

Working Group (WG) Meeting #6 Summary

October 19, 2009

Durango Recreation Center

4 – 6:30pm

NEXT MEETING DATE & AGENDA

November 2

4:00 pm -6:30 pm

Durango Recreation Center

AGENDA:

- Accept revisions to draft Guiding Principles, Sustainable Development Goals, and Transportation Goals (15 min)
- Review and complete drafting of Natural Environment Goals (75 min)
 - Wildlife/Riparian habitat
 - Wildland-Urban Interface
 - Geologic/Floods/Debris flows
 - Water/Air quality
 - Restoration of Oil and Gas Lands
- Initiate review of proposed draft Healthy Communities and Housing Element Goals (see attached worksheets) (60 min)
 - Affordable housing
 - Healthcare/Social Services
 - Recreation/Community Facilities

SUMMARY OF 10-19 MEETING

Meeting Participants:

Staff/Consultants: Jason Meininger, Charlie Deans, Robby Overfield, Juanita Sauvage, Tracie Hughes, Julia Stantic, Gabe Preston

Working Group: Jack McGroder, Wade Moore, Jeanine Justice, Peter Butler, Jennifer Lopez, Brian Kimmel, Barbara Jefferies, Dick Norton, Sue Herbst, Roy Horvath

Discussion:

Meeting began with an update on the scheduled objective of having the draft Planning Principles and Element Goals, as well as associated Visioning statements, ready for a round of community meetings beginning on Saturday, December 5 and through that following week. Draft Housing goals have been initiated by members of a Housing Roundtable, comprised of LPC affordable housing organizations and developers, for consideration by the WG at their Nov 2 meeting. Draft Healthcare/Social Services goals have been drafted by consultant team member Kate Hildebrand based on interviews with local non-profit organizations and stakeholders for the WG's consideration at the Nov 2 meeting. Draft Organizational Excellence goals are initially being drafted by LPC staff for review by the WG at their Nov 16 meeting. The Organizational Excellence goals are intended to provide a framework for how the County should administer services and who is the customer.

An **Organizational Excellence** goal was suggested to the staff by the WG:

Collaboration with and acknowledgement of all cultures and resources, such as the Southern Ute Tribe.

REVIEW DRAFT GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

The WG completed revisions to the Guiding Principles and this clean version (no redlines) is attached as the "WG 10-19-09 Draft". Charlie has suggested a few revisions to the WG version for consistency and succinctness, which is attached as a redlined version with Charlie's revisions shown in red and titled "Charlie's suggested revisions to the WG version". A clean version of Charlie's revisions to the WG version is attached as "Charlie's revisions to WG Version". Please try to

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read and review this version for acceptance prior to the next meeting. Dick White also suggested an additional principle via e-mail:

Planning should account for the likelihood of sharply increasing energy costs, especially for transportation fuels.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT- REVISED GOALS

The WG reviewed the previous meetings draft goals and made revisions as follows (except for Goal 5 which is Charlie's suggestion until we hear from Peter T):

1. ~~LPC will s~~Support the enhancement of local food, fiber and forest production systems (growing, processing, marketing, consumption). ~~_through agricultural enhancements.~~
2. Support the enhancement of renewable natural resource production systems (forest products, fisheries, wildlife). ~~_through enhancements.~~
3. Promote access ~~for everybody in the community that is to~~ healthy, affordable, culturally-appropriate, and sustainably produced food, sourced as locally as possible.
4. ~~LPC aims to p~~Promote a resource-efficient growth and settlement pattern.
5. Development will be aligned with the achieving a sustainable energy future that reduces energy costs and greenhouse gas emissions. CEAP (Peter will wordsmith this for the next meeting).
6. ~~LPC s~~Supports the availability of adequate water resources ~~supplies~~ in the future for social and economic purposes.
7. Encourage the efficient use of energy and materials.
8. Encourage energy production and mineral development that are environmentally friendly

Historic Preservation and Cultural Resources (HP/CR) Sub-element Goals

Juanita Sauvage with County Planning provided an overview of Historic Preservation activities in La Plata County. The BoCC created a county historic register and a Historic Commission. The process began by establishing a system for nomination and registration of a site of potential historic significance. There are no requirements for owners of registered structures to preserve the structure, unless the owner has received tax credits or funds for preservation or rehabilitation. The WG drafted the following two goals related to HP/CR:

9. Promote historic preservation to enhance heritage tourism and increase restoration and reuse of these sites.
10. La Plata County acknowledges the value of historic and prehistoric cultures and resources.

