



you
make this
possible.



WHATCOM
community
FOUNDATION

2024 Impact Report



Dear neighbors,



You are receiving this FY 2024 Impact Report because you're part of a powerful network of donors who are invested in Whatcom County.

Flo and I have the job of managing your generosity to make life here better for everyone. Unleashing the power of this collective giving is intensely rewarding work, and we are grateful for your trust.



Every day we witness the beautiful ways in which money is transformed into relief, experimentation, hope, and change. We are inspired not only by your gifts, but by what they reveal about your big hearts: from whimsical art to elder care; housing and health to childcare and environmental education; from disaster relief to local food and farming; from bringing people in from the margins to stepping up in whatever way matters most right now.

Thank you for making more possible in this place we love by leveraging your giving through the Whatcom Community Foundation.



Together over the last year, you invested more than \$8 million in our community; overall, the Community Foundation deployed nearly \$11 million in Whatcom County from July 2023 to June 2024.

We hope you're as energized as we are.

Mauri Ingram
President and CEO

Flo Simon
Board Chair

Our work at the Whatcom Community Foundation is organized into three areas:

Community Ventures are initiatives that we lead for the benefit of our community.

Nonprofit Partnerships includes grantmaking and other activities that help fuel and strengthen the local nonprofit sector.

Philanthropic Services are focused on supporting donor giving goals.



