

RESOLUTION NO. _____

**ENCOURAGING THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE TO PURSUE OPPORTUNITIES FOR
PROPERTY ACQUISITION THAT PROMOTES CONSERVATION, ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM ASSOCIATED WITH BELLINGHAM TO MT. BAKER
TRAILS**

WHEREAS, in 2016, the Whatcom County Council adopted a Comprehensive Plan that included goals and policies to promote opportunities to link trails from Bellingham to Mt. Baker; and

WHEREAS, Chapter 9 of that Plan includes goals and policies that support parks and recreational facilities; and

WHEREAS, Chapter 9 of that Plan includes Goal 9C: Expand outdoor recreation opportunities for county residents by providing enjoyable trails for hiking; and

WHEREAS, Chapter 9 of that plan also includes Policy 9C-2: Incorporate existing and proposed trails into a comprehensive and integrated system of looped and interconnected trails which give users a wide choice of routes and environments; and

WHEREAS, Chapter 9 of that plan also includes Policy 9C-3: Trails should link other recreational uses in the Foothills area and connect to existing trail systems in the National Forest and state land; and

WHEREAS, Chapter 9 of that plan also includes Policy 9C-26: Bay to Baker Trail – Develop and implement a plan to secure Rights of Way for trail segments along the abandoned RR R/W in conjunction with the Nooksack River Trail to achieve a contiguous trail system between communities and recreation areas; and

WHEREAS, Chapter 9 of that plan also includes Policy 9C-27: Nooksack River Trail – Develop and implement a plan to acquire Rights of Way for a trail corridor and picnic areas along the Nooksack River between Ferndale and Glacier, to provide recreation opportunities, inter-community transportation, and tourism development; and

WHEREAS, Chapter 10 of that plan includes Goal 10A, Protect natural resources and systems, life, and property from potential hazards; and

WHEREAS, Chapter 10 of that plan also include Policy 10A-10 Support acquisition, conservation easements, open space, and other such programs to protect high-value natural areas as identified through the GMA planning process, the Natural Heritage Plan, the state Priority Habitats and Species (PHS) program, the Lake Whatcom Management Program, and other sources; and

WHEREAS, Chapter 10 of that plan also includes Policy 10A-11: Designate high-value open space and natural areas for acquisition, conservation easements, open space, and other such programs to protect these natural areas upon request or consent of the property owner; and

WHEREAS, Chapter 7 of that plan states the goals and policies related to prompting tourism as a means for economic development; and

1 **WHEREAS**, Policy 7H-7 of the that plan states: Encourage growth of tourism,
2 recreational activities, and businesses that provide for diversity of the natural resource
3 industry, provided they comply with County regulations and, when located in a rural area,
4 preserve the rural character; and
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6 **WHEREAS**, on February 23, 2016, the Whatcom County Council approved Resolution
7 2016-005, adopting the 2016 Comprehensive Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan
8 (CPROS); and
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10 **WHEREAS**, the Comprehensive Parks, Recreation & Open Space (CPROS) Plan
11 outlines goals and policies to protect the environment, preserve historic lands, and
12 encourage the retention of open space and development of recreational opportunities,
13 natural resources, and parks; and
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15 **WHEREAS**, in 2016 Whatcom County Council added the Bellingham-Mt. Baker trail
16 to the Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan, Conceptual Trail Corridors Map; and
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18 **WHEREAS**, the County remains committed to its stated goals of acquiring land to
19 further these Comprehensive Plan Goals and Policies; and
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21 **WHEREAS**, on November 21, 2023 Whatcom County Council approved Resolution
22 2023-049 requesting that the Whatcom County Executive and staff pursue public access
23 opportunities for trails on all county owned land and easements;
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25 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that Council requests that the Executive
26 pursue opportunities for property acquisition and/or acquisition of easements that promotes
27 these stated goals related to conservation, economic development, tourism, as related to
28 Bellingham to Mt. Baker trails.
29

30 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that Council requests that the Executive consider
31 property acquisition and/or acquisition of easements opportunities that promote connectivity
32 near properties that have access existing easements with the County; and
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34 **BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that Council requests the County Executive approach
35 willing sellers who may be interested in promoting these goals and policies.
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37 **APPROVED** this ____ day of _____, 2023.
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40 **ATTEST:**

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WASHINGTON

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45 **Dana Brown-Davis, Clerk of the Council**

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48 **Barry Buchanan, Council Chair**

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51 **APPROVED AS TO FORM:**
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_____ **Civil Deputy Prosecutor**

