

VISION 2038 LOCAL VALUES FUTURE

Jefferson County Comprehensive Plan Update Summary of Public Comments and Feedback June –November 2016



This word cloud shows the most popular words and terms citizens used to describe, “what they liked about Jefferson County.” The larger a word appears, the more frequently it was used in responses.

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Executive Summary

This document summarizes public comments on the Jefferson County 2018 Comprehensive Plan (CP) Periodic Update. To date, public meetings, online activities and other methods were used to solicit public feedback on general topics related to the Plan update. Over 603 ideas/suggestions/comments from six open houses, 43 SpeakUp (online) discussion responses, 7 SpeakUp (online) “Question of the Week” responses, 66 element surveys, 71 general surveys and 4 comment letters/emails were received. A local “meeting in a binder” event was held in Cape George by a resident planning commissioner. Additionally, 28 general surveys were submitted in 2014 and these comments are reflected in Appendix A and B. Public input will be continuously sought throughout the Plan update. Some of the most common of all comments received are:

- The need for innovation and flexibility in addressing affordable housing (e.g. tiny homes), water supply, and residential wastewater treatment.
- Access to family-wage jobs and small business opportunities
- Support local agriculture and ensure food security
- The request for greater pedestrian and bike trails without sacrificing rural character.

The complete list of reoccurring issues and themes and other reporting at public comment events follows.

Methods

General Survey:

DCD currently provides a survey to citizens at the DCD office, open house meetings, via DCD website and SpeakUp link, and through the Meeting in a Binder activity. The survey asks quantitative questions regarding neighborhood location, familiarity with the Comprehensive Plan, and asks users to rank various land use issues by level of importance. The survey also asks *qualitative* questions. Staff compiled qualitative responses separately in the public comment database. The *quantitative* response collection and analysis is in **Appendix A**. A collection of 28 general surveys from 2014 outreach efforts by the planning commission was included in the qualitative count.

Open House Public Comments and Informal Contacts (Listening Logs)

DCD collected public comments during the public outreach period coinciding with the summer/early fall 2016 Planning Commission open house meetings held June through November in Port Ludlow, Clearwater, Quilcene, Tri-Areas, Gardiner, and Brinnon.

The first hour was devoted to staff and Planning Commissioners greeting the public, discussing CP elements, themes and process, with the element goals posted around the room. Staff recorded notes in “listening logs” documenting informal contact comments. Additionally, a survey for each Comprehensive Plan element was available for citizens to complete as well as the general survey. The second half of the meeting included a sit down with the Planning Commission taking formal comments from the public on their concerns, comments, and ideas. One planner took notes during the public comment period of each meeting. Staff reconciled any notes with this planner’s notes. Staff consolidated listening logs and staff notes into a “Public Comment” database. This database, available in **Appendix B**, also synthesizes the *qualitative* data generated from the general survey, element surveys and SpeakUp comments. The element code table or key is in **Appendix H**.

Speak Up

Attending public meetings is not always an option for many people who work during the day and take care of families at night. An on-line way for citizens to review proposals, provide input, comments and allow polling of proposals is the best alternative for these people. SpeakUpJeffco.com, available <http://speakupjeffco.com> is an online portal used to offer citizens the chance to send in comments. All CP update information including meeting advertisements, Comprehensive Plan link, DCD website, Meeting in a Binder and survey files, and online forum access through “discussions” is available under the Comprehensive Plan “project”. Within the “project” webpage, each Comprehensive Plan Element is represented by a “discussion” webpage, which states the element’s purpose and goals. Each element “discussion” webpage contains a series of “Topic” questions that reflect those in the Element Surveys. The online forum begins here where users responded to the topic questions and each other. Additionally, staff asked, “Questions of the Week,” accessible on the SpeakUp homepage. The questions included “What is your favorite thing about living in Jefferson county?”, “What is your favorite Jefferson county Park” (received no responses),

and “What is one transportation/ road improvement that you feel would significantly improve your community or Jefferson County in general?” Responses to the questions of the week are named “ideas.” Users voted on ideas and topic question responses. SpeakUp output is available in **Appendix G**.

