

## **THE WYOMING RURAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL**

The Wyoming Rural Development Council is a collaborative public/private partnership which brings together six partner groups: local/regional government, state government, federal government, tribal government, non-profit organizations and private sector individuals and organizations.

WRDC is governed by a Steering Committee representing the six partner groups. The Steering Committee as well as the Council membership have established the following goals for the WRDC:

- Assist rural communities in visioning and strategic planning
- Serve as a resource for assisting communities in finding and obtaining grants for rural projects
- Serve and be recognized as a neutral forum for identification and resolution of multi-jurisdictional issues

The Council seeks to assist rural Wyoming communities with their needs and development efforts by matching the technical and financial resources of federal, state, and local governments and the private sector with local development efforts.

If you would like more information about the Wyoming Rural Development Council and how you may benefit as a member, contact:

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**Douglas Resource Team**

**May 15-18, 2000**

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Benchmarking & Target Industry  
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## **PROCESS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS REPORT**

The Wyoming Rural Development Council (WRDC) has provided a resource team to assist the City of Douglas, Wyoming in evaluating the community's assets and liabilities and in developing suggestions for improving the environment, social and economic future of Douglas.

The City of Douglas and Converse Area New Development Organization (CANDO) requested a community assessment from the Wyoming Rural Development Council. Joe Coyne served as the community contact and took the lead in agenda development, logistics and publicity for the assessment. Resource team members were selected to visit, interview citizens, business and community leaders; and develop a plan of recommended action for the city. The team members were carefully selected based on their fields of expertise that Douglas officials indicated would be needed to respond to the problem areas identified.

The Resource Team toured the city and interviewed approximately 150 people over a three day period from May 15-18, 2000. The team interviewed representatives from the following segments of the Douglas community: Industry, telecommunications and utilities, business professionals, retail, community development and government, tourism, nonprofits, social welfare and healthcare, youth, workforce development, school administration, youth organizations, seniors, teachers, parents, real estate and insurance, churches, mining, oil and gas, and agriculture. Each participant was asked to respond to three questions designed to begin communication and discussion and to serve as a basis for developing the action plan. The three questions were:

- ✓ What do you think are the major problems and challenges in Douglas?
- ✓ What do you think are the major strengths and assets in Douglas?
- ✓ What projects would you like to see completed in two, five ten and twenty years in Douglas?

Upon completion of the interviews, the team met to compare notes and share comments following the three days of intense study. The team then agreed that each team member would carefully analyze the things said, synthesize what they heard with their knowledge of programs and resources, prepare their notes and suggestions, and forward these items to be combined into WRDC's final report to Douglas.

The oral report was presented to the people of Douglas on May 18, 2000 and many of the citizens of Douglas who participated in the interviews were in attendance.

Following the oral report, a formal written report was prepared and presented to CANDO. It was agreed that CANDO would print copies or summaries for each person interviewed.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The elements are all here for Douglas to have a successful future. To become a growing, vibrant community takes only a few people willing to roll up their sleeves and go to work. Once this nucleus begins to exert effort, it will begin to show some successes. Then this nucleus needs to expand to include more and more of the community until the entire community is involved. But the work is not on big jobs, it is on small ones that can be achieved quickly. The big ones come later after Douglas has seen the results of the smaller and sees that it can accomplish things.

There are a number of short term, accomplishable recommendations that the review team has provided. The most important thing is to get the entire community involved in trying to find ways to accomplish its goals. A few celebrations at the successful conclusion of an activity which has involved a large number of citizens will lead to a feeling of accomplishment that will carry over into other activities. Look through the short-term suggestions, pick out one that you know what you can do, and get started!

Each of you individually must decide what it is that you want to do—what kind of project you want to tackle. There are enough tasks for everyone. Each small step, every accomplishment, no matter how limited, is movement in the right direction toward achieving Douglas's goals. It can be done! There is no problem facing Douglas that cannot be solved by the people living in the community. It is your choice, your decision, you can do it.

On behalf of the Douglas Resource Team, I want to thank the community and our sponsors, CANDO and the City of Douglas for the warm hospitality shown to us during our stay. The meals and accommodations were outstanding. We heard over and over in the listening sessions that Douglas was filled with warm, caring individuals and we certainly can attest to that! Thank you very much.

We hope you will find great value in this report and remember, any team member is available for you to call to clarify information or provide more information and assistance.

The Wyoming Rural Development Council is here to help you in any way that we can.

Mary E. Randolph, Executive Director, Wyoming Rural Development Council

# RESOURCE TEAM MEMBERS

## Douglas, Wyoming Resource Team May 15-18, 2000

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## **LOCAL CONTACTS/COORDINATORS**

### **Converse Area New Development Organization (CANDO)**

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### **Best Western Douglas Inn**

1450 Riverbend Road (I-25 at Exit #140)  
Douglas, WY 82633  
(307) 358-9790  
(307) 358-6251 (fax)

### **Converse County Courthouse**

107 North 5<sup>th</sup> Street  
Douglas, WY 82633  
(307) 358-2244

### **Douglas High School**

1701 Hamilton  
Douglas, WY 82633  
(307) 358-2940

Other community leaders: Rob Boner, Parker Moore, Jim Fuller, Jason Whitley, Lucile Taylor, Matt Adelman, Norm Long, Ed Werner, Kari Jo Gray, Dale Eslinger, Jason Whitley, Todd Van Rensselaer, Hale Kreycik, Dave Edwards, Steve Sibrel, Judy Johnston, John Robitaille, Izetta Foster, Alan Price Doug Bull, Marilyn Werner, Sue Campbell, Kathy Hutchison

# Douglas Community Assessment

May 15-17, 2000

## Resource Team Agenda

### **Monday, May 15th**

	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Location</b>
10:00 – 11:30 a.m.	Orientation and Organization Meeting (Resource Team only)	Best Western small conference room
11:30 – 1:00 p.m.	Buffet lunch with Assessment Planners	Best Western small conference room
1:00 – 2:30 p.m.	Tour of Douglas area	Depart from lobby of Best Western; bus will take team to City Hall afterwards
2:30 – 3:00 p.m.	Break: Refreshments with City Officials	City Hall Conference Room
3:00 – 3:50 p.m.	Industry	City Hall Chambers
4:00 – 4:50 p.m.	Telecommunications & Utilities	City Hall Chambers
5:00 – 5:50 p.m.	Business Professionals	City Hall Chambers
6:00 – 7:30 p.m.	Working Supper	Village Inn (privacy room)

### **Tuesday, May 16<sup>th</sup>**

	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Location</b>
7:00 – 7:50 a.m.	Breakfast	La Bonte (Ball Room)
8:00 – 8:50 a.m.	Retail	La Bonte (Ball Room)
9:00 – 9:50 a.m.	Community Development	La Bonte (Ball Room)
10:00 – 10:50 a.m.	Tourism	La Bonte (Ball Room)
11:00 – 11:50 a.m.	Nonprofits, Social Welfare & Healthcare	La Bonte (Ball Room)
12:00 – 12:30 p.m.	Lunch: with students	Douglas High School cafeteria
12:30 – 1:20 p.m.	Youth – ½ team to English class; ½ to welding class	Douglas High School
1:30 – 2:20 p.m.	Workforce Development & Administrators	CC#1 School Admin. Bldg. Board Room
2:30 – 3:20 p.m.	Youth Organizations	CC#1 School Admin. Bldg. Board Room
3:30 – 4:00 p.m.	Break: With Seniors and School officials	CC#1 School Admin. Bldg. Board Room
4:00 – 4:50 p.m.	Seniors	CC#1 School Admin. Bldg. Board Room
5:00 – 5:50 p.m.	Teachers	CC#1 School Admin. Bldg. Board Room
6:00 – 6:50 p.m.	Parents	CC#1 School Admin. Bldg. Board Room

7:00 – 8:00 p.m.	Supper	La Bonte (Ball Room)
<b>Wednesday, May 17<sup>th</sup></b>		
	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Location</b>
7:00 – 7:50 a.m.	Breakfast	TBA
8:00 – 8:50 a.m.	Real Estate & Insurance	County Courthouse Commissioners Board Room
9:00 – 9:50 a.m.	Churches	County Courthouse Commissioners Board Room
10:00 – 10:50 a.m.	Mining, Oil & Gas	County Courthouse Commissioners Board Room
11:00 – 11:50 a.m.	Agriculture & Public Lands	County Courthouse Commissioners Board Room
12:00 – 1:30 p.m.	Lunch	With Rotary Club @ Best Western Inn conference room
1:30 – 5:00 p.m.	Resource Team prepares for Town Meeting	Village Inn (privacy room)
5:00 – 6:30 p.m.	Working Supper	Village Inn (privacy room)
7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.	Town Meeting	Best Western Conference Room

## **Jasper Resource Team May 15-17, 2000**

### **WHAT WAS SAID AT THE INTERVIEWS**

The Resource Team spent two days interviewing the local residents to hear what they had to say. Those being interviewed were directed to answer three questions:

What are the major problems/challenges in the community?

What are the major strengths/assets of the community?

What projects would you like to see implemented in your community in the next two, five, ten, or twenty years?

We have listed below, without comment, what we heard from those who volunteered to be interviewed.

### **What are the major problems and challenges in your community?**

Old line people don't want change  
Agree with lack of desire to change  
Lack of cultural activities  
Lack of business attraction  
Need to keep businesses open  
Insufficient labor force – need workforce development  
Lack of marketing about assets  
Support service people not paid well  
People don't want to see growth  
Lack of hotel rooms for big events  
City land not being developed  
Weak county leadership  
Few local people can scuttle good ideas  
Hard to hire people  
Lack of population (also a strength)  
Hard to find employees that can read and write  
Can't pay competitive wages  
Good ol' boy attitude prevents change  
Can't sell large homes  
Senior center too small  
No senior housing  
Lack of retail stores  
Lack of activities for kids

Communications are poor, even Post Office is slow  
Next day delivery is limited, compared to rest of country  
Resistance to change  
Decrease vulnerability to fluctuation in the energy market  
Funding mechanisms for infrastructure maintenance are limited  
Limited business base  
Some businesses have virtual monopolies  
Shopping  
Medical-lack of physicians  
Budweiser, Hewlett Packard plant turned away by good 'ol boy attitude  
Had to struggle to get chiropractic license approved over limitations  
No major big chain shopping  
Lack of hotel to accommodate larger groups  
Community is spoiled because things are cheap  
Cheyenne getting an "events center complex" with ice rink  
Stable funding  
Transportation  
Shopping  
No light industry  
Lack of cooperation between city and county  
Protection of State Fair  
Lack of motel and in-won RV spaces  
Housing  
Lack of land use planning/zoning – emotional issue  
No building construction going on  
Lack of leadership, locally and statewide  
Lack of cooperation between city and county  
Lack of zoning  
Chance of losing State Fair  
People spend their money outside Converse County  
Transportation  
Shopping  
No support for growth outside of mining and agriculture industries  
Not necessarily an aesthetically pleasing town – lack of pride?  
Not necessarily aesthetically pleasing town  
Not a lot of pretty sites here  
Looks like town was thrown together  
Funding of state fair  
Education system  
Side walks  
No job opportunities  
Lack of clothing stores  
Funding limitations for infrastructure

Hospital can be a problem  
Question whether hospital expansion is warranted; yet using public funds  
Lack of zoning enforcement in city  
Bigger problem with lack of county zoning at edge of town  
Long term residents don't support youth activities  
We don't use the assets we have  
Lack of decent salaries for waitresses and waiters  
Lack of diversity of job opportunities  
Lack of clothing store/shopping  
Can't get zoning done  
Keeping city infrastructure (water & sewer) in shape takes a lot of time  
Lack of response of school board to concerns of teachers  
Poor cable TV service  
Lack of constructive youth places to go  
Unrealistic expectations (people want big city frills/hard to please)  
Lack of Housing  
Too close to Casper  
Lack of rental housing  
Gasoline prices too high  
Sexual predators of women and children, especially male children  
Need jobs for young people  
Need jobs for young people  
School teacher pay may be issue  
Wages in community are too low to keep young people here  
Weak labor pool  
Weak labor pool  
Need jobs for youth  
Technology  
Abuse within families  
Dugs and alcohol abuse  
Can't get shoes (athletic or women's)  
Can't get shoes (athletic or women's)  
PPO provider/hospital is going out of state  
Takes forever to get concrete poured  
Pain to work with utilities because no longer have local reps in offices here  
Can't get answers when needed  
Lack of recycling for plastics and cardboard  
More resources for poor  
More support of school programs other than sports  
Same for WYDOT  
Need more marketing for EWC  
Getting night classes at EWC is problem – no flexibility with scheduling classes?  
People want development, but not in their own backyard

## Zoning

People want to earn a lot more than they are qualified or trained for

People are unskilled

Lack of retail options

Lack of culture diversity

Community doesn't support womens/childrens clothing stores

Retailer's hours need to be more customer friendly

School board's hands are tied on salaries (by state)

