

Comments on Proposed Comp Plan

The first question one MUST ask about any proposal is: What problem are we trying to solve? That never seems to be stated. Instead there is a vision:

The Community Vision

The Community Framework Plan encourages growth in urban growth areas and rural centers, with each area center separate and distinct from the others. These centers of development are of different sizes; they may contain different combinations of housing, shopping, and employment areas. Each provides places to live and work. The centers are oriented and developed around neighborhoods to allow residents the ability to easily move through and to feel comfortable within areas that create a distinct sense of place and community.

Whose vision this is?

Is this the vision of the average citizen? Or is it the vision of some nameless planner?

The proposed changes to people's daily lives to accomplish this vision appears to be:

1. Reduce car use.
2. Increase mass transit.
3. Prevent sprawl by increasing density and limiting land availability.
4. Modify roads for bikes/transit.

The reality is that NONE of these will reduce any real problem and will make people less well off.

Introduction

Since Portland long ago implemented all of these elements, we can look to Portland to see how they have worked.

Portland had the highest housing cost increase in the nation:

The Standard & Poor's/Case-Shiller 20-city home price index rose 5.8 percent from a year ago, up from a 5.5 percent pace in October, according to a Tuesday report.

Among the 20 cities included in the index, though, Portland gained the most year over year -- up 11.1 percent. It gained 0.3 percentage points between October and November.

http://www.oregonlive.com/business/index.ssf/2016/01/portland_has_nations_highest_y.html

Dave Nielsen, CEO of the Home Builders Association of Metropolitan Portland:

“While there are some common factors our market shares with other markets facing similar issues around the country, two things that make our market worse are a lack of functional land supply and high government regulations and fees,” Nielsen says. “Our National Association did a study and found that, on average, regulations add almost \$85,000 to the price of a new home.”

<http://portlandtribune.com/pt/9-news/309358-187379-home-prices-rents-continue-to-rise>

Portland remained the 12th most expensive rental market in the nation in April, says a report released last week by Zumper, an online rental resource.

IBID

Here is what one analysis found:

When judged by the results rather than the intentions, the costs of Portland's planning far outweigh the benefits. Planners made housing unaffordable to force more people to live in multifamily housing or in homes on tiny lots. They allowed congestion to increase to

near-gridlock levels to force more people to ride the region's expensive rail transit lines. They diverted billions of dollars of taxes from schools, fire, public health, and other essential services to subsidize the construction of transit and high-density housing projects.

Those high costs have not produced the utopia planners promised. Far from curbing sprawl, high housing prices led tens of thousands of families to move to Vancouver, Washington, and other cities outside the region's authority. Far from reducing driving, rail transit has actually reduced the share of travel using transit from what it was in 1980. And developers have found that so-called transit oriented developments only work when they include plenty of parking.

Please go to this link for the full report:

<http://object.cato.org/sites/cato.org/files/pubs/pdf/pa-596.pdf>

1. Reduce car use

As shown below, cars are a fast, convenient, low cost and low polluting way to get places. They are ready 24/7 to take us wherever we want to go without waiting for a bus or walking to a bus stop. This saving of time places cars in the same category as other labor saving devices, in both the home and on the job, that has made our society one of the most productive in the world. Speed in doing things translates directly into economic prosperity and an increased standard of living. Further cars can reach many more potential employment choices than buses, so our job choices are increased. More job choices gives more income and a better match to our desires, thus makes us happier.

That this is to reduce car use, it will waste time, money and energy getting places and thus reduce our personal (and society's income) which reduces our standard of living and reduces our well being.

Cars are cheaper by a wide margin. AAA says that the cost of driving is 59.2 cents per mile. Allowing for the fact that the average car has 1.6 passengers, the average cost per passenger-mile is 37 cents. This is a highball number based upscale AAA member's car costs, not the USA average. (The cost for an average USA car is around 27 cents.) This is about 1/3 the cost of C-Tran's 95 cents per passenger-mile (C-tran carried 36,193,395 passenger miles at a cost of \$34,483,217.)

