

## **Chapter 23.20. COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING PROCESS**

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### **23.20.010. Planning Organization.**

In order to actually prepare a comprehensive plan, it is necessary to develop an organizational network which outlines tasks and assigns responsibilities within the bounds set by the available time and the applicable State laws. Deschutes County chose to develop an organization that relied upon citizen involvement and initiative to complete the necessary plan.

Citizen involvement in land use planning has been mandatory statewide since 1973. Senate Bill 100 (ORD 197.160) required each County-governing body to submit a program for citizen involvement in preparing, adopting and revising comprehensive plans within each County. Each program must at least contain provision for a citizen advisory committee broadly representative of geographic areas and interest relating to land use. All jurisdictions must develop, publicize and adopt a program appropriate to the local level of planning and containing the following:

- A. Provision for widespread citizen involvement;
- B. Assurance of effective two-way communication with citizens;
- C. Provision of opportunities for citizens to be involved in all phases of the planning process;
- D. Assurance that technical information is available in an understandable form;
- E. Assurance that citizens will receive a response from policy makers;
- F. Assurance that there will be funding for the citizen involvement process.

Further, the law requires that Federal, State and local agencies, as well as special districts, coordinate their planning efforts and make use of existing citizen involvement programs.

In Deschutes County, citizen participation in planning has occurred since 1968 but with the advent of the LCDC goals and the project of updating the Deschutes County Comprehensive Plan, the citizen involvement program experienced a dramatic expansion.

The planning process followed in the plan preparation was largely based upon citizens' participation, agency involvement and both local and outside professional analysis to assure consistency with the LCDC goals and good planning.

(Ord. 2002-005 §1, 2002; Ord. 2000-017 §1, 2000; PL-20, 1979)

### **23.20.020. Comprehensive Planning Process.**

The program began with a well-publicized educational meeting at the local college to acquaint Deschutes County residents with citizen involvement in land use planning and the upcoming opportunities for participation. One hundred and fifty persons attended to view a slide show on the goals, hear an explanation of the program, fill out an attitude survey (later compiled by college students) and receive several handouts. For a month thereafter, people volunteered for advisory committee membership and were accepted without restrictions.

The Board of County Commissioners, acting as the committee to evaluate the citizen involvement program, appointed 17 technical and area advisory committees and an Overall Citizens Advisory Committee with a total of 326 officially appointed members. Up to 300 additional persons also were indirectly involved.

The technical committee functioned as a panel of experts (often including Federal, State, local and district agency personnel) and interested citizens. These committees covered the following topics: minerals and aggregates, agriculture, forest lands, fish and wildlife, historic and cultural, economy, transportation,

public facilities and services, recreation, housing and energy. Each committee was given a general work program to collect information, identify needs and problems and prepare justified recommendations. Committees met two to four times per month and 10 to 20 times totally. Each group prepared a detailed and factual preliminary report which was then submitted to the Overall Citizens Advisory Committee (OCAC) for comment. Revisions to each report were made and submitted as a final report to the OCAC and Planning staff. The initially weak database as well as the demanding time schedule for plan completion were handicaps the committee had to overcome. Their detailed reports were ofsed word for word in the preparation of the resource element and preliminary plan.

The area committees involved interested citizens from the three major rural service center areas: La Pine, Terrebonne and Tumalo. An attempt was also made to form a Sunriver committee but little interest was expressed by residents of that area. The committees addressed each of the LCDC goals and developed a list of programs, needs and directions for future community growth. Their reports were reviewed by the OCAC in the same manner as the technical reports and eventually used in the preparation of the preliminary plan.

There were also three urban area advisory committees appointed to work with each city's planning staff in order to prepare urban area plans for each city and its surrounding urbanizing area. While the Bend Urban Area Plan was largely completed by the time the OCAC was formed, the Redmond and Sisters planner periodically reported to the Overall Citizens Advisory Committee to assure communication and coordination.

The Overall Citizens Advisory Committee was the largest committee and the one most broadly representative of the various interests and areas of the County. Their primary function was to resolve conflicts between the recommendations of the various committees. In addition, they also reviewed the recommendations to assure they met the State's goals and guidelines. The OCAC also initiated many of the recommendations regarding development in urbanizing and rural areas of the County, thereby tying together the various elements of the plan. It was their direction to the staff which served as the basis for the preliminary plan.

