



# Barriers to Accessible Housing in Cheyenne, WY

Spring 2022

*Prepared for:*  
The City of Cheyenne, WY

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# Acknowledgements

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I am a Land Use Planner for Elbert County, Colorado, and a student finishing the MURP program upon completion of this semester. I intended to use my experience in land use and academic project experience in researching and understanding housing issues to help continue a critical dialogue on housing in Cheyenne.



Master of Urban  
and Regional Planning

COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO **DENVER**



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## Note

All unlabeled photos were taken by student Matthew Karney while performing field work in Cheyenne, WY in March of 2022.

# Executive Summary

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## Report Contents

Barriers to Accessible Housing in Cheyenne takes a straightforward approach to continue the City of Cheyenne's push to address housing concerns for present and future residents. The City has several organizations taking interest in alleviating housing pressures in the community, and others are being created or utilized to tackle the issue head-on. This report is intended to guide the Planning & Development Department and their various stakeholders in understanding what barriers might exist for the housing development in Cheyenne to be more affordable and diverse for residents of all backgrounds, but also to account for abnormally large population growth in the coming years in light of a multi-million-dollar investment from the federal government into the local F.E. Warren Air Force Base. Four potential barriers were identified in early correspondence with city staff and subsequent field visits to Cheyenne. Questions were raised as to how the community feels about housing, if development trends are too siloed in any one direction, how land use could benefit housing development, and if there were regulations that were actively impeding accessible housing development. Recommendations at the end of the report will be in response to the findings of each area studied.

City staff and stakeholders interviewed indicated that residents have been concerned about issues regarding housing following the last several years where housing costs have grown at rates far outpacing wages earned, something further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. To understand community perceptions better, this report provided a community outreach strategy for the Planning & Development department to gauge resident opinion, but also to involve them in the process for developing plans and regulations for easier access to housing. A preliminary survey for this report was completed in April of 2022 and yielded consistent results from the concerns presented by staff. It was found that Cheyenne residents are concerned about housing access in their community and are in support of broader action to address this issue.

In researching the applicable plans and regulations in place for Cheyenne, it was found that there is a plenty of existing support for a wide variety of housing for residents, primarily in regulations that allow for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and design-oriented form-based codes. An audit of the city's Unified

Development Code was completed as a part of this analysis of planning tools, and it was found that there are a number of density-related restrictions that if removed could expand urban density and make infill development more viable. With the completion of other plans and studies in and around Cheyenne, such as the Transit Study for the Metropolitan Planning Organization, cross-cutting themes could be prioritized so the Unified Development Code and PlanCheyenne could be benefitted by increased transit opportunities.

Because housing development is largely dependent on the private entities in charge of planning, design, construction, and maintenance of new housing stock, this report analyzed the types of units the city has seen constructed since 2016 and elaborated on the input provided by one of the city's more active developers. The city has seen relatively stable single and two-family housing development, and inconsistent, fluctuating multi-family development over the last five years. It was identified that local developers must take on the projects that add the best number of units for the community for the right price. Development of sprawling, single-family subdivisions is often not the preference, certain regulations around density and parking make it difficult for developers to propose and follow through with infill and higher density development. Other potential housing types that would not be grouped with a large multi-family apartment building or a new single-family subdivision in ADUs and missing middle housing are looked at from a practical standpoint to recommend priorities for additional housing options alongside Cheyenne's discussed development trends.

Further research and analysis into land use in Cheyenne attempts to make sense how of long-range planning attempts to be cognizant of development constraints and how future development can be programmed into areas with existing municipal services. PlanCheyenne has identified areas of future population growth that are potentially pushing the limits of the city's Urban Service Boundary. From a municipal standpoint, the importance of establishing and maintaining adequate city services affect issues such as annexation and how it is to be administered, as well as how infill development can often relieve the difficulties of considering access to service on periphery subdivision proposals. The city's establishment of an Urban Renewal Authority in 2021 will ideally be a conduit to redevelopment of

urban areas and if paired with planning for infill and missing middle housing units, areas closer to downtown can see more productive uses and economic activity with more accessible housing planned.

### Findings & Recommendations

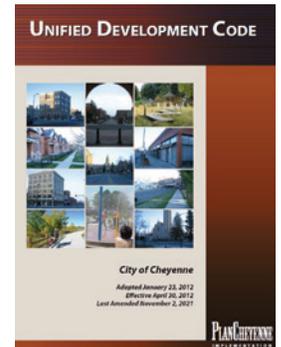
The report revisits the analyses completed in looking at the four potential barriers to accessible housing in Cheyenne. The graphic below depicts the lessons learned for each potential barrier, as well as the recommendation offered to the city for addressing



its current and future housing needs. Overall, it was found that the city is in a critical position to utilize their regulatory tools and planning organizations to spearhead planning for accessible housing. Involving residents, local developers, and integrated stakeholders such as the Metropolitan Planning Organization and the Urban Renewal Authority, developing and implementing a housing plan or strategy that are considerate of the broad range of affordability and diversity issues is the paramount recommendation made to the city as a conclusion of this report.

**Eliminate Requirement That Property Owners Must Live On-Site if there is an ADU**  
Art. 5.7.3.c

**Reevaluate Residential Parking Standards**  
Table 6-2



<b>Phase 1</b>	<p><b>Preliminary Outreach</b></p> <p>Completion of two initial surveys to help inform PDD on how to proceed in addressing its housing crisis.</p>
<b>Phase 2</b>	<p><b>Consensus Building</b></p> <p>Informed by Phase 1, PDD should facilitate engagement with a wide range of residents and stakeholders to develop a comprehensive housing strategy.</p>
<b>Phase 3</b>	<p><b>Planning for Housing Engagement</b></p> <p>Using best practices and lessons learned thus far, engagement for future housing planning is crafted based on the City's long-range housing initiatives.</p>

Top Concerns of a Local Developer (AVI Cheyenne)



## Findings & Recommendations

Residents are in favor of strategically planning for housing in their community.  
**Complete all three phases of the Community Outreach Strategy.**

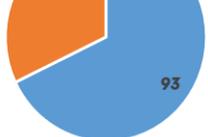
Cheyenne sees a wide variety of housing development and developers support density.  
**Coordinate with the development community to help incentivize the addition of housing units.**

Plans & regulations generally support density and the development of diverse & accessible housing.  
**Amend the UDC to remove density thresholds and simplify review requirements.**

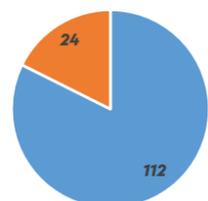
Sprawl is possible, but Cheyenne has a strong downtown core suitable for infill development.  
**Complete all three phases of the Community Outreach Strategy.**

**Cheyenne should look to complete and implement a housing plan or strategy to guide its housing development in light of future growth and cost factors.**

**Plan for Housing? Or Leave it up to the Market?**  
from Survey



■ Housing Downtown  
■ Housing on City's Edge



**Downtown or Periphery Development?**  
from Survey

■ Planning ■ Market

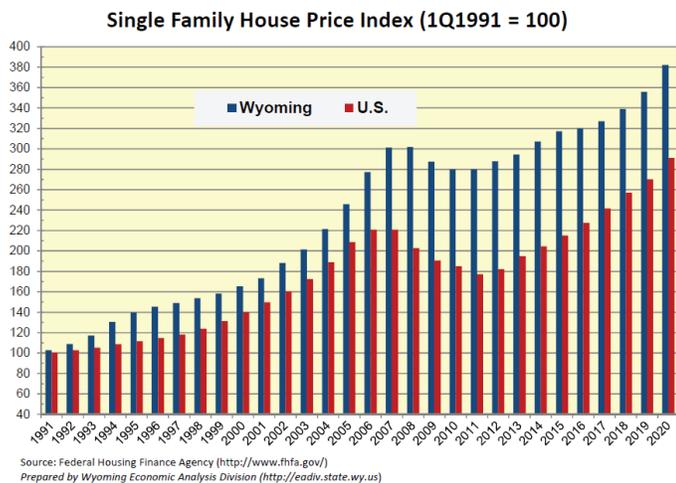


## Chapter 1 Setting the Stage

An introduction to Cheyenne  
& the housing pressures it  
is facing.

# Understanding the Issue

The City of Cheyenne, Wyoming has received varying levels of input from their community, local developers, and many stakeholders that housing is becoming increasingly unaffordable, contributing to sprawl, and pushing the limits of infrastructure and city resources. As a city that identifies well with the railroad connectors of the Midwest, the housing pressures faced by the Rocky Mountain Front Range in Colorado have permeated into Wyoming and have driven housing prices into uncharted territory. See Figure 1.1 below, in 1991, the State of Wyoming and the United States had similar price-points for a single-family home at \$100,000. From 2007 to present day, housing prices in Wyoming have maintained an \$80,000 to \$100,000 higher average price than the United States as a whole. If prices continue to climb consistent with the values of Figure 1.1, housing will continue to burden households affected by limited increases in wages and income.



**Figure 1.1: Change in Housing Prices for Single Family Homes in Wyoming & the United States**  
Source: State of Wyoming - Department of Administration & Information

The Joint Centers for Housing Studies of Harvard University publish an annual State of the Nation's Housing as a report containing multiple figures and assessments based on data and trends throughout the United States. This report addresses the annual findings for each year, and the issues as addressed in 2021 can be highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic recovery and a return to pre-recession growth, but prices are rising at an unprecedented rate, hamstrung by high demand and limited supply (Joint Centers

for Housing Studies – Harvard University 2021, p1). Although this report speaks to the proliferation of housing-related constraints across the country, the concerns raised by the City of Cheyenne are consistent with housing markets both large and small.

The State of the Nation's Housing provides an outlook for the future based on the trends studied and the overall push to reduce the number of households that are cost burdened or spending over 30% of their income on housing-related expenses. Figure 1.2 below indicates Cheyenne is a community of predominantly owner-occupied units, but less so than the county it resides in (Laramie) and the State of Wyoming overall. Less than 20-percent of owner-occupied units face a housing cost burden, but that figure is closer to 50-percent for renter-occupied units.

## Cost Burden by Tenure

	State: Wyoming	County: Laramie	City: Cheyenne
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	<b>230,101</b>	<b>39,683</b>	<b>27,344</b>
<b>Owner-Occupied Percent</b>	<b>70.39%</b>	<b>69.78%</b>	<b>65.92%</b>
Owner-occupied housing units:	161,972	27,692	18,025
Total Owners Cost Burdened	29,002	5,214	3,271
<b>Percent Owners Cost Burdened</b>	<b>17.91%</b>	<b>18.83%</b>	<b>18.15%</b>
Renter-occupied housing units:	68,129	11,991	9,319
Total Renters Cost Burdened	25,214	5,301	4,349
<b>Percent Renters Cost Burdened</b>	<b>37.01%</b>	<b>44.21%</b>	<b>46.67%</b>

**Figure 1.2: Percentage of State, County, and City Owners or Renters Facing a Housing Cost Burden**  
Source: United States Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates Table B25106: Tenure by Housing Costs as a Percentage of Household Income in the Past 12 Months

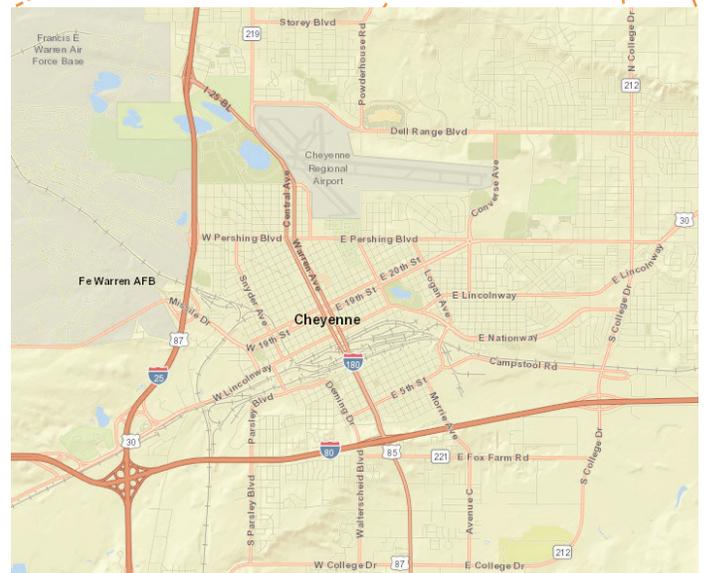
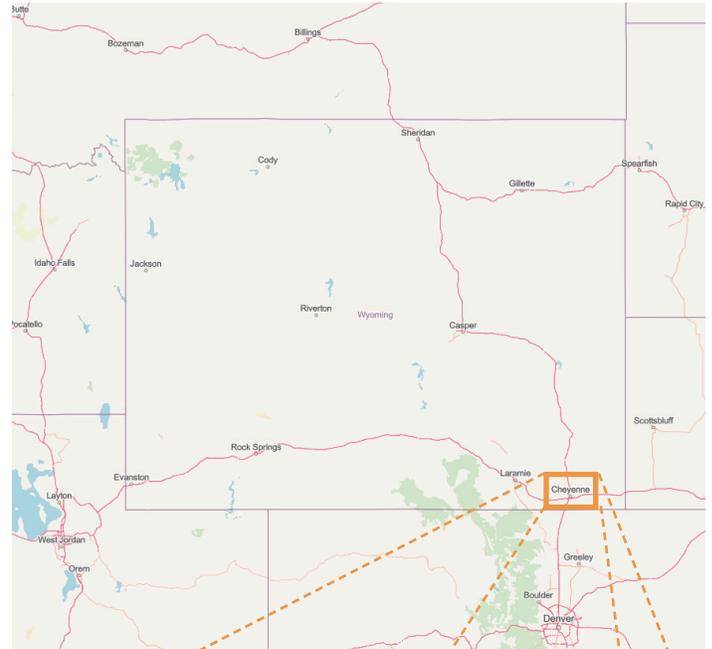
When comparing to the 2014 American Community Survey data to the 2019 data provided in Figure 1.2, Cheyenne's homeowners have become less cost burdened, whereas a larger share of renters are becoming cost burdened. Many scenarios could be occurring here from Cheyenne's rentals becoming more inaccessible to the broader population or housing development is targeting ownership over renting. If this trend continues, Cheyenne will be facing an unmistakable housing crisis in the ranks of the other severely cost burdened cities of the Front Range and the United States as a whole.

