

# La Plata County Comprehensive Plan

## Ft. Lewis Mesa, CO Visioning Open House Meeting Summary

July 28, 2009

---

*The La Plata County Comprehensive Plan visioning outreach included 1 full day vision summit, 6 open houses in locations throughout the county, a youth survey, and a community survey. All participants in the vision process answered the same four questions.*

- *What do you treasure about La Plata County that you do not want to see change?*
- *What concerns do you have about La Plata County for the future?*
- *What would you like to see different or change in La Plata County in the future?*
- *What do you want La Plata County to be like in 20 years?*

*Vision open house participants responded to an additional four questions that survey and vision workshop participants were not asked. Those questions were:*

- *What would be the worst possible scenario for La Plata County in the future?*
- *What are the internal factors (possibly in our control) that are going to be affecting La Plata County's future that we need to consider in our vision?*
- *What are the external factors (outside our control) that are going to be affecting La Plata County's future that we need to consider in our vision?*

---

*The comments here are from the Ft. Lewis Mesa open house held on July 28, 2009.*

### **1. What do you TREASURE about La Plata County that you do not want to see change?**

- Good water quality for most basic needs
- Diverse community
- Solid agricultural component in our community
- A place that youth want to come back to
- My children's ability to have their children's and grandchildren's birthday in the home and on the land that they were born
- Mountain views

### **2. What CONCERNS do you have about La Plata County for the future?**

- Too much growth
- Cost of living, especially housing too high for low/moderate income folks
- Cost of future living in the county
- Inability of elected and hired officials to govern in complex times

- Money/taxes in the future
- Water!!! Agricultural and domestic
- Stock ponds are wildlife ponds. When they go, what happens to wildlife?

**3. What would you like to see DIFFERENT/CHANGE in La Plata County?**

- More public shaping of where and how development occurs
- Better matching of available water with development
- More distributed renewable energy produced

**4. What do you want La Plata County to be like in 20 years?**

- Diverse
- Economic resiliency/vitality
- Nice place to live, environmentally
- Still active agriculture
- Clean air, water, and stop global warming (this is what my 10 yr old said)
- A place where growth has been acknowledged and dealt with in the previous 20 years.

**5. What would be the worst possible scenario for La Plata County in the future?**

- 70,000 to 80,000 people in the county
- Land prices so high no low/moderate income folks can afford to live here
- Traffic congestion throughout the county
- Old time residents forced out because they can no longer afford to live here

**6. What are the internal factors (possibly in our control) that are going to be affecting La Plata County's future that we need to consider in our vision?**

- Availability of usable water
- Growth/water
- Ability to grow some of our own food
- Viable economic opportunities that we can influence
- Personal greed
- "private property rights"
- Oil and gas development
- Stupid and unknowledgeable people/public controlling the future

**7. What are the external factors (outside our control) that are going to be affecting La Plata County's future that we need to consider in our vision?**

- Oil and gas development
- Human population growth
- Utes
- Water and who controls it
- Lake Nighthorse reservoir and whether water is supplied to the dry side

The Ft. Lewis meeting involved a long discussion about planning for water and people. A primary concern is that for this area is what impact the development of water infrastructure will have on the region. If water becomes available it would allow for denser development clusters, however it might also allow sprawl. If water is not available, what options exist for more sustainable development patterns given the limited water resources? How can agriculture remain viable? Additionally, they pointed out the county planning areas might correspond to the major drainages/watersheds for the Florida/Animas/La Plata Rivers. Each of these areas has unique concerns that might allow for the individuality of each area to be addresses while also addressing the cross-boundary county issues.