

THE WYOMING RURAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

The Wyoming Rural Development Council is a collaborative public/private partnership that brings together six partner groups: local/regional government, state government, federal government, tribal government, non-profit organizations and private sector individuals and organizations.

WRDC is governed by a Steering Committee representing the six partner groups. The Steering Committee as well as the Council membership has established the following goals for the WRDC:

- Assist rural communities in visioning and strategic planning
- Serve as a resource for assisting communities in finding and obtaining grants for rural projects
- Serve and be recognized as a neutral forum for identification and resolution of multi-jurisdictional issues
- Promote, through education, the understanding of the needs, values, and contributions of rural communities.

The Council seeks to assist rural Wyoming communities with their needs and development efforts by matching the technical and financial resources of federal, state, and local governments and the private sector with local development efforts.

If you would like more information about the Wyoming Rural Development Council and how you may benefit as a member, contact:

Mary Randolph, Executive Director
Wyoming Rural Development Council
214 West 15th Street
Cheyenne, WY 82002
307-777-6430
307-777-2935 (fax)
Mary.randolph@wybusiness.org
www.wyomingrural.org

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Any recommendations contained herein are not mandatory. The Wyoming Rural Development Council has not endorsed any recommendations and opinions contained herein. Neither the WRDC, nor any of its employees, contract labor, committee chairs, and/or members makes any warranty, express or implied, including warranties of merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose, or assumes any legal liability for the accuracy, completeness, or usefulness of this report or any information, recommendations, or opinions contained herein.

PROCESS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS REPORT

The Wyoming Rural Development Council (WRDC) has provided a Resource Team to assist Weston County, Wyoming, in evaluating the county assets and liabilities, and in developing suggestions for improving the future for social, economic and environmental growth of Weston County.

Weston County requested a county assessment from the Wyoming Rural Development Council. The Weston County Planning Coordinator, Ray Pacheco, served as the contact and the County Commissioners helped in agenda development, logistics, and publicity for the assessment. Resource Team members were selected to visit, interview citizens, business, county and community leaders to develop a plan of recommended action for Weston County. The team members were carefully selected based on their fields of expertise that the Weston County officials indicated would be needed to respond to the problem areas identified.

The Resource Team toured the county and interviewed approximately 150 people over a two day period from May 11-13, 2010. The team interviewed representatives from the following segments of the county: local business, city & county government, law enforcement, education, youth, seniors, agriculture, emergency services, utilities, energy, industry, healthcare, civic organizations, churches, social services, state and federal agencies, grandparents, parents, and the general public. Nearly 100 written replies came from the students of the county, and other written replies came from interested citizens.

Many of these people had reviewed the questions with their respective businesses or organizations and were representing many people at the listening sessions. Each participant was asked to respond to three questions designed to begin communication and discussion, and to serve as a basis for developing the action plan. The three questions were:

What do you think are the major problems and challenges in Weston County?

What do you think are the major strengths and assets in Weston County?

What projects would you like to see implemented in 2, 5, 10, or 20 years in Weston County?

Upon completion of the interviews, the team met to compare notes and share comments following four days of intense study. The team then agreed that each team member would carefully analyze the things said, synthesize what they heard with their knowledge of programs and resources, prepare their notes and suggestions, and then forward these items to be combined into WRDC's final report to Weston County Commissioners.

An oral report was presented to the Weston County Commissioners on May 13, 2010 with the press and organizers in attendance.

Following the oral report, a formal written report is presented to Weston County.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On behalf of the Weston County Assessment Resource Team, I would like to thank Weston County and the county/community members who worked so hard to coordinate the Weston County Assessment. This report contains an abundance of information that will hopefully be used by the people of Weston County to better the county and reach its goals.

While reading this report, you will find a variety of recommendations made by the team members on the issues that were identified during the listening sessions. We encourage the county to use these recommendations to build a plan for the future of Weston County.

Anything is possible if everyone works together to achieve a common goal, as the citizens of Weston County already know. Every step, no matter how small, is a movement in the right direction toward achieving Weston County's goals. It can be done. What you do with the recommendations is your choice and will be accomplished by the dedicated citizens of Weston County.

Members of our team will return to Weston County to facilitate a follow-up meeting in the near future. The meeting will help determine the priorities and develop strategies for implementation in Weston County. We encourage everyone from the county to attend this meeting, even if they were unable to attend the assessment. This follow-up goal setting meeting will identify both short-term and long-term goals for Weston County.

On behalf of the Weston County Resource Assessment Team, let me express our gratitude for the hospitality shown us during our time in your county. Good luck on your challenges and visions.

Sincerely,

Jo Ferguson
Team Leader

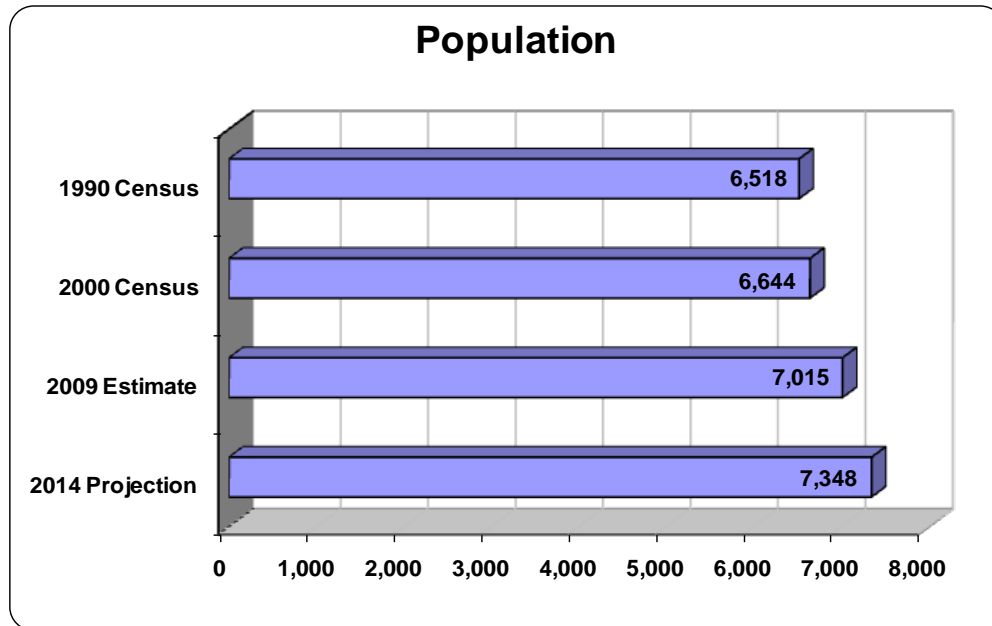
WESTON COUNTY PROFILE

Weston County Executive Summary

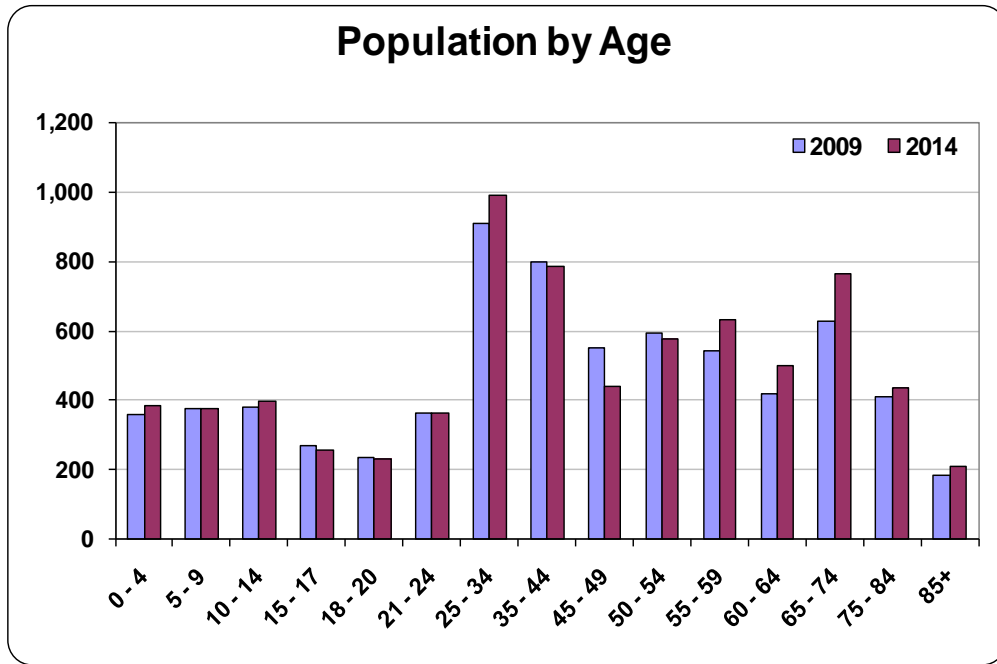


Population Demographics

The population in Weston County in 1990 was **6,518** and in 2000 it was **6,644**, a 1.9% change. The population for 2009 was **7,015** and the projection for 2014 is **7,348** representing a change of **4.7%**. The growth rate from 1990 to 2009 was **7.6%**.



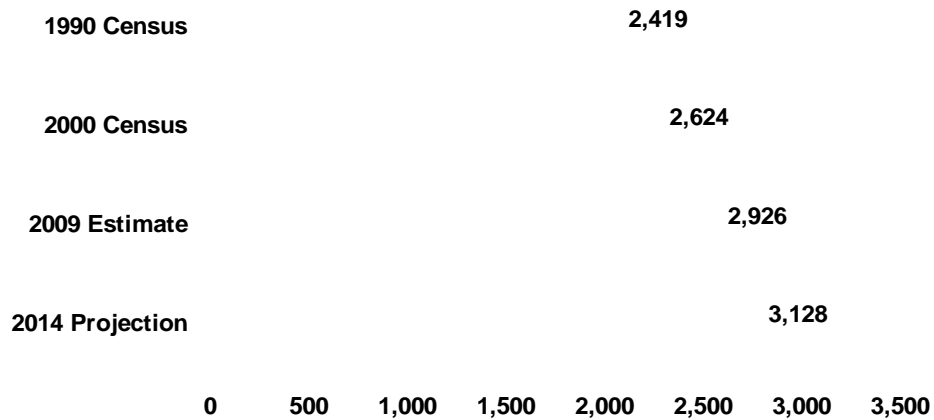
The 2009 median age of the total population in Weston County was **42.7** and it is predicted to change in five years to **43.5**. For 2009, males represented **51.1%** of the population and females represented **48.9%**. The most prominent age group was **Age 25-34** years. The age group least represented was **85+** years.



Household Demographics

The number of households in Weston County in 1990 was **2,419** and in 2000 it was **2,624**, an **8.5%** change. The household count for 2009 was **2,926** and the projection for 2014 is **3,128** representing a change of **6.9%**. The growth rate from 1990 to 2009 is **21.0%**.

Households

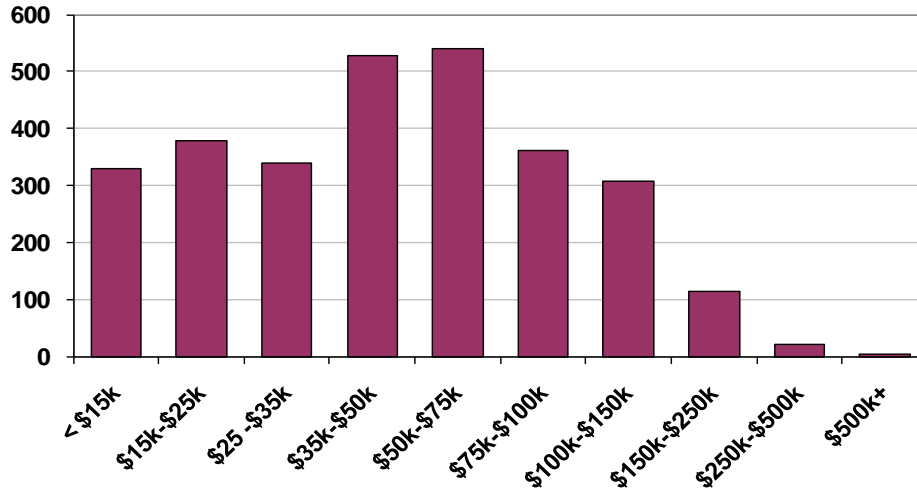




Income Demographics

The 2009 predominant household income category for Weston County was **\$50k-\$75k**, and the income group that was least represented was **500k+**. For 2009, average household income was **\$60,198**, median household income was **\$46,788** and per capita income was **\$25,906**.

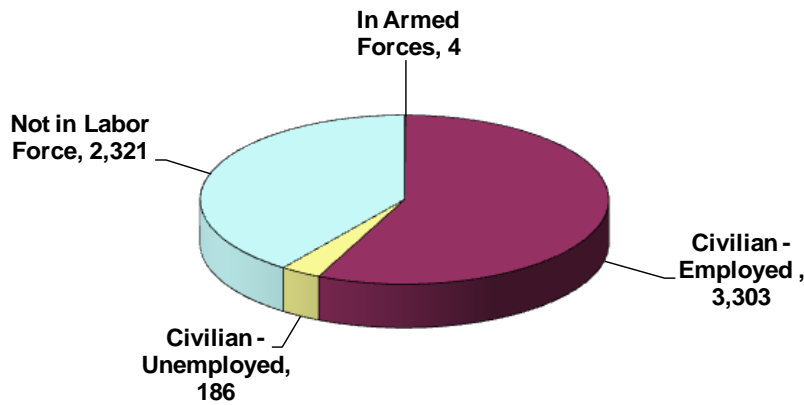
Households by Income (2009)



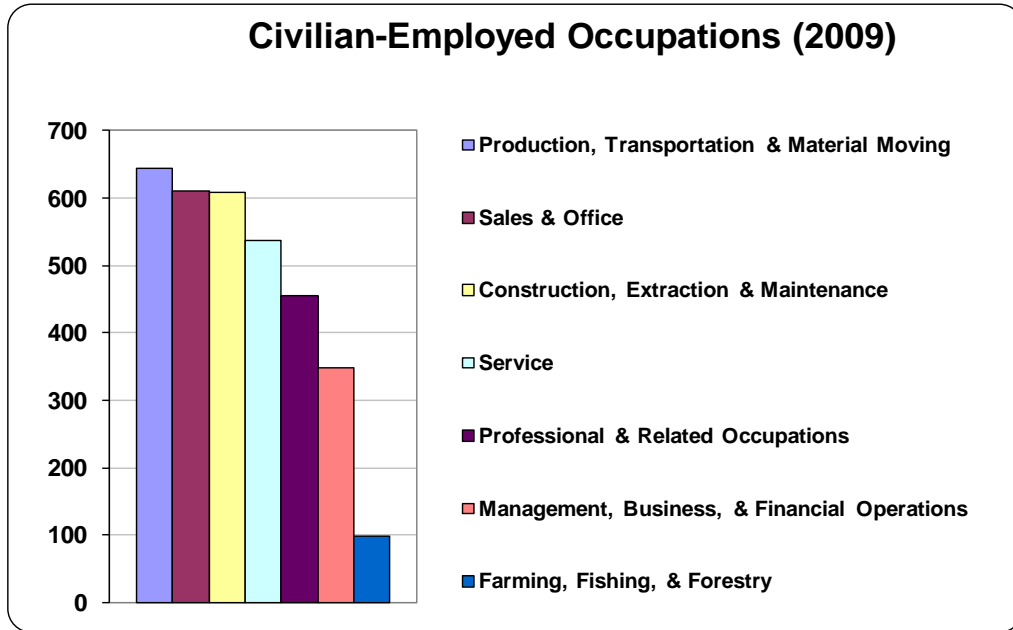
Labor Force Demographics

For 2009, **47.1%** of the Weston County population (age 16+) was estimated to be employed. The status of the labor force was as follows: **0.1%** were in the Armed Forces, **56.8%** were employed civilians, **3.2%** were unemployed civilians, and **39.9%** were not in the labor force.

