



# ***Benton Believes***

## **Benton County Comprehensive Plan Project**

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Community Comprehensive Plan Advisory Group (CCPAG)  
Meeting #2

April 10, 2025



**Benton  
County**

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
DEPARTMENT**

# Welcome

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Shannon Bush, Program Coordinator

Petra Schuetz, Interim Community Development Director

**01**

## **Welcome, Agenda, Meeting Objectives**

15min

**02**

## **Meeting #1 Reflections**

15min

**03**

## **Public Engagement & Survey Overview**

5min

**04**

## **Brainstorming Strategies**

80min

**05**

## **Next Steps / Meeting Close**

5min

# Process Timeline

## Phase 1: *Prepare*

Design an  
Outreach  
Plan

## Phase 2: *Explore*

Drivers of Change

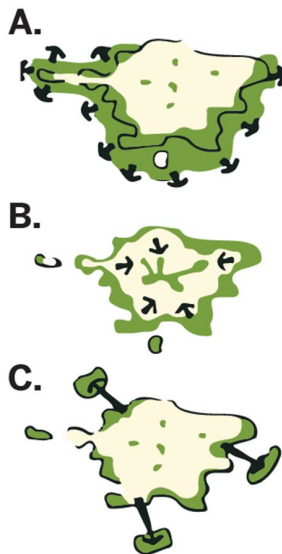
Exploratory  
Futures

*We are here*

Work Plan

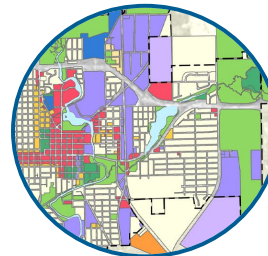
## Phase 3: *Experiment*

Scenario Modeling



## Phase 4: *Plan*

Write the Plan



## Phase 5: *Implement*

Align local  
zoning, land  
use, and  
development  
regulations

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## **Comprehensive Plan Advisory Group Purpose and Approach**

The Community Comprehensive Plan Advisory Group's (CCPAG) purpose is to help weigh in on key decision points and support community engagement within their networks throughout the planning process.

In the near-term, the CCPAG will meet 3 times during this phase of the project. No quorum is required but every CCPAG member is important and invited for a reason. Staff is committed to transparency and open dialogue in this process.

# Meeting #1+ Recap

## DRAFTED FUTURE HEADLINES

*In the future, what might headlines about these drivers of change say?*

ISSUE, XVII JANUARY 30TH, 2050

**BENTON BELIEVES**  
COMMUNITY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

COMMUNITY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ADVISORY GROUP (CCPAG) • MEETING #1

DRIVER OF CHANGE \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ DRIVER OF CHANGE

DRIVER OF CHANGE \_\_\_\_\_

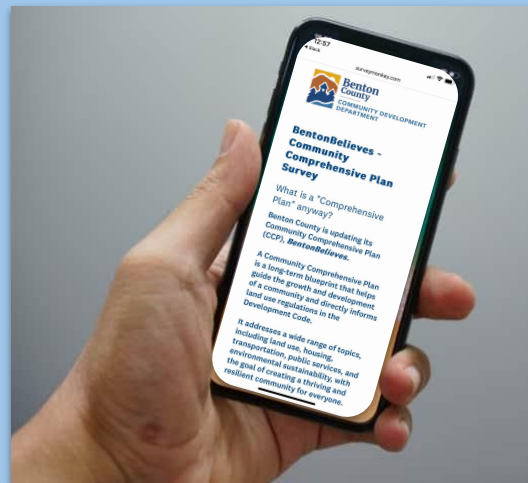
\_\_\_\_\_ DRIVER OF CHANGE

DRIVER OF CHANGE \_\_\_\_\_



## SUMMARIZED KEY THEMES & CREATED A SURVEY

*Which of these scenarios do you think is most important to prepare for?*



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## Meeting #2 Purpose

To review the prioritized drivers of change (from the public survey) and identify high-level strategies that could best respond to them.

