

The Housing Crisis in Wyoming



Wyoming Association
of Municipalities

Building Strong Communities

Our Mission

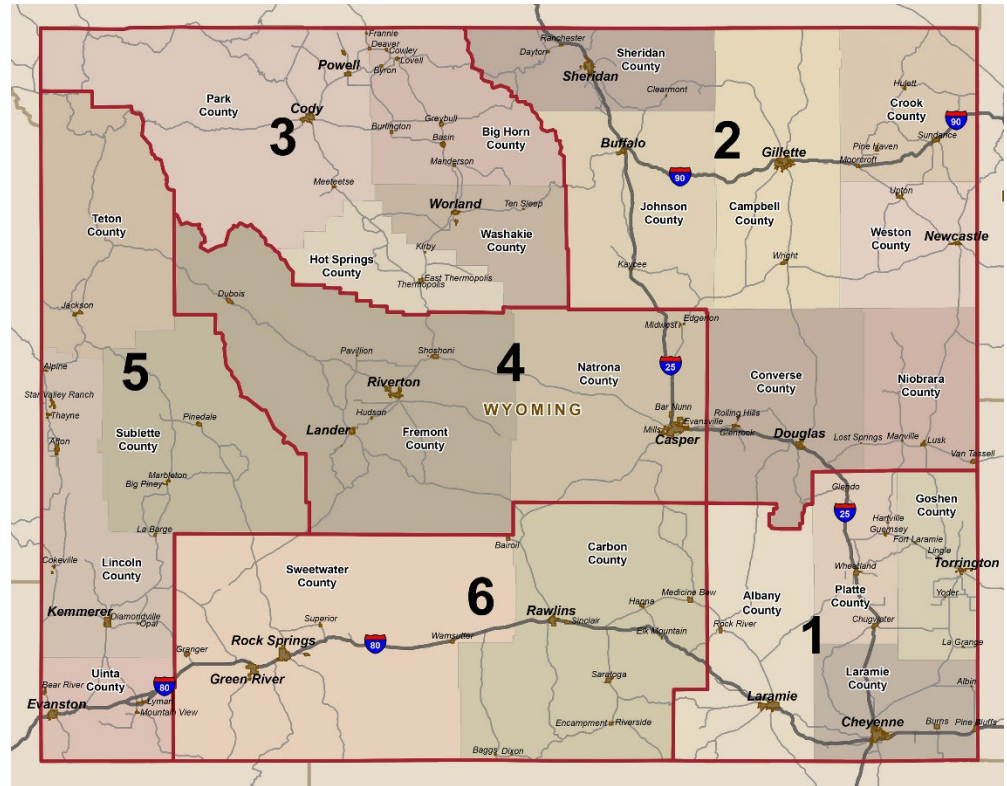
To collaborate with the legislature and other critical stakeholders to find solutions for the current housing crisis in Wyoming.



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Where do things stand?

- On May 26, 2022 we distributed a survey to our 98 member communities inquiring about their current housing challenges. To date we've received 41 responses.



