



Chapter 7: Transportation System

THEME: DEVELOP A CONNECTED, SAFE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM WITH MULTIPLE MODES

WHY IS THIS THEME IMPORTANT?

Sheridan County's transportation system consists of municipal street systems, county roads, and state and federal highways and interstates; a regional airport; and, within the City of Sheridan, a fledgling pathways system. As the county grows, a transportation network with multiple options will be needed to address the region's transportation challenges, rising energy prices, and emergency response system needs. This Plan also recognizes the close relationship between transportation and land use and suggests that solutions to mobility issues require a comprehensive integration of the two elements. In the future, the county will continue to work with the various transportation planning entities to develop a transportation system focused on safe, cost efficient, connected streets and roads, and also offers multiple transportation options (e.g., walkways, roads for vehicle travel, public transit, bike lanes, and off road trails), especially within Sheridan's Urban Service Area.

Summary of This Theme's Topics

This theme addresses the following topics:

- √ Connected, safe roads;
- √ Transportation options;
- √ Land use/transportation coordination; and
- √ Funding for improvements.



This chapter addresses the existing and future road network, shown on Figure 6.

CHAPTER CONTENTS

This chapter contains transportation maps as well as goals and policies.

TRANSPORTATION PLANS

COUNTY ROAD NETWORK

Figure 6 displays the County Road Network, with Heavy Truck Corridors, Alternative Cross-Country Routes, and the future network for the area around the City of Sheridan and to the south. These features are described below.

Heavy Truck Corridors

The heavy truck corridors show principal access to industrial land uses and energy production areas that are serviced by commercial trucks. The corridors are also thru routes that connect to industrial land uses and energy production areas in adjacent counties. The roads are under the jurisdiction of Sheridan County and WYDOT. The corridors have been mapped to inform future planning efforts. Future studies could evaluate potential conflicts at intersections, pavement deficiencies, truck traffic volumes, dust mitigation needs, and pilot projects.

Alternative Cross-Country Routes

The alternative cross-country routes show secondary access to communities in Sheridan County and the City of Sheridan. The routes highlight potential opportunities to connect the communities in the event of accidents or natural disasters. In the future the routes could be studied to identify areas for planned improvements. The county could also conduct more detailed study with emergency service professionals to designate the corridors as emergency routes.

Future Road Network

Figure 6 shows the proposed future network of roads based on past and on-going transportation planning efforts in the Sheridan Joint Planning Area. The specific alignment, road type, width, speed, and connections for all future roads will be determined based on the land uses they will serve, and should be compatible. For instance, rural areas should have rural roads. The West Corridor and Upper Road specifications have yet to be determined.

Insert County Road Network Map (11x17 fold out) – Figure 6

COUNTY TRAILS AND PATHWAY PLANNING

The Long-Range Trails and Bicycle Routes Plan (Figure 7) shows a future looped system of on-road bicycle lanes and routes and off-road multi-use trails throughout the county and adjacent to the City of Sheridan (based on the Pathways Plan). The Plan map is a starting point for long-range planning. This Plan's policies suggest extending the bicycle and trail systems in the county, including connections to the Big Horn foothills as generally shown on the plan. However, the county will need to do more planning, prioritize connections, identify specific rights of ways, and identify funding sources. The county will work with citizen groups to prioritize loops and explore future connections.



Example of an on-road bicycle lane and route.



Example of an off-road multi-use trail.

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Insert County Trails and Pathways Plan - Figure 7 (11x17 fold out)

TRANSPORTATION GOALS AND POLICIES

Goal 5.1: The transportation network will be well connected and coordinated with adjacent land uses.

Policy 5.1 a: Construct a well-connected road network

The county will plan and construct a well-connected road network that allows for different widths, speeds, and access requirements as appropriate to the transportation needs of the areas being served. The Future Roadway Network illustrated on the County Road Network map is based on past and on-going transportation planning efforts. Those efforts will guide decisions concerning road types, specific placement, speeds, and widths, including on-going planning for the future West Corridor and Upper Road.

Policy 5.1 b: Coordinate land use and transportation planning

The county will plan its future transportation system to compliment and encourage development patterns adopted as a part of the Future Land Use Plan. This includes constructing new roads that interface with adjacent land uses in a safe manner for all right of way users. New urban developments should contain “complete street” systems that allow for internal pedestrian, bike, and auto circulation. They should also be comprised of a mix of compatible uses, so residents have services, recreation, jobs, and shopping near homes.

Goal 5.2: Urban areas will have “complete streets” to accommodate motorized vehicles, public transit, bicycles, and pedestrians.

Policy 5.2 a: Accommodate all transportation modes

Ensure that all new streets provide for efficient and safe movement for all transportation modes (i.e., vehicles, public transit, bicycles, and pedestrians).

Policy 5.2 b: Extend pathways in communities

Extend the pathways system for bicycles and pedestrians to encourage transportation and recreation travel consistent with the Pathways Master Plan. The pathways systems will complement, but not substitute for, improvements to the roadway network for bicycling and walking.

Goal 5.3: The county will balance competing demands for rural county road use and maintenance.

Policy 5.3 a: Balance competing demands for rural roads

Future improvement and maintenance of rural roads in Sheridan County will balance the competing demands of residents and

industry. Sections of rural county roads that have overlapping functions (resident access, industry, scenic byways, interstate alternatives during mineral development and emergencies, etc) will be designed to provide safe and efficient travel for all users.

Policy 5.3 b: Prioritize rural road and bridge maintenance needs

The county will address needs related to planning, condition, and maintenance of county roads including: dust control, cattle guard maintenance, roadside fencing, surfacing condition and grading, bridges, culverts, and other needs.

Policy 5.3 c: Adopt minimum standards for new rural roads

New development will build rural roads that meet county standards to prevent erosion, control weeds, minimize dust, provide adequate surfacing and maintenance of entrances, and prevent degradation of existing conditions.

Goal 5.4: The Sheridan County Airport will continue to serve as a convenient regional aviation facility

Policy 5.4 a: Provide continued support for the Sheridan County Airport

The county will continue to support the role of the Sheridan County Airport as a regional aviation facility and the Airport's ability to accommodate future increases in air traffic. It will follow the Airport Master Plan, as updated from time to time. The county will ensure that future land use around the airport is compatible and does not create conflicts or safety issues affecting airport operations.

Goal 5.5: The county will ensure that new development provides adequate transportation improvements to accommodate needed services

Policy 5.5 a: New development will provide adequate transportation facilities

The county will require that new development adequately addresses system-wide impacts that the development creates for all modes of travel, and will identify necessary improvements to be made as a part of the development approval process. The county will allow new development only where adequate facilities exist, or can be constructed or upgraded prior to development or phased as development occurs.

Policy 5.5 b: New development and high impact users will pay equitable shares for improvements

The county will implement mechanisms that require new development and other high impact users to pay an equitable share of necessary improvements to the county transportation system.

Policy 5.5 c: Prioritize transportation improvements through Capital Improvement Program

The county will continue its Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for county transportation facilities that emphasize the importance of reducing traffic congestion, maintaining the existing roadway system, providing “complete streets” that accommodate a variety of mode types, and building structures that are compatible with neighborhoods and with land uses designated on the Future Land Use Plan. The CIP will also enable the county to leverage available funds for local and state funding sources.

Policy 5.5 d: Reserve road/utility corridor rights-of-way

The county will reserve adequate additional right-of-way, at the time of the subdivision process, for those corridors the county anticipates extending or widening in the future.

Goal 5.6: The county will support planning and extension of a regional non-motorized trails and pathways system

Policy 5.6 a: Coordinate to implement and extend the Sheridan Pathways Master Plan

The county will work with the City of Sheridan to implement aspects of the Pathways Master Plan that overlap in unincorporated areas and identify possible extensions of trails.

Policy 5.6 b: Plan for and establish a regional multi-use trails system

The county will coordinate with citizens and an advisory committee and plan for a linked non-motorized trail system that extends from the urban areas to the foothills (e.g., Big Horn Mountain Trail System) and accommodates multiple users (e.g., walkers, joggers, bicycles, equestrians, and disabled). The Long Range County Trails and Bicycle Networks map is a starting point for future county trails planning.

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Chapter 8: Distinct Communities

THEME: MAINTAIN DISTINCT COMMUNITIES, VALUES, AND TRADITIONS

WHY IS THIS THEME IMPORTANT?

