



# Fort Laramie, WY Community Review

September 24 & 25, 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

## Fort Laramie, Wyoming

### September 24 & 25, 2019

#### Sponsoring Agencies and Organizations

- Town of Fort Laramie
- Fort Laramie American Grill & Restaurant
- Vickie's Saloon
- The Haystack
- The Gathering Place
- Joyce Evans
- Jennifer Lanier
- Goshen County Friendship Center, Fort Laramie
- Planning Roots Pre-School
- Goshen County Economic Development Corporation – Lisa Miller
- Fort Laramie Connection - Facebook

#### 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.

#### Fort Laramie Home Team Organizers

Joyce Evans

Jennifer Lanier

Lingle/Fort Laramie Lions Club

Pine Ridge Homeowners Association

National Association of Pony Express

Town Council

Fort Laramie Historical Association

Fort Laramie National Historic Site



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## Executive Summary

The Fort Laramie Community Review team would like to thank the organizers and citizens of Fort Laramie for their time and hospitality. Fort Laramie has an abundance of natural resources and history. Major themes coming out of the Review can use these assets as a springboard to achieve the goals the citizens of Fort Laramie have.

Fort Laramie is the third community to participate in the Wyoming Business Council's new Community Review Program. 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.comunityreview.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 Fort Laramie 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. Fort Laramie 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 (2007 Fort Laramie Community Assessment)

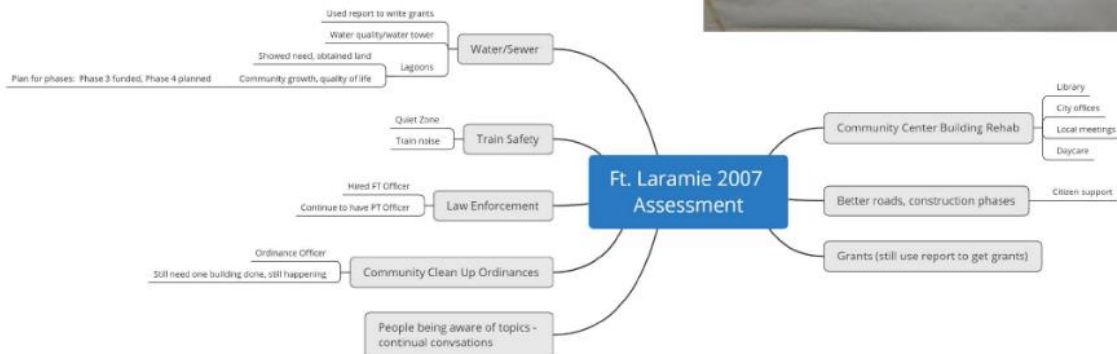
On July 8, 2019, we conducted Ripple Effect Mapping (REM) around the 2007 Community Assessment. REM is a versatile participatory evaluation tool to collect the untold stories and behind-the-scene activities that can ripple out from a specific program or activity. It uncovers both the intended and unintended outcomes of the previous assessment. Four of the major themes from the 2007 Assessment were:

- Safety
- Town Image
- Communications
- Tourism
- Infrastructure



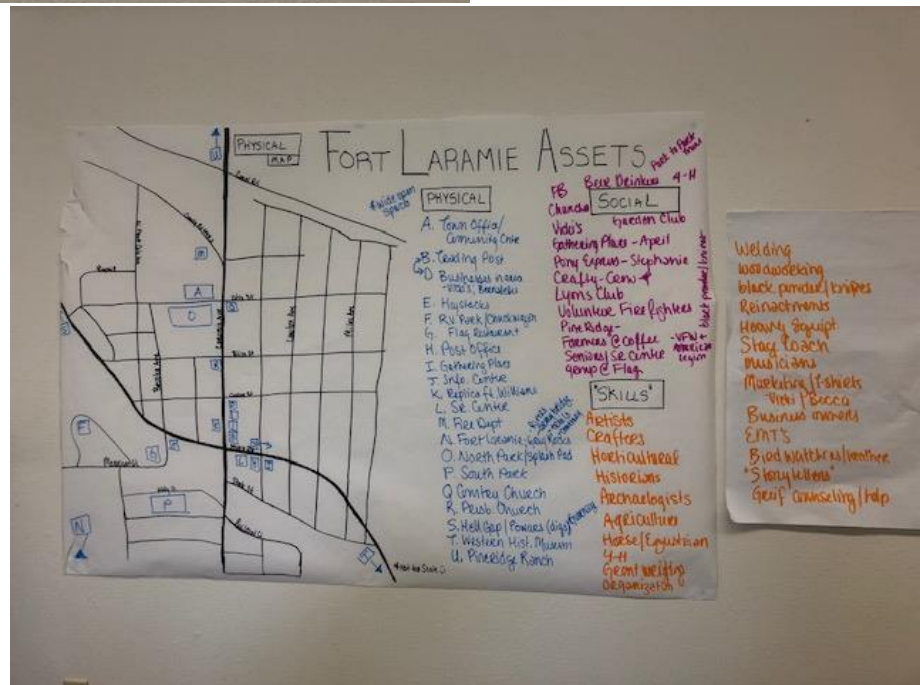
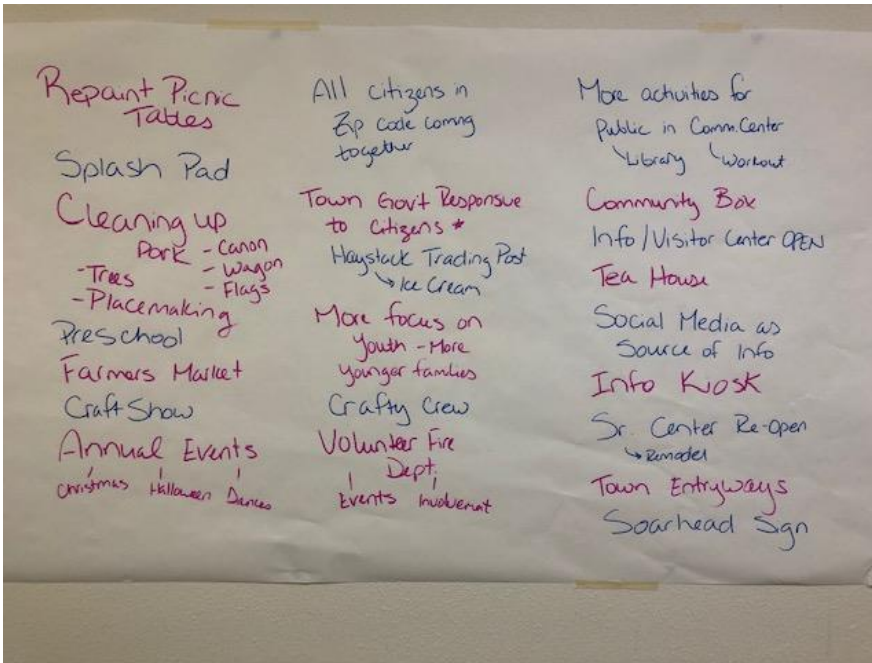
As depicted on the REM, many projects were completed as a result of the 2007 including: water and sewer projects, train safety, law enforcement presence, clean-up ordinances, Community Center rehabilitation, better roads and people generally being aware of topics. The 2007 report is still being used today for grant writing purposes.

## Fort Laramie Ripple Effect Mapping – 2007 Community Assessment





During this same session, we also conducted Asset Mapping and a brainstorming session around the great things Fort Laramie accomplished in recent years. This great work done and the assets in the community will be extremely helpful in moving forward after the Community Review.









## Town Hall Meeting

A Town Hall Meeting was conducted on September 25th 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, which will be scheduled in early 2020.

