From:	Cnty 2025 Comp Plan
To:	Peter L. Fels; Cnty 2025 Comp Plan
Cc:	Oliver Orjiako; Jose Alvarez; Rebecca Messinger
Subject:	RE: You must consider this new scientific report when voting on the Comp Plan
Date:	Friday, September 11, 2026 8:07:45 AM
Attachments:	image001.png image002.png image003.png image004.png

Good day, Peter,

Thank you very much for submitting comments related to the 2025 Comprehensive Plan update.

These will be added to the Comprehensive Plan Index of Record. I am including Rebecca Messinger from the Council's Office as well for awareness.

Best,

Jeff Delapena
Program Assistant
COMMUNITY PLANNING

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From: Peter L. Fels <plfels@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 10, 2026 10:34 PM
To: Cnty 2025 Comp Plan <comp.plan@clark.wa.gov>
Subject: You must consider this new scientific report when voting on the Comp Plan

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Dear Councilors,

There is new information I hope you will consider when making your final decisions and voting on the County Comprehensive Plan. It is a recent (September 2, 2026) report by the United Nations Environment Program called "Limiting Overshoot – Navigating Exceedance of 1.5C and pathways toward return".

This report, authored by a large number of scientists from around the world, states that it is now certain the world will not remain below the 1.5°C goal set by scientists and governments in 2015 to limit the rise over pre-industrial earth temperatures in order to avoid the worst consequences of global warming.

The risks from warming include faster sea-level rise, a higher likelihood of collapse of ecosystems such as coral reefs, more extreme heat and wildfires, and profound changes to ice sheets, sea ice, glaciers, permafrost and snow. There is also a higher risk of irreversible tipping points to global systems which would reshape the world forever.

The report states that while there are uncertainties around the timings and strength of the impacts and tipping points, it is clear they will harm people, societies and economies. As a result, the scientists argue it is urgent for the world to get onto an 'overshoot, peak and decline' pathway that holds temperature rise to the lowest level possible and then brings it down by the end of the century.

What does this mean for the Clark County Council? *It means you as our leaders must do everything you can to immediately take steps to reduce the county's greenhouse gas emissions in order to do our part to stop and reverse the trend toward higher global temperatures*.

Your citizens and constituents are concerned about loss of agricultural land and rural habitat, not only because undeveloped land provides refuge from the cities and allows for protection of the agricultural economy, but also to reduce vehicle miles traveled and keep GHG emissions down by increasing density.

This new report stresses that the world is already on the path toward enormous climate change and resulting potential ecological destruction. Unfortunately, we in the United State have contributed more than our share of damaging emissions. We now must begin to do our share to bring global temperatures back down.

I am providing a copy of the Executive Summary of the Report and a link to a news article in the Washington Post that discusses the Report, along with this

letter. You may note that one of the primary authors is Kristie Ebi, a professor at the University of Washington. The UW issued an earlier report in 2013 predicting some of the problems for Washington that would be caused by global warming, including more and stronger wildfires with their attendant days of unhealthy air, drought, loss of snowcap, changes to rainfall and water patterns and harm to salmon and other wildlife. We are seeing those predictions come true now.

The Executive Summary notes that "Rapid, collective and global action is vital – with stronger political will, multilateralism and governance as key enabling conditions for all efforts."

I am asking you to reconsider your prior votes on the Comprehensive Plan. In particular, the County should work along with Vancouver toward the same Greenhouse Gas emission reduction standards, as recommended unanimously by your citizen advisory committee, rather than adopt the lower standard you previously chose. Secondly, you should not grant Camas, Ridgefield and Battle Ground's requests to extend their urban growth boundaries nor allow any de-designation of agricultural land.

These choices are relatively small, but they are not minor. If you choose to adopt them as part of the Comprehensive Plan you will be doing your part to reduce overshoot, begin on the decline pathway and help protect the planet from potential irreversible system changes.

Thank you for your consideration.

