1 2 2025 AUG -6 P 3: 12 3 WHATCOM COUNTY WASHINGTON 4 5 6 7 THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF WHATCOM 8 9 NO. 24-2-00355-37 CITY OF BELLINGHAM, a municipal 10 corporation, CITY'S MOTION TO AMEND 11 WARRANT FOR ABATEMENT Plaintiff. 12 OF PUBLIC NUISANCE AND FOR **ENTRY OF JUDGMENT** 13 V. JUDGE LEE GROCHMAL 14 LI-CHING FANG, 15 Defendant, 16 and 17 52<sup>nd</sup> & BROOKLYN, LLC, a limited 18 liability company, 19 Intervenor. 20

## RELIEF REQUESTED

This case concerns the City's ongoing efforts to address the large unauthorized encampment of unhoused individuals established on Defendant's property southeast of the Bellingham Wal-Mart. The City filed this abatement action in 2024 in an effort to encourage Defendant to begin taking steps to remove the unhoused individuals living on the property and to secure the site to

MOTION TO AMEND WARRANT OF ABATEMENT AND FOR ENTRY OF JUDGMENT - 1

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City of Bellingham
CITY ATTORNEY
210 Lottie Street
Bellingham, Washington 98225
Telephone (360) 778-8270

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prevent further encampment activity. Despite the City's consistent engagement and requests for cooperation, Defendant failed to take any action to abate the nuisance.

On September 25, 2024, this Court granted the City's and Intervenor's motions for summary judgment to declare Defendant's property as a nuisance. Dkt. #38. The Court further entered a Warrant of Abatement directing Defendant to abate the nuisance "immediately" and allowing the City to enter the Property to plan the abatement work. Dkt. 39. Although a review of the transcript of the September 25, 2024, hearing reveals that the Court also issued oral rulings that the City was authorized to abate the nuisance as soon as it deemed necessary, and that Defendant would be responsible for the City's costs of abatement, those oral rulings were not reflected in the written orders entered. Phillips Decl., Ex. A at 37:22-25 – 38:1 ("At any time the city can, they have the authority now at any time to come in and . . . start doing the clean-up, themselves, and if they do that, the Defendant will be expected to repay the cost of that to the City.")

After the September 25, 2024, hearing, Defendant did not take any steps to abate the nuisance as directed by the Court. Accordingly, the City began to plan Phase 1 of the abatement work, which, as described more fully below, was primarily directed toward reducing the impacts of the encampment to residents of the Intervenor's property, Tullwood Apartments. Phase 1 was completed in December 2024.

As described more fully below, the undeveloped 20-acre property is mostly inaccessible by road, and the well-established encampments are deep within the

interior of the property, which is all forested and includes a creek and critical wetland areas. Due to the severity of the impacts and environmental degradation that has occurred, as well as the difficulty in accessing the property, the abatement work will cost millions and require a multi-year, multi-phased approach as the City's time and limited resources allow.

The City is now planning Phase 2 of the abatement work. The City believes it is prudent to ensure that the Court's record is clear for anyone reviewing it in the future, years from now, that pursuant to the September 25, 2024, rulings, the City is authorized to perform the abatement work and Defendant is financially responsible for the City's work. Because the abatement work will need to be completed in multiple phases over years, the City is requesting that the Court's orders also make clear that the City may return to Court as many times as needed for entry of judgments for its costs as the phases are completed.

Finally, consistent with the Court's September 25, 2024, oral rulings, the City now seeks entry of a first judgment against Defendant for the costs to date for the Phase 1 work, in the amount of \$126,743.59.

