

INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

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4.1 STATEMENT OF INTENT

The cooperation of county and local jurisdictions, special districts, towns, agencies, and institutions in the development of plans will benefit our community.

4.2 BACKGROUND/EXISTING CONDITIONS

Intergovernmental relations play an important role in accomplishing the goals of the Comprehensive Plan and, ultimately, the success of the plan depends on them. Our community is larger than any one jurisdictional boundary, and the issues addressed by the Comprehensive Plan (economic development, the conservation of agricultural land, natural resources, cultural resources, open space, transportation, community services, and housing) span across these jurisdictional boundaries. In addition, the actions of one jurisdiction, agency, or special district impacts other jurisdictions.

Intergovernmental relations occur when two or more jurisdictions, agencies, or special districts make the arrangement to discuss individual visions, goals, plans and policies, and to address and resolve mutual issues.

The benefits of positive intergovernmental relations are numerous:

- ✧ Saves time and money: increases efficiency, reduces duplication, avoids litigation,
- ✧ Saves effort: identifies problems early, takes advantage of opportunities, avoids future problems, addresses issues at a regional level,
- ✧ Allows governments to be more proactive rather than reactive,
- ✧ Creates predictability, consistency, understanding, and trust,
- ✧ Creates a broader ownership of the plans; plans with support are easier to implement.

Wyoming State statutes build the foundation for intergovernmental relations in Albany County. Wyoming State Statutes 9-8-301, 18-5-208, and 15-1-503 encourage counties to cooperate with federal and municipal governments.

The Board of County Commissioners of a county that has officially adopted a comprehensive plan pursuant to W.S. 18-5-202(b) may participate in efforts to coordinate the plan with federal regional forest or other resource management plans as provided in the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 and

federal regulations adopted pursuant to that act, including but not limited to, Title 36, of the Code of Federal Regulations, part 219.7 and Title 43, of the Code of Federal Regulations, part 1610.3.

For cities (such as the City of Laramie) and towns adopting a master plan that includes territory outside that city or town, Wyoming State Statute 15-1-503 states that:

Action shall be taken with the concurrence of the board of county commissioners or county planning commission, or other municipal legislative body concerned.

In June 2007, the Albany County Board of County Commissioners “concurred” with the City of Laramie’s comprehensive plan, which includes area outside the current city limits.

Cooperation among local jurisdictions, agencies and special districts already exists in our community. The City of Laramie and Albany County have cooperated in many areas relating to public services and health concerns. For example, the City of Laramie Fire Department provides fire response to the southern part of the county, and emergency response to the entire county. The City and County have cooperated in the past to develop the Casper Aquifer Protection Plan (CAPP) for the vulnerable area of the aquifer east of the city, and are currently working together to update the plan. The City of Laramie, Albany County, and the South of Laramie Water and Sewer District have a 201 Intergovernmental Agreement in place which establishes standards for the construction of sewage collection lines and standards for requiring connection to the City of Laramie sewer lines.

Another area of intergovernmental cooperation has been in attracting employment. The Partners In Progress initiative is a public/private sector partnership to advance economic development in the region. The City and County recently created a Joint Powers Board, which furthers economic development through grant application and administration, strategic economic planning, programs to draw and expand businesses, and maintaining open communication among stakeholders. The City and County annually cooperate on community clean-up projects throughout the county, with the City providing a landfill fee waiver to the County.

There are many other agencies, special districts, and jurisdictions in Albany County that can potentially (if they do not already) cooperate with each other to further individual goals and avoid unnecessary conflicts in operation.

Potential partners include:

- * City of Laramie,
- * Town of Rock River,
- * Special service districts (e.g., water and sewer districts, road improvement districts),
- * Laramie Rivers Conservation District,
- * Albany County School District #1,
- * University of Wyoming,



- * Laramie County Community College, Albany County branch,
- * Wyoming Technical Institute,
- * Fire districts,
- * Federal agencies (U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service),
- * State agencies (Wyoming Department of Transportation, Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality, State Historic Preservation Office),
- * Laramie Regional Airport,
- * Ivinson Memorial Hospital,
- * Union Pacific Railroad,
- * Utility companies,
- * Laramie Economic Development Corporation,
- * Chamber of Commerce,
- * Albany County Tourism,
- * Citizen groups.

It is important to build on previous successes such as the cooperation and assistance provided by the University of Wyoming during the County Comprehensive Plan process and the City of Laramie and County staff efforts to coordinate land uses and development patterns around Laramie. Keeping existing positive relations between the County and the City is key.

Intergovernmental coordination leads to efficient and directed growth; both are important issues that are addressed in this plan. One area for cooperation is the provision of public services, including, but not limited to, the extension of water, sewer, and utility lines; solid waste disposal; road maintenance; and fire and police protection. Cooperation can also result in more cost effective implementation strategies such as land exchanges (of private property and federal lands); transfer of development rights (having density transferred from the county to the municipalities); strategies for conserving open space, agricultural lands, and natural and cultural resources; and review and agreement on the details of densities and uses in the Priority Growth Areas (PGAs).

Subsequent to the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan the County will work cooperatively with the City of Laramie to create a sub-area plan for the area surrounding the city, where the City and County will agree on subdivision review authority. An objective will be to establish an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) in regard to review and extension of services in PGA 1. The IGA can foster an environment of trust and mutual respect and forms the foundation of a strong working relationship between the County and City. An IGA can also be used for many other forms of cooperation, such as police and fire protection; road, water and sewer districts; and open space or land reservation.

