



Downtown Plan  
**Rawlins**  
WYOMING  
September 21, 2010





Above: Antolik Mural painted by Jerry Antolik in 1987

Cover: Peggy Colson left portion

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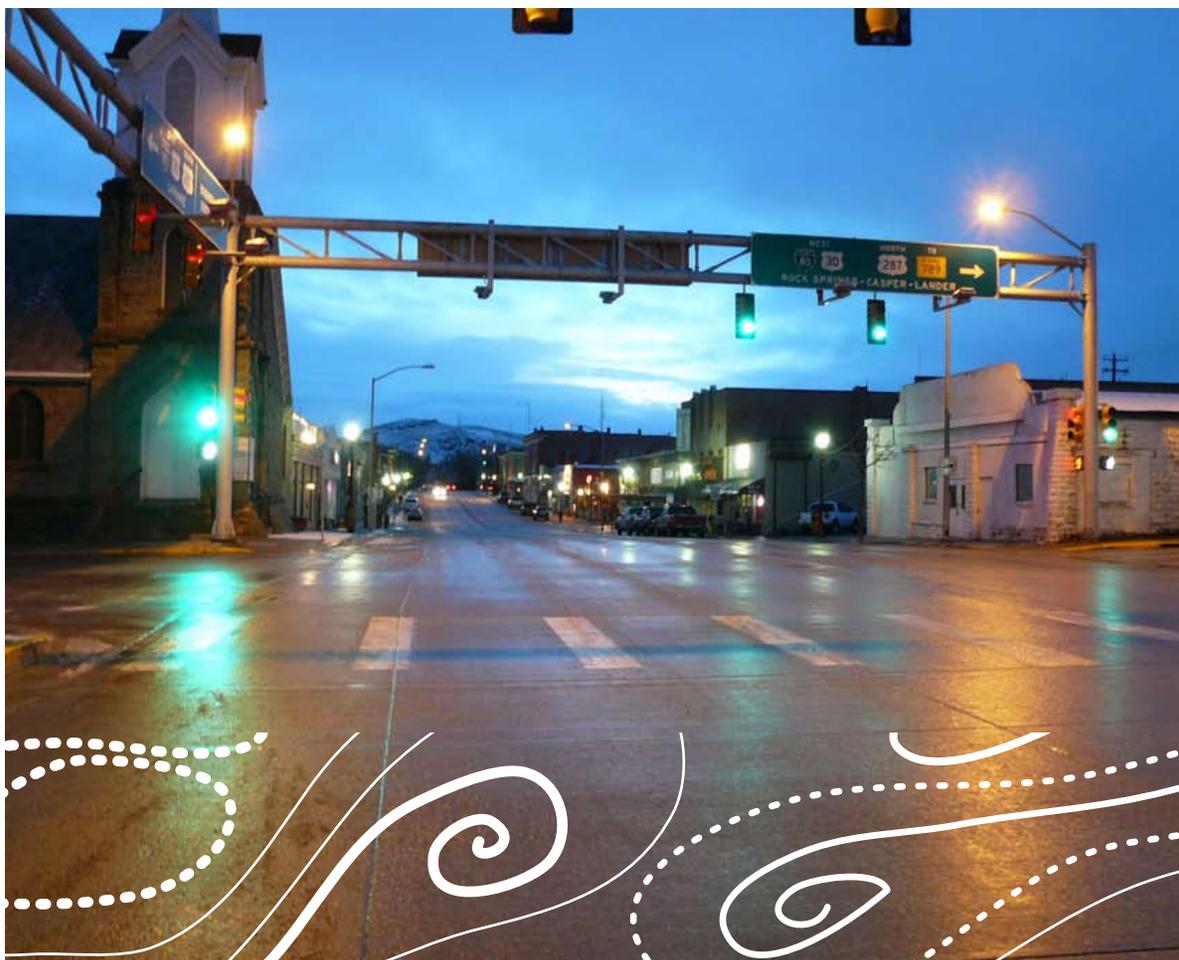
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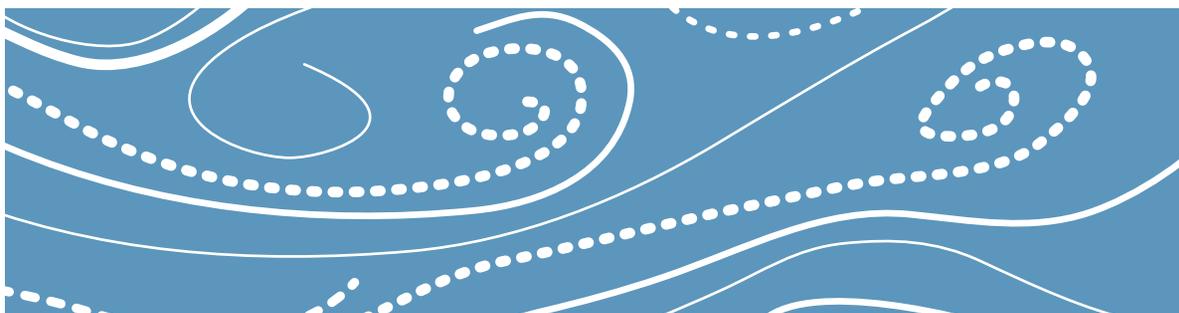
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Rawlins Market Analysis

A sound downtown development program must be based on market potential. This chapter reviews important demographic and market characteristics that guide planning for the future of the district. This market analysis quantifies future development markets for the City and considers downtown's share of that demand.



## TRADE AREA DEFINITION

Rawlins is known as a quality community with a historic downtown, located midway between Laramie and Rock Springs. Historically the community has held great potential as a regional market because of its proximity to the Union Pacific Railroad and Interstate 80.

The trade areas represent the basis for calculating commercial demand for goods and services in the city. Map 1.1 illustrates the geographic trade areas of Rawlins.

- **PRIMARY.** The primary market area is comprised of the corporate limits of Rawlins. Both residents and individuals in the surrounding area rely on Rawlins for their daily shopping needs, and view the city as a place where the need for goods and services can be met.
- **SECONDARY.** The secondary market is the area within 65 mile radius of Rawlins where daily needs may be met, however, people within this market may travel to Rawlins for special events, tourism or destination business. People in this area may travel to competing communities for goods and services.
- **TERTIARY.** The tertiary market is more broadly defined and includes people who visit Rawlins for tourism. Visitors may be visiting the Frontier Prison, historic downtown, or just passing through on Interstate 80.

Map 1.1: Market Trade Areas



## DEMOGRAPHICS

### Population Change

Table 1.1 displays historical population growth since 1940. Rawlins has experienced periods of significant growth that have been punctuated by periods of significant decline. The most recent boom and bust cycle occurred between 1970 and 1990, when mining and mineral extraction industries started to develop. Between 1970 and 1980 Rawlins' population increased from 7,855 to 11,547, representing an annual growth rate of 3.4%. This trend reversed over the course of the 1980s, as the mining and mineral extraction industry was affected by a national recession. The 2009 population estimates, prepared by RDG Planning & Design, projects Rawlins at 8,951, representing 0.55% annual

growth rate or an increase of 4.7% from 2000. These figures can be confirmed after the decennial census is published by the U.S. Census Bureau.

Table 1.2 compares Rawlins with regional communities as well as Carbon County outside of Rawlins. Rawlins' population declined 10% during the 1990s, decreasing from 9,380 to 8,538. This has led to a decline in the economic base for the city and conversely the downtown. The majority of surrounding communities within Carbon County and neighboring Sweetwater County have experienced similar declines, particularly Green River and Saratoga.

Table 1.3 presents the population of Rawlins by age cohort (5-year increments) and predicts the 2000 population by using a cohort survival forecast method, which



Historic Downtown painted by Peggy Colson

Table 1.1: Historical Population Change, Rawlins

Year	Population	Decennial Change	Decennial % Change	Annual Rate of Change
1940	5,531			
1950	7,415	1,884	34.1%	3.4%
1960	8,968	1,553	20.9%	2.1%
1970	7,855	-1,113	-12.4%	-1.2%
1980	11,547	3,692	47.0%	4.7%
1990	9,380	-2,167	-18.8%	-1.9%
2000	8,538	-842	-9.0%	-0.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

“ages” a five-year age range of people by computing how many of them will survive into the next five-year period. Cohort survival rates used were developed by the National Center for Health Statistics (1992), while the U.S. Bureau of the Census developed projected birth rates for the population.

The results suggest that during the 1990s, Rawlins experienced an out-migration of 9.0%. Most age groups experienced an out-migration with exception to children under the age of 10, and adults aged 30-34 years. Individuals in this cohort are considered to be among those in their primary child bearing years, thus accounting for an increase in childhood cohorts. The most notable out-migration has occurred with those aged 45 and older. Reasoning as to why there is a decline in these cohorts is speculative; however, the cause may be related to changes in employment, retirement, or a lack of service or community amenities.

Table 1.2: Population Change, Comparable Communities 1990-2006 based on 2000 Census and 2009 State Estimates

	1990 Population	2000 Population	Change	% Change	2009 est. Population <sup>1</sup>	2000-2009 Change	2000-2009 %Change
Rawlins	9,380	8,538	-842	-9.0%	8,951	413	4.8%
Green River	12,711	11,808	-903	-7.1%	12,580	772	6.5%
Lander	7,069	6,867	-202	-2.9%	7,181	314	4.6%
Laramie	26,768	27,191	423	1.6%	27,303	112	0.4%
Riverton	9,263	9,258	-5	-0.1%	10,009	751	8.1%
Rock Springs	19,198	18,654	-544	-2.8%	20,487	1,833	9.8%
Saratoga	1,973	1,726	-247	-12.5%	1,790	64	3.7%
Carbon County <sup>1</sup>	16,659	15,639	-1,020	-6.1%	15,960	321	2.1%
Carbon Co. (w/o Rawlins)	7,179	7,101	-78	-1.1%	7,009	-92	-1.3%
90-mile <sup>2</sup>	15,589	14,634	-955	-6.1%	14,635	1	0.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Wyoming Department of Administration and Information<sup>1</sup>, and Claritas, Inc.<sup>2</sup>

## Population Projections

Projecting the future population of Rawlins and the market area helps predict the future demographic character of the area. This is important for the city to make decisions regarding future investments and change, as well as understanding the city's future possibilities. Projecting the total population could be calculated by evaluating historical trends and comparing them to the city's rate of construction. Table 1.4 identifies population growth trends from the 1990s in order to project future population growth for the city and region beyond 2000. Rawlins is expected to grow, while the region will likely continue to experience out-migration and graying of its population. According to Claritas Inc., the median age from 2000 to 2009 increased slightly from 35.9 to 36.7. Meanwhile, the secondary market population's median age changed from 38.4 in 2000 to 40.7 in 2009. Table 1.5 calculates growth rate scenarios for the City of Rawlins.

- **Natural Population Change.** A natural population change or 0% migration (birth and death rates) to 2020 peak population of 9,024. Starting in 2025, the population would decline to 8,902 by 2030. This scenario is not likely since the estimated 2009 population of Rawlins, according to the State of Wyoming has already reached 8,951.
- **-8% Migration.** The city would continue to experience the out-migration of 8% from the 1990s, the 2020 population would be 3,774 and 2030 population would be 2,509. This level of decline would be unlikely to occur in Rawlins, given the presence of the State Penitentiary, Union Pacific, and the renewed development of mining and energy industries in the region.



Antolik Mural

Table 1.3: Predicted and Actual Age Cohort Change, Rawlins

Age Group	1990 Actual	2000 Predicted	2000 Actual	Actual minus Predicted	% variance (Actual/Predicted)
Under 5	672	483	578	95	19.7%
5-9	816	490	571	81	16.5%
10-14	837	618	612	-6	-1.0%
15-19	706	750	719	-31	-4.1%
20-24	560	767	605	-162	-21.1%
25-29	843	645	494	-151	-23.4%
30-34	838	511	559	48	9.4%
35-39	894	769	707	-62	-8.1%
40-44	723	762	752	-10	-1.3%
45-49	543	809	718	-91	-11.2%
50-54	406	647	590	-57	-8.8%
55-59	349	476	452	-24	-5.0%
60-64	323	344	305	-39	-11.3%
65-69	302	282	267	-15	-5.3%
70-74	221	243	213	-30	-12.3%
75-80	166	205	200	-5	-2.4%
80-84	109	127	114	-13	-10.2%
85+	72	122	82	-40	-32.8%
Total	9,380	9,050	8,538	-512	-5.7%
Median Age	31.5		35.9		

Source: U.S. Census Bureau



Scoggin Collection

Table 1.4: Projected Population 2000-2014, Market Areas

	1990 Population	2000 Population	Growth rate bw 1990/2000	% Change 1990/2000	2009 Estimate	2014 Estimate	2000-2014 Growth Rate	% Change 2000/2014
City of Rawlins <sup>1</sup>	9,380	8,538	-0.9%	-9.0%	8,951	9,377	0.75%	9.83%
Secondary (45-mile) <sup>2</sup>	15,618	14,670	-0.6%	-6.1%	14,673	14,889	0.1%	1.49%
Secondary-Primary	6,238	6,132	-0.2%	-1.7%	5,722	5,512	-0.8%	-10.11%

Source: Wyoming Department of Administration and Information<sup>1</sup>; Claritas, Inc.<sup>2</sup>

Table 1.5: Migration and Growth Scenarios for Rawlins

	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Trend from 1990 to 2000 (-8% CAGR)	8,538	6,962	5,676	4,628	3,774	3,077	2,509
Natural Population Change	8,538	8,665	8,804	8,939	9,024	9,013	8,902
0.55% Annual Growth Rate (2000 - 2010) <sup>1</sup>	8,538	8,775	9,019	9,219	9,528	9,793	10,065
0.75% Annual Growth Rate	8,538	8,863	9,200	9,480	9,914	10,292	10,683

Source: U.S. Census, Claritas Inc., RDG Planning & Design, Wyoming Department of Administration and Information<sup>1</sup>,

Table 1.6: Median Income Forecasts in Rawlins’s Market Areas, 2000-2009

	2000 Census	2009 Estimate	Change	% Change
Primary (city)	\$36,330	\$49,247	\$12,917	36%
Secondary (5-mile radius)	\$36,854	\$51,491	\$14,637	40%
State of Wyoming	\$38,353	\$52,213	\$13,860	36%

Source: Claritas, Inc., U.S. Census Bureau

- **0.55% Growth Rate.** Figures from the Wyoming Department of Administration and Information suggest a growth rate of 0.55% from 2000 to 2009 for the City of Rawlins. This rate from 2000 to 2030 yields a total population of 10,065.
- **0.75% Growth Rate.** Rawlins lies within the Wyoming Energy Corridor where the state is expected to channel future investments in mining, coal methane gas production, and electricity production through coal gasification. This renewed investment will likely lead to an influx of new job opportunities into the region. The 0.75% growth rate is a conservative forecast, based on the annual growth that has occurred in Rawlins and Rock Springs. Between 2000 and 2009, Rock Springs has experienced significant growth as mining operation in Sweetwater County have begun to expand.

For the purposes of planning for Rawlins and its downtown, a 0.55% annual growth rate is used for forecasting future growth. This rate yields a 2015 population of 9,219. While the secondary market, as aforementioned, will likely experience continued decline.

### Income Characteristics

Table 1.6 presents the 2000 and 2009 estimated median household income for residents of Rawlins and the secondary market area. The median income for the region is proportionally similar to that of Rawlins. The rate at which the regions median income is growing is comparable to that of the state.

## BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT

### Distribution by Trade Area

Table 1.7 displays the distribution and percentages of establishments and employees for the Primary Trade Area. Within the primary market area, service and retail businesses make up 60% of all establishments and account for about 56% of the market's 6,357 employees. The forty-five miles surrounding Rawlins is 48% retail and service establishments and accounts for 47% of the market's 3,091 employees. As expected, the area surrounding Rawlins has a greater proportion of employees in mining and agriculture, while the primary market has a greater proportion of retail and public administration employees.

### Consumer Spending Patterns by Product

Table 1.8 displays a comparison of annual consumer expenditures by product type in each trade area to the national average. National average per capita expenditures are equal to a market index of one, which is the ratio of the Annual Average Household Expenditure (AAHE) in each trade area compared to the AAHE for the United States. Therefore, scores greater than one hundred indicate that consumers spend more on a good or service than the rest of the nation.

Spending patterns are similar for urban and rural areas, with indexes reported at or below the national average. Many smaller communities that RDG has worked with tend to experience lower spending patterns from national averages. Rawlins' and the secondary market however, have strong demand for used vehicles, and boats and recreational vehicles. Consumer spending in these markets are exceptionally strong.



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Table 1.7: Work Places and Employment for Rawlins' Downtown Trade Areas

<i>Business Description</i>	City of Rawlins				Secondary Trade Area (exclusive)			
	<i>Total Establishments</i>	%	<i>Total Employed</i>	%	<i>Total Establishments</i>	%	<i>Total Employed</i>	%
Industries (All)	593	100%	6,357	100%	470	100%	3,091	100%
Agriculture (All)	8	1%	25	0%	35	7%	243	8%
Mining (All)	10	2%	72	1%	17	4%	286	9%
Construction (All)	31	5%	593	9%	23	5%	147	5%
Manufacturing (All)	9	2%	49	1%	15	3%	115	4%
Transportation, Communications/Public Utilities	42	7%	565	9%	54	11%	392	13%
Wholesale Trade (All)	24	4%	77	1%	14	3%	40	1%
Retail (All Retail)	117	20%	1,269	20%	77	16%	473	15%
Finance (All)	43	7%	231	4%	22	5%	67	2%
Service (All)	237	40%	2,280	36%	152	32%	1,000	32%
Public Administration (All)	72	12%	1,196	19%	60	13%	327	11%

Source: Claritas, Inc., 2009

Table 1.8: Consumer Spending Patterns, Rawlins 2009

	Primary	Secondary
Total Specified Consumer Expenditures	92	95
<i>Food at Home</i>	94	95
<i>Food Away from Home &amp; Alcohol</i>		
Alcoholic Beverages	79	80
Food Away from Home	87	88
<i>Day Care, Education &amp; Contributions</i>		
All Day Care	90	87
Contributions (All)	77	85
Education	66	71
<i>Healthcare</i>		
Medical Services	96	<b>100</b>
Prescription Drugs	79	85
Medical Supplies	91	95
<i>Household Furnishings &amp; Appliances</i>		
Furniture	91	95
Household Textiles	93	96
Major Household Appliances	96	99
Miscellaneous Household Equipment	92	96
Small Appliances & Housewares	<b>103</b>	<b>106</b>
<i>Housing Related &amp; Personal</i>		
Housing Expenses	90	91
Household Repairs	95	<b>100</b>
Household Services	74	71
Housekeeping Supplies	95	97
Personal Expenses and Services	97	<b>102</b>
<i>Personal Care &amp; Smoking Products</i>		
Personal Care Products & Services	85	87
Smoking Products & Supplies	<b>104</b>	<b>105</b>
<i>Pet Expenses</i>	98	<b>112</b>
<i>Sports &amp; Entertainment</i>		
Photographic Equipment/Supplies	86	90
Reading Materials	97	<b>106</b>
Sports & Recreation	87	90
Travel Expenses	<b>103</b>	<b>106</b>
TV, Radio, & Sound Equipment	<b>104</b>	<b>105</b>
<i>Transportation &amp; Auto Expenses</i>		
Automotive Maintenance/Repair/Other	93	98
Gasoline	99	<b>104</b>
Diesel Fuel	<b>108</b>	<b>117</b>
Vehicle Purchases & Leases	<b>112</b>	<b>116</b>
New Autos/Trucks/Vans	76	79
Used Vehicles	<b>144</b>	<b>145</b>
Boats and Recreational Vehicle Purchases	<b>183</b>	<b>213</b>
Rented Vehicles	91	79
<i>Total Apparel</i>	86	87

Source: Claritas, Inc., 2009



Table 1.8: **Bold** items note strong consumer spending.



## Retail Sales

One way of evaluating downtown's retail role in the region is to consider its share of total regional retail sales. Table 1.9 indicates total retail sales in Rawlins and the secondary market area. Within the primary market area, nearly two-thirds of retail sales were reported to have occurred, with the remaining third occurring in the secondary market ring.

Table 1.9: Share of Total Retail Sales, 2009

	Total Retail Sales	% of Total
Primary (Rawlins)	\$203,508,924	65%
Secondary	\$110,880,091	35%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$314,389,015</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Claritas Inc. 2009

## Retail Sales Gap Analysis

Table 1.10 identifies the gap between consumer demand (expenditures) and retail sales within Rawlins and the secondary market trade area. A positive value results from demand exceeding supply and reflects a leakage of consumer dollars to outside markets. In other words, residents have dollars to spend but they are spending them outside of Rawlins. A negative value results from sales exceeding demand and indicates a flow of regional dollars into the city's retail market. In Rawlins, 2009 retail supply exceeded demand by nearly \$72,000,000, illustrating the community's import of dollars from other retail markets. Within 45 miles of Rawlins, this number increases to \$85,000,000. The additional capture in retail dollars is driven by an increase in gasoline station sales, while expenditures in other trade markets declined.