See: <http://www.portlandfacts.com/cars-vs-transit.html>

and: <http://www.urbantransport.org/costcomp.pdf>

Cars are faster A study of commute to work times shows that, in most cities, transit users spend almost double the time getting to work compared to those who use a car (48 minutes for transit compared to 25 by car). Planners say that will change when we have high density because the distances are shorter. They ignore the actual data which shows our densest MSA, Los Angeles still has an average transit commute time of 46 minutes compared to car's 27 minutes for residents of the city of Los Angeles and about the same for the whole area at 47 and 27 minutes. For NY City, it is 48 and 32 minutes; 51 and 28 minutes for the whole area. See: <http://www.portlandfacts.com/commutetime.html>

Cars Are More Convenient : Your car is usually a few steps away in your garage (or within a short walk of your front door) compared to several blocks away for transit, or ¼ mile for light rail. Your car takes you when you want to go instead of being a slave to a bus schedule. There is no waiting for the bus in 100 degree heat or 0 degree cold. There is no exposure to criminals on the way to, or at, the bus stop. You can make many stops on your way, unlike transit which

involves a long wait for a bus after each stop. When shopping, you can load up a weeks (or month's) worth of groceries in your car, or carry a day or two's worth of groceries on, the sometimes crowded bus. And you NEVER have to stand up, jammed cheek to cheek with strangers, in your car.

Cars use less energy than transit. The Transportation Energy Data Book shows cars use 3,144 BTU per-passenger-mile and "Transit Buses" use 4,071, 29% more. See: http://cta.ornl.gov/data/tedb34/Edition34_Chapter02.pdf Table 2.14. (Also see table 2.15)

For older people driving is much easier than using transit - "In fact, driving is often the easiest physical task for older people. Long before they lose the ability to drive, older people may be unable to board or ride public transit, or to walk to a bus stop or train station"

From: Chapter IV. Debunking the Myths of Elderly Travel Needs; The Mobility Needs of Older Americans: Implications for Transportation Reauthorization; Sandra Rosenbloom

http://www.brookings.edu/reports/2003/07transportation_rosenbloom.aspx

See: <http://www.debunkingportland.com/elderly%20travel.html>

Cars rated as a most needed item. A Pew research poll found that people rate cars as the most needed item. See: <http://www.debunkingportland.com/carsnecessary.html>

- **Cars put more destinations within easy reach:** One can travel to far more destinations in a given amount of time by Car, improving your standard of living.
- **More Job Choices:** Instead of choosing jobs along transit lines, one can choose from the whole area. More job choices usually means you can get a job that pays more.
- **More Shopping Choices:** The ability to travel further allows a broader choices of where to shop and lets you choose lower cost stores, lowering your cost of living.
- **More Living Choices:** The ability to travel further gives you a broader choices of where to live. This lets you choose a location that has better schools, lower housing costs or other better choices.
- **More Leisure Time Choices:** Faster travel means you can travel further to that great restaurant.
- **More Convenient:** Your car is usually just a few feet from your front door, so you don't have to walk ¼ mile to the transit stop.
- **Less exposure to crime:** You can choose your traveling companions - no drug dealers, no crazy people and no criminals.
- **Enabling the civil rights** and women's liberation movements
- **Making outdoor sports** and numerous other recreational and social opportunities available to the average person;
- **Providing rapid access to fire** and other emergency services and swift escape from natural disasters.

Because of these benefits, it is reasonable to call the mass-produced automobile the greatest invention in the 230 years since the American republic was founded. Those who seek to reduce the amount of driving people do by imposing disincentives to the auto or allowing traffic congestion to increase risk killing, or at least limiting, the automotive goose that laid the golden egg of American prosperity.

(Parts from: The Greatest Invention: How Automobiles Made America Great, Randal O'Toole)

http://www.portlandfacts.com/cars_improve_living.html

2. Increase mass transit use

As we saw above,

- transit is slower than driving
- transit uses more energy than driving
- transit costs more than driving
- transit is less convenient than driving

In view of these harmful effects of transit, what is the social good of getting people out of cars and onto transit?

Few low income people use transit “One of the most frequently recurring justifications for densification policies (smart growth, growth management, livability, etc.) lies with the assumption that the automobile-based mobility system disadvantages lower income citizens. Much of the solution, according to advocates of densification is to discourage driving and orient both urbanization and the urban transportation system toward transit as well as walking and cycling.”