# Introduction to Cheyenne

The City of Cheyenne has its roots from the Union Pacific expansion in the 1800s. The city has grown from a modest settlement of approximately 600 to 63,607 (U.S. Census Bureau 2019). Cheyenne lies entirely within Laramie County in the absolute southeastern corner of Wyoming. In terms of population (2019), Cheyenne contributes 64% of Laramie County's population in only 32-square miles, only 1.2% of the county's land area. Not only is Cheyenne the State Capitol of Wyoming and the Laramie County seat, but it is one of the few urban centers in the state of 581,024 (American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates 2019).

The City of Cheyenne has a mayor-council form of government with nine members serving three wards of the city, in addition to the mayor serving at-large. The entity responsible for planning is the city's Planning & Development Department which is comprised of Current Planning, Long Range Planning, and the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). The city's Planning Commission is a seven-member board, appointed by the mayor, to provide review and recommendations for action on planning requests to the City Council. Other various entities such as the Urban Renewal Authority (URA) have been formed by the City Council in response to ever-evolving circumstances.

As the Front Range that extends into southern Wyoming continues to grow and add population at historic rates, the housing needs of local communities from Colorado Springs to Cheyenne are becoming grossly unaffordable for middle to low incomes. Development patterns outside of the city and activity centers of Fort Collins, Loveland, Denver, for example, are low-density and contributing to significant sprawl, resource depletion, and automobile dependency. Although most of the region's growth is contained in Colorado, Cheyenne, Wyoming is also tasked with managing future growth in providing a diverse, yet affordable supply of housing.



**Figure 1.3: Map of Wyoming and Street Network of Cheyenne**  
Source: City of Cheyenne General Information Map - ESRI Basemaps

# Project Background

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Cheyenne is predicted to add 2,000 jobs with a \$90-million contract to upgrade the Ground Based Strategic Deterrent (GBSD) which includes Malmstrom AFB (Montana), Minot AFB (North Dakota), and F.E. Warren AFB on the west side of Cheyenne (Connect 2045, 2020). Investments are due to occur over a 15-year span beginning in 2025, attracting a wide variety of jobs from various sectors and income levels. This combined with population growth trends from the 2010s indicate that Cheyenne will experience growth for the next two decades at the very least and housing supply will need to accommodate this growth.

According to the City of Cheyenne, the two most common forms of growth are large, suburban single-family and fourplexes, four units being the most under one roof that does not require a sprinkler system for fire suppression. The city is teeming with exurban lands prime for development and city core parcels that are prime for infill redevelopment.

The Planning & Development Department of the City of Cheyenne submitted a project proposal to the University of Colorado Denver for the Spring 2022 Capstone cycle for a student to work on and identify barriers to housing development in the City of Cheyenne. More specifically, to identify areas of concern that may be exacerbating affordability and supply issues from policy to development trends. Upon completion, the project will contain a report highlighting the concerns from the primary barriers identified in preliminary research and best-case recommendations to address these barriers. The student will be working with the Planning & Development Department to present to the City Council during a special session on May 20, 2022.



# Report Approach

Through interacting with the city’s planning staff, conducting preliminary field work within the City, and reading through the Unified Development Code (UDC) and related plans, the following four potential barriers have been identified. They will serve as the focal point for research and analysis, and as the context for the final recommendations made:



## Community Perceptions

Cheyenne’s approximately 63,000 residents live in the primary population center of their state and have the power through their vote and voice to change the trajectory of how the city looks to accommodate future growth. Growth and density can often be difficult topics for longer term residents of any locality and a low-density and predominantly rural state can be causal for concern.



## Land Use in Cheyenne

In the urban-rural interface, the widest housing varieties can be achieved from a variety of price points. From sprawling 10+ acre Laramie County ranches to 3,000-square foot urban lots, Cheyenne truly has a context for any of its residents. Infill and higher density can look to accommodate the Central Business District and surrounding city core, whereas single-family and limited density developments and subdivisions enter the city’s periphery.



## Planning Tools

PlanCheyenne, adopted in 2014 and the UDC, most recently amended in 2022, are two of the most critical “living” documents in the city that set the parameters of growth through zoning controls and future land use. Other documents including the Urban Renewal Authority’s Blight Studies can factor in to influence development patterns as well.



## Development Trends

Financial institutions and developers read the market and respond by developing the most sensible products given the present and future trends. The sprawling growth patterns Cheyenne is no stranger to are in response to market trends. Absent of policy or incentives, development will continue to prioritize sprawl over infill and density.

These four areas will be split into chapters where individualized research and analysis will be conducted and best practices identified. Key stakeholders and agencies will be consulted for their input and appropriate methodologies will be created to guide the report’s final recommendations.

The barriers, at the time of identification, are hypothetical and were selected for their ability to solicit input, direction for research, and find potential gaps. By establishing four clear areas that might be impacting the city’s ability to provide affordable and diverse housing options to present and future residents, the report might establish that the city’s residents are in support of this approach to housing, or that PlanCheyenne is adequately addressing the evolving needs of the city.

The known barriers to this project are affordability and growth pressures; they are interrelated and connected in some way, shape or form to the potential barriers identified. The project’s recommendations are intended to work with the potential barriers that can be guided to some extent through education, policy, or incentives. The overarching goal of the project is to provide meaningful feedback to Cheyenne’s planners and elected officials to guide growth in an equitable manner, respectful of present and future residents.



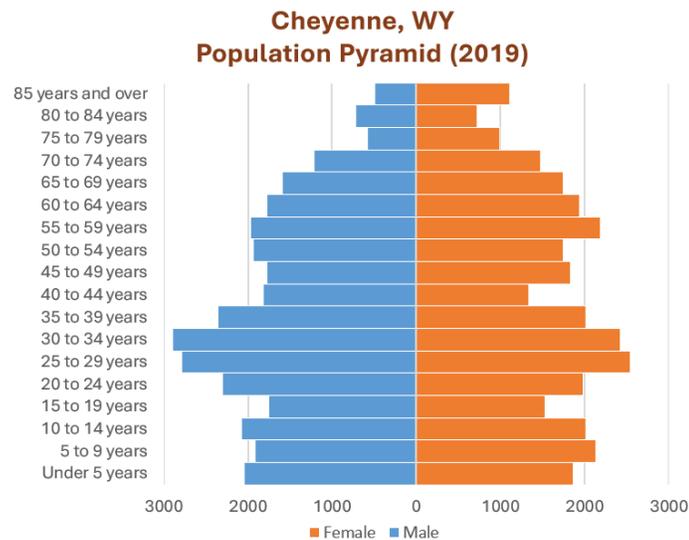
## Chapter 2

# Community Perceptions

Preparation of an outreach strategy to guide the city in learning on how residents feel about housing in Cheyenne

# Cheyenne Demographics

The City of Cheyenne, as informed by the 2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau, has a population of 63,607. The same survey indicates Laramie County has a population of 98,320 persons and the State of Wyoming with 581,024 persons. The population pyramid provided in Figure 2.1 below indicates the city has an abundance of working age males and females from ages 20 to 40. This pyramid indicates there is aging within the community, but a reasonable level of replacement from the school age youth of the community. The median age (Table B01002) of city residents is 36.6, with men trending younger (35.5) than females (38.0), both younger than the county's median age of 37.0 and the state at 37.7 (U.S. Census Bureau 2019).



**Figure 2.1: Population Pyramid for City of Cheyenne based on 2019 Population Figures**  
 Source: United States Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates Table B01001: Sex by Age

Demographic research has also indicated that pre-pandemic trends are supportive of a stable population that has remained in Cheyenne or Laramie County as seen in Figure 2.2. Future growth spurred by the F.E. Warren AFB investments or rising housing costs would ultimately uproot these trends either as point-in-time occurrences or define a new trend of shorter-term stays in local areas.

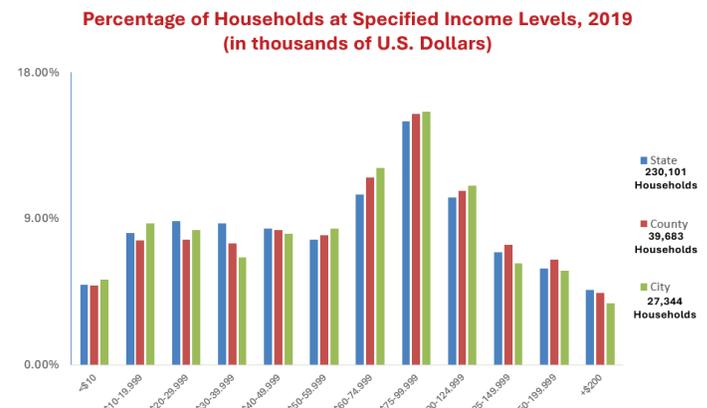
Median household income figures (Table B25119) from 2019 in the State of Wyoming and Laramie County are near similar to Cheyenne's at \$64,598 (U.S. Census Bureau 2019). The divide is found between owner and

## Mobility of Residents

	State: Wyoming	County: Laramie	City: Cheyenne
<b>Did Not Move</b>	83.17%	82.62%	81.66%
<b>Moved within County</b>	9.21%	9.66%	11.24%
<b>Moved within State</b>	2.55%	1.68%	1.94%
<b>Moved from Other State</b>	4.69%	5.72%	5.02%
<b>Moved from Abroad</b>	0.38%	0.33%	0.14%

**Figure 2.2: Geographic Mobility of Residents (Percentage of Whole)**  
 Source: United States Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates Table B07001: Geographical Mobility in the Past Year By Age for Current Residence in the United States

renter occupied units, with the median income of owner households at \$78,283 and renter households at \$40,349. This discrepancy exists across the board in Wyoming and in Laramie County as well. Figure 2.3 below indicates all three geography scales have similar distributions of income levels with Cheyenne having a larger share of its households in close proximity of the area median income or AMI.



**Figure 2.3: Percentage of Wyoming, Laramie County and Cheyenne Households at Specified Income Levels**  
 Source: United States Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates Table B19001: Household Income in the Past 12 Months (in 2019 Inflation-Adjusted Dollars)

The census figures showcase a working-age community representative of the larger scales of the state it resides in. Cheyenne and Laramie County residents like to remain local in southeast Wyoming as well with limited in and out bound migration. Incomes hover close to the median incomes of the geography with fewer households experiencing extreme poverty or extreme wealth. This demographic research will guide the remainder of this chapter.

# Outreach Strategy

The residents of Cheyenne play a pivotal role in how housing strategy can be formed and beneficially impact affordability and choice. In order to seek feedback from Cheyenne residents, a Community Outreach Strategy is outlined in this section to allow for the City of Cheyenne to understand the views and desires of the community as it pertains to housing. This strategy will be formed and guided by research and best practices and is designed to be carried out by Cheyenne planning staff and future interested stakeholders. Given the timing constraints of the Spring 2022 semester, the strategy will be designed to be completed at any time and used for the benefit of the Planning & Development Department (PDD) in its planning efforts regarding housing.

Since this project and report do not coincide with a major planning effort, the word “input” is used carefully as the identification of barriers will help guide a planning process that is intended to involve the larger community as a whole at a later time. Having the community weigh in and provide feedback regarding the issues they see as critical or pertinent to acquiring housing will allow for the city to approach a housing plan or strategy in a more informed way.

The Outreach Strategy will be split into three specific phases to accommodate information gathering (Phase I), community interaction & education (Phase II), and conclude with direct community engagement in development of a housing strategy for the city (Phase III).

<b>Phase 1</b>	<b>Preliminary Outreach</b> Completion of two initial surveys to help inform PDD on how to proceed in addressing its housing crisis.
<b>Phase 2</b>	<b>Consensus Building</b> Informed by Phase 1, PDD should facilitate engagement with a wide range of residents and stakeholders to develop a comprehensive housing strategy.
<b>Phase 3</b>	<b>Planning for Housing Engagement</b> Using best practices and lessons learned thus far, engagement for future housing planning is crafted based on the City’s long-range housing initiatives.

## Phase 1: Preliminary Outreach

### Steps to Complete:

Preliminary Questionnaire

Follow-Up Questionnaire

Since limited studies or plans have been completed in the City of Cheyenne or Laramie County leading up to present day, the community’s perceptions of the housing market and conditions in the city are relatively unknown. Based on input from various stakeholders and interviewees for this report, it has been identified as common knowledge that Cheyenne is facing an unprecedented housing issue and the first step in proceeding with addressing this issue is identifying if the community can confirm the presence of this issue and see how they can best inform the planning for housing in the future.

The strategy to be utilized with this survey of residents is built from best practices articulated by Matt Leighninger of the Deliberative Democracy Consortium. The successful practices delineated in Using Online Tools to Engage – and be Engaged by – The Public will factor into the questionnaire administered during March 2022. Participants will have the opportunity to “consider a range of views and policy options” with complex questions that will make responses more personal and tied to “tangible actions and outcomes” (Leighninger N.D., p4). Surveys are one of the most useful ways to solicit feedback and by asking more detailed and provoking questions, the result of the community input phase will help the city see the types of development current residents would like to see in their neighborhoods.

