

IMPLEMENTATION

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CHAPTER

The Laramie Comprehensive Plan lays out the vision for the community and how it should develop and prosper over the next 20 years. This plan serves as a foundation and blueprint for managing future growth and sustaining quality of life in the community. With the adoption of this plan comes an inherent expectation to take the most important step in the planning process - plan implementation. This is where the vision set forth by the community is turned into reality through day-to-day policy decisions and implementation of specific programs, projects, and strategies.

Introduction

Plan implementation is the most important step of this plan development process. It requires the efforts and commitment of the City's leadership, including the Mayor, City Council, Planning Commission, and City Staff. It is also necessary for there to be close coordination and a joint commitment on behalf of the Wyoming Department of Transportation (WYDOT), Albany County, University of Wyoming (UW), WyoTech, Laramie County Community College (LCCC), Laramie Main Street, Laramie Economic Development Corporation (LEDC), Downtown Development Advisory (DDA), Urban System Advisory Committee (USAC), and other organizations and individuals to serve as champions of the plan. In and of itself, the plan is capable of accomplishing very little. Rather, community leaders and citizens must assume ownership in the plan to see that it is successfully implemented. Successful plan implementation includes:

- ◆ **Commitment** on behalf of the City's leadership;
- ◆ **Credit** given to the plan for its role in guiding decisions and its leads to success;
- ◆ **Involvement** of citizens as the beneficiaries of the plan and its successful implementation;
- ◆ **Visibility** of the plan and its use in the decision-making processes of the community;
- ◆ **Integration** of the plan's recommendations into other business practices and programs of the City, County, and other government entities;

- ♦ **Coordination** among the City and County as well as the array of stakeholders that will play a role in the future of the community and the surrounding area;
- ♦ **Periodic amendment** to ensure that the goals, objectives, and recommended actions reflect the changing community needs and attitudes.

Each chapter of this plan outlines the specific issues that must be addressed in order to achieve what is envisioned by community residents. In response to these issues are a number of recommended actions that relate to regulatory changes, programmatic initiatives, and capital improvement projects. While these recommendations are comprehensive and intended to be accomplished over the 20-year horizon of this plan, near-term strategies must be put in place to take the first step toward successful implementation. These strategies must then be prioritized, with decisions made by the community as to the sequencing of implementation activities, the capacity to fulfill the initiative, and the ability to obligate the necessary funding. Those deemed as top priorities and viewed as feasible in the short-term are placed in a five-year action plan. In addition to implementing these general strategies, the policies set forth by the plan text and maps may be used by City staff, the City's boards and commissions, and local property owners and businesses in making decisions related to the physical and economic development of the community.

Therefore, the purpose of this chapter is to integrate the different elements of the plan together in such a way as to provide a clear path for sound decision-making. This chapter outlines the organizational structure necessary to implement the plan, including methods of implementation, roles and responsibilities, specific implementation strategies, and sets forth a five-year action plan. Additionally this plan element establishes a process for annual and periodic evaluation and appraisal of the plan.

Methods and Responsibility for Implementation

This chapter lays out a framework for implementation. This framework alone, however, will not ensure that the vision and policies contained within this plan will be implemented. To be successful, any implementation strategy must utilize this plan on a daily basis and must be integrated into ongoing governmental practices and programs. For instance, the recommendations must be referenced often and widely used to make decisions pertaining to the timing and availability of infrastructure improvements, City-initiated and requested voluntary annexation(s), proposed development/redevelopment applications, zone change requests, expansion of public facilities, services, and programs; and annual capital budgeting, among other considerations.

Each staff person, board, commission, and committee of the City has an obligation to use this plan in guiding their decisions and priorities. As such, the plan has been designed to be thorough, with the intent to guide the overall growth and economic development of the community. The plan is intended to guide staff in all departments with their efforts to manage their individual operations and activities, annual work programs, and capital improvement projects. To ensure the plan's use throughout all municipal departments, the overall community vision and recommendations in each element of the plan should be referenced in other related studies and projects. Components of the plan, including the

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Future Land Use Plan, Major Street Plan, and Parks and Recreation Plan should be used during the development review process, as well as during any decision-making related to investments in community infrastructure and the provision of municipal services.

Methods of implementation include the following:

- ♦ **Development Ordinances:** Development ordinances are perhaps the most important means of implementing this plan. As new development and/or redevelopment occurs throughout the community the City's regulations and ordinances must ensure that the quality and character of development is reflective of the community's overall vision. One of the initial steps in plan implementation will involve revising the City's ordinances, including zoning, subdivision, sign, and landscaping ordinances, to ensure their consistency with the overall vision.
- ♦ **Policy Decisions:** Policies, both direct and indirect, should be implemented through decisions made by City Staff, the Planning Commission, and City Council related to development proposals, zone change requests, site plan review, annexation, utility extensions, and infrastructure improvements. As new developments are being proposed within the City limits and the planning jurisdiction, City staff and the Commission and Council have the opportunity to work with developers and land owners to ensure the type and pattern of development reflects the desired character of the community and policies identified in this plan. The type and character of development should be consistent with those identified on the Future Land Use Plan, the pattern of development should be within the defined Urban Growth Area, needed rights-of-way should be secured as shown on the Major Street Plan, opportunities for parks and recreation areas should be coordinated with the Parks and Recreation System Plan, and priorities for infrastructure investment should be in accordance with the utility improvement plans.
- ♦ **Capital Improvements:** A Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is a five-year plan that identifies budgeted capital improvements including street infrastructure; water, wastewater, and drainage needs; and public buildings and services. Identifying and budgeting for major capital improvements will be essential in implementing the plan. The Urban Growth chapter recommends areas of focus for needed infrastructure improvements that should be prioritized and programmed into the City's CIP. Policy decisions regarding these capital projects must include criteria with respect to the project's compliance with the policies and objectives of this plan.
- ♦ **Special Projects, Programs, and Initiatives:** Special projects and/or initiatives are an important tool in implementing the plan. These projects may include conducting further studies to identify solutions to small area problems, preparing detailed or specific area plans, or initiating specific programs. Funding for special projects and initiatives may come from a variety of sources including City funds, economic development funds, and/or grants and public/private partnerships. Coordinating the Comprehensive Plan with the annual budget process will be important in implementing and securing funds for special projects and initiatives.

