

*Laramie*  
GROWTH AREA  
PLAN



**A COLLABORATION BETWEEN:**



**ADOPTED**

**Albany County Board of County Commissioners July 18, 2023**

**Laramie City Council August 1, 2023**

**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

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L O G A N S I M P S O N



**Thank you to the COMMUNITY MEMBERS that participated in this planning process. Your input and direction were invaluable to the creation of this plan.**



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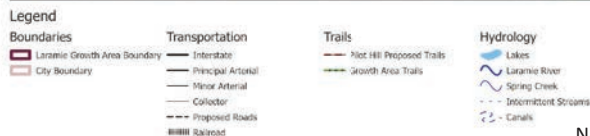
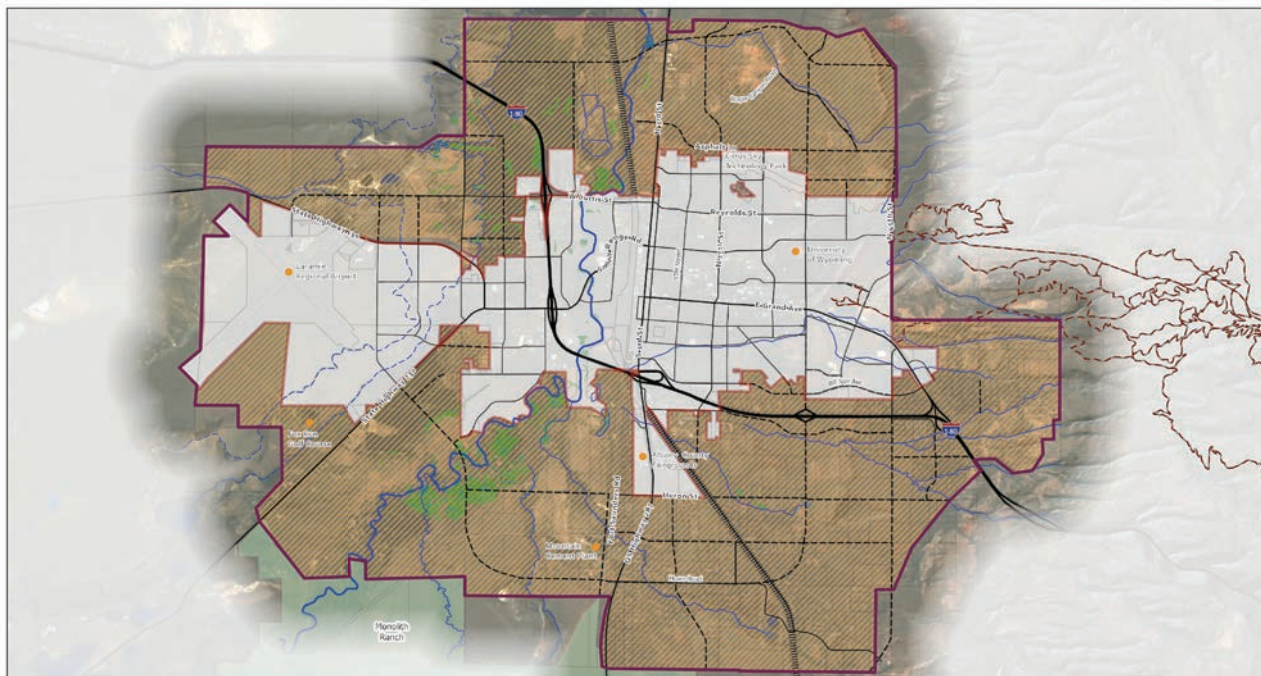
# 1 The Foundation

## LARAMIE GROWTH AREA PLAN

The Laramie Growth Area Plan (LGA Plan or the Plan) is a collaborative effort between Albany County and the City of Laramie that helps provide guidance to future decisions that shape land use, housing, economic development and the delivery of services - specifically streets, water, and sewer - within the unincorporated County area directly adjacent and nearby the City of Laramie. The outer boundary encompasses the land area where development and conservation activities are of joint interest to residents and decision makers of both the County and City. The Plan does not address land currently within the City of Laramie or beyond the Laramie Growth Area (LGA) boundary.

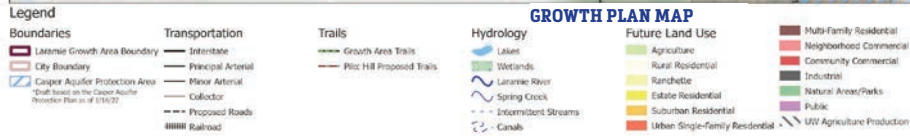
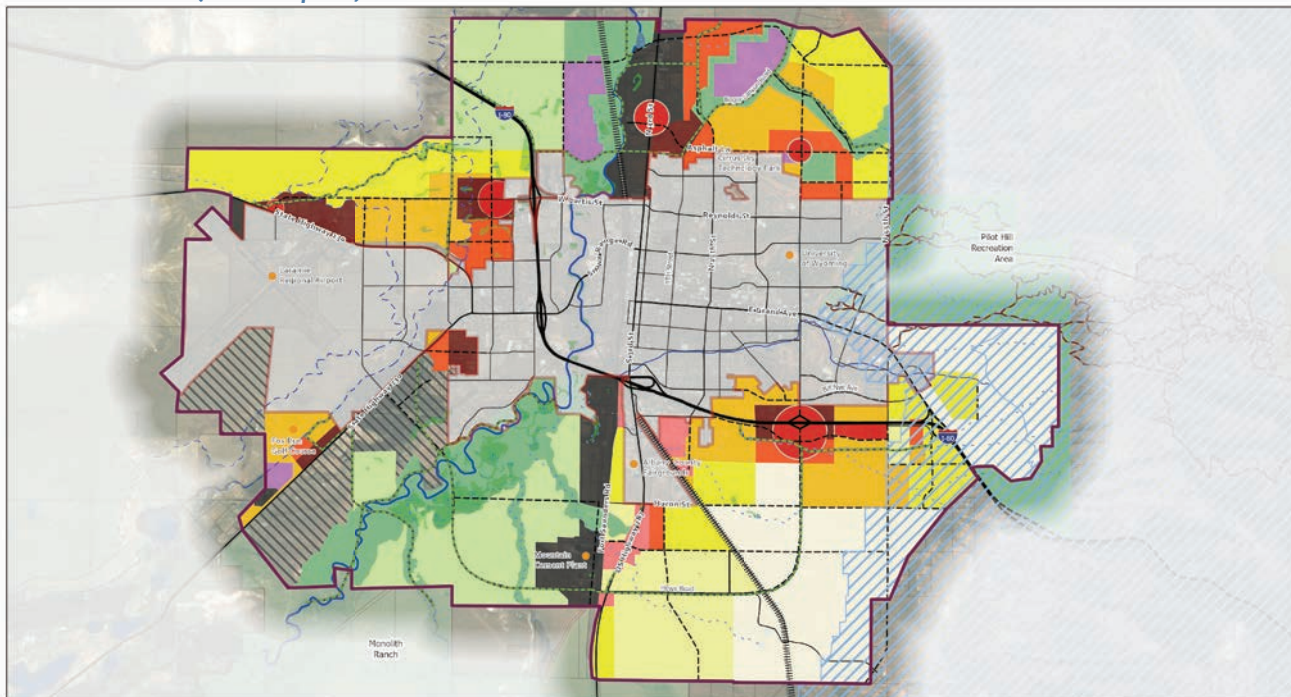
The Plan jointly provides long-range guidance to County and City property owners and decision-makers regarding future residential, commercial, and industrial development, as well as how natural resources and open space can be protected. A jointly adopted Growth Area Map illustrates the desired development pattern for the LGA, however, it is generally assumed that these changes will occur incrementally overtime on a parcel to parcel basis. The Growth Area Map (Map 10) and associated Land Use Category descriptions--coupled with the goals and policies of this Plan--will help direct future development patterns and infrastructure improvements. By establishing the Laramie

Map 1. Laramie Growth Area Boundary



Note: All GIS data sources are located in Appendix 2: Full-Size Maps and GIS Data Sources

Laramie Growth Plan (See Map 10)



Growth Area and associated land use descriptions, City and County officials are providing flexibility for denser development that will be closer to the infrastructure and services that can support it. The long-range perspective provided by this joint plan will allow County and City decision-makers to proactively respond to development pressures, resulting in better service provision, increased natural resource protections, greater predictability for property owners and developers, and a higher quality of life for the community. Ultimately the direction this document provides will facilitate the drafting of a formal intergovernmental agreement between both entities detailing the needed changes in code and zoning which implement the Plan and improve the symbiotic relationship between the City and County.


As shown by Figure 1, the Plan was completed over a 1 year period —from March 2022 to March 2023. Each phase included a series of engagement activities, see  icon, to ensure the process was shaped through community participation (See Figure 2). Additionally, the project phases were completed in consultation with City Council and the Board of County Commissioners, as well as their Planning Commissioners and Staff.

Figure 1. Project Timeline

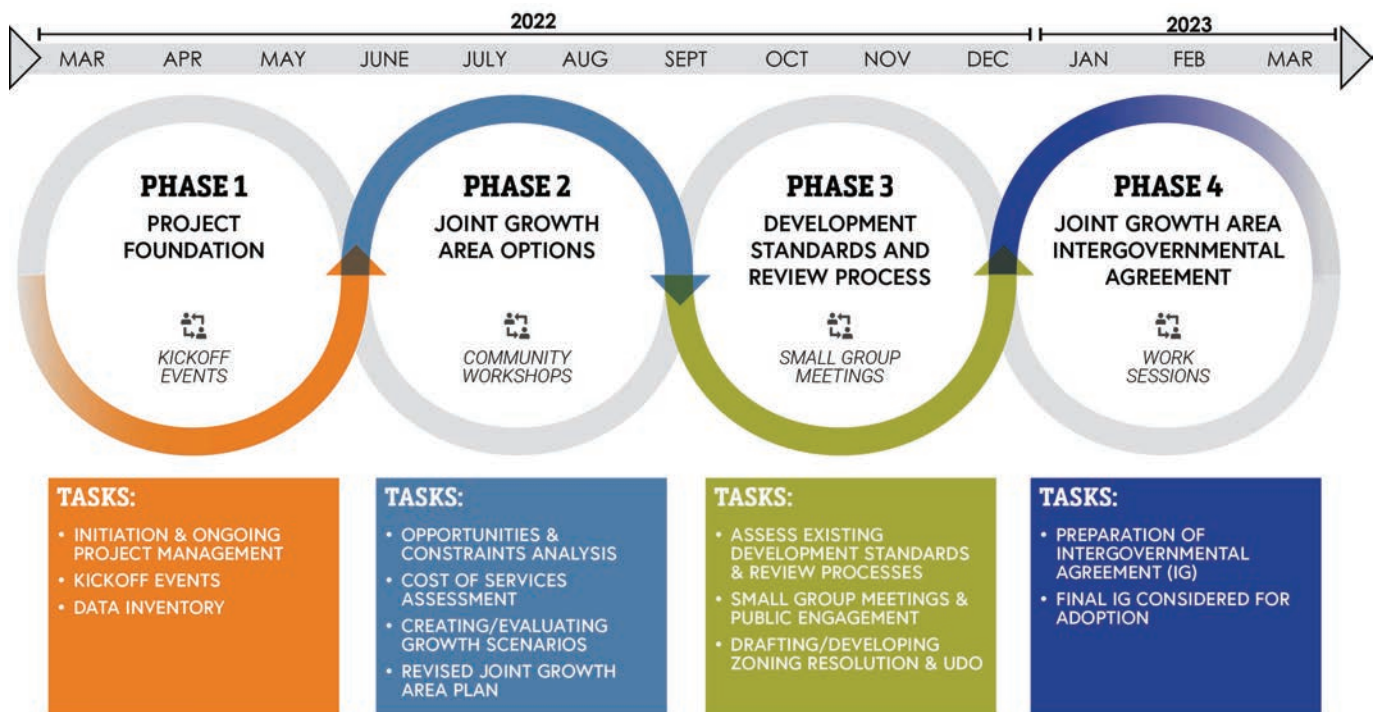


Figure 2. Community Participation by the Numbers



## **WHY THE PLAN IS NEEDED**

In recent years, both the County and City have seen an increase in growth pressure within the LGA. Based on 2022 estimates from the Wyoming Department of Administration and Information, most of Albany County's residents (estimated population of 39,500) live within the City of Laramie (estimated population of 33,400) or within a few miles of the city boundary. The Wyoming Department of Administration and Information also forecasts that by 2040, the County and City population will both increase by 18%, bringing in about six thousand more people to the area.

While population growth can be beneficial and encourage economic stability, appropriate policies and standards are needed to ensure sustainable patterns of development and cost-effective provision of public infrastructure. Funding for water and sewer infrastructure comes primarily from user rates--thus expansion of the system is considered based on strategic planning such as the Laramie Growth Area Plan, previous master plans, and City Council priorities. The City currently maintains 275 miles of waterline along with pumps, wells, and tanks to supply water. There are approximately 175 miles of sewer line maintained by the City with a Wastewater Treatment Plant running at 63% capacity or 3.79 million gallons per day (MGD). The design flow rate for the City's Wastewater Treatment Plant is 6.00 MGD. Factors such as total population, industry type, inflow and infiltration rates, affect the plant's capacity and make it difficult to accurately approximate what full capacity could support in terms of business and commercial.

Historically, development occurring along the fringe of the City of Laramie has resulted in mobility and transportation inefficiencies, utility constraints, land use conflicts, and challenges for both residents and County and City Planning staff in reviewing applications within the LGA. Ensuring predictable and coordinated land uses along the City-County interface has been challenging, specifically, coordinating uses, road access, and clear development standards. Providing a predictable and efficient way to extend municipal water and sewer services to residential areas historically supported by well and septic systems has been a challenge for the City's water and sewer utilities as the community has grown. Balancing City goals with County values provides needed structure and organization to development along the periphery of the City.

With the recent change to the state statute regarding development application referrals, along with continued development pressure, the City and County embarked on a joint planning effort to develop the Plan as guided by Wyoming State Statues. However, it is important to note that the LGA Plan is not regulatory, but is instead an advisory document considered to be an extension of the City of Laramie and Albany County comprehensive plans as a plan for growth along the edge of the City of Laramie. The City and County are maintaining their own separate Comprehensive Plans, but have agreed to coordinate the development of this plan in order to guide development along the City-County interface in a more sustainable and logical direction. The LGA Plan is an official document of both the City and the County, and has been adopted by the City Council, County Planning and Zoning Commission, and the County Commissioners. The LGA Plan is used as a guide for other actions and regulations, such as zoning and subdivision regulations.

