



# SAN JUAN COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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## MEMO

**REPORT DATE:** March 22, 2022  
**TO:** San Juan County Planning Commission  
**CC:** David Williams, Department of Community Development (DCD) Director  
**FROM:** Sophia Cassam, DCD, Planner II *sc*  
**SUBJECT:** 2036 Comprehensive Plan Update  
Draft Section A, Introduction  
**DISCUSSION:** April 1, 2022  
**ATTACHMENTS:** A. Draft Section A, Introduction

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### PURPOSE

To provide the draft Comprehensive Plan (*Plan*) Section A, Introduction (Introduction) to the Planning Commission for review and to prepare a public hearing draft.

### PUBLIC COMMENTS

Please send all public comments to [compplancomments@sanjuanco.com](mailto: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 the Introduction is to introduce readers to the *Plan* and to San Juan County. The aspect of the Introduction required by the Growth Management Act is the Vision. WAC 365-196-400(2)(e) states:

(e) The comprehensive plan should include a vision for the community at the end of the twenty-year planning period and identify community values derived from the visioning and other citizen participation processes. Goals may be further defined with policies and objectives in each element of the comprehensive plan.

The updated 2018 Vision is included in the draft Introduction (Attachment A). The Vision was adopted by the County Council in Resolution 27-2018 after multiple rounds of public involvement. At this time, the Vision should not be edited. The other information provided in the Introduction is a local choice and can be edited up to the point of the Planning Commission public hearing on the *Plan*.

The draft Introduction is a proposal to repeal and replace the existing Introduction, which was last updated in 2010 and contains out of date information and is unnecessarily dense. The Introduction should be clear, engaging, and easy for the layperson to understand. Overall, the proposed draft Introduction presents the

Vision, guiding the *Plan* and stating the community's values and goals for the future. Additionally, the draft explains the *Plan's* purpose, how it was developed, its contents, and how it is used by the County. It also orients the reader to the unique context of San Juan County, including the geography, the population, and the overarching issues the County faces that the *Plan* is intended to address.

The Planning Commission first reviewed the draft Introduction at the June 19, 2020, meeting. During the first review, public feedback was incorporated, and minor edits were made. On October 8, 2021, the Planning Commission reviewed the draft Introduction a second time when they reviewed a section proposed by staff providing a guide to navigating climate change mitigation and resilience strategies in the *Plan* (Attachment A, page 16). The Planning Commission had previously asked staff to add more information about the County's response to climate change to the Introduction. After reviewing the new climate change section, the Planning Commission decided to add it to the draft Introduction.

## **PUBLIC HEARING DRAFT**

At the meeting on April 1, 2022, the Planning Commission will review the draft Section A, Introduction to agree on a draft to use for the future *Plan* public hearing. The draft Introduction 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 Introduction, 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 A**

**INTRODUCTION AND VISION**

**September 16, 2021**

**Draft**

**SUPERSEDES APRIL 27, 2010**

**DRAFT**

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**SECTION A: INTRODUCTION AND VISION**

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DRAFT



Photo: Kevin Holmes

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## INTRODUCTION

San Juan County is part of an archipelago in northwest Washington State, a cluster of islands in the Salish Sea. The County is home to approximately 17,000 permanent residents. The population in the County increases in the spring and summertime due to the significant number of seasonal residents and visitors. The islands are accessed by Washington State Ferries, private boats, and by air. Ferries serve the four most populated islands: San Juan, Orcas, Lopez, and Shaw. Friday Harbor is the one incorporated town in the County, and there are other population centers in the County’s two urban growth areas (Eastsound and Lopez Village), rural hamlets, activity centers and master planned resorts.

Residents and visitors alike are most attracted to the islands’ rural scenery, the relaxed pace of life, the recreation opportunities at beaches and forests, marine wildlife viewing, and the sense of community generated by the friendliness of locals, according to the 2019 San Juan Islands Visitors Study.

Life in San Juan County today builds upon a rich natural and cultural history. The archipelago stands in the Salish Sea, which was shaped by the forces of the last ice ages. The Salish Sea and the Islands are home to a diverse assortment of marine and terrestrial plants and animals. For thousands of years, the Coast Salish peoples have inhabited the area. European exploration of the islands began in the 1600s, with settlement in the 1800s, which made way for the County’s agriculture, maritime, and resource extraction industry heritage. Since the San Juan Islands became a popular destination in the 1960s, the year round and visitor population has boomed. Today, San Juan County faces the challenges of managing human environmental impacts, meeting basic human needs such as housing for low to middle income households, and mitigating and becoming more resilient to climate change.

