

**UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING  
LEWIS STREET REPORT**

Report to Governor Mead and the Joint Appropriations Committee

December 1, 2011

Pursuant to 2011 Session Laws, Chapter 88, Section 346(h)(vi)

**Section 1: A report on the status of offers to property owners on Lewis Street between 10<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> streets.**

**Status.** Letters were mailed from the UW Real Estate Office to the six privately held parcels along the north side of Lewis Street between 10th and 14th Streets to determine the owners' interest in selling their properties to the University. The letters were sent on August 12, 2011 via certified mail, return receipt requested. Five signed return receipts were received by the University. One letter was refused and returned unopened by the property owner. The status of the offer to each property owner by address is as follows:

- 1103 Lewis – Return receipt signed and received on August 15. The University has received no other communications with the property owner.
- 456 N. 12<sup>th</sup> St. – The property owner contacted UW on November 11 and would like to discuss options for a potential sale.
- 1221 Lewis – Letter was refused and returned unopened by property owner on August 15.
- 457 N. 13<sup>th</sup> – UW officials met with the property owner on September 14 and the discussion was favorable. The owner will follow-up with UW in January 2012 after she has discussed the options with family members.
- 1307 Lewis – Return receipt signed and received on August 16. A University representative communicated with the property owner on November 18. The owner stated that “under no circumstances” would he ever sell his property to the University.
- 1319 Lewis – University Board of Trustees approved the purchase of this property at its November 18 meeting. The anticipated closing date is December 2011.

Please see the attached Appendix A for a copy of the certified letter mailed to the Lewis Street property owners. In summary, one of the six private property owners along Lewis Street between 10<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> streets has sold his property to UW. Two are in discussion, and three have refused to sell or accept the letter of interest.

**Section 2: Report on a plan developed in consultation with the City of Laramie for the vacation of Lewis Street, including provisions to allow access for transit buses and vehicles, emergency and utility vehicles and vehicles for any remaining private property owners.**

**Status.** The University of Wyoming's Long Range Development Plan (LRDP), a study that envisions development on campus for the next fifty years, recommends expansion of the campus north to include the Lewis Street corridor. It states: *Lewis Street is identified as a local street between 9<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Streets. The street edge varies, with few buildings fronting on the street and multiple parking lots and under-used parcels. Since the roadway does not continue east of 15<sup>th</sup>*

*Street or provide an important through connection, the street may function better as a destination or a continuation of the campus.* (The University's Long Range Development Plan can be found at <http://www.uwyo.edu/FACILITIESPLANNING/lrdp/index.html>.)

A vacation of the Lewis Street right-of-way requires an application to the City of Laramie's Community Development Department and the City Council's approval. The application must include written, signed consent of the majority of the owners owning a majority of the property abutting the street's right-of-way, as well as the property abutting the additional right of way within 300 feet of either end of the section to be vacated (W.S. 15-4-305). Other required items include a completed traffic study, appraisal of the property to be vacated and written comments from all affected franchise utilities. According to the City's Community Development office, the entire process from initial application to recording of quitclaim deeds is approximately four months.

Since the spring, representatives from UW and the City of Laramie have held several meetings to discuss the vacation of Lewis Street. At this point, one option under consideration by UW is an application which outlines a plan for phased vacation by the city. Immediate vacation of Lewis Street might be more appropriate for certain sections, such as the portion between 9<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> streets. Other sections might be more appropriate for future vacations, with input from the remaining property owners.

There are a few additional issues associated with vacating Lewis Street. After reviewing some city street plats, the City of Laramie's Community Development Department indicated that private property owners may be able to gain ownership of the street to the south side of Lewis if the sections in front of their properties are vacated. While UW must research this further, a traditional vacation in which the property owner gets ownership to the centerline of the street would still create challenges for a walking plaza along what is now Lewis Street. This problem may be mitigated by vacating sections of the street as UW gains ownership of all of the property on both sides of the avenue, but what sections get vacated would be influenced by the desires of the remaining property owners.