## PLAN OBJECTIVES

- Set a clear, unified blueprint for the community's desired future development pattern and service delivery.
- Create a set of consistent standards and zoning for land development and roadways to ensure coordination between County and City efforts.
- Coordinate the development process consistent with the Plan's direction through an Intergovernmental agreement between the County and City.

## BENEFITS OF JOINT PLANNING

Joint planning between the County, City and other service providers allows the community to clearly communicate its future vision for the land adjacent to the city as well as address broader regional goals. Cooperative community planning allows for growth to occur in the most cost-effective and sustainable manner, by anticipating and coordinating future public service and facility needs.

The Plan serves as one of the community's most significant joint planning efforts. It seeks to thoughtfully prepare for future growth within the LGA in a manner that protects open space, active agricultural operations, provides needed housing for residents, and respects private property rights.

- **For residents**, the Plan increases predictability by identifying the general locations for future commercial, residential (all density types) and open space designations that will guide future development.
- **For business and property owners**, the Plan's land use recommendations and overall development policies detail community preferences and needs and provide for better predictability in land use and infrastructure investments.
- **For community leaders and decision-makers**, the Plan provides guidance for future growth and development; policies, programs and services; resource allocation; potential code updates; and capital improvements. In addition, the Plan represents a commitment by community leaders and decision-makers to work together for the good of the community as a whole.





## 2 THE VISION AND PLAN DEVELOPMENT

*The land use plan establishes an anticipated community boundary in which urban services can be provided efficiently through coordination between the County, City, and special districts. The development pattern retains a more rural character at the community's furthest edges and avoids 'leapfrog' development by providing denser, newer neighborhoods near existing services.*



## PHASE 1: PROJECT FOUNDATION

Phase 1 included the formation of the Intergovernmental Committee (IC) to offer oversight and feedback throughout the project and to ensure that the planning process was tailored to the community. An important component of Phase 1 was a field tour of the LGA to visit major opportunity sites, identify key interests of City and County property owners, and discuss challenges and opportunities with County and City staff. Another important component of this Phase were community kickoff events, including in-person interviews with over 50 City and County community stakeholders which included major land owners, developers, contractors, realtors and others who drive the economy of Laramie and two online questionnaires with over 200 responses total. Both questionnaires contained optional questions about where respondents live within the County. For both questionnaires, approximately 20% of questionnaire respondents indicated their primary residence is within the unincorporated County and 20% own property within the unincorporated County.

### INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE

- Bern Hinckley, Planning and Zoning Commission, Albany County
- Heber Richardson, Commissioner, Albany County
- Paul Weaver, Laramie City Council & Mayor, City of Laramie
- Rob Fisher, County Road/Bridge Superintendent, County
- Sharon Buccino, Planning Commissioner, City of Laramie

Figure 3. Community Challenges and Opportunities Word Cloud



Kickoff events introduced the community to the project and invited participants to identify community challenges and opportunities. The word cloud below (the larger the word, the more times it was mentioned) captures what respondents see as challenges for the area. Appendix 1 includes more information and detail related to the public input and participation process.

Similarly, feedback received during the community interviews revealed the following nine (9) themes. To see a list of opportunities provided under each theme, please refer to the Phase 1 Summary in Appendix 1.

1. Provide Adequate Workforce and Attainable Housing
2. Diversify Economic Development Opportunities
3. Improve Connectivity (roads, trails, and neighborhoods)
4. Improve Access to Outdoor Recreation (open space, parks, and trails)
5. Protect Water Quality
6. Consider Impacts to the Cost of Development
7. Enforce Development Regulations (zoning, building codes, and development standards)
8. Financial Responsibility for Infrastructure
9. Collaborate with the University of Wyoming

Public comments received during Phase 1 were instrumental in guiding the potential growth patterns and scenario maps developed in Phase 2.

**Figure 4. Phase 1 Public Engagement Events**



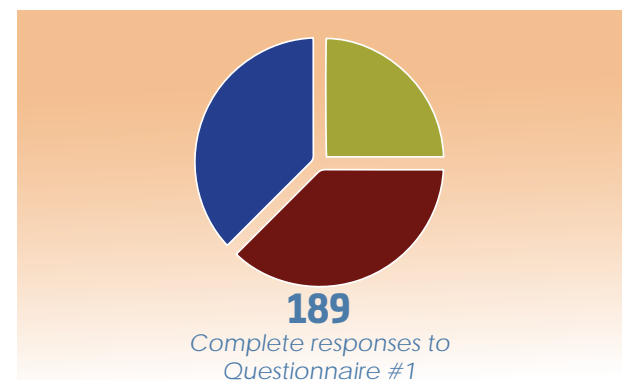
*Community Interviews*



*Community Interviews - online opportunities*



*Information Booth at Recreation Center*





## PHASE 2: JOINT GROWTH AREA OPTIONS

Phase 2 included a technical analysis of population projections, utilities assessment, fiscal assessment, and land use constraints. These studies, along with public comments received from Phase 1, informed three potential growth scenarios, which were then reviewed and evaluated by the community. The scenarios were presented to community members through a series of information kiosks at City and County community events like the Downtown and County Farmers' Markets, Freedom Has a Birthday, Laramie Jubilee Days, and County Fair Family Night. Opportunities were also provided for people to review and comment on the growth scenarios via an online questionnaire, available on the City and County website that garnered over 50 responses.

Throughout Phase 2, the public suggested character-defining elements which they wanted to see reflected in the final plan. These elements were reviewed and finalized by County and City leadership and staff, and give way to the LGA's guiding principles. See section 4: the Path Forward.

Figure 6. Development of Guiding Principles

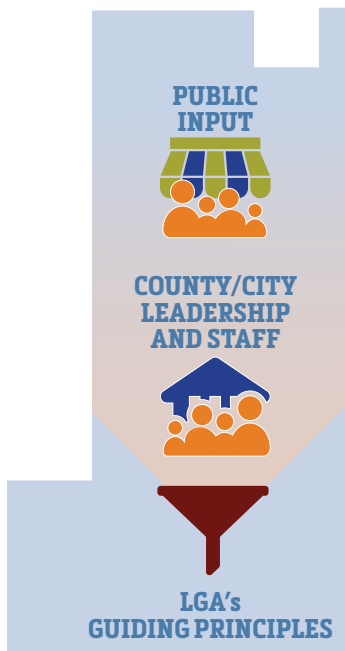


Figure 5. Phase 2 Public Engagement Events



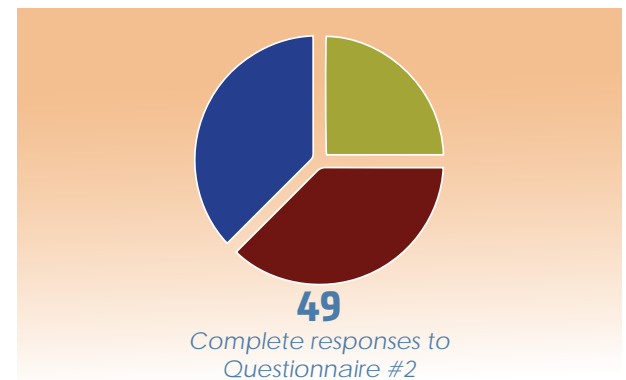
Albany County Farmer's Market



Downtown Laramie Farmers' Market



Laramie Jubilee Days



Phase 2 Public Engagement Events Cont.



Freedom Has a Birthday



County Fair Family Night

### POPULATION PROJECTIONS

Using the Wyoming Department of Administration and Information average growth rate of 5%, it can be projected that in 40 years—by 2060—Albany County and the City of Laramie will have a population of 46,500 and 39,300 people respectively. Planning for future growth will be important for the long term health of the City and County.

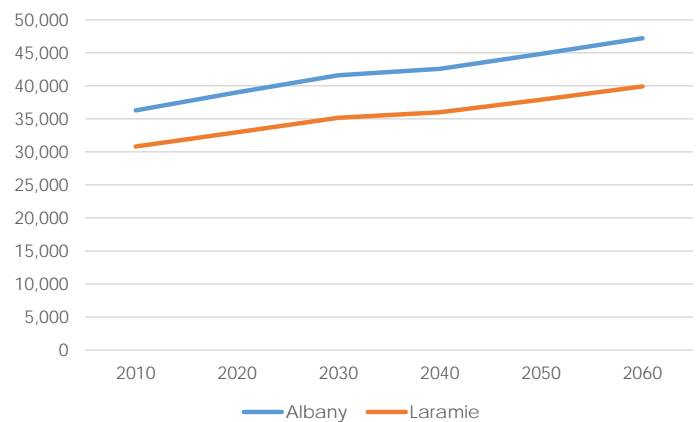
### UTILITIES ASSESSMENT

The feasibility of extension of potable water and sanitary sewer service within the LGA and adjacent to the existing corporate limits of the City was examined through coordination with the City of Laramie and the South of Laramie Water and Sewer District. The resulting utilities assessment is conceptual in nature, and based upon existing reports from the City of Laramie, including existing GIS data, the Laramie Water Management Plan, the 2022 City Wide Master Drainage Plan, 1986 sanitary sewer master plan, 2015 Laramie Water Water Plan, FEMA floodplain maps, the City of Laramie Water and Wastewater Rate Study, as well as Wyoming State Statutes and Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality standards and requirements. See Map 2. New water and sanitary sewer service areas were based solely on capacity needs to serve each of the projected residential, commercial, and industrial uses described in the Plan.

### Modeling Methodology

The proposed potable water and sanitary sewer mains were located to provide those respective services to existing residences along with providing capacity for increased densities and additional expansion associated with potential community growth. In vacant areas anticipated for residential development, the proposed potable water and sanitary sewer mains were placed within existing road rights-of-way. In areas not serviced by existing roads, the proposed potable water and sanitary sewer mains were aligned to coincide with future planned roads that are shown in the 2018 Major Street Plan, integrated into the Transportation Framework Map (See Map 6, page 20). Potable water mains were configured to maximize looping, and the sanitary sewer mains were placed to minimize the number of lift stations.

Figure 7. Population Projections



The sizing of the potable water and sanitary sewer mains were based on future land uses and densities described in the Plan. An average of 100 gallons per capita/day and 2.25 persons/household (ACS, 2020 estimate) was used for sanitary sewer capacity sizing. Projected lot sizes were used to determine the average daily flow rates for each respective pipe located in the LGA. By using a peaking factor of 3.0 and an additional sizing factor of 2.0—per Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality (WYDEQ) requirements—the maximum flow rates for each pipe were estimated. The sewer mains were sized to accommodate the maximum flow rate at 80% capacity.

The potable water mains were sized with a similar methodology, using a design peak flow rate of 200 gallons per capita/day. Based on an average of 2.2 persons/residence and the minimum lot sizes for each respective future land use, the daily peak flow rates were estimated and used to size each proposed potable water main within the LGA. Pressure reducing valves will be necessary in many cases to maintain existing pressure zones within the City of Laramie water system and to prevent future water pressure zones from operating outside of standard pressure ranges. In addition to additional pressure reducing valves, there will be a need for a few additional pump stations to provide system pressure and/or supply water storage tanks to then provide gravity pressure to the expanded service area.

### **Utility System Needs**

In many communities the capacity and location of utility systems is often the largest limiting factor in where and how a community grows. Through an evaluation of existing water and sewer studies conducted by the City of Laramie, the overall the system is planned and sized for growth to occur, but as with all infrastructure, it may require improvements and extensions in areas long term. It is important to note that, generally, there are no major barriers, such as line capacity, availability, or treatment capacity, that would preclude growth in key areas such as to the north, south, and west of the community. It is also important to note that extension beyond the current City of Laramie serviceable area will necessitate updates to the defined serviceable area with the State of Wyoming.

In recent years, upgrades to the existing systems within the developed area of Laramie have resulted in significant improvements and reduced known issues that were limiting the City's ability to serve areas of new growth within the City. Furthermore, these upgrades have included planned infrastructure improvements in areas outside the City limits and within the LGA that will aid in future development, specifically private land owners in and around the City. While these recent improvement have helped, analysis shows that east-to-west expansion of water and sewer lines, outside of already developed areas to the north and south of the City, is now the limiting factor that will affect the City's ability to grow. Expanding the sanitary sewer system east-to-west, in locations north of the City limits, such as the Cirrus Sky Technology park, north of Laramie Ridge Estates, or south of Corthell Hill or I-80, will accommodate future growth in areas that are identified as some of the most logical growth areas in the LGA. Most growth is anticipated north and south of the City, however, some growth opportunities exist west of town with east-west utility extensions. Finally, growth to the east is limited, due to the Aquifer Protection Area, difficulty in extending services, limited access, and the Pilot Hill Open Space area.