Implementation requires the City to take specific actions designed to achieve the goals of the plan. Action takes a number of forms including plans and studies, programs, regulation, fiscal expenditures, leadership, policy decisions, and intergovernmental

cooperation. The most challenging are those that require regulating land or spending scarce resources to pay for improvements. Regulations are important, because the private sector makes the decision to create land uses, and the City needs a way of ensuring that the development meets their expectations as to its quality, contribution to community character, and its economic sustainability. The costs of building and maintaining infrastructure can guide growth to some degree, but the challenge and hence, the value and expectation of this plan is to stay ahead of the demands.

Plan Administration

Administration of the plan will involve efforts and commitment of the entire community. Staff, Planning Commission, City Council, and other committees and organizations will all have essential roles in implementing the plan and ensuring its success.

Education and Training

The first step in the implementation process is for the City or consultant to conduct individual training workshops with the Planning Commission, City Council, County Planning and Zoning Commission, County Commissioners, City department managers, and together, other key groups such as LEDC, USAC, and the DDAB. These are the groups who collectively, will be responsible for successful implementation of this plan. It is of utmost importance that there is collaboration, coordination, and communication among these groups and that all understand their individual roles in managing the community's future. The training course should include the following:

- ♦ A discussion of the individual roles and responsibilities of the respective board, committee, or group.
- ♦ A thorough overview of the entire Comprehensive Plan, with emphasis on the segments that relate to each individual group.
- ♦ Implementation tasking and priority setting, which would allow the group to establish their first year and five year agendas.
- ♦ Facilitation of a mock meeting in which use of the plan and its policies and recommendations is necessary.
- ♦ Closing questions and answers session.

Role Definition

As the elected body, the City Council must assume the lead role in the implementation of the plan. Their responsibilities are to decide and establish the priorities and timeframes by which each action will be initiated and completed. They must also manage the coordination among the various groups responsible for carrying out the recommendations of this plan. As the governing body, they are also responsible for consideration of the funding commitments that will be required, whether it involves capital improvements, new facilities and expanded services, additional staffing, more studies, or programmatic changes such as the City's development codes and procedures.

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An outline of the overall hierarchy and roles is as follows:

City Council

- ◆ Establish the overall priorities and timeframes by which each action of the plan will be initiated and completed.
- ◆ Consider and establish funding commitments that will be required.
- ◆ Offer final approval of projects/activities and associated costs during the budget process, keeping in mind the need for consistency with the plan and its policies.
- ◆ Provide direction to the Planning Commission and staff.

Planning Commission

- ◆ Recommend to City Council an annual program of actions to be implemented, including general directions as to the timeframes and departments/agencies responsible.
- ◆ Prepare an Annual Progress Report for submittal and presentation to the Mayor and City Council (see Bi-annual Amendment Process below for more detail).
- ◆ Ensure decisions and recommendations presented to the City Council are reflective of the plan objectives and recommendations. This relates particularly to decisions for subdivision approval, site plan review, zone change requests, ordinance amendments, and annexation.
- ◆ Ensure that the plan impacts the decisions and actions by all stakeholders, including the Planning Commission, City Council and all other interest groups.

City Departments and Plan Administrator

All departments of the City are responsible for implementation of this plan, specifically as it relates to their roles within the organization. Many of the individual departments were involved in the plan development process and are, therefore, familiar with its content and outcomes. They must now be brought into the process as implementers to ensure their budgets and annual work programs are in adherence with the plan.

The Community Development Director shall be the Plan Administrator and will play a lead role, coordinating among the various City departments. The roles of the Plan Administrator should include:

- ◆ Serve as the staff person for each of the implementing boards, commissions, and committees. Act as a liaison for other committees and groups throughout the community, attending their meetings and giving presentations and implementation status reports.
- ◆ Facilitate and manage an interdepartmental plan implementation committee, who will meet, at a minimum, on a monthly basis to coordinate projects and ensure consistency with the plan.
- ◆ Maintain a list of amendments (text or map related) that have been suggested by City staff, the Implementation Board, and others. These amendments should be compiled into a list and then prepared for the Bi-annual amendment process.
- ◆ Review Bi-annual suggested amendments and prepare a report that outlines which suggested amendments should be included in the final Bi-annual amendment packet.

Each department, staff person, board, commission, and committee of the City has an obligation to use this plan in guiding their decisions and priorities.

Intergovernmental cooperation refers to an arrangement among governmental jurisdictions and/or non-governmental public agencies to communicate visions and coordinate plans, policies, and programs to address and resolve issues of mutual interest. Coordination may be as simple as regularly sharing information or it may involve entering into intergovernmental agreements to share resources such as buildings, facilities and equipment, technology, databases, staff, and revenue. In some locales, it has evolved into consolidation of services or independent planning functions.

Plan Amendments

The Laramie Comprehensive Plan is meant to be a flexible document allowing for change over time. Shifts in political, economic, physical, and social conditions and other unforeseen circumstances may influence and change the priorities and fiscal responsibilities of the community. As the City grows, new issues will emerge while others will no longer be relevant. Some action statements will be found impracticable or outdated, while other plausible solutions will emerge. To ensure the plan continues to reflect the overall vision of the community and remains relevant and resourceful over time, the plan must be revisited on a regular basis to ensure plan elements are relevant, and the recommended strategies, policies, and action statements are still appropriate.