Community Ventures

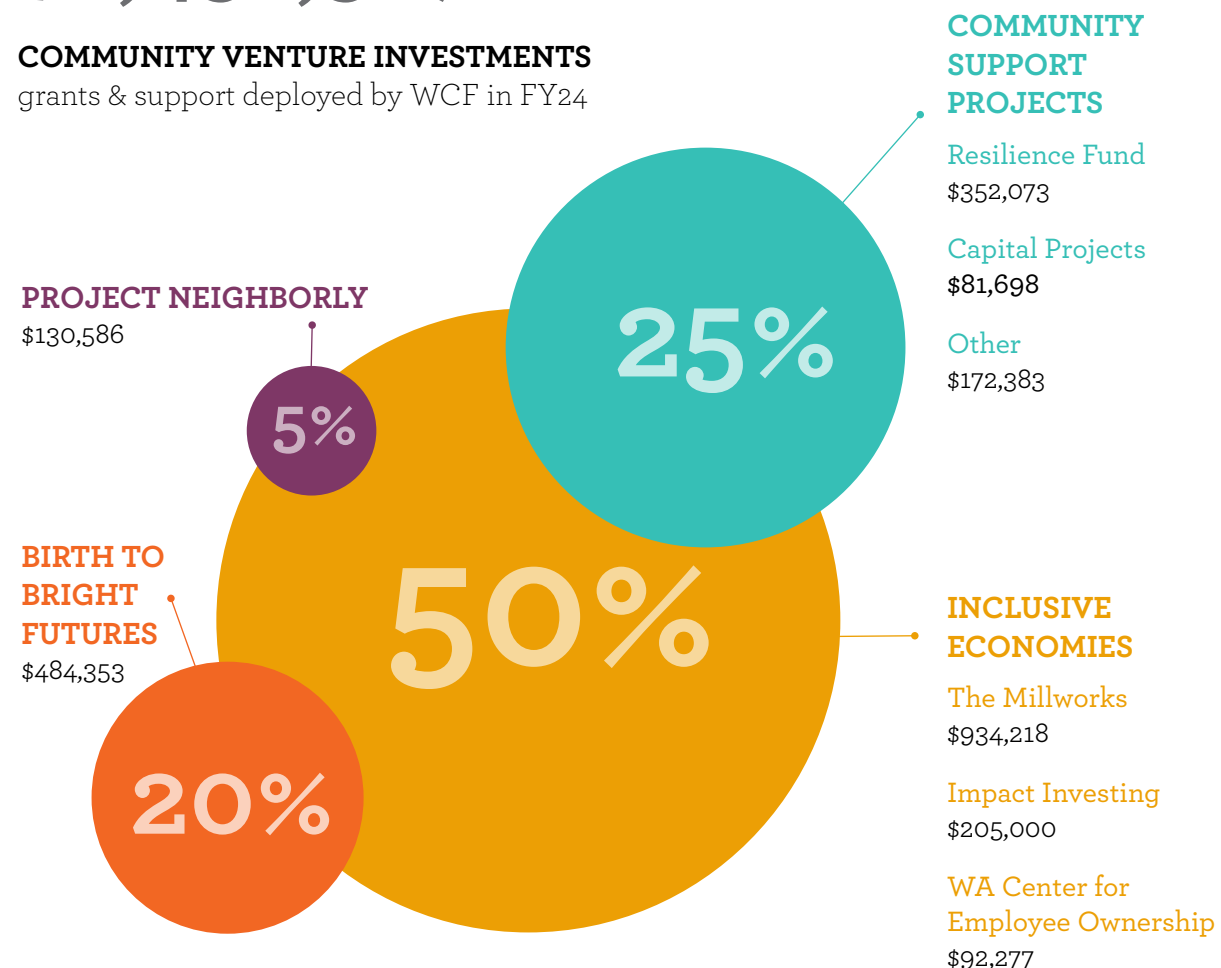


We lead several initiatives by investing in promising approaches to addressing community challenges and taking advantage of opportunities. What we do is based on what we see and hear from local communities. Then, we look at our skills and resources, as well as who else might be involved, and if there's a role that makes sense for the Community Foundation, we're in!

Support for Community Ventures

\$2,452,587

COMMUNITY VENTURE INVESTMENTS
grants & support deployed by WCF in FY24



Birth to Bright Futures

Wouldn't it be amazing for every child in Whatcom County to know that their community has their back? That we believe in their abilities, their possibilities, their hopes and ambitions?

Birth to Bright Futures reflects our commitment to the idea that former first lady of the United States Lady Bird Johnson articulated so well:

"Children are likely to live up to what you believe of them."

This initiative encompasses a range of programs, including child savings accounts (CSAs), scholarships and youth philanthropy, focused on assuring that every single kid in Whatcom County has access to the opportunities they need to create stable and fulfilling lives.

Project Neighborly

Project Neighborly is designed to help us all be better neighbors. Grants up to \$5,000 are awarded to groups from Point Roberts to Kendall. Project Neighborly grants fund great ideas that connect people who might not otherwise meet, fostering a sense of belonging and building trust. Projects come from all corners of the county and all manner of groups, from neighborhood associations and faith organizations, to schools, local tribes and government, a range of arts, environmental and social service nonprofits.



Columbia neighborhood mural painting project funded by a 2023 Project Neighborly grant.

The Millworks

The opening of **The Millworks Phase 1** last April marked an exciting milestone for the Community Foundation, Mercy Housing NW, the Port of Bellingham, our community and most especially, for the 83 families who now have an inviting, safe and stable place to call home in the heart of Bellingham — one that also offers YMCA childcare onsite and other family-focused support programs from owner Mercy Housing NW.

As Whatcom County's first Community Benefit (CB) mixed-use real estate development, **The Millworks** shows what's possible when project sponsors seek to maximize benefits for the people of Whatcom County. While CB projects don't forgo financial return, they prioritize community dividends, such as supporting local jobs growth, applying resilient building practices and providing dignity and hope to our neighbors. And there's more to come! **Phase 2** continues the Community Foundation's inaugural role as master developer as we marshal the resources and partners to open a regional food campus on the waterfront, along with more workforce housing, a nonprofit collaboration center and public gathering spaces.

"That's the last piece I need,"

said a Millworks resident after asking the YMCA Early Learning Center manager when the center would open.