/s

Peter Fels

Vancouver

Washington Post article summarizing Overshoot report:
https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/2026/09/02/world-is-certain-overshoot-critical-climate-threshold-un-warns/

Limiting Overshoot full report: https://www.unep.org/resources/limiting-overshoot-navigating-exceedance

Limiting Overshoot* - UNEP 9/2/2026

Executive summary

1. While the international community has made progress on climate change, global action to cut greenhouse gas emissions has not been fast enough to avoid global warming crossing 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels in the next few years.

This means surpassing the multi-decadal global warming level of 1.5°C, the central long-term temperature goal of the Paris Agreement, as affirmed by the International Court of Justice and backed by a UN General Assembly resolution. Even an optimistic scenario of current government pledges (full implementation of all national climate plans plus meeting additional net-zero targets) puts expected peak temperature rise at 1.8°C.

2. Exceedance of 1.5°C should not be interpreted as safe or acceptable; there are no benign scenarios with global temperature rise above this level.

Risks and impacts include faster sea-level rise, a higher likelihood of collapse of ecosystems such as coral reefs, more extreme heat and wildfires, and profound changes to the cryosphere (ice sheets, sea ice, glaciers, permafrost and snow). For example, glaciers could lose more than a quarter of their mass by 2100, which could raise sea levels by 9 to 12.5 cm (for warming up to/less than +3°C) and permanently alter water availability in many places. There is also a higher risk of irreversible tipping points to global systems such as the West Antarctic and Greenland ice sheets, the Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation (AMOC) and the Amazon rainforest – which would reshape the world forever.

While there are uncertainties around the timings and strength of these impacts and tipping points, it is clear they will harm people, societies and economies, particularly in Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and low-lying cities, some of which face partial or complete submersion. Food security and water supplies will be hit – for example, projections indicate declines of up to 14 per cent in global food production by 2050 in the absence of effective adaptation. More frequent and intense heatwaves, more nutrition-related diseases and greater risks of pathogen spillover will increase illnesses and deaths.

Cities and infrastructure will be at greater risk from stronger and longer heatwaves and flooding. Warming oceans, declining oxygen levels and rising acidity will make it harder for marine life and the communities that depend on it to survive. Higher energy demand, consumer costs, and insurance and financial system stress will pose risks to all nations.

3. The global goal remains limiting long-term average warming to 1.5°C.

However, overshoot means this goal must now be approached from above, while simultaneously adapting to the impacts of climate change. This means meeting and exceeding, not rescinding, existing commitments and concurrently delivering faster mitigation and adaptation.

With unprecedented action it is possible to minimize and adapt to the impacts of exceedance and return to 1.5°C – which would keep options open to protect the poor and vulnerable, minimize harm to infrastructure and livelihoods, and support people and nature. To do so, the world must get onto an 'overshoot, peak and decline' pathway that holds temperature rise to the lowest level possible, then brings it down by the end of the century, all while taking adaptation actions that reduce vulnerability to the current or expected impacts of climate change.

* Limiting Overshoot - Navigating Exceedance of 1.5°C and pathways toward return

This is by no means an acceptable or preferred pathway; it is simply the best remaining option.

4. Avoiding every additional fraction of a degree of global warming and reducing the time in overshoot decrease risks and damages and increase the chances of bringing temperatures back down.

The duration and severity of the overshoot, peak and decline pathway, and the ability of communities to cope, will depend on how fast emissions are cut and how quickly transformational adaptation measures are implemented. Reductions in methane and other short-lived climate pollutants are particularly important in the immediate term. Enhancing adaptive and mitigation capacity requires strong political will, urgent multilateral action, effective policies and finance — with equity, justice and differentiated responsibilities serving as guiding principles.

5. The global response needs to encompass three interconnected phases: immediate response, coping and containment, and long-term resilience.

