



**GENERATION CASPER COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**SUMMER 2017**

**The Community: Special thanks to the entire community for providing their input and time to Generation Casper!**

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## CITY COUNCIL

Kenyne Humphrey,  
Mayor  
Ray Pacheco, Vice Mayor  
Bob Hopkins  
Amanda Huckabay  
Shawn Johnson  
Jesse Morgan  
Dallas Laird  
Charlie Powell  
Chris Walsh  
Stephen Cathey  
(Previous)  
Daniel Sandoval  
(Previous)  
Wayne Heili (Previous)  
Scott Miller (Previous)

## PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

Bob King, Chairman  
Don Redder, Vice  
Chairman  
Fred Feth  
Susan Frank  
Randy Hein  
James Holloway  
Ryan Waterbury

## STAFF

J. Carter Napier, City  
Manager  
V.H. McDonald, City  
Manager (Previous)  
Liz Becher, Assistant City  
Manager/Community  
Development Director  
Craig Collins,  
City Planner  
Aaron Kloke, Associate  
Planner/Project Manager  
Constance Lake, GIS  
Dee Hardy,  
Administrative Support  
Holly Bosak,  
Planning Intern  
Andrew Beamer,  
Public Services Director  
& City Engineer  
Jolene Martinez, Special  
Projects Coordinator

## STEERING COMMITTEE

Christy Aksamit  
Stephen Cathey  
Jacob Ernst  
Woody Giles  
Lindsey Grant  
James Holloway  
Bob Hopkins  
Barry Johnson  
Stacy Johnson  
Bob King  
Kayla Morrison  
Kate Sarosy  
Abbie Shaible  
Albon Shaw  
Alex Sveda  
Kirstin Vanatta

## CONSULTANT TEAM

### **Logan Simpson**

Bruce Meighen  
Megan Moore  
Kristina Kachur  
Pier Davis  
Maria Michieli-Best

### **Michael Baker International**

Chuck Huffine  
Jennifer Carpenter  
Katie Villela

### **Leland Consulting Group**

Alisa Pyszka  
Ted Kamp

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....i

---

CHAPTER 1: OUR STORY..... 1-1	CHAPTER 2: OUR LIFESTYLE..... 2-1	CHAPTER 3: OUR VISION ..... 3-1	CHAPTER 4: OUR FRAMEWORK..... 4-1	CHAPTER 5: OUR PATH FORWARD 5-1
Overview ..... 1-1	Overview .....2-1	Overview .....3-1	Overview .....4-1	Overview .....5-1
Scope and Purpose of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan..... 1-4	Neighborhoods & Housing .....2-2	Endless Character 3-4	Transportation Plan .....4-3	Priorities .....5-1
Planning Process.. 1-6	Economic Development .....2-11	Vibrant Urban Center .....3-8	Planning for the Future .....4-18	Roles of Implementation ..5-2
Our Vision .....1-11	Transportation ..2-24	Distinctive Regional Hub .....3-12		Monitoring .....5-4
Review of Existing Plans .....1-12	Natural Assets & Recreation .....2-40	Enhanced Connectivity .....3-16		
	Arts & Culture .....2-47	Undiscovered Quality of Life .....3-22		
		Embracing the River .....3-26		

## LIST OF MAPS

Map 1-1. Casper Regional Context .....	1-3
Map 2-1. Casper Workforce Distribution and Wage Rates .....	2-10
Map 2-2. Existing Street Network.....	2-28
Map 2-3. Connectivity Analysis.....	2-33
Map 2-4. Bus Routes .....	2-37
Map 2-5. Natural Resources and Recreation .....	2-45
Map 2-6. Casper's Creative Assets.....	2-51
Map 4-1. Major Streets Plan.....	4-12
Map 4-2. Zoning Mix .....	4-21
Map 4-3. Areas of Change.....	4-23
Map 4-4. Future Land Use .....	4-26

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 2-1. Functional Classification .....	2-26
Table 2-2. Typical Characteristics of Each Functional Classification.....	2-27
Table 5-1. Metrics Criteria .....	5-5
Table 5-2. Generation Casper Strategies .....	5-6

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2-1. Population Growth, 2010-2015.	2-3
Figure 2-2. Natrona County Projected Population Growth by Age Group .....	2-3
Figure 2-3. Casper Population Pyramid 2014 .....	2-4
Figure 2-4. Annual Net Migration, Natrona County .....	2-5
Figure 2-5. Casper Population by Race/Ethnicity, 2016 .....	2-5
Figure 2-6. Population Forecasts.....	2-6
Figure 2-7. Casper Household Characteristics, 2016.....	2-6
Figure 2-8. Average Home Value .....	2-7
Figure 2-9. Wyoming Employment, Growth Since 1990 .....	2-8

Figure 2-10. 2014 Top 5 Wyoming Industries by Employment and 2024 Growth Projections (%).....	2-9	Figure 2-18. Distribution of Household Income .....	2-25	Figure 4-6. Access Management.....	4-8
Figure 2-11. Percentage Change in Unemployment (June 2015 - June 2016) ...	2-12	Figure 2-19. Example of Existing Cross Sections .....	2-31	Figure 4-7. Typical Cross Sections .....	4-15
Figure 2-12. City of Casper Versus US: Education Rate/Average Wages .....	2-13	Figure 2-20. Proximity to Bus Stops .....	2-36	Figure 4-8. Population Density Per Square Mile.....	4-19
Figure 2-13. The Age of Tech: Market Capitalization of the World's Most Valuable Public Companies .....	2-15	Figure 2-21. Vehicle Crash Injuries .....	2-38	Figure 4-9. Zoning Composition.....	4-20
Figure 2-14. Traded-Sector and Local-Sector, US Average Wages .....	2-18	Figure 2-22. Parks and Trails Compared to Similar Cities.....	2-43	Figure 4-10. Comparing the Effect of Block Sizes on Shaping Urban Form and Street Networks (By Year Platted).....	4-24
Figure 2-15. Wyoming Private Start-Up and Start-Up Exit Rates .....	2-19	Figure 4-1. Mix of Uses .....	4-4		
Figure 2-16. Travel Mode .....	2-25	Figure 4-2. Desired and Undesired Block Configurations.....	4-5		
Figure 2-17. Average Commute Time .....	2-25	Figure 4-3. Roadway Spacing, West Casper .....	4-6		
		Figure 4-4. Roadway Spacing, Central Casper .....	4-7		
		Figure 4-5. Roadway Spacing, East Casper .....	4-7		



Joyce Rogers  
*A View in Casper*  
Wyocity Public Art Project, 2016  
A Keep Casper Beautiful Project

Rogers

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## WHY PLAN?

Generation Casper is the City of Casper's revised and updated Comprehensive Land Use Plan and Transportation Plan. The Plan (or Generation Casper) serves as a guide for policy changes, land use and transportation planning, economic development forecasting, and capital improvement planning. It is essentially a land use policy document that will help to ensure efficient city services, adequate key infrastructure, and continued growth of Casper's unique quality of life.

The City's last comprehensive plan update was nearly a generation ago, primarily based on data from the 1990s. Economics, demographics, and the areas of growth in and around Casper have changed dramatically since its publication; it has become outdated and out of scope. Generation Casper revisits, reconfirms, and where necessary, re-envision the 2000 update. It is a living document intended to guide local decision makers, be a vision for community leaders, and serve as a policy document for developers.

The land use plan provides an overview of the City's obstacles and opportunities; outlines future land use and transportation visions, principles, and goals; and includes a monitoring program for both implementation and necessary amendments to reflect changing conditions and values.

Just as ancient civilizations and the earliest American cities laid out plans for settlement, the Generation Casper Comprehensive Plan devises a path forward, guiding the future of the City.

# PLAN OVERVIEW & HIGHLIGHTS

## VISION

The City has a duty to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the community through planning and management of future growth. A community-driven vision was set forth to guide investment in public infrastructure and private development; this vision is supported by six themes: Endless Character, Vibrant Urban Center, Distinctive Regional Hub, Enhanced Connectivity, Embracing the River, and Undiscovered Quality of Life.



### ENDLESS CHARACTER

Casper will cultivate a dynamic, welcoming community with growth and redevelopment based in best practices and history that set the stage for a vibrant future.



### VIBRANT URBAN CENTER

Casper will work to realize untapped potential and foster a vast network of entrepreneurs to support a thriving Downtown and Old Yellowstone District with unique character that anchors the community.



### DISTINCTIVE REGIONAL HUB

Casper will embrace strong relationships between education and industry to retain talent, promote business-friendly policies, and cultivate incubators aimed at fostering fresh ideas and allowing small businesses to make their mark on Casper.



# OUR VISION FOR CASPER

In 2030, Casper serves as an economically diverse, regional hub centered on lively commercial centers that embraces a strong and unique community identity through a world-class quality of life.

## ENHANCED CONNECTIVITY

Casper will offer transportation choices through safe, reliable streets and a bike and pathway network that connect all residents to their destinations through a variety of traditional and emerging transportation modes.



## EMBRACING THE RIVER

Casper will engage with the world-class North Platte River and a network of trails that are visually and physically linked to commercial centers to foster economic opportunities.



## UNDISCOVERED QUALITY OF LIFE

Casper will be comprised of creative, safe, family-friendly neighborhoods and gathering areas where all residents and visitors can enjoy rich culture, stunning vistas, vast open spaces, recreational opportunities, and big city amenities.



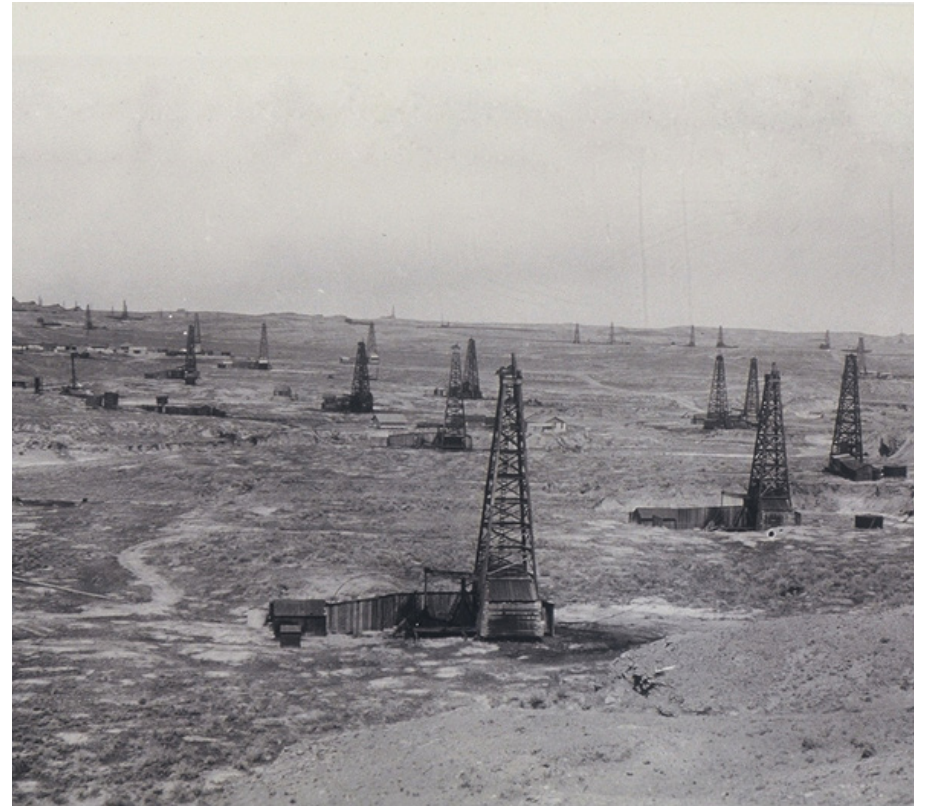
The Salt Creek Oil Field was discovered north of Casper in the early 1900s.  
(photo below, Source: esri.com)

## WHAT WE'VE LEARNED

The planning process offered an unprecedented opportunity for the community to reflect, have a dialogue about the future of growth and development in Casper, and garner community pride. The process gave the community the opportunity to comment and provide valuable input for what they want Casper to be. Elected officials, city staff, community organizations, citizens, and many others came together to form this Plan. When the community was asked to envision Casper in 10 to 20 years, residents said “safe, family-friendly, economically stable and diverse, and affordable”.

As Casper’s close association with energy industries makes it economically susceptible to boom and bust cycles, and as Casper expects future growth, now is the time to reflect and look forward. A significant reality is that Casper and the state of Wyoming are economically dependent on the oil and gas (energy) industry. This is a fact that will not change in the near future - and is beyond the immediate control of Casper. As the energy industry is a volatile industry prone to ebbs and flows, expanding the breadth of other industries could result in less significant impacts in those times of hardship. In the context of planning for the Casper area, economic diversification should be understood as supplementing the energy industry’s role, rather than reducing its influence.

Casper’s population has historically fluctuated with the energy industry, damaging the community in the process. To build a stable residential community, this plan focuses on enhancing the quality of life, embracing the natural and recreational assets, and celebrating the entrepreneurial culture of Casper. A lively and dynamic community will attract families to stay in Casper through economic hardships and keep the next generation living and investing in Casper.



## EFFECTS OF ECONOMIC DIVERSITY

Wyoming has been fortunate to provide a high quality of life for its residents while claiming some of the nation's lowest tax rates. In addition to having relatively low property and sales tax, the State of Wyoming has no corporate or income taxes. This has been possible due to extractive mineral and energy industries contributing a substantial amount of money to state and municipal budgets. In fact, roughly 65 to 70 percent of state revenue comes from extractive industries, more specifically from severance taxes and royalty payments.

Talk of economic diversity is nothing new in Wyoming. But a recent call for greater economic diversity in the midst of an economic downturn due to a slump in the energy industry has led Wyoming state and municipal leaders to think about what this means for government budgets. Economic diversity may not be financially beneficial to government entities because the current tax structure is focused solely on extractive industries. The inconvenient fact is that if non-energy businesses are to grow, the state and municipalities need to decide how to fund government services with shrinking contributions from extractive related severance taxes and royalty payments.

To put it simply, a new economy may require a new government funding model.



---

## KEY IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

While this plan focuses on efforts to maintain and increase the quality of life in Casper, this plan can also serve as a strategy to reduce long term costs by managing growth, encouraging infill, and exploring new ways to finance infrastructure. Growth, while positive and encouraging, can create detrimental and long lasting impacts to city services when left unchecked. The land use plan addresses how growth should be achieved, and prioritizes implementation based on strategies. Generation Casper's implementation will take the effort of not only the City, but organizations, developers, and the greater community.

While a seemingly overwhelming feat of strategies is outlined at the end of this document, it is important to remember that thoughtful change takes time. No community can implement all of the strategies set forth in their comprehensive plan overnight; therefore, the following priorities have been set as short-term actions to implement Generation Casper with minimal capital and personnel costs.

**PRIORITIES** include short-term actions to implement Generation Casper with minimal capital and personnel costs.

---

*A focus on reducing infrastructure, urban sprawl, and long term maintenance costs and impacts to city services through managed growth:*

- Codify the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) to require development within the areas presented on the Future Land Use Map.
- Align the City of Casper Water and Sewer Policy with the UGB to encourage growth in appropriate locations.

*A focus on zoning code changes:*

- Evaluate code changes to encourage shared parking and parking reform.
- Align the Zoning Code with the Future Land Use Plan by changing zoning category definitions and/or create new zoning district options and applying in the Zoning Map. Allow for the integration of residential development to create flexible housing options. Review Floor Area Ratio (FAR), setbacks, parking, and incentivize the development of multifamily and mixed use housing.
- Implement the strategies recommended in the Boomer Study, including implementing zoning code updates, creating consistent and improved sidewalks with tree lawns, and applying for AARP "Liveable Communities" Program.
- Establish roadway spacing standards for arterial, collector, and local roadways and enforce them through new development applications.
- Establish standards for block sizes, block configuration, parcel interconnection, and access limitations.
- Adopt a complete streets ordinance/policy and identify where various users are permitted to travel.
- Review Traffic Study requirements in the Code of Ordinances.

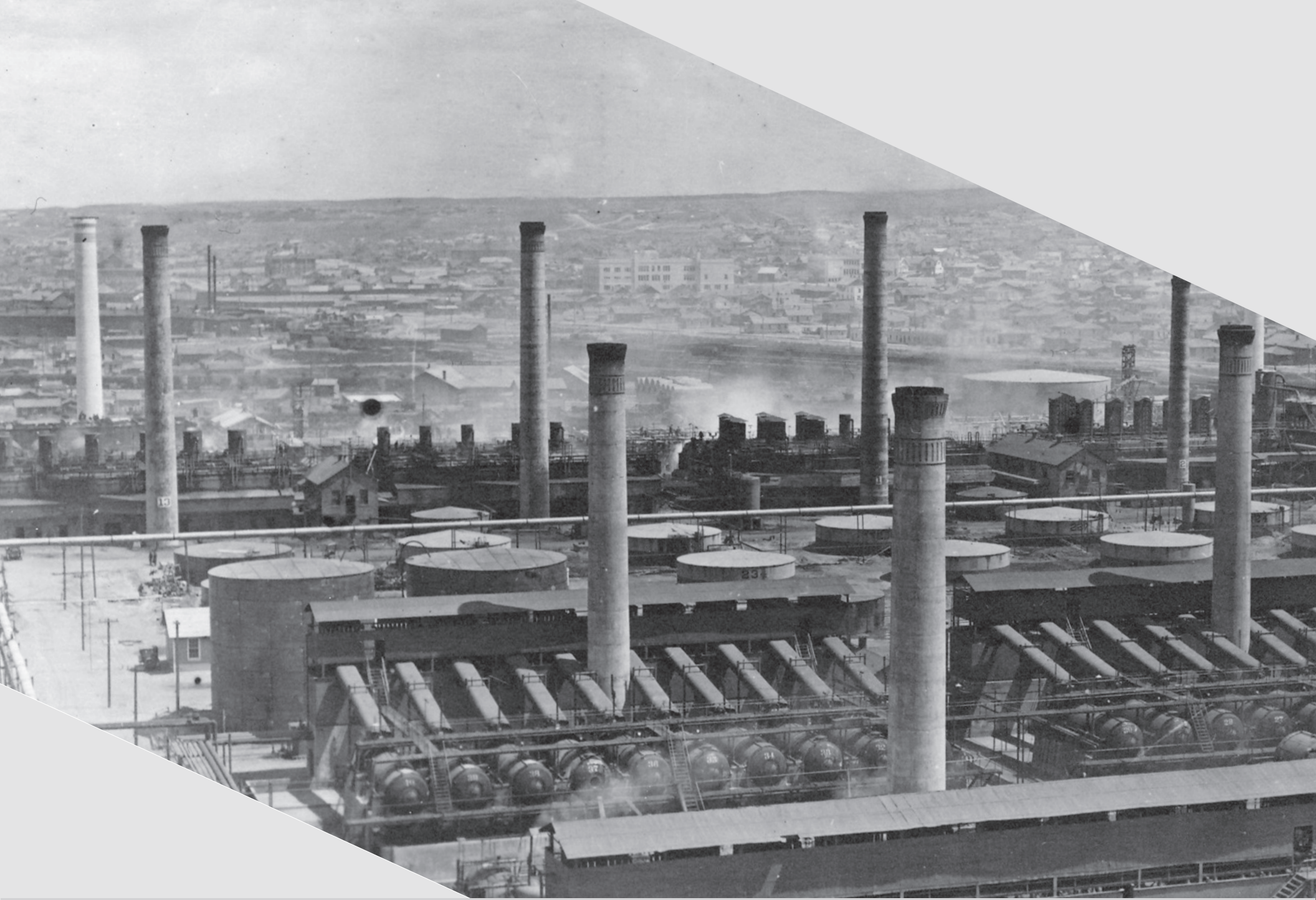
*A focus on rethinking infrastructure financing:*

- Implement reasonable impact fees on building permits for the adequate construction of future roadways to ensure equity in financing infrastructure. Utilize fees for specific infrastructure associated with auto and non-auto modes. During the establishment of an impact fee/mobility fee system, direct a portion of the funds towards redevelopment infrastructure, or reduce the fees for redevelopment projects to encourage infill development.
- Codify and implement an impact fee structure to create a funding source for the funding of other public infrastructure and amenities such as parks and public spaces.

*A focus on working with partners to complete a City-wide economic development strategy for Casper:*

- Work with Casper Area Economic Development Alliance (CAEDA) to implement their four Industry Focus Areas; Energy, Medical, Advanced Manufacturing, and Finance/Insurance with the strategies of investment in existing businesses, recruitment of new business, creation of an innovation culture, expansion of workforce development, and improvement of quality of life.

Over the next 10 to 20 years, the City's economic situation will likely change - but the values that the community holds true will not. Through an annual review of metrics and development of a strategic action plan, Generation Casper affords the community the opportunity to continually monitor and reevaluate its priorities.



*Aerial View of Standard Oil Refinery, 1920. Blackmore Collection, Casper College Western History Center*

# CHAPTER 1: OUR STORY

## OVERVIEW

Located along the banks of the North Platte River in the high plains of Wyoming, Casper was settled along historic trails and railroads at the site of Fort Caspar. The tracks of the Fremont, Elkhorn, and Missouri Valley Railroad arrived in June of 1888. Buildings were constructed soon thereafter, with the initial platting centered in today's Downtown, at 2nd and Center Streets.

Between the late 1880s and the early 1900s, the regional economy relied upon agriculture and sheep and cattle ranching. While oil speculation began as early as Casper's incorporation, it wasn't until 1907 that European investors rushed to the Salt Creek Oil Field, 40 miles north of Casper. By this time, oil had become a key component in the manufacturing of vehicles, and had evolved into the nation's new primary source of energy.

By the 1980s, Casper was booming – benefitting from strong oil and gas prices - and expected to grow to over 200,000 people by the millennium. But, by the mid-1980s, prices dropped and the economy stalled. The region lost over 13,000 people within a few years; it was not until the mid-2000s that the population recovered to pre-bust levels. Current population estimates record 60,000 residents; however, another bust has overwhelmed the community since early 2015.



*Time Gone By. Blackmore Collection, Casper College Western History Center*



## HISTORY OF CASPER

FROM RESHAW'S BRIDGE TO THE ODD FELLOWS BUILDING, CASPER HAS A UNIQUE FLAIR FOR PLANNING AND A TALE OF ENTREPRENEURS.

The State's Historical Society expands on the unique history of Casper, at [www.wyohistory.org](http://www.wyohistory.org).

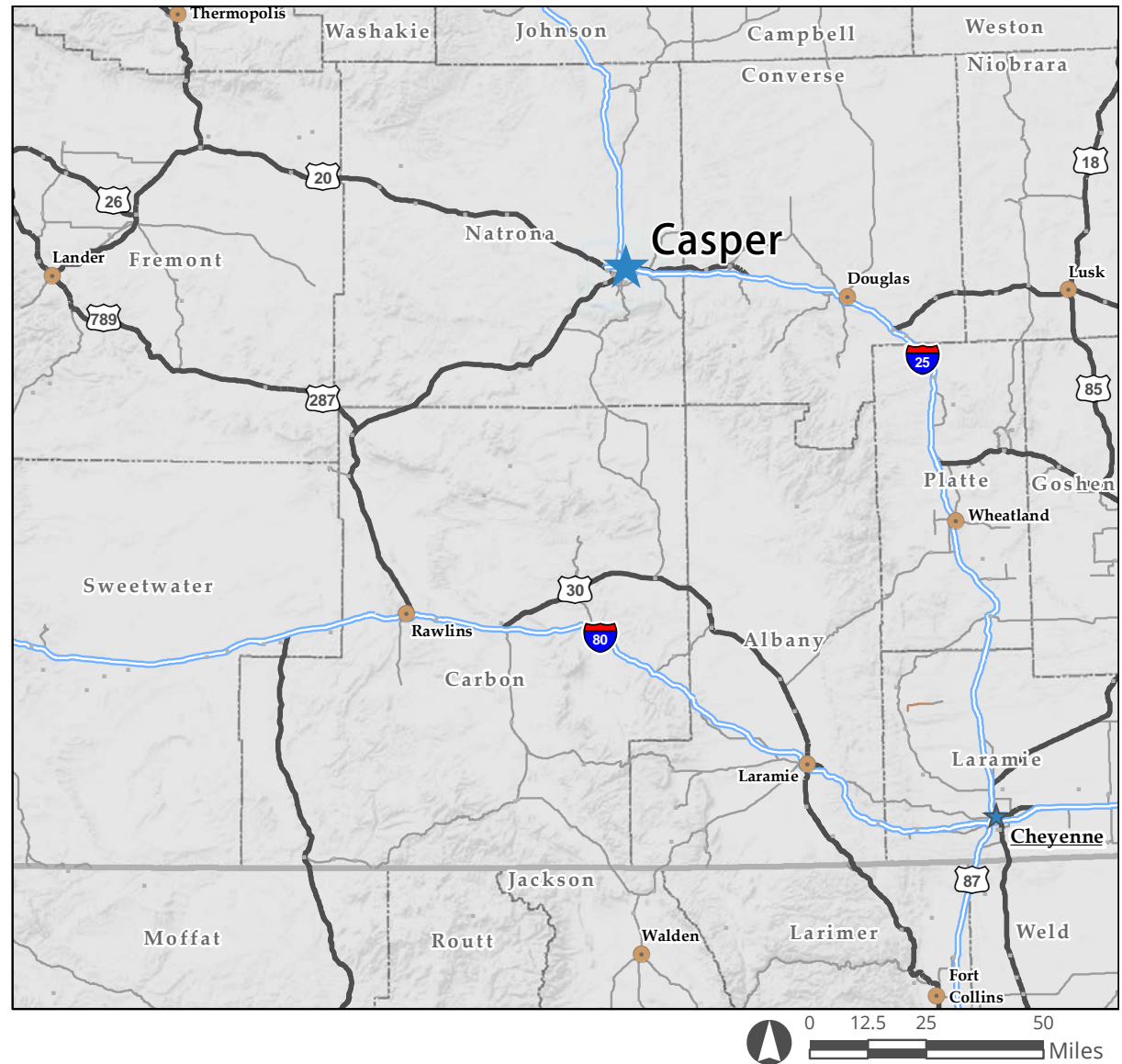


Interstate 25 (I-25), the main transportation corridor to and from Casper, runs east-west through the city. The city covers approximately 27 square miles, but has an expanded service area that includes the surrounding communities and much of central Wyoming. The city stretches from the Hat Six Road/I-25 interchange at the east, southwest along Cy Avenue/WY-220, to just north of the North Platte River and to the foot of Casper Mountain on the south (**Map 1-1**).

The Casper area serves as a hub for regional commerce and entertainment. The City of Casper and Towns of Bar Nunn, Evansville, and Mills are located within the greater Casper Area Metropolitan Planning Area. Outside of this metro area, the next major town is Douglas, 45 minutes to the east. Laramie and Cheyenne both are about two and one half hours south of Casper.

Recent commercial development has primarily focused along East Second Street, while new residential development has been incorporated to the far southwest. The West Belt Loop was completed in the summer of 2016.

MAP 1-1. CASPER REGIONAL CONTEXT



---

# SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN

## WHO USES A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

The comprehensive plan is designed to be used by anyone interested in the future:

- City leaders can reference the direction it provides on the topics of new development, redevelopment, and programs and services provided by the City.
- Residents may be interested in the location of new parks, trails, neighborhoods, or community facilities and services.
- Business and property owners may be interested in land use recommendations or development policies for their property.
- Decision-makers will use the Plan as a policy guide to inform land use and transportation planning, economic development forecasting, budget, timing for capital improvements, and in review of development proposals.

## WHAT DOES THE PLAN INCLUDE?

The Plan is a land use policy document that will help guide the future of development, public amenities, and infrastructure. The Plan:

- Includes specific and detailed visions, principles, and recommendations that are unique to Casper and based on extensive data, obtained through an extensive and robust public engagement process.
- Emphasizes a complete transportation system, including facilities and design for walkability, transit, and overall connectivity within Casper, and integrates the Transportation Element with the Casper Area Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) corresponding plan for the Towns of Bar Nunn, Mills, and Evansville Transportation Element Update.
- Ensures that potential environmental, economic, and social consequences are considered in all decisions.
- Addresses future growth through a safe, connected, multi-modal system that accommodates all forms of transportation.

# GENERATION CASPER

revisited, reconfirmed, and sometimes re-envisioned the prior plan.

*"Make big plans; aim high in hope and work, remembering that a noble, logical diagram once recorded will never die, but long after we are gone will be a living thing, asserting itself with ever-growing insistency." - Daniel H. Burnham, architect (1846-1912)*

## PLAN HORIZON

- Provides a strategic plan and a priority list for next step projects, initiatives, and strategies.
- Identifies potential infrastructure financing mechanisms and future resources needed to manage and implement recommendations.
- Establishes performance measurements (qualitative and quantitative) in relation to future needs and goals to monitor performance of future land and transportation development.
- Sets forth recommendations to update the Casper Municipal Code to reduce existing barriers to implementation.
- Challenges long-held beliefs and traditions, asks hard questions, provides solutions, and reflects the desires of the citizens of Casper.
- Garneres wide-spread community support through a public process.

Generation Casper looks ahead 10-20 years. Growth projections were used to evaluate long-term trends, analyze problems and opportunities that could occur during the period, and project long-term infrastructure needs. Although the Plan considered a 10 - 20 year period, it is a work in progress that should be reviewed and updated at least every five years, or as conditions change. Further details of implementation and monitoring are described in Chapter 5.

## AUTHORITY TO PLAN

The development of a comprehensive plan by a city government is authorized in Wyoming State Statute. The municipal authority is derived from Section 15-1-503(a), which states that the commission, after holding public hearings, shall adopt and certify to the governing body a master plan for the physical development of the municipality. Section 15-1-504 further defines the purpose of a master plan by stating that the plan shall be made for the general purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted, and harmonious development of the municipality, which will best promote the general welfare as well as efficiency and economy in the process of development. Following the adoption of a plan, no development may be constructed unless it conforms to the plan that is amended. In addition, Wyoming State Statute Section 15-1-508 grants the governing body the permission to make additions to or modifications of an official map after the municipality's Planning and Zoning Commission adopts a major street plan, in conjunction with commission approval.



## PLANNING PROCESS

The public involvement process coincided with the overall Plan's five phases. Each phase involved at least one public meeting, a series of community outreach opportunities at existing public events, an online questionnaire for people that may not have been able to attend the events, and meetings with the Steering Committee and boards and commissions. Each phase involved radio and TV interviews, social media updates, e-newsletter notifications, and other forms of outreach. In addition, staff presented updates at "Book a Planner" and Developer Coffee Talk events, as well as to the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council throughout the project.

OVER THE PAST YEAR, the Generation Casper planning process provided the public an opportunity to shape the planning for the community's future. Generation Casper is a plan for all residents and reflects the community's desires, concerns, and opportunities expressed throughout the planning process. Funding for the plan was provided by the City and Casper Area MPO.

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION BY THE NUMBERS

There were multiple opportunities for public input at community events, forums, and workshops; through online surveys; and through City Council and Planning and Zoning Commission meetings. All events and opportunities were posted and publicized around the city, on the City and project websites, in project newsletters, and through social media.



**9** PUBLIC MEETINGS

**6** STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS WITH **16** MEMBERS

**6** QUESTIONNAIRES



**25** "BOOK A PLANNER" TALKS/FOCUS GROUPS

**11** E-NEWSLETTER NOTIFICATIONS/UPDATES TO **750+** CONTACTS

**17** COMMUNITY EVENTS ATTENDED

## SCHEDULE OVERVIEW

PHASE 1: FOUNDATION	<p>Outreach Series #1 engaged targeted stakeholders, including agency and technical experts, early in the process to identify key issues and collect relevant background information.</p> <p>Key Questions included “What methods should we use to reach the community?”, “What do you love about Casper?”, “What would you like to see improved?”, and “How should previous planning efforts help guide the future?”</p>
PHASE 2: VISIONING	<p>Outreach Series #2 reached out to residents, visitors, and committees to refine the vision, issues, and objectives for the Plan. This phase was used to gain momentum for the Plan through a celebratory visioning event at the Central Wyoming Fair and various other community events and festivals.</p> <p>Key questions included “How should the vision, goals, and objectives be refined to reflect the community’s future?” and “How do major trends impact the future of the community?”</p>
PHASE 3: CHOICES AND OPPORTUNITIES	<p>Outreach Series #3 obtained input from residents, visitors, and committees on the big ideas and choices for the future and conducted additional analysis on existing conditions and trends. Events were held to reach out specifically to families, senior citizens, and underrepresented neighborhoods.</p> <p>Key questions included “What are your preferred future opportunities?”, “Where should we focus our analysis?”, and “What are the key Future Land Use Plan decisions to be made?”</p>
PHASE 4: CREATING A WORKABLE PLAN	<p>Outreach Series #4 obtained input from residents, visitors, and committees on the strategies and policy framework. Emphasis was placed on the Transportation Element, including additional opportunities for feedback, specific to this element.</p> <p>Key questions included “What strategies will help achieve the vision?”, “What are our priorities?”, and “How do you visualize the future?”</p>
PHASE 5: ADOPTION	<p>Outreach Series #5 obtained input from residents, visitors, and committees on the strategies, and draft and final plans. This series also included public hearings at both Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council.</p> <p>Key questions included “What indicators will help us monitor and evaluate the implementation of the Plan?”</p>

## STEERING COMMITTEE

The Steering Committee acted as a sounding board on key issues throughout the process and provided an additional outreach option to the public. The Steering Committee generally met once per phase, and was vital in promoting the plan process and other public engagement opportunities throughout members' respective networks.

The Steering Committee was made up of a diverse group of community members from all walks of life, and included architects, real estate agents, entrepreneurs, engineers, business owners, and students. Millennials, baby boomers, and every age in between were represented on the Committee to provide feedback on topics such as aging in place, new modes of transportation, and starting a local small business.









## OUR VISION

A successful comprehensive plan is values-based, vision-driven, and outcome-oriented. A vision should be aspirational and set the stage for a plan's principles, goals, and key implementation strategies.

The first phase of Generation Casper began with listening to the community. Questions that were asked included "What do you want Casper to be in 10 to 20 years?" and "What do you love about Casper and want preserved in the future?" The community shared their values through an online visioning survey, public listening sessions, the visioning kickoff event at the Central Wyoming Fair, stakeholder interviews, and numerous other community events. The vision is also rooted in existing plans; the City's 2000 Comprehensive Plan provided the foundation along with ongoing planning efforts.

It was clear that the city values its quality of life, and seeks opportunities for supporting small businesses, the urban core, and entrepreneurs. Residents value their outdoor recreation amenities and authentic family-friendly small town charm. With the ebb and flow of the economy, Casper strives to become more economically diverse through an increasing focus on affordability and self-reliance and, above all, creating a great community hub that attracts families and visitors from around the region and beyond.

## REVIEW OF EXISTING PLANS

Since 2000 when the last comprehensive plan was completed additional studies and master plans have been completed on the various subject matters. These documents provide more specific recommendations on topic areas such as transportation and economic development or geographic areas such as the Old Yellowstone District (OYD). The time and energy spent on these plans affords this Plan ahead start of the growing challenges, opportunities, and community preferences throughout Casper. The following section gives an overview of many of the plans that have been recently completed. Key recommendations related to the future growth and development of the city are very useful with many of overall ideas and goals from the Casper Area Comprehensive Plan (2000) being carried over into this updated plan. This information is outlined below and consolidated according to the plan elements outlined in Chapter 2 in the current comprehensive plan.

The Casper Area Comprehensive Plan completed in 2000 was designed to establish a cohesive decision-making strategy for the community that would consider social, economic, and environmental conditions, promote development and redevelopment, and anticipate future demands for facilities and services. That plan has served as a guide for making decisions; spending funds; assessing programs and services in an informed and consistent manner; and creating opportunities and coordinating land uses in a way that benefits the community. Generation Casper revisits old assumptions; updates planning policies, goals, and objectives where needed; and expands upon the current 2000 Comprehensive Plan.

The Casper Area Comprehensive Plan focuses on:

- Vision 1—Diverse Economy
- Vision 2—Vital City Center
- Vision 3—Compact Development
- Vision 4—Cohesive Residential Neighborhoods
- Vision 5—Open Space Connections
- Vision 6—View of Casper Mountain
- Vision 7—Casper’s History
- Vision 8—Distinct Character
- Vision 9—Attainable Housing
- Vision 10—Cultural Amenities
- Vision 11—Transportation Choices
- Vision 12—Attractive Gateways

# GENERATION CASPER

revisits assumptions from a number of previous planning efforts.

## NEIGHBORHOODS AND HOUSING

The Casper Area Comprehensive Plan lays out a number of strategic policy elements related to housing. Six of the twelve vision elements comprising that plan's policy framework directly pertain to housing. The Casper Area Comprehensive Plan calls for housing supply to be balanced with the needs of economic growth and speaks to enhancing the vibrancy of Downtown Casper and surrounding neighborhoods. This can be achieved in part by encouraging increased quantity and variety of residential development and prioritizing infill redevelopment over edge development.

Policies for this vision element urge compatibility of land uses by keeping density near the urban center, protecting semi-rural areas from urban encroachment, and protecting residential neighborhoods from commercial uses that may create nuisances. Orderly coordination of infrastructure expansion with residential development is also encouraged.

The Casper Area Comprehensive Plan expresses the community need for a broad range of housing types, suitable for meeting the needs of diverse life-stages and incomes. This is achieved by setting aside adequate reserves of residential land, avoiding encroachment/incompatibility with existing neighborhoods, and encouraging affordable housing.

2007's [Old Yellowstone District Master Plan](#) works to foster infill redevelopment and plan for mixed use projects, including residential over commercial development west of Downtown.

Casper's Downtown Development Authority (DDA) has adopted [strategic goals](#), which guides the DDA by including greater specificity for how to attract and incorporate increased housing and boost housing diversity Downtown – in part by providing a planning concept for new housing development at either end of the E 2nd Street commercial/retail corridor.

The [Senior Services Study Update \(Boomer Study\)](#) provided an assessment and recommendations for anticipating future trends and adapting to changing demographics. The study provides a range of demographic data and provides direction for community design, transportation, finances, healthcare, housing, learning/civic engagement, recreation, and workforce opportunities.

The [2012 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice](#) identified public and private sector impediments to fair housing choice in Casper and recommended actions and objectives to ameliorate or mitigate the impediments. The impediments consist of discriminatory patterns to renting of home loan applications, lack of statewide fair housing laws, and lack of fair housing services to the community.



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic development plays a central role in the Casper Area Comprehensive Plan. The plan outlines the need for an expanded, more diversified, and stable local economy that continuously grows new jobs while paying higher wages than the current average. Specifically, this element calls for the redevelopment of underutilized industrial areas, enhancing the city's attractiveness as a tourism (and regional shopping) destination, and ensuring land and infrastructure investments to accommodate growth. It also speaks to enhancing the vibrancy of Casper's urban center and surrounding neighborhoods, by promoting a greater mix of uses, more residential development, and strengthened cultural investment.

Sense of place plays a key role in economic development as the plan speaks in support of artistic enrichment and cultural opportunities as vital ingredients to economic (in addition to civic and community) development and focuses on the role of Casper's gateways as key image-making opportunities – another way to reinforce visitation and related economic flow.



## TRANSPORTATION

There have been several plans and studies related to transportation completed within the last ten years. Four of these plans, in particular, provided data for this summary, and conclusions/assumptions which informed this Plan.

### 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan

[Connecting Casper 2040](#), completed in July 2014, is the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) for the Casper Area MPO, which updated the 2030 LRTP published in 2007. The LRTP analyzes existing and future year roadway conditions, transit operations, non-motorized facilities, rail facilities, and airport facilities. A number of specific recommendations to address transportation deficiencies through the year 2040 are identified.

The “Needs Assessment” section of the LRTP supplied a starting point for transportation needs throughout Casper. This section discussed barriers to transportation, roadway connectivity issues, capacity and safety issues, plus pedestrian, bicycle and transit needs.

Improvement recommendations follow, as well as funding and implementation strategies.

**Roadway Recommendations:** The recommended roadway plan includes committed projects identified in the Casper MPO Fiscal Year 2014 to Fiscal Year 2017 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the WYDOT FY 2014 – 2017 State TIP. Additional projects, or future projects beyond 2017, were also identified to address future year transportation needs throughout the Casper Area.

**Roadway Safety Recommendations:** The LRTP recommended performing an in-depth crash rate analysis to identify roadway segments with crash rates above state or national averages for vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per roadway type. The MPO should take action to improve the intersections prioritized in the 2007 High Hazard Intersection Study.



**Pedestrian Safety Recommendations:** Since nearly half of all pedestrian accidents occurred at or involved intersections it is important to evaluate the presence of street crossings or difficult street crossings in the Casper area that could adversely affect pedestrian activity.

Intersections where pedestrian crashes occurred can be assessed to understand contributing factors, such as:

- Missing crosswalk signals, or insufficient time to cross the street
- Long crossing distances on wide streets with multiple lanes
- Uneven curbs or missing curb ramps
- Ineffective or missing pavement markings
- Heavy turning volume (especially heavy right-turn movements that can occur on red lights)
- Discontinuous walking route through intersection (curb cuts that occur at different locations within an intersection)

Additionally, the pedestrian crash analysis found that alcohol use was involved in 14% of all pedestrian and auto conflicts and resulted in one fatality, indicating a need to take measures that prevent alcohol-related pedestrian accidents.



