

# Citizen's Guide to Effectively Participating in the San Juan County Comprehensive Plan Update

**Subscribe to notices.** Interested parties may sign up to receive notices about the Comprehensive Plan Update at the link below. After opening the link, select Comprehensive Plan Update under the News Flash header. <http://www.sanjuanco.com/list.aspx>

**Get the latest news and track the progress of the Update.** Check the project website for staff reports and draft documents: <http://www.sanjuanco.com/1079/Comprehensive-Plan-Update>.

**Review project materials and ask questions to clarify or increase understanding.** Rhetorical questions are not helpful. If you don't support a proposal, tell us what and why.

**Make your comments specific and direct.** Avoid general statements such as "Protect the environment." Help us by identifying specific goals and policies, or changes/additions to documents that you think need to be made and why. Or let us know what part of the environment needs protection, and what it needs protection from. Make specific suggestions such as delete line 15, on page 4 and replace it with the following sentence:.....

**Make your comments constructive.** If you have a criticism, also try to suggest a solution. Let us know what you think the problem is and what possible solutions there are.

**Use facts not rhetoric.** The more clearly you state the facts, the better your chances are of getting the results you seek. Rhetoric can obscure facts.

**Comment before or at public hearings.** Make sure your comments are part of the official record by commenting (either verbally in writing) during the official public comment periods for public hearings of the Planning Commission and County Council. Please read the hearing notice for special instructions on how and where to submit written or email comments. Please clearly identify the topic in the subject line. Example Population Projection Selection: State share method.

**Check deadlines.** If you are submitting written comments on a matter that may have a comment deadline, be sure to check out the deadline and submit material well ahead of time to account for possible mail or filing delays.

**Keep copies.** When writing to us, whether it is an official comment submission or not, keep a copy of what you have written and know to whom you sent it. This can be a valuable reference in your follow-up contacts.

**Sign in.** County meetings often have sign-in sheets. Although there is no requirement to sign in, the sign-in sheets are often used as mailing lists for later communication about the issue at hand.

**Avoid the shotgun approach.** Give the first person you call with a question or comment a chance to respond. Calling several people might end up duplicating work on your question, which is not effective use of county time — paid by taxpayers.

**Send us an email.** General comments can be emailed to: [compplancomments@sanjuanco.com](mailto:compplancomments@sanjuanco.com). Please check public hearing advertisements for specific instructions on how to comment and to whom email and written comments must be sent.