

THE WYOMING RURAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

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

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

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

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

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

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

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PROCESS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS REPORT

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

The Town of Ranchester requested a five-year follow up community assessment from the Wyoming Rural Development Council. The mayor served as the community contact and took the lead in agenda development, logistics, and publicity for the assessment. Resource Team members were selected to visit, interview citizens, business, and community leaders to develop a plan of recommended action for Ranchester. The team members were carefully selected based on their fields of expertise that the Town of Ranchester officials indicated would be needed to respond to the problem areas identified.

The Resource Team toured the town and interviewed approximately 100 people over a two day period, April 8 & 9, 2008. The team interviewed representatives from the following segments of the community: local business, city, law enforcement, (youth and education on write-in sheets) grandparents, parents, and the general public.

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

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

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

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

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

The oral report was presented to the people of Ranchester on April 9, 2008 and the many citizens who participated were in attendance.

Following the oral report, a formal written report is presented to the Town of Ranchester.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On behalf of the Ranchester Community Assessment Resource Team, I would like to thank the Town of Ranchester and the community members who worked so hard to coordinate the Ranchester Five-Year Follow up Community Assessment. This report contains an abundance of information that will hopefully be used by the people of Ranchester to better the community and reach its goals.

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

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

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

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

Sincerely,

Jo Ferguson
Team Leader



Ranchester, WY - 1941

Source: <http://www.wyomingtalesandtrails.com>

RANCHESTER COMMUNITY PROFILE

(Elevation: 3,775)

Ranchester, located in Sheridan County, calls itself “The town where the handshake’s stronger and the smile lasts longer.” The town was named by English born Senator S. H. Hardin, a combination of “Ranch” and “Chester” (an English name for town).

Ranchester was the site of significant battles during the Plains Indian Wars. In the summer of 1865, Brigadier General Patrick E. Connor, an aggressive, anti-Indian commander, led a column of troops from Fort Laramie into the Powder River Country of northern Wyoming. The Powder River Expedition's mission was to make war on the Indians and punish them, so that they would be forced to keep the peace. On August 29, Connor attacked Chief Black Bear's Arapaho Indian camp along the Tongue River. The Indians fled up a small stream, Wolf Creek, and Connor followed at a gallop, only to be driven back. While the troops destroyed the village including tents and food supplies for the winter, the Arapahos launched an aggressive counter-attack, which drove Connor down the Tongue River. Only the use of howitzers saved the out-numbered soldiers from serious loss. This was the single most important military engagement of the three-pronged Powder River Expedition of 1865. A monument at the site, located at the south end of the town, now marks the area of the Indian encampment.

In 1894, Ranchester became a shipping stop on the Burlington railroad for the McShane Tie Company. The town was incorporated on September 5, 1911.

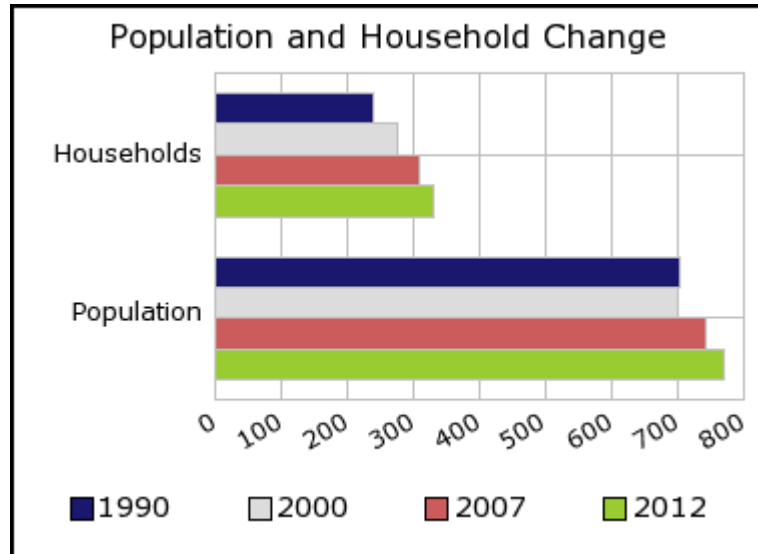
Sources: <http://www.ultimatewyoming.com>
<http://wiki.wyomingplaces.org>

Ranchester Executive Summary

Population Demographics:

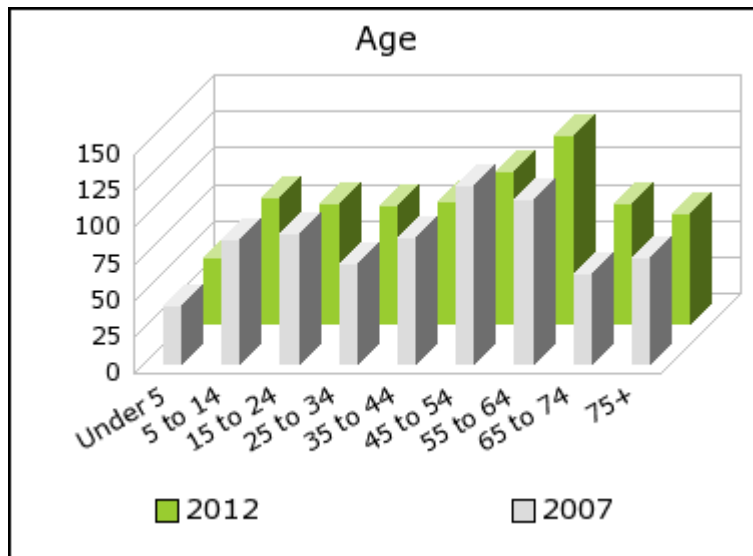
The number of households in Ranchester in 1990 was **238** and changed to **277** in 2000, representing a change of **16.4%**. The household count in 2007 was **308** and the household projection for 2012 is **329**, a change of **7.0%**.

The population in Ranchester in 1990 was **704** and in 2000 it was **701**, roughly a **-0.4%** change. The population in 2007 was **741** and the projection for 2012 is **771** representing a change of **4.0%**.



	1990 Census	2000 Census	2007 Estimate	2012 Projection	Percent Change	
					1990 to 2000	2007 to 2012
Total Population	704	701	741	771	-0.4%	4.0%
Total Households	238	277	308	329	16.4%	7.0%

Population by Age



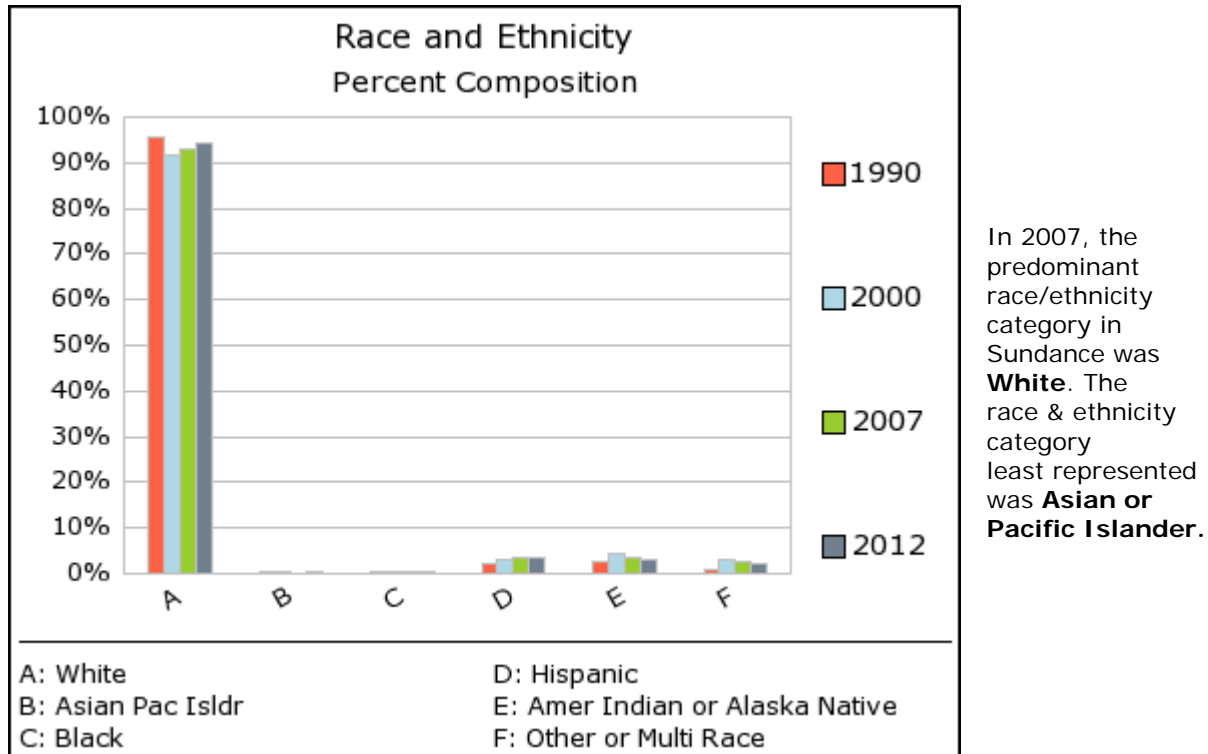
In 1990, the median age of the total population in Ranchester was **38.0**, and in 2000, it was **41.5**. The median age in 2007 was **44.9** and it is predicted to change in five years to **45.6** years.

In 2007, females represented **46.9%** of the population with a median age of **41.8** and males represented **53.1%** of the population with a median age of **47.5** years. In 2007, the most prominent age group was **Age 45 to 54** years. The age group least represented was **18 to 24** years.

Age Groups

	1990 Census		2000 Census		2007 Estimate		2012 Projection		Percent Change	
		%		%		%		%	1990 to 2000	2007 to 2012
0 to 4	48	6.9%	35	5.0%	41	5.5%	45	5.9%	-26.9%	11.5%
5 to 14	105	15.0%	101	14.5%	85	11.5%	87	11.3%	-3.9%	1.8%
15 to 19	42	6.0%	58	8.2%	50	6.7%	42	5.5%	37.0%	-15.6%
20 to 24	23	3.3%	29	4.1%	40	5.4%	41	5.3%	22.2%	2.6%
25 to 34	92	13.1%	58	8.3%	69	9.3%	81	10.5%	-37.1%	18.2%
35 to 44	145	20.7%	109	15.6%	87	11.8%	84	10.9%	-25.0%	-3.6%
45 to 54	81	11.4%	117	16.8%	123	16.5%	104	13.5%	45.8%	-14.8%
55 to 64	70	10.0%	75	10.7%	113	15.3%	129	16.7%	6.7%	13.8%
65 to 74	61	8.6%	53	7.6%	61	8.3%	82	10.6%	-12.8%	33.9%
75 +	37	5.3%	65	9.3%	73	9.8%	75	9.8%	75.0%	3.6%

