



# Wright, WY Community Review

May 6-8, 2019

## PHASE 1 - LEARN

A service of the Wyoming Business Council in partnership with the University of Wyoming Extension, the University of Idaho and University of Montana.

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# COMMUNITY REVIEW REPORT

## Wright, Wyoming

### May 6-8, 2019

### Sponsoring Agencies and Organizations

Town of Wright  
Library  
High School  
Cottonwood Elementary  
Fire Station  
Senior Center  
Wyoming Business Council  
University of Wyoming Extension  
University of Idaho

### Acknowledgments

Thank you to the many individuals who generously shared their time, opinions, and knowledge by serving on the home team, completing a survey, participating in a listening session or other conversation with the visiting team.

### Wright Home Team Organizers

Paula Strohschein  
Michael Phipps  
Elizabeth Albin  
Mayor Ralph Kingan  
Barb Craig  
Janet Schneider  
Brandi Harlow

### Visiting Team

**Desiree Brothe**  
*Community Development Coordinator*  
Wyoming Business Council  
307-631-6137  
[desiree.brothe@wyo.gov](mailto:desiree.brothe@wyo.gov)

**Amy Quick**  
*Northwest Regional Director*  
Wyoming Business Council  
307.421.0140  
[Amy.quick@wyo.gov](mailto:Amy.quick@wyo.gov)

**Brandi Harlow**  
*Northeast Regional Director*  
Wyoming Business Council  
307.689.1320  
[brandi.harlow@wyo.gov](mailto:brandi.harlow@wyo.gov)

**Kim Porter**  
*Community Initiatives Director*  
Wyoming Business Council  
307.777.5812 | Cell: 307.287.1625  
[kim.porter@wyo.gov](mailto:kim.porter@wyo.gov)

## Executive Summary

The Wright Community Review team would like to thank the organizers and citizens of Wright for their time and hospitality. Wright has a great sense of community and pride.

Wright is the second community to participate in the Wyoming Business Council's new Community Review Program and the first community to move to phase II. The new program is a hybrid of our long standing (20+ year) and successful Community Assessment Program, with new processes and a partnership with Montana and Idaho. During this three-state grant project, the Wyoming Business Council and University of Wyoming are collaborating with the University of Idaho, Montana State University and the Montana Economic Development Agency to develop the very best review process in each of our states. Dr. Lorie Higgins, University of Idaho Extension, is leading and guiding the project.



As part of the three-state collaboration, each state has its own design team. The Wyoming Design Team is guiding the four-phase process to help identify community needs, build community capacity and provide resource information to address community needs.

The tri-state Community Review website can be found at <http://www.communityreview.org>, where there is a searchable database of resources for community development and other useful information. It will prove to be of immense help to communities now and far into the future.

Thank you again, for sharing your hopes and vision for Wright during the Community Review. Working together, much will be accomplished.

## Wyoming Community Review Process Overview

The Wyoming Community Review Process has four phases. Not every community will go through all the phases, but the opportunity is available to grow and achieve success through four phases of assistance. A community coach is made available to help the community prepare for success. Wright has completed Phase I.

- Phase I – LEARN - Includes the application, community pre-assessment survey and exploration, community team training, the Community Review with priority setting, and initial report.
- Phase II – LEAD - Community training (if needed and in areas identified), Home Team members with the assistance of a community coach develop a workplan/action plan using the Strategic Doing process, set up committees to work on areas identified, and a final report outlining the activities to be undertaken.
- Phase III – LAUNCH – Determine funding sources, identify consultants or other community success stories, follow-up and technical assistance. In-depth training, if needed.
- Phase IV – EVALUATION/CELEBRATION – One-year follow-up and celebration, report out of community successes and return on investment. Celebrating successes.

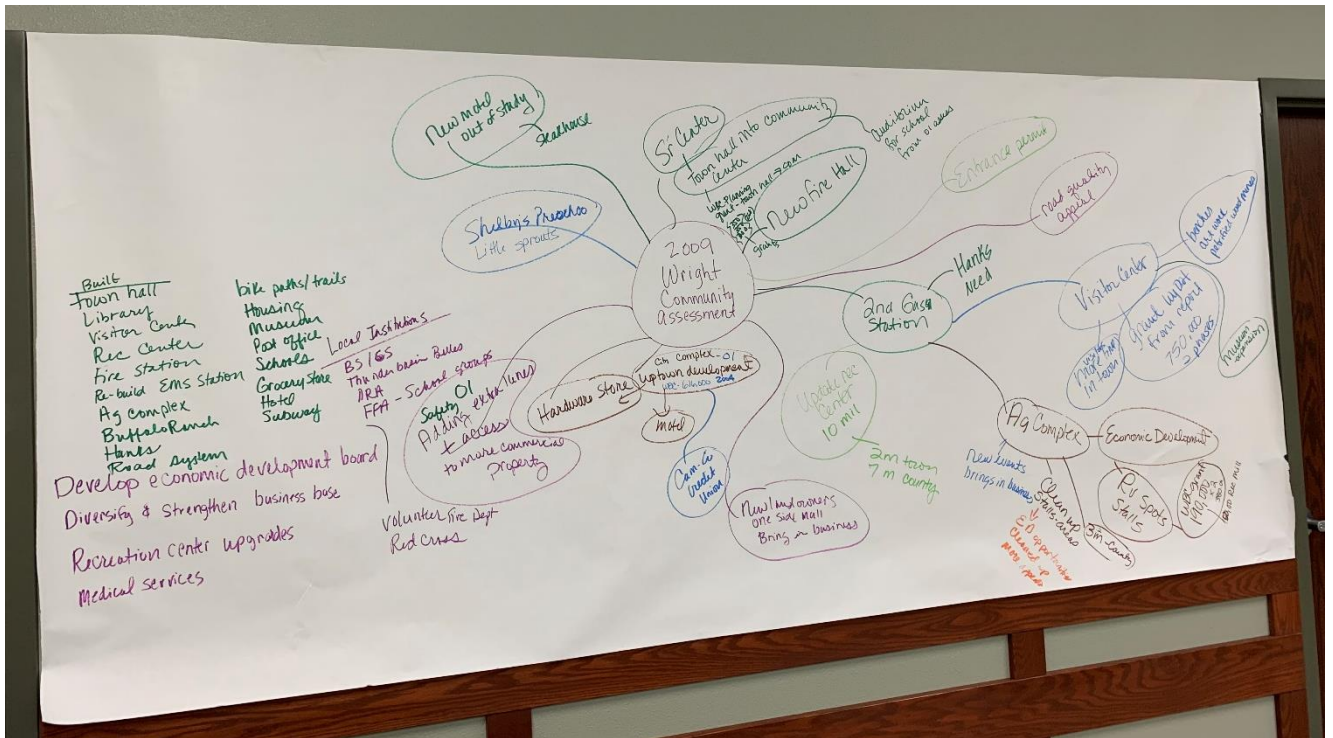


# Ripple Effect Mapping (2009 Wright Community Assessment)

We began the Wright Community Review with Ripple Effect Mapping (REM) around the 2009 Community Assessment. REM is a versatile participatory evaluation tool to collect the untold stories and behind-the-scene activities that can ripple out from a specific program or activity. It uncovers both the intended and unintended outcomes of the previous assessment. Four of the major themes from the 2009 Assessment were:

- Develop economic development board
- Diversify and strengthen business base
- Recreation center upgrades
- Medical services

As depicted on the REM, many economic development ventures were attributed to the 2009 Assessment, including a second gas station, hardware store, the Ag Complex and a new motel, to name a few. The Rec Center received \$10 million in upgrades through successful grants, supported by the Community Assessment Report. The report was also used to obtain grants for the Visitor Center, which encourages people to stop in Wright.





This word cloud visually represents the most frequently voiced responses. Larger text indicates items mentioned most often.