A few people are fighting the many who want zoning

Youth don't know how to work

Lack of youth center

Too much conservative, non-progressive sameness in government, especially County

Not enough vision in leadership to be progressive

Employers don't allow youth to work on their schedules

Having the resources and ability to bring new businesses in

Need to get kids to return here to work

Too small

Challenges to state fair growth due to city size

Lack of good restaurants

Lack of cultural and art events

Quality daycare is not available

Douglas boards do not work together

No work for spouses when they transfer to Douglas

Hospital ER

Customer service is lacking

Public lands

Workforce shortage

Difficult to get professionals to move to Douglas

Lack of shopping

Lack of housing

Discrimination against girl's sports

Recreation center

Basketball court time is limited

Maintaining infrastructure

Attitudes of people and change

Pay teachers more

Have a community very close that offers more shopping options

Once in Casper for one thing, do other business there

Hard to come up with activities to hold people in town to spend \$ here

Might be behind in technology locally, as is Wyoming

Being a small town has its pluses and minuses

Hard to do overnight shipping (especially bigger containers)

Low pay for teachers

Unless entire community buys in, projects can't get done  
Douglas hasn't changed in 20 years  
Bust and boom cycles have limited our growth  
State fairgrounds facilities are one dimensional – intended for summer use only  
Unstable education system  
Job pool  
Unresponsive retailers toward community needs  
Lack of stores  
No adequate funding for teachers  
Lack of housing  
Economic vitality  
Not enough good jobs for the talent pool in Douglas  
Retail clothing  
Can't get workers because we can't compete with big cities on salaries  
State fair grounds, run down  
indoor rink (project)  
Too many cops  
Drunken tank – cops assuming because where you were, you are drinking  
Cops harass  
Fair grounds – update it  
Costs too high for youth clubs at State Fair  
Not much to do, spend time cruising on weekends  
Complex (needs)  
Don't have a facility to do anything at  
School – getting facility fixed, but money isn't going to classroom (books etc.)  
Some Teachers have been here too long  
Low pay so Douglas does not get good teachers  
Not using school funding right – carpets instead of books, teachers pay  
Can't express yourself to teachers – get in trouble  
Tenure keeping teachers here  
Not paying teachers enough  
No pay raises in 10 years  
State needs to realize teachers need more pay  
Lost state competitions due to lack of facilities  
People don't want to hire teenagers  
Want to come back to Douglas after college, but depends on field you go into  
Wyoming is so small, there are not opportunities i.e. technology  
Don't have all technology skills that larger communities might have  
Not enough people to support bigger businesses  
No large business  
Dependent on mining – Wyoming will lose ½ population when they leave  
No land available for big businesses (Budweiser example)  
State doesn't realize communities want to stay small, but still need jobs

Lack of jobs

Have tourist attractions, but no tourists until hunting season

Guest ranches – nothing to draw people to them

Douglas not well known – doesn't have large parks to draw people

Ranchers – some doing good

Cost of hockey will be expensive

State Fair going downhill

Getting rid of "good" classes

Help sons feel good about community & opportunities

Keep children here

Don't want son to come back here – no opportunities

Drug abuse – tobacco, alcohol

Legislators are skirting problem of drug abuse

Open container laws – will lose highway funds

Lose highway funding – excuse is to put \$ into drug education

Not safe for drug abuse to be happening

Need people to have a successful business – also an asset and problems

Entertainment has been to get in a car and shop Casper

Children have little desire to stay in Douglas

No economic opportunities available

Challenge to recruit

Exporting kids out of state

Some people family oriented

Multi-working families

Latchkey kids

Structure of family has changed – lost what family is for

Interests of kids and lack of opportunities take them out of town

Reversal of support and opportunities

Different group of social skills

Wyoming needs kids like we have in this community – they can be ambassadors

Don't have much downtown

Parents take care of their own

Youth show pride in tickets for drinking

Parties are means of entertainment for youth

Teaching values of drinking – parents have expressed pros and cons of teaching

Youth are drinking, chewing, at young ages

Challenge of health care providers & delivery

Lacking emergency health services (could be communication problem)

Lack of recognition of economic development

Anti growth attitude in Wyoming

A lot of people think they can find better prices in Casper (or elsewhere)

Retailers complain about Casper, but they aren't convinced themselves that Douglas is a great place to shop – they need to stand up and say that

Too much talk and not enough action on problems  
No zoning or land use planning  
A few people (maybe 5?) are controlling discussion about land use planning  
Too hard to make long term business or home development commitments w/o land use planning  
Need leadership to take charge, and follow through with action on future plans  
Can't get qualified employees, especially with technical skills  
Also have need for employees with general basic skills  
Skilled trades (plumbing/roofing) are behind – too busy  
We are too dependent on mining industries  
Concerns about fluctuations in mineral/energy industry  
Economy is not diverse enough  
Mineral industry is concern, such as losing railroad employment  
Telecommunications are needed to grow businesses  
Kids need meaningful employment – a reason to come back (emotionally & jobs)  
Losing utilities involvement in community  
Utilities are moving offices out (phone, gas)  
Telecommunications are costly, but need more fiber cable  
Need more retail, especially clothing  
Lack of meaningful employment opportunities for young people  
Need more leadership/legislative support of state fair  
Rural telecommunications, including cable TV, is poor  
Shopping is horrendous, have to go to Casper  
Shopping  
Shopping  
Workforce  
Need multipurpose facility (fairgrounds has no indoor facility)  
Need to decide where we want to be: support business? Stay a small town? Or grow?  
Need to look at bigger picture  
Unstable education system will affect people's decision to stay in Douglas  
Unstable education system hinders economic growth  
Uncertain revenue flow from state, which is key to infrastructure maintenance and other things  
Wage base is not competitive  
Need to bring in new industry  
Previous boom cycles led to instable public safety and sense of community  
Need to build on better sense of community we have now  
Need growth in technical area (that will also help shopping issue)  
Hard to get a T-1 line in Douglas  
Only one full service hotel/convention facility  
Lack of clear community goals for tourism  
No marketing outside of immediate area  
We have too many well-kept secrets in Douglas  
We have too many well-kept secrets in Douglas  
Merchants close their doors at 5 or 6 o'clock (too early for tourism traffic)

Merchants close their doors at 5 or 6 o'clock (too early for hunters)  
Douglas isn't marketed as a destination, but just as a town to pass through  
Need help with marketing  
Douglas, Converse County and State aren't promoted well outside of immediate area  
Lack of stability in Chamber leadership  
20% of the people do 80% of the work, so we have a lot of burnout  
Tourism has dropped (more RV's and air)  
Need to work together to promote all businesses, not just some  
Need to make sure brochures are getting used appropriately  
Work that was previously done by others gets ignored – we should build on their work  
Need to talk to the people that are really interested in all we have to offer  
Need to record what we are doing now, so that it can be used in the future  
Lack of adequate hotel spaces during peak times  
Lack of year round activity to support hotel development  
Different travelers today (e.g., state fair visitors more interested in entertainment, not agriculture)  
Airport handles only private airplanes, not commercial traffic  
Leadership making tourism marketing decisions don't have marketing expertise  
Lack of understanding that public lands are a tourism resource  
Douglas wants the tourism economy, but doesn't want the people that come with it  
We want tourism, but are afraid of growth – explains why we keep secrets  
Hunting restrictions are limiting hunting to the rich  
State Fair is limited in what it can do  
Lack of signs on highways (about attractions and access points)  
Healthcare has been adversely impacted by funding (same as other communities)  
Limited demographics (rural nature of community) compound funding issue  
Challenge to keep people in this area here, so they don't go elsewhere  
Hard to keep up traditional library services and also add new technology services  
Need stable revenues/funding  
Hard to find grants for recreational projects (like ice rink)  
Affordable healthcare for people without medical insurance  
Funding needs to be more stable and adequate to cover costs  
Need to find new sources of revenue (other than mining industry)  
Need to bring in new jobs  
We don't use the facilities and services that are available here  
Hard to find out what is available here (with healthcare, recreation)  
Never anything to do for youth (small community problem)  
Have to go to Casper for things to do  
Not a lot for youth to do  
School doesn't offer a wide range of classes – schedules are difficult  
Teachers control youth  
Punishments at school are harsh  
People dump on others to make themselves look better

Need more shopping, like clothes, so we don't have to go to Casper  
Same issue with healthcare  
School is downsizing classes (such as foreign languages)  
School moving to distance learning  
High school teacher is leaving  
Fewer classes are being offered, making schedules harder  
State funding is dropping  
Nothing for youth to do  
Stores closed down because no one supports them  
Don't have a band teacher for both high school and middle school  
People don't act well  
Need bigger population  
Teen club didn't work out because school ran it/took it over (but kids had started it)  
Location for the teen club was really hot  
Expensive to get bands booked for teen club – need financial support  
Police force is stupid, just follows people around (targeting certain people) until they do something wrong  
Police break up people that are just talking to each other  
Curfew needs to be eliminated (e.g., interfered with after prom party)  
Everyone knows everyone  
Can't get everyone to agree on what needs to get done in community  
Youth drink and party because there's nothing else to do  
Police shouldn't be breaking up house parties, but just wait to see if people leave  
Youth are judged by the company they keep  
Some drugs being used in community (but not in school)  
Marijuana and crank present in the community, but not widespread use  
Low paying jobs (\$6-7/hour)  
Hard to recruit new teachers, because of low pay  
Also losing new teachers to other areas that pay more  
School board doesn't have any more money to spend on salaries  
Community doesn't understand the need to raise awareness for more school funding  
Losing special education teachers, therapists and counselors to better paying jobs  
Need to get community better engaged  
Not enough small industries, including manufacturing and trades, to support families  
Takes two or three incomes to support family  
We are not real civic minded, in part because we are partially a transient population  
No longer an agriculture community  
Lack of a multipurpose arena hamper recreational and educational activities for youth  
We are losing age group 18-30 to better education and employment opportunities  
Need something to keep youth here  
EWC is very limited in its offerings  
Lack of short term training opportunities for businesses, especially in technology  
Harder and harder to attract teachers to Douglas (same issue for all Wyoming)

Employers can't find employees with adequate skills (mostly missing soft skills)  
Few recreational grants available  
Nothing to do for youth (same challenge in all communities)  
Recreational needs for youth have changed (e.g., skateboarding and roller blading), and we need to keep in touch with that  
Build it and they will come attitude is necessary, especially winter months  
Don't have an events center like Casper  
Zoning conflict is real burden on city/county  
Lack of zoning hurts us economically  
We are a conservative thinking community that limits change  
To maintain quality of life, and also grow, need to be in control of growth  
Sedentary lifestyle of community (and country)  
Limited educational background  
A lot of smokers, even in restaurants (statewide issue)  
Lots of kids play summer ball, but we don't have enough practice fields  
We need to keep our kids here in the state (other than just agriculture) – statewide issue  
Douglas's population is aging, because we are losing youth  
To do that, we need high tech or high paying jobs  
Aging population won't support taxes for projects they won't use  
Transportation  
Shopping and availability of things you need (like clothing)  
Need more state funding for state fair – its part of our culture  
Need more state funding for state fair – its part of our culture  
We don't promote Douglas's assets enough  
More jobs and business development  
Not enough good paying jobs  
Better pay for teachers  
Need street repair, especially 4<sup>th</sup> and Richards  
Teenagers don't abide by laws – they need to have more respect for law and elders  
Lack activities for young people  
Teenagers aren't kept busy  
Keep Douglas economy stable  
Educational system needs improvement  
Don't seem to be clothing stores in town  
Need better upkeep at cemetery  
Need shopping here, not Casper  
Would like to bring in industry that will get people to move here  
Need better air transportation  
High prices for things here (like gasoline and toothpaste)  
Losing businesses because residents don't shop here – need to support them  
Improve entryways into town  
Need transportation to attract businesses  
Need to attract light industry

Growth at intersections needs trimming back  
Shopping  
Need input on need for city/county jail  
Police don't seem to be able to solve crimes – need community help  
Need jobs  
Air transportation not feasible with city's small size  
Attract electronic/Internet companies like mail order firms  
Need to attract technology companies  
City needs to enforce mowing and upkeep of vacant lots and rights of way  
Need more cooperation between city and county officials  
Driveways need to be redesigned so cars don't scrape bottom  
Have more laws than police can enforce  
Approaches to businesses have poor viewing for traffic  
Population is transient  
Quality of schools is suffering because of lack of funding  
Teacher salaries and insurance costs make it difficult to maintain quality of school  
Teacher salaries and insurance costs make it difficult to maintain quality of school  
We are not maintaining high quality of schools  
We are not keeping youth in state – need to maintain salaries  
Salaries were once higher than other states, but now are dropping  
Lack of appreciation for teachers  
Substance abuse is a concern  
Need better community effort to educate  
We are role models for students, and need to be aware of what we are doing  
Once we were recognized for educational excellence, but now there's a lack of interest  
Need parents to show interest in a positive way, not just negative  
Need businessmen to hire handicapped people  
Lack of productive, healthy youth activities is a growing problem  
Local and state officials don't make education a priority  
Businesses want to blame teachers for poor preparation of students, need help from parents  
Alcohol and drug problems, with youth and adults  
Community attitude toward to teachers is awful  
One School board member openly denigrates and insults teachers  
Community is apathetic to tackle problem  
Community is afraid to openly support teachers or to state their opinion  
Community is unaware of the difficulties going on in this school district  
Even students are unaware of the problems  
Teachers afraid of losing jobs  
Nothing for youth to do, beyond sports  
School board listens to just a few negative parents or patrons; others need to be more vocal  
Dark cloud over the school district  
Sports are out of balance  
Fines for loose dogs are higher than for substance abuse

