file clean-up and archive outdated paperwork, ensuring that our records are organized and up-to-date.

At Cascade Landing, our community meetings have been invaluable in gathering resident feedback and implementing improvements. Notable changes include relocating the bulletin board to a more accessible location, allowing for important community-wide notices and resources to be readily available. Additionally, the insertion of a comment box in the community room has facilitated a constant flow of feedback from residents, enabling us to address their concerns effectively.

One of our significant projects at Cascade Landing has been the implementation of trash and recycling bins inside the facility. This initiative, a partnership between the service coordination program and property management, aims to improve waste management practices. The Community Manager ensures that bins are pulled out each morning for residents, while our RSC provides tenant education on proper recycling and trash disposal procedures.

For more detailed information on the Resident Service Coordination program, please refer to the accompanying reports from Sam and Rachel.

Resident Service Coordination - Cascade Landing

Sam LeBrun, Resident Services Coordinator

April 2024

Accomplishments:

Cascade Landing held its first community meeting on March 14th, drawing a diverse group of participants. Among those present were Board Member Heather Wallace, representing the Rental Advisory Committee, Coast Property Management representatives, Community Action staff, and 15 residents from the local community. Feedback from attendees was overwhelmingly positive, with residents expressing gratitude for the opportunity to have their voices heard. In response to their suggestions and requests, the RSC staff has diligently worked on implementation. Looking ahead, the next community meeting is slated for April 18th, continuing the collaborative dialogue and furthering the shared goals of the Cascade Landing community.

Cascade Landing Management office is now fully functional and has two Community Action staff as well as the Community Manager from Coast Property Management. This has significantly improved the ability to help residents and complete tasks in a timely manner.

Challenges:

Coast Property Management has brought much more oversight to the property and are enforcing rules that Key NW had been lax about, most residents are responding positively and appreciate the direction that the apartment is moving. Some Residents are unhappy with the changes and have vocalized their concerns, RSC has had mixed success in mediating these issues.

Emerging Issues & Future Focus:

In February, we faced several challenges related to criminal activity at Cascade Landing, accompanied by resident concerns regarding safety. In response, we actively engaged with the community, listening to feedback and swiftly implementing changes. Notably, we introduced guest parking passes for residents, enhancing our ability to monitor guest activity effectively. Encouragingly, both in March and April, these issues have not resurfaced, with many residents expressing a heightened sense of security within the apartment complex. Minimizing criminal activity and enabling residents to feel safe and happy in their homes will continue to be a top priority.

Resident Service Coordination – Mount Vernon Manor

Rachel Cathey, Resident Services Coordinator

April 2024

Accomplishments:

- 25 residents were served through the Commodity Supplemental Food Program, giving them a 30lb. box of shelf stable food items.
- 37 residents were served through both Mobile Food Banks held this month. Residents were able to get food and necessity items provided by the Skagit Food Distribution Center at no cost.

Challenges and Action Plan:

- Residents have expressed a disinterest in the food offered on the Mobile Food Bank days. SFDC informed RSC of a surplus in funds they have that will be used to purchase additional food and rationed throughout the next few months. RSC conducted a survey during both Food Bank days to get resident feedback on what kind of food they would like to be purchased with the surplus. RSC will relay the results of resident responses to SFDC.

Emerging Issues and Future Focus:

- With the agency's newly added transportation program, RSC is hopeful residents will be able to utilize the program as another resource for transportation needs.
- RSC has made a goal to reach out to the local YMCA to table to inform residents on how to maintain healthy lifestyles and utilize programs and classes that they offer and that may even be covered by their insurance.
- RSC has made a goal to reach out to the local library for increased tabling on-site for residents. Specifically, focusing on tech education for residents to equip them with the knowledge and skills to independently use their devices.

- RSC has made a goal to reach out to Skagit transit to table, in order to provide residents with more updated knowledge of the transportation services already available to them, as well as additional services they may be eligible for.