Over the years, the City of Laramie and UW have worked closely on many projects to the benefit of the campus and the larger community. Indeed, the City is a valued partner. During the many conversations that the two groups have had in exploring the topics contained in this report, a couple of issues have arisen that may affect the vacation of Lewis Street.

The City has indicated it will appraise the value, or require UW to do so, for those sections of Lewis Street that would be vacated. The City Council may then condition the vacation upon university payment of the appraised value. If the appraisal is substantial, funding to pay for it may be an issue.

On a related matter, UW and the City are discussing who would be responsible for the costs of moving or improving the City's water line buried under Lewis Street, if the avenue is vacated. The City staff has indicated it may recommend that the university pay all or a portion of the cost of improving or relocating the fourteen-inch water distribution line. While UW would provide

whatever assistance it could, it believes the City is responsible for the costs of improving or moving its water line.

The University has also contracted with WWC Engineering in Laramie to identify, discuss and evaluate alternative concepts for utilities in the LRDP expansion area from Lewis Street to Flint Street. WWC's activities will analyze UW's steam and condensate utilities and the City's water/sewer/drainage systems and their capacity to adequately serve the Enzi Classroom Laboratories (STEM Building) and future development in the Lewis Street corridor. The University has earmarked \$3.5 million in federal mineral royalty funds to cover operational and maintenance costs for the Enzi Classroom Laboratories.

Please see the attached Appendix B for a schedule for application and resolution of the Lewis Street vacation.

### **Section 3: Report on a plan that incorporates consistent landscaping for the growth of the campus north of Lewis Street.**

**Status.** The LRDP anticipates the closure of streets between Lewis and Flint to incorporate open spaces, promenades, walks, and service roads as sufficient land is acquired. Sustainable and durable design techniques and material will be utilized for buildings, open spaces, utilities and circulation systems.

For the campus generally, the LRDP identifies an open space framework composed of a hierarchy of different spaces that range from larger, signature spaces such as Prexie's Pasture to smaller and more common landscape areas between buildings. The open space system will be connected by a well-defined network of paths, bikeways and streets. New buildings will frame open spaces while new pathways will lead to and through new plazas and other landscaped areas.

On UW's west campus, new open spaces will be located within the expansion area north of Lewis Street, which will also include multiple new active plazas and quads as central gathering places. UW is committed to allowing continued access for emergency and utility vehicles, transit buses and vehicles for special events, and any remaining privately owned parcels. Specifically, the following descriptions and diagrams from UW's LRDP describe (visually and narratively) the improvement in landscaping and use proposed for the Lewis Street corridor.

The following pages from the LRDP describe the development and transportation recommendations for the Lewis Street Corridor.

More information regarding UW's Long Range Development Plan, Capital Facilities Plan and Utility Master Plan can be found at the following websites:

<http://www.uwyo.edu/administration/reports-and-plans/index.html>.

