

# 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 – Visioning Meeting Summary

**Date:** February 3, 2009

The following is a summary of the La Pine Comprehensive Plan Visioning Meeting held January 27, 2008 at the La Pine Senior Center.

The meeting was appropriately noticed and advertised by means of public postings at prominent locations in La Pine (Post Office, City Hall, Library, Senior Center, etc.) and in a local paper of general circulation. There were 26 people in attendance at the meeting. The attendance varied from City Councilors, to property owners within the City limits, to business owners and residents who live in the outlying area.

The meeting began with a brief presentation by the consultants for the project (Deborah McMahon and James Lewis) about the history of the past Visioning Process that took place in La Pine and what was and was not anticipated for this meeting. It was explained that this meeting was not an entire visioning process – such processes are typically lengthy and result in a specific Vision Document. Rather, this meeting was going to be used to re-visit some old ideas, as well as identifying new ideas. However, most importantly, it is intended to get people to think about what they want for their community and to understand how their ideas (vision) fit within the Comprehensive Planning process.

After the introductory presentation, the consultants directed the meeting toward a discussion with the attendees and sought out specific issues. One of the primary purposes of the meeting was to review the previous City visioning process (the La Pine Community Design Charrette – April 2000) to determine if the identified ideas and projects are still relevant to the citizen's desires today, and to identify new issues that should become part of the vision. It was also explained to those in attendance that the visioning process was something that continued throughout the course of the Comprehensive Planning process – meaning that the ideas discussed at this public meeting would have further discussion during the future public meetings where specific issues were discussed (such as transportation, recreation, public facilities, etc.). The specific items from the previous visioning process that were discussed were as follows:

1. Performing Arts Center – An auditorium of 12,000 square feet with 400 seats

**Public Response:** This has been completed with a recent expansion of La Pine High School that included a large auditorium.

2. Community Health Center – A 24-hour emergency facility and rural hospital of 10,000 to 20,000 square feet.

**Public Response:** This is still needed in the community – there are no emergency services.

3. Skate Park – Would require about 9,000 square feet of land

**Public Response:** This should be done in conjunction with overall park development. If done alone, it could potentially lead to problems for the area in which it is located (i.e. vandalism).

4. Safe House – A short-term residence for 1 to 5 victims of domestic violence.

**Public Response:** This is a good idea to plan for – it should be located in an area in close proximity to medical services and should not be isolated.

5. Civic Center – A 5,000 square foot building to provide a variety of City and County services.

**Public Response:** This has somewhat been completed by the joint use of a building by Deschutes County for county services and the City of La Pine as City Hall and Council Chambers.

6. Senior Center – A 9,500 square foot building on 4-acres with parking for 100 vehicles. This would provide a variety of senior services.

**Public Response:** This project is complete with the construction of the Senior Center approximately 3-years ago.

7. Community Park – Large enough to accommodate many large scale recreational needs for the community and region.

**Public Response:** This should be looked at in conjunction with the Community Fairgrounds project listed below and the very recent discussions about BLM/Federal land on the southwest side of La Pine being given to the community as a Rodeo Grounds. The discussion centered around the fact that a large site could meet many overlapping needs for cost savings and efficiency sake. It was discussed though that this may not be appropriate in the City limits and the City may be better involved in coordination and support rather than direct responsibility.

8. Community Fairgrounds – A multi-use recreational and educational facility requiring 40 to 50 acres consisting of rodeo grounds, community building, administrative offices, etc.

Public Response: See above.

9. Airport – On approximately 300 acres, this facility would include hangars, light industrial businesses, RV park, etc.

**Public Response:** It was discussed that over the long term, this is something that will benefit the region and would provide an amenity to justify/support private economic development in La Pine and the surrounding area. However, the previously planned are on the east side of La Pine, within City limits, may not be appropriate for logistical/safety reasons. Nonetheless, it was something that should still be planned for in the Comprehensive Plan. Limitations identified though were the costs to develop and maintain an airport, and the proper agency (City or not) to operate the airport.

After review of the points identified in the past visioning process, the discussion opened up toward new ideas. Many of the issues raised were similar to those identified during the project launch meeting in December. The primary points raised at the launch meeting that were also echoed at this meeting were:

- Economy – how to create and generate jobs in La Pine
- Desire to maintain the “rural feel” of the community
- Transportation – Highway 97 bisects the city and creates physical and perceivable obstacles – need for a traffic signal at 1<sup>st</sup> Street
- Livability – a “slow degree of change” – not aggressive tactics to change the community quickly
- Establish design protocol for new development/buildings in La Pine
- Concern over the newest residential neighborhood within City boundaries that was reviewed/approved by Deschutes County under County development standards

Aside from the issues listed above, a significant discussion occurred about the idea of Design Review standards for new buildings in La Pine. At issue was whether or not the City should regulate “how buildings look.” There was strong sentiment in both directions. The point was not to resolve this issue at this meeting, but rather to show the attendees that there are some issues that need to be thought out more carefully and that compromise will be necessary during the Comprehensive Planning process.

Another item that was discussed and believed to be important to the community is the establishment of a “town center.” Simply, this is an area identifiable as a downtown.

At the meeting, an information packet was handed out to attendees. The information packet included documents describing what Visioning is and what was identified at the past visioning process in 2000. Also, a public sign-in and survey sheet was distributed again. The sign-in/survey sheet asked basic information (contact information) as well as specific questions about property ownership in La Pine, business ownership, and how the meetings can be more helpful.