



Memorandum

September 13, 2023

TO: The Honorable Satpal Sidhu, Whatcom County Executive
The Honorable Whatcom County Council

FROM: Matt Aamot, Senior Planner

THROUGH: Steve Roberge, Assistant Director

RE: Cost Sharing Interlocal Agreement for 2025 Comp Plan Update

The Growth Management Act (GMA) indicates that county and city comprehensive plans, including urban growth area (UGA) plans, must be coordinated and consistent (RCW 36.70A.100). The GMA also requires Whatcom County and the cities to update their respective comprehensive plan by June 2025 (RCW 36.70A.130). Because this review requires a coordinated effort between Whatcom County and the seven cities, the City/County Planners Group has developed a draft interlocal agreement that would share costs associated with certain tasks that will benefit both the County and the cities.

Specifically, under the terms of the draft interlocal agreement, the County, the cities, and the Whatcom Council of Governments (WCOG) would agree to provide a total of \$600,000 to jointly fund consultant assistance with the following:

- County-wide population and housing projections and allocations to urban growth areas;
- County-wide employment projections and allocations to urban growth areas;
- Allocation of housing, households, population and employment to other geographic units;
- Land Capacity Analysis;
- Environmental review under the State Environmental Policy Act;
- Transportation model analysis support;
- Housing element work products;
- Tribal participation in planning;
- Climate planning – resiliency sub-element (GMA amendments in House Bill 1181);
- The 40 year planning strategy; and
- Project management, periodic update checklists, etc.

The County's portion of the cost-sharing agreement (\$212,680) would come from State grant money. Please note that there are other consultant tasks associated with the 2025 Comprehensive Plan update that will be solely funded by the County (from State grant money) and, therefore, are not included in this Interlocal Agreement concerning cost sharing.

Planning & Development Services is requesting the County Council, at the September 26 meeting, to authorize the County Executive to sign the interlocal agreement. The interlocal would become effective when signed by the County Executive, the WCOG Executive Director, and city representatives.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.