



# Whatcom County

COUNTY COURTHOUSE  
311 Grand Avenue, Ste #105  
Bellingham, WA 98225-4038  
(360) 778-5010

## Agenda Bill Master Report

File Number: AB2025-264

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<b>File ID:</b>	AB2025-264	<b>Version:</b>	1	<b>Status:</b>	Adopted
<b>File Created:</b>	03/17/2025	<b>Entered by:</b>	THelms@co.whatcom.wa.us		
<b>Department:</b>	County Executive's Office	<b>File Type:</b>	Ordinance		
<b>Assigned to:</b>	Council Committee of the Whole			<b>Final Action:</b>	05/27/2025
<b>Agenda Date:</b>	05/27/2025	<b>Enactment #:</b>	ORD 2025-028		
<b>Related Files:</b>					

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Primary Contact Email: Apennucc@co.whatcom.wa.us

### TITLE FOR AGENDA ITEM:

Ordinance to amend Whatcom County Code Section 3.08.100, Council approval required, to increase the threshold for contracts that require council approval

### SUMMARY STATEMENT OR LEGAL NOTICE LANGUAGE:

See attached

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## HISTORY OF LEGISLATIVE FILE

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Date:	Acting Body:	Action:	Sent To:
03/25/2025	Council	REFERRED TO COMMITTEE Aye: 6 Buchanan, Byrd, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremier Nay: 0 Temp Absent: 1 Donovan	Council Committee of the Whole
05/13/2025	Council Committee of the Whole	DISCUSSED AND MOTION(S) APPROVED	
05/13/2025	Council	SUBSTITUTE INTRODUCED Aye: 4 Buchanan, Donovan, Galloway, and Scanlon Nay: 3 Byrd, Elenbaas, and Stremier	Council Committee of the Whole
05/27/2025	Council Committee of the Whole	RECOMMENDED FOR ADOPTION Aye: 4 Buchanan, Donovan, Galloway, and Scanlon	

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05/27/2025 Council

Nay: 3 Byrd, Elenbaas, and Stremier

ADOPTED

Aye: 4 Buchanan, Donovan, Galloway, and Scanlon

Nay: 3 Byrd, Elenbaas, and Stremier

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**Attachments:** Proposed Ordinance, Substitute Ordinance - \$100,000, Substitute Ordinance - \$150,000,  
Substitute Ordinance - \$75,000, 2024 Contracts, Notice of Action Proposed on 5.13.2025

PROPOSED BY: Deputy Executive, A. Pennucci  
INTRODUCTION DATE: May, 25, 2025

ORDINANCE NO. 2025-028

**AMENDING WHATCOM COUNTY CODE SECTION 3.08.100, COUNCIL  
APPROVAL REQUIRED, TO INCREASE THE THRESHOLD FOR CONTRACTS  
THAT REQUIRE COUNCIL APPROVAL**

**WHEREAS**, it has been over seven years since the last significant update to Whatcom County Code (WCC) 3.08; and

**WHEREAS**, since the last update to WCC 3.08, the County has faced challenges in operating efficiently due to several factors, including increases in the volume and complexity of contracts that has increased the number of contracts requiring council approval by 40%; and

**WHEREAS**, contracts that require Council approval delays contract execution and subsequent service delivery by as much as three to eight weeks; and

**WHEREAS**, the number of items and time associated with processing administrative decisions at Council reduces time for policy makers to focus on broader policy discussions and staff time to oversee and report on contract outcomes; and

**WHEREAS**, increasing the threshold for contracts that require Council approval to \$75,000 would allow contracts to be executed more efficiently while retaining approval authority by the Council on 96% of the awarded funds; and


**WHEREAS**, the Executive is implementing enhancements to the online contract database search options to make information more accessible to the public and to the Council and will report quarterly to the Council on all executed contracts; and

**WHEREAS**, the Executive will continue to work on a more complete update to WCC 3.08 and will recommend additional changes to the purchasing code to the County Council in the next six to 12 months, which will allow the Council to review and consider if the changes to the thresholds for contracts that require Council approval in this Ordinance should be adjusted;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED** by the Whatcom County Council that WCC Section 3.08.100 is hereby amended as presented in Exhibit A

**ADOPTED** this 27th day of May, 2025.

ATTEST:

  
Cathy Halka, Clerk of the Council

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Brandon Waldron per email 03/14/25

Civil Deputy Prosecutor

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL  
WHATCOM COUNTY, WASHINGTON

  
Kaylee Galloway, Council Chair

WHATCOM COUNTY EXECUTIVE  
WHATCOM COUNTY, WASHINGTON

  
Satpal Sidhu, County Executive

☒ Approved      (    ) Denied

Date Signed:

6.3.25

**EXHIBIT 'A'**  
**(AMEND WCC SECTION 3.08.100)**

**3.08.100 Council approval required.**

County council approval is required for the following:

- A. Contracts or bid awards exceeding \$75,000, all interlocal agreements, and all real property leases, except when:
  - 1. Exercising an option contained in a contract or lease previously approved by the council.
  - 2. Contract is for the design, construction, right-of-way acquisition, professional services, or other capital costs approved by the county council in a capital budget appropriation ordinance.
  - 3. Contract or bid award is for supplies or for equipment approved in a capital budget appropriation ordinance.
  - 4. Contract is for technical support and software maintenance from the developer of proprietary software which is currently being used by Whatcom County.
  - 5. Contract is for manufacturer's technical support and hardware maintenance of electronic systems.
  - 6. Pursuant to and within the scope of a declaration of emergency made by the county executive under WCC 3.08.060(B). The county executive, pursuant to a declaration of emergency, shall submit the contract to the county council for informational purposes at the council's next regular or special meeting.
- B. All informational materials distributed to more than 20 percent of county residences for the purpose of informing or educating the public on a specific capital project, levy or tax.
- C. The Director of Administrative Services shall provide to the County Council no less than quarterly a written report listing of all contracts signed by the County Executive, including information on the contractor, term of agreement, amount of award, and source of funding.