Employment Status (2009)



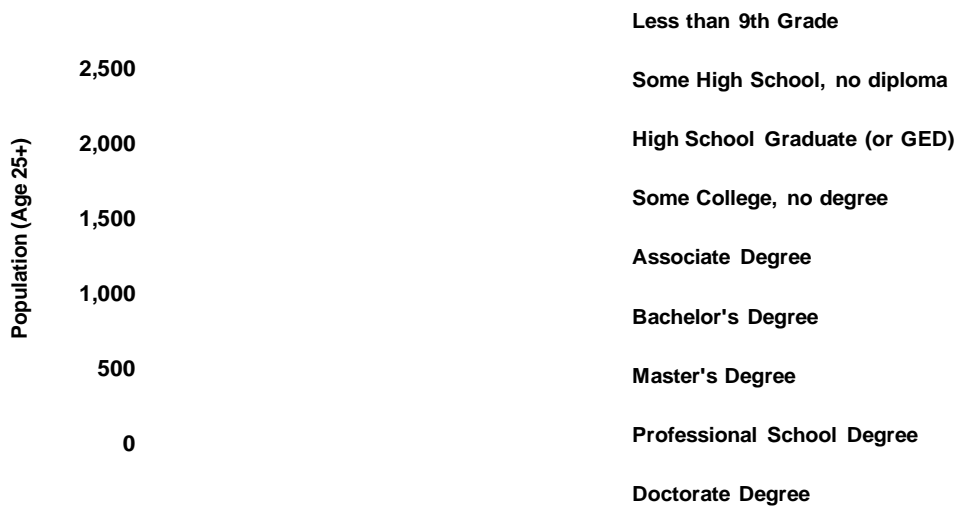
For the civilian-employed population, it is estimated that they were employed in the following occupational categories: Production, Transportation, & Material Moving (19.5%); Sales & Office (18.5%); Construction, Extraction, & Maintenance (18.4%); Service (16.3%); Professional & Related Occupations (13.8%); Management, Business, & Financial Operations (10.5%); Farming, Fishing, & Forestry (3.0%).



Education Demographics

For 2009, it was estimated that 4.3% of the Weston County population (Age 25+) earned a Master’s, Professional, or Doctorate Degree and 10.1% earned a Bachelor’s Degree.

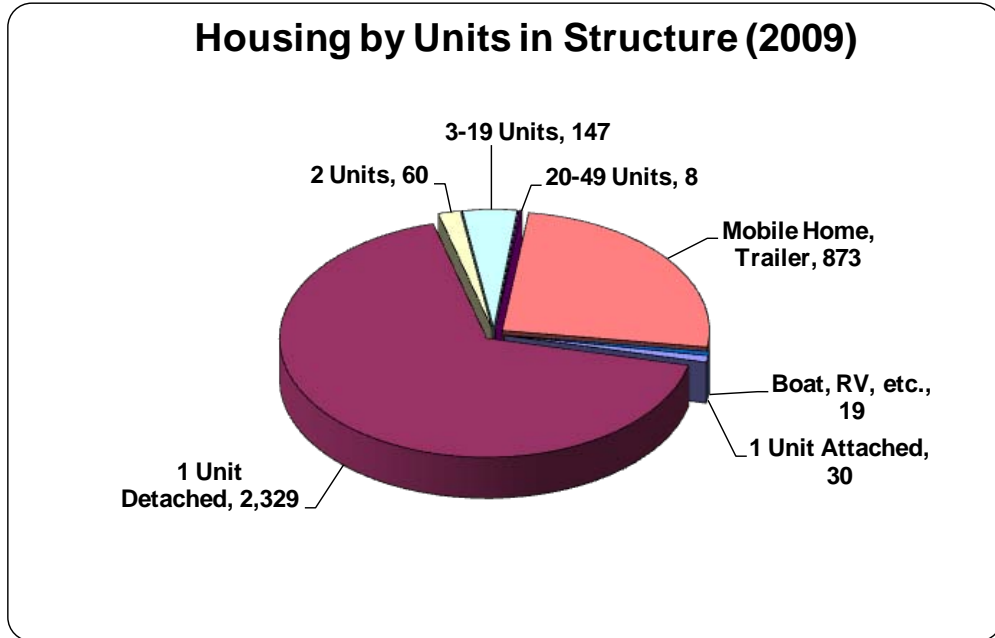
Educational Attainment (2009)





Housing Demographics

For 2009, most of the dwellings in Weston County (**78.1%**) were Owner-Occupied. The majority of dwellings are estimated to be structures of 1 Unit Detached (**67.2%**). The majority of housing units (**20.9%**) were built between 1970 and 1979.



Source: Claritas, Inc.

County Employment Statistics	
Labor Force (Jan 2010) <i>p</i>	3,180
Employed (Jan 2010) <i>p</i>	2,918
Unemployed (Jan 2010) <i>p</i>	262
Unemployment Rate (Jan 2010) <i>p</i>	8.2%
Average Weekly Wage (Q3_09)	\$591

Source: WY Dept. of Employment, Research & Planning
p = preliminary

Sales Tax Collections	FY 2009
Ag, Forestry, Fishing, & Hunting	\$1,636
Mining	\$733,771
Utilities	\$224,444
Construction	\$100,928
Manufacturing	\$93,712
Wholesale Trade	\$340,610
Retail Trade	\$1,339,655
Transportation and Warehousing	\$42,322
Information	\$105,207
Financial Activities	\$58,747
Professional & Business Services	\$32,640
Educational & Health Services	\$1,468
Leisure & Hospitality	\$336,399
Other Services	\$153,044
Public Administration	\$347,035
Total	\$3,911,618

Source: Wyoming Dept. of Revenue

Landowners	Sq. Miles
United States Government	
National Park Service	0.0
Forest Service	360.9
Fish and Wildlife	0.0
Bureau of Land Management	117.1
Bureau of Reclamation	0.0
Wyoming	
State Lands Commission	189.1
Recreation Commission	0.0
Game and Fish	0.0
Local Government	
County	0.8
City	2.3
School Districts & Colleges	0.1
Other Lands	5.0
Total Public	675.2
Total Private	1,724.9
Surface Water	2.2
Total Land	2,400.1

Source: University of WY, Dept. of Geography & Recreation

Personal Income	2008
Total Personal Income (000s of \$)	\$299,561
Per Capita Personal Income	\$43,239
Per Capita Current Transfer Receipts	\$5,907
Per Capita Dividends, Interest, & Rent	\$8,866
Average Wage & Salary Disbursements	\$35,245
Average Non-Farm Proprietors' Income	\$21,609

Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis

County Finance	
Assessed Valuation (For 2008)	\$134,391,925
Total Property Taxes Levied (2008)	\$9,667,198
Sales & Use Tax Distribution (FY2008)	\$2,712,590
Bank Deposits (6/30/2008)	\$171,137,000
2008 Average County Levy (mills)	71.933

Source: Wyoming Dept. of Revenue & Dept. of Audit

Selected Statistics: School Year	2007-2008
Number of School Districts	2
Number of Schools	8
Fall Enrollment	1,057
High School Graduates	65
Average Daily Membership (ADM)	1,054
Average Daily Attendance (ADA)	992
Certified Teachers	97
Certified Staff	18
Administration	16
Classified Staff	86
Students Transported Daily	365
Bonded Indebtedness, June 30 th	\$1,365,000
Total General Fund Revenues	\$15,409,336
Total General Fund Expenditures	\$15,218,785
Operating Cost Per ADM	\$16,496

Source: WY Department of Education, Statistical Report Series

Crime Offenses by Contributor: 2008	
Murder	0
Rape	0
Robbery	0
Aggravated Assault	12
Burglary	24
Larceny	110
Motor Vehicle Theft	8
Violent Crimes	12
Property Crimes	142
Total	154

Source: Wyoming Attorney General, DCI

Full & Part Time Employment	2008
Wage and Salary Employment	2,652
Proprietors Employment	2,827
Farm	280
Forestry, Fishing, Related Activities	70
Mining	850
Utilities	(D)
Construction	396
Manufacturing	165
Wholesale Trade	(D)
Retail Trade	564
Transportation and Warehousing	233
Information	44
Finance and Insurance	199
Real Estate, Rental, and Leasing	353
Professional and Technical Services	249
Management of Companies and Enterprises	(L)
Administrative and Waste Services	142
Educational Services	(D)
Health Care and Social Assistance	(D)
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	(D)
Accommodation and Food Services	(D)
Other Services, except Public Administration	271
Government and Government Enterprises	842
TOTAL	5,479

Earnings (000s of \$)	2008
Wage and Salary Disbursements	\$93,470
Supplements to Wages and Salaries	\$25,519
Proprietors' Income	\$53,202
Farm	-\$1,563
Forestry, Fishing, Related Activities	\$1,078
Mining	\$37,689
Utilities	(D)
Construction	\$11,197
Manufacturing	\$12,973
Wholesale Trade	(D)
Retail Trade	\$11,233
Transportation and Warehousing	\$10,354
Information	\$1,025
Finance and Insurance	\$3,664
Real Estate, Rental, and Leasing	\$2,797
Professional and Technical Services	\$10,323
Management of Companies and Enterprises	\$595
Administrative and Waste Services	\$958
Educational Services	(D)
Health Care and Social Assistance	(D)
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	(D)
Accommodation and Food Services	(D)
Other Services, except Public Administration	\$10,038
Government and Government Enterprises	\$38,940
TOTAL	\$172,191

Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis.

(D) - Not shown to avoid disclosure of confidential information. (L) - Less than 10 jobs.

Taxes

- No corporate state income tax.
- No personal state income tax.
- No inventory tax.
- Weston County has a 5% sales and use tax (statewide base of 4% plus 1% optional county tax).
Source: Wyoming Department of Revenue, Excise Tax Division (January 2010).
- Unemployment Insurance - taxable base rate of \$21,500. Tax rates by industry grouping - WY Department of Employment. Source: <http://wydoe.state.wy.us/doe.asp?ID=885>.
- Workers' Compensation - rates vary by occupation and can be found at:
Source: <http://159.238.91.226/etd/Rates/2009-Rates.xls>.
- Property taxes. Average tax rate in Weston County is 7.279%.
Source: Wyoming Department of Revenue, Ad Valorem Division (2009)

Tax computation:

Fair Market Value of Property * Level of Assessment (9.5% for Residential and Commercial Property) * Tax Rate

Example: Tax on a commercial facility valued at \$1,000,000 is as follows: \$1,000,000 x 0.095 = \$95,000 x 0.07279 = \$6,915. The State assesses agricultural lands at 9.5% of agricultural value, residential and commercial at 9.5% and Industrial at 11.5% of fair market value.

State Incentives

1. No corporate state income tax.
2. No personal state income tax.
3. Community Development Block Grants administered by Wyoming Business Council. (http://www.wyomingbusiness.org/pdf/financial/comm_loan_grant_wbc.pdf)
 - Provides grants to local governments for community and economic development projects.
 - Provides convertible loans to grants based on job creation.
4. Partnership Challenge Loan Program administered by Wyoming Business Council.
 - Provides low interest loans to community development organizations.
 - Provides gap financing for projects with the Wyoming Business Council participating with a commercial lender.
5. Industrial Development Revenue Bonds. Cities and counties may issue tax-exempt bonds to provide financing for manufacturing.

Workforce Training

2. Wyoming Department of Workforce Services offers employers up to \$2,000 per employee for training. *Source:* <http://www.wyomingworkforce.org/wdtf/existing.aspx>.

3. Quick Start

Wyoming is the first state approved to license the State of Georgia’s Quick Start program. The Wyoming Business Council and the Wyoming Community Colleges are partnering to provide training in:

- Customer Service
- Manufacturing
- Warehousing and Distribution

Source: <http://www.wyomingbusiness.org/business/workforce.aspx>.

Cost of Living Index (Prices as of January 6, 7, and 8, 2010, Statewide Average = 100)

Food	Housing	Apparel	Transportation	Medical	Recreation & Personal Care
94	84	96	100	102	96

Source: State of Wyoming, Economic Analysis Division (<http://eadiv.state.wy.us/wcli/NewsRelease-2009.pdf>).

Average Price of Single-Family Home (2008) 129,108

Source: A Profile of Wyoming <www.wyomingcda.com>

Higher Education

Eastern Wyoming College: Campus in Torrington
University of Wyoming Outreach Program

Transportation

1. Airports:

Gillette-Campbell County (GCC)

4 miles northwest of Gillette

Commercial Service: Great Lakes (United Express)

Daily flights to: Denver

Fixed Base Operator: Flightline Inc.

Runways: 7,500 x 150 ft., concrete

5,803 x 75 ft., concrete

Mondell Field (ECS)

5 miles northwest of Newcastle

Runway: 5,300 x 75 ft., concrete

Fixed Base Operator: Tuff Air

Upton Municipal (83V)

1 mile southwest of Upton

Runway: 3,710 x 80 ft., gravel

Fixed Base Operators: None

2. Highways:

Distance from county centroid to nearest Interstate highway = 31.68 miles to I-90

U.S. 16

U.S. 85

3. Railroad:

Burlington Northern Santa Fe

Weston County RMP Opportunity Gap - Retail Stores 2009

The difference between demand and supply represents the opportunity gap or surplus available for each retail outlet. When the demand is greater than (less than) the supply, there is an opportunity gap (surplus) for that retail outlet. For example, a positive value signifies an opportunity gap, while a negative value signifies a surplus.

	(Demand) Consumer Expenditures	(Supply) Retail Sales	(Opportunity) Gap/ Surplus
Total Retail Sales (\$) - Including Eating & Drinking	115,862,753	56,520,010	59,342,743
Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers	21,416,562	5,484,006	15,932,556
Automotive Dealers	17,622,205	4,965,003	12,657,202
Other Motor Vehicle Dealers	1,888,149	104,002	1,784,147
Automotive Parts/Accessories, Tire Stores	1,906,208	415,001	1,491,207
Furniture and Home Furnishings Stores	2,367,006	32,000	2,335,006
Furniture Stores	1,245,395	0	1,245,395
Home Furnishing Stores	1,121,611	32,000	1,089,611
Electronics and Appliance Stores	2,699,526	29,995	2,669,531
Appliances, TVs, Electronics Stores	2,052,366	17,995	2,034,371
Household Appliances Stores-	491,741	17,995	473,746
Radio, Television, Electronics Stores	1,560,625	0	1,560,625
Computer and Software Stores	542,161	12,000	530,161
Camera and Photographic Equipment Stores	104,999	0	104,999
Building Material, Garden Equip Stores	12,882,682	3,117,002	9,765,680
Building Material and Supply Dealers	11,892,668	3,117,002	8,775,666
Home Centers	4,858,757	0	4,858,757
Paint and Wallpaper Stores	262,218	0	262,218
Hardware Stores	1,018,974	1,956,000	-937,026
Other Building Materials Dealers	5,752,719	1,161,002	4,591,717
Building Materials, Lumberyards	2,260,104	454,200	1,805,904
Lawn, Garden Equipment, Supplies Stores	990,014	0	990,014
Outdoor Power Equipment Stores	151,042	0	151,042
Nursery and Garden Centers	838,972	0	838,972
Food and Beverage Stores	14,923,974	12,546,005	2,377,969
Grocery Stores	13,716,866	11,952,001	1,764,865
Supermarkets, Grocery (Ex Convenience) Stores	13,026,554	11,814,001	1,212,553
Convenience Stores	690,312	138,000	552,312
Specialty Food Stores	407,168	267,004	140,164
Beer, Wine and Liquor Stores	799,940	327,000	472,940
Health and Personal Care Stores	6,165,151	286,003	5,879,148
Pharmacies and Drug Stores	5,315,333	276,003	5,039,330
Cosmetics, Beauty Supplies, Perfume Stores	221,843	0	221,843
Optical Goods Stores	226,632	0	226,632
Other Health and Personal Care Stores	401,343	10,000	391,343
Gasoline Stations	13,992,690	18,451,998	-4,459,308
Gasoline Stations With Convenience Stores	10,469,485	9,134,000	1,335,485
Other Gasoline Stations	3,523,205	9,317,998	-5,794,793
Clothing and Clothing Accessories Stores	4,482,137	634,002	3,848,135
Clothing Stores	3,189,158	634,002	2,555,156
Men's Clothing Stores	209,349	0	209,349