“Indeed, the impression that lower income citizens rely on transit to a significantly greater degree than everyone else is just that – an impression....This is illustrated by a compilation of work trip data from the five-year American Community Survey for 2006 to 2010. In the nation's 51 major metropolitan areas (more than 1,000,000 population), 76.3% of lower income employees use cars to get to work, three times that of all other modes combined “

<http://www.newgeography.com/content/002666-how-lower-income-citizens-commute>

Even big city transit does not beat cars: It does not save energy and is still much more expensive than driving. This indicates that increased density will not make transit cost, time or energy competitive with cars: <http://www.portlandfacts.com/top10bus.html>

Mass transit spending can increase congestion by spending money on the tiny minority of people that use transit instead of the vast majority that drive: “Policies designed to promote transit utilization can in certain instances increase traffic congestion—as appears to have been the case in Portland, Oregon.” http://www.portlandfacts.com/transit_congestion.html

Transit does not reduce congestion:

http://www.portlandfacts.com/a-498090~Wendell_Cox_Mass_transit_does_not_reduce_congestion.html

Mass transit has been losing market share for over 100 years and is unlikely to reverse to any significant degree: <http://www.publicpurpose.com/ut-usptshare45.pdf>

<http://www.newgeography.com/content/001634-despite-transits-2008-peak-longer-term-market-trend-down-a-25-year-report-transit-rid>

We sometimes hear that Europeans use transit instead of driving and we can do the same if we remake our cities to be more like Europe. Eurostat says that, in the 15 advanced countries, passenger rail fell by 23%, buses fell by 27%, trams & metro fell by 21% while passenger cars increased 2.5% to 78% of all motorized travel.

<http://www.portlandfacts.com/transit/eurotranistshareloss.htm>

The false claim that GM destroyed streetcars is part of the transit story:

<http://www.portlandfacts.com/transit/gm-streetcar.htm>

<http://www.1134.org/stan/ul/GM-et-al.html>

Some general transit information: <http://www.portlandfacts.com/sometransitfacts01.htm>

3. Prevent sprawl by increasing density

Sprawl and density are really the opposite of each other. High density is the proposal to accommodate more people by building “up instead of out”. Downsides of this include high density costing more than low density “sprawl”, concentrating driving on fewer roads in the dense areas increases congestion, most people want a single family home with a real back yard.

Most jobs and shopping centers are now in the suburbs (“sprawl”), so driving is spread over a wide area with less congestion. People often confuse Los Angeles style development with sprawl, but the reality is that Los Angeles is the densest MSA in the county - Los Angeles is an example of high density, not sprawl (NY central city is denser, but not the MSA.)

Sprawl is poorly defined, but here are several definitions of Sprawl:

<http://www.portlandfacts.com/smart/sprawldefined.htm>

Here is what actual Portland sprawl looks like:

<http://www.portlandfacts.com/smart/sprawl/sprawl3.htm>

Is this really what we want to stop with government planning?

Health effects of “sprawl”: “No correlation between urban form and obesity has been proven”:

<https://nextcity.org/daily/entry/urban-design-planning-obesity-geography-studies>

High density REDUCES socialization: “The statistical revelation behind all of these findings is that for every 10% increase in density, there is a 10% decrease in socialization.”

<http://www.portlandfacts.com/smart/socialinteractionandurbansprawl.htm>

High Density construction cost is much higher than single family construction, contributing to unaffordable housing: <http://www.portlandfacts.com/smart/densitycost.htm>

Restricting land availability, to force higher densities, increases land costs which adds more to the cost of housing. See below.