We are getting a reputation as a school district to stay away from  
Actions need to match what is said  
Need to keep and attract quality teachers  
Can't fill teacher positions that are getting vacated, because of pay & reputation  
Community doesn't have focus on same or common problems  
School board listens to select few  
School board micromanages through the administrators, ignoring professional opinion  
Community needs to take charge of school district  
Sick leave and insurance are big problems  
Not cheap to live here  
Need to keep quality educators here  
Need more shopping  
College grads know that this is a "no apply" school district  
School board offers \$2,000 for new hires, but won't pay experienced teachers  
No support for experienced teachers  
Teachers are forced to consider moving  
Need to keep youth in state  
“

Railroad hiring and laying off causes problems  
Don't know where we are going with teachers and education system  
Infrastructure is lacking  
Don't have lots available for development  
City puts cost of development on the private landowner, making lots too expensive  
Hard to bring in viable businesses  
No shopping here (clothing store) – need business growth  
Keep Wyoming kids in Wyoming  
Losing teachers/good educators because of low wages  
Housing shortage – no new construction  
No competitive shopping here  
Need to educate community on what we are trying to do with economic development  
Don't have an industrial park  
Brownfield Road needs water and sewer  
Don't have a place to put a new business (e.g., no buildings with 10,000 sq. ft.)  
Brownfield Road not a big enough area for new business  
Need to reassure existing businesses that growth won't hurt them  
Economic base is coal mines and railroad – can't depend on it  
Need economic diversification  
Need more franchise businesses, not mom & pop's (they offer more benefits)  
No zoning around Douglas  
Entry from the north is not attractive  
People in county do not want any zoning  
Teachers' pay here ranks low, yet administrator pay ranks high  
Drug and alcohol use with youth

Community has a “long memory” and is tied to the way they used to do things  
Personal history stays with us forever  
Education problems, including getting quality educators here  
Small community can’t compete with larger cities regarding teacher pay and attraction  
Shrinking pool of applicants for teacher vacancies  
Lack of responsiveness from school board, such as regarding concerns about teacher pay  
Workplaces (public or private) develop hard feelings w/o ability to reconcile problems  
Fragmented families are prevalent, including single parent families  
Young teenage mothers  
Kids without adequate parental supervision will lead to problems  
Too much conservative nonprogressive sameness with leaders, especially with county commissioners  
Need opportunities for youth & families outside of school system (other than Casper)  
Need more Friday night & Saturday activities here  
Unnecessary hostility toward Game & Fish and Forest Service personnel  
Isolation and antisocial sentiment  
Need to keep churches relevant to community  
Maintain quality of services within tax base  
Maintain quality of businesses  
Maintain quality of school system and recreational activities  
Same group of people making decisions, doesn’t include all residents  
Concern with education system in general – room for improvement w/o \$  
Lack of places in town to build moderately priced homes  
No space to expand in city, so development is going out to county  
School are a challenge  
Concern about infrastructure in town, such as streets  
Highway 59 needs work  
Isolated town  
Need to diversify economy beyond minerals  
Problems with schools  
“  
Need better attitudes about education system  
Take advantage of highways for economic development  
Community needs to be better informed about mineral industry’s support for community  
Businesses need to be open more (days and hours)  
City and county agencies don’t cooperate – turf battles and failure to recognize big picture  
State fair needs better funding  
Available shopping is bad  
City leaders need to recognize and include county residents in planning  
Hard to get qualified people to work  
Hard to compete with coal mine salaries  
Not too many people looking for jobs  
City/county politics hinder infrastructure and housing development

Pole barns detract from appearance of city  
If Douglas doesn't diversify now, there will be a lot of housing available in 20 years  
Community college isn't producing skilled trades  
Service companies can't get young people willing to work and get dirty  
Draft analysis of national grasslands EIS is concerning (need more public involvement) – threatens our economic base  
Lack of commitment from UW to be actively promoting agriculture  
Need agriculture marketing help  
Lack of cohesiveness, need countywide approach to planning  
Education, especially agriculture  
Federal government encroachment  
Endangered Species Act and federal war on the west  
Don't know if we can raise a product that justifies the price  
Land values are skyrocketing  
Marketing  
Tax revenues gobbled up by state mandated programs, leaving little county discretion  
State Fair funding is threatened  
Tax revenue is not being efficiently used  
Ag bears brunt of taxes  
Some zealots stop all types of zoning and planning  
Federal planners ignore local input  
Public grazing is a critical issue – federal movement to remove all grazing, which will intensify use of other lands  
Prices for ranchland is very high, because of increasing recreational ranch prices  
County and state have been ineffective advocates for ranches, but are getting involved on north side of county  
UW Law professor works against agriculture  
Ag based resources are diminishing (school and elsewhere)  
Places ranchers need to do business are not located in Douglas  
Social cohesion in community, due to ranching community influence  
Jeopardizing the agriculture community jeopardizes the community cohesiveness  
Community is turning back on agriculture  
Pressure to eliminate agriculture from school curriculum  
New teachers are hostile to beef ranching

**What are the major strengths and assets of your community?**

The leadership & attitude of community leaders  
Beautiful place to live  
Schools  
High parental participation  
Friendly people  
Interstate Access, I-25  
High ethics  
Good support for good things  
Law Enforcement and emergency services are very dedicated  
Wyoming State Fair  
Golf Course  
People say hello – it's a very friendly community, even to tourists  
Always welcomed with a smile  
Community pulls together when needed  
State fair and fairground facilities  
Community has integrity and watches out for others  
Return of an Employment Resources Office  
Public land access  
Good city infrastructure  
Hospital is a big asset  
Great outdoors – we have a lot of it  
Sportsman's paradise  
Everybody knows everybody  
Shop owners have integrity  
Recreation center is nicer than a lot of private professional health centers  
Historic trails and Laramie Peak  
Lots of activities at recreation center, and it's free  
Good access (Interstate and railroads)  
Attractive rural setting  
Fairgrounds  
Recreational opportunities  
Recreational opportunities  
Cable access to Internet  
Good chiropractor  
Wyoming State Fair  
Douglas Chamber  
Good jobs (but need more)  
Nutriwest is a community asset  
Wyoming State Fair  
River  
Jackalope  
Size of town  
Water storage is good

Highway traffic to attract tourists  
People willing to go out of way to help  
Quality of life  
Progressive needs – tech savvy users for a rural market  
Our location in the state (close for shopping)  
Water resources good  
Coalmines  
Railroad business  
City structure is sound for goods and services  
Central location on interstate  
Interstate access  
Just the right size  
Go forward minded council at city and community  
Proactive leadership  
City parks  
Eastern Wyoming College  
Fairgrounds  
Golf course  
Schools  
Cooperation-appearance, pride in community  
LEA  
Raceway  
Airport  
Good people  
Great senior center  
Good school system  
Good churches  
Good hospital  
Hospital is expanding  
Our small size  
Have quality hotels and restaurants  
Public facilities  
Good Police  
Senior Citizen bus  
Historical heritage  
Being a small town has its pluses and minuses  
The people are friendly and accepting – willing to give  
Hospital is major asset  
People  
Individual expertise  
Historical heritage  
State Fair  
When community buys into something, it really puts its energy behind it & get it done

Size of community – related to friendliness of people  
Citizen volunteers  
Small businesses  
Our hospital  
Recreation Center  
Housing is nice  
Community pride  
Strong sense of ownership in community assets  
Technology  
Churches  
Good people  
Senior Center  
School facilities are excellent  
Aesthetics of community, such as river walk, are attractive  
Good hospital  
Good police and sheriff departments  
Good swimming pool  
River walk bike path  
Technology is better than in other communities (such as fiber optics)  
Golf course  
Proximity to national forest  
River goes right through town  
Organizations have dedicated leadership to help the community  
Major interstate  
Appropriately sized airport here, and only 50 miles from international airport  
Library  
International raceway  
Lack of smog  
Handicap accessibility  
Unity of community  
Platte River goes through town  
Lack of pollution  
Natural resources  
Outdoors  
Excellent police department  
Senior Citizen bus  
Golf course  
Still a small town – not many people  
Safe streets – no gangs  
People care about each other  
Size of town  
Location, close to Casper to go shopping and what they have to offer  
Clean, green neighborhoods

Nice place to live  
Close to Glendo  
Centrally located  
Closeness of community  
Varied climate  
Excellent mental health programs  
Good overall resources  
State Fair  
Races  
People are nice  
City offers jobs in summer  
Kids don't realize places they can get jobs – they are too lazy to apply  
Very good hospital  
Good water department  
Lots of places to get jobs  
Ideal job for teen – get off by 5 and make enough \$\$  
FAA has helped with internships  
Good city government  
Tourist attractions  
More dude ranches opening up  
Caring, responsive positive people  
Natural Bridge is good  
Douglas is a great place, don't want much to change  
College credit for classes at High School  
Good day care  
Community college good  
Natural resources – good setting all seasons  
People enjoy doing things as families  
Recreation Center  
City pool  
Strong, participating civic organizations  
Good Mexican restaurant  
State Fair and its director  
Kids are our resources  
Opportunities through schools have been great  
Size of community – can be detriment  
State Fair  
LEA  
Hospital  
Location  
People  
Small town  
Know where kids are and who they are with

Parents know what they are doing before they do  
Parents and involvement in community  
Commitment parents make to their children  
Golf course  
Agricultural community  
Many people have moved back when it is time to raise kids  
Education system  
Support from business community – scholarships & youth recreation  
Good schools and teachers  
A good place to raise our children  
Support from business community – scholarships & youth recreation  
Safe community – don't lock doors  
Isolated  
Quiet, neighborly type town  
Hamilton Street Singers  
DARE program  
Giving community  
Rallies in time of need  
Supportive of youth and people in general  
CANDO  
Hiring Joe  
Hospital growth  
Beautiful town  
Recreation center  
School buildings  
Attractive downtown  
Great bike trail  
Scenic River  
Quality of life  
Creative personalities  
The fact that the skilled trade companies are so busy is a potential area of growth  
Businesses are willing to “give back” to the community (e.g., kid sports sponsorships)  
People are a major strength of all Wyoming communities  
School facilities  
Movie theatres  
Parks along the river  
Fishing  
Business center  
Opportunities for youth  
Friendly, helpful people  
People have good ethic and attitude – very community oriented  
People come together to solve problems  
Access off I-25

State Fair grounds  
Museum  
WLEA  
Fitness physical and mental health  
Social services facilities and programs  
Good community  
Schools  
Police and Fire Department  
Size of community  
Community feeling  
Retail clothing  
Community works well together  
City government that plans ahead  
Clean city  
Our rurality, land and views is a phenomenal asset  
Natural resources are a bane and a boon, especially considering wildlife  
Natural resources are a bane and a boon, especially considering wildlife  
Don't have big city scale problems with crime and drugs  
Police aggressively pursue problems  
Volunteerism is rampant – people rally around a cause  
Size of community is great  
CANDO and Chamber are getting stronger and can help community  
City government is a great asset – dedicated and responsive; they genuinely care  
City government is a great asset – dedicated and responsive; they genuinely care  
City government is a great asset – dedicated and responsive; they genuinely care  
County employees are a strength – just as dedicated  
Quality of life  
Trees in town are a real asset  
State fair  
State Fair  
Have digital cable TV  
Easy access off I-25  
Close proximity to Denver, Cody, Rapid City national parks  
Old trails, Yellowstone highway  
Helpful city government and services  
Helpful city government and services  
Best Western Douglas Inn, with convention space, draws people  
Hotels work together to attract bigger conventions  
Community works well together  
State fair is asset  
Sense of community  
Sense of community  
Sense of community

We have a great city governing body and City Administrator  
Community philosophy of partnerships and problem solving  
Strong forward thinking leaders throughout the community who collaborate  
Collaborative philosophy permeates Douglas  
We have capacity to grow in our infrastructure  
Teamwork is getting stronger  
Good water infrastructure  
Legislative support  
Youth oriented community (music, athletics)  
State fair  
Platte River in town  
Coalmines and railroads  
Location of Douglas, with river, forest, residences spread out  
Work ethic, including volunteers  
Willingness to work to get projects done  
The people in Douglas are extraordinary  
Community is not exclusionary  
Town looks great, many strengths  
Excellent hunting area  
Working on new marketing, with a County perspective  
Working on joint promotions  
Have a lot of assets in Douglas  
People here are very dedicated to the community  
Beautiful things – Natural bridge, golf course, wildlife/hunting, trails, historic places  
Family oriented place  
Douglas is an old town that believes in itself  
State Fair  
Hunting is good  
We are on the way to Yellowstone  
Museum, Ft Fetterman, and other attractions – open for more development  
Public land access  
Good city infrastructure (including hotels and businesses)  
Oregon Trail goes right through Douglas (needs more marketing)  
Community says thanks -- has appreciation banquet for state fair and hunters banquet  
Film production crews have good access to public and private land (need to let them know)  
We are the wild west, very independent – that's what tourists want  
Fortunate to have the health facilities and professionals we have, given our small size  
People here will work with each other to get projects done  
Appearance of community (attractive and clean)  
Appearance of community (attractive and clean)  
Swimming pool, parks, bike paths  
Racetrack  
Schools

