

Anderson, Colete



From: Kerri Altom <kerrialtom@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 17, 2015 4:09 PM
To: Cnty 2016 Comp Plan
Subject: Comprehensive Plan Comments, resending.

Attn: Oliver Orajako

Please note, I am resending this email as I did not receive a confirmation when I sent this second set of comments about 10 minutes ago. The original of this WAS send within the public comment period, but I believe an electronic error may have occurred. Please do submit these comments for the public record. Thanks, Kerri

I am writing in opposition to Alternative 4 on the grounds that it contradicts the letter and spirit of the law. The Washington State Growth Management Act asks us to budget responsibly for our growth by designating supplies of land, water and other resources reasonably matched to demand. Proper implementation of the GMA should provide for our best economic interests. Alternative 4 fails to do this.

Government is not supposed to be picking the winners and losers in our economy in general, and specifically in this case, a responsible government decision should not skew our community's housing marketplace. In the case of Alternative 4, our county government would add too many of the wrong lands to the market, making it relatively cheap and easy to build sprawling development on our farm and forest lands when the demand for close-in, urban housing is not being met.

I live in Fisher's Landing, a nicely planned community on the East side of Vancouver where we benefit from the wisdom of thoughtful community planning. We see a huge increase in demand for low maintenance homes with high density here and around our city, people looking for neighborhoods near schools with walking and biking options. I know families who have spent years pre-approved for a home loan, but living in nearby apartments, because they were hunting for a home close to their jobs in Columbia Tech Center. As we continue to build our base of high tech and new economy jobs, the demand and competition for close-in housing increases.

For families who want a big house with a yard, there is plenty of supply in Clark County. Those houses sit on the market for months. And that supply has for too long diluted the options for others who struggle to find homes with the amenities of a well-planned urban neighborhood. People of all ages and situations are eager to live in communities with sidewalks and bike paths near good schools, parks and restaurants.

Young couples, empty nesters, and even families with kids are opting for a different lifestyle. Many don't want to spend their weekends grooming a lawn, and they don't want to spend a fortune on tools and equipment. They want to walk to a local coffee shop, catch a bus to the Farmer's Market, or bike down to and along the river. They want to get to know their neighbors while watching their kids play together at the local park. They want to spend their weekends at soccer games, on family hikes, in the mountains or on the coast. To be mindful of the way these citizens choose to live and work, and to plan for and provide this type of housing and amenities is one of the best economic development decisions we could make at for our County's future. Investing in urban villages will position us to attract new businesses to locate here, and it will encourage our own homegrown businesses to stay here.

But Alternative 4 undermines this economic opportunity. Even though high density neighborhoods with small village cores are the housing of future. Even though Clark County is well positioned to create these housing and business options. And even though many of our local builders are eager to start providing these types of communities, it has been too slow to happen. As long as we're supplying huge tracts of greenfield land for development by national builders, we are undermining the economic equation. The higher density housing options are a bit more complicated to plan and permit, making it hard for our small local builders to compete as long as it's faster, easier and more profitable for builders to sprawl into our agricultural lands.

This is how opening rural lands for housing developments skews the marketplace- giving more power to the bigger players on the supply side and less power on the demand side of the economic equation. We have builders coming here from around the country, eager to gobble up our agricultural and forest lands, where they can plat out a grid of lots, build whatever floor plans they've been building for the last 10 years, and pocket some serious profits. Cheap and open rural land attracts these builders to come here and follow the plans they've executed across the rest of the country, which is greenfield development of subdivisions.

These subdivisions are the opposite of what our community needs right now. They don't make financial sense: they cost more in public services; and, they increase in taxable value at a slower rate than developments that are closer into towns and services. They don't provide the quality of life that the majority of families are looking for: sprawling subdivisions demand more time in our automobiles just to run errands or shuttle kids; commute times increase; and, all this time adds up. Families are desperate to reduce this time in our cars and spend it instead with our families, cooking meals together, walking the neighborhood, visiting with friends as our kids play together in the park.

Alternative 1 will best serve the financial interests of the citizens of Clark County. Looking at the economics of this decision, selecting Alternative 4 would be a case of our elected officials choosing short term personal profits for a few over the long term best financial interests of the majority in our community.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kerri Altom

Friends of Clark County

Board of Directors

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From: Kerri Altom <kerrialtom@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 17, 2015 3:55 PM
To: Cnty 2016 Comp Plan
Subject: Comprehensive Plan Comments

Attn: Oliver Orjiako

I am requesting that the following letter be part of the public record, as submitted within the public comment period for the Comprehensive Plan Update.

I am writing in opposition to Alternative 4 on the grounds that it contradicts the letter and spirit of the law. The Washington State Growth Management Act asks us to budget responsibly for our growth by designating supplies of land, water and other resources reasonably matched to demand. Proper implementation of the GMA should provide for our best economic interests. Alternative 4 fails to do this.

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