

**Section 5.** Establishes these goals for the City for 2011 and 2012:

**1.) Solid Waste Services**

- a. Adopt Ordinance to Establish Residential Recycling Program
- b. Adopt the 10-Year Capital Improvement Plan for Solid Waste Collection, Disposal, and Diversion Programs
- c. Adopt Financial Plan for Landfill Capital Construction/Disposal Facility

**2.) Economic Development**

- a. Provide Advocacy & Adequate Support to Ensure Mega-Data Center Locates in Laramie
- b. Foster Strong Partnership with Laramie Economic Development Corporation (LEDC)
- c. Host the Wyoming Association of Municipalities (WAM) Convention in June 2012 in Partnership with Albany County Tourism Board
- d. Market the Turner Tract Proactively

**3.) Drinking Water & Sanitary Sewer (wastewater)**

- a. Allocate Resources for Infrastructure Rehabilitation in Accordance with the Adopted 10-Year CIP
- b. Provide for Long-Term Protection of Source Water from the Casper Aquifer; by means including, but not limited to prioritizing lands for acquisition and/or conservation easement.

**4.) Public Safety**

- a. Adopt Memorandum of Understanding with Ivins Memorial Hospital for Efficient, Cost-Effective Operation of Emergency Medical Service (EMS/Ambulance)
- b. Adopt Memorandum of Understanding with University of Wyoming for Fire Service Cost-Sharing
- c. Enhance Understanding of Law Enforcement Processes and Service Options to Increase Safety of Individual Citizens and the Overall Community
- d. Mitigate Downtown Electrical Grid Safety Issues
- e. Complete Public Protection Classification (PPC) ISO Rating

**5.) Community Development**

- a. Plan for Construction of a Harney Street Viaduct that will Enhance the Community in Partnership with WYDOT
- b. Adopt Tree-Area Design Overlay
- c. Conclude the 5-Year Comprehensive Plan Evaluation/Appraisal Report
- d. Complete Storm Water Plan for Lower Downtown
- e. Plan Construction of Public Works Service Center & Redevelopment of North 4th Street, City Complex

**6.) Community Enhancement & Quality of Life**

- a. Complete Recreation Master Plan for City and City-owned Properties
- b. Determine Alignment and Location of Greenbelt Trail System Loop
- c. Develop a Gateway Beautification-Redevelopment Plan
- d. Support Formation of Transit Authority

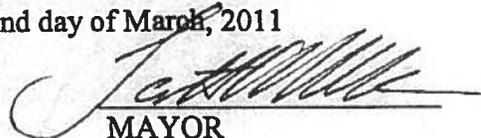
**7.) General Governance**

- a. Review Ward System of Electing Council Members
- b. Provide Educational Opportunities for Citizens to Learn About Municipal Government
- c. Continue to Be Efficient and Do More with Less

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED THIS 22nd day of March, 2011

ATTEST

  
CITY CLERK

  
MAYOR



High Plains Economic Development District

# Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

2010 CEDS for Albany, Goshen, Laramie, and Platte Counties

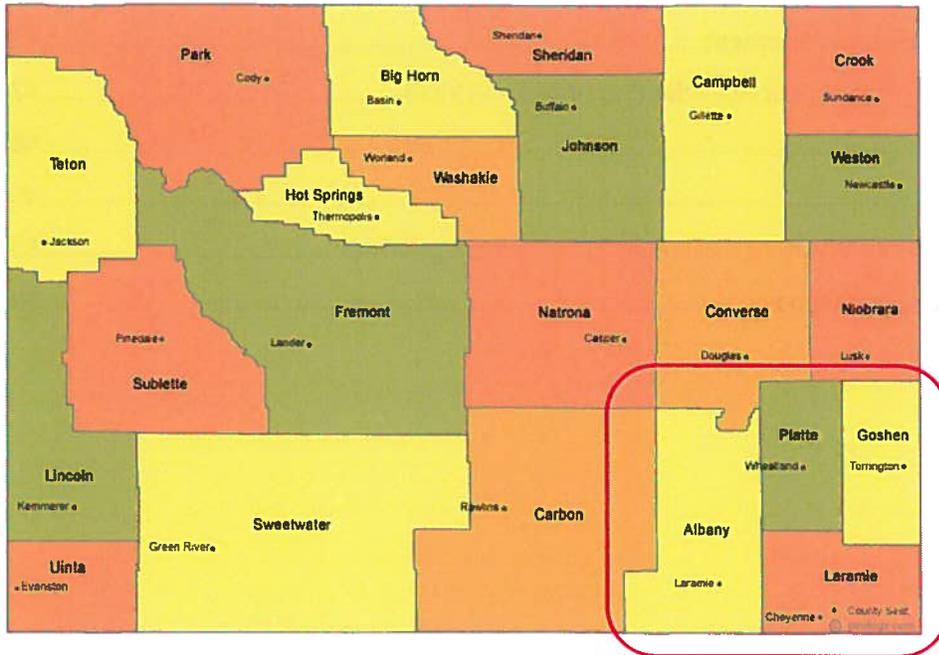
Submitted by: Anja Bendel, Executive Director HPEDD  
6/30/2010

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# Wyoming



The four counties of High Plains EDD.

## HIGH PLAINS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT QUICK FACTS

Table 1: Population Overview

Population			
County/Town	2000 (census)	2008 (estimate)	% change
Laramie County	81,607	87,542	7%
Cheyenne*	53,011	56,915	7%
Pine Bluffs	1,153	**	
Burns	285	**	
Albin	120	**	
Albany County	32,014	32,758	2%
Laramie*	27,204	27,664	2%
Rock River	235	**	
Goshen County	12,538	12,072	-4%
Torrington*	5,776	5,514	-5%
Lingle	510	**	
LaGrange	332	**	
Fort Laramie	243	**	
Yoder	169	**	
Platte County	8,807	8,294	-6%
Wheatland*	3,548	3,298	-7%
Guernsey	1,157	**	
Chugwater	244	**	
Glendo	229	**	
Hartville	76	**	
<b>Total population</b>	<b>134,966</b>	<b>140,666</b>	<b>4%</b>

Source: US Census Bureau and American Fact Finder

\* County Seat

\*\* Data not available

The High Plains Economic Development District (HPEDD) is comprised of the four counties in south-east Wyoming, namely Albany, Goshen, Laramie, and Platte Counties.

Although the district has the largest and third largest cities in Wyoming, Cheyenne and Laramie respectively, the total population is around 140,000. There are also only sixteen incorporated municipalities in the four-county region (see Table 1 at left.)

In the last decade, Laramie County has seen the most growth at 7%, while Albany County's growth has been modest at 2%. Unfortunately, the two least populated counties, Platte and Goshen, have seen negative population change, between -4% to -6%. However, since Laramie County has over half of the District's total population, the overall growth was 4%.

## BACKGROUND

### Introduction

Originally the district was formed in 1999 as the Eastern Wyoming Economic Development District and consisted of Platte and Goshen Counties. In 2002 Albany and Laramie Counties indicated an interest in joining Platte and Goshen in the district, so resolutions were passed and the district was expanded to four counties and renamed the High Plains Economic Development District.

As part of the requirement of being a fully funded economic development district, the Economic Development Administration, under the Department of Commerce, requires that a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) be submitted every five years, with annual updates for the years in between, and this document is the five year update.

It is important that the region work together on an economic strategy because businesses, workers, shoppers and tourists all think regionally, so therefore these issues must be addressed in such a way that it addresses the regional reality. It is important that we have a unified voice when we communicate with our local, state, and federal governments. Most importantly, we need to cooperate regionally because we are now in a new economy that is knowledge-based and global. In this "New Economy" communities that work together will grow together while communities that only focus on their own back yards will be isolated and therefore stagnate. Likewise, divided regions will be politically weak and ineffective.

Planning, and the strategy created to execute the plan, is an in-depth process since "planning encompasses an evaluation of the situation, the development of near and long term objectives, the formulation of courses of strategy to obtain the objectives and a detailed establishment of responsibilities and strategies to be taken."<sup>1</sup> This document begins with background information of the economic development situation of the region to evaluate the situation of the current condition of the High Plains Economic Development District. Each subsection in the background is followed by an analysis of problems and opportunities, which in turn provides the framework for the objectives. Then we identify the partnerships we have for achieving our objectives, and follow with specific projects that we have identified.

The makeup of the Strategy Committee for the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy has 57% Private Sector Representatives and 43% Representatives of Other Economic Interests, which is in accordance with the EDA guidelines.

**Table 2: Private Sector Representatives (CEDS Committee)**

Name	Company	Position
Jodi Guerin	Coal Creek Coffee	Owner
Terry Jones	Half Circle Farm	Farmer/ Sole Proprietor
Dan Kirkbride	Harding & Kirkbride Livestock Co., Inc.	Rancher/ Owner
Ross Newman	Newman Ranch	Farmer/ Sole Proprietor

<sup>1</sup> Picard-Hennig, A Non-Legal Primer Employing Lands Use Laws To Control Population In Wyoming. Laramie, Wyoming: University of Wyoming, Public Administration Service, 1975, p. 15.

**Table 3: Representatives of Other Economic Interests (CEDS Committee)**

Name	Area of Interest	Position
<b>Gaye Stockman</b>	Economic Development	Executive Director, Laramie Economic Development Corp.
<b>Lisa Johnson</b>	Economic Development	Executive Director, Goshen County Economic Development
<b>Scott Sutherland</b>	Economic Development	Vice President, Cheyenne LEADS

The members of the CEDS committee who are representatives of ‘Other Economic Interests’ represent through their membership organizations the additional major industries in the High Plains Economic Development District that are not directly represented by Private Sector representatives on the committee. These industries include, but are not limited to:

- Agriculture
- Business Parks
- Contractors and Engineers
- Education
- Hospitality
- Industry
- Information Technology (IT)
- Manufacturing
- Health and Human Services
- Real Estate
- Research and Development
- Retail
- Telecommunications
- Travel and Tourism
- Utilities

The last two years has brought much economic upheaval, beginning with the Housing Crisis that turned into the Financial Crisis, which has affected the housing market, banks, manufacturing, and everything in between. The resulting national and world-wide recession has hit Wyoming as well, however there are several factors that have prevented the High Plains EDD from slipping as much as other areas of the nation. First, the housing bubble was much less pronounced; property values did not soar as dramatically in the last decade compared to some regions in the nation, so they could not drop as dramatically in the last two years either. Second, Wyoming historically lags the nation in economic trends, both up and down, so it can be assumed that Wyoming will reach its low point after the nation begins to turn around. Third, since southeast Wyoming has not seen the loss in jobs or the rise in under-employment to the same extent that the nation has, the employment and income levels have remained more constant, thus looking “better” compared to areas that have experienced significant or dramatic losses.

This economic base analysis examines the economic base, population, business growth trends, and other factors pertinent to the formulation of this CEDS for the HPEDD. With the globalization of the economy, rapid advances in industrial technologies, the ever-expanding role of information technology and the Internet, and finding ourselves two years into the largest recession since the Great Depression, such a focus is vitally important to placing the region within the context of a changing world. As southeast Wyoming examines this context, an understanding of the structure and relative impacts of its

principal industries, the key characteristics of its population base, its natural resources, and other factors, the CEDS process will be more informed and thereby more productive.

***Data Sources***

The primary data sources used in this study include the following, unless otherwise indicated:

1. The U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, and Bureau of Economic Analysis;
2. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics;
3. Wyoming Department of Labor;
4. Wyoming Department of Economic Analysis

# Economic Base of Southeast Wyoming

## Percentage of Employment by Sector

The information presented below on industry in southeast Wyoming came through the Wyoming Labor Market Information. Unfortunately, this analysis is fettered somewhat as there are a few fields for the individual counties that show either NC (Non-Calculable) or ND (Non-Disclosable). Both of these are due to the relatively small sample sizes provided by the number of businesses in an industry. Non-calculable is displayed when the data does not exist or it is zero. Non-disclosable is displayed when sensitive information about a particular business could be derived knowing that there are only one or two businesses in a county that are in a particular category.

This first bar graph shows the percentage of the aggregate employment within the four-county region. (Due to space considerations the numbers for the actual percentage of employment, as well as total employment are shown on the following page). As you can see according to the data that may be disclosed, the lion's share of the employment, namely sixteen percent, is in the Office and Administration sector. This is followed by Food Preparation and Services (9.4%), Sales and Related Activities (8.8%), and Transportation and Materials Moving (7.8%). (Note: if the data were non-disclosable or non-calculable, they were treated as zero.)

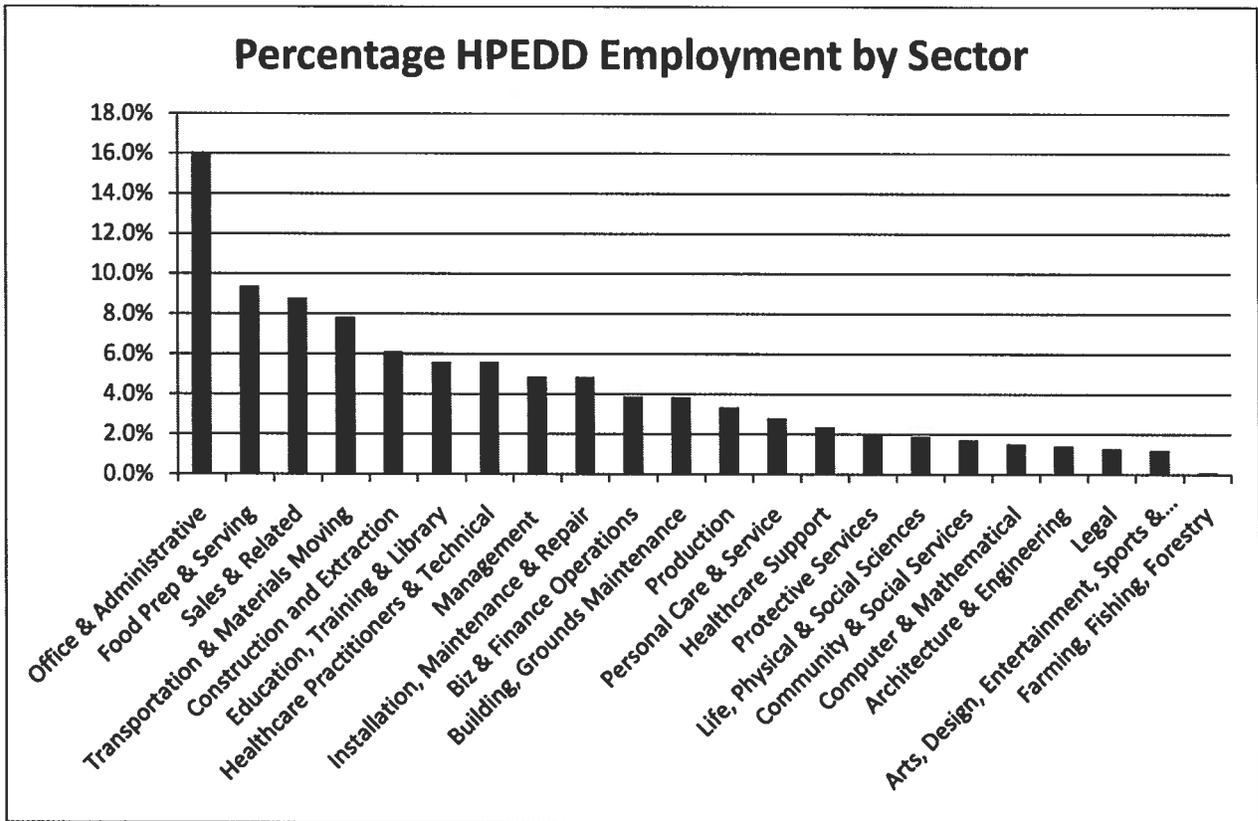


Figure 1: Percentage of Employment by Sector for the four counties aggregated in southeast Wyoming, March 2010. Source: Wyoming Labor Market Information - <http://doe.state.wy.us/lmi/oes.htm>

HPEDD EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR									
Annual Average March 2010*									
	Occupation Code	Albany County		Goshen County		Laramie County		Platte County	
		Employment	% of Employment	Employment	% of Employment	Employment	% of Employment	Employment	% of Employment
TOTAL		15,010		4,570		42,970		3,660	
Management	11-0000	890	5.93%	200	4.38%	2,130	4.96%	0	0.00%
Business & Financial Operations	13-0000	480	3.20%	110	2.41%	1,980	4.61%	0	0.00%
Computer & Mathematical	15-0000	300	2.00%	20	0.44%	690	1.61%	0	0.00%
Architecture & Engineering	17-0000	260	1.73%	20	0.44%	630	1.47%	30	0.82%
Life, Physical & Social Sciences	19-0000	580	3.86%	50	1.09%	600	1.40%	30	0.82%
Community & Social Services	21-0000	340	2.27%	80	1.75%	670	1.56%	40	1.09%
Legal	23-0000	50	0.33%	20	0.44%	500	1.16%	280	7.65%
Education, Training & Library	25-0000	1,870	12.46%	500	10.94%	1,160	2.70%	170	4.64%
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports & Media	27-0000	330	2.20%	10	0.22%	460	1.07%	0	0.00%
Healthcare Practitioners & Technical	29-0000	770	5.13%	N/D	0.00%	2,760	6.42%	170	4.64%
Healthcare Support	31-0000	260	1.73%	150	3.28%	1,040	2.42%	110	3.01%
Protective Services	33-0000	180	1.20%	120	2.63%	960	2.23%	30	0.82%
Food Preparation & Serving	35-0000	1,890	12.59%	230	5.03%	3,870	9.01%	210	5.74%
Building, Grounds Maintenance	37-0000	580	3.86%	260	5.69%	1,550	3.61%	160	4.37%
Personal Care & Service	39-0000	290	1.93%	200	4.38%	1,290	3.00%	70	1.91%
Sales & Related	41-0000	1,380	9.19%	230	5.03%	3,860	8.98%	350	9.56%
Office & Administrative	43-0000	2,300	15.32%	820	17.94%	7,310	17.01%	210	5.74%
Farming, Fishing, Forestry	45-0000	20	0.13%	50	1.09%	N/D	0.00%	10	0.27%
Construction and Extraction	47-0000	660	4.40%	100	2.19%	2,720	6.33%	560	15.30%
Installation, Maintenance & Repair	49-0000	420	2.80%	540	11.82%	2,100	4.89%	150	4.10%
Production	51-0000	390	2.60%	160	3.50%	1,420	3.30%	240	6.56%
Transportation & Materials Moving	53-0000	780	5.20%	340	7.44%	3,830	8.91%	240	6.56%

\*Numbers not additive because of home-based workers and employed students. N/D = Not Disclosable. N/C = Not Calculable, the data does not exist or it is zero

Table 4: Source: Wyoming Labor Market Information - <http://doe.state.wy.us/lmi/oes.htm>.

## Concentration of Basic Industries

Another method of analyzing the local economy's structure which complements the previous analysis is the location quotient calculator. The 2002 version of the NAICS is the industry coding system used by the location quotient calculator. If a location quotient is equal to 1, then the industry has the same share of its area employment as it does in the U.S. A location quotient greater than 1 indicates an industry with a greater share of the local area employment than is the case in the U.S. For example, Laramie County has a location quotient of 1.99 in the Transportation and Warehousing industry because this industry makes up a larger share of the Laramie County employment total than it does for the United States as a whole.

Some of the analysis is hampered by non-disclosure rules mentioned before that prevent the Bureau of Labor Statistics from posting information in areas where such disclosure would provide information about a specific business, instead of about the industry as a whole. However, some interesting data is still available. For example, the top 10% of location quotient fields are highlighted in red, and the bottom 10% are highlighted in green. The highest location quotient is 4.03 for Platte County in Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting, and lowest location quotient is 0.24 also for Platte County in Manufacturing.

Location Quotients calculated from Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages Data				
Industry	Albany County	Goshen County	Laramie County	Platte County
Base Industry: Total, all Industries	1	1	1	1
NAICS 11 Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	0.59	ND	0.75	4.03
NAICS 21 Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	0.35	ND	0.55	3.33
NAICS 22 Utilities	ND	1.8	0.94	ND
NAICS 23 Construction	1.52	1.93	1.63	1.27
NAICS 31-33 Manufacturing	0.39	0.77	0.46	0.24
NAICS 42 Wholesale trade	ND	1.22	0.54	ND
NAICS 44-45 Retail trade	1.34	1.04	1.37	1.17
NAICS 48-49 Transportation and warehousing	0.46	0.4	1.99	1.06
NAICS 51 Information	0.58	0.53	1.33	0.38
NAICS 61 Educational services	1.41	ND	0.33	ND
NAICS 62 Health care and social assistance	1.11	ND	0.88	ND
NAICS 71 Arts, entertainment, and recreation	0.89	0.66	0.55	0.42
NAICS 52 Finance and insurance	0.86	0.94	1.03	0.93
NAICS 53 Real estate and rental and leasing	1.07	0.92	0.94	0.52
NAICS 54 Professional and technical services	1.29	0.51	0.77	0.36
NAICS 55 Management of companies and enterprises	ND	NC	0.29	ND
NAICS 56 Administrative and waste services	ND	0.58	0.77	ND
NAICS 72 Accommodation and food services	1.82	0.9	1.39	1.69
NAICS 81 Other services, except public administration	1.1	0.74	1.06	0.65
NAICS 99 Unclassified	NC	NC	NC	NC

**Table 5:** Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics. (ND) Not Disclosable, (NC) Not Calculable, the data does not exist or it is zero. Location Quotient: Ratio of analysis-industry employment in the analysis area to base-industry employment in the analysis area divided by the ratio of analysis-industry employment in the base area to base-industry employment in the base area.

## Transportation

### Roads and Highways

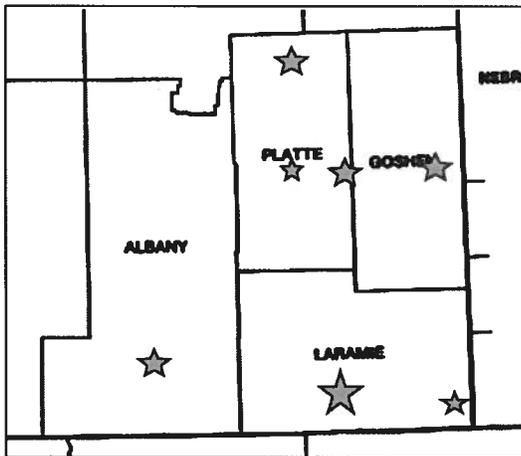


Figure 2: Southeast Wyoming Highway Network

The region is fortunate in that there is good interconnectivity within the four counties and with the areas surrounding it. Interstate 25 provides good north-south access, connecting the region with the Colorado Front Range and the Denver Metro Area to the south and Casper, Wyoming to the north. Interstate 80 is a major route for transporting items to the East and West Coasts and has heavy semi trailer truck use. Although it is subject to frequent closures due to bad weather, particularly snow storms in winter, it is still better to navigate than Interstate 70 that crosses Colorado with its highest elevation at 11,135 feet, whereas the maximum elevation of Interstate 80 is 8,640 feet.

Torrington is the only county seat that is not on an interstate in the in the High Plains Economic Development District, however it has good access on two lane highways to Cheyenne, Wheatland, and Scottsbluff, NE. Highway 26, going Scottsbluff to Torrington through historic Fort Laramie and Guernsey is in the works of becoming a designated Historic Byway, which will be likely to bring more tourists to the region.

### Air Travel



There are seven airports in the region. The two largest airports are in cooperation with military operations, namely in Cheyenne and Guernsey, and can serve larger airplanes such as C17s and commuter jets. The other airports serve smaller, regional airplanes. The airports are:

- Glendo (Thomas Memorial)
- Wheatland (Phifer air field)
- Pine Bluffs Municipal
- Laramie Regional
- Torrington Municipal
- Camp Guernsey
- Cheyenne Municipal

### Railroads

As energy prices rise, regions with good railroad access will have a significant competitive advantage over regions that do not have good access to rail lines. Therefore southeast Wyoming is well positioned as it is served by two major railroads.

The Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad and the Union Pacific Railroad provide a large majority of railroad activity in the region and represent a significant base industry.



**Special Considerations: A Few Major Employers**

Large federal and state employers obviously affect their immediate geographic areas. Each county has at least one such large employer that significantly impacts the region.

***F.E. Warren Air Force Base (Cheyenne, Laramie County)***

The F.E. Warren Air Force Base is located in Cheyenne in Laramie County. The base oversees 150 intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) stationed in underground silos in Wyoming, Nebraska, and Colorado. For fiscal year 2009 the total personnel assigned, namely officers, enlisted, and civilian, was 4,224 and their combined payroll was \$213.8 million. In addition to the payroll, expenditures and the estimated dollar value of the indirect jobs brings the total impact of the base to \$342.3 million.

<b>FE Warren Air Force Base ECONOMIC IMPACT ON LOCAL AREA (Millions \$)</b>	
<b>PAYROLL</b> (All agencies on FEW AFB)	<b>\$ 213.8</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b> (Construction, GPC, Services and Procurement of Materials, Equip & Supplies)	<b>\$ 67.6</b>
<b>DOLLAR VALUE OF INDIRECT JOBS</b> (Est. indirect jobs created in local area- 1,444)	<b><u>\$ 60.9</u></b>
<b>TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT</b>	<b>\$ 342.3</b>
<b>PREPARED BY 90 CPTS/FMA, 773-4008</b>	

Source: Mary B. Danner, Capt, USAF. Chief, Public Affairs, F.E. Warren AFB WY

The Obama administration announced a nuclear weapons strategy in April 2010 that includes cuts in nuclear warheads and two years of studies into how many ICBMs should remain in the nuclear weapons arsenal. While the plan reaffirms the need to maintain the nuclear triad, which consists of the type of ground based long-range missiles managed by the Cheyenne base, along with ship-based weapons and bombers armed with nuclear bombs, there still will be cuts in nuclear warheads. This could potentially impact F.E. Warren’s future and what level of activity it will see.

***National Guard Camp Guernsey (Guernsey, Platte County)***

The headquarters for the National Guard Camp Guernsey is located on the eastern boarder of Platte County adjacent to the Town of Guernsey. In 2007 the camp was seeking to expand its airfield to accommodate more and larger airplanes. At that time, the agreement was that if the airfield were expanded then the federal government would be willing to commit to further expansion of the camp as well. Therefore Camp Guernsey commissioned an economic analysis of the current and future expansions through the State of Wyoming, Department of Administration and Information, Economic Analysis Division. The airfield expansion was completed in the fall of 2009 so the camp is continuing to proceed with its plans for further expansion.

The following table comes from the economic analysis published in 2007. The Camp has greatly improved the number of training days as well as the number of individuals being trained over the last several years. Not only do they provide training to the military, they also train members of law enforcement and other

similar fields. Most recently, they have provided training to the employees of the new Wyoming Medium Correctional Institution in Torrington.

	2007	2008	2014	2020	2035	2045
<b>Total Employment</b>	20	67	405	254	259	267
<b>Total Gross Domestic Product by State (2007 \$)</b>	\$182,449	\$2.7 M	\$20.7 M	\$14.5 M	\$18.1 M	\$21.3 M
<b>Output (Sales, 2007 \$)</b>	\$1.8 M	\$5.9 M	\$21.4 M	\$7.9 M	\$10.3 M	\$12.7 M
<b>Personal Income (2007 \$)</b>	\$254,484	\$2.2 M	\$16.5 M	\$12.4 M	\$15.3 M	\$18.5 M
<b>Population</b>	2	23	277	328	329	345

**Table 6: Economic Impacts (results represent the change from the baseline forecast of that particular year, results are not additive over time)**

*Note: Results represent the changes to Wyoming's economy due to state and Federal spending to expand and upgrade Camp Guernsey.*

As stated in the economic analysis, "The data presented above detail the total economic impact of expanding and upgrading Camp Guernsey. A vast majority of the funding is expected to come from the Federal government. Most of the Federal funding, however, is contingent on the airfield upgrade that the State has been asked to fund. By the State funding the \$9.6 million airfield upgrade, an additional \$107.7 million in Federal spending on Camp Guernsey is expected to occur from 2007 to 2020. It is expected that by the end of the expansion period, training man-days training will increase by 615,000. [...] The expansions planned for Camp Guernsey may lead to other high-technology businesses deciding to locate in the area. Camp Guernsey provides high-tech training to soldiers through its robotics program. This may help create a cluster effect, where businesses with high-technology components move to an area where there is a concentration of similar type businesses. The robotics program at Camp Guernsey, the planned NCAR [National Center for Atmospheric Research] Supercomputer in Cheyenne, and the various activities at the University of Wyoming might trigger other high-technology businesses to relocate to this geographic area. The expansion of Camp Guernsey may assist in the continuing effort to diversify Wyoming's economy." (Camp Guernsey Economic Analysis, October 2007, p. 3)

***Wyoming Medium Correctional Institution (Torrington, Goshen County)***

The Wyoming Medium Correctional Institution (WMCI) had its grand opening on January 6, 2010. Total bed space, including infirmary and mental health isolation cells, is 720. They are also a major employer in the region: once fully operational, the Wyoming Department of Corrections is anticipating 350+ state positions plus some contracted positions for medical, mental health, substance abuse treatment and chaplain services. The correctional institution provides a variety of jobs: Correctional Security, Administrative Specialists, Programming/Education, Food Service, Trades Specialists, and general Business Support. The Wyoming Department of Corrections also strives to be a good neighbor in its communities. Each community with a prison has a Prison Community Partnership Committee which serves as a citizen advisory group to the institution's warden and designated department representatives regarding correctional issues, activities and practices affecting their community.

Not only do the additional jobs stimulate the local economy, but simply housing the inmates can have positive economic impact. For example, on the day of the 2010 census, the facility had 498 inmates. The

City of Torrington states that the census number from the facility contributed to the increase of 8 percent of the funds they receive from the State. If WMCI had been completely full the increase would have been 12 percent.

***Institutions of Higher Education***

**University of Wyoming (Laramie, Albany County)**

<b>Enrollment, Spring 2010</b>	<b>9,684</b>
<b>Total Employment</b>	<b>6,360</b>
<i>Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty</i>	<i>651</i>
<i>Full-time instructional Faculty</i>	<i>730</i>
<i>Other</i>	<i>4,979</i>
<b>Total</b>	<b>16,044</b>

As the chart illustrates, the total number of students and employees for the 2010 spring semester at the University of Wyoming Laramie Campus was 16,044. Since the estimated 2010 population of Albany County is 32,250, then you can see how approximately half of the population of Albany is tied to the university on some level. Their total

**Table 7: UW Laramie Campus, Spring 2010**

budget for the 2010 Fiscal Year is \$431,853,687. Of that, almost 18% is from external research funding, contracts and grants (which includes financial aid). Just based on size relative to population, the university plays a significant role not only in Albany County, but in Southeast Wyoming. It is also very influential throughout the state as it is the only public university in Wyoming.