Emergency services are fast  
People are willing to sit down and resolve problems  
State Fair (needs more support and promotion)  
Hockey team won the state championships, even without a rink  
Video classes are a good idea in school  
Everyone knows everyone  
Everyone knows everyone  
Good religious groups – people live their faith all week  
Businesses will help out with donations  
Scenery, like the river  
Town is clean  
People are supportive, like for hockey (even though its not a school support) and the after prom party  
People come together to support each other when in need  
People pull together  
No violence  
Good environment  
No serious weapons violations in school, just a few pocketknives now and then  
Good community support for prom  
Strong concern and care for children and families  
Good schools  
Good schools  
Excellent, growing hospital  
Stable businesses serve community well  
Close to expanded shopping (Casper)  
Quite, peaceful community  
Not a lot of crime  
Need to grow, but slowly  
We are moving to being more futuristic, addressing the needs of community  
Grassroot commitment to keep state fair here  
Good leadership in city and county, forward looking and responsive  
Controlled growth  
Good school facilities  
Good support for sports  
Good teachers  
Need more vocational opportunities  
Have exchange program with Maryland – generously supported by Chamber  
Excellent Chamber promotions of Douglas  
Good support for youth  
We have facilities for basketball, swimming, etc.  
Great place to live – quiet – good quality of life  
Low population  
Our kids

Great recreation center  
Good athletic programs for kids  
Huge community support for each other, including kids  
Clean air  
River runs through community  
Hunting  
Mountains and forests  
Great outdoor opportunities  
Small town atmosphere, no cliquish feeling  
Great place to raise kids  
Good schools  
Low crime  
Douglas is the best kept secret in Wyoming (e.g., quality of life, great place to raise kids)  
Free recreation center  
High school sports events are free  
Strong support for youth  
Good support for other causes (e.g., outdoor summer pool and new wood floor in gym)  
Old fashioned town that supports shift to technology  
3 ISPs (a lot for a small town)  
Great music program  
Older population will support youth  
Have \$40,000 in ice rink donations  
Great place to retire  
Douglas is a great place  
Great town because of its great people  
Great senior center  
Could keep young people here with jobs  
Friendly people  
City and county government are doing wonderful job  
School system – outstanding athletics  
Beautiful city with small town flavor  
Everyone knows everyone  
Beautiful city, with river, railroad and airport  
Great town, able to survive booms and busts  
Recreation center is above average  
Wonderful city that is in control  
Marvelous senior center  
Recreation center  
Great school system  
City, police, water dept do the best they can with limited funds  
Churches  
River walk through town  
Churches outnumber the bars

Close to the interstate and rail access  
Hospital facility and its staff  
Good buildings and funding support for public facilities  
City administration does good job  
Excellent police department  
Senior citizen bus available to entire community  
Historical heritage (needs to be more promoted)  
State fair volunteers  
We have a new clothing store  
Hospital and its future expansion – including home cooked meals  
Top nurses and doctors  
City has talent – such as music at High School  
People are fantastic  
Volunteer fire department  
Golf course  
Outdoor swimming pool  
Library is fantastic  
Community college  
Community college  
Lack of smog  
International race way  
International race way  
7 beautiful parks  
Good handicap access in town  
Hospital attracts specialists at their clinics  
Unity of community to pull together and help each other out  
Seniors will support taxes for roads  
Supported swimming pool too  
Area has clean water clean air  
Facilities are in great shape  
School district will pay for facilities  
Local businesses will hire local grads  
Parental support is good in many areas  
Good recreational facilities, even for youth  
Safe community  
Infrastructure will support growth  
Love living here  
Good place to raise kids  
Small town with friendly people  
Low crime  
Great recreational activities and programs for youth  
Schools have more room than needed  
Community is active in speaking up and participating

Teachers are engaged and supportive of youth  
Human resource council  
Healthy youth organizations  
Our recreational opportunities are free  
People are understanding and supportive, when informed  
Senior citizens are well supported as a part of the community  
Infrastructure we have is in good shape  
Low crime  
Low crime  
School has had a great sports program  
Coalmines and railroad are a major strength  
Our quality of life  
Mining and railroad jobs are good jobs  
Good educational system  
Our location (proximity to other cities, outdoor recreational opportunities)  
Low property taxes  
School facilities are paid for and relatively new  
Hospital expansion  
Town looks good from most directions  
Hunting and fishing  
Community support for kids and school system  
Kids are proud of schools' appearance  
Great kids in this community  
Lots of churches, and they work well together  
Active, family oriented community  
Community financial support – pulls together to get things done  
Douglas has embraced technology  
Low key ranching community is behind the community  
Low key ranching community is behind the community  
Low key ranching community is behind the community  
Good job so far on beautification  
State Fair  
Law Enforcement Academy  
Young and middle-aged adults are a very strong force, willing to serve and lead  
Our smallness, recognize value of people  
Excellent mental health services  
Low crime  
Low cost of living  
Good emergency services and hospital  
Influx of new people and new families  
Overall hardiness of Wyoming mentality  
Father Hubbard's Cupboard, Helping Hands, and Good Samaritan Fund  
Dave Anderson (music director at High School)

Jubilee House  
Jubilee House  
Good ecumenical spirit among churches here  
Recreation Center is open consistently, supporting sports and focusing on kids  
State Championships  
Golf Course  
Community supports sports, pulling whole city together  
Community leadership and camaraderie  
City manager and engineer  
People and businesses here participate and are responsive to needs  
Close proximity to public lands and outdoor recreation  
Douglas Ecumenical Ministries  
Baccalaureate Services  
A lot of effort in youth groups at churches  
Strategic location  
Small town atmosphere  
Quality of life  
Work ethic of people (ranch backgrounds)  
Great location  
Community sticks together  
Low crime rate  
Location and quality of life  
Recreational facilities  
State Fair  
Location and size, but still close to Casper  
Low crime rate  
Good core of businesses and services  
A lot of coal out there  
Oil and gas industries directly support companies/suppliers in Douglas  
Oil, gas and mining is asset to community  
Coal industry allows people to stay in Douglas  
Minerals industry would support more taxes on themselves for schools  
Employees don't mind working hard or long hours  
Mining industry might support taxes for scenic bypass on north  
Diversified community (mining, railroads, agriculture)  
Family values in community  
Beautiful  
Responsive  
Community volunteers  
Open space  
Hospital facilities are great and getting better  
Police force does excellent job  
People respond to needs

People are biggest strength

Youth development programs (soccer and other recreation, country club, diversity)

Unique support for agriculture from private lending institutions

On a major interstate

Fiber optics/cable

Decent airport

Good corridors for development

Beautiful climate – it's a nice place

Largest golf tournament in Wyoming (seniors)

State Fair

Agriculture might support taxes for economic development or multipurpose center or to support agriculture marketing (but not recreation?)

Most ranchers understand need for reasonable land use planning

Long term stable agricultural base – don't want government to mess it up

**What projects would you like to see accomplished in your community in the next two, five, ten, or twenty years?**

## **WHAT WE HEARD FROM WHAT WAS SAID**

After listening to citizens of Douglas, the Resource Team reviewed what was said and condensed the comments down to a few basic statements. These are in no particular order.

### **MAJOR CHALLENGES IN DOUGLAS:**

#### **Education**

- Teacher pay
- Teacher recruitment
- Teacher retention
- Teacher rewards
- School board responsiveness
- Funding and prioritization
- Limited curriculum
- Adult job training

#### **Lack of Diversified economy**

- Dependent on mineral & agriculture industries
- Few service providers

#### **Retail**

- Clothing
- Restaurants
- Franchise
- Hours/days of operation
- Customer Services
- Utility companies

#### **Employment**

- Workforce training
- Attraction of good paying jobs
- Low wages

#### **Infrastructure**

- Streets & Sidewalks
- Lack of Business or Industrial Park

- Lack of water & sewer to sites that can be developed

**Community Aesthetics**

- All entryways, especially north
- Richards Street
- Downtown

**Lack of Promotion**

- Signage
- History
- Natural resources
- Best kept secret
- Shops

**Lack of County Zoning**

**State Fair**

- Marketing
- Funding
- Need to expand with education and entertainment opportunities
- Need to keep the fair in Douglas

**Economic Growth is Inhibited**

- Lack of County Land Use Planning or Zoning
- There are some community attitude that resist change and growth

**Housing**

- Lack of developed lots
- No rental properties
- No moderate-income housing

**Lack of City and County Cooperation**

**Youth**

- Substance abuse
- Keeping the kids here
- Trust of kids
- Latchkey-family structure
- Lack of activities, other than sports
- Handicapped and special needs

## **MAJOR STRENGTHS AND ASSETS IN DOUGALS:**

### **Public Facilities**

- River walk
- Hospital
- Senior center
- School facilities
- Recreation Center
- Golf course
- Swimming pool
- Library
- Airport
- Museum
- Law Enforcement Academy
- Raceway
- Eastern Wyoming College
- Water, sewer and landfill capacity

State Fair

### **Friendly, caring people**

- Community members support each other
- Parents support schools and volunteers
- Business community support schools and youth

### **Quality of Life**

- Outdoor recreation
- Natural resources
- Small town atmosphere
- Low crime
- Clean town
- Youth activities

### **Heritage**

#### **City Government**

- Responsive
- Dedicated
- Good communication with public

**Telecommunication - Technology**

- 3 Internet Service Providers
- Fiber Optics

**Accessibility and Location**

- I-25
- Airport
- Proximity to larger towns
- Potential railroad access
- On major route to Yellowstone

**Existing Industry**

**Public Services**

- Police
- Fire
- Ambulance/EMT service
- Healthcare

**MAJOR PROJECTS THAT HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED**

**Capital Projects**

- Ice rink
- Multi-purpose center
- Skateboard Park
- Hospital expansion
- Joint City/County Law Enforcement Facility/Jail
- Joint City/County Administration
- Infrastructure - continue to expand develop & extend new water & sewer lines
- Richards Street (sidewalks and covered ditches)

**Workforce Development**

- Technology Training
- Expansion of college classes (especially trades)
- Recruit trades and skilled professionals
- Support School to career program

**State Fair**

- Enhance entertainment and education opportunities
- Keep fair here

**Economic Development**

- Diversity the economy
- Managed growth
- Expand retail
- Industrial Business Park
- Better paying jobs
- Recruit technology based businesses
- Help existing business grow

**Land Use Planning**

- Develop City-County Dialogue
- Develop realistic, coordinated City/County Plan
- Implement land use regulations and zoning

**Affordable Housing**

**Promotion & Marketing**

- Promote natural resources
- Heritage tourism
- Attract conferences, seminars and new events
- Signage
- Shopping
- State Fair

**Education**

- Improve teacher pay
- School Board-teacher communication with teachers, parents and public
-

## **RECOMMENDATIONS SUBMITTED** **BY RESOURCE TEAM MEMBERS**

The Resource Team has given many suggestions, some which have been repeated by more than one of the team members. We have listed the individual recommendations, along with contact information for the respective team members. You are encouraged to communicate directly with any team member whose recommendation you decide to implement.

### **Steve Achter**

Wyoming Business Council  
214 West 15<sup>th</sup> Street  
Cheyenne, WY 82002  
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### **Education**

- **CHALLENGE:** Many participants expressed concern about the education system and in particular the relationship between the school board and teachers. Challenges such as low teacher pay, teacher recruitment and retention were topics mentioned many times. The school district was referred to as a no apply district for recent graduates from universities in adjacent states. If only half of what was said in fact, there still exist serious problems within the educational system.
- **SOLUTIONS:** Teacher appreciation day, local shops could offer discounts to teachers year around and award points or rewards for shopping locally. The points or rewards could be redeemed for merchandise at local shops and restaurants. The Chamber of Commerce could take the lead and promote the program. This would help the teachers as well as the local merchants.

### **Lack of Diversified Economy**

- **CHALLENGE:** Topics such as lack of an industrial/commercial park, need for expanded retail, need to help existing businesses, need to expand retail, recruit technology based businesses, need better paying jobs, and the need to manage growth were expressed as concerns by participants of the listening sessions. It was stated more than once that Wyoming has an anti-growth attitude and the “good old boy” attitude prevents change.

- **SOLUTIONS:** The Wyoming Business Council has engaged a consulting firm with a national reputation to prepared a targeted industry study which identifies, given the attributes of Wyoming communities, the most appropriate industries to recruit to the state. The analysis is from an objective, external corporate site selector's perspective of Wyoming. Even though the study focuses on business attraction, it is useful for business expansion and retention because it identifies the current business climate under which excising businesses operate. With a better understanding of the existing business climate local economic development professionals will be in a position to implement strategies that will assist existing businesses. The report also contains a guide for communities to follow to prepare themselves to attract the identified industries, as well as understand the critical location factors for each targeted industry. It is recommended Douglas use the report as a starting point as it develops and refines both its recruitment and existing business and retention efforts.

A formal business expansion and retention program is an important component of any local economic development strategy. The city of Powell has successfully conducted such a program. It is unlikely that the community will attract a company that will create a number of jobs in excess of one-hundred. It is likely however, that ten existing companies will create ten new jobs each. An existing business expansion and retention program will help to make this happen. The person to talk to in Powell is Dave Reetz.

