

Meeting-in-a-Box Round 1 Summary

TO: Deschutes 2040 Project Management Team

FROM: Nicole Mardell, Deschutes County Senior Planner

CC:

DATE: February 23, 2023

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Deschutes County is updating its Comprehensive Plan. Through this process, staff and the project team utilized a variety of tools to reach community members and gather input to inform the plan update. One of these tools, called a “meeting-in-a-box” brought all materials for an engagement event to a group for a more intimate and casual conversation about the future of the County. Through this process, staff was able to gather a variety of perspectives and opinions about key issues facing the future of the County, and potential solutions. The most popular topics of discussion include:

- **Housing.** Concern regarding the lack of affordable housing in the region, its impacts on the workforce and increasing visibility of homelessness.
- **Wildlife and Natural Resource Impacts.** Interest in exploring ways to protect wildlife habitat and other natural resources through increased education, incentives, and regulations.
- **Water and Wildfire.** Discussion of increasing natural hazard events and desire for more local and state action to address impacts of drought and wildfire events.
- **Destination Resorts and Sustainable Recreation.** Desire to review need for new resorts and golf course development. Interest in partnering with other agencies to create new or expanded recreation opportunities.
- **Agricultural Lands.** Diverging opinions about the role of agricultural lands in the County, and potential uses or new designations of low productivity lands.

A detailed summary of input provided through the meeting-in-a-box events is included in this report. The following page includes a table of contents with a breakdown of the topic area for ease in reference.

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INTRODUCTION

Between October 2022 and February 2023, Deschutes County staff conducted a series of informal virtual and in-person meeting with County Departments, government agencies, nonprofits, and social groups. This meeting format, referred to as a “meeting-in-a-box” was intended to bring a more intimate discussion regarding the County’s Comprehensive Plan update and supplement the online and in person open house activities in Fall 2022.

PARTICIPATING GROUPS

County staff gathered an initial list of community groups through internet searches and past outreach events. The groups on the list were identified as organized, existing groups that have dedicated staff or regular meetings. Staff attempted to identify groups that could provide countywide and regional perspectives, represented a variety of different perspectives and focus areas (e.g. environmental focus, economic development focus, etc.), and had some interaction with the rural County. Staff also met with City staff from Bend, La Pine, Redmond, and Sisters and a variety of state agencies to gather supporting materials to inform the plan. Additionally, staff set out to reach out to at least one group interacting with the following populations to promote inclusive outreach: low income populations, Spanish speaking populations or linguistically isolated communities, youth, people of color, and veterans. Staff also allowed groups to request a meeting-in-a-box through the County website or by emailing staff. These opportunities were advertised through the project constant contact list and social media. Several groups requested presentations through this medium. A list of groups met with, the date of the meeting, and approximate number of attendees is shown below.

Name of Group	Date	No. of Attendees
Backcountry Hunters and Anglers Association	12/19/2022	3
Bend- Ft. Rock Ranger District (Forest Service)	11/22/2022	2
Bend Parks and Recreation District	11/16/2022	6
Bureau of Land Management - Bend Field Office	11/15/2022	2
Central Oregon Builders Association and Central Oregon Realtors Association	11/9/2022	2
Central Oregon Fire Chiefs Association	10/20/2022	12
Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council	11/30/2022	3
Central Oregon Land Watch	10/13/2022	2
Central Oregon Regional Solutions	11/16/2022	8
Central Oregon Veteran's Ranch	10/11/2022	1



Central Oregon Visitors Association and Travel Oregon	10/25/2022	3
City of Bend	11/30/2022	1
City of La Pine	10/24/2022	2
City of Redmond and Redmond Economic Development Initiative	10/31/2022	8
City of Sisters	11/9/2022	4
Department of State Lands - Wetlands Division	1/18/2023	1
Deschutes Basin Board of Control	12/12/2022	5
Deschutes County Assessor's Department	12/5/2022	1
Deschutes County Emergency Management Department	10/18/2022	2
Deschutes County Farm Bureau	1/5/2023	10
Deschutes County Health Department	10/10/2022	2
Deschutes County Historic Landmarks Commission	1/9/2023	5
Deschutes County Joint Office on Homelessness	11/14/2022	1
Deschutes County Juvenile Services - Homelessness Outreach	11/8/2022	1
Deschutes County Language Access - Latinx Outreach	10/19/2022	1
Deschutes County Natural Resources Department	12/9/2022	3
Deschutes County Property Management Department	11/8/2022	1
Deschutes County Road Department	10/10/2022	3
Deschutes County Solid Waste Department	12/9/2022	2
Deschutes Land Trust	11/30/2022	5
Deschutes Public Library Administrative Team	10/13/2022	8
Deschutes River Conservancy	12/12/2022	3
Deschutes Soil and Water Conservation District	11/17/2022	8
Economic Development of Central Oregon	10/26/2022	1
Environmental Center	1/31/2023	8
High Desert Education Service District	11/28/2022	1
High Desert Food and Farm Alliance	10/12/2022	1
NeighborImpact	11/8/2022	16
Old Bend Neighborhood Association	11/3/2022	7
Orchard District Neighborhood Association	1/10/2023	7
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife	11/23/2022	6
Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Resources	1/23/2023	2
Oregon Dept Agriculture - Food Safety Division	10/19/2022	2

Oregon Dept Agriculture - Land Use and Water Division	10/17/2022	1
Oregon Housing and Community Services	12/14/2022	1
Oregon Hunters Association - Deschutes Chapter	2/8/2023	35
Oregon Natural Desert Association	11/17/2022	1
Oregon Water Resources Department - Deschutes County Field Office	11/21/2022	2
Project Wildfire	12/21/2022	41
Redmond Area Parks and Recreation District	10/11/2022	9
Region 4 - Oregon Department of Transportation	11/3/2022	7
Seventh Mountain Resort	11/7/2022	1
Sisters Park and Recreation District	11/29/2022	6
Sunriver Area Homeowner's Association	11/7/2022	1
Upper Deschutes Watershed Council Board	11/28/2022	6
	total	283

Throughout the duration of the meetings, staff also asked each group if they had recommendations of other groups or individuals to meet with, that led to the expansion of the outreach list. Some groups either did not have capacity to take on a meeting-in-a-box request due to more pressing agenda items, and in certain occasions staff did not hear back from groups at all, even after several attempts.

Staff will conduct a second round of meeting-in-a-box meetings during the Spring outreach phase and will have opportunities to engage groups that we previously had not heard from. These groups include:

Name of Group
Agricultural Connections
Bend La Pine School District
Black Butte Ranch Resort
Boy Scouts – CO Field Office
Central Oregon Coalition for Access
Central Oregon Community College staff and student association
Central Oregon Veteran’s Outreach
Deschutes County Veterans Services
Girl Scouts – Bend Field Office
Juntos

La Pine Chamber
Latino Community Association
Oregon State University Cascades staff and student association
OSU Extension – 4H
OSU Extension – Deschutes Office
Redmond School District
Sisters School District
The Fathers Group
Vamanos Outside
Warm Springs Tribal Government
Widgi Creek Resort

MEETING-IN-A-BOX FORMAT

To aid in the conversation, the consultant provided a set of materials to be used at each meeting. These materials included: an icebreaker activity, worksheet, project FAQs, demographic surveys, agenda with website QR code, comment forms, and a background presentation on the project.

County staff facilitated these meetings, typically with one staff member in attendance to provide background information, prompts, and transcribe feedback from larger group discussions. Meetings were on average one hour in duration and either held virtually through Microsoft Teams and in person at the organization’s typical meeting location.