### What are the hopes or aspirations for Wright?

Places to eat and activities were the most voiced hopes for Wright, followed by improvements in the Mall area, increased shopping, Highway 59 and movie theatre. Secondary themes around hopes include a splash park/ice rink, shooting range, another basketball court, and more programs for youth, all tying back to activities. Public transportation and road repair around the town were mentioned often too.



## Wright Major Themes

Taking into consideration all three questions the major theme heard in Wright were as follows:

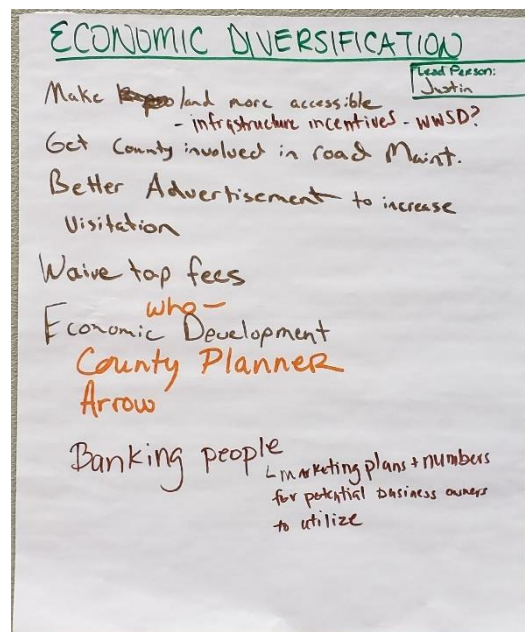
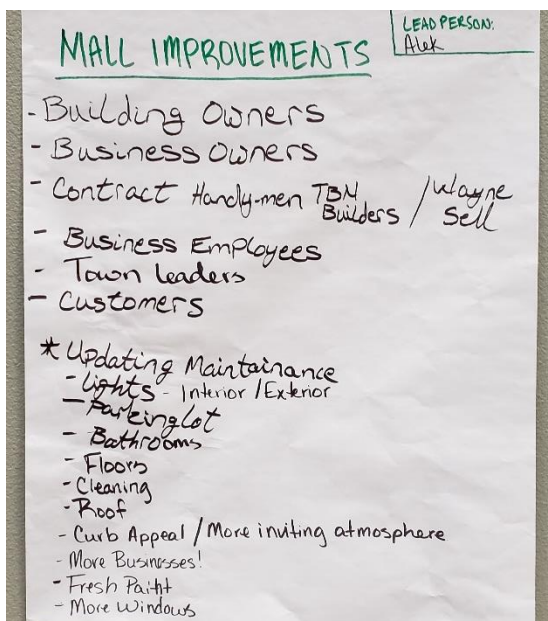
- **Mall improvements**
- **Economic diversification**
- **Community communications**
- **More activities**
- **More places to eat/shopping**
- **Amenities**
- **Highway 59**
- **Parking lot improvements**



These are the areas the Community Review team will focus on in Phase II.

## Town Hall Meeting

A Town Hall Meeting was conducted on May 8<sup>th</sup> to report what was heard from the community during the Review. After the report out, attendees were asked to work in small groups on the theme most important to them, come up with other community members who should be at the table and action items. This work sets the stage for Strategic Doing, scheduled for August 6, 2019. *Highway 59 was not addressed in small groups, as WYDOT and Government Representatives are working on this. Parking lot improvements were not selected by any group to work on.*





COMMUNITY COMMUNICATIONS Lead Person: Arran

Digital Billboard  
 News Paper  
 Gillette Public Access

Table -  
 News Record      High School English  
 GPA Staff      Business Advertise/invest

Action  
 High School Student Community letter  
 Contact City of Gillette

MORE ACTIVITIES Lead Person: Crystal

Youth  
 Roller skates  
 Skate board Park  
 Human board games

People  
 Principles  
 Volunteers  
 Parents  
 Teens

Adults  
 Shooting range  
 Cook off's  
 Open market  
 high Teas  
 Vender's tournament

government  
 golf course

MORE PLACES TO EAT/SHOPPING Lead person: Jane

Bar + Grill  
 Fast Food — Drive thru > Food truck coming!!

Shopping ☺  
 Family Dollar  
 Dollar store

☺

AMENITIES Lead person: Paula

~~NEW~~ New/Additional Gym  
 Space  
 PAB, Athletic Director, TC  
 Students, Coaches, Parents  
 County, Rec Center

Study - benefits to Community  
 Public discussion  
 -benefits: Lodging  
 Restaurants  
 Gas Stations  
 Community Promotions

## Recommendations

1. Phase II: Schedule Strategic Doing Session  
A 3-4-hour session, to identify strategies to meet Wright’s goals. This session will provide an exciting opportunity for engaged citizens throughout Wright to participate in a workshop utilizing the Strategic Doing™ process. During the session, we will work together to identify strategies to meet Wright's goals. Strategic Doing™ is a new approach that helps local communities, regions, or organizations form the collaborations needed to address complex challenges. Instead of just talking about what can be done, this workshop will allow us to set doable goals that can be achieved in a short time period.
2. Pursue some sort of marketing/promotional/information sharing network:
  - i. For example, a community bulletin board, both in a physical place as well as online/social media platforms.
  - ii. Approach the high school about students creating a town newspaper/newsletter and/or assist the efforts of the community volunteer (Chrystal) with an on-line newspaper or combine this effort with students.
  - iii. Include in this venue, activities and events taking place in wright. At the end of this report is a document to help get the community engaged, “Great ideas for our downtown.”
3. Establish a Merchant’s Association, Chamber or business services to help network businesses and share information. Include re-starting the networking with the Council. This will improve communication and promotion of local events, businesses, etc.
4. Wayfinding signs throughout town to identify different public facilities as well as businesses. In addition, work with local businesses to better sign their buildings.
5. Review the existing town and county building codes and other permits to ensure they are supportive of a positive business climate and helpful in attracting new and helping existing businesses to expand.
6. Identify potential industries/businesses that would be interested in locating or expanding to Wright and work with them to help diversify the local economy and reliance on the natural resource extraction industries.

## Next Steps

On August 6, 2019, Wright will enter Phase II of the Community Review process. A Strategic Doing Workshop will be held at the Town Hall. During the session, we will work together to identify strategies to meet Wright's goals. Strategic Doing™ is a new approach that helps local communities, regions, or organizations form the collaborations needed to address complex challenges. Instead of just talking about what can be done, this workshop will allow us to set doable goals that can be achieved in a short time period. See invitation on the following page.




# Strategic Doing™ Workshop

Facilitated by Kim Porter (Wyoming Business Council) and Julie Daniels (University of Wyoming Extension)

## What is Strategic Doing™?

This session builds on the community input received during Wright's Community Review. The next step is an exciting opportunity for engaged citizens throughout the community to participate in a workshop utilizing the **Strategic Doing™** process. During the session, we will work together to identify strategies to make Wright an exciting community that is actively working to attract 21st Century talent and industry.



**Strategic Doing™** is an exciting new approach that helps local communities, regions, or organizations form the collaborations needed to address complex challenges. Instead of just talking about what can be done, this workshop will allow us to actually set doable goals that can be achieved in a short time period.