**Bicycle Safety Recommendations:** It is recommended that the following strategies be implemented in order to promote safe conditions for bicyclists:

- Improve walking and biking infrastructure for safety and comfort.
- Educate the population about how to be safe while walking and biking.
- Better accommodate bicycles at intersections:
  - Review the City’s signal timing policy and revise as necessary to accommodate bicyclists at all intersections located on the bicycle network.
  - Develop a protocol for assessing concerns from bicyclists regarding detection or additional time to cross at other locations.
- Make infrastructure safety improvements near schools.
- Educate students on the rules of the road and safe walking and biking practices.
- Promote safety through additional local ordinances such as:
  - helmet requirements;
  - establishing a minimum passing distance between motor vehicles and bicycles (i.e. a “3-foot law”);
  - opening a vehicle door in front of a cyclist (“dooring”); and
  - driving or parking in bicycle lanes.
- Educate police officers on the laws pertaining to bicyclists and bicycle facilities.
- Continue to collect data and analyze bicycle and pedestrian crashes.

**Freight Recommendations:** Through the plan review, existing conditions analysis, and dialogue with the WTA, the following freight needs were identified:

- Provide adequate connections to major freight corridors including I-80 and I-25.
- Implement Wyoming Quiet Zone Study recommendations:
  - New medians at four rail crossing locations: Curtis Street, Evans Street, Mystery Bridge Road, and Wyoming Boulevard
  - Wayside horn at Western Avenue.
- Grade-separate one existing, at-grade crossing in Evansville.
- Determine the need to accommodate trucks during interstate closures.
- Consider truck access needs during development plan review.
- Develop a comprehensive truck parking plan to accommodate trucks during roadway closures.
- Develop a western connection from Bar Nunn and Casper to the airport.

**Active Transportation Recommendations:** Recommended infrastructure improvements for bicycle facilities, sidewalks, and intersections are outlined. These recommendations were prioritized in the LRTP based on screening criteria developed in the CATPBP. These improvements were to be considered and implemented as funding becomes available.

## Casper Area Transit Development Plan

The [Casper Area Transit Development Plan \(TDP\)](#) update, completed in December, 2015, examined how the community has changed and will likely change in the next five years, and how the transit system will need to change to provide quality service to a changing demographic and increasing number of passengers. Information on ridership, routes, stakeholder input, and amenities were used from this plan. Some recommendations were also used to feed this Plan.

The fixed-route bus service is the backbone of the transit program, and offers the greatest opportunity for expansion as the community grows. A number of objectives should be met to improve the service for current users and create opportunities for additional residents of the community to take advantage of the fixed-route transit system. Some of those objectives are highlighted.

***Crosstown Express*** - A crosstown express route which would provide more rapid service to Downtown Casper and the major shopping locations in the community should be established. It could connect with the other routes at numerous locations to provide a versatile effective network.





**Minimize Headways** - Short headways are desired by most users. Steps should be taken to minimize the route times to the greatest extent possible. Stakeholders that participated in surveys and discussions favored short headways over fewer transfers between buses.

**Maximize Connectivity** - Having more opportunities to transfer from one bus to another is viewed as an effective means to maximize the flexibility of the fixed-route system, rather than having most of the transfers take place at the Transit Plaza on an hourly basis. Coordinated transfers at locations like Casper College, Smith's Grocery, and Kmart can improve the service.

**Number of Stops and Placement** - To maximize ridership, there needs to be a well-planned network of bus stops which minimize the distance users have to walk to and from the bus stop.

- **Spacing.** Making a ten minute or quarter of a mile walk to a bus stop is frequently referenced standard. The Casper fixed route system has stops from two blocks to three miles apart with an average spacing of a half mile. The number of stops should be increased significantly. The improvements at new stops can be limited to a sign to minimize costs. Stops that are used can be upgraded and those that are not can be abandoned.
- **Safety and Comfort.** There should be a gradation of improvements at bus stops that reflect the level of use. At a minimum, all stops should have a sign and a hard surface pad or sidewalk to stand on. They should be located at established crosswalks and accessible by sidewalks in good condition. Most stops should have benches. Shelters should be restricted to the busiest and most remote stops. Smaller, less costly, three-sided shelters, which would serve as a wind screen and sun shade, should be considered in some locations.

**Specific Locations to Service** - Providing new or increased fixed route service to the following locations was recommended: Casper College, Natrona County International Airport, Bar Nunn, McMurry Business Park, and heavy employment centers.



## Casper Walkability Study

The [Casper Walkability Study \(WS\)](#), completed in January 2008, looked at pedestrian demand throughout the city and recommended pedestrian improvements. The Casper, Wyoming Safe Routes to School Plan and the Casper Area Trails, Path and Bikeway Plan also examined pedestrian improvements. Recommendations included:

- Developing land use and development standards that result in good pedestrian facilities that will not need future retrofitting
- Retrofitting pedestrian facilities in areas of inadequacy
- Educating the public on pedestrian laws and what it means to be a pedestrian
- Creating a minimum safety requirement for all local jurisdictions
- Prioritizing pedestrian funding and exploring alternative funding options
- Establishing a maintenance plan for existing and future pedestrian infrastructure

---

## Casper Area Trails, Path and Bikeway Plan

The [Casper Area Trails, Path and Bikeway Plan](#) (CATPBP) builds upon previous planning and ongoing infrastructure implementation efforts to identify gaps and barriers to walking and biking in the Casper area, and recommends infrastructure improvements as well as policies, programs, and practices that support these modes, and outlines an implementation plan. The following is an outline of the recommended strategies that informed this Plan.

- A. Supporting Policies, Programs, and Practices
- B. Education and Enforcement
  - Strategy 1: Distribute Information on Proper use of Bicycle Facilities
  - Strategy 2: Deliver Bicycle and Pedestrian Education through Safe Routes to School Programming and Partnerships
  - Strategy 3: Provide Adult Bicycling Education Courses
  - Strategy 4: Promote Safety through Local Ordinances
  - Strategy 5: Provide Regular All Mode Road Safety Training for Patrol Officers and Institute a Bicycle Infraction Diversion Program
  - Strategy 6: Expand Police Bicycle Patrol
- C. Encouragement
  - Strategy 7: Develop a Map of the Casper Area’s Bicycle Facilities
  - Strategy 8: Partner with Local Businesses, Colleges and Organizations
- D. Engineering
  - Strategy 9: Institutionalize the CATPBP Plan into plans, policies and practices.
  - Strategy 10: Continue to Collect and Analyze Bicycle and Pedestrian Crashes
  - Strategy 11: Develop a Connected, Convenient and Comfortable Bicycle Network
  - Strategy 12: Provide Wayfinding Signage on the Recommended Bicycle Network
  - Strategy 13: Provide Convenient and Secure Bicycle Parking
  - Strategy 14. Incorporate Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities into Existing Maintenance Policies and Programs
- E. Implementation
  - Strategy 15: Pursue a Multi-Pronged Implementation and Funding Strategy
  - Strategy 16: Prioritize Recommended Bicycle Improvements
  - Strategy 17: Prioritize Completion of Sidewalks Where Gaps Exist
  - Strategy 18: Utilize Engineering Strategies which Maximize the Safety and Comfort of Bicyclists and Pedestrians of All Ages and Abilities
  - Strategy 19: Establish a Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee
  - Strategy 20: Establish Performance Measures

## NATURAL ASSETS AND RECREATION

Serving as a regional concept, the CATPBP was developed in 2013 to envision a connected and convenient network for bicyclists and pedestrians of all abilities.

CATPBP recommendations revolve around education, encouragement, enforcement, evaluation, and engineering to develop a safe, convenient network of trails and “fostering the development of a culture” for acceptance of walking and bicycling as modes of transportation. The implementation strategies, gaps identified, best practices, and recommended improvements suggested in the CATPBP have been used to guide decisions for the Generation Casper planning process.

The [Casper Parks and Open Space Improvement Plan](#), completed in 2014, was written to review, inventory, and assess the level of park development and the condition of improvements made in parks and recreational spaces. This plan also evaluates gaps in the park system to understand the inequities of park access within the community. The public was involved to help better understand the amount and type of use of each park and determine desired improvements within the park system. Specific data regarding uses, amount of users, walkability of dwelling units to parks, and comparisons to similar cities is provided in this plan. This data, along with the gap analysis and access inequality, can be used to inform the Casper Comprehensive Plan.

The [Elkhorn Valley/Eastside Master Trail Plan](#) (EVEMTP) was developed in 2010 by the Casper Area MPO, Platte River Parkway Trust, Inc., and various consultants to focus on conservation of the Elkhorn Valley study area and development of trail connections for people residing in or working in the east Casper area. EVEMTP offers guidance regarding trail corridor layout and design considerations, and recommends standards for trail connectivity, access, and implementation. It briefly mentions preserving and enhancing the natural and cultural resources and notes the opportunity to educate users through interpretation of ecology, history, and culture.



*"For the friendly residents of Central Wyoming, Casper is the place where the boundaries between natural and urban landscapes blur, offering unparalleled access to recreational, cultural, and commercial opportunities." - Public Comment*



## ARTS AND CULTURE

The “Cultural Amenities” vision statement of the Casper Area Comprehensive Plan (2000) aims to develop “A community that supports artistic enrichment and cultural opportunities as vital parts of the community’s values, quality of life, and economic vitality.”

This vision is realized through encouraging public and private partnerships and support of cultural and civic facilities; expanding the presence and prominence of public art; collocating and centralizing cultural and civic facilities to develop a synergy between these institutions while supporting commercial activities where possible; and encouraging the use and reuse of schools as community and neighborhood facilities.

The MPO completed an [Interstate 25 Entryway Beautification Plan](#) in 2015 that provides recommendations for shaping the corridor into a visually appealing and cohesive gateway into the community. The plan highlights design guidelines for bridge enhancements and signage including lighting, landscaping, color and materials. The design guidelines are integrated with WyoCity™ brand promise elements.





In 2015, the Casper Area Visitors & Convention Bureau released the “WyoCity™” brand in response to an effort to bring a marketing identity to the area. The principles of the brand encompass the following attributes: WyoCity™ is short for “Wyoming’s City,” which encompasses the friendly, relaxing, outdoorsy, beautiful, western, welcoming, happy, adventurous, and hardworking ideals of the community.

“NESTLED IN THE NORTH PLATTE RIVER Valley, at the base of iconic Casper Mountain in Central Wyoming, Casper is blessed with world-class outdoor recreational opportunities, a touch of urban lifestyle and a friendly attitude. Established at the confluence of five historic pioneer trails, the city remains Wyoming’s hub of commerce, culture, creativity and competition that beckons the adventurous to immerse themselves in its brilliant blue skies and wide open spaces.”

- WyoCity™ Brand Promise





# CHAPTER 2: OUR LIFESTYLE

## OVERVIEW

Casper is a community with a wealth of assets on which to capitalize, such as; the infrastructure and economic diversity of a great Downtown and momentum of the Old Yellowstone District, situated along one of the most nationally known fishing rivers in the country, and home to the National Historic Trails Interpretive Center. The cyclical Wyoming economy and changing demographics are altering the dynamics of the community, requiring an updated understanding of local needs.

This section presents a series of “existing conditions snapshots” that provides an overview of baseline conditions per topic area and defines how these conditions influence the development of principles,

goals, and strategies for the comprehensive plan. Trends and existing data aided the public in updating Casper’s vision; identifying major opportunities; and developing a strategic, forward-thinking land use plan. This chapter sets a framework for Chapters 3-5, where conclusions and actions to guide the future are drawn.

The Citizens' Perspective section of each theme highlights the community’s values and desires. Over 1,700 community members, staff and stakeholders shared their input through an online visioning questionnaire, public listening sessions, the visioning kickoff event at the Central Wyoming Fair, stakeholder interviews, and numerous other community events.

Using the best available data from the City of Casper, Natrona County, the Casper Area MPO, the State of Wyoming, the census and other sources, data and trends were researched and synthesized into five planning themes:

- Neighborhoods & Housing
- Economic Development
- Transportation
- Natural Assets & Recreation
- Arts & Culture



## NEIGHBORHOODS & HOUSING

### WHY IT MATTERS

Casper's unique context (scenic/recreational amenities + abundant energy resources + historic Western heritage & culture) creates the need for creative planning and policy approaches to housing. Maintaining an attractive and diverse housing stock is vital to ensuring that the City of Casper remains an appealing community for all types and ages of people, as well as attaining its economic development goals. Available homes must be suitable for all life stages and lifestyles in order to attract and keep a sustainable workforce. The cyclical Wyoming economy and changing demographics are altering the dynamics of the local housing market, requiring an updated understanding of local housing needs. The housing element of the plan includes a current depiction of the demographic and economic characteristics that impact housing affordability and preferences.

### KEY POINTS + ASSUMPTIONS

**Net migration, a function of local employment prospects, is the key driver of Casper housing needs.**

**Employment prospects in Casper have historically been volatile – rising and falling in response to both national business cycles and energy sector supply/demand forces.**

**Based on the natural increase rates, Casper has the potential for additional (but hard to predict) growth in housing needs.**

**Broader demographic forces--namely, growth in Baby Boomer and Millennial age cohorts -- will push higher-than-usual demand for smaller, low-maintenance housing and entry-level single-family housing, respectively.**

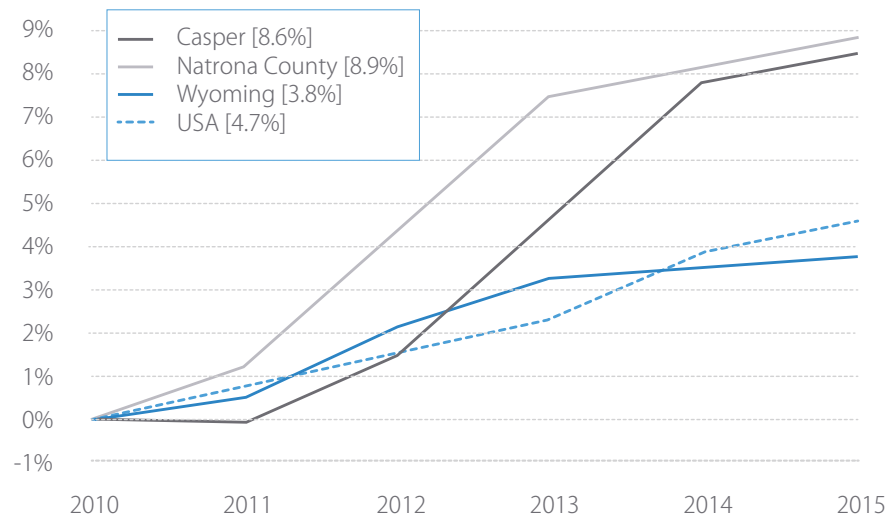
**Opportunities for infill to satisfy housing needs are prominent.**

## EXISTING CONDITIONS

### Overview

Wyoming is prototypical Great American West – extremely low density, self-sufficient, individualistic and outdoors-oriented – occasionally converging in a handful of larger urban centers, like Casper, where commerce, industry, culture, government and education come together. Here, a key housing policy question is “how to accommodate these strong Western values with quality and efficiently designed urban form?”

FIGURE 2-1. POPULATION GROWTH, 2010-2015

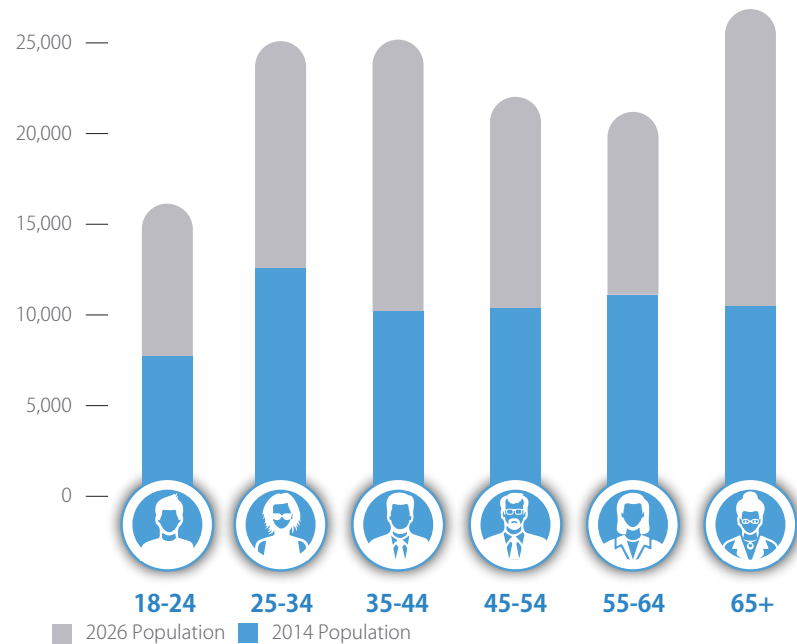


Source: US Census Bureau, Census 2010, Esri Forecasts for 2016 and 2021

## Population

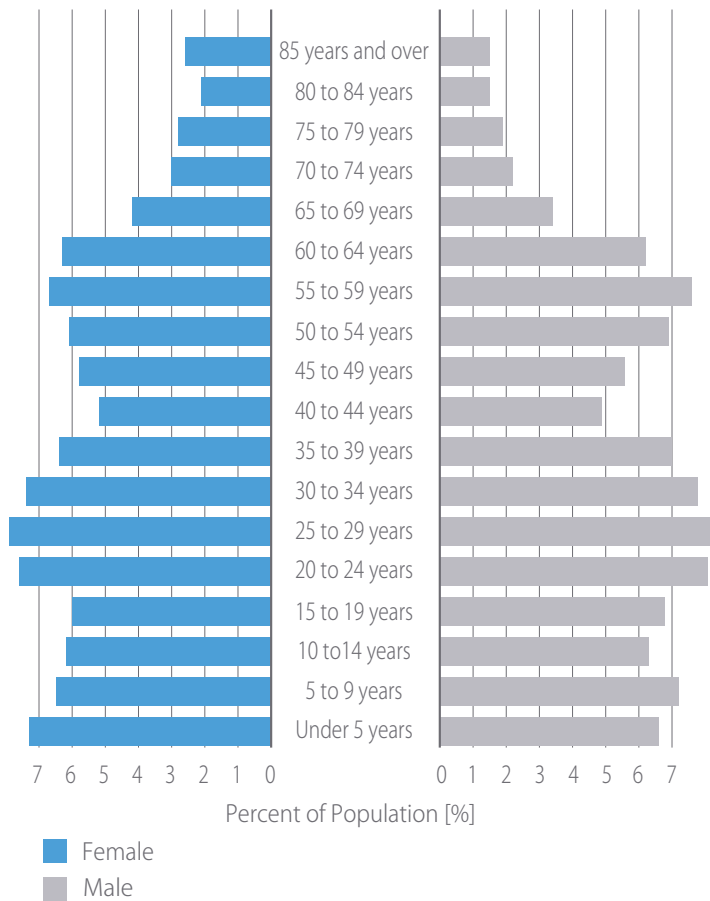
Casper’s total population is estimated to be just over 60,000 residents, increasing from 55,000 in 2010 (**Figure 2-1**). The population growth in Casper over the next 5 years is expected to be around 1.5% annually. The recent economic downturn may reduce those projections; however, recent school enrollment figures do not show a decrease in students. This suggests some resiliency since the last downturn. As elsewhere, Natrona County’s growth in the next decade will be dominated by increases in the senior (age 65+) population and in the 35-44 category (**Figure 2-2**), driven by aging across the two largest generational populations, Baby Boomers and Millennials, respectively.

FIGURE 2-2. NATRONA COUNTY PROJECTED POPULATION GROWTH BY AGE GROUP



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

FIGURE 2-3. CASPER POPULATION PYRAMID 2014



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

As indicated in **Figure 2-3**, the Millennials (currently aged 20 to 34) are the second largest percentage of the population within the City of Casper. Boomers are the largest percentage of the population (currently spanning ages 52 to 70).

Boomers, at least nationally, should generally spur demand for smaller, lower-maintenance housing, along with more units geared towards seniors needing targeted amenities or even professional on-site care. In urban Wyoming, it remains to be seen how retirement living needs will translate into Western tastes: with some opting for low-density “mini-spreads” versus more typical smaller-footprint senior living arrangements. While Wyoming’s dry, sunny climate appeals to many retirees, the often harsh winters will lead other seniors to opt for more forgiving climates.

Boomers have been changing the urban landscape by spurring the completion of “Boomer Studies,” which have provided municipalities the opportunity to assess infrastructure and services throughout the community. Ultimately, what is being recommended (health care, workforce development, housing, accessible transportation, and community design) are best practices for community planning and services.

Millennials have recently helped fuel an upsurge in nationwide apartment demand as they pass through their twenties and early thirties. While that rental segment will remain large over the near term, its rate of growth will level off, replaced by greater need for starter homes for the next generation and their growing families.

The next generation, Generation Z, will continue to transform economics, urban form, and infrastructure. They were born with technology at their finger tips, becoming the most social, entrepreneurial, educated, and globally aware generation.

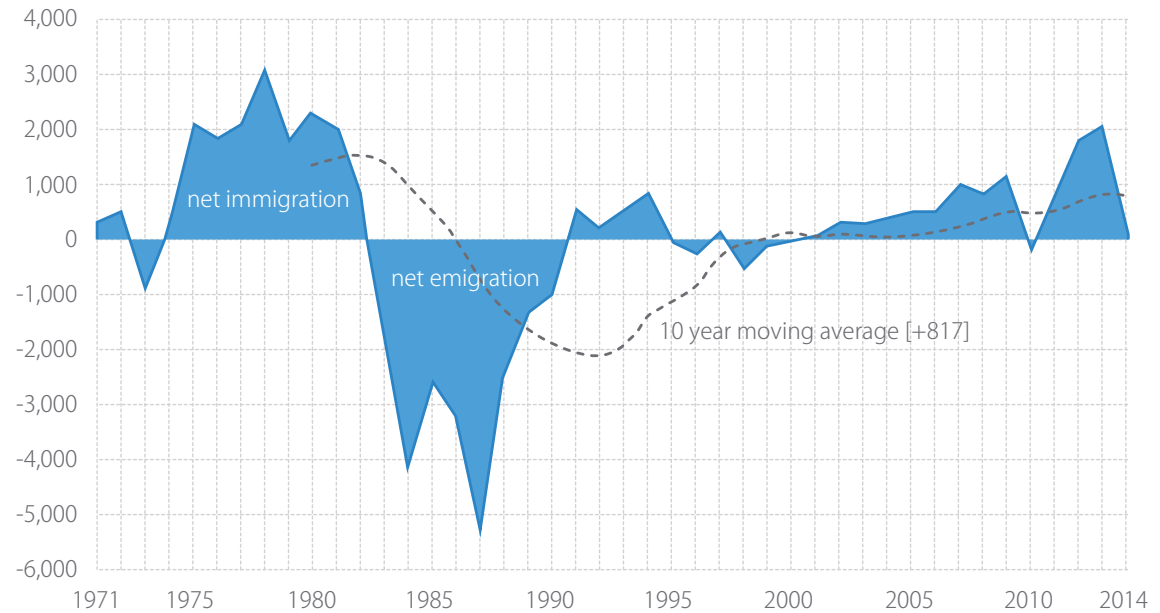
**“Families are the future; to thrive you need to appeal to all groups from single adults to young families, to growing families, empty nesters and retirement. The small town feel is important because it shows we care for each other, we look out for each other.” - Public Comment**

Net migration (**Figure 2-4**), one of the functions of local employment prospects, is a key driver of Casper housing needs. Population growth in the Casper area has historically been driven by major swings in net migration, depending on oil, gas and even coal industry hiring needs. That volatility is still being seen today, although perhaps not to the extent seen in the 1970s and 1980s. With data through 2014 only, **Figure 2-4** is missing the ongoing downswing being experienced with the latest downswing in petroleum commodity pricing.

Since the mid-1990s, rates of natural increase, due to rates of births and deaths, has settled into a reasonably steady average net gain of just over 400 new county residents annually. Casper has the potential for additional (but hard to predict) growth in housing needs.

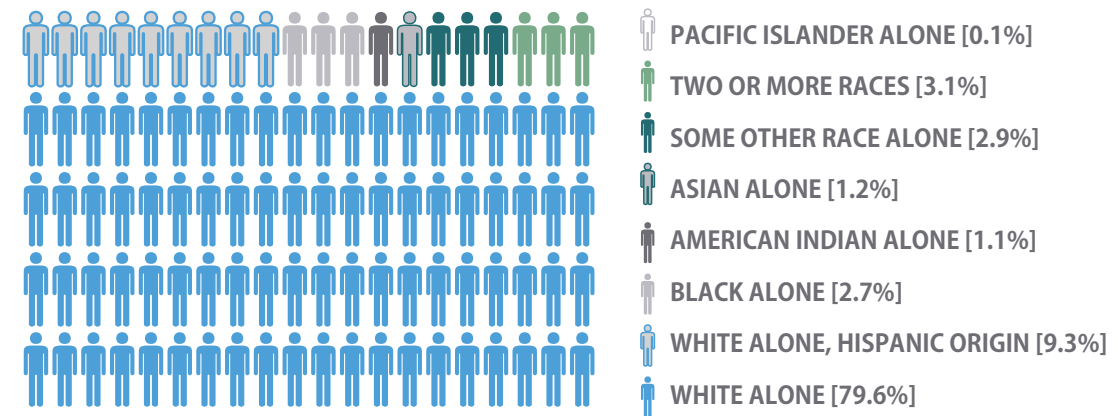
Casper is considerably less ethnically diverse than the nation. Its only major minority group, Hispanics, represent 9.3% of the population (**Figure 2-5**), up from 7.4% just six years ago. That share is considerably lower than the nationwide figure of nearly 18%.

FIGURE 2-4. ANNUAL NET MIGRATION, NATRONA COUNTY



Source: U.S. Census Bureau and Wyoming Department of Health

FIGURE 2-5. CASPER POPULATION BY RACE/ETHNICITY, 2016

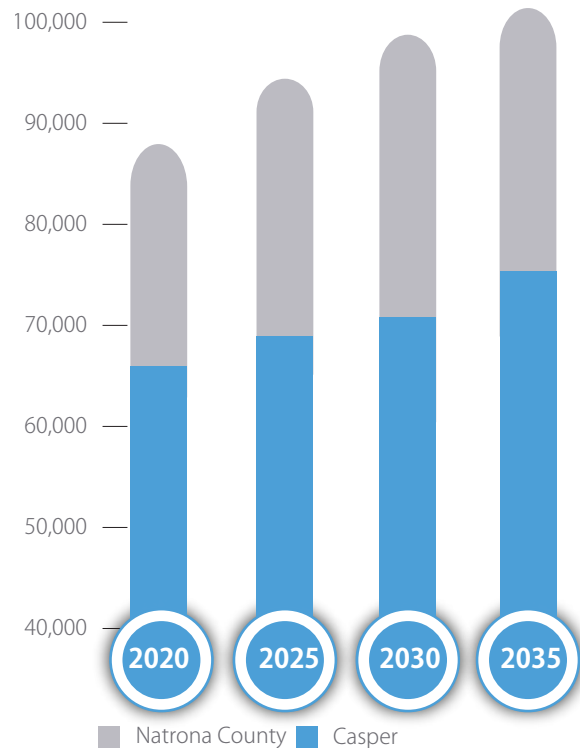


Source: ESRI, estimates based U.S. Census Bureau/ACS data

## Population Forecasts

The future population forecast is expected to be between 1-2% according to the Wyoming Economic Analysis Division. Within the planning horizon of this Plan of 10-20 years, Casper is expected to grow to about 70,000 to 75,000 people (**Figure 2-6**).

FIGURE 2-6. POPULATION FORECASTS



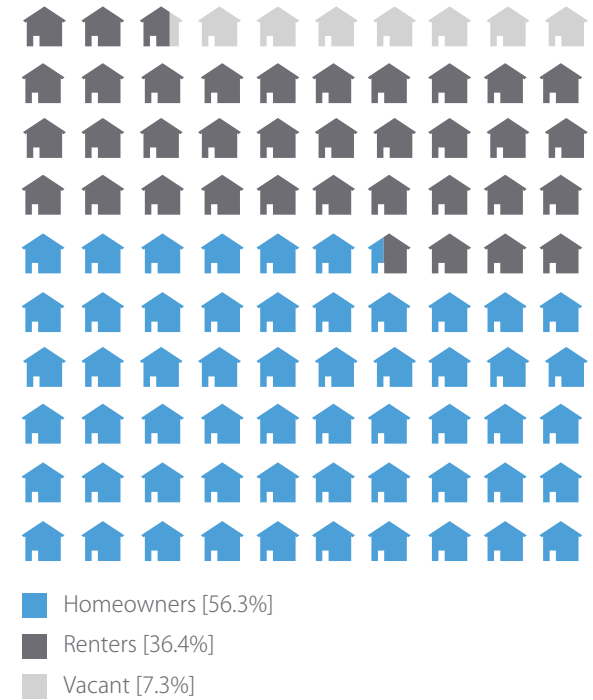
Source: Wyoming Department of Administration & Information, Economic Analysis Division, 2015

## Household Characteristics

As of 2016, the City of Casper had approximately 25,000 households residing in approximately 27,000 housing units, for a vacancy rate of 7.3%, compared to 11.3% nationally. Household ownership rates are just below that for the nation, with Casper having just over 36% renters (as a share of all occupied units). On average, there are 2.40 people in each Casper household, somewhat smaller than the national average of 2.59. In Casper, 28.5% of households have just one member, versus 26.7% nationally (**Figure 2-7**).

Casper has significantly more divorced residents, per capita, compared to the nation (16.5% versus 11.0%) – a phenomenon that can lead to greater need for flexible, more temporary housing arrangements (such as apartments) that would otherwise be suggested by age profiles alone.

FIGURE 2-7. CASPER HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS, 2016



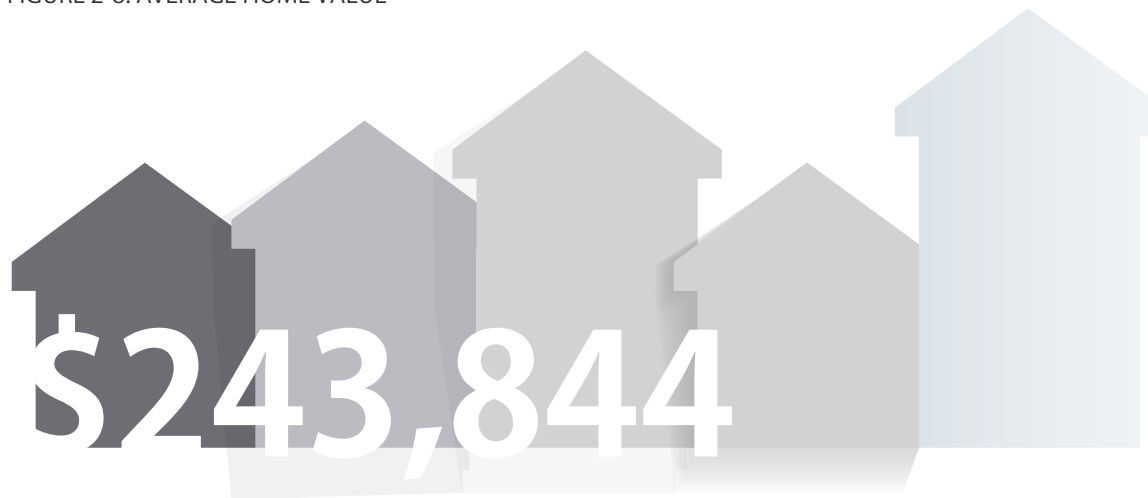
Source: ESRI estimates, based on U.S. Census data

The majority (70.2%) of housing units in Casper are single-family detached homes, with another 2.5% attached. Multi-family units make up 23% of the housing units. The average home value is \$243,844 (Figure 2-8). Casper's average per capita income of \$31,979 (discussed further in the next section) creates a gap, although not significant, in affordability.

There is currently a mix of historic and some new building stock in the urban center which are primarily three to four stories. There is the ability to go vertical without obstructing mountain views. New residential rooftops would add “eyes on the street” for safety and boost spending density in support of retail.

Outside of central Casper, there will always be demand for lower density homes with large private yards, even for the rental market. Rather than ignore this ingrained Western preference, planning can focus on ways to make such patterns more efficient.

FIGURE 2-8. AVERAGE HOME VALUE



Source: ESRI estimates, based on U.S. Census data

## Population Workforce

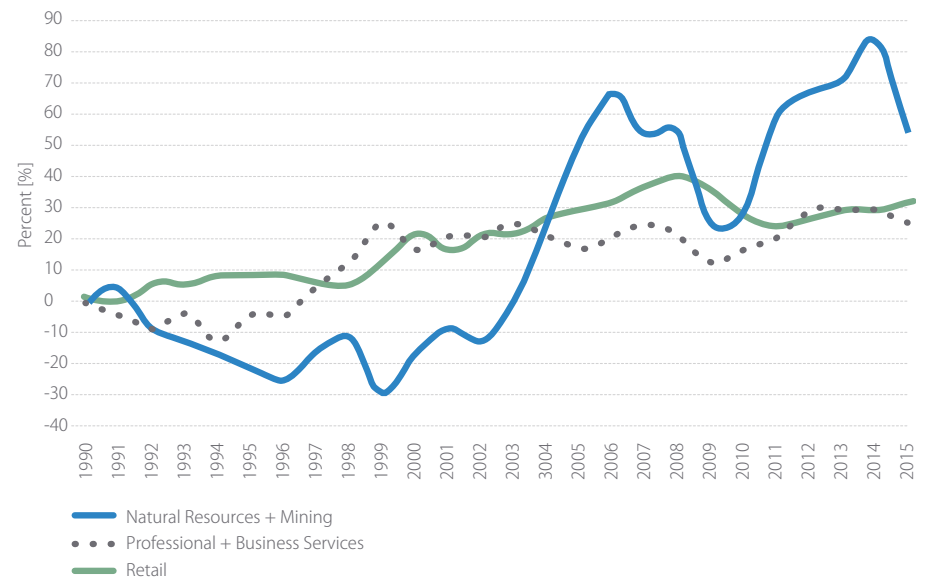
While Casper has fewer college grads (25.4% have a baccalaureate degree, versus 30.5% nationally), it actually has more adult residents that have attended “at least some college” when compared to the US overall (69.3% versus 59.6%). Casper has 26% of its population working in so-called “blue collar” occupations versus 21% nationally.

In boom times, the draw of relatively high-paying jobs in skilled trades can outweigh the perceived benefits of a lengthier university stay. It remains to be seen whether the current downturn will lead towards re-enrollment for some college students whose degree paths were interrupted by ready employment.

**Figure 2-9** reflects the relative volatility in traditional energy-sector industries, relative to more stable sectors such as professional services and retail, which tend to flourish in evenly-growing diversified economies.

**Figure 2-10** illustrates the major industry groups in which Wyoming residents are employed. Even though this graph does not reflect job losses occurring since the recent oil and gas downturn, it shows both retail and health/education services sectors as being a larger employer than mining/extraction. This understates the relative importance of oil and gas in the local economy. Mineral extraction is a so-called “basic-sector” industry – meaning that each job directly involved in oil/gas tends to indirectly increase employment in other sectors especially transportation, construction, wholesaling, lodging, and dining as money flows into the local economy from outside.

FIGURE 2-9. WYOMING EMPLOYMENT, GROWTH SINCE 1990



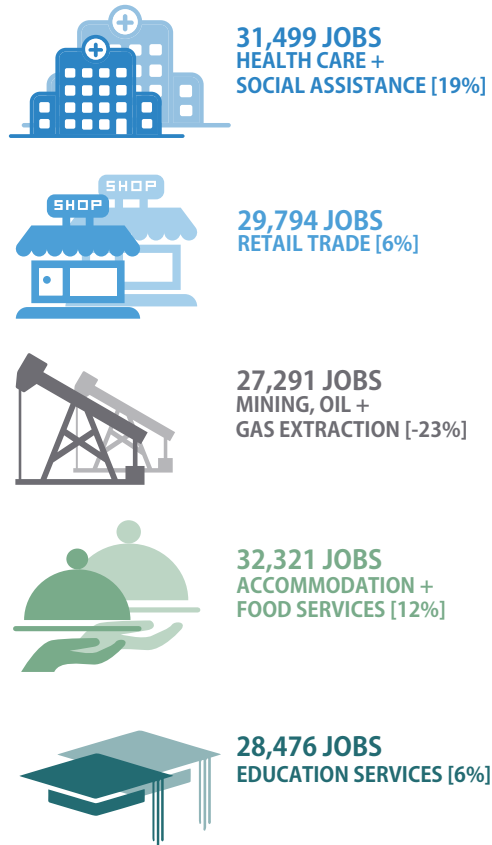
Source: Wyoming Department of Workforce Services (using BLS data)

While energy extraction can greatly benefit the local economy during boom times, the lack of economic diversity puts housing policy in reactive mode by chasing new construction when energy jobs boom and solving vacancy and affordable housing needs during decline periods. **Map 2-1** shows dots representing where workers live (by census block) in the Casper area.

Dots are sized proportionally by the number of worker residents and shaded to indicate their wage levels, with green shading indicating higher wage brackets (and more prevalent in south Casper). Brown-shaded dots are lower wage brackets, and are especially concentrated in north-central Casper. This shows a division in wealthier and lower-income neighborhoods.



FIGURE 2-10. 2014 TOP 5 WYOMING INDUSTRIES BY EMPLOYMENT AND 2024 GROWTH PROJECTIONS (%)



## CITIZENS' PERSPECTIVE

Consensus amongst Casperites is that there is a need for more types of housing stock in the urban center. More market-rate housing targeting young professionals is desired, along with housing for seniors and families, to supplement the existing affordable and assistance-based housing.

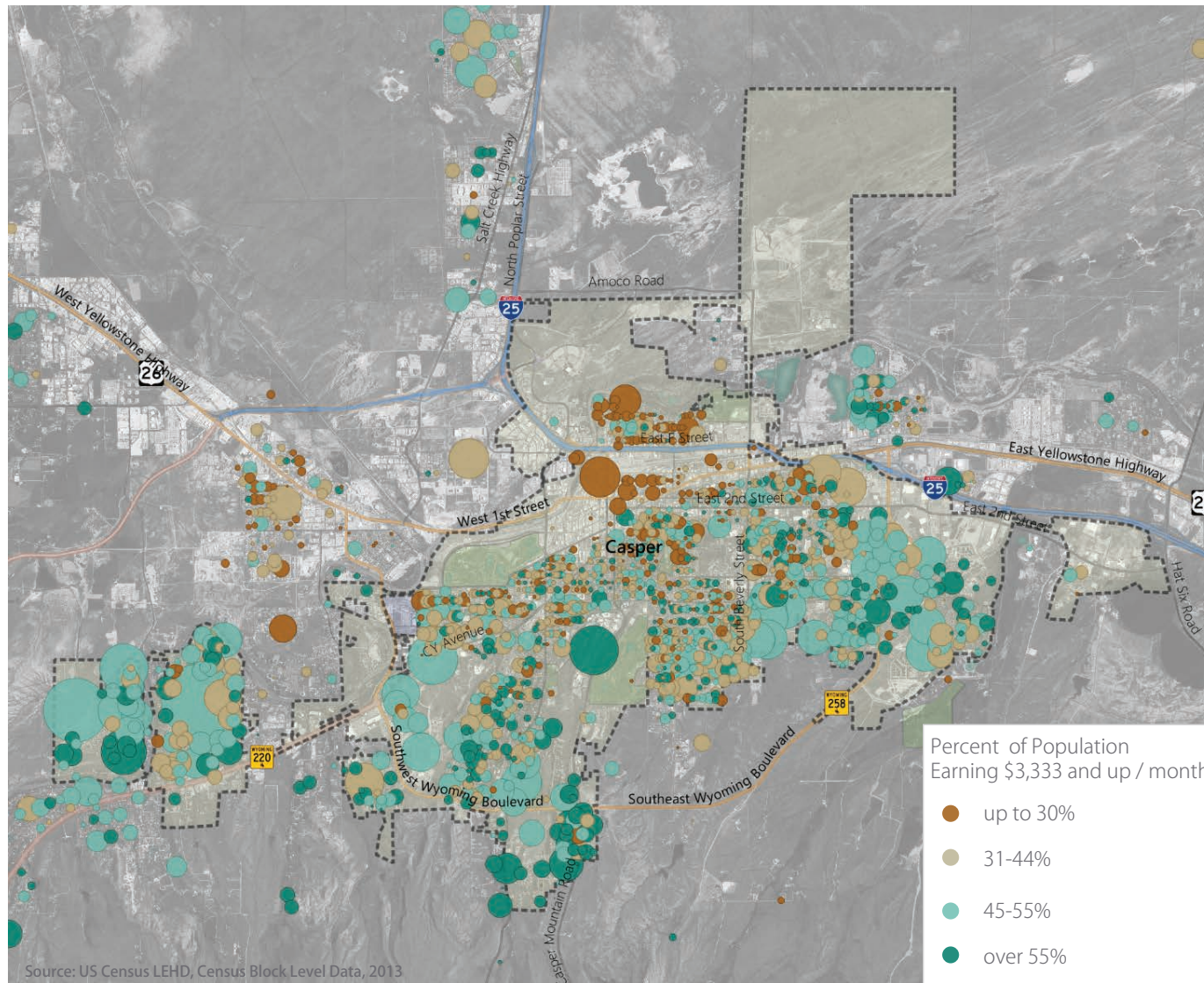
From a housing standpoint, Downtown Casper represents an underutilized asset. A large desire exists to add smaller format rental and ownership choices within a walkable urban environment with the potential to leverage and add to cultural/retail/dining amenities. These amenities will be harder to support without additional housing within the urban center.

Residents want more public places in each neighborhood, through neighborhood parks, community gardens, and corner shops or cafes, which contribute to preserving the small-town characteristics that Casperites love. Residents want more mixed-use development in residential neighborhoods that would provide a few amenities within walking distance from home.