[Gas, Groceries] Restaurants  
Who else?  
 Legislative  
 County Comm  
 Hageman's  
 SBDC

Actions  
 Surveys  
 focus Group

- Cater to Local Residents  
 - Balance w/ Tourist "amenities"

Capitalize on history and local Artists to enhance tourism

Who else: Mark Davidson (H) Milla  
 Tyler GCO  
 Barry Lee Joe R-H  
 Robert M. (H) H-Steve Fullmer  
 Mary E. (H) Joe Anderson (H)  
 Carol S. Alan email guy  
 Maleta Laurie & Phyllis

Actions: Quilt show  
 Living History  
 Fort William  
 Art in Park  
 Gallery/Studio

Point Person: Jennifer

Community Connections

10 Officers from Homeowners Assoc. - Advocate (PRC)  
 Town Council / Mayor / Clerk  
 Seniors - Youth Leaders  
 Chamberlains - Jennie, Laveland  
 Fire Department

2 Round table  
 Report  
 post-present sharing

3 Phyllis, Jennie, Lavin, Laveland

Spruce Up Community  
 Amenities @ Campground  
 Clean up Main Street Day  
 " " Abandon Bldgs  
 Yards / alleys / street right of ways  
 Store fronts updated

1- Older students assist

## Recommendations

Below are a few recommendations to start considering. More planning work will be carried out in Fort Laramie in early 2020 to get efforts started and moving forward with actionable items that can be carried out in a short period of time.

- Engage with SBDC and Market Research to work on a marketing plan for a grocery/gas option. WBC Regional Director, Heather Tupper can share the Shopko work to help identify gaps and build a case for this type of business. May want to explore the option of a co-op type model or reach out to existing businesses to show the need and see if they can meet the need.
- Under community connections, it is interesting to note that people who are not involved in the community cited they weren't asked, if they had more time and if they wanted to. A few tips and tricks are to make small asks first and make them meaningful, give them thanks, if they initially say no, don't be afraid to approach them again. Here is a link to a video for Volunteer Training with Kathy LaPlante from Main Street America: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZhziE4cUYqQ&t> and here is a video on fundraising: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0xl1CIZUzFU&t>
- Start planning "One Summer Day." Start with a general committee and spread out to sub-committees. Contact people on the sign-up sheets as a start. Spread the work out! Perhaps consider having information about things happening, such as initiatives started through this process.
- Consider adopting a formal community art initiative or plan to help identify the focus of the history/art/tourism culture that the community would like to see develop, including exploring options for paid staff and increasing volunteers.
  - Wyoming Arts Council Rural Arts Access Grant: Up to \$750 and can be received twice a year. The application is very simple and super flexible grant. Application deadline is 6 weeks before the event you wish to receive support for. See [www.wyoarts.state.wy.us/grants](http://www.wyoarts.state.wy.us/grants) for more information on this and other grant opportunities.
  - Wyoming Humanities Council: The Humanities Council has a new Interdisciplinary grant. With the rich history of the Fort and under told history of the town this may be an interesting opportunity. You can find more information on this and other grants at [www.thinkwy.org/grants](http://www.thinkwy.org/grants).
- Create an informal artist cooperative for local artisans who are interested in selling their artwork. Start with a small group of individuals who are willing to work with each other to develop ideas on where the artwork could be sold, how the work involved in staffing the location could be distributed, and when this could happen. Start small to keep it doable. Even one or two days during the summer, with good advertising, is enough to see if residents and/or tourists are interested in stopping and shopping. The artist network has some tips on getting a co-op gallery started at <https://www.artistsnetwork.com/art-business/start-co-op/> and staff at the Wyoming Arts Council can provide insight into the process as well.
- Create an adopt-a-block program to start on community cleanup work, hold clean-up days, identify seniors that may live alone and need assistance with yard maintenance/upkeep and engage high school students to volunteer to do the work.



- Wyoming Community Foundation: The general grant gives priority to “address an identified need”, partner with other non-profits and leverage dollars to obtain additional funding. For more information on this and other grants, visit [www.wycf.org/grants](http://www.wycf.org/grants).
- As a community in a County Main Street Program, take advantage of the opportunities available through this program. The Wyoming Main Street Program offers technical assistance and grant funding. The Main Street Approach is a long standing and proven method for revitalizing downtowns. Please contact Heather Tupper or Linda Klinck ([heather.tupper@wyo.gov](mailto:heather.tupper@wyo.gov) and [linda.klinck@wyo.gov](mailto:linda.klinck@wyo.gov)) for more information.

## Next Steps

At the beginning of 2020, Fort Laramie will enter Phase II of the Community Review process. A Strategic Doing Workshop will be held at the Town Hall. During this interactive, 3-hour session, we will work together to identify strategies to meet Fort Laramie'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.

Along with this, \$2500 in grants are available for completing the Community Review and the Ripple Effect Mapping. Another \$1,000 or a community coach is available also.

# Overview

## What is Strategic Doing?

Strategic Doing is a process that enables civic leaders to form collaborations quickly, guide them toward measurable outcomes, and make adjustments along the way.

The process focuses on four key questions:

## What to Expect

During a Strategic Doing Workshop participants are led through a structured set of conversations and guided by workshop exercises, which define five things:

1. Opportunities
2. At least one outcome with characteristics and metrics
3. At least one initiative or project
4. A complete action plan
5. A plan to meet again

### 1 What *could* we do together?

- Look first at assets within the group at the table.
- Next look to see how combining the known assets might offer new opportunities.
- Evaluate who is not at the table but might have an interest or resources helpful to the solution.

### 2 What *should* we do together?

- Evaluate the options for action and help the group narrow the scope of activity by suggesting the group focus on no more than three goals initially.
- Analyze the suggested activities to see which would have the highest impact but it still do-able.
- Define an outcome with specific characteristics of success and metrics.

### 3 What *will* we do together?

- Draft an activity/action plan including the first action steps, the responsible entities and “due dates.”
- Make a public commitment to “do” the action step

### 4 What's our 30/30?

- Decide how the group will communicate (face-to-face, internet, email, weblogs, etc.).
- Set a date, in the next 30 days, for follow-up, reporting and adjustments.



Strategic Doing allows your community, organization or network to create an action plan, with measurable outcomes and accountability, in a 3-6 hour period.

Contact us at [info@strategicdoing.net](mailto:info@strategicdoing.net) to learn more about Strategic Doing.  
Follow our blog at [www.strategicdoing.net](http://www.strategicdoing.net) to stay up to date with activities and opportunities.

# Community Review Agenda

| September 24, 2019  | Session                                 | Location                 |
|---------------------|---|--------------------------|
| 11:30 am - 12:30 pm | Lunch at Senior Center                  | Senior Center            |
| 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm   | Rural residents                         | Community Center         |
| 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm   | Tourism                                 | Community Center         |
| 3:00 pm – 4:00 pm   | Businesses (Brick & Mortar: homebased)  | Community Center         |
| 4:00 pm – 5:00 pm   | Town Residents                          | Community Center         |
| 3:53 pm - 4:45 pm   | Youth Bus Stop Party (Parents WELCOME!) | North Park               |
| 6:30 pm –9:00 pm    | *Public Session and Open House          | Community Center         |
| September 25, 2019  | Session                                 | Location                 |
| 8:00 am – 9:00 am   | Business, Professional, Realtors        | Community Center         |
| 8:00 am – 9:00 am   | Coffee crowd                            | Haystack Hills           |
| 9:00 am – 10:00 am  | Government and Boards                   | Community Center         |
| 10:00 am – 11:00 am | Veterans                                | Community Center         |
| 11:00 am – 12:00 pm | Churches, Service Clubs & Healthcare    | Community Center         |
| 12:00 pm - 12:30 pm | Parents of preschoolers                 | Planting Roots Preschool |
| 12:30 - 1:30        | Lunch and Agriculture                   | Vickie's Saloon          |
| 7:00 - 9:00         | Town Hall Meeting                       | Community Center         |

## Tour of Fort Laramie

Mayor Joyce Evans provided a tour, showing the team the ins and outs of Fort Laramie, past projects and future needs. We looked at businesses, parks, the town, went out into the county and drove by Fort Laramie National Historic Site.







## 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 interviewed nearly 65 people during 14 listening sessions, received 12 online comments and 11 comments on Facebook.

# Fort Laramie Community Survey Results

A “Community Satisfaction Survey” was conducted in Fort Laramie prior to the community review team visit to conduct listening sessions and community meetings on **September 24 & 25, 2019**. The survey 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 community grant proposals and demonstrate support for new policies or the status quo. Citizen groups and municipalities can also use this data as a guide for planning and identifying future initiatives.

