

COMMUNITY REVIEW

Phase 1 Report

NOVEMBER 2022



Presented by:



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Section 1: Community Review

Purpose

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Community Review

Purpose

The Wyoming Community Review is a program to make Wyoming communities stronger, healthier, and more prosperous. We work closely with community residents and leaders to cultivate solutions at a local and regional level by listening and observing, sharing perspectives, and exploring technical assistance and resources appropriate to each community. Ideally, review participants are better prepared to build on shared strengths and are working together to achieve common goals.

Community Reviews are a community-based planning and assessment process involving interviewing many people in the community, recording their thoughts and suggestions, and using the information to craft an action plan where community members work together to achieve their common goals.

While the first step of the review is imperative to better understanding the community, asking citizens to participate creates an unwritten contract that community leaders will use the information in a valuable and visible way. Therefore, communities must commit to, and communicate, the next step: Action.

Community Review Benefits

- Reach agreement about community priorities and economic development opportunities.
- Information and skills to improve community decision-making and leadership.
- More effective collaboration and coordination among key local organizations and residents.
- Stronger relationships between the community and agencies that provide funding and assistance.
- Identify sources of funding, technical assistance, and best practices
- Support future grant applications with objective, professional assessment of local conditions and opportunities. The monetary value of a community review (\$50,000+) can also be used as a soft match.
- Community-focused and inspired action steps to implement community driven initiatives.

Phases

Phase 1: Learn

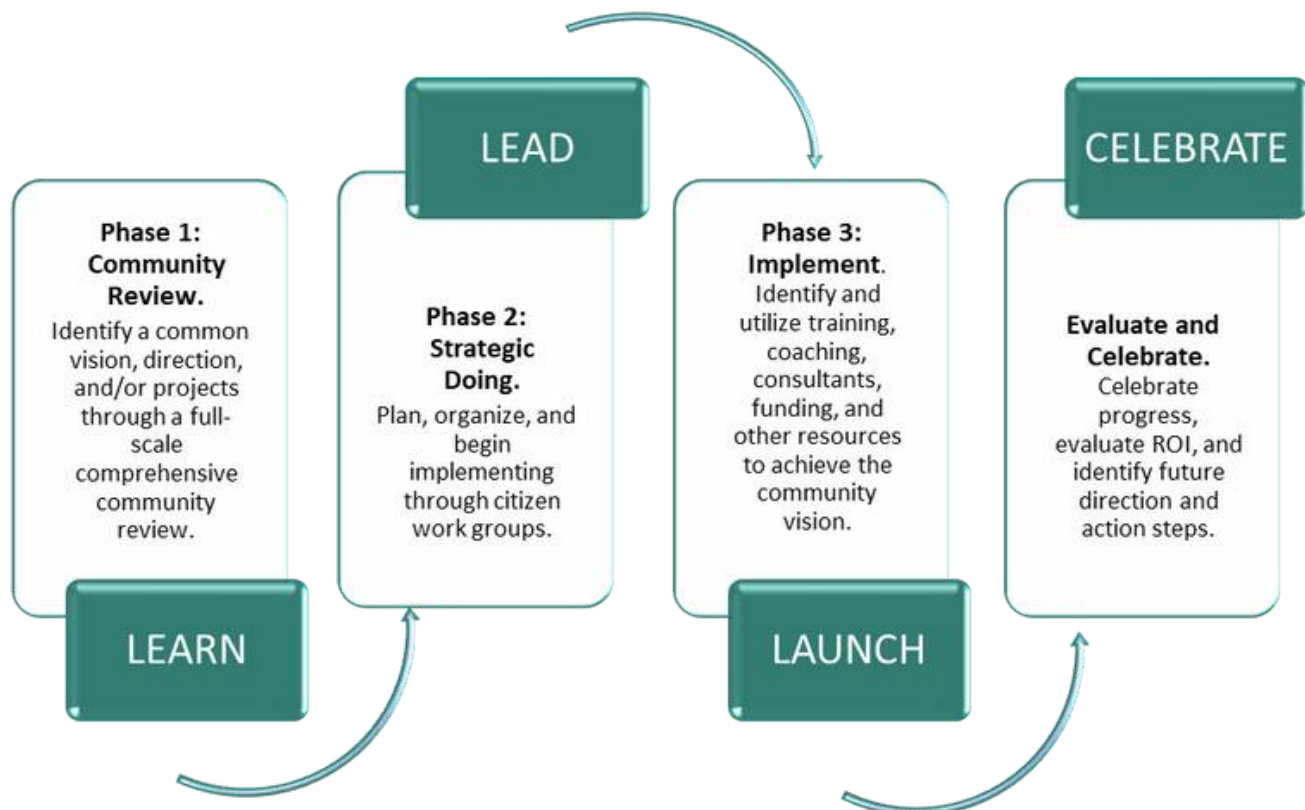
Communities recruit and encourage as many residents as possible to participate in a survey and WBC-facilitated listening sessions, all with the goal of identifying common themes that can be to inform community planning, projects or initiatives, and action steps, both small and large-scale. This phase culminates in a Town Hall meeting where the community prioritizes the themes, volunteers for working groups, and designs first steps to address them.

