

# Sheridan County Comprehensive Plan

Appendices

PLAN:   
SHERIDAN  
COUNTY

Adopted  
December 2008







# Appendix A: Existing Conditions

## INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

This appendix presents information on conditions and trends in Sheridan County, Wyoming, at the time of the plan. Subjects included are: population, land use, housing, economy, transportation, parks, open space and trails, historic sites and landmarks, infrastructure and service districts, and education and libraries.

Sheridan County is an area of 2,516 square miles organized in 1888. It is surrounded by the following counties:

- Big Horn, Montana (to the north),
- Powder River, Montana (to the northeast),
- Campbell County, WY (to the east),
- Johnson County, WY (to the south), and
- Big Horn County, WY (to the west).

## POPULATION

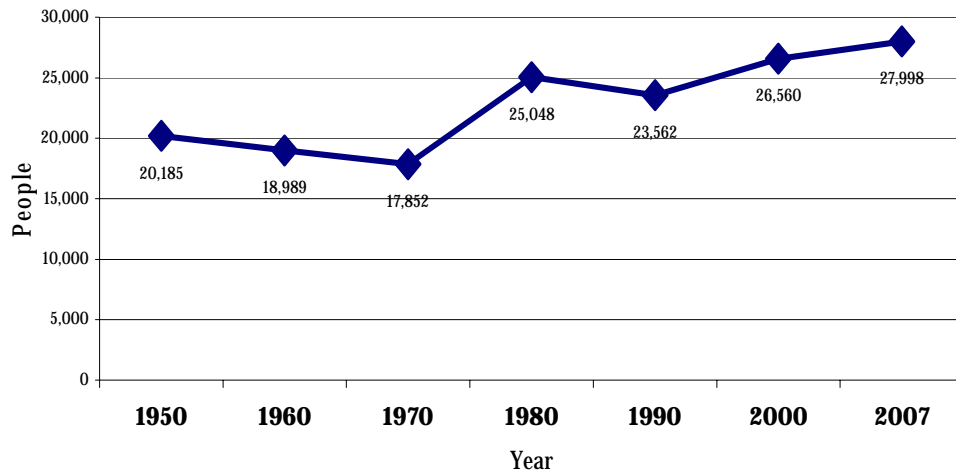
### TOTAL POPULATION

According to the U.S Census Bureau, the estimated 2007 population of Sheridan County was 27,998, up 5 percent from just seven years earlier. This continues a growth trend that has been underway since 1990; the county grew over 11 percent from 1990 to 2000.

**Table 1: Sheridan County Population 1950 - 2007**

Year	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2007
Population	20,185	18,989	17,852	25,048	23,562	26,560	27,998
10-yr Growth Rate	--	-6.29%	-5.99%	40.31%	-5.93%	11.2%	--

Source: U.S Census Bureau and Major Street and Highway System Report 2005.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1950-2007

**Figure 1: Sheridan County Population – 1950 to 2007**

### POPULATION DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION

Much of the county population is concentrated in and around the City of Sheridan (60 percent) – about six in ten Sheridan County residents.

Table 2 (below) shows the percentage of total Sheridan County population location dynamics in Sheridan County, from 1990 to 2000. As envisioned and encouraged by the 1982 Sheridan County Comprehensive Plan, the City of Sheridan has absorbed the majority of population growth in the County since 1990. The various municipalities have annexed outlying areas, thus a shrinking number and percentage of Sheridan County residents live in the remaining unincorporated areas of Sheridan County. The average population density for unincorporated Sheridan County in 2000 was 5 people per square mile.

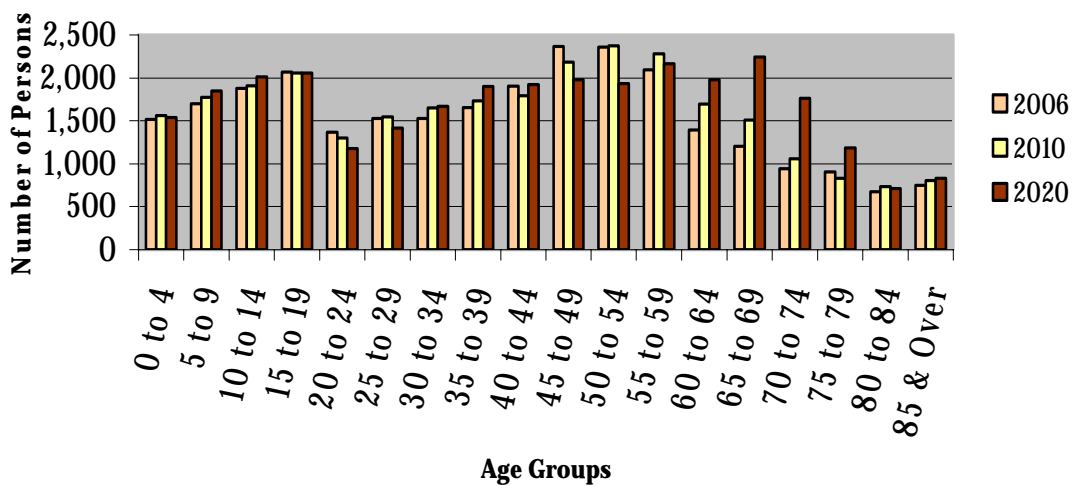
**Table 2: Population Distribution, Sheridan County, WY**

	Sheridan	Dayton	Clearmont	Ranchester	Unincorp.
1990	13,900	565	119	676	8,302
% total 1990	59.0%	2.4%	0.5%	2.9%	35.2%
2000	15,804	678	115	701	8,205
% total 2000	62.0%	2.7%	0.5%	2.7%	32.2%
Total change (1990-2000)	1,904	113	-4	25	-97
% total change (1990-2000)	3.0%	0.3%	0.0%	-0.2%	-3.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990, 2000

## POPULATION AGE DISTRIBUTION

The chart below depicts the age distribution of the total Sheridan County population by age for 2006, 2010, and 2020.<sup>1</sup> Currently, over sixty percent of the population of Sheridan County today is of prime workforce age between 20 and 65 years. Less than one fifth of the population is school-age, and about one-eighth is over retirement age. However, as the chart indicates, the population in Sheridan County is expected to shift toward greater number and percentage of older workers and retirees in 2010 and 2020. This reflects both national trends, and the fact that Sheridan County continues to be a desirable location for retiring couples.



Source: Sheridan County Housing Needs Assessment, 2006

**Figure 2: Projected Changes in Population Age Distribution, Sheridan County, Wyoming, 2006, 2010, and 2020**

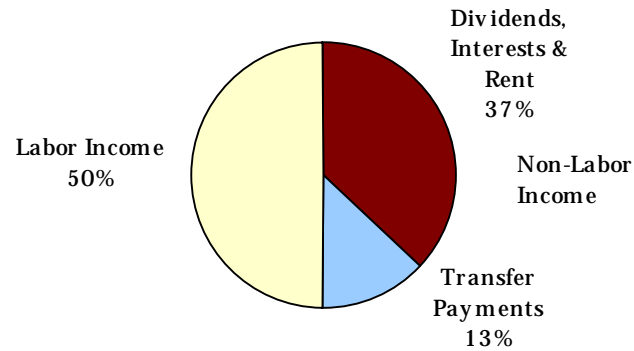
## GENDER AND RACE

The racial composition of Sheridan County is uniform; more than 98 percent of the population is white. The population is well-balanced from a gender standpoint, with 51 percent males and 49 percent females. These trends are not projected to change significantly.

## INCOME, EMPLOYMENT, WAGES, AND POVERTY

<sup>1</sup> Source data from this chart from: Wyoming Department of Administration and Information. [http://eativ.state.wy.us/pop/agsx00\\_20.html](http://eativ.state.wy.us/pop/agsx00_20.html).

Total employment in Sheridan County for 2005 was 15,462.<sup>2</sup> Over 27 percent of Sheridan workers are self-employed – up from 21 percent in 1970. Median household income in Sheridan County in 2004 was \$53,450, substantially higher than the national average of \$44,334 and the Wyoming state average of \$43,785. Sheridan County had a poverty rate of 10.7 percent in 2000, lower than that of the state (11.4%) or the country (12.4%) at that time.



Source: Sonoran Institute, 2003.

### **Figure 3: 2000 Income Sources, Sheridan County, WY**

Wages in Sheridan County are low however, at 19 percent below the Wyoming average. A 2003 report<sup>3</sup> indicates that from 1970 to 2000, average earnings in Sheridan County actually dropped in real terms, from \$28,258 in 1970 to \$23,516 in 2000. By 2000, a full 50 percent of income in Sheridan County was from non-labor sources.

- Thirty seven percent of 2000 income was from rent, interest and dividends,
- Thirteen percent was transfer income. Of all transfer payments, two-thirds was from “age-related sources” such as retirement and social security. Just five percent was from welfare.

This high percentage of non-labor income, coupled with the number of older residents, illustrates the growing impacts of a lifestyle economy in Sheridan County

<sup>2</sup> Sheridan County Demographics, [www.wyomingeda.com](http://www.wyomingeda.com).

<sup>3</sup> Population, Employment, Earnings and Personal Income Trends, Sheridan County, WY, Sonoran Institute/Center for a Vital Economy, 2003.

## POPULATION PROJECTIONS

Sheridan County population is projected to grow from 27,998 people in 2007 to just over 30,000 people in 2020, as shown in the table below (2006 Housing Needs Assessment projections). The Sheridan County Growth Management Plan adopted in 2001 forecast a population of 26,120 persons by 2005, and 30,390 persons by the year 2020. Earlier efforts, including the county's 1982 Comprehensive Plan update, significantly over-projected population growth, with a population estimate of 46,000 persons by the year 1990. Over the past several decades, population in Sheridan and Sheridan County has been growing slowly and steadily, although throughout the past 20 years the county has experienced various increases and decreases. The projected rate of growth continues to be modest, with a projected annual county compound growth rate of just under 1% per year.

**Table 3: Population Projections through 2020**

Year	2000	2007	2010	2020
Population	26,560	27,998	28,307	30,336
10-yr Growth Rate	--	--	6.57%	7.17%

Source: 2008 U.S. Census estimates, Sheridan County Housing Needs Assessment, 2006, Clarion Associates 2008.

## HOUSING

Housing trends in Sheridan County reflect population growth, second homes, and retirees. Housing prices have increased dramatically, while real earnings have fallen and wages remain low, as described in sections that follow.

### TOTAL HOUSING AND MIX

Housing construction has fluctuated in unincorporated Sheridan County for the past five years, as indicated in Table 6. In the unincorporated county, all building permits have been for single family homes. According to U.S. Census data, the average household size was 2.31 in 2000.

**Table 4: New Construction of Housing Units in the City of Sheridan, Wyoming, 2000-2007**

Type	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
One Family Houses Detached	46	15	26	53	34	16	61	120
One Family Houses Attached	13	34	88	83	64	34	89	71
Two Family Buildings	4	5	2	2	2	4	2	2
3 or 4 Family Buildings	4	6	3	0	11	8	4	52
5 or More Family Buildings	6	8	120	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Total Units</i>	<i>73</i>	<i>68</i>	<i>239</i>	<i>138</i>	<i>111</i>	<i>62</i>	<i>156</i>	<i>245</i>

Source: City of Sheridan 2008, Sheridan County Housing Needs Assessment, 2006.

**Table 5: New Construction of Housing Units in Ranchester and Dayton, Wyoming, 2001-2007**

Type	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Ranchester	2	1	1	5	15	10	18
Dayton	0	9	9	8	11	6	10

Source: Local City Staff 2008, Sheridan County Housing Needs Assessment, 2006.

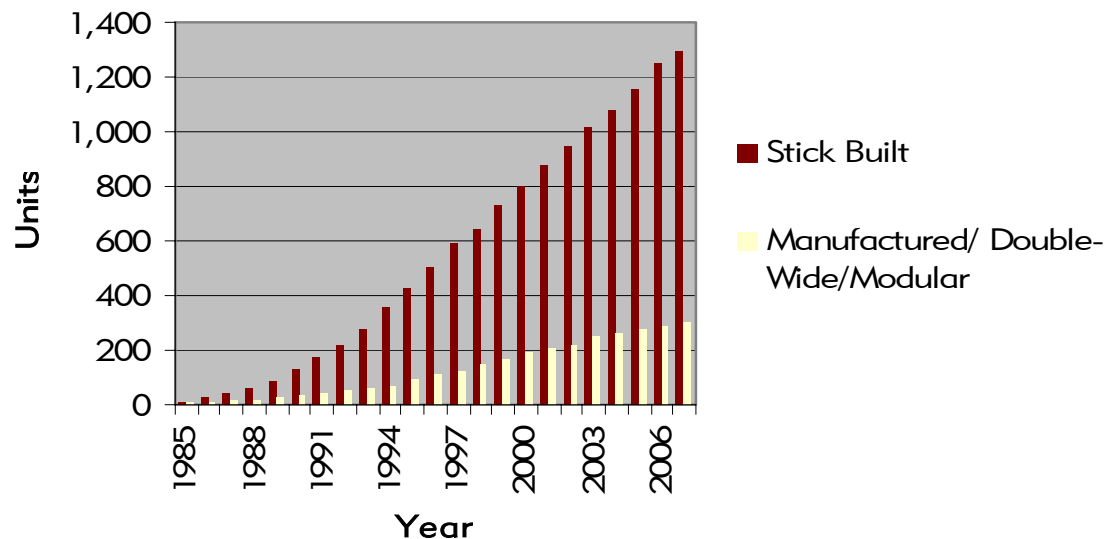


Housing in Big Horn area and Dayton Area, respectively.

**Table 6: New Construction of Housing Units in Unincorporated Sheridan County, 2000-2007**

Type	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Single Family	67	96	72	95	61	93	109	117
Total Units	67	96	72	95	61	93	109	117

Source: U.S. Census of Building Permits, Sheridan County Housing Needs Assessment, 2006.



Source: Sheridan County Public Works, June 2007.

**Figure 4: Cumulative Permitted Single Family Dwelling Units by Construction Type in Sheridan County (1985 – 2007)**

## HOUSING AGE AND QUALITY

In 2005, the median age of housing stock in Sheridan County was 42 years, which, given the number of new units built recently, indicates that many Sheridan County homes are quite old. In some areas of Sheridan County, such as in the community of Story, mobile homes comprise a substantial proportion of the total housing units. Many residents indicate a desire for new homes to be of higher construction quality than mobile homes.<sup>4</sup>

## HOUSING PRICES AND NEW UNITS

Between 1990 and 2000, Sheridan County median housing prices for a single family home jumped more than 70 percent, from

<sup>4</sup> Source: <http://www.whywyoming.org/pdf/Counties/Sheridan.pdf>.

\$57,800 to \$98,300.<sup>5</sup> By 2004, the median housing price had increased another 60 percent to \$162,917.<sup>6</sup> Multiple Listing Service information for Sheridan area indicates that by 2006, the average sales price for a home was \$244,038—more than double 1999 prices.

**Table 7: Average Sales Price for All Residential in Sheridan**

Year	Multiple Listing Service (MLS)		Sheridan County Tax Assessor	
	Average Sales (\$)	% Change	Average Sales (\$)	% Change
1999	\$104,182	n/a	\$104,167	n/a
2000	\$106,666	2%	\$115,003	7%
2001	\$117,817	9%	\$125,000	11%
2002	\$135,099	13%	\$142,150	21%
2003	\$144,409	6%	\$145,776	4%
2004	\$149,506	3%	\$162,917	10%
2005	n/a	n/a	\$186,095	12%
2006	\$244,038	n/a	\$224,369	17%
2007	n/a	n/a	\$245,738	10%
<i>Total Change (1999-2006)</i>	\$139,856	134%	\$141,571	136%

Source: MLS and County Assessor, 2007.

## HOME OWNERSHIP

In 2000, Sheridan County homeownership rate was 69 percent, just below the Wyoming state rate of 70 percent but higher than then national rate of 66.2 percent.<sup>7</sup> Homeownership in Wyoming in 2006 had increased to 73 percent (no 2006 data available for Sheridan County).<sup>8</sup> As of 2000, almost 800 units in Sheridan County were counted as seasonal or second homes.

<sup>5</sup> *Historical Census of Housing Tables: Home Values and Rents for Wyoming and Counties 1960 to 2000* Wyoming Division of Economic Analysis

[http://eadiv.state.wy.us/housing/Value\\_Rent\\_Cnty.htm](http://eadiv.state.wy.us/housing/Value_Rent_Cnty.htm); 2000 U.S. Census

<sup>6</sup> Source: <http://www.whywyoming.org/pdf/Counties/Sheridan.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> *Historical Census of Housing Tables: Home Values and Rents for Wyoming and Counties 1960 to 2000* Wyoming Division of Economic Analysis

[http://eadiv.state.wy.us/housing/Value\\_Rent\\_Cnty.htm](http://eadiv.state.wy.us/housing/Value_Rent_Cnty.htm)

<sup>8</sup> *Homeownership: Annual Statistics 1984-2006*, Wyoming Division of Economic Analysis [http://eadiv.state.wy.us/housing/Owner\\_8406.html](http://eadiv.state.wy.us/housing/Owner_8406.html)

## HOUSING RENTAL

According to the Wyoming Department of Administration and Information, the average monthly rental rate for an apartment in Sheridan County in the fourth quarter of 2006 was \$571, which is slightly higher than the Wyoming statewide average of \$567. This is an increase from a year earlier, when Sheridan average monthly rates were \$489, which was less than the statewide average at that time (\$527).<sup>9</sup> In 2000, the rental vacancy rate was less than five percent<sup>10</sup> (more recent data were not available).

## NEED FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

While there is certainly market demand for retirement and second-home owners, there is also a clear need for a range of housing choices in Sheridan County. Housing that is affordable for working families are needed, given that average wages in Sheridan County are quite low (see Demographics Section, above) compared to housing prices. The Sheridan County Housing Needs Assessment (2006) estimates to meet the existing demand for affordable homeownership opportunities, an additional 2,565 homes are needed for those earning less than 115 percent of median family income (\$51,950 in 2005 for a family of 3.5 according to Housing and Urban Development (HUD)).

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<sup>9</sup> *Average Monthly Rental Rates for Apartments and Houses in Wyoming and Counties*, Wyoming Division of Economic Analysis [http://eadiv.state.wy.us/housing/Rental\\_rates4Q06.pdf](http://eadiv.state.wy.us/housing/Rental_rates4Q06.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> *Census 2000 Housing Profiles for Wyoming, Counties, Cities, and Towns*, Wyoming Division of Economic Analysis [http://eadiv.state.wy.us/housing/HU\\_2000.htm](http://eadiv.state.wy.us/housing/HU_2000.htm)

## LAND USE PATTERNS AND PROJECTIONS

### GENERAL LAND OWNERSHIP

Most of the land in Sheridan County is under private ownership—1,037,616 acres (about 64%), while 572,399 acres (about 36 percent) are public land. Of the public land, most is under U.S. Forest Service ownership in the Bighorn National Forest, with approximately 389,360 acres (24 percent). The BLM manages approximately 53,800 acres (3%) and the State Board manages approximately 125,200 acres (8%). Other public lands (e.g., airport, county, city/towns, and schools) account for less than one percent of the county's land. (See Table 9: Ownership and Ownership map.)

**Table 8: Land Ownership Patterns, Sheridan County, Wyoming, 2007**

Ownership	Acres	% Total
Private	1,037,617	64%
<b>Public</b>		
BLM	53,811	3%
State	125,191	8%
USFS	389,360	24%
Other Public	4,038	<1%
Public Subtotal	572,399	36%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,610,016</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Clarion Associates, Ownership Map, GIS, 2007.

### EXISTING LAND USE

The majority of the developed land in the county is located in incorporated cities and towns, particularly in the City of Sheridan and its growth area. It is not surprising that agriculture is the largest existing county land use by area at just over 996,597 acres (about 62 percent). Public lands account for the next largest land use at 572,399 acres (approximately 36 percent). Residential land use accounts for 21,072 acres (1.3 percent), with over 16,000 acres of built residential outside Sheridan's Urban Service Area, and non-residential uses (businesses, industry, special purpose, and multi-use) account for another 3,034 acres (less than one percent) and tend to be located near existing communities. The county has 14,753 acres of land (less than one percent) classified as vacant. (See Table 10: Existing Land Use and Existing Land Use map.)

**Table 9: Existing Land Use, Sheridan County, Wyoming, 2007**

<b>Land Use</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>% of Total</b>	<b>Inside Sheridan USA (ac.)</b>	<b>Outside Sheridan USA (ac.)</b>
Agricultural	996,597	61.9%	22,571	974,026
Commercial/Multi-Use	1,486	0.1%	1,087	399
Industrial	146	0%	37	109
Special Purpose / Mining	3,034	0.2%	1,143	1,891
Residential	21,072	1.3%	5,017	16,055
Vacant	14,753	0.9%	1,694	13,059
Public / Right of Way	572,928	35.6%	3,259	569,669
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,610,016</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>34,808</b>	<b>1,575,208</b>

Source: Clarion Associates, Existing Land Use map, GIS, 2007.

## EXISTING ZONING

### Zone Districts

Sheridan County has nine zone districts, as summarized in Table 11 below, plus the Powder Horn PUD. Most of the districts allow a mix of use types. Minimum lot area is established at two acres or more for any land use on property not served by central water and sewer systems—most of the agricultural lands.

**Table 10: Zone Districts**

<b>Zone District</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Allowed Uses</b>	<b>Minimum lot area</b>
Urban Residential: UR	Urban Residential Dwelling - Dwelling structures designed or used exclusively for residential purposes, including mobile homes.	Residential	With central water/sewer: 6,000 sf. min for single family and 2,500 sf. min. for multiple family unit  Without central water/sewer: 2 acre min.
Rural Residential: RR	Residential Dwelling – Any buildings which are designed or used exclusively for residential purposes, including mobile homes.	Agricultural Residential	2 acre min.
Agricultural: A	Agricultural uses (farms, ranch and rangelands, and similar).	Agricultural Residential	35 acre min.
Commercial: C-1 (Most intense commercial)	Wholesale and retail commercial businesses, shipping depots, loading docks, animal hospitals and boarding facilities, woodworking and cabinet shops, service stations, auto repairs, warehousing etc., and C-2 and C-3 Commercial uses.	Commercial	With central water/sewer: No min.  Without central water/sewer: 2 acre min.
Commercial: C-2	Retail and professional commercial businesses, professional offices, grocery stores, clothing stores, auto sales, convenience stores, mini warehouse storage rentals, woodworking and cabinet shops etc., with no more than 7 employees.	Commercial Residential	With central water/sewer: 6,000 sf. min.  Without central water/sewer: 2 acre min.
Commercial: C-3 (least intense commercial)	Professional offices, doctor, dentist, lawyer, insurance, bookkeeping, etc., with not more than 5 employees. It is the intent of the C-3 district to provide for professional service uses that are compatible with residential neighborhoods.	Commercial Residential	With central water/sewer: 6,000 sf. min.  Without central water/sewer: 2 acre min.
Industrial: I-1	Heavy industrial, smoke stack industries, assembly, manufacturing and fabrication facilities, outside storage businesses, salvage yards, bulk storage facilities, and I-2 industrial and C-1 commercial uses.	Industrial Commercial Agricultural	With central water/sewer: No min.  Without central water/sewer: 2 acre min.
Industrial: I-2	Non-smoke stack industries, assembly, manufacturing and fabrication facilities, outside storage, construction yards, ready mix concrete plants, heavy equipment service and sales, machine shops, welding shops etc., C-1 and C-2 commercial uses.	Industrial Commercial Agricultural	With central water/sewer: No min.  Without central water/sewer: 2 acre min.

## **Special Zones**

Additional development regulations apply in parts of Sheridan County that are located within the Airport Zone and in areas that are within a federal or state designated flood zone.

## **Current Zoning**

The largest zoned land use is agricultural, encompassing 1,573,660 acres (over 97% of the county). The agricultural zoning district includes Forest Service, BLM, and most state lands. Residentially zoned lands account for 35,490 acres (about two percent) whereas non-residential zoning covers 3,583 acres (less than one percent). The majority of residents live, work, and shop in incorporated areas, which occupy 6,992 acres (less than one percent of county land). (See Table 12 and Current Zoning Map.)

**Table 11: County Zoned Land Area**

<b>Zoning</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>% Total</b>
Agricultural	1,573,655	97.10%
Powder Horn PUD	937	0.06%
Non-Residential		
Airport	1,540	0.10%
Commercial 1	623	0.04%
Commercial 2	384	0.02%
Industrial 1	227	0.01%
Industrial 2	808	0.05%
Non-Residential Subtotal	3,583	0.22%
Residential		
Rural Residential	17,125	1.06%
Urban Residential	18,361	1.13%
Residential Subtotal	35,486	2.19%
Incorporated Cities and Towns <sup>11</sup>	6,992	0.43%
Total	1,620,653	100.00%

Source: Clarion Associates, Zoning Map, GIS, 2007.

