

SHERIDAN COUNTY
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

PLAN
SHERIDAN COUNTY

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This Update was completed and adopted due to the participation and commitment of members of the public who took the time to share their opinions and ideas and by the dedication of the following individuals. Thank you.

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

The Sheridan County Comprehensive Plan serves as a guide for future decisions that will shape Sheridan County's land use, economic development, housing and service delivery. It is used principally by the County Staff, Planning and Zoning Commission, and the Board of County Commissioners as part of their review of development proposals in unincorporated Sheridan County.



PURPOSE

The Sheridan County Comprehensive Plan serves as a guide for future decisions that will shape Sheridan County's land use, economic development, housing and service delivery. It is used principally by the County Staff, Planning and Zoning Commission, and the Board of County Commissioners as part of their review of development proposals in unincorporated Sheridan County.

In 2008, Sheridan County adopted its Comprehensive Plan which contained background information, vision statements, goals, policies and strategies. That document in turn had been built on the direction set by the 1982 Comprehensive Plan and the Vision 2020 Growth Management Plan of 2001.

With the passage of ten years since the Plan's adoption, it is clear that this information and the premises used for development of the 2008 Plan are in need of revisiting and updating to reflect conditions present today. Beginning in the Fall of 2018, the Board of County Commissioners moved ahead with the completion of this Comprehensive Plan Update.



The Plan Update's vision, goals, policies, and actions are intended to be used in combination with the Future Land Use Plan map when making decisions affecting growth, land use and development, land conservation, and the provision of public facilities and services. It provides long-range guidance to property owners, citizens, appointed boards, and decision-makers on land use topics, such as where future residential, commercial, and industrial development should occur. In addition, the Plan Update includes policies to protect and conserve resources and open space.

While the Comprehensive Plan is a general guide for the future development of the county, the zoning code is one technique that is used to implement the Plan, along with other tools. It is important to remember that they are distinct entities and not one and the same. The Comprehensive Plan lays the framework for the future look of the

county while zoning, capital improvement plans and other regulatory tools are used to implement that framework.

To remain effective, the Plan Update should be reviewed and revised as warranted, typically every five to ten years. The goals and policies should be particularly monitored to make sure they are aligned with current community values, as was the case with this Update.

The Plan Update encompasses unincorporated county land only. Not included in this update is the portion of county land that is located within the Joint Planning Area adjacent to the City of Sheridan. A separate update was completed and adopted for that area in 2017. Key components of that update are found in Appendix H of this document.

STATUTORY AUTHORIZATION

This Plan Update complies with Wyoming Statutes Section 18-5-202, Planning and Zoning Commission/

Preparation of a Comprehensive Plan. The statute sets forth criteria for preparing and amending a comprehensive plan. The plan may promote the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the unincorporated areas of the county. According to state law, the Planning and Zoning Commission is required to certify the plan to the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC), and the BOCC it is responsible for adopting and implementing it. Wyoming statutes are not specific about what components or elements the plan must address. In this case, the Update builds on the 2008 Plan and addresses a variety of comprehensive topics including land use, public safety and health, natural resources, transportation, utilities and services, local history, and other areas of interest.

PLANNING PROCESS

Throughout the Update's preparation, citizen outreach was conducted. Although this was an update to an existing plan, the importance of providing opportunities for substantive public involvement was still critical. It was conducted throughout the various steps of the planning process discussed below.

Data Collection and Inventory - This step both established and quantified how Sheridan County has changed since 2008 and identified the portions of the 2008 Plan that have been implemented. Existing studies, plans, and resources were reviewed, including and not limited to the Sheridan County Joint Planning Area Plan Update; State of Wyoming Department of Administration and Information Economic Analysis Division; U.S. Bureau of the Census, Wyoming Profile of Demographics, Economics, and Housing semiannual reports sponsored by the Wyoming Community Development Authority; County Public Works Department ArcGIS information; Sheridan Area Water Supply (SAWS), Esri, and additional studies that have focused on the county's future. The Update's Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) reviewed data and map updates and provided comments throughout.



Issues and Opportunities - The 2008 Plan was reviewed in order to identify issues and opportunities that remained applicable and to discover issues and opportunities which had not previously surfaced. Public outreach was used to obtain community input about issues facing the county, as well as to gain an understanding of what citizens valued most about living and working in Sheridan County. The CAC participated in public events and reviewed the results after the events. That information was then used to create the Plan Update Vision and set the direction for the Update of the entire document, with particular focus on goals and policies.

Implementation Strategies - The implementation portion of the 2008 Plan was reviewed to delete those actions that have been achieved, update actions to better reflect current trends and local input, and introduce new actions that are likewise based on public comment and the project team's background analyses. Draft maps and the Future Land Use Plan map were available for public comment at an open house, posted on the project website, and two Third Thursday Street Fairs held in 2019. The CAC participated in the review of public comments, draft maps, and the Future Land Use Plan map.

Draft and Final Plan - The Update was completed in draft form for review by the public, Planning and Zoning Commission, and the Board of County Commissioners, and it was then completed as a final document for adoption.

The ways in which citizen input was requested and feedback was obtained included:

- Project website
- Project Facebook page
- A Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)
- Planning Week activities in four locations
- Coffee with Consultants during Planning Week
- Public open house
- Media advertisements
- Third Thursday Street Fair booth



PLAN CONTENTS AND ORGANIZATION

The Plan Update includes the following contents:

Chapter 1 - Introduction. The chapter describes the purpose and legal status of the Update, along with the process and contents.

Chapter 2 - Sheridan County Today. Highlights of changes in Sheridan County since 2008 are presented, plus the assessment of past accomplishments.

Chapter 3 - Citizen Contributions. The various methods used for achieving citizen input are outlined, and their outcomes are presented.

Chapter 4 - Vision Statement. Based on what was heard at public events and CAC comments, a vision statement was developed for Sheridan County.

Chapter 5 - Stewarding the Future of Sheridan County. Key aspects that were considered in the preparation of the Update are described.

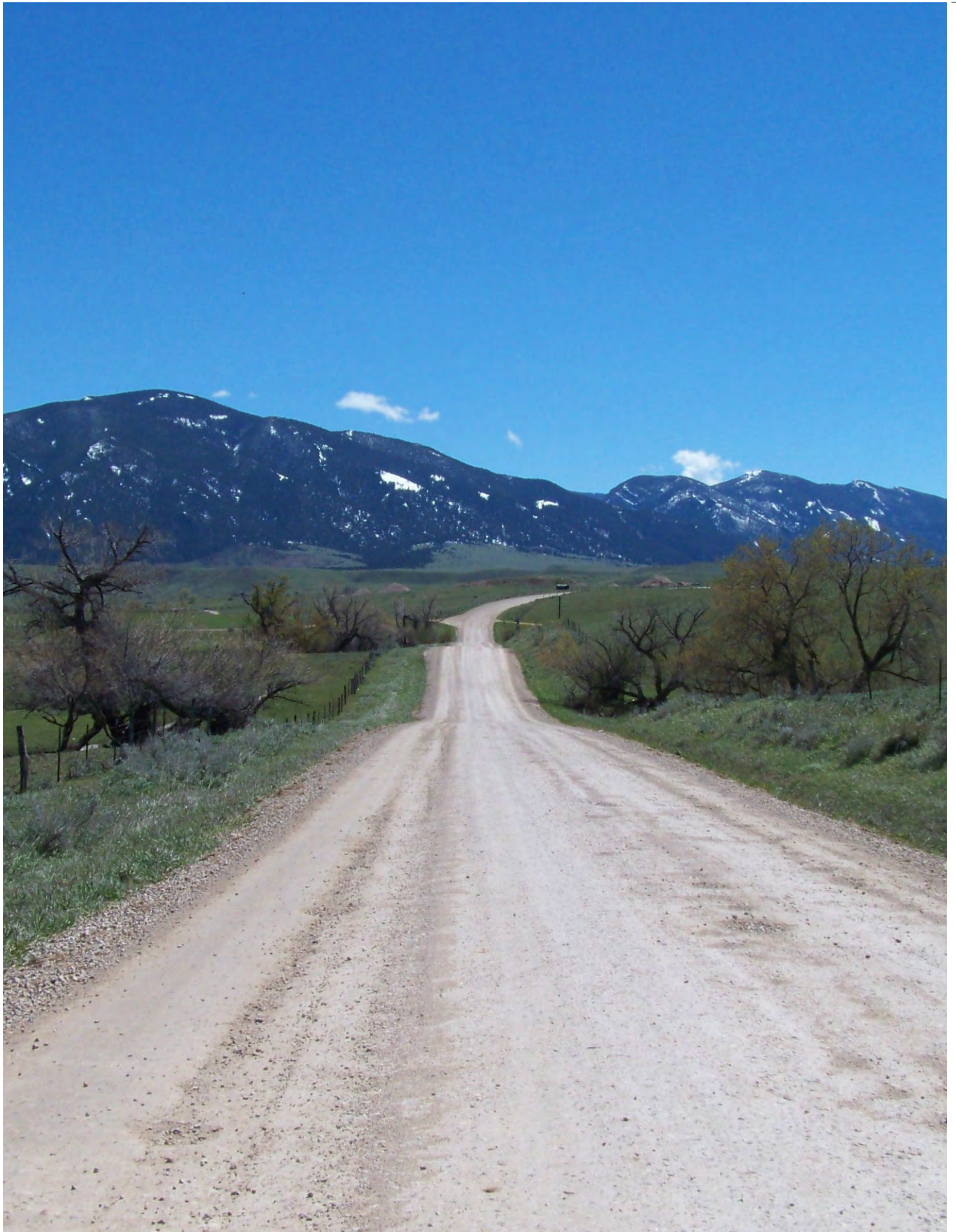
Chapter 6 - Functional Plan Elements. Descriptions and goals for land use, transportation and mobility, natural and historic resources, economy, services and facilities, and county communities are given.

Chapter 7 - Implementation Strategies and Action Plan. Strategies and actions needed to implement the Update goals are displayed in a matrix.

Chapter 8. Regional Cooperation, Plan Monitoring and Amendment Process. Approaches for regional cooperation and plan monitoring and amendment are outlined.

- Appendices
- County Profile
- Inventory Maps
- Definitions
- Public Process
- Plan and Policy Summary
- References
- Plan Capacity
- Sheridan Joint Planning Area Land Use Plan





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CHAPTER 2. SHERIDAN COUNTY TODAY

As summarized in the 2008 Comprehensive Plan, Sheridan County, located in Northern Central Wyoming, is an area of approximately 2,516 square miles. The county is traversed north-south by Interstate 90 and east-west by US Highway 14/16. These highways connect the county to several regional destinations within a two-hour drive time, including Billings, Montana to the north and Casper, Wyoming to the south. They also connect northeast and northwest Wyoming, creating a popular driving route for area visitors. The Bighorn National Forest is a major recreation destination in Sheridan County and accessible nearby to the west. The county contains four incorporated cities and towns: Sheridan, Dayton, Ranchester, and Clearmont, and several unincorporated places, including Big Horn, Story, Parkman, and Arvada. The 2008 Plan and this Update focus on unincorporated Sheridan County and do not directly address the incorporated areas.

SHERIDAN COUNTY SNAPSHOT

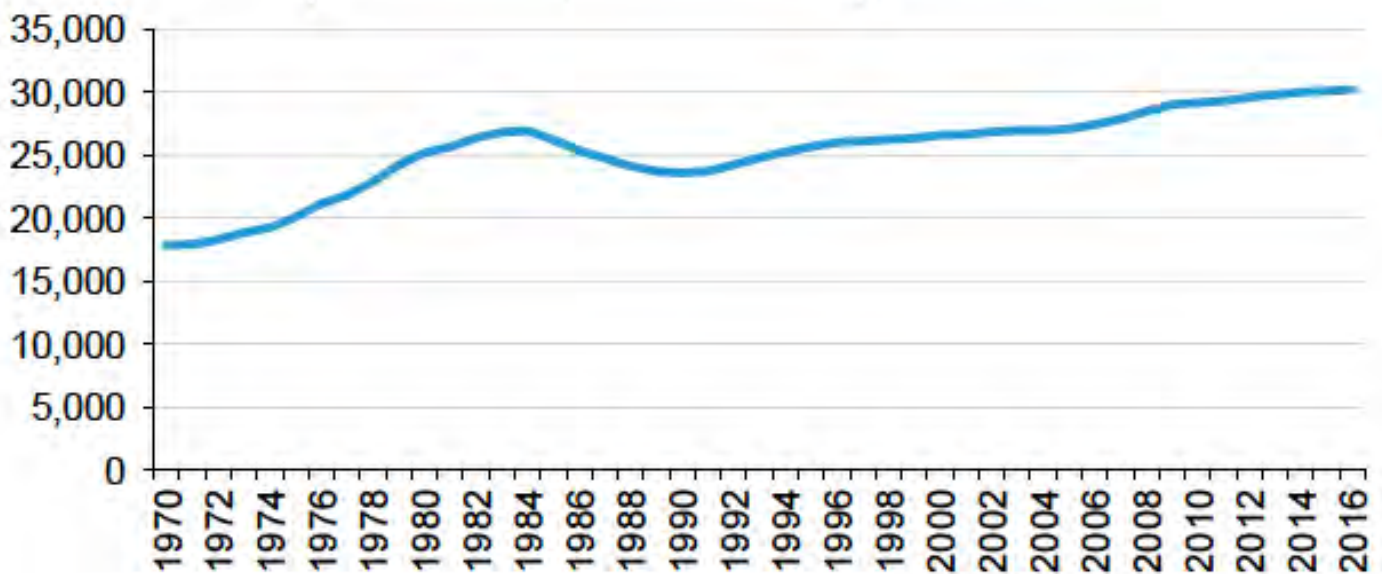
Population Demographics

○ Sheridan County has experienced relatively stable growth over the past 30 years, although average annual growth rates have been declining since 2000. The County grew by 11% between 1990 and 2000. At the time of the last comprehensive plan update the county population was just shy of 28,000, the result of a 5% growth rate for the decade. Current population estimates place the county-wide population at 31,044, a marked increase since 2010 when the population stood at 29,116. Population estimates in July 2018 indicate the County has continued to grow, albeit at a lesser rate of 3.8%, or 0.78% annually since 2010.

statewide, Wyoming reported the nation’s steepest population decline in 2017.

- The five-year population projection for Sheridan County is 32,120, representing a change of 0.68% annually from 2018 to 2023. Into the future, Sheridan County is expected to grow to 33,260 people by 2030 and 34,860 by 2040, with the majority of that growth occurring in the City of Sheridan and other urban areas. By 2040 the population of Sheridan (City) is expected to approach nearly 21,000 (comprising 60% of the county-wide population), with Ranchester and Dayton’s populations nearing 1,000 residents each.
- The County’s population is evenly split between male and female, with very little change since the 2008 Comprehensive

TABLE 1 – POPULATION TRENDS, SHERIDAN COUNTY, WY



○ Sheridan County’s population growth is mainly attributable to net in-migration, in which more people move into an area than move out. The lack of natural increase (births) can be directly linked to older, aging populations. Looking

Plan update. There was a slight decrease in the male population (51% to 49%, respectively) according to the 2010 census, but since then the male population has grown ever so slightly back up to about 50%.



- Trends in population age show that in 2007 the majority of the population was of prime workforce age, between 20 and 65 years old. The big change since 2007 is a shift in the retirement-aged population (those 65 and over), from comprising 1/8 of the overall population to nearly 1/5 (20%) of the overall County population. This is 4.3% more than the statewide average for this age group, and reflective of both national trends and the desirability of Sheridan County for retirees moving to Wyoming.
- The median age of Sheridan County's population is about 43 years old, 5 years older than the median age in the US.
- The racial composition of the population is not even discussed in the 2008 Comprehensive Plan, other than to say it is "uniform". While this may be true, the racial breakdown is slowly shifting, with a 209% increase in black population (228 residents), a 34% increase in populations identifying as Hispanic or Latino (344 residents), and lesser increases in all other racial groups (208 residents combined). The white population had the smallest percentage increase since 2010 at just over 2%, or 658 residents.
- 10% of the County's population identifies as "veteran" according to the 2017 American Community Survey.
- Between 1990 and 2000 the unincorporated county lost population while the incorporated areas all gained population (with the exception of Clearmont, although the population change was negligible). The greatest increases occurred in and around Sheridan and Dayton during this time period.
- Between 2010 and 2015 only about 20 percent of Wyoming's population growth occurred in rural areas of the state. This represents a decrease from the previous decade (2000 and 2010), when one third of the state's growth occurred in rural areas.
- Looking at recent population gains in Sheridan County, growth that occurred between 2010 and 2015 follows statewide trends closely, with roughly 1.5% of growth occurring in rural areas and 2.3% of growth happening in urban, incorporated areas.

Housing

Development Trends

- In 2008 about 60% of the population was concentrated in and around the City of Sheridan. The 1982 comprehensive plan encouraged future development density around the City and "urban", incorporated areas such as Dayton, Ranchester and Clearmont. In more recent plans, Big Horn and Story are also identified as outposts that may attract future growth and are appropriate for some increased development density.
- Currently in Sheridan County 59.1% of the 14,875 housing units in the area are owner occupied; 29.0%, renter occupied; and 11.8% are vacant. Comparatively, 56.0% of the housing units in the United States owner occupied; 32.8% are renter occupied; and 11.2% are vacant. There has been a slight decrease in owner occupied units and a slight increase in renter occupied units since the last comprehensive plan update.
- The county added 936 housing units to its housing stock in the last decade, with an annual rate of change of 2.93% since 2010.
- The median home value in the county is \$262,913, compared to a median home value of \$218,492 for the U.S. In five years, median value is projected to increase by 1.31% annually to \$280,614.



- Between 2000 and 2016 the cost of a single family detached home in Sheridan County increased 134%, from \$115,003 to \$269,986. This trend is consistent with the trends expressed in the 2008 Comprehensive Plan update for the previous decade.

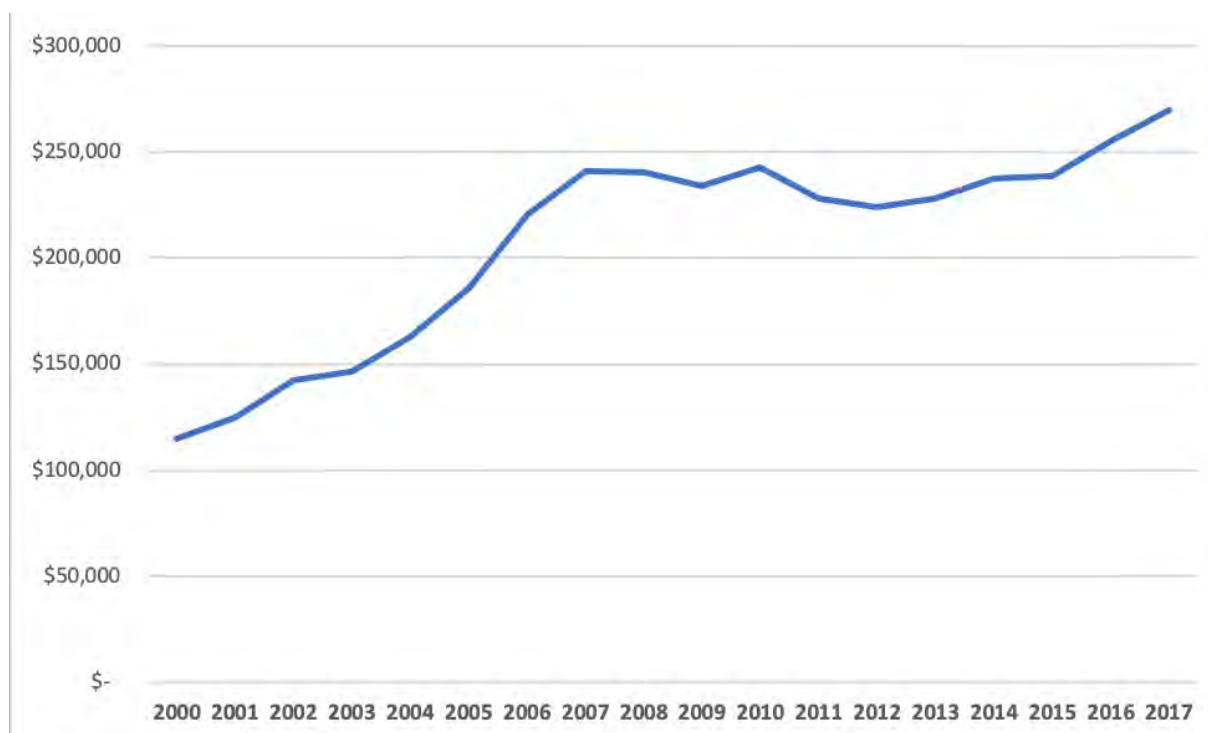
The Local Economy

- Total employment in Sheridan County in 2005 was 15,462; according to the recent economic profile prepared for Sheridan County by Headwaters Economics, employment was 15,164 in 2017 with an employable labor force in the county of 15,791.
- The average annual rate of unemployment since 2010 has been 5.4% percent, with a spike in 2010 (up to 7.3%)

divergence between the state and the county, with Sheridan’s unemployment rate dropping to 3.9% and the state’s spiking to 5.4%.

- In 2017 Sheridan County saw an annual average weekly wage increase of 1.2%.
- The 2008 Comprehensive Plan update highlights that between 1970 and 2000 average earnings in the county dropped by 16%; however, the average fluctuated annually over that 30 year time period.

TABLE 2 – AVERAGE HOME SALES PRICES, SHERIDAN COUNTY



and a current rate (last measured in 2017) of 3.9%.

- The County’s unemployment rates have typically correlated with the state’s, except in 2016 when there was a



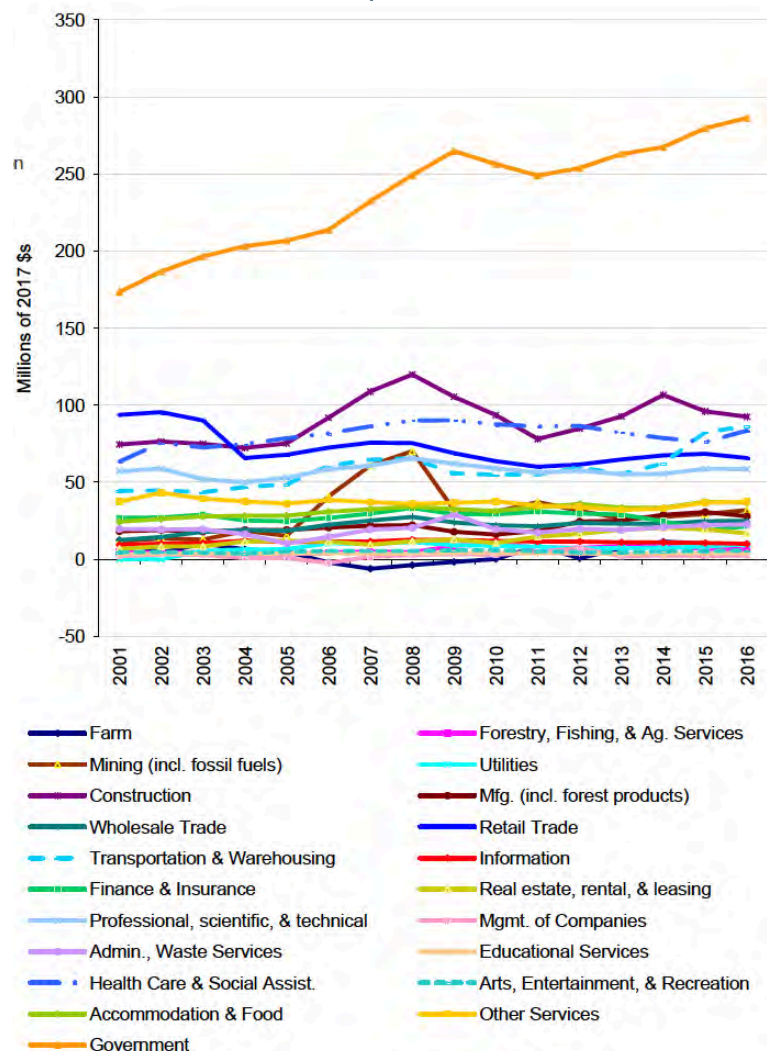
For example, between 2000 and 2016 the county experienced an increase in average earnings per job of \$6,199 (or 16.3%) over that 16-year period.

- Current median household income (MHI) is \$53,150 in the county, compared to \$58,100 for all U.S. households. Median household income is projected to reach \$61,010 in five years, compared to \$65,727 for U.S. households. Current median household income is slightly down from 2004 (reflective of the data used in the 2008 Comprehensive Plan), when MHI was \$53,450. However, MHI in Sheridan County remains significantly higher than the state median household income.
- Current average household income is \$68,545 in Sheridan County, compared to \$83,694 for all U.S. households. Average household income is projected to be \$78,211 in five years, compared to \$96,109 for all U.S. households
- Current per capita income is \$30,128 in the county, compared to the U.S. per capita income of \$31,950. The per capita income is projected to be \$34,129 in five years, compared to \$36,530 for all U.S. households.
- In the year 2000 nearly 50% of the income in Sheridan County was from non-labor sources; 37% of which originated from rent and 13% from transfer income. One third of the transfer income originated from age-related sources such as retirement and social security. Comparatively, in 2016 labor earnings were up 3.6%, leaving non-labor earnings at 46.4% of the total. Rent as part of the non-labor income dropped to 30.3% (a 3% decrease from 2000); while transfer income totaled the

remaining 16% and age-related sources increased to two thirds of that total.

- In 2000 the three industry sectors with the largest number of jobs were services (4,556 jobs), retail trade (3,097 jobs), and government (3,020 jobs). In 2016 the three industry sectors with the largest number of jobs were government (3,700 jobs), retail trade (2,200 jobs), and health care and social assistance (1,893 jobs).
- In 2000 the three industry sectors with the largest earnings were government (\$163.1 million), services (\$160.8 million), and retail trade (\$68.8 million). In 2016 the three industry sectors with the largest earnings were government (\$286.4

TABLE 3 – EARNINGS BY INDUSTRY SECTOR, SHERIDAN COUNTY



million) transportation and warehousing (\$86.4 million), and health care and social assistance (\$83.6 million). These same three industry sectors added the most earnings (in the same order) between 2001 and 2016.

- In 2016 government jobs paid the highest wages (\$52,838) and constitute the 2nd lowest number of people employed (3,497). Service related jobs paid the lowest (\$33,489) but constitute the 2nd highest number of jobs (7,847).
- Sheridan County business establishments grew consistently up until 2008; followed by a 3-year period of loss averaging 1.3% annually. Over the last seven years the number of business establishments have rebounded, growing each year with the exception of 2014. Growth in new business establishments has averaged .3% annually.

CHANGES FROM 2008 TO 2018

There have been relatively few large-scale changes to the county since 2008. The most significant trends and concerns include:

- The countywide growth rate has remained steady at a relatively low, stable pace.
- The Coal Bed Methane (CBM) boom of the early/mid 2000's largely came to an end.
- The Sheridan Joint Planning Area Plan was updated and adopted in 2017.
- Fiscal responsibility continues to be critical with regard to development patterns and utilities.
- The issue of affordable housing for young families, new households, and senior citizens has become more critical.
- The county population has continued to age at a greater rate than the state as a whole.
- Trails, paths, and access to public lands have gained popularity and are much sought after.
- All incorporated areas except Clearmont have grown at a faster rate than the unincorporated county.
- New or expanded manufacturing enterprises have benefited the local economy.
- Tourism has seen steady growth.

ASSESSMENT OF 2008 PLAN ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The 2008 Plan led to significant accomplishments for Sheridan County on behalf of sound land use planning practices. The Action Plan found in the 2008 Plan included 52 strategies that related to:

- Day-to-day policy decisions
- Regulatory and zoning revisions
- Programs and plans
- Regional coordination
- New funding mechanisms

A review of the recommended strategies and actions from the 2008 Plan was conducted as part of this Update to determine how many have been achieved. It was discovered that quite a few were accomplished since that Plan's adoption; the 2008 themes and accomplishments are summarized as follows.



