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To: [Sonja Wiser](#)
Cc: [Christine Cook](#)
Subject: FW: Comments on the Draft Public Participation Plan
Date: Tuesday, February 21, 2023 5:05:08 PM

From: Ann Foster <annfoster5093@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 21, 2023 4:56 PM
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Subject: Comments on the Draft Public Participation Plan

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Councilors, County Manager Otto, Director Orjiako:

Friends of Clark County submitted comments to the Draft of the Plan, by the requested date, February 9, 2023. We feel the significance of the Public Participation Plan warrants an additional look at comments made two weeks ago

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- The importance of public participation can be exemplified in three
 - current projects:
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 - The Whipple Creek North project
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 - The Knife River Concrete Batch Plant in Central Vancouver
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 - Chelatchie Bluff mining overlay request and application by Granite Construction
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- Each exemplifies where local and constant communication with neighborhoods and communities failed
- using the current tactics for “public participation” by Clark County.
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- Each project involves major upheavals to the lives, health, future, economic investments of residents.
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- Consequences are experienced in the forms of time wasted (sometimes years), costly legal fees,
- increased stress and anxiety resulting from insecure futures on the part of residents, and public dollars spent unnecessarily. Because developers and builders can afford the years of working through citizen resistance, neighbors can not and often give up,
- resulting in increased criticism and pessimism towards officials and local government.
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Whipple Creek North - a requested rezone to OR22 from Commercial designation on property on NE 179th St. and NE 10th Avenue was approved by the Planning Commission, although denied by Staff. If the property is largely residential, as opposed to commercial, the reduction in job creation opportunities provided by that property is huge - both in the next few years and permanently. Discovery Corridor was conceptualized as a land-use strategy for job creation.

OR 22 also reduces traffic impact fees for the developer by approximately \$12M, according to the County, meaning that that \$12M contribution towards infrastructure comes out of the public’s pocket.

There was no notification to the public regarding this rezone request, other than information on the County website that this was going before the Planning Commission. The one barely-visible sign on the corner was yard-sign sized, with a green background, hardly legible.

Knife River Concrete Batch Plant - although involvement by neighbors in Central Vancouver have organized and increased its activity and resistance to this project, it claims it initially heard about the request rezone by the owner from IL to IR, thereby allowing “freight dependent uses”, such as concrete in the PVJR, from a UPS driver who saw a small sign, and alerted the neighbors through a Facebook posting.

Chelatchie Prairie mining overlay - FOCC took action on its own on this issue to physically visit the neighbors in the area of the overlay request and its consequences. None of them were aware of the overlay request. A few small signs were noted by FOCC representatives in the area, mixed in with much larger campaign signs. Neighbors were not aware of any other notifications, largely due to the 500’ rule that the County observes.

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- Public Participation needs to be exponentially improved and increased:
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- Need for greater involvement by local communities AT THE BEGINNING of the comprehensive plan update
- process, when code and policy created, when frameworks are built. This is the only chance that a neighborhood has to alter the future of its homes, roads, and local facilities.
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- Increase notification periods from 14 days to 28 days, allowing time for residents to organize,
- educate, fund-raise, etc. This is especially the case when the pending decision dramatically changes a neighborhood permanently.
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- Increase radius of residences when considering land-use decisions. 500 ft. is ridiculously minimal,
- especially in rural areas.
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- Go door-to-door, if necessary, handing out flyers in neighborhoods that are significantly impacted
- by a pending decision. If a concrete plant is going in someone's backyard, every effort should be made to alert neighbors in a timely way. Costs of these efforts should
- be billed to the developer.

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- Increase road and land signs.
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- Use Columbian, Reflector to publicize public hearings - 28 days in advance.
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- Use the public school system for sending home flyers on pending decisions and/or public hearings.
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- Have more open houses, again especially in rural areas.

The County must make a greater and more aggressive effort to find ways to reach the public, rather than expecting the public to come to it.

Friends of Clark County envisions a government that can guarantee putting practices in place that result in an engaged, enlightened, energized and positive group of committed citizens.

Best regards,

Ann Foster and Friends,
Friends of Clark County