

Highway 20/26 Enhancement Study

Casper Area
Metropolitan Planning Organization
December 2008





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INTRODUCTION

The Highway 20/26 Enhancement Study Plan is the development of a comprehensive enhancement plan for improving the appearance, character and usability of the Highway 20/26 corridor. This important transportation corridor is a primary east-west gateway into the city of Casper from the Natrona County International Airport (NCIA) and NCIA Business Park located on the western edge of the Casper metropolitan area. Currently, the visual character of the corridor is unadorned, open and generally unattractive due to a mix of unscreened outdoor storage areas, utilitarian designed industrial and auto-oriented commercial uses, surface parking lots and five undivided travel lanes.

This study focuses on crafting a framework plan for improving the quality and appearance of the highway right-of-way through integrated landscape improvement plans and strategies including:

- multi-seasonal planting designs for screening, framing views and thematically unifying the corridor
- selection of drought tolerant, ecologically responsive plantings
- identification of special gateway nodes and development of specific gateway elements, lighting, signage and plantings
- energy-efficient and environmentally sensitive accent and roadway lighting

- enhancements to roadway safety
- integration of facilities for alternative travel modes

Communities across the country have shown that investing in the quality and attractiveness of their commercial/business corridors brings multiple long-term benefits in the form of growth, improved competitive advantage, strengthened community satisfaction, and an increase in overall quality of life. The purpose of this corridor plan is to establish a written and graphic framework to guide the public and private sectors through the process of improving the corridor's visual character and functionality.

Development of the enhancement framework plan for the Highway 20/26 Corridor employed a project steering committee, a public engagement process and discussions with business owners to build support and commitment for investing time, energy and money into initial capital improvements as well as long-term maintenance. It is also essential that the design recommendations be developed in concert with the Wyoming Department of Transportation to ensure their implementation, long-term viability and potential for State and/or Federal funding.



Example of native planting near Casper Skate Park.



Example of highway planting in Casper.

EXISTING CONDITIONS AND ISSUES

This section provides an overview of Highway 20/26's existing conditions, context and land use controls. Photographs were taken of the corridor to capture the general visual characteristics of the corridor and any unique natural and cultural features. The photographic inventory provides a "snapshot" of current physical and spatial qualities of the site.

Right-of-Way

Public enhancements along the corridor are proposed to be located within the existing right-of-way (ROW). The width of the existing ROW for enhancements varies throughout the corridor. The ROW is not currently mapped electronically so for the purpose of this study the existing parcel lines were used as an indication of ROW. The area available for enhancements, from the edge of pavement to the existing parcel lines, varies from 10 feet or less to areas exceeding 40 feet wide.

Additional areas of ROW for enhancements will be limited for enhancement use because of physical restrictions and utilities that supply the corridor. Qwest has a very large fiber optics duct bank that is located primarily on the south side of the corridor, from the airport to south of Salt Creek Highway and that crosses to the north side of the highway. The existing irrigation canal runs from Oilfield Center Road along the south side of the highway, as well, and extends near Seven Mile Road where it turns south.

Transportation

U.S. Highway 20/26 is designated as a principal arterial serving as the main east/west access road in the Casper metropolitan area and neighboring communities. The current access to the Natrona County International Airport Business Park is along U.S. Highway 20/26 and affects 35 businesses and 135 buildings. The speed limit ranges from 45 mph to 55 mph. U.S. Highway 20/26 is under the Wyoming Department of Transportation jurisdiction, and serves as a connector and

bypass route to Interstate (I)-25. Safe and efficient traffic movements are an important component for this study.

Traffic Data

The current Annual Average Daily Traffic (ADT) map shows that the U.S. Highway 20/26 corridor currently handles between 11,106 and 14,986 vehicles per day depending on the location. The heaviest ADT on U.S. Highway 20/26 occurs between South Poplar Street and Poison Spider Road with consistent counts at or above 14,548.

Accident History

During the three-year period from 2004-2006, there were 219 reported accidents along U.S. Highway 20/26. There was one reported fatality. Between 2004 & 2006, 69 injury accidents occurred with a total of 113 persons injured.



Example of Right-of-Way condition along Highway 20/26 corridor.



Intersection of Wyoming Boulevard and Highway 20/26 - one of the most heavily trafficked areas.



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The major causes of these accidents included Failure to Yield Right-of-Way (FTYROW) Making Left Turn, FTYROW Driveway, and Following Too Close (rear-end) which can all be attributed to poor access management along the corridor. (See appendix)

The corridor is expected to see increased usage as business and residential development expands. The Casper Area Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) projects 170 new dwelling units and 85 new acres of developed industrial or commercial properties will be utilizing this corridor by 2030. WYDOT has a number of improvements slated for U.S. Highway 20/26 over the next five years. The Improvements include:

- widening the existing bridge at the intersection of South Poplar Street and Highway 20/26
- a signal upgrade at Salt Creek Highway
- a redesigned roadway at Wyoming Boulevard which includes the loss of free right turns
- modification of the south side of the Poison Spider Road intersection including a traffic signal upgrade
- an improved intersection and roadway geometry at the U.S. Highway 20/26 Bypass

It is the Casper MPO's hope, with public support, to facilitate enhancements in conjunction with those projects for all modes of transportation.

Plant Material

Currently, the corridor has very little landscaping defining its edges. The eastern end of the corridor, near the City of Casper includes the Platte River Parkway, Amoco Park and roadway plantings. Native plantings along the Platte River include a variety of native trees and grasses. These plants enhance the trail and river corridor and contribute to wildlife habitat. Landscaping is intermittently planted throughout the Town of Mills, though the scale and maintenance of the areas are

varied. An effort to unify the private landscaping efforts into a common theme and maintenance regime will help strengthen the impact of future efforts. The Natrona County Airport on the west end of the corridor has visual appeal and an overall attractiveness due to landscaping, lighting and an existing entry monument. The design of the airport entry establishes itself as a gateway amid the vast Wyoming landscape.

Existing Amenities

Site amenities currently existing throughout the corridor include the oil derrick at the intersection of Poplar Avenue and Highway 20/26 and monument signs at the entry and exit to the Town of Mills and the Natrona County Airport. Additional amenities that



The intersection of Poplar Street and Highway 20/26 was the scene of many accidents 2004-2006.



The historic oil derrick at the intersection of Poplar Street and Highway 20/26 can provide inspiration for a corridor enhancement theme.

could also enhance the corridor include decorative lighting, additional plantings at existing monuments, decorative fencing, boulevard trees, benches and a trail system extension in the Town of Mills.