The following potential challenges to implementing the LGA Plan include:

- Unknown phasing of private development
- Construction costs (capital and maintenance )
- Funding availability
- Existence of rights-of-way
- Additional pressure zones to serve the LGA
- Additional water storage capacity needs
- Existing system capacities may be limiting

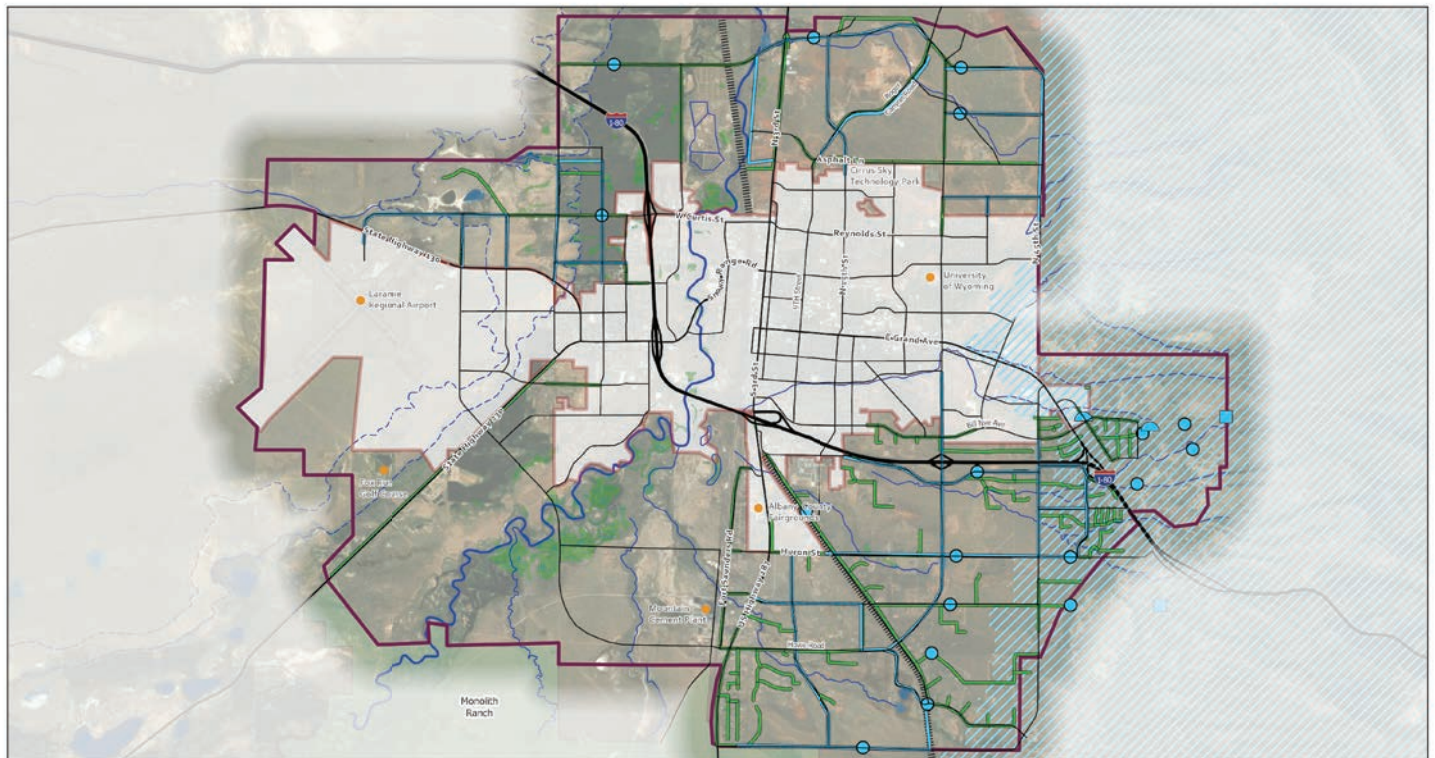
Estimated utility system expansion costs at build-out:

Map 2 below depicts the conceptual expansion of the City of Laramie water and sewer systems, based on the conceptual plans for the expansion of potable and waste water in areas where significant density currently exists or where higher density development is anticipated. The methodology described in the East Laramie Waste Water Feasibility Study, the Laramie City-Wide Master Drainage Plan, and the Laramie Major Street Plan were used to develop the linkages and infrastructure shown in Map 2.

The following cost estimates were developed based on all of the City of Laramie Water and Sewer Studies and the 2022 average construction prices across the State of Wyoming. Map 2 and cost estimates are for expansion into all areas where the City has studied water and sewer extension and do not reflect prioritization or actual desire to expand into these areas. Cost of construction is subject to change with market conditions, specific design and construction criteria, and site-specific factors.

- Potable water system expansion: \$50 - \$80 Million (2022)
- Sanitary sewer system expansion: \$40 - \$70 Million (2022)

Map 2. Laramie Growth Area Water and Sewer System



<b>Legend</b>					
<b>Boundaries</b>	<b>Transportation</b>	<b>Hydrology</b>	<b>Conceptual Water Infrastructure</b>	<b>Conceptual Sewer Infrastructure</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="border: 2px solid purple; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Laramie Growth Area Boundary</li> <li><span style="border: 2px solid red; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; margin-right: 5px;"></span> City Boundary</li> <li><span style="border: 1px dashed blue; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Casper Aquifer Protection Area <small>*Data based on the Casper Aquifer Protection Plan as of 11/16/22</small></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="border-bottom: 2px solid black; width: 15px; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Interstate</li> <li><span style="border-bottom: 2px solid black; width: 15px; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Principal Arterial</li> <li><span style="border-bottom: 2px solid black; width: 15px; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Minor Arterial</li> <li><span style="border-bottom: 2px solid black; width: 15px; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Collector</li> <li><span style="border-bottom: 2px dashed black; width: 15px; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Railroad</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: lightblue; border: 1px solid blue; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Lakes</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: lightgreen; border: 1px solid green; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Wetlands</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; border-bottom: 2px solid blue; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Laramie River</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; border-bottom: 2px solid blue; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Stream</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; border-bottom: 2px dashed blue; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Canals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="border-bottom: 2px solid blue; width: 15px; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Proposed Water Mains</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: lightblue; border: 1px solid blue; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Proposed Water Tanks</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: lightblue; border: 1px solid blue; border-radius: 50%; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Proposed Water Pump Stations</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: lightblue; border: 1px solid blue; border-radius: 50%; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Proposed PRV</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="border-bottom: 2px solid green; width: 15px; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Proposed Sewer Mains</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: lightgreen; border: 1px solid green; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Proposed Sewer Lift Stations</li> </ul>	<div style="text-align: right;"> <p>0 0.5 1 Miles</p> </div>

Note: All GIS data sources are located in Appendix 2: Full-Size Maps and GIS Data Sources

## FISCAL ASSESSMENT

A fiscal impact analysis compares public revenues (e.g., taxes and charges for services) generated by development to the cost to provide public services and infrastructure to the same development. Unlike a municipal budget that needs to be balanced, a fiscal analysis may find that the cost for services and infrastructure exceeds projected revenue. Key factors in a fiscal analysis include a locality's revenue structure, levels of service, infrastructure capacity, and demographic characteristics of new growth.

The assumption is that growth occurring in the LGA will be annexed by the City of Laramie, therefore service and infrastructure costs would be incurred by the City. Services provided by Albany County on a county-wide basis (such as Assessor, Clerk, Courts, Treasurer, Public Health, and Detention Center) would be provided regardless of whether development occurs in the City or unincorporated County. In other words, the change being evaluated is additional City development (in the LGA) and whether City revenues are sufficient to cover the resulting costs for City services and infrastructure. It is possible that some County costs may decrease given the transition to City services (e.g., law enforcement services provided by the Sheriff's Office and Planning Department). However, these types of services are largely driven by population growth and development, and current undeveloped conditions in the unincorporated area of the County can be considered to have a minimal impact relative to city development.

The City of Laramie funds government services with sales and property taxes, state-shared revenues, as well as nonrecurring revenues (from reserves) particularly to fund capital and other nonrecurring expenses. Given a revenue structure that relies on nonlocal revenues, it is not uncommon for a fiscal analysis to yield negative results—and this is the case for the City of Laramie. Because the City's base year level of service for operations and capital is funded through reserves/nonrecurring revenues and nonlocal funding, the cost to serve new development is not fully covered by locally generated revenues.

A summary of fiscal findings is provided below, reflecting annual revenues and expenditures projected to serve new growth. The projected deficit is approximately 16 percent of cost impacts, which is consistent with base year fiscal conditions where reserves fund more than this level of current costs. It should be

## DEFINITIONS

**Fiscal Impact Analysis:** Projection of revenues and expenditures to a public entity from development. The projection reflects revenues from taxes and other sources minus the costs to provide public services and build and maintain capital infrastructure. Unlike preparing a municipal budget—which is revenue constrained—a fiscal impact analysis may find that the cost for services and infrastructure exceeds projected revenue. Fiscal analysis can be used to evaluate the impacts of a specific development project (such as a rezoning request); analyze changes in land-use policies (such as increasing or decreasing allowable densities for development); assist in determining the appropriate balance of land uses (residential, retail, industrial); or identify fiscal impacts related to a proposed annexation.

**Economic Impact Analysis:** Study that focuses on the cash flow to the private sector, measured in income, jobs, output, indirect impacts, and overall wealth in a community. These impacts may or may not have a direct impact on local public fiscal conditions.

noted that the figures shown do not include current City base revenues or expenditures but reflect projected revenues and costs from new development only.

The analysis relies on a series of assumptions. Changes to these assumptions—property valuations, retail sales tax assumptions, levels of service—would affect the fiscal results. Additional revenue options are available to the City that may be worth exploring to strengthen fiscal sustainability.

### Opportunities to Strengthen Fiscal Sustainability

The City of Laramie is limited in its ability to generate own-source revenues at a level sufficient to support ongoing service and infrastructure needs. The City is not alone in this challenge as many local governments face similar revenue constraints. That said, there are several fiscal strategies available to the City that could help improve fiscal sustainability.

Figure 8. Fiscal Findings Summary

LAND USE CATEGORY	20-YEAR PROJECTED GROWTH (HOUSING UNITS AND NONRESIDENTIAL)	ANNUAL PROJECTED REVENUES	ANNUAL PROJECTED COSTS	ANNUAL PROJECTED FISCAL IMPACT
SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL	1,027 SF	\$1,381,315	\$2,035,514	(\$654,199)
MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL	1,069 SF	\$871,235	\$1,536,153	(\$664,918)
RETAIL	196,000 SF	\$1,270,472	\$355,544	\$914,928
COMMERCIAL	337,000 SF	\$267,915	\$585,032	(\$317,117)
INDUSTRIAL	156,000 SF	\$79,560	\$93,444	(\$13,884)
Total		\$3,870,497	\$4,605,687	(\$735,190)

The City’s use of reserves to fund one-time or non-recurring costs such as capital improvements—as opposed to ongoing expenses—is sound financial practice. However, a reliance on reserves requires continual replenishment for ongoing and regular investment in capital needs. By definition, reliance on reserves to fund a capital program may not be feasible on a consistent basis due to annual budgetary pressures.

Three strategies to help the City of Laramie fund capital improvements are briefly discussed in this section:

- Impact Fees
- 7th Cent Sales Tax
- Storm Drainage Utility

### Impact Fees

Impact fees are one-time payments made by new development to mitigate the cost of additional infrastructure capacity. Impact fees can only be collected and used to fund capital improvements that add/expand capacity to a system. Generally, the jurisdiction imposing the fee must: (1) identify the purpose of the fee, (2) identify the use to which the fee is to be put, (3) show a reasonable relationship between the fee’s use and the type of development project (i.e., a nexus), and (4) account for and spend the fees collected only for the purpose(s) used in calculating the fee.

An impact fee represents new growth's proportionate share of capital facility needs. Impact fees do have limitations and should not be regarded as the total solution for infrastructure funding needs. Rather, they are one component of a comprehensive portfolio to ensure provision of adequate public facilities needed to serve new development. In contrast to general taxes, impact fees may not be used for operations, maintenance, replacement of infrastructure, or correcting existing deficiencies.

Impact fees for the City of Laramie could augment the City's use of General Fund, SPT, and nonrecurring revenues for capital improvements. Impact fee revenues could be used to fund general government infrastructure such as street and storm drainage improvements, parks and recreation capital improvements, fire stations, police stations, general government buildings as well as utility capacity needs. Assuming a hypothetical impact fee amount of \$2,000 per housing unit, over \$200,000 could be generated for capital improvements annually. The impact fee amount would be contingent on the infrastructure categories implemented and the methodologies used to calculate the fees.

### 7th Cent Sales Tax

The City currently levies the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Cent optional sales taxes—with the 5<sup>th</sup> Cent being renewed in 2022<sup>1</sup> and the 6<sup>th</sup> Cent most recently approved (by Albany County voters) in 2018 for a 10- to 12-year capital improvement program. A 7<sup>th</sup> Cent optional sales tax is also available to local governments. Per the City of Laramie FY 2022 and 2023 Budget:

*The 7th Cent Sales and Use Tax: This optional tax is available to local governments for general or specific purposes and up to \$0.25 of this tax can be used to support economic development. This tax is not currently levied in Albany County. As stated in the Council's 2018 goals, this source may be discussed as a future funding option, but recent efforts have been directed at the 5th and 6th cent local optional taxes.<sup>2</sup>*

This tax would provide additional broad-based tax revenue to further support one-time capital and other funding needs.

### Storm Drainage Utility

The City has identified a Storm Drainage Utility (allowed by state law) as a potential mechanism to fund storm drainage improvements.<sup>3</sup> Typically, storm drainage costs are due to existing problems from aging development and infrastructure—as opposed to issues caused by new growth. Therefore, a utility is often a better fit to mitigate those needs, rather than impact fees, which is consistent with how the City manages similar utilities such as water and sewer. A utility provides a larger revenue base and generates ongoing revenues to cover operations, maintenance, and debt service for major capital improvements. A storm drainage utility could also reduce the storm drainage infrastructure demand on the City's general fund.

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Figure 1. <sup>1</sup> While the tax was renewed in 2022 for another 4-year cycle, the ballot question to make this tax permanent was rejected (also in 2022).

Figure 1. <sup>2</sup> City of Laramie Adopted Budget Fiscal Years 2023 and 2024, p. 25

Figure 1. <sup>3</sup> City of Laramie Adopted Budget Fiscal Years 2023 and 2024, p. 30.

