



Office of the Washington State Auditor
Pat McCarthy

Financial Statements and Federal Single Audit Report

Whatcom Council of Governments

For the period January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024

Published July 21, 2025

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**Office of the Washington State Auditor
Pat McCarthy**

July 21, 2025

Board of Directors
Whatcom Council of Governments
Bellingham, Washington

Report on Financial Statements and Federal Single Audit

Please find attached our report on the Whatcom Council of Governments financial statements and compliance with federal laws and regulations.

We are issuing this report in order to provide information on the Council's financial activities and condition.

Sincerely,

Pat McCarthy, State Auditor
Olympia, WA

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SCHEDULE OF FINDINGS AND QUESTIONED COSTS

Whatcom Council of Governments January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024

SECTION I – SUMMARY OF AUDITOR’S RESULTS

The results of our audit of the Whatcom Council of Governments are summarized below in accordance with Title 2 *U.S. Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR) Part 200, *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards* (Uniform Guidance).

Financial Statements

We issued an unmodified opinion on the fair presentation of the Council’s financial statements in accordance with its regulatory basis of accounting. Separately, we issued an adverse opinion on the fair presentation with regard to accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAP) because the financial statements are prepared using a basis of accounting other than GAAP.

Internal Control over Financial Reporting:

- *Significant Deficiencies:* We reported no deficiencies in the design or operation of internal control over financial reporting that we consider to be significant deficiencies.
- *Material Weaknesses:* We identified no deficiencies that we consider to be material weaknesses.

We noted no instances of noncompliance that were material to the financial statements of the Council.

Federal Awards

Internal Control over Major Programs:

- *Significant Deficiencies:* We reported no deficiencies in the design or operation of internal control over major federal programs that we consider to be significant deficiencies.
- *Material Weaknesses:* We identified no deficiencies that we consider to be material weaknesses.

We issued an unmodified opinion on the Council’s compliance with requirements applicable to its major federal program.

We reported no findings that are required to be disclosed in accordance with 2 CFR 200.516(a).

Identification of Major Federal Programs

The following program was selected as a major program in our audit of compliance in accordance with the Uniform Guidance.

<u>ALN</u>	<u>Program or Cluster Title</u>
20.205	Highway Planning and Construction

The dollar threshold used to distinguish between Type A and Type B programs, as prescribed by the Uniform Guidance, was \$750,000.

The Council did not qualify as a low-risk auditee under the Uniform Guidance.

SECTION II – FINANCIAL STATEMENT FINDINGS

None reported.

SECTION III – FEDERAL AWARD FINDINGS AND QUESTIONED COSTS

None reported.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

Report on Internal Control over Financial Reporting and on Compliance and Other Matters Based on an Audit of Financial Statements Performed in Accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*

Whatcom Council of Governments January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024

Board of Directors
Whatcom Council of Governments
Bellingham, Washington

We have audited, in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, the financial statements of the Whatcom Council of Governments, as of and for the year ended December 31, 2024, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise the Council's financial statements, and have issued our report thereon dated July 10, 2025.

We issued an unmodified opinion on the fair presentation of the Council's financial statements in accordance with its regulatory basis of accounting. We issued an adverse opinion on the fair presentation with regard to accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAP) because the financial statements are prepared by the Council using accounting practices prescribed by state law and the State Auditor's *Budgeting, Accounting and Reporting System* (BARS) manual described in Note 1, which is a basis of accounting other than GAAP. The effects on the financial statements of the variances between the basis of accounting described in Note 1 and accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, although not reasonably determinable, are presumed to be material.

REPORT ON INTERNAL CONTROL OVER FINANCIAL REPORTING

In planning and performing our audit of the financial statements, we considered the Council's internal control over financial reporting (internal control) as a basis for designing audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances for the purpose of expressing our opinions on the financial statements, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Council's internal control. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of the Council's internal control.

A *deficiency in internal control* exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent, or detect and correct, misstatements on a timely basis. A *material weakness* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control such that there is a reasonable possibility that a material misstatement of the Council's financial statements will not be prevented, or detected and corrected on a timely basis. A *significant deficiency* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control that is less severe than a material weakness, yet important enough to merit attention by those charged with governance.

Our consideration of internal control was for the limited purpose described above and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control that might be material weaknesses or significant deficiencies and therefore, material weaknesses or significant deficiencies may exist that were not identified.

Given these limitations, during our audit we did not identify any deficiencies in internal control that we consider to be material weaknesses.

REPORT ON COMPLIANCE AND OTHER MATTERS

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether the Council's financial statements are free from material misstatement, we performed tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts and grant agreements, noncompliance with which could have a direct and material effect on the financial statements. However, providing an opinion on compliance with those provisions was not an objective of our audit, and accordingly, we do not express such an opinion.

The results of our tests disclosed no instances of noncompliance or other matters that are required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards*.

PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

The purpose of this report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of the Council's internal control or on compliance. This report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering the Council's internal control and compliance. Accordingly, this communication is not suitable for any other purpose. However,

this report is a matter of public record and its distribution is not limited. It also serves to disseminate information to the public as a reporting tool to help citizens assess government operations.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pat McCarthy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Pat" and last name "McCarthy" clearly distinguishable.

