

O'Donnell, Mary Beth



CP16#0249

From: Niten, Jeff
Sent: Wednesday, August 27, 2014 3 19 PM
To: O'Donnell, Mary Beth
Subject: FW: CREDC Comments on Clark County Economic Development Policies
Attachments: CREDCClarkCountyEcDevPoliciesFeedbackFINAL.pdf; Lands for Jobs recommendations-1-10-12 pdf

For the record

Jeff Niten
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Vancouver, WA 98666
360-397-2280 x 4909

From: Mike Bomar [<mailto:MBomar@credc.org>]
Sent: Thursday, August 21, 2014 3:14 PM
To: Niten, Jeff
Cc: Swanson, Jeff
Subject: CREDC Comments on Clark County Economic Development Policies

Hi Jeff,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments. I have also attached our Board approved Lands for Jobs Committee recommendations for your reference. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Best,

Mike Bomar
President
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805 Broadway Ste 412 | Vancouver, WA 98660 | credc.org



Clark County Economic Development Council



Wednesday, August 20, 2014

Clark County
Attn: Jeff Niten
PO Box 9810
Vancouver, WA 98668-1995

Mr. Niten:

Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to provide comments on the proposed Economic Development Policies for the 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update. The Columbia River Economic Development Council (CREDC) is a public private partnership focused on accelerating business growth and innovation in Clark County. The CREDC is the lead organization responsible for implementing the 2011 Clark County Economic Development Plan that was adopted by Clark County and local municipalities.

In response to your request for feedback, the draft policy document was sent to our Lands for Job Committee with an opportunity for the group to provide individual feedback on the policy to be considered for this letter. The committee is made up of both public and private CREDC partners including representatives from land use consulting firms, contractors, local ports, Clark County, and the City of Vancouver.

Our feedback and recommendations are as follows in no particular order:

1. Background and Context –

- a. We recommend updating Clark County's unemployment rate to the most current figure available at the time of implementation.
- b. We recommend incorporating the **2011 Clark County Economic Development Plan** as a guiding document for these policies.
- c. The policies should frame Clark County's position in the Greater Portland Metropolitan Statistical Area, highlighting both the advantages of the region along with the competitive factors.

2. The County's Role –

- a. The CREDC supports the desire to partner with various organizations engaged in economic development:

"The County has significant indirect effects on economic development. This is primarily through partnerships such as with the Columbia River Economic Development Council (CREDC), Southwest Washington Workforce Development Council (SWWDC), Vancouver USA Regional Tourism Office, chambers of commerce, ports and other jurisdictional relationships. Through cultivation of these relationships and extensive, ongoing public engagement, Clark County will develop and maintain an economic development vision and pursue it with strategy, discipline, and intentionality."

Currently, Clark County does not currently have a formal contract with the CREDC. We support a formal partnership that provides the CREDC with resources to assist the County in meeting its economic development goals while creating efficiencies through other municipalities' contributions, grant funding, and investment from the private sector.

- b. The County also plays a significant role in legislative matters impacting the County, its cities and the region. This should be noted under the "The County's Role" section.

3. Objectives –

- a. The CREDC appreciates and supports the focus on economic diversification, human well-being and opportunity, and a holistic, strategic approach, particularly the focused public investment areas (FPIA's) referred to under (3)d. This effort should be integrated with the County's Economic Development Plan being implemented in partnership with the CREDC.
- b. We recommend adding to (3) the following: (e) Develop partnerships with other public agencies that can positively impact planning and implementation of strategic land-for-job infrastructure and development.

4. Guiding Principles –

- a. (1) Only focusing on middle income, middle skill employment opportunities falls short of the County's potential for sustainable economic development. The principles should recognize the "top" and "bottom" of every industry cluster (as it pertains to skill and wage).
- b. The CREDC supports a focus on traded sector jobs, "Focusing on traded sectors, attracting new investment, and creating opportunities to export products and services across the globe".
- c. (3) A small, strong and simple economic development program is effective as long as there are strong partnerships with local and regional economic development interests.
- d. Focusing on the needs and expansion opportunities for existing businesses would be a solid strategy that would lead to the largest economic gain. The County should work with partners to develop a needs assessment of existing businesses to be incorporated in to planning documents.