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Responding Communities

Thayne

Cokeville

Guernsey

Shoshoni

Saratoga

Sundance

Opal

Douglas

Casper

LaBarge

Star Valley Ranch

Encampment

Wright

Ranchester

Cheyenne

Lander

Sinclair

Frannie

Jackson

Green River

Worland

Dubois

Cody

Hanna

Kemmerer

Meeteetse

Sheridan

Moorcroft

Greybull

Glendo

Upton

Pinedale

Alpine

Van Tassel

Mills

Lingle

Torrington

Chugwater

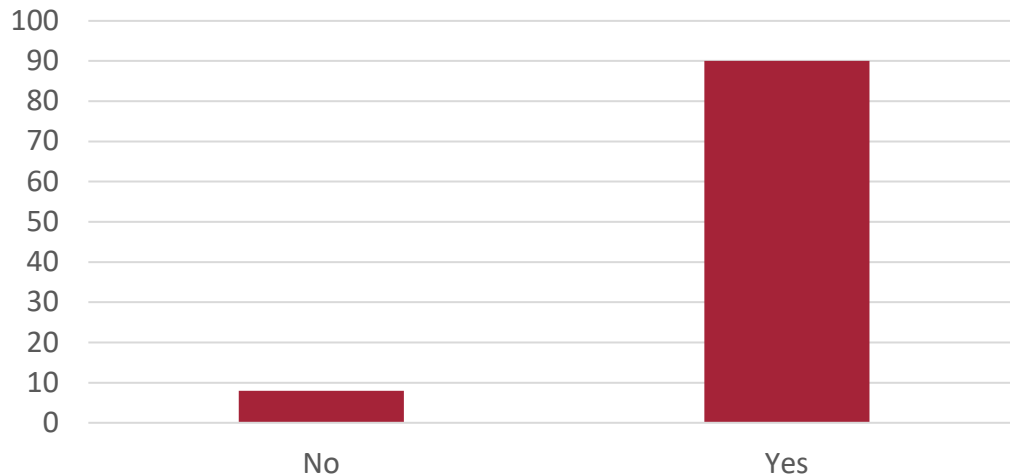
Baggs

Riverton

Laramie

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Is your community facing some sort of housing shortage?



90-percent of responding communities indicated that they were experiencing some sort of housing shortage.

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What types of housing is your community currently lacking?

We asked respondents to mark all that applied.

88-percent of communities said they needed more affordable housing.

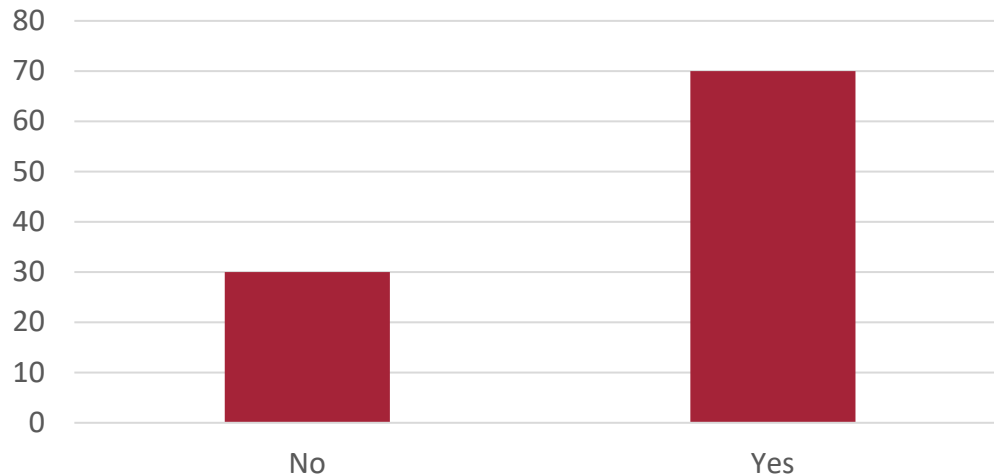
83-percent said they needed more workforce housing.

63-percent said they needed more housing for seniors.

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Is your current lack of workforce housing hindering your economic development efforts?



70-percent of respondents indicated that a lack of available workforce housing was hurting their efforts to attract or grow business in their communities.

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We asked them to elaborate....

School teachers were hired but had to decline because they could not afford housing. – Town of Thayne

An established business has been wanting to expand but employees already need to commute from outside because there is no housing available in Guernsey.

– Town of Guernsey

It is almost impossible to hire waitresses, daycare workers, hospital staff in our community because there is no rental properties available or homes to buy. If there were homes to purchase, they are too expensive for them to purchase.