Equity:

- For residents that have barriers to off-site transportation, RSC has coordinated reoccurring tabling events with the Public Health Department, and continued partnership with the SFDC in order to hold on-site food banks, to provide residents with health and wellness resources. Additional goals have been made to increase tabling events, and on-site education for residents.

Resident Engagement:

- This month RSC has met with 48 residents and provided the following services:
 - Benefits Assistance – 2 residents
 - Education/Employment – 2 residents
 - Civil Rights Services – 1 resident
 - Health Care Services – 3 residents
 - Home Management – 1 resident
 - Meals – 37 residents
 - Resources & Referrals – 1 resident
 - ROI's/Consent Forms – 5 residents
 - Outreach – 1 resident
 - Translation – 1 resident

Ongoing Projects:

- Updating and condensing resident files to contain only relevant information is still ongoing.
- Program forms have been updated to more effectively communicate program services, and protections of resident information.

April 2024

Community Engagement Team Report to the Board of Directors

Elizabeth Jennings, Director of Community Engagement

2024 STRATEGIC Priority: Communication Action is well-known and respected in the community.

- **Strategies:** *Learn > Volunteer > Advocate > Give > Coordinate*

VOLUNTEER Strategy:

- **National Volunteer Week & Skagit Volunteer Month Proclamation** took place April 9.
- **Skagit Lead & Serve Fair** engaged 20 nonprofits and 100+ participants, including Leadership Skagit Class of 2024, in partnership with Economic Development Alliance, Skagit Community Foundation and SVC.
- **Board member Kati Ortiz** represented Community Action's board of directors at the Leadership Skagit Challenge Day on nonprofits, on a panel on Equity & Board Service. Thank you Kati!
- **Media coverage** for Skagit Volunteer Month events included an article in the Skagit Valley Herald and a KSVR radio interview.

EQUITY Strategy:

- **Latinx Advisory Committee April topic: Resources for Justice-involved & At Risk Youth & Their Families:** With leadership from board members Kati Ortiz and Christina Soltero, the LAC identified community needs for **facilities for youth** as a high priority:
 - **Poverty is biggest risk factor:** Not just one culture/background going through justice system. Common denominator is poverty, lack of structure at home increasing risks.
 - **Funding:** Opportunities are few and far between, and more funding is needed.
 - **Mentorship is needed** by people with lived experience.
 - **Transportation:** Barriers to getting youth to Triumph Teen Center, summer NWCT programs.
 - **Latino-led youth programs are needed, collaborations.** Jose proposed leading a collaborative.
 - **Housing for youth transitioning to adulthood: Many Latino youth seeking NWYS housing resources right after turning 18, the earlier referred the better.**
- **Mount Vernon School District engagement:**
 - We provided training on community resources to Mount Vernon School District staff who work with homeless youth, migrant families, and families that speak languages other than English, with the goal of strengthening referral pipelines.

ADVOCACY Strategy:

- **CREAT discussion on November ballot initiatives:** At their April meeting, the board's Community Relationships, Education & Advocacy Taskforce heard from Washington State Community Action Partnership staff about two ballot initiatives that Community Action may be asked to take a position on. They will bring information and a recommendation to the May or June board meetings.

Board Motions
Community Action of Skagit County
 April 25 2024 Board of Directors Meeting

Draft Motions within Consent Agenda

Note: Any Board member may ask that an item within the consent agenda be pulled for separate discussion prior to a vote.

Motion to Approve April Consent Agenda:

1. Approve Minutes from March 26, 2024, Board meeting

Background on Consent Agenda Motion: Please see attached draft minutes from the March 26, 2024, Board meeting (Item 2).

2. Approve April 2024 Finance Report (through month of February 2024)

Background on Consent Agenda Motion: The Board Finance Committee reviewed at its April 22 meeting the attached April Finance report (through the month of February 2024) items 5a + 5b.

