











FORGE LARAMIE
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

PUBLIC HEARING DRAFT

October 2026



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Freedom Has a Birthday - Laramie Staff

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Wyotech Car Show 2025 - Laramie Staff

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Pridefest - Laramie Staff

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Laramie Main Street Alliance

Laramie Regional Airport

Laramie Soup Kitchen

University of Wyoming

Visit Laramie

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WyoTech

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THE *LARAMIE* COMMUNITY

A sincere thank you to everyone in Laramie that participated in this planning process—you make this community what it is, and your voices are essential to ensuring this plan reflects a shared vision for Laramie's future.

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Keep moving, there's plenty more ahead!





Railyard - Adobe Stock

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Laramie – the Gem City of the Plains – is a special place among mountain west communities. It is both remote in its location and interconnected to several natural wonders within a short drive: the Happy Jack Recreation Area and Vedauwoo, Pilot Hill Recreation Area and Wildlife Habitat Management Area, and the Snowy Range Mountains. The city's roots extend beyond the natural environment and recreational amenities. It is Wyoming's center for higher education and is home to the University of Wyoming, the state's only 4-year university, WyoTech, and the Laramie County Community College. This combination of natural amenities and higher education has created a highly attractive and eclectic community that has a thriving downtown and small business sector, high-quality schools, active community engagement in events and civic life, and is a growing tourist destination. Residents lovingly call their city Laradise.

While many nearby communities in the Rocky Mountains have experienced extreme growth and the corresponding public pressures to serve and protect new households and population, Laramie has maintained a healthy 2% growth rate over the years. This has allowed the city to continue to prosper at a fiscally manageable pace. However, the city is not immune to the national housing crisis, evolving economic dynamics, and fiscal challenges for local governments in Wyoming. To maintain a healthy growth rate into the future, evolving from a smaller to a mid-size community, Laramie will need to address several key issues:

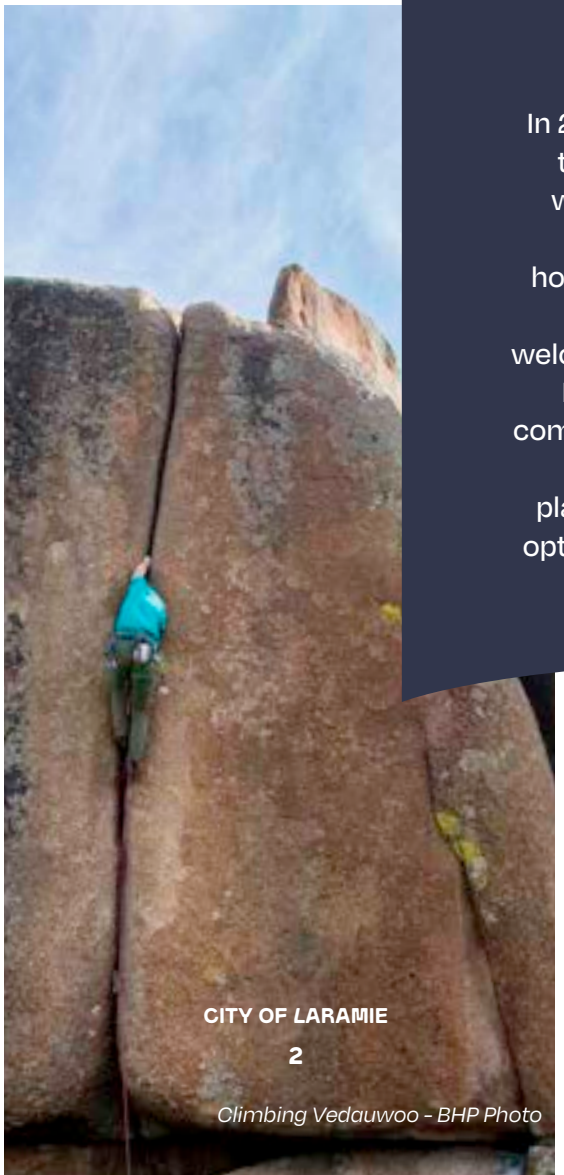
- **Business growth and economic development in Laramie are directly intertwined with the need for housing that is attainable to the local workforce**. Without an affordable place for their workers to live, businesses cannot grow or locate within the city.



Montessori Scho

LARAMIE'S VISION

In 2050, Laramie will be a thriving community that has grown sustainably and responsibly while retaining the small-town feel and high quality of life residents value. A range of housing choices and economic opportunities help Laramie remain an affordable and welcoming place for people of all stages of life. New neighborhoods and commercial areas complement the city's character, support local businesses, and are well connected to the places people live and work by safe, practical options for walking, biking, driving, and transit.



Climbing Vedauwoo - BHP Photo







ol - Clarion



Downtown Carnival - Laramie Staff



UW Homecoming - BHP Photo



Farmers Market - Laramie Staff

- **Many college-aged students and younger residents enjoy living in Laramie due to the city's proximity to outdoor recreation, lively downtown, and small-town feel (*see Appendix).* Access to well-paying jobs and affordable housing opportunities are needed to keep young residents here after graduation.** Higher paying jobs that are attractive to younger workers can help spur economic development and fiscal health of the community.
- **Progress has been made to support active transportation options in Laramie, such as walking, biking, and taking transit. Additional investment in network connectivity and user safety would make the city's transportation system even better.** More work is needed to address safety, intercon-nectivity, and the harsh travel conditions the city experiences most winters.
- **New infrastructure improvements require funding for implementation. Because the City of Laramie works hard to efficiently provide public services to reduce the tax burden on residents and** State statutes limit the amount of revenue that local governments in Wyoming can generate, funding public service enhancements or expansions is an important balancing act. Additional spending reductions may further impact the city. This is in addition to the fact that the city is not home to significant oil and gas reserves, which are large sources of public funding for many Wyoming communities. It will be even more important in the future for the city to strategically prioritize use of its revenues and take an "all government" approach with departments working collabo-ratively together toward the same community goals. This will be critical for maintaining a vibrant community that attracts new residents and businesses.
- **The Laramie Growth Area Plan was a partnership effort between Laramie and Albany County to plan for areas of growth on the edges of the city within the County's planning and zoning jurisdiction. This plan needs to be fully implemented to appropriately direct and efficiently serve new development.** Continued efforts to work with Albany County to support plan implementation are needed.

Achievement of community priorities set out in this plan will require teamwork among a broad group of stakeholders, with the city serving as the primary convenor and coordinator of key organizations and institutions, businesses, residents, Albany County, and state agencies. Together, Laramie and its partners are forging new policy and implementation paths through this plan to create the next chapter for a more vibrant and livable city.

WHY PLAN?

PURPOSE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Much has changed in the 18 years since Laramie's 2007 Comprehensive Plan was adopted. Laramie's population has matched the growth projections in the 2007 Plan, which anticipated a population of 31,792 residents by 2025, while local and national trends have introduced new challenges and opportunities. These include workforce housing shortages, the rise of remote work and school, changing transportation needs, zoning and land use reform, and evolving technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI).

The comprehensive plan provides a framework for understanding these changes, establishing long-term priorities, and developing actions to guide Laramie's future. While the plan addresses a broad range of topics (including development, housing, transportation, public services and facilities, parks and recreation, tourism, economic development), its primary focus is physical planning and how these other topics influence development, conservation, infrastructure, and the built environment.

By bringing together the shared priorities of the community, the comprehensive plan provides direction that extends beyond election cycles and the issues of the moment. Developing the comprehensive plan provides an opportunity to reflect on the past, consider the future, and forge a new plan for Laramie's growth and infrastructure to support the community's priorities.



THE PLANNING CYCLE

This comprehensive planning effort represents the first step in the City's larger planning cycle, which is the process of establishing City policy priorities, translating those priorities into staff work plans, allocating funding to support the work plans, using that funding to initiate projects that advance City policies, and then coming together as a community to assess overall plan implementation.

Many master plans and technical plans have already been adopted by the City. The Comprehensive Plan works with these plans to set the overarching goals for land use development and infrastructure investment, while these more technical and specific plans (such as the Capital Investment and Construction Plan, Engineering Standards, and drainage master plans) provide the technical requirements for future development.

COMPLIANCE WITH WYOMING STATE STATUTES

Local land use plans are required by Title 9, Chapter 8, Article 3 of Wyoming State Statutes (WY Stat §9-8-301). The Forge Laramie comprehensive plan was created in accordance with these statutes and shall be used in conjunction with other adopted plans to guide development within Laramie's jurisdiction.



Laramie Neighborhood - Adobe Stock

ABOUT THE FORGE LARAMIE PROCESS

OPPORTUNITIES FOR INPUT

This plan was generated from a robust and intentional community engagement process entitled "Forge Laramie." Over the course of the 18-month process, the project team sought input from residents, children, local workers, business owners, local organizations, regional partners, elected and appointed officials, and numerous other stakeholder groups. Both in person and online opportunities were provided, as described below.

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

In June of 2025, the project team conducted 21 interviews with city staff, elected officials, representatives of educational institutions, community groups, and others with an interest or role in implementing the comprehensive plan. The purpose of these initial interviews was to help evaluate how well the 2007 plan served Laramie's needs, and to identify common themes that should be addressed through the Forge Laramie process. A summary of key themes from these interviews was prepared and served as a baseline for understanding current community issues. These themes were then explored through public engagement activities to confirm their broader applicability with residents and business owners.

COMMUNITY TABLING

Throughout the summer and fall of 2025, the project team attended a variety of public events to introduce the community to the Forge Laramie project. These events included the Blue Devils community show at War Memorial Stadium, the WyoTech Car Show, Laramie Pride Fest, Freedom has a Birthday, Laramie Soup Kitchen, Laramie Farmers Market, the Jubilee Days Parade, the Albany County Fair, and the Pumpkin Walk at the Territorial Prison.

FORGE LARAMIE QUESTIONNAIRE

From June to September 2025, community members had the opportunity to participate in an online questionnaire and mapping exercise where participants were asked what they liked most about Laramie, what changes they wanted to see, and what they wanted to stay the same. More than 12,000 post cards were mailed to every address in the city to notify folks of this engagement opportunity. More than 800 responses were collected.


Forge Laramie Engagement - Lara




PlanningDeptEngagement,FarmersMarket-LaramieStaff




mie Staff



Forge Exchange - Laramie Staff


Steering Committee Meeting - Clarion


Forge Laramie Event Tabling, Freedom Has a Birthday - Laramie Staff

FORGE EXCHANGE

From January to March of 2026, the Forge Laramie team oversaw a pop-up event, called the Forge Exchange, located in the heart of downtown in the Laramie Main Street office. The Exchange included three rounds of interactive engagement activities designed to elicit feedback related to housing, economic development, and downtown/commercial corridor development. In addition to walk-in activities, the Forge Exchange series also included a general open house reception to kick off the exchange and a listening session sponsored by AARP (who provided grant funding for the activity). In total, 104 walk-in and 42 special event attendees participated in the Forge Exchange.

UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING STUDENT-*LED* SURVEY

As part of their spring 2026 coursework, a group of UW students conducted a survey to gather feedback from higher-education students about life in Laramie during and after graduation. More than 300 UW, Laramie County Community College, and WyoTech students participated in the survey. Survey findings suggest that students value Laramie's small-town character and proximity to outdoor recreation, but see limited job opportunities, housing choices, dining and retail options, and social gathering places as barriers to staying in Laramie after graduation. These findings helped inform development of the plan's policy direction. (*See "Appendix" on page 151 to view the full report).*

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

A Steering Committee was assembled at the start of the project by asking interested community members to apply through a simple online form. The group was made up of Laramie residents, business owners, and representatives of partner organizations and agencies who provided feedback on the goals, policies, and actions included in the updated plan, as well as changes to the Future Land Use map. Seven meetings were held with the project Steering Committee throughout the Forge Laramie process.

DRAFT COMPREHENSIVE *PLAN* PUB*LIC* REVIEW

The third round of community engagement was designed to collect feedback from the general public on the public review draft of the comprehensive plan. Outreach was conducted virtually and included two ways to participate:

- **Forge Laramie Draft Plan Questionnaire.** This longer questionnaire included 23 questions related to the community priorities, future land use map, and implementation actions included in the draft plan. This engagement tool was open from July 22 to September 7, 2026. A total of 112 responses were collected.
- **Short Questionnaire: Laramie's Draft Vision and Priorities for the Future.** This short questionnaire included three questions to elicit feedback on draft vision and community priorities. This engagement tool was open from September 1 to 7, 2026. A total of 13 responses were collected.

TECHNICAL FOUNDATIONS

2007 PLAN ASSESSMENT

An in-depth review of the 2007 Comprehensive Plan goals and action statements was conducted in the fall of 2025 to evaluate the breadth of policy guidance provided as it relates to Forge Laramie themes and identify opportunities for improvement in the updated plan. This analysis served as the basis for preparing the updated plan, and was modified to reflect community and Steering Committee inputs and guidance provided by the Planning Commission and City Council.

The Assessment also served as a reminder that city staff and partner agencies successfully implemented many of the goals and actions in the 2007 Comprehensive Plan. Notable wins in the 18 years since the 2007 Plan was adopted include the acquisition of Pilot Hill, several amendments to the Unified Development Code (such as changes to expanded housing types and the incorporation of new sign regulations), and the creation of the Casper Aquifer protection plan and associated overlay district. All of these accomplishments were born out of the city's commitment to following the land use policies to guide decision making about growth and development laid out in the 2007 Plan.

TECHNICAL ANALYSIS

To understand the technical foundations of land use planning in Laramie, an *Existing Conditions, Trends, and Projections Report* was prepared in January 2026 and includes technical data and trends. This report provides a common understanding around land use-related topics as they exist in Laramie today and to ground policy discussions held as part of the Forge Laramie process. The report can be found on the City's comprehensive plan website. Key trends that were foundational to the Forge Laramie process include:

- **Laramie's population has experienced moderate growth and is stable.** As of 2023, Laramie had a population of 31,848 residents. The city's population is projected to increase by 10%, or 3,300 people by 2040. This population growth is projected to outpace that of Albany County (9%) and Wyoming (6%).
- **Household income is relatively low.** Laramie has a median household income of $52,414, which lags behind the median household income of Albany County ($59,881) and Wyoming ($74,815; although the state's median household income is slightly skewed by Teton County, which is $112,681). Almost half of Laramie households earn less than $50,000 in annual income, compared to a third of state households.
- **Housing costs are rising.** The median home value reached $302,000 in 2023, representing a 56% increase since 2013. Renters are also feeling the squeeze in the tight housing market, with 45% of renters spending more than 35% of their income on housing, making them severely cost-burdened (and leaving less money for other necessities, such as healthcare and transportation).
- **"Brain drain" remains a challenge.** The city has a younger-than average population strongly influenced by the presence of higher-education institutions. However, many residents leave after early adulthood in favor of job or housing prospects elsewhere, creating challenges for workforce retention and long-term economic stability.



Forge Laramie Event Tabling, Freedom Has a Birthday - Laramie Staff

HOW TO USE THIS PLAN

PLAN FRAMEWORK

The Laramie Comprehensive Plan is organized through a Plan Framework that articulates the highest level of community priorities all the way down to the specific actions the city and its partners will take to achieve its vision. The Laramie Plan Framework, as shown here, sets the organizational structure of this document and provides policy and implementation guidance for city leaders, staff, community partners, and residents that will support implementation of this plan.



COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

Informed by key themes that arose during the Forge Laramie process, the Community Priorities express the big ideas that the plan is designed to accomplish and are the organizing titles of plan chapters. The following five community priorities are the key areas of focus for the plan.

Traditional planning elements are organized under each of these Community Priorities.



	DESCRIPTION	RELEVANT PLANNING AREA
WORK AND PROSPER	The city's focus on economic development, attracting and retaining young workers, supporting and expanding tax base through land development, and new housing in key focus areas	WORKFORCE AND THE LOCAL ECONOMY FISCAL HEALTH GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT
LIVE AND BELONG	The city's aspiration to attract students, new working families, and new businesses to lay permanent roots in Laramie	HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS PLACEMAKING
CONNECT AND NURTURE	The city's objective to provide safe and accessible transportation options that connect people to destinations and recreation, and promote public health	TRANSPORTATION PARKS AND RECREATION PUBLIC HEALTH
STEWARD AND CONSERVE	The city's commitment to serve as a steward to its natural resources and improve resiliency to hazards	NATURAL RESOURCES HAZARD RESILIENCY
SERVE AND COLLABORATE	The city's ongoing effort to provide fiscally efficient and effective public services, facilities, and infrastructure, as well as transparent governance	PUBLIC UTILITIES AND SERVICES GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATIONS



UW Sculpture - Laramie Staff

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PLANS

The Forge Laramie comprehensive plan serves as a blueprint to guide land use, development, and growth over the next 20 years. While this plan provides the overall vision and high-level policy guidance for the physical development of the city, it is supported by a variety of other topical focused plans and policies the city has adopted, and will adopt in the future. Relevant plans are referred to in applicable Plan chapters.

In addition, the City has adopted numerous technical master plans and studies that it uses to determine specific requirements of development for drainage, building construction, transportation investments, and similar built infrastructure requirements. In the future, these documents may be updated to reflect policy guidance in the comprehensive plan. Additional plans and studies may also be prepared to support policy guidance in the comprehensive plan.

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Keep moving, there's more to see!





WyoTech Car Show - Laramie Staff

CHAPTER 2
WORK AND PROSPER

INTRODUCTION

Laramie's future success as a mid-sized, western city that offers a diversity of economic opportunities, a natural playground within the eastern Rockies, and a pleasant quality of life will be realized through the growth and prosperity of the businesses and workers that call the city home. The benefits of this growth will support the city itself, increasing the fiscal health of Laramie to support needed public investments and improve the city's built environment. The city's focus is on fostering economic resilience through housing creation, business expansion, workforce development, and entrepreneurship; and encouraging strategic land development that supports sustainable growth.



Downtown Business District - B



Downtown Market - BHP Photo





Altitude Brewing - BHP Photo





BHP Photo

Poppys - BHP Photo



BHP Photo



Print Shop - BHP Photo

WORKFORCE AND THE LOCAL ECONOMY

LARAMIE TODAY

Laramie's local economy is supported by several large industry clusters, many of which are higher-education related. Government is the largest regional employing industry, as University of Wyoming employees are classified as government workers along with Albany County School District (ACSD), the City of Laramie, and Albany County. Health Care and Social Assistance is the second most concentrated industry, and there is significant healthcare job demand, with an average of more than 70 Healthcare Practitioners and Technical positions posted in Laramie each month. Accommodation and Food Service and Retail are also large employing industries, which support Laramie's high quality of life and tourism economy, but may be putting downward pressure on wages.

Laramie has a median household income of $52,414, which is lower than the median household incomes of Albany County ($59,881) and Wyoming ($74,815). Almost half of Laramie households earn less than $50,000 in annual income, compared to a third of state households. Laramie's lower median household income is likely influenced by the presence of the University of Wyoming, both because of the large number of full-time students who work fewer hours per year, and because UW, the city's largest employer, pays relatively low wages. Despite lagging behind Wyoming median incomes, Laramie household incomes have been increasing at a rate that surpasses that of the state overall.

Median income also significantly varies across age groups in Laramie. For workers in Laramie under age 45, median incomes lag the state, but Laramie median incomes for workers aged 45 years and older surpass the state's median. This breakdown shows that Laramie's income gap is age-driven, not structurally economic. At the same time, wage

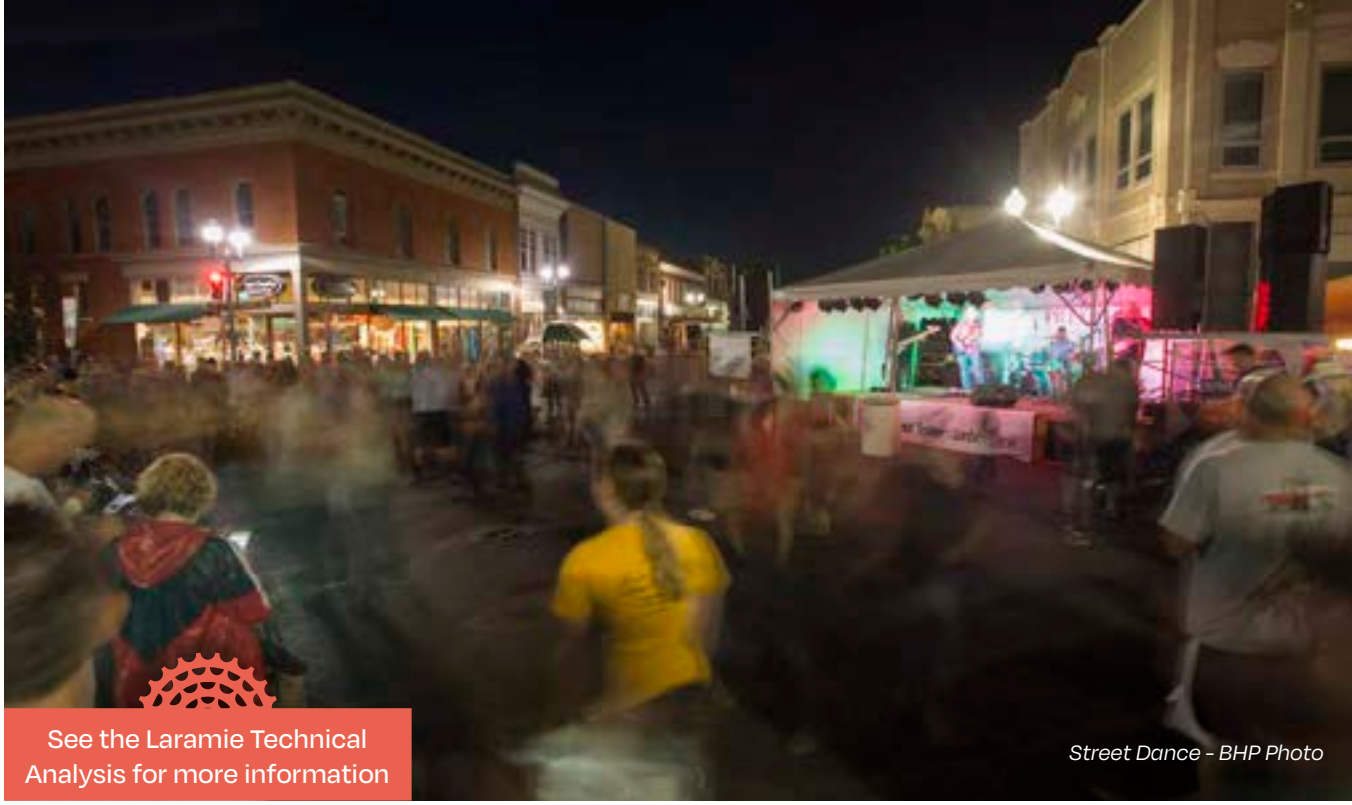
See the Laramie Technical Analysis for more information

growth is picking up for younger workers, with 22-24 (77%) and 25-34 (61%) year old workers experiencing outpaced wage growth between 2013 and 2023. Supporting workforce development and retention strategies could help sustain the higher-earning 45–64 cohort and strengthen the city's long-term economic base.

As a college town, Laramie has a greater share of young adults than the state overall. Given the presence of the University of Wyoming, Laramie residents also lead the state in educational attainment, particularly in terms of professional degrees. More than half (55.8%) of Laramie residents aged 25 or older have attained at least a Bachelor's degree.

In-migration (people moving to Laramie) is also largely driven by young people, most of whom are likely college-age students relocating to attend the University of Wyoming. Common migration origins and destinations include Laramie County and Natrona County in Wyoming, and Larimer County and Weld County in Colorado. This indicates that people are interested in staying in the region, but are open to moving to nearby communities, potentially in pursuit of better job prospects.

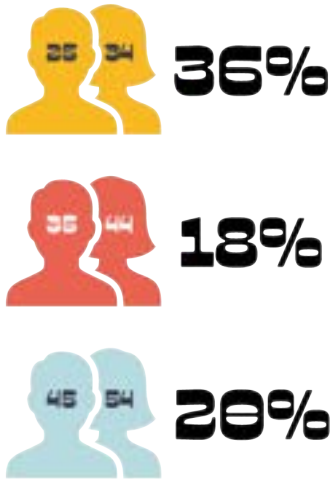
Overall the economy in Laramie is growing, with jobs projected to increase 7% over the next 10 years, following historic growth patterns, and making it competitive among peer communities. Working age employment share is also growing, with the number of working age adults aged 35 to 54 steadily increasing in Laramie since 2017. Nearly two-thirds of jobs in Laramie are filled by residents, indicating a strong live-work relationship and abundant job opportunities within the city limits. This is further reflected in commuting patterns, with 70% of residents traveling less than 10 miles to work.



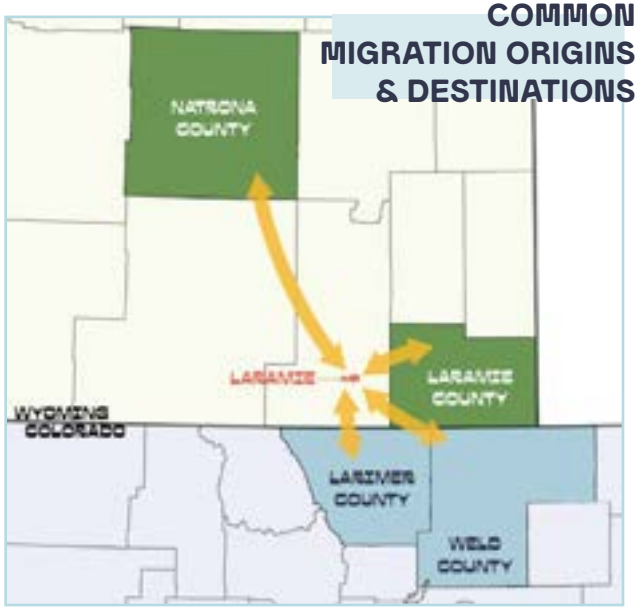
See the Laramie Technical Analysis for more information

Street Dance - BHP Photo

RELOCATED TO LARAMIE 2025 – 2026



COMMON MIGRATION ORIGINS & DESTINATIONS



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: CITY'S ROLE AND PARTNERS

As a public agency, the City of Laramie plays an important role in spurring economic development. City leaders serve as convenors and facilitators of strategic partnerships that bring together land developers, community partners, and funders for specific projects. The city also conducts land development review of projects and invests in public infrastructure that result in expansion of the local economic base.

Economic development initiatives focused on business recruitment and expansion, workforce development, and tourism related initiatives are led by several strategic partners:

- **Laramie Chamber Business Alliance** focuses on attracting and retaining jobs in Laramie, expanding local businesses, and promoting sustainable growth to enhance the local economy.
- **Laramie Main Street Alliance** works with local businesses, property owners, consumers, the City of Laramie, and residents and workers to preserve historic Downtown while enhancing its economic and social vitality. This has been further expanded to focus on making Downtown Laramie a center for experiential and community-based learning that drives year-round activity, partnerships, and civic engagement.
- **Visit Laramie** (Albany County Tourism Board) is the destination marketing organization for a part of Southeast Wyoming that includes Laramie and Albany County, as well as Centennial, Rock River, Bosler, Woodslanding, Jelm, and WyColo. Through national advertising, the Tourism Board promotes lodging amenities and year-round activities within the area that increases tourism spending.
- **Wyoming Business Council** works alongside leaders, businesses, and communities (like Laramie) to build strong sustainable economies through innovative programs, resources, and partnerships. The Council's economic development approach focuses on identifying problems and breaking down barriers that obstruct a more resilient economy.
- **Wyoming Smart Capital Network** supports local economic development within its partnering municipalities through the design, building, and management of development funds that support business and enhance local and regional economies.
- **University of Wyoming** supports economic development efforts through the training and education of the next generation of Wyoming workers. More specifically to Laramie and other local governments across the state, it supports economic development and entrepreneurship through the UW Business Incubator (IMPACT 307), training through the Technology Transfer and Research Products Center, and market and fiscal analyses conducted by the Center for Business and Economic Analysis.
- **Albany County Campus of Laramie County Community College and WyoTech** are also important partners that are training the next generation of workers.

WHERE WE ARE HEADING

The themes discussed in this section were central to the 2020 *Thrive Laramie Community and Economic Development Action Strategy (Thrive)* and remain relevant today. *Thrive* identified strategies for investing in target industries and the built environment, developing a highly skilled workforce, supporting business diversity and entrepreneurship, improving business-critical infrastructure, and enhancing quality-of-life amenities. This comprehensive plan builds upon and refines those strategies to reflect current conditions and priorities while maintaining continuity around the issues critical to Laramie's economic future.

As Laramie monitors conditions that are likely tied to young workers moving out of the city (such as declining enrollment in the ACSD), it is important to prioritize solutions focused on retaining and attracting talented workers and that lead to the expansion of well-paying jobs in large and growing industries. To support economic growth, Laramie should strengthen workforce development programs that connect workers directly to local industries, especially in entry-level positions. The city should also support competitive wages, attract new businesses and industries, and help existing employers remain and grow here.

Housing availability, quality, and cost is another major factor affecting both business and workforce attraction and retention, and strategies aimed at addressing housing are discussed in more detail in Chapter 3: Live and Belong.

Expanding economic development opportunities in Laramie will occur through partnership efforts that leverage the capabilities and skills of the city and its local partners. Laramie is positioned to serve as a strategic convenor and facilitator of discussions and collaborative economic development efforts. It also serves as a property developer and regulator of private sector development. Other entities, such as the Laramie Chamber Business Alliance, Main Street Laramie, Visit Laramie, the University of Wyoming, ACSD, Laramie County Community College-Albany County Campus, WyoTech, and the Wyoming Business Council are important partners in these efforts and support workforce development, training, and job creation efforts more directly.

TARGET INDUSTRIES

A **target industry** is an industry identified by the city as a priority for business attraction, retention, or expansion because it aligns with local economic goals and growth opportunities. The Thrive Laramie plan identifies professional, scientific, and technical services; manufacturing; and finance and insurance as target industries.

GOAL 1 MAINTAIN A STRONG WORKFORCE PIPELINE THAT IS WELL-POSITIONED TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF LOCAL JOB OPPORTUNITIES

POLICY 1.A TALENT ATTRACTION AND RETENTION

Create a broad talent base that is well suited for Laramie's local economy through partnerships aimed at recruiting and retaining graduates, young professionals, and mid-career workers.

POLICY 1.B WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Coordinate with local employers to better align employee skills, education, and experience with industry needs and create a more direct pipeline for job seekers to local industries.

POLICY 1.C WORKER COMPENSATION

Continue to offer City of Laramie employees competitive wages and benefits. Encourage other employers to raise wages in line with those offered throughout the county and in peer communities.

GOAL 2 ADVANCE ECONOMIC GROWTH THROUGH TARGETED INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT AND SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT

POLICY 2.A BUSINESS ATTRACTION AND RETENTION

Focus on attracting and retaining businesses in target sectors, such as healthcare and hospitality, to provide additional economic opportunities for residents and new arrivals to the region.

POLICY 2.B TOURISM SECTOR GROWTH

Build on Laramie's strengths in tourism, enhancing focus on outdoor recreation, main street, and visitors drawn to the city's unique history and culture.

POLICY 2.C ENTREPRENEURIAL SUPPORT

Support entrepreneurs and small businesses through business planning, startup resources, financing, mentorship or coaching between new and seasoned entrepreneurs, and more.



Local Shop - Laramie Staff

WORKFORCE AND THE LOCAL ECONOMY IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

This plan sets out different types of actions to implement the city's community priorities, including Tier 1 (near-term) actions and Tier 2 (long-term) actions. To learn more, see "Taking Action" on page 129.

Goal 1: Maintain a Strong Workforce Pipeline that is Well-Positioned to Take Advantage of Local Job Opportunities

WLE.1: Develop a marketing strategy for the region to support talent recruitment and retention, including features like local employer spotlights, cost of living index, quality-of-life benefits, a jobs board or talent-engagement portal, and an ambassador program for new recruits.

WLE.2: Explore incentives, like housing assistance or a forgivable loan program, for students who remain in Laramie working in their respective field for a certain period of time after graduation.

WLE.3: Convene the city's economic development partners, major employers, workforce organizations, and educational institutions to identify local wage gaps and develop strategies to increase access to higher-paying jobs. Strategies may include workforce training, employer recruitment and expansion, career pathways, and consideration of wage standards for city-funded incentive programs.

WLE.4: Conduct an annual employer survey and industry roundtable to identify priority occupations, workforce shortages, and required employee skills and qualifications. Use the findings to inform workforce-training programs, career pathways, and business recruitment and retention efforts.

WLE.5: Work with local education and training institutions to improve connections between students and local employment through internships, career fairs, employer outreach, and promotion of available career opportunities in Laramie.

WLE.6: Collaborate with local developers to identify the most effective incentives to expand early-career housing options (such as attainable rentals, roommate-friendly units, or employer-assisted housing). These conversations may be revisited every 2-5 years.

WLE.7: In partnership with educational institutions and the Laramie Chamber Business Alliance, enhance social/professional networks for young professionals (peer groups, leadership programs, community integration).

Goal 2: Advance Economic Growth through Targeted Industry Engagement and Small Business Support

WLE.8: Develop a business attraction and recruitment strategy for target industries that includes relevant city data and market reports, such as top industries, population and labor force statistics, available properties and shovel ready parcels, land and construction costs, taxes, permitting fees, development times, and testimonials from business leaders about the benefits of operating in Laramie.

WLE.9: Partner with the Wyoming Business Council, economic development organizations, and employers throughout the region to collaborate on a regional business retention strategy, including specific steps for supporting successful businesses that may be growing out of their existing spaces.

WLE.10: Partner with tourism organizations to coordinate a cohesive marketing campaign for a variety of audiences.

WLE.11: Support tourism-supporting businesses, such as hospitality, retail, dining, and lodging, through business development initiatives like mini-grants, tax incentives, and specialized job training and employment perks.