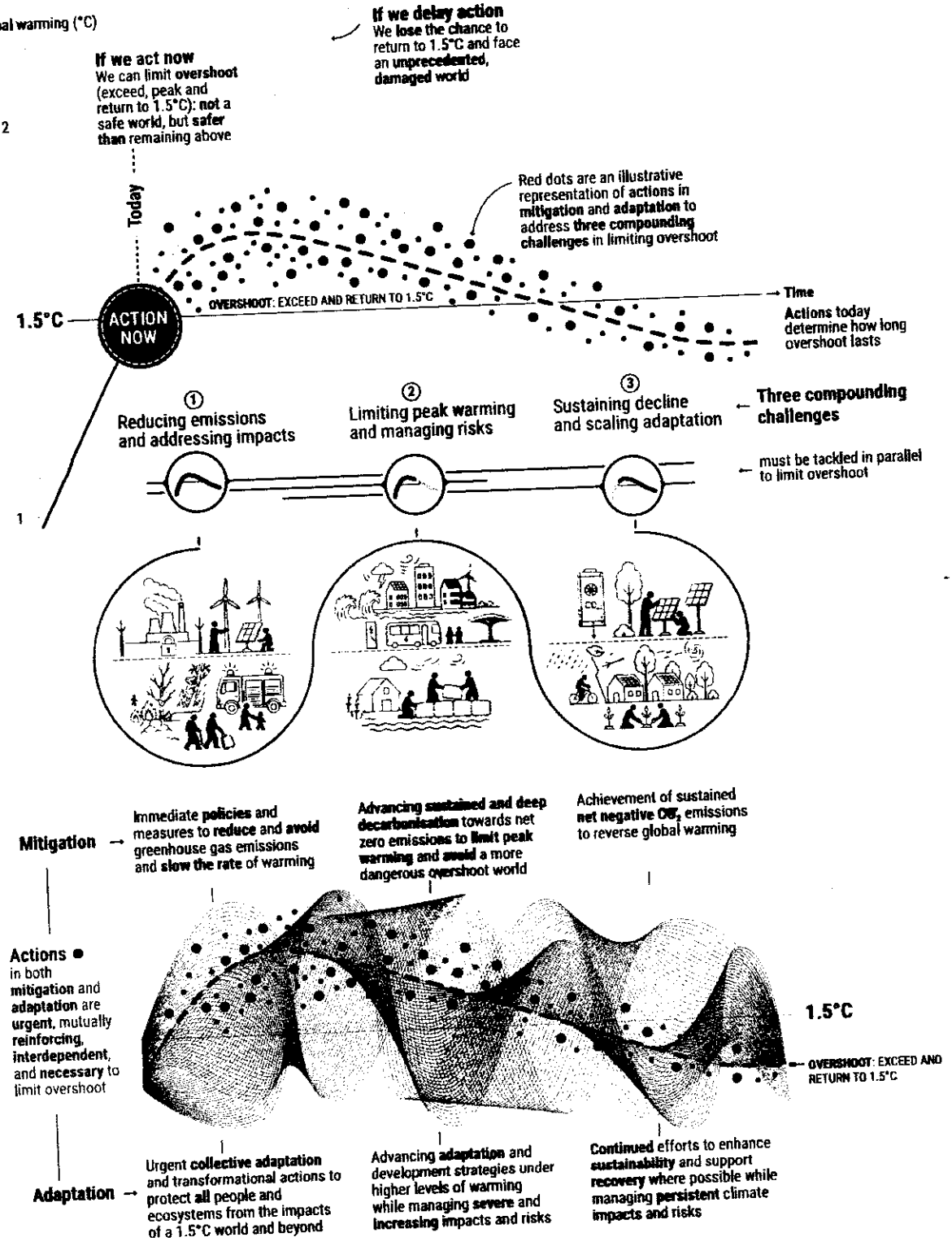
- **Immediate response phase (as temperatures approach, then exceed, 1.5°C)**: Slow warming quickly through deep emissions cuts, including to methane and other short-lived climate pollutants. Adopt urgent adaptation measures that protect the most-vulnerable people and ecosystems.
- **Coping and containment phase (as temperatures peak)**: Advance deep and sustained decarbonization that achieves at least net-zero emissions. Develop societal resilience, while managing severe impacts and risks.
- **Long-term resilience phase (as temperatures decline and stabilize)**: Deliver sustained net-negative carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions. Enhance sustainability and resilience. Ensure lasting adaptation where irreversible limits have been reached.