Character Districts

Defining characteristics along this 7.5 mile corridor include land uses, building conditions, site development patterns and landscape. Land uses vary in type and intensity and include a mix of commercial, light industrial, residential and public. Further analysis of visual quality reveals three distinct districts:

1. Urban Transition District
2. Urban District
3. Rural District

Urban Transition District

The Urban Transition District is located from South Poplar Street and extends to Salt Creek Highway, a natural gateway into the City of Casper. Opportunities exist in partnering with WYDOT on improvements to this intersection. The urban transition district is very green, it contains the Platte River Parkway and trail system, Amoco Park and businesses that are set back from the highway. The landscaping and buildings coupled with the natural beauty of the river valley make this the most pleasant and visually attractive district within the overall corridor.



Recent plantings along the corridor have enhanced the corridor's aesthetics.

This is a very pedestrian friendly district due to the location of the trail along the Platte River. There are several undeveloped parcels along both sides of the corridor that present opportunities for new development supportive of the areas' land use. The railroad and trail system provide potential enhancement opportunities through improving lighting, railings and sidewalks.

Urban District

The Urban District extends from the Salt Creek Highway through the Town of Mills to the Highway 20/26 Bypass. The existing highway section is a 5-lane urban section with a posted speed of 45 mph. The predominant uses along this corridor segment consist of a mix of commercial businesses such as gas stations, take out restaurants, steel suppliers and auto/truck repair. The majority of sites are covered with building and surface parking leaving little or no landscaped space. Signage within this district consists of a combination of pylon and building signs.

The overall character of this district is cluttered and unattractive due to the lack of landscaping, older age and poor condition of many of the buildings, auto-oriented uses and numerous pylon signs. The majority of the business doesn't provide services that support the adjacent residential neighborhoods. This tends to foster a degree of ambivalence among residents with little sense of ownership or neighborhood pride engendered towards these businesses.

The district is also characterized by a lack of landscaping, intermittent, discontinuous sidewalks and no pedestrian amenities. Opportunities in this district include, new streetscaping, lighting, access reconfigurations, creation of pedestrian friendly site development.

Rural District

Similar to the Urban District, land uses start with industrial and commercial and transition to agricultural. The existing highway section is a 5-lane urban section with a posted speed of 55 mph. The roadway traverses across gently rolling terrain that provide several

opportunities for introducing landscape enhancements along embankments and frontage roads in the right-of-way.

The overall character of this district is mixed due to the older age and poor condition of many of the existing buildings, yet wide open and green spaces framed by the mountains in the background. This district could benefit from long range planning, land use planning, shifting land from industrial, commercial to multi-use with some multi-family residential and redevelopment of vacant, underutilized or undesirable uses.

PLANNING AND DESIGN PROCESS

Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) is a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach that includes involvement of all stakeholders to ensure that transportation projects not only provide safety and mobility but are also in harmony with communities and the environment. The environment includes the natural, social, economic and cultural environments. The integration of projects into the context or setting in a sensitive manner involves careful planning and balancing of consequences from differing perspectives and tailoring design to particular project circumstances. There are a variety of design, construction and safety standards that must be followed along with environmental considerations. CSS is the art of creating public works projects that function safely and efficiently and look pleasing to both the users and the neighboring communities.

The planning and design process for this project uses the principles of Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) developed by Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to meet the four main primary objectives that have been identified:

- Develop maintenance-friendly and cost-sensitive roadway and aesthetic streetscape designs that will improve the visual image of the corridor and the communities, while addressing its relation to the surrounding land use. CSS incorporates aesthetics as an integral part of good design and is responsive to all aspects of community context, including a community's financial capacity and ability to pay for the long-term maintenance of improvements. For a design to be successful and beautiful, maintenance expectations and costs must be planned and incorporated from the beginning.
- Create a cohesive visual character for the corridor as a whole while developing a high quality and aesthetically pleasing

landscape treatment. CSS starts with defining and understanding the various aspects of the corridor and the community's context from heritage, natural environment, land use patterns, soils, climate, community design preference, etc. This understanding is reached together in concert with project stakeholders and serves as the basis for creating a holistic vision for enhancing the corridor. We propose to explore ideas for unifying the entire corridor as well as specific designs for special areas such as community gateways.

- Develop an implementation plan that is economically feasible and reasonably phased. CSS uses an interdisciplinary team approach tailored to project needs (landscape architects, urban designers, engineers and plant specialists) to ensure that design recommendations are vetted from multiple perspectives, are implementable and meet the community's needs. Our focus is not on the plans but on the planning process as a means for achieving a better looking and functioning corridor over time.
- Examine engineering, environmental, safety and cost factors to determine the location and design of every component of aesthetic amenities. CSS advocates a balanced approach between safety, mobility, costs, community and environmental goals, and focuses on strengthening a sense of place. This requires that design ideas be responsive to the unique characteristics of the site.

Public Involvement

The corridor planning process utilized several forms of public involvement including:

- four steering committee meetings
- a public Design Workshop
- a formal public meetings/presentations
- a luncheon with local corridor business owners

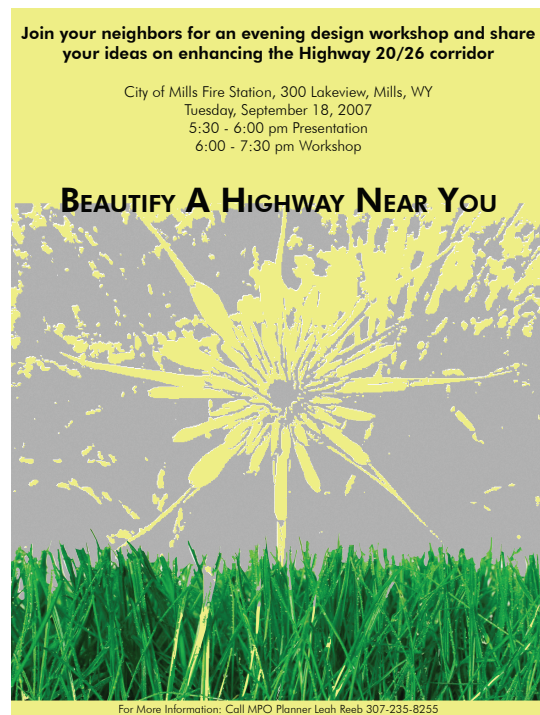


The Highway 20/26 Enhancement Study Kick-off Meeting helped identify concerns along the corridor, such as;

1. What can the enhancements be?
2. Who will take care of the enhancements?
3. How will these enhancements be paid for?
4. What are the enhancements projects timeline?

It is through the planning process and collaboration that these questions have been answered.

