



**LARAMIE PLANNING COMMISSION
(SITTING AS THE LARAMIE BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT)
April 13 2026
STAFF REPORT**

FILE: VAR-26-0001: Prairie West Estates Expansion

REQUEST: The following variances are requested from Laramie Municipal Code 15.14.140.A.3 (Minimum Community Size), 15.14.140.A.4 (Perimeter Landscaping), 15.14.140.A.5 (Screening Requirements), 15.14.140.A.6.a, 15.14.140.B.2 (Permitted Accessory Buildings Within a Manufactured Home Park)

PROJECT LOCATION: 2260 Franklin Street

OWNER: Prairie West Estates, LLC

APPLICANT: Christie Roberts, DWEL inc.

CURRENT ZONING: R2M (Limited Multi-Family with Independent Manufactured Homes) Zoning District

PREPARED BY: Joseph Shahidi, Planner II

STAFF RECOMMENDED MOTION:

Move to **deny** the requested variance from Laramie Municipal Code sections 15.14.140.A.3, 15.14.140.A.4, 15.14.140.A.5, and 15.14.140.B.2, located at 2260 Franklin St, based on findings of fact and conclusions of law.

APPLICABLE CODE SECTIONS

- LMC -- 15.06.060.D – Variances
- LMC – 15.08.020.F – Limited Multi-Family with Independent Manufactured Homes (R2M) District
- LMC – 15.10.000 – Table of Permitted Uses
- LMC – 15.14.140.A – Development Standards – Manufactured Home Communities – Development Standards
- LMC – 15.22.020 – Nonconforming Uses

Authority for consideration and granting of variances is found in LMC § 15.06.060.D [Variances]. The variance process is intended to provide limited relief from the requirements of this code in those cases where strict application of a particular requirement will create a practical difficulty or unnecessary

hardship prohibiting the use of land in a manner otherwise allowed under this code. It is not intended that variances be granted merely to remove inconveniences or financial burdens that the requirements of this code may impose on property owners in general. Rather, it is intended to provide relief where the requirements of this code render the land difficult or impossible to use because of some unique physical attribute of the property itself or some other factor unique to the property for which the variance is requested. State and/or federal laws or requirements may not be varied by the city.

APPLICABLE DEFINITIONS

15.08.020.F – Limited Multi-Family with Independent Manufactured Homes (R2M) District – purpose

The R2M district is intended to promote the construction of and the continued use of the land for single-family dwellings on small-size lots with a greater density of land use allowed than in the R2 district. In addition to single-family homes, two-family homes (duplexes), townhomes, HUD manufactured homes, and multi-family residential buildings not exceeding four units are allowed. The district prohibits commercial and industrial use or any other use that would substantially interfere with the development or continuation of residential uses in this district.

15.28.030.A.129 – Dwelling, Manufactured Home – A single-family dwelling unit constructed after June 15, 1976, built in accordance with National Manufactured Home Construction and Safety Standards Act, 42 U.S.C. Section 5400 et seq.

15.28.030.A.130 – Dwelling, Mobile Home -- A factory-built dwelling built before June 15, 1976, to standards other than the National Manufactured Home Construction and Safety Standards Act, 42 U.S.C. Section 5400 et seq., and acceptable under applicable state codes in effect at the time of construction of introduction of the home into the state. Mobile homes have not been built since introduction of the National Manufactured Home Construction and Safety Standards Act, 42 U.S.C. Section 5400 et seq.

15.28.030.A.214 – Lot – "Lot" means the area enclosed within the boundary of a lot.

15.28.030.A.230 – Manufactured Home Community – A site containing spaces, improvements and utilities that are leased for the long-term placement of manufactured homes, mobile homes, or recreational vehicles.

15.28.030.A.320 – Setback – The minimum distance required from the property line to the building line.

15.28.030.A.348 – Structure -- anything constructed or erected, except fences or decks less than twelve inches in height, which requires permanent location on the ground or is attached to something having location on the ground. (Ord. 1322 § 2 (part), 2000: Ord. 194 § 12.2(32), 1964).

15.28.030.A.373 – Use – The purpose for which land or building is designed, arranged or intended, or for which either is or may be occupied or maintained. (Ord. 194 § 12.2(33), 1964).

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION:

On December 22, 2025, Planning staff met with the applicant and owner of Prairie West Estates to discuss a proposed expansion of the existing manufactured home community. The community was originally approved through a Conditional Use Permit on April 18, 2006, and later modified through a variance approved on December 20, 2006. It currently contains 46 spaces. The applicant proposes to expand the community by an additional 63 spaces into previously undeveloped portions of the property, resulting in a total of 109 spaces.

The existing manufactured home community does not conform to several development standards adopted with the Unified Development Code on March 2, 2010, including requirements related to minimum community size, landscaping, screening, and accessory structures. As a legally established use, the existing development may continue; however,

expansion of the use onto previously undeveloped land triggers compliance with current development standards pursuant to LMC Section 15.14.010.B.2.

Following the meeting, the applicant submitted a variance request for the following sections of code:

1. 15.14.140.A.3 - All manufactured home communities shall be a minimum of 20 contiguous acres.
2. 15.14.140.A.4 -- All manufactured home communities shall conform to the L4 site perimeter landscaping standards of subsection 15.14.050.
3. 15.14.140.A.5 -- All manufactured home communities shall be screened from any adjacent development or public street with a masonry wall or solid material fence at least six feet in height and adequate plantings.
4. 15.14.140.B.2 -- Detached individual storage rooms with an area no more than 150 sq. ft. each.