REVIEW TRANSPORTATION GOALS

The WG made revisions to the Draft Transportation Goals:

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1. Promote development that is accessed with multiple modes of transportation.
2. Develop/Encourage an integrated interconnected network of public streets that promote multi-modal transportation options.
3. Encourage the use of the most efficient known/proven transportation technologies.
4. Promote the use of telecommunications as a substitute to daily commuting and travel.
5. Encourage land use patterns that reduce per-capita average daily trips (ADT) & vehicle miles traveled (VMT), to reduce future or projected transportation infrastructure costs.
6. Promote the expansion of aviation services (number of flights, frequency, destinations) for the County and support viable rail connectivity.

HEALTHY NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS ELEMENT DRAFT GOALS:

The WG began working on the sub-elements of Healthy Natural Environments which include:

- Wildlife/Riparian habitat
- Wildland-Urban Interface
- Geologic/Floods/Debris flows
- Water/Air quality
- Restoration of Oil and Gas Lands

and drafted the following goals:

1. Protect, mitigate & enhance the native bio-diversity in the county.
2. Preserve and restore wildlife corridors, wetlands and riparian habitats.
3. Reduce wildfire hazards in wildland- urban interface areas.

Dick White suggested via e-mail the following Healthy Natural Environment goals:

- *Mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and adapt projected impacts of climate change, adopting "no-regrets" measures and balancing short-term costs against long-term risks.*
- *Collaborate with La Plata Electric Association and local gas production companies to explore and implement a program to deploy solar photovoltaic panels on land already disturbed by oil and gas development.*
- *Reduce the upwind emissions of carbon dioxide and conventional air pollutants that enter the local airshed.*
- *Minimize light pollution, light trespass, and glare from future development and encourage retrofit of existing lights.*
- *Work with residents, businesses, and other agencies to develop energy infrastructure to generate sufficient energy locally to meet future needs without net energy imports.*

GUIDING PRINCIPLES in the development of the LPC Comprehensive Community Plan

Guiding principles serve as a basis of reasoning and action; a set of beliefs that lead, show the way and direct the decisions of the plan. They are the fundamental basis for any decision. They will shape the solution and define the way that strategies take place. Each principle should be defined with a rationale that explains that principle's purpose and implications. Guiding principles define the ground rules for the process and development of the plan.

La Plata County will embrace these Guiding Principles in the development of the Comprehensive Community Plan:

- Growth and change has occurred and will occur in the future; it can either serve or not serve your interests/community values.
- Growth will likely continue to alter the rural/agriculture community and landscape.
- Growth can create great places to live and work if it is based on the community's own sense of how and where it wants to grow, by crafting a vision and setting standards and codes for development which respond to community values.
- An integration of land uses such as housing, retail, work places, schools, parks, and civic facilities are important to the daily life of the residents and when conveniently located are components of achieving better places to live.
- A diversity of commercial spaces are available to accommodate growth of businesses.
- A diversity of housing types available to a wide range of income levels, age groups and abilities are essential to preserving real and healthy communities.
- Efforts will be made to provide a continuous system of greenbelt/wildlife corridors that help to define identified growth communities.
- Communities are desirable places to live, when they include a system of connected streets, infrastructure, pedestrian paths, and bike routes to adequate commercial educational, recreational, residential destinations.
- Land use planning will be integrated with a larger transportation network that encourages a variety of transportation choices and modes.
- Agricultural land, open space, and critical environmental areas are important to the local character and improve the communities' quality of life.
- Energy efficiency and renewable energy production at the local and regional levels provide the basis for a sustainable economy.
- Communities will use water through the most efficient means possible.
- Growth and development standards and decisions should be predictable, consistent, fair and cost effective.

