




## SAN JUAN COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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### MEMO

**MEMO DATE:** August 6, 2021  
**TO:** San Juan County Planning Commission  
**CC:** Erika Shook, AICP, DCD Director  
**FROM:** Adam Zack, Planner III   
**SUBJECT:** San Juan County Comprehensive Plan (*Plan*) Update  
Public Participation  
**BRIEFING DATE:** August 20, 2021  
**ATTACHMENTS:** A. Calendar of Events: October through January  
B. Town Hall Volunteer Sign Up Sheet

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#### PURPOSE

To provide the Planning Commission with proposed public participation strategies for the Comprehensive Plan (*Plan*) update. To get the Planning Commission input on the following to prepare for the *Plan* update public participation:

1. The preferred town hall format;
2. Assemble a list of questions or discussion prompts for the public during the town halls; and
3. Volunteer for town hall roles.

#### PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PHASES

The public participation process prior to the public hearing will be divided into three phases with specific objectives for each. Table 1 shows each phase, its objective and a brief description of the public outreach involved with that phase.

**Table 1. Public Participation Phases, Objectives, and Descriptions**

Phase	Phase Objective	Topic Focus	Description
<p><b>Phase One</b></p> <p>Pop Ups and Open Houses</p>	<p><b>Education</b></p>	<p><b>Overall Plan Update</b></p>	<p>Phase one will be staff led. The pop ups and open houses will be in-person events where staff is on hand to walk the public through the possible changes during the <i>Plan</i> update. These events will give the community an opportunity to find out more about what might change during the <i>Plan</i> update and where to find more information. This is an important step to ensure the public can make informed comments during the later phases of public involvement.</p>
<p><b>Phase Two</b></p> <p>Five Public Town Halls</p>	<p><b>Public Input</b></p>	<p><b>Official Maps, Climate Change, and Housing</b></p>	<p>Phase Two will be Planning Commission led. This phase provides opportunities for the public to weigh in on the preliminary draft of <i>Plan</i> amendments during virtual town halls. There will be a total of five town halls. Virtual town halls on climate change and housing each will be held. Then, three virtual town halls will focus on proposed changes to the Official Maps on San Juan, Orcas, Lopez, and Shaw islands each. Lopez and Shaw will be combined because they have fewer proposed map changes.</p>
<p><b>Phase Three</b></p> <p>Planning Commission Work Sessions</p>	<p><b>Synthesize Input Into drafts</b></p>	<p><b>Overall Plan Update</b></p>	<p>The Planning Commission will synthesize responses to public comments from public meetings into the pre-hearing draft of the <i>Plan</i> update. The public will be able to provide additional input during the public access time. The Planning Commission will get to a public hearing draft of the <i>Plan</i> update by the end of the public work sessions.</p>

**POP UPS**

Three pop ups will be held at locations throughout the islands. The pop up will be a booth set up somewhere in the community, typically the grocery store, where staff and Planning Commission members can distribute information about the *Plan* update and public participation opportunities. The pop ups will put County staff and members of the Planning Commission in the community to engage the public in conversations about the *Plan* update. The pop ups will also be an opportunity to provide the public with information about the open houses that will follow on the same day and how to participate in the town halls. In a casual setting, staff and commission members can give the public an introduction to what the County is working on. Planning Commission pop up participants can expect to discuss the *Plan* update with the public at a high level, with staff on hand for support.

## OPEN HOUSES

Staff will conduct open houses in the evening following the pop ups to give the public more detailed information on the *Plan* update. Stations for elements of the *Plan* will be available so the public can find out more detailed information about the *Plan* update. The open houses will also give the public a chance to engage with the *Plan* update materials prior to the town halls. The concept is to provide the public with the tools and information needed to give the Planning Commission meaningful feedback on the proposed *Plan* amendments at the town halls. Members of the Planning Commission are encouraged to participate. The open houses on San Juan, Lopez, and Orcas will give members of the Commission the chance to engage with the public prior to getting specific feedback at the town halls.

## TOWN HALLS

The town halls will be Planning Commission led public meetings. The town halls will be held in the weeks following the pop ups and open houses. These meetings will be the Planning Commission's opportunity to directly engage in conversations with the community about *Plan* update topics before finalizing their public hearing drafts of the *Plan* update. There will be five town halls in total. There will be two virtual town halls on climate change and housing goals and policies in the *Plan*. Then, there will be three virtual town halls on the *Plan* Official Maps; one each for San Juan, Orcas, and Lopez Islands.

## WORK SESSIONS

The work sessions will follow the town halls. These work sessions will take place during the regularly scheduled Planning Commission meetings. They will be the Planning Commission's opportunity to synthesize the feedback received in the previous phases of public participation into the draft of changes to the *Plan* and finalize the public hearing draft of amendments to the *Plan*. These meetings will be open to the public, who will be able to comment during public access time.

