



MEMORANDUM

TO: Deschutes County Planning Commission

FROM: Nicole Mardell, Senior Planner – Long Range
Will Groves, Planning Manager

DATE: July 14, 2022

SUBJECT: Deschutes 2040 – Community Engagement Plan Review

I. PROJECT BACKGROUND

Staff has initiated the first phase of the Comprehensive Plan Update process. The Comprehensive Plan is Deschutes County’s policy document for guiding growth and development within the county over a 20-year planning period. The plan’s purpose is to provide a policy framework for zoning and land use regulations, demonstrate consistency with statewide goals, rules, and laws, and serve as a cohesive vision for future planning activities. This phase serves as the project’s initiation, and as part of that, the consultant and staff have drafted a community engagement plan to provide a framework for outreach activities and community participation.



II. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW AND NEXT STEPS

The Planning Commission is serving dual roles in this process, first as the County’s citizen participation body, and also as the advisory body for the Deschutes 2040 project. Due to this unique role, staff seeks Planning Commission input on the attached draft Community Engagement Plan. The feedback staff is seeking is intended to be broad, with focus on the overall strategies and tools used for outreach, rather than providing line-item edits. Following the meeting, staff will incorporate Planning Commission feedback into the final version of the document, which will be used throughout the process.

Staff notes an e-mail mailing list has been created for this project and will be utilized to provide key updates to community members on engagement events and project materials. Parties can sign up for this mailing list on the project webpage: <https://www.deschutes.org/cd/page/deschutes-2040>

Deschutes 2040: Engagement Strategy

Working File – July 7, 2022

Introduction and Purpose

Engaging the community in this project is essential for its success. This document describes the goals, audiences, tools, and schedule considerations for the community engagement process. Some elements of this plan are intentionally less defined or flexible at the outset to allow for adaptation to meet the project goals.

Engagement Goals

- The Deschutes County Comprehensive Plan Update project will reach across the county and engage a broad spectrum of community members, including those who have not been a part of past comprehensive plan projects. This will include multiple, targeted methods to hear the perspectives of:
 - All parts of Deschutes County (geographic coverage)
 - Residents that the Community Development Department doesn't typically hear from (demographic diversity, less-vocal communities, younger residents under 25)
 - Residents and stakeholders who are disproportionately impacted by planning decisions (people of color, low-income residents, veterans, linguistically isolated communities)
 - Recent and long-time residents (length of residency)
- Individual activities will be designed to not only collect input from large numbers of participants, but also allow for disaggregation of results to explore differences in opinion.
- We aim to hear directly from the individuals of Deschutes County; we will also reach out to community organizations and advocates representing the perspectives described above.
- We will facilitate meetings to maximize the diversity of voices heard and avoid having the conversation dominated by individual perspectives.
- At key points in the process, we will pause to reflect on the results to-date as well as engagement with social and web content. We will conduct a detailed Engagement Audit during the project to evaluate how well the County's goals are being met and make changes to tools and outreach methods as needed.
- We will continue the commitment of Deschutes County to remove barriers to participating in community discussions. This will include access to the physical, technological, cultural, and language spaces that are a part of the process.
- We will make it clear to community members how feedback will be used and the limitations at this level of planning and jurisdiction.

Engagement Metrics

To align with these goals, the County and the Consultant will utilize the following metrics to measure effectiveness of community engagement activities. Each of these is set as a target, not a requirement. The team will be able to use these targets to evaluate performance during the project and determine if new approaches are needed.