## Outcomes

1. CCPAG members will receive a high level overview of the *BentonBelieves Community Comprehensive Plan Survey*.
2. CCPAG members will hear the community's prioritized drivers of change and brainstorm potential strategies to best respond to them.

# Meeting #1 Reflections

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*Any thoughts or reflections since our last meeting?*



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# Public Engagement & Survey Overview



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## Drivers of Change

### **Public Outreach Workshops & Survey**

**Outreach:** March 3th - April 4th

**Survey Responses:** 404

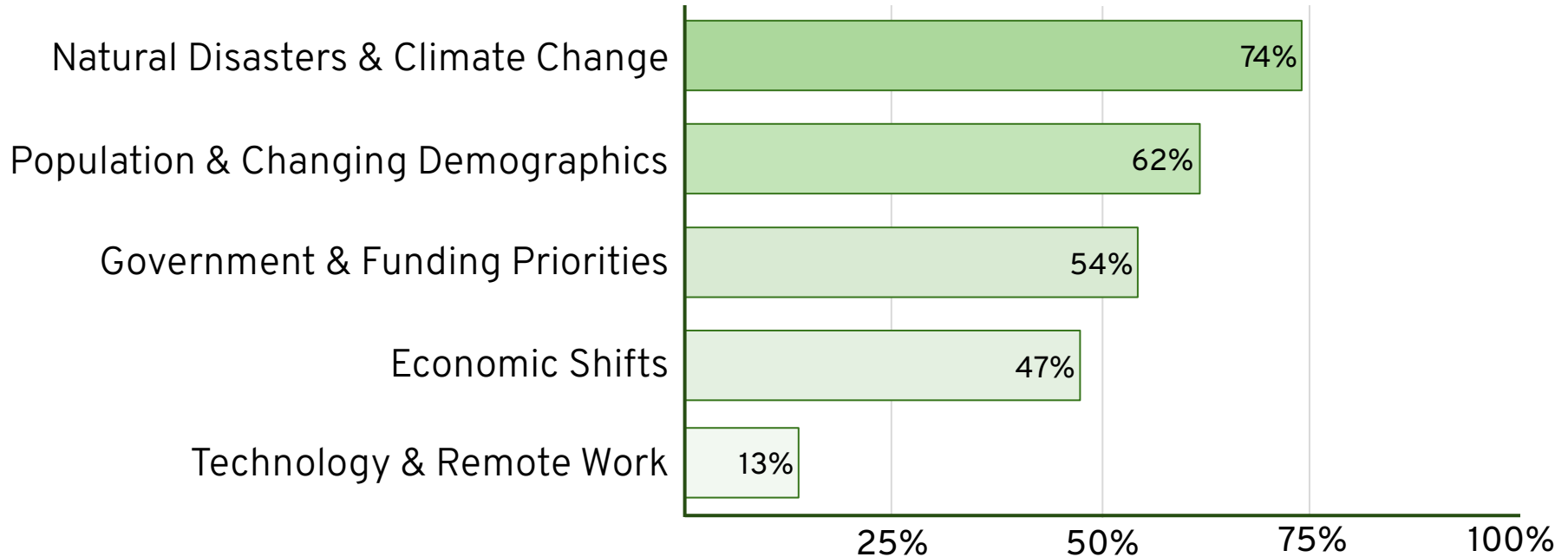
- Offered in English and Spanish

**Number of CAC meetings:** 4

- Wren, NW Benton & Mid-Benton
- South Benton
- North Benton
- Alsea

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**Which of the following changes should the Community Comprehensive Plan help Benton County prepare for? (Select up to 3)**



# Natural Disasters & Climate Change

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**How should Benton County prepare for climate and environmental challenges?**  
(Select up to 2)

1. **Natural Resource Management:** Support wildfire prevention, watershed protection, and sustainable land use practices to reduce environmental risks.
2. **Disaster Readiness & Response:** Strengthen and invest in emergency plans, early warning systems, and community preparedness efforts to reduce risks.
3. **Infrastructure Upgrades:** Invest in resilient roads, water systems, and energy infrastructure to withstand natural disasters and climate impacts.
4. **Resilient Land Use & Development:** Guide new development away from high-risk areas and plan for rebuilding strategies that improve long-term safety.