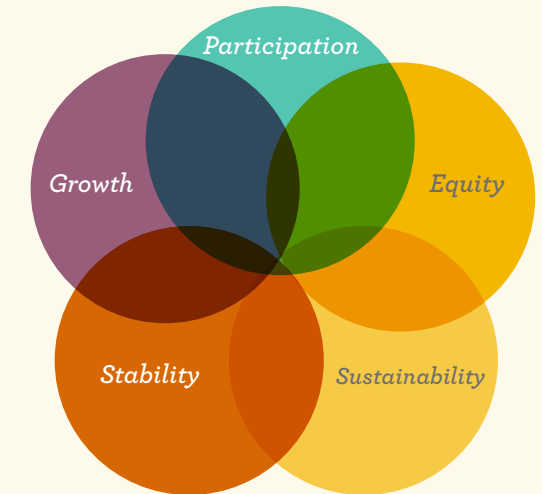
Phase 2 of the Millworks includes a food campus, workforce housing, nonprofit offices and community gathering space.



Nearly 100 kids now have a new, stable home complete with a playground in their backyard.

What is an Inclusive Economy?

An inclusive economy offers every person the economic opportunity to prosper on their terms.



An economy that leaves no one out means all people enjoy full and fair access and participation. It's an economic system that operates for the benefit and wellbeing of all residents, rather than just some, or even most, of the people who live and work in it.

Money alone isn't enough for people to move, and stay, out of poverty. All humans need the dignity that comes from having power over their lives and being valued by their community.* Our economy doesn't work for everyone and it could. That's why an inclusive economy isn't just something we can create. It's something we must create.

We're working to contribute to an inclusive economy. Because people need meaningful, stable lives and livelihoods to thrive.

"It is our economy rather than the economy."
— Chris Benner & Manuel Pastor

*U.S. Partnership on Mobility from Poverty, Stanford SPARQ, and the Urban Institute



Nonprofit Partnerships



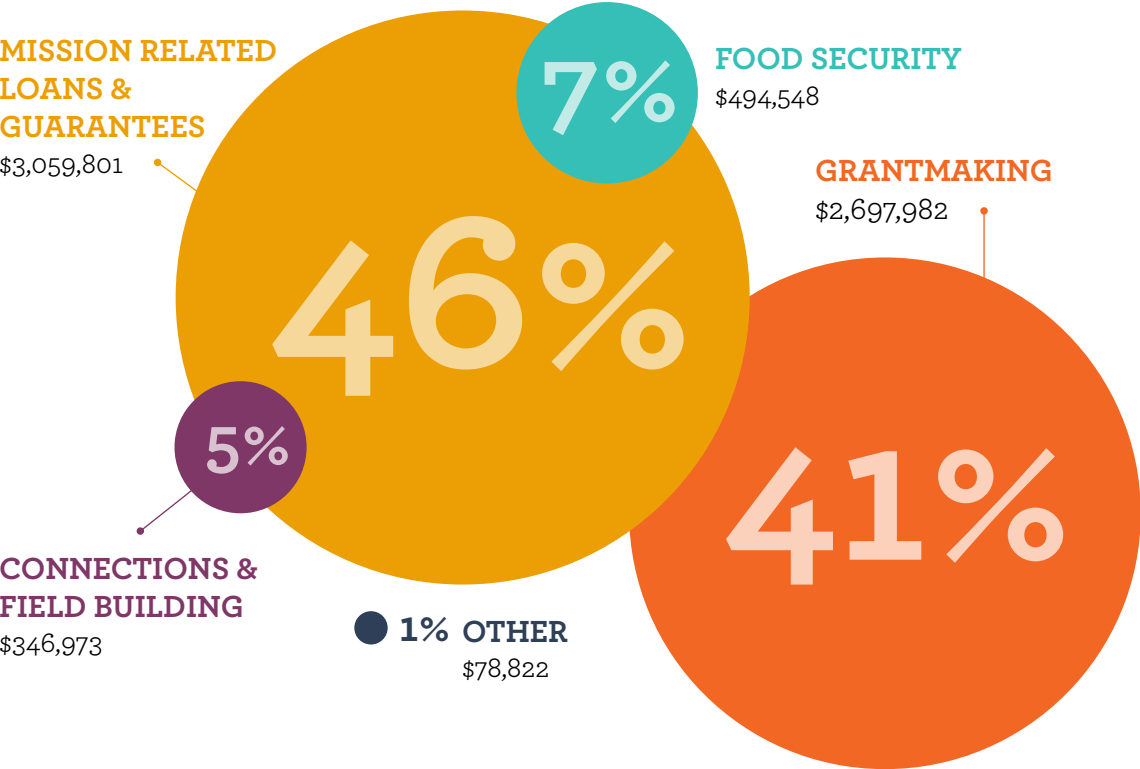
The Whatcom Community Foundation makes grants to nonprofits so they can advance their missions. We also invest in activities like strengthening infrastructure, professional development, nonprofit network support and more. Since 1996, WCF has granted more than \$73 million to local nonprofits in all corners of Whatcom County.