Revisions to the comprehensive plan are two-fold, with minor amendments to the plan occurring bi-annually and more significant modifications and updates occurring every five years. Minor plan amendments could include revisions to certain elements of the plan as a result of the adoption of another plan or changes to the land use and growth plans, major street plan, and/or parks and recreation system plan. Major updates will involve reviewing the base conditions and growth trends; re-evaluating the goals, policies, and recommendations in the plan; and formulating new ones as necessary.

Before any amendment to the plan outside the city limits, but within the 1-mile planning area is approved by the city, Albany County shall concur with the amendment pursuant to Wyoming Statutes, title 15.

Annual Progress Report

A progress report should be prepared by the Planning Commission, with the assistance of the Community Development Director, and presented to the Mayor and City Council. This ensures that the plan is consistently reviewed, and allows for any identified need for bi-annual minor plan updates/revisions, such as changes to future land use designations, implementation of actions, and review of plan consistency with ordinances and regulations.

The Annual Progress Report should include:

- ◆ Significant actions and accomplishments during the past year including the status of implementation for each programmed task of the Comprehensive Plan.
- ◆ Obstacles or problems in the implementation of the plan, including those encountered in administering the land use, transportation, growth, and parks and recreation system plans, as well as any other policies of the plan.
- ◆ Proposed amendments that have come forward during the course of the year, which may include revisions to the individual plans, or other recommendations, policies, or text changes.
- ◆ Recommendations for needed actions, programs, and procedures to be developed and implemented in the coming year, including a recommendation of projects to be including in the City's CIP and programs/projects to be funded.

Bi-annual Amendment Process

Plan amendments should occur on a bi-annual basis, allowing for proposed amendments to be considered concurrently so that the cumulative effect may be understood. When

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considering a plan amendment the City should ensure the proposed amendment is compatible with the goals and policies set forth in the plan as it relates to land use compatibility, infrastructure availability, and conservation of environmentally sensitive areas. Careful consideration should be given to ensure that site specific plan changes do not negatively impact adjacent areas and uses, or detract from the overall vision and character of the area. Factors that should be considered in making a decision regarding a plan amendment include:

- ◆ Compatibility with the surrounding area and goals and policies set forth in the plan;
- ◆ Adherence with the urban growth plan;
- ◆ Impacts on infrastructure provisions including water, wastewater, and the transportation network;
- ◆ Impact on the City's ability to provide and fund services with the proposed amendment;
- ◆ Impact on environmentally sensitive and natural areas; and,
- ◆ Whether the proposed amendment contributes to the overall vision of the plan and character of the community.

5 Year Update/Evaluation and Appraisal Report

An evaluation and appraisal report should be prepared every five years. This report should be prepared by the Community Development Director, with input from various City departments, Planning Commission, and other boards and commissions. The report involves evaluating the existing plan and assessing how successful it has been in implementing the community's vision and goals. The purpose of the report is to identify the success and shortcomings of the plan, look at what has changed over the past five years, and make recommendations on how the plan could be modified to reflect those changes. The report should review baseline conditions and assumptions including trends and growth indicators, and it should evaluate implementation potential including the success and shortcomings of the goals, policies, and recommendations. The result of the evaluation report will be a revised comprehensive plan, including identification of new or revised information that may result in an updated vision, policies, goals, and recommendations.

The report should identify and evaluate the following:

1. Summary of plan amendments and major actions undertaken over the past 5 years.
2. Major issues in the community and how these issues have changed over time.
3. Changes in the assumptions, trends, and base studies data including the following:
 - ◆ The rate at which growth and development is occurring relative to the projections put forward in the plan;
 - ◆ Shifts in demographics and other growth trends;
 - ◆ The area of urban land that is designated and zoned and its capacity to meet projected demands and needs;
 - ◆ City-wide attitudes and whether changes (if any) necessitate amendments to the vision and mission statements, and goals of the plan;
 - ◆ Other changes in the political, social, economic, or environmental conditions that dictate a need for amendments.
4. Ability of the plan to continue to successfully implement the community's vision. The following should be evaluated and revised:

- ◆ Individual statements or sections of the plan must be reviewed and rewritten to ensure that the plan provides sufficient information and direction to achieve the intended outcome.
- ◆ Conflicts between goals and policies that have been discovered in the implementation and administration of the plan must be identified and resolved.
- ◆ The action agenda should be reviewed and major actions accomplished should be identified. Those not accomplished by the specified time frame should be re-evaluated to ensure their relevancy and/or revised appropriately.
- ◆ As conditions change over time, re-evaluate the timeframes for implementing the individual actions of the plan. Some actions may emerge as a higher priority given new or changed circumstances, while others may become less important to achieving the vision and development objectives of the City.
- ◆ Based upon organizational, programmatic, and procedural factors, as well as the status of previously assigned tasks, the implementation task assignments must be reviewed and altered to ensure timely accomplishment of the plan's recommended actions.
- ◆ Changes in laws, procedures, and missions may impact the ability of the community to achieve its goals. The review must assess these changes and their impacts on the success of implementation and, subsequently, suggest revisions to strategies.

Intergovernmental Coordination

Increasingly, jurisdictions are acknowledging that issues are regional, rather than local, in nature. Watersheds, ecosystems, economic conditions, land use, transportation patterns, housing, and the effects of growth and change are issues that cross the boundaries of the community and impact not only Laramie, but also Albany County and the larger region. As a result, the economic health of Laramie and the County are innately interconnected, meaning that the success of one is largely dependent on and, thus, responsible for the success of the other. In addition to issues crossing boundaries, intergovernmental cooperation is becoming more important as each jurisdiction struggles with increased service demands and limited resources. Coordinating among the different entities allows for the provision of quality services more efficiently and effectively.