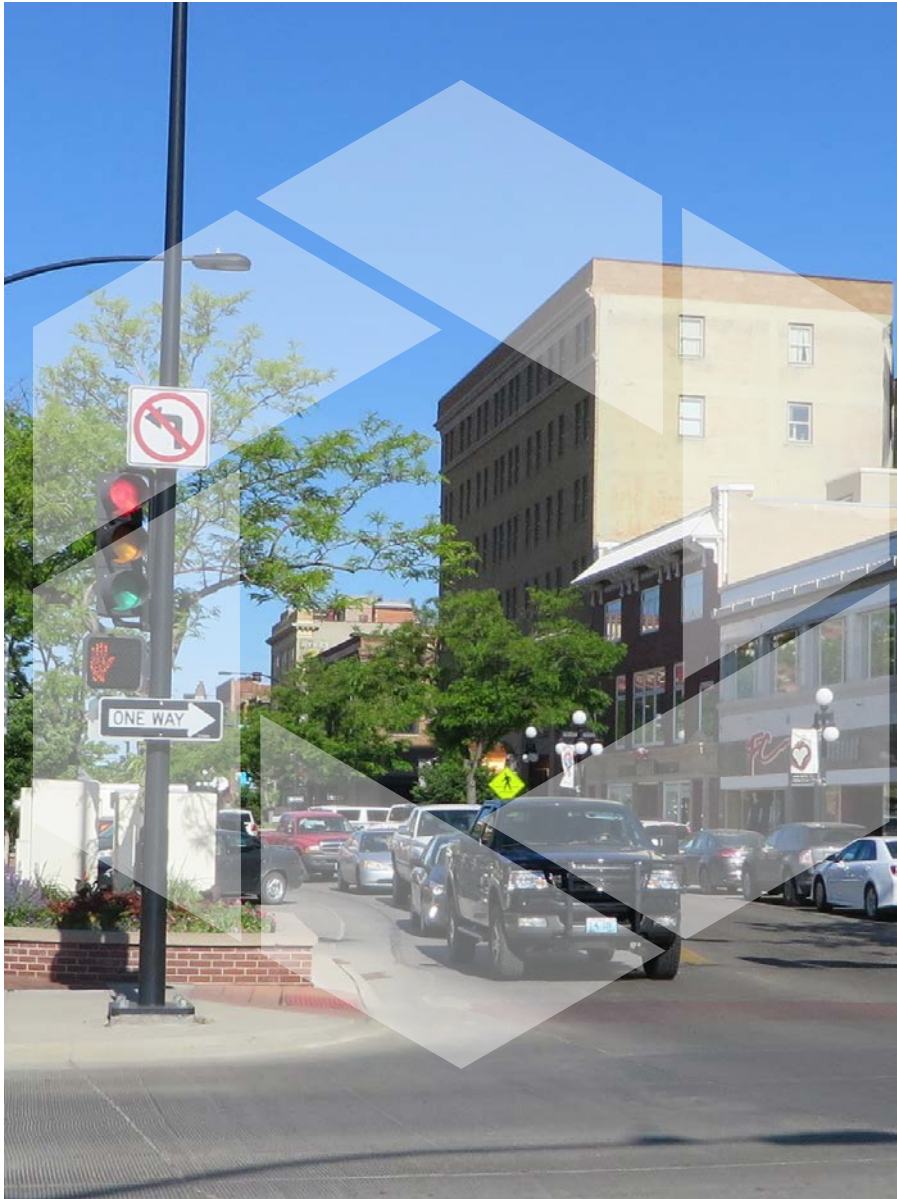
The community values connected, safe, and friendly neighborhoods, and wants to see those characters preserved as Casper grows. This goes hand-in-hand with the small-town feel that is so appreciated amongst Casperites. As Casper grows and further develops the urban center, the public wants the City to preserve the small-town feel, especially in the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

Source: Bullard, D. (2016). Wyoming Long-Term Industry Projections, 2014-2024. Research & Planning, Wyoming Department of Workforce Services. Retrieved from <http://doe.state.wy.us/LMI/projections.htm>Source:

MAP 2-1. CASPER WORKFORCE DISTRIBUTION AND WAGE RATES



A key economic development policy question is “how do we provide a range of opportunities in a stable community, while being fiscally responsible?”



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### WHY IT MATTERS

The City of Casper and surrounding region has long benefitted, and at times suffered, from a robust mining and gas/oil industry. Since the late 1800s Casper’s economy has been rooted in the oil and gas industry. The Casper region has also provided support services for the coal mining industry in the Powder River Basin. The oil, gas and mining industries and related services are collectively referred to as the energy industry. The Casper area is currently suffering from a significant decrease in oil prices and demand, which is translating into an increase in unemployment and reduced employment base. Current reports by the State indicated that this trend will not reverse in the near term.

*“Given the failure to identify a point in time when supply and demand drive oil prices upward, an abundance of natural gas, and changing utility strategies relating to electricity supply, it is clearly not certain that employment in mining will return to 2014 levels within the next few years. Rather, the commodities market strongly suggests that the demand for labor will decline further during the period in the mining industry and consequently in other industries.”*

Wyoming Labor Force Trends, Wyoming Department of Workforce Services and Workforce Development Council, April 2016.

It is clear that the City of Casper desires an economic base diversified beyond the energy industry in order to stabilize revenues and impacts on the community. To do this, it is important to understand the local existing trends as well as the national trends that are shaping the future economy.

## KEY POINTS + ASSUMPTIONS

The national economy is becoming increasingly more talent/knowledge-based than resource-based.

Retaining and employing local skilled young adults will be key to future economic stability. A skilled workforce is a key driver of the future economy.

Quality of life and sense of place will play a role in future economic development.

Natrona County had one of the highest unemployment rates from June 2015 – June 2016, significantly higher than the US average.

Health care has been a growing industry in the US and Casper over the past 10 years.

## EXISTING CONDITIONS

### Overview

The State of Wyoming unemployment rate was 5.7% in June 2016, which was significantly higher than its June 2015 level of 4.2%, and significantly higher than the current U.S. unemployment rate of 4.9%. From June 2015 to June 2016, unemployment rates increased in almost every county. Natrona County (up from 5.1% to 7.8%) had one of the largest increases **Figure 2-11**.

In addition to the increasing unemployment rate, there is general concern for the Casper area’s ability to retain and employ the local skilled youth population. Positively, Natrona County has one of the highest retention rates of Wyoming high-school graduates in the state. According to the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services, 72% of 2010 graduates from Natrona County are in the workforce.

FIGURE 2-11. PERCENTAGE CHANGE IN UNEMPLOYMENT (JUNE 2015 - JUNE 2016)

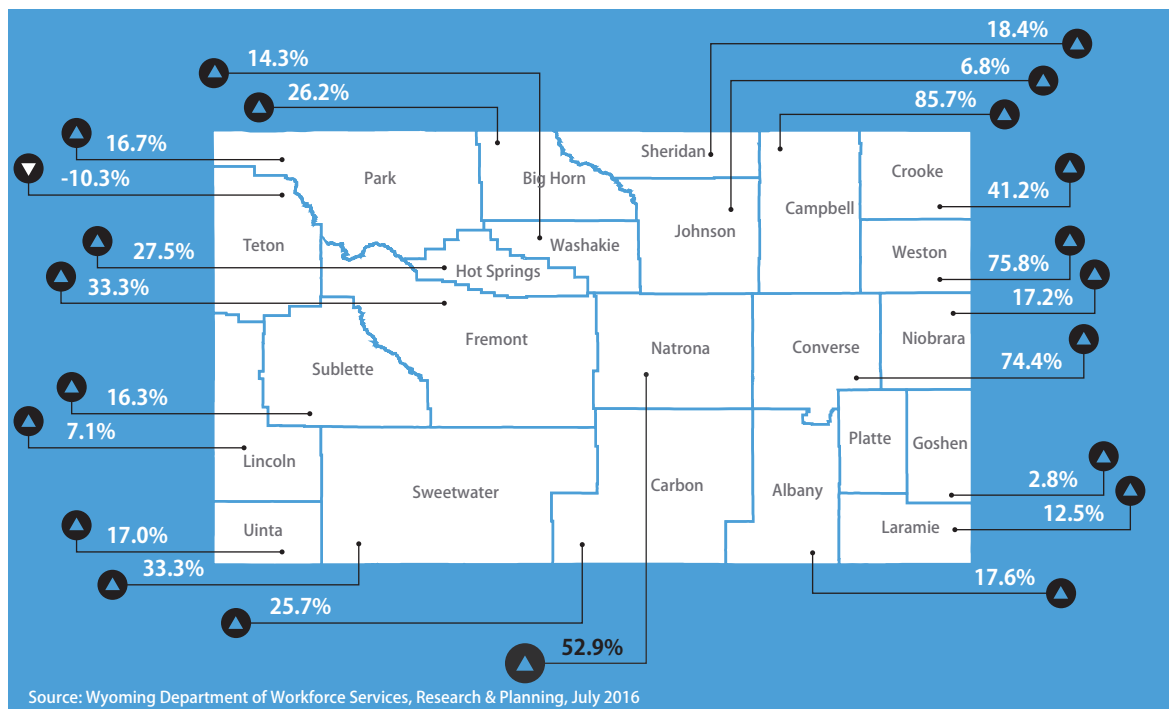
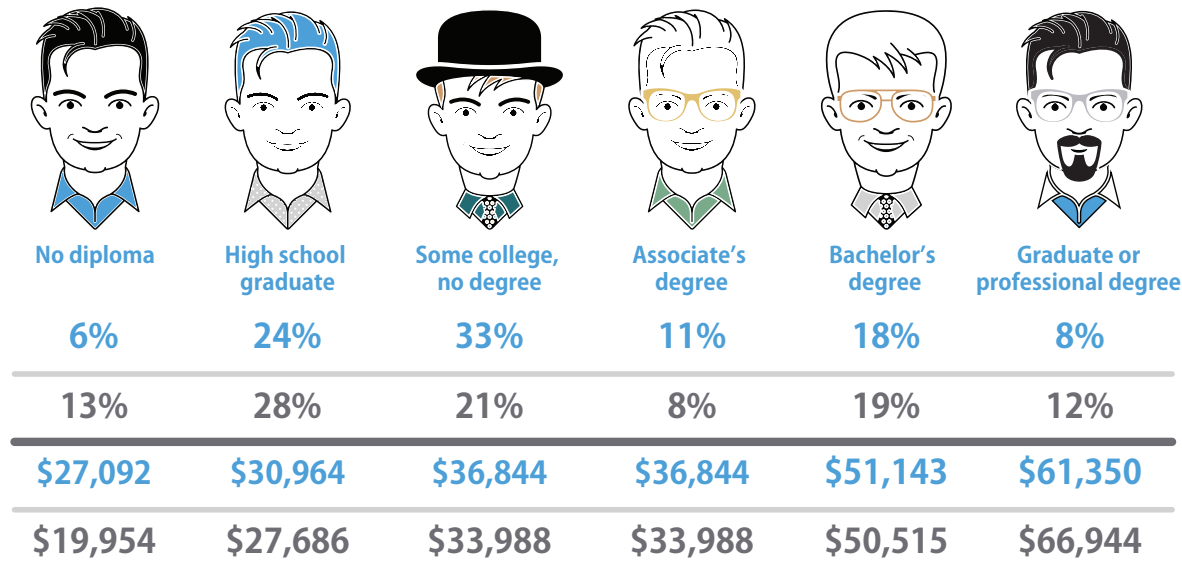


FIGURE 2-12. CITY OF CASPER VERSUS US: EDUCATION RATE/AVERAGE WAGES



Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

— Casper — US

### Skilled Workforce

When planning for a future economy it is important to understand that all industries are dependent on a talented workforce that has technical skills and/or a higher education. A future economy in Casper will need a skilled workforce with training in career and technical education (CTE) and higher-education science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) degrees (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015).

### Higher Education

The City of Casper has a strong high school graduation rate at 93.5% compared to the national average of 87.2% (Figure 2-12). Furthermore, Casper has an average per capita income \$31,979 compared to the US average of \$29,472 (ESRI, US Census). While this is commendable and an asset to the community, it is important for the City to retain and attract an educated and technically proficient workforce. Globally, positions requiring substantial independent judgment and decision making are now in

high demand (Brookings Institute, 2014). Increasingly employers are demanding a workforce that has technical skills, including manufacturing jobs that involve the operation of sophisticated machinery requiring some advanced training beyond high school. STEM workers are increasingly in demand and in short supply especially in the private sector where software developers, data scientists, and those in skilled trades are needed.

## Career Technical Education (CTE) Training

CTE training is targeted toward middle-skill jobs, which require education and training beyond high school but less than a bachelor's degree. These jobs are a significant part of the economy. Of the 55 million job openings created by 2020, 30% will require some college or a two-year associate degree (Association for Career and Technical Training, 2016). Casper has developed a workforce culture through the oil industry that aligns with this important and in-demand sector of the talent base. It is important to foster partnerships with Casper College and local high-schools to encourage youth to consider this career path. By engaging youth early, they may be more likely to attend Casper College and apply their critical skills with local companies in Casper.



## Talent

The national economy is becoming increasingly more talent/knowledge-based than resource-based meaning people over raw materials are the most important asset to a company's value and prospects for growth (Martin Prosperity Institute, University of Toronto). This applies to all industries including manufacturing, professional services and technology, and defines the shift in market assessment for the world's most valuable companies. As illustrated in **Figure 2-13**, ten years ago the most valuable companies consisted largely of natural resource extraction and now they are largely technology companies with values based upon people generating innovative ideas and processes. This is not to suggest that Casper needs to focus its industrial base on technology companies, but it does need to understand that the modern economy thrives more on skilled people than natural resource extraction.

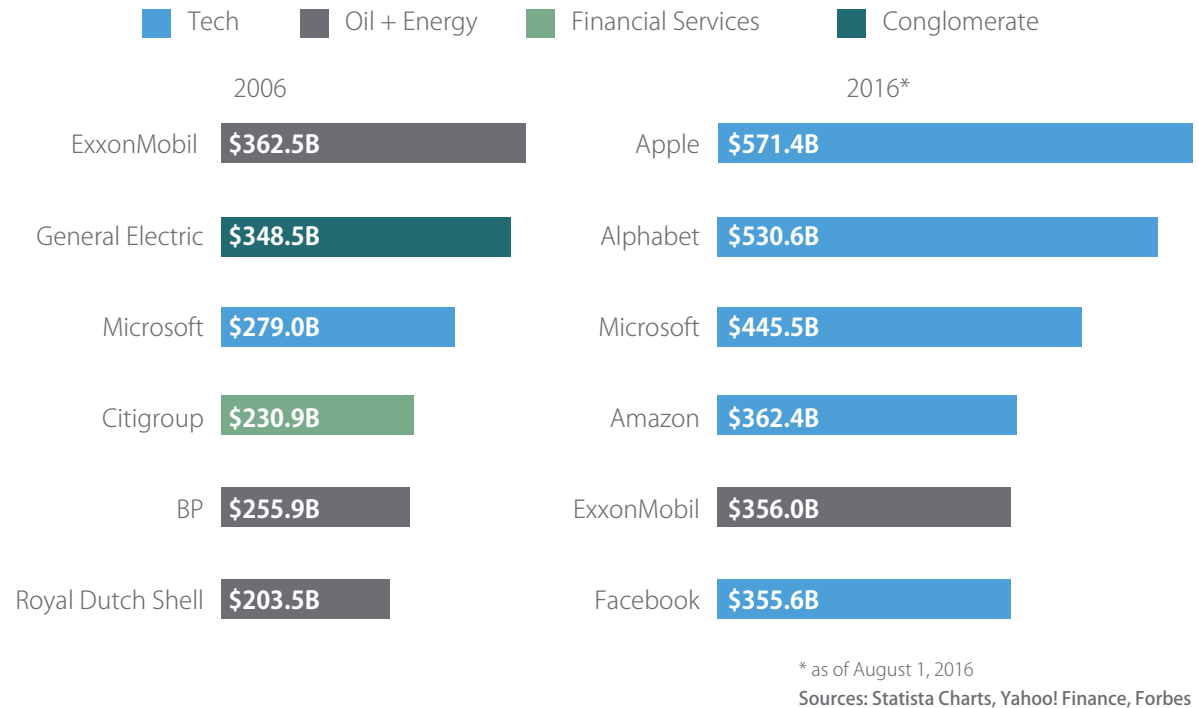
A significant cohort of the talent in demand consists of the "Millennial" generation made up of approximately 76 million people – the largest demographic group the US has seen. As this generation grows and shapes the talent-based economy, it is important to understand what motivates them and what communities choose. The new economy is based in a highly mobile environment.

The following elements are influencing the choices of the next generation:

- Job Base. Talent moving to a new community wants to know that there are other opportunities if the job that brought them there does not work out.

- **Simple Commute.** Many Millennials are not defined by the automobile, and do not want to drive if they don't have to. As reported in Urban Land Institute (ULI) Emerging Trends 2016, miles traveled by car for those people 34 years old or younger are down 23% nationally. Locally, the average miles travelled by any mode – walking, driving, biking, or taking transit – is the lowest for the next generation.
- **Urban Lifestyle.** They tend to prefer density with alternative transportation modes and retail nearby, which provides alternatives to owning a car. This urban lifestyle does not mean the entire community must conform to urban densities. What is important is that some element of an urban lifestyle through either a healthy Main Street in a traditional downtown or denser urban centers in suburbs is provided.
- **Entertainment.** The next generation is looking for ample amenities, especially restaurants and access to outdoor recreation.
- **Open Culture.** They embrace social or ethical causes and communities that are more diverse, accepting, and willing to change are more attractive to this group. Millennials value the ability to change and see this as a key principle behind US success.

FIGURE 2-13. THE AGE OF TECH: MARKET CAPITALIZATION OF THE WORLD'S MOST VALUABLE PUBLIC COMPANIES



Additionally, the growing Baby Boomer population will change how talent is viewed. Financial stability, may require this independent generation to retire later or not at all; seeking new or different challenges. Seniors are more active, have higher incomes and a greater ability to move. Retaining this talent in Casper will foster a greater sense of community and harbour institutional knowledge. The creation of satisfying, flexible schedule jobs, and volunteer positions for older adults.

## Place

Communities that are thriving today are those that develop, retain, and attract talent. In order to do that a community must recognize what makes it distinct and build on those genuine qualities. Casper is fortunate to possess two important factors for the Millennial generation: an urban environment within the community and access to outdoors.

### Urban Center

Employers in all industries are striving to attract and retain talent. A vibrant urban center is important as a younger workforce and seniors want to live and work near good active transportation (including pedestrian and bikeway systems), restaurants, and entertainment. At the same time, employees with families, perhaps not living in the urban core, still desire a unique environment for entertainment on the weekends and a vibrant environment during the week.



This demand heavily influences the kinds of investment cities make in their urban core. One important way to do this is through “placemaking” – making places where people and employers want to be.

Through placemaking efforts, the City can create more vibrant areas, connect employment opportunities to residential communities, and leverage natural and cultural assets to attract and retain both employers and talent. This ultimately contributes to the success of the area’s economy.



"Take a section of Downtown Casper, close off the streets in that section, open up the bars, bring in music talent from traveling bands to local bands...so that people can enjoy music, food, beverages, and dancing. Once it happens, the mom and pop stores downtown will get free advertising and it will boost the local economy." - Public Comment



## Outdoors

The small town feel and access to the outdoors are major assets to attracting new employees and retaining them. The Casper area has great access to outdoor adventure, with everything from skiing, rafting, kayaking, cycling, rock climbing, camping, hiking, fishing, hunting and other sports. An additional quality of life measure that is important to the local economy is keeping Casper family-friendly through public recreational facilities.

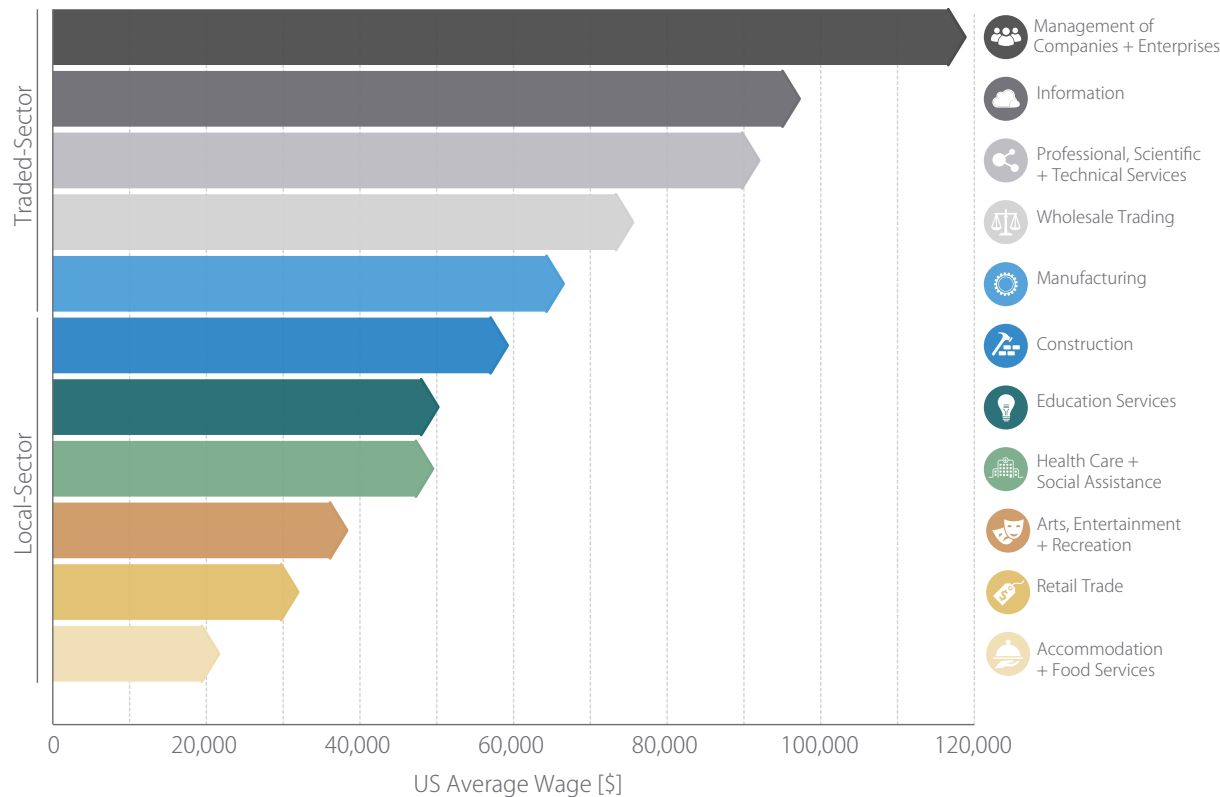
Over the next two decades, the South Platte river corridor, another tributary through the Denver Metro, is expected to generate 19,200 permanent jobs and produce \$4.3 million annually in new revenue for the city through completed by the Greenway Foundation. In Pittsburgh, the \$130 million invested in the 13-mile long Three Rivers Park leveraged \$2.6 billion in development over the last 15 years. Property values have skyrocketed 60% along the river compared to 32% elsewhere in Pittsburgh, according to the Pittsburgh PostGazette. (Casper River Project highlights confluence of economy and ecology, Wyoming Business Council, 2015)

## Jobs Housing Balance

Jobs-housing balance is the distribution of employment opportunities and workforce population across a geographic area. It is measured by the ratio of jobs (employees) to households. In the City of Casper the jobs-housing balance is 1.12 (28,000 jobs/25,000 households), indicating a weak employment base and/or an over abundance in housing. This means that for every household there is barely more than 1 job.

However, many employers are located in the surrounding communities of Evansville and Mills. There are 40,000 jobs and 32,000 households in the Metropolitan Statistical Area for Casper for a 1.25 jobs/housing balance. Housing growth should match economic development.

FIGURE 2-14. TRADED-SECTOR AND LOCAL-SECTOR, US AVERAGE WAGES



Source: NAICS

### Traded-Sector versus Local-Sector Jobs

It is important to distinguish between traded sector and local sector jobs because they have very different needs in terms of workforce and business location. In addition, each sector requires different types of support and investments. These sectors are distinguished for clarification of future recommendations.

Traded-sector businesses include industries and employers that produce goods and services consumed outside the region where they are made and, therefore, bring new income to the area (e.g., medical equipment, food, drilling services). Workers in the traded sector tend to be better educated, work more hours, and earn higher average wages than local sector business. As the traded sector increases employment and wages, it enables entrepreneurs to develop skills and resources to foster innovation and start new businesses. Furthermore, certain traded-sector companies foster a supply-chain effect that creates the need for additional companies to supply components of a manufactured product.

*"I'm actually quite disappointed in the lack of new industries. Taking ideas from other cities, where the natural resources were a big part of founding the city, to the new innovations they created for themselves... would increase jobs, bring in more population, in turn creating more income for the city." - Public Comment*

Local sector business consists of industries and firms that produce goods and services that are consumed locally in the region where they were made, and therefore circulate existing income in the area (e.g., professional services, health care, retail). These businesses are important as they make a community distinct and provide amenities to attract young professionals and families that drive the new economy.

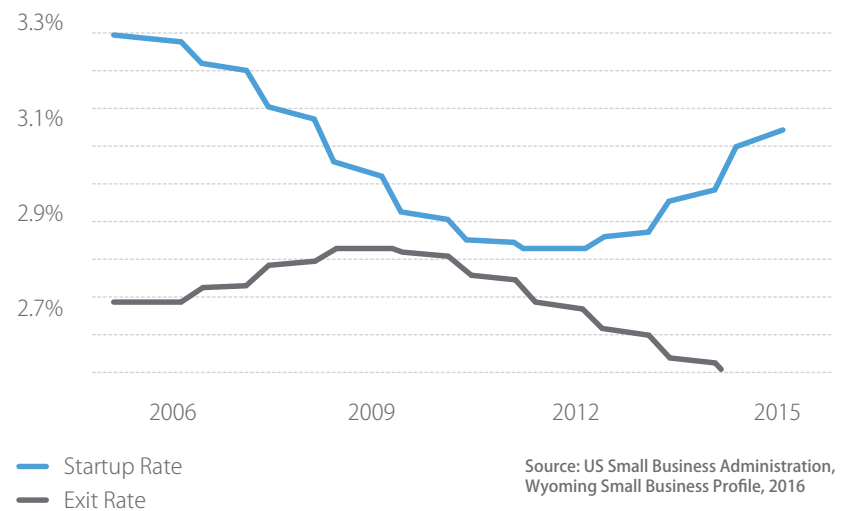
**Figure 2-14** highlights the US average wage difference between traded sector jobs and local sector jobs. The local sector industry exceptions regarding typical lower wages are health care and construction industries. These industries are beneficial to the economic base by generating large numbers of high-wage jobs that have less significant education requirements. However, these industries do not generate a significant supply-chain effect or foster an environment for innovative new companies to emerge that grow the economic base.

### Start-Up Business

In fostering the traded-sector economy, it will be important for Casper to focus on supporting a start-up culture. New businesses account for nearly all net new job creation and almost 20% of gross job creation. Start-ups have been on the rise in Wyoming in recent years (**Figure 2-15**). The exit rate, the rate at which start-ups divest in their capital infrastructure, has been falling.

Companies less than one year old have created an average of 1.5 million jobs per year over the past three decades. People generally start businesses in the places they are already located, and many of the resources they access are at the local or regional level (Kaufman Foundation, 2015).

FIGURE 2-15. WYOMING PRIVATE START-UP AND START-UP EXIT RATES



As rural communities often struggle with a limited labor pool and retaining young talent, recruiting new companies to the area is often a challenge. To offset this challenge, fostering an environment that encourages companies to grow from the ground up is a critical strategy to implement. An entrepreneurial culture not only serves to create new jobs, it also provides an environment that supports “trailing spouses”: a person who follows his or her life partner to another city because of a work assignment. For hospitals or schools in rural areas, this is often an important subject in recruiting new talent. Providing a supportive outlet for the trailing spouse can serve as one way to offset this concern. One way to do this is through the support of co-working spaces, which could be an office or other working environment used by people who are self-employed or working for different employers, typically so as to share equipment, ideas, and knowledge.

## Economic Base

A city's economic base is founded on traded (primary)-sector companies that offer higher-wage jobs, innovation, and bring new wealth into the community. The City's economic development partner, Casper Area Economic Development Alliance (CAEDA), is focused on tactically engaging the private sector to grow the following Industry Focus Areas.

- Energy – building off the machining capabilities that serve the energy industry, this focus area will work to define additional industry opportunities. For example, some machines serving the energy industry rely on advanced sensor technology, which can be enhanced and leverage for new opportunities.
- Medical – building off the strength of the three major hospitals in the Casper area, this area is focused on increasing professional positions as well as exploring opportunities for medical devices pending further research and development (R&D) support from higher-education.
- Advanced Manufacturing – building off the existing workforce and small businesses, this focus area will work to grow this base tied to the region's unique assets. One example may be outdoor recreation, which leverages the outdoor culture and inspires new gear or apparel design. In addition, Casper has a robust metals craft manufacturing community that defines the city's unique creative culture and could be supported with an innovative maker space opportunity.
- Finance/Insurance – as a regional hub, Casper is home to several finance and insurance companies. Focusing on this area will inform opportunities and needs to grow this sector.

In keeping with national trends identified earlier, these Focus Areas will incorporate technology and advanced skills in their operations, which requires a more skilled workforce. Innovation is derivative of these industries and integrating technology will be an important strategy to success. For example, expanding the energy industries' focus on advanced sensor technology or medical services could include the development of medical devices.

To grow these Focus Areas, CAEDA will first work to expand existing businesses in the community. With an understanding of the operational needs for these businesses, there can be a strategic effort to recruit companies that fill supply-chain gaps and help the existing companies thrive. To recruit these companies, it important to be able to show that there is a viable workforce and that Casper is a quality place for a business to grow and thrive.

The city's role is to focus on making Casper a great place so that businesses can easily retain and attract the talent it needs. This is accomplished through the completion of such projects of David Street Station, or building partnership opportunities with the private sector to seed a coding school to produce needed technology talent locally.



## EFFECTS OF ECONOMIC DIVERSITY

Wyoming has been fortunate to provide a high quality of life for its residents while claiming some of the nation's lowest tax rates. In addition to having relatively low property and sales tax, the State of Wyoming has no corporate or income taxes. This has been possible due to extractive mineral and energy industries contributing a substantial amount of money to state and municipal budgets. In fact, roughly 65 to 70 percent of state revenue comes from extractive industries, more specifically from severance taxes and royalty payments.

Talk of economic diversity is nothing new in Wyoming. But a recent call for greater economic diversity in the midst of an economic downturn due to a slump in the energy industry has led Wyoming state and municipal leaders to think about what this means for government budgets. Economic diversity may not be financially beneficial to government entities because the current tax structure is focused solely on extractive industries. The inconvenient fact is that if non-energy businesses are to grow, the state and municipalities need to decide how to fund government services with shrinking contributions from extractive related severance taxes and royalty payments.

To put it simply, a new economy may require a new government funding model.

## CITIZENS' PERSPECTIVE

In creating a stronger economy, one of the pieces of feedback most often heard is the desire to diversify Casper's economy. Residents want to attract new industries to Casper, along with a young and educated workforce. They want to supplement the large professional employers, like Casper College and Wyoming Medical Center, by attracting new employers.

Along with a diversified economy, strengthening Casper College's curriculum, or possibly having it transform into a state university, would be helpful in attracting local talent to contribute to the Casper economy. A more diverse economy would ideally include jobs aimed at high school students. Residents have told us that providing jobs for Casper teenagers could help to foster the types of connections that encourage youth to stay in Casper as they grow up.

The consensus amongst residents is that Casper needs to move away from being dependent on the oil, gas, and mining industries. The boom-and-bust cycle that is intrinsic to these energy industries is seen as not only preventing Casper from realizing its potential, but consistently hurting Casperites through the loss of jobs, income, and diminished property



values that come along with every bust. A variety of jobs would provide opportunities for the families of energy industry staff interested in other fields of work, and could potentially decrease the economic volatility. Some residents have said that they would like to see Casper invest in the renewable energies of wind and solar, as the energy industry job base and infrastructure already exists in Casper. Other residents would like to see Casper move away from the energy economy entirely, as it is not viewed as a dependable

market. Regardless of the differing opinion on means, Casperites want to see their city become economically self-sustaining.

Stakeholders believe that Casper needs to take tangible steps to be more supportive of local-sector small businesses and encourage their development. Stakeholders would love a city department, or individual, focused on providing assistance to Casperites as they navigate the regulations and requirements to becoming new business owners. For

**Stakeholders believe that Casper needs to take tangible steps to be more "supportive of local-sector small businesses and encourage their development."**



residents, easing the path to establishment includes loosening or eliminating the regulations and infrastructure that make it hard for new businesses to get started and be successful. And where the lack of regulation acts as an impediment, implement a policy to create change. One such issue is with the law that controls Casper's allotted liquor licenses. Residents and business owners have shared how difficult it is to obtain a liquor license, especially for businesses in the urban center. This in turn makes it difficult

for new restaurants to be successful, as a significant portion of sales are often attributed to alcohol. Related to small businesses, although stakeholders want to focus on urban development, there is also public demand for more restaurants in West Casper.

Community members emphasized the importance of talent retention, and the need for Casper to focus on keeping its youth population and attracting young professionals. Suggestions for talent retention programs included entrepreneurship competitions

and job incubators. Less specific suggestions included creating a more social aspect through more youth oriented businesses, including restaurants, bars, breweries, coffee shops, and music venues. Residents expressed that another way to provide the amenities and lifestyle that the next generation tends to prefer is through designing a mix of market-rate housing for young professionals in Casper's urban center.

The community suggested that public-private partnerships between businesses and the City of Casper can help improve Casper's economy and increase the quality of life as well. Ideas for such public-private partnerships included public events Downtown with longer store hours, to promote local businesses, and organized infrastructure improvements and maintenance.

A modernized city, with city-wide wi-fi, or fiber to provide increased internet speeds, has been cited by residents as a way to contribute to attracting businesses and a younger workforce to Casper. Additionally, the public feels that promoting Casper as an outdoor city, and capitalizing on its natural features through marketing and tourism is a way to increase recognition and ultimately positively impact Casper's economy.



## TRANSPORTATION

### WHY IT MATTERS

Transportation is intertwined with all aspects of community life. People use transportation to get to work, school, shopping, medical facilities, recreation, and community and social activities. The availability and convenience of transportation can have a profound influence on quality of life, economic development, housing options, and health and human services. A transportation system that serves all users well can help a community achieve desired land use patterns and other goals, and allow residents and visitors of Casper travel choices, public safety, and freedom of personal mobility.

### KEY POINTS + ASSUMPTIONS

The automobile is the predominant means of transportation.

Land use and transportation are mutually dependent on each other. If one is not well planned, the other suffers.

There is a desire for increased biking and walking transportation through better trails, bike lanes, more frequent transit service, and other infrastructure improvements.

The Casper Area Transportation Coalition (CATC), contracted by the City of Casper, provides "The Bus" for fixed route deviation and CATC buses for demand-responsive transit service. Not all of the metro area is served by "The Bus" on all days of the week.

Freight corridors passing through the Casper area include: the Burlington Northern and Santa Fe (BNSF) Railways, I-25, US 20/26, and SH 220.



## EXISTING CONDITIONS

### Travel Patterns

The Casper Metropolitan Area is relatively isolated from other communities in the state, meaning the vast majority of people live and work in the area. Almost all commuting is to and from the neighboring communities of Bar Nunn, Mills and Evansville and the most common form of transportation is driving alone (82%), while 11% carpool (Figure 2-16). According the Center for Economic Studies, US Census Bureau, each day, over 15,100 people live and work within the City of Casper limits. Over 11,100 people live in Casper but work in the neighboring communities, or outside the metro area. Almost 9,900 people live outside of Casper but commute daily to work in Casper. Just over half (51.5%) of residents have less than a 15 minute commute to work, 38.4% have a 15 - 29 minute commute, and 10% commute more than 30 minutes. The average commute time is 17.8 minutes (Figure 2-17).

Approximately 46% of Casper residents pay 46% of their household income to cover the cost of their transportation (22%) and housing (24%) (Figure 2-18). The Center for Neighborhood Technology's (CNT) research indicates that these costs should remain below 45% to be affordable.

### Functional Classification

The functional classification of a roadway describes its primary purpose, such as moving traffic efficiently, providing local or regional connections, or providing land parcel access. Functional classification is based on traffic volumes, vehicle speeds, length of typical trips, spacing between similar roads, and state/regional significance. Each functional classification has a corresponding set of design criteria, such as access spacing, design speed, and typical cross sections. The primary functional classifications that exist in Casper and their primary purpose are outlined in Table 2-1. Table 2-2 summarizes the typical characteristics of each Functional Classification.

Streets generally serve two important functions: mobility and land access. These two functions conflict with each other – more land access generally leads to reduced mobility and traffic carrying capacity, and vice versa. Each roadway type is specifically designed to operate with certain characteristics based on the adjoining land uses, level of continuity, and proximity/connections to other facilities.

FIGURE 2-16. TRAVEL MODE

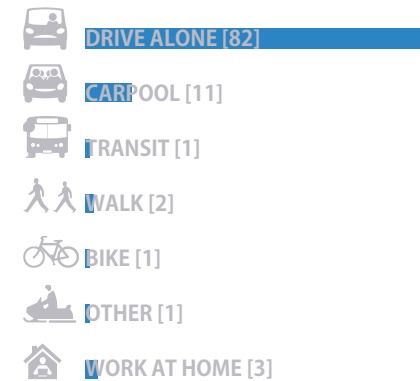


FIGURE 2-17. AVERAGE COMMUTE TIME

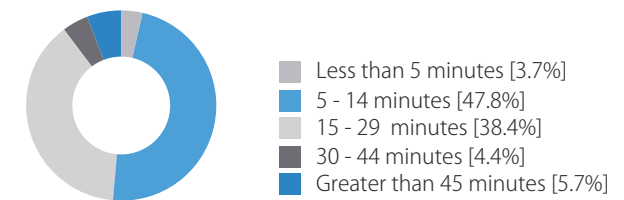
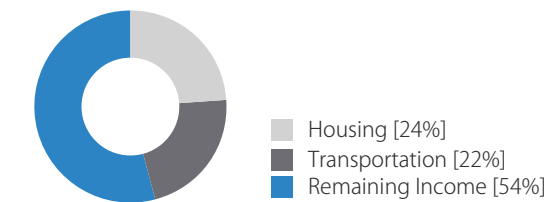


FIGURE 2-18. DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME



Source: US Census

TABLE 2-1. FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION

FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION	PRIMARY PURPOSE
Highway	Highways serve long distance trips within and across states, generally have limited access via interchanges, and carry high traffic volumes at high speeds. Their primary purpose is to move traffic quickly and efficiently.
Principal Arterial	Principal arterials serve travel between cities and other activity centers. Typically, these roadways have high traffic volumes and are frequently the route of choice for intercity buses and trucks. Principal arterials play a unique role in providing a high degree of mobility and carrying a high proportion of travel for long distance trips. Wyoming Boulevard and CY Avenue are examples of Principal arterials in Casper.
Minor Arterial	Minor arterials serve longer trips within and between urban and suburban areas. They are typically designed with limited locations at which vehicles can enter or exit the roadway. Minor arterials typically have higher posted speed limits, and typically account for more than half of the daily vehicle-miles of travel. Casper Mountain Road, Twelfth Street, Collins Drive, and Beverly Street are classified as minor arterials.
Collector Road	Collector roads connect local roads and arterial roadways, and are typically shorter and narrower than arterial routes but longer and wider than local roads. Collectors often provide traffic circulation between neighborhoods as well as commercial, industrial, or civic districts, and have a higher number of access points to parcels. Collectors account for the next largest percentage of travel, accounting for 5% to 15% in urban areas. College Drive, Fifteen Street, and McKinley Street are classified as Collector Roads.
Local Road	Local roads provide direct access to properties. In contrast to other classifications, local roads are lined with access points in the form of driveways, intersecting roadways, crosswalks, and transfer points for buses and other modes. Speed limits are kept low to promote safety and neighborhood quality of life. The urban local road network serves denser land uses and therefore accounts for a larger proportion of travel than its rural counterpart. Beech Street, Farnum Street, and Scoffman Avenue are classified as Local Roads.