**Strategic Doing™** builds complex collaboration networks by helping groups answer four simple questions.

For more information contact [kim.porter@wyo.gov](mailto:kim.porter@wyo.gov)





# Community Review Agenda

May 6	Session	Location
3:00 pm – 4:00 pm	Agriculture	Fire Station
4:00 pm – 5:00 pm	City, County, Law Enforcement, EMS, Fire	Fire Station
7:00 pm – 8:00 pm	Public Session	Town Hall
May 7		
10:00 am – 11:00 am	Business & Professional	Town Hall
11:30 am – 1:00 pm	Lunch & Seniors	Community Center/Senior Center
1:30 pm – 2:30 pm	Civic Groups & Church	Public Library
3:00 pm – 4:00 pm	Education and Family	Cottonwood Elementary
4:30 pm – 5:30 pm	Industry	Town Hall
7:00 pm – 9:00 pm	Open House (drop in/answers questions)	Town Hall
May 8		
9:00 am - 10:00 am	Open Session	Town Hall
11:00 am – 1:00 pm	Lunch w/ students	WJSHS
7:00 pm	Town Hall Meeting	Town Hall

## Tour of Wright

Mayor Ralph Kingan provided a tour, showing the team the ins and outs of Wright, past projects and future needs. We looked at housing, businesses, the Ag complex and the industrial park, as well as amenities, such as the Rec Center, Library and parks.



## Community Listening Sessions

Community Listening Sessions are open-ended, focus group-like discussions with stakeholders in the community. We ask the same questions at each session and offer several sessions to encourage as many participants as possible. We facilitated nine listening sessions, one general open house, one open house at the Jr/high school and elementary school. We saw 283 people at the sessions and received two written comments. It culminated in a town hall meeting to report our initial findings. Group work was completed to get ideas from the community about how to address community-identified priorities.

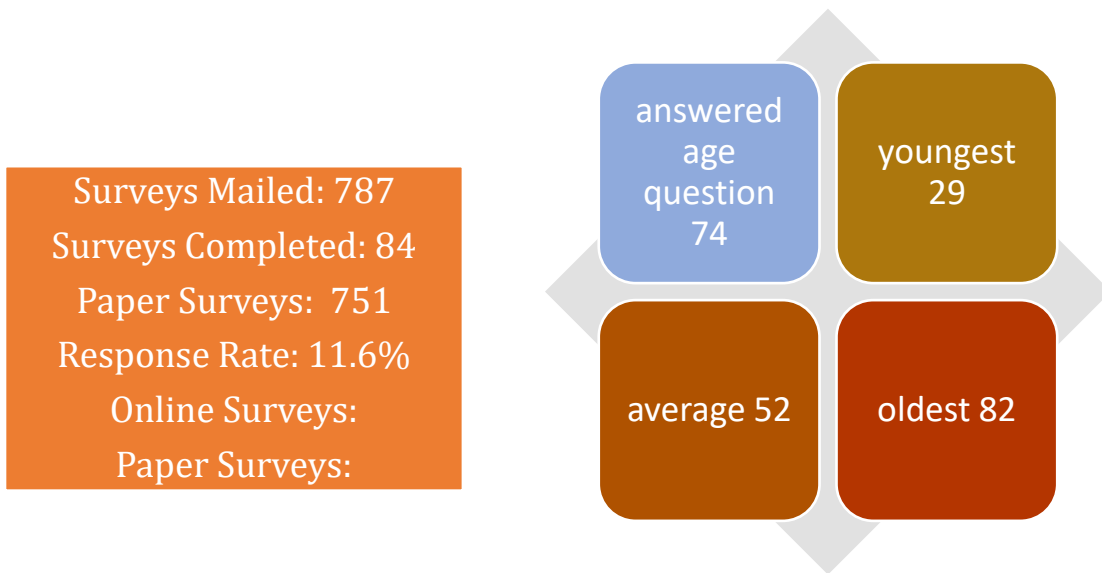


## Wright Community Survey Results

A “Community Satisfaction Survey” was conducted in Wright prior to the community review team visit to conduct listening sessions and community meetings on **May 6 – 8, 2019**. It was conducted by University of Idaho and the HELPS Lab at Montana State University.

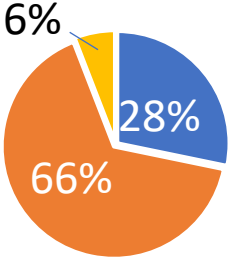
Survey results serve a number of purposes and serve communities in multiple ways. Results can be used to bolster grant proposals and demonstrate support for new policies or the status quo. Citizen groups and municipalities can use this data as a guide for planning and identifying future initiatives.

In addition, Community Review delivery organizations and partnering Universities use this data to identify common interests and concerns across multiple communities, which in turn helps these organizations develop programs and resources to better assist rural communities like yours. In order to identify commonalities and differences across communities, surveys need to be relatively standardized. Therefore, some questions in a standardized survey may be more or less relevant to particular communities. That said, a majority of the questions on your survey are relevant to Wright, which we will demonstrate in this section. We appreciate your willingness to assist these service organizations with this important effort.



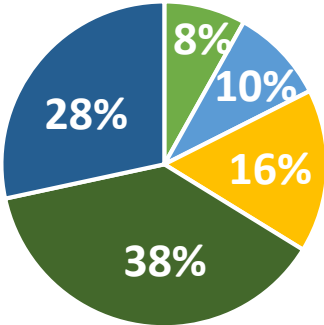
## Sex

■ Male ■ Female ■ Prefer Not to Answer

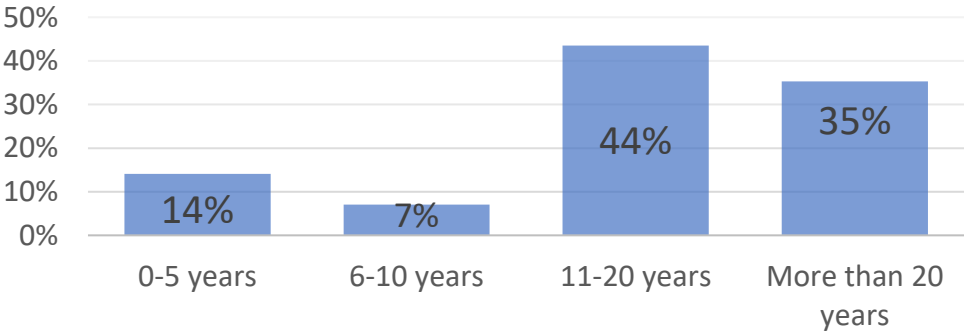


## Income

■ Under \$25,000 ■ \$25,000-\$49,999 ■ \$50,000-\$74,999  
 ■ \$75,000-\$100,000 ■ Above \$100,000



## YEARS IN THE COMMUNITY



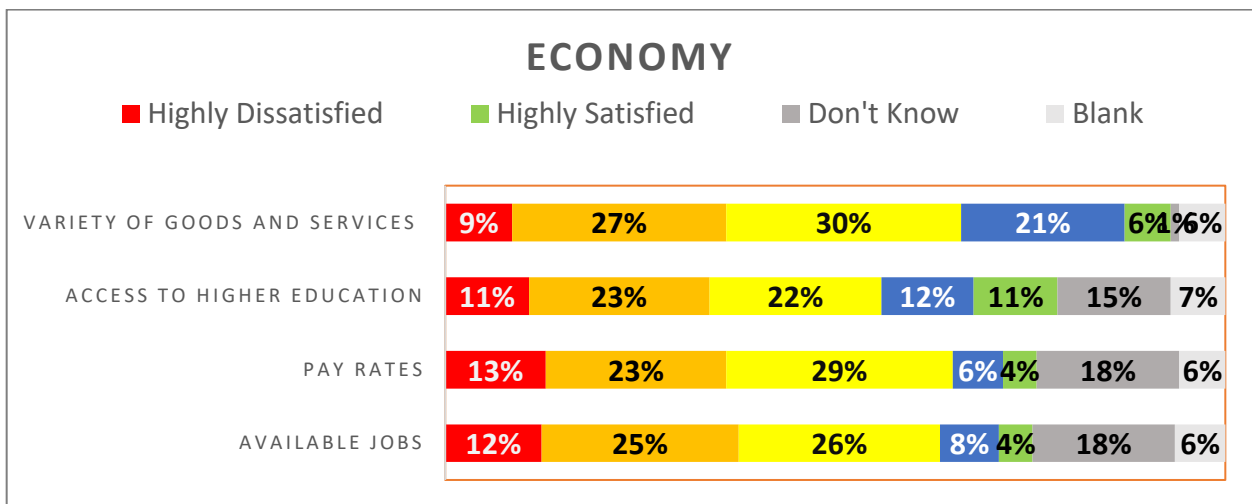
In each section below, graphs depicting how residents ranked various goods and services available in Wright, are followed by comments typed or written on surveys. Survey responses to these open-ended questions are representative of comments from 45 respondents who chose to provide answers:

- “Would you like to comment or explain why you rated your satisfaction with any of these public services and community amenities in the way you did?”
- “Would you like to comment on your level of satisfaction with any other public services or community amenities that are not listed above?”