Maintain a Balanced Land Use Pattern

- *Future Land Use Map – Adopted 2008*
- *Urban Service Area – Adopted by City and County 2010*
- *County Conservation/Cluster Subdivision Regulations – Adopted 2010*
- *Financial and Technical Cooperation with Sheridan Community Land Trust (SCLT) - Ongoing*

Sustain Natural and Scenic Resources and Environmental Quality

- *County Groundwater Vulnerability Protection Measures – Adopted 2010*
- *City and County Steep Slope Regulations – Adopted 2010*
- *County Stream Setbacks - Adopted 2010*

Provide Services and Facilities in an Efficient and Fiscally Responsible Manner

- *Revised SAWS Agreement and Service Area to Reflect Urban Service Area and Plan Policies - Adopted 2015*
- *Countywide Septic Regulations - Adopted 2016*

Develop a Connected, Safe Transportation System with Multiple Modes

- *Expansion of Bike Lanes/Multiple Use Trails (Soldier Ridge Trail, Red Grade Trails, Hidden Hoot, etc.) - Ongoing*



Resource Protection/Hazardous Area standards

- *Riparian area mapping - 2010*
- *Steep slope standards - Adopted 2010*
- *Landslide development prohibited - 2010*
- *Riparian Management program - Proposed 2013*

Consistent Zoning

- *Rezoning in Ranchester/Dayton area from Urban Residential to Agriculture - Adopted 2009 - 2011*
- *Rezone in Acme area from Agriculture to Future Industry - Adopted 2018*

Agricultural Zone District and designated Conservation Development Areas Overlay

- *Amendments to Zoning Rules for Agricultural zone lot size and density - Adopted 2010*
- *Conservation Design subdivisions included in Subdivision and Zoning Rules - Adopted 2010*

Bighorn Foothills Stewardship

- *Rezones in Ranchester/Dayton area from Urban Residential to Agriculture - Adopted 2009 - 2011*

Regional Cooperation: Story

- *Story septic assessment - Completed 2009*
- *Adoption of Story Area Septic Supplemental Regulations - Adopted 2012*

Establish Urban Service Area

- *Amendment to provide for new Sewer Service Area Boundary to be consistent with Comprehensive Plan-Urban Service Area - Adopted 2010*

Water Rights Distribution

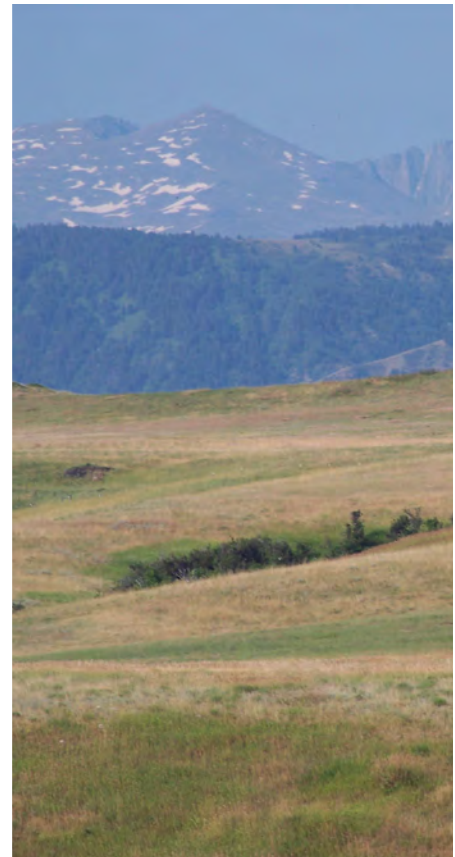
- *Subdivider compliance with Title 18 of Wyoming Statute 18-5-306(a)(xi)*
- *Approved plan from Wyoming State Engineer's Office required prior to County signing subdivision plats*

Cooperative Conservation

- *GIS data sharing with Sheridan Community Land Trust for potential conservation easements*
- *Trail easement opportunities for partnership*

Long Term and Safe Water Supply

- *Level II, Phase I Sheridan Supplemental Supply Study completed*
- *Level II, Phase II Study completed*
- *Storage water in Park and Dome Lake Reservoirs has been/ is being acquired over time by the City and SAWSJPB as it*



becomes available

- *SAWS service area parameters examined*
- *Level I Study, Sheridan Water System completed*

Reserve Rights of Way

- *Reserving rights of way as development occurs as identified on the County Road Network Plan*

Community Gateways and Corridors

- *E. 5th Street Corridor Plan - Completed 2013*

In addition to the above accomplishments, Chapter 12 of the 2008 Plan, Conservation and Clustering, was particularly successful in its implementation. This chapter pertained to establishment of conservation design principles and tools for the county's agricultural resource area and other designated rural residential areas.

Conservation Areas and Clustering

- *Rezoning in Ranchester/Dayton area from Urban Residential to Agriculture*
- *County Conservation/Cluster Subdivision Regulations – Adopted 2010*
- *Amendments to Zoning Rules for Agricultural zone lot size and density*
- *Riparian area mapping*
- *Steep slope standards adopted*
- *Landslide development prohibited*
- *Riparian Management program*



PLAN

SHERIDAN COUNTY

How can I get involved?

#SheridanCountyProud

Share your favorite photos of Sheridan County on Instagram using the hashtag, #SheridanCountyProud. Post what you love about the County, including places, spaces, trails, recreation, and industry.

1

We want to hear from YOU!
Whether you live or work here; are a student, retiree, or whatever your age; come and share your thoughts about our county as we begin to update the Sheridan County Comprehensive Plan.
Your opinions matter!



Questions? Call: Mark Reid, Sheridan County Planner, at 675-2420.

Join Sheridan County in shaping the future of the county! Share your ideas with us to help Sheridan County be a great place to LIVE, WORK, and PLAY!

Planning Week Workshops

Help create the FUTURE of Sheridan County by attending any of the following Planning Week workshops, hosted by Sheridan County Public Works and Orion Planning+Design. All workshops will be approximately 1 ½ hours in length.

2



6:00 pm
Tongue River Valley Community Center-Ranchester



6:15 pm
Clearmont School Multipurpose Room



6:00 pm
Big Horn High School Auditorium



6:00 pm
County Courthouse Public Hearing Room, 2nd floor of the Courthouse

CHAPTER 3. CITIZEN CONTRIBUTIONS

Plans are at their best when their contents are based on the contributions of local citizens, especially when identifying what will make the community more appealing or what aspects of the area need to be retained for the benefit of future generations. With this in mind, several opportunities were available for public input throughout this Plan Update; their focus and outcomes are summarized in this chapter, and more detailed results are located in Appendix D, Public Process. The results were also posted on the project website.

PLANNING WEEK

Planning Week was conducted December 3-6, 2018, through a series of mini-workshops held in Ranchester, Clearmont, Big Horn, and Sheridan that were as accessible as possible to unincorporated county residents and businesses, as well as the city and town citizens. The purpose of the workshops was especially critical for several reasons:

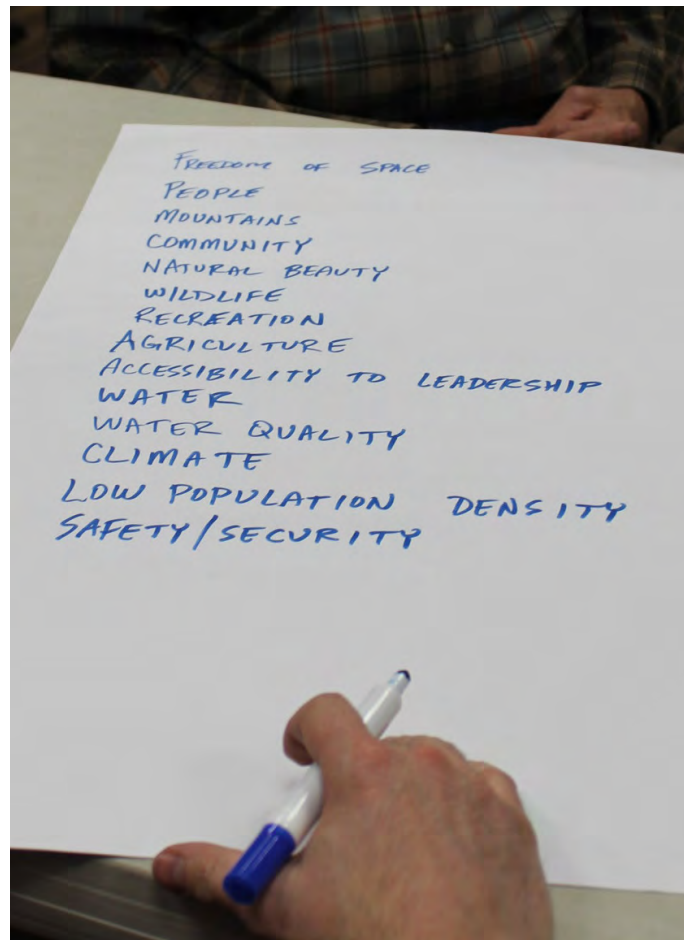
- **To obtain public feedback about the 2008 vision statement and themes;**
- **To understand what kind of image citizens currently have about the County and its future development;**
- **To learn where there are commonalities about the community's vision and direction;**
- **To gain input about the status of issues identified in the 2008 Plan; and**
- **To discover whether new issues that warrant Plan inclusion have arisen in the last ten years.**

Planning Week was announced through social media, public service announcements, radio, and print (Sheridan Press and the Country Bounty). Invitations were also delivered to key stakeholders identified by the County.

Attendees were asked to break into roundtables to discuss three questions, specify which were the top answers, and present the outcomes to the group as a whole. The questions that were generally asked at each workshop were:

- 1. **What do you love most about Sheridan County?**
- 2. **What specific issues or situations cause you the most concern?**
- 3. **You've left Sheridan County and returned after 10 years. You pick up the newspaper, or news web site. What headline would you most like to read?**

Nearly 100 citizens participated in the four workshops and provided insights and opinions about unincorporated Sheridan County which have been used to form the backbone of this Plan Update. Top responses for two of the posed questions at each workshop are listed below. With regard to what is most loved about the County, the area's mountains, open space, and outdoor recreation were clearly cherished by respondents, along with agriculture, rural character, and economic opportunities and diversification. The issues or situations causing the most concern focused on unmanaged growth, affordability, and workforce development.



🗨️ **What do you love most about Sheridan County?**

Ranchester/Dayton Workshop

- Mountains
- Open space
- Recreation
- Agriculture/ranching
- Natural beauty

Clearmont/Arvada Workshop

- Small community atmosphere
- Rural character—wildlife, ranchland

Big Horn/Story Workshop

- Open space
- Water—riparian areas
- Bighorn Mountains: easy to access, outdoor activities without over-population, not overcrowded
- Value private property ownership and supporting local business

Sheridan Workshop

- Outdoor natural spaces/resources/recreation/working ranchland, clean streams, Bighorn access
- Bighorn viewshed
- Economic opportunities, diversity
- Community gathering places (YMCA, WYO Theater, etc.)
- Historical richness
- City experience in small town atmosphere

🗨️ **What specific issues or situations in Sheridan County cause you the most concern?**

Ranchester/Dayton Workshop

- Unmanaged growth/attracting economic development/workforce
- Lack of economic opportunities besides energy
- Rising cost of living/lack of affordable housing
- Lack of involvement/lack of informed citizens

Clearmont/Arvada Workshop

- Affordability—low wages/high costs
- Services for an aging population, particularly in remote areas, such as medical, meals, and senior centers

Big Horn/Story Workshop

- [Wildland-]Urban interface/fire — building next to forest/foothills; climate change
- Increasing density [development]
- Lack of well-paying jobs and high cost of housing
- Waste handling

Sheridan Workshop

- Urban sprawl, unmanaged [rural] growth
- Lack of County funding, unsustainable tax base
- Affordable housing
- [Fear of] Becoming Teton County
- Diversity in economic base



COFFEE WITH CONSULTANTS

During the mornings of December 4, 5, and 6, 2018, team consultants were stationed at Java Moon in downtown Sheridan to meet with citizens about the Plan Update. Similar to the questions asked at the Planning Week workshops, the public was encouraged to provide input about their concerns and hopes for Sheridan County's future. Flip charts, sticky notes, dots and markers were available to convey ideas and support for responses. Responses were varied and often focused on incorporated areas, however the information gathered was still useful for gaining an understanding of local concerns. All recorded comments are found in Appendix D and were posted on the project website.

Among the most often cited concerns for the county's future were affordable housing and land costs, diversified and balanced economy, and standards for land development. The stated hopes for the county's future included balanced growth and employment opportunities, access to outdoor recreation and waterways, and continuing respect for the land.

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE

On June 10, 2019, a public open house was held at the Agriculture Center of Sheridan College. Displays and exercises were provided to solicit citizen input, and team members were available to answer questions and discuss the Update. Nearly 40 citizens and county officials attended the open house.

Several new and updated maps were on display for public comment. The maps showed current conditions such as existing land use, pathways and trails, resource conservation, hazardous areas, and so on. A suggestion was received to create a map of historic sites, which has subsequently been completed as part of the Plan Update.

A large map of the county was also available for citizens to place dots indicating where future residential housing, commercial uses, and industrial uses should go. Participants were told that the dots could be placed anywhere on the map, including incorporated

What are your hopes for Sheridan County's future?

”

“



Please join us and share your opinion!



The **2008 Sheridan County Comprehensive Plan** is in the process of **being updated**. The Plan is a guide that is used by elected officials, appointed boards, and citizens in directing the future land use of the county. **Updated goals, maps, and the overall vision** for the unincorporated portions of Sheridan County are now **ready for your review and comment**.



4:00 - 7:00 p.m.

Watt Agricultural Center
Sheridan College
3401 Coffeen Avenue



This is an **open house event**, which means you are welcome to drop by to see and comment on draft goals and maps **any time between 4:00 and 7:00**. Project team members will be present to answer questions and get your feedback.



...I CAN'T MAKE IT ON THE 10TH?
The draft goals and maps will be on display during the **June 20 Third Thursday Street Festival on Main Street**. Look for the Sheridan County booth. In addition, the material will be available for review and comment on the project website at: <https://sheridancountyplanupdate.com>.

For further information, please contact the Sheridan County Planning Office at 675-2420.





areas. A significant number of residential dots were placed within the incorporated city and towns. Dots indicating future commercial uses appeared primarily in the city and towns, as well as Big Horn. Future industrial uses were shown around the Acme area and in close proximity to Sheridan.

Updated versions of the Plan goals were also available for comment, as was a draft vision statement for the unincorporated county. Most of the comments that were received about the goals suggested alternative wording and ideas for zoning, all of which were considered in the drafting of the final goals.

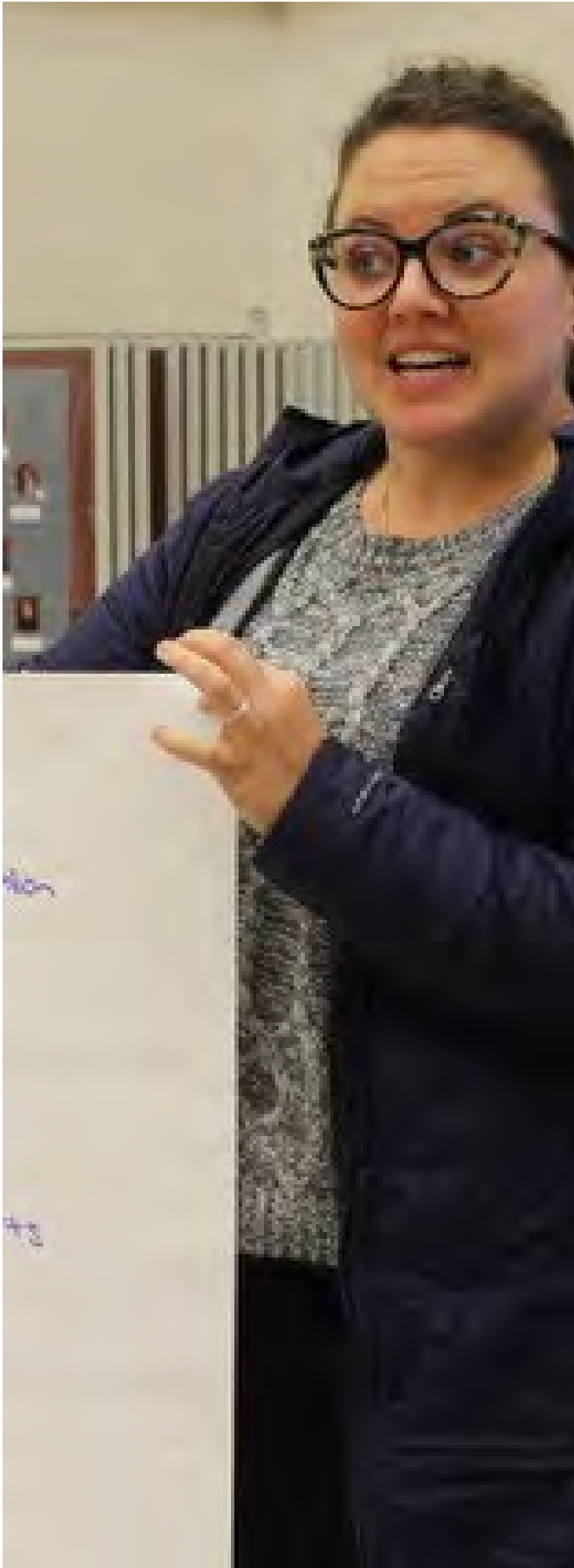
THIRD THURSDAY STREET FAIR

The project team had booths at the June 20 and August 15, 2019 Third Thursday Street Fair in Sheridan for the display of draft maps and materials. Comments were sought from the public about the drafts and input requested to identify where future land uses (residential, commercial, and industrial) should occur.

In June, the Third Thursday booth used several of the same exhibits that were part of the June 10 Open House, including the map to indicate where future land uses should be placed. The results were strikingly similar to what was produced at the open house, indicating that most residential, commercial, and industrial development should occur within or near incorporated areas, along with scattered future residential uses to the south towards Big Horn and west near Big Goose; more commercial uses in Clearmont, Big Horn, the Big Horn Y, and north of Sheridan; and industrial uses directly north, east, and south of the Sheridan Joint Planning Area and in the Acme vicinity.

The August Third Thursday booth was used to show the draft future land use map and other draft maps. Comments about the future land use map were generally positive, with some feedback received about the lack of affordable agricultural land located in the central and western portions of the county. Considerable interest and feedback regarding existing and future paths and trails was also expressed.





STAKEHOLDERS

County officials and staff compiled a list of Plan Update stakeholders that were periodically contacted about events and opportunities to comment on draft materials. People who attended the public workshops and open house were also added to the contact list. At the conclusion of the Update, there were 82 names on the stakeholder list and 78 who attended meetings and wished to be included on the attendee list.

CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

In addition to the official and formal roles of the Planning and Zoning Commission and Board of County Commissioners, the Plan Update was guided by a Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC). CAC members were selected by the Board of County Commissioners after the Commissioners published two rounds of notices looking for volunteers. A considerable number of county residents expressed an interest in serving. Following a thorough review of all the applications, the County Commissioners selected twelve individuals that offered a broad representation by location, background, and interests. They played an important role in the Plan Update and provided critical input during four CAC meetings and through the online review of goals, vision, maps of existing conditions, the future land use plan map, and draft chapters. The CAC assessed the results of the public outreach activities and shared their perspectives on the advantages and disadvantages of countywide growth throughout the Update.





PROJECT WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

A project website was maintained at <https://sheridancountyplanupdate.com> in an effort to keep the public informed about upcoming outreach events and to let them know the results of those events. The website also provided opportunities for citizens to comment on several key items such as the proposed Update goals, revised maps, and the future land use map. Citizen comments and questions were posted and received through the website on a periodic basis. Questions were answered by the project team.

Along with the website, a project Facebook page was created. Posts were made to promote public outreach opportunities and to ask questions about goals and the Plan Update. Attempts were made to generate discussion about the Update, with limited success.

SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

Citizens remain very vocal about maintaining open space and public access to outdoor recreation, and they are equally focused on creating a healthy and diversified economic base that allows residents - particularly young adults - to find meaningful employment opportunities. The availability of affordable housing is a point of concern expressed by residents throughout the county, and maintaining a strong sense of rural character and small town communities remains important. Well-managed development, maintenance of a good road and trail system, and the minimization of impacts to natural resources are also important.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

The concluding outreach on behalf of the Plan Update consisted of the public hearings before the Sheridan County Planning and Zoning Commission and the Sheridan County Board of County Commissioners. Public hearings for the Plan Update were heard before the County Planning and Zoning Commission on January 9, 2020. Their recommendation for approval was then forwarded to the Board of County Commissioners for their public hearing on February 4, 2020. At that time the Plan Update was unanimously adopted.

CHAPTER 4. VISION STATEMENT

BACKGROUND

The 2008 Comprehensive Plan vision statement consisted of seven themes that formed the backbone of the plan. They pertained to balanced land uses, environmental quality and natural resources, the local economy, service and infrastructure delivery and fiscal responsibility, the transportation network, distinct communities, and cooperative planning. They continue to represent values supported by county residents that were heard during the Update’s public outreach events. These wide-ranging themes and others that were described in the 2008 Plan are reviewed in Chapter 5 of this Update.

As explained in the 2008 Plan, the seven vision themes represent the broad values and ideas for the county to maintain or pursue over the next 20 years in order to enhance the qualities that make Sheridan County a great place to live, work, play, and enjoy. The vision statement is also helpful in describing the overall intent of the county, and the Update’s goals, policies, and strategies are intended to back up that vision. In addition, the vision statement serves as the description of the future that is being worked towards through the actions of County elected and appointed officials, County staff, and citizens.

This Update has taken input from the public outreach events to craft the vision statement that follows below which continues to build on the seven themes introduced in the 2008 Plan. It was refined by the Citizens Advisory Committee and reflects the values and long-term goals of Sheridan County.



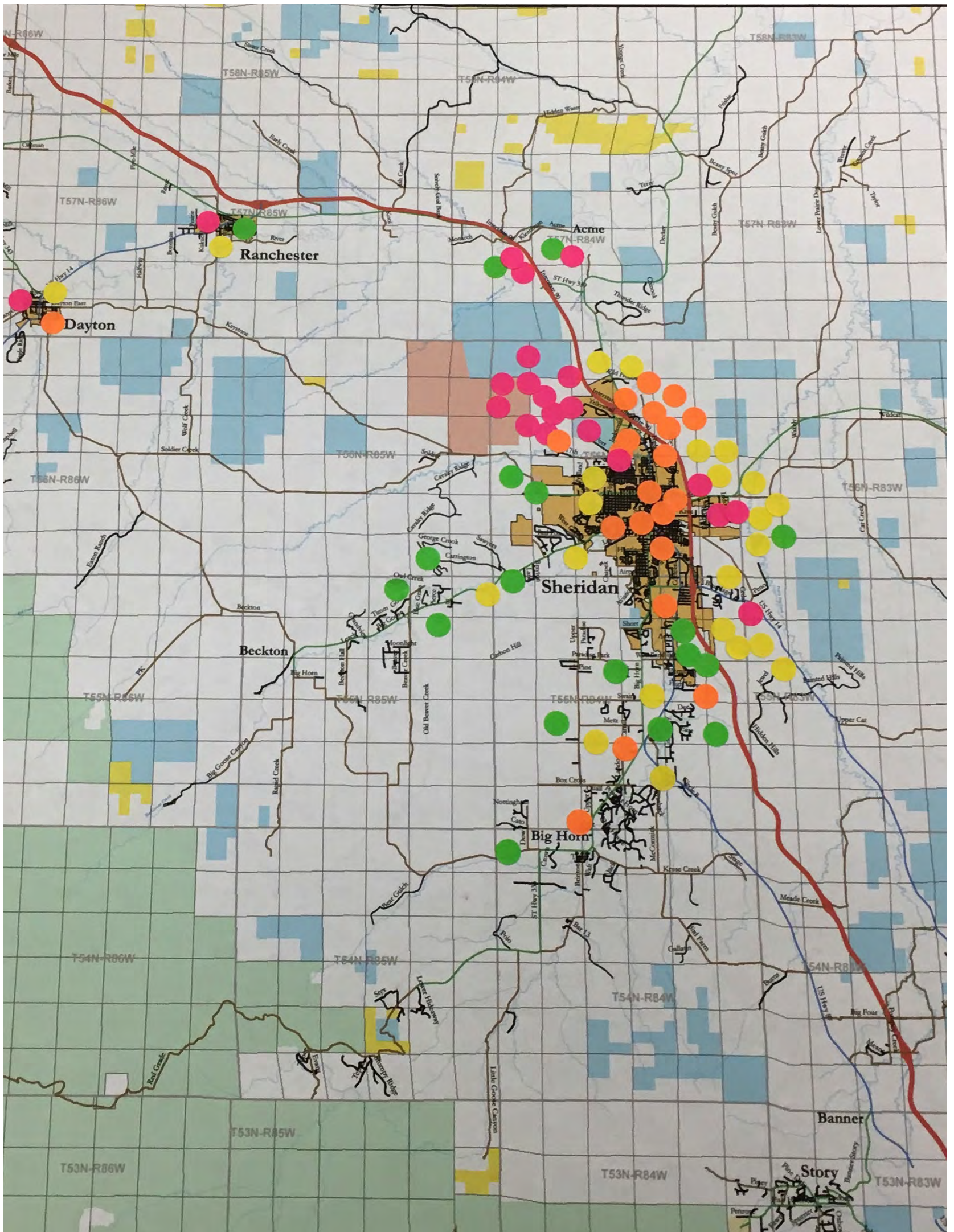
VISION STATEMENT

The spirit of the west blows free in Sheridan County, from the wilderness heights of the Bighorns to vast expanses of the eastern rangelands, cradling the landscapes, people, communities and economies that we love and are deeply connected to.

Challenged to look forward, this Plan is intended to guide County leaders and citizens in crafting the appropriate growth, development, and preservation of Sheridan County with wisdom, integrity, and care, seeking to build a future focused on:

- Balanced stewardship and uses of the land, water, view sheds, and natural resources that inspire and sustain us;*
- Sustainable growth and development that enhances our communities and promotes the dignity and value of people, their rights and their property;*
- Enhancement of an intermodal transportation network of roads, trails, paths, waterways and bikeways allowing ease of access for commerce, work and play through all seasons;*
- Support of our vital working lands and the lifestyles they require;*
- Preservation of our rich history of places and people that make Sheridan County special.*

We value and celebrate who we are and how far we've come, and we embrace the vision found in this plan with confidence that its path is leading to a bright and prosperous future.

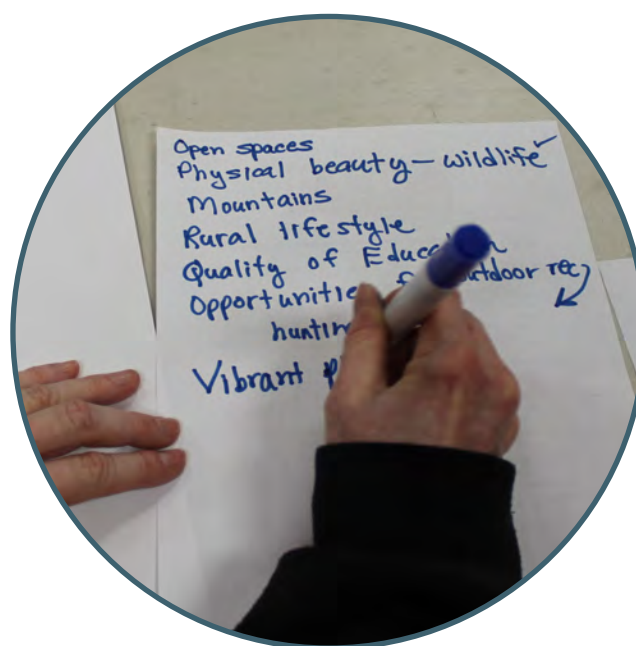
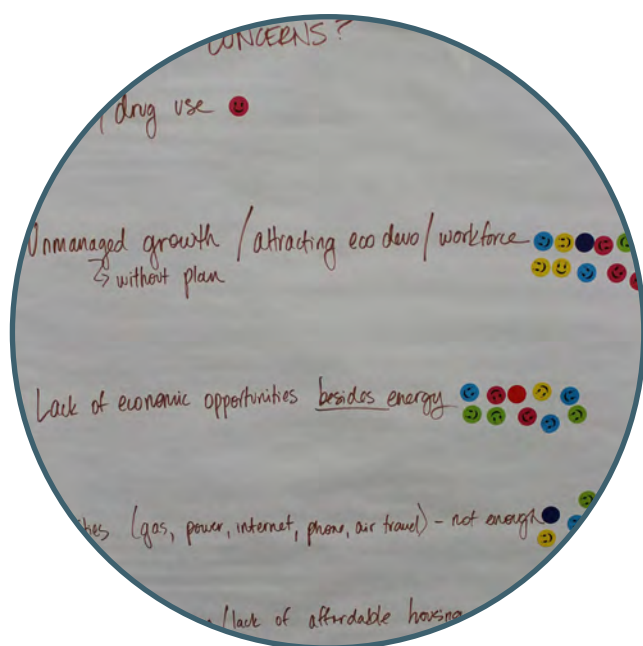


CHAPTER 5. STEWARDING THE FUTURE OF SHERIDAN COUNTY

Based on community input, the 2008 Plan identified nine issues that needed to be addressed in order for the Plan to be successful. The issues (in no order of priority) were:

1. **Planning for growth and fiscal responsibility**
2. **Provision of utilities, services, adequate water and fiscal responsibility**
3. **Property rights**
4. **Workforce housing**
5. **Agriculture**
6. **Open lands**
7. **Planning for commercial and business locations**
8. **Transportation planning**
9. **Historic Preservation**

Citizen feedback received during this Plan Update confirmed the continued importance of these nine topics relative to Sheridan County. The Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) further analyzed the results of the December 2018 public workshops and amended the 2008 text to expand the scope of some or better define what the issue entailed. In addition, two new topics were added as a result of what was heard at the public workshops.





