

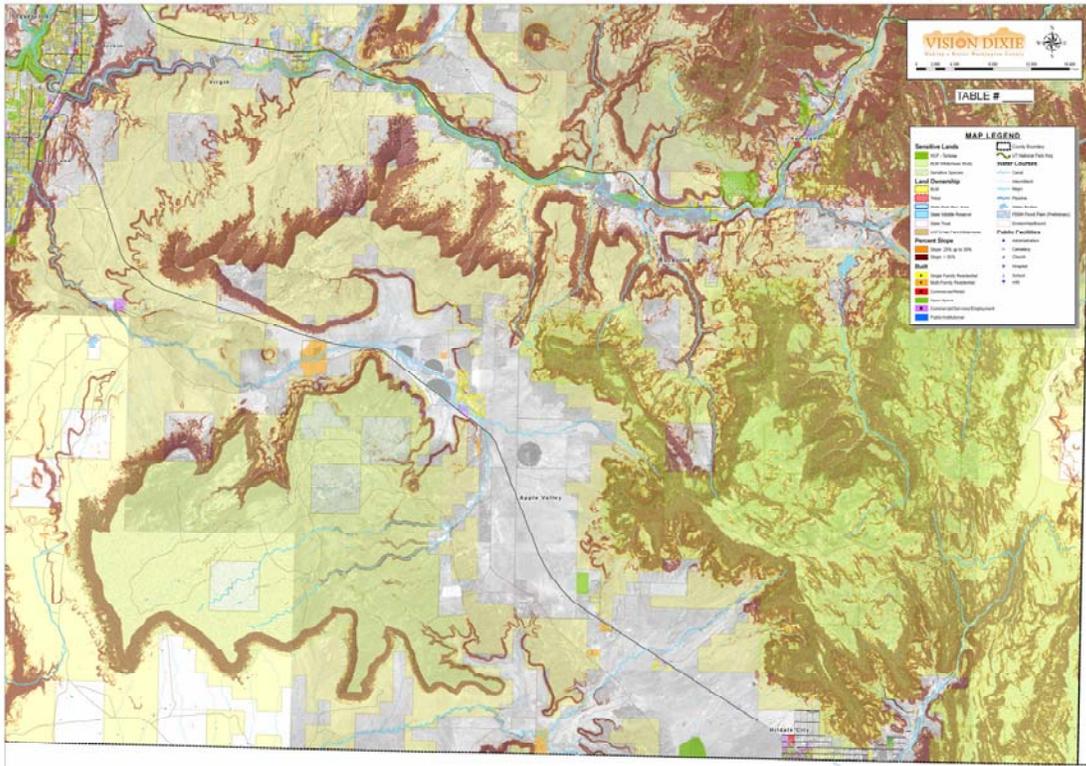


Section 3: Vision Dixie – Public Involvement Supporting Critical Lands Preservation



Data gathered during the 2006-2007 Vision Dixie public engagement process suggest general support for critical lands preservation in Washington County. During September and October 2006, Vision Dixie sponsored 13 public workshops in various communities throughout the county. Over 1,200 citizens participated. Participants worked as teams to explore ideas for accommodating projected growth in a sub-region of the county.

Each team worked with a base map plotted over aerial imagery that showed land in public and private ownership, developed areas, roads, and water ways. Some sensitive land features were also designated on the map, including FEMA flood plains and steep slopes over 25%.

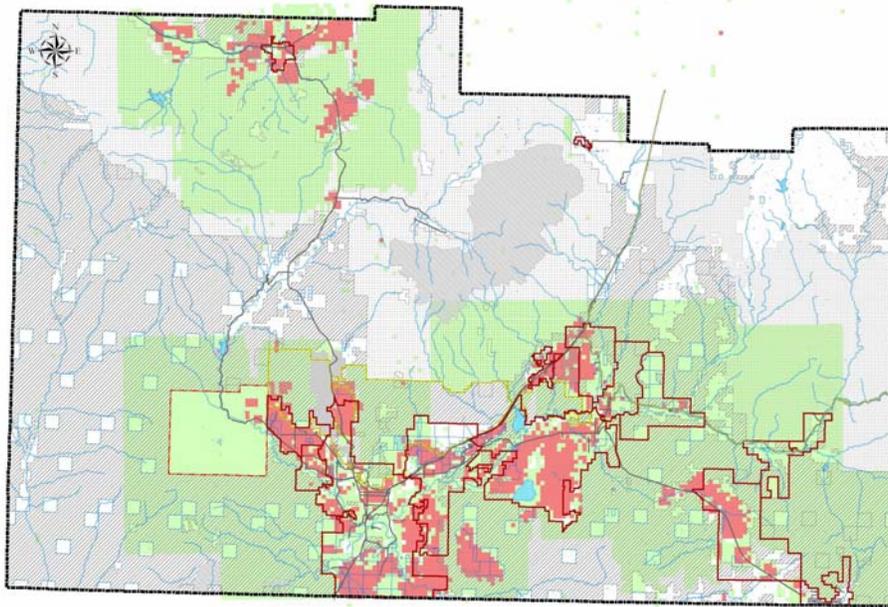


Vision Dixie Workshop Base Map

Each group had an 11 x 17 atlas showing sensitive lands information, including the additional features of geologic hazards, farmland, critical habitat for threatened and endangered plant and animal species, and BLM ACEC and Wilderness Study Areas. Participants were encouraged to refer to the atlas as they made decisions about future growth patterns. Although farmland areas featured in the atlas were not highlighted on the base map, farming areas and access roads were visible in the aerial imagery. Participants from rural areas in particular seemed to recognize farmland in their region.

