



## Memorandum

To: SJC Planning Commission

CC: Adam Zack, Planner II, DCD  
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From: San Juan County Agricultural Resource Committee (ARC)  
Learner Limbach, Chair, ARC 

Date: March 15, 2018

Subject: Comments on Second Draft Vision Amendments Dated March 1, 2018

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### Purpose

To provide the Planning Commission and County Planners with the ARC's recommendations for changes to the second draft Vision Amendments dated March 1, 2018.

### Background

The ARC is a Citizen Advisory Committee composed of 15 voting seats, half of which must be members of the farming community. Our 2018 Work Plan includes engaging and collaborating in the Comprehensive Plan Update process by researching and proposing amendments to ensure consistency and support for a stronger agricultural economy. The ARC also serves as a listening post for the Agricultural community and conducts outreach throughout the year to help inform priorities.

The ARC's Regulations and Policy subcommittee drafted initial recommendations which were then revised by the Executive Committee. All ARC members then had the opportunity to suggest changes to the recommendations. The ARC then voted on and passed the final recommendations by electronic (e-mail) vote completed on Wednesday March 14th.

### Attachment

The ARC's adopted recommendations are attached.

Recommendations are based on the second draft Vision Amendments dated March 1, 2018 found at <https://www.sanjuanco.com/DocumentCenter/View/14542>

## Recommended Amendments to the San Juan County Vision

Adopted March 15, 2018 by the Agricultural Resources Committee of San Juan County

**1) After the section “Natural Environment” ADD the following new section**

**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 encourage regenerative practices and recognize the integral role that agriculture plays in the stewardship of our soils and water resources. Agricultural activities are essential to the health and well-being of our community, contributing to the social, economic and environmental fabric of our islands.

Why this change is important:

- We believe that existing references in the Vision are not sufficient to reflect the cultural, social, economic and environmental significance that agriculture and local food production holds for our community.
- There have been many comments during the Vision Amendment process thus far that suggest there is a strong desire in the community to include a more comprehensive statement on agriculture in the Vision.

**2) On page 3, line 23 ADD “Everyone has access to healthy, locally produced food.” after “vital resource.”**

Paragraph reads:

**BASIC HUMAN NEEDS** Our islands are places where all citizens can safely walk or play, day or night. The drinking water supply is clean, adequate, and conserved as a vital resource. **Everyone has access to healthy, locally produced food.** Health care, elder care and help in time of need are accessible and affordable. Making a life here is possible for all people and is not limited by lack of access to basic human needs.

Why this change is important:

- After water, food is our most basic human need.
- We believe that everyone should have access to healthy, locally produced food.

**3) On page 3, line 40 ADD “environmentally conscious” after “ethical”**

Paragraph reads:

**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

environment founded on academic excellence and artistic expression. This educational environment produces ethical, **environmentally conscious**, self-directed, compassionate, responsible world citizens, alive with the love of learning.

Why this change is important:

- Providing an educational environment that produces environmentally conscious citizens is a critical component of creating the change that is needed to stop and reverse global warming and other environmental degradation. This relates to being responsible world citizens and we feel it is important to identify this specifically.

**4) On page 4, line 2 ADD “and maintains” after “recognizes”**

Paragraph reads:

**ECONOMY** We support a pattern of economic growth and development which serves the needs of our community, and which recognizes **and maintains** the rural, residential, quiet, agricultural, marine and isolated nature of the islands. ...

Why this change is important:

- This makes it more clear that the desire is to *maintain* these characteristics of our islands rather than simply recognizing them. Our community is involved in our environment, not merely passive observers.

**5) On page 4, line 26 ADD “fertile and” after “soil is”**

Paragraph reads:

**NATURAL ENVIRONMENT** Our islands have exceptional natural beauty and healthy diverse ecosystems surrounded by pollution-free marine waters. The air is fresh and clean, the water quality is excellent, and the soil is **fertile and** uncontaminated. ...

Why this change is important:

- The intent of our Vision should be to have soil that is fertile, alive and productive not to simply not contaminate it.
- The statement “Water quality is excellent” sets an aspirational goal. “Soil is uncontaminated” sets a low bar in contrast.
- Vision statements look for what is desired, not for paths to avoid.

**6) On page 5, line 22 ADD “Food production and” after “encouraged.”**

Paragraph reads:

**ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES** Our community fosters resource and energy conservation. Energy independence is encouraged. **Food production and** drinking water resources are managed to meet the needs of our community and future generations.

Why this change is important:

- Management of our food production resources, and food production capacity, are critically important and it makes sense to include food alongside water in this context.

**7) On page 5, line 25 ADD “Community and private composting systems are encouraged to minimize waste and to increase soil fertility.” after “basis.”**

Paragraph reads:

**ENERGY AND RESOURCES** Our community fosters resource and energy conservation. Energy independence is encouraged. Food production and drinking water resources are managed to meet the needs of our community and future generations. Recycling, solid waste, and sewage treatment are managed both within the confines of each island and Countywide in an environmentally sound manner. Renewable natural resources are used on a sustainable basis. **Community and private composting systems are encouraged to minimize waste and to increase soil fertility.** Nonrenewable resources are conserved wherever possible and practical.

Why this change is important:

- We feel there is a strong push for this in our community already, with progress being made toward this goal. Our support for community and private composting systems should be spelled out in the Vision to help anchor this as a theme in our organic waste planning.
- Through composting, the amount of garbage sent to the landfill is reduced, recycling the organic matter into a useful soil amendment,.