Stakeholder groups and Meeting in a Binder

The Cape George community convened a meeting in a binder and generated eleven comments. The Food Policy Council held a stakeholder meeting attended by planner, Joel Peterson, to discuss their proposed changes to the element goals and policies within the Comprehensive Plan. The participants downloaded element surveys on SpeakUp to collaboratively evaluate and present their proposed changes using the Meeting in a Binder format. Their goal and policy-specific “line in/line out” suggestions are available in **Appendix C**. The Local 2020 Climate Action and Transportation (T-lab) group also submitted a set of proposed changes to Comprehensive Plan element goals, policies, and strategies elements to address climate change impacts on the area, see **Appendix I**. The submission also suggests climate change-related planning objectives and describes how plan elements relate to climate change issues.

Element Surveys

The element surveys asked open-ended questions, “What is most important to you, or what stands out about this element?” in order to solicit feedback about the element’s general significance. The second part of the survey listed the element’s goals and asked which goals stood out or were important, what would the respondent change, and how to accomplish change. The latter portion of the survey provided feedback to inform the county’s CP goal and policy analysis as detailed in the “Specific Goal-Related Comments by Comprehensive Element” section below.

Compiling the Comments: Errors/Issues

Some participants attended multiple meetings and spoke during the public comment periods. Therefore, some ideas and themes are overrepresented. Nonetheless, none of these people introduced new ideas or themes that did not already have strong support such as broadband internet, improving flexible sanitation and/or tiny homes regulations, and the furthering of a healthy and sustainable farming community.

Speak Up provided the same ability to gather goal specific feedback; however many SpeakUp comments described general issues relating to elements. The online format gave respondents the ability to “do their homework” by providing facts, statistics, and more narrative-based anecdotes. While SpeakUp is an invaluable tool, it is unfortunately less accessible than hoped. This is because outreach revealed many rural areas in the county such as Brinnon and Gardiner lack access to broadband or high speed internet.

General Suggestions/Comments by Comprehensive Plan Element

The “public comment” database, **Appendix B**, contains all comments collected. Comments were sorted and classified according to positive (P) comments (used to generate the word cloud) with those that contained specific suggestions or ideas (S). Comments were also categorized by element (see table summary in **Appendix D**). Some comments related to multiple CP elements. Staff evaluators identified

these instances and highlighted secondary relevant elements. Staff also restricted two relevant elements plus an “other” classification. The “other” class included suggestions for food system development and health; however, many comments fell into this class due to septic/sewer/and water suggestions that, though relevant to the utilities element, are subject to state law outside the purview of the Comprehensive Plan.

Staff identified reoccurring or major themes generated by the element surveys, general surveys, comment letters and open house comments below. Approximate number of repetitions is also shown.

Major Themes/Issues:

- Comments relating to need for high speed internet access (15)
- Innovation and flexibility to improve housing and sanitation (community septics, sewer/septic, graywater, humanure, composting and wells) (32)
- water resource/right sharing, lack of water rights(7)
- Need to find ways to connect to Dosewallips State Park sewer system (3)
- ease regulations for permitting new/existing businesses (21)
- anti-retail/big box stores (2)
- need more major retailers (5)
- Anti-Brinnon MPR (9)
- recreational/tourism based economy (7)
- need more small businesses/jobs (11)
- need more senior businesses
- need more small manufacturing/lumber mill (5)
- economic development should be sustainable and protect the environment (5)
- live here for way of life-not economic opportunity (2)
- ease regulations for permitting tiny homes (9)
- increase density of ADU's and tiny homes on land (5)
- Small-scale, clustered housing
- increase affordable housing (17)
- Provide safe, mold-free affordable housing
- More senior services such as housing, eldercare, senior transportation (9)
- no sprawl (3)
- gentrification is an issue, need family wage jobs, affordable housing and sewer without high connection fees (2)
- Need smaller parcel sizes on west side. Large acreage is unaffordable to families
- need higher density zoning in some areas (especially around Rural Village Center and areas not supporting agriculture) (6)