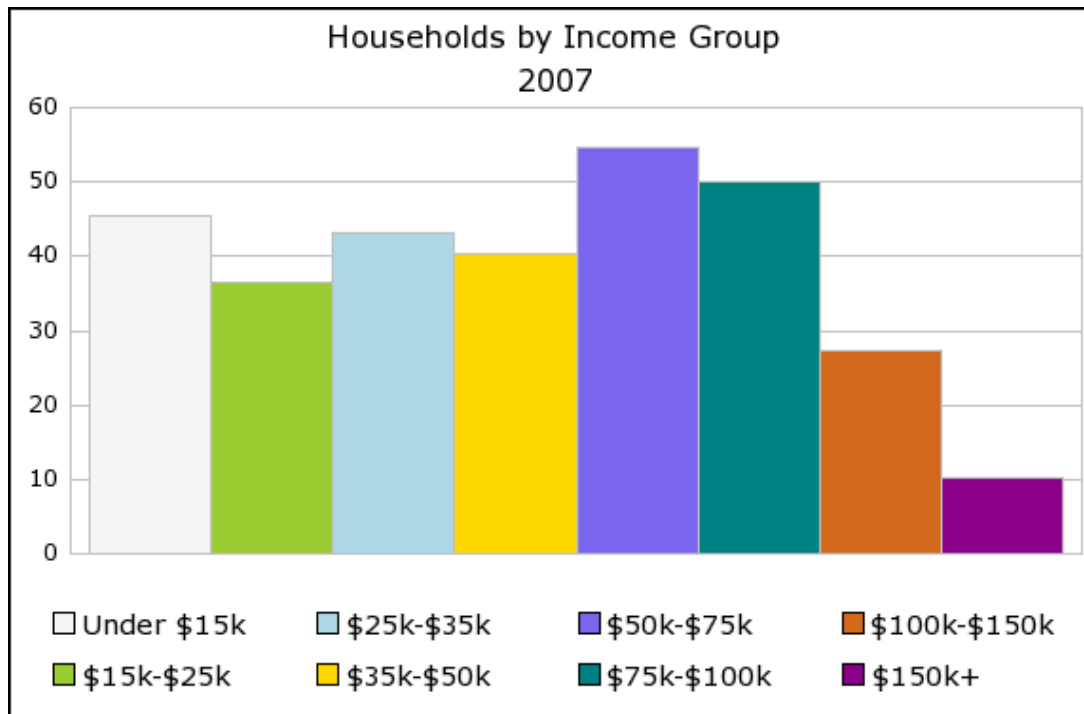
Population by Race/Ethnicity



Race & Ethnicity	1990		2000		2007		2012		Percent Change	
	Census	%	Census	%	Estimate	%	Projection	%	1990 to 2000	2007 to 2012
White	674	95.8%	643	91.8%	690	93.1%	727	94.3%	-4.6%	5.4%
Black	4	0.6%	3	0.4%	2	0.3%	2	0.3%	-37.5%	0.0%
American Indian or Alaska Native	19	2.7%	32	4.6%	27	3.6%	24	3.1%	67.6%	-11.5%
Asian or Pacific Islander	2	0.2%	2	0.2%	2	0.2%	2	0.3%	0.0%	33.3%
Other Race	5	0.7%	6	0.9%	6	0.8%	5	0.6%	33.3%	-25.0%
Two or More Races			15	2.2%	15	2.0%	11	1.4%		-25.0%
Hispanic Ethnicity	16	2.2%	22	3.2%	25	3.4%	28	3.6%	43.3%	8.2%
Not Hispanic or Latino	688	97.8%	679	96.8%	716	96.6%	744	96.4%	-1.4%	3.8%

Households by Income

In 2007 the predominant household income category for Ranchester was **\$50K - \$75K**, and the income group that was least represented was **\$150K+**.



HH Income

Categories	1990 Census		2000 Census		2007 Estimate		2012 Projection		Percent Change	
		%		%		%		%	1990 to 2000	2007 to 2012
\$0 - \$15,000	64	26.7%	48	17.2%	46	14.8%	44	13.5%	-25.0%	-2.5%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	47	19.6%	40	14.4%	36	11.8%	35	10.5%	-14.6%	-4.7%
\$25,000 - \$34,999	29	12.2%	37	13.3%	43	14.0%	36	11.1%	27.5%	-15.8%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	53	22.2%	40	14.4%	40	13.1%	46	14.0%	-24.7%	14.1%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	34	14.1%	68	24.6%	55	17.7%	55	16.6%	103.4%	0.0%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	5	1.9%	27	9.9%	50	16.3%	56	16.9%	500.0%	11.4%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	7	3.1%	15	5.5%	27	8.9%	41	12.4%	107.7%	50.0%
\$150,000 +	0	0.0%	2	0.6%	10	3.3%	17	5.0%	N/A%	61.1%
Average HH Income	\$31,964		\$46,101		\$50,813		\$59,082		44.2%	16.3%
Median HH Income	\$27,250		\$38,511		\$45,849		\$51,034		41.3%	11.3%
Per Capita Income	\$11,211		\$18,218		\$20,231		\$24,098		62.5%	19.1%

Employment and Business Percent Change

	1990 Census	2000 Census	2007 Estimate	2012 Projection	1990 to 2000	2007 to 2012
Age 16 + Population	541	549	604	629	1.4%	4.2%
In Labor Force	298	359	412	429	20.4%	4.3%
Employed	276	334	390	407	21.1%	4.4%
Unemployed	22	25	22	22	14.3%	2.4%

In Armed Forces	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	N/A%	N/A%
Not In Labor Force	243	44.9%	190	34.6%	192	31.8%	200	31.8%	-21.8%	4.1%

Employment in Blue Collar Occupations	140	41.8%
Employment in White Collar Occupations	194	58.2%

Housing Units

	1990 Census		2000 Census		2007 Estimate		2012 Projection		Percent Change	
									1990 to 2000	2007 to 2012
Total Housing Units	274		301		331		352		9.8%	6.4%
Owner Occupied	160	58.3%	195	64.7%	216	65.1%	231	65.8%	21.7%	7.4%
Renter Occupied	78	28.6%	82	27.4%	92	27.8%	98	27.8%	5.1%	6.2%
Vacant	36	13.1%	24	7.9%	23	7.0%	23	6.5%	-33.3%	-2.4%

Vehicles Available

	1990 Census		2000 Census		2007 Estimate		2012 Projection		Percent Change	
									1990 to 2000	2007 to 2012
Average Vehicles Per HH	2.10		1.90		2.10		2.40		-11.8%	10.7%
0 Vehicles Available	9	3.2%	14	5.1%	16	5.4%	16	5.0%	66.7%	0.0%
1 Vehicle Available	63	23.8%	82	29.6%	84	27.2%	84	25.6%	29.7%	0.7%
2+ Vehicles Available	194	73.0%	181	65.3%	208	67.5%	229	69.4%	-6.7%	10.1%

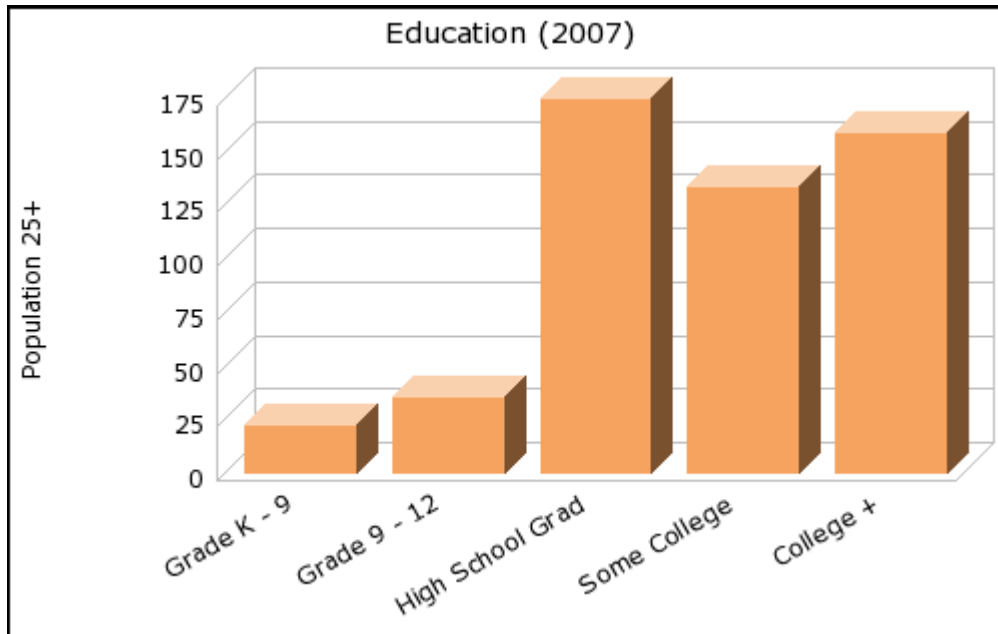
Marital Status

	1990 Census		2000 Census		2007 Estimate		2012 Projection		Percent Change	
									1990 to 2000	2007 to 2012
Age 15+ Population	552		564		616		639		2.2%	3.8%
Married, Spouse Present	310	56.1%	311	55.2%	339	55.1%	352	55.1%	0.5%	3.8%
Married, Spouse Absent	15	2.7%	57	10.0%	62	10.0%	64	10.1%	275.9%	4.2%
Divorced	89	16.2%	68	12.1%	74	12.1%	77	12.0%	-23.8%	3.5%
Widowed	36	6.5%	44	7.7%	48	7.8%	49	7.7%	21.7%	3.3%
Never Married	101	18.3%	85	15.0%	92	15.0%	96	15.0%	-16.4%	3.9%

Educational Attainment

	1990 Census		2000 Census		2007 Estimate		2012 Projection		Percent Change	
									1990 to 2000	2007 to 2012
Age 25+ Population	487		478		526		556		-1.8%	5.7%
Grade K - 8	29	6.0%	25	5.3%	22	4.2%	17	3.0%	-12.5%	-23.8%
Grade 9 - 12	58	12.0%	48	10.0%	36	6.8%	29	5.1%	-17.9%	-20.3%
High School Graduate	151	31.1%	143	29.9%	175	33.2%	196	35.3%	-5.5%	12.5%

Some College, No Degree	141	28.9%	123	25.7%	134	25.5%	141	25.3%	-12.9%	5.0%
Associates Degree	47	9.6%	39	8.2%	44	8.4%	48	8.7%	-16.7%	9.4%
Bachelor's Degree	31	6.4%	76	16.0%	90	17.1%	98	17.7%	145.0%	9.2%
Graduate Degree	29	6.0%	22	4.7%	25	4.8%	27	4.9%	-23.2%	6.1%



Current year data is for the year **2007**, 5 year projected data is for the year **2012**.

Resource Team Members

Ranchester, Wyoming
 April 8 & 9, 2008

Team Leader



Jo Ferguson

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

COMMUNITY CONTACT

Melinda Johnson, Grant Coordinator

P.O. Box 695
Ranchester, WY 82839
307-655-2283, cell 307-751-5640
Mkj32@hotmail.com

Dr. Ron Whitlatch

3800 Plateau Place
Casper, WY 82604
307-258-9463
DrWhit@bresnan.net

Trish Ullery

Bighorn Mountain Coalition
P.O. Box 2358
Kaycee, WY 82639
307-738-2269
Ullery@rtconnect.net

Ted Craig

Deputy Director Outreach Program
Wyoming Technology Business Center
Dept. 3011
1000 E. University Ave.
Laramie, WY 82071-2000
(307) 766-2099 p; (307) 760-5727 c
ecraig@uwyo.edu

Ranchester Community Assessment Agenda

Monday, April 7th, 2008

Resource Team Arrives and checks in at the Ranchester Western Motel.