## LAND USE OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

Land use opportunities and constraints were assessed and mapped (See Maps 4-7) to understand the community’s development opportunities and limitations. Elements investigated included the following:

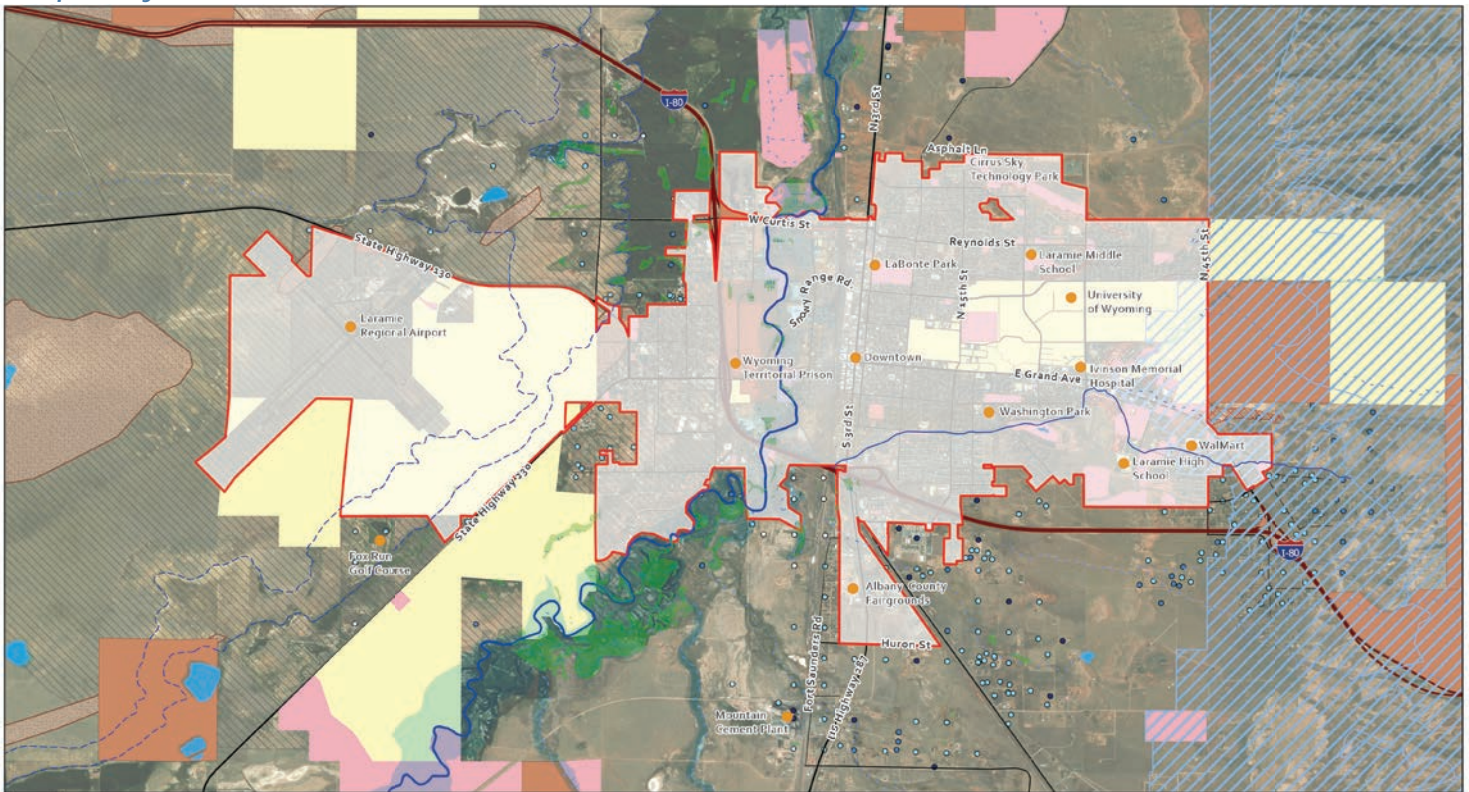
- Physical and environmental constraints
- Parks, trails, and open spaces
- Development Applications in the LGA
- Transportation framework
- Existing zoning framework

### Physical and Environmental Constraints

Physical and environmental constraints, including steep slopes, unstable soils, floodplains, and wetlands, can be significant impediments to development and pose health and safety risks. As such, these barriers and the Casper Aquifer Protection Overlay Zone (APOZ) were mapped to ensure proposed development considers natural topography and is economically viable to construct. The Casper Aquifer Protection Plan (CAPP) provides a level of protection specific to Laramie’s water supply.

The most prevalent constraints are the wetlands and floodplain associated with the Laramie River north and south of the City, and the APOZ and Pilot Hill recreation Area along the eastern edge of the City. There are also significant topographic constraints throughout the area northeast of the City and prohibitive infrastructure costs required to develop west of I-80. Generally, areas between 3rd and 45th Streets have the highest potential development due to proximity to existing infrastructure and services. Map 3 shows these constraints, which helped guide development of the Growth Plan Map.

Map 3. Physical and Environmental Framework



**Legend**

<b>Boundaries</b>	<b>Floodplain</b>	<b>Land Ownership</b>	<b>Transportation</b>	<b>Hydrology</b>	<b>Development Constraints</b>	<b>Active Water Wells by Total Depth</b>
City Boundary	500 Year Floodplain	State of WY	Interstate	Lakes	Expansive Soils	<15'
Casper Aquifer Protection Area	100 Year Floodplain	City of Laramie Parcels	Existing Principal Arterial	Wetlands	Ridgelines	15' - 50'
<small>*Data based on the Casper Aquifer Protection Plan as of 3/16/22</small>		UW Holdings	Existing Minor Arterial	Laramie River	Airport Influence Area	50' - 250'
			Existing Collector	Spring Creek		250' - 500'
				Intermittent Streams		>500'
				Canals		

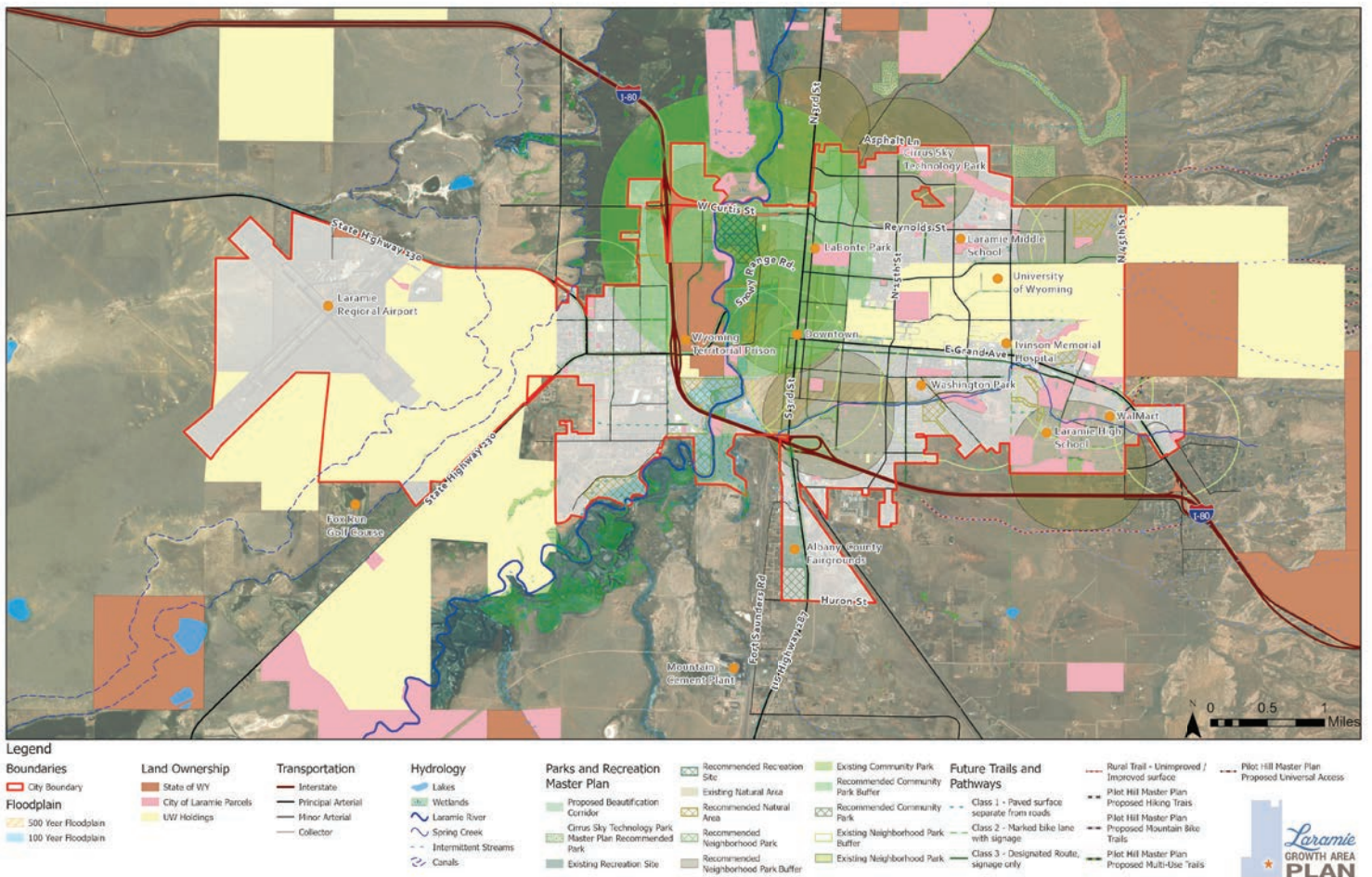
0 0.5 1 Miles  
  
**Laramie GROWTH AREA PLAN**

Note: All GIS data sources are located in Appendix 2: Full-Size Maps and GIS Data Sources

## Parks, Trails, and Open Spaces

While developing this Plan, areas within the proposed LGA which could benefit from additional facilities were identified using the spatial distribution of and access to existing and planned parks, trails, and open space. One of the most treasured characteristics of the LGA is the access to parks, open space, and trails. However, the following map indicates that while City residents will be well served by proposed new facilities, very little of the LGA would be served. As Laramie grows, it is important that the County and City collaborate (e.g., in creating/updating their Parks and Recreation Plan) to maintain and expand access to these community facilities, with the ultimate goal of serving the future LGA with the same level of service as anticipated within the City.

Map 4. Parks, Trails, and Open Space Service Framework

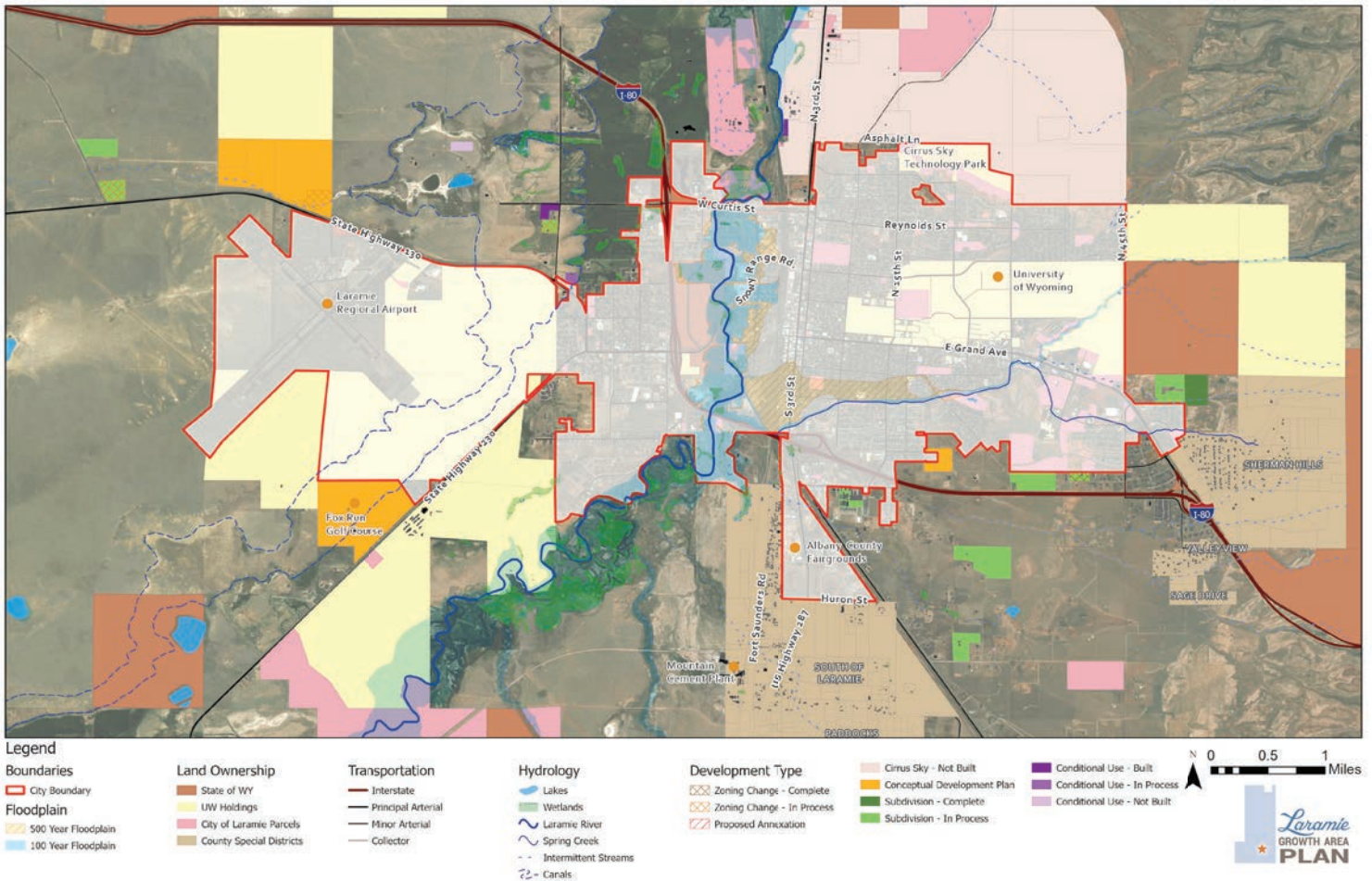


## Approved, Pending, and Conceptual Development Applications

As shown on Map 5 below, the location of approved and anticipated land development plans was identified, along with the existing pattern of development, which helped to understand potential impacts to property rights established under present regulations and areas where change can be more readily accommodated. Approved, pending, and conceptual development plans within the LGA serve as an indicator of where development is being considered by property owners and developers. The State of Wyoming and the University of Wyoming have large land holdings near the airport and Pilot Hill area, which significantly reduces development potential in those areas as they will not accommodate growth. Representatives from the University of Wyoming’s Planning and Design Department indicated that there are no plans to change the use or sell any University land holdings, largely ruling out any future development on any University land holdings.

Map 5 encompasses all development applications submitted at the time the LGA Plan was developed. This map provides important context to understanding projected growth within the LGA and where private development has grown.