This process recognizes the importance of respondents’ self-determination; responses will be collected and utilized regardless of their content. As shared in the Principles of Community Engagement, “communities and individuals need to own the issues, name the problem, identify action areas, plan and implement strategies, and evaluate outcomes” (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, p50). Instead of presenting the housing dilemma raised by this report as a negative, survey respondents will define the type of response they see fit because of this process.

Community and stakeholder outreach as completed by the Connect 2045 Transportation Plan used online maps/surveys, a community open house, focus group meetings and two pop up events for a total of 641 participants over a six-month window (Connect 2045, 2020). In a substantially smaller time window, the number of responses is anticipated to be low, so the emphasis on the responses themselves, however detailed, should help influence how the city looks to engage the housing conversation after Spring 2022.

In discussion with city planners, it was determined that a web-based survey would be the ideal medium for soliciting feedback on housing in Cheyenne. Given the waning of the COVID-19 pandemic and limited time window for collecting and synthesizing feedback, a survey (as seen in Figure 2.4) will be made available for a two-week span in April with no additional engagement, outreach or input modes proposed in tandem with this report. A follow-up survey should be completed in 3-4 months that uses similar questions to solicit informative opinions on housing from Cheyenne constituents. Completion of both surveys will create a path into Phase 2 and should help inform PDD on how receptive the community will be for development of a housing strategy or plan.



**Figure 2.4: Preliminary Survey as published on Facebook in April 2022**

Source: City of Cheyenne Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/CityOfCheyenne>

If it is found from the community input process that residents largely support sprawl, low-density development, and auto-dependent uses, the city

as it continues to battle affordability and the lack of housing choice in its community, should look to establish a holistic and educational approach to community engagement that allows for residents to see and interact with the benefits of a diverse housing strategy. Residents and community members should be afforded the opportunity to picture what gentle density increases or the implementation of walkable developments.

## Phase 2: Consensus Building

### Steps to Complete:

- Stakeholder Meeting I
- Stakeholder Meeting II
- Stakeholder Meeting III

To best continue working with the community in addressing housing challenges in Cheyenne, this report is suggesting three stakeholder meetings between City staff and officials, local developers, business owners, and community residents. Having three meetings for this phase will allow for different locations in Cheyenne to be utilized, different meeting types to be implemented (ex. town halls, focus groups, etc.), and different times of the week or day for scheduling purposes.

The process that is recommended to be utilized for Phase 2 can be referred to as scenario planning. This practice is more common within the business world but has a practical application to the planning process. As defined by the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) in their Scenario Planning Handbook completed in 2013, scenario planning “allows a community to look long-term and envision the future it wants, rather than accept the trend line embodied in most existing plans” with “the expectation is that through the process of conceiving, developing, and evaluating a series of future scenarios and the outcomes they produce, a preferred and feasible course of action can be identified.” (ODOT 2013, p6)

Current development trends hardly encompass the changes that need to be made to ensure Cheyenne has an adequate and affordable housing supply for its current and future inhabitants. Through the interviews and interactions completed as a part of this project, there is a significant impetus to address the investments to the F.E. Warren Airforce base and the-

growth to the city that is expected as a result. Scenario planning offers all members of the community the opportunity to consider how housing supply will be addressed going forward.

Scholars Chakraborty & McMillan propose a typology that can be customized to create an ideal scenario planning process for Phase 2. Here are the following questions PDD will have to consider when preparing the stakeholder meetings in reviewing Chakraborty & McMillan's typology:

### **1. How should the process be organized?**

It is proposed that this process should follow a "strong leader" form of structure. This will allow for PDD to lead a broader coalition of stakeholders to provide input on housing. The emphasis is that PDD facilitate and allow for the those more entrenched in the community to provide direction for developing strategy.

### **2. What is the scope of the issues at hand?**

In developing a typology, it has been determined that the housing crisis as identified by multiple interviewees in this planning process that this is a "problem-oriented" initiative. As discussed by Chakraborty & McMillan, the end result of this initiative will produce answers, either one clearly defined approach or multiple all-encompassing approaches, to guide the scale of planning for housing in the future.

### **3. What is the motive guiding the process?**

Scenario types can be either normative and addressing of a particular target, predictive and based on trajectories or statistical patterns, or explorative and in consideration of all potential outcomes. The process in Cheyenne has a singular target on housing and statistical inference will hardly encapsulate the volatility of the housing market considering future predicted growth. Cheyenne will need a normative and preferred scenario towards addressing its housing affordability and supply shortage and should let tangential issues that interact with housing such as transportation and food access support the housing conversation opposed to dominate the conversation.

### **4. What type of outcome is desired?**

Is Cheyenne looking to build awareness of the housing issue, create a vision and goals for the future, or produce policy recommendations? Phase 1 of this outreach strategy is to collect feedback and generate awareness that the city is taking steps to address the housing crisis it is facing. The scenario planning process

in Phase 2 should instead create a vision forward to inform planning for housing conversations that will be starting with the proposed stakeholder meetings.

### **5. Who is involved in the process?**

Chakraborty & McMillan identify a broad mix of potential stakeholders, but this strategy should target public groups like PDD and the Cheyenne MPO, private groups such as local developers and business associations, and the broader public including individuals or community organizations. Having a broader consensus will allow for a more inclusive and thorough process to benefit the city as a whole.

### **6. What is the extent of stakeholders' participation?**

This process can look to inform, solicit feedback, or to have joint fact-finding. In this particular phase, having as many stakeholders at the table as possible will allow for a collaborative process in finding a solution for the housing pressures the city faces.

### **7. What is the medium for outreach?**

Depending on timing and other various constraints, PDD will have to decide whether in-person, virtual, or hybrid means for engagement will be preferred. Since three meetings are proposed for this phase, PDD can look to try in-person for one or all of the meetings or provide hybrid opportunities for the benefit of the attendees.

### **8. How are future scenarios being constructed?**

It is not clear whether qualitative tools, planning tools such as GIS story-mapping, or computer modeling will be the best fit for this process. It is encouraged that PDD consider whether informal or opinion-based means should guide the process, or if data or quantitative measures would be a better for guiding the process.

### **9. What resources will support this process?**

Chakraborty & McMillan identify that there are a wide range of factors or resources that can influence a scenario planning process. Does PDD want to make a recurring outreach process for housing strategy implementation? Is conducting three stakeholder meetings to be opportunity-based, point-in-time-captures of discourse on housing by multiple groups? Or is this an outreach process that could be supported and expanded by grant funding, a department budget surplus, or a sales tax initiative? The city should look to mobilize appropriate resources for undergoing this process and ensure that there are limited, if any,

threats to the completion of this engagement process. (Chakraborty & McMillan 2015, pp21-23)

By answering these broader questions and defining a unique typology behind the outreach, the following two engagement processes are suggested for Phase 2:

### **Town Halls**

Either in-person or virtual, town hall meetings allow for information sharing from affected parties and the opportunities for others to listen and reflect on the issues at hand. Town halls, in a scenario like this, where there is significant intersection of issues pertaining to housing between different individuals or groups place a significant emphasis on the outreach facilitator, PDD, to build a strict meeting procedure, lay effective ground rules, and guide conversations between multiple groups. Developers, citizen group organizers, elected officials, or housing advocates can have the opportunity to field questions themselves or allow for PDD to facilitate the conversation in defining how the city should look to address housing. Implementation of the scenario planning process discussed previously should allow for the meeting to be effective in completing broad community outreach.

### **Focus Groups**

Involving smaller parties of stakeholders, focus groups gather feedback from direct and open-ended conversation between participating members. A focus group facilitator will be involved in the conversations and offer thought provoking questions or comments to help steer discussions in a meaningful and productive way. Focus groups should be scheduled, as any number of the three stakeholder meetings, to have follow-up dialogue 2-3 weeks after the initial meeting to see how well the initial conversation has progressed and if participants have additional insight to offer.

## **Phase 3: Planning for Housing Engagement**

This process will be in consideration of the findings from the first two phases of the outreach strategy. Many of the recommendations produced by this report will help guide PDD and the city in determining the actions it should take in addressing its housing crisis in the short and long terms. It is anticipated that the city will undergo some form of a planning response to the crisis, either through housing policy initiatives, production of a housing plan, or establishing of partnerships with the community and/or local housing developers.

No specific engagement medium is proposed for this phase as PDD will have to be reflexive to the results of the first two phases of outreach, and the course of action pursued by elected officials. For all intents and purposes, Phase 3 will overlap with the larger engagement methodology embarked upon for the completion of a housing plan or policy initiative. As a result, the following recommendations should be considered for the outreach and engagement efforts for future planning efforts:

### **1. Continue Relationship Building**

Housing is not a static issue, and a wide range of actors and factors play in assuring supply meets demand. It is no secret that “positive change is more likely to occur when community members are an integral part of a program’s development and implementation” (Clark N.D., p48). The key for longstanding success in dealing with a recurring and pervasive issue is to not pause partnerships and coalitions just because a strategy or plan is in place to address an issue. To maintain the fight against housing inaccessibility, relationship building among all members of the community will be essential.

### **2. The Importance of Listening**

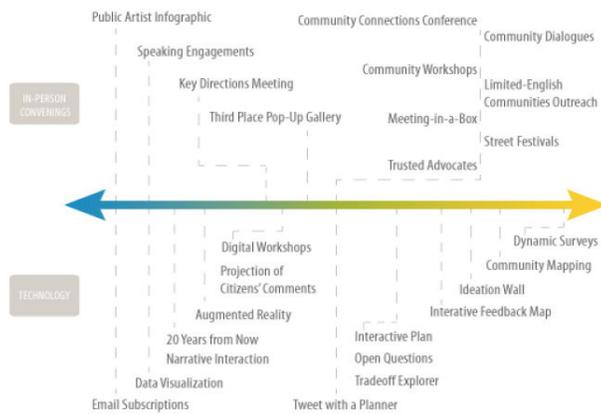
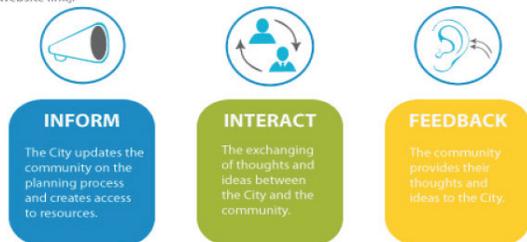
For as much as the city can be involved in the development of housing in its communities, it serves best as a middleman between the developers providing the supply and residents bringing the demand. From the interviews held for this project, Cheyenne is found to be a community where its citizens want to be heard and involved in where their community is going. City staff and elected officials should be keen in their ability to listen to what their residents and developers have to say and shy away from controlling the dialogue in the process.

### 3. Get creative with engagement

There are a wide variety of engagement tools available to local governments and planners tasked with facilitating authentic community outreach. The City of Minneapolis, MN as seen in Figure 2.5 have adapted their civic engagement plan to be cognizant of the different mediums available due to the proliferation of best practices and technological advancements.

#### APPROACHES TO ENGAGEMENT

The following continuum ranks engagement activities that are based on three approaches to engagement for Minneapolis 2040. Inform and Feedback are activities focused on single-way communication, and Interact is a balanced approach with the exchanging of ideas between City staff and the Public. For more information about Minneapolis 2040 please visit [insert website link].



**Figure 2.5: City of Minneapolis, Approaches to Engagement Continuum**

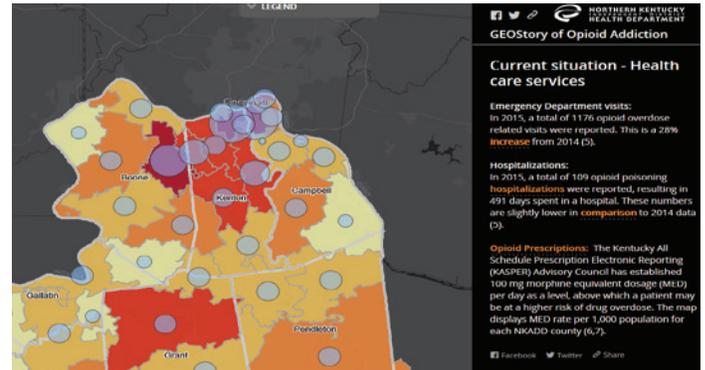
Source: City of Minneapolis; 2016 Civic Engagement Plan

Other resources such as the International Association for Public Participation’s (IAP2) Public Participation Toolbox can serve as a starting point for devising the best mediums to conduct engagement for a housing plan or strategy. Consider some of the following strategies or mediums to help foster creative and adaptable community engagement:

#### Story Mapping

It is the interweaving storytelling and maps that gives citizens and outreach participants the blank canvas of an interactive map to engage with planning concepts and provide critical, graphical feedback as seen in Figure 2.6. “Community mapping recognizes that maps are not value-free renderings, but rather convey certain understandings of the world and make them meaningful,” (Lung-Amam & Dawkins 2019, p4)

something that would be holistic and appealing to the city. PDD could implement story mapping as an effective, indefinite method of engagement to ideally create a better relationship between planner and constituent, and branch farther beyond housing.

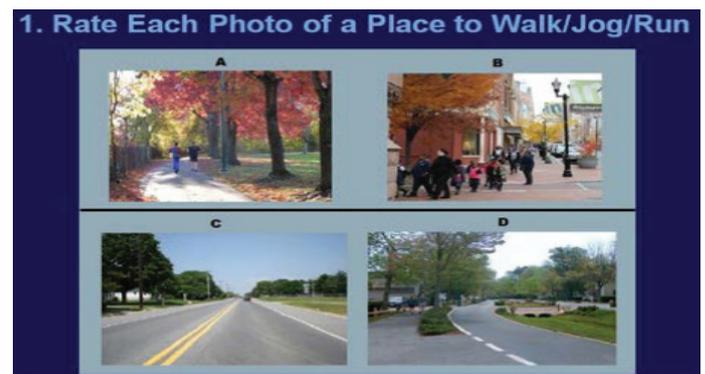


**Figure 2.6: Example of Story Mapping**

Source: N. Kentucky Health Dept. through Geo Jobe

#### Visual Preference Surveys

These surveys are a new technique shared by the Institute for Public Administration of the University of Delaware as seen in Figure 2.7. This is defined as an engagement tool that allows “citizens and decision-makers to determine preferences for various types of community design, architectural styles, land/streetscaping, and/or built environment options” with “stakeholders [determining] which components of a plan or project environment contribute positively to a community’s overall image or features” (Univ. of Delaware N.D., p2). Visual Preference Surveys would be an option for Cheyenne residents to show what types of housing development they would like to see if their city or be used as a tool to help educate on topics such as gentle density or missing middle housing.



