

To Whom It May Concern,

In Support of PLAN C:

Columbia County was once a somewhat isolated community, and Vernonia is the often-overlooked stepchild of Columbia County.

Increased housing prices in metro area have brought racially diverse families to Vernonia and southern Columbia County. These younger parents value a K-12 education that can lead to traditional higher education, as opposed to older residents in North County who place higher value on vocational education.

South county residents frequently support school bond measures. North county residents prefer lower taxes.

75% of Columbia County residents commute to Portland and the tech corridor in Washington County. Most of these workers reside in south county, including Vernonia. While Vernonia considers itself, a "Logging Town", the truth is these jobs are disappearing and being replaced by jobs in Washington County and Hillsboro. This is also where most people shop, see their physicians, etc. They don't go back over the hill to St. Helens or Scappoose; they go to Hillsboro or Forest Grove. West Washington County actually is more reflective of the population here in Vernonia.

South Columbia County residents shared interests are similar to those who live in rural and suburban Washington County, rather than those who reside in North Columbia County.

Thank you for your attention in this matter.

Respectfully submitted,

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