The Lot

Prairie West Estates is located on a single lot totaling approximately 17.42 acres. Although bisected by the Jimmy Carter Subdivision, the property is generally located west of Colorado Avenue and south of Franklin Street. The site is almost entirely surrounded by incorporated land, with the exception of

approximately the southern two-thirds of the western property line, which abuts unincorporated county property.

The property contains a 20-foot-wide utility easement for water running north-south, located approximately 55.8 feet east of the western property line which is used for a city water line leading to a city water facility to the south of this property.

The Use

The property is zoned R2M, where a manufactured home community is permitted by right. Unlike many uses that rely primarily on the general development standards in LMC Section 15.14, manufactured home communities are subject to use-specific design standards outlined in LMC Section 15.14.140. These standards apply to expansions, reconfiguration of spaces, and the addition or modification of on-site structures. For example, while a development comprised primarily of single-family dwellings would follow the setback requirements in LMC Section 15.12, manufactured home communities are subject to the specific setback standards in LMC Section 15.14.140.A.6.

The use was originally approved in 2006 by City Council through a Conditional Use Permit (CU-06-01) and later amended that same year through a Variance (VAR-06-04). The original approval contemplated up to 125 spaces; however, only 46 were developed. Because the approved plans have lapsed, any further development of the site requires submission of a new site plan that complies with current standards in LMC Chapter 15.

At this time, no site plan application has been submitted and the applicant has not yet submitted a site plan application pending the outcome of this variance request.

DEPARTMENT REVIEW:

The application was routed to other City departments for review and comment per standard procedure. Based upon the applicant's submitted information, no comments were provided to the planning division.

FINDINGS OF FACT FOR VARIANCE:

In support of their request, the applicant has provided a detailed explanation related to the finding of fact required for this Variance request. This reasoning can be found in the attached cover letter.

Pursuant to LMC §15.06.060.D [Specific Review Procedures – Variances], the Board of Adjustment must find that **all** of the following criteria have been met in order to approve the variance:

- (a) There are special circumstances or conditions, fully described in the board's findings, that are peculiar to the land or building for which the adjustment is sought and do not apply generally to land or buildings in the neighborhood, and have not resulted from any act of the applicant subsequent to the adoption of the code, such as irregularity, narrowness, or shallowness of lot, or exceptional topographical conditions.**

Staff Response: The Planning Division finds that no special circumstances or conditions exist that would justify regulatory relief. With the exception of a utility easement located on the west side of the property, the lot appears to be fully developable, with a standard configuration and relatively flat topography.

- (b) The circumstances or conditions are such that the strict application of the provisions of the code would deprive the applicant of the reasonable use of such land or building.**

Staff Response: The Planning Division finds that strict application of the code would not deprive the applicant of reasonable use of the property. The property is currently developed and functioning as a manufactured home community, and expansion of the use remains feasible under compliant design. The inability to expand at the intensity or configuration proposed does not constitute a deprivation of reasonable use.

- (c) If applicable, the circumstances or conditions are such that the strict application of the provisions of the code would deprive the applicant of access to alternative forms of energy such as solar or wind power.**

Staff Response: Not applicable. The request does not involve solar or wind energy systems, and the variance would not impact access to alternative energy sources.

- (d) The granting of the adjustment is necessary for the reasonable use thereof and the adjustment as granted is the minimum adjustment that will accomplish this purpose.**

Staff Response: The Planning Division finds that the requested variance is not necessary to allow reasonable use of the property. While the applicant has indicated a desire to accommodate storage rooms and additional vehicle storage, these elements can be designed to comply with applicable development standards. As such, the requested adjustment is not considered the minimum necessary.

- (e) The granting of the variance is in harmony with the general purposes and intent of the code and will not be injurious to the neighborhood or otherwise detrimental to the public welfare.**

Staff Response: The requested variances are not in harmony with the general purposes and intent of the code. The development standards for manufactured home communities are intended to ensure adequate buffering, screening, and site design to mitigate impacts associated with higher-density residential development. Granting relief from multiple core standards would undermine these objectives and could result in adverse impacts to surrounding properties and public welfare.

- (f) The variance, if granted, will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood or district in which the property is located, nor substantially or permanently impair the appropriate use or development of adjacent property.**

Staff Response: The requested variances would alter the essential character of the development by reducing required design and buffering standards for a higher-density residential use. Expansion of the community without compliance with these standards may negatively affect adjacent properties and limit the ability of surrounding land to develop in a compatible manner..

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Legal notice was published in the Laramie Boomerang on March 27, 2026. Letters were sent to surrounding property owners within 300 feet of the subject property. Prior to writing this staff report, the Planning Division received one inquiry primarily concerning stormwater and drainage in the area.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve the variance as submitted by the applicant, based on findings of fact and conclusions of law.
2. Approve the variance subject to conditions based on findings of fact and conclusions of law.
3. **Deny** the variance based on findings of denial. **(Recommended)**
4. Postpone the variance until issues identified during the meeting can be resolved.
5. Move to Withdraw the variance based on staff recommendations.

CONCLUSION OF FINDINGS AND STAFF RECOMMENDATION/ BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT OPTIONS:

All the required findings, statutorily necessary for granting a variance as detailed in the staff report above, cannot be made for the request for relief from Municipal Code LMC section 15.14.140.A.6 therefore:

Move to **deny** the requested variance from Laramie Municipal Code sections 15.14.140.A.3, 15.14.140.A.4, 15.14.140.A.5, and 15.14.140.B.2, located at 2260 Franklin St, based on findings of fact and conclusions of law.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Vicinity Map (1 Page)
2. Applicant Cover Letter (4 Pages)
3. Site Plan (1 Pages)