Phase 2: Leading

Communities, through their working groups, begin planning and implementing the vision, projects, and/or initiatives using the information from the Review. The WBC uses the Strategic Doing approach to provide coaching and support for communities to build or increase capacity to attain their vision.

Phase 3: Launch

Communities implement the planning and projects. The WBC provides project management through the process and connects them with potential funding, experts, technical assistance and other resources.



Phase 1 Process

Phase 1 Gather



Community Survey

The Community Home Team disseminates a survey to as many community members as possible one month prior to the Review.



Listening Sessions

The WBC Visiting Team hosts listening sessions with as many stakeholder groups as possible.



Work Session

The Visiting Team consolidates the results from all the listening sessions to identify key themes.



Town Hall

The WBC Visiting Team facilitates a Town Hall open to all community residents, businesses, organizations and other stakeholders. The Community will prioritize the themes and identify next steps.



Final Report

The WBC drafts a final report outlining all of the results gathered from Phase 1 Listening Session of the Community Review.

A group of people are seated in a room with black curtains. They are facing towards the left side of the frame, presumably towards a speaker or a screen. The room has a high ceiling with visible lighting rigs and tracks. The people are dressed in casual to business-casual attire. The overall atmosphere appears to be a formal listening session or a community meeting.

Section 2: Sheridan's Review

Overview

The Teams and Sponsors

The Listening Sessions

PHASE 1: LEARN

Sheridan's Review

Overview

The Sheridan County Economic Development Task Force (EDTF) is a team made up of the City of Sheridan, Sheridan County, Sheridan County Chamber of Commerce, Sheridan College, Downtown Sheridan Association, Sheridan Economic and Educational Development Authority, Impact 307, Sheridan County Travel and Tourism, the Wyoming Business Council, and many other local organizations. This team works in partnership to promote the incredible opportunities found in the Sheridan area with the goal of growing existing businesses and attracting new business to the area.⁽¹⁾

The EDTF requested a WBC Community Review for Fall 2022. The Review is Phase 1: Learning what the community 1) loves, 2) would like to improve, and 3) envisions for the future.

The Home Team (EDTF) ambitiously surveyed almost 950 Sheridan county residents over several months. The Wyoming Business Council assembled a four-person team to tour the community and facilitate multiple sessions on November 2-3, 2022. The engagement process included 10 listening sessions hosting almost 60 residents representing four Sheridan County communities as an opportunity for citizens to provide feedback and better define some of the themes uncovered in the survey.

The community Town Hall was the Capstone for the Phase 1 Visit. It provided the Sheridan Community with a preliminary review of this report, as well as identified common themes addressed during the listening sessions. This report will outline the themes and provide general recommendations based on the community's input.

Sheridan is now tasked with using this feedback in real and constructive ways. We encourage the community, its organizations, and its leaders to integrate the information into planning and projects, or use the results as verification that current initiatives are reflective of the community's vision and desired direction.

945

Survey Responses

10

Listening Sessions

59

Listening Session
Participation

4

Sheridan County
Communities

(1) <https://downtownsheridan.org/main-street-committees/initiatives/economic-development/>

The Home Team

Sheridan's Economic Development Task Force

- Rich Bridger, Sheridan Mayor
- Amy Albrecht, Center for a Vital Community Executive Director
- Robert Briggs, SEEDA Planning and Economic Development Director
- Christi Haswell, Sheridan County Commissioner
- Dixie Johnson, Sheridan County Chamber CEO
- Stuart McRae, Sheridan City Administrator
- Shawn Parker, Sheridan County Travel and Tourism Executive Director
- Zoila Perry, Downtown Sheridan Association Executive Director
- Renee Obermueller, Sheridan County Administrative Director
- Scot Rendall, Impact 307 Sheridan Director
- Wendy Smith, Sheridan College Vice President of Community Engagement & Strategic Communication & Public Information Officer



The Visiting Team

Wyoming Business Council

- Brandi Harlow, Northeast Regional Director
- Brandon Marshall, Services Manager
- Amber Power, Community Leadership and Engagement Manager
- Heather Tupper, Southeast Regional Director

Local Sponsors



Crafting the Listening Sessions

While the Listening Sessions provide the perfect opportunity for Sheridan County residents to relay their visions and provide important input for the direction of economic development, the Visiting Team also used themes from the preliminary survey results to guide the public discussions during each of the sessions.

Preliminary Survey Themes

What do you value about your community?

- Small town feel
- The people (friendliness, support and values)
- The downtown
- Events and activities
- Schools and education

What do you value about the Sheridan area?