**Figure 2.7: Example of a Visual Preference Survey**

Source: University of Delaware, Institute for Public Administration

# Preliminary Questionnaire

The following questionnaire, as a part of the broader Community Outreach Strategy to gather housing input, was made available for response online from April 6 to April 20, 2022. Consistent with the approach delineated earlier in this chapter, the questions are designed in such a way to inform the future of the Outreach Strategy and determine which course of engagement needs to be followed, by asking simple, yet poignant questions for the City to understand the types of housing and cost levels its residents reside in compared to the housing they would prefer to live in.

## Community Questionnaire

Topic: Housing in Cheyenne  
 Produced by Matthew Karney  
 CU Denver Capstone Student  
 For the Planning & Development Department  
 of the City of Cheyenne  
 Revised by Mark Christensen

### Disclaimer Placed on Survey:

The answers provided with this survey will be informing a report to be presented to the Cheyenne City Council in May 2022. This report produced by a student with the University of Colorado-Denver shall inform the city's Planning & Development Department, as well as various local stakeholders, how the housing needs of the community are to be viewed and addressed in the future.

The responses to the survey are located after each question as well as the number of responses for each question. Overall, the survey yielded responses from 140 different respondents.

### Survey Question #1

What type of housing do you reside in currently?

*select one of the following*

- a. Large single-family home (>2,500 square-feet)
- b. Medium single-family home (1,000-2,500 square-feet)
- c. Small single-family home (<1,000 square-feet)
- d. Single-Family Attached
- e. Townhome/Rowhouse
- f. Duplex
- g. Triplex
- h. Fourplex
- i. Multi-Unit apartments
- j. Accessory Dwelling Unit
- k. Other

Number of Responses: 137

### Survey Question #2

What type of housing would you be interested in or would like to see more of in your community?

*select all that apply*

- a. Large single-family home (>2,500 square-feet)
- b. Medium single-family home (1,000-2,500 square-feet)
- c. Small single-family home (<1,000 square-feet)
- d. Single-Family Attached
- e. Townhome/Rowhouse
- f. Duplex
- g. Triplex
- h. Fourplex
- i. Multi-Unit apartments
- j. Accessory Dwelling Unit
- k. Other

### Number of Responses: Not Applicable

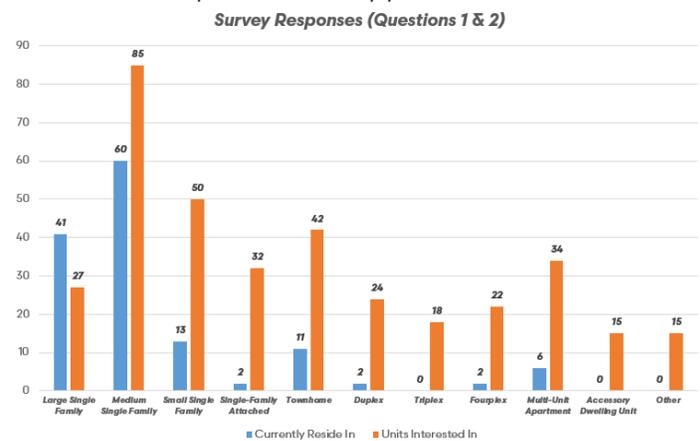


Figure 2.8: Responses to Questions 1 & 2

### Survey Question #3

Does access to a garage or carport influence your choice of housing?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Number of Responses: 138

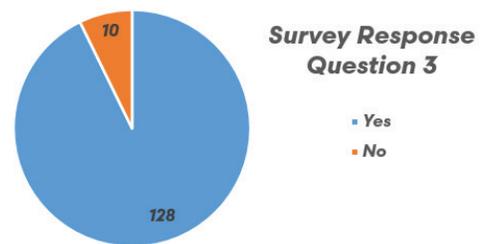


Figure 2.9: Responses to Questions 3

**Survey Question #4**

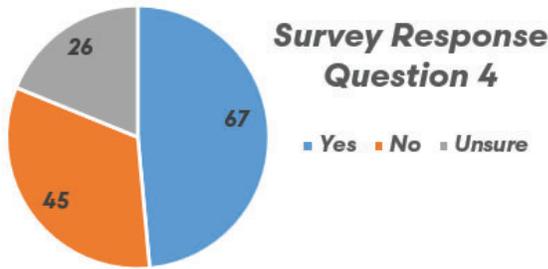
Would you be interested in seeing more options for alternative housing arrangements (studios, efficiency units, rent-by-the-room, shared common areas) in the city?

Number of Responses: 138

**Survey Question #5**

Please explain your answer to the previous question, if possible

Number of Responses: 98



**Examples of Written Responses to #5:**

*"We need affordable housing that isn't a 3000 plus square ft home. This kind of home only targets one kind of person"*

*"Trying to rent here is really hard! More options would make it easier"*

*"It might be good for some people, not for me"*

*"I don't think we need more one bedrooms, We need more bedrooms for affordable pricing for people who are starting families or already started families"*

Figure 2.10: Responses to Questions 4 & 5

**Survey Question #6**

What do you think is the smallest unit you could live in? Please answer in square footage.

Number of Responses: 130

**Survey Question #7**

Hypothetically, if you were a renter, what do you think an average rent should be for the unit size you identified in the previous question?

Number of Responses: 129

Average Unit Size	<b>1,115 s.f.</b>
Average Rent	<b>\$920</b>
Average Cost Per Square Foot	<b>\$0.96</b>

Figure 2.11: Key Numbers from Questions 6 & 7

**Survey Question #8**

What do you think is the largest unit you could live in? Please answer in square footage.

Number of Responses: 126

**Survey Question #9**

Hypothetically, if you were a renter, what do you think an average rent should be for the unit size you identified in the previous question?

Number of Responses: 124

Average Unit Size	<b>2,663 s.f.</b>
Average Rent	<b>\$1,893</b>
Average Cost Per Square Foot	<b>\$0.75</b>
Number of Responses over 2,500 s.f.	<b>67 (55.8%)</b>

Figure 2.12: Key Numbers from Questions 8 & 9

**Survey Question #10**

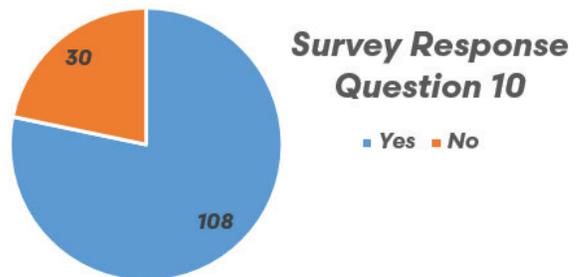
Do you have any concerns as a Cheyenne resident with the housing development you are seeing in the city?

Number of Responses: 138

**Survey Question #11**

If you answered yes to the previous question, please explain.

Number of Responses: 105



**Examples of Written Responses to #11:**

*"The cost of purchasing some of the new houses are priced out of many families budgets."*

*"To much suburban sprawl, and not enough smart development to infill the missing middle. Car dependent single family housing is not the absolute solution."*

*"Almost all new construction is in the higher end. We need to provide entry level housing - not low income - entry level for first time buyers. Owner occupied (not allowed to be rentals) condominium units."*

Figure 2.13: Responses to Questions 10 & 11

### Survey Question #12

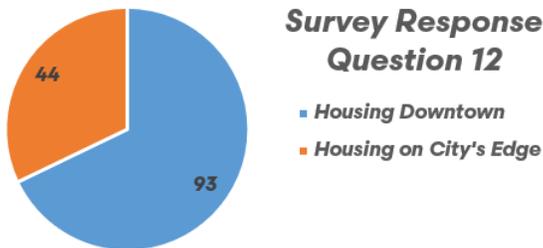
Would you be supportive of housing development primarily being focused in the downtown neighborhoods? (As opposed to on the edges of the city)

Number of Responses: 137

### Survey Question #13

Please explain your answer to the previous question, if possible.

Number of Responses: 108



#### Examples of Written Responses to #13:

"There is a lot of underutilized space and land downtown that should receive some focused attention before trying to expand the city along the edges."

"I feel downtown should be retail oriented. Parking is already an issue."

"I think it would help attract young professionals who want to live near local businesses, restaurants and bars (as long as it's affordable)."

"Only if there was a grocery store downtown, so people living there would have walkable access"

Figure 2.14: Responses to Question 12 & 13

### Survey Question #14

Do you feel the City of Cheyenne should strategically plan for its housing needs or let the market decide?

Number of Responses: 136

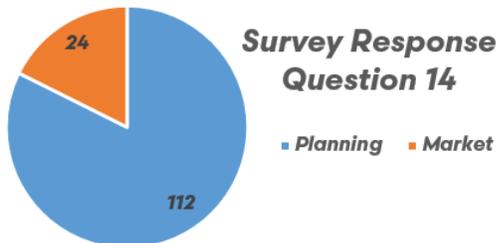


Figure 2.15: Responses to Question 14

### Survey Question #15

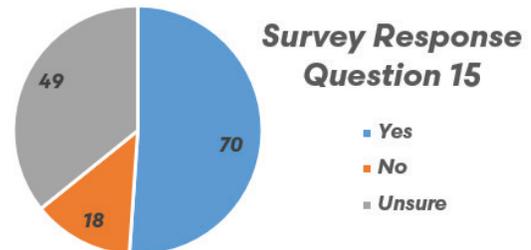
Are you in support for public investment, such as in roads and land acquisition, to offset housing costs?

Number of Responses: 137

### Survey Question #16

Please explain your answer to the previous question, if possible.

Number of Responses: 71



#### Examples of Written Responses to #16:

"You can't make things better without some public investment. It takes diverse options to continue to have strategic and planned growth."

"Depends on how it's funded. If it's in more taxes, then no."

"If left to private means, the cheapest solution possible will be employed. The city will need to take over eventually and need to rebuild infrastructure."

Figure 2.16: Responses to Questions 15 & 16

### Survey Question #17

If you have any additional comments on your feelings towards Cheyenne's past, present and future housing development, please share:

Number of Responses: 67

#### Examples of Written Responses to #17:

"As a landlord in this city of a 72 unit apartment complex the issue I see as most concerning is the uncontrolled rental rates posted by other landlord. Housing costs (rentals and ownership) are out of touch with the wages earned. Unless rent control factors into this survey, housing within this city will be an issue."

"The city of Cheyenne should most definitely control the growth of residential housing. To avoid the infrastructure problems that we've all witnessed over the decades in CO."

"If Cheyenne doesn't find a way to create more affordable housing soon, there won't be an adequate workforce to keep some existing businesses open, much less help attract new businesses and industries."

"Giving fee waivers and other incentives for remodeling exciting homes could be a great thing for find affordable housing"

Figure 2.17: Responses to Question 17



## Chapter 3 Planning Tools

An analysis of the regulatory codes, policies, and plans that dictate development in Cheyenne

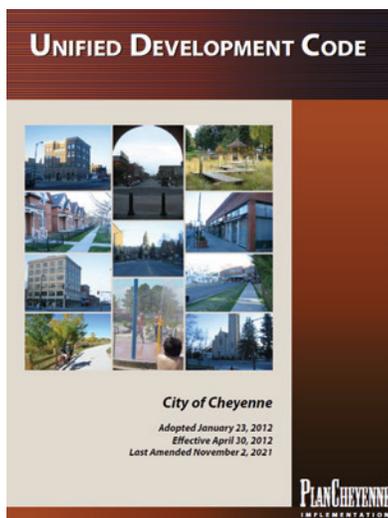
# Applicable Documents & Plans

The Planning & Development Department of the City of Cheyenne is responsible for producing, administering, and updating multiple core plans that allow for effective and well-managed growth and development in the city. The city's Current Planning or Development Division is the primary agency responsible for reviewing any given development proposal or application in relation to the documents highlighted in this section. Proposals and applications must meet the regulatory standards of the Unified Development Code whilst displaying applicability to the Comprehensive Plan, PlanCheyenne.

In looking at the city's regulatory and long-range planning documents, certain standards, goals, policies and/or strategies will be identified that weaken the city's ability to achieve housing affordability and choice. As there is no formal housing plan in place for the city, the following documents and plans were determined to be noteworthy for studying the potential impacts on housing.

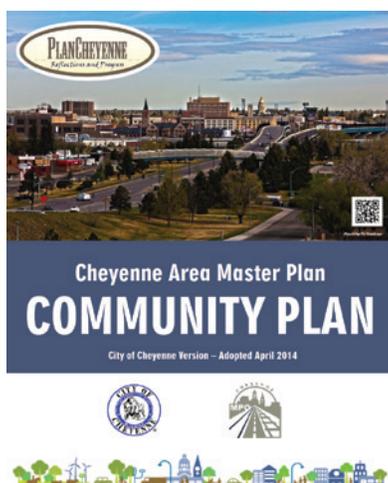
## Unified Development Code (UDC)

The UDC is the regulatory tool for the city to administer land use decisions within its boundaries. It is divided into seven articles that vary in content from establishing decision-making bodies, discussing subdivision or zoning regulations, design standards and form-based codes. Any part of the 312-page document can be amended at the request of the City Council, Planning Commission, the Planning Director or City Engineer. As new discoveries, research or planning efforts come forward, the UDC as a living document, is updated with the best interests of present and future city inhabitants. The UDC, as a part of this report, will be audited to determine if any standards, procedures or language is negatively impacting housing affordability or choice.



