

Chapter 23.08. INTRODUCTION

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23.08.010. Introduction.

Recent years have witnessed dramatic growth and change in Deschutes County. A rapidly increasing population causes ever greater pressures on the land as well as the economic, governmental and social structures of the area. These pressures require many adjustments. Unfortunately, in the past, many of these public decisions on land use and related matters were made without adequate consideration of alternatives or consequences. To provide part of the answer, the comprehensive planning process has been developed. This process provides for the gathering of information, the prudent review of alternatives and the final development of reasonable policies. The local need for planning is also spurred by the requirements of the people of Oregon, as manifested through the Legislature and the Land Conservation and Development Commission, which require all local jurisdictions to prepare adequate plans and planning programs. (Ord. 2000-017 §1, 2000; PL-20, 1979)

23.08.020. Purpose.

The purpose of the Comprehensive Plan for Deschutes County is not to provide a site-specific identification of the appropriate land uses which may take place on a particular piece of land but rather it is to consider the significant factors which affect or are affected by development in the County and provide a general guide to the various decisions which must be made to promote the greatest efficiency and equity possible, while managing the continuing growth and change of the area. Part of that process is identification of an appropriate land use plan, which is then interpreted to make decisions about specific sites (most often in zoning and subdivision administration) but the plan must also consider the sociological, economic and environmental consequences of various actions and provide guidelines and policies for activities which may have effects beyond physical changes of the land.

The plan must also consider factors other than those of a strictly local nature because the policies must serve not only as an internal guide but also as a way of relating to the larger society of which we are a part. The planning process has to be oriented toward the production of the most beneficial long-range results possible for the residents of the community, not as an end to growth, but as a way to guide growth for the general welfare of the public. (Ord. 2000-017 §1, 2000; PL-20, 1979)

23.08.030. The Process.

In Deschutes County, as well as throughout the State of Oregon, there is a strong commitment to citizen participation in the planning process. This is consistent not only with State regulations, but also with standard local planning practice and common sense, because citizen involvement with the planning process improves the quality of the plan and ensures greater acceptance of the final document since it is the direct product of the people's involvement.

Deschutes County's citizen involvement program has involved hundreds of participants representing the various geographic areas and interest in the County. Thousands of hours were spent by the citizens in the preparation of the plan. Predictably, because of the plan's importance to the future of the residents of Deschutes County, there is still controversy and continual improvements are being made. The planning process calls for regular updates to assure that the plan is functioning properly and adapting to the changing

needs of the local populace. Undoubtedly, the on-going participation of the local citizenry will be an important part of that process.

(Ord. 2000-017 §1, 2000; PL-20, 1979)

23.08.040. The Plan.

The Deschutes County Comprehensive Plan is a reflection of the needs and desires of the people now and for the future. Important resources, such as agriculture, wildlife and forest lands, have been identified and marked for protection. The inefficient, expensive development pattern which has characterized the County's growth in recent years is being restricted. Emphasis is being placed on accommodating development in urban areas, while providing areas in and around Rural Service Centers and on the urban fringes for those who wish to live in a rural area. This growth pattern is considerably more efficient, as far as energy and public facilities are concerned, as well as less environmentally damaging than the present land use pattern. Further, this polynucleated pattern will lend itself to the future transportation, public service, energy, housing and urban expansion needs of the County during and beyond the present 30-year planning period, while preserving, as much as possible, the rural character and environmental quality of the area. By maintaining large open spaces and keeping development clustered together along transportation/energy corridors not only is sprawl reduced, but services may be provided more efficiently and air pollution may be kept at lower levels.

Naturally, the plan must be a compromise between the need for protecting existing resources and the demand to accommodate a growing population. Intermixed in this situation are also the complexities of individual rights and the public's needs. Difficult decisions have been made. More will yet be required. However, the County Comprehensive Plan will serve the needs of the people of Deschutes County well, especially as long as the people stay involved--working toward the goals they have set in this plan.

(Ord. 2000-017 §1, 2000; PL-20, 1979)