- Proximity to and access to mountains (Big Horns)
- Small town feel
- The people (friendliness)
- Outdoor recreation opportunities
- Scenic beauty and open spaces

What would you like to see in the future, say 10-15 years from now?


- Housing options, affordable housing
- Planned and managed growth (controlled, sustainable)
- Preserve the current look and feel/Concern that growth will change community
- More businesses (often mention smaller businesses and restaurants)

Listening Session Focus

- What is the community vision for Sheridan? What could Sheridan "look like" in 20 years? (Open-ended question)
- What does Sheridan mean by "small town feel and values"? (Requesting more specific information.)
- How does Sheridan define and/or what does it value about the outdoor recreation? (Requesting more specific information.)
- How does Sheridan define planned and managed growth? What does "controlled" growth look like? How does this relate to Economic Development? (Requesting more specific information.)

Listening Sessions

- Session 1: Ranchester and Dayton
- Sessions 2-3: Sheridan
- Sessions 4-6: Sheridan
- Sessions 7-9: Sheridan
- Sessions 10: Big Horn



Section 3: Listening Session Results

Vision
Deeper Dive
The Themes

Listening Sessions Results



Vision

In 20 years, Sheridan is a place with abundant enough opportunity and quality of life for its children and grandchildren to live and thrive. Sheridan is a **healthy, vibrant, active** community that balances its stalwart dedication to its **values** and celebration of its **heritage** with successful and measured economic **growth** and **diversity**.

Deeper Dive

Sheridan is a healthy community.

- Ensure mental health care is available and affordable to all who need it.
 - Services are available with limited or no wait times, especially in emergencies.
 - There are enough quality providers to service the need.
 - There are dedicated facilities.
 - Expand and promote education and awareness. Get rid of the stigma.
- Support and expand general health care.
 - Expand hospital footprint and increase services.
 - Recruit and retain providers: increase wages and ensure positive culture and training.
 - Provide early or free screenings (cancer).
 - Reinstate residential hospice.
 - Medicaid expansion: can be effective if driven by business community.
 - Reignite Greenhouse Dementia Program.
 - Expand VA services.
 - Ensure access to health insurance regardless of income.

Image Credit: TSP Architecture Engineering Planning



Image Credits: Veterans Affairs



Sheridan is a vibrant, active community.

- Celebrate Outdoor Recreation.
 - Trails and Pathways
 - Model and expand Red Grade Trail System.
 - Expand access to all neighborhoods and connect outlying communities.
 - Balance new builds with maintenance and clean-up of current trail systems (ex. Goose Creek Trail System).
 - Incorporate and respect green space.
 - Clean up Riverwalk.
 - Remove concrete.
 - Offer kayaking and flyfishing.
 - Ensure accessibility for people with limited mobility.
 - Ensure safety for vehicles, walkers, bikers, and horses.
 - Increase, add signage.
 - Establish lanes for different uses.
 - Address traffic crossings as they can be dangerous.
 - Expanded Access to Big Horn Mountains
 - Work with partners (such as Nat-FS) to increase extended stay permitting and access from town to mountains.
 - Build bike paths to mountains.
 - Increase education for safe recreation.
 - Increase other Outdoor Recreation opportunities.
 - Cross Country Ski Trails
 - Snowmobiling
 - Climbing
- Focus on Sports and Sports Tourism:
 - Upgrade and maintain current facilities, such as Double Day Park, pools, and tennis courts.
 - Ensure parks have running water and restroom facilities.
 - Build a competitive pool - we are a destination for Water Polo,
 - Build multi-purpose gym for indoor sports opportunities (pair with Conference Center?).
 - Improve marketing about large events.
 - Expand sports tournaments.
 - Explore building pickleball courts to take advantage of growing sport. Build facilities and host tournaments.
- Explore Public Transportation options.
 - Expand public transportation, bus system. Privatize away from HUB?
 - Increase senior transportation access, especially from outskirt communities.
 - Continue to work on expanded air and bus service.



Image Credit: Wyo Theater

Sheridan celebrates its heritage and values.

- Promote the sense of community.
 - Welcoming and neighborly. "Spirit of Sheridan"
 - Safe and clean. (Invest in public services, police, fire, EMTs, etc.)
 - Hard working and respectful.
 - Sheridan "gets things done". The community comes together.
 - Community is active and engaged. Foster and promote strong philanthropic culture.
 - Sheridan welcomes and accepts diversity - all people.
- Foster diversity in both people and ideas. Be mindful, create opportunity.
- Celebrate rural Western culture - rodeo, "western values" (see above).
- Improve, foster tribal relations.
- Ensure Sheridan is age-friendly. Foster engagement from and between all ages.
- Continue to engage community (all ages and demographics) in to help with solutions (CVC model).
- Support and celebrate Downtown! Incentives for downtown business/shopping?

Image Credit: Megan Ahrens, WY Travel and Tourism



Sheridan is strategic and intentional in its growth.