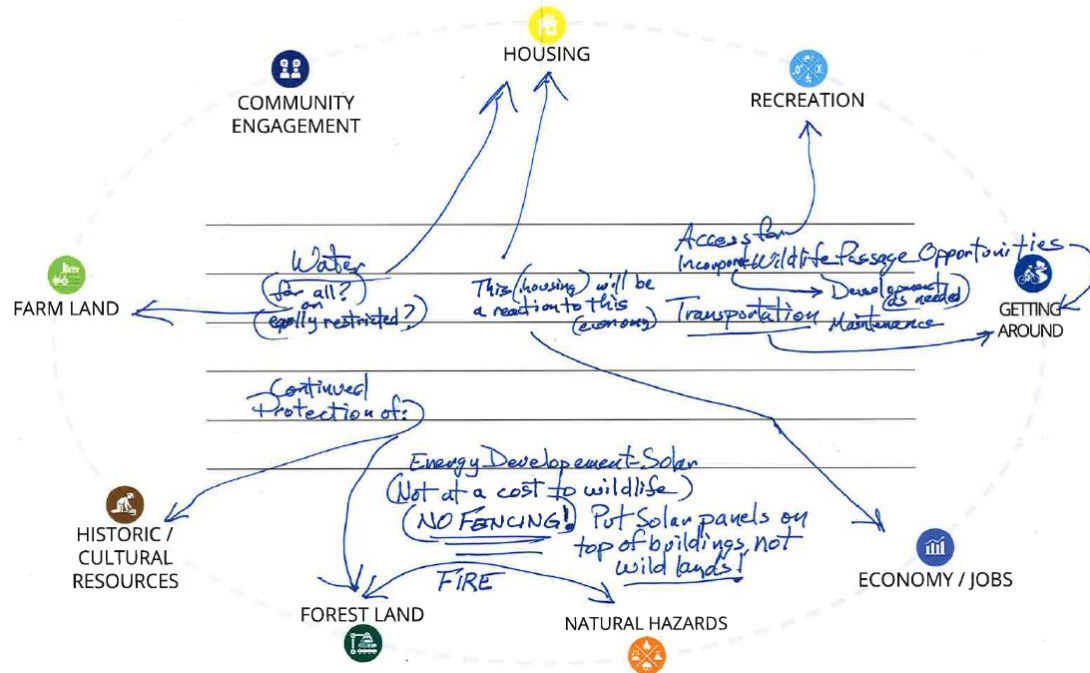


DESCHUTES COUNTY
2040

A PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

WHAT CHANGES DO YOU HOPE TO SEE?

1. Write your thoughts in the circle
2. Connect them to relevant topic(s) by drawing a line to the icons on the circle



COMPLETED MEETING-IN-A-BOX ACTIVITY WORKSHEET

Staff asked the following initial questions at each meeting to prompt conversation:

- How would you describe the most important topics facing Deschutes County over the next 20 years?
- Are there any obstacles or opportunities to address these issues?
- Where might there be areas for partnership?
- What projects are your organization undertaking that might relate to these issues?

Staff found this meeting format to be extremely valuable. It led to discussion amongst meeting participants, questions with staff about state and county land use requirements, and greater depth in understanding community members desires and concerns. As a disclaimer, staff has attempted to incorporate all key issues, challenges, and opportunities expressed during meeting-in-a-box meetings. These ideas have not yet been vetted for specific projects or with compliance with state laws or other regulations. More detailed integration of this feedback will occur as staff drafts goals and policies for the Comprehensive Plan document.

As can be expected, meeting with this volume of community members solicited a variety of key issues, challenges, and opportunities for Deschutes County to consider. Within those discussions, many participants agreed about certain key issues at a high level but had differing opinions about potential policy approaches. As such, staff has provided two summary sections below. The first is an outline of key issues, opportunities and challenges as presented by community members. Staff has summarized and categorized these for readability. The second section is information gathered during meetings with local government partners.

KEY ISSUES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND CHALLENGES

In this section, staff includes the overarching topic in **bold**, a high level summary sentence of the key issue, challenge, or opportunity, and community perspectives shown in *italic*.



Oregon Hunters Association Meeting-In-A-Box

I. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Summary: Participants overall were supportive and appreciative of current outreach methods conducted by staff, but offered several ideas for improvement, in particular reaching more isolated rural residents and community members who traditionally aren't involved in planning processes due to language or accessibility barriers. Participants also noted the ongoing political and social tensions that often divide community members on key issues and cited the need for ongoing civil dialogues about key issues facing the community as a whole. Last, participants cited the need for resources and educational opportunities for new and longtime residents on elements of rural living, including best practices for water use, managing some of the nuisances that come with rural living, and interacting closely with wildlife habitats.

- **The County is changing, there's a need for increased opportunities for civil dialogue and community building.**
 - *Flip of wealth is occurring – rural is wealth, cities are more affordable. Need to ensure those who want rural lifestyle with limited incomes can stay. Preserve housing where we can.*
 - *Lots of polarity in the County, need to find ways to break down walls – too many delays in government due to polarized viewpoints.*
 - *Need for more meeting space for groups in the County, especially near Bend and Redmond.*
 - *Urban/rural divide is real, need to elevate and partner on key issues of our time – food security, managing growth, transportation. Need to facilitate civil conversations among residents for the greater good.*
 - *Emerging need for a civic dialogue/nonpolitical discussion around the use of water to build consensus.*
 - *Too much involvement in land use process from out of state neighbors, interest group. Listen to locals.*
 - *Southern Deschutes County is growing, having an identity shift- need support from County in placemaking or visioning for the greater region.*
 - *Potential need for update or implementation plan for Newberry Country appendix*
 - *Community cohesiveness – need ways to bring us all together on key issues.*
 - *Reduce entitlement culture.*
 - *Find ways to connect new and old residents.*
 - *Diversity, equity, and inclusion – accessibility to resources and belongingness.*
 - *Need more intelligent compromise.*

- **Invest and support education and resources on land use for residents.**
 - *Provide education on land use to new residents – many do not understand the statewide land use requirement and why they are in place.*
 - *Provide education on City vs. County services – many people do not know if they're in a UGB or not, which has impacts on services such as grant program eligibility through NeighborImpact.*
 - *Provide more than just education on noxious weeds, educate all residents on ecosystems and water.*
 - *Provide handbook on rural residential for folks new to the state – nuisances, sustainable practices, etc.*
 - *Need to educate new residents/community members on rural living – proper water use, soil quality, etc.*

- *Provide funding to Deschutes Soil and Water Conservation District to conduct farmers/rural resident outreach.*
- *Require education course (forester, OSU, NRCS staff, etc) as condition of purchasing farm or forest land.*
- **Explore new and innovative ways to reach community members and promote participation in planning processes**
 - *Word of mouth is common amongst rural residents – make use of newsletters from organizations (irrigation districts, OSU Extension, Oregon Farm Bureau).*
 - *Provide an annual “land use in review” to note key issues and projects completed by the county.*
 - *Continuously get out in the community – farmers markets, chamber events, etc.*
 - *Need to include Latinx population in decision making, building trust takes time. If you come into their space for outreach provide Spanish interpretation, provide Spanish print outs and presentations in Spanish. Cultural appropriateness.*
 - *Provide stipends for participation from Latinx community – a gift card, more if they go to multiple meetings.*
 - *Connect with community leaders to determine interest in participating in planning processes.*
 - *County should find ways to reach people who speak another language, are low income, or not typically involved with county processes.*
 - *Engage tribal governments in all decisions, become better partners in land management.*
 - *Diversity/inclusion - ensure county is reaching out to underrepresented groups.*

II. REGIONAL COORDINATION AND PLANNING FOR GROWTH

Summary: Meeting participants often cited the desire for a more coordinated, regional approach to growth. In particular, utilizing the County as a convener to tie together planning between local governments and special districts in Deschutes County, and venturing further into coordination with adjacent neighboring counties. Of most concern was the approach to growth, many participants expressed desire to analyze growth through a resource carrying capacity lens rather than solely accommodating growth. Participants also expressed desire for support of partnerships between local governments on key projects, including collaborating on funding for infrastructure projects. Last, participants noted a desire for increased understanding of the challenges that come with development projects during a heavy growth cycle – expressing challenges with permit application fees, timelines for review, and other barriers to the permitting process for new development.

- **County should have a firm understanding not only of the projected number of new residents, but more detail on resource carrying capacity and areas most impacted by growth.**
 - *Study distribution of growth (e.g., if all growth is projected on west side of Bend we should use resources to plan for that area).*
 - *Population growth – need to be aware of when we are exceeding our resources and how to handle that (water, etc.)*
 - *Sunriver is now 99.9% developed out but relies on services from surrounding community. Need to prioritize affordable housing for employees, daycare. Need to have foresight on transportation planning between Bend and Sunriver as Bend's UGB continues to expand South. Support employment opportunities in S. County and La Pine.*
 - *Overreliance on accommodating growth, should account for natural resource protection and natural hazards as part of the equation.*
 - *Ensure projects for growth include new trends and technological changes like remote work.*
 - *Look at the entire plan with sustainability lens, not over reliant on population or economic growth at the expense of natural resources.*
 - *Work with homebuilders and construction groups to fully understand rate of home construction vs. population projects, compare over time to ensure accuracy.*
 - *Share assessment methods for land management for a collaborative management process.*
 - *Need to collect data on projected income with population growth – if we're expecting to plan for services, we need to build what works for those populations.*

- **Coordinate regional planning efforts, especially growth and urban reserve planning with cities, and projects on state and federal lands.**
 - *Find ways to be conduit to grant funding for key issues. Support work of community organizations and cities.*
 - *Plan far ahead for UGB amendments – no rezones near UGBs, plan for Urban Reserves for Bend, Sisters. Serve as a cheerleader, advocate for city projects – DSL land exchange in Redmond, urban reserve planning.*
 - *Coordinate with cities on planning for growth including urban reserve areas.*
 - *County should be a leader in helping residents think, plan, and act as an integrated region.*
 - *Coordinate with cities on urban reserve planning, statutory process is time intensive and difficult, could do this as a non-regulatory exercise.*
 - *Keep development in cities, maintain habitat in county.*

