

**CITY OF SISTERS**

# **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2040 UPDATE**

**Community Engagement Audit**

**Sisters 2040 Comprehensive Plan Update**

**Report of Results**

**July 30, 2021**

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## 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

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## 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

# Executive Summary

This document provides an extensive summary of community engagement efforts conducted by the City of Sisters for the Sisters2040 Comprehensive Plan Update and the feedback received which informed the policy direction of the plan. The report is split into sections providing detail on the methods and results from an assessment of the 2018 Sisters Country Vision, online outreach activities, in person community outreach activities, and the advisory committee process.

The chapters in this audit provide greater detail on the activities and feedback collected during each phase of the planning process. For a quick reference guide, staff has compiled the results of all engagement activities to determine the overarching key themes and priorities shared by community members again and again, throughout the process.

### Key Themes and Priorities Garnered through Community Input

As a result of all of the Comprehensive Plan's community engagement process, the community's input and sentiments can be summarized as "growth with intention".

Despite state planning laws that require cities to plan for growth, the Sisters community often has conflicting sentiments about growth within the community. Many community members do not want to see Sisters grow or change at all, or only in a very limited way. Residents often share comparison to larger cities where growth has impacted the livability, and express concern for losing the unique look and feel that makes Sisters so special.

Yet simultaneously, many community members recognize the need to grow in order to provide workforce housing for residents, add capacity to its transportation system, increase parks and recreation opportunities within city limits, and enhance opportunities for new businesses and jobs creation.

Below are the top five key themes and priorities garnered through community input that aided the Comprehensive Plan project team in identifying what "growth with intention" looks and feels like:

#### 1. Maintain the Quality of Life

- Preserve and protect the valuable natural resources that make Sisters a great place to live, in particular the urban forest, wildlife, public-access to trails, Whychus Creek, scenic view areas, and greenspaces.
- Support a compact city footprint that promotes walking and biking throughout town
- Create and protect view corridors of the Cascade Mountains, especially if building height allowances are increased
- Add community park facilities for a variety of ages to recreate

#### 2. Mitigate the Effects of Growth



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- Support for a second roundabout to reduce traffic congestion on Cascade Avenue, and support improvements to the City's Alternate Route on Barclay Drive.
- Address increased traffic congestion as a result of increased residential developments within city limits
- Increase wildfire preparedness and mitigation planning
- Support responsible and efficient use of resources (i.e., water)

### 3. Maintain the Unique Community Character

- Preserve the small-town atmosphere that is characterized by: knowing your neighbors, community gathering spaces, and the feeling of low-density development that incorporates a balance of green/open spaces
- Western Design Theme – whether an individual personally liked or disliked the western design aesthetic, they acknowledged it was an important part of the Sisters identity and contributed to the unique personality of the City
- Promote native vegetation in landscaping to maintain the character of Central Oregon
- Preserve history, historical sites and avoid demolition of older homes
- Increase the protection of ponderosa pine trees to reduce removal during development

### 4. Diversify Housing Options

- Reduce barriers to a variety of housing that meets the diverse needs of Sisters residents
- Support infill development in existing neighborhoods. Reduce the construction of large homes on small lots
- Increase design standards – promote additional mix of housing types with a variety of materials and architectural features to add unique character to new homes and neighborhoods and avoid “cookie cutter” developments
- Support a mix of incomes and diverse housing options in neighborhoods for families, the workforce, retirees, etc. (Examples: cottage housing, mixed-use development, a cohesive “village feel”, and manufactured homes as an affordable housing option).
- Promote owner occupancy of housing stock. Reduce the number of second homes and vacation rentals that are vacant for a large part of the year.

### 5. Promote a Diverse Economy

- Promote an economy that reflects Sisters' assets and identity, including a variety of industries and jobs
- Prioritize job creation through attraction and expansion of businesses with higher paying, living wages to help support and retain local talent (youth and families). Reinforce the importance of Sisters Schools in educating the local talent pool.
- Examine hurdles to attracting new industrial and commercial development. Vacant landholders say that developing vacant lots doesn't pencil out.
- Consider restricting formula food and retail chain businesses. Support local unique businesses, restaurants and artisans.
- Expand broadband internet to assist business operations



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# Community Engagement Audit Overview

## Introduction

At the last major update of the Sisters Comprehensive Plan in 2005 the City's population was approximately 1,660. Today, the City has grown to 3,270 people and is projected to grow to approximately 5,000 people by 2040. The City continues to see a strong tourism sector and new growth in traded sector economies, a desire for a full range of housing options for its residents, a priority placed on preservation of and access to natural areas, and a need to accommodate future growth in an efficient manner while retaining the qualities that make Sisters a special place. In balancing these priorities and trends, the City embarked on its Sisters 2040 Comprehensive Plan to build a cohesive strategy for the community's next twenty years of growth and prosperity.