The Comprehensive Plan (*Plan*) is San Juan County’s principal planning document. It guides future growth and has been prepared to comply with the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA). Implementation of the *Plan* prepares the County to manage future growth. It helps the County meet people’s needs and maintain the high quality of life found in the islands. The goals and policies in the *Plan* are the framework within which the County creates and implements development regulations, programs, and other plans. The 2036 Vision, developed by the community, is the *Plan’s* North Star, guiding the *Plan* elements and leading the County toward the future we strive for every day.

## 2036 VISION

The San Juan County Vision portrays the near future as the community aspires for it to be. The Vision is a statement of values that guide the goals and policies of each *Plan* element. In designing the Vision collectively through extensive workshopping and deliberation, the community identified the nature of essential aspects of life in the San Juan Islands.

The world is not the same today as it was in 1999 when the San Juan Islands community and the County created the previous, first Vision statement. The original Vision remains largely true to the San Juan Islands' spirit and character, thanks to the hard work and countless hours the community invested in creating the document. However, when reflecting on this original Vision in 2017, the community realized that life has adjusted course as new factors have entered into the conversation. We know more about the effects of human action on climate change. We are more aware of our limited resources. We recognize that there are underrepresented voices in the community that need to be amplified. Technology ever increases the speed of and capacity for communication. Participants noticed where the Vision excluded some members of the community and took steps to adjust the language to better represent the true make-up of the Islands.

The County and community revised the Vision over a 10-month process between August 2017 and May 2018, nearly 20 years since the last revision. The outcome of this process is a 2036 Vision based on the original statement that reflects the community's goals, desires, and needs.

# 2036 VISION

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## PREAMBLE

WE THE PEOPLE, citizens of San Juan County, value our healthy natural environment, vibrant and diverse community, self-sufficiency, interdependence, privacy, personal freedom, independence, and stewardship of our common resources. These rural islands are an extraordinary treasure: as a community bound together by these shared values, we declare our commitment to work towards this vision of the San Juan Islands.

## COMMUNITY

We envision a community that is primarily rural, made up of islands of varying character, each with its own unique qualities. The islands are places of peace and mutual tolerance, where people of differing backgrounds and beliefs respect each other's dignity, privacy, and freedoms. We communicate effectively and openly and work together toward goals identified as being for the common good. We foster a sense of neighborliness, of self-sufficiency, and community pride that has long been a part of our island character.



Photo: San Juan Island National Historic Park

## BASIC HUMAN NEEDS

Our islands are places where people are safe, day and night. The drinking water supply is clean, adequate, and conserved as a vital resource. Health care and help in time of need are accessible and affordable. Making a life here is not limited by lack of access to basic human needs.



## 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.



**HOUSING**

Adequate, safe, affordable and stable housing helps our community thrive. There are diverse housing types and we use innovative strategies to meet the various housing needs of our community.



Photo: James Finn

**EDUCATION**

Learning is a continuing lifelong process that is encouraged and aided by the community. A partnership of families and community creates a supportive and challenging educational environment founded on academic excellence and artistic expression. This environment produces ethical, self-directed, compassionate, responsible world citizens, alive with the love of learning.



Photo: Slater Moore

**NATURAL ENVIRONMENT**

Our islands and marine waters have exceptional natural beauty and healthy, diverse ecosystems that are pollution-free. The air is fresh and clean, the water quality is excellent, and the soil is uncontaminated. As careful stewards of these islands and waters, we conserve resources, preserve open space, and take appropriate action to assure healthy land and marine environments. We recognize the integral role that forests play in the stewardship of our air, soils and water resources. The natural environment is central to the ecological health, quality of life, and the economy in the islands. Native plants, animals, and marine life of the islands thrive, and are identified, appreciated and conserved.



Photo: Jim Maya

## ENERGY AND RESOURCES

Our community strives for energy independence and zero waste. We use renewable energy, materials, and natural resources on a sustainable basis. Solid waste and sewage treatment are managed in an environmentally sound manner.



