



To: Honorable Mark Boldt, Chairman Clark County Council, Councilor Jeannie Stewart, Councilor Julie Olson, Councilor David Madore, and Councilor Tom Mielke

CC: Dr. Oliver Orjiako, Director of Community Planning; Mark McCauley, Clark County Manager

From: Heidi Owens 

Date: 22 June 2016

Subject: 2016 Comprehensive Plan Effective Date for Rural Element divisions

At the June 21, 2016 Growth Management Hearing, this board approved the rural element changes that allow for divisions in resource lands county wide, specifically AG-20 to AG-10 and FR-40 to FR-20, with a cluster provision as an option for land owners. While I may not agree with that decision, I do understand the demands around the issue that would prompt the action. However, given that there is a lengthy record that documents the current availability of rural parcels to support the projected growth in Clark County, the need to protect, preserve, enhance resource land and encourage resource use (especially given the rate of loss over the past 10 years), and the impact/questions remaining around the capital facilities and water issues to support an addition 985 parcels, I am seriously concerned about the repercussions to the County and our communities regarding grant ineligibility and other issues should any of the board's decisions put the county into non-compliance upon appeal with the WWGMHB.

At the June 21st hearing, Brian Snodgrass from the City of Vancouver noted that the Vancouver supports the Planning Commission's recommendation and expressed legal concerns on how your deliberations could impact Vancouver's access to transportation grants. Mr. Snodgrass suggested that if this board should choose to adopt the preferred alternative, that a time extension could be adopted for the rural element zoning changes. And, as Chairman Boldt indicated while it might be time to look at [bigger changes], it needs to be done in a manner that is respectful to cities.

I agree with Chairman Boldt's comment that the cities are a main part of the comprehensive plan and they deserve respect, as this will allow them the flexibility and determination to address their own growth planning. Rural land owners and other stakeholders who have spoken out against changes to the rural resource areas also deserve that respect. They too have individual concerns for negative impacts and should not be burdened by a non-compliant plan. Let the process unfold, and **please adopt an effective or activation date** for the Rural Element changes to be 245 days from July 1, 2016. **This will ensure that grant eligibility does not impact our cities and protect the community and all rural landowners until the WWGMHB weighs in on appeals.**