One of the key themes of the Sheridan County Vision 2020 Plan was to ... "maintain a community character that preserves the quality of life, values, and traditions of the area." This Plan builds on that premise by encouraging growth patterns that retain each community's positive attributes and maintaining a clear distinction between the county's urban and rural places.

Sheridan County residents are justifiably proud of their communities and their distinct identities, and the following goals and policies are intended to allow for growth while retaining each area's unique sense of place. The county also recognizes that each community has its own landscape, sense of place, traditions, and priorities, and the communities are where most of the people of Sheridan County live. Joint planning for development around the edges of these self-governing communities will be important in the future to provide appropriate guidance for future growth and development. Sheridan County will continue to recognize the diversity and individuality of the communities and towns within it.

This theme also recognizes that many county residents will continue to prefer a rural (in remote locations with no urban services) or "semi-rural" lifestyle (near cities with some urban services). Maintaining the distinctions between each place and the quality of life that residents enjoy are an important aspect of what Sheridan County will be in the future.



Dayton, is one of the incorporated communities.

Summary of this Theme's Topics

This theme addresses the following topics:

- √ Recognition of individual community characteristics and needs;
- √ Development that is compatible with community values; and
- √ Recognition of cultural and historic legacy.

DISTINCT COMMUNITIES GOALS AND POLICIES

Goal 6.1: The county will recognize and reinforce individual community characteristics.

Policy 6.1 a: Develop Community Plans for unincorporated communities of Big Horn, Arvada, and Story

This Comprehensive Plan and Community Plans will recognize the unique characteristics and needs of the communities in the county, both incorporated and unincorporated. Chapter 3, the Future Land Use Plan, addresses some of these distinct characteristics, as well as Chapter 10, Communities in Focus.

Policy 6.1 b: Ensure compatible development within and adjacent to community growth areas and unincorporated communities

Ensure that new development within community growth areas and communities is compatible with local values and existing development. The county will use its development review process to ensure that development that occurs in these areas is compatible with community needs, issues, and character. The review process will focus on design quality, scale, context, and historic preservation.

Policy 6.1 c: Improve community gateways and corridors

Enhance and protect the aesthetic quality of community gateways and other highly visible corridors through appropriate site design measures. Avoid placing heavy industrial uses in community gateways and along highly visible entrance corridors. Encourage redevelopment over time of existing outdoor storage and heavy industry in highly visual corridors near communities, including along the interstate near Sheridan.

Policy 6.1 d: Reinforce traditional neighborhood patterns

Provide mechanisms that encourage the perpetuation or extension of traditional neighborhood designs in areas platted in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Goal 6.2: Sheridan County will identify and preserve historic and cultural resources and maintain its legacy.

Policy 6.2 a: Reinforce efforts to preserve urban and rural historic and cultural resources

The county will continue to reinforce and maintain the County's historic and cultural legacy by building on historic preservation efforts occurring in the City of Sheridan, Sheridan Historic Preservation Commission work to heighten awareness and ensure preservation of Sheridan County's diverse historic and cultural heritage throughout the county. Preservation efforts could target communities and surrounding areas, such as old barns, cabins, remnant segments of trails, archaeological sites, and old mining communities.

Policy 6.2 b: Prepare a Historic Preservation Plan

Support the Historic Preservation Commission in its efforts to create a long-range historic preservation plan so that the most effective preservation tools are available with emphasis on incentives and coordination with other agencies and land trusts.

Policy 6.2 c: Avoid development impacts on archaeological and historical resources

Identify sensitive archaeological and historical resources in the county's unincorporated areas. To the extent possible, direct development away from significant archeological and historic sites or use clustered site designs that account for and avoid these resources. The county will use incentives to promote preservation.

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Chapter 9: Regional Cooperation

THEME: ADDRESS REGIONAL ISSUES COOPERATIVELY

WHY IS THIS THEME IMPORTANT?

Sheridan County recognizes that a number of the planning issues addressed under previous themes—such as transportation, water planning, land management, and efficient service provision—must be addressed at a regional level. The county will make a strong commitment to continue working with other agencies and entities to achieve regional objectives. The success of this Plan depends on continued cooperation between Sheridan County, the City of Sheridan, other towns and communities in the county, state and federal agencies, private and non-profit entities, and adjoining counties and municipalities in those counties.

Summary of this Theme's Topics

This theme addresses the following topics:

- √ Joint planning with the City of Sheridan for the Urban Services Area;
- √ Cooperative planning with other communities;
- √ Coordination with agencies;
- √ Coordination with other counties; and
- √ Other regional issues.



Bighorn National Forest shown in the background.

REGIONAL COOPERATION GOALS AND POLICIES

Goal 7.1: The county will continue to jointly plan for orderly growth at the edge of the City of Sheridan.

Policy 7.1 a: Continue County/City of Sheridan Joint Planning

The county will continue to work with the City of Sheridan in a joint planning arrangement for the unincorporated lands within the Urban Service Area. The city and county will implement the plan with an intergovernmental agreement to address consistent development standards.

Goal 7.2: Sheridan County will cooperatively plan with incorporated towns (Dayton, Ranchester, and Clearmont).

Policy 7.2 a: Cooperative planning with other incorporated towns

The county will pursue cooperative planning with the other incorporated communities and towns, addressing critical growth issues (transportation, land use, conservation, provision of services) in an efficient manner.

Goal 7.3: The county will cooperatively plan with citizens of the county's unincorporated communities (Big Horn, Story, and Arvada).

Policy 7.3 a: Work with residents of unincorporated communities

The county will work together with residents of its unincorporated communities (Arvada, Big Horn, and Story) to address issues of local concern by providing political and organizational assistance, recognizing that citizen initiative in these areas is critical, and that county government is not always able to take the lead.

Goal 7.4: Sheridan County will work with other government agencies to address issues of regional concern.

Policy 7.4 a: Coordinate with agencies on issues of regional concern

The county will continue to cooperate with, and where relevant provide guidance to, federal and state agencies that manage land and resources (water quantity and quality, air quality, weed and pest control, wildlife management, health and safety, historical and archaeological, recreation and cultural resources) in Sheridan County. Other regional issues include:

- Railroad planning,
- Utility corridor and landfill siting,

- Significant industrial or natural resource development,
- Parks, open space, and trails,
- Interstate freeway expansions and improvements,
- Law enforcement and emergency services,
- Wildfire management, and
- Water quality and interstate transfer of discharged waters from coal bed methane.

(see also Theme 4, *Facilities and Services*).

Policy 7.4 b: Coordinate with adjoining counties

The county will continue to coordinate with Johnson and Campbell counties on issues that cross county boundaries, such as energy development, water, and transportation planning.

Goal 7.5: Sheridan will coordinate and support missions of conservation and non-governmental organizations with aims that support this Plan's goals.

Policy 7.5 a: Work with land conservation organizations

The county will continue to work with and provide support to organizations whose mission advances conservation, agriculture, and open space.

Policy 7.5 b: Work with non-profit organizations on social services and health care

The county will continue to work with non-profit and private organizations whose mission advances social services, housing, and healthcare to community residents.

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Chapter 10: Communities in Focus

INTRODUCTION

This chapter addresses incorporated towns in the county (other than the City of Sheridan which is addressed in Chapter 11), unincorporated places, and rural centers.

1. INCORPORATED TOWNS

Other than Sheridan, the three incorporated towns in the county are Dayton, Ranchester, and Clearmont. The Future Land Use Plan shows potential growth areas for these communities, which vary from ¼- to ½-mile beyond current town limits. Additional collaboration and planning will be necessary in these areas. Jointly agreeing to establish these growth areas and procedures and standards for development, including annexation procedures and zoning, will provide future predictability for the towns, county, and landowners regarding these issues and will also help with capital facilities planning and determining locations for future urban services.

Policy directions to maintain autonomous incorporated towns include:

- 1 **Retain Distinct Communities:** Minimize the extent of dispersed residential development in the county outside of towns and their designated growth areas.
- 2 **Establish Coordinated Growth Areas:** The Future Land Use Plan designates Incorporated Community Growth Areas, generally based on where each town can expand utilities and grow in a compact fashion, and to achieve each town's desired physical size within a 20 year period.

WHY IS ESTABLISHING GROWTH AREAS WITH THE INCORPORATED COMMUNITIES IMPORTANT?

The growth areas provide a defined area within which town-level capital expansion planning can occur. Establishing a growth area for each community will ensure coordination between each town and the county, so towns can determine their futures, and the county can limit dispersed costly urban and rural development beyond the edges of the towns. Within these areas, town-level housing and services can occur near the existing towns, allowing the towns to provide jobs and commercial services in and near their cores. In addition, designating the growth areas helps discourage development into county agricultural areas. As noted above, limiting dispersed rural development into remote areas of the county is fiscally beneficial to the county and communities and taxpayers.

