



## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** October 7, 2021

**TO:** Planning Commission

**FROM:** Peter Russell, Senior Transportation Planner

**RE:** October 14, 2021 panel discussion on Rural Economic Development Opportunities in Deschutes County.

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The State of Oregon's land use program is designed to keep resource lands (farm and forest lands) rural while keeping most commercial and industrial uses within urban growth boundaries (UGBs). This intent is summarized in the Statewide Planning Goals, Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS), and Oregon Administrative Rule (OAR). County development codes reflect the intent of the State land use program. Yet, there are degrees of flexibility within this regulatory framework. State law and administrative rules, along with County code, allow selected economic activities to take place on rural lands or to support rural residents or travelers moving through rural lands. Thus, broad rural economic opportunities are achieved through Comprehensive Plan policies, goals, and objectives while specific ventures are reviewed under the Deschutes County development code, particularly Title 18.

### I. BACKGROUND

Board of County Commissioners (Board) asked staff to prepare a white paper on rural economic development opportunities in Deschutes County. Staff presented the white paper to the Board at its June 28, 2021 meeting and to the Planning Commission at its July 8, 2021 meeting. Besides ORSs, OARs, and zoning, the white paper also cited other factors influencing rural economic development opportunities such as septic issues, building codes, and rural demographics. During the presentations the two bodies requested staff convene a panel discussion that would occur in a less busy time in the agricultural season. The panel would discuss the challenges facing small operators and their entry into new activities in terms of fees, transportation system development charges, and regulations. Both the Board and PC expressed particular interest in economic opportunities to support local farmers and related rural uses.

## **II. PANEL DISCUSSION INVITEES AND FORMAT**

Staff has invited members from the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA), Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLDC), Central Oregon Land Watch (COLW), Oregon Farm Bureau, and High Desert Food and Farm Alliance (HDEFFA). Additionally, staff from Building Safety, Environmental Soils, and Planning will on hand to answer questions.

The panel discussion will proceed as follows with Planning Commission Chair Hudson and staff helping to moderate and be timekeepers.

- Introductions
- Each panelist speaks for 2-3 minutes
- Two or three questions can be asked of the featured panelist, move to next panelist
- Once all panelists have spoken, check to see if Planning Commissioners have additional questions
- Chair Hudson to then query if members of the public have questions

## **III. NEXT STEPS**

Staff will provide a summary of the panel to the Planning Commission and recap the panel discussion to the Board at a late October, early November meeting. Staff can discuss further issues and opportunities.