

# La Plata County Comprehensive Plan

## North County, CO Visioning Open House Meeting Summary

**August 4, 2009**

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*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?*

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*The comments here are from the North County open house held on August 4, 2009.*

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

#### ***Natural Resources***

- Wilderness
- Abundant wildlife
- Forested properties
- Water

#### ***Open Spaces***

- Mountain views
- Beautiful green vistas
- Rural and mountain feeling
- Open space
- Open spaces
- Our open spaces

***Recreational Opportunities***

- Public access to public lands
- Public and access to them

***History/Heritage***

- Value character of historical sites
- Interesting historical sites

***Ft. Lewis College***

- Ft. Lewis College

***Agriculture***

- Active agricultural community needs to be preserved
- Farming and ranching

***People***

- Diversity of people and lifestyles

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

***People***

- No building height should deny anyone privacy or outdoor uses of their property
- Increase unplanned building

***Loss of Access, Open Space, Recreation Use***

- Loss of open space, public lands, and public access.
- Access for everyone
- Off road and wilderness use, retaining and maintaining a wilderness, no encroachment
- Increased ATV's

***Population Growth***

- Increase population (Ditto comment added)
- We need a form of population growth counter measured to assure our existence of quality of life

***Money/Affordability***

- Increase money
- Lack of workforce housing
- Affordable housing in general

***Decrease in Environmental Quality***

- Increase invasive species (weeds/mussels)
- Quality of water

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

***Environmental Protection***

- Increase environmental education and money to protect and promote

#### ***Planning and Resource Management***

- Cogent and effective planning tools to avert ruin!
- Develop zoning.
- Decrease property taxation or provide more service like road maintenance that we already pay for. Also 4WD emergency equipment paid for by North County should reside in the North County.
- Decrease ATV, tourism, money for consumption, MV/ATV's/motor boats

#### ***Support Agriculture***

- A fairgrounds that supports the fair and other agricultural activities. The county should support agriculture and sustainability of the county as well as tourist dollars. (*comments added YES! X 2*)

#### ***Unclassified***

- How can the county actually control growth and greed?

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

- As like as it is now as it can possibly be protected to be
- Increase open space, increase wilderness, decrease population, decrease MV, ATV, etc.
- As rural as possible. Avoidance of city or suburban type of housing sprawl
- As a member of North County of La Plata County...controlled growth...no strip malls or chain hotels. No loss of public lands to developers in so called land exchanges. (comment added X2)

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

- Poorly planned and uncontrolled community and residential development
- Poorly planned developments
- Haphazard development, urban sprawl, strips along highways of commercial development
- Too much growth that would cause a loss of our rurality and small town atmosphere which is already under duress
- Strip malls – think of Pagosa or 285 going into Denver
- Vail – concrete jungle in north county
- Loss of access to public lands to developers
- Loss of public lands in land exchange agreements
- Loss of an active agricultural community (comment added x2)
- Individuals lining their pockets at the public expense ie land exchanges
- Junk and weeds
- Mussel invasion all lakes and reservoirs

#### **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?**

- Different groups with different interests

- The county has a lot of different areas and problems
- Towns vs rural areas
- Growth vs quality of life
- Lack of education of importance of planned growth and development
- Please pay attention to the current proposed land exchange “Hermosa land exchange” this is a very good example of a few benefitting for the loss of the many. Greed are taking place for the quality of life everyone is entitled to – our community – our wildlife- our planet. (comment added X2!)
- Must be careful of formal legal processes as us common folk should not be hammered because we do not know all of the rules of the game.

**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?**

- Economics. Tourism, needs of seasonal visitors, masses of people and now values moving in and taking over with money.
- Sustainability vs greed (comment added X2)
- Decline in revenues from gas and oil
- Over aggressive development/ developers coming in for the money