

Whatcom County  
River & Flood Division  
November 2021 Flood Response

Whatcom County Council  
Climate Change & Natural Resources Committee

June 7, 2022

# Actions Underway

- Emergency Repairs – Follow-up Work
  - Twin View, Timon, Fishtrap Creek, Lynden, Saar Creek, Rainbow (Kwina) Slough, Sigurdson, Hovander
- Interim Repairs
  - Glacier-Gallup Levee
- Permanent Repairs
  - Jones Creek Revetment, Hudson Road Bridge
- Permanent Levee Repairs - USACE
  - Timon Levee, Upper Hampton Levee

# Actions Underway

- Continuing Capital Projects – Flood Repair
  - Everson Overflow
  - Marine Drive Levee
  - Truck Road
  - Glacier-Gallup Flood Levee Repair
  - High Creek Sediment Removal
- Continuing Capital Projects – Flood Protection/Hazard Reduction/Habitat Enhancement
  - Jones Creek Debris Flow Risk Reduction
  - Cougar Creek Floodgate
  - Ferndale Levee
  - Glacier-Gallup Alluvial Fan Restoration Project
  - Abbott Levee Phase 2
  - Fish Camp

# Actions Underway

- Continuing Flood Planning
  - FLIP Steering Committee
  - Reach Teams
  - Integrated Emergency Response
  - Everson Flow Split Design Charrette
- Elevation & Buy-out Program
- Transboundary Coordination Process
- Outreach

# Actions Underway

- Acquire Funding
  - 2022 State Supplemental Budget - \$2.5M Commerce & Ecology
  - Floodplains by Design Grant Program – 3 grants \$7.55M, \$7.9M, \$12.95M
  - Dedicated State Allocation
  - Federal
    - HMGP - \$31.5M
    - FEMA - \$5M-\$7M

# Proposed Elevation and Buy-out Plan

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# Proposed Elevation and Buy-out Plan

- Voluntary acquisitions targeting areas with worst damages and future floodways
- Elevation assistance for adjacent areas
- Cities and unincorporated areas
- Likely to be funded and implemented in phases





# Proposed Project Development Approach

- Identify areas to target for acquisition and for elevation/floodproofing
- Send letters to property owners in targeted areas to assess interest
- Develop prioritization scheme (see considerations for prioritization)
- Develop project scope and funding strategy to target highest priority areas with interested property owners

# Prohibition on Building in Floodway

- State law prohibits new or substantial improvement/repair of residences in floodways
- Exception for farmhouses on lands designated as ag lands of long-term significance; Farmhouse = single-family residence on farm site where ag products are not produced for primary use of occupants

# Potential Criteria for Prioritizing Properties

- In current floodway
- In future floodway
- Substantially damaged
- Had flood insurance? Through NFIP?
- In designated buyout area in current CFHMP
- In a repetitive flood loss area
- Location with respect to City planning – how does it fit in with City plan?
- Agricultural property

# Potential Funding Sources

- Washington State Department of Commerce
  - \$1.5 M Awarded
- FEMA – Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)
  - \$16.5M application submitted in April (COVID)
  - \$10M pre-application submitted in June (November 2021 Flood)
  - \$5M pre-applications due in July (January 2022 Winter Storm)
- Washington Department of Ecology Floodplains by Design Grants
  - 2019-21 FbD grant – \$1.2M awarded
  - 2021-23 FbD grant – \$1.5M awarded
  - 2023-25 FbD grant – \$5-8M applied
- Possible state allocation for Nooksack?

# HMGP Funding from November 2021 Floods

- 52 properties that were interested from initial outreach but not included in first HMGP applications
- Proposed new areas to target
- Final scope for application(s) will consider:
  - Priority based on BCA and applicability to this funding program
  - Total project cost relative to amount of funding available
  - Ensure use of HMGP funding will not conflict with long-term plans

# First Round HMGP Proposal

- \$16.5M
  - 24 acquisitions in Everson (6), Sumas (6), Unincorporated areas (12)
  - Substantially damaged homes (22) and properties where costs are below FEMA's precalculated threshold for cost-effectiveness (2)
- 17 elevations in Ferndale (3) and Sumas (14)
  - Homes that can be elevated for less than FEMA's precalculated threshold for cost-effectiveness
- Time was limiting factor in developing scope – no time to do benefit-cost analysis (BCA)
- Funding also limits future use – align with long-term strategy

# Proposed New Target Areas

- Acme repetitive flood loss area – elevation, possible acquisition of 2 parcels
- Deming area (Upper Reach 4) – acquisition of future floodway parcels; elevation for remaining properties or ag properties in floodway
- Backacre Road – acquisition of parcel in current and future floodway
- West end of Nolte Road – elevation
- Northwood/Timon – acquire parcels and/or structures/deed restrict
- Polinder Road area – acquire structures/deed restrict
- River Road area – acquire parcels and/or structures/deed restrict
- Paradise Road area – acquire parcel and/or structures/deed restrict

Questions or Concerns?