Deleted:

- 3 **Adjust Planning/Growth Areas as Necessary:** Work with the towns to continue to fine-tune the boundaries indicated on the Future Land Use Plan if necessary.
- 4 **Urban Development in the Growth Areas:** Future urban development (i.e., generally densities of one unit per acre and higher with water and sewer) will go inside the growth area boundaries and should annex to the towns.



Dayton.

DAYTON

Dayton is an incorporated town, and as such makes its own plans and decisions about development and land use within town limits. This plan recommends joint planning with Dayton to finalize common growth areas and refine joint policies, particularly in areas near the Tongue River and along highway corridors. The intent is for development in areas near town designated as Urban Residential to annex to the town and be served with town water and wastewater.



Ranchester.

RANCHESTER

Ranchester is also an incorporated and independent town, like Dayton. This plan recommends joint planning with Ranchester to finalize common growth areas and refine joint policies. The Future Land Use Plan shows some areas where Urban Residential, County Low Density Residential, and Light Industry can occur in the future. The intent is for urban development to be annexed to the town and be served with town water and wastewater.



Clearmont.

CLEARMONT

Clearmont is the third of the smaller incorporated and independent towns in the county. This plan recommends joint planning with Clearmont. The Future Land Use Plan shows light industrial development west of U14-16 and Low Density Residential to the east in the growth area adjacent to the town. Any town or urban uses should be annexed to the town. The county should not approve any urban uses outside of the designated growth area.

2. UNINCORPORATED PLACES: COMMUNITY PLANNING

Three larger unincorporated communities are located in the county: Arvada, Story, and Big Horn. Additional community planning should occur for each.

ARVADA

The 1982 Plan and recent planning efforts did not address land use for the small eastern community of Arvada. Arvada is unincorporated and does not currently have an option for landowners to develop residential uses or commercial services without going through a complex zone change processes. Only agricultural uses are allowed under current zoning (i.e., at one unit per 35 acres).

Policy directions for Arvada include:

1. **Continue Coordination:** Continue coordinated planning with residents of Arvada.
2. **Address Water and Wastewater System and Services:** The County and developers will need to address how to provide services before expanding the community core. Large scale development of the smaller lots would need water and sewer and the county will need to ensure that development can be efficiently served (sheriff, roads, etc.).
3. **Designate Community Core:** Designate locations for residential uses, light industry, or commercial services within Arvada's core (e.g., a specific zone to allow mixed-uses typically found there today).
4. **Prepare and Adopt Standards.** Prepare and adopt development standards consistent with traditional town layout.

STORY

The unincorporated community of Story is primarily residential with mixed commercial and agriculture. Story has a small community core. However, residents do most of their shopping and seek most other services in the City of Sheridan. This plan recommends developing a new sub-area plan for Story that will address future land uses and utilities planning. To provide a better balance of land uses and to make the community more self sufficient, it could be advantageous to plan for additional commercial services in Story's core area. In addition, defining future residential growth patterns that fit Story's character and that protect water quality could be



Story.

addressed through an updated Story Community Plan. Policies and directions for Story include:

1. **Coordinate to Prepare a Story Community Plan:** Designate a planning boundary and planning process, so residents can participate in future land use and utilities planning for Story.
2. **Address Water Quality Issues Before Development Occurs:** Address appropriate land use patterns, non-conforming uses, and water quality protection and improvement prior to expansion of the community.
3. **Encourage Story to Create an Improvement and Service District:** An Improvement and Service District would allow Story to provide sanitary sewer and resolve groundwater quality issues.



BIG HORN

The unincorporated community of Big Horn is primarily residential, consisting of a community core with urban-size lots, large lots, and predominantly rural uses. The Powder Horn Planned Unit Development (PUD) is nearby.

The Future Land Use Plan identifies the kind of future growth patterns desirable to continue. In addition, the following directions and policies apply to Big Horn:

1. **Coordinate to Prepare a Community Plan:** Work with the community to plan for the provision of central sewer services that will: (1) serve to mitigate documented groundwater issues, and (2) encourage a development pattern that is more compatible with the core of the community than recent large acreage subdivisions.
2. **Evaluate Core Land Use:** Evaluate commercial and residential land uses within the original platted town site of Big Horn that are consistent with activities and uses there now.
3. **Address Water Quality and Quantity Issues Before Development Occurs:** Address appropriate land use patterns, non-conforming uses, and water quality protection and improvement prior to expansion of the community.
4. **Prepare and Adopt Standards.** Prepare and adopt development standards consistent with traditional town layout.
5. **Encourage Big Horn to Create an Improvement and Service District (ISD):** An ISD would allow Big Horn to provide sanitary sewer and resolve groundwater quality issues.

WHY IS DESIGNATING COMMUNITY PLANNING AREAS FOR COMMUNITIES IMPORTANT?

Designating a community planning area for each community will allow for continued coordination and community-driven planning to address their land use and utility needs and water quality issues. The mixed-use "community core" designation will provide more flexibility for these communities to plan for future development that is consistent with the core parts of the communities as they are today.

3. RURAL CENTERS

Several small rural centers exist throughout the county that may provide one or more services to the outlying Agricultural/Resource Area. These include Leiter, Ucross, Wyarno, Parkman, Beckton and Banner. The Future Land Use Plan acknowledges the importance of these centers to the rural population. These communities are generally isolated and do not have other services now.

Policy direction for rural centers includes:

1. **Services for Surrounding Areas.** The county will encourage the location of future rural public and private services catering to the needs of the surrounding areas in these locations.
2. **Prepare and Adopt Standards.** Prepare and adopt development standards consistent with traditional town layout.



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Chapter 11: Sheridan Joint Planning Area

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides further definition for the Figure 3 in Chapter 3 (the Future Land Use Plan for the City of Sheridan) and describes its intent and purpose.

THE SHERIDAN JOINT LAND USE PLAN

The intent for the Sheridan Joint Planning Area is to define a compact pattern of future growth with urban neighborhoods within an Urban Service Area and a feathered residential transition around the City of Sheridan where clustered development patterns and conservation at the edge of the city transitions into agricultural areas. This is consistent with what participants in the planning process have said they would like to see for Sheridan’s future: growth in a compact fashion but with some continued opportunities for larger lot “rural” residential development at the edges.

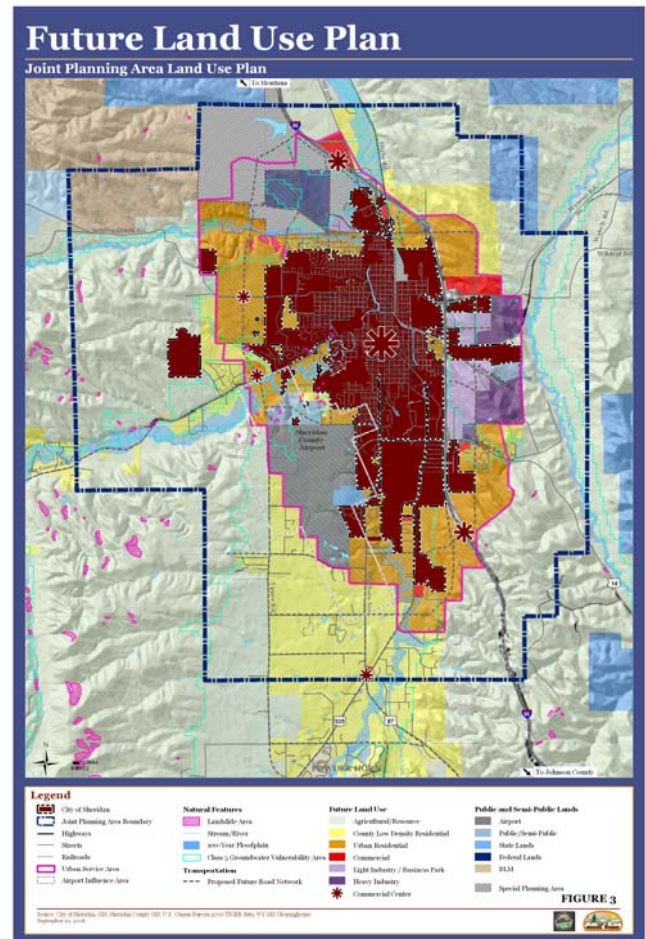


Figure 3: Sheridan Future Land Use Plan is on page 25.