A bus tour was the finale of the meeting and many members of the steering committee recognized the poor visual quality and lack of aesthetics throughout the corridor for the first time. The tour reinforced the need for development of a framework plan which supplies a menu of enhancement elements including plantings, lighting, specialty signs, gateway features/structures, fencing, etc., illustrated with photographs composed in a graphic format.



Flyers were used to encourage local residents and stakeholders to get involved in the design workshop and open house.

Participants in the Design Workshop helped identify areas where “cleaning up the appearance of the corridor would be beneficial.” It was agreed upon by participants that this is not a pedestrian corridor, but possibly a biking corridor. The business owners also had a chance to participate with the steering committee to identify issues and opportunities.

As a result, draft final plans were displayed and discussed with community members at an open house.

Preliminary Framework Plan

The preliminary framework plan is all about collecting information that identifies issues, analyzes the existing conditions with respect to the project mission and identifies preliminary enhancement opportunities.

Opportunities to be explored included:

- Innovate with stormwater practices.
- Increase pedestrian accessibility.
- Preserve and highlight natural viewsheds.



- Better define gateways.
- Define entrances and edges.
- Design buffer zone between pedestrians and vehicles.
- Create interesting areas with plants and paving.
- Integrate diverse plant material.
- Preserve long views.

Identifying the physical and cultural issues that affect the corridor builds/strengthens the backbone or framework of the corridor. Issues that affect enhancement design and placement are:

- fiber Optic Corridor within the ROW
- minimal ROW through the Town of Mills
- curb and gutter areas require 2 foot clear zone



Some opportunities explored during the Preliminary Framework Planning process included (clockwise from top left): preserving long views, gateway enhancement precedents,

- incompatible land uses throughout corridor
- inconsistent maintenance standards along the corridor
- irrigation Canal location
- winds, how they affect the plant material and blow snow in the winter
- undefined access points along the corridor
- coordination of WYDOT Projects



traffic management precedents and integrating native plant material.

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Focus Areas

The preliminary framework plan was developed based upon the corridor forces and issues, steering committee meetings, and design workshop. These plans take into account the initial enhancement ideas for corridor-wide and district-specific areas.

WYDOT improvements are targeted for four intersections on this corridor and specific enhancements should be included in each intersection.

1. South Poplar Street
 - gateway and landscape enhancements within the Urban Transition District
2. SW Wyoming Boulevard
 - pedestrian and landscape enhancements within the Urban District
3. Poison Spider Road
 - pedestrian and landscape enhancements within the Urban District
4. Highway 20/26 Bypass
 - landscape enhancements within the Urban District

One way to enhance the U.S. Highway 20/26 corridor is through plant material, a technique which could be applied in a number of ways including: tree planting along the corridor and ROW between frontage road and highway, planted medians, plant materials used as a



Planted medians were an option studied during the Highway 20/26 Enhancement Study.

living snow fence and enhancing existing green space. These large-scale plantings will frame the corridor and help develop an edge, visually helping to delineate the corridor. An opportunity for significant impact is possible within the Rural District west of U.S.

Highway 20/26 bypass. Starting at the bypass, mass plantings consisting of both deciduous and evergreen trees would act as sentinels and “natural gateways” into the business “neighborhoods”.

Planted center medians manage access to the highway and provide additional green space. Planted center medians can also manage stormwater, provide visual interest and slow traffic, thereby increasing safety. Throughout this design process, center medians were examined for these reasons. A center median in the Urban Transition district could double as a gateway and help define the new intersection geometry. Center median placement within the Town of Mills could help provide access management and provide a safer corridor, not only for transportation but also for pedestrians as they attempt to cross the wide highway. Center medians planted in the Rural District could serve as visual interest and would in portions of the district address the miles of center turn lanes which cannot provide access to adjacent properties as a frontage road system has been established.

Although a highly contested and controversial enhancement for this corridor, use of center medians are supported in WYDOT's Access Manual – Rules and Regulations and Policy for Accesses to Wyoming State Highways, March 2005. However, the WYDOT guidelines for medians on rural roadways require center median widths of 56' – 90'. Center medians were not included in the enhancement menu as the existing Highway 20/26 roadway isn't wide enough to accommodate the minimum required center median design width.

In the Wyoming winter, blowing snow is the primary cause of icy roads in wind-exposed areas. (1) Plant materials used as a living snow fence can provide additional color to the

landscape and be effective in collecting snow. The added value of a living snow fence, especially in the drought prone Wyoming climate, is additional water made available to the soil by the drifting snow. Another possibility that is effective as well as aesthetically pleasing, when placed in the landscape as a sculptural element, is the “Wyoming snow fence” a wooden structure made out of large dimensioned lumber. As both of these techniques would need to be located on private property, deployment would require a public/private partnership.

Enhancing existing green space could be done in a number of areas within the corridor:

1. targeted WYDOT Project areas, as mentioned above
2. area around Salt Creek Highway
3. park area on Lakeview Drive in the Town of Mills
4. street trees through the Town of Mills
5. enhanced vertical plantings at the gateway monuments
6. additional native grasses and forbs along the highway

Context Sensitive Solutions represents a “paradigm shift” in how road and street corridors are planned and designed (Otto 2000, Lockwood 2001). Transportation planning can become urban planning. Increased community input encourages a transportation planner to research how trees can contribute to safer streets and cities. (2)

The preliminary Framework Plan provided a variety of enhancements for the steering committee and public to consider and evaluate.

Access Management

(1)Tabler, R. D. (2003). *Controlling blowing and drifting snow with snow fences and road design*. Niwot, CO: Tabler & Associates.

(2)Urban Trees and Traffic Safety: Considering U.S. Roadside Policy and Crash Data, Kathleen L. Wolf and Nicholas Bratton - 2006

In this study, access management improvement concepts were employed as a design tool to create a more legible public realm between the roadway and existing parcels. With access management, possibilities for planting and pedestrian amenities became more feasible and better connected. The Poison Spider Road intersection, slated for reconstruction by WYDOT in 2011, was conceptually redesigned as a prototype for access management improvements within the Highway 20/26 corridor.

Definition

The Federal Highway Administration defines access management as “the process that provides access to land development while simultaneously preserving the flow of traffic on the surrounding system in terms of safety, capacity, and speed.” In practical terms, it means managing the number of driveways that a vehicle may encounter without hampering reasonable access to property and removing slower, turning vehicles from the arterial as efficiently as possible. (3)



Living snow fences are one way to enhance the corridor with plantings and manage the snow drifting near the highway.



Wooden snow fences are another common snow fence technology, image reprinted by permission of Ronald D. Tabler.