TABLE 2-2. TYPICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF EACH FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION

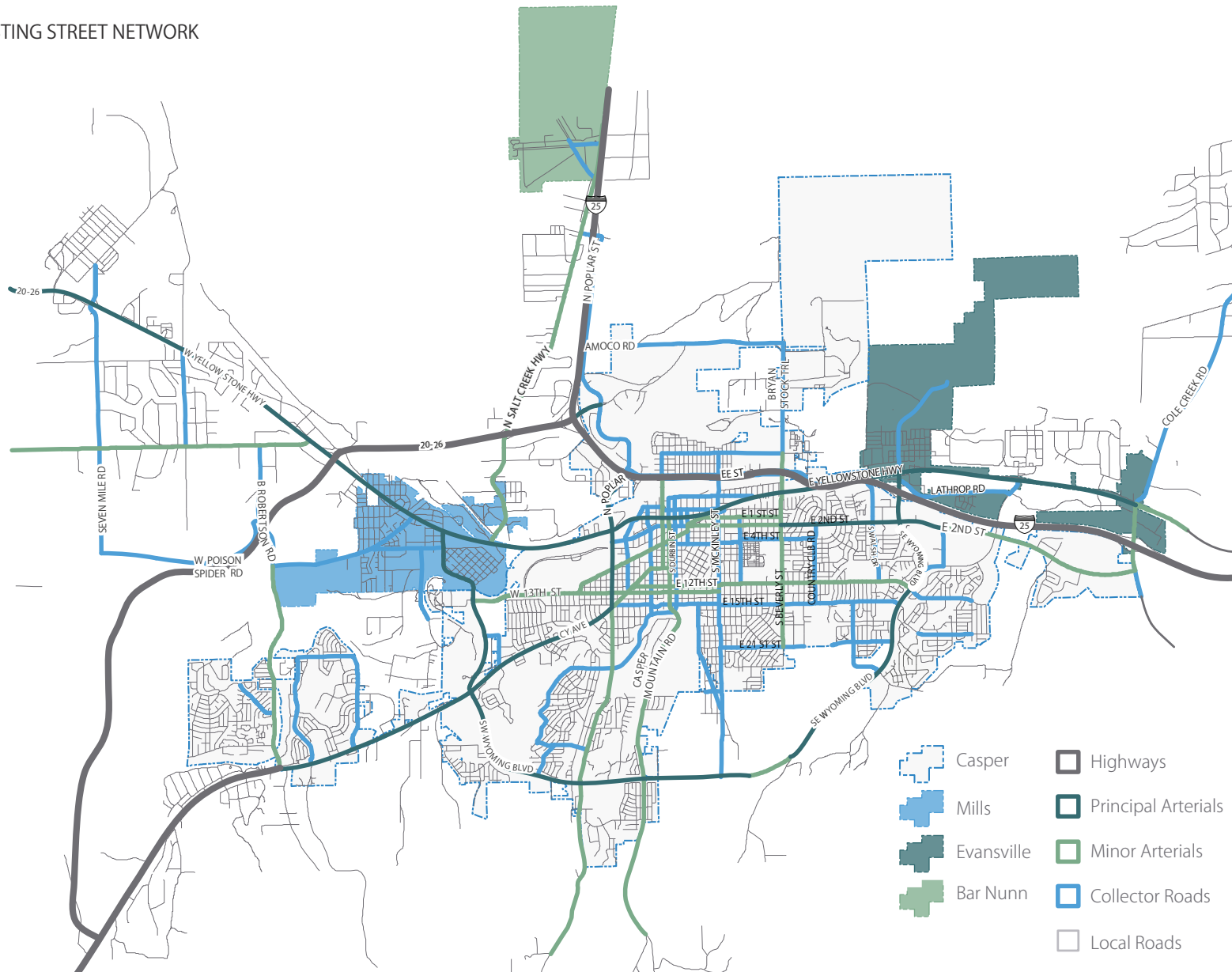
FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION	TRIP LENGTH/ ROAD LENGTH	INTERSECTIONS	SPEED LIMIT	DISTANCE BETWEEN SIMILAR ROADS	TRAFFIC	SIGNIFICANCE	NUMBER OF TRAVEL LANES
Highway	Long	Few (all with grade separation)	High	Long	High	National/ Statewide	High
Principal Arterial	Long	Few, some at-grade	Medium-High	Long	High	Statewide	High
Minor Arterial	Medium	Few to medium, most at-grade	Medium-High	Long to Medium	High	Regional	High
Collector Road	Medium/ Short	Medium	Medium	Medium to Short	Medium	Local/ Regional	Medium
Local Road	Short	Many	Low	Short	Low	Local	Low

A street’s functional classification describes these characteristics. Arterial roads focus more on mobility, local streets on accessibility, and collector roads somewhere in between. I-25 and the US and State highways are owned by WYDOT.

The street network in Casper includes approximately 3,300 miles of local streets that provide direct access to residences, I-25 (national interstate facility) and arterial roads US 20/26, CY Avenue and Popular Street (SH 220), Wyoming Boulevard (SH 258) and the West Belt Loop (SH 257). Local streets account for 96% of the street network, and arterial roads and collectors each consist of about 2% (**Map 2-2**).

The Casper Area Long Range Transportation Plan indicates that almost all roads within Casper operate at level of service (LOS) D or better, indicating acceptable traffic flow with relatively minimal congestion. Based on 2040 traffic projections, however, a number of arterial and collector roadways in Casper are forecast to drop to unacceptable LOS below D. Congestion is anticipated to increase appreciably. This is likely to be due to increased traffic volumes, and a lack of adequately spaced arterial and collector roads in some parts of town.

MAP 2-2. EXISTING STREET NETWORK





day. When compared to the volume of about 8,000 vehicles per day on I-25 in that area, it is easy to understand the congestion at that intersection.

There is a lack of arterial/collector street connectivity, and proper arterial/collector street spacing. There are no east-west arterial roads that traverse the entire City of Casper. If heading east on Highway 26 to First Street, one must head south one block to Second Street to stay on an arterial road. The same occurs on Twelfth Street/Thirteenth Street. In the north/south directions, only Poplar Street and SE Wyoming Boulevard traverse the city. Center Street traffic must move to Wolcott Street. Traffic on McKinley Street and Beverly Street has no adjacent arterial roads which to transfer. Neither street fully extends through the city. This leads to congestion at

In addition, land uses, lack of connectivity between adjacent developments, and lack of a grid street system can all contribute to congestion on arterial and collector road intersections. People must use the major roads for travel that might otherwise be accommodated on interior local or connector roads. Constructing a grid block configuration has been shown to decrease trip lengths by over 40%, while reducing congestion and air pollution.

This is particularly evident in East Casper and West Casper. As an example, near the intersection of SE Wyoming Boulevard and Second Street, Second Street currently experiences over 24,000 vehicles per day, while SE Wyoming Boulevard handles over 23,000 vehicles per

the “transfer point” intersections, higher traffic volumes on collector and local streets, and safety concerns.

Roadway spacing is a concern in some of the newer parts of Casper. In the established neighborhoods, optimal one mile spacing for arterial roads, and ¼ to ½ mile spacing for collector streets is reasonably provided. In East and West Casper, spacing between arterial roads is usually much greater than one mile, as few arterial roads currently exist in those areas. As development continues to occur without these high-functioning roads, congestion and safety will likely be significant problems in those areas.

There is a lack of consistent street cross sections throughout Casper (See **Figure 2-19**). The number of lanes; lane widths; provisions for parking, pedestrians, bicycles and transit and their offsets from the travel lanes; presence of a median and other access management techniques; lighting; and other street cross section elements all contribute to how a street functions, how safe it is and feels, and how it supports the character of the community. Having medians, bike lanes and sidewalks appear and disappear, lanes widths vary from 12 feet to as low as 9 feet, and other variables set inconsistent expectations amongst the travelers, leading to confusion, conflicts, and safety concerns. For example, if a highway with two 12-foot lanes per direction with a raised median suddenly narrows to two 10-foot lanes with no median and on-street parking, the tendency is to keep driving just as fast as before and not pay attention to cross traffic, the opening of doors of parked cars, and pedestrians. Not having continuous and consistent pedestrian and bicycle facilities can lead to the same concerns, as walkers and bicyclists may have to share the road with vehicular traffic where they were separate before.

When funding is tight, street maintenance can often suffer. If regular maintenance is not completed, it can lead to crashes, and much higher costs to reconstruct streets in the future. Several streets were noted as needing maintenance during tours of the Casper area.

Residential street speed is a perennial problem in all urban and suburban cities. As congestion increases on arterial and collector streets, motorists often use local roads to bypass the delays. Where not enough arterial and collector streets are provided, traffic often has no choice but to use local roads for regional travel. Finally, local streets tend to be wide open pavement. There is usually no striping, and if no cars are parked on the curbs, they can be inviting to higher speeds.

## Major Barriers to Transportation

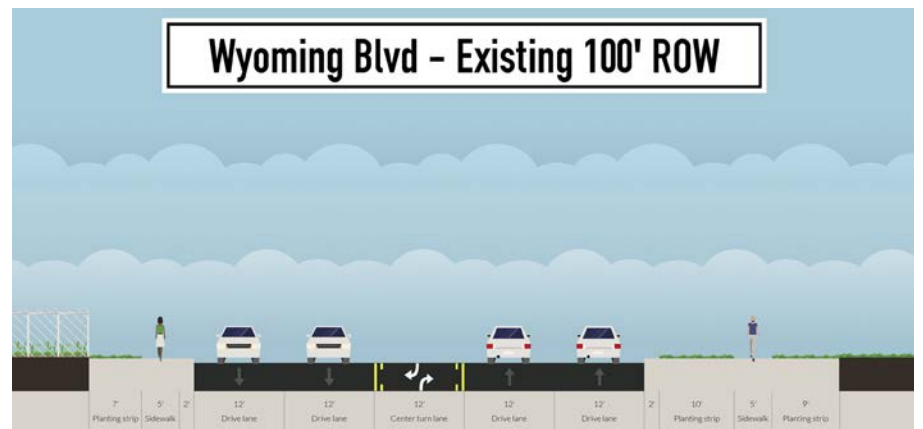
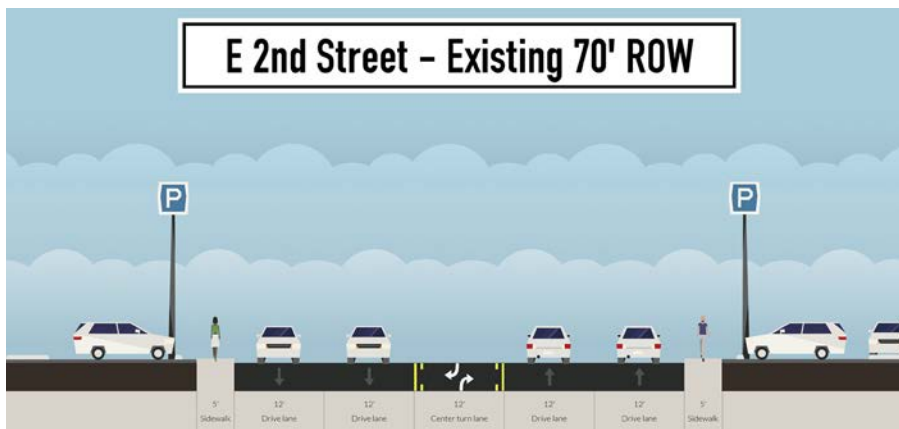
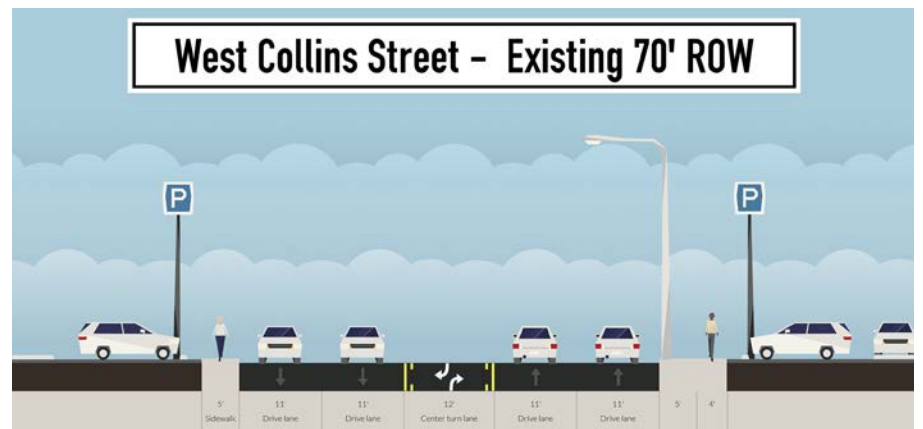
Within Casper, there are a number of features which act as barriers and largely impact the future transportation network. These include existing highways, such as I-25, US 20/26 and the West Belt Loop; railroads; the North Platte River and associated drainages; green space such as parks and golf courses; bodies of water like Soda Lake; and hilly terrain. These barriers are illustrated on **Map 2-3**.

### Connectivity

In addition to the barriers listed above, the connectivity of major roads and individual parcels of land with the resulting block sizes impact how well the transportation system functions.

Urban planners use a concept of transect zones to determine the appropriate density and form for a given area. These transects go from very low density rural development to very high density urban development. Within Casper, the development density varies from suburban to low density urban development transects. In these transects, block perimeters, or the measurement of a block size, should be between 2,000 to 3,000 feet to reduce the distance a pedestrian must travel and to allow for a distribution of traffic throughout the city. Larger blocks result in fewer roads and options for vehicles to travel, which leads to wider roads and larger intersections. Wide roads and large intersections become increasingly more difficult and less desirable for pedestrians. In short, larger block perimeters lead to reduced connectivity.

FIGURE 2-19. EXAMPLE OF EXISTING CROSS SECTIONS



---

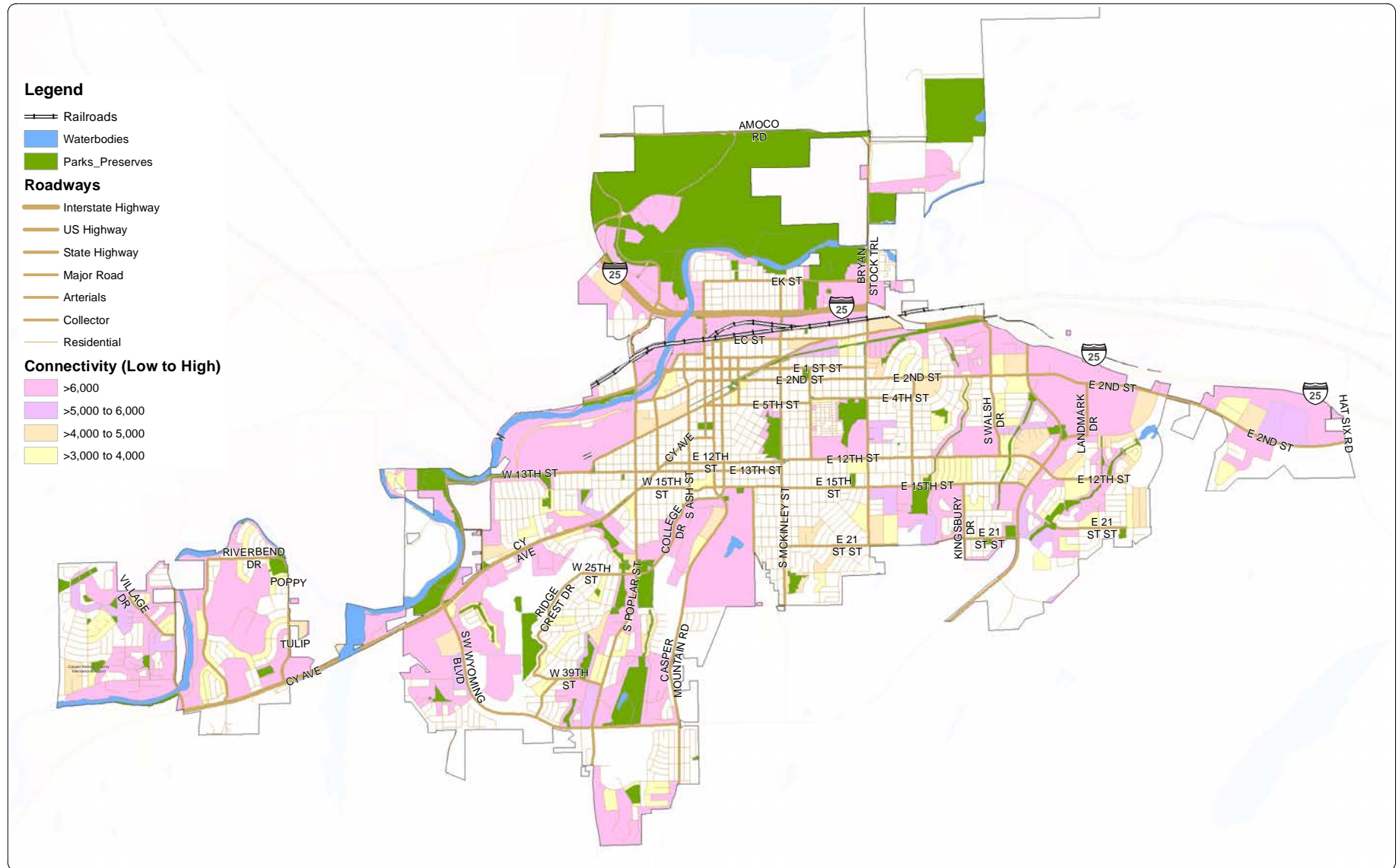
In the suburban areas of Casper, 3,000 foot block perimeters are acceptable, but block perimeters in more urban areas, such as the urban center, should not exceed 2,000 feet.

An assessment of the existing roadway network and developed land within the city limits shows quite a few blocks that exceed this block perimeter recommendation. More specifically, block sizes adjacent to highways, the railroad, and around natural amenities and parks tend to be quite large. These larger blocks create north/south and east/west barriers to the transportation network. Accounting for pedestrian trails and pathways, some of these blocks may be less of a barrier for bikes and pedestrians, while still forcing vehicles to traverse them. Many of these blocks are of certain uses that are not anticipated to experience redevelopment during the planning horizon. Some of those uses include cemeteries, golf courses, schools, and parks/preserve land.

Connectivity of the local roadway network and connectivity between individual parcels of land can help to reduce traffic on major roadways and at major intersections by allowing users alternate ways in and out of the site. In some cases, a patron wants to go into more than one non-residential use along a block, but without interconnects, the number of opportunities for vehicle and/or pedestrian conflicts increases as vehicles exit one site and enter another from the arterial. The City requires connectivity between residential uses, but connectivity between non-residential uses is lacking.



MAP 2-3. CONNECTIVITY ANALYSIS



## Rail and Freight

The Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railway one-track Casper line traverses east-west on the north side of the City of Casper, carrying an average of eight trains per day. There is a rail yard and some short spur lines to serve customers. There are four at-grade railroad crossings (including two minor access crossings) in Casper, the most notable being across Bryan Stock Trail. The trains are generally slow moving and long, often blocking the at-grade crossing locations for long periods of time.

The last rail accidents in the Casper area occurred in 2003, although at-grade crossings are inherently dangerous for injury and fatality crashes. In 2009 WYDOT conducted the Wyoming Quiet Zone Study which produced

recommendations for Casper. The Study examined the two major public crossings in Casper: Bryan Stock Trail and Hereford Lane and found a feasible quiet zone with the installation of medians or the installation of wayside horns at both crossings. A wayside horn is used in place of the locomotive's horn in quiet zones to reduce ambient noise.

Three of Wyoming's freight corridors (as identified in the Statewide Freight Plan) travel through Casper – I-25, US 20/26 and SH 220. Some roads in Casper such as Poplar Street (SH 220), SE Wyoming Boulevard (SH 258), and Bryan Stock Trail/Beverly Street are heavily impacted by overweight industrial trucks, resulting in considerable damage, deterioration, and shortened life expectancy for the pavement.

## Bicycle and Pedestrian

Casper is slowly transitioning into a more walkable city. Walking conditions along arterial roadways vary throughout Casper. In the older parts of Casper, sidewalks are generally present on both sides of the street. The same can be said of most newer areas of the city, however there are notable gaps with sidewalks not present on one or both sides of the roadway. On-street parking or landscaping typically buffers pedestrians from the traffic movements in Casper's urban core area. Elsewhere, sidewalks are often attached to travel lanes decreasing safety and desire to travel along these routes. Curb ramps exist at many intersections. Pedestrian crossings are generally marked near schools and other higher pedestrian activity areas, including signalized intersections.

On collector roadways walking condition also varies. Attached sidewalks are more numerous in many areas outside of Downtown Casper. Walking conditions on local roadways are usually better, with sidewalks on one or both sides of the street in most areas. On-street parking typically provides a buffer.



Cycling is often challenging and stressful on arterial roads. While some bike lane and off-road facilities are provided on a few arterials, most cyclists must mingle with traffic. The same occurs at most intersections. Traffic signal detection for bicyclists is lacking. Collector roadways can be better for cyclists, except where they widen to four lanes with higher speed vehicles. There are bike lanes on several collector roads such as Blackmore Road, Centennial Village Drive, and Centennial Boulevard, but observations show little use. Most local roadways are better for cycling due to low volumes and speeds.

Casper has a regional path/trail system that can meet recreational needs for much of Casper. The approximately ten-mile long Platte River Parkway runs mostly east-west along the North Platte River from the North Casper Soccer Complex to Paradise Valley Park.



The Casper Rail Trail runs from Downtown Casper to Edness Kimball Wilkins State Park along the abandoned Chicago and Northwestern Rail line. There are also several local trails, some of which connect to the two regional trail facilities, but many areas of the metro area are not served by any trails. In general, there is a lack of connectivity between the trails and desired destinations. See the Natural Assets and Recreation section for more information.

Maintenance is often a challenge with an off-street pedestrian and bicycle network. While use logically goes down during cold and snow months, some people may still prefer to use it as a commuting and recreational route. Pedestrian and bicycle facilities often come near the bottom of the maintenance priority lists; therefore, keeping them in good shape is a challenge.

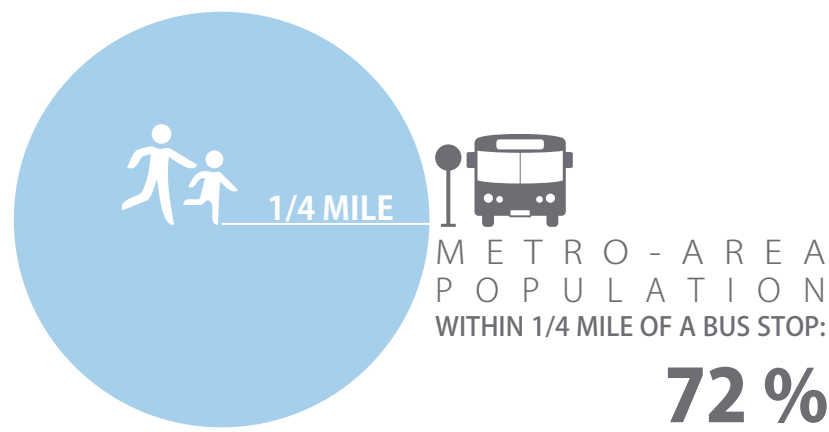
## Transit

There are two primary transit services in Casper, both managed by the City of Casper and operated by the Casper Area Transportation Coalition (CATC). The first is a demand responsive service that CATC designed primarily for transportation-challenged individuals.

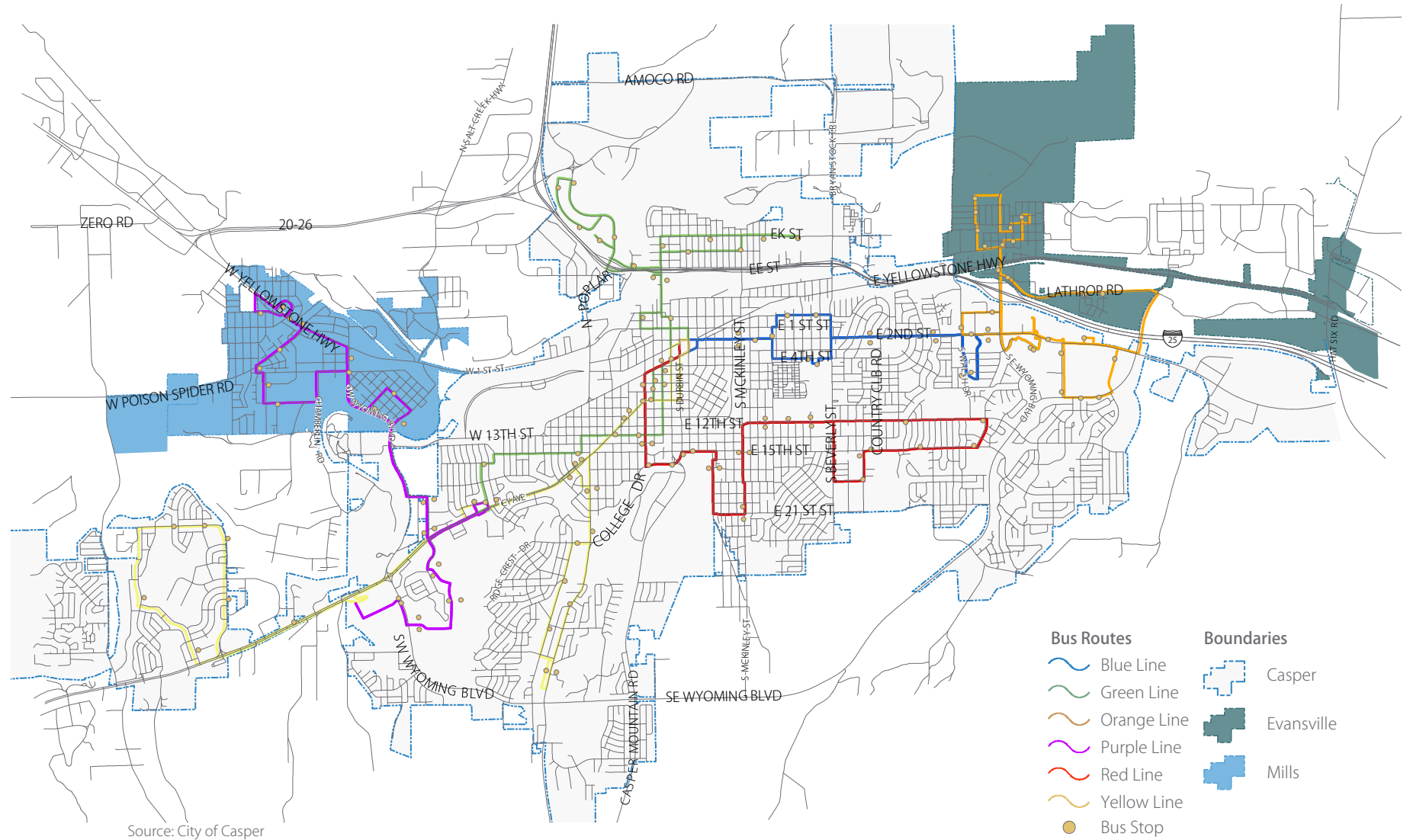
The second, called The Bus, is a fixed route/route deviation service. There are currently six routes that serve much of the Casper metropolitan area. Four of the routes intersect at a transfer point along Beech Street just south of Second Street. The other two routes serve primarily Mills and Evansville. Buses are allowed to deviate from their fixed route to be a bit more demand-responsive, as long as their schedules are maintained. Buses are equipped with bike racks. There is now weekend service for "The Bus."

An examination of the existing bus routes illustrates that some areas are not served by a close enough route, and other parts of the Casper metro area are not served at all (**Map 2-4**). However, 72% of the metro-area's population is within a quarter mile to a bus stop (**Figure 2-20**). In addition, it was noted through survey input that service is not available on all days and during all needed hours. As with all transit systems, shorter headways will help to increase ridership, but at a cost. Amenities are generally lacking at bus stops. Having to stand in the snow and rain does not attract additional riders.

FIGURE 2-20. PROXIMITY TO BUS STOPS



MAP 2-4. BUS ROUTES



Source: City of Casper

## Safety

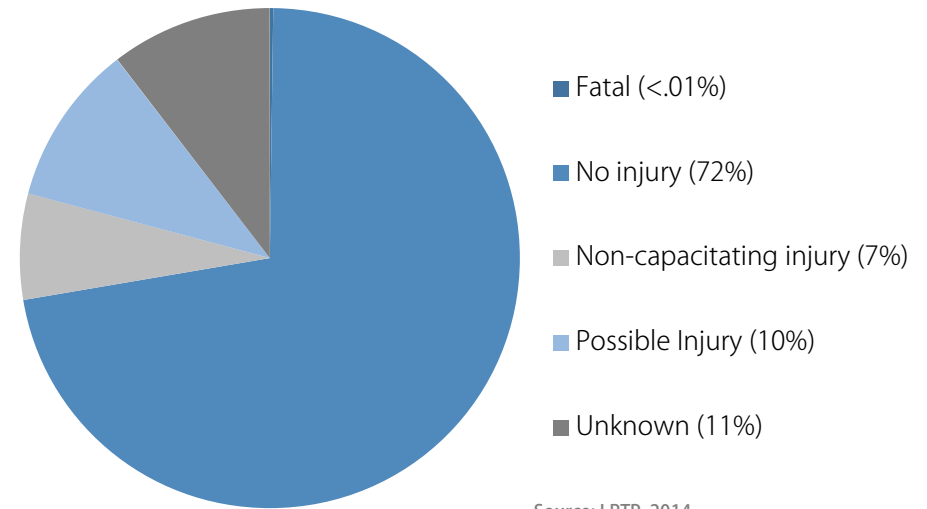
From 2011 – 2014, 5,683 crashes occurred in Casper. While 71% of those crashed resulted in property damage only, 953 crashes resulted in injury, and 12 involved fatalities (**Figure 2-21**). Pedestrians (1%) and bicyclists (0.7%) were involved in a relatively low percentage of crashes, and there have been no train crashes since 2003.

The intersections of CY Avenue with Wyoming Boulevard and South Poplar Street experience the highest number of crashes (54 and 50, respectively). While the intersection of E First Street and Center Street was noted to experience 18 crashes, it was interesting to note that 416 crashes (7.4% of the total), plus 18 (32%) of pedestrian-involved crashes and 5 (13%) of bike-involved crashes occurred at or within 2000 feet of that intersection. 14 other pedestrian-involved crashes occurred on Second Street, and 50% of pedestrian-involved crashes occurred between the hours of 3 pm and 8 pm on weekdays.

As for bike-involved crashes, seven occurred in the vicinity of the Wyoming/Second Street intersection, seven occurred along Twelfth Street, and five occurred around the intersection of CY/Poplar. Forty-seven percent of bike-involved crashes occurred between 3 pm and 6 pm on weekdays.

The report states that 73.5% of pedestrian fatalities in Wyoming were on roads with a speed limit of 40 mph or higher, compared to 8.2% on streets with a speed limit of 30 mph or under. The data show that street design matters. When the needs of all users—all ages, all abilities and all modes of travel—are properly balanced, our streets are safer and easier to navigate for everyone.

FIGURE 2-21. VEHICLE CRASH INJURIES



Source: LRTP, 2014

---

## CODE REVIEW

The requirements for a Traffic Study are listed in the Code of Ordinances, Section 16.20.080. Following are overall observations, or noted sections that are missing/could be revised to assist the City in achieving its transportation vision. Recommendations addressing these observations are presented in Chapter 5:

- Define how the “adjacent street system” is to be defined as it related to the assessment of potential transportation impacts.
- Pedestrian Study. This section does not specify how to determine impacts to pedestrians, nor does it include anything on connectivity measurement or mitigation.
- No assessment of bicycle or transit service/facilities is included.
- Traffic counts do not require counting of pedestrians, bicyclists, or bus riders.
- There is no requirement to study adjacent side interconnectivity or apply access management principles.

According to the 2016 Casper Signal Timing Study, 50% of traffic lights are prematurely constructed. Casper and the MPO should strive not only for greater accuracy in traffic studies, but also appropriate application of their results as related to code.

## CITIZENS' PERSPECTIVE

Input indicates that changes in city codes to implement an effective long-term transportation network are needed.

The necessary transit improvements most often mentioned by residents ultimately address the need to make public transportation more convenient. These improvements include increasing the frequency of buses, the number of bus stops, and the number of routes. A resident suggested special event shuttles that offer another mode of transportation to large public events, such as fairs and concerts, as a way to provide residents a convenient opportunity to take public transportation.

An important part of a good transportation service, as expressed by Casper residents, is making sure the bus stops provide shelter, and are ADA accessible year-round. Maintaining these bus stops is especially important for Casper’s handicapped population. In the winter, snow removal in the right-of-way between the bus and the shelter is essential.

The community wants Casper to be bike-friendly. Stakeholders have reported that installing bicycle lanes on common routes and main corridors is an important step in encouraging more people to bike. These routes are seen as a way to provide an efficient way to get to Casper’s large employment sectors, entertainment venues, and popular commercial corridors and destinations.

Making Casper more walkable is a priority amongst community members. They want Casper to have improved walkability through fixing broken sidewalks, downtown streetscape transformations to widen sidewalks, and connecting Casper’s existing trails.

Within Casper, some road rights-of-way are narrow, thereby limiting the elements that can be accommodated within the available right-of-way. It is also preferred that bike lanes be provided on slower, less busy streets, and street trees should be given enough space to grow without the roots damaging the adjacent sidewalk. Of the other components, residents did not feel that lighting was very important in the non-residential areas, nor was there much support for dedicated travel lanes for transit.



## NATURAL ASSETS & RECREATION

### WHY IT MATTERS

Wyoming's economy is disproportionately dependent on extractive industries, which creates low economic diversification. This dependency results in a cyclical economy; therefore, Wyoming's tourism and recreation industries are increasingly important to the economic stability of the state. Recreational opportunities and the natural environment contribute to a community's quality of life and can help counteract decreasing health trends. These amenities not only attract visitors to an area but are often key factors in determining where to live or locate a business. Also, the City needs to be proactive to make land use decisions that support healthy lifestyles. In turn, contributing to lower health care costs, reducing childhood obesity and attention disorders, and increasing social connections. This section includes a review of the parks, trails and other natural assets, and recreational tourism attractions that could boost the economic vitality of the region.

### KEY POINTS + ASSUMPTIONS

Fishing is a major recreational attraction. Blue ribbon trout fishing is available in the city and, in some cases, a few steps from your door.

The North Platte River is the "centerpiece" of recreation in Casper. Fishing, trails, water recreation, and parks are available along the River.

Approximately 45 miles of trails are found throughout the City of Casper.

Casper Mountain, with its associated trail network, and Hogadon Ski Area, provides a scenic backdrop as well as a recreational amenity.



## EXISTING CONDITIONS

### Wildlife

The City of Casper resides in the midst of some of the most important fish and wildlife habitats in North America. More pronghorn antelope (*Antilocapra Americana*) exist within a one hundred mile radius of Casper than anywhere else in the world. Within the city limits, it is not uncommon to view a variety of small to large mammals. The city boasts many parks, where a visitor may spot small mammals such as prairie dogs (*Cynomys ludovicianus*), cottontail rabbits (*Sylvilagus floridanus*), coyotes (*Canis latrans*), red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*), bobcat (*Lynx rufus*) a variety of bat species, or skunks (*Mephitis mephitis*). Near riparian areas one may spy beavers (*Castor Canadensis*), muskrats (*Ondatra zibethicus*), raccoons (*Procyon lotor*), or mink (*Neovison vison*). Many larger mammals call Casper and its environs home. Larger mammals present within or close to Casper include mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*), elk (*Cervus elaphus*), white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*), and pronghorn antelope.



Due to the diversity of landscapes, numerous bird species can be viewed in or near Casper. Horned Larks, Lark Buntings, Black-capped and Mountain Chickadees, multiple sparrows, and finches are among the smaller birds that call Casper home. In riparian areas, Red-winged Blackbirds, Killdeer, Yellow Warblers, Double-crested Cormorants, American White Pelicans, Common Mergansers, Canada geese, Wood Ducks, and Mallards can be found. Occasionally, Sandhill Cranes passing over or feeding in nearby agricultural fields

may be seen. Casper and surroundings also has a vibrant population of Wild Turkey. Bald and Golden Eagles, Osprey, Red-tailed Hawk, Ferruginous Hawk, Great-Horned Owl, Eastern Screech-Owl, and Northern Saw-whet Owl are among some of the raptors who live in the area.



Supplementing this list of bird species is a number of sensitive and non-sensitive species known to inhabit the area. The iconic Greater Sage-Grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) performs its spring mating rituals at many lekks close to town. The piping plover (threatened) is a species listed under the Endangered Species Act that may use the Platte River Corridor during migration. The North Platte River is one of the largest migratory corridors between the Rocky Mountains and the Missouri River! Activities in this area may affect these and other threatened or endangered species.



The North Platte River, its tributaries and reservoirs provide the region with diverse aquatic habitats supporting a large number of game and nongame fish. The North Platte River is a blue ribbon trout water managed for wild trout. Anglers from all over the world come to Casper to enjoy this world-class fishery. Wild rainbow, brown, and cutthroat trout are common game fish. Natural spawning and nursery habitat for spring-spawning rainbow trout and fall-spawning brown trout are present in the North Platte River drainage. Reservoirs are actively managed to provide both trout and walleye fisheries. The aquatic habitats also support a diverse assemblage of native nongame fish and amphibian species.

## Recreation

Over 2,000 acres of parks and open space are available within the city. These parks range from undeveloped lands and/or natural areas to formal parks and developed recreation areas (such as athletic complexes, skate parks, a shooting complex, pools, etc.). Compared to similar communities across the nation, Casper boasts more than double the acres of parks per 1,000 residents (**Figure 2-22**). Parks are generally dispersed throughout the city, though some gaps have been identified in the Casper Park and Open Space Improvement Plan (**Map 2-5**).

Park acreages:

- Athletic parks: 120 acres
- Developed/formal parks: 235 acres (includes city parks, rail trails, fairgrounds, public plazas, etc.)
- Natural parks: 435 acres
- Specialty parks: 510 acres
- Undeveloped land: 775 acres

Casper offers a full recreation center, four outdoor pools, an aquatic center, four golf courses (both private and public) and an events center.

FIGURE 2-22. PARKS AND TRAILS COMPARED TO SIMILAR CITIES



*Level of service for parks and trails is commonly expressed in the number of acres or miles, respectively, per 1,000 residents."*

Atop Casper Mountain, just south of city limits, exists an abundance of recreational opportunities from a biathlon course and training center, to cross country trails, mountain biking, and festivals. Hogadon Ski Area is owned and operated by the City of Casper. The City also owns Rotary Park, Casper Mountain Park, the biathlon course, and Beartrap Meadow. These parks are managed by Natrona County and offer hiking, camping, picnicking, snowmobiling, snowshoeing and Nordic skiing opportunities. The County owns and operates Ponderosa Park and Crimson Dawn on Casper Mountain.

Casper offers many other recreational activities and serves as a staging area for activities in the region such Air Modelers Facility, shooting ranges, BMX track, Motocross track, car racing, and rockhounding (the Jade State), snowmobiling, and much more.

Hunting opportunities are another major draw for tourists and residents alike. Pronghorn, elk, mule deer, pheasant, and duck hunting are also common game for hunters.

Not only does the North Platte River offer exceptional fishing opportunities, but is also claimed to be the "scenic centerpiece of Casper." Approximately ten miles of trails follow the river, along with multiple parks and other recreational opportunities. The Casper Whitewater Park, located just west of Poplar Street on the North Platte River, provides unique opportunities for whitewater kayaking and urban river play sports.

Due to the abundance of game and fish, hunting and fishing are two high-quality – and highly touted – recreational opportunities in Casper. The fishing opportunities within and surrounding Casper are praised for their trophy-sized rainbow and brown trout. While the internationally known Miracle Mile is located just 30 miles from Casper, there is great fishing in the urban core. Dubbed “urban fly fishing,” sections of the North Platte River that cut through town offer an estimated 2,200 trout per mile (or approximately 2,400 pounds per mile), providing blue ribbon

quality fishing close enough for one’s lunch break. Catching 20-30 inch trout is not a rare occurrence within town, making this river a unique and influential recreational opportunity. Several fly shops and 60 to 70 guides rely on high quality fishing to make a living, and the North Platte’s reputation draws anglers from outside Wyoming’s borders. About 35% of the fishing licenses in Natrona County are sold to out of state residents (Casper River Project Highlights Confluence of Economy and Ecology, Wyoming Business Council, 2015).

## Trails

A total of approximately 45 miles of trails are found throughout the City of Casper, with a total 64 miles of bicycle facilities (bike lanes, paved shoulders, and pathways) throughout Casper. The Casper Rail Trail is a multi-use, paved trail built upon the abandoned Chicago and Northwest Rail line. Apparent gaps in the trail network include:

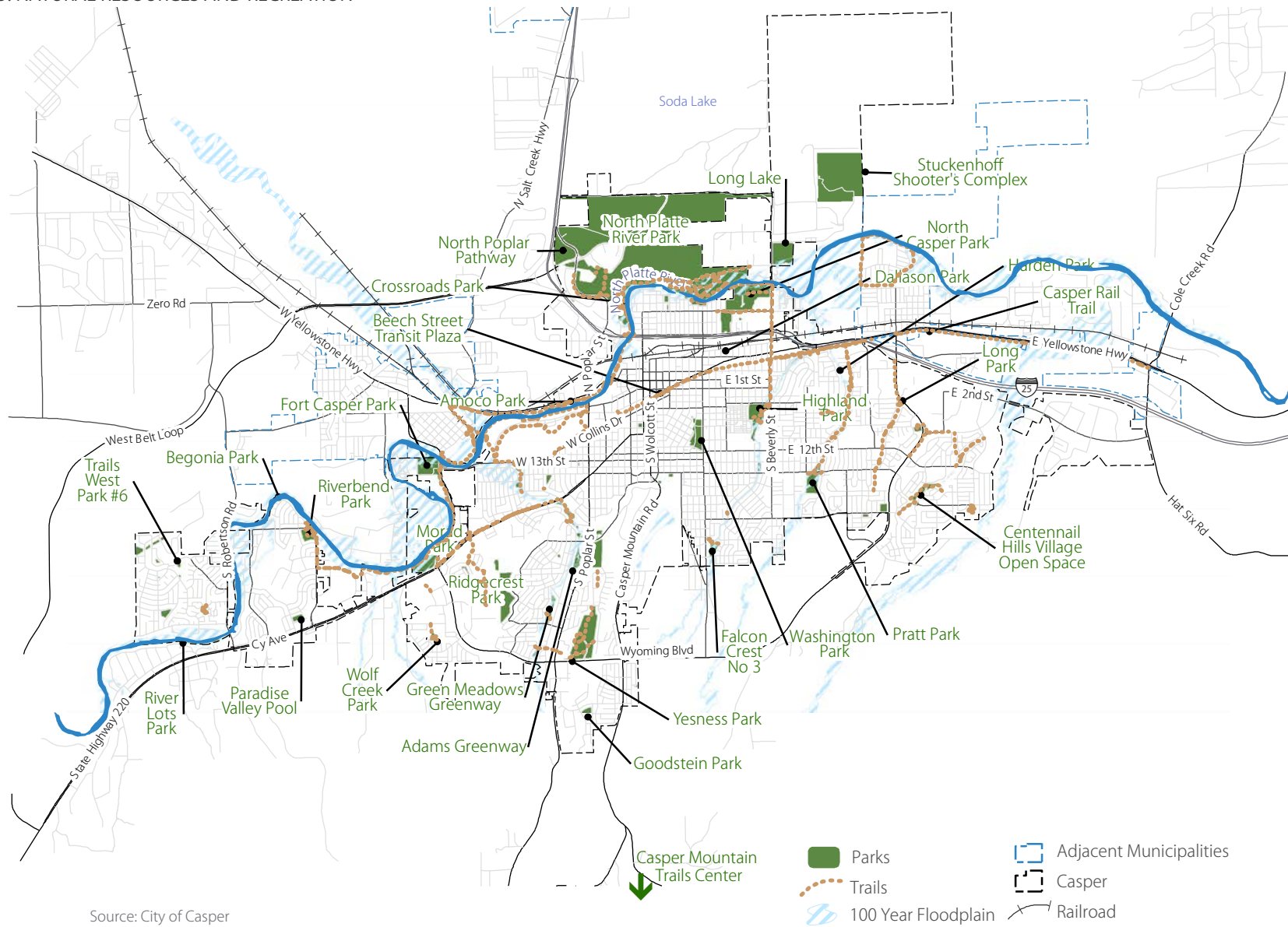
- North-south connections in Downtown (river as north boundary, Beverly Street as east boundary, Poplar Street as west boundary, and continuing south); as well as east-west connections in this area.
- South of 220 and generally west of Poplar Street.
- Between 220 and river, west of the BLM regional headquarters.