WHY IS JOINT PLANNING WITH SHERIDAN IMPORTANT?

A compact urban approach will mean that most future neighborhoods and commercial centers will occur near city services and jobs and in locations that are efficient to serve. This would provide more opportunities for affordable and workforce housing integrated into the city.

Development may be more aesthetically attractive—if commercial development is not spread along major roads—and more livable if it is walkable and of high quality.

Designating commercial development opportunities in focused locations may also be more economically beneficial for the Sheridan downtown. It will be more efficient to provide local services to future development—water, sewer, fire protection, schools, parks, and other—with a compact development pattern.

The Future Land Use Plan also retains a County Low Density Residential choice at the edge of Sheridan. County low density residential development that is not connected to sewer could have implications for groundwater and water resource quality—exacerbating groundwater and Little Goose Creek surface water quality degradation. This Plan’s policies call for tight restrictions on lot sizes and septic/wastewater treatment for rural properties, especially those within vulnerable groundwater areas.

By establishing an Urban Service Area and future land uses, the city and county will be able to jointly plan for and coordinate future roads (right-of-way) and plan for future transit. With compact development and commercial centers, the road system will function efficiently and can be built for pedestrians, bikes, and transit, as well as vehicles.

Directions and policies for the Joint Planning Area include:

1. **Designate Urban Service Area—Location for Urban Development.** Future development will occur as compact pattern of urban neighborhoods (like those existing in Sheridan today) and future commercial “centers” (as an alternative to “strip” linear commercial development along major roads), as well as light and heavy industrial areas.
2. **Support Infill and Redevelopment in the City.** Promote quality “infill” development and mixed-use redevelopment within the city in strategic locations, such as North Main.
3. **Attain Quality Neighborhoods and Commercial Centers.** Ensure that new neighborhoods and commercial centers are high quality, walkable, livable places with a mix of activities.
4. **Ensure that Development will be Efficient to Serve.** Promote future urban development in areas where it can efficiently be served with municipal water and sewer.
5. **Provide Opportunity for “Feathered” Residential Edge.** Allow residential with two to five-acre and larger lots between city neighborhoods and outlying agricultural areas, where the Future Land Use Plan shows County Low Density residential. Clustered development is encouraged.
6. **Protect Natural Resources.** Provide stewardship for resources that are important to sustain the region and that people value (e.g., water quality/creeks, riparian corridors, wildlife habitat, and mineral resources, and hillsides and ridgelines), as described in the Natural and Scenic Resources chapter.
7. **Efficient and Multi-Modal Transportation System:** The transportation system will be coordinated with future growth and land use and designed with “complete streets” and multiple modes to serve the urban area, as described in the Transportation chapter.
8. **Coordinate planning.** The city and county will continue to work together to implement this Plan.



Chapter 12: Conservation Areas and Clustering

INTRODUCTION

This chapter addresses the agricultural/resource area for clustering, Big Horn foothills, and the Big and Little Goose Creek rural residential areas.

1. AGRICULTURAL/RESOURCE AREA

The Agriculture/Resource Area encompasses most of Sheridan County. It is located outside of communities and their growth areas and beyond County Low Density Residential areas. This is where agriculture, mining, and other resource extraction takes place.

The cost efficiency of delivering county services to dispersed residential development in this area is low. This plan, therefore, discourages residential development in remote locations—in the Agriculture/Resource Area.

The lands west of Interstate 90 and along the Big Horn Foothills consist of mostly large parcels, over 65,000 acres of which have conservation easements or are permanently protected from development. The eastern part of the county experiences pressure for some residential development in the Clear Creek / Powder River Valleys (along Highway 14/16).

Policy directions for the Agriculture/Resource Area include:

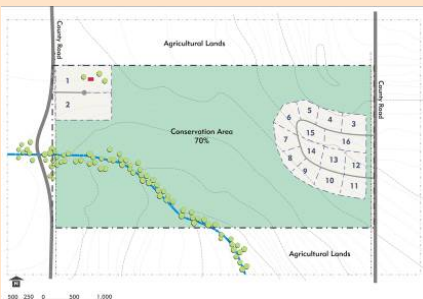
1. **Direct Development to Existing Communities:** Most future growth and development should occur in cities and towns and their growth areas. Discourage development of productive agricultural lands and crucial wildlife habitat areas for home sites.
2. **Limit Residential Development in Remote Areas:** Limit rural residential development in remote areas where it is costly to

WHY IS THE AGRICULTURAL RESOURCE AREA IMPORTANT?

This approach would help reduce dispersed development in more remote areas of the county and help prevent greater loss and potential fragmentation of agricultural lands and wildlife habitat. It will also help the county to efficiently provide services. County road maintenance costs, on a per customer or residential unit basis, increase disproportionately to costs in more densely settled areas. This plan will keep maintenance costs for the county from escalating faster than revenues increase.

WHY IS IT HELPFUL TO ALLOW CLUSTERING?

The county does not currently provide for clustering, but it is now widely seen as a good alternative to large lot rural residential development for several reasons. First, it can help retain natural features on a property, such as riparian areas and wildlife habitat and allow continued farming or ranching. It can provide connected open space that is commonly managed, thereby helping to prevent invasive weeds from spreading to adjacent properties. The open space can be an amenity for residents of the clustered lots (who might share its use and access). Finally, clustered subdivisions can be more economical because they require shorter roads, driveways, and shorter utility lines than traditional large lot subdivisions.



serve and compromises the visual amenities associated with Sheridan County.

3. **Allow Clustered Development to Retain Traditional Agricultural Patterns:** The county will allow clustered residential development in designated Clustering/Conservation Development Areas that replicates historic ranch or farmstead patterns and that conserves open space, natural resources, and agricultural lands.
4. **Irrigated Agriculture:** The county will discourage development of irrigated lands for non-agricultural purposes in the Agriculture/Resource Area (except where existing communities need to expand.)

CLUSTERING/CONSERVATION DEVELOPMENT AREAS

The intent for the Clustering/Conservation Development Areas is to designate locations within the county near urban areas where property owners are eligible to cluster developments and conserve open space or resources and be eligible for a higher density bonus than in more remote locations of the county.

Location of Clustering/Conservation Development Areas

The Clustering/Conservation Development Areas are generally shown on the Future Land Use Plan in several locations:

1. Within two miles or less of Dayton and Ranchester.
2. Surrounding the Sheridan Urban Service Area, within six miles of the city for parcels with access to paved roads and eight miles along Big Goose Creek.
3. Excluding large public lands parcels and private lands beyond them, northwest of the City of Sheridan.

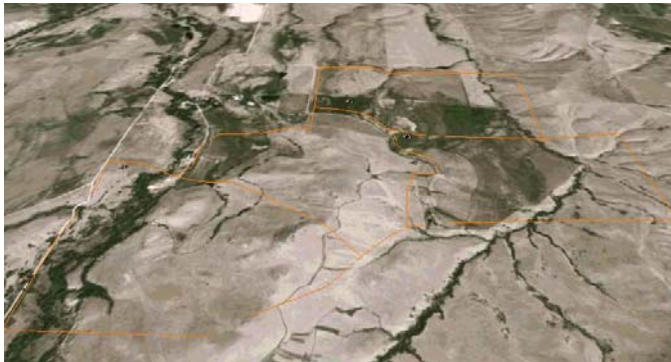
Eligibility for Clustering in this Area

To be eligible for clustering with a higher net density within this designated area, a property must meet the following criteria:

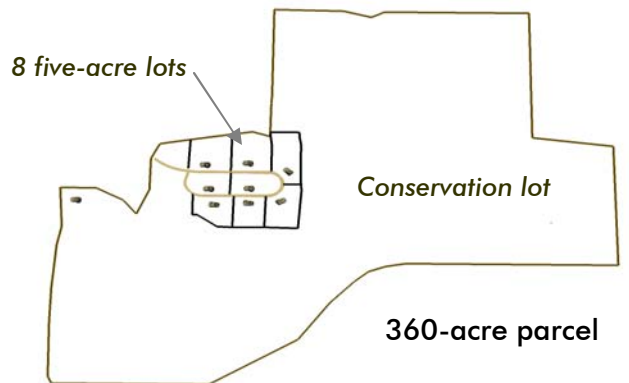
1. Property must be within the Clustering/Conservation Development Areas.
2. Property must be designated as Agriculture/Resource or County Low Density Residential, and meet criteria listed for those categories (see Land Use Categories.)