**Community Colleges**

LCCC, or Laramie County Community College, has two campuses, one in Cheyenne and one in Albany County with a total student body of 5,049 full time and part time students in 2009. Eastern Wyoming College has its main campus in Torrington in Goshen County, but covers a six-county service area and has extension contacts in 13 communities. It has a total enrollment of approximately 1,600 full-time and part-time students per semester. These community colleges provide solid two-year associate degrees as well as many Continuing Education courses.

## Industry and Job Growth Trends

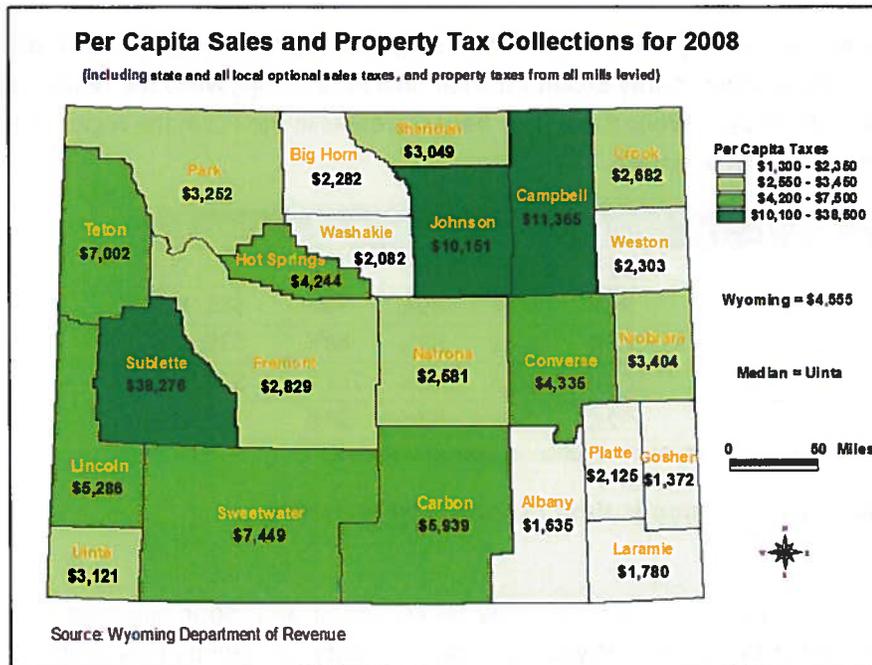
As indicated in Table 8 below, the four-county region gained only slightly more than 2,200 jobs (or 3% growth) between the year 2000 and 2008. This is significantly less than the previous decade from 1990 - 2000 where the region experienced a total growth of 19.1% and 9,300 jobs as indicated in the CEDS from 2003. The 4% and 5% growth in Albany and Laramie Counties were offset by the negative job growth of -3% and -10% in Goshen and Platte Counties respectively, which is troubling for these two agricultural based counties. The growth rate is less than the rate for the state of Wyoming for the same period. These numbers, however, need to be considered in light of the fact that the national recession began in 2008, and not all effects of that recession are yet evident in the most recent available data.

<b>County</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>Employment Growth 2000-2008</b>	
										<b>Δ</b>	<b>%</b>
Albany	17,688	17,880	17,740	17,990	19,104	18,858	18,247	18,191	18,428	740	4%
Goshen	6,022	5,902	5,690	5,563	5,502	5,435	5,669	5,704	5,862	-160	-3%
Laramie	38,732	38,464	39,101	39,633	39,441	39,709	40,101	40,582	40,796	2,064	5%
Platte	4,179	4,001	3,927	3,836	3,866	3,823	3,813	3,779	3,763	-416	-10%
<b>Region totals</b>	<b>66,621</b>	<b>66,247</b>	<b>66,458</b>	<b>67,022</b>	<b>67,913</b>	<b>67,825</b>	<b>67,830</b>	<b>68,256</b>	<b>68,849</b>	<b>2,228</b>	<b>3%</b>
State of Wyoming	256,685	259,508	258,462	259,489	262,358	266,986	274,198	280,087	283,598	26,913	10%

**Table 8: Total Employment by County, 2000-2008, High Plains Economic Development District**

Source: Wyoming Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2000-2008 Wyoming Benchmark Labor Force Estimates—Annual Averages

## Per Capita Sales and Property Tax Collections for 2008



The four counties in the High Plains Economic Development District are four of the five counties in Wyoming with the lowest per capita sales and property tax collections in 2008. There is a close correlation in the state for counties and the level of oil, gas, and coal extraction and their related per capita taxes.

Looking forward, the per capita taxes per county could change significantly in southeast Wyoming with the new development of oil and natural gas extraction, as well as the development of wind energy as explained in the "Overview of Natural Resources" part of this document (p. 42). New technology has made drilling for oil in southeast Wyoming economically feasible within the last year, and oil and gas leases abound in the region.

### Per Capita Income and Wealth

Per capita income is an important component of quality-of-life and economic development. Growth in per capita income is among the best measures of economic development.

Historically, Goshen County has had a Per Capita Income (PCI) of 80% or lower of the US average PCI. However, with recent adjustments in the official numbers released by the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), the numbers for Goshen County (as well as the other three counties in HPEDD) have improved compared to the national average. In its most recent revisions, the adjusted numbers for Goshen County are up, so now the PCI for 2008, the most recent year available, is at 88% of the national average. While this number is still below the national average, it is above the 80% designation from the Economic Development Administration's guidelines for qualification for most of their grants. At this point there is

only one county in Wyoming, Big Horn, that qualifies under this measure as it has a PCI that is 74% of the national average. It is located in north Wyoming south of the Montana border.

Compared to Wyoming as a whole, the four counties in southeast Wyoming are below the statewide average. However, only Laramie County exceeds the national PCI average, while the remaining three counties are below that average. While there have been increases in the PCI in the region, it has not matched pace with the statewide growth.

Area	2005	2006	2007	2008	Amnt in \$
Wyoming state total	111%	119%	119%	121%	\$48,580
Albany, WY	86%	87%	89%	90%	\$35,993
Goshen, WY	85%	85%	85%	88%	\$35,412
Laramie, WY	106%	110%	110%	111%	\$44,613
Platte, WY	92%	91%	92%	98%	\$39,418

Table 9: Per Capita as a percent of the U.S. Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis

### SWOT Analysis for Economic Base of Southeast Wyoming

#### Strengths

- Southeast Wyoming excels in job training, higher education, and continuing education through a combination of the University of Wyoming, Laramie County Community College (LCCC) and Eastern Wyoming College (EWC) which have excellent outreach programs based out of Laramie, Cheyenne, and Torrington respectively.
- UW in Laramie has a very valuable asset with the Wyoming Technology Business Center.
- The region and the State have done a fairly good job helping existing businesses grow.
- Excellent access through Interstate 80 for east-west access, and Interstate 25 for north-south access.
- The region has a good system of two-lane highways.
- The region's railroads, Burlington Northern Santa Fe and Union Pacific, provide excellent rail access to much of the country.
- The rail industry is a significant economic force in the region.
- Southeast Wyoming has 7 municipal airports.
- Commercial air service is available to Denver and to Dallas/Fort Worth from Cheyenne.
- There is presence of a knowledge hub in Laramie due to the presence of the University of Wyoming.
- Southeast Wyoming has many elements in place that will assist in transitioning the area into a region with increasing returns.
  - Southeast Wyoming has a very good K-12 public school system.
  - Southeast Wyoming has the state's only public university and two very good community colleges.
  - The region's banks have been supportive of entrepreneurs.
  - The region has very affordable utilities.
  - The region has many positive quality of life attributes.

- There is no state income tax which is favorable to both businesses and residents.

### ***Weaknesses***

- The Wyoming economy has historically lagged national trends, so there is a fear that the Wyoming economy will continue to fall after the national economy begins recovery.
- Much of the region has been slow to adapt to the changing economy.
- The region has many persons who grew up in an industrial age that conditioned them to believe the source of wealth comes primarily from the production of tangible items.
- Out of the 22 Wyoming counties, we are in the bottom five for per capita sales and property tax collections.
  - There is a huge disparity between the highest in per capita sales and property tax collections, Sublette county at \$28,276 per capita, and the lowest, Goshen County at \$1,372 per capita.
- The Per Capita Income of three counties, Albany, Goshen, and Platte, is below the national average.
- The Per Capita Income of all four counties is below the state average.
- Regional job growth from 2000 to 2008 was only 3%
  - Wyoming job growth over the same period was 10%
  - Platte and Goshen Counties over the same period lost jobs, -10% and -3% respectively.
- It is expensive for many lower and middle income people to fly to Denver, especially when they are in parties of two or more.
- The region has many dead spots for cell phone users.

### ***Opportunities***

- We can improve productivity by incorporating innovation and technology.
- The region can create wealth by creating value through Research and Development (R&D), branding, design, distribution, marketing and sales.
- Concentrating on helping existing businesses to grow can be a very successful strategy and a cost-effective use of resources.
- The region can improve regional incomes, reduce its dependence on government, and reduce its overall tax burden by focusing economic efforts on transitioning to a New Economy, where it is an "Increasing Returns" region.
- As energy prices rise, regions with good railroad access will have a significant competitive advantage over regions that do not have good access to rail lines.
- Technological advancements can help rural areas in the region overcome many logistical barriers to development.

### ***Threats***

- Many quality employers are deterred from moving to the region due to a perception they will not be able to find a workforce.
- There are many citizens and politicians in the area and in the state who are stuck in an old economy mindset and resist change.

- If southeast Wyoming fails to move toward a knowledge-based economy the region will likely lose young individuals who are more interested and involved with modern technology and are seeking higher wages.
- Many of the region's industries are extremely vulnerable to high energy prices – carbon "cap and trade" schemes could hurt the coal-rail industry.
- The ag counties, namely Goshen and Platte, are having difficulty providing quality employment opportunities for their residents relative to employment prospects in the region's trade counties, namely Albany and Laramie.
- Parts of the region could see very minimal job growth or even job losses over the next decade.

### **Recommended Actions**

-Encourage federal lawmakers to increase federal subsidies to airlines that serve rural markets to help offset the crippling cost of fuel.

-Make "Back Offices" an economic development target.

-Take advantage of our close proximity to the Colorado Front Range and the existing highway and railroad connections.

- Incorporate southeast Wyoming into the Front Range Economy
  - Maintain air service to Denver and Texas from Cheyenne
  - Market the region's business and residential advantages to the Front Range
  - Increase the region's tourism marketing to the Front Range which will make that population more familiar with the area.

Southeast Wyoming needs to have two strategies to transition our economy into a knowledge-based economy.

1. We must maintain and add value to our existing industries
2. We must transition to more productive industries in terms of value.

### ***Add Value to Our Existing Industries***

- Foster innovation in order to increase productivity
- Maintain and exploit natural resources including soil and water
  - Manage water resources so they are sufficient for agriculture, industrial municipal, and recreational uses
  - Help regional oil producers gain favorable compensation for their production
- Continue to improve quality of life aspects to help retain and attract workers
- Support government initiatives to develop economically feasible "clean coal" such as the coal gasification initiative in Laramie County.
- Develop initiatives to grow the region's travel and tourism industries
  - Increase statewide marketing for tourism

- Encourage travelers to stop at Interstate Interchanges
- Add to the “Welcome to Wyoming” centers at key entrance points
- Continue to develop more efficient, regional marketing strategies for tourism
- Continue and expand efforts to support beginning farmers

***Transition to More Productive Industries in Terms of Value***

- Focus on research and development
  - Work with UW to disseminate innovation to rural Wyoming
  - Support the Wyoming Technology Business Center to help connect entrepreneurs with innovation
- Encourage entrepreneurial culture
  - Continue entrepreneur support agencies
  - Advance internship and apprenticeship programs
  - Develop a network to connect entrepreneurs with existing capital resources
- Shape governance to benefit a knowledge-based economy
  - Support strong educational institutions to produce skilled workforce
  - Continue to advance job training and continuing education programs through UW, LCCC, and EWC.
  - Support the advancement of telecommunications in the region, especially in depressed counties.
  - Develop policies that help retain educated young adults.
- Focus economic development efforts on higher wage industries and primary jobs.
- Improve the local non-farm economic development opportunities in the ag counties.

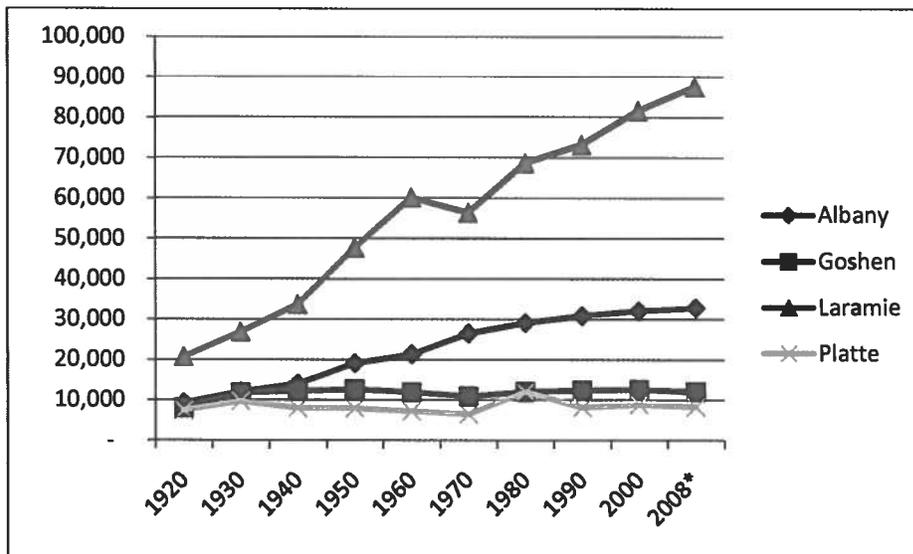
## Demographic Profile of Southeast Wyoming

Since this document is being written in the year of the 2010 Census, much of the data used in this CEDS in relation to demographics is either almost ten years old or an estimate. The Cheyenne area does have a large enough population to be a MSA (Metropolitan Statistical Area), which means that numbers are periodically updated through official estimates between the census years. In an effort to stay as current and relevant as possible, estimates are used when available. However, wherever there is a lack of similar current data for all four counties, this analysis uses the data from the 2000 Census in order to have all numbers be equitable.

**Table 10: Absolute population numbers. Source: American FactFinder and the US Census Bureau. (\*estimate)**

Location	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2008*
Wyoming	194,402	225,565	250,742	290,529	330,066	332,416	469,557	453,588	493,782	532,668
Albany	9,283	12,041	13,946	19,055	21,290	26,431	29,062	30,797	32,014	32,758
Goshen	8,064	11,754	12,207	12,634	11,941	10,885	12,040	12,373	12,538	12,072
Laramie	20,699	26,845	33,651	47,662	60,149	56,360	68,649	73,142	81,607	87,542
Platte	7,421	9,695	8,013	7,925	7,195	6,486	11,975	8,145	8,807	8,294

The above numbers in Table 9 illustrate simply the absolute population numbers for the counties in the District as well as the numbers from Wyoming. The year 1920 is the first year that all four counties were in existence and therefore included in the United States Census. The data becomes more illustrative when shown in graphs, as follows.



**Figure 5: Population per decade by county. Source: US Census and American FactFinder**

As illustrated above, two of the counties in the District, Laramie and Albany Counties, have steadily trended upward in population over the last century. Much of this can be attributed to the urban growth of Cheyenne and Laramie. Cheyenne, the state capital, in Laramie County has the headquarters of many state agencies as well as F. E. Warren Air Force Base. Albany County is fortunate to have the only state university, the University of Wyoming, in the City of Laramie, and the county benefits from ancillary activity and business associated with the university. By comparison, the populations of Platte and Goshen Counties have remained relatively flat since 1920. Therefore, the concerns of each county in regards to population are also approached differently. However all see the value in controlled, sustainable growth.

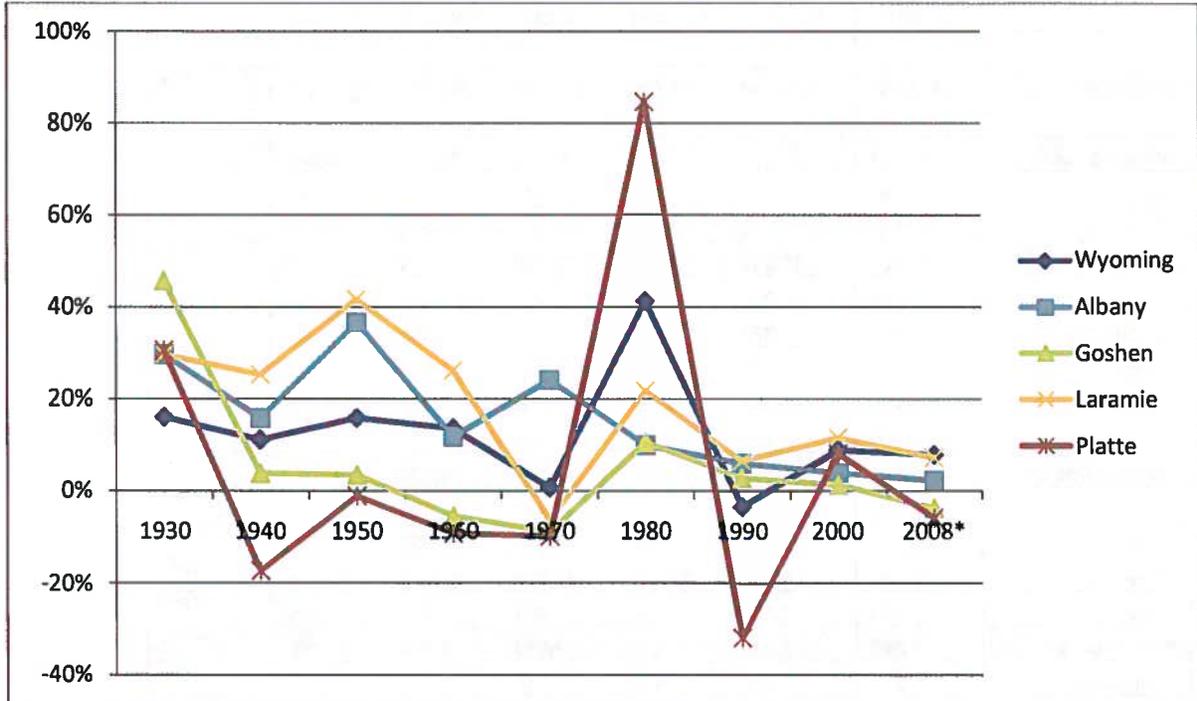


Figure 6: Percent change in population from one decade to the next by county. Source: US Census and American FactFinder

While the absolute numbers in population illustrate the scale of growth, the above graph shows the percent change from one decade to the next. It is interesting to note that the only county that has consistently had positive population growth is Albany County--the only line that remains above the 0% line. While the population of Platte County historically has consisted of 15% or less of the District's total population, it has seen the most dramatic short-term changes. The peak increase in population from 1970 to 1980 of 85% and the resulting 32% loss from 1980 to 1990 is attributed to the construction of the Laramie River Station coal power plant outside of Wheatland which began construction in the late 1970s and was in full operation by 1982. This illustrates the challenge that small communities face with new industry. While the new jobs and increase in the flow of capital are welcome, many services can be strained with sudden changes when the ratio of new population to existing is very large.

That same period for all four counties, the population loss, followed by the population growth, followed again by a loss shows the effects of the energy boom in Wyoming which began in the 1970s and ended

with a bust in the early 1980s. In the first decade of the twenty-first century, Wyoming had been favored by another energy boom, however the population has not been as dramatically influenced by this in the District as it has in other regions of the state.

### Population Forecast

AREA	2000	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	% Change
	CENSUS	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	
<b>WYOMING</b>	<b>493,782</b>	<b>539,740</b>	<b>560,000</b>	<b>578,730</b>	<b>598,100</b>	<b>621,160</b>	<b>26%</b>
<b>Albany County</b>	<b>32,014</b>	<b>32,250</b>	<b>32,040</b>	<b>31,880</b>	<b>32,300</b>	<b>32,870</b>	<b>3%</b>
Laramie	27,191	27,260	27,083	26,948	27,303	27,785	2%
Rock River	235	213	212	211	213	217	-8%
<b>Goshen County</b>	<b>12,538</b>	<b>12,050</b>	<b>11,960</b>	<b>11,820</b>	<b>11,790</b>	<b>11,800</b>	<b>-6%</b>
Fort Laramie	243	229	227	225	224	224	-8%
La Grange	332	327	325	321	320	321	-3%
Lingle	510	486	483	477	476	476	-7%
Torrington	5,776	5,462	5,421	5,358	5,344	5,349	-7%
Yoder	169	160	159	157	156	156	-7%
<b>Laramie County</b>	<b>81,607</b>	<b>87,660</b>	<b>89,240</b>	<b>91,000</b>	<b>94,220</b>	<b>98,000</b>	<b>20%</b>
Albin	120	117	119	121	125	131	9%
Burns	285	307	312	318	330	343	20%
Cheyenne	53,318	56,483	57,501	58,635	60,710	63,146	18%
Pine Bluffs	1,153	1,159	1,180	1,203	1,246	1,296	12%
<b>Platte County</b>	<b>8,807</b>	<b>8,290</b>	<b>8,060</b>	<b>7,840</b>	<b>7,880</b>	<b>7,960</b>	<b>-10%</b>
Chugwater	244	222	216	210	211	213	-13%
Glendo	229	216	210	204	206	208	-9%
Guernsey	1,147	1,074	1,044	1,016	1,021	1,032	-10%
Hartville	76	71	69	67	68	68	-10%
Wheatland	3,555	3,307	3,215	3,127	3,143	3,175	-11%
<b>TOTAL HPEDD</b>	<b>134,966</b>	<b>140,250</b>	<b>141,300</b>	<b>142,540</b>	<b>146,190</b>	<b>150,630</b>	<b>12%</b>

**Table 11: Population Forecast for HPEDD counties, cities, and towns**

**Note:**

- 2000 state, county and municipality population are 2000 Census data with official revisions included;
- 2001-2007 state, county, and municipality population estimates were produced by U.S. Census Bureau;
- 2008 to 2030 state and county population forecasts were developed based on trends of demographic and economic variables;
- Municipality population forecasts were simply calculated by applying the place/county ratios to the appropriate county population forecasts.

Prepared by Wyoming Department of Administration and Information, Economic Analysis Division (<http://eadiv.state.wy.us>), July 2008

The overall population for southeast Wyoming is projected to rise over the next two decades until the year 2030. However, this total growth is carried primarily by the 20% projected growth for Laramie County. Albany County only has modest growth predictions of 3%, while Goshen and Platte Counties continue to face declining population of -6% and -10% respectively.

NOTE: There are some major factors that are not included in these projections created in 2008, namely, the potential development of wind energy farms and the oil and gas extraction. If these developments do go forward, it is anticipated that there would be no population loss in the region.

### Population Trends by Age

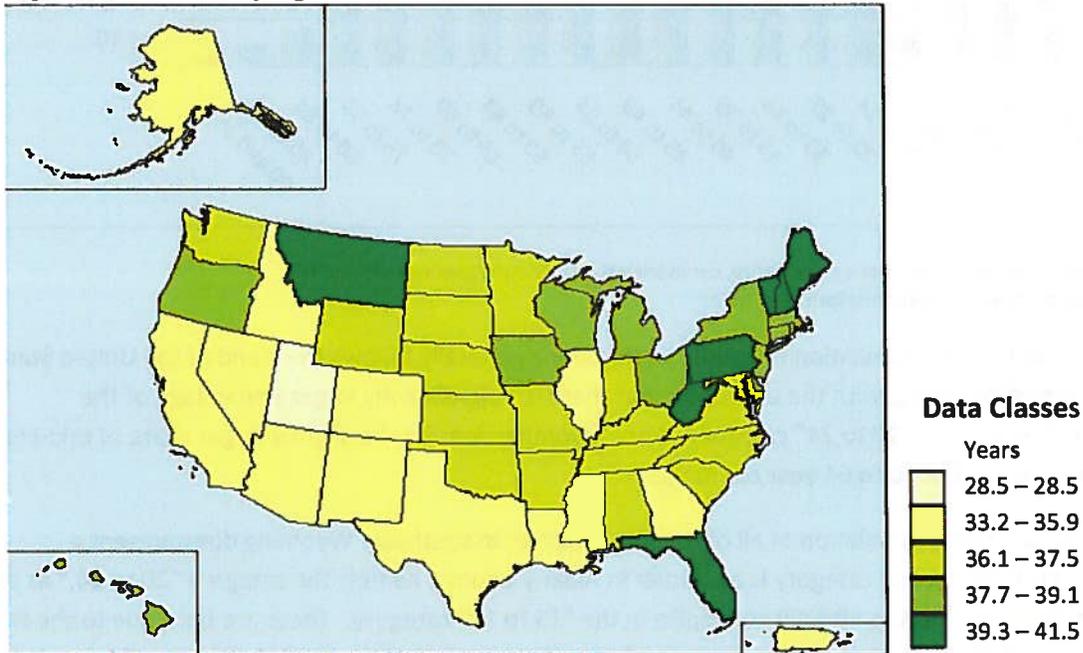


Figure 7: Median Age of the Total Population, Source: American FactFinder, US Census Bureau

This illustrates briefly how Wyoming's average population age is between 36.1 and 37.5 years. Compared to other nations in the state, Wyoming falls into the middle category for average age. While there tends to be a net out-migration in Wyoming of those in their twenties and thirties, we are in the same age category as nineteen other states. However, it is important to keep in mind that this is a state-wide average, and the different counties do have different age profiles for their populations.

The data and tables presented below look at the population specifically in southeast Wyoming. The population numbers in the following bar graphs are normalized by converting them into percentages so that comparisons can be made between the different population data with different scales.

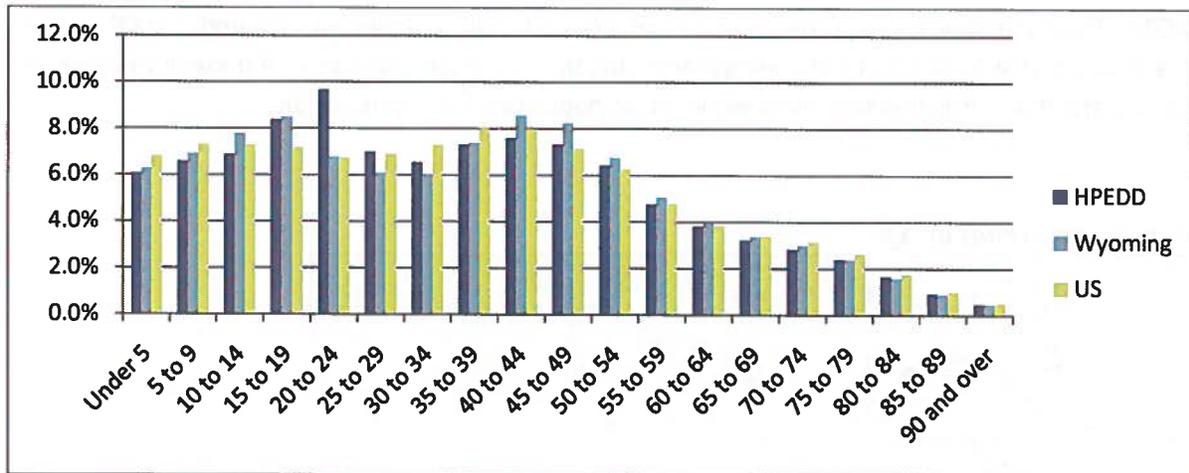


Figure 8: Percent of population per age category, comparing the District, Wyoming, and the U.S.  
 Source: US Census Bureau and American FactFinder

Figure 8 shows that the population of southeast Wyoming generally follows the trend of the United States and the state of Wyoming, with the exception that there is a significantly larger percentage of the population that is in the “20 to 24” category. Also, Wyoming does have a slightly larger share of mid-lifers to baby-boomers in the 40 to 64 year old range.

However, grouping the population of all of the four counties in southeast Wyoming does present a distorted picture, since one category is an outlier in Albany County, namely the category “20 to 24,” as can be seen in Figure 9. There is also a higher spike in the “15 to 19” category. These are both due to the fact that the only public university in Wyoming, namely the University of Wyoming, is in the city of Laramie in Albany County. This of course means that the share of the population in Albany County that does not fall into categories that the student body of the university falls into is proportionately smaller. The combined undergraduate and graduate enrollment at the university in 2010 was 9,684, or approximately thirty percent of the entire population of Albany County.

The population of Laramie County is much more evenly distributed, particularly the age categories between 0 and 54 which all fall between 6.6% and 8.2% of the total population of the county. Platte and Goshen Counties have a noticeable drop in the age categories from 20 to 39 years old, thus illustrating how young people with families do leave parts of the state, particularly the agriculture communities. There is great incentive for all counties, but these two counties in particular, to increase their economic development efforts since a declining and aging population without any new working families will bring undesirable consequences.

