

From: [Jenna Kay](#)
To: [Cnty 2025 Comp Plan](#); [Jeffrey Delapena](#)
Subject: FW: LAND, ITS OCCUPATION AND PLANNING OUR FUTURE
Date: Friday, November 21, 2025 8:35:37 AM

For comp plan record

From: Randal Friedman <randalfriedman@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 19, 2025 5:23 PM
To: Rick Marshall <camasrick@gmail.com>; Heidi Cody <heidi@waconservationaction.org>; Don Steinke <crvancouverusa@gmail.com>
Cc: Jenna Kay <Jenna.Kay@clark.wa.gov>
Subject: Fwd: LAND, ITS OCCUPATION AND PLANNING OUR FUTURE

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Greetings — Just sent this to the Camas City Council.

I reference the DEIS issue as well as basic GMA and SEPA compliance.

The DEIS comments will go out from the Camas Earth Day Society.

Randal

Begin forwarded message:

From: Randal Friedman <RandalFriedman@gmail.com>
Subject: LAND, ITS OCCUPATION AND PLANNING OUR FUTURE
Date: November 19, 2025 at 5:18:32 PM PST
To: council@cityofcamas.us
Cc: Denis Hayes <denis@denishayes.com>, David Stuebe <David.Stuebe@cityofwashougal.us>, Molly Mckay Williams <mollymckaywilliams@gmail.com>, Glen DeWillie <grdewillie@gmail.com>, Tyler Sanders <strongtownscamas@gmail.com>, SunCal <matt@suncal.com>, Carrie Schulstad <carrie@downtowncamas.com>

Good evening — A note from Monday's Council workshop on the Comp Plan now including the Nevin properties.

I was reminded of Mark Twain's famous quote "Buy land, they are not making any more of it."

Part way through the discussion of whether or not 160 acres of rural ag land should be sacrificed to development, a councilor asked about the mill property. This Councilor has repeatedly expressed interest in mill property meeting state planning mandates but providing needed future revenue with the minimal costs to the city. Barely missing a beat, our Community Development Director said in essence, "that land is occupied in its land use and isn't considered available." That's it. A matter-of-fact dismissal of an alternative future for our city.

I thought about Mark Twain's quote and realized the shallowness. All land is "occupied." Ask the Native Americans who occupied land and you will get a vastly different answer. Of course the mill is occupied. Consider that roughly half of it is officially designated "non-operational" and subject to a cleanup order. It is "occupied" by derelict buildings, many of which are coming down, and contaminated soil and water. It's occupation is choking our historic downtown.

Fortunately, our State through the MTCA has the authority to remediate these contaminants and end that occupation. Remediation is based on the future use as specified by the GMA prepared plan.

Consider the North Shore and Johnson Dairy property. 30 years ago that land was "occupied" by a dairy. Land Use maps did not show it "occupied."

Compounding this sadness was the subsequent tone of the council. The tone became one akin to a meal at the Golden Corral: how much urbanization now could we get on our plate before Vancouver or Washougal take it? You had just finished budget discussion and fresh on your mind was all the development fees the city has been living on the last few years. Fees substantially higher this year. There was no temperament with discussion on the costs and future servicing of roads and sewers, let alone more pollution in the Lacamas Creek watershed. That lack of information didn't matter. Camas is required to grow. The mill is "occupied" so grab the land before it is too late. Environmental rules be damned.

If only life were that simple.

Camas is a city with its own sovereignty: the power to plan its future. “Occupied” land can change occupants. Some proof: soon we may see a Fred Meyer and its ocean of parking where cows once roamed. Yes it is subject to the mill’s decision, but the city can decide a future with a different occupation that can drive a more robust remediation and the city's economy. We can’t force the change, but we can facilitate it through planning, economic development measures and a proper cleanup.

The North Shore’s inevitably for urban development was sealed the moment it was added to the UGA. It was still a dairy farm, but this current use no longer mattered. It had a new “urban” designation and was unstoppable. Lines have meaning and moving them deliberately has lasting consequences.

Adding the Nevin properties to the UGA is the next growth wave beyond the North Shore. Continued sprawl will be called inevitable despite concerns worse than those expressed by North Shore development. It would be too bad if they weren’t recognized and studied before the decision to designate it urban with a proper SEPA analysis. That’s a subject for Clark County.

Ten years from now, at a presentation on this next wave of development, the community will be asked where they were 10 years ago when Council made that decision on the Nevin properties? We are here now.

I’ve watched this played out my entire life and watched so much of California’s stunning rural landscape disappear. I watched proposals for new cities in that landscape get stopped due to the consideration of planning/impact analysis. What is now Golden Gate National Recreation Area was to be one of those future cities in Marin County. Sixty years ago “the planned community of Marincello, envisioned as a sprawling hillside community for 20,000 people in single-family homes, townhouses and apartment towers” actually started construction. They started paving streets before it was stopped.

You can see the beauty of the Tennessee Valley today instead of this proposed new town just beyond the Golden Gate Bridge. The trails end at Rodeo Lagoon and not a waterfront community as was planned. The Coastal

Commission was two decades away.

This is an issue beyond Camas. It is one concerning the basic meaning of Washington's fundamental environmental protection laws.

There is more than ample evidence of what Strong Towns called the "Ponzi" scheme of growth. Take a look. How about a workshop on the costs of different development alternatives? <https://www.strongtowns.org/journal/2020-5-14-americas-growth-ponzi-scheme-md2020>

Camas can do better. That goes for a SunCal Development Agreement. I hope you give my new council representative, well schooled in development issues, a chance to represent our community through a transparent process. That's a subject for later.

Randal Friedman
Camas, WA



[Marincello](https://en.wikipedia.org)
en.wikipedia.org