# Population & Changing Demographics

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Benton County's population may grow or decline in the future, which could impact housing, services, and land use. **Which of these scenarios do you think is most important to prepare for?** (Select up to 2)

1. **Housing Availability & Affordability:** Population changes could affect housing demand and the need for new types of development.
2. **Land Use & Development:** Population shifts could influence the need for housing, agricultural land, forestry, and waste management planning.
3. **Public Services & Infrastructure:** Changes in population size may impact demand for transportation, parks, roads, water, and other public services.
4. **Evolving Community Needs:** Population changes may impact local businesses, schools, healthcare, and recreation.

# Government & Funding Priorities

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**How should Benton County prepare** for shifts in public and/or government priorities? (Select up to 2)

1. **Strengthening Public Engagement:** Foster trust and transparency in local government decision-making by improving community outreach and participation.
2. **Sustainable Infrastructure Investments:** Advocate for continued investment in transportation, public transit, and infrastructure that supports community mobility & sustainability.
3. **Update Development Code:** Update zoning and land use regulations to better align with evolving environmental standards and government policies, ensuring a balance between development interests and sustainability.
4. **Diversified Funding Sources:** Explore funding opportunities at the non-profit, local and state levels to support housing, social programs, and economic development.

# Economic Shifts

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As the regional and local economies evolve, **what should Benton County prepare for most?** (Select up to 2)

1. **Land Use & Business Growth:** New and existing industries may compete for space and resources, influencing how land is used and developed.
2. **Infrastructure & Services:** Growing industries may bring new investments and jobs but could also require upgrades to utilities, broadband, and transportation.
3. **Workforce Changes:** As industries grow and shift, new job opportunities may emerge, requiring a shift in workforce training and skill development.
4. **Agricultural Innovation:** Advances in farming and automation may create new efficiencies and opportunities while also changing traditional practices and land use.

# Technology & Remote Work

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How might new technology and remote work impact Benton County? **Which of these should we prepare for most?** (Select up to 2)

1. **Rural Housing & Economy:** Remote work could increase demand for rural housing while also supporting different local businesses and expanding job opportunities in new areas.
2. **Community Connection:** As more services and jobs move online, in-person interactions may change, creating both challenges and new opportunities for community engagement.
3. **Internet & Infrastructure:** Improved access to high-speed internet could boost education, business growth, and remote work, but gaps in coverage may create disparities.
4. **Energy & Resource Use:** Expanding industries like data centers and high-tech agriculture could create jobs and economic growth while also increasing demand for electricity and water.



# Public-Identified Priorities

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## **1 Natural Disasters & Climate Change**

Top Priority:  
Natural Resource Management

## **2 Population & Changing Demographics**

Top Priority:  
Housing Availability & Affordability

## **3 Government & Funding Priorities**

Top Priority:  
Strengthening Public Engagement

## **4 Economic Shifts**

Top Priority:  
Land Use & Business Growth

## **5 Technology & Remote Work**

Top Priority:  
Rural Housing & Economy

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Discussion:  
**Brainstorming Strategies**

# Natural Disasters & Climate Change



**Imagine this -**

A major climate event, such as a wildfire or a natural disaster like an earthquake, has had devastating impacts on sensitive natural areas as well as working lands for agriculture and timber.

**How prepared do you feel Benton County  
is to handle this?**

## **Natural Resource Management:**

Support wildfire prevention, watershed protection, and sustainable land use practices to reduce environmental risks.