Perhaps of greatest importance to the effective implementation of this plan is recognition that all levels of government, local and regional agencies and organizations, and private sector entities must participate. In many cases, implementation does not observe governmental boundaries. Therefore, good stewardship of the aquifer within the City, for instance, may not be effective without sound land management and enforcement of protective measures throughout the influence area, which extends well beyond City boundaries. Also, as the economic center of the County, it is in the best interests of both the City and County to effectively manage development around the periphery of the community to maximize the efficient use of scarce resources in the provision of facilities and services. Peripheral growth that is scattered throughout the planning jurisdiction and beyond will have grave impacts on the City and its ability to provide adequate services and meet the expectations of its constituency, which is also the constituency of the County.

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Strong intergovernmental cooperation between Laramie, Albany County and other organizations will be instrumental in effective implementation of this plan, and the ultimate success of the community and region as a whole. Many of the different governmental agencies share common interests and goals, including enhancing economic development, providing for quality housing, services and infrastructure needs. These goals can be more appropriately and effectively achieved through mutual cooperation and coordination between the various jurisdictions and agencies.

There is residential development occurring outside the City's limits. The type and quality of this development not only impacts the character of the City but also impacts its resources, as residents living in these unincorporated areas come into the City for their shopping and service needs. The County, on the other hand, with increased development occurring in the unincorporated areas, will be increasingly responsible for providing infrastructure, police and fire protection, and other services to developing areas. Instead of trying to meet the increasing demands placed on each governmental agency based on its own evaluation of services, rather, mutual decisions need to be made as to adequate provision and cost efficiency of these services. Successful culmination of intergovernmental cooperation is a mutual plan for the one-mile planning jurisdiction. The plan must be highly coordinated, with an implementation program that preserves the western character of Laramie and Albany County, and most importantly, protects the public health, safety, and welfare of its' residents.

Recommended Strategies for Intergovernmental Cooperation

- ◆ Undertake jointly between the City and County an area plan for the one-mile planning jurisdiction, which would include a future land use plan and specific recommendations such as ordinance additions and changes for the County to better manage development.
- ◆ Increase protection of the aquifer protection zone, ridgeline protection, preservation of open views, and adherence to the City's growth plan.
- ◆ City and County cooperation in relation to the development of the Comprehensive Plan and all other Planning documents.
- ◆ Amend the City and County regulations for the planning jurisdiction, including the procedures of review and advisory input on behalf of both bodies.
- ◆ Coordinate and formalize with the University of Wyoming and WyoTech to review and come to a mutual understanding as to their campus plans and coordinated improvements. Additionally, work with the University to ensure that their plan for future development does not encroach upon the aquifer protection zone, which may be handled through density bonuses or other innovative development approaches.
- ◆ Close coordination with rural utility providers so as not to deter the ability of the City and County to manage their pattern of development, protect their resources, and ensure sound fiscal management practices.

Implementation Strategies

Implementation is the most important part of the planning process because it is the point at which the Comprehensive Plan executes the transition from policy into practice. Goals,

Benefits of a Unified Development Code

- Procedural consistency and a single source of standards and definitions.
- Simplifies the amendment process helping to ensure consistency among the different codes.
- More user-friendly for the development, real estate, and consultant communities.
- Better cross-referencing to ensure that all related provisions are taken into account pertaining to any particular proposal.
- Administration of the codes is consolidated into one section simplifying the roles and responsibilities of each party.
- Applications and procedures for all development processes are clearly defined.
- It allows application of subdivision requirements to "zoning-only" projects, such as driveway access and site circulation review for a single-user site plan when subdivision is not required.
- It improves the ability to track the total development process.

objectives, and policies that are visionary in the plan are transformed into detailed programs, projects, regulations, and other implementing actions.

Each of the plan elements includes a series of recommendations or initiatives that are intended to be realized in the future. *Table 12.1 Implementation Strategies* provides a summary listing of the specific tasks that have been identified for priority attention. It is essential that this table is completed as the first step toward implementation. Following completion, this table should be advanced to the Planning Commission and City Council for their review, consideration, and acceptance. At this point, the appointed Plan Administrator (Community Development Director) will initiate the first year work program.

This section outlines the key strategies for implementation of this plan. These strategies highlight the primary steps to be taken by the City, in many cases, in coordination or acting jointly with another jurisdiction, organization, or agency. As general strategies, the individual action steps must be identified by the Plan Administrator (Community Development Director) in concert with the Planning Commission, which will be subsequently reviewed and considered for acceptance by the City Council.

Unified Land Development Code

Currently, the City has separate zoning and subdivision codes. It is therefore, advisable for the City to combine these into a single, unified document that would consist of multiple parts or sections, including administrative procedures, zoning, subdivision regulations and improvement standards. This task may be accomplished over a period of several budget years. In the following paragraphs the specific elements as they relate to the implementation of this plan are addressed.

Zoning Ordinance

Amendment of the zoning ordinance is imperative. The current ordinance is pyramidal meaning that uses are cumulatively permitted in each district. This acts against the preservation of neighborhood character since it allows incompatible development. It is advised to replace the use-based scheme with districts based on character, which permits flexibility and provides better protection of valued features. The need is for a complete revision of the zoning and subdivision regulations into a unified development code.

Rewriting the existing subdivision, zoning and other development standards contained in Laramie Municipal Code will undoubtedly be complex, change administrative operations and impact property owners, builders and developers. Adoption of the unified development code is a critical component in implementing this comprehensive plan and improving effectiveness and efficiency of the planning and development review process. In order to carry the momentum of this comprehensive plan and start implementing its initiative as soon as possible, it is recommended that the zoning ordinance be re-written and adopted in multiple phases.

