



DESCHUTES
COUNTY

2040

Deschutes County Comprehensive Plan



1.0

Public Engagement



A PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

1 Sign In

Let us know you're here! This helps the project team ensure we are talking to lots of different members of the Deschutes County community.

2 Learn about the issues

The Comprehensive Plan update will focus on the following topics:



3 Share your ideas!

For each topic we have a few questions we want your opinion on. Your feedback informs the policies the County will work to implement through the Comprehensive Plan. Place a dot along the line to let us know how much you agree with a question. Then, use the sticky notes to share your other thoughts on each question or topic, and any other ideas you have! See the example below.



Consider this!



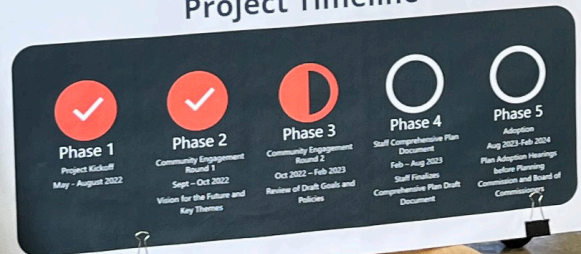
Keep the conversation going! Before you leave, scan this QR code with your phone camera to join the conversation on our Consider platform. Share more ideas with County staff and see what your neighbors have to say about the project.



DESCHUTES COUNTY
2040

A PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

Project Timeline





Opportunities, Challenges, and Considerations

Public engagement is the touchstone of planning in Oregon. As Deschutes County grows and its population changes over the course of the next 20 years, the County must be prepared to find innovative ways to keep community members involved in the planning process and provide ample and accessible ways to find and digest information. Challenges including funding, resources, and ongoing state appeals might pose challenges to this work. The County has an opportunity to plan for adequate resources and staffing to support this work.

Context

A far-reaching community conversation was a vital part of updating the Deschutes County Comprehensive Plan. This effort included:

- Two phases of engagement – one focusing on long-range vision, opportunities, and challenges; and another phase focusing on important and controversial topics.
- Outreach events in all parts of the County.
- A deliberate audit of engagement activities to learn and build on successes.
- Engagement infographic



Involving the public in planning is a critical part of Oregon’s land use system. Statewide Planning Goal 1, Citizen Involvement, is intended to ensure that the public has the opportunity to be meaningfully involved in all phases of the land use planning process. Creating these opportunities requires time and energy on the part of County staff, as well as systems to incorporate that input in a meaningful way.

Whether it be focus groups for a larger planning project, email notification lists for department activities, or mailed notices of public hearings, local governments need to be aware of changing technologies and best practices to involve the community. To participate in planning actions, the public needs to be notified of the proposal or project, understand the legal framework for the decision and understand the implications of the decision.

Regulatory Framework

Statewide Planning Goal 1 – Citizen Involvement lays the groundwork for the County’s public involvement program. Jurisdictions are required to establish a Citizen Involvement Program that provides widespread community involvement, ensures two-way communication with appropriate feedback mechanisms, provides opportunities for engagement in all phases of the planning process, makes technical information available in an intelligible form, and is adequately funded.

Deschutes County’s Community Involvement Program

Statewide Planning Goal 1 is implemented by Deschutes County’s Community Involvement Program, as described in the following.

Deschutes County Planning Commission

The Deschutes County Planning Commission serves as the County’s Committee for Community Involvement (CCI). The Planning Commission is composed of seven volunteer members appointed to four-year terms by the Board of County Commissioners (Board).

Membership of the commission is representative of the various geographic areas of the County. Members are selected through an open process that aims to balance the diverse views of Deschutes County residents.

The purpose of the CCI is to create a direct and transparent connection between County decision-making and the public by providing regular updates, speakers, panel discussions, and handouts on land use law and policy. The CCI aims to make materials intelligible and convenient for the public and to provide a venue for civil discourse on important issues for the County.

STATEWIDE PLANNING GOAL 1

Statewide Planning Goal 1: To develop a citizen involvement program that ensures the opportunity for citizens to be involved in all phases of the planning process.

Historic Landmarks Commission

The Historic Landmarks Commission serves as a hearings body for matters concerning historical districts, structures and sites within unincorporated Deschutes County as well as the city of Sisters. The Landmarks Commission is composed of nine voting and several non-voting ex-officio members who have demonstrated expertise in historic preservation related disciplines. Commissioners serve four-year terms.