## PlanCheyenne

The long-range document serving Cheyenne and its larger planning area through the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is PlanCheyenne. Originally constructed in 2006, PlanCheyenne received and adopted its most recent update in 2014. PlanCheyenne allows residents, the City of Cheyenne, Laramie County and the MPO to evaluate everyday planning proposals as well as to create longer term visions of development within the planning area boundary. There are two sub-plans to PlanCheyenne; Connect 2045 Transportation Plan and the Parks & Recreation Master Plan that both provide additional analysis and guidance into their respective sub-fields. Since the present-day UDC was only established in 2012, the update provided in PlanCheyenne in 2013 takes into consideration the regulatory improvements established that otherwise were not in place in 2006.



The plan is an integral planning tool shared between Cheyenne and Laramie County. The plan establishes review and updates to occur every five years, however, no updates have been adopted by either government since 2014. The plan is organized meticulously and provides an introduction and snapshot into the community and the existing conditions it faces. The plan provides "foundations" through the larger planning areas of Structure, guided by the community, and Shape to define how future growth will be mitigated by the city and county. The concluding section, Build provides the implementation strategies and planning to accommodate the vision and desires of the community. Although the plan has not been updated in over seven years, it still provides a strong source of guidance for future planning based on a thorough long-range planning process.

# Applicable Documents & Plans

## Connect 2045 Transportation Update



The transportation component of the long-range PlanCheyenne effort was updated most recently in 2020 to provide for a 25-year planning horizon for transportation initiatives in the Cheyenne planning area. Typical with most transportation plans, Connect 2045 looks at the full extent of transportation in the community and provides analysis and recommendations based on current demographics and trends, interspersed with the forecasts of population and employment growth during the specified time frame. Given the size and scope of growth in the Cheyenne planning area, topic areas such as land use and population density carry a large weight with how the transportation network can be programmed for present use and more carefully as future growth is realized. The implementation of Connect 2045's transportation priorities can easily impact housing and the areas of the community that are due to see the most substantial changes due to growth. For this report, this plan will provide insight on how transportation priorities will direct housing growth in Cheyenne and if the proliferation of non-automobile transportation opportunities will shift development inward to the city core.



## 2020 Laramie Housing Strategy (A Model Housing Plan in Wyoming)

As there are only four cities in the State of Wyoming that contain over 25,000 residents, the most applicable and useful planning document by a similarly situated community in the state comes from the City of Laramie. According to the City of Laramie, Thrive Laramie is an economic development initiative with a robust community vision that has identified housing: lack of affordability and choice, as significant threats to the future of their city. Final recommendations for how the City of Cheyenne should address their housing issues will be in consideration of how Laramie shaped their detailed process. The Laramie Housing Strategy is still early in its implementation but will serve as a sterling example for how a Wyoming city is able to articulate its needs and solicit input from residents to developers.

# Unified Development Code Audit

The UDC, as identified previously, contains the following articles. The sections that were identified during an initial review to pertain to or influence housing development are bolded. These Articles and their supporting sections will be discussed in this audit and will be identified within Chapter 6: Conclusions for recommendations forward. Approval periods for rezonings or site plans in Article II can have an influence on housing development, but are procedural in nature. Subdivision regulations serve as guidelines and standards for new subdivisions or amendments to existing subdivisions or plats, but are often consistent from community to community underneath the same state statutes. The final three articles of the UDC are more specific, local, and dictate development in Cheyenne. The zoning code was amended during the writing of this report, therefore the November 2, 2021 iteration has been cited and used for this audit.

- Article I: General Provisions
- Article II: Applications, Procedures and Criteria
- Article III: Impact Studies
- Article IV: Subdivision Regulations
- Article V: Zoning Regulations**
- Article VI: Design Regulations**
- Article VII: Form-Based Codes**

## Article V: Zoning Regulations

The Zoning Regulations stipulate the zoning and overlay districts within the city, as well as use standards. The zoning table in Article V is shown in Figure 3.1 to the upper right.

Agricultural zone districts are established for larger acreages on the city's periphery and allow for a transition of annexed Laramie County properties into the city's zoning hierarchy.

In Cheyenne, residential zoning districts are dependent on density. Even further, neighborhood residential districts stipulate specific densities at a number of units per acre to maintain neighborhood character. Lot and building types are provided for each district as referenced in Figure 3.2 to the right. Reflexively, each lot and building type references the type of zoning districts that each can reside in.

<b>Rural and Agriculture Districts</b>	
<b>AG</b>	Agricultural
<b>AR</b>	Agricultural Residential
<b>RR</b>	Rural Residential
<b>Residential Neighborhood Districts</b>	
<b>LR</b>	Low-density Residential
<b>MR</b>	Medium-density Residential
<b>HR</b>	High-density Residential
<b>NR-1</b>	Neighborhood Residential - Moderate Density
<b>NR-2</b>	Neighborhood Residential - Medium Density
<b>NR-3</b>	Neighborhood Residential - High Density
<b>Commercial and Mixed-Use districts</b>	
<b>NB</b>	Neighborhood Business
<b>CB</b>	Community Business
<b>CBD</b>	Central Business District
<b>MUR</b>	Mixed-Use Residential Emphasis
<b>MUB</b>	Mixed-Use Business Emphasis
<b>MUE</b>	Mixed-Use Employment Emphasis
<b>Industrial Districts</b>	
<b>LI</b>	Light Industrial
<b>HI</b>	Heavy Industrial
<b>Special Purpose and Overlay Districts</b>	
<b>P</b>	Public District
<b>PUD</b>	Planned Unit Development
<b>AD</b>	Airport District
<b>M</b>	Military
<b>AHR</b>	Airport Height and Use Restrictions
<b>CHR</b>	State Capitol Height Restrictions

Figure 3.1: Zoning District Table

Source: City of Cheyenne Unified Development Code, Article V, Section 1.1, Amended November 2, 2021

TYPE SD2: SEMI-ATTACHED DWELLING / STANDARD LOT		
Lot Area (min.)	3,500 square feet	
Lot Frontage (min.)	35' 40' on corner lots	
Setbacks: Principal Building (min.)	Front	Context of other adjacent detached dwellings or 25', whichever is less.
	Side	0' attached side [a] 5' detached side 10' on street side corner lots
	Rear	20'
Setbacks: Accessory Building (min.)	Front	10' behind front building line
	Side	2', 0' if party wall [a] 15' on street side corner lots
	Rear	2' 5' if alley loaded
Total Lot Coverage (max.)	60%	
Building Height (max.)	Principal	Up to 2.5 stories
	Accessory	Up to 2 stories but in no case higher than the principal building
Zoning Districts	Permitted: MR, HR, NR-1, NR-2, NR-3	

[a] 0' setbacks on attached dwellings require a party wall meeting all building code standards and proper designation on a recorded plat.

(A) Frontage	(D) Accessory Building	(G) Public Sidewalk
(B) Side Setback	(E) Property Boundary	(H) Public Right-of-way
(C) Rear Setback	(F) Depth	(I) Alley

Figure 3.2: Lot & Building Types

Source: City of Cheyenne Unified Development Code, Article V, Section 1.1, Amended November 2, 2021

## Article V Recommendations

The following recommendations are proposed to address barriers to housing development that may exist within Article V of the UDC:

### 1. Restrictions on Multi Family

Allow multi-family as a use by right opposed to a conditional use within the MR, HR, and NR-2 districts. Allow for multi-family within the CBD as a use by right.

**Logic:** *Opening multi-family to more of the city will allow for higher density nodes to be achieved and allow for activity centers away from downtown to become less automobile dependent. Centrally located multi-family will allow for the economic and social growth of the central business district and maintain it as the heart of Cheyenne.*

### 2. Remove Dwelling Densities for Multi Family (5.1.5.d)

Remove the stipulation that multi-family dwelling types on large, standard, and small lots are allowed one dwelling per 1,600 square feet and one dwelling per 1,000 square feet if the structure is over three stories.

**Logic:** *Having restrictive densities for structures that are meant to provide a larger number of units prevents smaller, often more affordable units from being constructed. If the price per square foot remains high, the most straightforward remedy is to provide a unit with fewer square feet.*

### 3. Expand Urban Use Overlay (5.4.7.d)

The urban use overlay only applies to land in P, MUB, and MUR zoning districts and if expanded to areas around identified activity centers could allow for denser developments outside of downtown to establish an urban feel and create nodes for alternative transportation.

**Logic:** *Activity centers that encapsulate similar acreages as the CBD should be able to promote walkable residential and commercial interaction, even if they are not immediately adjacent as it.*

### 4. Remove Restriction for ADU Owners (5.7.3.c)

The Specific Use Standards regarding accessory dwelling units or ADUs states that “a property owner must occupy either the principal unit or the accessory dwelling unit as their permanent residence” (Unified Development Code p180, 2021). This standard should be removed to allow for additional flexibility to property owners that have developed an ADU.

**Logic:** *Essentially, property owners that rent out a residence would not be able to construct an ADU*

*and rent it out as well. Owners providing additional housing to the community ideally should not be limited in this regard.*

### 5. Remove Density Requirements for Manufactured Home Parks (5.8.2, Table 5-6)

Remove the density standards for manufactured home parks that stipulate a maximum of nine units per acre for units up to 750 square feet and a maximum of seven units per acre for units over 750 square feet.

**Logic:** *Having a density requirement for potential housing concepts or proposals that could provide a significant number of smaller, affordable units seems restrictive and could prevent some specialty developers from pursuing new housing ideas in Cheyenne.*

### 6. Remove Density Requirements for Manufactured Home Parks (5.8.2.g)

Remove standard stating that a manufactured home must have a minimum width of 24’ on the widest part of its shortest axis.

**Logic:** *This essentially ensures that manufactured homes must be at least 576 square feet which could limit the development of smaller, micro units that could be developed for the public.*



## Article VI: Design Regulations

The Design Regulations of the UDC provide the city's standards for site design elements such as landscaping, parking, and lighting. Further design standards for residential or commercial concepts are defined in this article.

### Article VI Recommendations

The following recommendations are proposed to address barriers to housing development that may exist within Design Regulations of the UDC:

#### 1. Consider more lax parking requirements for higher density housing developments in mixed-use or urban zoning districts (6.2.4, Table 6-2)

Elaborate on the parking standard of 1.5 spaces per unit for all other residential categories than detached, semi-attached, and attached single-family lots.

**Logic:** MUR zones bordering downtown could be losing out on development opportunities due to parking requirements. HR districts along bike routes or walkable corridors that house predominantly one-person households could support this type of amendment.

#### 2. Consider raising the transit access credit (6.2.6.d)

This standard presently allows for a 10% reduction in parking for any use within 600' of a public transit stop. This number could be raised in conjunction with the city expanding its transit access and facilities.

**Logic:** As the Metropolitan Planning Organization completes its study into expanding transit in the community, the City should look to facilitate development near future transit stops to help increase transit ridership following implementation of transit expansion.

#### 3. Add a standard allowing for patios or community areas on roofs or terraces of multi-family structures to be considered towards landscaping area requirements (6.3)

The landscaping standards do not have a statement regarding open space or landscaping for structures that can accommodate these on a rooftop or terrace. A statement could be added to allow for these square footages to be considered for landscaping requirements.

**Logic:** Some higher density, multi-family development especially near the urban core that approaches 100% of building lot coverage would have limited opportunities to meet landscaping requirements. Considering open space provided on rooftops, terraces or balconies

could help offset this requirement on developers looking to utilize a lot in full for housing.

#### 4. Add flexibility to cottage lot developments that utilize shared parking areas (6.6.5.e.1)

Presently, cottage lot development parking requirements indicate parking must be within 300' of the dwelling unit. Add a statement that speaks to developments that are to utilize shared parking.

**Logic:** Cottage lot developments that utilize shared parking over 300' from the dwelling units would be limited by the UDC and could be pushed to add parking when there could be a surplus of spaces provided in proximity.



## Article VII: Form-Based Codes

This article of the UDC covers alternative design standards for mixed-use development in accordance with long-range or area plans. Transect or T-Zones are identified to take a community-oriented approach to development, creating a cohesive neighborhoods.

### Article VII Recommendations

The following recommendations are proposed to address barriers to housing development that may exist within the Form-Based Codes of the UDC:

#### 1. Establish a provision for form-based codes in specific infill areas (7.1.2.b)

Form-based districts are to be areas of at least 20-acres that are subject to a regulating plan. The areas can be smaller per this standard for infill, but specifics are not provided to create direction for infill developers.

**Logic:** *Having regulatory infill plans for form-based codes could best meet the intent of this Article, as well as open more urbanized infill areas to community-oriented design standards. Elaborating on this standard could help guide and place an emphasis on developing infill in key areas of the city.*



# Additional Planning Efforts

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In a city like Cheyenne where there are a wide variety of interests and needs at play for any given development or redevelopment project, there are two efforts that are in progress beyond the scope of this report. Cadets with F.E. Warren Airforce Base are undergoing their own housing study to address their future needs in light of the \$90-million dollar federal contract beginning in the next few years. In 2021, the City Council initiated a Housing Task Force to explore providing relief to the housing crisis that Cheyenne is experiencing. Regardless of the outcome of both the cadet's housing study and the continued work of the Housing Task Force, it is recommended that the Cheyenne Planning & Development department look to coordinate with the cadets in any housing planning process and leverage the Housing Task Force in guiding the planning process. Further, the Metropolitan Planning Organization is in the process of completing a transit study to guide future investments and expansions in transit within the organization's planning boundaries.