5. Planning Goals and Policies –

- a. We recommend a full, qualitative analysis of industrial land. The 2011 inventory survey completed by Mackenzie for CREDC was never taken to the next level of in-depth analysis and is now outdated—some of those "sites" would be better repurposed as park land, wetland, etc.
- b. The CREDC supports the goals and policies listed in this section that promote an adequate supply of industrial and commercial lands and limits the conversion from industrial to commercial without sufficient criteria limiting such activity to those sites with little to no present or future potential to develop.
- c. We support the goal to provide a continuum of educational opportunities responsive to the changing needs of the work place locally and regionally. It is unclear, however, in this document what the County's role would be in that effort.

- d. We also support policies that provide for long term preservation of key industrial sites using tools such as a rural industrial land bank.
- e. Policies 2.5 and 5.1 can be revised to better stress the importance of workforce development and education. Key leaders in the K-20 system should be engaged to provide feedback on their needs as it relates to creating better connections between educational institutions and private industry.
- f. Land supply policies should reflect the need for a certain character/type/size/location desired by target industries, not just an aggregate acreage target. Policies 3.1 and 4.1 can be revised to better address a more strategic and targeted approach to ensuring that land is available to accommodate the various types of target sector employers identified in the economic development plan.
- g. E.D. 4.3 / 4.4 – We recommend moving design guidelines and community appearance to a different policy section as it is more of an indirect benefit than a tool for economic development.

6. Technical Appendix –

- a. The jobs numbers listed are not current. We would recommend contacting referencing total jobs by target sector (from the 2011 Economic Development Plan) rather than listing employment for individual companies.
- b. If the intent of this section is to highlight the County's high employment sectors, there appears to be some missing key sectors, most notably, construction and development. The County should consider largest employers vs. target industries depending on the purpose of including the data.

Sincerely,



Mike Bomar, CREDC President

Attachments: 2012 Land for Jobs Committee Recommended Policies



Eric Fuller
Eric Fuller Inc., President,
CREDC Board Chair

Lisa Nisenfeld
CREDC, President

Helen Devery
BergerABAM, Vice President,
CREDC Executive Board Member





Lands for Jobs Committee

Helen Devery (Chair), BergerABAM

Sierk Braam, Norris, Beggs & Simpson

Carol Curtis, Commissioner, Clark Public Utilities

Bob Durgan, Andersen Construction

Mark Feichtinger, Steel Rives LLP

Eric Fuller, Eric Fuller & Associates

Brent Grening, Port of Ridgefield

Bryan Halbert, Schlecht Construction

Garret Harper, Norris, Beggs, & Simpson

Steve Hill, Miller Nash

Steve Horenstein, Miller Nash

Alan Hughes, Maul Foster & Alongi

Todd Johnson, Group Mackenzie

Mark Lampton, Port of Camas-Washougal

Tim McMahan, Steel Rives LLP

Steve Morasch, Schwabe, Williamson & Wyatt

Scott Nyseth, Miyamoto International

Jerry Olson, Olson Engineering

Dennis Pavlina, The Gold Medal Group

Alisa Pyszka, City of Vancouver

Kelly Sills, Clark County

Technical Advisory Group (TAG)

Brent Grening, (Chair), Port of Ridgefield

Helen Devery, BergerABAM

Todd Johnson, Group Mackenzie

Mike Mabrey, Clark County

Jerry Olson, Olson Engineering

Curtis Shuck, Port of Vancouver

Alisa Pyszka, City of Vancouver





Committee Goals and Process

Committee Goal & Goal # 5 Clark County Economic Development Plan:

- Determine how Clark County can meet its current and future employment lands needs and how the CREDC should be involved in ensuring that sufficient developable land is available for new job creation within the community.

Process:

- Inventory available lands, opportunities, and constraints.
- Use inventory to develop recommendations for the CREDC to implement.
- TAG developed inventory and draft recommendations.
- Lands for Jobs Committee, public jurisdictions, and CREDC to review recommendations.





