



MEETING SUMMARY

Clark County Buildable Lands Project Advisory Committee

Meeting #2

2/21/2020, 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Members Present: Bryan Snodgrass, David McDonald, Eric Golemo, Jamie Howsley, Jeff Swanson, Jennifer Baker, Jim Malinowski, Marjorie Ledell, Matt Swindell, Rian Davis, Ron Barca, Ryan Makinster, Stephen Abramson; Jerry Olson; Councilor John Blom (Council Liaison)

Staff and Presenters: Jose Alvarez, Clark County Community Planning; Bob Pool, Clark County GIS; Oliver Orjiako, Clark County Community Planning; Bob Parker, ECONorthwest; Becky Hewitt, ECONorthwest

Welcome and Status Update

Councilor Blom gave an update on Council's discussion of the Buildable Lands Project. Jose Alvarez and ECONorthwest gave an update on the topics for discussion by the Buildable Lands Project Advisory Committee (BLPAC) and the tentative meeting sequence as well as updates to the committee protocols. (See presentation and meeting materials for details.)

Meeting 1 Summary

Jose Alvarez and ECONorthwest explained the role of the meeting summary and invited clarifications and corrections. Two members offered corrections, which were recorded. The summary was approved as amended by a unanimous voice vote.

Land Classifications and Redevelopment

Bob Pool gave an overview of how the land classifications work in the VBLM currently. Becky Hewitt presented highlights of the Project team's analysis and recommendations. (See presentations for details.) Committee discussion and questions are summarized below by subtopic.

Residential: Lot Size Threshold for Vacant / Vacant Platted Lots

- Would the proposed approach account for the ability to consolidate lots?
 - This is possible but not very likely for recently platted lots. The proposed approach would assume this does not happen on vacant platted lots.
- Concerned about including platted lots. This is short-sighted, as they may have building permits on them by the time it's adopted by the Council. Platted lots are being absorbed as they're created now.
 - Depends on the lag between assigning land classifications and projecting population growth. If there is a lag of a year or more, this becomes an issue. Project Team will look into this further.
- Need to exclude gaps and slivers that aren't actually buildable.
- Need to set a time period for how far back to go for plat date. Don't know how long to go back – how long does it typically take for platted lots to be developed?
- Think it's appropriate to include platted lots—there are many smaller ones in Vancouver.
- Will this throw off the baseline, if we compare it to what we had before, since it would count land that wasn't counted before?
 - Not throwing the land in with other vacant land, counting the units towards population capacity.



Residential: Value Threshold for Vacant / Vacant vs. Underutilized Criteria

- How complex would it be to introduce some of the other factors considered by the project team? Given that the model is missing a lot overall, what is the trade-off between simplicity and accuracy?
 - The Project Team will consider this further.
- Clarifying question: explain building value versus building value per acre.
 - Example: a 1 acre lot with a \$10,000 building and a 10 acre lot with a \$100,000 building both have a building value per acre of \$10,000. Under the current system, the 1 acre lot would be considered vacant and the 10 acre lot would be considered underutilized.
- Is there a difference in the building value or building value per acre of what developed more recently compared to 2007?
 - The available data may not provide a good answer to this, since the building value data is from 2007, not the year in which the land developed.
- Would like to know the acreage of these larger lots where capacity may be underestimated using current criteria.

Residential: Lot Size for Underutilized / Small Lots with Capacity

- There is demand to convert to higher density, but a 2-4 lot short plat is not cost-effective.
- Considering zoning capacity is important in identifying potential for additional development on smaller lots (under 1 acre). Will need to set a capacity threshold. Likely more in the multifamily density range, not low-density residential.
- How are things like cottage homes and Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) being addressed?
 - These are not captured in the current methodology. The proposed approach would not capture things like adding an ADU to an existing home.

Commercial/Industrial

- Need some way of ground-truthing this. Maybe look at examples that people are familiar with.
- Need a different form of analysis to look at underutilized commercial/industrial land. Sometimes businesses bring in new equipment but don't change the building.
- Some commercial/industrial land is fully functional but doesn't have buildings at all.
 - One way of accounting for this is by identifying parcels that are assessed together as built, even if they don't have improvements, on the assumption they are part of a larger site.
- Curious how it would treat the BNSF railroad.
 - This is excluded.
- Would be appropriate to be consistent throughout the model with the same approach to identifying vacant and underutilized land (e.g. building value per acre).
- Can't treat commercial/industrial like residential. It may be that locations with a higher building value has a higher chance of adding jobs while low value areas aren't desirable or appropriate for commercial or industrial use.
- Need something more empirical. Need to address subjectivity.
- Capacity is what we're trying to capture, but we're missing the jobs that might be lost through redevelopment or a change of business.
- Not all jobs are the same. Doing some work on the value of new employers using criteria and data at a national level. Might be applicable.
- For commercial development, need a parcel that can yield a usable pad. Sometimes constraints, etc. make that impossible. Some land is zoned commercial/industrial but doesn't work for that.
- Consider how other jurisdictions look at this.
- Models are abstractions. Can't let the perfect be the enemy of the good.
- In Vancouver, on the jobs side, the model has tracked pretty well with covered wage employment growth.

Redevelopment

- Don't have an issue with the concept, but can we say that more of this is happening, and more will happen because of how development trends are changing?
- Need to balance this against underbuild relative to zoning capacity.
- A little cautious about a strict percent assumption.

- In Vancouver, about 6,000 units of multifamily developed. Some had development on the site prior. Many were zoned commercial.
- Hope we can take enough time to address this properly.
- Don't want to totally move away from a land-base approach.
- Think we will see more of this in the future. History may not be a perfect predictor of the future.
- We don't know if this is really "broken". It may not be the best use of resources to analyze this in depth.

ECONorthwest summarized the next steps for each topic as follows:

- Residential: Lot Size Threshold for Vacant / Vacant Platted Lots
 - Investigate the time lag between VBLM outputs and population projections
 - Confirm the appropriate plat date to use
- Residential: Value Threshold for Vacant / Vacant vs. Underutilized Criteria
 - Consider how much additional complexity would be required to introduce a different factor
 - Evaluate an appropriate building value per acre threshold if this is the PAC's recommendation
- Residential: Lot Size for Underutilized / Small Lots with Capacity
 - Consider how to implement capacity threshold
- Commercial/industrial:
 - Consider alternatives to building value based measures
 - Consider in the context of estimating capacity / employment density assumptions
- Redevelopment:
 - See what additional data we can bring to highlight redevelopment that has happened

Public Comment

- Would like to know which comments the County would respond to, and make sure all comments are included in the record.
 - Make sure to direct comments to staff for this project to ensure they are provided to the committee in a timely manner.
- Would like to know who AHBL is, who the unnamed stakeholders are.
- Submitted an old monitoring report for the County. Identified about 3,000 lots left in the rural areas, which won't last for 20 years.
- Rural Element is descriptive of what has to happen with County's population projections. Submitted that for the committee to review.

Preview of Next Meeting Topics

- ECONorthwest described that the next meeting will include follow-ups from this meeting as well as introducing market factor and infrastructure gaps. Committee members were invited to identify any specific information they would hope to have related to those topics.
- A committee member requested data for the past 20 years to evaluate market factor.
- A committee member requested that materials be provided further in advance. Staff clarified that the materials are available via the link that was sent out a week prior to the meeting. This will be the method going forward to share materials with the committee, and materials will be posted a week in advance of the meeting.