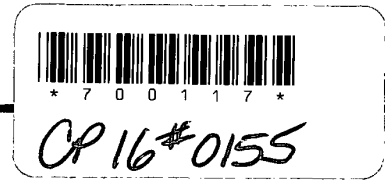


**O'Donnell, Mary Beth**



**From:** Tilton, Rebecca  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 24, 2014 8:05 AM  
**To:** O'Donnell, Mary Beth  
**Subject:** FW: La Center testimony for 6/24 BOCC hearing  
**Attachments:** BOCC 2016 Population-Employment Allocation Letter 6.24.2014.pdf

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

This is testimony for the Comp Plan hearing.

**Rebecca Tilton, Clerk of the Board**  
**Board of Clark County Commissioners**  
1300 Franklin Street  
PO Box 5000  
Vancouver, WA 98666-5000  
PHONE: 360-397-2232, ext. 4305 | E-MAIL: [Rebecca.Tilton@clark.wa.gov](mailto:Rebecca.Tilton@clark.wa.gov)

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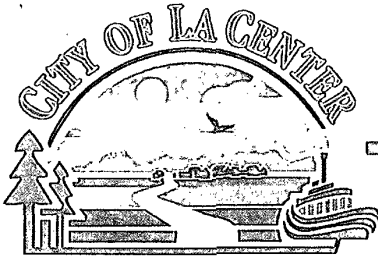
**From:** Elizabeth Decker [<mailto:edecker@jetplanning.net>]  
**Sent:** Monday, June 23, 2014 11:03 AM  
**To:** Tilton, Rebecca  
**Subject:** La Center testimony for 6/24 BOCC hearing

Hi Rebecca,  
Please accept the attached testimony from the City of La Center for the 6/24 BOCC hearing on population and employment allocation for the 2016 Comprehensive Plan update.

Thank you,  
Elizabeth



Elizabeth Decker  
215 W 4th Street, #209  
Vancouver, WA 98660  
[503.705.3806](tel:503.705.3806)  
[edecker@jetplanning.net](mailto:edecker@jetplanning.net)



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214 East Fourth Street • La Center, WA 98629

June 24, 2014

Clark Board of County Commissioners  
P.O. Box 9810  
1300 Franklin Street,  
Vancouver, WA 98660-9810

*Re: Comprehensive Plan – 2016 Population and Employment Allocation*

Dear Commissioners:

The Board of County Commissioners proposed to adopt a new allocation for population and employment across Clark County for the next 20 years and has asked its city partners to weigh in on the issue. La Center appreciates the opportunity to weigh in on the allocation process. We request that the Board consider an allocation and supporting policies that make our community whole, allowing the City to maintain its existing Urban Growth Area (UGA) for residential land and allowing sufficient employment land to support a balanced community.

In 2007, the City of La Center committed to expanding its UGA to accommodate an anticipated 2024 population of 9,827 residents. This represented significant growth of 7,387 people over the existing population, a nearly four-fold increase. The City worked with property owners who were brought into the UGA, and those property owners now have legitimate expectations about the future development potential of their property. Since 2007, the City has made significant investments in infrastructure to support the planned population growth. The City has completed a \$12.8 million expansion to the wastewater treatment plant to triple the sewer capacity to serve growth, much of it financed through bonds. The City has made a good faith effort to plan for the future, putting its money where its mouth is, and we do not believe it makes sense to roll back the clock. We are concerned that the proposed 2035 population allocation, which is lower than the 2024 population allocation, could have unknown consequences related to reducing the size of the UGA.

We request that the population allocation be adjusted and supported by policies that allow the La Center's UGA to remain whole, to support the legitimate expectations of property owners and capitalize on the infrastructure investments already completed by the City. We thank the Board and staff for addressing the issue through an additional Principles & Values statement that affirms, "Respect cities' investment in capital facilities by maintaining the 2007 urban growth boundaries." Additionally, we request:

- A population allocation of 4,338 people, which is equal to the existing UGA capacity and allows the City to retain the extent of the current UGA.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> County VBLM analysis shows capacity for 4,772 people in the existing UGA, adjusted to allow for a 10% market factor, resulting in requested population allocation of 4,338. Total 2035 population would be 7,501.



- An additional County-wide plan policy in Section 1.1 of the existing Land Use Element. Suggested Policy 1.1.4: "Land designated as part of an Urban Growth Area shall remain in the Urban Growth Area to ensure orderly provision of public services and rational development expectations. Clark County shall not compel an individual city to remove land designated for the Urban Growth Area, though a City may elect to remove land at its discretion."

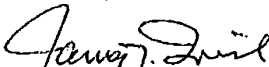
We need your help through the employment allocation process as well to ensure that we can be made whole again, and provide the needed employment lands to support balanced job growth in our community. For nearly two decades, throughout the GMA planning process, La Center has never wavered from its goal of creating a robust employment base in our downtown core and at the I-5 interchange. In 2007, the County expanded our UGA to encompass both sides of the La Center I-5 Junction. Subsequently the City lost nearly three-quarters of our employment lands from our Junction area UGA as a result of a court decision. We are left with 46.3 net buildable acres of commercial land and 48.9 net buildable acres of industrial land within our entire UGA, capable of supporting 1,367 jobs.

Our employment base is woefully inadequate to meet the 1.1 jobs to household ratio adopted by the Board of County Commissioners. As presented in Issue Paper #4, La Center would be the only jurisdiction under the proposed 2035 employment allocation unable to meet the jobs to household ratio. The Board has affirmed its commitment to balanced job growth in La Center and across the County in its Principles and Values, including Employment Lands principle #1, "Equalize land allocation and jobs/population ratio so that cities have equitable share of jobs – diverse tax base." We ask that you help rectify La Center's employment lands shortfall and implement your adopted principles to:

- Approve an increased employment allocation of 2,120 jobs, which implements the 1.1 jobs to household ratio for the projected 2035 population.<sup>2</sup>
- Support a minor expansion of our UGA at the I-5 La Center interchange for job creation based on the employment allocation and the City's work to justify the expansion.
- Reaffirm the County's commitment to La Center detailed in Clark County County-Wide Plan Policy 1.1.19, to add additional industrial land to the La Center UGA as an out-of-cycle plan amendment if a Tribal Casino is located adjacent to the City limits.<sup>3</sup>

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

  
James T. Irish, Mayor  
City of La Center

<sup>2</sup> Net allocation of 2,120 jobs calculated based on 2035 population of 7,501 at 2.66 persons per household and 1.1 jobs per household, less 981 existing jobs. Existing jobs based on data from 2008 La Center Comprehensive Plan.

<sup>3</sup> 1.1.19 An additional 120 acres +/- of industrial land –located west of Interstate 5 and east of 41st Avenue, and south of 309th Street and north of 299th Street – shall be added to the La Center Urban Area as an out-of-cycle subarea amendment if the United States government recognizes a new tribal reservation within the La Center Urban Area.