Payments of the cost to develop of public improvements for an industrial park may be funded by the Community Development Block Grant Program. The limit is \$150,000 and a company must commit to locate at the park.

- **CONTACT:** A copy of the targeted industry report is attached. Additional information about the targeted industry report and the Community Development Block Grant Program may be obtained by contacting either Steve Achter at 307 777 2811. Dave Reetz may be reached at 307 754 2011.

### Capital Projects

- **CHALLENGE:** A number of capital projects were reported as desired by the community, however, one that was mentioned over and over again was the desire for an indoor ice arena. Others that were mentioned include a multi-purpose center, skateboard park, the hospital expansion, joint city/county law enforcement facility and joint, a joint city/county administration facility, Richard street improvements, and continued expansion of water and sewer lines.
- **SOLUTIONS:** A number of communities around the state are in the process of constructing new indoor ice arenas. Most notably Cheyenne and Cody. The Cheyenne arena is being developed as a private for profit facility and is located on property owned by a major motel. The Cody arena is being developed privately as a not for profit

operation. Given the popularity of ice hockey and other ice skating sports, it may be possible, with adequate investor equity, to build and operate an ice arena on a for profit basis.

- **CONTACT:** The contact for the ice arena in Cheyenne is Mike Rosenthal. His number is 307 634 7723. The Cody contact is Victor or Karen Riley at 307 527 5211. Other possible funding sources for capital projects are: State Loan and Investment Board, Brad Miskimins 307 777 6646, USDA Rural Development, John Cochran 307 261 6319. Also, private foundations may be of help. There is a web site called the Foundation Center, which can act as the launch point for identifying funding possibilities with private foundations. The address is [www.fdncenter.org](http://www.fdncenter.org).

## Land Use Planning

- **CHALLENGE:** Many comments centered around the lack of a coordinated land use plan between the city and the county. In particular, a plan for the area adjacent to the city. To complicate matters, in the mid 90's, the Wyoming Supreme Court determined the then existing county land use controls were in conflict with existing state statutes. As a result the county regulations were invalidated. Since that time the county has backed away from the control of land use. The city of Douglas, due to the fact the county does not control land use adjacent to the city, and for planning purposes, will not extend public water and sewer to land outside city limits. Many of the respondents at the listening sessions indicated they would be in favor of land use controls in the county if they were realistic and reasonable. There was general concern that the lack of land use controls or zoning was inhibiting growth.
- **SOLUTIONS:** The city and the county need to come to the table and discuss these issues. While the assessment team was in town we became aware that the city and county officials were starting to schedule regular meetings with one another. This is a good first step. It is recommended that a joint city/county planning committee be formed consisting of members of both city and county planning commissions. Also, members should be included that are non planning commission members that have not been embroiled on the on going land use controversy. This committee should then take a fresh look at the issues and provide a recommendation to the city and county officials. Technical expertise could be provided by the respective city and county planners.

## Affordable Housing

- **CHALLENGE:** The assessment team heard numerous times about the shortage of affordable housing. Various reasons were offered, such as the cost of development considering the city does not pay for the cost of public improvements in new residential subdivisions. It should be pointed out that this policy is not unusual, and it is typical that developers are responsible for such improvements. Also, home builders focus on high

end homes because the profit margins are much greater for such homes. It may also be the case that home builders are not aware of the demand for affordable housing.

- **SOLUTIONS:** Other communities have faced similar and have used a variety of methods to solve the problem. There are also programs designed to overcome the impediments of high development costs. The Wyoming Community Development Authority (WCDA), which is the housing finance agency for the state, manages the HOME Investment Partnership Program, or HOME for short, which helps pay for development costs if the subsidy is passed on to the homebuyer. The city of Powell prepared a housing demand study and in turn used it to persuade home builders that there was a market for affordable housing. This resulted in new housing construction.
- **CONTACTS:** Cheryl Gillum, housing programs director for the WCDA, may be reached at 307 265 0603. Dave Reetz, President of the Powell Valley Economic Development Alliance, should be contacted to learn how the city of Powell solved many of their affordable housing problems. Dave may be reached at 307 754 2201.

## Promotion and Marketing

- **CHALLENGE:** Many comments centered around Douglas being a well kept secret, and that many attractions exist but are not adequately promoted outside the area. It was stated that there is a lack of signage pointing tourists to the attractions of the area. If tourists just knew of what the area had to offer maybe they would stay an additional night.
- **SOLUTIONS:** The travel and tourism division of the Wyoming Business Council will assist communities with identifying and promoting attractions. Promotion of the community includes promotion of the retail service sector as well, particularly the downtown area. The National Main Street Center offers programs that take a long term perspective towards revitalizing downtowns. This is an excellent resource.
- **CONTACT:** The Wyoming Business Council contact for tourism development is Laurie Green at 307 777 2808. The National Main Street Center may be contacted at 202 588 6219 or [www.mainst.org](http://www.mainst.org).

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My responses will cover those areas which I have some knowledge in mainly Capital Projects.

1. Ice Rink:

My suggestion on the Ice Rink is to combine the Ice Rink and the Multi-Purpose Center into one project. This building should be located close to the Fair Grounds so it can be used at all times.

There are three ways to organize this project for funding

- a. Form a Joint Powers Board between the City of Douglas and Converse County.
- b. Form a Non Profit Organization.
- c. The City of Douglas could apply for loans and grants.

Funding Sources:

1. Rural Development: loan only, Contact RDS Jack Hyde, 208 Shiloh Rd, Worland WY 82401-2914. Email Jack Hyde @ wy.usda.gov
2. Guaranteed loans may be available from your local banks.
3. Any of the three Bond Councils in the state can help set up bond elections and give advice as to the best bonding route to go.

Bond Attorneys are,

Borthwick Law Firm  
1312 Capital Ave, Suite 506  
P.O. Box 1124  
Cheyenne WY 82001  
307-635-2433

Herschler, Freudenthal, Salzburg & Bonds  
314 E. 21<sup>st</sup> St.  
P.O. Box 387  
Cheyenne WY 82003-0387  
307-634-2240

Wiederspahn, Lummis & Liepas, PC  
2020 Carey Ave. Suite 700  
Cheyenne WY 82001  
307-638-6417

2. Multi-Purpose Center

The same sources of funding and the same organizations would apply for the center if separate buildings are what the community decides upon.

3. Hospital Expansion;

It is my understanding this project is funded.

4. Joint City/County Law Enforcement Facility/Jail:

This project could also be funded by forming a Joint Power Board with funding sources being available as follows.

A. Rural Development: Contacts as above

B. Bonding Councils: Contacts as above

C. Federal Mineral Royalty Capital Construction Account

Brad Miskimins

Grant and loan Manager

Herschler Bldg. 3 W

122 W 25<sup>th</sup> St.

Cheyenne, WY 82002

307-777-7309

16. Joint City/ County Administration Building:

My suggestion concerning this building would be to look at the possibility of not combining city/county administration at this time. If the joint city/county law enforcement facility/jail is build will this provide enough space in the existing buildings, with remodeling, to meet both needs at minimal cost. If the decision is to proceed with a new City/ County Administrative Building a Joint Powers Board would be the organization to form. The same funding sources are available.

17. Infrastructure:

The funding for water and sewer systems are normally funded by joint participation with the State of Wyoming and Rural Utilities.

Contact Rural Utilities: John E. Cochran P.O. Box 820, Casper WY 82602.  
Phone Number 307-261-6319 Email John [Cochran@wy.usda.gov](mailto:Cochran@wy.usda.gov)

Contact the State: Wyoming Water Development Commission, Herschler Building,  
4th Floor, West wing, Cheyenne WY 82002, Phone 307-777-7626

18. Richards Street: sidewalks and covered ditches.

The best way to provide sidewalk and covered ditches would be a special improvement District with landowners voting for the improvements.

This could be funded by Rural Development with the use of Bond Councils listed above.  
Rural Development contact would be Jack Hyde.

## WORK FORCE DEVELOPMENT

There are three contacts for this project that may be contacted for funding.

1. Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education act of 1998:

Heather Wagoner

Hathaway Bldg. 2<sup>nd</sup> Fl

2300 Capital Ave.

Cheyenne WY 82002

307-777-5329

Purpose is to develop academic, vocational and technical skills of vocational students.

2. Workforce Development Training Fund

Jan Wilson

P.O. Box 2760

Casper, WY 82602-2760

307-235-3294

Purpose to enhance employment opportunities and help meet training needs of existing and new industries.

3. Adult Education and Literacy

Department of Education

Karen Milmont

Hathaway Building 2<sup>nd</sup> Flr.

2300 Capital Ave.

Cheyenne WY 82002

307-777-3545

Purpose to provide education for undereducated adults(those who have not graduated from high school or received a GED

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### 1. Industrial Business parks;

This is a community facility that Rural Development can make a loan for. We also have a very small grant for this type of Industrial Park.

Another source of funding  
Industrial Road Program  
Office of Local Government Coordination  
P.O. Box 1708  
Cheyenne WY. 82003-1708  
307-777-4384

Another source of funds would be the Economic Development Fund from the Federal Home Loan Bank of Seattle. EDF funds can be used to support community or economic development activities. The Federal Home Loan Bank offers a number of community lending programs to financial institution customers (local Banks) the banks then pass the money to nonprofits or governments. Douglas does not have a bank that is a FHLB Customer at this time. They provide some loans for affordable housing and Community Investment Programs.

The Seattle Banks address is 1501 Fourth Avenue, Suite 1900, Seattle WA 98101- 1693  
General phone number is 1-800-973-6223, Web site [www.fhlbsea.com](http://www.fhlbsea.com)

## LAND USE PLANNING

My only suggestion on land use planning would be that during beginning dialogue to keep personalities and tempers from destroying the meeting is to have an outside facilitator lead the discussions. The Forest Service and the Natural Resources Conservation Service both have facilitators.

## AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Rural Development has both direct loans and guaranteed loan. These loans are for the purchase of existing homes or for the construction of new homes. The loan eligibility is for the very low to moderate incomes. Rural Development address in Douglas is 1954 E. Richards, Suite 9, Douglas WY 82633-3089 Phone Number 307-358-3050 Ext. 4

The Federal Home Loan Bank discussed under Economic Development has some affordable housing programs.

## PROMOTION AND MARKETING

There was talk about promoting the river that runs through town, two programs I came across which might apply.

Habitat Trust Fund Grant (Aquatic)

Mark Fowden  
5400 Bishop Blvd.  
Cheyenne, WY 82006  
307-777-4559

Purpose is to maintain or improve water developments and riparian habitat for the Benefit of aquatic wildlife

Land and Water Conservation Program

Jeff Hauff  
Manager Planning and Grants  
Herschler Bldg. 1E  
122 W. 25<sup>th</sup> St.  
Cheyenne, WY 82002  
307-777-7029

Purpose is to acquire and/or develop/renovate public outdoor recreational lands and facilities.  
50% match required

Habitat Trust Fund Grant (Terrestrial)

Gary Butler  
5400 Bishop Blvd. Cheyenne WY 82006  
307-777-4590

Purpose Maintain or improve water development and riparian habitat. 50% match

If you do not have a Catalog of Wyoming State Grant Programs, the order address is

State of Wyoming  
Department of Administration and information  
State Library Division  
2301 Capital Ave. Cheyenne, WY 82002  
Web site <http://www-wsl.state.wy.us/sis/grants/index.html>>.

**Dennis Engelke**

Texas Electric Cooperatives  
PO Box 9589  
Austin, TX 78766  
(512)454-0311 x 212  
Fax: (512)454-3587  
E-mail: [engelke@texas-ec.org](mailto:engelke@texas-ec.org)

1. Many comments were made about thematic enhancements -- the use of slogans and themes on billboards, printed material or for projects. Douglas has been recognized as “*One of the Best Small Towns in America.*” I have a few suggestions that capture the assets of the area – heritage, community pride, agriculture, etc.

“Douglas – The Real Wyoming”

“*Come to Douglas – For a Day, a Night or a Lifetime.*”

“*Douglas Promotes agriCULTURE*”

“*Platte  
River  
Invites  
Douglas  
Entrepreneurship*”

“*Douglas – One of the Best High-Tech Small Towns in America!*”

2. Diversified agricultural products and services could initiate contemporary alternative uses for small landowners looking to supplement incomes. Often times, part-time farmers have limited expertise in product promotion and marketing, financing options, legal services and technology. An “Agricultural Incubator” may allow part-time farmers, “mom and pop” operations and youthful entrepreneurs to engage in innovative, diversified agricultural production. Incubator participants can pay for shared services – marketing, product design, legal and clerical services, financial resources – that are necessary to product development, but by themselves, they cannot afford to provide.

CONTACT: Carl Foshee, President, Coastal Plains Agri-business Incubator System, c/o Wharton County Electric Cooperative, PO Box 31, El Campo, TX 77437, (979)543-6271, Fax (979)543-6259

3. Create a high school graduate alumni program. Douglas is experiencing the out-migration of its greatest assets – the youths that are reared and educated in the community, but then leave. Youth are attracted by the notion that “things are greener on the outside.” Many times they can not find adequate local employment which would retain them in the close proximity of Douglas. However, youths leave, enter the business world, mature and gain useful life and people skills. Some communities have initiated efforts to locate and stay in touch with graduates. They provide complimentary subscriptions to local newspapers. Alumni are encouraged to return home and expand or start a business. Some communities have had success in business recruitment by this method.