Other questions from later in the survey are included in the relevant sections. For example, the question about supporting local businesses is included in the Economy section.

## 1. Economy

Most respondents were neither highly dissatisfied or highly satisfied with economic indicators in Wright, with the exception of “variety of goods and services,” which received the highest ranking of the four economic indicators. Respondents were least satisfied with pay rates and available jobs. Though access to higher education was mentioned in a few comments as a need, the rankings do not reflect a high level of dissatisfaction with this indicator.



Survey respondents' comments related to the economy centered on jobs and wages. These comments reflect the relatively lower ranking for “pay rates” and “available jobs.”

*“Trying to find a job in town is near impossible, if you do it’s only for \$10.”*

*“Low wages unless you work in the mines.”*

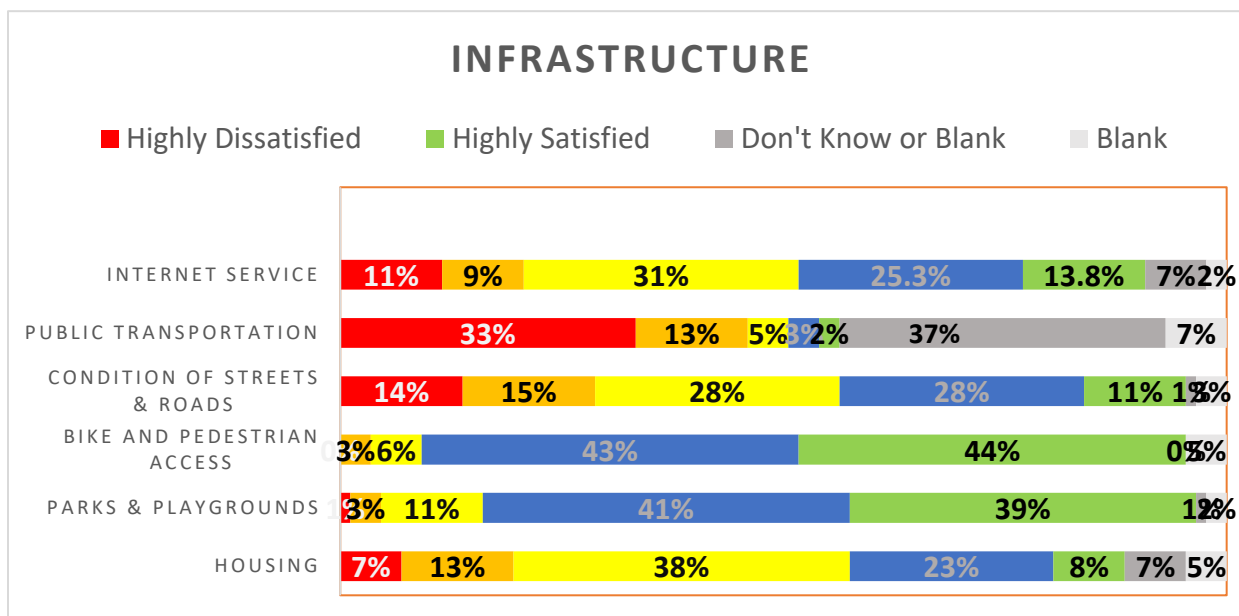
**Question: Do any of the following factors challenge your ability to support Wright’s locally owned businesses? (Select all that apply)**

Prices and availability of products and services are part of what drives people to shop in several other communities near Wright. These challenges are common to other communities across the West.



“Other” challenges shared focused primarily on potholes in the mall parking lot and the limited number and type of businesses in Wright.

## 2. Infrastructure and Housing



Of all types of infrastructure, Wright residents are most dissatisfied with public transportation. Respondents are most satisfied with walking and biking paths and parks and playgrounds.

Several comments provided by respondents to the survey reflect pride and appreciation for these amenities:

*“Love the paths and parks.”*     
 *“Nice paths in town and around.”*     
 *“Water system is great.”*

Though satisfaction on the high side with regard to roads in town, and comments reflect that with a few exceptions. However, some comments expressed concern about roads outside of town:

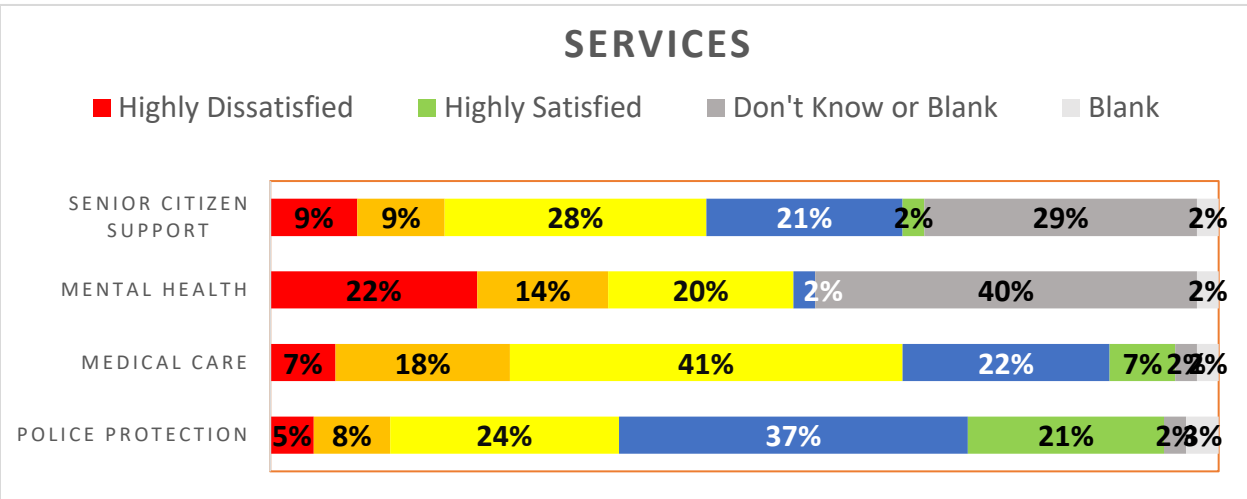


*“The roads in town are maintained. The roads south of town where many residents live need work.”*

Other areas of high satisfaction are housing and internet service; however, one comment noted a possible housing challenge:

*“Housing is a 1 because there are not/no more lots in town to build on.”*

### 3. Services



Respondents were most satisfied with police protection and least satisfied with mental health care.