In this period the County Planning staff also wrote several reports to provide information to the OCAC. These papers covered geology, geomorphology, soils, areas of special interest, climate, hydrology, history and population. The OCAC also considered this information in its deliberations.

During this citizens' committee stage of the process, over 200 meetings were held and in excess of over 10,000 hours of time were spent by volunteers working on the plan. More than 5,000 newsletters were mailed to interested citizens and thousands of letters, mailings, posters and flyers were also distributed. Radio, television and newspaper coverage was extensive. The largest local newspaper printed an explanatory article on each of the committees' and staff's reports. This was to insure that everyone whether involved directly in the process or not, was kept up to date as to where the plan was heading.

Once in the preliminary plan stage, the document was brought to the County Planning Commission for review. A newspaper supplement describing the major elements of the plan was placed in the major newspaper in Deschutes County and the local news media were very cooperative in disseminating information about the plan. The Planning staff also spoke to various groups in the community. Copies of the plan were placed in local libraries and made available to everyone interested. The Planning Commission held a number hearings on the preliminary plan and then provided a services of recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners.

The County Commissioners also held hearings on the plan. These hearings seemed to be emotion-packed events which generated large turnouts and spirited testimony. Using the public testimony (both written and verbal) and the recommendations of the Planning Commission and staff, the Board compiled a working draft of the Comprehensive Plan. This working draft was then sent out to outside legal and planning consultants for review and comment. Earlier, the preliminary plan had been given to an outside reviewer to determine the adequacy of the energy elements of the plan. All these reports were then delivered to the Board of County Commissioners. Their determination was that the Planning staff should take some additional time to use these studies to improve the plan where necessary. This new draft was then taken to the Overall Citizens Advisory Committee and Planning Commission for comment, before the Board took any final action. The Board also determined that an additional public hearing would be held to

hear testimony on planned exceptions to be taken to the agricultural and forest land goals of the State Land Conservation and Development Commission. The use of such an extensive citizen involvement program, as well as the utilization of specific professional assistance, was a complex but extremely useful combination. The preparation of the plan was not only speeded but the quality of the overall document was significantly improved. It is expected that this will produce a document that will effectively serve as a basis upon which to build a bright future for the people of Deschutes County.

(Ord. 2002-005 §1, 2002; Ord. 2000-017 §1, 2000; PL-20, 1979)

**23.20.030. Alternatives.**

**A. Introduction.**

Choosing a course into the future is a difficult task. To help in making adequate decisions, it is often most desirable to consider a number of alternatives. In the preparation of the Deschutes County Plan, a number of different options were considered at several levels. First, each of the citizen advisory committees reviewed and discussed a variety of different policies, each with varying impacts, and chose the recommendations most likely to achieve the desired result. After their deliberations, the policies were sent on to the Overall Citizens' Advisory Committee, where decisions had to be made about tying the various elements of the plan together into a cohesive document. To do that it was necessary for the membership to determine a consistent philosophy and direction for development in Deschutes County.

**B. Population and housing projections.**

This subsection, and the following Table 1, represents the population forecast adopted with the Comprehensive Plan in 1979. The initial decision which had to be reached was which population projection to use in preparing for the future. The Center for Population Research and Census at Portland University had prepared a population estimate indicating Deschutes County would grow at an approximate rate of 2.8 per cent annually. A study by the Economic CAC indicated the present growth rate (1970-77) was 6.3 per cent annually. The committees felt that CPRC's estimate was too far off and should not be used but that use of the present growth rate would certainly exceed the actual growth because of economic fluctuations and a declining percentage gain near the end of the planning period (Planning Period = present to the year 2000). The preferred alternative was one, which would use the 4.5 per cent annual growth rate to yield 128,200 people in Deschutes County by the year 2000. Section 23.16.020, Population, of the Comprehensive Plan includes the updated population forecast for 2000 to 2025.

**TABLE 1  
DESCHUTES COUNTY  
POPULATION PROJECTIONS (1979)**

	<b>PSU 2.8%</b>	<b>PRESENT RATE</b>	<b>PREFERRED ALTERNATIVES</b>
1980	50,500	56,324	53,400
1985	56,700	76,298	66,600
1990	60,700	103,557	82,900
1995	63,900	140,554	103,400
2000	65,700	190,770	128,200

Recognizing the need for a single target population and in light of the Economic ACA's research and expertise the 4.5 per cent annual growth was chosen as the "best guess" option and the one to be used in the preparation of comprehensive plans in Deschutes County. Ultimately, this was to result in allocations of population to different parts of the County with the Bend Urban Area receiving 84,000, the Redmond Urban Area obtaining 23,093, the Sisters Urban Area having 2,135, and the remainder of the County getting 18,972. Once the population figure was chosen, it was possible to determine housing needs to the year 2000 by making some assumptions about household size and rehabilitation.