Potential Motion: Approve Consent Agenda (Items 1-2)

Draft Motions within Discussion Agenda

1. Approve Personnel Committee recommendation on Wage Equity Proposal

Background on Consent Agenda Motion: Background on Consent Agenda Motion: The Board Personnel Committee met on April 2 to review the wage equity and pay transparency re-classifications (which, if instituted, would have an additional impact of approximately \$100,000). In effort to stay aligned with our Compensation Philosophy, the Personnel Committee endorsed the pay transparency re-classification work as it is a necessity to equitably compensating staff and creating a fully transparent pay grade and classification system. The Finance Committee also reviewed the proposal at its April 22 meeting, and can present their recommendation at the Board meeting. For a summary of the Personnel Committee meeting and its recommendations, see (Item 6).

Potential Motion: Approve Wage Equity Proposal

January Finance Reports through February 2024

Balance Sheet Comparison	*Preliminary Year-end 2023	Through 2/29/24	Change in Value
Asset			
Cash and Cash Equivalents	532,796	590,989	58,194 [a]
Short-Term Investments	13,020	13,020	0 [a]
Long-Term Investments	968,705	985,449	16,745 [a]
Accounts Receivable	1,841,711	1,770,335	(71,375)
Prepays and Deposits	43,708	86,284	42,576
Fixed Assets	4,878,095	4,878,095	0
Depreciation	(1,708,650)	(1,722,683)	(14,034)
Furniture and Equipment	1,051,879	1,051,879	0
Total Asset	7,621,262	7,653,368	32,105
Liabilities			
Accounts Payable	(47,931)	138,375	186,306
Mortgage	644,303	639,679	(4,624)
Vacation Liability	138,123	152,590	14,467
Other Payroll Liabilities	327,480	337,955	10,475
Other Liabilities	(12,057)	(12,057)	0
Deferred Revenue	43,543	43,543	0
Total Liabilities	1,093,461	1,300,085	206,624
Net Assets			
Beginning Net Assets			
Other	6,599,998	6,531,298	(68,699)
Total Beginning Net Assets	6,599,998	6,531,298	(68,699)
Total Current Net Income (Loss)	(72,196)	(178,016)	(105,820)
Total Net Assets	6,527,802	6,353,282	(174,519)
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	7,621,262	7,653,368	32,105

Days Cash on Hand	18.95	[3]
Days Investment Cash on Hand	30.91	[3]
Days Cash in A/R	55.54	[3]

P&L	Through 2/29/24	2024 Operation Budget	% of Budget
Revenue			
Federal Grants	794,490	4,356,003	18.2%
State Grants	336,125	1,671,287	20.1%
Local Grants	376,263	3,192,137	11.8% [b]
Foundations & Corporations	66,622	201,952	33.0%
Contributions	29,316	484,186	6.1%
In-Kind	803,351	6,048,418	13.3%
Program Revenue	231,943	1,713,437	13.5% [c]
Miscellaneous Revenue	31,118	0	0.0%
Sponsorship Income	19,250	7,950	242.1%
Total Revenue	2,688,478	17,675,370	15.2%
Expenses			
Wages and Benefits	1,096,510	6,533,412	16.8%
Program Expenses	819,756	4,268,654	19.2% [d]
Supplies/Equipment	6,391	63,784	10.0%
Travel and Training	9,911	66,042	15.0%
Telephone	22,762	66,935	34.0%
Professional Fees	22,081	115,174	19.2%
Licenses, Dues, Subscriptions	32,972	119,225	27.7%
Printing and Postage	6,717	38,081	17.6%
Insurance	16,073	73,023	22.0%
In-Kind	803,351	6,048,418	13.3%
Occupancy	31,350	290,950	10.8%
General and Administrative	0	0	0.0%
Miscellaneous Expense	0	0	0.0%
Marketing/Advertising	1,330	31,672	4.2%
Total Expenses	2,869,205	17,715,370	16.2%
Net Income (Loss) Before Depreciation & Unrealized Gains/Losses	(180,727)	(40,000)	[1]
Depreciation (non-cash expense)	14,034		
Unrealized Gains/Losses	16,745	40,000	[2]
Net Income (Loss) Including Depreciation and Unrealized Gains & Losses	(178,016)	0	[1]
Net Income (Loss) Feb 2024	(1,911)	% should be	16.7%

January Finance Reports through February 2024

General Notes:

Through February 2024, we have received checks \$31,118.09 from Key Northwest. This recorded as Miscellaneous income \$27k Jan, \$3,465.12 Feb

We are submitting request for Kulshan View reimbursement 4th Quarter, 2024.