Women's Clothing Stores	775,955	0	775,955
Children, Infants Clothing Stores	176,891	0	176,891
Family Clothing Stores	1,738,026	634,002	1,104,024
Clothing Accessories Stores	76,078	0	76,078
Other Clothing Stores	212,859	0	212,859
Shoe Stores	616,402	0	616,402
Jewelry, Luggage, Leather Goods Stores	676,577	0	676,577
Jewelry Stores	618,214	0	618,214
Luggage and Leather Goods Stores	58,363	0	58,363
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, Music Stores	2,191,338	105,003	2,086,335
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Musical Inst Stores	1,525,026	33,001	1,492,025
Sporting Goods Stores	758,984	21,001	737,983
Hobby, Toys and Games Stores	486,064	4,000	482,064
Sew/Needlework/Piece Goods Stores	137,899	8,000	129,899
Musical Instrument and Supplies Stores	142,079	0	142,079
Book, Periodical and Music Stores	666,312	72,002	594,310
Book Stores and News Dealers	454,041	0	454,041
Book Stores	429,179	0	429,179
News Dealers and Newsstands	24,862	0	24,862
Prerecorded Tapes, CDs, Record Stores	212,271	72,002	140,269
General Merchandise Stores	14,783,109	173,997	14,609,112
Department Stores Excl Leased Departments	6,990,689	161,998	6,828,691
Other General Merchandise Stores	7,792,420	11,999	7,780,421
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	2,697,121	42,997	2,654,124
Florists	211,070	3,998	207,072
Office Supplies, Stationery, Gift Stores	1,152,612	23,998	1,128,614
Office Supplies and Stationery Stores	651,066	19,000	632,066
Gift, Novelty and Souvenir Stores	501,546	4,998	496,548
Used Merchandise Stores	237,914	1,001	236,913
Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers	1,095,525	14,000	1,081,525
Non-Store Retailers	7,183,259	9,104,000	-1,920,741
Foodservice and Drinking Places	10,078,198	6,513,002	3,565,196
Full-Service Restaurants	4,356,347	1,678,000	2,678,347
Limited-Service Eating Places	874,347	0	874,347
Special Foodservices	394,757	1,967,001	-1,572,244
Drinking Places -Alcoholic Beverages	27,675,728	998,995	26,676,733
GAFO *	14,783,109	173,997	14,609,112
General Merchandise Stores	14,783,109	173,997	14,609,112
Clothing and Clothing Accessories Stores	4,482,137	634,002	3,848,135
Furniture and Home Furnishings Stores	2,367,006	32,000	2,335,006
Electronics and Appliance Stores	2,699,526	29,995	2,669,531
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, Music Stores	2,191,338	105,003	2,086,335
Office Supplies, Stationery, Gift Stores	1,152,612	23,998	1,128,614

*GAFO (General merchandise, Apparel, Furniture and Other) represents sales at stores that sell merchandise normally sold in department stores. This category is not included in Total Retail Sales including Eating and Drinking Places.

Retail Market Power (RMP) data is derived from two major sources of information. The demand data is derived from the Consumer Expenditure Survey (CE Survey), which is fielded by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). The supply data is derived from the Census of Retail Trade (CRT), which is made available by the U.S. Census.



**RESOURCE TEAM
WESTON COUNTY ASSESSMENT
May 11-13, 2010**

Team Leader

Jo Ferguson

Sr. Rural Development Specialist
Wyoming Rural Development Council
214 W. 15th Street
Cheyenne, WY 82002
307-777-5812
Jo.ferguson@wybusiness.org

Steve Elledge, Director of Field
Operations Division
Wyoming Business Council
300 S. Wolcott, Suite 300
Casper, WY 82601
(307) 577-6012
steve.elledge@wybusiness.org

Mark Willis, COO
Wyoming Business Council
214 W. 15th Street
Cheyenne, WY 82002
307-777-2842
mark.willis@wybusiness.org

Stacey Reichardt, Owner
Ninth Street Cafe and Daylight Donuts
714 9th Street
Wheatland, WY 82201
307-331-1951 (cell)
staceyr@vcn.com

Linda Harris
NEWEDC
P.O. Box 4369
Gillette, WY 82718
307-257-2343
linda@newedc.com

Community Contact

Ray Pacheco, County Planner
1 West Main Street
Newcastle, WY 82701:
(307) 746-2966
wcplanner@rtconnect.net

WESTON COUNTY ASSESSMENT AGENDA

May 11, 12, 13, 2010

Tuesday, (11th)	Listening Session Groups	Location – Upton____ Upton Food Bank Bld.
11:00am	<i>Orientation/Lunch Meeting</i> with Community Planners and Resource Team @	
Remy's		
12:30pm	Resource Team leaves for area tour	
2:00pm	LISTENING SESSION	
3:00pm	LISTENING SESSION	
4:00pm	LISTENING SESSION	
5:00pm	LISTENING SESSION	
6:30pm	<i>Dinner Time</i> – Old Mill Restaurant	
Wednesday, (12th)	Listening Session Groups	Location – Newcastle____ Court Room - Courthouse
6:30 – 7:30am	<i>Breakfast</i> – Fountain Inn	
8:00 – 10:00am	Area Tour	
10:00 – 10:50am	City, County, Law Enforcement Officials & Staff	
11:00 – 12:00pm	<i>Lunch</i> – The Antler	
12:10 – 1:00pm	Agriculture	
1:10 – 2:00pm	Retail, Business, Banking & Finance	
2:10 – 3:00pm	Utilities, Energy, Industry	
3:10 – 4:00pm	Students, Youth Groups, Educators	
4:10 – 5:30pm	<i>Dinner Time</i> – Old Mill Restaurant	
5:45 – 6:40pm	Healthcare	
7:00 – 8:00pm	Residents (anyone who could not make it to earlier sessions)	
Thursday, (13th)	Listening Session Groups	Location - Newcastle____ Senior Center
6:30 to 7:30am	<i>Breakfast</i> – Donna's Diner	
8:00 to 8:50am	State and Federal Agencies	
9:00 to 9:50am	Civic Clubs- Churches-Social Services	
10:00 am – 12:00pm	Team Prepares Report to County Commissioners	
12:00pm - 1:00 pm	<i>Lunch</i> with Senior Citizens @ Senior Center	
1:30 to 2:30pm	Report to County Commissioners @ Senior Center	

WESTON COUNTY MAJOR THEMES, May 13, 2010

- **CLEAN UP**
 - Reclamation Ordinances/monitoring
 - Entrances to Cities/Towns
 - Old Cars/metal
- **COMMUNICATION**
 - Coordination among ALL agencies, including County, city and towns
- **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**
 - Job diversification
 - Retail recruitment – downtown development
 - Dollar flight
 - Housing
 - Infrastructure – roads
 - Vocational ED
- **YOUTH**
 - Rec center – retain youth
 - Activities – skate park (Upton)
 - Dances – Ice skating – open pool & community center
- **SERVICES / RESOURCES**
 - Rec center - health care (OB GYN)
 - Child care – Substance Abuse – senior issues – assisted living – landfill/recycle – law enforcement training – Public transportation
 - Communication between youth & adults

Team Members' Recommendations Weston County May, 2010

Jo Ferguson

Senior Rural Development Specialist
Wyoming Rural Development Council
214 W. 15th Street
Cheyenne, WY 82002
307-777-5812
Jo.ferguson@wybusiness.org

A big thank you goes to the planners and organizers of this county assessment. The county residents welcomed us with warm hospitality; we enjoyed our tours. Weston County has great history and great potential. It is evident that they care for their youth and their seniors—a good sign that the right values are in place in Weston County.

Challenge: A year-round recreation center not only for the community, but county-wide

Solution/Contact:

This has been a desired/goal of many communities in Wyoming. One way to acquire the funding for a Recreation Center would be to tax themselves so this funding could be used to partner with other state and/or federal agencies to complete the project. Green River and Rock Springs have both built recreation centers by utilizing the Capital Facilities Optional 1% tax, which is imposed on sales and use and is in addition to the state 4%. The citizens of the towns Weston County would have to vote on this tax which must be used for a specific project. The tax is in existence until the needed money has been collected. In other communities, this has been a successful way to raise money for high dollar projects that could otherwise not be built. The Optional 1% Sales and Use Tax could then be used to support the Recreation Center once it has been built.

Comments were made to renovate the old Osage school for it to become a County Community Center. There is a program available through the Wyoming Business Council—the Community Facilities Grant & Loan Program which assists with the preservation of school and surplus government buildings to provide space for community gatherings, recreation, swimming, and other functions. Counties are eligible applicants.

Resource:

Wyoming Business Council
Mollie Davies, Community Facilities Specialist
214 W. 15th Street
Cheyenne, WY 82002
307-777-2811
Mollie.davies@wybusiness.org

For the new Upton Community Center, it may be possible to extend privileges to students to use the indoor gym. In Pine Bluffs, they keep a key to the center at Town Hall—when a group of kids want to play ball, etc. they sign the key out and then return the key when done. This has worked well in Pine Bluffs. Pine Bluffs does a short orientation about the facility before the first time a group requests entry. Also, try to recruit volunteers to help man the Upton Center so that it can be used to full potential.

For more information, contact:

Town of Pine Bluffs
Cate Cundall, Clerk
P.O. Box 429
Pine Bluffs, WY 82082
307-245-3746

Dave Hanks, Director,
Rock Springs Chamber of Commerce
Phone: 307-362-3771
E-mail: rschamber@sweetwaterhsa.com

Janet Hartford, Director
Green River Chamber of Commerce
Phone: 307-875-5711
E-mail: jhartford@sweetwaterhsa.com

FUNDING

Challenge: We heard many comments regarding lack of funding for different needs and wants in Weston County.

Solution: Perhaps more grants should be explored and written. The Neighborhood Networks Funding Opportunity has sent out information on the Dr. Scholl Foundation. They fund to organizations that help people help themselves in areas of education, programs for children, civic and cultural institutions, social services, environmental and faith-based organizations and healthcare organizations. Applications are available on September 1 of each year and can be submitted between November 1 and March 1.

Resources:

Dr. Scholl Foundation
1033 Skokie Boulevard, Ste. 230
Northbrook, Illinois 60062
847-559-7430
<http://www.drschollfoundation.com/>

HOUSING

Challenge: Affordable and Senior Housing: lack of housing and senior housing was mentioned various times during each listening session throughout Weston County.

Solution: Many low-income families in the area may become home owners and can succeed in home ownership with proper support. There is a need to consolidate a plan to address the need to improve affordability by creating new home ownership opportunities.

Wyoming Community Development (WCDA): their programs vary from Rental Housing, Homeowner Rehabilitation, to homeownership opportunities.

HOME Investment Partnership Program (HOME). The General purpose of HOME includes: the expansion of the supply of decent and affordable housing, particularly rental housing, for low and very-low-income families, strengthening the abilities of State and local governments to design and implement strategies for achieving adequate supplies of decent affordable housing, and extending and strengthening partnerships among levels of government and the private sector, including for-profit and non-profit organizations, in the production and operation of affordable housing.

Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC). Was created to encourage the construction and rehabilitation of housing for very low, low, and moderate-income individuals and families.

Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG).

First goal of the program is to expand housing opportunities for low and moderate income households

Objective 1. Provide appropriate housing for special population groups such as the frail elderly, elderly and the handicapped/disabled, which support an appropriate level of independent living.

Objective 2. Provide support for the development of emergency shelters, transitional housing,

and permanent housing for the handicapped/disabled and homeless.

Objective 3. Encourage first time homeownership opportunities for low and moderate-income families.

Objective 4. Encourage improvement and/or renovation of substandard housing for both low and moderate-income owner-occupants and renters.

Objective 5. Encourage affordable housing through acquisition and/or development of land for new subdivisions in areas that can demonstrate a lack of affordable lots for affordable newly constructed housing. Second goal of the program is to stabilize and upgrade housing in deteriorating neighborhoods.

USDA, Rural Development Rural Housing Service (RHS) administers various housing programs that are targeted toward providing affordable housing in small communities and rural areas.

502 Direct Homeownership Loans (SFH) Purpose: Loans to aid low- and very-low income rural residents to purchase, construct, repair, or relocate a single family dwelling and related facilities. The loans are typically made with payment assistance depending on the income level. Loans may be made for the market value of the property with improvements.

502 Guaranteed Rural Housing Loans (SFH) Purpose: Single family housing guaranteed loans are available to credit-worthy applicants. The loans are made by an eligible bank or lender with guarantees by the Rural Housing Service.

504 Rural Home Repair Loans & Grants (SFH) Purpose: To enable very-low-income rural homeowners to remove health and safety hazards in their home and to make homes accessible for people with disabilities. Grants are available for people 62 years old and older who cannot afford to repay a loan.

515 Rural Rental Housing Loans (MFH) Purpose: To allow individuals or organizations to build or rehabilitate rental units for low-income and moderate income residents including those ages 62 and older in rural areas.

538 Rural Rental Housing Guaranteed Loans (MFH) Purpose: Rural Rental Housing projects assist in reducing the amount of out of pocket cash that very-low-income and low-income families pay for rent, including utilities.

Resources:

WCDA
Cheryl Gillum
Housing Programs Director
155 North Beech (82601)
P.O. Box 634 (82602)
Casper, WY
Website = <http://www.wyomingcda.com>

WCDA
Gayle S. Brownlee
Director of Multi-Family Housing
155 North Beech (82601)
P.O. Box 634 (82602)
Casper, WY
Website = <http://www.wyomingcda.com>

Wyoming Housing Network
300 S. Wolcott, Suite 200
Casper, WY 82601
307-472-5843

www.wyominghousingnetwork.org

DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE

Challenges: In the Weston County area it was mentioned several times that there is a problem among the teens and adults with drug and alcohol abuse.

Solution: From the comments from community members they considered it to be both a drug and alcohol problem. The best method of dealing with this issue is prevention through education, and adult and peer support. The parents, teachers, and the adults in the community should be acquainted with the resources that are readably available there in their community and to utilize the programs established.

The Daniels Fund Grant Program supports nonprofit organizations in Wyoming. Its purpose is to ensure youth and adults with alcohol and substance abuse challenges achieve stability by supporting prevention, treatment, and supportive /after-care services.

The community may want to consider participating in Wyoming prevention needs assessment; you can learn about this at <http://uwyo.edu/wysac/>.

Resources:

Wyoming Department of Education
Hathaway Bldg., 2nd Floor
2300 Capitol Avenue
Cheyenne, WY 82202-0050
Dr. Jim McBride, Supt. of Public Instruction
Telephone: (307) 777-7673
Web site: <http://www.k12.wy.us/>

Boys & Girls Club of America

Regional Office:
2107 N. Collins Blvd.
Richardson, TX 75080
Mr. Tom Hough, Regional Director
Telephone: (972) 690-1393
National Office:
1230 W Peachtree Street
Atlanta, GA 30309-3447
Roxanne Spillett, President
Telephone: (404) 487-5700
Web site: <http://www.bgca.org/>

Wyoming Department of Health
Substance Abuse Division
6101 Yellowstone Road, Suite 220
Cheyenne, WY 82002
Web site: <http://wdh.state.wy.us/sad/index.asp>
Deputy Director, Rodger McDaniel (307) 777-6494
or Marilyn Patton (307) 777-6494
The Daniels Fund
101 Monroe Street
Denver, CO 80206
Phone: 303-393-7220, Toll Free: 877-791-4726
Contact@danielsfund.org

INFRASTRUCTURE

Challenge: It was mentioned by several residents there are development challenges to the infrastructure: road and street repairs... The land fill is a rising concern.