As downtowns across the nation compete for a share of the retail market, many have found success in specialty or niche markets. Downtowns that have successfully competed against the "big box" retailers have focused on service oriented and specialty retailing. Specific market sectors that appear to hold potential for Downtown Rawlins include:

- Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores
- Electronics & Appliance Stores
- Food & Beverage Stores
- Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores
- Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book & Music Stores
- General Merchandise Stores

Although it can be difficult to compete with the bigger retailers in the clothing and clothing accessory market, Rawlins has a significant outflow of dollars in this area. For this reason the downtown should look at ways to capture this market, especially in the more specialized clothing accessory market. The Carbon Mercantile attempts to capture some of the dollars leaking outside to other regional markets. Likewise, general merchandise items in GAFO (general merchandise, apparel, furniture and other represents sales merchandise that is normally sold in department stores) can be served by big box stores, yet Rawlins should still seek to compete with this market.

*Note: Numbers in Table 1.10 show the difference between demand (Consumer Expenditure Survey from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics) and supply (Census of Retail Trade from the U.S. Census Bureau). Numbers in parenthesis reflect a greater supply than demand, while numbers without parenthesis reflect a greater demand than supply.*

Table 1.10a: Retail Demand and Supply for Rawlins' Primary Market

	<i>Demand (Consumer Expenditures)</i>	<i>Supply (Retail Sales)</i>	<i>Gap/Surplus Opportunity</i>		<i>Demand (Consumer Expenditures)</i>	<i>Supply (Retail Sales)</i>	<i>Gap/Surplus Opportunity</i>
<b>Total Retail Sales</b>	131,748,777	203,508,924	(71,760,147)				
<b>Adjusted Total Retail Sales</b> (auto, fuel, & non store retail withheld)	84,999,422.00	68,776,065.00	16,223,357.00				
<i>Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers</i>	22,779,301	32,144,332	(9,365,031)	<b>Gasoline Stations</b>	15,712,582	85,192,524	(69,479,942)
Automotive Dealers	18,939,837	27,315,686	(8,375,849)	Gasoline Stations with Convenience Stores	11,790,724	19,612,009	(7,821,285)
Other Motor Vehicle Dealers	1,823,075	0	1,823,075	Other Gasoline Stations	3,921,858	65,580,515	(61,658,657)
Auto Parts/Accessories, Tire	2,016,389	4,828,646	(2,812,257)	<i>Clothing &amp; Clothing Accessories</i>	5,544,581	958,676	4,585,905
<i>Furniture and Home Furnishings</i>	2,734,464	3,332,847	(598,383)	Clothing Stores	3,954,997	333,676	3,621,321
Furniture Stores	1,453,595	2,349,003	(895,408)	Shoe Stores	786,616	0	786,616
Home Furnishing Stores	1,280,869	983,844	297,025	Jewelry, Luggage, Leather Goods Stores	802,968	625,000	177,968
<i>Electronics and Appliances Stores</i>	3,239,578	93,972	3,145,606	<i>Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, Music</i>	2,676,296	362,223	2,314,073
Appliances, Televisions, Electronics	2,455,445	56,282	2,399,163	<i>General Merchandise Stores</i>	17,341,658	8,525,089	8,816,569
Computer and Software Stores	659,460	37,690	621,770	Department Stores Excluding Leased Depts	8,277,469	0	8,277,469
Camera and Photographic Equipment	124,673	0	124,673	Other General Merchandise	9,064,189	8,525,089	539,100
<i>Building Material and Garden Equipment</i>	14,194,199	13,224,667	969,532	<i>Miscellaneous Store Retailers</i>	3,049,715	1,155,638	1,894,077
Building Material and Supply Dealers	13,096,602	13,224,667	(128,065)	<i>Non-Store Retailers</i>	8,257,472	17,396,003	(9,138,531)
Lawn/Garden Equipment, Supplies	1,097,597	0	1,097,597	<i>Foodservice and Drinking Places</i>	12,125,364	11,844,169	281,195
<i>Food and Beverage Stores</i>	17,405,818	20,224,167	(2,818,349)	Full-Service Restaurants	5,357,530	3,519,314	1,838,216
Grocery	15,955,219	16,088,431	(133,212)	Limited Service Eating Places	5,245,385	7,001,001	(1,755,616)
Specialty Food	478,793	0	478,793	Special Foodservices	1,050,916	0	1,050,916
Beer, Wine and Liquor	971,806	4,135,736	(3,163,930)	Drinking Places Alcoholic Beverages	471,533	1,323,854	(852,321)
<i>Health and Personal Care Stores</i>	6,687,749	9,054,617	(2,366,868)				
Pharmacies and Drug Stores	5,753,282	8,971,201	(3,217,919)				
Cosmetics, Beauty Supplies, Perfume Stores	237,614	0	237,614				
Optical Goods Stores	264,403	69,415	194,988				
Other Health and Personal Care Stores	432,450	14,001	418,449				

Source: Claritas, Inc., 2009

Table 1.10b: Retail Demand and Supply for Rawlins' Secondary Market (excludes figures from Primary Market)

	<i>Demand (Consumer Expenditures)</i>	<i>Supply (Retail Sales)</i>	<i>Gap/Surplus Opportunity</i>		<i>Demand (Consumer Expenditures)</i>	<i>Supply (Retail Sales)</i>	<i>Gap/Surplus Opportunity</i>
<b>Total Retail Sales</b>	\$62,816,927	\$31,049,097	<b>\$31,767,830</b>				
<b>Adjusted Total Retail Sales</b> (auto, fuel, & non store retail withheld)	97,555,723	110,880,091	<b>(13,324,368)</b>				
<i>Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers</i>	16,701,662	3,454,651	13,247,010	<i>Gasoline Stations</i>	11,854,094	76,361,718	<b>(64,507,624)</b>
Automotive Dealers	13,681,080	1,674,600	12,006,480	Gasoline Stations with Convenience Stores	8,857,615	12,149,717	<b>(3,292,101)</b>
Other Motor Vehicle Dealers	1,468,769	292,233	1,176,536	Other Gasoline Stations	2,996,479	64,212,001	<b>(61,215,523)</b>
Auto Parts/Accessories, Tire	1,551,813	1,487,818	63,995	<i>Clothing &amp; Clothing Accessories</i>	3,965,264	1,566,173	2,399,091
<i>Furniture and Home Furnishings</i>	2,084,334	233,715	1,850,619	Clothing Stores	2,811,176	1,570,506	1,240,671
Furniture Stores	1,105,770	0	1,123,529	Shoe Stores	532,795	376	532,419
Home Furnishing Stores	978,564	251,473	727,091	Jewelry, Luggage, Leather Goods Stores	621,292	0	626,001
<i>Electronics and Appliances Stores</i>	2,366,822	178,924	2,187,898	<i>Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, Music</i>	1,945,093	580,805	1,364,288
Appliances, Televisions, Electronics	1,790,965	156,404	1,634,561	<i>General Merchandise Stores</i>	12,700,503	549,173	12,151,330
Computer and Software Stores	481,382	22,457	458,925	Department Stores Excluding Leased Depts	6,063,060	3,378	6,059,682
Camera and Photographic Equipment	94,475	63	94,412	Other General Merchandise	6,637,443	545,795	6,091,648
<i>Building Material and Garden Equipment</i>	11,029,417	14,740,962	<b>(3,711,544)</b>	<i>Miscellaneous Store Retailers</i>	2,373,529	744,908	1,628,621
Building Material and Supply Dealers	10,163,944	12,059,924	<b>(1,895,980)</b>	<i>Non-Store Retailers</i>	6,183,040	14,625	<b>6,168,415</b>
Lawn/Garden Equipment, Supplies	865,473	2,681,038	<b>(1,815,565)</b>	<i>Foodservice and Drinking Places</i>	8,715,851	3,158,813	5,557,038
<i>Food and Beverage Stores</i>	12,491,091	8,468,037	4,023,054	Full-Service Restaurants	3,865,016	1,392,500	2,472,516
Grocery	11,458,020	1,720,391	9,737,629	Limited Service Eating Places	3,739,150	212,070	<b>3,527,080</b>
Specialty Food	338,895	5,860	333,036	Special Foodservices	751,273	0	751,273
Beer, Wine and Liquor	694,176	6,741,786	<b>(6,047,610)</b>	Drinking Places Alcoholic Beverages	360,413	1,554,242	<b>(1,193,830)</b>
<i>Health and Personal Care Stores</i>	5,145,023	827,588	4,317,435				
Pharmacies and Drug Stores	4,425,755	822,924	3,602,831				
Cosmetics, Beauty Supplies, Perfume Stores	184,365	0	184,365				
Optical Goods Stores	202,142	4,770	197,373				
Other Health and Personal Care Stores	332,761	0	332,867				

Source: Claritas, Inc., 2009

Table 1.10c: Retail Opportunity Gap and Surplus for Retailing for Rawlins' Primary and Secondary Market, exclusive

	<i>Primary</i>	<i>Secondary</i>	<i>Total Trade Area</i>		<i>Primary</i>	<i>Secondary</i>	<i>Total Trade Area</i>
<b>Total Retail Sales</b>	(\$71,760,147)	(\$13,324,368)	(\$85,084,515)				
<b>Adjusted Total Retail Sales</b> (auto, fuel, & non store retail withheld)	16,223,357	47,991,187					
<i>Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers</i>	(9,365,031)	\$13,247,010	\$3,881,979				
Automotive Dealers	(8,375,849)	\$12,006,480	\$3,630,631				
Other Motor Vehicle Dealers	1,823,075	\$1,176,536	\$2,999,611				
Auto Parts/Accessories, Tire	(2,812,257)	\$63,995	(\$2,748,262)	<i>Gasoline Stations</i>	(69,479,942)	(\$64,507,624)	(\$133,987,566)
<i>Furniture and Home Furnishings</i>	(598,383)	\$1,850,619	\$1,252,236	Gasoline Stations with Convenience	(7,821,285)	(\$3,292,101)	(\$11,113,386)
Furniture	(895,408)	\$1,123,529	\$228,121	Other Gasoline Stations	(61,658,657)	(\$61,215,523)	(\$122,874,180)
Home Furnishing	297,025	\$727,091	\$1,024,116	<i>Clothing &amp; Clothing Accessories</i>	4,585,905	\$2,399,091	\$6,984,996
<i>Electronics and Appliances</i>	3,145,606	\$2,187,898	\$5,333,504	Clothing	3,621,321	\$1,240,671	\$4,861,992
Appliances, Televisions, Electronics	2,399,163	\$1,634,561	\$4,033,724	Shoe	786,616	\$532,419	\$1,319,035
Computer and Software	621,770	\$458,925	\$1,080,695	Jewelry, Luggage, Leather Goods	177,968	\$626,001	\$803,969
Camera and Photographic Equipment	124,673	\$94,412	\$219,085	<i>Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, Music</i>	2,314,073	\$1,364,288	\$3,678,361
<i>Building Material &amp; Garden Equipment</i>	969,532	(\$3,711,544)	(\$2,742,012)	<i>General Merchandise</i>	8,816,569	\$12,151,330	\$20,967,899
Building Material and Supply Dealers	(128,065)	(\$1,895,980)	(\$2,024,045)	Department Stores	8,277,469	\$6,059,682	\$14,337,151
Lawn/Garden Equipment, Supplies Stores	1,097,597	(\$1,815,565)	(\$717,968)	Other General Merchandise Stores	539,100	\$6,091,648	\$6,630,748
<i>Food and Beverage</i>	(2,818,349)	\$4,023,054	\$1,204,705	<i>Miscellaneous Store Retailers</i>	1,894,077	\$1,628,621	\$3,522,698
Grocery	(133,212)	\$9,737,629	\$9,604,417	<i>Non-Store Retailers</i>	(9,138,531)	\$6,168,415	(\$2,970,116)
Specialty Food	478,793	\$333,036	\$811,829	<i>Foodservice and Drinking Places</i>	281,195	\$5,557,038	\$5,838,233
Beer, Wine and Liquor	(3,163,930)	(\$6,047,610)	(\$9,211,540)	Full-Service Restaurants	1,838,216	\$2,472,516	\$4,310,732
<i>Health and Personal Care</i>	(2,366,868)	\$4,317,435	\$1,950,567	Limited Service Eating Places	(1,755,616)	\$3,527,080	\$1,771,464
Pharmacies and Drug	(3,217,919)	\$3,602,831	\$384,912	Special Foodservices	1,050,916	\$751,273	\$1,802,189
Cosmetics, Beauty Supplies, Perfume	237,614	\$184,365	\$421,979	Drinking Places Alcoholic Beverages	(852,321)	(\$1,193,830)	(\$2,046,151)
Optical Goods	194,988	\$197,373	\$392,361				
Other Health and Personal Care	418,449	\$332,867	\$751,316				

Source: Claritas, Inc., 2009

## PROJECTED ANNUAL EXPENDITURE GROWTH

### Retail Space Potential

Projecting the growth of retail expenditures helps determine the need for additional retail space in Rawlins. Overall, Rawlins is leaking retail dollars to larger commercial centers in other communities. However, Rawlins could strengthen its niche markets to compete with these commercial centers. Downtown is less likely to be in direct competition with big box retailers like Wal-Mart. By using the data in Table 1.12, current per capita spending can be determined. If the amount of dollars spent per individual is applied to Rawlins' future population and that of its regional market, future retail sales (based on 2009 dollars) can be calculated. These market areas should continue to capture projected retail sales at current rates but should also strive to capture a portion of the dollars that leak to other market areas.

Tables 1.11 and 1.12 illustrate this methodology and relate future expenditures to retail space demands. This is determined by:

- Calculating the average sales yield of retail space in Rawlins using an estimated sales yield of \$320 per square foot. This estimate is the midpoint of the median sales yield for community shopping centers and neighborhood shopping centers.
- Assuming a continued decline in the rural population of the secondary market, Rawlins will require less commercial space to serve the population in

Table 1.12a: Potential Demand for Retail Space, 2009-2014 (auto, fuel, & non store retail withheld)

<b>STEP 1A: Projecting Total Demand in 2014</b>			
	<b>Primary</b>	<b>Secondary</b>	<b>Total</b>
2009 Estimated Demand	\$84,999,422	\$16,067,572	\$101,066,994
2009 Estimated Population	8,951	5,722	14,673
2009 Per Capita Dollars	\$9,496	\$2,808	
2014 Projected Population	9,377	5,512	14,889
2014 Projected Demand	\$89,044,753	\$15,477,885	\$104,522,637
<b>STEP 1B: Projecting the Increment for Demand between 2009 and 2014</b>			
2014 Projected Demand	\$89,044,753	\$15,477,885	\$104,522,637
2009 Estimated Demand	\$84,999,422	\$16,067,572	\$101,066,994
Increment 2008-2013	\$4,045,331	-\$589,687	\$3,455,643
<b>STEP 1C: Projecting the Captured Share of Future Demand</b>			
Increment 2008-2013	\$4,045,331	-\$589,687	\$3,455,643
Market Area Capture rate	81%	100%	
Market Area Share of the Increment	\$3,276,718	-\$589,687	\$2,687,031

<b>STEP 2A: Calculating Opportunity/Gap</b>			
Existing Gap (difference: demand-supply)	\$84,999,422	\$16,067,572	\$101,066,994
Future Gap (City: \$64,432,319 - \$54,694,890)	\$3,276,718	-\$589,687	\$2,687,031
Total Gap (City: \$370,555,714 - \$443,301,366)	\$88,276,140	\$15,477,885	\$103,754,025
<b>STEP 2B: Calculating Rawlins' Share of the Gap</b>			
Total Gap	88,276,140	\$15,477,885	\$103,754,025
Rawlins Capture Rate	25%	15.0%	
Share of Gap	\$22,069,035	\$2,321,683	\$24,390,718

<b>STEP 3: DETERMINING SQUARE FOOTAGE</b>			
Share of Gap	\$22,069,035	\$2,321,683	\$24,390,718
Sales Yield Per Square Foot	\$320	\$320	
Citywide commercial Space Demand (SF)	68,966	7,255	76,221

Source: Claritas Inc. 2009, RDG Planning & Design



the surrounding region. The largest growing market for Rawlins is the primary market, or the people within the City of Rawlins.

- Rawlins will continue to find itself competing against Casper and Laramie for a share of the sales in the regional market as consumers continue to shop outside of Rawlins for goods and services. Over the next five years the Rawlins region could assume a \$2.4 million increase in demand.

This analysis indicates a potential demand for an additional 76,000 square feet of citywide commercial space over the next five years, of which the downtown can expect to attract a portion of. The aggregate per capita annual spending for retail goods and services within the primary and secondary markets is estimated at \$9,496 and \$2,808 respectively. Future gap is de-

Table 1.12b: GAFO by Primary and Secondary Market Space Demand Square Feet (exclusive)

	City of Rawlins			Secondary Market (exclusive)		
	Demand (Consumer Expenditures)	Supply (Retail Sales)	Opportunity Gap/Surplus	Demand (Consumer Expenditures)	Supply (Retail Sales)	Opportunity Gap/Surplus
GAFO*	\$32,878,161	\$13,945,730	\$18,932,431	\$24,065,973	\$3,320,681	\$20,745,292
Sales Yield Per Square Foot <sup>1</sup>	\$320	\$320	\$320	\$320	\$320	\$320
Square Feet Yield	102,744	43,580	59,164	75,206	10,377	64,829

Source: Claritas Inc. 2009, RDG Planning & Design<sup>1</sup>

termined by multiplying 2014 projected population by 2009 per capita dollars. The increment is the difference between the 2014 projected demand and 2009 demand.

A total increase of 216 new residents to this area between 2009 and 2014 may result in a demand increase of \$3,455,643 for a total 2014 projected demand of \$104,522,637. The existing capture rate is about 81% for the primary market, while the secondary market is assumed as a loss due to a declining population. The primary and secondary markets' total share of the five-year increment is \$3,455,643.

The existing gap for both primary and secondary markets is \$101,066,994 and the future gap is \$2,687,031, or a total of \$103,754,025. This study anticipates capturing 25% of the total gap in the primary market and 15% of the secondary market, resulting in \$24,390,718 of total captured sales.

GAFO\* (General merchandise, Apparel, Furniture and Other) represents sales at stores that sell merchandise

normally sold in department stores, such as Pamida. The city's projected 90,000 square feet for retail space does not consider GAFO space, therefore GAFO would be considered as additional retail space to the 90,000. Assuming \$320 per square foot to operate retail space, Rawlins has 43,580 square feet (\$13,945,730 /\$320) of GAFO space and a demand for 102,744 square feet (\$32,878,161 /\$320). Rawlins is meeting 42% of the demand, while the remaining 58% is being captured elsewhere. The secondary market (rural areas outside of Rawlins) has a demand for 75,000 square feet. About 86% of this demand is being shared by Rawlins, Laramie, Casper, and other regional communities. Rawlins could capture more of this share, although Rawlins competes with commercial centers in Casper and Laramie that provide more diverse services and retail options.

Using an estimated sales yield of \$320, the citywide commercial space demand is 76,221 square feet. Downtown has about 116,000 square feet of vacant space on the main level. Some of this space can respond to the demand for additional retail space.

## RESIDENTIAL MARKETS IN RAWLINS

Residential development has been critical to downtown revitalization initiatives in many communities and could play a role in the growth and sustaining of Downtown Rawlins. This section addresses potential housing markets in the district.

### Recent Construction Activity

Table 1.13 displays residential construction activity within the city between 2004 and 2009. The rate of construction varied year to year, with as many as 46 units added in 2007 and as few as 3 units added in 2009. On average approximately 28 units were built while 15 units were demolished in the last three years. Currently, the downtown housing mix includes limited upper level renter occupied units and a mixture of single-family and multi-family units on the periphery of the downtown. Overall the downtown lacks high quality residential options.

### Overall Housing Demand

Based on population forecasts developed in Table 1.3, Table 1.14 projects housing development in Rawlins to 2020. The housing demand model assumes:

- That over the last several years the vacancy rate will continue to decline, while persons per household remains at 2.45 persons, as new jobs created by the energy sector and prison continue to attract individuals between the ages of 30 and 40 years of age.
- Five units will be removed from the market on an annual basis.

1.13: Projected Downtown Housing Demand, 2009-2020

	2009-2014	2015-2020	Total
Owner-Occupied Units	93	114	207
Renter Occupied Units	40	49	89
<b>Total</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>296</b>

Source: RDG Planning & Design

1.14: Residential Construction Activity in Rawlins, 2000-2009

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	Total Units	People/HH	Total People
Single-family Units	0	0	2	3	10	11	30	46	18	3	108	2.45	264.6
Multi-family Units		0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0	2.15	0
Demolition (subtract)								(5)	(5)	(5)	(15)	2.15	32.25
<b>Total</b>			2	3	10	11	30	46	13	-2	103		232.35

Source: City of Rawlins, 2010

This approach results in an annual production of 26 – 27 new housing units for a cumulative demand of 296 units over the next ten years. Providing a variety of housing in appropriate settings will be essential to increasing demand and meeting future city projections. This should include housing options in and around the downtown.

### Retail Impact of Housing

If Downtown Rawlins grows as a residential neighborhood, it will capture a greater share of the city's housing production. According to the 2000 Census, the overall occupancy mix in the city is roughly 70% owner-occupied and 30% renter occupied.

Effectively developed, downtown housing can be a unique attraction, and can often develop its own, larger market. Implementation of an overall downtown re-

vitalization program that makes the district a more attractive place will also increase housing demand. For example, a focus on the arts can generate a special demand for housing by young professionals; similarly development of senior housing can attract people from a broader area and increase overall housing demand and a skilled workforce.

In 2008, Sunrise Pacific Development began developing concepts for converting the upper story of the Ferguson Building to apartments or condominiums. With the downturn in the economy, several developers throughout the country stalled these development projects indefinitely. Price points identified for sales per square foot in Rawlins' market may be beyond the rate of absorption. However, this project may be eligible for funding assistance.