Deschutes 2040 – Comprehensive Plan Update

- 500 responses to each survey
- 100+ attendees to each round of open house meetings
- Engage with representatives of all identified perspectives (see goals above) through:
 - Meetings with more than 75 identified stakeholder groups (approximately 90 have been identified) through "meeting in a box" presentations
 - Confirming at least one group specifically representing each of the following perspectives: veterans, youth, people of color, low-income residents, linguistically isolated communities
- Increasing the number of unique visitors per google analytics to the project site (sessions in ESRI Hub page dashboard)
- Ongoing development of the County's network of engaged residents as shown by:
 - Growth in County's contact list throughout the duration of the project
 - Increasing clicks/read statistics from email campaign management (Constant Contact)
- 1 news story for each in-person community event
- Monitoring geographic representation (by ZIP Code) of the entire county for total participation
- At least three check-in points to compare cumulative results to the goals and metrics, including one Engagement Audit.

Demographic Questions

To track progress toward the engagement goals, individual activities will include an opportunity to collect self-reported demographic data about participants. This information in aggregate will be one way to measure success in the goals stated above.

Questions

Standardizing questions for different activities will allow the information to be aggregated across the project. While not all questions will necessarily be asked in each activity, the answer choices should remain the same.

Standard message about data use: The following questions are optional and may not perfectly represent how you identify yourself. Your closest answers will help us understand who we have reached in this effort.

- 1 Your relationship to Deschutes County (check all that apply):
 - Rent a home
 - Own a home
 - Live here, do not rent or own a home
 - Own agricultural land
 - Own a local business
 - Work in a local business
 - Go to school
- 2 I live in the following Zip Code:
- 3 My age is:
 - Under 18
 - 18-24
 - 25-34
 - 35-44
 - 45-54
 - 55-64
 - 65-74
 - Over 75
 - I prefer not to answer
- 4 I have lived in Deschutes County:
 - Less than 5 years
 - 5-9 years
 - 10-19 years
 - 20 years or more
- 5 Gender
 - Female
 - Male
 - Non-binary
 - I prefer not to answer
- 6 If you prefer to self-describe your gender identity, please do so here:
 - 6 Which of the following most accurately describes your race and ethnic identities. (check all that apply)
 - Alaskan Native
 - First Nation/American Indian/Indigenous
 - Asian or Asian American or South Asian
 - Black or African American
 - Hispanic or Latino/a or Chicano/a
 - Middle Eastern/North African
 - Pacific Islander
 - White/European American
 - I prefer not to answer
 - If you prefer to self-describe your racial/ethnic identity, please do so here:
- 7 My yearly household income is:
 - Less than \$35,000
 - \$35,000-\$50,000
 - \$50,000-\$75,000
 - \$75,000-\$100,000
 - \$100,000-\$150,000
 - \$150,000 and above
 - I do not know
 - I prefer not to answer
- 8 In my household, we speak:
 - English as a primary language
 - Spanish as a primary language
 - A primary language neither English nor Spanish (please specify):

- 9 Are you a veteran of or active duty in any US armed service? Yes No

Demographic Data Collection

The project team will collect demographics in different ways, depending on the activity. These could include:

- **Demographic/comment card** – good for informal events, where people are walking in/up to the activity
- **Surveys and online platforms** – where other single or multiple-choice questions are being asked, these questions should be offered (and optional)
- **Live polling** – in workshop settings if live polling clickers or digital polling is available

Accommodations

As a public agency, Deschutes County has an obligation to ensure that participating in this process meets the standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Beyond this, the County has a goal to maximize community conversations, including with those who do not typically engage in land use issues. The guiding question to ensure meaningful public involvement will be: **What can we do to remove barriers to participating in this process?** This will include access to the physical, technological, cultural, and linguistic resources that are a part of the process.

Physical and Technological Accessibility

For all activities:

- Ask early and often if there are any accommodations needed to be a part of the process. Most accommodations can be made with a bit of advance planning.
- The project team should allow for at least one week as a final deadline for accommodation requests to allow for proper preparation.