Tuesday, April 8th 2008

7:00-8:00 am **BREAKFAST**
8:00-11:00 am **Town Tour**
11:00-12:00 pm **Youth**

Tongue River Café
Hosted by Teri Laya and Cliff Clevenger
Middle School

12:00-1:00 pm	Youth and LUNCH	High School
1:00-2:00 pm	Setup	Town Hall
2:00-3:00 pm	Agriculture	Town Hall
3:00- 4:00 pm	church/civic/nonprofit	Town Hall
4:00- 4:15 pm	BREAK/Refreshments	
4:15-5:15 pm	Education	Town Hall
5:15-6:45 pm	SUPPER	Taco's at Pauls Pub
6:45-7:45 pm	Community	Town Hall
7:45-8:45 pm	Business/Retail/Industry	Town Hall

Wednesday, April 9th 2008

6:00-7:00 am	Breakfast	Tongue River Café
7:00-8:00 am	Community	Town Hall
8:00-9:00 am	Economic Development	Town Hall
9:00-9:15 am	BREAK/Refreshments	
9:15-10:15 am	Town/County Gov.	Town Hall
10:15- 11:15 am	Senior Citizens	Town Hall
11:15-11:30 am	BREAK/Refreshments	
11:30- 12:30 pm	Law Enf./Emerg. Services	Town Hall
12:30- 1:30 pm	LUNCH	Rendezvous Trading Post
1:30-5:00 pm	Prepare for Town Meeting	
5:00 pm	SUPPER	Compliments of Forward Sheridan
7:00- 9:00 pm	Town Meeting	

Thursday, April 10th 2008

Breakfast
Resource Team departs

RANCHESTER MAJOR THEMES

From Five-Year Follow Up Assessment, April 7 & 8, 2008

MAIN STREET

VISUALS

Entry Impact
Lighting
Benches, Banners, Flowers

Traffic-stopping public art displays

Improved signage

Cross walks

Speed limits

Attractions

Clean Up

Street Sweeping

Property Clean Up

FUNCTIONALITY

Reconfigure Main Street

Set back commercial buildings

Zoning

Parking

Traffic flow

INFRASTRUCTURE

Well communicated Comprehensive Plan

Water (Quality & Quantity)

Drainage, flood control

Street paving, sidewalks, curb & gutter

Utilities

Telecommunication services

Natural gas vs. propane

QUALITY OF LIFE

Trails around town

Pathway to Dayton

Parks, better playground equipment

Enhanced Community Center activities

Pre-school to seniors

Education

**After school
Adults
Public Safety
Response Time
Correct House Address**

MANAGED GROWTH

**Commercial Development
Grocery Store
Restaurant
Hardware store
Medical facility
Misc. Retail
Well-planned sub-divisions
Affordable Housing**

Team Member Recommendations

Ranchester Assessment Summary –

Dr. Ronald Whitlatch
Rural Assessment Team Member

Casper, Wyoming
307-258-9463

Compliments, Offer of Assistance

Thank you Ranchesterites! We were warmly welcomed and treated with respect during our stay. Meeting all of you added to the wealth of our relationships. You are interesting people. Your investment in your town has paid dividends. Your future is promising. We wish you the very best. Any way we can help, know we are just a phone call away.

Format: Challenges and their solution resources are woven together in one narrative.

RANCHESTER ROCKS! The main boulders in Ranchester are the committed municipal staff, excellent schools, and the new and old residents who are willing to go to work improving the city.

The main themes emerging after meeting with the town folks were the appearance of main street, poor water quality, unpaved streets, trash clean-up and business development. While the team was on site we learned, Dayton and Ranchester plan to collaborate on a water line from upstream Dayton to Ranchester. After the Wednesday night town meeting the merchants group of Ranchester decided to reconvene and collaborate. The small grocery store owner plans to expand his services to carry meats and produce and be more full service. He plans to purchase the restaurant adjacent to his store so it will not close and on the other side of his store install diesel pumps to accommodate trucks and motor homes.

Main Street Beautification and Reconfiguration

The traffic flow down Main Street from both directions could be slowed by clearly marked pedestrian crosswalks, adding a center turn lane and parallel parking spaces marked on either side of the street. Larger signage designating the State Park at the Connor Battlefield and the two school zones would also slow down drivers. A Large decorative sign as traffic comes off the freeway and over the railroad tracks could say “Welcome to Ranchester – Gateway to the Big Horn Mountains – free maps at the Library.” Prominently placed covered picnic tables providing ample shade, with large trash cans would invite tourists to stop for lunch. Flower barrels at close intervals along Main Street would convey the impression of a clean, well maintained city. A prominently displayed fenced dog park with water and shade would attract travelers with pets.

Paved Streets, Dead Mosquitoes and New Playground Equipment

Ranchester has chosen to pave its own streets but at a pace perceived by the citizenry as too slow. The Community Church is interested in contributing money and labor for the city to pave their parking lot. Speeding up this process would save money because the materials are escalating in price each year. Citizens would like to know the schedule for paving well in advance and for the new pavement to be swept on a regular schedule. The flooding of H street every year is a concern needing immediate attention. The timely eradication of mosquito larvae

and fogging of flying mosquitoes would make it possible for greater usage of the parks and other out of doors leisure activities. Younger families are moving to Ranchester to escape larger city life and take advantage of the excellent school system. This group would utilize upgraded playground equipment and picnic tables with barbeque pits. The Community Center could serve the city by a campaign to buy new equipment and monitor it after installation. Part of their daycare activities could be tied to usage of the new playgrounds. The Community Center was viewed favorably by the entire city and expanded services could incentivize residents to further projects upgrading the city

Personal Property Beautification, Uniform Street Addresses and Railroad Underpass

Personal property beautification and improvement are matters requiring regular attention. Residents can be trained by repetitive means to adopt higher standards. Every other week trash pick-up for larger items, bundled branches, sacks of leaves or discarded appliances works to steadily improve the appearance of lots. During the summer months recognizing, improved, well groomed yards with awards in the form of a prominent yard sign can be helpful. Citizens can nominate neighbors for this award and the accompanying publicity builds community well being. Awards could be given for the citizens who clean up the walking paths that adjoin their property. Great interest in a network of walking/biking paths was expressed, even one connecting Dayton and Ranchester. A green-belt along the river featuring educational plaques about the river, water birds, wild flowers and wildlife would provide a destination event.

Organized uniform street addresses are a safety concern when the fire department or safety services are trying to rapidly respond to an emergency or locate a victim. Signage that is artful on the street sign pole and the building or lot demarcation could reflect a common theme, such as, Ranchester Rocks!, Historic Gateway to the Rockies, or simply Beautiful Ranchester. Signage is a relatively inexpensive way to improve the look of a city. Allowing residents to customize their address sign, as long as the numbers were large and prominent could create a healthy competition for recognition among town residents.

On the West side of town about Carl Street or at the County Road a railroad underpass would solve the problem of waiting on trains and open new land for city growth. The railroad should build the bridge for good public relations and Ranchester could dig the hole and pave the road. The history of the railroad could be a theme for part of the museum. Old restored railroad cars on a siding could serve as an attraction for tourists and a location for a concession business. Local tax breaks or incentives could be provided for retiring railroad employees who want to live where they can still hear the sound of a train passing. Millions of dollars of coal pass through Ranchester every month and coal mining could provide another theme for the museum and an educational opportunity for tourists to learn about the largest deposit of BTU's in the world (The Powder River Basin). The coal mines could be approached for funding of this positive public relations opportunity for their industry. Does there exist anywhere in the world a city that has more coal trains pass through its limits? Ranchester! Home of 192 coal trains per day, one every eight minutes, \$250,000.00 per train, \$48 million dollars a day! Providing ten million Americans with electricity from low sulfur, clean burning, "Powder River Basin" black thunder. Contact with the new mine that will be opening to ask them to describe ways Ranchester could meet their needs and new employee's needs would be timely and helpful.

Free WI-FI, Natural Gas Service, Residential Development

If residential development is in the future for Ranchester discussion with the owners of the pipeline 4 miles east of town would be imperative. It is as important as the clean water issue. Free wireless computer access for the immediate area is a wonderful service that a municipality can provide for a reasonable negotiated price. The new and attractive town sign could tell people, pull-over, get a refreshing drink and access the internet free, while shopping in Ranchester. Be sure and check out our website to know what business services, educational and recreational activities are scheduled! Residential housing currently is in short supply and more people are on the way, how can Ranchester be ahead of the curve in this demographic trend? With neighborhoods come families with children who need safe, innovative, arts and educationally oriented child-care. This child/parent service industry could be a featured strength of Ranchester starting by building on the Community Centers good reputation.

Church Resources, Blood on the Ground

In many communities where battles have been fought, spiritual leaders have recognized the need for reconciliation between the adversaries. The Biblical perspective that blood on the ground calls out for retribution or justice is a spiritual truth recognized throughout the earth. Ceremonies are conducted in which the adversarial parties apologize to each other for the violence of their ancestors. The result often times is a refreshing, renewal of prosperity in the land and surrounding region. The Conner battlefield is such ground and together the churches in Ranchester could organize and lead such reconciliation and offer united prayer and concern for the city. The number of churches in Ranchester represented in the listening sessions was almost unanimous. Some of the spiritual leaders were elderly and well respected and very able to serve the city as well as their congregations. This reconciliation event could provide a stage for featuring Native American music, folk lore, art work and customs. The host nation of the land (Absaalooke) called the river Buffalo Tongue River (Bishee Deesha Aashe) and adoption of this indigenous title could create more interest in the areas rich history. Docents could be trained by a local resident and art gallery owner, Kim Fuscha who is well versed in local and regional history to staff the museum. Publication of the local history could be an item for sale in the museum along with native artifacts. Mary Helen and Jeffrey Medicine Horse have published a Dictionary of Everyday Crow that would provide a rich resource for renaming or co-naming area features.

A prominent sign indicating the location of and directions to local churches along with their service times would allow Sunday travelers the option of stopping to worship. The Southern Baptist denomination has an annual program where they send crews in to small communities to repaint and fix up residences as a ministry. They conduct summer Bible school for children while they do the refurbishing.

Managed Growth, Spirit Ridge Subdivision, Medical Care

City council members and city officials are making an effort to keep property zoned commercial and encourage commercial development. The need for affordable housing is fighting against that effort. The Spirit Ridge Subdivision has a planned business/retail portion along the highway.

This area would attract new businesses, such as, a hardware store, an emergency medical facility coupled with a doctor's office, another restaurant, small manufacturing, and retail outlets. Managing the mix of new and encouraging old business to grow is a task the current leadership is well suited to undertake. With the merchants new collaborative attitude they could pool resources and be a part of new undertakings that would be complimentary to their existing businesses. For certain, unified efforts, media cost sharing and referrals to each other would promote existing businesses.

Modular housing is more affordable. Ranchester could cater to modular units by designing subdivisions well suited for this style of living. Improved water service is in the planning stages but installing natural gas service, cheaper propane service, planning to convert to natural gas from propane are all areas the city leadership can be researching and planning to implement. Improved cell phone service and cable TV service were concerns expressed. The city could provide the land, build the cell-phone tower and charge communications providers for the usage of the tower monthly creating a stream of income for the city.

Medical care in Ranchester could be as good as the dental care if the right doctor, who loved to hunt and fish, could be enticed to locate downtown. A clinic, staffed by retired or vacationing physicians on a rotating basis is a possibility. A regular scheduled doctor from Billings or Sheridan or Gillette could provide outpatient services before he spent a few days fishing or hunting guided by the Rendezvous staff. Rural medicine is a fast growing field and many communities receive care via video-conferencing equipment set up at the town hall or community center. A veterinary medicine clinic specializing in large animals is a natural fit for the town and region. The Town hall's new building has space to house numerous projects that would benefit the community. The museum has at least three themes to build on, Native American Lore, Coal Production, Railroad Tradition. There already exists a docent for the Native American Lore who has an art gallery in town.

Hiring a grant writer for Ranchester was a wise step that will lead to additional funding streams that can be matched to managed growth projects. Purchase of a search engine such as, Guidestar that covers private, state and Federal funding would offer appropriate assistance to the grant writer. A grant writing team could be formed by citizens and the number of grant applications would be greater. Growth requires capital and the rural development office can fund projects such as the waterline by guaranteeing 90% of any loan that could be acquired for the project. Banks are highly interested in federally guaranteed loans.

The president of the Tongue River UCC suggested Ranchester join the joint powers board that will be established in Sheridan County. The self sufficiency of Ranchester, not wanting to drive to town for everything, needed to be coupled with civic groups, businesses, and city administration working together as a whole, maximizing services not duplicating services. Ranchester, within its leadership has many "doing" skills that can be added to its knowledge base. Creativity, innovation, strategic planning, good decisions, wise choices, alternatives, initiatives when applied to the task of living in the future will generate a healthy managed growth plan.