Photo: The Exchange

## CLIMATE CHANGE

Our community sets an example with its response to climate change. We prepare to address the negative effects in advance before they become crises. Our community encourages voluntary efforts and enacts incentives and regulations if necessary to reduce our carbon footprint.



Image: San Juan County

## ECONOMY

We support a diverse, resilient, and sustainable economy while respecting the natural world. This economy serves the needs of our community, and recognizes the rural, residential, quiet, agricultural, marine and isolated nature of the islands. Our economy comprises a wide spectrum of stable, year-round activities that provide wages that allow islanders to live, work, and thrive locally. We encourage new ideas and new technology for improving the quality and profitability of our goods and services. Communication systems support our economy.



Image: San Juan County Economic Development Council

## AGRICULTURE

The San Juan Islands have a rich agricultural heritage that remains culturally and economically significant. We invest resources to ensure that agricultural lands are preserved and to maintain and enhance agricultural viability. We recognize the integral role that agriculture plays in the stewardship of our soils and water resources. Diverse agricultural activities are essential to the health and well-being of our community, contributing to the social, economic and environmental fabric of our islands.



Photo: Barbara Marrett

**TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATION**

We have water, land, and air transportation systems commensurate with our island culture. Transportation plans carefully consider multimodal transportation and rural character. Expansion or construction of transportation systems, infrastructure, and facilities occurs only based on demonstrated local public need. Advanced communication infrastructure is encouraged.



**ARTS, CULTURE AND RECREATION**

Our community nurtures the expression of its creative talents and supports diverse cultural and entertainment activities. Our cultural facilities such as libraries, museums, and theaters are focal points of activity and community support. Well-managed parks, trails, and shoreline access, where appropriate, provide islanders with recreation with due regard for both the rights of private property owners and the natural limitations of each site.



**HERITAGE AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

Our community is enriched by a strong sense of identity, tradition, legacy, and continuity, where past and present freely mingle. We recognize the contributions to our rural and maritime heritage made by indigenous peoples, explorers, and island pioneers. We encourage preservation of our heritage, historic sites, structures, and traditions for the enjoyment of all.



Photo: National Park Service

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**OUR COMMITMENT: AS FORTUNATE CITIZENS OF THE SAN JUAN ISLANDS, WE COMMIT** ourselves individually and communally to a future for ourselves and our children that reflects this vision.

1 **FRAMEWORK**

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3 The County has the responsibility of planning for growth management. That is, the County must plan in  
4 order to meet the everyday needs of the anticipated future population. The goals and policies in this *Plan*  
5 directly influence development regulations, programs, and other plans that shape everyday life.  
6

7 The *Plan* and its 10 Elements are key to maintaining life sustainably in San Juan County. All residents (and  
8 visitors) have need for housing, utilities and transportation infrastructure, capital facilities and services,  
9 and clean water and other natural resources. All are affected by economic development programs and  
10 land use regulations. Many human activities impact critical environments, such as shorelines and  
11 wetlands, which provide ecosystem services and habitat for wildlife. Many appreciate the islands' natural  
12 beauty and history, and therefore, have reason to value their protection and preservation.  
13

14 Past trends show that population growth will occur in San Juan County at a similar rate as Washington  
15 State. The islands have limited resources and house unique and fragile natural ecosystems. The effects of  
16 climate change may be exacerbated by population growth, as growth requires new development and  
17 leads to greater greenhouse gas emissions. Planning for growth has never before been so imperative.  
18

19 **Public Involvement**

20 The public played a key role in developing and updating this *Plan*. It was shaped by early and continuous  
21 public involvement. The public was involved in the development of the *Plan Vision*. The original 1992  
22 Vision was revised in 2017-18 by members of the public who participated in pop-up studios, workshops,  
23 an online survey, and public hearings. The public engagement for the Vision informed additional 2018  
24 workshops, in which the public helped established focus areas for the *Plan* update. While revising the  
25 Elements and appendices, the Department of Community Development released multiple drafts of each  
26 for public comment.  
27

28 Throughout the *Plan* update process, several topics were particularly important to the public. Sense of  
29 community and preservation of rural character were concerns the public often brought forward.  
30 Concerns about tourism management, natural resources, wildlife protection, and climate change  
31 mitigation and resilience emerged. Housing availability and affordability were important public concerns.  
32 The community rallied to support farming by adding a new agriculture section to the Vision.  
33

