



Sheridan County, Wyoming Conservation Design Subdivision Option

Recent Amendments to Zoning and Subdivision
Rules and Regulations

Adopted November 2010

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County Road #255 traffic control

What Is Conservation Design?

- **Conservation Design:** An alternative to conventional subdivision layout
- Key features:
 - Significant percentage of buildable land is permanently protected
 - Development clustered on smaller lots—permissible densities maintained by allowing smaller lots
 - Open space conserved for agriculture and working landscapes, wildlife habitat protection, outdoor recreation
 - Can reduce infrastructure costs





Conventional



**Conservation
Design**

National Association of Homebuilders 4-Star Certified Development National Green Building Standard



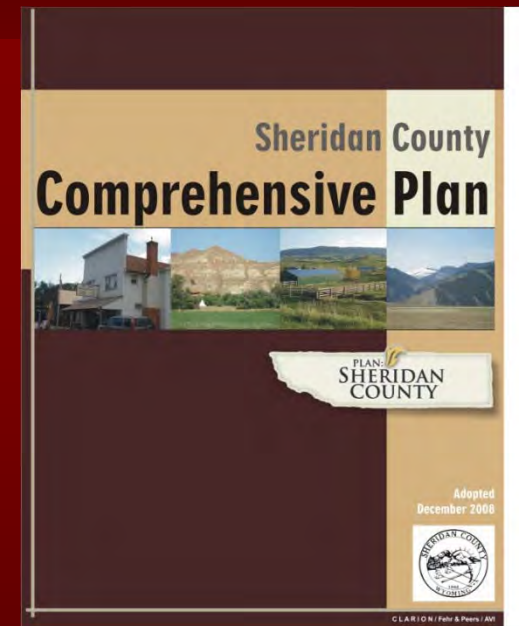
Not in Sheridan County !

How the Conservation Design Amendments Work--Overview

- Residential clusters allowed with smaller building lots and permanently preserved open space
- 70% of site conserved for agriculture or open space
- 50%-100% density bonus for using **Conservation Design** in targeted areas
- Streamlined review process
- New stream setback and steep slope protection standards for all subdivisions

What led to the development of CD...

- ✓ Comprehensive Plan (2008) identifies **Conservation Design** as a top priority action to maintain ag land and protect natural resources
- ✓ Nationally recognized firms retained to present **Conservation Design** best practices
- ✓ Stakeholder interviews
- ✓ Field design workshop with Sheridan Community Land Trust
- ✓ Sonoran Institute public survey
- ✓ Public open house



Old Regulations— Where They Fell Short...

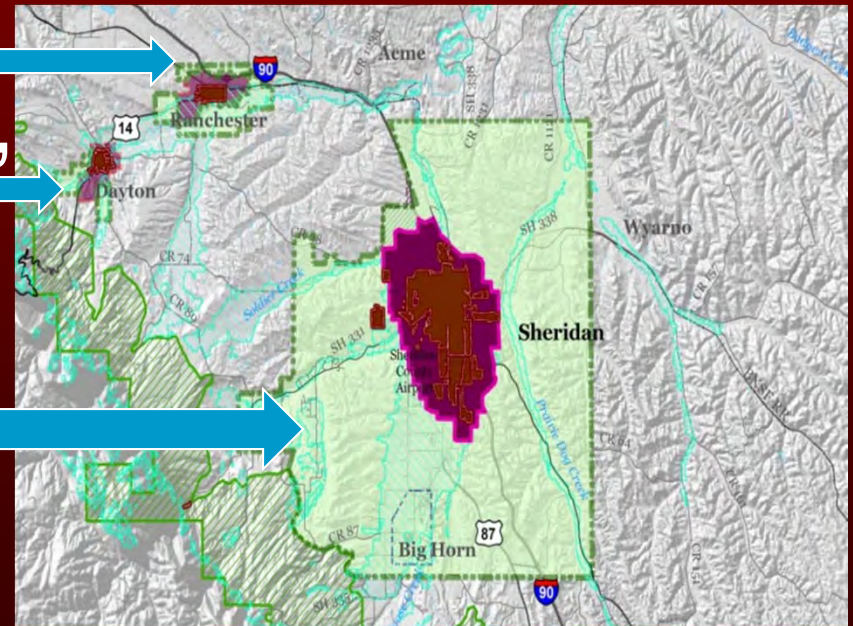
- Nothing specific concerning conservation subdivisions
- Standards were vague or absent:
 - Preserve trees, natural drainage “if possible”
 - No standards regarding riparian setbacks, steep slopes or landslides
 - PUDs require only 25% open space
- Minimum lot sizes not in accord with Comprehensive Plan