CONTACT: Darren Clark RC&D Coordinator (in regards to Crystal City initiative to attract alumni back home), (915)943-3888, or E-mail: [dclark@tx.nrcs.usda.gov](mailto:dclark@tx.nrcs.usda.gov)

4. Adopt a “Grow Your Own” business mentality. Maximize what limited resources you have into taking care of the existing businesses, provide resources/opportunities for small business entities (mom and pop operations) to grow and expand (business incubator), and consider eco-tourism development because of the natural beauty and historical resources. Photo safaris, birding, hike and bike trails, the State Fair and other events can attract a lot of people to the area.

There may be interest in establishing a technical business center or incubator. Although fiber optics and Internet connectivity are generally available, there was a need identified for someone to repair computers, to provide computer upgrades, and a place for someone to go for Internet services that does not have Internet accessibility in their home or business. Perhaps a 24/7 business -- open 24 hours a day, seven days a week -- would be viable. Internet connectivity in hotel rooms would be an attraction to business travelers and convention attendees.

CONTACTS: Business Incubator program – Quincy Ellis, Early, TX (915)649-9300, Fax (915)643-4647, E-mail: eedc@web-access.net

“Grow Your Own” business development – Denise Coulter, City of Dublin, TX, (254)445-1919; John Studer, City of Seymour, TX, (940)631-3330, Fax (940)888-2258, E-mail: jwstuder@aol.com

5. Celebrate little successes! Douglas residents are thirsting for indications that progress is being made. As the community works on prioritizing goals and projects and as a task is completed, celebrate it! Publicize it! The little successes bind commitment and momentum.

6. Develop and nurture Internet connectivity within schools, businesses, homes and community. Technology removes old impediments of isolation, remoteness and distance. The Internet places most communities on a “level playing field.” The Internet opens Douglas to access to information, entertainment and e-commerce trade.

7. Douglas has a significant pool of young people. Youths indicated their need for more employment opportunities for teens. Youthful entrepreneurs would gain immense business skills with the initiation of the Rural Entrepreneurship through Action Learning (REAL) curriculum in the high school program. Teens learn how to develop business plans, business management practices and are encouraged and assisted in starting a business.

CONTACT: Rick Larson, National REAL Director, 115 Market Street, Suite 320, Durham, NC 27701, (919)688-7325, Fax (919)682-7621.

8. The citizens wanted more variety of retail shopping opportunities, especially clothing stores. Factory Stores will conduct a free economic analysis of your community to help determine the feasibility of establishing an outlet mall in your community.

CONTACT: Carleton Meyers, Factory Outlet Consultants, 9905 Hemlock Woods Lane, Burke, VA 22015-2905, (703)250-5166, Fax (703)239-0288, E-mail: factoutlet@aol.com

9. To help maintain the understanding of the role of agricultural heritage in Douglas, I suggest the school system explore utilizing the Food, Land and People curriculum within the school. FLP is a K-12 agricultural literacy program that teaches ag concepts in math, art, music, history, science, etc. disciplines.

CONTACT: Mr. Chris Williams, National Chairperson, Food, Land and People, PMB 136, 1990 N. Alma School Road, Chandler, AZ 85224-2815, (480)963-7959, E-mail: Cwill1012@aol.com

10. Through the interview process, we discovered that the City of Douglas is named for Stephen Douglas, the recognizable political figure that challenged Abraham Lincoln in several political elections. Douglas, WY was named for Douglas’ influence in bringing the railroad west through

the territory. To capitalize on the political significance of Stephen Douglas, create a Lincoln-Douglas Debate reenactment as a town celebration. This should attract several tourists!

11. The community's need to maintain the Wyoming State Fair in Douglas is paramount! Several suggestions were made to provide year-round, covered facilities on or near the Fair grounds to enhance year-round use and revenue-producing events. The Fair should not forget its traditional agricultural roots; complete with livestock competition and exhibits. However, the Fair might want to consider including non-traditional activities that may be more contemporary and of interest to a larger diverse consumer base. A technology expo (computer symposium or trade show), car or motorcycle races at the nearby Raceway, an antique show, a sporting tournament (golf, tennis, hockey, etc.), a Science or Art Fair (something for youths not interested in sports), host a multi-state livestock producer event, etc.

### **David 'Tex' Taylor**

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### **CHALLENGE: IMPLEMENTATION**

I believe that there are three keys to the successful implementation of the Douglas Community Assessment. They are: 1) follow-up, 2) follow-up, 3) follow-up. The process seems to have created an excitement in the community. It has also probably created some expectations among residents. Douglas needs to capitalize on this momentum by developing and implementing plans of actions for the issues identified in the assessment. As soon as possible after receiving the report the community needs to hold a community meeting to discuss the results among themselves and begin to implement projects to accomplish their goals. Initially, priority should be given to short term projects that have a high probability of success in a rather short time frame. Celebrate these successes. This will provide the incentive for more difficult, longer-term projects. The community might consider two parallel tracks. One track would involve selected short-term projects to hold peoples' interest. A second track would involve planning and organizing for longer-term projects.

#### **Challenge: Economic growth is inhibited**

As note in the community assessment Douglas has a lot of assets going for it, mostly centering on the quality of life found in the community. Despite these assets the community seems to feel that economic growth has been inhibited in recent years, particularly in terms of higher paying jobs. Several possible limiting factors were mentioned during our listening sessions. They include:

- a. Work force may not have the necessary skills not only in terms of high tech employers but also in terms of skilled trade workers such as plumbers and electricians.
- b. Lack of affordable housing, particularly due to the lack of developed lots (water and sewer) within the city limits. This limits the amount of affordable housing in the community.
- c. Lack of retail shopping reduces the desirability in locating in Douglas
- d. Lack of land use planning in the county makes businesses unwilling to invest since they don't know what will happen to adjacent properties.

It is important to note that no one we talked to was in favor of rapid growth in Douglas. What was preferred was moderate manageable growth involving the addition of small businesses to the community.

Suggestion 1: As a first step the community may want to quantify the rate of changes in employment in the area in recent years and the wage levels in those sectors that have been growing. This will help determine whether reality matches perception. Sources of job and income information for Converse County include the Mike Evans at Wyoming Department of Employment (307-473-3807), Buck McVeigh at the Division of Economic Analysis (307-777-7504), Janice Houston at the Wyoming Business Council (307-777-2863) and Tex Taylor (307-766-5682) or Roger Coupal (307-766-5246) at the University of Wyoming Cooperative Extension Service.

Suggestion 2: In terms of work force preparation, the community should consider a program to train workers in high tech skills. Eastern Wyoming College may be able to help in this effort through its Douglas branch campus. This type of training might be at least partially funded by high tech firms interested in locating in Douglas. The community might want to also consider developing contacts with trade schools in the region to assist in recruiting skilled trade workers to the area. The Cooperative Extension Service has resources in work force preparation for youth. Information on these resources could be obtained from Barb Daniels at the Converse County Extension Office (307-358-2417).

Suggestion 3: In terms of affordable housing the community may want to pursue grant and loan funding to extend water and sewer to undeveloped lots within the city. A good contact for assistance on affordable housing would be George Axlund at the Wyoming Community Development Authority (307-265-0603).

Suggestion 4: To improve retail shopping the commercial sector of the community needs to focus on its strengths and weakness relative to competing areas. A Main Street type program might be an appropriate way to quantify what the Douglas commercial sector has, what is missing, and how to fill the gaps. Any sort of Main Street type program should include the entire commercial sector in Douglas not just the downtown merchants. Also due to Douglas's relatively small population base it may be necessary for retail establishments to broaden their market beyond just local residents. For example attracting customers from Casper, interstate travelers on I-25, and through the use of E-commerce. Above all merchants in Douglas should concentrate on their

primary advantage over the competition in other locations, which is service. As a part of this service strategy, the commercial sector should again consider the issue of expanding the hours that stores are open to make it more convenient for customers to shop. This needs to be a coordinated activity among several merchants in order to be effective. Also it may take some time for customers to start taking advantage of the extended hours. A coordinated promotional effort among the cooperating merchants would be helpful. In Wyoming, individuals familiar with the Main Street Program include Dave Reetz at the First National Bank in Powell (307-754-2201) and Edre Maier at the Uptown Sheridan Association (307-672-8881). The Western Rural Development Center at Utah State University is currently developing a program on E-commerce for rural communities (435-797-9732). Barb Daniels at the Converse County Extension Office (307-358-2417) can provide information on Internet training and home-based business development programs.

Suggestion 5: In terms of land use planning, city and county government need to expand the lines of communication regarding land use planning in Converse. Also it might be helpful to present educational programs on the various forms, methods, and implications of land use planning to improve the general public's understanding on the issue. People need to understand what land use planning does and does not mean, what it can and can't do, and the various alternatives that are available. The local planner may be able to develop these programs or Dr. William Gribb who directs the planning program at the University of Wyoming may be able to help (307-766-6253).

#### Challenge: Lack of economic diversity

The community seems to feel that the local economy is too dependent on minerals and agriculture industries. The mining activities in the area involve finite resources that will eventually be depleted. Agriculture is vulnerable to large price fluctuations that make it difficult for producers to stay in business. Several ideas for diversifying were suggested during the listening session including:

- a. Tourism development
- b. Attracting high tech firms
- c. Retention and expansion of existing businesses
- d. Developing value-added opportunities for mining and agriculture

Suggestion 1: Efforts to develop tourism in the Douglas area such be coordinated with the Wyoming Business Council's Division of Tourism (307-777-2800). Tourism development efforts might focus on three areas including: 1) Recreation on public lands, 2) State Fair and other events utilizing the State Fair Grounds, 3) Heritage tourism like the Old Yellowstone Highway.

Suggestion 2: As previously mentioned, having a trained work force is an important aspect of attracting high tech firms. The community also needs to promote and build on its existing Internet access, which is quite good for a community, the size of Douglas. It would also be helpful if the community had a business park for high tech firms to locate in. This park could attract other businesses as well as high tech firms. One limiting factor to the development of a

business park seemed to be lack of sewer and water to areas zoned industrial. The Wyoming Business Council (307-777-2800) may be able to provide assistance in identifying sources of funding for sewer and water development to commercial sites.

Suggestion 3: While many individuals mentioned the need to attract new businesses to diversify the local economy, most people also felt that retention and expansion of existing businesses was important. One way to assist existing businesses is to develop a Business Retention and Expansion Program to work with local firms to help them stay in business and perhaps expand. The Wyoming Business Council (307-777-2800) may be able to provide assistance in developing a Business Retention and Expansion Program in Douglas. Another resource is the Western Rural Development Center at Utah State University (435-797-9732).

Suggestion 4: One way to maintain agricultural production in the area is to improve the marketing of agricultural products produced in the area perhaps through the development of niche markets. These marketing efforts could not only increase profitability but also may stabilize price fluctuations. Frank Henderson at the Converse County Extension Office can provide information on programs regarding agricultural marketing (307-358-2417).

Suggestion 5: Douglas offers an excellent quality of life, good public facilities, and good accessibility. It would seem that given these resources the community might want to expand its marketing efforts as a great place to live. This would be a continuation of the top 100-community designation but would focus on target audiences such as upscale retirees and individuals with outside sources of income who are looking for a good place to live. The Western Rural Development Center at Utah State University may be able to provide assistance in developing this marketing effort (435-797-9732).

### **CHALLENGE: COMMUNICATION**

Many individuals expressed a concern regarding the lack of communication and coordination between County and City government. Also much of the concern with the school system in Douglas seemed to be associated with a lack of communication between the school board and teachers.

Suggestion 1: The County and City governments need to develop better communication. A first step has already been taken in that the City Council and County Commissioners have initiated a periodical breakfast meeting to discuss issues. A next step might be a joint project like a law enforcement center. Eventually the County and City need to coordinate their efforts in terms of land use planning in the county and city, particularly in the rural-urban fringe around Douglas.

Suggestion 2: A great deal of concern was expressed about the school system in Douglas. At one time, Douglas had one of the finest school systems in the nation. Now it is felt by some that the system has slipped somewhat. Much of the concern seems to involve the issue of teacher pay and whether that by itself is the answer to improving quality. Improved communication between the teachers in terms of their concerns about salary levels and the school board in terms of the financial limitation of the district could help provide creative solutions to the concerns.

For both these suggestions the Wyoming Rural Development Council may be able to provide assistance in obtaining outside resource people to facilitate meeting associated with this process.

**Justin Williams**

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[descender99@cs.com](mailto:descender99@cs.com)

The following report will be some ideas and contacts that can be used to help with the concerns that Converse County expressed during the three day assessment. Not all of the people listed as contacts have been contacted about the issues, so it is important to explain what project you want to work on and who you are working with. All of them should be great contacts and can help you in any way possible.

Challenge: Many people of the community expressed concerns in regards to the retail businesses in Converse County. There were many aspects of retail such as lack of clothing stores, restaurants, customer service, and hours of operation. I see how hard it must be for businesses to compete with larger city shopping such as Casper, Cheyenne, or Colorado, but the key to the retail problem is to have stores that either support the community activities or are different than larger city stores.