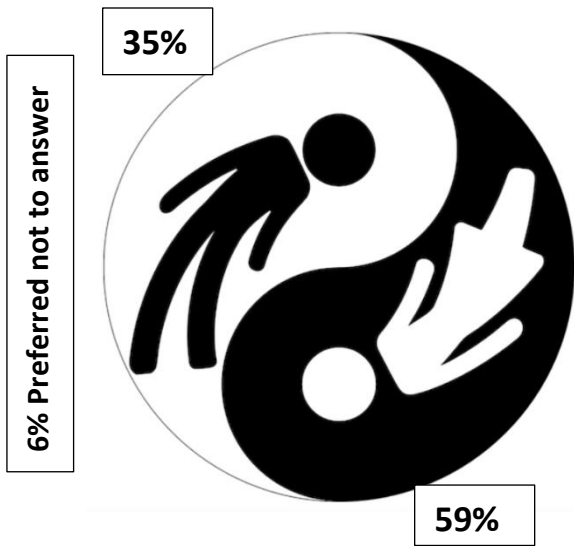
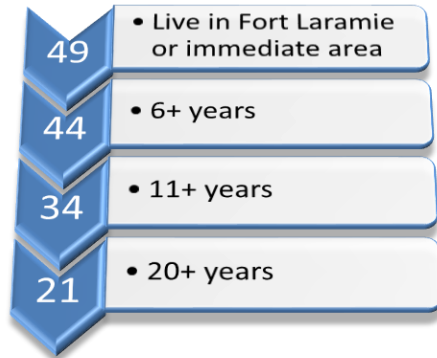
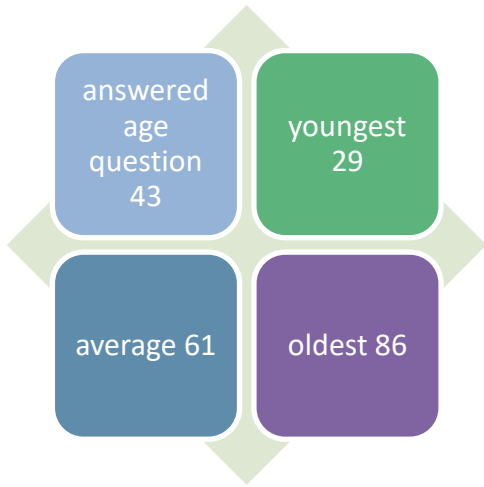
In addition, Community Review delivery organizations and partnering Universities use this data to identify common interests and concerns across multiple communities, which in turn helps these organizations develop programs and resources to better assist rural communities like yours. In order to identify 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. Fort Laramie had several questions that did not pertain, including public transportation and medical care.

The survey was sent to residents in the 82212-zip code.

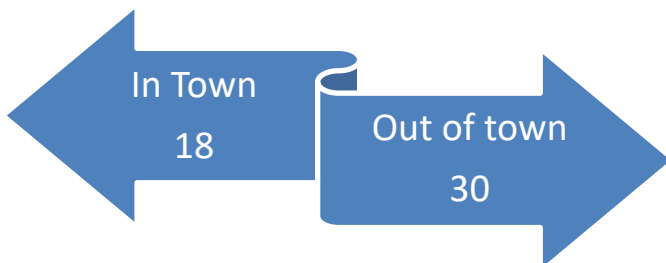
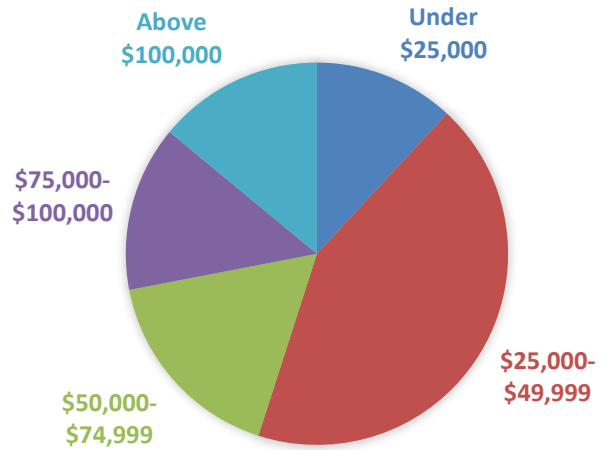
## Demographics (Respondent Characteristics)

Surveys mailed: 232  
Surveys Returned: TBD  
Surveys Completed: 53  
Response Rate: ~22%  
Online Surveys: 7  
Paper Surveys: 44

Respondents tended to be **older, female, long-term residents** in the **lower-middle-income** range residing **outside city limits**

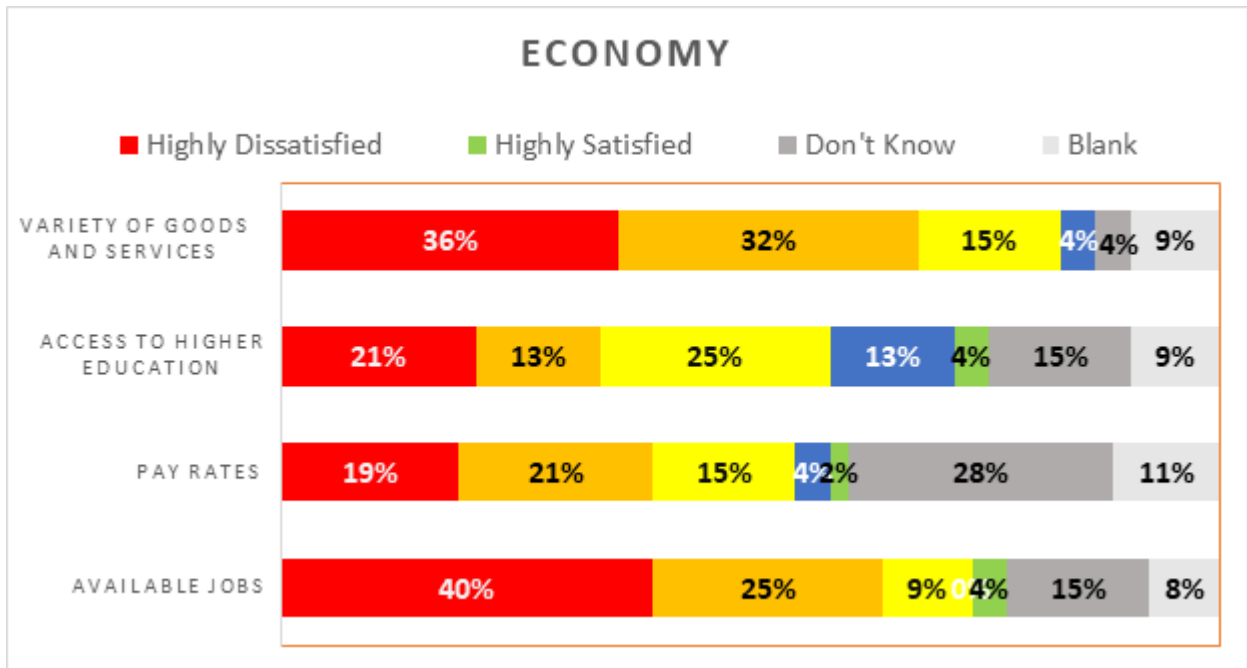


### INCOME OF RESPONDENTS





# 1. Economy



Satisfaction was quite low with economic questions asked, especially “available jobs” and with “variety of goods and services.” Respondents painted a brighter picture in the open-ended responses. Here are four such responses:

*Our town is very small. We do have one limited convenience store.... Shopping is 13-20 miles away. We've lived here 50 years, so we must be satisfied.*