## SUMMARY OF ABATEMENT WORK AND COSTS

To recap, the Defendant's property is 20 acres, undeveloped, and forested. Spring Creek runs down the middle of the property from north to south, with a steep slope going down to Spring Creek. The flat areas of the property are largely wetlands. There are no access roads into the property. The property contains an estimated 1000-2000 tons of solid waste. The property has at least

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ten significant homestead sites and multiple encampments. There are multiple burn pits, one appearing to be 20-plus feet in diameter and potentially exceeding 10 feet deep. There are no facilities for disposal of human waste and a latrine was observed in the middle of a wetland. The extreme conditions of the property and refuse within are likely to directly impact water quality and soil conditions, harming various aquatic species, including endangered Puget Sound chinook salmon and steelhead. It is estimated that it will cost over \$2 million to remove the waste on the site, and another \$2-4 million to remediate the wetlands and creek, including removing contaminated soil, making soil amendments, and replanting native vegetation. See generally Dkt ## 26, 28, 30 (Declarations of Steven Sundin, Michael Olinger, and Sean O'Neill).

Following the Court's order granting summary judgment in this case on September 25, 2024, the City began to plan its first phase of abatement. Because the residents of Tullwood Apartments on Intervenor's property were experiencing the worst impacts, the City's efforts initially focused on abating the nuisance along the shared property line between the Tullwood Apartments and Defendant. A plan for installing fencing was developed in partnership with Intervenor. Under Phase 1, the City would clean and clear the vegetation on Defendant's property on the north and east sides to ready it for installation of a fence. The Intervenor paid for cleaning and clearing on their side of the property line. The City would pay for the fencing along the shared property line between Intervenor and Defendant, as well as install a gate to allow future entry, with Intervenor bearing the cost of installing the fencing along the north side of its property line on E.

Stuart Road. Second Declaration of Sean O'Neill at ¶ 4, Exhibit A (map of Phase 1 work).

In order to perform the clean-up work, the City engaged outreach teams to notify the occupants in the area that they would need to move. The City then tagged personal property that needed to be removed and provided notice of the date of the work and the need for the occupants to vacate the property before that date. *Id.* at ¶ 5.

The City completed the clean-up work on November 22, 2024. That work entailed removing 35,000 (17-18 tons) pounds of solid and hazardous waste, and spreading 60 yards of mulch for soil stabilization. The total cost of that portion of Phase 1 was \$65,453.37. The City has forwarded that invoice to Defendant for payment, but to date Defendant has not made any payments on the invoice. *Id.* at ¶ 6.

The City then hired a contractor, Discount Fencing, to install 684 feet of chain link fencing on the shared property line between Defendant and Intervenor. The fencing was finished on December 13, 2024, and cost the City \$38,378.90. *Id.* at ¶ 7.

Following installation of the fencing, the City performed routine patrols of the fence line, which revealed that individuals were regularly vandalizing and breaching the fence by cutting holes in it to regain access to the property. The City has consistently repaired the holes in the fencing and maintained its weekly foot patrols along the fence line in order to identify new repairs needed as quickly as possible and hopefully to deter future vandalism. The City has also installed

solar lighting along the fence to deter vandalism. Since the fencing was installed, the City has incurred \$12,950.30 in personnel costs for patrolling the fence line and repairing it, and \$9,961.02 in materials and equipment, for a total of \$22,911.32. *Id.* at ¶ 8.

The City is currently planning Phase 2 of the abatement work, which is to install fencing along the southern border of Defendant's property in order to deter additional trespassers. The southern property line is 1,304 feet, and is bifurcated by Spring Creek, which flows north to south through the property. There is no direct access via road to the southern property line, so the City will first need to re-clear the refuse and vegetation adjacent to the fencing along the western property line to create an access path for trucks and equipment. Because of the creek, the City will have to implement Phase 2 into two phases, A and B. Phase 2A will involve cleaning and clearing vegetation along the western-most 700 feet of Defendant's southern property line, up to the point of Spring Creek and then installing fencing, similar to the work performed in Phase 1. *Id.* at ¶ 9, Exhibit D (map showing planned work).