Jo Ferguson
Senior Rural Development Specialist
Wyoming Rural Development Council
Jo.ferguson@wybusiness.org

Challenge: Managed Growth

Issue: Commercial Development

Solution: The town needs to look for available land that is undeveloped or that could be redeveloped. Visit with the current owners about their goals and desire for the property. Is infrastructure available? If not how expensive would it be to a make available? There are a multitude of issues to be overcome but if the vision is not communicated, it will never happen.

Specifically for retail component that was mentioned numerous times, the town may want to partner with Wyoming Business Council to do some entrepreneur programs such as “How to Start a Business.” WBC can also do market research for any business. Often joint sponsorship and marketing attract more interested parties.

For other business expansion the town may desire to create a business park. Business parks have retail and professional services type businesses. Professional services could include private and government office buildings. Your WBC Regional Director can assist in discussions for any research the Town requires to help it to make a decision.

Attracting and keeping viable businesses in a community is a long-time planning effort by members of the town council, real estate community, and residents. The Business and Industry section of the Wyoming Business Council, along with your WBC Regional Director can point you in the right direction for study and action to this problem. The Business Council has access to many tools to jump start this effort: SBDC, Marketing Research, Wyoming Women’s Business Center and others.

Resources:

Dave Spencer
Southwest Regional Director
Wyoming Business Council
P.O. Box 962
Gillette, WY 82717
307-685-0283
Dave.Spencer@wybusiness.org

Molly Davis, Manager
Business Ready Communities
Wyoming Business Council
214 W. 15th Street
Cheyenne, WY 82002
307-777-2811
molly.davis@wybusiness.org

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

Brandon Marshall
Business Retention & Entrepreneurship
Program Manager
Wyoming Business Council
307-777-2820

Annie Wood, Sr. Mktg. & Attraction Specialist
Wyoming Business Council
307-777-2844
annie.wood@wybusiness.org

Brandon.marshall@wybusiness.org

Another tool to revitalize the downtown development would be to hold monthly “Business After Hours” affairs and/or a Business Fair to attract other business owners and new customers.

Resource:

Cheyenne Chamber of Commerce
121 E. 15th Street
Cheyenne, WY 82001
307-638-3308

Challenge: Main Street

Issue: Visuals & Functionality

Solution: The Wyoming Main Street Program is dedicated to providing Wyoming communities with opportunities to strengthen local pride and revitalize historic downtown districts. It strives to improve the social and economic well-being of the community by assisting them to capitalize on their assets and uniqueness. Wyoming Main Street has just introduced a new tier program that will allow smaller communities to participate.

Resource:

Wyoming Main Street Program
Evan Medley, State Program Manager
214 West 15th Street
Cheyenne, WY 82009
307-777-2934
Evan.medley@wybusiness.org

Challenge: Infrastructure

Issue: Water System, Quality & Quantity

Solution: We heard numerous folks say the water system needs help. The key is to have a plan that requires development strategies and then educating the citizens. By combining the efforts of the entire community (significant population base) it will be easier to receive state funding through the SLIB block grant process.

Resource: The Town of Star Valley Ranch has gone through water issues this past year. Good information is on their website in the “water” section at the website address listed below. There are also several programs available to communities the size of Ranchester to assist them in upgrading the town’s infrastructure. The Town of Ranchester could take a big step by making application to the State Water Commission for a Master Plan Study for technical assistance in these areas. After that application is sent to the Wyoming Development Commission as

recommended by the Director of the Wyoming Water Development Office and is then approved by the 2008 State Legislature, a study can begin in 2008. The contact person for this is:

Wyoming Water Development Office
6920 Yellowtail Road
Cheyenne, WY 82002
307-777-7626 Fax: 307-777-6819
mpurce@state.wy.us
www.wwdc.state.wy.us

Town of Star Valley Ranch
Mayor Boyd Siddoway
307-883-8696
www.starvalleyranchwy.org

USEFUL WEB SITES AND GRANT INFORMATION

Federal Catalog of Domestic Assistance:
www.cfda.gov

Information about private foundation assistance:
www.fdncenter.org

USDA/Rural Development
www.rurdev.usda.gov/

Federal Funding Sources for Rural Areas
www.nal.usda.gov/ric/ricpubs/funding/federalfund/fed03.html

USDA-RD Community Development Program Publication. As a strategy for economic development, tourism and festivals can be very useful.
<http://ocdweb.sc.egov.usda.gov/technotes/tn5.pdf>

Issue: Sidewalks & Street lights

Solution: These two issues were mentioned many times during the listening sessions. Information on installation and repair of sidewalks could be found through the CDBG Program at the Wyoming Business Council.

Resource:

Susan Flobeck, CDBG Economic Development Grant Program Manager
Wyoming Business Council
307-777-2812
Susan.flobeck@wybusiness.org

Issue: Paving of Streets

Solution: Town officials are working on paving all streets and are in need of newer equipment. Wyoming State Surplus in Cheyenne might be a resource for obtaining these items. Also another solution for streets that are not paved is to use a Dust Guard spray application. The Town of Star Valley Ranch has taken advantage of the Wyoming State Surplus and also does dust-guarding on their dirt roads.

Resources:

Wyoming State Surplus Office
2045 Westland Road
Cheyenne, WY 82002, 307-777-7901
307-777-7901

Town of Star Valley Ranch
Mayor Boyd Siddoway
307-883-8696
www.starvalleyranchwy.org

Issue: Railroad Safety Railroad Tracks. Even though the proximity of the railroad tracks to the town and school and the railroad crossing did not come out in a listening session, the challenge for providing safe crossing procedures and safety rules near the tracks is always useful

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

Resource:

Wyoming Operation Lifesaver
[Darrell Real - State Coordinator](#)
P.O. Box 681
342 Highridge Cir.
Wright, WY 82732
Phone (307) 680-0146 | Fax (307) 464-6000

Challenge: Beautification of town

Solution: Many comments were heard about vacant, unkempt houses, falling down structures, junk, old cars and garbage on vacant lots. Some federal programs help with cover-up fencing costs to shield vision of junk cars. Also, a community cleanup program could definitely enhance the town. This would be organized by volunteers—challenges could be made among difference organizations. This could be a one-time effort or a long-term continual effort. There may be some grants available to help this effort. TEAL program at Wyoming DOT for community

beautification and paths. Saratoga and Frannie are among several towns in Wyoming that have formed clean-up committees.

Resources:

Wyoming Department of Transportation

Office of Local Government Coordinator

C.J. Brown

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

cj.brown@dot.state.wy.us

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

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

City of Fort Collins, Colorado

<http://www.ci.fort-collins.co.us/neighborhoodservices/pdf.nbs-brochure.pdf>

Challenge: Preserving History

Issue: Connor Battlefield and Museum Expansion

Solution: A program that can provide technical assistance in areas of historic preservation is the State Historic Preservation Office. It assists in preserving our state's most valuable historic, places, assets, objects and culture.

Resource:

Wyoming Department of State Parks & Cultural Resources

State Historic Preservation Office

2301 Central Ave.

Cheyenne WY. 82002

Audrey York, 777-6347

Nancy Weidel, 777-3418

Challenge: Miscellaneous

Issue: Enforcing ordinances

Solution to enforcing the cleanup ordinances: The first question is, "Do the people of Ranchester even know what the cleanup ordinances are?" Holding a town meeting to explain what the ordinances are and how the town plans to enforce them could be a first step. Make copies of the town ordinances available to anyone that wants them. Maybe even include them in

the water bill so that you know everyone got a copy. Letting the community members of Ranchester know what the ordinances are and that the town plans on enforcing them is a vital part in cleaning up the town.

Challenge: Quality of Life

Issue: Educators and residents would like to enhance after school and summer activities for students. The young people could use more recreational activities, tutoring and mentoring services for academics, arts and music education programs, reading and math enrichment.

Solution: The Ranchester Schools are jewels in the community. They have dedicated teachers and administrators. The pupils are respectful and bright. Learning is important in Ranchester. The activity at the Library is evidence of that. There is a federally funded grant program that is administered by the Wyoming Department of Education.

This is the Wyoming 21st Century Community Learning Center Program. The 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21 CCLC) program supports the creation or expansion of community learning centers that provide academic enrichment opportunities for children.. The program helps students meet state and local standards in core academic subjects, such as reading and math; offers students a broad array of enrichment activities that can complement regular academic programs; and offers literacy and other educational services to the families of participating children. At the same time, centers help working parents by providing a safe environment for students during non-school hours or periods when school is not in session including summer recess periods.

A community learning center offers academic, artistic, and cultural enrichment opportunities to students and their families when school is not in session. It can offer a broad array of additional services such as, drug and violence prevention programs, art, music and recreation programs, technology education programs, each designed to reinforce the regular academic program of the participating students. This grant process will be starting in its Fifth Year Cohort and is applied for through the Local School Districts and Community Advisory Board. A first call to the State Department of Education will give other contacts and direction on how to access this grant money.

The new application for the Fifth Year Cohort will be sent to School Superintendents and Principals in July 2008

Resources:

Wyoming State Department of Education

Kim Prey

Cheyenne, WY

307-777-5332

kprey@educ.state.wy.us

Recommendations

Ted Craig Assistant Director
Wyoming Technology Business Center
Dept 3011
1000 E University Avenue
Laramie Wyoming 82071

(307) 766-2099
ecraig@uwyo.edu

INTRODUCTION

First I want to say thank you for the generous hospitality that I received during my visit. It made my stay very enjoyable. The Town of Ranchester is an incredible place with an abundance of natural beauty and friendly people. In addition Ranchester has a variety of community assets including outstanding outdoor recreation opportunities, small town values, a great educational system and a commitment to its future generations.

Issue #1 Main Street

During my time there a recurring theme that we heard was the need to improve Main Street. Traffic speeds through town, speed limits are confusing, tourists don't stop, some businesses are run down, others have been converted to housing, there aren't enough setbacks for business, the street needs cleaning more often and the entrance to Main Street needs to be overhauled. Some of the visual changes suggested include constructing a defined entrance to the town off the interstate, improved lighting, signage, crosswalks, street sweeping, and property cleanup. The functionality of main street needs to be addressed allowing for increased parking, uniform speed limits and improved pedestrian safety.

Solution #1: Main Street Entrance

First impressions are important if you want people to stop in your town. An attractive entrance gives a warm and inviting feel to a town. The town should apply for grant funds from the Wyoming Business Council. I suggest that it be included in a comprehensive overhaul plan of the main street to make it safer, more user friendly and aesthetically appealing. Considering the scope of the work that needs to be done on Main Street I recommend that the town apply for a CDGB planning grant to set priorities for the improvements desired. Planning grants are available to local government to perform feasibility studies related to economic and community development.

Key Contact Information:

Wyoming Business Council (WBC-Investment Ready Communities)

Shaun Reese, Director

214 West 15th Street

Cheyenne, WY 82002

(307) 777-2811

(307) 777-2838 (fax)

E-mail: shawn.reese@wybusiness.org

Web: www.wyomingbusiness.org

Solution #2: Main Street Safety

There is no need to have a four lane highway with confusing speed limits going through Ranchester. The town should request that the WYDOT address the concerns of the town. It should be relatively easy to repaint lines creating a two lane road with parking on the sides to

accommodate business needs. The creation of crosswalks, the addition of a stop light and the reduction of speed to 25 or 30 miles per hour through the town would slow down traffic and increase safety.