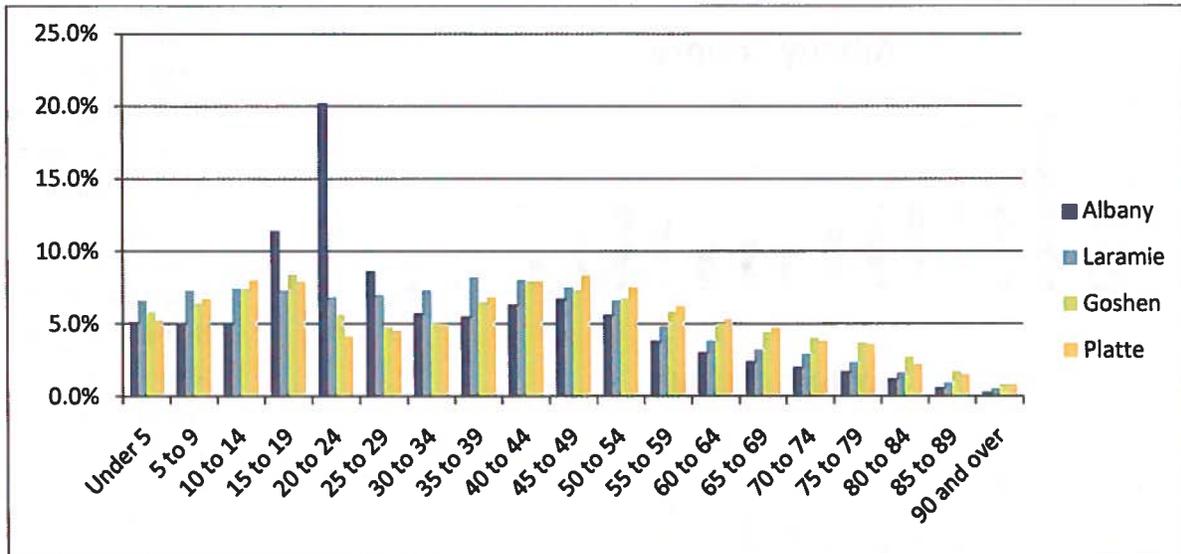


Figure 9: Percent of population per age category, comparing the counties within the District. Source: US Census Bureau and American FactFinder

**Household Trends by Income Levels**

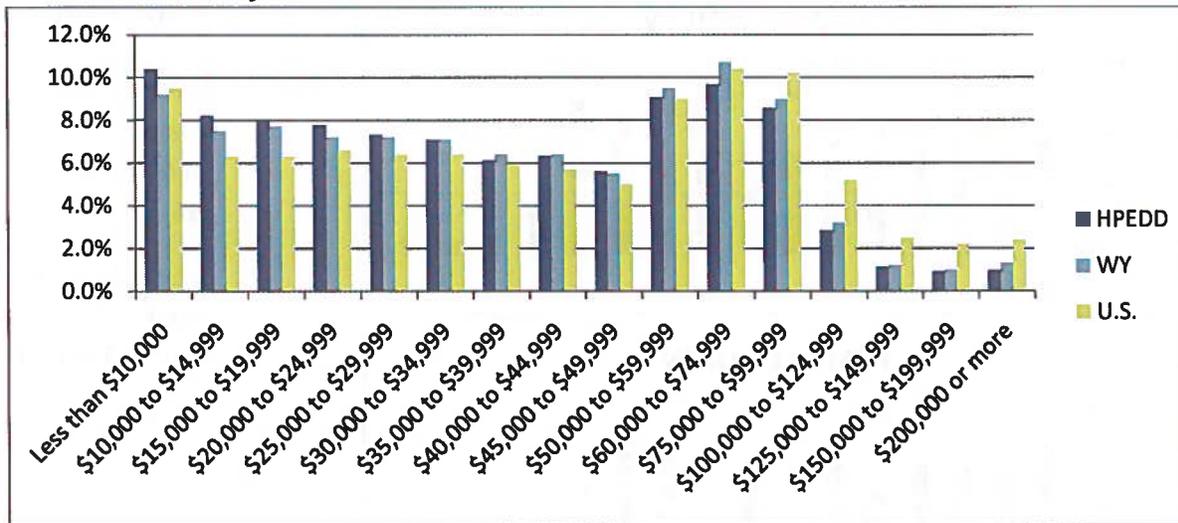
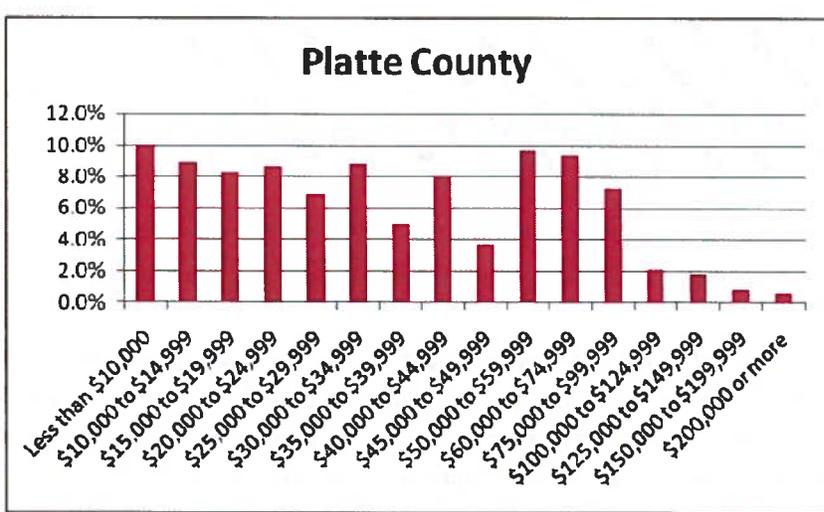
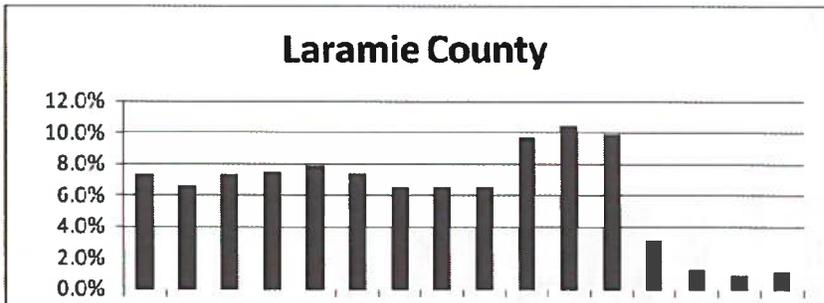
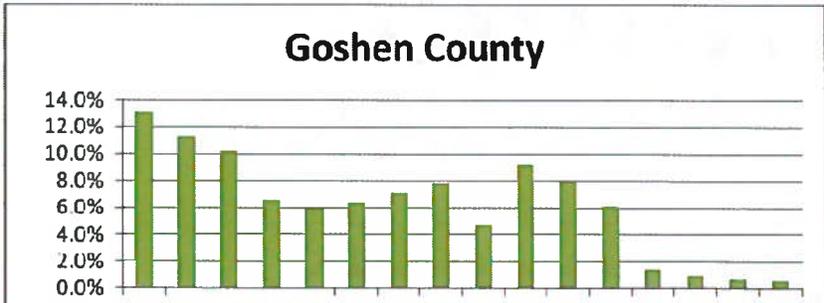
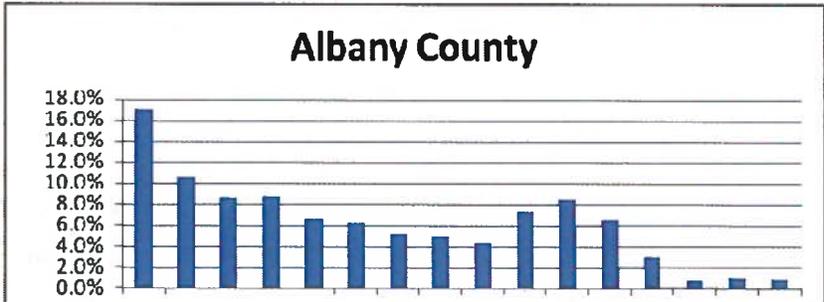


Figure 10: Household Trends by income Levels comparing HPEDD, Wyoming, and the U.S. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2008 American Community Survey

Household income counts all the income of all residents over the age of 18 in each household, including not only all wages and salaries, but such items as unemployment insurance, disability payments, child support payments, regular rental receipts, as well as any personal business, investment, or other kinds of income received routinely. The percentage of households in southeast Wyoming that earn less than \$20,000 per year is 27%, whereas in the U.S. it is a little over 22%. Also, the number of households in HPEDD that earn more than \$100K per year is 6%, whereas in the U.S. it is a little over 12%.



enough differences in household income between the four counties that the figures for each county are displayed on separate graphs.

In the graphs that show the \$50K - \$60K bracket, it can be largely attributed to dual-income households.

It also needs to be given consideration to the fact that the number of households in each of the

6,329  
1,988  
36,663  
526

counties do not have households that have an income above \$100,000.

### Race and Ethnic Characteristics

RACE	Albany		Goshen		Laramie		Platte		HPEDD	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
<b>Total Population</b>	<b>32,014</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>12,538</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>81,607</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>8,807</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>134,966</b>	<b>100%</b>
White	29,235	91.3%	11,764	93.8%	72,563	88.9%	8,471	96.2%	122,033	90.4%
Black or African American	354	1.1%	25	0.2%	2,124	2.6%	14	0.2%	2,517	1.9%
American Indian and Alaska Native	305	1.0%	108	0.9%	693	0.8%	44	0.5%	1,150	0.9%
Asian	545	1.7%	25	0.2%	777	1.0%	15	0.2%	1,362	1.0%
Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander	18	0.1%	15	0.1%	89	0.1%	2	0.0%	124	0.1%
Some other race	847	2.6%	458	3.7%	3,267	4.0%	149	1.7%	4,721	3.5%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	2,397	7.5%	1,107	8.8%	8,897	10.9%	465	5.3%	12,866	9.5%

Table 12: Race and Ethnic Characteristics of southeast Wyoming: Source: US Census Bureau, Census 2000

As outlined in Table 10, the White population represents southeast Wyoming's largest population at 90.4 percent. The Hispanic or Latino population, the second largest ethnic groups for which data are available. Hispanics, comprised primarily of a large Mexican population, represented almost 10 percent of southeast Wyoming's population in 2000, (up from just under 9 percent in 1990). The third largest group is African-Americans at almost 2 percent of the total population.

### Educational Attainment

Percent of population 25 years and over	Albany	Goshen	Laramie	Platte	HPEDD
Less than 5th grade	0.2%	0.8%	0.8%	0.6%	0.7%
5th to 8th grade	1.7%	4.7%	2.2%	4.5%	2.5%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	4.7%	9.8%	7.8%	10.0%	7.6%
High school graduate (incl. equivalency)	21.9%	33.4%	26.5%	38.5%	27.1%
Some college credit, less than 1 year	5.3%	7.7%	10.5%	6.8%	8.9%
1 or more years of college, no degree	17.3%	16.7%	19.5%	17.5%	18.6%
Associate degree	4.9%	8.2%	9.2%	6.9%	8.1%
Bachelor's degree	25.6%	14.3%	15.4%	10.7%	17.0%
Master's degree	10.7%	3.0%	5.4%	3.9%	6.1%
Professional degree	1.9%	0.9%	2.1%	0.5%	1.8%
Doctorate degree	6.0%	0.4%	0.6%	0.1%	1.6%
Percent high school graduate or higher	93.5%	84.7%	89.1%	84.9%	89.3%
Percent bachelor's degree or higher	44.1%	18.6%	23.4%	15.2%	26.5%

Table 13: Educational Attainment of the Adult Population. Source: Census 2000 Data Summary File 3

The data from the 2000 Census in Table 11 show that 89.3 percent of the region's population has attained at least a high school education. In addition, adults with a bachelor's degree represent 26.5 percent in the region. The fact that 44.1% of the population in Albany County has a bachelor's degree or higher can be attributed to the presence of the University of Wyoming in that county.

## Labor Force Profile

The civilian labor force of southeast Wyoming is estimated at 72,762 in 2010, an increase over 2000 of 3,621, or approximately 5% growth. This growth was less than the previous decade which saw an increase of almost 6000 in the labor force, or 13%. The region's labor force only grew three percent less than the national growth rate over the past decade, which grew at 8%. Also, the increase in the number of employed in the region (1%) also lagged behind the national rate of 3%.

County	1990	2000	Feb. 2010	Change 2000 to 2010
Albany, civilian labor force	16,707	18,300	19,900	9%
Employed	15,784	17,688	18,834	6%
Unemployed	923	612	1,066	74%
% unemployed	5.5%	3.3%	5.4%	2%
Goshen, civilian labor force	5,947	6,249	6,115	-2%
Employed	5,663	6,022	5,725	-5%
Unemployed	284	227	390	72%
% unemployed	4.8%	3.6%	6.4%	3%
Laramie, civilian labor force	36,688	40,237	42,778	6%
Employed	34,787	38,732	39,121	1%
Unemployed	1,901	1,505	3,657	143%
% unemployed	5.2%	3.7%	8.5%	5%
Platte, civilian labor force	3,865	4,355	3,969	-9%
Employed	3,661	4,179	3,644	-13%
Unemployed	204	176	325	85%
% unemployed	5.3%	4.0%	8.2%	4%
<b>Region, civilian labor force</b>	<b>63,207</b>	<b>69,141</b>	<b>72,762</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Employed</b>	<b>59,895</b>	<b>66,621</b>	<b>67,324</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>Unemployed</b>	<b>3,312</b>	<b>2,520</b>	<b>5,438</b>	<b>116%</b>
<b>% unemployed</b>	<b>5.2%</b>	<b>3.6%</b>	<b>7.5%</b>	<b>4%</b>
Wyoming, civilian labor force	235,977	266,882	288,875	8%
Employed	222,951	256,685	265,409	3%
Unemployed	13,026	10,197	23,466	130%
% unemployed	5.5%	3.8%	8.1%	4%
U.S., civilian labor force	125,840,000	141,815,000	153,512,000	8%
Employed	118,793,000	135,208,000	138,641,000	3%
Unemployed	7,047,000	5,655,000	14,871,000	163%
% unemployed	5.6%	4.0%	9.7%	6%

The unemployment rate has increased drastically over the last few years in the region as well as across the nation due to the national recession.

Regionally it increased by four percent to an unemployment rate of 7.5%, and nationally it increased by six percent to a high of 9.7%.

A decade ago in 2000 the region had a very low unemployment rate of 3.6% due to the impact of a large employment increase in defense and military-related industries as well as in other sectors, combined with a slower rate of growth and net out-migration in the young-middle age segments of the population base.

**Table 14: Civilian Labor Force Employment & Unemployment.**

Sources: Wyoming and U.S. Bureaus of Labor Statistics

## Workforce Development

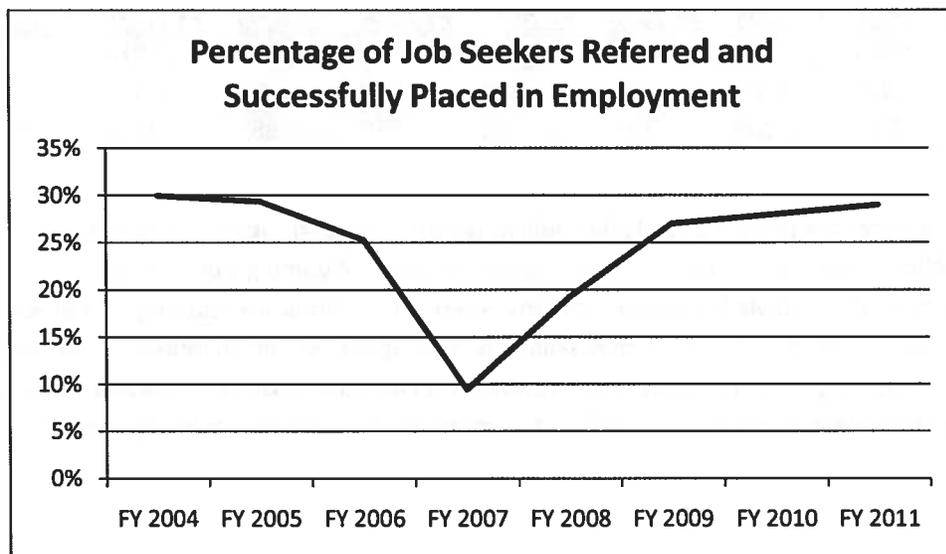
The workforce development system encompasses organizations at the national, state, and local levels that have direct responsibility for planning, allocating resources (both public and private), providing administrative oversight and operating programs to assist individuals and employers in obtaining education, training, job placement, and job recruitment.

Included in this broad network are several agencies charged with providing specific education and/or training support and other labor market services such as labor market information. At the state and local levels the network includes the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services and local workforce investment boards, state and local career and technical education and adult education agencies, vocational rehabilitation agencies, recognized apprenticeship programs, state and local welfare agencies, and/or sub-units of these entities.

There are a variety of organizations that provide direct education, training, or employment services (e.g. Eastern Wyoming College, Laramie County Community College, and the University of Wyoming, as well as direct training through local employers such as hospitals). Wyoming Workforce Development manages and operates four workforce development service centers in the District: in Laramie (Albany County), Cheyenne (Laramie County), Torrington (Goshen County), and Wheatland (Platte County).

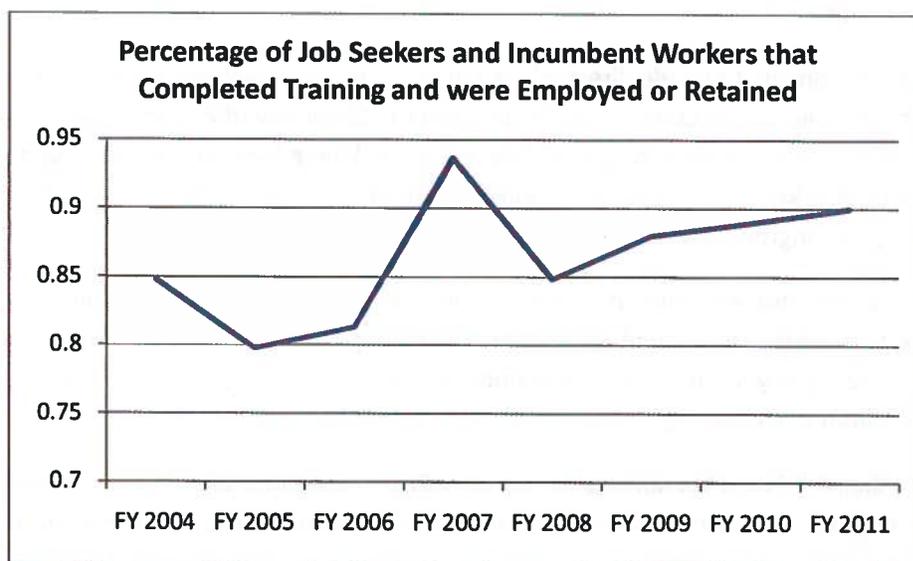
The Wyoming Department of Workforce Services has 28 programs that served 5,162 businesses and 85,833 individuals in fiscal year 2009. These numbers are anticipated to go up in the next fiscal year due to the national recession. The Agency has five critical functions: recruitment, employment, training, career guidance, and rehabilitation counseling.

While numbers specific to the High Plains Economic Development District are not available, the statewide trends can be applied to southeast Wyoming. Some important performance measures that the Agency tracks are illustrated below.



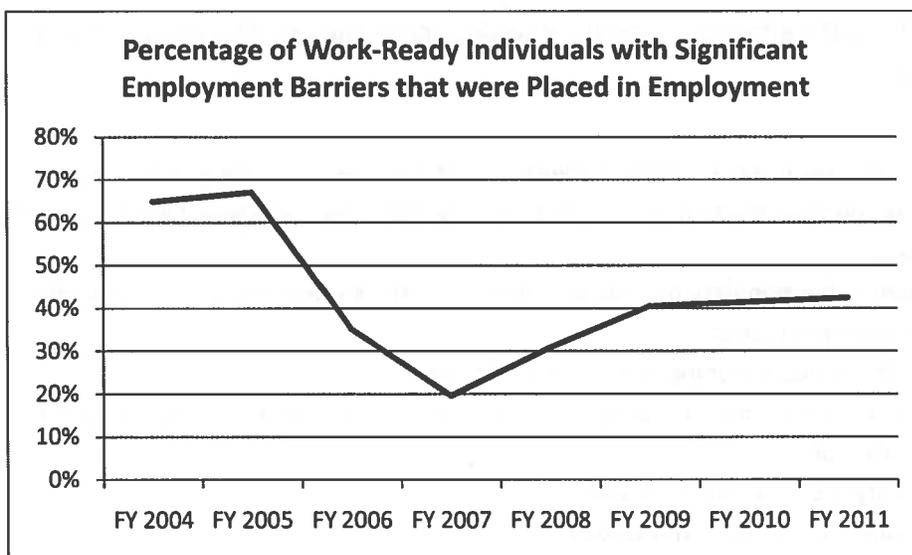
<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>FY 2004</u>	<u>FY 2005</u>	<u>FY 2006</u>	<u>FY 2007</u>	<u>FY 2008</u>	<u>FY 2009</u>	<u>FY 2010</u>	<u>FY 2011</u>
Total Matched	9,853	9,414	7,064	4,743	6,599	5,796	6,006	6,221
Total Available	32,874	32,083	27,941	50,324	34,284	21,452	21,452	21,452
Percentage	30%	29%	25%	9%	19%	27%	28%	29%

It is important that the observer notes that the reason for the significant drop in successful placements in FY 2007 was not due to poor performance, but that the pool of available job seekers jumped by 22,383 (an 80% increase). This number decreased the next two years and the success rate went back to levels of previous years.



<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>FY 2004</u>	<u>FY 2005</u>	<u>FY 2006</u>	<u>FY 2007</u>	<u>FY 2008</u>	<u>FY 2009</u>	<u>FY 2010</u>	<u>FY 2011</u>
Total Matched	1,743	2,879	2,483	1,488	4,345	2,694	2,724	2,755
Total Available	2,055	3,609	3,053	1,589	5,121	3,062	3,062	3,062
Percentage	85%	80%	81%	94%	85%	88%	89%	90%

Agency-wide, training services are provided to eligible individuals on unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests and informed choice. Wyoming's economy is continuing to become more of a knowledge-based economy where all positions are requiring higher levels of technological expertise. As the demand for higher-skilled, technological workers increases, the Agency, alongside its partners, is working to create innovative strategies that identify those skills needed, develop training opportunities and style its services and funding streams to meet Wyoming's evolving economy.



<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>FY 2004</u>	<u>FY 2005</u>	<u>FY 2006</u>	<u>FY 2007</u>	<u>FY 2008</u>	<u>FY 2009</u>	<u>FY 2010</u>	<u>FY 2011</u>
Total Matched	1,242	1,257	1,776	1,545	1,767	1,579	1,617	1,656
Total Available	1,914	1,873	5,045	7,903	5,722	3,901	3,901	3,901
Percentage	65%	67%	35%	20%	31%	40%	41%	42%

Workers included in this measure are offenders, individuals enrolled in Food Stamp Employment and Training Program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), eligible individuals in the Employment and Training for Self-Sufficiency Program, low income seniors enrolled in the Senior Community Service Employment Program and all clients receiving services through the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. Veterans receiving specialized services unique to their veteran status are also included in this measure.

The Agency continues to view intensive counseling and guidance services as essential to the successful placement of program participants with significant employment barriers into unsubsidized positions.

### **SWOT Analysis for Demographic Profile of Southeast Wyoming**

#### ***Strengths***

- The region has an above average 15-24 year olds compared to Wyoming and the U.S.
- Since 1990, the region's labor force increased by nearly 5%.
- Most of the residents of southeast Wyoming are legal U.S. residents.
- The University of Wyoming and the region's hospitals have helped attract highly paid, young workers to the region.
- The region presently has a large number of baby boomers in the work force.

- Wyoming has a strong Department of Workforce Services, providing valuable job training and job placement services.

### ***Weaknesses***

- Population growth has been stagnant or negative in 3 of the 4 counties in the past two decades.
  - The two ag counties, Platte and Goshen, have essentially the same population now as they did in 1920.
  - Over a third of the population of Albany County is in the student body of UW and most will leave upon graduation.
- The region's population loss is leading to less political clout.
- The FDIC's John Anderlik estimates a county needs to have at least 10,000 persons to support services and infrastructure.
  - Platte County is below this threshold
  - Goshen County is very near this threshold
  - Continued population loss in Goshen and Platte Counties would threaten the critical mass needed to support government, business, and churches
- The region has been losing a significant number of young adults over the years, particularly after graduating high school or from higher education.
- It can be projected that all of the increase in labor force this decade will come from Laramie and Albany Counties, unless there are substantial changes through oil and gas exploration and drilling.
- The Department of Workforce Services' resources can easily become strained in a down economy like we are experiencing now.

### ***Opportunities***

- Southeast Wyoming is close to the Colorado Front Range.
- Southeast Wyoming is very affordable compared to places like the Front Range, making it a prime location for people wanting to leave and come someplace less expensive.
- If economic trends enable an improvement in young adult migration, the region's future population could very well increase.
- The region's above average percentage of 15-24 year olds could provide a solid foundation for the future if they are retained.
- The region's higher education institutions could help retain young adults.
- The "wyomingatwork.org" website can connect job seekers with job opportunities and job training.

### ***Threats***

- A large number of the labor force in southeast Wyoming will be retiring in the next 5 to 10 years.
- Youth out-migration (after high school or secondary education) has continued to damage the region's present and future populations.
- The ag counties will have an older population than Albany and Laramie Counties.
- The region's political representation could be diminished at both the state and federal levels if population declines in the ag counties continue.

- If the national recession continues, qualified workers will not be able to get placed as there simply will not be jobs available.

### **Recommended Actions**

- Continue and expand labor recruitment efforts.
- Take actions to attract young professionals.
  - Provide employment opportunities that reduce the income gap.
  - Continue to change economic strategies from low wage job creation to quality job development.
  - Provide clear career paths that are attractive to youth.
- Continue to increase the numbers of students at Eastern Wyoming College and Laramie Community College.
- Retain and expand housing opportunities (see housing section).
  - Capture some of the population growth from the Colorado Front Range.
  - Market the region's business and residential advantages to the Front Range
- Increase the region's tourism marketing to the Front Range, which will lead to their better familiarity with the region.

## Housing Inventory Profile

According to the data from the 2000 Census, southeast Wyoming's housing inventory expanded by 4,593 units over the past decade. This expansion was entirely in the category of owner-occupied housing, consisting of single-family detached housing.

While the regional trend in owner-occupied housing was consistent with national trends, the region's inventory of rental housing declined by four percent as the overall U.S. inventory of rental units increased by almost two percent.

The accompanying bar graphs (Figures 11 and 12) further illustrate the region's owner-occupied housing inventory by value levels for 1990 and 2000 with the national and state patterns of distribution. The lowest value range of housing in southeast Wyoming at \$50,000 declined paralleling the national trend during the decade. However, the low to middle value range (\$50,000-\$99,999) remains as the largest value range of housing in southeast Wyoming, reaching 41% compared to 30% nationally in 2000. This is down only over 20% from the 1990 percentage of about 64% compared to the national average of 38%.

All value ranges of housing in southeast Wyoming fell significantly lower than the national average in proportion of the total inventory in 2000. Over the decade, moreover, each value level of housing above the \$100,000 level in the region was increased at a much slower rate than in the national housing inventory, further reducing their percentages of the overall housing inventory from 1990.

In brief, southeast Wyoming's housing inventory underwent moderate growth at a rate that appears to be consistent with its modest population growth.

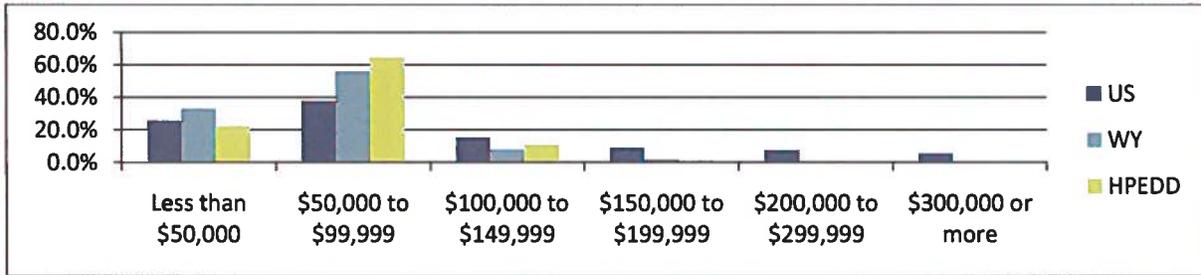


Figure 11: Housing by Value Levels in 1990. Source: U.S. Census Bureau

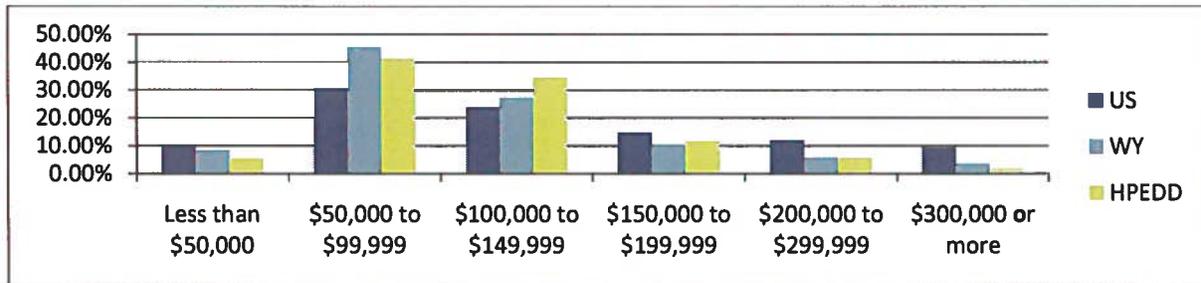


Figure 12: Housing by Value Levels in 2000. Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

## **SWOT Analysis Housing Inventory**

### ***Strengths***

- The U.S. Census Bureau estimates southeast Wyoming added 4,593 housing units the past decade.
- Homes in southeast Wyoming are more affordable than in many other places in the nation, even during the housing crisis.
- Southeast Wyoming is not facing high foreclosure rates like much of the United States.

### ***Weaknesses***

- Much of housing is at least several decades old.
- The region has a low ratio of high value homes.
- The region does not have many apartment complexes, especially in rural communities.

### ***Opportunities***

- Housing in southeast Wyoming is generally cheaper than the Colorado Front Range.
- If there is an increase in higher wage jobs, it will provide incentive to build new housing.

### ***Threats***

- It will be difficult to grow the population without adding many more houses.
- Failing to meet the latent demand for housing could limit the region's development potential.
- An aging housing stock could contribute to housing shortages if too many homes become dilapidated.
- Higher commodity prices are making homes more expensive to build.

### **Recommended Actions for Housing**

- Expand housing rehabilitation and weatherization programs to maintain existing housing stock.
  - Make residents aware of existing housing rehab and weatherization programs.
  - Encourage communities to apply for existing housing rehab funding programs.
- Develop more retirement housing to accelerate filtering process
  - Encourage communities to utilize existing programs to expand retirement housing.
  - Recruit developers to build quality retirement facilities.
  - Encourage state and federal representatives to expand programs to build retirement housing.
- Increase the number of rental complexes.
  - Encourage communities to utilize existing programs to expand rental complexes.
  - Recruit developers to build quality apartment facilities.
  - Encourage state and federal representatives to expand programs to build apartments.

## The Environment and Environmental Resources

### Climate Profile of Southeast Wyoming

This profile of the climate of southeast Wyoming addresses the principal characteristics that exert an obvious impact on its economy and business growth. Thus, the data presented in this section will be at a summary level as reported for the primary weather station in the region located at the Cheyenne municipal airport.

Southeast Wyoming experiences long diurnal and annual temperature ranges due to the advent of the both warm and cold air masses combined with its relatively high elevation which permits rapid incoming and outgoing radiation. The daily temperature range averages about 30 degrees in the summer and 23 degrees in the winter.

Many northern cold air masses during winter miss southeast Wyoming. Because of the down-slope of land to the east and the prevailing westerlies, some of the cold air masses do move over the region. However, only about 13% of the days in an average January, the coldest month of the year, show temperatures dropping to zero or below. Temperatures during the winter months average a few degrees higher than over the Mississippi and Missouri Valleys at the same latitude.

Windy days are quite frequent during the winter and spring months. Fortunately, about 70 percent of the normal annual precipitation occurs during the growing season. During the summer months precipitation is mostly of the shower type and occurs with thunderstorms. Hail is frequent and occasionally destructive in some thunderstorms.