Scoggin Collection painted by Bill Scoggin

## CONCLUSIONS

This analysis of population and potential markets leads to the following conclusions:

- Rawlins and the surrounding county have experienced considerable population declines during the 1990s. Since 2000, Rawlins has seen its population increase due in part to renewed investments in mining and energy industries.
- If the City of Rawlins is able to maintain a growth rate of 0.55%, its 2020 population will be greater than 9,500.
- Nearly 60% of Rawlins' employment in the primary and secondary market is dedicated to service and retail.
- Consumer spending by residents in Rawlins' primary and secondary markets on used vehicles, boats and recreational vehicles is far greater than that spent by consumers nationwide.
- A potential demand for an additional 76,000 square feet of citywide commercial space over the next five years, of which the downtown can expect to attract a portion of. Downtown has about 116,000 square feet of vacant space on the main level. Some of this space can respond to the demand for additional retail space.
- The existing gap for both primary and secondary markets is \$101,066,994 and the future gap is \$2,687,031, or a total of \$103,754,025. This study anticipates capturing \$24,390,718 of total captured sales.
- A total increase of 216 new residents to Rawlins between 2009 and 2014 may result in a demand increase of \$3,455,643 for a total 2014 projected demand of \$104,522,637.
- New housing demand of 296 units over the next ten years.





chapter  
**TWO**  
Existing Conditions

This chapter examines existing conditions and opportunities in the corridor. It provides a basis for thinking about the future of the district.



## DEVELOPMENT STRUCTURE

Situated at the foot of the Rawlins Uplift, Rawlins has long served as a center for commerce along the cross-roads of America. Its location proved to be one of strategic importance to the Union Pacific Railroad where trains could take on coal and water before setting out across the Red Desert Basin and Rock Springs, Wyoming. The city also served as a stepping off point to the rugged wilderness of Central Wyoming, with military roads extending out from Rawlins to the north and south. The railroad and these military routes in many ways shaped Downtown Rawlins, with business concentrated on 4th and Cedar Streets near the Union Pacific Depot.

In time US Highway 30 (the Lincoln Highway) led to an expansion of the traditional downtown, with service stations and motels to the periphery of the district along West Cedar and East Spruce Streets. Eventually, the development of Interstate 80 reoriented the focus of commerce in Rawlins. Many businesses have moved outward towards the Interstate in order to better serve regional travelers.

### *Districts*

Map 2.1: Rawlins Development Structures, illustrates the development patterns that distinguish Rawlins' downtown. These changing development patterns distinguish the downtown into the following distinctive sub-districts:

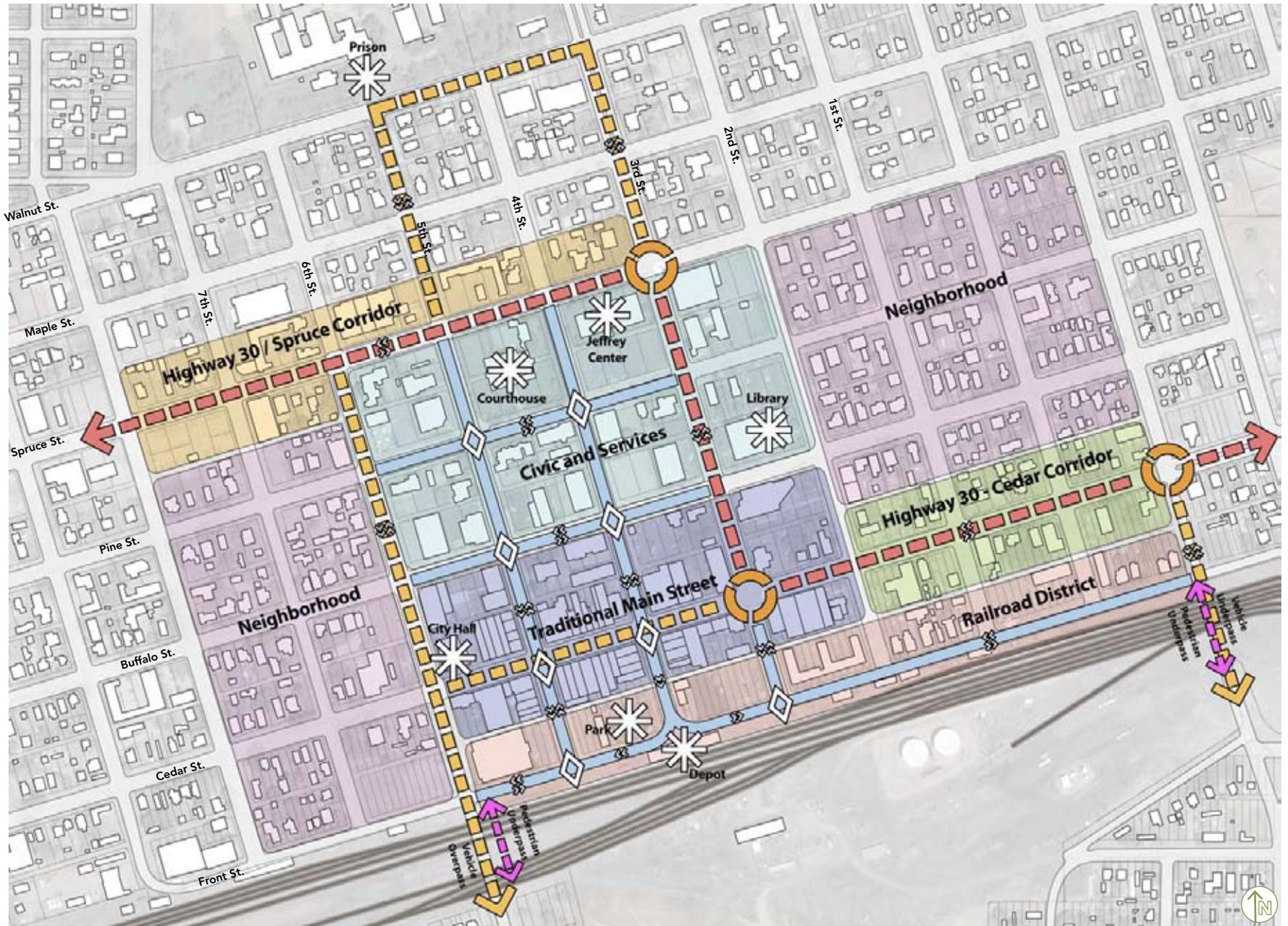


**Traditional Main Street District.** Bounded by Sixth Street to the west, Second Street to the east, Front Street to the South, and Pine Street to the north, this district is comprised mostly of the traditional urban fabric of Downtown Rawlins. US Highway 30/287 provides regional access to the district. The highway also directs through traffic around the downtown district via West Cedar, Third, and East Spruce Streets. Buildings in the district range from one to two stories in height, built primarily to the property line. On-street parallel and diagonal parking is available throughout the district with additional off-street parking located along the perimeter of the district. After experiencing sig-

nificant decline the district has been rejuvenated with many new businesses and restaurants opening. However, ground floor vacancies still remain prevalent. Important destinations within the district include:

- **City Hall.** Located in the former US Post Office building on Sixth and Cedar Street, the majority of city services are managed from this location.
- **Cedar Street Retail Strip.** The majority of retailing in Downtown Rawlins occurs on Cedar Street. Businesses include restaurants, clothing stores, art galleries, furniture stores, and financial services.

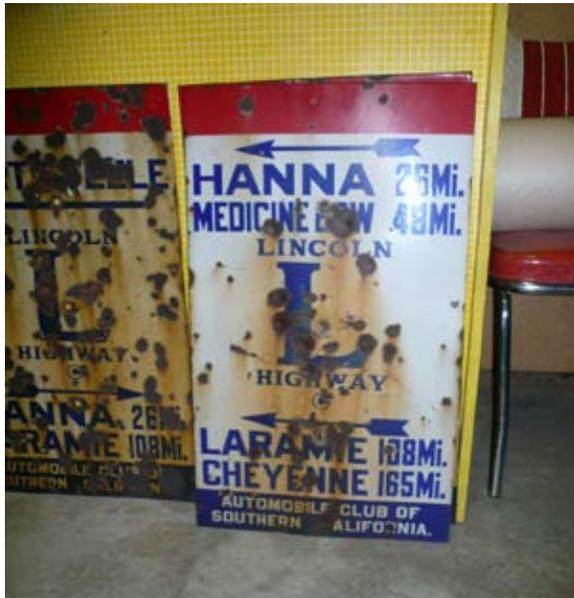
Map 2.1: Development Structure





**Civic & Services District.** Bounded by Spruce Street to the north, Buffalo to the South, and Second and Sixth Streets to the east and west, several of the city's important civic centers are located here. These civic facilities include the Carbon County Courthouse, Jeffrey Center, Masonic Temple, St. Joseph's Catholic Church, and St. Thomas Episcopal Church. In addition, a number of banks, law offices and various other commercial facilities are located in this area. Important historic destinations include:

- **Carbon County Courthouse.** Houses the majority of county departments that provide services to county residents. The courthouse reinforces Rawlins' retail market by drawing county residents into the city for government services.
- **Rawlins Public Library (Carbon County Public Library at the Carbon Building).** Located in the former high school, this library is the main branch of the Carbon County library system, with branches in eight communities. The branch includes county and state offices, study and meeting rooms, and a separate children's library.
- **Jeffrey Community Center.** Built in 1963 and donated to the City by Dr. Jeffrey, this meeting facility is used by the public for special events and conferences. The facility has the capacity to hold over 900 people.
- **St. Joseph's Catholic Church.** Built in 1915, this building is a signature piece of architecture in Rawlins with its cupola peaking above all other buildings in the downtown.
- **Elks Club Lodge #609.** Located on the northwest corner of Buffalo and 4th Streets, this building was built in the early 1900's and in the 1960's a false front was built on.
- **Masonic Temple.** Located at the northwest corner of Pine and 5th Streets, this building was built in 1908.



**Highway 30 District.** The Lincoln Highway (US Highway 30) was the first major highway route from east to west coast. While its importance has been overshadowed by the development of the national interstate system, the Lincoln Highway remains as an important link to the surrounding region. US Highway 30/287 follows Interstate 80 through Wyoming, between exits 211 and 215 the highway diverges as a business route into downtown Rawlins. The highway route follows Cedar Street from exit 215 to Third Street. Following Third Street north, Highway 30 then turns left and follows Spruce Street westward to exit 211, while Highway 287 continues north towards Lander. Uses along the route are characterized by individual buildings separated from one another with minimal landscaping. Concrete and asphalt parking lots in front or to the sides of structures dominate the entrances into



these developments. In addition, they often disrupt the continuity of the surrounding urban fabric, because of setbacks that pull them away from the city street. A number of motels and businesses are vacant along Spruce Street, creating a perception that the downtown and the city is in decline.

**Railroad District.** Located on Front Street along the Union Pacific rail yards, the district creates a strong border between downtown and residential neighborhoods located to the south. An overpass at Sixth Street and an underpass located at Colorado Street provide street access across the rail yards. In addition, a pedestrian underpass located at Sixth Street also connects the downtown to the south side of the rail yards. Front Street is marred by gravel lots, and temporary office structures of the rail yards. On the north side

of Front Street there is a mix of uses including postal facilities, Main Street Park, vacant office space, single family homes, and surface lots for downtown patrons. Improvements at the intersection of Forth and Front Streets with the development of Main Street Park have created a defined environment that unifies the historic Depot and Front Street with the traditional main street district. Important destinations in the district include:

- **Historic Union Pacific Depot.** The historic depot is used for public meetings and events.
- **Main Street Park.** Developed through the Rawlins DDA/ Main Street, Main Street Park provides a staging area for community events within the downtown. During summer months, concerts, festivals and the Rawlins Farmers Market take place here.



**LAND AND BUILDING USE**

Inventoried building use and calculating square footage provides data that is useful for understanding development patterns and the health of the downtown area. This data is further used in the parking demand model discussed later in this chapter and calculating the share of the market.

Table 2.1 summarizes building use in the downtown study area. The overall district provides approximately 816,572 square feet of gross floor area, with about 586,933 square feet on street level and 231,113 additional square feet on upper levels. Street level space in the district has a high vacancy rate of about 20%, with other spaces only in marginal use. The upper level spaces include a mixture of uses with most occupied spaces being used for offices and residential uses.

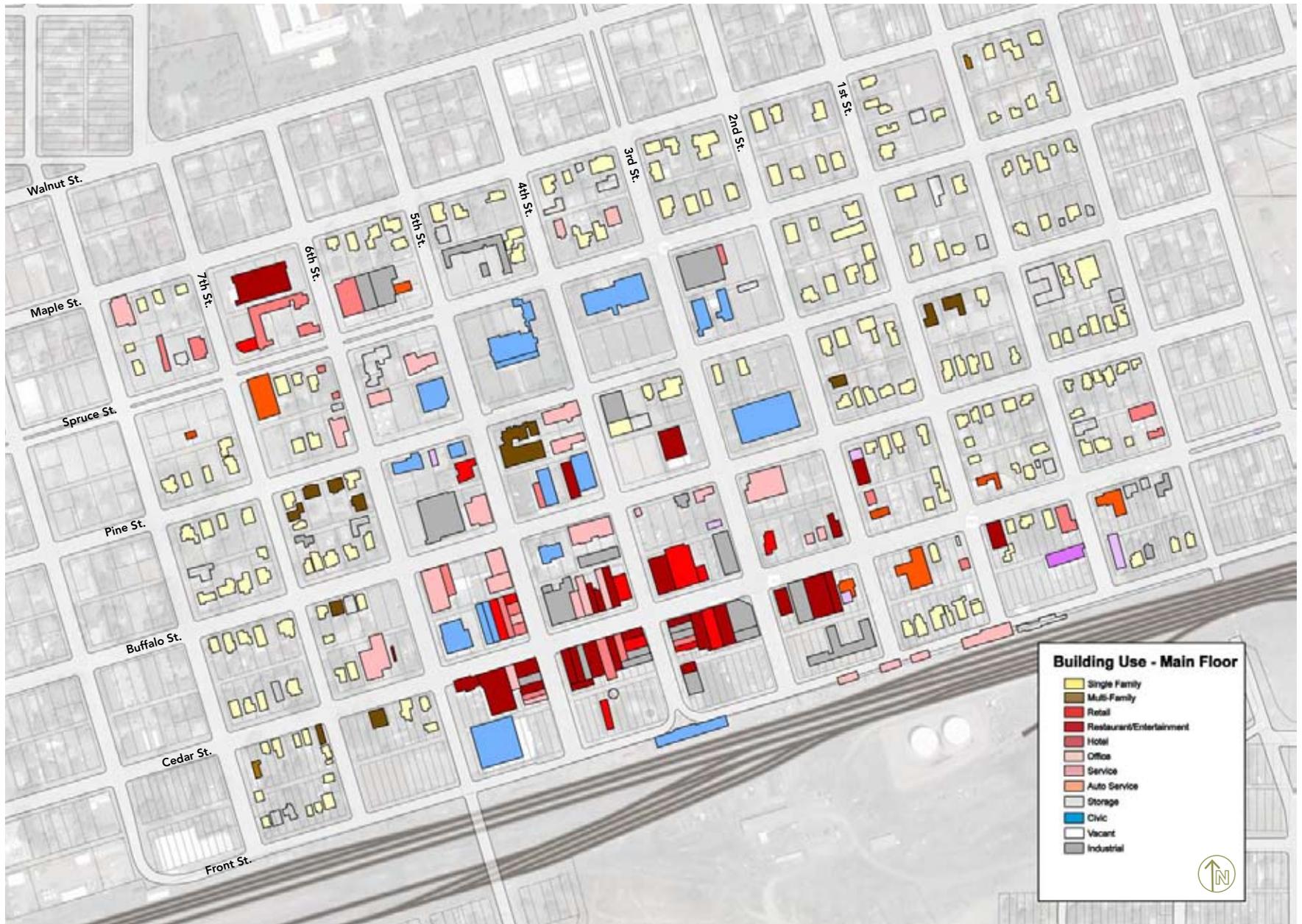
Among occupied commercial space users, consumer uses including retailing, personal services, and hospitality, account for about 184,184 square feet, while private office uses occupy about 140,874 square feet. Civic (churches and non-profits) and governmental institutions occupy over 249,404 square feet. The Downtown Building Use Map (Map 2.1) indicates the geographic distribution of these uses in the district.

Planning priorities should address the large number of vacant spaces throughout the district, including the apparent clustering of vacant spaces on 4th Street. The DDA/Main Street has pursued a number of rehabilitation projects for this area, most recently rehabbing the Rawlins Main Street Gallery at the corner of Cedar Street and securing grant funding to rehabilitate the Rainbow Te-ton as a Entrepreneurial Center.

Table 2.1 Building Use in Downtown

Building Use Type	Main Level	Upper	Total
<b>Auto Retail</b>	1,482	-	1,482
<b>Auto Service</b>	25,956	-	25,956
<b>Civic</b>	145,961	103,442	249,404
<b>Office</b>	102,548	38,326	140,874
<b>Restaurant/Entertainment</b>	37,100	6,610	43,709
<b>Retail</b>	92,726	-	92,726
<b>Service</b>	54,359	2,066	56,425
<b>Vacant</b>	116,109	76,917	193,026
<b>Storage</b>	10,693	1,474	10,693
<b>Upper Floor Residential</b>	-	2,277	2,277
<b>Total</b>	586,933	231,113	816,572

Map 2.2: Existing Land Use



## HISTORIC BACKGROUND

This analysis identifies potential opportunities for redevelopment or adaptive reuse by relating building occupancy and historic significance. Rawlins exhibits examples of commercial vernacular, beaux arts, Italianate, Italian renaissance, and art deco architecture. The goal setting process, discussed in Chapter Three, indicates that stakeholders in the District appreciate the traditional downtown ambiance, and that historic preservation is an important community value. The Downtown Historic District ensures that the unique culture and heritage of Rawlins' commercial center is preserved for future generations.

Map 2.3 Historic Significance illustrates the location and condition of historic structures in the downtown district. First floor façades on several historic structures have been altered, while this effects their historic assessments, the majority of these alteration could be easily reversed. For example, structural awnings that are comprised of steel or wood, and covered with wooden shingles can be replaced with fabric awnings that either are stationary or retractable. These awnings can also be screen printed with the name of businesses, allowing for additional signage space.

Historical assessment categories include:

**Landmarks.** These are buildings judged to be of essential historic significance and are either listed or eligible for individual listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

**Strongly Contributing Buildings.** These individual structures contribute to the character or fabric of the National Register district. Some may also be eligible for individual listing.

**Background Contributing.** These buildings were typically built before World War II and represent examples of commercial vernacular architecture. While probably not individually eligible for Register listing, they generally contribute to the character of their overall context.

**Significant New Buildings.** These are relatively contemporary buildings that represent substantial capital investments.

**Not Contributing.** These are structures that do not contribute to the structure or fabric of a district because of deteriorating conditions or appearance.

**Major Modification.** These represent structures that have undergone major modifications and, as a result, do not contribute to the integrity of the district. Some of these buildings have been modified with a screen or façade treatment that may be reversible.

Many of the most beloved structures in the Downtown Historic District are eligible to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places. While many buildings can be listed for their architectural importance, many more should be listed because of their importance to the his-



tory Rawlins, the State of Wyoming and Carbon County as a whole. Those structures listed on the registry in Rawlins include:

George Ferris Mansion, Queen Anne Victorian  
Wyoming State Penitentiary  
Union Pacific Railroad Depot, Italian Renaissance Revival

Additional Structures within the Downtown Historic District that may be considered for National Register Listing include:

Ferguson Building, Commercial Vernacular  
Carbon County Courthouse, Art Deco  
Masonic Lodge, Greek Revival  
City Hall, Neoclassical Revival  
Bank of the West, Beaux Arts

Map 2.3: Historic Significance



Several programs for the rehabilitation and protection of historic structures currently exist, both at the state and federal level. The Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit program offers property owners either a 10 or 20 percent tax credit towards the rehabilitation of a property. Those structures that are certified historic and undergo a certified historic rehabilitation are eligible for a 20 percent tax credit. Alternatively, structures that are non-historic but built before 1936 are entitled to a 10 percent tax credit.

A second federal level program available to communities nationwide is the National Trust for Historic Preservation Main Street Program. Offering assistance to communities through a “Four Point Approach” of organization, promotion, design, and economic restructuring for the revitalization of older commercial districts. Rawlins is a current member of the Wyoming Main Street Program, which has provided guidance and funding for revitalization projects.

At a more local level, individual property owners can ensure the continued preservation of their property through the allowance of preservation easements. Preservation easements allow for the individual property owner to hand over the right to change important exterior and interior features of their property to the city. Thus ensuring that any future owner of the property will have to first receive clearance from the city before making any changes to the property that are covered by the easement.

## TRANSPORTATION

### Street System

Transportation is vital to the Downtown framework. Downtown's primary streets include Cedar Street, Third Street and Spruce Street. These three streets form the US Highway 30 business route between Exits 215 and 211 on Interstate 80, moving traffic east/west through the district. Interstate 80 moves traffic east/west along the outer edge of the city, while US Highway 287 moves traffic east/west and north/south through the city center.

