



WHAT WE HEARD!

TOP 10 RESPONSES FROM THE CENTRAL WYOMING FAIR & RODEO

CASPER COMPREHENSIVE PLAN VISIONING KICKOFF / JULY 12 2016



1: SMALL BUSINESSES

The need to support small businesses was expressed over and over again, in many different ways. Casper has a lot of local talent, but regulations and infrastructure make it hard for that talent or idea to become a product or a business. Casperites want more investment in the local talent through job incubators and entrepreneurial competitions. Residents want regulations and local government to provide an easier path to establishment, with better assistance for completing the requirements of starting your own business.



2: VIBE

Perhaps least tangible, but of equal importance, is the need for Casper to develop “a vibe” or an identity. There isn’t an easy check-list to creating a vibe, but developing a unique feel downtown is important in creating a city that attracts life, culture, diversity, and vibrancy. Casperites told us that the Old Yellowstone District has an identity that makes it enjoyable to spend time in, but the rest of downtown is missing such an identity. Having design and branding guidelines for properties and businesses downtown would help to create this feeling. Installing more public art and organizing public events downtown would also help. Casperites offered a list of things they would love to see in town that would help contribute to a thriving cultural scene. Events such as small outdoor concert series, art shows, holiday fairs, and events that support downtown businesses, all contribute to fostering a vibe in cities similar to Casper.



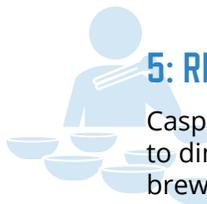
3: YOUTH

There is a general knowledge amongst Casperites that to improve the city, you must invest in Casper’s future. We talked to people who think there need to be more job opportunities and educational activities available to the teenagers and young adults of Casper. The experiences and connections they make in their young adult years have the power to impact where they choose to live as adults. In this regard, turning Casper College into a competitive state university would help to keep the next generation in town. Retaining Casper’s young talent is an important step in making Casper a thriving and vibrant city!



4: FUN!

Casper youth, from five year olds to 18 year olds, had many suggestions for more things to do in town. Lake Alcova is a popular space for teenagers, but they want more fun spaces to hang out with their friends, and activities that they don’t think they’re too old for. The younger children of Casper want an indoor space that offers year-round fun. When we asked fair-goers for specifics, we heard responses ranging from free activities like a splash pad, to a place like Denver’s Amazing Jakes with rides, arcade games, bowling, and laser tag, to an amusement park with roller coasters. From what we heard it seems Casper doesn’t have quite enough indoor activities to keep kids happy and occupied during the long winter.



5: RESTAURANTS

Casper residents are hungry for more restaurants. They want less chain restaurants, they would prefer to dine and eat at places as unique as Casper. They would love to be able to enjoy new local restaurants, breweries, and bars. And we heard more than a few Casperites specifically request more restaurants on the west side of town, so that they don’t have to drive as far to eat at good restaurants.



6: POOLS

From mothers of young children to grandmothers of teenagers advocating for Casper’s youth generation, residents are worried about the lack of a competition-sized pool, and how that is diminishing the opportunities for youth to excel or receive college scholarships. Some Casperites are traveling outside of Casper to swim in the pools of other communities.



7: PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

If public transportation can be convenient, Casperites would take the bus. At the fair, an attendee suggested the idea of city shuttles during large events, which could help eliminate the need for everyone to drive, while providing more opportunities for people who don’t have the option to drive. An important part of a good transportation service, as expressed by Casper residents, is making sure the bus stops provide shelter and are handicap accessible year-round.



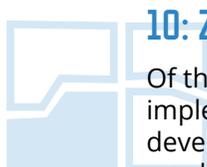
8: PARKS

Residents felt that more neighborhood-sized parks would offer more outdoor activities for people of all ages. Some people told us that they would love each park to be unique, with different types of programming and features.



9: URBAN PLAZA

An urban plaza would serve many demographics. Casper teens told us how they love practicing parkour, or free running, and having features for this in an urban plaza would be something they would love to see in the future. The parents of younger kids said they want a splash pad downtown, and more public spaces for their children to play.



10: ZONING

Of the many responses, few were as varied as the Zoning Response. Some residents want Casper to implement form-based zoning codes, especially downtown, in order to encourage more mixed-use development. Other Casperites felt the current zoning codes need to be enforced more so that residents would mow their lawns and repair their fences, allowing neighborhoods to have greater curb appeal.