Development along an arterial often has a major impact on traffic safety and traffic carrying capacity. Encouraging wide spacings between driveways is the single most important step that a municipality can take to ensure safety and maintain traffic carrying capacity of its arterials. (3)

Modifications/Recommendations

To make an impact on safety and aesthetics within the corridor, enforcement of WYDOT's existing access management plan is recommended. New developments and redeveloped areas should be planned in such a manner that they limit the number of access points or driveways along Highway 20/26. Wherever possible, they should include or connect to frontage or service (backage) roads. They should be required to have complete on-site circulation and interconnections between adjacent developments and abide by the access management plan currently in place.

The current principles for accesses and access spacing are:

- Accesses should be aligned directly

(3) Access Management Handbook, Center for Transportation Research and Education, October 2000

(4) Wyoming Department of Transportation, (2005). WYDOT access manual: rules, regulations and policy for accesses to Wyoming State Highways. Cheyenne, WY: WYDOT Traffic Program.

across from each other when on opposite sides of the road.

- The number of accesses should be minimized while the distance between accesses maximized.
- Joint accesses should straddle the property line between property owners.
- No access shall be within the limits of an auxiliary lane including taper.
- Having interconnectivity between businesses will keep traffic from re-entering the roadway to access another business.
- Accesses shall be designed to disallow backing onto the State system.
- Unless the spacing requirement is met, direct access to malls, residences, or businesses should not be from an arterial, but should be from side and backage roads.
- A bond may be required when applying for an access permit. This guarantees that WYDOT will not be liable for the cost of building, finishing, or removing an access. (4)

This U.S. Highway 20/26 Enhancement Study does not fully address the existing accesses but does encourage all new permits for access to follow the above principles and specific design requirements for the different areas.



Existing view of area around Poison Spider Road and Highway 20/26 in the Town of Mills.



Prototypical access management plan for area around Poison Spider Road and Highway 20/26 in the Town of Mills.

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FRAMEWORK PLAN

The final framework plan for the Highway 20/26 Corridor refined the design treatments for enhancing and improving the corridor. Throughout the planning and design process different enhancement strategies and special focus areas have been identified. With the rhythm of the corridor, differences along its length, a character defined by edges or lack thereof, three distinct districts have evolved. The districts are defined by the overall visual character as influenced by the various land uses, building types, site development patterns and streetscape.

The integration of landscape within the urban roadside system offers many advantages to the surrounding community including enhanced property value, environmental benefits, and the well recognized aesthetic enhancements. (5)

The plans define different planting zones throughout the corridor. These zones provide a mosaic of native plant communities connected to surrounding open space. The planting zones and placement of the plants within these zones are defined by the highway clear zone requirement of 10' and the curb/gutter clear zone requirement of 2'.

Integrated design standards are incorporated into the framework plans: gateway locations and opportunities, potential trail connections – specifically to the Platte River Parkway System, ROW planting areas, lighting, park enhancement areas, and potential snow fence locations – public/private partnerships.

Recommendations

One of the primary purposes of the corridor study is to identify a set of comprehensive ideas to enhance the visual character of the corridor resulting in a greener, more attractive public realm with a consistent theme or style. The proposed public realm enhancements

employ a set of related elements that build off of the central themes of multi-season color and texture, progression and repetition. The elements recommended for achieving these ideas include:

- prairie flowers (native perennials) in mass plantings
- ornamental grasses
- street trees
- ornamental flowering trees
- coniferous Trees
- site Amenities – benches/litter receptacles
- ornamental metal railing system
- interconnected sidewalks and trails
- ornamental pedestrian and street lighting

The following recommendations relate to the districts defined in the study:

1. Plan for transportation enhancements throughout:
 - Provide a hierarchy of interconnected facilities for pedestrians, bikes, cars, buses and truck.



A "batbox-style" decorative light, such as this, is recommended for the corridor.

(5) Dixon, K. K., & Wolf, K. L. (2007). Benefits and risks of urban roadside landscape: finding a livable, balanced response. 3rd Urban Street Symposium. Seattle, WA.

- Limit future curb cuts and consolidate existing driveway entrances.
 - Include sidewalks and off street trails.
 - Interconnect parking lots.
2. Create a strong sense of place throughout:
 - Establish stringent landscape and urban design enhancement and maintenance requirements.
 - Improve the public streetscape with street trees and lighting.
 3. Diversify the character of the corridor through unique design, increased density and intensity throughout:
 - Establish distinct use districts along the corridor.
 - Accommodate a range of non-retail uses.
 4. Design for plant material throughout:
 - Native plantings will offer a wide variety of seasonal color and texture.
 - Plant material to be very adaptable to the somewhat harsh conditions of the Casper climate.
 - Requirements of plant materials have considered water needs, snow removal, erosion control, wildlife, maintenance, enhancement of existing vegetation and preservation.
 - Plant materials lists prepared for this project have been reviewed by a local consultant, City Forester and University Extension Service.



A slab-style bench, cut from native stone, would serve as a durable and beautiful bench to enhance the corridor.



The City of Casper trail with its multi-level planting scheme provides inspiration for the type of pedestrian realm section which would enhance the Highway 20/26 corridor.



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Urban Transition District Goals

- Create recognizable and memorable gateways.
- Strengthen the community character of rural heritage, on a prairie landscape.
- Provide a landscape that is attractive and easy to maintain.
- Increase pedestrian comfort within the district.

Recommendations

- Design special landscape treatments in the public right-of-way at select locations to signal entrance into the community.
- Provide street tree planting and lighting along roadway in existing ROW.
- Encourage planting and long-term maintenance of deciduous and coniferous trees adjacent to the right-of-way on new private facilities.
- Design additional crosswalks, trail connections/signage and seating for pedestrians and trail-users.

Enhancements

The design theme for the rural gateways consists of a semi-formal arrangement of native plantings. The gateway enhancements should include large-scale plantings and/or sculptural elements to give a monumental feeling to gateway areas. Lighting would also help to emphasize gateways and provide a sense of arrival.

It is recommended that the City of Casper work with WYDOT on the re-design of the U.S. Highway 20/26 – South Poplar Street intersection. Plant materials, decorative lighting and pedestrian accommodations would greatly enhance this community gateway.

Maintenance

In the short term, maintenance should consist of spot weeding by hand or with a hand applied sprayer using a broad leaf herbicide. Long-term maintenance of the rural gateway landscape treatments should consist of annual/biannual burning of the prairie plants.



Flowering Crabapple and Linden trees would be hardy and beautiful additions to the Urban Transition District.

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Urban District Goals

- Enhance the visual experience as people drive or walk the corridor and encourage its use for interaction of people, as well as general commerce.
- Provide a landscape that is attractive and easy to maintain
- Provide a landscape that provides visual relief and mitigates the sun and heat during the summer.
- Include ample landscaping at all new construction projects.
- Restore all disturbed ground surfaces with permanent vegetation to prevent erosion.
- Create a user-friendly outdoor environment for visitors and residents.

