




SAN JUAN COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

135 Rhone Street, PO Box 947, Friday Harbor, WA 98250
(360) 378-2354 | (360) 378-2116
dcd@sanjuanco.com | www.sanjuanco.com

MEMO

MEMO DATE: September 30, 2021
TO: San Juan County Planning Commission
CC: Mike Thomas, County Manager
FROM: Adam Zack, Planner III 
SUBJECT: San Juan County Comprehensive Plan (*Plan*) Update
Public Participation
BRIEFING DATE: October 8, 2021
ATTACHMENTS: A. Town Hall Volunteer Sign Up Sheet

PURPOSE

To get Planning Commission input on the following:

1. Town hall discussion questions and prompts, and
2. Volunteers from the Planning Commission to fill town hall roles.

BACKGROUND

The public participation process prior to the Planning Commission 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. This memo focuses on specific input related to the town halls planned during Phase Two.

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

Phase	Phase Objective	Topic Focus	Description
<p>Phase One</p> <p>Pop Ups and Open Houses</p>	<p>Education</p>	<p>Overall Plan Update</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>Phase Two</p> <p>Five Public Town Halls</p>	<p>Public Input</p>	<p>Climate Change, Housing, and Official Maps</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>Phase Three</p> <p>Planning Commission Work Sessions</p>	<p>Synthesize Input Into drafts</p>	<p>Overall Plan Update</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>

RESCHEDULING TOWN HALLS

The town halls were initially planned to take place over several weeks in November and December. These town halls will be rescheduled for early 2022 to allow adequate time to prepare materials and account for the end-of-year holidays. The schedule will be provided at a later Planning Commission meeting.

TOWN HALL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND PROMPTS

To ensure that the Planning Commission collects quality feedback, discussion questions and prompts are needed. Staff has provided general questions for the Planning Commission to consider, but these broad questions should be refined in advance of the town halls. Discussion questions and prompts should be specific enough to encourage detailed feedback on the topics the Planning Commission would like more public input on.

Climate Change

When discussing proposed goals and policies for the Land Use and Rural Element of the *Plan* at their meeting on March 19, the Planning Commission decided to defer making a recommendation until after a town hall meeting on climate change. The Climate Change Town Hall will be scheduled for early 2022. In preparation for the town hall meeting, the Planning Commission should put together a list of questions and discussion prompts for the public to respond to during the Climate Change Town Hall. There are two general prompts the Planning Commission can use to form more specific questions:

1. Are there any missing climate change goals or policies that are not included in the proposed *Plan* update?
2. Are there any proposed alternative Land Use climate change goals and policies?

The Planning Commission requested the climate change town hall to get specific feedback on the proposed climate change goals and policies. The two questions listed above are very general questions. The discussion questions and prompts should be made more specific to address the particular questions the Planning Commission has during the town hall. If the discussion questions and prompts are more specific, they will elicit more actionable input from the public.

Staff recommends expanding the list of questions and prompts to between four and seven. More questions than seven will cut down on the amount of discussion of each possible during the allotted time. Fewer prompts than four will likely keep the discussion too general and not elicit the specific feedback the Planning Commission is looking for.

Housing

A town hall on housing will be scheduled in early 2022. In preparation for the Housing Town Hall meeting, the Planning Commission should put together a list of questions and discussion prompts for the public to respond to during the Housing Town Hall. There are two general prompts the Planning Commission can use to form more specific questions:

1. Are there any missing housing goals or policies that are not included in the proposed *Plan* update?
2. Are there any proposed alternative housing goals and policies?

The two questions listed above are very general questions. The discussion questions and prompts should be made more specific to address the questions the Planning Commission seeks to answer during the town hall. If the discussion questions and prompts are more specific, they will elicit more actionable input from the public.

Staff recommends expanding the list of questions and prompts to between four and seven. More questions than seven will cut down on the amount of discussion of each possible during the allotted time. Fewer prompts than four will likely keep the discussion too general and not elicit the specific feedback the Planning Commission is looking for.

Official Maps

Three island-specific Official Map town halls are planned. These town halls will focus on the preliminarily recommended amendments to the Official Maps on San Juan, Orcas, Lopez, and Shaw. Staff has recommended two general discussion prompts for the Official Map town halls:

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.
2. Input on designation and density candidate area alternatives in Eastsound Urban Growth Area (UGA) at the Orcas Town Hall.

The Planning Commission can call out specific proposed land use changes they would like comments on during each island-specific town hall. The staff presentation at the outset of the town hall can highlight the proposed amendments on the island and set the stage for gathering comments. In general, these land use review requests are the principal issues surrounding the Official Maps. If the Planning Commission has other issues they would like to get public input on related to the Official Maps, they can propose additional questions or discussion prompts.

On Orcas, there are some proposed density increases in the Eastsound UGA that the Planning Commission has not made a preliminary recommendation regarding. At the Orcas Official Map Town Hall, the Planning Commission can get input from the public regarding the proposed density increases in the UGA.

PLANNING COMMISSION TOWN HALL ROLES

Volunteers from the Planning Commission are 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 for each town hall will provide a summary of the discussion to the Planning Commission at the work sessions following the town halls.

Volunteers from the Planning Commission will fill each of the following roles at the town halls. A sign-up sheet is provided in Attachment A. If needed, Planning Commission members can hold off on volunteering for town hall roles until the town hall schedule has been set. Volunteer roles can be discussed at a later meeting when the schedule is solidified. Three volunteers for each of the five town halls, for a total of fifteen volunteers, are needed. 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.

Town Hall	Role	Name
Climate Change Date TBD 5:30 to 7:30 pm	Facilitator	
	Scribe	
	Reporter	
Housing Date TBD 5:30 to 7:30 pm	Facilitator	
	Scribe	
	Reporter	
Official Maps: San Juan Date TBD 5:30 to 7:30 pm	Facilitator	
	Scribe	
	Reporter	
Official Maps: Orcas Date TBD 5:30 to 7:30 pm	Facilitator	
	Scribe	
	Reporter	
Official Maps: Lopez and Shaw Date TBD 5:30 to 7:30 pm	Facilitator	
	Scribe	
	Reporter	