



MEMORANDUM

TO: Whatcom County Council

FROM: Tyler Schroeder, Deputy Executive

THROUGH: Satpal S. Sidhu, County Executive

RE: Economic Development Investment Board – Funding Recommendation for City of Bellingham Old Town Redevelopment & City of Blaine Wellfield Reservoir

DATE: February 8, 2024

The Economic Development Investment Board met on January 30, 2024. The Board adopted a recommendation to present the following projects to the County Council for confirmation. If this recommendation of the Board is adopted by the Council, the Administration will proceed with the preparation of agreements, as well as a supplemental budget request for County Council review and approval.

Project	Wellfield Reservoir Replacement
Funding Request	\$1,333,334 loan, \$666,666 grant
Board Recommendation	\$1,333,334 loan, \$666,666 grant
Vote	12-0
Contingencies	Additional funding source(s) committed.

Project	Old Town Urban Village Infrastructure Improvement Project
Funding Request	\$1,500,000 loan, \$1,500,000 grant
Board Recommendation	\$1,500,000 loan, \$1,500,000 grant
Vote	11-0-1, Mayor Lund abstaining
Contingencies	N/A

Project	Ferndale Civic Campus
Funding Request	\$1,000,000 grant
Board Recommendation	The Board passed a motion to table this application until a future date. Board members spoke to the City of Ferndale finding city funds instead of using EDI funds for this type of administrative project and consideration to future EDI

	programs/policies should happen before the board considers this type of EDI application.
Vote	0-11-1, Commissioner Deshmane abstaining
Contingencies	N/A

The Administration has confirmed that sufficient fund balances are available for Council approval of this request, and that the recommended projects are eligible for funding under RCW 82.14.370. The EDI funding applications are attached for your review, along with EDI Board meeting notes, as you consider this recommendation at your February 20, 2024 Council meeting.

The Board also considered an application from the City of Ferndale for an investment in its Civic Campus; the Board did not approve this recommendation. This application is also attached for your review.

The EDI Board also discussed County Council [Resolution 2023-043](#) “Supporting the Use of EDI Funds for Affordable Housing.” The Board discussed working closely with Council over the coming year to provide recommendations on the use of EDI funding in support of housing, review EDI board membership, and modernize EDI program policies and applications to reflect Council and community priorities. The Administration is pulling together a workgroup to undertake this work and expects to present recommendations to Council in the latter half of 2024.

Please contact Tyler Schroeder or Kayla Schott-Bresler at (360) 778-5200 with any questions.

Attachments: Rural Sales Tax Fund Project Cash Balances
Draft Meeting Notes of the EDI Board meeting of 1/30/2023
City of Bellingham EDI Program Application
City of Blaine EDI Program Application
City of Ferndale EDI Program Application