

La Plata County Comprehensive Plan

Visioning Process Countywide Treasures Summary

Compiled on September 17, 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?*

The comments are a synthesis of all of the comments for Treasures.

TREASURES: WHAT DO YOU TREASURE ABOUT LA PLATA COUNTY THAT YOU DON'T WANT TO SEE CHANGE?

Sense of Community

Family friendly

- Families in a real community
- Great kid – friendly place
- Family friendly, kid activities
- Love that 3 of my 4 children live here
- 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
- Family is here
- Family of future
- Great place to raise kids
- Good education in the schools
- Good schools
- Schools

Community Spirit

- Sense of community – which is getting lost in all the growth
- Community spirit
- Community
- Sense of community

- Sense of community

Community Capacity

- Responsive progressive county government
- Non profits to solve most every problem
- Keep good partnerships with governments and tribes
- Growing effort to work as a region
- Community concern for sustainability
- Support for all our non-profits, family issues, some open space, support for community colleges, schools, and city recreation and parks.
- Community support
- Caring community
- I like the sense of community and variety of activities
- Opportunities for community gatherings

Willingness to discuss

- Willingness to engage in debate
- We value the efforts to reach out to residents for their comments and to listen and act.
- Independent spirit of the community – “live and let live”
- Community agitators and collaborators
- Diversity of opinions
- Environmental concerns get voices (but are they heard?)

Engaged Citizens

- The community appreciates what we have and major changes is not what the community wants to see.
- That people are friendly and caring about their community (mostly)
- Percentage of residents who volunteer must be very high
- Strong sense of community and great people
- High level of community engagement
- People who care about issues and get involved
- Level of innovative civic involvement
- People who care about the place
- Easy to get involved in community activities (public govt. meetings)
- Commitment and volunteers
- Concerned citizens (lots of volunteer opportunity)
- Community service
- Solitude and camaraderie
- Community mindedness

Great Friendly People

- Most of the people
- Friendliness
- Friendly people

- Love living here. People are great!
- Community – nice people
- The people
- The community of people that came here b/c it was small, out of the way, and relaxed
- Friendly people downtown
- People
- The people
- The people
- People fresh air – unpretentiousness of it
- My work group
- Friendly working class people
- Friendly stores/people
- Friendly people
- Friendly people
- Friendly people
- Great people
- Great People
- People
- People
- People
- Friendly people
- Attitude of the people
- Real people
- The friendly people
- Independent people
- Interesting people
- Eclectic people
- The old timers with deep roots in the county

Diverse and Real Communities

- Great towns
- Real towns and communities
- Real town
- Real town
- Diverse businesses
- We're not fancy
- It is not an Aspen or Telluride.
- Lovely towns

Small with Distinct/Unique Characteristic

- My Indian country
- 3 municipalities each with distinct character
- Size of community (not too small or too large)
- Small community feeling

- Small town feeling
- Small, quaint, beautiful – say hello to neighbors
- Friendly downtown Durango
- Unique features of Ignacio
- I really enjoy the down home, small town feel to the community. It is great to live in a community where you know one another, love where you love and support each other. People choose to live here and I think that makes a big difference in how the community functions.
- The communities
- Main street Durango

Culturally and Economically Diverse

- Socioeconomic diversity makes it real
- Diversity of people and houses
- Diverse populations (college and tourism influence, mexico/central American proximity)
- Diversity
- Diversity
- Diverse community
- Diverse perspectives
- Cultural diversity
- Cultural diversity
- Love the divers demographics – love Durango people
- Diversity of population
- Cultural diversity: tri-ethnic
- Tri-ethnic
- Diverse cultural aspects of community
- Tri ethnic community
- Diversity of people and lifestyles
- Tri-ethnic community
- Love cultural and economic diversity
- I like the diversity of the people in the county.
- diversity
- multiculturalism

Access to Culture

Learning Environment and Assets

- College for lectures, plays, music
- Educated community
- I greatly value the presence of FLC.
- Fort Lewis
- Ft. Lewis College
- A college town
- Ft. Lewis College
- Ft. Lewis College
- Ft. Lewis

- Ft. Lewis College
- Ft. Lewis College
- Ft. Lewis College being here
- Fort Lewis College
- Fort Lewis College
- Educated
- Educated community
- Cultural educational resources
- Learning environment of colleges, schools, outdoors
- Education institutions

The Arts, Music, and Events

- The arts, music, culture
- Cultural diversity and opportunity
- Small town atmosphere – frequent local festivals in Durango
- Cultural access
- Community concert hall
- Film festival
- Cultural arts and concerts
- Art: galleries and public
- Concert hall
- Local events
- Art walks
- Art and performances
- lots of events
- All the events that happen on Main Street
- Downtown area is also something I treasure.
- A great community for art, music, pretty good theater
- Taste of Durango, harvest dinner
- vibrant downtown