Lands for Jobs Inventory

- Base information from Clark County's June 2010 Vacant Buildable Lands Model (VBLM) and GIS data
- VBLM – Clark County planning tool developed to analyze residential, commercial, and industrial lands
- Port properties are not included in VBLM
- Committee contacted ports and included vacant land details
- Using VBLM, County split into eight subareas
- Initial screen - properties with minimum of 20 acres (size determined to be regionally significant in terms of generating employment)
- Within the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB)
- Zoned appropriately
- Unconstrained
- Contiguous (not necessarily under single ownership)

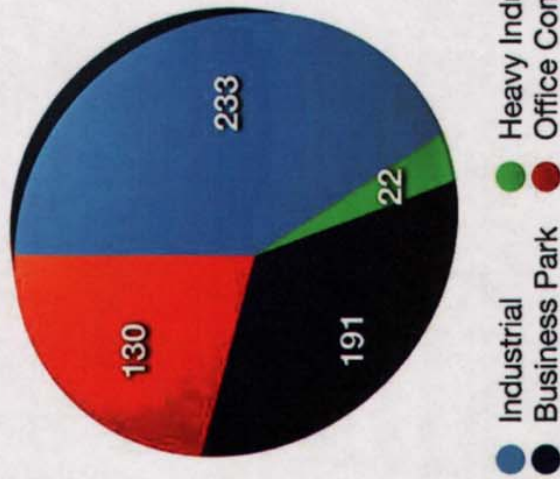


Draft Results

- 70 potentially developable sites - 20 acres or larger
- Using GIS data and TAG members' knowledge - 70 sites screened for development readiness
- Scoring criteria applied
 - common ownership
 - size
 - constrained environmentally
 - water
 - sewer
 - arterial access
- 3 levels of development readiness
 - 0-18 months
 - 18-36 months
 - + 36 months

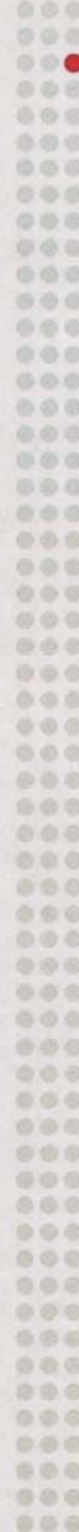


Acreage per Zone 13 Sites



Key Issues

- Limited shovel ready land
 - 13 sites
 - 576 acres
 - development ready 0-18 months
 - constraints - infrastructure, ownership
- Need to increase shovel ready land
- CREDC focus on lands for jobs



1. Lands for Jobs Committee

The CREDC needs to work to ensure that there is sufficient readily developable land available for job creation in Clark County by:



Draft Recommendations



1. Lands for Jobs Committee, continued

- Making the **Lands for Jobs Committee a standing CREDC committee.**
- Developing a work plan to address Committee recommendations to track and respond to land, zoning, and UGB changes.
- Developing conceptual layouts for the 13 most readily developable sites which could be provided to site selectors.
- Tracking new market credits to determine whether these could be applied to industrial land.
- Assigning a CREDC staff member to the Committee as a resource. Responsibilities for the CREDC staff member should be defined and should include keeping up to date on changing regulatory and policy issues related to lands for jobs and providing updates and suggested direction to the Committee.
- **Including a report on lands for jobs in the CREDC annual report.**



Draft Recommendations



2. Zoning/Permitting/Urban Growth Boundary

In the short term, zoning, permitting, and regulatory changes have positive and negative effects on the development readiness of land within Clark County. In the longer term, the UGB will define which areas provide potential opportunities for new lands for jobs. The CREDC should be influential in working with the community as coherent choices are made about the supply and availability of lands for jobs and the investment strategy needed to ensure their availability and readiness. This will be particularly important during future Urban Growth Area revisions. A local example of positive policy change is the fast track permitting program that was recently developed for projects of state-wide significance in Oregon. The CREDC needs to fully engage in land use policy, zoning, permitting, and UGB issues by:

Draft Recommendations



2. Zoning/Permitting/Urban Growth Boundary, continued

- Working with jurisdictions to ensure that zoning codes provide flexibility, particularly within industrial and mixed-use districts to preserve their use for lands for jobs.
- Working with jurisdictions as zoning codes are updated to ensure that lands for jobs are protected.
- Working with state and local agencies to determine opportunities for **expeditious and pre-permitting of properties**.
- Working with jurisdictions to simplify and expedite permit processing timelines.
- Implementing a standing subcommittee to track and advocate zoning/code revisions that could affect lands for jobs.
- Working with Clark County as future decisions on the UGB are made. When the Growth Management Act process is revisited, the CREDC should be at the table to advocate for lands for jobs.
- Working with Clark County to bring current urban holding lands into the UGB.