The Platte River Trails Trust is a citizen-led non-profit organization with a mission to develop a river pathway system. In addition to connecting to Casper Mountain, their most recent work is to add to the river oriented parks, the existing trail system, and the overall pedestrian infrastructure.



The community would like to enhance the river front and add more bicycle and walking trails.

MAP 2-5. NATURAL RESOURCES AND RECREATION



Source: City of Casper

---

## CITIZENS' PERSPECTIVE

Casper residents expressed that they think the City should prioritize completing and connecting local trails in Casper, such as connecting the Rail Trail to the River Trail. Residents have also told us that they would like to see more local trails and more programming along trails in general, such as an aerobic or interactive and educational component.

Stakeholders are interested in seeing the City embark on a transformation of the North Platte riverfront. Residents feel that redeveloping and improving the river will help Casper become a great outdoor recreation destination. And, as young professionals continue to gravitate to urban environments with great public places and natural features, a well-designed river front can help Casper become the Millennial-friendly city that stakeholders envision. Residents want to see the Hogadon Ski Area redeveloped into a modern winter resort and a great summer recreation destination as well. A more modernized local ski resort is a much desired amenity for Casperites and regional residents alike, which residents believe could increase tourism and brand Casper as a great destination year round.

Community members expressed a desire for more neighborhood-sized parks throughout Casper, with a focus on making each park unique, either through its design or its programming. Residents feel the parks need to be better maintained to make them more welcoming and enjoyable. When asked what residents want for Casper in 10 to 20 years, many residents express a vision for Casper to be a great outdoor lifestyle city. Community members feel that preserving the city's surrounding natural areas and open space, and increasing outdoor recreation options will help promote this "outdoor lifestyle" form of tourism. Regarding other forms of recreation, Casperites agree that there is a demand for more pools. Some residents need a pool for competitive swimming, and others want more recreational pools. Additionally, younger children and their parents wish there were more youth-oriented year-round activities in Casper. These requests included indoor activities, more entertainment venues, amusements parks, and water parks.



## ARTS & CULTURE

### WHY IT MATTERS

Arts and culture are known to enhance a person's quality of life. They offer personal enrichment and growth, and opportunities to make new connections and be more involved in a community. Casper has a rich and unique history full of historic neighborhoods, monuments, trails and historic places. In the case of a city, arts and culture add to its value and appeal, and can contribute to community and economic development. Arts can be an effective tool to deliver health care, education or social services and help achieve better outcomes such as improved early learning, higher educational achievement and enhance business performance.

*"Several researchers have argued that people are increasingly first choosing where they want to live and then seeking employment there. In today's economy, the ability to attract and retain creative human talent is the key to economic growth. In fact, the cities that are most successful in attracting workers are the ones that have exciting art and cultural offerings. The arts and culture sector is an integral part of the new economy."*

*- Michigan State University, Impact of the Arts.*

The "Creative Class," a workforce group involved in innovative and creative processes, are a key driving force for economic development. A community must have "talent, tolerance, and technology" to attract this group (*Rise of the Creative Class*, Richard Florida). As Casper aims to diversify its economy through attracting new talent and job sectors to its city, it will be important to focus on developing the city's arts and cultural identity. Creating an appealing environment and cultural scene will help attract people that are considering relocating to Casper.

## EXISTING CONDITIONS

Casper's arts and culture contributes to the quality of life of the city, and offers a diverse assortment of opportunities for a city of its size. Fort Casper and National Historic Trails Interpretive Center offer great exhibits on the history of Casper and the West, while The Nicolaysen Art Museum (The Nic) is one of best contemporary art museums in the Rockies.

The Wyoming Community Development Authority, the Downtown Development Authority (DDA), City of Casper, Keep Casper Beautiful, and local service clubs are all contributing to growing the arts in Casper through public art installations, designing public spaces, and engaging the community in participating in art and culture opportunities. The WyoCity™ Public Art Project is helping to explain the new City Brand through art.

Throughout Casper, bronze sculptures can be seen, with many paying homage to Casper's natural resources, and their important place amongst the history of the West and settlement of the American frontier. More recently, street art and murals have been commissioned to add to the art scene around the urban center. The Nic is a popular Downtown art museum that, in addition to its exhibitions,



### KEY POINTS + ASSUMPTIONS

Casper boasts one of the best contemporary art museums in the Rockies, The Nicolaysen Art Museum.

Citizens' increasingly acknowledge the importance and role of arts and culture in the community.

A unique culture can add to the community's economic development and quality of life.

Young adults often select where to live first based on quality of life and amenities versus making their locational decisions on employment.

hosts and sponsors community events. The Science Zone is a science museum in Casper that focuses on providing innovative ways to engage youth in arts and science. Art321 is a nonprofit organization that hosts art exhibitions and community workshops, and the monthly Art Walk (**Map 2-6**). Along with these art and museum venues, art and music events are emerging in parks and small

plazas such as Movie in the Park, Food Truck Fridays, Art Walks and other festivals. Venues for these local community events are limited but include the Tate Pumphouse, Yellowstone Garage, The Nic in Downtown, and regional parks. The developing David Street Station is currently under construction in Downtown, which will offer a unique venue for the community.



**"The film industry brings lots of money, is temporary on its impact and helps advertise our community. Let's put an effort to have more of this type of business. Let's also work on a vibrant maker space where our youth can invent and create things." - Public Comment**



Casper Ice Arena is home to the Casper Coyotes Hockey Team, and among other events the Center offers public workshops, high school sports competitions, Broadway plays, rodeos, themed entertainment and educational exhibits, shows, and expositions. Casper has played host to the College National Rodeo Finals every year since 2001.

Casper has a rich and vibrant history and offers many opportunities to explore this community. Fort Caspar Museum is a museum that tells the history of Casper's settlement. The National Historic Trails Interpretive Center is a must-see destination in Casper with exhibits that share the history of the West while Downtown Casper and the Old Yellowstone District showcases unique historic architecture.



## CITIZENS' PERSPECTIVE

While it is clear that there is a local art/cultural district budding in the urban center, residents feel that the City needs more year-round public events, city-wide activities, entertainment options, and entertainment venues. They want the City to invest more in the arts and cultural opportunities. Stakeholders would also like the City to invest in programs to attract more artists to Casper. Residents have expressed how The Nic is an important part of the community, and they'd like to see more events, alleyway murals and improvements sponsored by the art museum.

Casper residents have stated that the city is lacking an identity and a unique "vibe" or feel to the urban center. They feel that strengthening the city's arts and culture can help nurture a Casper identity. Residents want more events that are unique to Casper, and event series that they feel will help create a unique vibe. Stakeholders also expressed that supporting the urban core and local businesses will help Casper's identity.



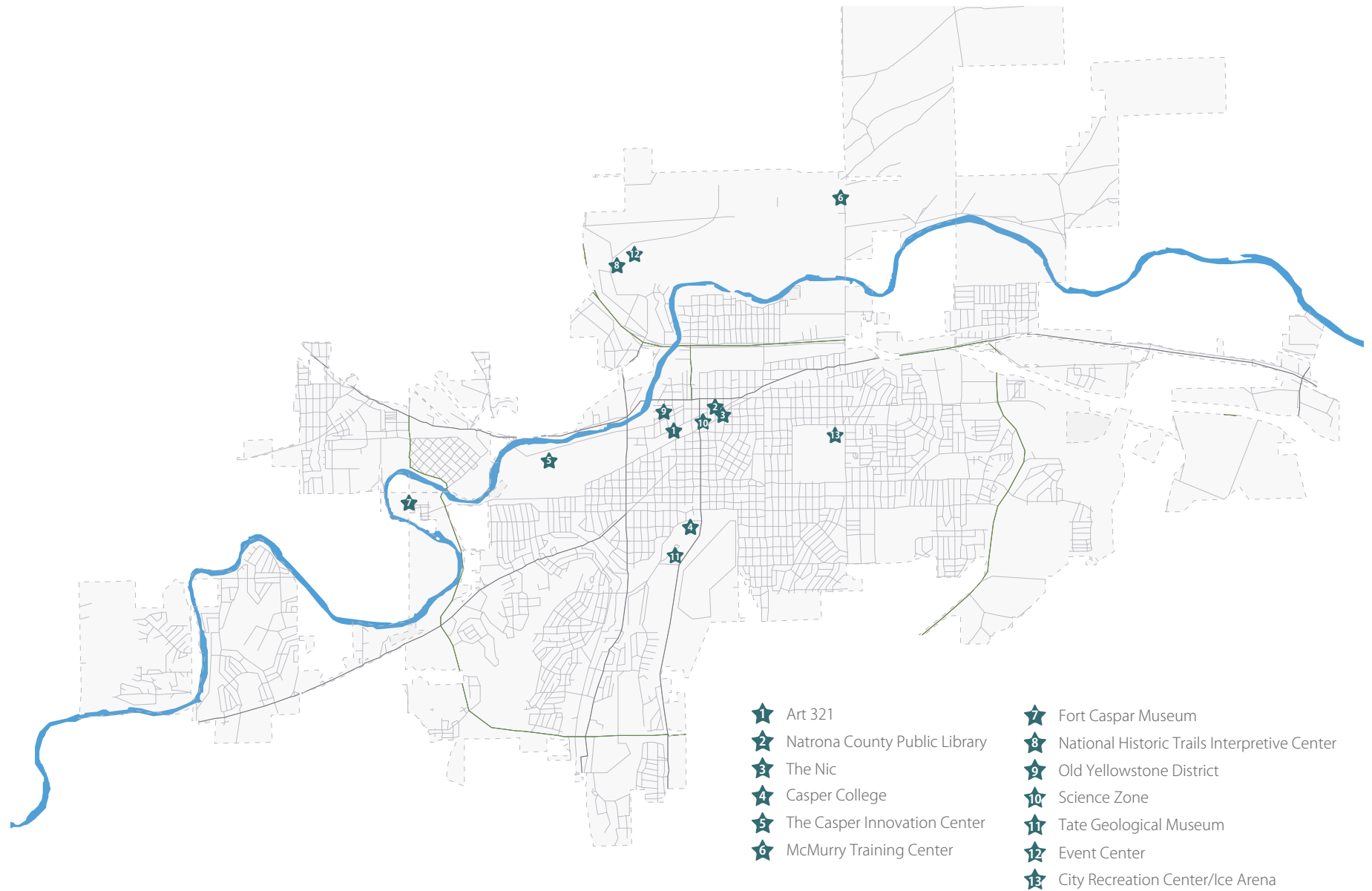
Residents want to keep the small-town feel that so many people love about Casper. The community wants to focus on maintaining that small-town perception in the neighborhoods around the urban center to help preserve the friendly, safe, familiar and connected characteristics that Casperites love. The public sees fixing and maintaining existing local roads and sidewalks as a necessity in improving neighborhood character and appearances.

Downtown, Casperites overwhelmingly support the DDA's vision for a public plaza that can serve a diverse community, through entertainment for children, teenagers, and adults. The community's vision for a public plaza would include a gathering place for informal and formal events that could act as a landmark and anchor. Residents believe that a popular, well-designed and -maintained public place such as this would greatly contribute to creating a city that is capable of

attracting new residents and supporting new and existing businesses.

Stakeholders want to see design guidelines and sign standards for commercial properties throughout the urban center to help unify the district, preserve historical landmarks and architectural features, and insure that new development compliments the existing built form. The community wants Casper's urban center to become a destination with a unique character.

MAP 2-6. CASPER'S CREATIVE ASSETS





# CHAPTER 3: OUR VISION

## OVERVIEW

This Chapter includes a framework for the community vision. Each framework includes a series of principles and goals that represents the vision. The community has identified the following visions as priorities:

- Endless Character
- Distinctive Regional Hub
- Vibrant Urban Center
- Enhanced Connectivity
- Undiscovered Quality of Life
- Embracing the River

The principles and goals begin to put the community's vision into action. Using the vision and supporting data as a basis, these statements reflect Casper's aspirations and foundation for future decision making.

Some of the principles and goals from the previous 2000 Comprehensive Plan were brought forward but refined to achieve the community's updated vision.

The principles and goals should provide a guide to all future land development, city initiatives, and organizations within Casper to forward the vision of the community. The City is not solely responsible for implementing the Generation Casper Comprehensive Plan. Specific strategies and the roles of the community for implementing the Plan are outlined in Chapter 5.

Each of the principles is linked to community input, previous plans, best practices and/or data gathered. On the following pages, these symbols are shown to highlight the support for each big idea.



COMMUNITY INPUT



PREVIOUS PLANS



BEST PRACTICES



DATA GATHERED/TRENDS

THE VISION is an overall statement with six supporting statements that describe desires for the future and are based on values of the community.

THE PRINCIPLES provide direction for both City and private development to achieve the Vision.

THE GOALS are more detail-oriented tasks to achieve the Principles.

THE STRATEGIES outline a series of methods supported by anticipated funding, responsible parties, and a timeline to implement the overall Vision. Strategies are detailed in Chapter 5: Our Path Forward.



---

## OUR VISION FOR CASPER

---

**In 2030, Casper serves as an economically diverse, regional hub centered on lively commercial centers that embraces a strong and unique community identity through a world-class quality of life.**

### ENDLESS CHARACTER

Casper will cultivate a dynamic, welcoming community with growth and redevelopment based in best practices and history that set the stage for a vibrant future.

### VIBRANT URBAN CENTER

Casper will work to realize untapped potential and foster a vast network of entrepreneurs to support a thriving Downtown and Old Yellowstone District with unique character that anchors the community.

### DISTINCTIVE REGIONAL HUB

Casper will embrace strong relationships between education and industry to retain talent, promote business-friendly policies, and cultivate incubators aimed at fostering fresh ideas and allowing small businesses to make their mark on Casper.

### ENHANCED CONNECTIVITY

Casper will offer transportation choices through safe, reliable streets and a trail network that connect all residents to their destinations through a variety of traditional and emerging transportation modes.

### EMBRACING THE RIVER

Casper will engage with the world-class North Platte River and a network of trails that are visually and physically linked to commercial centers to foster economic opportunities.

### UNDISCOVERED QUALITY OF LIFE

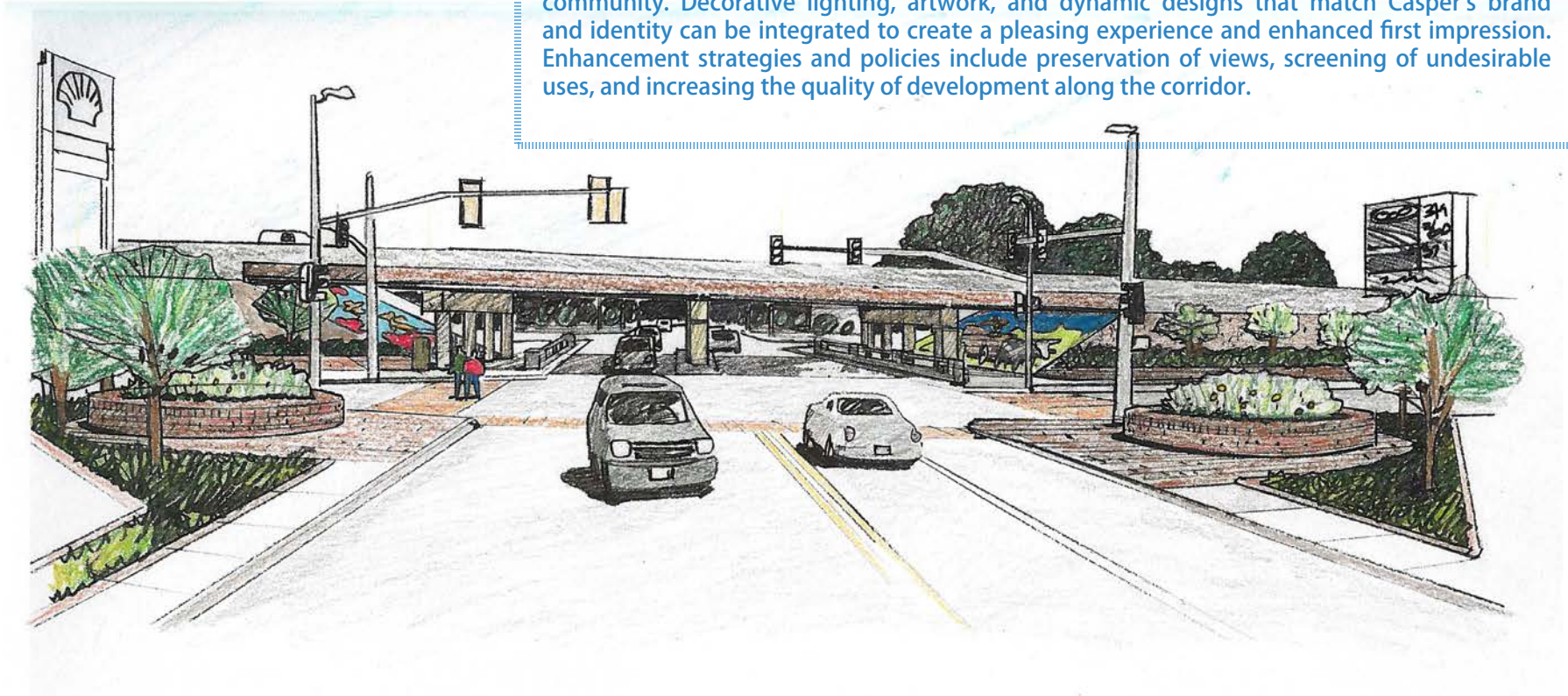
Casper will be comprised of creative, safe, family-friendly neighborhoods, and gathering areas where all residents and visitors can enjoy rich culture, stunning vistas, vast open spaces, recreational opportunities, and big city amenities.

# ENDLESS CHARACTER

CASPER WILL CULTIVATE A DYNAMIC, WELCOMING COMMUNITY WITH GROWTH AND REDEVELOPMENT BASED IN BEST PRACTICES AND HISTORY THAT SETS THE STAGE FOR A VIBRANT FUTURE.

## I-25 ENTRYWAY BEAUTIFICATION GUIDELINES

The I-25 corridor has eleven different bridge or underpass structures. As a result, these dominant elements in the landscape hold the most potential to create a favorable impression for the community. Decorative lighting, artwork, and dynamic designs that match Casper's brand and identity can be integrated to create a pleasing experience and enhanced first impression. Enhancement strategies and policies include preservation of views, screening of undesirable uses, and increasing the quality of development along the corridor.



*Center Street and I-25 beautification*



## Principles and Goals

**ECH1. BALANCED USES:** Encourage a balance of land uses and provide adequate space and distribution for all uses across the community through identified and planned locations.



**ECH1-1. Public Safety:** Working with the Police Department, integrate safety by design principles into public amenities and ROWs including lighting, site layout, maintenance, visibility, etc.

**ECH1-2. Commercial and Employment Space:** Promote the redevelopment of underutilized commercial and industrial space to accommodate new uses.

**ECH1-3. Annexation:** Annex contiguous areas into the City only in situations where development meets city standards; when the visions, principles, and goals of Generation Casper are furthered; and full city services can be provided.

**ECH1-4. Housing Space:** Promote land use patterns that provide adequate housing of all types, supported by integrated parks and services.

**ECH1-5. Fair Housing:** Provide a range of attainable and affordable housing throughout the community with equal access to fair housing (meaning equal housing opportunities free from discrimination, as according to HUD).

**ECH2. INTENTIONAL GROWTH:** Protect the intrinsic value of Wyoming’s wide open spaces by promoting redevelopment and infill. Growth should promote efficiency in the provision of services, and should not burden existing property owners in the City with increased costs to subsidize inconsistent development.



**ECH2-1. Compact City:** Require new development only within the Urban Growth Boundary to encourage compact and fiscally responsible development and to help reduce development pressures encroaching on surrounding open space and vistas.

**ECH2-2. Downtown Rising:** Prioritize infill development within the core of the community, and the transition of vacant, underutilized properties, and buildings to public spaces, residential and commercial development.

**ECH2-3. Public Infrastructure:** Increase public investment in collector and arterial networks; streetscapes, including access control, beautification measures, and incorporation of public amenities (outdoor seating, bike racks, etc.); public spaces; and infrastructure improvements in order to catalyze additional private investment, and to guide growth to areas where it is desired.

**ECH2-4. Infrastructure Expansion:** Discourage expenditures on transportation and other infrastructure improvements and expansions that encourage premature development of raw land.

**ECH2-5. Low-Density Development:** Ensure large lots and estates are developed responsibly and only in limited areas at the edge of the City, with the understanding that the long-term plan is to increase densities in those areas, and not to preserve a rural lifestyle within the City limits.

**ECH2-6. Natural Systems:** Development patterns should integrate natural patterns of streams, ridge lines and topography, riparian areas, and critical wildlife corridors.

**ECH3. WELCOMING GATEWAYS:** Prioritize the development of pleasing community gateways that promote community pride and present a positive image for the community.



**ECH3-1. Enhanced Entryways:** Improve the visual image of the community by enhancing the look and feel of the corridors and protecting scenic viewsheds (e.g. limiting signage and billboards, and overhead utility lines). Make a great first impression!

**ECH3-2. Historic Buildings:** Identify and capitalize on the location, significance, and potential for reuse and/or renovation of historic resources.

**ECH3-3. Gateways and Placemaking:** Create gateway guidelines for major entryways into Casper to encourage the preservation of local landmarks, scenic views, and monuments; and create a higher quality of design amongst gateway signage. Encourage monument and consolidated signage.

**ECH3-4. Landscaping:** Require new commercial, office, and multi-family development to install and maintain quality, context sensitive, and sustainable landscaping along major streets to achieve the goals of of the specific area of development (e.g. OYD, makers district, I-25 corridor, etc.)

**ECH3-5. Highway Corridors:** Coordinate with WYDOT to improve the aesthetics of I-25, Yellowstone Highway, and US 20/26 Corridors. Follow the recommendations set in the MPO I-25 Entryway Beautification Project Design Master Plan & Guidelines.

**ECH4. STRONG CHARACTER:** Convey a positive visual image of the community.



**ECH4-1. Creative Design:** Create design guidelines and incentives that encourage more creativity and unique architectural design to fit within the community's existing architectural and cultural character.

**ECH4-2. Streetscape:** Enhance our existing neighborhoods through cohesive streetscape, landscape, signage, and façade improvements.

**ECH4-3. Code Enforcement:** Support code enforcement efforts to ensure property upkeep and maintenance.

**ECH4-4. Night Sky:** Encourage dark sky friendly lighting to reduce energy, increase safety, and protect ecological processes.



## URBAN GROWTH BOUNDARY

Growth management increases efficiency in emergency response, creates consistent development standards, preserves appropriate lands for agricultural and open space, and meets the principles and goals of the comprehensive plan.

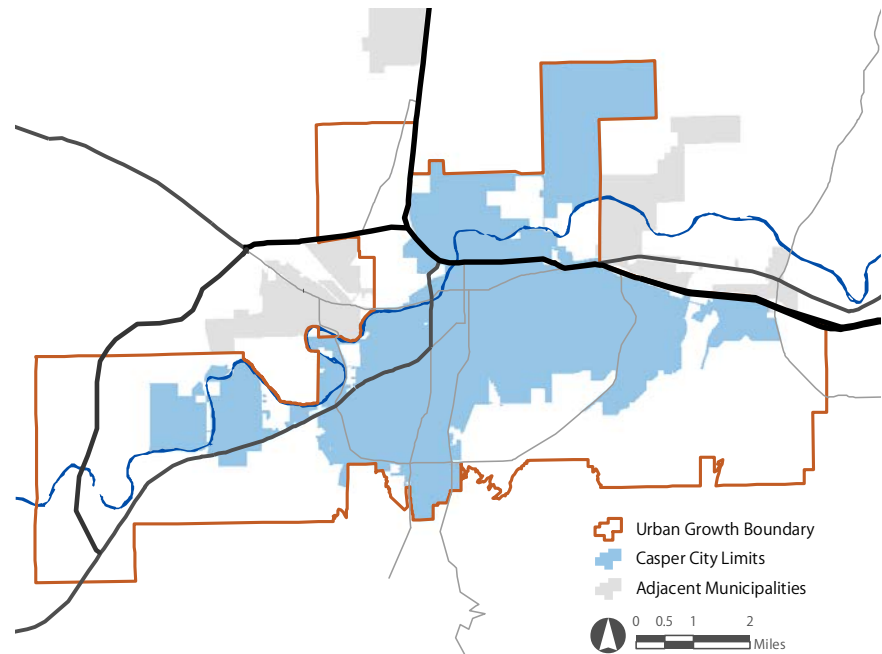
Annexation is a legislative act and the City Council exercise their sole discretion in the annexation of lands to the City. Land to be annexed and the uses proposed for the land shall be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. However, it has been a policy of City Council to not force annexation into the city unless a property owner desires to obtain water and/or sewer utilities.

The City will encourage annexation of any land within the defined Urban Growth Boundary (UGB), particularly county enclaves.

It is the City's policy to encourage growth within those areas that can currently be served by utility services, emergency services, and city infrastructure. Considerations for the future annexation of land shall include:

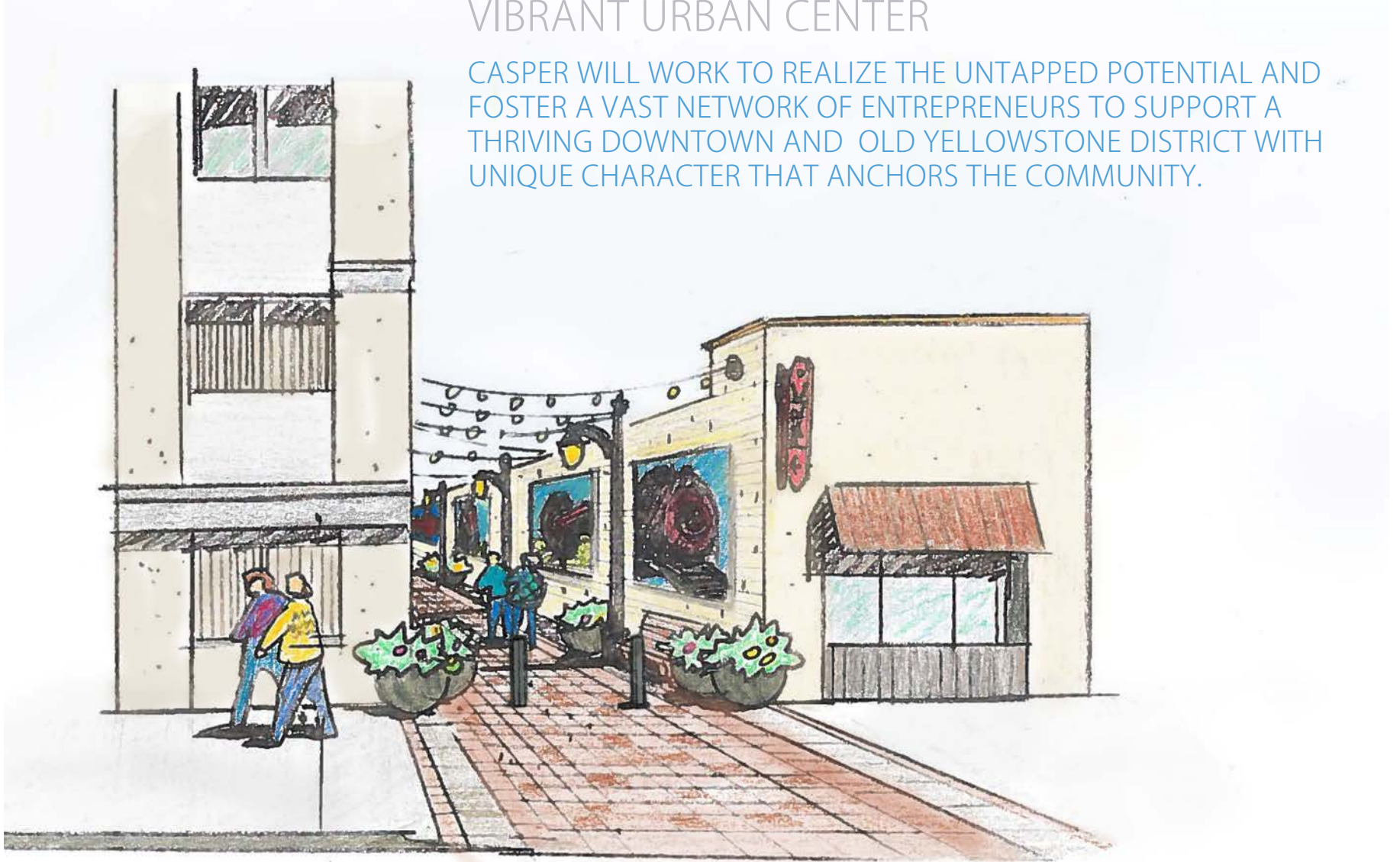
- contribution to the City's property and sales tax base;
- diversification of the employment base;
- the City's water and sewer policies;
- provision of a wider range of goods and services; and
- provision of a wider range of housing opportunities for all economic groups.

Development proposals within the UGB should conform to a set of development requirements. These requirements include, but are not limited to: conformance with the goals of the City of Casper Comprehensive Plan; development of pedestrian facilities; the Major Streets Plan; and conformance with utility plans, etc. Public facilities and amenities must be constructed as part of annexation and development agreements for any land annexed to the City to ensure that public needs are met. Industrial and business uses should be encouraged within the UGB to provide adequate services to the city and provide local jobs and sales tax revenue.



## VIBRANT URBAN CENTER

CASPER WILL WORK TO REALIZE THE UNTAPPED POTENTIAL AND FOSTER A VAST NETWORK OF ENTREPRENEURS TO SUPPORT A THRIVING DOWNTOWN AND OLD YELLOWSTONE DISTRICT WITH UNIQUE CHARACTER THAT ANCHORS THE COMMUNITY.



*Alley from David Street Station to parking garage*

## Principles and Goals

### VUC1. HOLISTIC CORE:

Increase the social vitality of Downtown and the Old Yellowstone District (OYD) by creating a mix of land uses, housing, neighborhood services, and a range of activities.



**VUC1-1. Unique Public Character:** Invest and create unique public spaces such as Riverfront Park and David Street Station (community events, splash pad, stage, etc.) to attract visitors, and entice families, businesses, and talent to stay and grow.

**VUC1-2. Neighborhood Services:** Enhance the cohesiveness and identity of residential neighborhoods by encouraging a healthy mixture of commercial, employment, neighborhood services (coffee shops, grocery stores, and restaurants), and cultural uses that support the everyday needs of these residents.

**VUC1-3. Vertical Mixed Use:** Encourage vertical mixed use, creative office/co-working space to encourage vibrancy and facilitate easy access to retail, restaurants, and services.

**VUC1-4. High-Quality Housing:** Identify barriers to and incentives for the development of a variety of urban living options (condos, lofts, apartments) for all income levels.

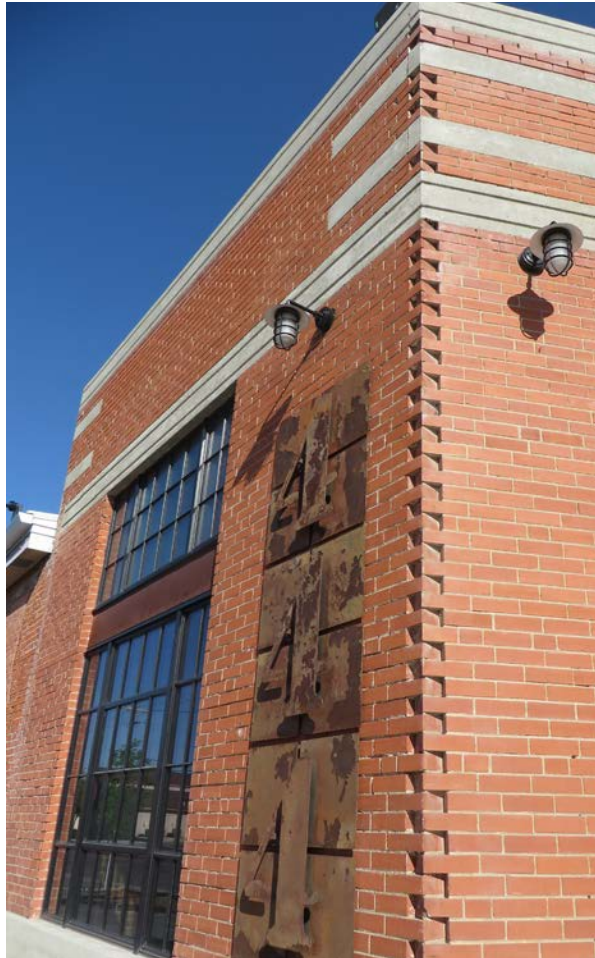
## THE ART OF PUBLIC SPACES

A Montreal, Quebec neighborhood took an innovative approach to developing public places, despite their limited supply of urban open space and short supply of warm weather. Using San Francisco's Parklet Program as a model, Montreal recruited fabricators and artists to transform used shipping containers into unique public spaces, complete with planters, seating, and cut out windows.

The structures occupy three parking spots and provide a durable, low-cost – the financial investment is often a public/private partnership – option to businesses interested in nearby curbside seating, and they have the added benefit of creating more human connections and engagement. <https://www.pps.org/places/lqc/placottoir-a-place-to-chat/>

Casper's David Street Station, pictured below, is poised to be a unique public space.





**VUC2. THRIVING CENTERS:** Strengthen the economic role of Downtown and the OYD as a unifying element for Casper through unique and diverse uses.



**VUC2-1. Downtown Activities:** Expand the range of activities and businesses occurring within Downtown including entertainment (cinema, music, live theater, and outdoor cultural activities), restaurants, and hotel/convention facilities that bring people into Downtown after 5:00 PM.

**VUC2-2. Commercial Connections:** Encourage and enhance the connectivity of the urban core to local hotels, convention facilities, and other commercial areas.

**VUC2-3. Enhanced Place:** Capitalize on the urban center and continue to develop key streets like First Street and Yellowstone Highway that connect to the North Platte River.

**VUC2-4. Development Style:** Encourage compatible development that meets the current style of Downtown and the OYD while being vibrant and creative.

**VUC2-5. Creative Energy:** Capitalize on the emerging arts/cultural district in the urban center by fostering a culture of creativity and entrepreneurship with a variety of incubator space, art space, live/work units, and shared workspaces.

**VUC2-6. Stationary Vehicle Management:** As demand increases manage parking, especially within the OYD, by encouraging shared parking, redesign of streets to accommodate on-street parking, and investing in new types of parking garages that serve multiple purposes.

**VUC2-7. Historic Preservation:** Encourage a commitment to the adaptive reuse of vacant buildings to new uses, an investment in architecturally unique and culturally historic structures, and the creation of economic incentives to promote neighborhood preservation and revitalization. Work with local stakeholders on the historic preservation education and renovation of historic buildings.

**VUC2-8. Design Standards:** Establish design standards and incentives for both new and rehabilitated industrial, commercial employment areas, and civic buildings that address landscaping, signage, and building design.

*“Offer incentives to have small businesses open their doors and stay open instead of catering to big box stores and chain restaurants.” - Public Comment*



*Potential parking garage (for illustrative purposes only)*

## DISTINCTIVE REGIONAL HUB

CASPER EMBRACES STRONG RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN EDUCATION AND INDUSTRY TO RETAIN TALENT, PROMOTE BUSINESS FRIENDLY POLICIES AND INCUBATORS AIMED AT FOSTERING FRESH IDEAS AND ALLOWING SMALL BUSINESSES TO MAKE THEIR MARK ON CASPER.



*Lifestyle living in the McMurry Business Park region*



## Principles and Goals

**RH1. COMPLETE COMMUNITY:** Position Casper as a medical, shopping, cultural, and educational hub.



**RH1-1. Commercial Clusters:** Increase the intensity of land uses and employment within identified commercial clusters by centralizing commercial, governmental, retail, residential, and cultural activities in these areas.

**RH1-2. Lifestyle Living:** Re-envision and transform inefficient or underutilized commercial areas, such as the Eastridge Mall, into a community destination that offers a unique shopping, dining, and entertainment experience with indoor and outdoor spaces, and smaller commercial storefronts at the perimeter, focusing on improved walkability and quality public gathering spaces.

**RH1-3. Medical Hub:** Continue to support partnerships with the medical industry to cluster medical services and market the region as a state-of-the-art medical hub by specializing in orthopedic, neurology and cardiac practices and new technologies and innovation.

**RH1-4. Higher-Learning:** Foster partnerships between Casper College, business development groups, and City departments to increase talent retention and job placement amongst Casper residents. Further encourage local industries to partner directly with Casper College and to provide options for job placement, continuing education, and educational attainment through internships, online learning programs, and four-year degree programs.

**RH1-5. Aging in Place:** Encourage developments that allow for senior housing and amenities integrated with transportation options and located near neighborhood services and medical facilities.

**RH1-6. Inter-Generational Partnerships:** Encourage the placement of kindergarten and elementary schools within or adjacent to senior centers, to facilitate intergenerational interactions, improving mental and physical health across generations.

**RH2. RENOWNED TOURISM:** Promote Casper's tourism industry and regional retail prominence.



**RH2-1. Regional Attractions:** Increase Casper's attractiveness to tourists and regional shoppers by emphasizing the area's amenities, including riverfront retail and restaurants; rooftop patios and decks; cultural attractions; and Casper Mountain and North Platte River recreational opportunities.

**RH2-2. Outdoor Space:** Encourage a year-round environment with larger building/porch overhangs, appropriate building orientation, wider sidewalks, and indoor and outdoor convertible space on commercial properties.

**RH2-3. Creative Wayfinding:** Integrate art into city wayfinding and signage for cars, pedestrians, and bicycles, including increased signage for tourism destinations, the river, the urban core, and regional trails and pathways.

**RH2-4. River Interaction:** Transform the North Platte River into a meaningful part of the urban experience with activities and events, and through encouraging riverfront cafes and restaurants to interact with the River, as a way to grow local and regional tourism and increase length of stay.

**RH2-5. Urban Incentives:** Continue to foster partnerships to create events and encourage businesses in the urban center to stay open late, through First Friday, art walks, foodie walks, shop local evenings, etc.

**RH3. CULTIVATED ECONOMY:** Expand and diversify the City's economic base and create an environment to foster and grow businesses.



**RH3-1. Public Facilities and Services:** Ensure that facilities and services are available concurrent with the impacts of development and that local capital improvement elements are being constructed in accordance with adopted schedules and plans.

**RH3-2. Capital Improvement Projects:** Strategically align capital improvement projects with future and underutilized land use.

**RH3-3. Modern Infrastructure:** Invest and expand infrastructure that promotes a high-tech hub with expanded programs focusing on connectivity, technology, and businesses that are not location-based.

**RH3-4. Technology Businesses:** Cultivate an environment for and work to attract technology businesses such as small tech startups, design centers, search engine optimization, advertising/marketing firms, and engineering/ design/ manufacturing companies.

**RH3-5. Diversify Energy Economy:** Supplement existing energy industry by working with economic development groups to attract and support alternative energy businesses including wind, solar, and clean carbon technologies.

**RH3-6. Business-Friendliness:** Streamline policies and processes to be more adaptable and business-friendly, such as increasing options for non-traditional businesses such as food trucks, cottage industry purveyors, and local agriculture.

**RH3-7. Outdoor Industry:** Leverage access to outdoors and existing outdoor company growth to build this industry.

**RH4. HEALTHY LOCAL ECONOMY:**



Develop a network of collaborative industries that focus on growing local small businesses.

**RH4-1. Entrepreneurial Opportunities:** Encourage Casper College and economic development groups to encourage start-up companies and further entrepreneurial opportunities.