Recommendations

- Design special landscape treatments in the public right-of-way at select locations to signal entrance into the community.
- Provide street tree planting and lighting along roadway in existing ROW.
- Encourage planting and long-term maintenance of deciduous and coniferous trees adjacent to the right-of-way on new private facilities to enhance facilities.
- Provide benches and seating areas for pedestrian shoppers and trail-users.
- Encourage access management standards on new developments within district.

Enhancements

The enhancements for the urban district, within the Town of Mills, consist of a formal arrangement of native plantings. Plantings could occur individually or as private/public partnerships where adequate space between the edge of roadway and existing parcel lines do not exist. Ideally, a mixture of decorative lighting, benches, overstory trees, shrubs and perennial plantings would enhance the public realm creating a comfortable experience for pedestrians.

It is recommended that the Town of Mills work with WYDOT on the re-design of the U.S. Highway 20/26 intersections that are planned for upgrades. The intersection projects may provide opportunities to enhance pedestrian accommodations and implement access management policies. Plant materials, decorative lighting, additional sidewalks and benches would greatly enhance the streetscape within the Town of Mills.

Existing green space at Lakeview Drive, across from the fire station, is an opportune area for public open space design and gateway enhancements. The existing gateway sign and decorative lighting could be incorporated into a larger planting area to make a statement of arrival into the Town of Mills. The seemingly leftover space could be further enhanced with sidewalks, benches and shade trees creating a park-like setting.

Maintenance

In the short term, maintenance in the district should consist of water and weeding. Long-term maintenance of the landscape treatments should consist of plant replacements, water, weeding and luminaire replacement.



Hardy, drought tolerant perennials would enhance the pedestrian realm within the Town of Mills.

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Rural District

Goals

- Create recognizable entries to neighborhoods/frontage road access points.
- Strengthen corridor character – rural heritage, prairie landscape.
- Provide a landscape that is attractive and easy to maintain.

Recommendations

- Support special landscape treatments in the public right-of-way at select locations to signal entrance into the neighborhood/frontage road access points.
- Plant tree massing and seeding along roadway in existing ROW.
- Encourage planting and long-term maintenance of deciduous and coniferous trees at right-of-way.

Enhancements

Enhancements for the rural district consist of informal interpretation of native plantings. Access points to frontage roads east of the U.S. Highway 20/26 Bypass are planted with both deciduous and coniferous trees along with colorful shrubs. The plantings are meant to provide visual interest and signal the crossing of traffic in those key areas.

Numerous locations along south side of the highway have been identified as areas with potential for public/private placement of both man-made and living snow fence. The snow fences could create visual interest in the landscape and provide a safety benefit by preventing snow drifts and icing on the highway in winter.

Finally the MPO should work with WYDOT on the final planting layout for the U.S. Highway 20/26 Bypass. Deciduous and coniferous trees and colorful shrubs would provide a transition between the Urban District plantings, with street trees and decorative lighting, and the large-scale plantings of the Rural District.



Maintenance

In the short term, district maintenance should consist of water and weeding. Long-term maintenance of the landscape treatments should consist of plant replacements, water, weeding and annual/biannual burning of the prairie plantings.



Hardy trees and native seed mixes would enhance the roadside landscape along Highway 20/26.

Insert Rural District Plan East 11x17

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Insert Rural District Plan West 11x17

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Project Phasing

This plan communicates a vision for beautification, improving the aesthetics of U.S. Highway 20/26 within the greater Casper area. The recommendations presented here represent a simplified timeline recognizing known existing and future projects. It would be advisable for the current steering committee to continue to work together on the projects as many of these projects appear in the short-term time period. Many conversations and meetings between citizen organizations, public officials and other stakeholders will need to take place for resources to be in place to start implementing the enhancements possible for U.S. Highway 20/26 Corridor.

There are several funding alternatives available for improvements. Below is a listing of funding sources:

- Transportation Enhancement Program (SAFETEA-LU) Transportation Enhancements are transportation-related activities designed to strengthen the

cultural, aesthetic and environmental aspects of the nation's intermodal transportation system. The types of projects that are eligible for funding under this category include bicycle and pedestrian facilities, scenic beautification, historic preservation, and environmental mitigation. This program is up for reauthorization on September 30, 2009.

- Intergovernmental Grants
- Local Debt Financing
- Dedicated Sources of Local Funds

Each of these funding sources has a unique set of requirements and criteria that must be met to receive funding. For this to be a successful enhancement plan the commitment for investing time, energy and money must be in place.

Project	District	Short 3 yrs	Medium 6 yrs	Long- Term	Project Description	Responsible Party
S. Poplar / 20/26 (2011)	Urban Transition	X			Aesthetics, widen existing bridge, 10'5' walks, decorative railing	WYDOT, City of Casper
Salt Creek Highway (2011)	Urban Transition	X			Signal upgrade, lighting/monument	WYDOT
Wyoming Boulevard (2011 or sooner)	Urban	X			Radius only, new geometry N/S bound	WYDOT, Town of Mills
Poison Spider (2011)	Urban	X			South side modification, signal	WYDOT
20/26 Bypass Phase 1 - 2009 Phase 2 - 2011	Urban	X			Structures, regrading, intersection surfacing (Ph. 1 & 2), possible Federal money	WYDOT, Natrona County
Trail Plan	Urban		X		Trail connection/extension in Town of Mills	Partner Platte River Trust & Town of Mills/Natrona County
Lighting	Urban Transition/ Urban		X	X	Lighting in conjunction with roadway improvements	WYDOT, City of Casper, Town of Mills & Natrona County
Landscaping	Urban Transition/ Rural	X	X	X	Plant material enhancements	WYDOT, City of Casper, Town of Mills & Natrona County



APPENDIX

References

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Casper, WY
Highway 20/26 Enhancement Study
Kick-Off Meeting
July 17, 2007 2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

1. Introductions
2. Schedule
3. Client's Responsibilities
4. Review Process and Deliverables
5. Casper Area Metropolitan Planning Organization's Vision
6. Next Steps
7. Corridor Tour

casper



Casper Area Metropolitan Planning Organization/City of Casper, WY
Highway 20/26 Enhancement Study
Committee Meeting
September 18, 2007 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

1. Existing Conditions/Photo Inventory
2. Forces and Issues
3. Preliminary Plant Palette
5. Review Vision for Highway 20/26 from Committee
6. Next Steps
7. Design Workshop 5:30 – 7:30

casper

Casper Area Transportation Planning Process
Metropolitan Planning Organization
20/26 Enhancement Study Meeting
Mills Small Community Hall
September 18, 2007

Minutes/Notes

MEMBERS PRESENT

<u>NAME</u>	<u>JURISDICTION/ORGANIZATION</u>
Danyelle Payne	S.E.H.
Chris Behringer	S.E.H.
Chad Aagard	WYDOT
Jack Stone	WYDOT
Mac McPherson	Town of Mills
Liz Hepp	City of Casper
Patsy Horton	Natrona County
Pepper McClenahan	Town of Evansville
April Getchius	Community Development Director
<u>GUESTS</u>	
None Present	
<u>MPO STAFF PRESENT</u>	
Leah Reeb, MPO Planner	
Jennifer Turnbull, Secretary	

20/26 Enhancement Study
September 18, 2007

The meeting was led by Chris Behringer of S.E.H. and her associate Danyelle Payne. First discussed were the existing conditions and the photo inventory of what the corridor looks like currently, starting at the South Poplar intersection proceeding out to the Natrona County International Airport. A brief overview of the maps and their legends were provided.