At the core of the Comprehensive Plan is community involvement and input. The Comprehensive Plan is a key opportunity for community members to shape growth over the next twenty years and provide feedback on the type of development they want to see, and how best to preserve the existing character of the City.

At the start of the Sisters 2040 Comprehensive Plan process in September 2020, a community engagement plan was created to provide a strategy for an effective and inclusive public engagement process including goals, and key messages. The Sisters 2040 process integrated public involvement with the Sisters community through every step, (including residents, property owners, business owners, underserved populations, community leaders, City staff, and elected officials). The City listened to and incorporated feedback from every engagement opportunity to achieve the overarching goal of this project:

*That the Comprehensive Plan reflects the whole Sisters community and is accessible to all community members.*

In order to achieve the above goal, each community engagement strategy the Comprehensive Plan team conducted strived to:

- Encourage community members to get involved early, and stay involved throughout the planning process;
- Facilitate equitable and constructive communication between community members and the project team, including City staff and consultants;
- Create a wide range of opportunities for community members to provide meaningful input on specific topics that will be addressed by the Comprehensive plan (such as housing, the economy, resiliency, and future growth) as well what they want Sisters to be like in 2040 generally;
- Document the ways that community input is reflected in the final Plan so that the final outcome is a document that is representative of the whole community;



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- Build from and expand on the input that was received as part of the Sisters Country Vision process;
- Provide the community with balanced and objective information to help them understand issues, alternatives, opportunities, and solutions;
- Offer reasonable accommodations to encourage participation of all community members regardless of race, ethnicity, age, disability, income, or primary language; and
- Build on existing City communication networks, relationships, and resources.

This Community Engagement Audit serves as a detailed overview of the City's public involvement strategies and process for the Comprehensive Plan and to reflect on its outcomes. If you have any questions, please contact Scott Woodford, Community Development Director, at [swoodford@ci.sisters.or.us](mailto:swoodford@ci.sisters.or.us) or call City Hall 541-549-6022.



## Assessment of the 2018 Sisters Country Vision



The foundation for the Comprehensive Plan update process began in 2018, with the extensive community outreach and engagement associated with the Sisters Country Vision. The Sisters Country Vision is a project developed between 2018-2019 by the City of Sisters, in collaboration with Deschutes County and Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council. The goal of the project was to conduct a community visioning process to engage local residents in a comprehensive conversation about the future of Sisters Country — to renew and update the community's existing but dated vision statement of 2009, but also develop a long-term community-based

overarching vision to engage the City and key partners in achieving that vision over time.

Nearly 2,000 participants from Sisters Country were involved in the visioning process, engaging in numerous community meetings and forums, online surveys, and related activities resulting in a long-term Sisters Country Vision for the community. Twenty priority strategies were identified within four focus areas: Prosperous Sisters, Livable Sisters, Resilient Sisters, and Connected Sisters.

You can learn more about the Sisters Country Vision here: <https://sistersvision.org/>

As the first step in the Sisters2040 Comprehensive Plan Update process, staff and the consultant team (a.k.a. the project team) "mined" this plan and its supporting documents for relevant information, opinions and visionary ideas to inform the update. As the Comprehensive Plan is a guiding land use document for the City of Sisters proper, staff focused on City-specific topics and issues associated with planning and growth within the Vision — from vehicular traffic and downtown development, to economic development, affordable housing, urban form, and preservation of significant open spaces.

Where the Vision provided broader guidance for the whole of Sisters Country, the Comprehensive Plan refines and adds more details to these community values and aspirations. The graphic below provides a visual representation of how the Vision comes to life through the policy process.



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Infographic illustrated by RARE AmeriCorps member, Emelia Shoup. It illustrates the process of integrating community input into the updated Comprehensive Plan policies.





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# Online Outreach and Communication Tools