WLE.12: Enhance overall visitor experience through gateway and corridor improvements, beautification efforts, connected bicycle/pedestrian pathways, and wayfinding infrastructure that better directs visitors to downtown and commercial areas.

WLE.13: Increase the frequency of special events that bring in additional visitors to the community.



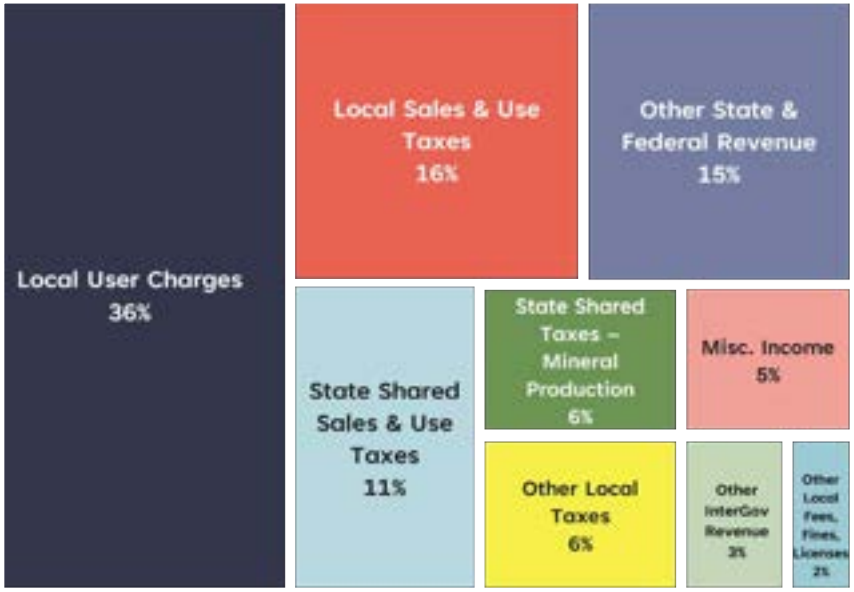
Main Street Signs - BHP Photo

FISCAL HEALTH

LARAMIE TODAY

Wyoming generates its state revenues from a unique mix of sources, including sales and use taxes, property tax, and investment income, with a strong reliance on its natural resources**.** Unlike much of Wyoming, however, Laramie does not benefit from the same level of sales and use taxes levied on mineral extraction like other communities, which currently represents just 6% of the city's revenue. In addition, the largest employers, UW and the Albany County School District, operate tax exempt properties and don't generate sales and use taxes.

The state does not allow corporate or individual income tax, and the city's tax base is subsequently primarily residential-and service-oriented. As a result, Laramie is limited in the ways it can raise funding to cover budgeted expenses, like maintaining essential infrastructure and public safety, quality of life improvements like parks, recreation, and public services, and economic development projects that increase local economic vitality. In addition, in 2025 Wyoming passed a 25% residential property tax reduction, which further constrains Laramie's ability to cover these services. Achieving the priorities set out in this plan will require moving past these fiscal hurdles and identifying other new funding sources.



CITY OF LARAMIE REVENUE SOURCES

FISCAL YEAR 2026

WHERE WE ARE HEADING

While many areas in Wyoming are experiencing population decline, Laramie's population grew 17% since 2000, reaching 31,848 in 2023. That growth will likely continue, with Laramie projected to increase by 10%, or 3,300 people between 2020 and 2040, a growth rate that is expected to outpace that of Wyoming (6%) and Albany County (9%). This is a positive sign and can lead to increased investment in the city. Despite the 2025 state property tax cuts, this population growth can unlock additional property and sales and use tax revenue, and the city has an opportunity to strategically utilize revenues from growth. In addition, the city should work with the community to identify the best methods to pay for the initiatives, programs, and services identified in this plan that will lead to the long term vision for community success.

GOAL 3 INCREASE REVENUE GENERATION TO SUSTAIN FISCAL HEALTH

POLICY 3.A POPULATION GROWTH-RELATED REVENUE

Plan for how Laramie can benefit from future projected population growth and resulting capture of additional sales and use and property tax revenue to enhance community vibrancy. It is equally critical to take steps to maintain the city's expected population growth to ensure these benefits are realized.

POLICY 3.B LOCAL-OPTION TAX

Explore an additional local-option tax to support community priorities. Evaluate the range of legally available local-option tax increments and purposes, including whether a smaller increment could help address General Fund needs.

POLICY 3.C LOCAL USER REVENUE

Annually evaluate and recommend changes to locally-controlled revenue sources like service fees, licenses, and permitting as a critical tool for sustaining the city's fiscal health. Examples include recreation fees, solid waste charges, mosquito control fees, and utility fees.

POLICY 3.D GRANT FUNDING

Identify grant opportunities to support city priorities and special projects related to economic and community wellbeing. Due to state statute, Laramie is limited in its ability to raise money through taxation to cover operating expenses for projects that lead to increased economic vitality, and grants provide a way to augment existing revenue sources.

POLICY 3.E TOURISM EXPENDITURE CAPTURE

Investigate and advocate for ways to generate additional tax revenue and, where possible, fees from arts-oriented, cultural (including sports and history), and recreation-related activity, to help further develop the tourism-related ecosystem and contribute to overall fiscal health of the city.

FISCAL HEALTH IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

This plan sets out different types of actions to implement the city's community priorities, including Tier 1 (near-term) actions and Tier 2 (long-term) actions. To learn more, see "Taking Action" on page 129.

Goal 3: Increase Revenue Generation to Sustain Fiscal Health

FH.1: Strategically budget for new revenue sources, based on the priorities identified in this plan and the City's other fiscal priorities.

FH.2: City will continue to weigh benefits, need, and ability to use additional general purpose versus specific purpose tax revenue, based on the nature and scope of upcoming projects and

FH.3: Evaluate current local user charges to determine where adjustments may be made to increase revenue potential, while maintaining reasonable rates for the local community.

FH.4: Develop priority lists of projects that may require additional philanthropic funding.

FH.5: Identify funding partners including foundations and specific grant funding opportunities that may help the city reach its goals.

FH.6: Understand the current state lodging tax disbursement structure and opportunities to lobby for additional funding allocation.

FH.7: Develop a tourism expenditure capture strategy focused on increasing length of stay, visitor spending per trip, and reducing economic leakage.

FH.8: Continue partnering with Visit Laramie on the data-driven approach to track visitor behavior, length of stay, and spending patterns to inform future investments and strategies.

FH.9: Evaluate the opportunity to use community benefit agreements to secure new infrastructure or facilities as part of development review, particularly for intensive uses like data centers.



West Laramie - BHP Photo

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

LARAMIE TODAY

Laramie is a regional center for education, culture, and economic activity w1ith a reputation as a hub for innovation and entrepreneurship and a high quality of life for residents. Population trends suggest Laramie will continue to grow, with young adults and university-related migration playing a major role in shaping the community's workforce. While the city benefits from a highly educated population, incomes tend to lag behind state averages, and housing affordability and availability continue to be a growing concern. Local development constraints—such as rising land and construction costs, the presence of the Casper Aquifer to the east, and the need to extend water and utility infrastructure near developing areas—help explain the general decline in building permits issued since 2000 (*See Technical Analysis)*.

At the same time, Laramie has land available to accommodate future growth. The city has identified more than 3,000 acres of land that could support housing infill and redevelopment within developed areas, presenting opportunities to use existing infrastructure efficiently and reinvest in established neighborhoods. Public utilities, such as water, wastewater, and solid waste, generally have capacity to support future development, although aging distribution systems may require targeted upgrades to support growth in desired areas.

See the Laramie Technical Analysis for more information

WHERE WE ARE HEADING

Throughout the Forge Laramie process, participants have expressed the desire for the city to take a proactive role in attracting and coordinating economic development and housing investment in the community. The following goals and policies establish a framework for guiding growth and development in a way that strengthens Laramie's economy and capitalizes on the efficient use of public infrastructure. This model for sustainable growth is intended to discourage development patterns that can result in capital, operations, maintenance, and replacement obligations that exceed the revenue they generate (such as extremely low-density, sprawling developments). Laramie will continue to support community priorities related to housing and economic

opportunity by coordinating land use decisions with capital improvement investments and adopting regulations that support economic opportunity while maintaining the quality of life valued by community members.

GOAL 4 SPUR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT THROUGH STRATEGIC LAND USE PLANNING

POLICY 4.A LAND USE VARIETY

Provide opportunities for a range of land uses at a variety of scales and intensities that are consistent with the city's Future Land Use and Character Framework and supported by existing and planned infrastructure capacity.

POLICY 4.B EMPLOYMENT AREAS

Support the locational needs of new and expanding businesses through the identification of sites for mixed-use and nonresidential development, including modern business parks with prime office and industrial spaces, mixed use employment centers, and downtown shopfronts.

POLICY 4.C MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Expand allowances for mixed-use development throughout Laramie. Support the creation of residential units above ground floor commercial and office spaces downtown and in designated mixed-use areas.

POLICY 4.D JOBS-HOUSING ALIGNMENT

Use the Future Land Use Map to designate sites for housing development at a variety of sizes and price points (such as apartments, townhomes, and small lot detached homes) near employment centers and along major corridors.

POLICY 4.E INFILL AND REDEVELOPMENT

Continue to encourage the creative use of vacant and underutilized sites through infill, redevelopment, and adaptive reuse as consistent with the goals and policies of this Comprehensive Plan.



Big Hollow Groundbreaking - BHP Photo



Little Lane Village - Laramie Staff

GROWTH TERMINOLOGY

Laramie has a history of supporting well-managed growth as part of land use planning efforts. The following terms are used throughout this document to describe different types of development.

SUSTAINABLE GROWTH.
Development that occurs at a pace and in locations that can be supported by available infrastructure, services, and natural resources without compromising quality of life for future generations

GREENFIELD DEVELOPMENT
Development on lots that have not previously been developed.

REDEVELOPMENT
Development on lots with existing buildings where all or most of the existing buildings would be removed and a new building or buildings built. Redevelopment generally occurs in established commercial areas or neighborhoods on underutilized lots where there is an emerging pattern of decline and disinvestment.

INFILL DEVELOPMENT
New construction on open pockets of land, including individual lots and vacant properties, surrounded by existing development.

ADAPTIVE REUSE
The process of converting an existing building to a use other than that for which it was originally designed.

GOAL 5 ENSURE LAND USE REGULATIONS SUPPORT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

POLICY 5.A DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES

Ensure the Unified Development Code and associated development review procedures are understandable, flexible, and result in desirable development outcomes. Consider adopting streamlined permitting procedures for proposals that align with city economic development objectives.

POLICY 5.B IDENTIFIED LAND USES

Regularly review and update the Unified Development Code to ensure new, cutting-edge land uses (such as data centers) are identified, defined, permitted in appropriate zoning districts, and regulated to offset potential nuisances.

POLICY 5.C ADAPTIVE REUSE

Incorporate standards into the Unified Development Code that enable flexibility in the adaptive reuse of existing buildings as needs change over time. Identify and remove regulations and procedures that prevent reinvestment in nonconforming properties.

GOAL 6 COORDINATE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS TO SUPPORT DESIRED DEVELOPMENT

POLICY 6.A BUSINESS-READY INFRASTRUCTURE

Using the direction provided in *Guiding Principals for Implementation* (Ch. 8-Implementation Chapter), conduct small area utility service studies along key corridors to identify infrastructure deficiencies and associated improvements that would make land available for development. Prioritize the timing of improvements in areas where the highest possible cost benefit will be realized.

POLICY 6.B INFRASTRUCTURE CAPACITY

Designate compact areas of concentrated development to facilitate economical and efficient provision of utilities, public facilities, and services. Encourage infill and redevelopment where excess utility capacity is available. Include periodic upgrades, as necessary, to utilities and services in capital improvement plans if sufficient capacity is unavailable in targeted redevelopment areas.

POLICY 6.C WEST LARAMIE IMPROVEMENTS

Encourage street paving and stormwater management infrastructure to be constructed as part of subdivision, development, and redevelopment projects in West Laramie to spur reinvestment and reduce maintenance costs associated with poor drainage.



Water Line Work - BHP Photo

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

This plan sets out different types of actions to implement the city's community priorities, including Tier 1 (near-term) actions and Tier 2 (long-term) actions. To learn more, see "Taking Action" on page 129.

Goal 5: Spur Economic Development through Strategic Land Use Planning

- See Tier 1 action: "Map Infill Sites for Development and Promote Via City Website" on page 134.

Goal 6: Ensure Land Use Regulations Support Economic Development Opportunities

- See Tier 1 action: "Update the Unified Development Code" on page 131.

Goal 7: *Coordinate Capital Improvements to Support Desired Development*

GD.1: Prepare a West Laramie revitalization plan or conduct a focused study to identify and provide recommendations for needed infrastructure improvements such as streets, sewer, water, parks and public services, beautification, sidewalks and economics.

GD.2: Review the utility and service capacity in and around targeted redevelopment areas and upgrade facilities to support planned development intensities, as needed.



Many Hands Mural - BHP Photo

CHAPTER 3
LIVE AND BELONG

INTRODUCTION

Laramie is committed to a future where a variety of households and people can find a place to call home. By fostering welcoming neighborhoods, housing that is attainable for the next generation of workers and their families, and vibrant public spaces, the city seeks not only to attract new residents, but to ensure that those who already call it home feel valued, connected, and inspired to stay.



Playground - B



Rodeo - BHP Photo





Gill Street Mural - BHP Photo





HP Photo



Snowy Laramie Neighborhood - BHP Photo



Freedom Has a Birthday - BHP Photo



West Laramie - BHP Photo

HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS

LARAMIE TODAY

NEIGHBORHOODS

Laramie is home to a variety of neighborhood designs, from older, traditional neighborhoods with a mix of housing types options along the same street frontage to newer neighborhoods characterized primarily by single-family detached homes. The city's high quality of life has been a key factor in its steady growth, and the quality and variety of neighborhoods play an important role in attracting and retaining residents. As the city looks to address critical housing challenges, the design of neighborhoods and the long-term maintenance of infrastructure that support them are critical considerations. It is essential that the city balances the need for more housing units, especially lower-cost housing options, with quality, efficient neighborhood design to achieve long-term success.

PARTNERS IN HOUSING

Laramie's efforts to create neighborhoods with a variety of housing options that fit residents' needs are supported by local organizations with similar goals. Organizations working to address housing needs in Laramie include but are not limited to:

Albany County Housing and Land Trust

My Front Door

Rocky Mountain Power/ LIEAP Weatherization

Wyoming Department of Health

Wyoming Housing Network

Wyoming Senior Citizens Inc.

TABLE 3.1: TOTAL HOUSING OCCUPANCY VERSUS VACANCY

	HOMEOWNER UNITS	RENTAL UNITS	TOTAL UNITS
Occupied housing units	6,221	7,918	14,139
Vacant housing units	663	495	1,158
Total housing units	6,884	8,413	15,297

Source: Census ACS 2023 5-year

HOUSING SUPPLY

A constrained housing supply is a persistent challenge for many communities, including Laramie. A lack of housing supply and choice limits the ability of Laramie residents to find appropriate housing, put down roots, or age in place. When asked "What do you want to see change [in Laramie]?" 47% of Forge Laramie participants ranked "more housing" among their top three desires. As one stakeholder shared, "Housing is the major issue in our community. Good quality, and a mix of housing types is needed." In a similar vein, developers cited Laramie's administrative review and permitting process as barriers to new development and construction.

In total, Laramie has just over 15,000 housing units. Of those units, 4.3% of for-sale units and 3.2% of rental units (about 1,150 units total) were vacant in 2023. Ideally, communities want to have some level of vacancy (between 5-8% for rental housing) to allow for relocation of households and support a healthy housing market. However, Laramie's relatively low housing vacancy rate indicates the presence of a tight housing market, which may be associated with higher rents and fewer housing choices for residents.

One factor contributing to the city's tight housing market is the rate of housing production. Laramie's housing production lags slightly behind that of peer communities, as shown in table 3.2. Laramie is in the bottom half of peer communities regarding shares of homes built since 2000. The city is not just producing fewer lower-priced homes, it is producing less housing overall.

While this is not a concern that is unique to Laramie (nationally, vacancy is trending downward due to constrained supply), it does affect the city's ability to attract and retain residents, leading to difficulties for employers looking to hire and for new businesses to justify locating in the area. This means that the lack of available housing supply has a direct impact on economic development, limiting the amount of job growth that can occur in Laramie.

TABLE 3.2: SHARE OF HOMES BUILT SINCE 2000

LOCATION	SHARE OF HOMES BUILT SINCE 2000
Bozeman, Montana	48%
Gillette, Wyoming	38%
Flagstaff, Arizona	33%
Ellensburg, Washington	32%
Missoula, Montana	32%
Pullman, Washington	28%
Fort Collins, Colorado	28%
Moscow, Idaho	25%
Laramie, Wyoming	**25%**
Logan, Utah	25%
Corvallis, Oregon	23%
Casper, Wyoming	23%
Cheyenne, Wyoming	22%

Source: Census ACS 2023 5-year

Declining home production has also led to a lack of housing choice, with stakeholders citing a need for a greater variety of housing types. For example, while most Laramie households are composed of one or two people, with the average household size (2.1 people) slightly lower than the state (2.4) and national (2.6) averages, more than half of Laramie's housing supply is composed of single-family homes. Additional housing options are needed for smaller households that may not desire or need a traditional single-family home, such as:

- **Senior Housing.** As older adults choose to age in place and retire in Laramie, new senior- and retirement-living options are needed. This will ensure residents have options that are conducive to their needs, including smaller units that require less maintenance, ADUs or "granny-flats" to enable multi-generational living, and living near other seniors to enable strong social connections into old age.
- **ADUs, Modular, and Manufactured Homes**. Accessory dwelling units (ADUS), modular (prefabricated homes built in sections), and manufactured (built off site and installed on a foundation) homes are solutions that make housing more affordable due to their smaller footprint and reduced need for specialized construction labor.
- **Multi-family Housing.** Multi-family housing is a solution that meets the personal needs of many students, young professionals, seniors, and small families.

TABLE 3.3: INCOME TO HOME VALUE RATIO 2023

LOCATION	MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME	HOME VALUE: INCOME*
Corvallis, Oregon	$26,868	17.9
Pullman, Washington	$33,935	11.8
Bozeman, Montana	$79,903	7.7
Flagstaff, Arizona	$68,041	7.4
Fort Collins, Colorado	$81,883	7.2
Ellensburg, Washington	$49,888	7.2
Missoula, Montana	$65,329	6.5
Logan, Utah	$56,764	6.0
Laramie, Wyoming	**$52,414**	**5.8**
Moscow, Idaho	$65,179	5.4
Cheyenne, Wyoming	$77,884	4.0
Casper, Wyoming	$69,171	3.6
Gillette, Wyoming	$90,699	2.8

Source: Census ACS 2023 5-year

HOUSING COST

As housing production has slowed, housing costs have increased. Home values in Laramie are increasing, outpacing the state. Overall, the median home value in Laramie has increased by more than 50% since 2013, with Laramie ($302,000) leading the state ($285,000) in both change and dollar value. Since 2013, Laramie and Wyoming have seen a reduction in the number of homes valued under $200,000 and a general increase in higher value homes. High land and construction costs throughout the state also make it challenging to produce housing at all price points.

On average, household incomes in Laramie have not kept pace with housing costs. The city's median household income is $52,414, while its home-value-to-income ratio is 5.8—meaning the typical home is valued at approximately 5.8 times the typical household's annual income, above the commonly cited affordability range of three to five times annual income. While Laramie's home-value-to-income ratio is less severe than many peer college communities, it is the highest of Wyoming peer communities. This speaks to the relative competitive advantage other Wyoming communities have for talent attraction and retention.

Across the nation, the biggest barrier to the creation of new units is the cost to produce it. Laramie would benefit from larger developers participating in the local housing market to help build homes at scale. Housing priced at-or-above market rate is needed to help free up lower-cost units for those living below area median income (AMI), with a specific need for 600-800 higher-end rental units for those making greater than 80% AMI. There is also a significant need for highly affordable units for those making below 50% area median income. Housing analysis for Forge Laramie shows a gap of nearly 6,000 rental-units for those making less than 30% AMI, and nearly 5,000 owner-units for those making less than 50% AMI. The city should support development of housing at all price points, helping to provide a better return on investment for developers and create more housing options that fit within residents' means.

TABLE 3.4: 2024 HUD AREA MEDIAN INCOME

HOUSEHOLD AMI LEVEL	1 PERSON HOUSEHOLD	4 PERSON HOUSEHOLD
30% AMI (extremely low-income)	$20,550	$31,200
50% AMI (very low-income)	$34,200	$48,850
80% AMI (low-income)	$54,750	$78,150
100% AMI	$68,450	$97,700

Source: Fourth Economy Analysis of HUD Data, 2024

AREA MEDIAN INCOME

Area median income (AMI) is a measure of household income in a specific geographic area, with half of households earning more and half earning less that the median. AMI is commonly used to determine eligibility for Affordable Housing programs and help communities understand what types of new housing units may be needed to support residents' needs. The 2024 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) income guidelines established the following AMI thresholds for Albany County.

SUMMARY

The convergence of relatively high housing costs and limited housing stock that does not match current and future housing demand drives outmigration, and limits resident retention and business development opportunities. Stakeholders have consistently cited the desire for sustainable growth driven by the needs of residents, particularly workforce housing for teachers, firefighters, and other full-time essential workers and professionals.

Laramie's limited housing supply, low vacancy rate, rising costs, and lack of housing diversity create challenges for residents at different stages of life, including older adults wishing to age in place, workers seeking to live near their jobs, and households looking for lower-cost options near essential services.

WHERE WE ARE HEADING

Ensuring the availability of housing options that meet current and projected demand continues to be a priority for Laramie. Providing a variety of housing types and price points will help retain existing residents, attract new residents, support local employers, and help generate opportunities for economic growth. The community has expressed support for compact and infill development, as well as rehabilitating and improving existing housing stock. To meet diverse housing needs, the city should establish policies and tools that encourage a wider range of housing options, such as middle housing and homes on smaller lots, while supporting construction of units at a variety of price points. These efforts can help expand housing choice in established neighborhoods and accommodate growth in areas with adequate (or planned future) service capacity.

Laramie's role within housing development is to be a convener, in service of these key goals:

- **Facilitation**: Bringing housing groups to the table, to explore and capitalize on existing opportunities;
- **Development Process Improvements:** Assessing and adjusting city policies that directly apply to development of housing through zoning amendments, permit process improvements, and more; and
- **Creating Opportunity:** Exploring options for redevelopment on city-owned properties, land transfers, and close partnerships to encourage adaptive re-use and creative solutions (such as converting unused school property to workforce housing).

GOAL 7 IMPROVE THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS TO ENABLE HOUSING PRODUCTION

POLICY 7.A HOUSING PARTNERS

Continue to work with the Albany County Housing and Land Trust to convene public, private, and non-profit entities to address local housing issues.

POLICY 7.B DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

Establish development regulations (such as building code, City Engineering Standards, and Unified Development Code regulations) that support life safety and result in high-quality, long-lasting development.

POLICY 7.C PERMITTING PROCESSES

Establish development review and permitting processes that are easy to understand and result in predictable outcomes to avoid delays and additional unforeseen costs.



Multifamily Housing - AVI

GOAL 8 SUPPORT DEVELOPERS INCREASING HOUSING SUPPLY AND DIVERSITY

POLICY 8.A AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Support the production of affordable housing units for those making below 50% area median income.

POLICY 8.B DIVERSE HOUSING TYPES

Encourage new housing construction that consists of a mix of housing types—including a range of unit sizes that can be sold or rented at different price points—to accommodate residents at all stages of life.

POLICY 8.C AGING IN PLACE

Increase housing options that support aging in place, including smaller units, accessible units, housing near services, and development patterns that promote independence for older adults.

POLICY 8.D SHARED AND MULTI-GENERATIONAL HOUSING

Support shared housing and multigenerational living models, including homesharing arrangements, as part of the city's housing strategy, recognizing their role in affordability, caregiving support, social connection, and efficient use of existing housing stock.

GOAL 9 SUPPORT IMPROVEMENTS TO CURRENT HOUSING ENVIRONMENT

POLICY 9.A COST-BURDENED HOUSEHOLDS

Support programs and efforts by partner organizations to alleviate the financial burden of housing costs on renters and home owners.

POLICY 9.B HOME IMPROVEMENTS, REHABILITATION, AND MAINTENANCE

Maintain the city's stock of lower-cost homes by supporting partner organizations who oversee initiatives to upgrade and maintain the quality of existing housing units. See also policy *"Policy 20.H Home Repair and Maintenance for Aging in Place" on page 66.*

POLICY 9.C BLIGHT REMEDIATION

With guidance from the Laramie Urban Renewal Agency, continue to remediate and revitalize areas that have seen disinvestment.

POLICY 9.D PROPERTY DATABASE

Support the development of workforce and lower-cost housing by proactively cataloging publicly-owned properties that are vacant or underutilized, and therefore ripe for redevelopment.

Cost burdened households are vulnerable because spending a large portion of their income on housing leaves them with less money for other necessities like food, healthcare, and transportation. This lack of financial flexibility makes households susceptible to financial shocks, such as job loss or medical bills, and can lead to material hardship, health problems, and housing instability, including overcrowding or eviction.

HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

This plan sets out different types of actions to implement the city's community priorities, including Tier 1 (near-term) actions and Tier 2 (long-term) actions. To learn more, see "Taking Action" on page 129.

Goal 8: Improve the Development Process to Enable Housing Production

- See Tier 1 action: "Update the Unified Development Code" on page 131

HN.1: Promote residential growth within the Downtown Commercial zoning district through tools like the Laramie Main Street Low Interest Revolving Loan.

HN.2: Continue to audit development regulations on a regular basis, which should include conversations with developers, to understand how different regulations impact the cost of housing development.

HN.3: Continue to work with development applicants to clarify development review procedures to avoid project delays and additional unforeseen costs. This may include the creation of handouts/information guides to explain complex processes.

Goal 9: Support Developers Increasing Housing Supply and Diversity

- See Tier 1 action: "Develop and Provide Pre-Approved Plans for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)" on page 132

HN.4: Conduct a housing needs and market study that identifies specific ownership and rental gaps by income level, household size, and tenure. Study findings should establish measurable, periodically updated affordability targets that provide developers with clear guidance about the types and price ranges of housing that may qualify for assistance through the Community and Economic Development Department infrastructure fund.

HN.5: Assess the current and future demand for housing for older adults aging in place, from nursing to assisted living, senior-communities, and high-end condos. Publish this information for use by developers and other implementation and funding partners.

HN.6: Establish and maintain relationships with builders and financial institutions to enable the development of affordable housing, such as through the creation of revolving funds, pre-construction loan funds, and other tools.

HN.7: Explore the viability of a HOME Investment Partnership Consortium with partners within and surrounding Laramie, including Albany County and nearby counties, to increase the number of housing units affordable to households earning at or below 50% AMI.

HN.8: Evaluate the need for and feasibility of developing single-occupancy units, shelter beds, and transitional housing for vulnerable populations.

HN.9: Coordinate with local employers and higher-education institutions to explore homesharing opportunities for students, employees, and other residents seeking lower-cost housing.

Goal 10: Support Improvements to Current Housing Environment

- See Tier 1 action: "Secure Funding Sources to Support Rehabilitation and Maintenance of Existing Homes" on page 132
- See Tier 1 action: "Map Infill Sites for Development and Promote Via City Website" on page 134

HN.10: Promote the work of organizations that offer income assistance and housing programs by sharing educational and outreach materials.

HN.11: Partner with Albany County to establish a Homeownership Zone from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to reclaim vacant and blighted properties, increase homeownership, and promote economic revitalization.

HN.12: Through the City's new Rental Housing Program Coordinator, coordinate with housing organizations, social services institutions, Albany County Public Health, and other agencies to improve the quality and safety of rental units.

HN.13: Compile and maintain information on available funding and technical assistance programs, and share these opportunities with property owners seeking to rehabilitate or maintain existing homes.

HN.14: Initiate and support projects and programs to improve neighborhood and corridor conditions, such as infrastructure repair, open and green space development, or removal of unsafe structures.


Downtown Mural - Clarion

PLACEMAKING

LARAMIE TODAY

Placemaking is an approach to planning and urban design that focuses on creating lively, people-centered spaces that reflect the needs, culture, and identity of the community. At its core, placemaking is about turning everyday spaces into places that people care about—not just where people pass through, but where they want to gather, stay, and connect. Efforts to create meaningful places throughout Laramie are already underway through city projects, and through actions undertaken by partner agencies such as the Laramie Public Art Coalition.

In Laramie, the places people value most are those that feel safe and authentic to community members, are comfortable and lively spaces that incorporate art and engaging environments, and those that offer a connection to nature. Areas like downtown Laramie and neighborhood parks are appreciated for their walkability, neighborhood character, and ongoing programming that brings folks together. Just outside of the city, outdoor areas like Pilot Hill and Vedauwoo serve as essential recreation areas for residents and visitors alike. In contrast, some areas of the city have limited pedestrian amenities, a shortage of areas to comfortably congregate, or lack of cohesive identity, making them feel less vibrant. These places present unique opportunities for reinvestment and reactivation—informed by community needs and preferences—to transform them into welcoming and valued parts of the city.

WHERE WE ARE HEADING

Participants in the Forge Laramie process showed support for the creation of safe, welcoming places for people of all ages. They also expressed the desire to see better connections between neighborhoods and more public and outdoor spaces throughout the community. Growing public arts and culture is also important to creative placemaking and building a sense of authentic community. The goals and policies included in this section are intended to create opportunities for thoughtful and creative placemaking throughout the city.



Farmers Market - Laramie Staff

WHAT MAKES A PLACE GREAT?

Project for Public Spaces, a leader in the study and practice of placemaking, has identified four qualities that are common amongst most successful places.[1]

ACCESSIBILITY

Successful places are highly accessible and are well-connected to other parts of the community.

COMFORTABILITY

Successful places include features that make the space feel comfortable and safe.

ACTIVITY

Successful places attract people to participate in active and passive ways.

SOCIABILITY

Successful places are defined by sociable and inclusive environments that people want to experience time and again.

1 Source: Project for Public Spaces, A Placemaking Primer, 2022.

GOAL 10 CREATE MEMORABLE SPACES FOR EVERYONE TO ENJOY

POLICY 10.A INCLUSIVE DESIGN

Ensure public spaces incorporate universal design principles, ADA accessibility, diverse signage, and amenities that serve people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds. Support the development of shared spaces and programming for intergenerational activity.

POLICY 10.B COMFORTABLE DESIGN

Design new, and retrofit existing, city-owned parks and public spaces to include features that support community members' comfort in using that space.

POLICY 10.C CONNECTING PLACES

Improve multi-modal connections to parks, plazas, and public spaces to improve access for all users. Use signage and wayfinding tools to link unique places throughout the community. See also policies *"Policy 12.A Active Transportation" on page 50* and *"Policy 13.B Sidewalk Infrastructure" on page 52*.

POLICY 10.D INCORPORATE ART

Support the incorporation of art, through many forms, into new public and private developments.

GOAL 11 ENCOURAGE AND INCENTIVIZE PLACEMAKING AS PART OF DEVELOPMENT

POLICY 11.A PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS

Create incentives (such as density bonuses or increased building height) to encourage the incorporation of public plazas, outdoor seating areas, public art, and pedestrian-oriented design features in private development projects.

POLICY 11.B PLACEMAKING DESIGN GUIDELINES

Establish design guidelines or standards that prioritize human-scale design, active ground floors, ground floor transparency, and streetscape enhancements to encourage new development and redevelopment to contribute to creating engaging places.

POLICY 11.C ART IN CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Proactively identify opportunities to incorporate art into capital improvement projects to enhance community identity. Consider partnerships with local art organizations to provide necessary funding for art installations.

POLICY 11.D PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Partner with developers and local organizations to co-create and maintain public spaces and associated programming as an amenity for residents and visitors.



1st Street Plaza - Laramie Staff

PLACEMAKING IN LARAMIE

Laramie residents and visitors benefit from access to unique, meaningful places throughout the community.

FIRST STREET PLAZA

First Street Plaza was developed through a collaborative effort involving the Downtown Streetscapes Committee, Downtown Development Authority, Laramie Main Street Alliance, and City of Laramie. Centrally located in historic downtown Laramie, the plaza serves as a year-round public gathering space featuring picnic tables, xeriscape landscaping, a natural gas fire pit, and overhead lighting. The plaza provides a place for residents and visitors to gather, enjoy trainspotting, and support surrounding downtown businesses.



Public Art - Laramie Staff

POLICY 11.E TACTICAL PLACEMAKING

Encourage interim uses—such as pop-up events, parklets, food trucks, and temporary art installations—through flexible permitting to activate underutilized spaces on public and private lands and test long-term placemaking concepts.



Broadway Square, Bismarck, N.D. - Clarion

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP BEHIND BROADWAY SQUARE

In many communities, public-private partnerships are leveraged to create meaningful gathering places for residents and visitors. The Broadway Square in Fargo, North Dakota serves as an example of a successful public-private partnership. In 2019, the development firm Kilbourne Group began the process of transforming a surface parking lot in the heart of downtown Fargo into a mid-rise, mixed-use tower, parking garage, and public plaza to be programmed by the Fargo Parks District.

Redevelopment of the property was made possible in part through the provision of several economic development programs offered by the city. The first was a five-year property tax exemption offered through the state of North Dakota's Renaissance Zone program. A second property tax exemption program that allowed the developer to make an annual payment in lieu of paying taxes was also established, and required the developer to provide a $1.2 million payment for 15 years following the end of the Renaissance Zone tax exemption. The annual $1.2 million payment was then used to help pay off the $15 million in bonds used by the city to finance the parking garage and public plaza.

Today the public plaza, called Broadway Square, serves as an essential community gathering place for year-round activities, including the farmers market, summer splash pads, and winter ice skating rinks.

PLACEMAKING IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

This plan sets out different types of actions to implement the city's community priorities, including Tier 1 (near-term) actions and Tier 2 (long-term) actions. To learn more, see "Taking Action" on page 129.

