

Position 1

Tony DeBone

OPB: How can the county address housing shortages and rents that are out of reach for many residents? What is your proposal for a long-term solution to the management of shelters and sanctioned camps?

DeBone: I support the urban growth boundary expansion efforts of each city. The Oregon land use system prioritizes housing being built in cities. County government does not have a funding source for shelters or sanctioned camps.

I support Long Term Visitor Areas (LTVA) for people in transition and looking for housing. LTVA designation for an area of county, state or federal land would allow someone to register for a 6 month permit for a fee and live in a safer setting.

OPB: What measures would you champion to address resident concerns about natural hazards like winter storms, wildfire and extreme heat? Please address each type of disaster in your response.

DeBone: As a current commissioner I have been through a few wildfire events and flooding in our community. I support our Sheriff's office Emergency Management staff and the response they provide during disasters. Deschutes Alerts is a notification system that sends information out to individuals with timely information about disaster events. For wildfire I always advocate for defensible space around structures. Defensible space is accomplished by cleaning out gutters, removing flammable vegetation from the perimeter of each building and removing branches and thinning trees. Each and every property can be resilient to a wind driven ember shower but it takes effort to prepare.

The most probable natural disaster for Deschutes County is a rain on snow flooding event that can happen in the spring. It only takes a few inches of moving water to do a lot of damage to a house foundation or a road. If we know that a flood event is coming the road department can provide access to sand bags so property owners can strategically divert water.

OPB: How would you approach applications to rezone parts of the county for denser development? How do you propose the county grows to accommodate a growing population?

DeBone: For the lands that are located outside of urban growth boundaries of La Pine, Sisters, Redmond and Bend there are a limited set of options for adding density. First there are a lot of acres in the high desert that have been zoned Exclusive Farm Use (EFU) that

have not been farmed for a profit, do not have irrigation water and have poor soils. I have supported re-zone requests that have been sent to the board with a recommendation of approval by a hearings officer who is a land use lawyer acknowledged by the State of Oregon, Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD).

It may be prudent in some areas of Southern Deschutes to allow sewer which could support a second dwelling on 1 acre properties. Protecting the great groundwater in the upper deschutes basin (Southern Deschutes County) is important.

If we want housing and we limit private property development rights and rezones we will always have a tension in the system.

OPB: Where would you propose the county build a new solid waste facility and how do you propose helping the county reach the state's Department of Environmental Quality goal of reducing waste disposals in landfills to 45%?

DeBone: Deschutes County has published a Solid Waste Management Plan and as commissioners we are involved with appointing members of the Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC).

<https://www.deschutes.org/solidwaste/page/managing-future-solid-waste> The conclusion that jumps out is that we should keep operating a landfill in Deschutes County instead of filling many trucks a day and sending them hours away.

In April of 2026 the SWAC will be prioritizing two sites off of Hwy 20 East of Bend. I am eager to proceed with land use and DEQ permitting so we can have a long term location for the waste created in Deschutes County. We have a very cost effective system and although the cost will go up over time we still have the opportunity to lock in relatively low rates for generations to come. Also, I support designing the next generation of waste management for aggressive recycling, reuse and minimal disposal like the 45% Recycling Modernization goal.

OPB: Do you support the district map going before voters in November? Why or why not? If not, how do you think commission seats should be apportioned? Why?

DeBone: I thank the members of the Deschutes County District Mapping Advisory Committee that provided a reasonable map to the board of commissioners. I have voted for putting the district proposal on the November 2026 ballot for each and every voter of Deschutes County to vote yes or no. If the map does not get support from the majority of the voters this fall then each seat stays at large for the whole county.