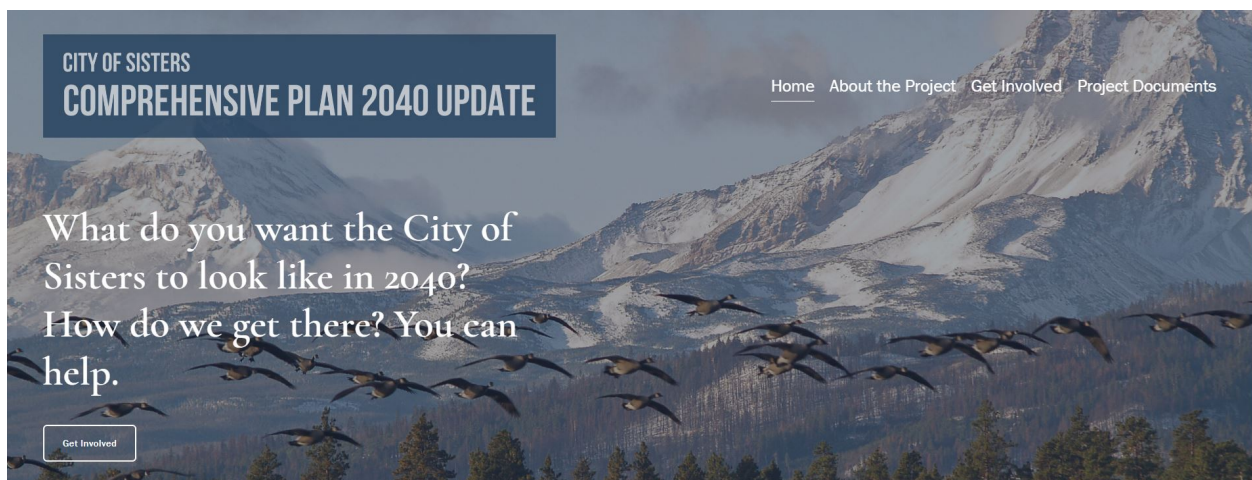
Due to the COVID-19 pandemic social-distancing regulations, the City of Sisters’ public engagement process would need to take a different shape from historical practices – during the majority of the process, there was no option for open houses at City Hall with snacks, walk-in visits from community members, or appearance at the many festivals and events held within Sisters Country. Instead, staff needed to capitalize on virtual tools in order to communicate and engage with the community throughout the Comprehensive Plan update process. Below are the strategies and methods used to connect and communicate with the public remotely.

### Project Website

Throughout the Comprehensive Plan update process, the project team utilized two websites to share announcements, public engagement opportunities, calendar events, press releases, technical documents, meeting minutes & recordings, and other important information.

The City of Sisters website ([www.ci.sisters.or.us](http://www.ci.sisters.or.us)) will serve as the long-term host of the Comprehensive Plan meeting materials and other important documents for the public record.

The Sisters 2040 Project Website ([www.sisters2040.com](http://www.sisters2040.com)) serves as the temporary host for all relevant documents, information, and announcements in an easy-to-navigate format to where the public could learn about the Comprehensive Plan update process in more detail, and sign up to the project updates email list.



Screenshot of the Sisters 2040 Project Website home page.



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### Interested Parties Email List & Engagement Tools

The project updates email listserv allowed community members to sign up to receive occasional announcements, materials, and summaries of technical studies in regards to the Comprehensive Plan update process via email. By the end of the update process, the email list had over 340 subscribers.

Other digital tools like social media were utilized to notify the community of upcoming engagement opportunities and important information (i.e., Facebook, Instagram, Nextdoor).

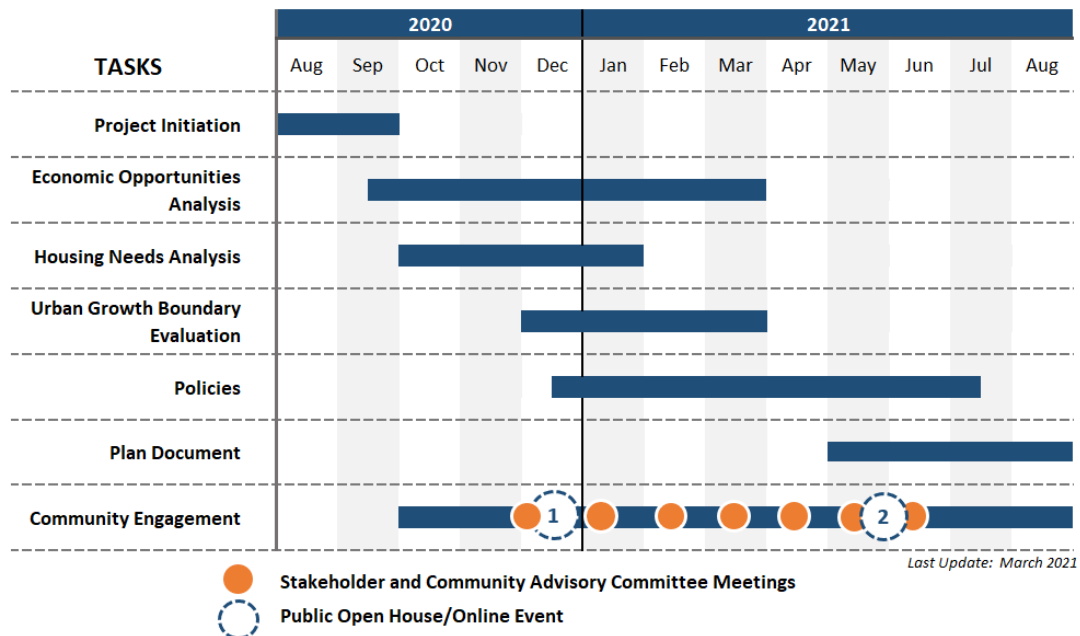
### Paper Outreach

In order to expand the Comprehensive Plan Team’s outreach with the community, non-digital forms of outreach were used.