Key Contact Information:

Wyoming Dept of Transportation
Programming Section of Planning
5300 Bishop Blvd
Cheyenne Wyoming, 82009
<http://dot.state.wy.us/>

Solution#3 Main Street Beautification

There are many ways to add curb appeal to a town, Once you have clean, well maintained roads, curbs, gutters and sidewalks it then become a matter of creativity. It is amazing what lighting, benches, trees, flowers and signage will do to spruce up a down town. As a town puts in improvements there is a snowball effect and business owners tend to follow suit. For those businesses that do not respond to the desire of the community to clean up then the town needs to enforce existing bylaws. If the bylaws have no teeth then pass new ones that will compel those businesses to clean up their property. Property blight is like a cancer. If you don't address the problem it spreads. . Food related establishments that pose a health hazard are regulated by the Department of Agriculture. Wyoming Main Street Program administers a Revolving Loan Fund that provides monies for business and/or property owners to renovate their buildings. The funds can be used for bricks-and-mortar construction costs and/or technical assistance and design of structural or façade renovations

Key Contact Information:

Wyoming Main Street Program
Evan Medley State Program Manager
214 West 15 Street
Cheyenne, WY 82002
(307) 777-6430
(307) 777-6593 (fax)
E-mail: evan.medley@wybusiness.org

Key Contact Information:

National Main Street Center of the
National Trust for Historic Preservation
1785 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 588-6219
Web: <http://www.aminst.org>

Key Contact Information:

Consumer Health Services
Dean Finkenbinder - Manager
Wyoming Department of Agriculture
2219 Carey Avenue
Cheyenne Wyoming 82002
Phone: 307.777.6587
dfinke@state.wy.us

Solution#4 Main Street Tourism

The use of the Community Center as a stopping place for tourists to find out more about the town will help keep them in town longer. Information about things to see and do in town should be readily available. I suggest working with Wyoming Travel and Tourism to help promote the town in general. Its In-State Development program provides technical assistance to local destinations in tourism, product, and service development as well as managing the turnouts and signage program dollars. Projects involving turnout construction and signage needs require application to access the funds.

Key Contact

Wyoming Travel and Tourism
Leslie Kedelty, Manager Industry Services
307.777.2839
Email: leslie.kedelty@visitwyo.gov.

Key Contact Information:

Wyoming Travel and Tourism
Diane Shober, Director
Cheyenne, WY 82002
(307) 777-2808
diane.shober@visitwyo.gov

Solution #5 Main Street Farmers Market

The management of a farmers market by the community center staff adds stability to the market and charm to the down town as people look to buy locally produced products. Studies have shown that tourists will stop and stay in down towns where there is a Farmers Market. The Business Council has a small grant program for marketing costs associated with Farmers Markets in Wyoming. The Wyoming Department of Agriculture has a Specialty Crop Grant Program to promote youth involvement in Community Gardens and Farmers Market. The National Gardening Association has small grants for Youth Programs and community gardens.

Key Contact Information:

Wyoming Farmers Market Association
Renee King
P.O. Box 20939

Cheyenne Wyoming 82003
Phone: 307-674-6446 ext. 3509
<http://www.wyomingfarmersmarkets.org/contact.htm>

Key Contact Information:
Wyoming Business Council
Farmers Market Program
Kim Porter
214 West 15th Street
Cheyenne Wyoming 82002
kim.porter@wybusiness.org

Key Contact Information:
National Gardening Association
1100 Dorset Street
South Burlington, VT 05403
Phone: (802) 863-5251
Fax: (802) 864-6889
<http://assoc.garden.org/grants/>

*** I would also recommend that the town look into the Wyoming Main Street Program for assistance.

Theme or Issue #2 Infrastructure

Ranchester is feeling the effects of Wyoming's energy boom. We heard for the need to develop a well communicated comprehensive plan for improved water quality, telecommunications drainage and flood control, street paving, sidewalks, curbs and gutters and in the long term the access to natural gas. Given the impact the energy boom is having on Ranchester philanthropic opportunities may exist from oil, gas and coal companies that do business in Wyoming. It never hurts to ask.

Solution #1: A well communicated comprehensive plan

The Wyoming Business Council has grant opportunities to facilitate the development of a comprehensive community planning. Once the plan has been developed communicating it to the community can be facilitated through town meetings, mailers, flyers and internet marketing.

Solution #2: Water Quality

The present Mayors of Ranchester and Dayton have a good working relationship and are in talks about utilizing the Dayton water treatment plant to supply both towns. A pipeline would have to be constructed between Dayton and Ranchester as well. Given that mayors are elected officials there needs to be a formal agreement developed if this project is to go forward. A Joint Powers

Board could be formed with Dayton to provide good quality water for the area. The (WWDC) has Grants available for Water supply projects from the Wyoming Water Development Commission. Wyoming Business Council provides financing for publicly owned infrastructure that serves the needs of businesses and promotes economic development within Wyoming

communities. Public infrastructure that is eligible for funding include water and sewer.

Key Contact Information:

Shaun Reese
Director of Investment Ready Communities
Wyoming Business Council
214 West 15th Street
Cheyenne, WY 82002
307-777-2811

Key Contact Information:

Wyoming Water Development Commission (WWDC)
122 W. 25th Street, Herschler Building, 4th Floor West
Cheyenne, WY 82002
(307) 777-7626
besson@state.wy.us

Solution #3: Sidewalks, curb and gutter, street paving

The town administration should be complimented for all the improvements that they have made over the last five years. With the pressures being put on the infrastructure by growth from the energy boom additional money for improvements are needed. Again the Wyoming Business Council Business Ready Community Grant & Loan Program provides grants for these types of improvements.

Key Contact Information:

Shaun Reese
Director of Investment Ready Communities
Wyoming Business Council
214 West 15th Street
Cheyenne, WY 82002
307-777-2811

Solution #4: Telecommunications

Telecommunications are critical to community development. Adequate and affordable land line and cell phone service as well as high speed internet are needed for personal security and business development. The USDA has a telecommunications program available for rural communities to develop better communication access. The town of Powell recently wired the town with fiber optics cable to facilitate better phone TV and internet service.

USDA Rural Development
Kim Jacobs
General Field Representative-Telecommunications
1149 Road 8
Powell, WY 82435
307-754-9000
Email Kim.jacobs@wdc.usda.gov

Solution #5: Provide natural gas to the community.

Given the present growth rate of Ranchester the opportunity for natural gas coming to the community is increasing. The biggest drawback at this time is whether it would be profitable for a company to invest in the infrastructure given the size of the population. This does not mean that it should be discounted and should be included in the long term plan for the community.

Theme or Issue #3 Quality of Life

Ranchester has a great opportunity to enhance its quality of life. Blessed with an idealic location that includes the Tongue River, an abundance of natural beauty and the Connor Battlefield Park there is ample opportunity to develop its outdoor recreation opportunities.

Solution #1: State Park

The Conner Battlefield Park needs road improvement and some equipment upgrades. A dialogue with Wyoming State Parks needs to be developed cut through some of the state bureaucracy to address the concerns the town has with the parks upkeep. Increased signage and a mosquito abatement program needs to be implemented. Early intervention for mosquito breeding will prevent adult formation and provide a safer and more enjoyable usage of the trails and parks.

Solution #2 Parks and Recreation

For preschool children other than the city-owned parks with old equipment there are few options for them to play. The school playground is a favorite of young children but is only available after school. The present community center has done an excellent job of creating a safe fun environment for after school youth activities. As the town grows it may soon reach its capacity to provide the needed services for the community. There are plans for a new grade school in the future which will provide the town with an opportunity to convert the old school into a Community/Recreation Center. This is several years down the road but it is never too soon to begin planning for this opportunity. The Wyoming Business Council administers the Community Facilities Grant and Loan Program. The purpose of the CFP is to assist communities to preserve former school and government facilities that have existing or future community uses. USDA Rural Development, through the Community Facilities Program has grant opportunities to assist in the development of essential community facilities. Grant funds can be used to construct, enlarge, or improve community facilities for health care, public safety, and community and public services. This can include the purchase of equipment required for a facility's operation. A grant may be made in combination with other CF financial assistance such as a direct or guaranteed loan, applicant contributions, or loans and grants from other sources

Key Contact Information:

Wyoming Business Council
Shannon Stanfill Community Facilities Program Manager,
214 West 15th Street
Cheyenne, WY 82002
(307).777.2841
(307) 777-2838 (fax)
E-mail: shannon.stanfill@wybusiness.org
Web: www.wyomingbusiness.org

USDA Rural Development

http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rhs/cf/brief_cp_grant.htm

Solution #3: Trails around town and a pathway to Dayton

The expansion and improvement of the trails in town would add outdoor exercise opportunities and a safe way for the youth of Ranchester to bike to Dayton for summer activities. If a water line is constructed between Ranchester and Dayton the same right of way could accommodate a trail the follows the pipeline. The town with the purchase of a trail sized asphalt paver could create the trail itself at reduced costs. Other trails used for walking or jogging could be inexpensively made from waste wood chips. Exercise stations are often spaced along these trails for those so inclined. Trails are an inexpensive tourist attraction. The National Park Service Rivers & Trails Program provides technical and planning assistance to states, communities and conservation organizations for a wide variety of trail, river, and greenway projects. NPS staff work cooperatively with local trail groups, conservation organizations, and state agencies on greenways, rail-trails, river corridors, publications and workshops.

The National Park Service Rivers & Trails Program

<http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/rtca/>

Many foundations support conservation initiatives, including trails and greenways development. For example American Greenways Awards / Conservation Fund. This Fund offers non-profit organizations, public agencies, and individuals from \$500 to \$2,500 to stimulate the planning and implementation of greenways in communities throughout America. Contact the American Greenways Coordinator at The Conservation Fund, (703) 525-6300 (1800 North Kent St., Suite 1120, Arlington, VA 22209), www.conservationfund.org

Theme or Issue #3 Managed Growth

Ranchester has experienced a rapid population growth with very little commercial expansion. The close proximity to Sheridan is creating an increase in population as it becomes a bedroom community for people willing to commute. The energy boom has caused many people employed in this sector to seek out local housing as well. With no hardware store, one family restaurant, no medical facility and a small limited stock grocery store people are forced to go to Sheridan or Billings to do major shopping. Encouragement should be given to local business people to look at business expansion opportunities.

Solution #1: Commercial Retail Development

Economic developers are learning that growing from within a community is preferable to importing business. In order to attract and maintain grocery stores, restaurants, hardware stores etc there has to be a favorable business climate. Retail business will not survive without the support of the community. The population of a town will determine the development of retail. As Ranchester grows it will become more attractive to develop these businesses. Because Ranchester is a gateway to Yellowstone and opportunity exists to develop retail that can survive by capturing more of the tourist dollars as they pass on through. The sprucing up of Main Street, slowing down of traffic, development of a trail system, continued development of a seasonal farmers market, and creating more awareness of Conner Battlefield will all help retailers be more profitable by making the town more appealing to tourists.

Key Contact Information

Wyoming Retail Association

[Lynn Birleffi](#) - President

1825 Carey Avenue, P.O. Box 1003,

Cheyenne, WY 82003

307-634-7768

Fax 307-632-0249

lynn@wyoretail.org

<http://www.wyoretail.org>

Solution #2: Business Development

As we spoke to the young people of the town it became evident you have a very articulate and valuable labor force that is willing and able but frustrated by the lack of employment opportunities. Small businesses provide the majority of new job creation in a community. But starting a business is risky and 80% fail within five years. Many towns are looking at business incubators as a way to develop new small businesses. They typically provide space, training and office support for companies that are new to business. Laramie has a Technology Incubator, Powell has recently developed an incubator and Casper and Rawlins are pursuing the idea to name a few. USDA Rural Development has several business Development programs. RBOG program promotes sustainable economic development in rural communities with exceptional needs through provision of training and technical assistance for business development, entrepreneurs, and economic development officials and assists with economic development planning. The RBEG program provides grants for rural projects that finance and facilitate development of small and emerging rural businesses help fund distance learning networks, and help fund employment related adult education programs. To assist with business development, RBEGs may fund a broad array of activities.