Pat McCarthy, State Auditor

Olympia, WA

July 10, 2025

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

Report on Compliance for Each Major Federal Program and Report on Internal Control over Compliance in Accordance with the Uniform Guidance

Whatcom Council of Governments January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024

Board of Directors
Whatcom Council of Governments
Bellingham, Washington

REPORT ON COMPLIANCE FOR EACH MAJOR FEDERAL PROGRAM

Opinion on Each Major Federal Program

We have audited the compliance of the Whatcom Council of Governments, with the types of compliance requirements identified as subject to audit in the U.S. *Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Compliance Supplement* that could have a direct and material effect on each of the Council's major federal programs for the year ended December 31, 2024. The Council's major federal programs are identified in the auditor's results section of the accompanying Schedule of Findings and Questioned Costs.

In our opinion, the Council complied, in all material respects, with the types of compliance requirements referred to above that could have a direct and material effect on each of its major federal programs for the year ended December 31, 2024.

Basis for Opinion on Each Major Federal Program

We conducted our audit of compliance in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAS); the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States; and the audit requirements of Title 2 U.S. *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 200, *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance)* are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of Compliance section of our report.

We are required to be independent of the Council and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audit. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion on

compliance for each major federal program. Our audit does not provide a legal determination on the Council's compliance with the compliance requirements referred to above.

Responsibilities of Management for Compliance

Management is responsible for compliance with the requirements referred to above and for the design, implementation, and maintenance of effective internal control over compliance with the requirements of laws, statutes, regulations, rules and provisions of contracts or grant agreements applicable to the Council's federal programs.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of Compliance

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether material noncompliance with the compliance requirements referred to above occurred, whether due to fraud or error, and express an opinion on the Council's compliance based on our audit. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with GAAS, *Government Auditing Standards* and the Uniform Guidance will always detect a material noncompliance when it exists. The risk of not detecting a material noncompliance resulting from fraud is higher than for that resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Noncompliance with the compliance requirements referred to above is considered material, if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, it would influence the judgement made by a reasonable user of the report on compliance about the Council's compliance with the requirements of each major federal program as a whole.

Performing an audit in accordance with GAAS, *Government Auditing Standards* and the Uniform Guidance includes the following responsibilities:

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit;
- Identify and assess the risks of material noncompliance, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the Council's compliance with the compliance requirements referred to above and performing such other procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances;
- Obtain an understanding of the Council's internal control over compliance relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances and to test and report on internal control over compliance in accordance with the Uniform Guidance, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Council's internal control over compliance. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed; and

- We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and any significant deficiencies and material weaknesses in internal control over compliance that we identified during the audit.

REPORT ON INTERNAL CONTROL OVER COMPLIANCE

A *deficiency in internal control over compliance* exists when the design or operation of a control over compliance does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent, or detect and correct, noncompliance with a type of compliance requirement of a federal program on a timely basis. A *material weakness in internal control over compliance* is a deficiency, or combination of deficiencies, in internal control over compliance, such that there is a reasonable possibility that material noncompliance with a type of compliance requirement of a federal program will not be prevented, or detected and corrected, on a timely basis. A *significant deficiency in internal control over compliance* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control over compliance with a type of compliance requirement of a federal program that is less severe than a material weakness in internal control over compliance, yet important enough to merit attention by those charged with governance.

Our audit was not designed for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of internal control over compliance. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed. Our consideration of internal control over compliance was for the limited purpose described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of Compliance section above and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control over compliance that might be material weaknesses or significant deficiencies in internal control over compliance and therefore, material weaknesses or significant deficiencies may exist that were not identified.

Given these limitations, during our audit we did not identify any deficiencies in internal control over compliance that we consider to be material weaknesses, as defined above.

Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this report on internal control over compliance is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over compliance and the results of that testing based on the requirements of the Uniform Guidance. Accordingly, this report is not suitable for any other

purpose. However, this report is a matter of public record and its distribution is not limited. It also serves to disseminate information to the public as a reporting tool to help citizens assess government operations.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pat McCarthy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "P" and "M".

Pat McCarthy, State Auditor

Olympia, WA

July 10, 2025

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements

Whatcom Council of Governments January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024

Board of Directors
Whatcom Council of Governments
Bellingham, Washington

REPORT ON THE AUDIT OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Unmodified and Adverse Opinions

We have audited the financial statements of the Whatcom Council of Governments, as of and for the year ended December 31, 2024, and the related notes to the financial statements, as listed in the financial section of our report.

Unmodified Opinion on the Regulatory Basis of Accounting (BARS Manual)

As described in Note 1, the Council has prepared these financial statements to meet the financial reporting requirements of state law and accounting practices prescribed by the State Auditor's *Budgeting, Accounting and Reporting System* (BARS) Manual. Those accounting practices differ from accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAP). The differences in these accounting practices are also described in Note 1.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the cash and investments of the Whatcom Council of Governments, and its changes in cash and investments, for the year ended December 31, 2024, on the basis of accounting described in Note 1.

Adverse Opinion on U.S. GAAP

The financial statements referred to above were not intended to, and in our opinion, they do not, present fairly, in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, the financial position of the Whatcom Council of Governments, as of December 31, 2024, or the changes in financial position or cash flows thereof for the year then ended, because of the significance of the matter discussed below.

Basis for Unmodified and Adverse Opinions

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAS) and *Government Auditing Standards*. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are required to be independent of the Council, and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audit. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit unmodified and adverse opinions.

Matters of Emphasis

As discussed in Note 8 to the financial statements, in 2024, the Council adopted new accounting guidance for presentation and disclosure of compensated absences, as required by the BARS manual. Our opinion is not modified with respect to this matter.