- Mailed flyers with resident’s utility bills
- Expository articles in the local Nugget Newspaper that addressed the Comprehensive Plan update, common misconceptions about its process, and engagement opportunity announcements
- Visited local Sisters businesses door-to-door to hand out flyers and talk with business owners
- Where possible, materials also had Spanish translations that were posted publicly and shared with community liaisons of the local Latinx community

### Project Schedule

The following schedule outlined the key tasks to be undertaken throughout the Comprehensive Plan update process, including check points for advisory committee meetings and community events.



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# Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committees

City Staff appointed two advisory committees to represent the broader community: residents, business owners, retirees, young families, working professionals, agency partners and city officials, both inside and



outside of Sisters city limits. Their time and expertise as members of the Sisters community was vital – without them, the Comprehensive Plan document would not have been possible.

Serving for seven months, the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) and the Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) reviewed data and draft policies prepared by the project team, leading to the development of the updated Comprehensive Plan document.

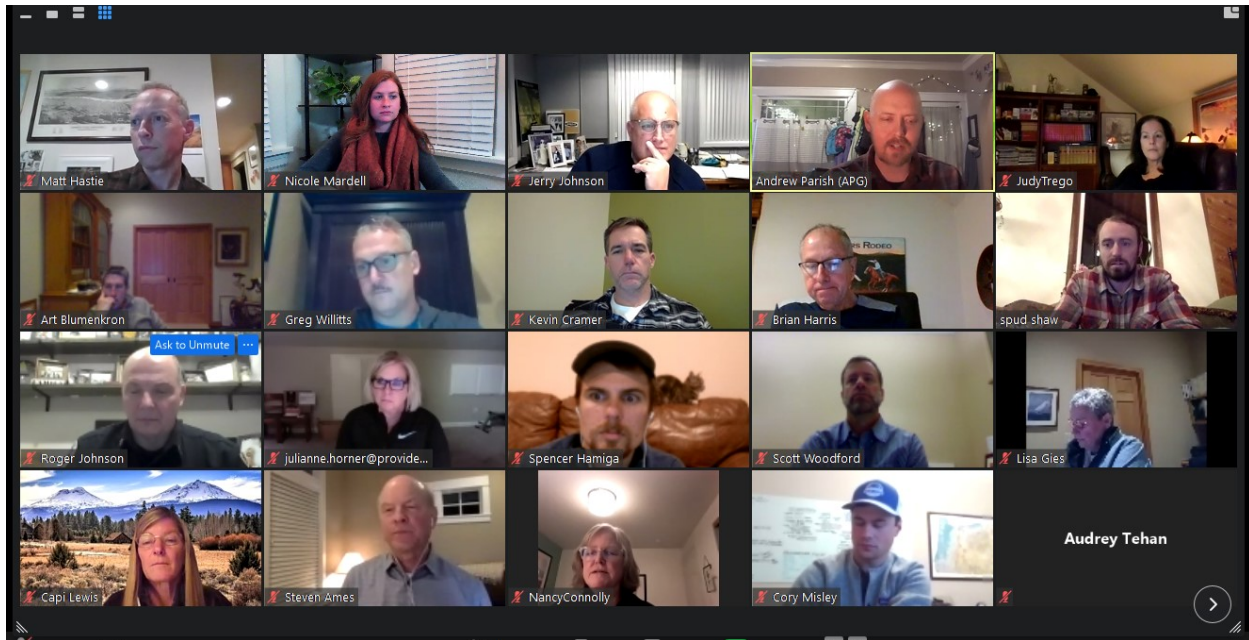
**Community Advisory Committee (CAC):** Represented on-the-ground community interests and perspectives. As the initial reviewing body, the CAC worked with City staff and consultants to craft policies to be considered by the Stakeholder Committee, Planning Commission, and ultimately City Council.

**Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC):** Provided oversight for the Comprehensive Plan process as a group of agency partners and various elected official representatives that brought their technical expertise and perspective to guide the process. They provided feedback on work done by the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) and ultimately acknowledged support of the draft goals and policies prior to the public hearing process.

Throughout the Comprehensive Plan update process, staff conducted community outreach, produced technical studies, and formulated this data into presentations and memorandums to the advisory committees, to ensure committee members felt as informed as possible as they reviewed and suggested changes to the draft policies.

This draft policy language warranted additional discussion between the two groups. Staff worked to ensure that in cases of disagreement on policy language between the committees, revisions were brought to and agreed upon by both groups to reach consensus.