Comments in the survey suggest residents are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with senior citizen support, but from a few comments provided, there appears to be some conflict around operation of the local senior center. Comments suggest seniors may feel excluded from decision-making. Other comments related to services important to seniors:

*“Some transportation for seniors and disabled to Gillette or Casper once a month or so.”*

Several comments were in regard to fire, EMS and police services:

*“Happy to have a high level of competence in the EMS and fire dept. as well as police and law enforcement.”*

*“fire station nice, has hard time getting volunteers.”*

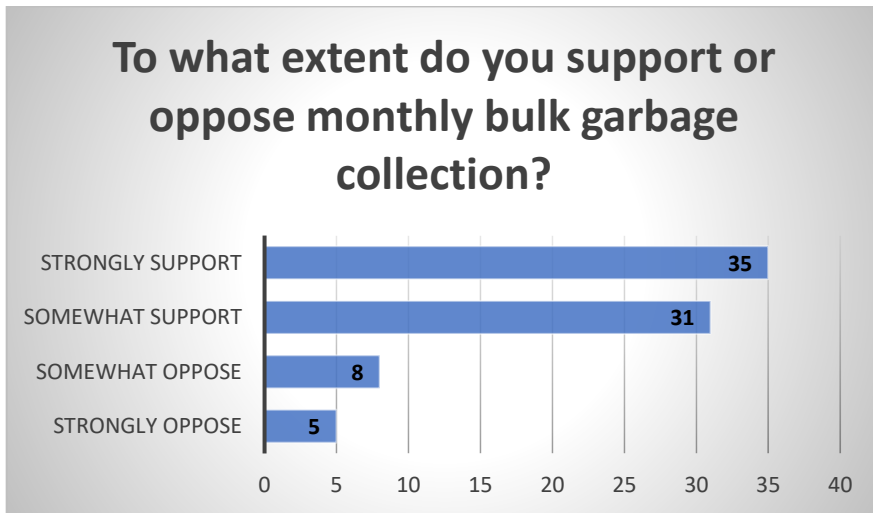
*“WE NEED ANOTHER (or more) full time firefighters in Wright. One full time and part time volunteers who have other jobs is not safety for our community. Closest fully manned fire dept is 38 miles away”.*

For some, there is a sense of inequity with regard to Wright’s share of the county and state budgets:

*“Wright seems like an afterthought for community assistance or new things for the schools or community. The high school doesn’t offer the upper level classes that students need.”*

*“Wright is a part of Campbell County, but we usually get the short end of the stick when it comes to funding. Having schools with leaky roofs still in operation when Gillette cannot only build a new H.S. but a new field too?”*

The following was selected as one of Wright’s optional survey questions:



## 4. Placemaking

Respondents were most satisfied with “friendliness of residents” and the “K-12 school system,” and least satisfied “arts & entertainment,” and “availability of fresh produce.”

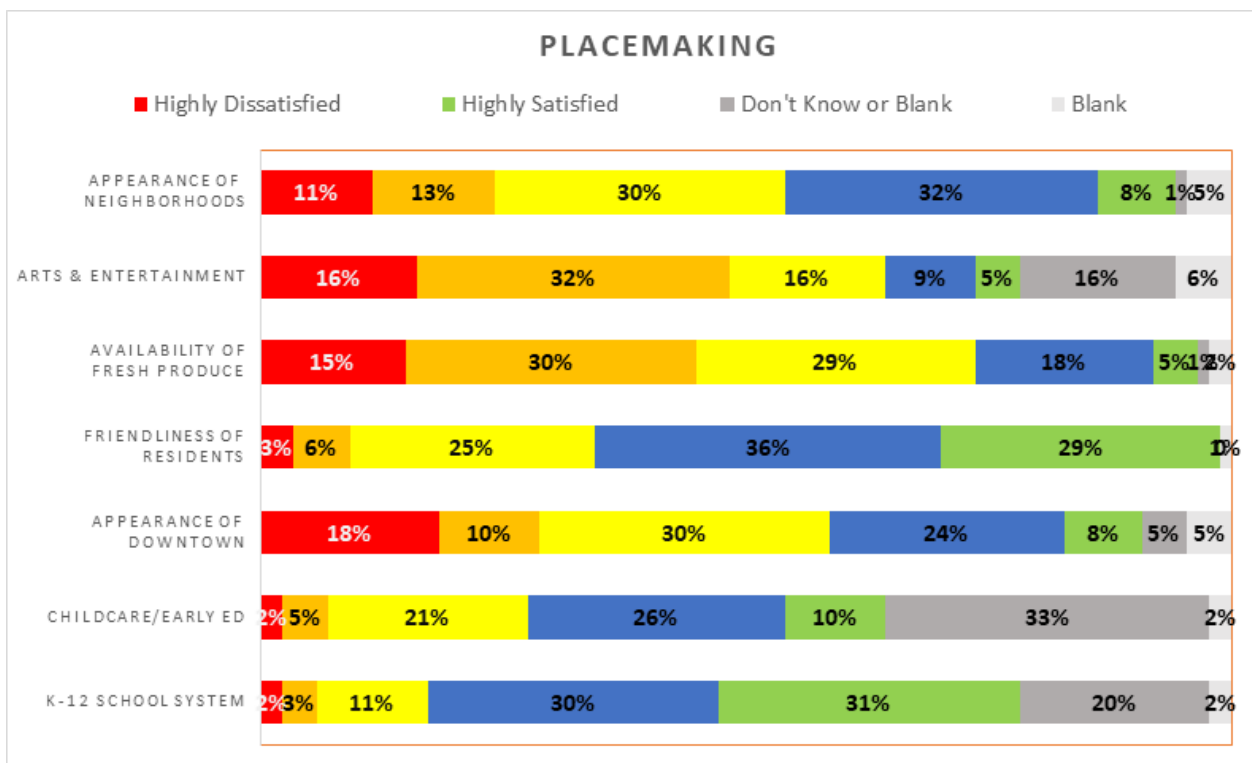
Survey comments related to placemaking demonstrate how much Wright residents love their community and some community design and beautification challenges they would like to address. First the good:

*“The town layout is very nice.”*

*“Our town always looks nice.”*

*“We like the new streetlights.”*

*“The rec center is great! It’s also super clean and well-maintained.”*



*"We love our museum." "I love Wright Days."*

The bad:

*"It would be nice if we had art of some form around town."*

*"As far as a downtown area, where would downtown be?"*

*We don't have a "damn town" or central meeting area."*

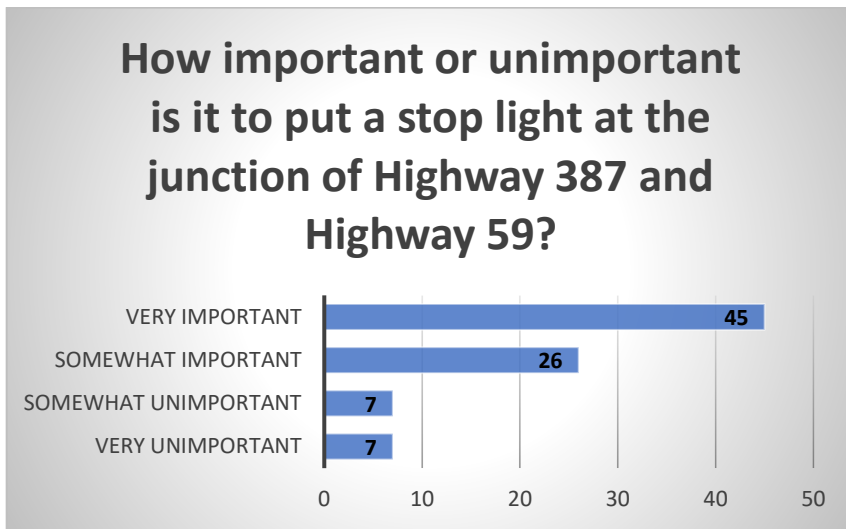
And the ugly:

*"And the "Mall" here is an eyesore and an embarrassment and needs badly to go."*

*"Some people have junk everywhere...campers, boats, 4 cars, etc. at house. Park in yards."*