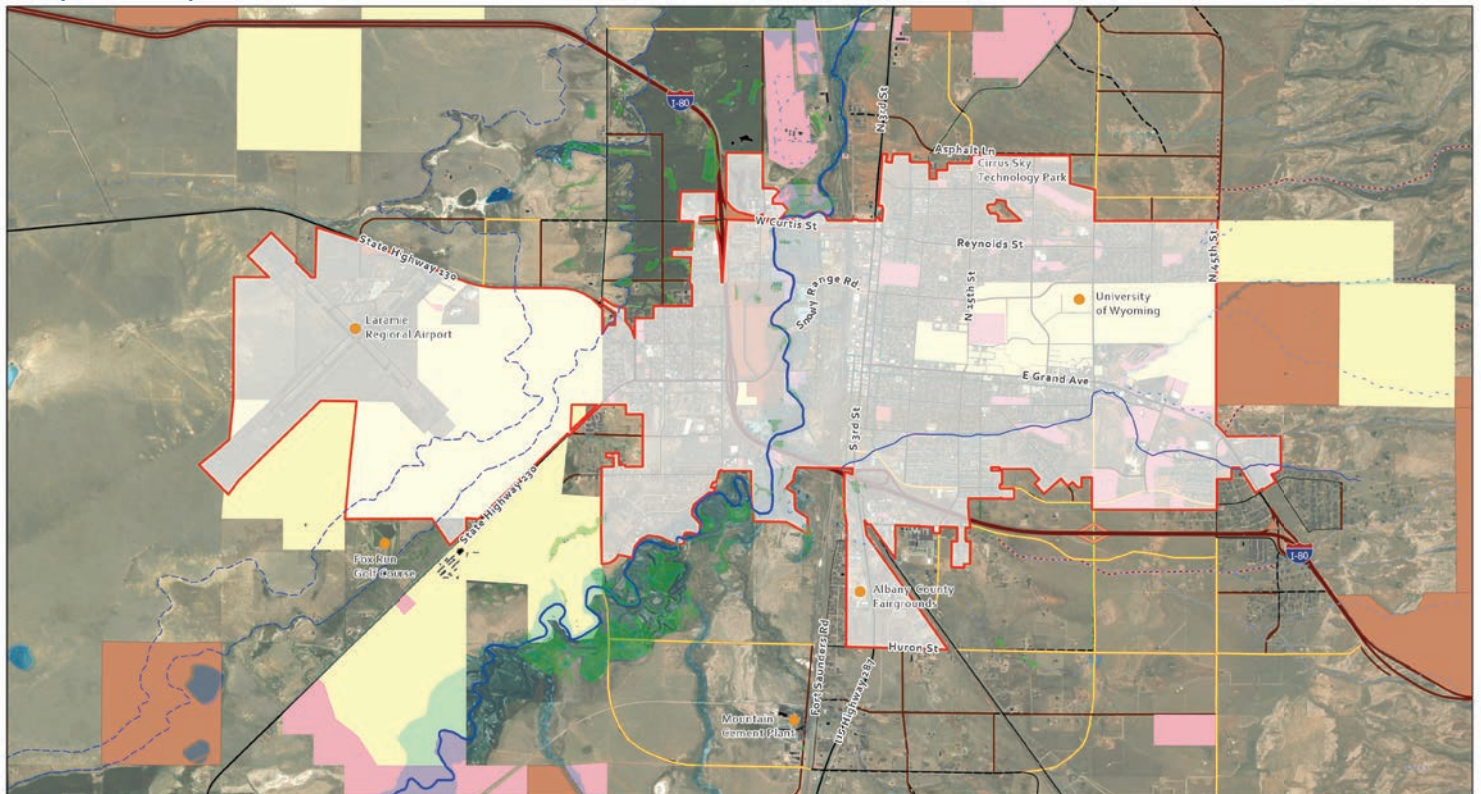
Map 5. Approved, Pending, and Conceptual Development Framework



## Transportation Framework

A well planned and good transportation network is essential to a community and the ability for it to grow effectively and efficiently. Adequate public roads, designed to handle appropriate traffic now and into the future, promotes growth, aids property owners in accessing their land and reduces future cost to the community and landowners for development of this essential infrastructure. Although much of the community has an existing road network that provides access to some areas of the community, the Major Street Plan, an adopted plan by the City and County identifies existing and proposed major roads with the LGA and is essential to funding opportunities related to construction of these roads. Except for a few modifications due to steep slopes, drainageways and other geographic features, the arterial and collector roadway alignments depicted in the LGA, reflect the Major Street Plan alignments. The proposed land patterns and uses, shown in the plan directly correlate to the transportation framework map indicated below and in conjunction with the Major Street Plan ensures that these major roads are dedicated, constructed and used for the current and future development of the community.

Map 6. Transportation Framework



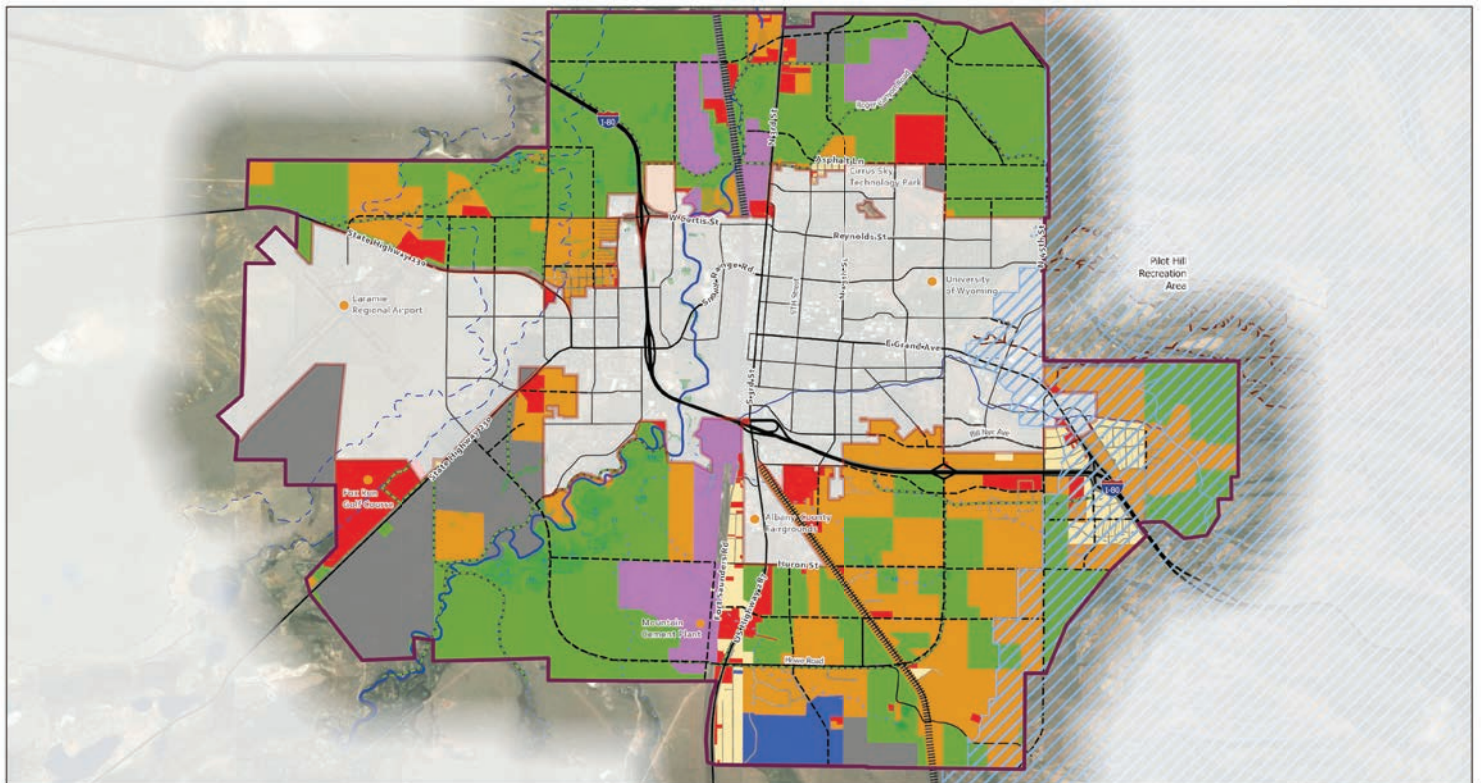
<b>Legend</b> <b>Boundaries</b> City Boundary <b>Floodplain</b> 500 Year Floodplain 100 Year Floodplain	<b>Land Ownership</b> State of WY LW Holdings City of Laramie Parcels	<b>Transportation</b> Interstate Principal Arterial Minor Arterial Collector	<b>Hydrology</b> Lakes Wetlands Laramie River Spring Creek Intermittent Streams Canals	<b>Future Roads</b> Future Interstate Future Principal Arterial Future Minor Arterial Future Collector	<b>Future Trails and Pathways</b> Class 1 - Paved surface separate from roads Class 2 - Marked bike lane with signage Class 3 - Designated Route, signage only Rural Trail - Unimproved / Improved surface	N 0 0.5 1 Miles 
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Note: All GIS data sources are located in Appendix 2: Full-Size Maps and GIS Data Sources

## Existing Zoning Framework

Existing Albany County (Map 7, below) and City of Laramie Zoning (Map 8, next page) and ‘as-built’ development heavily influenced development patterns reflected in the potential growth scenarios. An underlying premise with each scenario was to respect existing construction investments made by property owners while, at the same time, anticipating where vacant and underdeveloped areas could be developed with different uses and development intensities in the future. Existing ‘built-up’ areas, or those where residential subdivisions are well-established, were considered ‘stable areas’ that are not anticipated for significant future change. On the other hand, largely undeveloped areas provided an opportunity to create different housing and commercial types, locations, and opportunities than what exists today, a strategy that aligns with Thrive Laramie, the 2020 economic and housing analysis for the City of Laramie. The below map shows the existing Albany County zoning.

Map 7. Albany County Zoning



### Legend

<b>Boundaries</b> Laramie Growth Area City Boundary Casper Aquifer Protection Area <small>*Draft based on the Casper Aquifer Protection Plan as of 1/16/22</small>	<b>Transportation</b> Interstate Principal Arterial Minor Arterial Collector Proposed Roads Railroad	<b>Trails</b> Growth Area Trails Pilot Hill Proposed Trails	<b>Hydrology</b> Lakes Laramie River Spring Creek Intermittent Streams Canals	<b>Albany County Zoning</b> Agricultural Commercial Exempt Industrial Rural Residential Single Lot Residential Urban Residential	 
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Note: All GIS data sources are located in Appendix 2: Full-Size Maps and GIS Data Sources

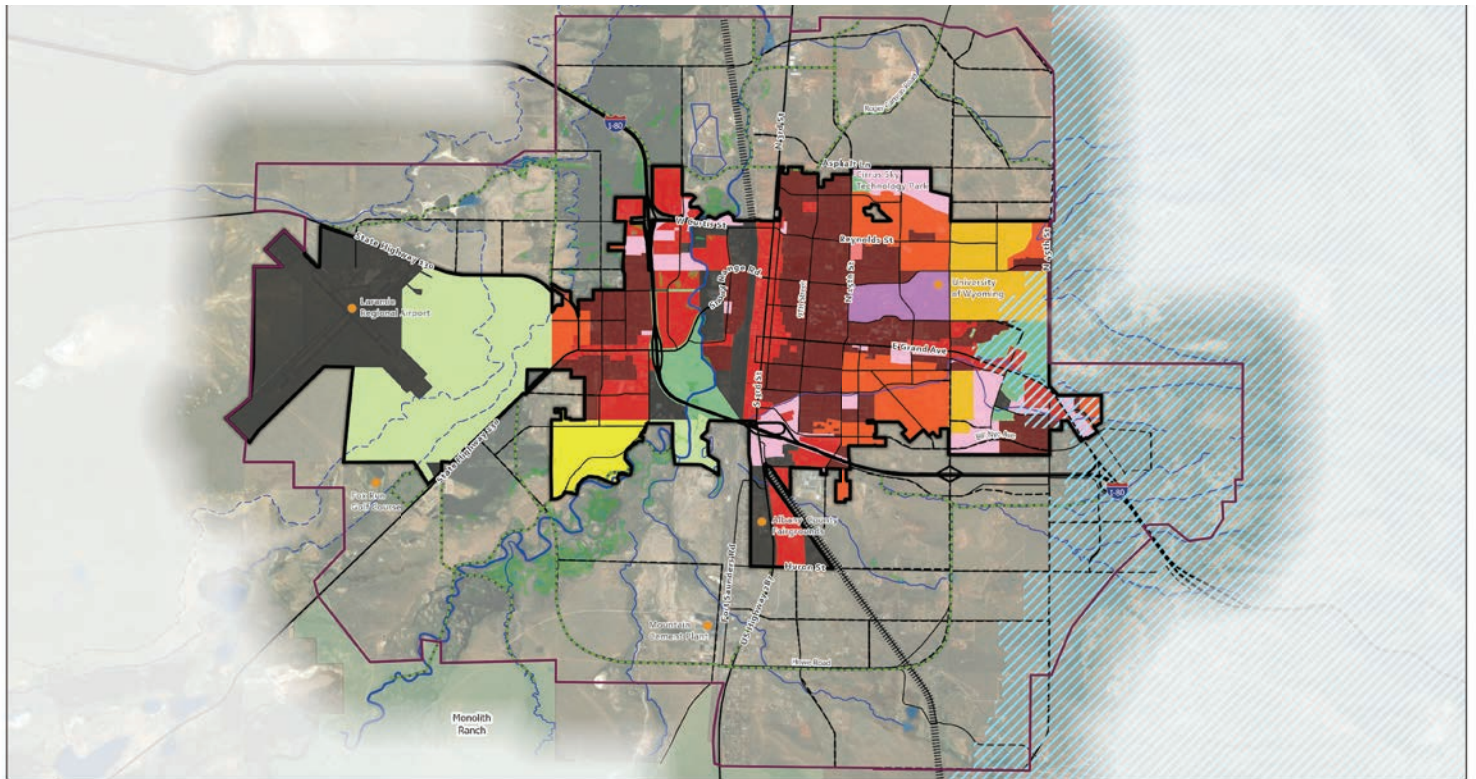
### Existing Zoning Framework Cont.

The below map shows the existing City of Laramie zoning. Please note that the zone districts have been condensed as shown in Figure 9 for clarity.