- *Greater need for coordination between County land use and federal agencies (examples Thornburgh, wastewater facilities, projects that cross between private and public lands). County should lead this effort and serve as coordination between federal agencies, cities, developers, and County in these situations. Many needs from all these groups, agree on priorities.*
- *Dual purpose of public lands – BLM has portions of roads/powerlines/fiber optic cables that pass through their lands. Seeing increase in demands from commercial entities including solar projects, could use more County assistance.*
- *Strategize use for County landholdings, communicate goals for this land.*
- *Explore expanding Community Block Development Grant into UGB beyond City of Bend city limits, would open eligibility for many more County residents.*
- **County should understand rural lifestyles and challenges during planning processes and remove barriers to development where possible.**
 - *Give planners training on rural lifestyles, need to get out of office and take part in experience of working lands to make best decisions.*
 - *BOCC/PC – should be required to live in the rural county (not in cities). Need rural residents to make the rules for rural residents.*
 - *Expedite apps for medical hardship dwellings, use tools in our toolbelt to get these decisions issued quickly to house people. Look at equity lens in how we process decisions and its impact on homelessness.*
 - *Deschutes County more difficult than any other County to get permits, need to streamline – issues like legal lot of record a major barrier to development.*
 - *Fee structure for planning apps should be funded by general fund to reduce cost to applicant.*
 - *Appeals – put the burden on the appellant, too difficult for applicants today.*
 - *Explore raising appeal fees.*
 - *Shift burden onto the appellant to avoid onerous fees on applicants.*

III. FARM AND FOREST LANDS

Summary: Resource lands, which include farm and forest zoned land, was the topic with the most divergent viewpoints through the meeting-in-a-box conversations. Overall, participants supported protection of productive, commercial scale agricultural operations, but diverged on the use of lower value farmland. Many participants cited the need for a new zone in between that of the Exclusive Farm Use and residential zones, with a moderate level of regulation and protection. From there, participants seemed to have two very different viewpoints on the focus of this new zone, in one lens was a focus

on housing production, and another was focused on using larger tracts of land for open space and wildlife. Many participants also expressed the need for more restrictions to protect all farmland in the County. Last, participants cited ways in which the County could support agriculture including more flexibility with farm related housing and agritourism operations.

- **New designation needed between farmland and residential land for areas with poor soils and low productivity.**
 - **Concept 1: Housing Focus – New Designation Should Allow More Development Potential**
 - *Allow for housing on nonproductive lands.*
 - *Unreasonable barriers to farm dwellings, agricultural buildings – income test is too difficult for size of low value parcels in Deschutes County.*
 - *Explore non-resource land program, find avenues for local control. The one-size fits all approach isn't working.*
 - *Advocate for changes at state level – eastern, high desert goal and requirements.*
 - *Low value, low forestry, non-irrigated land, like near Millican, should be used for residential development – make use of low value land without disturbing farm/forest land.*
 - *Create an EFU-20 zone, many EFU properties aren't zoned property, leave owners with hands tied due to regulations.*
 - *Parcels are already too small for viable agriculture, wholesale rezone to an alternative zone with 5-to-20-acre minimums. Soil doesn't matter if the parcel is too small to begin with.*
 - *Seems to be a missing designation between EFU and residential land. Advocate for state land use changes for land zoned EFU with bad soil.*
 - *Conduct a countywide assessment of soil quality on EFU lands, rezone lands through a legislative process rather than piecemeal rezonings. County should carry effort.*
 - *Review soils on County-owned lands to determine potential for rezonings to residential.*
 - *EFU should be better defined, some of it rezoned with smaller designations.*
 - *Nuanced issue – small farms use disproportionate amount of water for their operations, not true agriculture. Takes away from true agriculture in Jefferson County, use for another purpose.*
 - **Concept 2: Stewardship Focus – New Designation Should Protect Open Space, Preserve Large Tracts of Land.**



- *Far too often developers use affordable housing argument to rezone farmland, working around land use laws. Could use new overlay to preserve land beyond just single-family home potential.*
 - *Find way to place value on open space, recreation on larger unparcelized agricultural lands.*
 - *Is there another way to protect land beyond irrigated agriculture? EFU zone protects open space but at a cost (water).*
 - *High Desert Zone” - 20-60-acre parcels with stewardship focus*
 - *High Desert overlay as an EFU status with climate change, open space, and wildlife elements – tax benefit as incentive.*
 - *Incentivize open space on farmlands through something like a high desert zone – value in keeping open space outside of just agricultural practices.*
 - *Assign value to open space in property – major value to wildlife. High desert zone that promotes open space.*
 - *Theodore Roosevelt created national forests, parks, at the time was a radical idea but helped us today. County should also take a radical stance to preserve spaces and give land value based on natural characteristics (ecosystems, wildlife). Gift to future generations.*
 - *Need to maintain and enhance open space countywide – Eden Properties rezoning noted land was useless. Need to incorporate value of open and undisturbed lands in these decisions.*
 - *Farm and forestry land should not be lost for growth and money, allow for recreation to be accessed in these areas to avoid need for new developed areas.*
 - *Preserve farmland while being flexible with water rights (in stream leasing, water banks, etc.)*
 - *Preserve farm and ranch land for preservation of wildlife habitat.*
 - *Preserve farmland while being flexible with water rights (in stream leasing, water banks, etc.)*
- **Protect farm and forest resource lands through current law use requirements or by utilizing conservation easements.**
 - *Strictly limit one-off conversions of resource/EFU lands to other uses.*
 - *Concern about rezoning of farmlands for housing.*
 - *Rezoning of farm land feel tied to money, greed.*
 - *Limit land fragmentation – the shadow that’s cast by rezonings is much larger than we see today.*
 - *No more spot zoning of resource lands.*

- *Rangeland becoming more and more valuable, preserve lands for emerging agricultural practices.*
 - *Difficult to see forest/high value farms turning into homes.*
 - *Limit fragmentation of lands.*
 - *Preserve farmland to the greatest extent possible.*
 - *Partner with NRCS to support creation and enforcement of conservation and agricultural easements to preserve valuable farmland.*
 - *Cumulative impact of nonfarm development is concerning. Need to analyze water/farming impacts from non-farm development from a broader perspective.*
 - *Steward farm and forest lands during UGB process.*
 - *Farmland one of the first things to go with growth, protect the small farms.*
 - *Prohibit nonfarm uses on EFU lands.*
 - *Pursue working lands conservation easements.*
 - *Invest in working lands easements to ensure farmland is used for that purpose in perpetuity – invest in land trust work around this.*
 - *Lots of interest in working land easements in Sisters to Redmond area along 126*
 - *Protect forest land.*
 - *Protect farm encroachment by nonfarm uses.*
 - *Stop zoning it away!*
 - *Control interface housing near farmlands.*
 - *Continued protection of forest lands.*
 - *Please protect farming interests and water.*
- **Support all agricultural activities and local food production through partnerships and flexibility for supportive uses on farmland.**
 - *Change the narrative about food production in central Oregon, lots of opportunities for self-reliance on a community level.*
 - *Retain agricultural lands that define our farming communities.*
 - *Ensure agri-tourism is compatible with neighboring farming practices. Farmers work better with other farmers.*
 - *Connect farms with local businesses who want to compost but don't have space – benefit to both parties for compost on farming operations.*
 - *Support large scale food production – supports local economy and resilience.*
 - *Promote/expand local food production.*
 - *Need agritourism to make a living as farmer.*
 - *Work with ODFW and NRCS to use bio-char on public lands, support vegetation growth, biodiversity, benefits to water.*

- **Remove barriers to farming through funding reduction in land use fees, and timeline for review.**
 - *Exempt agricultural uses from permitting processes.*
 - *Planning department is a barrier to farming – process takes too long and appeals drag on, are expensive. Timing is a critical issue.*
 - *Revisit maps to remove miscategorized wetlands and floodplain on irrigation facilities, explore grant funding.*

- **Promote and support upgrades to equipment on farms to promote more efficient and cost-effective practices.**
 - *Need for investment in onsite efficiencies – farmers have limited capital to spend on equipment and technology upgrades. Partner with HDFFA and other groups to increase grant opportunities.*
 - *Support onsite efficiency work through match with NRCS/Soil Water Conservation Districts, could always use more help and more money for farm efficiency upgrades. Could see water efficiency go up by 90%.*
 - *Promote agro-forestry and regenerative agriculture, only way to make a living on poor soils. Provide resources/education to farmers.*

IV. WATER AVAILABILITY, USE, AND MANAGEMENT

Summary: Estimated to be the most discussed topic at each meeting, water availability, use, and management was top of mind for meeting participants. A general sense of concern for depleting groundwater and surface water resources, combined with complicated state and federal water laws left participants feeling frustrated. Potential solutions included requests for the County to advocate for changes at the state level, integrating additional criteria related to water in the County's development code, participating in regional efforts to plan for water, supporting piping projects for irrigation district canals, and using staff resources to conduct outreach and education on water conservation to community members.

