



# MEMORANDUM

**To:** Whatcom County Executive Satpal Sidhu  
**From:** Kayla Schott-Bresler, Deputy County Executive  
**Subject:** Grant Agreement for Administrative Services for Whatcom Racial Equity Commission  
**Date:** November 18, 2025

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## Background and Purpose

The Whatcom Racial Equity Commission was established in October 2022 through Whatcom County Council Ordinance 2022-065 to address 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, disproportionate incarceration rates, and housing insecurity. The Commission serves as a conduit for ongoing community collaboration, engagement, and education to gather, review, and evaluate data and make recommendations on eliminating racial inequities throughout Whatcom County. The Commission has 19 voting members representing a variety of communities and sectors, plus four non-voting members who hold elected office throughout the county.

The 2026 contract with Whatcom Community Foundation provides administrative and facilitation services to support the Commission's ongoing operations and strategic initiatives. This represents a continuation of the contract previously held by Chuckanut Health Foundation, which has been transitioned to Whatcom Community Foundation effective August 1, 2025, through Amendment No. 1. The 2026 contract was re-solicited through the MRSC roster, per County purchasing policies.

The focus of 2026 work includes providing policy recommendations to the County, development of a racial equity web/matrix, facilitation of public forums/town halls relating to racial equity issues, collaboration on cultural events, analyzing data related to justice system involvement and health outcomes, and continued tracking of racial equity progress in alignment with the WREC strategic plan.

## Funding Amount and Source

The total contract amount is \$150,000 for the 2026 contract period. This amount is funded through an interlocal agreement (Contract No. 202210012) between Whatcom County and the City of Bellingham, with Whatcom County providing up to \$50,000 and the City of Bellingham providing up to \$100,000 toward the total contract cost. The funds are allocated to administrative fees capped at 10% of direct personnel costs (\$13,636), personnel costs (\$104,895), and employee benefits (\$31,469). The funding source represents a shared commitment by both jurisdictions to support the Commission's racial equity work throughout the region.

## Differences from Previous Contract

The primary change from the previous contract (Contract No. 202308013) is the transition of the fiscal agent from Chuckanut Health Foundation to Whatcom Community Foundation, effective August 1, 2025.

**WHATCOM COUNTY  
EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE**  
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**Satpal Singh Sidhu**  
County Executive

The contract amount has been reduced from \$200,000 in 2025 to \$150,000 in 2026, representing a \$50,000 decrease of Whatcom County funds. The City of Bellingham maintained its investment of \$100,000.

The scope of work has shifted from initial launch activities to include enhanced deliverables in community partnership building, policy writing, program development, grant writing and funding diversification.

The previous contract focused heavily on seating the Commission, establishing governance structures, and completing Phase 1 strategic planning. The 2026 contract builds upon this foundation with deepened engagement, external partnership development, and expanded efforts to identify sustainable funding sources beyond county and city contributions. Additionally, the new contract includes explicit deliverables including policy recommendations, progress reports and the development of a racial equity web/matrix.

The contract term is January 1, 2026, through December 31, 2026.