Notes to Finance Reports:

[1] As of 2/29/24, we are reflecting YTD net loss of \$180,727 before Depreciation Expense and Unrealized Gains & Losses; and loss of \$178,016 YTD after Depreciation Expense and Unrealized Gains & Losses.

[2] Unrealized gain on our investments up to February is \$16,745.

[3] Days Cash on Hand at the end of February was 18.95, Days Investment Cash on Hand is 30.91, and Days Cash in A/R is 55.54. For a combined total 105.40. Days cash on hand is calculated by taking our "normal" annual operating budget, less in-kind, dividing by 366 days. "Normal" daily operation amount has increased for 2024 to **\$31,877**.

[a] **Definition** of what cash is counted in which account: **Cash and cash equivalents:** Checking account **Short-term investments:** NCCU CDs **Long-Term Investments:** Baird Funds and Skagit Community Foundation. All cash, short-term and long-term investments are liquid and are used in calculating Days Cash on Hand.

Total \$35,255.58 (below details) of income received previous year came into Deferred Grant Revenue the end of year 2023 because we have not spent - then moved out of Deferred Grant Revenue into 2024 income. This is an internal journal entry that is done annually so that budgets number do not skew when the funds are spent.

[b] Local Grants \$9,909.49 City of Anacortes

[c] Program Revenue \$25,346.09 WEAFF CBO

[d] Maintenance and Janitorial expenses: renovations of Vets Connect charge \$35,061.04 - of \$25k we received funds to spend last year from Robert Gates.

Overview of Human Resources Dashboard

2023 Turnover: 17%

Retention Rate: 76%

	Turnover	Retention
2023	17%	76%
2022	25%	67%
2021	24%	67%
2020	19%	81%
2019	31%	65%
2018	26%	72%

Goal: 10-15% Turnover and 85+% Retention

Other Community Action Turnover Rates for 2023

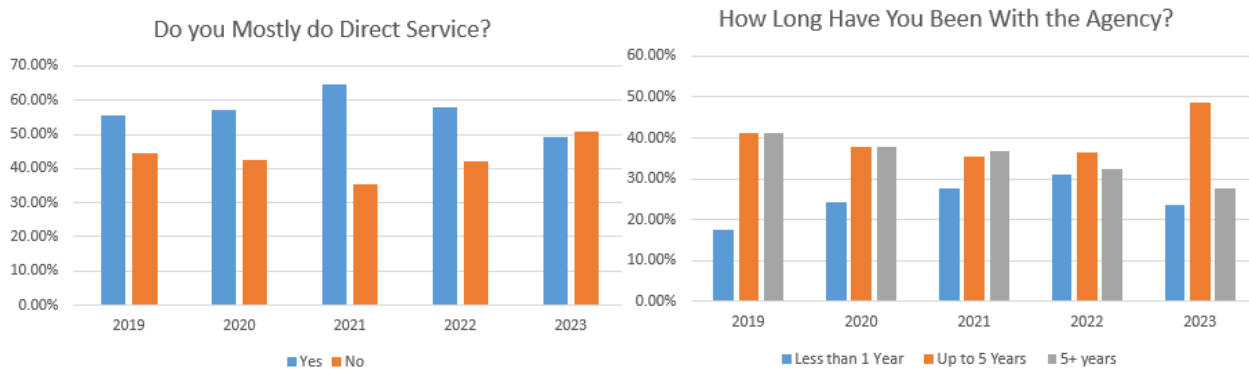
- Olympia: 22%
- Colville: 17%
- Lacey: 27%
- Spokane: 24%

2023 turnover was the lowest we have seen in the past 6 years. Retention is also trending in the right direction. Going into 2024 we are seeing some changes and will need to continue efforts in recruitment and retention in order to maintain a stable workforce.

