

From: [Kathleen Otto](#)
To: [Rebecca Messinger](#)
Subject: FW: Rural population growth fails to meet adopted standards in the Clark County Comprehensive Plan
Date: Thursday, February 22, 2024 8:32:41 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)



Kathleen Otto
County Manager

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From: Clark County Citizens United, Inc. <cccuinc@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 22, 2024 1:45 AM
To: Gary Medvigy <Gary.Medvigy@clark.wa.gov>; Karen Bowerman <Karen.Bowerman@clark.wa.gov>; Michelle Belkot <Michelle.Belkot@clark.wa.gov>; Glen Yung <Glen.Yung@clark.wa.gov>; Sue Marshall <Sue.Marshall@clark.wa.gov>; Kathleen Otto <Kathleen.Otto@clark.wa.gov>; Carol Levanen <cccuinc@yahoo.com>; sprazz@outlook.com
Subject: Fw: Rural population growth fails to meet adopted standards in the Clark County Comprehensive Plan

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FOR THE PUBLIC RECORD AND THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

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---- Forwarded Message ----

From: Clark County Citizens United, Inc. <cccuinc@yahoo.com>
To: Carol Levanen <cccuinc@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, October 23, 2023 at 08:45:12 PM PDT
Subject: Fw: Rural population growth fails to meet adopted standards

Re: Rural population growth fails to meet adopted standards in the Clark

County Comprehensive Plan

Clark County elected officials, Democrats and Republicans, have adopted policies determining the future balance of population allocations. The 90% urban, 10% rural population allocations have been a policy since 2005. On the surface, it appears the 90/10% is workable. However, when statistics in various county reports are viewed collectively, a trend emerges that shows multiple policy failures adopted by Clark County elected officials.

During the most intense period of Clark County growth, the rural areas received 1.7% of county growth, **794 of 45,448** new people, (2021 BLR, Figure 2). The 1.7% indicates the rural population has been failing to meet the 10% adopted policy standard. **794** is 17.5% of the allocated 4,545 rural persons.

The failure of the policy indicates an urgent need exists to remedy this situation for thousands of rural families stuck with diminished ability to afford rural homes. The 1.7% means the UGAs have been burdened with accepting 98.3% of growth when they were ill-prepared for their allocated 90%.

The cumulative effects of the county's land use zoning laws have had disastrous effects on rural affordable housing, the ability of rural families to remain living in Clark County and forcing displacements.

- The **794** rural population growth serves as a warning of what can happen to a community as a whole when access to affordable housing is intentionally, systematically denied.
- The **794** illustrates the painful consequences of a 10% allocation policy failure.
- The **794** demonstrates a failure to implement fair housing practices.
- The **794** indicates a failure to *make adequate provisions for existing and projected needs of all economic segments of the community. . . , RCW 36.70A.070(2)(d).*
- *(ii) Documenting programs and actions needed to achieve housing availability including gaps in local funding, barriers such as development regulations, and other limitations. . .*
- The **794** indicates bias and a failure to be sensitive to local communities, cultures and housing conditions.

The data tells a compelling story.

- The 1994 Clark County Comprehensive Growth Management Plan had an **adopted 2012 Rural Area Population Allocation of 79,689**, (Clark County Buildable Lands Monitoring Report, 2002, Page 4, Table 1). The 2010 rural population, U.S. Census Urban & Rural was **58,566**. **The county's rural population allocation for 2012 failed by approximately 21,123 people.**
- The R.W Thorpe Report, 2016, Critique of Planning Assumptions, shows the 2012 Rural Population to be **60,845**. **This figure is short 18,844 rural people from the adopted 2012 allocation of 79,689.**

- The 2004 Comp. Plan,(Page 3-3) projected **82,799** rural people by 2024, (63,566 + 19,262). The 2021 BLR (Figure 2, Pg. 12), shows **66,975** for the rural population, **a failure of 15,824 rural people** with only 2 years left in the planning horizon.
- By 2021, 27 years after the rural population projection made in the 1994 Comp. Plan, the county is failing to meet the 2012 rural projection, **79,689 rural people**.

The failure is evident in the Buildable Lands Report, August 2007 (Amended), Summary, Pg. 47.;

Given the underlying zoning, the total vacant and development potential in the rural area is approximately 7,387 lots. Assuming 2.59 persons per household, there is capacity to add 19,132 persons in the rural area.

This statement is faulty by omission, misleading and evidence of bias. The 19,132 rural persons quoted above, fails to meet the policy standard of **19,264 rural persons** adopted in the 2004 Clark County Comprehensive Growth Management Plan. The effects of the policy failure need to be openly addressed for the benefit of all communities hurt by direct and indirect impacts of this very questionable action. Importantly, how could a lingering policy failure be allowed to go unabated over 15 years?

Despite a repeated pattern of inaccurate forecasts and failed policies, nothing is mentioned in county reports, including the recent 2021 BLR. With assistance from the Office of Financial Mangement, county officials should accurately predict future populations and be able to adapt county land use zoning laws to better suit the housing needs of all communities of people. It is unfortunate reports are written that routinely create illusions of abundant buildable rural lots. This is bias and is used to disadvantage rural housing in successive county BLRs. The 1.7% rural growth defies this illusion and tells the real story.

As Clark County has systematically obsessed over regulations that impede rural growth, rural families have been struggling with inadequate rural buildable lots, inadequate housing supplies, affordability and finally displacement. Can the county's reports be trusted to accurately assess data on important public policy issues like buildable land and affordable housing? The county's land use zoning laws control many aspects of housing supplies that inform housing affordability. Bias shouldn't be allowed.

There is a truthful, analytic prediction made in the first **Clark County Plan Monitoring Report (1995-1999), July 2000; PRICE OF HOUSING, Page 40:**

There was little opportunity for home ownership in a more rural setting for households achieving the median income. By 1998

only Amboy offered existing housing and Yacolt offered new housing in a rural setting with an average sales price that could be purchased by the median income household. Rural housing opportunities are generally beyond the median income household's ability to purchase.