## 1 WHAT IS THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN? 2

3 The *Plan* aims to accomplish the 14 planning goals (Attachment 1) set by the Washington State Growth  
4 Management Act (GMA). Local goals, policies, and land use maps based on the community’s vision for the  
5 future and on assessments of current and predicted conditions are oriented toward the GMA planning  
6 goals. In addition to goals and policies, the *Plan* contains other documents such as technical appendices,  
7 official maps, subarea plans, and the plans of jurisdictions and organizations whose work coincides with  
8 the County’s. New regulations, programs, and other plans should align with the *Plan*.  
9

### 10 *Plan Contents* 11

12 The *Plan* is organized into three sections, plus appendices and subarea plans.  
13

- 14     ▪ **Section A:** Introduction to the *Plan*, orients readers, provides the community’s Vision.
- 15
- 16     ▪ **Section B:** *Plan* elements, each of which contain an introduction and overview of each topic, and  
17 goals and policies. The *Plan* elements are: Governance, Land Use, Shoreline Master Program,  
18 Water Resources, Housing, Transportation, Capital Facilities, Utilities, Historic and Archaeological  
19 Preservation, and Economic Development.  
20
- 21     ▪ **Section C:** Administration
- 22
- 23     ▪ **Appendices:** Technical information supplemental to the *Plan* elements. This information includes  
24 budgets, relevant data, inventories, and analyses that inform the corresponding goals and policies  
25 in Section B.  
26
- 27     ▪ **Subarea Plans** to guide development in the unincorporated Urban Growth Areas and in certain  
28 communities that require planning tailored to their specific contexts.  
29

### 30 *Implementation* 31

32 The *Plan* is implemented by various parties throughout the County. It is used by the Department of  
33 Community Development to guide land use decisions and amend the development code. The Capital  
34 Facilities Plan includes many budgets used countywide for allocating funding for County facilities and  
35 services. Public Works uses the Transportation Element to plan for the development and maintenance of  
36 transportation infrastructure. The Housing Element informs and guides housing programs run by the  
37 County and in partnership with local organizations.

1 **COUNTY PROFILE**

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By identifying the County population and the location-based characteristics of the Islands, San Juan County creates and implements the *Plan* with appropriate context. San Juan County intends for the *Plan* to foster and maintain people’s wellbeing, and sense of community and place in the Islands.



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1 Population

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In 2016, San Juan County was home to 16,314 residents. The four most populated islands are San Juan, Orcas, Lopez and Shaw. The islands are said to each have their own unique ‘feel’ shaped by the communities and the landscapes. According to the 2019 San Juan Islands Visitors Study, both residents and visitors are attracted to the friendliness of the locals.

**Table 1. Number of permanent residents in San Juan County by island, 2016 and predicted in 2036.**

Island	2016	2036
San Juan (incl. Town of Friday Harbor)	7,810	9,298
Orcas	5,395	6,432
Lopez	2,466	2,936
Shaw	241	287
Other Islands	402	470
<b>Total</b>	<b>16,314</b>	<b>19,423</b>

9 Source: San Juan County *Plan* Appendix 6, Housing Needs Assessment.

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San Juan County is a popular place to retire, and the population is skewed older than the rest of the state. Whereas the state median age is 37 years, the median age in San Juan County is 55 years. The median age in the County has been increasing over time, meaning that the population is aging. An aging population has economic implications, such as workforce availability, and affects the needs for schools, housing and various services.

Every year, San Juan County receives a significant number of visitors, including tourists, service providers, second homeowners, and seasonal workers, artists and scientific researchers. The majority of visitors come during the warmer months of May through September. On a single day in the peak season, there can be up to nearly 25,000 (24,810 in 2018) people in the County. By 2036, the County could have nearly up to 30,000 people on a peak day. When San Juan County plans to accommodate growth, it not only plans for an increase in residents, but also anticipates more visitors.

San Juan County’s population is 93.9 percent white. It has smaller percentages of all other racial and ethnic categories when compared to the state.