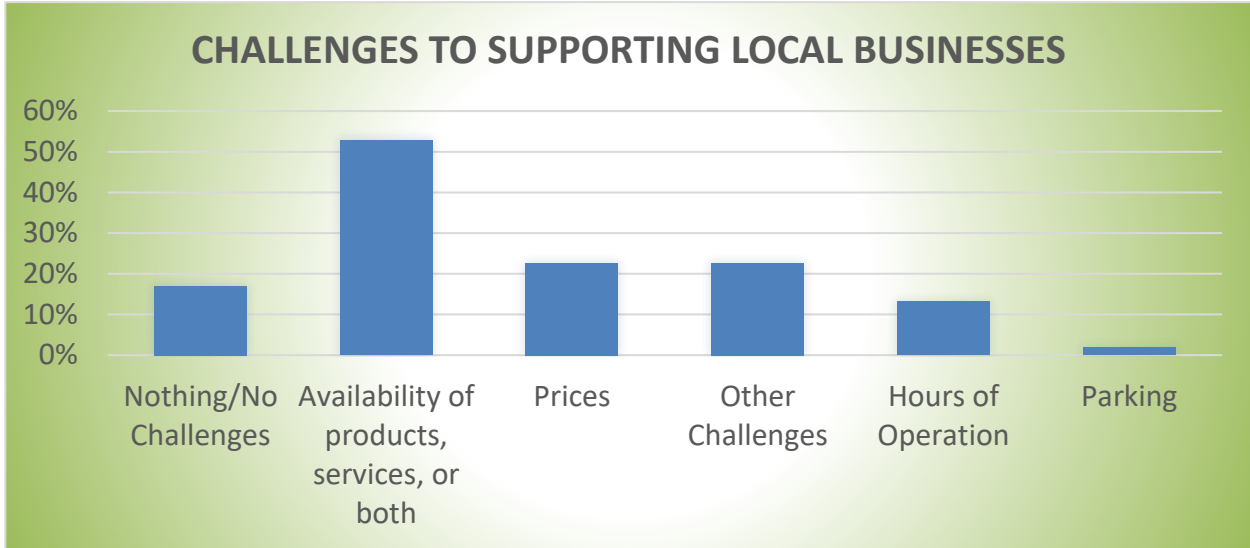
*Ft. Laramie is a little town. Cannot expect a bunch of services. The advantages of living outweigh having to drive to get extras.*

*Many services are satisfactory, they just aren't available in Ft. L. For example, I am satisfied with my job and healthcare, but they are in Torrington.*

*For Fort Laramie. We do appreciate the town's proximity to other Wyoming towns who have these services.*

This same story was repeated in responses to the following question.

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

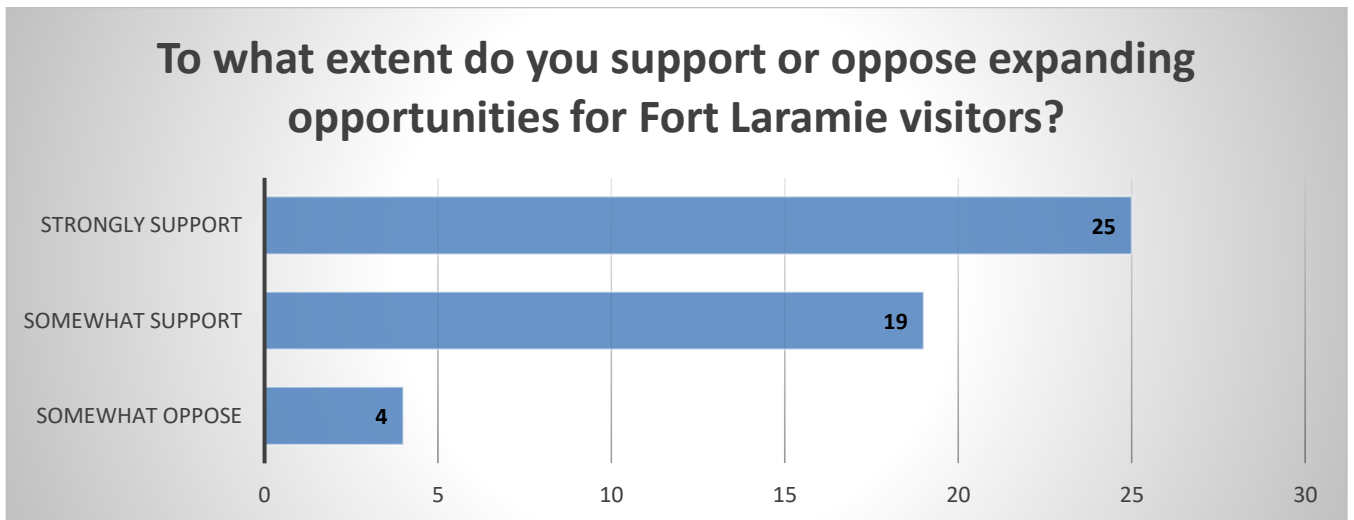


It can come as no surprise to residents of Fort Laramie that “Availability of products and services, or both” primarily drives people to shop in other communities such as Torrington mentioned above.

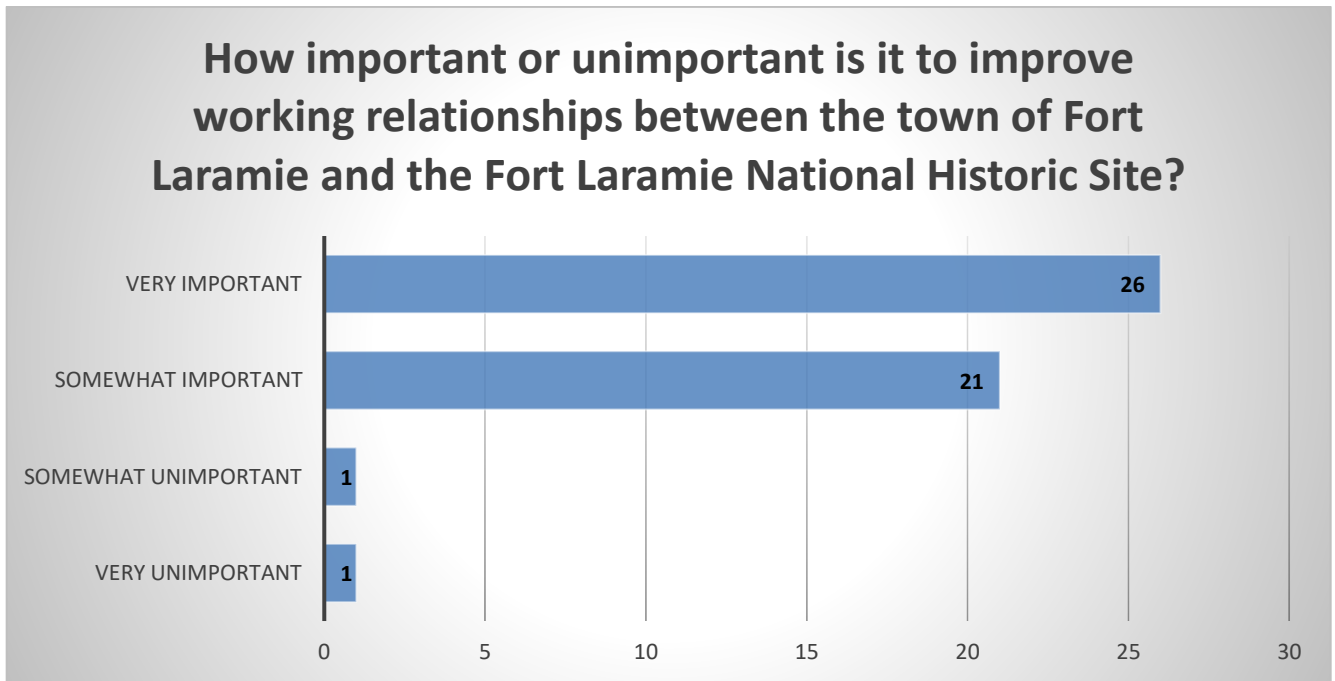
“Other” challenges are friendliness of proprietor (2), lack of gas station (2), lack of dining options (1), lack of accessibility (1), not being in town frequently (1), and simply lack of businesses (5).