Workshop participants used markers, tape and paper chips to designate on their base maps areas most appropriate for development, their preferred types of land use and transportation, and areas they believed should not be developed. They did not distinguish between critical lands and land they hoped would remain undeveloped for other reasons.

The green area on the map below shows where workshop participants preferred that no development occur. Such area might include agricultural land, parks, habitat, scenic corridors, riparian areas or other undeveloped land uses. The red color represents all other types of future developed land. This simplified view of developed vs. non-developed land use reflects the input by participants from all 13 workshops.



Dominant land use types from workshop input. Green, dominant undeveloped land; Red, dominant development. The abrupt edges of green undeveloped areas are due to the map boundaries for each workshop subregion.

This map reflects the preference of the majority of table groups that selected a specific area for development or for preservation. For example, if 10 table groups each worked on a base map, and six out of the ten tables colored an area green for preservation, the area would show up on this map as a public preference against development. If equal numbers of maps designated an area for development and no development, the more intense land use prevailed. For example, if five of ten tables designated an area for no



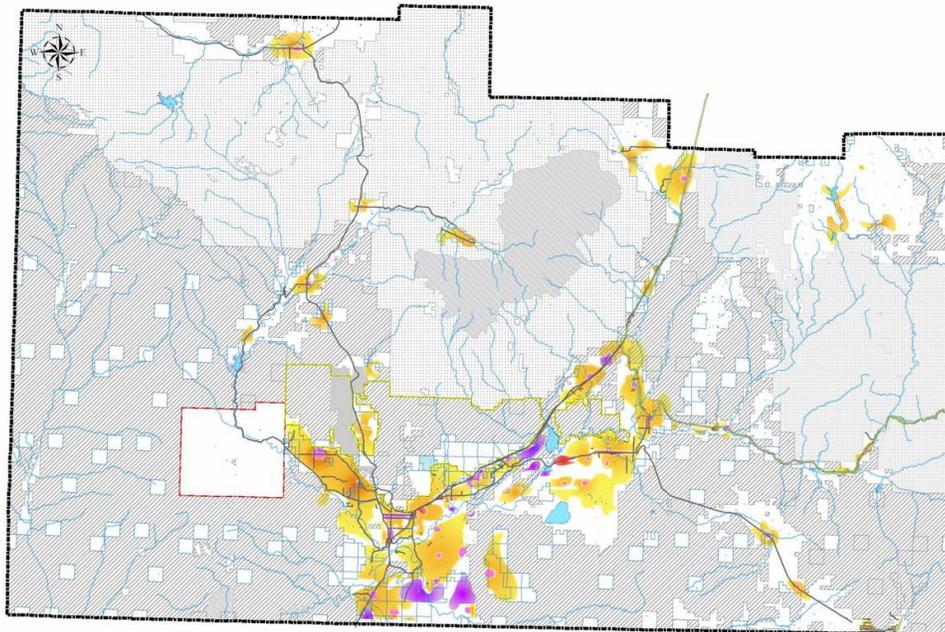
development, and the other five selected the same area for single-family homes, the area would be red on the map, reflecting a preference for single-family homes.

The workshop results were analyzed and formed the basis for four distinct scenarios of how the county might develop in the future. Each option was evaluated using modeling techniques to determine how each option performed relative to a variety of public interest indicators.

In the spring of 2007, the public reconvened to review and react to the growth scenarios and performance measures. Members of the public participated through a telephone poll, online survey, and in public forums where they could respond to questions using live keypad polling technology. Some of the questions to which participants responded dealt with critical lands. For example, when asked about the level of land conservation Washington County should work toward, nearly everyone believed “flood plains and rare habitats” should be preserved. A majority of residents also believed that “scenic backdrops like ridges and steep slopes,” “major recreation areas,” and “open space areas that separate communities from each other” should be preserved.

Residents also had an opportunity to prioritize a diverse list of goals for the county. Goals such as “preserve scenic beauty, including ridgelines and steep slopes,” and “preserve wildlife habitat” received significant support, even above goals such as “reduce the need to drive long distances” and “keep housing reasonably priced.”

The public input, expressing preferences for various elements of the scenarios, served as the basis for a series of Vision Dixie growth principles—statements providing guidance to local jurisdictions as they make critical decisions about land use and transportation. These principles, in turn, underlie the Vision Scenario, a plausible view of Washington County development in 2040, which contemplates growth occurring in an efficient manner and reflects public preferences for areas to be left undeveloped.





Vision Dixie provides a target for future growth in Washington County, and sees that growth being shaped in efficient growth patterns that infringe minimally on surrounding critical and other undeveloped lands. The above map of the Vision Scenario illustrates concentric growth patterns that can accommodate over three times the existing population and workforce without consuming as much land area as current growth trends.

The following section, "Implementation Tools and Techniques," provides an overview of planning and zoning codes that local governments may adopt to preserve critical lands and shape growth to be consistent with the Vision Scenario and growth principles.