Phase I key amendments include:

1. **Eliminating of pyramidal zoning**, revise permissible and conditional uses, establish overlay districts and establish new zoning districts for the University of Wyoming Campus and the Historic Downtown.
2. An increase in the required **open space**, based upon the character of the district. For instance, a Suburban district will require a greater open space ratio within residential developments and landscape surface ratio within nonresidential districts.
3. Requirements for **variable bufferyard requirements** between and, in some instances, within, developments based upon the character (defined by density or intensity) of abutting uses.
4. Permit **clustering and planned developments** as a matter of right, with density incentives for the provision of greater amounts of open space.
5. Establishment of a **streamlined review and approval process** that expedites compliant applications. With clearly outlined performance standards the process should be eased with greater reliance on a well-written development code and more administrative authority.
6. Incorporation of **resource standards** for protection of the aquifer, ridgelines, valued open space, and natural features. A two-tier approach is recommended. First is to identify the resources and establish protection levels in terms of the amount of open space required for protection. Second is required clustering, with a density bonus to offset the loss in development yield. These strategies ensure protection is consistently achieved without penalizing the subdivider. Because there is a density incentive associated with clustering, the subdivider is rewarded rather than penalized for preserving a resource. It is more efficient to combine all resource protection into performance standards with a site capacity calculation that alerts landowners, purchasers, and developers as to the impact the natural resources have on the site. A site capacity calculation links the resources to the maximum density permitted on the site.
7. Enhancing **site standards** such as landscaping, screening, lighting, signage and building form and architectural guidelines. More intensive site landscaping is necessary to improve the aesthetic value of properties, more specifically major entryways along Grand Avenue, 3rd Street, Highway 130, Highway 230 and I-80. Better screening of parking lots, loading and storage areas, and ground- and building-mounted mechanical equipment will improve the quality appearance of development.
8. Creating commercial and multi-family **development review process**.
9. **Infill development standards** are needed to ensure new development is of comparable scale and character to the existing surrounding development. This is particularly important to the growth management plan since infilling is a priority versus growth in the fringe and peripheral areas where there are limited or no services and infrastructure available.

Future phases of zoning regulations:

1. **Adopt sign regulations** including specification as to the placement, size, and height of signs, as well as the type and number of signs. For multi-tenant centers, in particular, a cohesive sign plan is important.
2. Base the districts on **community character** that are linked to the land use plan. Key features include:
 - a. Urban Commercial district to preserve the building form in downtown.
 - b. Urban University district to encourage more intensive, mixed use development in campus settings around both UW and WyoTech.
 - c. Conservation district with required clustering around the periphery of the community to maximize open space, preserve views, and particularly, to protect resources (refer to *Figure 7.9, Urban Growth Areas*).
 - d. Suburban Commercial district with applicable performance standards to ensure compatibility within a neighborhood environment.
 - e. Distinguishing Suburban, Auto-Urban, and Urban Residential districts to better reflect their unique character, i.e. the tree area versus the newer neighborhoods.
 - f. Auto-Urban Multiple-Family district to locate them in appropriate areas, with adequate standards for buffering and compatibility.
 - g. Neighborhood conservation districts so as not to make the existing neighborhoods nonconforming. This district ensures that no land becomes non-conforming and can eliminate the non-conforming status of developments that were developed prior to an amended zoning ordinance.
3. Adopt inclusionary zoning consisting of an incentive program for constructing affordable housing.

Subdivision Ordinance

The current subdivision process focuses simply on whether the plan meets the standards and is properly engineered. However, it does not easily handle clustered development nor does it directly allow for the protection of resources. Development throughout the community is typical, meaning that it maximizes the site without regard to preservation of open space, protection of sensitive lands, or enhancement of community character. Therefore, specific standards and review criteria are needed, particularly ensuring conformance with this plan. Newly developed code should integrate subdivision and land development standards with zoning, by way of a unified development code.

Formalizing elements of the land development application process doesn't mean that the process becomes longer or more burdensome. Indeed, the use of established procedures and checklists often provides clarity to all participants thus, streamlining the application process. The application process and regulations can also be streamlined, or incentives

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built into the process to enable an applicant to get through the process easily. The City Council has to be clear in their delineation of standards, where approval is to be granted to the Planning Commission or staff, as many land development decisions are not legislative in character, and do not require review by the City Council—provided clear standards exist. By providing standards for development, the City can tell an applicant, “this is what we want to see. If you want to develop this with less open space, (for example) you must go through these additional review steps.” In other words, you give a benefit to applicants who meet the preferred standards.

The timeliness of subdivision review is essential for the economic development of the community. Improvements to the submittal and review procedures are as follows:

1. Clearly spell out the **application submittal requirements**.
2. Publish a **schedule of submittal** dates for various boards and commissions. Submittal requirements should be adhered to, and applications not accepted until all information is received by staff.
3. **Create checklists** for staff and applicant use so there is a clear understanding of what needs to be submitted for an application to be complete and to proceed in the process.
4. Correct differences between practices and policies - the two should be consistent.
5. Form an **interdepartmental review process** for projects. This would clarify responsibilities and allow coordinated staff comments to the applicant for corrections or problems. This could be incorporated into a pre-application conference process whereby the applicant is able to attend and participate.
6. Eliminate the requirement for subdivision improvement agreements. Instead, establish standard public improvement procedures that would be enforced through conditional approval of subdivisions.

Infrastructure Standards

Current subdivision and zoning ordinances are not linked and consistent in terms of when public improvements are required and how the requirements are enforced. The unified development code would provide consolidation and consistent enforcement of public improvements, particularly off-site.