- Be proactive in planning.
 - Foster the mindset of forward thinking leadership.
 - Find examples of communities that do this well. What can Sheridan do?
 - Engage with private sector for feedback, partnering, and solutions.
 - Ensure there are opportunities for all social and economic demographics.
- Preserve history and buildings.
- Focus on Infrastructure.
 - Don't grow past capacity. Pace the growth.
 - Invest as needed to keep up with growth. Don't sacrifice the quality and access of streets, water, sewer, snow removal, lights, etc. to grow.
- Protect the natural vistas and incorporate green space.
- Balance growth with agriculture.
- Infill first while maintaining private property rights.
- Consider zoning hurdles to growth.
- Ensure consistent, reliable, and equitable development guidelines.
- Housing
 - Need for Senior Housing and Assisted Living.
 - Need low(er) cost and more inventory in middle class housing.
 - Use 2-3 floors of downtown buildings.



Sheridan's economy is sustainable, diverse, and growing.

- Focus on current industry and businesses - support and grow Sheridan's current assets.
 - Celebrate and support current business and industry - see Downtown!
 - Support local entrepreneurship - SBDC and Impact 307.
 - Focus on small, cottage industry.
 - Expand tourism - increase planned, multi-day tours, sports tourism, outdoor rec.
 - Support foundational industries (agriculture, minerals) while diversifying.
 - Create immersive experiences.
 - Continue to share business stories.
 - Celebrate industries, Manufacturing Days.
 - Use as tourism opportunity?
- Explore light industry and IT.
- Build a Convention Center (multi-use from rodeo, to basketball to meeting rooms).
- Support and foster educational and industry partnerships to grow and train workforce.
 - Create pipeline for K-12 and college to industry.
 - Expand 4-year degree opportunities for local students.
 - Offer study-abroad and/or out-of-Sheridan training opportunities enabling student to bring back knowhow.
 - Continue to support of local schools. Fix turnover issues.
 - Offer free college for local kids. For everyone?
- Sponsor a bond Issue to fund Economic Development.



Image credit: Ammoland

LISTENING SESSION

Themes

Listening Session themes are not in any particular order and reflect only the information garnered from those 59 participants..

Intentional, Planned Growth

Sheridan must balance growth with the natural environment and resource availability. Incorporate and highlight greenspaces, reexamine the development planning and zoning processes, and ensure that planning is well-reasoned and intentional.

Education

Sheridan should continue to support and promote its strong educational system, K-12 and Sheridan College. The College should focus on expanding degree and training options and work in concert with local industry.

Economic Diversity

Prioritize support and growing local business and entrepreneurs. Expand efforts based on current assets - light manufacturing, IT, tourism, sports tourism. Celebrate and protect Downtown.

Health

Expand general health services from "Cradle to Grave". Focus on expanding access, affordability, and education for mental health care.

Amenities

The community is proud and supportive of its many amenities, such as parks, pathways, outdoor recreation, and the Downtown. Maintain current amenities, but explore expansion opportunities.

Housing

Housing was a consistent theme in every session, though we purposefully did not allot much time for discussion in the sessions given that Sheridan recently sponsored a Housing Study.

A red pencil is positioned diagonally across the top of the page. Below it, a checklist is visible with several empty square boxes and the words 'Excellent', 'Very', 'Good', 'Fair', and 'Poor' printed in a serif font. The background is a light, textured surface.

Section 4:

EDTF Survey Results and Analysis

The Survey Results and Analysis was
prepared by Robert Briggs, Sheridan
Economic and Educational
Development Authority.

EDTF SURVEY Results

Introduction

As part of the Sheridan Thrive 2035 Community Review conducted and supported by the Wyoming Business Council, the Sheridan Economic Development Taskforce (EDTF) decided to conduct a survey of area residents in order to ascertain their perspectives on what they valued about the community and what they hoped to see in the future. The Survey consisted of three open ended questions:

- What do you value about your community?
- What do you value about the Sheridan area?
- What would you like to see in the future, say 10-15 years from now?

Respondents were also asked to provide their zip code to help track whether those taking the survey lived in Sheridan County, or were offering perspectives from outside the area. The survey was made available in paper form at Third Thursday events and at other community gatherings such as the Suds N' Spurs Brewfest. A drop box for paper surveys was available at the Sheridan County Courthouse. The survey was advertised in the Sheridan Press and links to an electronic version were available on the City of Sheridan, Sheridan County, and Chamber of Commerce website. In total 946 surveys were completed, 510 online surveys and 436 paper surveys.

The data was then compiled and analyzed for common themes and insights into what those participating in the survey valued about Sheridan and the surrounding area. In general respondents enjoyed the small-town feel of Sheridan and surrounding communities and appreciated the attitudes and values of the people living in the area.

They enjoyed the historic downtown and scenic beauty of the county and access to recreation. Their visions for Sheridan's future included measured and controlled growth that preserved the look and feel of the community and surrounding area. They also wanted more opportunities for families and young people, with a desire for more attainable housing and economic opportunities being common themes.