Port Ludlow Open House Meeting on July 6, 2016 at Port Ludlow Beach Club



Tri-Area Open House Meeting on August 17, 2016 at the Jefferson County Library

- attracting workers to move here (jobs, housing, land, farming opportunities/limitations)(16)
- Increased food self-reliance (4)
- Address farm worker housing (5)
- Limit marijuana as agriculture-need more food (2)
- year-round farmer's market
- create food hubs
- aging farmer and farm transition (4)
- increase education relating to local food availability
- alternative energy development and electric vehicle charging stations (2)
- improve air quality (2)
- climate change is a real issue that needs attention (3)
- Improve logging buffers/encroachment (Port Ludlow MPR)(8)
- Rescind Forest Transition Overlay zoning classification
- Don't convert working forest and farms
- Increase conservation and public access/trails (specifically waterfront, bike, foot, boat trails) (5)
- Add community gardens and orchards to open space
- Improve safe pedestrian and bike trails and connectivity without sacrificing rural character (14)
- Need space for future rail lines for non-gasoline transportation
- Need Seattle foot ferry
- Improve public transportation to outlying areas like Marrowstone, Cape George, Beaver Valley Rd (2)
- Need adequate mental health facilities (3)
- increase number of sheriff patrols/staffing and provide training to help aging population (4)
- Improve emergency planning (2)
- improved intercounty medical coordination (7)



*Gardiner Open House Meeting on September 7, 2016
at Gardiner Community Center*

Area Specific Themes/Issues generated during open house public comment period:

Marrowstone: Broadband internet services

Quilcene: Too regulated (businesses and homes)

Gardiner: intersection/transportation/safety/bus stops, need bathroom stop, power reliability during storms, fix boat ramp, wheelchair accessibility on busses, turn lane at Discovery Bay, modify turnoff on Old Gardiner Rd, broadband internet services, enforce traffic laws

Brinnon: Master Planned Resort will overwhelm transportation, is inappropriately scaled for community, has driven small businesses out of the area, and vetted poorly during the planning process. July 2016 letter represents many residents opinion on MPR. Dosewallips State Park sewer connection opportunity should occur. Broadband internet services. Brinnon Community Center is underutilized.

Chimacum: limit density from UGA, improve pedestrian access without suburban feel, pedestrian-friendly trail along Hwy 19 from the schools to Ness' Corner

Cape George: more innovative alternative waste disposal, planning for waste water treatment facilities outside of Port Townsend, retain rural character and provide farming, industrial and other economic activities. Need affordable housing to support business' workers.

Specific Goal-Related Comments by Comprehensive Plan Element

SpeakUp and element surveys asked how to improve specific goals in the Comprehensive Plan. Staff sorted these responses in **Appendix E** to assist with "Fitness Table" (**Appendix F**) completion. As the county updates the Comprehensive Plan, county reviewers will be analyzing existing goals and policies. County reviewers should reference the public comments with both general and specific comments as well as stakeholder input.

Selected Miscellaneous Observations, Anecdotes, Comments, and Testimonial

"I don't like the fact that I must drive two hours to buy shoes."

"I'm new to Jefferson County and like the phenomenal natural landscape that has been preserved--trees, water--and like the agriculture. I've met some interesting people. There is a lot of civility here--there are no security police needed at these meetings which is a good thing! Small, incremental steps don't work well any more. Think inside and outside of the box--we need paradigm changes and eliminate the box. Gentrification concerns me. We need major resources put into the county for a sewer system. Developers can build affordable housing with sewer infrastructure."

"Owner of computer company since 2008, has difficulty finding skilled labor because they can't find housing. There is a limited ability to bring in new employees to the business."

"Concern about marijuana growing and selling in our county--would like to see less ideally - no more pot shops or farms"

"What is most exciting is when forests and farmlands are worked in an environmentally sustainable manner that creates jobs and valued products. Tourists are not only attracted to wild areas, but to communities that seem to have found answers in how to thrive and take care of the environment at the same time. Hope and inspiration will always be a good sell!"