Key amendments should include the following:

1. Clearly identifying **when off-site improvements** are required with subdivisions and commercial developments and to what standards. The level of improvements should be based on sound planning and engineering principals such as traffic volumes, levels of service, and projected water and wastewater demands.
2. **Reducing rights-of-way** width for local residential streets.
3. Establishing **consistent enforcement standards** for subdivisions and commercial developments.
4. Eliminating the need for platting for the sole purpose of requiring off-site improvements.

Growth Management

The plan for growth management, while including some areas already within the City limits, primarily deals with undeveloped land within the one-mile planning jurisdiction. Implementation of this plan is essential if the City is to forge fiscally responsible future development, preserve its freestanding character, protect views and open space, secure the protection of sensitive resources such as the aquifer and ridgelines, and control its own destiny. There are two strategies for accomplishing the urban growth plan, as follows:

1. The preferred approach is for the City and County to collaborate to prepare an area plan for the one-mile planning jurisdiction. This plan should largely mirror the City's urban growth plan (refer to *Map 7.2, Growth Areas*). Subsequently, the County's development regulations should be amended to adhere to the county's comprehensive plan to enact improved growth management practices in this area.
2. A less preferred approach but nonetheless a strategy that would help the City achieve its growth management objectives is for the City to annex the areas where there is likely to be growth pressure by reason of the availability of access and adequate infrastructure. This strategy may involve service agreements with property owners so as not to commit itself to costly infrastructure improvements until the appropriate time. A minimum improved level of service may be provided as an incentive for those property owners.

Other growth management strategies are as follows:

1. Upon determination of the above approach, amend the zoning of the areas reflected in *Map 7.2, Growth Areas*.
2. Conduct analysis to clearly delineate and map the protection areas, with strengthened ordinance provisions to prevent their encroachment.
3. Diligently implement and commit the requisite funding for the 2006 Water Management Plan, 1986 Sanitary Sewer Master Plan, 2004 Turner Tract Sanitary Sewer Study, and the 2005 Reynolds Street Sanitary Sewer Study. Furthermore, incorporate these focus area plans into coordinated city-wide master plans.
4. Identify and promote the areas where there are infill development opportunities. This may involve the improvement of infrastructure as an incentive for new development to occur, or possible other economic incentives.
5. Consider the use of an impact fee system within the city whereby the level of fees is commensurate with the availability and adequacy of existing infrastructure. In this way tax revenues and user fees do not bear the entire cost of new, peripheral growth.
6. Identify target redevelopment areas along with financing plans and partnership strategies.

City-County Planning Coordination

Intergovernmental cooperation between Laramie and Albany County is essential for successful implementation of many aspects of this plan. While there is sound cooperation in some areas there is a limited coordination of land use planning. While the City is much different than the unincorporated county, both have common interest in more fiscally responsible growth in joint support of the agenda and initiatives of LEDC. Development that occurs within the appropriate areas of the City is of significant value to the City and its residents, which equally benefits the County. More intensive development is better served within the City so as not to burden the County's resources for the provision of infrastructure and services.

Failure to mutually plan and regulate has already had consequences, which will continue without improved coordination. Sprawling development with limited management as to its character and appearance harms the image of the community for prospective business, and their managers and employees. Therefore, a common set of goals and planning is needed to improve the success of this plan in its implementation.

Coordination strategies include:

1. Conduct annual joint meetings between the City and County Planning Commissions with a goal of outlining mutual development objectives, policies, and review and decision criteria.
2. Conduct joint meetings between the City Council and the County Board of Commissioners.
3. Establish City-County subdivision development standards rural and urban growth areas for subdivisions within the one-mile jurisdictional boundary.

Capital Improvement and Public Facilities Plans

Closely related to the ability of the City to manage its growth is the adequacy of its existing infrastructure and its ability to maintain it. The City has fallen behind on the maintenance of existing facilities and does not have sufficient revenues to meet industry standards for repair and rehabilitation. This serves to strengthen the cause for managing growth to ensure that new development occurs within the areas where infrastructure and services already exist.

Capital improvement strategies include:

1. Develop a 5-year capital improvements program that is tied to the urban growth plan, parks and trails plan, and other plans thereby allowing the City to assess its long-term infrastructure needs, and to stage improvements concurrent with growth.
2. Prepare financially constrained infrastructure improvement plans. Limited resources should be directed to those projects that are absolutely essential, and within the defined growth areas.

3. Use CDBG and other grant funds to improve the infrastructure in West Laramie and the areas surrounding downtown to bring them to acceptable standards.
4. In coordination with the urban growth plan, direct new development only to areas where there is existing adequate street and utility infrastructure, or where they may be readily extended without financial burden on the City.
5. Adopt utility extension policies that strictly adhere to the growth policies of this plan.
6. Use density bonuses to provide incentives for development clustering, which minimizes the needs for infrastructure since there are fewer roads and utility lines needed thus, maximizing their efficiency. Extreme forms of clustering, such as conservation (75 percent open space) and preservation (90 percent open space) development should be used within the transitional countryside areas provided they have on-site utilities.

Parks, Recreation and Trails

The City should prepare an updated master plan that consolidates parks, recreational facilities, and trails. The master plan should include the following:

1. An introduction outlining the plan development process, parks and recreation planning principles, and key community characteristics.
2. Develop a Parks, Trails and Recreation Plan that provides detailed inventory and prioritization of goals and objectives for the future and existing parks system.
3. Goals and objectives for the following areas:
 - a. Environmental conservation, preservation and sensitive area planning;
 - b. Balanced and accessible parks and recreation opportunities;
 - c. Renovation and enhancement of existing park areas and facilities;
 - d. Ongoing management and maintenance;
 - e. Development and facility improvement standards;
 - f. Intergovernmental coordination and private sector collaboration;
 - g. Community linkages and connections;
 - h. Appreciation and preservation of cultural resources; and,
 - i. Program management and funding.
4. A detailed inventory of all public, semi-public, and private areas, equipment, facilities, and improvements. Development of an accurate GIS parcel map and a corresponding database is advisable.
5. Facility standards for the amount of acreage needed for the current and projected future population, along with standards for major facilities (fields, courts, pools, etc.) and individual improvements. National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) standards recommend between six and ten acres per 1,000 persons, which may be

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tailored for the community based upon user preferences, participation trends, and the availability of other public lands.

