

Lynden Community Center Structural & Mechanical Repairs

EDI Funding Request: \$300,000



Request: The City of Lynden is requesting Whatcom County Economic Development Investment (EDI) funds in the amount of \$300,000 to perform critical structural and mechanical repairs and upgrades to the City's Community Center which is used by northern Whatcom County residents. The City regularly performs required maintenance, but some building components have reached the end of their useful life. The total cost of the proposed repairs and improvements is expected to be \$600,000 and the balance of the project would be funded by the City. COVID restrictions had a severe impact on the operation of this facility.

Issue: The City partners with the Lynden Community/Senior Center, a 501(c)3 non-profit, which operates in an 11,000 square foot City building (a former grocery store). This Center helps mature adults in the community maintain their independence and quality of life by offering a lunch time meal program, meal delivery to the disabled and homebound, and exercise and socialization opportunities. This past summer the Center worked with the local Lions Club to operate a cooling shelter during excessive heat events. The Center includes a covered WTA bus stop with close access to essential City services for those using scheduled transit services including, paratransit and the new Lynden HOP.

Because of COVID the Center was closed to the public for over a year. However, during COVID staff continued to provide meals to the most vulnerable via home delivery and meal pickup options. The closure provided staff the opportunity to make modest interior cosmetic improvements and to identify other more significant deficiencies.

This facility operates with an inefficient, original 1969 HVAC system. The windows do not meet energy code, are difficult to operate, and have failing components. The HVAC system needs replacement to meet current standards and provide safe air circulation and filtration. Also, the building does not meet current energy standards and the upper brick façade needs to be upgraded or replaced for seismic safety.

Solution: The City is interested in proceeding with structural and mechanical changes needed for this aging facility to correct seismic and energy code related deficiencies. EDI funds would be matched with \$300,000 in City funds to complete the full project to replace the HVAC system and the needed exterior work on the Center. This will provide a safer, more energy efficient gathering place which offers vital services to a valued demographic of the northern Whatcom County population.



Photo showing front of the Community Center which requires seismic upgrades and major mechanical repairs