<sup>11</sup> Includes incorporated communities of Sheridan, Ranchester, Dayton, and Arvada.

## LAND-BASED DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

According to a GIS-based analysis, unincorporated land in Sheridan County has more than enough capacity to accommodate projected growth for the region through 2020—and beyond. Vacant and agricultural lands, based on current zoning, could accommodate over 56,000 new residential units, and over 10.5 million square feet of commercial and industrial space.

The analysis suggests that availability of land will not be a constraining factor for growth, whereas other factors, such as water availability, may be.

The assumptions are listed below.

### **Land Capacity Assumptions:**

- The analysis focuses on the unincorporated lands, not potential development within City of Sheridan or other incorporated limits.
- It focuses on lands classified as “vacant” or “agricultural”.
- It is also based on current zone districts and their established minimum lot area/ density for residential zones and moderate assumptions for commercial and industrial intensity in those zone districts.
- It deducts lands with conservation easements and assumes no development potential for them.
- It also assumes no potential development for public lands, even though they are zoned Agricultural.
- It assumes that 25% of the Agricultural and Rural Residential zones within the 201 (sewer) Boundary and Urban Service Area will urbanize.
- It assumes 500 additional units will be built for the Powder Horn PUD.

## Tables 12 A-D: Sheridan County – Land Capacity By Urban Services and Jurisdiction

### A. Unincorporated Land in Sheridan 201 Boundary (with sewer/water)

	Max DU/acre	Total Acres	Potential New Units (adjusted - 80%)
Corporate limits		1,109	n/a
Agricultural (1 du/35 acres) (assume 25% will develop at urban densities -- 4.0 du/ac)	0.03	3,466	2,836
Planned Unit Development	var.	0	0
<b>Residential</b>	<b>DU/acre</b>	<b>Ac.</b>	<b>Units</b>
Rural Residential (1 du/2 acres) (assume 25% will develop at urban densities -- 4.0 du/ac)	0.50	208	229
<b>Urban Residential</b>	<b>DU/acre</b>	<b>Ac.</b>	<b>Units</b>
Dwelling units served by SAWS (6,000 sf/du) (assume 80% of UR are single family)	7.00	2,576	14,425
Multiple dwelling units served by SAWS (2,500 sf/du) (assume 20% of UR are multi-family)	17.00	644	8,758
Residential and Agriculture Subtotal		3,428	26,247
<b>Non-Residential</b>	<b>FAR</b>		<b>SF</b>
Commercial 1	0.25	1,062	9,252,144
Commercial 2	0.25	27	235,224
Commercial 3	0.40	0	0
Industrial 1	0.10	72	251,603
Industrial 2	0.20	59	413,994
Non-Residential Subtotal		1,221	10,152,965
<b>Total</b>		<b>9,224</b>	

**B. In Sheridan Urban Service Area (no sewer)**

	<b>Max DU/acre</b>	<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>Potential New Units (adjusted - 80%)</b>
Agricultural (1 du/35 acres)	0.03	10,991.2	251
Planned Unit Development	var.	0	0
<b>Residential</b>	<b>DU/acre</b>	<b>Ac.</b>	<b>Units</b>
Rural Residential (1 du/2 acres)	0.50	183	73
Urban Residential (1 du/2 acres)	0.50	3,794	1,518
<i>Residential and Agriculture Subtotal</i>		3,977	1,842
<b>Non-Residential</b>	<b>FAR</b>	<b>Ac.</b>	<b>SF</b>
Commercial 1	0.10	0	0
Commercial 2	0.10	0	0
Commercial 3	0.10	0	0
Industrial 1	0.10	51	176,331
Industrial 2	0.10	21	73,529
<i>Non-Residential Subtotal</i>		72	249,860
<b>Total</b>		<b>15,039</b>	

**C. Outside Sheridan Urban Service Area (no sewer)**

	<b>Max DU/acre</b>	<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>Potential New Units (adjusted - 80%)</b>
Corporate limits	n/a	138	n/a
Agricultural, no easement (1 du/35 acres)	0.03	903,939	20,661
Agricultural, with easement (no du)	0.00	65,584	0
Planned Unit Development	var.	223	500
<b>Residential</b>	<b>DU/acre</b>	<b>Ac.</b>	<b>Units</b>
Rural Residential (1 du/2 acres)	0.50	10,138	4,055
Urban Residential (1 du/2 acres)	0.50	7,014	2,806
Residential and Agricultural Subtotal		17,152	28,022
<b>Non-Residential</b>	<b>FAR</b>	<b>Ac.</b>	<b>SF</b>
Commercial 1	0.10	0	0
Commercial 2	0.10	49	170,407
Commercial 3	0.10	0	0
Industrial 1	0.10	0	0
Industrial 2	0.10	0	0
Non-Residential Subtotal		49	170,407
<b>Total</b>		<b>987,085</b>	

**D. Total Potential New Units**

	<b>Potential New Units</b>
Agricultural, no easement (1 du/35 acres)	23,748
Planned Unit Development	500
<b>Residential</b>	<b>Units</b>
Rural Residential (1 du/2 acres)	4,357
Urban Residential (1 du/2 acres)	27,506
Residential and Agriculture Unit Subtotal	56,111
<b>Non-Residential</b>	<b>SF</b>
Commercial 1	9,252,144
Commercial 2	405,631
Commercial 3	0
Industrial 1	427,933
Industrial 2	487,524
<b>Non-Residential Subtotal</b>	<b>10,573,232</b>

## ECONOMY

### MAJOR EMPLOYMENT SECTORS

#### Strong and Growing Sectors



Source: Sheridan County Memorial Hospital website

#### Professional Services

In 2000, nearly 62 percent of jobs in Sheridan County fall into the broad category of Professional Services. Within this group, subcategories include:

- Health, Legal and other Business Professions (28 percent of jobs);
- Retail trade (19 percent); and
- Finance, Insurance and Real Estate (eight percent).

#### Government

Governmental professionals are the next largest work industry in the county with 18 percent. These jobs included elected officials and other tax paid jobs.

#### Construction

Construction has increased slightly with populations trends, from almost eight percent in 1970 to nearly nine percent in 2000.

#### Energy

Coal bed methane development has increased dramatically since the 1990s in Sheridan County, and was the leading reason that county sales tax revenues increased 20 percent in 2006.



Coal Bed Methane Development  
(Source: [alandoutoftime.org](http://alandoutoftime.org) website)

#### Declining Sectors

##### Mining

Mining has dropped from being a significant employer in the 1980's to providing jobs for less than one percent of the current work industry. P&M Coal, however, is evaluating the possibility of a new open-pit mine northeast of Sheridan that could potentially reverse this trend.

##### Agricultural

Farm and Agricultural based jobs are becoming less viable because of the difficulty for farmers in making a profit. These jobs have decreased 3.6 percent since 1970, and gross income has dropped \$18,134 since 1970. Raising livestock produces up to 78 percent of the farmer's gross income whereas crops only provide seven percent.

Many farmers have turned to other agricultural services such as soil preparation and crop services. This sector also includes forestry services, such as reforestation, fishing, hunting, and trapping. These jobs offer a larger income and also supplement the income yields from year to year.

### Forest Goods

The manufacturing of forest goods has decreased since 1970 to less than four percent of the work industry.

### Largest Employers

Many of the largest employers in Sheridan County are representative of the strong sectors indicated above.

**Table 13: Top 20 Employers in Sheridan County, 2006**

Rank	Name of Employer	Type of Industry
1	Sheridan County School District #2	Education
2	Veterans Administration Medical Center	Health Services
3	Sheridan County Memorial Hospital	Health Services
4	Wal-Mart	Retail
5	Sugarland Enterprises dba Holiday Inn	Lodging
6	Burlington Northern Railroad	Transportation
7	City of Sheridan Local	Government
8	Rehabilitation Enterprises of NE Wyoming	Health & Social Services
9	Sheridan County School District #1	Education
10	Sheridan College	Education
11	Sheridan County Government	Local Government
12	First Interstate Bank	Financial Services
13	Wyoming Sawmills	Manufacturing
14	YMCA	Health & Fitness Services
15	Normative Services	Education
16	Westview Health Care Center	Health Services
17	U.S. Forest Service	Federal Government
18	Wyoming Girls' School	State Government
19	Wyoming Department of Transportation	State Government
20	Best Western Sheridan Center Motor Inn	Lodging

Source: Forward Sheridan, "Employers and Existing Industry" (December, 2006)

**Table 14: Estimated Growth in Employment by Industry, Sheridan County, 2005 to 2012**

Industry	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	287	284	282	280	278	275	273	271
Mining	155	157	158	160	162	164	166	168
Construction	1,054	1,088	1,122	1,158	1,195	1,234	1,273	1,314
Manufacturing	369	374	378	383	387	392	397	401
Wholesale, Trade, Transportation, and Warehousing	559	568	577	586	595	605	615	624
Retail Trade	1,580	1,602	1,624	1,647	1,670	1,694	1,717	1,741
Information	177	178	178	179	179	180	180	181
Finance and Insurance	369	374	380	386	391	397	403	409
Professional, Business, and Real Estate Services	915	948	984	1,020	1,058	1,097	1,137	1,180
Education and Health	2,558	2,599	2,641	2,683	2,726	2,770	2,814	2,859
Leisure and Hospitality	1,546	1,566	1,586	1,607	1,628	1,649	1,670	1,692
Other Services, Ex. Public Admin	526	535	543	552	561	570	579	588
Government	1,224	1,232	1,239	1,246	1,254	1,261	1,269	1,277

Source: Sheridan County Housing Needs Assessment 2006

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES

Three quasi-governmental agencies in the county provide economic development resources and information about the City and County of Sheridan.

### Forward Sheridan

Forward Sheridan, a private development corporation, was developed to establish and implement goals developed by the businesses in the community. The goals were set to increase the overall economy of Sheridan County by creating 633 new jobs within the county, increase the county's average income rate, increase the sales tax revenue growth rate, and improve the image of the community. Forward Sheridan is also focused on creating jobs that will attract young families to stabilize and increase school enrollment. By investing the \$1.8 million in Forward Sheridan programs, the county in turn expects to generate about \$19 million

in new payroll dollars each year. Forward Sheridan is currently working to implement their plan and has established a task force to monitor economic development progress.

The following list, from the Forward Sheridan website, indicates commercial properties available in Sheridan County (buildings and lots for sale and/or lease) in August 2007.

- Airport Business Park
- Double Eagle
- East Side Industrial Park 1
- Fort Road Industrial Park
- Holly Ponds Commercial Corner
- Riverside Industrial Park 1
- Riverside Industrial Park 2
- Riverside Industrial Park 3
- Sheridan Commercial Park
- Wesco Subdivision

### **Sheridan County Chamber of Commerce**

Sheridan County Chamber of Commerce promotes a healthy economy in Sheridan County by promoting business and community growth and development; retention and expansion of existing businesses; discovering and correcting circumstances that prevent business expansion and community growth; promoting civic, social and cultural programs that increase the functional and aesthetic values of the community, and operating the Wyoming State Welcome Center in Sheridan in cooperation with Wyoming Travel & Tourism, greeting over 140,000 visitors each year.

### **Sheridan Travel and Tourism**

Sheridan Travel and Tourism operates a website that promotes the City of Sheridan and offers information on many of the attractions in surrounding Sheridan County. Much of the funding for this organization comes from a four percent lodging tax assessed on lodging within the City of Sheridan. The website is located at: <http://www.sheridanwyoming.org/>.

## TRANSPORTATION

### ROADS

#### Major Highways

The three highways through the County are Interstate 90 and Highway 87, which run north and south through the county and through the City of Sheridan, and State Highway 14 and 14A, which run generally east and west through the county.



Source: <http://www.whywoming.org/pdf/Counties/Sheridan.pdf>

**Figure 5: Major Highways**



#### County Roads

State Highways, including 331, 335, 336, 338, 341, 343, 345, as well as county roads provide alternative local travel routes to the major roadways, as well as key access points to the Big Horn National Forest, rural development and agricultural operations.

The Sheridan County Public Works Department is responsible for building and maintaining 530 miles of County Roads. Road construction and improvements in Sheridan County are funded partially through a Capital Facilities Tax and state matching funds, when available.

Coal bed methane development has had an impact on certain county roads, increasing traffic on these roads by five or six times the normal levels. Sheridan County has begun to require Road Use Agreements with coal bed methane developers when development approval is given, that roads be restored to pre-development condition as well as requiring dust mitigation measures.

Recently the Wyoming State Investment Land Board declined to match several important road improvements projects in Sheridan County, citing lack of statewide priority. The County is approaching the state legislature to seek additional funds.

## **City Streets**

Within the City of Sheridan, the Streets Division maintains 1,098 miles of streets.

## **TRANSIT**

The Senior Citizens Council, a local non-profit organization, has been providing transportation to people of all ages in Sheridan County since 1973. A mini-bus fleet of ten, which includes six vehicles with ramps provides “dial-a-ride” door-to-door service. Daily and weekly scheduled routes serve the Sheridan County communities of Sheridan, Ranchester, Dayton, Big Horn, Story, and Banner. Weekly trips are also made for doctors’ appointments in Buffalo, Casper, and Billings for those patrons needing specialized care not available in Sheridan.

## **RAILROAD**

The Burlington Northern Santa Fe railroad is a heavy rail line that runs through much of Sheridan County, and serves principally as a coal-hauling route. As shown in the graphic below, it links Sheridan directly with Billings Montana and Gillette Wyoming, and indirectly to both the Denver and Salt Lake City major metropolitan areas. There is an average of 25-30 trains daily (Forward Sheridan).

## **AIRPORT**

The Sheridan County Airport is located at the southwest edge of the City of Sheridan and operates as the county’s regional airport. It offers daily commercial flights to Denver, Colorado and Billings, Montana.

## **PAVED TRAILS**

The County does not have a trails system. The City of Sheridan has started to create a trails systems to help improve overall aspects of the town and to encourage people to use alternate transportation. Trail systems are being developed and implemented that take residents and visitors through planned green belts to important areas of the city, including a seven-mile trail linking several parks in the city. Bike lanes are also being developed along major roads within the City of Sheridan.



## COMMUTING

The chart below summarizes how Sheridan County residents get to work and commute times, with comparisons for Wyoming and national averages. This year 2000 data indicates that most Sheridan County residents take a personal vehicle to work. The percentage of Sheridan County residents who work from their home is slightly higher than state or national averages.

**Table 15: Commuting Transportation and Times, 2000**

	Sheridan County	Wyoming	U.S.
<b>Transportation to Work</b>			
Public transportation	0.2%	1.4%	4.7%
Car, motorcycle, truck	90.0%	88.6%	88.0%
Walk	3.6%	4.4%	2.9%
Work at home	5.1%	4.3%	3.3%
<b>Commuting Time</b>			
Average travel time to work (minutes)	18	18	26
Average travel time to work using public transportation	19	49	48
Average travel time to work using other transportation	18	17	24

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

## NATURAL RESOURCES

### WILDLIFE HABITAT

The County is home to a variety of wildlife including native fish species, birds, and large game. Wyoming Game and Fish have inventoried a growing list of small fish species native to the County's prairie streams. These stream habitats face water quality challenges from surface runoff as well as septic effluent which load bacteria, sediment, and nutrients that decrease oxygen and increase temperatures in the water.

Another important wildlife habitat is that of the sage grouse, which have numerous lek sites throughout the County, as identified on the Wildlife Habitat Map. Lek sites are the sites where males display for females during the mating season and are crucial to the breeding behavior of the species. In addition, sage grouse typically nest within a two mile radius of the lek site. Because the sage grouse will return to lek and nest at the same site each year, loss of the lek site or infringement in the area around a lek site results in loss of the breeding potential of all birds that would nest there. Protection of lek sites is therefore critical to the continuation of the species in the County.

Other notable wildlife includes the big game species of antelope, elk, mule deer, and moose as well as large predators such as black bear and mountain lion. With the exception of the antelope, which have main migration routes north of the cities of Sheridan and Clearmont, these large wildlife species tend to live in and along the foothills of Bighorn National Forest. As shown on the Wildlife Habitat Map, elk, mule deer, and moose have crucial range areas in the county. Crucial ranges as defined by the Wyoming Game and Fish Department (WGFD) are those areas that represent a "determining factor in the population's ability to maintain itself at a certain level."<sup>12</sup> In particular, moose and elk tend to inhabit foothills areas east of the Forest. WGFD note that white tail deer populations have increased in recent years resulting in increased collisions with cars and increased presence of mountain lion drawn by the presence of these prey. Increased development of rural areas has eliminated hunting activity in certain areas further supporting the population growth of white tail deer.

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<sup>12</sup> Definition as listed by the Biodiversity Conservation Alliance in their work with WFGD crucial habitat data.

Game and Fish note an increased presence of black bear around certain communities including Story, crediting improper waste disposal and illegal feeding activities for attracting them to settled areas.

## STEEP SLOPES AND LANDSLIDES

The steep slopes and landslide areas are shown on the Steep Slopes and Landslides map. The county has vast steep areas, especially at the edge of Bighorn National Forest and also to the east of Sheridan and north of Highway 14. Landslide areas mainly occur in the Bighorn Foothills, however numerous small landslide areas occur all around the county.

## GROUNDWATER VULNERABILITY

Since 1992, the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality's Water Quality Division, the University of Wyoming's Water Resources Center, the Wyoming State Geologic Survey and the US Environmental Protection Agency have worked to compile data and map groundwater vulnerability. Groundwater vulnerability refers to the relative speed that substances on the surface can reach and pollute the groundwater supply. This includes both point source (e.g. a gas station tank) and non-point source (e.g. pesticides applied over wide ranges) pollution. The agencies modeled and mapped groundwater vulnerability using the following factors: (1) depth to groundwater, (2) geology, (3) soils, (4) hydrogeology, (5) net aquifer recharge, (6) slope, and (7) vadose zone characteristics. According to the county's groundwater supply vulnerability scoring system, a score of one is the least vulnerable and a score of five is the most vulnerable. The Groundwater Vulnerability map illustrates that in the County, the areas of highest vulnerability score also tend to be in locations where the greatest development pressures have been occurring.

## MINERAL RESOURCES AND MINES

Two maps illustrate mineral resources. The Mines and Potentially Exploitable Coal map shows potentially exploitable coal fields, which exist throughout the county. The map shows abandoned mine sites, also throughout the county but primarily in the west near the city of Sheridan and to the north. Finally, it shows one known subsidence area near Acme.

The Coal Bed Methane Wells map shows coal bed methane wells throughout the county primarily east of I-90. The status of wells varies—some are producing gas whereas others are approved yet not drilled and some are no longer producing gas.

Gravel resources, while not mapped in the inventory maps, are an extremely important economic and development resource for Sheridan County.

## AGRICULTURAL LAND AND LARGE RANCHES

Sheridan County is a largely agricultural, with 96% of all private land in the unincorporated county in agricultural use and development concentrated in cities and towns. The vast majority of agricultural land in the county is non-irrigated cropland or livestock grazing range.

As illustrated on the Agricultural Lands and Large Ranches map, nearly half (45%) of all agricultural land in the unincorporated county is within one of 31 large ranches that range in size from just under 2,000 acres to over 92,000 acres. These ranches include a mix of corporate and private productive ranches as well as lifestyle ranches. Many of the large ranches are comprised of non-contiguous and fragmented land holdings as private land holdings mix with public lands.

Most of the irrigated land supply in the county is located along a river, creek, or roadway in four main areas:

- Clear Creek in the southeastern portion of the county through Clearmont and Leiter;
- Tongue River in the northwest near Ranchester and Dayton;
- Big Goose and Little Goose Creeks to the southwest of Sheridan, including the largest concentration of irrigated land in the Big Horn area; and
- Prairie Dog, Wildcat, and Dutch Creeks just west of Sheridan.

## WEED AND PEST CONTROL

Sheridan County Weed & Pest Control District implements effective prevention, containment, and weed and pest management programs on all lands within the district. Professionally trained individuals assist landowners with individual weed or pest program. The district also strives to achieve the best management with minimal environmental damage by employing Integrated Management Systems. Finally, it manages the following programs:

- Leafy Spurge Program
- General Program
- Small Acreage Program
- Mosquito Program
- Equipment Rental Program
- Equipment Building Program

## PARKS, OPEN SPACE, TRAILS, AND RECREATION

Access to open spaces and the outdoors is a key part of the quality of life enjoyed by residents of Sheridan County. Recreation opportunities abound in the diverse and beautiful landscapes of the county.



*Bighorn National Forest (Source: National Forest Service website).*

### PUBLIC LANDS

#### **Bighorn National Forest**

The far western part of Sheridan County is designated as a part of the Bighorn National Forest, managed by the National Forest Service. The Big Horn Mountains are a sister range of the Rocky Mountains that includes diverse landscapes—from lush grasslands to alpine meadows, from crystal-clear lakes to glacial carved valleys, from rolling hills to sheer mountain walls. The National Forest provides Sheridan residents and visitors with ample opportunity for camping, fishing, hiking, hunting, snowmobiling, and wildlife viewing.

Access to Bighorn National Forest is available in Dayton, where locals and visitors alike enjoy multiple lakes and reservoirs, 32 campgrounds, two scenic byways, 14 picnic areas, seven lodges, miles of fishing streams, 189,000 acres of Wilderness, 1,500 miles of trails, and much more. The Bighorn National Forest is also accessible by the Red Grade Road from Big Horn, Little Big Horn River Road, Smith Creek Road, Tongue Canyon Road and State Highway 194 from Story.

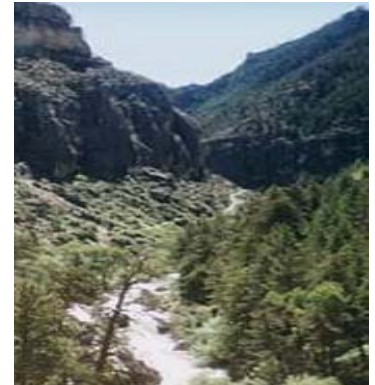
#### **Sheridan County-Owned Lands**

Sheridan County owns three parcels of land that are presently not under any intensive management. The Kleenburn parcel (103 ac.) on the Tongue River (near the old Acme town site) is situated within a rich riparian area containing the river and a small reservoir. Plans

are being developed to offer a variety of activities including camping and fishing. The Keystone Road parcel (562 ac.) located four miles west of Sheridan contains a shooting facility, but is mostly open grass land. The Little Goose Canyon parcel (119 ac.) is situated in rugged terrain at the foot of Little Goose Canyon. It contains superb large game habitat and spectacular mountain scenery.

### **Tongue River Canyon**

Near Dayton, Tongue River Canyon (photo, left) is an outdoor recreation area offering a variety of activities. A hiking trail leads up the canyon 15 miles to the top of the mountains. The Tongue River winds below spectacular cliff walls of the canyon and offers first-class trout fishing. The canyon walls feature many bolted and mapped rock climbing routes. Tongue River Canyon Cave is a two-mile long natural feature that is enjoyed by technical cavers.



Tongue River Canyon  
(Source: Sheridan Sports Stop website)

## **RECREATION**

### **Sheridan Recreation District (School District #2 Recreation Fund)**

The Sheridan Recreation District (SRD), an independent district funded through a 1 mill property tax mill levy as well as corporate sponsorship, provides recreational facilities and activities in Sheridan County. SRD offers a variety of activities and programs, some in conjunction with local partners such as the schools and YMCA. SRD facilities listed below are located in the City of Sheridan except where noted.

#### **Thorne-Rider Park**

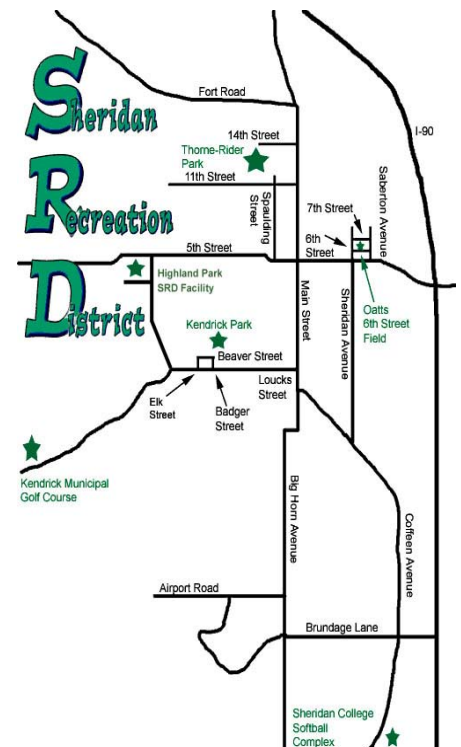
The Sheridan Recreation District office, Thorne-Rider kiddy park, BMX bike track, tennis, sand volleyball courts, basketball courts, Redle baseball field, Trooper stadium, walking path, cross-country ski trail, sledding hill, skate board park, ice rink, and Dan Madia football field are all located in Throne-Rider Park, located in north Sheridan between 14<sup>th</sup> Street and 11<sup>th</sup> Street.