Density has little effect on daily driving until you get to very high densities (probably because the severe congestion prevents driving):

<http://www.portlandfacts.com/smart/densitycongestion.htm>

Limiting buildable land (as this plan does) increases the cost of housing

“Restricted supply leads to higher prices and less affordability” is what Obama’s chief economic advisor said: “Restricted supply leads to higher prices and less affordability. We see the association in the relationship between land use regulations and affordability in several dozen U.S. metro areas (Figure 3)..... This house price appreciation experienced especially in those cities towards the right of the figure presents affordability challenges for nearly all, but they can hit the poorest Americans the hardest.” Read the whole speech here

https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/page/files/20151120_barriers_shared_growth_land_use_regulation_and_economic_rents.pdf

Nobel economist, Krugman described the cost of zoning before the housing bubble burst:

“But in the Zoned Zone, which lies along the coasts, a combination of high population density and land-use restrictions - hence "zoned" - makes it hard to build new houses. So when people become willing to spend more on houses, say because of a fall in mortgage rates, some houses get built, but the prices of existing houses also go up. And if people think that prices will continue to rise, they become willing to spend even more, driving prices still higher, and so on.”

<http://www.portlandfacts.com/krugmanbubble.html>

“Smart growth and other land-use restrictions cost U.S. homebuyers at least \$275 billion in 2005. This conclusion is based on several measures of housing affordability in more than 300 metropolitan areas. The 48-page report finds that high housing prices are almost always due to government planning rules that prevent homebuilders from meeting the demand for new homes. Such rules cause prices to increase much faster than incomes, which quickly makes housing unaffordable “ <http://americandreamcoalition.org/penalty.html>

California has more draconian land use laws than Washington and hence is more unaffordable: “California cities have the least affordable housing and the most congested traffic in the nation. California’s housing crisis results directly from several little-known state institutions, including local agency formation commissions (LAFCo), which regulate annexations and the formation of new cities and service districts; the California Environmental Quality Act, which imposes high costs on new developments; and a 1971 state planning law that effectively entitles any resident in the state to a say in how property owners in the state use their land. “ <http://object.cato.org/sites/cato.org/files/pubs/pdf/pa602.pdf>

UW study: Rules add \$200,000 to Seattle house price: “The skyrocketing of home prices from 1989 to 2006 was largely because of laws intended to preserve the area's character, analysis finds.“ http://old.seattletimes.com/html/business/technology/2004181704_eicher14.html

Portland was affordable before planning took over: “In Portland’s case, median home prices were 1.8 times median family incomes before planners drew the growth boundary. Since then, the population inside the growth boundary has grown by 60 percent but the boundary has been expanded to add only 14 percent more land. As a result, median home prices today are 4.1 times median family incomes. Because all Oregon cities must have growth boundaries, Oregon in 2014 was the fifth-least-affordable state after Hawaii, California, New York, and Massachusetts. Of course, higher prices also have to do with increased land-use regulation, stiffer development fees, and other costs, but cities like Portland wouldn’t dare to impose those restrictions and fees if there weren’t an urban-growth boundary to prevent people from escaping to low-cost housing elsewhere.” <http://ti.org/antiplanner/?p=11612>

People DO NOT want high density - Portlanders voted 3:1 against more density: <http://www.portlandfacts.com/smart/metrodensityvote.htm>

Page of links to housing cost references:
<http://www.portlandfacts.com/housing.html>
<http://www.portlandfacts.com/housing/housingcost.htm>

We are not running out of land: <http://www.portlandfacts.com/urbansprawl.html>

4. Roads

You can build your way out of congestion:

“San Jose is living proof that crowded cities can build their way out of congestion: Between 1989 and 1994, the region gained 100,000 new jobs, yet new road construction cut the delays encountered by the average rush-hour driver in half. ...”

From UDOT web site: “Since the Parkway opened to traffic it is estimated that traffic on I-15, between the U.S. 89/Legacy Parkway/I-15 interchange in Farmington and the I-215 exit in North Salt Lake, has been consistently reduced as much as 20 percent.”