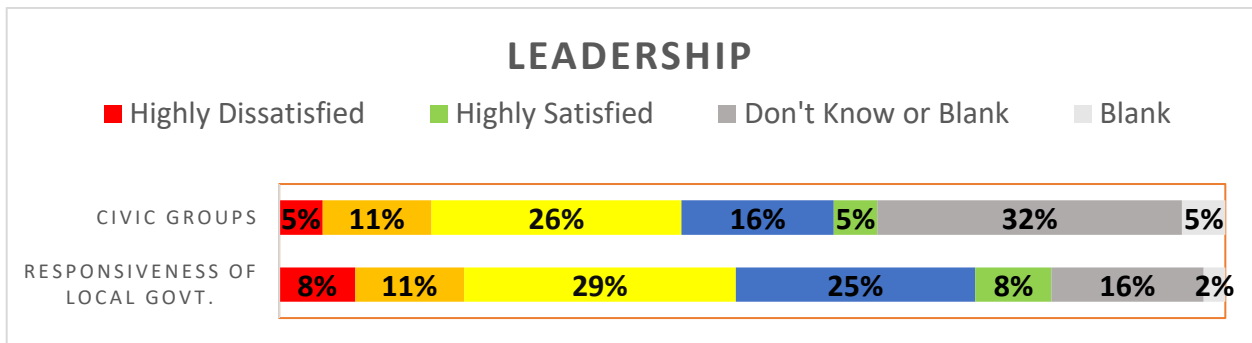
*"The mall has turned into the local junk yard. Junk unlicensed vehicles stacked in residential yards."*

The following was another optional question selected for the survey:



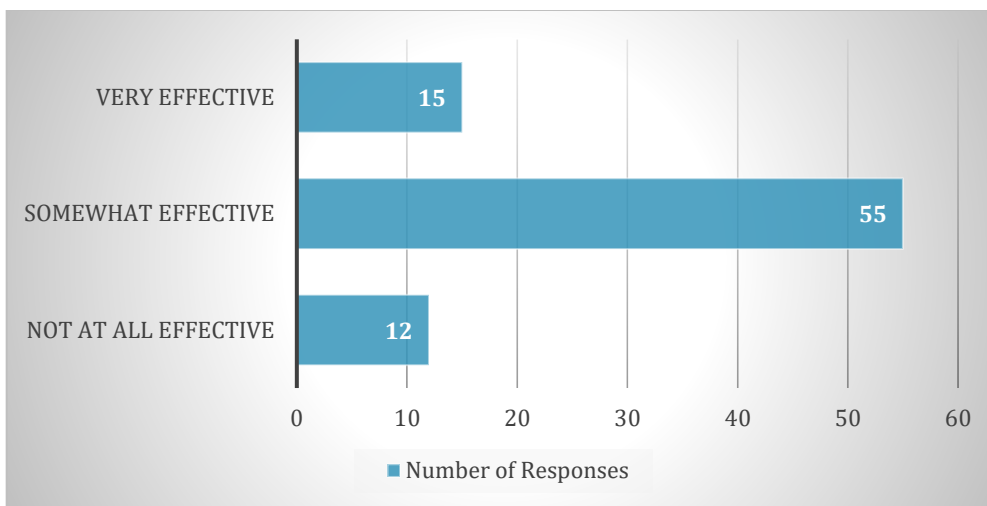
## 5. Leadership

Residents are least satisfied with responsiveness of local government but are none too impressed with civic engagement of the community in general.



Leadership was a topic of another survey question with two parts: one that asked respondents to rate how effective residents are at working together to solve challenges as “very effective,” “somewhat effective,” or “not at all effective,” and the second asked for respondents to explain their choice.





Survey respondents' comments fall into three main categories: People primarily come together in times of trouble, there is an uneven sense of community across resident groups, and there have been groups getting things done.

**Times of Crisis**

This is typical of small towns: there is a fierce individualistic (leave me alone!) mentality but also a sense that when someone is in need, it falls to fellow residents to address that need:

*“We all pull together in a crisis and everyday problems.”*

*“When it comes to school or someone in need the town works well.”*

*“We watch out for each other; we help and lend a hand when needed.”*

**STP (Same Ten People)**

This is also common among small towns: a few people shoulder most of the burden of leadership and action.

*“It's usually the same people getting involved.”*

Some suggest short term residents (miners?) tend not to get involved and that this population is increasing:

*“It seems now that we are getting more “temporary” type families that don't join in.”*

**We Try**

Lots of comments suggest there are efforts on behalf of the community, improvements have resulted, but funding and other factors, limit the amount that can get done.

*“Citizens can usually come together to solve problems in a satisfactory manner.”*

*“When the people in this town put their mind to something they get it done.”*

*“I have seen local groups get together and accomplish some goals, but not large enough to get serious things done.”*

*“Community works well together, schools, town, businesses are all involved.”*

However, there is a sense that it is difficult to achieve momentum due to resistance to change and apathy.

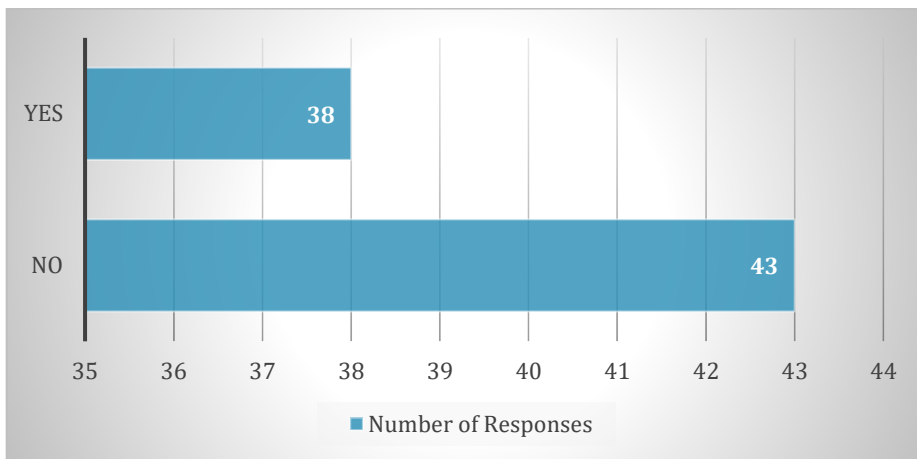
*“Residents are working to solve challenges, but a wall seems to be put up and people get discouraged.”*

*“It seems as if some challenges don't get a complete follow through or are met with oppositions that don't allow a change.”*

*“Wright is a mine camp community with people working shifts at the mine. There is no buy in to the community and the living and working together attitude is not there. ”*

**Question: Have you been involved in a neighborhood or community project in the last 12 months? (For example, youth development, community beautification, fund raiser, etc.)**

Respondents were roughly split between those who have been involved in volunteer activities in the last year and those who have not been involved.



**Question Please complete this sentence: “I would be involved in more community projects if...”**

“Time” was by far the most common response, but 15 of the 50 comments were either along the lines of “if I were asked,” or “if I knew about them.”

Several respondents mentioned their perception that there are cliques in charge of some of the activities and that “outsiders” feel unwelcome to participate.

Others said they need to feel the effort is well-organized and their contribution would be appreciated.