Planners are tasked with finding solutions to many complex problems and given the factors at play, addressing the present housing crisis will take a broad and comprehensive effort by multiple agencies and stakeholders. Here are outlines of these additional efforts that are being pursued in the community:

## **F.E. Warren Air Force Base Housing Study (to be completed in 2022)**

A team of cadets within the Air Force's Operations Research program are completing a cursory housing study for the Cheyenne community in light of the Ground Based Strategic Deterrent (GBSD) investments set to begin. This study will look into possible strategies in developing affordable housing, as well as how the city should look to account for future population growth beyond traditional growth to the area. This document can assist the city in adequately preparing for the population growth and housing needs of the community by discerning how the GBSD program will affect Cheyenne.

## **City of Cheyenne Affordable Housing Task Force (formed in 2021)**

The Affordable Housing Task Force was created in a response to the housing pressures Cheyenne is facing. It was identified at the time of the first meeting in July 2021 that the city was 3,000 housing units short of what is needed. The Task Force consists of a number of public and private stakeholders with ties to housing, with meetings themselves covering a wide range of topics from builders' remedies to discussing State lands. This Task Force can be a chief asset for the development of a housing plan or unified housing strategy to guide the city for the interim and long term.

## **Cheyenne Metropolitan Planning Organization Transit Study (to be completed in 2022)**

Utilizing travel demand forecasting, the MPO is developing a Transit Study to help guide future transit development and implementation within the community. Population growth projections and future zoning/land use factor in to the analysis and allow for planners to adequately gauge the efficiency of the transportation network and make proposals for how to improve it. With increased transit service in the community, this study can help inform developers where future stops will be, what areas could become transit nodes and ultimately where many of the city's future affordable units will be located.



## Chapter 4

# Development Trends

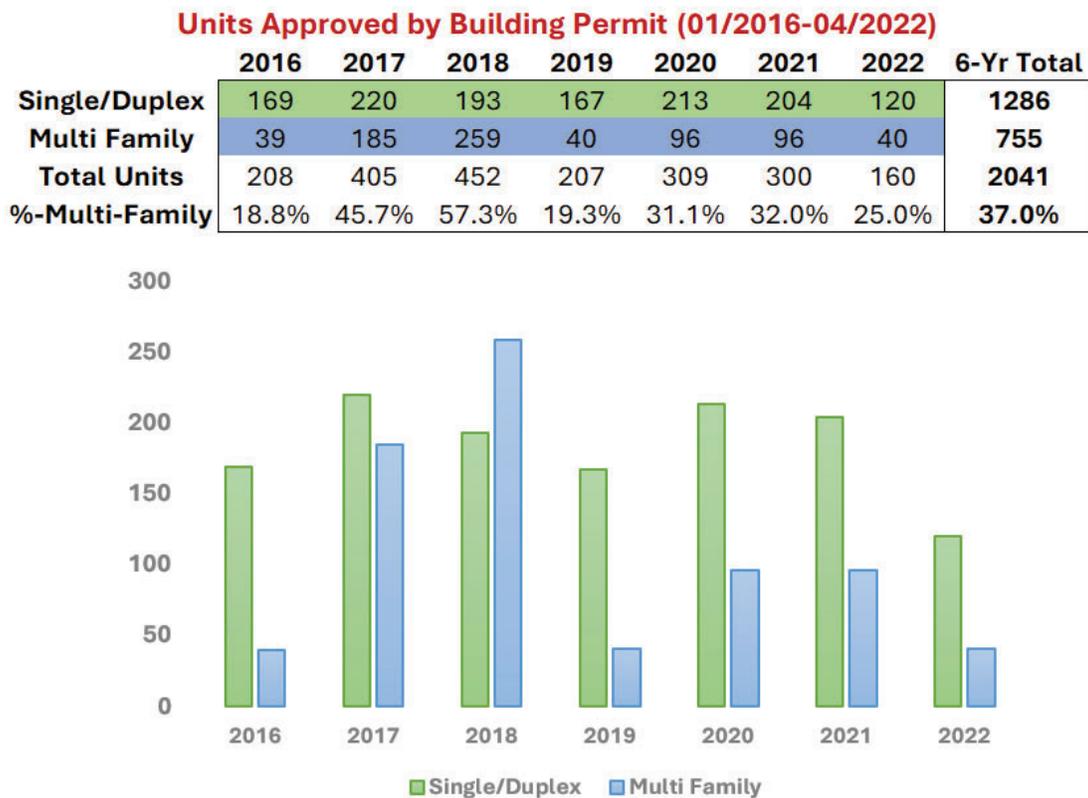
A look into how Cheyenne has developed over the last few years and the types of units that should be considered going forward.

# Recent City Approvals

Building permit data was provided by the City of Cheyenne from 2016 to the end of March 2022, to serve as a snapshot for the development seen in the community.

The building permit reports categorize single-family as both single unit and duplex, and multi-family as three or more units.

In Figure 4.1 below, the breakdown between approved single family & duplexes, and buildings of three or more units is made. The common denominator is established as the total units to be built following the issuance of individual building permits.



**Figure 4.1: Distribution of Permitted Units between Unit Mixes**  
 Source: Cheyenne Building Permitting & Licensing Department.

The data provided does not exhibit any particular correlation. The year 2018, for example, the City approved the most multi-family units in this timeframe with 259 units, and in the next year, only 40 units were permitted, with a 6-unit building being the most dense approval that year. Single-family & duplexes permitted have been consistent over the years, but like multi-family development, COVID-19 (between 2020-2021) did not lead to a stagnation in residential development in Cheyenne.

Some multi-family projects within the city require conditional use approval to build in the MR, HR, NR-2, and CBD zoning districts. In the same time frame, 17 conditional use approvals were granted for multi-family residential; there were no conditional use denials in the timeframe analyzed here. A valuable consideration for the removal of the conditional use requirement as posed in Chapter 3 is: how many proposals for properties subject to this conditional use requirement failed to reach Pre-Application due to the process or fees?

# Input from the Development Community

This report collected input from a member of the development community in AVI. Development Coordinator & Principal, Brad Emmons, was interviewed after AVI was identified as one of the more experienced and widespread developers in the community. This interview is used to synthesize the lens of a developer approaching the City of Cheyenne for housing development. The following key points were gathered in conversations with Mr. Emmons and AVI during the development of this report:

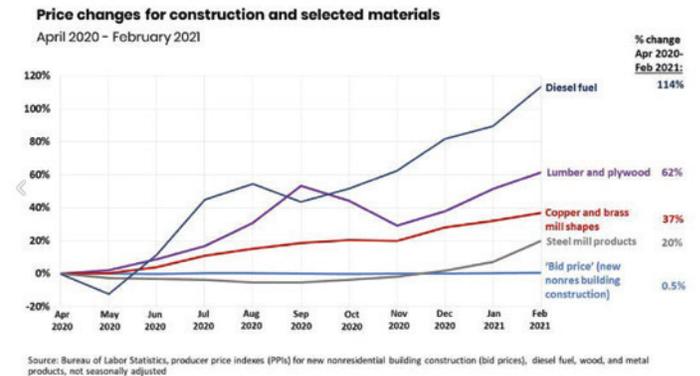
## 1. Building Higher Densities

The community overall is open to the development of modest density, there might be some complaints depending on the area of the city, but generally Cheyenne residents are in favor of limited density. The regulations allow density, but don't enable it like many larger Front Range communities, which results in more tedious approvals such as needing conditional use approval for most multi-family in the city. Most local developers are trying to bring as many units as possible to the city and support adding density, the climate is difficult to navigate as building larger single-family homes will typically always be a bigger return for a developer. In many ways, it is felt that higher density development is encouraged in Cheyenne but is often overregulated and makes it difficult for developers to deliver the units the city needs.

## 2. A Developer's Constraints

The market is highly volatile at this time and the costs to build are forcing rents or sale prices far higher than any renter or buyer would like to pay. Figure 4.3 shows the change in building material costs over an approximately 10-month span during the COVID-19 pandemic, with extreme pressures from inflation of the US Dollar, it should come as no surprise that developers must be selective with the projects they put forward. When considering the regulatory pressures and the cost burden of development, many local developers are severely constrained and are often forced to develop low density just to return a profit. Partnering with the city could be an effective avenue in addressing the constraints of developers and look to reduce some of the risk they face through easing the

planning approval process or continuing to make UDC amendments that simplify the construction of higher density development.



**Figure 4.2: Change in Cost of Building Materials in 2021-2022**  
Source: <https://www.hfmmagazine.com/articles/4347-covid-19-and-construction-costs>

## 3. Parking

At times, the regulations in place are too restrictive, especially regarding parking. Residential types, per Article 6.2.4 (UDC 2021, p6-5) is 1.5 parking spaces per dwelling unit and only provides limited parking credits. Continued development of the Cheyenne MPO's Transit Plan (to be completed in 2022) and further consideration of amendments to the zoning code, in particular to the residential parking standards will allow immense flexibility to developers in planning for one of their largest expenses and uses of space on a developable lot.



**Figure 4.3: Whispering Chase Project Completed by AVI Cheyenne**  
Source: [www.avipc.com](http://www.avipc.com)

# Alternative Housing Units

Continuing to sprawl from a city core to undeveloped land affords new residential developments the opportunity to utilize more land per unit than what was initially constructed in the older residential neighborhoods near the city core. Some density and multi-family are pursued, but in a manner that exacerbates affordability issues and dependence on automobiles. The two development types that have not seen much traction in Cheyenne are ADUs and housing for the Missing Middle. Although there is multi-family in the community, affordable rents are not a guarantee and ADUs are hardly a choice for Cheyenne residents to develop or live in.

## Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)

The city is fortunate enough to have Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) already covered within the UDC, as a legitimate option available to virtually every residentially zoned property outside of the city core. Besides the text amendments that are proposed in Chapter 2, the city should look to build partnerships with local groups or establish programs to help low- and middle-income individuals develop their own ADUs.

### Case Study: Denver

The West Denver Renaissance Collaborative (WRDC) published a guide, the West Denver Single Family Plus ADU Handbook in 2018 as a product of an extensive public, private and non-profit partners. The handbook walks readers through what ADUs are as an educational medium, and how to navigate Denver's zoning code and building requirements. Financing and project management are touched on in great detail and could walk any West Denver resident through the ADU development process. For a city like Cheyenne that has a development code that permits and has relatively lax zoning regulations on ADUs, the missing piece is a collaborative tool to help inform and educate the community of a development endeavor that can help raise affordable housing supply in the community.

A Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) case study of multiple U.S. communities from 2008 concludes:

***"A community can tailor ADU ordinances to suit its demographic, geographic, and socioeconomic characteristics ... In order for an ADU program to succeed, it has to be flexible, uncomplicated, include fiscal incentives, and be supported by a public education campaign that increases awareness and generates community support."* (HUD, p7)**

The proliferation of ADU construction, financing and occupation runs hand in hand with local government's ability to educate its citizens on the options available to them and the benefit that can be realized if a higher percentage of the population is exploring and acting on Cheyenne's allowance of ADUs.



**Figure 4.4: Examples of Accessory Dwelling Units in Denver, CO**  
Source: Curtis Park Neighbors website

## Missing Middle

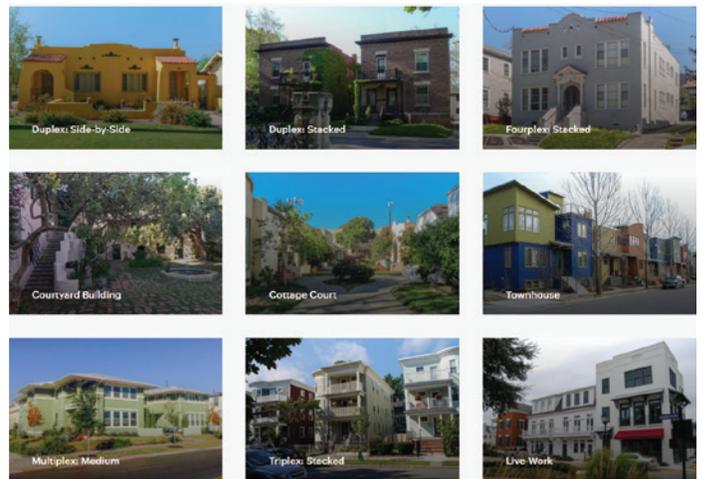
Between the range of a single-family home and a prototypical large, multi-unit apartment falls a wide variety of housing types that can be developed on the smallest of lots, or utilize large urban footprints through infill. Missing Middle Housing, written by Daniel Parolek discusses what the missing middle is, the barriers to developing it, and the path towards implementation. Missing middle development is occurring to some extent in Cheyenne, where some sprawled subdivisions are looking to developing duplexes and some cottage developments are under construction, but infill development closer to the city's center utilizing small lots should be under consideration for more than just single-family homes. Parolek argues that the defining characteristics of missing middle housing are simple; walkable contexts in areas proximate to activity centers, smaller units with appropriate densities that can allow for residents to own or rent, and buildings that help contribute to a neighborhood or block's sense of community.

Parolek asserts that the missing middle can be addressed in any city, large or small, beginning with educating the community. This involves beginning a conversation on housing and using careful language about the specific type of housing to be pursued opposed to words attached to an emotional response such as "density" or "multi-family" (Parolek, 2020). Using the community as a template, showing what existing missing middle looks like in Cheyenne can be a helpful interface to open the conversation about denser development in the city and especially through infill. Parolek's application of missing middle identifies infill as the ideal strategy for choosing where to develop missing middle housing. By creating a tandem infill and missing middle development strategy, Cheyenne could look to utilize its more walkable neighborhoods to add density and more diverse housing types.