The balance of traffic movement through the downtown is provided by the local street grid. The north/south streets provide direct access to surrounding residential neighborhoods, schools, parks and civic centers of the city. Cedar, Fourth and Fifth Streets are the primary streets along which the majority of downtown businesses are located, and forms the most distinguishable destination in the city. In addition, the Union Pacific Railroad forms a strong border to the south of Downtown that limits access to neighborhoods south of the tracks. Road access to the south is provided by an overpass at Sixth Street and an underpass at Washington Street.

Traffic in the district moves smoothly with the exception of special events. Improvements could enhance the safety and movement for motorists and pedestrians, particularly at the intersections of Fourth and Fifth



Streets with Cedar Street. Improvements to parking on Fourth Street may also help to change perceptions that the street is too narrow. Participants in the planning process rated parking as the second greatest liability for the downtown district. A number of participants perceive that parking availability would be best addressed by improvements to the availability of parking and the implementation of directional signage.

The personality of Downtown Rawlins changes from day to night. During the day the street experiences activity with shoppers and tourists, while during the evening many businesses close, resulting in few destinations for visitors to downtown.



### Sidewalks

Sidewalks are relatively complete throughout the downtown, ranging in width from 8 to 10 feet. However, sidewalks along the US Highway 30 designated portion of Cedar Street are only 4 feet wide due to increased vehicle lane width requirements. The lack of benches, street trees, and other pedestrian amenities along this section of Cedar Street creates a sterile street environment that does not reinforce Cedar Street as the primary gateway into the downtown district. Residential sidewalks are fairly contiguous with 4 feet walks.

Access to the south of the Union Pacific tracks is provided by two underground pedestrian passageways. These passageways are located near the Washington Street and 6<sup>th</sup> Street Crossings.



### Parking Supply

Quantity and quality of parking is an important issue for the district. The core retail district, along West Cedar from 1st Street to 6th Street, furnishes about 848 parking stalls, 356 of which are on-street. Map 2.4 Parking Supply illustrates the location and nature of this parking supply. Table 2.2 inventories the parking supply, and Table 2.3 below calculates parking demand for Downtown, based on existing building use.

Map 2.5 Parking Demand identifies the supply, demand and surplus/deficiency of parking by block. The blocks facing West Cedar Street from 1<sup>st</sup> Street to 6<sup>th</sup> Street has a significant parking demand not being met by supply. Although parking is available on side streets

and nearby surface lots, visitors perceive that parking is unavailable for patrons. This perception is reinforced by comments received during the public participation process.

Table 2.2 Parking Supply

	Number of Spaces	% of Total Supply
<b>On-Street</b>	605	42%
<b>Off-Street</b>	845	58%
<b>Total</b>	1450	100%

Source: RDG Planning & Design

Table 2.3 Parking Demand in Downtown

Use	Area (SF)	Projected Parking Ratio/1,000 SF	Required Parking
<b>Auto Retail/Service</b>	12,710	2.50	32
<b>Civic</b>	224,657	2.50	562
<b>Industry</b>	4,783	1.00	5
<b>Multi-Family</b>	33,950	1.50	51
<b>Office</b>	140,072	3.50	490
<b>Restaurant/Entertainment</b>	40,151	3.00	120
<b>Retail</b>	66,013	3.00	198
<b>Service</b>	36,593	2.50	91
<b>Storage</b>	8,920	0.25	2
<b>Vacant</b>	157,211	-	-
<b>Total</b>	725,060		1,552

Source: RDG Planning & Design

Map 2.4: Parking Supply



Map 2.5: Parking Demand







chapter  
**THREE**

Strategic Planning

This chapter reviews the public participation process, which gave stakeholders the opportunity to frame the goals and directions of the Downtown Rawlins Plan. This plan recommends policies largely based on opinions and perceptions of those who know the community best - its residents and business and property owners.

## A REVIEW OF THE GOAL-SETTING PROCESS

This plan's concepts flow from the opinions and perceptions of those who know it best – its residents and people who work or invest in the community. While participation in a downtown planning process typically focuses on business and property owners, every resident of Rawlins has a compelling interest in the heart of their city and had the opportunity to participate at some level.

Components of the public participation process included:

**Public Questionnaire.** The planning process began with an opinion survey, which could be completed either on-line or in hard copy. The survey identified potential issues and goals, which stakeholder group meetings addressed more completely.

**Kick-off Presentation.** An initial community kick-off event took place August 17, 2009. This event included a public presentation that discussed the planning process and presented strategies that comparable communities have pursued to improve and market their downtown.

**Focus Group Discussions & Individual Interviews.** Focus groups provided 2 days of discussions about the state of downtown and the overall area, and explored issues and directions for the district. Also, several individual interviews provided in-depth understanding of the community's emerging issues.

**Design Workshops.** Two on-site design workshops took place from October 13 to 15, 2009 and January 20, 2010 to engage citizens, residents,



business owners, and other stakeholders directly in conceptual planning for downtown. Participants shared their ideas, issues and concerns informally with the design team, and helped define and test concepts for the future of the planning area.

**Plan Steering Committee.** The Rawlins DDA/Main Street Board acted as the Plan Steering Committee which met at key points during the planning process to review the progress of the plan and make revisions to the draft concepts.

**Open House.** A public Open House occurred on April 15, 2010. The open house provided the public an opportunity to review and comment on the development plan before further development and adoption.

## PUBLIC QUESTIONNAIRE

The process began with an opinion survey, designed to gather opinions and perceptions about Downtown Rawlins. Over a thirteen-week period, 30 people completed the survey on-line or on paper. This section summarizes key results.

### Downtown Features

A community questionnaire asked respondents to rank various features of downtown on a 5 (excellent) to 1 (poor) scale. Results are tabulated and reported by the frequency of responses. Categories with the highest scores (most ranked in 4's and 5's) include Growth in the Office Market, Traffic Circulation, and Business Growth during the Last Five Years. Other high-ranking areas include, Future Business Prospects and Willingness of Owners / Businesses to Invest.

**Table 3.1: Quality of Corridor**

Answer Options	1	2	3	4	5	Don't Know	Rating Average
Overall Economic Health	1	12	12	3	0	2	2.83
Adequacy of Parking	3	11	12	3	1	0	2.60
Business Variety	5	8	10	5	2	0	2.70
Public Perception of Downtown	9	11	6	4	0	0	2.17
Marketing and Promotional Activities	3	10	10	4	3	0	2.80
Traffic Circulation	2	6	14	6	2	0	3.00
Business Growth During the Last 5 Years	5	7	9	5	1	3	2.97
Condition of Buildings	5	17	5	2	1	0	2.23
Retailing Environment	5	11	11	1	1	1	2.50
Overall Appearance as a District	7	8	10	4	0	1	2.50
Streetscape and Public Environment	7	10	8	4	1	0	2.40
Future Business Prospects	6	11	3	4	0	6	2.97
Amount of Business Attracted from Outside Rawlins	14	10	3	1	0	2	1.97
Condition of Surrounding Residential Areas	10	8	9	3	0	0	2.17
City Investment in Downtown	6	10	6	4	1	3	2.77
Cultural Facilities and Attractions	6	12	5	5	0	1	2.45
Restaurants and Entertainment Facilities	3	10	12	5	0	0	2.63
Willingness of Owners/Businesses to Invest	7	8	9	1	2	3	2.73
Growth in the Office Market	6	9	6	1	1	7	3.10
Directional Information to Downtown	8	12	3	5	1	1	2.40
Tourism	5	13	7	3	2	0	2.47
Quality of the Public Spaces	3	12	11	2	2	0	2.60

Source: RDG Planning & Design, 2009

Receiving the lowest score (most 1's and 2's) by far was Amount of Business Attracted from Outside Rawlins, with 14 of 30 respondents recording a "poor" ranking. The second-poorest rating was given to Condition of Surrounding Residential Areas, closely followed by Public Perception of Downtown. Other low-ranking categories include Directional Information to Downtown, Streetscapes and Public Environment, Condition of Buildings, and Business Variety.

In a follow-up question, the survey asked respondents to consider ideas and actions for improving downtown Rawlins, again ranking them on a "5" (greatest importance) to "1" (least importance) scale. Top-rated actions included:

- Attraction of New Retail Businesses (3.93)
- Extended Business Hours (3.83)
- Improved Streetscape (3.79)
- Special Events and Activities (3.76)
- Better Advertising and Promotion (3.76)
- Better Directional Information to Downtown (3.76)
- Entrance Features and Gateways (3.71)

## Quality of Corridors

Survey participants rated the health and quality of streets or sub-areas in downtown, again using a “5” to “1” scale. This helps to identify priorities by measuring satisfaction with parts of the district. The highest ranked areas by response average were Cedar St. between 1st and 6th St., and 3rd St. between Spruce and Cedar St. Averages aside, the intersection of Cedar St. and 3rd St. ranked highest based on the sum of combined (4 and 5’s) responses, with 7 total. Survey respondents reported Spruce St. between 3rd and 6th St. having the lowest overall quality among the areas

## Downtown Assets and Liabilities

In the first of four open-ended questions throughout the survey, respondents were asked to list downtown Rawlins’ three greatest assets. Of 74 listed responses, the most frequently mentioned assets pertained to recreation, and the physical condition of downtown, citing Depot Park and the unique historical buildings in the area. Other important assets to the downtown area are local customers, merchants, and a climate of support for downtown. All responses by category of feature follow.

### 23 Physical Condition

- 11 Historic/Unique Buildings and Facades
- 4 The Murals
- 3 Basic Beautification Completed
- 2 Wide Streets
- 1 Cedar Street
- 1 General Cleanliness of the Area
- 1 Post Office

Table 3.1: Quality of Corridor

	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Intersection of Cedar St. and 3rd St.	0	9	10	6	1
Intersection of Spruce St. and 3rd St.	1	8	12	5	1
3rd St. between Spruce and Cedar St.	0	5	18	3	1
Cedar St. between 1st and 6th St.	2	3	15	2	4
Spruce St. between 3rd and 6th St.	3	11	9	2	1
Buffalo St. between 2nd and 6th St.	2	10	10	3	0

Source: RDG Planning & Design, 2009

### 13 Recreation and Natural Environment

- 13 Depot Park

### 30 Business and Development

- 8 Downtown potential / Many usable buildings
- 4 Anong’s Thai Restaurant
- 3 Wide Variety of Businesses
- 3 Merchant and Public Support of Downtown Businesses
- 2 Main Street Program DDA
- 2 Local merchants/ownership desire to succeed
- 2 Variety of Shopping
- 1 The Gallery
- 1 Huckleberry’s Espresso
- 1 Have Funding for Projects
- 1 Rasmuson Furniture building
- 1 Sporting Goods stores
- 1 Riflemen Bar

### 5 Connections

- 2 Friendly Store Owners
- 2 Friendly Local Customers
- 1 Government support for Main Street

Survey respondents listed the greatest single liability to downtown as vacant and deteriorating buildings. With 24 individual answers, this category accounted for nearly one-third of all listed liabilities. The second-greatest liability listed was lack of parking spaces (11), followed by limited business hours (5), and a lack of willingness to bring in good business/retail/entertainment (3). Responses by category of issue follow.

### Mobility and Transportation

- 11 Lack of Parking Spaces
- 1 Not pedestrian friendly
- 1 Intersection of Cedar and 6th

### Physical Condition

- 24 Vacant / Deteriorating Buildings
- 2 Lack of Uniformity or Theme
- 2 Bird droppings on sidewalk
- 1 Cords hanging from roofs to light poles very tacky
- 1 Cleanliness of individual businesses and walks
- 1 Railroad tracks
- 1 Lack of public space



**Business Climate**

- 3 Lack of people shopping locally
- 2 Lack of Business
- 1 Retail drain out of town (big box store)
- 1 Businesses not advertising to customers
- 1 Short life of new businesses
- 1 Lack of cultural attractions

**Programs and Policies**

- 1 Lack of variety in shopping
- 1 Lack of activities for youth

**Overall downtown**

- 5 Limited business hours
- 3 More events, gatherings, greater sense of community.
- 3 Not willing to bring in good business/retail/entertainment
- 1 Attitudes of retail clerks and food servers

- 1 Poor street lighting after dusk
- 1 Absentee landowners
- 1 Signs that do not match businesses
- 1 Poor attitude on Rawlins
- 1 No cigarette receptacles on the streets

Following the listing of liabilities, another open-ended question asked respondents to list new businesses that are most needed downtown. Specific businesses desired most include a bookstore (9), retail clothing (8), and restaurants open weekends. In grouping responses into general categories, nearly half (46%) called for some type of general retail, such as clothing, shoes, books, & kitchenware. When grouped with requested specialty retail such as craft and fabric stores, this proportion reaches 60%. Responses also indicate a need for new restaurants with greater variety and hours of operation.

A complete list of consolidated responses follows.

- 9 Book store
- 8 Clothing
- 7 Restaurants open weekends
- 4 Craft supply store: beads, scrapbooking
- 3 Cooking/Kitchen supply store
- 3 Professional office space
- 3 Shoe store
- 2 Nice but not over-priced restaurant
- 2 Pet store
- 2 Music Store
- 2 Affordable specialty shops
- 2 Entertainment: live theater and music
- 2 Antique store
- 2 Restaurants with greater variety
- 2 Specialty furniture store
- 2 Anything
- 2 Toy store
- 1 Store for young people’s clothing
- 1 Kids entertainment: Chuck e Cheese
- 1 Yoga/tai chi studio
- 1 Candy shop
- 1 Second-hand clothing
- 1 Day Spa
- 1 Name brand clothing store (Sears, JC Penny)
- 1 Retail
- 1 Upstairs residential rental
- 1 Another clothing for variety-Western wear
- 1 Health food store
- 1 Mercantile type
- 1 Para-legal office to assist residents
- 1 Bicycle shop downtown
- 1 Nice adult lounge, quiet - no smoking
- 1 Affordable clothing/outdoor store
- 1 Travel agency

**Actions and Projects**

The final question of the survey asked participants to list types of actions that they desired for the district. Of 68 short-answer responses, the most often cited recommendations addressed the rehabilitation of historic buildings, streetscape improvements, and attracting new businesses to downtown. Responses generally fall under 5 categories, including Policy, Business Development, Transportation and Mobility, Recreation and Culture, and Development Projects. Responses grouped by category follow.

### 19 Policy

- 6 Fill downtown with new businesses/shopping
- 2 Tear down old and uninhabitable buildings
- 2 Make downtown a more welcoming destination
- 2 Be more selective on what businesses open downtown
- 1 Public restrooms and water fountains
- 1 Increase special events like farmers market, street dances, etc
- 1 Cigarette butt disposals
- 1 Projects done right, not cheap
- 1 Improve appearance of surrounding neighborhoods
- 1 Get rid of pigeons
- 1 Market downtown as whole, not just Main Street



### 17 Business Development

- 3 Getting businesses to stay open later
- 4 Grants for facades renovation
- 3 Encourage people to shop locally
- 2 Recruit New Business
- 1 Loans to business owners to fix their buildings
- 1 Improve building on 4th and Cedar
- 1 Rainbow Teton bldg
- 1 Help the WY Bar fix it's bldg
- 1 Restaurants
- 8 Transportation and Mobility
- 5 Improve parking/ parking study
- 3 Directional signage/promotions for downtown

### 5 Recreation and Culture

- 2 Create a unifying theme - not prison
- 2 Activities for children and families (ice skating)
- 1 Public space

### 19 Development Projects

- 8 Streetscape/beautification improvements Downtown. Keep streets clean
- 8 Restore/Renovate buildings
- 1 4th Street improvements
- 1 Addition of offices or apartments on second story
- 1 Filling the corner of 5th and cedar



### FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS & INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS

Focus group meetings and individual interviews that took place over seven days, August 18th and 19th, 2009, resulting in over 13 hours of discussion. Groups such as business and property owners, financial institutions, public officials, nonprofit and arts organizations, development professionals, realtors, students and others participated in roundtable discussions to share their opinion of the district and its future opportunities. The following summarizes the proceedings, ranked generally in order of attention.

### ISSUE 1: Downtown as a Destination

- Planning should focus on developing an experience for families, couples, singles and teenagers that could include an assortment of restaurants, entertainment, theaters, bars, events, attractions, and lodging.
- Businesses should collaboratively market downtown. Participants perceive that downtown was destination of the past and needs to be marketed to attract patrons. The Main Street program should continue leading these efforts.
- Farmer's Market is a popular event, attracting hundreds to downtown.

### ISSUE 2: Downtown Streetscape Environment

- Streets need to be more attractive for pedestrians and passersby. Tree-lined streets, benches, planters, ornamental lights, banners, graphics, historical markers, and art should be programmed into the streetscape design.
- Streetscape design should express community values and theme. Street signage could be ornamental and more distinguishable than typical street signs.
- Weeds, cracked sidewalks and snow covered walkways contribute to a negative perception of downtown. Maintaining streets and sidewalk is critical to building a positive impression of downtown. Participants perceive that property owners do not adequately maintain sidewalks (sweep or snow removal) or flower pots (watering or removing cigarette butts).
- Sculptures and public art should be displayed. Both Gillette and Buffalo have extensive displays of art in their downtowns.
- Bump-outs or nodes should be developed at intersections to shorten crossing distances, protect parked vehicles, provide planter space, and enclose the corridor.
- New development should be pedestrian in scale and be consistent with the character of Cedar Street.
- The approach from the west is unattractive and detracts from the visitor's and resident's perception of the community.

### ISSUE 3: Business Development

- New development should be pedestrian in scale and consistent with the character of the older buildings in downtown. Buildings along Cedar Street exhibit roof details, setback, and material that are similar to each other. The first floor of buildings should have an active use.
- Downtown has a strong environment for restaurant and retailing. Participants are satisfied with the number of restaurants, although indicate a desire to have more upscale dining.
- Development of the Ferguson Building has suffered during the economic slowdown in 2008. The project remains on hold.
- Buildings that are being neglected should be preserved. The City should intercede with the property owner before the structure is beyond repair. Code enforcement should be exercised to protect the property, as well as protect the investments of surrounding neighbors.
- Rehabilitating building space for business development is expensive. Financial mechanisms should be adopted to allow businesses to remodel or expand instead of relocating to areas outside of downtown. Businesses that generate foot-traffic should receive priority.
- Entrepreneurs are concerned about the initial investment and fear of having an unsuccessful operation. Participants report that upstart businesses are not able to secure a loan.



- Downtown should have a set of Architectural Design Guidelines. New construction or redevelopment of property or buildings should be completed with quality craftsmanship and be consistent with the existing architectural patterns of downtown. Guidelines should encourage design, not tell the owner how to design the building.
- Participants are concerned that retiring business owners will result in vacant storefronts and little succession.
- Business owners battle with the perception that goods and services can be purchased for less money outside of Rawlins, when often people can find goods cheaper in the City.
- The Strand Theater is planned to reopen and provide an atmosphere for adults to enjoy movies.
- Development used to orient to the railroad in the 1800's and early 1900's then shifted to Highway 30. With the development of Interstate in 1969, development began orienting itself to Interstate 80.
- The district should consider becoming a Business Improvement District (BID). By becoming a self taxing district, it will create funds for ongoing maintenance, particularly sweeping and shoveling of sidewalks. Funds could also be used for doing improvement projects.
- Tax Increment Financing (TIF) financing is a good mechanism for encouraging development. The City needs to provide additional assistance as many banks' lending practices have changed since 2007.
- Surface parking lots behind Domino's could become space for new community gathering space.



Desert Dust Collection by Kerry Hanson

#### **ISSUE 4: Traffic Circulation, Parking, and Wayfinding**

- Participants perceive that the district does not have enough parking.
- Cedar Street could possibly transform from a four-lane street to a three-lane street. The four-lane section seems tight for some participants.
- Participants perceive that Rawlins is not bicycle or pedestrian friendly. Bicycling is a growing form of transportation and recreation in Rawlins yet there are no dedicated bicycle lanes. Also there are virtually no bicycle racks available in downtown.
- Reduce the visual clutter along the street. Bury electrical and telephone poles throughout the district.

- Downtown should be networked through a system of sidewalks and trails to other community destinations, including parks, schools and museums.
- Sidewalk network is incomplete, sections are missing throughout the community.
- Wayfinding signage should be installed to direct traffic from Interstate 80 and Highways 30 and 287 to downtown businesses. Parking, tourist sites and regional destinations should be identified.

#### **ISSUE 5: DDA/Main Street Organization**

- Rawlins DDA/Main Street has accomplished much with limited resources. This program should continue and receive additional support from businesses, city hall and community.

- Residents and business community perceive that the organization is healthy and operating well.
- Some participants perceive that Rawlins DDA/Main Street is demanding. However, they also recognize the positive results of the organization.

#### **ISSUE 6: Art and Culture**

- Murals throughout town add color and story to Rawlins. Booklets are available at each mural, identifying the location and significance of art in the city.
- Sculptures and public art should be displayed throughout the district, particularly at gathering places and major intersections.
- Interpretative displays could be installed in the downtown area. Installations could communicate Rawlins' history and geography. Possible examples include the Lincoln Highway, railroad, and geology.
- The Rawlins Main Street Gallery opened in 2009 and has perpetuated the Rawlins' reputation as an Arts Community. Its opening was spearheaded by Rawlins DDA/Main Street.
- Rawlins lacks a community gathering space during the winter.
- Theming and branding should consider historical references. Community is losing its connection to the historic Lincoln Highway.
- Cedar Street is frequently closed during community events. Participants question whether the street needs to be entirely closed.