Goal 11: Create Memorable Spaces for Everyone to Enjoy

P.1: Incorporate features such as shade, seating, and lighting in public spaces to encourage safe and comfortable use across all seasons.

P.2: Update city-owned, pedestrian-scale signage (such as interpretive signs and wayfinding signs) to improve legibility for visually-impaired users.

P.3: Create and support existing programs and enrichment activities designed to facilitate interactions between youth and older adults.

Goal 12: Encourage and Incentivize Placemaking as Part of Development

P.4: Allocate funding to incorporate art in high-visibility capital improvement projects, such as a new park or government facility.

P.5: Establish partnerships with local and regional artists and include these partners in conversations at the onset of designing new public facilities.

P.6: Encourage the activation of alleys as part of downtown redevelopment projects through improvements such as pedestrian-friendly walkways, lighting, public art, outdoor seating, and connections to adjacent businesses.

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Keep moving, there's more to see!





Bike Parking - Clarion

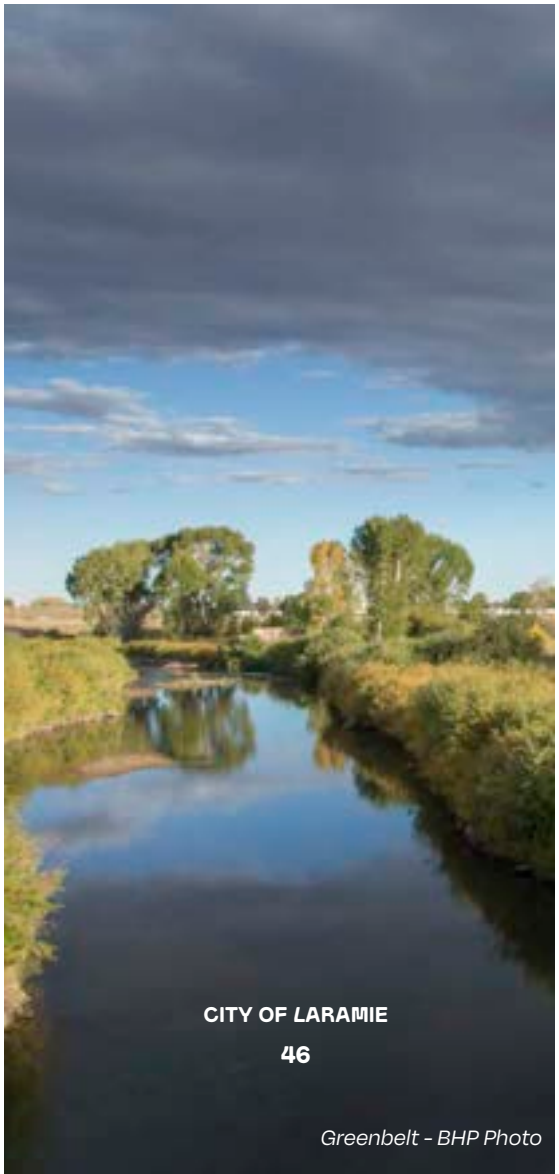
CHAPTER 4
CONNECT AND NURTURE

INTRODUCTION

The city envisions a community where movement is safe, efficient, and accessible for everyone—whether walking, biking, or driving. By creating a safe, connected, and accessible multimodal network, the City can make it easier for people of all ages and abilities to reach homes, jobs, schools, parks, and daily services—expanding transportation choices while supporting physical and mental health, social connection, and everyday access to nature.



Local Street - B



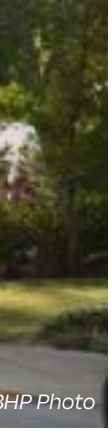
Greenbelt - BHP Photo





Disc Golf - BHP Photo





BHP Photo



Footbridge - BHP Photo



Greenbelt - BHP Photo



Public Transit - Laramie Staff

TRANSPORTATION

LARAMIE TODAY

Planning for, constructing, and maintaining safe and effective transportation systems is an essential government function. At the federal level, the U.S. Department of Transportation sets national priorities, established regulations, and provides funding for programs that are then implemented through agencies such as the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration. State-level transportation departments, such as the Wyoming Department of Transportation, serve as the bridge between federal priorities and local transportation initiatives by overseeing the state's highway system and allocating state and federal funding to municipal transportation projects.

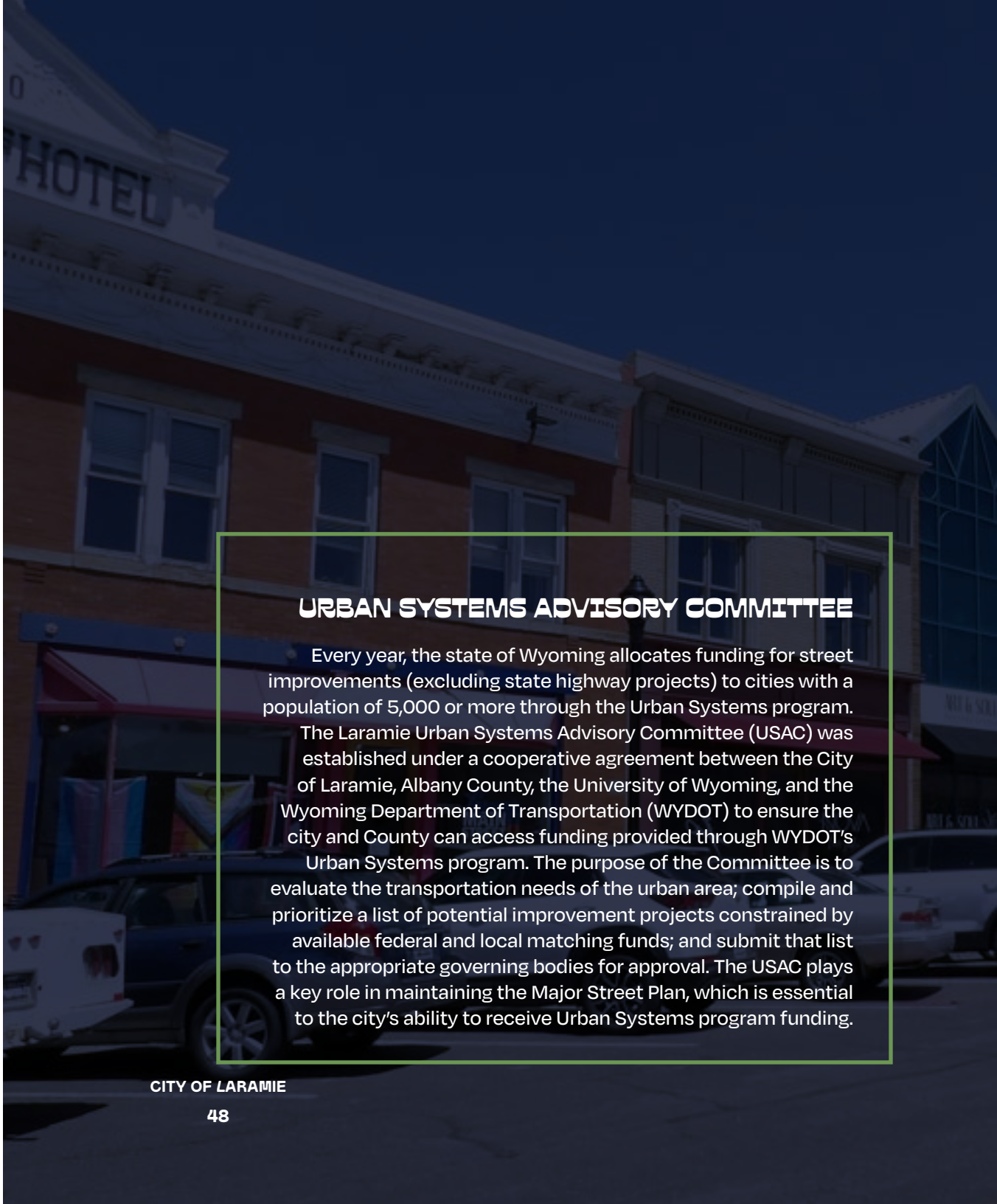
At the local level, cities establish policies and create long-range plans to guide investment in the transportation system in a way that aligns with community priorities (such as safety, accessibility, and connectivity). Connecting transportation planning with land use planning positively affects community development by coordinating systems that support:

- Safe multimodal networks for all users, including pedestrians and cyclists;
- Enhanced street connectivity; and
- Access to public transit services.

While Laramie does not have a stand-alone master transportation plan, the city has undertaken a number of planning efforts to guide long-range transportation decisions. The *Major Street Plan*, which was included in the *2007 Comprehensive Plan* and amended as recently as 2023, serves as the city's primary tool for guiding alignment of future collector and arterial roadways. Other supplemental plans, such as the *Bill Nye Avenue Corridor Study* and *3, 2, 1...3rd Street!,* support corridor-specific improvements along key thoroughfares. More recently, the city partnered with the Albany County Transportation Authority to develop the *10-year Strategic Public Transportation Plan* (adopted in 2026) that includes recommendations for new public transit services throughout the county. The city also completed the *Reconnect West Laramie* transportation plan in 2026, which identifies barriers and opportunities to improve connectivity between West Laramie and the rest of the community. Additional documents that support planning for the city's transportation network include:

- *Laramie Parks and Recreation Master Plan*
- *2014 Speed Study*
- *Harney Street Corridor Study*
- *Pavement Management and Sidewalk Report*
- *City Capital Improvement Plan*

In addition, the city is currently working on updating the local transportation model that can assist with future transportation policy and investment decision-making.



URBAN SYSTEMS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Every year, the state of Wyoming allocates funding for street improvements (excluding state highway projects) to cities with a population of 5,000 or more through the Urban Systems program. The Laramie Urban Systems Advisory Committee (USAC) was established under a cooperative agreement between the City of Laramie, Albany County, the University of Wyoming, and the Wyoming Department of Transportation (WYDOT) to ensure the city and County can access funding provided through WYDOT's Urban Systems program. The purpose of the Committee is to evaluate the transportation needs of the urban area; compile and prioritize a list of potential improvement projects constrained by available federal and local matching funds; and submit that list to the appropriate governing bodies for approval. The USAC plays a key role in maintaining the Major Street Plan, which is essential to the city's ability to receive Urban Systems program funding.

Laramie currently benefits from a robust transportation system that serves a variety of community needs. The city has invested heavily in road improvements, pedestrian crosswalks and warning signals, bike facilities, and accessibility enhancements to improve traffic flow and safety for drivers and pedestrians. The University of Wyoming operates a fare-free public transit system serving the campus and portions of the broader community through multiple fixed routes, along with paratransit and evening transportation services. The University's ability to offer these services is informed by the availability of state and federal transit funding, which can fluctuate from year-to-year. In 2026, the University asked the city to provide funding to help offset the loss of federal funds. Additional on-demand and paratransit services are available to older residents, courtesy of the Eppson Center.

Laramie's broader transportation network also includes limited passenger air service and major freight rail connections. The Laramie Regional Airport offers one-to-two passenger flights per day to Denver, as well as fixed-base services for private flights. Recent federal funding changes could be a challenge to the long-term viability of the airport. The city can help address this concern by working in partnership with the Laramie Regional Airport Joint Powers Board to support additional revenue generation options.

Laramie was originally built around the presence of the Union Pacific railroad, which previously provided both freight and passenger rail service. Today, freight trains continue to move goods through downtown Laramie as they make their way between the west coast/pacific northwest and the Midwest. Passenger rail service in Laramie ended in 1997 with the discontinuation of Amtrak's Pioneer route. However, there is a renewed interest in bringing passenger rail service back to the region through Colorado's front range passenger rail project, which is anticipated to include an extension into Wyoming (specifically to Cheyenne). Additional conversations between regional partners are needed to determine what impact, if any, future passenger rail service could have in Laramie.



Footbridge - BHP Photo

WHERE WE ARE HEADING

Looking ahead, Laramie knows there are opportunities to prepare for positive changes to the city's transportation network and has actively developed a tool to guide improvements to roads and sidewalks in the city. Participants in the Forge Laramie process noted that ongoing maintenance of city streets (and sidewalks) was a major concern, especially as the city grows and new roads are constructed. Participants also cited a desire to support investments in street and sidewalk connections that improve safety and accessibility throughout the community. The goals and policies in this section are intended to guide investments in street and multimodal infrastructure in a way that supports the broader community goals of safety, accessibility, and connectivity.

GOAL 12 MAINTAIN A SAFE AND CONNECTED TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM THAT ACCOMMODATES ALL MODES AND USERS

POLICY 12.A ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

Support opportunities for active transportation—such as biking or walking between destinations—as an alternative to personal vehicle travel through infrastructure investments that improve gaps in street and sidewalk connectivity and provide traffic calming measures.

POLICY 12.B COMPLETE STREETS

Plan, design, construct, operate, and maintain a transportation network that safely and comfortably accommodates all users.

POLICY 12.C CITYWIDE CONNECTIVITY

Improve multimodal transportation connections throughout the city with a focus on enhancing mobility, safety, equity, and economic vitality for all users.

POLICY 12.D PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Enhance transit service, optimize transit connectivity, and advance equitable and sustainable access to transit through partnerships with local transit providers, such as Albany County and the University of Wyoming. Consider the need for event and on-demand transit to support tourism growth when planning for public transit.

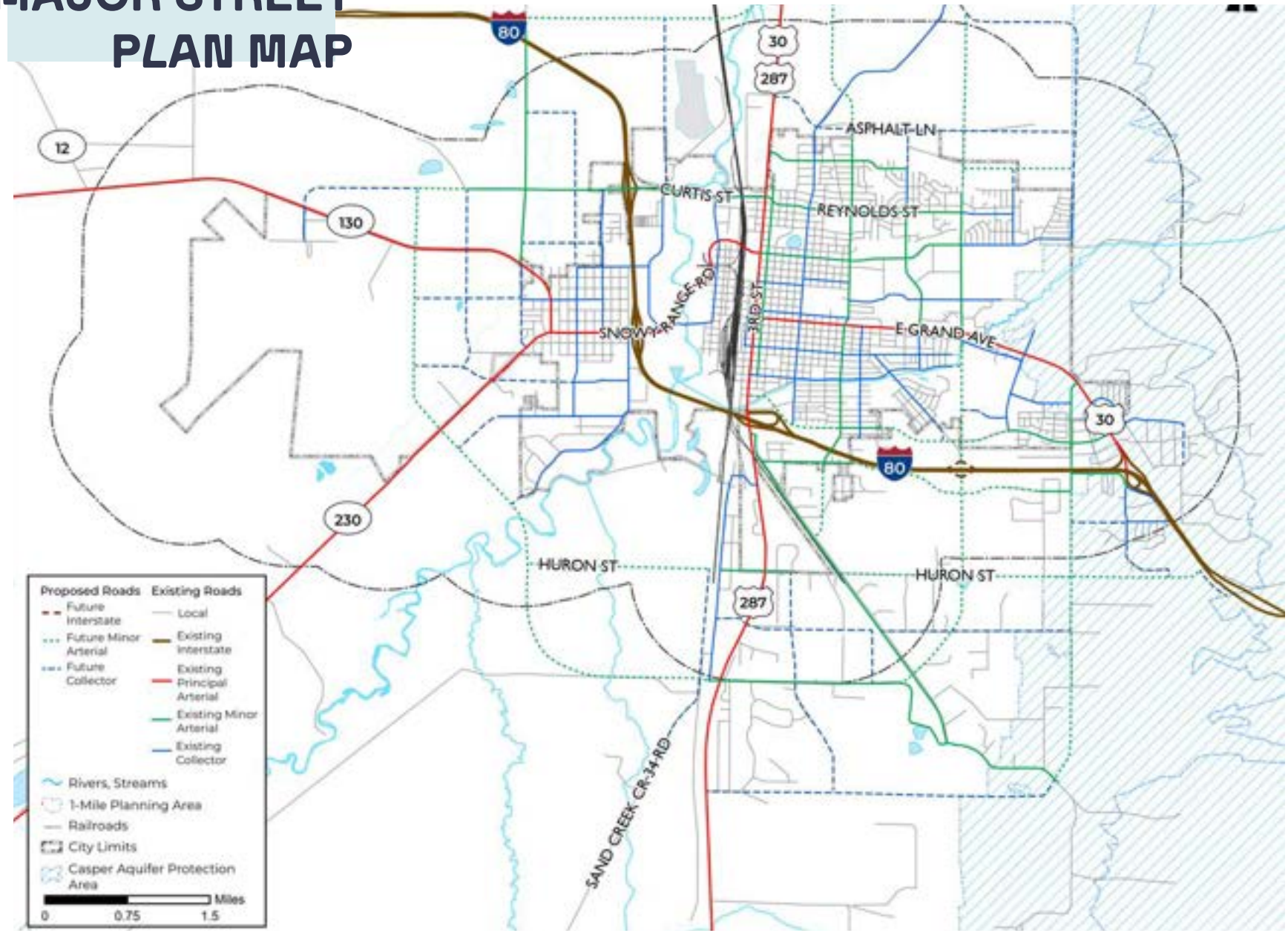
POLICY 12.E AIR TRAVEL

Continue to support the retention and expansion of reliable air transportation services at the Laramie Regional Airport as an economic and quality-of-life benefit to the community. Work with the Joint Powers Board to support expansion of revenue generating land uses on the airport property.



Reconnect West Bike Ride - BHP Photo

MAJOR STREET PLAN MAP



GOAL 13 COORDINATE LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION PLANNING DECISIONS TO PROMOTE EFFICIENT TRAVEL PATTERNS AND HIGH-QUALITY COMMUNITY DESIGN

POLICY 13.A DEVELOPMENT INTENSITY

Encourage higher-density development, including a mix of residential and non-residential uses, along or near streets designated for existing and future transit service to increase opportunities for residents, workers, and visitors to ride transit.

POLICY 13.B SIDEWALK INFRASTRUCTURE

Continue to support targeted improvements to the city's sidewalk network, particularly as they relate to improving accessibility for people with disabilities.

POLICY 13.C RIGHT-OF-WAY DEDICATION

Regularly review city regulations to ensure that right-of-way design standards result in the dedication of sufficient roadway widths to meet community needs while maintaining flexibility for innovative street design.

POLICY 13.D DOWNTOWN PARKING MANAGEMENT

Manage the use of existing on- and off-street parking spaces in downtown Laramie during peak periods. Balance the need to build or require new vehicle parking with other community priorities, such as community character and walkability. Continue to supplement vehicle parking needs through the expansion of bicycle parking options.



Laramie Sign - Laramie Staff

GOAL 14 PLAN AND PREPARE FOR LONG-TERM CHANGES TO THE CITY'S TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

POLICY 14.A TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENTS

Evaluate the potential benefits and impacts of implementing new transportation technologies, such as dockless e-bikes and e-scooters, autonomous vehicles, and drone delivery services.

POLICY 14.B ELECTRIC VEHICLES

Promote the expansion of infrastructure, such as vehicle charging stations, needed to support the use of private electric vehicles and expand the use of electric vehicles within the city's fleet. Ensure that electric vehicle charging stations in city-owned parking lots are well-maintained and highly visible for public use.

POLICY 14.C COMMUTER RAIL

Continue to partner with the City of Cheyenne and other regional partners to advocate for the expansion of commuter rail services to Wyoming as part of the Colorado's future Front Range Passenger Rail line.

TRANSPORTATION IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

This plan sets out different types of actions to implement the city's community priorities, including Tier 1 (near-term) actions and Tier 2 (long-term) actions. To learn more, see "Action Plan" on page 130.

Goal 13: Maintain a Safe and Connected Transportation System that Accommodates All Modes and Users

- See Tier 1 action: "Keep Master Plans Current and Actionable" on page 131.
- See Tier 1 action: "Create an Educational Campaign on Safe Use of Public Rights-of-Way for All Modes of Travel" on page 132.
- See Tier 1 action: "Fill Gaps in, and Maintain, the City's Multi-Use Paths" on page 133.

T.1: Continue to work with the Albany County Transportation Authority, University of Wyoming, and other partners to expand public transit services, including on-demand services.

T.2: Improve connectivity throughout Laramie through projects that address safety, condition, capacity, accessibility, and maintenance needs across the full network.

T.3: Explore potential revenue sources to secure committed funding for ongoing street improvement and maintenance. Dedicate staff time to research and apply for grant funding to support network improvements.

T.4: Perform a condition inventory of bike lanes and trails to assess condition and maintenance requirements, and allocate funding to repair areas back to city standards, especially in areas with high pedestrian traffic.

T.5: Conduct an audit to identify intersections that would be good candidates for testing low-cost safety improvements (e.g., high-visibility crosswalks, improved signage, removing visual obstructions, signal timing adjustments, and other solutions) and install said improvements.

T.6: Where warranted through Engineering design, construct crosswalk improvements such as striping, pedestrian countdown timers, and audible traffic signals, prioritizing improvements in high-traffic areas and areas of known conflict between vehicles and pedestrians.

T.7: Adopt a Vision Zero policy to prevent traffic fatalities and severe injuries, and promote safe and equitable mobility. Continue utilizing less costly tactical urbanism improvements, such as installation of bollards and painting pedestrian/bike facilities, to support these efforts.

T.8: Adopt a complete streets policy that speaks to the city's role in planning, designing, and building streets that enable safe access and movement for all users.

T.9: Work with the Laramie Regional Airport Joint Powers Board to implement the 2025 Airport Master Plan. Work with the Board to identify any needed changes to Development Code to support airport economic development efforts.

Goal 14: Coordinate Land Use and Transportation Planning Decisions to Promote Efficient Travel Patterns and High-Quality Community Design

T.10: Building on the findings in the 2025 Asset Management Report, create a plan for installing accessibility improvements to the city's sidewalk network.

T.11: Coordinate with WYDOT, Albany County, and private property owners to conduct corridor studies along major thoroughfares that would identify necessary and feasible roadway improvements.

T.12: Where practicable, coordinate major street improvements with the timing of development projects and consider contributing additional city funding to improve the aesthetic of major streets.

T.13: Improve parking access, availability, and curbside management in Downtown Laramie through implementation of the goals and actions in the Laramie Downtown Development Plan.

Goal 15: Plan and Prepare for Long-term Changes to the City's Transportation System

T.14:Evaluate the need to regulate the use of e-bikes and e-scooters on city streets, multi-use paths, and other bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

T.15: Identify high traffic areas within the city for the installation of EV charging stations.

T.16: Allocate staff time to researching and recommending regulatory changes that support the implementation of new community-supported transportation technologies.



Kids on Pilot Hill Trail - Laramie Staff

PARKS AND RECREATION

LARAMIE TODAY

Laramie's parks, trails, recreational facilities, and programs contribute significantly to the community's quality of life and sense of place. Recreational opportunities in Laramie include not only the parks, facilities, programs, and trails provided by the City, but also the wide range of outdoor activities available in the surrounding region. Many of these amenities are maintained by State and Federal partners such as State Parks, the University of Wyoming, and the National Forest Service. Together, the resources provided by internal and external agencies make Laramie the beloved place to live, work, and play that it is today.

The Laramie Parks and Recreation Department administers 29 identified facilities in the city; including 14 designated parks, the city trail system, the Recreation Center, the Ice and Event Center, the cemetery, and mosquito/integrated pest management. The staff of approximately 20 full-time employees ensures the recreation and open space needs of the community are met. Through the robust park system, the department provides space for soccer, basketball, baseball, softball, playgrounds, skateboarding, trails, dog parks, and many more recreational opportunities. Additionally, the department administers popular services and programs in the community such as aquatics, youth recreation, adult recreation, public art, and special events.

The Parks and Recreation Department is guided by the 2016 Parks and Recreation Master Plan. This plan outlines 25 service areas in the community and overviews access to recreation amenities in each service area. It then makes recommendations for each service area to act as implementation steps to the Master Plan. This plan is scheduled to be updated in fiscal year 2028. Actions and administration of the department are funded through the city general fund and specific purpose taxes.

The University of Wyoming augments the offerings from the Parks and Recreation Department by providing recreation opportunities for students and guests. Similar to the city, the University provides programing and services to promote community health and wellness. Although these facilities are not directly accessible to the public, they serve a significant portion of the community and mitigate stress to other city-managed facilities.

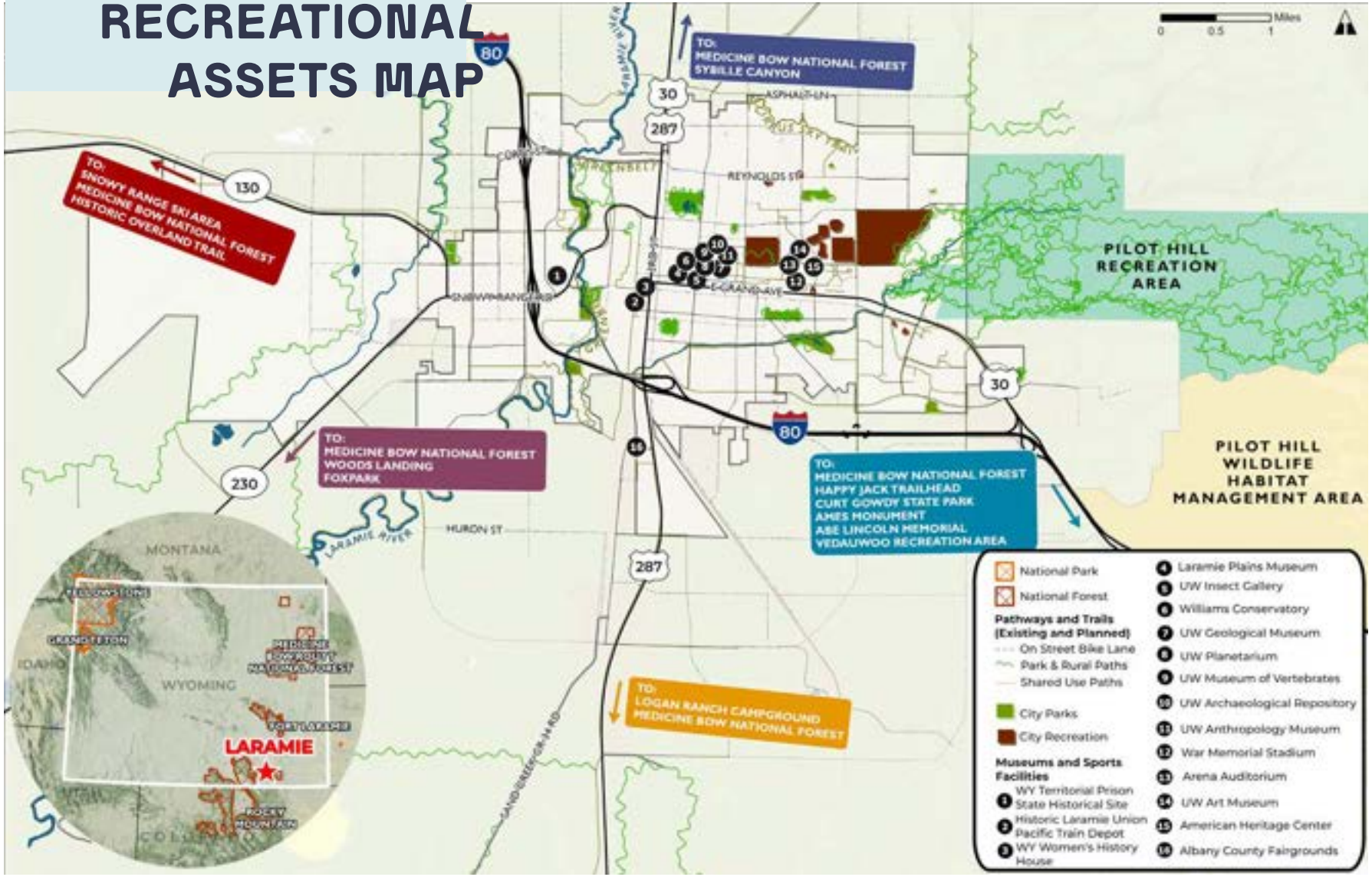
Many of the recreational assets that help define Laramie are located outside city limits but remain closely connected to the community; they are

proximate regional assets like Tie City/Happy Jack, Pilot Hill, Vedauwoo, the Snowy Range, Medicine Bow National Forest, Curt Gowdy, and Snowy Range Ski Area. The State and Federal resources within and near Laramie complete the Parks and Recreation picture of the community. The State Parks System operates the Wyoming Territorial Prison and nearby Curt Gowdy State Park. These amenities provide mountain biking, wildlife viewing, water sports, and historic resources for residents and visitors of Laramie. The National Forest Service also provides similar recreation opportunities along with a myriad of winter sports with the Medicine Bow National Forest and its many trailheads, including Tie City. The Forest Service also administers the Vedauwoo Recreation Area, providing world class climbing opportunities. Even though many of these amenities are outside the city's jurisdiction, they are central to Laramie's identity, and Forge Laramie seeks to help residents and visitors access these resources more safely, easily, and intentionally.



Recreation Center - Laramie Staff

LOCAL & REGIONAL RECREATIONAL ASSETS MAP



WHERE WE ARE HEADING

Laramie is well on its way to being a recreation destination in Wyoming. The internal park amenities and proximity to large-scale recreation destinations provide an abundance of opportunities to capitalize on the outdoor sector of the economy. Laramie has already taken strides to realize this potential, notably with the Pilot Hill Project that connects the city to 55,000 Acres of Forest Service land for hiking and mountain biking. Laramie can continue to grow its position regionally regarding outdoor recreation, further diversifying and expanding the local economy. However, the community will need to balance the advantages that come with being a regional recreation destination with the needs of current residents. Laramie seeks to implement a balanced approach that ensures regional recreation grows sustainably. Working with local partners, such as Bikenet, Laramie Audubon, and others is critical to achieving recreational goals.

Internally, Laramie has several opportunities to connect neighborhood parks to each other and citywide attractions through on- and off-street trails. This includes identifying missing segments for connections, determining if on- or off-street facilities are appropriate, and solidifying funding sources for potential improvements. Identifying this network will provide a basis for selecting future sites for new Parks and Recreation resources. The effort will be improved by coordinating future investments and shared uses with the University of Wyoming. Furthermore, the city will need to determine future use and programing of the Monolith and Hart (formerly known as Bath) Ranches, both purchased for water rights but contain the potential



Facilities at Pilot Hill - Laramie Staff

PILOT HILL

Pilot Hill is a large community conservation and recreation area east of Laramie that serves as a connection between the city and the Pole Mountain-Happy Jack area. The site, which includes roughly nine square miles of land, was acquired by Albany County from the Warren Livestock Company in 2020 through a land swap. Today, Pilot Hill benefits Laramie residents and visitors by:

Protecting land located above the Casper Aquifer, which is one of the primary source of drinking water for the community;

Providing access to outdoor recreation, including hiking, running, mountain biking, and horseback riding trails; and

Conserving large swaths of shortgrass prairie through the Wildlife Habitat Management Area.

for extensive recreation opportunities. This focus area of the comprehensive plan is anticipated to be supplemented by a larger update to the city's Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

GOAL 15 CATER RECREATION TO CURRENT AND FUTURE RESIDENTS

POLICY 15.A REGIONAL CONNECTIONS

Explore opportunities for public transportation to regional amenities such as Vedauwoo, Pilot Hill and Snowy Range Ski Area. Further explore how neighborhood connections and safer bike and pedestrian networks can enhance access to regional amenities.

POLICY 15.B BALANCED APPROACH

Balance Laramie's regional appeal with local needs. The access and availability of recreation opportunities in the vicinity of the city was a major factor cited during the community engagement on why residents loved the community. Maintaining this access and controlling overcrowding will serve the interests of local constituents. Ensure the local population is considered before marketing to regional and national audiences. Use targeted recreational marketing to bolster economic development opportunities.

POLICY 15.C ALL SEASONS RECREATION

Implement solutions for all seasons recreation. Promote a diverse range of facilities that can be used year-round. Recognize that nearby amenities, such as Snowy Range Ski Area, Tie City, and Happy Jack, cater to winter recreation and plan for these uses accordingly.

POLICY 15.D RANCH OPPORTUNITIES

Plan for future recreation opportunities at the Monolith and Hart Ranch, while preserving the water rights of the property. Emphasize passive uses that require minimal funding due to proximity and budgetary constraints. See also *"Policy 23.A Municipal Ranch Access" on page 76.*

POLICY 15.E LARAMIE RIVER

Enhance recreational opportunities, such as fishing and walking trails, and support wetland preservation along the Laramie River. Explore opportunities for land transfers between partner organizations and private property owners for river preservation.

POLICY 15.F RECREATION FOR ALL AGES

Program recreation for all ages in the community at the Recreation Center, Ice and Events Center, and local parks. Seek opportunities to expand offerings through arts, learning, and events. Provide opportunities for different age groups to recreate and explore nearby natural resources.

POLICY 15.G PARKS AND FACILITIES TO SUPPORT ALL USERS

Ensure parks and recreational facilities contain equipment and resources that accommodate all ages. Plan to revisit facilities in service areas at specific time horizons to deliver up-to-date and modern facilities for all users. See also *"Goal 10 Create Memorable Spaces for Everyone to Enjoy" on page 40.*

POLICY 15.H ENHANCED PROGRAMING

Explore future programing opportunities. This may include, but is not limited to arts, crafts, humanities, or cooking classes at recreational facilities.

GOAL 16 COORDINATE WITH KEY PARTNERS TO PROVIDE EXCEPTIONAL PARKS AND RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

POLICY 16.A SHARED FACILITIES

Seek opportunities to share recreation and park facilities with the University of Wyoming and Albany County School District. Clearly outline roles and responsibilities to minimize conflict. Outline opportunities for shared funding to provide amenities in a responsible manner. Determine which partners may rent equipment for the variety of recreation opportunities in the vicinity and coordinate so all recreation opportunities are addressed.

POLICY 16.B CONNECTED FACILITIES

Explore on- and off-street facilities to connect Parks and Recreation resources. Ensure partner organizations, such as the school district, higher education institutions, the Forest Service, and State Parks are engaged to create a complete network.

