



SAN JUAN COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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MEMORANDUM

REPORT DATE: January 7, 2022
TO: San Juan County Planning Commission
CC: David Williams, DCD Director
FROM: Sophia Cassam, Planner II *SC*
SUBJECT: Comprehensive Plan Status Update
BRIEFING DATE: January 21, 2022

PURPOSE

To inform the Planning Commission of the status of the Comprehensive Plan (*Plan*) update, including upcoming work.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Please send all public comments to compplancomments@sanjuanco.com. Please do not copy the County Council, Planning Commission members, or County Staff. Written public comments received by January 20 at 4pm will be provided to the Planning Commission prior to the meeting. Please focus public comments on the issues contemplated in this memo.

BACKGROUND

The County is in the process of updating the *Plan* to prepare for the projected growth through the year 2036. The WA State Growth Management Act (GMA) requires the County periodically review and update the *Plan* as necessary. The *Plan* update project will satisfy the GMA periodic review requirement.

The *Plan* update project dates to 2016, when the scope of work was established by Resolution 21-2016. Staff is currently working with the Planning Commission and County Council to develop a draft of updates to the *Plan*. Significant work has been completed on the *Plan* update project. Drafts have been developed with Council direction, Planning Commission refinement, and public input. The following summarizes work that has been completed:

- Adopted a 2016 population and 2036 population projection;
- Updated the *Plan* Vision through an extensive public process;
- Completed a land capacity analysis to determine whether there is development capacity to accommodate projected growth in both the County's urban and rural lands;
- Completed a Housing Needs Assessment that determined projected housing needs through 2036 and identified key challenges that the *Plan* should address;
- Completed a Capital Facilities Inventory and determined levels of service based on population projections and adopted level of service standards;

- Completed an Agriculture and Forest Resource land designation analysis;
- Reviewed and made preliminary recommendations on 25 land use review requests for various Official Map changes submitted by the public during the *Plan* update process; and
- Created preliminary drafts of all *Plan* elements (see below), including updating old information and developing new goals and policies to achieve the Vision and meet the projected population's needs.

Previous staff reports showing past work done on *Plan* elements can be found here: <https://www.sanjuanco.com/1306/Comprehensive-Plan-Elements>. New Planning Commissioners are encouraged to explore the element tabs on this page to understand the work that has been completed thus far. The current drafts of all Elements can be found here: <https://www.sanjuanco.com/1753/Comp-Plan-Update-Current-Drafts>. The *Plan* elements are:

1. Governance
2. Land Use and Rural
3. Shoreline Master Program
4. Water Resources
5. Housing
6. Transportation
7. Capital Facilities
8. Utilities
9. Historical and Archaeological Preservation
10. Economic Development

CURRENT WORK: PREPARING FOR TOWN HALL EVENTS

During the refinement of their draft of proposed changes to the *Plan*, the Planning Commission will conduct additional public engagement activities to gather input on potential changes. The refinement and public engagement are planned to be the bulk of the work the Planning Commission undertakes during the first part of 2022. Once the Planning Commission has finished refining their draft of updates, they will hold at least one public hearing on the proposed amendments and make a recommendation to the County Council.

The Planning Commission is preparing to hold five virtual town all events to gather public feedback. In 2021, the Planning Commission requested to hold town hall events as additional public outreach to inform the development of a public hearing draft. The town hall events will give the Planning Commission the opportunity to gather public feedback on the following topics. Each topic will be addressed at its own separate virtual town hall:

1. Climate change goals and policies in the *Plan*
2. Housing goals and policies in the *Plan*
3. Land use review requests on San Juan Island
4. Land use review requests on Orcas Island
5. Land use review requests on Lopez/Shaw islands

A January 7, 2022 staff report provides additional information on the town hall events, including a proposed schedule and Planning Commissioner roles: <https://www.sanjuanco.com/DocumentCenter/View/24935/>. This report was provided to the Planning Commission in the transmittal of documents for the January 21, 2022 meeting.

NEXT STEPS

Following the town halls, the Planning Commission will refine the pre-hearing draft of changes based on the public input during public work sessions. The refined pre-hearing draft will become the public hearing draft the Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on before making a recommendation to the County Council. Table 1 below shows a timeline for the Planning Commission's role in the remainder of the *Plan* update.

Table 1. Planning Commission Comprehensive Plan Update Estimated Timeline.

Month	Task
February	Prepare for Town Hall events
March	Town Halls on Climate Change and Housing
April	Town Halls on proposed map changes (x3 – San Juan, Orcas, Lopez/Shaw)
May - June	Public Work Sessions to synthesize public input into public hearing draft
July - August	Public hearings