#### **Kendrick Park Facilities**

The SRD owns and operates facilities within Kendrick Park (which is owned and operated by the City of Sheridan). SRD facilities include a pool, tennis courts, and an ice cream stand.

#### **Oatts 6<sup>th</sup> Street Field Park**

Oatts 6<sup>th</sup> Street Field Park is a baseball field.



Sheridan Recreation District Parks  
(Source: Sheridan Recreation District website).

### Sheridan College Softball Complex

This facility includes three lighted softball fields, concessions and restroom facilities, a playground area, and two slow-pitch batting machine/cages.

### Highland Park SRD Facility

This former Highland Park Elementary School (closed in 2006) is available for rentals through the SRD.

### Story "Centennial Park"

This family-oriented park includes playground and picnic facilities

### **Tongue River Valley Recreation District (School District #1 Recreation Fund)**

The Tongue River Valley Community Center located in Ranchester, features a full-service fitness center, game room, and meeting rooms. The Community Center offers fitness and educational classes for participants of all ages.



*Crook's Fountain (Source: Whitney Benefits, Inc. website)*

### **City of Sheridan Parks and Trails**

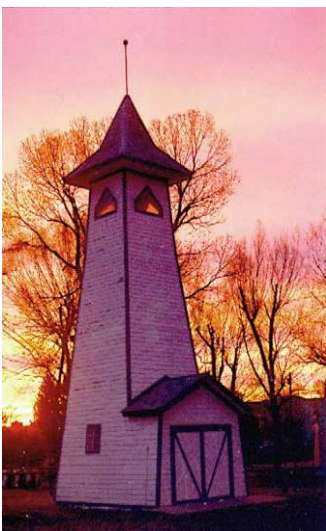
The City of Sheridan owns and maintains nine parks within the city. These include:

- Crook's Fountain
- Emerson Park
- Kendrick Park
- Lions Club Park
- Marshall Park
- Mill Park
- North Heights Park
- Rotary Park
- Washington Park

Whitney Commons is a formal park setting with a botanical garden, meditation labyrinth, amphitheater, and water fountain, shown at right. Whitney Commons is operated by the educational foundation, Whitney Benefits, Inc.

Currently, the city maintains 2,475 linear feet of paved pathways, and a 7-mile pathway system of paved and unpaved sections that connects Kendrick Park and Whitney Commons with many smaller parks and other destinations.

The City of Sheridan operates Kendrick Municipal Golf Course, a public 18-hole course. The course has moderate fees that cover all expenses and generate revenue for the City.



*Source: Foothills Motel & Campground website*

## **Town of Dayton Parks**

The Town of Dayton owns and maintains a riverside park and Bicentennial Park, which includes a historic bell tower that was used to signal the fire alarm in earlier times.

## **Private Recreation Sites and Facilities in Sheridan County**

The Powder Horn features three mature, nine-hole courses that offer spectacular golf and views for every type of golfer. Scottish-style links golf, challenging target golf and wide-open fairways allow for many creative shot-making opportunities. The Powder Horn is consistently ranked on America's Top 100 Modern Courses List.

The Flying Cowboys radio controlled aircraft association leases the land at the SRD main complex.

Just outside Big Horn, the Big Horn Events Center is the site of world-class polo games from late May until Labor Day. At other times, the area is used for community activities including state-wide soccer tournaments, fireworks, and the Don King Days old-time ranch rodeo.

The Sheridan YMCA is another private facility.

## **OTHER COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

- **The State of Wyoming fish hatchery** grounds are open year round. Educational displays can be viewed at the visitor's center and the fish hatchery ponds show lake trout hatching.
- **T-Rex Natural History Museum** features fossils, dinosaur dioramas, and a beautiful collection of minerals and crystals.
- **The Wyoming State Bird Farm** raises many native fowl and some exotic types as well. They have a show pen for a close-up view of many birds we seldom see.
- **Bellevue Municipal Cemetery** is owned and maintained by the City of Sheridan.



*State Fish Hatchery (Source: Thunder Mountain Tours website)*

## HISTORIC SITES AND LANDMARKS

Sheridan County has a rich history dating back to the gold mining days of the Bozeman Overland Trail. Many significant historic resources continue to preserve and celebrate the history of the area.

### DOWNTOWN SHERIDAN HISTORIC DISTRICT

A self-guided walking tour guides visitors through a walking tour of the historic business district of Sheridan. This tour is designed by the Downtown Sheridan Association, a nonprofit organization dedicated to the preservation of our historic downtown. The city also has an operating trolley which runs six days per week on a circuit through the Downtown Historic District.

### HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND SITES

#### Historic Sheridan Inn

The Historic Sheridan Inn of 69 gables is a National Historic Landmark located in the City of Sheridan. This hotel was once considered the finest hotel between Chicago and San Francisco. It was frequented by Buffalo Bill Cody, who auditioned acts for his famous Wild West Show from the porch of the grand old building. The Inn is open year-round for tours.



*The Historic Sheridan Inn (Source: Sheridan County Chamber of Commerce).*

#### Trail End Historic Site

Trail End Historic Site is owned and operated by the State of Wyoming and located in the city of Sheridan. It is the former mansion of John B. Kendrick, a Wyoming senator, governor, and rancher. Carefully restored and authentically furnished, Trail End shows an elegantly different side of Wyoming's rich ranching heritage. Hours vary by season. The 1913 3-story mansion features original furnishings and woodwork unmatched anywhere. The construction required 36 train boxcars of wood to complete it.



*Trail End Historic Site (Source: <http://www.sheridanwyoming.org/>)*

#### WYO Theater

The WYO Theater located in the City of Sheridan presents Broadway plays, nationally known musical entertainment and local talent. During changing economies, the old Lotus Theater was closed and a group of local citizens set out to "Save the WYO". The full-service theater reopened in 1989.

#### Hans Kleiber Cabin, Dayton

Hans Kleiber Cabin is the original studio of the late German artist. The cabin is located on Main Street, Dayton. It is staffed by volunteers and features a variety of art related books and materials.

## **Connor Battlefield State Historic Site, Ranchester**

The park surrounds the monument to the Battle of Tongue River, fought during the 1865 Powder River Expedition. Camping, fishing, and picnic facilities are on site.

## **HISTORY MUSEUMS**

### **Sheridan County Museum**

Sheridan County Museum, located in the City of Sheridan, features interactive exhibits, dioramas, and a gift shop highlighting the colorful cultures, commerce and characters of the area. The museum was recently relocated to a new building, just off the Fifth Street exit. It serves as the gateway for exploring historic downtown Sheridan and heritage sites around the region.

### **King Museum**

The King Museum in the City of Sheridan, features Native American artifacts, antiques, western art, and a collection of over 500 saddles—some dating back to the 1800's.



*Inside King Museum.*

### **Bozeman Trail Museum**

The Bozeman Trail Museum, located in Big Horn, is an original blacksmith shop serving travelers on the Bozeman Trail. This historic museum depicts various eras from 1800's to the present.

### **Bradford Brinton Memorial & Museum**

The Quarter Circle A Ranch is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This gentleman's ranch has been a museum since 1961. The 1892 main ranch house showcases the Brinton Western Art collection with works by Russell, Remington, Borein, F.T. Johnson, Kleiber, and Gollings. The furnishings and other collections give visitors a feel for the lifestyle of the more prosperous ranches in a bygone era. The Reception Gallery features seasonal art exhibitions.

## **HISTORIC LANDMARKS AND DRIVES**

### **Big Goose Creek**

In May 1876, General George Crook and his troops arrived at present day Sheridan, setting up camp along Big Goose Creek. From there, Crook set out against the Sioux and Cheyenne Indians. On June 17, 1876—eight days before the Custer Battle—Crook's troops met the Sioux warriors of Crazy Horse at the Battle of the

Rosebud. This battle, between Sioux and Cheyenne and Crooks' forces, ended in a draw and forced Crook to withdraw back to his camp on the Big Goose Creek.

### **Highway 14: Medicine Wheel Passage**



Medicine Wheel Passage  
(Source:  
[http://www.byways.org/  
explore/byways/2164/stories/  
68357](http://www.byways.org/explore/byways/2164/stories/68357))

The Medicine Wheel Passage is beautiful scenic byway that is only open during hunting season. This historic site was the scene of an 1865 battle between U.S. Troops and the Arapahoe Indians. The area features camping, fishing access, a groomed walking path, and a picnic area with a playground and public restrooms.

A historical sign located on U.S. Highway 14 between Ranchester and Dayton gives an informative description of the battle between U.S. Troops and the Arapahoe Indians. In the summer of 1865, an expedition commanded by Colonel James A. Sawyer undertook building a route linking Sioux City, Iowa to the gold fields of Montana via the Bozeman Trail. On August 31, over a hundred men were attacked by the Arapahoe Indians in the Tongue River Valley. The struggle continued for days until assistance arrived from General Connor's Powder River Expedition Forces. This allowed the men to continue on to Virginia City, Montana.

## **OPEN SPACE PROGRAMS**

### **Private Land Conservation**

Private land conservation in Sheridan has been significant—aided by the three land trusts that work in the region. They land trusts are the Nature Conservancy, the Wyoming Stock Growers Agricultural Land Trust, and the Sheridan Community Land Trust. In total, 60,279 private acres are under easement and another 5,300 are anticipated by year end in 2007.

#### **The Nature Conservancy**

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) has 33 conservation easements in Sheridan County totaling 51,991 acres, as indicated in the figure below. In 2007, TNC is working on projects that will add another 3,600 acres by year end. TNC has prioritized working along the face of the Bighorns Mountains for many years (i.e., the Bighorn Foothills Site) because of its biological and natural values.



**Figure 6: Nature Conservancy Conservation Land**

#### Wyoming Stock Growers Agricultural Land Trust

Wyoming Stock Growers Agricultural Land Trust (WSGALT) formed out of the Stock Growers Association six years ago to give landowners yet another option to conserve land. WSGALT holds five agricultural easements that cover a total of 9,129 acres. These easements are located west of Sheridan near Dayton. In 2007, the land trust is negotiating two more easements, to conserve an additional 1,700 acres.

#### The Sheridan Community Land Trust

The Sheridan Community Land Trust is a new organization. Its mission is: “to promote agricultural landscapes; open spaces, wildlife recreational opportunities; affordable housing and historic preservation. These interests are complementary and essential to our quality of life and economic sustainability.” The community land trust is working on its first easement in 2007.

## INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICE DISTRICTS

### FIRE PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

Sheridan County currently has five independent fire districts, as well as the joint City-County Sheridan Fire-Rescue Department. In addition, the National Forest Service provides fire response in Bighorn National Forest. Fire danger is substantial in unincorporated areas of Sheridan County.

City of Sheridan, and areas outside of the City of Sheridan within 5 miles of the fire-rescue station and within a 1000 ft of a fire hydrant, have a fire insurance Public Protection Classification of 5 (on a scale of 1 to 10).

Areas of Sheridan County that are not within a Fire District have a classification of 9.

#### **Six Independent Fire Districts**

Landowners in each of the independent fire districts are assessed a 3 mill levy on their property taxes to fund the district. The graphic below depicts the names and geographic coverage area of each fire district. The districts are:

- Tongue River,
- Dayton,
- Big Horn,
- Story,
- Clearmont, and
- Sheridan Area Rural Fire Protection.

See Fire Districts map.

#### **Sheridan Fire-Rescue Department**

The Sheridan Fire-Rescue Department provides fire and emergency services to the City of Sheridan and, on a temporary contract, portions of unincorporated Sheridan County in a doughnut-shaped area around the City (Sheridan Area Rural Fire Protection District). In 1999, this department consolidated the former Sheridan County Fire Department, 911 Ambulance Service, and the Sheridan Fire-Rescue Department. The department currently employs 34 full-time people (30 of which are divided into three-ten person crews who operate out of the fire station and four employees in the administrative offices).

The Sheridan Fire-Rescue Department also responds to wild land fires in and around Sheridan and Sheridan County, with mutual aid agreements with the surrounding fire districts (i.e., Bighorn National Forest, Johnson and Campbell counties in Wyoming, and Bighorn County in Montana). Sheridan Fire-Rescue also provides ambulance standbys for wild land and forest fires when needed.

### **Sheridan Fire Capacity**

The Sheridan Fire-Rescue Department current average response time for emergency calls, from time of dispatch to arrival at emergency scene, is 6.04 minutes. (This includes calls for assistance to County and Fire Districts.)

### **Town Fire Departments**

The communities of Ranchester, Dayton, Story, Big Horn, and Clearmont all maintain local fire departments to respond to immediate fire needs within their respective communities. The firefighters are all volunteers in all of the communities except Ranchester.

## **SHERIFF AND POLICE PROTECTION**

Law Enforcement services are provided by the City of Sheridan Police Department, the Sheridan County Sheriff's Department, and the Wyoming Highway Patrol. Sheridan College campus security officers patrol the campus as well.

In 2006, more than 118 full-time personnel (civilian and law enforcement) served the Sheridan County area, 74 of whom are law enforcement officers. Sheridan County boasts a ratio of 2.67 law enforcement officers per 1,000 residents, compared to the national average (law enforcement personnel: 1,000 residents) of 2.3 and a mountain region average of 1.8.

In 2002, as reported in DCI's Uniform Crime Report, Sheridan County's violent crime index of 244.1 (crimes per 10,000 inhabitants) ranked lowest among the eight major counties in Wyoming, and 33% below the state average of 359.1. Sheridan County's 2003 crime index is 40% below the 2002 U.S. Crime Index of 400.3 (the latest year-end figures available.)

Enhanced 911 emergency telephone services are available throughout Sheridan County, which include addressing and location identification for caller, including cellular phones.

### **Sheridan County Sheriff's Office and Courthouse**

The Sheriff's Office conducts regular patrols throughout Sheridan County, with its base of operations at the Sheriff's Office in the City

of Sheridan. Deputies patrol hundreds of miles, including several small communities, farm and ranch land, and vast areas of coal bed methane development. They also conduct community programs such as the school resource officer, and the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) program.

The Sheriff's Office operates a detention center. The detention center offers mental health, AA meetings, work release, and General Education Diplomas, and religious services to those who are incarcerated.

The Sheridan County Courthouse is a circuit court that deals with civil and criminal cases. The Sheridan County Clerk of Court processes all cases, as well as handling foreclosures, victim assistance, recording of wills, and administrative legal matters such as fines and paperwork.

### **Sheriff's Office Capacity**

Currently, the Sheridan County Sheriff's Office Patrol Division is comprised of 19 sworn Peace Officers, 16 of which are on active patrol assignments. These include the School Resource Officer, Community Resource Officer, and a K-9 officer. The Detention Center, constructed in 1985 to house 46 inmates, was recently expanded to meet current demand, which is typically 75 inmates or more.

Between 2001 and 2005, the Sheriff's Office has seen an increase of 43% in the number of case reports generated. Some of this increase is attributed to coal bed methane development. This has placed greater demand on the existing patrol force, as well as the Detention Center. The Sheridan County Detention Center was expanded in 2006 to better meet needs, but a final finishing step remains for facility expansion—to build a kitchen to allow food preparation on-site. The addition is expected to save tax dollars over time.



### **City of Sheridan Police Department**

The Sheridan Police Department, which employs 28 sworn officers and 19 1/2 full time civilian personnel, provides police response to the city of Sheridan. Several specialized departments comprise the police unit of Sheridan. These include:

- One certified K-9 unit,
- Two motorcycle police officers,
- Bike Patrol,
- Crisis Negotiations Team,
- Criminal Investigation Department, and
- Special Response Team – this team is specially trained to deal with high risk situations.

### **Sheridan Police Department Capacity**

The department is currently looking to increase their staff by six officers, the additional staffing necessary to provide adequate coverage of Sheridan and the area directly surrounding the city.

### **Ranchester Town Marshall**

The Town of Ranchester has a Town Marshall that offers public safety services within the town limits.

## **WATER AND WASTEWATER UTILITIES**

### **Overview and Water Availability**

Sheridan County has abundant waters from the Goose Creek and Piney Creek drainages, the Tongue River, and their tributaries, as well as a system of reservoirs. The County also holds the rights to 10,000 acre feet from Lake DeSmet. A key element of planning for future growth in Sheridan County rests on the availability of potable water to sustain development, and on the capacity of wastewater treatment facilities to treat and then discharge water which meets environmental quality standards. In addition, location and character of residential and commercial development is often driven by the availability of services—water, natural gas, urban roads, electricity, water, and wastewater treatment. Utilities and facilities planning is a powerful tool that can be used to shape development.

The ability of a water system to meet future demands is determined by a number of factors—principally the amount of water available to the system, the capacity of the system’s water treatment facility, and the size of transmission and distribution lines in the service area.

Wastewater treatment systems are also limited in capacity by size of the treatment system (i.e., lagoon volume, line capacity, or permitted discharge).

### **Water and Wastewater Systems**

The following sections contain information about the water and wastewater service providers operating in Sheridan County and capacity.

#### **City of Sheridan Water System**

The Sheridan water system serves the City of Sheridan, as well as the Sheridan Area Water System Joint Powers Board (SAWSJPB), which provides water service to over 1,400 accounts in the rural areas around Sheridan. It also provides water to Soldier Creek Water Company. The total service area population is 18,500, served by 8,190 total taps. Water treatment techniques include conventional

treatment (chemical addition, coagulation, sedimentation, filtration), and disinfection.

#### **Monthly Water Rates**

SAWS water rates are a base rate of \$74 bi-monthly (\$37 per month), plus a tiered rate structure based on actual use. The rate for 0 to 6,000 gallons is \$1.45 per thousand gallons. The price per thousand gallons increases with the amount of water uses.

#### **Water Capacity/Water Treatment**

The City of Sheridan Water Treatment Division operates two water treatment Plants, Sheridan and Big Goose. The water supply for both plants comes from Big Goose Creek and reservoirs on tributaries to Big Goose Creek. The system has a direct surface right from Big Goose Creek of 16 cubic feet per second (cfs), all the storage in Twin Lakes (3,400 acre-ft), plus an interest in the storage in Park, Dome and Sawmill Reservoirs (200.45 acre-ft total). The water supply system capacity (diversion and treatment) is about 18.5 million gallons per day (MGD). Storage capacity is 3,600 acre-ft of raw water, and 12.09 million gallons of treated water. According to the city, the capacity is adequate to meet both the average daily demand of 4.7 million gallons as well as peak day demand of 10.4 million gallons.

The 18.5 MGD capacity of the diversion and treatment facilities is substantially above the current maximum day demand of 10.4 MGD. This indicates an ability of the Sheridan system to meet substantial future potable water demands in the service area for the next 20 to 30 years. Limitations include the availability of raw water to the system and storage capacity. Ideally, a public water system will have at least the maximum daily demand (MDD) in storage. Sheridan has storage capacity of 12.09 MG of treated water, and is in the process of acquiring funding for an additional 3 MG. Additional storage can be added incrementally as demand increases.

The City of Sheridan is currently replacing the water main and upgrading the water intake facility. The city is planning improvements to infrastructure at the Sheridan Water Treatment Plant and studying the wastewater headworks for possible expansion.

#### **Ability to Meet Future Demand**

Supply: As noted above, Sheridan's current water supply consists of direct flow rights in Big Goose Creek and storage capacity in four mountain reservoirs. SAWSJAB also has a late (1989) direct flow right in Big Goose Creek, and uses the City of Sheridan's early (1882) direct flow right of 13 cubic feet per second (cfs) when the full capacity of the right is not required to meet City demands.

There appears to be an ample supply of treatable surface water available to meet projected County growth rates of .65 to 1.50

%/year. Regardless of the actual rate of population growth, there are options to meet future demands. Acquisition of new supplies will be expensive regardless of the source.

**Existing Storage:** Storage rights are available for sale in high mountain reservoirs in the Big Goose drainage. Purchase of these rights would increase the amount available for diversion and treatment at the water treatment plant at the mouth of Big Goose Canyon. Some of these reservoirs have maintenance issues that a prospective purchaser would inherit if these rights are purchased (dams in need of repair, inadequate emergency spillways, etc.) Since these reservoirs are located on the Big Horn National Forest, permits for construction would pose an obstacle to repairs, upgrades, or enlargements. The State Engineer's Office would probably require adequate spillways in association with construction at the site, substantially increasing the costs of water from these sources.

**Lake DeSmet:** Johnson and Sheridan Counties are currently co-owners of approximately 28,000 Ac/ft of firm yield in Lake DeSmet. This water is managed by a Joint Powers Board created for this purpose and consisting of one county commissioner and two citizens from each county. The best use of this resource may be the exchange of DeSmet water for stored water at other locations that could be diverted into the existing Big Goose Sheridan system. Direct use of Lake DeSmet water in Sheridan County could become economically feasible if pumping and/or treatment costs are shared by the City of Buffalo. Buffalo's current supply is nearing full utilization, due in part to releases from Tie Hack reservoir for power generation. Lake DeSmet will be considered as Buffalo explores supply options. Lake DeSmet resources are being evaluated in the WWDC\HKM Level I Study addressing water supplies for Johnson and Sheridan counties. Economic feasibility for the use of DeSmet water in Sheridan County would probably require cost sharing with Buffalo.

**Conservation:** Water use the Sheridan system is relatively high, as might be expected from the relatively low rates for residential users. Conservation, whether voluntary, regulatory, or encouraged through higher rates, is the cheapest option for extending the life of current supplies. In some cases, as with the Big Horn Planned Unit Development (PUD), the SAWS Joint Powers Board required developers to provide a separate raw water irrigation system as a condition of purchasing potable supplies. This requirement will be made of future developments seeking to connect to the SAWS system. Since peak water demands are usually for irrigation, the continued implementation of this requirement by SAWS for new water purchasers will significantly extend the capacity of the system to meet potable demands. The progressive rate structure used by

SAWS is also an important element in water conservation in the service area.

### **Sheridan Area Water Supply System**

The SAWS system supplies water to 1,449 existing users in Big Goose Valley, Little Goose Valley, and the Soldier Creek area. Of that number, 115 are currently not currently using water, but represent a contractual obligation to provide water in the future. SAWS have contracted with an additional 331 potential users, 323 of which will not be allowed to irrigate from the SAWS system. Since 2003 the number of taps served by the SAWSJPB has increased at a rate of 3% per year, which is substantially higher than projected growth rates for the rest of the County.

In September of 2006, EnTech Inc. of Sheridan prepared a report entitled "Analysis of Existing Water Supplies for the Sheridan Area Water Supply Joint Powers Board." EnTech estimated the amount of uncommitted water currently owned by SAWS at 183 acre-feet. EnTech concluded that 183 acre-feet will provide sufficient water supplies for a period time anywhere between the year 2014 and 2036, depending on rates of growth and whether or not separate non-potable water systems are required in future developments. (See Appendix C, page C-2. for additional information about water system limiting factors and capacity.)

### **City of Sheridan Wastewater Treatment**

The City of Sheridan operates an activated sludge wastewater treatment plant with a capacity to treat up to 4.4 MGD. In addition to piped wastewater, county septic tanks are cleaned by a local hauler and delivered to the plant for treatment. Currently, average summer time flows are 3.0 MGD, and average winter time flows are 1.8 MGD, indicating that the facility capacity is adequate for current needs and to meet a demand increase of almost 50 percent. The facility returns approximately 2.5 MGD to the Big Goose Creek drainage. Treated sludge is dewatered and transported to the county landfill for composting. Recently, a new grease treatment facility was added.

### **Goose Creek Septic Systems**

In 2006, HKM Engineering conducted a study of the Goose Creek Watershed to assess the impacts of septic systems and determine the feasibility of alternative technologies for septic system treatments in the watershed. The study determined surface uses in a large area of the watershed have a high potential risk to impact groundwater. Additionally, the Little Goose Creek drainage has a higher septic system density and a larger groundwater sensitivity area than other parts of the watershed.

Some recommendations from the study include:

- Explore the feasibility of expanding the central sewer system;
- Initiate a regional sewer Master Plan for the Little Goose Creek drainage;
- Consider establishing a licensing program for septic system installers and pumpers; and/or
- Explore alternative technologies for sewage treatment identified in the study.

### **Town of Ranchester Water**

The town of Ranchester is located in northern Sheridan County, along the Tongue River. The system serves an estimated population of 718 on 303 taps. Average daily use is reported 232 gpcpd, with a maximum demand of 709 gpcpd. Total average day demand is about 200,000 GPD with a maximum day demand reaching almost 700,000 GPD. Base water rates are \$19.00 for 2000 gallons, plus \$.90 per 1000 gallons over the base amount. The average water bill is about \$27.00 per month.