<b>Month</b>	<b>Temperature</b>		<b>Number of days with:</b>		
	<b>low (°F)</b>	<b>high (°F)</b>	<b>Heavy fog</b>	<b>Thunderstorms</b>	<b>snowfall &gt; 1.0 in</b>
January	15.2	37.9	1.0	0.0	1.9
February	18.1	40.5	1.9	0.0	1.7
March	22.1	44.9	3.2	0.2	3.6
April	30.1	54.3	3.3	2.1	2.1
May	39.4	64.5	3.0	7.8	0.7
June	48.3	75.1	1.9	11.3	0.0
July	54.6	81.1	1.2	13.2	0.0
August	52.8	79.4	1.4	10.5	0.0
September	43.7	70.5	1.9	4.5	0.3
October	33.9	59.2	2.0	0.9	1.3
November	23.7	45.5	1.9	0.0	2.0
December	16.7	39.0	1.4	0.0	2.0
<b>Annual averages/ totals</b>	<b>33.2</b>	<b>57.7</b>	<b>24.1</b>	<b>50.5</b>	<b>15.6</b>

Most of the snow falls during late winter and early spring months, though it is not unheard of to have heavy snow in May.

The growing season in southeast Wyoming averages about 132 days per year, and extends from May 18<sup>th</sup> to September 27<sup>th</sup>. Freezing temperatures have occurred as late in the spring as mid-June, and as early in the fall as late August.

Relative humidity in the region averages near 50% on an annual basis with large daily variations. Very seldom is the relative humidity above 30% when the temperature is above 80 degrees.

In view of the foregoing, it is apparent that business operations and especially the transportation sector, including air and ground transportation systems, must observe carefully planned scheduling of inbound and outbound movements. In addition, the region's infrastructure systems are vital to the maintenance of safe and efficient ground and air transportation operations. The effectiveness of the region's efforts to attract new and expanded business investment and jobs will continue to be greatly dependent on the capabilities of its public and private sector infrastructure to minimize the interruptions of its climate on normal business operations.

## Overview of Natural Resources

While Wyoming is known for its coal, oil and natural gas resources, the southeast corner of Wyoming has not been able to share in those endeavors. As you can see from this map taken from the United States Geological Survey paper "Assessing the Coal Resources of the United States" (July 1996), the area covered by the High Plains Economic Development District does not have any significant coal beds or coal formations.

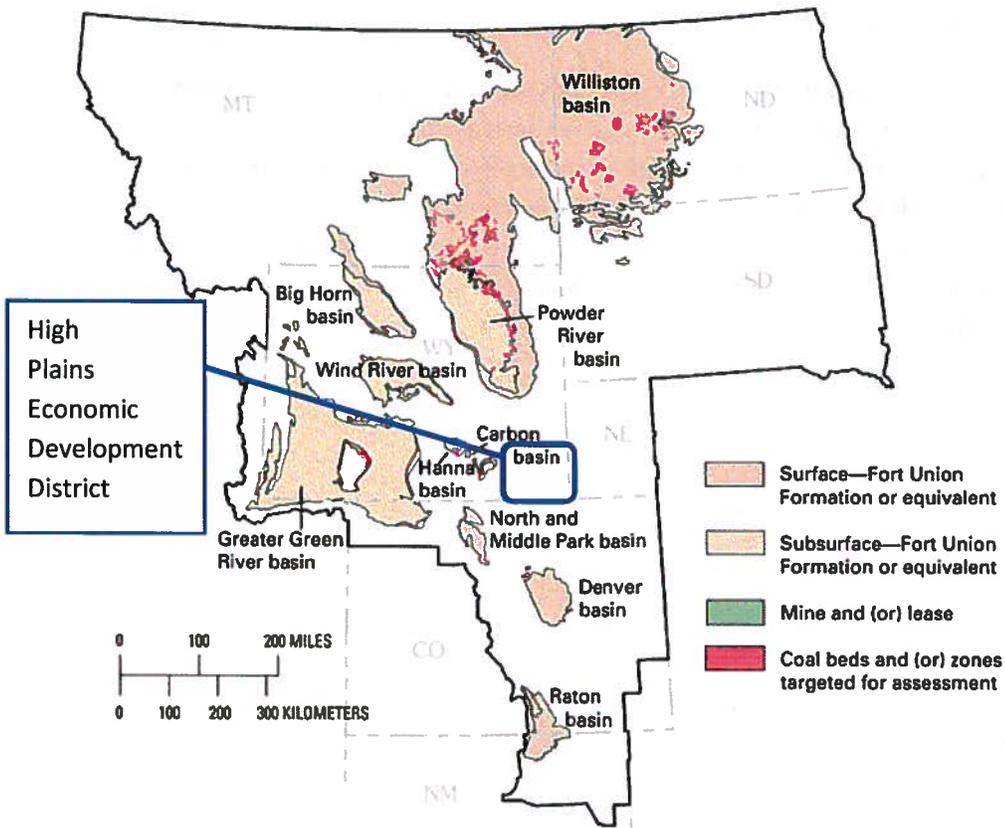
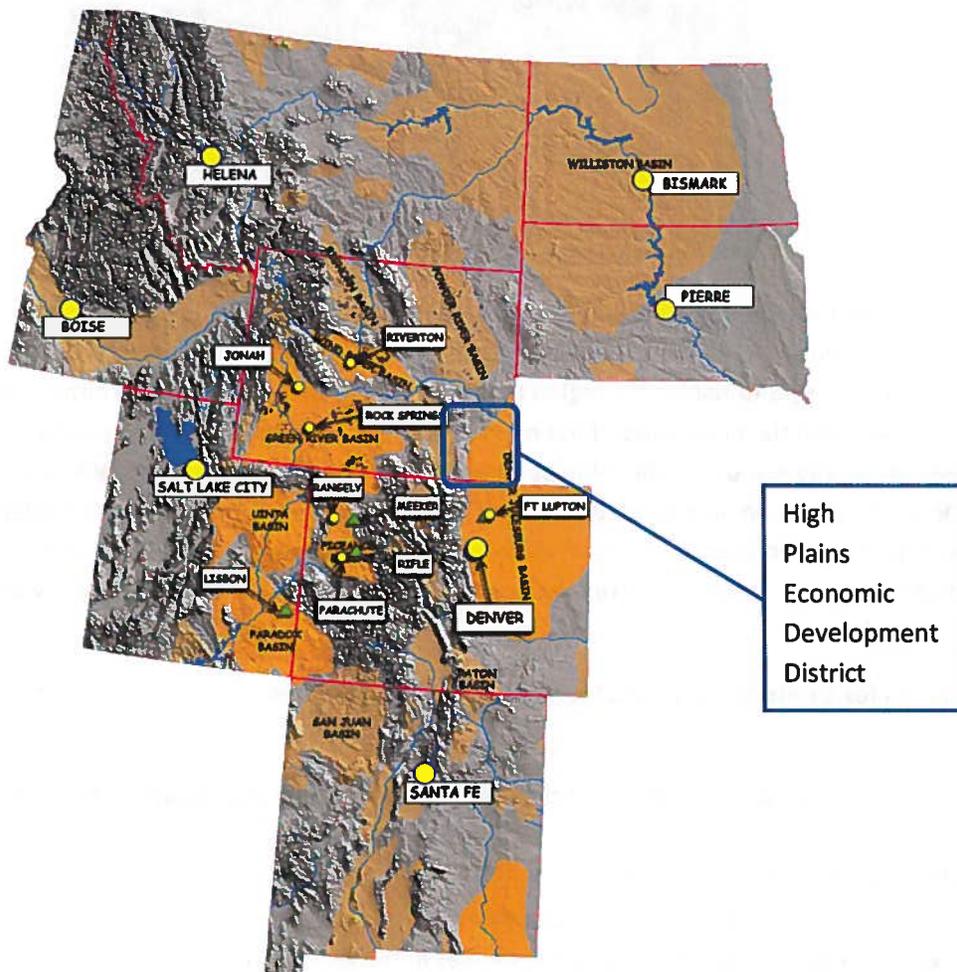


Figure 13: Rocky Mountains and Colorado Plateau coal producing region. Source: USGS Fact Sheet FS-157-96

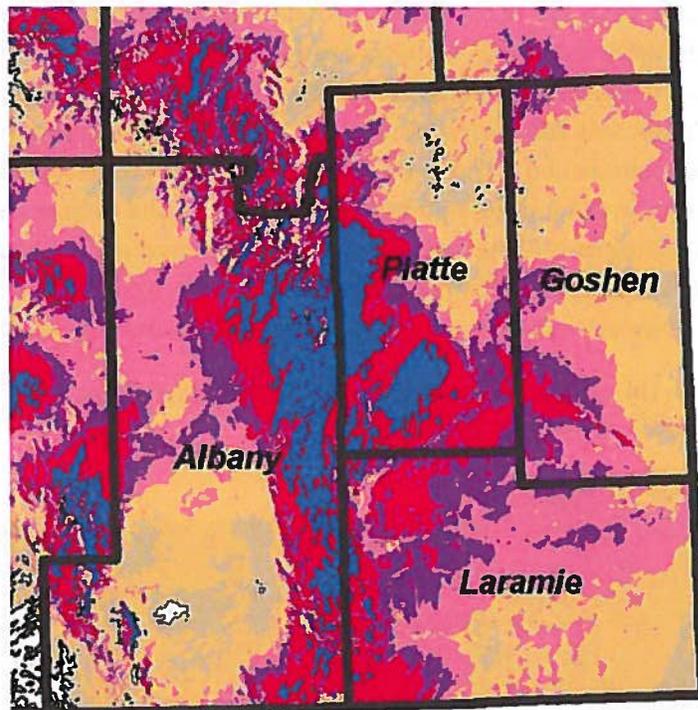
Historically, there has been no drilling for oil and natural gas in the region either. As the map below indicates, there are oil and natural gas reserves (Niobrara Shale) in the region in the Denver-Julesburg Basin, but it has been technically prohibitive up until now to access those resources. However, an article in the Casper Star Tribune from March 17, 2010 “Potential oil play in eastern Wyoming excites industry” notes that with national oil prices expected to average more than \$80 per barrel through 2010 and average \$85 in 2011, along with huge leaps in drilling and completion technologies, the potential for oil and gas drilling from Cheyenne up north to Douglas now exists. A few rigs have begun operation in Spring of 2010. This new development will be closely watched and any movement will be incorporated into the region’s development strategy, as it could have significant impact on the regional economy.

**Figure 14: Oil and Gas Reserves in the Rocky Mountain Basin.**  
**Source: [www.rockiesenergyworkforce.org](http://www.rockiesenergyworkforce.org)**



**Legend:**

- — state capital
- ▲ — towns that have exploration and production activity or are a center for regional exploration and production activity
- — basin with significant oil and natural gas resources



The above map is an excerpt from an NREL (National Renewable Energy Laboratories) map showing the various wind classes for Wyoming. As illustrated above, a large part of the region has wind classes that are “Good” and above. There is potential for the region to become home to significant wind farms that would change the landscape and the economies of the region. With the national push for improving the United States’ renewable energy resources, the interest for wind farms has increased in recent years. The area has some of the nation’s best on-land wind resources, however the development has been stalled by the lack of high power transmission lines to transport the energy to those states that desire it. This, coupled with previous uncertainty in state-wide regulations, is why wind farms have not yet been widely developed in this area of the state.

### **SWOT Analysis for Environment and Environmental Resources**

#### ***Strengths***

- The region has a very comfortable, semi-arid climate that is less humid than much of the United States.
- The region has very good wind resources.
- The region has an above average number of sunny days.
- Recent innovations in technology make the oil resources in the region accessible.
- The region already benefits from producing and transporting energy.
- The distribution of coal pumps millions of dollars into our regional economy.
- There are untapped oil reserves in southeast Wyoming.
- The availability of Powder River Basin coal has kept electric rates low.

### ***Weaknesses***

- Much of the country is unaware of the region's climate and advantages.
- Aside from the cities of Laramie and Cheyenne, the rest of the region is sparsely populated.
- The region has some climate disadvantages:
  - It does not receive much precipitation.
  - It is prone to droughts.
  - It is susceptible to severe hail storms.
- Despite our great potential for wind energy production, the region has very few turbines installed.
- Wyoming's wind industry is being held back due to many policy and physical restraints.
  - Wyoming's government has not made wind energy development a significant initiative.
  - Wyoming has few wind energy incentives compared to many neighboring states.
  - Wyoming has transmission issues which challenge wind energy development.

### ***Opportunities***

- There are oil resources which are now technically available in the region.
- Wyoming is recognized as one of the premium wind sites in the United States.
- Southeast Wyoming could potentially provide hundreds of MW of wind energy to Colorado.
- Wind energy development could lead to lucrative wind manufacturing and assembly employment.
- Adopting a state Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) and other incentives could propel Wyoming's wind industry energy forward.
- The region is close to the Colorado Front Range mega-region.
- Producing energy will likely be one of the greatest economic development opportunities for rural areas in the coming decades.
- Increased demand for coal will likely create additional railroad opportunities for the region.
- Renewable energy has become a bigger part of the United States' energy portfolio and will likely continue to account for an increasing share of our country's total supply in coming years.
  - Southeast Wyoming has very good wind resources.

### ***Threats***

- Large parts of southeast Wyoming are relatively remote.
- High energy prices will have a greater negative impact on remote rural areas.
- The Wyoming legislature could do more to promote wind energy in Wyoming.
- The region's oil industry could occasionally be hit with steep pricing discounts.
- The United States has seen its oil production continue to decline over the last several decades.
- The Western Hemisphere has an abundance of non-conventional oil, but it is expensive to extract and has limited daily production.
- The region's high reliance on coal for electricity could lead to high electricity rates in the near future, especially with potential 'cap and trade' legislation.
- The development of wind, solar and geo-thermal could suffer a temporary step backwards if legislation changes.

## **Recommended Actions for Environment and Environmental Resources**

- Promote the region's climate advantages in websites and marketing materials.
- Encourage Federal Legislators to investigate ways to assure independent domestic oil producers receive fair rates for their production.
- Stimulate wind energy development in southeast Wyoming.
  - Encourage state representatives to promote legislation that will benefit the wind energy industry.
  - Encourage the state set a Renewable Energy Portfolio.
  - Encourage federal assistance on addressing transmission issues for wind energy.
- Enable the use of renewable energy such as solar, wind, and geothermal.
- Wind energy development strategies:
  - Advocate for a state Renewable Portfolio Standard.
  - Encourage Federal and state government to work with other Great Plains States to develop a large wind energy network to improve wind reliability.
  - Encourage the Federal government to invest in the improvement of the country's electrical transmission system.
  - Encourage Federal and state government to fund more research for developing efficient wind energy storage.
  - Encourage towns and cities to develop zoning regulations that enable environmentally responsible wind farms.
- Coal, oil, and rail strategies:
  - Develop rail service cluster (engine and car repair).
  - Preserve and develop rail spurs.
  - Encourage the Federal Government to assist small towns are served by the railroads.
  - Encourage the Federal Government to provide research and funding for carbon sequestration and coal gasification.
  - Encourage zoning regulations which ensure that environmentally responsible energy developments are not hindered.
  - Provide assistance to develop and maintain oil service industries.

## STRATEGIC GOALS AND STRATEGIES

The goals that are necessary to address the economic threats and weaknesses and to capitalize on the strengths and opportunities of the region are listed below. Following each goal are strategic projects, programs or activities to fulfill these goals and objectives.

Borrowing a term coined by Jim Collins in *Built to Last*, the BHAG (Big Hairy Audacious Goal), "an audacious 10-to-30-year goal to progress towards an envisioned future," of the CEDS is **to enhance the regional economic conditions in order to increase the quality of life for the region's citizens**. This large goal has many facets ranging from workforce needs, to business capital, to infrastructure and everything in between. We have identified sub-goals to address certain aspects of the BHAG.

*Goal #1: Enhance economic diversity.*

*Goal #2: Promote "economic gardening."*

*Goal #3: Establish and promote strong public-private partnerships.*

*Goal #4: Maintain and improve public infrastructure and the public planning process.*

*Goal #5: Increase regional prosperity through a regional approach.*

### **Strategies**

Below we outline specific strategies which will help achieve each goal. Included are also projects which we have identified for the region. Several projects help address several goals and are indicated with an asterisk (\*).

Goal #1: Enhance economic diversity.

Strategic Action 1: Determine the business needs for the region that will complement our resources.

Strategic Action 2: Develop agriculture diversification and value-added processing.

Strategic Action 3: Attract new businesses to the region.

Project 1: Encourage a datacenter to relocate to southeast Wyoming.

Project 2: Create a regional marketing approach to show prospective businesses that all amenities and resources from the region are at their disposal.

Project 3: Increase and encourage further development of existing business parks.\*

Project 4: Enhance rail capacity at Swan Ranch development south of Cheyenne.\*

Project 5: Create a regional revolving loan fund.\*

Goal #2: Promote “economic gardening.”

Strategic Action 1: Support existing businesses through technology, education, and information.

Strategic Action 2: Encourage and provide resources to entrepreneurship.

Strategic Action 3: Provide support to existing businesses in their expansion efforts.

Strategic Action 4: Provide needed resources to retain existing businesses.

Project 1: Increase and encourage further development of existing business parks.\*

Project 2: Enhance rail capacity at Swan Ranch development south of Cheyenne.\*

Project 3: Create a regional revolving loan fund.\*

Goal #3: Establish and promote strong public-private partnerships.

Strategic Action 1: Enhance communication between community leaders.

Strategic Action 2: Promote leadership development.

Project 1: Begin a young professionals’ network.

Goal #4: Maintain and improve public infrastructure and the public planning process.

Strategic Action 1: Determine the infrastructure needs for new business and recruitment efforts.

Strategic Action 2: Encourage and support community planning efforts.

Project 1: Increase and encourage further development of existing business parks.\*

Project 2: Enhance rail capacity at Swan Ranch development south of Cheyenne.\*

Goal #5: Increase regional prosperity through a regional approach.

Strategic Action 1: Support regional planning and marketing efforts.

Strategic Action 2: Enhance the cooperation between existing state and local economic development entities.

Project 1: Create an inventory of physical and service assets.

Project 2: Create and distribute value added industry profiles of the region that will serve as tools for counties, municipalities, private industry and economic development organizations.

## **COMMUNITY AND PRIVATE SECTOR INVOLVEMENT**

In order to achieve the BHAG outlined in the previous Strategic Goals and Objectives section, the High Plains Economic Development District cannot work alone. HPEDD has strong partnerships with each of the four counties’ economic development corporations. The strong commitment of the corporations is

demonstrated by their offices providing up to forty percent of the budget through in-kind work. The HPEDD staff works closely with their offices in the development and implementation of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. HPEDD incorporates the strong private sector relationships that the economic development corporations have with their members.

The private membership involved in economic development and strategy development in southeast Wyoming cover a wide spectrum of industries, as shown below:

- Agriculture
- Business Parks
- Contractors and Engineers
- Education
- Hospitality
- Industrial
- Information Technology (IT)
- Manufacturing
- Health and Human Services
- Real Estate
- Research and Development
- Retail
- Telecommunications
- Travel and Tourism
- Utilities

The economic development organizations that play an integral role in the role of HPEDD and its activities and outreach to the community are:

**Goshen County Economic Development**  
117 West 22<sup>nd</sup>  
PO Box 580  
Torrington, WY 92240

**Platte County Economic Development**  
1560 Johnston Street  
PO Box 988  
Wheatland, WY 82201

**Cheyenne LEADS**  
121 West 15<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 304  
PO Box 1045  
Cheyenne, WY 82003-1045

**Laramie Economic Development Corporation**  
313 South 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Suite B  
PO Box 1250  
Laramie, WY 82073-1250

Other organizations that partner with HPEDD include the Wyoming Business Council and the four chambers of commerce for Platte County, Goshen County, City of Laramie, and City of Cheyenne. Additional partnerships exist with Wyoming Entrepreneur.BIZ (Small Business Development Center) and their local representatives in southeast Wyoming.

## STRATEGIC DISTRICT PROJECTS, PROGRAMS OR ACTIVITIES (SUGGESTED AND VITAL)

Following is a list of all suggested projects, programs and activities we have identified for the region, and the projected number of jobs to be created as a result. Some projects do not lead to direct job creation, but either foster collaboration or are used as a tool in the economic development activities in southeast Wyoming.

\*\*\*Projects which we have identified as **Vital** are **highlighted in red text**.\*\*\*

While there are quite a few projects identified as “vital” several of them are low-cost endeavors that will serve as a tool for all economic development entities in southeast Wyoming and will be a continuing service provided through HPEDD.

### *Projects*

<b>Project</b>	<b>Lead Organization</b>	<b>Number of jobs created</b>
Establish an Enterprise Center in Goshen County to support entrepreneurs and small business.	Goshen County Economic Development	15 per year
Inventory of business parks and facilities of the region.	HPEDD	Indirect-used for marketing
Create a toolkit of resources available in the region.	HPEDD	Indirect - used for business retention and expansion
Continue to assist with regional planning efforts such as the Platte and Goshen County “Building the Wyoming We Want” pilot project.	HPEDD	Indirect – used by local governments for land use planning.
Continue to develop North Range Business Park in Cheyenne	Cheyenne LEADS	20-150 per year until full
Continue to develop Cheyenne Business Parkway in Cheyenne	Cheyenne LEADS	30-120 per year until full
Develop new Cold Springs Business Park in Torrington	Goshen County Economic Development	50-180
Continue to develop Laramie River Business Park I	Laramie Economic Development	25-130
Continue to develop Laramie River Business Park II	Laramie Economic Development	10-60 per year until full
Encourage a datacenter to relocate to southeast Wyoming.	Cheyenne LEADS	20-100
Create a regional marketing strategy	HPEDD	Indirect – used to attract prospective companies
Enhance rail capacity at Swan Ranch development south of Cheyenne	Cheyenne LEADS and Grannit Peak	10-30
Build recreation/ community center in Platte and Goshen Counties	Platte and Goshen County Economic Development	10

### ***Programs***

<b><u>Program</u></b>	<b><u>Lead Organization</u></b>	<b><u>Number of jobs created</u></b>
Implement local business retention and expansion programs ("economic gardening").	Local economic development groups	.5% job growth per county per year (approx 350 per year)
Create regional revolving loan fund	HPEDD	10-25 per year

### ***Activities***

<b><u>Activity</u></b>	<b><u>Lead Organization</u></b>	<b><u>Number of jobs created</u></b>
Establish networks for young professionals	Local economic development groups	NA
Invest in short-term strategies to address the need for rental housing in Torrington	Goshen County Economic Development	3-8
Have quarterly meetings to inform local officials of regional developments	HPEDD	NA

### **Sources of funding**

At the time none of the counties in the High Plains Economic Development District qualify for most EDA funding based on the Per Capita Income or Unemployment criteria. We do qualify for planning grants and will continue to take advantage of that funding source for regional planning projects.

The Wyoming Business Council has been and continues to be a great source of funding for many projects in the region and throughout Wyoming. This funding is also useful since the state money can often be used as match for federal funds, for example through the EDA or through USDA Rural Development. The applicable funding programs through the Wyoming Business Council are:

- Business Ready Community (BRC) Grant and Loan Program
  - Data Center Program (Part of the BRC Program)
- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program
  - CDBG Community Development Grants
  - CDBG Economic Development Infrastructure Grants
- Community Facilities Grant and Loan Program

## **PLAN OF ACTION**

High Plains Economic Development District is in a unique position to provide complimentary services to local, state, and federal economic development goals and strategies. The HPEDD participates in and encourages a variety of collaborative efforts directed at improving the economic and quality of life conditions of southeast Wyoming.

In regards to state efforts, this CEDS has been created to be compliant and cooperative to State of Wyoming economic development goals. For example, two of the counties, namely Platte and Goshen, were selected to be the pilot project for Governor Freudenthal's program "Building the Wyoming We Want" or BW3. This is an in-depth planning and visioning process that is a 16 month process to create a vision of what Wyoming should be decades into the future. It creates a baseline scenario, doing a high-tech analysis of the area using GIS, and establishes what the future will look like if the "business as usual" approach is taken. It also creates other scenarios, looking at growth patterns and industry development, and relies heavily on public participation and input. As this type of in-depth analysis and visioning process is critical to the continuation of any economic development district, HPEDD is part of the Executive Committee and the Project Team leading this effort.

The High Plains Economic Development District has and will continue to participate in regional activities that:

- Promote economic development and opportunity
- Foster effective transportation access
- Enhance and protect the environment
- Maximize effective development and use of the workforce consistent with any applicable State or local workforce investment strategy
- Promote the use of technology in economic development, including access to high-speed telecommunications
- Balance resources through sound management of physical development
- Obtain and utilize adequate funds and other resources
- Support the coordinated and collaborative implementation of all CEDS goals and strategies

## **Integrating the CEDS into Wyoming's economic development priorities.**

The Wyoming Business Council is the entity designated for the economic development of Wyoming. The highlights of its strategic plan are below. The elements of the Wyoming Business Council strategy that harmonize with the Goals, Strategies, and Projects outlined in the CEDS are highlighted in gray. While the strategy for the Wyoming Business Council is more elaborate and farther reaching than what is outlined in this CEDS, the elements of the CEDS all fall within the state-wide strategy.

### **1. MISSION STATEMENT.**

- a. To facilitate the economic growth of Wyoming.

### **2. VISION STATEMENT.**

- a. Wyoming's economy is growing and resilient; its businesses have the resources necessary for success; its communities are vibrant, sustainable places where people want to live, work, visit and play; and its western heritage is celebrated and supported.

### **3. GOALS.**

- a. **People.** Improve the quality of life and opportunities for people in Wyoming.
- b. **Business.** Promote business development that complements Wyoming's assets.
- c. **Places.** Develop Wyoming with places where people want to live, work, visit and play.

### **4. PEOPLE STRATEGIES**

- a. Goal: Improve the quality of life and opportunities for people in Wyoming
- b. Strategies
  - i. Increase job skill training and education
  - ii. Diversify employment opportunities
  - iii. Ensure quality child care facilities are available
  - iv. Promote youth entrepreneurship
  - v. Participate in efforts to increase median wages
  - vi. Collaborate with increasing access to vocational education and training
  - vii. Support efforts to reduce substance abuse

### **5. BUSINESS STRATEGIES**

- a. Goal: Promote business development that complements Wyoming's assets.
- b. Strategies
  - i. Expand and attract target sectors
  - ii. Increase agriculture diversification and value-added agriculture
  - iii. Expand national and international opportunities for Wyoming products
  - iv. Identify and support local and regional economic development organizations
  - v. Identify and support niche industries
  - vi. Provide technical assistance and education to businesses and entrepreneurs
  - vii. Increase networking and mentoring programs
  - viii. Expand incubator support throughout the state
  - ix. Build more "spec" buildings
  - x. Expand utilization of federal tax credits

- xi. Expand retail and services sectors
- xii. Help develop the non-profit sector
- xiii. Participate in workforce recruitment efforts

## 6. PLACES STRATEGIES

a. Goal: Develop a Wyoming with places where people want to live, work, visit and play

### b. Strategies

- i. Expand and improve amenities, including recreation, cultural and entertainment opportunities
- ii. Provide preservation incentives (structure, resources, building)
- iii. Enhance downtown revitalization efforts
- iv. Encourage the development of community leadership
- v. Assist with planning
- vi. Improve business infrastructure
- vii. Expand health care facilities
- viii. Increase facilities to train and encourage entrepreneurs and businesses
- ix. Increase housing opportunities, including senior and transitional housing
- x. Improve basic service infrastructure (buildings, roads, sewer and water) for communities
- xi. Collaborate to increase availability of public transportation
- xii. Collaborate in efforts to preserve open space
- xiii. Participate in efforts to improve water development and management

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND EVALUATION

Performance measures will be tied directly to the long-term economic development goals as previously identified in this document. The goals are to be accomplished in a manner protective of the region's environmental quality. The following data will be monitored as the data becomes available to monitor performance of the strategy:

- Computation and comparison of regional and county unemployment rates to state and national rates;
- Computation and comparison of regional and county job creation to state and national figures;
- Computation and comparison of regional and county job retention to state and national figures;
- Computation and comparison of regional and county per capita income levels to state and national figures;
- Computation and comparison of regional and county economic development investment to state and national figures;
- Computation and comparison of regional and county economic cluster activity to state and national figures;
- Computation and comparison of regional and county industry diversity to state and national rates.

Trends in these key economic development indicators and any significant changes in the economy will be monitored by HPEDD on a consistent and timely basis. Effectiveness in meeting goals will be evaluated and adjustments will be made to the CEDS document as required to meet the performance goals of the document and/or the economic development needs of the region.



# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

9

CHAPTER

Laramie is situated in an attractive setting, boasts small-town values and a special quality of life, and offers great economic development potential. The approach taken to seize its potential and to enhance its attractiveness as a place to live and work will greatly influence its ability to achieve its vision. This economic development element of the plan is written to capitalize on the community's assets and both strengthen and stabilize its tax base. To do so, it must add value to its existing businesses, attract new businesses and industries that complement its assets and workforce, foster an entrepreneurial spirit, and take steps to enhance its living environment.

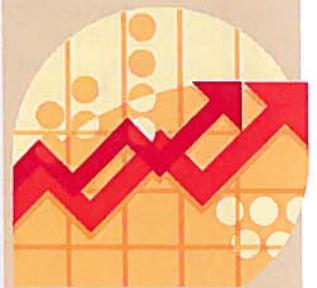
## Introduction

Over the course of the last three decades Laramie has had stable population growth, amounting to approximately 0.5 percent annually. The local economy has grown at a steady, albeit modest rate as well, as reflected by several economic indicators<sup>1</sup> for the City and County. While this reflects positively on the local economic environment and the community's success in its development efforts, there must be continued diligence to both sustain and grow the economy to meet the needs of its residents and businesses.

The purpose of the economic development chapter is to provide the City with a framework for economic growth. Laramie's location along the Interstate 80 corridor and the presence of the university, and technical and community colleges among other strengths, offer significant opportunities. The strategies in this plan will help define Laramie in the minds of businesses and residents throughout the area. Sound economic development policies will enhance the community's ability to capture job growth and business expansion, while maintaining its capacity to provide public services for current and future residents.

The essence of this plan element and the reason for its existence is to provide the necessary policy direction for the community to act in its best long-term interests by making strategic

<sup>1</sup> Economic Indicators for the Laramie Area, 1990-2003 Annual Trends



Laramie is engaging in this economic development planning process as a means to increase its population and employment, strengthen its tax base, and create improved opportunities for its residents and businesses.

decisions as to how it strengthens and grows its economy. The future land use plan, thoroughfare plan, and urban growth policies, together with this economic development plan, establishes the vision of the community, as expressed by its citizens, and the recommended actions for achieving the intended outcomes. Use of these plans is, therefore, essential in the community's ultimate success.

A common understanding of economic development helps clarify intent and purpose. With this in mind, we encourage a definition that acknowledges the importance of collaboration and partnership. Economic development is the use of public resources to stimulate private investment. In other words, effective policy for Laramie should be judged by how well public resources can create a response from private investors. This response can certainly be measured in jobs, but also in capital investment (land and buildings), technology, and spin-off (cluster) benefits.

### STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS OF THE COMMUNITY

An economic development Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats Analysis (SWOT) was conducted for Laramie, which was based on a review of economic and demographic characteristics, discussions with area residents and representatives of local organizations, input of the CPAT and LEDC, and the consultant's experience working with communities across the country. Displayed in *Table 9.1, Laramie SWOT* are the primary findings of this analysis.

Laramie is positioned well in relation to many other small communities in that its indicators are all on an upward swing and, thus, generally favorable. For instance, sales and use tax receipts have gained each year since 1990, generally doubling between 1990 and 2003.<sup>2</sup> The total number of employed persons increased in the City and County, while the unemployment rate remained steady at just under two percent.<sup>3</sup> The number of employers<sup>4</sup> and proprietors<sup>5</sup> increased, and per capital personal income also increased over the same time period.

As displayed in *Table 9.1, Laramie SWOT*, the community has many assets and offers advantages, each of which is and must remain central to its competitiveness as a place for conducting business. Among the primary advantages are the University of Wyoming and its business incubator, WyoTech, and Laramie County Community College (LCCC), which contribute to the availability of an educated workforce and offer training and higher education for employees, as well as their spouses and children. The K-12 education program, including the Lab School and Snowy Range Academy, is also noted for its quality, which is an attraction to the community. The stable population growth and ongoing development activity is also a strength as it shows confidence and bolsters the area economy. This growth has resulted in the development of new retail businesses and expansion of the hospital, both of which encourages local spending and result in increased

<sup>2</sup> Wyoming Department of Revenue and Taxation

<sup>3</sup> Wyoming Department of Employment

<sup>4</sup> Wyoming Department of Employment

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Commerce Department, Bureau of Economic Analysis

#### Expectations for Quality of Life

In a highly competitive environment, businesses are seeking communities that offer an enhanced quality of life, including:

- ♦ Well paid jobs with benefits offered to employees
- ♦ Educational opportunities for all, including lifelong learning
- ♦ Medical facilities
- ♦ Quality and affordable housing
- ♦ Low pollution / environmental damage
- ♦ Public amenities, including public school systems
- ♦ Low crime
- ♦ Recreation, entertainment, shopping, and intellectual stimuli
- ♦ Low cost of living / low taxation and
- ♦ Aesthetic built and natural environments.

**Table 9.1, Laramie SWOT**

Strengths	Opportunities
<p><b>Population/Workforce</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stable population growth</li> <li>- Educated population</li> <li>- UW, WyoTech, and LCCC</li> </ul> <p><b>Economy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Retail growth</li> <li>- Engineering/technology companies</li> <li>- UW Business Incubator</li> <li>- Downtown businesses/restaurants</li> </ul> <p><b>Infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Airport</li> <li>- Interstate 80</li> <li>- Rail</li> <li>- Available/quality water supply</li> <li>- Good Aquifer protection</li> </ul> <p><b>Livability</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- UW education, events, and activities</li> <li>- Accessibility to public lands</li> <li>- Ridge and rangeland views</li> <li>- Tree area</li> <li>- Quality of healthcare</li> <li>- Quality of K-12 education</li> <li>- Small-town values</li> </ul>	<p><b>Downtown</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Expansion and revitalization</li> <li>- Mixed use, including residential living</li> <li>- University leveraging</li> </ul> <p><b>Economy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Partners in Progress Initiative</li> <li>- Airport related businesses</li> <li>- Healthcare/medical expansion</li> <li>- Educational Opportunities (Hathaway Scholarship)</li> <li>- Tourism</li> </ul> <p><b>New Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- New conference center</li> <li>- Turner Tract/Grandview Heights</li> <li>- Reynolds Crossing</li> <li>- Coughlin Pole Mountain</li> <li>- South Gait property</li> </ul> <p><b>Redevelopment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- North of Downtown</li> <li>- "Tired" neighborhoods</li> </ul> <p><b>Livability</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Trail expansion</li> <li>- Recreation Center</li> <li>- Resource and view/ridge protection</li> </ul>
Weaknesses	Threats
<p><b>Housing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Affordability</li> <li>- Availability</li> <li>- Rental vs. owner occupancy</li> </ul> <p><b>Infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Water transmission and distribution</li> <li>- Aging conditions of wastewater mains</li> <li>- Storm drainage</li> </ul> <p><b>Economy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Low wage levels</li> <li>- Lack of employee benefits</li> <li>- Tax exempt properties</li> <li>- Timeliness of development review/approval</li> <li>- Shortage of trade labor</li> </ul> <p><b>Appearance and Image</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of identity and gateways</li> <li>- Corridor aesthetics</li> </ul>	<p><b>Housing/Neighborhoods</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Integrity of well established neighborhoods</li> <li>- Declining housing conditions</li> </ul> <p><b>Infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- West Laramie's Standards</li> <li>- Aquifer vulnerability</li> <li>- Requisite funding for reconstruction</li> </ul> <p><b>Economy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continued rising energy prices</li> <li>- Recruitment/Retention of physicians</li> <li>- Lack of quality office space</li> <li>- Workforce shortage</li> </ul> <p><b>Transportation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Loss of air service</li> <li>- Increased congestion</li> </ul>

### Trends in Business Attraction

- ◆ Site selection is the process by which businesses seeking to invest a large amount of resources seek out a new location for their facilities.
- ◆ Financial incentives almost always influence the site selection process for medium- and large-sized businesses.
- ◆ Communities are trying to focus their recruitment dollars using cluster analysis to target their marketing and recruitment efforts towards specific kinds of businesses.
- ◆ Workforce development incentives have become an important business attraction tool.
- ◆ Quality of life attracts businesses and workers because a business wants most of its workers to move with it.
- ◆ Successful campaigns involve prominent politicians and business figures, as well as economic development practitioners.
- ◆ Well benefited jobs.

tax revenues. Additionally, Laramie benefits from its location along I-80, the presence of the airport, Turner Tract Area, UW Business Incubator, the amount of land that is serviceable by utilities, and a high quality water supply. Its livability is commonly cited as the reason they have chosen to live and work in the community. In addition to the strengths, there are also several opportunities, including economic expansion of Downtown through location of an anchor or a major investment, or reinvestment decision, arising from the opportunity created by the final outcome of siting the railroad overpass. The presence of UW provides the community with a unique economic development opportunity to position itself for research activities and associated funding, which has the potential of reaping long-term economic benefits for the entire community. This is particularly important because University research is now recognized as a key driver for local economic development due to the potential commercialization of research, spin-off start-ups, and associated wealth creation throughout the community. The developing Turner Tract, potential for development of an airport business park, UW Wyoming Technology Business Center (a business incubator) and the continuing development of Reynolds Crossing and the Laramie River Business Park provide opportunities for business location within attractive settings. The positive planning steps Laramie has taken in developing its river trail and its potential for City-wide expansion, as well as the measures taken to protect the aquifer are also opportunities for enhancing and sustaining community livability.

Like any community, though, there are also weaknesses or obstacles to overcome. As addressed in *Chapter 5, Housing and Neighborhoods*, the median house value has outpaced the increase in median income, meaning that affordability is becoming an increasing concern. There is also aging infrastructure (outlined in *Chapter 7, Urban Growth*) that requires reinvestment and a significant annual commitment of capital funds. A low median household income relative to other communities in the State and a high rate of impoverishment as discussed in *Chapter 2, Conditions and Outlook*, also present challenges. Lastly, there are opportunities to build upon the attractive features of the community to further enhance its visual image and physical identity, making it more appealing to those considering a move or major investment in Laramie. Although UW provides many positives to Laramie's economy, its tax exempt land creates obstacles, such as loss of revenue and expanded infrastructure that must be maintained. Recognizing the City's financial impacts, in 2006 and 2007, UW worked with the City of Laramie to obtain financial support from the State Legislature. Through a complex formula, the State recognized that some communities, including Laramie, cannot generate revenues at the same level as other communities with similar characteristics. As a result, the City of Laramie was appropriated additional funds from the State to off-set the financial impacts.

Threats are also present, meaning those known or unknown occurrences that may negatively impact or influence the economic growth of the community. While many are external to the community, such as the national economy, interest rates, rising energy prices, increasing healthcare costs, etc., many are subject to the community's control through advanced planning and pro-activeness. For instance, the condition of housing will emerge as an increasing issue in the future, as structures and neighborhood infrastructure age. Issues such as these are within the realm of decision-making process of the community that can positively affect change. Successful protection and conservation of the aquifer is also within the parameters of management of the City and County through

effective and responsible land development practices. These and other circumstances must be continually monitored and addressed to guard against their potential impacts.

Small communities across the nation are confronted with circumstances similar to those in Laramie as they seek to address the stability and strengthening of their tax base. The difference between communities who are able to sustain themselves and those who will face decline lies in their ability to adapt to a rapidly changing national and international economy. Each community has its own uniqueness and set of attributes that offer competitive advantages over other communities and regions. The key to success, then, is uncovering and strongly promoting these attributes and capitalizing on them in a way that benefits the local economy and, at the same time, adds to community character. To strengthen and secure the City's competitiveness, the City must regularly evaluate itself by assessing a range of business factors against previous years, as well as other peer cities. Such an approach will shed light on those for which the City offers an advantage, but, more importantly, those that add costs or may present concerns to businesses considering a local investment decision. A willingness to alter the course, adapt new ideas and strategies, and commit to invest the necessary resources is a prerequisite for success.

This chapter expands upon the community's opportunities to retain and support existing businesses, attract and grow desirable new businesses, and adequately train and educate youth and the community workforce - all while sustaining, protecting, and enhancing the characteristics valued most by those who live in Laramie. Therefore, the purpose of this chapter is to provide guidance to the community as to how it can be proactive in its economic development and achieve its vision without compromising character or quality of life.

## **ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

### Easing the Site and Community Selection Process

There are widely varying criteria that are used by businesses to select a site, which are unique to different businesses and between businesses depending on their needs. Some require location near an interstate highway or a major metropolitan area, while others rely on the existence of other industries or the expertise of a local technical college or university. The criteria differ, yet they all generally relate to the expectations that one location will offer an advantage over another relating to business factors, such as development and operational costs, business efficiency, and community acceptance.

Costs include initial start-up costs, as well as the operating costs over the life of the business. Start-up costs include all those things that contribute to the up-front costs of doing business, such as the price of land, length of development reviews/approvals and permitting, amount of time to have a building open for business, local construction costs, and the investment in employee hiring and training. In addition there may be regulatory provisions that have the unintended effect of increasing land and development costs, such as overly restrictive building footprint requirements without due consideration of floor area ratio provisions or other measures that more effectively manage building bulk and scale. These direct and indirect costs can vary greatly between communities. The longer

term operating costs that are of the most importance are those associated with carrying on the business operations, such as wage rates, state and local taxes, impact fees or assessments, and the costs related to complying with local and other regulations.

The efficiency of operations relates to the amount of time it takes to bring the facility to full operating capacity. As other costs have risen, time has become one of the more important factors in the site selection process. Therefore, delay caused by lengthy development approvals and permitting has a fiscal consequence on companies in terms of lost sales, loss of an otherwise competitive edge for reason of timing, and loan interest.

Each step in the process, from zoning and site plan approval to building design, permitting, and inspections, affects the way a project can affect the community. More and more communities are beginning to streamline their development approval process to combat the timing problems of businesses and, particularly, to gain a competitive edge over those who have a delayed and more difficult development process. In other words, they are structuring their ordinances to encourage compliant applications by expediting the review and approval process for those that meet the objectives and standards of the ordinance. These changes many times come in the form of a Unified Development Code (UDC). Generally, a UDC merges all development functions thereby simplifying the procedures and use of the code. It also helps to avoid duplicative and conflicting provisions within the code that are confusing and often cause delays. Among other benefits, a UDC allows simplification and streamlining of the development review and approval processes by coordinating the review and permitting functions. Streamlining may be accomplished by consolidating districts and establishing strict performance standards, which both improve development outcomes and limit the number of zoning amendments and, thus, application submittals, review time, and public hearings. Portions of the existing ordinance requiring substantial review and negotiated approvals, such as conditional uses<sup>6</sup> and planned unit developments,<sup>7</sup> may be permitted as of right, subject to applicable conditions and standards.

These and many other ordinance modifications greatly aid economic development by expediting approval of compliant applications and shortening development time. The experience has been that even though the standards are increased, businesses are willing to comply in exchange for increased certainty in the zoning process and reduced time for receiving approvals and permits. In the end, there is a gain and benefit to the community and its businesses. Recently, the City has focused attention on the development process to find ways to improve its efficiency. It is also approaching the process of updating and amending its zoning ordinance to begin implementing this plan. Therefore, proactive steps are being taken although they will take time to integrate and implement.

It is now commonplace for prospective businesses to request meetings with local employers to gain insight as to the business climate in the community and their relationship with the City, utility providers, and other regulatory agencies. From a business perspective, they are interested in knowing the impact of the City practices on

Telecommunications is fundamental to service industries, as well as to rural economic diversification strategies. Telecommunications can provide communities with an opportunity to compete in the fast-growing service sector. It represents a tool with which rural businesses and citizens can directly participate in national and global economies. As an electronic highway, telecommunications allows urban-based industries and customers to access rural products, services, and markets more easily. Without a modern telecommunications infrastructure, however, rural communities may be left behind and denied the economic and quality-of-life opportunities new technologies have created.

Source: The Role of Telecommunications in Rural Economic Development, AeRie Applied Rural Telecommunications, Colorado Rural Telecommunications Project (CRTP).

<sup>6</sup> Chapter 17.09, Conditional Uses, City of Laramie Municipal Code

<sup>7</sup> Chapter 17.38, Planned Unit Developments, City of Laramie Municipal Code

their operating costs. Instances where tax increases are often without proportionate services or where there are burdensome regulations are telling of the local business environment. Therefore, prospective businesses are interested in the history of the community regarding the addition of operational costs to the business community. They also consider the extent to which the cost of basic services gets shifted from the residential community to the business community.

This highlights the role of the economic development corporation in a cooperative effort with the City and a full-time professional who can facilitate this process, acting in the interest of both the prospect and the community. Organization of local business owners and groups, into a representative group, can promote and “sell” the City to potential new business, based on good sound information collected from all the parties involved. Other programs, such as an active business retention program also demonstrates the community’s interest and ongoing support of its employers. The acceptance of the community and its excitement for the company is also a factor in the site and community selection process. Companies make location decisions based upon the communities that want them and work to solve any barriers to making the location decision.

### Infrastructure Condition and Capacity

Laramie, like many smaller communities, is increasingly challenged by limited fiscal resources. While it benefits from its location along I-80, the presence of UW, WyoTech, and LCCC, and its picturesque setting nestled adjacent to the Laramie Mountains, the local economy is sustaining itself and growing modestly, but not at the preferred level of healthiness. Laramie recognizes the importance of their infrastructure to the success of their economic development program. It is, therefore, essential for the community to make efficient use of its infrastructure, which is affected by its pattern of growth and coordination of infrastructure. It is, thus recommended that the City remains mindful of its fiscal responsibility for managing growth, particularly as it relates to the provision of adequate facilities and services.

Laramie has and continues to invest millions of dollars in their public infrastructure in recognition of the improvement to the local business climate. While it annually replaces water distribution lines the revenue flow does not cover the costs, leaving a funding deficit. Therefore, line replacement is occurring although at a slower than preferred pace. There are also revenue shortages to cover the costs for sewer line expansion and maintenance. Maintenance of the storm sewer system is also not meeting the preferred schedule, which may compromise drainage capacity and result in increased costs over the long term. Funding is also needed for street repair and reconstruction. Consequently, the aging and deteriorating condition of the infrastructure system may limit the City’s access to economic opportunities without proactive measures and near-term action.

Capital programs that are planned to construct new streets, provide sufficient water capacity, treat wastewater, and expand telecommunication services all contribute benefits for business creation and retention. Upgrading public facilities and municipal infrastructure also have the added benefit of improving the character and image of the immediate area and community as a whole. Therefore, investments made in public

### **Trends in Workforce Development**

- ♦ Developing advanced skills training meets needs for skilled workers in regions with high-tech industries.
- ♦ Public initiatives try to help small businesses gain access to previously unaffordable training.
- ♦ Business partnerships pool and leverage a range of financial, physical, human, and intellectual resources and provide a collective voice for workforce development funding.
- ♦ Businesses’ employee retention efforts focus on accommodating differing needs and lifestyles of workers.
- ♦ Cities are establishing programs to retain local university graduates who possess needed skills for high-tech firms or to attract graduates to move back home.
- ♦ Integrating the curricula of community colleges

improvement projects, while not seemingly of direct impact to the infrastructure system, have an indirect influence on the character and assertiveness of the community. Capital improvements are not the only option municipalities have. Many different and creative strategies should be used to maximize the benefit of any funding received for these improvements. Consideration of tax increment financing (TIF), to fund infrastructure improvements for new nonresidential developments, pay-as-you-go or perhaps use of sales tax as possible means of funding should all be evaluated. Such actions and projects serve to benefit economic development through their contributions to the community and its observed or perceived livability.

Businesses are now operating in highly competitive markets, thereby demanding the need for faster, more reliable, and cheaper means of communication. Now more than ever, companies are reliant upon technology for their everyday operations and communications with suppliers, distributors, associated companies, and clients. For this reason, it is essential to the efficient operations of local businesses and the competitiveness of the community to offer advanced telecommunications infrastructure. Doing so requires telecommunications companies to have the ability to handle the growth in demand, especially as the Internet becomes an ever important tool in the world of business. Companies of varying levels of technology are all seeking reliable communication service. To aid in the provision of this highly valuable service, Laramie must be creative in their financing of technology infrastructure.

The difficulty in the investment of infrastructure in the local economic development program is that its direct benefits are difficult to measure. Without question, though, infrastructure creates jobs and stimulates new business development. However, its impact may not be recognized or attributed to such investment for several years. Moreover, infrastructure installation may have negative impacts on the community initially, such as the inconveniences of construction, before any benefits are realized.

### Training and Workforce Development

Companies that are looking to locate in an area are interested in the labor force that is available for them to employ. Depending on the nature of the business, whether it is salary or non-salaried workers, they evaluate such measures as the percent of unemployment, the ratio of those employed who are available to be in the workforce, the educational attainment of persons, and the existence of training facilities and educational institutions in the area. Generally, they are interested in the skill sets of individuals that may give one community a competitive advantage over another. From this perspective, Laramie is very well positioned relevant to other communities of similar size or even larger.

The presence of UW, WyoTech, and LCCC places the community in a very competitive position. The importance of the local school system cannot be understated. For the City's workforce program to be highly competitive and successful, employers want assurance of their access to trainable workers. At the same time, company executives and rank-and-file workers alike, place emphasis on their own access to training and higher education, as well as the quality of education for their children. Both home buyers and the development community recognize their investments are affected by the quality of schools and the availability of higher learning. As a result, it is imperative that Laramie remains supportive

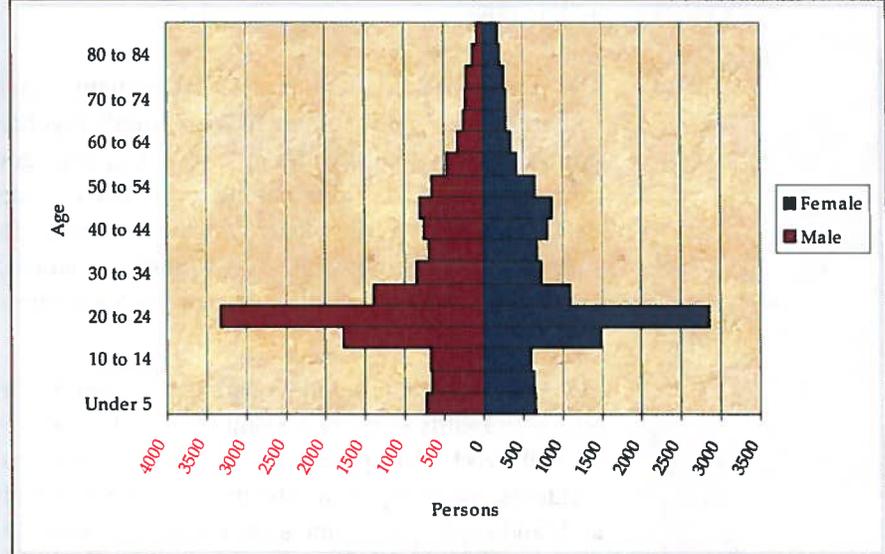
of the local school district, University, WyoTech, and LCCC and establishes excellence in education and workforce training as long-term goals. Communicating the community's economic development goals with the education and training institutions will enable business to be responsive to the changing needs of the existing and targeted businesses and future employers in the community. In other words, the coordination of institutional programs with the target industries can provide a key competitive advantage for the community.

In addition to educated workers from the schools, the unemployment rate has been held at or below two percent each of the last 10 years, meaning that over 98 percent of the labor force in the community is employed.<sup>8</sup> Also, Laramie has higher rates at most educational attainment thresholds in comparison to several other communities in the State. Therefore, there is a larger pool of trained and talented persons available to the workforce. Albeit much of the workforce is only available as part-time employees and their employment is relatively short term while they are attending school, there remains an opportunity to capitalize on this human resource.

It is incumbent upon the leadership of Laramie who is actively promoting its economic development to become highly familiar with the programs that are offered through each of the institutions ranging from basic skills such as literacy, to technical training like carpentry or electronics, and to higher education degree programs. This is highly valuable information that is of great interest and may enhance the competitiveness of the community for attracting prospective businesses. These learning and education facilities

are attractive to businesses since they offer specialized training opportunities to their employees, but also because they offer higher learning institutions for the spouses and children of their employees. Opportunities for higher education contribute to area quality of life. Additionally, if the types of local businesses are well matched with the education and skills of graduating students there is an increased opportunity for their retention in the community. Laramie is fortunate to have a major university, technical

Figure 9.1, Age Breakdown



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Sex by Age, STF 1

<sup>8</sup> Labor Force Averages for Wyoming, Albany County, and Laramie, 1995-2003, Economic Indicators for the Laramie Area, 1990-2003 Annual Trends.

training school, and community college, which offer higher learning opportunities for community residents and training for local employers.

The Laramie Employment Resources Center is also a benefit for providing employment assistance to residents and assisting employers in their staffing needs. These facilities greatly improve the competitiveness for attracting technology-based businesses. As shown by *Figure 9.1, Age Breakdown*, an issue for the future of the community is the retention of its youth. Currently, there is an influx of college-age students attending each of the three institutions, some of which are local students who grew up in Laramie and attended UW, WyoTech, or LCCC. However, there is a significant decline in the age cohorts beyond graduation age, meaning that many graduates leave Laramie following graduation to seek higher paying jobs, more employment opportunities, and more cultural amenities within a larger metropolitan area. Creating strategies and opportunities for these students to remain in Laramie to attend higher schooling and stay upon graduation is essential to sustaining the economy.

#### Image and Community Character

With improved technology and advanced means of communication, companies now place an even higher priority on quality of life in choosing their business setting. Therefore, while the availability of sites and buildings, adequate infrastructure, skilled labor force, and incentives remain vitally important to the location and investment decision, factors such as housing availability and affordability, quality of schools, proximity to higher learning institutions, recreational opportunities, access to medical services, and community appeal have become increasingly important. As Laramie continues to grow, there must be plans, policies, and ordinances in place to effectively manage its appropriate placement and quality.

The appearance of Laramie is formed by many factors. First and foremost is the quality of its natural areas and views, which are highly regarded by both residents and visitors. Also important, though, is the design of public spaces, government buildings and grounds, and infrastructure, while also having a proactive stance to ensure the land use standards deliver quality development outcomes. Without focusing attention on the quality and sustainability of physical development, character is left to chance, leaving little opportunity for the community to control the destiny of its appearance.

The emerging pattern of development is along the frontage of each major corridor, as has and is presently occurring along 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, Grand Avenue, and increasingly along other arterial streets. This pattern of strip development lends itself to the concerns expressed by residents, including a proliferation of signage; multiple driveways; limited green space and landscaping along the streetscape; buildings situated to the back of sites with a view from the street across large expanses of concrete and parked vehicles; wide street sections needed to accommodate higher traffic volumes, multiple turning movements and vehicular acceleration and deceleration; and, generally, an unappealing corridor environment. Instead, the public would like to see shopping districts with enhanced standards that achieve a development character that reflects positively on the community and its identity. New development standards that address these amenities issues must be

available to developers.

The character and appearance of Laramie are of top priority according to a broad cross-section of the community that participated in the public comment process. Residents recognize the importance of quality of life in the success of their economic development and, therefore, both desire and expect quality new development and redevelopment. There is a strong desire to protect and preserve areas of distinction, such as Downtown, the tree area, the ridge north of Indian Paintbrush Elementary School, aquifer protection area and along the Laramie River. In addition, residents voiced their desire to improve the entrances to the community with distinctive gateways, enhance the roadway environs with streetscape improvements, increase the amount of green space adjacent to the rights-of-way and throughout the community, add more landscaping and screening of parking and storage areas, control the size and location of signage, incorporate more public displays of art and community history, better manage the appearance of structures and vacant properties, and diligently enforce the City's codes.

Community design and appearance are essential components to providing a positive visual perception of Laramie, making it more attractive to prospective residents and endearing it to current ones. In other words, community design should no longer be considered only as amenities. Instead, it should be considered a critical factor in selling the community to skilled and talented workers that will make local employers more competitive. Unfortunately, community design and aesthetic features are often the first to be compromised during periods of constrained budgets. Budgets must be in place to enforce and review projects where design guidelines must be followed. Also, community and design features should not be compromised due to opposition, based on cost factors. They must, nonetheless, be maintained if the City is to cast a positive first impression on visitors and potential residents and investors.

### Achieving Quality, Affordable Housing

Without a sufficient supply of housing, including within different neighborhood environments, varying styles and sizes, and at variable price ranges, the ultimate success of the community's economic development program may falter for reason of an inadequate or poor supply of housing choices. When business owners are looking to relocate or establish a new branch, there are multiple variables that factor into the decision, one of which is the availability, adequacy, affordability, and quality of housing. It is, therefore, of utmost importance to Laramie and its economic development program to devote resources toward implementation of this plan, as well as the Housing Study and Action Plan.

Available and affordable housing are also key factors in the attractiveness of a community as well as the quality of life of existing residents. The presence of an adequate, available housing stock is imperative to meet the needs of low-, moderate-, middle-, and upper-income households. Market conditions will determine the quantity and price of new residential units, as well as resale and rental housing. It is sometimes necessary for public agencies and nonprofit organizations, though, to take steps to encourage housing



Housing – urban and rural, large and small, attached and detached – is important as to acceptable price and preferences of consumers.

construction or rehabilitation or to assist lower-income buyers or tenants to find adequate, affordable shelter in the community.

As outlined in detail in *Chapter 5, Housing and Neighborhoods*, as well as within the Laramie Housing Study and Action Plan, there are existing and increasingly emerging concerns with respect to the condition and affordability of housing, particularly for the very low- and low-income population. In addition, the availability of housing is also an issue as the vacancy rates have declined steadily since 2001, from 6.25 percent to 2.84 percent in 2005.<sup>9</sup> A vacancy rate of five percent is considered the minimum desired

rate to ensure an adequate supply of housing at various price points to satisfy demands and allow sufficient mobility within the market. Since the vacancy rate is well below the five percent threshold, there is a shortage of available housing, particularly from an economic development perspective.

Beyond livability and economic development concerns, local government also has an interest in the sustainability of new residential construction and the condition of the existing housing stock since market and assessed values directly impact the tax base and resulting revenue potential. Areas that are in need of revitalization and redevelopment, such as those to the north and south of Downtown and within West Laramie, should be the target of public and private funding and assistance efforts to preserve the integrity of these existing neighborhoods and prevent future decay and deterioration.

There continues to be construction of new homes in the community, amounting to 538 residential building permits since 2000. However, much of this is due to the increased demand caused by fewer persons per household, a smaller population living in University dorms, and a larger percentage of non-family households. Therefore, the homes that are being built are largely accommodating the current population and, thus, meeting only a small portion of the total demand. At the same time, newly constructed homes are not affordable for the average citizen.

For the community's economic development objectives to be met there are a wide range of variables to be considered and adequately addressed. For instance, while the Partners in

<sup>9</sup> Wyoming Community Development Authority

**Partners in Progress**, a public-private economic development partnership for Laramie, Albany County, and the surrounding areas has forged a five-year strategic plan focusing on job creation through industry analysis, marketing, and an entrepreneurial environment, plus community enhancement, with plans for community development, beautification, and communication and reporting.

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Progress initiative has shown strong results since its inception in 2005, if the housing situation is not remedied, it has the potential to retard business growth for a lack of housing for new employees and residents. Therefore, housing is of utmost importance in the overall economic development program, similar to the timely and adequate provision of infrastructure, incentives, and quality of life.

### ECONOMIC GOALS AND ACTION STATEMENTS

In this section the goals and action statements for each element of the plan are set forth. The goals and action statements are to be used as a starting point to achieve the overall vision of this plan.

#### Economic Competitiveness Goals and Action Statements

1. Assemble and consolidate all development-related codes into a unified development Code (UDC). A UDC is a code that consolidates all development related ordinances, i.e. zoning, subdivision regulations, landscaping, sign controls, etc. into a single bound document.
2. Conduct a comprehensive management and organizational study, customer service training, process and systems analysis, work flow analysis, and management training for the City's development review function. The study's is to comprehensively review and critique each individual function, as well as the system as a whole, identify needed policy changes, procedural modifications, organizational adjustments, and technical revisions in an effort to maximize efficiency.
3. Consider establishment of a one-stop-shop development review, processing, permitting, and inspections center, whereby all functions associated with development are highly coordinated and handled by a single project development coordinator from the initial inquiry through to final inspection and issuance of a certificate of occupancy.
4. Develop a marketing plan, survey and information database for the City. A plan such as this would be used to help promote development and aid potential business in there decision to locate here and would include:
  - a. Full and regularly updated base line data on the City, such as business costs, land costs, building values, construction costs, transportation costs, labor rates, taxes, permit and fees, development times,
  - b. Identify criteria and issues that business use when making a decision to locate in a community (alternative site evaluation).
  - c. Regional market reports with minimum market criteria, e.g. market area population, income, and educational limits, as well as anecdotal support to identify key intangible considerations, for potential business comparing our city to others in the region.
  - d. Prioritize improvement project or other capital investments identified that will aid in promoting the City.

