

Sophia Cassam

From: Angela Broderick
Sent: Monday, September 19, 2022 3:29 PM
To: Comp Plan Update
Cc: Kendra Smith; David Williams
Subject: Comments from SJC Climate and Sustainability Advisory Committee
Attachments: C&S Committee Comp Plan Recommendations.pdf

I am submitting the attached statement at the request of our Climate and Sustainability Advisory Committee.

Thank you,
Angela



Angela Broderick (she/her) | *Climate & Sustainability Coordinator*

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Date: September 16, 2022

To: San Juan County Council
San Juan County Planning Commission



From: Climate and Sustainability Advisory Committee

RE: Incorporation of Climate Action Language into the Comprehensive Plan

The Climate and Sustainability Advisory Committee reviewed the proposal by the Friends of San Juans (FOSJ) to add a climate element to the current comprehensive plan (Plan) update and received public comment from FOSJ at our August 26th meeting. We also had a discussion with David Williams, Planning Director to help us understand the status of the planning process, and reviewed Planning staff reports detailing the current climate-related language in the Plan. We have been informed that adding a new element or chapter to the Plan at this point in time would be a structural change that would invoke additional State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) review and delay the Plan's adoption by up to five months (potentially off setting our next Plan update scheduled for 2025).

We understand that the Plan is 6 years overdue for update, and the Council has directed staff to complete the work by the end of 2022, to help bring the County back into compliance with the Growth Management Act (GMA). Being out of compliance puts our community at a disadvantage in terms of receipt of grant funding from the State for future Plan updates, as well as a grant from Department of Commerce to address climate action planning.

As a pragmatic response to this situation, the Climate and Sustainability Advisory Committee agreed that further delay of the Plan was not acceptable, and we concur that the current language is a good start for climate action in the Plan. However, we would like to recommend to Council the following:

- Support updates to the Development Code in 2023 that will strengthen our ability to take climate action and continue to advance environmental enforcement.
- Make climate action a top priority in the next Plan update and commit to adding a climate change element to the Plan, following the guidance of model element language due to be delivered by the Department of Commerce in June 2023 and with consideration for the climate actions this committee identifies.
- Fully commit to pursuing climate mitigation and resilience solutions to the extent possible, without delaying the completion of the current Plan update.

In addition, we would like to thank the Council's recent support for funding a greenhouse gas inventory, which we identified as a necessary first step to developing the baseline conditions for the County's Climate Action Plan (CAP). The Environmental Stewardship Department has been searching for CAP grant funding since June 2021, but unfortunately has not found a funding opportunity that aligns with our timing and needs. Our goal is to complete the CAP by the end of 2023 and identify funding for the Climate and Sustainability program to support the CAP implementation. This important work will also feed into the Comprehensive Plan updates for 2025, as well as the County's capital and operating programs. Completing the CAP will allow the County to prioritize and seek infrastructure bill capital funding for actions deemed most effective and relevant to our small rural County.

We look forward to providing input on the integration a Climate Element into the Plan for the 2025 update. Thank you for your consideration of our recommendations.