

Wiser, Sonja



From: Orjiako, Oliver
Sent: Monday, February 22, 2016 10:06 AM
To: Alvarez, Jose; Albrecht, Gary; Anderson, Colette; Euler, Gordon; Hermen, Matt; Kamp, Jacqueline; Lebowsky, Laurie; Lumbantobing, Sharon; Wiser, Sonja; Schroader, Kathy
Cc: Cook, Christine
Subject: FW: United States Census definition of rural and urban - For the Public Record and the 2016 Comprehensive Plan update

FYI and for the record. Thanks.

From: Carol Levanen [<mailto:cnldental@yahoo.com>]
Sent: Sunday, February 21, 2016 10:57 PM
To: Olson, Julie (Assessment); Mielke, Tom; Stewart, Jeanne; Madore, David; Boldt, Marc; Orjiako, Oliver
Subject: United States Census definition of rural and urban - For the Public Record and the 2016 Comprehensive Plan update

Dear Councilors,

2. U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, Office of Rural Health

What is Rural? <http://www.ruralhealth.va.gov/about/rural-veterans.asp> (link is external)

"At this time, the Department of Veterans Affairs utilizes the US Census Bureau's definition for "Urban", "Rural" and "Highly Rural".

- Urban Area: Census Bureau-defined urbanized area, which is any block or block group having a population density of at least 1000 people per square mile.
- Rural Area: Any non-urban or non-highly rural area
- Highly Rural Area: An area having < 7 civilians per square mile."

The United States Census Bureau definition for Rural is a population of less than 1000 persons per square mile. Highly Rural is having less than 7 persons per square mile. One square mile is 640 square acres. Divide 640 sq. acres by 999 people equals .64 acres (a little more than 1/2 acre). Multiply that times 2.66 persons per household, equals 1.7 acres, otherwise approximately an acre and a half. The United States Post Office, and the Department of Defense uses this same definition from the US Census Bureau to determine rural locations and populations as well. State and federal agencies also use this definition when approving grants and financial assistance for rural programs.

If Clark County is using these definitions to receive financial aid from federal and state governments for rural area funding, it would seem compelling that they also should be used to determine rural zoning and development. The GMA says counties should consider local circumstances, predominant parcel size, and existing rural character, when considering zoning for rural areas. The courts have said there is no bright line density for rural and resource land and an OFM formula cannot be used to determine rural density and development. Furthermore, that formula cannot be used as a cap on rural growth in the county.

The Preferred Alternative, adopted on November 24, 2015, stays cleanly away from these smaller rural parcels, excepting existing cluster development lots, where they already exist. In addition, it obeys the

GMA when it does not allow or require urban infrastructure and services. The existing Preferred Alternative responds to court orders by recognizing existing development that occurred prior to 1994. It considers and responds to meaningful public input and testimony while allowing for a variety of housing types and economic growth in rural and resource areas. Even though the agricultural and forest soils continue to be questionable and need further scrutiny under the GMA, the parcel sizes in each zone of the current Preferred Alternative, more accurately reflects historical rural and resource land development, and the character of rural and resource land in Clark County. The Alternative recognizes the reality of existing parcelization and complies with the law. Therefore, the November 24, 2015 Preferred Alternative, adopted by the Board of Councilors should not be changed and should move forward for FSEIS review.

Sincerely

Carol Levanen, Ex. Secretary

Clark County Citizens United, Inc.

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