Figure 9. City of Laramie Zoning

ZONING CATEGORY	CITY OF LARAMIE ZONE DISTRICT
AGRICULTURAL	AG
ESTATE RESIDENTIAL	RR
SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL	LR
URBAN RESIDENTIAL	R-1
MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL	R-3, R-3 PUD, R2, R2M
OFFICE	TO, B1
NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL	NB, BIR
COMMUNITY COMMERCIAL	C2, DC, B2
INDUSTRIAL	I-1, LM, IP, I-2, AV, AE
NATURAL AREAS/PARKS/OPEN SPACE	O
PUBLIC	Public (P)

Map 8. City of Laramie Zoning



**Legend**

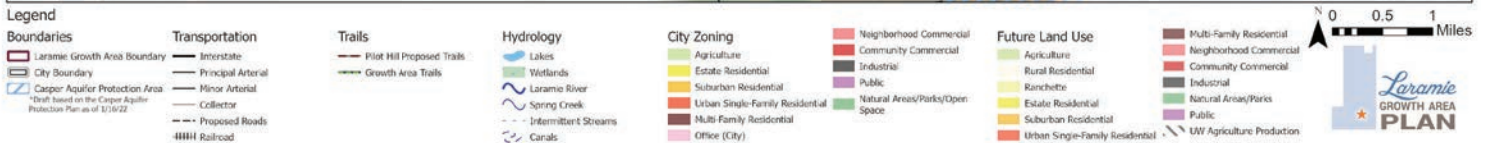
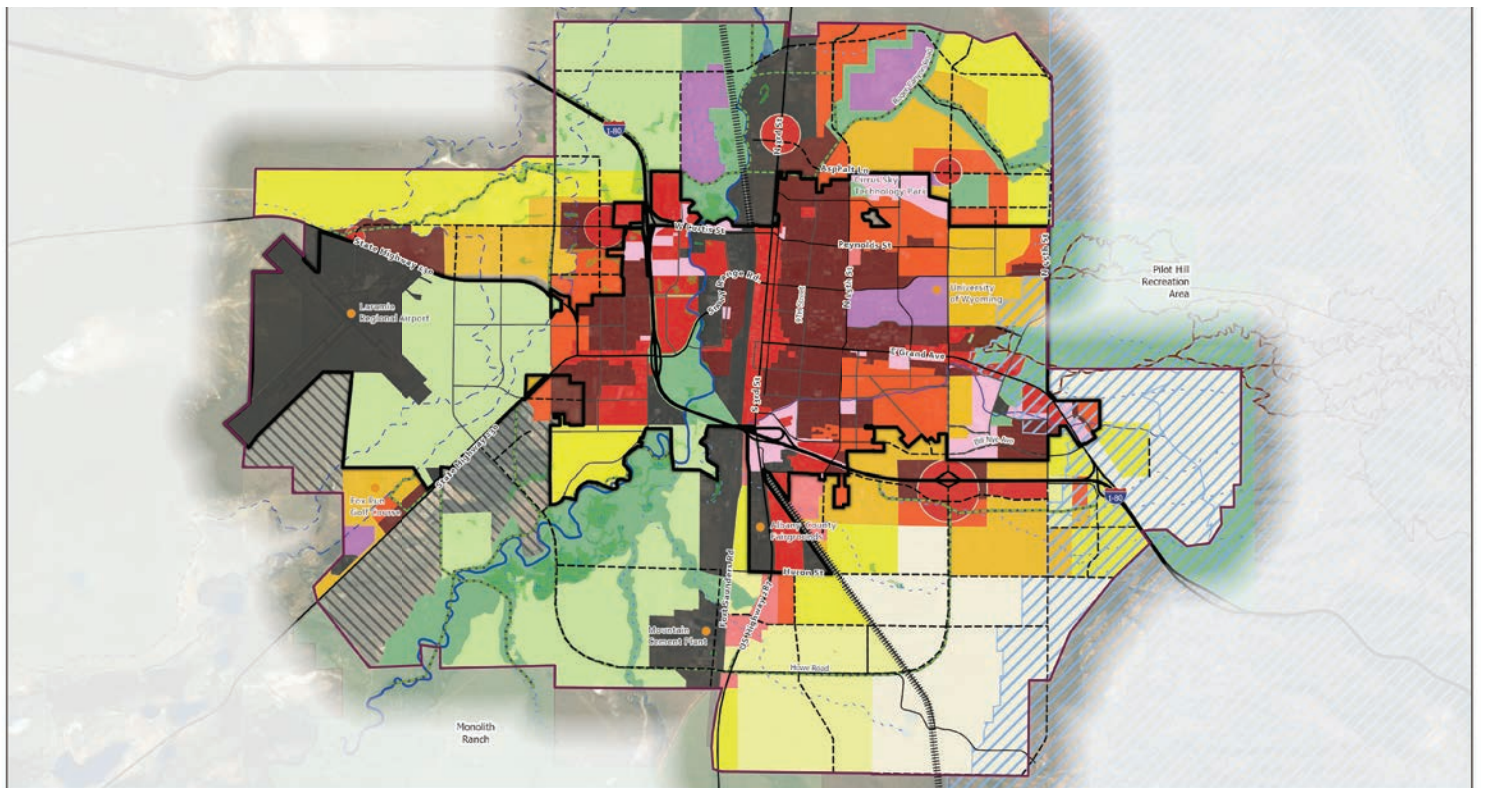
<b>Boundaries</b>	<b>Transportation</b>	<b>Trails</b>	<b>Hydrology</b>	<b>City Zoning</b>	<b>Other</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Laramie Growth Area Boundary</li> <li><span style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; margin-right: 5px;"></span> City Boundary</li> <li><span style="border: 1px dashed black; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Casper Aquifer Protection Area <small>*Draft based on the Casper Aquifer Protection Plan as of 1/16/22</small></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="border-bottom: 2px solid black; width: 15px; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Interstate</li> <li><span style="border-bottom: 2px solid black; width: 15px; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Principal Arterial</li> <li><span style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; width: 15px; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Minor Arterial</li> <li><span style="border-bottom: 1px dashed black; width: 15px; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Collector</li> <li><span style="border-bottom: 1px dotted black; width: 15px; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Proposed Roads</li> <li><span style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; width: 15px; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Railroad</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; width: 15px; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Growth Area Trails</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px; background-color: lightblue; border-radius: 50%; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Lakes</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px; background-color: lightgreen; border-radius: 50%; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Wetlands</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px; background-color: lightblue; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Laramie River</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px; border-bottom: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Stream</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px; border-bottom: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Canals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #90EE90; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Agriculture</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #FFFF00; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Estate Residential</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #FFD700; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Suburban Residential</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #FF4500; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Urban Single-Family Residential</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #8B0000; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Multi-Family Residential</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #FFB6C1; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Office</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #FF6347; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Neighborhood Commercial</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #FF0000; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Community Commercial</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #808080; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Industrial</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #800080; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Public</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #90EE90; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Natural Areas/Parks/Open Space</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px; background-color: #FFFFFF; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> North Arrow</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 100px; border-bottom: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> 0 0.5 1 Miles</li> </ul>

Note: All GIS data sources are located in Appendix 2: Full-Size Maps and GIS Data Sources

## Zoning Compatibility

The map below illustrates the seamless compatibility of land uses between the City's current zoning and the future land uses for the LGA.

Map 9. City of Laramie Zoning and Laramie Growth Plan Composite

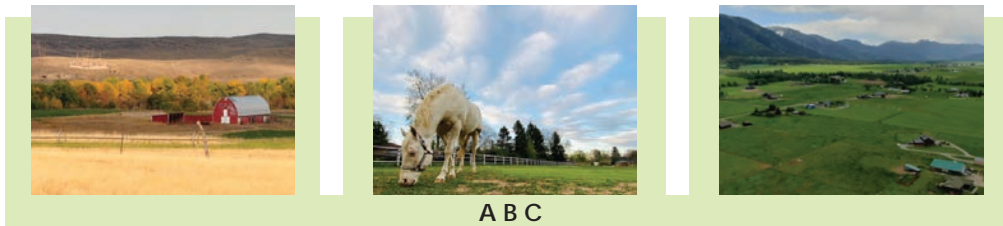


Note: All GIS data sources are located in Appendix 2: Full-Size Maps and GIS Data Sources

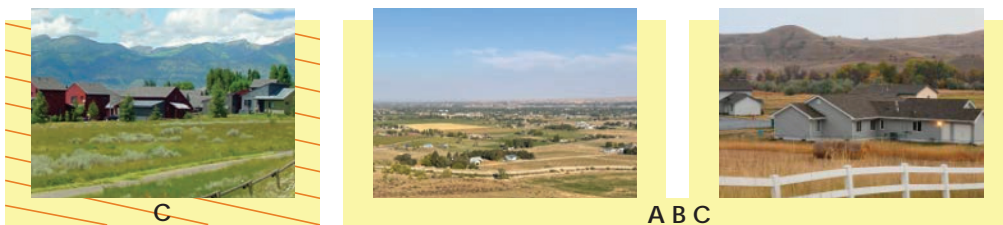
## GROWTH SCENARIOS

Following the completion of the framework maps and the alignment of land uses between the County and the City, three growth scenarios were developed for the LGA to depict possible land use patterns. The scenarios—labeled A, B, and C—were presented to the public through a series of pop-up events described at the beginning of this chapter. The following images illustrate building type examples for each scenario.

Figure 10. Growth Scenarios Possibilities



**Agricultural** land uses that retain and support farm and ranch practices.



**Rural residential** single-family housing on lots ranging from 2-5 acres would be developed closer to the Laramie River and along the south edge of the community.



**Suburban residential** single-family housing on lots ranging from 7,000-15,000 ft<sup>2</sup> south and west of town.



**Urban single-family residential** are small, detached single family homes on small lots.



**Multi-family residential**, higher density housing options, including apartments, townhouses, multi-plexes, and small lot single-family housing clustered around the new commercial centers.



**Neighborhood-scale commercial** providing local services would be developed on the north and west sides of town.



A larger, **community-scale commercial** center would be developed at a new interchange located at I-80 and 30th St.



**Industrial** development would be expanded along the N. 3rd St. corridor and extend east to the landfill.

**Scenario A** provided a ‘town-like’ pattern extending from existing developed areas, with single-family housing on lots ranging from compact to moderately sized.

**Scenario B** depicted a suburban development pattern, with a predominance of single-family houses on moderate to large-sized lots located immediately north, south, and west of town, along with significant commercial areas.

**Scenario C** placed the greatest emphasis on the provision of single-family housing that has a ‘semi-rural’ feel and is spread over a broad area, with most residential lots in the rural residential and suburban land use categories, and larger properties closer to the Laramie River and along the south edge of the community.

To see an illustration of the three growth scenarios, please refer to the *Phase 2 Engagement Summary*. Based on community input, the draft three scenarios were refined into one Growth Plan Map (GPM). Additionally, the public suggested character-defining elements which they wanted to see reflected in the final plan. These elements were presented to and enhanced by County and City leadership and staff, and gave way to the LGA’s guiding principles. See section 4: the Path Forward.

## **PHASE 3: DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS AND REVIEW PROCESS**

Phase 3 included an assessment of existing development standards and review processes and a series of small group meetings to draft standards that would be implemented in the LGA. While some interviewees shared general concerns regarding the difference in development standards between County and City, there were no significant comments provided about the review process.

One of the biggest challenges highlighted during the code evaluation process was the creation of development standards that are both simple to understand by users, ranging from property owners to decision makers, and that also protects existing property rights established under the County’s present Zoning Resolution. Several different regulatory approaches were

**Figure 11. Phase 3 Public Engagement Events**



*Open House (September 2022)*



*Open House (September 2022)*



*Open House (September 2022)*

considered, including the rezoning of parcels within the LGA. Ultimately, in order to provide a transparent and straight-forward process for property owners and City and County staff, the recommendation in this Plan is that existing uses on properties within the LGA not be required to come into compliance with the future code changes that might be a result of this plan unless expansion of use is desired or subdivision occurs by the property owner.

A second public open house was held in late February to publicly review the draft LGA Plan and provide an opportunity for public comment on the draft. 16 people attended the open house and asked questions regarding the implementation of the Plan and eventual build-out of infrastructure systems, but there were no significant comments provided on the draft plan itself or about the review process.



## PHASE 4: JOINT GROWTH AREA INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT

The scope of this project directs the drafting of an agreement for consideration by Albany County and the City of Laramie to formalize each entity's role within the LGA. It is recommended that the final phase include drafting, presenting, and adopting an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) between Albany County and the City of Laramie subsequent to the approval of the LGA Plan.

The IGA should be crafted to provide mutual benefits to Albany County, the City of Laramie, and property owners. County property owners developing within the LGA, will likely see a greater range of development options that may translate into higher financial return on their investment. In exchange for this increased value, the City and County should consistently obtain dedicated rights-of-way needed to expand the street network and public utility system. For all parties, there should be a more predictable process for developing private property.

Figure 15. Phase 3-4 Public Engagement Events



Draft Plan Public Open House (February 2023)



Draft Plan Public Open House (February 2023)



Draft Plan Public Open House (February 2023)

It is recognized that the density depicted in some areas of the LGA are not serviceable by individual well and septic systems and would need to be serviced by municipal water and sewer services. Currently, the City does not extend services outside the City boundary. In order to achieve the desired development pattern depicted in the Plan, the City should consider revisions to its policy on out-of-city extension of services. The most likely place for this policy to be revised is as part of an IGA following the adoption of the LGA Plan. The IGA should center on when municipal services will be required to service new development and under what conditions the City will extend services outside the City boundary and when annexation would be needed to receive services. Provisions within the IGA could require that any landowner within the LGA wishing to subdivide their property to go through the annexation process if they are contiguous to the City boundary and wishing to develop at a higher-density that would require connection to municipal sewer and water services. If properties wishing to redevelop are not adjacent to the City and therefore cannot annex, they could execute an Annexation Agreement providing their consent to annex at such time that their property becomes eligible in the future. The intent of the Annexation Agreement would not be to implement a continuous, rolling annexation, but rather to require properties that wish to redevelop within the LGA to agree to annex into the City when and if extension of services by the City of Laramie occur. With a signed Annexation Agreement, the City of Laramie would still have the discretion to annex individual properties when, and if, it is possible based upon, municipal services capacity, service availability, and funding for extension. The process for annexation is anticipated to remain unchanged from the current process.





## 3 Growth Plan

This Plan embodies the community vision, illustrating the desired mix, character, and location of future land uses within the LGA. The keystone to this physical form is the Growth Plan Map (GPM) which defines the community's anticipated outer growth boundary in addition to the pattern of development. Each Land Use Category includes defining characteristics, primary and secondary uses, and guidelines for residential density and commercial intensity.

The Growth Plan Map establishes the long-term physical growth strategy for the LGA; however, it does not predetermine exact land uses or densities for given parcels of land. The intent is to generally illustrate land use concepts, interrelationships, and categories with preferred location, density, and design characteristics. As properties in this area develop, zoning requests and changes should rely on the LGA Plan for guidance and expertise for City and County staff to evaluate requests in conformance with the LGA.

## DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FUTURE LAND USE AND ZONING

The GPM and associated Land Use Category descriptions, coupled with the goals and policies of the Plan, help direct development patterns, infrastructure improvements, and the general character and location of neighborhoods, commercial areas, and amenities, such as parks and schools. The GPM is advisory and does not change the existing zoning or the ability of landowners to continue existing legal uses consistent with the current zoning. When future development is proposed within the LGA, the general recommendations of the GPM form the basis for future zoning designations and subdivision regulations and updates.