#### **Ranchester Water System Capacity**

The WWDC funded construction of a new 500,000 gallon glass fused to metal storage tank. The new tank is for treated water and is located adjacent to the existing tank. Ranchester is looking for additional sources of water. The Town would also like to relocate its existing diversion works up stream to a point where better quality water is available in the Tongue River. Relocating the diversion would reduce the demands on the Town's water treatment plant and the costs associated with treatment. Ranchester presently does not have the capability to contribute drinking water to a regional system.

### **Ranchester Wastewater Treatment**

Ranchester's wastewater treatment facility is a three-cell lagoon located east of town. The facility is adequate to meet the needs of the current population of 718. The discharge rate varies from 100,000 gpd to 130,000 gpd in summer. In the summer, some storm water drainage is routed to the lagoons, which can increase discharge to a peak of 150,000 gpd. The permitted discharge is 179,000 gpd. There have been no reported discharge violations. A new subdivision is under development west of town, and a new school may be built in the same area. Incorporation of these users into the system could bring the existing system to near permitted capacity. An enlargement may be necessary at that time. Ranchester has only limited capacity to contribute to a regional system.

### Town of Dayton Water

The Dayton Water utility provides service to a population of 678, with 283 water taps. The water treatment plant is a package plant with chemical addition, coagulation, sedimentation, filtration, and disinfection.

The Wyoming Water Development Commission (WWDC) recently funded a project providing significant upgrades to the Dayton drinking water system. Components included a new Madison formation ground water well with sufficient capacity to allow Dayton to take its treatment plant off-line during winter months. The well flows, without pumping, approximately 120-150 gallons per minute.

WWDC also funded a new pipeline from the Town's water treatment plant to the distribution system. This pipeline has sufficient capacity for a regional system. The line is large enough to provide water to the area between Dayton and Ranchester, and could supplement Ranchester's supply. The project also included a pump station to improve system pressure for end users. Detailed reports are available from WWDC.

WWDC is currently studying the feasibility of constructing a raw water distribution system or building a new potable water distribution system. If this project comes to fruition, Dayton could decommission its water treatment plant and supply potable needs year around from the Madison well. The original transite (concrete-asbestos) transmission line from the Water Plant to the distribution system was left in place and could covey raw water for irrigation to a distribution system. As an alternative, the Dayton water treatment plant, a package plant with chemical addition, coagulation, sedimentation, filtration, and disinfection, could service a regional system serving the area between Dayton and Ranchester.

#### **Dayton Water System Capacity and Ability to Meet Future Needs**

Dayton's system has a maximum capacity of 1,200 gpm from the infiltration gallery on the Tongue River, plus the 120-150 gpm from the new Madison well. The system is 97% metered, and serves a population estimated at 700 thorough approximately 310 taps. Dayton recently agreed to provide potable water to a new subdivision adjacent to the town limits. Average use is reported at 270 gallons per capita per day (gpcpd), with maximum day use at 600 gpcpd. Total average day usage is about 100,000 gallons per day (gpd) with maximum day usage at about 500,000. The Town's water rates are a base rate of \$12.40 for 2250 gallons per month plus \$0.75 for each additional 1000 gallons. The average water bill is reported to be \$17.00.

The Town's ability to meet future demands is limited only by operational considerations. The existing treatment plant should be maintained for future growth and/or the development a regional system.

### **Dayton Wastewater Treatment**

Dayton's lagoon system consists of three cells with one cell divided by a curtain to create a total of four operational cells. The system has no reported discharge violations and is permitted for 200,000 gallons per day (gpd) discharge. Current discharge averages about 50,000 gpd, but may reach 100,000 gpd during periods of peak use or when storm water runoff is present. The system has capacity for at least double the current service population of 700. Dayton has expressed an interest, on the drinking water supply side, of participating in a regional supply system. Dayton clearly has the capacity to participate in a regional wastewater system.

### **Clearmont Water System**

Located in the southeast portion of Sheridan County, Clearmont's water system consists of two wells producing a total of 150 gallons per minute, which is sufficient to meet the requirements of the current population of 160 people. The town has a total storage capacity of 400,000 gallons, however only about 200,000 gallons are held in storage at any one time.

The WWDC is currently conducting a Level I study of the town's water wells. This study will verify production capacity and evaluate possible impacts of coal bed methane production in the area on the town wells. Because the town has excess storage capacity above current needs, it could accommodate an increase in population with the current system, provided production from the wells remains at current levels.

### **Clearmont Wastewater Treatment**

Clearmont has a non-discharging wastewater treatment lagoon with three cells. The system is of sufficient size to accommodate projected countywide growth of 0.65 to 1.5% for the next 10 years, although Clearmont's remote locate makes substantial growth in the area unlikely.

### **Big Horn School Septic System**

The Big Horn School currently discharges 6000 gallons of sewage per day into a septic system. (Septic System Impact Study, HKM, 2006) The School has plans to double in size in the near future. Also planned by the Big Horn School is a bus barn, fueling point and light maintenance/washing facility at the Big Horn/Story Y. This facility will have the potential to introduce contaminants such as petroleum products, silt, road salt, etc. into area waters.

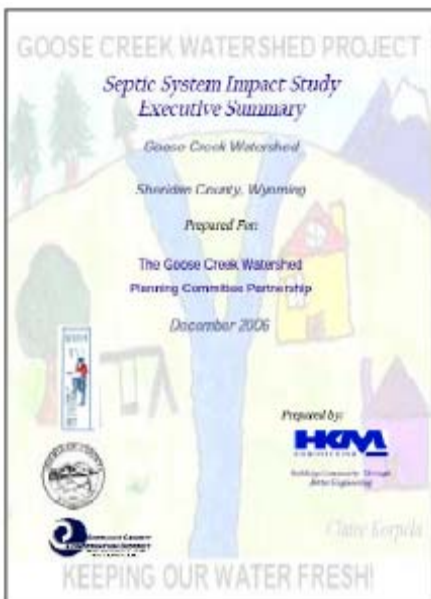
### **Powder Horn PUD Package Sewage Treatment Plant**

This development operates a collection system and a package sewage treatment plant.

### Unincorporated Story Wells and Septic Systems

In the community of Story, all of the 750 to 800 homes and several commercial establishments are all on individual wells and septic systems. The area soils are alluvial sands and gravels of high transmissivity. There is a potential for contamination of wells from septic systems. The area is at risk and would benefit from a central water distribution system and/or a sewer collection and treatment system.

The Story Community Development Plan (1977) identified these issues and recommended a regulatory approach to require proper installation of wells and septic systems, and improved septic system technology in at-risk areas. A centralized sewage collection and treatment system was considered to be too expensive due to soil conditions (boulder fields) and limited customer base. The report also recommended consideration of a centralized water system. The county's imposition of a two-acre minimum lot size for rural septic systems will alleviate the impacts of future development, but high residential density in Story will continue to create water quality concerns.



### Groundwater Programs

Groundwater quality is a significant issue in Sheridan County. The main threat to water quality is contamination from septic systems. Approximately one-third of Sheridan County residents use well and septic for their water and wastewater. As indicated below, a 2006 study found some groundwater contamination and high groundwater sensitivity from septic systems in some areas of the Big Goose Creek watershed, particularly in the Little Goose Creek basin. The study recommends exploring a variety of alternatives to reduce the potential for groundwater contamination from residential septic systems. Livestock and coal bed methane development have also been identified as potential sources of groundwater contamination in parts of Sheridan County.

Sheridan County has initiated several programs to help minimize potential sources of drinking water contamination. These include larger lot size minimums for development that is not served by central water and sewer systems; increasing knowledge about proper installation of septic system; and incentives for landowners to keep potential contaminants, such as livestock corrals, away from water sources.

## ELECTRIC POWER

Sheridan County does not own or operate an electric utility. A variety of power utilities serve county customers, including both privately held and publicly traded companies, as well as cooperative utility providers. The power companies in Sheridan County are listed below:

- Big Horn County Electric Cooperative, Inc.
- Big Horn Rural Electric Company
- MDU Resources Group, Inc.
- Rocky Mountain Power
- Powder River Energy Corporation
- The Weighted Average Cost per KWh of Power 2001 in Sheridan County is as follows<sup>13</sup>:
  - Industrial power: 3.26 cents per kWh.
  - Commercial power: 5.14 cents per kWh.
  - Residential power: 6.58 cents per kWh.

## SOLID WASTE FACILITIES

Sheridan County has no solid waste facilities; residents in unincorporated areas may use some of the City of Sheridan facilities, as indicated below.

### City of Sheridan Solid Waste

#### Waste Collection

The City of Sheridan provides weekly residential waste collection for city residents and businesses. Rates vary by size of container (i.e., 100-gal or 300-gal), as well as dumpsters for business.

#### Recycling Center

A recycling center operated by the City of Sheridan receives drop-offs of metal, glass, newspaper, office paper and corrugated cardboard. Six recycling trailers are also provided in locations throughout the city that accept aluminum cans, steel cans, magazines, and newspaper.

#### Sheridan Municipal Landfill

The City of Sheridan owns and operates the Sheridan Municipal Landfill for solid waste disposal, which accepts waste on a fee basis. City residents receive free services including one free trip per year



*Solid Waste Facility Source: Sheridan County*

<sup>13</sup> Source: <http://www.whywyoming.org/pdf/Counties/Sheridan.pdf>.

and up to one ton of disposal per household during spring clean-up days. The facility compacts and covers approximately 30,000 tons of household waste and construction debris per year. The facility also provides recycling for tires, batteries, metal and oil, composting, and free green waste disposal and recycling. Through recycling and composting programs, the landfill diverts about 55 percent of the approximate 150 tons of material each day.<sup>14</sup> The current landfill replaces an older landfill which operated from 1950 to 1985. A primary concern is the amount of space available (as addressed in the 2001 Solid Waste Master Plan.)

The City of Sheridan Solid Waste Division also offers city residents special services during the year, including leaf pick-up in the fall, drop-off Christmas tree recycling, and an annual hazardous waste disposal day.

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<sup>14</sup> City of Sheridan, Solid Waste Master Plan, 2001.

# EDUCATION AND LIBRARIES

## ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

### Public Schools (K-12)

Sheridan County has three School Districts which operate a total of 19 schools. (See School Districts map.)

#### School Districts

##### District #1

District #1 serves approximately 900 students in the Big Horn, Dayton and Ranchester area. District #1 operates three elementary, two middle schools and two high schools.

##### District #2

District #2 serves 2,900 students in Sheridan and Story, and includes six elementary, one junior high and two high schools.

##### District #3

District #3 serves the Clearmont-Arvada area with two elementary schools, one junior high and one high school serving 93 students.

#### School Performance

According to School Matters, a service of Standard and Poors<sup>15</sup>, Sheridan County School Districts #1 and #2 were named as two of six “outperforming” districts in Wyoming. This means that, compared to districts with similar demographics, these districts achieved higher levels of student proficiency, as measured in statewide testing, over two years. These districts also had higher graduation rates (79.1 percent and 74.3 percent, respectively) than Wyoming as a whole (72 percent). In contrast, Sheridan District #3 students score lower on proficiency exams compared to Wyoming state averages. This district spends more per student and has lower student teacher ratios than the other Sheridan County districts or Wyoming averages (5.5 to 1). All Sheridan County school districts are making Adequate Yearly Progress according to state standards.



*Sheridan County Schools (images above and below) (Source: Sheridan County School District #2 website)*

<sup>15</sup> Outperforming School Districts in Wyoming, 2002-03. Standard and Poors 2005. [http://www.schoolmatters.com/pdf/error\\_band/EB\\_Wyoming.pdf](http://www.schoolmatters.com/pdf/error_band/EB_Wyoming.pdf)

### School Capacity

In 2005, a total of 3,933 students were enrolled in the three Sheridan County School districts. School enrollment has decreased in Sheridan County since 1985, causing some schools to close. The county projects that there will not be much growth in school enrollment in the next ten years unless there is a substantial increase in jobs that attract young families to the area.

The district has adequate capacity, however several school buildings in the district are in poor condition and are under review for improvement and expansion.

### State Facility

Wyoming Girls School serves as a rehabilitative/correctional facility for court ordered delinquent girls, ages 12 through 18. It has a student capacity of 90.



Wyoming Girls School (Source: Wyoming Girls School website)

### Private Schools (K-12)

Sheridan County has six private schools, all of which are located in the City of Sheridan. They are listed below:

- **Normative School** is an accredited treatment and educational facility for at-risk and adjudicated delinquent youth grades 6 through 12, with a student population of 104.
- **Red Grade Christian Academy** is a non-denominational Christian private school offering kindergarten through 7th grade education, with a total enrollment of 38 students.
- **Three Peaks Christian School** is a non-denominational Christian private school serving grades 8 through 12, with a total enrollment of 35 students.
- **Holy Name School** is a Roman Catholic private school offering kindergarten through 8th grade education, with a total enrollment of 160 students.
- **Reaching Higher School** is a non-denominational Christian private school that serves 7 students in grades 4 through 10.

## SHERIDAN COLLEGE

Sheridan College is a two-year college that is located in the city of Sheridan. The college offers associates degrees along with certificate programs which prepare students for technical vocations or to continue on to a four-year college. As of fall 2007, there were 1,611 students enrolled in the college. Of these, 929 were from Sheridan County, 425 were from elsewhere in Wyoming, 241 were from out of state, and 16 were international students.

The nearest accredited Wyoming four-year college is the University of Wyoming in Laramie.

## LIBRARIES

### Sheridan County Public Library System

The Sheridan County Library System (SCLS) has been serving patrons since its early beginnings in 1883 on the second-floor of a small downtown building. In 1904, an interested group of citizens, along with the generosity of Andrew Carnegie, established the Carnegie Public Library, which later became the Fulmer Library. In addition to collections of print, video and audio material, the library system offers internet access, children's programs such as story hour and homework help, homebound services, copying and typewriters, meeting rooms, and audio-visual equipment to library members. The SCPLS is connected to the Wyoming State Library and other libraries in Wyoming through the WYLD interlibrary loan system. The SCLS was visited more than 209,000 times by Sheridan area residents in 2006.

#### Library Capacity

The main library is the Sheridan County Fulmer Public Library located in the City of Sheridan. In 1974, the building shown at right was constructed with donated funds from Harry & Margaret Fulmer and the library's name changed in their honor. An addition doubled the size library in 1984. The Fulmer library offers an events calendar of programs, exhibits and speakers. The Fulmer library includes the Wyoming Room, which houses specialized genealogy and western history collections.

The SCLS has three branch locations in Story, Tongue River, and Clearmont.

1. **The Tongue River Branch Library** is located in the Ranchester Municipal Building, and is open on weekdays. The Tongue River Branch began serving patrons since 1978.
2. **The Story Branch Library** opened in 1957, and its building was expanded and remodeled in 1996. It is open two full days and two half-days per week. This branch offers a meeting room and audio visual equipment.
3. **The Clearmont Branch Library** opened in 1975 and is located in the Clearmont Community Center.

The SCLS has a total of 15 staff members, which is on the lower end of national library industry standards for the size of the population that SCLS serves.



*Library (Source: Sheridan County Library Project website).*

More than 30 years after its last addition, the Fulmer Library is in need of expansion to meet the growing needs of Sheridan County. To bring about necessary improvements, the Library Foundation Board has embarked on a \$2.1 million dollar Capital Campaign to add meeting rooms, and improve circulation and desks and a number of other services.

The SCLS Library Foundation contributed over \$237,000 of the total needed to acquire and clear land for the expansion project.

The Friends of the Library organization have given the Sheridan County Fulmer Public Library nearly \$700,000 over the past twenty-four years, including \$45,000 to SCPLS in April of 2007. The recent gift was earmarked for furnishings, equipment and programming. The local Rotary Club also gives books and other materials.

### **Dayton Community Library**

The Town of Dayton operates a community library.

## **REGIONAL INFLUENCES**

There are several regional influences beyond the boundaries of Sheridan County that need to be considered as part of the planning process. These include the following:

### **MINING OPERATIONS IN MONTANA**

Two mines are located just north of the Wyoming/Montana border: Spring Creek and Decker. Both are major coal mining operations located near Decker, Montana. Since these facilities are located close to Sheridan (20 miles to the north), they likely have an impact on the local housing market and economy. While contributing only about 1% to the total employment of the county, both are significant facilities and are expected to continue production for many years.

### **RESERVATION LANDS**

Two major tribal reservations are located in the region; The Crow reservation and Northern Cheyenne Reservation. The two tribes have a lot of economic influence in the area resulting from local expenditures for shopping, services, etc. The Crow reservation supports a population of more than 10,000 residents, most of whom live in Big Horn and Yellowstone counties in Montana. The Northern Cheyenne tribal reservation is located in southeastern Montana, with a local population of approximately 4,500 residents. The northern Cheyenne tribe has proposed a casino, to be located on the banks of the Tongue River Reservoir near the Montana, Wyoming border and only 25 miles from Sheridan, Wyoming.

## LAKE DESMET

Johnson County has approved at least two rural residential subdivisions on Lake DeSmet that is advertised as “Northern Wyoming’s Premier Waterfront Community,” and 20 miles away from Sheridan County Airport. Phase I has over 80 lots. The affects of the development south of Sheridan are unknown, but it is likely to create some traffic impacts.

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# Appendix B: Inventory Maps

- Figure A-1 - Ownership**
- Figure A-2 - Existing Land Use**
- Figure A-3 - Development Status**
- Figure A-4 - Current Zoning**
- Figure A-5 - Wildlife Habitat**
- Figure A-6 - Slopes and Landslides**
- Figure A-7 - Groundwater Vulnerability**
- Figure A-8 - Mines and Potentially Exploitable Coal**
- Figure A-9 - Coal Bed Methane Wells**
- Figure A-10 - Agricultural Lands and Large Ranches**
- Figure A-11 - Fire Districts**
- Figure A-12 - Water and Sewer Districts**
- Figure A-13 - School Districts**





# Appendix C: Water and Wastewater Conditions Influencing Growth

C-2

TO: Clarion Associates

FROM: AVI, p.c.

SUBJECT: Utilities Update, Sheridan Master Plan – SAWS Area  
AVI Project No. 2.2865.07

DATE: June 12, 2008

## **WATER AND WASTEWATER ISSUES INFLUENCING GROWTH IN SHERIDAN COUNTY**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Clarion has identified three focus areas in the Sheridan County Joint Comprehensive Plan. AVI was asked to evaluate how water and wastewater utilities influence the choice of land use alternatives in these focus areas.

The focus areas are:

- Focus Area 6, City of Sheridan Joint Planning Area
- Focus Area 7 A and 7 B, Big Goose Rural Residential Area
- Focus Area 7 C and 7 D, Little Goose Rural Residential Area

Refer to *Plan: Sheridan County, Concept and Plan and Focused Choices* for a detailed discussion of growth options under consideration.

### **DISCLAIMER**

Opinions expressed in this Memorandum are based on interpretation of the reports cited herein and interviews with employees of SAWS, the City of Sheridan, and Sheridan County as understood by AVI professional staff. Neither the water nor the wastewater systems were modeled. Several utility-specific, growth-limiting factors are identified below. Water and wastewater system components which now have excess capacity may need to be expanded to meet future demands. Depending on where growth occurs, such expansion may be very expensive. Demand for water increases in relatively small increments along a smooth curve as development occurs. Investment in the raw water and physical infrastructure to meet that demand is made in large increments. System capacity is increased beyond immediate demand, and consequently, in advance of the presence of customers to absorb the capital cost. Development decisions by both utilities and developers will be based on economic factors in place at the time such decisions occur.

This memorandum addresses two questions:

1. What factors limit the capability of existing water and wastewater systems to support the growth and land use proposed in the focus area choices?
2. What is the current capacity of existing water and wastewater systems?

### **WATER SYSTEM LIMITING FACTORS**

Sheridan Area Water System (SAWS) Raw Water Supply. SAWS has an estimated 183 acre-feet of uncommitted raw water in reservoir storage to support growth in its service area. (*Analysis of Existing Water Supplies for the Sheridan Area Water Supply Joint Powers Board. EnTech, Inc., Sheridan, Wyoming. September, 2006.*) Assuming 350 gallons per day per residential unit, 183 acre-feet of water would supply about 450 equivalent residential dwelling units (EDU). EDUs are based on a ¾" service tap. Because stored water is subject to evaporation and transmission losses, a conservative estimate of the number of potential units served is closer to the 270 EDUs reported by SAWS Administrator Jay Stender. Prolonged drought will also reduce the potential yield of water supplies. (*Personal Communication with Jay Stender, SAWS Administrator.*) The SAWS service area has experienced a growth rate in the number of active metered accounts of about 2.5% per year.

Sheridan/SAWS Treated Water Storage Capacity. The City of Sheridan and the SAWS area water systems are supported by 9.25 MG of treated water storage, approximately the peak day demand of 10 MGD. (*Draft Report for the City of Buffalo-Sheridan Area Water System –Lake DeSmet Level I Study. January 2008. HKM Engineering, Sheridan, Wyoming.*) Industry standards recommend that a municipal water system have treated water storage equal to peak day demand. Storage is adequate for current demand, but additional capacity equal to increased peak day demand will be desirable to support future growth.

### **WASTEWATER SYSTEM LIMITING FACTORS**

- Sheridan Wastewater System. The City of Sheridan is planning to expand its Sewer Service Boundary and provide service in those areas where the City is expected to grow over the coming years. This planned expansion indicates the City is willing to make the system improvements necessary to support development in areas adjacent to the City. Sheridan Utilities Manager Mike Cole says the Sheridan system has capacity to support the 1 to 1.5% population growth projected for the next 20 years. Currently, about 40% of the influent into the Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) is Inflow and Infiltration (I&I). Line repair and replacement in the service area would reduce I&I. However, the capacity of the WWTP is actually increased by I&I because it reduces the Biological Oxygen Demand (BOD) of water entering the WWTP. A more detailed explanation is provided

below in the section on existing wastewater treatment component capacities. The Sheridan wastewater system may be a limiting factor for future development in the focus areas depending the City's willingness to accept wastewater from a central collection system outside the planned Sewer Service Boundary expansion. (*Septic System Impact Study Goose Creek Watershed, Sheridan County, Wyoming. December 2006. HKM Engineering, Sheridan Wyoming, and personal communication with Sheridan Utilities Manager Mike Cole.*)

- Contamination from Existing Individual Septic Systems. Monitoring of surface water has identified elevated concentrations of fecal Coliform bacteria in Big and Little Goose Creeks. (*Septic System Impact Study.*) Little Goose Creek is listed as an impaired stream due to this contamination. (*Wyoming DEQ 303d List, 1998.*)

Individual septic tank and leach field systems discharging into the alluvium in Big Goose and Little Goose Valleys may be contributing to contamination of surface water.

Ground water in the area is also vulnerable to contamination. HKM's Septic System Impact Study delineated areas in Big Goose and Little Goose drainages with "High" ratings for aquifer sensitivity. The report provides the following definition: "Aquifer sensitivity refers to the relative ease with which a contaminant applied on or near the land surface can migrate to the aquifer of interest, based solely upon hydrogeologic factors."

Given the vulnerability of both surface and ground water in the focus areas, it's important to understand the review process for proposed new septic systems.

DEQ reviews plans for new subdivisions of more than five lots and re-plats of existing subdivisions of any size. This review includes modeling with the Wehrmann procedure to predict nitrate concentrations likely to result from septic tank and leach field sewage treatment systems. According to DEQ Water Quality Program Manager Lou Harmon, lots smaller than five to ten acres in areas such as the Goose Creek Drainages where contamination already exists and soils are unsuitable for leach fields are likely to receive negative recommendations from DEQ. (*Personal communication on May 29, 2008.*) The County Commission reviews and acts on requests for new subdivisions. Once approved, septic system permit applications are reviewed by the Sheridan County Public Works Department. Permits in compliance with the subdivision conditions and applicable DEQ regulations are routinely approved.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- SAWS should continue to seek new sources of raw water.
- SAWS and the City should continue to evaluate the need for upgrades to all water and wastewater systems. Particular attention should be paid to treated water storage, contamination issues in the Goose Creek drainage, and the condition and capacity of Sheridan's wastewater system.
- Sheridan County should continue efforts to determine the feasibility of a wastewater collection and treatment system to serve the Little Goose Valley.
- Sheridan County should carefully review any negative recommendations from DEQ relating to septic systems in new or re-platted subdivisions in the Goose Creek drainage before permits are issued by the Sheridan County Public Works Department.
- Sheridan County should vigorously pursue its mandate under the Wyoming State Small Wastewater Rules and Regulation "to prevent, reduce, and eliminate pollution and enhance the waters of the State of Wyoming and to protect the health, safety and welfare of the environment and its inhabitants by ensuring that the design, construction and operation of small wastewater systems meets the purpose of the Environmental Quality Act." An aggressive program to inspect existing septic systems should be implemented and appropriate action taken to ensure regular maintenance of working systems and replacement of faulty systems.
- Sheridan County should implement zoning ordinances to require all new development not served by a central wastewater system to install individual septic systems that use enhanced wastewater treatment systems that are not dependent on leach fields. Designs of alternative treatment methodologies should be based on site-specific conditions such as soil properties, ambient groundwater levels, development density and predicted rates of discharge. The 2006 *Septic System Impact Study, Goose Creek Watershed* prepared by HKM Engineering discusses several treatment options applicable to the area and enumerates in detail the site conditions which should be evaluated to determine the appropriate treatment technologies for specific areas of proposed development.
- Sheridan County should coordinate with the City of Sheridan to encourage high-density urban development within the area now served by the City Wastewater System, or to be served within the proposed expansion of the City Sewer 201 Service Area.