**Next steps for Fort Laramie’s economy...**

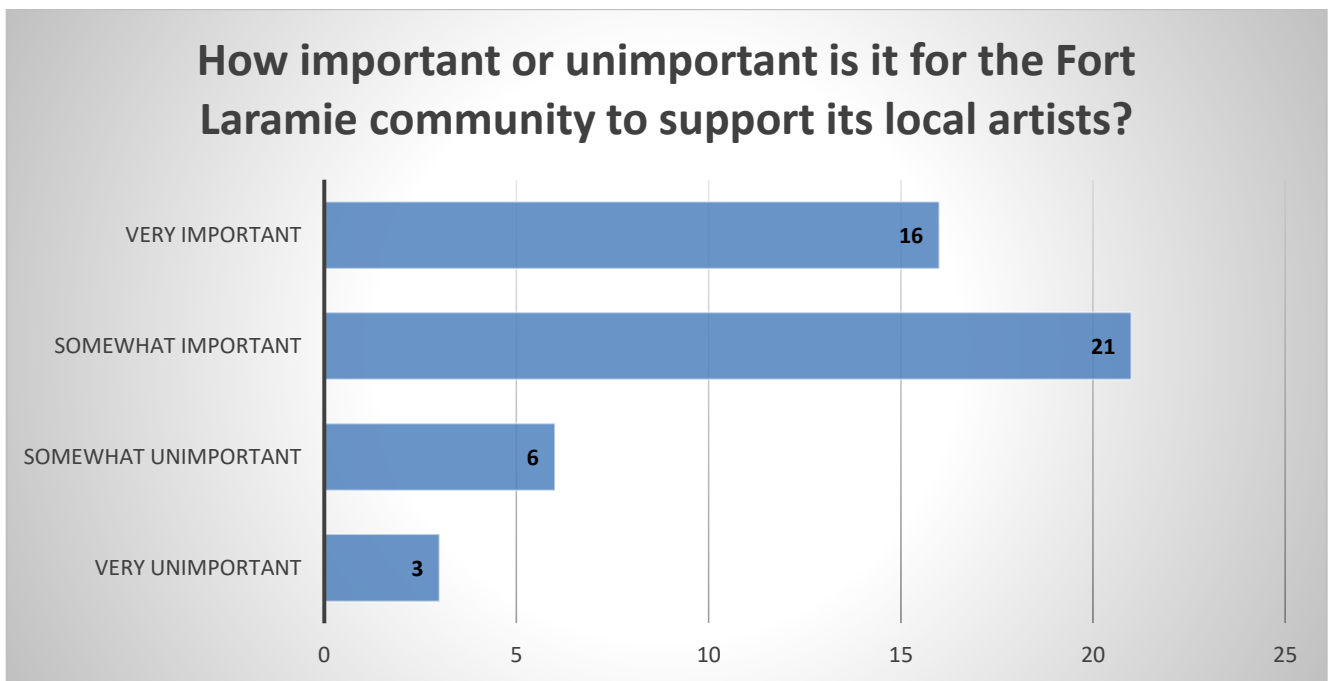
Three questions, unique to Fort Laramie’s survey, have economic implications. Three graphs below summarize responses.



Only 4 of 44 respondents somewhat oppose (none strongly oppose) expanding opportunities for visitors. No correlations exist between respondents age, length of residency, gender, or in-town status. For those that filled out the survey, it is not the case that older folk or out-of-town folks are less supportive of opportunities for outside visitors.



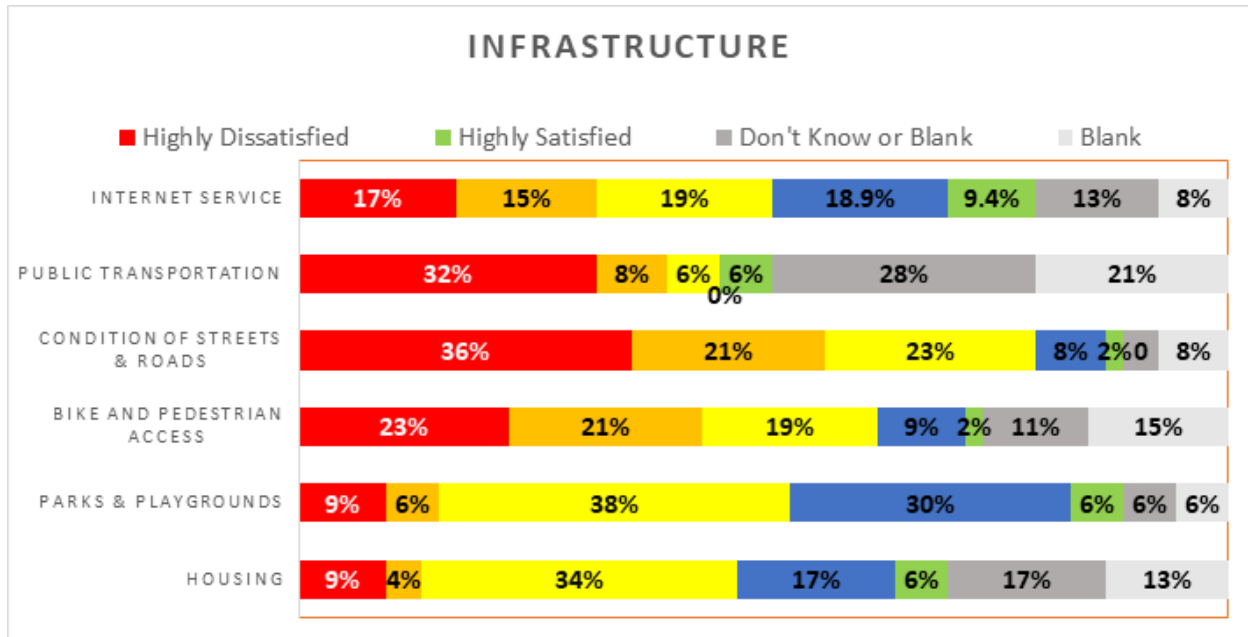
While generally male respondents selected very important more frequently than female respondents, near unanimous support for improving the working relationship between the city and the fort exists!



As with the previous two questions, demographics do not correlate. For example, low- and high-income respondents ranked importance similarly - generally high levels of importance.



## 2. Infrastructure and Housing



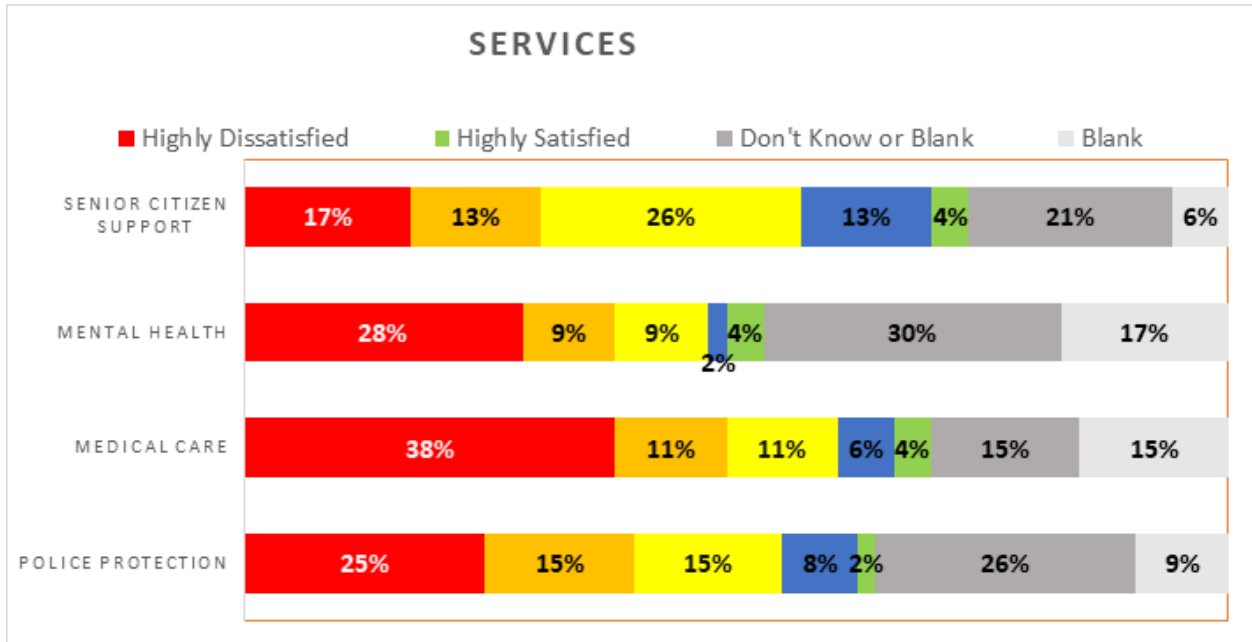
Without public transportation, it is not surprising to see many (32% of respondents) highly dissatisfied with it, though six percent were highly satisfied with not having public transportation. In contrast, Fort Laramie has streets and roads, and even more respondents (36%) were highly dissatisfied with it. Bike and pedestrian access were also unsatisfactory for over 40% of respondents. One resident wrote:

*Roads are in the worst condition I have ever seen in the last 50 years.*

Parks and playgrounds were most satisfactory with housing close behind. roads are in the worst condition I have ever seen in the last 50 years

This is consistent with what was shared in listening sessions where we heard there are some neighborhoods that are particularly run down.