For in-person activities:

The selection of locations will consider:

- Physical access, such as path-of-travel and restrooms
- Locations where the community is accustomed to gathering, with a preference for locations with transportation alternatives that do not require a private automobile
- Language interpretation including Spanish and American Sign Language as appropriate
- Availability and usability of assisted listening devices
- Technology availability, such as not requiring (or providing) internet access or internet-enabled devices to complete activities

For digital meetings:

- Engage built-in features and best practices for participants reliant on adaptive technology to overcome differences in hearing and vision
- Allow phone-in or video streaming options that do not require specific programs to participate
- Include participants on the phone or who were unable to attend the digital meeting in questions
- Provide printed materials on request (potentially in larger formats for limited vision participants)

For on-demand digital tools:

- Acknowledge the limitations and advantages of digital tools
 - Expanded reach and efficient data collection from large numbers of participants
 - May create a barrier to those who have limited access or familiarity with technology
- Use on-demand digital tools to complement and expand upon other engagement tools
 - Avoid unique or exclusive information/input through digital platforms
- Create alternative channels (such as a point of contact at the County) for information and engagement

Language and Culture

The project team seeks to expand the County’s ability to continue conversation and engagement with residents who speak languages other than English. This process will help build relationships with community leaders and residents with hesitancy about engaging with government. We anticipate:

- Posting all video content with English and Spanish captions as well as transcripts to ensure accessibility. (CCD to take the lead, coordinating with Admin)
- In-language landing page for Spanish language email and social posts describing the project, connecting to translation/interpretation contact, and explaining digital translation tools available.
- Simultaneous interpretation will be provided on advance request for in-person and digital meetings.
- Any activities advertised in languages other than English will direct people to resources in those languages. (CCD to take the lead, coordinating with Admin)
- Outreach to community leaders to create a path for information to flow to communities that are hesitant or have not engaged before.
- Compensate community ambassadors for their investment of time and social capital.

Tools

The team will use a variety of tools and resources as described in the following scoped tasks. The attached matrix identifies the purpose of each task and identifies tools for target audiences, needed accommodations, and schedule considerations.

[Project Webpage](#)

Consultant will work with County staff to develop a project website using the ESRI Hub platform. The website will be hosted by the County. The project website will serve as the primary information source, including at a minimum project background, current/upcoming events, a process schedule, a document library, and an ongoing method for providing comments or input. Consultant will work with County staff to prepare initial content for the Website and will provide content to update the Website approximately every one to two months to include access to draft work products, announcements about upcoming engagement events, results of previous engagement events and other project information as it is available.

[Email and Social Media](#)

County will use existing channels such as email lists and social media platforms to advertise the project and specific events. Project activities will include opportunities to expand the County’s contact list through opt-in “Sign up for updates” messages. Consultant will coordinate regularly with County Communications staff regarding their communications efforts, including use of Social Media, the County Website and other communications tools.

[Community Open Houses and Workshops](#)

Up to the equivalent of two sets of community open houses or workshops will be conducted during the course of the project to inform the community and solicit feedback on key project elements. Each set of open houses/workshops will include four events in different areas of the County, including South County (La Pine or Sunriver area), Sisters Country (Sisters or Tumalo area), North County (Redmond or Terrebonne area) and the Bend metro area. Topics of these meetings could include residents’ overall vision for the future of the County; key planning or policy issues that need to be addressed in the Comprehensive Plan update; revised draft policy language for inclusion in the Plan; and/or shorter-term actions that are needed to implement longer-term policies. Consultant will work with county staff to determine the most appropriate format and approach for each meeting, identify needed meeting materials and staffing assumptions, and agree on notification/publicity efforts, consistent with the Engagement Plan. Consultant will staff the equivalent of up to two meetings during each set of meetings. County staff will make logistical arrangements, implement the notification plan, and staff meetings. For each community meeting, consultant deliverables include meeting plans, agendas, presentation or other materials, content for notification materials such as Website announcements or media releases, and summaries of each meeting conducted. Spanish interpretation will be provided at community open houses. County staff will work with local community organizations or translators to secure translation services.