The Primary Target Industries report of Albany and Carbon Counties (Zone 9), dated April 2005, was the product of a contract between the Wadley-Donovan Group and the Wyoming Business Council. The Primary Target Industry selection was based on the findings of the Locational Assessment Reports, which examined such topics as labor, real estate, infrastructure, training, and quality of life issues. The primary targets include:

- ◆ Sensor-Based Companies
- ◆ Educational Software and Archival Services
- ◆ Back Office Accounting and/or Payroll Operations

Source: Primary Target Industries: Wyoming Zone 9 – Albany and Carbon (eastern) Counties, Wyoming Business Council, April 2005

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5. Promote and support the efforts of property owners and the City of Laramie, who own property within the Turner Tract area due to the residual economic activity this area will generate.
6. Organize a group of local business owners to act as a coordinating committee with officials of the City, Laramie Economic Development Corporation (LEDC), and Chamber of Commerce.
7. Promote and support the efforts of the University of Wyoming and their plans with the business incubator. The business incubator can serve as primer for good economic development for the City of Laramie once these “incubated” business look for permanent facilities.
8. Work to attract an anchor to Downtown and seize the opportunities for redevelopment in the northern and southern fringe area.
9. Promote and support business and new development with strong environmental ethics to re-locate or develop in Laramie.
10. Target tourism in the strategy for expanding the local economy. Tourism should be used to not only promote the community but to help promote economic development.

### Infrastructure Management and Readiness Goals and Action Statements

1. Utilize the policies and recommendations of *Chapter 7, Urban Growth*, to refine the limits of future urban development.
2. Seek ways to narrow the funding gap for infrastructure improvements, through different funding sources identified potentially by a municipal financing specialist.
3. Identify specific deficiencies in certain locations through small area utility service studies that would improve capacity and make land available for development. Work closely with the Laramie Economic Development Corporation (LEDC) to prioritize the areas and the timing and staging of improvements, where the highest possible cost benefit will be realized.
4. Adopt criteria and a policy for financially constrained maintenance whereby cost efficiency is maximized for the minimal maintenance required to sustain the useful life of the infrastructure systems. A structural integrity process may be used to guide maintenance resources into financially viable repair and replacement strategies.
5. Amend *Laramie Municipal Code 17.80, Wireless Telecommunication Towers*, to allow expedited approval subject to increased performance standards relating to allowable heights in specified locations, appearance and buffering of equipment buildings and cabinets, and electrical and mechanical equipment, landscaping, fencing materials, signage, illumination, noise of equipment, and the location and appearance of accessory support facilities.
6. Consider the use of incentives for developments to encourage new technology like wireless or fiber optic communication networks, including density bonuses, property tax abatements, grants, low interest loans, preferential fee structuring, rebate or payback programs, cost sharing for on-site or off-site improvements, priority status for development review, and flexible facility standards.

The Public Telecommunications Facilities Program (PTFP) is a competitive grant program to help public broadcasting, state and local governments, Indian Tribes, and nonprofit organizations construct facilities to bring educational and cultural programs to the American Public using broadcasting and non-broadcasting telecommunications technologies.

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7. Seek out Federal funds, such as grants through the Public Telecommunications Facilities Program (PTFP), that are designed to assist with public and nonprofit communication technology services or Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds.
8. Promote interconnection and common carrier collaboration among technology service providers and the City. Joint ventures should also be encouraged to maximize the value of communications technology information to resident and business consumers. The City should also support coordination of a shared common grid of communications technology systems for education, health care, public agencies, social services, justice, and economic development.

### Training and Workforce Development Goals and Action Statements

1. Fully embrace and support the enrollment growth of UW, WyoTech, and LCCC through the Statewide, legislative level, and at the local level. The City and educational establishments should work together to secure legislative assistance when possible, all avenues should be explored that promote the University and the City in a cooperative manner.
2. Create a career education program through the school districts and other educational institutions where information about local career opportunities, speakers from local business and industry, career matching, and curriculum planning will occur.
3. Establish a career apprenticeship program whereby students can train on the job for a local career, while receiving work credit at school. A partners-in-education program may also be considered to facilitate tutoring of students by community leaders, members of the business community, and retirees.
4. Seek to leverage the graduate and research programs and faculty of the University to expand upon current, and identify additional opportunities for long-term economic diversity and vitality.
5. Coordinate with the Department of Workforce Services (DWS) to administer local education and training programs, such as basic education, apprenticeship utilization, career aptitude and exploration, employment, and training for self-sufficiency.
6. Continue cooperation efforts with existing or new businesses to access Department of Workforce Services Business Training Grants, New Hire Economic Development Grants, Wyoming Business Council, including Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Job Training Grants and the Business Ready Communities Grant & Loan Program.<sup>10</sup> Also, assist in providing access to the Wyoming Business Council's workforce training programs, including Quick Start and Development Dimensions International (DDI).<sup>11</sup>
7. Periodically conduct a comprehensive survey among local employers and the target industries to identify their labor needs and minimum skill requirements. Utilize the findings of the survey to coordinate with the local educational and training institutions

The Department of Workforce Services (DWS) is focused on delivering comprehensive and effective services that build a workforce to meet the changing demands of Wyoming's diverse businesses, citizens, and economy. The Agency's mission is "linking human and economic development for Wyoming's future." DWS is comprised of four divisions, including the Business Training & Outreach (BTO) Division, Employment Services (ES) Division, Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Division, and the Office of the Director.

Source:  
<http://www.wyomingworkforce.org/>

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<sup>10</sup> Wyoming Business Council, <http://www.wyomingbusiness.org/community/workforce.aspx>.

<sup>11</sup> Wyoming Business Council, <http://www.wyomingbusiness.org/business/workforce.aspx>.



The roadway environs are within the purview of the public sector as to their design, appearance, and maintenance.

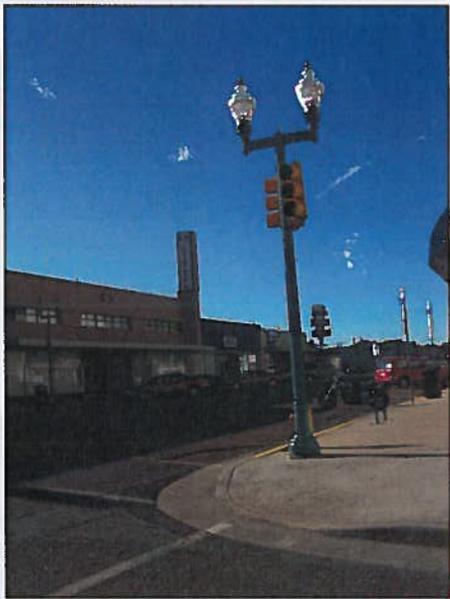
to refine existing or craft new programs directed at addressing the identified skill needs.

8. Continue to offer scholarships funded by the Laramie business community, in addition to the Hathaway Scholarship Program, to reward outstanding and deserving students with college financial assistance.
9. Establish a forgivable loan program for students meeting specified criteria who remain in Laramie and agree to work in the community in their respective field for a certain period of time after graduation.

10. Develop a "Return Home to Laramie" promotion for the children of parents who reside in the community. Such program may highlight local employers and career opportunities, competitive wage rates, cost of living index, and other factors that may lead to a decision to return to Laramie.

11. Continue the Leadership Laramie program to identify, train, and motivate prospective and current community leaders, with the intent to promote local economic development objectives.

Image and Community Character Goals and Actions Statements

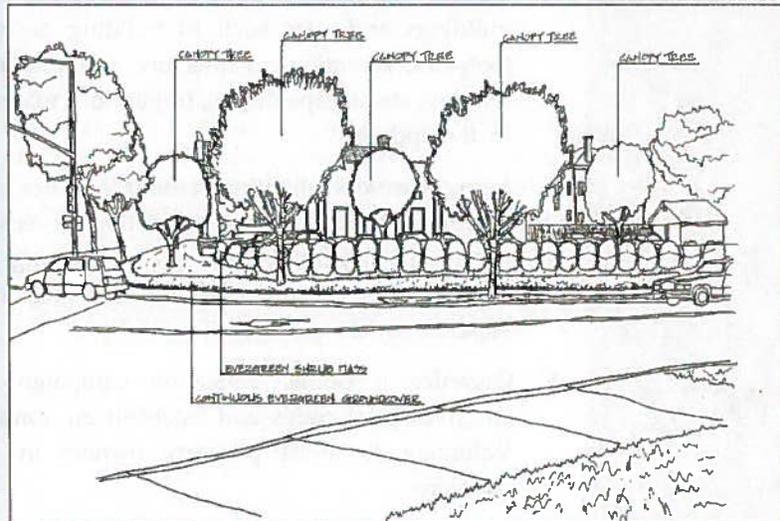


The unique lighting standard used in Downtown could be extended elsewhere in the community, with variations as to the height and necessary light output. This helps to form an identity and a unifying theme throughout the community.

1. Coordinate with WYDOT to prepare special area corridor revitalization studies and plans for U.S. 287/3<sup>rd</sup> Street, Highway 130 & 230 and U.S. 30/Grand Avenue. The studies should include and consider:
  - a) Redevelopment and enhancement projects at the entrances to the community, including public infrastructure improvements and strict enforcement of code violations. The areas should be prioritized according to traffic counts at each location.
  - b) Inventory and assessment of existing conditions, including land use and zoning, building footprints, numbers and locations of driveways and parking lots, numbers and locations of signs, trees and vegetation, power poles and overhead lines, street cross-sections and rights-of-way, sidewalks and pedestrian improvements, pervious and impervious surfaces, and general visual

characteristics.

- c) Inclusion of a raised medians, which breaks up the wide expanse of pavement by creating space for grass, groundcover, shrubbery, trees, xeriscape and other amenities.
- d) Street trees within the median and the outer streetscape buffer areas abutting the roadway, allowing a canopy to be formed over the roadway (similar to the Tree Area), which significantly alters the driver's perspective of the roadway environs. This area creates separation between the public and private realms and provides space for more "green" adjacent to the roadway.
- e) Limit the number, width, and location of new driveways, consolidating existing driveways, and defining the edges with curb cuts and patterned crossings helps to create a more appealing pedestrian environment.
- f) The use of neighborhood standards, such as decorative street lamps, help form a unique community identity.
- g) Require underground utilities similar to requirements now. Also examine methods of relocating already existing above ground utilities underground or out of sight.
- h) Traffic control devices and signage also contribute to the appearance of the road environs. The condition of road sign poles and faces, as well as their placement and proximity to other public and private signs, has a significant visual impact. Consolidating signs onto single poles where applicable or relocating signs are options for enhancing the appearance of corridors.
- i) Timelines and cost figures for the implementation of the goals and action statements.



Sufficiently screened parking areas form an edge between the public and private realms and create an attractive streetscape environment.

2. Prepare an urban design plan that identifies the design characteristics of individual areas, such as the Downtown, Turner Tract, Tree Area, etc., with defined limits of individual framework areas. Framework areas should identify the improvements and enhancements that will exploit and perpetuate its unique features to form a special sense of place. Standards may also be established within developing areas, as well as future development areas, such as along the extended 30<sup>th</sup> Street corridor.
3. See recommendations found in *Chapter 3, Community Character*.

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4. Update subdivision code to incorporate and address issues of newly designed buildings and sites such as building design, floor area ratio, building materials, footprint, elevation, architecture and placement. Landscaping (xeriscape), parking, lighting, streetscape design, impervious material and signage should also be addressed by the update.
5. Improve outdoor lighting standards as not to contribute to the nighttime appearance of development. Without regulations to ensure an appropriate light intensity, light pollution will diminish the quality viewing of the nighttime sky, light spillover will impact adjacent properties, and light glare may create harmful conditions along the adjacent street.
6. Organize a public education campaign regarding property maintenance and environmental codes and establish an annual amnesty program for code violators. Volunteer to assist property owners in identifying violations and conforming solutions.
7. Amend the design standards of the rights-of-way for arterial and collector roadways to acquire sufficient additional lands to include increased green space and buffer zones from adjacent land uses. Refer to *Chapter 8, Transportation*, for more information.
8. Adopt tree protection and preservation standards, including the establishment of tree protection zones during construction, and standards relating to grade changes, dumping, and unauthorized pruning.

### Quality, Affordable Housing Goals and Action Statements

1. Establish and maintain relationships with area builders and financial institutions to determine interest in assisting in development of affordable housing through programs that allow builders to share responsibility for creation of affordable housing and financial institutions to establish a revolving loan fund for pre-construction loans to area builders in development of affordable housing.
2. Consider development of a HOME Investment Partnership Consortium with areas surrounding Laramie, including Albany County.
3. Review the possibility of application for a Homeownership Zone from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to reclaim vacant and blighted properties, increase homeownership, and promote economic revitalization.
4. Seek funding sources for housing from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) that serve specific households that historically require affordable housing, such as the elderly and persons with disabilities.
5. Coordinate with local financial institutions to establish a down payment and closing cost assistance program for those households in need.
6. Utilize Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to leverage other funds and to implement projects and programs, such as infrastructure repair, park development, or removal of unsafe structures, aiming to improve neighborhood conditions in areas of low- to moderate-income and in efforts to eliminate "slum and blight."

7. Revise local health and building codes, as needed, to streamline the process to address unsafe or dilapidated structures and other potential health and safety risks, such as weeds, tires, and heavy trash.





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## CHAPTER 15.18: IMPROVEMENTS

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### 15.18.000 GENERAL PROVISIONS

#### 15.18.000.A Purpose

This section is intended to provide for orderly development and to:

1. Provide for the proper arrangement and construction of streets and public utilities and public infrastructure devices;
2. Ensure proper relationship of public improvements to existing or proposed public improvements;
3. Ensure the completion and maintenance of permanent or temporary private improvements required as part conditions of development approval or other applicable standards are completed in a timely fashion;
4. Ensure compliance with the Laramie Comprehensive Plan;
5. Reference specifications for the installation and design of streets, public utilities and public infrastructure devices;
6. Establish a mechanism for securing public improvements for new subdivisions and development permits; and
7. Generally promote the health, safety and welfare of the people of Laramie, both present and future.

#### 15.18.000.B Applicability

The requirements of this chapter shall apply in all instances where improvements are required to be constructed in conjunction with subdivision of land or in conjunction with other development permits.

### 15.18.010 PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS AND DESIGN REQUIREMENTS

#### 15.18.010.A Streets

All streets shall conform to the requirements of the City of Laramie's engineering and public works design standards and section 15.14.060 Transportation, Mobility and Connectivity, and in addition shall comply with the following standards. Exceptions to the design standards of this section are allowed pursuant to subsection 15.16.040.D Subdivisions.

##### 1. Topographic Relationship

Streets shall bear a logical relationship to topography and to the location of existing or platted streets in adjacent property. (Prior code § 35-3(a)).

**2. Minimum Widths**

Minimum street widths shall be as follows:

Classification	Right-of-Way Width (feet)	Minimum Roadway Width (feet)
Arterial	100	68
Collector	80	52
Local, Non-Residential	60	46
Local, Residential	60	46 or 40 [1]
Local, PUD, parking one street side	50	32
Local, PUD, no on-street parking	40	24
<p>[1] Developments constructing new streets which extend existing streets shall have a minimum roadway width of 46 feet, unless otherwise approved by the final decision making body. Development constructing new streets which do not extend existing streets shall have a minimum roadway width of 40 feet.</p>		

(Ord. 1085 § 1, 1992: prior code § 35-3(c)).

**3. Roads Adjoining Development Boundary**

Planned or existing roads adjoining a property on which a minor or major subdivision, or a development which requires design review, that are not improved to the city's engineering and public works design standards, and at a minimum shall include the following:

- a. Full pavement width;
- b. Curb, gutter and sidewalk on the side of the road adjoining the minor subdivision, major subdivision, or development;
- c. Curb and gutter on the opposite side of the road from the minor subdivision, major subdivision or development;
- d. Stormwater conveyance infrastructure necessary for proper drainage;
- e. Hydrants, if required by city standards;
- f. Street signs, if required by city standards; and
- g. Street lights, if required by city standards.

**4. Access Roads not Adjoining Development Boundary**

Roads providing access to a minor subdivision, major subdivision or development shall be paved. The pavement shall be a minimum of 28 feet in width. The final decision maker may grant an exemption from this requirement if it is determined by the final decision maker that paving of a road cannot meet engineering standards enforced by the city or that paving of the road will result in detrimental impacts to adjacent properties or city infrastructure.

**5. Improvement of Internal Roads**

All roads proposed within a minor or major subdivision shall be constructed to the City's engineering and public works design standard.

**6. Marginal Access Road**

Where a development adjoins or contains an existing or proposed major arterial highway or street on which traffic volumes and vehicular speeds warrant special safety features, marginal access streets at least 30 feet in width may be required. (Prior code § 35-3 (d)).

**7. Dead Ends**

The use of dead-end streets is discouraged pursuant to subsection 15.14.060.E.2.d Transportation, Mobility, and Connectivity. Where dead-end streets are permitted, they shall be designed according to the standards established in subsection 15.14.050.E.2.d.

**8. Intersections**

Streets shall intersect at right angles. Deviations may be permitted by the city if found that they do not negatively affect pedestrian and vehicular circulation and safety. (Prior code § 35-3(f)).

**9. Full width platting**

Streets shall be platted at their full width. Exceptions may be granted by the city council in the event that necessary right-of-way is not within the control of developer or changing of a right-of-way would adversely affect an existing or proposed right-of-way.

**10. Street Grades**

Street grades shall be more than five tenths percent but less than ten percent for local and collector streets and alleys and less than six percent for principal or minor arterial streets. (Prior code § 35-3(h)).

**11. Street Intersection Grades**

Streets shall be leveled to a grade of less than four percent for a distance of at least 100 feet approaching all intersections. (Prior code § 35-3(i)).

**12. Street Offsets**

Streets which are offset at an intersection with collector or arterial streets shall have centerline-to-centerline offsets of no less than 250 feet. Streets which are offset at an intersection with local streets shall have centerline-to-centerline offsets of no less than 125 feet. (Ord. 723 § 1, 1982: prior code § 35-3(i)).

**13. Street Naming**

When new streets are in alignment with existing streets, or new streets extend existing streets, the new streets shall be named according to the streets with which they correspond to the extent possible. Continuation of street names shall consider future connectivity. If future connectivity is not possible or impractical, the streets do not have to have corresponding street names. Streets which do not fit into an established street-naming pattern shall be named in a manner which will not duplicate or be confused with existing street names.

**14. Drainage and Irrigation Ditches**

Drainage ditches and irrigation ditches shall not be permitted on public streets or highways except to cross such public street or highway, or as part of an approved street design that does not include curb and gutter. (Prior code § 35-3(q)).

**15. Alleys**

Alleys shall be at least 30 feet in width, paved and dedicated to the city as rights-of-way. Alleys are not required, unless proposed to provide rear-yard access to properties, or access to maintain city utilizes.

**15.18.010.B Water and Wastewater Main Extensions**

**1. Private Installation**

The developer shall install the mains to and within the development by private contract, subject to approval of the plans and specifications by the City, and City inspection of actual construction; provided, that the City may elect to install the mains, in which case the developer shall deposit with the City the estimated cost of installing the mains, plus engineering and administrative costs, and the City may then proceed to make the installation by contract with a private contractor according to standard City policies and procedures. In the event that the original deposit is insufficient, the developer shall upon notification, immediately deposit the balance required with the City to complete the work. (Prior code § 39-53).

**2. Installation Cost Developer's Responsibility--Full Extensions**

All water and wastewater mains required to serve a development, including cross-connecting mains, shall be installed at the cost of the developer. The developer shall install mains to the farthest points of the subdivision or to the appropriate terminus within the development as determined by the department.

**3. Connecting Loops and Crossties**

Connecting loops and crossties within a development shall be constructed by the developer as determined necessary by the department. If the connecting loop is such that property outside the subdivision abuts such loop or ties, and connections are made to such line, the reimbursement provisions of subsections 15.18.100.D shall apply. Before any abutting property connects to such mains constructed at the expense of the water utility, the charge based on the front footage of the property to be served shall be collected by the City.

**4. Water Pumping Stations**

When, in the discretion of the City, additional water pumping stations are required to serve new platted subdivisions or development, the decision making entity, as a condition to acceptance of a final plat or approval of a development, may require the installation of the stations and require the developer to execute such instruments as may be necessary to convey title to the stations to the City upon completion. The installation and cost of the stations shall be the responsibility of the developer. The City shall supervise the construction and determine all matters with respect to the installation of the stations including, but not limited to, capacity, type, design and location, as in his discretion would meet minimum requirements for

fire and domestic demand. The City may require oversized stations to serve demand or areas larger than that proposed by the developer; however, in such cases the City shall pay the cost of the oversized, which cost shall thereafter be collected from other developers using the stations. Upon completion the City shall assume responsibility for operation and maintenance of stations installed pursuant to this section.

## **15.18.020 REQUIRED IMPROVEMENTS AND AGREEMENT TO COMPLETE**

### **15.18.020.A Completion of Improvements**

Before a final plat for an entire or a portion of a minor or major subdivision is approved by the city, or before a final certificate of occupancy is issued for a new development project requiring design review and approval, all public and private improvements required by this code, conditions of approval, or other applicable standards must be completed by the developer and approved by the City. The developer also shall construct all temporary improvements required as a condition of approval of the applicable plat or development project and shall maintain those temporary improvements for the period specified in such approval. Any dedication of public improvements or land to the City shall be free and clear of all liens and encumbrances.

### **15.18.020.B Deferral of Required Improvements Associated with Plats**

As an alternative to completion of the required public and private improvements associated with plats as referenced in subsection 15.18.020.A, above, the developer may defer the completion of those required improvements pursuant to section 15.18.030.

### **15.18.020.C Failure to Complete Improvements**

If the required improvements are not completed within the period specified in the applicable approval conditions, or within the time specified in the security and improvement deferral acknowledgement, the city shall have the authority to use the financial security to construct the improvements.

### **15.18.020.D Payment of In-lieu Fees**

The City may require the developer to pay proportional fees in-lieu of constructing certain improvements if it is determined that the certain improvement is preferred to be constructed by the City or other agency as part of a larger improvement.

## **15.18.030 SECURITY AND IMPROVEMENT DEFERRAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

### **15.18.030.A Security and Improvement Deferral Acknowledgement Contents**

If the required improvements are not completed prior to approval of a final plat, the developer shall file with the city a financial security in accordance with this section for the improvements being secured. Concurrently with the submittal of the security, the developer shall submit a signed security and improvement deferral acknowledgement on a form prepared and provided by the city. The security and improvement deferral form shall include, but may not be limited to, the following:

1. A detailed reference to the improvements requiring completion, including an engineer's cost estimate;

2. For final plats, all required improvement must be completed by the developer and excepted by the City within two years of approval of the final plat or prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy for the first building, whichever occurs first;
3. A statement that all work will be completed in accordance with the improvement drawings and specifications approved by the city;
4. A statement that a notice of completion issued by the department be submitted indicating that all improvements comply with the applicable map approval requirements, conditions of approval and this code prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy;
5. A statement that the financial security may be withdrawn by the developer in part or in whole upon final completion and approval of the improvements;
6. A provision that the developer shall repair, at his sole cost and expense, any hidden defects in design, workmanship and materials which appear in the work within one year following acceptance by the City;
7. A statement that requiring that each required public improvement shall be maintained by the developer until the improvement is accepted by the city;
8. A statement that all temporary improvements shall be constructed and maintained by the developer until no longer required by this code or conditions of approval for the plat or development project; and
9. The security and improvement deferral agreement shall run with the land and bind all successors, heirs and assigns of the developer. The agreement will be approved by the department and shall be filed with the city clerk.

#### **15.18.030.B Financial Security**

1. The security shall be 125% of the city engineer's estimate for the required improvements being secured. The city engineer's estimate shall be submitted by the developer's engineer on a form provided by the department. The security shall be reviewed and approved by the department prior to commencement of development activities.
2. The security shall be in a form of a letter of credit, bond, cash escrow, certificate of deposit, or check. The security shall explicitly be for the construction of the improvements, warranty and maintenance promises contained in the security and improvement deferral acknowledgement, including those pertaining to temporary improvements.
3. If a security is required by and provided to another governmental agency for the same improvements required by the city, the developer is not required to submit a security with the City for the same improvements. Proof of filing of such security with the other governmental agency shall be submitted.

## **15.18.040 REMEDIES**

### **15.18.040.A Fault of Terms**

In those cases where a security and improvement deferral acknowledgment has been executed and securities have been posted and required public improvements have not been installed within the terms of this code, the City may then:

1. Suspend plat or development plan approval or construction of a building until the improvements are completed and record a document to that effect for the purpose of public notice;
2. Obtain funds under the security and complete the improvements itself or through a third party;
3. Assign its right to receive funds under security to any third party, including a subsequent owner of the land to be divided or building constructed for which improvements were not constructed, in whole or in part, in exchange for that subsequent owner's promise to complete the required improvements; or
4. Exercise any other rights available under the law.

## **15.18.050 INSPECTION AND ACCEPTANCE OF PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS**

### **15.18.050.A Prior Responsibility**

Prior to the commencement of any work, the developer shall obtain all required permits and pay all required fees, where applicable for the construction of required improvements. No final plat shall be approved or building permits issued until all applicable permits are obtained and fees are paid.

### **15.18.050.B Periodic City Inspection**

City shall inspect improvements during and at the completion of construction of improvements and, if completed in accordance with the standards and specifications for such improvements, the city shall certify the improvements as being in compliance with city's standards and specifications. If upon the inspection, the city engineer finds the construction performed to be in a satisfactory condition for inclusion in the completed project, city engineer shall issue a statement of inspection which shall permit the developer to perform the next phase of the construction. If it is determined upon inspection that any one or more of the required improvements have not been constructed in accordance with the city's construction standards the developer shall be responsible for properly completing the improvements.

### **15.18.050.C Notice of Completion**

Upon inspection and approval of all completed improvements by the city engineer, the city engineer shall issue to the developer a notice of completion. The dedication of required public improvements will not be accepted, nor the amount of any remaining security posted by the developer be reduced until the city engineer or other agency having jurisdiction over the improvements has issued a notice of completion stating that all required improvements have been satisfactorily completed and approved.

**15.18.050.D Developer Responsibility Until City Acceptance**

The developer shall be responsible for the care and maintenance of all improvements until completion and final acceptance by the city. During moving in, construction, and moving off, the developer shall keep the site free and clean from dangerous accumulation of rubbish and debris, and shall maintain sufficient and proper temporary traffic control devices in conformance with the MUTCD for the protection of the public. Final acceptance of the improvements will not be made by the city until the construction areas and adjacent property has been cleared of all rubbish, surplus materials and equipment resulting from the contractor's operations, to the satisfaction of city.

**15.18.060 WARRANTY OF PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS**

**15.18.060.A One-Year Warranty**

The developer shall warrant all public improvements for a period of one (1) year from the date the city accepts the dedication of a completed improvement or group of improvements (the warranty period), and without delay or cost to the city to replace or reconstruct any defective or otherwise unsatisfactory part or parts of the improvements.

**15.18.060.B Financial Security**

A financial security for the warranty period shall be posted or retained from the original security with the city for the warranted improvements. The amount of the security for the warranty period shall be 25% of the approved City engineer's estimate for the improvements.

**15.18.060.C Damages**

The developer shall repair any damages to the improvements without cost to city before and during the warranty period due to private construction-related activities in accordance or defective work, or, if it has been rejected by the city, remove it from the site and replace it with non-defective work. If developer fails to promptly repair or replace damaged or defective work, the city may have the defective work corrected or the rejected work removed and replaced, and all direct and indirect costs of such removal and replacement, including compensation for professional services, shall be paid by the financial security for the warranty.

**15.18.070 REDUCTION OF SECURITY FOR PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS**

**15.18.070.A Reductions**

The amount of security posted by the developer may be reduced by the ratio of the costs of public improvements completed by the developer and approved by the city. In no event shall the security be reduced to less than 25 percent of its original amount unless and until a warranty security or other form is posted for the warranty period.

**15.18.070.B Request**

The request of reduction of the security shall be made in writing by the developer on a form provided by the city. The request shall include an itemized list of public improvements that were completed by the developer and approved by the city for which the reduction of the security is being sought.

## **15.18.080 ISSUANCE OF BUILDING PERMITS AND CERTIFICATES OF OCCUPANCY**

### **15.18.080.A Public improvements**

When a security has been required by this Chapter, no certificate of occupancy for any structure or facility built on the project covered by such security shall be issued prior to the completion of the required public improvements, except for the following:

1. Uninstalled stop signs or street name signs
2. Unpainted street striping
3. Uninstalled or unconnected street lights, except for any required traffic signals;
4. Any other improvements considered by the City to be minor or not related to fire/life safety standards, do not negatively affect vehicular or pedestrian circulation, and do not affect the operation of utilities.

### **15.18.080.B On-site private improvements**

All on site improvements shall be installed and approved by the City prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy. A temporary certificate of occupancy may be issued for a development if non-fire and life/safety improvements, such as landscaping and striping cannot be completed due to weather conditions. In order to obtain a temporary certificate of occupancy, the developer shall submit to the City a financial security in the amount of 125% of the cost of remaining improvements, including labor and materials. The temporary certificate of occupancy shall not exceed 180 days.

## **15.18.090 AS-BUILT PLANS FOR PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS**

### **15.18.090.A Required Upon Completion**

Upon completion of public improvement and before the City acceptance of those improvements, the developer shall submit to the City as-built plans which at a minimum indicate the following:

1. All manholes;
2. The location, size and depth of all sewer mains, laterals and wyes for the connection of service lines, and size;
3. Depth, and location of all water lines, valves, service lines and fire hydrants;
4. The location, grade and specific construction section for all streets; and
5. The location, size and depth of all storm drainage improvements.

## **15.18.100 REIMBURSEMENT FOR OVERSIZE PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS**

### **15.18.100.A Water and Sewer Mains**

The developer may request and the city may reimburse the developer for oversized water mains or oversized sanitary sewer mains installed by the developer. City's reimbursement shall be limited to the incremental cost of oversized water or sewer mains and associated appurtenances that are beyond the size of the water and sewer mains necessary to provide the required water and sanitary sewer service for the development. As part of the request for reimbursement, the developer shall submit to the department invoices with itemized costs for the oversized water and sewer mains and associated appurtenances.

**15.18.100.B Roads**

The developer may request and the city may reimburse the developer for oversized off-site collector roads or off-site and on-site arterial roads constructed or improved by the developer. City's reimbursement shall be limited to the actual cost of construction and materials associated with construction of the road beyond the size of the road warranted by the development to provide safe vehicular, pedestrian and bicycle traffic and maintenance of the roadway's or intersecting roadways' Level of Service C. As part of the request for reimbursement, the developer shall submit to the department invoices with itemized costs for the road construction.

**1. Paving cost apportionment**

Whenever the city requires paving consistent with the requirements of collector or major arterial streets, and when in the city council's discretion, funds are available for the purpose, the city shall participate in the cost of such required paving, with the subdivider, on the following basis:

Paving Cost Apportionment		
Excavation Base and Asphalt Surface	Developer's Share	City's Share
Arterial Street	66%	34%
Collector	88%	12%

(Prior code § 35-4 (1)).