- Town of Sundance

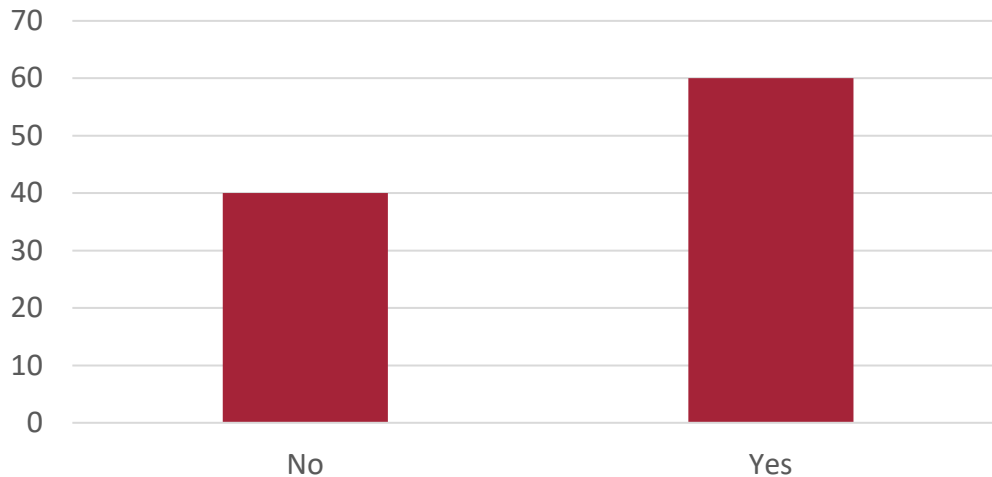
Commercial business space available for development but no housing available for prospective business owners and their employees.

- Town of Cokeville

Companies are having a difficult time recruiting prospective employees to Cheyenne due to lack of affordable housing and/or housing in general.

- City of Cheyenne

Are there companies that would like to move to, or expand in, your community that can't because of a lack of workforce housing?



60-percent of respondents indicated that a lack of available workforce housing has currently stopped new or growing business opportunities.

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We asked them to elaborate....

Our economic development team has had several manufacturing businesses to the table, only to fall through when the discussion went to workforce and housing.

– Town of Sundance

There is a hydrogen plant considering Saratoga for corporate office but there is a shortage of housing.

– Town of Saratoga

Have had several companies "shop" Pinedale thru Wyoming Business Council but cost and availability of housing made it less than ideal. Additionally, we have new hospital going in which will require additional housing.

- Town of Pinedale

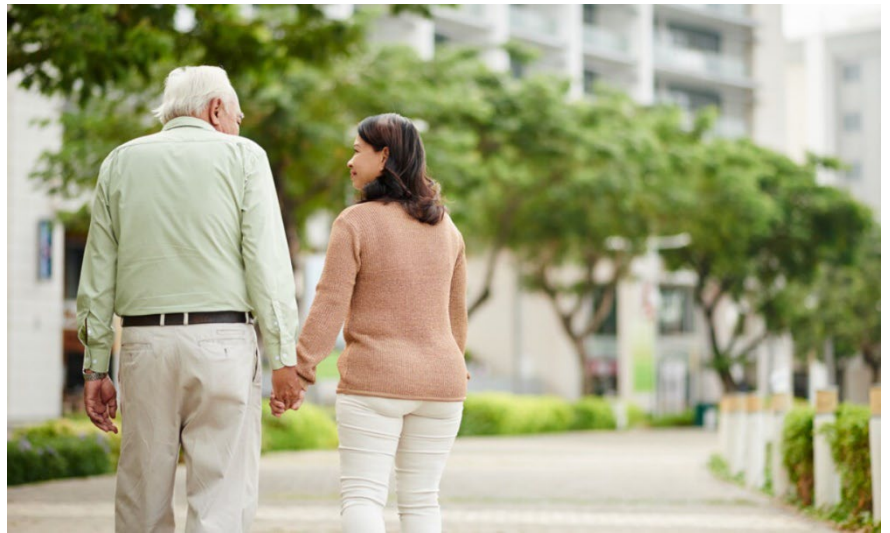
Laube Pet Supplies looked at Shoshoni as a relocation spot for their business. We did not have the infrastructure or the housing for their staffing.

- Town of Shoshoni

Do seniors currently have to move out of your community to find senior housing?