Entertainment Activities

- Dinner/lunch /shopping/people watching
- Good entertainment
- Family activities

The Southern Ute Tribe

- Southern Ute
- Southern Ute Indian Tribe
- Southern Ute

Cultural Assets

- Culture
- Tourism

- Tourism
- The diversity of culture, tourism, agriculture, open space, natural resources and lifestyle.
- Library
- Train
- Purgatory
- Casino
- Downtown
- Downtown
- Rodeo
- Durango Coffee Company
- businesses
- The buy local campaign

Natural Resource Assets

Wildlife

- Abundant wildlife
- Wildlife
- Animals outside my window
- Living with wildlife
- Wildlife
- Watching wildlife
- Wildlife and their ability to adapt
- Can see wild animals
- Wildlife
- Wildlife habitat
- The wildlife
- Wildlife habitat
- Wildlife
- Wildlife habitat
- Wildlife
- Love seeing the animals (deer, etc.) so close – protect the wildlife

Water

- The river
- I love clean air and water
- clean river
- The river
- All the rivers
- Rivers
- Rivers
- Rivers
- Rivers
- Animas River

- Animas river
- Animas river
- Animas river
- Animas river
- River corridors and lakes
- Rivers/water
- Rivers and open space
- Rivers
- Enough water
- Good water quality for most basic needs
- Water
- water
- Clean water
- The river
- Water
- The river, trees, in town, activities
- Preserve river flows

Qualities of Nature

- Tranquility
- Beauty
- Beauty
- Natural beauty
- Smell
- Lightness of air
- Diversity in land forms
- blue skies
- Blue skies
- skies
- Clear skies
- blue skies
- stars
- Dark skies and lots of stars
- stars
- Stars
- The night sky
- Beauty of sun
- Sunshine – we need to use it!
- Sunshine
- Sun
- Climate
- Great weather
- Weather
- weather

- weather
- Our climate
- Mild climate
- Weather
- Four distinct seasons
- Weather
- Beautiful weather and seasonal
- Climate – 4 seasons
- Climate
- Weather
- Colors
- Seasonal differences and changes

Mountains and Forest

- Mountain
- Mountains
- Mountains
- Mountains
- Mountains
- Mountains
- The mountains
- Mountains
- Mountains
- Mountain environment
- San Juan Mountains
- The prime areas of trees and foliage
- Trees and mountains
- Forests
- the forestry
- Proximity to national forest
- Proximity to natural forest/river/etc.
- Forest
- Wilderness
- Preservation of national forest areas
- Wildlands

Healthy Ecosystems

- It is clean! Very clean!
- Wild lands
- Environment
- The natural beauty of the area which is the bread and butter of La Plata's economy.
- The beautiful natural surroundings
- Natural resources

- Nature
- Landscape
- Nature
- The land
- Abundant natural resources
- Paradise: very sustainable environment
- Healthy clean environment
- Yet undisturbed natural and native environment
- Diversity of ecosystems
- Natural landscape – mostly still clean, open
- Land without gas wells
- Clean air
- Clean air
- Clean air

Quality Local Businesses and Local Foods

- Support small businesses
- Mom and pop
- Durango main street and train
- Micro-economy-breweries
- Microbreweries
- Support for local economy
- Supportive business partners
- Local farmers and ranchers
- Great local food community
- Local food resources
- Local food community gardens
- Food variety and restaurants
- Natural food stores
- Farmers market
- Durango Farmers Market
- Farmers Market (local produce)
- Local food
- the farmers market
- the farmers market
- Farmers market
- The availability of so much healthy food (growers and people who care)
- Farmers market

Agricultural and Rural Community

Agricultural Presence

- Farming and ranching
- Solid agricultural component in our community
- Support and feature our ranching and farming element

- Active agricultural community needs to be preserved
- Large agriculture properties
- Farm and ranch land
- Ranching
- Agriculture
- Agricultural richness
- 4-H and agricultural community
- Predominance of farms and ranches
- Farms and ranches
- Can see farm and ranch animals – horse, sheep, cows, steers, goats
- My ranch
- Agriculture is what “made” this valley – family values, clean air, open spaces. If we don’t preserve the agriculture of this area, we have lost the foundation of the county.
- The agricultural roots.
- Fairgrounds and horse facilities within walking distance to schools.
- The fair
- Farmland
- 4-H!
- A fairgrounds that belongs to the county and not to the city of Durango
- Ranches
- Blend of farm and ranch
- Agriculture
- Agriculture and open space
- Agricultural feel
- I would really hate to see La Plata County stop caring for our farms and ranches.
- Possible chickens

Rural Character

- Hometown flavor
- Rural
- The rural part
- Rural life style, farm, ranching
- good rural/urban mix
- Rural lifestyle
- Still has rural flavor – I grew up here.
- Quiet lifestyle
- Rural agricultural atmosphere
- Rural community
- Low density housing
- Rural and mountain feeling
- Distance from metro areas
- Keep us quaint, high rises out

