

From: [Jeffrey Delapena](#)
To: aabregoviveros@swecwa.org
Cc: [Bart Catching](#); [Jose Alvarez](#); [Oliver Orjiako](#)
Subject: RE: Public Comment
Date: Thursday, November 7, 2024 9:27:00 AM
Attachments: [SWEC Statement.pdf](#)

Good day, Alondra,

Thank you very much for submitting SWEC's public comment for consideration in the Land Use Alternatives to be studied in the DEIS.

I am forwarding to members of Staff and will enter these into the Comprehensive Plan Index of Record. Your comments will also be sent to the Planning Commission ahead of tonight's Hearing.

Regards,
Jeff Delapena

From: Alondra Abrego-Viveros <aabregoviveros@swecwa.org>
Sent: Thursday, November 7, 2024 9:23 AM
To: Jeffrey Delapena <Jeffrey.Delapena@clark.wa.gov>
Subject: Public Comment

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full name: Alondra Abrego-Viveros
Address:P.o. Box 2823 Vancouver Wa 98668

I have attached SWEC's Public comment that we would like for it to be added to the Public Comments Record.

Best,
Alondra

Good Evening,

My name is Alondra Abrego Viveros, and I am writing on behalf of the Southwest Washington Equity Coalition (SWEC), where I serve as the Community Engagement and Policy Organizer. Our organization has been active since 2016, founded by dedicated community members who wanted to ensure that the policies and decisions affecting Southwest Washington reflect the needs and voices of all residents. With that in mind, I am reaching out to express our strong interest in being actively involved in the ongoing Clark County Comprehensive Planning process.

SWEC, along with six other culturally specific, community-based organizations, was awarded funding from the Department of Commerce to help bring an equitable lens to the Comprehensive Plan—one that amplifies the voices of the BIPOC community throughout the development and implementation process. These resources allow us to contribute critical insights that will help shape a more inclusive future for the region. In light of the Clark County Council's recognition in 2020 that racism is a public health crisis, we are hopeful that the County will prioritize including the voices of communities of color as the Comprehensive Plan moves forward.

We understand that the planning process is behind schedule, and while we too are somewhat behind due to delayed funding from Commerce, we believe there is still a significant opportunity for collaboration moving ahead.

As an organization dedicated to serving our community, SWEC and our partners are well-positioned to provide valuable feedback on the Comprehensive Planning process. The trust that our community places in us is something we take very seriously. It is our responsibility not only to ensure their voices are heard but also to keep them informed and engaged at every stage of the planning process.

Recently, alternatives for land use were presented to the community. Unfortunately, SWEC and other organizations were not involved in the development of these alternatives, leaving out crucial input that reflects the needs and concerns of our communities. As a result, many of our communities' priorities are not adequately represented in the proposed alternatives.

SWEC has been closely involved with the City of Vancouver in the development of its Comprehensive Plan. We've participated in monthly meetings to advise City staff on equitable policy development and to raise concerns we hear daily from our community members of color, as well as those in our 34-organization Membership Bloc. Additionally, we have organized an ad hoc group of service providers, community members, and leaders from communities of color to regularly meet with Vancouver's staff to provide direct input, offer community-based solutions, and advise on anti-displacement strategies. Our experience with this collaborative approach has shown us that when we are included from the outset, the plans we develop are more inclusive, responsive, and reflective of our communities' needs.

We would welcome the opportunity to bring this same approach to Clark County. We are more than willing to meet with County staff at their convenience to establish pathways for meaningful input from the community at times that would be most helpful for staff.

SWEC understands the importance of timelines and deadlines, but we also recognize the need to proceed thoughtfully and inclusively. As the County continues to grow rapidly, now is the time to make sure that we are planning for the future in a way that reflects our shared values and ensures no one is left behind. As my Executive Director often says, "Slow is smooth, smooth is fast." This is a moment where pausing to engage intentionally with communities who have historically been left out will ultimately allow us to move forward more effectively and with greater confidence.

In the spirit of collaboration and continued progress, we respectfully request to be more actively involved in the upcoming phases of the Comprehensive Plan, especially as the County begins developing alternatives. Given our experience, community relationships, and access to key information, we are well-positioned to contribute to and support this process. We look forward to continuing our partnership with the County to create a Comprehensive Plan that reflects our community's shared vision for the future. We urge you to postpone decisions about Land Use alternatives until our community-groups have been able to develop a plan with staff around targeted community engagement with Communities of Color, and until new County Council members are sworn into office.

Thank you for your time and consideration.