Solution: The Integrated Solid Waste Plan will be a great set up for management of solid waste. It is important to look at the effects on what solid waste has on the economy and the environment of the community. Road maintenance issues are ongoing; planning is the key here.

The State of Wyoming, Office of State Lands and Investments Board (SLIB) has loan and grant funds available to strengthen infrastructures within cities, counties, school districts and other political subdivisions of the state. The government grant and loan programs are used primarily for public water and sewer projects; streets, roads, and bridges; public health, safety, and medical facilities; jails and law enforcement facilities; and school districts.

USDA, Rural Development, Rural Utilities Service also administers Solid Waste Management Grants. With this program, grants are made to public and private nonprofit organizations to provide technical assistance and/or training to associations located in rural areas to cities and towns with a population of 10,000 or less to reduce or eliminate pollution of water resources and improve planning and management of solid waste facilities. Assistance may be provided to enhance operator skills in operations and maintenance, identify threats to water resources, and reduce the solid waste system.

Resources:

Integrated Solid Waste Management & State Recycling Coordinator

[Craig McOmie](#)

Phone (307)473-3487

Fax (307) 473-3458

Alana Cannon, Community Programs Director

PO Box 11005, Casper, WY 82602-5006

100 E. "B" Street, Room 1005

Casper, WY 82601

307-233-6719; TDD 307-233-6733

Fax 307-233-6739

E-mail to: alana.cannon@wy.usda.gov

Office of State Lands and Investments
Susan Child
122 W 25th St
Herschler Bldg 3-W
Cheyenne, WY 82002
307 777-6646
schild@state.wy.us
<http://slf-web.state.wy.us/grants.aspx>

Theme: Community Enhancement – Public Transportation

Resources: To meet various transportation needs, the following point of contact can provide information on planning, acquisition and operational support.

Wyoming Transportation Enterprise Fund
122 W 25th St
Herschler Bldg 3-W
Cheyenne, WY 82002
307 777-6646
<http://slf-web.state.wy.us/grants/adobe/teaapp1.pdf>

Challenge: Communication between communities

Solution: Each Mayor could attend the other's town council meeting. This is a good first step for cementing a solid relationship between the communities. A possible recommendation would be to hold joint town council meetings or workshops when similar projects appear on the horizon. Perhaps those workshops could be facilitated by an outside organization when trying to come up with vision items. Another comment we heard was that it is hard for Upton residents to get to Newcastle to do business in the Court House. Perhaps some county offices could stay open one to two hours later once a month and advertise it well.

The combined cultural events can be tied to school activities and led by talented instructors. The current local festivals perhaps could bring in additional concerts, etc. that would appeal to all ages and add revenues to the town. Expanding the length of the events might help accommodate the above-mentioned concert idea. Check with Cheyenne Frontier Days Committee Chairmen for ideas and planning information. Wyoming Travel and Tourism could possibly provide aid in events that could attract more to Weston County.

Jointly, the towns would like to see Vocational/Technical Training and Education in this area. Community Colleges and State Department of Education would be the first contacts—in other areas of Wyoming, industry itself is pushing training programs to help fill their workforce void.

Resources:

Event and concert information:

Cheyenne Frontier Days

Pat Moffett, Chairman of Contract Acts

Jerry Ciz, Chairman of Public Relations

307-778-7200

www.cfdrodeo.com

Training & Educational Information

Professional, Technical, Community Trng.

Northern WY Community College District

Gillette College

www.sheridan.edu

USDA-RD Community Development Program Publication. As a strategy for economic development, tourism and festivals can be very useful.

Challenge: Beautification of towns and county

A community cleanup program could definitely enhance the county and towns. This would be organized by volunteers—challenges could be made among different organizations. This could be a one-time effort or a long-term continual effort. There may be some grants available to help this effort. TEAL program at Wyoming DOT for community beautification and paths. Saratoga and Frannie are among several towns in Wyoming that have formed clean-up committees.

Resources:**Wyoming Department of Transportation****Office of Local Government Coordinator**

C.J. Brown

5300 Bishop Blvd. Cheyenne, WY 82002 307-777-4179

cj.brown@dot.state.wy.us

Town of Saratoga, PO Box 486, Saratoga, WY 82331, 307-326-8335

Town of Frannie, PO Box 72, Frannie, WY 82423, 307-664-2323

Challenge: Outdoor recreation sustainability for young people

Solution: In 2009 Sen. Jack Reed (D-R.I.) and Rep. John Sarbanes (D-Md.) were the chief sponsors of the No Child Left Inside bill. Rich Dolesh, public policy director of the National Recreation and Park Association, said support was building. "A coalition of more than 160 national education and conservation groups were behind it," he said. "It's caught fire among a very diverse number of groups. Environmental literacy is a key component." While mainly addressing environmentalism, this legislation also seeks to touch on healthy living programs encouraging outdoor recreation and sound nutrition

The No Child Left Inside Coalition said recently, "We know from experience that environmental education engages and stimulates students, but many schools lack the resources or support they need to offer high-quality instruction in this critical subject. It's time for Congress to fix that and make sure all of our young people have the opportunity to take part in good environmental lessons." Urge your senators and congresswoman to support reintroduction

Resources--Contact our elected officials:

Senator Mike Enzi
2120 Capitol Avenue
Cheyenne, WY 82001
307-772-2477

Senator John Barrasso
2120 Capitol Avenue
Cheyenne, WY 82001
307-772-2451

Rep. Cynthia Lummis
2120 Capitol Avenue
Cheyenne, WY 82001
307-772-2595

Theme Transportation

Challenge: Railroad Tracks--even though the proximity of the railroad tracks in Newcastle and its schools did not come out in a listening session, the challenge for providing safe crossing procedures and safety rules near the tracks is always useful

Solution: The Wyoming Chapter of Operation Lifesaver presents programs to schools and communities every year throughout the State of Wyoming. Wyoming Operation Lifesaver is a non-profit organization that provides education programs to the public. The programs are designed to help prevent and reduce crashes, injuries, and fatalities at the nation's 260,000 public and private highway-rail intersections and on railroad rights-of-way. Wyoming Operation Lifesaver is part of the national program, Operation Lifesaver, Inc.--volunteers dedicated to saving lives by promoting highway-rail intersection safety through education. The goal is to make the public more aware of the dangers that exist on and near railroad tracks. It is recommended that Weston County and its schools should request that this education program be done about once a year. More information can be found on the website: www.wyomingoperationlifesaver.com. Contact the State Coordinator to set up a presentation.

Resources:

Wyoming Operation Lifesaver

State Coordinator: Darrell Real
P.O. Box 681
342 Highridge Circle
Wright, WY 82732
307-608-0146
statecoordinator@wyomingoperationlifesaver.com

Weston County Assessment

Linda Harris
North East Wyoming Economic Development Coalition
P.O. Box 4369
Gillette, Wyoming 82717
(307) 670- 1539

Introduction: Thank you for the opportunity to come into your communities. It is not always easy to show the good and the bad. The public meetings were very positive and although there were some negatives, they were expressed with the feeling that they were not insurmountable. It was interesting to hear from all age groups and how many topics had the same outcomes from each group.

Weston County does not lack community pride and support of one another. Getting volunteers in small communities usually means the same people are being utilized to the max and you find that one person will wear many hats to be able to get things done. I compliment you and encourage you to continue on your planned projects as well as the ones that will be suggested from the assessment team. You have the opportunity to build on this momentum and get things completed.

You are set in a prime spot for tourism. The “Old Town” depicts life as it was so many years ago. A growing number of folks are seeking those ties to the past and you have a jewel right in your neighborhood.

One big plus for your future is the step forward by completing this county assessment. Now that you have started the process, don’t lose the momentum. It will be up to your elected and other community and county leaders to maintain and complete this effort. For them to succeed, you should consider doing some of these critical steps.

Get aggressive about putting this assessment to work. Be sure to include input from a cross section of Weston County so they will buy into the process and take ownership. There are good funding resources available from the WBC, the Economic Development Administration (EDA), and others for such planning. Be aggressive and get it done, and then follow your plans. You would be wise to make any such plans an election issue for every election cycle – ask candidates if they support each plan (as they are developed) and then hold the elected officials accountable for ongoing progress in accomplishing each plan.

Theme: Beautification/Clean Up

Challenges:

One of the biggest issues I heard was the dislike of all the old vehicles and metal objects scattered around the county. One of the topics that surfaced many times was to be a tourist destination. As stated above, you are right in the central part of many tourist interests. It can be a deterrent for tourism if the scenery surrounding your area is cluttered and in disrepair.

Some residences and businesses have an accumulation of items on the property that does not make them appealing. Having an attractive community will help entice new residents and new industry/businesses.

Solution:

There are a few options that might relieve this. Make the “old” part of your tourism. Collect them all together and make a “bone yard.” People love old vehicles, tractors, farm equipment and might stop to view if they were all together as a show item, not left without value.

There is always the potential for conflict when asking owners to clean up their property. Another option that is available to help with this situation should it arise is the Agricultural and Natural Resources Mediation Program. There are over 50 mediators located around Wyoming that can help with a variety of mediation needs.

Agricultural and Natural Resources Mediation

Lucy Pauley
Mediation Coordinator
2219 Carey Ave.
Cheyenne, WY 82002
(307) 777-8788 or 1-888-996-9278
lpaule@state.wy.us

Diane Shober, Director
Wyoming Division of Tourism
307 777 2808
diane.shober@visitwy.gov

Many communities around Wyoming have initiated town Clean-up projects including motivational incentives for community members to clean up and take more pride in their environment.

You could plan a weekend or two to have a company come in and have a county clean-up. There is a company called "Junk My Car". They are throughout South Dakota, the closest being in Belle Fourche. They can remove, for FREE, up to 80 vehicles in a weekend and in some cases give you money for them. It doesn't matter if they are in a driveway or hayfield. If you are interested call:

Junk My Car
Jarvis Starks
1-877-586-5692, ext. 6247

Another option is donating to a charity that can sell them for scrap metal. This is used in other communities for fund raisers for charity.

An assessment of the local zoning and ordinance laws would be helpful in cleaning up some of the residential and commercial lots. Offering large dumpsters and rotating to each neighborhood may help with clean up. If the cities and county are willing to offer the dumpster and haul items away for free, it may see big results. Make it into an annual event where residents know the first three weeks of June (example) they would have access to a large dumpster. Maybe prizes attached to the process for the cleanest areas.

There was some concern for the site of the refinery. Although everyone appreciates what the refinery brings to the county, they felt it could be dressed up a little.

WDOT has grant programs that will help with highway cleanup and signage

WYDOT Headquarters
5300 Bishop Blvd
Cheyenne, WY
82009-3340

State Forestry Division (for community tree planting for beautification purposes)
1100 W. 22nd Street
Cheyenne, WY 82002
307-777-7586

Theme: Economic Development

Challenge: Job Diversification

Solution: Work Force Development Training Grants. Notify businesses and companies around the county and evaluate what skills are lacking.

Business Training Grants

- [Grants for Existing Positions](#) - Helps fund skill upgrades for your existing employees
- [Grants for New Positions](#) - Helps fund training for your expanding business's new employees

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Vermona Peterson
2013 W Main St. #102, Newcastle, WY 82701
307-746-9690
307-746-9692 fax

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION OUTREACH

Contact or send mail to our Sheridan Office
2013 W. Main St. #102, Newcastle, WY 82701
307-746-4592

Challenge: Retail Recruitment

Solution: Are your communities business friendly? Sometimes it's hard to know. Maybe provide a short visitor survey and leave at local business and restaurants. Get feedback. One comment in a listening session was that signs were allowed around town but sandwich boards stating specials and sales were not allowed in front of stores. Studies have shown that a sandwich board is a huge asset to small business with tourists walking around your downtown. It is a great way to make quick changes to sales and specials and helps with the advertising budget!

Survey your local folks and find out what is the biggest "want" in new retail. Contact your local and regional economic developers for assistance in recruiting.

Utilize the Wyoming Main Street Program for any buildings on your main street that are not attractive and welcoming to new business. Wyoming Main Street is a program of the Wyoming Rural Development Council and a division of the Wyoming Business Council. Wyoming Main Street strives to improve the social and economic well-being of Wyoming's communities by assisting them to capitalize on the unique identity, assets and character of their business areas through economic development and historic preservation.

Wyoming Main Street Program
Valerie Gaumont
214 W 15th St.
Cheyenne, WY 82002
307.777.2934 or 307.777.6430
mary.randolph@wybusiness.org
valerie.gaumont@wybusiness.org

Small Business Development Center
Wyoming Entrepreneur.Biz
Susan Jerke, Regional Director
2001 W. Lakeway Road, Suite D
Gillette, Wyoming 82718
307-682-5232
sjerke@uwyo.edu

General Business Consulting. The Wyoming Small Business Development Center (SBDC) helps Wyoming businesses and entrepreneurs by providing management assistance, educational programs, and helpful resources. The Wyoming SBDC mission is to strengthen Wyoming businesses and create economic growth by providing excellent management assistance, educational programs, and helpful resources for Wyoming small businesses and entrepreneurs. Free and knowledgeable consulting can often mean the difference between success and failure for local businesses.

Manufacturing Works
Matt Melinkovich, Field Engineer
Gillette, Wyoming 82718
307-567-8171 (cell)
mmelink1@uwyo.edu

Specialized Manufacturing Consulting. Manufacturing-Works (MW) provides consulting assistance to manufacturers. MW serves small and mid-sized manufacturers and technology companies in Wyoming by providing counseling, training, and resources to help them grow. MW offers quantifiable hours of free service per year per business as well as unlimited access to technical assistance for contract development and completion. Other functions include technical manufacturing support nationwide, LEAN, Six Sigma, OSHA and environmental seminars; environmental, energy and agricultural development and enhancements; ISO certification; free online manufacturing directory; sales, marketing and website assessments, including design and development.

Resources:

Wyoming Business Council – Dave Spencer
201 West Lakeway, Suite 1004
Gillette, Wyoming 82718
307-685-0283

Newcastle Chamber of Commerce
1323 Washington Boulevard
Newcastle, WY 82701-2950
(307) 746-2739

EDA Funds
Economic Development Administration
Contact: Linda Harris, NEWEDC Executive Director
P.O. Box 4369
Gillette, Wyoming 82717
307-686-3672
307-670-1539 cell

Challenge: Dollar Flight

Solution: This is a hard issue to tackle. It is prevalent in nearly every community. It goes to retail Recruitment – the more options one has the more likely they are to stay at home. People want choices, even though they may have to pay a little more for them. (See Retail Recruitment)

Challenge: Vocational ED

Solution: Newcastle has an asset that some communities do not have and that is a Community College local outlet. It would be beneficial to survey local business and corporations regarding areas lacking in training. What could be implemented at the college toward technical training classes? If there are areas that one college cannot address, other college outlets might, such as the tech center at the Gillette College. Work Force Development training dollars are available through your local Work Force Development offices.

Eastern Community College
Kim Conzelman, Newcastle Coordinator
(307) 746-3603 / 2196
116 Casper Ave. ~ Newcastle High School Room 120
Newcastle, Wyoming

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Vermona Peterson
[2013 W. Main St. 102, Newcastle, WY 82701](http://www.newcastlewy.com/2013-W-Main-St-102-Newcastle-WY-82701)
307-746-9690
307-746-9692 fax

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION OUTREACH

Contact or send mail to our Sheridan Office
[2013 W. Main St. #102, Newcastle, WY 82701](http://www.newcastlewy.com/2013-W-Main-St-102-Newcastle-WY-82701)
307-746-4592

Theme: Services/Resources

Challenge: Recreation Center

Solution: The recently completed Community Center in Upton is a great asset to the community. It has the potential to be also used for the youth as a recreation center, if supervision can be worked out. Work Force Development has a program that pays the wages of a 55 and older worker for up to 20 hours per week. It would be a great way to save the town budget and still have the coverage. This program is called “Experience Works.”