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*Screenshot of the joint CAC-SAC committee meeting in session via Zoom videoconference, December 10, 2020. The total of 13 advisory committee meetings were conducted entirely virtually using Zoom videoconference which allowed the committee members and staff to convene safely, conveniently, and to stay engaged throughout the Comprehensive Plan process during a global pandemic.*

### Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC)

Nancy Connolly — City Council President  
Michael Preedin — Mayor  
Jeff Seymour — Planning Commission Chair  
Cris Converse — Planning Commission Vice Chair  
Cory Misley — City Manager  
Roger Johnson — Fire District  
Curtiss Scholl — School District  
Ian Reid — Forest Service  
Jennifer Holland — SPRD  
Nick Lelack — Deschutes County  
Paul Bertagna — City of Sisters Public Works  
Judy Trego — Sisters Area Chamber of Commerce  
Scott Edelman — DLCD  
Caprielle Foote-Lewis — EDCO

### Community Advisory Community (CAC)

Michael Blesius  
Dixie Eckford  
Lisa Geis  
Spencer Hamiga  
Brian Harris  
Katie Roberts  
Rachel Ruppel  
Adrian Shaw  
Audrey Tehan  
Sharlene Weed  
Art Blumenkron  
Kevin Cramer  
Julianne Horner  
Greg Willitts





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# Community Conversations

**FAST FACTS**

**Participants:** 130

**Hot Topics:** Livability & Growth

## Background

The outlined Community Engagement Plan noted a need for small group engagement, or “Community Conversations”, to inform policy development in the Plan and capture feedback that was not included in the 2018 Sisters Country Vision. The COVID-19 pandemic created challenges to traditional in-person engagement, so to provide the opportunity for meaningful engagement, staff met with a variety of existing community groups via Zoom videoconference. Staff interviewed 19 groups, approximately 130 people total during this time.

The meetings were intended to be informal “kitchen table” style conversations, in which staff asked a series of broad questions and recorded feedback, which illuminated key themes.

Staff asked the following workshop questions:

- Why did you choose Sisters to be your home and/or your place of business?
- Where do you spend your time in Sisters?
- What makes Sisters, Sisters? What elements or characteristics make the community feel like Sisters? (Think about housing, businesses, building forms or designs, street layouts, parks, vegetation, etc.)
- What's going well in Sisters? What hasn't gone well?
  - What do you wish you could change about Sisters?
  - How has Sisters changed in the last 5, 10, 20 years? What have you liked? What haven't you liked?
- Describe your ideal Sisters in 2040. What has changed? What has remained the same?

## Key Themes:

From these conversations, several common themes emerged from interviewees’ sentiments, values, priorities and suggestions on Sisters’ future and built-environment. These common themes and community input have been integrated into the Comprehensive Plan policy language by staff. You can read the full Community Conversations Key Themes analysis on the Sisters2040.com project website. The



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identified key theme categories were: Community Character and Livability; Housing; Economic Opportunity; Outdoor Recreation & Natural Amenities; Sustainability & Resilience.

### Community Conversation List:

Citizens4Community's Let's Talk about the Comp Plan (October 19, 2020)

Urban Forestry Board (November 9, 2020)

Planning Commission (November 19, 2020)

Sisters Folk Festival (November 30, 2020)

Sisters Outdoor Quilt Show (November 30, 2020)

Three Sisters Historical Society (December 1, 2020)

City Parks Advisory Board (December 2, 2020)

Seed to Table (December 4, 2020)

Traded Sector (December 9, 2020)

Sisters Trail Association (January 6, 2021)

Sisters Lions Club (January 7, 2021)

Habitat for Humanity (January 14, 2021)

Sisters Middle School Leadership Class (January 20, 2021)

Sisters Rotary (January 21, 2021)

Age-Friendly Sisters Country (January 22, 2021)

Central Oregon Area Realtors (January 29, 2021)

Sisters Fight for Social Justice (February 17, 2021)

Sisters High School Leadership Class (February 19, 2021)

Sisters Houseless Networking Group (March 2, 2021)

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# Community Web Art Engagement Station

**FAST FACTS**

**Participants:** 52

**Hot Topics:** Urban Amenities (i.e. pool)

Virtual Engagement is a helpful tool to reach new populations, although there are some limitations in relying solely on these methods for equitable engagement. Limited or no access to equipment, language and literacy hurdles, and technology burnout can lead to barriers to participation by community members.



As the social distancing restrictions of COVID-19 public health regulations persisted during the mid-point of the Comprehensive Plan Update schedule, City staff had to be creative in supplementing virtual strategies to ensure the public could get involved in the Comprehensive Plan update process in a non-virtual way. In conjunction with the City's first Online Open House, which was to be hosted entirely online with a survey component, an in-person engagement station was implemented.

This community engagement station, called the Community Web, was designed as a passive engagement art installation. Located in Barclay Park, at the center of downtown's pedestrian corridor, community members and visitors could walk by the art installation and find an opportunity to learn about the Comprehensive Plan update process via the posted flyers, and provide a response to the posted prompts by writing on a scrap of fabric and tying it to the twine web. Using materials like twine string and quilting fabric from the local fabric store, Stitchin' Post, reflected the Sisters community culture.

tying it to the twine web. Using materials like twine string and quilting fabric from the local fabric store, Stitchin' Post, reflected the Sisters community culture.

