



## MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Satpal Singh Sidhu Whatcom County Executive and  
Honorable Members of the Whatcom County Council

THROUGH: Elizabeth Kosa, Public Works Director

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

RE: Drainage Improvement District No. 7 Assessment Revision

DATE: March 21, 2023

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Enclosed is an Ordinance titled Finalizing a Revised System of Assessment for Drainage Improvement District No. 7 for your review and signature, subject to a public hearing.

### ▪ Requested Action

The County Engineer respectfully requests that the County Executive and the County Council adopt an Ordinance revising the system of assessment for Drainage Improvement District No. 7. District Supervisors are in support of the revised system of assessment for the District.

### ▪ Background and Purpose

At the request of the Drainage Improvement District No. 7 Board of Supervisors, the Whatcom County Engineer is proposing changes to the method of assessment for property owners within the District. The changes will improve the equity of property assessments by incorporating a fee based on improvement value (per Assessor) and establishing a minimum fee for lots smaller than one-acre. The existing method of assessment is based solely on a relative ratio per acre per lot and does not take into consideration the greater contribution of runoff from and benefit to higher density development within the District.

The proposed system of assessment will be based on a combination of a relative ratio per acre (including minimum fee for lots smaller than one-acre) and a relative ratio of improvement value per lot within the District. Any significant changes will likely result from one of the following reasons:

- Parcels with improvements or higher improvement values may see an increase in assessed amount due to their greater contribution of runoff to the drainage system and the greater benefit associated with conveying runoff away from a higher value asset.
- Parcels with no improvements or lesser improvement values may see a decrease in assessed amount.
- Parcels smaller than one-acre will be assessed a fee corresponding to a one-acre lot.

Each property owner pays a proportionate share based on the resulting total benefit value within their parcel. The final fee paid is determined from this basis along with the total assessment amount set by the district Supervisors.

Notices are being sent to each of the affected property owners informing them of the hearing and their specific assessment fee under the past and proposed systems of assessment.

Please contact Paula Harris at 6285, if you have any questions or concerns regarding this matter.

Encl.