

To: Laramie Council and Staff

From: Danielle Campbell

Date: November 12, 2020

Subject: Support Letter

Matthew,

We're glad to learn that the City of Laramie is moving forward with code reforms intended to enable a wider range of housing choices in the community. Such reforms are among the strategies we've recommended through our work with the City and broader community to find practical strategies to address local housing needs in Laramie.

Across the west parking requirements are a major barrier revitalization and affordability in communities. An important part of the work we've done with the City and its partners, is to understand barriers to development of the different housing types needed to address local demand. Code requirements that make it difficult to build diverse "missing middle" housing types in good locations have been a consistent issue of discussion. The proposed parking changes will lessen the pressure on developers to provide parking, allowing more buildable square footage which will encourage developers to provide attainable product in Laramie.

Based on our work in the community, and our analysis of these amendments, we believe they fulfill three important needs: they reflect what we heard from the community, they will make it easier for the private sector to build the housing types that address current supply issues, and relatedly, they will therefore help to affordability of housing and commercial development in Laramie. We provide additional insight into each of these below.

Community-driven Reform

Easing parking requirements will allow for a greater variety of high-quality building types that will match the historic neighborhood quality of Laramie. In Laramie there was a variety of recent residential product built surrounded by vast parking lots. Throughout our community process a key finding was this style of product was not desired. However, parking requirements establishes this product as one of the most feasible options for developers. Providing these parking amendments will encourage development that supports the vision and design of the community.

Expanding Supply and Diversity of Housing

The supply of residential and commercial development is greatly needed especially around the downtown area. However, parking prohibits developers to create projects that can support attainable products. Through our experience of pro-forma testing proved a clear barrier between parking and desired products. Allowing these zoning code amendments will decrease this barrier and support the needed demand. Moreover, opens the availability to build on lots that are currently underutilized and vacant due to parking restrictions.



Improving Affordability

Laramie's housing cost is at an all-time high and becoming a huge barrier to retain or attract young professional. Current parking requirements make building low cost housing such as studios, one-bedroom apartments, and single-family homes financially infeasible. By easing parking requirements developers will be able to utilize and capitalize on lot capacity. This allows to not only increase available sites to build upon in Laramie but allows to lower sale and rental prices that developers require to build housing due to financial restrictions in the market.

We hope this feedback is useful as the City of Laramie considers these policy reforms. We believe they are right in line with the direction we've been hearing from the community through our work on the Housing Strategy. Please let us know if we can be of any additional assistance.

Sincerely,

Danielle Campbell

Danielle Campbell

Project Manager