**RH4-2. Start-Up Business Support:** Encourage the development of partnerships to provide start-up business support.

**RH4-3. Collaborative Spaces:** Designate a portion of developable parcels for collaborative, co-working spaces.

**RH5. ENHANCED NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN:**



Promote the beautification and character of Casper through improving the community's urban form in commercial and urban clusters.

**RH5-1. Rethinking Undeveloped Land:** Rethink future growth areas by creating new zoning codes and guidelines that set the stage for a small town feel - small and walkable blocks, public amenities, a variety of housing types, and places to shop and gather.

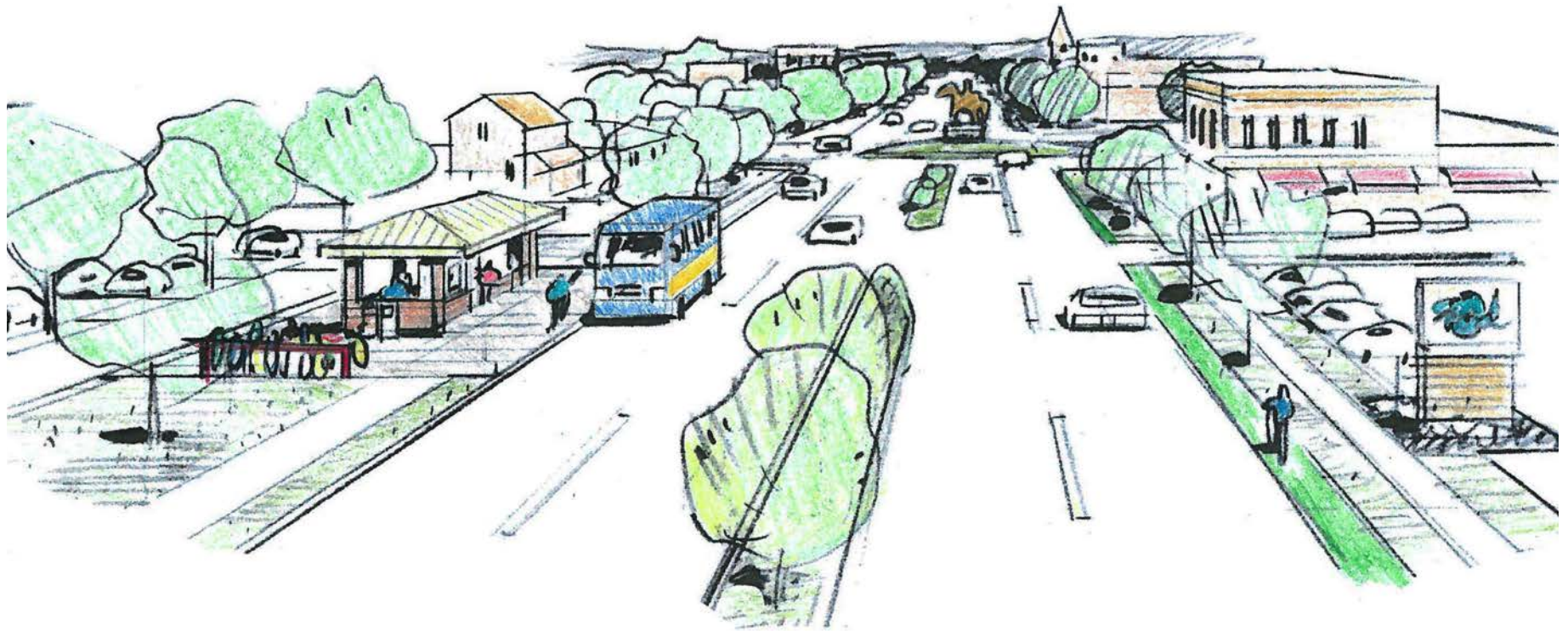
**RH5-2. Urban Form:** Require urban form that reflects the desired character of an area including allowing for a mix of uses, encouraging human scale, and using context-sensitive or form-based site design.



Eastside Retail

## ENHANCED CONNECTIVITY

CASPER OFFERS TRANSPORTATION CHOICES THROUGH A SAFE AND RELIABLE STREETS AND TRAILS NETWORK THAT CONNECTS ALL RESIDENTS TO THEIR DESTINATIONS THROUGH A VARIETY OF TRADITIONAL AND EMERGING TRANSPORTATION MODES.



*Complete streets throughout Casper*

## CASPER'S MOBILITY TEAM VISION:

The four pillars of our future transportation system:

1. To address future growth and build communities through transportation.
2. To address connectivity at all scales of transportation.
3. To be inclusive and accommodating of all forms of transportation.
4. To promote safety and access.

## Principles and Goals



### EC1. MAINTAINING A BASELINE:

Develop consistent and reliable standards and maintenance plans for future growth to ensure transportation needs are met in the future.

**EC1-1. Transportation Standards:** Establish safety/efficiency standards for bicycles, pedestrians, and transit.

**EC1-2. Adequate Maintenance:** Establish a maintenance and expansion plan for the pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.

**EC1-3. Roadway Network:** Control future congestion with standards for roadway spacing, block sizes, and driveways.



### EC2. INTEGRATED TRANSPORTATION NETWORK:

Integrate land use patterns and transportation facilities as the strategic framework.

**EC2-1. Land Use Patterns:** Evaluate the impacts of land use decisions on the transportation network, and modify zoning, roadway spacing, block size, and multi-modal transportation facilities to achieve desired land use patterns.

**EC2-2. Street Network:** Provide a roadway system that includes functional hierarchy, appropriately accommodates access and mobility needs, and requires multiple access points from new development/residential neighborhoods.

**EC2-3. Neighborhood Traffic:** Establish a grid of collector and arterial streets that can accommodate traffic from new development. Further reduce the impacts on neighborhoods, by incorporating traffic calming where necessary on neighborhood streets.



---

## TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

In the fall of 2014, the City of Casper Planning and Zoning Commission expressed concerns relating to commercial development patterns, in particular the resulting urban form and block sizes of recent developments of commercial parcels in East Casper. A historically consistent increase in block sizes has led to a decrease in the connectivity of the public street network as development has moved away from the urban core over time. This decrease in the links and intersections of Casper's street network is also accompanied with an underutilization of street typology application. This realization has led Casper officials and area wide leaders to rethink transportation and see the need for a Comprehensive Plan Transportation Element to address not only street connectivity, but also the citywide elements that affect or are affected by the street network.

One year following this discussion, a Casper Mobility Team was formed to attend a series of workshops through the Community Mobility Institute in October 2015. Working with transportation and community development professionals, the team drafted a vision and established goals to inform the creation of a Transportation Element to supplement the City of Casper's Comprehensive Plan.

This workshop and its outcome served to lay the foundation for the Transportation Element of the update to the City of Casper's Comprehensive Plan with particular emphasis on street connectivity solutions. The result of the team exercises was the creation of a vision for the Transportation Element and the City of Casper's transportation system as a whole. In addition, the team explored what was needed for an effective and inclusive stakeholder engagement effort. Finally, they framed the desired components and outcomes of the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

Development guidelines, particularly related to street connectivity, street hierarchy, safety, and access management have been lacking, and future development will further deteriorate the street system as Casper grows without adequate transportation standards. Of particular concern is the undeveloped regions east of the City and near/around the West Belt Loop corridor where future growth is expected. Today, the City of Casper is committed to building communities through transportation and finding street connectivity and transportation/land use solutions.



Tourism building off the Rail Trail

**EC3. IMPROVED ACCESSIBILITY:** Connect residents to their destinations through integration of all modes and accessibility.



**EC3-1. Arterial Connections:** Continue to identify and resolve access management issues along arterials.

**EC3-2. Bicycle Network:** Improve accessibility around/through barriers such as intersections, freeways, and discontinuous streets.

**EC3-3. Alternative Transit Options:** Consider alternative modes, such as electric bikes, Uber, dedicated bike infrastructure, bike shares, and a year round trail network for transit riders to reach high-frequency travel corridors.

**EC3-4. Complete Streets:** Adopt a Complete Streets policy, designed to equally prioritize walking, biking, and driving; and implement while ensuring the infrastructure design and placement protects residential character.

**EC3-5. Pedestrian and Bicycle Connections:** Provide direct pedestrian and bicycle connections from residential neighborhoods to transit, schools, parks, public facilities, shopping areas, and commercial centers.

**EC3-6. ADA Compliant:** Design all future pedestrian infrastructure to be ADA accessible and adhere to Universal Design standards during upgrades and repairs, and retrofit existing streets to address lack of ADA and Universal Design standards compliance, specifically at intersections that are currently only partially ADA compliant.

**EC3-7. Eliminate Barriers:** Improve access to parts of the city that are separated by I-25 and the railroad.



**EC4. ENHANCED NETWORK:** Create a balanced transportation network that manages the movement of goods and people across all modes, alleviates pressure at major intersections, and reduces auto dependence.



**EC4-1. Traffic Flow:** Implement Intelligent Transportation Systems (including, but not limited to: traffic signal control systems, variable message signs, and speed cameras), innovative intersections, roundabouts, bike boxes, protected intersections and buffered bike lanes to regulate traffic flow at key intersections.

**EC4-2. Traffic Calming:** Adopt and implement a traffic calming policy and toolkit, with variable ways to reduce speeds through residential streets.

**EC4-3. Transit Frequency:** Improve the regional transportation system by consolidating routes, and decreasing travel time thru concepts such as queue jumps and Transit Signal Priority.

**EC4-4. Pedestrian-Scaled Infrastructure:** Design new streets and redesign existing streets to be pedestrian-friendly and compatible in scale, width, and design with adjacent land uses.

**EC4-5. Automobile Mobility:** Retrofit streets to improve the mobility of the car through the implementation of effective transportation tools and mechanisms, such as adaptive traffic signal coordination, access management policies and parcel interconnection, acceleration/deceleration lanes, etc.

**EC4-6. Transportation Flow:** Continue to develop a street network of small blocks and gridded streets to improve transportation connectivity and redundancy throughout the City.

**EC4-7. Education, Connection, and Safety:** Improve safety and educate all users on bicycle and pedestrian laws to improve safety. Follow the Casper Area Trails, Path, and Bikeway Plan recommendations for education of bicycle and pedestrian laws.

**EC4-8. Commuter Routes:** Increase safety and convenience for transit/bike/pedestrian commuters by providing protected intersections, protected bike lanes, bike racks on transit buses, better and more bus shelters, bike share programs, and long distance ped/bike facilities on parallel routes to major roads.



**EC5. MODERN UTILITIES/INFRASTRUCTURE:** Ensure that adequate utility infrastructure and capital facilities are in place.



**EC5-1. Infrastructure Priorities:** Invest in new and upgraded infrastructure within the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) and where appropriate. Maintenance and improvements should be prioritized prior to installation of infrastructure within undeveloped areas.

**EC5-2. Redevelopment:** Target infrastructure investments toward identified redevelopment areas based on community demand for various types of commercial and industrial space. Redevelopment areas should be given priority over new development.

**EC5-3. Utility Partnerships:** Identify and coordinate prioritized redevelopment and infrastructure upgrade areas with private utility companies and the Casper Area Economic Development Alliance.

**EC5-4. Stormwater Investment:** Invest in stormwater infrastructure improvements and integrate infrastructure with landscaping, greenways, and open space.

**EC5-5. Advancing Technology:** Support private investment in city-wide technology infrastructure plan to deliver increased band-width for high-tech businesses and web-based services and firms.

**EC5-6. Energy Efficiency Measures:** Encourage measures in existing and future developments at the site scale, including renewable energy, recycling, xeriscapes, native species, energy efficiency lighting and building techniques, etc.



## UNDISCOVERED QUALITY OF LIFE

CASPER WILL BE COMPRISED OF CREATIVE, SAFE, FAMILY-FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOODS AND GATHERING AREAS WHERE ALL RESIDENTS AND VISITORS CAN ENJOY RICH CULTURE, STUNNING VISTAS, VAST OPEN SPACES, RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES, AND BIG CITY AMENITIES.



*Recreational Opportunities along the North Platte River*

## Principles and Goals

**UQL1. STABLE NEIGHBORHOODS:** Ensure neighborhoods retain a complementary character across architectural form and use, yet allow for unique and creative design solutions amongst neighborhoods.



**UQL1-1. Density Transect:** Compel design that mitigates impacts of high-density development on established neighborhoods by maintaining a transect of built form, with compatible design and scale in each land use zone.

**UQL1-2. Neighborhood Groups:** Foster more neighborhood “pride” in which people identify with certain neighborhoods or areas through the creation of friendly, safe, familiar, and connected neighborhoods and support of neighborhood programs.

**UQL1-3. Neighborhood-Specific Plans:** Identify areas in need of a neighborhood subarea plan to identify specific needs such as schools, grocery stores, connections, code enforcement, amenities, street trees, etc.

**UQL1-4. Housing Options:** Working with the neighborhood and HUD, encourage a range of housing options in North Casper and other parts of the community.

**UQL2. QUALITY NEIGHBORHOODS:** Encourage a small town feel by utilizing a variety of housing options that are supported by a safe and efficient transportation system, neighborhood services and amenities for all household types.



**UQL2-1. Neighborhood Streets:** Implement standards for residential neighborhood streets to create safe pedestrian connections and characteristics similar to traditional neighborhoods.

**UQL2-2. Mixed Use Neighborhoods:** Provide for commercial uses in and adjacent to residential neighborhoods in a manner that contributes to the neighborhood’s integrity and identity through thoughtful design of signage, lighting, buffers, and parking.

**UQL2-3. Site-Conscious Design:** Develop well-designed neighborhoods in the foothills that limit grading by working with the natural topography, avoid blocking views to Casper Mountain, and ensure that rooflines are not visible above the ridgeline.

**UQL2-4. Community Housing:** Implement land use changes that encourage diverse housing options and affordability by integrating the latest tools, incentives, and code options.

**UQL2-5. Public Places:** Provide public places in each neighborhood through neighborhood parks, community gardens, and/or corner shops or cafes, which contribute to preserving small-town characteristics.

**UQL2-6. Neighborhood Parks:** Provide neighborhood parks and greenways at no greater distance than one-third mile from all residences. Maintain existing neighborhood and community parks, and when developing new parks, provide a mix of design and amenities that add interest and contribute to neighborhood identity.

**UQL2-7. Recreation Facilities:** Identify the need and establish priorities for park, recreation, and aquatic facilities, including type and locations.

### THE ADOPTED PARKS AND OPEN SPACE GOALS:

1. Make our parks appealing to motivate people to spend more time enjoying them;
2. Ensure that every household is within one-third of a mile (10 minutes) of a quality park or school playground; and
3. Provide recreational opportunities for people of all ages and abilities.

- City of Casper 2014 Parks and Open Space Improvement Plan



## DEVELOPING A MAKERS' DISTRICT

Omaha, Nebraska is following in the footsteps of cities across the country in creating a dedicated district for artists, artisans, and fabricators.

Future Forward LLC has been moving this project forward, buying parcels of land in the designated area. This "forgotten area" near their downtown is rooted in a history of light industrial and manufacturing, and is well positioned to provide affordable live/work opportunities for the city's creative entrepreneurs.

A special use zoning designation for the district will help the project overcome development hurdles.

Proponents of the plan envision this area for makers, techies, artisans, and entrepreneurs as well as an area that will form a mutually beneficial relationship with the adjacent downtown.

- Omaha World Herald, December 21, 2016 ([http://www.omaha.com/news/metro/workspace-for-creative-thinkers-proposal-calls-for-omaha-makers-district/article\\_456286d7-41c9-547d-8e2a-5ed114d58d71.html](http://www.omaha.com/news/metro/workspace-for-creative-thinkers-proposal-calls-for-omaha-makers-district/article_456286d7-41c9-547d-8e2a-5ed114d58d71.html))



East of the downtown would be a prime location for a "Makers' District". Growing in popularity across the US, these districts transform vacant, industrial areas into work-live spaces for industrial, manufacturing, agricultural and creative industries. By revitalizing industrial areas and including affordable housing options, Casper would be able to build on existing human capital and housing stock. This area would capitalize on affordable land costs of the underutilized land close to the urban core, strengthening Downtown's vibrancy in the process. Current hurdles to this type of development include zoning regulations and building/safety codes.

**UQL3. RICH CULTURE:** Promote an unexpected quality of life through art, community facilities, and enhanced community pride.



**UQL3-1. Community Involvement:** Enhance community pride through celebrating Casper's amenities and assets. Explore new ways to provide consistent messaging through apps, kiosks, and educational art.

**UQL3-2. Interactive Art:** Promote culture and arts through improving art venues, developing outdoor performance venues, and encouraging interactive art throughout every neighborhood.

**UQL3-3. Concentrated Facilities:** Centralize new public and private cultural, art, and civic facilities to support existing facilities and create a synergy between these institutions. Cultural facilities shall be located to take advantage of and support commercial activities.

**UQL4. INTEGRATED PATHS:** Create a vast network of interconnected open spaces and recreational resources.



**UQL4-1. Finishing the Gaps:** Complete the gaps in the trail system and connect the Platte River Parkway to other regional trails, adjacent communities, and destinations.

**UQL4-2. Core Connections:** Create a connected trail system and dedicated bike lanes within the urban core that connect to key destinations around the city. Enhance the Rail Trail with shelters, kiosks, murals, and public amenities to increase interest in adjacent economic development.

**UQL4-3. Platte River Parkway Connections:** Increase safety and ease of access from the Parkway to Downtown Casper.

**UQL4-4. Trail Network:** Improve the network of trails, greenways, and off-street paths and sidewalks.

**UQL4-5. Natural and Historic Routes:** Utilize drainageways and abandoned railroad rights-of-way as supplements to the primary parks, open space, greenways, and trails system.

**UQL4-6. Riverwalk:** Embrace the River through the construction of a Riverwalk that integrates shopping, restaurants, and entertainment adjacent to the river, where appropriate.

**UQL4-7. Casper Mountain Trails:** Contribute to a trail system on Casper Mountain via the Central Wyoming Trails Alliance and other groups dedicated to trails in the Casper area.

## EMBRACING THE RIVER

CASPER WILL ENGAGE WITH THE WORLD-CLASS NORTH PLATTE RIVER AND A NETWORK OF TRAILS THAT ARE VISUALLY AND PHYSICALLY LINKED TO COMMERCIAL CENTERS TO FOSTER ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES.

### Principles and Goals

**ETR1. OUTDOOR CITY:** Promote Casper as an outdoor city and capitalize on its natural assets.



**ETR1-1. Commercial Branding:** Encourage new energy and commercial development around the North Platte River through a marketing campaign to rebrand the area between Downtown, the Old Yellowstone District, and the River as the “Riverfront District.”

**ETR1-2. River Redevelopment:** Encourage the development of land adjacent to the river to address the demand for urban living and services with nearby natural amenities and river views.

**ETR1-3. River Transition:** Work to identify underutilized industrial buildings and promote the redevelopment of valuable areas for public use. New development should face the river and integrate amenities.

**ETR1-4. River Health:** Promote the health of the North Platte River and its drainageways and riparian areas by investing in river restoration projects and protecting the overall ecosystem, thereby, creating a unique place to recreate (including additional trail corridors, whitewater paddle boarding, tubing, etc.), and expanding the Blue Ribbon Fishery.

**ETR1-5. Recreation Economy:** Use the North Platte River to foster economic development through addressing existing river recreation businesses and incentivizing river-based recreation technology businesses to relocate to Casper.

**ETR1-6. Wildlife Corridors:** Protect wildlife corridors from the mountains to the river, including the floodplain areas along Casper Creek, Garden Creek, and Elkhorn Creek.

**ETR1-7. Passive Open Space:** Coordinate with state and local park and recreation agencies to provide adequate passive open space areas and corridors for critical wildlife.

**ETR1-8. Stormwater Management:** Protect the Platte River water quality and its associated wildlife through management and natural treatment of stormwater runoff.

**ETR1-9. River Protection:** Preserve the North Platte River as a recreation corridor with development easements that prioritize public access and river health. Investigate additional, subsidiary trail systems along Casper Creek, Garden Creek, and Elkhorn Creek.



Trailhead connecting the urban center to the river



*Public spaces and economic development along the North Platte River*



**ETR2. CELEBRATED RECREATION:** Offer parks and recreational facilities to meet the needs of residents and visitors.



**ETR2-1. Parks Level of Service:** Follow the standards and recommendations set in the Parks and Open Space Plan and the Casper Area Trails, Path and Bikeway Plan.

**ETR2-2. River Recreation:** Capitalize on the river frontage through the city by promoting river activities and river recreation businesses through designating and designing a portion of the North Platte River for leisure and sporting activities.

**ETR2-3. Outdoor Recreation Lifestyle:** Enhance the recreational amenities that support and retain young families through increasing neighborhood parks, recreation centers, and other recreational assets.

**ETR2-4. Riverfront Destinations:** Encourage the development of commercial properties and additional structures and utilities that support restaurants and retail, and temporary commercial businesses.

**ETR2-5. North Casper:** Develop connections to and amenities within the area around the riverfront in North Casper.

**ETR2-6. Casper Mountain:** Identify and support needed improvements or expansion of recreational facilities on Casper Mountain through coordination with Natrona County.

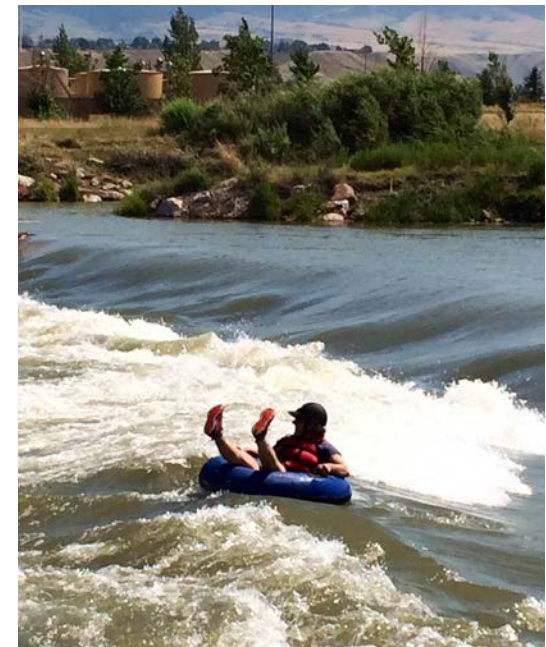
**ETR2-7. Park Maintenance Improvements:** Invest in the maintenance and upgrade of existing parks and recreation facilities, consider maintenance costs during design phases, and look for long-term value and bang for the buck.

## RIVERFRONT SUCCESSES

The Columbus, Indiana Redevelopment Commission designated a riverfront district to enhance the city's appeal, improve economic vitality, and optimize the enjoyment of its natural features.

The creation of the Riverfront Development District removed downtown development barriers and allowed the State of Indiana to grant a district-wide liquor license.

- <http://www.columbus.in.gov/cityofcolumbus/assets/File/columbus-riverfront-district.pdf>





# CHAPTER 4: OUR FRAMEWORK

## OVERVIEW

A community land use plan that is programmed in a deliberate manner, with an understanding of market, financial, and physical realities, can help foster a healthy balance of land uses and minimize uncertainty for its officials, staff, residents, and other interests. Leveraging and preserving natural features, recreational resources, and neighborhood character that contributes to the high quality of life in Casper is important in attracting and retaining residents, businesses, and visitors that sustain the community's economy.

Additionally, public space attributes and architectural features, building design, and placemaking amenities are important to maintaining the unique character of a community.

In general, land uses should be efficient and viable; support a complete transportation network; provide housing choices conveniently located near jobs, schools, shops, and parks; minimize conflicts between incompatible uses; and plan development in areas of existing and planned infrastructure.

By creating a guide for future development, the City can make the most out of their budget. The City's goals on density, land use, public spaces and layout of infrastructure and services can make a difference in providing quality of life.

### PLACEMAKING

Placemaking is the process of creating quality places in which people want to live, work, play, and learn. The beginnings of placemaking came about in the 1960s, as Jane Jacobs and William H. Whyte, planning pioneers, promoted designing cities for people, not just cars and shopping centers. Placemaking involves ideas of "shaping our public realm in order to maximize share value"; it combines physical form with emotion and utility.

- Project for Public Spaces



As communities look for complete transportation solutions, transportation system planning has evolved from simply providing vehicle capacity and vehicle trips on roadways to considering transit, pedestrians, bicyclists and neighborhood integration with a shift in focus to person-trips. A transportation system that integrates land use planning creates a long term mode for efficient travel patterns and use of City resources. As the City grows the land use should provide guidance for the planning of transportation systems and vice versa. For example, the capacity of a transportation corridor should be adequate for the surrounding lands uses, and if higher density land uses are planned the appropriate road should be built.

This chapter includes an analysis of the transportation system and existing land uses and provides a framework for transportation and land uses including the Major Streets Plan and the Future Land Use Map.



## TRANSPORTATION PLAN

### TRANSPORTATION PLAN ELEMENTS

#### Land Use and Transportation

Land use is made up of five characteristics: development density, mix of uses, urban form, urban design, and contiguousness of development (where developments are adjacent to each other and/or connected). All of these components have an impact on the number or length of trips on the roadway network. Density is the amount of development within a specific area. Higher levels of density are typically associated with availability of transit and a mix of uses.

A mix of uses can enable more activities to be served by shorter trips. Urban form is established through a pattern of land development and sets the basis for the transportation infrastructure. Urban design offers an opportunity to make properties more accessible for alternative modes, while providing aesthetic benefits. Contiguous development can increase density in an area and reduce travel.

Each of these components is critical to integrating land use patterns and transportation facilities as the strategic framework of the community.

A combination of the five characteristics of land use, as well as the concepts of block configuration, roadway spacing, and access management, if done well, can have a drastic impact on the transportation system operation and character of Casper.

## Mix of Uses

Modern zoning typically results in residential, commercial, and industrial uses not being located close to each other, which promotes the use of the automobile. This increases traffic and makes communities much less friendly for bicyclists and pedestrians. Zoning that promotes a mix of uses and interconnected development can create high-quality, walkable communities that preserve roadway and intersection capacity while increasing opportunities for alternative modes like bicycles and transit (**Figure 4-1**).

FIGURE 4-1. MIX OF USES

Encouraged Land Use Form



Discouraged Land Use Form

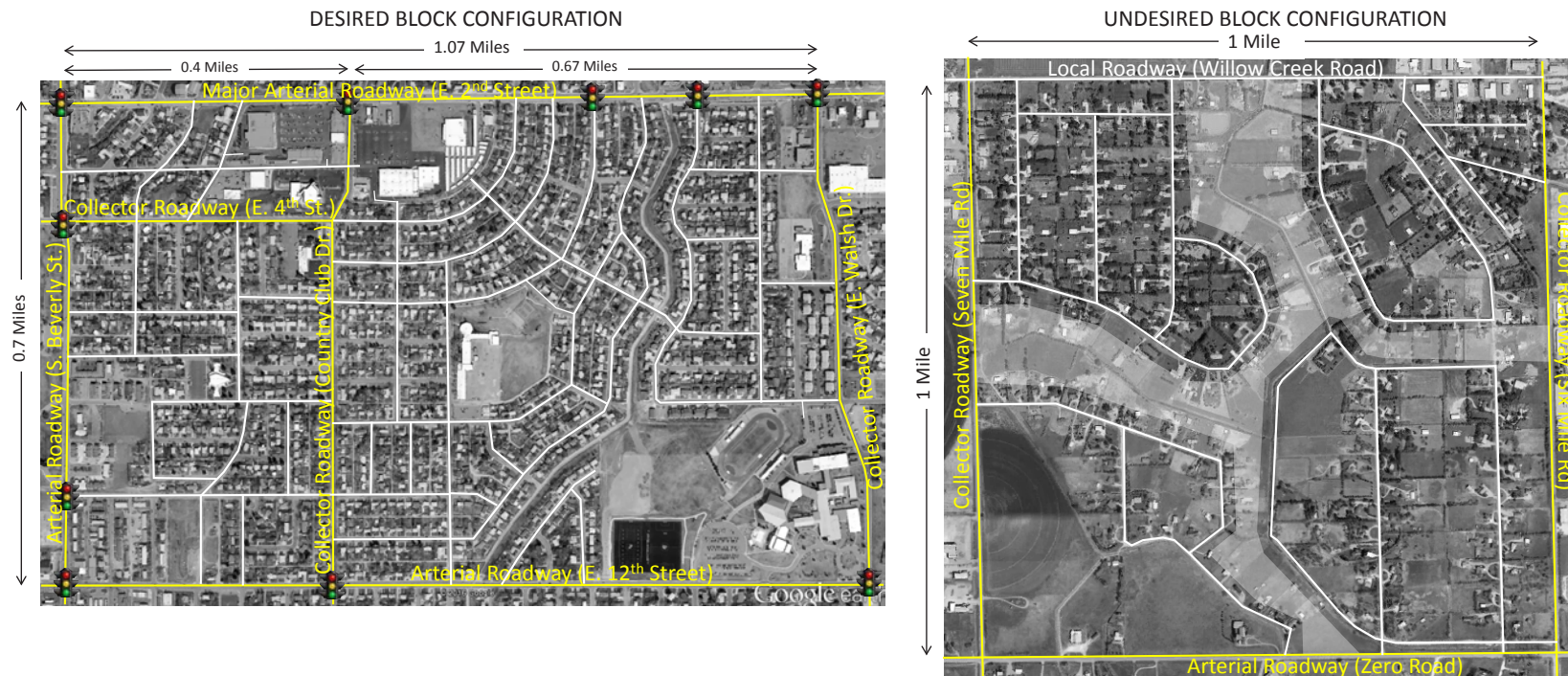


## Block Configuration/Interconnection

Block development, layout, and connectivity can significantly impact motorized and non-motorized traffic movement. When development within a block is comprised of multiple commercial or residential developments that are not connected, traffic from one side of the area must use the collector and arterial roads to access development on the opposite side of the area. Doing so decreases the capacity of the adjacent collector and arterial roads for regional traffic, while increasing congestion on those roads and intersections, making them less safe. Increased congestion can lead to constructing wider roads, creating greater divisions between blocks and neighborhoods, and longer distances for bicyclists and pedestrians to cross. This lack of connectivity also forces pedestrians and bicyclists to travel on high speed, high volume arterial and collector roadways, which often makes them feel less safe.

Conversely, providing a grid of connected local streets within a block, allows alternative ways for both vehicles and pedestrians to access nearby development within the area (Figure 4-2). Since this traffic does not have to use the arterial or collector streets, narrower arterial and collector roads are sufficient to handle traffic volumes, and shorten pedestrian and bicyclist crossing distances.

FIGURE 4-2. DESIRED AND UNDESIRED BLOCK CONFIGURATIONS



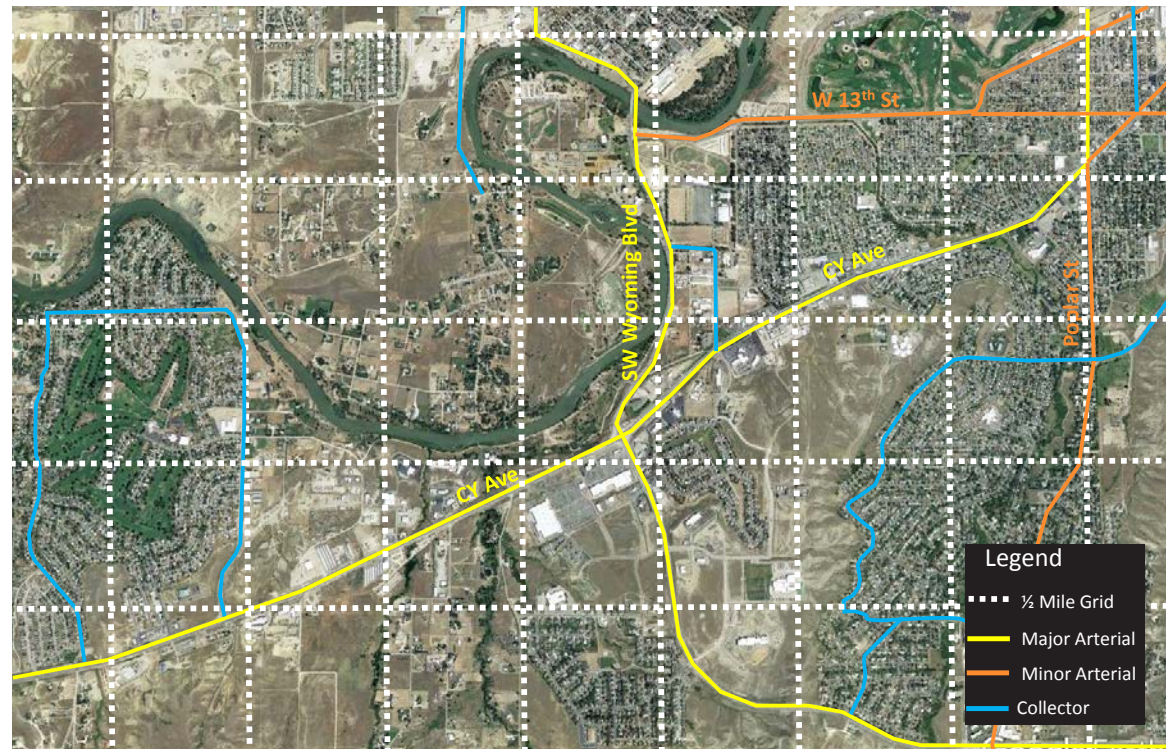
## Roadway Spacing/Block Size

Implementing appropriate roadway spacing is important to avoid having closely-spaced intersections, which increases delay and congestion. Conversely, having too wide of roadway spacing can force too much traffic to use collector and local roads (**Figure 4-3**, **Figure 4-4**, **Figure 4-5**). One-mile spacing is the accepted standard for urban arterial roadways with a supporting system of collector and local roadways.

Advantages of this urban street network configuration include:

- Local bus service on arterial and collector streets places residents within a reasonable (1/4 mile) walking distance of a bus line.
- Continuity of collector streets provides an alternative to arterials and serves shorter trips.
- A reasonable travel distance from a residence to a major street or arterial road reduces the vehicle-miles of travel (VMTs) on local streets and collectors, thereby improving the residential environment and reducing vehicle-pedestrian conflicts on local streets.

FIGURE 4-3. ROADWAY SPACING, WEST CASPER



- Emergency response time may be improved, as less distance is traveled on local streets and smaller collector roads.
- It allows for one half mile spacing of signalized intersections, which can provide more efficient traffic flow.
- It allows local streets to be designed with curves, traffic calming elements, etc. to actively discourage cut-through traffic, while supporting connectivity and continuity of movement for pedestrians and bicycles.



FIGURE 4-4. ROADWAY SPACING, CENTRAL CASPER

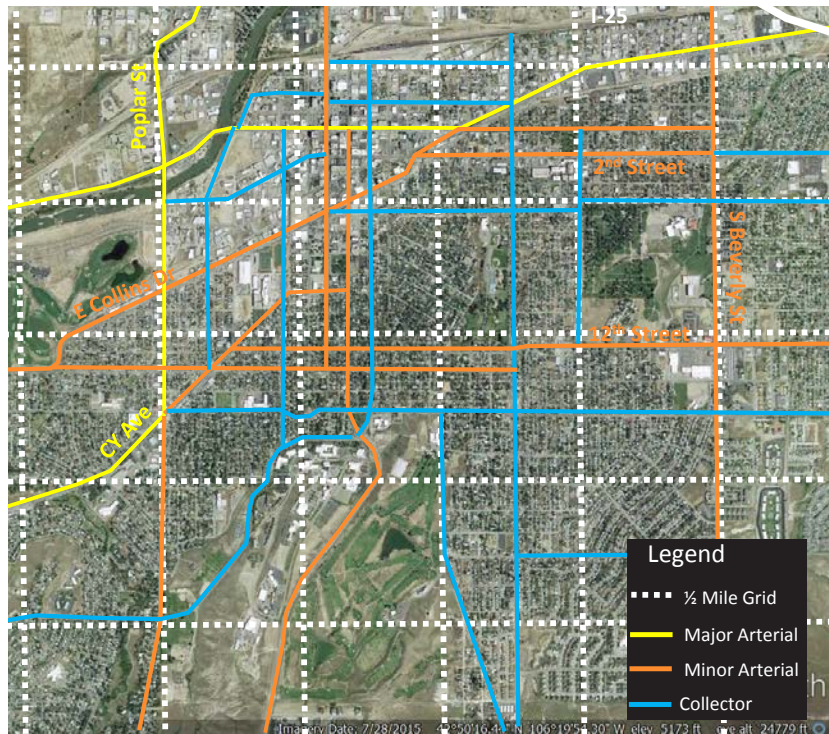


FIGURE 4-5. ROADWAY SPACING, EAST CASPER



Central Casper reasonably complies with these recommended standards with multiple arterial and collector roadways with a system of local roads to support the network and provide alternatives for vehicles, bikes and pedestrians to travel to their destination. However, block sizes within East and West Casper, where new development is occurring, are much larger, and portions of those areas are developing without the support of enough arterials. As a result, higher levels of traffic congestion can be seen in these areas.

## Access Management

Access management is the management of driveways and access points from roads into and through sites. A good access management policy considers the following:

- intersection spacing
- driveway spacing
- cross access/interconnected parking lots
- turn lanes
- medians

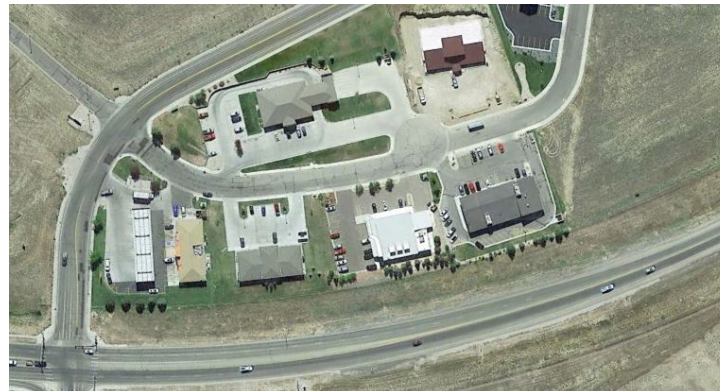
A minimal number of adequately-spaced access points preserves the capacity of the roadway and provides smoother traffic flow on arterial and collector roads. Limiting the number of driveways can also reduce the number of traffic accidents.

FIGURE 4-6. ACCESS MANAGEMENT

Avoid



Promote



### WEST BELT LOOP

An MOU between Casper, Mills, and the County established standards for the expected development to the west. Based on existing issues recommendations and standards for access management and street spacing were established. In August of 2015, Casper, Mills, and Natrona County agreed to the implementation of the West Belt Loop Land Use, Connectivity, and Access Management Plan. This plan was created by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to establish standards for the expected development to the west of Casper, particularly along the West Belt Loop.

The example in **Figure 4-6** shows developments on the left that were not required to interconnect, and have individual driveway access. By enforcing these two concepts, development would start to look like the pictures on the right. Support of these two concepts allows for vehicles to stay within the site to access multiple uses, reducing the

impact on the adjacent roadway.

Similarly, medians restrict turning movements on a roadway, which limits the number of conflict points, and preserves the smooth flow of traffic. Medians can retain the flow of traffic, but are not ideal for smaller, lower speed roadways where access to individual parcels is a higher priority.



## AUTO TRIP REDUCTION

The concepts of block configuration, roadway spacing, driveway and intersection spacing, mix of uses, and interconnected development all play a role in reducing the length of vehicle trips and number of vehicles on the roadway. The benefits of reducing automobile trips are numerous and can include the following:

- reduced roadway maintenance costs;
- fewer accidents;
- smaller roadways and intersections (lower construction costs);
- decreased air pollution and carbon emissions;
- fewer conflicts for bicyclists and pedestrians; and
- increased physical activity.

## Auto Trip Reduction

The majority of trips taken in Casper are done by automobile, primarily because of a lack of options for alternative modes. During the summer, biking and walking are potential options for shorter trips, but may require biking in the vehicular travel lane, or walking in grass where sidewalk segments are missing. Year-round, transit exists as an option if origin, destination, and time of travel fall within the location and duration of existing transit routes.

In order to take advantage of the benefits of reduced automobile trips, it is recommended that the improvements listed in the Casper Area Trails, Path, and Bikeway Plan and the Casper Area Transit Development Plan be implemented.

## TRANSPORTATION PRIORITIES

During a transportation workshop, held on December 8, 2016 at Casper City Hall, participants discussed the various elements of a roadway cross section and identified which elements they would prefer on streets of varying functional classification and right-of-way width. Based on input from the participants, the most important elements are sidewalks, bike lanes with appropriate buffering, and trees to mitigate the wind. This is consistent with the Generation Casper transportation survey where residents of the Casper Metro Area stated that “construction of sidewalks, bike lanes, pathways and trails” is their top transportation priority.

## Bike and Pedestrian

The use of alternative modes has become a priority for citizens in the Casper Metro Area, but the existing bike/pedestrian network and the existing Code are not representative of those desires. The City should establish standards for the bike/pedestrian network, including:

- minimum design standards and avoidance of obstructions (i.e. drainage grates and electric poles within the sidewalk/path; sidewalk width and conditions; crosswalks; signage; minimization of roll-over curbs; etc.),
- bike/pedestrian requirements for residential and non-residential development (i.e. sidewalk connectivity through the site, bike parking spaces, etc.),
- typical block sizes, and
- complete street cross sections.

With alternative modes becoming a focus across the country, guiding documents could also include a toolbox of options for innovative solutions to improve the existing network, such as buffered bike lanes, bike boxes, and protected intersections.