### 3. Services



Respondents generally expressed dissatisfaction with the above services. As described in the “Economy” section above, respondents may be fine with accessing services elsewhere, even when the Fort Laramie service offerings are very limited. One response was especially telling:

*Although the ratings look terribly low, it's worth mentioning this is a small town in Wyoming which doesn't even have gasoline so of course we don't have public transportation or some of these things (I mean, the town is walking distance anyways.) Also, there is NO medical care to rate (and I'm more than a bit uncomfortable with how long it would take an ambulance to get here.) I think they've hired a new cop, but I haven't actually seen them yet so I'm not sure.*

Police protection seems to be somewhat controversial, with many not knowing about the service or not answering (35%), and only 10% satisfied or highly satisfied, while 40% were dissatisfied. In addition to the portion of the comment above regarding policing, several are below:

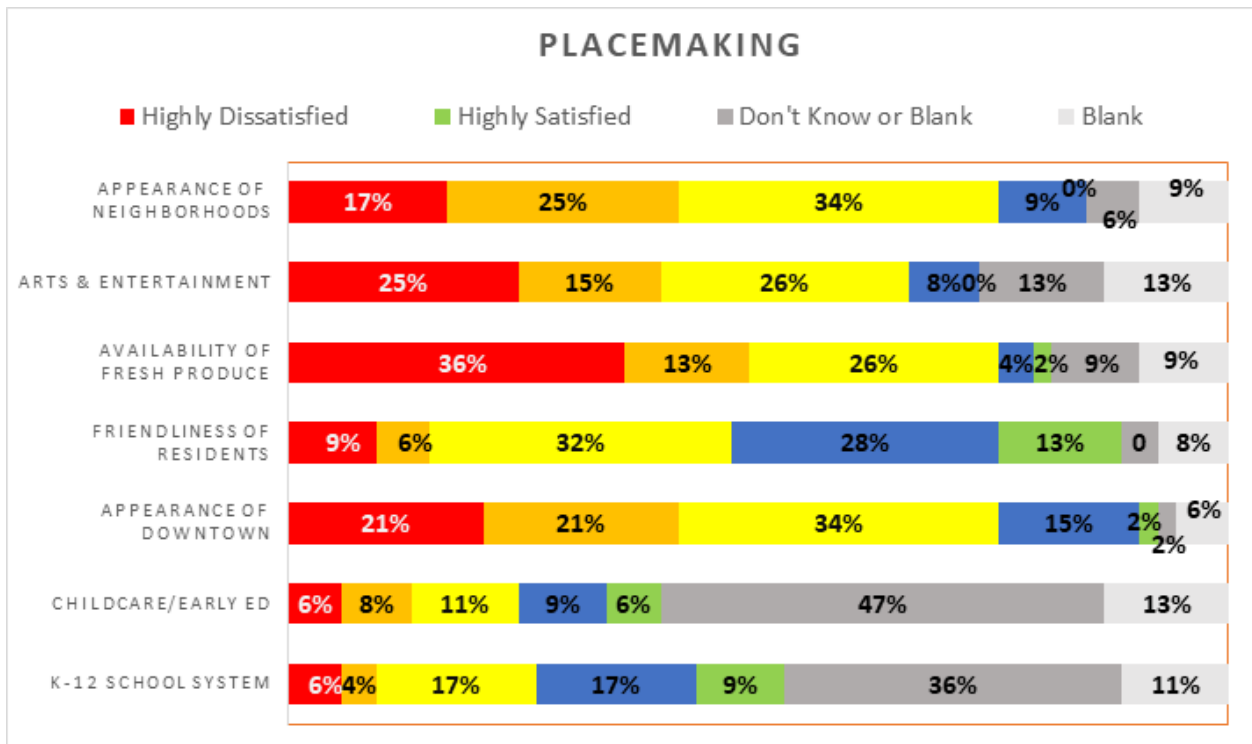
*We have a police car---not sure if we have an officer.*

*Law enforcement is scarce.*

*Why do we need 3 part time cops?*

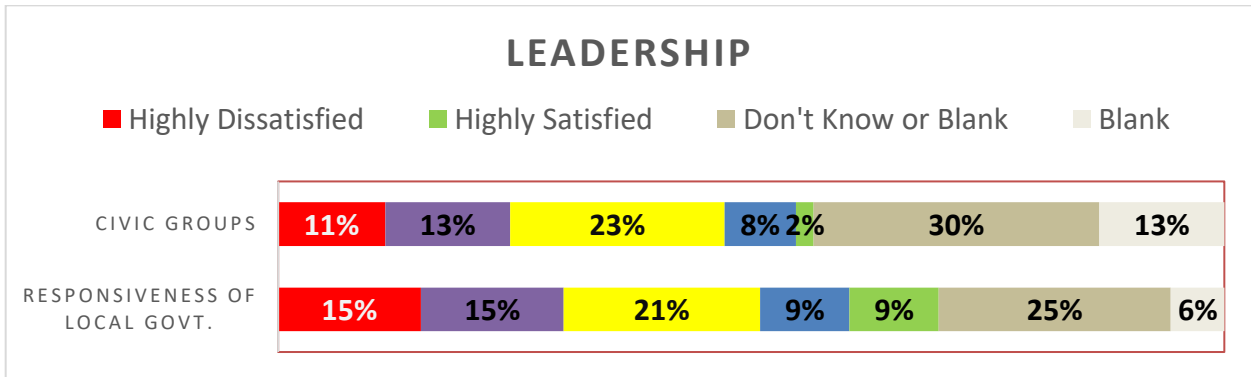
While these perceptions may not exactly match the actual situation, they do reveal underlying dissatisfaction with the present policing situation. The post office on the other hand is a “helpful” service called out by three respondents as a service they use most!

## 4. Placemaking



In the Placemaking questions on the survey, one question stood out; in most respondents' opinion Fort Laramie has friendly residents! On the other end of the spectrum, respondents are dissatisfied with availability of fresh produce in town – though again they may be satisfied with its availability overall, so more discussion is warranted.

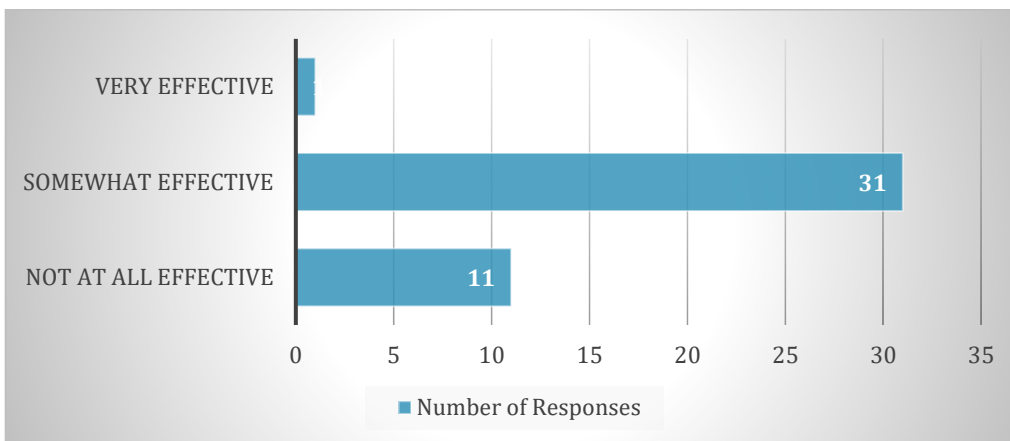
## 5. Leadership



With such a high percentage of respondents not knowing their satisfaction levels with civic groups or local government responsiveness, it brings up the question, what is leadership in a little town like Fort Laramie; it may be the people who get in and get it done.

