



April 13, 2015

Clark County Councilors
P.O. Box 9810
Vancouver, WA 98666-9810

Oliver Orjiako
Director, Clark County Community Planning
P.O. Box 9810
Vancouver, WA 98666-9810

Comments submitted electronically for the Administrative Record for the April 14, 2015 hearing.

Dear Clark County Councilors and Dr. Orjiako:

I am submitting these comments for the record in advance of the April 14, 2015 hearing on the Comprehensive Plan update. Time permitting, I plan to be in attendance to read these into the record; however, I am submitting these in writing to inclusion in the record as well.

SEPA Process and Schedule

The current Comprehensive Plan process, including SEPA Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement development, would have the current three-person Council making a preferred alternative decision in November 2015. That would prevent the two new Council positions, under the adopted Home Rule Charter, from having a part in such an important policy decision.

I recommend that the County Council adopt Alternative 1, the current Comprehensive Plan, as the “Interim Comprehensive Plan”, and postpone the alternatives narrowing process until the new councilors take office in January 2016. Extending the current plan as the “Interim Plan” for approximately one year allows two new councilors to have a say. It allows for the county to meet the state-imposed June 2016 deadline, staving off state sanctions.

Although not required, the SEPA process should include an **economic and financial impact assessment**. Alternative 4, especially, is a blanket “upzone” and results in a de facto tax increase; it will increase property values, and thus property tax assessments, on most rural land. Clark County Councilors can only cap about ¼ of the total property tax assessment; the other ¾ is controlled by the State and other school and special districts.

Alternatives 1-3

I recommend that Alternatives 1 and 3 be carried forward. I recommend Alternative 2 be discarded.

Alternative 2 is nothing more than a “Plan by Postcard”. Essentially, anyone wanting to have their rural lot zoning changed was encouraged to send a postcard requesting such action. This is not a plan and is not consistent with any planning principles of which I am aware.

Alternative 4

I am opposed to Alternative 4 for many reasons and recommend that this alternative be discarded; it puts the county in a high risk of litigation as well as legal and financial liability. Here are my specific reasons why this Alternative should no longer be considered.

1. **Councilor Madore now has the opportunity to make a policy decision on an alternative he developed by circumventing the customary and normal process of giving direction to the Director of Community Planning Department to develop alternatives.** The behind the scenes contact that Councilor Madore had with a single, small group of individuals with a specific agenda to the exclusion of the public at large and planning staff violates the County's own Board Resolution that the public participation ordinance was for the purpose of “**insuring that no single group or interest dominates the process**” (emphasis added). In this instance, Councilor Madore's direct contact with this small group of individuals excluded every member of the remainder of the public from participating in the creation of Alternative #4 which he now touts as the preferred alternative on his public FB page.
2. **It parcelizes rural Clark County and add 8,000 new lots** (per Staff Report, table on Page 26). It offers no protection for small farms or other agricultural uses, including wineries. 8,000 large houses on these new lots translates to 20,000 more people in the rural area. With 25-30 percent of Clark County workers commuting to Portland, **this alternative potentially adds 12,000 more vehicles a day crossing our already-overcrowded I-5 and I-205 bridges.**
3. **It creates no new jobs and it adds to I-5 bridge traffic congestion.** No new jobs are developed other than a few service workers cleaning or doing landscaping at these new rural mansions. Those opposed to previous efforts to add capacity to I-5 across the Columbia River wanted Clark County to add jobs to reduce I-5 Bridge congestion. Alternative 4 does not alleviate I-5 Bridge congestion; it increases it.
4. **It strangles Clark County's small cities.** Alternative 4 creates a ring of large, expensive houses around our small cities which prevents future growth; meaning **no new small city neighborhoods and no new jobs.**
5. **Alternative 4 increases traffic congestion on rural roads and streets through small cities.** With no rural services, retail areas, or job centers, 20,000 rural residents will travel southward into Vancouver and across the I-5/I-205 bridges, adding substantial traffic to substandard roads.

6. **This alternative adds population with no access to public transportation.** There is no way C-TRAN can afford to serve these outlying areas, nor are there sidewalks or paths for rural residents to use or to access C-TRAN.
7. **Alternative 4 impacts groundwater.** These new rural lots will be served by wells and septic tanks, not water and sewer lines.

My Value-Based Planning Proposal

After talking with a number of people across the political spectrum at and subsequent to the Hockinson open house, I recommend that the county hold off on further developing and assessing alternatives and instead, undertake a broad, value-based community discussion on what should go into the Comprehensive Plan. As a candidate for County Council, if elected, I would be happy to champion such an effort. I do not have any financial gain realized in any of this effort nor am I associated with anyone who does stand to gain financially.

My Value-Based Plan process includes:

- **Reaching community agreement or informed consent on values and performance measures** with which to develop and evaluate the Plan.
- **Inclusion, rather than exclusion,** by involving a comprehensive variety of community groups, such as Clark County Citizens United, Friends of Clark County, land conservation as well as the building and development community, and others, to provide input and discuss trade-offs of various options.
- **Bringing in a group such as WSU-Vancouver's Initiative for Public Deliberation to facilitate a series of forums to capture community input.**
- **Allowing County Planning staff to fairly and equitably develop and evaluate a plan for community review, before acted on by the FIVE County Councilors.**

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Chuck Green

Ridgefield Resident

Candidate for Clark County Council District 2