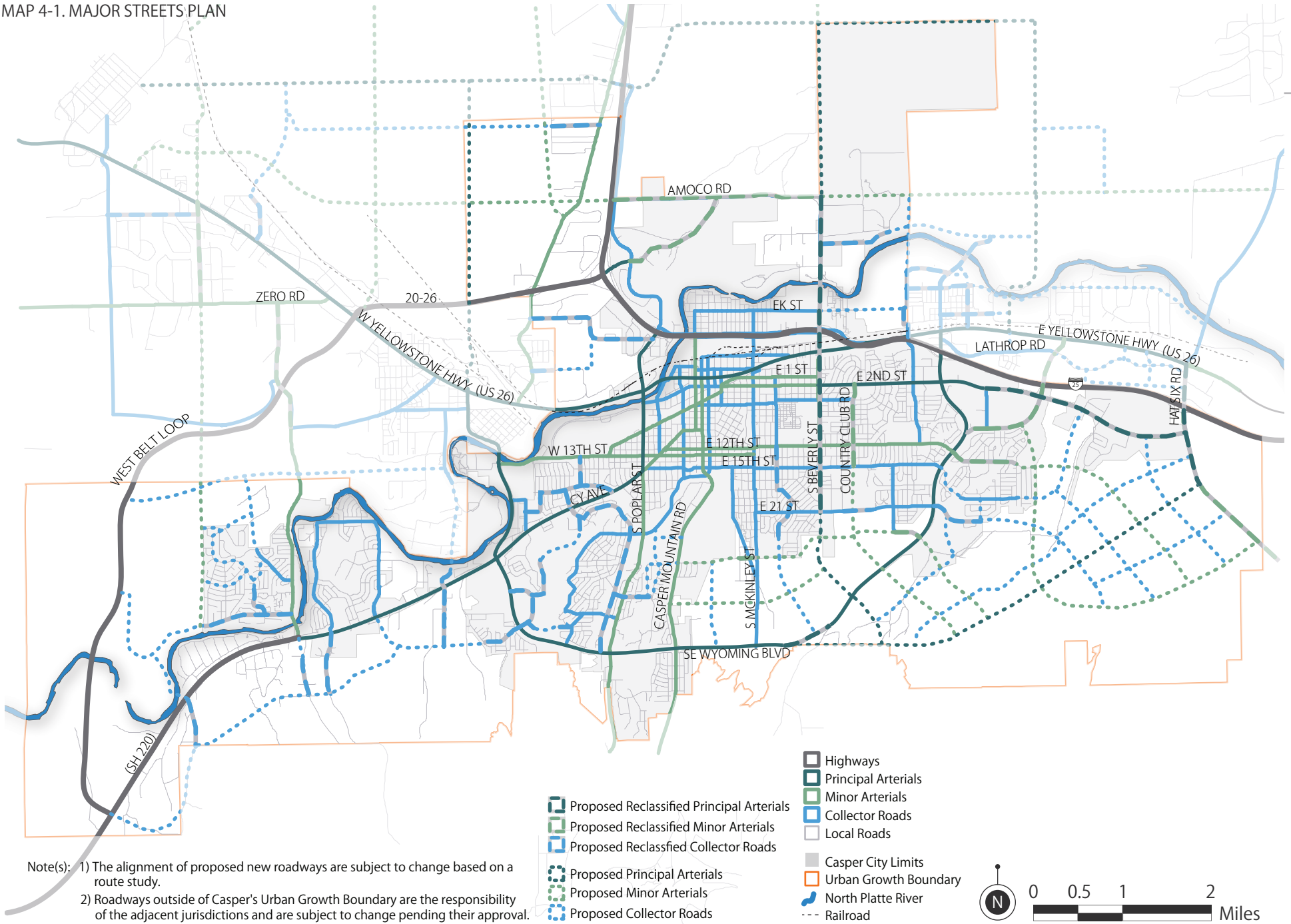
## MAJOR STREETS PLAN

The Major Streets Plan (**Map 4-1**) serves as a guiding map for development of an adequate and properly-spaced network of major roadways (i.e., arterials and collectors) for buildout of Casper within the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB), and to help achieve desired land use patterns and the benefits described in the previous section. It shows where right-of-way should be preserved and provides a framework from which planners can evaluate future infrastructure needs when funding opportunities arise. A Major Streets Plan is especially beneficial when updating the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) in order to prioritize future planned roadway projects.

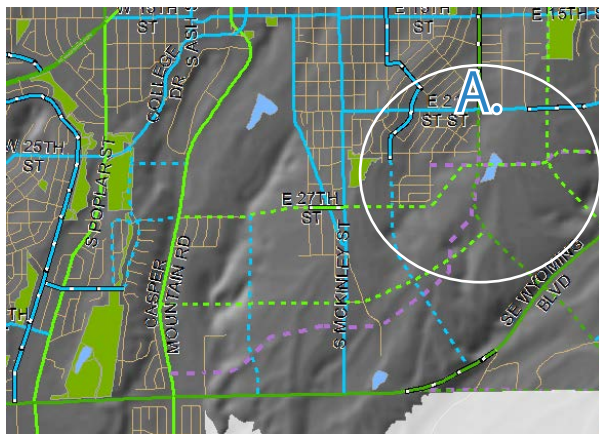
Some of the proposed roadways on the Major Streets Plan follow/extend existing roadways, while others are more conceptual in nature, because no roadways or development patterns currently exist in those areas. This generality will allow for minor variation in actual locations and alignment due to steep grades and roadway impacts, that are determined during the completion of a route study. Alternatively, if the conceptual roadway crosses a large parcel, City staff and developer could negotiate the final alignment during development of that parcel, provided adequate spacing standards are followed.

The Major Streets Plan does not identify future local roads since the location of those roadways will be determined by type and density of development to be constructed. However, in order to achieve a transportation network that supports the associated development, it is recommended that the concepts of land use, block configuration, roadway spacing, and access management be fully enforced.

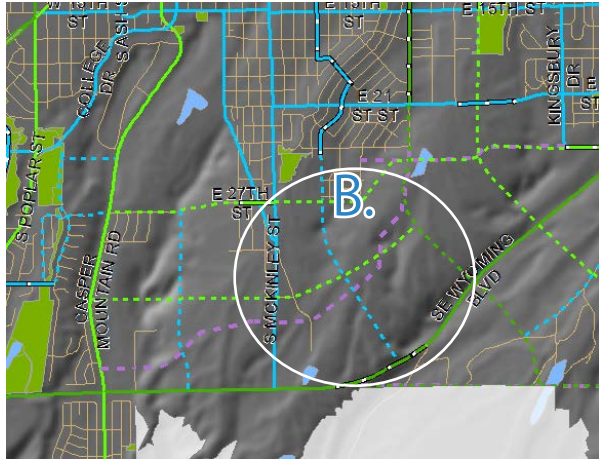
MAP 4-1. MAJOR STREETS PLAN



The placement of proposed new roads and reclassification of major roadways in the Major Streets Plan were recommended after considering existing uses, proposed new uses, topography, water infrastructure, public input, and the concepts of roadway spacing and signal spacing identified above. These recommendations also considered the proposed new roadways shown in the MPO's adopted Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and the anticipated access points identified in the West Belt Loop Land Use, Connectivity, and Access Plan. While some of these roadways deviate from the LRTP proposed roadways, this was done to increase connectivity and maintain spacing standards. More specifically, there are three locations that deviate from the LRTP and the justification for modifying each is shown and outlined below. The LRTP roadways are shown in purple, and should be replaced with the proposed roadways shown in blue and green.

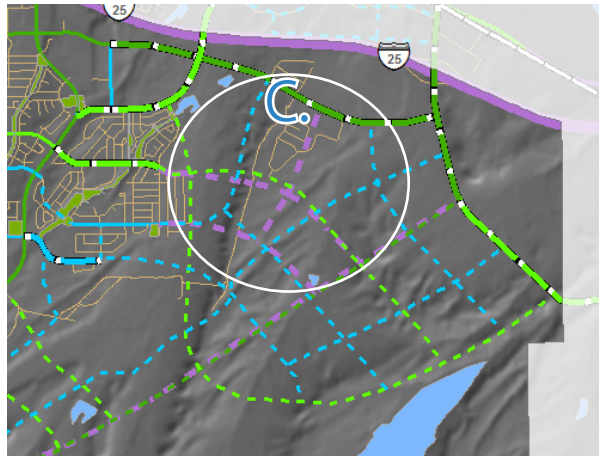


A. The smaller LRTP roadway circled terminates at Sagewood Avenue, a local road. In the interest of adding an additional east/west roadway, and in order to maintain traffic flow on the major roadways, the Major Streets Plan shows this road continuing to the south, then west, to connect to McKinley Street and Casper Mountain Road, which are collector and principal arterial roadways. Because major roadways have higher traffic volumes and speeds than local roads, it is not desirable to have an arterial terminate at a local road.



B. The extension of Beverly Street as shown in the LRTP terminates approximately 660 feet north of the extension of the Casper Mountain Road/SE Wyoming Boulevard intersection. Considering the length and functional classification of this proposed extension, it is anticipated that traffic volumes at the intersection of the Beverly Street extension with Casper Mountain Road will warrant a signal sometime in the future. Placing signals closer than one-half mile can cause challenges with maintaining traffic flow, and accommodating turn lanes and vehicle queues. Therefore, the proposed extension was shifted north to a point approximately one half mile north of the Casper Mountain Road/SE Wyoming Boulevard intersection in anticipation of future signalization.

The consideration of arterial and collector roadway spacing in the vicinity of the Beverly Street extension resulted in additional proposed north/south and east/west roadways. Similar to the reasons for shifting the west end of this roadway, the east end of this road was shifted south, to evenly space the Beverly Street Extension with adjacent major intersections.



C. With the expansion of the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) in the southeast portion of the city, the Major Streets Plan incorporates a new future roadway network for this area. While creating a grid at one half mile spacing, it was also important to consider the extension of the existing east/west roadway network. In the LRTP, both the Twelfth and Twenty-first Street extensions connected to the SE Wyoming Boulevard extension, and a third road connected those two roads to Second Street. This configuration would result in all of the east/west traffic terminating at two points along the SE Wyoming Boulevard extension, which would likely experience congestion challenges in the future. With the proposed new configuration, there are more major roadways to distribute future traffic. The new configuration is consistent with the recommended arterial and collector spacing (one half mile) in anticipation of potential future signal spacing. Also, both the SE Wyoming Boulevard extension and Hat Six Road have parallel routes to accommodate shorter trips within the area.



## Typical Cross Sections

Other factors that determine how a road functions are the elements within it. Roadway cross sections will always include vehicular travel lanes, include sidewalks, and sometimes include a median, bike lanes, street trees, and/or street lights within the rights-of-way (ROW). A road with wider travel lanes will generally have vehicles traveling at higher speeds, while a road with wide sidewalks, street trees, and street lights, will create a feeling of safety and comfort for pedestrians.

Casperites have stated a desire to have bike- and pedestrian-friendly streets. However, few streets in Casper have bike lanes, and many of the sidewalks are narrow, and/or are right next to the vehicle travel lane. Some examples of typical cross sections are shown in **Figure 4-7**.

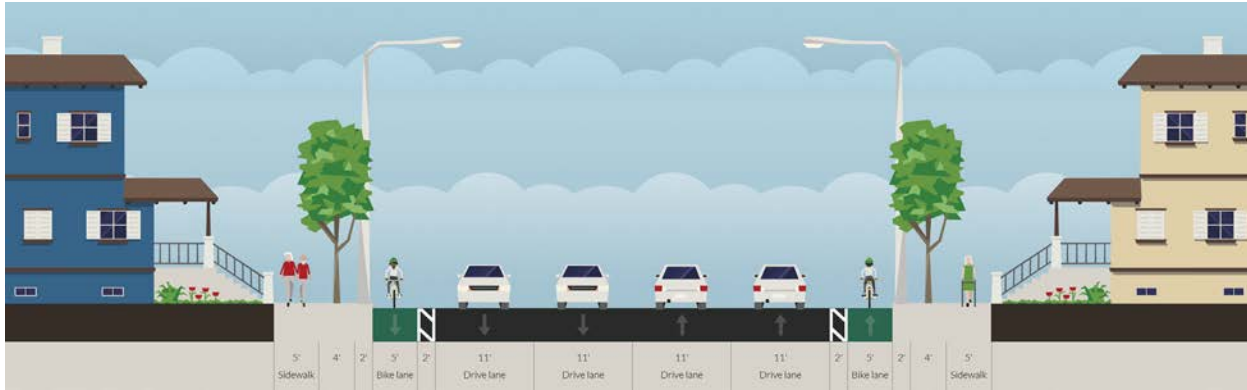
FIGURE 4-7. TYPICAL CROSS SECTIONS

**Arterial Roads: 4-Lane, 100' ROW:** It is preferred that bike lanes be provided on the roads parallel to the arterial; however, if that is not feasible, the buffer should be more significant than on smaller, lower speed roads. If bike lanes can be provided elsewhere, the median could be widened to allow for larger refuge islands when vehicles are turning onto or off of the arterial.

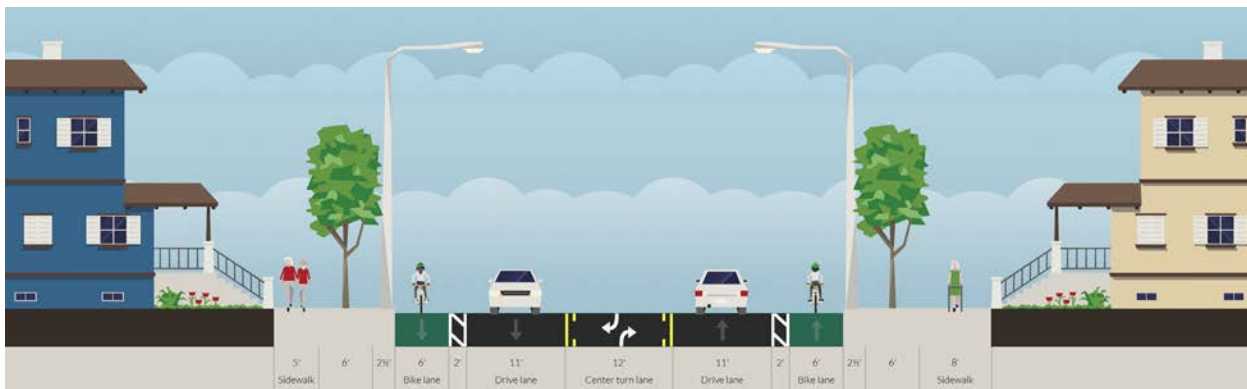


### Collector Roads:

**4-Lane, 80' ROW:** In the case of a four-lane collector roadway, the minimum sidewalk, tree planting area, bike lane/buffer spacing shown above, should be provided.



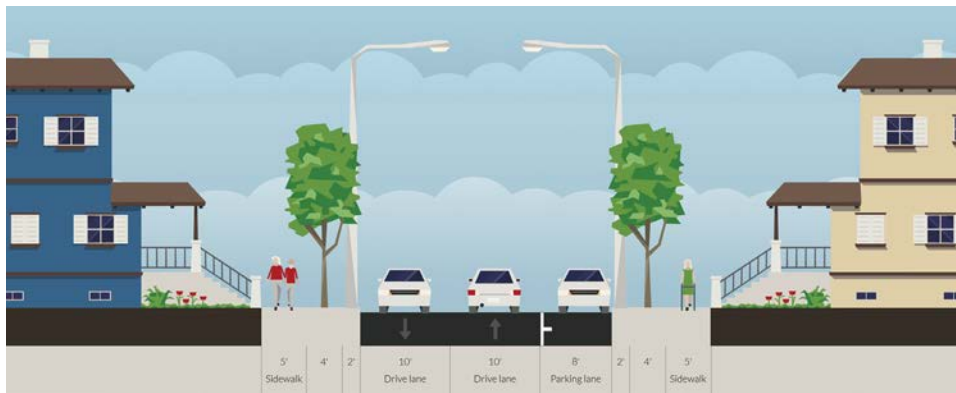
**2-Lane, 80' ROW:** If on-street parking is desired, the center two-way, left-turn lane can be removed and parking placed between the travel lane and the bike lane. Serving as a buffer for the bikes, the on-street parking would allow the bike lane to be reduced to four feet and still be comfortable for the average biker, thereby allowing for on-street parking on both sides of the road.



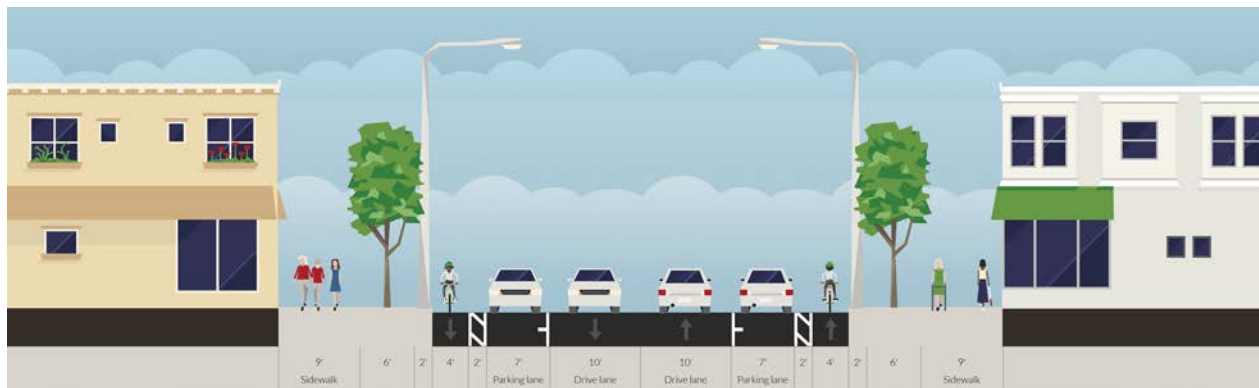
## Local Roads:

**Residential, 50' ROW:** Workshop participants stated the need for on-street parking in residential areas. With 28' of pavement, on-street parking could be provided on one side of the road. Alternatively, providing wider travel lanes and no striping would allow for less formal on-street parking that could occur on both sides of the street, as long as cars alternate and provide a continuous 20' pavement for traveling vehicles.

**Commercial, 60' ROW:** Local roads within commercial areas should provide pedestrian amenities. On-street parking may be appropriate where traffic volumes are lower. A dual turning lane reduces the impacts to flow of traffic.



**Urban Center, 80' ROW:** The road should be developed with pedestrian and bicycle amenities to encourage a thriving retail atmosphere. Roads within the urban center should off-set the need for surface parking lots by providing on-street parking. If wider sidewalks were needed to allow for outdoor seating, the tree planting areas may be reduced or the parking on one side of the street could be eliminated.





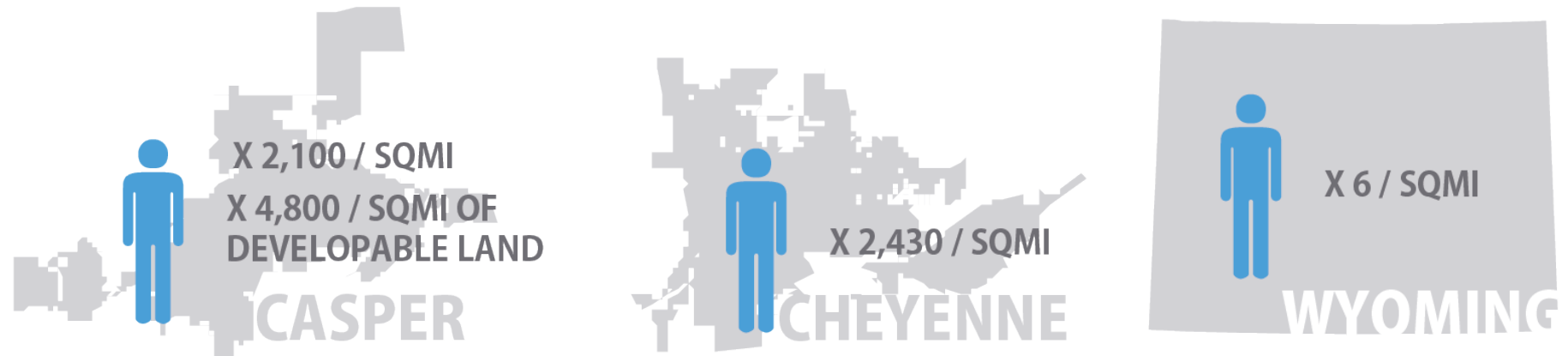
## PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

### LAND USE ANALYSIS

#### Key Points and Assumptions

1. Casper's current city limits include 27.24 square miles. Of that area, 12.47 square miles (46%) are developable (excluding ROW and tax-exempt lands such as parks, open space, and public land like the landfill).
2. Casper currently maintains a population density of about 2,100 people per square mile; or 4,800 people per square mile of developable land (**Figure 4-8**). By concentrating residents within regional hubs, like Casper, Wyoming's western values are preserved.
3. While much of the land within Casper's city limits is currently built out, 15% of this area remains vacant. Of this vacant land, 39% is planned commercial and 61% is planned residential. These calculations assume vacant land as properties where no improvements have been made, or where the only improvement is a surface parking lot. Parks and open space have not been included in these calculations. Vacant residential land is primarily located at the outer edges of the City, while vacant commercial land lies along the major transportation corridors of East Second Street, CY Avenue, and scattered throughout the urban center.
4. Casper's residential density equals 900 housing units per square mile.

FIGURE 4-8. POPULATION DENSITY PER SQUARE MILE



5. The future growth of Casper is primarily limited to the availability of water and other utilities and agreements with neighboring communities. While expansion opportunities generally exist in most directions, adopted growth boundaries do exist between Casper and the communities of Mills, Bar Nunn, and Evansville. In order to provide water to higher elevation areas of Casper, additional water infrastructure must be built. Water pressure needs are divided into zones with Zone 1 being the lowest pressure zone and Zone 4 the highest pressure zone. Infrastructure improvements to provide water to additional Zone 3 service areas were approved in 2014. **Map 4-2** shows additional land where water is now available for future development. The impetus for expanding the water infrastructure was driven from residential development in the area and system redundancy. Lands within Zone 4 cannot develop further and is not addressed by the current Water Master Plan given the large infrastructure investment needed to supply water to higher elevations.

#### WATER TREATMENT FACILITY PLAN

Most recently in March 2017, the Central Wyoming Regional Water System Joint Powers Board (CWRWS) completed a water treatment plant facilities plan. In addition to a water treatment plant and wellfield assessment and analysis, recommended expansions, and upgrades, this plan provided population growth estimates and reviewed future water treatment production requirements in consideration of this population growth.

With today's water infrastructure, peak day production is 29.22 million gallons per day (mgd). Calculating for an estimated .5-percent per year population growth rate in Natrona County, peak day production would need to reach 35.7 mgd by year 2045. Improvements necessary to reach these capacities to meet future demand, EPA requirements, and routine system upgrades expect to total roughly \$17.5 million by fiscal year 2022, and just under \$36 million dollars by 2035.

FIGURE 4-9. ZONING COMPOSITION



- Residential [34%]
- Industrial [19%]
- Park Historic [19%]
- Planned Unit Development [12%]
- Commercial [11%]
- Educational District [4%]
- Agriculture [2%]

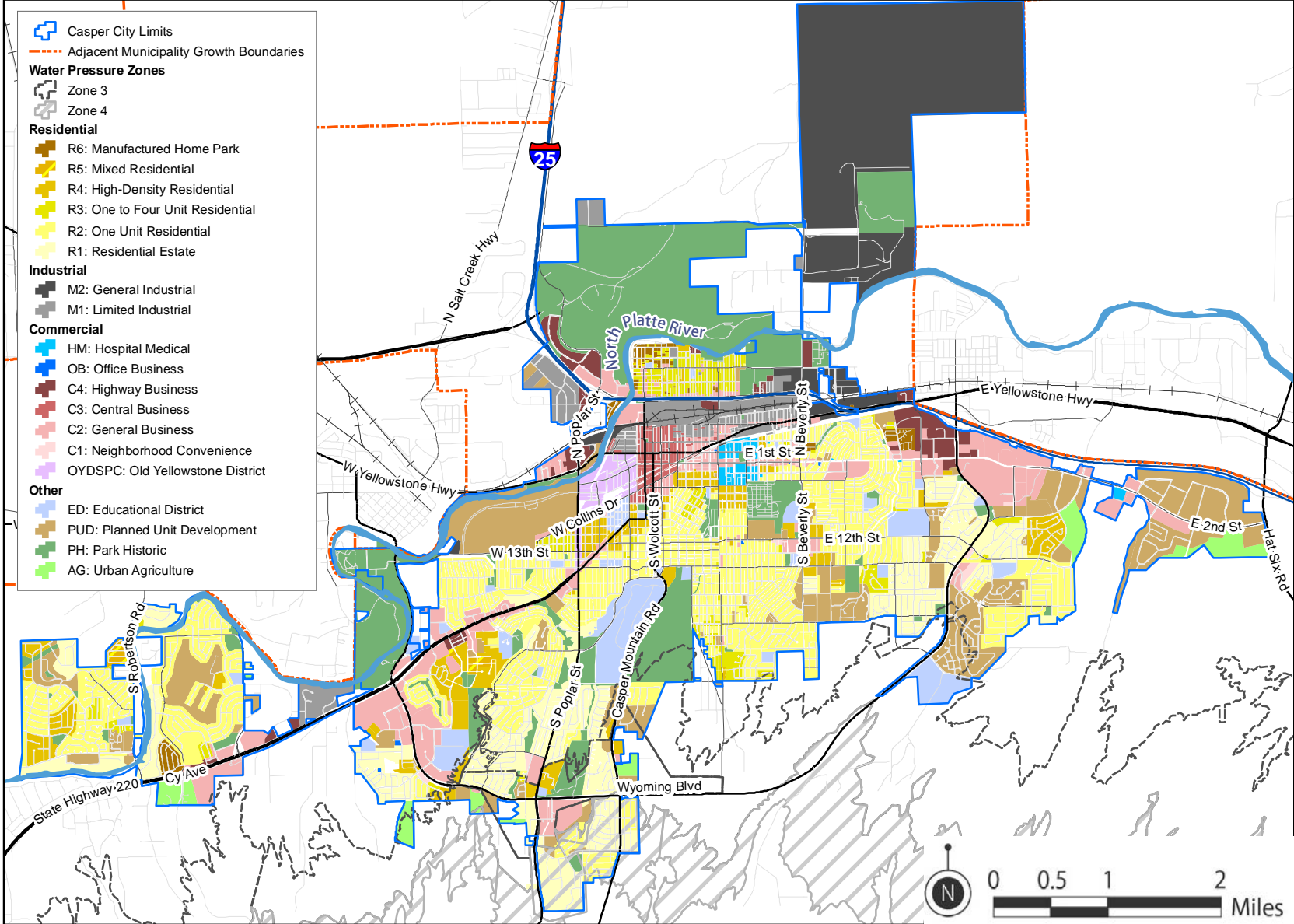
## ZONING MIX

Zoning refers to land use entitlements and requirements that regulate appropriate use, bulk, height, density, and other characteristics appropriate for a specific site (**Map 4-2**).

The largest zoning classification within the City is categorized as Park Historic (19%) which is due to the large North Platte River Park, the Casper Municipal Golf Course, Fort Caspar, and other parkland. Another 4% is categorized as Educational District including all schools and Casper College. These are all tax exempt lands (**Figure 4-9**).

The second most predominate zoning classification is single-family residential at 17%, while remaining residential uses total 17%. Industrial (Limited and General) makes up 19% and is primarily located along the I-25 and railroad corridors through the historic center of Casper and includes the City's landfill that is located north of the river. Planned Unit Development, like the Platte River Commons and McMurry Business Park, makes up just over 12% and consists of both residential and commercial uses. Commercial (retail, services, lodging, hospitals, etc.) comprises 10% of the overall land area.

MAP 4-2. ZONING MIX



## CITIZENS' PERSPECTIVE

Casper stakeholders generally want to see future growth and development concentrated in the urban center, and with a focus on infill instead of additional outlying greenfield development on the edges of town. Residential neighborhoods that are more walkable, and contain a mix of uses are desired.

Although residents prefer to see a focus on redeveloping in the urban center, they also emphasized the need for infrastructure improvements in surrounding neighborhoods and along major corridors. Amongst the community, the I-25 Corridor is a top choice for redevelopment, specifically in aesthetic improvements to represent the sort of character and businesses Casper wants travelers, tourists, and commuters to see.

Many people expressed interest in rethinking how we finance development. Impact fees were suggested as an equitable solution - a way to ensure private development contributions to the public realm by either setting aside funding for future development or by building public amenities and infrastructure.

## AREAS OF CHANGE

The areas of change (AOC) analysis highlights areas that, in the future, are likely to change due to their condition or proximity to features that typically affect change. This analysis takes into consideration several conditions including:

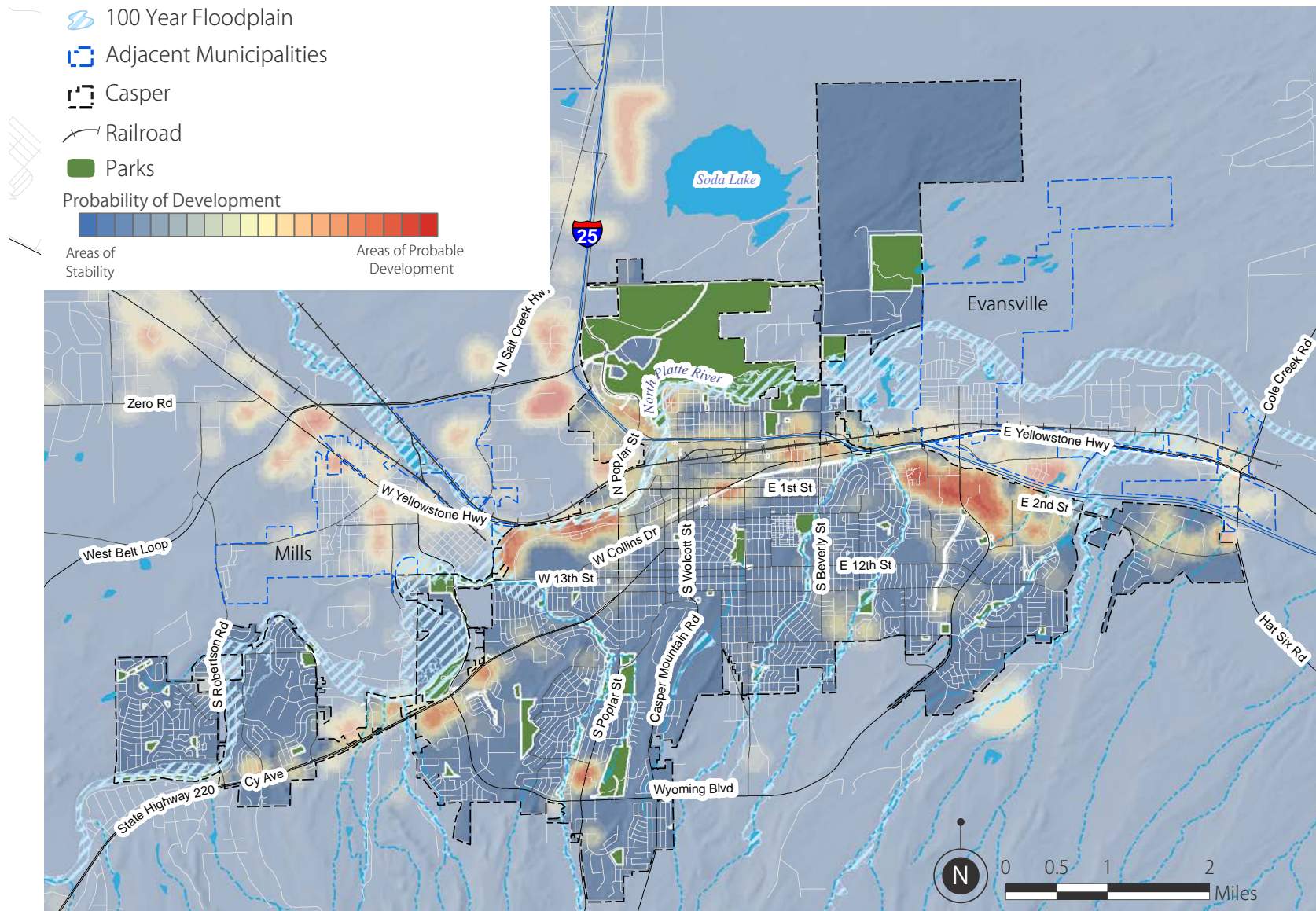
- parcel vacancy;
- agricultural land;
- parcels that the County assessor's data labels the condition of the structure as "poor";
- Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of less than 0.1;
- building age over 45 years;
- proximity to parks, existing utilities, major intersections, and highways; and
- areas currently being platted and/or developed

Parks, steep slopes, and the 100-year floodplain are represented as overlays to illustrate development constraints. The analysis provides an opportunity for discussion and should not be used as a final means to an end. For example, certain Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) may have a skewed level of development given the variety of uses allowed. Outcomes of this analysis show these AOC at the edges of the Casper municipal boundary at small nodes along Wyoming Boulevard and within new development areas at the far west edge. Major commercial AOC are along the I-25 Corridor concentrated near the eastern boundary of Casper, the interchange at Wyoming Boulevard, and the area north of the Casper city boundary between I-25 and Mills. Other probable AOC lie within the vacant properties in the urban center (**Map 4-3**).

Areas of higher probable AOC were analyzed further when determining the future land use. Goals and strategies have been developed to focus redevelopment and energy into these areas of higher probable development, such as working to reduce surface parking lots in the urban center and re-envisioning and transforming inefficient or underutilized commercial areas.



MAP 4-3. AREAS OF CHANGE



## CHANGING URBAN FORM

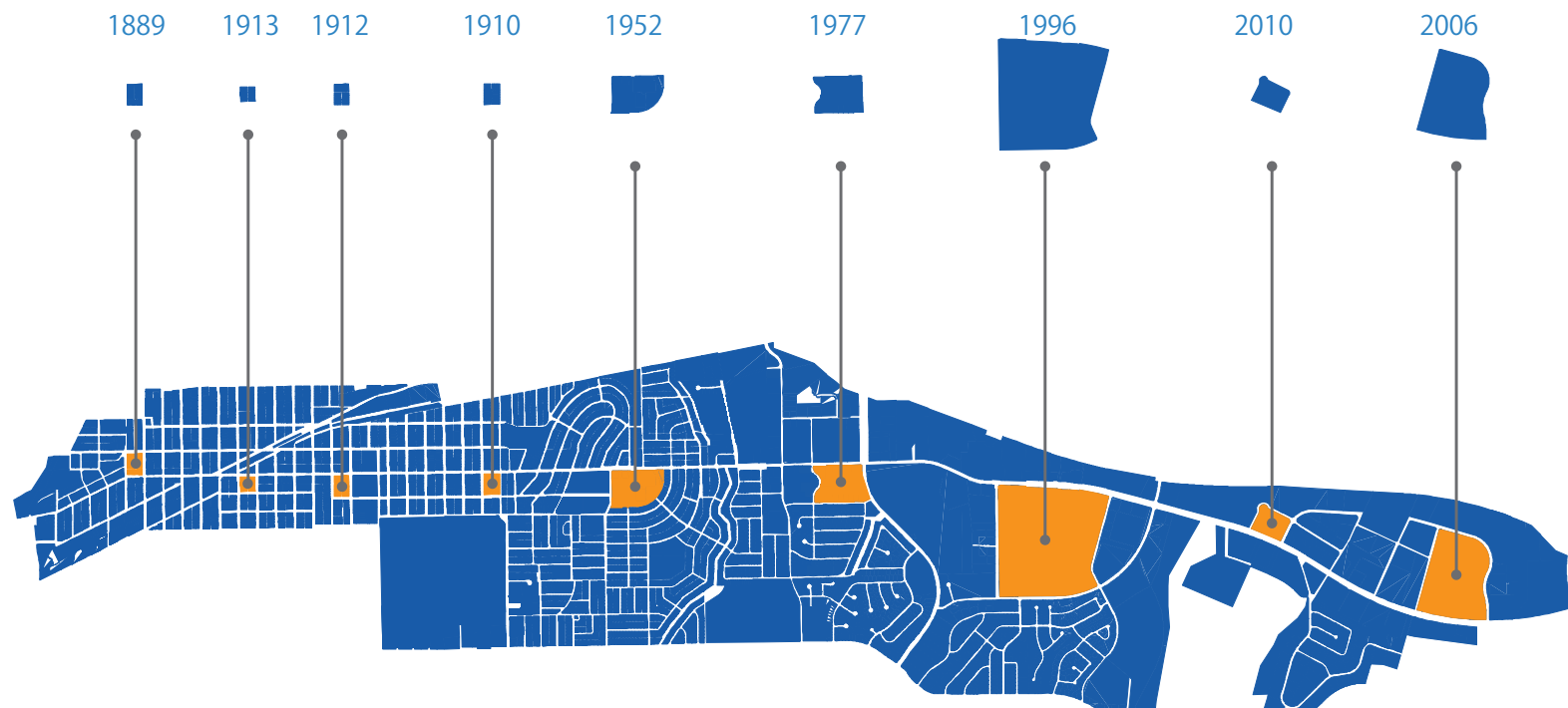
The general trend of Casper's urban form has been to larger and larger block sizes. Recent commercial development patterns, in particular, have quadrupled in size the farther you get from the historic Downtown. This pattern of development has led to a decrease in connectivity of the public street network and lack of hierarchy (**Figure 4-10**).

Connectivity standards do not apply to Casper's commercial, industrial, and mixed use areas. Smaller blocks use land more efficiently, promote walkable communities, allow for a variety of

transportation choices, improve access for emergency vehicles, and encourage the conservation of open space. Benefits to developers include less impervious surfaces, more street frontage, and dedication of local roads.

While cars can still be accommodated, greater emphasis should be put on pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. A mix of land uses should be encouraged in these smaller blocks to cluster jobs, stores, and homes in smaller mixed use land blocks, allowing greater flexibility for development options, and resulting in higher property values.

FIGURE 4-10. COMPARING THE EFFECT OF BLOCK SIZES ON SHAPING URBAN FORM AND STREET NETWORKS (BY YEAR PLATTED)



---

## FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

The Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use (FLU) Plan are the primary tools that Casper uses to guide growth and development to ensure efficiency in the provision of service and the protection of the community's health, safety, and welfare. Therefore it is important to continually evaluate what changes need to be made to ensure that the community grows the way it desires. Future development proposals and ordinances should be consistent with the categories and the FLU map (**Map 4-4**).

### What is a Future Land Use (FLU) Plan?

- The FLU map is an illustrative map that identifies the physical distribution of land uses.
- The FLU Map and FLU category descriptions, built off of and coupled with the principles and goals, help direct citywide development patterns and infrastructure improvements to achieve the overall community vision.
- General recommendations of the FLU Plan form the basis for zoning and municipal code regulations.

### How is a FLU Plan Developed?

The designation of FLU categories for areas within the existing city boundary primarily relied on existing conditions, zoning, and the existing street infrastructure. Lands that have been previously identified, through the community development process, for future land uses were taken into consideration. Areas with existing traditional neighborhood grids, and closer to the urban core, being more conducive to future higher density residential housing (through infill/retrofitting), were increased to Neighborhood 3. Existing areas with suburban street networks remained as Neighborhood 2.

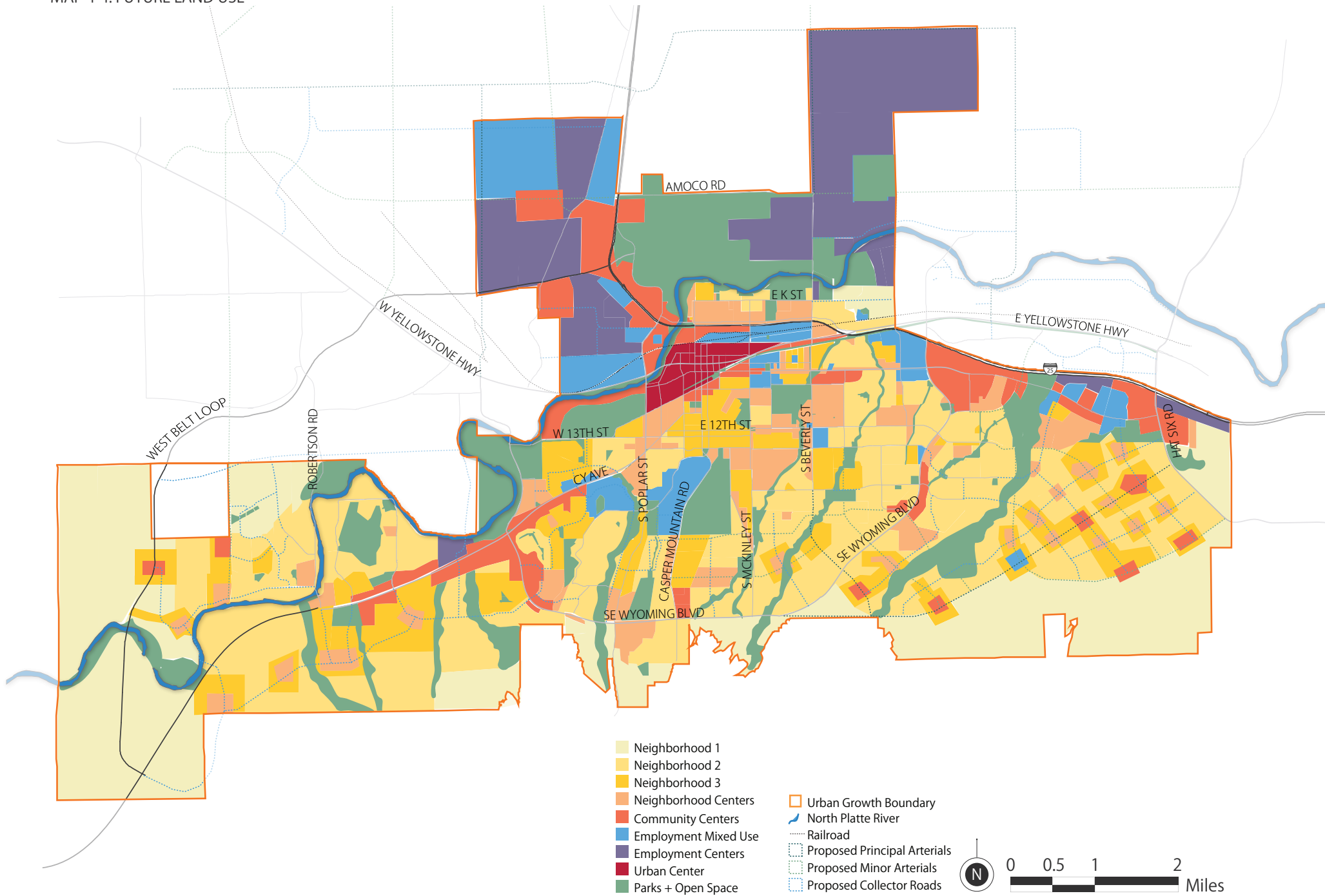
To further promote the strong Western values, small town feel, and individualistic areas; commercial, government, and cultural entities should be focused within Neighborhood and Community Centers surrounded by tight-knit residential development. While low density can be accommodated, where appropriate on the edges of the community, lower density should be encouraged within the County.