“The usual stop-and-crawl delays of a half-hour to nearly an hour - especially on the Wednesdays before the holiday - should be history, officials said. ‘
from <http://www.portlandfacts.com/roads/buildwayout.htm>

Traffic Calming kills people by slowing fire trucks and ambulances and saves few lives because most fatalities occur on higher speed roads that are not subjects of speed bumps:

- London ambulance drives describes patient harm:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EvFE6WMNhNs>
 - Former Austin deputy fire chief explains how traffic Calming KILLS many times as many people by slowing emergency responses as are potentially saved by slowing traffic:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iZEY8ERtWRI>
 - “Factors that slow PF&R’s response in some geographic areas more than in others include distance, topography (like hills), congestion, and traffic calming structures such as speed bumps.” Page 7 of <http://www.portlandonline.com/auditor/index.cfm?c=51639&a=307535>
 - “Firefighters say they sometimes choose a longer route without speed bumps to avoid a direct route with speed bumps on it.” IBID, pg26
 - “each speed bump can add up to nine seconds of delay.” IBID, pg26
- See: <http://www.portlandfacts.com/calming.html>

One-Way Streets are safer than Two-Way Streets: “Studies were conducted from the 1930's to the 1970's of "before" and "after" conditions as cities switched from two-way to one-way streets. Almost universally they found that one-way streets had 10-20% lower accident rates than when previously two-way. Most significantly, pedestrian accidents plummeted by 30-60% (Pages A-126; A-162, Source 1; Pages 7-2 to 7-8, Source 2; Source 3; Page 28, Source 4; and Chapter 10, Source 5). As one traffic safety expert noted: "Conversion from two-way to one-way street systems has consistently been found to reduce pedestrian accidents" (Source 6).

“Nothing the City of Portland has done to reduce pedestrian accidents in the past 70 years has been as effective as implementing one-way streets. When the City of Portland converted most of its downtown street system to one-way in the late 1940's it found a 50% decline in pedestrian accidents, a decline in auto accidents, higher speeds, better traffic flow, and what seemed like emptier streets (because of the wider gaps in traffic), These results were typical of the many cities that made such conversions. All forms of transportation benefited: pedestrians the most, but also buses, autos, trucks, and bicycles. It has proven to be a win-win proposition where implemented.”

“Since 1980 several one-way streets have been converted back to two-way flow in downtown areas. In 1986 Denver converted seven streets on three one-way couplets. Average intersection accident rates increased 37.6% while average mid-block accident rates increased 80.5%. The City report noted that accident rates were up on all three couplets "as is expected with two-way operation" (Pages 23 and 29, Source 7). Lubbock, Texas in 1995 converted two streets back to two-way. Overall accident rates increased there 41.6% (Source 8).” From:
<http://www.portlandfacts.com/onewaystreets.htm>

Miscellany

If smart growth doesn't work, what does?

We did just fine before city planners were given dictatorial powers. Our cities grew in a low cost, orderly manner by converting close in farms to housing as has been done for thousands of years.

(The term “suburbs” is an ancient term that means beyond the wall found around cities since Roman times. or before) Some say we must preserve farmland, but this country is NOT running out of farmland and farmland acreage is being kept out of production by government policy and lack of need..

Anything outside of the earliest city core was most likely built on farmland. In Portland this includes almost everything on the East side of the Willamette river, including Ladd’s Addition.

To answer the question of what does work: First get rid of what DOES NOT WORK! That is most government planning. Keep only enough planners to discover what the people really need to live the way they want to live instead of how the planners want people to live and provide the needed infrastructure.

It is useful to review how government actually works:

<http://www.portlandfacts.com/politics.html>

About planners:

This memo from the planners on the Columbia River Crossing planners details **how to make it look like planners are listening to the public** (with proper public meetings and input), while actually ignoring them! http://www.portlandfacts.com/crc_decision_making.html

Former Metro planning director, Rich Carson said planners are mostly fascists:

http://www.portlandfacts.com/planners_are_fascists.html

(Richard Carson is a former planning director for METRO that planned for the 1.5 million people, 25 cities and three counties in the Portland region. He is a former planning manager for the state of Oregon, Metro, Oregon City and Clark County Washington.)