- **Changes are needed at state level, County should advocate for changes to water rights systems and allocation process for both surface and groundwater.**
 - *Advocate for changes at state level.*
 - *Beneficial use not practical – based on a generic number, not best practice.*
 - *Need changes to water right system/use at state level.*
 - *Reduce barriers to instream leasing with tax deferral status, advocate for state changes.*
 - *Advocate for changes in groundwater allocation rule update project.*
 - *Promote a more equitable irrigation right system.*

- *Use it or lose it not beneficial, focus on number of livestock has no relationship to productivity of operation.*
- *180-degree turn to groundwater allocation is coming, no new water rights being issued, will continue to be much more restrictive, new development in rural county will face big issues with obtaining water rights.*
- *Water should go to farmland before golf courses.*
- *Water for all? Or equally restricted?*
- *Water resource management should fairly allocate enough water for farm irrigation.*
- **Integrate water more closely into the development and planning process.**
 - *Add regulations regarding water availability when considering rezonings or nonfarm development.*
 - *Study impacts on groundwater from exempt wells and new development, study benefits of clustering new homes.*
 - *Drought, climate shifts, population growth – need to think outside of the box with water, especially with conserving land as open space other than irrigating.*
 - *Integrate groundwater planning with zoning and development review.*
 - *Look at cumulative impacts to water - long view of climate resilience.*
 - *County needs to have a plan to address shrinking groundwater supplies and how it's addressed through zoning and development.*
 - *Regulate and reduce groundwater use.*
 - *Need to really plan for impacts of water in the development process.*
- **Participate in regional approach to planning for water and engage a variety of sectors in this effort.**
 - *Recognize and support goals of Habitat Conservation Plan.*
 - *Need to plan as a region, especially with water – what we do impacts Jefferson County.*
 - *Tie County actions around water to the basin, water doesn't stop at jurisdictional boundary.*
 - *Groundwater use and declining springs a major issue in the region.*
 - *Deschutes Comprehensive Water Plan under development – incorporate recommendations.*
 - *Explore tri-county approach with Crook, Jefferson, Deschutes. Identify where best farmlands are in the region, where water should go. Make the case to rezone other areas that don't make sense for farming.*

- **Water could become a housing and economic development issue.**
 - *Disparity in access to water in mobile home parks, rentals. Low-income residents, seniors, disabled are often at the will of landlord's charges for water, no way to regulate.*
 - *Increase the number of farms that can use water during continued drought.*
 - *Many high value seed producers in Deschutes County, lack of water a threat to our competitive advantage in this area.*
 - *End cycle of removing water rights from agricultural land and selling to developments in groundwater vulnerable areas.*
 - *Concerned about groundwater use, need to deepen wells in areas of the County.*
 - *Water needs protection, even if it means cities won't grow.*
 - *Prohibit exempt wells outside of the UGB.*
 - *Require exempt well monitoring and restrictions.*
 - *Massive need at NeighborImpact for well replacement/cisterns - need assistance funding for low-income residents.*
 - *Wickiup was one of the best Kokanee fisheries but not now due to spotted frog.*
 - *South County – a lot of wells aging dry.*
 - *Need water to grow food.*
 - *Big impacts to our recreation industry – can't keep a whitewater rafting business running with fluctuating stream flows.*
 - *Water availability is the top issue the County should address – farming, habitat for fish/wildlife/recreation/rural residences – all wondering where the water will come from.*
 - *Concern about water usage from new residential development.*

- **Promote piping projects and education supporting water conservation.**
 - *Reduce potential barriers to piping of irrigation facilities to promote water conservation, list as outright permitted use in SR 2.5 zone.*
 - *County should help facilitate piping of irrigation district canals as part of water conservation.*
 - *Reduce opposition to piping projects through education/process.*
 - *Support water banking and on-site efficiency.*
 - *Continue to provide funding for onsite efficiency and community groups like Deschutes River Conservancy, Upper Deschutes Watershed Council.*
 - *Education on beneficial use, piping projects, and water law in general is needed.*
 - *Need for additional education on in-stream leasing for property owners with water rights.*
 - *Need to be as conservative as possible for smart and efficient use in County.*
 - *Provide funding for Upper Deschutes Watershed Council, serve purpose in a variety of efforts regarding our watershed and water.*
 - *Incentivize conservation of water – especially use of irrigation and landscaping water*

- *Address stormwater issues.*
- *Educate irrigators on responsible water use and state requirements.*
- *Education on water conservation for all users is needed. Neighborly approach to water conservation and incentives.*
- *Need to recharge depleted spring and groundwater resources.*
- *Identify impact of water use on different crops (alfalfa versus MJ). Limit the big water wasters.*

V. NATURAL RESOURCES

Summary: Many participants discussed the value of natural resources to Central Oregon’s identity, economy, and livability. Through these discussions, participants noted that stewardship of natural resources was very important, although the method in which to steward these resources varied. Participants offered the need for an expanded Natural Resources Department (also referenced in the Recreation section below) to provide more outreach, education, and management of lands in the County. Other participants noted the need for updated regulations to protect wildlife and water resources. Wildlife crossings were mentioned by several participants.

- **Be a leader in conservation and stewardship of natural resources.**
 - *County as voice of land stewardship and conservation.*
 - *Concern about overuse of natural resources.*
 - *Appeal of living and working here is natural resources, important to consider this as a value in decision making.*
 - *Loss of large, mature ponderosa trees to new development is upsetting, tie ins with climate change and wildfire mitigation.*
 - *Protect our natural resources!*
 - *Protecting wildlife habitat is essential, they don’t make it anymore, once it’s gone, it’s gone forever.*
 - *Take wildlife and habitat into account for all county decisions.*
 - *Need aggressive plan to preserve more habitat.*
 - *Wildlife habitat should be analyzed in all decisions.*
 - *Add a stewardship element to the Comprehensive Plan document.*
 - *Balance preservation measures with growth – shared resource preservation.*
 - *Emphasize co-benefits of looking at wildlife while protecting resource lands or natural hazard planning. Great ways to do good work on the same project.*

- **Protect wildlife resources by updating inventories and regulations to minimize conflicts with wildlife.**
 - *Update wildlife inventories.*
 - *Limit uses in Tumalo Deer Range.*
 - *Preserve wildlife corridors from development pressures.*
 - *Protect wildlife habitats, create a wildlife chapter to plan, federal lands disturbed by overuse, fragmented habitat.*
 - *Tumalo winter deer range – airplanes/rec disturbing wildlife, need to further limit uses.*
 - *Preserve wildlife corridors as development pressures occur. Open spaces provide ecosystem benefits.*
 - *Incorporate state level wildlife planning projects into document and education.*
 - *Create ways to be more adaptive, not stagnant in decisions, flexibility for adaptive management approach to wildlife.*
 - *Incorporate no net loss standard through county regulations.*
 - *Continue to protect sage grouse – new pressures with solar, dirt bike tracks, gun range, mining and aggregate resources emerging.*
 - *Enforce current restrictions, lots of fences going up in Wildlife Area combining zone.*
 - *Update mule deer inventory as pilot project, follow through by updating other inventories as well.*
 - *Need to enforce placement of shipping containers/boats in sage grouse habitat.*
 - *Create county specific cumulative impacts analysis for new solar sites- exclude these from Goal 5 resource areas.*
 - *Wildlife studies before approving any new development needed.*
 - *Update wildlife inventories and implement strong protection programs.*
 - *Cumulative impacts to wildlife – how can we address this in large or small projects over time.*

- **Explore partnerships with other agencies and groups to provide education and incentives for protection of wildlife and other resources.**
 - *Work with ODFW on data to inform decision making and protection of habitat and species protections, whether or not they are inventoried species.*
 - *Evaluate wildlife protection measures outside of just zoning.*
 - *Look for connections and links to habitat, co-benefits for protections.*
 - *Work with wildlife agencies to provide key information upfront in development process, at development counter.*
 - *Educate planners on baseline of wildlife issues.*
 - *Partner with hunting and angling groups on educational materials and presentations about wildlife habitat and regulations.*

