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futurewise.org

April 18, 2023

The Honorable Karen Dill Bowerman, Council Chair  
The Honorable Glen Yung  
The Honorable Michelle Belkot  
The Honorable Gary Medvigy  
The Honorable Sue Marshall  
Clark County Council  
PO Box 5000  
Vancouver, Washington 98666-5000

Dear Council Chair Bowerman and Councilors Yung, Belkot, Medvigy, and Marshall:

**Subject: Comments on the Approval of a 20-year population projection for the 2025 Comprehensive Plan update.**

Send via email to: [rebecca.messinger@clark.wa.gov](mailto:rebecca.messinger@clark.wa.gov);  
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Futurewise works throughout Washington State to support land-use policies that encourage healthy, equitable and opportunity-rich communities, and that protect our most valuable farmlands, forests, and water resources. Futurewise has members and supporters throughout Washington State including Clark County.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the 20-year population projection for the 2025 Comprehensive Plan update. Futurewise recommends the County adopt the “middle” or “medium” population projection. That projection is the most accurate. For example, the 2017 medium population projection was just 3,911 people, -0.8 percent, below the 2020 census population for Clark County.<sup>1</sup> The 2017 high population projection was 46,653 people, 8.5 percent, higher than the

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<sup>1</sup> Comparison of Past OFM Projections for 2020 (Low, Medium, High) with the 2020 Census Population last accessed on April 17, 2023, at:  
[https://clark.wa.gov/sites/default/files/media/document/2023-04/Comparsion%20of%20past%20OFM%20projections%20with\\_2020\\_Census.pdf](https://clark.wa.gov/sites/default/files/media/document/2023-04/Comparsion%20of%20past%20OFM%20projections%20with_2020_Census.pdf)



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2020 census population.<sup>2</sup> The Office of Financial Management first prepared Growth Management Act population projections in 2002, and also prepared projections in 2007, 2012, 2017, and 2022. For the four sets of projections that were done before 2020, the medium, or middle, projection has always been the most accurate for Clark County.<sup>3</sup>

Efficiently providing public facilities and services is important in Clark County because the current County Comprehensive Plan Transportation Element projects a 20-year deficit of -\$158,104,000.<sup>4</sup> Given this deficit, planning for a higher than needed population projection will just increase costs for taxpayers and ratepayers because they will need to fund unneeded public facilities.

For these reasons, we recommend that Clark County adopt the “middle” population projection. Thank you for considering our comments. If you require additional information, please contact me at telephone 206-343-0681 Ext. 102 or email: [tim@futurewise.org](mailto:tim@futurewise.org).

Very Truly Yours,



Tim Trohimovich  
Director of Planning and Law

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<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> Clark County, Washington, *20 Year Comprehensive Growth Management Plan 2015-2035* p. 160 last accessed on April 18, 2023, at [https://clark.wa.gov/sites/default/files/media/document/2023-01/2015-2035%20Comprehensive%20Plan-ORD.%202022-07-01%20AR\\_Dockets.pdf](https://clark.wa.gov/sites/default/files/media/document/2023-01/2015-2035%20Comprehensive%20Plan-ORD.%202022-07-01%20AR_Dockets.pdf).