6. An assessment of need that essentially quantifies the added acreage needed to comply with the established standards. At the same time, comparison of the facility equipment standards against the inventory will identify gaps and needs generally and within each individual park.
7. A detailed implementation program outlining priorities, timing of projects and improvements, and sources of funds. A detailed five-year capital improvement program (CIP) should be assembled based upon the collected data, which may then contribute to the citywide CIP and capital budgeting process.

As a component of the plan, trail standards, development criteria, and an improvement program should be developed. This will provide the nexus for preparation of a parkland dedication ordinance and fee in-lieu ordinance. The ordinance should require of new development an amount of dedicated parkland on the basis of 6.25 acres per 1,000 persons, which is the minimum National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) standard. The fee amount in lieu of land development must be equivalent, including a cost basis for improved land (fully improved with streets and utilities) along with park facility improvements consistent with that recommended by the standards of the master plan.

Revitalization and Enhancement Plans

This comprehensive plan identifies several key strategies for improving the built environment of the City. Revitalization and enhancement plans provide the opportunity for the City and stakeholders to develop common ideas how to beautify distressed neighborhoods and commercial corridors. The purpose of such plans is to ensure that when the City, property owners, business owners or developers of new sites construct improvements, the improvements are compatible and consistent. The plans can also be used to obtain urban renewal loans or grants, establish redevelopment districts and fund annual capital improvements. Enhancing commercial corridors and neighborhoods often leads to re-investment by the private industry into the area, stimulating economic development benefiting the entire community.

Revitalization and enhancement plans should include:

1. Street and sidewalk improvements.
2. Streetscape such as trees, benches, planters, delineated crosswalks and medians.
3. On-site landscaping and parking standards.
4. Façade improvements.
5. Lighting and public signage.
6. Funding options and programs.

Architectural and Subdivision Design Guidelines

Design guidelines are often adopted as complementary regulations to the minimum standards required by zoning or subdivision ordinances. Design guidelines are illustrative booklets that suggest and recommend specific designs for site layouts, buildings, lighting, landscaping and signage rather than establish mandated standards. Also, design guidelines are typically flexible and provide options.

Upon completion and adoption of the unified development code, the City should adopt various design guidelines. The key components should be based on Chapter 3 of this Plan. The guidelines should be developed through a collaborative planning process with stakeholders and adopted by the City Council.

Affordable Housing and Housing Rehabilitation Programs

Closely tied to economic development is the City's ability to offer suitable housing to the employees of new businesses. The occupancy is extremely high, the range of housing types and price ranges is limited, and the quality of older homes is declining. Therefore, the City must act to protect, stabilize, and strengthen neighborhood environments while revitalizing "tired" neighborhoods and rehabilitating the older housing stock.

Key strategies to improve the housing are:

1. In the development of the amended development code, incorporate the following:
 - a. A housing palette, which will allow a range of different housing types while preserving neighborhood character.
 - b. Provisions for inclusionary housing, which is accomplished through a housing bonus program whereby a subdivider may achieve greater density in exchange for providing affordable units.
 - c. An average lot formula to allow different floor plans and sizes of units within the same development.
 - d. Achieve a balance between regulation and development. Excessive regulation can cost development large amounts of money which ultimately passes on to the customer. In order to achieve affordable housing this balance must be sought.
2. Provide a range of different development options within each community character district, with density bonuses for planned and clustered options. This serves as an incentive for this development type while, at the same time, achieving other City objectives.
3. Have a code specialist perform a critique of the zoning ordinance to identify impedances, such as minimum lot sizes and maximum densities, required infrastructure improvements, lengthy review/approval processes, added fees, etc.

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4. Promote infill development. Infill development typically is less costly due to the fact that infrastructure is already in place. These cost savings can help make development more affordable without sacrificing quality.

Economic Development

The City and County jointly participate in the local economic development program. As outlined in the Partners in Progress initiative, the City must focus attention on attractive businesses and new investment that offers higher paying jobs and increased benefits. It is therefore, essential for the City to enable its economic development program to be successful through efficient review and approval of development projects.

Economic development strategies include:

1. In the initial phase of preparing a unified development code, focus attention on rewriting the standards of submission and the procedural aspects of development review and approval. The integration of performance standards will allow better development outcomes with less reliance on the review process since they are clearly articulated in the development regulations.
2. Focus attention on downtown development, including attraction of a significant anchor to the area. There are opportunities for reuse and redevelopment on the northern and southern fringes that may be ripe for public-private partnership. Continued development on the edges of the community should be curtailed in favor of infill development, building reuse, and redevelopment.
3. Permit increased density and mixed use in and immediately around Downtown while preserving the urban form (minimum two story building heights, zero setbacks, use of comparable materials and designs, etc.). With increased intensity will come a need for more parking so the City must be prepared to partner with the private sector to provide structured parking.
4. Improve tourism promotion through enhanced gateways at each of the interstate entrances, aesthetic enhancement along I-80, and tourism destination signage directing passers-by to Downtown, Territorial Park, and other local destinations and attractions. Use of an AM broadcast to alert drivers of events and sites to see in Laramie would also be beneficial. Also, promote more weekend events to solicit overnight stays and thus, increased spending.
5. Promote areas like the future Air Port Business Park, Turner Tract and other future development areas in an effort to bring business to the community.