LEWIS STREET



*Lewis Street—existing*



*Proposed entry to Lewis Street between 9th and 10th Streets*

## D. EXPANDING THE WEST CAMPUS ACADEMIC CORE

### LEWIS STREET

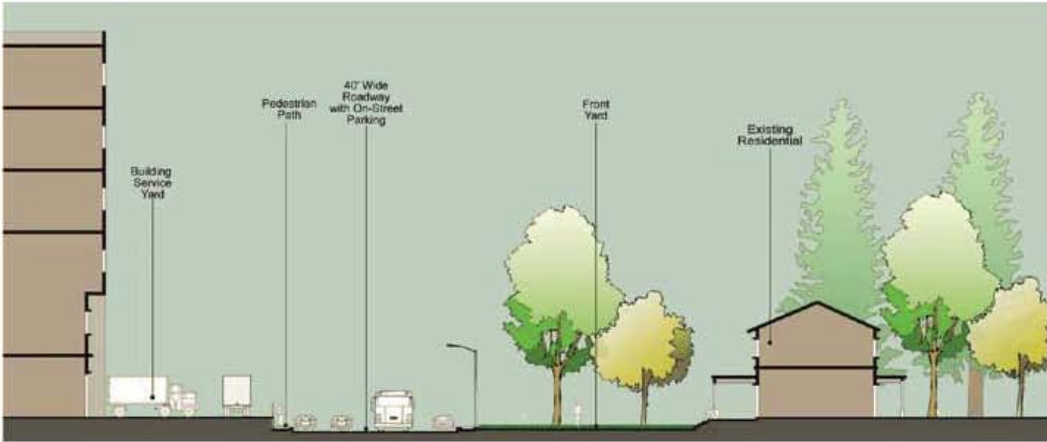


*Lewis Street—existing conditions*

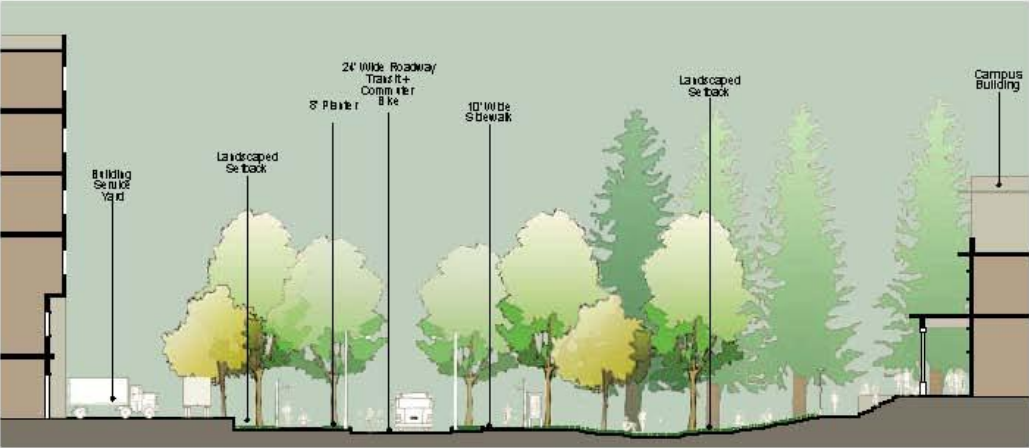


*Lewis Street—proposed redesign concepts*





*Lewis Street—existing section*



*Lewis Street—proposed section*



## Map 4C **Proposed Transportation System**

The proposed transportation system will include an expanded promenade system, new walks and pathways, and reconfigured campus streets. The campus promenade will allow non-vehicular users to safely and conveniently access all ends of campus, with connections to new walks and pathways. A new transit mall will provide efficient campus transit service, while accommodating bicyclists and pedestrians. Some streets such as Willet Drive, Fraternity Row, and Lewis Street will be redesigned to accommodate development of the transit mall, with the addition of several new off-campus shuttle routes and stops. Parking areas will also be relocated to consider new campus buildings, while two major campus entries will be emphasized at 13th and 22nd Streets.



TOP:  
*Lewis Street existing*

BOTTOM:  
*Lewis Street proposed*

*continued from page 90*

Street is campus bound. These trips are using: the education building access between 14th and 15th Streets; the agriculture building access at 12th Street; the engineering building access at 11th Street; and the access between 9th and 10th Streets.

Lewis Street is also a high activity pedestrian area on the campus. During peak periods more than 100 pedestrians cross Lewis Street at 10th, 11th, and 12th Streets. As the campus expands north, pedestrian activity is expected to increase, and the potential for conflict between pedestrians and motorists at those locations will increase as well.