**Table 2. Race and Hispanic Origin in San Juan County and Washington State, 2018 Estimates**

Race/Ethnicity	San Juan County % of Population	Washington State % of Population
White	93.9	78.9
Black or African American	0.8	4.3
American Indian or Alaska Native	1	1.9
Asian	1.5	9.3
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0.2	0.8
2 or more races	2.6	4.8
Hispanic or Latino	6.7	12.9
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	88.1	68

28 Source: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/sanjuancountywashington> and <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/WA>

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1 Place

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3 At 173.91 square miles of land, San Juan County is the smallest in Washington by landmass, though it has  
4 the greatest amount of marine shoreline with 410 miles. Seventy-two percent of the County's 621 square  
5 miles of total area are marine waters. It is only accessible by ferry, private boat and aircraft. The County  
6 has ports of entry between the United States and Canada on San Juan Island. One can travel to Canada  
7 via the Sidney, B.C. ferry and the Friday Harbor airport.

8

9 San Juan County is known for its scenic landscapes and marine environment. Among them: rocky  
10 shorelines, sandy beaches, dense forests, sweeping prairie, arable farmland, and unique villages and  
11 hamlets.

12



Spencer Spit State Park  
Photo: Barbara Marrett



Moran State Park  
Photo: Mark Gardner



San Juan Island Farm  
Photo: Barbara Marrett



Eastsound Urban Growth Area  
Photo: San Juan Islands Visitors Bureau

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14 The climate in San Juan County is astoundingly varied. The surrounding landmasses and bodies of water  
15 affect the weather and lead to microclimates throughout the San Juan Islands. Some places receive many  
16 inches of rain annually, and feature dense, lush forest with fungi, mosses, ferns and big trees. Other areas  
17 are quite dry, scrubby and rocky, with small trees and even cacti. The Islands are teeming with marine and  
18 terrestrial life, with a variety of mammals, fish, birds, arthropods, plants, fungi, and algae.

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1 Key Challenges

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3 This *Plan* addresses all GMA requirements. Public participation indicated that the County will face the  
4 following key challenges during the 2036 planning period.

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6 **Housing:** Stable housing people can afford is a foundational aspect of a strong community. In San Juan  
7 County there is a low stock of housing units for purchase or long-term rental, and many people struggle  
8 to find available housing that suits their needs. Housing affordability is another issue, particularly for  
9 those who rely on wage incomes. The median earned income in San Juan County is significantly lower  
10 than the state average; however, the median home price in the County is significantly higher than the  
11 state average. The cost of living is high in the San Juan Islands. San Juan County needs a variety of housing  
12 types that suit the needs of households of various income levels and life stages.

13  
14 **Economic Diversification:** Rapid, unexpected changes such as a natural disaster, pandemic, or recession  
15 shake the foundation of the County’s economy; as do long-term changes, such as industry shifts and  
16 climate change. Currently, the County economy rests heavily on tourism, and largely sources labor and  
17 skills from outside the County. San Juan County will be more resilient to natural and economic disruptions  
18 with a broad and diverse economy that utilizes the local workforce and attracts a variety of business types.

19  
20 **Tourism Management:** Communities around the world are learning to manage tourism in order to  
21 promote balanced economies, high quality of life for residents, and protection of the natural environment  
22 from degradation. Tourism management strategies are needed to protect the quality of life and natural  
23 resources on the Islands. This *Plan* considers the San Juan Islands’ seasonal population in most elements;  
24 however, other documents, such as the 2019 San Juan Islands Visitor Study, engage with the topic of  
25 tourism in more depth. A Tourism Master Plan is being developed. San Juan County also partners with  
26 other organizations to better understand and manage the effects of tourism, and to provide outreach and  
27 education to visitors about stewarding the natural environment. It is the only County that has officially  
28 adopted the Leave No Trace principles. Visitors are actively educated in stewardship principles.

29  
30 **Preserving Rural Character:** Growth and rural character can seem like contradictory concepts. Rural  
31 character is defined, in part, as a place where open space, the natural landscape, and vegetation  
32 predominate over the built environment. Growth, on the other hand, is linked to development as  
33 members of the County population need places to live, work, go to school, recreate, and carry out other  
34 life activities. With mindful planning, the County can face the challenge of preserving natural beauty,  
35 open space, natural resources, wildlife habitat, rural lifestyles and quality of living while accommodating  
36 the necessary development that comes with population growth. The most intense new development will  
37 occur strategically in the urban growth areas on San Juan, Orcas and Lopez.

