



# Analysis: County's comp plan: 3 lingering questions

## Land-use document faces final talks, approval this week



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Clark County Councilors Jeanne Stewart, from left, Julie Olson, Marc Boldt, David Madore and Tom Mielke listen to testimony March 22 at the Clark County Public Service Center. (Amanda Cowan/Columbian files)

By **Katie Gillespie (/author/katiegillespie)**, Columbian County Government Reporter  
Published: June 20, 2016, 6:00 AM

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It's a trope that planning wonks are likely growing tired of, but let's face it. Comprehensive plans don't make for particularly thrilling reading.



Yet in contrast to the often dull subject matter, the Clark County council's handling of the 435-page Comprehensive Growth Management Plan update, a state-mandated plan outlining where and how the county will develop for the next 20 years, has been laced with drama and contention.

After three years of work, the council is slated to adopt the plan this week. Councilors will open final discussions about the plan at their regular 10 a.m. meeting Tuesday at the Public Service Center, 1300 Franklin St., Vancouver. There is a second hearing tentatively scheduled to begin at 10:30 a.m. Wednesday at the Public Service Center to continue the debate if needed.

One thing is certain. Clark County Community Planning staff are ready for the process to be over.

"There's always a sense of relief when you get to the end of something," Deputy Planning Director Gordy Euler said. "It's up to the decision makers to hopefully have a reasoned discussion and . . . take a vote."

Here's what you need to know about the comp plan update to prepare you for this week's meetings.

## 1. What's the deal with Alternative 4?

Much of the controversy surrounding the Comprehensive Growth Management Plan update has centered on Alternative 4. Republican Councilor David Madore, who has no experience in land-use planning, introduced the proposal at the urging of a rural property owners group, Clark County Citizens United.

*The proposal would have reduced the minimum lot sizes of rural, agriculture and forest land. In short, that means more lots would be permitted in rural Clark County, which could mean more houses, which in turn could put more strain on environmental resources.*

Alternative 4 was volleyed back and forth for some time. It was twice rejected by the Clark County Planning Commission, then adopted by the three-member interim county council last winter, then rejected by the current county council after Republican Councilor Julie Olson and Council Chair Marc Boldt, no party preference, joined the board.

Oh, and there were planning assumptions Madore wrote, framework that would have supported Alternative 4. The county council last year approved a \$45,000 contract with an outside firm, R.W. Thorpe and Associates, to analyze those assumptions. Email records, by the way, show Madore hand-selected that firm. That backfired on him though, after the firm determined more than half of what he wrote was invalid.

Alternative 4 is defunct and it would be a huge shocker if the council votes to revisit the proposal. But that doesn't mean that Madore, and Clark County Citizens United, won't push for it to be reconsidered this week.

## 2. Where are the county attorneys?

Longtime politicians with an eye on county politics will have noticed the absence of Clark County Deputy Prosecutors Chris Cook and Chris Home from Clark County Council hearings.

You can thank Madore for that.

Madore has accused both attorneys of lying about the impact of Alternative 4 – which would be a violation of state law if they have. Though Democratic Prosecutor Tony Golik has stood by his deputies, the county has hired an independent investigator, Rebecca Dean, to look into Madore's allegations. More on that later.

In the meantime, Steve DiJulio, an attorney with the Seattle law firm Foster Pepper, is representing the council as it completes the 20-year growth plan update. DiJulio charges the county \$450 an hour for his services, according to his engagement letter with the county.

## 3. And what about that whistle-blower complaint?

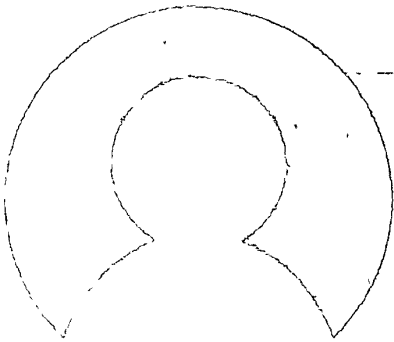
There's one other major story line still to play out in this plan update. Planning Director Oliver Orjiako, represented by local attorney Greg Ferguson, has filed whistle-blower and harassment complaints against Madore.

*The complaint describes a pattern of discrimination and harassment against the community planning director, and accuses Madore of "single-handedly commandeering the usual functions of the planning department."*

Madore has accused Orjiako and county staff in Facebook posts, from the dais and in a Jan. 27 op-ed piece in The Reflector, Battle Ground's weekly newspaper, of providing false data to the county council in order to promote an anti-rural growth agenda. Orjiako later followed up with a lawsuit against the county, accusing Madore of withholding records in connection to the complaint. Dean, who is charging the county \$240 an hour for her work, is looking into Orjiako's complaints and Madore's allegations.