- *Education about dark skies lighting .*
- *Wildlife counts – predator regulations are too strict, let us hunt them with dogs and reduce the numbers to increase other wildlife numbers.*
- *Make sure residents know not to feed wildlife.*
- *Use deed restricted conservation easements to protect open spaces. Support Deschutes Land Trust and other groups doing this work.*
- *Provide educational materials/resources to folks at planning counter on wildlife related issues and its intersection with land use.*
- *Integrate climate adaption framework, OCAMP from the state into policies.*
- *Evaluate protection measures outside of just zoning, look at wildlife through a coordinated protection lens rather than private property regulation.*
- *Seek rebound in mule deer population.*
- *Education and respect for wildlife habitats on federal and private lands*
- *Prioritize dark skies and lessening of light pollution, benefits to wildlife.*
- *Concern about habitat impacts for wildlife from new residential development.*

- **Support and provide funding for wildlife crossings into development and road projects.**
 - *Support funding and incorporation of wildlife crossings to preserve wildlife migration corridors.*
 - *Seasonality of wildlife populations, need to accommodate wildlife with lowered speed limits, more signage, wildlife crossings. Pursue seasonal speed limit/nighttime speed limit to help populations.*
 - *Incorporate wildlife passage opportunities into development.*
 - *Keep large parcels intact to support wildlife migration, partner with property owners.*
 - *Incorporate wildlife passages into transportation projects.*
 - *Develop and improve wildlife corridors throughout county.*
 - *Support wildlife crossings on busy roads, including County roads and state highways.*
 - *Overpasses on migration routes for wildlife.*
 - *Build undercrossings and overpasses in forested areas.*
 - *Build more wildlife crossings.*

- **Expand inventories and protections of sensitive water resources.**
 - *Groundwater fed stream reaches need strong protections on cold water reaches.*
 - *Create a goal 5 category for cold water springs, refuges, and water table – requirements to protect these resources.*
 - *Update list of perennial streams, water bodies that aren't currently in inventory.*

- *Residential/camping impacts to wetlands, feels like death by 1,000 cuts – many activities fall under DSL's permitting threshold, dumping greywater, promote additional enforcement.*
- *More wetlands in S. Deschutes County than LWI shows – remap to avoid issues with property owners.*
- *Pursue creation of wetland mitigation bank.*
- **County should expand Natural Resources Department and staffing to allow for additional outreach and management of sensitive areas.**
 - *Add staff to natural resources department for community outreach – familiarity with agricultural lands, ecosystems, etc.*
 - *Hire more natural resources staff at the County to get out in the community.*
 - *County staff should have a good baseline understanding of wildlife issues and intersection with other agency rules to avoid blindsiding customers.*

VI. HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Summary: Participants agreed there is value to protecting existing historical and cultural resources, and opportunities to do more to bring cultural resources to Deschutes County, in particular a museum or performing arts space.

- **County should explore partnerships to provide more cultural activities in the area, protect historic and cultural sites during development processes, and recognize new resources.**
 - *Protect/recognize resources like Redmond Caves.*
 - *Need for more museums and art/cultural centers in Deschutes County.*
 - *Need additional programs for youth.*
 - *Make sure expansion areas don't trump historic sites.*
 - *Continuous preservation of historical/cultural sites.*
 - *Attract/plan for an art museum.*
 - *Need large performing arts venue.*
 - *Continue to protect cultural resources.*
 - *Integrate agricultural history in cultural/historic resources, advertise them.*

VII. RECREATION

Summary: Participants noted the abundant recreation opportunities in the County, although many expressed concern that these sites are quickly becoming damaged by overuse. A desire for an increased number of sustainable recreation sites, partnerships among agencies in land management, and greater recreation planning was often noted by participants. Destination resorts were a hot topic, with many participants requesting the County limit new facilities. Regional trails and connected open spaces were discussed by many participants as a way to maximize intergovernmental partnerships and provide additional transportation options. Many participants expressed the need for the County to expand its role in recreation, including expansion of the Natural Resources Department for recreation related projects or the creation of an entirely new County Parks and Recreation Department. Last, participants noted the need for education and stewardship of existing recreation resources.

- **Increase affordable, sustainable, and diverse recreation opportunities for locals and visitors through partnerships with government and private entities.**
 - *Invest tourism dollars into natural resource conservation and recreation infrastructure.*
 - *Promote sustainable recreation – provide recreation opportunities while maintaining rural character of the land.*
 - *Need to recognize/preserve natural assets in a sustainable way, find a balance between accommodating locals and visitors.*
 - *Promote sustainable recreation – maintain rural character of lands.*
 - *Growth in population equate pressure on public lands. Massive demand on BLM lands due to overuse of Deschutes National Forest lands.*
 - *Tourist become residents/biz owners. Need to steward our outdoor recreation resources to preserve this pipeline.*
 - *Need to plan for affordable access to recreation, especially for kids. Promotes stewardship and connection in place, can reduce at risk behaviors. Avoid pricing locals out.*
 - *Promote equitable access to recreation, need more open space in new developments.*
 - *With growth, important to keep space for outdoor recreation.*
 - *Maintain greenspace, especially around cities.*
 - *Conserve Skyline Forest for primitive recreation and camping.*
 - *Protect resources like Skyline Forest – public recreation amenity for community and unsafe for development.*
 - *Integrate Deschutes Land Trust’s Skyline Forest Vision document.*
 - *Expand recreation sites – disperse people to reduce impacts, need collaboration between County/state/federal agencies.*
 - *Increase amount of developed federal and state recreation sites.*

- *Support annexation of Tumalo and Deschutes River Woods into parks districts.*
- *Plan for public, state, county, national park usage and maintenance.*
- **Revisit golf courses, destination resorts, and commercial recreation codes**
 - *Take a regional look to destination resort planning – coordinate with Crook County and cities to plan for this at a macro scale.*
 - *Stop building golf courses.*
 - *Need for rural sports complex for kids – baseball fields, gym, activity space.*
 - *Reducing large scale resorts and golf courses.*
 - *No new destination resorts.*
 - *Destination resorts especially Thornburg pose a huge threat to the wellbeing of Deschutes County.*
- **Reduce barriers and promote a regional trail and open space system.**
 - *Lead effort for a regional trails system – connect to cities.*
 - *Continue to collaborate with Sunriver on river access – Harper Bridge.*
 - *Trail connectivity and public access to land should be clarified through easements.*
 - *County should enforce trail and access easements during development process when an area is listed in a recreation master plan (WTZ is a success of this) critical to quality of life for rural residents and recreation planning. Parks districts need extra teeth to help with negotiation.*
 - *Incorporate BPRD trail plan by reference to County documents.*
 - *Support regional trails projects, simplify language in code to reduce issues with building these facilities in County jurisdiction.*
 - *Help support trails on irrigation district ditch rider roads, help navigate issues with property owners.*
 - *Support urban reserve planning to support future recreation planning.*
 - *Explore regional trails and recreation opportunities on already disrupted lands, connectivity without being in a place that's totally wild.*
 - *Work with property owners along irrigation district canals to provide walking trails.*
 - *Plan for regional trails – in particular in old rail/forest road corridors to lessen impacts.*
 - *Connect forest service, county lands, private farmland, and land trust lands for connected trail and recreation system. Allow recreation in areas that aren't totally "wild" to avoid conflicts to sensitive habitats.*
- **Increase County role in recreation (similar to item above in Natural Resources section)**
 - *Pursue more active park management of County properties along Deschutes and Little Deschutes, improvements to control waste, access, signage.*

- *Expand natural resources department to include management of recreation sites..*
 - *Use new County Parks and Recreation Department for maintenance of a regional trails system with support from ODOT, cities, parks districts*
 - *Skyline Forest – countywide bond measure, County as land manager.*
 - *Follow through on recommendations from Trust for Public Land work in 2010s.*
 - *Establish County Parks and Recreation Department to manage lands outside UGBs.*
 - *Use County owned lands for opportunities with BPRD and other parks districts.*
 - *County should have a natural resources dept to serve unincorporated areas like Terrebonne with parks and recreation.*
 - *Revisit County strategy around landholdings – what is the goals? Serve as land trust or other use. County parks department for unincorporated communities like Terrebonne.*
 - *Prolonged management of open spaces on County property – wildfire mitigation, drought resilience, and insect/disease management.*
 - *Skyline forest -find a permanent conservation solution and county involvement in acquisition and management of property.*
- **Promote education and stewardship of recreation sites.**
 - *BLM lands seeing impact of overuse year-round, used to have 3-5 cars at a trailhead, now seeing 20 cars. Pressure for developed recreation opportunities, as well as people wandering out into undeveloped land and disturbing lands/resources, which take time for BLM to identify/correct.*
 - *Homelessness a continued issue on BLM lands, mainly with trash.*
 - *Congestion on public lands a growing issue- manage parking, usage, trail conditions.*
 - *Establish land management coalition with County, parks districts, BLM, and forest service to better manage recreation site and issues like trash and homelessness.*
 - *Resources are being abused especially in S. County – need more active management for septic issues, trash, permanent structure.*
 - *As county grows, need to plan for recreation and rural residential conflicts – examples skyliner subdivision, fall river, spring river – recreationalists will start looking for less crowded areas and more conflicts will occur.*
 - *Less OHV access.*
 - *Increase wildlife passage opportunities on recreation lands.*

VIII. NATURAL HAZARDS

Summary: Many participants noted the County's changing climate as contributing to increased frequency and impact of natural hazard events and the need for climate change to be more integrated

into the County's documents. Wildfire was top of mind for many participants while discussing natural hazards, including concern of increasing impacts to residents and visitors alike. Participants desired continued coordination among agencies to align projects and provide a quick and coordinated response to wildfire events, in addition to great education and communications about wildfire. Resources like funding and staff time for wildfire related projects was well supported by many participants, in addition to a variety of other potential incentives. Many participants expressed a need for quick action for stricter building and defensible space requirements, although some participants noted the need for making these requirements as clear as possible and reducing potential costs associated with the additional requirements.