## SCHEDULE

The planned dates for all three phases are shown on the calendar in Attachment A.

## EXPECTED PLANNING COMMISSION INVOLVEMENT

The three phases of public participation provide several opportunities for the Planning Commission to engage directly with the public and get their feedback on proposed changes to the Comprehensive Plan. To maximize the utility of the public engagement sessions, Planning Commission members are expected to participate during each phase as described below.

## PHASE ONE – POP UPS AND OPEN HOUSES

### POP UPS

The pop ups will be staff led public engagement endeavors. Members of the Planning Commission are encouraged to attend the pop ups to engage with the public in a casual setting and get a better understanding of the plurality of opinions in the County. There will be a pop up scheduled during the day on San Juan, Lopez, and Orcas islands as follows:

**San Juan – October 6, 2021 noon to 4:00 PM.**

**Orcas – October 13, 2021 noon to 4:00 PM.**

**Lopez – October 20, 2021 noon to 4:00 PM**

## **OPEN HOUSES**

Open houses will be scheduled in the evenings following the pop ups. These will be staff led public engagement endeavors. Members of the Planning Commission are encouraged to attend the open houses as another opportunity to engage with the public. There will be an open house scheduled during the evening on San Juan, Lopez, and Orcas islands as follows:

**San Juan – October 6, 2021 5:30 to 7:30 PM.**

**Orcas – October 13, 2021 5:30 to 7:30 PM.**

**Lopez – October 20, 2021 5:30 to 7:30 PM.**

## **PHASE TWO – PUBLIC TOWN HALLS**

### **CLIMATE CHANGE TOWN HALL**

The climate change town hall will be about two hours long and focus on the proposed climate change related goals and policies throughout the *Plan*. This town hall will be a special meeting of the Planning Commission. The meeting will be held virtually. The town hall is tentatively scheduled for November 3 at 5:30 pm.

### **HOUSING TOWN HALL**

The housing town hall will be about two hours long and focus on the proposed housing related goals and policies throughout the *Plan*. This town hall will be a special meeting that would replace the regularly scheduled December Planning Commission meeting. This meeting will be held virtually. The town hall is tentatively scheduled for November 10 at 5:30 pm.

### **OFFICIAL MAP TOWN HALLS**

The Planning Commission will hold three virtual town halls on the preliminary draft of Official Map amendments in November and December. Each Official Map town hall will be about two hours long and focus on the Official Map changes on each ferry-served island. These town halls are three special meetings that will replace the regularly scheduled November and December Planning Commission meetings. The Official Map town halls are tentatively scheduled as follows:

**San Juan – November 17, 2021 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM.**

**Orcas – December 8, 2021 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM.**

**Lopez and Shaw – December 15, 2021 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM.**

## TOWN HALL FORMAT

The Comprehensive Plan town halls are the Planning Commission's to structure. These are the Commission's opportunity to engage with the public directly in advance of reaching a public hearing draft of changes to the Comprehensive Plan. Because this is the Planning Commission's process, they can design their portion of the town hall however they would like.

Staff recommends the Planning Commission prepare a list of questions and discussion topics for the public to respond to during each town hall. This list of questions can be used to structure the Planning Commission facilitated portion of the town hall. The facilitator can ask the public to respond to each question or topic. If five questions or topics are provided, about 20 minutes of public discussion can take place for each. Providing a list of questions or topics will also help ensure that the Planning Commission gets public feedback on the specific topics they are looking for.

Staff recommends the following format for the Town Halls:

5:30 to 5:40 PM – Welcome and Introductions

5:40 to 6:00 PM – Staff Presentation

6:00 to 7:30 PM – Planning Commission Facilitated Public Feedback on Discussion Questions and Topics

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND TOPICS

Staff recommends the Planning Commission assemble a list of discussion topics and questions to provide the public with a prompt for comments and to structure the Planning Commission facilitated portion of the town halls. These discussion topics and questions should be structured to address the points the Planning Commission wants specific feedback on.

The town halls will focus on three topics. Table 2 provides the staff recommended high level question and topic prompts for each town hall. These prompts should act as a starting point for the Planning Commission to develop their own list of specific questions and discussion topics.