Methodology

Online and data from handwritten surveys were combined into a common dataset. As part of the data cleaning process spelling was standardized for certain terms. Responses from each of the three open ended questions was prepared for further analysis by being exported and saved into separate text files.

Survey analysis was coded in R ver. 4.2.2 using RStudio 2022.07.2. The following data packages were used to import, export, shape and analyze survey response data.

- tidyverse
- tidytext
- wordcloud
- wordcloud2
- readr
- writexl

The core of the analysis involved using different techniques to look at word frequency for common expressions and themes. This included creating word frequency tables for both single words (excluding common stop words, punctuation and symbols) and two and three word chains (bigrams and trigrams). Word frequency was expressed visually for single words using word clouds, and network graphs were created for the bigram chains. This analysis summary makes use of the word clouds and bigram frequency tables to illustrate common word frequency and themes.

Common Themes by Survey Question

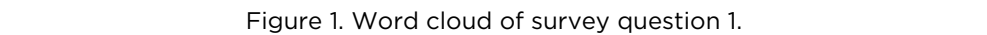
What do you value about your community?

“That no matter how long I’m gone, it always feels like home.” - Survey Respondent

By far the dominant themes for what people value about the community is the small town feel and friendly and supportive attitude of community residents. Survey responses for this question mentioned that it was the “people” that they valued about the community 221 times and the community “feel” 91 times. Other high frequency words included can be found on Table 1. below and illustrated in the word cloud in Figure 1:

Table 1. Word Frequency - What do you value about your community?

word	#
community	250
people	221
small	207
town	203
friendly	102
feel	94
sheridan	66
downtown	61
events	61
family	59
great	57
values	54
safety	51
schools	50
activities	48
support	48
good	44
parks	43
safe	43
arts	42



at word frequency one conclusion that can be drawn is that what pe

Additional insight into themes can be found in looking at the bigram frequency. A bigram is a connection of two words used in tandem. This type of word association can help provide understanding as to whether or not a word is being used in a positive or negative context. Table 2. below contains the most common bigrams found in the survey responses. The small town feel, friendly people, community events, low crime and small town values top the list.

Table 2. Bigram Frequency - What do you value about your community?

word1	word2	#
small	town	148
town	feel	68
friendly	people	29
community	events	22
low	crime	20
town	values	17
family	friendly	15
main	street	14
open	spaces	11
walking	paths	11
town	atmosphere	10
close	knit	9
downtown	area	9
hometown	feel	9
small	businesses	9
vibrant	downtown	9
great	schools	8
open	space	8
outdoor	recreation	8

What do you value about the Sheridan area?

“There is no better place to live. The mountains, great things to do downtown (winter & summer).” - Survey Respondent

When the question is focused on the Sheridan area, the residents themselves are still one of the top things people value about the community, with references to the “people” being raised 123 times. However, there was also a large number of mentions of the “mountains”, “beauty” and “recreation” opportunities of the area. Again, what people value is a mix of the environment and the people and activities in the area. Table 3. contains the frequency of the most common words respondents used in answering this question. Figure 2. Is the word cloud that depicts the frequency of respondent word choice.

word	#
mountains	176
small	131
people	123
town	123
community	116
outdoor	93
access	78
open	73
beauty	70
sheridan	69
beautiful	68
recreation	65
area	61
feel	61
opportunities	61
activities	58
great	58
spaces	54
downtown	48
outdoors	48

[illegible]

26

As with the previous question, the frequency of bigrams can provide additional insight. In this case the open spaces and outdoor activities and opportunities are highlighted in addition to the small town feel and friendly people. (Note: Although the proper name of the range is the Big Horn Mountains, Big Horn was combined into a single word for this analysis to help highlight word connections.)

Table 4. Bigram Frequency - What do you value about the Sheridan area?

word1	word2	#
small	town	91
open	spaces	46
town	feel	44
outdoor	recreation	29
outdoor	activities	27
bighorn	mountains	25
friendly	people	20
clean	air	13
easy	access	13
main	street	13
open	space	13
outdoor	opportunities	13
recreation	opportunities	13
low	crime	12
natural	beauty	12
walking	paths	12
wide	open	11
sheridan	area	10
mountains	lakes	9
recreational	opportunities	9
small	population	8
town	values	8

What would you like to see in the future, say 10-15 years from now?

“Keep Sheridan – Sheridan” - Survey Respondent

The final open ended question contains more complexity as it taps into the hopes people have for the community and recognition for some of the challenges it faces. Many respondents acknowledged that the community is going to continue to grow with the word “growth” being mentioned 163 times. Reactions to the potential changes brought by growth ranged from those desiring a no growth scenario, to those hoping that continued growth brought additional opportunities to the community. Concerns about what growth means for the Sheridan area can be categorized into responses expressing a fear of loss of what they value in Sheridan, and worries that young and working people might not be able to find their place in the community. These response recognized the value in a diverse community with opportunities for all residents.