**Question: Please tell us the type(s) of projects you have been involved in.**

<p><b><u>Cultural</u></b>  Wright Days 9  Museum 2  Thunder Basin Belles</p>	<p><b><u>Youth</u></b>  Youth Activities 8  Schools 2  Scouts Pre-school 1  AAU Volleyball 1</p>
<p><b><u>Community Quality of Life</u></b>  Community Clean-up 9  Fundraising 9  Senior Center 7  Road Improvement Project 4  Church 1  Library 1  Community Garden 2</p>	<p><b><u>Health and Safety</u></b>  Blood Drives 5  Families in Need 2</p>

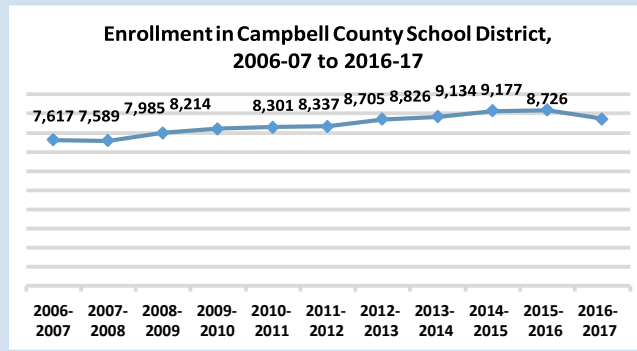
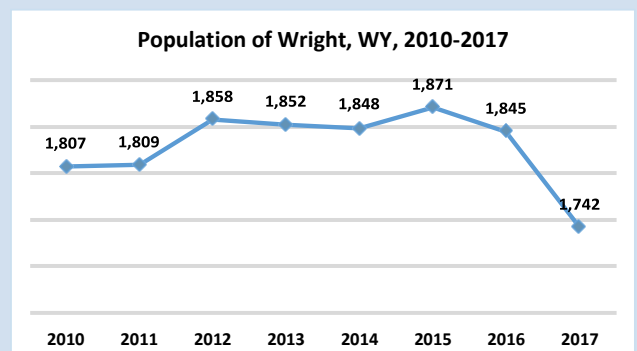
# WRIGHT, WYOMING COMMUNITY PROFILE



## POPULATION

	Wright City	Campbell County
<b>Total population</b>		
2017, number	1,742	46,242
2010, number	1,807	46,133
Change 2010-2017, percent	-3.6	0.2
<b>Components of population change, 2010-2017</b>		
Net migration change (in-migrants minus out-migrants)		
Number	---	-3,627
Percent	---	-7.9
Natural change (births minus deaths)		
Number	---	3,684
Percent	---	8.0
<b>Population by race, 2013-2017 average, percent of total</b>		
White	93	95
American Indian or Alaskan Native	4	1
Other	2	4
<b>Population by ethnicity, 2013-2017 average, percent of total</b>		
Non-Hispanic	91	92
Hispanic	9	8
<b>Population by age group, 2013-2017 average, percent of total</b>		
Under age 18	30	28
Age 18-64	65	64
Age 65 and older	6	8
Median age, 2013-2017 average, years	30.4	33.2

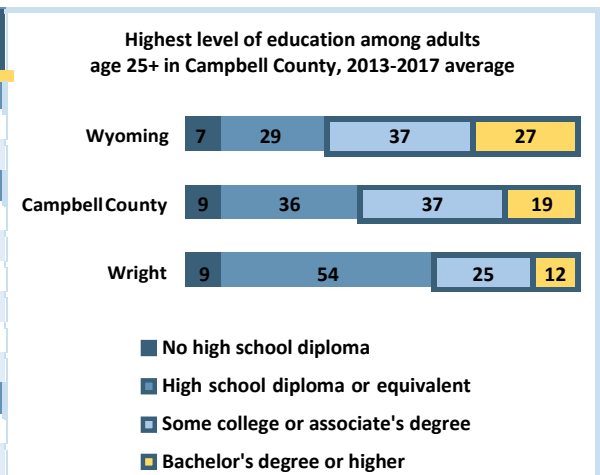
SOURCES: US Census Bureau, US Department of Education



## SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

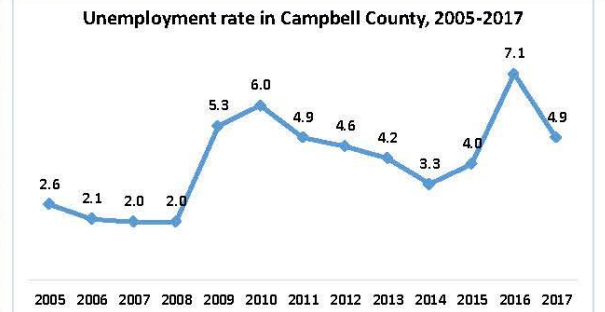
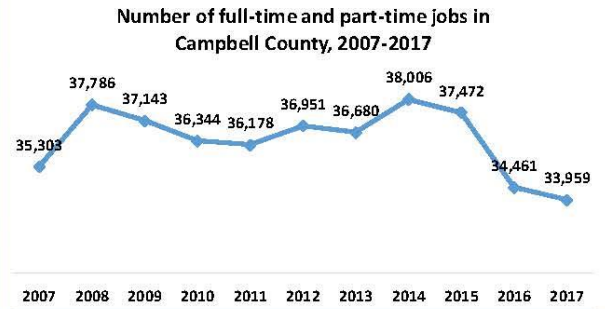
	Wright City	Campbell County	Wyoming State
<b>Income</b>			
Per capita income, 2013-2017 average, dollars	31,193	33,200	31,214
Median household income, 2013-2017 average, dollars	75,500	80,178	60,938
<b>Poverty</b>			
Overall poverty, 2013-2017 average			
Number	121	4,450	63,398
Rate, percent	6.5	9.4	11.1
Children living in poverty, 2013-2017 average			
Number	37	1,679	17,412
Rate, percent	6.7	12.6	12.8
<b>Food insecurity</b>			
Overall rate, 2016, percent	---	12.2	12.6
Rate among children, 2016, percent	---	17.3	16.7

SOURCES: US Census Bureau, Feeding America



# ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

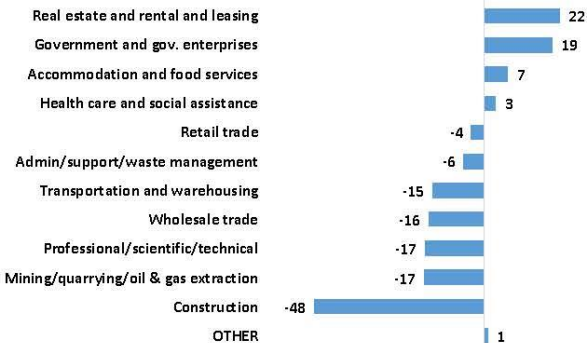
	Wright City	Campbell County
<b>Full- and part-time jobs</b>		
Total number, 2017	---	33,959
Total number, 2012	---	36,951
Total number, 2007	---	35,303
Change, 2012-2017, percent	---	-8.1
Change, 2007-2012, percent	---	4.7
<b>Employment characteristics</b>		
Labor force participation rate, 2013-2017 average, percent	72.7	74.6
Unemployment rate, 2013-2017 average, percent	0.6	4.6
Self-employment rate, 2017, percent	---	23.1
Average annual pay, 2017, dollars	---	55,491
<b>Business establishments with paid employees, by size, 2015</b>		
All establishments, number	---	1,525
Establishments with 1-4 paid employees, number	---	728
Establishments with 5-9 paid employees, number	---	335
Establishments with 10-19 paid employees, number	---	251
Establishments with 20-49 paid employees, number	---	143
Establishments with 50 or more paid employees, number	---	68