Draft Recommendations



3. Infrastructure

The Lands for Jobs Committee noted that to encourage new job growth, we need to lead with infrastructure which is often constrained by our pay-as-you-go policy. For example, of the 13 readily developable sites within the inventory, 5 are in Ridgefield which is constrained by regional sewer capacity in north Clark County. The CREDC should be involved in developing creative and cost-effective solutions by:



Draft Recommendations



3. Infrastructure, continued

- **Advocating for infrastructure investment** including new roads, rail, bridges, and utilities within the county.
- Working with public agencies to advocate and obtain **funding for key infrastructure** projects within the community, particularly for properties which could become shovel-ready and add to the available lands for jobs as a result.
- Advocating for **creative solutions to infrastructure needs**. (A good example is the non-gravity sewer system solution that made available lands for jobs in the City of Camas during the 1990s.)
- Advocating for a **solution to the regional sewer discussions** on-going in Ridgefield. A solution that is cost efficient and can be implemented within the short term is required.



Draft Recommendations



4. Lands for Jobs Inventory

The Lands for Jobs inventory is a useful tool which took significant staff and volunteer time to prepare and review. The CREDC now has a good source for information about land within Clark County. Since land is bought and sold and infrastructure opportunities and constraints change constantly, the inventory should be seen as a living document and should be kept up to date by:

Draft Recommendations



4. Lands for Jobs Inventory, continued

- Assigning a CREDC staff member to ensure that the **inventory is updated regularly.**
- Encouraging ongoing input about buildings into the inventory.
- Developing a useable and efficient **tool to track project demand** by property, size, and type.



Draft Recommendations



5. Industrial Land

Of the 70 sites larger than 20 acres in the inventory, only 13 are potentially ready for development and only 7 of these are zoned for industrial use. The Plan notes that sites, including Centennial Industrial Park (Vancouver), 199th Street Industrial Area (Battle Ground), Ridgefield Industrial Park and Discovery Pointe (Ridgefield), and Camas Meadows (Camas), could be available for development in the short term. The Lands for Jobs Committee has concluded that there is a critical need to ensure an adequate supply of industrial land and the CREDC should be an advocate for this by:

Draft Recommendations



5. Industrial Land, continued

- Increasing the inventory of industrial land in the county.
- Ensuring that industrial lands within the 18-month timeframe remain ready for development and those within the 18-36 month timeframe can be made shovel-ready.
- Advocating for the preservation of industrial zoning/comprehensive plan designations.
- Encouraging retention of larger parcel sizes which are essential to this sector.
- **Supporting Clark County ports which are critical in ensuring an adequate supply of industrial land.**
- **Advocating that Clark County ports work together to land bank industrial land for the future, within and outside existing port boundaries.**
- **Supporting Clark County ports in buying and aggregating land, developing infrastructure, and selling/leasing industrial land in the county.**
- **Supporting Clark County ports in obtaining financing to purchase and develop heavy industrial lands.**
- Working with the City of Vancouver and Clark County to determine whether there are existing light industrially zoned properties that could be used for heavy industry.

Draft Recommendations



6. Commercial Office/Business Park

The Lands for Jobs Committee concluded that the retail sector is well represented in the community. However, the CREDC should be forward-thinking and recognize that future job growth in Clark County is likely to result from new office and business parks in sectors such as software development, healthcare, and professional services. The inventory indicates that only 3 sites larger than 20 acres and zoned for business park use are potentially ready for development within 18 months. For commercial office/business parks, the CREDC should be:



Draft Recommendations



6. Commercial Office/Business Park, continued

- Increasing the inventory of shovel-ready lands for employment office/business parks in the county.
- Supporting Vancouver, Ridgefield, and Camas/Washougal as appropriate land for waterfront mixed-use development is purchased, planned, and developed.
- Ensuring that commercial office business park lands within the 18-month timeframe remain ready for development and those within the 18–36 month timeframe can be made shovel-ready.
- **Refocusing on ensuring that land in the Discovery Corridor is developable for new office and business park uses.**
- **Working with educational institutions to find land for business parks, readily accessible to WSU Vancouver to leverage research and development opportunities.**

Draft Recommendations



Next Steps

- **October** – **November 2011** – Lands for Jobs Committee review of inventory and recommendations
- **November** – **December 2011** – CREDC Executive Committee and Board to review and approve
- **October** – **December 2011** – CREDC review land inventory with each public jurisdiction and ports
- **January 2012** – Roll out to community