**TABLE 2  
NEW HOUSING UNITS (1979)**

1980	3,181
1985	6,339
1990	7,740
1995	9,669
2000	11,753
	38,682

The question still remaining was how to allocate this new population and housing throughout the County. Several different alternatives were directly and indirectly discussed by members of the OCAC.

Underlying all of the alternatives were a number of basic assumptions:

1. LCDC will require some protection and coordination.
2. Energy will become increasingly expensive and relatively more scarce.
3. Much of the area's growth is tied to amenities.
4. Federal agencies will continue to use their lands for multiple public uses.

C. Alternative One - Current Trends.

1. Land Uses: Continue with the present trends without modification of the dispersed housing pattern that was developing in Deschutes County. Anticipate that most people would live in the urban areas but that many would choose to scatter throughout rural areas. Recognize that much of the agricultural and forest lands of the County would be lost or replaced by hobby farms. And expect a less than stringent enforcement of regulations to protect unique historic and environmental areas. Environmental: Anticipate the loss of additional scenic and natural amenities. Recognize that the deer winter ranges would almost certainly be developed and the wildlife lost. And prepare for increasing problems with air and water quality.
2. Social and Economic: Continue the strong economic growth of the area, particularly in the service, trade and construction industries. Expect more cultural amenities. Anticipate increasing social problems such as crime.
3. Public Services and Facilities: Expect to see an expanding road system and a growing demand for other public services. Recognize that these services will continue to lag behind demand and taxes are rising rapidly to provide the necessary services. Other: While there will be some improvement in land use controls and increasing cities and County cooperation there is likely to be continued State review and occasional intervention. Ultimately, population increase is expected to decline as the environmental amenities of the area decline.

D. Alternative Two – Unrestricted Development.

1. Land Uses: Greater amount of urban sprawl from all growth centers; in addition rural sprawl also occurs in the vicinity of the Rural Service Centers as they rapidly develop. Some protection is given the most dramatic and publicly supported historic and environmental sites. Agriculture ceases to exist as pollution problems in parts of the County ultimately requiring some areas to be mandated to install expensive sewer and water facilities. The growing development on private lands interspersed within the public lands severely reduce the beauty and usefulness of the public lands.
2. Social and Economic: Continued high employment, particularly in construction, for the next 10 to 15 years with the development ultimately resulting in a loss of amenities which sharply reduce unemployment in the non-manufacturing industries. Cultural amenities increase in conjunction with the population, but there are serious social dislocations resulting from the inequitable tax burdens created by the growth and loss of esthetics.
3. Public Facilities and Services: Serious problems with providing adequate services, resulting in higher taxes and public dissatisfaction. Recreation demands continue to grow and demand expands

rapidly as the formerly available outdoor areas become lost to development. Finally an expensive mass transit system must be constructed to bring people into the urban centers as the gasoline prices continue to climb. Other: Energy costs locally continue to increase finally leading some people to begin leaving. There is little effective coordination or local authority to control unnecessary subdivision and construction. Increasingly, the State intercedes in Deschutes County to assure State interests and people's lives and safety are protected.

E. Alternative Three – Strict Growth Controls.

1. Land Uses: No further residential, commercial or industrial construction is permitted in rural areas and ultimately the rural population begins to decline. Urban areas grow rapidly but the restrictiveness of the regulations result in a slower growth rate. Historic and environmental sites receive strict protection. Increasingly, apartments and higher densities are common.
2. Social and Economic: Housing and land costs rise rapidly because of the relative shortage of buildable land. Lower and middle-income families find themselves effectively excluded from the community. Cultural amenities rise. Employment suffers to some extent and much of the higher paying construction jobs are replaced by lower paying service employment. This situation leads to considerable social and economic dissatisfaction.
3. Public Facilities and Services: Few new roads are constructed and an emphasis on alternative transportation methods provides effective local people and freight movement. Public facilities, such as sewer and water, catch up and keep pace but may be somewhat more expensive than otherwise due to the reduced tax base.
4. Environmental: Pollution levels rise only slightly and the natural amenities are protected. Public lands receive heavy use but are protected from the more serious effects of development.
5. Other: Energy costs are down. There is considerable upheaval over government regulations, such as zoning and environmental controls, as well as mandated local government coordination.

