

Schroader, Kathy



From: Orjiako, Oliver
Sent: Thursday, September 17, 2015 12:09 PM
To: Euler, Gordon; Alvarez, Jose; Anderson, Colete
Cc: Schroader, Kathy
Subject: FW: Letter re GMA Comp Plan Update from BIA, CCAR and ICC
Attachments: GMA ltr for BIA, CCAR and ICC.pdf

FYI and for the record. Thanks.

From: Lisa McKee [<mailto:lisa.mckee@jordanramis.com>]
Sent: Thursday, September 17, 2015 12:06 PM
To: Cnty 2016 Comp Plan; Cnty Board of County Councilors General Delivery; Orjiako, Oliver
Cc: 'Avaly Scarpelli'; 'michele@ccrealtors.com'; 'Carrie Leder'; 'John McKibbin'; Jamie Howsley; Joseph Schaefer; Peter Watts
Subject: Letter re GMA Comp Plan Update from BIA, CCAR and ICC

Hello,

Attached is a letter on behalf of the Building Industry Association of Clark County, the Clark County Association of Realtors and Identity Clark County.

If you have any trouble opening the attachment please let us know.

Thank you.

LISA McKEE | Legal Assistant to James D. Howsley
Jordan Ramis PC | Attorneys at Law
Direct: 360-567-3909 Main: 360-567-3900

Portland OR | Vancouver WA | Bend OR
www.jordanramis.com



September 17, 2015

Dear Chair Madore, Councilor Mielke and Councilor Stewart:

On behalf of the undersigned business organizations we respectfully request that the Board take swift action to hit pause on the current Growth Management Act (GMA) Comprehensive Plan update. We believe that the circumstances have radically changed within Clark County since the start of the update process and a reset is needed. We believe that a reset, if requested, will be granted and may provide a better opportunity for Clark County to meet the housing and employment needs of its residents over the next twenty years.

The current trajectory of the plan sets up a divide between the urban and rural areas that is unnecessary. The business community understands and empathizes with many of the issues raised by rural property owners in this process, but by planning for the likely growth that will come to this community the rural issues can be addressed without impacting the land necessary to grow housing and jobs on.

Lands for Jobs

Clark County and its cities continue to blossom with positive employment growth after the end of the recession. But the new Comprehensive Plan is as much about the next twenty years as it is about present conditions. Clark County should not let the positive economic forces at work flounder by not having enough land set aside for employment over the next twenty years.

Clark County remains uniquely positioned in the Portland/Vancouver Metropolitan area to receive a disproportionate share of employment growth. Washington's tax structure along with the County's business ready attitude lends itself to ensnaring businesses that want to create their own change of circumstances. New employers continue to seek refuge here moving in from out of state while many of the existing businesses continue to thrive, expand, and drive our community forward.

Clark County's distinct advantage over its neighbors in Oregon is large acreage parcels ready to accommodate future sizable employers. But with each success story the supply line dwindles further. Having an adequate supply of land is necessary to ensure that our community remains attractive to employers.

We strongly believe that the assumptions currently being used in this planning process, primarily the population forecast and market factor remain woefully low to accommodate what is likely to happen in the next twenty years. Clark County should remain the County of opportunity. And by addressing the flawed assumptions, it does not have to be a choice between rural or urban interests.

Housing

An affordable and well built housing stock works as another tool to attract quality employees. Employers want their employees to be happy in their communities and home ownership percentages are often a very important gauge to determine the health of a community.

Again we should proceed cautiously when planning for a twenty year horizon and make sure that we get the fundamental assumptions correct. If we under-plan we run the risk of creating market conditions where housing no longer is affordable for the employees we need to further business in the County.

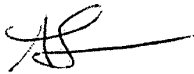
Legislative Reset

In addition to the demographic and economic changes occurring since the start of the GMA update process, the County also passed a Charter. As this Board is well aware, this will drastically change the structure of County government.

These unique sets of conditions glimmer with opportunity to ask the Washington legislature in 2016 to delay and reset the County's obligation to adopt a Comprehensive Plan by June 2016. We believe that with a unified community as signified by the partners signed onto this letter we can postpone adoption of a plan to examine the fundamentals of this plan and ensure that we do in fact have enough land in the right places to accommodate job and population growth.

We therefore respectfully request that this Board strongly consider the reset option.

Respectfully,



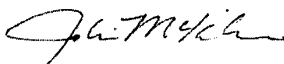
Avaly Scarpelli
Executive Director
BIA of Clark County

Respectfully,



Janice Hall
President
Clark County Assoc. of Realtors

Respectfully,



John McKibbin
President
Identity Clark County