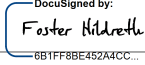
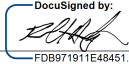


## Comprehensive Plan Text/SJC Code\* Amendment Request

\*San Juan County Code Titles 15, 16 & 18  
(Annual Docket)

APPLICANT INFORMATION:			
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This request is for a text amendment to the Comprehensive Plan or development regulations, not a comprehensive plan map amendment. I understand that this request will be reviewed according to the County’s annual docket		
 <small>DocuSigned by: Foster Hildreth 6B1FF8BE452A4CC...</small>	<b>Foster Hildreth</b>	<b>2/28/2021</b>
<i>Signature</i>	<i>Printed Name</i>	<i>Date</i>
 <small>DocuSigned by: Russell Guerry FD8971911E48451...</small>	<b>Russell Guerry</b>	<b>2/28/2021</b>
<i>Signature</i>	<i>Printed Name</i>	<i>Date</i>

**Please Describe the Proposed Amendments (attach additional pages if you need more space):**

- Comprehensive Plan amendments (if applicable). Describe proposed amendment and/or attach proposed text changes. List Comprehensive plan section, page numbers, title and policies proposed for amendment.**

N/A

- San Juan County Code Title 15, Title 16 or Title 18 amendments (if applicable). Describe proposed amendment and/or attach proposed text changes. List code sections proposed for amendment.**

This proposal adds a new **Land Use** to the **Utilities Uses** section of **Table 18.30.040** land use table – rural, resource, and special land use designations. The proposed new land use would be called “**Utility renewable power-generation facilities**” for modern renewable energy systems that are clean and quiet, unlike legacy non-renewable fossil-fueled power generation systems that may be deployed in the code’s current “**Commercial power-generation facilities**” land use.

This proposal allows provisional/conditional use permitting for utility renewable power-generation facilities in all rural areas (RGU, RR, RFF, RI, RC) and AG Resource Lands, and conditional use in Forest Resource Lands (FOR). Special Lands (C, N) would be prohibited. This is summarized in the table below.

**Table 18.30.040**

Land Uses	Classification of Uses by Land Use Designation									
	Rural Designations					Resource Lands		Special Lands		
	RGU	RR	RFF	RI	RC	AG	FOR	C	N	N
<b>Utilities Uses</b>										
Utility renewable power-generation facilities	P/C	P/C	P/C	P/C	P/C	P/C	C	N	N	N

A definition for “Utility renewable power-generation facilities” in UDC section 18.20.210 should also be adopted as follows:

“Utility renewable power-generation facilities” means equipment or machinery that produces fossil-free electricity from renewable energy sources by electric utilities co-located with Rural Designation and Resource Lands, and can include energy storage.”

**3. Why is the amendment being proposed?**

Climate change is accelerating globally. Washington state’s 2021 Energy Strategy, Climate Commitment Act, and Clean Energy Transformation Act set a very high bar to reduce carbon emissions by 50% by 2030 and net-zero by 2050. The entire region is racing against the clock to decommission fossil-fueled power generation and replace it with clean renewables. The County’s recent Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventory Identified fossil-fueled transportation and heating contribute to 81% of County GHG emissions. The state and federal governments are providing a variety of grants and incentives to accelerate a rapid transition to electric heating and driving. These grants are substantial and require timely response, necessitating permitting certainty wherever possible.

But Washington is reducing fossil generation faster than replacing it with renewables. OPALCO and northwest energy forecasters both expect an increased probability of major region power outages and blackouts. The more local generation we have in place, the better the County can ride through outages and avoid surges in mainland power market rates. Those rate surges fall especially hard on the vulnerable.

Utility-scale renewable generation is much more cost-effective and efficient compared to rooftop solar. In less than a year, the most recent planned Bailer Hill project will more than double the local energy in the county, compared to all the rooftop solar in the county, which took 13 years to build. And at a small fraction of the price and time to build rooftop solar. Current permitting limitations put the grants for that project at risk. Those grants include important Washington Clean Energy Funds for helping low-income households with energy from the Bailer Hill agri-solar array.

Referring to the current Land Uses, Utility Uses section below, the utility functions are commonly provisional/conditional (P/C) or, in some cases, P or Y. This helps strike a balance for critical energy systems the public depends on. The proposed **Utility renewable power generation** land use is shown in BLUE.