The second topic covered was Forces and Issues of the Corridor. There are currently existing obstructions that will make it difficult to enhance the Corridor. The biggest concern in this area is not affecting the fiber optics owned by Qwest that service the Western side of the United States. Suggested sites for beginning Corridor enhancements were VRP and TRI sites as specified by the EPA (these are industrial locations that have had toxic spills sometime in the past).

April Getchius asked Wyoming Department of Transportation (WYDOT) to provide plans and preliminaries or scopes of work for future projects along the corridor and specifically intersection improvements and how they will impact the Corridor.

Another topic of conversation was connecting the existing gateway to Mills towards the Salt Creek interchange to create a more welcoming entrance into the town. This could be done with the use of green space, banners, or lighting with many other options available.

The possibility of closing drive areas or access points along the corridor was also presented. Most persons present agreed that closing access points would be extremely difficult and would pose a challenge with property owners. Although everyone agreed that using green spaces to create more definition of these access points and the WYDOT standards was a good idea.

Developing a green space around the 20/26 bypass was also discussed. WYDOT pointed out that green space will not be useable if it will interfere with the safety of the motorists. WYDOT also continued to say that green space requiring maintenance could be an issue for them as their time and funds are limited.

Mac McPherson suggested several business owners are receptive to the idea of creating green space around their properties by using the existing open drainages. Mr. McPherson suggested that these drainages be covered and then planted to create a more beautiful environment.

Danyelle Payne presented the topic of using native plants to enhance the Corridor, acknowledging that the different areas of the Corridor would each have vegetation that would be more successful than others. Her ideas were to vegetation to create a common thread throughout the Corridor to tie the areas together while also making it more visually appealing.

Ms. Behringer concluded the meeting with asking Committee members to consider ideas for enhancing the Corridor and to attend the Public Workshop scheduled later that evening.

PUBLIC WORKSHOP NOTES

The turn out was minimal but fruitful. Those present had relevant questions to ask. A big concern was if the Study had the support and representation of the municipalities. Another question posed was how the Plan's goals would come to light and who would be responsible for achieving those goals. Property owners were concerned with who would cover the costs of these enhancements and if they would be forced to make the enhancements. A large concern of making enhancements to the Corridor is weather related and whether or not the enhancements would worsen or improve the drivability of the Corridor in icy and snowy conditions. Most present agreed that the Corridor is not used as a pedestrian route and enhancements towards that could be a waste of time and money although several agreed that taking a look at a bicycle trail would be a good idea. In general those present thought the Study is a good idea and that cleaning up the appearance of the Corridor would be beneficial.

**Insert Preliminary Plant Palette
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Issues - East 11x17”**

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**Insert Preliminary “16 Forces &
Issues - West 11x17”**

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Casper Area Metropolitan Planning Organization/City of Casper, WY
Highway 20/26 Enhancement Study
Committee/Business Luncheon Meeting
October 17, 2007 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

1. Project Overview
2. Final Issues & Opportunities
3. Preliminary Framework Plan
4. Discussion
5. Next Steps

Casper Area Transportation Planning Process
Metropolitan Planning Organization
Highway 20/26 Enhancement Study Luncheon
October 17, 2007

Minutes

MEMBERS PRESENT

<u>NAME</u>	<u>JURISDICTION/ORGANIZATION</u>
Mac McPherson	Town of Mills
Jack Waltz	Town of Evansville
Terry Wingerter	Natrona County
Mike Haigler	Natrona County
Patsy Horton	Natrona County
Jack Stone	WYDOT
Chad Aagard	WYDOT
Pepper McClenahan	Town of Mills
April Getchius	City of Casper
<u>GUESTS</u>	
Chris Behringer, S.E.H. appearing by telephone	
Chuck Ehrlich, Lariat Trailer Park	
Dave Bauer, D&C Mini Storage	
Gary Hines, Wyoming Machinery	
Rob Destefand, Excal Inc.	
Lloyd Underwood, Underwood Oil and Gas	
Steve Loftin, 71 Construction	
Bob McGee, Gases Plus	
<u>MPO STAFF PRESENT</u>	
Leah Reeb, MPO Planner	
Jennifer Turnbull, Secretary	

This luncheon was led by Leah Reeb of the MPO with Chris Behringer of Short Elliott Hendrickson (S.E.H.) via teleconference. Ms. Reeb started the luncheon with introductions and then a brief overview of the Study. There were immediate questions by business owners concerning the funding of the Study and the implementation of Study findings. Ms. Reeb advised the Study is being funded in large by the federal government. Ms. Behringer advised the funding for enhancements will be addressed in the framework plan more specifically, however in general the enhancements would be funded by the Town, City, County, State and business and property owners.

Forces and issues was the next topic covered. Ms. Reeb presented the boards prepared by S.E.H. showing examples of the current conditions of the highway and the layout of the roadway and its access points. Ms. Reeb also addressed weather conditions along the highway and the current plant palette.

A brief break was taken to give the guests an opportunity to view the boards and to discuss amongst each other their opinions.

During the discussion portion of the luncheon business owners expressed their concerns regarding medians and how they would limit access into their businesses. It was commented that overall Highway 20/26 from Poplar Street to the Natrona County International Airport is largely commercial and that with medians; it may cause difficulty at entrances. Ms. Behringer pointed out medians can be used not only for green space but they also provide opportunity to reduce traffic accidents, and to control traffic. Ms. Behringer also commented that a traffic engineer from WYDOT will be reviewing the plan and that some access points may be limited due to roadway constraints. Ms. Behringer advised that utilizing a 300 foot median would offer 150 feet of green space. Business owners expressed their opinion that medians are not a problem for properties served by frontage roads but not for the businesses going into Mills. It was also stated that medians can create left hand turn restrictions causing difficulty gaining access into businesses.