John Benson CEO

Wyoming Technology Business Center

Dept 3011

1000 East University Avenue

Laramie Wyoming 82071

(307)-766-6395

Jbenson@uwyo.edu

USDA Rural Development
Jerry Tamlin Business and Cooperative Specialist
Federal Building Room 105
100 East B street
Casper Wyoming 82602
(307)-261-6333

National Business Incubator Association
http://www.nbia.org/about_nbia/index.php

Key Contact Info:

Wyoming Business Council
Dave Spencer, Director
222 South Gillette, Suite 406
Gillette, WY 82717

The town of Ranchester has utilized a Wyoming Business Council grant for business development as well. The WBC programs help with the infrastructure needs. Several communities have used the program to build buildings that are then leased out to companies creating local employment opportunities.

Solution #3: Well Planned Subdivisions

The town has been proactive and has several subdivisions in response to the growth in population. This shows good planning on the part of the town administration. Again the Wyoming Business Council has programs to help with further development.

Key Contact Info:

Wyoming Business Council
Dave Spencer, Director
222 South Gillette, Suite 406
Gillette, WY 82717
dspencer@wysbc.com
<http://www.wyomingbusiness.org/>

Key Contact Information:

Wyoming Business Council (WBC-Investment Ready Communities)
Shaun Reese, Director
214 West 15th Street
Cheyenne, WY 82002
(307) 777-2811
(307) 777-2838 (fax)
E-mail: shawn.reese@wybusiness.org
Web: www.wyomingbusiness.org

Solution #4: Affordable Housing

This is a problem that many communities around Wyoming are facing. “The Wyoming Community Development Authority is the state agency that manages the HOME Investment Partnership Program which helps pay for development costs of affordable housing.” “The WBC administers the Wyoming Workforce Housing Infrastructure Loan Program. The purpose of the program is to promote and continue economic development at the city, town and county level by providing adequate housing necessary to create additional economic health and a stronger state economy in order to promote the economic welfare of the state and its residents.”

Key Contact Information:

Wyoming Community Development Authority
155 North Beech
Casper, WY 82601
307-265-0603

Key Contact Info:

Wyoming Business Council
Dave Spencer, Director
222 South Gillette, Suite 406
Gillette, WY 82717
dspencer@wysbc.com
<http://www.wyomingbusiness.org/>

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(307) 777-2838 (fax)
E-mail: shawn.reese@wybusiness.org
Web: www.wyomingbusiness.org

Conclusion

There are many government funding opportunities that could be explored at <http://www.grants.gov> or the State Library.

Key Contact Information:

Catalog of Wyoming State Grant Programs

Department of Administration of Information
State Library Division
Supreme Court & State Library Building
2301 Capitol Avenue
Cheyenne, WY 82002
<http://www-wsl.state.wy.us/sis/grants/index.html>

Funding other than Government

In the United States, private Foundations are directed by specific legislation of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to make grants only to type 501(c) 3, 509(a) organizations. I would suggest that you create a nonprofit to allow access to these funds. <http://foundationcenter.org/>

Trish Ullery, Executive Director
Big Horn Mountain Coalition
214 Center Street
P. O. Box 250
Kaycee, WY 82639
(307) 738-2225
(307) 738-2471
ullery@rtconnect.net
www.bighornmountains.org

RANCHESTER FIVE YEAR FOLLOW UP ASSESSMENT April 7 – 8, 2008

Introduction

The community of Ranchester is uniquely situated in an area of natural beauty, nestled in the Tongue River valley with the Big Horn Mountains rising up immediately to the west. Dayton, a sister community of roughly the same population, sits at the base of the mountains five miles away, and both towns are evolving from farming and ranching communities to become linked in the urban corridor stretching along the foothills of the Big Horns. The transition from an agriculture-based economy to a suburban, more densely developed area has had some positive and negative impacts.

Ranchester is becoming a desirable suburban extension of greater Sheridan, with high-end homes dotting the hillsides and some agricultural tracts being subdivided into upscale residences in the valley. Affordable housing is limited to older, smaller residences within the town limits and is in short supply. Adaptive re-use of existing retail locations threatens the commercial core of the downtown, and is changing the identity of Ranchester and its small-town atmosphere.

Commercial/Retail Development

Assets - Location near I-90 means a 15-20 minute drive to Sheridan for shopping, recreation or commuting to jobs, which is an added attraction to many who have chosen to live in Ranchester.

Challenges - Loss of the retail base as area residents bypass local merchants for Sheridan and Billings has left the community lacking in some essential retail services. Ranchester currently does not have a full service grocery. A convenience store adjacent to a gas station sells bread, milk and limited items. The only restaurant in town is open for breakfast and lunch, but not dinner. There is speculation it is to close soon. Residents would like to see a hardware store, medical clinic and other specialty retail, in addition to a full service restaurant. A bright spot is the new Rendezvous Trading Company, which specializes in outdoor apparel and is a recent expansion to the existing campground.

Increases in the price of gasoline might make Ranchester retail merchants more in demand, if the proper mix of businesses can be generated. The downtown association of retailers has been inactive in recent years, and needs to revitalize their organization and focus on what will make Ranchester a vibrant downtown shopping experience. A market study to identify what residents want in retail would be a vital first step.

Opportunities - A commercial business park is being proposed just west of downtown and will help anchor the business district. Added employment from this development will support more downtown retail, creating a critical mass of activity.

Resources – Wyoming Business Council
Dave Spencer, North East Regional Director
201 West Lakeway, Suite 1004
Gillette, WY 82718
Dave.spencer@wybusiness.org

Wyoming Small Business Development Center
Region 5
Jill Kline, Regional Director
201 W. Lakeway Rd., Suite 1004
Gillette, WY 82718
(307) 682-5232
888-956-6060
http://uwadmnweb.uwyo.edu/sbdc/pages_media/contact/region5.htm

USDA, Rural Development, Rural Business Cooperative Service
Rural Business Enterprise Grant Program
Lola J. Lucero, Area Director
1949 Sugarland Dr. Ste. 118
Sheridan, WY 82801
Lola.lucero@wy.usda.gov
Website: = <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov> and
<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/wy>

Main Street

Assets - Ranchester has excellent transportation services, with the Burlington Railroad, I-90, former U.S. 87 and Highway 14, a state-designated scenic byway all converging nearby.

Challenges - Unfortunately, all pour into the community in a concentrated area and mainstreet has become a pass-through for travelers going through town. Ranchester's downtown thoroughfare has the appearance of a busy highway with few amenities to attract the traveling public. A beautification campaign to clean the streets and spruce up some existing buildings would go a long way toward creating an attractive downtown.

Opportunities - Beginning at the edge of town, an entryway needs to be created that informs the public and creates interest and appeal. The location of the Connor Battlefield historic site nearby

is a natural amenity to begin the “conversation” with visitors to lure them in to taking some time to explore the community and its history. Banners and street signs with an attractive graphic image would unify the community’s identity and highlight area attractions.

Resources – 1% Optional Tax
% Rene Obermueller
Administrative Director
224 South Main, Ste B-1
Sheridan, WY 82801
Robermueller@sheridancounty.com

Wyoming Department of State Parks & Cultural Resources
State historic Preservation Office
2301 Central Ave.
Cheyenne, WY 82002
Audrey York, 777-6347
Nancy Weidel, 777-3418

Main Street Program, Design Guidelines
Historic Downtown Laramie, Wyoming
P. O. Box 1250
Laramie, WY 82070
mainstreet@laramiewy.org

Wyoming Travel & Tourism
Diane Shober, Director
1520 Etchepare Circle
Cheyenne, WY 82007
(307) 777-2877

Wider sidewalks and setback of commercial buildings along mainstreet would create a pedestrian environment that would enhance Ranchester’s thoroughfare. Street lights, benches and planters would add a great deal of eye appeal and draw local residents and travelers to the downtown. Creating parking along mainstreet would narrow the transportation corridor and alter the flow of traffic with a monitored speed limit device similar to what Dayton utilizes. Crosswalks would create a safer, more pedestrian-friendly access.

Resources – Wyoming Department of Transportation
Office of Local Government Coordinator
C. J. Brown
5300 Bishop Blvd.

Cheyenne, WY 82002
(307)777-4179
cj.brown@dot.state.wy.us

Wyoming Main Street Program
214 W. 15th St.
Cheyenne, WY 82002
www.wyomingmainstreet.org
mary.Randolph@wybusiness.org
evan.medley@wybusiness.org

Main Street Program
1785 Massachusetts Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20036
(202)588-6219
www.nationaltrust.org

Recreation

Assets – Ranchester is located along the Tongue River, which is a tremendous asset for fishing, recreation and potentially hiking/walking pathways connecting Ranchester with Dayton. The Big Horn Mountains are close by and outdoor activities are abundant all year. Highway 14 brings visitors through the designated scenic byway who represent potential for longer visits in the area if there were adequate motels, restaurants and other diversions. Wild life viewing and environmental tourism is growing in popularity. Again, the Big Horns offers opportunities here that simply need to be promoted. Many miles of roads and trails provide easily accessible solitude, with varied landscape and spectacular scenery.

Challenges - Funding for new recreational initiatives is a daunting challenge for small towns as they struggle to provide basic city services. Providing activities for all age groups is a worthwhile goal, yet is often unattainable in smaller communities .

Opportunities – Building upon the success of Rendezvous Trading, Ranchester can work toward becoming a center for outdoor recreation. Target marketing to specialty firms that manufacture or distribute outdoor recreational equipment, apparel, equestrienne equipment, special events and camping gear would seem a good fit for the area. Winter recreation in the Big Horns includes snow mobile and skiing activities and draws a wide variety of visitors to the area from the Midwestern states of Minnesota, Wisconsin and beyond.

The Ranchester Community Center serves youth and adults and is viewed as a terrific new asset. Continued program development for the Center should remain a priority.

Resources:

Bighorn National Forest

2013 Eastside 2nd Street
Sheridan, WY 82801
Ruth Beckwith
rbeckwith@fs.fed.us

Sheridan Recreation District
1579 Thorne Rider Park Drive
Sheridan, WY 82801
(307) 674-6421

YMCA of Sheridan
417 N. Jefferson St.
Sheridan, WY 828801
(307) 674-7488

RANCHESTER PROBLEMS & CHALLENGES

- Sidewalks system is cracked
- Community activities to keep kids active, ditto, ditto, ditto
- Use housing development areas to do something for kids
- Dayton needs a community center
- Kids need more things to do.
- Remove the Bar it is bad influence
- Cars speed through town and it is dangerous
- More things to do in the summer time
- Fix the parks they are falling apart, also the battlefield park
- A spot where teenagers can do stuff more advanced than the community center
- Better litter control
- Jobs for teenagers that are not 16 yrs. old yet, ditto
- Clean up the swimming pool, ditto
- Get rid of the housing developments they are spoiling the view
- Dog poop needs to be cleaned up, around school as well
- Litter in the waterfall at Conner Battlefield
- High School Level -----
- Lack of Resources, ditto, ditto, ditto
- Boredom, ditto,
- Attracting new businesses to the community
- Younger people lack respect for older people
- Lack of organized activities
- Young people using drugs and alcohol, ditto,
- Ditto to all of the above
- Underage driving