GOAL 17 EXPAND AND MAINTAIN OUR EXISTING RESOURCES

POLICY 17.A CONNECTED COMMUNITY

Plan for and create a connected, accessible, communitywide trail network that includes an interconnected loop trail around Laramie.

POLICY 17.B MASTER PLAN AND SERVICE AREAS

Continue to monitor the service area approach contained in the 2016 Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Draft targeted updates with a focus on implementation to ensure the Master Plan maintains its relevance. Consider consolidating service areas for broad implementation success.

POLICY 17.C PARK FEES (DEVELOPMENT)

Identify uses for Park Fees in development applications. Focus on service areas within the vicinity of the proposed development.

POLICY 17.D MULTIPLE USES AND USERS

Allow multiple users and uses in recreation facilities. Determine whether new parks can accommodate a variety of uses or if uses should be grouped in different locations throughout the city.

POLICY 17.E SUSTAINABLE REVENUE SOURCES

Secure sustainable funding sources to address park maintenance and facility expansion costs.



Freedom Has a Birthday - Laramie Staff

PARKS AND RECREATION IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

This plan sets out different types of actions to implement the city's community priorities, including Tier 1 (near-term) actions and Tier 2 (long-term) actions. To learn more, see "Action Plan" on page 130.

Goal 16: Cater Recreation to Current and Future Residents

- See Tier 1 action: "Keep Master Plans Current and Actionable" on page 131.
- See Tier 1 action: "Create a Shared Use Agreement for Parks and Recreation Facilities with Albany County Schools" on page 134.

PR.1: Evaluate use and capacity of regional recreation amenities. This will inform uses that may be able to be marketed and those that are close to capacity.

PR.2: Determine which regional amenities may be enhanced with scheduled connections to the city. This may include van pooling or buses to regional destinations for residents.

PR.3: Evaluate potential programmatic updates based on facility capability and community interests.

PR.4: Promote local businesses that offer recreation rentals, and explore opportunities to partner with rental businesses to expand Parks and Recreation program offerings.

PR.5: Coordinate citywide greenbelt, trail, shared-use-path, sidewalk, and on-street bicycle connections through the Major Street Plan and Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Goal 17: Coordinate with Key Partners to Provide Exceptional Parks and Recreation Opportunities

PR.6: Identify connections from neighborhoods that can enhance access to regional and nearby amenities. Use enhanced signage and wayfinding to accomplish this objective.

PR.7: Coordinate marketing of recreation opportunities (such as through the creation of pamphlets, web resources, and social media posts that catalogue recreation options) between local and regional partners.

Goal 18: Expand and Maintain our Existing Resources

PR.8: As part of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan update, create an updated GIS trails layer, formatted for use in the City's mapping systems and compatible with public-facing platforms such as Google Maps, to help ensure that trail routes, access points, and connections are accurately reflected in commonly-used navigation tools.



Downtown Clinic Garden Produce - Laramie Staff

PUBLIC HEALTH

LARAMIE TODAY

A thriving and successful city can be measured by the well-being of its community members. When public health investments are made in a community, they strengthen overall resilience and empower individuals to contribute their best to the social, civic, and economic fabric of the place they call home.

SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

The purpose of public health is to protect and improve the health of all people and their communities, with a focus on overall community well-being. Public health intersects with comprehensive planning by influencing the social determinants

SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH



of health, which are the conditions in which people are born, grow, work, play, live, worship, and age. The social determinants of health are frequently divided into five categories: economic stability, education access and quality, health care access and quality, neighborhood and the built environment, and social and community context. Together, these factors influence residents' ability to lead healthy, productive, and fulfilling lives.



Big Hollow Groundbreaking - BHP Photo

PUBLIC HEALTH IN ALBANY COUNTY

Research has shown that the social determinants of health influence health outcomes more than individual genetic factors or medical care alone. A community's health is a reflection of the access, safety, and quality of life for community members. Laramie benefits from access to educational resources, including multiple post-secondary educational institutions and a highly educated population, with more than half of residents ages 25 and older holding a bachelor's degree or higher. The city also boasts parks, trails, recreation opportunities, social gathering places, and limited public transit services that support active lifestyles and access to community resources for residents of all ages. However, economic and housing challenges may impact residents' overall well-being. Laramie's median household income is lower than state and national averages, and more than half of renters are cost burdened (spending more than 30% of their monthly income on housing). Healthcare access is also a concern in Albany County, where about 39% of adults report issues with accessing healthcare (which is higher than the state average of 33%)1. Together, these conditions can impact residents' ability to afford essential goods and services, while also influencing workforce participation and the local economy.

1 Wyoming Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), 2015-2019. https://health.wyo.gov/publichealth/chronic-disease-and-maternal-child-health-epidemiology-unit/brfss/

HEALTH OUTCOMES FOR ALBANY COUNTY ADULTS

The Wyoming Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) is an ongoing statewide telephone survey of adults. The survey's purpose is to gather information about health behaviors and factors that influence chronic disease, illness, injury, disability, and premature death. The information is summarized at the county level in Wyoming and can provide some insights into the overall health of those living in Albany County. For more information on the data and methods for the Wyoming BRFSS, please see the Wyoming Department of Health website.

According to the Wyoming Department of Health, the adult community members of Albany County experience the following health outcomes in their daily lives:

HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

- Maintaining a healthy lifestyle—including regular physical activity and good nutrition—provides benefits such as reducing blood pressure and improving sleep. Staying active can also help people live longer, have a better quality of life, and maintain independence as they age.
- Most adults in Albany County (69%) report that they are not living a healthy lifestyle. In this case, a healthy lifestyle was defined as not smoking, having leisure time outside of work for physical activity, and being at a healthy weight. This has increased slightly from the 2015-2019 survey time period in which about 63% of adults reported not living a healthy lifestyle. This is lower when compared to Wyoming overall, where the percentage of adults reporting that they are not living a healthy lifestyle is 81%.
- Around 14% of Albany County adults report not participating in any physical activities or exercise in the past month. This is lower than statewide, where 26% of adults report not participating in any physical activities.
- Approximately 87% of adults in Albany County report inadequate fruit and vegetables consumption.

MENTAL HEALTH

- In Albany County, 24% of adults report being told by a healthcare provider that they have a depressive disorder (which includes a diagnosis of depression, major depression, dysthymia, or minor depression). This is slightly higher than the statewide percentage of adults (21%).

ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE

- Access to healthcare is defined as the ability to have necessary medical services, which includes having a personal doctor, healthcare coverage, and being able to afford seeing a doctor if needed.
- Approximately 30% of adults report not having a personal doctor or healthcare provider. This has slightly improved from the 2015-2019 survey time period when 36% of adults reported that they did not have a doctor or healthcare provider. This is higher than the Wyoming average of 24%.
- Approximately 13% reported that they could not see a doctor due to cost (at least once in the past 12 months). The percentage of adults who couldn't afford to see a doctor has slightly increased since the 2015-2019 aggregate dataset (9%) and this is currently on par with the rest of the state (12%).

WHERE WE ARE HEADING

Public health is advanced by improving the social determinants of health across a community. Forge Laramie addresses these interconnected factors through policies that support economic stability and workforce development opportunities, promote active lifestyles through outdoor recreation, strengthen social connections through creative placemaking, encourage the creation of lower-cost housing, and provide clean drinking water through the protection of the Casper Aquifer. Together, these policies can strengthen residents' social and economic well-being and create a healthier Laramie for years to come.

GOAL 18 CONSIDER PUBLIC HEALTH IN CITY DECISION-MAKING TO IMPROVE COMMUNITY WELL-BEING

POLICY 18.A HEALTH CONSIDERATIONS FOR LAND USE REGULATIONS

Integrate public health considerations into city regulatory processes, such as development review and permitting. Maintain coordination between land use decisions and environmental health standards. Review and update the Unified Development Code to address regulatory barriers to health-related uses and identify new opportunities to improve public health.

- Health-related uses can include healthcare facilities such as clinics, behavioral health offices, mobile health units, and urgent care facilities; facilities that care for older adults, such as independent living, assisted living, memory care, skilled nursing facilities and nursing homes, residential care homes, and other types across the continuum of care; childcare operations; businesses that support physical activity and wellness; and uses that support local food system access.
- Opportunities to improve public health can include reducing pollution and improving air quality; ensuring consistent access to nutritious, fresh, and affordable food; improve access to healthcare; and reducing proximity to tobacco and vaping retailers (especially for youth, such as around schools and playgrounds).
- Code updates to improve the social determinants can be coordinated with other Goals, Policies, and Actions of Forge Laramie, particularly for the Parks and Recreation, Natural Resources, Hazard Resiliency, Transportation, and Housing sections.

POLICY 18.B HEALTH IN CITY PROCESSES

Evaluate established city processes to identify ways to incorporate public health. An example could include the annually updated Capital Investment Plan and budget processes, in which City Council sets goals to guide its work. Continue coordination between Community and Economic Development and Environmental Health on new development projects as appropriate.

POLICY 18.C PUBLIC INVESTMENTS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Coordinate the planning, funding, and construction of infrastructure improvements to provide co-benefits for public health, hazard resiliency, and other important dimensions of Forge Laramie. Align Laramie's efforts to address economic stability, resiliency, and emergency preparedness, with investments in active transportation, utilities, facilities, and social infrastructure.

GOAL 19 SERVE AS FACILITATOR AND CONVENER OF PUBLIC HEALTH STAKEHOLDERS

POLICY 19.A HEALTH STAKEHOLDERS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

When conducting community engagement, coordinate efforts with public health stakeholders, such as the Albany County Department of Family Services, Albany County Public Health, Intermountain Health, and other health-focused community organizations and agencies to ensure public health is considered as part of city-led initiatives.

POLICY 19.B ALBANY COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH COLLABORATION

Collaborate with Albany County Public Health's existing programs and initiatives to improve public health. Identify ways to incorporate Albany County's health priorities in Laramie's decision-making processes.

POLICY 19.C COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

Leveraging existing community resources and initiatives, such as the campaigns by Albany County Public Health, into existing Laramie community communications and social media. Advance existing efforts to support maternal and child services, clinical services for communicable diseases and immunizations, community prevention, and emergency preparedness.

POLICY 19.D CONNECTIONS TO RESOURCES

Foster partnerships with service providers, nonprofit organizations, and healthcare systems to expand access to in-home services, community-based care, and social support networks that reduce isolation and improve quality of life. Encourage the integration of age-friendly design principles into public spaces, facilities, and capital improvements to create inclusive environments for residents of all ages and abilities.

GOAL 20 TAKE AN ACTIVE ROLE IN IMPROVING PUBLIC HEALTH

POLICY 20.A HEALTHCARE ACCESS

Promote equitable access to healthcare facilities and services through coordinated land use, infrastructure, transportation, and technology investments. Support efforts to recruit and retain healthcare professionals and hospital support staff by addressing barriers related to housing affordability and childcare availability.

POLICY 20.B ACTIVE LIFESTYLES

Promote lifelong physical activity, safety, and overall well-being for Laramie community members of all ages and abilities by creating safe, accessible, and connected opportunities for parks, recreation, and active transportation. See also "Policy 12.A Active Transportation" on page 50.

POLICY 20.C MENTAL HEALTH

Support accessible and comprehensive mental health and substance use services through community-based facilities, telehealth opportunities, and other options to support mental health needs. Partner with Albany County Public Health to expand Laramie community members' access to preventive and behavioral health services.



Multifamily Housing - AVI

POLICY 20.D ACCESS TO NATURE

Protect, enhance, and expand access to natural resources, including parks, trails, and open spaces, which support physical health, mental well-being, and social connection for all community members of all ages and abilities.

POLICY 20.E YOUTH WELLNESS

Promote the well-being of youth by fostering safe, supportive, and enriching environments that enable all young people to thrive physically, mentally, and socially. Encourage access to quality education, nutritious food, healthcare, and recreational opportunities within neighborhoods and community facilities.

Support the development of safe routes to schools, parks, and community destinations through well-designed pedestrian, bicycle, and transit networks. In coordination with Placemaking efforts, encourage the creation of safe, substance-free spaces and activities for youth, and support community design and programming that reduces exposure to violence, environmental hazards, and other risk factors.

POLICY 20.F AGING IN PLACE

Support the comfort and ability of community members to age in place by promoting housing, neighborhood design, and community services that enable older adults to live safely, independently, and with dignity in their homes and communities. Encourage a diverse mix of housing types—including smaller homes, accessory dwelling units (ADUs), and accessible units—that meet the changing needs of an aging population.

POLICY 20.G COMPLETE NEIGHBORHOODS

Align land use, transportation, and public health efforts to ensure that neighborhoods are walkable, well-connected, and provide convenient access to essential services such as healthcare, grocery stores, parks, and social opportunities. Support transportation options that accommodate reduced mobility, including transit, paratransit, and safe pedestrian infrastructure.

POLICY 20.H HOME REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE FOR AGING IN PLACE

Partner with local senior organizations, housing nonprofits, and contractors to develop and implement a program that assists older adults with home modifications and ongoing maintenance. The program may include home assessments, financial assistance or grants for accessibility improvements (e.g., ramps, grab bars, bathroom retrofits), and support for routine maintenance tasks that enable seniors to remain safely in their homes. See also policy *"Policy 9.B Home Improvements, Rehabilitation, and Maintenance" on page 37.*

PUBLIC HEALTH IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

This plan sets out different types of actions to implement the city's community priorities, including Tier 1 (near-term) actions and Tier 2 (long-term) actions. To learn more, see "Action Plan" on page 130.

Goal 20: Consider Public Health in City Decision-Making to Improve Community Well-Being

- See Tier 1 action: "Update the Unified Development Code" on page 131.

PH.1: Establish a protocol for Environmental Health participation in development review.

Goal 21: Serve as Facilitator and Convener of Public Health Stakeholders

PH.2: Conduct a regular meeting between Laramie leadership and Albany County Public Health to identify ways that Laramie can best support their community efforts, and vice versa.

Goal 22: Take an Active Role in Improving Public Health

- See Tier 1 action: "Create a Shared Use Agreement for Parks and Recreation Facilities with Albany County Schools" on page 134.

PH.3: Create partnerships with organizations like the Eppson Center to achieve the healthy community vision, such as promoting age-inclusive spaces and reducing isolation in older population.

PH.4: Work with the Wyoming Business Council to implement the workplace resources for Laramie businesses from the Work Well Wyoming initiative from the Wyoming Department of Health. See also Workforce and the Local Economy.

PH.5: Consider proximity to sensitive receptors, such as hospitals and other health care facilities, schools, day cares, and other immobile populations, when reviewing new facilities and businesses handling hazardous waste.

PH.6: Conduct a health needs assessment for Laramie and connect to existing plans and processes, such as parks and recreation improvements.

PH.7: Host an annual health fair that brings mobile unit preventive and primary care health services to the Laramie community, either as a standalone event or in conjunction with other community-wide events.

PH.8: Encourage the Wyoming Department of Health and Albany County Public Health to establish rotating services or mobile clinics in Laramie.

PH.9: Work with the Albany County Public Health, with support from other County and State agencies, to gather community support and to obtain grants for a detox facility.

PH.10: Increase public awareness among property owners about how they can support accessibility on their adjacent sidewalks and driveways. Work with the Laramie Advisory Council on Disability, Board of Health and other interagency partners to improve physical access for differently abled people of all ages.

PH.11: With Albany County Mental Health (Interagency) Board, explore and develop community integrative programs to address mental health needs.

PH.12: Conduct a community mental health awareness campaign by sharing available services through regional providers and Albany County Public Health.

PH.13: Support partnerships and investments that expand reliable, affordable high-speed internet access for community members, particularly in areas with limited service or barriers to digital access, to improve connections for telehealth, health information, social services, education, employment, and emergency communications.

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Keep moving, there's more to see!





Ranch - BHP Photo

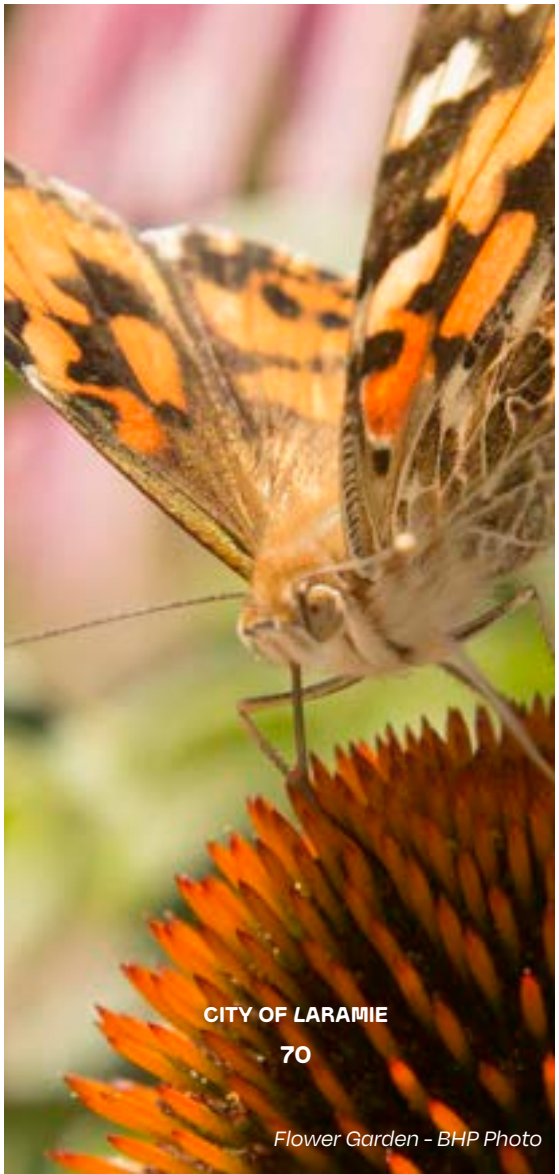
CHAPTER 5
STEWARD AND CONSERVE

INTRODUCTION

The city embraces its role as a dedicated steward of the natural environment, fostering a balance between the natural resources and ecologies that sustain the community and supporting necessary growth and development. By strengthening resilience to hazards and adapting thoughtfully to a changing climate, the city is building a future that is both enduring and responsive to evolving conditions.



Medicine Bow - B



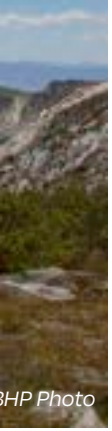
Flower Garden - BHP Photo





Greenbelt - BHP Photo




BHP Photo


Vedauwoo - BHP Photo


Laramie River Fishing - Adobe Stock


BHP Photo

NATURAL RESOURCES

LARAMIE TODAY

Laramie takes pride in being an outdoor town where people have access to a variety of recreation opportunities. Within the city, walkers, hikers, and bikers can enjoy the Greenbelt Trail along the Laramie River and excellent mountain biking trails in the protected Casper Aquifer / Pilot Hill area. Just outside the city, Vedauwoo and the Snowy Range offer residents and visitors alike the chance to fish, ski, camp, and wander amidst unparalleled mountain views. The health and continued viability of these areas and the ecological benefits they provide depend on the community's careful and intentional stewardship.

MUNICIPAL RANCHES

Following the city's acquisition of two historic ranches – Monolith Ranch in 1981 and Hart Ranch in 2022 – for water rights, there are additional opportunities to allow public access to part of these lands for active or passive recreation. The creation of new plans for the municipal ranch properties, specifically outlining how the city could provide public access to the properties while protecting the water resources, would be the next step in clarifying the future of Laramie's next great outdoor areas.

CASPER AQUIFER

The Casper Aquifer, located on the eastern edge of Laramie, is one of the primary sources of drinking water for city and county residents. For more than 20 years, the Casper Aquifer Protection Plan (CAPP), has provided guidance for balancing local development pressures with preservation of the aquifer. The city implements the recommendations of the CAPP in part through the application of the Aquifer Protection Overlay district, which includes additional land use, wastewater, and setback requirements.

WILDLIFE HABITAT

According to information provided by the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Laramie also "encompasses areas which provide habitat to a wide variety of terrestrial and aquatic species, including numerous Wyoming Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN)," including pronghorn, migratory birds, bats, swift fox, plus reptiles, native fish, and amphibians. Pronghorns' crucial winter range habitat borders eastern Laramie, and "numerous undeveloped, open prairie areas within city limits provide habitat for terrestrial wildlife. Spring Creek and the Laramie River provide habitat for both terrestrial and aquatic species, serve as movement corridors through Laramie for wildlife and fish, and provide fishing and other recreation opportunities for the public."

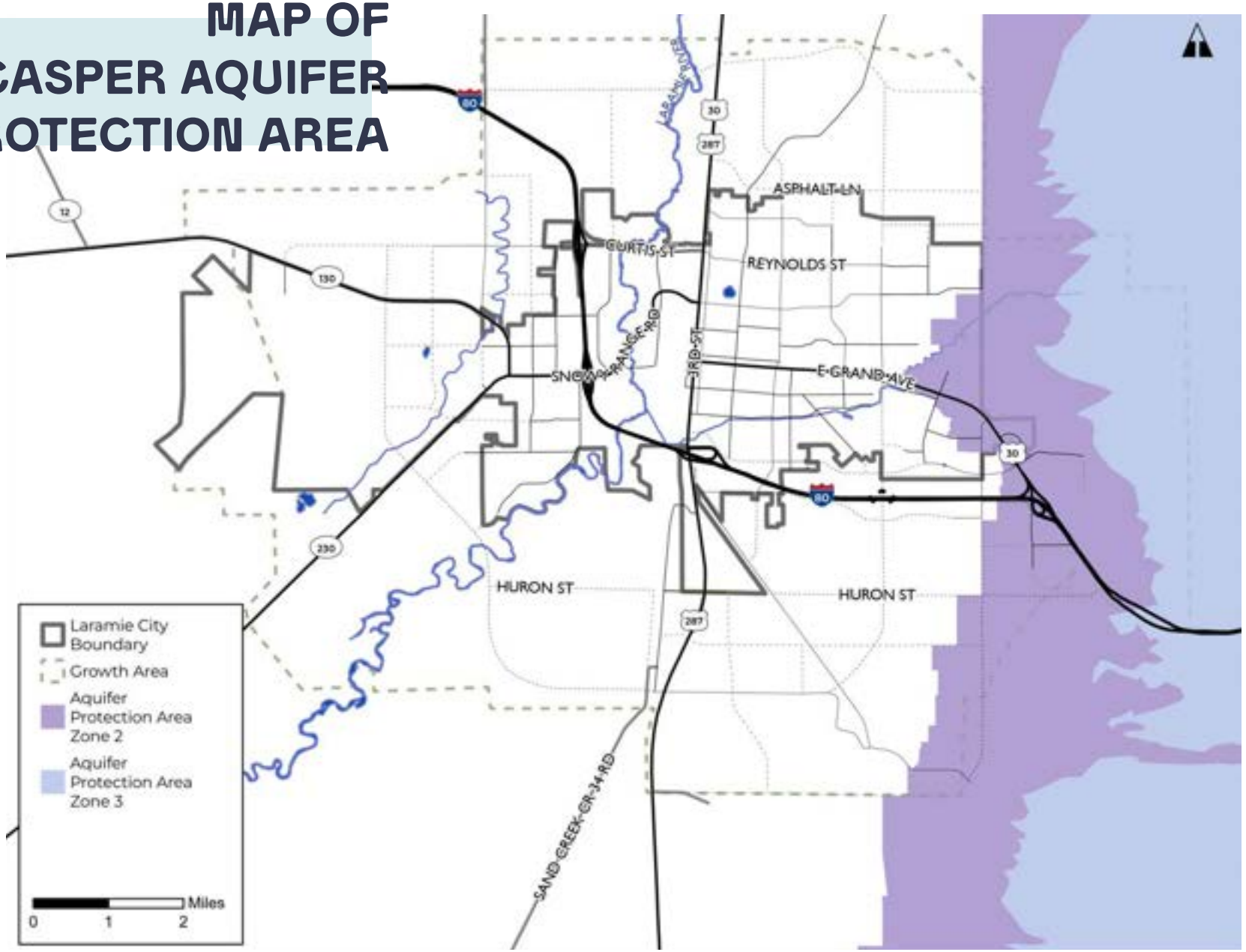


Trail Run - Laramie Staff

WATERWAYS

The Laramie River is the city and county's other significant source of drinking water and an important community asset that contributes to the city's scenic landscape while providing recreational opportunities for residents and visitors. Maintaining the health of the river is essential to supporting Laramie's high quality of life. The river is negatively affected by sedimentation from bank erosion and stormwater runoff related to construction activity. There have also been reports of cyanobacteria contamination, which produces harmful blue-green algae. While the condition of the Laramie River is often impacted by activities well outside city limits, there are opportunities to partner with local and state organizations to help safeguard and improve water quality in Laramie and beyond. Both the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality (WDEQ) and the Laramie Rivers Conservation District could prove important partners as the city works to ensure the health of the river and the biomes it supports. Additionally, Spring Creek supports wild fish habitat and a variety of other wildlife, and provides recreation and educational opportunities to the citizens of Laramie. It is located entirely within the city and feeds into the Laramie River. Safeguarding water quality and sediment loads in Spring Creek can improve conditions in the Laramie River.

MAP OF CASPER AQUIFER PROTECTION AREA



WHERE WE ARE HEADING

Open space is an important component of Laramie's natural resources, and community members regularly expressed a desire to preserve and maintain the area's key natural assets throughout the Forge Laramie process. Participants often cited the need to balance new development opportunities with the protection of Laramie's waterways, dark skies, natural areas, and rural surroundings. Laramie already has a notably compact physical form, with developed neighborhoods transitioning quickly to wide-open landscapes—particularly along the community's eastern and northern edges. Although this distinct development pattern was not created through a formal urban growth boundary, it has emerged over time through a combination of infrastructure limitations, soil and environmental conditions, water availability, land ownership, and other development constraints. As discussed throughout this plan, maintaining a compact development pattern and prioritizing appropriate infill can help preserve this distinctive edge, use existing infrastructure efficiently, and accommodate growth without unnecessary outward expansion.



Laramie River - BHP Photo

PARTNERING TO PRESERVE AND PROTECT NATURAL RESOURCES

The city's ability to achieve its goals related to environmental quality, conservation, preservation, and protection rely, in part, on successful collaboration with regional and state partners.

STATE AGENCIES

State agencies (such as the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality and Wyoming Game and Fish) can play a critical role in the development review process by examining and providing feedback on development proposals.

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

The city benefits from the expertise offered by the joint city-county Environmental Advisory Committee, whose purpose is to analyze environmental issues and offer advice and recommendations to the City Council and the Board of County Commissioners.

ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Partnerships with local environmental and non-profit organizations (such as the local Sierra Club chapter and the Laramie Rivers Conservation District) are critical for expanding knowledge and understanding of Laramie's natural resources and should continue to be strengthened through consistent partnership.

GOAL 21 PROVIDE THOUGHTFUL AND INTENTIONAL STEWARDSHIP TO LARAMIE'S KEY NATURAL ASSETS

POLICY 21.A SENSITIVE LANDS

Utilize mapped floodplains, wetlands, and the guidance of the Master Drainage Plan to protect sensitive lands (such as those prone to subsidence, flooding, or erosion) within the community, and apply existing standards and regulations to protect these lands in the event of development to ensure they are developed safely. If conditions of sensitive lands evolve, evaluate the need to update standards and regulations.

POLICY 21.B DARK SKIES

Consider the impact of outdoor lighting on nighttime dark skies when reviewing development proposals. Consult Dark Skies International's five principles for responsible outdoor lighting in comparison to current UDC regulations to see where improvements could be made.

POLICY 21.C WATERWAY PROTECTION

Protect water quality in Laramie's waterways and wetlands through regulatory tools that address construction and stormwater drainage in and around riparian areas.

POLICY 21.D NATIVE PLANTS

Promote the planting of native and drought-tolerant plant species in tandem with the preservation of mature and healthy plantings as part of development and redevelopment. Concurrently, eliminate invasive or non-native plants when and where possible.

POLICY 21.E CRITICAL HABITAT

Balance habitat preservation with development by minimizing and mitigating impacts to critical habitat and wildlife corridors. Provide regulations to ensure that public and private development projects are planned, designed, and maintained to protect ecological function while supporting responsible growth.

POLICY 21.F WILDLIFE CORRIDORS

Work with Wyoming Game and Fish and other partners to identify and preserve critical wildlife transit corridors on land and along Laramie's waterways.

GOAL 22 LEVERAGE PARTNERSHIPS WITH ENVIRONMENTAL AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS TO SUPPORT A THRIVING NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

POLICY 22.A COLLABORATE WITH GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT

Continue collaboration with Wyoming Game and Fish Department, considering new ways of working together on shared goals and objectives.

POLICY 22.B CITY-COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE

Continue to support and staff the Environmental Committee, and monitor the issues they address along with their recommended solutions.



Downtown Clinic Garden - Laramie Staff

POLICY 22.C OTHER AGENCIES OR ORGANIZATIONS

Identify other partners working on responsible access and stewardship, and determine ways to implement positive partnerships and information sharing. The University of Wyoming has both active environmental groups, and academic programs where students engage directly to remediate environmental issues such as streambank erosion and replanting.

GOAL 23 CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE PUBLIC OPEN LANDS AND NATURAL AREAS

POLICY 23.A MUNICIPAL RANCH ACCESS

Establish a plan for municipal ranch properties, informed by community input, that outlines a path to providing public access to recreational open spaces while continuing to protect the water resources of the ranches from contamination.

POLICY 23.B CASPER AQUIFER PROTECTION

Periodically review the Casper Aquifer Protection Plan and Overlay to ensure they are accomplishing their objectives. Update as necessary to respond to changes in circumstance or conditions.

POLICY 23.C WATERWAY ACCESS AND USE

Continue to improve public access to Spring Creek and the Laramie River. Expand education and promotion of existing assets, such as greenbelt trails and shared use paths. Explore opportunities to expand or add community fisheries, such as dredging LaBonte Lake to support fish populations.

POLICY 23.D UNDEVELOPED GROWTH AREAS

Where possible, maintain areas that are designated as Agriculture or Natural Areas/Parks/Open Space in the Laramie Growth Area Plan as undeveloped open space to ensure the rural atmosphere of this area can be preserved. Maintaining undeveloped land within these areas will help to keep the small town, independent feel while simultaneously discouraging sprawl.

POLICY 23.E MAINTENANCE OF EXISTING OPEN SPACE

Plan for long-term maintenance of publicly accessible public lands, so their health and viability is preserved over the long-term, providing enjoyment to current and future residents of the community.

GOAL 24 ENVIRONMENTALLY-SENSITIVE TOURISM

POLICY 24.A RESPONSIBLE TOURISM

Ensure that the emphasis on expanding tourism in Laramie does not compromise the health or enjoyment of existing natural areas due to overuse. Devise strategies to protect areas that may be at risk of decline owing to increased tourism.

POLICY 24.B ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

In partnership with Visit Laramie, assess the potential of economic development to diminish or compromise the quality or quantity of key natural assets in Laramie.



Medicine Bow Camping - Adobe Stock

NATURAL RESOURCES IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

This plan sets out different types of actions to implement the city's community priorities, including Tier 1 (near-term) actions and Tier 2 (long-term) actions. To learn more, see "Action Plan" on page 130.

Goal 23: Provide Thoughtful and Intentional Stewardship of Laramie's Key Natural Assets

- See Tier 1 action: "Map Conservation Priorities in Laramie and Albany County" on page 134.
- See Tier 1 action: "Provide Educational Materials on the Benefits of Native and Xeric Landscapes" on page 134.

NR.1: Explore opportunities to provide "out of the box" planting designs for xeric gardeners that are pre-approved for compliance with the Unified Development Code.

NR.2: Review and update regulations related to development in and near the Casper Aquifer and Laramie River floodplain to ensure they align with recent studies and adequately protect the health and viability of these areas.

NR.3: Evaluate potential impacts from high-intensity or water-intensive land uses (such as data centers) and update the regulations as necessary to protect the Casper Aquifer and Laramie River floodplain.

Goal 24: Leverage Partnerships with Environmental Agencies and Organizations to Support a Thriving Natural Environment

NR.4: Identify potential partners and establish relationships to support natural resource protection.

Goal 25: Continue to Maintain and Enhance Public Open Lands and Natural Areas

- See Tier 1 action: "Keep Master Plans Current and Actionable" on page 131.

NR.5: Continue to implement the recommendations of the Casper Aquifer Protection Plan.

NR.6: Establish a Natural Resources Plan for city open space that details actions needed for maintenance, who is responsible for accomplishing those actions, and how the maintenance is to be funded.

Goal 26: Promote Environmentally-Sensitive Tourism

NR.7: Monitor use of existing natural assets and encroachment impacts from nearby development to determine if increased access is compromising the long-term health or viability of the assets.



4th Street Flooding - BHP Photo

HAZARD RESILIENCY

LARAMIE TODAY

The city worked with Albany and Carbon Counties and other local municipal partners in the development of the 2025 *Wyoming Region 3 Hazard Mitigation Plan*, participating in work sessions, a risk assessment workshop, and a mitigation assessment workshop. This document is updated approximately every five years. The resulting plan considers that the following hazards exist for Albany County, and assigns a risk level to certain hazards as shown in Table 5.1.

TABLE 5.1: LARAMIE HAZARD RISK (2025)

HAZARD	RISK LEVEL
Avalanche	N/A
Drought	High
Earthquake	Low
Flood / Dam, Dike or Levee Incident	Moderate
Geologic Hazards (landslide, land or mine subsidence, expansive soil)	High
Severe Thunderstorm (lightning, hail)	Moderate
Tornado / Wind / Windblown Deposits	High
Wildfire	Moderate
Winter Storm	High

Source: 2025 Wyoming Region 3 Hazard Mitigation Plan

While the plan acknowledges several high-risk hazards, actual federally-declared disaster events affecting Laramie have been few. Aside from COVID-19, the most recent federal disaster in Albany County was a severe storm declaration in July 2015. The most recent fire management assistance declaration was in 2020. By contrast, drought is the exception, having been a near-constant condition, with USDA declarations in 2012, 2013, and 2018, then every year starting in 2018 up through 2024 (USDA declarations primarily support farmers and ranchers who have lost production due to drought conditions. These declarations typically do not have widespread direct impact for most citizens not engaged in agricultural activities). Laramie has generally been fortunate in avoiding recent, large-scale disasters, but evolving climate and intensifying storms, heat, and drought mean the risk for such events is likely to increase over time.