Nonprofit Partnerships

\$6,678,126

NONPROFIT PARTNERSHIPS INVESTMENTS

grants & support deployed by WCF in FY24



Connections

Some 1,500 nonprofits in our county employ more than 7,000 people who take care of us and this beautiful place in many ways. One of the ways we support these diverse organizations is by offering opportunities for them to connect with each other, through forums like the Executive Director Roundtable and, more recently, the warm and sunny chance to celebrate their role in building an equitable and thriving community.

Grantmaking

Whatcom County’s nonprofit sector is both committed and resilient. But the sector is also stretched to its increasingly frayed edges, which were challenged even before the pandemic, floods and opioid crisis. Burnout is real and turnover is high. In 2024, WCF established the Health and Wellness grant round focused on “caring for the caregivers.” The money supported 56 organizations with grants ranging from \$1,000-\$10,000 totaling \$293,000.

One of the primary roles of community foundations is to safeguard and augment the work of local nonprofits; if they cannot prosper, neither can our community.

Loans & Guarantees

When nonprofits are awarded public funds, which are often based on reimbursements, they may not have the upfront cash needed to take advantage of the grant. Earlier this year, a \$75,000 bridge loan allowed Road2Home to house and care for our unhoused neighbors at their winter shelter, while waiting for grant reimbursements. The Threshold Fund makes it possible for WCF to back construction loans and reduce the cost of borrowing for organizations building affordable housing.



In August 2023 over 100 nonprofit organizations gathered on the Bellingham waterfront to connect and celebrate. The gratitude celebration was hosted in partnership by United Way of Whatcom County, Chuckanut Health Foundation, Mount Baker Foundation and Whatcom Community Foundation.

The McClain Legacy in Whatcom County

One spring day in 2015 when his curiosity got the best of him, Joe McClain wandered into the Whatcom Community Foundation offices to see what we were all about. He had heard about the Community Foundation from a trusted, longtime friend.

Two years later, after a thorough, and thoroughly engaging, period of kicking our tires — which included opening a donor advised fund (DAF), developing an estate plan and attending many gatherings — Joe showed just how much he embraced the Whatcom Community Foundation mission and our ability to fulfill it.

Joe entrusted the Community Foundation with a generous bequest of more than \$23 million for unrestricted grantmaking. He knew he wanted his gift to help make great things happen in Whatcom County forever.

Joe grew up in a West Virginia coal mining town and built a flourishing career with UPS after his Navy service. During our annual Celebration of Giving, he enjoyed visiting with Community Foundation board and staff, staff from other local nonprofits, and students in the Youth Philanthropy Project. He was the life of the party. A lifelong learner and giver with a bright smile and even brighter socks, the legacy of Joe and his wife of 60 years Anne, who, sadly, died before we had a chance to meet her, has already reached deep into the fabric of Whatcom County and will enrich local communities in perpetuity.