Matter Giving Rise to Adverse Opinion on U.S. GAAP

Auditing standards issued by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) require auditors to formally acknowledge when governments do not prepare their financial statements, intended for general use, in accordance with GAAP. As described in Note 1 of the financial statements, the financial statements are prepared by the Council in accordance with state law using accounting practices prescribed by the BARS Manual, which is a basis of accounting other than accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. The effects on the financial statements of the variances between the regulatory basis of accounting and accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, although not reasonably determinable, are presumed to be material and pervasive.

Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with the financial reporting provisions of state law and the BARS Manual described in Note 1. This includes determining that the basis of accounting is acceptable for the presentation of the financial statements in the circumstances. Management is also responsible for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Council's ability to continue as a going concern for twelve months beyond the financial statement date, including any currently known information that may raise substantial doubt shortly thereafter.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinions. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with GAAS and *Government Auditing Standards* will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Misstatements are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the financial statements.

Performing an audit in accordance with GAAS and *Government Auditing Standards* includes the following responsibilities:

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit;
- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements;
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Council's internal control. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed;
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the financial statements;
- Conclude whether, in our judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Council's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time; and
- We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant audit findings, and certain internal control-related matters that we identified during the audit.

Supplementary Information

Our audit was conducted for the purpose of forming an opinion on the financial statements that collectively comprise the Council's financial statements. The accompanying Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards is presented for purposes of additional analysis as required by Title 2 *U.S. Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR) Part 200, *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards* (Uniform Guidance). The Schedule

of Liabilities is also presented for purposes of additional analysis, as required by the prescribed BARS manual. These schedules are not a required part of the financial statements. Such information is the responsibility of management and was derived from and relates directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements. The information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the financial statements and certain additional procedures, including comparing and reconciling such information directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements or to the financial statements themselves, and other additional procedures in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. In our opinion, the information is fairly stated, in all material respects, in relation to the financial statements as a whole.

OTHER REPORTING REQUIRED BY GOVERNMENT AUDITING STANDARDS

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we have also issued our report dated July 10, 2025 on our consideration of the Council's internal control over financial reporting and on the tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts and grant agreements and other matters. The purpose of that report is to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of the Council's internal control over financial reporting or on compliance. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering the Council's internal control over financial reporting and compliance.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Pat McCarthy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Pat" and last name "McCarthy" clearly distinguishable.

Pat McCarthy, State Auditor

Olympia, WA

July 10, 2025

FINANCIAL SECTION

Whatcom Council of Governments January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Fund Resources and Uses Arising from Cash Transactions – 2024
Notes to Financial Statements – 2024

SUPPLEMENTARY AND OTHER INFORMATION

Schedule of Liabilities – 2024
Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards – 2024
Notes to the Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards – 2024

Whatcom Council of Governments
Fund Resources and Uses Arising from Cash Transactions
For the Year Ended December 31, 2024

Beginning Cash and Investments

308	Beginning Cash and Investments	359,404
388 / 588	Net Adjustments	-

Revenues

310	Taxes	-
320	Licenses and Permits	-
330	Intergovernmental Revenues	1,768,834
340	Charges for Goods and Services	-
350	Fines and Penalties	-
360	Miscellaneous Revenues	228,438
Total Revenues:		1,997,272

Expenditures

510	General Government	-
520	Public Safety	-
530	Utilities	-
540	Transportation	-
550	Natural/Economic Environment	1,895,535
560	Social Services	-
570	Culture and Recreation	-
Total Expenditures:		1,895,535
Excess (Deficiency) Revenues over Expenditures:		101,737

Other Increases in Fund Resources

391-393, 596	Debt Proceeds	-
397	Transfers-In	-
385	Special or Extraordinary Items	-
381, 382, 389, 395, 398	Other Resources	-
Total Other Increases in Fund Resources:		-

Other Decreases in Fund Resources

594-595	Capital Expenditures	-
591-593, 599	Debt Service	60,267
597	Transfers-Out	-
585	Special or Extraordinary Items	-
581, 582, 589	Other Uses	-
Total Other Decreases in Fund Resources:		60,267

Increase (Decrease) in Cash and Investments: 41,470

Ending Cash and Investments

50821	Nonspendable	-
50831	Restricted	-
50841	Committed	-
50851	Assigned	-
50891	Unassigned	400,875
Total Ending Cash and Investments		400,875

The accompanying notes are an integral part of this statement.

**Whatcom Council of Governments
Notes to Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2024**

Note 1 - Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

The Whatcom Council of Governments was formed on February 23, 1966, and operates under the laws of the state of Washington applicable to a regional planning agency (RCW 36.64.080). The Council is a special purpose government which provides a mutual forum to identify, discuss, study, and bring into focus regional challenges and opportunities. The Council's current primary function is providing staff support for regional transportation planning activities in Whatcom County. The Council is composed of elected officials representing the cities of: Bellingham, Blaine, Everson, Ferndale, Lynden, Nooksack and Sumas; Whatcom County; the Lummi Indian Nation; the Port of Bellingham; and the Lake Whatcom Water & Sewer District.

