

## **2024 Lake Whatcom Protections Resolution**

**WHEREAS**, Whatcom Democrats' Platform identifies clean water as a basic right and specifically identifies Lake Whatcom as a critical environmental area demanding our protection; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Bellingham Silver Beach neighborhood has areas of high density zoning that city staff have identified as incompatible with protecting Lake Whatcom water quality, going so far as to have City Council implement a moratorium on accepting development applications and permits relating to multi-family zoned properties within the Silver Beach neighborhood in July 2022 and renewed multiple times<sup>2,3</sup>; and

**WHEREAS**, the Lake Whatcom Watershed is the drinking water supply for over 100,000 residents of the Bellingham area as identified in the Lake Whatcom Management Program 2020-2024 Work Plan<sup>4</sup>; and

**WHEREAS**, the current moratorium on accepting development applications and permits relating to multi-family zoned properties within the Silver Beach neighborhood expires in July 2024<sup>5</sup>; and

**WHEREAS**, the current Lake Whatcom Management Plan lacks mitigation for the Lake Whatcom tributaries and does not require retrofitting for the storm drains and doesn't account for already existing development; and

**WHEREAS**, the Washington Department of Ecology identifies that there must be over 80% less development than existed in 2003 and since then more development has occurred<sup>6</sup> and the city of Bellingham Planning Department has identified that current Lake Whatcom Management Plan lacks mitigation for the Lake Whatcom tributaries and does not require private property retrofitting for existing storm drains and doesn't account for already existing private development<sup>4,5</sup>; and

**WHEREAS**, the city of Bellingham Planning Department is understaffed and may not have the ability to appropriately address the protections Lake Whatcom needs<sup>9,10</sup>; and

**WHEREAS**, the city of Bellingham Planning Department has proposed allowing development in the Silver Beach neighborhood at medium density and the Bellingham City Council will eventually consider the allowed development density and the current moratorium in the Silver Beach neighborhood<sup>5</sup>.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Whatcom Democrats do support only minimal development, if any is required, in the Lake Whatcom Watershed.

**THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Whatcom Democrats do advise the Bellingham City Council to only develop the Silver Beach neighborhood at a low density, if at all, to protect Lake Whatcom water quality as much as possible.

1. <https://www.whatcomdemocrats.org/platform-and-resolutions>
2. [https://meetings.cob.org/Documents/DownloadFileBytes/City\\_Council\\_Regular\\_Meeting\\_2714\\_Minutes\\_7\\_11\\_2022\\_7\\_00\\_00\\_PM.pdf?documentType=2&meetingId=2714](https://meetings.cob.org/Documents/DownloadFileBytes/City_Council_Regular_Meeting_2714_Minutes_7_11_2022_7_00_00_PM.pdf?documentType=2&meetingId=2714)
3. <https://whatcomwatch.org/index.php/article/whats-next-for-lake-whatcom>
4. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1SCty9lRhgFx7k6Cx6iboyNSSslvE8lXY/view>
5. [https://meetings.cob.org/Documents/DownloadFileBytes/Planning\\_Commission\\_3165\\_Agenda\\_Packet\\_3\\_21\\_2024\\_7\\_00\\_00\\_PM.pdf?documentType=5&meetingId=3165&isAttachment=True](https://meetings.cob.org/Documents/DownloadFileBytes/Planning_Commission_3165_Agenda_Packet_3_21_2024_7_00_00_PM.pdf?documentType=5&meetingId=3165&isAttachment=True)
6. [Whatcom County Assessor & Treasurer - Property Details - 70833 MF OLD MILL VILLAGE LLC for Year 2023 - 2024](#)
7. <https://cob.org/wp-content/uploads/Memo-to-Planning-Commission-for-Work-Session.pdf>
8. <https://ecology.wa.gov/water-shorelines/water-quality/water-improvement/total-maximum-daily-load-process/directory-of-improvement-projects/lake-whatcom-watershed-multi-parameter-tmdl>
9. [https://cob.zoom.us/rec/share/6WhuJx6egDXL1taRkdMP-8ChbgJF2NVvBDs4Vt2u6g\\_tsf6LV4mnxNjdxGVmJk8R.1-9mzTo6BFUg5wHd](https://cob.zoom.us/rec/share/6WhuJx6egDXL1taRkdMP-8ChbgJF2NVvBDs4Vt2u6g_tsf6LV4mnxNjdxGVmJk8R.1-9mzTo6BFUg5wHd) (27:50)
10. **\*\***<https://cob.org/wp-content/uploads/4-17-24-DRAFT-Minutes.pdf>

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*Adopted by a vote of 32-5 at the May 18, 2024, Endorsement Meeting*