The cost of living and need for more economic opportunities often coalesced around the perceived lack of attainable or affordable housing. In total 189 responses mentioned concerns regarding housing or a desire for more housing choice. The word frequency table (Table 5.) below captures the frequency of the most common words used along with the word cloud found in Figure 2.

Table 5. Word Frequency - What would you like to see in the future, say 10-15 years from now?

word	#
housing	189
community	173
sheridan	173
growth	163
people	132
affordable	111
town	109
small	85
city	84
downtown	70
restaurants	62
area	56
live	56
continued	52
opportunities	52
development	49
open	49
options	49
businesses	48
kids	47

What would you like to see in the future, say 10-15 years from now?



Figure 2. Word cloud of survey question 3.

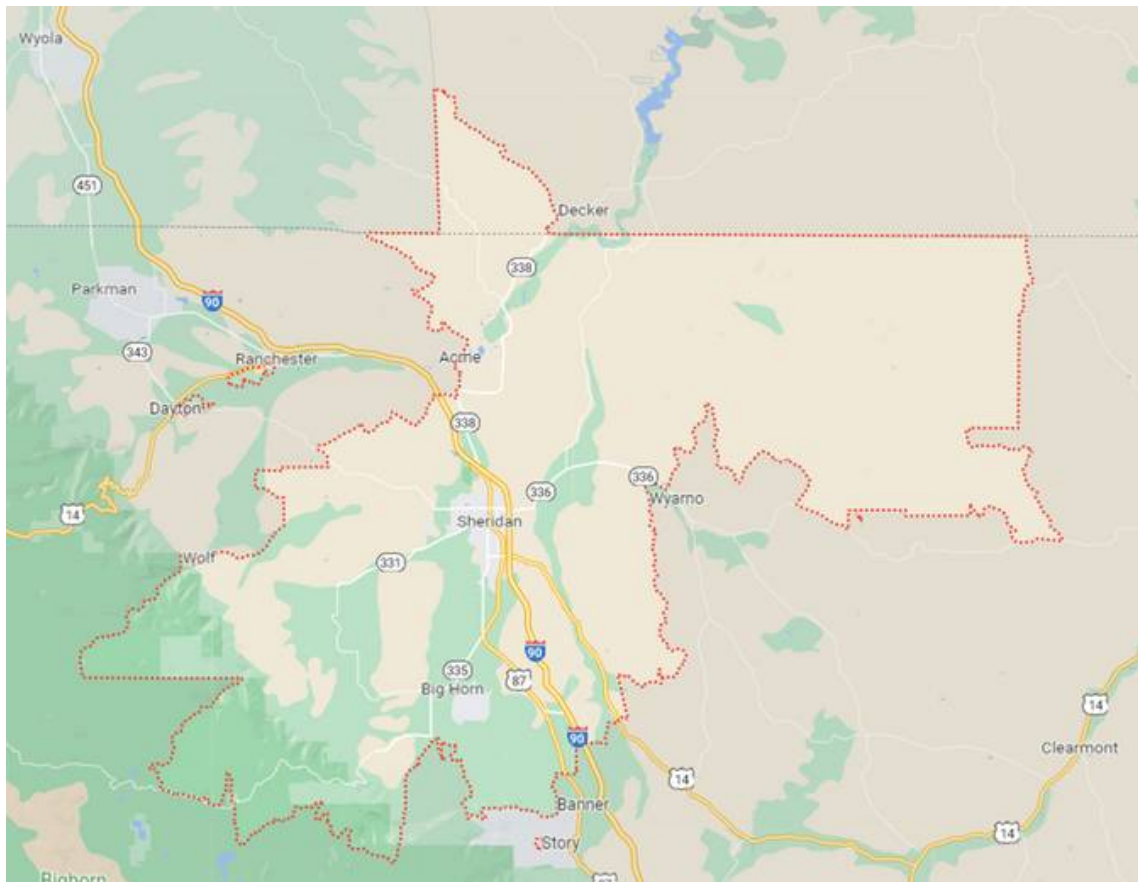
Exploring the bigram frequency table (Table 6.) helps better highlight some of the specific things that respondents hoped to see in the future or some of the detailed concerns they had. The need for affordable housing again topped the list. Another high frequency response revolved around maintaining the small town character of Sheridan. The desire for controlled or planned growth was expressed often as a way to address growth, but those who answered the survey also indicated that they did not want to see Sheridan become a community like Jackson Hole. Survey respondents also mentioned a need for more grocery stores, better paying job opportunities, and a desire for the continued success and growth of Sheridan College.