There's one more complaint Dean is investigating, this one from public service employee union AFSCME. The union accused Madore in November of violating state labor laws by working on the comp plan, work that should have been performed by union employees. In May, after Madore's op-ed accusing staff of acting in an "unethical, dishonest and deceptive manner," the union filed a retaliation complaint.

The results of those various investigations — and total cost — remain to be seen.



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**Debbi Bleckinger**

Throw them all out...This State has gotten so over populated..Thanks to The Planning Commissioners!!

Reply · Jun 20, 2016 10:16am



**Jack Burkman** · Council Member at Vancouver, Washington City Government

Are you proposing that we 'close the doors' and not allow people to move to Clark County?

Reply · 👍 1 · Jun 20, 2016 10:27am



**Gary Hollmer** · Works at MTRWestern



Unbiased reporting?

Reply · 👍 1 · Jun 20, 2016 10 11am



**Stuart L. Riley** · Vancouver, Washington

You'll find bias in all media outlets. The important question is, was this factual? If you think it wasn't, then prove it.

Reply · 👍 5 · Jun 20, 2016 10 22am



**Gary Hollmer** · Works at MTRWestern

Stuart L. Riley no

Reply · Jun 20, 2016 10 41am



**Marty Porter** · Senior Consultant at Windstream Holdings

That's a really compelling argument.

Reply · 👍 2 · Jun 20, 2016 2 36pm



**Gary Hollmer** · Works at MTRWestern

Marty Porter I asked a question looking for an answer. I see no need to justify my question!

Reply · Jun 20, 2016 2 45pm



**Stuart L. Riley** · Vancouver, Washington

Gary Hollmer I answered your question. Now, answer mine - anything that is not factual in the article? If you think it isn't factual, prove it.

Reply · 👍 3 · Jun 20, 2016 2 51pm



**Gary Hollmer** · Works at MTRWestern

Stuart L. Riley : " Republican Councilor David Madore, who has no experience in land-use planning"

That is an opinion in my mind. We do not know at this point what Madore may have done to educate himself but I suspect it was more than some who call themselves planners!

Reply · Jun 20, 2016 3.08pm



**Thom Rasmussen** · Salmon Creek, Washington

Gary Hollmer , experience is not the same as studying something. You can read all the books in the world but that doesn't give you experience. You can read about boxing but until you get into the ring with the gloves on, you have no experience.

Reply · 👍 2 · Jun 20, 2016 3 56pm



**Carolyn Collins Price** · Framingham State College

Stuart L. Riley Actually, you should be proving the accusations are true, THAT is what investigative reporting is...and sadly, what The Columbian never delivers.

Reply · 👍 1 · Jun 20, 2016 7 10pm



**Stuart L. Riley** · Vancouver, Washington

Gary Hollmer Madore's documented experience is a matter of public record. If you can find any documented evidence that says he has experience in land-use planning, post the link. Otherwise, you're just arguing for the sake of arguing.

Let's assume that he does have experience. Madore's own handpicked consultants, R.W. Thorpe and Associates, "determined more than half of what he wrote was invalid." If he has experience in land-use planning, then he's incompetent.

I'm assuming you are all about government transparency, and holding politicians accountable.

If you are, Madore's not your guy. His complete inability to work with anyone, lack of candor, propensity for underhandedness, and total lack of responsibility is the antithesis of what I assume you are supposed to be for. There are better conservative candidates who are running for Madore's and Meilke's council seats who seem to be more rooted in reality, and able to work with other council members.

And finally, let's look at this a different way. I'm sure you'd agree that Madore's always got something to complain about, and he whines a lot about how he doesn't get his way. I don't know about you, but that doesn't sound like a leader, nor an effective representative for his district.

It sounds like a spoiled brat who can't get his way, so he moves his chair further away from those mean people who won't let him get his way. Maybe he's just not cut out to be a County Councilor. Maybe he'd be happier if he just left the council.

Reply · 👍 2 · Jun 20, 2016 9:27pm · Edited



**Stuart L. Riley** · Vancouver, Washington

Carolyn Collins Price What accusations specifically are you talking about? As I asked Gary, if you think the article is not factual, prove it. It's all a matter of public record, so do your own homework.

If you like supporting an completely incompetent, narcissitic, con man, then by all means feel free to live the fantasy. There are better conservative candidates than Madore who should to be on the council.

