

**Montezuma County Planning Commission  
Comprehensive Plan Workshop #1 (Cortez)  
May 14, 2009**

Approximately 20 interested citizens, the staff of the Montezuma County Planning Department, and most of the Montezuma County Planning Commission met from 600 pm to 900 pm to review the existing Montezuma County Comprehensive Plan and to answer the following questions. The group was divided into three roundtables, and the highlighted items in questions 1 – 3 represent those that were identified by all or most of the participants as being important; the groups also discussed the non-highlighted items.

**Question 1: What about Montezuma County would you like to see kept or preserved?**

- **Rural character**: farming/ranching/agricultural uses
- **Archaeological/cultural resources and related tourism**: awareness of our cultural heritage
- **Air and water quality and dark skies**: Clean air, water and land (health and safety related)
- **Communication/sense of community/respect**
- **Open space**
- **Viable local economy**: enough services to keep people in community; viable agriculture and natural resource development
- **Quality of life/lifestyle**

**Question 2: What about Montezuma County would you like to see changed or improved?**

- **Plan growth**
- **Enforce and fund current regulations**
- **Reduce visual blight**: it has an economic impact on the community and is a health and safety concern; prioritize areas for addressing
- **Clearly identify commercial and industrial zones**: define land uses, especially better location and concentration of commercial and industrial uses and protection of residential areas
- **Have a fair and predictable land use process/plan**: definitive rules to avoid legal process; more responsive and fair local government
- Develop response to cumulative impacts of expanded population

- Encourage green/clean industry
- Increase environmental protection: monitor and be aware of air quality; dirt roads cause particulate pollution; reduce light pollution
- Encourage agricultural production/agritourism: keep agriculture viable
- Encourage density closer to towns/cities: create centralized communities
- Private property rights should not infringe on neighbors or community: as population grows, things that used to be informally worked out now need to be formally addressed
- Increase cooperation with special districts/water companies: begin mediation where conflicts exist.

**Question 3: What are the needs and concerns you would like to see addressed in a revised Comprehensive Plan?**

- **Clear mechanism for enforcement of Land Use Code and unambiguous definition of terms**
- **Lighting standards**
- **Enforceable and objective rules for controlling and managing visual blight**
- **Master plan with zoning; more predictability through real zoning**
- **Policies and guidelines for mineral-resource extraction:** create mineral-resources master plan
- **Regular review (~ 5 years) of Comprehensive Plan/ community goals/infrastructure**
- Review of high impact and special use components in the Plan as they relate to the code
- Predictable planning for transportation, commercial, and industrial activity
- Rules/building code for residential and commercial buildings, and building inspections
- Protection of views, especially along corridors
- Improved infrastructure, including schools
- Clearly defined private property rights of all parties – responsibilities and expectations
- Cooperation with agencies regarding transportation
- Promotion/encouragement of alternative energy
- Involvement of all players in Comprehensive Plan (towns, city, tribe, special districts, public lands)

The following questions were designed to help the Planning Department and Planning Commission get a better sense of existing terms used in the Land Use Code and Comprehensive Plan, as well as Land Use Code issues. The listed items were noted by a majority of the participants.

**Question 4: Define rural character.**

- Open space
- Low-density development
- Development allowed only in concentrated areas (cluster development)
- Pastoral living – ranching and farming take precedence
- Dark and clear skies
- Absence of cumulative impacts from housing and commercial/industrial development
- Mixture of good and different uses
- Productive agricultural uses.

**Question 5: Should there be “mixed uses”?**

- Yes, but with enforced mitigation measures, such as buffers for visual impacts and skyline protection
- Yes, but planned
- Yes, but minimize impacts to neighbors
- Yes, but only in PUDs or urban areas.

**Question 6: Where are appropriate areas for non-residential uses?**

- Places with adequate infrastructure capability
- Only those identified in planned commercial and industrial zones
- Those without geologic constraints such as soil percolation issues
- Encourage historical non-residential uses rather than creating new ones
- Rehabilitation of existing structures/infrastructure