F. Alternative Four – Chosen Alternative.

After considering the various alternatives available, the citizens chose a compromise between current trends and strict growth control, the emphasis to be on restricting sprawl and protecting resources while accommodating the new population in adequately large urban boundaries and Rural Service Centers.

1. Land Uses: Major growth occurs in urban areas as the County continues its shift from a rural to urban area. Rural development is largely restricted to rural service centers and on existing rural lots. An active housing program seeks to offset the costs created by the regulations. Some hobby farming occurs and the existing agriculture and forest areas are protected.
2. Social and Economic: Taxes increase but not so rapidly as in the other alternatives because a more efficient growth pattern exists as does a growing tax base. Jobs continue to increase with some shift from construction to services, and growth in manufacturing, but not as rapidly as the commercial sector. Cultural amenities continue to increase.
3. Public Facilities and Services: Few new roads are constructed and a greater emphasis on transit alternatives reduces automobile use. Energy costs rise but within the capabilities of the area's residents. Most public facilities catch up with the growth and provide adequate services.
4. Environmental: Wildlife and vegetative areas particularly vulnerable to damage are protected from excessive development. Pollution increases are small. Public lands continue to be adequate to meet the demand. There is some loss of visual amenities but it is minimal.
5. Other: Continuing controversy over how much control to use but general acceptance of local ordinances and little State intervention. Coordination is mandated and controls are strict but oriented to achieving a specified result rather than being a routine and/or arbitrary mechanism.

The process by which the final alternative was chosen was not a smooth one. Many meetings were required and the alternatives are certainly more clearly identified here than was true during their discussion by the committees. Yet, as the process continued, it became increasingly clear that the people wanted to see growth guided but not stopped, except where development was proceeding too rapidly and needed to be slowed, or where important natural or cultural resources needed to be protected. They were convinced that the inefficient sprawled pattern of development must be curtailed

in a way to restrict additional subdivision while permitting existing development to be utilized. To do that, the philosophy of Alternative Four was used to develop the goals and policies that are contained within this plan.

(Ord. 2004-012 §2, 2004; Ord. 2002-005 §1, 2002; Ord. 2000-017 §1, 2000; PL-20, 1979)

#### **23.20.040. Goals and Policies.**

##### **A. Introduction.**

The alternative chosen for growth in Deschutes County was one which emphasized accommodating the anticipated growth of the area primarily in the urban areas, with some rural development taking place in the Rural Service Centers and in existing subdivisions. This new pattern would then provide much greater efficiency in the provision of public services and foster savings in energy, particularly in transportation. The development pattern would also protect scarce resources, while permitting compatible improvements.

##### **B. Rural development.**

DCC 23.20.040(B), Rural Development, serves as the basis for the rest of the plan. Basic guidelines to do away with the former inefficient development pattern and to accommodate the anticipated 7,050 new rural residents are contained in DCC 23.20. Emphasis is placed on maintaining the existing rural character of the County, while acknowledging that Deschutes County is becoming more urban, by concentrating new rural development in the Rural Service Centers. In that way people desiring a rural lifestyle may do so without unduly increasing the costs to others or utilizing resource lands. The only exception to this rural pattern is in the La Pine area where emphasis is laid on the incorporation of the community and improvements in local services provided. The La Pine rural area is also likely to receive many of the over 3,000 new rural homes which will be built, because so many lots already exist in that area.

##### **C. Urbanization.**

Urbanization links this plan to those of the three incorporated communities. DCC Chapter 23.20 provides parameters for the establishment and expansion of the urban boundaries and provides common guidelines to the cities to help them accommodate the 71,450 new residents that will need over 35,600 homes and 29,000, perhaps as high as 35,000, new jobs. Sufficient land must be allocated and managed to serve these new local citizens.

##### **D. Economy.**

The Economy chapter discusses the need to protect our existing timber, agriculture, mining and scenic resources for our future prosperity. It also provides policies to help Deschutes County in its metamorphosis from a rural resource economy to a more commercial/industrial orientation as an urban center, perhaps providing between 7,700 and 16,000 new manufacturing jobs and 27,000 to 32,000 new non-manufacturing positions.