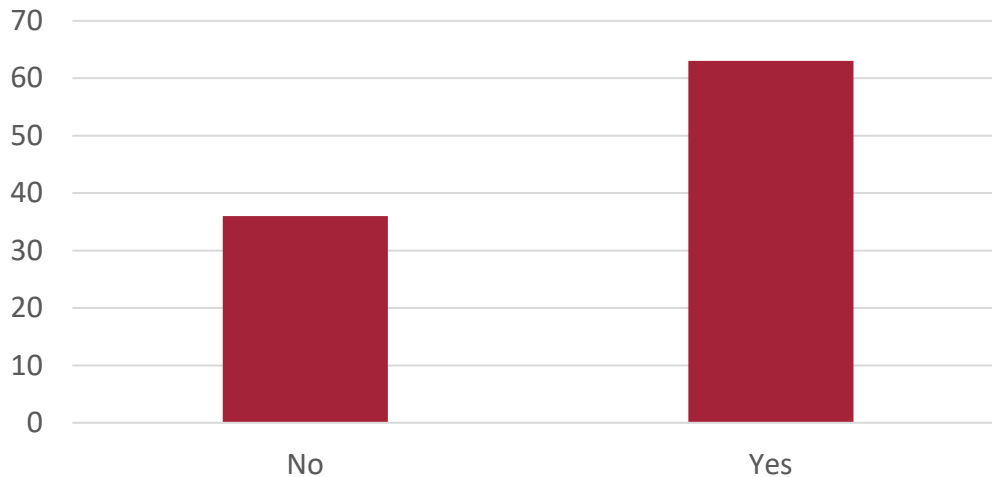
56-percent of communities said that their seniors are having to move away to find appropriate housing.

Our elderly residents are having to move into senior housing as far away as Salt Lake City Utah, because of lack of senior housing.
- Town of LaBarge



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Do your municipal employees currently have issues finding housing in your community?



63-percent of respondents indicated that hiring and retaining municipal employees is negatively impacted by a lack of housing.

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A stark example....

We had to have our new police chief live in a camp trailer for a few months before a house became available.

– Town of Cokeville



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Among others....

We have two police officers who cannot find housing, so they live outside the community, making it a tough situation when responding to calls.

– Town of Guernsey

Human Resources notes that we often extend offers that are rejected due to inability to find affordable worker housing or pay current market rates.

– City of Cody

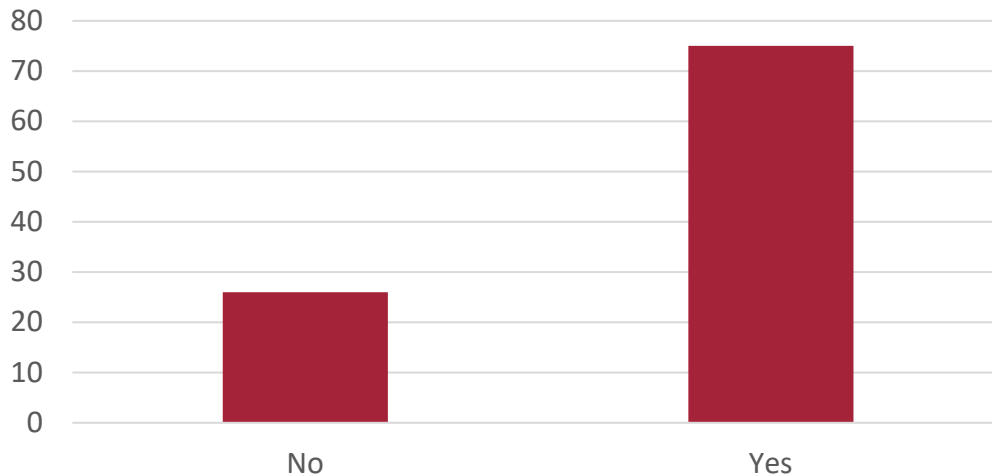
We have offered the job of airport manager to 6 parties so far, who initially said yes, and then had to decline due to housing..

- Town of Pinedale

If they were required to live in town corporate limits no one could find suitable housing. Four out of the five full time employees live outside town limits and two of those live more than 10 miles away.

- Town of Lingle

Have you made any efforts to address your housing issues on the local level?



75-percent of communities have made efforts to address housing issues in their cities and towns.

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An ongoing effort....