38  
39 **Climate Change:** The impacts of rapidly changing global climate regimes, from a local to global scale,  
40 demand serious attention. They create concerns for human well-being, the health of the marine  
41 ecosystem, sustainability, and economic prosperity everywhere. We are at an inflection point in history  
42 and our community faces critical choices as we collectively strive for greater resilience and self-reliance  
43 given the cascading changes we will experience. In the decades ahead the social, economic and  
44 environmental reverberations amplified by climate change will not only impose challenges, but also  
45 expand opportunities, as yet unanticipated for our County. Prioritizing a diversified economy, systems  
46 resiliency, adaptation planning and goals that remediate, sequester and reduce carbon emissions are  
47 incorporated into the elements of this updated plan.

1 Climate Change Mitigation and Resilience Strategies in the *Plan*

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3 Climate Change, one of the five key challenges identified as especially critical during the planning period  
4 and beyond, is addressed throughout the *Plan* elements. There are goals and policies that support climate  
5 change mitigation and resilience efforts and apply to a wide variety of issues. Some goals and policies  
6 directly address climate change and some address tangentially related issues. *Plan* goals and polices are  
7 used to direct County regulations and programs. Most climate change issues in the *Plan* fall into the  
8 categories of sea level rise, water availability, extreme weather events and natural disasters, and reducing  
9 fossil fuel dependence and greenhouse gas emissions. Section B, Element 4, Land Use includes a policy  
10 directing the County to conduct a climate change impact study that assesses lands susceptible to climate  
11 impacts and identifies hazard areas and regulatory changes. Many of the goals and policies discussed  
12 below can build off the findings of the climate change impact study. Below is a guide to climate change  
13 mitigation and resilience strategies in the *Plan*.

14  
15 **Sea Level Rise:** in San Juan County, an island community surrounded by water, sea level rise will be  
16 apparent through increased shoreline erosion, flooding, and storm surge events. The following *Plan*  
17 elements address sea level rise:

- 18  
19 • **Element 2, Land Use and Rural:** Includes goals and polices that ensure that the *Plan* and  
20 development regulations are responsive to climate change, including potential impacts of sea  
21 level rise.
- 22  
23 • **Element 4, Water Resources:** Includes a policy about avoiding saltwater intrusion, which will be  
24 exacerbated by rising sea levels.
- 25  
26 • **Element 5, Housing:** Includes a policy stating that the County will consider climate change risks  
27 such as flooding and severe erosion when siting UGA expansions and affordable housing.
- 28  
29 • **Element 6, Transportation:** Includes policies that ensure new transportation infrastructure is  
30 sited appropriately and protected from sea level rise, increased flood and erosion hazards, and  
31 storm surge.
- 32  
33 • **Element 7, Capital Facilities:** Includes a policy stating that the County gradually retreat public  
34 infrastructure away from climate impacted areas as they require replacement or maintenance.

35  
36 **Water Availability:** San Juan County has limited ground and surface freshwater resources. During the  
37 *Plan* update process, water availability was one of the greatest community concerns related to climate  
38 change. The following *Plan* elements include goals and polices for managing water resources and  
39 encouraging practices that support aquifer recharge during a time when water systems and aquifer  
40 networks may be stressed.

- 41  
42 • **Element 2, Land Use and Rural:** Includes a goal and policies that cultivate practices that support  
43 natural systems that provide ecosystem services such as stormwater management and aquifer  
44 recharge.
- 45  
46 • **Element 4, Water Resources:** Promotes water use efficiency and conservation. Collect data and  
47 monitor water use and availability long term. Encourage practices that improve aquifer recharge.

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- **Element 5, Housing:** Includes a policy stating that the County will avoid siting affordable housing in areas projected to have increased water shortages due to climate change.
  - **Element 6, Transportation:** supports transportation facility design that promotes stormwater management, which can improve aquifer recharge.

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**Extreme Weather Events and Natural Disasters:** Climate change is expected to bring wetter winters and drier summers in Western Washington. The following *Plan* elements include policies to reduce the potential impacts of more frequent flooding events, drought, and the natural disasters that may result of climate change.

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- **Element 2, Land Use and Rural:** promote forest stewardship activities that reduce wildfire risk. States that the County will update the *Plan* and UDC as needed to address climate change impacts as they emerge, including more frequent severe weather events and natural disasters.
  - **Element 4, Water Resources:** Includes a policy stating that the County will reduce the impacts of drought by promoting water conservation and practices that enhance aquifer recharge.
  - **Element 6, Transportation:** Includes policies ensuring that new transportation infrastructure is sited appropriately and protected from storm surge.
  - **Element 8, Utilities:** Includes a goal and policies supporting energy independence from the mainland, which can improve resilience in weather events and natural disasters.
  - **Element 10, Economic Development:** Includes policies supporting agricultural practices that build resilience to a changing climate.