2019 Plan Issues (Not listed by order of importance)

- Planning for growth and fiscal responsibility
- Provision of utilities [including high-speed internet], services, adequate water and fiscal responsibility
- Property rights
- Workforce housing and residential lands
- Agriculture
- Open lands and view sheds
- Planning for commercial, business, and large acreage industrial locations
- Transportation and regional trails planning
- Historic sites
- Wildlife and natural resources
- Access to public lands [for outdoor recreation]



Following the discussions with the CAC, it became clear that the 11 topics are items that require inclusion in the County Plan Update and that continued stewardship will be necessary to fully understand and address each topic. They reflect the publicly expressed values and assets of the county; their successful attainment will be crucial to leading Sheridan County to a positive, healthy future.



KEY ISSUES THE PLAN AND UPDATE ADDRESSES

Early in the planning process for both the 2008 Plan and this Plan Update, the public, Citizens Advisory Committee, other committees, elected and appointed officials, staff, and consultants, helped identify issues that needed to be addressed in order for the Comprehensive Plan to be successful. This Plan Update proposes to continue the momentum of the 2008 Plan by focusing on the issues as described below.

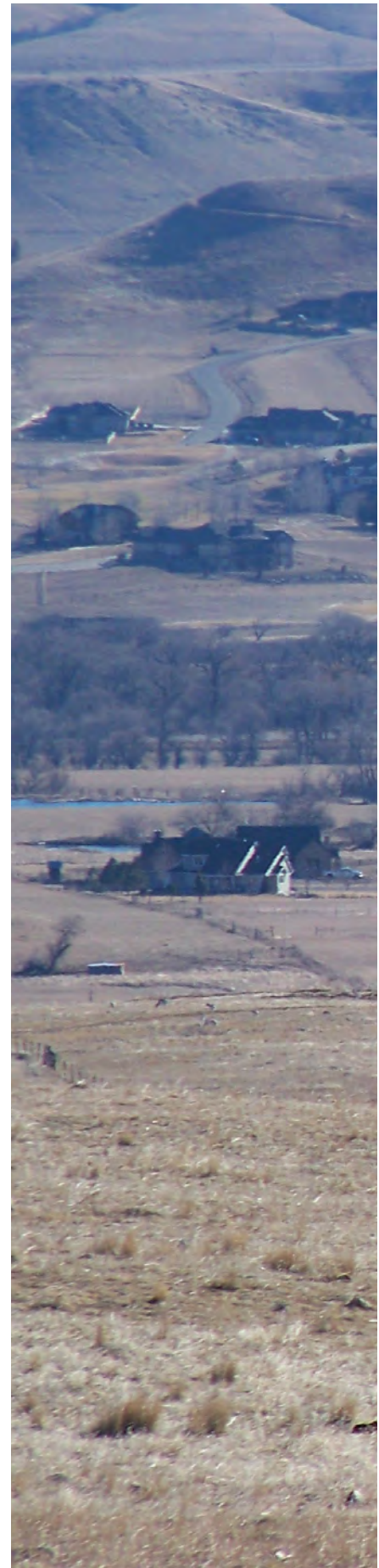
1. Planning for growth and fiscal responsibility

Planning for and managing fluctuating and sometimes rapid rates of growth in Sheridan County is a major driving issue for this Plan, as it was when the county first developed a Comprehensive Plan in the late 1970s.

Adopting a Future Land Use Plan with clear direction will continue to help the county refine its zoning districts and accommodate growth. This Update provides policies to help plan for growth, as follows:

- **Refine residential districts located in areas possessing exceptional natural qualities or sensitive areas, such as critical winter range.**
- **Address residential development within the Agricultural district unit, particularly on highly productive irrigated lands.**
- **Identify and plan special planning areas for future jobs and industry.**
- **Identify and plan commercial nodes or rural centers for future retail and services.**
- **Enact additional site development standards (e.g., landscaping, lighting pollution, and scenic protection). Steep slope standards were adopted in 2010.**
- **Clearly define urban/rural and agricultural edges and identify needs for unincorporated communities.**

The Comprehensive Plan will enable the county to protect its assets and values as new development occurs and consider the impacts on roads, schools, emergency services, and assure that the county has the fiscal ability to provide services and deal with possible infrastructure constraints.



2. Provision of utilities [including high-speed internet], services, adequate water and fiscal responsibility

Water and wastewater are important considerations for this Plan, much as they were in 2008. Considerations for this planning effort include the need to:

- **Maintain a Joint Planning Area Plan with the City of Sheridan and adopt comparable plans for Ranchester and Dayton that identifies capacities to accommodate new growth.**
- **Identify existing water and/or sewer systems in need of upgrades.**
- **Continue to identify and plan for rural septic systems that are creating water quality and environmental problems or potential development constraints. Work accomplished to partially address septic issues since 2008 included: adoption of special construction standards for the Story area, adoption of the Groundwater Protection Area (GPA) and increased minimum lot sizes, and completion of a feasibility study to explore municipal sewer options for the Little Goose valley. Additionally, in 2012 the Sheridan County Conservation District and the County partnered to conduct a series of septic workshops and communications to start updating permit records for septic systems within the county, which was particularly critical since many older systems do not have permits.**
- **Ensure an adequate water supply for current and future generations of residents and businesses. Since 2008, work accomplished to partially address water supply included three Level I and Level II WWDC studies and proactive acquisition of water rights.**
- **Understand capacity of rural fire districts' ability to provide service, adequate fire flows and plan for adequate ingress and egress for subdivisions.**
- **Identify opportunities for enhancing high-speed internet to rural areas**

The 2008 Comprehensive Plan and Update identifies areas with constraints for continued rural residential growth that rely on septic systems and wells. It also addresses the relationship of development and healthy streams and watersheds. Finally, it includes policies for long-term planning and triggers for adequate water and wastewater treatment.



3. Property rights

Part of the purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is to maintain the countywide quality of life for current and future generations, while respecting individual rights. At the same time, the Plan must look at broad goals and actions to focus on community health, safety, and welfare. This Update is not a major philosophical shift from any of the previous plans that have been in place for decades, including the 1982 Plan. It continues to strengthen many positions that were in the 2008 Plan and proposes specific strategies for plan implementation.

This Update continues to respect rights of private property owners to use their land and identify the limits of takings that can be related to county actions, while balancing community interests and responsibilities to protect public health, safety, and welfare.

4. Workforce housing and residential lands

The cost of housing in Sheridan County has been increasing and outpacing wages since the 2008 Plan was adopted, and the county has seen increased pressure for affordable and workforce housing. This Update confirms the conclusion of the 2008 Plan that the needs and potential solutions for workforce housing primarily rests with the communities in the county, given that these are the areas where a majority of jobs, services, and transportation is available. At the same time, there is still a need for future residential land in the unincorporated county, particularly in association with conservation development areas.

5. Agriculture

Agriculture and ranching has been one of the traditional economic mainstays of Sheridan County and is a primary source of the highly valued visual quality of the county. As with many rural areas, farmers and ranchers are experiencing pressure to sell or develop agricultural lands. This Plan advocates continued utilization of previously adopted measures to work with the farming and ranching community to help sustain working farms and ranches, particularly areas with irrigated agriculture.





6. Open lands and view sheds

Citizens value open lands and access to public lands for recreation, and they also value views of the Bighorns and the Bighorn National Forest. Private land trusts, such as the Sheridan Community Land Trust, the Nature Conservancy, and Wyoming Stock Growers Agricultural Land Trust have accomplished a great deal of land conservation (for both open lands and agriculture, especially along the Bighorn Foothills). This Update continues to identify additional priorities and tools to achieve open lands conservation for recreation, scenic quality, resource protection, and other objectives.

7. Planning for commercial, business, and large acreage industrial locations

Sheridan County's economy has been strong since the 2008 Plan was adopted, in part due to energy resource development, manufacturing, construction, and tourism. It is not Sheridan County's responsibility to promote job growth, because that is primarily the role of Forward Sheridan, the Sheridan County Chamber of Commerce, Sheridan Economic and Educational Development Authority (SEEDA), and other economic organizations. However, this Plan can seek ways to assist and encourage a long-term stable economy. It addresses how to balance business and industry-friendly development with other community values, such as 'small town' qualities, a unique environment for residents and tourists, and clean industry. It also identifies appropriate locations for business and industry development.

8. Transportation and regional trails planning

The lack of a plan for the preservation and protection of future rights-of-way can result in a disjointed, inefficient roadway network. The county performs annual capital improvement planning for its road system expansion and management needs that identifies existing and projected traffic circulation levels of service. The Comprehensive Plan Update advocates continued coordination of transportation planning of the road system and trails with the communities in the county and outlying rural areas. Coordination with the Sheridan Community Land Trust on the continued development of a regional trails (pathways) system remains a high priority among citizens.

9. Historic sites

While many of the historic structures of the county are located in the City of Sheridan, the county has several identified historic sites and areas that are important as well, such as the Connor Battlefield, a State Historic Site, the Fetterman and Wagon Box battle sites, and the Bozeman Trail. Not all sites have been identified or are managed. The 2008 Plan and this Update identify ways to preserve historic areas and corridors and how to treat other cultural or archaeological resources. Most recently, Sheridan County participated on the Acme Working Group with the Sheridan County Conservation District and other organizations that are working on the reclamation of the historic former Acme Power Plant.

10. Wildlife and natural resources

Wildlife and natural resources are a critical component of Sheridan County's values and economy as evidenced by public comments received during the Plan Update. Wildlife, particularly big game such as elk, moose, and deer provide viewing and hunting opportunities that are enjoyed by area residents and visitors. Natural resources can be found both above (Tongue River, Big Goose Creek, and other waterways; Bighorn foothills; agricultural land) and underground (minerals, natural gas, sand and gravel). Strategies for the conservation and even-handed stewardship of all resources are identified in the Update and are a continuation of work previously completed. Starting in 2011 and finishing in 2014, the Sheridan County Conservation District and Sheridan County worked in a partnership to complete a stream channel survey for Tongue River Canyon. The Conservation District recently worked with the County and other partners to complete construction on some of the recommendations from that plan.

11. Access to public lands [for outdoor recreation]

A consistent theme heard throughout the Update's public outreach was the importance of access to public lands, primarily for outdoor recreation such as hiking, ATVs, birdwatching, wildlife viewing, and hunting. The 2008 Plan and this Update outline goals and strategies for maintaining access to public lands and providing support for a wide variety of outdoor recreational opportunities.



SPRINGWILLOW RD

ULM ROAD

SHERIDAN
157
COUNTY



SHERIDAN
42
COUNTY

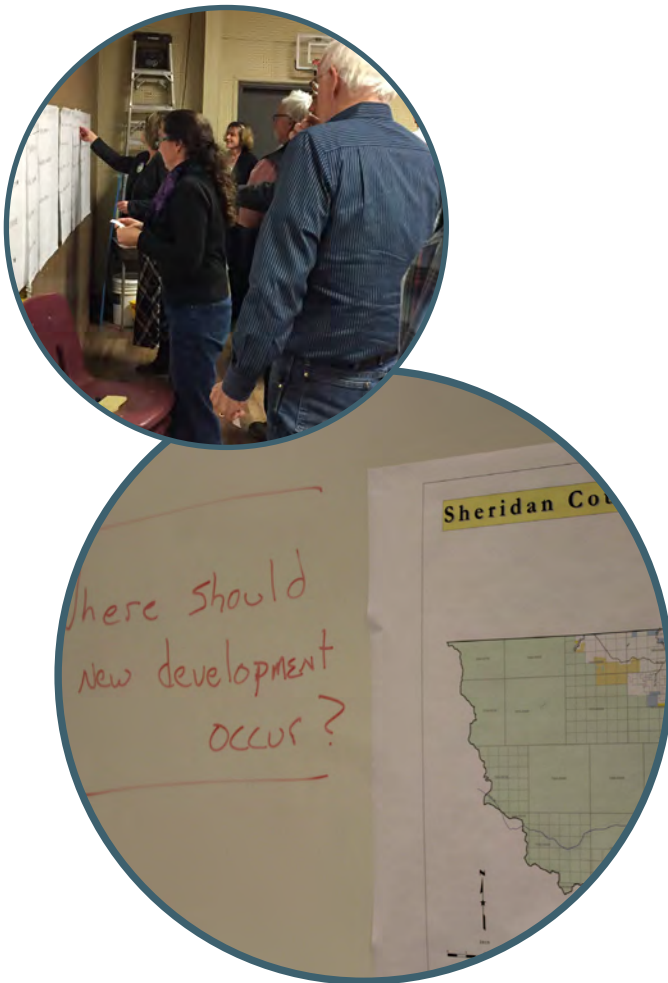


CHAPTER 6. FUNCTIONAL PLAN ELEMENTS

This chapter focuses on several important factors in determining the future development and conservation of Sheridan County: land use, transportation and mobility, natural and historic resources, economy, services and facilities, and county communities. Brief summaries and goals and policies are presented for each element. More thorough descriptions of each element are found in Appendix A, County Profile.

The chapter refers to a number of countywide and regional maps, all of which are located in Appendix B (Fire Districts, Agricultural Land, County Road Network, Existing Land Use, Groundwater Protection Areas, Hazardous Areas, Long Range Trails, Resource Conservation, Water and Sewer Districts, Zoning, and Historic Sites). Many of the maps are included in this chapter. These maps are intended to be used in association with the Future Land Use Plan Map to guide decisions regarding where certain land uses can best be accommodated.

The 2008 Plan goals and policies were reviewed and updated based on their level of completion, continued relevancy, and expressed support raised during the various public outreach activities. As a result, some of the 2008 goals and/or policies were removed, others were modified, and new ones were created.



LAND USE

This section begins with a description of the major land use ideas found in the 2008 Plan, followed by a summary of existing land use statistics, information about place types, the Future Land Use Plan Map, and land use goals and policies. In general, the land use concepts listed in the 2008 Plan remain relevant today, and those portions of the concepts that have been implemented are noted below.

Status of 2008 Land Use Ideas

1. Plan for well-designed compact urban growth in communities

In general, commercial and urban residential uses should be located in towns and in the City of Sheridan, where services and infrastructure needed to support higher-intensity uses are available and can be supported. Since 2008, the county has:

- **Designated an Urban Service Area around the City of Sheridan for future urban development (residential, commercial, and business and industry).**
- **Designated where development will efficiently be served with municipal water and sewer.**
- **Designated some low density rural residential development at the edge of Sheridan.**

The county continues to support the following:

- **Plan for urban neighborhoods and commercial centers in an efficient compact pattern, to prevent extensive linear commercial development and provide a variety of housing in neighborhoods. New commercial uses will blend well with surrounding uses.**
- **Encourage infill development, revitalization, and the development of walkable, healthy living neighborhoods.**

2. Retain the distinct and autonomous towns in the county

The compact patterns of the distinct and self-governing communities of Dayton and Rancheater have been retained by designating planning and growth areas. Clearmont continues to be monitored in terms of its population and development. The County will continue to:

- **Coordinate planning/growth areas and future land uses with the towns of Dayton, Rancheater, and Clearmont.**
- **Minimize the extent of dispersed residential development in the county outside of towns and their designated growth areas to avoid encroachment on traditional rural uses and demand for services in the towns.**

3. *Retain the agricultural/rural areas of the county*

The Agricultural/Resource area has been established outside of cities, towns, and their growth areas, and the County will continue to:

- **Encourage farming and ranching and very low density residential development as the primary use of land.**
- **Direct most development away from agricultural areas and limit residential development in remote areas.**
- **Allow conservation design development to replicate traditional farmstead or ranch patterns and to conserve agricultural lands and resources.**
- **Discourage development of prime agricultural land (including irrigated lands and prime farm land based on soils classifications) outside of growth areas.**
- **Support activities that preserve rural historical/cultural features.**

4. *Encourage clustered development patterns*

As a result of the 2008 Plan, the County established a Conservation Development Area category that is identified on the Resource Conservation Map in Appendix B. This area applies to designated locations in the county (generally within two miles of Dayton and Ranchester and within six miles of Sheridan). Property owners are eligible to create conservation design subdivisions and conserve open space or resources and receive higher density bonuses than in more remote locations of the county.





5. Conserve the Big Horn foothills

This remains of significant interest to county residents. The county has maintained the Big Horn Foothills Resource Conservation Area (established in 1982) to protect the unique foothills visual quality and tourism resource, maintain traditional agricultural uses, protect wildlife habitat, and allow aquifer recharge to occur. In order to accomplish this, future development in the area should:

- **Be consistent with the agricultural uses or very low density residential development.**
- **Minimize adverse effects on wildlife habitat and aesthetic resources.**
- **Avoid wildlife migration routes and crucial winter ranges.**

6. Allow continued limited rural residential patterns in the Big and Little Goose Creeks

Rural residential patterns have been retained in Big and Little Goose Creeks. The areas will remain mostly rural with some limited expansion of the rural residential density pattern in areas where it already exists and where impacts to vulnerable groundwater areas are mitigated. This Update also continues to retain rural residential development patterns in Story and its vicinity.

7. Provide stewardship of our natural resources

Stewardship of natural resources has continued to be promoted in the county, including recommendations to:

- **Work with agricultural landowners to conserve lands.**
- **Protect streams and rivers and their riparian areas from negative impacts of development.**
- **Maintain groundwater quality by limiting expansion of activities that create pollution (i.e., poorly performing septic systems and dense residential development without adequate wastewater treatment).**
- **Protect crucial winter wildlife habitat from negative impacts of development.**

8. Identify suitable locations and standards for light industry

The Plan identifies areas for future industry in the city, towns, and the county to provide job opportunities. The 2008 Plan recommended standards to address impacts such as noise, lights, truck traffic, water pollutants, and odors. Work to accomplish this will need to be programmed by the county.

9. Provide community planning where it is needed in unincorporated places

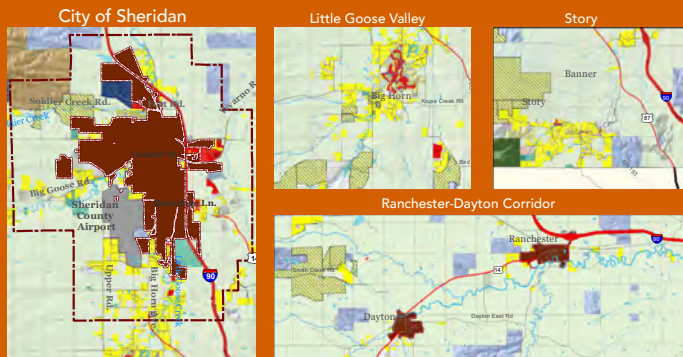
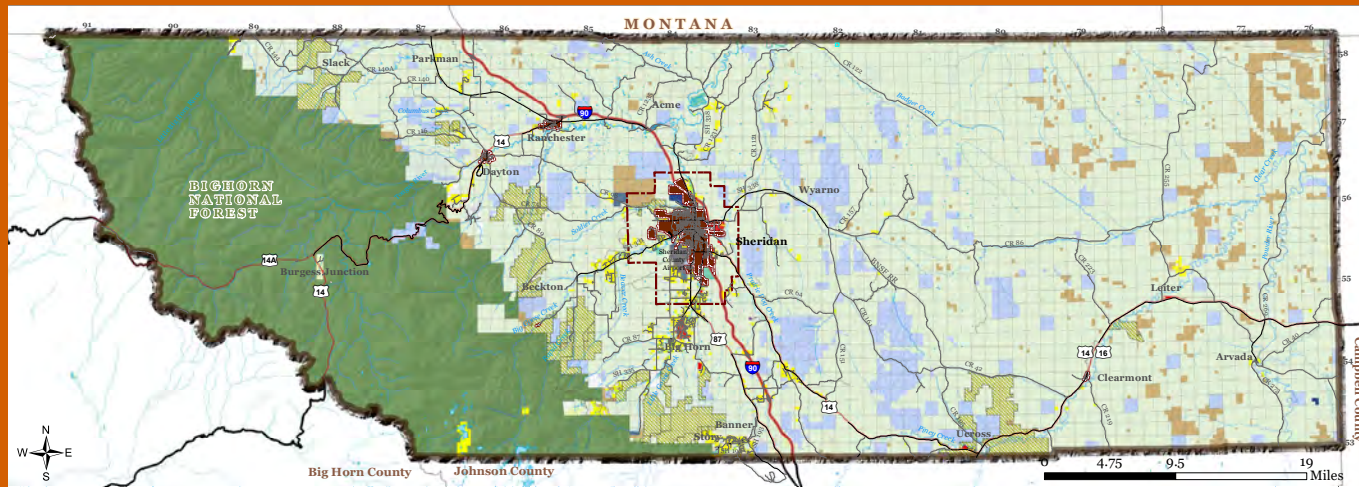
The Future Land Use Plan Map does not designate detailed land uses for the unincorporated communities. This Update continues to recommend that the County work with the unincorporated communities (Story, Big Horn, and possibly Arvada) to:

- **Develop community plans to address the specific needs for water, wastewater, and other services before extensive development occurs.**
- **Address how future development, including some commercial services, should locate and be compatible with existing communities.**



EXISTING LAND USE

Sheridan County, Wyoming
Comprehensive Plan



Legend

- Incorporated Places
- Sheridan Joint Planning Area
- Highways
- Streets
- Railroads
- Stream/River

- ### Private Lands
- Agricultural
 - Residential
 - Multi-Use
 - Commercial
 - Industrial
 - Vacant
 - Airport
 - Unknown
 - Conservation Easement (recorded before 2008)

Map A

- ### Public Lands
- Public/Quasi-Public
 - School
 - City/Town
 - Sheridan County
 - State of Wyoming
 - Federal
 - U.S. Forest Service
 - Bureau of Land Management

Inset Map Scale Bar
0 1.25 2.5 5 Miles
Source: Sheridan County GIS, Sheridan County Tax Assessor



MAP-A EXISTING LAND USE

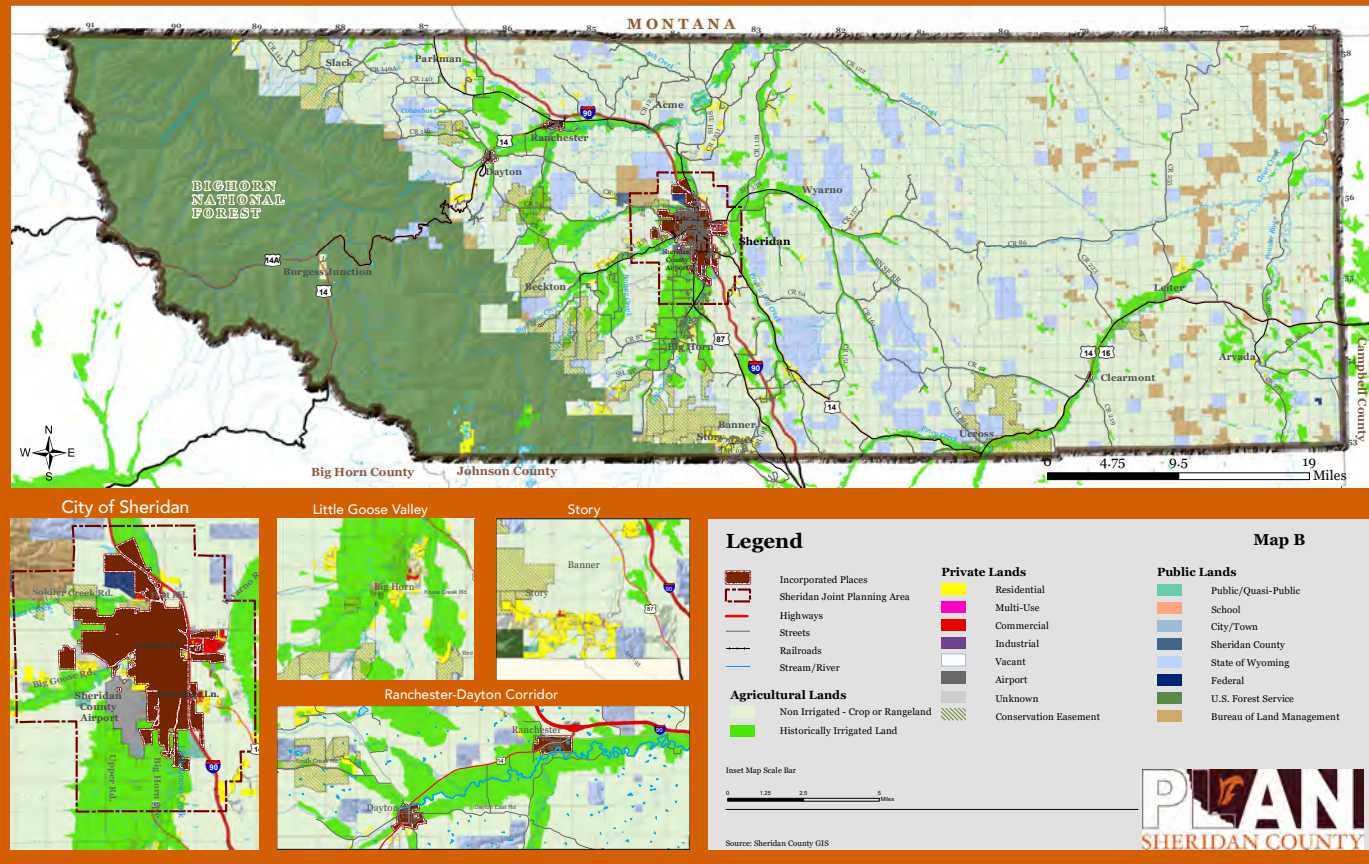
Existing Land Use

The majority of land in Sheridan County is under private ownership, totaling approximately 1,622 square miles and representing about 64 percent of all land within the county. The remaining 902 square miles (just under 36 percent) remains in public and trust ownership under local, state or federal authority. There has not been a significant change in overall land ownership over the last decade.

The preponderance of developed land in the county is located in incorporated cities and towns, particularly in the City of Sheridan and the area immediately surrounding the city's border. Agriculture is the largest existing county land use by area at just over 988,747 acres (about 62 percent). Public and trust lands account for the next largest land use at 558,734 acres (approximately 35 percent), most of which are used for agricultural purposes. Residential land use accounts for 15,889 acres (1.3 percent), and non-residential uses (businesses, industry, special purpose, and multi-use) account for approximately 666 acres or less than one percent of the overall land area. These non-residential uses have continued to locate primarily in or near the communities of Sheridan,

AGRICULTURAL LAND

Sheridan County, Wyoming
Comprehensive Plan



MAP-B AGRICULTURAL LAND

Dayton and Ranchester. At present the county has about 9,289 acres of land (less than one percent) classified by the County Assessor as vacant.