Charlie's suggested revisions to the WG's version

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- An integration of land uses such as housing, retail, work places, schools, parks, and civic facilities are important to the daily life of the residents, and when conveniently located are components of achieving better places to live.
- A diversity/variety of commercial ~~spaces are available to~~ land uses can accommodate business growth ~~of businesses and support economic diversity~~.
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Clean WG version with Charlie's revisions
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- A variety of commercial land uses can accommodate business growth and support economic diversity.
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HEALTHY COMMUNITIES AND HOUSING ELEMENT SUMMARY FROM THE COMMUNITY PROFILE

HOUSING

- An estimated 3500 families (18% of households) in La Plata County spend more than they can afford for housing.
- For decades, the cost of housing has gone up faster than family incomes. In the past six years, median home prices increased 104% in the county while median incomes increased only 20%.
- Increasingly, vacationers, second homeowners, retirees, and well-to-do people from outside the area are purchasing homes in La Plata County. This well-established trend is driving up the cost of land and construction (two major cost components of new development) for all types of housing.
- To rent housing, most families in Durango, Bayfield or Ignacio need to earn considerably more than the Colorado minimum wage or they need a second job.
- Only about 5% of the year-round households have access to affordable rental housing.

HEALTHCARE

- Almost one out of every five La Plata County residents were uninsured in 2000.
- The recent economic downturn has increased demand for healthcare services while causing healthcare resources to shrink.
- A growing number of providers are not accepting Medicare, Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP+) or Medicaid patients and/or certain insurance plans.
- Almost 25% of patients seen at local emergency rooms have no insurance. Those without insurance are more likely to: 1) delay needed care, 2) develop more serious health problems as a result, and 3) use the emergency room as their healthcare provider.
- Seniors—the fastest growing segment of residents in the region—often experience a growing number and severity of health problems.
- The number of long-term care beds is decreasing due to the loss of two facilities. In addition, there is a scarcity of nursing home and assisted living beds in the region along with a growing demand for private nursing and custodial care.

SOCIAL SERVICES

- In 2006, about one out of every five county residents was a child younger than 18.
- The resources to support children, youth and families in La Plata County are diminishing while the need for social services is growing.
- Simultaneously, the population is growing older and becoming more economically disparate and therefore more challenging to serve.
- La Plata County, in association with other governments and organizations, completed the "Children, Youth and Families Master Plan" in 2008, which identifies key areas for action.

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES AND HOUSING VISIONING:

La Plata County strives to maximize the quality of life, well being and potential of all citizens.

The County has achieved a balance of being able to both live and work in the County by taking an active leadership role in affordable housing. There are ample housing choices for all income levels achieved through partnerships and county supported programs. Through programs and organizations, families in poverty, children, the elderly, and youth are provided the support they need to reach their personal potential. Childcare is widely available and affordable. Our community promotes an active and healthy lifestyle. The county provides quality recreational and park facilities throughout the county enhancing public health. Our community members have access to quality and affordable health care for all income levels. Young people receive the support and care and love they need, are viewed as assets, are involved community members and responsible citizens, and take advantage of constructive, well-organized and accessible activities. They want to continue to live here. Our community provides opportunities for lifelong learning and development of every individual, including educational excellence for our youth.

Draft Housing Goals proposed by the Affordable Housing Roundtable members:

1. Encourage and take an active role in increasing the supply of accessible affordable/attainable housing.
2. Integrate a mix of housing types near employment and services.
3. Improve substandard housing that is safe, healthy and energy efficient.
4. Promote new and existing homes with increased energy efficiency and reduced carbon footprints.
5. Support education to close the gap between poverty and self-sufficiency.

Draft Healthcare/Social Services Goals proposed through community stakeholder interviews:

6. Strive to ensure healthcare as a right and with access for every resident.
7. Ensure a continuum of care that keeps seniors and disabled persons in their homes for as long as possible.
8. Promote healthy communities through neighborhood design, transportation networks, and public education.
9. Provide leadership to engage other jurisdictions and entities in improving healthcare and social services.
10. Ensure that quality childcare is widely available and affordable.
11. Provide a public transportation system that facilitates the independence and wellbeing of youth, seniors, families in poverty, and disabled persons.