How Staff Tricks the Elected Officials: <http://www.portlandfacts.com/politics.html>

Some other information related to planning issues:

We are not running out of resources: http://www.portlandfacts.com/no_limits.html

World population NOT out of control: <http://www.portlandfacts.com/worldpopulation.html>

Recycling is Garbage:

<http://www.nytimes.com/1996/06/30/magazine/recycling-is-garbage.html?scp=1&sq=Recycling%20Is%20Garbage&st=cse>

The great recycling myth:

<http://www.spectator.co.uk/2014/01/why-kerbside-recycling-is-just-slave-labour-for-councils/>

Household Recycling is State-Endorsed Slavery: Household Recycling is State-Endorsed Slavery:

<http://www.breitbart.com/london/2014/07/05/household-recycling-is-state-endorsed-slavery/>

Highly Recommended Videos:

How “smart Growth” is destroying prosperity:

The War on the Dream, Wendell Cox <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f32AynGMMcc>

How city planners are making housing unaffordable, Randal O'Toole
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WbhKVGtOV7U>

A better way to redevelop downtowns: Deregulating Down towns, Steven Greenhut (Orange County Register) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mg1HWn27jiY>

Deregulating Land Use - Wendell Cox (publicpurpose.com)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BDzKAr3FfIE>

Comments on Specific Quotes From the Proposed Comp Plan

Quotes are from: 04_Community Framework Plan-no changes proposed.pdf

Italics are quotes from the plan, underlines added

The Community Vision

The Community Framework Plan encourages growth in urban growth areas and rural centers, with each area center separate and distinct from the others. These centers of development are of different sizes; they may contain different combinations of housing, shopping, and employment areas. Each provides places to live and work. The centers are oriented and developed around neighborhoods to allow residents the ability to easily move through and to feel comfortable within areas that create a distinct sense of place and community.

Whose vision is this? Where did it come from? Is it really what the people want? Planners love to create a place for everything and plan for every detail. But they cannot forecast the future, so their plans eventually end up hurting people as described above by Obama's chief economic advisor.

A primary goal of the plan is to provide housing in close proximity to jobs resulting in shorter vehicle trips, and allows densities along public transit corridors that support high capacity transit, either bus or light rail.

Voters firmly rejected light rail multiple times - why does this plan ignore the wishes of the people by including light rail? Why do the planners think shorter vehicle trips are a good trade-off for higher costs, loss of privacy and loss of living space associated with higher density?

development in each of the urban growth areas would have a higher average density than currently exists.

Do most people want higher densities? Portland voted against higher density by a 3:1 margin <http://www.portlandfacts.com/smart/metrodensityvote.htm> (Repeat of above link)

A minimum of 25 percent of the new housing would be duplexes, townhouses, or apartments.
Since this plan will increase housing costs, fewer people will be able to afford a house

Most of northern Clark County would remain as it is today,

This deprives landowners of their property rights and creates an artificial shortage of land which increases housing unaffordability.

In order to achieve the vision of Clark County as a collection of distinct communities surrounded by open space, agriculture, and forest uses, Clark County and each of the cities and will adopt certain types of policies.

Whose vision is this? Almost certainly NOT the vision of the average citizen who wants to

live in a single family house with yard space. Who gave Clark County the right to dictate to cities?

All planning should be in the form of complete and integrated communities containing housing, shops, work places, schools, parks, and civic facilities essential to the daily life of the residents. Community size should be designed so that housing, jobs, daily needs and other activities are within easy walking distance of each other.

This plans requires, multiple grocery stores, multiple doctors, multiple hospitals, multiple industries, multiple home improvement stores, multiple department stores all to be within a very small are filled with potential customers. NOT EVEN HONG KONG IS THAT DENSE! This is another totally unrealistic planner fantasy of the perfect world. (Not everyone likes McDonalds or WalMart, or Lowes, so there must be multiple choices for each item that people require.)

2.1.1 Establish density targets with jurisdictions in the county for different types of communities, consistent with the definitions of Urban Growth Areas and Rural Centers.

Again, this will make all neighborhoods denser - is this what people really want?

2.1.3 Establish maximum as well as minimum lot sizes and densities in urban areas.

This will make all urban neighborhoods denser - again, is this really what people want?

All cities and towns are to encourage infill housing as the first priority for meeting the housing needs of the community.

Mandates increased density in all neighborhoods. Infill means tearing down low cost existing homes to replace them with multiple high cost houses on the same lot, second houses squeezed in next to existing homes, filling every vacant lot. This can be seen in most Portland neighborhoods and is the subject of citizen protests. Again, is this really what people want?

2.1.10 Establish a mechanism for identifying and mitigating adverse impacts on housing production and housing cost which result from adoption of new development regulations or fees.