3. The property or portion of the property to be clustered is outside of important resource areas, including crucial wildlife habitat, steep slopes, ridgelines, landslide areas, and irrigated agriculture.

DEVELOPMENT OF A 360-ACRE AGRICULTURAL PARCEL INSIDE THE CLUSTERING/ CONSERVATION DEVELOPMENT AREA: CONVENTIONAL VS. CLUSTERING



1a: Conventional Development Inside the Clustering/Conservation Development Area. A 360-acre parcel with four 80-acre lots.



1b: Clustered Development Inside the Clustering/Conservation Development Area. The same 360-acre parcel with eight 5-acre lots and one conservation lot (70%).

DEVELOPMENT OF A 360-ACRE AGRICULTURAL PARCEL OUTSIDE THE CLUSTERING/ CONSERVATION DEVELOPMENT AREA: CONVENTIONAL VS. CLUSTERING



2a: Conventional Development – A 360-acre parcel divided into four 80-acre lots.



2b: Clustered Development – A 360-acre parcel divided into eight 10-acre lots in two clusters and one conservation lot on 280 acres. The four-lot clusters are spaced at least 1/2-mile from each other.

COUNTY LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL: CONVENTIONAL VS. CLUSTERING



1a: Conventional County Low Density Residential: Inside Class 5 Groundwater Vulnerable Area - 80-acre parcel with sixteen 5-acre lots.

2b: Clustered County Low Density Residential: Inside Class 5 Groundwater Vulnerable Area (1 unit/3.5 acre density) - 80-acre parcel with 23 one-acre lots and 56-acres (70%) of open space.

2. BIG HORN FOOTHILLS RESOURCE CONSERVATION AREA

Description and Purpose

The Big Horn Foothills Resource Conservation Area, or the “face of the mountain,” has been one of Sheridan County’s priorities for conservation for several decades. First, it provides scenery unique to the western part of the county. Second, it is important for traditional agricultural uses as well as wildlife habitat (especially deer and elk). Third, the area functions as watershed and aquifer recharge and provides a source of surface water for domestic and agricultural use. Finally, the tourism sector depends on the existence of this dramatic, uncluttered scenic backdrop and gateway to the Bighorn National Forest.

The 1982 Plan initially defined the boundaries of the foothills area by considering the scenic, natural features, and wildlife values. The Planning and Zoning Commission at that time agreed that, in general, elevations above 4,600 feet should be designated as Big Horn Foothills Resource Conservation Area. In addition, the county extended the boundary below 4,600 feet where important wildlife areas existed—especially the critical elk range on private or state-owned lands. They used a series of photographs to determine scenic viewshed areas of the Big Horn Mountains.

As defined for this Plan, the Big Horn Foothills Resource Conservation Area retains the intent of the 1982 Plan—encompassing the lands above 4,600 feet and also including wildlife habitat as currently mapped by Wyoming Game and Fish.

Since the 1982 Plan designation, private land trusts have worked with landowners to conserve thousands of acres of land in the Big Horn Foothills Resource Conservation Area.

Policies for the Big Horn Foothills Resource Conservation Area

Policy direction for the Big Horn foothills area includes:

1. **Agricultural and Conservation Emphasis/ Very Low Density Development:** Any future development of the area should be consistent with the Agriculture/Resource zoning and density. Urban and low density residential and commercial development are not consistent with the intent for the Big Horn Foothills Resource Conservation area. The county will continue to develop policies that are compatible the efforts of land trusts and landowners to voluntarily conserve land along the foothills.

WHY IS CONSERVING THE BIG HORN FOOTHILLS IMPORTANT?

Conservation of the Big Horn foothills is still very important to Sheridan County’s people. In addition, maintaining the agricultural character of the Big Horn foothills is consistent with the County’s 1982 Plan and decades of planning and conservation activity. More dense suburban and rural residential development would not be consistent with long-standing community goals to conserve the “face of the mountain,” wildlife habitat, and scenic values of the foothills.



The Big Horn foothills have been a conservation priority for Sheridan County for decades.

2. **Retain Natural and Aesthetic Values of the Landscape:** The county should carefully consider any new development before approving it. All new development should be designed to minimize adverse effects on wildlife habitat and aesthetic resources. The county will consider potential scars by excavation, permanency of structures, and general harmony of the development with the physical environment.
3. **Retain Wildlife Habitat and Migration Routes:** The Big Horn foothills are important migration routes (for elk to travel from winter to summer ranges), many of which are on public lands, and crucial ranges for year-long and seasonal habitat as designated by the Wyoming Game and Fish Department—mostly for elk and moose. Ensure that any future development retains migration routes and avoids crucial winter ranges.

3. BIG AND LITTLE GOOSE CREEKS— LIMITED EXPANSION OF COUNTY LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

Description and Purpose

The County Low Density Residential category encompasses the residentially-developed lands on lots generally larger than two acres along the Big and Little Goose Creeks, at the edge of the incorporated communities, and where Rural Residential zoned areas occur. This type of development pattern should not expand beyond the areas designated on the Future Land Use Plan.

Big Goose Corridor

The Big Goose Corridor is within the Sheridan Area Water System (SAWS) boundary. This area has experienced a fair amount of growth pressure, because of the availability of water and proximity to the City of Sheridan—just to the east. A significant amount of 35+ acre development has recently occurred. However, the character of the Big Goose corridor now is fairly rural and hilly with most development concentrated in and near the Big Goose Creek. This plan recommends that the current patterns in the area continue and that it remain mostly rural with some limited expansion of the County Low Density Residential pattern.

Little Goose Creek Corridor

The Little Goose Creek Corridor is also within the Sheridan Area Water System (SAWS) boundary. This area has experienced a great deal of growth pressure, because of the availability of water and its location between the Powder Horn Planned Unit Development (PUD) and the City of Sheridan and proximity to I-90. It is the most rapidly developing area of the unincorporated county. The character is dispersed residential, riparian corridor, and some agriculture. One of the pressing issues to address in this area is water quality.

This plan recommends that the current patterns in the area remain mostly rural with some limited expansion of the County Low Density Residential pattern at densities lower than currently allowed.

WHY IS ALLOWING BUT LIMITING EXPANSION OF LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL IN BIG AND LITTLE GOOSE CORRIDORS IMPORTANT?

County low density residential provides a “rural lifestyle” choice, but has potential resource and fiscal implications. Such development, if not connected to sewer, has implications for groundwater and water resources, because on-site septic systems and stormwater run-off from developed areas contribute to groundwater contamination, especially with higher densities of development. Expanding patterns of dispersed residential in rural parts of the county will be costly for the county to serve and has implications for conserving irrigated agricultural and productive lands. Focused and compact development in SAWS provides the most economical utility extension, but also requires the most implementation of restrictions or incentives to achieve it.





Example of rural residential development in the Big and Little Goose Creek valleys.



Chapter 13: Implementation Strategies and Action Plan

OVERVIEW

This implementation chapter is one of the most important in the plan, because it explains how Sheridan County will accomplish the plan, who will be responsible for various actions, and when they should occur.

County leadership and staff recognizes the county will need to coordinate with the communities in the county, other organizations, and other agencies to carry out the Plan through the following general approaches described below:

1. Day-to-day policy decisions,
2. Regulatory and zoning revisions,
3. Programs and plans,
4. Regional coordination, and
5. New funding mechanisms.

The Action Plan, later in this chapter, identifies specific strategies to implement each part of this Plan, describes roles and responsibilities of governing bodies and departments, and notes timing of actions (priorities).

Sheridan County Zoning and Development Resolutions

Amending regulations and standards is one of the approaches to implementing this Plan.

PRIORITY ACTIONS

These are the top five priority actions and are not in order of priority. The strategy numbers listed below correspond to the Action Plan that begins on page 103. Priority actions to implement this Sheridan County Comprehensive Plan include:

- **Establishing a groundwater protection area** (See Strategy 2.2(a), and Chapter 3, Land Use Goals and Policies, and 4, Natural and Scenic Resources Goals and Policies.)
- **Establishing the Clustering/Conservation Areas and standards and incentives for clustering development** (in Agricultural and Rural areas) (See Strategies 1.2(b), (c) and 1.2(e), and Chapter 3, Land Use Goals and Policies, and Chapter 12, Conservation Areas.)
- **Changing Urban Residential zoning in the Big Horn Foothills** where it is inconsistent with goals for foothills and surrounding agricultural areas, and establishing standards to protect the Big Horn foothills. (See Strategy 2.3(a), and Chapter 4, Natural and Scenic Resources Goals and Policies and Chapter 12, Conservation Areas.)
- **Maintaining and refining agricultural zoning** (i.e., providing a distinction between rural and urban areas). (See Strategy 1.2(a), and Chapter 3, Land Use Goals and Policies.)
- **Establishing wildlife protection guidelines** and standards and review process to provide stewardship for wildlife and riparian areas. (See Strategy 2.6(a) and Chapter 4, Natural and Scenic Resources Goals and Policies.)