- Rural/pastoral areas in SE county
- Forested properties
- No building height should deny anyone privacy or outdoor uses of their property
- The rural character of the region
- Rural nature of county
- Urban/rural combo
- Rural
- Relative peace and tranquility
- Quiet in the vicinity (don't want jet skis on Lake Nighthorse)
- Lack of congestion
- Low housing density
- Low population
- Still large presence of agriculture
- The rural atmosphere
- Minimum housing developments
- Less development
- Minimal sprawl
- Space. We live in an uncrowded area. Let's not develop roads and areas that are around us. We do not need a road looks like a freeway (Bodo Park, Bridge to Nowhere)
- Our country way of life.
- Backyard country
- fairly crime free (violent)
- Lack of sprawl (with some exceptions)
- Limited development
- My family roots, and what my forefathers have built.

Geographic Location

- A reasonable place for different interest: outdoors, environmental, agricultural, etc.
- Proximity to mountains and desert
- Proximity to mountains
- Location hub to big cities, forest, desert, lakes
- Rural location
- Great location
- Geographical location
- Diversity of geography – subcultures around and in towns.
- I treasure La Plata for its geographical location (especially compared to our neighbors)

History and Heritage

- Heritage
- Agriculture/ranch heritage
- Ranching heritage
- Rural heritage

- Rural heritage
- History
- History
- Local history and historic structures
- Historic downtown Durango
- Historical sites
- Interesting historical sites
- Develop the “historical” aspects of town
- Value character of historical sites
- La Plata Canyon/La Plata City
- Historic towns

Privacy

- My dirt “mine”
- My mud
- My land
- The “my” backcountry
- Privacy
- Privacy
- Isolation
- Isolation – no interstates
- Isolation and privacy possible
- Privacy and uniqueness – don’t let HWY 160 look like the Farmington strip

Recreational, Scenic, and Open Space Assets

Open lands

- Large percent of the county is public lands of some sort
- Open space
- Open space
- Open space parks in Durango
- Open space.
- Open spaces
- open spaces
- Scenic vistas
- Open space
- Open space
- Open space
- Open space
- Open space
- Open space
- Vibrant downtown and open spaces
- Open spaces
- Open spaces
- Open spaces

- Open space
- Open spaces
- Our open spaces
- Open space
- Large natural spaces close by (easy access)
- Open lands: natural accessible beauty
- Open spaces (acres)
- Open space
- Open space
- Open space/parks
- Open space
- Open space
- Open space – vistas from western part of the county, wildlife, quiet, solitude
- Open space
- Open, undeveloped spaces
- Open space
- Open space
- Open space – been here 5 years
- Open space
- Open space
- Open space
- The wide open spaces
- The openness about it.

Access to an Abundance of Recreation Activities

- La Plata County has a lot of different activities for a variety of interest levels.
- The open spaces and bike trails and walking trails in the city
- Intown trail access
- The outdoors
- The train and all the outdoor activities we have available year round make this a wonderful county in which to live.
- Recreational access – rivers, mountains, deserts, trails, etc.
- Access to public lands and recreation open space
- public land access for trails and fishing
- Public and access to them
- Public access to public lands
- I love the rural atmosphere and the recreational opportunities.
- Outdoor recreation opportunities – river trail, hiking trails, rec center
- Access to natural areas including Dept. of Wildlife sites
- Access to recreation
- Easy access to uncrowded wilderness
- Known access to outdoors
- trails and more trails

- backcountry access
- Outdoor recreation
- outdoor recreation
- Living in paradise
- Recreational opportunities
- Recreation
- Recreational opportunities
- Sports
- Mountains and recreation opportunities
- Outdoor community (cycling, water sports, snow sports)
- Recreational opportunities
- Great activities
- Variety of things to do
- Various outdoor activities year round
- Love hiking, bicycling, skiing x-c, snow shoeing
- Love wildlife: fishing, bird watching, wildlife watching
- Hiking/show shoe trials near town
- River walk
- skiing
- hiking
- biking
- bike path
- trail connectivity and public lands
- Trails and recreation road access
- horse gulch- mt. biking opportunity
- Being able to walk out the door into the wilderness
- Hiking trails
- Trails
- Trails
- Fishing
- Fishing
- Fishing in La Plata, Animas, Mancos Rivers
- Multiple uses of rivers
- My animals and I can enjoy water
- Downhill skiing, but not the resort development
- skiing
- hiking
- biking
- bike path
- Trails
- Hiking
- The parks
- outdoor recreation
- trail connectivity and public lands
- public land access for trails and fishing

