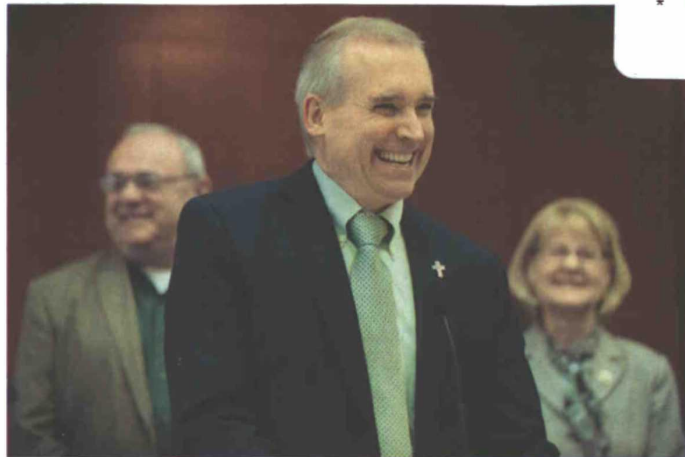


County council may adopt no-bid contract for growth plan



([http://www.columbian.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/101889 Gary Bickett retires 154.jpg](http://www.columbian.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/101889_Gary_Bickett_retires_154.jpg))

The Clark County council is expected to discuss more on the Clark County Comprehensive Growth Management Plan update at 1:30 p.m. today during Board Time.

By **Katie Gillespie** (</author/katiegillespie>), Columbian County Government Reporter
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Republican Councilor David Madore has been on a mission all year to make as many changes as possible to Clark County's Comprehensive Growth Management Plan update.



Tuesday night was no exception.

At a meeting that ran until approximately 11 p.m., the county council voted 2-1 to spend another \$65,000 on the 20-year growth plan. That's \$235,000 less than the county budget office's original recommendation of \$300,000. Madore spearheaded the effort and was joined by Republican Tom Mielke. Republican Councilor Jeanne Stewart voted no after pressing Madore several times for more details but receiving no information.

The county council also approved, again by a vote of 2-1 with Stewart dissenting, a \$5,000 agreement with planning firm R.W. Thorpe and Associates. In return, the Mercer Island-based firm will give a pitch to county planning staff and the county council today regarding what it can offer toward the development of the county's comprehensive plan update.

Afterward, the council could approve a contract with R.W. Thorpe to develop the final environmental impact statement without sending it through a public process. Doing so, however, would violate an internal county policy.

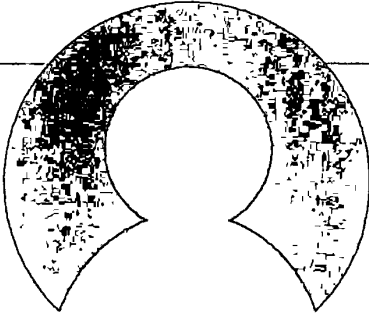
State law only requires that contracts go through a bidding process if they are for telecommunications or IT services, but internal county policy is to go out for bid for contracts estimated to at least \$25,000. The council could vote to waive that policy.

"It's not the thing that we like to do, but there are circumstances that kind of dictate it," county purchasing manager Mike Westerman said.

Another contractor previously drew up a draft EIS at a cost of \$141,000, with input from the county's planning staff. Madore bypassed the staff and prepared his own plan, which he and Mielke have approved.

Madore also asked county staff to implement a policy adopted last week that prohibits any documents not published by the county council or staff from being posted on the planning website as growth plan reports. Madore cited as an example the county's Growing Healthier Report. He criticized its references to public transportation and global warming, and said it promotes "collectivism."

That report was developed by county health and planning staff. The 86-page report describes the connection between the built environment and community health, and offers recommendations for planning policy to promote healthy living in Clark County. County staff started working on the plan in 2010, and the former Board of Clark County Commissioners voted to adopt it as a chapter of the growth plan update in 2012.



[Katie Gillespie \(/author/katiegillespie\)](#)

Columbian County Government Reporter

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