**2. Request for Reimbursement**

Requests for city participation shall be made in writing to the city manager on or before February 1st prior to the budget year in which such participation is requested. The request shall be accompanied by plans, specifications and estimated costs of the streets for which participation is requested, which shall require approval by the city engineer prior to approval of the request. (Prior code § 35-4 (2)).

**3. Public Bid**

The city's participation shall not exceed five hundred dollars unless the contract for streets or portions thereof for which participation is requested, is let for public bid. The city council shall review the bid and the qualifications of the bidder and may refuse participation in the bid for any reason. (Prior code § 35-4 (3)).

**4. When disbursement not required.**

The city shall not be required to disburse any moneys in connection with participation under this chapter until 90 calendar days after the commencement of any regular budget year. (Prior code § 35-4 (4)).

**5. Not a waiver of developer's responsibility.**

Nothing hereunder shall be construed to waive any other requirements to be performed by the subdivider under this chapter, preliminary to acceptance of a final plat of any subdivision of land. (Prior code § 35-4 (5)).

**15.18.100.C Reimbursement Agreement with the City**

Before the city reimburses the developer for oversized public improvements referenced in subsections 15.18.100.A and 15.18.100.B the city and the developer shall enter in a reimbursement agreement. The reimbursement agreement shall specify the improvements being reimbursed, the costs of those improvements and the time by which the city will reimburse the developer for those improvements. The reimbursement agreement shall be executed upon approval by the city council.

**15.18.100.D Reimbursement by Others**

1. If the developer is required to construct off-site improvements that benefit other properties, the developer of such improvements may request a reimbursement from the benefiting properties.
2. Prior construction of such improvements, the developer shall obtain bids from at least two contractors based on the plans for such improvements as approved by the city. The developer shall select the lowest qualified bid.
3. Bidding and Notification
  - (i) The developer shall notify the department of the intent to bid and construction of such improvements.
  - (ii) The department shall notify the benefiting owners within 30 calendar days of receipt of the developer's intent to bid and construct such improvements. In the notification, the department shall include the developer's contact information and estimated construction amount.
  - (iii) The benefiting property owners may provide written comments to the developer within calendar 30 days of the date of the notification letter provided by the department.
4. Failure of the benefiting property owners to provide written comments to the developer within 30 calendar days of the date of the notification letter provided by the department, shall be deemed as a consent by the benefiting property owner for the developer to request bids for construction of such improvements.
5. Upon acceptance of the lowest qualified bid, the developer may proceed with the construction of such improvements.
6. Within 30 calendar days of acceptance of such improvements by the City, the developer may request in writing reimbursement for such improvements from the benefiting property owners. The request for reimbursement shall be submitted to the department. The request shall include itemized invoices from the contractor that constructed such improvements, and pro-rata costs to be shared by the developer and benefiting owners certified by the developer's engineer.
7. The department shall review and confirm the invoices and pro-rata costs. Upon confirmation, the department shall prepare a reimbursement agreement and submit the agreement to the developer and benefiting property owners.
8. The developer and benefiting owners shall provide to the department in writing an approval or a request to modify the pro-rata costs no later than 30 calendar days of the date of transmittal of the reimbursement agreement by the department. Failure to provide comments within 30 calendar days will be deemed as an acceptance of the reimbursement agreement.

9. The reimbursement agreement shall be approved, approved with modifications or denied by the city council. The city council may consider comments by the developer and/or the benefiting property owners in rendering its decision.
10. Upon city council's approval or approval with modifications of the reimbursement agreement, the agreement shall be signed by the developer and benefiting property owners. The department shall record the reimbursement agreement with the county clerk and assign it to the benefiting properties.
11. The reimbursement agreement shall expire 15 years after the approval date by the City Council. After expiration, the benefiting property owners are no longer bound by the reimbursement to the developer or successors.
12. The city shall not approve a final plat, issue a building permit for construction of a new primary use structure, or issue a building permit for an expansion of an existing structure that would normally require construction of such improvements on any benefiting property covered by the agreement, unless the benefiting property owners pay the pro-rata reimbursement as specified in the reimbursement agreement.
13. The payment of the reimbursement by the benefiting property owners shall be made directly to the developer that constructed the improvements. A notarized receipt of payment shall be provided to the department.

## **15.18.110 DEVELOPMENT AND DELAYED IMPROVEMENTS**

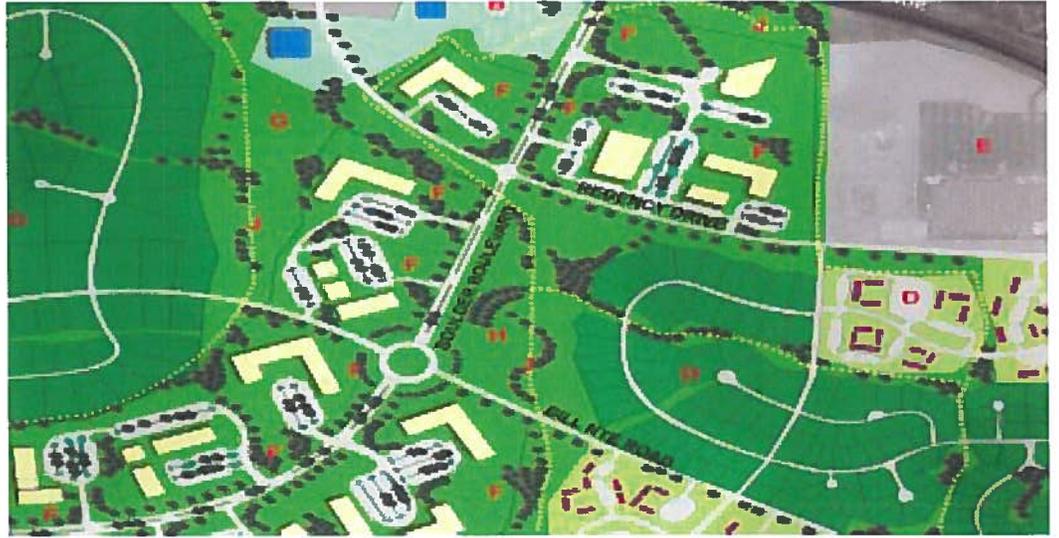
### **15.18.110.A Development Agreements**

1. From time to time, the City may enter into a development agreement with a developer for construction or dedication of improvements typically not considered standard, or requiring special considerations by the City or the developer.
2. If a development agreement is associated with minor or major subdivision, it shall be reviewed and considered by the Planning Commission prior to or concurrently with the final plat; and reviewed and acted upon by the City Council prior to or concurrently with the final plat.
3. If a development agreement is associated with a development requiring design review, it shall be reviewed and acted upon by the City Council prior to the issuance of a building permit for the development.
4. Developer shall notify the department of the intent to bid and construction of such improvements.
5. The department shall notify the benefiting owners within 30 calendar days of receipt of the developer's intent to bid and construct such improvements. In the notification, the department shall include the developer's contact information and estimated construction amount.
6. The benefiting property owners may provide written comments to the developer within 30 calendar days of the date of the notification letter provided by the department.

**15.18.110.B Delayed Improvement Agreements**

1. A developer may request a delayed improvement agreement for construction of off-site roads, water lines and wastewater lines. A delayed improvement agreement shall be presented concurrently with the application for a final plat or application for a design review.
2. If a delayed improvement agreement is associated with minor or major subdivision, it shall be reviewed and considered by the Planning Commission prior to or concurrently with the final plat; and reviewed and acted upon by the City Council prior to or concurrently with the final plat.
3. If a delayed improvement agreement is associated with a development requiring design review, it shall be reviewed and acted upon by the City Council prior to the issuance of a building permit for the development.
4. In making its decision, the City Council shall consider the following:
  - (i) Does the construction of the improvement result in the improvement not being utilized by the City or the public for an extended period of time resulting in pre-mature deterioration of the improvement;
  - (ii) Does the construction of the improvement result in a piecemealed or partial completion of a larger improvement that would be better achieved if the larger improvement is constructed in whole; and
  - (iii) Does the improvement result in detrimental impacts to adjacent properties and whether or not construction of such improvement requires other improvements outside the nexus or proportionality of the minor subdivision, major subdivision or development.
5. The developer shall provide to the City a bond in the amount of 150% of the City Engineer's estimate for the delayed improvements. The bond amount shall be based on the City Engineer's estimate for those improvements.
6. Delayed improvements shall be completed by the developer no later than 15 years after the signature of the agreement by the Mayor.
7. The Mayor shall not sign the agreement unless an appropriate bond is submitted by the developer to the City.

# Turner Tract Area Plan



*A Land Use and Conceptual Development Plan for the  
Turner Tract Area, Laramie, Wyoming*

*City of Laramie  
July 2001*



City of Laramie  
Community Services Department  
Planning Division  
P.O. Box C  
Laramie, WY 82070

May 31, 2001

Dear Residents and Friends of Laramie:

It is our pleasure to present to you the Turner Tract Area Plan. This document represents the product of many hours and weeks of hard work by City staff, Planning Commission, City Council, consulting team, and the public.

The City of Laramie staff and elected and appointed officials worked hard and enthusiastically to respond to the challenge of potentially losing an important and long-time employer by developing a plan that not only ensures that Mountain West Farm Bureau will be able to build their new home office in Laramie, but provides a vision for a mixed-use area that will accommodate new office development, a mixture of nearby cohesive residential neighborhoods, a new commercial center along I-80, and a civic and recreational center as a strong and perpetual anchor.

At the core of the vision and plan is an open pedestrian and automobile-oriented development area that will help make Laramie a more economically competitive community within the region. The office park and residential neighborhoods described in this plan will not emerge overnight, but it is achievable. The plan while rooted in the pragmatism of economic and engineering analysis, recognizes the vital need for the Turner Tract area to compliment the downtown and other economic centers in the community as well as a place that is human and economically viable.

Our sincere thanks to all those who have dedicated their talent, energy and ideas to this effort.

Mark Sawyer  
Planning Manager  
City of Laramie

The Turner Tract Area Plan was prepared with the assistance of City staff, Planning Commission, City Council, Mountain West Farm Bureau, Laramie Economic Development Corporation, and community and area residents. Thanks to all who participated including, but not limited to:

**City of Laramie**

**City Council**

Joe Shumway, Mayor  
Fred Homer, Vice-Mayor  
Bob Bell  
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**Project Funding**

This project is funded by the City of Laramie and Mountain West Farm Bureau (MWFB).



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The Turner Tract Area Plan is a framework for strategic actions that will reinforce the role of the Turner Tract area as one of the community's major office employment, residential, and civic centers. The plan is intended to guide future development of a one-square mile area as a multimodal, live-work district anchored by civic spaces and buildings.

As a result of the plan's focus on creating an attractive live-work district, the Turner Tract area will be an exciting place to locate a new business or buy a home. The area will offer abundant open space and views, live-work opportunities, parks and recreation facilities and trail connections to rest of Laramie. This new live-work district will contain a mix of uses including employment, a new commercial retail area, mixed housing, recreation facilities and pedestrian and bicycle areas. A balanced transportation system for pedestrians, bicyclists, future public transit, and motor vehicles will maximize travel mode choices.

While the development of the plan was initiated to review the appropriateness of providing land for development of a new home office for Mountain West Farm Bureau, after initiating the plan's development it became apparent that the city had a

number of pressing needs with respect to housing, office park development, and recreation that the Turner Tract area could help resolve through the development of an integrated live-work district.

After substantial public outreach and Planning Commission and City Council deliberation of such factors as an analysis of primary and secondary employment, property and sales tax revenue, additional operating and capital costs, and other qualitative consideration, the plan concluded that the City of Laramie would most benefit from office and residential uses in the Turner Tract area. Developing a significant new area for office development could help the city add significant numbers of new jobs and increase property tax revenue.

At the time of adoption of the Turner Tract Area Plan, there was no office park development area identified in the community and only 25 acres of scattered undeveloped commercial land that could reasonably be expected to accommodate moderate and large office-based businesses. Clearly part of reason there is limited office land available is due to a lack of demand for office land, the ability of the private sector to finance an office park development with more limited demand, and the more significant

retail and residential market pressure.

In an effort to foster the adopted vision of creating an integrated live-work district and employment center, the Turner Tract area plan has evaluated a series of potential policies and actions. The following is a summary of the actions recommended to implement the plan:

**Zoning:**

Adoption of this plan should be followed up with policy work to eliminate the existing conventional zoning designations in the Turner Tract planning area and establish a mixed-use PUD zoning district with detailed design standards based on the goals of this plan.

**Annexation:**

The City should initiate annexation and zoning of those areas necessary to support the development of the Turner Tract Office Park and the live-work environment.

**Land Acquisition:**

Establish acquisition strategies to acquire surrounding lands for development of the Turner Tract Area Plan. The inducement of residential development in the near term may only be achieved via City participation, such as property ownership.

**Phases:**

Identify stand-alone phases that are integrated with the City's Capital

The City of Laramie has extremely limited area for office park development. Infrastructure in many locations around the community is restricted due to inadequate water pressure or volumes or inadequate sewer system capacity. The Turner Tract Planning Area, however, offers a unique opportunity to develop a high quality office park with nearby supporting residential uses.



Improvement Program (CIP) projects.  
**Funding:**

City staff and City Council should update the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) that addresses major government facilities and infrastructure projects. CIP elements from the Turner Tract Area Plan should be sorted and prioritized, and funding sources analyzed during the process. City staff should also begin analyzing other funding strategies for the live-work district. The City should carefully investigate grant programs to leverage any infrastructure investment including, but not limited to, recreation facility development associated with any special purpose tax.

**Major Civic Uses:**

The City should demonstrate commitment to the plan by designating the Turner Tract Planning Area as the location for the community recreation center and other specific major civic uses during the Capital Improvement Plan process.

**Marketing:**

The City should develop a marketing and financing package to use in facilitating the investment in the property. This should include the development of a marketability study to help identify potential markets as well as barriers to attracting target businesses or promoting residential

development.  
**Incentives:**

The City should evaluate and develop incentives based on the marketability study. These incentives could include financing, land, etc. The incentive should be integrated into the marketing and financing package to help attract some large office users or housing investment.



## Overview

The Turner Tract Area Plan is the first detailed plan to be developed by the City of Laramie. The plan represents a mid-level plan lying somewhere between the broad comprehensive planning scale and the site-specific planning scale. As an area plan, the plan establishes a conceptual plan for future urban development in southeast Laramie and the urban fringe encompassing a portion of the southeast Spring Creek drainage

This plan was developed in response to pressures to develop the public-owned Turner Tract. The plan was developed in order to establish a vision for the Turner Tract area before market pressures caused it to develop without consideration of its development potential and the overall long-term needs of the community. The general purpose of the plan is to consciously plan for the development, preservation and enhancement of the area in a manner that helps ensure that future changes are beneficial to the area's citizens and to the City as a whole.

## What is an Area Plan?

An area plan is a plan for a specific area of the community as defined by physical boundaries such as roads, development character, and

common public facilities such as schools and parks.

Area plans provide an agreement among citizens and city departments on the future development of the area, create a common understanding among residents of expected changes in the area, and develop implementation methods for achieving the goals of the area plan. The goals of developing an area plan are:

1. Create a vision for the future of the area that support the needs of area residents and the community as a whole.
2. Establish the plan, the approach, the priority and schedule for implementing an area plan by identifying the means of financing plan elements, establishing a framework for reviewing public projects, land use changes, and development proposals and establishing the broader community context in which to select appropriate locations and projects for expenditures of public funds.

The planning horizon for an area plan is approximately 20 years.

## Project Purpose

The Turner Tract Area Plan is an integrated planning tool guiding future development of the Turner Tract and surrounding area. The project's primary function is to create

an area-specific plan that establishes future land use patterns and innovative development designs to meet the needs of current and future residents.

Specific objectives of the Turner Tract Area Plan planning process include:

1. Identify community development needs, land and development restrictions and establish an appropriate land use plan for the area that meets some or all of the community's land development needs.
2. Update land use designations in the area consistent with policies in the plan.
3. Evaluating the area's transportation needs per recommendations in the updated 2001 Major Street and Highway System Plan.
4. Explore innovative site design techniques that promote development options enhancing alternative transportation.
5. Identify and protect significant natural resource features.
6. Evaluate options for urbanization and develop a preferred alternative specifying appropriate land uses, street connectivity, development design criteria, residential densities,

A wide variety of ideas were generated in the public sessions and workshops. Some of those ideas are represented here. While the community identified many ideas and needs. The community overwhelmingly saw the need for office park and residential development in an open and well-landscaped environment as a top priority and most appropriate use for the area.

innovative design patterns for nonresidential development and commercial centers, parks and open space, and a multimodal transportation system.

7. Identify implementation measures with recommended Comprehensive Plan (or Land Use Element) and zoning amendments, potential design criteria, and infrastructure financing mechanisms.

8. Determine whether Mountain West Farm Bureau's need for a site for their new home office in Laramie could be met on land owned by the City of Laramie.

#### How Will the Plan Be Used?

The plan will be used to provide a framework for development decisions on the Turner Tract and in the surrounding area such as:

1. Budget setting and capital

improvement priorities;

2. Evaluation of annexation and development proposals;

3. Parkland acquisition and development;

4. Urban design improvements; and

5. Economic development initiatives.

#### Planning Process

The Turner Tract Area Plan

## Workshop Thoughts

### Parks & Recreation:

- Tie the existing greenway system to Spring Creek by extending it through TT.
- The city to consider exchanging land with Mountain West (MW) at Sherman Hill Estate (SH) in order to develop that area as a major entry gateway/parkway to the city.
- It is desirable to have a public park in TT that connects to other natural amenities.
- If the future recreation center is approved to be located here, it could be tied to the greenway system and share parking with the future ice arena.
- There is community support for an outdoor swimming pool. TT could provide an area for such a facility. The negative point about locating the outdoor swimming pool here is that all recreational facilities would appear to be concentrated at one end of town. This is also a strong positive point about locating this facility here: parents could take their children to one location for variety of activities without spending lots of time driving around town in order to meet different children's recreational interest.
- The location of the outdoor swimming pool in close proximity to the other two recreational facilities at TT makes fiscal sense.

### Housing & Lodging Needs:

- Most recent housing projects focus on high-end housing

developments. There is a need for more middle-income (80k-125k) single-family housing stock within the city as well as fixed income senior housing.

- Is it necessary to create a buffer between different types of housing? Or is it desirable to have a mixed development that provides for all types of housing needs from starter homes to high-end houses to senior independent living?

### Commercial & Retail Developments:

- A major goal of the charrette exercise is for the city to end up with an inventory of a dozen available (and varying size) commercial parcels at TT in order to entice potential companies such as Mountain West to relocate to the area. Currently there are no such parcels available for companies that employ more than 25 employees.
- Once potential companies relocate to the area, housing stock must be improved to accommodate the new employees.
- The design team is urged to establish a set of architectural covenants, signage and green space requirements to set aesthetic standards for all types of land uses within the tract.
- Some uses (such as used car lots) should be prohibited.
- Downtown Laramie is currently thriving with charming specialty shops but no major clothing stores

for men/women. Most shoppers travel +60 miles to the 2 major retail centers outside of the city for their shopping needs (estimated 40% leakage). There is a feeling that bringing some of these large stores to Laramie would keep retail dollars in the city although no one suggested that TT was the appropriate location for a regional shopping center.

- There is a sense that once commercial and office developments are established at TT, retail will follow growth. The needs of large-scale retail (big box) will have to be anticipated and planned for at master planning stages.

### Miscellaneous Discussions:

- The community is not culturally starved; there is a civic center utilized by the community that meets their current cultural needs. The building should be renovated at some future time.
- Future municipal buildings could be located at TT.
- Change existing requirements of street width etc. through establishment of PUDs.
- TT should become a showcase example of mixed use that would inspire other similar developments in the future. A more integrated planning concept should replace the traditional pyramid approach to planning. The planning of TT should be comprehensive and not piecemeal.

project was an intensive process managed by City staff in concert with a project consultant team composed of Brooks Borgs Skiles Architecture, Farm Bureau Financial Services, and Mountain West Farm Bureau. The project benefited tremendously from the guidance, support, and assistance of residents, the Planning Commission and City Council.

The Planning Commission and City Council conducted six meetings to review work products and provide technical support, while City project staff worked regularly with the consultant team on plan development, evaluation, and refinement.

The Consultant's work began with research and data collection, review of applicable adopted plans and documents, and synthesis of this information to develop an understanding of the project area, existing physical conditions, development constraints, and planning context. The task included an intensive community workshop in May. The City provided broad notice of workshop to the general public and specifically to area residents, property and business owners, employees, and representatives of various interest groups.

At the workshops, community members, Planning Commission members and City Council members:

- Discussed project planning objectives;
- Generated a vision for the study area; and
- Provided input on Plan alternatives.

The workshop yielded a series of important comments that helped determine the content of the Turner Tract Area Plan. Some of the comments received are identified in the "Workshop Thoughts" inset. Ultimately, the workshop resulted in six principles that guided the development of the Turner Tract Area Plan.

#### Guiding Principles

- 1) Natural resource protection
  - keep dense development away from the most sensitive areas
  - protect and respect the natural topography and land features
- 2) Accessible open space network
  - develop a spine of interconnected natural features, parks and corridors
  - provide multiple points of access
  - establish trail and

transportation links to outside the plan area

- utilize natural resource conservation and habitat protection, passive and active recreation, and pedestrian and bicycle trail systems to meet multiple purposes

3) Distributed but concentrated development

- distribute pedestrian-scaled employment and recreation within walking distance of most residences
- move larger scale employment and commercial centers to more heavily traveled transportation corridors with transit potential

4) Development pattern / landscape fit

- establish land uses and development patterns compatible with landscape character
- keep dense patterns in already developed areas
- create least dense patterns on hillsides, especially with hilltop viewsheds
- have most streets parallel contours

5) Transportation alternatives to

The City publicized the planning effort throughout the process. This included invitations to area and nearby property owners, ads and articles in the newspaper, and radio stories.

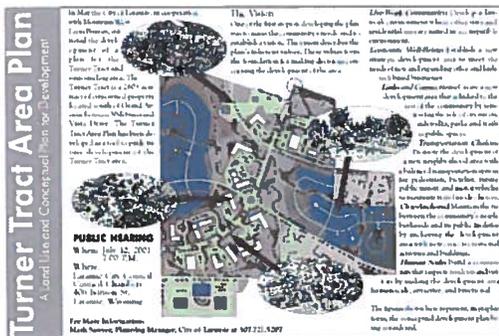
- private automobiles
  - provide safe, direct and convenient bicycle and pedestrian routes
  - establish both on-street and off-street alternative mode systems
- 6) Local employment/housing
  - strategically locate major employment
  - provide easily accessible housing

Based upon these guiding principles, the Consultant and City staff prepared a draft Plan for review and input. The Plan was adopted by the Planning Commission and City Council after being refined by staff based on input from the Planning Commission, City Council and public.

Walmart) and proposed recreation facility (i.e., ice arena). Within the urban fringe are scattered rural residential uses. Large and moderate-scale commercial uses, and other higher intensity developments are located along Grand Avenue to the north of the area. Low density residential development bounds the planning area to the east and moderate density residential development bounds the planning area to the west.

### Turner Tract Plan Area

The Turner Tract Area Plan boundaries are roughly formed by I-80 on the south, Grand Avenue on the north, Vista Drive on the east and 30<sup>th</sup> Street on the west. The total area includes approximately 30 existing residents and more than 15 dwellings on 628 acres, of which only 42% is within the city limits. Uses within the city limits near Grand Avenue include commercial retail development (i.e.,



## 2. The Plan

The Turner Tract Area Plan is a framework for strategic actions that will reinforce the role of the Turner Tract area as one of the community's major office employment, residential, and civic centers. The plan is intended to guide future development of a one-square mile area as a human-scale, multimodal, live-work district anchored by civic spaces and buildings.

### The Parts

The plan is divided into five parts:

1. **THE VISION** defines the primary values for the Turner Tract Area. These values should guide our public and private decisions about development in the Turner Tract Area.
2. **THE FRAMEWORK** is the skeleton around which development will evolve over time. The framework is structure that links the various elements or development in the area into cohesive district.
3. **THE PROGRAM** defines the uses which are proposed to be located in the Turner Tract Planning Area. The program is designed to promote development that reinforces the physical framework and the cohesiveness of the district.

4. **THE IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY** outlines an approach towards the realization of the vision for the Turner Tract Planning Area. It outlines a number of action steps to be taken by the City to help implement the plan. The implementation plan also includes projections and anticipated phasing.

5. **PHASE I DEVELOPMENT** summarizes the objectives, steps and procedures for initiating development of Phase I of the Turner Tract Planning Area.

The combination of these five elements forms a plan that provides for the realization of a new live-work district in the City of Laramie.

Trails and trail connections through residential neighborhoods and the office park are key features of the live-work district concept. Trails should be placed in greenways that have been designed to handle storm drainage. By using "green" techniques, stormwater issues can be resolved while providing open space, parks and recreational space for area residents and employees to enjoy and forming a functional backbone or development framework for the area.



The vision describes the plan's inherent values, which are intended to guide development of the Turner Tract Planning Area. The combination of these values forms the foundation for making decisions consistent with the overall plan.

**The Vision**

In an effort to generate high paying jobs, create a significant tax base and enhance the economy of the city, the Turner Tract Area should be used to promote a high quality, mixed use economic center that focuses on the city's non-retail target industries including: logistics, semiconductors and electronics, finance, research, business and professional services, telecommunications and software and multimedia development.

The Turner Tract will attract high paying jobs and enhance the economy of the city by:

**Creating a Live-Work Community:**

Develop a live-work environment where office use and residential uses are mixed in a compatible environment.

**Establishing Links and Connections:**

Links and connections to the rest of the community will be

reinforced using city streets and public spaces.

**Offering Transportation Choices:**

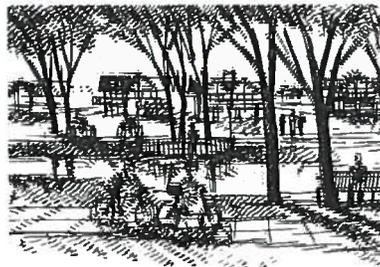
A balanced transportation system for pedestrian, bicyclist, future public transit, and motor vehicles will maximize travel mode choices.

**Building Civic-Anchors:**

The development of the area will be anchored by civic/recreational activities and buildings including city parks, open space, areas for gathering, trails, and other major civic functions.

**Being Human Scale:**

Streets and public spaces in the Turner Tract Planning Area will be attractive, functional and designed to make walking easy for the pedestrian.



## 4. The Framework

The Framework Plan (Panel 1) presents the structural elements of a cohesive district. It provides a logical system for development of the Turner Tract Live-Work District. The Turner Tract Area Plan uses two primary frameworks to structure the public realm: open space and trails. Continuous spines of open space and parks extend through the major public buildings and connect them to the Spring Creek Greenway and residential and office development areas.

The central organizing elements of the plan are two open space spines that connect various buildings within a unified public realm of parks, plazas, and trails. The parks, plazas, and trails provide meeting and gathering places, while providing linkages for people to walk to work, recreation and shopping.

In addition to these major open space spines running east/west and north/south, tree-lined streets and boulevards provide a comfortable space for pedestrians and provide visual interest for the pedestrian and motorist alike. The tree-lined streets and deep building setbacks provide significant open space and vistas along the roadway network that links throughout with the trail network.

New residential areas, that will

ultimately provide housing for area workers, buffer existing lower-density residential develop from the impacts of office park development.

In laying out the framework, the vision was translated into the following general policies for development of the Turner Tract. These policies not only helped guide the development of the framework, but should be used to provide more detailed guidance when considering where to located various uses to best utilize the land to enhance the community's economy.

**Policy 1:** Master-planned, mixed-use development with a small retail component. The development must be of a unified character with non-retail target industries as the predominate land sue. Ancillary retail uses must be integrated into the overall development scheme.

**Policy 2:** In an effort to promote the office park character of this area, retail development should be discouraged from locating on the Grand Avenue frontage and away from major intersections in clusters.

**Policy 3:** New automobile, truck boat sales, or other such retailers and service uses are not designated as target industries and should not be permitted.

**Policy 4:** Certain retail and commercial sues are deemed incompatible with the intent and purpose of the Turner Tract Area. These uses include retail gasoline stations, motels, etc. Retail uses should only be permitted when the use can demonstrate that the number, location and development timing of such uses correspond to and are not detrimental to the city's overall goal of promoting an environment favorable to the location, retention and attraction of non-retail target industries to the Turner Tract Area.

**Policy 5:** Provide appropriate transition of intensity between the Boulder Drive Corridor and existing or proposed residential neighborhoods outside of or on the corridor fringe is provided through design standards in the PUD overlay. Office park traffic routes should be designed and located so as not to negatively impact fringe neighborhoods.

**Policy 6:** Any residential zoning along the Boulder Drive Corridor is not consistent with the intent and purpose of the corridor and should not be permitted.

The Turner Tract Planning Area should be designed as live-work district. Office buildings should be developed around a spine of open space and trail network that connects work to home and takes advantage of the Turner Tract Planning Area's natural setting.

The program establishes the land uses for the area. The proposed land use program illustrates the location and types of uses that are consistent with the vision and the framework for the development of the area. All uses will be subject to approval of the necessary funding and application of the City's land use regulations. Factors considered in identifying these uses included projected needs for civic buildings based on anticipated growth, opportunities for private development, and identified demand for various land use types within the community. The various land uses are summarized in Table 1.

**Proposed Land Uses**

The following is a description of the land uses included within the program.

**1. Public Spaces and Plazas:** The central organizing elements of the plan are two open space spines that connect various buildings and development areas within a unified public realm of parks and plazas. The parks and plazas provide meeting and gathering places, while providing linkages for

people to walk or ride bikes to civic activities, employment and shopping and connect to a larger recreational trail network in the community.

**2. Civic Center Anchor (Recreation Center and Ice Arena):** If residents of Albany County approve the Special Purpose Tax at the ballot in August, a new recreation center will be the second phase of development within the plan area. The City Council is proposing to build a new 50,688 square-foot recreation center with indoor and outdoor pool, running track, gym, and meeting rooms. The development will also include an indoor ice arena and outdoor park space.

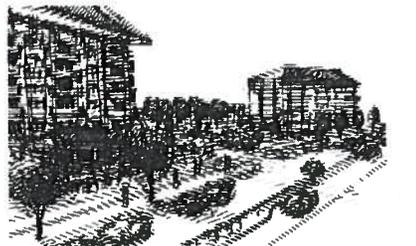
**3. Residential:** Single family, townhomes and multifamily units are proposed primarily along the eastern edge of the planning area. Low-density residential units and executive housing is proposed along the western edge of the tract along 30th Street. Residential units will create attractive streets and walking environments with

sidewalks, tree-lined planter strips, front yards and porches. Housing will act to buffer proposed commercial development from existing neighborhoods, and will help increase security in the evenings and on the weekends.