Respondents provide some insight in the question:

**In general, how effective do you think the residents of your community are at working together to solve challenges?**



These comments indicate satisfaction with the responsiveness of local leaders to local problems.

*There have been many improvements in community activities in the past year and we just need to keep moving forward. Missed having the farmers market in town this year.*

*I see some movement on local problems.*



*I don't really know what challenges are faced or how, but I see that efforts are made to reach community members and make improvements.*

One response suggested public input to city operations is not always welcome, but it was not clear if comments to that effect came from other citizens or elected officials.

Some hints at who Fort Laramie's leaders are is seen in these responses.

*The people that participate are hard workers, but not everyone wants to help.*

*I know there just aren't many people who participate.*

*Lots of ideas but no show for it.*

Without many paid city staff for getting projects done, Fort Laramie must have local "leaders" and "followers" work out who is who and what to do. This process is messy, as several respondents described:

*It's a small town so everyone has likes and dislikes.*

*The residents of Ft. Laramie all know one another and are always willing to work together.*

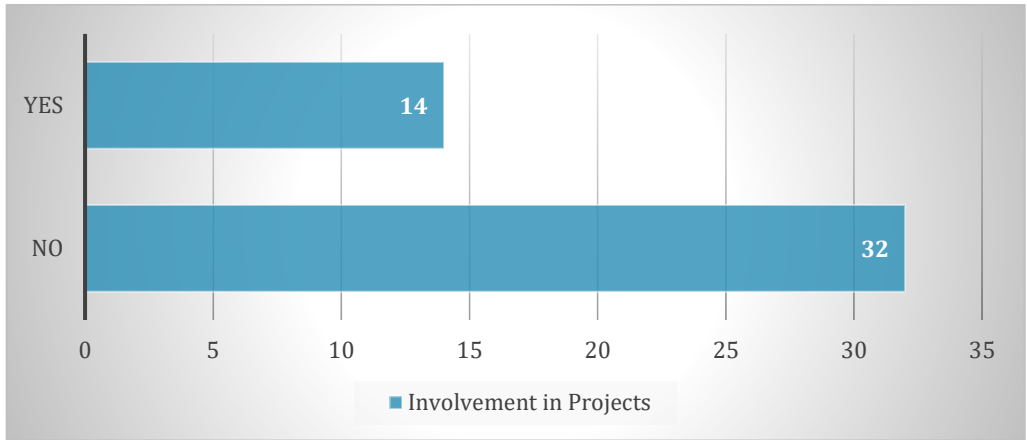
*The outlooks of older residents and of people moving in is quite different.*

*It seems as though it is hard to get the people in the community on the same page.*

*I have seen the community attempt to solve problems, but there is often arguing.*

So, who is stepping up to get things done? Responses to the following question gives some indication.

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



About one in three residents stepped up in the last 12 months. This does not necessarily indicate a lack of motivation; most respondents were older or female or have modest incomes. Clarification may be found in this follow-up question:

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

| Number of times mentioned out of 34 comments | Reason   |
|--|--|
| 11   | Communication (Don't know about/not asked to participate, not any projects)                  |
| 8  | Time (in 2 of 8 cases lack of time and not living in town overlapped)                        |
| 6  | Don't live in town   |
| 6  | Inability (age, health, lack of skills, or physical fatigue due to work)                     |
| 6  | Interpersonal difficulties (not feeling included, personality clashes, past bad experiences) |
| 2  | Projects lack positive impact  |
| 2  | Don't know?  |
| 1  | Don't want to help   |

For astute mathematicians, some comments include more than one reason; thus 34 comments contain 42 reasons. It may be surprising that “if only I had more time...” was not the most frequent reason respondents state. Nor is inability due to age, health, lack of skill, or fatigue from work. It was lack of communication! Nearly one in three comments include something about not being asked to help (3), belief that projects were not happening (3), or simply not being informed; *“the citizens were made aware of the goings on in town.”*

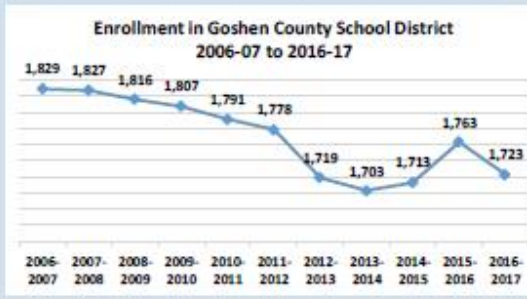
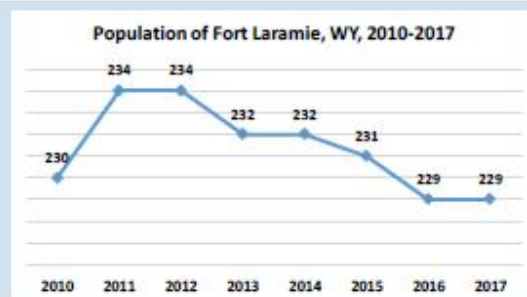
Time and living out of town are also major obstacles, as is inability. It may be encouraging to know that only 8 of 34 had something to do with interpersonal difficulties and belief that projects lacked impact. If *“I wanted to be”* is only stated once!

## FORT LARAMIE, WYOMING COMMUNITY PROFILE



### POPULATION

|   | Fort Laramie | Goshen County |
|---|--------------|---------------|
| <b>Total population</b>   |              |               |
| 2017, number  | 229          | 13,378        |
| 2010, number  | 230          | 13,249        |
| Change 2010-2017, percent   | -0.4         | 1.0           |
| <b>Components of population change, 2010-2017</b>                   |              |               |
| Net migration change (in-migrants minus out-migrants)               |              |               |
| Number  | ---          | 114           |
| Percent   | ---          | 0.9           |
| Natural change (births minus deaths)                                |              |               |
| Number  | ---          | -4            |
| Percent   | ---          | 0.0           |
| <b>Population by race, 2013-2017 average, percent of total</b>      |              |               |
| White   | 97           | 93            |
| American Indian or Alaskan Native                                   | 2            | 1             |
| Other   | 1            | 6             |
| <b>Population by ethnicity, 2013-2017 average, percent of total</b> |              |               |
| Non-Hispanic  | 97           | 89            |
| Hispanic  | 3            | 11            |
| <b>Population by age group, 2013-2017 average, percent of total</b> |              |               |
| Under age 18  | 13           | 21            |
| Age 18-64   | 59           | 59            |
| Age 65 and older  | 29           | 21            |
| Median age, 2013-2017 average, years                                | 54.1         | 43.7          |

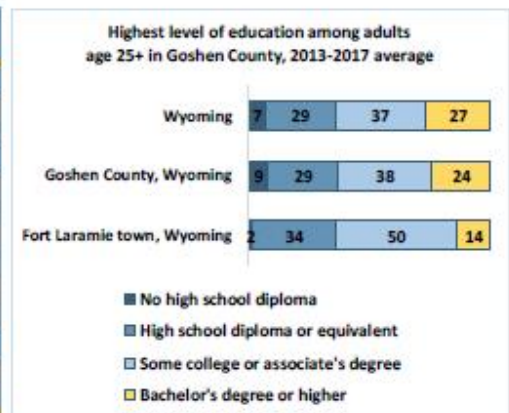


SOURCES: US Census Bureau, US Department of Education

### SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

|   | Fort Laramie | Goshen County | Wyoming State |
|---|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| <b>Income</b>                                       |              |               |               |
| Per capita income, 2013-2017 average, dollars       | 24,665       | 27,253        | 31,214        |
| Median household income, 2013-2017 average, dollars | 38,750       | 48,422        | 60,938        |
| <b>Poverty</b>                                      |              |               |               |
| Overall poverty, 2013-2017 average                  |              |               |               |
| Number  | 40           | 1,701         | 63,398        |
| Rate, percent                                       | 16.8         | 13.2          | 11.1          |
| Children living in poverty, 2013-2017 average       |              |               |               |
| Number  | 17           | 526           | 17,412        |
| Rate, percent                                       | 56.7         | 19.5          | 12.8          |
| <b>Food insecurity</b>                              |              |               |               |
| Overall rate, 2016, percent                         | ---          | 12.1          | 12.6          |
| Rate among children, 2016, percent                  | ---          | 19.4          | 16.7          |

SOURCES: US Census Bureau, Feeding America



This project is supported by USDA's Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, Grant #2016-10945. It is part of the AFRI Foundational program.