Other Land Use Related Advisory Groups

Project Wildfire is a committee formed to coordinate, develop and implement strategies to mitigate the effects of losses due to natural disasters that strike Deschutes County. Project Wildfire is composed of 15 to 27 members who reside or represent agencies within Deschutes County. All members are appointed by the Board and serve four years (see also Chapter X, Natural Hazards).

The Deschutes River Mitigation and Enhancement Program helps achieve Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) habitat and management goals and objectives within the Upper Deschutes River sub-basin, consistent with an agreement between the

Central Oregon Irrigation District (COID) and ODFW. As part of that agreement COID provides ODFW with funds to develop and implement a fish and wildlife habitat mitigation and enhancement program for the Upper Deschutes River Basin. The Deschutes River Mitigation and Enhancement Committee has seven voting members appointed to three-year terms by the Board (see also Section 2.5).

In addition to convening these groups, Deschutes County engages with the public through numerous methods, including:

- Conducting regular work sessions and hearings
- Providing timely public notice of important items
- Maintaining the County Website at www.deschutes.org, including the planning departments “Community Engagement Center” page.
- Advertising events and engaging with constituents through social media channels
- Coordinating with media organizations, such as local newspapers.
- Meeting with individuals and small groups to get feedback on important issues.

These activities were part of the most recent update of this Comprehensive Plan.



Key Community Issues

Deschutes County is changing and community members are seeking new ways to engage in key issues. To provide ample opportunities to engage, new tools and technologies will be needed to engage new groups. Issues that the policies in this section address include:

- Continuing to simplify materials to use plain language and be accessible to a variety of audiences
- Continuing to maintain a presence throughout the County, including holding meetings and events throughout the County
- Supporting engagement activities that allow community members to participate virtually and at the time of their choosing.

With these issues in mind, Deschutes County has adopted the following goals and policies:

Goals and Policies

Goal 1: Provide for a robust community involvement program that includes all members of the community, including those who are commonly under-represented, by ensuring access to information, encouraging community collaboration, identifying and addressing barriers to involvement, and promoting efficient and transparent planning processes.

Policy 1. Convene the Deschutes County Planning Commission as the County’s Committee for Community Involvement in order to provide a direct and transparent connection between County decision-making and the public.

Policy 2. Write all County planning documents to be understandable, intuitive, and easily available to the general public, using simplified language where possible, with acronyms spelled out and technical language explained.

Policy 3. Hold area-specific comprehensive plan and zoning text amendment public hearings in locations and at times convenient and accessible to area residents, as appropriate.

Policy 4. Provide property information to the public in an intuitive and easy-to-use manner.

Policy 5. Consult and coordinate with developers before submitting applications as required or recommended by the County Development Code to identify and discuss project requirements and impacts.

Policy 6. Invest in and support land use educational resources for community members including information related to rural living, agricultural practices, natural resources, and natural hazards.

Policy 7. Promote opportunities for community members to have civil dialogue around key community issues.

Policy 8. Explore new and innovative ways to reach community members and promote participation in the planning process.

Goal 2: Support the activities of the Committee for Community Involvement

Policy 1. Maintain adequate funding and staffing support for the Committee.

Policy 2. Provide regular updates, speakers, panel discussions, and handouts on land use law and policy.

Policy 3. Appoint members through an open and public process to reflect the diverse geographic regions, demographics, and values of Deschutes County residents.

Policy 4. Meet with the Board of County Commissioners at least once a year to coordinate planning policies and activities.

Policy 5. Complete periodic reports on community involvement implementation for the State Citizen Involvement Advisory Committee, the Board of County Commissioners, and the public.

Policy 6. Maintain open and civil discourse among Committee members and with the public.

Engagement



23

Months



1,500

Unique Website
Visitors



466

Email Contact List



29,000

Social Media
Impressions



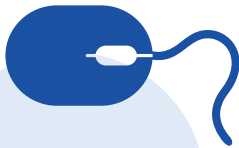
296

In-Person Attendees
at Open Houses



13

News Stories



361

Online Open House
Survey Responses



8

Planning
Commission
Meetings



55

Small-Group Meetings
and Stakeholder
Discussions



254

Small Group
Attendees



2

Staff Community
Engagement Trainings



3

Board
Worksessions

Timeline