Madore's had plenty of time to prove his effectiveness as a representative of the county, and now his district. He can't get beyond the fact that he now has to deal with the charter. He's still in denial. He's stuck in the mud, spinning his wheels, and just getting deeper and deeper.

Time for Madore to go.

Reply · 👍 3 · Jun 20, 2016 9:28pm · Edited

**Tim Schaeffer** · Works at Self

Stuart L. Riley you can be factual but omit important facts tht go against your story line.

"The proposal would have reduced the minimum lot sizes of rural, agriculture and forest land. In short, that means more lots would be permitted in rural Clark County, which could mean more houses, which in turn could put more strain on resources."

That may be true but not mentioning that it would improve the tight housing supply in the county is negligent reporting and biased.

Reply · 1 Jun 21, 2016 12 30am · Edited

**Stuart L. Riley** · Vancouver, Washington

Tim Schaeffer "That may be true but not mentioning that it would improve the tight housing supply in the county is negligent reporting and biased."

The Columbian has had several articles recently about the housing issue in Clark County. You must have missed them.

<http://www.columbian.com/.../housing-population-clark.../>

<http://www.columbian.com/.../demand-for-homes-exceeds.../>

There's another bias at play here. Yours. Your bias is blinding you to the facts.

<http://skepdic.com/confirmbias.html>

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/.../what-is-confirmation...>

Take your blinders off, and look at the facts. You may be surprised at what you learn.

Reply · 1 Jun 21, 2016 5 40am

**Gary Hollmer** · Works at MTRWestern

Stuart L. Riley : "Arguing for the sake of arguing"? It appears that is what you are doing. Also, you are an expert in what discipline that you can judge others?

Reply · Jun 21, 2016 9 03am

**Dennis Ohearn**

And how did Here Madore get away with this insurgent Facebook page that he runs. Seems like he is doing County business outside of open meetings.

Reply · 5 · Jun 20, 2016 10 06am


**Carolyn Collins Price** · Framingham State College

David Madore has a personal Facebook page, why shouldnt he? Is freedom of speech/press only for some?

Reply · 1 · Jun 20, 2016 7.12pm

**Loren Lee**



 Carolyn Collins Price ... Do you understand that David Madore represents the government as a County Councilor. He is clearly violating the 1st amendment when he denies any citizen the right to address their grievances which arise from policies he advocates for on his FB page.

Reply ·  3 · Jun 21, 2016 8:19am · Edited



**Michele Wollert**

David Madore is a public figure. The Clark County employees he has defamed with his allegations are not. The Washington Supreme Court threw out our state's anti-SLAPP law about a year ago, essentially removing a big legal hurdle for plaintiffs in defamation suits. I'd like to see David Madore be held financially responsible for his careless behavior. I am tired of the tax payers footing the bill for his poor judgment and abusive leadership style.

Reply ·  16 · Jun 20, 2016 7:11am · Edited



**Ann Bellows Laurier**

Yes, and I too am very tired of his tirades and continual contradicting of other Council members that not only take up far too much time at Council meetings but also delay matters needing discussion of importance to the County. This too is an insult to taxpayers.

Reply ·  9 · Jun 20, 2016 10:00am



**Loren Lee**

Ann Bellows Laurier . . .its not the lies from Madore that bother me the most, its the insult to my intelligence that I find so very offensive when he thinks he can do so with impunity or no fact checking.

Reply ·  8 · Jun 20, 2016 12:44pm · Edited



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

Madore lacks integrity in a big way.

Reply ·  5 · Jun 20, 2016 6:37am



**Thom Rasmussen** · Salmon Creek, Washington

Gettin' sick of this game show. Can't wait for it to end. I really hope the producers don't renew it for another 4 years.

Reply ·  5 · Jun 20, 2016 6:28am



**Stuart L. Riley** · Vancouver, Washington

Madore's slash-and-burn political tricks will cost us all dearly. Throw the bum out this November.

Reply ·  5 · Jun 20, 2016 6:27am · Edited



**Fran Hammond** · Vancouver, Washington

Please! And, don't replace him with one just like him! I am speaking of the candidate that has been recently described as "Madore in a dress"!

Reply ·  10 · Jun 20, 2016 7:52am



**Loren Lee**

sooner...August would be nice if Madore can't buy a top 2 spot in the primary

Reply · 7 · Jun 20, 2016 8 01am



**Thom Rasmussen** · Salmon Creek, Washington

Loren Lee just wait. If he doesn't make it through the primary, it could go one of two ways- he could either get really pissed and storm off for 4 months or call for a recount and start his obstructionism all over again. I suspect he'll go down fighting. I pity the rest of the board if that happens.

Reply · 2 · Jun 20, 2016 2 11pm

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