Table 12.1 Implementation Strategies

Element/ Action Statement	Budget Timeframe			Agency Responsible
	0-2 Years	3-5 Years	5+ Years	
<i>New Ordinances, Regulations and Amendments</i>				
Adopt of a Unified Development Code Including Phase 1 Zoning Ordinance Amendments, Subdivision Ordinance Amendments and Development Standards	x			CDD/PWD
Perform Impact Fee Analysis for Parks and Trails Improvement	x			CDD / P&R
Sign Regulations		x		CDD
City-Wide Rezoning and Adoption of New Zoning Classifications			x	CDD
One Mile Jurisdictional Boundary Ordinances or Development Standards	x			CDD
Economic Incentive Ordinance		x		CDD/LEDC
Subdivision Design Guidelines		x		CDD/PWD
Architectural Design Guidelines		x		CDD
Adopt of Historic Downtown Design Guidelines	x			CDD/Laramie Mainstreet
Revise and Adopt Engineering Design Standards	x			PWD/CDD
<i>Capital Projects</i>				
West Laramie Street Improvements	x			PWD
Water Line Replacements/Repairs and schedule	Continuous	Continuous	Continuous	PWD
Sewer Line Replacements/Repairs and schedule	Continuous	Continuous	Continuous	PWD
Landfill Improvements (DEQ Upgrade, Recycling, Biomass Generation)		x		PWD
Capital Improvement Plans	Continuous	Continuous	Continuous	CDD/P&R/ PWD
Formation of a Housing Authority and Housing Rehabilitation Program		x		CDD
Implementation of 2007 Viaduct Study	x			CDD/PWD
Implementation of the 2006 Water Management Plan	Continuous	Continuous	Continuous	PWD
Implementation of the 1986 Sanitary Sewer Master Plan	Continuous	Continuous	Continuous	PWD
Agency Key: CC-City Council PC-Planning Commission, PWD-Public Works Department, CDD-Community Development Department, LEDC – Laramie Economic Development Corporation, USAC-Urban System Advisory Committee, FD – Fire Department, DDA-Downtown Development Authority, P&R–Parks and Recreation, WYDOT – Wyoming Department of Transportation, etc.				

Element/ Action Statement	Budget Timeframe			Agency Responsible
	0-2 Years	3-5 Years	5+ Years	
Implementation of the 2004 Turner Tract Sanitary Sewer Study	Continuous	Continuous	Continuous	PWD
Implementation Of The 2005 Reynolds Street Sanitary Sewer Study	Continuous	Continuous	Continuous	PWD
Implementation of the 2007 Laramie Plan	Continuous	Continuous	Continuous	CDD
Aquifer Protection Plan Recommendations	x			CDD/PWD
Implementation of the West Laramie Revitalization Plan			x	CDD/PWD/WYDOT/FD
City Parks and Recreation Plan	x			CDD/P&R
City Transportation Plan	x			CDD/PWD/WYDOT
Implementation of Gateway Plans for East Grand Avenue, South 3 rd Street, North 3 rd Street and Curtis Street			x	CDD/PWD/WYDOT
<i>Programmatic Initiatives</i>				
Annual Progress Reports to Planning Commission and City Council	Continuous	Continuous	Continuous	CDD
Bi-Annual Amendment Process to Municipal Code	x			CDD
Public And Private Education and Training Sessions on the Laramie Comprehensive Plan	Continuous	Continuous	Continuous	CDD
Revise Subdivision Review Process	x			CDD
Creation of a Housing Authority		x		CDD
Regular City/County Governing Body Meetings (City Council, County Commissioners, Planning Commission And Planning And Zoning)	x			CDD
Economic Incentives Program		x		LEDC
<i>Plans And Studies</i>				
Approval of the Laramie Comprehensive Plan	x			CDD
Development and adoption of a Parks, Trails and Recreation Plan	x			CDD/P&R
Update and Revise Major Street And Highway Plan		x		CDD/PWD
Development and Adoption of a West Laramie Revitalization Plan		x		CDD/PWD/WYDOT
Agency Key: CC-City Council PC-Planning Commission, PWD-Public Works Department, CDD-Community Development Department, LEDC – Laramie Economic Development Corporation, USAC-Urban System Advisory Committee, FD – Fire Department, DDA-Downtown Development Authority, P&R-Parks and Recreation, WYDOT – Wyoming Department of Transportation, etc.				

Element/ Action Statement	Budget Timeframe			Agency Responsible
	0-2 Years	3-5 Years	5+ Years	
Development and Adoption of Gateway Plans for East Grand Avenue, South 3 rd Street, North 3 rd Street and Curtis Street		x		CDD/PWD/WYDOT
Development and Adoption of a Conservation Chapter into the Laramie Comprehensive Plan	x			CDD/PWD
City/County One Mile Jurisdictional Plan	x			CDD/PWD
Aquifer Protection Plan Update	x			CDD/PWD
Long Range Landfill Improvement Plan		x		PWD
Airport Master Plan			x	Airport Board
Annexation Studies of Urban Growth Areas			x	CDD
Emergency Operations Plan		x		FD
Voluntary and Involuntary Annexation Study	x			CDD/PWD
Five Year Update and Review of the Laramie Comprehensive Plan			x	CDD
Development and adoption of Monolith Ranch Specific Plan		x		CDD/PWD/P&R
Agency Key: CC-City Council PC-Planning Commission, PWD-Public Works Department, CDD-Community Development Department, LEDC – Laramie Economic Development Corporation, USAC-Urban System Advisory Committee, FD – Fire Department, DDA-Downtown Development Authority, P&R-Parks and Recreation, WYDOT – Wyoming Department of Transportation, etc.				