



# Clark County council OKs \$45,000 contract with land-use firm

It will write a report for growth management plan



[http://www.columbian.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/madore\\_mielke\\_stewart25-1024x658.jpg](http://www.columbian.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/madore_mielke_stewart25-1024x658.jpg)

By **Katie Gillespie (/author/katiegillespie)**, Columbian County Government Reporter

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The Clark County council unanimously approved a \$45,000 contract with a Mercer Island-based land-use firm to add an additional chapter to its 20-year growth plan.



R.W. Thorpe and Associates will write a report to be added to the environmental impact statement of Clark County's Comprehensive Growth Management Plan update, analyzing whether planning assumptions written and proposed by Clark County Councilor David Madore are based in fact.

"There's an opportunity, maybe, to help, but my caveat is I don't want to step on or over the consultants," firm principal Robert Thorpe said last week.

The contract was publicly proposed by Madore last week, and he said Tuesday that it will provide an additional tool for county staff in the environmental review process.

"We're doing well," Madore said. "We're moving in the right direction."

Madore's planning assumptions, which significantly reduce the number of lots considered likely to develop and therefore use county resources, have only been applied to his own controversial zoning alternative Alternative 4, which Madore proposed earlier this year, would allow for smaller allowed lot sizes for many rural landowners in unincorporated Clark County

According to the professional services agreement the council approved Tuesday, R W. Thorpe and Associates will review Madore's planning assumptions and determine whether it's valid to apply them to rural areas at all. If the assumptions are determined factually accurate, the firm will work with county staff to review and apply them to three staff-prepared alternatives to the growth plan. If assumptions are determined to be invalid, Madore's Alternative 4 will be revised

The firm will weigh in on whether the assumptions are valid later this month, with the draft addendum slated to be published by Clark County in late February. There will be opportunity for the public to comment on the addendum after it is released.

The document will be added as a chapter of the environmental impact statement prepared by Seattle-based Environmental Science Associates.

"We believe this is a defensible way to go forward with the changes in assumptions and the changes in Alt 4 that were adopted by the council," Deputy Prosecutor Christine Cook said.

Susan Rasmussen, president of rural property owners group Clark County Citizens United, praised the council for pursuing the addition to the comprehensive plan. She said there are "falsified claims" and "bias" in the existing environmental review, and urged the council to take steps to correct it.

"The rural folks deserve an honest (environmental impact statement)," Rasmussen said.

Meanwhile, Bridget McLeman, a frequent critic of the county council, said she's concerned the new consultant will only further draw out an already delayed process.

"I just think we're just spinning it out time after time to see how we can wiggle out of the process," McLeman said. "It concerns me because I think it's a waste of money."

The county must have its growth plan update completed and accepted by the state Department of Commerce by June 30. County staff have expressed concern at multiple points throughout the process that it may miss that deadline due to the many late additions to the plan, which would render the county ineligible for state grants and funding.



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9 Comments

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**John M. Kowalski** · Camas, Washington

If Thorpe has integrity they will in fact find that Madore's numbers are absurd. If Madore had a background in mathematics - which he doesn't - he'd know how badly he was lying. But we're not lucky to have county councilors educated beyond high school.

Reply · 16 mins



**Thom Rasmussen** · Salmon Creek, Washington

I'd love it if Thorpe came up with totally different numbers. Then Madore would have to hire yet another company.

Reply · 48 mins



**Bridget Schwarz** · Ridgefield, Washington

Tomorrow (Wednesday) the 2 consultant firms meet - together - with Long Range planning. Let's hope everybody at the table is reasonable and ethical.

Reply ·  3 · 8 hrs



**Michele Wollert**

Well, ESA of Seattle, the first consultant, has documentation of Madore's attempted interference, inspired by CC Citizens United complaints, with their objective process. He left them voice mail messages which, thanks to an FOIA request, can be heard on the county's public records portal. The ESA reps did not respond to him. And RW Thorpe asserted they are ethical. Both consultants would suffer reputation loss if their opinions could be manipulated by the entity hiring them.

How many times has Madore believed he was right, only to be disappointed by outside eyes and ears on his assertions/assumptions? Think of those failed lawsuits against C-Tran (and the \$25,000 of tax payer money wasted on legal opinion that did not go his way.)

Thorpe was hired to appease CCCU. That's OK, I guess. We all look forward to reading their opinion and recommendations.

Reply ·  1 · 47 mins · Edited



**Fran Hammond** · Vancouver, Washington

Based on the fact that we already had an agreement or contract with Environmental Science Associates, I would assume that the information that they had prepared did not sit well with Madore and his plan for Clark County. Either that, or they did not want another re-do based on Madore's ever-changing numbers without more \$\$\$\$!

Reply ·  3 · 9 hrs



**Thom Rasmussen** · Salmon Creek, Washington

Total BS. He came up with the numbers, he can pay for the study!

Reply ·  9 · 10 hrs



**Jared McClanahan**

This 'push my personal agenda through before the grownups get here' behavior is beyond words.

Reply ·  6 · 10 hrs



**Fran Hammond** · Vancouver, Washington

Hand-picked by David Madore to "validate" his Alt 4/5 plan! Disgusting and deceitful!

Reply ·  9 · 11 hrs



**Clark County Democrats**

Improper and arbitrary use of taxpayer funds.

Reply ·  15 · 11 hrs



**Lynn Carman** · Felida, Washington

Clark County Done Deal paid by tax payers funds to support what??? Madore will not stop until he has mess up Clark County beyond repair. What message does this send to staff??

Reply ·  10 · 11 hrs

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