- **Recognize impacts of climate change and incorporate into County decision making.**
 - *Add a climate action plan/sustainability objective.*
 - *Need to recognize climate change role in fire behavior, climate readiness.*
 - *Step up in climate change responsibility.*
 - *Climate change is here, fire seasons are now fire years, need to be proactive.*
 - *Acknowledge climate change in the plan – glaciers going away, wildfire prevention, etc.*
 - *Add stewardship chapter or climate action plan.*
- **Continue to improve coordinated response to natural hazard events through hazard planning, trainings, and shared facilities.**
 - *Need to do scenario/disaster planning to limit impacts to increasing natural hazard events.*
 - *Align Plans with cities to ensure cohesive approach to hazards.*
 - *Cascadia Event, need to ensure we're planning for the big one.*
 - *Need to do scenario/disaster planning to be prepared.*
 - *Coordinate agency responses to avoid missing vulnerable populations when disaster occurs.*
 - *Support CORE3 regional training facility, spread message to community of its benefits/uses.*
 - *Need to address volcanic hazards.*
 - *Work with cities to address increased fire risk with high density WUI development.*
 - *Need for more wildfire mitigation efforts in southern Deschutes County, especially around La Pine. National Forest doing good work, need more from private property owners.*
 - *Update wildfire master plan for La Pine.*
 - *Work with railroad companies and other utilities on fuel reduction work.*
 - *Continue to focus on responsiveness to wildfire and smoke management.*

- **Continue to improve education and communications surrounding natural hazards.**
 - *Develop better emergency management communication strategy for mass displacement – need to be able to communicate with underserved and unhoused during emergency events.*
 - *Need for education on natural hazards and individual preparedness.*
 - *Continued education on programs – smoke/prescribed burns scare transplants and tourists. Need for public information on these processes and benefits.*
 - *Continued education on programs – smoke/prescribed burns scare transplants and tourists. Need for public information on these processes and benefits.*
 - *Smoke- need to promote conversations about prescribed burning, provide education.*
 - *Create plans to share information with homeless/transient populations during natural disasters, big issue that came up with providing information/services to community members during 2020 Labor Day fires.*
 - *Communicate value of insurance for natural disasters, almost everyone is underinsured, big problem in 2020 Labor Day fires.*
 - *County should establish consistent messaging on why wildfire needs to be addressed, robust public education campaign.*
 - *Build smarter, not faster – educate on affordability narrative for fire hardened structures.*

- **Provide resources for hazard mitigation and adaptation related projects.**
 - *Continue providing money for thinning projects, tree restoration projects to orgs like Upper Deschutes Watershed Council.*
 - *Support funding for thinning of trees.*
 - *Enhance public safety funding and revenue options.*
 - *Review local community guidelines in comparison to Firewise USA certification standards.*
 - *Reform HOA/Architectural committee rules to push for wildfire reduction standards.*
 - *Retrofit existing/previously approved development to increase wildfire resiliency.*
 - *Accelerate FireWise USA and similar programs, provide resources for implementing this work in neighborhoods that are less organized.*
 - *Better wildfire survey for insurance needed.*
 - *Work with DEQ on air quality limits for prescribed burns.*
 - *Fuels reduction is very important and makes a big impact, coordinate with neighborhoods, federal agencies, county, municipal districts to promote education and fund projects.*
 - *Need to implement fire adapted communities and work together in fuels reduction throughout ownership of ground.*
 - *Comprehensive plan policies should support funding for wildfire related work.*
 - *WUI treatments and fire hardening of homes in high-risk fire areas.*

- **Take quick action to update building and development codes for fire hardening and defensible space.**
 - *Need prompt action on development codes to harden structures and mitigate loss from fire.*
 - *Adopts new standards from ICC 605, most recent standards for wildfire resilience.*
 - *Need significantly more robust fire mitigation codes such as banning wood fences for higher density developments.*
 - *Underground utility facilities wherever possible.*
 - *Create defensible space around critical infrastructures (transmission lines, towers, etc.)*
 - *County should require fire resistant landscaping in new developments.*
 - *Prioritize building code updates for fire mitigation, defensible space, and codes that are tailed to Deschutes County/Central Oregon.*
 - *New development needs to be firewise and fire hardened.*
 - *Be a leader in private land requirements for wildfire mitigation.*
 - *Create strict rules for high/extreme fire risk areas – no new development unless wildfire adapted community standards are in place (building materials, defensive space, etc.*
 - *Reduce density in areas abutting National Forest or similar areas.*
 - *No new development in high or extreme fire risk areas.*
 - *Prohibit new development in forest zones, too dangerous and adding fuels Reduce ambiguity in wildfire related requirements – defensible space, home hardening. Balance impact to cost.*
 - *Fire Adapted communities should be available at all income levels, tie in with housing approvals.*
 - *Use fire maps for decisions next to forest service and BLM lands.*

- **Explore additional programs and incentives to reduce wildfire risk.**
 - *Implement recommendations from NHMP into planning documents.*
 - *WUI should be taken into account in all decisions.*
 - *Add wildfire buffers between communities, overlays, land trust acquisition of property.*
 - *County should conduct asset management plan with natural hazard lens to reduce impacts from events like wildfire.*
 - *Integrate plan with Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan, Community Wildfire Protection plan – key word is adaptation, try not to wordsmith.*
 - *Follow guidelines of wildland cohesion strategy.*
 - *Create and maintain resilient landscapes – tree spacing, understory, perennial bunchgrasses, remove noxious weeds.*
 - *Reduce smoke and wildfire.*

IX. ENERGY

Summary: Renewable energy is an emerging topic in the county. With more funding available from state and federal agencies, meeting participants noted the need for participation in strategic planning around energy, and support of efficiency projects as new technologies emerge. Several participants expressed concern about placement of solar facilities in sensitive areas and sought more intentional review and design of facilities to limit their impacts to wildlife and other natural resources.

- **Participate in strategic energy planning.**
 - *County should complete comprehensive strategic energy and grid planning.*
 - *ODOE is working on a statewide energy security plan, due July 1, 2024. This will be tied to grant funding for utilities and wildfire hazard mitigation project – include policies and projects in plan to assist in eligibility for grant funds. Collaboration with pacific power, CEC, etc. more effective in grants.*
 - *Community Renewable energy Grants Program through legislature - seek funding.*

- **Support energy efficiency projects through incentives and streamlined review.**
 - *More collaboration with local governments to build efficient homes.*
 - *Energy costs directly tied to affordability/durability of homes.*
 - *Promote bio-mass operations to tackle natural hazards, forest loss, and economy and jobs in one project.*
 - *Support clean energy – biomass and solar.*
 - *Promote alternative energy sources and transportation changes – geothermal, nuclear.*
 - *Put biomass front and center as renewable energy, interest is taking off and several proposals for facilities are popping up. Highlight benefits of biochar for farming, biomass for energy.*
 - *Step up for climate change – ties in to all topics. Promote geothermal and other energy options to reduce impacts.*

- **Be cognizant of placement of energy facilities and their impacts on other natural resources.**
 - *Energy development and solar should not come at a cost to wildlife, put solar panels on top of buildings, not wildlands, no fencing.*
 - *Require solar arrays to have clearance for grazing underneath – great to have multiple uses in solar developments.*
 - *Provide incentives for on-farm solar, ensure structures are built for future solar installation.*

- *Balance siting of needed solar with habitats, apply limitations on fencing to avoid impacts.*
- *Incentive solar on existing structures, buildings, parking lots rather than on a greenfield site.*
- *Solar projects on BLM land near Alfalfa impacts wildlife/open spaces, coordination to avoid these impacts.*

X. HOUSING

Summary: Housing was a major topic of discussion among participants. Almost all participants noted we are seeing an affordability crisis in Deschutes County and it is impacting our workforce and local economy. Participants spoke to a variety of different preferences in addressing housing related issues. Some participants preferred the County to focus on regional housing planning with other local and state governments to collaborate on funding and building new and innovative housing projects. Other participants wanted the County to remove housing from its plan, and instead work with cities to locate new housing development in existing city limits, citing concerns about sprawl. Some residents desired more flexibility in rural zoning codes, primarily to allow RV parking, manufactured home parks, and Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs). Some residents discussed utilizing existing unincorporated communities for more dense development, in areas such as Millican or Alfalfa. Last, homelessness was a major topic of discussion with residents commenting on the need for services and expressing concern about public safety related issues that come with unsanctioned camping.