The Whatcom Council of Governments reports financial activity in accordance with the *Cash Basis Budgeting, Accounting and Reporting System* (BARS) Manual prescribed by the State Auditor's Office under the authority of Washington State law, Chapter 43.09 RCW. This manual prescribes a financial reporting framework that differs from Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) in the following manner:

- Financial transactions are recognized on a cash basis of accounting as described below.
- Component units are required to be disclosed, but are not included in the financial statements.
- Government-wide statements, as defined in GAAP, are not presented.
- All funds are presented, rather than a focus on major funds.
- The Schedule of Liabilities is required to be presented with the financial statements as supplementary information.
- Supplementary information required by GAAP is not presented.
- Ending balances for proprietary and fiduciary funds are presented using classifications that are different from the ending net position classifications in GAAP.

A. Fund Accounting

Financial transactions of the government are reported in individual funds. Each fund uses a separate set of self-balancing accounts that comprises its cash and investments, revenues and expenditures. The government's resources are allocated to and accounted for in individual funds depending on their intended purpose. Each fund is reported as a separate column in the financial statements, except for fiduciary funds, which are presented by fund types. The total column is presented as "memo only" because any interfund activities are not eliminated. The following fund types are used:

GOVERNMENTAL FUND TYPES:

General Fund

This fund is the primary operating fund of the government. It accounts for all financial resources except those required or elected to be accounted for in another fund.

B. Basis of Accounting and Measurement Focus

Financial statements are prepared using the cash basis of accounting and measurement focus. Revenues are recognized when cash is received, and expenditures are recognized when paid.

C. Cash and Investments

It is the Council's policy to invest all temporary cash surpluses. For further information see Note 3 - *Deposits and Investments*.

D. Capital Assets

Capital assets are assets with an initial individual cost of more than \$5,000 and an estimated useful life in excess of 1 year. Capital assets and inventory are recorded as capital expenditures when purchased.

E. Compensated Absences

A maximum of 240 hours of vacation leave and 700 hours of sick leave may be carried over at the end of each calendar year. A maximum of 240 hours of vacation leave is payable upon separation of service. Unused sick leave is not payable upon separation. Payments are recognized as expenditures when paid.

A BARS Manual change for the 2024 reporting year requires the Council estimate a liability for the accrued sick leave that is more than likely to be taken in the future. The Council estimated the sick leave liability by calculating the average number of sick hours used by employees over the preceeding 4 years and multipling that by the year-end hourly payrate per employee. The estimated liability is disclosed in Note 8 – *Long-Term Liabilities*.

F. Liabilities

See Note 4 – *Leases* and Note 5 – *Pension Plans*.

G. Leases

Leases are reported as liabilities if the total payments over the life of the lease is more than \$1,000. For more information, see Note 4 – *Leases*.

Subscription Based Information Technology Arrangements (SBITA) are reported as liabilities if the total payments over the life of the SBITA is more than \$1,000. The Council does not have any reportable SBITAs.

H. Restricted and Committed Portion of Ending Cash and Investments

Beginning and Ending Cash and Investments are reported as restricted or committed when it is subject to restrictions on use imposed by external parties or due to internal commitments established by the Council's board. When expenditures that meet restrictions are incurred, the Council intends to use the most restrictive resources first.

There were no restricted or committed cash and investments during the fiscal year.

Note 2 - Budget Compliance

The Council adopts an annual operating budget of expected income and expenditures for the general fund. The Council has the authority to amend the budget to meet unanticipated needs or changed conditions. The Executive Director is authorized to transfer budgeted amounts between object classes; however, any revisions that alter the total expenditures must be approved by the Council's board.

The annual operating budgets are adopted on the same basis of accounting as used for financial reporting.

The budgeted and actual expenditures for the adopted budget was as follows:

FUND	FINAL ADOPTED AMOUNT	ACTUAL EXPENDITURES	VARIANCE Under/(Over)
General	\$ 2,148,151	\$1,955,802	\$192,349

Note 3 – Deposits and Investments

Investments are reported at cost. It is the Council's practice to invest all temporary cash surpluses. The interest earned on these investments is credited to the General Fund.

Deposits and investments by type on December 31, 2024, were as follows:

Type of Deposit or Investment	The Council's Deposits & Investments
Bank Deposits	\$ 57,592
Whatcom County Investment Pool	343,283
Total	\$ 400,875

The Council is a voluntary participant in the Whatcom County Investment Pool, an external investment pool operated by the Whatcom County Treasurer. The pool is not rated or registered with the SEC. Rather, oversight is provided by the County Finance Committee in accordance with RCW 36.48.070. The Council reports its investment in the pool at cost, which is the same as the value of the pool per share. The Whatcom County Investment Pool does not impose liquidity fees or redemption gates on participant withdrawals.

Note 4 – Leases

The Council leases office space from a private party for \$5,064 per month under a lease agreement that began on July 1, 2000, and will end June 30, 2026. The current extension includes an option to cancel on June 30, 2025.

The total amount paid for leases in 2024 was \$60,267. As of December 31, 2024, the future lease payments are as follows:

Year ended December 31	Total
2025	\$61,472
2026	\$25,824
2027	\$0
2028	\$0
2029	\$0
Total	\$87,296

Note 5 – Pension Plans

A. State Sponsored Pension Plans

Substantially all of the Council's full-time and qualifying part-time employees participate in the following statewide retirement systems administered by the Washington State Department of Retirement Systems (DRS), under cost-sharing, multiple-employer public employee defined benefit and defined contribution retirement plans: Public Employee's Retirement System (PERS).

The State Legislature establishes, and amends, laws pertaining to the creation and administration of all public retirement systems.