Table 6. Bigram Frequency - What would you like to see in the future?

word1	word2	#
affordable	housing	79
small	town	41
town	feel	18
open	spaces	14
10	15	13
small	business	13
main	street	12
property	taxes	12
young	people	12
15	years	11
controlled	growth	11
grocery	store	11
jackson	hole	10
low	income	10
sheridan	area	10
housing	options	9
mental	health	9
paying	jobs	9
planned	growth	9
sheridan	college	9
job	opportunities	8
sheridan	county	8
vibrant	downtown	8

Zip Codes and Geography

The only piece of demographic information collected by the survey was the respondent's zip code. The vast majority of respondents, 801, reported living in area code 82801. This zip code includes the City of Sheridan and surrounding area, along with a small portion of Montana (see map below). Table 7 shows the most common other zip codes reported including 82839 (Dayton/Ranchester area), 82836 (Dayton and area west of Dayton), 82833 (Big Horn), and 82832 (Story and area east of Story). Based on this distribution of respondents, it is probably reasonable to assume that most respondents had familiarity with the Sheridan area in responding.



Map of Zip Code 82801 (retrieved via www.google.com/maps)

Table 7. Survey respondents by zip code.

Zip Code	# of Respondents
82801 (Sheridan)	801
82839 (Ranchester)	27
82836 (Dayton)	24
82833 (Big Horn)	15
82832 (Banner)	10
82842 (Story)	8
82834 (Buffalo)	5
Some other Zip Code	46
No Response	10
Total	946

Conclusions

One of the benefits of open ended questions is that it allows the participant tremendous flexibility in completing the survey. Responses ranged from single word answers to short paragraphs. The richness of this information brings with it the challenge of categorizing responses beyond broad strokes and teasing out insights with enough specificity to formulate action.

Despite these challenges the survey was an opportunity for a large number of area residents to express what they valued about the community. Their responses showed an appreciation for a community that they believed embodied small town feel and values. A place where they believe people are helpful, friendly and supportive. They enjoyed the downtown, the schools and college, parks and walking paths and trails. They have chosen to live in the Sheridan area because of the proximity and access to the mountains, and the scenic beauty and open spaces that help define the landscape. They love that Sheridan is an active community with events that families and individuals can enjoy.

In looking to the future, one of the most salient themes was a fear that continued growth will diminish the things valued about living in the Sheridan area. Respondents were concerned that unmanaged growth would consume open spaces, not match the character of the existing community, or overwhelm existing services and infrastructure. Those who answered the survey often expressed the desire that new growth be controlled and shaped in such a way as to retain the look and feel of the existing community.

The lack of affordable housing was seen as a detriment to retaining young and working families in the area. Found in the responses was a hope that growth will bring with it new opportunities in the form of new businesses and economic activity, with some emphasizing small and local businesses as opposed to national chains.

- That growth bring opportunity in the form of attainable/affordable housing, small business growth, and job opportunities.
- That growth be managed and controlled in such a way as to preserve community character, open space, and beauty.

A photograph of a winter scene. In the foreground, there is a wooden fence covered in snow. Behind the fence, several trees are visible, their branches heavily laden with snow. The ground is also covered in a thick layer of snow. The sky is a pale, overcast blue.

Section 5: General Recommendations

Next Steps

To Consider

Resources

General Recommendations

The Community Review is the first phase of a very long and very important process. The Review provides the community and its leaders with a snapshot of ideas, priorities, and pressing concerns from community members. How a community decides to use the information is most important. The Wyoming Business Council is happy to help facilitate the process, provide support, and potential access to resources, but fundamentally, the next steps are determined by Sheridan, its leaders, and its community.

The WBC recommends that an organization, such as the EDTF, serve as the communication hub for projects. Though the organization may not have authority to approve projects or initiatives, it can help coordinate, avoiding overlapping efforts and identify opportunities for collaboration and resource consolidation.

Next Steps

Spend time with Survey results and Listening Session Summaries. What can you learn? Identify:

- new priorities or direction.
- additional insights.
- validation of current projects, initiatives, or directions.

Determine how to best use the information. Perhaps the information is best suited to incorporate into current city, county, or organizational plans. Maybe a local non-profit integrates ideas into its working plan: raising money for pathway clean-up, beautification efforts, or signage. The Center for a Vital Community may choose to tackle a broader, more complex issue similar to its previous work on poverty. Community partnerships may form to better address a problem, avoiding overlap and pooling resources. The EDTF may wish to focus on a specific initiative that requires broad participation across the Sheridan County community.

What is the fundamental problem or issue the community wants to solve? There may be one, there may be many. How will you decide which to tackle?

Identify possible projects or initiatives.

- What additional information does the community and/or leadership need to better understand the issue, the problem, and constraints/barriers to success? Where can the community get the information?
 - Perform an Asset Survey.
 - Review previous studies, surveys, initiatives, reports.
 - Interview stakeholder or host focus groups.
- How can and should the community best prioritize potential projects?
 - Need
 - Current resources and assets
 - Project barriers and opportunities
- Who is best to lead and participate in project efforts?
 - Authority - can make the decision to approve and implement.
 - Ability - ownership and access to the knowledge, skills, and resources to solve the problem.
 - Acceptance - belief that there is an issue that can and should be solved.
- Who else needs to be at the table?