	Staff Hired	Staff Separations
2024 January - April	14	10
2023 January - April	18	11

STAFF SATISFACTION SURVEY

Response Rate: **2023: 71%** **2022: 81%** **2021: 78%** **2020: 80%**



Almost 50/50 on who is doing direct client services. Need to pay attention to this to ensure we are focused on positions that provide services to the community and are not structured to top heavy.

Longevity with the agency is growing, seeing more staff staying longer with an increase in those who have been here over 1 year. Positive and would like to continue seeing trend move in this direction.

Highlights:

- We are seeing improvement in areas with our supervisors on engagement, communication, and support.
- Belonging, inclusion, and culture had high scores and were very satisfactory. This is a direct link with our turnover and retention efforts and important to continue growing and working on.
- Trust and respect in coworkers and supervisors was very high.
- We saw the best results we have seen in response to the questions, “I’m proud to be a Community Action Employee” – staff are feeling a sense of pride in our agency, more staff are willing to refer others to work here.
- Out of all of the written questions, staff provided the most responses to the question, “what keeps them at community action” It was an overwhelming amount of positive feedback. The word cloud below depicts their responses.



Areas of Improvement:

- Fairness in administering rules and policies agency wide.
 - This has been an ongoing matter due to the lack of supervisory training and Leadership collaboration. This year focus will be on supervisory training and team building amongst supervisors.
- Communication.
 - Staff want transparency around decision making and pay. They want to know how staff feedback is actually being used and want more 1on1 time, listening sessions, and staff input.
 - This area is being worked on through a variety of outlets. Transformation Team, Leadership Team, and Human Resources, have all been gathering information to find out ways to improve this area.
- Pay/Compensation
 - Staff want full pay transparency. Staff feel underpaid for direct client service positions. The market has become very competitive with for these specific types of positions.
 - Compensation Committee work on re-class and pay transparency.
- Employee Engagement
 - Don't neglect the good staff. Show appreciation to the staff that don't need extra support. Humanize leadership, upper management, and Core.
 - Hosting a variety of staff engagement events. Working to start and employee of the month. Recognized long term staff at all staff. Core Team visiting all sites throughout the year. **All Staff Appreciation Event, June 27th 1-3p: would like board members to stop by.**

Pay Transparency Proposal

Background: Our Compensation Philosophy that was adopted in 2018 states that we will review our compensation plan, classifications system, and pay ranges at least every three years. Our position were last reviewed, classified, and matched with the labor market in 2020. Since that time we have maintained our position by providing annual cost of living adjustments, but last year we began the work of doing a full review and assessment.

Assessment: We reviewed labor market data. We pulled information from Archbright, one of the largest and most comprehensive pay surveys for the Pacific NW, and a tool we have used since switching to a performance based plan in 2020. We also pulled information from the Employment Security Department, specific to Skagit County, the Bureau of Labor and Statistics, and other Community Action partners when information was available. Together this gave us a good idea of what the labor market wage ranges are for each position and where we needed to focus on adjusting to be more competitive in recruitment and retention.

We then began looking at our positions and how they aligned with each pay grade associated with the classifications. It was easy to see at that time that we needed to update our classification system in order to best utilize and maximize our pay scale and align with labor market wages. One of the changes that we needed to make was adding in an 'Administrative' classification. Our wages for administrative positions needed to be catered to that position. We also polished up other areas of the written classifications in order to be effective in articulating the difference between positions classified in those areas.