- SAWS should continue to impose prescriptive limitations on the outside use of treated water, as described in SAWS Water Service Agreements issued since 2006. Steps should be taken to ensure enforcement of these limitations. Since conservation is the cheapest source of “new” water supplies, the City of Sheridan and Sheridan County should review SAWS policies and consider implementation of similar measures in their respective areas of jurisdiction.
- Dwelling unit acreage should be increased to a minimum of 5 to 10 acres for rural residential zoning in all focus areas not served by central sewer.
- The following reports should be incorporated by reference into the utilities section of the Master Plan:

Draft Report for the City of Buffalo-Sheridan Area Water System – Lake DeSmet Level I Study. January 2008. HKM Engineering, Sheridan, Wyoming.

Septic System Impact Study Goose Creek Watershed, Sheridan County, Wyoming. December 2006. HKM Engineering, Sheridan, Wyoming.

Sheridan Wastewater Collection System Capacity and Condition Assessment (Draft Report 2006), HKM Engineering, Sheridan, Wyoming.

### **EXISTING WATER SYSTEM COMPONENT CAPACITIES**

- Sheridan Raw Water Supply. The City of Sheridan has adequate water rights to meet current and projected needs for approximately twice the present population (*Lake DeSmet Level I Study.*) Sheridan currently serves approximately 8,000 taps, and has sufficient water rights to serve about 7,000 additional taps, assuming that future development is similar to existing uses. (*Personal communication with Sheridan Utilities Manager Mike Cole, P.E.*) As noted above, water supplies may be depleted by drought conditions. To ensure that new development can be confident of reliable supply, conservative estimates should be used to determine the ability to serve future demand.
- Water Treatment Plant Capacity. The Sheridan Water Treatment Plant (WTP) and the Big Goose WTP have a current combined capacity of 18.5 million gallons per day (MGD). Peak day demand is between 10 and 11 MGD. Current service population is about 8,000 connections. (*Request for Proposals, Water Treatment and Source of Supply Equipment and Operations Assessment, February 4, 2008. City of Sheridan Public Works Department.*) Based on current use, the excess treatment capacity in the

two plants could serve another 5,000 connections assuming use rates of existing and new connections are similar.

- Transmission Main Size. The existing transmission mains in Big Goose and Little Goose Valleys are 20-inch and 24-inch in size. If growth occurs at the predicted rate of 1.5%, the existing transmission mains will not restrict growth for 20-25 years. Peak day demand in the SAWS service area is projected to be 3.6 MGD by 2016. (*Lake DeSmet Study*). A comparable water system with 12-inch and 16-inch transmission mains was determined to have the capacity to deliver 3.5 MGD, serving 2700 residential units and 2,000 acres of commercial development. (*Technical Memorandum No. 2, Cheyenne/Laramie County Water Service Area Level II Study Cheyenne BOPU Eastern Extension. March 4, 2008. Black & Veatch Corporation, Centennial, Colorado.*)
- Pressure zones, PRVs and Booster Pumps. Seven pressure zones supported by pressure reducing valves (PRVs) or booster pumps maintain service pressures to individual connections. Depending on the area(s) where growth occurs, additional booster pumps may be required but this is not considered a limitation on future development.

### **EXISTING WASTEWATER SYSTEM COMPONENT CAPACITIES**

- The Sheridan WWTP has a “total treatment” capacity of around 4.5 MGD, with a “hydraulic capacity” that exceeds 10 MGD. (Based on 1984 design report from HDR.) The largest limiting factor (bottleneck) is the solids dewatering process. During the past 10 to 15 years, Sheridan has altered the treatment process, and the WWTP would be able to treat at least 7 MGD “total treatment” provided the Biological Oxygen Demand (BOD) strength of the influent waste stream is similar to what is currently being received (about 180 mg/ml).

Most wastewater systems (Gillette, Cheyenne, Casper) have an influent BOD of at least 500 mg/ml. Sheridan’s BOD influent is so low, mainly due to the infiltration and inflow (I&I) problem resulting from the amount of un-gasketed clay pipe installed below the ground water table in the Goose Creek alluvium. If BOD strengths were to be in the 500 mg/ml, Sheridan’s biosolids dewatering equipment (sludge pumps, digesters, belt presses) would not be able to adequately treat much more than 4.5 MGD. However, based on the current BOD and Total Suspended Solids (TSS) influent concentrations, the Sheridan WWTP can probably treat at least 7 MGD. The treatment process involves primary and secondary treatment with activated sludge.

Sheridan made the decision to bypass the primary treatment process (trickling filters) 10 years ago, as the BOD concentration was so low that it was starving the bacteria in the oxidation ditch (activated sludge). After

removing the trickling filters from the process, Sheridan has been successfully treating flows in excess of 7 MGD with an influent BOD concentration around 180 mg/ml. Flows of this magnitude are rare, however, and usually occur only after a major precipitation event. Sheridan officials are confident that as long as the BOD concentration remains similar to current conditions, the WWTP has adequate treatment capacity to support a growth rate of 1.5% for the next 20+ years. Sheridan is currently planning an aggressive equipment replacement program at the WWTP to replace 25-year old pumps and other equipment. The City expects to invest \$800k to \$1.2 million per year over the next seven years as part of this replacement plan.

## **DISCUSSION AND BACKGROUND – WATER SUPPLY**

Variables in both water consumption and water supply influence the ability of a system to meet future demands.

Demand for treated water can be reduced.

1. Sheridan County should implement zoning ordinances that restrain residential water use through prescriptive limitations on outside water use.
2. SAWS should continue to implement existing Water Service Agreements restricting the use of treated water for outdoor use.
3. Sheridan County, the City of Sheridan, and SAWS develop or continue to employ water conservation plans and educational programs to encourage efficient use of existing water supplies. The permit issued by the Corps of Engineers for the enlargement of Twin Lakes Reservoir contains requirements for conservation measures. Compliance with these conditions should be monitoring.

Supply of water is determined by several factors.

1. Raw Water Availability. A reliable source of raw water is necessary to ensure that future development can be supplied over the long-term. Future sources can be actual new water available to the system, or a more efficient use of existing supplies. Studies of the Sheridan and Johnson County area have identified sources of additional supplies, including unused water in Lake DeSmet. Acquisition of new sources will represent a significant expense to the utility. Raw water supplies in Sheridan County can be acquired in a variety of ways:
  - Purchase existing reservoir or storage space in existing reservoir.
  - Attempt to secure additional surface water rights
  - Construct a new reservoir (on the mountain or off-channel).
  - Enlarge an existing reservoir.
  - Develop reuse system (recycle wastewater effluent for non-potable use).

- Develop untreated water supply system for non-potable use, i.e., open space irrigation.
  - Short or long-term lease of existing stored water.
  - Exchange water in Lake DeSmet for mountain storage.
  - Develop a system for direct use of Lake DeSmet water.
2. **Water Treatment Capacity.** The demand imposed by future development is for potable water, even though only a portion of water normally supplied to a household or business is used for potable purposes. Water conservation and zoning requirements for raw water irrigation in new developments can reduce treatment costs and extend the effective capacity of existing water treatment plants. When water conservation has been maximized, an increase in treatment capacity may be necessary. There are several options for achieving that increase:
- Improve the efficiency of existing treatment processes through plant upgrades and utilization of advanced technology.
  - Increase flow-through capacity and add additional treatment cells or modules.
  - Construct a new WTP to treat Lake DeSmet source

3. **Treated Water Storage Capacity.** Treated water storage serves as a reserve against peak demand, provides water for fire suppression, and maintains pressure in water mains. Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) regulations (*Chapter 12 – Design Construction Standards for Public Water Supplies, Section 8 General Design Considerations. Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality Rules and Regulations*) state that water system supply components “...shall be designed for maximum daily demand at the design year.”) Municipal water supply systems normally have treated water storage capable of meeting the maximum day demand with the system’s source of supply off-line.

The City of Sheridan and the SAWS area water systems are supported by about 9.25 MG of treated water storage in the following facilities: Big Goose WTP Clearwell (0.5 MG), Sheridan WTP Clearwell (4 MG), South Low Tanks (2.04 MG), Southeast Tank (1.25 MG), Big Horn Tank (1.0 MG), and the Bradford Brinton Tank (0.5 MG). Storage capacity is approximately the MGD demand of 10 MGD recorded at the two treatment plants. DEQ requires a Permit to Construct for additions or improvements to public water systems, and might require additional storage if maximum day demands increase above existing storage capacity. An application to the Wyoming Water Development Commission is pending for a new water storage tank at the Big Goose Treatment Plant.

4. **Transmission and distribution systems.** Transmission mains and distribution pipelines determine the system’s ability to deliver of water supplies to meet future

growth. The SAWS system serving the Little Goose Valley has line sizes from 4" to 24". The main trunk line is a 24" transmission main which gradually reduces in size to a 16" line to the Big Horn Reservoir (storage tank). A 10" line runs south from the Big Horn tank through the Big Horn booster station. Smaller booster stations pressurize 4" lines serving areas east and west of the trunk line. Big Goose is served by the 20" steel line from the Big Goose WTP.

Without system modeling, it is not possible to give a precise determination of the capacity of the existing transmission systems. However, previous experience with municipal water supply systems indicates that existing main transmission lines do not pose a constraint on future development in Little Goose Valley. SAWS Administrator Jay Stender agrees with this conclusion.

5. Pressure Zones. As a general rule, one pressure zone is needed for every 100 feet in elevation change. The topography in the SAWS service area requires a total of seven pressure zones. In various locations throughout the service area, 25 pressure-reducing valves (PRV) are required to keep pressures within a range that will not damage household plumbing or distribution system components. In other locations, 19 booster pumps are required to maintain adequate pressure to individual homes. As noted above, line size in the SAWS service area is adequate to meet substantial future growth, but maintaining adequate system pressure may require additional booster stations, or the replacement of some existing stations with units of greater capacity.

## **DISCUSSION AND BACKGROUND – WASTEWATER ISSUES**

Wastewater treatment systems for the proposed focus areas are a limiting factor for land use and growth potential.

1. Sheridan's wastewater system is capable of growth into some proposed focus areas immediately adjacent to the City, but not to all areas and not at the level indicated by Clarion
2. Soil surveys and previous reports indicate that Big Goose and Little Goose Valley are unsuitable for development that relies on traditional septic tank and leach field treatment systems. High ground water levels and unsuitable soils limit the effectiveness of such systems, leading to contamination of surface and ground water.

For the Clarion focus areas, the following items address the proposed land use and growth potential in these areas.

1. Rural residential. This high-density dwelling unit spacing is not recommended, and may not be allowed by DEQ regulations. Individual septic systems in these areas will not support this land use.

2. Urban residential. Extension of the 201 Boundary to include these areas will require improvements to the existing wastewater collection system such as replacement of mains in a larger size and installation of lift stations to support proposed land uses in the focus area.
3. Rural residential in the 201 Boundary. As discussed above, the existing Sheridan WWTP can absorb some growth within the 201 boundary
4. Urban residential in the 201 Boundary. As with rural residential in the 201 boundary, growth will require additional WWTP facilities.

## **REFERENCES:**

Analysis of Existing Water Supplies for the Sheridan Area Water Supply Joint Powers Board. EnTech, Inc., Sheridan, Wyoming. September, 2006.

Chapter 12 – Design Construction Standards for Public Water Supplies, Section 8 General Design Considerations. Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality Rules and Regulations.

Draft Report for the City of Buffalo-Sheridan Area Water System –Lake DeSmet Level I Study. January 2008. HKM Engineering, Sheridan, Wyoming.

Personal telephone communication with Lou Harmon, DEQ Water Quality Program Manager.

Personal telephone communication with Jay Stender, SAWS Administrator.

Personal telephone communication with Sheridan Utilities Manager Mike Cole, P.E.

Request for Proposals, Water Treatment and Source of Supply Equipment and Operations Assessment, February 4, 2008. City of Sheridan Public Works Department.

Septic System Impact Study Goose Creek Watershed, Sheridan County, Wyoming. December 2006. HKM Engineering, Sheridan Wyoming

Soil Surveys for Selected Areas in the Goose Creek Watershed. February, 2008. Natural Resources Conservation Service, Washington, D. C.

Technical Memorandum No. 2, Cheyenne/Laramie County Water Service Area Level II Study Cheyenne BOPU Eastern Extension. March 4, 2008. Black & Veatch Corporation, Centennial, Colorado.

Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality 303d List of Impaired Streams, 1998.

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Clarion Associates

FROM: AVI, p.c.

SUBJECT: Utilities Update, Sheridan Master Plan  
AVI Project No. 2.2865.07

DATE: April 15, 2008

**1. Town of Clearmont.**

Attached to the e-mail containing this memorandum is a copy of a map of the Clearmont water system, circa 1980's. The map was provided by Joe Feeley of EnTech Inc., 1949 Sugarland Drive, Suite 205, Sheridan, Phone 673-1542. Conversations with Mr. Feeley and with the town clerk of Clearmont indicate this is the most recent written information available from the town. There is no development plan or map, nor has there been significant growth in the area. I recommend that the development area be limited to the existing municipal limits.

**2. Town of Dayton.**

Dayton provided a hard copy of its most recent development plan, dated 2001 and currently under revision. There is no development map or designated planning area, although it can be assumed that the town is aware of the potential for substantial growth since a one new subdivision southeast of town is already in place, and a second is planned for the area north west of town. The 2001 plan does give some direction for future growth, enumerated under "General Policies and Standards in the plan:

- Urban growth should be guided in order to economically serve all areas with a full complement of urban services.
- New development should be guided to areas already provided with sewers and other utilities. (Observation of the area and reports of existing and planned new development indicates this is not always followed. This is true of several of the following "policies.")
- New drainage basins should not be opened for development until there is sufficient need and necessary public works have been programmed, budgeted, and under construction.
- Comprehensive planning for the town should include consideration of areas outside the city limits urban area so that land-planning efforts can be coordinated.
- The Town should include within its corporate limits all land developed with urban uses in the immediate vicinity; of the town.

- New land uses should be properly located so as to be harmonious to surrounding uses.
- The town should use all legal means to protect and improve its aesthetic environment.

The complete document is available for your review if that would be helpful. The above sample of policies and standards mirror the concerns and issues raised by the TAC and CAC. The fact that this municipal document tends to be set aside in the face of actual proposals for subdivision platting by enthusiastic developers may be a cautionary tale for similar efforts on a countywide scale. I recommend that a the development map for Dayton should focus on the Highway 14 corridor between Dayton and Ranchester, as described below, with additional areas contiguous to the existing municipal limits included.

### **3. Town of Ranchester.**

According to Mayor Cliff Clevenger, the town has not officially identified a planning zone or area, and has no codified development plan. However, he was well informed and aware of numerous subdivisions planned for the immediate area. He indicated that he expected most development to occur in the area west of town along State Highway 14 between Ranchester and Dayton. He said a subdivision west of town with a potential of 100 homes is waiting for County approval of the plat. The Ranchester Elementary School may also relocate onto a ten-acre site to the west. About half of the subdivision and the site of the school will probably be annexed to the town. Another 16 to 18 acres north of the Middle School will be annexed, and 35 to 40 homes are expected on this site. Another 40 homes are possible at a potential subdivision site east of town.

The Mayor said he expected rapid growth in this portion of Sheridan County to continue. Thirty new home permits were issued in Ranchester in 2007. Every home was sold and most available lots have been purchased. He said that town policy is to “control its own future” by annexing development contiguous to the town limits, and that the town intends to provide water and sewer service to annexed areas. Ranchester would like to build a pipeline to Dayton for a water supply. With WWDC assistance, Dayton drilled a Madison well that flows about 200 gpm. Dayton plans to install a pump in the well, which could increase production to 500 gpm and provide a supply to Ranchester. The Mayor sees a time in the future when a Dayton-Ranchester Joint Powers Board (JPB) might oversee development along the Highway 14 corridor and in the areas surrounding the two towns. Dayton would be the water purveyor and Ranchester would process wastewater. The availability of water and sewer service along the highway 14 corridor would be a development magnet. The concept of a JPB to manage this development is a positive reflection on the foresight of the two communities involved, and may have implications for the County planning effort.

As per the Dayton discussion, I recommend a development area be designated for the Highway 14 corridor with additional areas to the north, east, and south included.

It seems logical, in the absence of specific development plans or maps for the Dayton-Ranchester areas, to reference and map those areas zoned by the County as Urban Residential. Those areas are designated on the "Current Zoning" map on the Sheridan County Website.

There has been local discussion of a cooperative effort between Dayton and Ranchester that could result in water and sewer lines along the Highway 14 corridor between the two communities. Construction of those lines could open the area for development. Whether or not a developed "strip" along the highway fits with other planning priorities requires further discussion and decisions by elected officials. Designating this area for future development would jeopardize existing agricultural and wildlife values, including the conservation easement established by the Padlock Ranch for an area north of Highway 14 between the two communities.

Designated development areas in all cases should be annotated to indicate that development is likely and appropriate control in the form of annexation or oversight by a JPB is desirable. Standards imposed by annexation requirements or by JPB regulations can ensure that future growth is consistent with community standards and that individual subdivisions are designed and constructed to facilitate extension of utilities and accommodate orderly additional development.

#### **4. Community of Story.**

Story, an unincorporated area, has no development plan, nor the tools for development planning. Growth is governed only by existing Sheridan County regulations. Census data for 2000 reports a total population of 887 with 667 housing units at a unit density of 48 per square mile. This is an average of one unit per 13 acres, but actual density is much higher in most of the area. The Sheridan County Public Works Department reports 13 new dwelling units constructed in Story in 2007. As described in the existing conditions report, Story has several hundred seasonal and year-around residences, all on individual wells and septic systems. If Story residents agreed to create a taxing entity of local government such as a Water and Sewer District or a Service and Improvement District, the entity would be eligible for state and federal funding assistance. In addition, the area would have a representative elected body to speak for the area and an organization with authority to monitor and shape future development. Given the desirability of the location, growth is likely to continue in the Story area. Additional growth will exacerbate the existing potential for contamination of the ground water aquifer from inadequate, un-maintained, or failing individual septic systems.



# Appendix D: Public Process

## OVERVIEW

This appendix provides an overview of the public process to update the County's Comprehensive Plan and prepare this document in 2007 and 2008. The county worked with the public, a Citizen Advisory Committee, a Technical Advisory Committee, the county Planning & Zoning Commission, the Board of County Commissioners, town mayors, and, for the Sheridan Joint Planning Area and land uses, jointly with the Sheridan City Planning Commission and City Council.

The planning team provided draft materials at each step of the way and worked with the public and committees to prepare the plan's maps and policies incrementally. This appendix provides a detailed summary of all the events and outreach that occurred during the process, the topics, and the locations.

## WEBSITE

The project website ([www.plansheridancowyo.com](http://www.plansheridancowyo.com)) has been the on-going source of up-to-date information about the project, place to send comments, and polling.



## MEETING SUMMARY

### PUBLIC MEETINGS

The county held public meetings throughout the process. Each meeting was preceded by press releases, newspaper advertisements, and email notifications. The meeting dates and topics were listed in Table D-1.



Table D-1: Public Meeting Event Schedule

#	Date	Location	Topic
1	November 13, 2007	Sheridan College	Draft Vision and Goals, Growth Concepts (small group discussion)
2	February 4, 2008	Leiter	Concept Plan and Focus Area Choices (presentation and discussion)
3	February 5, 2008	Sheridan College	Concept Plan and Focus Area Choices (key pad polling)
4	March 20, 2008	Sheridan College	Sheridan Joint Planning Area: Future Land Use Plan Concepts (small group workshop)
5	July 24, 2008	Sheridan Middle School	Future Land Use Plan and Strategies (open house, presentation, and key pad polling)
6	October 1	Sheridan County Bldg.	Open House: Draft Plan

**Table D-2: Posters and Advertisements**

Date	Location	Topic
July 2007	Posters at Library and other Locations	Confirming the 2020 Vision "What is the Vision for the County's Future?"
November, 2007	Eastern County	17 residents from the Eastern part of the county filled in comment forms regarding growth concepts.
Summer 2008	Newspaper, Fliers, Posters	
Fall 2008	Newspaper Flier Web polling	

## CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC)

The Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) had a role of providing guidance for the plan and represented a wide variety of interests and backgrounds. The CAC met seven times, beginning in July 2007, through the time of adoption of this plan. These meetings were open to the public, but members of the public generally did not participate. The meetings and topics are listed in Table D-3.

**Table D-3: Citizen Advisory Committee Meeting Schedule**

#	Date	Location	Topic
1	July 23, 2007	Sheridan County School District #2	Introductions, Work Plan, and Issues Discussion
2	October 1, 2007	Sheridan College	Existing Conditions Review, Vision Exercise
3	November 14, 2007	Sheridan College	Draft Vision and Themes and Concepts for Growth
4	February 4, 2008	Leiterville Country Club	Concept Plan and Focus Area Choices
5	April 22, 2008	Sheridan College	Future Land Use and Focus Areas and Policies
6	May 20, 2008	Sheridan College	Future Land Use and Focus Areas and Policies, Cont.
7	September 30, 2008	Sheridan County	Implementation Strategies and Transportation Plan



## FOCUSED MEETINGS

The planning team met with the mayors of Dayton and Ranchester during Spring of 2008 (to review the draft Future Land Use Plan).

## TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC)

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) assisted the planning team with gathering data and reviewing technical aspects of the plan. This committee represented the county departments and also agencies that have a role in reviewing projects in the county or overseeing land use and development. Meetings and topics are listed in Table D-4.

**Table D-4: Technical Advisory Committee Meetings**

#	Date	Location	Topic
1	October 2, 2007	Sheridan College	Introductions, Existing Conditions Review
2	February 6, 2008	Sheridan County Building	Concept Plan and Focus Area Choices
3	April 24, 2008	Sheridan College	Future Land Use and Focus Areas
4	July 24, 2008	Sheridan College	Draft Future Land Use Plan and Policies and Strategies
5	August 27, 2008	Sheridan College	Transportation Plan

## PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION

The Planning & Zoning Commission met periodically with the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) to hear updates, discuss public outreach, and participate in discussion about the plan direction. Table D-5 identifies dates.

**Table D-5: Planning & Zoning Commission Update Meetings**

#	Date	Topic
1	October, 2007	Issues, existing conditions (Joint with BOCC)
2	November, 2007	Public outreach; existing conditions; concepts for growth (Joint with BOCC)
3	January, 2008	Issues and existing conditions (Joint with City Planning Commission)
4	February, 2008	Concept plan and focused choices (Joint with BOCC)
5	April, 2008	Concept plan and focused choices (Sheridan) (Joint with City Planning Commission and Elected Officials)
6	July, 2008	Draft Future Land Use and Strategies (Joint with BOCC)
7	August, 2008	Draft Future Land Use (Sheridan JPA) and Strategies (Joint with Sheridan Planning Commission)
8	October, 2008	Study Session, Preliminary Draft Plan

## BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

The Board of County Commissioners also met with the planning team and with the Planning & Zoning Commission throughout the process to hear updates and discuss the planning effort. Table D-5, above, identifies times. The board met at least four times during the effort with the County Planning & Zoning Commission (P&Z) and three times with the Sheridan City Council, as indicated in Table D-6 below.

## JOINT SHERIDAN MEETINGS (BOARD AND COUNCIL)

Table D-6: Joint Meetings

#	Date	Topic
1,2	October and November, 2008	See above (Joint meetings with P&Z)
3	January 2008	Issues and Existing Conditions (Joint with Sheridan City Council to discuss Sheridan Joint Planning Area)
4	February 2008	See above, Joint meeting with P&Z
5	April 2008	See above, (Joint meeting with P&Z and Sheridan Council members to discuss Sheridan Joint Planning Area)
6	May 2008	Draft Future Land Use Plan and Strategies (Joint with Sheridan City Council to discuss Sheridan Joint Planning Area)
7	July 2008	See above (Joint with P&Z)
	TBD	

## OTHER EVENTS

Planning staff and Commissioners also participated in radio talk shows and submitted letters to the editor to notify the public about the planning effort and invite people to participate.