**4. Public Facilities and Schools:** With area for over 1,200 new families, a school or other public may be required to support development of the area. A school should generally be located in close proximity to planned parks and open space to allow these resources to be shared.

**5. Office:** Areas designated for office are intended for financial, high tech, real estate and commercial office uses. Offices shall be the primary use, and manufacturing or warehousing uses should be prohibited. This area should be in a campus-like, master-planned setting with large setbacks, abundant open space, trails, and attractive landscaping.

**6. Commercial Retail:** There is a long-term need in the City



for additional commercial retail space to accommodate large retailers and highway/regional-oriented commercial development. General commercial areas will provide the full range of sales and service activities. These uses will occur in a self-contained center. Commercial uses should be designed to protect adjacent residential uses from such impacts as noise or traffic. General commercial development is designated at a future I-80/30th Street interchange. New development should be designed to utilize internal accessways and not designed to encourage strip style commercial development.

#### Planning and Design Guidelines

These general guidelines pertain to all building types within the Turner Tract Planning Area. Guidelines pertaining to specific building types are described on the following pages.

#### General Design Considerations:

1. Avoid blank walls along streets, plazas and parks. Building facades facing these

public spaces should be composed of high quality materials and finishes, and should generally contain windows and entries.

2. Use architectural elements to establish human scale and massing for buildings when viewed from the street. This includes providing a cornice or "top", a "base", and windows located and proportioned to express the structural bay dimensions of the building.
3. Emphasize vertical proportion in the design of the building openings, windows, and panels.
4. Encourage the use of sandstone in all buildings, especially civic buildings, to establish visual continuity and a local "sense of place."
5. Reinforce the Turner Tract area's central axis by establishing a series of parks and plazas linked along this spine via clear pedestrian and visual connections.

#### City Recreation Center/Civic Uses

The proposed City of Laramie recreation center is located near the

intersection of Boulder Drive and Garfield Street to serve as the northern focus of the Turner Tract area's central axis. The recreation center also provides the northern edge to the east-west cross axis of the park/trail system and is integrated into the Spring Creek Greenway. Civic uses should meet the following design and use guidelines:

1. Locate the primary building entrance oriented to the east towards Boulder Drive, along the Turner Tract area's central axis and cross axis. Provide a secondary entrance off of Regency Drive, along the Turner Tract area's cross axis. The building entrances shall be connected to allow pedestrians to see and walk through the building, thereby creating a continuous series of parks and plazas along the central axis.
2. Provide varied roof forms to create architectural interest. Reduce the visual scale of the building and make it inviting by the use of architectural elements such as corner roof structures, cornice lines, niches, and other human-scaled features.

The Turner Tract Planning Area should be anchored with civic uses including an network of open space, trails, parks that are focused around a community recreation center and ice arena.

**Parks and Open Space**

The plan incorporates a significant and vital series of open space areas and planned civic and park areas. These areas serve as a major defining character element of the area. The park and open space features are shown as a mixture of types from developed green space to more natural areas of open space. Generally, when locating and designing parks and open space, the following design and use guidelines should be followed.

1. Parks should be conveniently located. Neighborhood-level recreational facilities needed by their residents including playgrounds, free play areas, basketball courts, picnic tables, etc. should be provided in association with all developments.
2. Design parks in conjunction with streets and walkways, to be a purposeful part of any land development, and not merely the residual leftovers from site planning for other purposes.
3. Parks should be mostly surrounded by local or collector

streets or house fronts, to maintain safety and visibility.

4. Open space areas should be designed and located to preserve environmentally sensitive areas including wildlife habitat, wetlands, steep hillsides, unstable soils, ridgetops, and riparian corridors.

5. Open space areas should be connected by a trail system that provides public access along drainages, and connects with regional open space resources to promote public recreation.

6. Open space and parks should be connected or adjacent to schools, whenever possible.

7. Streets and sidewalks should be considered as part of the public realm and open space or linear park features and should be designed in consideration of their role as public spaces. For example, in some cases street right-of-ways should be widened to allow for landscaping and other special design treatments or include

Table 1. Land Use Allocation

Use	Land Area (Acres)
<b>Commercial Retail</b>	
Business	30
Office	130
<b>Residential</b>	
High Density	50
Medium Density	70
Low Density	20
Very Low Density	45
<b>Public</b>	
Open Space	105
Public/Recreation	20
<b>Other Existing</b>	159



temporary and permanent art along major pedestrian corridors.

Single Family Homes, Townhomes, and Multifamily Development

New single family homes, townhomes, and multifamily developments are proposed along Vista Drive south of Walmart to add somewhat more affordable housing to the area and extend the existing residential neighborhoods to the east and south. These units will help buffer existing residential development at lower densities from the higher density office development proposed along the Boulder Drive Corridor connecting the Grand Avenue commercial area to the I-80/30<sup>th</sup> Street interchange. In addition, these units will help establish a live-work development orientation for the Turner Tract area where private residences are located within walking/bicycling distance of work.

Residential uses and neighborhoods should meet the following design and use guidelines:

1. Permit somewhat smaller lot sizes to enhance affordability and diversity in the area.
2. Create an attractive street and walking environment with sidewalks, tree-lined planter

strips, front yards, and appropriate building features. Primary entries shall be visible and accessible from the street. Front porches, window bays, and balconies shall face the street. Locate garages to the rear of the lots with either alley or side drive access.

3. Hip, gable, and gambrel roofs are required. Flat roofs are not permitted.
4. Permit duplex units in the single-family area so that smaller individual units have the appearance of the larger units in the neighborhood.
5. Residential neighborhoods should be designed to incorporate a mixture of houses, duplexes, and apartments. Very low, low, and moderate income households shall be integrated into neighborhoods through the use of innovative housing types, rather than merely creating isolated pockets of apartments.
6. New residential areas should be compatible with the existing residential development, primarily through appropriate density placement. Generally,

multifamily and duplex residential development is suitable transitional use that should be effectively located when possible between higher density development (such as commercial) and lower density development (such as single family residential) or integrated into a mixed use neighborhood.

7. Residential neighborhoods should be varied in design. Building facades should be articulated to provide visual interest to pedestrians. Neighborhoods should not consist of unarticulated blank walls or unbroken series of garage doors. Multifamily housing should offer variation between buildings while maintaining an "overall design theme".
8. Multifamily housing projects should incorporate the characteristics and amenities typically associated with single family homes. These characteristics include orientation of the front door to a neighborhood sidewalk and street, individual identity, private outdoor space, privacy, and security.

The I-80/30th Street Interchange should be reserved for regional commercial uses. The retail businesses should face and access an internal network of streets rather than facing I-80 or fronting 30th Street. The development should be well landscaped and connected to the pedestrian/trail system.

### Office/Business Park

One of the key land uses within the Turner Tract Planning Area is the development of an office park to accommodate large office employers. The office park is organized around the primary open space spine and Boulder Drive. Office has been included to meet the demand for office development areas and to help establish a live-work district. Office uses should meet the following design and use guidelines.

1. Offices should be located as a transitional use between higher density development (e.g. retail, commercial, or industrial) and lower density development, such as single family residential. Office development may also be used to provide a transition between single family development and public facilities.
2. Offices should be connected by pedestrian and bicycle routes and trails to promote alternative transportation modes for commuters.
3. Office users should be located on parcels of land large enough to adequately support the type of office development

proposed including possible expansion, and minimize any adverse effects upon surrounding properties.

4. Office areas should provide appropriate pedestrian linkages connecting parking lots to encourage internal trip capture and reduced impact on roads. Be designed to provide just enough commercial parking in small parking lots at the side or rear of buildings. Parking lots shall not be permitted to dominate the street frontage, interrupt pedestrian routes, or negatively impact surrounding neighborhoods.
5. Office lots should be designed to provide adequate area and road frontage to allow for controlled access points and proper spacing between driveways to minimize the impact on the operating capacity and safety of the adjacent road network.
6. Offices should be developed to provide adequate buffers, maintain adequate tree cover, and maximize visual compatibility. Generally, office development should be part of a parklike setting with significant green area and long-

vistas.

### Streets, Trails and Other Transportation System Components

The design, location, and orientation of streets determine how an area feels and how the transportation system functions. The following design and use considerations should be reviewed when designing streets, trails and other transportation system components within the Turner Tract Planning Area.

1. Streets should be designed to slow traffic in residential neighborhoods. Arterials or through traffic streets should be located on the periphery of residential neighborhoods. Arterials should never bisect neighborhoods.
2. The transportation system should not be designed to accommodate the automobile at the expense of other modes of transportation. Improvements identified to achieve a desired level of service for the automobile must not negatively impact the level of service for pedestrians or bicycles. Consider pedestrian levels of service measurements including directness, continuity, street crossings, visual interest and amenities, and security when



designing the road system. Street crossings for pedestrians should include crosswalks, lighting, median refuges, corner sidewalks widening, ramps, signage, signals, and landscaping. Crosswalks should be well marked and visible to motorists.

3. Form an interconnected network of neighborhood streets and sidewalks within a neighborhood and between neighborhoods, knitting neighborhoods together and not forming barriers between them. Narrower streets create a more interconnected neighborhood and reduce travel speeds.

4. Avoid the use of deadends and cul-de-sacs.

5. Trails, sidewalks and on-street bicycle facilities should be located in association with utility easements (overhead transmission lines, gas and water) when practical. This off-road corridor system should be designed and developed to connect neighborhoods to recreation and open space facilities.

6. Trails should be required to be built when roads are

under construction or reconstruction where an on-street trail would support linkage between residential neighborhoods or between residential neighborhoods and commercial areas.

7. The major goal in design is to create a trail system that addresses quality, consistency, safety, security, ease of use and cost-effective maintenance.

## Illustrative Concept Plan

The illustrative concept plan map (Panel 2) introduces a series of new residential neighborhood with mixed densities and housing styles in close proximity to an office park anchored by open spaces and civic recreational facilities forming a new live-work district in the City of Laramie. The concept plan is not intended to illustrate proposed building footprints, but to illustrate proposed uses and relationships, as well as, proposed civic spaces and linkages.

A variety of residential neighborhoods should be provided to meet the needs of various employees. These areas should include low-density residential areas for executive housing on the west side and moderate and high density housing to accommodate moderate income families and individuals.

The Turner Tract Area Plan outlines a framework and principles for development of the area over the next ten to twenty years. That vision will be realized as various public agencies, developers, and corporate and community leaders use the plan to guide their individual decisions. The implementation strategy outlines an approach to begin that realization. It describes the actions that are needed to bring the plan to life, and the choices that must be made by City officials.

**Zoning**

There are five separate zoning districts identified in the plan area: B2-General Business, LR-Limited Residential, R2-Limited Multifamily Residential, R3-Multifamily Residential, and RR-Rural Residential (See Panel 3. Proposed Zoning). There are discrepancies between uses permitted and uses proposed. For example, office uses are not permitted in the low-density single-family zone district. In addition, some allowed uses are probably incompatible with the desired future uses and plan for the Turner Tract Planning Area. It should be noted that the City's current zoning district regulations include area, setback, and density regulations that

may interfere with the development of the desired plan. Some of the city's zoning regulations may also discourage development.

**Recommendation:** Adoption of this plan should be followed up with policy work to eliminate the existing conventional zoning designations and establishment of a mixed-use zoning in the form of a PUD district or special office park district. In addition, the city should review the zoning ordinance to identify possible impediments to the development of the Turner Tract in accordance with this plan. Any such ordinances should include design guidelines that will promote the compatibility of new development with existing and planned development within or near the district. Finally, the city should work with property owners to annex and rezone their property within the Turner Tract area to be in conformance with the Turner Tract Area Plan at no cost to the property owner.

**Annexation**

Only about one half of the plan area is currently annexed. In order to facilitate development of the plan area, the entire area should be

zoned and annexed.

**Recommendation:** Adoption of this plan should be followed up with annexation of the Turner Tract Plan area. The City should consider offering incentives to property owners who are willing to annex and zone their property in accordance with the plan including waiving plant investment and tap fees for water and sewer service.

**Phases**

The plan should be broken into logical phases. Build-out of the phases may begin as early as 2001 and may take twenty to fifty years to complete. The order in which the various phases build out will be dominated by market forces, citizen approved capital improvement plans and funding and private/public funded projects. Phase I has been identified and is scheduled for detailed planning, engineering and design during the 2001-2002. A detailed description of Phase I development initiative can be found in "Section 7-Phase I Development " of the Turner Tract Area Plan. The City of Laramie in cooperation with Mountain West Farm Bureau is initiating development of Phase I of the Turner Tract



Area Plan. Mountain West Farm Bureau plans to construct their new home office on a 15 acre parcel located at the southeast corner of the intersection of Boulder Drive and Garfield Street.

**Recommendation:** Identify stand-alone phases that are integrated with the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) projects. City staff and City Council are currently updating the City's CIP to address major government facility and infrastructure projects. CIP elements from the Turner Tract Area Plan should be sorted, prioritized, and funding sources analyzed during this process.

#### Funding

There are various methods available to finance the public facilities and improvements envisioned in this plan. Generally they include the following:

1. **General Obligation Bonds**-Bonds maturing beyond the current year that are backed by the full faith and credit of the municipality and secured in part by the pledge of the issuer's general taxing power. The Wyoming State Law requires voter approval and a

complex checklist of things to be done regarding the election. Interest rates are ordinarily lower on general obligation bonds than on other types of bonds.

2. **Revenue Bonds**-Revenue bonds are payable from a special bond fund containing the net income revenue of the project or facility financed with bond proceeds. They may include funds from a specific or limited source other than general property taxes, such as sales or use tax. Revenue bonds require voter approval.

3. **Special Assessment Bonds**-Special assessment bonds are obligations issued by the municipality for the purpose of constructing or installing improvements in connection with a special improvement district. Special assessment bonds require voter approval.

4. **General Improvement Districts**-With City Council acting as the governing body, the district has authority to issue general obligation bonds and revenue bonds.

5. **Development Authority**-A separate corporate body with

the power to acquire property, construct, lease, and sell property and levy a general property tax.

6. **Business Improvement District**-The district has the power to enter into contracts, acquire and operate improvements, collect property tax, and issue general obligation bonds.

7. **Special Purpose Tax**-The city has the power to implement an optional sales tax to support special projects. Although the city will commit those funds for nearly 10 years if the special purpose tax is passed in August 2001, the city may use those funds in the future to support subsequent phases of the development.

7. **Urban Renewal Authority (URA)**-A URA may be established to eliminate slum or blighted areas within a municipality and clear areas for development or redevelopment. The URA has the power to acquire property by purchase or condemnation.

8. **Public Building Authority**-A not-for-profit public building authority established by City Council. A

Major roads such as Boulder Drive will be designed as boulevards. Boulder Drive and its design elements will be used to begin to tie the design of the office park together.

building authority can issue certificates of participation to obtain financing. Lease payments by the City to the authority, would be subject to annual appropriations only.

**9. Private Sector-Several** forms of private-public partnerships exist including: private funding, joint funding, leasing, franchises, sale of assets, and contracting out.

**10. Pay-As-You-Go Financing-** Paying for improvements from existing funds, saved up over time, and not extending a burden on future taxpayers.

**11. Targeted Incentives-** Incentives such as tax increment financing or other tax-related incentives are possible.

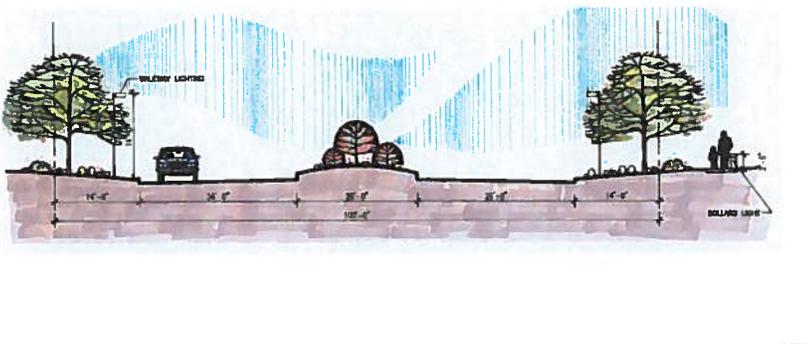
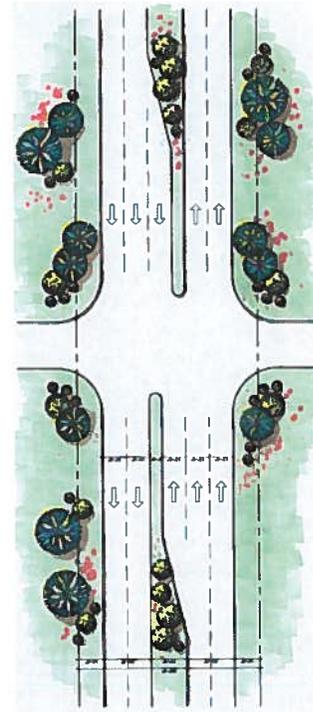
**12. Economic and Infrastructure Grants-** Grants supporting economic development and infrastructure development such as Community Development Block Grants, HUD Economic Development and Housing Grants, and Economic Development Assistance Grants are available and should be sought to help finance development of the area.

Grants are also available from both private and public sources for funding open space, parks, housing development, etc.

**Recommendation:** City staff and City Council should update the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) that addresses major government facilities and infrastructure projects. CIP elements from the Turner Tract Area Plan should be sorted and prioritized, and funding sources analyzed during the process. City staff should also begin analyzing other funding strategies for the live-work district. The City should carefully investigate grant programs to leverage any infrastructure investment including, but not limited to, recreation facility development associated with any special purpose tax.

#### Marketing

The realization of the Turner Tract Area Plan's development goals will require substantial investment by both the public and private sector. The City will need to ensure that the business community and investors are made aware of the plan and the City's investment schedule and strategies. In order to meet the city's goal of generating high paying jobs, creating a



significant tax base and enhancing the economy of the city, the city will need to make substantial effort to market the property to potential users. This effort should include the development of a detailed marketing plan including financial plan for the property and working with local and statewide economic development agencies to market the property.

**Recommendation:** The City should develop a marketing and financing package to use in facilitating the investment in the property. This should include the development of a marketability study to help identify potential markets as well as barriers to attracting target businesses or promoting residential development. Establish a local task force to review options for encouraging investment in the Turner Tract area, marketing the area as a regional employment center, and establishing attractive and competitive development packages.

#### Major Civic Uses

The Turner Tract has been identified for major civic facilities. The illustrative concept plan identifies at least three recreational/educational facilities for the site.

These facilities will help to establish the character of the area and ensure long-term commitment by the community in the development of the tract. Civic uses anchor the public spaces and the plan's framework. A commitment to the location of major civic uses within the Turner Tract area is necessary and essential to the success of the plan itself.

**Recommendation:** The City Council should continue to demonstrate a commitment to the Turner Tract Area as the location for specific major recreation and civic uses during the review and prioritization of projects within the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP). The City Council has already identified the Turner Tract as the priority location for a Community Recreation Center. A Community Ice Arena is also under construction within the planning area. Funding for the Recreation Center is on the Special Purpose Tax ballot issue in August of 2001.

#### Incentives

Attracting business and development to the Turner Tract will not be an easy task. Hundreds of communities compete for the very few new business and relocations

that occur each year. However, the city does need to be ready with a package of incentives to offer prospective development that would meet the city's goal of creating high paying jobs. The city should investigate potential incentives and continually update their incentive package as market conditions change. The city should also have a sound understanding of their options and limitations so that when opportunities arise the city is prepared to tailor the incentives to meet the prospective business's needs.

**Recommendation:** The City should evaluate and develop incentives based on the marketability study. These incentives could include financing, land, etc. The incentive should be integrated into the marketing and financing package to help attract some large office users or housing investment. The city should designate or establish an office in charge of managing the development of the Turner Tract and marketing it to prospective clients.

Road and gateway design are critical elements in establishing an identity for the Turner Tract Planning Area. Major roadways such as Boulder Drive should be designed as boulevards. Entry features should be established to provide visitors and residents with a sense of arrival. Roundabouts should be considered as not only defining features at major intersections, but as a means of enhancing traffic flow through the development.

The first phase of development is shown in Figure 1. The first phase includes the development of Boulder Drive to the proposed intersection with Regency Drive and will include gateway enhancements at the intersection of Boulder Drive and Grand Avenue. The first phase of development will provide access to three (3) office park lots and recreational/civic land including partial access to the proposed recreation center site. The costs for development of Phase I is outlined in Table 2. The costs of development is estimated at \$559,218. A portion of the required improvements will be funded by Mountain West Farm Bureau (MWFB) as shown

in Table 1. The city is seeking \$150,000 in CDBG funds to fund a portion of the city's share.

To complete Phase I of the Turner Tract Area Plan's development, the following tasks will need to be undertaken and completed no later than May 2002:

1. Establish detailed funding plan for required improvements and budget funding within city CIP in FY 2001/2002 and FY 2002/2003. Responsible party: City Manager and City Council
2. Develop a detailed Gateway Enhancement Table 1. Land Use Allocation Plan. Responsible party: Brooks, Borgs, Skiles LLC and City of Laramie Planning Division
3. Zone the lands within the Phase I area for office and recreation/civic uses including establishing the PUD Overlay and detailed design standards. Responsible party: Brooks, Borgs, Skiles LLC and City of Laramie Planning Division
4. Develop and approve the preliminary and final plat including engineered designs for water, sewer, stormwater, and roadway for all of Phase I of the Turner Tract Area. Responsible party: Brooks, Borgs, Skiles LLC and City of

Borgs, Skiles LLC and City of Laramie Planning Division

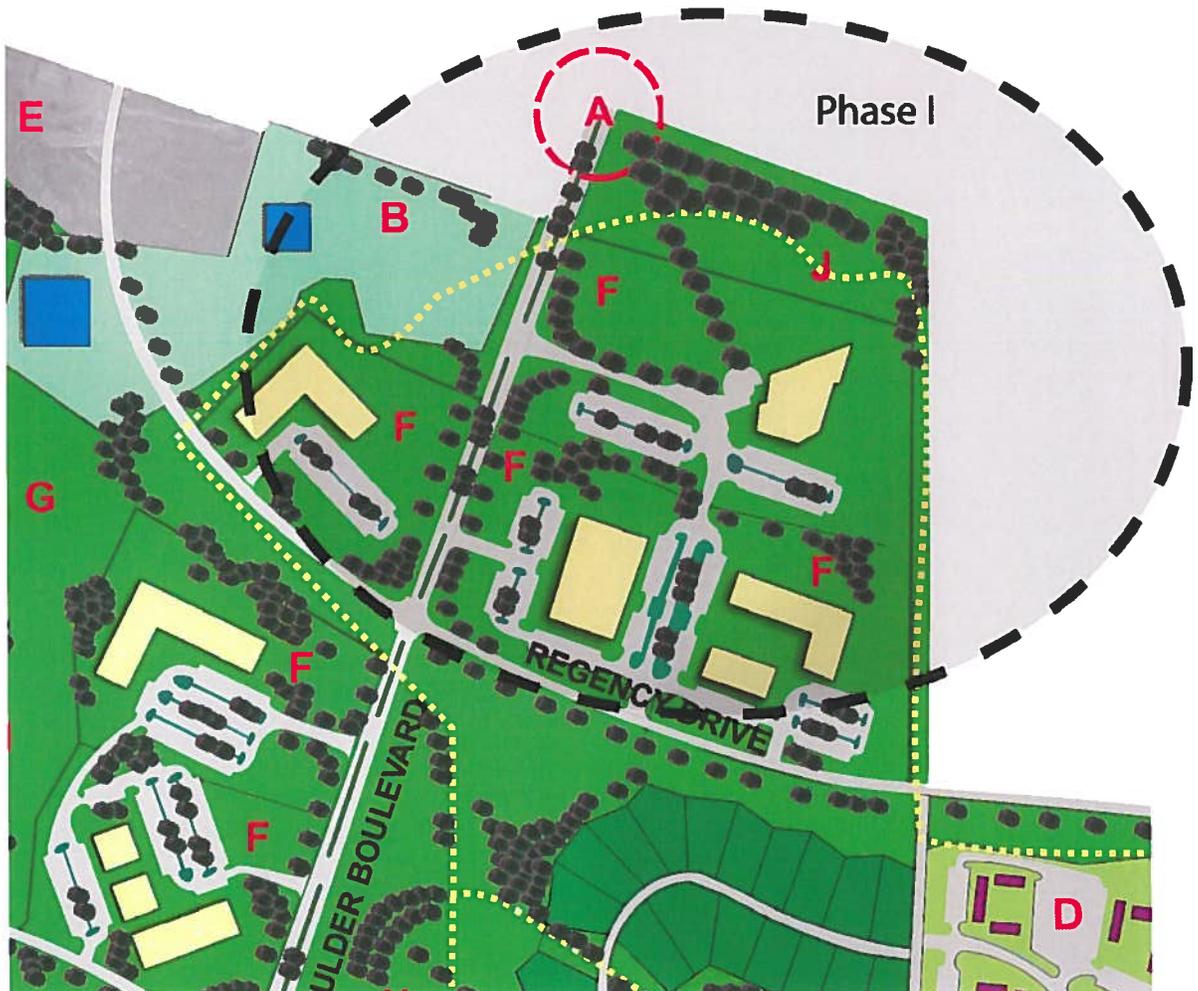
Table 2. Phase I Construction Cost Estimate

Description	Phase I			MWFB Lot			
	Quantity (ft)	Material and Installation Cost (\$/linear ft.)	Total	Quantity (ft)	Material and Installation Cost (\$/linear ft.)	Total	MWFB Share
Street	1220	\$273.40	\$333,548.00	560	\$273.40	\$153,104.00	\$38,276.00
Water	1220	\$52.90	\$64,538.00	560	\$52.90	\$29,624.00	\$7,406.00
Sanitary Sewer	1220	\$33.10	\$40,382.00	560	\$33.10	\$18,536.00	\$4,634.00
Bicycle and Pedestrian Trail	2500	\$28.30	\$70,750.00	1300	\$28.30	\$36,790.00	\$9,197.50
Gateway Total			\$50,000.00			\$50,000.00	\$12,500.00
Improvements Grand Total			\$559,218.00			\$288,054.00	\$84,053.50



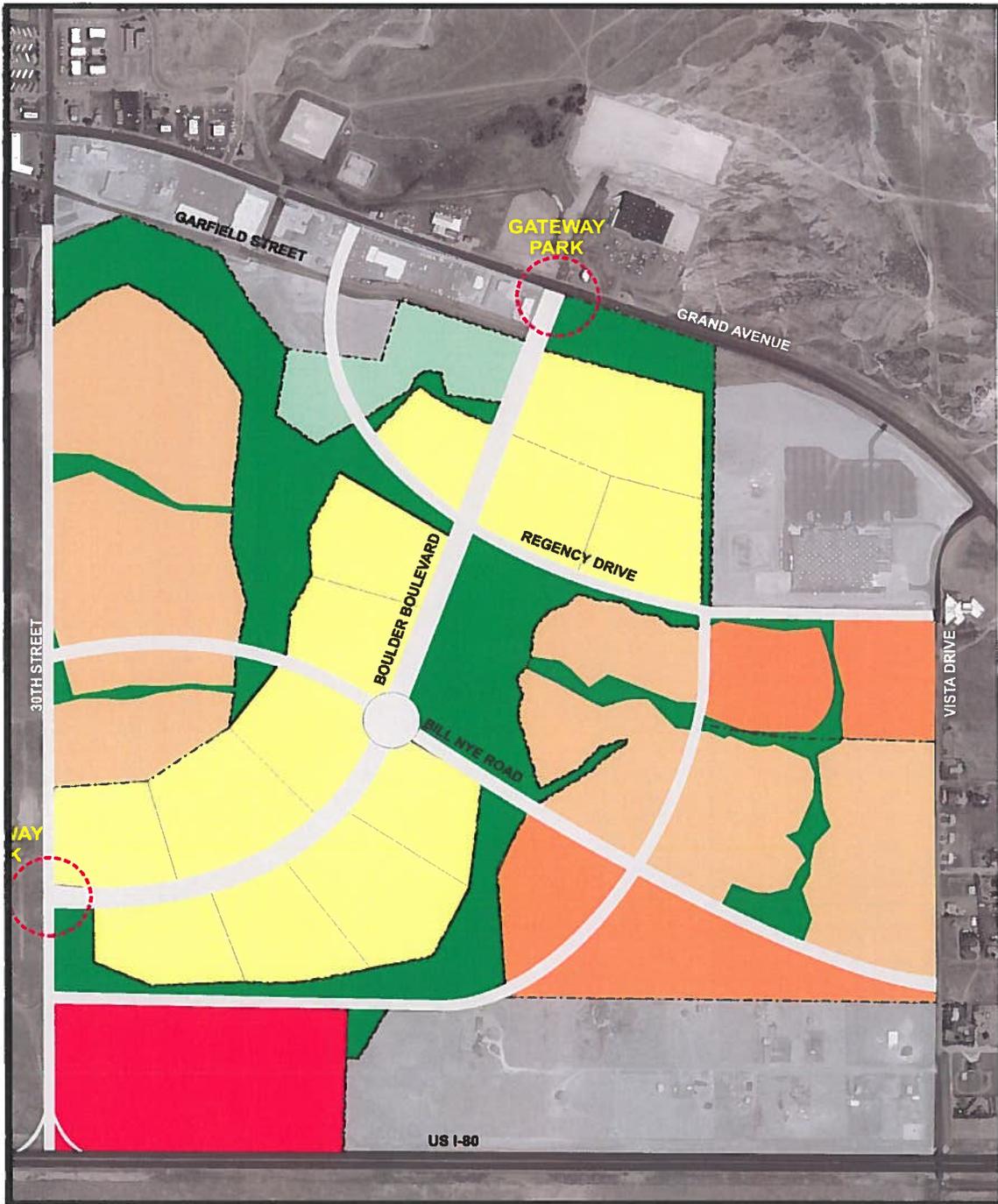
Laramie Engineering Division  
5. Bid and construct  
improvements to specifications.  
Responsible party: City of  
Laramie Engineering Division  
Work on Phase I tasks should  
begin no later than August 1, 2001  
and shall be completed no later than  
May 2002.

Figure 1. Phase I Development Area









# Panel 1: Turner Tract Area Plan: Framework Map

- Retail
- Office
- Multifamily
- Single Family Residential
- Recreation/Civic
- Open Space
- Existing





## Panel 2: Turner Tract Area Plan: An Illustrative Concept Map

- A-Gateway
- B-Recreational/Civic/Educational
- C- Commercial Retail
- D-Residential
- E- Existing
- F-Office
- G-Green Space/Open Space
- H-Central Park
- J-Trail





## Panel 3: Turner Tract Area Plan: Proposed Zoning Map

### Commercial

- Business (B2)
- Limited Business (B1)

### Residential

- Multifamily (R3)
- Limited Multifamily (R2)
- One Family (R1)
- Limited Residential (LR)

### Public/Open Space

- Public (P)
- Open Space (OS)

