



Elizabeth Kosa  
DIRECTOR

# MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Carol Frazey, Whatcom County Executive Pro Tempore, and the Honorable Members of the Whatcom County Council, collectively serving in their capacity as the Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District Board of Supervisors

**THROUGH:** Elizabeth Kosa, Public Works Director

**FROM:** Paula J. Harris, P.E., River and Flood Manager *PJH*  
Gary Stoyka, Natural Resources Program Manager *GS*

**DATE:** November 2, 2023

**RE:** HMGP Grant Agreement with Washington State Military Department for Acquisition of Flood Damaged Properties

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Enclosed is a grant agreement between the Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District (FCZD) and the Washington State Military Department for your review and signature.

▪ **Background and Purpose**

In response to the November 2021 flooding, the FCZD applied for Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) funding to acquire twelve (12) properties that were substantially damaged during the flood. Seven (7) of the properties are located in unincorporated Whatcom County, four (4) are located within the City of Everson, and one (1) is located within the City of Sumas. This is the first of two acquisition grants under the HMGP program that the FCZD is pursuing. The second HMGP grant is anticipated for award in 2024 and includes five (5) additional properties for acquisition. The HMGP grant agreements are administered through the Washington State Military Department Emergency Management Division (EMD).

Once the properties are acquired and demolition of structures is complete, the FCZD will transfer the titles of the properties within the Cities of Everson and Sumas to each jurisdiction, subject to the grant requirements. Deed restrictions recorded on the title will ensure the properties are maintained in open space for perpetuity. The Cities will be responsible for maintaining and monitoring the properties to ensure they are compliant with the deed restrictions and for ongoing reporting to the grant agency that the requirements are being met.

We are hoping to complete the acquisitions as quickly as possible as it has been over two years since the flood. To expedite the acquisitions once this grant was awarded, we have already completed appraisals using other grant funding from the State, so we have been able to start coordinating with property owners on potential purchase prices.

To avoid additional delays, in addition to approval of the HMGP grant agreement, we are requesting a separate motion authorizing the Executive to execute agreements for purchase of the properties and construction contracts as required to complete the project as long as the contracts are consistent with the approved budget.

▪ **Funding Amount and Source**

The proposed grant agreement provides \$8,434,477.80 of Federal funding (FEMA), \$468,582.10 of state funding, and requires a 5% local match (\$468,582.10). The 5% local match will be FCZD funds that will be reimbursed by a Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grant for Disaster Relief (CDBG-DR) administered through the Washington Department of Commerce once that funding is awarded.

Please contact Paula Harris at extension 6285 if you have any questions or concerns regarding the terms of this agreement.

Encl.