## MEETING SUMMARY NOTES

Meeting Summary notes are available for all meetings. The county can make all meeting notes available. They are not included here, to reduce volume of paper that is part of this plan.



# Appendix E: Plan and Policy Summary

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## INTRODUCTION

This Plan and Policy Summary provides a brief overview of existing plans, studies, and regulations that should be considered while updating the Comprehensive Plan for Sheridan County. This summary is intended to serve as a reference for the County Commissioners, Planning Commission, planning team, Citizen’s Advisory Committee, and the public as they work through the planning process. It should be noted that this summary provides only a general overview of each document. If more detail is required or desired during the course of the plan update process, we encourage you to refer to the actual documents and plans.

This summary is divided into the following sections:

- Countywide Plans and Studies,
- Strategic Plans and Studies,
- City of Sheridan,
- Community Plans, and
- Development Regulations and Intergovernmental Agreements.

Each summary includes information on the source, background and purpose, and key recommendations of the document.

## COUNTYWIDE PLANS AND STUDIES

### A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR SHERIDAN COUNTY

Date: 1979

Developed for: Sheridan County

Developed by: SAPA

#### **Background and Purpose**

The County Development Plan in 1979 was intended to guide the development of those portions of the county not within the urban areas in a manner that maximizes working, shopping, and recreational opportunities and living conditions for the residents. The plan had three objectives:

1. Provide a means of communication with the citizens informing them of the goals and objectives of the County Commissioners and Planning Commission.
2. It will serve as a common guide for county development to the County Commissioners.
3. It will be interrelated with community plans and programs, thus relating the development of the communities with the County's development.

The 1979 plan has been superseded by more recent plans.

### SHERIDAN COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Date: 1979-1980, Updated 1981

Developed for: Sheridan County Planning Office

Developed by: CSSA/Wyoming Consulting Planners and Engineers

#### **Background and Purpose**

The Sheridan County Comprehensive Plan was created to guide the 43% growth anticipated to occur from 1980-1985. At the time of the plan, the county expressed concern over the following growth-related issues:

- Increased residential development along the base of the mountains;

- Scattered subdivision developments occurring throughout the county;
- Impacts of growth in and around Story, Big Horn, and the Big Goose;
- Conversion of agricultural lands to residential development;
- Depletion of county water resources; and
- Limited sewer (only in city) and septic systems posing threat to water quality.

### **Key Recommendations**

The plan established the following general goals for the county to implement over the next ten years and update periodically to reflect current conditions:

#### **Growth Management**

- Growth management strategy relating economic development to population and residential growth, land use, and the need for and ability to provide services and facilities;
- Continued emphasis on providing a broad range of housing mixes, types and locations throughout the county;
- Identify sensitive and critical county resources and develop mechanisms to protect them;
- Implement incentive zoning and other growth management techniques to encourage a compact development pattern and reduce rural sprawl.

#### **Water supply**

- Develop a plan to extend the sewer system to service buildings outside city limits to reduce the number of septic systems.

#### **Facilities and Services**

- Establish an Urban Service Area around the City of Sheridan and form a joint planning arrangement for the unincorporated lands within the service area.
- Expand government facilities to accommodate future demands.

#### **Transportation**

- Work to form a direct relationship between land use and transportation.
- Update and improve the county airport to accommodate future increases in air traffic.

### Housing

- Develop policies to guide future housing development to discourage poorly planned rural sprawl that threatens to disrupt the county's scenic resources.

### **Implementation and Review**

The plan recommends a semi-annual review process for the comprehensive plan with major updating every five years.

## **UPDATE FOR SHERIDAN COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

Date: January, 1982

Developed for: Sheridan County Planning Office

Developed by: CSSA/Wyoming Consulting Planners and Engineers,  
Cheyenne, Wyoming

### **Background and Purpose**

The county reviewed and updated the original Sheridan County Comprehensive Plan to address the following concerns:

- The increase in residential development along the base of the mountain.
- Scattered subdivision developments occurring throughout the county.
- Continued growth in and around Story, Big Horn, and the Big Goose Area.
- The reduction of agricultural lands and subsequent conversion of these lands into residential developments.
- The continued depletions of water resources of the county.
- Energy development impact on Sheridan County.

### **Key Recommendations**

The County established the following goals to implement over the next ten years, with annual review and updates:

- A growth management strategy relating economic development to population and residential growth, land use, and the need for and ability to provide services and facilities.
- A continued emphasis on providing a broad range of housing mixes, types and location throughout the County.
- Identification of sensitive and critical county resources and development of mechanisms to protect these resources.

- Implementation of incentive zoning techniques and other techniques to encourage development to occur in a compact form and to prohibit continuing developmental sprawl.
- A direct relationship between land use and transportation planning, so that changes in land use or transportation facility implementation require revisions in the planning policies.
- A commitment to a semi-annual review process for the Comprehensive Plan with major updating every five years.
- An approach to joint planning between city and county for an established Urban Service Area.
- A series of techniques aimed at providing decision makers with evaluation mechanisms to review development proposals and their effect on the county, the Comprehensive Plan, the environment, and the economy.

## SHERIDAN COUNTY GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN/ VISION 2020

Date: Fall, 2000

Developed for: Sheridan County and City of Sheridan

Developed by: JGA Architects, Engineers, Planners and HKM Engineering Inc.

### **Background and Purpose**

The Growth Management Plan updates both the Sheridan Master Plan and the Sheridan County Comprehensive Plan of 1981. It provides policies to guide public investment and land use decisions that will define the pattern and quality of future development. The plan establishes nine key objectives:

- Assure the compatibility of new development and redevelopment with community values and existing development;
- Identify desired and likely growth areas;
- Plan for orderly commercial development;
- Maintain the Sheridan Historic Downtown District;
- Enhance city and county cooperation;
- Maintain natural and historic resources and environmental quality;
- Enhance recreational opportunities;
- Plan public water and wastewater systems to facilitate community expansion into desired Urban Growth Areas; and

- Plan transportation improvements to facilitate efficient traffic flow within desired growth areas.

### **Key Recommendations**

The plan identifies three major themes for growth management, each with their own set of goals, as listed below:

#### **Theme 1: Maintain a community character that preserves the quality of life, values, and traditions of the area.**

- Assure the compatibility of new development and redevelopment with community values and existing development.
- Maintain the Sheridan historic downtown district.
- Create pleasing entryways into the City of Sheridan.
- Maintain natural and historic resources and environmental quality.
- Enhance recreational opportunities.
- Promote the construction of a wide range of housing types, sizes, and costs.

#### **Theme 2: Enable planned growth throughout Sheridan County.**

- Identify desired and likely growth areas.
- Plan for orderly commercial development.
- Establish development patterns to effectively utilize land resources.
- Plan public water and wastewater systems to facilitate community expansion into desired growth areas.
- Recognize and incorporate master plans prepared by other communities and organizations into the county planning process.

#### **Theme 3: Initiate guidelines and standards to achieve predictable and consistent land use and development.**

- Enhance city and county cooperation.
- Use consistent standards, regulations, and development guidelines for all proposed development.
- Simplify the City of Sheridan corporate boundary.
- Maintain this Plan as an effective planning and growth management tool.

## POPULATION, EMPLOYMENT, EARNINGS AND PERSONAL INCOME TRENDS & SHERIDAN COUNTY SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITIES WORKSHOP

Date: September and October 2003

Developed for: Sheridan County

Developed by: The Sonoran Institute / Center for a Vital Community

### **Background and Purpose**

Sonoran Institute held a series of educational workshops on elements of successful rural communities. Workshop goals were:

1. Understanding our local economy and regional trends,
2. Understanding what our city and county look like, and
3. Understanding tools available for land use planning.

Three workshops was held in October of 2003 at three different times sought input from the community on the following topics:

- Socio-economic trends and analysis,
- Understand the local economy and keys to economic success,
- Land use, growth trend, natural resource and infrastructure issues,
- A review of natural and build resources,
- Growth management tools appropriate for Sheridan County, and
- Tools for managing rural land use change.

### **Key Recommendations**

The following four main themes emerged from the workshops for the long term planning for Sheridan included:

- Capitalize on existing assets, qualities of the community,
- Cultivate innovation and economic diversity,
- Create long-term social capital, and
- Develop community partnerships.

## COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

Date: January 26-30, 2004

Developed for: Sheridan County

Developed by: Wyoming Rural Development Council (WRDC)

### Background and Purpose

The county conducted a community survey of over 1,000 people to evaluate community concerns for the county and its residents. The survey consisted of three broad questions:

1. What do you think are the major problems and challenges in Sheridan?
2. What do you think are the major strengths and assets in Sheridan?
3. What projects would you like to see completed in two, five, ten, and twenty years in Sheridan?

Responses generally fell into the following eight categories, as described in the next section:

- Affordable housing,
- Economic development,
- Coordination and implementation of master plan,
- Infrastructure,
- Health and Community,
- Supporting Young Adults,
- Community Projects, and
- Public access to state lands.

### Key Recommendations

#### Affordable Housing

- Very little new housing is being built for middle and low income wage earners. This has made it difficult for young adults to live in the county.

#### Economic development

- The creation of a larger tourist destination is needed for the county. Creating a unique environment that people want to travel to is desired by Sheridan residents.
- More businesses and cleaner businesses are also desired by Sheridan County residents.

- Currently, the net income; \$33,703, is lower than the US average; \$45,128. This in turn has made it very difficult for residents to live comfortably in the county.

#### **Coordination and implementation of master plan**

- The balance of open space and development needs to be created and enforced.
- The master plan needs to be updated and implemented to reduce the problem of urban sprawl for the rapid growth the county has experienced.

#### **Infrastructure**

- Much of the infrastructure is in need of repair and updating. This is important to the community to preserve the history and feel of the county.

#### **Health and Community**

- The community lacks outpatient clinics and after-hours access to dentists and doctors. This has made it difficult for residents to receive emergency care from facilities other than the hospital emergency room. It has also made it difficult for residents to obtain routine medical check ups because of the difficulty of making appointments around work schedules.
- Historic preservation is very important to maintaining the community of Sheridan.

#### **Supporting Young Adults**

- Young adults are leaving the county because of the lack of affordable entry level housing and because of the lack of well-paying jobs. The county needs to create jobs and housing that will attract young workers, so the county can thrive in the future.

#### **Community Projects**

(Projects that respondents would like to be completed in the next 2, 5, 10, or 20 years)

- Turn the Community College into a four year college.
- Expand public facilities, such as the library.
- Expand public recreational sites. More parks and outdoor recreational activities are desired to improve the standard of living in Sheridan while also helping build tourism.
- Improve and preserve the environment, including clean up of high polluting industries.
- Implement community master plans, such as Vision 2020.
- Public Access to State Lands

## CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN FOR SHERIDAN COUNTY

Date: 2007

Developed for: Sheridan County

Developed by: TSP

### **Background and Purpose**

The County has a comprehensive Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) that addresses buildings (Courthouse, Community Health Building, Sheriff's Department, County Annex, and Road and Bridge Shop), roads, equipment, bridges, and information technology. The CIP is developed through a process of staff interviews, facility assessments, assemblage roadway data, bridge inspections, cost analysis and summary, administrative review, and assigning yearly funding priorities.

Total budget for FY 2007-2008 is \$15,923,000. Funding is allocated to address each of the categories listed above. Road and bridge improvements are the largest categories. The CIP will be updated annually.

# STRATEGIC AND FUNCTIONAL PLANS AND STUDIES

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## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### FORWARD SHERIDAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Date: 2006

Developed for: Forward Sheridan

Developed by: Campaign Council and Campaign Stakeholder Council

#### Background and Purpose

Sheridan County wages are 19% below Wyoming average wage. Sheridan has a poverty rate of 10.8%. The Forward Sheridan strategic plan seeks to create 633 new jobs in Sheridan County over the next four years. To do this, Forward Sheridan plans to work with existing companies to increase the county's average income rate and improve the image of the community. By investing \$1.8 million, the county in turn expects to generate about \$19 million in new payroll dollars each year. The following are the targets the county intends to achieve through the implementation of the Forward Sheridan strategy:

- Raise per capita income earned wages from 54% to 60%;
- Increase sales tax revenue growth rate from 5.6% to 7.6%; and
- Create jobs that will attract a minimum of 125 young families to stabilize and increase school enrollment.

#### Key Recommendations

To improve the county's economy, Forward Sheridan seeks to invest \$1.8 million into planning and implementation of an economic growth plan in the following areas:

- Organizational development and investor relations;
- Promoting local economic expansion;
- New business attraction;
- Site development for new or expanded business; and
- Workforce attraction program.

**Objective 1: Create Environment to support economic growth****Goals**

- To educate the community about the importance and necessity and value of planned growth for the Sheridan area in the next four years.

**Objective 2: Organizational development and investor relations****Goals**

- To hire a seasoned Economic Development professional to implement the Forward Sheridan initiatives.
- To hire additional staff to implement targeted marketing programs designed to attract new business, in addition to other internal marketing projects and administrative functions to keep all Forward Sheridan stakeholders informed on the status and accomplishments of the program.

**Objective 3: Promote local economic expansion****Goals**

- To develop a comprehensive business retention and expansion program for the Sheridan area.

**Objective 4: New business attraction****Goals**

- To aggressively market Sheridan County as a prime location for new business investment to specific "good fit" businesses.
- To place Sheridan County more frequently on the "short list" of site selection consultants.

**Objective 5: Site development for new or expanded business****Goals**

- Improve available site inventory relative to competitor communities.

**Objective 6: Workforce attraction program****Goals**

- Sheridan County will become nationally known for job seekers of all ages.

## WATER AND WASTEWATER

### TONGUE RIVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN

Date: September, 2000; revised May 2007

Developed for: Tongue River Watershed Steering Committee

Developed by: Sheridan County Conservation District

#### **Background and Purpose**

The Tongue River watershed is comprised of approximately 130,000 acres in the northwest portion of the county adjacent to Bighorn National Forest near Ranchester. The majority of the watershed acreage is privately owned. Water quality measures indicate bacteria contamination from wildlife, livestock, domestic animals, and humans as well as sedimentation from stream bed erosion impacting the Tongue River. This plan recommends policy directions to address the bacterial contamination of the Upper Tongue River Watershed. The plan will be implemented on a voluntary basis, therefore the plan places a strong emphasis on education and outreach to landowners.

#### **Key Recommendations**

- Maintain an on-going, active Steering Committee to provide leadership and project oversight.
- Continue long-term monitoring to further define watershed condition and evaluate project effectiveness.
- Improve understanding on the interaction among all land uses and watershed condition, and the importance of water quality as a measure of natural resource health.
- Minimize the financial burden for installing BMPs.
- Reduce water quality impacts from domestic animals, including bacteria, nutrient, organic matter, and other inputs.
- Reduce water quality impacts from septic systems, including bacteria, nutrients and other inputs.
- Reduce water quality impacts from irrigation practices.
- Reduce water quality impacts from unstable stream channels/banks.
- Reduce water quality impacts from poorly managed riparian areas (or increase awareness about proper riparian zone function/management).
- Increase awareness about water quality impacts from other activities including urban and rural residential areas, urban stormwater, roads, wildlife and others.

## THE GOOSE CREEK WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN

Date: December, 2004

Developed for: Goose Creek Watershed Project

Developed by: Sheridan County Conservation District

### **Background and Purpose**

The Big and Little Goose Creeks originate in Bighorn National Forest and flow through Big Horn and Sheridan where they are a focal point for the park system and a main recreation attraction. The extensive use of these water bodies makes the maintenance of their water quality, currently endangered by elevated levels of fecal coliform, a high priority. This plan, funded through Clean Water Act Section 319 funding, contains policies to address:

- water quality,
- water quantity,
- upland areas, riparian corridors, and stream channels,
- general information and education,
- financial conditions, and
- watershed plan implementation.

### **Key Recommendations**

#### **Water Quality**

- Demonstrate progress towards reducing septic system contributions to local water.
- Continue to demonstrate progress towards reducing livestock (and other domestic anima) contributions of bacteria to local streams and find new means to improve the local AFO program.
- Raise the awareness of watershed residents that wildlife potentially contribute bacteria to local streams.
- Minimize, to the extent practicable, the quantities of sediments and other pollutants entering local streams through proper use of BMPs.
- Reduce the potential impacts of miscellaneous activities that may affect local surface water and groundwater and aquatic life habitat.
- Raise awareness concerning the inter-relationships among water quality parameters

### Water Quantity

- Improve public awareness concerning the relationship between water quantity and water quality and the benefits of efficient water conservation practices and opportunities.

### Upland Areas, Riparian Corridors, and Stream Channels

- Maintain and promote healthy upland vegetative communities to decrease storm water run-off, decrease erosion, and increase infiltration rates.
- Maintain and promote healthy riparian buffer zones which improve water quality through sediment removal, nutrient uptake, and lower water temperatures.
- Maintain and promote, to the extent practicable, stream channel systems (including irrigation diversions and returns) with natural channel forming succession and sediment transport.

### General Information and Education

- Increase community awareness of the Goose Creek watershed project and encourage voluntary participation through public outreach and project salesmanship efforts.

### Financial Conditions

- Increase SCDD/GCWPC and public knowledge of existing funding resources to potentially provide a greater array of project funding capabilities.

### Watershed Plan Implementation

- Maintain an energetic planning committee, with SCCD supervision, to actively implement a dynamic watershed plan that addresses current and future watershed concerns.

## **Implementation and Review**

The plan also includes an action register/milestone tables that lists the various action items listed under each objective (listed above), the party responsible, and the estimated timeframe for its completion.

## POWDER/TONGUE RIVER BASIN PLAN (EXECUTIVE SUMMARY)

Date: February, 2002

Developed for: Wyoming Water Development Commission Basin Planning Program

Developed by: HKM Engineering, Inc., Lord Consulting, Watts and Associates

### Background and Purpose

This plan document is one of four River Basin Plans in Wyoming. It presents current and projected future uses of water in Wyoming's Powder/Tongue River Basin. Uses inventoried and analyzed include agricultural, municipal, industrial, environmental, and recreational. Surface and ground water uses are both described as is overall water quality.

The study area includes the drainages of the Little Bighorn River, Tongue River, Powder River, and Little Powder River. All of Sheridan County is encompassed (primarily by the Tongue River Basin, but also parts of Little Bighorn, and Powder River.

The report addresses:

- Water Law and the Yellowstone River Compact
- Water Use: Agriculture Irrigation, Municipal and Domestic, Industrial, Recreational, and Environmental
- Reservoir Evaporation
- Current Water Use Summary:
  - Dry Year: Total Surface Water = 192,000 acre-feet annually. Groundwater = 73,100 ranges to Wet Year: 208,000 acre-feet of surface water and 73,200 feet of groundwater.
- Available Surface and Ground Water :
  - For Tongue River it varies from 40,000 acre-feet to 189,000 acre feet depending on year.
  - For Powder River Basin, it varies from 74,300 to 211,500 acre-feet.
  - As of December 2000, the planning area has 16,432 active ground water permits. Groundwater estimates for the different aquifers are provided. The Madison Aquifer System may have the most development potential for high yield wells on a sustained basis.
- Projections for Different Uses
  - Projections range from 198,500 acre-feet per year (current and low projection) to 255,100 acre-feet per year for high growth scenario.
- Future Water Use Opportunities

## CITY OF SHERIDAN – VETERANS ADMINISTRATION MEDICAL CENTER - WATER PROJECT LEVEL II STUDY

Date: December, 2005

Developed for: Wyoming Water Development Commission

Developed by: HKM Engineering, Inc.

### **Background and Purpose**

The primary purpose of this study is to: “evaluate the feasibility of connecting the VAMC to the Sheridan treated water system.” In other words, is it more cost-effective for the VAMC to continue to treat and supply their own water to the Medical Center, or will they save money by having the City provide them treated water? The study has other purposes as well.

## CITY OF SHERIDAN WASTEWATER COLLECTION SYSTEM ASSESSMENT

Date: Draft Report, January 2006

Developed for: City of Sheridan

Developed by: HKM Engineering, Inc.

### **Background and Purpose**

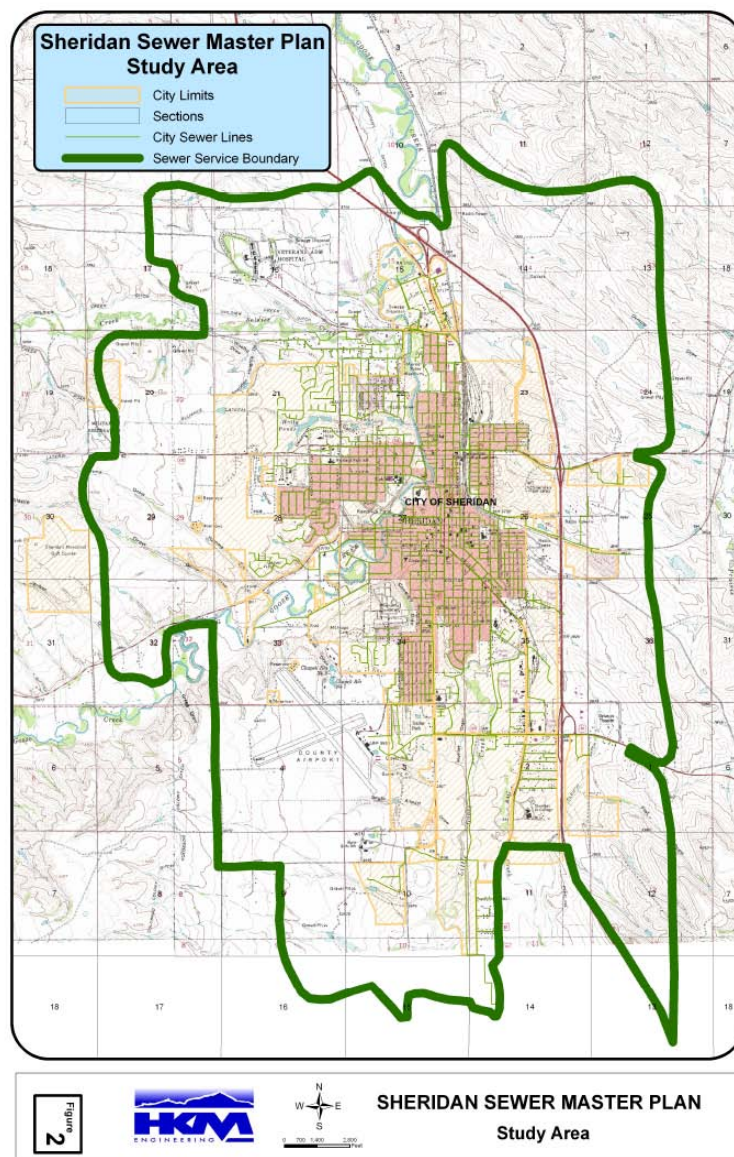
The purpose is to assess the Sanitary Sewer Collection system. All of the city of Sheridan (16,000) and much of the population in the Little and Big Goose drainages are served by City and Sheridan Area Water System (SAWS) treated water. SAWS has been a large factor in the ability of this growth to occur and has been the focus of engineering studies and management plans over the past few decades. With the exception of a few major “interceptor sewer projects”, the sanitary sewer collection system has slowly developed and been designed and built as needed for development over the years. With the exception of the wastewater plant, and a few relatively small extensions and replacement projects, the overall City of Sheridan sanitary sewer system has not been scrutinized since the 1970’s.

The purpose of this study is to:

- review existing collection system data,
- identify existing interceptors and major laterals,

- collect flow data and survey information at key locations,
- assess structural conditions at key locations,
- identify future impacts from planned growth,
- recommend solutions for rehabilitation and expansion of the city collection system, and
- prepare operational suggestions for a future monitoring program.

The service area is the “201 Sewer Service Boundary”



## **Key Recommendations**

This section summarizes the recommendations discussed in this study. These

recommendations include:

- Continue monitoring of sanitary sewers with flow meters at sewershed mouths, creek crossings and other select locations.
- Further evaluate creek crossings before completing CIP (Capital Improvements Plan) creek crossings project.
- Further evaluate the service area and size of future Big Goose Interceptor project. This project would most likely extend out Big Goose road, and serve the properties on the north side of Big Goose Road (Loucks). Preliminary sizing and routing of this line is presented in this report, however it may be prudent to reconsider the study area and how much of the Big Goose Valley should be served by city sewer, before final line sizes are established.
- Many recommendations were made for items of further study, including evaluating a service area larger than the current service area, and fine tuning the hydraulic model.
- Conduct further investigation of infiltration/inflow (I/I) once the camera software is upgraded and the survey data available for incorporation into the GIS.
- Complete the condition assessment and coding the condition of sewers. When this is complete, incorporate into GIS and asset management software.