- **Participate in a regional approach to planning for housing to allow for a more collaborative and innovative solutions.**
 - *Need to increase county collaboration with housing authority to build a coordinated response to housing production.*
 - *Improve urban/rural coordination on housing, plan for the region.*
 - *Partner with cities to connect citizens with resources like affordable housing.*
 - *Should be #1 priority and explore unique projects like veteran's village, employer assisted housing.*
 - *Explore housing on federal lands? Public private partnerships.*
 - *Housing biggest issue for educators and school system. Regional partnership needed to acquire properties, reuse old facilities for educator housing.*
 - *County should partner with existing groups – Kor, Housingworks, to support affordable housing.*
 - *Partner with school districts, local governments, and private sector for innovative housing solutions for teachers and other workforce.*
 - *Explore public private partnerships with housing to make it more affordable.*

- *Transfer federal land for use as affordable housing.*
- **Partner with cities on urban development to reduce impacts of sprawl.**
 - *Higher density housing to contain sprawl.*
 - *Keep development in cities, rural residential development leads to sprawl.*
 - *Remove housing chapter from County plan – not necessary.*
 - *Keep housing out of migratory paths.*
 - *Rural housing leads to sprawl, unaffordability, lack of transportation to goods and services.*
 - *Support housing in cities.*
 - *Manage long term growth strategies to avoid urban sprawl.*
 - *Stop large lot fringe development outside of UGB, especially near cities.*
 - *Remove housing bucket from the plan, no needed. Rural housing leads to sprawl, unaffordability, lack of transportation.*
 - *Coordinated planning with cities to plan for areas, get infrastructure in and paid for, then quickly build as we grow.*
 - *County should explore funding to help put initial infrastructure (water,sewer) in the ground, big barrier/delay for new housing.*
 - *Limit fragmentation of rural land for housing.*
 - *Housing not required to be provided by counties, but the County can play a key role in acquisition of property for strategic infill in cities.*
 - *Keep development in cities.*
- **Provide more flexibility for rural housing including RVs, manufactured homes, and Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs).**
 - *Need more rural housing – concentrate to provide access to services.*
 - *Need more flexibility in housing, hard to navigate rural land use system unless you have wealth.*
 - *Provide opportunities for additional manufactured home parks, develop regulations to protect and preserve existing manufactured homes parks.*
 - *Increase manufactured home parks as this increases pride of home ownership, reduces traffic congestion in population dense areas (apartment/condos), affects wildlife traffic as well.*
 - *Allow more flexibility for RV parking – expand beyond 6-month limit in times of emergency, housing crisis. Need more flexibility to aid low income/disabled residents.*
 - *Allow RV parks in County – will always have folks who want to live in their RV.*
 - *More diverse allowances for ADUs.*
 - *Rural ADUs – great opportunity to support housing on rural land.*

- *Change codes to allow ADUs on private property in County.*
- *Advocate for more flexibility in zoning – allowing homes to be near jobs will help with transportation, housing, and economic development.*
- *Develop small communities like Millican on County and State lands.*
- *More dense housing.*
- *EFU zoning makes building even one residence too difficult, affects ability to farm.*
- *Make it easier to get a residence on farmland.*
- *Add a livability component to the plan.*

- **Promote and reduce barriers to development in existing unincorporated communities.**
 - *Millican – promote affordable housing, building in existing unincorporated communities.*
 - *Utilize unincorporated communities for denser rural housing.*
 - *Look at developing areas that are lower value farmland, Millican areas for rural residences.*
 - *Use Alfalfa and Millican for low income or affordable housing.*
 - *Unincorporated communities – no one lives out there b/c of no services or medical care, improve these to support housing*

- **Preserve existing housing stock and opportunities for residents to age in place.**
 - *Will see a 30% increase in population over 60 in next 10 years (source: NeighborImpact) need to plan for aging populations and systems to support aging and aging in place.*
 - *Provide grants to retrofit homes to help aging populations (grab bars, ramps, etc.)*
 - *Preserve manufactured homes, provide grant opportunities to weatherize and repair existing manufactured homes.*
 - *Provide grants for upgrades to older homes – energy efficiency, window replacement to avoid deterioration of the home.*
 - *Limit short term rentals, explore limitations and stricter policies.*
 - *Explore measures to protect housing stock in RV parks/manufactured home parks.*

- **Supporting affordable and workforce housing should be the County's focus.**
 - *Affordable housing important to allow my children to live here in adulthood.*
 - *Affordable housing options and greater density in unincorporated parts of County to supplement inadequate housing supply in Bend/Redmond.*
 - *Housing needed at all levels, across the board – work force, low income, affordable, and in between.*
 - *Support affordable housing.*
 - *Housing prices are too high for average wages.*
 - *Need affordable housing for all, especially workforce housing.*

- *Don't invest more in shelters, invest more in housing.*
- *Housing for workforce is difficult, hard to bring in seasonal workforce for firefighting, even manager level positions.*
- *Make residential fire sprinklers more affordable.*
- *Encourage cities to participate in incentive programs – example: La Pine not participating in water assistance bill program, impacts to housing affordability.*
- *Government support and funding of housing is needed.*
- *Need to think about funding for housing and infrastructure post COVID-dollars. Many good programs in place today, secure funding to keep those in place.*
- *Affordability the biggest issue in Deschutes County, need housing at every level.*
- *Affordability for young families is a major issue, hard to put down roots here.*
- **Homelessness is a major issue in the County, and requires a variety of approaches.**
 - **County should work to address health and safety issues related to homelessness.**
 - *2 BLM officers cover all of Deschutes and other counties. Leads to community complaints as they are spread thin.*
 - *Coordination with agencies (BLM, forest service) needed on unhoused issues. Encourage more funding for staffing.*
 - *Homelessness becoming a wildfire issue.*
 - *Homelessness should be its own chapter – big issue, need collective effort as many public land managers don't have training in social services. Using a lot of resource on waste cleanup, dumping.*
 - *Need pragmatic approach to reduce vagrancy, squatting, and violent crime.*
 - *Remove homeless camps, what do we do with the homeless?*
 - *Unsanctioned camping is becoming a wildfire risk, need for additional services to these areas.*
 - *Crack down on land use for unsanctioned camping, provide health services and outreach to people in these camps.*
 - *Advocate for flexibility in safe parking as part of response to homelessness.*
 - **County should explore financial support to assist with and prevent chronic homelessness.**
 - *Cost of utilities is a huge burden to homeowners in the rural county, work done by nonprofits helps but doesn't cover it. Explore grants to provide aid to low-income rural resident's so they can keep their homes.*

- *Need to recognize cost of services for unhoused and balance with the cost of providing/supporting housing opportunities. \$15,000 for an emergency visit is a waste of local dollars, should use that money for housing.*
- *Need to address homelessness early, if someone is homeless in their youth more likely to become chronic.*

XI. TRANSPORTATION

Summary: As the County continues to grow, participants expressed concerns regarding increased congestion and access to services. Many participants spoke to the need for an expanded transit system serving more of rural Deschutes County, and connecting community members to jobs, health care, and services. Other participants noted the need for continued planning and maintenance of roads to increase capacity and ensure safe travel during increasing natural hazard events. Other participants expressed a desire for increased coordination with cities and the state on transportation projects as they often cross imaginary lines and are all used by County residents. Additionally, participants expressed interest in alternative transportation options like walking and driving.