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**Reducing Fossil Fuel Dependence and Greenhouse Gas Emissions:** The following *Plan* elements contain goals and policies that promote development patterns that reduce fossil fuel reliance and support efforts to transition toward cleaner energy and transportation by allowing the infrastructure required.

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- **Element 2, Land use:** Includes policies that encourage development patterns and allow activities that decrease reliance on fossil fuel dependent transportation.
  - **Element 5, Housing:** Includes a policy stating that the County will incentivize practices that decrease fossil fuel reliance.
  - **Element 6, Transportation:** Includes policies supporting Washington State Ferries in the electrification of the ferry fleet. Supports non-motorized transportation options and Complete Streets principles.
  - **Element 7, Capital Facilities:** Includes a policy stating that the County will transition to electric County vehicles and machinery.
  - **Element 8, Utilities:** Includes policies supporting locally produced renewable energy and the electricity infrastructure needed to electrify transportation.

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- **Element 10, Economic Development:** Includes a policy supporting the electrification of transportation. Includes policies for enhancing economic resilience by encouraging individuals and businesses to reduce fossil fuel consumption and transition toward electric energy from local providers as an economically favorable alternative.

## DEFINITIONS

### Scope.

See Chapter 18.20 San Juan County Code (SJCC) for the definitions of technical and procedural terms used throughout the Comprehensive Plan and SJCC.

### Interpretations.

1. For the purpose of this Plan, all words shall have their normal and customary meanings, unless specifically defined otherwise in Chapter 18.20 SJCC. In general, words used in the present tense shall include the future; the singular shall include the plural; and the plural the singular.
2. All definitions which reference the Revised Code of Washington (RCW), Washington Administrative Code (WAC), and Uniform Building Code (UBC) are intended to mirror the definitions in these codes at the effective date of the Comprehensive Plan and SJCC or as amended. If the definition in this Code conflicts with a definition under state law or regulation, the state definition shall control over this definition.
3. These definitions are not intended to establish regulations

1 **ATTACHMENTS**

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3 Comprehensive Plans are guided by the goals set forth by Washington State’s Growth Management Act.