Taking a look at the county’s zoning, the largest zoning district is Agricultural, encompassing 1,573,655 acres, over 97 percent of zoned land area in the county. The agricultural zoning district includes U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, and most State lands. Residentially zoned lands account for 35,486 acres or slightly over 2 percent of the total zoned area, whereas non-residential zoning covers 3,543 acres and less than one percent of all lands zoned in the county.

Appendix G, Plan Capacity, presents a generalized assessment of the availability of potential residential building sites within the unincorporated county, strictly based on current zoning and without factoring in the potential for greater densities associated with PUDs and conservation design subdivisions. Summarized, there is capacity for approximately 16,101 new building units, which has the potential to more than double the current county population.



Land Use Place Types

This section describes the land use categories or place types that are presented on the Future Land Use Plan Map found in this chapter and other maps located in Appendix B. Place types provide visual and general descriptions of what each land use should look like and where it is most suitable. While the descriptions may include references to County Zoning, the place types themselves do not have the regulatory status of zoning. They are primarily a tool for understanding where and how each land use should be implemented in the county. Proposed zoning amendments should be consistent with the categories and designations on the Future Land Use Plan Map and with the place type descriptions located below.

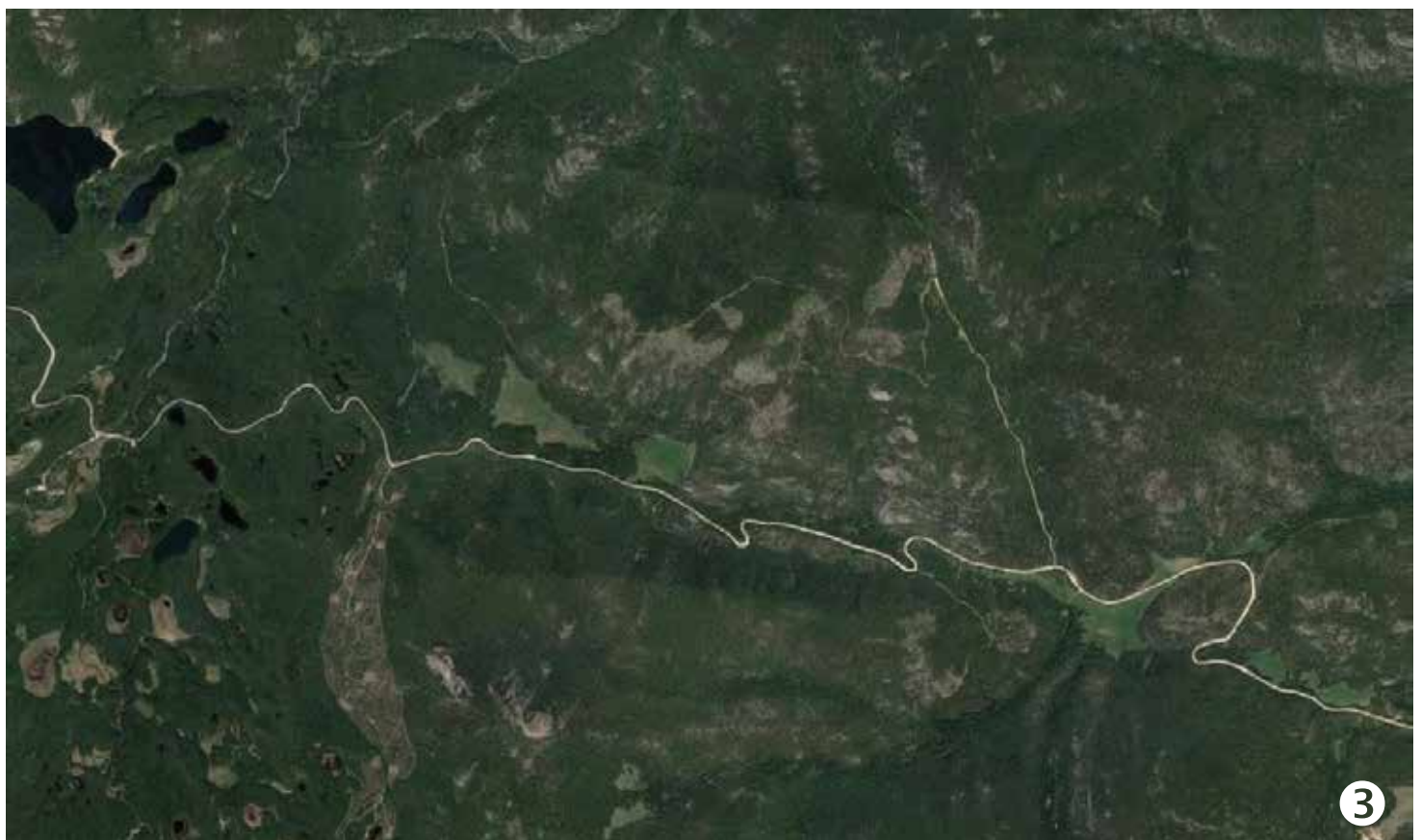
The place types developed for Sheridan County include:

- **Conservation and Outdoor Recreation**
- **Agriculture/Resource Lands**
- **Rural Residential**
- **Rural Centers**
- **Community Core**
- **Urban Residential**
- **Commercial Centers**
- **Neighborhood Commercial**
- **Light Industry/Business Park**
- **Heavy Industry**

The Special Planning Area designation that is included on the Future Land Use Plan Map indicates an area that is recognized by the county for its unique economic development potential. It is identified as an area where future development may occur but where land use designations will not be specified until a public master plan review process has concluded.

CONSERVATION AND OUTDOOR RECREATION

| POTENTIAL USES | |
|---|---|
| Primary Land Uses | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Parks • Bighorn National Forrest • Outdoor Recreation |
| Secondary Land Use | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance and support facilities |
| CHARACTERISTICS AND LOCATION | |
| <p>The Conservation and Outdoor Recreation place type is primarily composed of the Bighorn National Forest. as the title implies, these lands are primarily devoted to conservation and outdoor recreation.</p> | |
| DEVELOPMENT DENSITY | |
| <p>Development generally does not occur in Conservation and Outdoor Recreation areas.</p> | |
| PHOTO EXAMPLES | |
| <p>The precedent images visual convey the intended character of the place type and the verbal description above. 1. <i>Bighorns Meadow</i>, 2. <i>Bighorns Stream</i>, 3. <i>Portion of the Bighorn National Forest from above</i>.</p> | |



AGRICULTURE/RESOURCE LANDS

POTENTIAL USES

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Primary Land Use | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture • Ranching • Farm dwellings • Agricultural support facilities |
| Secondary Land Use | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource Extraction • Recreation and Wildlife oriented activities |

CHARACTERISTICS AND LOCATION

Agricultural/Resource lands exist throughout the county and lie outside of communities and their growth areas. Agricultural/Resource lands are intended to remain in agricultural use occasionally accompanied by very low density development.

DEVELOPMENT DENSITY

1 unit per 80 acres is the base density in large lot development, but net development density can range from 1 unit per 40 acres, to 1 unit per 20 acres in conservation design subdivisions.

PHOTO EXAMPLES

The photo examples are intended to visually convey the intended character of the place type, illustrating the narrative description above. These examples include 1. *Typical Ranch Facilities*, 2. *Livestock Grazing*, 3. *Irrigated Fields*



RURAL RESIDENTIAL

| POTENTIAL USES | |
|--|---|
| Primary Land Use | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single family residential |
| Secondary Land Use | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agricultural uses |
| CHARACTERISTICS AND LOCATION | |
| <p>The Rural Residential place type locations are generally zoned as Rural Residential. These areas provide opportunities for rural residential development to occur without encouraging the expansion their encroachment into remote areas or areas characterized by groundwater vulnerability.</p> | |
| DEVELOPMENT DENSITY | |
| <p>Density and minimum lot size generally vary for Rural residential from 1 unit per 2 acres to 1 unit per 5 acres, depending on location and availability of central water and wastewater treatment, and groundwater vulnerability. Clustering compliant with conservation design standards may yield higher densities depending on location relative to designated Groundwater Protection Areas. Conservation design subdivisions can yield higher densities..</p> | |
| PHOTO EXAMPLES | |
| <p>The photo examples are intended to visually convey the intended character of the place type, illustrating the narrative description above. These examples include 1. Rural Residential, 2. Rural Residential, 3. Rural Residential Neighborhood</p> | |



RURAL CENTERS

POTENTIAL USES

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Primary Land Uses | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighborhood commercial • Agricultural Services |
| Secondary Land Use | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional Uses |

CHARACTERISTICS AND LOCATION

Rural Centers provide support services to outlying Agricultural/Resource Areas. These include Arvada, Leiter, Ucross, Wyarno, Parkman, Beckton and Banner and are shown on the Future Land Use Plan. These areas are critically important to rural residents.

DEVELOPMENT DENSITY

Development density for Rural Centers is not specified but should be reflective of local context.

PHOTO EXAMPLES

The photo examples are intended to visually convey the intended character of the place type, illustrating the narrative description above. These examples include 1. Rural Commercial, 2. Rural Commercial, 3. Rural Center from above.



COMMUNITY CORE

| POTENTIAL USES | |
|---|--|
| Primary Land Uses | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small-scale commercial, offices • Residential in keeping with traditional community core areas of Big Horn and Story. |
| Secondary Land Use | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional Uses |
| CHARACTERISTICS AND LOCATION | |
| <p>The Community Core Place describes small community centers serving very small and outlying communities. The category identifies the core of the Big Horn community and the Story community.</p> | |
| DEVELOPMENT DENSITY | |
| <p>Density will vary, depending on community context.</p> | |
| PHOTO EXAMPLES | |
| <p>The photo examples are intended to visually convey the intended character of the place type, illustrating the narrative description above. These examples include 1. Rural Post Office, 2. Rural School, 3. Community Core from above.</p> | |



URBAN RESIDENTIAL

POTENTIAL USES

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Primary Land Uses | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single family residential • Multiple Family residential • near commercial services, transportation, parks, and civic facilities and services. |
| Secondary Land Use | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutions |

CHARACTERISTICS AND LOCATION

The Urban Residential Place Type is located in proximity to the City of Sheridan, the incorporated communities of Dayton and Ranchester, and in the vicinity of Big Horn. These areas are intended to indicate potential annexation. Urban Residential areas have access, or potential access, to central water and sewer. Urban Residential development densities shall only be approved where identifies on the Future Land Use Map.

DEVELOPMENT DENSITY

With central water and sewer, minimum lot area per single-family dwelling unit is 6,000 square feet; per multi-family dwelling unit is 2,500 s.f. Without central water and sewer, minimum lot areas as per Rural Residential.

PHOTO EXAMPLES

The photo examples are intended to visually convey the intended character of the place type, illustrating the narrative description above. These examples include 1. *Urban Scale Neighborhood*, 2. *Urban Scale Neighborhood*, 3. *Urban residential from above*.



1



2



3

COMMERCIAL CENTERS

| POTENTIAL USES | |
|--------------------|---|
| Primary Land Uses | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services • Retail • Professional offices • Commercial businesses • Grocery stores • Auto sales • (Generally C-1 and C-2 districts.) |
| Secondary Land Use | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary Land Uses - Residential (C-2 districts only) |

CHARACTERISTICS AND LOCATION

Commercial Centers are large nodes (10 to 50 acres) of auto oriented commercial activity serving multiple neighborhoods. They are typically located within communities or their growth areas, access to central water and sewer, and are accessed by highway, arterial, or collector roads. Commercial Centers in isolated areas and linear design patterns are inappropriate.

Commercial centers include a mix of uses and activities. They are designed to accommodate pedestrians with internal sidewalks, neighborhood connections, landscaping, sign and access control.

DEVELOPMENT DENSITY

Where central water and sewer are provided, no minimum lot area for commercial uses. Residential lot areas as per Urban Residential.

PHOTO EXAMPLES

The photo examples are intended to visually convey the intended character of the place type, illustrating the narrative description above. These examples include 1. *Commercial Center Entrance*, 2. *Typical Commercial Center*, 3. *Commercial Center from above*.



NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL

POTENTIAL USES

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Primary Land Uses | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retail • Professional offices, • Small scale commercial such as grocery stores, convenience stores. • Uses generally allowed in C-2 and C-3 zone districts.) |
| Secondary Land Use | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary Land Uses - Residential |

CHARACTERISTICS AND LOCATION

Neighborhood Commercial is indicated in limited locations where currently zoned. Future commercial development in the county is intended to occur as part of a community core or planned unit development (PUD) with centralized water and sewer rather than isolated locations. Neighborhood Commercial should be accessible to an arterial or collector road or county road.

DEVELOPMENT DENSITY

With central water and sewer, minimum lot area per single-family dwelling unit or commercial building is 6,000 square feet. Without central water and sewer, minimum lot areas as per Rural Residential..

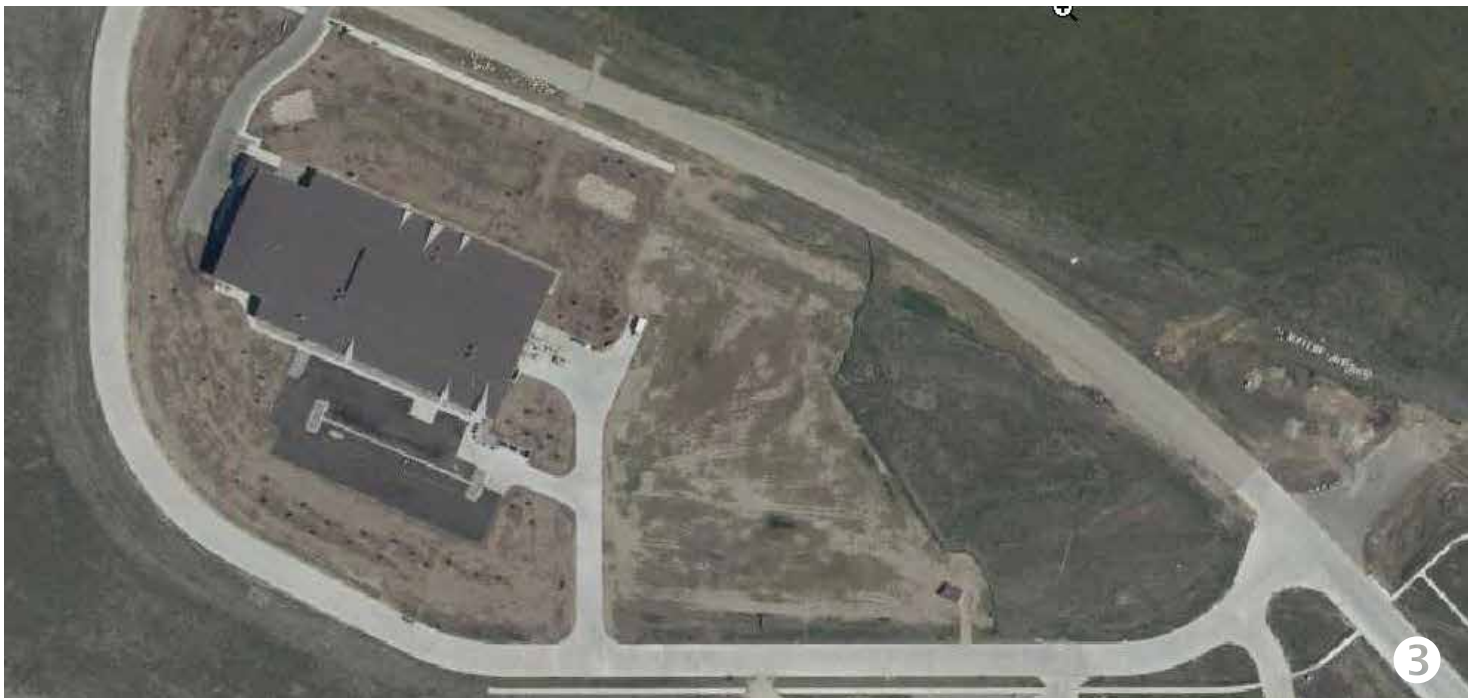
PHOTO EXAMPLES

The photo examples are intended to visually convey the intended character of the place type, illustrating the narrative description above. These examples include 1. Neighborhood Store, 2. Convenience Store, 3. Neighborhood Store from above.



LIGHT INDUSTRY/BUSINESS PARK

| POTENTIAL USES | |
|---|---|
| Primary Land Uses | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warehousing • Distribution • Low Impact Manufacturing |
| Secondary Land Use | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offices |
| CHARACTERISTICS AND LOCATION | |
| <p>The Light Industrial/Business Park Place Type is located in and near communities and are considered low impact to surrounding areas. This place type provides greater attention to design detail in high visibility locations near interstates and major roads including screening service areas and outdoor storage, and providing attractive fencing, low level lighting, and pedestrian access.</p> | |
| DEVELOPMENT DENSITY | |
| <p>Regulatory minimum lot areas not specified. Generally a function of limiting factors such as central water/sewer, floodplains, steep slopes, etc.</p> | |
| PHOTO EXAMPLES | |
| <p>The photo examples are intended to visually convey the intended character of the place type, illustrating the narrative description above. These examples include 1. <i>Light Manufacturing Plant</i>, 2. <i>Assembly Plant</i>, 3. <i>Light Manufacturing from above</i>.</p> | |



HEAVY INDUSTRY

POTENTIAL USES

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Primary Land Uses | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intensive Manufacturing • Intensive processing • Associated outdoor storage |
| Secondary Land Use | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offices |

CHARACTERISTICS AND LOCATION

The Heavy Industry Place Type is shown on the The Future Land Use Plan Map on the eastern edge of the Urban Service Area in the Joint Planning Area of Sheridan and is not visible from I-90. This place type accommodates high impact industrial activity including chemical processes or activity that generates noise, vibration and impacts on adjacent land.

DEVELOPMENT DENSITY

Regulatory minimum lot areas not specified. Generally a function of limiting factors such as central water/sewer, floodplains, steep slopes, etc.

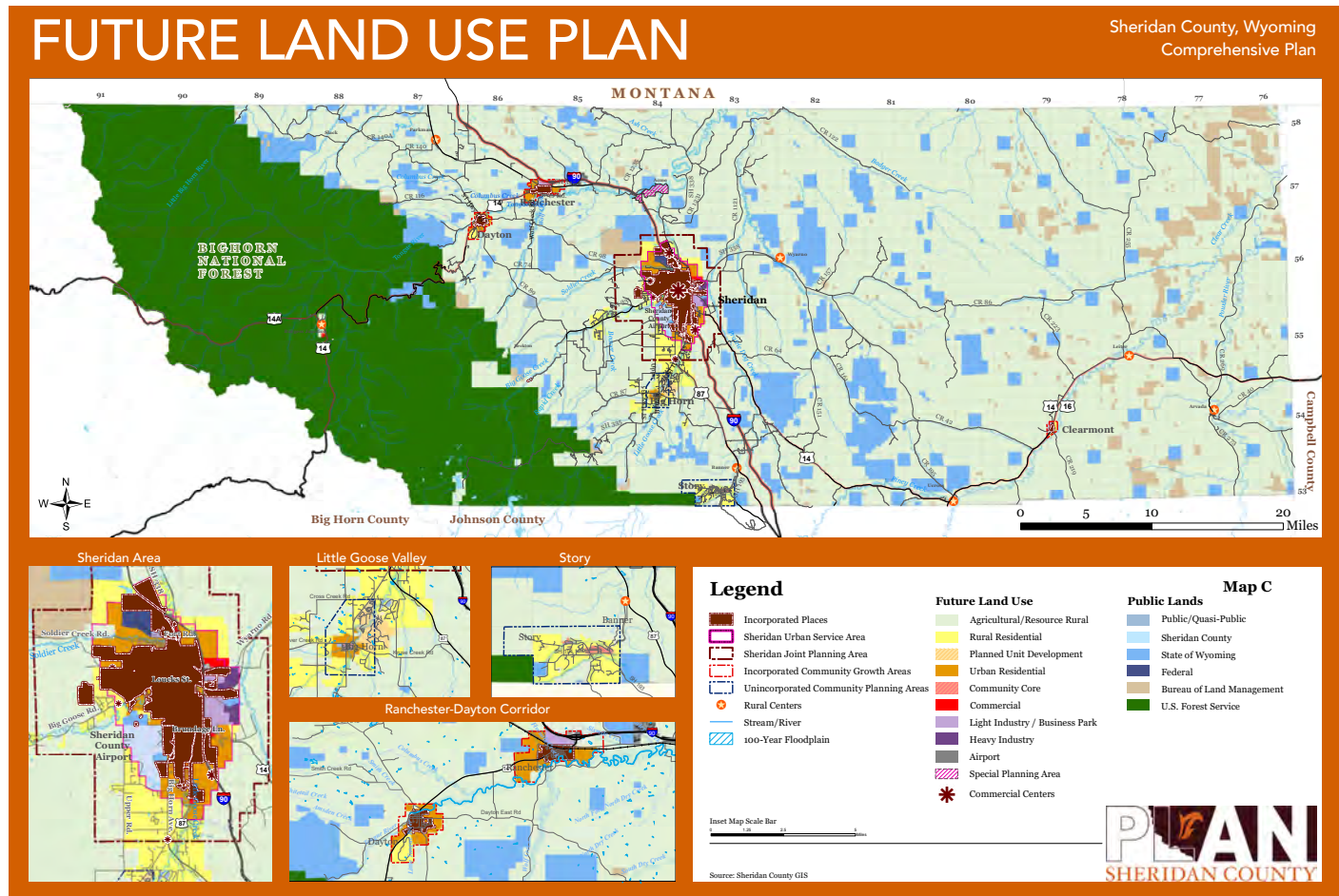
PHOTO EXAMPLES

The photo examples are intended to visually convey the intended character of the place type, illustrating the narrative description above. These examples include 1. Concrete Mixing Plant, 2. Beet Refinery, 3. Mining Site from above.



Future Land Use Plan Map

One of the primary components of the County Comprehensive Plan is the Future Land Use Plan Map for the unincorporated county. The original map was prepared for the 2008 Plan and served as the base for this update.



MAP-C FUTURE LAND USE MAP

The Future Land Use Plan Map is intended to be a guide for how the unincorporated county should develop over the next 10-20 years. Like the name says, it shows future land use in a general sense. It is not the same as zoning, which is a regulatory tool used by the County that includes standards and requirements for land development and identifies allowed uses by zoning category. The Plan Map is a general road map for what Sheridan County should look like in the coming years and is based both on feedback heard at public outreach events and on the Project Team's assessment of the 2008 map in comparison with the on-the-ground changes that have occurred since that plan was adopted. The maps and place type categories will also help the city and towns in the county to remain as distinctive, diverse places, by designating where various types of urban and town-level development and compatible activities can occur in communities and growth areas.

The intent of this plan is not to predetermine all specific land uses for individual parcels, but to provide a framework for future development and neighborhoods and centers of commercial development and provide some flexibility for a mix of uses. For example, Commercial Centers are designated on the map with a symbol and not parcel-specific designations, and these centers will ideally develop with a mix of commercial and



other compatible uses. Urban Residential areas will also develop with a mix of housing type, with more dense uses near commercial centers and community facilities. Outside of communities and growth areas, the Plan's maps identify locations where low density rural residential is appropriate and where agriculture/resource areas and important resource conservation areas will continue to be the predominant pattern.

Similar to the 2008 Plan, this Update also does not recommend detailed land uses for the unincorporated communities. The county should continue to work with these areas to address future development as warranted.

The Future Land Use Plan Map and accompanying maps also include the following boundaries and natural resource designations, defined below.

Sheridan Urban Service Area

The Urban Service Area boundary is the area within which the City of Sheridan will, or is planning to, provide municipal water and sewer service and within which lands are appropriate to develop as urban neighborhoods, commercial centers, and business parks.

Sheridan Joint Planning Area

The Sheridan Joint Planning Area is the potential urban area within which the City and County are jointly planning for future municipal growth.

Incorporated Community Growth Areas

The Incorporated Community Growth Areas are proposed planning and growth areas for the communities of Dayton, Ranchester, and Clearmont.

Unincorporated Community Planning Areas

The Unincorporated Community Planning Areas are planning boundaries for future community planning efforts for Big Horn and Story.

100-Year Floodplain

The 100-Year floodplain is mapped by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and is characterized as an area subject to a one percent probability of a flood occurring in any year.

The Big Horn Foothills Resource Conservation Area

The Big Horn Foothills Resource Conservation Area is proposed for greater conservation and protection due to scenic, natural resource, and wildlife values. The boundary illustrated on the Resource Conservation Map is generally based on the work conducted for the 1982 Plan.

Groundwater Protection Area

The Groundwater Protection Area is intended for greater management of potential groundwater contamination sources (including septic systems and stormwater runoff) and development density.

Conservation Development Areas

The intent of the Conservation Development Areas is to designate locations within the county near urban areas where property owners are eligible to cluster developments and conserve open space or resources and for a higher density bonus than in more remote locations. The Conservation Development Areas are shown on the Resource Conservation Map generally in these locations:

1. Within two miles or less of Dayton and Ranchester.
2. Surrounding the Sheridan Urban Service Area, within six miles of the city for parcels with access to paved roads and eight miles along Big Goose Creek.
3. Northwest of the City of Sheridan (excluding large public lands parcels and private lands beyond them)

To be eligible for clustering with a higher net density within this designated area, a property must meet the following criteria:

1. Property must be within the Conservation Development Areas.
2. Property must be designated as Agriculture/Resource or County Low Density/Rural Residential, and meet criteria listed for those categories.
3. The property or portion of the property to be clustered is outside of important resource areas, including crucial wildlife habitat, steep slopes, ridgelines, landslide areas, and irrigated agriculture.

Land Use Goals and Policies

Goal 1.1: The county will maintain a compact development pattern within or near communities where adequate services are available.

Policy 1.1 a: Locate urban growth in defined areas

Urban growth will be located in defined areas around incorporated towns and cities and unincorporated places, based on existing community expansion patterns and the ability of municipal systems to accommodate future development.



Policy 1.1 b: In line with the Sheridan Joint Planning Area Plan, maintain an Urban Service Area around the City of Sheridan

The defined Urban Service Area around the City of Sheridan will be used to determine appropriate areas for various types of urban development and to plan for needed infrastructure and services.

Policy 1.1 c: Establish cooperative planning/growth areas with the incorporated communities of Dayton, Ranchester, and Clearmont

The county will work with the incorporated communities of Dayton, Ranchester, and Clearmont to further refine and coordinate land use patterns in unincorporated areas around the communities' incorporated boundaries.

Policy 1.1 d: Coordinate future land use patterns with utility service areas

Development patterns in defined growth areas as provided for in policies 1.1 a-c will be complimented and encouraged by the location of existing and planned services and facilities, especially central water and sewer.

Goal 1.2: The county will maintain a clear distinction between rural, agricultural areas, and communities to conserve resources, maintain unique community identities, and provide services efficiently.

Policy 1.2 a: Locate rural development in designated County Rural Residential areas

Land use patterns in outlying areas, outside of communities and their designated growth areas, will remain primarily rural and agricultural in character. The county should consider the cost of services, roads, utilities, sheriff/fire protection, and schools when considering proposals for the expansion of rural residential uses. The county will also consider potential impacts on groundwater quality.

Policy 1.2 b: Allow conservation design subdivisions

The county will continue to allow and encourage conservation design development patterns as a means of encouraging best practices in site development, providing options to landowners, and conserving open space, natural resources, and agricultural resources in rural areas. The county will encourage conservation design subdivisions in the Conservation Development Area and Rural Residential areas through incentives.





Policy 1.2 c: Use rural design guidelines for new development in Agricultural/Resource area

The county and landowners will develop guidelines for rural design to limit impacts of development on agricultural lands, natural and scenic resources, and increase efficiency of roads and utilities on sites.

Policy 1.2 d: Support and encourage land conservation efforts

The county will continue to support and work with other governmental and non-governmental organizations that are involved in conservation of open space and agricultural resources.

Policy 1.2 e: Focus planned unit developments (PUDs) near urban areas

The county will allow planned unit developments inside the defined Conservation Development Areas where they are close to towns and the City of Sheridan. The county will not allow PUDs in remote locations.

Goal 1.3: The county will facilitate a diverse mix of housing, primarily in urban neighborhoods and communities with adequate services.