The Department of Retirement Systems, a department within the primary government of the State of Washington, issues a publicly available Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) that includes financial statements and required supplementary information for each plan. The DRS ACFR may be downloaded from the DRS website at www.drs.wa.gov.

At June 30, 2024 (the measurement date of the plans), the Council's proportionate share of the collective net pension liabilities, as reported on the Schedule of Liabilities, was as follows:

	Employer Contributions	Allocation %	Liability (Asset)
PERS 1	\$22,335	0.003731%	\$66,294
PERS 2/3	\$48,168	0.004894%	(\$161,334)

B. Defined Contribution Pension Plans

The Council contributes to 2 defined contribution plans under 26 U.S. Code Section 457.

The Council makes nonelective contributions for employees that are not required to be covered by the Federal Old Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance Program (Social Security). The Council has not entered into a Social Security Act - Section 218 agreement with the Social Security Administration. Social Security contributions are only required for employees that, 1) work less than 20 hours per week, are not vested in a Washington State public employee retirement system (PERS) and contribute less than 7.5% of compensation to one of the Council's 457(b) deferred compensation plans; or 2) are not in a PERS position and contribute less than 7.5% of compensation to one of the Council's 457(b) deferred compensation plans. For the rest of the employees, the Council makes contributions to the 457(b) Deferred Compensation Plan of the employee's choice in an amount equal to what would have been the required Social Security employer payment. The required employer contribution is currently 6.2%. The funds are generally not available to employees until termination, retirement, death or unforeseeable emergency.

- 1) Whatcom Council of Governments Deferred Compensation Plan administered by Empower Retirement. \$3,996 contributed in 2024
- 2) Whatcom Council of Governments Deferred Compensation Plan administered by the Washington State Department of Retirement Services. \$41,579 contributed in 2024

Note 6 – Risk Management

The Whatcom Council of Governments is a member of the Enduris Washington (the Pool). Chapter 48.62 RCW provides the exclusive source of local government entity authority to individually or jointly self-insure risks, jointly purchase insurance or reinsurance, and contract for risk management, claims, and administrative services. The Pool was formed on July 10, 1987, under the provisions of Chapter 48.62 RCW, Chapter 200-100 WAC, and Chapter 39.34 RCW when two counties and two cities in the State of Washington joined together by signing an interlocal governmental agreement to fund their self-insured losses and jointly purchase insurance and administrative services. During the Pool’s fiscal year ending August 31, 2024, there were 507 Enduris members representing a broad array of special purpose districts throughout the state.

The Enduris program provides various forms of joint self-insurance and reinsurance coverage for its members: Liability coverage, which includes General Liability, Automobile Liability, Public Officials’ Errors and Omissions liability, Terrorism liability and Employment Practices liability; Property coverage, which includes Building and Contents, Mobile Equipment, Boiler and Machinery, and Business Interruption/Extra Expense; Automobile Physical Damage coverage; Cyber coverage; Crime blanket coverage; Named Position coverage; and an Identity Fraud reimbursement policy. Pollution and Cyber coverage are provided on a claims-made and reported coverage form. Crime coverage is provided on a discovery form. All other coverage is provided on an occurrence coverage form.

Members are responsible for a coverage deductible or co-pay on each covered loss. Each policy year, members receive a Memorandum of Coverage (MOC) outlining the specific coverage, limits, and deductibles/co-pays that apply to them. In some instances, the Pool may allow members to elect to participate in the programs at limits, coverage, deductibles, and co-pays specific to their needs. Enduris is responsible for payment of all covered losses above the member deductible or copay up to the Pool self-insured retention (SIR). Enduris acquires excess/reinsurance from unrelated insurance companies to cover losses above the Pool’s SIR up to the coverage maximum limit of liability. The tables below reflect the Pool’s SIR, reinsurance limits, and member deductibles/co-pays by coverage type.

Coverage	Coverage Type	Pool Self-Insured Retention	Excess/ Reinsurance Limits	Member Deductibles/ Co-Pays ⁽¹⁾
Liability:				
General Liability	Per Occurrence	\$1 million	\$20 million	\$1,000 - \$100,000
Automobile Liability	Per Occurrence	\$1 million	\$20 million	\$1,000 - \$100,000
Public Officials Errors and Omissions Liability	Each Wrongful Act Member Aggregate	\$1 million	\$20 million \$20 million	\$1,000 - \$100,000
Terrorism Liability ⁽²⁾	Per Occurrence Pool Aggregate	\$500,000 \$1 million	None	\$1,000 - \$100,000
Employment Practices Liability	Per Occurrence Member Aggregate	\$1 million	\$20 million \$20 million	20% Copay ⁽³⁾