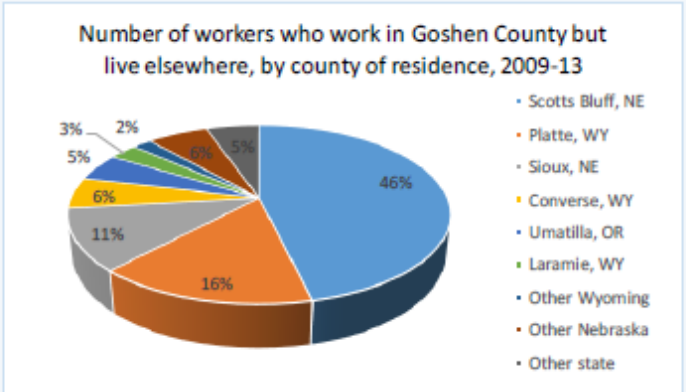
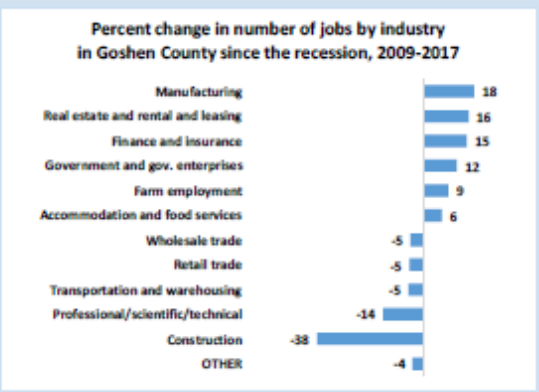
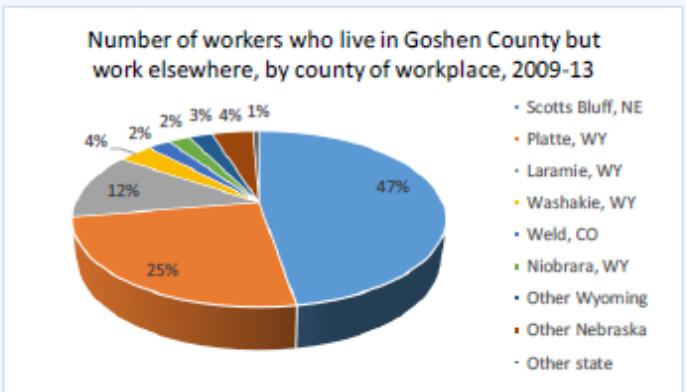
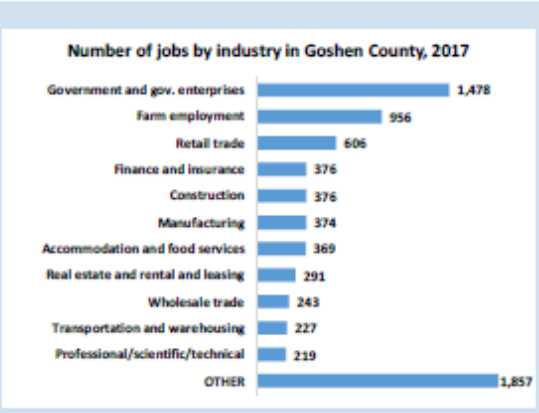
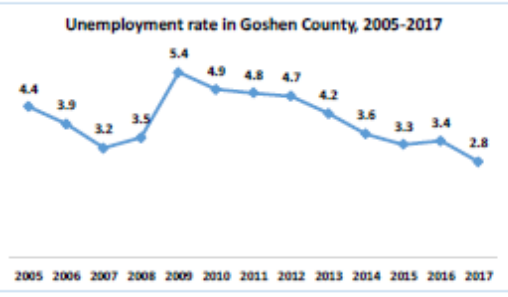
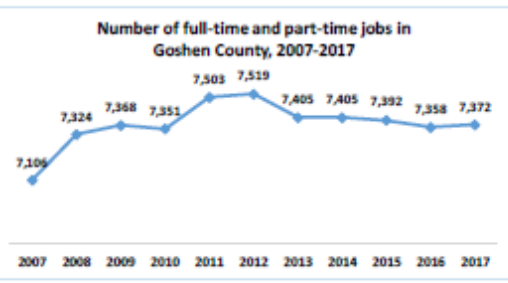


UNIVERSITY of WYOMING  
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# ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

|   | Fort Laramie | Goshen County |
|---|--------------|---------------|
| <b>Full- and part-time jobs</b>                                   |              |               |
| Total number, 2017  | ---          | 7,372         |
| Total number, 2012  | ---          | 7,519         |
| Total number, 2007  | ---          | 7,106         |
| Change, 2012-2017, percent  | ---          | -2.0          |
| Change, 2007-2012, percent  | ---          | 5.8           |
| <b>Employment characteristics</b>                                 |              |               |
| Labor force participation rate, 2013-2017 average, percent        | 52.1         | 59.4          |
| Unemployment rate, 2013-2017 average, percent                     | 12.4         | 6.5           |
| Self-employment rate, 2017, percent                               | ---          | 33.3          |
| Average annual pay, 2017, dollars                                 | ---          | 36,548        |
| <b>Business establishments with paid employees, by size, 2015</b> |              |               |
| All establishments, number  | ---          | 351           |
| Establishments with 1-4 paid employees, number                    | ---          | 208           |
| Establishments with 5-9 paid employees, number                    | ---          | 69            |
| Establishments with 10-19 paid employees, number                  | ---          | 37            |
| Establishments with 20-49 paid employees, number                  | ---          | 26            |
| Establishments with 50 or more paid employees, number             | ---          | 11            |



NOTE: "Other" industries include forestry, fishing, and related activities; mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction; utilities; information; management of companies and enterprises, administrative and support and waste management and remediation services; educational services, health care and social assistance; arts, entertainment, and recreation; and other services.

SOURCES: US Census Bureau, US Bureau of Economic Analysis, US Department of Labor



## HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

|  | Fort Laramie | Goshen County |
|--|--------------|---------------|
| <b>Total housing units, 2013-2017 average</b>                      |              |               |
| Number of housing units  | 132          | 6,032         |
| <b>Housing tenure, 2013-2017 average, percent of housing units</b> |              |               |
| Owner-occupied units   | 91           | 76            |
| Renter-occupied units  | 9            | 24            |
| <b>Housing type, 2013-2017 average, percent of housing units</b>   |              |               |
| 1 unit, attached or detached                                       | 73           | 81            |
| 2-4 units  | 1            | 3             |
| 5 or more units  | 0            | 5             |
| Mobile home, boat, RV, van, etc.                                   | 26           | 12            |
| <b>Housing affordability, 2013-2017 average</b>                    |              |               |
| Households spending 30% or more of income on housing costs         |              |               |
| Owner-occupied units, percent                                      | 13           | 20            |
| Renter-occupied units, percent                                     | 20           | 31            |

SOURCES: US Census Bureau



## RESOURCES

Headwaters Economics, Economic Profile System

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

- Fort Laramie City – Demographics
- Goshen 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

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

## Great ideas for Fort Laramie

*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 Fort Laramie.
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 town 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*.