Land Uses	Classification of Uses by Land Use Designation									
	Rural Designations					Resource Lands		Special Lands <sup>(4)</sup>		
	RGU	RR	RFF	RI	RC	AG	FOR	C	N	
<b>Utilities Uses</b>										
Category “A” joint use wireless facility <sup>(10)</sup>	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Category “B” joint use wireless facility	P/C	P/C	P/C	P/C	P/C	P/C	P/C	P/C	P/C	P/C
Utility distribution lines	P	P	P	P	P	P/C	P/C	P/C	P/C	P/C
Utility facilities	P/C	P/C	P/C	P/C	P/C	P/C	P/C	P/C	P/C	P/C
<b>Utility renewable power generation facilities</b>	<b>P/C</b>	<b>P/C</b>	<b>P/C</b>	<b>P/C</b>	<b>P/C</b>	<b>P/C</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>N</b>
Utility substations	P/C	P/C	P/C	P/C	P/C	P/C	P/C	P/C	P/C	P/C
Utility transmission lines	P/C	P/C	P/C	P/C	P/C	P/C	P/C	P/C	P/C	P/C

The urgency to develop local energy resources in a timely manner is not unlike the urgency of developing the Joint Use Wireless Facilities that OPALCO and the County collaborated on to quickly transition meager wireless and legacy dial-up and DSL broadband facilities to modern communication system standards. That joint use wireless land use facilitated and revolutionized local communication and broadband services. The proposed **Utility renewable power-generation facilities** Land Use will offer similar public benefits and transformation of County local energy capabilities.

Accelerating major local renewable energy capacity ensures a cleaner, more sustainable energy future, reducing our use of fossil fuels and mitigating the devastating impacts of climate change.

**4. How is the proposed amendment consistent with the Growth Management Act (RCW 36.70A), Comprehensive Plan and development regulations?**

**Growth Management Act:** This proposal is consistent with the Planning Goals of the Growth Management Act, particularly for RCW §36.70A.020:

- Environment - reduce greenhouse gas emissions, which will improve air and water quality.
- Economic development (local energy generation replaces increasingly expensive mainland power),
- Public facilities and services.
- Climate change and resiliency - support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and per capita vehicle miles traveled; prepare for climate impact scenarios; foster resiliency to climate impacts and natural hazards; protect and enhance environmental, economic, and human health and safety; and advance environmental justice.

**Comprehensive Plan:** This proposal will facilitate increased local production of renewable energy while reducing GHG emissions and increasing local energy resilience, consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, including in particular the following sections:

- 2036 VISION - ENERGY AND RESOURCES: “Our community strives for energy independence and zero waste. We use renewable energy, materials, and natural resources on a sustainable basis.”
- 2.2C ENERGY
  - POLICY 2 Provide opportunities within land use designations for the development and use of alternative energy resources which are compatible with the natural environment.
- ELEMENT 8. UTILITIES
  - 8.5.A General Goals and Policies, Goal 5: “Protect and preserve natural habitats and environments while also providing for the location and extension of necessary utility facilities.”
  - 8.5.B Utility-Specific Goals and Policies, Electricity Goal 6: “Minimize the environmental impacts of electricity production and use while promoting energy independence.”
  - “The need for locally generated electricity from wind, solar, tidal, and other sources are vitally important to prevent economic disruption and preserve the County’s environment. The County Vision states, “Our community strives for energy independence...we use renewable energy.” **To achieve this vision will require significant land and water areas to host local renewable energy** and tidal power sites.”
  - “**To increase energy independence from the mainland will require predictable permitting processes**, to ensure timely achievement of grant funding and site development. This is particularly so for agri-solar applications on Rural Farm Forest and Ag land. Just as improved wireless land use designations fostered rapid improvement of wireless services in the county, updating land use designations for local renewable energy sites can help accelerate achieving the vision of “energy independence.”

**Unified Development Code:** The proposal is to change the Code and is consistent with the overall policy goals of the Code in accordance with the Growth Management Act and Comprehensive Plan, as detailed above.

**5. Does this proposal impact an Urban Growth Area (UGA)? Lopez Village, Eastsound and the Town of Friday Harbor are the only UGAs in the County.**

- NO

**6. Does this proposal increase population or employment capacity?**

- NO