## **SEPTIC SYSTEM IMPACT STUDY (2006)**

Date: December 2006

Developed for: The Goose Creek Watershed Planning Committee Partnership

Developed by: HKM Engineering

### **Background and Purpose**

In 1998 and 1999 fecal coliform bacteria levels exceeding state regulations were found in the Big Goose and Little Goose Creeks. In 2000, Sheridan County created the Goose Creek Drainage Advisory

Group (GCDAG) to address current contamination levels in the streams.

The purpose of the study is to develop a recommended mechanism with which septic system installation and replacement can be evaluated for appropriate use of alternative technologies in areas of high risk for impacts to groundwater. The report documents the data gathered and methods used to develop a recommended evaluation criteria and septic permitting approach.

### **Key Recommendations**

The recommended strategy for implementing alternative septic system technologies requires minor amendment to the current Sheridan County septic system permitting program. Implementation of the program should include review and updates, if determined appropriate, to the 201 Intergovernmental Agreement between the City and the County and the Delegation Agreement between WDEQ and the County. In addition, detailed evaluation criteria and design guidelines should be developed. A commitment of appropriately trained staff to implement and administer the program will also be necessary.

The following recommendations are provided as measures to help protect the groundwater resource within the Goose Creek Watershed:

1. Continue implementing programs outlined in the Goose Creek Watershed Management Plan.
2. Consider updating the current septic permitting program (County).
3. Consider establishing a licensing program for septic system installers and pumpers (County).
4. Select an appropriate Management Program (County).
5. Initiate a Regional Sewer Master plan for the Little Goose Drainage (City).

## SOLID WASTE

### CITY OF SHERIDAN SOLID WASTE MASTER PLAN

Date: 2001

Developed for: City of Sheridan

Developed by: HKM

#### **Background and Purpose**

The Sheridan landfill serves 26,000 people throughout all Sheridan County. It receives approximately 150 tons of various waste materials each day. Much is segregated to be either composted or later hauled off, so about 55% of the waste reaches the lined disposal cell. Sheridan also manages a community-wide recycling program.

The Solid Waste Management Plan examines several important solid waste issues. A primary concern is with the remaining space available in the existing landfill. While several years of space remain, significant time is required to select, obtain, permit, design, and construct a new landfill. The study examines two location feasibility issues, including:

- Expanding the landfill adjacent to its current location.
- Developing a new landfill at another location further away from the city.

It also explores two operational feasibility issues:

- Converting to a balefill.
- Using alternative daily covers.

Finally, it explores the recycling program and how to enhance it, as well as customer service.

#### **Key Recommendations**

##### **Landfill Location**

1. Continued filling at the existing landfill and when Trench 8 is completed, utilize the area west of Trench 7 to maximize the life of the existing 120-acre site.
2. Purchase the Holmes and triangle shaped Cherni properties immediately south of the existing landfill, so the operation can laterally expand into this adjoining property. Pursue the preliminary approval of these areas for the future landfill. Maintain the landfill at its current location as long as possible.
3. Consider reasonable operational efficiencies and waste diversion practices to maximize the life of this area.
4. If future regulations, repermitting, or groundwater impacts require a new location to be found, consider obtaining a site

within the State/BLM land northwest of Sheridan. Further investigation is needed to confirm the suitability of this site.

#### Operation

1. Continue separating material at the landfill to the greatest degree practical to reduce the amount of material which must be disposed of in the expensive lined cell.
2. Maintain the current practice of placing loose garbage and compacting it with a steel-wheeled compactor (it is not recommended at this time to convert to a balefill).
3. Utilize both tarp and foam spray alternative daily covers (ADCs) to reduce the amount of dirt going into the landfill. This will both extend the life of the lined cell and help save dirt, as it appears the current site will be "dirt short."
4. The shape of the daily cell will probably need to be adjusted with the use of ADCs for optimal efficiency.
5. Track volumes and densities with periodic surveying.

#### Recycling and Customer Service

1. Expand the recycling center when additional area in the building becomes available.
2. Proceed with a more aggressive public information and education program relating to recycling. Utilize volunteers for this as possible. Strive to build the amounts of materials being recycled by user diversion efforts.
3. Continue to enhance services provided to the users and information on both recycling and the entire solid waste program.

## TRANSPORTATION

### SHERIDAN COUNTY AIRPORT MASTER PLAN UPDATE

Date: 1996

Developed for: Sheridan County

Developed by: Barnard Dunkelberg & Company, TSP, Emerson Studio, and Kaiser & Company

#### Background and Purpose

Sheridan County Airport is owned by the County; the County Commissioners act as the Airport Board. The 1,550 acre property is classified as a commercial service airport by the FAA. This plan is an update to the 1987 Plan. It is concerned with the planned growth of airport facilities to accommodate future demand. It evaluates aviation needs and also the relationship of airport facilities

to the surrounding land uses and the community. It evaluates: (1) airside facilities (runways, terminal, hangars, maintenance facilities, ground access, etc.), (2) landside facilities (aircraft parking aprons, terminal, hangars, etc.), (3) the relationship to the airport/airspace system, and (4) the airport environs.

### **Key Recommendations**

The following goals were established for the purpose of directing the airport planning process and the future development at Sheridan County Airport:

- Plan the airport to be able to safely and effectively accommodate the forecast aircraft fleet with facilities properly sized to accommodate forecast demand.
- Program facilities to be constructed when demand is realized (construction is to be driven by actual demand, not forecast demand).
- Plan and develop the airport to be capable of accommodating the future needs and requirements of Sheridan County and the larger surrounding service area, thus continuing in a role as a regional aviation facility.
- Enhance the self-sustaining capability of the airport and ensure the financial feasibility of airport development.
- Develop land acquisition priorities related to airport safety, future airport development, and land use compatibility.
- Encourage the protection of existing public and private investment in land and facilities, and advocate the resolution of existing and potential land use conflicts both on and off airport property.
- Plan and develop the airport to be environmentally compatible with the community and minimize environmental impacts on both airport property and property adjacent to the airport.
- Consider the feasibility of locating additional industrial/commercial facilities at the Airport.
- Provide effective direction for the future development of Sheridan County Airport through the preparation of a rational plan and adherence to the adopted development program.
- Integrate the airport's ground transportation access needs with the area transportation needs and coordinate with county long-range plans. Consider impact of background traffic on the airport development plans.
- Recognize General Aviation needs and accommodate General Aviation users.

Outside the airport, the areas to the west and south are in the county. The areas north and east are primarily in City of Sheridan limits and zoned for residential uses. The airport and surrounding environs are in the urban service area, which designates primary

development areas. However, areas near the airport which are noise sensitive, also have development constraints, including: ability to provide water due to high elevation, slopes that exceed 10%, and floodplain for Big Goose Creek.

The plan recommends a basic airside development plan, and landside development plan (alternative A) (both affecting facilities and property owned by the airport, although the airside alternatives recommend some acquisition of property.

Land Use Issues: The airport does have an Airport Influence Area, shown on the Recommended Airport Environs Land Use Plan, and is defined as that property within the environs of the airport, where particular land uses either are influenced by or will influence the operation of the airport, in either a positive or a negative manner. Figure E10 of the report shows the AIA and the land uses.

### **Sheridan County Airport Business Park Construction Plans**

Prepared By: TSP

This plan addresses the property at the southeast side of the airport runway. Phase 1A of development.

## **CITY OF SHERIDAN TRAFFIC STUDY**

Date: 2001

Developed by: HKM Engineering, Inc.

Developed for: City of Sheridan

### **Background and Purpose**

The purpose of the study is to evaluate the existing roadway network to accommodate current and future traffic, to address complaints of congestion in the High School area, and to make recommendations for city ordinance modifications for traffic related issues.

### **Key Recommendations**

#### **1. Roadway Network**

The study includes a proposed transportation network to accommodate current and forecast traffic. It includes classified major arterial, minor arterial, collector, and local street designations. Two distinct functions, mobility and access, distinguish the classifications. Mobility allows traffic to get from one point to another and access allows traffic to reach destinations. WYDOT's transportation model was used to verify the proposed functional classification system and its operation. The results showed the

proposed functional classification system improves the existing system's level of service and allows for significant future growth.

## 2. High School Area

With the proposed Functional Classification Map, students should be routed to an arterial street to minimize the impact to the surrounding network. The study recommends a signal at 5<sup>th</sup> and Long Drive, policeman control, and additional parking lot exits. In addition, local street traffic calming is recommended.

## 3. City Ordinance Modifications

The study suggests the following modifications:

- Coordinate speed limits to coincide with the functional classification,
- Change the current process to direct traffic concerns to Engineering,
- Expand the Sheridan roadway standards,
- Require more comprehensive traffic studies for new development, and
- Implement a traffic impact fee for new development.

## MAJOR STREET AND HIGHWAY SYSTEM REPORT

Date: 2005

Developed for: City of Sheridan, Surrounding communities, and Sheridan County

Developed by: Systems Planning, Planning Program and Wyoming Department of Transportation

### **Background and Purpose**

The Federal-aid Urban System Program was established in 1974, which joined with the Wyoming Highway Department and partnered with Sheridan County and the City of Sheridan and other communities to undertake a transportation plan. The partners conducted the Sheridan Area Transportation Planning Process to develop a plan to accommodate growth areas. Since the initial plan was developed, the partners have updated the plan approximately every ten years to accommodate traffic volume fluctuations.

### **Key Recommendations**

The study assesses traffic volume on major roads. The data collected will be used to create a twenty year recommended Major Roadway System. The first step in this process is to identify those major streets which are currently expected to be built and operational sometime within the next five years. These are then

added to the existing network and identified as the “existing plus committed network.” Proposals include:

- The extension of Sheridan Ave. from Avoca Ave. to Brundage Ln.
- The trip tables developed for 10 year and 20 year scenarios identified in ‘Future Assessment’ are assigned to the same network.
- The traffic assignments are then reviewed to determine and possible deficiencies. Possible solutions are then evaluated.
- The government is required to use the information collected as an assessment to assemble a plan of development for the existing and future roadways.

## SHERIDAN PATHWAYS MASTER PLAN

Date: May 2007

Developed for: City of Sheridan and Transportation Alternatives Coalition (TRAC)

Developed by: En Tech, Inc. Professional Engineers

### **Background and Purpose**

The Pathways Master Plan is a project intended improve the overall atmosphere of the City of Sheridan by encouraging alternative transportation and exercise. This plan establishes desired future pathways to connect important destinations of the town for safe and easy access by pedestrians and cyclists.

### **Key Recommendations**

The goals of this project are to improve upon the 1997 pathways project. The following are the main goals of the Pathways Master Plan:

- Recognize the benefits of safe and attractive pedestrian and bicycle circulation.
- Plan for “pedestrian friendly development” via development of designs that encourage walking by providing site amenities for pedestrians.
- Develop pedestrian friendly environments that reduce automobile dependence.
- Enhance recreational opportunities by planning for an integrated open space network compatible with existing trails or pathways plans.

- During the subdivision review process, achieve over time a comprehensive open space network that includes pathways and trails.
- Have the Sheridan County Planner investigate and pursue mechanisms that can enable open space to be preserved, and include such open space amenities as pathways, bikeways and trails.
- Incorporate requirements that new county subdivisions outline how they will accommodate pathways.

### Development Strategy

Improvements to existing trails are important to maintaining a safe and desirable trail system. Part of the pathways plan is to improve existing trails and related facilities by:

- Increasing shoulder width of pathways,
- Constructing more vandal-proof facilities,
- Providing safer crossings of major streets,
- Providing a safer multi-use pathway on top of the levee system adjacent to Little Goose and Goose Creeks,
- Reducing erosion and resulting undercutting of pathway,
- Creating a more natural environment in undeveloped areas via establishment of more native grasses,
- Providing a better overall, more consistent finished product,
- Trail extensions have been planned for the Pathways Project for trails that have already been built during the 1997 project. These have been organized based on importance of the trail along with other concerns.

### In order of concern are the following

- Tier 1 projects are the most important to complete and include extensions and safety improvements. Regional multi-use pathways are also planned to be developed to allow travel outside of the city of Sheridan.
- Tier 2 projects have moderate importance.
- Tier 3 projects should be implemented only after Tiers 1 and 2 have been completed.
- Miscellaneous projects have been depicted as projects that will incur minimum capital costs.

## SHERIDAN WEST CORRIDOR FEASIBILITY STUDY

Date: November 2006

Developed for: City of Sheridan and Wyoming Department of Transportation

Developed by: HDR Engineering and WWC Engineering

### **Background and Purpose**

The Sheridan West Corridor Study was developed as an extension to the Vision 20/20 plan. The study has two parts which include:

- The first part is the study to determine the purpose and need for this transportation corridor and to verify feasibility.
- The second part is the study to identify corridor options.

#### **Phase One**

Phase 1 is to determine the purpose and need for a west corridor and verify feasibility. The findings of Phase 1 support the need for a west corridor therefore allowing Phase 2 to evaluate corridor options and identify implementation phases for a west corridor to be designed and constructed. Phase 1 included the following tasks: (1) Analyze population trends to obtain reasonable future population projections to input into the future travel demand model; (2) Analyze existing traffic operations and accident data; (3) Evaluate future traffic conditions which compare build and no-build future traffic scenarios to determine the purpose and need for a west corridor from a traffic operations perspective; (4) Conduct a socioeconomic analysis of existing conditions in Sheridan with relation to public access, community cohesion, and downtown businesses that compare build and no-build scenarios to determine the purpose and need for and potential impacts of a west corridor; and (5) Perform a Level 1 environmental site assessment to check for known hazardous or sensitive sites based on a historical records search.

#### **Phase Two**

The purpose of Phase 2 of the Study is to identify and evaluate corridor options for the construction of a West Corridor. During this phase of the study four alternative alignments were evaluated based on the objectives defined during Phase 1. The four alignments provided various levels of travel benefits to current and future travelers. The four alternatives were evaluated by the Sheridan Urban Systems Advisory Council (SUSAC) and the public. The alternatives were evaluated by the north section of the corridor (I-90 to 5<sup>th</sup> Street), west section (5<sup>th</sup> Street to Sheridan County Airport), and south section (Sheridan County Airport to County Road 72). A preferred alternative was selected based on input from SUSAC,

public meetings and engineering feasibility. Details of the preferred alternative include:

- Two potential options for the north section including a new interchange with I-90
- One preferred option for the west section that connects CR113 to 5<sup>th</sup> Street
- A connection to I-90 in the southern section was not accepted based on community input

A planning level cost estimate generated for the project estimated that the cost per mile to build the West Corridor preferred alignment would cost approximately \$1.8 million/mile. Two important considerations for the Sheridan County Comprehensive Plan update are:

- The desire of the community expressed during the Phase 2 study to preserve existing agricultural land uses along the West Corridor from commercial development, and
- A detailed Environmental Assessment (EA) will be required to move the West Corridor project forward

## 2008 CITY OF SHERIDAN TRANSPORTATION PLANNING STUDY (ON-GOING)

The City of Sheridan Transportation Planning Study establishes the vision for transportation 50 years into the future. It provides the framework for roadways construction, future right-of-way acquisition, traffic problem-solving, and funding. A key objective of the Study is to identify a transportation system that is responsive to the community's growth. The study will also set the stage for the following objectives:

- Identify an effective regional transportation network to accommodate growth and the resulting traffic increase
- Recommend standards for transportation corridors and street classifications
- Identify new corridors, streets and modifications to existing streets to accommodate future traffic
- Prioritize transportation improvements
- Provide an official map for corridor preservation

The Study evaluates short and long term transportation system demands based on future growth scenarios using the WYDOT traffic model. The scenarios were prepared as a collaborative effort between City and County Planning staff and the WYDOT planning team. The 2005 scenario accounts for 20,958 people living in the urban planning area, 32,177 in 2025, 52,620 in 2055, and 103,638 at buildout. The traffic generated from the model is used

as the basis to determine the future transportation network. The plan recommends the following.

- Future signalization of new roadways at congested points in the network
- Emergency routes for life safety vehicles
- Truck routes that take advantage of a grid system
- Proposed priority snow removal routes based on functional classification
- Proposed bicycle facilities as recommended in the Sheridan Pathways Master Plan
- Update the current school safety program
- Consolidate bus routes to future arterial network for efficiency
- Conduct a transit study to determine travel demand between activity centers

## HOUSING

### SHERIDAN COUNTY HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Date: January, 2006

Developed for: Sheridan County

Developed by: Community Strategies Institute

#### Background and Purpose

The assessment provides a framework for understanding current and future housing conditions and needs and goals to address the needs. The assessment contains a wealth of socio-economic and housing data.

#### Key Recommendations

The assessment identifies the following housing goals for Sheridan County:

- Provide a full range of housing choices in Sheridan County. Special efforts should be directed to the housing needs of groups not easily served by the private market. Those groups include moderate and lower income families of various sizes, elderly households on fixed incomes, and those with special challenges.
- Promote the preservation and affordability of existing housing stock and older neighborhoods by improving the

housing and upgrading neighborhood infrastructure and conditions.

- Create innovative partnerships between government and the private sector by adopting ordinances, plans and policies to expand housing opportunities and support economic diversity.
- Facilitate and support housing activities carried out by community groups and individuals.

## OPEN SPACE

### SHERIDAN COUNTY OPEN SPACE: DEFINITIONS, GOALS AND ANALYSIS BY GROWTH MANAGEMENT AREA

**Date:** March 2005

**Developed by:** Planning Program, Department of Geography, University of Wyoming

Sheridan County, Wyoming created an open space committee to explore and examine the different aspects of open space because the citizens believe it is a critical component of their definition of Sheridan County's character and well-being. This report is a description and examination of the characteristics of open space that are an intrinsic component of land use. This study has four major elements that will provide a foundation upon which Sheridan County can develop their open space plan and policies. The four components are:

1. Open Space Background: a definition of open space with the legal foundations of open space planning within Wyoming, a jurisdictional survey of Sheridan County's responsibilities in open space planning, what role open space plays in the comprehensive plans of the county, and what pressures there are on open space in Sheridan County.
2. Open Space Goal Definitions: an analysis of what is meant by the ten different goals identified by Sheridan County's Open Space committee for; open areas, agricultural lands, wooded natural resources, wildlife areas, environmental concerns, water courses and riparian areas, viewsheds and ridgelines, recreation, historic areas, and sense of place.
3. Analysis of Growth Areas: Sheridan County identified four types of growth areas; urban core, urban growth area, rural transitional, and rural areas, the analysis examines each goal characteristic within the growth area.

4. Summary and Recommendations: a review of the main points presented in the background, definitions, and analyses is given along with a synopsis of recommendations for policies to obtain the identified goals. (Note: the recommendations span through several portions of the report and focus on implementation strategies the county could pursue.)

## CITY OF SHERIDAN

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### SHERIDAN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN & SUPPLEMENT (1983)

Date: 1983

Developed for: City of Sheridan

Developed by: Joseph A. Racine & Associates

#### **Background and Purpose**

The supplement updates earlier plans, including the 1967 and 1977 plans. The general recommendations include:

1. Economic forecasts for Sheridan should be reevaluated regularly in light of changes in the outlook for industrial activity in the region.
2. A cooperative process of reviewing zoning and subdivision cases within the planning area should be set up with the County through an intergovernmental agreement. Standards for development, a code enforcement, review procedures, and utility service should be included in such an agreement.
3. The planning goals and objectives listed in chapter 2 should be reviewed and, if necessary, amended on a regular basis.
4. This document and other City plans should be used as a basis for decisions on zoning and subdivision cases, code revisions, and public works projects.
5. The land use implications of the proposed West Beltway should be kept in mind due to the improved access it will provide to undeveloped lands. Anticipated development induced by the project should be viewed as an opportunity to apply good planning principles such as clustered commercial development, limited access, etc.

6. A set of annexation policies should be developed which consider all of the likely sets of circumstances and public needs. Utility extensions, road improvement, and maintenance, the fiscal costs and benefits of servicing new annexations and the procedures for processing annexations should be included.
7. An inner-city traffic control plan should be prepared.

## **SHERIDAN CURRENT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (ONGOING)**

The Planning Division is currently coordinating an update to the City's Comprehensive Plan. In 2001 the City of Sheridan joined with Sheridan County in adopting the Sheridan County Growth Management Plan - Vision 2020. The city's effort builds on the foundation established by that document and the 2004 Community Assessment.

## **COMMUNITY PLANS (IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER)**

### **BIG HORN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN (1977)**

**Date:** February 1977

**Developed for:** Community of Big Horn and surrounding areas, also given to Sheridan County as reference

**Developed by:** Big Horn Planning Advisory Board and Sheridan Area Planning Agency

#### **Background and Purpose**

The community plan guides the development of the community to maximize living, working, shopping and recreational opportunities and condition for the residents in the area. A long-term plan for development and growth has been put together to allow decision makers the ability to make informed decisions for the good of the community and residents.

The plan has three objectives:

1. Provide a means of communication to the citizens informing them of the goals and objectives of the Board of County Commissioners, the County Planning Commission, and the Big Horn Planning Advisory Board.

2. Serve as a common guide for community development to private developers and to a future council, planning commission, administration and other governmental jurisdictions that may come into being
3. Integrate the plan with other plans and programs of the county.

### **Key Recommendations**

- Pursue parks and recreational facilities based on demand and population growth.
- Conserve the surrounding environment.
- Continue economic growth through industry, jobs, and the utilization of natural resources.
- Continuously improve public facilities.
- Continuously improve the public education system.
- Protect water quality and extension and development of better a water system.
- Extend sewer coverage into areas in unincorporated communities where population densities are high and water contamination is high.
- Develop mixed housing for current and incoming residents.

The largest of concerns lie in how the community of Big Horn will develop in the future. Developing zoning ordinances is the most important part of the development plan. Appropriate zoning is needed to develop a desirable community and to conserve natural resources. Some issues include:

- The community desires focused commercial, industrial, and residential areas with enhanced a unified community and economy.
- A thorough plan of streets and highways will be developed to allow easy access to the city and surrounding areas as well as a larger sewer system.
- Environmental contamination is a large concern with the aquifers in the area and a plan to minimize health problems due to tainted water is a large concern.
- The development plan was designed to be a starting point for the community, but it needs to be updated frequently to accommodate the constantly changing community.

## CLEARMONT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Not available.

## DAYTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Date: 2001 (updated in 2008)

Developed for: Town of Dayton

Developed by: Dayton Town Council, Dayton Planning committee, and the citizens of Dayton

### Background and Purpose

The Town of Dayton created a comprehensive plan to guide the development of the urban area in a manner that maximizes living, working, shopping and recreation opportunities and conditions for the residents in the area. The town updated the plan in 2001 to address problems such as urban sprawl and economics.

### Key Recommendations

#### Overall Goals for Dayton

- Develop a viable urban community including decent housing and a suitable living environment and expanding economic opportunities.
- Preserve the natural environment and minimize adverse environmental impacts through proper development techniques.
- Achieve economic stability within the employment region.
- Strengthen the sense of community.

#### Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

- The Town currently has a 15-acre park with many amenities. Most residents find the park adequate for the town currently as well in the future.
- Open space is considered important in the preservation of the surrounding environment and wildlife. New development needs to consider open space resources in along with public access points.

#### Water System

- The water supply is adequate currently and for the future. Upgrading is needed in some areas of the water treatment facility. Some of the upgrades include backwash lagoon expansion, upgrading the infiltration system, replacing the

few old lines and reacting to growth and regulations changes.

#### Sewage System

- Extended services are required to meet the new development needs.

#### Housing

- The development of a senior citizen housing development is needed.
- Multi-family housing is also needed to supply adequate, affordable and mixed housing for the area of Dayton.
- Proper zoning must be continued to ensure adequate developments.

#### Land Use

- Proper zoning maps are needed to be updated to continue responsible development throughout the city.
- Policies and standard must be enforced to maintain safe and environmentally sound structures and facilities.

#### Residential

- Maintaining the sense of community is an important part of Dayton.
- Recreation sites need to be implemented into all new developments to maintain a high standard of living.
- Reasonable placing of residential development should occur so as to eliminate incompatible placement near industrial and commercial development.

#### Commercial

- The development of architectural standards for commercial property is needed to maintain a aesthetic standard for Dayton

#### Industrial

- Proper zoning and placement should be encouraged to keep all industries concentrated into an area.
- Zoning is the most important part of the implementation of the development plan. Development strategies must be developed in detail so that responsible development can occur.