Newcastle has some access to recreation facilities but on a limited basis. Listening sessions communicated the wish and need for longer hours of access to these facilities such as the pool and basketball court. If the issue is supervision, again the Experience Works program may be of benefit.

Challenge: Assisted Living

Solution: The first step in this process would be a feasibility study to assess the need and the size of facility to accommodate those needs. These studies can be applied for through the Wyoming Business Council or Economic Development Administration. If you are a successful applicant, and after the need is evaluated, the following resources can assist in researching funding for the facility.

Wyoming Business Council – Dave Spencer
201 West Lakeway, Suite 1004
Gillette, Wyoming 82718
307-685-0283

EDA Funds
Economic Development Administration
Contact: Linda Harris, NEWEDC Executive Director
P.O. Box 4369
Gillette, Wyoming 82717
307-686-3672
307-670-1539 cell

Department of Housing and Urban Development
150 East B Street
Casper, Wyoming 82610-1969
307-261-6250

Theme: Youth

Challenge: Lack of jobs for the youth. Lack of recreational facilities and summer activities. Schools are closed to the youth on off school hours for basketball or to work out on weights. Lack of fast food restaurants in Upton and Osage which are typical youth employment opportunities. Hard to attend some activities due to being scheduled on top of each other.

Solution:

- Jobs fall under economic development. Encourage new business through Chamber of Commerce, NEWEDC and the WBC
- Work with the school Superintendent and Principals on scheduling open gym and weight room times.
- Research grants or fund raising activities that could help bring the YMCA into Weston County.
- Work with the Chamber of Commerce or school district on maintaining a calendar of events so that scheduling can be monitored. Plan activities so that they do not overlap, allowing youth to have a larger variety to choose from and/or being able to attend them all.

Possible YMCA Funding Opportunities:

- [Ronald MacDonald House Charities](http://www.rmhc.org/rmhc/index/grants.html) [http://www.rmhc.org/rmhc/index/grants.html]
... *Deadlines:* December 29 and August 1 for letters of inquiry. Full proposals will be invited. The Ronald McDonald House Charities award grants to support programs that improve the health and well-being of children, ages 0-18. Programs should address a significant funding gap or critical opportunity, have long term impact in terms of duplication or reach, and produce measurable results.
- [Rosie's For All Kids](http://www.forallkids.org/) [http://www.forallkids.org/]
... *Deadline:* Applications are welcome at any time. Disbursements of funds occur in March and October.
... The Rosie O'Donnell for All Kids Foundation provides financial support to nonprofit programs serving economically disadvantaged and at-risk children and their families. Priority is given to programs serving low-income, urban areas
- [Verizon Foundation Grants Program](http://foundation.verizon.com/04009.shtml) [http://foundation.verizon.com/04009.shtml]
... *Deadline:* Applications are accepted January 1- November 30.
... Focuses on technology and programs in literary, the digital divide, women, economic development, and community development. Average grant sizes range from \$5,000 - \$10,000
- [National Service Learning Clearinghouse](http://www.servicelearning.org/resources/hot_topics/funding/index.php)
[http://www.servicelearning.org/resources/hot_topics/funding/index.php]
... Search or browse through many funding organizations and grant opportunities

Organization – YMCA – this grant was awarded - can you tap into these funds?

Grant Amount - \$90,000

Foundation - [Gates Foundation](#)

Grant Purpose - to support a capital campaign to expand youth program facilities

Recreational Funding Resources

Daniels Fund (Wyoming is one of their key state grant emphasis programs)

101 Monroe Street

Denver, CO 80206, Toll free number: 1-877-791-4726

Tony Hawk Foundation (for skate park grants)
1611-A S. Melrose Drive #360
Vista, CA 92081
(760) 477-2479

State Parks and Cultural Resources (for recreational trail grants & to acquire public outdoor recreation lands)
2301 Central Avenue
Cheyenne, WY 82002 307-777-8681

National Swimming Pool Foundation
4775 Granby Circle
Colorado Springs, CO 80919-3131
Office 719.540.9119 Fax 719.540.2787

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 7th Street S.W., Washington, DC 20410
Telephone: (202) 708-1112 TTY: (202) 708-1455
(Community Development Block Grants can be used for swimming pools and basketball courts)
Wyoming Business Council – (Community Development Block Grants)
214 West 15th St.
Cheyenne, WY 82002-0240

Department of Housing and Urban Development
150 East B Street
Casper, Wyoming 82610-1969
307-261-6250

Wyoming Associated Builders
Josh Carnahan
800 Werner Court, Suite 255
Casper, Wyoming 82610
307-577-6460
josh.carnahan@wyobuilds.com

Wyoming Community Foundation,
313 South 2nd Street, Laramie, WY 82070
(307) 721-8300, FAX. (307) 721-8333

WESTON COUNTY ASSESSMENT

May 11 – 13, 2010

Steve Elledge
Wyoming Business Council
300 South Wolcott, Suite 300
Casper, WY 82601
Steve.elledge@wybusiness.org

Introduction: The Weston County Assessment provided an enjoyable and productive venue to learn about and see the area, as well as listen to the residents of Weston County. The sessions were well attended and the residents were eager to provide the input and vision necessary for a productive assessment. I enjoyed my stay, learned much, and hope to contribute somewhat to the overall success and follow-through of the assessment. I also acquired a unique appreciation for the area and the people and expect to frequent the area more and more in the coming years. Thank you for your hospitality and thank you for sharing.

There is a challenge and a caveat that accompanies this “County” assessment report:

A 2009 population estimate for Weston County estimates the current population at just over 7,000 people. As we toured and listened county-wide I learned that Weston County is blessed with many of the assets that were mentioned. A beautiful new Community Center in Upton and a great swimming facility in Newcastle come to mind. Both are more than adequate to serve a populace of 7,000 but are located in different communities, providing access inconvenience and dissatisfaction, coupled with some political issues (mostly related to funding). These issues bring Community Center desires, and Swimming Facility desires to the surface in the opposite communities. This situation also relates to other area concerns, up to and including landfill issues.

YOUTH: County Youth were on the minds of most who spoke at the listening sessions. Things for youth to do, the welfare of the youth population, and the potential for either retaining youth in the area as they enter the workforce or promoting their return after higher education.

I will address my suggestions regarding the youth throughout this report, incorporating them into most of my responses and ideas. Overall, however, I do think that there is a great deal available for them throughout the County in the areas of supervised and organized recreational activities. I know that there can always be more, more diverse, and closer to home, but overall when the population of the county is considered the county youth population seems well served. There will always be “down time” and there will always be a bit of boredom. That is a rite of passage for youth everywhere and can actually stimulate their motivation to innovate and contribute if the time is utilized positively.

The main ingredient is passion, and I observed a lot of passion during my visit to the County. The tremendous response we got to our questions from youth is a great indicator of the desire and the intelligence of the youth population.

Resources and suggestions will be spread throughout this report.

CLEANUP: “Cleanup” was addressed with a multitude of objectives in mind. Some were referring to trash, some were referring to junk stored on personal property, some were referring to industrial and environmental situations, and others were more pointedly addressing beautification projects such as gateways and public thoroughfares. Whatever their objective was, we heard “cleanup” loudly and clearly.

A large driver to the cleanup movement is **pride**. Community / County pride is at the core of most cleanup and beautification efforts. While I do not have a specific referral resource, I believe that a cooperative effort with the media, local service clubs and organizations, local governments, and local youth groups, can start the “pride” ball rolling. What is needed to put County pride on the minds of all citizens are some small well publicized “wins” like:

- community park cleanup or countywide park cleanups;
- sponsored property owner contests with merchandise prizes;
- community organization driven cleanup contests / beautification contests;
- youth or community volunteer projects on elderly or disability owned or similarly classified properties.

There are examples of these types of programs statewide.

One that comes to mind is “Paint Your Heart Out” in Casper. This program, available through the Wyoming Housing Network, features volunteer crews from various businesses and organizations who team up to paint a certain number of homes in the community yearly at minimal to no cost to the homeowner who can’t afford to do it. A single weekend is usually sufficient for the actual painting followed by a golf tournament, BBQ, or other volunteer gathering. Supplies and paint can be donated or “sponsored” by individuals, businesses, etc. Contact: [Tonja Funch](#)

[Wyoming Housing Network 307.472.5843](#)

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: Usually a “catch-all” category for what is not happening in an area economically. The main issues I heard during the team visit were “dollar flight”; business diversification; and dark windows on Main streets.

Dollar Flight: I have a simple theory about dollar flight that is based on the concept that *“highways and communication channels run both directions.”*

The internet has opened up commerce extensively. Internet based retail and service businesses are run from virtually anywhere. Location is no longer a major issue. Telecommunications and broadband availability do restrict some to less efficient venues but the bottom line is – if e-commerce is stealing your business there are opportunities to steal some yourself.

As for the highway – there are examples all around us of unique, retail and service oriented businesses competing and winning with the big ticket providers. Examples like Svilar’s restaurant in Hudson, Wyoming or the Sport’s Lure retail operation in Buffalo, WY. If you can provide the atmosphere, the product, and the customer service, you can compete in many venues, and possibly contribute to South Dakota or other Wyoming locations’ “dollar flight” problems. We need to focus on the non-local resource base as well as the local.

I am not naïve enough to think this is always as easy as it sounds, or even possible at all times – but I do believe it is a goal to set our business sites on. Think regional and evaluate competition in other venues is a must – relying on the local market is risky.

Marketing assistance and referral is available through:

[David Spencer, Wyoming Business Council, 307.685.0283](#)

[Susan Jerke, Wyoming Entrepreneur.Biz, 307.682.5232](#)

[Linda Harris, NE Wyoming EDC, 307.686.3672](#)

Business Diversification: Diversification is an objective of most areas of the state, in fact of the nation. Usually, Economic Development is mentioned hand-in-hand with Diversification. It is a challenge.

Recruiting new and different businesses to the area is extremely difficult in most instances, and requires adequate time, effort, and resources. Economic Development groups work at it from a variety of angles. In my opinion, the best option for Weston County would be to continue to build on the successes in the Upton Business and rail project as well as other existing Weston County businesses. Those successes will contribute to synergies valuable to the entire county and region. I believe that diversification is best accessed via expansions and connections to existing industry. Those successes in turn lead to opportunity for related suppliers, affiliates, and even just personal friends.

Once again primary contacts in the Weston County area would be:

[David Spencer, Wyoming Business Council, 307.685.0283](#)

[Linda Harris, NE Wyoming EDC, 307.686.3672](#)

Turning on the Lights on Mainstreet: Filling downtown storefronts and retail slots is always a challenge. And “lights on” is always a lot more appealing and welcoming than dark, empty storefronts. Activity and commerce are vital to downtown and community survival and should be a major target for a community.

There are a number of things that communities have tried and there is room for a number of innovative new approaches. One of the “proven” downtown revitalization & rejuvenation programs that Wyoming has a strong and growing presence in is the MainStreet Program.

Wyoming’s affiliation with the National program, coupled with some innovative additions of its own provide powerful resources for communities statewide:

Contact: [Wyoming MainStreet Program, Mary Randolph @ 307.777.6430](#)

<http://www.Wyomingmainstreet.org> for information, guidance, assistance.

I believe that the “lights on main street problem” presents an outstanding opportunity for the area youth. Small shops and establishments provide youth the opportunity for entrepreneurial education, social networking, and part time employment. Youth developed and managed retail establishments could be an outstanding school, organization, or club project. Every business can benefit from youth input. Here are a few thoughts along these lines:

Youth Advisory Boards: what store couldn't use some input from their current and future clientele? Buy them dinner once a quarter and find out what is right and what isn't in their perception.

Youth Co-Ops: rent some space and turn two or three entrepreneurial youth loose with their products, services, ideas and see what develops. It is possible that a community or interested parties could provide such a space that could even function as a youth small business incubator for retail, light service operations with minimal investment.

Contact [Leah Bruscano with the Wyoming Business Council in Powell at 307.7545785](#) for information on a Youth Business Plan Challenge to stimulate the thought processes.

Several Wyoming communities run Business Plan Challenges to look for and assist new business start-ups in their communities. In Casper, the Casper Chamber of Commerce runs a business plan challenge once a year that provides a well over \$30,000 "in-kind" prize to the winner of the contest to assist with start-up expenses. Examples might include donated accounting, legal, banking, other professional and business services up to a given amount; advertising donations; some contributed cash; etc.

Contact for further information: [Lori Becker, Casper Chamber @ 307.234.5311](#). Again, Dave Spencer of Wyoming Business Council can make additional information referrals.

OSAGE: There was much discussion and reference made to Osage, and particularly to the empty school facility in Osage. A lot of different suggestions were made regarding the school. One of the primary thoughts was to use it as a Community / Youth Center. While it would be a suitable use I would want to be assured that it would be utilized extensively before I took that route. It appears that 10 – 20 miles each way for these activities may not be realistic to consider as best use given the preferences of many who provided input.

I would study the project from the private side of the spectrum, considering possible use as a Trade School, training facility, private school, or something of this nature. Perhaps a Trade Association, Community College, Government Division (National Guard, Army Reserve, Department of Corrections, etc.) would have a suitable occupant/use? I would encourage property ownership to do some appropriate market research and perhaps approach a few of these private or public entities with interests in the area.

[David Spencer with Wyoming Business Council, 307.685.0283](#) would be a resource for access to the Market Research Center at University of Wyoming.

COMMUNICATION: This is an interesting issue that surfaced on many fronts. I will attempt to briefly address one of them that surfaced several times regarding local governments and law enforcement. There is a significant element throughout the County that believes that law enforcement agencies do not apply or enforce the laws uniformly. We heard everything from apathy, to the buddy system (different strokes for different folks), to excessive enforcement. This is likely normal in most areas depending upon your contact with the agencies but seemed a bit elevated in Weston County. Outwardly there appears to be no communication – cooperation

between the agencies except on rare occasions. It would seem like there is an opportunity for a monthly or quarterly inter-agency breakfast meeting or something to identify common problems, perps, etc. If in fact there is such an effort no one we heard from is aware and perhaps it wouldn't hurt to publicize it a bit.

I am not knowledgeable in law enforcement and I respect the depth of the profession – sometimes those agencies need some PR and public awareness activities also. This is just a suggestion.

HOUSING: Several comments were made regarding various housing issues such as: lack of affordable housing; lack of rental housing; senior housing issues; and even available development property.

The County has to take a look at what their role is and should be in the area of housing. Perhaps a County-wide Housing study should be undertaken to get a clearer picture of the issues. Housing inventories, conditions, development, and affordability have a tendency to change in reaction to economic changes and opportunities. Housing is somewhat of a moving target.

Guidance and direction with steps necessary to assess the housing situation is available through:
[Greg Hancock, Wyoming Housing Network, 307.472.5843](#)
[David Spencer, Wyoming Business Council, 307.685.0283](#)

Again – thank you for the opportunity to get to know something about Weston County, another Wyoming gemstone still being discovered.

There is a lot more we could discuss – in fact keeping communities and counties healthy and protecting and enhancing their quality of life is a full time job for all of us. I am available to discuss any of the issues raised in this report.

Steve Elledge
Director of Field Operations
Wyoming Business Council
300 So. Wolcott, Suite 300
Casper, WY 82601
307.577.6012 FAX 307.577.6032 Cell 307.262.6346
steve.elledge@wybusiness.org

Weston County Assessment Report

Stacey Reichardt, Owner
Ninth Street Cafe and Daylight Donuts
714 9th Street
Wheatland, WY 82201
307-331-1951 (cell)
staceyr@vcn.com

As a business owner, downtown retailer and Wyoming Main Street Advisory Board member, I have the following as my contribution to our Weston County Assessment report:
Along with my colleagues, I wish to express my thanks for the hospitality bestowed upon us during our recent visit to Upton, Osage and Newcastle. I also would like to thank everyone who participated in the listening sessions and for taking the time to read this report and preparing for the next steps.