Again, the City will engage outreach teams to notify the current occupants in the area of the planned work, then tag any personal property still remaining, and provide notice of the date by which all occupant-trespassers will need to move. The City plans to complete Phase 2A in 2025. *Id.* at ¶ 10. The City estimates that Phase 2A will cost approximately the same amount as Phase 1 did, since the number of feet along the property line to be cleaned, cleared, and fenced off is roughly the same distance as was done in Phase 1. *Id.* at ¶ 11.

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The future abatement work beyond 2025 is projected to cost over \$6 million and will need to be conducted in multiple phases over years, as the City continues to plan its course of action and secure funding for the work. Phases of the abatement work are projected to include but are not limited to additional removal of hundreds of tons of solid and hazardous waste, safely and humanely removing the unhoused population living on the Property, securing the Property, building temporary roads and bridges in order to gain access to the interior of the property, conducting soil testing to determine clean-up and remediation needs, and repairing damage to the streams and wetlands. *Id.* at ¶ 12.

#### CONCLUSION

For the reasons described above, the City respectfully requests that the Court grant the City's motion and enter the following:

- (1) Order Granting Motion to Amend Warrant for Abatement of Public Nuisance;
- (2) Amended Warrant for Abatement of Publice Nuisance; and
- (3) Judgment for the City against Defendant in the total amount of \$126,743.59, consisting of the City's costs for the Phase 1 work described, as well as ongoing maintenance and patrol of the Phase 1 fenceline.

Respectfully submitted this 6th day of August, 2025.

CITY OF BELLINGHAM

Karen M. Phillips, WSBA #45305

Assistant City Attorney

1 2025 AUG -6 P 3: 12 3 WHAT OF COUNTY 4 MASHINGTON 5 6 7 THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF WHATCOM 8 9 CITY OF BELLINGHAM, a municipal NO. 24-2-00355-37 10 corporation, **DECLARATION OF KAREN M.** 11 **PHILLIPS** Plaintiff, 12 JUDGE LEE GROCHMAL 13 ٧. 14 LI-CHING FANG, 15 Defendant, 16 and 17 52<sup>nd</sup> & BROOKLYN, LLC, a limited 18 liability company, 19 Intervenor. 20 21 I, Karen M. Phillips, declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the 22 State of Washington that the following statements are true and correct to the best 23 24 of my knowledge: 25 I am over the age of 18 and competent to be a witness herein. I make 1. 26 this declaration concerning facts and events of my own personal knowledge. 27 28

1	2. Attached as Exhibit A is a true and correct copy of select portions of
2	the transcript of the hearing held on September 25, 2024 in this matter.
3	Respectfully submitted this 6 <sup>th</sup> day of August, 2025.
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5	January Works
6	Karen M. Phillips Assistant City Attorney
7	City of Bellingham
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## **EXHIBIT A**

1	IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON						
2	IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF WHATCOM						
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4	CITY OF BELLINGHAM, a municipal )						
5	corporation,						
6	Plaintiff, ) ) ) Cs. No. 24-2-00355-37						
7	)						
8	LI-CHANG FANG,						
9	Defendant, )						
10	and ) ) 52ND & BROOKLYN, LLC, a limited )						
11	Liability company,						
12	Intervenor. )						
13							
14	VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS						
15	WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2024						
16	COCCUMAL TUDGE						
17	THE HONORABLE LEE GROCHMAL, JUDGE						
18							
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20							
21	RHONDA JENSEN, CSR						
22	OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER						
23	WHATCOM COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT						
24 25	BELLINGHAM, WASHINGTON						
23	(360) 778-5608						

1 MR. DOUPE: Right.

THE COURT: Yes, within six months of this. I think that the city can request that I order the sheriff to do this. I hope that won't happen, within six months. I think that's my only authority is to order the sheriff, and nobody is asking me do that right now.

All right. Why don't you take a look at -- I'm going to indicate that Ms. Fang was present on Zoom, and I'm going to have the attorneys look at this order that I modified just a little bit, and then sign off on it.

