

# Community Appearance and Design

**Goal:** Encourage design in buildings, developments and infrastructure that maintains and extends the *REAL.WESTERN.SPIRIT.* of Lander and improves the comfort, safety and enjoyment of citizens and visitors.

**Core Principle:** Lander's small town western character is a key element in the City's identity, citizen and visitor satisfaction, and is a profoundly important asset to the community. This character should be preserved in the older parts of the City and extended to its newer sections.

**Objective:** Identify and recognize the importance of existing historic resources and key design elements in Lander that contribute to resident and visitor sense of place and quality of life.

The role historic resources play in a community's identity can easily be overlooked. These resources define who we are and where we've been and represent an important economic resource, yet they may go unnoticed or unappreciated until threatened or destroyed. Identifying and preserving key historic resources before this happens can help protect Lander's character and increase tourism potential.

Actions:

**4-1. Update the Historic Resources Survey to identify structures that now may be eligible to be included in the Lander Historic District.**

*A historic Resources Survey identifies historic resources within a community. Properties must be over 50 years in age to be eligible for potential listing on the National Register. With the passage of time, more properties may be considered historic so periodic updates are needed.*

**4-2. Install markers on historic buildings identifying them as listed on the National Register of Historic Places.**

*There are currently many properties within the Lander Historic District which are eligible for National Register Plaques. It is important to mark these buildings to illustrate their importance and role in the heritage of the community.*

**4-3. Determine eligibility of meaningful places in Lander, such as Lander Mill, under the Wyoming Markers and Monuments program and establish markers for those places.**

*Markers and monuments reinforce our collective memory, emphasize meaning and significance and serve to tell the Lander story. Not only is this useful and informative for our citizens, it strengthens our tourism environment and adds to our community character.*

Measures of Progress:

- Completion of an updated historic resources survey
- Number of places marked as historic places
- Number of marked places under the Markers and Monuments program

**Objective: Embrace the economic potential of downtown by protecting and preserving Lander's community character.**

An economically healthy downtown is an indicator of an economically healthy community. The historic development patterns in downtown demand unique strategies to maintain and promote economic viability. Many cities and towns have developed vital downtowns by using economic incentives, preserving and promoting design character, and establishing unique events and promotions that attract visitors and shoppers. Lander is well positioned to take advantage of these strategies, employing them in the city's overall economic development efforts.

Actions:

**4-4. Provide information to owners of historic buildings related to the availability of historic preservation tax credits.**

*Owners of historic properties are eligible for various tax credits when rehabilitation is carried out in a historically appropriate manner. Owners may be unaware of this information and an outreach effort may increase the number and viability of potential rehabilitation projects.*

**4-5. Increase investment downtown by establishing a local facade grant/loan program.**

*Many communities have pooled local financial resources through banks or other sources to create loan pools with favorable interest rates or even grant programs as an incentive for property owners to engage in appropriate rehabilitation activities.*

**4-6. Increase the economic vitality of downtown by participating in the Wyoming Main Street Program, accessing its resources and expertise.**

*The Main Street approach to downtown revitalization is a proven strategy for improvement. The Wyoming Main Street Program offers a variety of resources and training opportunities to member communities. Participation in Wyoming Main Street would likely result in substantial improvements.*

**4-7. Establish voluntary design guidelines to promote appropriate new construction and rehabilitation in the downtown core.**

*While mandatory design standards are the most effective way to ensure design quality in sites and buildings, they are sometimes resisted because they involve additional rules. Voluntary standards, however, could be used with property owners who are motivated to contribute to a quality townscape and need guidance on how to achieve this goal. These voluntary standards could also be used in conjunction with grant and loan programs.*

**4-8. Create a systematic historic preservation program by establishing a Historic Preservation Commission.**

*A preservation commission serves as an official vehicle for pursuing preservation activities such as the historic resources survey and educational and training activities for local property owners and the community at large. Having a preservation commission is also a prerequisite for Certified Local Government status.*

**4-9. Pursue Certified Local Government status from the Wyoming Historic Preservation Office to access preservation funds.**

*Certain historic preservation funds are reserved for communities that qualify as “Certified Local Governments.” Accessing these resources will help fund preservation activities.*

**4-10. Establish an annual awards program recognizing the best private development and redevelopment efforts that advance the design goals of Lander.**

*Rehabilitation projects that contribute to Lander’s character should be acknowledged and rewarded with community appreciation and recognition. An annual awards program is a vehicle for such recognition and serves as a “thank you” to those who contribute to make Lander better.*

**4-11. Conduct a retail market analysis for attraction of new downtown commercial activity.**

*A market analysis can help uncover opportunities and unique strategies for business development in the downtown. It is an excellent tool for marketing and can provide a wealth of information for existing business.*

Measures of Progress:

- Creation of a Preservation Commission
- Establishment of a Main Street Program
- Value of Incentives accessed by private property owners

**Objective: Ensure that the built environment of downtown offers a pleasant and enjoyable experience for visitors and residents.**

In addition to creating incentives and guidelines for appropriate development and redevelopment of private properties, Lander can expand the quality of the downtown environment through well directed public initiative and investments. These investments often include infrastructure improvements that increase pedestrian activity and comfort, complemented by development policies which emphasize living, recreating and doing business in a traditional small downtown environment.