**Number of jobs by industry in Campbell County, 2017**

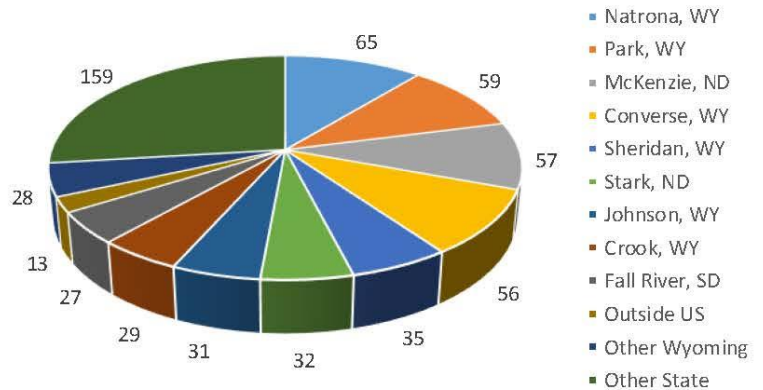


**Percent change in number of jobs by industry in Campbell County since the recession, 2009-2017**

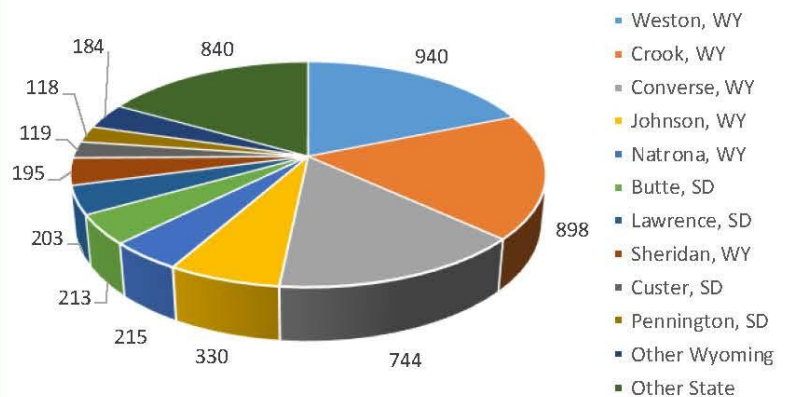


NOTE: "Other" industries include forestry, fishing, and related activities; utilities; manufacturing; information; finance and insurance; management of companies and enterprises; educational services; arts, entertainment, and recreation; and other services.

**Number of workers who live in Campbell County but work elsewhere, by county of workplace, 2009-13**



**Number of workers who work in Campbell County but live elsewhere, by county of residence, 2009-13**





# HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

	Wright City	Campbell County
<b>Total housing units, 2013-2017 average</b>		
Number of housing units	970	20,034
<b>Housing tenure, 2013-2017 average, percent of housing units</b>		
Owner-occupied units	66	71
Renter-occupied units	34	29
<b>Housing type, 2013-2017 average, percent of housing units</b>		
1 unit, attached or detached	39	60
2-4 units	4	5
5 or more units	11	13
Mobile home, boat, RV, van, etc.	46	22
<b>Housing affordability, 2013-2017 average</b>		
Households spending 30% or more of income on housing costs		
Owner-occupied units, percent	13	19
Renter-occupied units, percent	15	35



SOURCES: US Census Bureau

## RESOURCES

Headwaters Economics, Economic Profile System

<https://headwaterseconomics.org/tools/economic-profile-system/>

- Wright City – Demographics
- Campbell County – Multiple topics
  - Demographics
  - Socioeconomic measures
  - Agriculture, timber, and mining, including oil & gas
  - Services and tourism
  - Government
  - Non-labor income
  - Public land amenities
  - Federal land payments
  - Wildland urban interface

## PROJECT PARTNERS

University of Wyoming

Wyoming Business Council

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Kim Porter

[kim.porter@wyo.gov](mailto:kim.porter@wyo.gov)

[www.wyomingbusiness.org](http://www.wyomingbusiness.org)

[www.communityreview.org](http://www.communityreview.org)

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# Great ideas for Wright

*Adapted from Great ideas for your downtown, Linda Klink, WY Main Street*

1. Hire a manager or hire a coordinator to help coordinate the activities in Wright.
2. Beat the streets...know the constituents and keep them informed! Find out the needs of the businesses by communicating with them on a regular basis. React with appropriate projects.
3. Publish a newsletter to keep primary stakeholders and others in the community informed about your progress.
4. Recognize a volunteer of the month in the newsletter or the local newspaper.
5. Develop a work plan for the upcoming year that clearly defines the organization's mission, goals, projects, and specific tasks. Develop a timeline and budget for each task, and delegate the projects to specific individuals. Develop a budget for the organization based on this work plan.
6. Hold a town meeting. Identify downtown priorities by building consensus.
7. Hold a fundraiser for a specific project. (could be a Placemaking project)
8. Educate various stakeholder and community groups about the importance of local businesses.
9. Throw a party to bring people together.
10. Organize a youth advisory board to tap into students' viewpoints about the community, increase the volunteer pool, and provide an educational opportunity for area youth.
11. Sponsor monthly "coffee beaks" for merchants to talk about activities and issues that affect them. Rotate the locations among businesses.
12. Take a field trip to other communities that have implemented successful programs or projects.
13. Put together a slide show highlighting your accomplishments for presentations to community groups.
14. Create an instantly recognizable logo for the organization that symbolizes the downtown. Make sure the logo is easy to use and will be able to meet various graphic needs.
15. Build a strong relationship with the area's news media. Make it easy for them to cover stories about your community.
16. Install quality "Welcome" signs at the entrance to the central commercial district.
17. Hold an annual cleanup day with the assistance of volunteers and community groups. Make it fun! Also develop an ongoing maintenance program.
18. Create incentive programs for building renovation projects. Grant and loan programs have been used successfully by many communities.
19. Coordinate a walk through downtown. Identify "problem areas" that need attention. A survey list is available to use through the Wyoming Main Street program.
20. Spruce up...plant flowers, clean the alleys, sweep the streets, pull the weeds.
21. Put together a banner program.
22. Target some realistic façade improvement projects in the early stages of the program.
23. Put together a "sign squad". Remove signs and the supporting hardware that no longer serve existing businesses.
24. Sponsor design workshops to educate building owners, contractors and volunteers n appropriate building improvement projects.
25. Complete an inventory of the streetscape amenities, such as trash receptacles, benches, streetlights and trees. Develop a plan for future improvements.
26. Create people places – a park, children's play area or a town square/plaza.

27. Create a historic walking tour and brochure to promote community history.
28. Plan and publish a calendar of events.
29. Invite citizens to teach a craft or hobby.
30. Involve children in revitalization activities by providing them with activities that help them understand the community's importance.
31. Have a parade! Maybe make it a pet parade?
32. Hold a street dance!
33. Coordinate an exciting holiday promotion to bring people to local businesses.
34. On a designated evening or Sunday afternoon, have merchants fix simple hors d'oeuvres to serve in their business.
35. Develop a business directory with a map to help visitors and local people find what they are looking for. Business directories also call attention to the wide variety of retail businesses, services, professional and government offices offered.
36. In the summer, show movies on the outside of a building.
37. Schedule performances in downtown by local artists and musicians.
38. Hold a treasure hunt.
39. Sponsor an advertising and marketing seminar.
40. Conduct a market analysis to better understand the customers and to help identify their needs. Gather census information on the community and trade area. Also, conduct "focus groups."
41. Encourage businesses to extend store hours so employees can shop on their way to or from work. Also, establish uniform hours.

## 20 CLUES TO RURAL COMMUNITY SURVIVAL

### **1. Evidence of Community Pride:**

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

### **2. Emphasis on Quality in Business and Community Life:**

People believe that something worth doing is worth doing right.

### **3. Willingness to Invest in the Future:**

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

### **4. Participatory Approach to Community Decision Making:**

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

### **5. Cooperative Community Spirit:**

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

### **6. Realistic Appraisal of Future Opportunities:**

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

### **7. Awareness of Competitive Positioning:**

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

### **8. Knowledge of the Physical Environment:**

Relative location and available natural resources underscore decision-making.

### **9. Active Economic Development Program:**

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

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

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

### **11. Acceptance of Women in Leadership Roles:**

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

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

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

**14. Strong Multi-Generational Family Orientation:** The definition of family is broad, and activities include younger as well as older generations.

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

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

### **16. Sound and Well-Maintained Infrastructure:**

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

### **17. Careful Use of Fiscal Resources:**

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

### **18. Sophisticated Use of Information Resources:**

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

### **19. Willingness to Seek Help from the Outside:**

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

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

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

\*Reprinted from Heartland Center Leadership Development, Spring 2002 *Visions Newsletter*.