

FOR DISCUSSION ONLY:

DRAFT ORDINANCE NO. _____ - 2021

AN ORDINANCE TO AFFIRM SAN JUAN COUNTY'S COMMITMENT TO, AND TAKE STEPS TO SUPPORT, A SAFE AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY

WHEREAS, San Juan County acknowledges that its residents reside on the ancestral lands and waters of the Coast Salish people, who have taken care of these islands since time immemorial; and

WHEREAS, the United States as a country and the many local communities of which it is composed continue to suffer largescale individual and systemic inequality that prejudices the rights and opportunities available to our diverse peoples based on race, color, national origin, creed, religion, sex, sexual orientation including gender expression or identity, marital status, age, military status, disability, and immigration status; and

WHEREAS, the diversity of the peoples inhabiting San Juan County is one of our greatest strengths and should be celebrated and promoted for its own sake, in addition to the benefits it bestows upon the entire community; and

WHEREAS, many barriers--including language, culture, or fear of being targeted due to one's documentation status--prevent diverse members of our community from being able to participate fully, freely, and fearlessly in our community by, among other effects, limiting access to public services; and

WHEREAS, the current national political climate has increased barriers and risks to, and anxiety, fear and trauma for, members of our diverse community; and

WHEREAS, history teaches us that our citizenry can overcome the fear, miseducation and isolation that begets hate and that we can uphold the rights and dignity of all members of our communities, and that we must never enable those who would act otherwise; and

WHEREAS, history also requires confronting hard truths about our county's own history with settler colonialism and systemic racism;

WHEREAS, we acknowledge the need to continuously and vigilantly improve our approach to achieve true diversity, equity, and inclusion for our community, even when it means that we must correct and overturn existing or long-held customs, traditions, norms, or beliefs; and

WHEREAS, we are a stronger, more humane, and more successful community because of this commitment and we are steadfast and transparent in our purpose and determination to defend our values and thus our county employees' and residents' safe access to our services and facilities free of prejudice, hate, or violence; and

WHEREAS, the occasional replacement of local indigenous place names with stigmatized non-indigenous labels or names honoring those who historical figures that represent intolerance does not reflect our community's values in welcoming and celebrating diversity; and

WHEREAS, San Juan County citizens appreciate that boundary-breaking policies like those set forth below are essential to an equitable recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and historic injustice;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the County Council of San Juan County, state of Washington, as follows:

NEW SECTION. Sec. 1. Purpose.

- A. San Juan County proclaims its commitment to establishing an atmosphere and culture of inclusivity all county employees, elected officials, residents, and visitors regardless and in embrace of race, color, national origin, creed, religion, sex, sexual orientation including gender expression or identity, marital status, age, military status, disability, and immigration status.
- B. The purpose of this chapter is to acknowledge, dismantle, and eradicate the systemic racism, bigotry, and prejudice that occurs when non-indigenous peoples remove indigenous peoples from their lands and then eliminate the memory of those earlier peoples by replacing the indigenous place names.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 2. Guiding Principles.

The following core values shall guide San Juan County's conduct and decisions:

- A. Equity. Each resident's and each County employee's right to well-being, safety, justice, fairness, and access to learning and success are hereby guaranteed.
- B. Diversity. Individual differences and uniqueness are an essential asset and will not be prejudiced by County action; we are inclusive and treat our differences as a core strength.
- C. Collaboration. We will learn from each other and work together, valuing diverse views and the power of collective wisdom.
- D. Respect. All people will be treated with respect.
- E. Integrity. County personnel will act in good faith and serve residents and other stakeholders with honesty and dignity.
- F. Empathy. County personnel will listen deeply, share with, and support others.
- G. Accountability. We accept an obligation and willingness to be responsible for our behaviors and actions.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 3. Honoring Indigenous Peoples.

- A. **Replacing Demeaning Names**. By January 1, 2022, San Juan County shall identify and replace any public road and place names throughout the San Juan Islands that refer to people or concepts that demean Indigenous, Black, Latinx, People of Color, LGBTQ+ people, and individuals of other historically marginalized identities. The County shall collaborate with a

Citizens Oversight Commission that the Council establishes pursuant to subsection C below to accomplish this task.

B. **Recognizing Indigenous Names.** By January 1, 2023, San Juan County shall collaborate with indigenous peoples with a historic interest in the San Juan Islands to identify indigenous place names throughout the San Juan Islands and to add them to County-maintained maps. San Juan County shall not be required to take this action for any place names if, after meaningful efforts to collaborate with indigenous communities with an interest or rights in the San Juan Islands, it is unable to reach agreement on those place names.

C. **Citizens Oversight Commission.** The San Juan County Council shall be responsible for establishing and appointing members to a Citizens Oversight Commission, which shall number 5-7 people. The Commission will meet quarterly and will receive a stipend for each meeting. The Council shall make every effort to ensure that the Commission represents the diversity of San Juan County's residents, including, but not limited to, Indigenous, Black, Latinx, People of Color, LGBTQ+ people, and individuals of other historically marginalized identities.

Section 4. Severability.

If any provision of this ordinance or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the ordinance or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected.

Section 5. Effective Date.

This ordinance shall be effective on _____.

ADOPTED this ____ day of _____ 2020.

ATTEST: Clerk of the Council

**COUNTY COUNCIL
SAN JUAN COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

Ingrid Gabriel, Clerk Date

Jamie Stephens, Chair
District 3

REVIEWED BY COUNTY MANAGER

Cindy Wolf, Member

Michael J. Thomas Date

District 2

RANDALL K. GAYLORD
APPROVED AS TO FORM ONLY

Christine Gabler-Minney, Member

District 1

By: _____
Date

DRAFT