Actions

- 4-12. Maintain and extend the walkable and compact development pattern that exists in the heart of Lander through appropriate development coding that establishes build to lines rather than deep setbacks, encourages infill development and ensures upper floor housing provisions are feasible.**

*The Lander zoning ordinance and subdivision controls have a profound impact on the form and livability of the city. The codes have shaped what Lander is like now and will be in the future. Recognizing their impact, they should be thoroughly reviewed for effectiveness in producing a walkable, bikable, compact city form, particularly in and near the downtown.*

- 4-13. Review the Lander Zoning Ordinance for uses and development patterns that undermine the character and experience of downtown.**

*In addition to impacting the form of the City, the manner in which land is used will support or detract from community character and quality. Zoning categories should be reviewed for their effectiveness in meeting the design objectives of the plan.*

- 4-14. Establish a tree plan that will increase tree canopy and shade downtown.**

*The benefit of trees in a city environment is well established. Many of the increases in comfort, aesthetics, environmental benefits, and property values can be achieved in no way other than through a program of tree planting and care.*

- 4-15. Consider the placement of street furniture along Main Street to enhance downtown as a pleasant and enjoyable space.**

*The placement of street furniture in appropriate locations will enhance the pedestrian convenience and comfort and provide adequate additional amenities to support economic development efforts downtown. Street furniture makes the downtown more attractive to parents with young children and aging citizens.*

**4-16. Create alternative parking configurations downtown.**

*Parking efficiency can increase capacity and encourage more customers. Rather than add additional surface parking, which could have the effect of undermining character, a parking management plan can identify inexpensive ways to increase capacity by managing existing resources.*

**4-17. Design and implement a means of shortening the pedestrian crossing distance of Main Street by way of curb islands or pedestrian stripping for the safety and convenience of downtown visitors.**

*The distance of crossing from one side of Main Street to another is difficult to manage for pedestrians, particularly if they are older or are accompanied by young children. These distances can be considerably shortened through the use of curb islands or other devices to make crossing easier, increasing safety and convenience.*

**4-18. Increase the sense of arrival and distinction of the community by enhancing community gateways.**

*Well designed gateways tell us when we have arrived in a significant place. They help set the character and tone as well as the expectation of the visitor. Lander has excellent opportunities to enhance gateways through welcoming signage, crosswalks, decorative lighting, landscaping and other visual enhancements.*

Measures of Progress:

- Enactment of any needed zoning code revisions.
- Creation of crosswalks
- Addition of tree planting

**Objective: Increase citizen and visitor activity downtown.**

The presence of people in the downtown is essential to its ultimate success. Where there are people there is vitality. Where there are no people, there is no vitality. Promoting events and activities that attract people to the area will increase the viability of downtown as a destination.

Actions:

**4-19. Establish a pedestrian court at Third Street and Main Street that can serve as a location for downtown events.**

*A portion of Third Street to the east of Main is fronted by few buildings and offers an opportunity to explore a pedestrian court or street space that can be used for downtown gatherings and*

*events. Exploration of the practicality and benefit of using the street space in this manner may yield a unique place and expand capacity to host more visitors in the downtown.*

**4-20. Locate a Farmers Market downtown.**

*Farmers markets are excellent tools to increase access to fresh and local produce, create opportunities for community interaction, provide a market for locally grown foods, and create additional economic activity in the downtown.*

**4-21. Celebrate Lander by adding one or more downtown events or festivals, or expanding existing events to further promote community life and interaction.**

*Community events downtown attract visitors, increase community interaction, and enhance economic potential. Increasing the number of or expanding existing events will provide additional activity.*

**4-22. Establish a wayfinding system to direct citizens and visitors to Lander's institutions and attractions.**

*The well planned placement of graphically pleasing wayfinding signs can increase the visibility and the ease of access to local institutions and attractions.*

Measures of Progress:

- Growing number of people attending downtown events
- Creation of a wayfinding plan and installation of signage

**Objective: Increase support for Lander's creative community.**

Creative activity among artists and artisans has been shown to contribute to overall community well being. Increasing support for creative activity should result in expanded community interest, but these activities require specialized environments and organizations. Lander has a rich art heritage with which to partner to create an expanded role for the arts.

