



FORWARD GREATER CHEYENNE – IMPLICATIONS FOR LCCC

COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT: KEY STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES RELEVANT TO LCCC

- **The expansion of the Front Range:** Population growth in Greater Cheyenne has exceeded that of the average American community as the Front Range continues to expand northward.
- **In-migrants are relatively young and well-educated:** On average, in-migrants to the community are younger and better educated than the community's existing residents.
- **Sustainable, young workforce but this advantage is eroding:** There are enough 25-44 year olds in to eventually "replace" the community's workforce aged 45-64, but this advantage is eroding.
- **LCCC and the pipeline for middle-skill jobs:** Greater Cheyenne has a considerably higher share of adults with some college or an Associate's degree than the average American community; LCCC's capacity and the pipeline it generates produces a potential advantage for middle skill jobs.
- **Strong middle class:** Greater Cheyenne's household income distribution has fewer households at the ends of the spectrum, and the median household income is higher than the average community.

COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT: KEY CHALLENGES AND THREATS RELEVANT TO LCCC

- **Talent retention and competition with other Front Range communities:** Net migration data show that the community is losing talent to neighboring communities along the Front Range.
- **Aging population:** Greater Cheyenne's population is aging faster than its peers, reflecting eroding workforce sustainability from a demographic standpoint.
- **Comparatively low and stagnant educational attainment:** The percentage of the adult population with a bachelor's degree or higher is lower than the average American community and has actually declined slightly in recent years, contrary to trends nationwide.
- **Economic diversification:** Government services (federal, state, local) and predominantly local-serving sectors (retail, food service, health care) represent a relatively large share of employment in the region. Export-oriented sectors that attract new wealth are relatively underrepresented.
- **Entrepreneurship:** The community is characterized by low rates of self-employment and stakeholders have indicated that the area lacks sufficient support services for entrepreneurs.
- **Housing availability and affordability:** The availability of attractive and affordable housing was a frequently cited concern, particularly for military families and recent college graduates.

ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE PROFILE: KEY FINDINGS RELEVANT TO LCCC

- **From competing on cost, to competing on quality:** The community will need to elevate the quality of its workforce and the quality of place if it is to effectively compete for sectors that align with residents' vision for the future and whose locational considerations are more heavily influenced by proximity to a relatively high quality workforce and community as compared to a lower cost workforce and community.
- **Industry Opportunities:** Manufacturing, Data and Information Services, Energy, and Transportation and Logistics, PLUS professional, financial, and corporate services.
- Strategic implications based on research findings:
 - Investing in the entrepreneurial ecosystem
 - Investing in quality of place to support talent retention and attraction
 - Enhancing bachelor's and advanced degree production in the community and across the state
 - Targeted talent recruitment that focuses on repatriation of former residents and college students
 - Aligning education and workforce development programming
 - Preparing for workforce shortages due to impending retirements

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY: STRATEGIC INITIATIVES & IMPLICATIONS FOR LCCC

1. **Downtown Revitalization: *Facilitate revitalization of Downtown Cheyenne through a series of intentional investments, new incentives, and redevelopment projects.***

1.5 Invest in catalytic projects that can help kick start investment and transformation.

Around the country, many downtown revitalization efforts around the country fail to gain traction and positive momentum absent a sizeable investment from an anchor institution or major employer. In many urban cores, this “first mover” has been the public sector through investments in new city halls and government complexes. Similarly, anchor institutions – notably, educational and health systems – have advanced catalytic projects... Forward Greater Cheyenne recommends three major new investments in the community’s downtown:

- The extension and activation of the Cheyenne Greenway through Downtown Cheyenne
- The establishment of new LCCC instructional and residential facilities in Downtown Cheyenne
- The establishment of the Cheyenne Center for Enterprise and Entrepreneurship (C2E2)

3. **LCCC Expansion: Baccalaureate Degrees: *Begin offering applied baccalaureate degrees at Laramie County Community College (LCCC) to support long-term economic and workforce competitiveness.***

3.1 Develop a coalition through Forward Greater Cheyenne to build support for the development of applied bachelor’s degree programming at LCCC and establish a vision for residential and instructional facilities in Downtown Cheyenne.

3.2 Launch the Cheyenne Area Workforce Alliance to help develop appropriate programming and curriculum, and ensure alignment of K-12 career pathways with existing and new LCCC programming.

3.3 Evaluate opportunities to establish LCCC instructional and residential facilities in Downtown Cheyenne.

6. **Community Beautification: *Enhance community attractiveness, pride, and image through purposeful investments, programs, and policies that support beautification and blight removal.***

6.1 Prepare public and private spaces for public art installations, and provide adequate incentives to encourage the spread of public art installations in the community.

- Incorporate public art projects into the curriculum for the Art program at LCCC
- Support multidisciplinary public art projects at LCCC (i.e. engineering and art students working together)