Policy 1.3 a: Support a range of housing types to meet the region's housing needs

The county will work with the private sector to promote the construction of a wide range of housing types, sizes, and costs within communities, growth areas, neighborhoods, and downtown areas. Housing for the region's workforce and groups not easily served by the market is essential to the strength of the region to allow multiple generations to live, work, and settle. Workforce housing should be dispersed throughout the county's communities, not concentrated in one community, one area, or in remote, rural areas.

Policy 1.3 b: Locate urban residential development where designated

New urban residential development will occur only in communities and their growth areas as designated on the Future Land Use Plan. The county will avoid dispersed urban housing patterns and subdivisions that disrupt the county's natural and scenic resources and that are inefficient to serve. A variety of housing types in urban areas, ranging from apartments to single family homes, will help meet the region's housing needs and provide for healthy neighborhoods.





Policy 1.3 c: Locate rural residential development where designated

New rural residential development will occur where it is designated on the Future Land Use Plan Map.

Goal 1.4: The county's commercial uses will be located in communities and in designated centers.

Policy 1.4 a: Locate commercial development in communities

New commercial development will occur in communities and their growth areas. Commercial development located outside of communities will be limited to small-scale agricultural, home occupations, resource extraction, and recreational activities.

Policy 1.4 b: Locate commercial development in centers

Future commercial development will occur in planned commercial centers, as identified on the Future Land Use Plan, in small centers to serve neighborhoods, and to a limited extent in rural centers. Future commercial development in extended linear strips along roadways will not occur.

Goal 1.5: Future industry will be built in suitable locations where it will not negatively impact communities or natural resources.

Policy 1.5 a: Locate industry in suitable, concentrated areas.

To provide opportunities for jobs and economic growth, light and heavy industry will be located in areas identified on the Future Land Use Plan that have suitable access, utilities, and geology, or in other areas that meet locational criteria of this chapter. Heavy industrial uses will be located only in areas where they will not have negative impacts on community gateways, image of major corridors, community health, adjacent residential areas, and air and water quality.

Policy 1.5 b: Mitigate impacts resulting from industrial uses

The county will work closely with appropriate regulatory agencies to ensure that new heavy industry development and resource extraction will address its impacts, such as noise, lights, traffic, vibration, and impacts to air and water.

Goal 1.6: The county will retain open space as part of a balanced land use pattern.

Policy 1.6 a: Plan for open space and natural and scenic resources

Open space, natural and scenic resources, and agricultural and other resource lands are an important part of the county’s overall land use balance. The county will continue to coordinate with other agencies and organizations to plan and conserve these resources.

Policy 1.6 b: Establish open space that conserves natural resources

New residential subdivisions should provide open space that conserves sensitive and unique natural features of the land. This Plan promotes conservation design development patterns as an option allowing landowners to keep open space intact.

Goal 1.7: The county will respect individual property rights, balanced with community health, safety, and welfare.

Policy 1.7 a: Balance property rights with community objectives

Private property rights will be balanced with community planning, public health, and safety needs within the accepted confines of national, state, and local laws.

NATURAL AND SCENIC RESOURCES

Sheridan County enjoys an abundance of natural and scenic resources, including the Bighorn Mountains, its foothills, wildlife, historic assets, and more. The preservation of these resources was clearly articulated by citizens during the public outreach activities held in the course of updating this plan.

The Resource Conservation Map includes the county’s riparian areas (generally associated with the 100-year floodplain along the major rivers and streams), Big Horn Foothills Resource Conservation Area, crucial wildlife ranges, and groundwater protection areas.

The Big Horn Foothills Resource Conservation Area

The Big Horn Foothills Resource Conservation Area is an area proposed for greater level of conservation and protection because of its scenic, natural resource, and wildlife values. The area illustrated on the Future

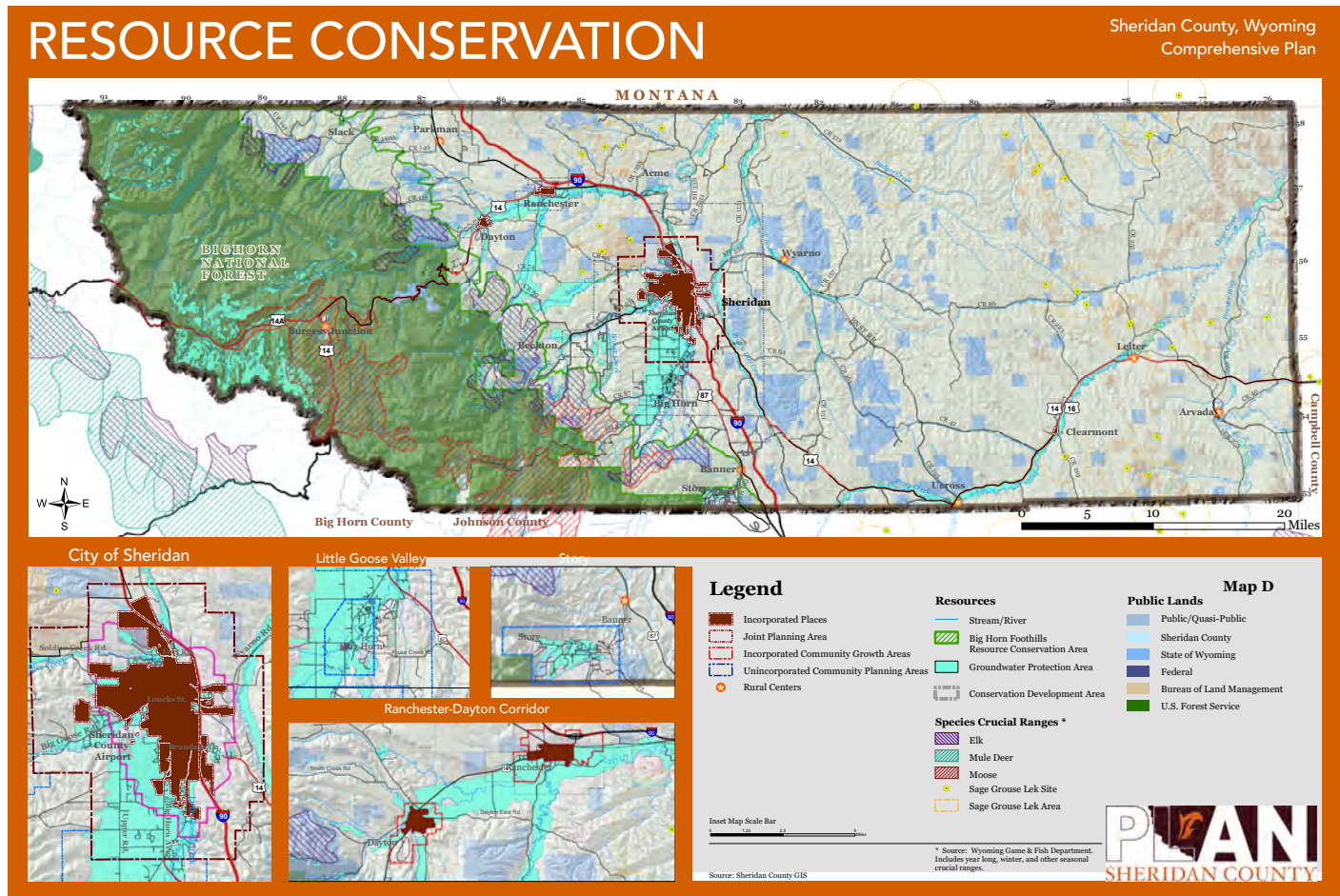


Land Use Plan Map is based on the work conducted for the 1982 Plan. The Planning and Zoning Commission at that time agreed that elevations above 4,600 feet should generally be designated as foothills conservation area. In addition, the County extended the boundary below 4,600 feet where important wildlife areas existed—especially the critical elk range on private or state-owned lands. A series of photographs were used to determine scenic viewshed areas of the Bighorn Mountains. This boundary also encompasses current crucial wildlife ranges, as illustrated on the Resource Conservation map.

Wildlife

The county is home to a variety of wildlife including native fish species, birds, and large game. Sage grouse have numerous lek sites throughout the County (see the Resource Conservation map). Protection of lek sites is critical to the continuation of the species in the county. Other notable wildlife species present in Sheridan County include big game such as antelope, elk, white tail deer, mule deer, and moose as well as large predators such as black bear and mountain lion. With the exception of the antelope, which have main migration routes north of Sheridan and Clearmont, these large wildlife species tend to live in and along the foothills of Bighorn National Forest. Elk, mule deer, and moose all have crucial range areas in the county, defined by the Wyoming Game and Fish Department (WGFD) as those areas that represent a ‘determining factor in the population’s ability to maintain itself at a certain level.’ In particular, moose and elk tend to inhabit the foothills east of Bighorn National Forest, as shown by the Resource Conservation map. A more detailed discussion of wildlife and its local impacts is found in Appendix A, County Profile.

MAP-D RESOURCE CONSERVATION MAP



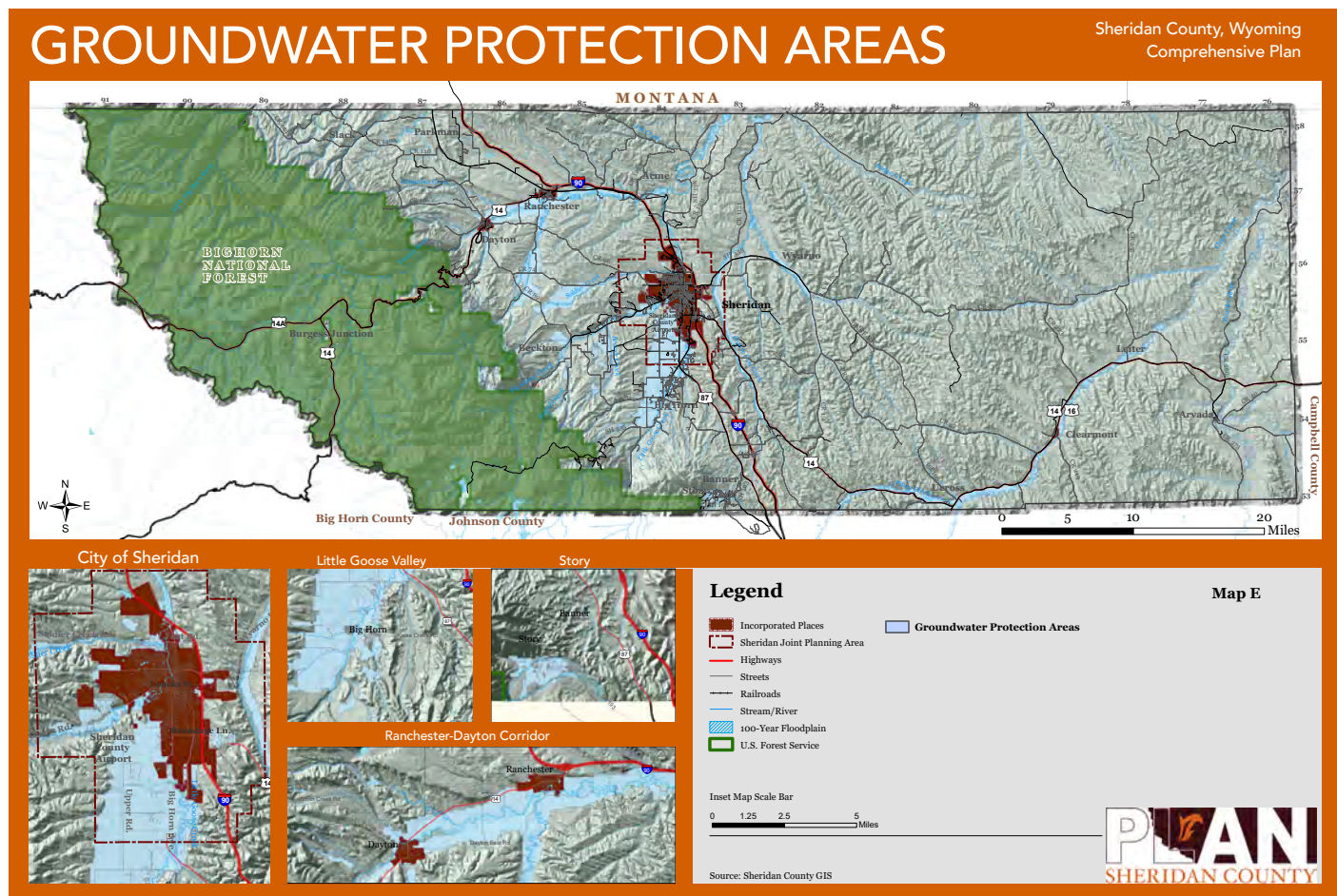
Groundwater Protection Areas

Groundwater protection areas have been mapped and addressed as a direct result of the implementation of goals and policies in the 2008 Plan. That Plan identified the Class 5 Groundwater Vulnerability Area for the greater management of potential groundwater contamination sources (including septic systems and stormwater runoff) and development density. Groundwater vulnerability refers to the relative speed that substances on the surface can reach and pollute the groundwater supply and tends to be in locations where the greatest development pressures have been occurring.

One outcome of the 2008 Plan and carried forward in the Update is the recommendation that the current development patterns in the Big and Little Goose Creek areas should remain mostly rural with some limited expansion of the County Low Density Residential pattern. These two areas have continued to experience growth pressure, although their character is still fairly rural with some significant riparian areas and agricultural uses.

County rural residential areas provide a rural lifestyle choice but with potential resource and fiscal implications. Such development, if not connected to sewer, can have implications for groundwater and water resources. On-site septic systems and stormwater run-off from developed areas may contribute to groundwater contamination, especially with higher densities of development. Expanding patterns of dispersed residential in rural parts of the county will be costly for the County to serve and has implications for conserving irrigated agricultural and productive lands. Focused and compact development in Sheridan's water service area provides the most economical utility extension, but also requires the most implementation of restrictions or incentives to achieve it.

MAP-E GROUNDWATER PROTECTION MAP

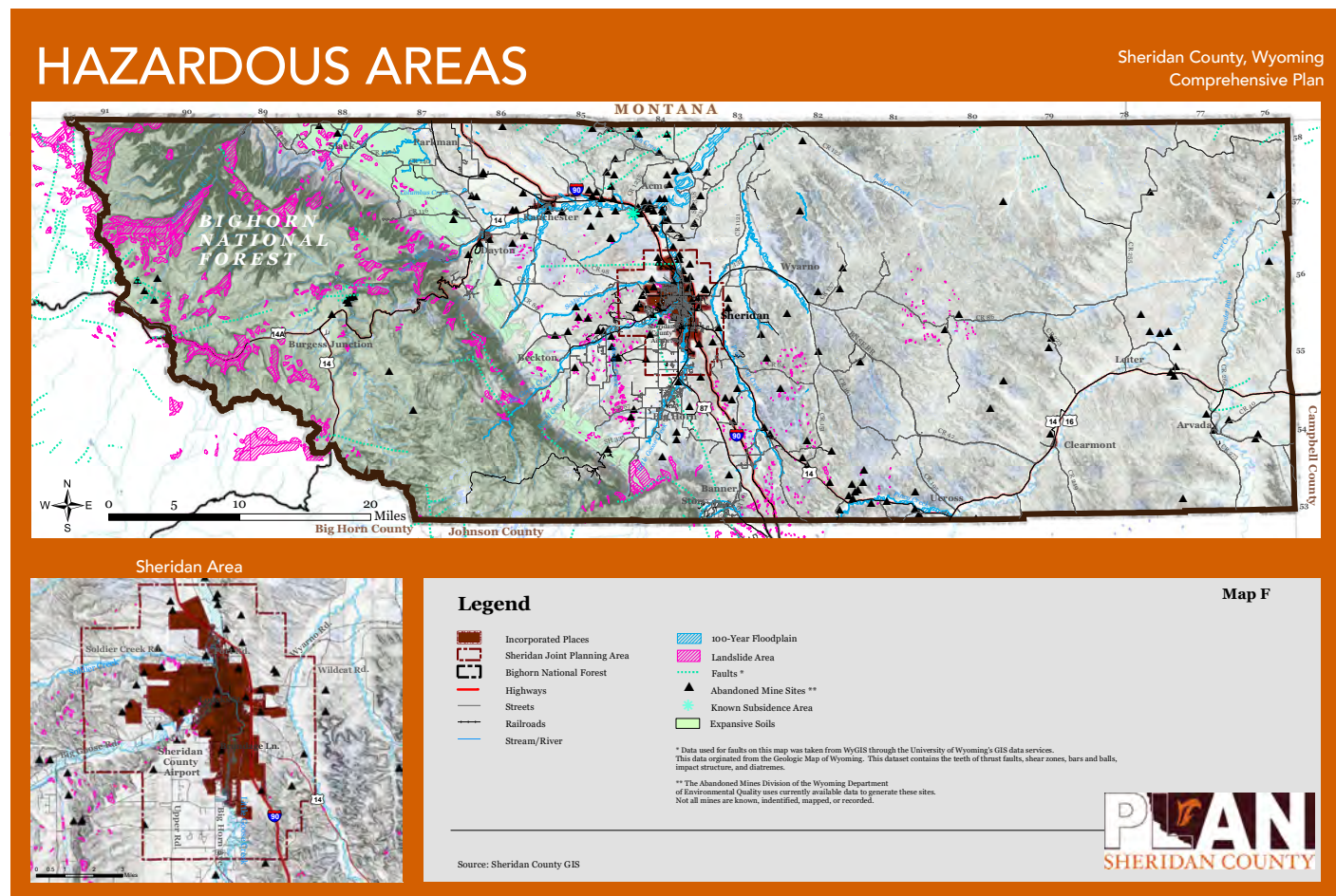


Hazardous Areas

The Hazardous Areas map shows the 100-Year floodplain, steep slope areas (20% or greater), landslide areas, faults, abandoned mine sites, and known subsidence areas. The county has vast areas where steep slopes are present, especially along the edge of Bighorn National Forest and to the east of Sheridan and north of Highway 14. Landslide areas mainly occur in the Bighorn Foothills; however, there is potential for smaller landslides and sloughing to occur around the county, especially in these areas identified.

The presence of known subsidence areas is correlated with abandoned mine sites in Sheridan County and are illustrated in the Hazardous Areas map. Abandoned mine sites are present throughout the county but concentrated primarily along the I-90 corridor, around Sheridan and to the north throughout the Tongue River valley.

MAP-F HAZARDOUS AREAS MAP



Natural and Scenic Resources Goals and Policies

Goal 2.1: The county will conserve and restore its riparian corridors and rivers and streams.

Policy 2.1 a: As development opportunities arise, protect riparian corridors

Riparian corridors along the Tongue River, Big and Little Goose Creeks, Piney Creek, Soldier Creek, and tributaries are examples of stream reaches that should remain as connected, viable habitats.

Policy 2.1 b: Preserve areas with significant vegetation

Preserve areas with significant vegetation, including riparian areas, wetlands, threatened or endangered species, and other vegetation types. Within conservation design developments, identify these areas before and during the development review process and protect them.

Goal 2.2: The county will maintain its overall water quality and quantity in association with state and federal programs.

Policy 2.2 a: Continue to regulate development in vulnerable groundwater areas

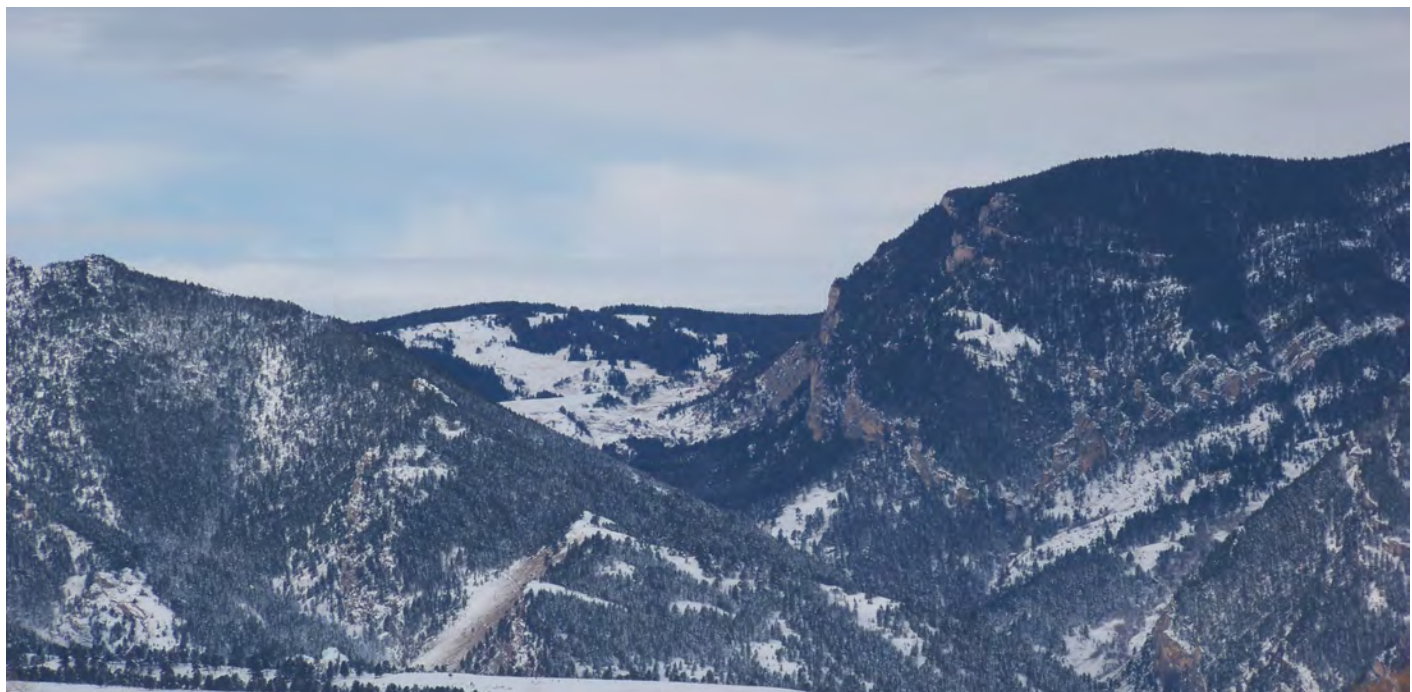
The county will continue to regulate development using on-site septic systems within the groundwater protection area and require low densities of development in these areas.

Policy 2.2 b: Protect aquifer recharge areas

Identify and map important aquifer recharge areas. Take necessary steps to prevent water contamination in these areas. No major point source pollution sources will occur in noteworthy aquifer recharge or vulnerable groundwater areas, such as Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) or discharging industries.

Policy 2.2 c: Encourage wastewater treatment systems in areas experiencing water contamination

The construction of central wastewater treatment systems will be encouraged in areas experiencing elevated surface or ground water bacterial contamination issues.





Policy 2.2 d: Follow storm water design standards

Continue current practices of managing storm water designs utilizing locally accepted engineering practices.

Policy 2.2 e: Promote water conservation

The county will work with partners in the community to encourage water conservation and use of non-potable water for landscaping.

Goal 2.3: The county will conserve the Big Horn foothills.

Policy 2.3 a: Support efforts to maintain the Big Horn Foothills Resource Conservation Area

Lands designated as Big Horn Foothills Resource Conservation Area are important for scenic, water quality, and wildlife habitat values. The county will continue to support conservation efforts and groups in this area and will periodically assess whether the 1982 criteria and boundaries encompass all crucial wildlife habitat ranges and are achieving that aim.

Policy 2.3 b: Very low-density development in Big Horn foothills

The county will discourage development that is inconsistent with the Agricultural/Resource area or conservation of the Bighorn foothills and allow very low-density development and conservation.

Goal 2.4: The county will facilitate conservation of productive irrigated agricultural land.

Policy 2.4 a: Support and enhance efforts to conserve agricultural lands

The county will continue to support efforts of property owners and non-governmental organizations to sustain working farms and ranches — especially large, intact, and contiguous properties with productive and irrigated agriculture.

Policy 2.4 b: Encourage development that allows for continued agricultural uses

Encourage development patterns that promote the continuation of agricultural land use, protecting the county's rural heritage.

Policy 2.4 c: Minimize impacts from development on irrigated agricultural lands

Maintain the integrity of highly productive agricultural lands throughout the county's Agricultural/Resource area, as designated on the Future Land Use Plan Map, by minimizing the intrusion and poor placement of non-agricultural uses that make it difficult for agricultural operations to continue.

Policy 2.4 d: Support agricultural-related businesses

Continue to promote and make it easy for landowners to establish agricultural businesses related to ranching, livestock production, and farming in areas outside of the community growth areas. Such businesses might include guest ranches, outfitting, hunting and fishing, timbering, and home-based businesses.

Policy 2.4 e: Support Continuation of Adjudicated Water Rights

Ensure that existing adjudicated water rights used for agricultural purposes are not diminished as development occurs.

Goal 2.5: The county will establish conservation priorities for open space.

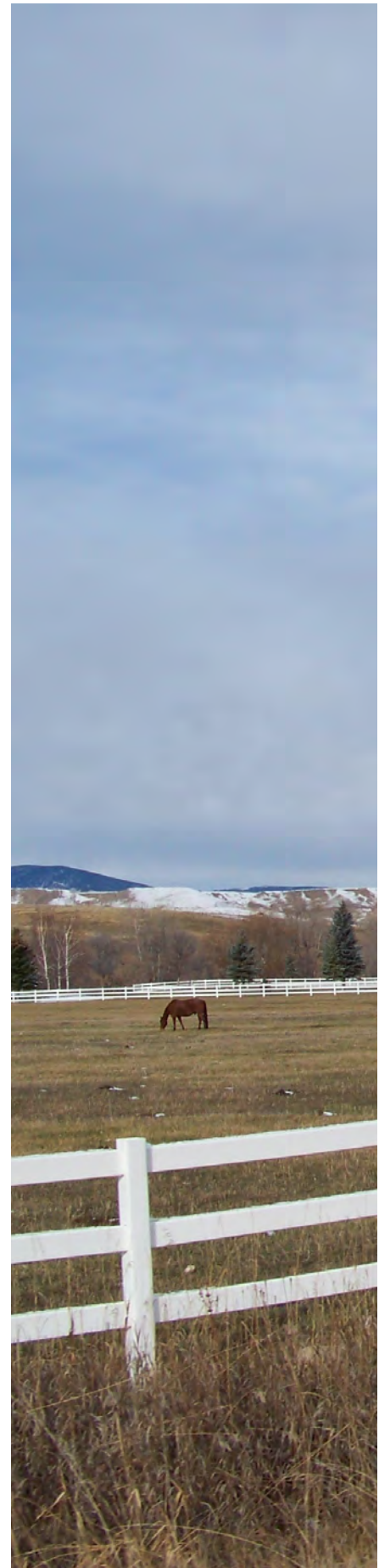
Policy 2.5 a: Establish open space priorities

Work with county citizens to identify lands that are priorities for conservation, such as the following:

- **Important River and Stream Corridors,**
- **Unique Natural Areas**
- **Crucial Wildlife Habitats,**
- **Community Separators,**
- **Land for Future Parks and Outdoor Recreation, and**
- **Irrigated Agricultural Lands.**

Policy 2.5 b: Use a variety of implementation tools to achieve open space protection

Work with property owners, conservation organizations and land trusts to create a protected and cohesive system of open space. Use a variety of flexible, incentive-based mechanisms to conserve resources, including public and private partnerships to achieve open space.





Goal 2.6: The county will support wildlife habitat protection.

Policy 2.6 a: Minimize development impacts on crucial wildlife habitat

Ensure that new development protects wildlife habitat and corridors and is wildlife friendly as possible through proper placement and design of structures, roads, utilities, and fencing. This will include consideration of crucial ranges for elk, deer, and moose, as identified on the Resource Conservation map when development decisions are made.

Policy 2.6 b: Coordinate with wildlife agencies to avoid wildlife/development conflicts

Coordinate with local, state, and federal agencies to identify, conserve and protect fish habitat and wildlife crucial ranges identified on the Resource Conservation map. The county will consider amending its comprehensive plan to reflect the most current science regarding wildlife habitat and corridors as it becomes available.

Goal 2.7: The county will steer development out of harm's way, avoiding hazardous areas such as landslides/steep slopes/floodplains/high wildfire risk areas.