The City continues to partner with our Housing Authority on all housing opportunities - we have offered up land and done loans with them.

– City of Casper

We are talking with builders of a new subdivision to try and get a variety of houses built, but they will be losing profit by doing so.

– Town of Ranchester

We tried to add options for creating "missing middle" homes and that was shot down by forceful misinformation/fear mongering campaign.

- City of Lander

As recommended in our adopted economic development plans, we are currently working through an extensive code revision in an attempt to encourage affordable housing development.

- City of Laramie

A contributing factor, out of state real estate investors and short-term rentals.

28-percent of communities responded that the properties that do go on the market locally are more likely to go to a real estate investor to be offered as a long or short-term rental than to people who will use them as a primary residence.



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Short-term rentals, long-term headache....

We have several that are used as Air BNB or seasonal houses for out of state residents. Mainly from the front range of Colorado. We hope that those that are doing Air BNB are at least paying lodging tax.

– Town of Encampment

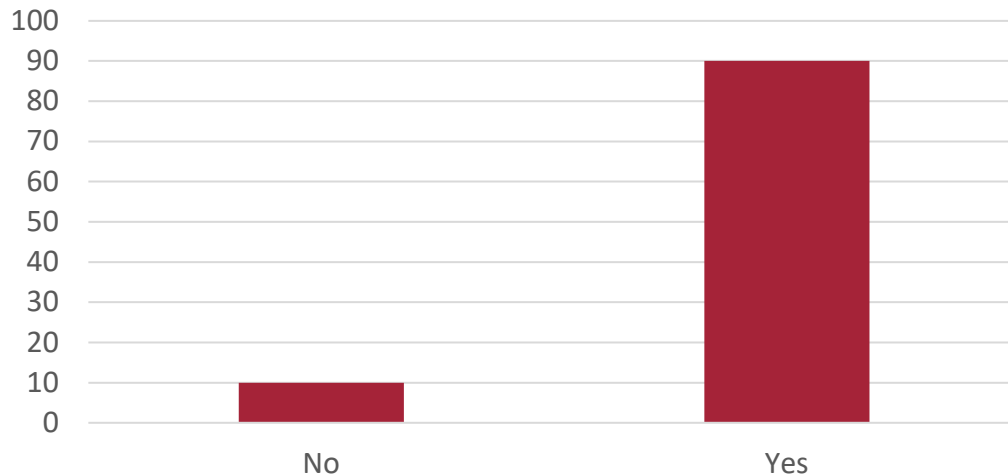
Laramie has 50% of its housing stock owed by rental property investors. This is a major contributor to affordable housing issues facing the city.

– City of Laramie

We have around 120 short term rentals in Cody. We have not limited short term rentals based on past City council's thoughts that the market would respond, and we could have both, but so far, the market is not keeping up.

- City of Cody

If the legislature were to provide resources and/or funding to help address housing issues in the state, would your community participate in the program?



90-percent of communities stated that they would participate if the state chose to invest in housing.

46-percent said they have “shovel ready” housing projects in their communities.

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We need your help....

Small local government does not have the personnel and expertise to do workforce housing projects. With more than 1/3 of our residents being seasonal this is beginning to create a big gap for local retailers and a serious lack of affordable housing for workforce in the area. We cannot blame a property owner for making the best sale they can on their property, but our population is not increasing with these sales.

– Town of Encampment

Lander-- and I suspect most communities-- can NOT afford single family home neighborhoods any longer. We couldn't for some time! If my street of 13 homes could magically direct all of our property tax that went to the City towards replacing pavement, curb and gutter, it would take 60 years (I did the math) at 2021 prices. And those prices are expected to increase as much as 30% *this year alone*. Not to mention the absurdity that somehow \$ could be dedicated to only pavement, curb and gutter and not also police, fire, cemetery, city rec, street plowing/sweeping; street lights, etc.

– City of Lander

Housing is very important to increase our population for the community, workforce, school, economic development, and general well-being of our community.

- Town of Meeteetse



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To see the entire survey and all the individual community responses please visit:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-ih4RupWXrx_2FxuW0uSh8zag_3D_3D/

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