The 2025 Plan focuses on mitigation actions, which it explains as "the use of long- and short-term strategies to reduce or alleviate the loss of life, personal injury, and property damage that can result from a disaster. It involves methods such as planning, policy changes, programs, projects, and other actions that can mitigate the impacts of hazards." The city has mitigation activities in progress since the 2020 version of the plan, including public education campaigns and stormwater runoff mitigation efforts. These areas are also emphasized in the updated plan, along with flood hazard mitigation efforts, updates to outdoor warning sirens, hazard mapping efforts, and plans for water storage.



Fire Engine - Laramie Staff

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PARTNERS

Laramie's efforts to prepare for and mitigate damage caused by hazardous are supported by state and local agencies with similar goals. Organizations working to build resiliency throughout Albany County include but are not limited to:

Albany County Emergency Management is the primary entity that plans for, coordinates, offers training, and supports incident response to help Albany County prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters.

Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) is a group of trained volunteers whose members help with community service, emergency planning, and support during emergencies.

Wyoming Homeland Security helps administer the National Flood Insurance Program (while the city administers and enforces local floodplain regulations), and also supports local jurisdictions in their response to emergency incidents. The state office also administers grants and provides training and education materials.

Mutual Aid Agreements are used to establish the terms for sharing resources, personnel, and equipment during emergencies. The city has mutual aid agreements in place with Albany for fire protection services and the University of Wyoming for policy and fire services.

WHERE WE ARE HEADING

Laramie plays a supporting role in emergency management, with Albany County taking the lead in this area of operations. In this capacity, the role of the city is to:

- **Participate:** The city will continue to participate in sessions aimed at emergency response planning, implementing mitigation actions, monitoring the evolution of hazard risks, and conducting tabletop, functional, or full-scale disaster response exercises.
- **Respond:** Every disaster response begins locally, with first responders being the first on the scene. If a response extends past the first hours or days, city staff and leadership would likely also play a role in staffing an emergency operations center.
- **Collaborate**: Share information and physical and human resources as available in the event of a longer duration event.

GOAL 25 MITIGATE THE RISK AND EFFECTS OF NATURAL OR HUMAN-CAUSED HAZARDS ON LIFE, PROPERTY, AND INFRASTRUCTURE

POLICY 25.A PUBLIC EDUCATION

Continue efforts to make citizens aware of disaster risks, and encourage proactive public preparedness. Education efforts should also extend to city elected officials and decision-makers, not only to increase their general awareness, but also so they can consider the funds and funding sources needed to accomplish mitigation actions.

POLICY 25.B UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE REVIEW

Ensure that the Unified Development Code and Engineering Standards support mitigation efforts. This can include limitations on development in hazard zones (such as floodplains, or adjacent to wildland urban interface (WUI) areas), measures to limit sedimentation and erosion, water conservation, and low impact development measures to reduce stormwater runoff.

POLICY 25.C FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT

Review floodplain management regulations, last updated in 2018, to determine if they are in need of revision to continue adequately managing the risk to property or structures that have been or may be established in the floodplain. Consider how green infrastructure stormwater designs can support reduction of flood hazards.



Pilot Hill View - Adobe Stock

POLICY 25.D WATER CONSERVATION

Consider implementation of measures aimed at water conservation to mitigate excessive water use during drought conditions.

POLICY 25.E EROSION CONTROL

Pursue erosion and dust control measures. Arid land – especially if not covered in plantings – is subject to increased erosion, and thus contributes to additional sedimentation in waterways and a decline in air quality.

POLICY 25.F EMERGENCY WARNING SIRENS

Install additional outdoor warning sirens in populated, tornado-prone areas. Albany County Emergency Management Agency (ACEMA) will lead the procurement aspect of this effort, with the expectation that the city will collaborate with the vendor to install, test, and maintain the sirens.

POLICY 25.G FLOOD HAZARD PROTECTION

Direct new development away from Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)-mapped Special Flood Hazard Areas and other areas with documented flood risks, where practicable. In areas where development is permitted, encourage site design and mitigation measures that reduce flood risks and comply with applicable floodplain regulations.

POLICY 25.H GEOLOGIC HAZARDS

Increase awareness of and discourage development in areas with documented geologic hazards, such as subsidence or expansive soils.

POLICY 25.I EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS

Strengthen regulations designed to mitigate the impacts of severe weather events, such as requiring snow storage plans and/or shade installation as part of new developments.

POLICY 25.J WILDFIRE MITIGATION

Educate the community about mitigation measures that can be taken to reduce the risk of fire damage to private property. Encourage the use of defensible space, resilient building materials, and other fire adaptive strategies. Expand knowledge of wildland urban interface (WUI) and mitigation measures specific to such areas.

GOAL 26 FOSTER COOPERATION ON HAZARD MANAGEMENT ISSUES

POLICY 26.A REGIONAL HAZARD MITIGATION

Continue to collaborate with Albany County and other regional partners to implement the recommendations of the *Wyoming Region 3 Hazard Mitigation Plan*.

POLICY 26.B EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Maintain clear channels of communication for communicating with residents, business owners, and visitors during emergency situations.

POLICY 26.C EMERGENCY SERVICE OPERATIONS

Ensure that emergency service responders have the necessary staff, facilities, equipment, training, and resources required to provide the city with the highest possible level of public safety services. Continue to seek opportunities for efficiency through regional collaboration on training, service provision, and other special initiatives.



Nov 2025 - Brush Fire - Laramie Staff

GOAL 27 MONITOR CLIMATE-RELATED EVOLUTION OF HAZARD RISKS

POLICY 27.A CONSIDER EVOLVING HAZARD RISKS

Monitor evolving risk profile, and consider mitigation and response strategies to changes in disaster risk. As the climate continues changing, the hazard risks to which the city may be exposed could also change.

POLICY 27.B PROLONGED HEAT EVENT

Considering the city's resources and capacity to respond to such an event. While not listed as an existing risk, heat events are becoming more common nationwide, and areas with increasing aridification are at increasing risk.

HAZARD RESILIENCY IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

This plan sets out different types of actions to implement the city's community priorities, including Tier 1 (near-term) actions and Tier 2 (long-term) actions. To learn more, see "Taking Action" on page 129.

Goal 27: Mitigate the Risk and Effects of Natural or Human-Caused Hazards on Life, Property, and Infrastructure

HR.1: Continue public education efforts related to the most likely hazards that could impact Laramie. Education should emphasize awareness and preparedness for residents of the community.

HR.2: Regularly review and update city dust control standards for bare ground and construction sites to complement Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality air quality requirements. Identify the city's responsibilities and enforcement mechanisms, and encourage the use of groundcover plantings to reduce erosion and airborne dust.

HR.3: Identify and map locally documented drainage concerns and critical watercourse conveyance areas that may not be reflected in FEMA floodplain maps.

HR.4: Work with the Albany County Emergency Management Department on the installation, testing, and maintenance of warning sirens.

Goal 28: Foster Cooperation on Hazard Mitigation Issues

HR.5: Where federal, state, or county funds are not available to accomplish mitigation actions, identify potential funding sources to enable continuing implementation of city-specific mitigation actions.

HR.6: Maintain regular contact with emergency response partners outside of emergency response events.

HR.7: Participate in tabletop and functional exercises as the opportunity arises to support hazard response preparedness.

HR.8: Ensure communication channels and equipment are functional and available for use in the event of a larger-scale incident.

HR.9: Monitor staffing and training of emergency responders. Identify evolving needs for staffing, training, and equipment, and determine the source for funds to meet these needs.

Goal 29: Monitor Climate-Related Evolution of Hazard Risks

HR.10: Work with partners to monitor how changing climate impacts existing and potentially new hazards.

HR.11: Assess community resources to respond to a prolonged heat event, including locations to establish shelters and cooling centers, and agreements for use of the facilities with property owners. (Cooling centers may be established in the same fire department locations that have been identified for warming centers.)



CHAPTER 6
SERVE AND COLLABORATE

INTRODUCTION

To support growth and prosperity, Laramie will continue to provide fiscally-efficient public services, facilities, and infrastructure, as well as transparent governance. These efforts will focus on directing resources in a strategic manner that supports housing development, business expansion and development, as well as meeting the health and safety needs of the community.



Volunteer Flyer - B


Tree Height - BHP Photo




Salamander Saturday - BHP Photo





BHP Photo

Community Clean-up - BHP Photo



City Springs Wellfield - BHP Photo



Piping - BHP Photo

PUBLIC UTILITIES AND SERVICES

LARAMIE TODAY

PUBLIC SERVICES

Laramie is governed under a Council-Manager System. The City Manager acts as the executive of the municipal government but serves under the direction of the City Council who, in turn, serve at the will of the citizens of Laramie. The city is divided into three wards with three city council members from each ward who serve overlapping four-year terms. The mayor and vice mayor are then selected from this group by City Council with two-year terms. The City Council acts on behalf of the residents who elected them to set goals, adopt the budget, and dictate the general direction of the public services that are provided in the community. This direction is conveyed to the City Manager who is responsible for implementing the will of the people.

The City Manager carries out these duties through the variety of city departments. There are 10 departments within the City of Laramie Organization, including: the City Attorney's office, the City Clerk's Office, Community and Economic Development, Fire, Human Resources, Parks and Recreation, Police, Public Works, and Financial Services, which includes the Deputy Treasurer's and Controller's Office. Most of these departments operate out of City Hall, the Historic Carnegie Library, and the Police Station located on the 400 block between Grand and Ivinson Avenues. In addition to the primary services downtown, the city also operates the Laramie Municipal Operations North Campus at 4374 North 3rd Street. This facility opened in 2022 and houses Public Works. The breadth of services the city provides falls under the umbrella of the ten departments and ensures the needs of the public are met. This ranges from the Policy and Fire Departments' mission of preserving life and property to the Community and Economic Development Department's focus on fostering growth and development. City services are funded through a variety of revenue streams, as depicted in *"City of Laramie Revenue Sources" on page 21*.

PUBLIC UTILITIES

The city operates the majority of public utilities in the community; namely water, wastewater, stormwater, and solid waste services. Other utilities, such as electricity, gas, and internet, are provided through franchise agreements with private entities. A variety of internet service providers exist in Laramie while the primary gas provider is Black Hills Energy and primary electric provider is Rocky Mountain Power. In general, the rates in Laramie fall within the midpoint of costs in the State of Wyoming.

The city uses a Capital Investment and Construction Plan to guide local decisions on infrastructure improvements to ensure projects are anticipated and fiscally sound. Infrastructure investments are assessed based on support for community goals, planning across multiple departments, data-driven prioritization, and life-cycle planning. This asset management approach guides the city to anticipate operational costs and plan for repairs prior to infrastructure nearing failure.

Public utilities are funded through a variety of sources that vary by service and project type. Water, wastewater, and solid waste services are funded through their respective enterprise funds, which generate revenue primarily through customer fees to support ongoing operations, maintenance, and system expansion. Street maintenance and other transportation projects rely on General Fund and other funding sources, such as the Specific Purpose Tax (6th Penny) which must be used for designated capital construction projects. Across these service areas, the city must balance ongoing operations and maintenance needs, rehabilitation and replacement of aging infrastructure, and investments in new or expanded facilities to accommodate growth.

Maintaining and strategically allocating diverse funding sources will help the city provide reliable public services while supporting long-term fiscal sustainability.

WHERE WE ARE HEADING

As public service needs evolve, Laramie must continue providing efficient, consistent, and high-quality services, while navigating budget constraints. Building on its history of successful infrastructure planning and management, the city will seek innovative approaches to service delivery and capital improvement investments. Addressing aging infrastructure, supporting economic development, and spurring housing construction will require strategic use of existing revenues and exploration of new funding mechanisms. By leveraging technology, partnerships, and creative financing strategies, Laramie can maintain reliable public utilities and services while preparing for future needs.

GOAL 28 COORDINATE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESSES ACROSS DEPARTMENTS

POLICY 28.A ONE-STOP SHOP

Acknowledge the potential that citizens may visit city offices without knowing which department they need to work with. Respond by ensuring each department involved in the development review process can confidently and consistently redirect citizens to the correct point of contact. The city will strive to coordinate internally to solve community needs.

POLICY 28.B CONSISTENT MESSAGING

Maintain consistent messaging across departments to ensure applicants and the general public receive clear and reliable guidance throughout the development review process. This will require ongoing coordination between the Planning, Code Administration, Engineering, and other city divisions involved in the development review process.

GOAL 29 USE TECHNOLOGY TO SUPPLEMENT THE PROVISION OF SERVICES

POLICY 29.A SOCIAL MEDIA ALERTS

Engage the public with a variety of social media platforms to disseminate information. This includes not only emergency alert notifications, but posts on pertinent public meetings, board and commission openings, and information to keep the community involved.

POLICY 29.B AUTOMATE SERVICES WHERE NECESSARY

Incorporate tools to automate services to supplement the provision of in-person services. This includes the use of online forms to pose concerns, the use of AI to help residents find solutions faster, and the posting of information through online databases such as interactive maps.

POLICY 29.C ONLINE PERMITTING SYSTEMS

Continue to use and improve Laramie Civic Access for all licenses, permits, and plans. The platform has made application processes more convenient for the general population. Laramie will monitor the system and make improvements as needed.

GOAL 30 MAINTAIN FISCALLY RESPONSIBLE INVESTMENT IN PUBLIC UTILITIES

POLICY 30.A CAPITAL INVESTMENT AND CONSTRUCTION PLAN

Continue the use of the Capital Investment and Construction Plan as a guide for infrastructure investments. Revisit the document on the continuous two-year cycle to maintain services and document asset management.

POLICY 30.B COORDINATED INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS

Increase construction efficiency by minimizing the number and scale of excavations required to install public infrastructure. This includes coordinating city capital improvement projects (such as water, wastewater, stormwater, and street projects) as well as coordinating with franchise utility providers.

POLICY 30.C SPECIFIC PURPOSE TAX PROJECTS

Catalogue progress and success on specific purpose tax measures to plan for future requests. Identify growth areas and future projects for specific purpose measures before previous efforts are completed to anticipate ballot initiatives.

POLICY 30.D DEVELOPMENT IMPACT FEES

Regularly review and update development impact fees and water/wastewater connection fees to ensure new developments are paying for the cost of expanding services.

POLICY 30.E TAX INCREMENT FINANCING

Continue to work with the development community on infrastructure improvements. This may include but is not limited to tax increment financing through urban renewal and infrastructure reimbursement agreements.

POLICY 30.F LOCAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS

Explore the establishment of local improvement districts in areas where localized infrastructure improvements may be warranted due to the presence of unpaved roads, unaddressed stormwater impacts, capacity limitations, or aging water and sewer systems.

POLICY 30.G ENTERPRISE SERVICES

Maintain fiscally responsible enterprise funds by establishing user fees that adequately support ongoing operations, maintenance, and system improvements needed to accommodate future growth.

POLICY 30.H TRANSPARENCY IN INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS

Build public understanding of and support for infrastructure investments, such as those established in the *Capital Investment and Construction Plan*, by maintaining open channels of communication and information sharing between city staff and community members.



Power Station - Clarion

PUBLIC UTILITIES AND SERVICES IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

This plan sets out different types of actions to implement the city's community priorities, including Tier 1 (near-term) actions and Tier 2 (long-term) actions. To learn more, see "Taking Action" on page 129.

Goal 30: Coordinate Development Review Processes Across Departments

- See Tier 1 action: "Create a New Development Services Advocate Position" on page 132.
- See Tier 1 action: "Prepare "Roadmaps" for Prospective Businesses to Assist with Land Development Process" on page 134.

PUS.1: Provide cross-training between departments and identify opportunities for collaboration and streamlining services.

PUS.2: Create a citywide "Service Excellence Standard" and training program that defines expectations for responsiveness, communication, and accountability across all departments, paired with internal recognition for high-performing staff and teams.

Goal 31: Use Technology to Supplement the Provision of Services

- See Tier 1 action: "Improve City Customer Service Call System" on page 134.

PUS.3: Establish a real-time service feedback loop (e.g., post-interaction text/email surveys or QR codes) to capture immediate input on customer experience and allow for rapid response and continuous improvement.

PUS.4: Working across city departments as relevant, develop and implement strategies to address perceived or real public service response shortfalls.

Goal 32: Maintain Fiscally Responsible Investment in Public Utilities

- See Tier 1 action: "Keep Master Plans Current and Actionable" on page 131.
- See Tier 1 action: "Construct Infrastructure Improvements to Support Economic and Housing Development" on page 132

PUS.5: *Hold public meetings to review and discuss proposed Specific Purpose Tax projects as they are considered, with an emphasis on explaining how these projects are selected, funded, and the specific work to be completed.*



Young Professionals Volunteer Fair - BHP Photo

GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATIONS

LARAMIE TODAY

Laramie's small town character and close-knit feel is created in part by community members who actively participate in public meetings and community events. In the spirit of maintaining two-way communication with community members, the city strives to foster collaborative, transparent decision-making and engaging community input opportunities. Locally, this requires the city to attract and retain talented employees, listen and respond to public feedback, and prioritize accountability, efficiency, and innovation in city services and programs. At the regional scale, this means relying on open dialogue and collaborative problem-solving to address issues throughout Albany County – with partner agencies, nonprofit organizations, businesses, and educational institutions.

Soliciting input from a range of voices is necessary to identify issues, opportunities, and solutions to the community's problems. However, the timing of public hearings and awareness of engagement opportunities continue to act as barriers to participation. Ensuring that all community members are effectively represented by the city and have meaningful opportunities to contribute to the planning and decision-making process is important to build trust, and to strengthen the relationship between residents, business owners, and the city.

In addition to the essential services provided by the city, there are also a variety of volunteer boards and commissions that influence how the local government functions. These boards and commissions provide an excellent way for citizens to be informed and positively impact city services.

Technology continues to change the way people interact with their local government, and the variety of communication options necessary to engage diverse voices continues to grow. The city will continue to review and update their modes of engagement as new outreach opportunities arise, taking steps to find the right combination of in-person and virtual engagement opportunities to reach as many constituents as possible.

CITY BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

The city maintains 18 boards and commissions that provide communication between City Council, city departments, and the community. These include:

Albany County Tourism Joint Powers Board

Albany County Transportation Authority

Building and Fire Code Board of Appeals

City Manager's Budget Advisory Committee

Civil Service Commission

Downtown Development Authority

Environmental Advisory Committee

Human Rights and Relations Commission

Laramie Advisory Commission on Disabilities

Laramie Police Advisory Board

Laramie Regional Airport Joint Powers Board

Laramie Youth Council

Ranch Advisory Committee

Parks, Tree, and Recreation Advisory Board

Planning Commission/Board of Adjustment

Traffic Safety Commission

Urban Renewal Agency

Urban Systems Advisory Committee

WHERE WE ARE HEADING

Civic engagement is a valued part of Laramie's decision-making process that maximizes local capacity by building upon varied perspectives. Two-way communication sharing fosters trust between community members and city government and furthers Laramie's values of transparency, accountability, and integrity. Looking ahead, the city will continue to foster opportunities for meaningful collaboration and communication with residents, business owners, nonprofit organizations, and partner agencies in pursuit of achieving a brighter future.

GOAL 31 FOSTER COLLABORATION ON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ISSUES

POLICY 31.A COORDINATED PLANNING EFFORTS

Actively participate in countywide, regional, and state-wide policy-setting related to municipal issues— such as land use, utilities, transportation, housing, and environmental management— that cross jurisdictional boundaries.

POLICY 31.B TOWN-GOWN RELATIONSHIP

Continue to develop and grow partnerships between the city and local education institutions (University of Wyoming, Laramie County Community College, and WyoTech) to ensure efficient use of resources and identify opportunities to attract and retain young people in Laramie.

POLICY 31.C COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Foster partnerships between the city and other local and regional organizations to share information, use resources efficiently, avoid duplication of efforts, and incorporate best practices.

POLICY 31.D SERVICE PROVIDERS

Work with and promote coordination among service providers in needs assessment, facility siting, operations, and other matters to ensure delivery of effective and efficient services.

GOAL 32 BUILD COMMUNITY TRUST THROUGH ACCOUNTABLE AND TRANSPARENT GOVERNANCE

POLICY 32.A TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION

Respond to changes in technology by testing new tools as they arise and incorporating devices and software that improve access to public hearings and government communications into the city's overall approach to information sharing. See also *"Goal 29 Use Technology to Supplement the Provision of Services" on page 87.*

POLICY 32.B TRADITIONAL INFORMATION SHARING

Maintain traditional, non-digital avenues of information sharing and outreach, such as paper questionnaires and printed announcements, that are accessible to community members of all ages and ability levels.

POLICY 32.C GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY

Adopt and implement practices and systems that are open and accountable to the public. Provide approachable platforms for the community to engage with city staff. Assist community members in understanding city processes, with an emphasis on transparency in budget setting and decision-making processes.

GOAL 33 CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN CITY DECISION-MAKING

POLICY 33.A PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT METHODS

Employ a variety of public engagement methods (such as open houses, pop-up activities, online questionnaires, and interactive mapping tools) to involve all members of the community, including harder-to-reach populations, in city projects. Continuously evaluate public engagement methods to determine if new options are needed to meet community needs.

POLICY 33.B PUBLIC NOTICE AND HEARINGS

Continuously evaluate public notice requirements to verify that residents and property owners are properly notified of upcoming public hearings. Ensure that the city's public notice and hearing procedures go above and beyond the provisions established by Wyoming Statutes.

POLICY 33.C PUBLIC COMMENT

Educate community members on the types of public engagement opportunities provided by the city. Clarify how public input will be considered in different types of development review decisions.

POLICY 33.D CITY BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Provide a range of opportunities for community members to volunteer for and learn about the City of Laramie organization. Encourage and appoint volunteers with different backgrounds and life experiences to serve on the city's boards, committees, commissions, and other outreach teams.

POLICY 33.E YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

Explore opportunities for engaging and actively soliciting input from youth in local government. Explore and promote additional opportunities to work with Albany County School District, University of Wyoming, Laramie County Community College, and WyoTech on special projects.



Fire Pals - BHP Photo

GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATIONS IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

This plan sets out different types of actions to implement the city's community priorities, including Tier 1 (near-term) actions and Tier 2 (long-term) actions. To learn more, see "Taking Action" on page 129.

Goal 33: Foster Collaboration of Comprehensive Plan Issues

GC.1: Continue to work with the University of Wyoming on land disposal, transfer, and acquisition opportunities.

GC.2: Establish a formal process to monitor Comprehensive Plan implementation that outlines review frequency and includes updates to boards and commissions.

GC.3: Work with local service providers to catalog the full range of services provided by Laramie and Albany County providers.

Goal 34: Build Community Trust through Accountable and Transparent Governance

GC.4: Identify opportunities and allocate funding for continuing education and training existing City employees on how to use new technology as it relates to their jobs.

GC.5: Create a civic engagement program to educate the community on the roles and responsibilities of each department, the powers of elected officials, and ways to participate in public processes.

Goal 35: Create Opportunities for Community Participation in City Decision-Making

GC.6: Conduct an audit of recent city-led engagement efforts to determine which public engagement approaches are most effective in Laramie.

GC.7: Continue to partner with local educational institutions to identify opportunities for mutually-beneficial student engagement in city planning efforts (such as through collegiate capstone projects).



Laramie Neighborhood - Adobe Stock

CHAPTER 7
FUTURE *LAND* USE AND CHARACTER FRAMEWORK

INTRODUCTION

Laramie's Future Land Use and Character Framework will guide land use policy decision-making, particularly for proposed land use and development applications considered by the city. While the policies included in the previous chapters are generally applicable to all areas within Laramie, the Future Land Use and Character Framework is designed to provide specific guidance for different Future Land Use and Character areas across the community. It ties the general policies to specific places, such as identifying areas where housing development is a strategic priority and places where land conservation is a priority given environmental considerations. This allows the city to more closely evaluate and apply land use and character policies that apply to areas with a common neighborhood or community design. It will be used by city staff, the Planning Commission, and City Council to guide decisions about how and where Laramie will develop in the future.



Reconnect Ride - B

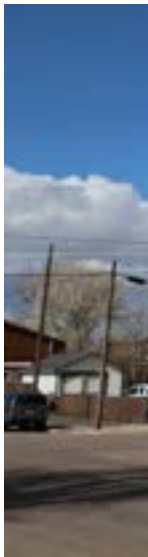


Jubilee Days - BHP Photo





Parklet - BHP Photo





BHP Photo



Aerial view of Downtown Laramie - Kyle Spradley





West Side Vision Project - BHP Photo

GROWTH AREA AND EXISTING CONDITIONS

The city has used its planning and zoning powers authorized through the Wyoming State Statute for many years. The growth patterns and established community character in different parts of the city have been defined by land use planning decisions and applied zoning regulations. As the city has annexed property over time, both the city's corporate limits and its planning area boundary have grown. This planning area incorporates 11,637 acres of land.

FUTURE *LAND USE*

Future land use planning is visionary in nature by design. Differing from existing land use that focuses on the actual uses and design of places found on the ground, future land use expresses the city's intent for growth and change that may occur in the future.

The Future Land Use Plan (FLUP) established in the 2007 Laramie Comprehensive Plan was the foundation for development of the following Future Land Use and Character Framework. The FLUP set out a series of 13 Future Land Use Classifications that were applied throughout the City's planning area (corporate limits plus a one-mile boundary around the city for long-range planning purposes.) These classifications identified appropriate land uses and zoning districts to be applied to different areas, the intensity of development, and the average lot area anticipated for new development and redevelopment. The FLUP was designed to both guide rational growth patterns to align with existing infrastructure and encourage infill and redevelopment, and to protect and maintain community character through the application of the different classifications.

GROWTH AREA PLAN

To address projected outward growth, the coordination of development patterns across jurisdictions, and the provision of utilities, the City of Laramie and Albany County undertook development of a joint Laramie Growth Area Plan in 2022. The study area includes lands adjacent to the City of Laramie's boundary within unincorporated Albany County that are anticipated to grow or experience growth pressures on an incremental basis over time.

The year long process defined the vision for areas that can appropriately grow and receive urban services, and areas that should maintain rural character at the edges of the growth area. This planning approach avoids "leapfrog" development by supporting growth near the city and established services. It also reduces challenges related to providing public services within fragmented jurisdictional boundaries. Key themes that guided development of the plan include:

- Provide adequate workforce and attainable housing
- Diversify economic development opportunities
- Improve connectivity (roads, trails, and neighborhoods)
- Improve access to outdoor recreation (open space, parks, and trails)
- Protect water quality
- Consider impacts to the cost of development
- Enforce development regulations (zoning, building codes, and development standards)
- Financial responsibility for infrastructure
- Collaborate with the University of Wyoming

The planning process included an assessment of potable water and sanitary sewer services to identify capacity needed to serve projected residential, commercial, and industrial uses described in the Growth Area Plan. Correspondingly, a fiscal assessment was prepared to evaluate the revenues and costs associated with different types of land uses that could be built within the growth area.

The plan establishes future land use categories for the growth area and will be used as a guide for development decisions made on projects located outside the city's corporate limits. A key implementation component of this plan is the adoption of a common Overlay Zoning District (a zoning district that is applied on top of the base zoning district in each jurisdiction and includes additional provisions for joint planning and development review) for the study area and a corresponding intergovernmental agreement between the City of Laramie and Albany County that assigns specific roles in the development review process for both parties. Implementation of these tools is a next step for plan implementation.

VISION FOR FUTURE *LAND USE*

The city's vision for future land use is focused on supporting economic development to advance Laramie's fiscal and economic health. This objective is supported by several key factors:

- Providing a **greater variety of housing choices** to meet the needs of current and future residents and worker households;
- Supporting **infill and redevelopment** to maximize use of existing infrastructure and revitalize already developed places;
- Promoting a **mix of uses in appropriate locations** to create a greater fiscal return on investment and create new forms of development that residents have asked for;
- Creating **quality designed places that incorporate open space, public amenities, and connectivity** for pedestrians and bicyclists during the warmer months, and offer vibrant public spaces where residents can come together in community during the winter;
- Providing **greater connectivity between neighborhoods and destinations** in the city and regional assets beyond Laramie, and
- Stewarding **important environmental assets**, such as the Casper Aquifer and the Laramie River.



MISSING MIDDLE INFILL HOUSING

"Middle housing" describes residential structures that sit on the spectrum between detached single-family housing and larger multifamily apartment complexes. Middle housing types are preferred for residential infill projects because they can be designed to provide more than one housing unit on a lot without disrupting the character or feel of the neighborhood. The graphic above depicts examples of middle housing typologies.



FUTURE LAND USE AND CHARACTER FRAMEWORK

The Future Land Use and Character Framework (map and related categories) identifies the intended future use, building patterns, and general character of future development and redevelopment within Laramie's planning area. These future land use and character classifications provide policy guidance for decision-makers as they evaluate the appropriateness of development proposals like rezonings. The Future Land Use and Character Framework was developed using the 2007 Comprehensive Plan as a foundation and was modified to support the following objectives:

- Provide flexibility for development of residential uses, particularly middle housing options (duplex, triplex, quadplex, townhomes)
- Create more opportunities for mixed use development that is designed as horizontal (residential and commercial uses side by side) or vertical (stacked developments, typically with residential on top of office or commercial uses)
- Support the use of multi-modal access so that residents that bike, walk, or drive can access different areas and destinations
- Better reflect recent development approvals

The following map was developed to provide general guidance regarding land development, annexation, and capital planning decisions. To best interpret which category should apply to a property located in an edge condition between categories, discretion should be used to identify the most appropriate fit given the site conditions and surrounding context.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN FUTURE LAND USE AND ZONING

Future land use designations are different from zoning regulations, but they work together to shape the places we live, work, and play in. The Future Land Use and Character Framework establishes the policy guidance for how property can actually **be used** (such as for housing, office space, shopping centers, schools, or factories). The city uses this guidance to establish zoning regulations, which are the laws that dictate how property can **be developed** (such as where certain uses are permitted, how tall buildings can be, and how many trees or off-street parking spaces must be provided on site).


Cycling Wyoming – Adobe Stock


Laramie Neighborhood - Adobe Stock


Downtown Commercial Businesses - AVI


University Building - Laramie Staff

OPEN LANDS

Agriculture

Parks and Open Space

NEIGHBORHOODS

Estate Residential

Suburban Neighborhood

Compact Neighborhood

Multifamily Neighborhood

Urban Neighborhood

COMMERCE

Neighborhood Commercial

Community Commercial

Core Commercial

Business and Innovation

Industrial

SPECIAL AREAS

Urban University

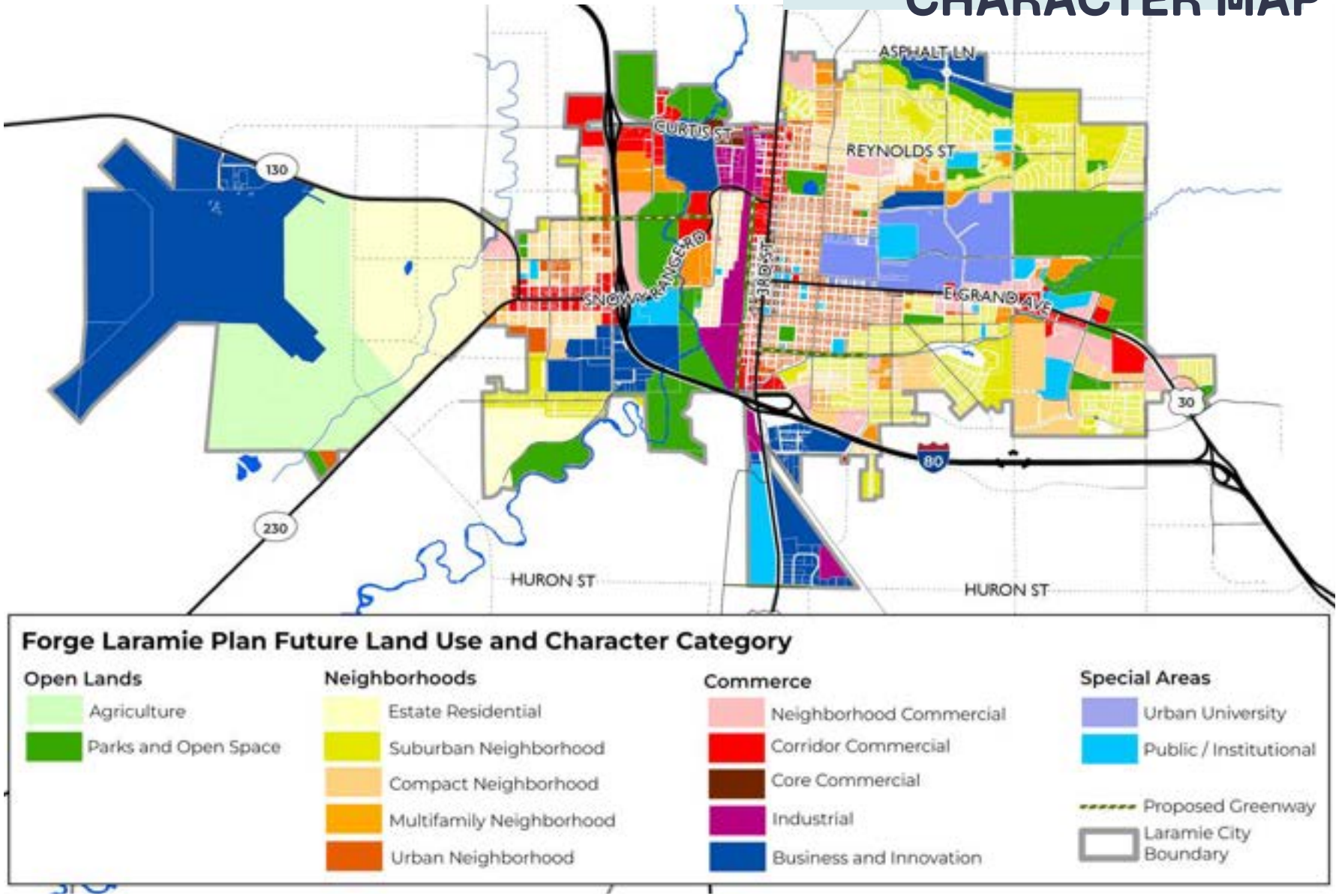
Public/Institutional

LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS

The Future Land Use and Character Map designates 13 classifications that are envisioned for the future of Laramie's planning area grouped in four categories, as shown above.