Problem Solution: *“Create a store or two that would support the community activities.”* These stores would be geared towards the hockey clubs, soccer, rodeo, or other. The stores would sell equipment that youth or other groups would need to participate in their activity. The key again is to find goods and services that are needed and can be bought at a fair price and competitive with the larger towns’ stores. In addition to the stores being created, would be the hours of operation. The downtown merchants must be willing to stay open longer hours on certain days, or open later in the morning and stay open later in the evening to accommodate the rest of the people who work. It would be difficult to shop in stores that close at 5 p.m. when you work until 5 p.m.. I have heard there may be an interest in creating a downtown merchants business association in Converse County. I think this is a great idea and would help everyone in the long run. However, it is important that you get this organized quickly and efficiently. You should make meetings on a regular basis, and keep to a schedule so there is no ambiguity as to if there will be a meeting or not. For example, set every third Thursday of every month for this meeting. Stick to this type of schedule, so that the merchants can mark it on there calendar. Make sure that there are roles set out at the beginning, say President, Vice President, etc. This will eliminate the crossing of roles and meetings will be much more organized and efficient. Finally, if clothes shopping is an interest in Converse County, and people were willing to shop in the county, you must bring in stores that people from other towns would want to shop at. One way of doing this could be through an outlet mall. I know too many people who complain about the stores in Casper, so this would be an ideal time to bring in stores that are unique to the surrounding communities. An outlet mall would be an ideal opportunity in Converse County with the access to larger towns and the interstate. If you brought in an outlet mall, you would

want to bring in stores like Calvin Klein, Abercrombie and Fitch, MiKasa, London Fog, etc. Non of these stores can be found in Casper or Cheyenne. Stores to avoid would be Sears, JCPenney, or Target. You can order from catalogues or drive 45 minutes to those stores. The clothes should be modern and unique to bring in youth and adults. The mall doesn't have to be huge like Loveland, but make it concise in which type of stores to have.

Resources: The first is in regards to store hours and forming a Retail Merchants Association. This is already in place in Casper, and could help you with this aspect.

Casper Area Chamber of Commerce

Todd Ennenga

500 N. Center

Casper, WY 82601

307-234-5311

The second is in regard to the outlet mall. I was unable to find a contact for the mall itself, but have contacted by e-mail the mayor of Loveland, Colorado. She would be able to find the people in charge of the outlet mall and how you would go about doing it.

Kathleen R. Gilliland

506 E 1<sup>st</sup> St.

Loveland, CO 80537

970-679-2908

[dkgilliland@aol.com](mailto:dkgilliland@aol.com)

Challenge: A concern for many residents and business owners was the lack of a quality labor pool, attraction of good paying jobs, teacher recruitment, low wages, etc. Your county has a problem getting people to come in from outside of the community to work. There are jobs and businesses that can support these people. In addition, many people voiced their opinions of keeping Wyoming youth in the state after graduation. There are many graduates who grew up in small Wyoming towns that like the atmosphere of a small community, but may not be looking in these communities for jobs, because there is not enough jobs being advertised. Places like Denver do a lot of recruitment for their employees, because they have to. The times have changed from the graduates having to look for the jobs to businesses looking for the graduates.

Problem Solution: Get together as a community business association and attend career fairs. There are career fairs held at all Junior colleges and universities. There are many career fairs held throughout the year for different fields, but businesses could come to a general fair and promote all the different types of jobs that are currently open, and ones that will be open. If you assigned two or three people to attend the career fairs, they could represent the community as a whole. The businesses like the hospital, schools, banks, accounting offices, etc. can have applications and business cards ready to be handed out. You will want to promote the small town community of Douglas when talking to the graduates. Avoid promoting jobs that may not require a degree. Students went through years of hard work to find professional positions. Save some of the other positions for high school students or adults who are already in the community or surrounding areas. Create a career fair at the local high school. Bring in other Wyoming businesses to promote the need for responsible teens who have work ethic. I heard so many people complain about the lack of responsibility by teens. The teens need to be taught this, it is

not just self-taught. When you promote the need for certain behavior, such as showing up on time, working hard, and creating a resume for future employment, you show the teens that you can not make it in this world without these attributes. A high school career fair would be ideal for the retail merchants of Converse County.

Resources: The following contact is from Glenrock and has been very positive about getting Converse County involved.

Casper College Career Service Center  
Dale Williams  
125 College Dr.  
Casper, WY 82601  
307-268-2392  
[dwilliam@admin.cc.whecn.edu](mailto:dwilliam@admin.cc.whecn.edu)

University of Wyoming Career Service Center  
Jo Chytka  
P.O. Box 3195, Rm. 228 Knight Hall  
Laramie, WY 82072  
[jchytka@uwyo.edu](mailto:jchytka@uwyo.edu)

Challenges: There are many capital projects that have been mentioned by the residents of Converse County. I am not familiar with the process of funds, but it seems the community has enough drive to get private funding for some projects. Three of the projects I will address were mentioned numerous times. They are: ice rink, multi-purpose center, skateboard park. The youth of Converse County play an important role in the community, and extra curricular activities would be helpful in keeping the youth on track and out of trouble. If they have too much free time, they will look for things to do, many of which are not approved by the teachers or parents. If they have a place to go and hang out, or participate, they may not be as anxious to be in trouble. The above mentioned projects could help eliminate this.

Problem Solutions: Create a place for the youth to be active. If the projects are to be accomplished, there needs to be teams set up. The roles taken on by adults and youth will again help keep things on track. Find people who have a true desire in having the projects become a reality and who have time to spare. It is important to make youth a part of the projects. After all it is their project for the most part. If the parents do all the work, it may not be as productive. Have the youth do fundraisers themselves. They can be creative and help with the funding issues that will plague the productivity of the projects' completions.

Resources: The skateboard park is near completion in Casper, and will be done by July. Those who are interested in this project should visit the park before progressing. The park is located near the YMCA, and once completed will be turned over to them.

Mountain Sports  
Bruce Lamberson, Project Supervisor  
543 S. Center  
Casper, WY 82601  
307-266-1136

The ice-rink in Casper is closed until late July, but may be contacted by machine until then. The ice rink used to be on the fairgrounds in the sheep barn until around 1987, and they may be able

to give you some new ideas on the process of creating a new rink, or making an old building into an ice rink. This could eliminate some of the costs that are not needed early on. In addition, it was expressed to me that there are time shortages for practice, and if Douglas did get a rink, it would be very likely that they could lease the ice out to Casper players.

Casper Rec Center/Ice Arena  
1801 E. 4<sup>th</sup> St.  
Casper, WY 82601  
307-235-8484

The multi-purpose center should be completed by the end of June. It is located on the fairgrounds in Casper, and has been created from a one cent sales tax.

Central Wyoming Fair  
Tom Jones, Manager  
Fairgrounds Rd.  
Casper, WY 82604  
307-234-1864 or 235-5775

Challenge: Marketing State Fair, tourism, and general ideas from Converse County seemed to be brought up a number of times. Marketing often involves many minds to brainstorm to trigger new ideas. It may be hard for small offices to think of new and creative ideas for Converse County, but with some help and a new line of thinking, Converse County could be a destination. Converse County has a lot of activities to offer a tourist, and one form of marketing I had seen while in Douglas, at the La Bonte Café, was a map of historical sights. I think the idea is great, but it should be used throughout town, especially at a place where tourists often eat, not just locals. This would be restaurants and hotels near the interstate, such as Village Inn, Best Western, etc.

Problem Solution: I worked with a marketing consulting company in Casper, titled Business Resource Group. They offer free first time consultation and could be a key player in marketing Douglas. They have years of experience and would help facilitate the county in the right direction. During my meeting with them, we came up with some new ideas to promote Converse County. State Fair seems to be a major topic in the county, and we were able to generate some ideas that may and may not work. First of all, it is important to use the facilities throughout the year, and not concentrate on the rodeo or fair during the rest of the time. In a general list I will give some of the ideas for State Fair:

- Concentrate on using the dorms for youth, such as church retreats
- Rent out the stalls to private people, as well as the use of the arena
- Promote a “Boys and Girls” club type activities in the larger buildings. Activities could include after school projects, such as Art, sports like Karate, Gymnastics, indoor hockey etc. and use a school bus to pick kids up after school and bring them to the State Fair.
- Additionally, possibly make one of the indoor buildings into a practice hockey rink. The building may not be big enough for a full rink or games, but it could be a half rink size, where the kids could practice some things, eliminating the need to drive all the way to Gillette. Since the buildings are similar to the old sheep barn/ice rink in Casper, I know this would work.
- Hold Flea Markets, Craft Fairs, or “Car Wars” on fairgrounds.

- Have Master Gardner's Plant Sales and Farmer's Markets out on State Fair property.
- Find concerts that would draw people from Casper and Cheyenne. People drove from all over the state to the Garth Brooks concert, and there is no reason people wouldn't drive 45 minutes for someone popular; rock or country.
- Advertise the buildings for other types of activities either on the internet, through a paper, or other.

Tourism is a key to the county's success. There are a lot of unique historical and natural resources that can be used to make Converse County a destination. Again, in bullet form, I will list off some ideas:

- Create Visitor pull off areas near both entrances to Douglas, as well as Glenrock which will have boards promoting all the activities to do in the area. Maps of the areas could also be in brochure form and in a box to be given out. If finances were an issue, you could possibly put the maps in a newspaper vending machine and charge a fee for the maps.
- One of the maps could be the historical sites in the areas, one could be the outdoor activities such as mountain biking trails, bird watching, snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, Platte River trips, wildflowers, hiking, etc. On the back of these maps, the Tourism Board of Converse County could sell advertisements to the businesses that relate to the activity, such as a mountain bike store, wild bird marketplace, Mater Gardner's plant sales, hotels, restaurants, etc.
- Have the dragstrip do snowmobiling races during the winter. If needed, they may have to haul in snow for the weekends.
- Do a "One Shot Deer or Antelope Hunt" as does Rawlins, which would also promote the ranchers who participate, and the outfitters in the area.
- In general, get the community together as a group and promote activities together to eliminate overlapping, in turn reducing the costs of marketing.

Resources: For general marketing ideas or help facilitating call the following, which can be charged by the hour, per job, etc.

Business Resource Group, LLC  
 Mary Louise Zander or Thomas A. Zimmerman  
 110 West Second St. Suite 280  
 Casper, WY 82601  
 307-473-2703 or fax 307-265-4437  
[mlz3565@aol.com](mailto:mlz3565@aol.com)

For help with marketing the outdoor activities such as birdwatching:

Wyoming Audubon Society  
 Vicki Spencer  
 101 Garden Creek Rd.  
 Casper, WY 82601  
 307-235-3485

**Bernie Bornong**

1969 S. Sheridan Ave. (Before June 26)  
2013 East Side Second Street (after June 26)  
Sheridan, WY 82801  
307-672-0751  
Fax: 307-674-2668  
Email: bbornong@fs.fed.us

Hold a meeting immediately after you receive this report. Make an implementation plan that schedules potential projects over the next several years, and assign group chairman and committee members. Choose some relatively simple projects first, in order to achieve some concrete successes. Make community members aware of successes – publicize completed projects, and make people aware of the status of on-going projects. *This assessment created some momentum in Douglas, and use every opportunity to keep that momentum alive!*

- a. Some short term projects that can sustain your initial momentum:
  1. Begin a “Plant-a-tree” program. Some people mentioned community beautification as a project, and numerous people told us that they were proud of the way Douglas looked. This could be as simple as picking a day or two each spring to plant trees around the community. See the Tree City USA discussion below for grants through Mark Hughes, Wyoming State Forester’s Office, 307-777-7586.
  2. We had a very interesting listening session with the senior group, and I believe they are a great resource for the community, with many assets and abilities to share. On the other hand, one of the youngest attendees of the listening sessions listed “art” as a potential project, and many people mentioned that there was at least the perception that “there was nothing for kids to do.” One way to capitalize on the assets of the seniors and provide activities for kids might be to have the seniors sponsor art classes, or similar, for the kids and young adults. Some strategizing should go into the location for these classes, perhaps they could be at the schools immediately after classes end.
- c. A project that will help maintain the quality of life and would meet some of the needs expressed in the clean up and beautification ideas would be for Douglas to become a Tree City USA through the National Arbor Day Foundation. Their website is at [www.arborday.org](http://www.arborday.org), or they can be reached by phone at 402-474-5655. I understand that Douglas, through Bobbe Fitzhugh, has already started the process to become a Tree City USA.

There are grants available for community forestry programs. Mark Hughes, of the Wyoming State Forestry Department, has helped other communities develop the Tree City USA program, and has information on grant opportunities. He can be reached at 307-777-7585.

I spoke with Mark, and he encouraged Douglas to continue this effort toward the Tree City USA designation. He said that the community may wish to consider developing a citizen tree board as an alternative to developing a community Forestry Department. He also said that while grants are available for tree planting programs, people should be aware that grants are also available for forestry education. Some examples of education projects might include tree inventories or developing a brochure that would list trees to plant in Douglas. Mark said that grant applications are typically sent to mayors in November, and applications are due around February 1.