The UGB was developed based on a balance between discouraging sprawl and ensuring enough supply of land for future development, emphasized in Principle ECH2, Intentional Growth. Future land uses within the UGB but outside of the existing city limits are diagrammatic to showcase the theory behind future development and ideal development patterns that:

- Reflect the community's desire for intensities, densities, connections, and mix of land uses.
- Take into consideration constraints, such as:
  - floodplains and wetlands;
  - service area boundaries, such as Zone 3 public works and emergency services;
  - slopes and topography; and
  - growth boundaries between municipalities.
- Coordinate with the Natrona County Development Plan.
- Coordinate with the Major Streets Plan.

Future land use areas are subject to additional planning efforts.

MAP 4-4. FUTURE LAND USE



## ROOM TO GROW

Based on current population projections, it would take over 120 years to build out all remaining developable area between the existing City boundary and the UGB assuming the continuation of current development patterns and density. Within the planning horizon of this document (10 – 20 years), the City would only need to expand by 5 square miles based on historic development patterns. However, this plan highlights the need and desire for infill development to preserve Wyoming’s small town feel and wide open spaces; therefore, a target of less than 5 square miles should be utilized for future development within this timeframe.



## GOALS

The FLU Plan needs to:

- be flexible, adaptable, and aspirational;
- coordinate with transportation planning efforts;
- address potential future development; and
- serve as a guide to the City Council and to the Planning & Zoning Commission.

## Future Land Use Plan Categories

Development approvals, capital improvement programs, and implementation ordinances should all consider and be consistent with the FLU categories indicated on the FLU Map. The FLU categories are described on the following pages. These categories are guidelines and should inform any changes to the regulatory zoning categories.

### How to read the Future Land Use Categories

Land Use Category

Photo examples of typical land uses

Figure Ground: Typical pattern of development showing density, building types, building orientation, and set backs from the parcel line/street. These illustrations show what a typical plat may look like for these uses.

Neighborhood 2

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS	PRIMARY USES	RES. DENSITY	NON-RES. FAR	BUILDING HEIGHT
Single-family neighborhoods built on a traditional development pattern of individual homes on individual lots, served by a highly connected street pattern, and interspersed with schools, public facilities, walkable neighborhood amenities, parks and trails. This designation exists throughout most of the City. A neighborhood center and park and/or open space should be integrated within every neighborhood.	Conventional, detached, single-family units and twin homes	3 - 10 DU/Acre	NA	1 - 3 stories

4-34 | Generation Casper: Comprehensive Plan

General Characteristics: An overview of the general location, purpose, public features, and transportation connections for the category.

Primary Uses: Typical allowable uses within the category to be used as a guideline.

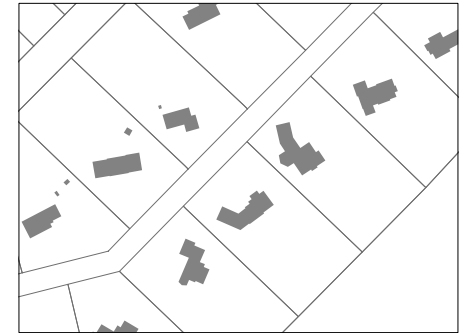
Typical Form: Range of residential density as expressed by dwelling units per acre (DU/Acre), non-residential density as expressed by Floor Area Ratio (FAR), and building heights to achieve the desired form.

## ZONING VS. LAND USE

Zoning is a regulatory tool that implements the FLU Plan through requirements, incentives, and enforcement. The FLU categories should be used for guidance, and should inform any changes to zoning categories. The FLU Map is not a zoning map and does not automatically change the zoning; the boundaries between land use designations are not rigid and can accommodate reasonable rezoning requests near the boundaries.

The City must ultimately provide developers with a regulatory framework for implementing the Comprehensive Plan and the FLU. The FLU Plan is codified through zoning. Specific changes to Casper's Municipal Code to implement the Comprehensive Plan are outlined in Chapter 5. The code includes, in part, zoning, building and construction, streets and public places, and health and safety.

## Neighborhood 1



### GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

Neighborhood 1 is the lowest density residential development and are primarily adjacent to open space and industrial uses on the fringe of the community. Density of development should be clustered to protect open space and view corridors. This land use surrounds much of the City and acts as a transition from rural County development to future City annexation areas. New neighborhood development outside of city limits should follow city standards. This use is not encouraged in mass across the community.

### PRIMARY USES

Single family homes, large-lot residential development, and other ancillary uses.

### RES. DENSITY

½ - 5 DU/  
Acre

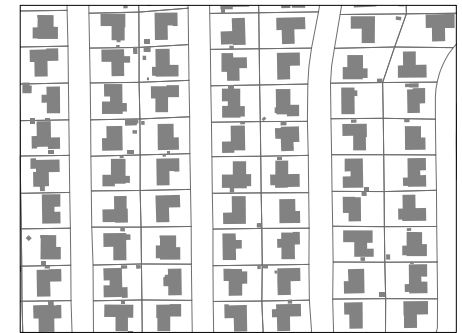
### NON-RES. FAR

NA

### BUILDING HEIGHT

1 - 2 Stories

## Neighborhood 2



GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS	PRIMARY USES	RES. DENSITY	NON-RES. FAR	BUILDING HEIGHT
<p>Single- and multifamily neighborhoods built on a traditional development pattern, served by a highly connected street pattern, and interspersed with schools, public facilities, walkable neighborhood amenities, parks and trails. This designation exists throughout most of the city. A neighborhood center and park and/or open space should be integrated within every neighborhood.</p>	<p>Conventional, detached, single-family units, twin homes, and multi-family up to 10 DUs/Acre.</p>	<p>3 - 10 DU/ Acre</p>	<p>NA</p>	<p>1 - 3 Stories</p>



## Neighborhood 3



### GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

Higher density neighborhoods near commercial centers and major corridors. Housing is built adjacent to sidewalks. To meet the needs of people in all stages of life, these neighborhoods are supported by a multimodal network, pocket parks, and public gathering spaces. Small offices, civic uses, and community uses (churches, daycare, etc.), that support the surrounding residential, would be acceptable, as necessary. Neighborhood 3 serves as a transition between Neighborhood 2 and Neighborhood Centers and Mixed Use areas.

### PRIMARY USES

Attached, single- and multifamily dwellings, including duplexes, townhomes, and other similar types of dwellings, at higher densities. Small format office and community uses.

### RES. DENSITY

8 - 30  
DU/Acre

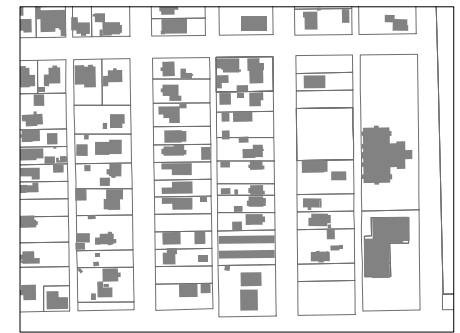
### NON-RES. FAR

2.0

### BUILDING HEIGHT

2 - 8 Stories

## Neighborhood Centers



### GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

Strategically located areas throughout Neighborhoods 2 and 3 that include a variety of housing types and provide services to their immediate neighborhood area. Neighborhood Centers typically consist of offices, small grocery, and/or restaurants. Size, scale, and intensity of use fit into the context of the neighborhood, and Centers are highly connected and pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly. Although primarily residential in character, other uses are focused at intersections and major corridors, to buffer single-family residential neighborhoods. Schools and other public facilities such as recreation centers are also located in Neighborhood Centers. Public facilities should connect to surrounding uses and major facilities should be buffered to residential uses by lower impact development.

### PRIMARY USES

Areas designated for low-scale commercial uses supporting general neighborhood needs with supporting multifamily residential.

### RES. DENSITY

5 - 15 DUs/  
Acre

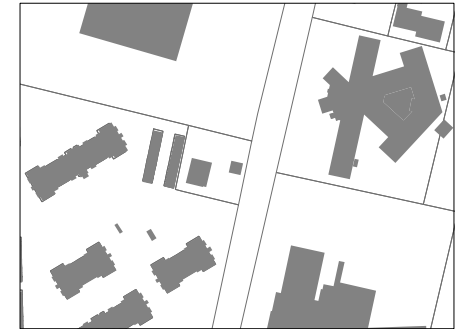
### NON-RES. FAR

.25 - 1.0

### BUILDING HEIGHT

1 - 3 Stories

## Community Centers



GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS	PRIMARY USES	RES. DENSITY	NON-RES. FAR	BUILDING HEIGHT
<p>Community Centers are a concentration of commercial activity serving a larger area than a neighborhood center but do not draw from the uniqueness of the Urban Centers. These areas may include some mix of higher density residential uses and multi-story buildings are encouraged. Transportation access balances all modes of traffic. Adjacent land uses would include denser residential land uses. Public art is integrated into design features and a high quality, context sensitive design is encouraged. Each Community Center should serve a particular purpose to the community and offer a distinctive sense of place.</p> <p>Existing and future Community Centers include Wyoming Boulevard and E Second Street; Platte River Commons; SW Wyoming Boulevard; CY Avenue; and additional sites per the FLU Map.</p>	<p>Areas designated for retail, trade, service uses, and offices with supporting multifamily residential.</p>	<p>10 - 30 DU/ Acre</p>	<p>.5-2.0</p>	<p>1-5 Stories</p>

## Employment Mixed Use Centers



### GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

Employment Mixed Use Centers include a variety of regional, job-creating, civic, and medical uses with integrated essential services. Building type may include free-standing, mid-rise, office, medical, and educational buildings in a unified campus setting with high-quality design. Large employers are supported but integrated with urban elements such as pedestrian connectivity and green space.

These areas are located near urban or community centers and highly connected with access to major arterials and transit systems. Residential may consist of live/work dwellings, loft housing, and other similar uses that may be ancillary to the employment as well as senior housing. Art is integrated with urban pocket parks to provide visual relief from the urban environment.

Existing and future Employment Mixed Use Centers include the Medical Campus at E Second Street and Conwell; Casper College Campus; and future growth areas at the eastern end of E Second Street.

A Maker's District or space to facilitate industrial and living spaces would be most appropriate in this land use, specifically east of the established downtown Casper.

### PRIMARY USES

Areas designated for civic, employment, or institutional space with limited supporting multifamily housing.

### RES. DENSITY

10 - 15 DU/  
Acre

### NON-RES. FAR

.5 - 2.5

### BUILDING HEIGHT

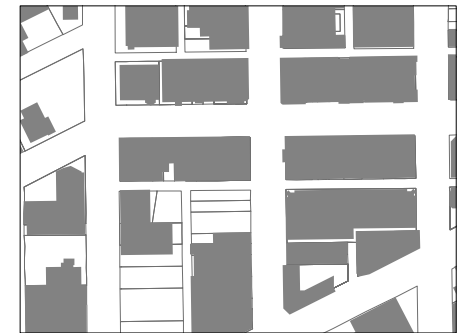
1-8 Stories

## Employment Centers



GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS	PRIMARY USES	RES. DENSITY	NON-RES. FAR	BUILDING HEIGHT
<p>Employment Centers are areas of high economic base located near regional transportation corridors, and include business parks, manufacturing facilities, distribution centers, and industrial uses. These areas support large industrial employers in more suburban development patterns, yet provide an intense workplace that serves both the City and the larger region. Focusing on the movement of goods, Employment Centers are connected to major arterials and state and regional highways. Generally, these areas are not compatible with residential uses.</p>	<p>Areas designated for industrial manufacturing and warehousing space.</p>	<p>NA</p>	<p>&lt;1.5</p>	<p>1 – 3 Stories</p>

## Urban Center



### GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

Downtown and the Old Yellowstone District is designated the only Urban Center in Casper and serves as a centrally-located regional attraction for shopping, entertainment, culture, arts, and public events, and offers a location for public gathering and community pride. A diversity of housing types at various price points are integrated with restaurants, bars, retail stores, offices, coffee shops, civic services, theatres, and museums. This area should include special urban improvements to make rich and enjoyable public spaces. Public art should be integrated into design features. Development should encourage preservation of character, redevelopment, and infill; and should include above-average standards for design. Renovation of older buildings is encouraged.

This area is highly connected to surrounding neighborhoods through a safe, welcoming, pedestrian-oriented environment. It maintains access to an efficient multi-modal transportation network. Development should include above average standards for design, intensity of development, and residential densities.

### PRIMARY USES

Retail, employment, entertainment, civic and residential uses in an urbanized, pedestrian-oriented environment.

### RES. DENSITY

15+ DU/  
Acre

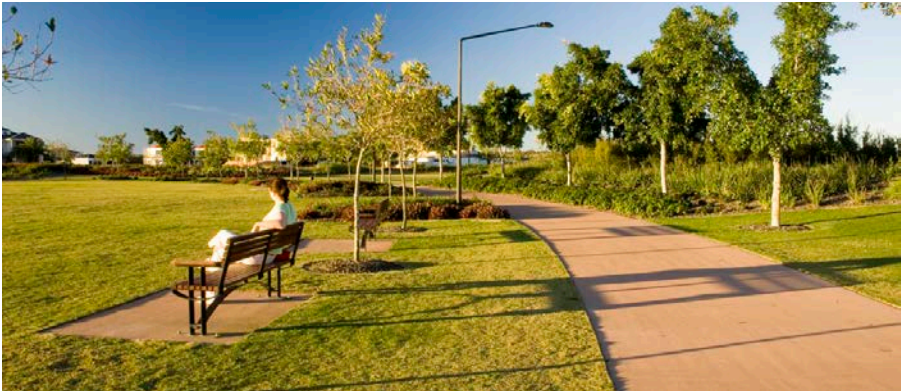
### NON-RES. FAR

2.0+

### BUILDING HEIGHT

3+ Stories

# Parks, Open Space, and Greenways



GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS	PRIMARY USES	RES. DENSITY	NON-RES. FAR	BUILDING HEIGHT
<p>Parks and open space provide visual and physical buffers from development, offer place for recreational enjoyment, and provide habitat for wildlife.</p> <p>Neighborhood parks should be evenly distributed throughout the community, and provide unique designs and amenities that add interest and contribute to neighborhood identity.</p> <p>Greenways will be interconnected to parks and the on-street bike system. The North Platte River will serve as the primary greenway system, with ancillary trails along creeks and drainages.</p>	<p>Land remaining undeveloped as natural open space, lands along drainageways identified as floodplain and lands identified and developed as greenways, trails, parks, and golf courses.</p>	<p>NA</p>	<p>&lt;.5 FAR</p>	<p>1 – 2 Stories</p>



McMURRY MEDICAL ARTS CENTER  
419 S. WASHINGTON



# CHAPTER 5: OUR PATH FORWARD

## OVERVIEW

For Generation Casper to be effective, it will take the work of the entire community. It will also need to be reviewed and updated periodically. This chapter outlines the roles of implementation, monitoring, and the strategic action plan.

## PRIORITIES

While this plan focuses on efforts to maintain and increase the quality of life in Casper, this plan can also serve as a strategy to reduce long term costs by managing growth, encouraging infill, and exploring new ways to finance infrastructure. Growth, while positive and encouraging, can create detrimental and long lasting impacts to city services when left unchecked. The land use plan addresses how growth should be achieved, and prioritizes implementation based on strategies. Generation Casper's implementation will

take the effort of not only the City, but organizations, developers, and the greater community.

While a seemingly overwhelming feat of strategies is outlined at the end of this document, it is important to remember that thoughtful change takes time. No community can implement all of the strategies set forth in their comprehensive plan overnight; therefore, the following priorities have been set as short-term actions to implement Generation Casper with minimal capital and personnel costs:

*A focus on reducing infrastructure and long term maintenance costs and impacts to city services through managed growth.*

*A focus on zoning code changes.*

*A focus on rethinking infrastructure financing.*

*A focus on working with partners to complete a City-wide economic development strategy for Casper.*

## ROLES OF IMPLEMENTATION

Elected officials, the Planning and Zoning Commission, the City, private developers and other government and non-governmental organizations all have specific roles in the implementation of Generation Casper; however, the participation of the community is equally important to the success of the plan. All decisions ultimately affect the community's vision; therefore, it is essential that the community remains invested throughout implementation of this Plan. Planning staff is responsible for:

- Reviewing development proposals against the Plan's vision, principles, goals, Future Land Use Plan, and Major Streets Plan guidance;
- Updating land development regulations, zoning codes, and other plan implementation measures for consistency with this Plan;
- Monitoring community perception of and satisfaction with this Plan; and
- Reviewing indicators, producing annual reports to illustrate progress, and working to integrate strategies into yearly budgets/ programs.

Elected officials are responsible for:

- Making decisions consistent with this Plan;
- Receiving and reviewing the annual reports presented by staff;
- Determining the strategies to be included in the implementation work plan for the following year;
- Allocating the necessary funding to implement the goals and strategies contained in this Plan; and
- Collaborating with other governmental and non-governmental entities.

The community is responsible for:

- Staying involved in local government and monitoring the decisions of elected officials, planning staff, and other governmental and quasi-governmental agencies; and
- Following the principles and goals of the Plan through design and implementation of development projects.

Government and non-governmental agencies and organizations are responsible for:

- Working with city planners and officials to find solutions to community issues that are inconsistent with this Plan and work together to implement the strategies;
- Assisting in gathering data to monitor indicators, analyzing the success of strategies, and studying the feasibility of proposed strategies;
- Integrating the goals of the Plan into their own strategic plans; and
- Working together to pool resources and find mutually-beneficial solutions toward community goals.

"We need a plan that is implementable, strategic, and phased over a period of time, with progress reports and citizen discussions every few years." - Public Comment



## MONITORING

Through each annual review, Casper can compare measurements within the Comprehensive Plan's principles and goals and will have the information needed to proactively review annual work plans to move Casper forward. A review of metrics (See **Table 5-1**) will serve as a check-in on progress towards achieving the vision and principles of Generation Casper. The monitoring plan consists of a set of quantitative and qualitative performance measures to monitor the effectiveness and performance.

Comprehensive Plan amendments may be necessary so that current issues continue to be addressed. The Planning and Zoning Commission is responsible for adopting plan amendments with ratification by City Council, following a public hearing.

Data from the National Citizen Survey (last completed in 2011) includes further insight on public preferences and perceptions. For example, the transportation section asks about ease of travel via various modes, the land use section inquires about the quality of development, the level of services to seniors is rated, and participation in parks and recreation opportunities and cultural/education programs is asked. Improving these ratings will also show progress.

### CRITERIA FOR METRICS

**Relevance:** Is the metric relevant and related to the vision of Generation Casper?

**Usability:** Will the metric be useful in evaluating the City's vision and lead to implementation over time?

**Reliability:** Is there a reliable source of data so that the metric can be consistently and accurately tracked over time?

**Affordability:** Can the metric be easily replicated over time without excessive costs?

TABLE 5-1. METRICS CRITERIA

METRIC	BASELINE	TARGET	DATA COLLECTED/ UPDATED	SOURCE
Average Residential Density on Developable Acres (housing units/ city area minus ROW and exempt lands)	900 units per square mile	1,000 units per square mile	Annually	City of Casper, US Census
Bicycle Infrastructure (bicycle lanes, pathways, trails and amenities)	Existing bicycle infrastructure system	Implement projects identified within the CATPBP within 10 years	Annually	City of Casper, MPO, Platte River Trails Trust, Volunteers
Connectivity/ Block Perimeters for New Development	Many areas >5,000 feet	< 2,000 feet in Neighborhood 2 and 3 and Urban/ Community/ Neighborhood Centers	Annually	City of Casper
Dedicated Funding for Multimodal Transportation	Current spending inconsistent and minimal	Increased % of annual capital budget to be dedicated to multimodal improvements	Annually	City of Casper
Development of Land Area	Much existing development occurs within greenfield areas or needs to be annexed	Increase the percentage of development within existing city boundaries as compared to greenfield development and annexations	5 Years	City of Casper
Educational Attainment (% of residents holding a bachelors degree or higher)	31.8%	Increase the baseline percentage through promotion of quality of life amenities, educational system and innovative industries.	Annually	ESRI, US Census
Fisheries (number and pounds per mile through city sections)	Blue Ribbon Fishery designation (830 - 1,960 pounds trout/ mile)	Maintain designation by maintaining and improving pounds of trout per mile	Annually	Wyoming Game and Fish
Housing/ Transportation Affordability	46%	45% of median income	Biannually	US Census
Job/ Housing Balance (ratio of total jobs to total households)	1.12	1.7	Biannually	Bureau of Labor and Statistics
Number of Conditional Use Permits Issued	Average 10.6 permits annually	Reduction in the number of conditional use permits issued	Annually	City of Casper
Number of Vehicular-Related Fatalities	12 (from 2011 - 2014)	Ongoing and continued reduction	During LRTP Updates	City of Casper, MPO
Streets Level of Service (LOS)	LOS as identified within the 2014 LRTP	Maintain or improve citywide LOS	During LRTP Updates	City of Casper, MPO
North Platte River Water Quality (pH and alkalinity)	pH = 8 - 8.5, alkalinity = 133 ppm	Maintain or improve	Annually (summarized)	City of Casper Water Department

Note: Metrics are anticipated to be added to or modified in the future, especially as new and improved data and sources become available.

# STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

The strategic action plan bridges the gap between vision and implementation, and is designed for adaptive implementation of Generation Casper. The strategic action plan includes a priority list of action items, estimated order of magnitude costs, responsibility, and possible financing/ funding options (See **Table 5-2**).

TABLE 5-2. GENERATION CASPER STRATEGIES

STRATEGY	RESPONSIBILITY/ PARTNERS	PRIORITY (*_ ***)	CAPITAL COSTS (\$-\$\$\$)	FUNDING MECHANISMS
Endless Character				
1. Link the Capital Improvement Plan with the Future Land Use (FLU) Plan.	Community Development	***	NA	NA
2. Work with the historic preservation groups to capitalize on the history of the area and buildings to bring people to the urban core and increase tourism. Build on the completed historic building inventory as recommended by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). Identify key properties, buildings and/or districts with redevelopment and/or rehabilitation potential for commercial or other uses.	Community Development, SHPO, Casper Historic Preservation Commission	*	\$\$	SHPO
3. Codify the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) to require development within the areas presented on the FLU Map.	Community Development	***	NA	NA
4. Limit development of large lot and estate development within city boundaries and limit annexation of new land with these characteristics.	Community Development	**	NA	NA
5. Evaluate code changes to encourage shared parking and parking maximums through a parking study. Track the reduction of parking per project from current standards to updated standards and guidelines. Create incentives for quality development such as the elimination of the transportation analysis requirement, reduction in fees, or quicker review process.	Community Development	***	NA	NA
6. Align the City of Casper Water and Sewer Policy with the UGB to encourage growth in appropriate locations.	Public Utilities, Community Development	***	NA	NA
7. Review and revise the sign code to limit future pole signs, and limit height and overall size along the I-25 Corridor.	Community Development	**	NA	NA

STRATEGY	RESPONSIBILITY/ PARTNERS	PRIORITY (*_ ***)	CAPITAL COSTS (\$-\$\$\$)	FUNDING MECHANISMS
Endless Character				
8. Provide development bonuses (e.g. parking reduction, etc.) for landscaping, trees, and physical enhancements.	City Manager, Community Development	*	\$	CIP
9. Initiate corridor improvement plans along major corridors to identify higher standards, such as form-based codes, increased landscaping/buffering standards, and compatibility with land uses. Prepare a corridor plan for SE Wyoming Boulevard to guide the growth and development along the corridor focusing on strategies to concentrate development at strategic locations, incorporate additional multi-family housing, transit opportunities, and improve aesthetics. Complete a corridor study along Second Street, Poplar Street, CY Avenue, and Wyoming Boulevard. Consider innovative intersections and designs as possible solutions.	Community Development, Streets and Traffic, WYDOT and Natrona County on SE Wyoming Blvd.	**	\$\$	MPO, WYDOT, HUD
10. Work with the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to implement recommendations of the 2012 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice to reduce impediments to fair housing. Complete further housing affordability studies.	Community Development, HUD	*	\$	HUD
11. Align the Zoning Code with the Future Land Use Plan by changing zoning category definitions and/or create new zoning district options and applying in the Zoning Map. Allow for the integration of residential development to create flexible housing options. Review floor area ratio (FAR), setbacks, parking, build to lines, building orientation, and incentivize the development of multifamily and mixed use housing. Begin to track and monitor FAR in coordination with the Natrona County Assessor.	Community Development	***	NA	NA
12. Adopt a city ordinance for city buildings and city properties to exemplify the principles and goals of the Comprehensive Plan including, but not limited to, landscaping, parking, art, and pedestrian and bicycle improvements.	Community Development	*	NA	NA

STRATEGY	RESPONSIBILITY/ PARTNERS	PRIORITY (*_***)	CAPITAL COSTS (\$-\$\$\$)	FUNDING MECHANISMS
Vibrant Urban Center				
13. Investigate re-zoning certain parcels for both higher-end and market-rate housing within the urban center.	Community Development	**	\$\$	private investment
14. Utilize tools to develop housing downtown, such as density bonuses, height minimums, limiting restricted housing, and other tools.	Community Development	**	\$	
15. Work with neighborhood groups to create design guidelines/standards for buildings and signage to preserve historical landmarks and architectural features, and ensure that new development complements the existing character.	Community Development, DDA, DCBA, Neighborhood Groups	*	NA	NA
16. Provide improved transportation options that funnel people to Casper's urban core (such as hotel shuttles, trolley, improved pathway system that creates a "hub", etc.). Increase the percentage of transportation funding within the urban core to allow for higher frequency transit service, improved transit stations/shelters, and the implementation of complete streets.	Community Development, MPO, Engineering, Streets and Traffic, CATC	*	\$\$\$	CIP, MPO, WYDOT, Federal Highways
17. Increase the cohesion of the urban center by reducing the number of large surface lots. Work with stakeholders to ensure a convenient and well-distributed parking supply by developing an overall parking strategy that includes promotion of existing parking and signage and review of existing strategies such as metered parking, parking maximums, scattered small surface parking lots (public), diagonal parking and potentially a new parking garage as demand increases. Garages could include secondary uses such as storage for housing or vertical greenhouses; incorporated into mixed use buildings; or offer direct access to retail shops and apartments.	Community Development, Streets and Traffic, City Manager	***	\$\$	CIP, One Cent
18. Improve walkability in the urban center, including fixing sidewalks, constructing ADA ramps, pedestrian refuges (islands) for crossing wide streets, traffic calming, sidewalk widening, etc.	Engineering, Streets and Traffic	**	\$\$	CIP, One Cent
19. Evaluate existing utility infrastructure within the urban center. Identify resources to help bring existing infrastructure up to standards. Combine infrastructure upgrades with other city projects to gain economies of scale, and maximize coordination efficiencies.	Community Development, Engineering, Streets and Traffic	***	\$\$\$	CIP, One Cent, private investment



STRATEGY	RESPONSIBILITY/ PARTNERS	PRIORITY (*_***)	CAPITAL COSTS (\$-\$\$\$)	FUNDING MECHANISMS
Vibrant Urban Center				
20. Work with the SHPO and complete a training on tax incentives and financial assistance that makes it easier to rehabilitate historic buildings.	Community Development, SHPO	*	\$	CIP, One Cent, SHPO
21. Work with property owners in the OYD to obtain Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) funds to redevelop rundown buildings. Explore the use of urban renewal tools to incentivize multifamily and mixed use development.	Community Development	**	\$	CDBG, private investment
22. Work with local partners on downtown revitalization efforts through the Main Street America technical assistance grant program funded by the Wyoming Business Council.	DCBA, DDA	*	\$	Wyoming Business Council

STRATEGY	RESPONSIBILITY/ PARTNERS	PRIORITY (*_***)	CAPITAL COSTS (\$-\$\$\$)	FUNDING MECHANISMS
Distinctive Regional Hub				
23. Partner with design and manufacturing companies to determine how additional medical innovations can be promoted and developed in Casper.	CAEDA	*	\$	
24. Continue WyoCity™ branding efforts to capitalize on the City's location to bring more people to Casper from surrounding communities and market Casper as a recreation destination.	City, CACVB	*	\$	CACVB
25. Plan for, and identify Free Wi-Fi zones (locations) at select locations throughout the City.	City, DDA, local business partners	*	\$\$	CIP, One Cent,
26. Work with CAEDA to promote/elevate the Casper Business Center at Platte River Commons.	CAEDA, Amoco Reuse Agreement Joint Powers Board (ARAJPB)	*	\$	CAEDA
27. Work with local stakeholders and the newly formed Workforce Advisory Group (WAG) to continue training opportunities and degree programs at Casper College and the University of Wyoming to grow energy programs; study the benefit with city infrastructure.	WAG, Casper College	*	NA	NA
28. Participate in the statewide lobby on alcohol licensure, taxing, and distribution process.	City Manager	*	\$	NA
29. Implement the strategies recommended in the Boomer Study, including implementing zoning code updates, creating consistent and improved sidewalks with tree lawns, and applying for AARP "Liveable Communities" Program.	Community Development, Engineering, Parks, Utilities, Streets and Traffic	***	\$\$	
30. Evaluate the potential of live/work housing for small scale manufacturing, makers, and artist shops within employment mixed use and employment centers to create affordable housing and mix of building types and spaces to accommodate differing trades and artisans.	Community Development, Building, Utilities	***	NA	NA
31. Update zoning code ordinance to allow for residential uses in light industrial areas in support of a Makers' District, specifically east of Downtown.	Community Development	***	NA	NA

STRATEGY	RESPONSIBILITY/ PARTNERS	PRIORITY (*_***)	CAPITAL COSTS (\$-\$\$\$)	FUNDING MECHANISMS
Enhanced Connectivity				
32. Implement the Major Streets Plan.	Community Development, Streets and Traffic	***	\$\$\$	CIP, WYDOT
33. Adopt typical cross sections and associated right-of-way widths for new and existing roadways which incorporate all users. Cross sections should be determined by roadway type and include separate cross sections for the urban center.	Community Development, Streets and Traffic	**	NA	NA
34. Consider speed limits in the design of new and existing streets to determine if section 10.24 of the Code is necessary and to determine the implications of new roads not being included.	Community Development, Streets and Traffic	**	NA	NA
35. Evaluate the feasibility of installing Intelligent Transportation Systems throughout the traffic signal system and install High Intensity Activated CrossWALK (HAWK) beacons at key intersections to increase pedestrian safety.	Community Development, Streets and Traffic	**	\$\$\$	CIP
36. Implement Casper's Stormwater Master Plan including creation or improvement of stormwater detention areas and conveyance, implementation of a stormwater utility, and creation of requirement for developments to avoid streams (channelized or natural).	Community Development, Utilities	**	\$\$\$	CIP
37. Adopt standards to evaluate the level of safety/efficiency provided in the transportation network. The components to be evaluated could include:  Transit: Availability of shelters/quality of shelters, additional bus shelters, connectivity of sidewalks to/from transit stops, proximity of non-residential uses, number of patrons utilizing the service, operating hours and headways for service and lighting.  Pedestrian: Pedestrian level of service, number of accidents, availability of street lights, width of sidewalks, and/or proximity of sidewalks to the street.  Bicycle: Bike level of service, number of accidents, availability of street lights, width/availability of bike lanes, width/availability of bike buffers, and/or types of bike facilities (i.e. on-street, separate trails, etc.).	Community Development, Streets and Traffic, CATC, MPO	***	NA	NA

STRATEGY	RESPONSIBILITY/ PARTNERS	PRIORITY (*_ ***)	CAPITAL COSTS (\$-\$\$\$)	FUNDING MECHANISMS
Enhanced Connectivity				
<p>38. Implement reasonable impact fees on building permits for the adequate construction of future roadways. Utilize fees for specific infrastructure associated with auto and non-auto modes. During the establishment of an impact fee/mobility fee system, direct a portion of the funds towards redevelopment infrastructure, or reduce the fees for redevelopment projects to encourage infill development.</p>	Community Development, Streets and Traffic, Building, City Manager	***	NA	NA
<p>39. Establish roadway spacing standards for arterial, collector, and local roadways and enforce them through new development applications. Change the minimum signal spacing to 1/2 mile on arterial, and possibly collector, roadways to maintain the flow of traffic on these roadways.</p> <p>Evaluate section 10.32 of the Code and the arterial/collector roadway network. Determine if "through streets" serve the purpose of a roadway network that appropriately accommodates access and mobility needs. Modify section 16.16.060.A of the Code to ensure the design of local streets shall discourage through-traffic, while still providing interconnectivity, and as much as practical, include appurtenances and devices to encourage traffic calming.</p> <p>Add guidelines for arterial roadways in Section 16.16.060.A of the Code, similar to the collector guidelines.</p>	Community Development, Streets and Traffic	***	NA	NA
<p>40. Establish standards for block sizes, block configuration, parcel interconnection, and access limitations.</p> <p>Consider adding language in section 16.16.060.F.2.b.iv of the Code that states, "when a development has frontage on more than one street, access shall be granted on the lowest classified roadway first. Granting of access on higher priority roads can be granted by the City Engineer if a second access is warranted or desired by the City."</p> <p>Make driveway spacing standards in section 16.16.060 of the code more stringent for collector and arterial Roadways (i.e. 330' for collectors and 660' for Arterials).</p>	Community Development, Streets and Traffic	***	NA	NA
<p>41. Adopt a standard for access to new residential neighborhoods requiring multiple access points to collectors or arterials.</p>	Community Development, Streets and Traffic	***	NA	NA

STRATEGY	RESPONSIBILITY/ PARTNERS	PRIORITY (*_ ***)	CAPITAL COSTS (\$-\$\$\$)	FUNDING MECHANISMS
Enhanced Connectivity				
42. Evaluate feasible solutions to connect areas that are currently cut off from the rest of Casper by large transportation barriers. In general, improve transportation corridors with overpasses, underpasses, sidepaths, trails, pedestrian refuges/islands for the safe crossing of bikes and pedestrians. Evaluate the feasibility of overpasses/underpasses and/or separate pedestrian bridges over I-25 and/or the railroad to connect neighborhoods in North Casper to the rest of the City. Extend the walkability of downtown north of First Street thereby making A Street the psychological downtown boundary. Work with WYDOT on making First Street more pedestrian-friendly.	Community Development, Streets and Traffic, WYDOT	***	NA	NA
43. Evaluate the pedestrian/bike network around schools and identify areas for improvement to eliminate mid-block crossings of pedestrians. Section 10.76 of the Code may need revisions based on the results of the evaluation.	Community Development, Streets and Traffic, Natrona County	*	NA	NA
44. Evaluate the feasibility of alternative transit options, such as bike share or electric bikes.	MPO, CATC	*	NA	NA
45. Adopt a complete streets ordinance/policy and identify where various users are permitted to travel. During this process, Section 10.64 of the Code will need to be re-evaluated and possibly eliminated.	Community Development, Streets and Traffic	***	NA	NA
46. Evaluate section 10.28 of the Code to determine if additional locations should be restricted from right-turns on red, for the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists.	Community Development, Streets and Traffic	***	NA	NA
47. Create a toolbox of traffic calming solutions and apply them to the high traffic residential streets.	Community Development, Streets and Traffic	**	NA	NA
48. Draft a new Code section that addresses bicycle and pedestrian facilities. This section should consider when and where sidewalks/bicycle lanes should be provided, the associated construction standards, placement of stormwater grates, etc. that would impact bike lanes, requirements for developers to provide connections from their property to the nearest/adjacent sidewalk/trail, requirements for bike parking by use, examples of complete street cross sections, and the consideration for solutions such as protected intersections, bike boxes, buffered bike lanes with all new development or roadway improvements, and at a minimum, detached walks on arterials and collectors.	Community Development, Streets and Traffic	***	NA	NA

STRATEGY	RESPONSIBILITY/ PARTNERS	PRIORITY (*_ ***)	CAPITAL COSTS (\$-\$\$\$)	FUNDING MECHANISMS
Enhanced Connectivity				
49. Modify section 16.16.020.K of the Code to state that there can be a maximum of four legs per intersection, "unless a roundabout can safely be provided and an alternative standard is approved by City Council."	Community Development, Streets and Traffic	***	NA	NA
50. Review Traffic Study requirements in Section 16.20.080 of the Casper Municipal Code. Define how the "adjacent street system" is to be defined as it related to assessment of potential transportation impacts, specify how to determine impacts to pedestrians, include an assessment of bicycle or transit service/facilities, improve connectivity and access management requirements, and include traffic counts for pedestrians, bicyclists and bus riders.	Community Development, Streets and Traffic	***	NA	NA
51. Update landscaping standards to frame and enhance development by including an updated species list and maintenance and replacement procedures.	Community Development, Streets and Traffic, Building	*	NA	NA
52. Consolidate maintenance repairs and construction projects to prevent traffic delays and improve value added i.e. add a bicycle lane when resurfacing a street.	Streets and Traffic	**	NA	NA
53. Identify transit routes that travel through high volume intersections and determine the feasibility of incorporating queue jumps and/or transit signal priority.	Community Development, Streets and Traffic, MPO	**	\$\$	MPO

STRATEGY	RESPONSIBILITY/ PARTNERS	PRIORITY (*_ ***)	CAPITAL COSTS (\$-\$\$\$)	FUNDING MECHANISMS
Enhanced Connectivity				
54. Codify and implement an impact fee structure to create a funding source for the development of additional parks, open space, conservation easements, and public amenities.	Community Development, Parks, City Manager	***	NA	NA
55. Revise the Park and Open Space Improvement Plan to a priority list for existing investments. Plan for the development of new parks and open space, as based on community needs, and promote Casper’s outstanding recreation system. Create signage at major destinations advertising the trail networks and key destinations for visitors.	Community Development, Parks, Recreation	**	\$	
56. Acquire and maintain open space within the 100-year floodplain.	Community Development, Parks	*	\$\$\$	
57. Improve pedestrian and bicycle trail connections (e.g. a pedestrian bridge from North Casper to the Platte River Parkway on the north side of the River, and connect the west side of Casper to the trail system).	Parks, Streets and Traffic, Natrona County, Platte River Trails Trust	**	\$\$	
58. Explore opportunities to reuse surplus school property as it may become available for community and neighborhood facilities.	Natrona County	*	\$\$\$	
59. Identify funding sources to support the expansion of arts programs.	Art and Culture Partners, Library	*	\$	
60. Require art as part of development proposals and offer development incentives (FAR premiums, density bonuses, etc.) for public art provisions.	Community Development, Building	*	NA	NA
61. Create a Riverfront District Master Plan with a focus on arts, music, community and gathering and initiate a marketing plan.	Community Development, Parks, Platte River Trails Trust	**	\$	
62. Develop a North Platte River Plan that turns focus towards the River by identifying redevelopment opportunities that focus on making the River the showcase of Casper with unique urban form, residential development, economic incentives, publicly utilized, etc.	Community Development, Parks, Platte River Trails Trust	*	\$	

STRATEGY	RESPONSIBILITY/ PARTNERS	PRIORITY (*_***)	CAPITAL COSTS (\$-\$\$\$)	FUNDING MECHANISMS
Undiscovered Quality of Life & Embracing the River				
63. Initiate an appropriate level of use study for recreational use within and along the River. Monitor use and development to ensure that activity along the River does not negatively impact river health.	Community Development, Parks, Platte River Trails Trust, Federal Agency review	*	\$	
64. Encode an overlay buffer of 50' from the North Platte River and significant drainages as a sensitive area where development undergoes special review.	Community Development	*	NA	NA
65. Identify funding sources to support and expand recreation programs.	Parks, Recreation	**	NA	NA
66. Complete a feasibility study for additional programming at Hogadon and other Casper Mountain facilities.	Parks, Recreation	*	NA	NA
67. Map wildlife corridors and understand overall habitat and migration corridors in the Casper Area. The location and provision of open space encourages wildlife habitat linkages and movement, and should be preserved and enhanced as the city grows to minimize wildlife conflicts with human use and fragmentation of habitat.	State Wildlife Agencies, Interest Groups	**		







City of Casper  
Community Development Department

Casper City Hall  
200 N. David Street, Room 205  
Casper, WY 82601

[www.casperwy.gov](http://www.casperwy.gov)