This was my first assessment and I must say it was quite an experience. I am not qualified to speak as a native having only lived in Wyoming since 1989. I do feel qualified to speak as a downtown business owner, an active chamber and economic development member and community developer.

After reviewing your lists of goals, strengths and problems, I would offer some very basic general suggestions rather than offer specific direction.

The biggest and best resources you identified in your community are the “people – people who care for each other” and your youth. You also mentioned events that are either currently going on or that have occurred previously and were successful. Upton Fun Days was one example. Other events in the other communities were mentioned as well.

Events are successful because they are well planned, well executed and well attended. They provide a reason, place and method to gather, provide an opportunity for fellowship, fun, to socialize, shop, eat, and hang out. These are all things that were mentioned as desirable by all ages in all the listening sessions.

My recommendation is to put energy into reviving those wonderful events, and create new ones. Build your committees by inviting people of all ages to join in, especially the younger people. Invite people personally and give them an assignment. Select a few leaders to be responsible for a particular aspect of the event and let them find their helpers. For example – the subcommittees might include Date and Activities, Publicity, Vendors, Set up/clean up, working with the town regarding any road closures, park maintenance, etc. Breaking down an event into manageable categories helps you grow these events over time because they don’t become overwhelming for any one group or person.

You have had many successful events and your chambers are quite active so I am sure this is not new information. I mention it because events – wherever they take place – help a community stay connected, give people something to do, build community pride, promote tourism, help local

retailers, become incentive to clean up, and are just plain fun.

You may think you have a long ways to go, and in some areas that may be accurate. The hardest step to take is that first one – you know – the one involving getting up off the couch – after that the next steps begin to become obvious and even the people to fulfill them.

Events can be organized around other celebrations to take advantage of people being in town. For example hunting season, graduations, holidays or what you celebrate in your community like harvests, town/county anniversaries, or you can make something up like “Upton Mosquito Days.” Serious or silly, who needs a reason to have a “community dance and potluck meet your neighbor day” or “we love our ‘firemen’, ‘policemen’, ‘teachers’, or ‘Santa’.

The best resource for all this lies in your chamber directors and members, your economic development officers and members, local businesses and church congregations, and above all, previous event organizers.

Communication between adults and youth

The quality of our future will be determined by the development of our youth. Opening lines and maintaining lines of communication between youth and adults is an ongoing, challenging process. Resources for this are teachers, school counselors, clergy, parent-teacher organizations, 4-H, coaches, and local organizations like Lions Club, and Kiwanis. Identifying your youth leaders and plugging them in to committees provides a vehicle to begin broadening youth participation. It may be as simple as asking them what they would have fun doing and then putting them on that committee to actually do something.

There are Junior Main Street groups, Junior Lions Clubs, and others that give youth a taste of what community service is all about. Not only are they an asset to the community, participation in these organizations looks good on a resume.

Providing adult supervision in recreation venues can be arranged through churches and social clubs. Matching the elderly with the youth could provide many opportunities for both age groups. Offering mentoring between these groups – like job training/experience sharing to the youth, and computer, cell phone, TV/DVD training to the “older” folks would be a way for them to help each other. There is a group of kids here in Wheatland (junior high kids) who provide tech training to people. They have specific appointments at the school to work on the computers or will come to your home to show you how to operate your TV recording equipment, cell phones, video cameras, you name it.

I look forward to visiting you in the fall as we review our recommendations and develop an action plan. I would also like to include a document that was in my packet, which says it all. 20 CLUES TO RURAL COMMUNITY SURVIVAL – attached herein.

Thank you again for your commitment to your community.

Resources: Wyoming Main Street Program and the 4-point approach to revitalizing historic downtowns. Contact Valerie Gaumont in Cheyenne: 307-777-2934

Mark S. Willis, CEcD, MBA

Chief Operating Officer

Wyoming Business Council

214 W. 15th Street

Cheyenne, WY 82002

307-777-2842

307-777-2837 Fax

Mark.Willis@wybusiness.org

Introduction:

The experience of participating in the Weston County assessment was one of the more enjoyable experiences I have had in some time. The hospitality extended to our resource team was wonderful. The participation in the process by local citizens demonstrated a commitment to the county and showed a great deal of forethought.

I found myself impressed with the amenities and civic resources available within the county, especially in light of the low population density. The school facilities are first class and the healthcare sector, despite some challenges, is impressive.

THEME: Community Planning

CHALLENGE: Cleaning up abandon vehicles and other eyesores. This topic arose more often than any other during our listening sessions and is a critical topic to address, as it effects the County's other goals to increase retail business, largely via tourism, and to attract new business interests to the area.

SOLUTION(S): Despite the best efforts at volunteer cleanup efforts it is unlikely that this problem can be addressed without adopting county wide ordinances to address the issue. While the municipalities have adopted these types of ordinances, it does not appear as if they are being enforced as actively as they might be. This may well be due to a feeling of futility, given that the same ordinances do not exist outside of the city limits where much of the clutter is located.

Beyond the legal rules, resources and options must be made available to the public to rid themselves of the clutter in an affordable manner. Perhaps the County could seek a partnership with a recycling company willing to take on the task of reclaiming the abandoned vehicles and other metal waste at little or no cost to the locals. Coupled with a concentrated effort to promote a cleanup event and enlisting some labor assistance from the Honor Conservation Camp, the initial push could be a momentum builder.

An initiative to promote County-wide zoning is a natural continuation of this process. Though not particularly popular in Wyoming or most of the western states, as population density increases it becomes a more viable consideration. A tour of Colorado's front-range demonstrates some of the problems associated with waiting too late to address the issue. This would likely not be an effort elected officials would want to promote until the clean-up ordinance proves successful.

RESOURCES: My take on the best state source is the most tourist and view shed concerned county in the state makes the most sense.

Teton County Planning & Development Phone: 307-733-3959
Teton County Administration Building, 2nd Floor
200 S. Willow Street, Jackson, WY

www.oklahomacounty.org/planningcommission/Documents/OklahomaCountyZoningRegulations.pdf

THEME: Economic Development

CHALLENGE: Diversification of the economy that drives retail and reduces leakage.

Given the County's strength of location as a "gateway to the Black Hills," increased tourism was the sector most referenced during the discussions. Other business diversification alternatives citizens seem to believe would naturally develop from the retail improvements tourism could initiate. This is logical, as one of the most noted shortcomings in the area was lack of shopping opportunities.

The road improvements presently underway, particularly in Upton, will provide a more attractive inducement to travelers, but new businesses and new or refurbished attractions will be required to complete the draw.

Additionally, Upton is experiencing growth and diversification driven by the rail park partially funded through state grants. With the increasing focus on rail transport this growth should continue.

SOLUTION(S): Assuming tourism is the initial target sector for growth in the area, the communities and county will need to address improving and expanding the aspects that attract tourists.

The World's Only Hand Dug Oil Well in Newcastle has fallen into disrepair. If it could be revitalized and marketed it might result in more people making stops in the town. The downtown area in the city is very appealing, but could use promotion and signage to draw tourist off the highway.

Upton's "Old Town" is fascinating and could be a central draw there. With the completion of the road there, perhaps the next step is a further upgrade of that complex.

RESOURCES:

Wyoming Department of Tourism Phone: 777-7777
1520 Etchepare Circle www.wyomingtourism.org
Cheyenne, WY 82007

THEME: Community Vitality

CHALLENGE: Developing or redeveloping amenities that make the area attractive to all citizens. This topic, especially in regards to the community's younger population, may have a great deal to do with the aging population.

Ironically the area has more facilities to provide activities than the majority of similarly populated areas. The indoor pool in Newcastle and Community Center in Upton, recently completed, are facilities few areas of this size have access to. However, there are issues of usage of these facilities due to lack of funding for personnel to manage them or, as in the case of the pool, some maintenance issues.

Osage has an unused former school building that might serve as a community center there. Funding to update the facility is partially available through grants, but it appears the management issues there might be similar.

Finally, the fact that community-wide family activities, such as dances, have declined in number over the years due to a lack of profit for those entities that sponsored those events. This demonstrates a pattern seen in many small rural cities.

SOLUTION(S): Until adequate funding for management personnel can be found, the best suggestion I heard involved making local non-profits and churches responsible, especially for youth activities, for at least part of this management function. Keys could be provided for those entities willing to accept responsibility for proper use of the facility and they could manage their membership's use of said facilities.

The county and/or Osage need to explore, through the Wyoming Business Council, potential grants to rededicate the school there as a community center. Newcastle may want to discuss developing a plan for a new community center, realizing that even 15 miles is an unmanageable distance even if the Osage center was dedicated to county-wide use.

Community-wide activities in smaller venues are so important in supporting the sense of community within an area that many small cities have subsidized them in recent years. Coupled with Chamber of Commerce and/or merchants (Main Street Program) there have been some successful developments in this regard in recently years. This type of partnership can be explored.

RESOURCES:

Wyoming Main Street/Rural Development
214 West 15th Street
Cheyenne, WY 82002

Phone: 307-777-6430
mary.randolph@wybusiness.org

THEME: Healthcare services

CHALLENGE: Maintaining existing healthcare services and expanding them if possible (no babies are delivered in Weston County).

CHALLENGE: Find a means to keep the services currently available and expand them.

SOLUTION(S): In rural areas there is now a move toward the use of electronic transfer to provide specialize medical services over long distances which will likely help as it develops. However, these services are often associated with a local partnership with a larger provider in a larger city.

This is an avenue I believe Weston County will need to investigate, even at the cost of the local facilities becoming satellites.

RESOURCES:

Wyoming Healthcare Commission	Phone: 307-235-3221
100 West Midwest	whcc@state.wy.us
P.O. Box 2760	
Casper, WY 82602	

THEME: Funding

CHALLENGE: Development of a funding source(s) for development, management and grant matching to take on projects.

While the taxation system in Wyoming puts cities and counties in a position of dependence on the state government, these entities must explore every option to help themselves with funding challenges.

Citizens in general bemoaned the lack of available funding for all the projects and needed management of even the existing facilities, few suggested additional taxation.

SOLUTION(S): Weston County needs to explore passage of a county wide one-cent sales tax for development and, at the county or municipality level, a lodging tax. Despite initial opposition these taxes do not impact citizens in any dramatic way and can provide much of the needed revenue to address the problems noted in this report.

A county-wide one-cent sales tax costs to the average family is estimated to be less than \$70 annually and lodging taxes almost nothing. Personally I have been involved in passage of 15 of these type issues at the city level. 14 of 15 passed and those that required renewal after a set time period were renewed by margins far greater than their original.

A good plan for use of the funds before the vote, a dedicated effort to inform the voters and even better management of the funds resulting are the key aspects of success in these measures.

RESOURCES:

Department of Revenue
Herschler Building, 2nd Floor West
122 West 25th Street
Cheyenne, WY 82002-0110

Phone: 307-777-7961

Dave Spencer
Wyoming Business Council
201 West Lakeway, Suite 1004
Gillette, WY 82718

Phone: 307-689-1320
Email: dave.spencer@wybusiness.org

Mark Willis
Wyoming Business Council
214 West 15th Street
Cheyenne, WY 82002

Phone: 307-777-2842
Email: mark.willis@wybusiness.org

THEME: Job Diversification

CHALLENGE: Expansion of job opportunities within the county beyond the traditional channels.

This topic came up during most of the listening sessions mostly in relation to providing opportunities for youth to either remain in or return to the area following completion of higher education. At present energy related jobs and/or commuter jobs in other locations dominate the base employment portfolio.

SOLUTION(S): As noted in the Economic Development section of this report, a focus on tourism could result in an expansion of the retail opportunities. However, retail is a secondary or support sector (does not pay well enough to be the primary source of family income) except in relations to owners or managers, rather than a base job sector. It is important to making the development of base jobs possible in providing shopping opportunities and secondary jobs for spouses/dependents, but will not drive that development.

To drive creation of base jobs an area needs to consider what type of business or industry might be best served by the assets in place or developable. Upton using the transportation base offered by rail in the city's business park seems to be on the right track here. In the other areas of the county transportation channels are a limiting factor. In the manufacturing area targets for consideration might include high value, light weight and small products (surgical tools, pharmaceuticals, small specialized components and similar products). To be attractive to these types of manufacturers the educational system would need to be enlisted to develop the types of skills these businesses require of the workforce. The area would also need to study the infrastructure needs of the industries targeted and develop accordingly. This is a long-term growth strategy.

Shorter term and in many ways also important to all industry in today's markets will be communication accessibility. In the short-term Weston County's quality of life advantages appeal to certain types of people who work independently (described in economic development circles as "lone eagles") who can live where they chose, with communication being the only limiting factor.

The state CIO's office, in cooperation with a federal study, is currently in the process of assessing and developing a plan to address state-wide broadband coverage. Weston County will need to become familiar with this on-going process and lobby to have additional resources targeted to the area to expand these services. Where there is adequate coverage the opportunity to recruit these types of persons exists, but I suspect there are many areas that need expanded capacity.

If and/or when the communication capacity is in place marketing to these "lone eagles" can be challenging, though Wyoming has experienced tourism related relocation decisions in a number of cases (a visit leading to relocation). Some of the best examples include: Cody Labs (pharmaceutical manufacturing) in Cody and Alces Technologies in Jackson. Though relatively small employers these firms can operate virtually anywhere with good communication channels and provide extremely high paying jobs.

Most demographic experts see the skills employment landscape changing from being company driven to being employee driven. Higher level employers will be more interested in places that are attractive to their workers. So the development of the same qualities and amenities the county may want to develop for tourism should aid in this regard as well.

RESOURCES:

Office of the Chief Information Officer for Wyoming
Deputy CIO: Joe Ahern (lead in the broadband project for the state)
2001 Capital Avenue
Cheyenne, WY 82002
Phone: 307-777-5492

Weston County Assessment Listening Session Responses

What are the major problems and challenges in your county?