WHAT WILL IT TAKE?

1. DAY-TO-DAY POLICY DECISIONS

The county will carry out many of the policies of this Plan during day-to-day policy recommendations and decisions—those made by planning staff, the Planning and Zoning Commission, and the Board of County Commissioners. These entities will continually make decisions regarding development proposals and plan amendments and should ensure that these decisions are consistent with this Plan. For example, deciding not to rezone agricultural lands for intensive rural residential uses when not in accordance with this Plan is a policy judgment that is consistent with the intent of the policies and the Future Land Use Plan.

2. REGULATORY AND ZONING REVISIONS

Carrying out this Plan will require zoning and development regulations (i.e., resolutions) consistent with the Future Land Use Plan and goals of this Plan. Shortly after adopting the plan, Sheridan County will need to adopt development regulations (including amending zoning, subdivision regulations, road standards, and procedures) consistent with this Plan. For example, the Plan recommends preparation and adoption of new incentives and guidelines for cluster developments to give landowners options and to conserve agricultural lands or open space. Other types of revisions might include:

- Changes to zoning where it is inconsistent with the Future Land Use Plan (i.e., in the Big Horn foothills, and in rural areas in the Little and Big Goose Creek areas),
- Overlay zoning districts to address resource protection (i.e., for Big Horn foothills, riparian areas, Class 5 Groundwater Vulnerability area),
- Rural road and building standards,
- Other resource protection standards or guidelines (e.g., for wildlife habitat protection), and
- Standards for traditional neighborhood lots (e.g., historically platted areas such as Big Horn).

3. PROGRAMS AND PLANS

This Plan calls for some new or enhanced programs and some new more detailed plans, such as the policy to support historic preservation education, trails planning, and community planning for Big Horn and Story. Programs have varying levels of priority, depending on the issues involved.

4. REGIONAL COORDINATION

A number of the recommendations in this Plan will best be achieved through new or amended Joint or Intergovernmental Agreements (IGAs) between the City of Sheridan and Sheridan County, and between the county and other governmental entities, such as Dayton, Ranchester, and Clearmont. Types of interagency coordination that will be necessary to implement the plan include:

- City or Town/County IGAs to address service provision, coordinated planning, or annexation,
- Agreements with districts or other organizations, and
- Partnerships with other organizations.



Community planning with unincorporated communities, such as Big Horn, is an example of a new program this Plan recommends.

5. FUNDING MECHANISMS

Sheridan County needs to address the costs of new growth and development as it occurs, as well as how to pay for on-going operations and maintenance of utilities and services.

ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan is a starting point to establish annual work plans but is dependent on staff resources and available funding.

#	Relates to	Description	Responsibility	Timing ¹
CH.	3	LAND USE		
1.1(a)	Goal 1.1: Compact Development Pattern; Future Land Use Plan	Consistent Zoning: Change zoning to be consistent with the Future Land Use Plan to limit expansion of urban and low density residential development into rural and agricultural areas.	County Planning / with City of Sheridan, Dayton, Ranchester	2
1.1(b)	Goal 1.1: Compact Development Pattern (Sheridan); Future Land Use Plan	Establish an Urban Service Area: Adjust the Urban Service Area for the City of Sheridan to be consistent with Urban Residential and Commercial and Industrial uses designated on the Future Land Use Plan	County Planning / with City of Sheridan,	1
1.1(c)	Goal 1.1 Compact Development Pattern (Incorporated Towns)	Incorporated Community Growth Areas: Continue coordinated planning between the county and towns to refine Community Growth Area designations and future land uses within them.	County Planning / with City of Sheridan, Dayton, Ranchester	2
1.2(a)	Goal 1.2: Rural and Agricultural	Agricultural Zone District: Maintain agriculture zoning and modify the agricultural zone district development base density to allow a base density of 1 unit per 80 acres for residential development, but with density bonuses for clustered development to allow 1 unit per 40 acres and variety of lot sizes. This would allow a landowner to split off a 10-acre parcel, for instance, and not be limited to just 35-acre parcels.	County Planning	1 <i>Ongoing</i>
1.2(b)	Goal 1.2: Clustered Subdivisions	Designated Clustering/Conservation Development Areas Overlay: The plan calls for the designation of Clustering/Conservation Development Areas. In order to implement this policy, the county may need to adopt a zoning overlay district that establishes locational criteria and standards for clustering.	County Planning	1

¹ **Timing Key:** 0 = On-going; 1 = Immediate; 2 = Within 2 years; 3 = Within 5 years.

#	Relates to	Description	Responsibility	Timing ¹
1.2(c)	Goal 1.2: Clustered Subdivisions	Clustering Option – Awareness: Inform the building community and landowners about the clustering option, and work with the private sector to promote its use. Educate people about the availability and benefits of clustering as an alternative to large lot rural residential development, through preparation and distribution of informational brochures and builders’ roundtable meetings. Consider identifying and promoting a “model project” with a private sector partner.	County Planning	3 <i>ongoing</i>
1.2(d)	Goal 1.2: Urban versus Rural and Agricultural	PUD Standards/Criteria: Develop more detailed standards and locational criteria for PUDs to provide greater predictability for developers and residents. These standards should address locational criteria; standards for utility and services (capital facility provision as well as operation and maintenance); and design standards, with particular emphasis on protection of natural resources.	County Planning	2
1.2(e)	Goal 1.2: Rural and Agricultural	Rural Design Guidelines: Develop guidelines for new development so that residential development in rural areas is compatible with the character of the county’s rural areas. Guidelines should address topics such as lot layout and siting, fencing, grading, and non-invasive plants and weeds.	County Planning	2
1.3(a)	Goal 1.3: Diverse Housing in Neighborhoods	Urban Residential Zoning: In areas where urban development is proposed in the unincorporated county in advance of annexation, such development should be in accordance with town/city standards for urban residential in order to create vibrant neighborhoods with a mix of housing types and amenities.	County Planning / with City of Sheridan, Dayton, Ranchester	2
1.3(b)	Goal 1.3: Diverse Housing	Traditional Neighborhood Standards: Establish an overlay district for areas platted long ago (such as Big Horn) that will allow for the use of lots without requiring a variance.	County Planning	1
1.4(a)	Goal 1.4: Commercial uses in Communities and Centers.	Commercial Zoning: In instances where some restricted commercial uses may be appropriate in the unincorporated county, zoning and standards should locate such development in “centers” and avoid strip commercial development patterns.	County Planning / with City of Sheridan, Dayton, Ranchester	2
	Goal 1.5	<i>See strategies below under Chapter 5, Services and Facilities.</i>		

#	Relates to	Description	Responsibility	Timing ¹
1.6(a)	Goal 1.6: Rural and Agricultural Areas/ Open Space	Non-Contiguous Density Transfers: Allow for Non-Contiguous Density Transfers between properties to give landowners within the Agriculture/Resource Area options to promote land and resource conservation by shifting density to more appropriate parcels.	County Planning	3
CH.	4	NATURAL / SCENIC RESOURCES		
2.1(a)	Goal 2.1, Goal 2.7: Resource Conservation and Hazardous Areas	Resource Protection/Hazardous Areas Standards: Develop standards such as setbacks and siting requirements to address impacts on streams, rivers, and riparian areas. Map significant riparian areas that should be protected (e.g., require 50-150-foot setbacks allowing transfer of density to other portions of the site and implement waiver allowances for smaller sites so property owners do not lose potential density or development units. Standards would apply to new development only.)	County Planning	1
2.2(a)	Goal 2.2: Low Density Rural Residential and Groundwater	Groundwater Protection: Establish a Groundwater Protection Area where residential development lot size is restricted to one dwelling unit per five acres in the Class 5 Groundwater Vulnerability Area, if no central wastewater treatment is provided.	County Planning / with City of Sheridan,	1
2.3(a)	Goal 2.3: Big Horn Foothills	Big Horn Foothills Stewardship: Where relevant, change Urban and Rural Residential zoned lands to Agricultural zoning. Consider developing a regulatory overlay district to address ridgeline siting and steep slope standards to limit development and grading on steep slopes (20% and greater).	County Planning	1
2.4(a)	Goal 2.4: Agriculture	Water Rights Distribution: Continue to require subdividers to adhere to statutory requirements regarding land subdivision and distribution of water rights. (Note: Title 18 of Wyoming Statutes Annotated, 18-5-306(a)(xi) provides five criteria for subdividers.)	County Planning	O Ongoing
	Goal 2.4: Agriculture	See Strategy 1.2(a) on page 103.		
2.5(a)	Goal 2.5: Open Space and Goal 1.6	Funding for Conservation: Explore local funding options dedicated to conservation and development rights acquisition for rural and agricultural landscapes, such as a dedicated mill levy or sales tax, or a real estate transfer tax (requires legislative authorization). Encourage acquisition of development rights through land trusts for scenic areas, riparian habitat, and irrigated lands.	County	2

