



MEMORANDUM

TO: Whatcom County Council

FROM: Jed Holmes, Community Outreach Facilitator

RE: Contract to Support the Development of a Racial Equity Commission

DATE: 04/08/2021

The County Executive requests authorization to enter into a contract between Chuckanut Health Foundation and Whatcom County in support of the development of a countywide racial equity commission.

▪ **Background and Purpose**

Whatcom County recognizes the community-wide costs and impacts associated with racial inequity and disparities, including negative health care outcomes, increased health care costs, reduced economic opportunity, increased government services costs, poor education outcomes, crime, and housing insecurity. In November 2020, at the County Executive's suggestion, the County Council approved funding in the 2021-2023 biennium for a racial equity commission.

In acknowledgement of the importance of having a community-led process, Whatcom County has identified a qualified partner, Chuckanut Health Foundation, to lead and manage the community engagement process to develop and propose recommendations on the establishment of a countywide racial equity commission. Those recommendations would then be brought to Council for consideration, potentially by the end of 2021.

▪ **Funding Amount and Source**

The contract allows the County to pay for the cost of work performed under the contract (up to \$90,000). The budget authority for this contract is included in the approved 2021 General Fund budget. A companion interlocal between Whatcom County and the City of Bellingham requires the City to reimburse the County 50% of the cost incurred for this contract up to \$45,000.

Please contact Jed Holmes at extension 5209, if you have any questions or concerns regarding the terms of these agreements.