



## City of Laramie

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### LARAMIE PLANNING COMMISSION

April 13, 2026

### STAFF REPORT

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**FILE:** A-26-0001: De-Annexation: Engelskirger Tracts 1 & 2 (West Slope Subdivision)

**REQUEST:** De-Annexation of approximately 80 acres of land

**LOCATION:** North of Laramie Ridge Estates 8th Addition (Northview St.), east of 30th Street.

**APPLICANT(S)/AGENT:** Carson Engelskirger & Danielle Engelskirger

**OWNER:** Carson Engelskirger & Danielle Engelskirger; Engel Land LLC

**PURPOSE:** De-Annexation of approximately 80 acres from the City of Laramie and return to Albany County jurisdiction

**CURRENT ZONING:** LR (Limited Single-Family Residential), R2 (Limited Multi-Family), R3 (Multi-Family)

**PREPARED BY:** Philipp Gabathuler, AICP, Planning Manager

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#### RECOMMENDED MOTION:

Move to recommend **denial** to the City Council the de-annexation of approximately 80 acres of property owned by Carson Engelskirger & Danielle Engelskirger, located generally north of Laramie Ridge Estates 8th Addition and east of 30th Street, based on findings of fact and conclusions of law.

#### APPLICABLE CITY CODE SECTION(S):

Laramie Comprehensive Plan  
Housing Study and Action Plan  
Thrive Community & Economic Development Plan  
Major Street Plan  
Laramie Municipal Code Title 15, Unified Development Code  
International Building Codes and Fire Codes  
Wyoming State Statutes Title 15 Cities and Towns, Article 4 Annexation  
Wyoming State Statutes Title 15 Cities and Towns, Article 5 Planning  
Wyoming State Statutes Title 15 Cities and Towns, Article 6 Zoning

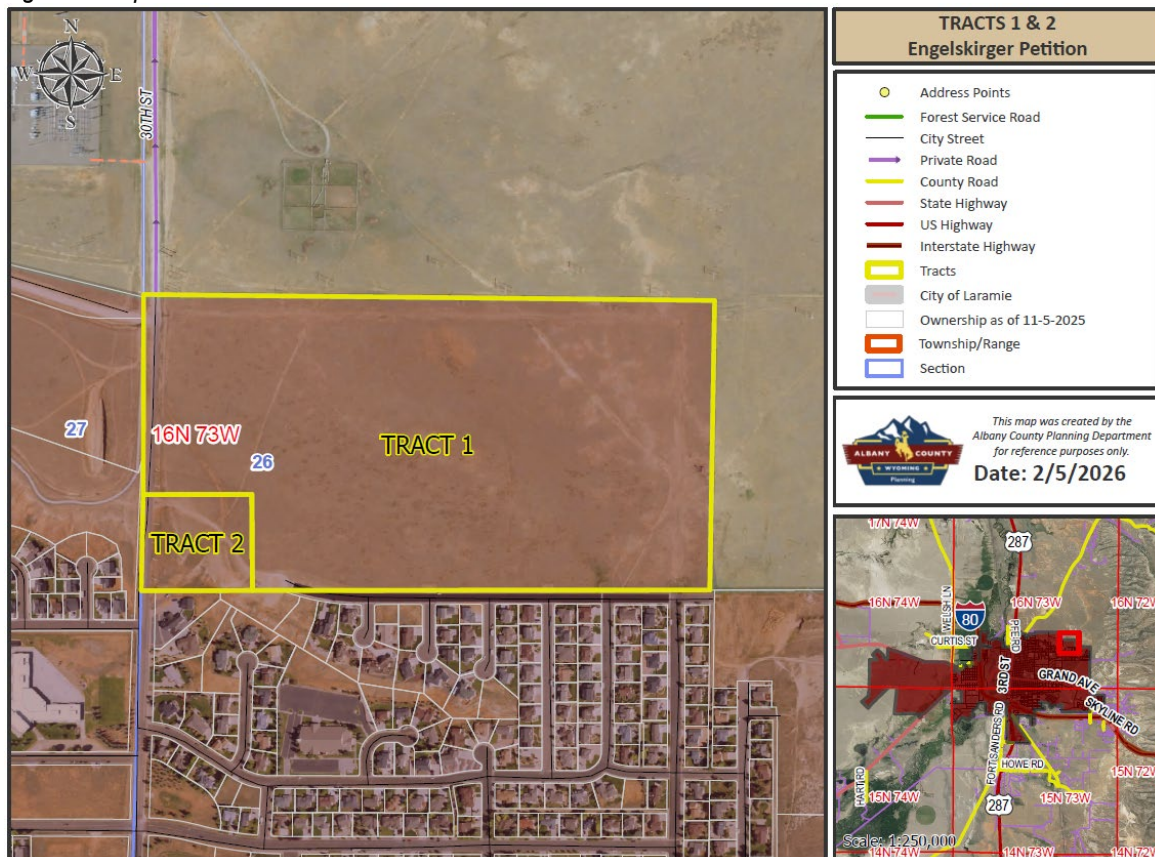
#### DE-ANNEXATION REQUEST, SUMMARY & BACKGROUND:

Property owners, Carson Engelskirger and Danielle Engelskirger, have petitioned (see attached petition) the City of Laramie for de-annexation of approximately 80 acres consisting of two tracts of land generally located north of Laramie Ridge Estates 8th Addition and west

of 30th Street. The subject property is currently located within the City of Laramie and was annexed in December 2023 as part of a coordinated annexation, zoning and preliminary plat development approval process.

At the time of annexation, Tract 1 (approximately 74.86 acres) was owned by West Slope Development Company and is approved with a Preliminary Plat for a planned subdivision consisting of 243 residential lots across a mix of single-family and multi-family zoning districts. The proposed Preliminary Plat includes an internal street network with new and extended public streets, park and open space areas, a detention pond, and a multi-use trail connection, establishing the framework for a complete residential neighborhood. Tract 2 (approximately 5.02 acres), owned by Carson and Danielle Engelskirger, was forcibly annexed in accordance with Wyoming State Statute W.S. 15-1-406(d) which allows for annexation of enclaves or parcels surrounded by the municipality which can complicate service delivery, infrastructure planning, and long-term land use coordination. In conjunction with annexation, the City Council approved amendments to the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map and the Official Zoning Map, reflecting the City’s long-term intent for urban development and service provision in this area.

Figure 1. Proposed De-Annexation Area



In January 2025, Engel Land LLC (associated with the petitioners) acquired Tract 1 following annexation and approval of the subdivision framework. While the Preliminary Plat remains active, the current ownership has indicated that they do not intend to pursue development under City standards at this time.

The applicants have submitted a petition pursuant to Wyoming State Statute 15-1-421 requesting that both tracts be removed from the City of Laramie and returned to Albany County jurisdiction. The petition cites factors including perceived lack of benefit from inclusion within the City, infrastructure considerations, and prior annexation circumstances. However, the request follows a recent annexation that included zoning and land use approvals intended to facilitate urban development, and represents a departure from those previously established entitlements and planning expectations.

The current request for de-annexation, if approved, would remove the subject properties from the City of Laramie and return them to Albany County jurisdiction, where zoning would revert to Agricultural for Tract 1 and Ranchette for Tract 2. This would effectively eliminate the previously approved comprehensive plan, subdivision and zoning framework and remove the property from an area identified in the Laramie Area Growth Plan as appropriate for future urban development, despite its location contiguous to existing development and infrastructure.

As required by Wyoming State Statute, Albany County has provided a de-annexation report evaluating potential impacts. The County indicates that no significant impacts would occur as a result of the de-annexation and that future development would be regulated under County standards. The report also notes that emergency services would shift to County providers and that zoning would revert to prior County designations. While the County's findings address service impacts, they do not evaluate consistency with the City's adopted plans, long-term growth strategy, or policy implications associated with reversing a recent annexation.

All required notices have been completed in accordance with State Statute for the de-annexation request.

#### **APPLICABILITY TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, OTHER ADOPTED PLANS & STUDIES:**

The Comprehensive Plan's Future Land Use (FLU) Map (Map 3.2) originally identified this area as Suburban Residential (SR); however, as part of the West Slope development approvals, the Future Land Use designation was amended to include a mix of Suburban Residential (SR), Urban Residential (UR), and Auto-Urban Multifamily (AUM) to support a broader range of housing types and increased residential density. These designations are intended to accommodate a variety of housing typologies, including single-family, attached housing, and multi-family development, consistent with City development patterns and standards.