*Design Objectives*

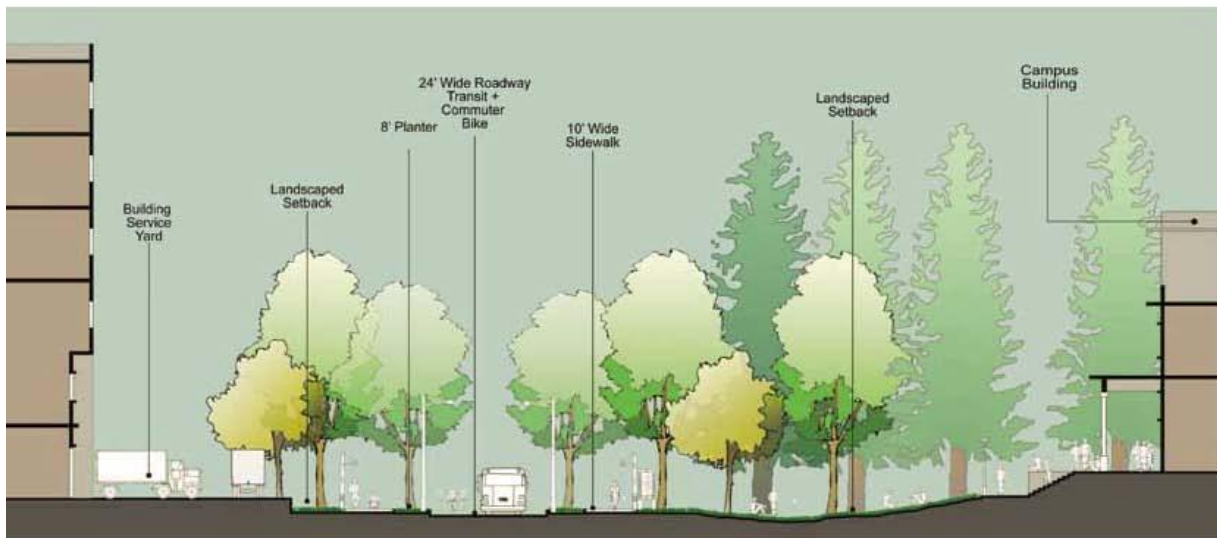
The redesign of the street into a transit mall achieves a variety of design objectives. Because of its position as the north-

ern vehicular edge of the campus, Lewis Street creates a barrier to the northerly expansion of the University. The proposed reconfiguration allows enhanced pedestrian and bicycle safety and increased connectivity between campus uses north and south of Lewis Street establishing a high quality pedestrian environment. Transit shuttles and service vehicles will also be given priority on the road.

*Proposed Design*

The proposed redesign of Lewis Street would create a transit mall between 10th and 14th Streets. However, access to parking facilities would be maintained between 9th and 10th Streets and between 14th and 15th Streets. The redesign reduces the potential for conflict between pedestrians, bicycles, and vehicles in an area that the Transportation and Parking Master Plan identified as a critical area to address safety concerns.





In addition to changing access on Lewis Street, the proposed design realigns the roadway. New curves in the roadway would create a visual cue for automobile traffic that Lewis Street does not provide through access. The design also pulls the roadway out of the shadow of the Engineering Building, allowing solar gain.

*Traffic Impacts*

The proposed design of Lewis Street will change vehicular travel patterns. The cre-

TOP:  
*Lewis Street existing*

BOTTOM:  
*Lewis Street proposed*



ABOVE:  
*15th Street looking north  
toward Iverson*

ation of a transit mall will reroute vehicle traffic currently using Lewis Street. Regional impacts of the restriction were found to be minimal. Analysis did not show significant impact to any parallel roadways when Lewis Street traffic is rerouted. Local impacts were also found to be minimal. Based on peak hour turning movement analysis, no geometric or signal improvements would be required on 9th or 15th Streets. At all intersections that were evaluated, adequate intersection capacity exists to accommodate diverted traffic from Lewis Street.

As a precautionary measure it is recommended that curb extensions be installed across Bradley Street, Flint Street, and Gibbon Street at 9th and 15th Streets to limit cutthrough traffic and encourage vehicles to use Harney Street. The curb extensions should be installed on the campus side of the intersection (on the east side of the intersections at 9th Street and the west side of the street at 15th Street).

Additionally, the signal at 9th Street and Lewis Streets should be monitored. When Lewis Street is rerouted this signal may no

longer be necessary at the intersection. The intersection of Clark Street and 9th Street should also be monitored as Clark Street may become a more important connection between downtown Laramie and the campus. Clark Street provides a more direct connection as it currently connects over the railroad tracks west of downtown. If the 9th Street and Lewis Street connection signal demand decreases and the intersection demand at 9th Street and Clark Street increases, the signal could be relocated.