Based on feedback from community members, the instructions and questions for the web were printed in both Spanish and English. The questions prompted to respondents were:

- What makes Sisters, Sisters?/ ¿Qué hace Sisters, Sisters?
- What does Sisters look like to you in 2040? / ¿Cómo te ves Sisters en 2040





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Overall, the intention of this engagement opportunity was to:

- 1) Increase awareness of the Comprehensive Plan 2040 process
- 2) Offer an alternative to the online engagement for those who may not usually participate – i.e. meet people where they are.
- 3) Increase community positivity during a difficult time (i.e., social isolation of the COVID-19 pandemic and cold, winter weather).

This art installation was available to the public from mid-December through mid-January of 2020 – coinciding with the Online Open House dates. We received 52 responses total on the scraps of fabric. Some input provided explicit responses to the Comprehensive Plan prompts, but many of the responses were taken as opportunities for the community to spread positivity, leave a humorous comment, or commemorate their visit in Sisters. Though this engagement strategy wasn't the most effective in gathering constructive public input on the Comprehensive Plan process, it still achieved the outlined goals.



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# Online Open House & Survey #1

### FAST FACTS

**Participants:** 147    **Hot Topics:** Livability, Housing & Economy

In lieu of a traditional in-person open house at City Hall, the project team created an online combined open house and survey using ArcGIS Storymap software.

The Online Open House provided information regarding the following topics through a combination of written content, maps, graphics, and recorded video presentations from staff and members of the consultant team:

- The role of a City's Comprehensive Plan and the purpose and process of updating the Plan;
- The role of the Economic Opportunities Analysis component of the project and preliminary findings related to economic trends and local target industries; and
- Updates being made to the City's 2019 Housing Needs Analysis regarding land inventory, housing capacity, and strategies to meet future housing goals.

The survey, imbedded in the open house, asked respondents a series of questions after each topic.

The survey questions, available for 32 days from Monday, December 7, 2020 through Friday, January 8, 2021, received 552 views and 147 survey responses. A link to the Online Open House was posted to the Sisters2040.com project website, the City of Sisters website, City Facebook page, and Nextdoor. It was also advertised on local news channels, sent to the project's interested parties email list, and included on a postcard mailed to City residents. As an incentive to solicit feedback from community members, open house participants were invited to enter into a drawing for one of six \$25 gift cards to local within a portion of the survey.

### Online Survey Results Highlights

Online Open House participants had the opportunity to provide feedback on the Sisters economy, housing strategies and goals, preferred methods for engaging the community throughout the planning process, and the future of Sisters generally. In addition to questions asking participants to rank their levels of support or select from a pre-defined list of options, open-ended responses were also accepted for each of the five topics and were included as Attachment A to the Open House #1 memo.

From the survey portion, the most popular responses among all participants were natural resources, parks, and recreation opportunities (19% of responses), livability and neighborhood character (16% of responses), and resilience to natural hazards (13% of responses). Specific results can be found on the Sisters2040.com project website.



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### Quantitative Summary of Open-ended Responses

As a result of the open-ended response section, there were 621 comments total that spread across various topics. Overall, this data reflected the priority of concerns by Sisters community members. Most respondents could agree that preserving Sisters' livability, environment, park facilities and the need for growth management is a high priority. The most divided topics among respondents are housing & the economy.

- 1) Livability, 49% of comments touched on this topic
- 2) Economy, 47%
- 3) Housing, 33%
- 4) Environment, 25%
- 5) Public Involvement, 19%
- 6) Growth management, 19%
- 7) Transportation, 18%
- 8) Parks, Recreation & Open Space, 14%
- 9) Public Facilities, 10%
- 10) Land Use, 10%
- 11) Comments beyond the scope of the Comp Plan, 14%

### Demographic Data Collected

The following questions were optional for participants, but allowed the project team to have a snapshot of the community and who was able to participate in the online survey.

What is your age?

- 1) 45-54 years old (29% of respondents)
- 2) 65 and older (24%)
- 3) 55-64 years old (21%)
- 4) 35-44 years old (18%)
- 5) 25-34 years old (7%)
- 6) Under 25 years old (1%)

Are there children in your household?

- 36% of respondents answered "Yes"
- 64% answered "No"



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Do you rent or own your home?

- 87% of respondents answered "Own"
- 13% answered "Rent"

What is your annual household income?

- 1) \$100,000 to \$149,000 (32% of respondents)
- 2) \$150,000 or greater (22%)
- 3) \$50,000 to \$74,999 (17%)
- 4) \$75,000 to \$99,999 (14%)
- 5) \$25,000 to \$49,000 (12%)
- 6) \$10,000 to \$24,999 (2%)
- 7) Under \$10,000 (1%)

### How was this information used?

With the Online Open House occurring early on in the Comprehensive Plan update process, this data in conjunction with the gleaned input from the Sisters Country Vision Assessment and technical studies informed the first set of draft policy language written by City staff and the consultants. This first draft of policies and collected data was then presented to the advisory committees to inform their policy recommendations.