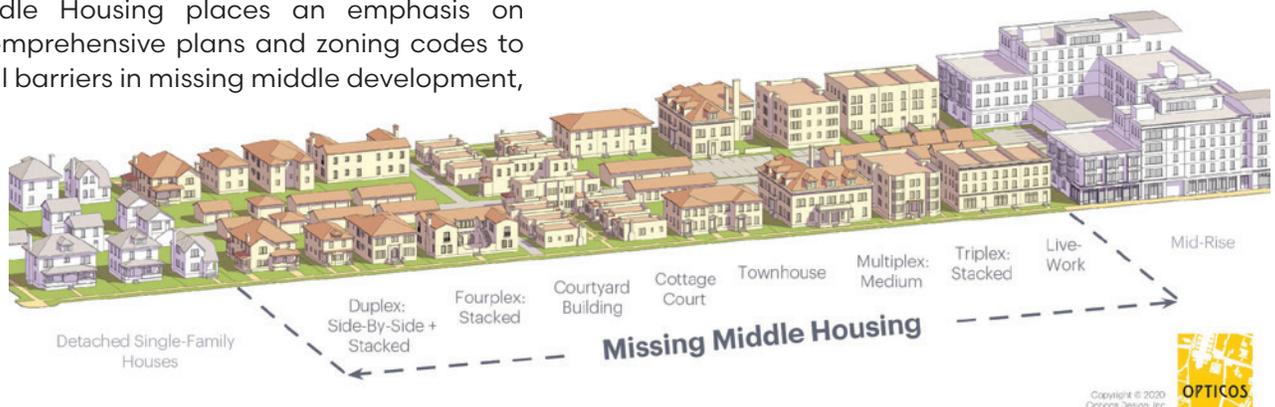
Missing Middle Housing places an emphasis on reviewing comprehensive plans and zoning codes to find potential barriers in missing middle development,

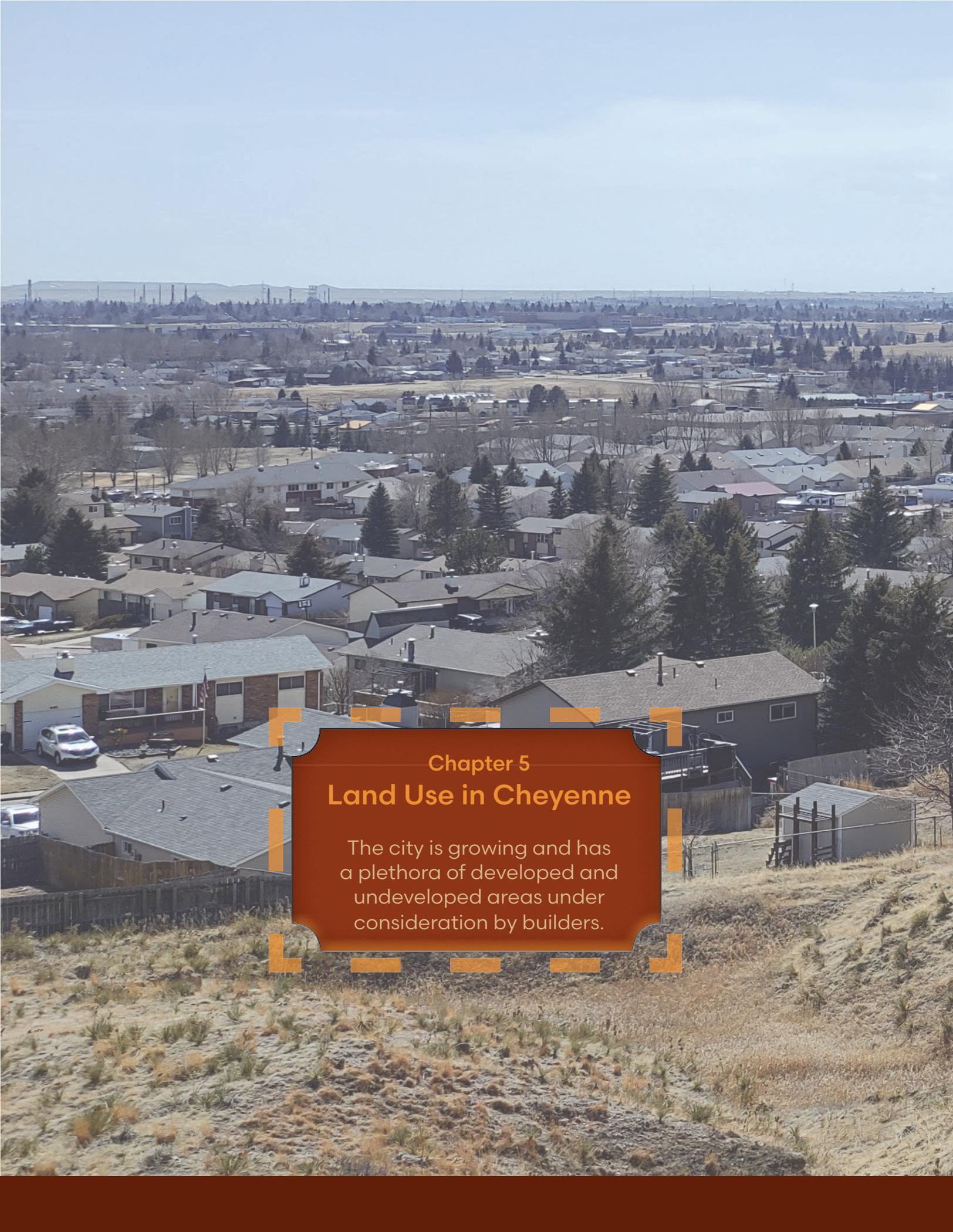
something that this report has placed an increased emphasis on in Chapter 2. Cheyenne sees fourplex development routinely as it is the most number of units that can be sited in a structure without adding sprinklers for fire suppression, with fourplexes being a common and successful missing middle type. However, the development patterns Cheyenne sees with fourplexes involves clusters of these structures in auto-dependent areas, opposed to singular builds in more dense, infill type scenarios, something that does not fit a traditional missing middle definition.

Supported by case studies from Oregon to Georgia and many places in between, Missing Middle Housing is a concrete and user-friendly resource that a city like Cheyenne should turn to in developing more diverse housing options. In using smaller area plans to coordinate areas of ideal infill development of the missing middle to following through with recommended zoning amendments, the opportunities are endless to transition from sprawled developments to compacting and redesigning Cheyenne's core.



**Figure 4.5: Missing Middle Housing Types**  
Source: [missingmiddlehousing.com](http://missingmiddlehousing.com), Opticos Design



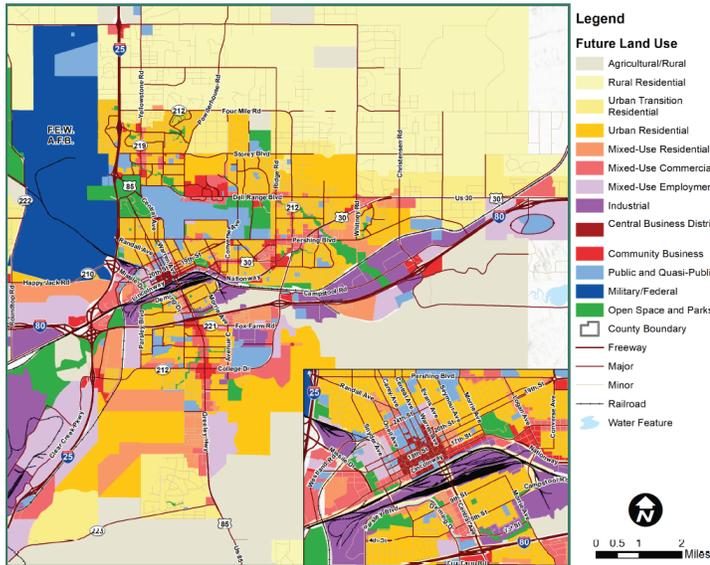


## Chapter 5 Land Use in Cheyenne

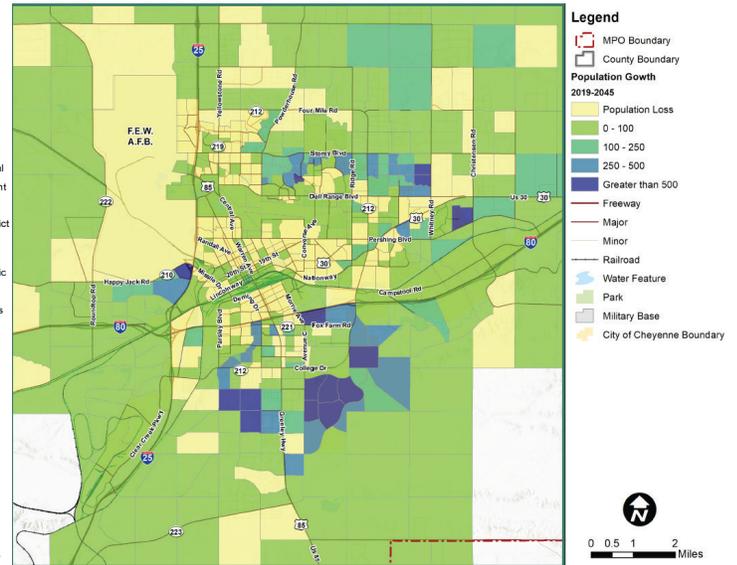
The city is growing and has a plethora of developed and undeveloped areas under consideration by builders.

# Land Use & Zoning Analysis

The Metropolitan Planning Organization that serves the transportation needs of 215 square miles of Cheyenne and unincorporated Laramie County created a Future Land Use Map as a supportive map document for the Connect 2045 Transportation update of PlanCheyenne. The Future Land Use map is in consideration of the zoning maps of both the city and county and provides insight on future uses in light of population and employment trends. Figure 5.1 is the Future Land Use Map and Figure 5.2 is the forecasted population changes in the city leading up to 2045. These maps will serve as the basis for this analysis.



**Figure 5.1: Future Land Use Map**  
Source: PlanCheyenne: Connect 2045 Transportation Update (Map 10)



**Figure 5.2: Forecasted Population Growth 2019-2045**  
Source: PlanCheyenne: Connect 2045 Transportation Update (Map 11)

In reviewing the zoning maps and the forecast maps for the city, the following observations and recommendations can be made:

1. Based on current predictions, many neighborhoods surrounding downtown are anticipated to lose population. Infill development and adaptive reuse are suggested in these areas to utilize smaller lots in providing multiple housing units. Most of this land is zoned MR and could be best suited with an expansion of the Urban Use (UU) overlay to unlock standards that allow for increased density.
2. Larger parcels on the periphery of the city are identified as future “Urban Residential” and are identified as areas of larger population growth. This periphery development is inevitable as development encroaches the urban service boundary (detailed in Figure 5.3 of the following section). “Urban Transition Residential” can be viewed as the prime lands for development in the near term. It is recommended that the city work to actively connect these future development areas with walkable corridors and bike routes to increase connectivity in the city and further bridge the urban-rural interface.
3. Parts of downtown or the central business district are identified as areas for some population growth. Assumptions are likely being made about the reuse of office space as residential or the potential development of multi-family in the immediate vicinity. Amending the UDC to allow for uncapped multi-family development in downtown to accommodate this growth prediction and to maintain downtown as a top tier destination in the city.
4. Many of the areas with the greatest forecasts for growth are identified as mixed-use areas within the future land use map. Activity centers can be anticipated to form with more dense, walkable centers to mixed use areas. Consider developing future mixed-use district plans to help guide these potential developments.

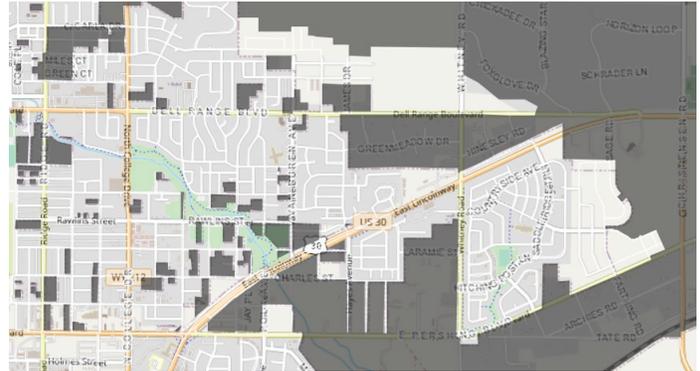
# Approach to Annexation

According to Growth and Change, annexation is defined as “a process to through which [a] municipality extends its services, regulations, voting privileges, and taxing authority to a new territory” (Wang & Gorina, p613). Cities like Cheyenne that are surrounded almost entirely by unincorporated lands, can annex new territory for new developments or as a part of a strategy to grow the tax base or expand a network of city services. The size of the annexed parcels has a significant impact on the municipality, either through smaller strategic parcels added or larger greenfields (Wang & Gorina, 2018). By annexing smaller parcels or filling in the unincorporated gaps, a municipality can fill in gaps in their service network or bridge the gap to a desirable area in the county.

Cheyenne does not have any towns or cities as neighbors, however, has census designated places such as the Ranchettes or Fox-Farm College. The city has a significant amount of county pockets or areas of unincorporated Laramie County (shown in Figure 5.3 to the right) surrounded entirely by the City of Cheyenne. These pockets will often have their own water wells and septic systems and have avoided connecting to the city’s systems and been considered with the city’s zoning.

The Urban Service Boundary, as defined by PlanCheyenne, is the limits at which the city can provide water and sewer service to new developments. It is a finite line identified in the Future Land Use Map (Figure 5.1) and is a threshold that can be encroached upon and developed on a case by case basis. In Figure 5.4 to the lower right, the Urban Service Boundary is drawn and shows the north and south edges of the city up against these lines already. Future potential development is identified in this map as within the boundary or pushing its edges.

