

DRAFT

Big Horn County Land Use Plan

Summary of Steering Committee Discussion of Public Comments on Proposed Goals

January 22, 2009

Growth and development near towns: One commenter questioned whether it is appropriate to encourage growth near Hyattville. The committee also discussed this question relative to Otto and Shell. It was noted that each community is different in terms of its potential for development and the level of services the community presently provides. Certainly, the goal is appropriate for the incorporated towns with municipal water supplies, sewage treatment systems, and full range of public services—this is what the goal was intended to address. As the plan is developed in detail, we will address the appropriate level of development for the unincorporated towns.

The committee noted that many people at the open houses said the county should try to keep development close to towns.

Annexation and control of development near towns: One commenter had suggestions on how the county can make development near towns more appropriate from the perspective of the towns. The committee noted that by state law, towns can govern county subdivision development within one-mile of the town. Other controls over development, such as zoning and similar land use regulation, must be implemented by the county. Similarly, review of subdivision developments more than a mile from towns is by law handled by the county. Towns should continue to make their views heard in the preparation of the plan so that the county can consider taking steps that will better address development near towns. This topic will be addressed in further detail in the draft plan.

Access issues: Several comments were received concerning access issues, primarily concerning access to public lands across private lands. The committee felt this was not within their scope to address. The committee did feel that the plan should address making sure that development on deeded land has adequate access.

Public lands issues: The committee noted that many people at the open houses supported keeping the present balance between public and private (deeded) lands. The committee also felt that the county does not have control over public lands and consequently should not prepare land use goals addressing

what should happen on public lands. The committee does support peoples' enjoyment of the public lands resources particularly those that strengthen tourism and the county could encourage this.

Tourism: It was noted that there is no mention of tourism in the goals, although it is indirectly addressed as the goals focus on agricultural lands, open spaces, scenic values, and other features important to tourism. It was also noted that tourism, per se, is not a land use. But tourist-related facilities including ski areas, resorts, and other recreational areas are land uses. The consultants will draft a new goal on tourism for the committee's consideration.

Mining and industry in general: Mining was also not specifically mentioned in the goals even though is it a major land use and employer in the county. It may not be appropriate to lump mining in with other development type and try to direct them all to areas near towns. Mining might be better for remote locations. The same may be true for other industries as some may conflict with normal town land uses—remote locations for some other industries may also be most appropriate. The consultants will draft a new goal on mining and industry for the committee's consideration.

Prioritization of goals: One commenter suggested prioritizing or ranking the goals. The committee decided against this. The goals need to be read together as a whole without one goal being more important than the others. Similarly, the goals are not intended to conflict with each other and instead are intended to complement each other. The goals set a general direction and focus for the plan and do not answer every conceivable question. The draft plan will provide more detail that will help make the whole picture more clear and specific.