



# 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  
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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

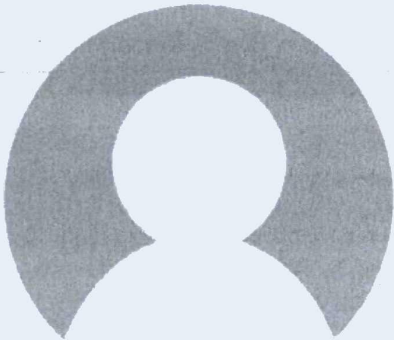
In the meantime, Steve DiJulio, an attorney with the Seattle law firm Foster Pepper, is representing the council as it completes the 20-year growth plan update DiJulio charges the county \$450 an hour for his services, according to his engagement letter with the county

## 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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**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 11 mins Edited



**John M. Kowalski** Camas, Washington

Madore lacks integrity in a big way

Reply 45 mins



**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 53 mins



**Stuart L. Riley** Vancouver, Washington

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

Reply 55 mins Edited

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