Policy 2.7 a: Avoid development being placed in unstable areas

Avoid public and private development in potentially hazardous areas, such as steep slopes, landslide areas, faults, known subsidence areas and abandoned mine sites, and wildfire hazard areas.

Policy 2.7 b: Direct development away from the 100-year floodplain to the extent possible

Development will be directed away from the 100-year floodplain (mapped by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and generally depicted on the Future Land Use Plan and Resource Conservation Map) unless the development is for low-impact recreation, wildlife management, open space, or agricultural purposes

Goal 2.8: The county will maintain its scenic quality and night skies.

Policy 2.8 a: Protect visual quality of the county, including hillsides and ridges

Key natural landscape features including bluffs, ridgelines, escarpments, major drainage features, rock outcroppings, valley walls and other scenic topographic features should be protected. The county should consider establishing specific standards within its development regulations.

Policy 2.8 b: Avoid development that is visually intrusive when viewed from major public rights-of-way

Design techniques, such as architectural design, site design, and native landscapes are techniques to protect the scenic nature of different areas in the County. For instance, structures should blend in with the natural landscape and development should be placed so as not to be a prominent feature on ridgelines (as viewed from major public rights of way). The county should consider establishing specific standards within its development regulations.

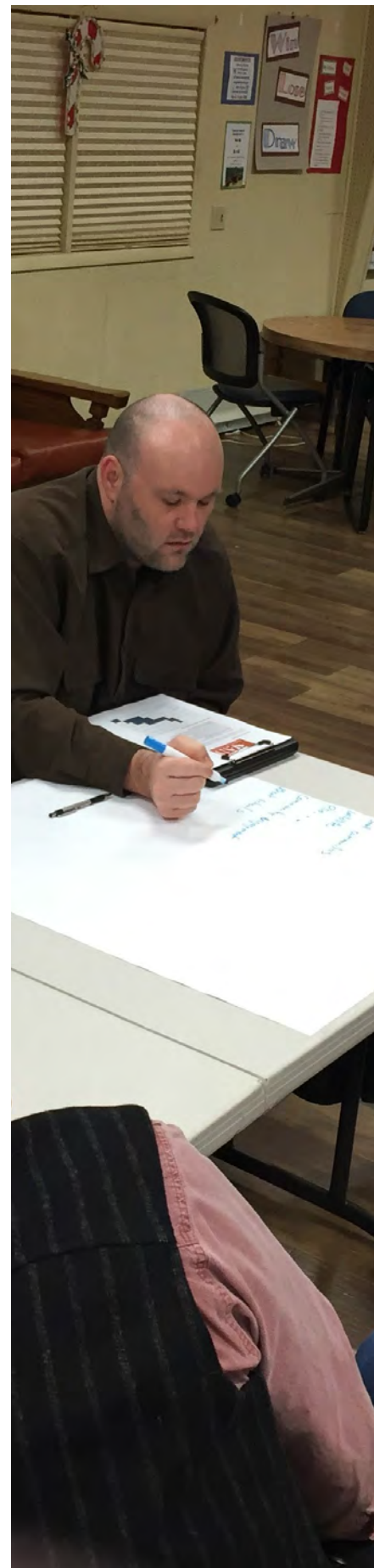
Policy 2.8 c: Prevent future light pollution

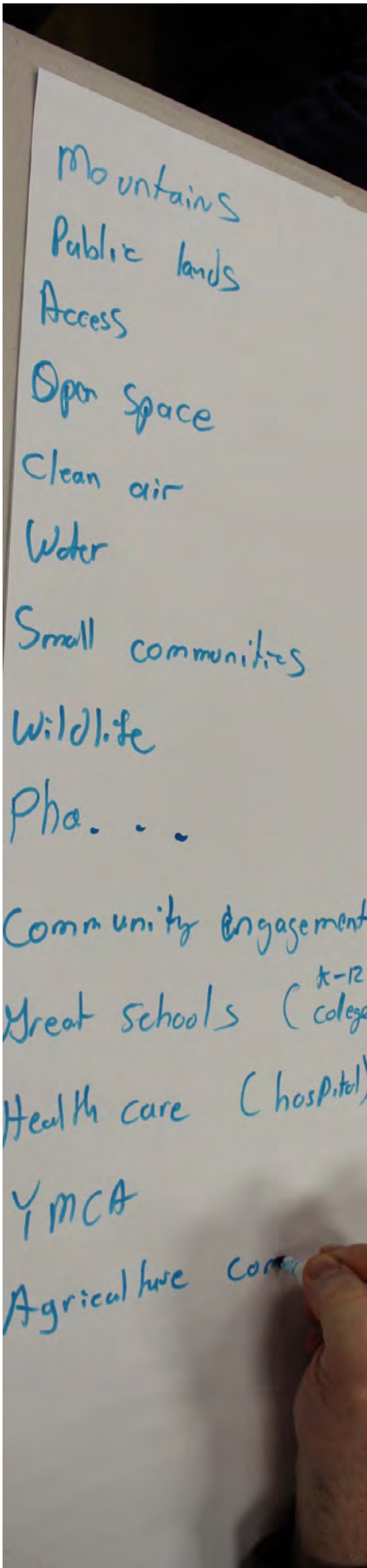
Dark night skies are important to many people in the region and to its scenic and economic values. The county should reduce light pollution through standards to address lighting levels and shielding.

Goal 2.9: Industry will mitigate any adverse impacts of mineral extraction and production in accordance with established state and federal statutes and regulations.

Policy 2.9 a: Mitigate mineral extraction impacts

The county will support the efforts of appropriate regulatory agencies, including the Department of Environmental Quality and the Oil and Gas Conservation Commission to ensure that mineral extraction activities will mitigate impacts through appropriate location and operational criteria as well as reclamation efforts.





Goal 2.10: The county will enhance outdoor recreation resources and opportunities.

Policy 2.10 a: Sustain the county's recreational resources

Continue to enhance outdoor recreational opportunities and tourism opportunities in a manner that sustains the county's resources and contributes positively to the economy. The county will partner with local entities involved in building multi-purpose trails.

Policy 2.10 b: Provide and retain access to public lands

Retain existing access to public lands and, where appropriate, provide additional access to serve the recreational needs of county residents and visitors.

Policy 2.10 c: Identify funding for open space, trails, and recreation

In conjunction with local partners, the county will prioritize open space, trails, and recreation projects. Identify and direct funding toward high priority trails, open space, and recreation projects.

Goal 2.11: The county will facilitate energy-efficient development.

Policy 2.11 a: Encourage focused, compact development subdivisions

This plan encourages focused, compact development, and where appropriate, mixed land uses to encourage energy efficient travel.

Policy 2.11 b: Encourage energy-efficient buildings

The county will encourage new development to be built in compact and conservation design development patterns. The County will continue to administer provisions of the Building Codes that encourage energy conservation.

ECONOMY

Background

Traditionally, Sheridan County's economy has been resource-based: ranching, mining, railroads, and energy. Consequently, the county has a history of economic fluctuations (boom and bust cycles), as industries expand and decline. The intent of this Plan is to foster conditions for a sustainable economy that reflects the unique characteristics of communities in Sheridan County, the wildlife and natural resource values of residents and visitors, and the outdoor recreational opportunities of the county.

A sustainable economy is one that is healthy and strong across multiple sectors meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to attain economic stability and prosperity. Sheridan County is continuing to achieve a more balanced and diverse economy that is a mix of resource-based jobs, farming and ranching, professional service jobs, and industries that pay livable wages and that are a good fit with the environment and communities.

According to data provided by the Bureau of Labor and Statistics, Sheridan County's labor force as of 2017 stood at 15,791, while the total number employed was 15,164. According to 2018 data projections provided by the US Census Bureau, Sheridan County's current unemployment rate is around 2.2%, well below the state unemployment rate of 3.7%. The number of proprietors (self-employed individuals) in the workforce in Sheridan County has continued to increase, representing 31% of the workforce in 2016 – an increase of nearly 50% since 2000.

Among the Non-Services related industries, manufacturing experienced the largest growth in employment, adding over 200 jobs between 2010 and 2016. Between 2010 and 2016 the real estate, rental and leasing, accommodation and food service, along with other services (excepting public administration) represented the largest growth in employment under the Services industry sector.

More details about employment sectors, income, wages, and other aspects of the county's economy can be found in Appendix A, County Profile.



Economic Opportunities Goals and Policies

Goal 3.1: The county will help to facilitate job expansion and diversification.

Policy 3.1 a: Support job expansion efforts of organizations in the region

Continue to work with organizations such as Forward Sheridan, Chamber of Commerce, Sheridan Economic and Educational Development Authority (SEEDA), the municipalities, and local communities that are promoting business expansion and retention programs to diversify jobs and economic opportunities. Improve the image of Sheridan County as a place to do business, and also a great place to live.

Policy 3.1 b: Promote the recruitment of “good fit” industries

Support recruitment of industries that build on the area’s strengths and contribute to a healthy environment. Examples are clean industries, those that focus on energy use or production (e.g., clean-coal technologies, etc.), and those that build on niche or specialized clusters, such as the arts community, outdoor recreation, education, entrepreneurship, foundations, not-for-profits, healthcare, knowledge-based workers, history, and culture.

Policy 3.1 c: Support industries that provide livable incomes and wages

Support and promote the retention and recruitment of industries that provide livable wages.

Policy 3.1 d: Support workforce housing in communities

Support and promote affordable workforce housing in communities to make the county and communities attractive for business development opportunities.

Goal 3.2: The county will establish adequate locations and criteria for future industry.

Policy 3.2 a: Identify appropriate locations for industrial uses

The Future Land Use Plan Map designates locations for light and some heavy industry. The county will coordinate with communities to ensure adequate land and services are available to support industrial growth. Balance goals for jobs and industry with other community and environment goals.

Policy 3.2 b: Locate industry uses near major transportation facilities

Encourage the location of new industrial development near major transportation facilities that have adequate capacity, while considering impacts to communities.

Goal 3.3: The county will continue to be a tourism destination.

Policy 3.3 a: Enhance tourism opportunities

Continue to work with the Chamber of Commerce, Sheridan Travel and Tourism, and other organizations to promote Sheridan County as a destination for visitors and tourists. Promote opportunities including expanding outdoor recreation, conserving open space and scenic qualities, expanding lodging and dining options, and showcasing history and culture. Maintain and protect scenic quality as seen from the major highways.

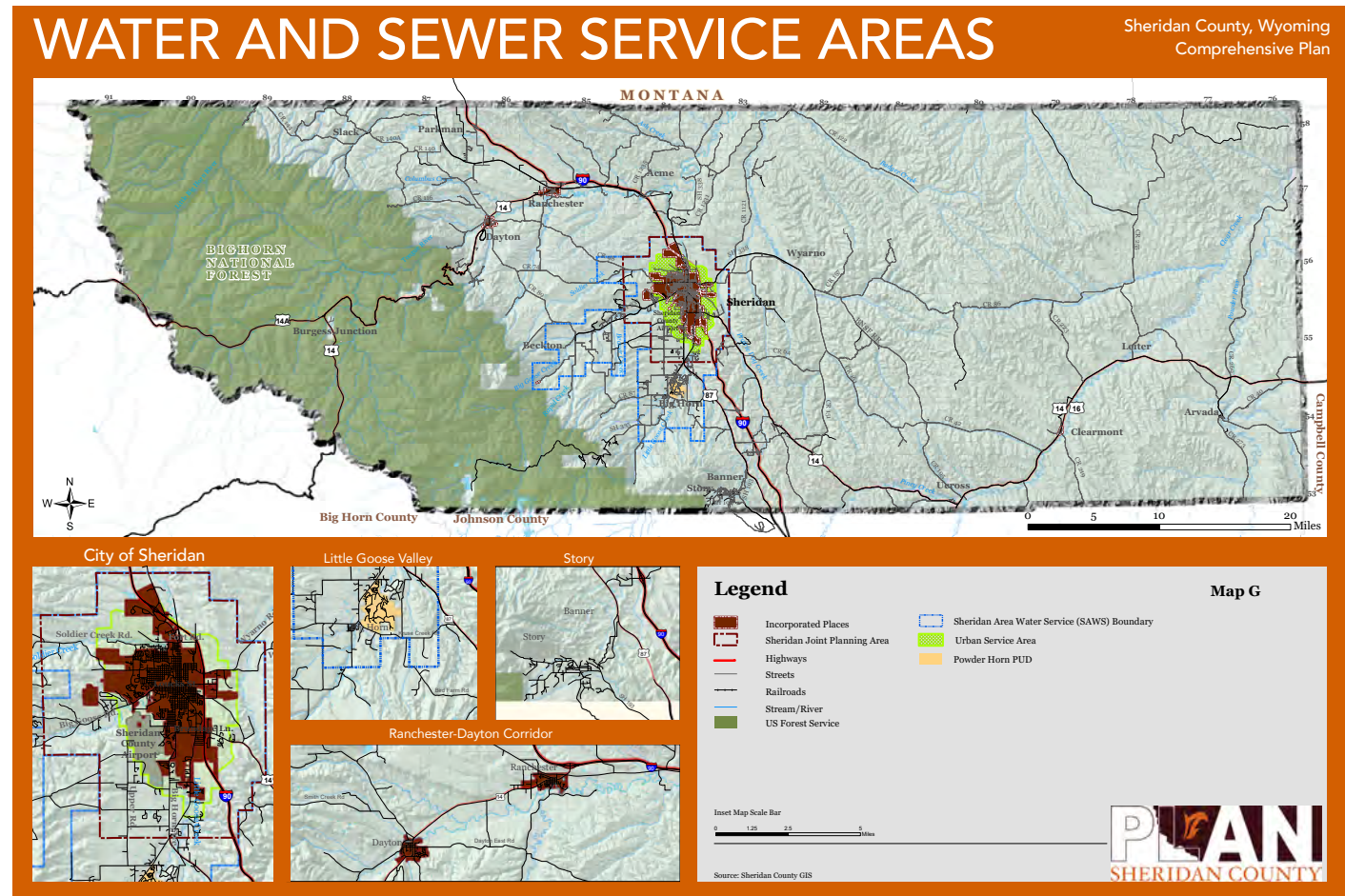
SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Background

As Sheridan County grows, it aims to provide public facilities and services to current and future residents in a fiscally responsible manner and under consistent standards. Sheridan County is primarily responsible for road and bridge maintenance and construction, public safety, land use oversight, the airport, and some social services such as the public library. As the county grows, it is important that demands for additional services are balanced with the county’s fiscal resources and capabilities. Generally, the municipalities provide urban services such as water and sewer, paved streets and sidewalks, parks, solid waste collection and management, and similar facilities. Other than its participation in the Sheridan Area Water Supply (SAWS) Joint Powers Board, Sheridan County does not provide these urban services and is not equipped to do so. Because of the variety of service providers, different parts of Sheridan County (i.e., urban and rural) experience different levels of service. For instance, the incorporated communities and their growth areas have urban services (municipal water and sewer, paved roads), whereas the rural parts of the county generally do not.

This Plan reinforces the historic distinction between city and county levels of service by guiding urban development into communities and their growth areas. Other public districts provide services, such as fire protection and schools. Future urban growth in Sheridan County will typically occur in locations that have appropriate municipal systems to accommodate it (i.e., water, sewer, transportation systems, and other essential services). Conversely, planned infrastructure improvements will normally occur in locations where growth is desired or to mitigate existing environmental concerns. Other infrastructure, such as natural gas, electricity,

MAP-G WATER AND SEWER SERVICE AREAS MAP





telephone, fiber optic lines, CATV, and broadband internet services will also need to be planned for in community growth areas as well as outlying areas.

Appendix A, County Profile, includes narratives about county and municipal infrastructure and service districts. A section that focuses on water and wastewater systems and SAWS provides information about the provision of this critical service which has a direct impact on future patterns of growth.

Services and Facilities Goals and Policies

Goal 4.1: The county will plan for public water and wastewater treatment systems and assure there are safe and adequate private systems where public systems are not available.

Policy 4.1 a: Coordinate with incorporated municipalities, Sheridan Area Water System (SAWS), and other improvement & service districts

The county will continue to work with municipalities, SAWS, and other districts to extend water and wastewater treatment facilities to accommodate future urban demands only in desired growth locations or to mitigate areas of known contamination.

Policy 4.1 b: Secure adequate water rights for future growth

The county will support efforts of municipalities and SAWS to secure additional water rights that will meet forecasted community growth. The county will especially encourage consideration of existing rights associated with Lake DeSmet.

Policy 4.1 c: Consider establishing improvement and service districts for developed areas that cannot be served by municipal sewer

The county will work with residents in developed areas to encourage the formation of improvement and service districts in areas where inadequate sewage treatment threaten county water resources, and municipal service is not feasible.

Policy 4.1 d: Limit on-site septic systems in areas that are susceptible to groundwater contamination

The county will keep development density low in groundwater protection areas where sewer is not available.

Policy 4.1 e: Promote replacement of failing on-site systems

The county will continue to work with other agencies in the region to identify financing, work with landowners, and assist with replacement and upgrading of wastewater treatment for properties with failing on-site septic systems.

Policy 4.1 f: Municipal water and sewer area around landfill

Within one-mile of the landfill expansion area the county and City of Sheridan will encourage connection to municipal water and sewer and discourage domestic wells and on-site septic systems in order to minimize future groundwater contamination concerns.

Goal 4.2: The county will identify and preserve planned utility and transportation corridors.

Policy 4.2 a: Plan and preserve connected necessary water and sewer utility and road corridors

The county will ensure that rights-of-way for future transportation and utilities corridors are identified and reserved before development occurs.

Goal 4.3: The county will coordinate with regional providers of electricity and natural gas to ensure that the needs of residents and businesses can continue to be met through a range of energy options.

Policy 4.3 a: Work with energy providers to encourage a range of energy alternatives

The county will work with the region’s providers of electricity and natural gas to ensure that the needs of existing and future residents and businesses can continue to be met through a range of energy options (e.g., electricity, oil, gas, wind, solar, etc.) In scenic areas, utilities should be placed underground.





Goal 4.4: New development will pay for needed facilities and services so that benefits to the county will equal or exceed cost burdens on the county over the project life.

Policy 4.4 a: New development will pay for needed facilities and services

Adequate facilities and services will be provided at the time that development occurs, with new development paying for the associated costs for necessary facilities improvements and services. The county may wish to adopt concurrency requirements.

Goal 4.5: Sheridan County will coordinate with fire protection, emergency service providers, and law enforcement to protect the safety and welfare of residents and visitors.

Policy 4.5 a: Coordinate with fire districts

The county will continue to cooperate with the six independent fire districts to address wildland-urban interface issues and to balance fire suppression needs of new development while not reducing fire protection service levels to existing residents.

Policy 4.5 b: Facilitate coordination between fire protection agencies

The county encourages coordination between the various fire department and fire districts in such areas as service calls, communication, equipment and training.

Policy 4.5 c: Ensure adequate fire protection to serve new development

The county will only approve new subdivisions when adequate fire protection can be demonstrated by the applicant.

Policy 4.5 d: Addressing and signage techniques that support fire protection

The county will require adequate addressing and signage techniques for existing and new development, to ensure that these areas can be served efficiently.

Policy 4.5 e: Provide adequate law enforcement services

The county will discourage new development if County law enforcement expresses unmitigated concerns about its ability to provide services.

Goal 4.6: Sheridan County will coordinate with school districts to plan for future facilities and expansion

Policy 4.6 a: Coordinate with school districts

The county will continue to coordinate with the school districts to plan for future facility needs to ensure that new development does not reduce school service levels.

Policy 4.6 b: Ensure coordination between school districts and service providers

New schools should mitigate impacts to existing public facilities such as roads, drainage, and utilities.

Goal 4.7: The county will continue to provide high quality library services.

Policy 4.7 a: Continue to provide branch libraries and plan for future needs

The county will ensure that current and future residents have access to high quality library facilities and will coordinate with organizations that support the library.

Goal 4.8: Sheridan County will coordinate with communication providers to ensure adequate service that meets the needs of residents while balancing environmental objectives.

Policy 4.8 a: Coordinate with communication technology providers

The county will continue to coordinate with providers of communication technology, including telephone, fiber optic, CATV, cellular service, and broadband Internet to ensure that the needs of current and future residents and businesses can be met. The county will place particular emphasis on high-speed communication capabilities to serve the county’s rural areas, and will encourage co-location of facilities when possible to minimize visual intrusions. Utilities should blend with regional landscape features to the extent possible.





Policy 4.8 b: Minimize impacts from communication facilities

Continue to encourage the location and design of new and expanded utility and communication towers in a manner that minimizes negative impacts on surrounding land uses and scenic resources.

Goal 4.9: Sheridan County will coordinate with the City of Sheridan to accommodate future solid waste disposal and management needs.

Policy 4.9 a: Jointly plan for landfill expansion or relocation

The county will coordinate with the City of Sheridan to address future solid waste disposal needs, including landfill expansion, possible relocation, compatible land use planning (within one mile of current and future landfill expansion).

Policy 4.9 b: Reduce solid waste

To help extend the longevity of the landfill operation, the county will encourage reduction of solid waste material, reuse, and recycling in county operations and the county as a whole.

TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

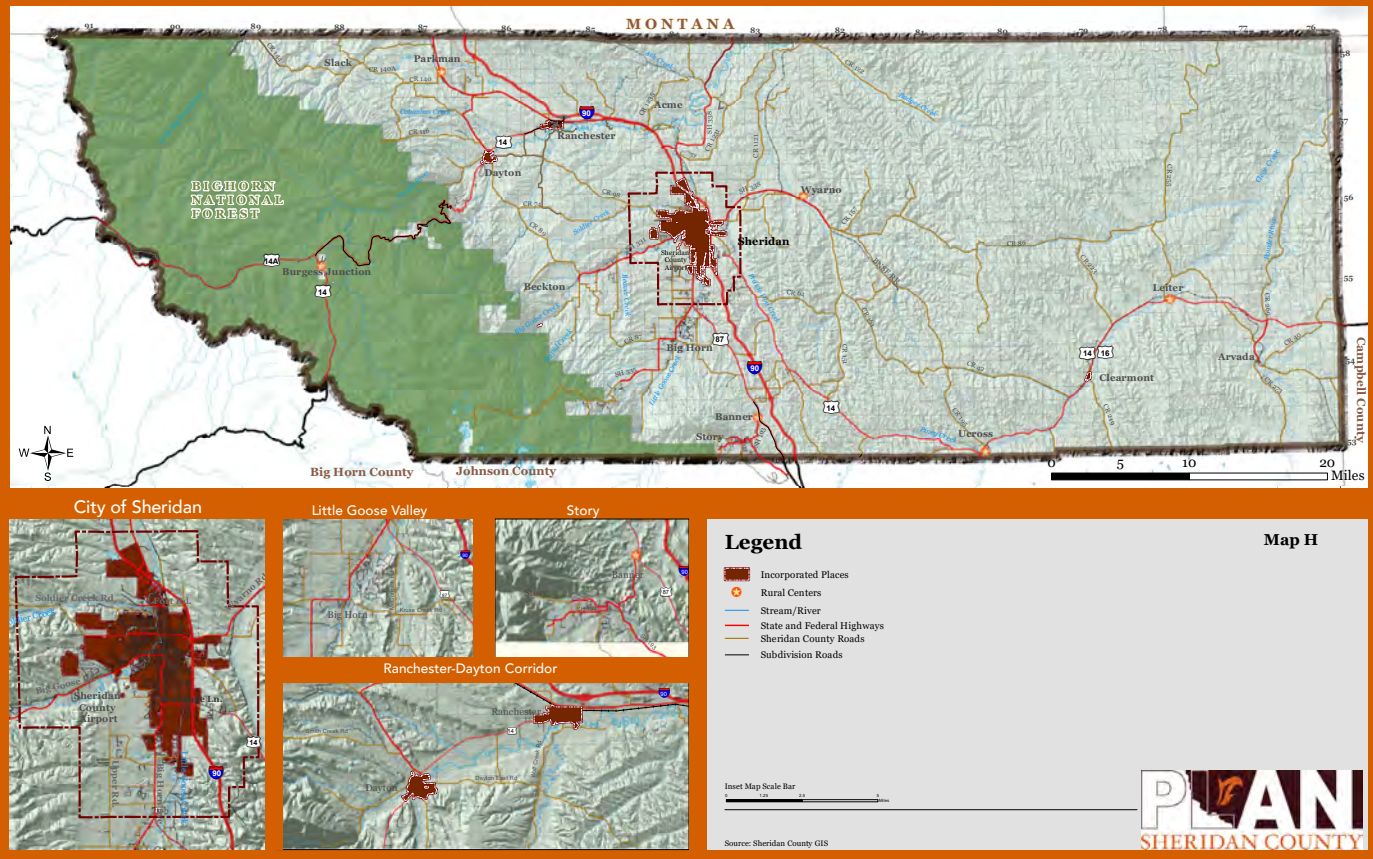
Sheridan County’s transportation system consists of municipal street systems, county roads, and state and federal highways and I-90; a regional airport; the BNSF railroad, and trails and pathways. As the county grows, a transportation network with multiple options will be needed to address the region’s transportation challenges, rising energy prices, and emergency response system needs. This Plan also recognizes the close relationship between transportation and land use and suggests that solutions to mobility issues require a comprehensive integration of the two elements. The County has continued to work with the various transportation planning entities to develop a transportation system focused on effective, safe, cost efficient, and connected streets and roads, and also offers multiple transportation options (e.g., foot paths, roads for vehicle travel, public transit, bike paths, and off road trails).

County Road Network

Sheridan County maintains approximately 530 miles of roads; 28 miles of paved roads, approximately 70 miles are dirt, and the remainder are gravel. The county road network mainly consists of federal, state, county, and local roads as illustrated on the County Road Network map.

COUNTY ROAD NETWORK

Sheridan County, Wyoming
Comprehensive Plan



MAP-H COUNTY ROAD NETWORK MAP

Road construction and improvements in Sheridan County are funded partially through a State provided County Road Fund, Capital Facilities Tax and State grant matching funds, when available. Sheridan County maintains a Capital Improvements Plan that considers ongoing maintenance for countywide infrastructure, updated annually with 5-year projections.

County Bridges

The County is responsible for bridge maintenance and replacement on county roads. There are currently 39 functional bridges in the county; the maintenance and replacement of these bridges are big-ticket items and often take precedence in capital improvement priorities because of the isolated nature of much of Sheridan County.

Transit

The Senior Citizens Council, a local non-profit organization, has been providing transportation to people of all ages in Sheridan County since 1973. Daily and weekly scheduled routes serve the rural county and communities of Sheridan, Ranchester, Dayton, Big Horn, Story, and Banner. Weekly trips are also made for doctors' appointments in Buffalo, Casper, and Billings for those patrons needing specialized care not available in Sheridan.