### **ISSUE 7: Marketing, Tourism & Image**

- Downtown could be marketed more as a regional destination. Rawlins is an attractive location for hunters to visit.
- Downtown should develop memories for growing children, visiting tourists, and residents. Theming or branding Rawlins' downtown will help the community's marketability. Residents and tourists should all be able to enjoy downtown. Community events should continue to be held in downtown near Depot Park.
- Businesses will refer other businesses in the downtown area, creating an environment for reciprocity.
- Wayfinding or directional signs should be posted to direct both motorists and pedestrians to destinations in Rawlins. Wayfinding should reinforce the appeal of downtown with graphics and color.
- Many businesses do not stay open late, making it difficult to have a thriving evening atmosphere.
- Buildings that are beyond repair or their life should be demolished. Motels that are condemned should be removed and redeveloped for new uses.



### **ISSUE 8: Community Culture**

- City is fortunate to have people committed to making the community a better place. The same ten people (STP) volunteer for activities. The hope is that the group will expand to the same twenty people or same thirty people.
- Rawlins was one of the earliest Main Street Programs in the United States, beginning in the 1980's.
- Despite the slower economy, participants report that Rawlins has a can-do attitude.
- Perception that there is little to do in Rawlins. Young professionals visit bars and participate in the cinema club.
- City should do what they can to retain and attract young professionals.



### **ISSUE 9: Youth Activities**

- Students perceive that few places cater to high school students to hang out and lounge.
- A majority of students anticipate to move away from Rawlins. Some consider returning to memorable places, such as Seminoe State Park.
- Perception that the City can't plan for the next generation if we can't keep them here.
- The proposed new elementary school will replace two existing schools and be located on the edge of town. Participants perceive that a more logical location for an elementary school is closer to neighborhoods. The proposed site commits parents and the school district to busing their students to school.



**ISSUE 10: Residential Uses In and Surrounding Downtown**

- Housing should be a priority for Rawlins’ future. Options are limited, causing rental rates and values to be higher in Rawlins. Participants speculate that the workers for the railroad, prison and nearby energy company increase the demand for housing.
- Downtown uses along the edge of the surrounding neighborhoods should not adversely influence a person’s enjoyment of their property. These edges should be thoughtfully planned.
- Downtown should be accessible to surrounding neighborhoods. Sidewalks should link into downtown, connecting parts of the city to each other.

The development concept should consider more downtown housing opportunities.



**ISSUE 11: Sustainable Development and Practices**

- New development (or redevelopment) should be constructed of quality materials and energy efficient. Older buildings should be restored rather than demolished. LEED certified professionals are emerging in Rawlins.
- On-going maintenance costs should be kept to a minimum. Energy-saving practices should be pursued by the city and encouraged for private building owners.
- Rawlins is in a good place to harvest wind and solar energy.



- Best Management Practices (BMP’s) should be used for controlling stormwater runoff.
- City and residents should consider using compost bins.
- Rawlins desires to be a pilot community for the Governor’s “Building the Wyoming We Want”.
- Rawlins is located in “Carbon” County. Rawlins should consider its carbon footprint.

## DESIGN WORKSHOPS

Multi-day public design workshops took place in Rawlins during October 12-15, 2009 and January 19-20, 2010. The plan presented in Chapter Four reflects and refines the work done in these sessions. During the workshops, public discussion defined the following themes and principles:

- **Accessibility and Linkages.** The Downtown Plan should promote linkage and accessibility among its constituent parts. The development concept should use continuous paths for pedestrians and cyclists to strengthen the relationships between uses.
- **Parking Adequacy and Aesthetics.** An adequate parking supply for patrons, business operators, and residents is necessary. Parking access should be convenient and clear without inhibiting pedestrian movement. Several sites provide locations for new parking structures and improved efficiency.
- **Redevelopment Sites.** Significant redevelopment opportunities include the UP parking lot at 3rd and Front Street, Elks parking lot, and Bank of the West parking lot at Buffalo and 4th Streets.
- **Streetscape Design.** Rawlins' downtown streetscape could be upgraded to compliment the surrounding development. Creating safe pedestrian movement is critical and should be incorporated.



## PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

The steering committee consisted of board members of the Rawlins DDA/Main Street and met throughout the planning project to provide input, review the progress of the plan, suggest mid-course corrections, and contribute to development concepts. Participants in the committee are acknowledged at the front of this document and were instrumental in the preparation of the plan.



## OPEN HOUSE

The open house was held on April 15, 2010. It provided the public an opportunity to review and comment on the development plan before formal approval by the City Council. The Open House included a 60-minute presentation and then a break-out to various stations focusing on development areas. Approximately 40 people attended.



chapter

# FOUR

## Downtown Development Plan

This chapter presents an ambitious but realistic vision for Rawlins. Ultimately a successful development effort for Rawlins should add new energy and vitality to Downtown Rawlins as a neighborhood and a renewed retail, service, and civic center. This development plan builds on the special features and resources of Rawlins to create a more vigorous and vibrant downtown that benefits the community and region, despite uncertain economic times.

The first three chapters of the Downtown Rawlins Plan address the population and economics of the city and its surrounding market area, potential markets, existing physical conditions, and the opinions and insights of residents, businesses, and other stakeholders.

## GOALS FOR DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT

A development program for Downtown Rawlins should:

**1. Increase business and private investment.** A successful downtown planning and development program should create an environment that encourages new investment. The success of this program will be more business, reinvestment in buildings, new retailers and services, and other responses that create a vital district. However, investments must be made in the public realm that will create these conditions for economic growth. These investments will pay returns by preserving and expanding property values, increasing sales tax revenues, and creating a central district that brings people, both residents and visitors, to the downtown.

**2. Take advantage of distinctive markets.** Rawlins has three separate, but complementary market segments. These include:

- **Primary Market.** The immediate local residential and consumer market, primarily residents of Rawlins and immediately adjacent areas. People in this market area are seeking basic goods, good customer service, small town quality, and intimacy. Business and development niches that serve this market segment include services, grocery shopping, hardware and durable goods, specialty retailing, and restaurants.
- **Secondary Market.** This secondary market includes people and communities within a 45 mile radius of Rawlins. This regional market is limited by the reach of other communities with significant commercial services, including Laramie and Casper. Assuming similar products and services, this secondary market can be approximated by a radius crossing the halfway point to these other regional communities.
- **Tertiary Market.** Visitors to Rawlins from outside the primary and secondary markets, including tourists, present a significant business growth potential for Downtown. City and regional attractions include museums, historic sites, Seminoe Recreation Park, outdoor recreation and hunting.

**3. Increase the number of reasons that people come downtown.** While Downtown is important to people in Rawlins, it is mostly active during daylight hours. People come to the district for civic purposes, banking, services, and shopping, but (with the exception of dining) do not make it part of their leisure or evening lives. Downtown districts come alive when people view them as places for many aspects of community life. Additional downtown uses that extend the



hours and scope of activities provide new markets for supporting retailing and services, and make downtown and surrounding neighborhoods more desirable living environments.

Improve the experience of being downtown. In the book *The Experience Economy*, B. Joseph Pine II and James H. Gilmore say:

*“Experiences have always been around, but consumers, businesses, and economists lumped them into the service sector alone with such uneventful activities as dry cleaning, auto repair, wholesale distribution, and telephone access. When a person buys a service, he purchases a set of intangible activities carried out on his behalf. But when he buys an experience, he pays to spend time enjoying a series of memorable events that a company stages – as in a theatrical play – to engage him in a personal way.”*



This story applies to Downtown environments just as surely as it does to individual companies. People have distinct memories of Downtown Rawlins – the experience of shopping, eating at a special restaurant, attending a movie at the Strand Theatre, or just experiencing the activity of Cedar Street on a warm summer evening. These experiences have very long lives, staying with people with great clarity throughout their lives. While mass retailers have their place in America, they make a commodity out of the retail experience. One of the great things that a downtown has to offer is the pleasure of a unique experience.

By making the experience of being downtown better, by filling its streets with life and activity, we can increase the satisfaction that people feel with the city center,

in turn building pride and increasing the frequency of return trips. When a Downtown is full of the life of experience, it also becomes more attractive to visitors, reinforcing businesses that rely on visitor traffic and creating expanded retail and service clientele.

**4. Introduce new uses.** Like many downtown districts, Downtown Rawlins tends to “close” in the evening, and this closing creates a vacuum that discourages desirable uses. District restaurants provide some evening activity, but new activities, including housing, culture and recreation, and the arts can extend the “open” hours of the district and make it a much livelier place. Additionally, many cities have successfully turned their downtowns into neighborhoods, with significant residential development. While downtown residential rarely produces enough customers to support new retail and services directly, it creates conditions that can increase the district’s customer potential by increasing activity and security. Housing is particularly appropriate as part of the Downtown Rawlins strategy and should take two forms – adaptive reuse of existing buildings and new development on vacant, underused sites in or around the core district.

**5. Strengthen key business niches.** While downtowns nationwide have struggled to preserve their traditional retail roles, successful districts have been able to rebuild with business niches that have a demonstrated ability to attract people to town centers. These include stable traditional local businesses; restaurants and entertainment; specialty retailing, and offices.

- **Traditional local businesses.** Downtown Rawlins has both long-standing and new local businesses that have adapted to change and continue to be anchors of their district. These key businesses sustain Downtown, and in some cases are attractions in their own right.
- **Restaurants and entertainment.** Restaurants have often been the vanguard of downtown revitalization. Many of the existing eateries are open during the evening, which contributes to creating an active nightlife for downtown.
- **Specialty retailing.** With the loss of mainline downtown retailers in an era of mass retailing and on-line sales, specialty shops have become increasingly important to central district retail revitalization. These shops typically require relatively high visibility, geographic clustering, and a pedestrian environment that encourages browsing and experience shopping. Creating an environment that nurtures and reinforces existing specialty retailing and provides opportunities for new development is another priority for retail revitalization in the District.
- **Offices.** Cedar Street should be reserved for commercial services. The presence of offices brings people downtown, and increases the potential markets for both housing and supporting retail services. However, offices should locate on side streets or adjacent blocks rather than occupy frontage space along Cedar Street.

## PROGRAM FOR DEVELOPMENT

The vision begins by establishing a development program, much like the architectural program for a building project. This program, developed with the input and insight of Rawlins' citizens who participated in the planning process, identifies the ingredients of development – the amount of space that markets can absorb, present and future community needs, current projects that are pending, and other opportunities. The program includes three separate agendas: development, community and functional, together expressing the different roles that Downtown Rawlins has and can have in the community.

### *The Development Agenda*

- **Retail Development.** Rawlins has the potential to increase retail area by 76,211 square feet over the next 10 years. Currently, downtown has an estimated 116,000 square feet of vacant space, which could absorb some of this future demand.
- **Housing Development.** Rawlins has the potential to increase its housing by 300 units over the next ten years. The plan projects a 2020 population of 9,528, or an increase of about 500 people from 2010. Downtown will be able to address a portion of this demand, as well as provide alternative housing opportunities for current residents, through the adaptive re-use of existing buildings and new development on vacant land.
- **Vacancy.** Redeveloping underused property should be a priority. Vacant and underutilized sites should be seen as opportunities for growth and renewal. A thoughtful development concept can guide the reuse of these sites, and help ensure that reinvestment produces results that are both rewarding and advance the interests of the city.
- **Rainbow Te-ton Entrepreneur Center.** This historic structure is being redeveloped through funds available from the State.
- **Strand Theater.** Owners of the building intend to restore the building back to a theater and restaurant.

### *The Community Agenda*

- **Creating a distinctive community image and experience.** Rawlins must become a stronger destination, offering distinctive experiences to customers and prospective residents. Branding and theming for the community should be celebrated in the built environment and community marketing material.
- **Expanding business and private investment.** Development concepts should lead to actions that significantly improve the district's business and investment climate. The program should stabilize existing businesses, and reward desirable new investments that strengthen the district. Public realm investments create conditions for desirable private responses that will preserve and increase property values, increase sales tax revenues, and attract new businesses.
- **Identifying spaces for year-around activity.** Downtown needs more public gathering space for families to enjoy. Upgrading of Main Street Rawlins Park and Depot Plaza and development of downtown as an entertainment district responds to local and regional demands and can reinforce other evening and weekend businesses in the downtown district. This concept relies upon the partnership of the private and public sectors.
- **Improving the overall appearance of the built environment.** Buildings along Cedar Street frame the corridor and its physical condition influences the perspective of visitors and residents in the district. A quality, well –maintained district influences an individual's perspective and interest in revisiting the downtown area.

**Figure 4.1:** Perspective Illustration of Downtown Rawlins

- **Improve places for people.** Green space and a community commons are major features of traditional town centers. Although Depot Park provides the community with a public space for special events like the Farmers Market, its proximity to the rail yards limit the types of events that can be programmed. Downtown should work to develop additional public spaces and strong connections to surrounding parks and public spaces.

### ***The Functional Agenda***

- **Increase pedestrian movements.** Rawlins' transportation network should provide safe and secure routes for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists within public rights-of-way. Pathways between destinations should be logical and help direct people to the front door of facilities.

- **Improving connections to the Neighborhoods.** Access to downtown should be convenient. Rawlins is a city divided by the Union Pacific Railroad. To the north is downtown and the bulk of the city's retail and commercial services, while to the south are primarily single-family residences. By improving pedestrian connections, revitalizing community parks, and improving community amenities, the city can be more unified. The under- and over-passes to the Southside should provide safe and convenient passage for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists.
- **Improve overall parking supply.** Parking can be one of the most contentious issues that any downtown faces. However, it can also be an indication of the overall vitality of a district. While providing adequate parking for everyday business is important, every vibrant downtown area experiences parking shortages for special events. Providing convenient, well-designed parking facilities and the pedestrian linkages that encourage motorists to become pedestrians is an objective of the Downtown Rawlins development program.
- **Establish gateway and wayfinding.** Highway 287 on the east and west sides from Interstate 80 should announce to visitors their arrival to Rawlins and encourage them to explore the City. A wayfinding signage program should inform visitors of the cultural and historical destinations and direct them to these locations.



## DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

The vision for the Rawlins Downtown Plan emerges by following the program based on markets, existing projects and priorities, and community-wide needs. The scope of this plan covers the downtown district. These components create the basis of the plan vision:

- **The Framework.** A conceptual diagram showing the relationships of major corridor elements.
- **Major Project Areas.** Self-contained projects that together create a transformed district.
- **Connections.** Address the spaces that link major projects together and link the study area to the larger Rawlins community.
- **Policies.** Describe in more detail the methods by which individual projects proposed in this plan can be implemented overtime.

## THE FRAMEWORK

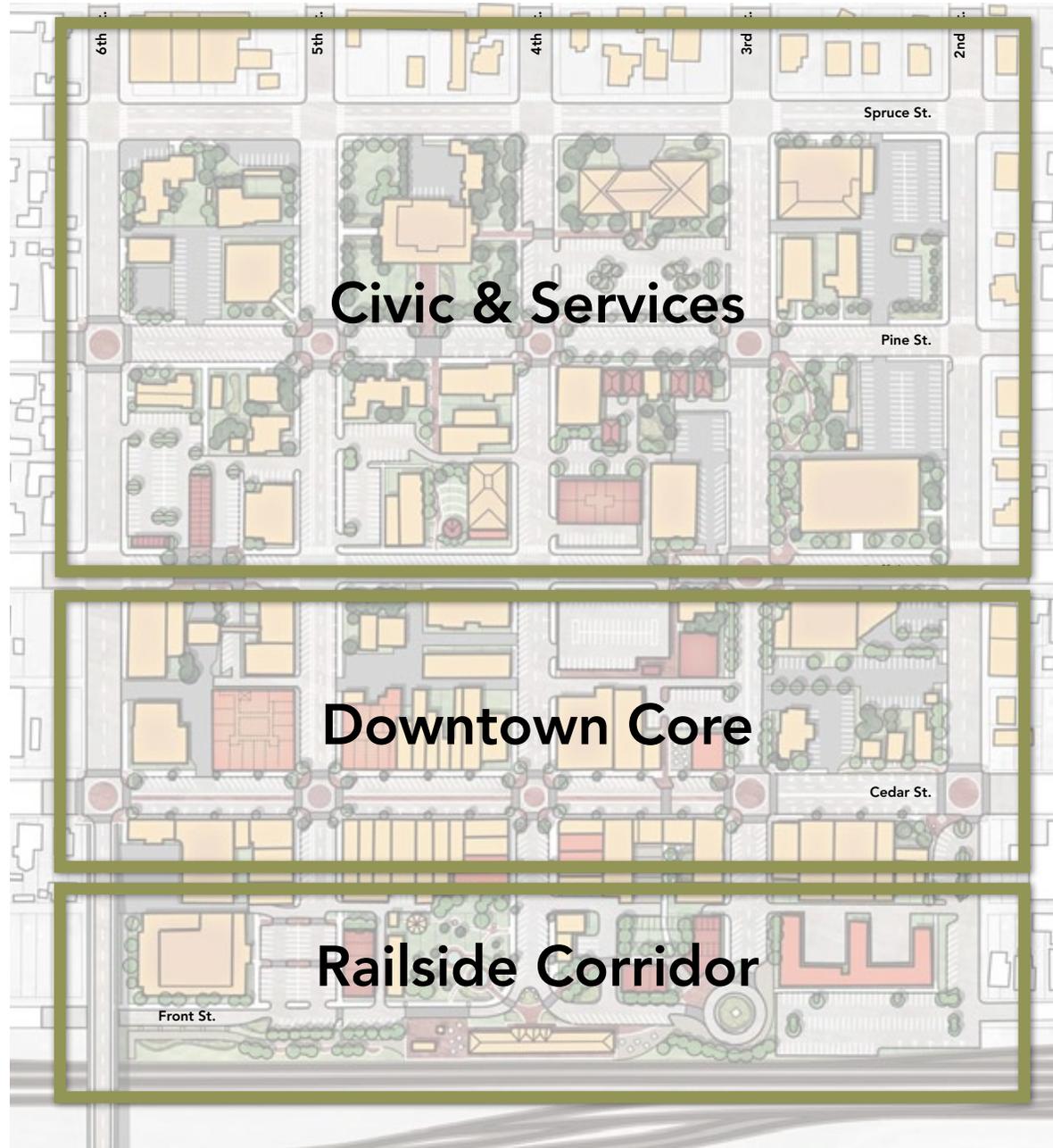
The Framework considers the overall structure of the city development program. Map 4.1 Framework Diagram illustrates the sub-districts and transportation networks of Downtown Rawlins. Its key elements include transportation movements, districts, and redevelopment areas. Its key elements include:

- An enhanced downtown retail core, with an economical but effective streetscape that creates a pedestrian friendly and amenity rich environment.
- Improved corridors leading to downtown, drawing people into the City.
- Improved connectivity between downtown and

surrounding neighborhoods. The neighborhood south of the railroad tracks is particularly disconnected from downtown and the rest of the city.

- Supporting commercial areas with convenient access to the Interstate corridor and rail.
- Create additional pedestrian pathways that use trails, sidewalks, alleys and midblock crossings to create quick connections between destinations.

**Map 4.1:** Development Framework



## MAJOR PROJECT AREAS

Map 4.2, the Development Concept, identifies individual projects within the study area. The concept includes three major project areas:

- *Railside Corridor*
- *Downtown Core*
- *Civic & Services District*

Long-term development plans are often subject to change over time. Some high priority projects will require short-term action and early implementation. On the other hand, emerging opportunities may cause priorities to shift, as other proposals recede in importance. This plan will provide guidance to public and private decision-makers, with the flexibility to respond to new conditions and markets.



**Map 4.2: Downtown Rawlins Development Concept**



1. Depot with fencing along Railroad
2. Main Street Park Improvements
3. Railside Greenway
4. 6th Street Underpass Landing
5. Parking Improvements
6. 5th Street Development Project
7. Expanded Depot Park
8. Rainbow Te-ton Rehabilitation
9. Building Rehabilitation
10. Winter Garden
11. Front Street Redevelopment
12. Depot Connection
13. Traffic Circulation Improvements
14. Union Pacific Parking
15. Union Pacific Building Reuse
16. Plaza and Parking Improvements
17. Strand Theater Reuse
18. Upgraded Truss
19. Potential Redevelopment Site
20. Outdoor Plaza Dining/Lounge
21. General Rawlins Passageway
22. Cedar Street Streetscape Upgrades
23. Ferguson Building Reuse
24. Daley Building Reuse
25. New Parking Structure
26. New Commercial/Office
27. St. Joseph's Park
28. Buffalo Street Condos
29. Pine Street Residential Dev't
30. Jeffrey Center Pathways
31. Elks Lodge Facade Improvements
32. Soroptimist Park Upgrades
33. Courthouse Passageway
34. Motel Site Reuse/Redevelopment
35. Collaborative Parking Dev't
36. Passageway
37. 4-way Stop at Cedar and 4th Streets

## RAILSIDE CORRIDOR

The City of Rawlins was born along the tracks of the Union Pacific Railroad as an important fueling station for trains at the edge of the Red Desert Basin. The Railside Corridor District consists of those properties bordering Front Streets between Sixth and Washington Streets. The majority of the district is comprised of industrial uses and vacant lots. Redevelopment of the corridor focuses on creating physical connections to surrounding areas.

### *Program*

The program for the Railroad Corridor includes:

- A linear park that softens the border between downtown and the rail yards, and provides a safe and pleasant environment from which the activity of the rail yards can be viewed.
- An improved Railside Greenway that serves as the community's "living room" where people can gather and small public events may occur.
- Reconfigured parking lots that add additional parking, to increase convenience and support existing and new businesses.
- New residential and commercial development that create a stronger connection between Front Street and the traditional retail core of downtown.
- An exchange with Union Pacific to gain developable property for the City and improved parking efficiency for Union Pacific.