**indicates an agreement to a response, one * for each person who agreed*

Listening Sessions

PROBLEMS & CHALLENGES

WESTON COUNTY

- Osage is totally left out of everything that is going on in this county. Including being left out of the county govt itself.**
- School kids don't have much to do after school.
- Clean up, and needs to be a method to dispose of old buildings and junk that is easier than what we have.
- Attracting new businesses and business owners.
- Young people need focus on behalf of the community. Community service outreach for young people.
- Keeping up county roads – would attract more people.
- County roads and more community, family oriented stuff
- Do more cleanup in the county
- Senior center, a nice one in Newcastle but not here
- Ditto – cleanup
- Youth voiced that there is a lack of communication between youth and adults on many levels –
- Youth don't have work, play options
- Community center lack youth oriented, community centered activity
- Lack of advertising
- Some way to instill enthusiasm to keep addressing problems – clean up, downtown project, keep momentum
- More family activities *
- More recreation for all ages
- Ditto above –
- County needs to bring back more recreational**
- More pride in where they live – their possessions
- Drug problem
- Not enough youth leaders
- Younger people to run for office
- More community oriented would help with drug problem, more family involvement
- Improvement in education of local governments
- Osage school demolition money could be used otherwise
- Inconsistent law enforcement

- Drug and alcohol problem is more than just with youth
- Garbage dumps – garbage being dumped out in county
- Law enforcement – things not being prosecuted
- Second fiddle to Gillette and Campbell county
- No dollars
- New people not respecting what we have here – another law enforcement issue
- Forest service does stuff I don't like
- Bedroom community for coal mines might make businesses hard to come here
- Nothing to do
- Rich people of families that have lived here a long time get away with anything
- Not enough recreational opportunities***
- All the road work all the time
- Kids getting into trouble because town being boring – not much to offer
- Drugs***
- Enforcement jurisdictions where drugs are being used is county
- No prosecution
- Nothing for kids to do*****
- Cats and dogs – people don't take care of them
- Two cities are divided
- Pool hours are inconvenient
- Lack of leadership – fewer events, things going on
- Upton the stepchild
- Courthouse closes at 4:30 – can't get there from Upton after work
- Paint and clean up 2 blocks of main street
- Lack of equal services within county for each community
- Lack of pride, taking care of things
- Drugs, alcohol*****
- Not of lot of things to buy
- Transportation – no bus system or taxis
- Not a welcoming town*** – “wait n see” just get accepted
- Liaz fare attitude
- Lack of housing
- Need more business
- Affordable housing
- Cliques community***
- Trains
- Refinery
- Not progressive, proactive community
- Lack of downtown shops
- Cleanup refinery
- Rec center closed
- Road conditions*****
- No work***
- Gossip

- Town rivalries
- Stupidity
- No respect for property***
- Vandalism**
- Things we have are not in good condition**
- Town looking rundown
- The cops
- No skate park*
- Location
- Working together as a county*
- Lack of assets to generate income like other counties do – Sublette
- State and federal money is mandated**
- Find something to keep tourists here more than one night*
- Revenue keeps getting cut back
- No covenants
- Lack of consistent funding*
- Emergency services equipment funding*
- Lack of business success*
- Cyclical economy
- More people to help my business
- Becoming a part of the community
- Opportunities for young daughter*
- Weston county money not properly utilized
- Not much here to entice families*
- Hospital CEO has changed a lot
- Swimming pool closed to public in summertime
- Govt too big,
- Too liberal
- Refinery buying property
- Lack of promotion of our attractions
- Dollar flight
- People burning their trash
- Landfill issues – affording it
- Bike path – half is by refinery, incomplete circuit
- Struggle with demands on infrastructure as a county
- Funding funding funding
- Cannot have a WCCC convention here because of lack of good eating and a meeting place to accommodate them
- Water
- Waste water treatment
- Town land locked
- Mill levy maxed out
- Some concern about 5th cent renewing
- Some people don't want change

- County fair a disaster
- Police are out of control
- How children are treated at high school by law enforcement
- Not doing enough to benefit from Black Hills tourism
- County planner doesn't live here
- In/situ leaching uranium using massive amounts of water
- Bringing youth back into agriculture
- Lack of ranching income
- Govt intrusion into ag culture
- Chopping up ranches into housing developments
- Abandoned land mines money not coming back into state and county
- City council not responsive to public
- Unfunded mandates
- County and local govt control infringed upon both by state and feds
- How to promote ag industry as the GDP of this nation
- Don't have things to add value – feed lot but not processing plant
- Ditto with lumber industry
- Us forest service promoting prairie dogs
- Us forest service planning on bringing in black footed ferrets
- Tendency to always look at bad side here
- Need for long term visioning and planning
- Divisive attitudes between people and county
- Keeping good people in medical care
- Keeping good people in schools
- Planned fly zone may drastically affect our way of life here
- No mid range priced housing
- Need better water and sewer*
- Need better county regs out in county subdivisions
- Junk cars*****
- People don't understand regs – think it controls their freedom when actually it helps their freedom
- Town not attractive
- Inconsistent enforcement of ordinance – i.e. business couldn't have their sandwich board advertising but allow junk cars
- Losing our smart kids
- County doesn't follow state statutes – pick and choose
- Reluctance to growth and change**
- Businesses aren't able to stay here
- No place to socialize besides bars
- Location – lose revenue to Gillette and Rapid*
- Leakage
- Lack of job growth – private sector unable to create jobs
- Good modern affordable housing development \$100,000 level
- Teen high risk factors

- Lack of organized for teens, youth
- Low income households – lack of employment
- Lack of parental involvement
- Increased broadband access
- Regional water provisions
- Absentee decision makers—fed govt has no regard for local culture*
- Environmental groups independent thinking (extremist)
- Decrease in sawmills
- Mountain Pine Beetle
- Road issues
- Sub-dividing and controlling sprawl
- County planning to control growth
- Huge segment of community do not want regulations
- Access getting blocked off
- Lack of planned regulation on land use
- Out of state landowners
- Welcome all, but maintain our culture
- Co-locating utilities, roads, railroads
- Wyo eminent domain laws—land taken by private entity
- Lack of low income housing
- Lack of unstructured activities for youth
- Lack of communication about activities – overlap*
- Same kids involved in everything –
- Law enforcement could be combined – county/city
- Need to reach kids who don't participate
- Lack traditional family structure*
- High % of at risk youth
- Number of people who work out of town
- Number of shift workers -
- People away from home long hours
- Spending money out of the county – recreational shopping
- Don't know how good we have it
- We want better when we have good enough
- Vacant stores on main street
- No pediatrician
- Don't deliver babies here anymore – out of town doctoring every month***
- Liability insurance for baby doctors
- Not enough day care
- No reciprocation on hunting, fishing licenses – we are so close to SD border
- Lack of law enforcement participation in these meetings
- Diverse population – oil and gas people are gypsy nomads
- Work/commute hours take people and their money away
- Distinct groups – don't work together
- Recruitment of primary care physicians*

- Youth graduating and leaving
- Inconsistent diagnoses between doctors here and out of town
- Lack of participation in govt – attending board meetings, etc
- Maintaining viable healthcare
- Education rate is low
- Assisted living
- Businesses close too early**
- Can't rely on tourists to solve our problems
- Title 25 involuntary commitments to state hospital
- Inadequate facilities for above people, expensive
- Lack of psychiatric coverage
- Need new emergency room
- Hospital needs more improving
- Short end of state paying attention to us – stepchild to them
- Need to attract new and good doctors
- Newcastle out of loop in terms of tourism
- Maintaining our property rights and freedoms**
- Federal government mandates – placing of well, septic*
- My rights as a citizen
- Affordable, quality housing*
- Lack of diverse business opportunities
- Govt thinking they can tax things
- Taxes going up but no services improving
- Failure of economic development
- Politicians take an oath they don't understand
- Zoning and land planning
- Economic development
- Requiring permits
- Too many bureaucrats
- Not left alone
- Some people not being responsible
- Lack of vocational school**
- People not coming together
- People don't always do the right thing
- No due process when you pass regulation
- Too many police for the area
- Federal agencies ignoring the county when they write their plans
- Lack of consideration and/or mitigation long term impacts due to development
- Lack of county regs re land use enforcement
- Lack of response from county officials
- Community is stagnant – no push toward doing things
- Forest service priorities messed up i.e. don't allow Christmas tree harvesting on the grasslands
- Habitat loss especially

- Disruption of migration corridors
- Employment
- Do not have assisted care living facilities in county
- not spending money wisely to generate jobs and industry
- lack of coordination between county and state and fed agencies
- refinery pollution
- slowly allowing dangerous offenders out of prison and they are working in community
- majority of our soils are very clayey and/or shallow resulting in bare areas
- refinery needs to improve its appearance
- refinery emits an obnoxious odor
- worry about environmental and health effects
- no zoning or enforcement of junk ordinances
- lack of low income housing
- promotion of alcohol at events
- domestic violence
- lack of economically feasible employment
- selective enforcement of ordinances
- slumlords
- not enough city funding for day care
- anti anything progressive
- lack of legal representation available for victims of domestic violence
- better law enforcement localized training
- need a better form of communication – paper is only once a week
- lack of transparency at all levels
- population based grant funding
- county has no website
- lack of public transportation*
- apathy
- lack of information provided citizens about things that affect our health, environment – warning system when toxins present
- State of Wyoming controls much of school business and they know not what they do
- State of Wyoming controls much of city income and they care not what they do to us
- Lack of good shopping facilities (clothing, etc.) No entertainment or clean environment for teenagers to have any entertainment and then we wonder why they drink or do drugs
- Lack of affordable housing
- Child care
- Need infrastructure, vision, and long-term planning for growth
- In Upton, Osage and Newcastle, the majority of our soils are very clayey and/or shallow. This results in bare areas where they are disturbed and lot of shrubs in native areas. Neither of these is attractive.
- Refinery does very little to improve their appearance. Obnoxious refinery odor
- Jumbled city boundaries and lack of zoning
- The drugs and alcohol with the teens also the partying. The influence comes from adults who make those choices. Also the work habits or attitudes are not so good.

- Lack of industry, keeping businesses in town & in operation & healthy
- I believe that a challenge for all school districts within the EWC service area is of keeping and hiring qualified instructors at the high school for concurrent classes. EWC is into their 10-year Higher Learning Commission's evaluation. In October we will have the visitation team present and will learn of our strengths and weaknesses. The Commission requires teachers to have a master's degree and really recommends 18 graduate level hours in the area of teaching. At EWC we have bent the rules to allow high school instructors to teach without meeting those requirements. It will be interesting to see what is said about our adjuncts, which include concurrent teachers.
- Another item that seems to be a challenge in many areas is the ability to accept change. There are times that the college is told rules that then trickles down to the concurrent program. I do not believe that communities need to accept everything; however, we do need to work together as partners to find the best solution for the students.
- Lack of things to do. The major issues come with the middle school and high school aged kids needing things to do.
- I think that the major problems and challenges this community faces would be the lack of thing for things to do. The major issues come with the middle school and high school aged kids needing things to do.
- There is nothing for the children and young adults to do in the community. We greatly need a youth or community center. Drinking and drug usage are high among our young people. We need to have something in the area for them to do for recreation. If someone would start up the bowling alley or skating rink, this would help alleviate the boredom the children have.
- We are also off the tourist path and the community is losing tourist dollars. This is also true for the Sturgis Rally. We need to do something to attract the bikers and tourists to our area. More advertising in the tourist flyers that are seen around the Black Hills might be advantageous.
- The streets in Newcastle are in bad shape
- I am concerned about the empty buildings, but hopefully this will improve.
- Lack of organized facility for teens, youth.
- Teen high risk factors.
- Low income for household families...lack of employment.
- Parental involvement.
- Underage drinking and drugs
- I think, from a high school student's perspective, there needs to be a place for high school students to congregate, hang out, and stay out of trouble.
- Lack of activities for students outside of school
- Hard for new people to find a job vs. people who have been here longer
- Need to promote safe habits (don't drink and drive, etc)
- Need more youth involvement in 4-H related activities

What are the major strengths and assets in your county?

**indicates an agreement to a response, one * for each person who agreed*

WESTON COUNTY ASSESSMENT

Listening Sessions

STRENGTHS AND ASSETS

WESTON COUNTY

- People are very proud of their community, where they come from, who they are
- Location
- People care for one another
- School in Osage – nice building**
- Rural communities, wide open spaces
- Good infrastructure, good school system, downtown projects, natural gas,
- Industrial park
- Location, edge of Black Hills
- School facilities are beautiful
- People
- School
- Churches
- Older generation – lot of knowledge, but need to share with youth*
- History of the area
- Wyoming Black Hills Leadership Institute
- Youth
- Educated adults
- Good family values*
- Golf courses
- Rodeo events
- Good base – need to add to it – more versatility
- Utilities and communication infrastructure
- Young people willing to learn
- Large population of younger families
- Natural resources – hunting, fishing
- Parks and forested areas
- Hunting
- Progression of volunteerism tapping into available resources
- Pride in present and past military
- Great volunteer fire department
- Communication around fire dept
- People friendly to strangers
- Active food bank
- Elderly people are doing volunteer work

- Tourism
- State support
- Not so many people
- Forest service
- In a nice part of the state
- Industrial park
- Coal mines provides workers
- Schools
- Infrastructure – streets in town
- Lot of open space
- Strong family focus*
- Active community
- Everybody knows everybody
- Very school involved community
- Not overpopulated
- Nice friendly place to be*
- Potential to have lots going on
- Family oriented
- 4H program combines well with Newcastle
- Easy participation in sports, 4H
- Museum district
- Library
- People*
- Wildlife
- Chamber of commerce
- Other active organization
- Events in community
- Beautiful are of Black Hills
- People come back to the community
- Beautiful location***
- Senior center manor***
- Small town*****
- Progressive school system****
- 75 miles to Gillette, Rapid, Spearfish, Devils Tower
- Car shows
- Race track
- Friendly people*****
- Great schools****
- Well run outreach program
- Opportunities for senior citizens
- Low unemployment
- Camping, fishing***
- Upton fundays
- School activities**

- Economic development
- City improvements
- Well supported schools*****
- Family oriented*****
- New track*****
- Good sports program**
- Strong communities that work together**
- Trust each other
- Track*****
- Everyone knows everyone and get along*****
- Community building***
- Not a lot of violence****
- Kids are competitive
- People*****
- None
- Beautiful scenery
- Self reliant attitude
- Wide open spaces
- Small communities
- Youngsters
- Wildlife
- Inter agency cooperation
- Having a county planner
- Location*
- Love the hills
- Low taxes
- No state income tax
- Great cattle raising
- Timber
- Creeks
- Diverse**
- Birds
- Three townships
- Small town rural values**
- Heritage
- Bike path
- Grassroots industries
- Ditto
- Youngsters
- Great state
- Accessibility – highways, county roads
- Personal contact – know everyone
- Low crime rate
- Low taxes

- Fewer govt regs
- Biodiversity
- Hunting, fishing
- Jobs for kids coming back
- Good schools
- Good lifestyle
- Medical care
- Professional care
- Know each other
- Pleasant, safe place to live
- Good water
- Cute downtown
- Rock retaining walls
- Good library
- Courthouse
- Good schools
- Lot of amenities for seniors
- Dental, hospital
- Good water
- Diverse industries
- Biomass potential
- Elk winter grounds
- Upton is progressive
- Some people starting to accept change – makes things better
- Directional horns on RR
- Good transportation and highways out of community
- See new money coming into community
- Could build a better home here than in Gillette and Rapid
- Banking independently owned
- Able to start up my business and get a lot of support from other businesses
- Construction less expensive here
- Quality construction work
- Knew to town and enjoy knowing people
- Less red tape to start a business
- Leaders of Weston County Development Board in Upton
- In 3 years my business has thrived –
- Local fairgrounds
- Friends of Fairground*
- Community support
- Small family community
- Growing improvements in the beautification of Newcastle –
- Newcastle chamber
- Uncomplicated to accomplish things
- People work together to accomplish common goals

- Taxes are low
- Good school system
- Good medical, dental facilities
- Good senior citizen program and facility
- Good cooperation between agencies
- Good fire protection
- Do our advertising and public statements convey the feeling of enthusiasm about our community that we share?
- Natural resources**
- Intelligent local people
- Development of resources in minimum polluting way
- County has ability to build jobs
- Excellent school system
- Swimming pool
- Fair grounds
- Indoor and outdoor arenas
- Museum
- Hospital (but not utilized enough)
- Refinery w/quality jobs
- Interested people in new planning for county
- Open minded citizens
- Amount of free public activities available
- Fund raising
- Businesses and individuals support community activities
- Mural committee
- Ministerial association
- Try to provide opportunities for people to be involved
- Bow hunters
- Shooting range
- Communications have improved
- Have high paying jobs
- Recession hasn't hit as bad as elsewhere in nation
- Businesses help families
- Young people can be big fish in a little pond
- Edge of Black Hills – good access
- We have people who truly care
- People put forth best effort to be involved
- Strong media support for anything you ask for – radio, paper
- Ray Pacheco
- Prison labor force*
- Radio and newspaper do a lot to pull community together
- Sense of community here and it is contagious
- Many citizens are committed – serve on boards, contribute
- Location* proximity to Black Hills***

- Refinery*
- History of this county*
- Black Hills
- Infrastructure – city govt is good
- Good mayor
- Good city engineer
- Good schools
- Good hospital
- People*
- LAK
- Water
- Senior center adaptive reuse
- Freedom***
- Nice bunch of honest hard working folks
- Not regulated to death here
- Natural beauty of nature**
- Open spaces*
- Many warm hearted people ready to help when needed
- People*
- Don't have a lot of people with that sense of entitlement
- We are kind and loving people
- Generous people*
- Access to Black Hills*
- Good strong local business community
- Nice, friendly people
- Self reliance of people here
- Court system
- Wonderful sheriff dept
- Small community
- Great roads
- Everyone helps each other
- Artesian water system
- Sewer system gravity fed don't have to treat it
- Wonderful outdoors
- Clean air
- Best water in the world
- Great place to raise a family
- Survivors of booms and busts
- Location relative to black hills*
- Nice climate**
- Lot of dedicated people
- Great diverse population
- Independent, hard working people
- Do not have zoning in county

- Do not have building permits
- Airport and the way its run –
- People accepted me quite fast
- People help each other-- grand sense of community here
- Diversity of landscape – black hills roll onto sage brush
- Good phone system – fiber optics
- Game animal population is an economic benefit – good sustainable population
- Good game management
- Prison a major employer
- Prisoners help with forest management
- Downtown Newcastle is more attractive
- Antlers no longer an eyesore
- Attractive courthouse
- Extremely strong agency partnerships
- Good coal mine jobs, refinery
- Gateway to black hills*
- Black Hills Leadership Training Institute
- Sense of community – people care about others
- Affordable education beyond HS – online, associates degree
- Chamber of commerce director
- Schools
- Resilient people
- Stable employment at the mines, oil/refinery, prison
- Helpful neighbors
- Friendliness
- Good health services
- Good religious environment in our churches
- We tend to forget how well off we really are
- Refinery
- Hospital
- Good schools
- Heritage and culture
- The three communities are set up against the Black Hills
- Nice climate for Wyoming. East winters and not too much wind
- Great people
- Close to US Forest Service and national Grasslands
- Lots of wildlife
- Downtown Newcastle is much more attractive than it used to be
- Courthouse is very attractive; Main Street looks good
- Acknowledging people’s achievements or group achievements, and supporting sports and education. Also if someone is in need the community is good at helping that family or someone out.
- Very close community, everyone knows everybody, and we put on a lot of fundraising events to help out things/people/places in need.