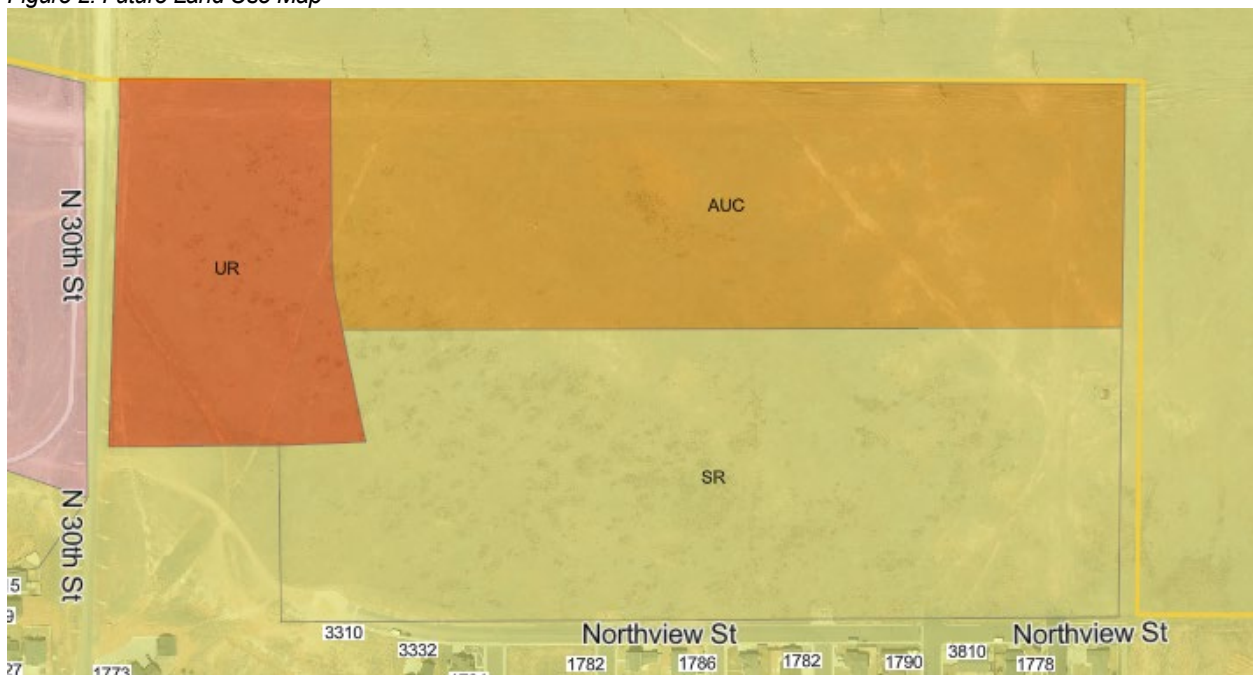
The Laramie Growth Area Plan, adopted in 2023 as a more refined extension of the Comprehensive Plan, identifies this area as appropriate for Urban Residential development. This designation supports both attached and detached housing types, including townhomes, at densities generally ranging from 8 to 10 dwelling units per acre. The Growth Area Plan specifically identifies this location as suitable for future urban expansion due to its proximity to existing development, infrastructure, and logical service extension areas.

Surrounding land use patterns further reinforce this designation. The subject property is adjacent to developed single-family residential neighborhoods to the south (Laramie Ridge Estates), Suburban Commercial and employment uses to the west (Cirrus Sky Park), and additional areas identified for residential growth. These patterns reflect urban and suburban development consistent with City standards rather than rural or agricultural development patterns typical of the County.

Additionally, multiple adopted plans—including the Housing Study and Action Plan 2030 and Thrive Laramie—identify a continued need for increased housing supply, diversity, and development within areas planned for urban growth. The subject property has been specifically evaluated and incorporated into these planning efforts as part of a coordinated strategy to accommodate future housing needs within the City.