### *Components of the Concept*

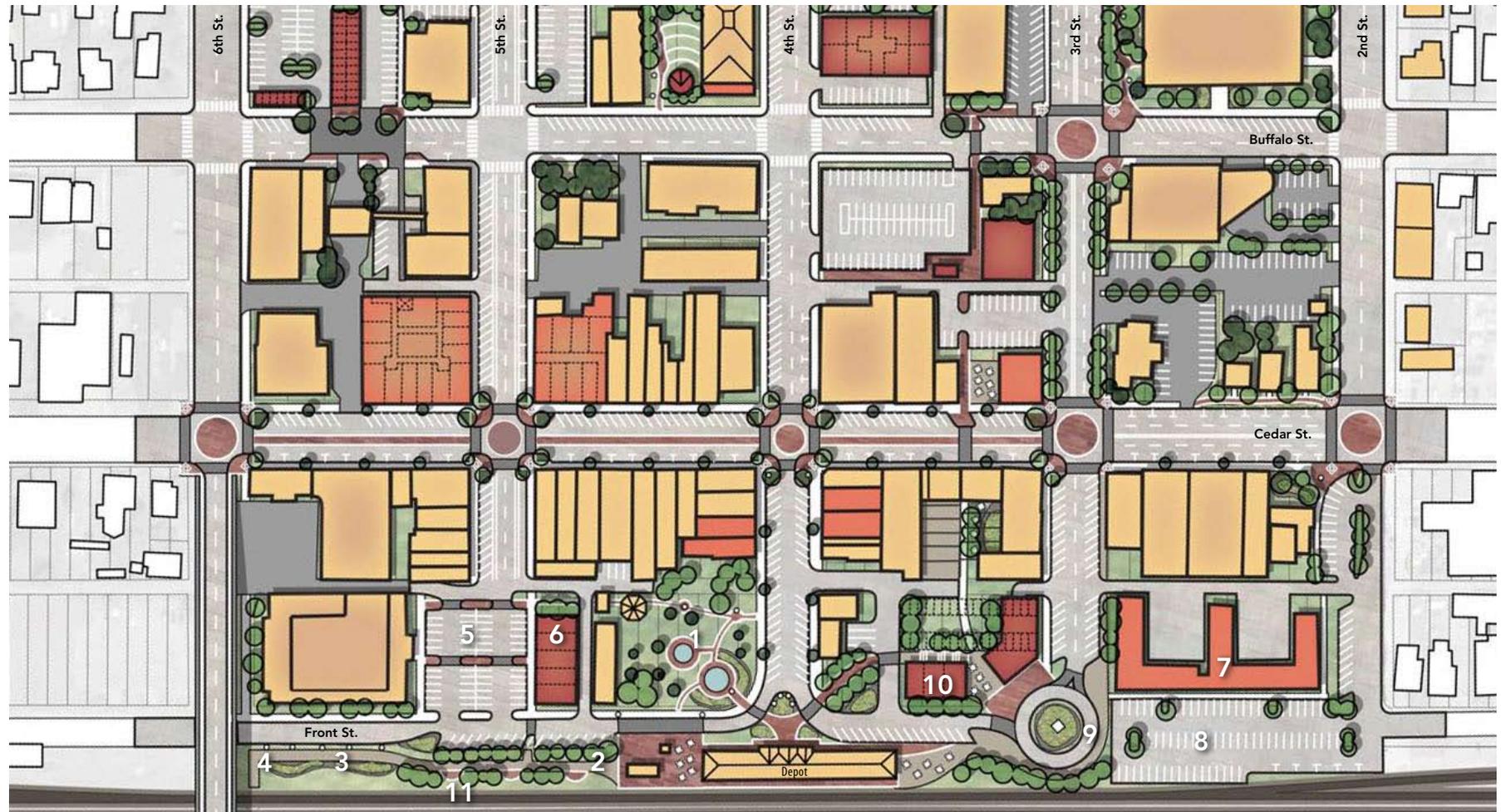
**Depot.** With the relocation of the Rawlins DDA/ Main Street organization out of the depot, it presents an opportunity for another non-profit organization to occupy the space. The City should provide routine maintenance and scheduled upgrades to the facility.

**Depot Park.** The Depot Park is a premier community space for hosting community festivals and events, while not disrupting access to businesses along Cedar Street. Enhancements to the park may include:

- Vacating the alleyway to the north to expand the park to the Rainbow Te-ton Entrepreneurial Center. This creates a cleaner edge with the sides of buildings.
- A new children spray pool provides a place for children interact with one-another in a non-structured play environment.
- The Wyoming Bar's east facade could be retrofitted as a blank screen for movie projection.
- Additional improvements in landscaping and furnishings to complete the space.

**Depot Plaza.** The space immediately surrounding the depot and caboose should be upgraded to include seating, landscape planters, and interpretive markers/ icons that tell the story of Rawlins and the Union Pacific Railroad. Paving the Front Street with colored concrete or pavers near the plaza will strengthen the visual connection between the Depot building and the park. Along the backside of the park and along the rail lines could be a new black fence.

**Map 4.3: Railside Corridor**



- |  |                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Depot Park Expansion                  | 7. Union Pacific Building Reuse      |
| 2. Depot Plaza Upgrades                  | 8. Union Pacific Parking             |
| 3. Main Street Park & Railside Greenway  | 9. Front Street Traffic Improvements |
| 4. South Rawlins Neighborhood Connection | 10. Front Street Redevelopment       |
| 5. Post Office Parking                   | 11. Black fencing along railroad     |
| 6. 5th Street Redevelopment Site         |                                      |



**Main Street Park and Railside Greenway.** The land west of the Depot and adjacent to Union Pacific's rails is mostly open and unused. The concept includes a trail that extends from the Depot to the pedestrian passageway leading to the South Rawlins Neighborhood. The trail would be lined with trees. Periodic overlooks along the promenade provide space for benches and viewing of the passing trains.

**South Rawlins Neighborhood Connection.** The landings to the pedestrian underpasses on the north and south sides of the railroad tracks should be upgraded. Installing lighting and painting murals are low-cost items that help create a pleasant environment and improve safety. A new trail extending from the

**Figure 4.2:** Depot Park and 5th Street Redevelopment



south entrance of the railroad underpass could replace the beaten path and loop back to the Washington Street underpass.

**Martinez Park.** The mural of Our Lady of Guadalupe commemorating Juan Martinez could be improved with a landscaped median. The area beneath the Sixth Street Viaduct is currently a vast expanse of concrete.

**Post Office Parking.** The parking design in front the post office could be doubled. The concept removes the curb between the post office and 5th Street to create a "parking street," with four rows of parking and landscaped islands. The parking gained makes the site on the east side of 5th Street feasible for redevelopment by providing sufficient off-street parking.

**5th Street Redevelopment Site.** The vacant lot on the northeast corner of 5th and Front Streets could be redeveloped for office or commercial use. The expanded parking created in front of the post office would relieve competition for parking between the post office and new use.

**Union Pacific Building Reuse.** Union Pacific intends to reoccupy the Union Pacific building north of Front Street, shifting resources from the auxiliary building to a central location. The alley and rear parking would be improved to meet access and parking requirements.

**Front Street Traffic Improvements.** As discussed in the Front Street Redevelopment Block, a land agreement

**Figure 4.3:** Front Street Redevelopment Block

between Union Pacific and the City would allow the City to gain ownership of the site on the northwest corner of Front and 3rd Streets in return for closing a portion of Front Street for parking by the UP. This change would effectively create a traffic circle at 3rd Street. The circulation permits the one-way eastbound traffic to be directed to Cedar Street, while allowing southbound traffic to return to Cedar Street.

**Front Street Redevelopment Block.** The north side of Front Street from 3rd to 4th Streets is used for parking by Rasmussen's and Union Pacific. However, the land's close proximity to Cedar Street and impressive overlooks of the railroad makes it strong candidate for mixed use redevelopment.

- **Property assembly.** The concept for redevelopment should be organized and proposed as a single development project. The City or DDA/Main Street could assemble the property through a land agreement with property owners.
- **Mixed Use Project with Underground Parking.** The development project could include a one- to two-story structure with a mix of retail, office, and residential uses. The slope of the site allows vehicles to enter from mid-block on 3rd Street to park underneath the building.
- **Front Street Development.** Next to the Mixed Use Project could be a small commercial development.

- **Union Pacific Terrace and Plaza.** The space between the Mixed Use and Front Street Projects would be a raised terrace from which the rail yards and surrounding mountains could be viewed.
- **Pathways.** Pedestrian walkways connect the development project to the Depot, Winter Garden and Cedar Street businesses.
- **Ramussen's Loading Dock.** Ramussen's Furniture is a major business in the downtown district and needs a rear loading dock. The concept includes a loading bay, staging area for loading and dedicated parking spaces for delivery vehicles.

## DOWNTOWN CORE

The retail core of Downtown Rawlins includes Cedar Street from Sixth to Washington Street, and between Buffalo and Front Streets. This district has a comfortable street environment with pedestrian scale lighting, benches, and trees. The concept focuses on enhancing the public environment, while encouraging private response in building rehabilitation and business investment. Its implementation, combined with development of the Railside Corridor, is designed to increase business activity.

### Program

The program for the Downtown Core District includes:

- An attractive but cost-effective Cedar Street streetscape, designed to provide maximum amenity and convenience at moderate cost.
- Improved pedestrian safety and comfort to encourage walking and shopping.
- Façade improvements that respect the integrity and quality of the district's historic buildings
- Upper-story residential development that creates additional activity within the district
- Improved design of on-street and off-street parking, that improves parking adequacy and accessibility.

## Components of the Concept

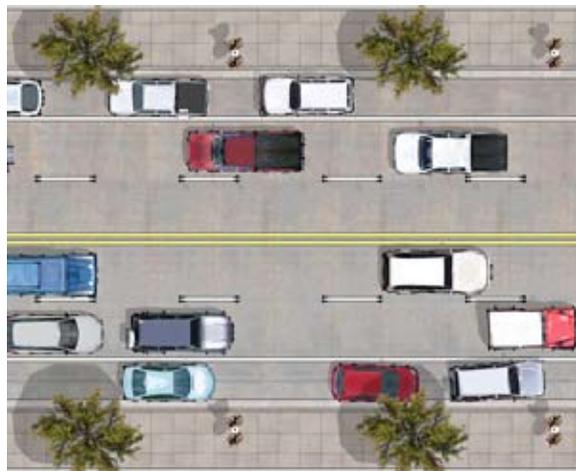
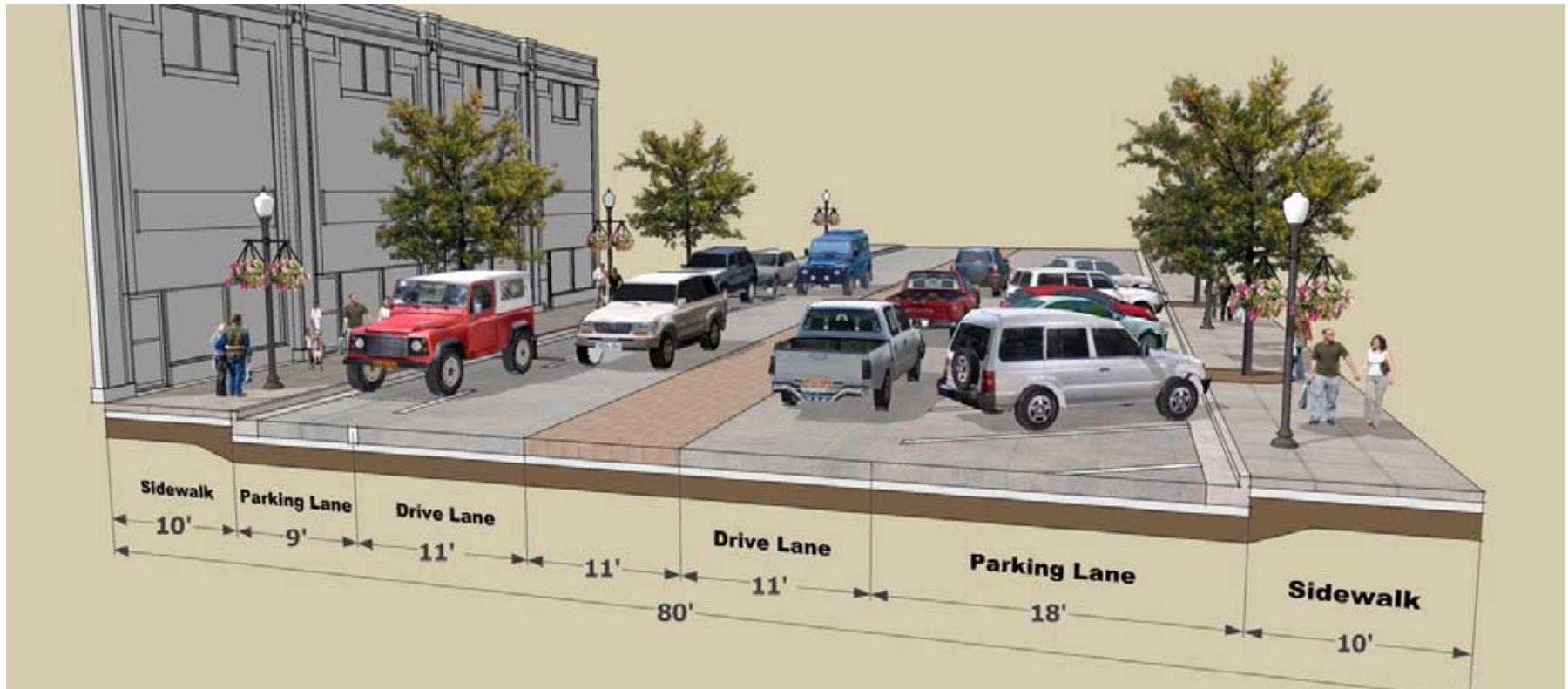
**Streetscape.** Cedar Street should provide its users with a unified, comfortable, and vibrant public environment, with streetscape features that meet both functional and aesthetic needs. Features of the proposed streetscape include:

- **Convert Street from 4-lanes to 3-lanes.** Highway 287 designation for Cedar Street stops at 3rd Street, allowing the City to manage the circulation and parking through the business district. Figures 4.4 to 4.6 shows the conversion of the existing 4-lane street with parallel parking to a 3-lane street with parallel parking on the south side and angled-parking on the north side. The proposed concept retains the sidewalks and curbs in their current location for the majority of the district, minimizing public investment.
- **Virtual median (turning lane).** The installation of a center service lane on Cedar Street provides a place for trucks to park while making deliveries. The lane should be clearly defined by a contrasting pattern. A variety of techniques can be used, including pavers, stamped patterned or colored concrete. Example products can be reviewed at [www.integratedpaving.com](http://www.integratedpaving.com). In addition, this center lane separates vehicles making left- turns from the primary drive lanes. (see page 64, photo #1)
- **Intersections.** While the overall curb line of Cedar Street will remain in place, intersection nodes that extend the curb out to the edge of the parking lane will calm traffic, define the edge of parking, and reduce pedestrian crossing distances. These nodes should be enhanced by paving details, and street

furniture, and also provide locations for interpretive graphics and public art. Nodes are envisioned as having mountable curbs with bollards along the curb line. During winter months the bollards and street furnishings can be removed allowing snow plows to mount the curb when clearing snow. (see page 64, photo #2)

- **Midblocks.** Mid-block nodes provide crossings for pedestrians and places for street landscaping, furniture, and other amenities. These crossings allow people to cross at several points, and increase business by encouraging two-sided shopping.
- **Crosswalks.** Crosswalks should be clearly defined by a contrasting pattern. A variety of techniques can be used, including pavers, stamped or patterned concrete, colored concrete, or a contrasting scoring pattern. Level of detail and type of materials should be consistent with other paving materials used in the project, and will vary depending on project budget. Speed tables – a slight elevation of the crosswalk above the paving surface with a very gradual vehicular incline in the street – are effective at increasing pedestrian security and slowing traffic to desired business district speeds.
- **Street Trees and Furniture.** Street tree plantings and furnishings such as benches and trash receptacles should be located at intersection and mid-block nodes. The design and color of these elements should be coordinated. Each block should include bicycle parking in convenient and visible locations that do not obstruct pedestrian flow. Simple facilities such as individual inverted U's or "hitching posts" are relatively inexpensive, unobtrusive, and secure.

Figure 4.4: Cedar Street Proposed Section



Figures 4.5 and 4.6:  
Existing and Proposed Street Section Improvements



Descriptions on Opposite Page

- **Street Lighting Improvements.** Much of Downtown Rawlins is lighted by acorn pedestrian fixtures, with attached banners, and graphic panels that depict the native wildlife of Wyoming's high country. These fixtures are in good condition, and should remain as part of the streetscape. As an inexpensive way of adding additional color to the street, hanging baskets may be installed to posts at regular intervals.

Cobra-head fixtures on 25-foot galvanized poles supplement the ornamental lighting. A possible replacement would be a fixtures with black casings mounted to a black pole. New lamps should have photometric performance that directs light to the ground plane and avoids light pollution. Height and

spacing of fixtures should provide adequate but not excessive illumination levels, and even distribution of light along the street roadway, and somewhat higher levels at intersections. (photo #6)

- **Accent building lighting.** Currently, the cornices of the buildings on Cedar Street are coursed with holiday lights that add to the district's ambiance at night. However, power cords currently draped across the sidewalk from outlets on light poles create a hazard and visual clutter. The installation of white LED strand lighting offers a low cost alternative to traditional string lighting that can be powered by roof mounted solar panels. Alternatively, power could be drawn from the alleys, and tied to the city's

electric meter. (photo #5)

- **Public Art.** Rawlins currently has a number of public murals that help to create a unique sense of place. Intersection and mid-block nodes and planned open spaces throughout the business corridors provide spaces for public art, including sculptures, mosaics, wall art and other two – and three-dimensional installations. Many communities have had great success with consignment programs, where local and regional artist submit sculptures in juried competitions that are displayed for specific periods of time. The art of children should also be incorporated into streetscape materials and concepts. (photo #3 & 4)

Figure 4.5: Cedar Street looking west from 4th Street



Opposite Page

1. Asphalt stamp in Manitou Springs, CO
2. Mountable curbs in Lexington, NE
3. Public art program in Gillette, Wyoming
4. Public art in Urbandale, IA
5. Alter lighting source for accent lighting
6. Supplemental lighting in De Pere, WI



**Winter Garden.** The harsh winters of Rawlins' mountainous climate often forces residents indoors and leaves residents with limited options for public gathering. Behind the Windy Corner Store and Domino's Pizza are small parking lots within the open shell of the stores' original building footprint. This concept suggests the transformation of this space into a winter garden. Utilizing kalwall (a semi-translucent material) to enclose the roof and create a greenhouse, the space could then be used year round, providing the community with a greenspace that can be enjoyed in the depths of the coldest winter. The winter garden would connect the to the Front Street Redevelopment project to the south and General Rawlins Passageway to the north.

**General Rawlins Passageway.** Forming the spine of a district wide system of midblock crossings and pedestrian linkages, the General Rawlins Passageway links several centers of community life together. These links include:

- Rawlins Depot
- Union Pacific Terrace, and Third and Front Streets Development
- Winter Garden
- Cedar Street Retail District
- Public Parking Garage
- Carbon County Library and Civic District

**Passageways and Alleys.** The concept suggests a series of pedestrian passageways between Cedar and Pine Streets, connecting the proposed parking structure, Carbon County Library, Jeffrey Center, and Carbon County Courthouse. These landscaped pathways would preserve service access to buildings and parking lots, while creating enjoyable pedestrian routes.

Pedestrian alleyways and passageways are often used by pedestrians for access to parking and shortcuts between two points. However, convenient alleys are primarily service areas for buildings, lined with loading docks and dumpsters.

**Figure 4.6:** Cedar Street aerial view looking southwest



Opposite Page

1. Cedar Street Redevelopment Site and Outdoor Plaza
2. Plaza space in Wauwatosa, WI
3. Proposed General Rawlins Passageway
- 4&5. Winter Garden Space



**Cedar Street Redevelopment Site.** Located at the northwest corner of Third and Cedar Streets, the redevelopment project would revitalize one of Rawlins' most important sites with a new commercial use. Access should be reoriented to the rear of the property, eliminating the curb cut on Cedar Street and increasing the amount of on-street parking. The new arrangement would create a common space shared between neighboring businesses for a small outdoor plaza with seating.

**Third Street Development.** Situated midblock between Buffalo and Cedar Streets, the site is adjacent to the proposed public parking structure. Anticipated to be used for either office or retail space, parking for the development would be provided by the parking garage. Orientation of the primary entrance would be directed towards Third Street, with secondary entrances oriented towards the parking garage and General Rawlins Passageway.

**Increasing parking adequacy.** Parking is clearly a significant issue for Downtown Rawlins and the plan recommends several strategies to improve this important system. These include parking structures,

parking lot upgrades and efficiencies, pathways to parking, and wayfinding.

- **On-Street Parking Configuration.** All on-street parking is striped for parallel parking. Streets widths are broad enough to provide diagonal parking on one side and parallel parking on the opposite. Throughout the district, the north and west sides of the street should be restriped for diagonal, which will yield an additional 9 to 12 more parking stalls per block.
- **Fourth Street Parking Structure.** New parking structures are expensive but effective ways of dramatically increasing the parking supply. This concept recommends that a parking structure be constructed at the intersection of Fourth and Buffalo Streets. Using the slope of the land, the garage would be two-stories, with the upper deck accessed from Buffalo Street and the lower deck accessed from Forth Street. Pedestrian access would be located at center block, with pedestrian pathways connecting the garage to Buffalo, Fourth, and Cedar Streets.

