



June, 25, 2020



To whom it may concern;

The Community Builders team, in collaboration with Cascadia Partners, strongly supports the zoning code amendments under consideration for the DC Zoning District. The proposed changes to height and parking requirements will be a major boon to Downtown Laramie and will support the city's goals for a vital and walkable downtown. Based on analysis of these amendments, we can state with confidence that they will increase the feasibility, affordability, and urban form of development in Downtown Laramie.

### **Feasibility**

Easing parking requirements and increasing maximum height will allow for a greater variety of high-quality building types that match the largely 2-story character of downtown. This is especially important for the Downtown real estate market which has seen relatively little activity in recent decades. Our experience working in towns across the intermountain west has taught us that expanding the range of building types, heights, and parking configurations possible, leads to greater developer interest. In fact, real estate pro-forma testing done during this project showed a clear relationship between parking, height, and the feasibility of downtown construction.

### **Affordability**

Laramie lacks the "entry level" housing needed to attract and retain young professionals. Current parking requirements and height limits in the DC zone make building low cost housing such as studios and one-bedroom apartments financially infeasible. By easing parking requirements and increasing maximum height, developers will be able to fit more units in downtown development projects thereby reducing the overall rental rate they need to charge.

### **Urban Form**

Current height and parking requirements make it impossible to build the types of buildings that make Downtown Laramie attractive. These historic structures, many of which were built with no off-street parking, add to the vitality and walkable nature of Downtown Laramie. Removing parking requirements for residential construction will allow new buildings to be built that better match the character of existing structures. Moreover, the relatively small lots that exist throughout much of Downtown Laramie make providing off-street parking difficult or impossible given space constraints. Given the cost of shared municipal parking structures or on-site underground parking, reducing parking requirements is the cost-effective way to encourage more walkable urban form.

Sincerely,

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