# Population & Changing Demographics

**Imagine this -**

More people move to Benton County,  
impacting our housing needs beyond what  
we are currently planning for.

**How prepared do you feel Benton County  
is to handle this?**





**Housing Availability & Affordability:** Population changes could affect housing demand and the need for new types of development.



## Government & Funding Priorities



**Imagine this -**

Due to political turmoil, all levels of government are viewed as dysfunctional and not trustworthy.

**How prepared do you feel Benton County  
is to handle this?**

**Strengthening Public Engagement:** Foster trust and transparency in local government decision-making by improving community outreach and participation.





## Economic Shifts

**Imagine this -**

It becomes more difficult to predict the land needs of emerging industries. New, lucrative industries continuously compete with existing industries for the same land.

**How prepared do you feel Benton County is to handle this?**



## **Land Use & Business Growth:**

New and existing industries may compete for space and resources, influencing how land is used and developed.



# Technology & Remote Work

**Imagine this -**

Increased remote working and adoption of private autonomous vehicles increase demand for housing in rural areas.

**How prepared do you feel Benton County is to handle this?**





## **Rural Housing & Economy:**

Remote work could increase demand for rural housing while also supporting different local businesses and expanding job opportunities in new areas.



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## **Additional Strategy Brainstorming** (Time Permitting)

# Natural Disasters & Climate Change



**Imagine this -**

Due to political shifts and changing attitudes toward hazards, Benton County residents take a "wait and see" approach to climate change and other natural hazards like earthquakes.

**What impact do you think this will have in Benton County?**

**Disaster Readiness & Response:** Strengthen and invest in emergency plans, early warning systems, and community preparedness efforts to reduce risks.





## Population & Changing Demographics



**Imagine this -**

A growing population increases demand for development of Benton County's working lands currently used for agriculture and forestry.

**How prepared do you feel Benton County is to handle this?**



## **Land Use & Development:**

Population shifts could influence the need for housing, agricultural land, forestry, and waste management planning.





## Government & Funding Priorities

**Imagine this -**

Benton County loses funding for alternative transportation options (biking, walking, public transit) and other major infrastructure projects that typically rely on federal funding.

**How prepared do you feel Benton County is to handle this?**

**Sustainable Infrastructure Investments:** Advocate for continued investment in transportation, public transit, and infrastructure that supports community mobility and sustainability.





# Natural Disasters & Climate Change



**Imagine this -**

Water capacity is impacted by climate change, roadways and other infrastructure are impacted by natural events such as earthquakes

**What impact do you think this will have in Benton County?**

**Infrastructure Upgrades:** Invest in resilient roads, water systems, and energy infrastructure to withstand natural disasters and climate impacts.



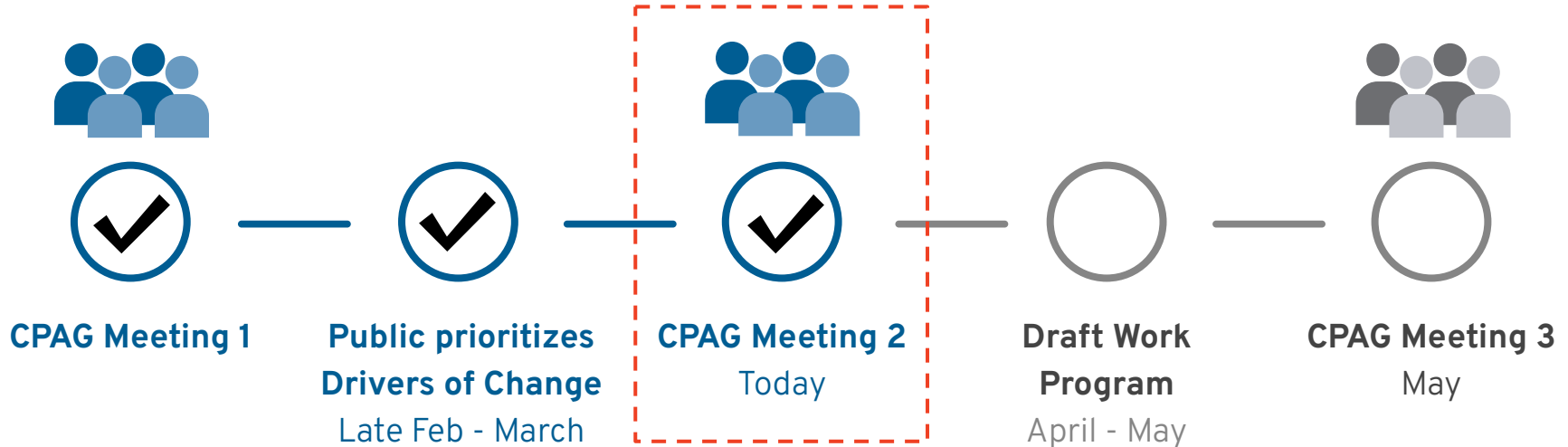
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## Next Steps