MR. DOUPE: May I approach?

THE COURT: Yes.

MR. GOOD: Your Honor, the city has a proposed warrant of abatement. It's the actual warrant, itself. I have a proposed copy. It does say proposed. I would think that we might need to -- the one I prepared says after January 1st. I think we can just cross that out.

THE COURT: Yes.

So, Ms. Wang, you can let Ms. Fang know that I've ordered the warrant of abatement. It requires that she immediately begin to abate the nuisance, hire somebody to do that. At any time the city can, they have the authority now at any time to come in and the start doing the clean-up, themselves, and if they do that, the Defendant will be expected to repay the cost of that to

the city. Understood?

MS. WANG: Understood.

(Ms. Wang translated.)

MS. WANG: Ms. Fang asked what kind of assistance are there, because there are criminals and people with guns and a lot of help in assessing that she does not know how to deal with.

THE COURT: I can't give her that information. She can maybe talk with the city about a plan to do that and to assist with that; is that right, Mr. Good?

MR. GOOD: Yes, Your Honor.

THE COURT: You would love to work with her, wouldn't you?

MR. GOOD: Yes, we would.

THE COURT: They sent a letter to her indicating that they wanted to work with her to work on a plan, and so you should respond to that work with them. That would be most cost effective way of getting that done for her.

MS. WANG: Defendant says that they have requested to work with the city, but the city did not respond or reply to. So hopefully this will resolve here, and I ask Your Honor to --

{Courthouse construction noise.)

THE COURT: I'm sorry. I'm sorry. We've got some construction noise here, and I just can't hear you. It's

1 2025 AUG-6 P 3: 12 2 3 WHATSON COUNTY WASHINGTON 4 5 б 7 THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF WHATCOM 8 9 NO. 24-2-00355-37 CITY OF BELLINGHAM, a municipal 10 corporation, 11 Plaintiff, 12 SECOND DECLARATION OF 13 ٧. **SEAN O'NEILL** 14 LI-CHING FANG. 15 Defendant, 16 and 17 52<sup>nd</sup> & BROOKLYN, LLC, a limited 18 JUDGE LEE GROCHMAL liability company, 19 Intervenor. 20 21 I, Sean O'Neill, declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State 22 of Washington that the following statements are true and correct to the best of my 23 24 knowledge: 25 I am over the age of 18 and competent to be a witness herein. I make 1. 26 this declaration concerning facts and events of my own personal knowledge. 27 Since 2023, I have been the Sanitation and Solid Waste Manager of

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the City of Bellingham Public Works Department. My duties include managing the contracts for clean-up efforts for all types of illegal dumping and litter on City property. Additionally, I manage the city's contracts for residential municipal solid waste collection, hauling, and disposal and three of the city's post-closure landfills. I help the City plan and direct all encampment clean up efforts. Since 2023, I have directed the clean up of approximately 2600 encampments.

- I am certified in Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency 3. Response, Certified Erosion and Sediment Control Lead, and Integrated Solid Waste Management.
- Following the Court's order granting summary judgment in this case 4. on September 25, 2024, the City began to plan its first phase to abate the nuisance located on Defendant's property. Because the Tullwood Apartments on Intervenor's property was experiencing the worst impacts, the City's efforts focused on abating the nuisance along the shared property line between Tullwood and Defendant. A plan for installing fencing was developed in partnership with Intervenor, as reflected in the map attached as Exhibit A. Under the Phase 1 plan, the City would clean and clear the vegetation on Defendant's property on the north and east sides of Defendant's property to ready it for installation of a fence. The Intervenor paid for cleaning and clearing on their side of the property line. The City would pay for the fencing along the shared property line between Intervenor and Defendant, as well as to install a gate to allow future entry, with Intervenor bearing the cost of installing the fencing along the north side of its property line on E. Stuart Road.

