



MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Jack Louws, County Executive
The Honorable Whatcom County Council

FROM: Matt Aamot, Senior Planner *MA*

THROUGH: Mark Personius, Director *MP*

RE: Community Attributes Contract Amendment relating to the Review and Evaluation (Buildable Lands) Program

DATE: July 22, 2019

▪ Background and Purpose

The Washington State Legislature approved a bill (E2SSSB 5254) in the 2017 session establishing new Growth Management Act (GMA) requirements for Whatcom County and the cities relating to the "Review and Evaluation Program" (also known as buildable lands). The County and cities will now be required to review past development patterns and compare them to the planned growth envisioned in the Comprehensive Plan. If the actual growth deviates from planned growth, then local jurisdictions may need to take reasonable measures to address the situation. This process will include developing countywide planning policies, data collection, research, and developing methods to conduct the buildable lands evaluation. The GMA requires the County and cities to issue a final Review and Evaluation Program report by June 30, 2021. This report will include evaluation of certain aspects of existing County and city comprehensive plans and inform the next comprehensive plan updates, which are due by June 30, 2024.

▪ Funding Amount and Source

The State Legislature allocated \$225,000 to Whatcom County for state fiscal year 2019 (July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019) in association with the new Review and Evaluation Program requirements. The State allocated an additional \$410,000 to Whatcom County for state fiscal years 2020 and 2021 (July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2021). These funds will be used for reimbursing County staff time and materials, reimbursing city expenses, and consultant work. The County and cities agreed that \$135,000 from the \$410,000 state grant would be utilized for consultant assistance.

Therefore, we are proposing to amend the contract with Community Attributes Inc. to provide additional assistance with the Review and Evaluation Program.

▪ **Differences from Previous Contract**

Work on several of the initiatives from the original contract will carry over in this contract amendment. These include:

- Working with the County and cities to develop a unified approach to the Review and Evaluation Program requirements;
- Developing countywide planning policies to establish the Review and Evaluation Program;
- Developing a tool (spreadsheet) to facilitate uniform data collection/reporting across jurisdictions; and
- Developing the Review and Evaluation Program methodology.

There are also several new tasks in the amended contract, including:

- Developing and implementing a public participation approach;
- Assisting with the final Review and Evaluation Program report; and
- Developing preliminary draft revisions of the housing elements of the County and city comprehensive plans.

Thank you for your review and consideration of the proposed contract amendment for consultant services between Community Attributes Inc. and Whatcom County. We look forward to discussing it with you.