Actions:

**4-23. Encourage and celebrate the rich array of public art in Lander through additional displays, a walking tour to include historic areas, and distribution of interpretive material.**

*Eagle Bronze has set the tone for public art in Lander and its public displays have become landmarks. These displays should be celebrated and expanded. Interpretation of public art displays, and even historic places, by means of a walking tour or distribution of interpretive*

*material will increase appreciation for these sites while generating pedestrian and tourist activity.*

**4-24. Establish of additional arts venues such as galleries and shops, particularly in downtown Lander.**

*Arts activity requires appropriate venues for viewing, appreciating, buying and selling. While some venues are present, promoting an increase in the number of galleries and arts related businesses will contribute to a thriving creative community and increase economic activity in this sector.*

**4-25. Arrange for and coordinate the display of art in available vacant windows along Main Street.**

*Vacant buildings can give a negative impression of a business district sending a message of deterioration. Filling the vacant windows with local art for display offers an attractive alternative to vacant storefronts, creating interest and activity.*

**4-26. Establish a performing arts center.**

*Performances in Lander currently must access school facilities for production. Dedicated facilities would offer more stability and permanence for performing arts, allowing a far more consistent and concentrated effort, expanding offerings and enhancing community life.*

Measures of Progress:

- Number of arts facilities
- New public art displays
- New art displays

**Objective: Guide the design of new development in a way that contributes to and supports Lander's overall character and avoids the negative consequences of sprawl.**

While the health of downtown is critical to Lander's success in the future, the community is greatly impacted by design issues located throughout the community. The distinctiveness, overall health, and satisfaction of the City will be undermined by inappropriate patterns of sprawl and building that are disrespectful of the City's unique heritage. The promotion of compatible designs in sites and buildings will extend the best of Lander throughout the community.

Actions:

**4-27. Integrate new development design into the overall character of Lander by means of voluntary design standards.**

*New development beyond the core of Lander can contribute to the overall vitality of Lander and reinforce community identity when sites and buildings are constructed to be reflective of community character. Many franchise establishments will observe community design goals in this regard when guidelines and encouragement are provided. Voluntary standards are a means for achieving this action.*

**4-28. Ensure that new site and parking facilities are appropriately landscaped both internally and at their perimeter.**

*A key design element and sound environmental practice is to ensure that adequate green space and landscaping are included in new site design, rather than vast expanses of asphalt. New sites should include ample landscaping to meet this objective.*

**4-29. Fully integrate new development into the overall development pattern of Lander by designing pedestrian and cycling facilities and including greenways, paths and trails.**

*The Lander Area Pathway System and sidewalk and bicycle facilities are essential to maintaining a balance of mobility choices and contributing to Lander's quality of life. New development should be carefully reviewed for ways in which it can reinforce these City elements through building location, connections, and the provision of onsite pedestrian and cycling infrastructure. The design of new developments should include connections to existing facilities and the extension of those facilities according to the Lander Area Pathway System Plan.*

Measures of Progress:

- Establishment of design standards for new development
- Establishment of connections between existing and new green spaces and paths.

**Objective: Fully integrate open space and recreation into the overall design of Lander to promote a healthy city as well as environmental stewardship.**

In addition to well designed sites and buildings, the integration of open space and recreational infrastructure into the townscape supports community health by providing ample facilities for active living and enhances the environmental stewardship efforts. The promotion and establishment of one or more community gardens can address healthy eating.

Actions:



**4-30. Review the Lander Area Pathway System Plan for consistency with design goals, feasibility of listed projects and overall progress.**

*Lander has an established pathway plan known as the Lander Area Pathway System. This system is a core element of overall City design and updating and implementing this plan should be one of the highest priorities for the City to increase non-vehicular mobility throughout the City.*

**4-31. Establish greenway connections to new neighborhoods as they develop.**

*New neighborhoods should be designed in a manner that integrates and extends the Lander Area Pathway System. Subdivision controls should be reviewed to ensure that adequate requirements exist to account for pathway connections.*

**4-32. Add pocket parks and community gardens in appropriate locations.**

*Underused properties may offer an opportunity for the creation of additional park spaces and community gardens. The inventory of municipal properties as well as underused private spaces should be reviewed to identify these opportunities. Once identified, additional parks and gardens should be established.*

**4-33. Pursue improvements for Centennial Park and consider improvements for Jaycee Park.**

*Centennial Park and Jaycee Park serve as important places at the gateway to Lander. Improvements to accommodate users will support the overall all goal of increasing the number visitors and supporting downtown activities.*

Measures of Progress:

- Improved downtown parks
- Expanded Lander Area Pathway System
- Establishment of additional pocket parks
- Establishment of community gardens