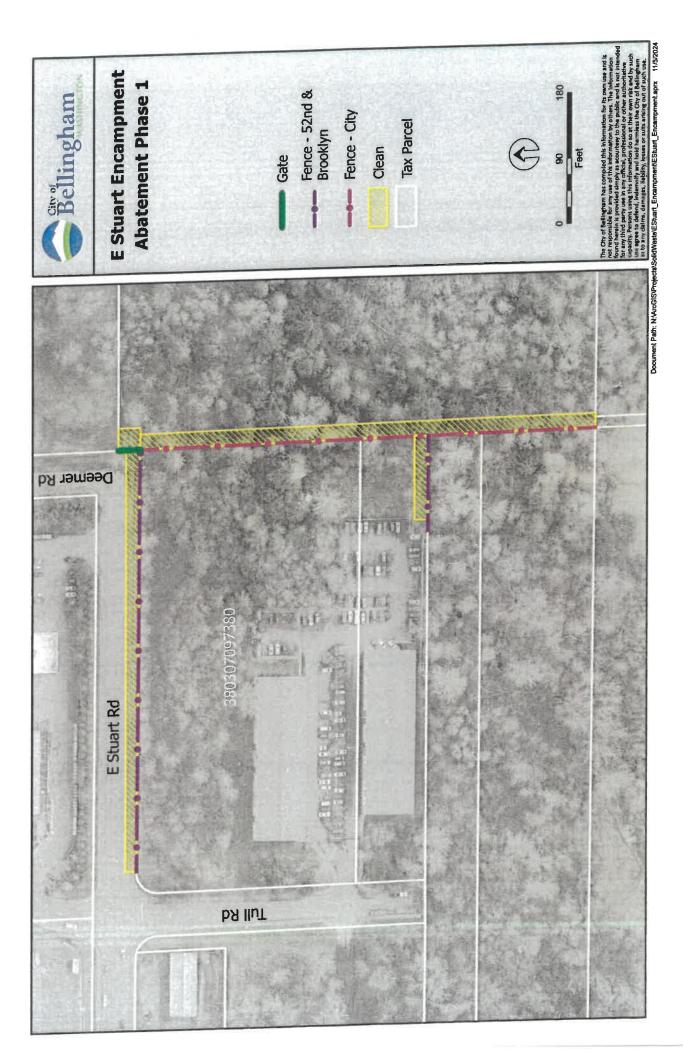
- 5. In order to perform the clean up work, the City engaged outreach teams to notify the occupants in the area that they would need to move. The City then tagged personal property that needed to be removed and provided notice of the date of the work and the need for the occupants to vacate the property before that date.
- 6. The City completed the clean up work on November 22, 2024. That work entailed removing 35,000 pounds of solid and hazardous waste, and spreading 60 yards of mulch for soil stabilization. Attached as **Exhibit B** is the invoice for that clean up work, totaling \$65,453.37. The City has forwarded that invoice to Defendant for payment, but to date Defendant has not made any payments on the invoice.
- 7. The City then hired a contractor, Discount Fencing, to install 684 feet of chain link fencing on the shared property line between Defendant and Intervenor. The fencing was finished on December 13, 2024. Attached as **Exhibit C** is the invoice for the fencing, which cost \$38,378.90.
- 8. Following installation of the fencing, the City has performed routine patrols of the fence line, which has revealed that individuals regularly vandalize and breach the fence by cutting holes in it to regain access to the property. The City repaired has consistently the holes in the fencing and maintained its weekly foot patrols along the fence line in order to identify new repairs needed as quickly as possible and hopefully to deter future vandalism. The City has also installed solar lighting along the fence to deter vandalism. Since the fencing was installed, the City has incurred \$12,950.30 in personnel costs for patrolling the fence line and

repairing it, and \$9,961.02 in materials and equipment, for a total of \$22,911.32.