## Next Steps

### Looking ahead...

Strategies brainstormed today will be summarized and integrated into either the Work Program and/or future Comp Plan development



# Benton County Community Comprehensive Plan Project

## CCPAG Meeting #2 Summary

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**DATE:** Thur, April 10th

**TIME:** 2:00p-4:00p

**LOCATION:** Kalapuya Building, Homes and Shipley Public Meeting Rooms, 4500 SW Research Way, Corvallis, OR 97333

**ATTENDANCE:** 25 participants (including project staff)

### PURPOSE AND GOALS:

The focus of the Community Comprehensive Plan Advisory Group (CCPAG) Meeting #2 was to review priority drivers of change and identify high-level strategies that could best respond to them. In this meeting, CCPAG members reviewed findings from a public survey where community members had prioritized the drivers of change that they felt it was most important for the County to plan for. The CCPAG group then discussed how prepared they feel Benton County is able to handle each prioritized drivers of change. CCPAG members generated potential strategies and approaches the County can take to respond to the public-identified priorities. The goals of this meeting were:

1. *CCPAG members will receive a high level overview of the BentonBelieves Community Comprehensive Plan Survey.*
2. *CCPAG members will hear the community's prioritized drivers of change and brainstorm potential strategies to best respond to them.*

### CCPAG MEETING #2 OUTCOMES:

CCPAG participants discussed robust strategies that would help the County prepare for the drivers of changes prioritized in the survey. Below are the prioritized drivers of change:

1. **Natural Disasters & Climate Change - *Top Priority***
  - a. *Natural Resource Management:* Support wildfire prevention, watershed protection, and sustainable land use practices to reduce environmental risks.
2. **Population & Changing Demographics**
  - a. *Housing Availability & Affordability:* Population changes could affect housing demand and the need for new types of development.
3. **Government & Funding Priorities**
  - a. *Strengthening Public Engagement:* Foster trust and transparency in local government decision-making by improving community outreach and participation.
4. **Economic Shifts**
  - a. *Land Use & Business Growth:* New and existing industries may compete for space and resources, influencing how land is used and developed.



## **5. Technology & Remote Work**

- a. *Rural Housing & Economy*: Remote work could increase demand for rural housing while also supporting different local businesses and expanding job opportunities in new areas.