While designations found on the GPM (See Figure 13) generally indicate the intended primary use and suggested residential density for a particular area, zoning districts specifically define allowable uses and contain the design and development regulations for those intended uses. Zoning sets the policies and laws governing the use, bulk, height, density, and other physical or operational characteristics on a specific site.

Figure 12. Future Land Use vs. Zoning

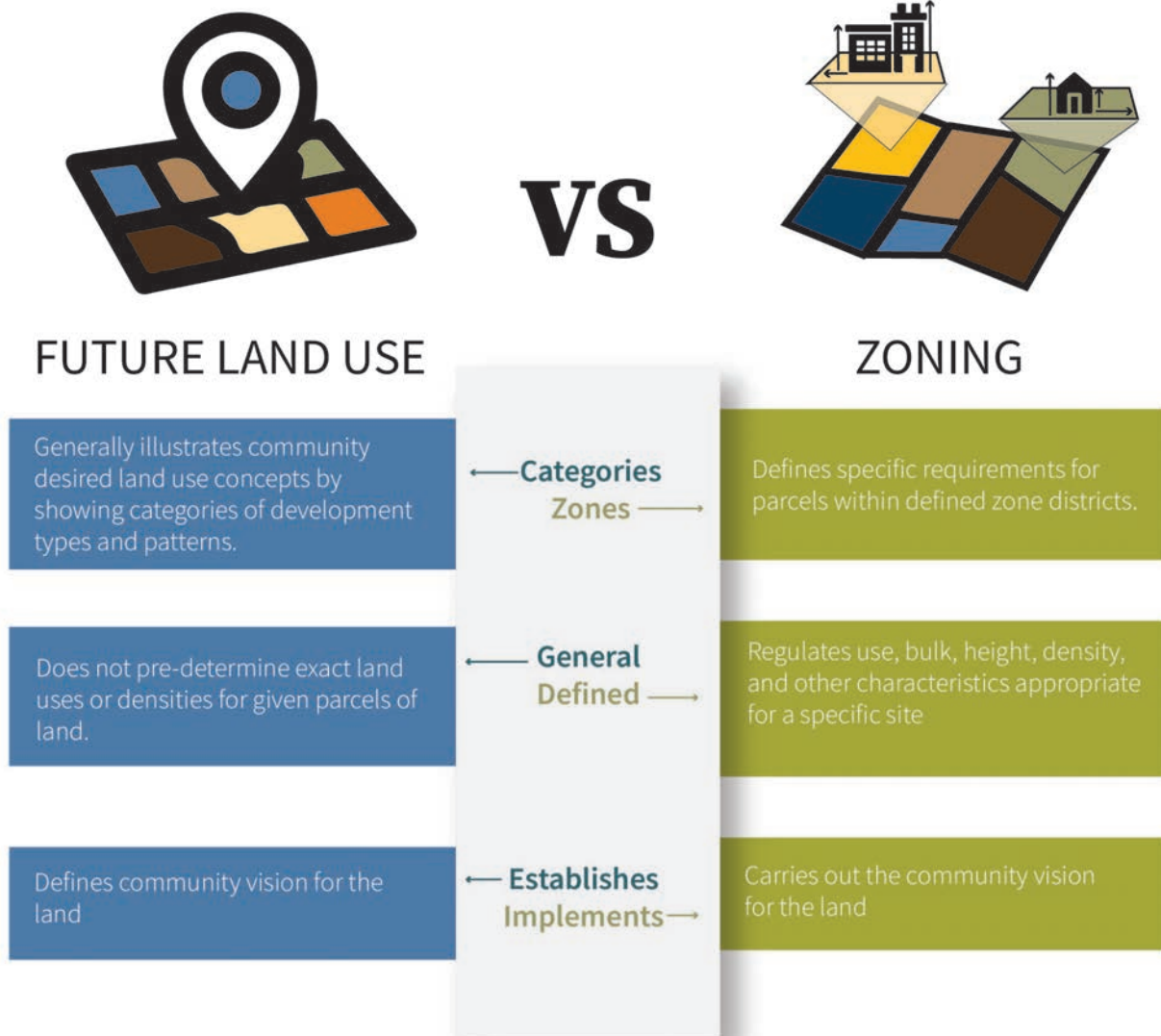


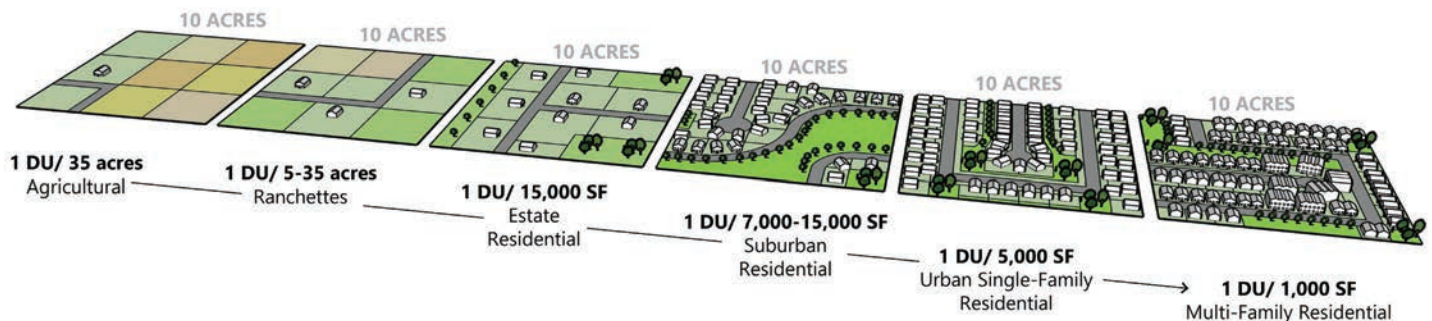
Figure 13. Future Land Use Categories Summary

CATEGORY	PRIMARY USES	SUGGESTED RESIDENTIAL DENSITY RANGE
AGRICULTURAL	Agriculture	1 DU/35 acres
RURAL RESIDENTIAL	Detached single-family, small-scale agriculture, and small-scale commercial	1 DU/5-35 acres
RANCHETTE	Detached single-family	1 DU/2-5 acres
ESTATE RESIDENTIAL	Detached single-family	3 DU/acre
SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL	Detached single-family	4-8 DU/acre
URBAN RESIDENTIAL	Detached single-family, attached single-family, and townhomes	8-10 DU/acre
MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL	Attached single-family, apartments, condominiums, multiplexes	24-30 DU/acre
NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL	Restaurants, retail, office, entertainment, artisan, service commercial	4-10 DU/acre
COMMUNITY COMMERCIAL	Restaurants, retail, office, entertainment, artisan, service commercial	8-12 DU/acre
INDUSTRIAL	Heavy manufacturing, gravel and mineral extraction, processing, assembly, warehouses, and truck terminals	N/A
NATURAL AREAS/PARKS/OPEN SPACE	Open space, drainage ways/floodplain areas, recreational uses such as parks and trails, and civic uses	N/A
PUBLIC	Schools, civic uses, plazas, libraries, infrastructure facilities, and emergency services	N/A
UW AGRICULTURAL	Educational use by the University	N/A

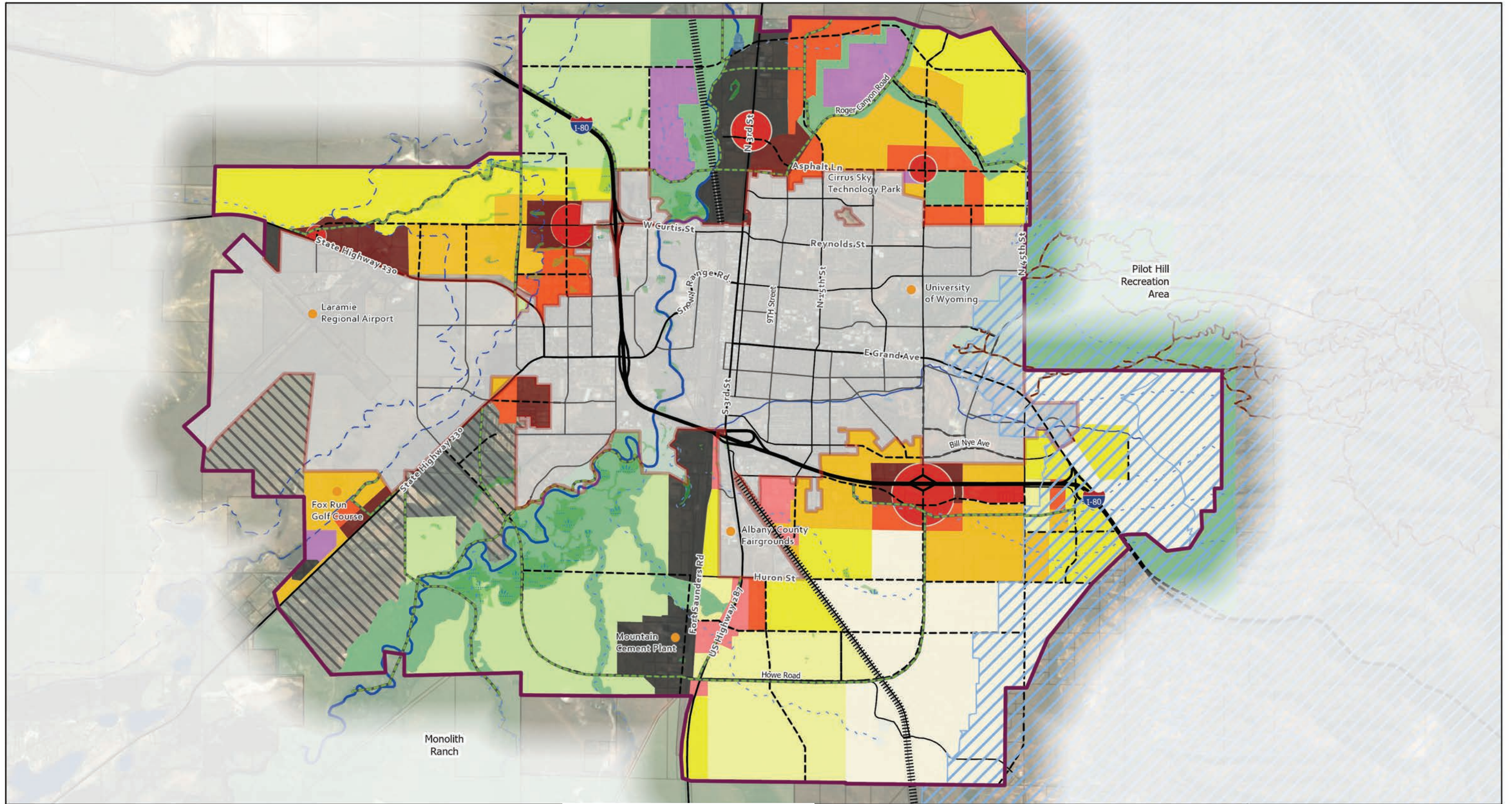
## UNDERSTANDING A RANGE OF HOUSING

The image below depicts the current allowable range of housing types found within the LGA.

Figure 14. Current Allowable Range of Housing Types



Map 10. Laramie Growth Plan



**Legend**

- Boundaries**
- Laramie Growth Area Boundary
  - City Boundary
  - Casper Aquifer Protection Area
- \*Draft based on the Casper Aquifer Protection Plan as of 1/16/22

- Transportation**
- Interstate
  - Principal Arterial
  - Minor Arterial
  - Collector
  - Proposed Roads
  - Railroad

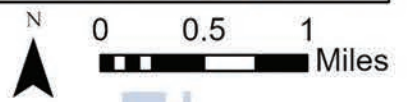
- Trails**
- Growth Area Trails
  - Pilot Hill Proposed Trails

- Hydrology**
- Lakes
  - Wetlands
  - Laramie River
  - Spring Creek
  - Intermittent Streams
  - Canals

- Future Land Use**
- Agriculture
  - Rural Residential
  - Ranchette
  - Estate Residential
  - Suburban Residential
  - Urban Single-Family Residential

- Multi-Family Residential
- Neighborhood Commercial
- Community Commercial
- Industrial
- Natural Areas/Parks
- Public
- UW Agriculture Production

**GROWTH PLAN MAP**



Note: All GIS data sources are located in Appendix 2: Full-Size Maps and GIS Data Sources

# LAND USE DESCRIPTIONS AND KEY CHARACTERISTICS

## AGRICULTURAL



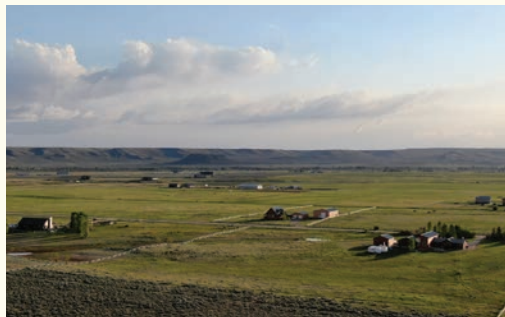
### **DESCRIPTION**

Agricultural land use provides space for commercial farming and/or ranching operations. This area allows for active production and management of livestock, production and storage of commercial and grain crops, and related functions.

### **KEY CHARACTERISTICS**

- **Primary Uses:** Agriculture
- **Secondary Uses:** Open space, public lands, and rural residential
- **Suggested Residential Density Range:** 1 dwelling unit per 35 acres

# RURAL RESIDENTIAL



## DESCRIPTION

Rural Residential land use consists of single-family dwellings on lots large enough to store, maintain, and adequately care for limited livestock. These areas are designated for residential uses and limited agricultural operations, and for areas with limited utility capacity and on-site well and septic systems.

## KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- **Primary Uses:** Detached single-family, small-scale agriculture, and small-scale commercial
- **Secondary Uses:** Open space, public lands, and large-scale agriculture
- **Suggested Residential Density Range:** 1 dwelling unit per 5 to 35 acres

# RANCHETTE



## DESCRIPTION

Ranchette land use contains single-family dwellings on relatively large lots that can accommodate urban livestock, and often includes larger accessory buildings such as barns, shops, and garages. This land use category encourages clustering of development to maximize open space and mitigate sprawl to the extent feasible. Additional density beyond 1 dwelling unit per 2-5 acres may be allowed if the development proposes clustering of single-family dwellings together on smaller lots with the balance of the larger property held in an open, undeveloped state.

## KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- **Primary Uses:** Detached single-family
- **Secondary Uses:** Small-scale agriculture and accessory dwelling units
- **Suggested Residential Density Range:** 1 dwelling unit per 2 to 5 acres; additional density may be permitted if the development proposes clustering of single-family dwellings on smaller lots with the deed-restricted open-space.

