



MEMORANDUM

TO: Satpal Sidhu, County Executive

FROM: Kayla Schott-Bresler, Deputy Executive

RE: Whatcom Racial Equity Commission (WREC) Contract

DATE: November 22, 2024

Attached is a one-year funding agreement between Whatcom County and Chuckanut Health Foundation for your review and signature. This Contract is for facilitation services of the Whatcom Racial Equity Commission (WREC), with Chuckanut Health Foundation serving as the administrative agency. This is based on the structure of the Domestic Violence Commission, where DVSAS services as the administrative agency.

▪ **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. To this end, Whatcom County - in coordination with numerous community partners and the City of Bellingham - established the Whatcom Racial Equity Commission (WREC) in October 2022. The Commission was formed through Whatcom County Council [Ordinance 2022-065](#) and through the addition of Chapter 2.107 to the Whatcom County code. Subsequently, the City of Bellingham and Whatcom County executed an interlocal agreement (Whatcom County contract [202210012](#)) which provides for joint governance, operational oversight, and funding to support the Commission.

This contract was competitively procured through Whatcom County RFQ 23-27. With the Commission now appointed in alignment with County RFQ 23-27, the County is entering into a new contract with Chuckanut Health Foundation to provide administrative services in support of the Whatcom Racial Equity Commission now that the launch phase has been completed.

Program Update

The Commission was seated in 2024 and an Executive Director has been hired. You can find agendas and minutes from 2024 meetings, as well as the list of members at <https://www.chuckanuthealthfoundation.org/wrec-meeting-information>.

The Commission's 2025 work program and deliverables will be focused on creation of a strategic action plan and prioritizing work under the Commission's areas of concerns. Commissioners and staff will also spend significant time engaging with and building partnership with community members, organizations, entities and jurisdictions to advance the work of the Commission. This will also include grant writing for future sustainability, creating a strategic

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County Executive

communications and outreach plan, hosting public awareness events, and developing policy input into key community initiatives (Justice Project, etc.)

- **Funding Amount and Source**

Funding for this Agreement may not exceed \$200,000 and is provided half by Whatcom County general fund and half by the City of Bellingham, per interlocal 202210012. These funds are included in the 2025 Whatcom County budget.