“What you’ve helped me realize is that there’s no way I can know what the needs and possibilities will be a hundred years from now, but in a hundred years, the Community Foundation will.”

— Joe McClain



What is the Madrona Society?

The Madrona Society is how we honor donors who have named the Community Foundation in their wills with a bequest.

The madrona tree is deeply rooted in its place. Its roots add stability to the tree’s environment, as Madrona Society members do to our community. In addition, healthy saplings can sprout from the fallen tree’s trunk, providing a base that makes new life possible. Madrona trees are beloved in the Pacific Northwest. That’s the way we feel about our legacy givers.

Establish your fund as a permanent endowment or design it to make grants for a fixed period (often 10 to 20 years). An unrestricted gift can be used to address community needs as they arise, or you can support a field of interest that is important to you. You can also choose to support specific organizations – or any combination of these options. We are happy to work with you and your financial adviser to meet your goals for charitable giving.

Philanthropic Services



Some people know exactly how and where they want to give, others want to learn more about the community and explore what is possible. What you share as donors is the urge to give in ways that help your community.

The Whatcom Community Foundation works with local individuals, families and workplaces to support their unique giving goals. These partnerships include identifying donor values and philanthropic goals, exploring community needs and opportunities, giving strategy evaluation and recommendations,

and gift and grant management and reporting.

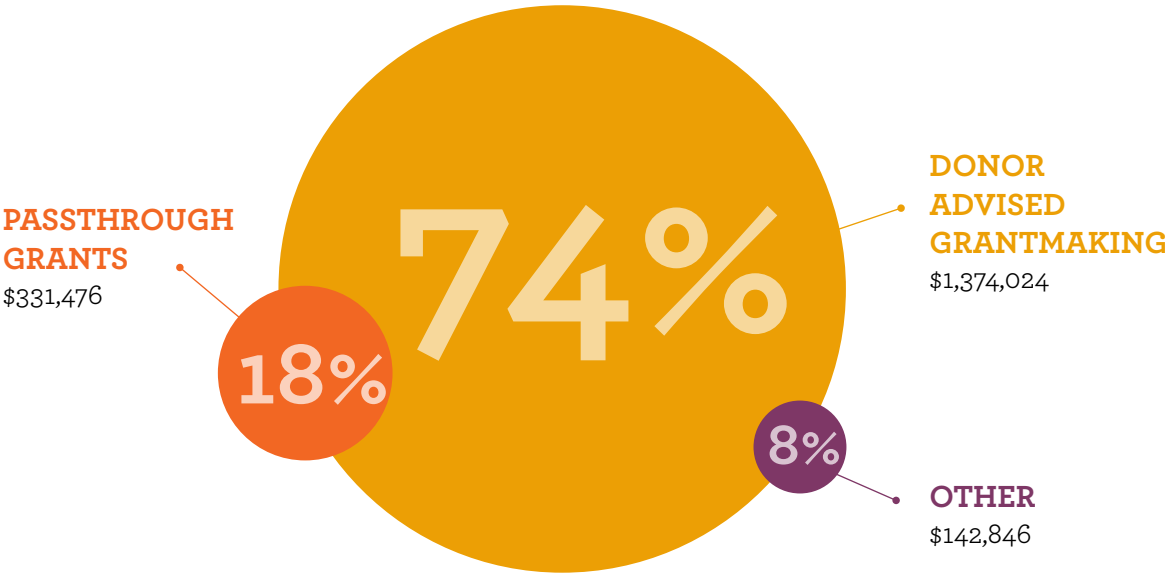
Each of these collaborations are one-of-a-kind, and often they include the creation of a fund dedicated to supporting the donor’s philanthropic aspirations.

Community Support through Philanthropic Services

\$1,848,346

DONOR-INSPIRED PHILANTHROPIC INVESTMENTS

grants & support deployed by WCF on behalf of fundholders & community members in FY24



A Legacy of Public Art

“The world is too darn serious! We need some frivolity to counterbalance all that seriousness.”