#	Relates to	Description	Responsibility	Timing ¹
2.5(b)	Goal 2.5: Open Space	Cooperative Conservation: Continue to support policies that are compatible with activities of land trusts and landowners to privately conserve land, particularly in the foothills area.	County	O Ongoing
2.5(c)	Goal 2.5: Open Space and Clustered Development	Cooperate with Land Trusts to Manage Land Conserved as Part of Conservation Developments: Work with local land trusts (i.e., Stock Growers Land Trust, The Nature Conservancy, and Sheridan Community Land Trust) to manage open space dedicated as part of some clustered subdivision developments. Individual landowners or ranchers could also continue to manage open space or agricultural land as part of a clustered development.	County	O Ongoing
2.6(a)	Goal 2.6: Wildlife Habitat Protection	Wildlife Habitat Protection Guidelines/Management: Develop guidelines to minimize impacts on crucial wildlife habitat (i.e.: Guidelines would address: (a) transferring development away from critical wildlife habitat and riparian corridors, (b) proper design and placement of structures and fencing and vegetation to avoid conflicts, and (c) management, such as pet control, archery hunting). Refine the referral process with Wyoming Game and Fish, so the agency provides review for subdivision proposals.	County Planning	1
2.7(a)	Goal 2.7: Hazardous Areas	Hazardous Areas Standards: Develop standards to minimize development in hazardous areas identified on the hazardous areas map (i.e., steep slopes, landslide areas, and 100-year floodplain. Standards would not affect existing development; nor would they leave landowners without options).	County Planning	2
2.8(a)	Goal 2.8: Scenic Quality and Night Skies	Lighting Standards. Develop standards to address light pollution (lighting levels and shielding).	County Planning	3
CH.	5	ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES		
3.1(a)	Goal 3.1: Facilitate Job Expansion	Coordinate with Economic Development Organizations. (Note: Generally it is not the role of Sheridan County to promote economic opportunities and recruit business but to partner with other organizations whose mission it is to do so. However, the county operates a business park at the airport and provides the infrastructure for it.)	County	O Ongoing

#	Relates to	Description	Responsibility	Timing ¹
3.2(a)	Goal 3.2: Industrial uses	Industrial Zoning and Standards. Update business park and industrial zoning to address contemporary needs, such as flex space and outdoor storage screening to encourage business parks with campus-like setting and a compatible mix of uses. Develop locational criteria and performance standards for heavy industry, as suggested in Chapter 3 of this Plan.	County Planning	2
3.1(a)	Goal 3.1: Tourism	Tourism Destination Marketing. Continue to promote Sheridan County's history, heritage, and scenic qualities.	County	2 <i>Ongoing</i>
CH.	6	SERVICES AND FACILITIES		
4.1(a)	Goal 4.1: Water utilities	Sheridan Area Water System (SAWS) Boundary Study: Determine if SAWS service area boundary (a) is consistent with designated future growth areas and County Low Density Residential areas that will be served and/or (b) clearly distinguishes ownership and water rights (City versus SAWS). Plan for long-term water supplies, including conservation measures.	County Engineering / SAWS / with City of Sheridan,	2
4.1(b)	Goal 4.1: Adequate Facilities and Services (water)	Long-term and Safe Water Supply: Coordinate with cities and SAWS to plan for long-term water supplies, including conservation measures.	County	0 <i>Ongoing</i>
4.4(a)	Goals 4.4 – 4.6: Adequate Facilities and Services	Level of Service (LOS) Standards for Urban Areas: Establish level of service standards for rural and urban areas (i.e., for roads, water and sewer, fire protection, emergency services, law enforcement, parks, and schools) so development pays its own way. Developers would have to make improvements and/or contribute land or funds toward that end. The city or towns could waive some requirements for projects that provide affordable or workforce housing, or otherwise provide for funding of these requirements.	County Planning / Cities and Towns	2
4.4(b)	Goals 4.4 – 4.6: Adequate Facilities and Services	Adequate Public Facilities Funding: Developers will ensure that adequate public facilities are in place or planned for within a reasonable time of the start of a new development (i.e., streets and other utilities and services). Consider/update impact fees for fire stations, streets, and other facilities in urbanizing areas. (Note: impact fees are not authorized by State Statutes expressly, but jurisdictions can collect fees. Legal advice and background studies would be necessary to justify impact fees).	County Planning	2

#	Relates to	Description	Responsibility	Timing ¹
4.4(c)	Goals 4.4 – 4.7: Adequate Facilities and Services	Funding for Quality of Life Measures: Continue to work with the public and identify funding sources for “quality of life” measures, such as open space, trails, libraries, and other services.	County Planning	3
4.4(d)	Goals 4.4 – 4.6: Adequate Facilities and Services	Capital Facilities Program: Establish a Capital Facilities Program linked to the plan’s priorities, providing for facilities and services in planned growth areas.	County	2
4.7(a)	Goal 4.7: Adequate Facilities and Services	Cooperate with Social Service Providers: Work with social service and health care providers to co-locate facilities and coordinate programs.	County Planning	O <i>Ongoing</i>
CH.	7	TRANSPORTATION		
5.1(a)	Goal 5.1 and 5.5: County Road Network	Reserve Rights of Way: As growth occurs, reserve rights of way as identified on the County Road Network Plan (and adopted regional Transportation plans as updated from time to time).	County Planning	O <i>Ongoing</i>
5.1(b)	Goal 5.1: Road network coordinated with land uses	Scenic Road Designation: Create a scenic road network that showcases the natural landscape of Sheridan County by motorized and non-motorized vehicles.		
5.1(c)	Goal 5.1: Road network, and Goal 5.3	Rural Road Standards. Develop standards to address rural roads—surface, grading, and weed control, etc.	County Planning/ Engineering	2
5.1(d)	Goal 5.1: Road network	Joint Transportation Planning Projects: Continue to work with local municipalities and the Wyoming Department of Transportation (WYDOT) to plan roadway and non-motorized transportation facilities.	County Planning/ Engineering, WYDOT	
5.2(a)	Goal 5.2: Complete Streets	Standards for “Complete Streets”. In urban growth areas, develop standards to address streets that accommodate autos, pedestrians, bikes, and future transit.	County Planning / Cities and Towns	2
5.2(b)	Goal 5.2: Complete Streets	Multimodal Transportation Improvement Plan: Prepare a transportation improvement plan that ranks multimodal transportation projects and identifies potential funding sources.	County Planning/ Engineering?	2
5.3(a)	Goal 5.4: Airport	Follow Airport Master Plan.		O
5.5(a)	Goal 5.5: Adequate Transportation	Collect Travel Data: Begin collecting travel pattern data to inform capital planning and identify emerging needs in the community.	County Engineering	1