- backcountry access
- trails and more trails
- horse gulch- mt. biking opportunity
- Animas River trail
- Animas River recreation
- Hiking, biking, rafting, skiing, fishing, etc.
- The river and trails
- How easy it is to access the outdoors, bike, hike, river
- Open space/bike parks
- Open spaces – access to outdoors/BLM/NFS.
- Recreational opportunities
- City of Durango river trail system
- 4 wheeling
- The natural resources that and use – hunting, fishing, four wheeling
- Access to public lands
- Availability to hunting and fishing
- Parks
- Access to public lands
- Parks
- The recreation opportunities
- outdoor recreation
- outdoor activities
- Recreational opportunities
- Bike path
- Roadless wilderness
- Seems to be a lot to do. I like the lakes, outdoors, not too many mosquitos! Weed control.
- Lots of outdoor activities
- I treasure the public lands we recreation on!

Scenic qualities of open space

- The natural beauty.
- Views of mountains
- The beauty
- Beauty
- The views
- I treasure our open landscapes and viewsheds.
- ridgelines
- views
- views
- Open views
- Beautiful vistas

- Preserving open spaces / scenic
- Mountain views
- Aesthetics – how to keep the scenery
- Mountain views
- Beautiful green vistas
- Scenic beauty
- Scenic environment
- Views of natural (unbuilt) hillsides and ridges
- Views
- Views of mountains, canyons, rivers
- Scenic viewsheds throughout the county (e.g. Logan's Peak)
- Peace and quiet of rural areas
- Beauty of nature
- Nature and beauty
- Natural beauty
- Wild land
- Beautiful country
- Ridge line protection
- Don't want all the hillsides cut into unless the buildings blend
- Its beauty and wonderful places
- Ridgelines
- The scenery – do not build and commercialize area
- The hills are not covered with houses (yet!)
- The views of ridgelines without homes
- No development in the mountains
- Ability to drive up and down and not see any bill boards and the beauty of the surrounding areas
- No billboard advertising

Places

- Ski area
- Recreation center
- Rec center
- Durango River Trail
- La Plata Mountains
- Colorado Trail
- Chapman Hill as open space
- Animas River
- Colorado mountains, lakes and streams
- Wild canyon road
- Bakers bridge
- Horse Gulch
- Chapman hill

- Places – Haviland Lake, RAPP corral, wilderness accessibility
- hanging valley (elk creek area)
- Raider ridge
- Top of junction creek overlook
- Colorado trail
- Shearer Creek
- Lemon
- Mill street

Healthy Community and Lifestyle

- Health Department with assistance programs
- Healthy place
- Healthy lifestyle
- Bicycle pedestrian friendly community
- Bike friendly intention
- Bike friendly. Florida road expanding to be multimodal.
- Safety and health – keep our county safe and clean, affordable health care
- happier healthier friendly
- I don't commute a mile
- Healthy place to be.
- Walk anywhere

Safe Small Towns

- The small town feel
- Small town feel
- Safe environment, low crime
- Safe community
- I feel safe
- Small town feel in Durango/Bayfield.
- Small town caring community feel
- Small town atmosphere.
- Small
- Small community atmosphere
- Small town atmosphere, wish it would it wouldn't get bigger and don't like traffic congestion
- The small town feel and rustic charm
- small community family
- Small population
- Safe
- Small town feel
- The small mountain town atmosphere while having access to benefits and services of larger cities is the most important quality that I would not like to see changed.
- Small town feel

- Safe
- Small town feel
- Small town atmosphere where a close-knit community, like we currently have, can survive.
- Economic and ethnic diversity of the population
- Small town feel
- Small town atmosphere

No Major Highways/Traffic

- No three lane streets.
- Relatively uncongested roads and no big traffic jams
- Roads that are country – hate freeways
- Minimal congestion
- Unpaved county roads and rural feel
- Reasonable traffic flow
- Low traffic

Community and Economic Assets

- Regional hospital
- Extension office
- LPEA
- MRMC
- Mercury Payment
- Oil and gas
- DMR
- River business
- Nonprofits
- Library
- Hospital
- Recreation center
- Fairgrounds
- Riverview Elementary

The Train

- The Trolley and life and Roadrunner
- Train
- Train
- The senior citizen center. I love it!
- Free trolley.

Airport

- Airport
- Airport
- Airport that connects to major city
- Air transportation access to the world

Low Taxes

- Low taxes
- Low property taxes

Private Property Rights

- Personal choice in how you desire to develop your property based on personal beliefs and values to benefit the area.

Unclassified

- A thriving cohousing community. Example of alternative high density neighborhood
- Constitutional rights
- Born and raised here
- Chose to settle here – lived all over the world
- Change is inevitable, but the issue of concern is how ready the county is to deal with it effectively.
- Well it is gone. Anything and everything about Durango and the county are gone. Our town is history. You cannot tell it.
- quality of life
- Very local
- things to do