This is an admission that this plan will increase costs and it pretends that basic economics can be overcome by “mitigating”. Since this plan will probable double the cost of housing, mitigation would require the taxpayers to pay ½ the cost of all new homes. (And existing homes too, as those increase in price with new houses.)

This is another example of planners being out of touch with reality. It also show that the planners know that this plan will make housing unaffordable and simply don't care about people's well being.

5.1.1 Encourage transportation systems that provide a variety of options (high capacity transit, high-occupancy vehicles, buses, autos, bicycles or walking) within and between and rural centers.

This is more anti car (really anti-mobility) planning. Again, is this really what people want?

5.1.3 To reduce vehicle trips, encourage mixed land use and locate as many other activities as possible to be located within easy walking and bicycling distances from public transit stops.

Mixed use is another variant on high density and another proposed reduction in mobility by encoring transit use. Planners just don't like cars. They plan as if transit saved money (it doesn't), saved energy (it doesn't), saved time (it doesn't) or reduced pollution (it doesn't)

because it uses more energy than cars.)

5.1.4 Encourage use of alternative types of transportation, particularly those that reduce mobile emissions (bicycle, walking, carpools, and public transit).

This falsely claims that “public transit” will “reduce mobile emissions”. Federal transit data shows that transit uses about 30% more BTU per passenger-mile than cars. See: Table 2.14 of http://cta.ornl.gov/data/tedb34/Edition34_Chapter02.pdf

5.1.5 Establish residential, commercial and industrial development standards including road and parking standards, to support the use of alternative transportation modes.

This means keep road capacity and parking spaces lower than needed to try to force people out of cars. Planners refuse to admit that transit has been losing market share for over 100 years and is currently under 3% in most areas.

5.1.8 Encourage a balanced transportation system and can be maintained at acceptable level-of-service.

Balanced, in planner code speak, means getting people out of cars, by spending more money on bike lanes, transit and making it harder to drive with narrower roads, bike lanes, giving entire streets to bikes, bubble curbs, and speed bumps.

9.1.5 Develop transit-friendly design standards for commercial and industrial areas. Encourage businesses to take responsibility for travel demand management for their employees.

More getting people out of car rhetoric with a requirement that employers help, typically, by restricting parking and being required to buy bus passes for employees under threat of fines.

10.1.4 Establish development standards for higher densities and intensities of development along priority and high capacity transit corridors that encourage pedestrian, bicycle, and public transit usage.

Planners claim that such corridors reduce driving, and they may by a few percent, but the vast majority of the residents still drive and that driving is concentrated in small areas, increasing congestion.

10.1.5 Encourage street, pedestrian path and bike path standards that contribute to a system of fully-connected and interesting routes to all destinations. Their design should encourage pedestrian and bicycle use and be defined by buildings, trees and lighting, and discouraging high speed traffic.

Less road capacity and more congestion as bike lanes and trees take up former road space. Discouraging high speed traffic means lower speed limits to reduce the advantage cars have over transit, biking and walking.

In Conclusion

This plan will do more harm than good, each of its major proposals, increased density, less driving, more transit use, limiting land availability, and not increasing road capacity has been shown to waste money, harm people and harm the economy. It will make Clark County poorer.

Of particular note is the fact that some people put their life savings into land for their retirement home, only to be told that they cannot build on that land -- in essence, the planners stole their life savings and don't seem to care.

That this plan is being seriously proposed by "professional" planners shows that planners are seriously out of touch with reality, out of touch with what people actually want and simply do not care about people's well being. More importantly, they are proposing elements that hurt people and hurt the economy. That the plan includes such elements, show that the planners want to dictate lifestyle changes to the people, instead of accommodating the needs of the people. They are behaving like, as one top Portland planner said, fascists. As such, they have no place in a representative democracy.

That this plan was produced under the direction of the county manager, shows that the manager shares this fascistic view of governance and lack of caring about the people's well being.

These attitudes are unlikely to be changed without wholesale personnel changes. Although some may have sympathy for planners "just doing their job", the planners have shown time after time that they DO NOT care about the well being of the citizens – the planners consider their plans more important than the well being of the people!