[Online Open Houses](#)

Consultant will plan for, organize, and conduct up to three online open houses that are informative, engaging, and easy to access regardless of technology. These events are expected to include

components that are live, such as facilitated Zoom sessions and drop-in “office hours” to allow for County staff to answer questions. Phone-in options, hard copies of materials, Facebook livestreaming, and Spanish interpretation can be offered to overcome technology, time, and language barriers. Other activities will be on-demand, available for a period of time, or as needed, including videos that walkthrough issues with a lay audience and add personality and accessibility to the project. These activities will be timed to coincide with the Community Open Houses/Workshops, with the timing of a third event to be determined as part of the Community Engagement Plan.

On-demand activities will likely require platforms beyond the project website to create interactions that are both meaningful and interesting. MIG curates and uses a variety of tools and chooses the specific tool(s) to fit the needs of the project. Initially we see two specialized tools that may be useful.

- **Maptionnaire** allows interactive maps to be shared and commented on, which could be useful for understanding where people live or observe specific issues. Maptionnaire can also be used to present options on maps for community feedback.
- A second platform that may be useful for coming to agreement on policy direction is **Consider.it**. This tool creates a space to indicate the level of support, as well as indicate pros and cons of a proposal, while seeing responses from other community members. These platforms are included in the project budget as separate activities or “modules.”

Planning Commission Meetings

Project Manager Matt Hastie will work with County staff to facilitate meetings of the Planning Commission (PC) which will serve as the advisory committee for the process. Consultant will work with the PC at the outset of the process to prepare: (1) their decision-making model and guidelines; and (2) the approximate schedule and list of agenda topics for PC meetings. Consultant will prepare meeting agendas and materials for County staff review and approval prior to distribution. County will prepare a summary of meetings. The Consultant team will conduct up to eight PC meetings for the purposes of reviewing Comprehensive Plan materials and recommendations. The project budget includes contingency funds to conduct additional meetings, if needed. Draft meeting summaries prepared by the County will describe members in attendance, key points of discussion, and any decisions made. They will not necessarily attribute specific comments to individual committee members but may attribute public comments or testimony offered to specific people. Consultant team participation in PC meetings will be conducted via an online meeting platform.

Informational Materials

Consultant will prepare general informational materials to inform people about the Comprehensive Plan project. At a minimum, these will include a draft Project Summary and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) documents.

The Project Summary will provide a general overview of the project, including key messages, goals, and a project timeline. The summary will be periodically updated (approximately every three months) to highlight recent or upcoming public outreach or involvement activities.

The FAQ will respond to recurring issues or questions and also will be updated periodically (e.g., every two to three months) to respond to new questions. It will serve as an effective tool for responding to individual comments and questions and will be readily accessible on the project website and distributed at community workshops, open houses, and other events. Consultant will prepare additional materials, as needed and as agreed upon with County staff. The project budget assumes Consultant will produce the equivalent of eight (8) other documents.

Meeting in a Box

Consultant will prepare “meeting-in-a-box” materials for use by County staff and volunteers to supplement the number of meetings or events that the consultant is budgeted to attend. Meetings-in-a-box will include a combination of talking points, presentation materials, additional informational materials, comment forms and/or speaker summary forms that provide flexibility to conduct presentations, provide information, and/or solicit feedback in a variety of settings. County staff have developed the start of an event list to apply this tool kit. Meeting or event facilitators – Consultant team members, county staff, and/or volunteers – will conduct and summarize results of these presentations and other outreach activities, and provide summaries to Consultant of what was done. Consultant will prepare a combined summary of activities and their implications for County values, visions, goals, and policies.

Community Event Support

Consultant will work with county staff to prepare for and summarize a variety of community outreach events and meetings. Consultant will work with County staff to identify potential community group meetings or events or other opportunities to meet with and provide information and opportunities to comment to people at meetings or events that they are already attending, consistent with the Community Engagement Plan. Input from these events will be directed to tools in other tasks, including comment forms designed for the meeting-in-a-box activities described above. Results will be summarized together with the meeting-in-a-box activity.

