



MEMORANDUM

To: Satpal Sidhu, County Executive
From: Rebecca Xczar, Whatcom County Assessor
RE: Just Appraised Contract
Date: November 21, 2024

Attached, please find for your review and signature a contract between Just Appraised and Whatcom County, for development and annual costs for senior and people with disabilities exemption online portal.

Background and Purpose

In 2023, the state Legislature passed HB 1355, which increased the qualifying income levels for the property tax exemption program for senior citizens and people with disabilities. This increase in qualifying income has created more work for the Assessor's office working through and processing the increased number of exemptions.

Just Appraised is creating an online portal which will do two things:

- 1) It will allow all applicants to submit applications online, including submission of supporting income documents.
- 2) The portal will ensure more efficient processing by Assessor's office staff.

Taxpayers will be required to include supporting documentation, resulting in less pending or incomplete applications that require significant staff time for follow up. Use of the processing side of the portal will also allow us to implement a triage model of processing, flagging more complex applications based on selections made in the application process. The portal will increase accessibility and convenience for taxpayers, while making processing as streamlined as possible.

Funding Amount and Source

The Assessor office's current 2024 budget includes an approved ASR for this cost, in Contractual Services, 6610. This was approved as an ongoing ASR for 2024, however, was not included in the 2025 budget. License fee balance to come from Assessor/Treasurer maintenance fund in the Treasurer's O&M fund.

Please contact Rebecca Xczar at extension 5055, if you have any questions or concerns regarding the terms of this agreement.

Encl.