Based on the adopted Future Land Use Map amendments, the Laramie Growth Area Plan, and supporting policy documents, this area is clearly identified as appropriate for urban residential development within the City of Laramie. Removal of the property from City jurisdiction would be inconsistent with these adopted plans and would undermine the coordinated planning framework established for future growth and development in this area and recent approvals given at the time of annexation and platting.

Figure 2. Future Land Use Map



The Housing Study and Action Plan 2030 provides additional guidance relevant to this request. The study identifies a shortage of land available for a variety of housing types within the City, including single-family housing, and emphasizes the need to develop land within City limits to meet this demand. The study estimates a 15-year housing need of approximately 4,100 units and highlights the importance of providing a range of housing types, quality, and price points.

The Housing Study further identifies criteria for areas best suited for new residential development, including proximity to existing infrastructure and public facilities, continuation of logical growth patterns, cost-effective development conditions, and consistency with the Future Land Use Plan. The subject property meets these criteria, as it is located adjacent to existing development, within an area planned for residential growth, and in proximity to existing infrastructure. As such, the

Housing Study supports continued inclusion of this property within the City to accommodate future housing needs, regardless of current ownership's development intentions.

The Thrive Laramie Community and Economic Development Action Strategy 2020 similarly emphasizes the importance of expanding housing quality and quantity as a key economic development priority. The plan identifies housing availability as a barrier to economic growth and includes strategies aimed at increasing housing options within the community. It also notes that, for properties located along the city-county boundary and adjacent to City development, a best practice is to incorporate such properties into the City to facilitate efficient extension of infrastructure and services.

De-annexation of the subject property would be inconsistent with these adopted plans, as it would remove land identified as suitable for residential growth from the City's inventory and limit the City's ability to meet long-term housing and economic development objectives.

#### **APPLICANTS REQUEST ANALYSIS:**

As required by Wyoming State Statute, the applicants have submitted a petition (attached) outlining their reasoning for the de-annexation request. The petition generally cites lack of perceived benefit from inclusion within the City, infrastructure considerations, and prior annexation circumstances as justification for removal from the City of Laramie.

Staff has reviewed the statements provided in the petition and finds that many reflect the applicants' preference for rural use of the property rather than inconsistency with City planning policies or regulations. The subject property was annexed in December 2023 as part of a coordinated annexation, zoning, and subdivision approval process intended to facilitate urban residential development. These approvals remain in place and provide a clear path for development consistent with City standards.

The petition also suggests that the property does not benefit from inclusion within the City or lacks adequate infrastructure. However, the property is located contiguous to existing development and within an area planned for urban growth, where extension of services is anticipated as development occurs. Annexation without immediate full service extension is a common and necessary practice to ensure orderly growth and efficient infrastructure planning.

Additionally, while the applicants indicate no intent to develop the property under current City standards, lack of immediate development does not negate the long-term planning framework established by the City and the finding recently approved by the City for annexation and development to city standards. The property has been identified in multiple adopted plans as suitable for future residential development, and removal from the City would be inconsistent with those plans.

Staff further notes that denial of the de-annexation request does not preclude use or development of the property. Development may still occur consistent with City regulations, and the property may also be replatted through the City's subdivision process to better align with a preferred layout, subject to applicable review and approval criteria. The existence of City standards does not constitute a basis for de-annexation.

Overall, staff finds that the reasoning provided in the petition does not outweigh the City's adopted plans, prior approvals, and long-term growth objectives, and therefore does not support the requested de-annexation.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Legal notice was published in the Laramie Boomerang on March 27, 2022. No comments have been provided to the City regarding this request.

#### **ANNEXATION -STATUTORILY REQUIRED FINDINGS:**

W.S. 15-1-421 requires that before any territory may request de-annexation, the governing body of any city or town shall:

- (a) Any landowner within a city or town may petition the governing body of the city or town to have his land or a portion of it de-annexed and the boundaries of the city or town redrawn so their land is outside the city or town boundaries. The landowner shall file the petition with the clerk of the affected city or town and shall also provide a copy of the petition to the county commissioners of the affected county. The county commissioners shall, within sixty (60) days, prepare a report on the impact of the de-annexation. The affected city or town may not take any action on the petition for de-annexation until after the sixty (60) day period. The commissioners may establish rules and regulations for the area to be de-annexed which are consistent with county land use plans and zoning ordinances.
- (b) The petitioner shall be responsible for publishing a public notice of the petition in a newspaper of general circulation in the affected municipality no more than ten (10) days after filing the petition with the municipal clerk. The notice shall also include a map showing identifiable landmarks and boundaries.
- (c) The governing body of the city or town may by ordinance provide for this de-annexation and redrawing of boundaries provided that:
  - (i) The owners of all the land to be de-annexed either sign the petition for de-annexation or consent to the de-annexation within one hundred twenty (120) days after the final passage of the de-annexation ordinance and before its effective date. The passage of the ordinance shall serve as the consent of the city or town for any land owned by the city or town within the area to be de-annexed;
  - (ii) The ordinance is adopted within one hundred twenty (120) days after the receipt of the de-annexation petition and within one hundred eighty (180) days after the landowner's signature of the petition, unless a further consent of all the landowners is obtained before the effective date of the ordinance; and
  - (iii) If the de-annexation causes land within the city or town boundaries to no longer be contiguous with the rest of the city or town, the de-annexation ordinance may be adopted only with the consent of all the owners of the land to be isolated by the de-annexation.

(d) If the city or town owns any rights-of-way, easements, streets or other property or improvements within the area to be de-annexed it may:

- (i) Vacate or abandon them;
- (ii) Transfer them to the county government with the consent of the county commissioners;
- (iii) Agree to transfer them to another city or town upon completion of the annexation of all or part of the de-annexed land to that other city or town;
- (iv) Retain ownership of them.

(e) No de-annexation shall create an area which is situated entirely within the municipality but is not a part of the municipality.

(f) The landowner petitioning to have land de-annexed and his successors and assigns shall remain liable for any assessments incurred or levied while the land was within the city or town boundaries and for all mill levies necessary to repay any indebtedness that was outstanding at any time the property was within the city or town boundaries. Neither the de-annexation nor subsequent annexation to or incorporation as another city shall increase or decrease these liabilities.

Staff believes that this project is eligible for de-annexation, however staff does not recommend approval of the de-annexation request as noted within the staff report. Once a property is annexed, de annexation is up to the approval of the City Council.

#### **FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:**

##### Findings of Fact:

- The application request complies with Wyoming State Statutes Title 15 Cities and Towns, for de-annexation WSS 15-1-421
- The petition complies with W.S. 15-1-4212(c).
- Approval of this petition would remove approximately 6.5 acres of land from the corporate limits of the City of Laramie.
- Approval of the de-annexation conflicts with the adopted and approved plans of the City of Laramie.
- The property currently receives multiple city services and can receive all city services the city offers if desired.
- Alternatives exist to allow the development of the property as desired by the property owner.

##### Conclusions of Law:

- The annexation is being processed pursuant to Wyoming State Statutes Title 15 Cities and Towns, for de-annexation WSS 15-1-421
- The de-annexation petition is not consistent with the adopted and approved plans and studies of the City of Laramie including:

- a. Non-Conformance with the Major Street Plan
  - b. Non-Conformance with the Comprehensive Plan
  - c. Non-Conformance with the Housing Study and Action Plan 2030
  - d. Non-Conformance with the Thrive Laramie Community and Economic Development Action Strategy 2020.
- This property meets the requirements of WSS for properties that should be annexed by a municipality and thus should remain as part of the city.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

1. Approve the project as recommended by staff, based on findings of fact and conclusion of law. Since staff recommends denial, the Planning Commission must conclude that the entire project does meet the findings necessary for approval. As part of the motion, findings for approval must be stated.
2. Approve the project with other modifications, based on findings of fact and conclusion of law.
3. Deny the project based on findings of denial. **(staff’s recommendation)**
4. Postpone the project until issues identified during the meeting can be resolved with the applicant.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Move to recommend **denial** to the City Council the de-annexation of approximately 80 acres of property owned by Carson Engelskirger & Danielle Engelskirger, located generally north of Laramie Ridge Estates 8th Addition and east of 30th Street, based on findings of fact and conclusions of law.

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Vicinity Map (1 page)
2. De-Annexation Petition (5 pages)
3. County’s Report on the Request for De-Annexation (7 Pages)