CCPAG members identified the following readiness (by voting with a red, yellow, or green slip; green being most and red being least ready) and strategies for each priority area:

<b>Priority 1</b> <b>Natural Resource Management:</b> Support wildfire prevention, watershed protection, and sustainable land use practices to reduce environmental risks.		
<i>Readiness</i>	<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Additional Thoughts</i>
Yellow/Red	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The current Comprehensive Plan strategy is aimed at resiliency and harm mitigation. In order to ensure the success of this strategy, Benton County needs to grow its tax base.</li> <li>● The County currently has a disaster management plan that encompasses the entire county, even smaller jurisdictions. This plan is robust and has many strengths, however, it is not well known throughout the community. In order to ensure this plan's success, Benton County could prioritize educating the public on this plan and gathering feedback so that all residents feel represented.</li> <li>● Immigrant populations aren't effectively connected with preparedness resources. Emergency response plans need to be accessible to multicultural and non english speaking individuals. Additionally, Benton County needs to ensure that these communities are included in and prepared for in emergency response plans.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Benton County's building stock isn't seismically prepared.</li> <li>● Wildfires are becoming more common.</li> <li>● The federal funding to handle disasters is not guaranteed and may not be a stable place to look for disaster relief.</li> </ul>
<b>Priority 2</b> <b>Housing Availability &amp; Affordability:</b> Population changes could affect housing demand and the need for new types of development		
<i>Readiness</i>	<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Additional Thoughts</i>
Red	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● There is a struggle between farmland and residential development, the agriculture and forestry land is well represented and can't be developed. To mitigate challenges presented by this, Benton County could maximize housing development in the urban fringe and infill areas.</li> <li>● Zoning and land use restrictions present significant barriers to residential and commercial development. To ensure that Benton County is promoting housing growth, land use and zoning restrictions should be reviewed for barriers and adjusted as necessary.</li> <li>● Housing is needed across types and pricepoints. To ensure Benton County is meeting the housing needs of its residents, the county needs to consider the need for workforce and affordable housing types.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● There isn't sufficient land to build housing in Corvallis, rents are too high and it is too hard to build affordable housing. OSU brings a lot of knowledge and people to the county, but they aren't keeping up with housing production.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Housing development impacts infrastructure. To ensure that Benton County is prepared for housing growth, the County needs to plan for how the infrastructure can sustainably adapt to support that housing (such as not just building more big roads).</li> </ul>	
<b>Priority 3</b> <b>Strengthening Public Engagement:</b> Foster trust and transparency in local government decision-making by improving community outreach and participation.		
<i>Readiness</i>	<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Additional Thoughts</i>
N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The news is hard to get out without proper journalism outlets, to ensure that Benton County is effectively engaging its residents, the County should consider the outlets and methods of outreach it utilizes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The system doesn't work for some folks, particularly those with lower incomes. Folks that aren't impacted by this might not care enough to change it or advocate for those impacted.</li> </ul>
<b>Priority 4</b> <b>Land Use &amp; Business Growth:</b> New and existing industries may compete for space and resources, influencing how land is used and developed		
<i>Readiness</i>	<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Additional Thoughts</i>
N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● There is a ton of vacant industrial land in the County, but there are challenges to utilizing this land such as a lack of built structures on this land, and long permit processing times that constrain building. To maximize the potential of these zones, the county could:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Make it easier to rezone industrial and light industrial land.</li> <li>○ Make industrial uses by right rather than conditional.</li> <li>○ Add necessary infrastructure.</li> <li>○ Provide fee and tax relief.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● There are changing technologies such as laminated timber and google farms.</li> </ul>

**In addition, CCPAG members brought up the following thoughts and considerations:**

- Additional approaches to engagement may need to be taken to connect deeper with youth and agriculture/forestry industry workers. However, Alsea has been engaging with high schoolers and OSU has additional avenues of engaging with ag and forestry, soil and water conservation.
- The parks dept undertook a review of the review and thought that it was passive and vague, however, where it was actionable it did well to accomplish its goals. They noted that the plan was particularly successful in the agricultural and forestry sections.

- CCPAG members reflected on the uncertainty of the times we are in regards to the economy, politics, and livability. One CCPAG member felt that the Comprehensive planning process should be delayed until there is more certainty on what the future will look like, but others felt that Comprehensive Plan could help address that uncertainty.