



MEMORANDUM

TO: Satpal Sidhu, Whatcom County Executive, and the Honorable Members of the Whatcom County Council, collectively serving in their capacity as the Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District Board of Supervisors

THROUGH: Elizabeth Kosa, Public Works Director

FROM: Julie Anderson, River and Flood Manager *JMA*
Gary Stoyka, Natural Resources Program Manager *GStoyka*

DATE: August 26, 2024

RE: HMGP DR-4635-WA, 4635-01-R Grant Agreement with Washington State Military Department for the elevation of twelve structures in flood-prone areas

Please find attached for your review a FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) grant agreement between the Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District (FCZD) and the Washington State Military Department.

▪ **Requested Action**

Public Works respectfully requests that Flood Control Zone District Board of Supervisors authorize the County Executive to sign the HMGP 4635-01-R grant agreement for the elevation of 12 structures in flood-prone areas of Sumas, Ferndale, and unincorporated Whatcom County.

To avoid additional delays, in addition to approval of the 4635-01 HMGP grant agreement, we are requesting a separate motion authorizing the Executive to execute agreements with the property owners that outline the terms for reimbursement for elevation of the structures.

▪ **Background and Purpose**

In response to the November 2021 flooding, the FCZD applied for Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) funding to elevate structures in areas that experienced the most flood damage, including affected small cities and Unincorporated Whatcom County. For those property owners that do not wish to have their structures acquired and wish to remain in the community, elevations are another tool that can be used to mitigate flooding and increase resiliency. HMGP funding was made available to Whatcom County as a result of the flood through FEMA Federally Declared Disaster Number DR-4635-WA. Two separate HMGP grant applications were submitted to FEMA under DR-4635-WA to elevate a total of twenty-four (24) flood-prone structures. The first application (4635-01-R) has been awarded by FEMA to elevate 12 structures in Sumas, Ferndale and unincorporated Whatcom County. The second HMGP elevation grant (4635-02-R) includes 12 additional properties to be elevated in Sumas, Ferndale, and unincorporated Whatcom County and is still under review with FEMA. The HMGP grant agreements are administered through the Washington State Military Department Emergency Management Division (WAEMD).

▪ **Funding Amount and Source**

The proposed HMGP grant agreement (4635-01-R) provides \$2,158,862.00 of Federal funding (FEMA), \$113,947.50 of state funding (WAEMD), and requires a 5% match by the property owners (\$113,947.50). Property owners who meet low to middle income criteria may qualify to be reimbursed for their 5% match by utilizing a Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grant for Disaster Relief (CDBG-DR). Whatcom County is in the process of pursuing this CDBG-DR grant, and it is not yet certain that the grant funding will come through in time to assist the low to medium income property owners in the 4635-01-R grant.

Please contact Julie Anderson at extension 6258 if you have any questions or concerns regarding the terms of this agreement.

Encl.