"Phased infrastructure development. I mention this because as an owner of Chimacum Corner Farmstand, it is frustrating how so many of the roadblocks we encounter in trying to build our business all come back to septic limitations. That and the lack of housing for our employees which again circles back to septic limitations in the surrounding areas. What we are trying to do is consistent with the community's rural character and history. We're supporting local farmers who are creating rural jobs and

goods while stewarding the land. Seems to me this is just the type of economic industry the GMA envisioned."

"High technology is a false economy -trades information, money, gadgets, programs. Not items that keep humans alive (food, water , shelter, clothes, transportation), or that builds culture and community that is sustainable. We can build artisan, craft, tourist, maritime, health, food, shelter, natural resource-based economies that provide family-wage jobs without bringing high tech to area."

"Edwin Glazer article in the Atlantic [Thomas Jefferson quote] "Government works best has least hand". If it doesn't grow here, will grow elsewhere. What businesses are allowed in Rural Village Center? Don't need over-regulation on types of businesses. There should no be heavy regulations on land use. Some things regulations are okay on."

"I have to live 35 minutes from work to afford housing on \$10/hour wage."

"Jefferson County has the oldest population in the state. We need to provide more opportunities to attract and retain younger residents as well."

"How can community activists put pressure on legislature to approve funding for tri-area sewer?"

"A park employee was killed this summer walking on Hwy 101. It was his first day on the job"

"My wife and I bicycled from Port Townsend to San Diego in 2014 and the most dangerous part of that entire 2400 mile trip was the stretch of Highway 20 between Discovery Bay and Adelma Beach. It is a very dangerous section of the otherwise beautiful and safe Olympic Discovery Trail that is used by a lot of bikers and needs to be addressed."

"Jobs are the main driving force behind the desire for economic development. Economic opportunity is scant in Jefferson County - but I personally do not live here for economic opportunity. It has been hard work to find employment but I accept it because the existing personality of this county is far more important to me."

"I'd like an inexpensive pub"

"I hope there are policies in place that will keep development in check and allow for some level of public process. My hope is that the future economic development in this area will go to support existing local

businesses, local agriculture and those who want to launch local businesses.”

“How quickly JC is changing, cost of housing is sky rocketing. To afford to live here and raise a family here...need to find a balance of infrastructure. Housing more affordable for young people. Make it easier for youth to be here. JC is not innovative, behind on technology.”

“Quilcene needs farm worker housing. We need to find ways to allow for smaller & less costly housing that is safe. Tiny homes without utilities or served by a common area. More houses per acre. Economic development would be helped with creative use of community drainfields. Water system infrastructure needs to expand, particularly with areas prone to saltwater intrusion.”

“Housing providers increase rental rates beyond affordable 30% of income for 59% of renters. Professional county staff turned down positions because could not find housing. Many commute from Clallam Co. 59% of renters in the county have insecure housing and pay more than 30% of income compared to 19% in 2000. Section 8 has a five year wait list due to no housing available.”

“Need policy around food system development. Food is central to our economy. See book "The Town that Food Saved". Surprised that the word "food" is non-existent in the Port Townsend City Comprehensive Plan. Need to make food that sustains us all, make it easy to grow food and make a food hub in the county that isn't hindered [by regulation].

Conclusion

This report is a summary of all comments to date. The county will continue to accept comments throughout the Comprehensive Plan Update process through final adoption in summer 2018. The outreach process demonstrates key reoccurring themes citizens care about, namely that they would like to be involved in the update, and be part of helping identify what the Comprehensive Plan can and cannot achieve.

Appendices

See attached documents

[Appendix A: General Survey Quantitative Responses](#)

[Appendix B: Public Comment Database \(master\)](#)

[Appendix C: Food System Policy Line In/Line Out and element notes](#)

[Appendix D: General Suggestions/Comments by Comprehensive Plan Element](#)

[Appendix E: Specific Goal-Related Comments by Comprehensive Plan Element](#)

[Appendix F: Fitness Test Example](#)

[Appendix G: SpeakUp Output Reports](#)

[Appendix H: Element Code Table](#)

[Appendix I: Local 2020 Climate Action Group and Transportation Lab Group Input on Comprehensive Plan](#)