- **Continue to invest in transportation planning, projects, and maintenance.**
 - *Need better sanding of roads in wintertime, ongoing maintenance during snow and ice events.*
 - *Road system quickly getting at capacity – have a more proactive approach to transportation planning and acquiring right of way through partitions for future projects.*
 - *Can't support development in outlying areas without increased transportation access.*
 - *Need additional connectivity for emergency vehicles.*
 - *Need additional ingress/egress in Deschutes River Woods for emergency access.*
 - *Focus on road improvements in high wildfire risk areas for evacuations.*
 - *Electric vehicles or CNG/RNG fleets could make a great impact but need a critical mass of local governments to buy in to make it economically feasible.*
 - *More EV chargers available.*
 - *Need better road planning.*
 - *Transportation to services is important for rural residents.*
 - *Improve access and variety of transportation to healthcare.*
- **Increase collaboration among city and state agencies in transportation related issues.**
 - *Increase coordination on right of way and transportation projects on city/county limits.*
 - *Address challenges with unhoused community in rights of way.*
 - *Modernize state highway system.*

- *Improvements needed for Hwy 126.*
- *Create bypasses around Bend, Redmond, Sisters.*
- *Airports – homeless living in Runway Protection Zones, need help in maintain safe areas around airports.*

- **Manage congestion of road system for freight and economic development activities.**
 - *Less traffic by allowing newer development in outlying areas.*
 - *Vehicle mobility through county is tied to economic development. Freight stalled on Hwy 97 loses competitive advantage over I-5.*
 - *Need relief on Deschutes Mkt and Knott Rd.*
 - *Address transportation issues to better move agricultural products through Bend or Redmond.*
 - *Better plan for recreation traffic in Bend, lots of backups.*

- **Invest in expansion and increased frequency to transit throughout Deschutes County.**
 - *Pursue mass transit to a greater degree – have more amenities to appeal to commuters (free Wifi, comfortable seats, etc.).*
 - *Work with employers to find opportunities for employers sponsored transit.*
 - *Transportation options to job centers – Safeway employee shouldn't have to bike to work at 2 am due to limited bus/uber service.*
 - *Childcare and student transportation – need to increase services through CET.*
 - *Rural transit limited by unmaintained roads, service area boundaries – additional funding could help this.*
 - *Need bus service in rural areas like Alfalfa Market Road.*
 - *Support for creation of a transit district serving multiple mobility functions to support transit, other ways of getting around.*
 - *Integrate transit infrastructure (benches/stops) into decisions for development projects, often an afterthought.*
 - *Explore rail or bus rapid transit around the County and connecting with key areas of the state.*
 - *Need widespread public transit in County.*
 - *Shuttles or alternative forms of transportation to recreation and jobs.*

- **Expand infrastructure for walking and biking.**
 - *Improve bike infrastructure and transit between towns.*
 - *Reduce parking and car reliance where possible.*
 - *Increase bicycle and pedestrian friendliness – connectivity in all directions to help with traffic congestion.*

XII. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Summary: Central Oregon's economy is changing, and participants expressed a strong desire for diversification of industries and creation of more living wage jobs for county residents. Some participants expressed interest in support economic opportunities on farm and forest lands, whereas others would prefer the County support businesses in cities. Childcare was a frequent topic of discussion, in particular from an employer lens, with several participants noting companies are starting to explore providing childcare on site to address this issue. Last, participants expressed an opportunity for the County to fund or participate in planning for new technologies to assist in automation of certain industries.

- **Continue to attract and grow a diversity of industries to promote living wage jobs and a thriving economy.**
 - *Continue to invest in EDCO and economic development organizations.*
 - *Competitiveness survey done by EDCO/DLT/BPRD - 16 out of 17 biz owners visited central Oregon first. Outdoor recreation is the secret sauce of economic development in Deschutes County.*
 - *Attract/grow diverse and quality employment alternatives.*
 - *Livable wages!*
 - *Need more manufacturing.*
 - *Support small businesses.*
 - *Meaningful access to working wage salaries.*
 - *Need consistent messaging about economic impacts and opportunities in region (overreliance on tourism at the expense of other industries).*

- **Recognize and support agriculture and forestry as part of the County's economy.**
 - *Agriculture is an economic engine, support producers.*
 - *Agritourism an economic driver, challenges to land use process inhibit this activity.*
 - *Be more supportive of economic growth and agriculture through code updates.*
 - *Push for development of bio-mass and bio-char to support farm and forest industry.*
 - *Enhance opportunities for agri-tourism as an economic driver, education on food systems and how to support farmers.*
 - *Use south county forests for economic opportunities.*

- **Focus on promoting economic development in cities rather than on rural lands.**
 - *Support economic development in cities.*
 - *Support large lot industrial development and ongoing coordination as a region.*

- *Large Lot Industrial project was innovation in action, keep that momentum going, pursue more regional projects.*
- *Support more shopping in Redmond area.*
- *Need resources for small business development in Sisters and Redmond.*
- **Childcare is a major factor in workforce and economic development, County should provide funding and space where possible.**
 - *Big barrier to childcare is available facilities – need to find way to provide starter and expansion spaces for operations.*
 - *Childcare should be its own chapter in the document, biggest issue in the County and married to economy/jobs issues.*
 - *Equitable economic recovery plan produced by state, biggest inhibitors to central OR are childcare and lack of large industrial space. Need for incentives for businesses to relocate here, regional plan for these businesses.*
 - *More attention needs to be paid to land and homeowners and less on homeless, not taxpayers.*
 - *Housing and the economy are tied together.*
- **County could support new technologies to assist in automation.**
 - *Look to new energy sources – electrify grid, less labor needed, more automatic processes.*
 - *Consider adding fiber infrastructure when development is occurring (road projects, etc.) rural broadband becoming more and more important.*

XIII. PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Summary: Participants recognized the County provides a variety of services beyond the Community Development Department, relating to infrastructure development, healthcare, and waste management. Participants expressed a desire for a health component to be integrated into the Comprehensive Plan document to tie together the impacts the built environment has on health. Additionally, participants promoted reducing barriers to infrastructure projects with city utility and regional utility providers. Last, participants spoke to the importance of incorporating waste management into the document, not only to reflect the major effort to site a new landfill in the County, but also to promote more sustainable waste management practices.

- **Health should be incorporated into the plan as it has impacts on land use and the built environment.**
 - *Need to plan for aging population – services for rural residents and access to those services.*

- *Add a health chapter to the plan to tie County services together.*
 - *Need to ensure we have quality healthcare as we grow.*
 - *Add a chapter on health – increase access to resources and a one-stop shop for services. Veterans especially will walk away if its hard to know where to go or get an appointment.*
 - *Need to recognize access to health services in document – ties in to land use.*
 - *Need another hospital system as we grow – diversity from St. Charles.*
 - *Need to really connect health department and planning for County and cities, since these services overlap so much.*
- **County should support public infrastructure development by reducing barriers in cost and timeline for review.**
 - *Support City wastewater and water projects in rural county, reduce barriers.*
 - *County should loop in utility providers to growth conversations, how to best work together on growth related infrastructure, resilience mindset.*
- **Long term view of waste management should be taken in planning, including sustainable waste management practices.**
 - *Need to look at all future waste needs – not just landfill but also compost facility, organics management, transfer stations, demolition debris and construction waste recycling, material recovery facility, recycling modernization. Need land and planning for all these future facilities.*
 - *Provide incentives/resources for diverting construction waste.*
 - *Fill of aggregate sit sometimes includes solid waste, trash, rebar, etc. County could explore additional criteria to avoid contamination of these sites.*
 - *Prioritize reduce, reuse, and repair, work with landfill to grow culture of rethinking waste. Engage businesses and community members in this.*
 - *Provide access to curbside recycling/compost throughout County as a whole.*
 - *New landfill in Deschutes County – incredible long term planning effort, need to plan for 100 years of waste.*
 - *Be cognizant of wildlife areas when planning for new refuse stations, impacts to sage grouse, corvids, rabbits, and other animals.*
- **County as regional government and health provider can be the conduit to resources.**
 - *Low-income populations/unhoused - so many different agencies/applications for assistance. Need a coordinated one-stop shop for folks to go, county is in a good position to serve in this way.*
 - *Need to recognize connection between housing and health in homelessness. More than just tents, families doubled up, workers couch surfing.*

- *Services work well when they are easy to access, affordable housing shouldn't be placed in rural county, hard to get to services that these communities need.*
- **Support schools in their planning efforts.**
 - *Support schools in all communities.*

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND AGENCY COMMENTS

In meeting with local government and agency staff, several opportunities for partnership and regional coordination were discussed. Staff has listed these comments separately to emphasize intergovernmental partnerships.

- Quarry Interchange –incorporate as high priority in TSP.
- Update noise impact boundary associated with Redmond Airport to include VOR facility.
- Create defensible space around critical infrastructures (transmission lines, towers, etc.).
- Support control tower in Bend, helps Redmond airport as well.
- Update code to require waiver of remonstrance for airport related noise.
- Support regional trails system.
- Support Redmond Wetlands Complex.
- Support CORE3 project.
- Support Sisters Water and Wastewater projects in county, reduce barriers.
- County should support strategic acquisition of property in city limits to promote infill development.
- Support piping of irrigation district canals.
- Partner with NRCS on supporting easements.
- Consider establishing a buffer within a mile radius of City of Bend to cluster development, limit division to preserve land for future urban development.
- Partner with Parks districts to integrate trail and facility maps to assist in acquisition of easements and future facilities.