Property ⁽⁴⁾:				
Buildings and Contents	Per Occurrence	\$500,000	\$1 billion	\$1,000 - \$250,000
Mobile Equipment	Per Occurrence	\$500,000	\$1 billion	\$1,000 - \$250,000
Boiler and Machinery	Per Occurrence	\$500,000	\$100 million	\$1,000 - \$250,000
Business Interruption (BI)/ Extra Expense (EE) ⁽⁵⁾	Per Occurrence	\$500,000	\$100 million (BI)/ \$50 million (EE)	\$1,000 - \$250,000
Sublimit ⁽⁶⁾:				
Flood	Per Occurrence	\$500,000	\$50 million (shared by Pool members)	\$1,000 - \$250,000
Earthquake	Per Occurrence	5% of indemnity, subject to a \$500,000 minimum	\$10 million (shared by Pool members)	\$1,000 - \$250,000
Terrorism Primary	Per Occurrence Pool Aggregate	\$250,000	\$100 million per occurrence \$200 million aggregate	\$1,000 - \$250,000
Terrorism Excess	Per Occurrence APIP Per Occurrence APIP Aggregate	\$500,000	\$600 million/ Pool aggregate \$1.1 billion/ per occurrence APIP program \$1.4 billion/ APIP program aggregate	\$0
Automobile Physical Damage ⁽⁷⁾	Per Occurrence	\$500,000 with exceptions	\$1 billion	\$250 - \$1,000
Cyber ⁽⁸⁾	Each Claim APIP Aggregate	\$50,000 to \$100,000 with waiting period	\$2 million \$45 million	20% Copay
Pollution ⁽⁹⁾	Each Claim APIP Aggregate	\$250,000 with exceptions	\$2 million \$25 million	\$1,000 - \$250,000
Crime Blanket ⁽¹⁰⁾	Per Occurrence	\$50,000	\$1 million	\$1,000
Named Position ⁽¹¹⁾	Per Occurrence	\$50,000	\$1 million	\$1,000
Identity Fraud Expense Reimbursement ⁽¹²⁾	Member Aggregate	\$0	\$25,000	\$0

- (1) Members may request or be required to pay a higher deductible than the minimum for certain coverage, and certain types of losses require a specific co-pay or deductible.
- (2) Terrorism liability is fully funded by the Pool, i.e., no excess/reinsurance is procured.
- (3) Members are responsible for a 20% co-pay for Employment Practices Liability coverage claim costs. However, the co-pay may be waived if they meet established guidelines.
- (4) Property coverage for each member is based on a detailed property schedule. Scheduled items are covered to the extent of the cost of repair or replacement according to the excess/reinsurance policy terms. Under the Alliant Property Insurance Program (APIP), reinsurance carriers cover insured losses over \$500,000 to the limit of \$1 billion, except for certain types of sub-limited property losses such as floods, earthquakes, and terrorism.
- (5) Business Interruption(BI)/Extra Expense (EE) coverage is based on scheduled revenue-generating locations/operations. A limited number of members are scheduled; the rest are limited to \$500,000 of

- coverage with a \$2.5 million Pool maximum for undeclared exposure. The waiting period (deductible) is typically 24 hours, but there are exceptions specific to the type of exposure covered.
- (6) This Property Program sub-limit list is simplified and is not all-inclusive. In addition, sub-limits are often shared or aggregated by all pool members and, in a few cases, are shared by all APIP members. Deductibles often vary by coverage sub-limit.
 - (7) Auto Physical Damage coverage includes comprehensive, collision, and additional coverage (i.e., rental reimbursement, towing, and personal property). Each member's coverage is based on a detailed vehicle schedule. The Pool's Auto Physical Damage coverage deductible is \$500,000 per occurrence with certain exceptions: \$25,000 for on-premises comprehensive and collision; a \$100,000 minimum for emergency vehicles and all other vehicles with an RCV of \$250,000 to \$750,000; \$250,000 for all vehicles with an RCV above \$750,000.
 - (8) Cyber coverage is included under the Pool's Property program on an optional basis. Members are subject to a 20% co-pay per loss and the Pool's SIR is tiered between \$50,000 and \$100,000 depending on the insured/member's property TIV with an 8-hour waiting period. By meeting established guidelines, the co-pay may be waived. The reinsurance maximum limit of liability is \$2 million, with various declared sub-limits.
 - (9) Pollution coverage is included under the Pool's Property program on an optional basis. Members are subject to a 20%co-pay per loss. The Pool's SIR is \$250,000, with certain specific deductibles ranging from \$250,000 to \$1 million. The reinsurance maximum limit of liability is \$2 million, with various declared sub-limits.
 - (10) Each member is provided with \$2,500 of Crime Blanket coverage (also referred to as "Employee Dishonesty Coverage with Faithful Performance"). Members may elect to "buy up" the coverage from \$2,500 to \$1 million.
 - (11) Named Position coverage is optional. Members may elect to schedule various employees, directors, and commissioners, with individual limits of between \$5,000 and \$1 million.
 - (12) Enduris purchases Identity Fraud Expense Reimbursement coverage. Member claims are not subject to a deductible; the limit is \$25,000 per member.

Members make an annual contribution to fund the Pool. Since Enduris is a cooperative program, there is joint liability among the participating members. No claim settlements were above the insurance coverage in the last three policy years.

Upon joining the Pool, members are contractually obligated to remain for at least one year. They must give notice 60 days before renewal to terminate participation. The Interlocal Governmental Agreement (formerly known as the Master Agreement) is automatically renewed each year unless provisions for withdrawal or termination are applied. Any Member terminated or withdrawing from the Pool shall be liable pro-rata for any assessments levied against Members for any year in which that Member belonged to the Pool as if they were still a Member.

Its member participants fully fund Enduris. Members file claims with the Pool, which determines coverage and administers the claims.

A seven-member Board of Directors governs the Pool. The Pool's members elect the Board, and the positions are filled on a rotating basis. The Board meets quarterly, oversees Enduris' business affairs, and provides policy direction to the Pool's Executive Director.

Note 7 – Employee Healthcare Benefits

The Whatcom Council of Governments is a member of the Association of Washington Cities Employee Benefit Trust Health Care Program (AWC Trust HCP). Chapter 48.62 RCW provides that two or more local government entities may, by Interlocal agreement under Chapter 39.34 RCW, form together or join a pool or organization for the joint purchasing of insurance, and/or joint self-insurance, to the same extent that they may individually purchase insurance or self-insure.

