



CLARK COUNTY WASHINGTON

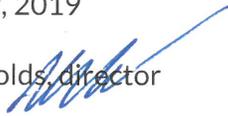
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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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FROM THE DIRECTOR

DATE: October 29, 2019
FROM: Mitch Nickolds,  director
TO: Rural Event Venue Forum Participants
SUBJECT: Status Update- Rural Event Venues

First, I wish to acknowledge and thank all Clark County residents and business owners who responded and provided support for our exploratory study of community support for rural event venues. The effort put into communicating your concerns and support, asking questions and attending meetings is valuable as we move the exploratory process forward. The status update below summarizes many public responses in a list of primary concerns and observations, and form the groundwork for the decision to move forward with proposing land use rule amendments for rural event venues and businesses.

Thank you all again for your important contributions and feedback!

Mitch Nickolds, director

Background

Currently in Clark County event businesses are only permitted as an accessory to wineries in rural areas, where wineries are a permitted use. Rural property owners recently expressed interest in a code revision that would allow rural commercial event businesses and venues not related to wineries as a permitted property use. Clark County Council asked the Community Development director to convene public forums to receive input and feedback from the public to determine the level of support for modifying current codes to allow rural event venues and businesses.

On July 31 and October 9, 2019, community forums were convened to gather feedback, opinions and recommendations regarding non-winery rural event venues from county residents, rural and farm enterprise operators and property owners. At this time approximately 50 percent of forum participants indicate they support the concept, and 50 percent expressed objection. On October 16, 2019, Clark County Councilors were briefed with the forum feedback and recommendations from forum participants.



For other formats, contact
the Clark County ADA Office

Voice 564.397.2322
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Primary Community Concerns & Observations

- **PRO:**
- Would appreciate being able to hold weddings and events but not be a winery
- Non-winery event venues could be allowed under conditional use permits as “Agri-tourism”
- Permitting non-winery rural event venues would legitimize existing unpermitted venues
- Family and private events not held for financial gain should be allowed outright
- Farm-to-table events and events for educational purposes should be allowed
- **CON:**
- Allowing commercial events in residential zones will conflict with those wanting peaceful enjoyment of their land
- Amplified sound and loud music at events (permitted or unpermitted) is a problem
- Increased traffic/speeding vehicles are a concern
- Event venues are more suitable in commercial areas with access to major highways
- Winery operations are expensive and competition from non-winery event venues could have severe revenue impacts

Community Recommendations

- Rural business opportunities should be expanded but with responsive and timely enforcement support; especially on weekends and evenings
- Rural event venues and businesses without wineries should require Type II Land Use process for a Conditional Use Permit
- Rural event venues should not be permitted in private communities (HOAs)
- Traffic, light and noise mitigation (buffers) must be required and maintained and monitored for effectiveness by the applicant
- Venue size should be tied to the size of the lot, proximity to other residences, road size and surface condition
- Ensure there is county resources and capability to actively and timely monitor events and ensure prompt compliance for violators

Next Steps and Approximate Time Frame*

- Draft recommendations for code and policy changes to allow rural event venues with CUPs and expand rural home occupation standards based on community feedback - November 2019
- Circulate draft recommendation to stakeholders for review and confirmation - November 2019
- Present draft code and policy changes to Clark County Councilors at public hearings - January/February 2020

* Dates given are approximate and subject to change – Notice of public hearings and/or additional meetings will be published in advance.