Albany County needs to coordinate its planning efforts with other regional planning efforts. Regional plans undertaken by the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Manage-



ment may affect Albany County's agricultural producers as well as the Natural Resource Framework (NRF). The use of public lands for grazing is especially important to the county's agricultural producers.

Intergovernmental relations are addressed in nearly every element of the Comprehensive Plan. Specific policies for intergovernmental relations are included in the appropriate chapter (Long Range Growth Plan and Land Use, Economic Development, Community Services, etc.). Many policies and implementation strategies can be expanded to include additional levels of intergovernmental involvement.

4.3 INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS OBJECTIVES

- IR1. Take a regional approach based on sound planning principles by acting in cooperation with other government agencies.
- IR2. Promote contiguous and orderly development and the provision of adequate services to such development.
- IR3. Coordinate efforts of local jurisdictions, agencies, and special districts in order to achieve common goals.
- IR4. Work with local jurisdictions, agencies, and special districts to conserve important natural resources, open space, agricultural land, cultural resources, and other valuable assets that cross jurisdictional boundaries.
- IR5. Combine efforts of local jurisdictions, agencies, and special districts to better promote economic development in the region.

4.4 IMPLEMENTATION

STRATEGIES

- 1. Examine the potential to negotiate an IGA to share land and infrastructure resources information and data.
- 2. Cooperate with and participate in the planning efforts of our neighboring jurisdictions, agencies and special districts, especially those that are directed toward efficient use of resources, conservation of agriculture and open space, and the cost-effective development of public infrastructure (roads, utilities). (1, 2, 3)
 - * Involve our neighboring jurisdictions, agencies, and special districts in future updates to the County Comprehensive Plan and other planning projects by inviting them to meetings, providing drafts, and having them participate in the public process. (1, 2, 3)
 - * Continue to require official contact with appropriate local, state and federal agencies as well as public utilities managers for their review and recommendations on proposed land developments. The County will refer development proposals to applicable special districts and



- jurisdictions so that they may be involved throughout the review process. (2, 3)
- ✱ Meet with neighboring jurisdictions, agencies, and special districts regularly to discuss regional issues, identify common goals, and address potential conflicts. (1, 2, 3)
3. Use zoning ordinances, land use regulations, maps, intergovernmental agreements, Memorandums of Understanding, Memorandums of Agreement, and other tools as appropriate to promote positive intergovernmental relations. (2, 3)
 - ✱ Coordinate plans with the City of Laramie in relation to subdivision regulations applicable to land within the 1-mile jurisdictional boundary.
 - ✱ Allow unincorporated areas within the Primary Growth Area 1 to develop under City of Laramie regulations such as development and parking standards. Signage, landscaping, lighting, and design guidelines, as well as right of way dedication and the identification of services, will be provided by the City. Mutually agree upon specific standards. (2, 3)
 - ✱ Specify processes for amending the boundaries of Primary Growth Area 1 or any portion of the IGA itself in the IGA language. (2)
 4. Work with the City of Laramie, special water and sewer districts, and Town of Rock River to implement the Comprehensive Plan Priority Growth Areas. (1, 2, 3)
 5. Consider regional implications in decisions regarding major capital improvements. (2, 3)
 6. Work with fire districts to identify new locations for stations. (2, 3)
 7. Work with WYDOT to develop gateway concepts and higher standards for aesthetic design. (1)
 8. Work with the City of Laramie and the University of Wyoming to establish data sharing programs that may benefit all entities. (3)
 9. Streamline the review system for development proposals that are for permitted uses within their zone. (1)

ACTIONS

- Update and amend subdivision and development review regulations to include a referral system for local jurisdictions, agencies, and special districts, including appropriate information sharing procedures (e.g., length of time for review, method of data transfer). (2, 3)
- Change process standards to include a provision that a board member of a water or water and sewer district, or any other special district, is encouraged



to participate in preliminary plat pre-application conferences for subdivision proposals in their district. (2, 3)

- ❑ Develop a timeframe for future reviews of existing or proposed intergovernmental agreements and the allowance to amend such agreements as necessary. (1)
- ❑ Examine the potential to negotiate an intergovernmental agreement to share land and infrastructure resource information and data. (1, 2, 3)
- ❑ Update intergovernmental agreements to reflect future updates to the Comprehensive Plan. (2)
- ❑ Coordinate with the City of Laramie to develop an area plan or IGA for the area surrounding the City of Laramie, particularly the City of Laramie Urban Growth Area (UGA). (2, 3)
- ❑ Create an official zoning map to reflect the designated areas for future development. Zone land within the City of Laramie UGA so that land use and development meet the intentions of both parties. (2)

4.5 RELATED DOCUMENTS

City of Laramie Comprehensive Plan: guides land use planning and development within the city and in an Urban Growth Area around the city (2007)

Casper Aquifer Protection Plan: delineates Casper Aquifer Protection Area, threats and mitigation actions (2002, revised 2007, update contracted for 2007)

Rawlins Resource Management Plan: guides management of Bureau of Land Management lands for Rawlins Resource Area, including Albany County (in progress 2007)

Medicine Bow National Forest Plan: guides management of Medicine Bow National Forest Land within Albany County (2003)

A Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy for Wyoming: identifies wildlife species of concern, as well as threats, challenges, and proposed conservation actions; Wyoming Game and Fish Department (2005)

Comprehensive Conservation Plan for Laramie Plains National Wildlife Refuges: provides direction and guidance for Bamforth National Wildlife Refuge, Hutton Lake National Wildlife Refuge, and Mortenson Lake National Wildlife Refuge (in progress 2007)