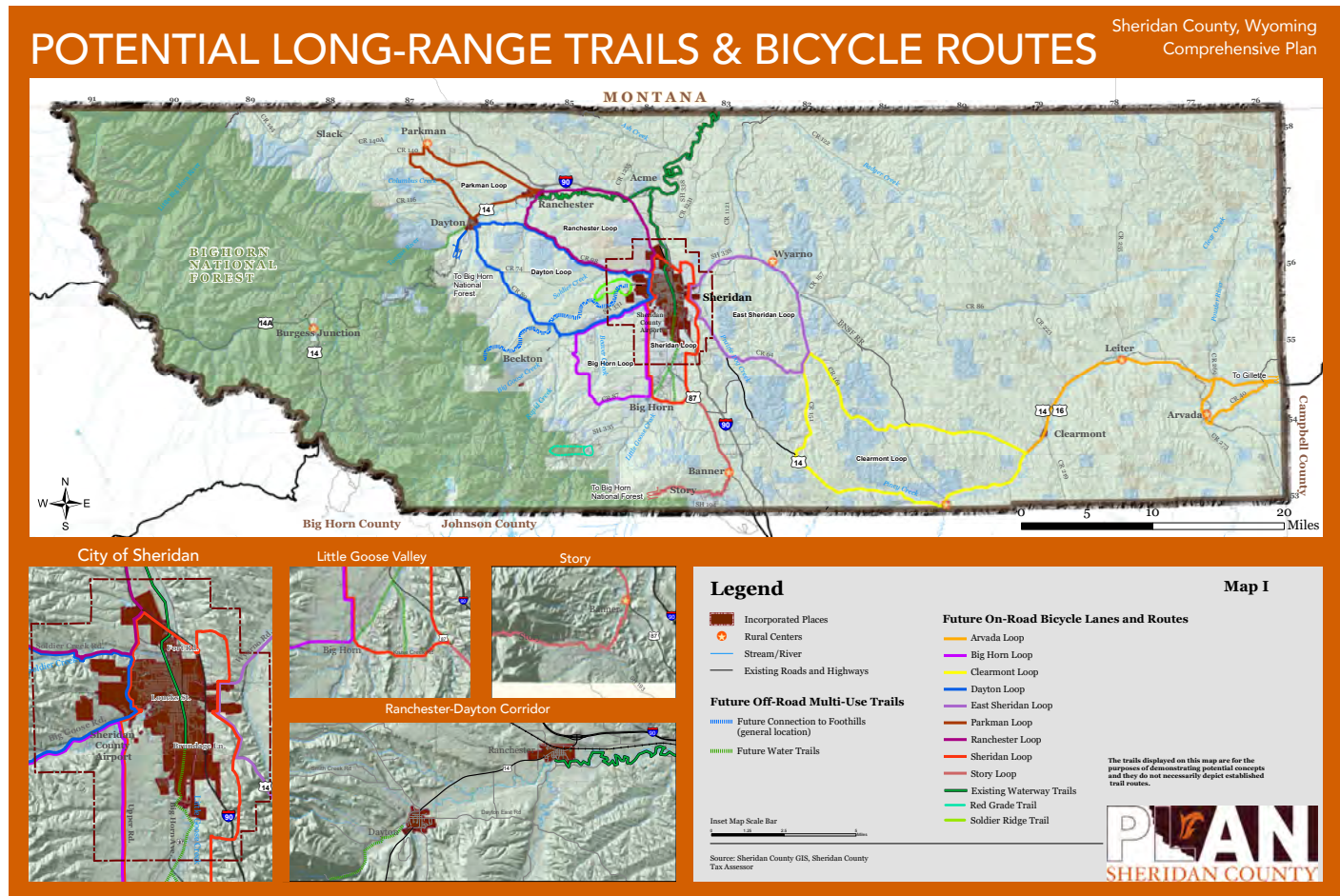
Sheridan County Airport

The Sheridan County Airport is located at the southwest edge of the City of Sheridan and operates as the county’s regional airport. Consisting of more than 1,500 acres and an 8,300 foot runway, the Malcolm Wallop Terminal supports one commercial carrier, a charter airline, and numerous private aircraft. The current commercial carrier, SkyWest, provides daily flights to and from Denver, CO. Bighorn Airways offers chartered flights and helicopter service to Billings, MT and Casper, WY. The airport serves approximately 19,393 commercial passengers annually, according to 2018 statistics provided by the Department of Administration and Information, Economics Analysis Division. The airport also boasts an adjacent business park with project-ready lots offering power, water and sewer, as well as runway access.

Pathways and Trails

The Sheridan Community Land Trust works with Sheridan County to create recreational opportunities for the benefit of the public. Systems including the Soldier Ridge and Red Grade Trails connect users to a range of activities and landscapes through multi-purpose trails that invite hiking, mountain biking, equestrians and water enthusiasts. The Tongue River Water Trail is one such experience that showcases the beauty and amenities of the Tongue River to paddlers and floaters alike. Connectivity between pathway and trail systems in the communities of Sheridan, Dayton and Ranchester are in the works.

MAP-I POTENTIAL LONG-RANGE TRAILS & BICYCLE ROUTES MAP



Transportation and Mobility Goals and Policies

Goal 5.1: The transportation network will be well connected and coordinated with adjacent current and projected land uses.

Policy 5.1 a: Maintain a well-connected road network

The county will plan for and maintain a well-connected road network that allows for different widths, speeds, and access requirements as appropriate to the transportation needs of the areas being served. Those efforts will guide decisions concerning road types, specific placement, speeds, and widths, including on-going planning for the future West Corridor and Upper Road.

Policy 5.1 b: Coordinate land use and transportation planning

The county will plan its future transportation system to compliment and encourage development patterns adopted as a part of the Future Land Use Plan. This includes constructing new roads that interface with adjacent land uses in a safe manner for all right of way users. New urban developments should contain Complete Street systems that allow for internal pedestrian, bike, and auto circulation.

Goal 5.2: Where opportunities exist, use Complete Street concepts in newly developing or redeveloping areas.

Policy 5.2 a: Accommodate all transportation modes

Ensure that all new streets provide for efficient and safe movement for all transportation modes (i.e., vehicles, public transit, bicycles, and pedestrians).

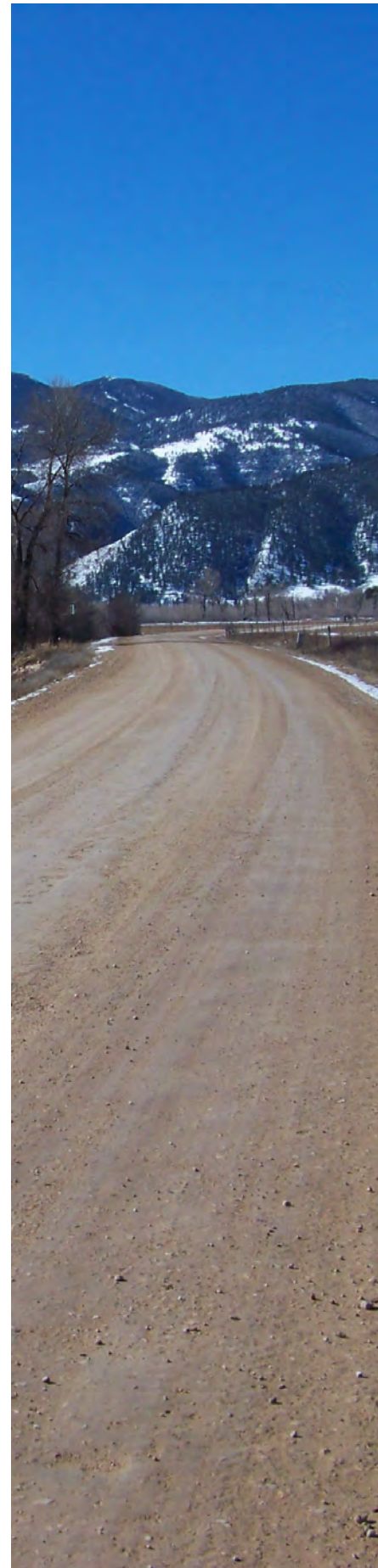
Policy 5.2 b: Extend pathways throughout county

In cooperation with local partners, extend multi-purpose pathway to encourage alternative transportation modes and recreation travel.

Goal 5.3: The county will balance competing demands for rural county road use and maintenance.

Policy 5.3 a: Balance competing demands for rural roads

Future improvement and maintenance of rural roads in Sheridan County will balance the competing demands of residents,





agriculture and industry. Sections of rural county roads that have overlapping functions (resident access, industry, scenic byways, interstate alternatives during mineral development and emergencies, etc.) will be designed to provide safe and efficient travel for all users.

Policy 5.3 b: Prioritize rural road and bridge maintenance needs

The county will address needs related to planning, condition, and maintenance of county roads including: dust control, cattle guard maintenance, surfacing condition and grading, bridges, culverts, and other needs.

Policy 5.3 c: Maintain minimum standards for new rural roads

New development will build rural roads that meet county standards to prevent erosion, control weeds, minimize dust, provide adequate surfacing and maintenance of entrances, and prevent degradation of existing conditions.

Goal 5.4: The Sheridan County Airport will continue to serve as a convenient regional aviation facility

Policy 5.4 a: Provide continued support for the Sheridan County Airport

The county will continue to support the role of the Sheridan County Airport as a regional aviation facility and the Airport's ability to accommodate future increases in air traffic. It will follow the Airport Master Plan, as updated from time to time. The county will ensure that future land use around the airport is compatible and does not create conflicts or safety issues affecting airport operations.

Goal 5.5: The county will ensure that new development provides adequate transportation improvements to accommodate needed services

Policy 5.5 a: New development will provide adequate transportation facilities

The county will require that new development adequately addresses system-wide impacts that the development creates, and will identify necessary improvements to be made as a part of the development approval process. The county will allow new development only where adequate facilities exist, or can be constructed or upgraded prior to development or phased as development occurs.

Policy 5.5 b: New development and high impact users will pay equitable shares for improvements

The county will consider mechanisms that require new development and other high impact users to pay an equitable share of necessary improvements to the county transportation system.

Policy 5.5 c: Prioritize transportation improvements through Capital Improvement Program

The county will continue its Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for county transportation facilities that emphasize the importance of reducing traffic congestion, maintaining the existing roadway system, providing Complete Streets in urban settings that accommodate a variety of mode types, and building structures that are compatible with neighborhoods and with land uses designated on the Future Land Use Plan. The CIP will also enable the county to leverage available funds for local and state funding sources.

Policy 5.5 d: Reserve road/utility corridor rights-of-way

The county will reserve adequate additional right-of-way, at the time of the subdivision process, for those corridors the county anticipates extending or widening in the future.

Goal 5.6: The county will support planning and extension of a regional non-motorized trails and pathways system

Policy 5.6 a: Coordinate to implement and extend the Sheridan Pathways Master Plan

The county will work with the City of Sheridan and other partners to implement aspects of their Pathways Master Plan that overlap in unincorporated areas and identify possible extensions of trails.

Policy 5.6 b: Plan for and establish a regional multi-use trails system

The county will coordinate with the Sheridan Community Land Trust and citizens and plan for a linked non-motorized trail system and accommodates multiple users (e.g., walkers, joggers, bicycles, equestrians, and disabled).

Policy 5.6 c: Pathway and trail development and site improvements for their use will be concurrent.

Impacts associated with trail system development will be mitigated with appropriate trail infrastructure, such as parking, sanitary facilities, and trash management.





COUNTY COMMUNITIES AND HISTORIC SITES

Distinctive Communities

This Plan supports the premise of encouraging growth patterns that retain each community's positive attributes while maintaining a clear distinction between the county's urban and rural places. The County also recognizes that each community has its own landscape, sense of place, traditions, and priorities, and the communities are where most of the people of Sheridan County live (see the population distribution table below). Joint planning for development around the edges of these self-governing communities will be important in the future to provide appropriate guidance for future growth and development.

Sheridan County has continued to recognize the diversity and individuality of the communities and towns within it. The County also recognizes that some county residents will continue to prefer a rural (in remote locations with few services) or semi-rural (near cities with some urban services) lifestyle. Maintaining the distinctions between each place and the quality of life that residents enjoy are an important aspect of what Sheridan County will be in the future.

The Future Land Use Plan Map shows the existing Joint Planning Area for the City of Sheridan and potential growth areas for Dayton, Ranchester, and Clearmont, which vary from $\frac{1}{4}$ - to $\frac{1}{2}$ -mile beyond current town limits. Jointly agreeing to establish these growth areas and procedures and standards for development, including annexation procedures and zoning, will provide future predictability for the city, towns, county, and landowners regarding these issues and will also help with capital facilities planning and determining locations for future urban services.

In addition, the growth areas provide a defined area within which city- and town-level capital expansion planning can occur. Establishing a growth area for each community will ensure coordination between the municipality and the County, so they can determine their futures, and the County can limit dispersed and costly urban and rural development beyond the edges of the towns. Within the growth areas, urban-level housing and services can occur near the existing city and towns, allowing the them to provide jobs and commercial services in and near their cores. In addition, designating the growth areas helps discourage development into county agricultural areas. As noted above, limiting dispersed rural development into remote areas of the county is fiscally beneficial to the county, communities, and taxpayers. An excellent resource to learn more about this topic is *The Fiscal Impacts of Rural Residential Development: An Econometric Analysis Of The Cost Of Community Services*, researched and written by faculty in the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics, University of Wyoming. See the citation in Appendix F.

Incorporated Municipalities

While Sheridan remains the largest municipality in the county by far, between 1990 and 2017 the unincorporated area and the towns increased slightly as a share of the countywide population distribution while Sheridan's proportional share decreased by 2.6 percent. All city and town populations are continuing to grow at a moderate rate, and development in and around the towns of Ranchester and Dayton is ongoing.

TABLE 4 – POPULATION DISTRIBUTION, INCORPORATED AND UNINCORPORATED AREAS

| | SHERIDAN | DAYTON | CLEARMONT | RANCHESTER | UNINCORPORATED AREAS |
|------------------------------|----------|--------|-----------|------------|----------------------|
| 1990 | 13,900 | 565 | 119 | 676 | 8,302 |
| % of total | 59.0% | 2.4% | 0.5% | 2.9% | 35.2% |
| 2000 | 15,804 | 678 | 115 | 701 | 8,205 |
| % of total | 62.0% | 2.7% | 0.5% | 2.7% | 32.2% |
| 2010 | 17,444 | 757 | 142 | 855 | 11,672 |
| % of total | 56.5% | 2.5% | 0.5% | 2.8% | 37.8% |
| 2017* | 18,115 | 809 | 148 | 941 | 12,095 |
| % of total | 56.4% | 2.5% | 0.5% | 2.9% | 37.7% |
| % total change (1990 - 2017) | -2.6% | 0.1% | 0.0% | 0.1% | 2.4% |

Sources: US Bureau of the Census, Wyoming Department of Administration & Information, Economic Analysis Division

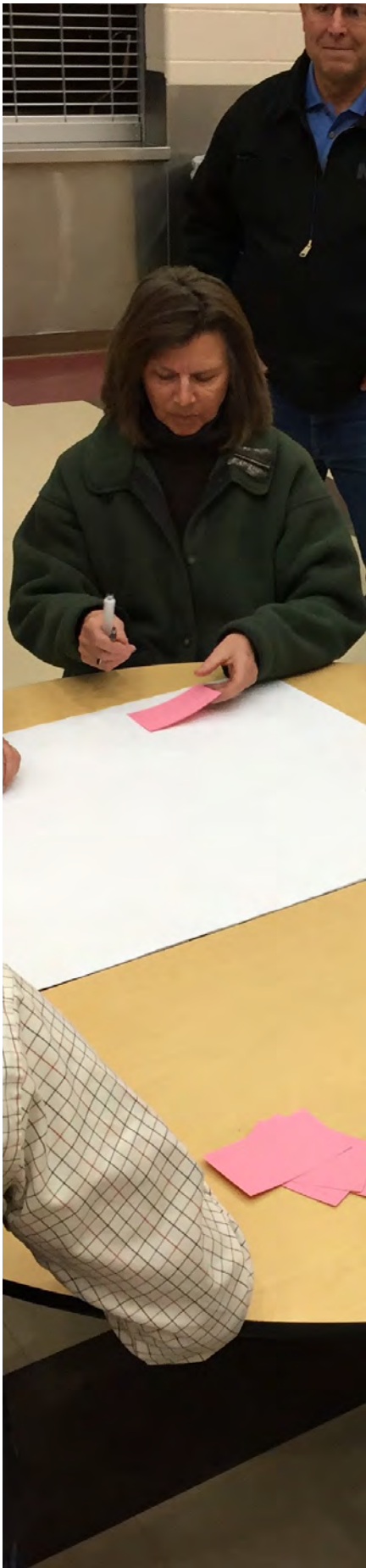
*Population projections based on ACS data provided between 2010 and 2016

City of Sheridan. Sheridan County and the City of Sheridan adopted a Joint Planning Area (JPA) Plan in 2009 and updated it in 2017. The intent for the Sheridan Joint Planning Area is to define the shape of future growth with land use patterns deemed desirable through the public involvement process:

1. A compact pattern of urban neighborhoods within an Urban Service Area,
2. A feathered residential transition toward the south of the City of Sheridan where clustered residential development patterns and conservation at the edge of the city transitions into county agricultural areas, and
3. A firm urban edge with strategic open space toward the north, west, and east of the City to conserve agricultural areas and promote infill development within city limits.

The Sheridan JPA Plan has its own goals and future land use map, which may be viewed in Appendix H.

Town of Dayton. Dayton makes its own plans and decisions about development and land use within town limits. This Plan recommends the development of a joint planning area plan with Dayton to finalize common growth areas and refine joint policies, particularly in areas near the Tongue River and along highway corridors. The intent is for development in areas near town designated as Urban Residential to annex to the town and be served with town water and wastewater.



Town of Ranchester. Ranchester is also an independent town, like Dayton. This County Plan recommends the development of a joint planning area plan with Ranchester to finalize common growth areas and refine joint policies. The Future Land Use Plan Map shows areas where Urban Residential, Rural Residential, and Light Industry can occur in the future. The intent is for urban development to be annexed to the town and be served with town water and wastewater.

Town of Clearmont. Clearmont is the third of the smaller incorporated and independent towns in the county. As with the city and other towns, this Plan recommends joint planning with Clearmont. Any town or urban uses should be annexed to the town. The County should not approve any urban uses outside of the designated growth area.

Unincorporated Communities

Three larger unincorporated communities are located in the county: Arvada, Story, and Big Horn. Additional community planning should occur for each as warranted and requested by the community.

Arvada. Arvada is unincorporated and does not currently have an option for landowners to develop residential uses or commercial services without going through detailed zone change processes. Only agricultural uses are allowed under current zoning (i.e., one unit per 80 acres).

Story. The unincorporated community of Story is primarily residential with mixed commercial and area agriculture. Story has a small community core although residents do most of their shopping and seek other services in the City of Sheridan. To provide a better balance of land uses and to make the community more self-sufficient, it could be advantageous to plan for additional commercial services in Story's core area. In addition, defining future residential growth patterns that fit Story's character and that protect water quality could be addressed through an updated Story Community Plan.

Big Horn. The unincorporated community of Big Horn is mainly residential with limited commercial uses, consisting of a community core with urban-size lots, large lots, and predominantly rural uses. The Powder Horn Planned Unit Development (PUD) is nearby. The Future Land Use Plan Map identifies a mix of Urban Residential, Rural Residential, and Agricultural/Resource as the future growth patterns likely to continue. The community could benefit by working with the County to prepare a community plan that will help Big Horn plan for central sewer services and evaluate its core land use.

Rural Centers

Several small rural centers exist throughout the county that may provide one or more services to the outlying Agricultural/Resource Area. These include Arvada, Leiter, Ucross, Wyarno, Parkman, Beckton and Banner. The Future Land Use Plan Map acknowledges the importance of these centers to the rural population. These communities are generally isolated and have few services at this time.

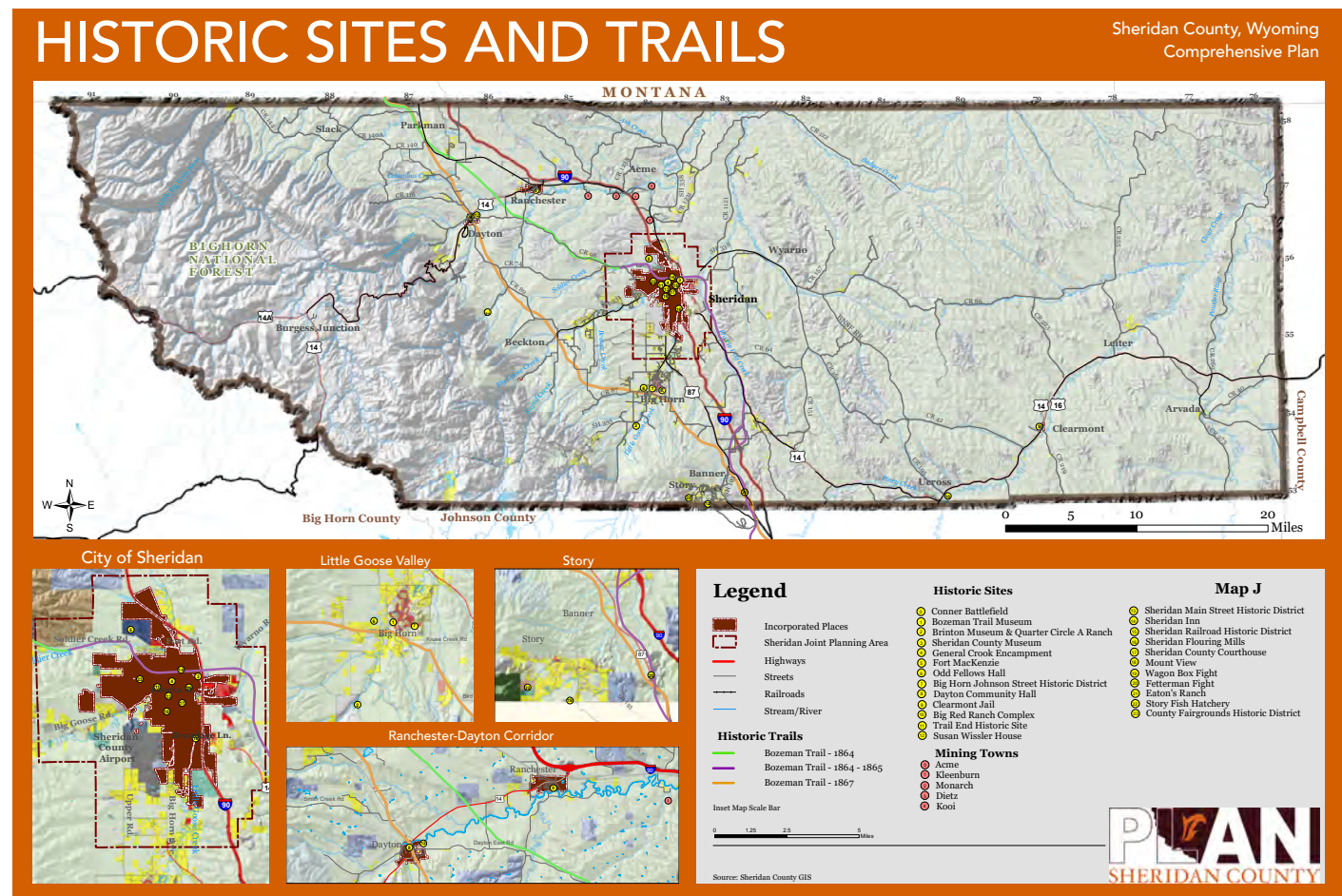
Historic Sites

Sheridan County has a rich history dating back to the gold mining days of the Bozeman Overland Trail. Prior to that, the area was part of the traditional hunting grounds for the Plains Indians and played a major role during the Indian Wars of the 1860s due to its proximity to Fort Phil Kearny and the overland trails heading north and west. The region was also the site of the Battle of the Rosebud between Sioux and Cheyenne warriors and the US Army, which took place eight days prior to the Battle of the Little Big Horn.

Many significant historic resources continue to preserve and celebrate the history of the area. Most recently, the Historic Preservation Commission was re-established in July 2019 to continue the work of recognizing and preserving the county's history. Sites and landmarks are found throughout the county and are generally identified on the Historic Sites map.

County Communities and Historic Sites Goals and Policies

MAP-J HISTORIC SITES AND TRAILS MAP





Goal 6.1: The county will recognize and reinforce individual community and rural center characteristics.

Policy 6.1 a: Develop Community Plans for unincorporated communities of Big Horn, Arvada, and Story

This Comprehensive Plan and updated Community Plans will recognize the unique characteristics and needs of the communities in the county, both incorporated and unincorporated.

Policy 6.1 b: Ensure compatible development within and adjacent to community growth areas and unincorporated communities

Ensure that new development within community growth areas and communities is compatible with local values and existing development. The county will continue to use its development review process to ensure that development that occurs in these areas is compatible with community needs, issues, and character. The review process will focus on design quality, scale, context, and historic preservation.

Policy 6.1 c: Improve community gateways and corridors

Enhance and protect the aesthetic quality of community gateways and other highly visible corridors through appropriate site design measures. Avoid placing heavy industrial uses in community gateways and along highly visible entrance corridors. Encourage redevelopment over time of existing outdoor storage and heavy industry in highly visual corridors near communities, including along the interstate near Sheridan.

Goal 6.2: Sheridan County will identify and preserve historic and cultural resources and maintain their legacy.

Policy 6.2 a: Reinforce efforts to preserve urban and rural historic and cultural resources

The county will continue to reinforce and maintain the County’s historic and cultural legacy by building on historic preservation efforts occurring in the City of Sheridan, Sheridan Historic Preservation Commission work to heighten awareness and ensure preservation of Sheridan County’s diverse historic and cultural heritage throughout the county. Preservation efforts could target communities and surrounding areas, such as old barns, cabins, remnant segments of trails, archaeological sites, and old mining communities.



Policy 6.2 b: Prepare a Historic Preservation Plan

Support the Historic Preservation Commission in its efforts to create a long-range historic preservation plan so that the most effective preservation tools are available with emphasis on incentives and coordination with other agencies and land trusts.

Policy 6.2 c: Avoid development impacts on archaeological and historical resources

Identify sensitive archaeological and historical resources in the county’s unincorporated areas. To the extent possible, direct development away from significant archeological and historic sites or use clustered site designs that account for and avoid these resources. The county will use incentives to promote preservation.

REGIONAL COOPERATION

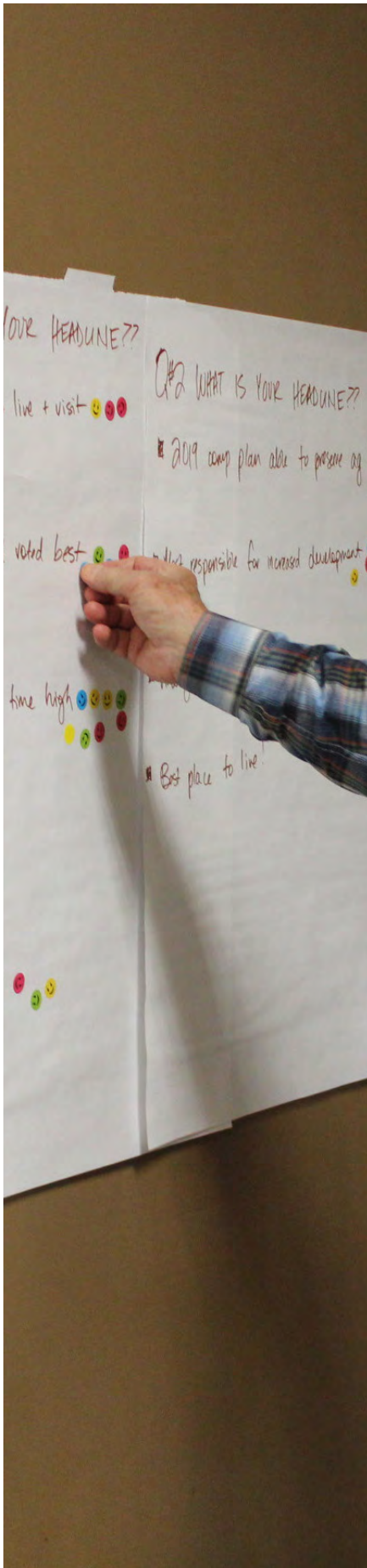
While this plan focuses on unincorporated Sheridan County, its outcomes will have an impact of the area’s city, towns, and communities. It is therefore critical that regional cooperation and coordination be conducted between the County and the local governments that results in healthy communities and positive development. Likewise, the goals and policies of this plan may have an impact on other governmental entities and nongovernmental agencies, which again makes the case for strong regional cooperation that results in the good of the whole. Regional coordination is further discussed in Chapter 8.

Regional Cooperation Goals and Policies

Goal 7.1: The county will continue to jointly plan for orderly growth at the edge of the City of Sheridan.

Policy 7.1 a: Continue County/City of Sheridan Joint Planning

The county will continue to work with the City of Sheridan in a joint planning arrangement for the unincorporated lands within the Urban Service Area. The city and county will reevaluate the Memorandum of Understanding as needed in order to address consistent development standards.



Goal 7.2: Sheridan County will cooperatively plan with incorporated towns (Dayton, Ranchester, and Clearmont).

Policy 7.2 a: Cooperative planning with other incorporated towns

The county will pursue cooperative planning with the other incorporated communities and towns, addressing critical growth issues (transportation, land use, conservation, provision of services) in an efficient manner.