An agreement to form a pooling arrangement was made pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 39.34 RCW, the Interlocal Cooperation Act. The AWC Trust HCP was formed on January 1, 2014, when participating cities, towns, and non-city entities of the AWC Employee Benefit Trust in the State of Washington joined together by signing an Interlocal Governmental Agreement to jointly self-insure certain health benefit plans and programs for participating employees, their covered dependents and other beneficiaries through a designated account within the Trust. As of December 31, 2024, 268 cities/towns/non-city entities participate and have enrollment in the AWC Trust HCP.

The AWC Trust HCP allows members to establish a program of joint insurance and provides health and welfare services to all participating members.

In April 2020, the Board of Trustees adopted a large employer policy, requiring newly enrolling groups with 600 or more employees to submit medical claims experience data in order to receive a quote for medical coverage. Outside of this, the AWC Trust HCP pools claims without regard to individual member experience. The pool is actuarially rated each year with the assumption of projected claims run-out for all current members.

The AWC Trust HCP includes medical, dental and vision insurance through the following carriers: Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of Washington, Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of Washington Options, Inc., Regence BlueShield, Asuris Northwest Health, Delta Dental of Washington, Willamette Dental Group, and Vision Service Plan. Eligible members are cities and towns within the state of Washington. Non-City Entities (public agency, public corporation, intergovernmental agency, or political subdivision within the state of Washington) are eligible to apply for coverage into the AWC Trust HCP, submitting application to the Board of Trustees for review as required in the Trust Agreement.

Participating employers pay monthly premiums to the AWC Trust HCP. The AWC Trust HCP is responsible for payment of all covered claims. In 2024, the AWC Trust HCP purchased medical stop loss insurance for Regence/Asuris and Kaiser plans at an Individual Stop Loss (ISL) of \$2 million through United States Fire Insurance Company. The aggregate policy is for 200% of expected medical claims.

Participating employers contract to remain in the AWC Trust HCP for a minimum of three years. Participating employers with over 250 employees must provide written notice of termination of all coverage a minimum of 12 months in advance of the termination date, and participating employers with under 250 employees must provide written notice of termination of all coverage

a minimum of 6 months in advance of termination date. When all coverage is being terminated, termination will only occur on December 31. Participating employers terminating a group or line of coverage must notify the AWC Trust HCP a minimum of 60 days prior to termination. A participating employer's termination will not obligate that member to past debts, or further contributions to the AWC Trust HCP. Similarly, the terminating member forfeits all rights and interest to the AWC Trust HCP Account.

The operations of the Health Care Program are managed by the Board of Trustees or its delegates. The Board of Trustees is comprised of four regionally elected officials from Trust member cities or towns, the Employee Benefit Advisory Committee Chair and Vice Chair, and two appointed individuals from the AWC Board of Directors, who are from Trust member cities or towns. The Trustees or its appointed delegates review and analyze Health Care Program related matters and make operational decisions regarding premium contributions, reserves, plan options and benefits in compliance with Chapter 48.62 RCW. The Board of Trustees has decision authority consistent with the Trust Agreement, Health Care Program policies, Chapter 48.62 RCW and Chapter 200-110-WAC.

The accounting records of the AWC Trust HCP are maintained in accordance with methods prescribed by the State Auditor's office under the authority of Chapter 43.09 RCW. The AWC Trust HCP also follows applicable accounting standards established by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board ("GASB"). In 2018, the retiree medical plan subsidy was eliminated, and is noted as such in the report for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2018. Year-end financial reporting is done on an accrual basis and submitted to the Office of the State Auditor as required by Chapter 200-110 WAC. The audit report for the AWC Trust HCP is available from the Washington State Auditor's office.

Note 8 – Long-Term Liabilities

During the year ended December 31, 2024, the following changes occurred in compensated absences:

	Beginning Balance 01/01/2024	Additions	Reductions	Ending Balance 12/31/2024
Compensated Absences	\$ 43,359	\$30,082		\$73,441

The Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) issued Statement 101 Compensated Absences in 2023. The requirements of this statement became effective for fiscal years beginning after December 15, 2023. The standard requires a liability be recognized for leave that has not been used. The Council has previously disclosed the liability for vacation leave. Beginning in 2024, the Council also estimates a liability for the accrued sick leave that is more than likely to be taken in the future.

There is no restatement of the beginning balance in the year of implementation. The 2024 Addition listed above includes \$22,224 for the estimated sick leave liability.

Whatcom Council of Governments
 Schedule of Liabilities
 For the Year Ended December 31, 2024

ID. No.	Debt ID Title	Description	Due Date	Beginning Balance	Additions	Reductions	Ending Balance
Revenue and Other (non G.O.) Debt/Liabilities							
259.12	Compensated Absences	Compensated Absences		43,359	30,082	-	73,441
264.30	Pension Liabilities	Net Pension Liability		107,151	-	40,857	66,294
263.57	Leases, SBITA, and PPPs	Office Space Lease	6/30/2026	147,563	-	60,267	87,296
Total Revenue and Other (non G.O.) Debt/Liabilities:				298,073	30,082	101,124	227,031
Total Liabilities:				298,073	30,082	101,124	227,031

Whatcom Council of Governments
Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards
For the Year Ended December 31, 2024