WYDOT advised that medians are not welcome in any shape or fashion due to maintenance issues, snow removal, and a low number of accidents not warranting a change to traffic control.

Ms. Behringer informed for the purposes of the Study that she is looking for context sensitive solutions and ways for WYDOT and the community to work together. Ms.

Behringer inquired if there were possible areas where snow removal would not be an issue for WYDOT. WYDOT stated that medians require different snow removal equipment and frequently the plows throw snow into the roadway.

Jack Stone of WYDOT advised placing medians in high speed traffic areas can create more of a hazard instead of an enhancement. Ms. Behringer advised that medians can help to break up the monotony of the roadway therefore reducing accident numbers.

Jack Waltz explained that he spoke for the minority when he said that trying to find enhancements to beautify the corridor are a good idea if beautifying and transit issues work together and that medians should not be completely disregarded.

Business owner Steve Loftin suggested that pedestrian friendly facilities be established along the corridor between the existing trail system through Mills due to large amounts of foot traffic on both sides of the road. It was also suggested by business owners that pathways be established around Mountain View Shopping Center and the gas stations along the Highway.

Upon inquiry of future land use plans for the Town of Mills, Ms. McClenahan advised that there is a plan in place but it is dated and that Mills is nearly fully developed and that any development or change will likely occur in the County.

Ms. Behringer confirmed that Stoner Lawn Care is being consulted on appropriate plan palettes that could be utilized for zeroscaping or dryscaping along the highway taking into account low maintenance needs and cost. Mr. McPherson reiterated if the Town of Mills utilizes their funds for plantings it will be up to the property owners to maintain these spaces. Ms. Behringer suggested for potential pathways or parks that come out of the Study a maintenance schedule may need to be established. Business owners concluded that they would be open to green space options provided that they require a minimum amount of maintenance and a long term plan is established for the maintenance of said spaces.

Mr. McGee of Gases Plus advised that he does not want to see trees or medians in front of his business. Mr. McGee advised his business was purchased in their location for visibility and accessibility and that to cover that up with trees or medians would detract from their business opportunities. Mr. McGee was open to the idea of more green space on his property and advised that the City or their consultants are welcome to visit with him any time.



Casper Area Metropolitan Planning Organization/City of Casper, WY
Highway 20/26 Enhancement Study
Committee Meeting
December 17, 2007 1:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

1. Project Review – 10/17/07
2. Final Framework Plan
3. Enhancement Menu Plans
4. Implementation Matrix
5. Discussion
6. Next Steps

Casper Area Transportation Planning Process
Metropolitan Planning Organization
20/26 Enhancement Study Meeting
Council Meeting Room
December 17, 2007

Minutes/Notes

MEMBERS PRESENT

<u>NAME</u>	<u>JURISDICTION/ORGANIZATION</u>
Bob Kost	S.E.H.
Chris Behringer	S.E.H.
Chad Aagard	WYDOT
Jack Stone	WYDOT
Jack Walts	Town of Evansville
Liz Hepp	City of Casper
David Hough	City of Casper
Gary Clough	City of Casper
Pepper McClenahan	Town of Mills/WLC
April Getchius	Community Development Director
<u>GUESTS</u>	
None Present	
<u>MPO STAFF PRESENT</u>	
Leah Reeb, MPO Planner	
Jennifer Turnbull, Secretary	

20/26 Enhancement Study
December 17, 2007

The meeting was led by Chris Behringer of S.E.H. and her associate Bob Kost. First discussed were the results of the luncheon held on October 17, 2007. Ms. Behringer advised that most business owners had little to no problems with small screenings provided they don't infringe on the business' access points.

Ms. Behringer told the committee that all of the proposed changes should be viewed only as options on a menu and not as absolute changes.

Ms. Behringer advised that the biggest change to the framework plan east is that the medians were removed. It was further suggested that the gateway sign to Mills could be better defined to enhance the feature. There was discussion concerning the green space in the area and that private partnerships between the Town of Mills and business/property owners would need to take place.

In the framework plan west Ms. Behringer commented that Mr. Jack Bell from WYDOT had advised her green spaces could be planted and that medians could occur only where frontage roads are established and where they will not interfere with accessibility. Ms. Behringer proposed that establishing medians for a wider plant area near the airport would play up a sense of arrival at the airport. There was much discussion concerning medians and their benefits. Mr. Walts inquired of WYDOT as to why medians are used everywhere else in the country and are widely accepted but not by WYDOT.

Regarding planting vegetation going west the question arose of whether or not the shrubbery or vegetation would be visible from the road (around Six Mile Road) or if the irrigation ditches would obstruct the view.

In the Urban Transition District the plan shows tree planting and lighting to enhance the area. Ms. Behringer suggested better lighting along the pedestrian trail using "shoe box" fixtures or luminaries. Ms. Behringer advised planting at Salt Creek Highway and along the possible trail extension would be a mixture of 30% wildflowers and 70% grasses using native seed mix. The proposed plan would duplicate plant material throughout the highway to create continuity and using different plant material throughout to define the separate districts. Ms. Behringer told the committee that in regards to the plant lists, they compile several sources to ensure that the plant options appeared on multiple lists. Ms. Behringer advised that businesses could also plant along the river to enhance this district however trees would not practical along the barrier. Ms. Behringer also suggested that lighting could be built into the barrier as a way to better enhance this area.

In regards to the Urban Area East, Ms. Behringer added that vertical elements could be used to give scale to the monument and more lighting could be used with the addition of flag poles and evergreen planting. This would define the space better. Ms. McClenahan advised that it is a tight space with not much room. Mr. Stone advised that one way to possibly create more space would be to widen the clear zone with sloping.

Extension of the current pedestrian trail for better connectivity was discussed at length as well. A concern of pedestrians having the ability to cross at 1st Street and Salt Creek was an issue. The consensus was if the trail was to be extended a more logical crossing point would be on the south side of Oregon Trail to Southwest Wyoming Boulevard.

In the Urban District West the framework plan suggests a redesigned parking at the shopping mall to create a green space and to add value to the property, however it could lead to a loss in the number of parking spaces available. At the second Mills sign it was suggested that this area could be enhanced by creating green space or a small park around it. Ms. Behringer added that a concrete bench and maybe a map of the area similar to a Welcome Center could be appealing at this location.

In the framework plan for the Rural District East, Ms. Behringer advised the Committee to consider using vegetated areas and enhancing them with additional vegetation. Mr. Aagard advised that island planting would need to be kept to the north side of the road. There was further discussion that tree planting would need to be broken up on the south side of the highway in order to keep snow drifting at bay in the winter months.