Developing additional parking at this site addresses a serious need for parking along Cedar Street between Third and Fourth Streets. The garage

would serve nearby businesses, including the Elks Lodge and Bank of the West, and new commercial development.

- **Pathways.** Attractive pathways between parking and destinations make people more tolerant of a longer walk to their destinations. The plan calls for alley pathways between Buffalo and Cedar Streets connecting to a new parking structure; and additional pathways radiating from the Jeffrey Center, connecting to the Carbon County Library, Courthouse, and Sroptimist Park.
- **Wayfinding.** Directional signage to parking should be incorporated into an overall downtown wayfinding system, and can improve user satisfaction and convenience.

**Upper-story residential rehabilitation.** Housing is a key element of most downtown revitalization programs and is central to this plan's vision for the district as a lively mixed use neighborhood. Residential development adds 24-hour occupancy to the district, helping downtown evolve into a neighborhood. The rehabilitation of upper-story units is part of this downtown housing strategy. The program establishes



two rehabilitation projects:

- **Daley Building (Miller Block).** The rehabilitation of this former hotel would create 14 spacious apartments in the heart of Rawlins' retail core. Apartments could surround an atrium that functions as community space for tenants. However, a hurdle for the project is the lack of on-site parking. To address this problem, parking for the project is suggested to be located to the north of the building in the proposed Sixth and Buffalo Streets lot. Either garages or covered reserved spaces would provide 1.5 to 2 spaces per unit.
- **Ferguson Building.** One of the most intact historic structures in downtown, the second-story of this building would allow for the creation of eight housing units. Parking for these units could either be located in a lot to the rear of the building, or within the structure with access from the alley. With internal parking, however, commercial space on the first floor would be limited to the front half of the building.

**Rainbow Te-ton Entrepreneur Center.** This economic development project, launched by the DDA/Main Street, rehabilitates two small commercial structures,

adjacent to Depot Park. The center will act as a catalyst for new economic development by providing space for small business upstarts in Rawlins.

**Collaborative Parking Lot.** Improved parking lot design and efficiency can also improve the functioning of downtown's parking resources. The redesign of parking facilities at Sixth and Buffalo Streets, for example, would add additional parking stalls for district employees, residents and customers. For this lot to be created it will require a public/private partnership that includes the City of Rawlins, St. Thomas Church, the Bank, and Daley Building owners. Located at the center of the site plan is a garage that would provide spaces to tenants of residential units in the renovated Daley Building. A development site at the intersection of Sixth and Buffalo Street would screen the lot and also establish additional commercial activity along Buffalo Street.

**Building Façades and Signs.** The streetscape, while important, is the foreground for the buildings of Downtown Rawlins. Generally, façades should be upgraded to restore windows similar in character to original features; replace inappropriate storefronts

with features that reflect original design; and include awnings, doors, and other features that add scale. However, diversity is also appropriate and a uniform look is neither necessary nor even desirable along the street.

A majority of business signs are flat, wall mounted signs, although some canopy and projecting signs are present. Well-designed projecting signs can be very attractive in a main street setting, but back lighted, projecting box signs should be avoided and replaced. Signs should not obscure large areas or major design features of building façades. The artistic use of materials such as neon or LED's is also encouraged in the downtown core.

Financing incentives that encourage façade improvement and restoration should be part of the downtown program. However, these incentives do not work effectively until building owners see an economic return from these investments in added business or higher revenues. Ultimately, programs such as low-interest loans, tax increments or abatements, and façade easements can encourage owners to reinvest in their properties.

## CIVIC AND SERVICE DISTRICT

The Civic and Service District extends from Buffalo Street to the north side of Spruce Street, and between Sixth and Third Streets. Within this area are a number of banks, churches and civic institutions including, the Carbon County Library, Elks Lodge, Jeffery Center, Masonic Lodge, and Carbon County Courthouse. The concept proposes improvements to the area's sidewalks and pedestrian connections, as well as considers the development of owner and renter occupied housing options within Downtown Rawlins.

### Program

The program for the Civic and Service District includes:

- Strong pedestrian connections between the downtown, and civic facilities.
- Improvements to Soroptimist Park
- A new public space that connects the Carbon County Library with the Jeffery Center.
- Improvements to parking availability and efficiency.
- A new urban neighborhood that includes apartments, and small lot single-family residential.

## Components of the Concept

**Elks Lodge Rehabilitation.** The Elks Lodge has been a part of the community since the late nineteenth century. Constructed in the Greek revival style, the structure has undergone major modifications. During the 1960s the front two-story portico was replaced with a false front, indicative of the international style of architecture. Recently, the lodge has been considering the restoration of the building to its original condition. As a first step in the rehabilitation, the lodge should consider hiring an architect specializing in historic renovations to assess the conditions of the remaining facade.

**Soroptimist Park.** Soroptimist Park could double its size with the loss of the building on the adjacent property. The present park would remain intact, with the pathway extended towards the courthouse. A new shelter or bandstand at the street-level could be constructed for staging small concerts or presentation, while the rest of the site is terraced towards the alley. The terraces would act as natural seating spaces.

**Pine Street Homes.** Small single-family dwellings along Pine Street would fill in vacant lots. The existing small historic house made of stone should set the size and scale for the proposed construction. Units would be rear loaded and have a central commons. Maintenance could be shared by all property owners through a small association fee.



Top: Elks Lodge Facade, early 1900's

Below: Elks Lodge, 2009

Map 4.4: Civic and Service District



Existing dwelling near #3.

- 1. Elks Lodge Rehabilitation
- 2. Soroptimist Park
- 3. Pine Street Homes
- 4. Buffalo Street Condos/Apartments
- 5. Jeffrey Center Connections
- 6. Courthouse Linkages
- 7. Fourth & Pine Linkage
- 8. St. Joseph's Linkage
- 9. St. Joseph's Linear Park
- 10. Collaborative Parking
- 11. Motel Redevelopment Sites



**Figure 4.3:** Buffalo Street Condos/Apartments



**Buffalo Street Condos/Apartments.** This project anticipates developing the site of the Elks Lodge gravel parking lot into a two-story, sixteen unit residential building, over parking. Using the topography of the site, parking for the building would be located underneath the structure. This covered parking area could individual garage bays or open to the rest of the lot. Parking for the Elks Lodge would be transferred to the proposed public garage across the street.



**Civic District Connections.** Radiating from the Jeffrey Center, this network of pathways connects the community center with important destinations throughout the district. These civic connections include:

- **Courthouse Linkage.** This pathway travels west from the Jeffrey Center to the east doors of the Carbon County Courthouse. The second half of this pathway leads from the courthouse’s south entrance, crosses Pine Street and connects to Soroptimist Park and Buffalo Street.
- **St. Joseph’s Linkage.** Crossing the Jeffrey Center parking lot to the southeast, this pathway leads to St. Joseph’s Catholic Church, where it then connects to St. Joseph’s Park, and the General Rawlins Passageway.
- **Fourth and Pine Linkage.** Crossing the Jeffrey Center parking lot to the southwest, this pathway terminates into the city sidewalk network at Fourth and Pine Streets.
- **St. Joseph’s Linear Park.** This small linear park on Third Street between Pine and Buffalo Streets is an important link in the districts pedestrian passageway system. Pathways through the park link the General Rawlins Passageway, Jeffrey Center, and Carbon County Courthouse. Gardens at the northern end of the park create a meditative space, from which views of St Joseph’s Catholic Church are framed.



Above: Potential Redevelopment Sites along Spruce Street

**Figure 4.3:** Collaborative Parking



**Collaborative Parking Lot.** Previously mentioned in the Cedar Street project area, the Collaborative Parking Lot is intended to improve parking availability for City Hall, St. Thomas Church, Rawlins State Bank, and the Daley Building (Miller Block) housing project. The concept includes using the existing parking lot for St. Thomas Church and assembling it with the property to the south into a single parking lot. The vacant structure on the southern property would be removed. A series of garages could be built on site, providing covered parking for residences at the Daley Building. Also, a small shelter along Buffalo Street would provide outdoor seating space for nearby properties, while holding the building edge on the street.

Peak parking demands for church programs, city functions and residential living complement each other, making the project ideal for a public/private partnership.

**Motels Redevelopment.** Independent motels were developed along this traditional tourist corridor near the uplifts and Prison. As they aged, these motels were at a competitive disadvantage relative to motel/hotel chains and nationally-branded retailers near Interstate 80. However, some of them can offer distinctive accommodations along a thematic corridor. Others may present attractive redevelopment sites.

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## CONNECTIONS

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The previous discussion has considered the design of the district's streetscape and the major projects that make up the heart of the downtown development program. This section describes connections that link features of downtown together and to the rest of the city. It also considers a different kind of connection – institutional connections that create partnerships that can support many of the initiatives identified in this plan. Map 4.5 shows the system for the physical connections. Specific components of the system include:

- South Rawlins Neighborhood Connections
- Connections to Interstate 80 and the Old Lincoln Highway
- Connections to the Wyoming Frontier Prison and Museum
- Pedestrian Passageway System
- Institutional Connections
- Gateway and Wayfinding Enhancements

### *South Rawlins Neighborhood Connections*

A stronger physical link should be developed to connect Downtown Rawlins and the South Rawlins Neighborhood, encouraging walking and biking between the districts, and encouraging visitors to explore. The Sixth and Washington Street pedestrian underpasses are the connecting corridors between these two districts. The plan recommends the following feature to strengthen the Downtown connection

- A continuous trail/sidewalk, creating a promenade along Front Street through a linear park environment.
- A continuous trail to the south of the underpass that connects to Martinez Mural and Washington Street underpass.
- Interpretive graphics, murals, and lighting to reinforce the connection.

### *Connections to Interstate 80 and the Old Lincoln Highway*

Transportation has played a key role in the growth and development of Rawlins. However, the importance of downtown in providing services to travelers has faded. Today, the experience that most have of Rawlins is only that of its interstate interchanges, and the gas stations and hotels that cluster around them. Strengthening the downtown district's connections to these transportation networks is an important step in attracting travelers into the city, and to experience the community. This plan recommends the following features to strengthen transportation connections to the Downtown.

**Corridor improvements.** These improvements should announce arrival to the city and create an enjoyable street environment, encouraging exploration. An improved corridor environment along Cedar and Spruce Streets should include:

- A pattern of landscaping, including tree and shrubs
- Improved roadway lighting, that reinforces the overall design and aesthetics of the corridor
- Banners and graphics that welcome visitors

**Icons/Gateway Features.** Located at key community entrances, these features welcome the traveler to the city. Interpretive elements provide an opportunity to incorporate art and to tell the story of the community.

**Wayfinding.** This signage identifies key destinations and provides continuous guidance to key community destinations.

### **Wyoming Frontier Prison and Museum Connection**

A stronger physical connection should be developed to connect the Wyoming Frontier Prison to Downtown, leading visitors between the district and the museum. Fifth and Third Streets are the connecting corridors between these two important destinations. The plan recommends the following features to strengthen the connection:

- Interpretive graphics to reinforce the connection.
- Wayfinding to guide visitors from downtown and the highway.

### **Pedestrian Passageway System**

Improving pedestrian connections is an important component in the creation of a well connected and vibrant downtown district. The pedestrian passageway system links the district together through a series of interconnected pathways that provide “shortcuts” between key destinations, businesses, and parking facilities to create a “park once” district. Key components of the pedestrian passageway system include:

Railside Greenway  
 General Rawlins Passageway.  
 St Joseph’s Linear Park  
 Soroptimist Park Passageway  
 Jeffrey Center Connectors.

### **Institutional Connections**

While physical linkages are very important, institutional connections will be as critical to realizing the plan. A strong and vital Downtown improves perceptions of the entire city, increases the community’s ability to attract new investment and people, and expands the base of support enjoyed by each institution. This plan recommends an alliance between three primary institutions in the city:

**The City of Rawlins.** City government will be extremely instrumental to achieving the vision for the future of Downtown Rawlins. The city will be actively engaged in financing, including tax increment financing and bond issues, and land assembly through its redevelopment authority powers.

**Rawlins Downtown Development Authority (DDA) / Main Street Organization.** Rawlins’ DDA/Main Street organization has been instrumental in the revitalization of Downtown. Main Street should continue to work closely with the city in planning district wide events, fundraising, marketing, and promotions for Downtown.

**Carbon County.** The County is a significant partner in regional economic development, tourism and community improvement.

### **Gateway and Wayfinding Enhancements**

Gateway features at key community entrances welcome the traveler to the city and identify destinations. All gateway features into Rawlins should have a consistent theme that strengthens the city’s overall identity. Elements of the design should include such themes as geological formations (uplifts and mountains), wind, transportation (railroad and the Lincoln Highway), wildlife (elks and buffalo) and historic sites (Wyoming Frontier Prison and Cedar Street). These design details should be carried throughout the community, including on banners, flags, street signs and wayfinding.

A citywide wayfinding system should be implemented to guide travelers to key destinations. Map 4.5 shows a mix of wayfinding signs oriented to vehicles and pedestrians. A citywide wayfinding system should include:

- Directional signs at key decision points.
- Destination arrival signs.
- Pedestrian-scaled signs, such as blade signs, with distance indications in number of blocks.
- Continuous guidance to key destinations such as Downtown, Courthouse, Library, and Wyoming Frontier Prison

Map 4.5: Gateway and Wayfinding





New truss system at 2nd and Cedar Streets.



## POLICIES

The previous elements of this vision plan presented the physical concepts of the Development Plan. The principles discussed here allude to many of these concepts, but are emphasized here as a framework for policy considerations. These continuing policies include:

- Retail and service development
- Historic preservation and restoration
- Housing development
- Public art program

### *Retail and Service Development*

Overall Policy:

- Consolidate and strengthen the existing retail and service environment, stabilizing existing retailers, expanding the number of people who come Downtown for activities, filling available space, and expanding the supply of space.
- Concentrate new businesses in areas of demonstrated potential strength for the downtown: specialty retail, furniture and home furnishings (specialty or general), food and beverage, clothing and accessories, sporting goods, and office support retail and services.
- Increase the demand for retail space in the market by increasing the number of people who use Downtown as a destination, and connecting Downtown to

other community attractions, including the Historic Wyoming State Prison, Martinez Park, Rawlins Depot, and civic centers.

Actions and Program Directions:

- Encourage retail, restaurant, and personal services in downtown storefronts with street exposure.
- Engage Rawlins' proven and innovative retailers, such as Rasmusson's, as mentors for potential new retail and service entrepreneurs.
- Aggressively market and recruit retailers in the Downtown area, matching needs with available space. Focus on areas of demonstrated potential for Downtown and in-town retailing, including submarkets where local retail spending exceeds the locally-based sales.
- Reinforce the City's program of events with other special themes and promotions. Provide high quality ongoing events that complement traditional celebrations, and extend fun and festivity throughout the year. Target events to both families and young people.
- Promote high standards of customer service to strengthen the district's identification with local consumers. Publicize these standards through a Customer Commitment Contract, prominently posted in all retail and consumer service businesses. Assure that the most convenient parking in the area is reserved for customers.
- Take extra steps to put fun and festivity into the Downtown shopping experience. New amenities, including public art, should enrich the experience of living and working in the District.

- Identify special niches and help put projects together that responds to these concepts. Projects may group a number of related, small retailers, artisan, or service providers in a single large space.

### *Historic Preservation and Restoration Policy*

Historic preservation and adaptive reuse are important to downtown. This plan recommends a building development policy that encourages preservation and adaptive reuse. Building owners and business should consider the City's Design Guidelines and work with Rawlins DDA/Main Street for making improvements. Components of this policy include:

- Adopting flexible building codes that encourage upper level residential adaptive reuse. Housing development is a foundation of successful downtown revitalization around the country. Federal tax incentives, construction costs, the nature and preferences of residents in urban districts, and knowledge of successes in other Wyoming cities and historic districts can encourage residential use of upper levels. Rawlins should review building codes to ensure that they encourage adaptive reuse without compromising health, safety and welfare. In addition, the City should provide technical assistance to help downtown property owners rehabilitate downtown structures. The city should also consider reasonable design standards to guide reuse and rehabilitation projects.

- ♦ *Providing gap financing for major rehabilitation projects.* Appropriate historic rehabilitation may not be economically feasible without financing assistance. Elements of a potential financing program are discussed in detail in

Chapter 5, Implementation and are identified below

- ♦ **Historic tax credits.** The historic tax credit provides a 20% investment tax credit against passive income for certified rehabilitation projects. Potentially eligible buildings include the Daley and Ferguson Buildings.
- ♦ **Tax Increment Financing.** The city should consider TIF to leverage substantial rehabilitation efforts. Alternatively, a portion of other, energy-related revenue sources may be used to assist with financing of downtown projects.
- ♦ **Community Development Block Grants.** CDBG funds can be used to provide gap financing for projects that meet statutory requirements for the program.
- ♦ **HOME.** Home Housing Investment Partnership funds may also be used for projects, including new construction ownership developments that are targeted toward low and moderate income households.
- ♦ **Preservation Easements.** Donation of façade easements can provide meaningful tax advantages to building owners and can open some avenues of public financing for façade restoration.
- ♦ **Other local public and private resources.** The public and private sectors could collaborate to offer financing that provides a real incentive to participants. The result could have major

benefits to both property owners and the community's business community.

- **Infill Development.** Infill development, especially along Cedar Street should respect the existing character of the district. Sometimes, rehabilitation is not feasible because of structural deterioration or economic issues. Downtown growth is a process, and natural growth includes change as well as preservation. However, new downtown construction should retain a strong street orientation and preserve the fabric and patterns of traditional downtown buildings.
- **Using design guidelines.** The Secretary of the Interior's Standards provide an excellent starting point for evaluating downtown rehabilitation projects. Particularly important is restoration of buildings that have been "modernized: or severely modified with unsympathetic facades". New development in the downtown core should preserve the scale, materials, and character of traditional architecture in the District. The illustrations in the appendix shows potential retrofits for a building façade, as an example. Priority elements include display windows, upper-story window installations, restoration of façade materials, and awnings. Property and business owners should refer to the Downtown Design Guidelines for assistance.

### **Housing Development**

The downtown development program should place a priority on new housing development and adaptive reuse of upper levels for residential development. As discussed earlier, housing is a key element of most downtown revitalization programs and is important

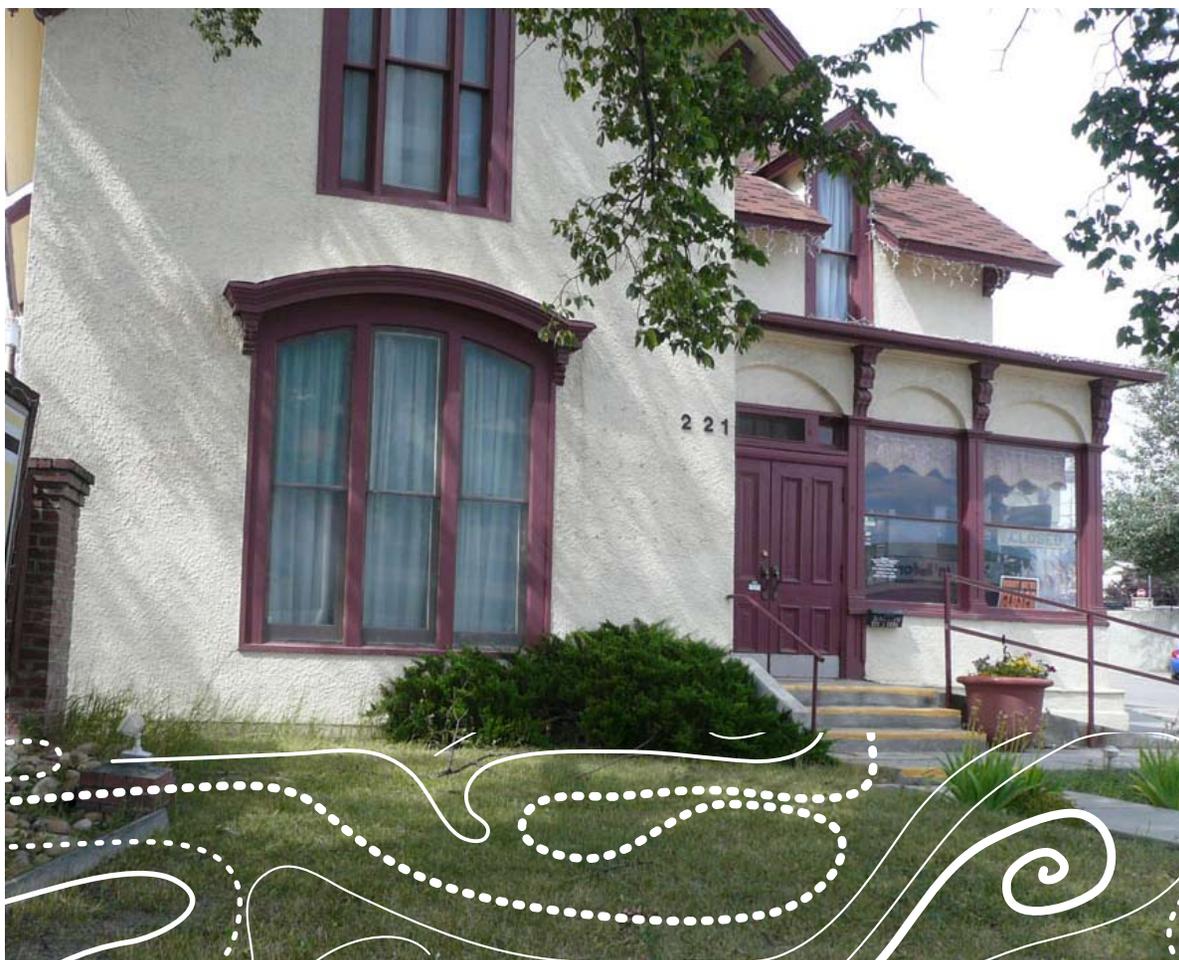
to this plan's vision of the future of business district as a lively mixed-use neighborhood. Residential development makes downtown a living, 24-hour neighborhood.