## RANCHESTER COMMUNITY PLAN

Not available

## STORY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN (1977)

Date: February 1977

Developed for: Community of Story and surrounding area

Developed by: Sheridan Area Planning Agency and Story Planning Advisory Board

### **Background and Purpose**

The Story plan has four main objectives:

1. A guideline for community development and a basis from which Story residents are encouraged to contribute constructive suggestions and ideas towards improving the plan.
2. This plan will be a common reference to the county, state and other governmental agencies.
3. It will be a guideline to private land development occurring in the area.
4. It will be inter-related with regional plans and programs.

### **Key Recommendations**

- Responsible use of the community's natural resources to preserve the community's natural beauty and to make the community collectively richer for all its residents.
- Existing patterns of development are of prime consideration in directing future growth and expansion.
- Maintain a healthy environment by keeping water supplies potable and maintaining an effective method of disposing of sewage.
- Story is considered to be primarily a retirement and leisure community, therefore recreation activities are a high priority. Some activities that the community would like to see developed include horse trails, hiking trails, bicycle paths, and an active sports park.
- Tree conservation.
- Wetland area acquisition.
- New land developments to dedicate portions for park, recreation, and open spaces.
- Better enforcement of speed limits, vandalism, and free-roaming pets.
- Most residents in Story use wells to obtain potable water. Water supply comes from the Big Horn Mountains, so water supply is ample. Potable water access is not a very large

concern for the area because of the community's easy access to water sources. However, water quality is considered a large concern for the community and as the community grows actions need to take place to ensure that aquifers do not exceed their ability to supply adequate water. (Note: This was direction in 1977.)

- Story relied completely on individual sewage systems. The potential for water contamination is very high in this area because of the high water table. Policies have been put in place to help regulate sewage systems and to prevent them from contaminating various water sources. The community would like to build a waste treatment facility to decrease the potential of water contamination. The following recommendations aimed to ensure the community is able to continue to have safe, quality drinking water and waste disposal. (Comment: verify which, if any, have been accomplished.)
  - a. Develop regulations for proper installation of water wells and sewage treatment systems.
  - b. Require aerobic or other improved sewage treatment systems be installed in any situation where soil conditions, water tables, etc. indicate conventional septic systems will not be adequate.
  - c. Consider centralized community water system to assure a potable community water supply.
  - d. If the costs for centralized collection and treatment of wastewater are too great at this time, because of soil conditions and lack of population density, then investigate improved individual treatment devices.
- Improve maintenance of county roads needs to improve, and extend roads to accommodate future traffic densities.
- Zoning is the most important component to appropriate land use. The community needs to enforce and establish a land use code and regulations.

### Housing

Story has high numbers of mobile homes. Many residents of the areas would like to see mobile home in designated parks.

The Story Community Development Plan was designed to be updated every year and modified to meet current conditions; however, that has not occurred.

## PROPOSED PLAN FOR MANAGING GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE BIG GOOSE AND BEAVER CREEK VALLEY (1979)

Date: 1979

Developed for: Sheridan County

Developed by: Big Goose Planning Committee

### **Background and Purpose**

The Big Goose and Beaver Creek Valley plan, and the committee that prepared it, grew from shared concerns related to growth, and resulted in the overall goal: "To maintain and encourage the rural atmosphere of the valley."

### **Key Recommendations**

The plan establishes four major goals to: (1) balance the needs of the growing community with the rights of the individual, (2) preserve the present life style, (3) protect agricultural and water resources that provide a renewable economic base, by maintaining low density development, and (4) work to prevent conflicting land uses which result in property devaluation and loss of community values.

The plan recommends an Advisory Board to become part of development review process, and performance standards to be used as guidelines for evaluating development. It also recommends minimum lot size (2 acres), uses by right and conditional uses, and prohibited uses.

## DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENTS

### **CURRENT RESOLUTIONS AND ANALYSIS**

#### **SHERIDAN COUNTY SUBDIVISION RESOLUTION**

Date: Amended 2007

The Subdivision Resolution explains the steps for the administration and application of the division of land. It provides policies for the recording of plats, creation of plats, and exemptions from the platting process. It works to assist property owners in subdividing and developing their property so there is consistency in the review, approval, and development of land in the county.

## SHERIDAN COUNTY ZONING RESOLUTION

**Date:** Adopted 1985; Most recent amendment 2001

The Zoning Resolution's purpose is "to promote the public health, safety and general welfare of the County. To regulate and restrict the location and use of buildings and structures and the use, condition of use or occupancy of lands for residence, recreation, industry [agriculture], commerce, public use and other purposes in the unincorporated area of the county". It describes land use classifications (see the table in the Existing Conditions report), with each being unique.

## CONSISTENCY OF THE CITY ZONING ORDINANCE & COUNTY ZONING RESOLUTION WITH THE SHERIDAN COUNTY GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN (2001)

**Prepared For:** Sheridan Planning Commission and the Sheridan County Planning and Zoning Commission

**Prepared By:** JGA Architects-Engineers-Planners

This analysis was prepared as a follow-up to the preparation of the Sheridan County Growth Management Plan to describe inconsistencies between the zoning and subdivision requirements of the City of Sheridan and Sheridan County as they pertain to the Growth Management Plan (e.g., Vision 2020). The recommendations are too lengthy to include here, but the analysis pertaining to county resolutions should be helpful with the plan update.

## AMENDING RESOLUTIONS

### SHERIDAN COUNTY MOBILE HOME PARK RESOLUTION (1976)

This Resolution is enacted to encourage and promote well planned mobile home parks by establishing adequate standards for design and construction and ensuring mobile home parks will contribute to the general development of the rural and future urban community. It applies to all the unincorporated land, excluding mobile home parks that existed prior to the Resolution adoption.

## **SHERIDAN COUNTY AIRPORT NOISE ZONING RESOLUTION (1979)**

This resolution guides, regulates, and provides for the compatible uses of land in the vicinity of the Sheridan County Airport by creating appropriate zones and establishing their boundaries. It contains standards and enforcement for three different zones:

- Zone A – High Interference
- Zone B – Medium Interference
- Zone C – Low Interference

## **SHERIDAN COUNTY PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT RESOLUTION (1988)**

The PUD Resolution defines PUDs as projects that are pre-planned in their entirety with variation permitted from the rigid subdivision regulations. The purpose of this resolution is to encourage and allow PUDs, including total planning of tracts consistent with the comprehensive plan, innovative approaches, and flexibility to the application of zoning regulations... to maximize opportunities for good design,

No PUDs shall be approved unless the final PUD plan is found to be consistent with current goals and objectives and/or the long-range comprehensive plan for Sheridan County.

The PUD resolution outlines the development approval process steps and procedures. It also defines specific uses and requirements for PUDs. (e.g., uses by right are allowed plus conditional uses, minimum of 25% open space, maximum net density for residential of 10 units per acre.)

## **SHERIDAN COUNTY FLOOD HAZARD RESOLUTION (1998)**

The purpose of the Flood Hazard Resolution is to minimize public and private loss due to flood conditions and to promote the health, safety and general welfare of the public.

The resolution regulates building and alteration in the floodplain without a permit, and it contains standards for new construction and substantial improvements. It also requires subdivision proposals greater than 50 lots or 5 acres to comply. The resolution references flood elevation information (the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) issued by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, dated 8/2001.

## **ZONING RESOLUTION TO LIMIT HEIGHT OF OBJECTS AROUND SHERIDAN COUNTY AIRPORT (1989)**

This resolution regulates and restricts the height of structures in the vicinity of the Sheridan County Airport (within established airport zones).

## **SHERIDAN COUNTY 1996 INTERIM AIRPORT INFLUENCE AREA RESOLUTION (1997)**

The purpose of the Resolution is to identify the Airport Influence Area, identify a Critical Zone (and DNL 55 Noise Contour), restrict future land uses, and require avigation easements. It also establishes the Airport Influence Area Map.

The resolution requires property owners to grant Avigation Easements to the airport prior to development permits if they are in the Airport Influence Area and prohibits residential uses, schools, auditoriums, churches, and places of public assembly in the Critical Area.

It also adopts the Height Resolution (below) by reference.

## **SHERIDAN COUNTY BUILDING STANDARDS RESOLUTION (1999)**

The Building Standards Resolution applies to all the unincorporated portions of Sheridan County that are within the boundary of the City of Sheridan's Comprehensive Planning Area of 1983, except for farms, hospitals, mines, and some transportation facilities. (Note: The Resolution contains more a more detailed list.) It is enacted for the purpose of implementing the Sheridan County Comprehensive Plan by the establishment of regulations to establish minimum standards to accommodate local Sheridan County needs. It adopts the Uniform Building Code of 1997, National Electrical Code of 1996, Uniform Mechanical Code of 1997, the uniform Fire Code of 1997, the Uniform Plumbing Code of 1997, and the Uniform Code for the Abatement of Dangerous Buildings of 1997.

## **INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT**

### **INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT FOR THE SHERIDAN WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITIES (SHERIDAN/SHERIDAN COUNTY) (1985)**

The agreement between the City of Sheridan and Sheridan County addresses wastewater facilities, political jurisdictions, and operation and management agencies within the service area boundaries.

The wastewater treatment facilities and the service area are shown as proposed by the 201 Facilities Plan (note: Figure A was referenced but not included with the IGA). Sheridan County will cooperate and participate with the City of Sheridan in the wastewater planning process for those areas outside the city limits, but within the boundary of the Sewer Service Area. The county agrees to refer plans for new development within the Sewer Service Area to the City of Sheridan for its review and approval as to the consistency of such plans with existing or planned sewer service.

The agreement shall not be terminated by either party without the concurrence of both.

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# Appendix F: Definitions

This section includes definitions for terms used in the Sheridan County Comprehensive Plan. Where applicable, it uses the same or like terminology as County resolutions to avoid duplicative terms.

## **Agriculture:**

Farmland and/or ranchland used for the production of food, feed, and domestic animal grazing.

## **Big Horn Foothills Resource Conservation Area:**

An area proposed for greater level of conservation and protection because of its scenic, natural resource, and wildlife values, which location is based on the 1982 Comprehensive Plan.

## **Cluster Development:**

Development that conserves open space on a parcel and clusters lots on another portion of the parcel. Cluster development is sometimes referred to as an Open Space or Conservation Subdivision. A cluster development maximizes open space conservation without reducing overall building density. Generally half or more of the buildable land area is designated as undivided, permanent open space.

## **Clustering/Conservation Development Areas:**

The Clustering/Conservation Development Areas designate locations within the county near urban areas where property owners are eligible to cluster developments and conserve open space or resources and for a higher density bonus than in more remote locations of the county.

## **Common Open Space:**

A lot or portion of a platted subdivision on which development is prohibited or restricted and ownership is held in common by all the lot owners in the subdivision.

## **Community Growth Area:**

The proposed planning and growth areas for the communities of Dayton, Ranchester, and Clearmont where the county will coordinate with incorporated communities to refine joint policies and plan for future growth.

## **Community Planning Area:**

The proposed planning areas for the unincorporated places of Big Horn, Story, and Arvada where the county will work with local residents and business to prepare community plans to address land use and utilities.

## **Density:**

The number of dwelling units per acre of land. The land use categories in this Plan identify a maximum number of units. Each zone district of the Sheridan County has prescribed (allowed) uses and a minimum lot area, which affects density.

**Develop, Development:**

To divide land for purposes other than agriculture; to prepare land for division, building, or improvements, including grading, fencing for planned residential lots, road building, or utility placement, or to place structures or utilities or fencing (other than for agriculture), or roads. Includes change of existing structure or land.

**Floodplain (100-Year):**

An area susceptible to flooding, as designated by the Army Corps of Engineers on Flood Insurance Rate Maps, published by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The 100-Year floodplain is mapped by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and is characterized as an area subject to a one percent probability of a flood occurring in any year.

**Groundwater:**

Water below the earth's surface in an aquifer which saturates the pores and fractures of sand, gravel, and rock formations. Most people in Sheridan County depend on groundwater for their drinking water.

**Groundwater Vulnerability Area (Class 5):**

Groundwater vulnerability refers to the relative speed that substances on the surface can reach and pollute the groundwater supply. The Class 5 Groundwater Vulnerability Area is intended for greater management of potential groundwater contamination sources (including septic systems and stormwater runoff) and development density.

**Home Occupation:**

An occupational use within a home or dwelling, employing the occupants and no more than one additional person.

**Homeowner's Association:**

An association of homeowners and lot owners having responsibilities for the management and upkeep of common property and improvements in a specific subdivision. Such associations may also be formed to include a specific area or combination of subdivisions.

**Incorporated Area:**

Lands within a city or town's jurisdiction by virtue of being within its legal boundaries.

**Intergovernmental Agreement:**

An agreement reached by County officials and City and Town officials which prescribes which entity's ordinances will apply in the designated growth area boundaries, and how development applications are processed. An agreement is enacted by resolutions by the County and City, the result of which is a resolution or ordinance by both governments.

**Lot:**

The contiguous land in the same ownership which is not divided by a public road right of way.

**Planning & Zoning Commission:**

Planning and zoning citizen planning body, which is appointed by the Board to make land use decisions and recommendations.

**Planned Unit Development (PUD):**

A development of land which is under unified control and is planned and developed as a whole in a single development operation or a programmed series of stages of development. Subdivision and zoning resolutions are applied to the project as a whole rather than to individual lots. Underlying densities are calculated for the entire development, allowing trade off between clustering of housing and provision of open space. The PUD may include some non-residential development. They can give a developer flexibility to be creative and do good design, but should not weaken environmental standards.

**Riparian Area, Riparian Corridor:**

All lands within and adjacent to areas of groundwater discharge, or standing and flowing surface waters where the vegetation community is temporarily or seasonally affected by the temporary, seasonal, or permanent presence of water. Examples including springs, seeps, cracks, streams, rivers, ponds, and lakes and their margins. Riparian corridors are connected riparian areas, usually serves as a movement route for fish or wildlife.

**River:**

The natural path of surface water flow above ground.

**Road (or Street):**

A public or private thoroughfare which affords principal means of access to abutting property.

**Septic System:**

An on-site system designed to treat and dispose of domestic sewage that is generally allowed to infiltrate into the ground.

**Sewer, Central:**

A sewage or effluent pre-treatment facility serving more than one structure, and owned privately or in common by other than a governmental entity.

**Sewer, Municipal:**

A system of sewer lines and treatment facilities to deliver and treat sewage, developed, serviced, and managed by a governmental entity or agency.

**Slope:**

The variation of terrain from the horizontal rise or fall to the vertical, expressed as a percentage.

**Urban Development:**

Development of or relating to a city that is closely tied to the density (i.e., greater than one unit per acre) and the nature of the services required for that development. Services include municipal water and sewer, an extensive road network, and services, such as public transit and parks.

**Urban Service Area (Boundary):**

A boundary delineating existing and planned municipal water and sewer service areas for the City of Sheridan, outside of which such urban services will not be extended. (Note: The Sheridan Urban Service Area boundary is generally based on the 201 sewer service boundary).

**Wildfire:**

Uncontrolled fire spreading through vegetative fuels, exposing and possibly consuming structures.

**Wildland:**

The area in which development is essentially non-existent, except for roads, railroads, power lines, and similar facilities.

**Wildlife:**

Any form of animal life, living in a natural state and under the authority of Wyoming Game and Fish or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

**Wildlife Habitat (Crucial Winter Habitat):**

Lands where wildlife breed, feed, migrate, or seek shelter. "Important habitat" is determined by Wyoming Game and Fish.

**Zone District:**

Sheridan County has nine zone districts, plus the Power Horn P.U.D. Zoning standards are prescribed by the Zoning and Subdivision Resolutions of Sheridan County.



# Appendix G: Plan Capacity

## INTRODUCTION TO FUTURE LAND USE PLAN CAPACITY

This appendix provides an analysis of the draft Future Land Use Plan and what it means for Sheridan County's communities at "Buildout" (i.e., when all vacant and agricultural lands are built out over an undefined period of time within the growth areas). It presents first the countywide capacity, and then describes the land use capacity for each community.

## COUNTYWIDE CAPACITY

### POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Tables G-1 through G-4 on page G-3 provide estimates of potential development, based on the categories in the Future Land Use Plan calculated for vacant and agricultural lands.

### New Residential Development Potential

A total of approximately 5,600 acres are planned as new Urban Residential development (i.e., housing in neighborhoods with water and sewer connection) and 10,160 acres are planned for County Low Density Residential (i.e., rural, single family residential on large lots with septic systems and sometimes wells at the outer edge of communities). The Powder Horn Planned Unit Development (PUD) also has capacity to grow. These future residential development lands could accommodate approximately:

- 21,130 new units in the Urban Residential category (not including any redeveloped housing units),
- 2,030 new units in the rural County Low Density category,
- 500 new units in the PUD category, and
- 100 new units in the Community Core category for Big Horn and Story.

### WHY CONSIDER THE IMPLICATIONS OF "BUILDOUT" AND GROWTH THAT THE PLAN CAN ACCOMMODATE?

*How much growth and where it occurs will have significant implications on city and town and county services, such as utilities, transportation, and parks. It is important to consider the Future Land Use Plan's ability to accommodate potential future growth and to monitor growth rates over time and adjust the plan accordingly.*

This could lead to a combined total of approximately 23,760 new residential units. (See Tables G-1 and G-2 on the next page.)

### **New Commercial Business and Industry Potential**

On the Future Land Use Plan, over 1,550 acres are planned for new commercial retail, office, and industrial land uses, plus 380 acres are planned for heavy industrial uses (not including any future industrial siting that could occur in the rural areas of the county). This could yield a total of over 13.4 million square feet of new commercial and industrial development (not include potential redevelopment). (See Tables G-3 and G-4 on the next page.)

### **Changes Suggested by the Future Land Use Plan**

The plan, in achieving a primary goal of promoting compact communities and efficient services, curtails the number of acres of land that could be built as rural residential (from over 17,000 acres currently zoned as Rural Residential to just over 10,000 acres in the plan that are designated as County Low Density Residential). The plan either designates these rural residential lands as Urban Residential (if they are near a community), or agricultural (if they are in a more remote location).

The county currently has 18,360 acres zoned for Urban Residential. This plan recommends a total of 21,130 acres of Urban Residential (mostly in the Sheridan area, but also in Arvada, Big Horn, Clearmont, Dayton, Rancheater). None is designated in remote outlying areas of the county.

Finally, the plan increases the amount of land designated for industry and commercial uses in centers and establishes criteria for where additional industry can locate.

**Table G-1: Planned Residential Vacant and Agricultural Acreages**

	Sheridan Growth Area	Dayton Growth Area	Ranchester Growth Area	Clearmont Growth Area	Other Unincorporated Areas*	Countywide
Planned Use	(acres)	(acres)	(acres)	(acres)	(acres)	(acres)
Urban Residential (at net 4 du/ac)**	3,888	462	916	6	325	5,596
County Low Density Residential (at net 0.2 du/ac)	3,914	445	0	194	5,611	10,163
Planned Unit Development (PUD)	0	0		0	193	193
Community Core (assumes mixed-use)	0	0	0	0	23	23
<b>Total Units:</b>	<b>7,802</b>	<b>906</b>	<b>916</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>6,151</b>	<b>15,974</b>

\* Most of the unincorporated Urban Residential is in Big Horn.

Low density residential is in the Little and Big Goose Creek areas and around Story.

\*\* 200 acres applied for commercial (in Sheridan)

**Table G-2: Planned Residential Uses and Potential New Units**

	Sheridan Growth Area	Dayton Growth Area	Ranchester Growth Area	Clearmont Growth Area	Other Unincorporated Areas*	Countywide
Planned Use	(units)	(units)	(units)	(units)	(units)	(units)
Urban Residential (at net 4 du/ac)	14,984	1,204	3,662		1,278	21,129
County Low Density Residential (at net 0.2 du/ac)	783	89	0	39	1,161	2,033
Planned Unit Development (PUD)	0	0	0	0	500	500
Community Core (assumes mixed-use)	0	0	0	24	73	97
<b>Total Units:</b>	<b>15,767</b>	<b>1,293</b>	<b>3,662</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>3,012</b>	<b>23,758</b>

\* Most of the unincorporated Urban Residential is in Big Horn and is dependent on utilities provision.

Low density residential is in the Little and Big Goose Creek areas and around Story.

**Table G-4: Planned Non-Residential Vacant and Agricultural Acreages**

	Sheridan Growth Area	Dayton Growth Area	Ranchester Growth Area	Clearmont Growth Area	Other Unincorporated Areas*	Countywide
Planned Use	(acres)	(acres)	(acres)	(acres)	(acres)	(acres)
Light Industry	407	0	400	133	0	940
Heavy Industry	380	0	0	0	0	380
Commercial	593	0	0	0	39	632
Community Core (assumes mixed-use)	0	0	0	0	23	23
<b>Total Units:</b>	<b>1,380</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>1,974</b>

\* The Community Core is in Big Horn and Story.

**Table G-5: Planned Non-Residential Uses and Potential New Square Footage**

	Sheridan Growth Area	Dayton Growth Area	Ranchester Growth Area	Clearmont Growth Area	Other Unincorporated Areas*	Countywide
Planned Use	(sf)	(sf)	(sf)	(sf)	(sf)	(sf)
Light Industry	2,128,151	0	2,089,165	693,988	0	4,911,304
Heavy Industry	1,985,133	0	0	0	0	1,985,133
Commercial	6,370,166	0	0	0	0	6,370,166
Community Core (assumes mixed-use)	0	0	0	0	118,496	118,496
<b>Total Units:</b>	<b>10,483,449</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,089,165</b>	<b>693,988</b>	<b>118,496</b>	<b>13,385,098</b>

\* The Community Core is in Big Horn and Story.

## BY AREA: SHERIDAN JOINT PLANNING AREA

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### SHERIDAN JOINT PLANNING AREA BUILDOUT POTENTIAL

#### New Residential Development Potential

In the Sheridan Joint Planning Area, a total of approximately 3,890 acres are planned as new urban residential development (i.e., housing in neighborhoods with water and sewer connection) and 3,910 acres are planned for County Low Density (rural) residential (i.e., single family residential on large lots with septic systems and sometimes wells at the outer edge of Sheridan). These future residential development lands could accommodate approximately 14,980 new housing units in the urban category (not including any redeveloped housing units) and 780 new units in the rural category for a total of 15,770 new housing units.

#### New Commercial Business and Industry Potential

In the Sheridan Joint Planning Area, 1,380 acres are planned for new commercial retail, office, and industrial land uses in the Future Land Use Plan, with potential for 10.5 million new square feet of development (not including potential redevelopment lands).

## BY AREA: INCORPORATED COMMUNITIES

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### DAYTON

The Future Land Use Plan includes approximately 450 acres of vacant or agricultural lands that are designated County Low Density Residential and 460 acres of Urban Residential outside the incorporated boundary of Dayton. These lands could accommodate approximately 1,290 new residential units.

### RANCHESTER

The Future Land Use Plan designates almost 920 acres of vacant or agricultural land as Urban Residential and 400 acres as Light Industry/Commercial outside the incorporated boundary of Ranchester. These lands could accommodate approximately 3,660 new residential units and almost 2.1 million new square feet of new office/light industrial/commercial uses.

## CLEARMONT

The Future Land Use Plan shows just over 190 acres of vacant or agricultural lands designated as Low Density Residential land, six acres of Urban Residential, and 130 acres of light industry outside the incorporated boundary of Clearmont. These lands could accommodate approximately 60 new units of housing and almost 700,000 new square feet of office/light industrial/commercial uses, assuming the community can provide water. The number of housing units would be higher if the almost 200 acres of Low Density Residential were to develop at town densities with water and sewer.

## BY AREA: BIG HORN AND STORY

### BIG HORN

The Future Land Use Plan includes 400 acres of Low Density Residential land and 300 acres of Urban Residential for Big Horn that are vacant, yielding potentially 80 new units of Low Density Residential and 1,200 units of traditional town residential, depending on whether sewer can be provided. Big Horn also has approximately 190 acres of vacant PUD lands that are anticipated to build out with another 500 units. Land uses for Big Horn may be adjusted if community members work with the county to develop a community plan.

### STORY

The Future Land Use Plan designates 1,260 acres of County Low Density Residential land, potentially yielding 250 new residential units. Story also has 17 acres of community core that could yield approximately 50 residential units and commercial space. Land uses for story may be adjusted if community members work with the county to develop a community plan and also depend on utilities.

### ARVADA

The Future Land Use Plan designates 13 acres of Urban Residential (traditional town development) potentially yielding 52 new residential units.

### LEITER

Leiter is shown as a rural center. The approximately 230 acres that comprise the community are designated as agricultural.

## **AGRICULTURAL/RESOURCE AREA**

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Outside of the community growth areas, Sheridan County has 992,570 acres of vacant or agricultural lands. None of the Agricultural/Resource area is planned for Urban or Low Density Residential. Average densities will be 1 unit per 40 acre if development occurs. Some developments will be clustered (meaning they will have lot sizes smaller than 40 acres).