# ESTATE RESIDENTIAL



## *DESCRIPTION*

Estate Residential land use is typified by larger detached single-family dwellings on generous-sized lots, without agricultural use.

## *KEY CHARACTERISTICS*

- **Primary Uses:** Detached single-family
- **Secondary Uses:** Accessory dwelling units, civic uses, schools, and neighborhood and community parks
- **Suggested Residential Density Range:** 3 dwelling units per acre

# SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL



## *DESCRIPTION*

Suburban Residential consists of detached, single-family dwellings on moderately sized lots, usually with attached garages. These residential areas are close to community services and include parks and space for family-based activities.

## *KEY CHARACTERISTICS*

- **Primary Uses:** Detached single-family
- **Secondary Uses:** Accessory dwelling units, civic uses, schools, and neighborhood and community parks
- **Suggested Residential Density Range:** 4 to 8 dwelling units per acre

# URBAN RESIDENTIAL



## DESCRIPTION

Urban Residential contains small, detached, single-family dwellings on small lots. This area is characterized by dense housing that enhances the character of the City. These areas are close to cultural amenities, parks, and public space, contributing to a walkable, dynamic lifestyle.

## KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- **Primary Uses:** Detached single-family, attached single-family, and townhomes
- **Secondary Uses:** Accessory dwelling units, civic uses, schools, and neighborhood and community parks
- **Suggested Residential Density Range:** 8 to 10 dwelling units per acre

# MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL



## DESCRIPTION

Multi-family Residential accommodates a wide range of age groups, from young professionals to seniors. This land use consists of apartments, multiplexes (duplex, triplex, four-plex) and other attached housing units which allow housing flexibility for different populations in the region. Multi-family residential can be incorporated into higher density areas for those wanting to live near their places of employment or near more residential areas, giving a wider group the opportunity to live at a slower pace.

## KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- **Primary Uses:** Attached single-family, apartments, condominiums, multiplexes
  - **Secondary Uses:** Live-work units and townhomes
- Suggested Residential Density Range:** 24 to 30 dwelling units per acre

# NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL



## DESCRIPTION

Neighborhood Commercial areas are comprised of small-scale commercial uses intended to meet consumer demands for frequently needed goods and services, with an emphasis on serving the surrounding residential neighborhoods. In addition to retail and service uses, it may include neighborhood-oriented uses such as schools, employment, day care, parks, small civic facilities, as well as residential uses.

The scale, type, and uses of neighborhood commercial areas should be compatible and integrated with the existing neighborhood it is located in.

## KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- **Primary Uses:** Restaurants, retail, office, entertainment, artisan, service commercial
- **Secondary Uses:** Attached residential, civic uses, schools, and neighborhood and community parks
- **Suggested Residential Density Range:** 4 to 10 dwelling units per acre

# COMMUNITY COMMERCIAL



## DESCRIPTION

Community Commercial areas are larger-scale commercial areas providing a combination of retail, offices, services, cultural facilities, and higher density housing. Businesses and facilities are scaled to serve the broader community, and often include larger retail formats. Community Commercial serves as an economic and cultural hub for the community, bringing in those from surrounding areas.

The scale, type, and uses of community commercial areas should be compatible and integrated with the transportation node it is located in.

## KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- **Primary Uses:** Restaurants, retail, office, entertainment, artisan, service commercial
- **Secondary Uses:** Multi-family, neighborhood parks and civic space
- **Suggested Residential Density Range:** 8 to 12 dwelling units per acre

# INDUSTRIAL



## *DESCRIPTION*

Industrial is generally for uses such as manufacturing, extraction, assembly plants, warehouses, vehicle-related commercial uses, outdoor storage yards, and distribution facilities. Industrial land uses are separated from residential uses to reduce potential nuisance impacts

## *KEY CHARACTERISTICS*

- **Primary Uses:** Heavy manufacturing, gravel and mineral extraction, processing, assembly, warehouses, and truck terminals
- **Secondary Uses:** Storage, warehousing, and light manufacturing

# NATURAL AREAS/PARKS/OPEN SPACE



## DESCRIPTION

Natural Areas/Parks/Open Space encompass community parks or open and undeveloped land with natural habitat or scenic value. Parks are designed for active uses, while natural areas and open space typically provide more passive activity and may provide a buffer between areas with incompatible land uses. These areas are generally owned and managed by public agencies but can also include privately owned areas protected through a conservation easement or similar mechanism.

## KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- **Primary Uses:** Open space, drainage ways/floodplain areas, recreational uses such as parks and trails, and civic uses

# PUBLIC



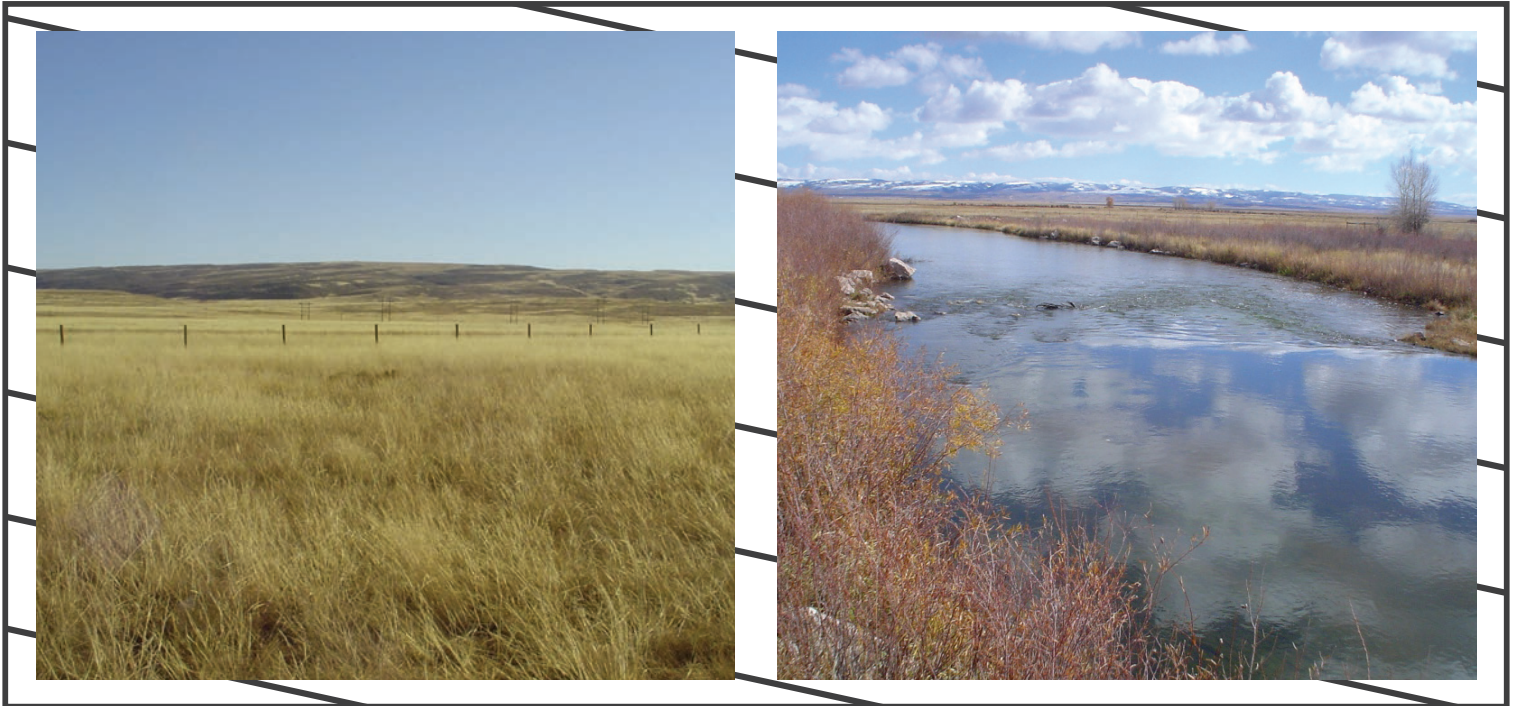
## DESCRIPTION

Public land use is applied to public facilities such as schools, libraries, water and sewer treatment facilities, fire stations, police or sheriff's offices, and quasi-public uses. This land use provides important services to ensure that key community organizations can carry out necessary tasks.

## KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- **Primary Uses:** Schools, civic uses, plazas, libraries, infrastructure facilities, and emergency services

# UW AGRICULTURAL



## *DESCRIPTION*

Property owned by the University of Wyoming that is retained in agricultural production or associated with the University's agricultural programs. Due to how this land is used, little growth is anticipated in this area, or on lands associated with the University. This area should be monitored over time and as the needs of the University changes in this area. If this land ever changes hands, re-evaluation of the property and it's potential land use should be done.

## *KEY CHARACTERISTICS*

- **Primary Uses:** Educational use by the University





## 4 The Path Forward

The following guiding principles seek to achieve:

- Context-sensitive growth,
- Preservation of agricultural land,
- Provision of attainable housing for the community, and
- Provision of services and facilities in an efficient and fiscally responsible manner.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

As explained in section 2: Vision and Plan Development, the following guiding principles were distilled from public input and later enhanced in consultation with County and City leadership and staff:

### PROVIDE EFFICIENTLY AND SUSTAINABLE PUBLIC SERVICES

- Establish the LGA where urban services (roads, utilities, public facilities) can be provided efficiently and sustainably with better service coordination between the County, City, and special districts.

### PROMOTE CONTEXT-SENSITIVE GROWTH

- Avoid 'leapfrog' development (as development occurs further into the County, leaving large areas empty between the City and the new development). To do so, growth should occur from the City out, and should be prevented or limited when it is not near existing or anticipated services.
- Retain a more rural character at the community's edges.
- Promote clustering of residential units with preserved open space as a way to preserve rural character and landscapes, provide a variety of low-density housing options, and promote agricultural practices.
- Enhance the appearance of community entryways through screening and landscaping.
- Encourage new development that conserves and enhances natural spaces within the community.

### PROVIDE DIVERSE AND ATTAINABLE HOUSING

- Expand housing choices by promoting a broader range of housing that addresses changing demographics and the need for more workforce housing.
- Create new commercial areas that provide essential services and that are supported by housing at a variety of densities.

### FACILITATE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE COUNTY AND CITY

- Coordinate land use decisions between the County and City within the LGA.
- Provide a clear subdivision application process for landowners with the LGA.

### ADOPT AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT FOR GROWTH

Development of Guiding Principles



## **DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS**

Plan implementation will require zoning and development regulations consistent with the Growth Plan Map (GPM) and guiding principles.

It is anticipated that shortly after adopting the Plan, Albany County and the City of Laramie will amend the respective zoning and subdivision regulations to be consistent with this Plan. “These revisions should implement the Plan and amend County zoning to promote the agreed upon development pattern described in the Growth plan Map and reduce rural residential sprawl by preparing the area for higher density and extension of city services. Specifically, amendments should focus on aligning the process for landowners developing their properties as described in this Plan. However, considerations should be made to ensure that property owners not wishing to subdivide can continue enjoyment of their property as it exists today.

Amendments should include provisions for providing City services to landowners developing in accordance with the Plan but are not eligible to annex to receive services. Currently, the City is hesitant to extend City water and sewer services beyond the City boundary without concurrent annexation, but the density and intensity proposed adjacent to the City cannot be served by individual well and septic systems. Therefore, to transition to the development pattern shown in the Plan, the City will need to consider revisions to City policies about Out-of-City utility service extensions as detailed in the Intergovernmental Agreement.

Additionally, in order to implement the Plan and resolve conflicts between City and County street standards and to improve transportation connectivity, specific design standards for streets within the LGA should require dedicated road rights-of-way and be developed to enhance mobility and transportation within the LGA. Design standards should address right-of-way widths, street cross sections, pedestrian amenities, and road surface requirements, as well as transitions between roads outside of the LGA to roads within the LGA and into the City. The result of these changes will align development standards between the City and County more closely, promoting sound development and growth patterns that work for the City and County now and into the future.

## **INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT**

Wyoming State Statutes allow the City and County to cooperate and assist each other on land use matters of common concern and that can be reflected in a written agreement. An Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) between Albany County and the City of Laramie acknowledges adoption of the LGA Plan and obligates both parties to uphold the Plan and related Zoning Overlay District.

The IGA defines the roles of both parties during development review, providing greater clarity for property owners, developers, and City and County staff. The IGA should include:

- Requiring the referral of development plans to City staff for County properties located adjacent to the City and City participation in the pre-application process when comprehensive plan or zoning amendments are proposed.
- Creating a clear requirement for obtaining City water and sewer services for higher-density development.
- Development of an updated policy for obtaining City water and sewer services that includes annexation criteria and criteria for extraterritorial extension of municipal water and sewer services without annexation.
- Requiring dedication of road rights-of-way for all subdivision applications in the LGA.
- Defining maintenance responsibilities for roadways.

## **PLAN MANAGEMENT**

This Plan and its subsequent updates will be used to guide decision-making within the LGA. The adoption process requires public hearings by the City of Laramie Planning Commission and Albany County Planning and Zoning Commissions, and recommendations to the Laramie City Council and Albany County Board of County Commissioners. The Laramie City Council and Albany County Board of County Commissioners are responsible for adopting the Plan and any subsequent updates.

Updates to the Plan should reflect changes in trends in the economic, physical, social, or political conditions of the LGA. If possible, changes to the respective Comprehensive Plans should be made in tandem to ensure consistency.

### **AMENDING THE PLAN**

Plan updates provide an opportunity to evaluate the content of this Plan more systematically for ongoing relevancy. This update process allows the City and County to reaffirm the Plan's vision and direction with the community as recommended by the City Planning Commission and County Planning and Zoning Commission and directed by the City Council and Board of County Commissioners.

A targeted update is recommended within five years of adoption, or earlier if sufficient need is indicated based on Plan monitoring and conditions. Plan updates are not expected to alter the overall organization and structure of the Plan and should continue on a five-year basis to ensure relevancy of the Plan. These periodic updates should serve to prolong the useful and relevant life of this document and extend the period before which a more comprehensive and complete revamping of the document is deemed necessary. Minor changes or revisions to the Plan's text, figures, or maps may be processed administratively to reflect updated information or grammatical corrections, provided that these changes do not modify the intent or substantive content of the document, as adopted.

Like the original development of this Plan, updates to the Plan should be a joint effort between Albany County and the City of Laramie. Such efforts should follow the same process by which the City and County amend their respective Comprehensive Plans.



**PREPARED BY**



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