Housing development policy in and near the downtown core includes both upper level adaptive reuse and new construction where opportunities present themselves. Many upper-level units will initially be rental, although some may provide owner-occupied apartments for people who live over their businesses or otherwise seek equity settings. Existing tax-driven incentives such as the Low-Income Housing Tax Credits and Historic Tax Credits are oriented to rental housing. However, apartment-type condos have been successful in many downtown markets.

Public actions and policies necessary to encourage delivery of downtown housing include preservation codes and building permit policies that encourage upper level reuse, production financing programs including the use of available federal tax credits, and shared use policies for residential use of commercial off-street parking lots. In some cases, shared vertical circulation and cooperative development of several adjacent buildings can improve project feasibility.

Housing projects include:

- Front Street Redevelopment (new condominium/apartments construction Streets)
- Daley Building (upper-story reuse)
- Ferguson Building (upper-story reuse)
- Buffalo Street Condos/Apartments)
- Pine Street Homes (new single-family construction)



chapter

# FIVE

## Implementing the Plan

The Downtown Rawlins Plan presents an ambitious and varied program that helps the district take advantage of its potential. This chapter considers several factors critical to implementing the Plan, including:

- ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE
- REGULATORY RECOMMENDATIONS
- PRIORITY CRITERIA
- OPINION OF PROBABLE COSTS
- FUNDING TECHNIQUES

The Downtown Plan and its scheduling will inevitably change over time. Some projects may advance as opportunities or demands open, while others will fade in importance. Yet, the overall vision is compelling and will result in a more vibrant, productive downtown. This section provides tools to allow the city and downtown stakeholders to mark progress and make necessary “mid-course corrections” on the journey to accomplishing this vision.

### ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK

Successful downtown development requires capable organizations and partnerships. Downtown management organizations are similar to shopping center managers – they handle promotions and marketing, maintain the character and sense of a place, stage events, improve the quality of the district, and provide a unified public voice for Downtown. They can also serve as agents for development, buying and selling property and taking other actions that promote private investment. The Rawlins Main Street Organization has also been a strong advocate for the downtown district, and has been tremendously successful. This plan continues to encourage public and private agencies to recognize the Rawlins DDA/Main Street.

#### ***Downtown Development Authority / Main Street Recommendations***

Often, downtown development or main street organizations lack adequate resources to accomplish their work over the long term. The following recommendations address the nexus between



organizational and development goals, and establish key directions that can help maintain Rawlins DDA/Main Street as a leader of the Downtown revitalization effort.

- Continue a strong fiscal base so that the organization maintains working capital for investment.
- Continue its role in real estate development. This plan identifies a number of substantial developments, and the DDA/Main Street has been an excellent vehicle to do what city government cannot – have a direct stake in projects. The Rawlins DDA/Main Street acts as an equity partner, using strategic investments in market-based projects to expand its
- assets. However, the success of each project should consider transition to private ownership. Projects for new construction should generally be led by the private sector development.
- If involved in development projects, choose real estate very carefully and strategically. It should only hold property to encourage a transition from one use to another, and should not be a long-term owner of real estate. The greatest benefit comes from turning over property for uses that increase property values in the district.
- Expand the District’s program of events.



## REGULATORY RECOMMENDATIONS

The City of Rawlins should update their entire zoning ordinance after updating their comprehensive plan. More specifically, this plan recommends creating a new district for downtown. The C-1 Classification is written more as a neighborhood commercial district than a downtown zoning district. Aside from that, the current ordinance complies with the concepts and principles included in this plan.

- Continue to increase interfaces with other community organizations, including the City, the Chamber, the Carbon County Economic Development Corporation, Wyoming Frontier Prison and Museum, and others. Cooperation and joint marketing materials can encourage visitors to the city to also visit Downtown.
- Ultimately, operate as a “mall manager” for Downtown. Strong retail downtowns share characteristics of a unified shopping center, and a development corporation, probably funded through a business improvement district (SID), is a logical manager for the downtown enterprise.

### *Downtown Special Improvement District*

Local Improvement Districts (LID’s) are special assessment districts, permitting businesses within a district to finance public capital improvement projects and district management, promotion, and maintenance. LID’s are created by the City following a specific process established by State Statute and administered by a LID Board. While LID’s are a valuable tool, assessments should not burden downtown retailers. This plan recommends a policy of public financing of major capital projects, with required LID funding of maintenance and district management and promotion. Maintenance would include sidewalks, plants, and cornice lighting.

## PRIORITY CRITERIA

The Downtown Plan establishes three major project areas. Certain projects are especially beneficial because they create spin-off development, creating conditions that encourage a maximum private sector response. The criteria used to establish priorities include the following:

- Does the project respond to specific or high-profile community issues or needs?
- Does the project generate maximum private market response?
- What is the project's potential to transform the image of Downtown?
- Does the project attract both local residents and visitors, increasing business traffic and creating new reasons for people to be downtown?
- Does the project support the growth of existing businesses?
- Does the project capitalize on established, but unmet, market needs?
- Can the project be realistically implemented within a reasonable time frame with potentially available resources?
- Does the project generate substantial community support or consensus?



Table 5.1: Priority Projects

ITEM	Ongoing	<3 Year	3-10 Years	10+ Years
<b>RAILSIDE CORRIDOR</b>				
Depot Improvements	X			
Rawlins Main Street Park Improvements		X		
Railside Greenway		X		
6th Street Underpass Improvements		X		
South side trail (City)			X	
5th Street Parking Street Project (Post Office)			X	
5th Street Development Project				X
Expanded Depot Park			X	
Rainbow Te-ton Rehabilitation		X		
Winter Garden Conversion	X		X	
Front Street Redevelopment Project & Depot Connection				X
Traffic Circulation Improvements (roundabout)				X
Union Pacific Parking Lot				X
Union Pacific Building Reuse			X	
Daley Building Reuse			X	
Ferguson Building Reuse			X	
Strand Theater Reuse		X		



Table 5.1: Priority Projects

ITEM	Ongoing	<3 Year	3-10 Years	10+ Years
<b>DOWNTOWN CORE</b>				
Cedar Street Streetscape Enhancements	X	X		
Parking Lines		X		
2nd Street Plaza			X	
Upgraded Truss at 3rd and Cedar Streets				X
Redevelopment at 3rd and Cedar Street (NW)			X	
Outdoor Plaza Space and Rear Parking			X	
General Rawlins Passageway		X		
<b>CIVIC AND SERVICES DISTRICT</b>				
New Parking Structure at 4th and Buffalo Streets			X	
St. Joseph Park and Trail			X	
Jeffrey Center Pathways			X	
Pine Street Residential			X	
Buffalo Street Condos			X	X
Soroptimist Park Upgrades		X		
Courthouse Passageway		X		
Motel Site Reuse/Redevelopment	X			
Collaborative Parking Development		X		

## OPINION OF PROBABLE COSTS

The Opinion of Probable Costs considers capital costs associated to site preparation, softscape (plants and soil), hardscape (materials and concrete), and development costs (construction). Utilities are excluded from the projection and require additional study. A 15% contingency is applied to the subtotal along with a 12% design and testing.

Probably Costs for improving Cedar Street Streetscape range from \$150,000 to \$250,000 between intersections for each block. Each intersection is anticipated to be about \$140,000. Utilities are excluded from this projection. The City should consult with a licensed landscape architect to improve schematic design and consider improvements to coincide with major infrastructure improvements.



**Table 5.2: Opinion of Probable Costs**

ITEM	Site Prep	Softscape	Hardscape	Development	SUBTOTAL	Contingency - 15%	Design and Testing - 12%	Total
<b>Courthouse Lawn Connection</b>	\$24,000	\$8,924	\$176,840	-	\$209,764	\$31,465	\$25,172	<b>\$266,400</b>
<b>Pine Street Redevelopment (Single-family Housing)</b>	\$83,600	\$30,356	\$79,760	\$400,000	\$593,716	\$89,057	\$71,246	<b>\$754,019</b>
<b>St. Thomas Trail on 3rd Street</b>	\$45,600	\$32,660	\$65,900	\$0	\$144,160	\$21,624	\$17,299	<b>\$183,083</b>
<b>Jeffrey Center Pathways</b>	\$24,000	\$18,782	\$57,280	\$0	\$100,062	\$15,009	\$12,007	<b>\$127,079</b>
<b>Cedar and 3rd Street Redevelopment Project</b>	\$61,600	\$16,880	\$152,500	\$72,000	\$302,980	\$45,447	\$36,358	<b>\$384,785</b>
<b>3rd Street Redevelopment (between Buffalo and Cedar)</b>	\$24,300	\$6,504	\$34,360	\$588,000	\$653,164	\$97,975	\$78,380	<b>\$829,518</b>
<b>Parking Structure (4th and Buffalo)</b>	\$57,000	\$20,708	\$91,920	\$1,820,000	\$1,989,628	\$298,444	\$238,755	<b>\$2,526,828</b>
<b>5th Street Redevelopment and Parking Improvements</b>	\$57,000	\$14,060	\$174,720	\$528,000	\$773,780	\$116,067	\$92,854	<b>\$982,701</b>
<b>Collaborative Parking Site and St. Thomas Improvements</b>	\$114,200	\$28,230	\$192,820	\$270,000	\$605,250	\$90,788	\$72,630	<b>\$768,668</b>
<b>Soroptimist's Park *</b>	\$29,000	\$32,800	\$57,320	\$25,600	\$144,720	\$21,708	\$17,366	<b>\$183,794</b>
<b>Buffalo Street Condos</b>	\$187,222	\$23,632	\$67,840	\$3,003,000	\$3,281,694	\$492,254	\$393,803	<b>\$4,167,752</b>
<b>Winter Garden*</b>	\$16,400	\$41,920	\$42,400	\$49,200	\$149,920	\$22,488	\$17,990	<b>\$190,398</b>
<b>Railside Linear Park</b>	\$63,000	\$73,520	\$118,950	\$0	\$255,470	\$38,321	\$30,656	<b>\$324,447</b>
<b>Front Street Roundabout and UP Parking</b>	\$120,008	\$17,109	\$241,232	\$80,000	\$458,349	\$68,752	\$55,002	<b>\$582,103</b>
<b>Front Street Redevelopment</b>	\$610,333	\$73,180	\$168,070	\$1,584,000	\$2,435,583	\$365,338	\$292,270	<b>\$3,093,191</b>

## FUNDING TECHNIQUES

A variety of financing tools can help finance the Downtown vision, including:

- Business Ready Community Grant and Loan Program
- Community Development Block Grants
- Community Facilities Grant and Loan Program
- Direct Public Investments
- Downtown Bond Issue
- Estate Taxes
- Joint Powers Act Loan Program
- Land Sale Proceeds
- Main Street Program
- Private and Foundation Philanthropy
- Revolving Loan Fund
- Rural Development Programs
- Small Business Administration
- Local Improvement District
- Tax Increment Financing
- Wyoming Department of Transportation
  - Transportation Enhancements (TE)
  - Transportation Enhancements Activities Local

The following discusses the application of these individual techniques and how they apply to specific recommendations in the plan.

### ***Business Ready Community Grant and Loan Program***

Business Ready Community Grant and Loan Program provides financing for publicly owned infrastructure that serves the needs of businesses and promotes economic development within Wyoming communities. Cities, towns, counties, joint powers boards and Tribes are eligible to apply for funding. Public infrastructure that is eligible for funding includes water, sewer, streets, airports, rights of way, telecommunications, land, spec buildings, amenities within a business park/site/district, landscaping, recreation/educational facilities, and other physical projects in support of primary economic and educational development.

For more information about the Business Ready Community and Loan Program, visit [www.wyomingbusiness.org](http://www.wyomingbusiness.org) or contact the Wyoming Business Council at 307-777-2800.

### ***Community Development Block Grants***

The Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) offers grants to Wyoming communities for improving local facilities, addressing critical health and safety concerns, and developing a greater capacity for growth. CDBG is a “pass through” administered by the Wyoming Business Council and funded from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development authorized by the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-383). They offer funds for projects that can range from housing and street repairs to industrial loans and job training.

For more information about Community Development Block Grants, visit [www.wyomingbusiness.org](http://www.wyomingbusiness.org) or contact the Investment Ready Communities Director at 307-777-2811.

### ***Community Facilities Grant and Loan Program (CFP)***

The Community Facilities Grant and Loan Program (Wyoming Statute 9-12-801) assists communities to secure grant and loan funding to construct local enhancements to a school building or facility or preserve former school and government facilities that have existing or future community uses. All projects must be related to economic development or quality of life enhancement. Facilities may be space for community gatherings and functions, recreational, swimming and athletic facilities for community members, particularly youth.

For more information about the Community Facilities Grant and Loan Program (CF), contact Community Facilities Program Manager at 307-777-2841.

### ***Downtown Bond Issues***

General obligation bond issues are appropriate to finance major public projects or improvements, and are secured by general city revenues. These revenues typically include taxes or other municipal revenues, including sales taxes. Revenue bonds may also be utilized for projects that generate income, such as public parking stalls leased on a monthly basis. Some states permit directed sales taxes, whereby taxes generated in a retail district may be directed back to the financing of improvements in that area.

### ***Joint Powers Act Loan Program***

The Office of State Land and Investments, under Wyoming Statute 16-1-109, provides \$28 million in funds from the Permanent Mineral Trust Fund to counties, municipal corporations, school districts, community college districts, special districts and Joint Powers Boards for the planning, construction, acquisition, improvement, emergency repair, acquisition of land for, refinancing of existing debt for, and operation of revenue-generating public facilities.

The Board can only award loans for facilities that generate revenue and the revenue must be sufficient to service the debt and represent a prudent use of state funds. The Board can award loans for 100% of the project cost as long as the facility generates sufficient revenue to service the debt and represents a prudent use of state funds. The Board has authority to set interest rates for Joint Powers Act Loans from 6 to 12% based upon similar securities in the commercial market. The interest is reviewed annually by the Board. Origination fees may apply.

Normally the Director limits loan terms to 30 years, although up to 40 years is allowed. The Director also recommends that the loan term coincide with the economic life of the project financed.

For more information about the Joint Powers Act Loan Program, contact the Office of State Land and Investments at 307-777-7331.

### ***Land Sale Proceeds***

Proceeds from sale of land to development projects should be allocated back to Downtown improvements and acquisition for other redevelopment activities.

### ***Main Street Program***

The Wyoming Rural Development Council administers the Main Street Program, which provides Wyoming communities with opportunities to strengthen downtown districts. The program has a revolving loan fund, providing low interest loans to help with storefront renovations.

For more information about the Main Street Program, visit [www.wyomingmainstreet.org](http://www.wyomingmainstreet.org) or contact the State Program Coordinator at 307-777-6430.

### ***Local Improvement District (LID)***

Local Improvement Districts (LID's) or Business Improvement Districts (BID's) are special assessment districts, permitting businesses within a district to finance public capital improvement projects and district management, promotion, and maintenance. LID's are created by the City following under Chapter 6a specific process established by State Statute and administered by a SID Board. While LID's are a valuable tool, assessments should not burden downtown retailers. This plan recommends a policy of public financing of major capital projects, with required LID funding of maintenance and district management and promotion.



### ***Private and Foundation Philanthropy***

The Rawlins Downtown Plan provides a variety of opportunities for individual or foundation contributions. Private philanthropy, with appropriate recognition and commemoration, is a critical part of the downtown implementation program, and is especially appropriate for major public projects, and other public open spaces proposed by the plan. The Wyoming Community Foundation can be a state resource.

For more information, visit [www.wycf.org](http://www.wycf.org) or contact the Wyoming Community Foundation at 307-721-8300.

### ***Rawlins Downtown Fund***

Establishing a new 501(c)3 charitable foundation to be affiliated with developing Downtown Rawlins. A similar organization in Buffalo, Wyoming has been instrumental in supporting local community projects.



### ***Revolving Loan Fund (RLF)***

The EDA Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Program provides matching grants to eligible recipients to create revolving loan fund programs to provide loans to businesses located in economically distressed areas in accordance with an approved Revolving Loan Fund Plan. Typically, EDA Revolving Loan Funds are used to match other state and local funds to leverage private sector loans for businesses that will address needs to diversify a distressed economy, to stimulate job creation or to assist in job retention. Eligible recipients generally provide matching funds equal to 50 percent of the capital required to establish the revolving loan fund.

For more information, contact U.S. Department of Commerce and Economic Development Administration at 406-449-5380.

### ***Rural Development Programs***

United States Department of Agriculture administers rural community development programs. Each program and initiative promotes self-sustaining, long-term economic and community development in rural areas. The programs demonstrate how every rural community can achieve self-sufficiency through innovative and comprehensive strategic plans developed and implemented at a grassroots level. The programs stress continued local involvement and decision making which is supported by partnerships among private, public and nonprofit entities.

Housing and Community Facilities Programs (HCFP) helps rural communities and individuals by providing loans and grants for housing and community facilities, including funding for single family homes, apartments for low-income persons or the elderly, housing for farm laborers, childcare centers, fire and police stations, hospitals, libraries, nursing homes, schools, and more.

For more information, visit <http://ocdweb.sc.egov.usda.gov> or call the USDA State office at 307-233-6700.

### ***Small Business Administration***

The Small Business Administration (SBA) has financial assistance program which provide access to debt and equity primarily from banks or other private sources. SBA evaluates each loan application on two levels; the first is for eligibility, which varies by industry and SBA program, and second on credit merits of the application.

SBA programs and services support small business owners, connecting businesses to loans, government contracting opportunities, disaster assistance and training programs to help your business succeed. For more information, visit [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov).

### ***Tax Increment Financing (TIF)***

Local Tax Increment Financing (Local TIF) permits the use of a portion of local property and sales taxes to assist funding the redevelopment of certain designated areas within your community. Projects pay their entire established tax obligation. However, taxes produced by the added value of the property caused by redevelopment or improvements may be used to finance project-related improvements or other public improvements in the district. TIF may be used to pay certain costs incurred with a redevelopment project. Such costs may include, but are not limited to:

- Professional services such as studies, surveys, plans, financial management, legal counsel
- Land acquisition and demolition of structures
- Building necessary new infrastructure in the project area such as streets, parking, decorative lighting
- Relocation of resident and business occupants located in the project area

**Strand Theater, Millard-Daley Building, and Ferguson Building.** The added value created by the rehabilitation be eligible for Tax Increment Financing. The taxes paid on the original value of the building continue to be distributed to all taxing jurisdictions, including the city,

county, school district, Natural Resources District and others. However the taxes collected on the added value are used to finance parts of the project that are necessary to make the project feasible, including façade upgrades and interior renovations.

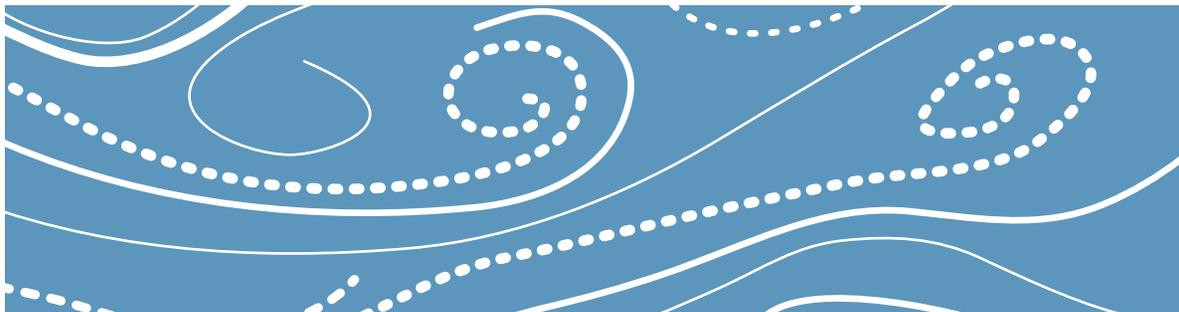
### *Wyoming Department of Transportation*

**Transportation Enhancements (TE).** The TE program provides 80% federal financing for such projects as enhancements to major transportation corridors, trails and other non-motorized transportation projects, and the preservation of historic transportation structures. The program is administered by the Wyoming Department of Transportation. TE funds are appropriate for financing such projects as:

- Streetscape improvements.
- Intersection and crosswalk improvements.
- Trail development and bicycle route connections.

**Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act (SAFETEA-LU).** Administered by the Federal Highway Administration, it provides matching grants for major street improvements, enhancements funding for corridor design, streetscape, trail development, and transit. Improvements to Highway 30 is eligible for SAFETEA-LU funding. Also, sidewalks providing service to Cat Bus may be eligible for transportation funding.





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## Appendix

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The following are graphics and illustrations prepared during the planning process. Designs are not prescriptive, rather they are concepts and possibilities for improving the Rawlins' building facades.