#### ***15th Street***

The City's Major Street Plan identifies 15th Street as a Minor Arterial. The posted speed is 20 miles per hour from Lewis Street to Grand Avenue with two lanes in each direction, and sidewalks on both sides of the street. The street has been identified as a significant barrier to pedestrian travel in previous studies. Fifteenth Street currently carries approximately 13,000 vehicles per day; a level of traffic almost as high as 3rd Street in downtown Laramie. Traffic counts taken during the AM and PM peak hours showed that approxi-

# UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING

Real Estate Operations  
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August 12, 2011

Tim Sullivan  
P.O. Box 1014  
Laramie, WY 82073

RE: Request to Purchase 1319 Lewis

Cert. Mail # 7002 2030 0003 4382 6758

Dear Mr. Sullivan:

On behalf of the University of Wyoming, I would like to take this opportunity to inquire about your potential interest in the sale of your property located at 1319 Lewis.

UW's Long Range Development Plan and Capital Facilities Plan have identified the Lewis Street corridor for potential expansion of University-related educational, research and support facilities. In order to address ongoing facility needs and to accommodate future campus growth, the University is contacting Lewis Street property owners to determine their interest in the potential sale of their property.

The University would like to make an offer to appraise and purchase your property. The University would purchase your property at appraised value and subsequently execute a real estate sale/purchase agreement if you choose to accept this proposal. I would welcome the opportunity to visit with you in more detail about your property and the process for selling your property to the University.

Please feel free to call me at 766-2937, or e-mail me at the following address: [jdeck@uwyo.edu](mailto:jdeck@uwyo.edu). You may also contact me at the following University address: Josh Decker, University of Wyoming Real Estate Manager, Dept. 3314, 201 Old Main, 1000 E. University Avenue, Laramie, WY 82071.

I appreciate your consideration of this proposal and look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Josh Decker  
University of Wyoming  
Manager, Real Estate Operations

## Schedule for Eventual Resolution on Lewis Street Vacation

Activity	Date	Completion Date	Notes
Lewis Street Vacation Meeting at City Hall – City CM/City CD Director/VP Admin/AVP Admin/Facilities Planning Director/Real Estate Manager	April 7, 2011	--	
Lewis Street Vacation Meeting at City Hall – City CM/VP Admin/AVP Admin/City CD Director	July 28, 2011	--	
Property Acquisition Letters Mailed (Certified Mail) to Lewis Street Property Owners	August 12, 2011	--	
Lewis Street Utility Meeting at UW Physical Plant – City Utility Officials/City CM/UW Physical Plant & Facilities Planning Staff	August 31, 2011	--	
UW Discussion with Property Owner at 457 13th St.	September 14, 2011		In discussion. Owner will follow-up with UW January 2012.
Lewis Street Vacation Meeting at City Hall – City CM/VP Admin/AVP Admin/City CD Director	October 3, 2011	--	
Contract Executed for Lewis Street Utility Engineering Plan with WWC Engineering	October 2011	November 30, 2011	
Lewis Street Vacation Update Discussion AVP Admin/City CD Director	November 11, 2011	--	
UW Discussion with Property Owner at 456 N. 12 <sup>th</sup> St.	November 11, 2011	--	Owner interested in “options”.
University Board of Trustees Approve Purchase of 1319 Lewis Street Property	November 18, 2011	December 2011	Closing scheduled for late December 2011.
UW Discussion with Property Owner at 1307 Lewis St.	November 18, 2011		
Lewis Street Report Submitted to Governor and JAC	December 1, 2011		
Construction of Energy Resource Center (ERC) Facility		October 2012	
Design of Steam & Condensate Line in Lewis Street	January 2012	July 2012	
Lewis Street Vacation Application to the City of Laramie	January 2012	June 2012	
Construction of Enzi Class Laboratories	June 2012	November 2013	
Construction of Steam & Condensate Line in Lewis Street	August 2012	June 2013	Dependent on funding/access considerations.