

**Schroader, Kathy**

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**From:** NoReply@Clark.Wa.Gov  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 17, 2014 11:32 AM  
**To:** Cnty 2016 Comp Plan  
**Subject:** 2016 Comp Plan comments submitted



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**Subject:** 2016 Comp Plan Update

**Comments:**

Dear Clark County Commissioners,

It is with great excitement that I share my ideas about the Comprehensive Plan Update in 2016. What an exciting opportunity you have to help shape Clark County's future for many years to come and to help preserve, promote, and protect this beautiful place we call home.

Many will come forward during the process to say that "agriculture is dead" in Clark County, and request that you change the plan to allow expansion into now rural areas and to rezone agricultural land for development. Please remember that the plan is not about what is best for individual landowners, who stand to gain financially from such rezoning, but what is best for all of the citizens in Clark County.

In 2009, the USDA reported that agriculture contributed \$52.69 million annually to Clark County's economy. Agriculture is far from dead, it is thriving and growing! Right in Portland's backyard, we not only have the perfect conditions for agriculture, we also have access to a market very interested in buying locally grown food and ag products. Portland is practically ground zero for the local food movement, as their busy farmer's markets clearly show. Opportunities for Clark County farmers to sell to that market are only beginning to be tapped, and there is much room for growth ahead.

As you consider the Comprehensive Growth Plan, I would urge you to look across the river at what Portland has done. Their approach to the urban growth boundary is recognized nationally for its innovative forward thinking that has created one of the most desirable places to live and work in the country.

We are part of that metro area. Our Comprehensive Growth Plan could adopt these proven practices and complete the circle. Adopting a tight urban growth boundary model encourages regentrification over sprawl. There are many areas already within the urban growth boundary that are currently very underutilized. They are close in, have existing infrastructure, and easy freeway access. This is where growth and (re)development should occur, not further and further out in rural areas.

Such a model ensures there are clearly defined spaces for commerce, industry, residential, and agricultural use rather than conflicting uses.

The Pearl District is a perfect example of how Portland's urban growth boundary encouraged regentrification of an area filled with abandoned warehouses and turned it into some of the most valuable real estate in the area. The same could happen for Vancouver, Hazel Dell, and other parts of Clark County.

In the process, Clark County's agricultural areas would also be preserved, protected, and promoted at their highest and best use.

In short, rather than continue to be Portland's bedroom community, providing lower cost housing for people who work and shop in Portland, Clark County can become a fully functioning and integrated part of the Portland metro area, complete with a thriving economy, places to work, dine, and shop, things to see and do on this side of the river, including beautiful rural spaces filled with a thriving agricultural and agrotorism industry.

You have the power to ensure Clark County does not turn into urban sprawl from Vancouver to Woodland. Please remember, the decisions you make while updating the Comprehensive Growth Plan in 2016 will either promote or prevent it.

Most sincerely,  
Michele Bloomquist

Submitted by:  
Michele Bloomquist

Email: [michelebloomquist@gmail.com](mailto:michelebloomquist@gmail.com)

Address:  
27904 NE 174th Ave  
Battle Ground, WA