- 9. The City is currently planning Phase 2 of the abatement work, which is to install fencing along the southern border of Defendant's property in order to deter additional trespassers. The southern property line is 1,304 feet, and is bifurcated by Spring Creek. There is no direct access via road to the southern property line, so the City will first need to re-clear the land adjacent to fencing along the western property line to create an access path for trucks and equipment. Because of the creek, the City will have to implement Phase 2 into two phases, A and B. Phase 2A will involve cleaning and clearing vegetation along the westernmost 700 feet of Defendant's southern property line, up to the point of Spring Creek and then installing fencing, similar to the work performed in Phase 1. Attached as **Exhibit D** is a map showing the Phase 2A planned work.
- 10. Again, the City will engage outreach teams to notify the current occupants in the area of the planned work, then tag any personal property still remaining, and provide notice of the date by which all occupant-trespassers will need to move. The City plans to complete Phase 2A in 2025.
- 11. The City estimates that Phase 2A will cost approximately the same amount as Phase 1 did, since the number of feet along the property line to be cleaned, cleared, and fenced off is roughly the same distance as was done in Phase 1.
- 12. The future abatement work beyond 2025 is projected to cost over \$6 million and will need to be conducted in multiple phases, likely over years, as the City continues to plan its course of action and secure funding for the work. Phases

1	of the abatement work are projected to include but are not limited to additional
2	removal of hundreds of tons of solid and hazardous waste, safely and humanely
3	removing the unhoused population living on the Property, securing the Property,
4	building temporary roads and bridges in order to gain access to the interior of the
5	property, conducting soil testing to determine clean-up and remediation needs, and
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7	repairing damage to the streams and wetlands.
8	Respectfully submitted this 6th day of August, 2025.
9	Respectfully subfillited this day of reason,
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13	SEAN O'NEILL Sanitation and Solid Waste Manager
14	City of Bellingham
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# **EXHIBIT A**



# **EXHIBIT B**



## INVOICE

Invoice:

1023165

Customer No:

C006776

Invoice Date: Due Date: 3/31/2025 4/30/2025

LI-CHING FANG NO. 921, KUNG-I RD CHUNAN TOWNSHIP MIAOLI COUNTY 350028 For questions concerning this invoice, please contact the originating department or e-mail ARinquiries@cob.org.

Dept: Public Works Phone: (360) 778-7700

### **Encampment Cleanup**

Line	Description	Qty	Unit Price	Amount
	Work order 828505 Civil Abatement Case No. 24-2-00355-37	1.00	65,453.37	\$65,453.37
	CIVII Adatement Case No. 24 2 00330 37		Total Due	\$65,453.37

Prepared by: JLCORFEE

## PLEASE RETURN THIS PORTION WITH YOUR PAYMENT

#### 3 Ways to Pay

- 1. Online at www.cob.org/ARPay
- 2. Mail us a check
- 3. Pay in person

Invoice:

1023165

Customer No:

C006776

Invoice Date:

3/31/2025

Due Date:

4/30/2025



**Total Amount Due:** 

\$65,453.37

City of Bellingham Attn: Finance Dept 210 Lottie St. Bellingham, WA 98225

Amount Enclosed:

\$



# **EXHIBIT C**



#### **Discount Fence**

2236 Pacific St.
Bellingham, WA 98229
+13608734005
missylee@discountfencewa.com

## INVOICE

**BILL TO** 

Ryan Salas-Mitchell Bellingham, City of 210 Lottie St Bellingham, WA 98225 SHIP TO

Ryan Salas-Mitchell Bellingham, City of 210 Lottie St Bellingham, WA 98225 **INVOICE # 3635** 

