



# LCCLT

LOPEZ COMMUNITY  
LAND TRUST 

*Building a Sustainable Island Community*

January 3, 2020

Sophia Cassam  
Linda Kuller  
San Juan County Dept. of Community and Development

Dear Sophia and Linda:

Thanks for the opportunity to review and comment on the draft Housing Goals and Policies. Because I wasn't able to attend the Housing committee meeting in November I missed that opportunity but wanted to get a few statements in writing.

Overall, the Housing Section seems fairly complete but one item of note is missing all together. It is in regard to meeting the needs of those who prefer to live with just a few basic amenities but get tired of being bounced from parks and vacant land. I have lived on Lopez for over 40 years and for as long as I have been here people have lived in converted busses, yurts, tents, camper tops, fifth wheels, travel trailers, RV's, cars, etc. Some live this way by choice while others are caught in unfortunate circumstances. Regardless, I'd like to see San Juan County make it legal for landowners to allow access to at least a patch of ground with connection to basic amenities, i.e. water, sewer and electricity. I suggest that the Plan allow something of this nature within UGA's (more than one hook up) or outside the UGA's (single hook ups).

Further comments include:

Suggest that the SJC Building Advisory Committee, include both the Eastsound Plan Review Committee and the Lopez Village Planning Review Committee in their planning efforts.

There are a couple references to long-term rentals – I'd like to see the Plan differentiate and incentive housing development not based on type (i.e. rental, ownership, senior, etc.) but classified and incentivized based on the terms of affordability covenants. I recommend that greater incentives be allowed/prioritized for units that will remain affordable for 50+ years and units that offer less than 50 years be less incentivized/prioritized. I do not believe we can build our way out of this housing crisis without forever changing the very nature of these islands. Policies need to help us keep the affordable stock that we have and incentivize more units being brought into the mix. We have plenty of housing in San Juan County but often those who need it because they lack access to funds do not have access to it.

A holistic approach will need to recognize that non-profit developers will not solve this problem on their own. We need a comprehensive approach that includes participation from

all aspects of the community. This includes but is not limited to de-incentivizing and limiting private short term rentals, while incentivizing private long term rentals, repairing and replacing older affordable units, and supporting agencies that develop and steward long term affordability programs and creating new programs.

I noticed there was a reference to adopting exemptions for SEPA requirements. This is contrary to good stewardship practices that all developers need to adhere to. Please strike this suggestion for exemptions. The environment takes a beating whenever development happens. Let's find ways to increase environmental stewardship. SEPA is rarely onerous. If we want to offer incentives perhaps we should look at ways to decrease building permit fees – allowing the REET funds to cover all building related fees associated with permits that are developed as 50+ years affordable whether or not those units receive REET funds.

In general I'd like to see the plan address housing for agricultural workers. This is a complex issue. I want to go on record to encourage SJC to develop policies that support ag related housing.

There are references to specific groups and comments they have made. The comments are generic in nature and I found it distracting to have the comments associated with a specific group. Suggest removing these.

Finally, I am in favor of expanding UGA Boundaries only if it is required that at least half of the new units meet at least a 50-year affordability covenant.

Sincerely,



Sandy Bishop  
Executive Director

Submitted via email to: [compplancomments@sanjuanco.com](mailto:compplancomments@sanjuanco.com)  
Copy to Ryan Page, SJC Housing Coordinator