The following map and classifications make up the Future Land Use and Character Framework. Each classification includes a description of each category, primary and secondary land uses, applicable zoning, and images to define the intent. Primary uses are defined as being the predominant use in an area, whereas secondary land uses may be found in an area but are not the predominant use. Below is the Future Land Use and Character Map that defines the appropriate classification for all areas within the city's growth area.

FUTURE LAND USE AND CHARACTER MAP



AGRICULTURE

DESCRIPTION

Agriculture future land use areas include rural lands dominated by agricultural uses with limited housing. The landscape is characterized by ranches, farmsteads, barns, fences, livestock areas, and a virtually unbroken horizon.

INTENT

Land is not intended to be subdivided and developed at a suburban or urban scale within the horizon of the plan. In the most rural areas, agriculture is intended as the sole use. Private well and septic systems support water and wastewater needs.

APPLICABLE ZONING DISTRICTS

Agricultural (AG), Open (O)

EXAMPLE CHARACTER



EXAMPLE PATTERN



USES

Primary Uses	Farms, ranches, equestrian facilities, and open lands
Secondary Uses	Animal sales and services; Public and utility uses; Single-family detached (including modular and manufactured housing)

BUILDING BLOCKS

Intensity/Density	1 dwelling unit / 35 acres or lower density
Building Height	Generally up to three stories, but can go higher

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

DESCRIPTION

Parks and Open Space future land use areas provide lands for recreational use and natural areas serving as habitat or protected for scenic value. This may include both passive and active parklands.

INTENT

These areas are generally owned and managed by public agencies but can also include privately owned lands protected through conservation easements or similar voluntary mechanisms. They are intended to stay in their natural or park state in perpetuity or until the landowner identifies a more appropriate use.

APPLICABLE ZONING DISTRICTS

These uses are generally permissible in all zoning districts.

EXAMPLE CHARACTER



EXAMPLE PATTERN



USES

Primary Uses	Open lands, parks, and recreational facilities
Secondary Uses	n/a

BUILDING BLOCKS

Intensity/Density	n/a
Building Height	Recreational facilities are generally up to two stories, but can go higher

ESTATE RESIDENTIAL

DESCRIPTION

Estate Residential future land use areas provide neighborhoods and individual homes on larger lots than found in the core of the city.

INTENT

These areas serve as a transition between large acreage rural homes in the Agriculture category and city neighborhoods. Development is intended to produce a visual openness, with open space remaining dominant and homes are secondary to the landscape. Either private well and septic systems or public water and wastewater systems support these areas.

APPLICABLE ZONING DISTRICTS

Limited Single-Family Residential (LR)

EXAMPLE CHARACTER



EXAMPLE PATTERN



USES

Primary Uses	Single-family detached (including modular and manufactured housing)
Secondary Uses	Public and utility uses

BUILDING BLOCKS

Intensity/Density	0.03-3 dwelling units/1 acre PUD densities may be higher

SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD

DESCRIPTION

Suburban Neighborhood future land use areas include established and new residential neighborhood developments. These areas typically do not include non-residential uses, but may offer a clubhouse or other public or private neighborhood amenities.

INTENT

Both existing and new suburban neighborhoods are opportunities to provide missing middle housing that is designed to provide smaller single-family detached homes, such as cottage courts or multi-unit buildings designed using single-family detached building forms.

APPLICABLE ZONING DISTRICTS

Single-Family Residential (R1)

EXAMPLE CHARACTER



EXAMPLE PATTERN



USES

Primary Uses	Single-family detached
Secondary Uses	Accessory dwelling units, or other smaller scale housing; Neighborhood amenities (clubhouses); Public and utility uses

BUILDING BLOCKS

Intensity/Density	4-10 dwelling units/1 acre
Building Height	Generally up to three stories, but can go higher

COMPACT NEIGHBORHOOD

DESCRIPTION

Compact Neighborhood future land use areas include a mix of single-family and attached housing units, typically located along major road corridors. Access to units is from alleys or on-street driveways.

INTENT

New development can include new missing middle housing options, such as duplexes, triplexes, and cottage courts. They should provide parks and public open space to add natural areas to these neighborhoods.

APPLICABLE ZONING DISTRICTS

Single-Family Residential (R1) and Limited Multi-Family (R2) and a future new district that allows for medium-density single and multi-family housing

EXAMPLE CHARACTER



EXAMPLE PATTERN



USES

Primary Uses	Single-family detached, single-family attached, townhomes
Secondary Uses	Accessory dwelling units, duplex, triplex, or other smaller scale housing; Neighborhood amenities (clubhouses); Public and utility uses

BUILDING BLOCKS

Intensity/Density	8-16 dwelling units/1 acre
Building Height	Generally up to three stories, but can go higher

MULTIFAMILY NEIGHBORHOOD

DESCRIPTION

Multifamily Neighborhood future land use areas include multifamily housing types at a variety of densities and scales, typically located along major road corridors. Access to units is from alleys or parking lots accessed from main road.

INTENT

These areas are opportunities for higher density housing that can create walkable neighborhoods. New development can also include new missing middle housing options and should provide parks and public open space to add natural areas to these neighborhoods.

APPLICABLE ZONING DISTRICTS

Limited Multi-Family (R2), Limited Multi-family with Independent Manufactured Homes (R2M), and Multi-Family (R3)

EXAMPLE CHARACTER



EXAMPLE PATTERN



USES

Primary Uses	Apartments, condominiums, townhomes, and manufactured home communities
Secondary Uses	Duplex, triplex, or other smaller scale housing; Neighborhood amenities (clubhouses); Neighborhood-scale commercial; Public and utility uses

BUILDING BLOCKS

Intensity/Density	16-32 dwelling units/1 acre Can be higher for multifamily
Building Height	Generally up to four stories, but can go higher

URBAN NEIGHBORHOOD

DESCRIPTION

Urban Neighborhood future land use areas include homes built in older, walkable neighborhoods near the downtown core.

INTENT

These areas are opportunities for smaller footprint multi-family and missing middle housing that can support walkable neighborhoods.

APPLICABLE ZONING DISTRICTS

Limited Multi-family with Independent Manufactured Homes (R2M), and Multi-Family (R3) and a future new district that targets medium-density single and multi-family housing

EXAMPLE CHARACTER



EXAMPLE PATTERN



USES

Primary Uses	Single-family detached, single-family attached, smaller footprint apartments and condominiums, townhomes, and manufactured home communities
Secondary Uses	Accessory dwelling units, duplex, triplex, or other smaller scale housing; Neighborhood amenities (clubhouses); Neighborhood-scale commercial; Small-scale commercial; Public and utility uses

BUILDING BLOCKS

Intensity/Density	8-20 dwelling units/1 acre Can be higher for multifamily
Building Height	Generally up to three stories, but can go higher

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL

DESCRIPTION

Neighborhood Commercial future land use areas include neighborhood-scale commercial uses that use site design and landscaping to transition to adjacent residential neighborhoods.

INTENT

These areas are opportunities for smaller footprint businesses, traditional shopping centers, and smaller office and professional service developments. These should be designed to be accessed via car, bike, and walking from adjacent neighborhoods. This can also include accessory residential uses to support affordable housing as horizontal or vertical mixed use. Public spaces such as plazas are encouraged.

APPLICABLE ZONING DISTRICTS

Neighborhood Business (NB), and Limited Business (B1)

EXAMPLE CHARACTER



EXAMPLE PATTERN



USES

Primary Uses	Retail commercial; Office uses
Secondary Uses	Duplex, triplex, or other smaller scale housing; Live/work or multifamily residential units; Public and utility uses

BUILDING BLOCKS

Intensity/Density	n/a
Building Height	Generally up to three stories, but can go higher

COMMUNITY COMMERCIAL

DESCRIPTION

Community Commercial future land use areas include traditional commercial and office uses that serve the larger community and are typically located along major thoroughfares.

INTENT

While many of these existing areas are auto-oriented, they represent opportunities for encouraging walkable, mixed-use redevelopment that is predominantly non-residential on first floors and can provide residential on upper stories. These should be designed to be accessed via car, bike, and walking from adjacent neighborhoods. Shared parking between uses is encouraged.

APPLICABLE ZONING DISTRICTS

Neighborhood Business (NB), Limited Business (B1), Business (B2) and General Commercial (C2).

EXAMPLE CHARACTER



EXAMPLE PATTERN



USES

Primary Uses	Entertainment; Lodging; Mixed uses; Retail commercial; Personal services; Office uses
Secondary Uses	Multifamily and attached single-family housing; Public and utility uses

BUILDING BLOCKS

Intensity/Density	n/a
Building Height	Generally up to five stories, but can go higher

CORE COMMERCIAL

DESCRIPTION

Core Commercial future land use areas include commercial and office uses located within the downtown core and West Side. These areas are designed to be the most compact and walkable format for commercial development.

INTENT

Core Commercial future land use areas should be revitalized and developed in alignment with the Downtown Development Plan, the Design Guidelines for Historic Downtown Laramie, and future small area plans. Guidance provided in this comprehensive plan is general in nature and these other documents should serve as the primary guide for future development and design decisions.

APPLICABLE ZONING DISTRICTS

Downtown Commercial (DC), Neighborhood Business (NB), Limited Business (B1), Business (B2), and General Commercial (C2).

EXAMPLE CHARACTER



EXAMPLE PATTERN



USES

Primary Uses	Entertainment; Lodging; Mixed uses; Retail commercial; Personal services; Office uses
Secondary Uses	Multifamily housing; Live/work housing; Public and utility uses

BUILDING BLOCKS

Intensity/Density	n/a
Building Height	Generally up to five stories, but can go higher

BUSINESS & INNOVATION

DESCRIPTION

Business & Innovation future land use areas include heavy commercial, flex office, research and development, and light industrial uses and are typically located near the interstate or highway and often located between industrial and retail commercial uses. These areas are generally not adjacent to residential areas to reduce impacts on neighborhoods.

INTENT

Business & Innovation future land use areas are intended to provide concentrated areas of heavy commercial and light industrial uses, combined with a mix of complementary retail commercial services.

APPLICABLE ZONING DISTRICTS

General Commercial (C2), Limited Manufacturing (LM), Industrial Park (IP), and Technology and Office (TO)

EXAMPLE CHARACTER



EXAMPLE PATTERN



USES

Primary Uses	Heavy commercial; Flex office, Flex industrial, Manufacturing, and Warehousing; Research and development parks; Wholesaling
Secondary Uses	Supportive retail commercial uses, Office uses, and Public and utility uses

BUILDING BLOCKS

Intensity/Density	n/a
Building Height	Generally up to five stories, but can go higher

INDUSTRIAL

DESCRIPTION

Industrial future land use areas include employment uses, such as manufacturing facilities, warehouses, and industrial parks. They are generally located near the Laramie Regional Airport and east of I-80. These areas can also include commercial development to provide supportive uses to industrial businesses.

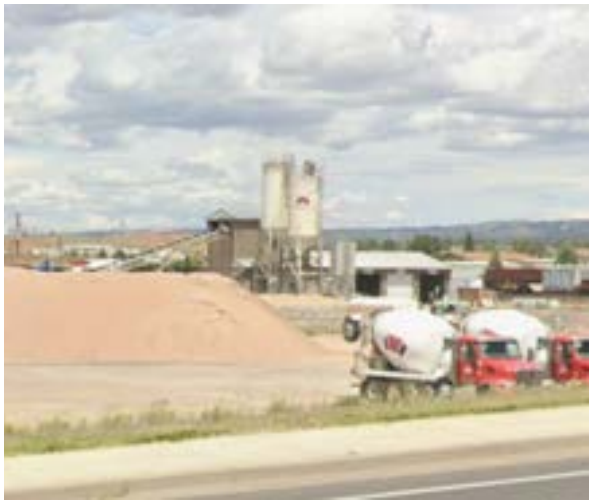
INTENT

These areas primarily serve as functional employment areas and are not intended to have the same level of walkability and public spaces as Commerce areas. Landscaping, buffering, and basic pedestrian access is needed between parking areas and businesses. Shared parking between businesses is preferred to maximize the use of land.

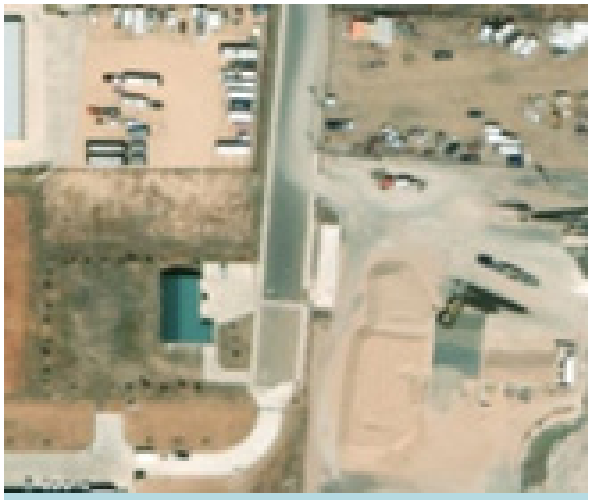
APPLICABLE ZONING DISTRICTS

Limited Manufacturing (LM), Industrial Park (IP), Limited Industrial (I1), and Industrial (I2).

EXAMPLE CHARACTER



EXAMPLE PATTERN



USES

Primary Uses	Flex, industrial, manufacturing, and warehousing.
Secondary Uses	Supportive retail commercial uses; Office; and Public and utility uses

BUILDING BLOCKS

Intensity/Density	n/a
Building Height	Generally up to three stories, but can go higher

URBAN UNIVERSITY

DESCRIPTION

Urban University future land uses include the University of Wyoming campus. UW creates and applies its own master plan for the campus and as an instrument of the state, it does not have to comply with local zoning regulations. Non-campus areas adjacent to UW are also included in this category.

INTENT

This area is intended to replicate Urban Neighborhood and Core Commercial development patterns in areas adjacent to campus to promote an urban, walkable environment. UW and the City of Laramie can share information about developments on and nearby campus to coordinate planning and infrastructure investments.

APPLICABLE ZONING DISTRICTS

Downtown Core (DC) and Multifamily (R3).

EXAMPLE CHARACTER



EXAMPLE PATTERN



USES

Primary Uses	Entertainment; Mixed uses; Retail commercial; Personal services; Office uses; Multifamily
Secondary Uses	Public and utility uses

BUILDING BLOCKS

Intensity/Density	Up to 32 dwelling units / 1 acre May be higher for PUD developments
Building Height	n/a

PUBLIC / INSTITUTIONAL

DESCRIPTION

Public / Institutional future land use areas include the Laramie Regional Airport, WyoTech, and other public and institutional uses, such as government facilities and schools.

INTENT

These areas provide a wide range of public and quasi-public uses within the community. Uses that are designed to encourage public access, such as government facilities and schools, should be designed as walkable developments.

APPLICABLE ZONING DISTRICTS

n/a

EXAMPLE CHARACTER



EXAMPLE PATTERN



USES

Primary Uses	Airport; Hospitals; Offices; Schools
Secondary Uses	Public and utility uses

BUILDING BLOCKS

Intensity/Density	n/a
Building Height	n/a



Downtown Mural - AVI

FUTURE LAND USE AND CHARACTER RECOMMENDATIONS

In addition to the policies set out in previous chapters, the following Recommendations will guide decision-making and implementation efforts to achieve the city's community priorities.

UPDATE ZONING TO ALIGN WITH FUTURE LAND USE AND CHARACTER CATEGORIES

New Zoning District to Support Missing Middle Infill and Redevelopment. Prepare a new zoning district category that allows for medium density housing and missing middle housing types, similar to Multifamily (R3) but that supports a density cap to encourage "gentle density" in appropriate areas without the risk of allowing for more intensive multifamily apartment complexes. Densities could range from 8-16 dwelling units / 1 acre. This is important not only to encourage medium-density development that is less intensive and visually impactful on neighboring properties, but also to manage the infrastructure needs of new proposed developments.

New Neighborhood Commercial Zoning District. To support smaller scale businesses that may want to locate proximate to existing residential neighborhoods, the city should add a new Neighborhood Commercial Zoning District that is tailored to neighborhood serving commercial retail and office uses.

Consider Lot Consolidation Limits for Older Neighborhoods. To encourage production of more housing units and maintaining character of older neighborhoods, undertake analysis to prepare lot consolidation limits for residential zoning districts that apply within older neighborhoods, primarily that are included in the Urban Neighborhood Future Land Use and Character category.

EVALUATE DATA CENTER OPPORTUNITIES AND IMPACTS

As AI (artificial intelligence) and related technologies advance across the nation and around the globe, communities are seeing a significant uptick in proposals for data centers to house and distribute this technology. Data centers produce both benefits and costs to communities, and should be evaluated carefully to determine if and where they are appropriate. Key objectives that are recommended to be achieved through the permitting of data centers includes:

- Protect important natural resources and wildlife habitat corridors
- Manage local utility demands (water and electricity) and ensure long-term capacity to serve the community
- Minimize noise, viewshed, air quality, water quality, stormwater, and other impacts on neighboring properties
- Utilize lands that are appropriate for industrial uses
- Support expansion of the local economy and fiscal tax base



Data Center - Adobe Stock

COORDINATE WITH ALBANY COUNTY TO IMPLEMENT THE LARAMIE AREA GROWTH PLAN

Laramie should continue to coordinate with Albany County to share information on development proposals for projects located near the edge of jurisdictional boundaries. This will allow the city and county to plan for future transportation, public services, and infrastructure impacts. To fully implement the Laramie Growth Area Plan, the city should work with the county to develop an inter-governmental agreement for lands within the plan's study area to achieve the objectives set out in the plan.

For future annexations within the Laramie Area Growth Plan study area, the city should use the following Future Land Use and Character classifications to determine the appropriate land use and zoning districts for these areas.

TABLE 7.1: FUTURE LAND USE AND CHARACTER CATEGORIES TO APPLY WITHIN LARAMIE GROWTH AREA PLAN CATEGORIES

LARAMIE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FUTURE LAND USE AND CHARACTER CATEGORY	LARAMIE GROWTH AREA PLAN FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORY
Agriculture	Agricultural, UW Agricultural
Estate Residential	Rural Residential, Ranchette
Suburban Neighborhood	Suburban Residential, Urban Residential
Multifamily Neighborhood	Multifamily Residential
Neighborhood Commercial	Neighborhood Commercial
Community Commercial	Community Commercial
Industrial	Industrial
Public/Institutional	Public
Parks and Open Space	Natural Areas/Parks/Open Space



Mural - AVI

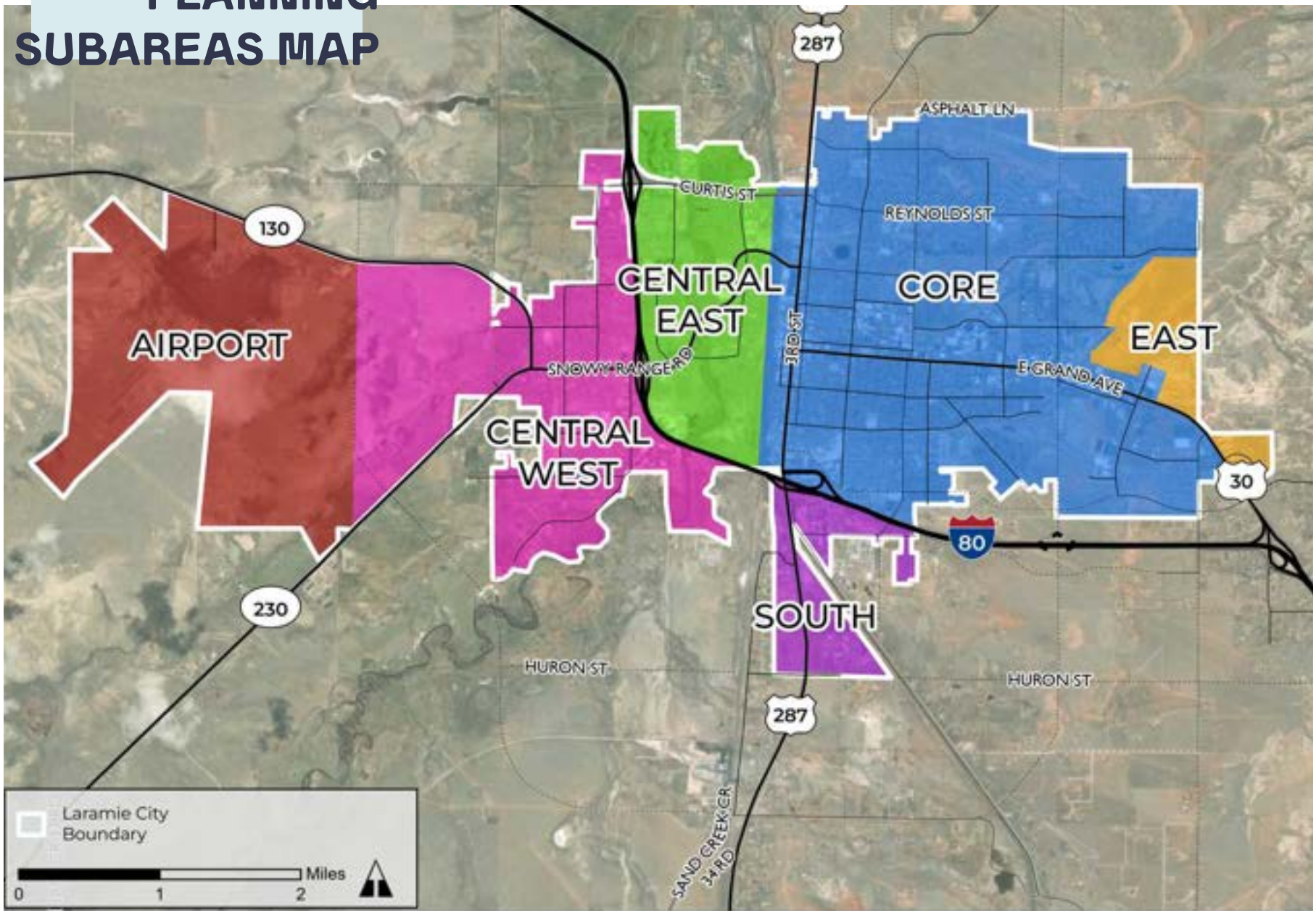
COMMUNITY PRIORITIES FOR PLANNING SUBAREAS

This Comprehensive Plan sets out to achieve five key community priorities for Laramie over the next twenty years. In addition to the Future Land Use and Character Framework that guides land use and development, this section provides guidance on how the five community priorities will be implemented within six general planning subareas:

- **Airport** includes the Laramie Regional Airport and surrounding industrial and commercial properties.
- **Central West** includes West Laramie neighborhoods, WyoTech, and commercial and residential areas west of I-80.
- **Central East** includes the Laramie River, the Wyoming Territorial Prison State Historic site, West Side and other commercial and residential neighborhoods east of the railroad line and downtown.
- **Core** includes the historic core of the city along with key commercial corridors, the University of Wyoming campus, and surrounding neighborhoods. It is bound by I-80 to the south and west, and generally the city's corporate limits to the north east.
- **East** includes the areas that are protected by the Casper Aquifer overlay and is generally agricultural or residential in nature.
- **South** is that area south of I-80 that is primarily planned for commercial development.

Each of these areas has unique opportunities and challenges that play a role in determining how the community priorities will be best achieved.

PLANNING SUBAREAS MAP



AIRPORT SUBAREA

COMMUNITY PRIORITY	APPLICATION IN AIRPORT SUBAREA
Work and Prosper	• Support new land uses to expand revenue generation for airport
Live and Belong	• Support placemaking efforts at gateways of airport and entrances to new developments
Connect and Nurture	• Maintain connectivity between airport and core areas of city and consider providing staging areas for tour buses when not in use
Steward and Conserve	• Incorporate open spaces as part of new developments • Continue to address flood prone areas and reduce impacts on development
Serve and Collaborate	• Maintain and enhance existing infrastructure

CENTRAL WEST SUBAREA

COMMUNITY PRIORITY	APPLICATION IN CENTRAL WEST SUBAREA
Work and Prosper	• Build on WyoTech and other employment uses and support additional business development • Support infill, redevelopment, and adaptive reuse • Prioritize infrastructure improvements, such as paving roads and addressing stormwater concerns
Live and Belong	• Support gateway improvements to enhance the visual experience of the city's entrances • Provide a mix of housing options that provide choices to households, with more diversity of unit types located as guided by the Future Land Use and Character Framework • Ensure important buffering or design transitions between higher and lower intensity uses to reduce incompatibilities
Connect and Nurture	• Enhance connections between West Laramie and downtown through Reconnect Laramie Plan implementation • Provide more recreational assets and trails in this area
Steward and Conserve	• Incorporate open spaces as part of new developments • Continue to address flood prone areas and reduce impacts on development • Continue to support UW Agriculture
Serve and Collaborate	• Expand utilities and services to support development in areas that are not currently served

CENTRAL EAST SUBAREA

COMMUNITY PRIORITY	APPLICATION IN CENTRAL EAST SUBAREA
Work and Prosper	▪ Encourage industrial and commercial development along the I-80/3rd Street corridor ▪ Encourage businesses supporting outdoor recreation activities, particularly for the Laramie River ▪ Support infill, redevelopment, and adaptive reuse
Live and Belong	▪ Provide a mix of housing options that provide choices to households, with more diversity of unit types located as guided by the Future Land Use and Character Framework ▪ Support neighborhood scale mixed use to provide proximate amenities to neighborhoods and encourage them to incorporate public spaces ▪ Ensure infill designs and uses mitigate impacts on neighboring properties
Connect and Nurture	▪ Enhance connections between downtown and points west through Reconnect Laramie Plan implementation
Steward and Conserve	▪ Incorporate open spaces as part of new developments ▪ Continue to address flood prone areas and reduce impacts on development
Serve and Collaborate	▪ Expand infrastructure to support development in areas that are not currently served as guided by the Future Land Use and Character Framework

CORE SUBAREA

COMMUNITY PRIORITY	APPLICATION IN CORE SUBAREA
Work and Prosper	▪ Support neighborhood and community commercial as identified in the Future Land Use and Character Framework
Live and Belong	▪ Support infill, redevelopment and adaptive reuse ▪ Support neighborhood scale mixed use to provide proximate amenities to neighborhoods and encourage them to incorporate public spaces ▪ Provide opportunities for missing middle housing and other more affordable housing options ▪ Support gateway improvements to enhance the visual experience of the city's entrances
Connect and Nurture	▪ Design new or retrofit older developments to support pedestrian, bicycle, and automobile connectivity to adjacent neighborhoods and destinations ▪ Encourage development of parks and public spaces and facilities as part of new development
Steward and Conserve	▪ Incorporate open spaces as part of new developments ▪ Continue to address flood prone areas and reduce impacts on development
Serve and Collaborate	▪ Expand infrastructure to support development in areas that are not currently served as guided by the Future Land Use and Character Framework

EAST SUBAREA

COMMUNITY PRIORITY	APPLICATION IN EAST SUBAREA
Work and Prosper	• Limit growth to protect the Casper Aquifer and maintain rural character
Live and Belong	• Support residential densities appropriate for this area, as defined by the Future Land Use and Character Framework • Support gateway improvements to enhance the visual experience of the city's entrances
Connect and Nurture	• Continue to provide access to Pilot Hill • Support additional trail development
Steward and Conserve	• Maintain low-density development to protect Casper Aquifer
Serve and Collaborate	• Limit infrastructure growth in this area

SOUTH SUBAREA

COMMUNITY PRIORITY	APPLICATION IN SOUTH SUBAREA
Work and Prosper	• Support business and industrial expansion as guided by the Future Land Use and Character Framework • Support infill, redevelopment, and adaptive reuse
Live and Belong	• Support gateway improvements to enhance the visual experience of the city's entrances • Encourage placemaking as part of new commercial development
Connect and Nurture	• Support development of commercial areas to points north, including safe and accessible pedestrian, bicycle, and automobile access • Encourage development of parks and public spaces and facilities as part of new development
Steward and Conserve	• Continue to address flood prone areas and reduce impacts on development
Serve and Collaborate	• Expand utilities and services to support development in areas that are not currently served



Community Event - BHP Photo

CHAPTER 8
IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH

The real value of planning comes through the implementation of collectively supported ideas. Achieving the community priorities identified in this plan will require intentional actions that are carried out through several city processes:

- Using the plan policies and the Future Land Use and Character Framework to guide development decisions, including city staff reports, and Planning Commission and City Council decision-making
- Considering the policy guidance and priority (Tier 1) actions of the plan as part of annual departmental work plans, City Council Goals, annual budgeting, and capital improvement plan decision-making
- Convening community partners to support implementation of priority (Tier 1) actions

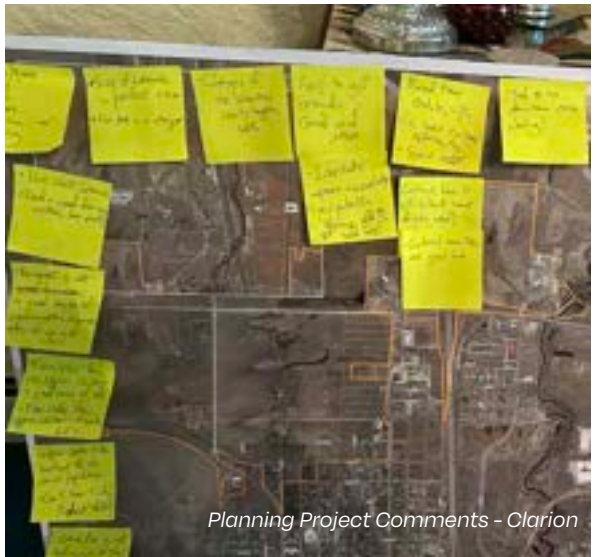


Blue Devils, UW



Construction - BHP Photo





Planning Project Comments - Clarion

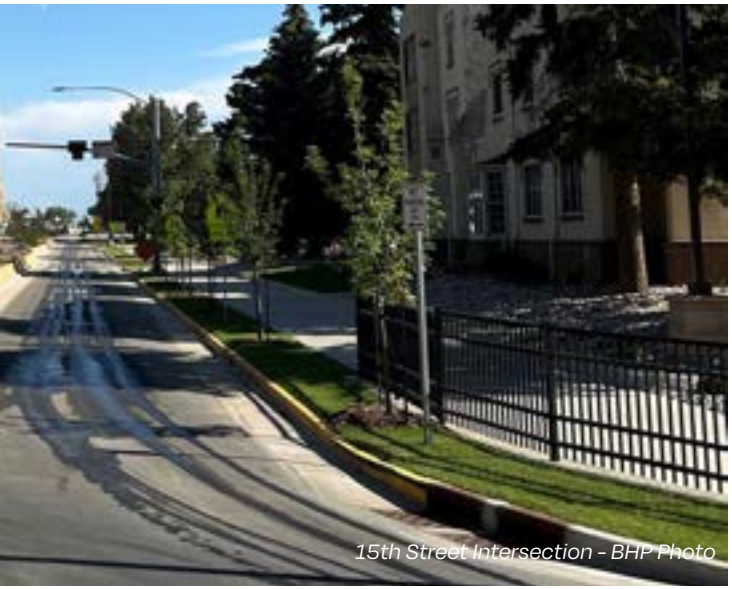




/ - Clarion



Bike to Work Day - BHP Photo



15th Street Intersection - BHP Photo



Forge Exchange - BHP Photo

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Plan implementation will use the following guiding principles:

1. **The city will take a proactive and strategic implementation approach that aligns the initiation of actions with the appropriate allocation of fiscal resources, city staff capacity, and support from community partners.** This "pay as you go" approach will allow the city to prioritize key actions for implementation as resources are available, while being flexible to address unforeseen circumstances that can impact implementation efforts.
2. **Events such as the COVID-19 pandemic or a major infrastructure failure cannot be fully planned for, and therefore the city needs discretion on when to initiate implementation efforts to align with immediate public service and facility priorities.** This flexibility is also needed to address state mandated changes, such as potential cuts to future revenue sources. This will allow the City Council and the larger city staff team to consider all needs holistically when making strategic investment decisions.
3. **In alignment with this approach, the city will ensure that dedicated funding to maintain existing infrastructure will be used for such, and not for the purpose of adding new infrastructure.** This will result in a better return on investment as deferred maintenance on public infrastructure and facilities can often result in more costly replacement in future years.
4. **The city will consider other adopted plans, existing system capacity, lifecycle costs, maintenance obligations, fiscal impacts, and overall community need—in addition to the guidance provided by this comprehensive plan—when identifying and prioritizing growth-related investments and infrastructure improvements.** Decisions about where and when to invest will follow a transparent, data driven process. The Future Land Use and Character Framework will inform these decisions, but will not independently authorize infrastructure expansion. This approach will help the city direct limited resources toward improvements that provide the greatest community benefit while balancing growth opportunities with existing commitments.



City Council Chambers - BHP Photo

LINKAGE TO CITY COUNCIL GOALS

Laramie's City Council prepares goals that articulate the specific objectives to be worked on in the following fiscal year. Updated annually, the priority (Tier 1) actions included within this comprehensive plan can be used as an inventory for consideration when updating future City Council goals, tying implementation of this plan to the city's strategic goals and departmental work plans.



