



Memorandum

July 26, 2023

TO: The Honorable Satpal Sidhu, Whatcom County Executive
The Honorable Whatcom County Council

FROM: Matt Aamot, Senior Planner

THROUGH: Steve Roberge, Assistant Director

RE: Interagency Agreement with the State / 2025 Comp Plan Update Grant

Requested Action

The Growth Management Act requires Whatcom County to review and update the Comprehensive Plan and development regulations by June 30, 2025. The State has allocated \$700,000 to Whatcom County for state fiscal years 2024 and 2025 (July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2025) for the update. This request is to enter into an Interagency Agreement to accept the grant money from the State for the update.

Background and Purpose

Whatcom County will use these state funds in the Comprehensive Plan update process to address:

1. Population and housing projections;
2. Employment projections;
3. Land capacity analysis;
4. SEPA environmental analysis;
5. Housing element revisions;
6. Tribal cultural resources and participation;
7. 40-Year planning strategy;
8. Whatcom County Council priorities (Resolution 2022-036);
9. Mineral Resource Lands assessment;
10. Whatcom County 20-Year Capital Facilities Plan update;
11. Subarea plans;
12. The Columbia Valley UGA – Planned Light Impact Industrial area;
13. Open space within and between UGAs;
14. Limited areas of more intensive rural development;
15. Essential public facilities;
16. Public participation plan;
17. Critical Areas Ordinance; and
18. Project management.

We would note the County Council Committee of the Whole approved a motion on July 11 to support the detailed scope of work for the 2025 Comprehensive Plan and development regulations update (AB2023-332). This detailed scope of work has been inserted in the request for consultant proposals. The Interagency Agreement with the State Department of Commerce for the Comp Plan update grant, the subject of this agenda bill, has an abbreviated scope of work with deliverables that will be submitted to Commerce to receive grant money from the State. Additionally, the climate change provisions from the detailed scope of work endorsed by Council on July 11 are not in the current Interagency Agreement with the Department of Commerce, as the State will have a second grant to address these provisions at a later date.

Funding Amount and Source

Thank you for your review and consideration of the proposed Interagency Agreement between Whatcom County and the State Department of Commerce. We request that Council approve a motion on August 8, 2023 authorizing the County Executive to sign the Agreement that will provide \$700,000 in State funding to the County for the 2025 Comprehensive Plan update.