- d. Develop a community leadership development program. This could satisfy two needs we heard about “the same people seem to do everything”, and, if developed or sponsored jointly by the city and county, can improve the city/county relations. A leadership development program I am aware of, and attended, is the Leadership Sheridan program. It could be used as a model, or at least as an example that might be tailored to fit Douglas’ needs. The program includes about 6 Saturdays, typically during the later winter/early spring months. Topics include an introduction to local and county government; the local court system; a day on local history and the quality of life factors that make the community what it is; an introduction to boardsmanship and what boards/committees are active in the community; the economy of the community; and, leadership and communications skills. The specific objective is to energize and train community leaders, for either formal boards or group leadership roles, or, at least for informal community leadership and support roles. Barb Daugherty coordinates the Leadership Sheridan program, 307-672-2485. She can answer questions concerning publicity, recruitment, and initial organization.
  
- e. One of the consistent themes we heard from a broad cross-section of residents was the need for some type of county zoning and county land use planning. This is a very difficult issue for communities in the rural west, which face the dilemma of providing for an accepted level of growth and maintaining the qualities of the community, versus the heritage of our western culture which values individual freedom of choice. We learned that Converse county had a land use plan that was overturned in the courts since there was no zoning to go along with it, so there is some relatively recent history on this topic.

Some of the comments we heard included:

- ε. “Develop zoning in some areas (but not strict zoning)”
- ε. “Zoning needs to be geared to people and what we need”
- ε. “Need reasonable zoning, tailored to what people need”

I believe, based upon what the citizens of Douglas told us, that the issue of county zoning and land use planning is ripe, although it will by no means be an easy task. However, I think that by using a two-pronged approach, it can be achieved.

The first item is to continue the city-county relationship building that we saw evidenced during our resource team visit in the “breakfast meeting”. Perhaps some of the other potential projects community members expressed, such as working jointly to keep the state fair in Douglas, or the building of a community center/ice rink/multi-purpose building, could be used to further this relationship.

The second item to consider is to get community acceptance from the initial stages of any proposed zoning plan. This is the type of issue that will not succeed without support from the people. I suggest that the county and city jointly sponsor a consensus building process, that would answer the question of whether or not the community is indeed ready for some type of zoning. Some steps and resources to consider:

a. I learned from Shad Springer, Sheridan County Planner, 307-674-2920, that it would be helpful to have the city attorney review the statutes for all the processes that must be followed in considering zoning. He also said, if the city of Douglas already hasn't done this, that incorporated municipal entities may have the authority under Wyoming statutes to develop an ordinance that could extend for up to one mile beyond the city limits where the city and county would jointly approve certain types of land use decisions. He said that topic needed further checking with the city attorney, as he had not read that particular passage in a while. This may be an option, if already not in place, to handle the area nearest to Douglas, which we understood to be the highest priority area for potential zoning.

b. If a decision is made to consider county zoning, hire a facilitator trained and experienced in the consensus building process. Andrea Brandenburg, a private consultant from Lander, was previously employed by the Montana Consensus Council, and has education and experience in rural community sociology. Her phone number is 307-335-7485. She said she recently attended a seminar where people use maps to express their ideas about land uses – this could be applicable in having citizens point out what types of areas and uses most need zoning. Other consensus building resources can be found through the University of Wyoming's Institute for Environment and Natural Resources (IENR). Their website is at <http://www.uwyo.edu/ENR/IENR.HTM>, and their phone number is 307-766-5099. Their website has a "community toolbox" that lists:

1. IENR faculty expertise available to communities;
2. Community Resources, organizations that provide assistance to communities, including grants;
3. Alternative Dispute Resolution Facilitators available to travel in southeast Wyoming, contact Karen Larsen, at 307-324-6774 for more information;
4. Selected References on Collaborative Decision Making.

c. The major question to answer through the consensus building process is what level of zoning is the community ready for? Most of the need we heard voiced was the need for county zoning in the immediate vicinity of the Douglas city limits; perhaps the zoning should be more restrictive near the city.

d. I spoke with Bruce Yates, Sheridan County Grantsman, 307-674-2915, concerning funding sources for a conducting a consensus building process. He directed me to two websites that he utilizes:

1. The Foundation Center website, <http://fdncenter.org/index.html>, provides a database of 10,000 of the largest US foundations to generate targeted prospect lists. There is a \$20 per month or \$195 fee to utilize this service.

2. At the website <http://aspe.os.dhhs.gov/> (a Department of Health and Human Services website) there is a Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Programs, a government-wide compendium of the Federal programs, projects, services and activities that provide assistance or benefits to American public. Once you are at that website, click on the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance, under the Frequently Used heading.

e. The cost of hiring a facilitator for a consensus building process might qualify for the Forest Service's Rural Community Assistance Program. Mike Sanders, 307-745-2337, currently oversees this program on the Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests. I understand the process is already complete for this year, but grant applications are typically processed each spring.

**Deborah Hinckley**

U S WEST

Local Markets Manager

6101 Yellowstone, Suite 300

Cheyenne, WY 82003

307-771-6958

307-771-7603 (fax)

E-mail: [dhinckl@uswest.com](mailto:dhinckl@uswest.com)

Community Aesthetics

- Consider participating in the National Trust for Historic Preservation Main Street Program to assist in preserving the historic downtown area. This program will revitalize the downtown area, assist existing businesses in improving store fronts and assist in attracting new businesses. Powell participated in this program and it was very successful.

Contact: National Trust for Historic Preservation

Main Street Program

1785 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.

Washington, DC 20036

Phone - (202) 588-6219

Website: [www.nationaltrust.org](http://www.nationaltrust.org) or specifically [www.mainst.org](http://www.mainst.org)

(be sure to look into their Small Town Main Street Program)

Email Dave Reetz in Powell for questions on their success:

[powell@wir.net](mailto:powell@wir.net)

- Consider a "Clean-Up" Project on Richards Street. Apply for a Community Development Block Grant through the Wyoming Business Council for a "Welcome to Douglas" sign and other projects along this entryway and down Richards street. Perhaps some landscaping along this road, benches, etc. Involve high school students in this project and involve businesses located on Richards. The Greater Cheyenne Chamber of Commerce worked to get the welcome sign for Cheyenne that is located on I-25 and has offered to answer any questions if needed.

Contact: Website: <http://wyomingtourism.org/wbc/>  
(Click on “Investment Ready Communities”)  
Steve Achter (307) 777-2811  
Greater Cheyenne Chamber Contact: Larry Atwell 307-778-1406

### Promotion and Marketing

- Businesses that are trying to sell their “Wyoming made” goods and services outside of Douglas should consider advertising through a new web-based business, Made in Wyoming.com. As you will see from their website, businesses can link their Wyoming made products to this site for free or have the option to pay a fee for more advertising exposure. This new business is based in Thermopolis and is already receiving tons of website hits each day.  
Contact: [www.madeinwyoming.com](http://www.madeinwyoming.com).
- Advertise Jackalope Days and the Wyoming State Fair and other activities through the following:
  - The new Wyoming Arts Council Events Calendar to reach other communities in Wyoming and out of state travelers.  
Contact: Mike Shay, Wyoming Arts Council (307) 777-5234.
  - The State of Wyoming Home Page  
Contact: [www.state.wy.us](http://www.state.wy.us)

### Education and Youth Involvement

- Take advantage of the new High School Principal and the new Superintendent’s arrival. Organize a meeting between active parents and teachers to discuss ideas, expectations and goals for the School District.
- Consider selecting (or allowing the students to select) a Junior representative to serve on a few community boards. (CANDO, Chamber, etc.). This representative should have a teacher sponsor who can support them and assist them in reporting their board activities back to the students through a school newsletter or through school civic clubs. This youth representative should also speak on behalf of the students and should work to link school/community activities and goals together.
- Integration of Agriculture in Education. Farmers and ranchers mentioned their concerns for educating students about the importance of agriculture. The community of Douglas is appreciative of their Ag-based heritage and should continue working to support this critical industry. To reach out to students that are not currently involved in Ag classes, consider getting involved in the USDA “Ag in the Classroom” activities.  
Contact: [www.agclassroom.org/](http://www.agclassroom.org/) (check out the featured state for ideas)  
Wyoming Contact - Shannon Andreen-Shipp  
WY Ag in the Classroom  
2219 Carey Avenue  
Cheyenne, WY 82002  
P: (307) 777-6618  
E: [wyaic@state.wy.us](mailto:wyaic@state.wy.us)  
website:[www.wyoagcenter.com/waic/classroom.html](http://www.wyoagcenter.com/waic/classroom.html)

(to see what others are doing in Wyoming and to see about class field trips)

## Capital Projects

- Focus on one major project that the entire community can support. Recommendation: indoor, multi-purpose center with Ice/Hockey Rink. This facility can also be used for concerts, conferences, and sports activities.
  - Potential funding sources:
    - The Kresge Foundation. While many private foundations do not fund capital projects, 80% of Kresge's foundation dollars support capital projects. Be sure to check out the "Bricks and Mortar Program."  
Contact: [www.kresge.org](http://www.kresge.org)
    - Rural Development USDA  
Contact: Lonnie Allred (307) 856-5383

## Workforce Development

- Promote the Wyoming Rural Development Council's upcoming Internet Masters Training Program that is scheduled for Douglas in September. Put up flyers to be sure and include students, senior citizens and all groups within Douglas.  
Contact: Mary Randolph  
(307) 777-6430  
[mrando@missc.state.wy.us](mailto:mrando@missc.state.wy.us)
- Continue Technology Training – use those trained in the Internet Masters Program to set up a permanent technology training class in Douglas. Extending the training to other residents and students will help solidify Douglas as a "high-tech" town with a knowledgeable, trained employee base and could lead to employment opportunities for high school graduates. This, along with the fiberoptic connectivity, will help attract high tech businesses. Consider applying for grant dollars through any/all of the following:  
U S WEST – (if interested, call first to discuss project ideas and concepts)  
Contact: Deborah Hinckley  
(307) 771-6958 or visit the U S WEST foundation website  
[www.uswf.org](http://www.uswf.org)  
The Kellogg Foundation for matching grants  
Contact: [www.wkkf.org/ProgrammingInterests/Guidelines.htm](http://www.wkkf.org/ProgrammingInterests/Guidelines.htm)  
Technology Opportunities Program  
Contact: [www.ntia.doc.gov/otiahome/top/grants/grants.htm](http://www.ntia.doc.gov/otiahome/top/grants/grants.htm)

## Economic Development

- Help existing businesses grow – Encourage small businesses who are looking for expansion opportunities to apply for U S WEST's Small Business "New Ventures" Grants. Ten winners will be selected from the U S WEST region and each will receive a \$10,000 grant.  
Contact: [www.uswest.com/smallbusiness/grow/](http://www.uswest.com/smallbusiness/grow/)  
(for grant guidelines & deadlines)
- Expand Chamber website ([www.jackalope.org](http://www.jackalope.org)) to include a business relocation section. Perhaps highlight that Douglas is connected via fiberoptics and highlight the opportunities for re-locating a home office or small business. Also list CANDO contact and phone number.

- Involve community members in economic development by increasing the number of qualified and experienced grant writers in Douglas. Ask Douglas businesses or organizations to sponsor these individuals by paying for their training. In return, these trained grant writers give back to the community by researching and applying for funding for community projects. The following resources might assist in engaging more participation in this:

Grant writing training – U S WEST will be sponsoring the registration fee for several people to attend the Bi-Annual Resource, Conservation & Development grant writing workshop. This workshop is for one week in November 2000 in Jackson and is considered to be one of the best grant writing schools in the region. U S WEST will cover the registration fee and will begin accepting applications mid June.

Contact: Deborah Hinckley  
(307) 771-6958

Consider sending a Douglas representative to the Wyoming Community Foundation “Wyoming Philanthropy Days” conference. June 15-16, Sheridan Wyoming. \$40 per person. Attendees will meet representatives from numerous private foundations and will gain an understanding of how philanthropy can make a community stronger.

Contact: Wyoming Community Foundation  
(307) 721-8300

- Funding resources for economic development projects:
- U S WEST Foundation: (Deadline is August 15, 2000)  
Contact: [www.uswf.org](http://www.uswf.org)  
Or call Darlene Gallegos or Deborah Hinckley (307)771-6208
- AOL Rural Telecommunications Awards through the National Center for Small Communities (Be sure to check out last years winner to understand the criteria. However, NCSC is a good organization to get involved with regardless of your grant application.)  
Contact: [www.natat.org](http://www.natat.org)
- Wyoming Community Network – will be up and running in a few months. Grants will be considered for those communities who utilize the Network and have funding goals and needs.  
Contact: email Roger Coupal at: [coupal@uwyo.edu](mailto:coupal@uwyo.edu) for immediate questions or once the Network is running and more grant information is available, the WCN Executive Director will be in touch with CANDO.
- The Foundation Center: Consider subscribing to the Foundation Directory Online for \$19.95 per month. This will give you access and application information to over 10,000 of the largest U.S. foundations.  
Contact: [www.fdncenter.org](http://www.fdncenter.org)

Lack of Moderately Priced Housing

- Work with Wyoming Community Development Authority and consider participating in their WCDA Outreach Program. They can assist Converse County on ways to address housing needs.  
Contact: Cheryl Gillum (307) 265-0603.

#### City and County Partnership

- Continue the City Council and County Commissioners monthly breakfast. Set goals for joint accomplishments and get the word out through newsletters (CANDO, Chamber, Newspaper) of the goals so the public knows the two are working together.