

MEMORANDUM

To: City of La Pine Mayor and City Councilors

From: DMC Consulting/Foreterra LLC (Deborah McMahon and James Lewis)

RE: La Pine Comprehensive Plan – First Technical Advisory Committee Meeting;
Forest Lands, Agricultural lands, Buildable lands, Population

Date: February 3, 2009

The following is a summary of the La Pine Comprehensive Plan Technical Advisory Committee Meeting held January 27, 2008 at the La Pine City Hall. These are not formal meeting minutes, but rather they are notes of primary issues and topics discussed, as well as comments and direction provided by committee participants.

The following representatives were in attendance at the meeting:

Deborah McMahon, DMC Consulting (project consultant); James Lewis, Foreterra LLC (project consultant); Mark Radabaugh, DLCD; Jim Bryant, ODOT; Peter Russell, Deschutes County; Kevin Harrison, Deschutes County; Peter Gutowsky, Deschutes County; Ginny Woodruff, Mayor of La Pine; Lee Smith, La Pine Industrial Group; Pat Yaeger, Principal La Pine Middle School (representing Charlie Beck, South County Area Supervisor for Bend-La Pine Schools); Daniel Daugherty, La Pine Fire District; Barbara Hedges, La Pine City Councilor; and, Luana Damerval, La Pine City Staff. Participants from the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, The U.S. Forest Service, Deschutes National Forest and Oregon Department of Forestry were also invited to the meeting – they either declined to participate at this time or did not show up for the meeting.

The meeting began with a brief presentation by the consultants for the project (Deborah McMahon and James Lewis) about the history of the La Pine Comprehensive Planning Project and the direction/participation expected from the TAC members. It was explained that the participants at this meeting and future meetings will have some core members, but will also vary depending upon the topic of the meeting and the expertise necessary for appropriate input. For the purposes of this meeting and the topics discussed, the participants were asked to provide relevant issues, as well as to provide any information on background materials that the consultants should have/use for the entirety of the project.

Prior to formal discussion on relevant issues, it was explained that State Rules and Statutes do not require planning for Agriculture or Forest lands inside Urban Growth Boundaries. However, it was discussed that such sections would be included in the LaPine Comprehensive Plan due to the large areas of Forest lands, inside the city boundary.

The first issue raised was by Jim Bryant, ODOT – Jim asked if the work being done for the La Pine Comprehensive Plan will correspond with the work being done by ODOT for Wickiup Junction – it was decided that the consultants would obtain copies of all relevant documents related to that project and would rely on ODOT for such coordination. Ultimately, the work done for Wickiup Junction and Highway 97 will be relevant during the transportation portion of the Comp Plan project.

Peter Russell, Deschutes County Transportation Planner, stated that there had been a past TGM Grant for an Access Management Plan to Highway 97 for the La Pine area. This was administered by Deschutes County when it was done approximately 7 years ago. A copy of the plan was to be obtained by the consultants.

Peter Gutowsky gave a brief explanation of the population study and growth rates established for La Pine and Deschutes County – the rationale for the growth estimates was explained with the understanding that they are based on historical percentages of growth. A handout was provided which showed past growth rates and projected growth for the 20-year planning period. It is estimated that La Pine will approximately double from 1,400 citizens presently to 2,800 in 2030.

There was a brief discussion of the fact that Deschutes County Commissioners will have an upcoming hearing on a change to the County Comprehensive Plan to reflect the fact that La Pine has incorporated. Mark Radabaugh, DLCD, indicated that it would be appropriate for the City of La Pine to issue a letter of support to the County in support of the amendment.

When looking at existing maps of Forest and Agricultural lands (as designated on current zoning maps (as historically applied by Deschutes County), it was noted that the majority of the Forest lands are located on the west side of La Pine, east of the BNSF railroad tracks. The majority of the Agricultural lands are located along the east side, associated with floodplain and some wetlands along the Little Deschutes River. Discussion ensued that since these are now located within La Pine City limits they do not have to remain in such designations in the future and that the long term best use of the property will be explored and planned for during the Comprehensive Planning process.

With regard to the location of the Forest lands, Peter Russell stated that much of the existing forest land lies east of the BNSF railroad tracks and that future use of this land will be subject to railroad crossings (primarily streets/auto, but also pedestrian). This fact could have a limiting affect on future uses of this land in terms of adequate access and costs to provide infrastructure.

Kevin Harrison, Deschutes County Planning, noted that there is currently a large amount of Forest land (acreage in general) in the La Pine City limits – not all of that land may be urbanizable (justifiable for inclusion in the La Pine UGB) based on existing and projected population projections and land needs. Thus, the City may be bigger than the UGB. Mark Radabaugh agreed with those statements and acknowledged that that will be determined through the buildable lands inventory/land needs analysis. Overall, it was

acknowledged by all that this may give rationale to not including some Forest lands east of the railroad tracks in the UGB.

Based on the discussion referenced above, Mayor Ginny Woodruff asked the question about when the City does expand the UGB (if UGB and City limits do not correspond), would the land added to the UGB have to come from the City limits (if City boundary is larger than the UGB)? It was explained by many that the UGB expansion is based on state law/rules guiding expansions – it is based on a prescribed set of rationale. It does not necessarily mean that future expansions would include lands from inside City limits if they do not meet the requirements for inclusion in UGB. The process of Urban Area Reserves Planning was discussed – it was stated that after La Pine does their initial Comprehensive Planning and develops implementing ordinances, the UAR planning process is something that would be appropriate in the future.

Peter Gutowsky indicated that it would be a good idea for the consultants to provide a road for the Comprehensive Planning process, as well as future processes that would be necessary to implement the Comprehensive Plan (i.e. zoning code, land division code, etc.). This would provide everyone with a long term idea of what is necessary to enable La Pine to be self sufficient.

Daniel Daugherty, La Pine Fire District, indicated that there was a Wildland Fire Protection Plan that was created by the Forest Service, with the participation of multiple agencies. There was also a Greater La Pine Fire Protection Plan that was created. Copies of all of these plans were to be obtained by the consultants.

Deborah McMahon explained the methodology as to how buildable lands were to be evaluated and decided upon – this was provided to the group as a handout. A mapping exercise with Deschutes County GIS was to be completed, based on specific criteria, with the results providing the basis for available development lands. Mark Rababaugh asked for clarification as to how the Tax Assessor's 40% to 50% criteria apply to the rationale for assessing re-developable lands.

Another final comment provided by Deschutes County was a question as to how the High water table lands identified within the City would be accounted for in this process. Those properties are essentially those with high water tables that cannot support septic systems. It was explained that ultimately these would be provided with sewer, but during the interim a plan for these properties must be decided upon.

The meeting concluded with an acknowledgement that the consultants would begin providing draft goals and policies associated with what we heard and the information we gathered regarding Forest and Agricultural lands.