Adopted Amendments—A Moderate Approach

- Balance of incentives and rules
- Some new resource protection provisions (streams, steep slopes) but not all (ridgelines, wildlife) recommended in comp plan
- Change in base density in the A-Agricultural zoning district (to 1 unit per 80 acres), but offset with density bonus options (up to 1 unit/20 acres in Conservation Development Area)

Location—Where Allowed

- Available county wide in A, RR, and UR districts (*except Urban Service Area*)
- In Conservation Development Areas, bonuses



New, Streamlined Review Procedure

- Pre-application meeting with staff
- Preliminary site analysis map and site visit, BUT no Preliminary Plat—concept plan submitted and reviewed by staff
- Planning and Zoning Commission reviews Final Plat and makes recommendation
- Final Plat reviewed and approved by BOCC

Conservation Design Standards

- Amendments to Zoning and Subdivision Regs. to encourage the county's open character and agricultural viability.
- Minimum Conservation area: 70% of gross land area

Conservation Design Standards

■ Minimum gross land area:

- Ag District – 70 ac
- RR District -10 ac
- UR District -10 ac

■ Densities:

District	Base Density	Density w/Bonuses
Agricultural	1 unit/40 ac	1 unit/20 ac
RR (outside GPA)	1 unit/2 ac	1 unit/1.33 ac
RR (within GPA)	1 unit/5 ac	1 unit/3.33 ac

Menu of Density Bonuses

Density Bonus	% Density Increase
Providing Central Sewer	25
Conserving Prime Farmland	25
Dedicating Add. Conservation Area	25-50
Protecting Streams & Riparian Areas	25
Protecting Visual Resources	25
Conserving Connected Open Space	25
Replat Old Large Acreage Development	10
Providing Fire Protection Measures	10
Public Trail Dedication	10
Stream Bank Restoration; Tree Planting	10
Wildlife-friendly Fencing	5

■ Minimum Lot Area

- None in RR or UR Districts
- .25 ac. in Agriculture District

■ Conservation Area Ownership Options:

- Dedication to County
- Dedication to other government
- Dedication of easement to County
- Convey to Association
- Retain Title (w/development deed restriction)
- Convey title or easement to Cons. Org.

Generally Applicable Amendments

- Base density in A-Ag zone district changed from 1 unit/35 acres to 1 unit/80 acres as recommended in Comp Plan
- Smaller lot sizes allowed in RR and UR zone district, but base density stays same
- 50-200 foot stream setbacks
- Limit development on steep slopes (30% or greater)—density transfer allowed to developable portion of parcel

Critical components...

- Open Space Use
- Open Space Ownership and Rights
- Open Space Perpetuation
- Prioritization of features worthy of preservation.

Observations & Issues

- Incentives are requisite.
- Existing-neighbor resistance.
- Uncertainty about on-site water/sewer.
- Property taxation questions.
- Access questions.
- Is it “right” everywhere?

Rules & Regulations accessed at:

- Sheridan County Website:

- www.sheridancounty.com

- Click on “*Department/Offices*”

- Select “*Public Works*”

- Then “*Rules & Regulations*”

- And finally, “*Division of Land*” and “*Zoning*”