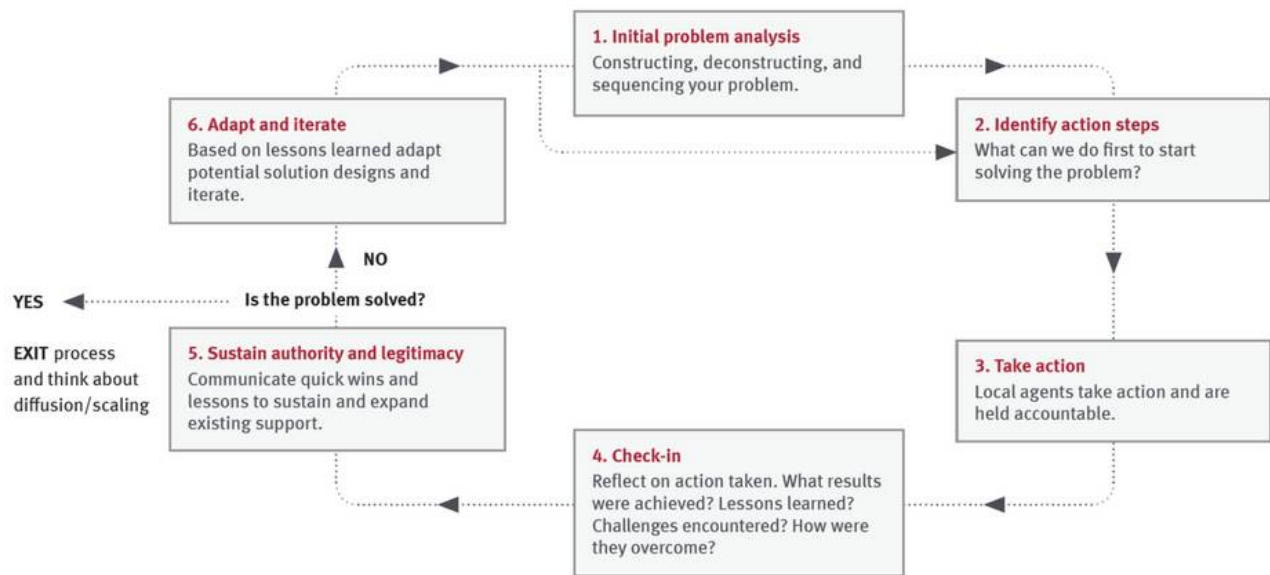
Identify the first next step and begin.

Check progress often. What have you learned? What do you need to change, if anything?



If the problem is complex, meaning that there is not one "right" answer or pathway to success, the Wyoming Business Council suggests Sheridan consider a Problem-Driven Iterative Process (PDIA) or something similar. PDIA is "a process of facilitated emergence which focuses on problems (not solutions) and follows a step by step process (not a rigid plan) that allows for flexible learning and adaptation," Harvard University, Building State Capability. We are happy to walk through it or provide any other guidance and support Sheridan may need as you begin.

PDIA Process



<https://bsc.cid.harvard.edu/about>

A few things to consider based on the Listening Sessions

1. How do we bridge the gap between city and county when planning for growth - water lines vs cultural space?
2. Citizens Academy - train and educate people on the process and the themes - place them in initiatives.
3. Bring in groups and processes that are already engaged and working toward a solution to a problem. Loop them in.
4. Look at what is already in progress, asset surveys, is this a real issue? Is this an education or is this an action item.

Resources to Get Started

Wyoming Planners Association

WYOPASS offers a library of planning resources.

<https://www.wyopass.org/>

Wyoming Zoning Toolkit

Aligning Zoning Code with Housing Goals

https://www.wyopass.org/planning_resources/zoning_toolkit.php

Wyoming Community Development Authority

WCDA focuses on affordable housing and first time homebuyer financing programs.

<https://www.wyomingcda.com/>

Wyoming Housing Network

Strengthening Wyoming Communities by providing quality resources and opportunities for people to reach their housing goals.

<https://whninc.org/>

Wyoming Business Council

WBC leads economic growth in order to build resilient communities and create opportunities for people to thrive.

<https://wyomingbusiness.org/communities/community-development/>

Wyoming Main Street

WMS helps communities of any size revitalize their downtown through the Main Street Approach.

<https://wyomingbusiness.org/communities/community-development/main-street/>

Wyoming Small Business Development Center

SBDC network offers free one on one confidential business counseling to Wyoming entrepreneurs through out the life cycle of their business.

<https://www.wyomingsbdc.org/>

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Wyoming
Community Reviews



Image credit: Sheridan WY Travel and Tourism

We thank you for your participation in Phase 1 of the WBC Community Review Program.

For more information about the Community Review Program, please contact
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