Federal Agency (Pass-Through Agency)	Federal Program	ALN Number	Expenditures				Passed through to Subrecipients	Note
			Other Award Number	From Pass- Through Awards	From Direct Awards	Total		
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION, TRANSPORTATION, DEPARTMENT OF (via WA Department of Transportation)	Highway Research and Development Program	20.200	Cascade Gateway CVO Study	3,095	-	3,095	-	2, 3
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION, TRANSPORTATION, DEPARTMENT OF (via WA Department of Transportation)	Highway Research and Development Program	20.200	Passenger Vehicle Survey	276	-	276	-	2, 3
			Total ALN 20.200:	3,371	-	3,371	-	
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION, TRANSPORTATION, DEPARTMENT OF (via WA Department of Transportation)	Highway Planning and Construction	20.205	FHWA-PL (2023-25)	333,268	-	333,268	-	2, 3
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION, TRANSPORTATION, DEPARTMENT OF (via WA Department of Transportation)	Highway Planning and Construction	20.205	IMTC (2023-25)	153,079	-	153,079	-	2, 3
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION, TRANSPORTATION, DEPARTMENT OF (via WA Department of Transportation)	Highway Planning and Construction	20.205	UPWP: STBG (2023-25)	81,648	-	81,648	-	2, 3

The accompanying notes are an integral part of this schedule.

Whatcom Council of Governments
Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards
For the Year Ended December 31, 2024

Federal Agency (Pass-Through Agency)	Federal Program	ALN Number	Other Award Number	Expenditures			Passed through to Subrecipients	Note
				From Pass- Through Awards	From Direct Awards	Total		
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION, TRANSPORTATION, DEPARTMENT OF (via WA Department of Transportation)	Highway Planning and Construction	20.205	Whatcom Regional Transportation Study (2025)	5,282	-	5,282	-	2, 3
			Total ALN 20.205:	573,277	-	573,277	-	
FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION, TRANSPORTATION, DEPARTMENT OF (via WA Department of Transportation)	Metropolitan Transportation Planning and State and Non- Metropolitan Planning and Research	20.505	UPWP-FTA (2023-2025)	160,391	-	160,391	-	2, 3
FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION, TRANSPORTATION, DEPARTMENT OF (via WA Department of Transportation)	Formula Grants for Rural Areas and Tribal Transit Program	20.509	RTAP (2023-25)	3,570	-	3,570	-	2, 3
Transit Services Programs Cluster								
FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION, TRANSPORTATION, DEPARTMENT OF (via WA Department of Transportation)	Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities	20.513	Mobility Mgmt & Training (2023- 25)	43,324	-	43,324	-	2, 3
			Total Transit Services Programs Cluster:	43,324	-	43,324	-	
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY, TRANSPORTATION, DEPARTMENT OF	Safe Streets and Roads for All	20.939		-	178,222	178,222	-	2, 3

The accompanying notes are an integral part of this schedule.

Whatcom Council of Governments

Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards

For the Year Ended December 31, 2024

Expenditures

The accompanying notes are an integral part of this schedule.

Whatcom Council of Governments
Notes to the Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards
For the Year Ended December 31, 2024

Note 1 – Basis of Accounting

This Schedule is prepared on the same basis of accounting as the Council's financial statements. The Whatcom Council of Governments uses single-entry, cash basis accounting. Revenues are recognized when cash is received, and expenditures are recognized when paid.

Note 2 – Federal Indirect Cost Rate(s)

The Council has not elected to use the 10-percent de minimis indirect cost rate allowed under the Uniform Guidance. The amount expended includes \$335,551 claimed as an indirect cost recovery using an approved indirect cost rate of 76 percent.

The amount expended also includes \$273,739 claimed as a fringe benefit cost recovery using an approved fringe benefit cost rate of 62 percent.

Note 3 – Program Costs

The amounts shown as current year expenditures represent only the federal grant portion of the program costs. Entire program costs, including the Council's portion, are more than shown. Such expenditures are recognized following the cost principles contained in Title 2 U.S. Code of Federal Regulations Part 200, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, wherein certain types of expenditures are not allowable or are limited as to reimbursement.

ABOUT THE STATE AUDITOR'S OFFICE

The State Auditor's Office is established in the Washington State Constitution and is part of the executive branch of state government. The State Auditor is elected by the people of Washington and serves four-year terms.

We work with state agencies, local governments and the public to achieve our vision of increasing trust in government by helping governments work better and deliver higher value.

In fulfilling our mission to provide citizens with independent and transparent examinations of how state and local governments use public funds, we hold ourselves to those same standards by continually improving our audit quality and operational efficiency, and by developing highly engaged and committed employees.

As an agency, the State Auditor's Office has the independence necessary to objectively perform audits, attestation engagements and investigations. Our work is designed to comply with professional standards as well as to satisfy the requirements of federal, state and local laws. The Office also has an extensive quality control program and undergoes regular external peer review to ensure our work meets the highest possible standards of accuracy, objectivity and clarity.

Our audits look at financial information and compliance with federal, state and local laws for all local governments, including schools, and all state agencies, including institutions of higher education. In addition, we conduct performance audits and cybersecurity audits of state agencies and local governments, as well as state whistleblower, fraud and citizen hotline investigations.

The results of our work are available to everyone through the more than 2,000 reports we publish each year on our website, www.sao.wa.gov. Additionally, we share regular news and other information via an email subscription service and social media channels.

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