In the framework plan for the Rural District West, Ms. Behringer suggested a small, depressed median would be a great way for adding green space. Mr. Aagard and Mr. Stone concurred that this sort of a median in this location would not create additional maintenance in regards to plowing in the winter months.

Mr. Aagard and Mr. Stone advised Ms. Behringer of the upcoming projects along Highway 20/26 that may directly impact potential enhancements for the corridor. Ms. Behringer posed questions to Mr. Aagard and Mr. Stone for feasibility of tying proposed enhancements during these projects.

Finally, Ms. Behringer advised that the next steps for the project are to make changes to the drawings, hold the public workshop and create the draft framework report for review.



Department of Transportation

State of Wyoming

Dave Freudenthal
Governor

John F. Cox
Director

May 22, 2008

Highway 20/26 Enhancement Study by SEH DISCLAIMER

The Wyoming Department of Transportation (WYDOT) does not necessarily agree with all of the ideas, options, discussions, or conclusions presented in this study. The area of US 20/26 defined in the study, is entirely under the jurisdiction of WYDOT, who is responsible for the operational and safety aspects of this roadway as it transverses the cities of Casper and Mills and portions of Natrona County along its length. Accordingly, WYDOT will not allow any options within its right-of-way that may compromise the capacity, safety, maintenance or physical attributes of the highway; nor allow any options which may result in future roadway problems or restrictions to the design, maintenance, operations, or construction of the roadway due to new or changes in regulatory laws, limits, or restrictions.

Funding for any options presented herein will be at the expense of outside entities, private landowners or businesses, or local governments, in addition to or in lieu of designated funding programs. Maintenance of all allowable options will be entirely the responsibility of and at the expense of local governmental entities by written agreement.

Any allowable options will conform to federal, state and WYDOT laws, rules, policies and design guides, including, but not limited to, fencing, access control, landscaping, road design, signage, and maintenance.

900 Bryan Stock Trail
Casper, WY 82601

WYDOT Comments to Final Report

Source: Aagard, C. (2008). E-mail to L. Reeb, Casper MPO. 05-19-08.

Leah

In talking with Jack Bell about the study and different issues with the study he stated that he was going to require a disclaimer within the study that WYDOT did not concur with many of the recommendations that were made in this study.

In reviewing the draft of the study I have the following remarks to make:

pg 15 There are 5 items bulleted. The third bulleted item states that a redesigned roadway at Wyoming Blvd includes the loss of free right turns. I don't know that this statement is false but there will be a dedicated right turn lane. The island that forces the right turn lane will go away and become part of the roadway. The radius will most likely change very little and there is not currently acceleration/merge lane existing now, so I do not think the function of the intersection will change very much from the Wyoming Blvd side of the intersection.

pg 15 - 16 under the heading Existing Amenities, the last sentence that goes into pg 16 states, Additional amenities that could also enhance the corridor include decorative lighting, additional plants at existing monuments, decorative fencing, boulevard trees, benches and a trail system extension in the Town of Mills. WYDOT has existing agreements with the adjacent landowners concerning the type of shared right of way fence. Those fences cannot be changed without agreement between WYDOT and the adjacent landowner. The landowner has final say on the type of fence to be used. In addition WYDOT would require assurances that livestock would not be allowed on the adjacent land before a non stock tight type fence would be allowed.

I am unsure what is meant by decorative lighting and boulevard trees but when coupled with bullet items 3,4 & 5 of street trees, ornamental flowering trees, and coniferous trees on pg 33, and on pg 34 item 2, bullet 2 Improve the public streetscape with street trees and lighting. A similar statement appears under Recommendations bullet item 2 on pg 39 and 43. The first bullet item under Recommendations on pg 39 and 43 states Design special landscape treatment in the public right-of-way at select locations to signal entrance into the community. This statement seems to be in line with what WYDOT agreed could be done inside the right of way, that is enhancements at select isolated locations. The references to street trees and lighting seem to be recommend the entire length of the study. All reference to trees and lighting need to be limited to isolated select locations. Tree species will be limited to a maximum 4 inch caliper at maturity anywhere within WYDOT right of way.

pg 16, the last sentence in the first paragraph in the right column. I am unsure how the railroad provides opportunities for enhancement. Does railroad refer to the old CNWRR rail bed?

The picture on pg 20 and beginning with the last paragraph in the left column through the 2nd to last paragraph on pg 25 lists all the reasons that islands were encouraged to be installed on this project, ending with the statement the center medians were not included in the menu of recommendations because the right-of-way is too narrow. This statement needs to remain in the study and there were many other reasons that center medians are undesirable and will not be allowed by WYDOT. Depressed medians also have many negative aspects and also will not be allowed by WYDOT.

The last paragraph on pg 25 carrying over to page 26 talks about snow fence, living and wooden structures. The statement at the end of the paragraph about working with the public to install them on private right-of-way is correct. However, WYDOT would encourage snow fences be placed an appropriate distance from the right-of-way fence as the snow drift that develops down wind of the snow fence is very hard on the right-of-way fence. Design should follow WYDOT spacing and placement procedures.

pg 33, third paragraph states that the highway clear zone 10' and 2'. This statement cannot be made. The clear zone is a function of many issues including speed, curvature, grade and curvature. What ever the clear zone is, I am sure that it is more than 10 feet for non curb and gutter sections of this road.

pg 34, item 2, 1st bullet, Establish stringent landscape and urban design enhancement and maintenance requirements. I am unsure what is desired from this statement, but the maintenance of any enhancement that is placed within WYDOT right-of-way will require that a maintenance agreement with the appropriate government entity is in place before the enhancement is installed. This agreement will detail maintenance responsibility, liability and cost borne by the permittee.

pg 39 and pg 49 under Maintenance refers to the annual or biannual burning of prairie plants. This will not be allowed to happen within WYDOT right-of-way, it is a health and safety issue.

pg 49, last bullet under Recommendations, I am unsure what is meant by planting AT right-of-way. Under the 3rd bullet of Recommendations of pg 39 it seems clear that for the Urban Transition District this same recommendations is being applied on private right-of-way and therefore in this case it appears this is inside the right-of-way. Once again, WYDOT will allow isolated select areas to be enhanced but planting trees along all or part of the right-of-way will not be allowed by WYDOT. Coniferous trees will probably not be allowed in WYDOT right of way except at isolated locations.

On pg 55 there is discussion of one possible funding source, SAFETEA-LU and several question marked sources. There is no attempt made at the cost to install or maintain any of the recommendations. To do isolated enhancements along the corridors is most likely feasible, but some the recommendations for enhancements for the entire length are not very feasible.

Chad Aagard, PE

Resident Engineer

WYDOT, Casper