#	Relates to	Description	Responsibility	Timing ¹
5.5(b)	Goal 5.5: Adequate transportation improvements	Transportation Impact Assessments: Require new developments and properties requesting land use designations to submit a transportation impact assessment. The assessment should analyze current and future motor vehicle traffic volumes, roadway suitability for the proposed land use, and the relationship of new structures to future right-of-way corridors (roadway and trail).	County Engineering	0
5.6(a)	Goal 5.6: Trails plan	On-Going Trails Planning and Prioritization. Coordinate with citizens groups to develop a detailed trails plan (using the plan map in Chapter 7 as a starting point and identify funding for bicycle lanes and trails.)	County Planning	2
CH. 8		DISTINCT COMMUNITIES		
6.1(a)	Goal 6.1: Community Plans	Community Plans: Cooperatively plan with incorporated towns and develop community plans for unincorporated communities.	County Planning/ Municipalities	3
6.2(a)	Goal 6.2: Historic Preservation Plan	Historic Preservation Plan: The county (as well as the City of Sheridan) will promote education and awareness and incentives to conserve rural historic and cultural resources. Develop a Historic Preservation Plan for areas outside towns and the city.	County Planning	2
CH. 9		REGIONAL COOPERATION		
7.1(a)	Goal 7.1: Sheridan Joint Planning Area (See also Strategies 1.1(a) to (c).	Urban Service Area: Adjust the Urban Service Area to be consistent with Urban Residential and Commercial and Industrial uses designated on the Future Land Use Plan	County Planning; City of Sheridan	1
7.1(b)	Goal 7.1: Sheridan Joint Planning Area (See also Strategies 1.1(a) to (c).	Consistent Standards and Intergovernmental Agreement: Develop an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) between the City of Sheridan and county to address consist annexation policies, zoning, and standards for the Urban Service Area.	County Planning; City of Sheridan,	1
7.2(a)	Goal 7.2: Incorporated Towns, Dayton, Ranchester, and Clearmont. (See also Strategies 1.1(a) to (c).	Incorporated Community Growth Areas: Continue coordinated planning between the county and towns to refine Community Growth Area designations and future land uses within them.	County Planning; Dayton, Ranchester, Clearmont	2

#	Relates to	Description	Responsibility	Timing ¹
7.2(b)	Goals 7.2 and 7.2: Incorporated Towns (See also Strategies 1.1(a) to (c).	Consistent Standards and Intergovernmental Agreements: Negotiate and execute Intergovernmental Agreement(s) to establish consistent zoning, standards for development, and annexation policies within the community growth areas.	County Planning, Dayton, Ranchester, Clearmont	2
7.3(a)	Goal 7.3: Unincorporated Places	Community Planning Process: Establish a community planning process for the unincorporated places to address future land use and development, and to resolve water quality and utilities issues.	County Planning/ Community Groups	2
7.3(b)	Goal 7.3: Unincorporated Places	Standards for Compatible New Development: Develop infill standards to ensure compatibility of new development in the communities of Story and Big Horn with existing land use.	County Planning	2
7.3(c)	Goal 7.3: Unincorporated Places: Story	Designate new zone district(s) to coincide with “Community Core” Category and specifications that result from community plans. (i.e., Allow limited commercial around the Story core to reflect current land uses, with the intent that the area could expand modestly if sewer and water become available.) Continue to address water quality issues for Story. Through the community planning process, assess whether the community will support a service district (water and sewer, improvements, etc) to provide an entity to represent the community and establish eligibility for state and federal utility loans and grants. Development at higher densities may create water quality and public health problems that would necessitate central water/sewer facilities for Story.	County Planning/ Community Groups	2
7.3(d)	Goal 7.3: Unincorporated Places: Big Horn	Establish a community plan for Big Horn. Adopt development standards for the original town site of Big Horn that maintain and encourage existing traditional neighborhood designs, provided that sewer becomes available. Address wastewater issues in Big Horn and at the high school.	County Planning/ Community Groups	2

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MONITORING AND UPDATES

- **Periodic Review:** Commit to a semi-annual review process for the Comprehensive Plan, with a major review and update on a 5-year schedule.
- **Plan as Growth Tool:** Use the Future Land Use Plan and comprehensive plan policies as planning and growth management tools to guide changes to zoning and standards, and follow its goals and policies during development review.
- **Plan Conformity Checklist:** Develop a checklist. Provide decision-makers with such a project evaluation tool to review development proposals and their effect on the county, the Comprehensive Plan, the environment, and economy.

PLAN AMENDMENT PROCESS

OVERVIEW

This Comprehensive Plan will be used to guide decision-making within Sheridan County. The Plan is adopted by conducting a public hearing by the Planning & Zoning Commission, which certifies the plan to the Board of County Commissioners. The Board is responsible for adopting the plan.

For this Plan to be functional, decision-makers must be able to be review, revise, and update it on an as-needed basis to respond to significant trends or changes in the economic, physical, social, or political conditions of the county. This section addresses how to revise the Plan. Revisions to it will follow two distinct and different procedures:

(1) Comprehensive Plan Updates (Every Five Years)

Updates to this Comprehensive Plan should occur at a minimum of every five years. The purpose of a Comprehensive Update is to reevaluate the foundations, policies, and strategies contained within this Plan—changing or removing those that are out-of-date, and developing new policies if necessary so the Plan will continue to be effective. The Process for a Comprehensive Update is described below.

(2) Plan Amendments.

A separate process is included to handle Plan Amendments and related functional plans. The county may perform plan amendments every six months. Plan amendments may include revisions to one or more sections of this Plan because of adoption of other plans or a specific issue/policy plan (e.g., changes to the Sheridan Joint Area Plan), or a directive from the Board of County Commissioners. Plan amendments may include changes to the Future Land Use Plan map. Other plan amendments may be as small as correcting text or map errors. The process and procedure for making these amendments are described below.

Wyoming Law Applies

Adoption and amendment procedures must follow Wyoming State Law regarding notice and comment submission procedures. Due to the complex nature of Comprehensive Plans and in an effort to efficiently consider all public comments, staff will consider and respond to written comments during a plan amendment or update. These comments will be considered, according to Wyoming State Statutes, prior to taking the Plan forward to the appropriate governing body.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE PROCESS—EVERY FIVE YEARS

It is intended that a comprehensive update of this Plan take place at least every five (5) years unless otherwise directed by the Board of County Commissioners to occur sooner. In making a determination of when a Comprehensive Plan Update should be initiated, a prime consideration is the magnitude of the changes that have occurred in the county since the Plan was last updated. For instance, unexpected changes in the economy, the environment, traffic congestion, projected growth, or other issues, may trigger a plan update in less than five years.

When conducting a Comprehensive Plan Update, the county will thoroughly re-evaluate the foundations, policies, and strategies of the Plan. During the update, it will be noted those that should change or be removed to make the plan effective. A Comprehensive Plan Update will also include a thorough review of the validity and current quality of all information contained within the Plan and should include opportunities for involvement by the public, boards and commissions, elected and appointed officials, county staff, and other affected interests.

Once the update is complete, the Board of County Commissioners shall then approve, approve with conditions, or deny the update based on its consideration of the recommendations from the Planning & Zoning Commission, staff, other relevant boards and commissions, and evidence from public hearings.

PLAN AMENDMENT PROCESS AND PROCEDURES

Amendments to this Plan that occur outside of a regular Comprehensive Update process are considered to be Plan Amendments. Plan amendments may include revisions to one or a few chapters or maps as a result of adoption of other plans or a specific issue/policy plan, or a directive from the Board of County Commissioners. They may also comprise changes to the Future Land Use Plan map, including those resulting from an approved master plan (planned unit development). Other Plan Amendments may be as small as correcting text or map errors. The recommended limit on amendments is twice per year.

The process and criteria as follows:

1. A directive for an amendment by a governing body or a citizen request occurs.
2. Staff reviews the amendment proposal and makes a recommendation and files a staff report.
3. The Planning & Zoning Commission shall hold a public hearing and make a determination.
4. Finally, the amendment request goes to the Board of County Commissioners for action.

This sequence of review steps is to ensure plan consistency. The Board of County Commissioners shall subsequently approve, approve with conditions, or deny the amendment based on its consideration of the recommendations and evidence from the public hearings. Approval of the amendments will be by resolution.

Citizen requests for a Plan Amendment shall be considered by the Board of County Commissioners no more frequently than twice per calendar year, unless the County Planner determines the proposed amendment warrants expedited consideration. Plan amendments initiated by the Board of County Commissioners, staff, and boards and commissions, may be processed at any time.

A Plan Amendment may be approved if the Board of County Commissioners make specific findings that:

1. The proposed amendment is beneficial to the county or addresses issues not foreseen during the planning process;
2. The proposed amendment is compatible with the surrounding area, and the goals and policies of this Plan;
3. The proposed amendment will address and mitigate impacts on transportation, services, and facilities;
4. The proposed amendment will have minimal effect on service provision, including adequacy or availability of urban facilities and services, and is compatible with existing and planned service provision;
5. The proposed amendment is consistent with the logical expansion of Urban Growth Areas;
6. Strict adherence to the Plan would result in a situation neither intended nor in keeping with other goals and policies of this Plan; and

The proposed plan amendment will promote the public welfare and will be consistent with the goals and policies of this Plan.

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