DATE 12/12/2024
DUE DATE 12/27/2024
TERMS Net 15

ACTIVITY	YTO	RATE	AMOUNT	
Chain Link Galvanized Install 670 LF of 8' tall galvanized chain link	1	33,660.00	33,660.00T	
Change Order Installed 13 additional LF of same fencing for a total of	13 of 683	50.00	650.00T	•
Sales Sales	10	50.00	500.00T	•
Installed 10 LF at west end per Sean O'Neill PM  Sales Installed 1 additional hookup	1	400.00	400.00T	,
E Stuart Rd Encampment Project	SUBTOTAL		35,210.00 3,168.90	
Contract 61NF-24 Certified Payroll and Affidavit Filed with L&I and approved 12/12/24	TAX TOTAL BALANCE DUE	<b>\$</b> 3	38,378.90 <b>8,378.90</b>	)
Please call our office at 360-873-4005 if you have any questions.		count Fence - 363	·	r
Intent 1483101 \$36,689.40 Approved 11/5/2024		ototal: \$ 35,	210.00	100/

NOC - COMPLETE NOC - ESD -NOC - L&I -NOC - DOR -

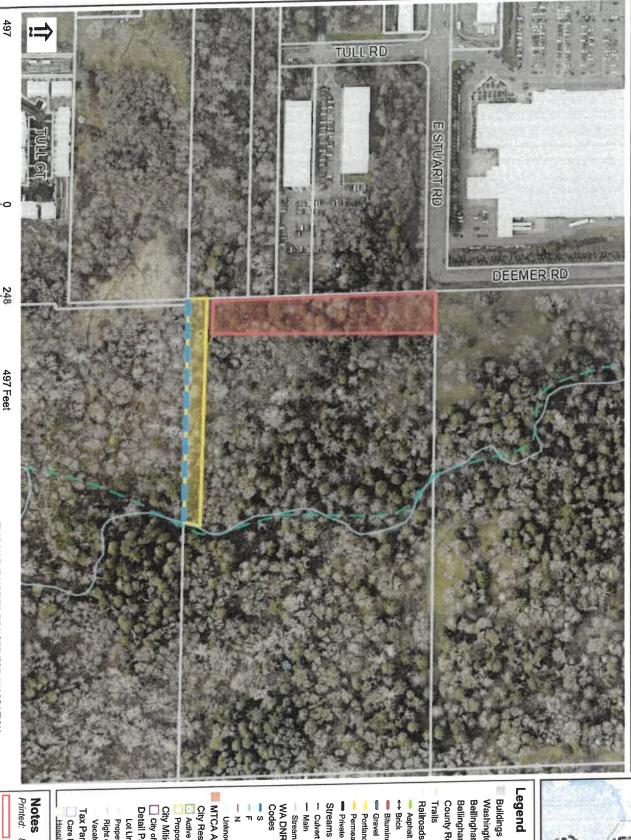
Affidavil 1376320 \$36,689 40 Approved 12/12/2024

10%

# **EXHIBIT D**



# П Stuart Phase 2a



Trails

# Brick Asphalt Railroads

Gravel

Permeable Concrete

Portland Concrete Cement

Streams Private

- Main -- Culvert

Stream

Bituminous Surface Treatment

S Codes

WA DNR - Fish Habitat Water Type

Active

Proposed

City Restoration Sites

**Detail Parcel Lines** City of Bellingham - Parks City Mitigation Sites

Lot Line

Property Line Right of Way

MTCA Areas (Model Toxic Control Ac

Unknown or Non-Typed Water

County Roads Detail **Bellingham Streets Detail View** Bellingham Streets Street View Washington Roads Labels

THIS MAP IS NOT TO BE USED FOR NAVIGATION

The City of Bellingham has compiled this information for its own use and is not responsible for any use of this information by others. The information found herein is provided simply as a courtesy to the public and is not intended for any third party use in any official, professional or other authoritative capacity. Persons using this information do so at their own risk and by such use agree to defend, Indemnify and hold harmless the City of Bellingham as to any claims, damages, liability, losses or suits arising out of such use. Contact the Whatcom County Assessors office (360-778-5050) for the most up to date parcel information.

497 Feet

# Notes

Tax Parcels

Care Facility

Vacated Right of Way

Printed: 8/4/2025 12:19:18 PM

Construction access

Fence Cleaning