Land that resides in unincorporated Laramie County that is anticipated to be developed in the next 15-20 years will need to be annexed into the city to receive water and sewer service, as well as other central services such as police and fire protection. This combined with filling in the unincorporated pockets warrants the city and the Planning & Development Department to have a concrete annexation plan or strategy to accommodate future growth, service extensions, and to ensure the rural character of the surrounding communities is preserved.

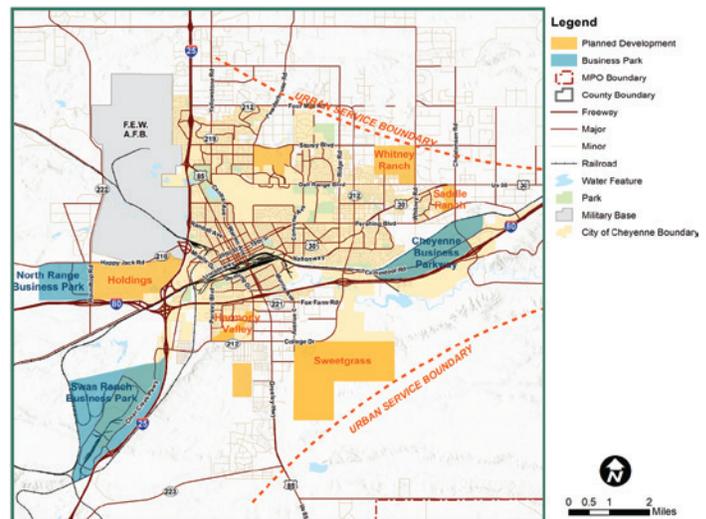


**Figure 5.3: County Pockets (Dark Grey) in North/East Cheyenne**

Source: Cheyenne General Information Map

The City Council at the time of this report is pursuing the development of an annexation strategy. When this strategy is finalized and approved by council, the following should be considered by the Planning & Development department:

1. Aid the annexing process for county pockets by working with affected property owners to assign appropriate zonings for their parcels within the county’s present and future land use classifications.
2. Assist housing developers building subdivisions to be annexed into the city by providing expedited review and approvals, or other supportive mechanisms.



**Figure 5.4: Future Development & the Urban Service Boundary**

Source: PlanCheyenne: Connect 2045 Transportation Update (Map 9)

# Applicability of Infill Development

**“The term infill applies most aptly to the construction of individual buildings or small projects on vacant tracts in established areas that are already served by utilities and surrounded by urban development.”** (Kelly, p280)

Developing land on infill sites in a city is a good response to combat sprawl or the expansion of municipal boundaries. Infill allows for the gaps in communities to be filled with needed housing stock or mixed-use developments. In cities like Denver, growth and expansion of light rail facilities led to the proliferation of infill development (transit-oriented too) and property values near stations that were only previously served by buses (Kelly, 2010). Cheyenne does not have the transit facilities or the population that Denver does, but infill can still be prioritized through policy or directives or become commonplace after regional growth is realized (ex. Front Range rail connecting Cheyenne to Colorado’s populated corridor).

When sprawl is affordable, in the sense that extending and connecting to infrastructure on the municipal periphery, selecting singular lots that may have demolition or remediation involved appears less appealing to developers. One of the biggest concerns highlighted by Eric Kelly in Community Planning are the complaints voiced by proximate neighbors to infill sites. The complaints “tend to focus on concerns about traffic, design compatibility, parking, and property value” (Kelly, p281). When developing infill sites with missing middle housing types (discussed in Chapter 4), it can be understood that a triplex being introduced to a lone vacant lot on a block of only single-family homes is an outlier, but the ability to add gentle density and still maintain the character of the neighborhood is ideal.

Infill can negatively impact social equity by potentially fueling gentrification or homelessness in areas of the city. By involving neighbors and city residents in the process, infill development can be driven by the needs of the community and result in products that enhance them and their neighbors’ quality of life. Infill development over time increases sustainability and enhances community resources. Existing neighborhoods seeing new development can either repeat built form or head in new direction. Infill affords a city the flexibility to consolidate and improve declining neighborhoods and augment housing supplies without pressuring infrastructure; the value added to built out

areas will manifest itself in sales taxes in proximate commercial areas among other benefits.

Community Planning is keen to note that the role of planners in supporting infill and redevelopment is by developing and implementing housing plans (Kelly, 2010). Infill as a strategy to add housing supply will be on a case-by-case basis and make limited impact unless a larger effort is undergone to facilitate the redevelopment process more easily. Having a concrete plan or strategy in place will have city residents involved and their input can help limit repercussions and assure that infill is sensible depending on the city’s multiple contexts.

The idea is “that not all growth is sprawl, and not all of the increased consumption of land is necessarily irrational” (Kelly, p16), but changes in planning and society, and the overall push for sustainable development will have cities like Cheyenne find a balance between sprawl and urban infill development. Mixed use infill on Lincolnway should carry the same value as a new subdivision in former unincorporated Laramie County, but a housing plan or strategy should ideally propel infill development to a place that Cheyenne and its residents can be satisfied with. Infill development should be supported in the areas surrounding downtown that are anticipated to have population decline in the next 15-20 years and should help support the addition of housing units in the community.



**Figure 5.5: Infill Projects in Cheyenne**  
Source: Field Photos

# Urban Renewal

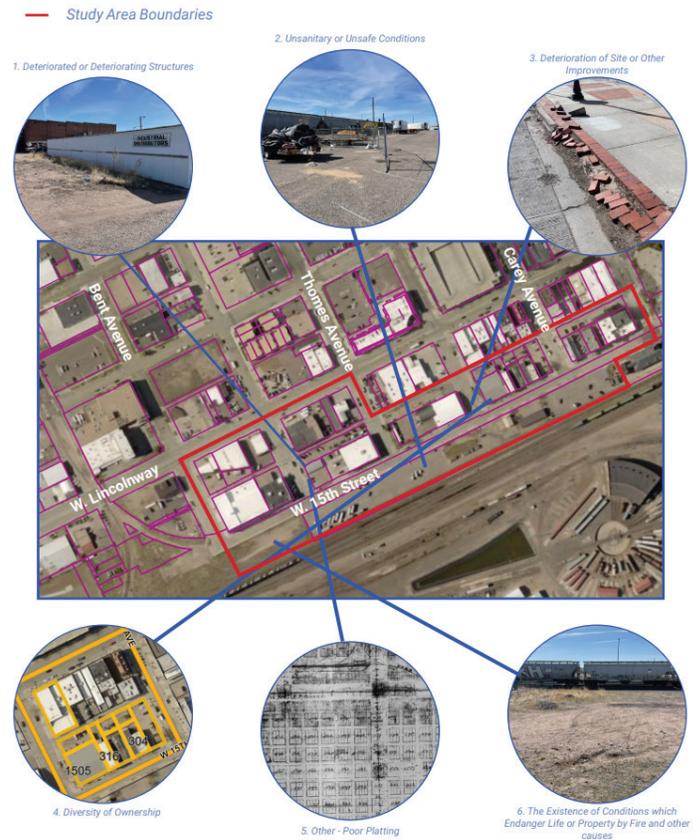
The City's Planning & Development Department (PDD) has been active in the last few years in implementing new tools to address barriers to housing in the community. Following is a synopsis of some of this progress made in this endeavor:

## Establishment of an Urban Renewal Authority (URA)

Ordinance No. 4381 approved by City Council in 2021 pursuant to Wyoming State Statute established Cheyenne's URA. This URA has the authority to determine areas of the city as blighted per Wyoming State Statute and an approved methodology as seen in Figure 5.5 and propose rehabilitation or redevelopment plans for these locations. The initial survey completed in the spring of 2021 identified three areas to be blighted in Hitching Post, Reed Avenue Rail Corridor, and the Hynds and the Hole. An expanded study over the winter of 2021 into 2022 included multiple corridors along Lincolnway, and proposed areas in downtown of both sides of the Union Pacific Railroad. An additional study was produced in March of 2022 for a 15th Street Corridor as well. These areas are in various pockets around the city with an increased presence in the city center.

As additional areas of the city fall under consideration for urban renewal, additional action steps need to be considered for the redevelopment or infill possibilities of blighted areas. The following questions should be considered by PDD in their administration of the URA:

1. How will community outreach be conducted and how can community members become involved in the determining of blight or subsequent redevelopment planning of these areas?
2. How will the city accentuate the areas determined to be blighted? Will the city help facilitate the redevelopment of these areas?
3. Will there be additional [long-range] planning efforts to provide recommendations or implementation strategies for blighted areas?
4. What types of incentives will the city look to offer developers interested in bringing accessible housing into areas determined to be blighted?



**Figure 5.6: 15th Street Urban Renewal Area**

Source: Cheyenne 15th Street Blight Study



## Chapter 6 Report Conclusions

Consideration of the report's evaluation and the recommended steps the city should take to address its housing needs

# Project Findings

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The process of completing this report involved approximately eight in-person interviews with various stakeholders associated with the city and community, and approximately 40-hours of exposure within the community itself. Research into best practices and case studies was completed, and the potential barriers in the community were analyzed in order to shape the recommendations made in this chapter. Investigating the four potential barriers selected in this report has yielded the following outcomes:

## **1. Is the community in favor of planning for housing?**

The community generally understands and recognizes the issues the city faces when it comes to housing. There are and will be the occasional sparring schools of thought between suburban/rural-lower density and urban-higher density, but the gap is far from extreme. Residents want to see what is best for their city, and smart strategy towards planning for housing, respective of the market, appears to be the desired outcome.

## **2. Do the planning tools in place support the diverse development of housing in Cheyenne?**

Yes, on paper they do. PlanCheyenne and the UDC allow for higher density development, more units for less cost, and missing middle development; but there are other supplemental standards and requirements than make developing single-family more preferable.

## **3. Do development trends indicate a certain type of housing is more preferred than others?**

No, the general consensus of city stakeholders and staff, confirmed by units permitted in the last six years, is that no particular type of residential development is excluded from the community (outside of highrises). The challenges developers face from hard costs to securing planning approval force calculated decisions to be made, which influences the types of projects that can be pursued. Single-family can net a developer the safest return, but meeting demand for renters in apartments is enticing in Cheyenne as well.

## **4. Is the way land is used in Cheyenne supportive of a wide variety of housing options?**

Mostly yes. Cheyenne can continue to add developments on the city's periphery within the Urban Service Boundary but an increased focus on infill in the city core or in Urban Renewal areas has yet to be seen.

From the perspective of a graduate student with approximately a year and a half of hands-on planning experience, Cheyenne has the tools and the support it needs to tackle its housing crisis. The concerns lay in the city's ability to work with the public and with developers to ensure the supply of housing the city needs can be provided. As an unmarried 27-year old with a limited salary, the "inverse" of mortgages often being cheaper than rents (as described by multiple interviewees) would not entice a future graduate in myself to the area. The prospect of home ownership for young people feels entirely out of reach, and looking for apartments in a city where developers have difficulties in delivering high density housing is hardly appealing. The answers I have looked to provide for the questions above are based on critical thinking and consideration of the widest range of factors I have had to immerse myself in for this project. Cheyenne has the tools it needs to address its housing crisis, and I believe it is in reach to address in light of the F.E. Warren Airforce Base investments trickling in and the persistent lack of affordable units in the city.

From the 140 responses collected from the report's preliminary outreach questionnaire, I was surprised with many of the answers, and the overall candor in the written responses. If the distribution of responses that was collected for the preliminary questionnaire is representative of the community as a whole, the city would have sufficient support from its populace to plan for housing in Cheyenne with genuine engagement. The city will find that a portion of its residents have a preference to not interfere with the development trends of the community and that less government intervention is ideal, but it is not the majority. Within reason, the community wants to see effective growth that creates a more vibrant downtown and limits costly, infrastructure-sensitive suburban growth. Residents know that housing is unaffordable and in limited supply, if anything can be done to support private development, residents would lean in favor.

# Final Recommendations

In order to address the city's housing crisis and provide a diverse range of housing units at costs Cheyenne's present and future residents can afford, recommendations are provided below. These recommendations, if pursued by the City and/or Planning & Development Department, could make a significant strides in breaking Cheyenne's housing barriers.



Community Perceptions

It is recommended that the city continue with the outreach strategy provided in this report or develop a comprehensive engagement/outreach plan for getting its citizens involved in planning for housing. The city should look to regularly maintain engagement with its citizens as housing should be viewed as a right to all residents of Cheyenne.

Make the suggested amendments to the UDC and broadly consider the ramifications of density and parking requirements. In lieu of the MPO's transit plan being completed in 2022, expanded transit opportunities and higher density development can help the city trend in the affordable direction.



Planning Tools



Development Trends

Local developers are providing the units they can afford to provide and are navigating the UDC and supplemental regulations as necessary. It is recommended that the city look to meet and workshop with the development community to address the concerns they see. It is understood that the city cannot alleviate market trends or supply costs, but the UDC and regulatory tools the city can adjust to help developers provide the units the community needs is recommended.

It is recommended that the city look to annex county pockets that disrupt community services and infrastructure. It is also recommended that the city explore producing a plan or strategy for infill development of the downtown core, as well as create a strategy or guide for redeveloping areas determined to be blighted by the URA.



Land Use in Cheyenne

*In response to the completion of this report, the city, in the near future, should look to explore the creation of the its own housing plan. A policy document that is consistent with the goals of PlanCheyenne that creates a path forward for the next 10 to 20 years for housing development that is respectful of community members, future residents, and those responsible for developing and maintaining the city's housing units is critically needed.*

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Table B01001 (*Sex by Age*)

Table B07001 (*Geographic Mobility in the Past Year by Age fir Current Residence in the United States*)

Table B19001 (*Household Income in the Past 12 Months*)

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