



Snohomish County

County Council

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

September 8, 2021

Mayor Nicola Smith
Lynnwood City Councilmembers
City of Lynnwood
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Lynnwood, WA 98036

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Dear Mayor Smith and Councilmembers,

After the arrival of the COVID-19 virus in Snohomish County our community continues to experience some of the greatest challenges we've ever faced together. Over 50,000 of our residents have contracted the virus, over 650 people have died, children were isolated from their peers and teachers during distance learning, many in our workforce were displaced from their careers or were under employed, families lived in fear of losing their homes, and countless businesses were forced to close.

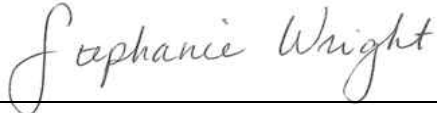
In the background, another pandemic continued to grow. As a result of COVID-19, many in our community experienced new onset of behavioral and mental health conditions and others experienced worsening of existing conditions and relapse. In 2020, at least 231 Snohomish County residents lost their lives to a drug overdose. This is an overall 27% increase in all overdose-related deaths, a 46% increase in opioid-related fatal overdoses, and the highest number of fatal overdoses recorded in our county's history. We are heartbroken to share that our local experts believe fatal overdoses in our community are likely to remain at or exceed this level in 2021.

In 2017, Snohomish County established the Snohomish County Opioid Response Multiagency Coordination Group (MAC Group) to address the alarming trends we continue to see in substance misuse and abuse. This group is composed of representatives from law enforcement, fire and EMS, emergency management, human services, public health, cities, and policy makers. The MAC Group speaks to the collaborative culture and spirit we have in Snohomish County. This team continues to work diligently to address this pandemic and find innovating and unified ways to mitigate the effects of substance misuse and abuse.

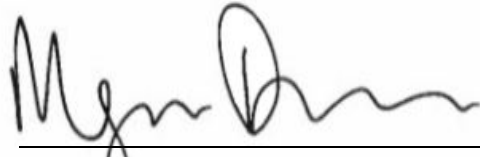
In 2021, Snohomish County opened two 16-bed inpatient treatment facilities to address substance use and behavioral health needs. This is exceptional progress, but the need for additional inpatient

beds is great. Snohomish County commends the City of Lynnwood for their desire to contribute to solutions by creating additional treatment beds utilizing space within their planned new facility. In support of this action, Executive Somers has expressed that he is committed to collaborating on this project through recommending \$3,000,000 in his 2022 budget proposal, which will be delivered to the Snohomish County Council later this month. After the delivery of this budget, Executive Somers will work closely with the Snohomish County Council to support this important work. The County Council is supportive of this approach and looks forward to working with the Executive during the budget review process.

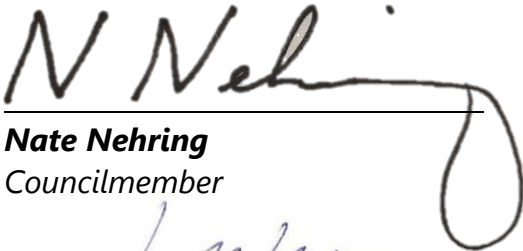
Sincerely,



Stephanie Wright
Council Chair



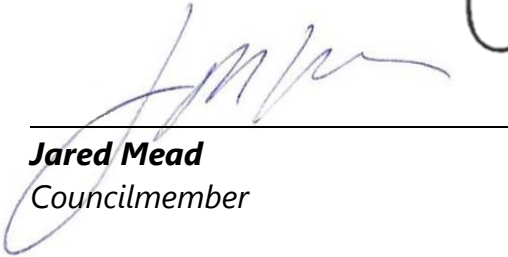
Megan Dunn
Council Vice-Chair



Nate Nehring
Councilmember



Sam Low
Councilmember



Jared Mead
Councilmember