



SAN JUAN COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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MEMO

REPORT DATE: March 17, 2022
TO: San Juan County Planning Commission
CC: David Williams, Department of Community Development (DCD) Director
FROM: Sophia Cassam, Planner II *SC*
SUBJECT: 2036 Comprehensive Plan Update
Element B.1, Governance
DISCUSSION: April 1, 2022
ATTACHMENTS: A. Draft Element B.1, Governance

PURPOSE

To provide the draft Comprehensive Plan (*Plan*) Element B.1 Governance (Governance Element) to the Planning Commission for review and to prepare a public hearing draft.

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 12pm on March 31 will be provided to the Planning Commission prior to the meeting. Please focus public comments on the issues and options contemplated in this report.

BACKGROUND

The purpose of Element B.1 is to set policies for government conduct, provision of services, and management of public programs. The Governance Element includes one goal and ten policies that guide County government from a high level and support the *Plan* Vision. The *Plan* Vision includes the following section on Governance:

We are self-governed by informed citizens. We are represented by elected officials who conduct the activities of government in an ethical, fair, impartial, responsive and open manner that recognizes the independent, self-reliant nature of its people. Our elected officials and government institutions lead, communicate and collaborate with regional partners in areas of mutual interest. Our government institutions balance responsibility with resources and costs, consolidate services where practical, manage prudently, provide reliable data, are service-oriented, and perform in a timely manner.

2036 UPDATE

For the 2036 *Plan* update, there are two proposed changes to the existing adopted Governance Element. The first proposed change is to delete existing policy 10 about redistricting and electing a board of freeholders

within three years of Plan adoption. The Governance Element was adopted in 1998 and this policy should be removed because it was never implemented. The second proposed change is to replace policy 10 with a new policy about prioritizing climate change planning. The changes appear in the draft as follows:

~~10. Within three years of the effective date of this Plan, conduct public hearings regarding equitable redistricting, which could lead to a call for an election of a board of freeholders. Consider climate change resilience and mitigation planning a high priority when amending County goals, policies, and regulations.~~

At the October 8, 2021, meeting the Planning Commission unanimously accepted these proposed changes.

PUBLIC HEARING DRAFT

At the meeting on April 1, 2022, the Planning Commission will review the draft Governance Element to agree on a draft to use for the future public hearing. The draft Governance Element can be brought forward as-is (Attachment A), or the Planning Commission can discuss and make any edits or additions before agreeing on a public hearing draft.

NEXT STEPS

After the Planning Commission makes its edits to the draft Governance Element, the draft will become the public hearing draft. This is the draft that will be brought forward at the Planning Commission's public hearing on the *Plan*. At the public hearing, the Planning Commission will hear public testimony and, after deliberations, make its final edits to the draft *Plan* to be recommended to the County Council.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

SECTION B

PLAN ELEMENTS

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COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

SECTION B, ELEMENT 1

GOVERNANCE

[adoption date], 2022

Supersedes December 20, 1998 version

"We are self-governed by informed citizens. We are equally represented by elected officials who conduct the activities of government in an ethical, fair, impartial, responsive and open manner which recognizes the independent, self-reliant nature of its citizens. Our government institutions balance responsibility with resources and costs, consolidate services where practical, manage prudently, provide reliable data, are service-oriented, and perform in a timely manner."

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ELEMENT 1 GOVERNANCE

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1.1 INTRODUCTION

San Juan County government has an established mission to provide the best possible service and responsiveness to its citizens at the least possible cost. The *Comprehensive Plan*, as the official policy statement for the County, establishes the framework for public decision-making in a number of interrelated areas. San Juan County citizens need a comprehensive plan that will meet changing needs and circumstances for the physical and economic growth within the county. This element of the *Plan* provides goals and policies for overall County government administration.

1.2 GOAL AND POLICIES

Goal: To conduct the activities of San Juan County government in ways that are ethical, fair, just, timely, and impartial; to provide those public services necessary for the health, safety, and general well-being of the citizens; and to serve the taxpayers by managing public programs effectively and economically.

Policies

San Juan County government will:

1. Conduct the public's business in a manner that is ethical, responsive, accessible, impartial, and open to county citizens.
2. Provide the minimum level of service that is effective, efficient, and affordable to county taxpayers.
3. Provide a system of taxation that, in an equitable manner, will yield adequate revenue to provide the minimum services desired by a majority of the community.
4. Ensure that private property shall not be taken for public use without just compensation having been made. The property rights of landowners shall be protected from arbitrary and discriminatory actions.
5. Support volunteerism and "neighbors helping neighbors" as basic tenets of island life.
6. Consider the needs of all county citizens on issues of affordable housing, jobs, services, and recreational opportunities.
7. Participate in interagency coordination efforts with federal, state, and local agencies, and the Native tribes.
8. Establish and facilitate an on-going, cooperative and coordinated inter-local agreement with the Town of Friday Harbor to enable the two jurisdictions and their citizens to work together to review and consider issues of mutual concern.
9. Adopt and implement joint planning policies and a management agreement with the Town of Friday Harbor for the Friday Harbor urban growth area.

10. ~~Within three years of the effective date of this *Plan*, conduct public hearings regarding equitable redistricting, which could lead to a call for an election of a board of freeholders. Consider climate change resilience and mitigation planning a high priority when amending County goals, policies, and regulations.~~