— Larry Berghoff

Meet Billy and George*. They live in Harriet Spanel Park in the York Neighborhood. The sculptures are Bellingham’s newest public art installation, and the playful kick-off to what donor Larry Berghoff hopes will be dozens more whimsical sculptures and other engaging works of art in Whatcom County that are visible and free to the community, whether occupying public land or not.

While he established the “whimsical sculpture” fund with the Whatcom Community Foundation after meeting with his attorney some 30 years ago, more recently Larry got to wondering, “Is this actually going to work?”

He spent the last few years working with the Community Foundation staff to test the idea and create a framework for implementation. One false start eventually led to the Bellingham Arts Commission and ultimately, many conversations and details later, to Billy and George.

“I couldn’t have done this without the Foundation. I don’t have the expertise of who to contact, how to navigate the permits or attend to the legal aspects associated with funding art for an organization.”



At the summer dedication ceremony, he watched a little boy encounter Billy and George, first puzzled, finally grinning with delight. It was the highlight of Larry’s day, his wish to bring viewers “a smile, a chuckle, or even an outright burst of laughter” made real.

It’s the beginning of his legacy, but nowhere near the end. A project in Ferndale is next, and as the word gets out about the Berghoff Art Fund, Larry imagines a future Whatcom County known as a place rich in serious art with not-so-serious subject matter for all to enjoy.

*Named for William Bellingham and George Vancouver, by artist duo Uckiood.

Fiscal Year 2024 Financials

\$8,241,933

Gifts to WCF in FY24

\$10,979,060

Funds deployed in grants & loans in FY24

\$86,841,354

Total Assets as of 6/31/24

382

Donor Advised and other funds as of 6/31/24

ASSETS	Cash & Investments	\$73,187,281
	Receivables & Others	\$13,654,073
	Total Assets	\$86,841,354
LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	Grants Payable	\$791,996
	Other	\$5,064,222
	Net Assets	\$80,985,136
	Total Liabilities & Net Assets	\$86,841,354

Whatcom Community Foundation's FY24 Spending Rate was 12.6%

Private foundations in the United States must distribute at least 5% of the fair market value of their assets annually to comply with tax codes.

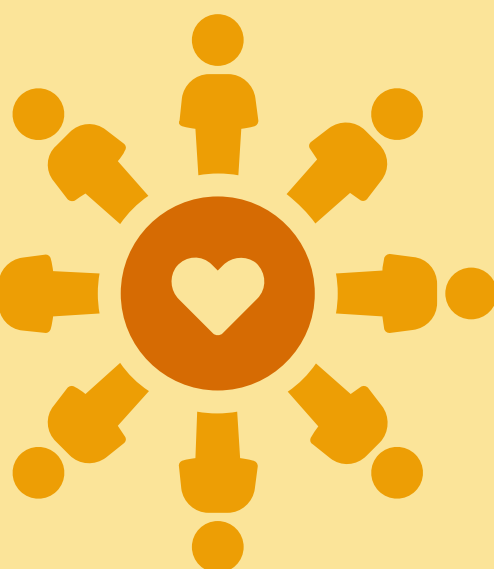
In FY24, Whatcom Community Foundation directed more than double that percentage to ensure that Whatcom County thrives. That means 12.6% of our assets went right back into the community in one year.

A look ahead

A different way to give: Impact Investing in Whatcom County!

Philanthropy comes in many forms, including grants and direct donations to an organization. Another option is to invest in a project or organization in a way that provides two kinds of returns: financial (for you) and community (for all). Double goodness!

Impact Investing means that capital is deployed with the goal of generating a measurable and beneficial social or environmental impact alongside financial returns. In 2025, we're introducing two options for donors to take part in this exciting form of community giving.





thank you.



WHATCOM
community
FOUNDATION

www.whatcomcf.org

360.671.6463 | 1500 Cornwall Avenue, Suite 202, Bellingham, WA 98225

In partnership with the Community Foundation Awareness Initiative