Goal 7.3: The county will cooperatively plan with citizens of the county’s unincorporated rural communities and centers

Policy 7.3 a: Work with residents of unincorporated communities

The county will work together with residents of its unincorporated communities (Arvada, Big Horn, and Story) to address issues of local concern by providing political and organizational assistance, recognizing that citizen initiative in these areas is critical, and that county government is not always able to take the lead.

Goal 7.4: Sheridan County will work and cooperate with other government agencies and non-governmental organizations to address issues of regional concern.

Policy 7.4 a: Coordinate with agencies and organizations on issues of regional concern

The county will continue to cooperate with, and where relevant provide guidance to, federal and state agencies that manage land and resources (water quantity and quality, air quality, weed and pest control, wildlife management, health and safety, historical and archaeological, recreation and cultural resources) in Sheridan County. Other regional issues include:

- Railroad planning,
- Utility corridor and landfill siting,
- Significant industrial or natural resource development,
- Parks, open space, and trails,
- Major highway expansions and improvements,

- Law enforcement and emergency services,
- Wildfire management, and
- Water quality

Policy 7.4 b: Coordinate with adjoining counties and tribes

The county will continue to coordinate with Big Horn, Johnson and Campbell counties in Wyoming, and adjoining counties and tribes in Montana on issues that cross county boundaries, such as energy development, water, and transportation planning.

Goal 7.5: Sheridan County will coordinate with and support the missions of land conservation organizations with aims that support this Plan’s goals.

Policy 7.5 a: Work with land conservation organizations

The county will continue to work with and provide support to organizations whose mission advances conservation, agriculture, recreation and open space.

Policy 7.5 b: Work with non-profit organizations on social services and health care

The county will continue to work with non-profit and private organizations whose mission advances social services, housing, and healthcare to community residents.





CHAPTER 7. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND ACTION PLAN

OVERVIEW

This chapter is one of the most important in the plan, because it explains how Sheridan County will accomplish the plan, who will be responsible for various actions, and when they should occur.

County leadership and staff recognizes the County will need to coordinate with the communities in the county, other organizations, and several agencies to carry out the Plan through the following general approaches described below:

1. Day-to-day policy decisions,
2. Regulatory and zoning revisions,
3. Programs and plans,
4. Regional coordination, and
5. New funding mechanisms.

The Action Plan, found later in this chapter, identifies specific strategies to implement many parts of the Plan, describes roles and responsibilities of governing bodies and departments, and notes timing of actions (priorities).





PRIORITY ACTIONS

The following four items are the County's top priority actions needed to implement the Sheridan County Comprehensive Plan and are not in order of priority. They include:

○ **Joint Planning Area Plans for city and towns – Sheridan, Ranchester, and Dayton**

The City of Sheridan and Sheridan County have a mutually agreed upon Joint Planning Area (JPA) Plan that should be routinely reviewed and updated. Ranchester and Dayton are growing at a more rapid pace, and the likelihood of future annexations to the towns is strong. Both towns and the County should work together to develop a JPA Plan for the municipalities and surrounding unincorporated area as is reflected on this plan's Future Land Use Plan Map and where growth is likely to occur.

○ **Creating a Special Planning Area - Acme Special Planning Area**

The Special Planning Area designation on the Future Land Use Plan indicates an area that is recognized by the county for its unique economic development potential. It is identified as an area where future development may occur but where land use designations will not be specified until a public master plan review process has concluded. A Special Planning Area designation requires that development proposals within the area be reviewed in a comprehensive manner, based on a set of policies and criteria to address planning issues specific to the area, including and not limited to land use compatibility, viewshed protection and design, circulation and access, natural feature preservation and open space, and facilities and services.

○ **Trail and pathway development planning**

Public comments that were received throughout this Plan's update stressed the strong affection citizens have for trails and pathways that connect local landmarks and which allow people to have access into the Bighorn Mountains and foothills. The continued development of more trails and paths is important for the recreational enjoyment and health benefits achieved through outdoor accessibility.

○ **Community Plans for Big Horn and Story**

The unincorporated communities of Big Horn and Story have long been in existence, and the last time either one had a community plan prepared for the area was in 1977. With their continued potential for more growth, it is very important that local residents of the two

communities develop new community plans in association with County staff and leaders.

WHAT WILL IT TAKE?

1. Day-to-Day Policy Decisions

The County will carry out many of the policies of the Plan during day-to-day policy recommendations and decisions — those made by planning staff, the Planning and Zoning Commission, and the Board of County Commissioners. These entities will continually make decisions regarding development proposals and plan amendments and should ensure that the decisions are consistent with the Plan. For example, deciding not to rezone agricultural lands for intensive rural residential uses when not in accordance with this Plan is a policy judgment that is consistent with the intent of the policies and the Future Land Use Plan Map.

2. Regulatory and Zoning Revisions

Carrying out this Plan will require zoning and development regulations (i.e., resolutions) consistent with the Future Land Use Plan Map and goals. Shortly after adopting the plan, Sheridan County may need to adopt development regulations including amending zoning, subdivision regulations, road standards, and procedures to be consistent with this Plan. Types of revisions might include:

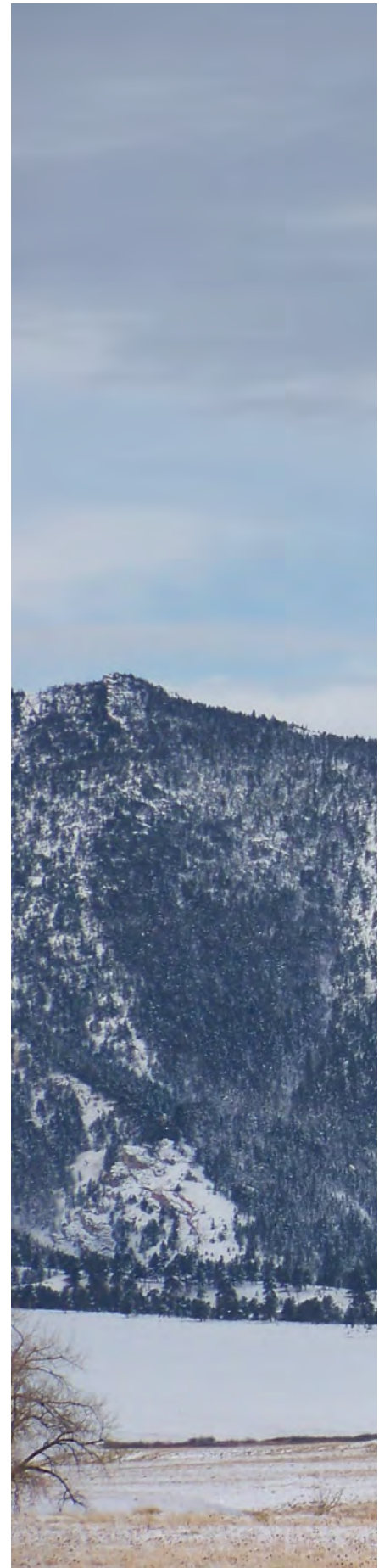
- Changes to zoning where it is inconsistent with the Future Land Use Plan,
- Rural road and building standards,
- Other resource protection standards or guidelines (e.g., for wildlife habitat protection, outdoor lighting, ridgeline protection)

3. Programs and Plans

This Plan calls for several new or enhanced programs and some new, more detailed plans, such as the policy to support historic preservation education, trails planning, and community planning for Big Horn and Story. Programs have varying levels of priority, depending on the issues involved. The community plans that are recommended for Big Horn and Story should be locally driven by the area residents.

4. Regional Coordination

A number of the recommendations in the Plan will best be achieved through new or amended Joint Planning Area Plans or



Intergovernmental Agreements (IGAs) between the City of Sheridan and Sheridan County, and between the County and the Towns of Dayton and Ranchester. Regional Coordination will be ongoing with the Town of Clearmont. Types of interagency coordination that will be necessary to implement the plan include:

- City or Town/County Joint Planning Area Plans and IGAs to address service provision, coordinated planning, or annexation,
- Agreements with districts or other organizations, and
- Partnerships with other organizations.

5. Funding Mechanisms

Sheridan County will need to address the costs of new growth and development as it occurs, as well as addressing how to pay for on-going operations and maintenance of utilities and services.

ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan is a starting point to establish annual work plans for the next five years, although it is dependent on staff resources and available funding. Not all of the Plan’s policies and goals found in Chapter 6 are included, which is not to say they are not important. However, the reality is only so many items can be tackled within a five-year timeframe, and the actions that follow are deemed most critical for completion. If time and resources permit, additional policies may also be pursued and accomplished.

| POLICY # | RELATES TO GOAL | DESCRIPTION | RESPONSIBILITY | *TIMING |
|-----------------|---|--|--|---------|
| LAND USE | | | | |
| 1.1(a) | Goal 1.1: Compact Development Pattern; Future Land Use Plan Map | Consistent Zoning: Change zoning to be consistent with the Future Land Use Plan Map to limit expansion of urban and low-density residential development into rural and agricultural areas. | County Planning / with City of Sheridan, Towns of Dayton, Ranchester | 2 |
| 1.1(c) | Goal 1.1 Compact Development Pattern (Incorporated Towns) | Incorporated Community Growth Areas: Continue coordinated planning between the county and towns to refine Community Growth Area designations and future land uses within them. | County Planning / with City of Sheridan, Towns of Dayton, Ranchester | 2 |
| 1.2(a) | Goal 1.2: Rural and Agricultural | Agricultural Zone District: Maintain agriculture zoning to allow a base density of 1 unit per 80 acres for residential development, and with density bonuses for clustered development to allow 1 unit per 20 acres and a variety of lot sizes. | County Planning | 0 |

* 0=ongoing 1=immediate 2=within 2 years 3=within 5 years



| POLICY # | RELATES TO GOAL | DESCRIPTION | RESPONSIBILITY | *TIMING |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|--|---------|
| 1.2(c) | Goal 1.2: Rural and Agricultural | Rural Design Guidelines: Develop guidelines for new development so that residential development in rural areas is compatible with the character of these areas. Guidelines should address topics such as lot layout and siting, fencing, grading, and non-invasive plants and weeds. | County Planning | 2 |
| 1.3(b) | Goal 1.3: Diverse Housing in Neighborhoods | Urban Residential Zoning: In areas where urban development is proposed in the unincorporated county in advance of annexation, such development should be in accordance with town/city standards for urban residential in order to create vibrant neighborhoods with a mix of housing types and amenities. | County Planning / with City of Sheridan, Towns of Dayton, Ranchester | 2 |
| 1.5(a) | Goal 1.5: Locate Industry in Suitable, Concentrated Areas | Acme Special Planning Area: The County will develop processes, procedures and standards for considering commercial and industrial uses within the Special Planning Area. | County Planning | 1 |
| 1.6(a) | Goal 1.6: Rural and Agricultural Areas/ Open Space | Non-Contiguous Density Transfers: Allow for Non-Contiguous Density Transfers between properties to give landowners within the Agriculture/Resource Area options to promote land and resource conservation by shifting density to more appropriate parcels. | County Planning | 3 |
| NATURAL / SCENIC RESOURCES | | | | |
| 2.4(a) | Goal 2.4: Agriculture | Water Rights Distribution: Continue to require subdividers to adhere to statutory requirements regarding land subdivision and distribution of water rights. (Note: Title 18 of Wyoming Statutes Annotated, 18-5-306(a)(xi) provides five criteria for subdividers.) | County Planning | 0 |
| 2.4(b) | Goal 2.4: Agriculture | See Strategy 1.2(a), Agricultural Zone District | County Planning | 0 |
| 2.5(a) | Goal 2.5: Open Space and Goal 1.6 | Funding for Conservation: Explore local funding options dedicated to conservation and development rights acquisition for rural and agricultural landscapes, such as a dedicated mill levy or sales tax, or a real estate transfer tax (requires legislative authorization). Encourage acquisition of development rights through land trusts for scenic areas, riparian habitat, and irrigated lands. | County | 2 |

* 0=ongoing 1=immediate 2=within 2 years 3=within 5 years

| POLICY # | RELATES TO GOAL | DESCRIPTION | RESPONSIBILITY | *TIMING |
|-------------------------------|---|---|-----------------|---------|
| 2.5(b) | Goal 2.5: Open Space | Cooperative Conservation: Continue to support policies that are compatible with activities of land trusts and landowners to privately conserve land, particularly in the foothills area. | County | 0 |
| 2.5(b) | Goal 2.5: Open Space and Conservation Design Development | Cooperate with Land Trusts to Manage Land Conserved as Part of Conservation Developments: Work with local land trusts (i.e.. Stock Growers Land Trust, The Nature Conservancy, and Sheridan Community Land Trust) to manage open space dedicated as part of some subdivision developments. Individual landowners or ranchers could also continue to manage open space or agricultural land as part of a Conservation Design development. | County | 0 |
| 2.6(a) | Goal 2.6: Wildlife Habitat Protection | Wildlife Habitat Protection Guidelines/ Management: Develop guidelines to minimize impacts on crucial wildlife habitat (i.e.: Guidelines would address: (a) transferring development away from critical wildlife habitat and riparian corridors, (b) proper design and placement of structures and fencing and vegetation to avoid conflicts, and (c) management, such as pest control, archery hunting). Refine the referral process with Wyoming Game and Fish, so the agency provides review for subdivision proposals. | County Planning | 1 |
| 2.8(c) | Goal 2.8: Scenic Quality and Night Skies | Lighting Standards. Develop standards to address light pollution (lighting levels and shielding). | County Planning | 3 |
| ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES | | | | |
| 3.1(a) | Goal 3.1: Facilitate Job Expansion | Coordinate with Economic Development Organizations. (Note: It is generally not the role of Sheridan County to promote economic opportunities and recruit business but to partner with other organizations whose mission it is to do so. However, the county operates a business park at the airport and provides the infrastructure for it.) | County | 0 |

* 0=ongoing 1=immediate 2=within 2 years 3=within 5 years



| POLICY # | RELATES TO GOAL | DESCRIPTION | RESPONSIBILITY | *TIMING |
|--------------------------------|--|--|---|---------|
| 3.2(a) | Goal 3.2: Industrial Uses | Industrial Zoning and Standards. Update business park and industrial zoning to address contemporary needs, such as flex space and outdoor storage screening to encourage business parks with campus-like settings and a compatible mix of uses. Develop locational criteria and performance standards for heavy industry, as suggested in Chapter 6 of this Plan. | County Planning | 2 |
| 3.3(a) | Goal 3.3: Tourism | Tourism Destination Marketing. Continue to support entities that promote Sheridan County's history, heritage, and scenic qualities. | County | 0 |
| SERVICES AND FACILITIES | | | | |
| 4.1(a) | Goal 4.1: Water Utilities | Sheridan Area Water System (SAWS) Boundary Study: Continue to monitor SAWS service area boundary to ensure it is (a) consistent with designated future growth areas and Rural Residential areas that will be served and/or (b) clearly distinguishes ownership and water rights (City versus SAWS). Plan for long-term water supplies, including conservation measures. | County Engineering / SAWS / with City of Sheridan | 2 |
| 4.1(a) | Goal 4.1: Adequate Facilities and Services | Capital Facilities Program: Establish a Capital Facilities Program linked to the plan's priorities, providing for facilities and services in planned growth areas. | County | 3 |
| 4.4(a) | Goals 4.4 – 4.6: Adequate Facilities and Services | Level of Service (LOS) Standards: Establish level of service standards for rural and urban areas (i.e., for roads, water and sewer, fire protection, emergency services, law enforcement, parks, and schools) so development pays its own way. Developers would have to make improvements and/or contribute land or funds toward that end. The city or towns could waive some requirements for projects that provide affordable or workforce housing, or otherwise provide for funding of these requirements. | County Planning / Cities and Towns | 2 |

* 0=ongoing 1=immediate 2=within 2 years 3=within 5 years

| POLICY # | RELATES TO GOAL | DESCRIPTION | RESPONSIBILITY | *TIMING |
|------------------------------------|--|---|---|---------|
| 4.4(a) | Goals 4.4 – 4.6: Adequate Facilities and Services | Adequate Public Facilities Funding: Developers will ensure that adequate public facilities are in place or planned for within a reasonable time of the start of a new development (i.e., streets and other utilities and services). Consider/update impact fees for fire stations, streets, and other facilities in urbanizing areas. (Note: impact fees are not authorized by State Statutes expressly, but jurisdictions can collect fees. Legal advice and background studies would be necessary to justify impact fees). | County Planning | 2 |
| 4.4(a), 4.5(a), 4.6(a), and 4.7(a) | Goals 4.4 – 4.7: Adequate Facilities and Services | Funding for Quality of Life Measures: Continue to work with the public and identify funding sources for quality of life measures, such as open space, trails, libraries, and other services. | County Planning | 3 |
| TRANSPORTATION | | | | |
| 5.1(a) | Goal 5.1 and 5.5: County Road Network | Reserve Rights of Way: As growth occurs, reserve rights of way as identified on the County Road Network Plan (and adopted regional Transportation plans as updated from time to time). | County Planning | 0 |
| 5.1(b) | Goal 5.1: Road Network | Joint Transportation Planning Projects: Continue to work with local municipalities and the Wyoming Department of Transportation (WYDOT) to plan roadway and non-motorized transportation facilities. | County Planning/ Engineering, WYDOT | 0 |
| 5.2(b) | Goal 5.2: Complete Streets | Extend pathways throughout the county. In conjunction with local trail interests, rank multipurpose trail projects and identify potential funding sources. | County Planning/ Engineering/ Sheridan Community Land Trust | 2 |
| 5.4(a) | Goal 5.4: Airport | Follow Airport Master Plan. Support the efforts of the Airport Board in implementing the Airport Master Plan. | County, Airport Board | 0 |
| 5.5(a) | Goal 5.5: Adequate Transportation Improvements | Collect Travel Data: Continue collecting travel pattern data to inform capital planning and identify emerging needs in the community. | County Engineering | 1 |

* 0=ongoing 1=immediate 2=within 2 years 3=within 5 years



| POLICY # | RELATES TO GOAL | DESCRIPTION | RESPONSIBILITY | *TIMING |
|-----------------------------|---|---|---------------------------------------|---------|
| 5.5(a) | Goal 5.5: Adequate Transportation Improvements | Transportation Impact Assessments: Require new developments and properties requesting land use designations to submit a transportation impact assessment. The assessment should analyze current and future motor vehicle traffic volumes, roadway suitability for the proposed land use, and the relationship of new structures to future right-of-way corridors (roadway and trail). | County Engineering | 0 |
| 5.5(b) | Goal 5.5: Adequate Transportation Improvements | New Development and High Impact User Assessments: Implementation mechanisms will be investigated to require new development and other high impact users to pay equitable shares of necessary improvements to the county transportation system. | County Planning | 2 |
| 5.6(a) and 5.6(b) | Goal 5.6: Trails Plan | On-Going Trails Planning and Prioritization. Coordinate with Sheridan Community Land Trust and citizens groups to develop a detailed trails plan (using the plan map in Chapter 6 as a starting point) and identify funding for bicycle lanes and trails. | County Planning | 2 |
| DISTINCT COMMUNITIES | | | | |
| 6.1(a) | Goal 6.1: Community Plans | Community Plans: Cooperatively plan with incorporated towns and develop community plans for unincorporated communities. | County Planning/ Municipalities | 2 |
| 6.2(a) | Goal 6.2: Historic Preservation Plan | Historic Preservation Plan: The county (as well as the City of Sheridan) will promote education and awareness and incentives to conserve rural historic and cultural resources. Develop a Historic Preservation Plan for areas outside towns and the city. Support the efforts of the Historic Preservation Commission. | County Planning | 2 |
| REGIONAL COOPERATION | | | | |
| 7.1(a) | Goal 7.1: Sheridan Joint Planning Area (See also Strategies 1.1(a) and (c). | Consistent Standards and Intergovernmental Agreement: Maintain a Joint Planning Area Plan and Development Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City of Sheridan and the county. | County Planning; City of Sheridan, | 1 |

* 0=ongoing 1=immediate 2=within 2 years 3=within 5 years

| POLICY # | RELATES TO GOAL | DESCRIPTION | RESPONSIBILITY | *TIMING |
|----------|---|--|---|---------|
| 7.2(a) | Goal 7.2: Incorporated Towns, Dayton, Ranchester, and Clearmont. (See also Strategies 1.1(a) and (c). | Incorporated Community Growth Areas: Continue coordinated planning between the county and towns to refine Community Growth Area designations and future land uses within them. | County Planning; Dayton, Ranchester, Clearmont | 2 |
| 7.2(a) | Goals 7.2: Incorporated Towns (See also Strategies 1.1(a) and (c). | Consistent Standards and Intergovernmental Agreements: Negotiate and execute Joint Planning Area Plans and Development MOUs to establish consistent zoning, standards for development, and annexation policies within the community growth areas. | County Planning, Dayton, Ranchester, Clearmont | 2 |
| 7.3(a) | Goal 7.3: Unincorporated Places | Community Planning Process: Establish a community planning process for the unincorporated places to address future land use and development, and to resolve water quality and utilities issues. | County Planning/ Community Groups | 2 |
| 7.3(a) | Goal 7.3: Unincorporated Places: Story | Designate new zone district(s) to coincide with Community Core Category and specifications that result from community plans. (i.e., Allow limited commercial around the Story core to reflect current land uses, with the intent that the area could expand modestly if sewer and water become available.) Continue to address water quality issues for Story. Through the community planning process, assess whether the community will support a service district (water and sewer, improvements, etc) to provide an entity to represent the community and establish eligibility for state and federal utility loans and grants. Development at higher densities may create water quality and public health problems that would necessitate central water/sewer facilities for Story. | County Planning/ Community Groups | 2 |
| 7.3(a) | Goal 7.3: Unincorporated Places: Big Horn | Establish a community plan for Big Horn. | County Planning/ Community Groups | 2 |

* 0=ongoing 1=immediate 2=within 2 years 3=within 5 years







CHAPTER 8. REGIONAL COORDINATION, PLAN MONITORING AND AMENDMENT PROCESS

REGIONAL COORDINATION

A number of the recommendations in this Plan will best be achieved through new or amended Joint Planning Area Plans (JPAs) or Intergovernmental Agreements (IGAs) between the County and the City of Sheridan and the Towns of Dayton, Ranchester, and Clearmont. Partnerships should also be maintained and continued with organizations such as the Sheridan Community Land Trust, Sheridan Area Water Supply – Joint Powers Board (SAWS-JPB), the Sheridan County Conservation District, Forward Sheridan, and others. Types of interagency coordination that will be necessary to implement the plan include:

- **City or Town/County JPAs to address service provision, coordinated planning, or annexation,**
- **Agreements with districts or other organizations, and**
- **Partnerships with other organizations.**

Sheridan County should address the costs of new growth and development as it occurs, as well as how to pay for on-going operations and maintenance of utilities and services.





COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MONITORING AND UPDATES

- **Periodic Review:** Commit to a semi-annual review process for the Comprehensive Plan, with a major review and update on a 5-year schedule.
- **Plan as Growth Tool:** Use the Future Land Use Plan Map and the Comprehensive Plan policies as planning and growth management tools to guide changes to zoning and standards, and follow its goals and policies during development review.
- **Plan Conformity Checklist:** Develop a checklist. Provide decision-makers with such a project evaluation tool to review development proposals and their effect on the county, the Comprehensive Plan, the environment, and the economy.

PLAN AMENDMENT PROCESSES

This Comprehensive Plan and future updates are intended to be used to guide decision-making within Sheridan County. Upon completing plan updates, public hearings are heard before the County Planning and Zoning Commission and then the Board of County Commissioners. The Commission makes a recommendation to the Board for approval, approval with modifications, or denial of the plan, and the Board is responsible for adopting the plan.

For this document to be functional, decision-makers must be able to review, revise, and update it on an as-needed basis to respond to significant trends or changes in the economic, physical, social, or political conditions of the county. Revisions to it will follow two distinct and different procedures:

1. Comprehensive Plan Updates

The purpose of a Comprehensive Update is to reevaluate the foundations, goals, policies, and strategies contained within this Plan — changing or removing those that are out-of-date or have been accomplished and developing new policies if necessary so the Plan will continue to be effective. The process for a Comprehensive Plan Update is described below.

It is recommended that a comprehensive update of this Plan take place every five (5) years unless otherwise directed by the Board of County Commissioners to occur sooner. In making a determination of when a Comprehensive Plan Update should be initiated, a prime consideration is the magnitude of the changes that have occurred in the county since the

Plan was last updated. For instance, unexpected changes in the economy, the environment, infrastructure stresses, projected growth, or other issues may trigger a plan update in less than five years.

When conducting a Comprehensive Plan Update, the county will thoroughly re-evaluate the backbone of the Plan, including its goals, policies, and strategies. Those that should change, have been accomplished, or should be removed to make the plan effective are flagged and handled in the course of the update. A Comprehensive Plan Update will also include a review of the validity and current quality of all information contained within the Plan and should include opportunities for involvement by the public, boards and commissions, elected and appointed officials, county staff, and other affected interests.

Once the update is complete, the Board of County Commissioners shall then approve, approve with conditions, or deny the update based on its consideration of the recommendations from the County Planning and Zoning Commission, staff, other relevant boards and commissions, and evidence from public hearings.

2. Plan Amendments

Amendments to this Plan that occur outside of a regular Comprehensive Update process are considered to be Plan Amendments, and there is a separate process to handle Plan Amendments and related functional plans. Plan amendments may include revisions to one or more sections of this Plan because of adoption of other plans or a specific issue/policy plan (e.g., changes to the Sheridan Joint Area Plan), or a directive from the Board of County Commissioners.

Plan amendments may also comprise changes to the Future Land Use map, including those resulting from an approved master plan (planned unit development or a special planning area). Other Plan Amendments may be as small as correcting text or map errors. The process is as follows:

1. A directive for an amendment by a governing body or a citizen request occurs.
2. Staff reviews the amendment proposal and makes a recommendation and files a staff report.
3. The County Planning and Zoning Commission shall hold a public hearing and make a recommendation.
4. Finally, the amendment request goes to the Board of County Commissioners for action.



This sequence of review steps is to ensure plan consistency. The Board of County Commissioners shall subsequently approve, approve with conditions, or deny the amendment based on its consideration of the recommendations and evidence from the public hearings. Approval of the amendments will be by resolution.

Plan amendments initiated by the Board of County Commissioners, staff, and boards and commissions, may be processed at any time. The recommended limit on amendments is twice per year.

It is recommended that Plan Amendments include specific findings that:

1. The proposed amendment is beneficial to the county or addresses issues not foreseen during the planning process;
2. The proposed amendment is compatible with the surrounding area, and the goals and policies of this Plan;
3. The proposed amendment will address and mitigate impacts on transportation, services, and facilities;
4. The proposed amendment will have minimal effect on service provision, including adequacy or availability of urban facilities and services, and is compatible with existing and planned service provision;
5. The proposed amendment is consistent with the logical expansion of Urban Growth Areas;
6. Strict adherence to the Plan would result in a situation neither intended nor in keeping with other goals and policies of this Plan; and
7. The proposed plan amendment will promote the public welfare and will be consistent with the goals and policies of this Plan.



WYOMING STATUTES

Adoption and amendment procedures must follow Wyoming State Statutes:

18-5-202

(b) The planning and zoning commission may prepare and amend a comprehensive plan including zoning for promoting the public health, safety, morals and general welfare of the unincorporated areas of the county, and certify the plan to the board of county commissioners. Before certifying its plan or amendments thereto to the board the commission shall hold at least one (1) public hearing. Notice of the time and place of hearing shall be given by one (1) publication in a newspaper of general circulation in the county at least thirty (30) days before the date of the hearing. Any person may petition the planning and zoning commission to amend any zoning plan adopted under the provisions of W.S. 18-5-201 through 18-5-208.

(c) The planning and zoning commission shall prepare recommendations to effectuate the planning and zoning purposes and certify its recommendations to the board of county commissioners. Before adopting the recommendations the board shall hold at least one (1) public hearing. Notice of the time and place of hearing shall be given by one (1) publication in a newspaper of general circulation in the county at least fourteen (14) days before the date of the hearing. After public hearing has been held, the board shall vote upon the adoption of the planning or zoning recommendation. No planning or zoning recommendation shall be adopted unless a majority of the board votes in favor thereof.



PLAN

SHERIDAN COUNTY

