



Friends of Clark County

PLANTING THE SEEDS OF RESPONSIBLE GROWTH

November 7, 2023

Dear Clark County Councilors, County Manager Otto, Community Planning Director Orjiako and his Staff,

We appreciate your efforts to develop the Public Participation Plan in compliance with E2SHB 1181 to incorporate Climate Change and Resilience Element into the Comprehensive Plan. Friends of Clark County supports the Public Participation Plan outlined by Community Planning. Creating sound and sustainable land use policies for a County rich with natural resources and incredible urban pressure is no easy task and we applaud your efforts to preserve these precious resources and create a County that is livable for all.

We support the prevention of sprawl by encouraging development within the urban growth boundaries as stated in goals 1 and 2 of the Act. Goal 8 specifically requires the County to “Encourage the conservation of productive forestland and productive agricultural lands and discourage incompatible uses”.

Prime farmland has been prime for development in the County for so long that much of our agricultural roots have been lost to development. Preservation of agriculture and ag lands is critical in this time, especially as it relates to climate change. A productive farming community adds to carbon sequestration and contributes less to greenhouse gases than do urban areas. It is also vital to the health of our community. Increasing numbers of immigrants and underserved populations suffer from diabetes and other food related diseases. A good supply of fresh fruits and vegetables that are locally grown could help remedy this.

We support the development of a Community Advisory Group and encourage the inclusion of the agricultural community in this group. FoCC supports the adoption of an Agricultural Commission that represents the agricultural community in this group.

We support the formation of an Environmental Justice Coalition (EJC) that the staff recommends. It is vital to address food quality and food insecurity with these advisory groups.

To quote a letter from the WA State Food Policy forum letter to the Department of Commerce' Climate Program regarding updates to the Climate Planning Guidance “The pressure that climate change will enact on all facets of our food system cannot be overstated. The passage of HB 1181 provides a unique opportunity to review whether comprehensive plans have effectively planned for resilient food systems in the face of a changing climate.”

Thank you for your time and all of your work on public participation and integrating climate goals into the 2025 Comprehensive Plan.

Sincerely,
Diane Dempster
Friends of Clark County