- **Lack of technology, internet**
 - **Lack of interest in what is offered**
 - **K-12 interaction**
 - **Job opportunities for younger people**
 - **Cops on the edge of town with a speed trap**
 - **Latch-key kids, lack of thorough parenting**
 - **High cost of propane**
 - **Better insulated homes to save on energy**
 - **Better construction of housing, lack of quality contractors**
 - **Mosquito spraying, ditch treating for mosquito**
 - **Maintaining our irrigated stream valleys, not filling them up with development**
 - **Preserve the beauty of the area**
 - **Stronger economic base, lack of retail outlets**
 - **Better planning for utility distribution**
 - **Local businesses**
 - **Medical, Veterinarian services are lacking**
 - **Petroleum products are more expensive than in Sheridan**
 - **Having to travel to Billings in order to save money on sales tax 6% compared to zero**
 - **Need for low cost housing that is adequate**
 - **Unpaved roads in town**
 - **Not everyone attends church, 6 not full churches**
 - **The majority of the people don't want the city to grow**
 - **Getting the different groups to work together to maximize effort and limit duplication of effort, businesses, community center, churches, school district,**
- Town leadership**
- **Growth is a problem making it difficult to preserve what is unique about our area**
 - **Creating for our children an environment that will allow them to stay in the area**
 - **A real concern for the kids in the community to offer them services**
 - **A lack of understanding in how to leverage dollars to get services.**
 - **Lack of understanding of the value of services, Wyoming market, national market**
 - **Getting representation and communication from the areas that surround Ranchester as they effect the city**
 - **Include the Native Americans in this representation**
 - **The Tongue River community should work as a whole**
 - **No water aerobics available in Ranchester**
 - **Not much emphasis on music activities in the area**
 - **Cultural reluctance to working together – tribal mentality – provincial conservatism – not including everyone in the planning, ditto**

- Not enough people attend church
- City helping with paving of church parking lot
- City needs to reach out to non profits to see how they can assist
- Education Segment -----
- Meeting the needs of families, child-care, in addition to educational goals
- Lack of advanced placement and international baccalaureate classes in a small high school
- Lack of fine arts education in the schools
- Lack of child care for working mothers
- Lack of cooperation among non-profits
- Lack of vocational education
- Small size of the library and the new high school
- Lack of kids being involved in the community, systematic teaching of the kids for community service
- Lack of transportation of kids in community
- Lack of Adult learning opportunities
- Lack of diversity acceptance
- Lack of mentoring and apprenticeship education
- Lack of pre-school education
- Drug and alcohol problems in the community, even school age kids
- A community mind-set that says it is OK to celebrate with alcohol in excess
- A lot of things are happening but they are not coordinated
- COMMUNITY LEADERS SECTION -----
- Flooding on H street every year last year was worst
- Making main street more inviting to travelers, ditto,ditto
- Cleanliness
- Infrastructure
- More family friendly, park for kids to play in
- Spruce up the town
- Economic development
- Main street improved and streets paved, ditto
- Finish the paving of side streets
- Cleaning up the town, all areas
- Affordable child care, quality child care
- Emergency services, notification of problems
- Cohesive vision, ditto, ditto
- Create a reason to stop in Ranchester
- Disguise the bar signs
- Beautification, all over
- Paving, initially we paid our own, now the city is doing it for free. Scheduling of the paving so we know what is coming. Maintain the ones that have been paved, especially the ones that residents paid for

- Recreational facilities, fix degraded surface on basketball court
- Future water needs, Joint Powers board to deal with this concern, water purification and costs
- Last assessment we were teetering are we at the same place today?
- Readdress the noise of the Rail road crossing
- Keep the newly paved streets swept to keep them clean
- Establishing a nice approach sign, to welcome people to the city and the valley, focus on what is already here and improve it, fix up abandoned buildings
- **BUSINESS SECTION -----**
- Getting people to stop in town
- The visual appeal of town does not stop them
- Kelly's kitchen is closed so people do not stop at the strip mall
- Filling the business places that we have
- Road is too wide and not attractive
- No one is on the road courting prospective businesses
- Not careful enough in screening businesses that are worthy for the community on the long term
- We forget that we have a good trailer court
- State hwy cannot be changed
- Tongue River restaurant closes at 4:00 p.m.
- People don't patronize our local businesses enough, spend our dollars in Ranchester
- We don't focus on the things we do well, and love creating more pride in what we do
- The city doesn't help out the contractors, they are the future
- There is a lot of encouragement from the community but real dollar support is what is needed
- In order for business to thrive the population base needs to grow to support a healthier business population
- Local government creating barriers that inhibit development
- Small business loans are not available for expansion and start up costs
- Retail needs more residential to support it
- Retail locations are limited
- Nothing to do - 42
- Nowhere to go – 4
- Tobacco
- Alcohol - 35
- Drugs – 10
- Cops & law – 3
- Vandalism
- Better basketball court & equipment
- Underage driving
- Bad roads - 5

- **Dirty neighborhoods**
- **Cliques – 4**
- **Lack of respect**
- **Bullying – 4**
- **Boredom/apathy – 4**
- **Expansion/real estate – 4**
- **Too many bars**
- **Speeders**
- **Pollution**
- **Litter *****
- **Drugs**
- **Nothing to do *******
- **Not enough recreation *******
- **Alcohol/drugs**
- **Drinking & driving**
- **Too many people**
- **Transportation/busses for kids to get to activities**
- **Law enforcement issues**
- **Clean up and fix up neighborhoods**
- **New people moving in may change identity of community**
- **Don't always include other small communities in decisions ***
- **Trashy look when first entering; no theme**
- **Little community involvement**
- **Need to make Main Street inviting**
- **Mosquitoes**
- **Vehicle route between Ranchester & Dayton**
- **Need to put principle & purpose above personalities**
- **City maintenance has slipped in past year**
- **Better organize city services**
- **Keep street repairs and maintenance in budget**
- **Need a good street sweeper**
- **Need more lighting on Main Street**
- **Need to back mayor on property clean up**
- **Growth planning**
- **More affordable housing***
- **Improve walkways up to school**
- **More stores**
- **Drinking water problems (color and taste)**
- **Water pressure**
- **A change in the demographic scene in Sheridan County, growth that needs to be managed, issues between cities, and counties**
- **Growth management ****
- **Communication through out the duration of projects**
- **Not anticipating that present funding may expire**

- Connor Battlefield road needs to be fixed and it is a bureaucratic headache
- Water supply is red and it will get worse
- Affordable housing
- Planning to deal with the new mine that will open
- Keeping up with the demands of development
- Town government has been unresponsive to the needs of older portions of the town, particularly paving of streets
- Funding is generally based on population base rather than needs***
- Community Involvement is lacking
- People with ideas need to step up and work on them
- Creating incentives for business to come to town
- Capital Facilities Tax funding needs to be accessed
- Roads are unpaved and the mud and dust are terrible
- Held up at the railroad crossing east of town for longer than 30 minutes, 125 unit cars block the crossing, could be a problem in the case of an emergency
- Need bus service to Sheridan social functions at night for seniors
To travel to senior center functions
- Train noise 125 times a day
- Quest rural phone rates are high, we need a small phone company or a discount for seniors
- Bundled Quest service has no local channels, customer service is poor
- Cable company tech support is in Nebraska
- Spotty reception for cell phones
- Older fun businesses have closed in Ranchester/Dayton
- Lack of a good grocery store
- Absentee landlords charge too much for rent
- The downtown is not inviting
- The Park is not easy to find
- Growth of 250 residents
- The visual appearance of the city is poor
- Unpaved streets
- Ambulance crews cannot find where people live
- Addresses are random because people gave themselves their own address and they are not willing to change their addresses
- The fire department is resisting new, faster equipment upgrades.
- Businesses have closed down
- Lack of community development
- Speeding in town
- Lack of people showing up for community meetings **
- Helicopter evacuation service is far away
- Pollution from ground diesel fuel
- Rail road crossing noise

- **Businesses don't pull together – merchant's group lapse**
- **Poor drinking water**
- **Emergency response times are too long***
- **Cleaning of Main Street**

RANCHESTER STRENGTHS & ASSETS

- **Crosswalks making it safe to cross streets ditto**
- **Small town appeal, ditto**
- **Cops do a good a good job**
- **Openness of town meetings**
- **Fund raisers for people who are sick or have needs**
- **Great schools**
- **Grocery stores at each end of town**
- **Opportunities, programs to be involved in**
- **Pride in property appearances**
- **Job opportunities for younger people**
- **Bike Trail**
- **Dentist and hair salon**
- **Good library**
- **Absence of graffiti**
- **Recreational parks, basketball courts, etc. ditto, ditto, ditto**
- **Great local churches, ditto, ditto, ditto**
- **Family activities, include friends**
- **City Council is responsive to city needs, funding comes immediately to needs**
- **Good fire department, ditto**
- **Lots of activities for older people**
- **A law abiding community, ditto, ditto**
- **Open gyms to work out in**
- **Bus Barn**
- **Honey Farm, ditto**
- **Concert park for bands to come and play**
- **Ranchester Days Celebration, ditto, ditto**
- **Good School bus service, ditto**

- **Fire departments do well**
- **Safe place to live, ditto, ditto, ditto**
- **Senior Citizens Center**
- **Newly paved streets**
- **New teachers that are giving of their time freely after school, ditto**
- **Sports programs, soccer, football, basketball, no charge**
- **Field trips through school**
- **Great relationships with school teachers**
- **High school Level-----**
- **Family atmosphere, safe and friendly**
- **Support of athletics**
- **Academic superiority**
- **Responds well to tragedy**
- **Environmentally clean**
- **Neighborhood caring attitude**
- **Safe, no crime, ditto, ditto, ditto**
- **Parks and community centers**
- **Beautiful location, beauty, weather, ditto**
- **Helpful people**
- **New development, projects, ditto**
- **Assistance for people with cancer**
- **Friendly, honest, low crime area**
- **A good place to live, abundance of wildlife**
- **Hard working town government**
- **Small size**
- **Community Center, Schools, ditto, ditto, ditto**
- **Great Churches**
- **Outstanding view**
- **We are trying to offer necessary things here so we don't have to drive to other places, ditto, ditto**
- **Non profits that are successful could spring-board others**
- **Community questionnaire could be sent to survey what people want**
- **Community center is doing an outstanding job, we should encourage them to do more, particularly for the youth, provide a place for them to go after the prom**
- **We are positioned to grow in the business sector**
- **A great sense of community, people have time for each other**
- **Education segment -----**
- **School District #1 is outstanding**
- **Young people are wonderful**
- **Committed staff, board and kids**
- **Achievement data is outstanding – certification results were outstanding**
- **Long tenured teachers**

- Community is wanting to improve
- Community support of education – bond issue passed with a wide margin
- Fund raisers are well responded to by the community
- Small class sizes, 15 – 20 students
- Elementary classes have remained small, an asset
- New High School under construction and elementary school planned
- Alternative schedule – 4 day week – Mon – Thu
- Extended opportunities, summer school, after-school, community centers, library, recreation
- Generous people live here, paid for Community Center
- Sheridan County foundations giving scholarships to kids
- Kindergarten pupils are now sending their children to kindergarten
- Patrolman Don does an excellent job
- Party for the kids after the prom went well

COMMUNITY SECTION -----

- Scenic view, great school system, people want to move here, ditto, ditto, ditto
- Great community center, ditto
- Library is great
- We have Mellinda our great grant writer
- Cowboy state bank, Connor State Park, School system
- Ducks need a place to rest, recreate and socialize be more creatively, artistically use flora and fauna to do it
- Wide framework, far enough away from Sheridan to be self sustaining
- Dinosaur place
- Proximity to Dayton is a strength
- State Park is a wonderful place to walk
- Tae Kwando studio
- Cleanliness, cleanliness, cleanliness, need maps to the stuff
- Recycling program, ditto, tree trimming free of charge from the city
- Free trash days, do these more often
- Quick response from city officials
- Christmas carnival, bazaar was a great success

BUSINESS SECTION -----

- Town and community are supportive of businesses and are not restrictive to changing plans
- Start ups are not impaired by regulations
- Environment causes people to come to Ranchester
- Police force does a good job
- A good place to start a church
- Streets are paved and the snow is plowed
- A positive and committed population that encourages each other
- Friendly – 23