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# Online Open House & Survey #2

**FAST FACTS**

**Participants:** 138

**Hot Topics:** Growth Management

As the circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic persisted, the project team created the second online combined open house and survey using ArcGIS Storymap software, in lieu of a traditional in-person open house at City Hall.

The Online Open House provided a summary of each of the ten policy chapters included in the updated Comprehensive Plan: Public Involvement, Land Use, Growth Management, Livability, Housing, Environment, Parks, Economy, Public Facilities, and Transportation. Each section of the survey included:

- A brief summary of the purpose and background for the policy chapter
- A high-level overview of the key goals and policies
- A link to a PDF of the full set of draft goals and policies for readers who were interested in diving deeper into certain topics.

The Online Open House, which included an informational component as well as survey questions, was available for 20 days from Friday, June 4, 2021 through Wednesday, June 23, 2021, and received 394 views and 138 responses to the survey questions. A link to the Online Open House was posted to the project website, the City of Sisters website, City Facebook page, and the Sisters Community Website and social media outlets. It was also advertised on local news channels, sent to the project's interested parties email list, and included on a postcard mailed to City residents. As an incentive to solicit feedback from community members, open house participants were invited to enter into a drawing for one of six \$25 gift cards to local within a portion of the survey.

### Online Survey Results Highlights

Online Open House participants had the opportunity to provide feedback on each of the policy chapters through a set of survey questions that was provided at the end of each page. In addition to questions specific to each policy topic, open-ended responses were also accepted for each of the ten chapters. Responses to the open-ended questions are included as Attachment A to the Open House #2 memo.

As a bonus part of the survey, respondents were invited to review the draft policies more deeply and provide their level of support for the draft policy language. Below is a summary of overall community support for each draft policy chapter. The results are ranked from highest level of support to lowest level of support by survey respondents.

- 1) Transportation (29 responses)



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- 76% support for most or all of the draft policies
  - 3% supported only some of the vast majority of the draft policies
- 2) Public Involvement (45 responses)
- 65% support for most or all of the draft policies
  - 2% did not support all, or the vast majority of the draft policies
- 3) Recreation, Parks & Open Space (22 responses)
- 77% support for most or all of the draft policies
  - 14% supported only some of the vast majority of the draft policies
- 4) Environment (19 responses)
- 73% support for most or all of the draft policies
  - 11% supported only some of the vast majority of the draft policies
- 5) Public Facilities (17 responses)
- 70% support for most or all of the draft policies
  - 12% supported only some of the vast majority of the draft policies
- 6) Economy (17 responses)
- 64% support for most or all of the draft policies
  - 18% supported only some or not all of the vast majority of the draft policies
- 7) Livability (24 responses)
- 67% support for most or all of the draft policies
  - 29% supported only some or not all of the vast majority of the draft policies
- 8) Growth Management (25 responses)
- 56% support for most or all of the draft policies
  - 40% supported only some or not all of the vast majority of the draft policies
- 9) Land Use (34 responses)
- 55% support for most or all of the draft policies
  - 24% supported only some or not all of the vast majority of the draft policies
- 10) Housing (23 responses)
- 52% support for most or all of the draft policies
  - 26% supported only some or not all of the vast majority of the draft policies



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### Demographic Data Collected

The following questions allowed the project team to have a snapshot of the community and who was able to participate in the online survey.

Do you live inside or outside Sisters city limits?

- 58% of respondents answered “Inside city limits”
- 41% answered “Outside city limits”
- 1% answered “Not sure”

What is your age?

- 1) 65 and older (38% of respondents)
- 2) 45-54 years old (18%)
- 3) 55-64 years old (18%)
- 4) 35-44 years old (12%)
- 5) 25-34 years old (12%)
- 6) Under 25 years old (2%)

Are there children in your household?

- 27% of respondents answered “Yes”
- 73% answered “No”

Do you rent or own your home?

- 83% of respondents answered “Own”
- 17% answered “Rent”

What is your annual household income?

- 1) \$100,000 to \$149,000 (23% of respondents)
- 2) \$150,000 or greater (24%)
- 3) \$75,000 to \$99,999 (22%)
- 4) \$50,000 to \$74,999 (15%)
- 5) \$25,000 to \$49,000 (9%)
- 6) \$10,000 to \$24,999 (5%)
- 7) Under \$10,000 (2%)

### How was this information used?

With this second Online Open House occurring at the end of the policy development phase for the Comprehensive Plan update process, this data was presented to the advisory committees to inform their policy recommendations for the final set of draft policy language written by the project team.