4 The following table lists the GMA planning goals in RCW 36.70A.020.

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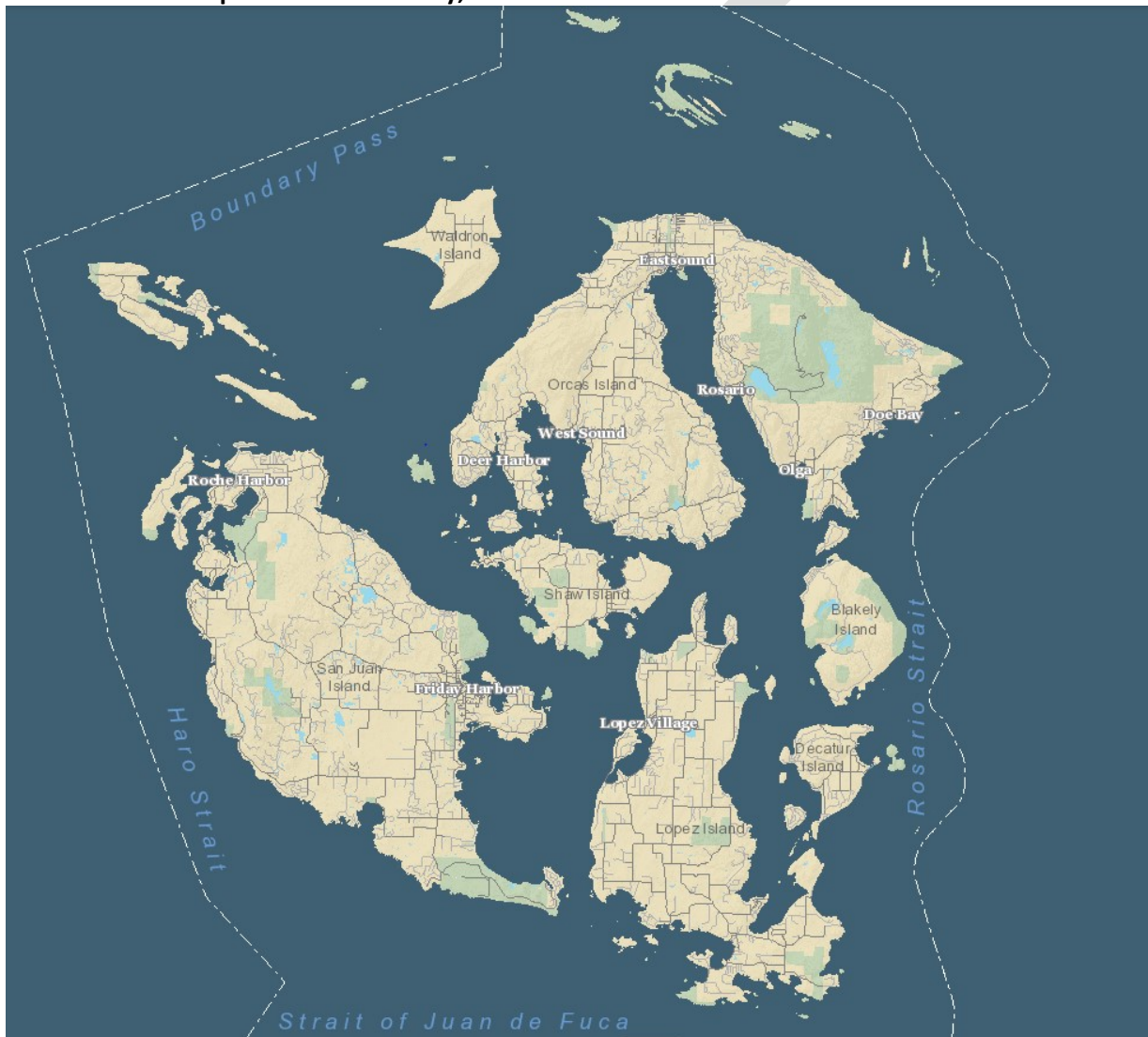
6 **Attachment 1. GMA Planning Goals**

<b>GMA PLANNING GOAL</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>
Urban Growth	Encourage development in urban areas where adequate public facilities and services exist or can be provided in an efficient manner.
Reduce Sprawl	Reduce the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density development.
Transportation	Encourage efficient multimodal transportation systems that are based on regional priorities and coordinated with county and city comprehensive plans.
Housing	Encourage the availability of affordable housing to all economic segments of the population of this state, promote a variety of residential densities and housing types, and encourage preservation of existing housing stock.
Economic Development	Encourage economic development throughout the state that is consistent with adopted comprehensive plans, promote economic opportunity for all citizens of this state, especially for unemployed and for disadvantaged persons, promote the retention and expansion of existing businesses and recruitment of new businesses, recognize regional differences impacting economic development opportunities, and encourage growth in areas experiencing insufficient economic growth, all within the capacities of the state's natural resources, public services, and public facilities.
Property Rights	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.
Permits	Applications for both state and local government permits should be processed in a timely and fair manner to ensure predictability.
Natural Resource Industries	Maintain and enhance natural resource-based industries, including productive timber, agricultural, and fisheries industries. Encourage the conservation of productive forestlands and productive agricultural lands, and discourage incompatible uses.
Open Space and Recreation	Retain open space, enhance recreational opportunities, conserve fish and wildlife habitat, increase access to natural resource lands and water, and develop parks and recreation facilities.
Environment	Protect the environment and enhance the state's high quality of life, including air and water quality, and the availability of water.
Citizen Participation and Coordination	Encourage the involvement of citizens in the planning process and ensure coordination between communities and jurisdictions to reconcile conflicts.

Public Facilities and Services	Ensure that those public facilities and services necessary to support development shall be adequate to serve the development at the time the development is available for occupancy and use without decreasing current service levels below locally established minimum standards.
Historic Preservation	Identify and encourage the preservation of lands, sites, and structures that have historical or archaeological significance.
Protect Shorelines	Minimize, insofar as practical, any resultant damage to the ecology and environment of the shoreline area and any interference with the public's use of the water.

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**Attachment 2. Map of San Juan County, 2020**



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