Figure ES 1: Temperature overshoot: actions and challenges *(See next page)*

Description: This is an illustrative depiction of temperature overshoot and the actions and challenges associated with limiting its magnitude, duration and consequences. The visual features in the **top panel** are indicative and do not represent precise warming magnitudes, rates or probabilities. The black dashed line represents an overshoot pathway adapted from an SSP2-4.5 pathway based on IPCC (2021), while the light grey dashed line represents a high-overshoot pathway adapted from Reisinger *et al.* (2025). The horizontal line marks the 1.5°C global warming level, relative to 1850–1900. The light grey trajectories in the background are illustrative and are informed by visual interpolation across an ensemble of SSP scenarios and tipping-point peaks, depicting a world that may become increasingly challenging depending on the actions we take. The red dots are an illustrative representation of actions in mitigation and adaptation to limit overshoot. (See Conclusion for full description)

TEMPERATURE OVERSHOOT: EXCEED AND RETURN TO 1.5°C

Decades of **insufficient** action have locked us into **three compounding challenges** to limiting **temperature overshoot**, with an **urgent** need for action now



In practice, multiple phases will coexist across time and across and within regions. Impacts are expected to accumulate dynamically across the overshoot, peak and decline pathway, with each phase inheriting the legacies of those that preceded it.

6. Mitigation and adaptation are fundamentally interconnected and must advance together throughout all phases.

Mitigation and adaptation are both critical to address the climate challenge and protect human and natural systems. Many interventions can achieve adaptation and mitigation goals at once — increasing urban tree canopy coverage, for example, lowers heat-related morbidity and mortality while reducing the need for energy intensive and polluting cooling approaches.

Weak mitigation will increase impacts and potentially divert funds to emergency responses instead of needed climate action, creating a feedback loop. Yet even the most successful mitigation efforts will not eliminate the need for adaptation: 1.5°C is not considered safe for most nations, communities, ecosystems and sectors. Meanwhile, current adaptation plans and their implementation often overlook links to mitigation, neglect inequalities and insufficiently address loss and damage and adaptation limits. Without proper adaptation, the assets built to cut emissions are themselves at risk. Therefore, actions to reduce and manage the risks of climate change will need to be radically re-thought, re-imagined and re-calibrated under the overshoot, peak and decline pathway.

7. To navigate an overshoot, peak and decline pathway, the world must adopt proactive approaches that deploy flexible, multi-level governance, particularly when it comes to adaptation.

Such approaches are necessary to anticipate coming risks, integrate new knowledge, reduce and adapt to climate impacts before they arrive with full force, and allow enough agility to adjust to uncertainties associated with the decline to 1.5°C. Adaptation set up now forms the foundation for all efforts to come, but it must become transformational and responsive to evolving non-linear and abruptly arising risks, recognizing these will occur unevenly across regions or systems. Expected profound shifts—such as submersion of SIDS or low-lying coastal cities and uninhabitability across the world—mean that incremental adjustments are not enough.

Transformational adaptation must embed flexibility, learning and continual revision of baselines across all phases.

8. Conventional and novel Carbon Dioxide Removal (CDR) will be needed in addition to, not instead of, sustained reductions in residual greenhouse gas emissions, but CDR methods come with risks and trade-offs that could limit their potential — calling for strong governance frameworks that ensure responsible and appropriate deployment of CDR.