Wild Blue - BHP Photo

TAKING ACTION

This plan sets out several different types of actions to implement the city's community priorities:

- Regulatory updates,
- Capital investments and funding programs,
- Further planning efforts and initiatives, and
- Partnership opportunities.

These actions will be undertaken by the city and its partners as identified in the Action Plan. To support collaboration, city departments will work together to discuss and coordinate on recommendations to be included in departmental work plans and requests for budgeted resources. The city's Executive Leadership Team will identify opportunities and needs to cross-departmental coordination on implementation. Priorities should be placed on actions that support more than one community priority.

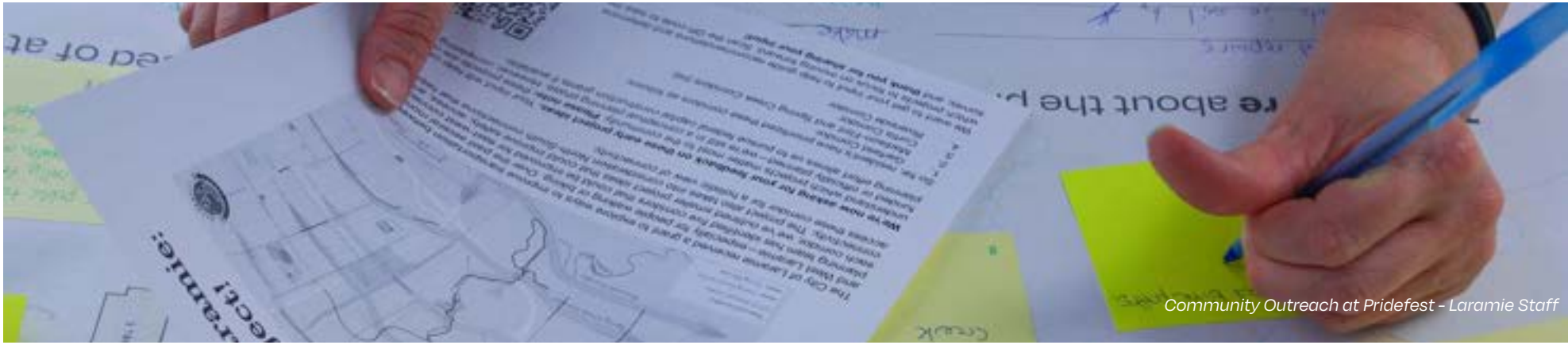
These actions are set out into two categories to help with prioritizing implementation and are described in the Action Plan that follows:

- **Tier 1 Actions:** These are actions that are most needed in the near-term to support the city's community priorities, with a focus on actions that support economic development and the development of new housing. They also include "low-hanging fruit" opportunities that can create momentum around implementation efforts. These actions are recommended for initiation over the next three to five years, as guided by future City Council Goals.
- **Tier 2 Actions:** These are future actions that can be undertaken once Tier 1 actions have been implemented.

Implementation is a process that has several important steps before an action is initiated:

- Defining the work plan
- Securing funding or other resources needed to support implementation
- Coordinating the work plan with partner agencies and organizations
- Identifying the timing of initiation

It is important to complete these steps prior to initiation to support efficient use of revenues and staff resources and to ensure a strategic approach to implementation. Following identification by the City Council to move forward with an action, these steps will be undertaken. As such, implementation requires preparatory time before initiation.



Community Outreach at Pridefest - Laramie Staff

ACTION PLAN

TIER 1 ACTIONS

The following actions should be reviewed annually as part of City Council Goal development to identify appropriate new actions to undertake. Tier 1 actions are organized as follows:

For each action, *Lead Implementors* and *Partners* are identified to support coordinated implementation across city departments and alongside community partners and other public agencies. In addition, the city should look to leverage voluntary advisory boards during implementation efforts.

BIG MOVES

Near-term actions that require significant City funding and resources

SMALLER LIFTS

Near-term actions that are more easily accomplished with existing City resources

KEEP MASTER PLANS CURRENT AND ACTIONABLE

Description: *To support implementation of the comprehensive plan and respond to current conditions, Laramie will update existing public service and facilities plans and develop new plans for the city-owned ranches, as outlined below.*

- Hart Ranch Master Plan
- Monolith Ranch Master Plan
- Parks and Recreation Master Plan
- Sanitary Sewer Master Plan
- Transportation Master Plan
- Water Management Plan

Lead Implementors: *Parks and Recreation Department, Public Works Department*

Partners: *Community and Economic Development Department, Albany County*

UPDATE THE UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE

Description: *The city will undertake a process to review and update the Unified Development Code to support new opportunities for housing and economic development. This includes:*

- Evaluate zoning districts, permitted uses, and use specific standards to remove barriers and support economic and housing development that aligns with the Future Land Use and Character Framework.
- Audit the city's development review process to identify areas for improvement, including administrative review procedures. This can include an outline of application materials, steps in the review process with timeline estimates, and responsibilities of city agencies.
- Streamline development review processes for addressing unsafe structures or those in need of repair, including health and safety risks, such as site contamination.
- Prepare a new medium-density residential zoning district that allows for missing middle housing types and places a cap on density (8-16 dwelling units/1 acre).
- Prepare a new neighborhood commercial zoning district that supports smaller-scale, neighborhood-serving uses and allows for live/work or other lighter density residential dwellings as part of commercial developments.
- Explore tools to support housing development, such as inclusionary zoning or density bonuses.
- Make land use permissions for ADUs, manufactured homes, and modular homes more permissive, and balance this allowance with use-specific design standards, as needed.
- Evaluate and implement changes to the table of permitted uses to provide new opportunities for housing development that align with the Future Land Use and Character Framework guidance.
- Update land use permissions for health-supportive uses, such as childcare and healthcare facilities, to be more permissive.
- Incorporate spacing requirements for "sin" uses (such as vape shops and adult entertainment uses) to be applied in areas near schools, childcare facilities, faith-based establishments, and other uses.
- Incorporate Data Centers within the Permitted Use Table and apply conditions for development approval (see previous Future Land Use and Character Framework for guidance on objectives to be achieved).
- Clarify requirements for nonconforming land uses and structures.
- In reviewing zoning and development regulations for adaptive reuse, incorporate accessibility standards and provide design guidance and incentives to encourage accessible housing across unit types.
- Evaluate and implement lot consolidation limits within zoning districts that apply in older, established neighborhoods to maintain lots for future housing development or redevelopment.
- Modify landscaping regulations to focus on native plantings, xeriscaping, and incentivizing preservation of existing mature landscapes. These standards can promote both water conservation and mitigating prevalent drought conditions.
- Evaluate and implement the dedication of "parklets" (small pocket parks) to be included in new or redeveloping neighborhoods or commercial developments.
- Evaluate and implement incentives for developing publicly accessible placemaking features as part of new commercial and mixed-use private devel-

opments, including plazas, courtyards, seating areas, and similar design features.

- Consider updating outdoor lighting standards to minimize light spillage by regulating lighting temperature, targeting, time controls, and maximum brightness.

Lead Implementors: *Community and Economic Development Department*

Partners: *Engineering Division, Parks and Recreation Department, development community stakeholders*

DEVELOP AND PROVIDE PRE-APPROVED PLANS FOR ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS (ADUS)

Description: *Prepare pre-approved site plans for accessory dwelling units (ADUs) that are made available for free or a small fee to residential property owners interested in developing ADUs. This can help homeowners offset housing costs with generation of rents and provides new housing opportunities within the city.*

Lead Implementors: *Community and Economic Development Department*

Partners: *Engineering Division*

CREATE A NEW DEVELOPMENT SERVICES ADVOCATE POSITION

Description: *Secure funding for, recruit, and hire a new development services advocate to serve as a neutral liaison between applicants and city departments. The advocate would: (1) help applicants understand development review requirements, navigate city processes, and coordinate communication with relevant departments; and (2) prepare an annual report identifying barriers to housing and commercial development (including challenges related to development review procedures, permitting, and building inspections) and recommending process improvements. This position would provide procedural assistance while preserving the independence and decision-making authority of the city staff responsible for technical reviews.*

Lead Implementors: *City Manager, Community and Economic Development Department*

Partners: *Engineering Division*

CONSTRUCT INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS TO SUPPORT ECONOMIC AND HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Description: *Support the installation of infrastructure needed to support residential and commercial development in areas where existing services are limited in capacity, limited by the age or location of distribution lines, or where new utilities may be needed. This action includes development of criteria to identify priority areas that are most in need of these services to spur development activity, considering factors such as the Future Land Use and Character Framework, other adopted plans, existing-system capacity, existing-system maintenance needs, lifecycle costs, developer responsibility, and public benefits. The identification and implementation of new funding sources to finance these improvements may also be needed.*

Lead Implementors: *City Manager, Finance, Public Works Department*

Partners: *Development community stakeholders*

CREATE AN EDUCATIONAL CAMPAIGN ON SAFE USE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS-OF-WAY FOR ALL MODES OF TRAVEL

Description: *With WY-DOT as a lead partner, create a public service announcement or similar educational campaign that supports awareness of sharing public roads and rights-of-way with users of all modes of travel (walking/rolling, biking, taking transit, riding e-micromobility devices, and driving).*

Lead Implementors: *City Manager, Engineering Division, Streets Division*

Partners: *WY-DOT, Visit Laramie, Downtown Laramie Main Street, Police Department*

SECURE FUNDING SOURCES TO SUPPORT REHABILITATION AND MAINTENANCE OF EXISTING HOMES

Description: *Collaborate with Albany County and housing partners to identify and secure funding sources (federal, state, other) to develop programs to support rehabilitation and maintenance of existing homes in Laramie. Programs should be designed to assist lower-income residents.*

Lead Implementors: *Community and Economic Development Department and Albany County Grants Office*

Partners: *Cheyenne Housing Authority (Laramie Office), Laramie Interfaith, Albany County Housing and Land Trust, Wyoming Community Development Authority*

FILL GAPS IN, AND MAINTAIN, THE CITY'S MULTI-USE PATHS

Description: *Identify and fill gaps in the city's multi-use path system, including the Greenbelt and Laramie Loop system, and seek active transportation grants to enhance connectivity and multi-modal use. Develop a plan and secure necessary funding for ongoing maintenance of these paths, such as for snow removal and resurfacing.*

Lead Implementors: *Public Works Department, Parks and Recreation Department*

Partners*: WY-DOT, Visit Laramie, Downtown Laramie Main Street, Police Department, Laramie Bikenet*

CREATE CITYWIDE ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT OR RESOURCE GUIDE FOR ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS

Description: *Prepare a coordinated, citywide strategy for engaging residents and business owners in public engagement efforts and general community governance input opportunities.*

Lead Implementors: *City Manager's Office, City Public Information/Public Relations*

Partners*: All City Departments*



SMALLER LIFTS

MAP INFILL SITES FOR DEVELOPMENT AND PROMOTE VIA CITY WEBSITE

Description: *Using available GIS data, develop a dynamic, online map to be hosted on the city's GIS site that identifies infill development properties within the city. Promote this site through economic development partners and real estate/development organizations.*

Lead Implementors: *Community and Economic Development Department and Engineering Division*

Partners: *Wyoming Business Council, Laramie Chamber Business Alliance, Downtown Laramie*

PREPARE "ROADMAPS" FOR PROSPECTIVE BUSINESSES TO ASSIST WITH LAND DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Description: *Prepare a page on the city's website that provides an interactive, easy to understand, step-by-step guide for prospective business owners that are looking to establish or expand a business in Laramie. An example of such a tool is the Colorado Springs, CO, Open for Business website (https://cosopenforbiz.com/) Promote this site through economic development partners.*

Lead Implementors: *Community and Economic Development Department*

Partners: *Wyoming Business Council, Laramie Chamber Business Alliance, Downtown Laramie*

IMPROVE CITY CUSTOMER SERVICE CALL SYSTEM

Description*: Evaluate the city's customer service communication system to identify regular challenges experienced by customers. This could include a survey or some other mode of collecting data. Develop a strategy to streamline and provide more efficient customer service communications and implement the strategy.*

Lead Implementors: *Information Technology, City Clerk*

Partners: *All City Departments*

MAP CONSERVATION PRIORITIES IN LARAMIE AND ALBANY COUNTY

Description: *Work with conservation partners to identify, map, and prioritize important natural resources, wildlife habitat corridors, riparian areas, viewsheds, prime agricultural lands, and other important natural lands in Laramie and within Albany County. This map can serve as the starting point for developing a coordinated plan to conserve the highest priority areas. Where adequate protection measures do not already exist, consider implementing plans, policies, and regulations to apply needed protections.*

Lead Implementors: *Planning Division, Engineering Division*

Partners: *Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Pilot Hill Project, Laramie Rivers Conservation District, Albany County, University of Wyoming, Wyoming Stock Growers Land Trust, Albany County Conservancy, The Nature Conservancy*

CREATE A SHARED USE AGREEMENT FOR PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES WITH ALBANY COUNTY SCHOOLS

Description: *Work with Albany County Schools to develop a shared use agreement for school fields, parks, and other facilities to augment existing facilities available to residents and visitors.*

Lead Implementors: *City Manager, Parks and Recreation Department*

Partners: *Albany County Schools*

PROVIDE EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS ON THE BENEFITS OF NATIVE AND XERIC LANDSCAPES

Description: *Create a public education campaign to promote the benefits of native and xeric landscapes on private and public lands.*

Lead Implementors: *Public Works*

Partners*: University of Wyoming, Laramie Garden Club*

TIER 2 ACTIONS

The following actions can be considered for implementation upon completion of initiating Tier 1 actions or as guided by City Council Goals. At that time, the specific parties to be involved with each action will be identified, including the department or community partner that will lead the effort and any supporting departments or partners.

ACTION	LEAD IMPLEMENTORS	PARTNERS
WORK AND PROSPER: WORKFORCE AND THE *LOCAL* ECONOMY (*WLE*)		
WLE.1: Develop a marketing strategy for the region to support talent recruitment and retention, including features like local employer spotlights, cost of living index, quality-of-life benefits, a jobs board or talent-engagement portal, and an ambassador program for new recruits.	Community and Economic Development	City Manager's Office; Laramie Chamber Business Alliance; University of Wyoming
WLE.2: Explore incentives, like housing assistance or a forgivable loan program, for students who remain in Laramie working in their respective field for a certain period of time after graduation.	Community and Economic Development	Finance; University of Wyoming; Laramie Chamber Business Alliance
WLE.3: Convene the city's economic development partners, major employers, workforce organizations, and educational institutions to identify local wage gaps and develop strategies to increase access to higher-paying jobs. Strategies may include workforce training, employer recruitment and expansion, career pathways, and consideration of wage standards for city-funded incentive programs.	Community and Economic Development	Laramie Chamber Business Alliance; University of Wyoming; Human Resources

ACTION	LEAD IMPLEMENTORS	PARTNERS
WLE.4: Conduct an annual employer survey and industry roundtable to identify priority occupations, workforce shortages, and required employee skills and qualifications. Use the findings to inform workforce-training programs, career pathways, and business recruitment and retention efforts.	Community and Economic Development	Laramie Chamber Business Alliance; University of Wyoming
WLE.5: Work with local education and training institutions to improve connections between students and local employment through internships, career fairs, employer outreach, and promotion of available career opportunities in Laramie.	Community and Economic Development	University of Wyoming; Laramie Chamber Business Alliance; Human Resources
WLE.6: Collaborate with local developers to identify the most effective incentives to expand early-career housing options (such as attainable rentals, roommate-friendly units, or employer-assisted housing). These conversations may be revisited every 2-5 years.	Community and Economic Development	Laramie Chamber Business Alliance; Finance
WLE.7: In partnership with educational institutions and the Laramie Chamber Business Alliance, enhance social/professional networks for young professionals (peer groups, leadership programs, community integration).	Community and Economic Development	University of Wyoming; Laramie Chamber Business Alliance; Parks and Recreation
WLE.8: Develop a business attraction and recruitment strategy for target industries that includes relevant city data and market reports, such as top industries, population and labor force statistics, available properties and shovel ready parcels, land and construction costs, taxes, permitting fees, development times, and testimonials from business leaders about the benefits of operating in Laramie.	Community and Economic Development	Engineering Division; Laramie Chamber Business Alliance; Wyoming Business Council
WLE.9: Partner with the Wyoming Business Council, economic development organizations, and employers throughout the region to collaborate on a regional business retention strategy, including specific steps for supporting successful businesses that may be growing out of their existing spaces.	Community and Economic Development	Laramie Chamber Business Alliance; Wyoming Business Council
WLE.10: Partner with tourism organizations to coordinate a cohesive marketing campaign for a variety of audiences.	Community and Economic Development	Laramie Chamber Business Alliance; Local tourism organizations

ACTION	LEAD IMPLEMENTORS	PARTNERS
WLE.11: Support tourism-supporting businesses, such as hospitality, retail, dining, and lodging, through business development initiatives like mini-grants, tax incentives, and specialized job training and employment perks.	Community and Economic Development	Laramie Chamber Business Alliance; Finance; Tourism and hospitality partners
WLE.12: Enhance overall visitor experience through gateway and corridor improvements, beautification efforts, connected bicycle/pedestrian pathways, and wayfinding infrastructure that better directs visitors to downtown and commercial areas.	Public Works; Parks and Recreation	Community and Economic Development; Laramie Main Street
WLE.13: Increase the frequency of special events that bring in additional visitors to the community.	Parks and Recreation; Community and Economic Development	City Clerk; Police; Fire; Laramie Chamber Business Alliance
WORK AND PROSPER: FISCAL HEALTH (FH)		
FH.1: Strategically budget for new revenue sources, based on the priorities identified in this plan and the City's other fiscal priorities.	City Manager's Office; Finance	All City departments
FH.2: City will continue to weigh benefits, need, and ability to use additional general purpose versus specific purpose tax revenue, based on the nature and scope of upcoming projects and community priorities.	City Manager's Office; Finance	City Council; Public Works
FH.3: Evaluate current local user charges to determine where adjustments may be made to increase revenue potential, while maintaining reasonable rates for the local community	Finance	City Manager's Office; Relevant service departments
FH.4: Develop priority lists of projects that may require additional philanthropic funding.	City Manager's Office	Finance; Relevant project departments
FH.5: Identify funding partners including foundations and specific grant funding opportunities that may help the city reach its goals.	Relevant project departments	City Manager's Office; Finance
FH.6: Understand the current state lodging tax disbursement structure and opportunities to lobby for additional funding allocation.	Community and Economic Development; City Manager's Office	Finance; Tourism organizations

ACTION	LEAD IMPLEMENTORS	PARTNERS
FH.7: Develop a tourism expenditure capture strategy focused on increasing length of stay, visitor spending per trip, and reducing economic leakage.	Community and Economic Development	Laramie Chamber Business Alliance; Tourism organizations
FH.8: Continue partnering with Visit Laramie on the data-driven approach to track visitor behavior, length of stay, and spending patterns to inform future investments and strategies.	Finance	City Manager's Office; Relevant service departments
FH.9: Evaluate the opportunity to use community benefit agreements to secure new infrastructure or facilities as part of development review, particularly for intensive uses like data centers.	Finance and City Attorney	City Manager's Office; Community and Economic Development
WORK AND PROSPER: GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT (GD)		
GD.1: Prepare a West Laramie revitalization plan or conduct a focused study to identify and provide recommendations for needed infrastructure improvements such as streets, sewer, water, parks and public services, beautification, sidewalks and economics.	Community and Economic Development; Public Works	Parks and Recreation; Albany County
GD.2: Review the utility and service capacity in and around targeted redevelopment areas and upgrade facilities to support planned development intensities, as needed.	Public Works	Community and Economic Development; Fire Department
***LIVE AND BELONG:* HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS (HN)**		
HN.1: Promote residential growth within the Downtown Commercial zoning district through tools like the Laramie Main Street Low Interest Revolving Loan.	Community and Economic Development	Laramie Main Street; Finance
HN.2: Continue to audit development regulations on a regular basis, which should include conversations with developers, to understand how different regulations impact the cost of housing development.	Community and Economic Development	Development community
HN.3: Continue to work with development applicants to clarify development review procedures to avoid project delays and additional unforeseen costs. This may include the creation of handouts/information guides to explain complex processes.	Community and Economic Development	Laramie Main Street; Finance
HN.4: Conduct a housing needs and market study that identifies specific ownership and rental gaps by income level, household size, and tenure. Study findings should establish measurable, periodically updated affordability targets that provide developers with clear guidance about the types and price ranges of housing that may qualify for assistance through the Community and Economic Development Department infrastructure fund.	Community and Economic Development	Albany County; Laramie Chamber Business Alliance; University of Wyoming

ACTION	LEAD IMPLEMENTORS	PARTNERS
HN.5: Assess the current and future demand for housing for older adults aging in place, from nursing to assisted living, senior-communities, and high-end condos. Publish this information for use by developers and other implementation and funding partners.	Community and Economic Development	Albany County Public Health; Housing and senior services providers
HN.6: Establish and maintain relationships with builders and financial institutions to enable the development of affordable housing, such as through the creation of revolving funds, pre-construction loan funds, and other tools.	Community and Economic Development	Finance; Builders and financial institutions
HN.7: Explore the viability of a HOME Investment Partnership Consortium with partners within and surrounding Laramie, including Albany County and nearby counties, to increase the number of housing units affordable to households earning at or below 50% AMI.	Community and Economic Development	Finance; Albany County; Neighboring counties
HN.8: Evaluate the need for and feasibility of developing single-occupancy units, shelter beds, and transitional housing for vulnerable populations.	Community and Economic Development	Albany County Public Health; Albany County; Housing and social service providers
HN.9: Coordinate with local employers and higher-education institutions to explore homesharing opportunities for students, employees, and other residents seeking lower-cost housing.	Community and Economic Development	University of Wyoming; Laramie Chamber Business Alliance; Local employers
HN.10: Promote the work of organizations that offer income assistance and housing programs by sharing educational and outreach materials.	Community and Economic Development	Information Technology; Housing and social service organizations
HN.11: Partner with Albany County to establish a Homeownership Zone from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to reclaim vacant and blighted properties, increase homeownership, and promote economic revitalization.	Community and Economic Development	Albany County; Finance

ACTION	LEAD IMPLEMENTORS	PARTNERS
HN.12: Through the city's new Rental Housing Program Coordinator, coordinate with housing organizations, social services institutions, Albany County Public Health, and other agencies to improve the quality and safety of rental units.	Community and Economic Development; Environmental Health	Albany County Public Health; Rental Housing Program Coordinator; Housing service organizations
HN.13: Compile and maintain information on available funding and technical assistance programs, and share these opportunities with property owners seeking to rehabilitate or maintain existing homes.	Community and Economic Development	Housing rehabilitation organizations
HN.14: Initiate and support projects and programs to improve neighborhood and corridor conditions, such as infrastructure repair, open and green space development, or removal of unsafe structures.	Public Works; Parks and Recreation	Community and Economic Development
CONNECT AND NURTURE: PLACEMAKING (P)		
P.1: Incorporate features such as shade, seating, and lighting in public spaces to encourage safe and comfortable use across all seasons.	Parks and Recreation	Public Works
P.2: Update city-owned, pedestrian-scale signage (such as interpretive signs and wayfinding signs) to improve legibility for visually-impaired users.	Parks and Recreation; Public Works	Accessibility advocates
P.3: Create and support existing programs and enrichment activities designed to facilitate interactions between youth and older adults.	Parks and Recreation	Public Works
P.4: Allocate funding to incorporate art in high-visibility capital improvement projects, such as a new park or government facility.	City Manager's Office; Public Works	Finance; Parks and Recreation; Arts organizations
P.5: Establish partnerships with local and regional artists and include these partners in conversations at the onset of designing new public facilities.	Public Works	Local and regional artists
P.6: Encourage the activation of alleys as part of downtown redevelopment projects through improvements such as pedestrian-friendly walkways, lighting, public art, outdoor seating, and connections to adjacent businesses.	Community and Economic Development; Public Works	Laramie Main Street; Downtown property owners

ACTION	LEAD IMPLEMENTORS	PARTNERS
CONNECT AND NURTURE: TRANSPORTATION (T)		
T.1: Continue to work with the Albany County Transportation Authority, University of Wyoming, and other partners to expand public transit services, including on-demand services.	Community and Economic Development; Public Works	Albany County; Albany County Transportation Authority; University of Wyoming
T.2: Improve connectivity throughout Laramie through projects that address safety, condition, capacity, accessibility, and maintenance needs across the full network.	Public Works	Community and Economic Development
T.3: Explore potential revenue sources to secure committed funding for ongoing street improvement and maintenance. Dedicate staff time to research and apply for grant funding to support network improvements.	Public Works; Finance	City Manager's Office
T.4: Perform a condition inventory of bike lanes and trails to assess condition and maintenance requirements, and allocate funding to repair areas back to city standards, especially in areas with high pedestrian traffic.	Public Works	Parks and Recreation; Finance; Information Technology
T.5: Conduct an audit to identify intersections that would be good candidates for testing low-cost safety improvements (e.g., high-visibility crosswalks, improved signage, removing visual obstructions, signal timing adjustments, and other solutions) and install said improvements.	Public Works	Community and Economic Development
T.6: Where warranted through Engineering design, construct crosswalk improvements such as striping, pedestrian countdown timers, and audible traffic signals, prioritizing improvements in high-traffic areas and areas of known conflict between vehicles and pedestrians.	Public Works	Community and Economic Development
T.7: Adopt a Vision Zero policy to prevent traffic fatalities and severe injuries, and promote safe and equitable mobility. Continue utilizing less costly tactical urbanism improvements, such as installation of bollards and painting pedestrian/bike facilities, to support these efforts.	Public Works	Community and Economic Development
T.8: Adopt a complete streets policy that speaks to the city's role in planning, designing, and building streets that enable safe access and movement for all users.	Public Works; Community and Economic Development	Parks and Recreation
T.9: Work with the Laramie Regional Airport Joint Powers Board to implement the 2025 Airport Master Plan. Work with the Board to identify any needed changes to the Unified Development Code to support airport economic development efforts.	Laramie Regional Airport Joint Powers Board	Community and Economic Development

ACTION	LEAD IMPLEMENTORS	PARTNERS
T.10: Building on the findings in the 2025 Asset Management Report, create a plan for installing accessibility improvements to the city's sidewalk network.	Public Works	Community and Economic Development; Accessibility advocates
T.11: Coordinate with WYDOT, Albany County, and private property owners to conduct corridor studies along major thoroughfares that would identify necessary and feasible roadway improvements.	Public Works; Community and Economic Development	WYDOT; Albany County
T.12: Where practicable, coordinate major street improvements with the timing of development projects and consider contributing additional city funding to improve the aesthetic of major streets.	Public Works	Community and Economic Development
T.13: Improve parking access, availability, and curbside management in Downtown Laramie through implementation of the goals and actions in the Laramie Downtown Development Plan.	Public Works; Community and Economic Development	Laramie Main Street; Police Department
T.14: Evaluate the need to regulate the use of e-bikes and e-scooters on city streets, multi-use paths, and other bicycle and pedestrian facilities.	Community and Economic Development; Police Department	Public Works; Parks and Recreation; City Attorney
T.15: Identify high traffic areas within the city for the installation of EV charging stations.	Public Works; Community and Economic Development	Electric utilities; Private property owners
T.16: Allocate staff time to researching and recommending regulatory changes that support the implementation of new community-supported transportation technologies.	Public Works	City Attorney; Parks and Recreation
CONNECT AND NURTURE: PARKS AND RECREATION (PR)		
PR.1: Evaluate use and capacity of regional recreation amenities. This will inform uses that may be able to be marketed and those that are close to capacity.	Parks and Recreation	Community and Economic Development; Regional recreation providers
PR.2: Determine which regional amenities may be enhanced with scheduled connections to the city. This may include van pooling or buses to regional destinations for residents.	Parks and Recreation; Community and Economic Development	Albany County; Transit providers

ACTION	LEAD IMPLEMENTORS	PARTNERS
PR.3: Evaluate potential programmatic updates based on facility capability and community interests.	Parks and Recreation	Community recreation organizations
PR.4: Promote local businesses that offer recreation rentals, and explore opportunities to partner with rental businesses to expand Parks and Recreation program offerings.	Parks and Recreation	Community and Economic Development; Local recreation businesses
PR.5: Coordinate citywide greenbelt, trail, shared-use-path, sidewalk, and on-street bicycle connections through the Major Street Plan and Parks and Recreation Master Plan.	Public Works; Parks and Recreation	Community and Economic Development
PR.6: Identify connections from neighborhoods that can enhance access to regional and nearby amenities. Use enhanced signage and wayfinding to accomplish this objective.	Parks and Recreation; Public Works	Community and Economic Development
PR.7: Coordinate marketing of recreation opportunities (such as through the creation of pamphlets, web resources, and social media posts that catalogue recreation options) between local and regional partners.	Parks and Recreation	Community and Economic Development; Information Technology; Tourism partners
PR.8: As part of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan update, create an updated GIS trails layer, formatted for use in the City's mapping systems and compatible with public-facing platforms such as Google Maps, to help ensure that trail routes, access points, and connections are accurately reflected in commonly-used navigation tools.	Parks and Recreation; Information Technology	Community and Economic Development; Public Works
CONNECT AND NURTURE: PUBLIC HEALTH (PH)		
PH.1: Establish a protocol for Environmental Health participation in development review.	Community and Economic Development	
PH.2: Conduct a regular meeting between Laramie leadership and Albany County Public Health to identify ways that Laramie can best support their community efforts, and vice versa.	Community and Economic Development	Albany County Public Health
PH.3: Create partnerships with organizations like the Eppson Center to achieve the healthy community vision, such as promoting age-inclusive spaces and reducing isolation in older population.	Parks and Recreation; Community and Economic Development	Albany County Public Health; Eppson Center; Community organizations

ACTION	LEAD IMPLEMENTORS	PARTNERS
PH.4: Work with the Wyoming Business Council to implement the workplace resources for Laramie businesses from the Work Well Wyoming initiative from the Wyoming Department of Health. See also *"Workforce and the Local Economy" on page 15*.	Community and Economic Development	Human Resources; Wyoming Business Council; Laramie Chamber Business Alliance
PH.5: Consider proximity to sensitive receptors, such as hospitals and other health care facilities, schools, day cares, and other immobile populations, when reviewing new facilities and businesses handling hazardous waste.	Community and Economic Development	Fire Department; Albany County Public Health
PH.6: Conduct a health needs assessment for Laramie and connect to existing plans and processes, such as parks and recreation improvements.	Community and Economic Development	Albany County Public Health; Parks and Recreation
PH.7: Host an annual health fair that brings mobile unit preventive and primary care health services to the Laramie community, either as a standalone event or in conjunction with other community-wide events.	Community and Economic Development; Parks and Recreation	Albany County Public Health; Healthcare providers
PH.9: Work with the Albany County Public Health, with support from other County and State agencies, to gather community support and to obtain grants for a detox facility.	Community and Economic Development	Albany County Public Health; State and county agencies
PH.10: Increase public awareness among property owners about how they can support accessibility on their adjacent sidewalks and driveways. Work with the Laramie Advisory Council on Disability, Board of Health and other interagency partners to improve physical access for differently abled people of all ages.	Public Works	Community and Economic Development; Information Technology
PH.11: With Albany County Mental Health (Interagency) Board, explore and develop community integrative programs to address mental health needs.	Community and Economic Development; Police Department	Albany County Public Health; Albany County Mental Health (Interagency) Board

ACTION	LEAD IMPLEMENTORS	PARTNERS
PH.12: Conduct a community mental health awareness campaign by sharing available services through regional providers and Albany County Public Health.	Community and Economic Development	Albany County Public Health; Information Technology; Mental health providers
PH.13: Support partnerships and investments that expand reliable, affordable high-speed internet access for community members, particularly in areas with limited service or barriers to digital access, to improve connections for telehealth, health information, social services, education, employment, and emergency communications.	Community and Economic Development; Information Technology	City Manager's Office; Broadband providers
STEWARD AND CONSERVE: NATURAL RESOURCES (NR)		
NR.1: Explore opportunities to provide "out of the box" planting designs for xeric gardeners that are pre-approved for compliance with the Unified Development Code.	Community and Economic Development	Parks and Recreation
NR.2: Review and update regulations related to development in and near the Casper Aquifer and Laramie River floodplain to ensure they align with recent studies and adequately protect the health and viability of these areas.	Community and Economic Development	Public Works; City Attorney
NR.3: Evaluate potential impacts from high-intensity or water-intensive land uses (such as data centers) and update the regulations as necessary to protect the Casper Aquifer and Laramie River floodplain.	Community and Economic Development	Public Works
NR.4: Identify potential partners and establish relationships to support natural resource protection.	Parks and Recreation	Community and Economic Development; Conservation organizations
NR.5: Continue to implement the recommendations of the Casper Aquifer Protection Plan.	Parks and Recreation; Public Works	Community and Economic Development; Aquifer protection partners
NR.6: Establish a Natural Resources Plan for city open space that details actions needed for maintenance, who is responsible for accomplishing those actions, and how the maintenance is to be funded.	Parks and Recreation	Community and Economic Development; Finance

ACTION	LEAD IMPLEMENTORS	PARTNERS
NR.7: Monitor use of existing natural assets and encroachment impacts from nearby development to determine if increased access is compromising the long-term health or viability of the assets.	Parks and Recreation	Community and Economic Development
STEWARD AND CONSERVE: HAZARD RESILIENCY (HR)		
HR.1: Continue public education efforts related to the most likely hazards that could impact Laramie. Education should emphasize awareness and preparedness for residents of the community.	Fire; Albany County Emergency Management Agency	Information Technology
HR.2: Regularly review and update city dust control standards for bare ground and construction sites to complement Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality air quality requirements. Identify the city's responsibilities and enforcement mechanisms, and encourage the use of groundcover plantings to reduce erosion and airborne dust.	Community and Economic Development; Public Works	Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality
HR.3: Identify and map locally documented drainage concerns and critical watercourse conveyance areas that may not be reflected in FEMA floodplain maps.	Public Works	Community and Economic Development; Information Technology
HR.4: Work with the Albany County Emergency Management Department on the installation, testing, and maintenance of warning sirens.	Albany County Emergency Management Agency	
HR.5: Where federal, state, or county funds are not available to accomplish mitigation actions, identify potential funding sources to enable continuing implementation of city-specific mitigation actions.	Albany County Emergency Management Agency	City Manager's Office; Finance; Public Works
HR.6: Maintain regular contact with emergency response partners outside of emergency response events.	Albany County Emergency Management Agency; Fire; Police	Regional emergency response partners
HR.7: Participate in tabletop and functional exercises as the opportunity arises to support hazard response preparedness.	Albany County Emergency Management Agency; Fire; Police	Regional emergency response partners
HR.8: Ensure communication channels and equipment are functional and available for use in the event of a larger-scale incident.	Albany County Emergency Management Agency; Information Technology	Fire; Police; City Manager's Office

ACTION	LEAD IMPLEMENTORS	PARTNERS
HR.9: Monitor staffing and training of emergency responders. Identify evolving needs for staffing, training, and equipment, and determine the source for funds to meet these needs.	Fire; Police	Human Resources; Finance; City Manager's Office
HR.10: Work with partners to monitor how changing climate impacts existing and potentially new hazards.	Albany County Emergency Management Agency	
HR.11: Assess community resources to respond to a prolonged heat event, including locations to establish shelters and cooling centers, and agreements for use of the facilities with property owners. (Cooling centers may be established in the same fire department locations that have been identified for warming centers.)	Albany County Emergency Management Agency; Parks and Recreation	Albany County Public Health; Community service providers
SERVE AND COLLABORATE: PUBLIC UTILITIES AND SERVICES (PUS)		
PUS.1: Provide cross-training between departments and identify opportunities for collaboration and streamlining services.	City Manager's Office; Human Resources	All City departments
PUS.2: Create a citywide "Service Excellence Standard" and training program that defines expectations for responsiveness, communication, and accountability across all departments, paired with internal recognition for high-performing staff and teams.	City Manager's Office; Human Resources	All City departments
PUS.3: Establish a real-time service feedback loop (e.g., post-interaction text/email surveys or QR codes) to capture immediate input on customer experience and allow for rapid response and continuous improvement.	City Manager's Office; Information Technology	All City departments
PUS.4: Working across city departments as relevant, develop and implement strategies to address perceived or real public service response shortfalls.	City Manager's Office	All City departments
PUS.5: Hold public meetings to review and discuss proposed Specific Purpose Tax projects as they are considered, with an emphasis on explaining how these projects are selected, funded, and the specific work to be completed.	City Manager's Office; Finance	Public Works

ACTION	LEAD IMPLEMENTORS	PARTNERS
SERVE AND COLLABORATE: GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATIONS (GC)		
GC.1: Continue to work with the University of Wyoming on land disposal, transfer, and acquisition opportunities.	City Manager's Office; Community and Economic Development	City Attorney; Finance; University of Wyoming
GC.2: Establish a formal process to monitor Comprehensive Plan implementation that outlines review frequency and includes updates to boards and commissions.	Community and Economic Development	All City departments
GC.3: Work with local service providers to catalog the full range of services provided by Laramie and Albany County providers.	City Manager's Office; Community and Economic Development	Albany County; Information Technology; Local service providers
GC.4: Identify opportunities and allocate funding for continuing education and training existing city employees on how to use new technology as it relates to their jobs.	Human Resources; Information Technology	All City departments
GC.5: Create a civic engagement program to educate the community on the roles and responsibilities of each department, the powers of elected officials, and ways to participate in public processes.	City Manager's Office; City Clerk	All City departments
GC.6: Conduct an audit of recent city-led engagement efforts to determine which public engagement approaches are most effective in Laramie.	City Manager's Office; Community and Economic Development	All City departments
GC.7: Continue to partner with local educational institutions to identify opportunities for mutually-beneficial student engagement in city planning efforts (such as through collegiate capstone projects).	Community and Economic Development	Local educational institutions



Forge Exchange - Laramie Staff

MONITORING AND REPORTING

The comprehensive plan will guide city investments and initiatives for all departments and divisions that play a role in shaping the physical fabric of the community. To maintain a focus on implementation, the city will develop an approach to track implementation status for Tier 1 actions and report on the status every two years, or as requested, to the Planning Commission and City Council.