##### **E. Housing.**

Housing emphasizes the need for flexibility in housing styles and costs so as to provide adequate homes for all segments of the community. Also fostered are programs to help rehabilitate existing homes and to accommodate low and moderate-income families through government programs and efforts to reduce development costs.

##### **F. Transportation.**

The Transportation chapter seeks to aid movement to and between the communities, and to improve the ability of the communities to efficiently deal with the new residential, commercial and industrial uses which are anticipated. Greater public safety is promoted, as is preparation of a shift from automobile dependence to public transit and other transportation alternatives.

##### **G. Public facilities and services.**

To accommodate existing and anticipated populations and land uses the Public Facilities and Services chapter provides basic guidelines for the construction of new facilities, while again fostering urban rather than rural development.

H. Recreation.

Recreation seeks to accommodate both the growing local population and the tourist industry. New facilities and cooperative plans are identified and, while the county seeks to provide primarily a facilitator function, greater commitment to recreation and associated activities is made.

I. Energy.

The Energy chapter emphasizes more local independence in providing energy, protection of future energy resources and better coordination with energy providers. Information and education about energy and local opportunities are stressed. As the population continues to grow and because of the importance of tourism, energy will play an ever more dominant role in local planning efforts. These policies seek to emphasize the need for greater efficiency in development patterns and construction, while surveying our available future options.

J. Natural hazards.

The Natural Hazards chapter seeks to guide development away from identified hazards, such as wildfire, while making use of areas that need to be protected from development for other useful purposes. The protection of the 100-year flood plain is an example of an area where development shall be prohibited but wildlife and recreation opportunities will be fostered.

K. Agriculture.

One of the more controversial resource chapters has been Agriculture. The policies in this plan seek to protect identified agricultural areas, while recognizing that marginal agricultural conditions are present in some areas. Some hobby farming is permitted in the more marginal areas so as to increase agricultural productivity, while a program to research local marginal lands and to determine how they may be utilized while agricultural production is preserved, is mandated for future updates of the plan.

L. Forest lands.

Forest Land seeks to protect existing areas with timber capability, while permitting compatible development on non-productive lands that will foster other aspects of the local economy. The loss of much of La Pine to development is recognized (see Exceptions Statement) but in those areas where larger lots exist, small woodlot management is encouraged and commercial timber is protected where it remains feasible (primarily the national forest and on timber company ownerships).

M. Open spaces.

The local economy and environment is very dependent on the protection of this County's scenic and natural areas. Because of that, the Open Spaces chapter identifies the policies required to protect those resources for the area's tourism, recreation and quality of life needs, while recognizing the appropriateness of flexibility when dealing with individual property owners.

N. Surface mining.

The Surface Mining chapter seeks to preserve known mining resource sites for ultimate mining activity and to permit mining as it is needed in the County. There is also recognition of the County's responsibility to protect adjoining residents (safety and health hazards) and the general public (excessive construction costs and hazards created by a shortage of building materials as well as loss of scenic qualities and pollution).

O. Fish and wildlife.

Fish and Wildlife seeks to balance the wildlife needs of the area against the requirements of a growing population. The important economic and lifestyle qualities are recognized and irreplaceable wildlife areas protected, while precautions that permit limited development are identified.

P. Historic and cultural.

One of the most non-controversial chapters is Historic and Cultural, which seeks to protect the ever dwindling supply of historic and cultural sites, protection that will have important economic and social benefits for a community growing as is Deschutes County presently.

Q. Water resources.

Water is the resource without which there will be no future growth in Deschutes County. Preservation of existing water quality and greater efficiency in delivering available water supplies is being sought. The new and existing residents will need all that is presently identified. Agriculture, new employment

opportunities and maintenance of the tourism/ recreation industry all require water. This plan seeks to improve coordination and planning for that water's use.

R. Citizen involvement.

DCC 23.20.040(R) of this plan is Citizen Involvement. Planning is a dynamic process and one that does not stop with the adoption of a plan. More study to keep the plan functional and up-to- date will be required. The County's efforts will continue to be aimed at involving the public, in meaningful ways, with the preparation of future plans and studies. There is also an emphasis on explaining planning, its purposes and techniques, so that it will be better understood and more usable by County residents.

S. Plan policies.

The plan policies must be read as a whole, as the County will grow as a single unit, not sixteen separate pieces or aspects. Taken together these policies point the direction for the County's future, a future full of change but one full of promise as well.

(Ord. 2002-005 §1, 2002; Ord. 2000-017 §1, 2000; PL-20, 1979)