- **Supportive – 11**
- **Helpful – 4**
- **Clean – 3**
- **Safe – 18**
- **Freedom**
- **Everyone knows everyone - 18**
- **Pretty – 4**
- **Small Population – 31**
- **Park – 5**
- **Wildlife**
- **Job opportunity – 3**
- **Tourists**
- **People – 17**
- **Involvement – 6**
- **Teachers**
- **Parks - 24**
- **Peaceful**
- **High School**
- **Location – 8**
- **Community Center – 27**
- **Rivers to fish in**
- **Caring**
- **Schools – 6**
- **Dayton Pool**
- **Sticking together, working together**
- **Library**
- **Basketball courts – 7**
- **Library – 4**
- **Self sufficiency—water, sewer maintenance**
- **Small town values**
- **Safe way of life**
- **Independence of people**
- **Stay in budget**
- **Progress in cleaning street drains**
- **Bank, dental office, store**
- **People**
- **School system**
- **School**
- **Carwash, gas station**
- **Community Center**
- **Great school**
- **School system**
- **Library**
- **Community Center**

- **People**
- **Helping nature of community**
- **Scenery—mountains, river for fishing**
- **History**
- **State Park**
- **Good sports teams**
- **Good coaches**
- **Gateway to the Big Horns**
- **Small town community living******
- **Town administration that is creative and works hard**
- **Good economy, great locations*****
- **People are willing to work together**
- **Town leadership, council and mayor are trying hard***
- **Regional location has great potential***
- **New sub divisions look great**
- **Governmental entities are great**
- **Ranchester has room to expand in an orderly way, it hasn't been messed up**
- **Leaders have the capacity to stay ahead of the growth curve**
- **Conner battlefield can be developed as a better attraction**
- **Tongue River**
- **Railroad and Interstate**
- **School system, public service institutions**
- **Ranchesterites**
- **The community center reaches all ages**
- **Library services are excellent**
- **Town Hall is a great facility**
- **The community center is a great central gathering place**
- **A real caring community*****
- **Beautiful Scenery**
- **Location***
- **Independent community**
- **Nice fire hall**
- **Wonderful Police Department****
- **Growth***
- **Farmers market in the mall – Hutterites from Fairview**
- **Support for law enforcement**
- **Elected officials and town staff do a good job****
- **Town Hall meeting room for big events**
- **People try things on their own, independent solutions, can do attitude******
- **People good to each other, help**
- **Great place to raise children**

RANCHESTER PROJECTS & GOALS

- **Swimming pool 2,5**
- **More outside activities, golf, miniature 2,5**
- **Establish bypass, 2,5**
- **Better water quality, 2,5**
- **More activity, indoor and outdoor**
- **Bike trail to Dayton, 2,5**
- **More playground equipment in the parks, 2,5**
- **Climbing wall, repelling platform, 2,5**
- **More economic development, ditto, 2,5**
- **Gym to work out in, 10**
- **Miniature Walmart, 10**
- **Clean up the pond, 2,5**
- **Fine arts Bldg. 10, ditto**
- **Strip Mall, 10 ditto**
- **Campground fixed up 10 ditto**
- **Improve run-down properties 10**
- **Summer playground with lots of grass.**
- **Track at the High School**
- **High School level -----**
- **5 community center, ditto lots of options, ditto**
- **20 same small community**
- **20 combining Ranchester/Dayton**
- **10 green belt connecting two cities**
- **5 more kids going out for sports**
- **5 Welcome sign to Ranchester and the valley, good first impression**
- **5-10 more business opportunities, ditto, ditto**
- **5 all streets paved with curbs**
- **Big business, corporate America invited**

- **Rehabilitation Center for Substance Abuse**
- **Affordable housing for employees**
- **Take out the bars.**
- **More businesses, lumber yard, grocery store**
- **Better access to technology, internet, cell phone**
- **More businesses, good restaurant**
- **Paving Streets**
- **Better cable TV services, less expensive**
- **More industry, light industry, something to create jobs**
- **Check out wind energy, wind farm**
- **Trains moved**
- **Young people to stay here and work**
- **Maintain quality schools**
- **More pride in ownership of property, trash removal day, recycling emphasis, profitable program for the city to make money recycling**
- **Central theme for the city around which merchants can rally**
- **Building inspections to insure quality construction**
- **Build the houses on the hills to look over the valley and preserve the valley's beauty**
- **Natural gas to heat the houses the closest pipe line is 4 miles east of town**
- **2-5 joint powers board to operate the community centers**
- **2 -5 cleaning up the aesthetics of the town and then grow**
- **5 better process for dealing with things like what to do with the old elementary school, beautification, ditto**
- **2 -5 the city following a central theme for decoration**
- **2 -5 a grocery store**
- **10 more businesses in town, incentive for locals to patronize local businesses**
- **Careful planning and consideration for subdivision expansions to forestall future problems**
- **Consideration of human services, community projects that involve collaboration, leadership, funding. Like old community barn raisings.**
- **Mosquito eradication**
- **Financial encouragement of retail businesses that can access funding streams wider than the community and tourism**
- **Library expansion**
- **Community Foundation to receive charitable giving**
- **Community to take over the old elementary school and use it to serve the community, ditto**
- **2-5 pre-school services at minimal cost or free**
- **2-5 vocational training for kids to actually go to work**
- **2-5 more adult education**

- Immediate need for child care, day care, pre-school
- Senior care, ditto
- Summer programs, evening programs, Sheridan college having night classes in Ranchester
- Free WI-FI for the entire community
- Affordable housing and the climate to support that
- Public transportation system, bike paths, to community services. Shuttles to Sheridan on a regular schedule.
- Apprenticeships for kids to get them ready for the work world
- Community section -----
- Flood safety – immediate help
- Pave the sports complex road between Soldier creek Road, pave keystone road, include a bike road tie it into 5th street in Sheridan, wolf creek road to Ranchester
- Refurbish the old downtown strip mall and Kelly's kitchen
- 2-5 well thought out strategic plan that can be followed
- Schedule your priorities, ditto, ditto
- 2-5 Main street is too wide, narrow it to make people stop, picnic tables, sitting places
- WYDOT moneys to improve the main street
- Train crossings are made silent and safe
- Lighted cross walk near the community center with a push button
- Comprehensive plan – abandon shotgun approach – rifle shot when and where paving is done
- 5 a green belt, walking path, bike trails, 10 main street lighted with antique lights, a social gathering place
- Teenagers are entertained and have positive social activity in safe places. Teenagers are involved in community improvement process and goal setting for the city, things that enhance their college resume
- Pathway to Dayton for walking and bikes on top of the new water system, solving right of way problems
- Parks with updated equipment and restrooms
- Visitor center visible, a reason to stop
- Businesses and town cooperate for annual events
- Community Center could house the informational visitor center
- Ranchester is the gateway to the big horn mountains
- Night life is healthy and available in evenings
- Dumpsters at every house catch all the litter
- BUSINESS SECTION -----
- 2-5 the town is clean and well regulated and looks more presentable
- 2-5 the town has well marked walk paths that visitors can use.
- 2-5 the main street slows people down like it does in Dayton
- There is a comprehensive plan for the development of Dayton and Ranchester together.

- Annual activities are celebrated by the community and travelers stop to enjoy them
- The used car lot and the repair shop have been relocated and the old hotel has been renovated
- A good restaurant and grocery store have been opened
- Businesses have been established that hire local people
- Water is improved
- The city sparkles and is perceived as clean right away
- Every one who attended the assessment went home and did something about the concerns
- Main street has a center turn lane and parallel parking on each side.
- The center of town is improved and stands out as unique while the edges are also developed
- The town council has enlisted the community to work on specific projects
- Main street task force
- Community sports events & teams – 9
- More restaurants – 6
- Less cops
- Community Center in Dayton – 4
- More businesses – 2
- Entertainment (bowling alley, arcade) – 3
- Swimming pool - 37
- Theater
- New park equipment
- Mall – 3
- Skate shop
- Better roads – 7
- Less alcohol – 3
- Stores – 3
- Improve scenery – 7
- Arena for rodeo
- Rehab center – 2
- Exercise clinic – 2
- Community Center – 6
- Paving
- Bigger town – 3
- Activities – 7
- Ping Pong Camp
- Connection w/Ranchester
- Car Pool
- Clubs
- Subdivisions
- Homeless people

- **Steady growth/housing – 16**
- **Trees – 3**
- **Good bike trail - 3**
- **Mall**
- **Steakhouse**
- **Airport, 20 years**
- **Skate Park - 3**
- **Pool Slide**
- **Paved running track- 6**
- **Drama Club**
- **Better economic growth**
- **New baseball field**
- **Young child park update, 2 years**
- **Trails, walking areas**
- **2-5, Maintenance of current paved streets & walking paths**
- **5-10, Pave remainder of streets**
- **2, Green waste program, recycle**
- **2-5, Water quality and needs**
- **More affordable housing**
- **Grocery store**
- **Restaurant**
- **Child care 24-7**
- **More 3-bedroom low income apartments**
- **Activities at Community Center for older kids**
- **Keep swinging bridge at river**
- **2 reliable water supply****
- **Streets are paved everywhere*******
- **Businesses so attractive and successful they stop tourists**
- **Water line is finished****
- **Business association formed**
- **Sub divisions are completed in an orderly process**
- **Expansion of business properties in town**
- **A defined main street**
- **2 Ranchester's plans incorporated in the county planning**
- **Trails, more business**
- **Check sewer and water under the streets before paving**
- **Tie Ranchester trail system with the county wide trail system**
- **5 sewage repair and improvement**
- **Fix the road to the park**
- **Town encourage businesses by not over regulating them**
- **Decide what is important in the town and needs to be retained**
- **Preserve the mercantile bldg. and the blue northern bldg**
- **The streets everywhere are paved**
- **The Highway appearance is beautiful and the shops are attractive**

- **A website promoting the features of the area**
- **The town develops in a planned fashion, not just a suburb of Sheridan**
- **A new phone company gives good service**
- **The community center has buses to deliver people to activities in Sheridan**
- **Senior meals are served at the community center**
- **Ice skating rink for kids like the one they have in Dayton**
- **Senior housing for people who are down sizing with a commons area, cafeteria and lawn care**
- **Cleaner, no junk**
- **Better water source**
- **2-5 all law enforcement can get along without politics**
- **More sidewalks**
- **Increased opportunities for new businesses**
- **2-5 water line and waste water upgraded to compensate 187 new homes**
- **Data base that emergency services can access to get GPS locations for residents**
- **Ranchester/Dayton collaborate on water delivery**
- **Regional community involvement**
- **R3 zoning somewhere*****
- **10-20 City is well paved and marked**
- **Speed limits inside city at state mandated 30 mph.*****
- **More environmental, Green bldg. educational program******
- **20 mph for gravel streets**
- **Docents to tell about the area history, a good museum**
- **Shopping center**
- **Doing a Main Street Clean up project**

20 CLUES TO RURAL COMMUNITY SURVIVAL

1. Evidence of Community Pride:

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

2. Emphasis on Quality in Business and Community Life:

People believe that something worth doing is worth doing right.

3. Willingness to Invest in the Future:

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

4. Participatory Approach to Community Decision Making:

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

5. Cooperative Community Spirit:

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

6. Realistic Appraisal of Future Opportunities:

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

7. Awareness of Competitive Positioning:

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

8. Knowledge of the Physical Environment:

Relative location and available natural resources underscore decision-making.

9. Active Economic Development Program:

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

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

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

11. Acceptance of Women in Leadership Roles:

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

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

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

14. Strong Multi-Generational Family Orientation:

The definition of family is broad, and activities include younger as well as older generations.

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

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

16. Sound and Well-Maintained Infrastructure:

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

17. Careful Use of Fiscal Resources:

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

18. Sophisticated Use of Information Resources:

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

19. Willingness to Seek Help from the Outside:

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

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

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

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