UPDATING AND AMENDING THE PLAN

Just as community conditions are not static, the plans that guide them should evolve to address new conditions and opportunities. Best practices suggest that the comprehensive plan should be updated on a 10-year cycle. However, changing conditions may warrant more frequent updates to provide clear direction.

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Keep moving, there's plenty more ahead!





Old Ledger - BHP Photo

APPENDIX

FORGE Laramie Final Report

Kara Waskowiak
Emily Bauer
Hudson Urruttia
Blake Houser

ENR 4950
University of Wyoming
May 12, 2026

UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING | Haub School of Environment and Natural Resources

FORGE LARAMIE

Research Brief
Spring 2026



Collecting Student Sentiment for FORGE Laramie

Research & Brief by Blake Houser, Emily Bauer, Kara Waskowiak, and Hudson Urruttia

Why it's Needed

The City of Laramie is currently facing a persistent issue, a significant portion of college graduates leave the community following completion of their degrees. The Wyoming Business Council reports that nearly two-thirds of students leave Wyoming and Laramie after graduation (Wyoming Business Council, 2024). Despite being home to multiple higher education institutions (University of Wyoming, WyoTech, and Laramie County Community College), Laramie has struggled to retain young, educated individuals who could otherwise contribute to the city's long-term economic vitality and workforce development.

The FORGE Laramie Comprehensive Plan aims to outline long-term growth and development, and the retention of Laramie's college-aged population is critical to the city's long-term growth. Without effectively incorporating student perspectives, the comprehensive plan risks overlooking one of the most influential populations of our city. The need for this project arises from a rift between planning efforts, perspectives, priorities, and experiences of college-aged residents in Laramie. Currently, FORGE Laramie's efforts focus on broad community sentiments and satisfaction; it does not currently capture student specific sentiment for post-graduation retention. Understanding the motivations of this population is essential for designing targeted retention strategies that align with both student needs and the city's development goals.

Statistics

The following statistics were extracted from our survey data conducted across the three college campuses in Laramie (WyoTech, Laramie County Community College, and the University of Wyoming).

- We gathered over 300 responses from college-aged students.
- 44% of responses were from out-of-state students
- 73% of responses came from UW students
- Half of surveyed students stated they would **not** stay in Laramie after graduation. While roughly a third of those surveyed said the might stay in Laramie
- The majority of respondents stated they like Laramie due to its access to outdoor recreation, downtown, and small-town feel.
- 214 students stated they wanted to see more entertainment options such as concerts and festivals in Laramie.
- 46% of students feel affordable housing and competitive wages are the most important priorities when determining where to live after graduation.
- Half of respondents stated lack of employment opportunities is the biggest barrier to living in Laramie after graduation.

Our Process

1. Partnered with City of Laramie planners and Clarion Associates to align project goals with the FORGE Laramie Comprehensive Plan
2. Developed cross-campus survey questions from the FORGE framework
3. Administered survey via Qualtrics and in-person outreach to maximize student participation
4. Collected and organized responses from a diverse, multi-campus student sample
5. Analyzed data using descriptive statistics and created visualizations to identify key trends
6. Synthesized findings into recommendations and delivered final report and materials to the City of Laramie







Findings

Survey findings suggest that while Laramie is viewed positively during college, it struggles to retain graduates due to gaps in economic opportunity and overall livability. Responses consistently emphasized employment as the primary factor shaping post-graduation decisions. Students appreciate and value Laramie's access to outdoor recreation and the small-town environment. However, they feel entertainment options (such as concerts & festivals) and third-places are missing from the community. Our analysis of the responses indicate a strong demand for mid-size national retailers—particularly Target & Costco—as well as accessible dining such as Dutch Bros and Applebee's.

These requests reflect not only brand preference, but broader gaps in affordability, retail diversity, and social infrastructure. Multiple respondents also noted traveling to nearby cities for access to these services, suggesting ongoing economic leakage. Concerns around housing affordability and variety, as well as everyday infrastructure challenges, further contribute to this disconnect. Together, these themes point to risks of outmigration and competition from nearby cities and states while also highlighting opportunities to improve job access, expand community-oriented spaces, and better align the local environment with students' long-term needs.

Images from: University of Wyoming website, LaramieLCCC Facebook Page, and Fleet Management Magazine.

Importance

This project directly supports the City of Laramie's ongoing planning efforts by providing insights of student perceptions supported by data. By conducting a cross-campus, online questionnaire survey, the project ensures that a diverse sample of the student population is included in the planning process. Rather than depending on assumptions of student's perceptions, the survey provided the FORGE Comprehensive plan with empirical evidence.

Thank you!

to our collaborators and stakeholders including...

Haub School of Environment and Natural Resources

Dr. Richard Vercoe
ENR Capstone Professor

Laramie Wyoming

Emma Dixon and
Philipp Gabathuler

...and the various faculty and staff across Laramie who helped distribute our survey.

Abstract

This project was conducted in partnership with the City of Laramie to support the FORGE Laramie Comprehensive Plan by incorporating student perspectives into long term community planning. Laramie is home to three higher education institutions, the University of Wyoming, WyoTech, and Laramie County Community College (LCCC). However, a significant portion of graduates leave the city after completing their education. This pattern contributes to workforce shortages and limits long term economic growth. The purpose of this project was to better understand student perceptions of Laramie and identify factors influencing their decision to stay or leave after graduation.

To accomplish this, our team designed and distributed a cross campus survey using the Qualtrics platform. The survey targeted students across all three institutions and was distributed through classroom outreach and faculty partnerships. Questions focused on key areas including housing, employment opportunities, amenities, transportation, and overall quality of life. The survey was designed to be completed in under five minutes to maximize participation and minimize respondent fatigue. Data collection occurred between late March and late April 2026. Survey results revealed that while students value Laramie's outdoor recreation opportunities and small-town character, a majority do not plan to remain after graduation. The primary factor influencing this decision is the perceived lack of job opportunities and competitive wages. Additionally, students identified gaps in entertainment options, retail, and "third spaces" such as outdoor community gathering areas. Housing affordability and availability as well as infrastructure concerns also emerged as key challenges.

The project produced several deliverables for the City of Laramie, including a comprehensive final report, data visualizations summarizing survey results, and a project brief outlining key findings and recommendations. These deliverables provide actionable insights to support data driven decision making within the FORGE Laramie Comprehensive Plan. Ultimately, this project highlights the importance of integrating student perspectives into local planning efforts to improve post-graduation retention and strengthen Laramie's long-term economic and community development.

Introduction

Our project addressed the incorporation of college age perspectives into the FORGE Laramie Comprehensive Plan in order to better support that population currently and in the long term. Laramie is a small town with multiple colleges within city limits which creates a deeply

tied economy and identity with the students. However many graduates from the University of Wyoming, WyoTech, and LCCC leave Laramie (and often Wyoming) soon after graduation. This creates a planning problem regarding college age retention rates. The FORGE Initiative already seeks to address long term planning concerns, however, effective retention strategies require an understanding of what the students of UW, WyoTech, and LCCC value in a community long term.

Our partnership with the City of Laramie played a central role in the shaping of this project. Emma Dixon (City of Laramie Planner I) and Philip Gabathuler (City of Laramie Planning Manager) consistently communicated with us through emails and in-person meetings. Both planners emphasized that while the FORGE Laramie initiative had gathered broad community input, student perspectives were critical to planning long-term growth. A key takeaway from these conversations was the importance of aligning this project with existing planning efforts. As a result, we adapted our survey design from the broader FORGE Laramie community survey to ensure consistency.

The FORGE Laramie Comprehensive Plan aimed to outline long-term growth and development; the retention of Laramie's college-aged population is critical to the city's long-term growth. Without effectively incorporating student perspectives the comprehensive plan risks overlooking 33.5% of our city (Census Reporter, 2024) The need for this project arises from a rift between planning efforts and the perspectives, priorities, and experiences of college-aged residents in Laramie. Currently, FORGE Laramie's efforts focus on broad community sentiments and satisfaction; it does not currently capture student specific sentiment for post-graduation retention. Understanding the motivations of this population is essential for designing targeted retention strategies that align with both student needs and the city's development goals.

Further guidance was provided through a meeting with Clarion Associates, the consulting company assisting the City of Laramie in their comprehensive plan. This discussion reinforced the importance of identifying both the strengths and weaknesses of Laramie in our survey. Clarion also emphasized the need to think beyond retention and explore how Laramie can become a long-term attractive destination.

Our project produced several key deliverables for the City of Laramie that aimed to provide clear, useful insights for the FORGE Laramie Comprehensive Plan. The primary deliverable was a final report that summarized the project's background, methods, and key findings from our cross-campus survey. This report presented survey results using visualizations such as charts and graphs to clearly communicate trends in student perceptions. We used percentages of collected data from our multiple-choice survey to create said charts. For example, one chart displayed the percentage of students that wanted increased studio apartments compared to other housing structures. The final report also included a brief discussion connecting our survey findings to broader issues like workforce and housing opportunities. In addition, the team provided a set of actionable recommendations, such as increasing housing stock or strengthening community spaces, as supported by the survey results. Finally, we created a project brief which

provided an overview of the most important findings and recommendations. Together, these deliverables ensured that the results of the project were not only informative but useful for city planners.

Project Defense and Literature Review

We identified surveying as the most efficient and scalable method for collecting data from a large population. Qualtrics, a surveying platform supported by the University of Wyoming, was chosen to create our survey. We designed the survey questionnaire to be completed in under five minutes which increased the likelihood of participation while minimizing respondent fatigue. Additionally, the use of primarily closed-ended questions allows for streamlined data analysis. The descriptive statistics and proportions derived from our survey made it possible to generate concise and applicable suggestions within the short period of time given. Overall, the cross-campus survey method is necessary for the sustainable growth and improvement of Laramie, and our strategic planning and efforts make the project actionable.

While existing literature identifies economic and cultural drivers of outmigration, there is limited place-based research capturing student specific perceptions in Laramie. This creates a gap between planning efforts and student experiences. Lamby et al. (2024) highlighted how limited industry opportunities, stagnant wage growth, and continuous student exodus all contribute to Wyoming's workforce shortage. This has created a cycle where graduates leave due to limited opportunity which causes the state to lose skilled laborers causing less industry diversity and more constrained wage growth, which further encourages more graduates to leave. However, culture has also played a role (Young, 2025) with distrust for newcomers and fear of development (Lenhart, 2025).

Vyse (2024) provides a case study from a rural Oregon college community facing similar outmigration issues and the actions taken to encourage retention of graduates. The article highlighted that proactive strategies such as internships, targeted career development efforts, and community integration could lessen student exodus. These findings suggest that outmigration is not an inevitable decline, but rather a community management and integration challenge.

Surveying allows us to have consistent questions for straightforward analysis of the data we gather. Ponto (2015) emphasizes that survey research is flexible, and capable of representing large diverse populations effectively. Thoughtful, non leading, and easily understood questions ensure a representative and reliable deliverable for use in the FORGE plan. Singer and Ye (2013) further expound on the effectiveness of surveys in gathering community input.

The final part of our project will include our analysis of the survey data. The Queensland Government Statistician's Office (2015) provides guidance on effectively presenting survey results in research reports. The guide emphasizes the use of descriptive statistics and proportions when analyzing survey responses. These methods make large datasets easier to interpret and apply. By summarizing responses into clear percentages and statistical descriptions rather than

writing each individual response, researchers can present findings in a practical format. This approach is particularly useful for large-scale planning and implementation. It allows the reader to quickly understand key trends and patterns within the data. In the context of this study, using descriptive statistics to report survey findings will provide a concise description of students' perception of Laramie.

Methods

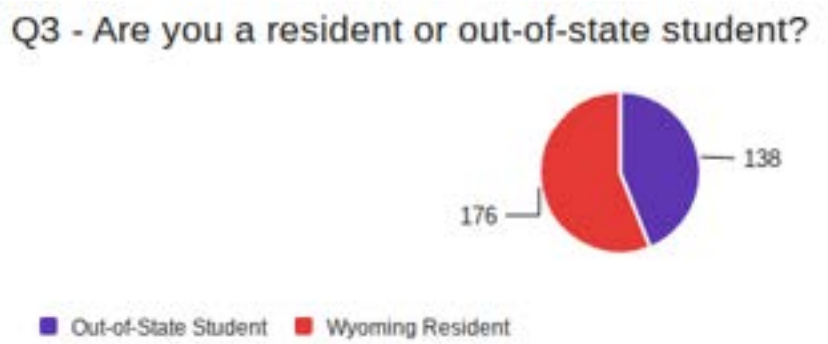
The FORGE Laramie timeline laid out key project objectives, deliverables, and due dates from the start of the semester. We began by reviewing background information (February 19), developed our project methods (March 8), investigation plan (March 15), project plan (March 24), and annotated bibliography (March 29). We created the survey by March 8th and released it on March 26th. After that, we conducted classroom outreach in University of Wyoming classes (March 30–April 3 and April 19–25) and LCCC classes (April 5–10). Data collection ended on April 25. We also completed recorded presentations on March 31st and finished synthesizing results by April 30th. The project concluded with transferring the data to the city on May 12th and submitting the final report, including figures, on May 14th.

As we aimed to gather as much data on student perception of Laramie, it was important to gather input in an effective, efficient way. Surveying allowed us to have consistent questions for straightforward analysis of the data we gathered. A Qualtrics survey was our means of collecting information that could help better understand the student demographic. As we sought to understand student perception of Laramie, online surveying was the most effective practice for efficiency’s sake. Utilizing these methods, we created a survey geared toward young people, which was administered online and broadcast through in-person classroom visits. We contacted specific professors from diverse schools and majors within the University of Wyoming, LCCC, and WyoTech to get authorization to enter classrooms and discuss the survey. For LCCC, we got in contact with a professor who forwarded our request to Nicole Beumer, an administrative assistant to Dean Damien Kortum. Dean Kortum then forwarded our request to professors teaching during the spring semester. For the University of Wyoming, we reached out to multiple heads of different schools to try and cast as broad a net as possible given the school’s diverse and widespread scholarship. From there, we engaged with professors directly through email and in-person communication to gain permission to speak in their courses. Finally, our team would speak at the beginning of courses to students about taking our survey. We would give a short introduction speech and encourage participants to scan a QR code that directed them directly to our survey instrument. This process took under ten minutes to respect the professor's class time and gather as many responses as possible.

Results

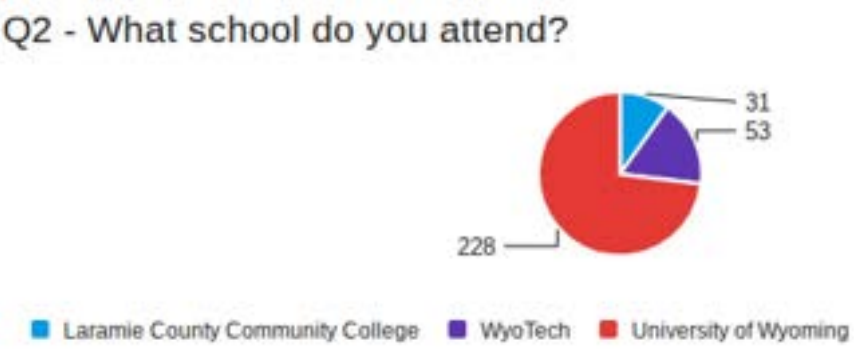
Survey findings reveal a clear and consistent narrative of student perceptions about Laramie. While the community is attractive during college, it struggles to retain graduates due to structural gaps in opportunity and livability. In Figure One, our sample size is displayed with the University of Wyoming being the largest portion of our survey respondents at 73%. Additionally, we had a notable number of responses (44%) from the out-of-state population, underscoring that retention is not just a campus issue but an economic development challenge.

Figure 1



Results from question 3 of the student sentiment survey illustrating the quantity of student respondents residency status

Figure 2

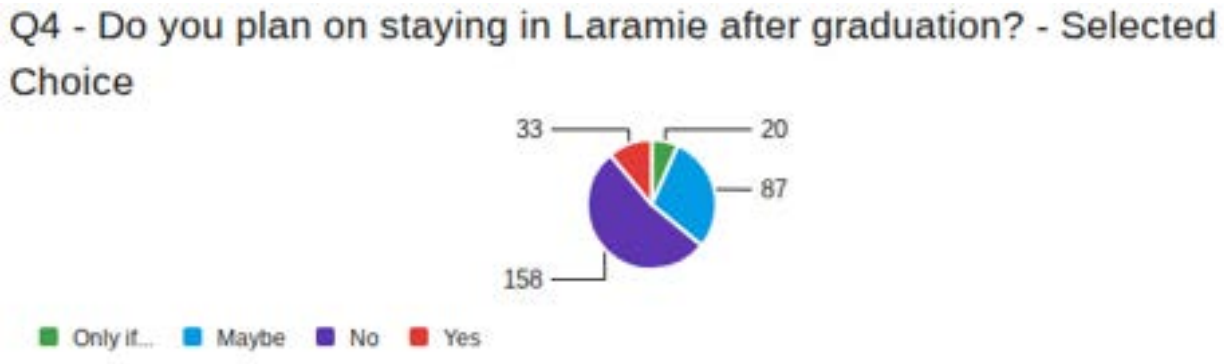


Results from question 2 of the student sentiment survey illustrating the quantity of student respondents from each institution

A majority of respondents (53%) do not plan to stay after graduation, with only 11% intending to remain, and the primary driver across all data is employment 51% cite lack of job opportunities as the top barrier, and most conditional responses hinge on securing stable,

well-paying work (Figure 3). This reinforces employment as the primary retention driver. Without economic expansion, other improvements will not significantly reduce outmigration. Beyond employment, students experience a lifestyle mismatch: while they value Laramie's outdoor recreation (74%) and small-town feel (67%), they report significant gaps in entertainment, social life, and retail, with 72% wanting more entertainment options and frequent requests for "third spaces" like cafés, music venues, and non-bar social environments. This suggests that while Laramie meets basic livability needs, it lacks the social infrastructure necessary to retain young professionals long-term.

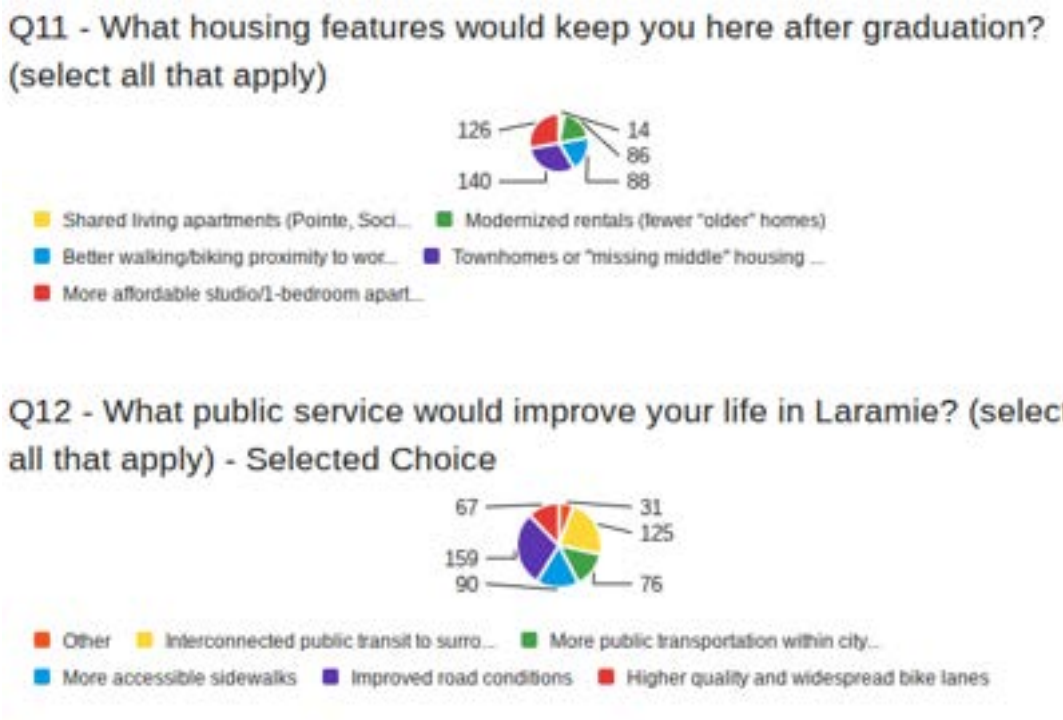
Figure 3



Results from question 4 of the student sentiment survey illustrating the number of total students who expect to stay in Laramie after graduation. Additionally 13 of 19 "only if" responses contained language pertaining to employment being the driving factor in determining if they stay or leave.

Figure Three highlights concerns about housing and public services in Laramie. Housing presents a key friction point, with demand for affordable one-bedroom units (46%) and "missing middle" housing (51%), alongside concerns about cost, quality, and limited variety. Infrastructure challenges, including road conditions, parking, and regional connectivity, further contribute to daily frustration.

Figure 4



Results from questions 11 and 12 of the student sentiment survey illustrate the need for improved housing conditions and types, along with improvements desired for public services. Improved road conditions, interconnected public transportation, townhomes, and studio/one bedroom apartments dominate these results.

These factors collectively contribute to broader threats such as brain drain, negative perceptions, and competition from outside cities, while also highlighting clear opportunities: job creation as the primary retention factor, expansion of entertainment and community spaces, housing diversification, and retail development to reduce economic leakage. Ultimately, the data shows that students like Laramie but do not see a viable future there. The core challenge and opportunity for the city is to bridge the gap between a strong college experience and clear employment and housing post-graduation.

To address the key factors influencing student retention, several actionable strategies should be prioritized. First, because employment emerged as the primary driver of post-graduation decisions, the City of Laramie should focus on expanding local career pathways by partnering with local businesses to create internship-to-employment pipelines and incentivize companies to hire recent graduates. Targeted investment in industries students are interested in, such as tech, outdoor recreation, and small business development, would further strengthen this effort. Second, the city should invest in social infrastructure to address the strong demand for entertainment and “third spaces.” Supporting the development of outdoor venues and non-bar gathering spaces along with expanding community events and downtown programming, a lively community could help retain young professionals beyond their college years. Third, housing

must be addressed by encouraging the development of affordable one-bedroom units and “missing middle” housing through zoning updates and incentives for developers. Finally, improvements to infrastructure and transportation, including road conditions, parking, bike lanes, and regional connectivity, would enhance quality of life and accessibility. Together, these strategies directly respond to student-identified barriers and position Laramie to better bridge the gap between a positive college experience and a viable long-term future.

Discussion

This capstone project provided valuable experience in applied research, stakeholder collaboration, and large-scale survey implementation. One of the key lessons learned was the importance of early and consistent engagement with outside stakeholders. Working with City of Laramie officials helped ensure that the project remained aligned with real planning needs and improved the overall quality and relevance of the survey design. Early collaboration also allowed us to refine our approach and adapt our survey to better match existing city efforts such as the FORGE Laramie Comprehensive Plan.

As a group, teamwork and delegation of responsibilities worked well. Tasks were divided based on individual strengths which helped streamline the development of materials, outreach efforts, and data analysis. Classroom engagement was especially effective as a distribution method. This allowed us to reach a broad and relevant sample of students across multiple institutions. These in-person classroom visits proved to be one of the most successful strategies for soliciting responses and increasing participation. However, there were also challenges throughout the project. Scheduling errors and occasional miscommunication created brief delays in coordination and task completion. These issues highlighted the importance of clearer timelines and more frequent internal check-ins to ensure everyone remained aligned. Despite these setbacks, the team was able to adjust and complete all major deliverables on time. Overall, the project demonstrated the value of structured teamwork, proactive communication, and direct stakeholder involvement in producing meaningful research outcomes.

Continuity Plan

The next steps for this project focus on ensuring that the data and insights collected continue to be useful beyond the completion of the course. After the survey closed, we transferred the data to the City of Laramie. This transfer included our analyzed results and findings, rather than raw data, in accordance with IRB policy. We also provided an Excel-based summary of results and walked city officials through how the data was organized and how to

interpret our analysis. In addition, we shared the final version of our survey questions so the city could reuse or adapt them for future data collection efforts.

While no specific group has formally committed to continuing this exact project, the City of Laramie and its partners, including those involved in the FORGE Laramie Comprehensive Plan, are positioned to build on our work. Our findings can serve as a foundation for future student-focused research, policy refinement, or follow-up surveys that track changes in student perceptions over time. The long-term goal of this project is to support more effective post-graduate retention strategies by ensuring student perspectives are consistently included in city planning efforts. Ideally, this work will contribute to ongoing data-informed decision-making, improved alignment between student needs and city development goals, and ultimately, a stronger, more sustainable community that retains a larger portion of its educated population.

Conclusion

This project examined student perceptions of Laramie and their relationship to post-graduation retention within the city's three higher education institutions. Through a cross-campus survey and subsequent analysis, we identified key trends in student priorities, experiences, and concerns regarding living in Laramie after graduation. The findings were synthesized into clear data visualizations and summarized insights to support city planning efforts, particularly the FORGE Laramie Comprehensive Plan. Overall, the project highlighted the importance of incorporating student perspectives into long-term planning and provided evidence-based recommendations to help address the city's ongoing challenge of graduate outmigration and workforce retention.

Appendix

Appendix A: Survey Questions

(A). Demographics

1. What is your current standing?
    a. (Undergraduate, Graduate/Professional)
2. What school do you attend?
    a. (UW, WyoTech, LCCC)
3. Are you a resident or out-of-state student?
4. Do you plan on staying in Laramie after graduation?
    a. (Yes / No / Maybe / Only if…[***fill in***])
5. How integrated do you feel in the local community?
    a. Rate from 1 to 5
    b. ***Optional:*** Please explain

(B) Identity & Culture

6. What do you love about Laramie? (check all that apply)
    a. School spirit
    b. Downtown
    c. Access to outdoor recreation
    d. Local art and music scene
    e. Safety
    f. Small-town feel
    g. Other _____[***fill in***]
7. What do you want to see more of in Laramie? (check all that apply)
    a. More corporations (Wholesale clubs, clothing stores, etc)
    b. More small businesses
    c. More entertainment options (Concerts, festivals, etc)
    d. Park Systems
    e. Career opportunities
    f. Available Housing
    g. Off-Campus jobs for students
    h. Other _____[***fill in***]

(C). Living in Laramie

8. What is your current housing situation?

a. On campus housing (dormitory)
b. Off campus apartment complex (Alight, Bison Run, Pointe, Spring Creek, etc.)
c. Medium density rental housing (Duplex, single unit multiple occupant)
d. Medium density owned home
e. Other ___ [***fill in***]

9. How satisfied are you with your current living situation?
    a. Rate from 1 to 5
    b. Optional: Please explain
10. Which of these is the most important when deciding where you will live after graduation?
    a. Close commute to employment
    b. Most affordable housing
    c. Most competitive wages
    d. Near friends & family
    e. Near my partner
    f. Other___[***fill in***]
11. What housing features would keep you here after graduation? (Select all that apply)
    a. More affordable studio/1-bedroom apartments.
    b. Townhomes or "missing middle" housing (not a complex, not a mansion)
    c. Better walking/biking proximity to downtown/campus.
    d. Modernized rentals (fewer “older” homes).
    e. Shared living apartments (Pointe, Social, Alight)

(D) Transportation & Infrastructure

12. What public service would improve your life in Laramie? (Select all that apply)
    a. Higher quality and widespread bike lanes
    b. Improved road conditions
    c. More accessible sidewalks
    d. More public transportation within city limits
    e. Interconnected public transit to surrounding areas (bus/rail route to Cheyenne/Denver)
    f. Other ___ [***fill in***]

(E) Career & Growth

13. What is the biggest barrier preventing you from working in Laramie long-term?
    a. Lack of employment opportunities
    b. Competitive wages
    c. High cost of rent/housing relative to local wages.
    d. Lack of "big city" amenities (entertainment, retail, dining)
    e. Other _____[***fill in***]

(F) Economic Development

14. What industries would you like to see grow in Laramie?
    a. Tech & Innovation
    b. Outdoor Recreation & Tourism.
    c. Public Services (State and Federal Agencies)
    d. Small Businesses
    e. Extraction Industry
    f. Other _____[***fill in***]

(G) Amenities

15. What is one specific business, amenity, or "third space" (like a park, cafe, or venue) that Laramie is currently missing?
    a. Optional open response: _____[***fill in***]

Appendix B: Notable Question Results

Summary of **Q10: Which of these is the most important when deciding where to live after graduation? - Selected Choice**

Sample Size	Number of Distinct Categories
297	6

Reorder/Recode | Bucketing

Q10: Which o...ected Choice	Count	Percent	Cumu...tive
Close commute to employment	37	12.5%	12.5%
Most affordable housing	70	23.6%	36.0%
Most competitive wages	66	22.2%	58.2%
Near friends & family	53	17.8%	76.1%
Near my partner	46	15.5%	91.6%
Other	25	8.4%	100.0%

Summary of **Q11: What housing features would keep you here after graduation? (select all that apply)**

Bucketing

Q11: What hou...l that apply)	Checked Percent		Check...Count	Sample Size
Townhomes or "missing middle" housin...		50.9%	140	275
More affordable studio/1-bedroom apar...		45.8%	126	275
Better walking/biking proximity to work/...		32.0%	88	275
Modernized rentals (fewer "older" hom...		31.3%	86	275
Shared living apartments (Pointe, Socia...		5.1%	14	275

Summary of **Q12: What public service would improve your life in Laramie? (select all that apply) - Selected Choice**

Bucketing

Q12: What pub...lected Choice	Checked Percent		Check...Count	Sample Size
Improved road conditions		56.0%	159	284
Interconnected public transit to surroun...		44.0%	125	284
More accessible sidewalks		31.7%	90	284
More public transportation within city li...		26.8%	76	284
Higher quality and widespread bike lanes		23.6%	67	284
Other		10.9%	31	284

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