**Table 2. Staff Recommended Questions and Discussion Prompts.**

Town Hall Topic	Question and Discussion Prompts
<p><b>Climate Change</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Land Use climate change goal and policy alternatives.</li> <li>2. Are there any missing <i>Plan</i> climate change goals and policies?</li> </ol>
<p><b>Housing</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Housing goal and policy alternatives.</li> <li>2. Are there any missing <i>Plan</i> housing goals and policies?</li> </ol>
<p><b>Official Maps and Land Use Designations</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. List of land use designation review requests the Planning Commission would like specific feedback on. Note: there will be a town hall on San Juan, Lopez, and Orcas islands, each. The Planning Commission can ask island-specific questions at each island’s town hall.</li> <li>2. Input on designation and density change alternatives in Eastsound UGA.</li> </ol>

**PLANNING COMMISSION TOWN HALL ROLES**

Volunteers from the Planning Commission will be needed to facilitate the discussion at each town hall, take notes on the discussion, and keep track of follow-up questions they have for staff based on the discussion. Planning Commission volunteers from each town hall will provide a summary of the discussion to the Planning Commission at the work sessions following the town halls. Staff will be present to provide an introductory presentation, give clarification as needed, and help track follow up questions.

Staff suggests the following Planning Commission volunteer roles at each Official Map town hall. A sign-up sheet is provided in Attachment B. The volunteer roles are:

- **Facilitator** – runs the Planning Commission facilitated portion of the meeting;
- **Scribe** – keeps track of comments received and follow-up questions; and
- **Reporter** – summarizes the feedback received during the town halls at the work sessions following the town halls for those members that might miss an island-specific town hall.

**PHASE THREE – PLANNING COMMISSION WORK SESSIONS**

The Planning Commission will have the opportunity to respond to the public comments gathered during the town halls at work sessions. The work sessions will take place during regularly scheduled Planning Commission meetings. During the work sessions the Commission will refine the public hearing draft of *Plan* amendments. The proposed schedule for the Planning Commission work sessions is:

**January 21, 2022 8:30 AM** – Planning Commission members will discuss the input they gathered at each town hall during their regularly scheduled January meeting. The volunteer reporter for each town hall

will provide a summary of the feedback received for the members that did not make it to that town hall. Then, the Planning Commission will work on the following over the course of the work sessions:

- A list of follow-up questions for staff;
- A ‘parking lot’ of issues raised at the town halls that should be addressed but do not pertain to the matter at hand; and
- The public hearing draft of possible amendments.

**February 18, 2022 8:30 AM** – Staff will brief the Planning Commission on the answers to their follow-up questions. Then they will continue to work toward the public hearing draft of possible amendments. Finally, they can add or remove items from the Planning Commission parking lot.

The public will be able to attend the work sessions and provide comments to the Planning Commission during defined public access time.

#### **PLANNING COMMISSION ‘PARKING LOT’**

The Planning Commission ‘Parking Lot’ will be a running list of issues that come up that the commission agrees are important topics for further discussion but do not relate to the specific *Plan* amendments considered during the town halls. The idea is to hold onto these topics so the Planning Commission can return to them as they work on their hearing draft. For example, if the public is concerned about the allowed uses in the Island Center land use designation, these regulations are not necessarily a part of the Official Maps, but the public concern could be added to the parking lot until they work on the Island Center land use policies and/or regulations. This should help the Planning Commission keep track of other issues the public is concerned about but do not necessarily relate to the matter at hand.

# October 2021

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
				1	2	3
4	5	6 <b>San Juan Pop Up and Open House (In person)</b>	7	8	9	10
11	12	13 <b>Orcas Pop Up and Open House (In person)</b>	14	15 Regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting	16	17
18	19	20 <b>Lopez Pop Up and Open House (In person)</b>	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31



# November 2021

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1	2	3 Climate Change Town Hall (Virtual)	4	5	6	7
8	9	10 Housing Town Hall (Virtual)	11	12	13	14
15	16	17 San Juan Official Map Town Hall (Virtual)	18	19 Regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting	20	21
22	23	24	25 Thanksgiving	26	27	28
29	30					

# December 2021

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8 <b>Orcas Official Map Town Hall (Virtual)</b>	9	10	11	12
13	14	15 <b>Lopez and Shaw Official Map Town Hall (Virtual)</b>	16	17 Regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25 Christmas	26
27	28	29	30	31 New Year's Eve		

# January 2022

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21 Planning Commission Work Session	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Town Hall	Role	Name
<b>Climate Change</b> November 3 5:30 to 7:30 pm	Facilitator	
	Scribe	
	Reporter	
<b>Housing</b> November 10 5:30 to 7:30 pm	Facilitator	
	Scribe	
	Reporter	
<b>Official Maps: San Juan</b> November 17 5:30 to 7:30 pm	Facilitator	
	Scribe	
	Reporter	
<b>Official Maps: Orcas</b> December 8 5:30 to 7:30 pm	Facilitator	
	Scribe	
	Reporter	
<b>Official Maps: Lopez and Shaw</b> December 15 5:30 to 7:30 pm	Facilitator	
	Scribe	
	Reporter	