

**From:** [publiccomment](#)  
**To:** [Oliver Orijako](#); [Jose Alvarez](#); [Cnty 2025 Comp Plan](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Council Hearing Public Comment  
**Date:** Monday, April 27, 2026 2:22:35 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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Please see the below comments for tonight's hearing. Thanks.



**Rebecca Messinger**  
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**From:** Clark County <[webmaster@clark.wa.gov](mailto:webmaster@clark.wa.gov)>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 27, 2026 1:34 PM  
**To:** publiccomment <[publiccomment@clark.wa.gov](mailto:publiccomment@clark.wa.gov)>  
**Subject:** Council Hearing Public Comment

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Submitted on Mon, 04/27/2026 - 1:34 PM

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**Subject**  
Land Use Alternatives Hearing

## **Date of Hearing**

Mon, 04/27/2026

## **Comment**

Good afternoon councilors,

This is my comment to you regarding the discussion on land use alternative adoption.. Clark County is growing quickly, and the question isn't whether we grow—it's how we grow without undermining our long-term economy and quality of life here in SW Washington.

Preferred Alternative 1 is the fiscally responsible choice because it protects agricultural land while directing growth where infrastructure already exists—inside our urban growth areas. That's the most cost-effective way to accommodate population increases. Expanding into agricultural lands may look like it creates capacity, but in reality it raises public costs—for roads, utilities, emergency services, and schools—while spreading growth inefficiently. Not only that, but losing these agricultural lands will put even more strain on ecosystem services, which are the foundation of what makes this region so livable in the first place.

Agricultural lands are not “unused capacity.” They are economic assets that support jobs, local food systems, wildlife habitat, watershed health and regional resilience. Once those lands are converted, they are gone permanently, and we lose both their economic productivity and the option value they provide for future generations.

If the goal is to increase housing supply and support economic growth, the data consistently show that focusing on density, redevelopment, and infill within existing urban areas delivers more units at lower long-term public cost than outward expansion.

Our ag lands are irreplaceable environmental assets that:

- \* Help maintain groundwater quality and recharge
- \* Provide open space, habitat, and carbon storage
- \* Reduce runoff and flooding compared to paved development

Past legal challenges in Clark County specifically cited failures to protect groundwater and environmental quality when agricultural lands were reduced. Disregarding the importance of ag lands in to our environmental integrity and water supply would be legally and fiscally irresponsible. Clark county is also an important stopover point for migratory birds and we have already lost valuable wildlife habitat in recent years. Retaining our ag lands supports healthy ecosystems locally and regionally.

Protecting agriculture supports the local economy and food system resilience.

Agricultural lands are defined as those capable of long-term commercial production under state criteria.

Maintaining these lands:

- \* Supports local farmers and rural jobs
- \* Strengthens regional food security
- \* Keeps land affordable for future farmers (avoiding speculation and price spikes after rezoning)

Clark county ag lands will be increasingly important to our regional food supply as climate change

and international crop lands are increasingly affected by climate change. The Guardian reported a few days ago that world food systems are being pushed to the brink by extreme heat. We must protect our local food growing capacity.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2026/apr/22/world-food-systems-extreme-heat-farming-un-report>

Preferred Alternative 1 aligns with a growth strategy that supports economic growth and prosperous quality of life. PA-1 protects a working land base while maximizing efficient growth capacity where it belongs.

I urge you to adopt Alternative 1 and keep Clark County's growth both strong and sustainable. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to exercise judicious integrity and set a regional example for responsible growth.

Thank you.

Tonya Enger

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