- The community supports the high school tremendously for activities and sports games.
- Small town- close knit people
- Members gather young and old to help others throughout the community (manner, cleaning highways and parks)
- The school system, EWC Outreach, small community with family values
- Your community has an outstanding K-12 program with numerous instructors who help individuals receive college credits. That is definitely an asset for the community of Newcastle. You also have a wonderful facility to house the EWC credit and community education offices. These offices are staffed by friendly, qualified individuals who are always customer service first with each individual who enters their doors. They are organized and knowledgeable in all aspects of EWC's offerings.
- The major strengths in the community would be the effort people are willing to put into finding ways to keep kids out of trouble. The assets would include the skate park, swimming pool and the various parks
- Our major strength is our citizens. We have good support of the citizens when we have fundraisers or a need in the community.
- Our downtown area is wonderful
- Community support.
- Small family community.
- Growing improvements in the beautification of Newcastle~ Always trying to do more. Chamber is big on this...
- Uncomplicated to accomplish things.
- People work together to accomplish common goals.
- Taxes are low – we need to keep them that way.
- Good school system
- Good medical & dental facilities to provide the necessary fundamental care for a small town.
- Good senior citizen program & facility.
- Good cooperation between agencies.
- Good fire protection but need to expand as the community needs expand.

What projects would you like to see accomplished in your county in 2, 5, 10 and 20 years?

**indicates an agreement to a response, one * for each person who agreed*

WESTON COUNTY ASSESSMENT

Listening Sessions

GOALS AND PROJECTS

WESTON COUNTY

- Renewable energy – 5 years
- Educating law officers – short term
- Organized growth – 5 years

- Downtown areas with more businesses 20 years*
- More locally owned businesses
- Towns need to not limit what kind of businesses come in
- Good rec centers for all ages – 5 yrs
- Comprehensive plan that addresses all these needs – 2 yrs
- Workforce training – now
- Some method of cleaning up – 5 yrs
- More of our younger people were in our churches
- These changes without restricting our freedoms – 5 yrs
- Improvement in roads – 5 yrs
- Clean up along main – especially along highways*
- Senior housing – short term
- More apartments for elderly people*
- Strong economic plan for county – short term
- Get Osage what they want and get them involved in county govt
- Planning for future growth
- Plan to bring in more business for long term, county needs to do more to bring in for whole county – draw big business
- Decent senior center**
- Clean up – 5 yrs
- Airport working 5 yrs
- Address state highways – improvement to handle truck traffic
- Recycling for tires, metal and brush
- Marketing plan 5 yrs
- Historical stuff here – dinosaur bones, shark teeth – marketing
- Towns working together as a county
- Continue towns and county working together *
- Olde Town put on the map and events there
- Economic dev, tourism and city marketing plans
- Improve aesthetics
- Continue people helping people idea – not just rely on govt
- More businesses in town – 5 – 10 yrs
- Housing of some sort
- A motel in town
- More businesses
- Burger king on main street
- More activities for youth
- Skate park*****
- Indoor pool*
- Rec center**** 36 - pool, open gym, yoga classes etc,
- Fast food place
- Place to buy things
- Main street cleaned up and look like an actual town
- Road improvement in Osage

- Year round swimming facility in Upton
- Larger library
- More funding for law enforcement
- Work
- Subway 15
- McDonalds 5
- Taco Bell 2
- Burger King 5
- Dairy King
- More places to hang out 7
- Arena improvement
- More caring police force
- Better roads 7
- Pool 10
- Beer Pong table
- 4 wheeler trails
- Bike trails
- Better stores
- Movie theatre 4
- Track dome2
- Restaurants 5
- Indoor roping arena
- 24/7 gas station 3
- Old HS lot used for something in community
- Bowling alley 7
- Pool hall 4
- Day care center
- More jobs
- Free music program
- Roller skating
- Shopping
- Pretty up town
- Refinery not in middle of town
- Community thriving
- More retail business
- Some industrial business
- More jobs
- More economic development
- Bowling alley back
- Skating rink
- High school dances
- Enjoy the fountain
- See “Now Open”
- More tourist attractions

- Renewable energy
- Workforce training
- Zoning within county
- Regulate junk yards*
- Local govt has a cooperative agency status on any agency that comes here to work with us on what we want/don't want
- Open spaces
- Blue sky
- Private sector job creation
- Thriving economy in all sectors
- County cleaned up
- More businesses downtown
- Wind energy*
- Jobs
- Tourist dollars
- Refinery moved from main street
- Beautiful main street
- Old timers mentor us
- Tie growth into open spaces/blue sky
- Clustered developments
- Living around where services are
- Community rec center
- Amenities for all ages
- Economic development
- Use the resources we have i.e. community center in Osage**
- Weekend shoot
- PRCA rodeo
- More jobs – ongoing*
- More education based*
- Accessible, available, easy to run dump here and Upton
- Affordable senior housing
- Sawmill
- Expansion of after school programs
- 20 yrs – great grandson enjoying the same lifestyle on a big ranch
- Heartland express stopped
- 85 a 4 lane from Cheyenne north – Sundance
- Packing plant
- More diverse treatment of the diverse species
- Game population doubled
- Forest service and BLM more active in land exchange programs
- Co-locate utilities to preserve viewscape
- Re-open campgrounds
- Oil well drilling pits reclaimed
- Abandoned oil well equipment clean up

- Expand community college into Osage school
- Huge improvement in health of refinery workers and air quality
- Old houses fixed up so there are more rentals
- All environmental pollution resolved
- Well planned growth
- Car recycling program
- Lot of history to be told
- See a high fence around refinery
- Upgraded storefronts
- More tourism
- Empty buildings downtown full*
- Offer incentives to new businesses
- More population – have room without changing much
- Continue beautification – expand on towards Pamida
- Shopping
- Continue renovation of fairgrounds
- Hand dug oil well is an asset
- Historic coal mine
- Petro glyphs
- Edge of Black Hills provides diversity
- great steakhouse
- industry to sustain families
- make sure our resources are keeping up with needs as the needs increase i.e. sub development
- one place for developers to get info and details about codes before development begins
- Ride the Prairie Project (bring horses)
- Rec Center
- Hwy 85 expanded to compete with Heartland Express (short term)**
- Recycling
- Recycle metal while cleaning up junk
- County and city work together to own landfill
- Continue RENEW project
- Cleanup of entrances to community
- Market metals of junk (old cars)
- Involve schools in city/county recycling programs**
- Community theme to attract tourists, retirees (branding)
- Continue Mural Committee
- Education of growth problems to allow locals to plan
- Economy, resources and culture should be issues in growth planning process
- County junk regulations
- Pride and covenants to protect canyons from junk
- Community/County project to bring in crusher
- Housing for lower income people
- Take this assessment and make something happen

- Uneven City boundaries
- Make smaller subdivisions possible
- Election year
- Better communication between elected officials
- Some kind of youth center – safe, hang out
- Functioning Y
- Utilize what is already here – i.e. pool**
- Baseball team
- More diverse population 10 yrs
- Continued viable healthcare system*
- 5-10 years more viable economy
- Upgrade infrastructure
- Rec center
- More advanced education
- Renewable energy jobs
- Activities for young and old
- Thriving and booming main street
- 2 yrs better cooperation between NEWEDC, other agencies and neighboring counties
- Assisted living 5-10 yrs
- Continued upgrade of city services
- Waste water treatment
- Protect environment from oil well other polluting entities
- Dissolve planning commission
- Return to constitutional law
- No regulations
- People responsible for their own actions
- Common law courts
- End public housing
- Reduction in govt in county
- Govt stay out of it
- Keep it with private sector
- More meetings like this so people can say what they think
- Main street has changed and is more appealing
- Repurpose things
- Vocational school
- Community center like a Y where family have access to activities i.e. Lessons
- State park in Cambria Canyon
- Restore Cambria City
- Still have public library in 20 yrs
- Still have hospital then
- Still have public schools
- We as a county are supporting those things for the citizens
- Cleaned up
- Beautiful place where people want to come and live

- Meaningful work for our young people to keep them here
- All things people want thru private sector alone without govt, grants
- No regulations
- Public servant jobs made minimal
- County taxes dropped by 90%
- No grants, no strings
- Become independent, self reliant
- Future growth with limited govt
- Education system operated/owned by county
- Free enterprise system
- What is going to happen is going to happen
- 2 yrs return to constitutional, free republic where I keep 98% of what I earn
- 5 yrs – alcohol and drug abuse free county
- Dept of homeland security gone
- County planner gone
- Fewer bureaucrats
- Govt smaller
- Sense of pride among all county citizens*
- Voluntarily clean up junk
- Restore roundhouse
- Large rock circle up north promoted and preserved
- Preserve our base heritage
- Planning of utility and transportation corridors
- 5 yrs – establish an assisted care living facility*
- 10 yrs – hospital stand on its own
- Basic infrastructure for potential growth
- Clean up the junk
- Storefronts filled up here and in Upton
- Expand museum
- Provide for artists
- Need OB care
- Need end of life care
- 2 yrs – tort reform passed
- 2 yrs plan for regulating wind energy in county
- Maintenance of viewsheds
- Regulation of long term management of wind towers
- More employer involvement in use of federal funds we have
- Means to help businesses locally
- More bentonite pit reclamation aimed toward wetland use
- US Forest Service have a person or two stationed in Newcastle or Osage
- Commissioners appoint a small board of citizens (3-5) to work with refinery, deq and epa to clean up appearance of refinery and address air, soil and water problems it is causing
- Pass a strong junk ordinance within city limits

- Annex business properties in and immediately adjacent to Newcastle into city limits so ordinances could be enforced.
- Train whistles at crossings instead of horns
- Refinery would be moved and replaced with play area
- Would have an awesome VFW
- Change in local ordinance to ban convicted drug dealers from getting a liquor license
- Vocational training for non college bound kids
- Community center – 2 yrs
- Osage improvement district finalized**
- Have our own Y complete with work out facility
- New trade school(s)
- Get rid of train crossing horns
- More shopping for clothes in town
- Mural protect and finish
- Fair Community Bldg finished and in use
- County Commissioners appoint a small board of citizens to work cooperatively with the Refinery, DEQ, and EPA to clean up the appearance of the facility and address air, soil and water problems
- Strong junk ordinance passed within city limits
- Business properties in and immediately adjacent to Newcastle annexed into the City limits as to enforce ordinances
- Get a place for teens to hang out, such as a YMCA or such, to try to keep people away from the drinking and drugs and for kids to have something to do. Or maybe even getting an ice skating rink or water slide into down, so people have a place to go other then the pool.. Also religion could be expanded, but if it is a group with a purpose it has more potential. Also more job opportunity for young people to keep them working here. Also everyone needs to chip in, celebrate the positives and fix the negatives. And for more people to be involved
- For people to buckle down on underage drinking and drug use.
- Rec Center
- Business growth, strong manufacturing industry
- Pertains to the opinions of the community in reference to EWC. We will gladly try to help in any way that we can with educational offerings
- A major project that I would like to see accomplished in the community in the near future would be a YMCA opened. I think this would help keep more kids off drugs and away from alcohol.
- Another project that I would like to see accomplished in the community would be a roller skating rink opened up again.
- *A youth or community center is desperately needed for our children and the community as a whole.
- *We have a large base of talented artists and musicians in the area. The community should really build on this talent. An art center or something of this sort would be a nice way to start.
- Youth Center for our youth.
- Bowling alley, arcade, etc. (Somewhere for families to hang out as a family.)

- Promote industry to produce jobs to support families so the community can sustain.
- Need to make sure our resources are keeping up with the needs as the needs increase, for example sub-development.

20 CLUES TO RURAL COMMUNITY SURVIVAL

1. Evidence of Community Pride:

Successful communities are often showplaces of care, attention, history and heritage.

2. Emphasis on Quality in Business and Community Life:

People believe that something worth doing is worth doing right.

3. Willingness to Invest in the Future:

In addition to the brick-and-mortar investments, all decisions are made with an outlook on the future.

4. Participatory Approach to Community Decision Making:

Even the most powerful of opinion leaders seem to work toward building consensus.

5. Cooperative Community Spirit:

The stress is on working together toward a common goal, and the focus is on positive results.

6. Realistic Appraisal of Future Opportunities:

Successful communities have learned how to build on strengths and minimize weaknesses.

7. Awareness of Competitive Positioning:

Local loyalty is emphasized, but thriving communities know who their competitors are and position themselves accordingly.

8. Knowledge of the Physical Environment:

Relative location and available natural resources underscore decision-making.

9. Active Economic Development Program:

There is an organized, public/private approach to economic development.

10. Deliberate Transition of Power to a Younger Generation of Leaders:

People under 40 regularly hold key positions in civic and business affairs.

11. Acceptance of Women in Leadership Roles:

Women are elected officials, plant managers, and entrepreneurial developers.

12. Strong Belief in and Support for Education: Good schools are the norm and centers of community activity.

13. Problem-Solving Approach to Providing Health Care: Health care is considered essential, and smart strategies are in place for diverse methods of delivery.

14. Strong Multi-Generational Family Orientation: The definition of family is broad, and activities include younger as well as older generations.

15. Strong Presence of Traditional Institutions that are Integral to Community Life:

Churches, schools and service clubs are strong influences on community development and social activities.

16. Sound and Well-Maintained Infrastructure:

Leaders work hard to maintain and improve streets, sidewalks, water systems, and sewage facilities.

17. Careful Use of Fiscal Resources:

Frugality is a way of life and expenditures are considered investments in the future.

18. Sophisticated Use of Information Resources:

Leaders access information that is beyond the knowledge base available in the community.

19. Willingness to Seek Help from the Outside:

People seek outside help for community needs, and many compete for government grants and contracts for economic and social programs.

20. Conviction that, in the Long Run, You Have to Do It Yourself:

Thriving rural communities believe their destiny is in their own hands. Making their communities good places is a pro-active assignment, and they willingly accept it.

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