We are striving not only to stay up to date in our compensation, classifications, and pay philosophy, but also to get up to date when it comes to pay transparency. We need to become fully transparent when it comes to pay and our positions at the agency in order to recruit and retain mission aligned employees. We also must do this to stay legally complaint with the 2022 update to Washington's Equal Pay and Opportunities Act in which employers must disclose in each posting the wage scale for each position. We currently post starting pay ranges, but need to be able to transparently showcase full pay ranges for all of our positions.

Proposal: We would like to re-classify approximately 40% of the positions we have at the agency. The focus of this proposal is on direct client service positions in housing, care coordination, energy and outreach. We are also looking at administrative, coordinator, and front door positions. By re-classing these positions to align with the updated classification plan, we will be able to show full pay transparency, we will be more competitive in the market and will retain staff better. The majority of the staff we have lost so far this year was due to pay and we have struggled to find replacement candidates. We are at a point in time where our financials are still unknown and this will cost the agency approx. \$100,000. If the decision is made to move forward with this we will have a very healthy classification and attractive pay scale for staff and candidates. With the financial uncertainty we may find the need down the line to have to downsize in order to make this a reality.

Community Action DASHBOARD

April
2024

Financials as of February 29, 2024

Assets	\$ 7,653,368
Liabilities	\$ 1,300,085
Fund Balance	\$ 6,531,298

Net Income/Loss

Month	\$ (1,911)
YTD	\$ (178,016)

Board
Mini-Retreat in June

HOT TOPICS

New enterprises and Revenue.

Spirit of Hope has grossed approximately \$114,527. We are beginning to submit capital funding requests for our Kulshan View project, beginning with a \$1M request through Congressman Larsen's office for direct federal allocation (to cover major infrastructure costs).

Recent Progress on Strategic Plan

- Stabilize the Agency: We have begun to keep a more detailed dashboard for Care Coordination to show the billable units and revenue each month. We have also made more progress on role clarity related to directors, managers, and coordinators; have started to work on KPIs for managers and directors in order to improve clarify and accountability (and will eventually do so for all positions).
- Operationalize Equity: At our April All Staff Meeting, we announced to the agency that we would be leading with racial equity. In our evaluation survey, many staff answered that they would be more interested in engaging with the DEI committee when it was clearer what their goals and actions would be.
- Position the Agency as the Leader in Resource Navigation: Dulce gave a talk to the MV City Council requesting MV CDBG funds this year and explaining the vital role of resource centers in providing both immediate and ongoing face-to-face support.

Service Highlights:

Mariana, Senior and Disabled Volunteer Services program coordinator – due to a relationship and trust built up over time – was able to connect a very ill senior to call EMS herself and seek the medical care she needed. This routine check-in call turned out to be vital.

How can I help this month?

Please mark your calendars for the mini-retreat prior to the June Board meeting: 3:00-5:00 at Hillcrest Park. Prior to the retreat, there will be a staff appreciation day. Drop by at 2:30 if you would like to mingle and show your appreciation to staff.

Trends in Needs and Services

The Board will meet for a mini-retreat for two hours prior to the June Board meeting. The outcomes will be:

- to understand where the agency is at operationally and financially
- to identify risks and strategic opportunities facing us

The retreat will include an operational update and overview, a review of the budget and financial situation, a discussion of the community environment, a discussion of Kulshan View, and other strategic approaches we should be looking at down the road in order to get back on the path to break-even and to greater flexibility and resilience.

Community Conversations and Partnerships

- We received several letters from partners for our \$1M federal direct allocation request (Commissioners, Mayor Donovan, MV City Council, MVSD, MV Chamber).
- Staff from state coalition, WSCAP, briefed CREAT on Nov ballot initiatives, including the Climate Commitment Act.
- We are partnering with SVC to host a Veteran's event on May 8 at McIntyre with Dr. Robert Gates.
- Sandi gave a presentation to the Concrete Town Council.
- Board Member Kati Ortiz was highlighted in a Leadership Skagit discussion on nonprofit boards.