County Staff Training

Consultant will conduct community engagement training with County staff. The equivalent of 10 hours of training and related preparation of presentation and training materials is assumed. Training topics may include but not be limited to synthesizing comments and feedback "on the fly," facilitating contentious meetings, online adaptability, equitable and accessible meetings, and/or other topics agreed upon by Consultant and County staff.

Community Engagement Audit

Consultant also will work with County staff to prepare a “Community Engagement Audit” of these and other activities. It will describe what we heard from community members and how it has been incorporated in the planning process and recommendations. Consultant and County staff will define roles and responsibilities for preparation of these audit materials as part of the Community Engagement Plan.

Board of County Commissioner Updates

Consultant will prepare and deliver a combination of relatively concise briefings on the project, combined with 2-3 more in-depth work sessions with each group during the course of the project. For

the short briefings, Consultant will prepare brief talking points and a short PowerPoint presentation or handout describing the project status and results of activities to date (3-5 slides). For more in-depth work sessions, Consultant will participate remotely (or in-person if the meeting can be combined with other in-person activities) and will prepare longer presentation materials and facilitate discussions with the groups.

Technical Advisor Coordination

Consultant and County staff will identify the technical advisors at the outset of the project. Advisors are expected to include other County Department staff; other local, state and federal agency staff; and topic-specific advocacy or community groups. County staff will have the primary responsibility for communicating and coordinating with these groups, with support and assistance from Consultant, as needed. Coordination and communication will be primarily via telephone, email and online meetings. It will focus on identification of planning issues, trends and regulatory requirements at the outset of the project and review of preliminary policy recommendations during the project, as well as review of the draft Comprehensive Plan document.

Tool	Purpose	Audience Targets and Considerations	Accommodations (as requested)	Schedule considerations	Iterations
Project Webpage	primary information source, including at a minimum project background, current/upcoming events, a process schedule, a document library, and an ongoing method for providing comments or input.	All interested parties	Printed or large format materials on request	Updated in coordination with other announcements (social posts, mailings, etc.)	Initial content + updates once every 1-3 months
Community Open Houses and Workshops	In-depth exploration of topics with the planning team available for questions. Shared experience and hearing what others in the community have to say	Local, geographically specific audiences	Interpretation (as requested) Printed materials translated?	Conduct during Phases 2 and 3 to assess community vision for future and support for draft policies	Two sets of events
Online Open Houses	Extending the in-person events to a longer time period,	Those who can't easily travel, aren't typically involved	Video translation captions/voice-over Text translated Paper version (or is this part of the community events package?)	Launch with advertising of Open House/Workshop, keep open for 1-2 weeks following	Two sets of events paralleling/extending Community Open Houses and Workshops
Planning Commission Meetings	Project updates and conversations by topic	Technical audience	If requested	Align with Planning Commission Calendar; begin in Phase 2	
Informational Materials	Causal check in on the project, use in social posts to generate interest in the project	Target to audiences identified above	Translation? Large format ready to print on demand? Tagged documents for adaptive technology	First materials should be available with launch of website	
Community Events and Other Outreach Support	Expand County capacity to reach out to existing groups, events, etc.	Limited, compelling questions to grab attention	Translated materials available Staff may have to accommodate on the fly	Can be timed with /co-located at existing events	Depends on County staff capacity
Board of Commissioner Updates	Update and build an understanding of pieces of the Comp Plan as they come together	Elected officials	County standard practices at Board Meetings	Align with Board calendar; conduct approx. quarterly	6 briefings and 6 work sessions
Communications Coordination	Identify and provide project updates and questions in social media sized bites, with images, video or animation if possible.	Existing social media channels Provide to representative organizations to send or like	Include text on any images in post	2 days in advance for approval 3-5 days if post will be translated	TBD
Technical Advisor Coordination	identify planning issues, trends and regulatory requirements. Review of preliminary and draft Plan content	Technical audience	If requested	As needed through the project	TBD