CDR comes in two forms: conventional, such as afforestation and ecosystem restoration, and novel, such as bioenergy combined with carbon capture and storage, and direct air carbon capture and storage. However, CDR can only contribute credibly to a return to below 1.5°C within the 21st century if peak warming remains well below 2°C and all remaining emissions of CO_2, methane and other greenhouse gases are reduced. Beyond around 1.8°C, decline to 1.5°C during the 21st century becomes increasingly challenging. In a warmer future, nature's removal and carbon retention capacity will likely be eroded, while competition between sustainable development goals and CDR can limit the feasibility of land-intensive mitigation strategies.

It would take over 100 years of afforestation and forest management at the current scale, and zero residual CO_2 emissions, to bring warming back by 0.1°C. Meanwhile, the temperature reduction achievable through novel CDR that relies on geological carbon storage is also constrained. Just maintaining net-zero CO_2 emissions could exhaust current estimated storage capacity in sedimentary basins by 2200.

While rapid upscaling of CDR is critical, alongside urgent and accelerated emission reductions, strong governance frameworks on CDR are needed to manage implications for equity, scale and uptake — and to provide guardrails for the exploration of new and uncertain technologies that could have unintended negative consequences.

Overall, even optimistic CDR scaling is unlikely to deliver a temperature reversal beyond a few tenths of a degree this century. This emphasizes the importance of focusing on reducing greenhouse gas emissions now.

9. Equity and justice must be the core of effective strategies to protect the vulnerable, create a just transition for communities and workforces, and secure a liveable future for coming generations.

Countries with greater historical responsibility for climate change and capability to address it should act the hardest and fastest. Countries disproportionately impacted by climate change must be an integral and respected part of the global decision-making process; they should take an active role in implementation of mitigation and adaptation, based on science and the principles of equity, as a matter of survival.

10. Even if a return to below 1.5°C is secured, many nations and communities will face irreversible losses and permanently changed conditions.

Impacts such as continued sea-level rise, species extinctions and ecosystem regime shifts may continue far beyond peak temperatures. Many communities may have relocated or changed livelihoods. Societies will face the challenge of readjustment: agricultural systems reconfigured for higher temperatures may need to be readapted; infrastructure designed for climate extremes may become mismatched; communities weakened by decades of crisis will face a second transition capacity; and maladaptation from mitigation may be an issue.

11. The legacy consequences of overshoot raise issues of justice, power and political legitimacy, which will require inclusive governance arrangements far beyond what most current climate governance envisions.

Governance arrangements at all scales will have to evolve to resolve difficult issues, such as deciding what gets rebuilt, how livelihoods are reconfigured, how loss and damage is addressed, and how the sovereignty and entitlements of SIDS and their peoples are respected even as their territories face increasing risk of uninhabitability.

12. Rapid, collective and global action is vital — with stronger political will, multilateralism and governance as key enabling conditions for all efforts.

Across both mitigation and adaptation, countries will need to strengthen international cooperation, align policies and institutions with the realities of overshoot, and substantially increase finance, technology transfer and capacity-building. Effective multilateralism will be essential to coordinate action across borders and generations, manage shared risks and ensure that countries with the least responsibility and capacity are not left to face the greatest burdens alone.

13. As an overshoot, peak and decline pathway could unfold over decades to centuries, subject to many unknowns, the discussion and efforts initiated by this report will need to evolve alongside the challenge.

The prospect of an overshoot pathway points to new frontiers for research and science to underpin and support better understanding, policy setting, governance and decision-making. The science, policies and institutions needed to navigate this pathway must therefore evolve as knowledge and conditions change. Particular attention is required to the poorly understood decline stage, the durability and equity of carbon removal, persistent and irreversible impacts, and adaptation as temperatures peak and later recede.

This report is not a definitive prescription, but a foundation for sustained research, learning, action and inclusive decision-making across generations.

The issues of equity and trade-offs require further research, learning and shaping as the baton is passed from generation to generation, across different geographies, and within countries and communities.