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# Virtual Community Forum Session

**FAST FACTS**

**Participants:** 8

**Hot Topics:** Livability & Housing

Projects of this scale can often be intimidating or confusing to understand. As part of the second Online Open House & Survey, the project team hosted two one-hour virtual community forum sessions on the evening of June 3rd, 2021 via Zoom videoconference. This was an opportunity for any interested community members to join City staff live for a presentation update on the status of the Comprehensive Plan update process and participate in a Q&A session where they could ask questions directly to the City staff.

The event was advertised across all community outreach platforms and strategies and garnered a total of 8 attendees. Although attendance was lower than predicted, this opportunity allowed for two-way communication between staff and participants. The topics covered focused in particular around housing and natural resource preservation including trees and scenic views. Attendance may have been low as a result of COVID-19 restrictions lifting and the nice summer weather, to where people are less likely to want to participate a virtual setting. The community forum sessions were posted on the Sisters2040.com project website to be available for public viewing.

# Community Engagement Tabling Sessions

**FAST FACTS**

**Participants:** 125+

**Hot Topics:** Growth Management & Livability



As the social distancing restrictions of COVID-19 public health regulations lifted, City staff were able to host their first in-person community engagement opportunities in June 2021. The City's second Open House for the Comprehensive Plan update was still hosted entirely online with a survey component; however, the in-person tabling engagement stations were pivotal in providing an opportunity to meet the community where they were, listen to their perspectives and feedback, and directly educate and answer questions about the Comprehensive Plan.



## 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Tabling Sessions were hosted at the following locations with dates coinciding with the Online Open House & Survey #2:

- Oliver Lemons Grocery Market, June 1<sup>st</sup> (~5 people engaged)
- Village Green City Park, June 5<sup>th</sup> (~20 people)
- Sisters Farmers Market at Fir Street Park, June 13<sup>th</sup> (~100 people)

These tabling sessions were designed to be fun, informative and interactive exhibits where community members could learn about the Comprehensive Plan update process, directly talk with City staff, and participate in a visual-tactile ranking activity that was friendly for all ages.

The tactile ranking activity was designed to gather input around the Livability policy chapter of the updated Comprehensive Plan. What is unique about this particular policy chapter is that it is not a required by any Statewide Planning Goals, such as for the transportation, housing, environment policy chapters. The Livability policy chapter is entirely a result of the Sisters community's values and needs. Working to gather as much input around this Livability policy chapter and its goals was important in developing viable policies that support the community's livability and quality of life for the next 20 years to come.

The Livability activity prompted the questions in both English and Spanish, "What makes a neighborhood great (livable)? Place a sticker on your top 5 assets". City staff handed each participant 5 stickers to place onto various photos that best represented the community assets that they believe to be important to retain. The photos were captioned with coinciding topics, which also reflected the themes and verbiage of the draft Livability policies: townhomes, multi-family, single-family, dark skies, bikeability, sidewalks, quality design, vista views, trees, nature, sustainability, trails, and parks & community spaces.

Top Ranked Neighborhood Assets for Livability:

1. Trails
2. Parks & Community Spaces
3. Trees
4. Dark Skies
5. Sustainability

Overall, these in-person tabling sessions were successful in engaging with the community, hearing from community members of all ages and demographics that might not have been involved through previous virtual engagement opportunities, and gathered good quantitative data on the community's sentiment around livability amenities. The narratives that City staff heard through this in-person engagement opportunity reaffirmed the feedback staff had heard during previous outreach events.



## 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

# Public Records, Comments, & Letters

**FAST FACTS**

**Participants:** 34+

**Hot Topics:** All topics

Throughout the year-long community engagement, staff noted that individuals could reach out directly to the project team with questions, and share their ideas and comments on proposed policies. All letters have been placed into the public record and are available for viewing by interested parties. The letters provided input on the following topics:

### Ideas

- Attract retirees and remote workers
- Require larger yards in new residential developments
- Consider a toll road to ease traffic congestion
- Adjust code for easier incorporation of small residential units like Accessory Dwelling Units on existing properties.
- Examine parking requirements, especially in higher density areas like downtown. Build public parking lots in downtown for seasonal tourist traffic.
- Reduce barriers to local food systems like permit fees for events
- Provide public pickleball courts in Sisters
- Provide a community pool in Sisters
- Provide a dog park in Sisters
- Promote City leadership in using alternative energy, including electric vehicles, electric vehicle charging stations, and solar panels
- Support wildlife, restrict development in areas that have wildlife habitat
- Incorporate Age Friendly Communities language throughout the plan

### Comments

- Continue to support and encourage workforce housing
- Ensure parcels in current city limits have adequate vehicular access
- Ensure Economic Opportunities Analysis, Housing Needs Analysis, and Buildable Lands Inventory are using consistent data and methodology that complies with state law
- Ensure special interests are not guiding growth and change in the community
- Limit remote workers, be mindful of Sisters becoming a post-COVID zoom town, or bedroom community for larger cities.
- Ensure adequate access for citizens to meetings
- Address houselessness issues throughout the plan
- Limit growth and do not expand Urban Growth Boundary