

# CAEDA DIRECTIONS

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT NEWSLETTER

Summer Edition 2011



Casper Area Economic  
Development Alliance, Inc.  
www.casperworks.biz

## Innovation Center Hosts Ground Breaking



*Governor Matt Mead acted as the Keynote Speaker at the CAIC Ground Breaking.*

The Casper Area Innovation Center (CAIC) held its official Ground Breaking Ceremony on June 14 at the Old Amoco Building, located at 2435 King Boulevard. The CAIC will be housed on the Platte River Commons in nearly 40,000 square feet of the renovated Amoco Administration Building.

The CAIC is considered a business incubator, or a set of programs, services, and facilities that collectively support the successful development and growth of start-up and early stage companies. Business incubation is a process that increases the long-term success of start-up and early stage companies by providing entrepreneurs with needed resources and services. Tenants pay market-rate lease rates for office space in the facility, while benefiting from business advisory committees and business counseling of incubator staff.

Headlining the Ground Breaking Ceremony was Governor Matt Mead. Governor Mead stated that he is confident this project will be a successful one, based on what Casper and Natrona County has done thus far

to put it together. "Because of the enormous support and community buy-in, I predict that this project will be a great success," stated Mead during the Ceremony. Furthermore, Mead stated, "This project is creating an environment where people and ideas can thrive."

The project is expected to cost nearly \$8 million. Among the lead funding sources for the CAIC is \$4.5 million from the Wyoming Business Council, which provided a \$3 million Business Committed grant and a \$1.5 million Community Readiness grant. Both grants come out of the Business Council's Business Ready Community program. The project also received \$2

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*CAIC affiliates line up to commence the Ground Breaking.*

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## SBIC Program Speaks at CAEDA Quarterly Breakfast

CAEDA held its Summer Quarterly Breakfast on June 23 at the Petroleum Club. Speaking at this event was Ryan Whitehead and Mike Martin of the newly introduced Wyoming Small Business Investment Credit



*Guests at the Quarterly Breakfast sit at a table after the presentation for a lively discussion.*

Program. The Small Business Investment Credit Program is a subdivision of the Wyoming Business Council (WBC). It was implemented on January 3 and was enacted by the Wyoming Legislature in 2010.

Whitehead and Martin gave an overview of what the program is. This program is essentially designed to provide an alternative source of capital to Wyoming small businesses and entrepreneurs. Furthermore, this program has been designed to stimulate job creation.

In order to enter the program, venture capital companies must receive certification by the WBC to act as a Wyoming Small Business Investment Company (SBIC) to invest designated capital into qualified businesses. The SBIC's investments should stimulate job creation by making capital available to Wyoming businesses. Participating investors in SBIC's are insurance companies with premium tax liability to the State of Wyoming. The insurance companies in turn receive a tax credit equal to the amount of their investment. In 2010, the Wyoming Legislature set a limit of \$30 million for this program.

To receive certification, the proposed SBIC will file an application with the WBC, and needs to be located, headquartered and licensed to conduct business in Wyoming and have at least five years of experience. When the SBIC receives certification and funding,

they will invest money into "qualified businesses." The money is invested in the form of a debt instrument or equity purchase.

Qualified businesses:

- Are headquartered in Wyoming, its principal operations are located in Wyoming, at least 60 percent of the employees are employed in Wyoming or the business has committed in writing to move to Wyoming as a condition of the investment
- Have provided evidence acceptable to the WBC of its intent to remain in Wyoming after receipt of the qualified investment
- Have 100 employees or less
- Are not a franchise
- Are not predominately engaged in:
  - o Professional services provided by accountants, doctors, or lawyers
  - o Banking or lending
  - o Insurance
  - o Direct gambling activities

For more information on this program, please contact Ryan Whitehead at 307-777-2882 or [ryan.whitehead@wybusiness.org](mailto:ryan.whitehead@wybusiness.org).



*Ryan Whitehead and Mike Martin discuss the new Small Business Investment Credit Program. This program is a subdivision of the Wyoming Business Council and was enacted during the 2010 Wyoming Legislature.*

## Ground Breaking Cont.

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million from the federal government's Economic Development Administration; \$500,000 from Housing and Urban Development Administration and over \$3 million in public and private donations. The CAIC will be debt-free immediately (thanks to rent, grants and donations) and is designed for financial self-sufficiency.

At the end of the Ground Breaking Ceremony, DeAnna Adams, Director of the CAIC, addressed the crowd, stating "Congratulations, Casper! You are now officially entering the fellowship of cities in over 66 countries who have embraced the Business Acceleration concept. You are adding a vital component to the many resources you already provide for the entrepreneurs in our community. Statistics have proven that the life blood of our economy will be new, innovative companies. The Casper Area Innovation Center will give start-up companies the 'access' they need to succeed."

For more information on the incubator, contact DeAnna Adams at 307-577-7011 or [deanna@caeda.net](mailto:deanna@caeda.net).



*Many community members gathered at the CAIC Ground Breaking to listen to the speakers present the building.*

## Synchronist Surveys in Natrona County

This year the Casper Area Chamber of Commerce and the Casper Area Economic Development Alliance (CAEDA) are teaming up to conduct Synchronist Surveys in Casper and Natrona County.

Beginning in early summer, the Chamber of Commerce and CAEDA trained a team of volunteers who are going out and conducting face-to-face interviews with various community companies. Once all the data is collected, Blane, Canada, Ltd. will take that data and utilize their synchronist system to provide the Chamber and CAEDA with important information.

The synchronist survey will provide these entities with the information and reporting tools needed to: identify expansion opportunities, as well as companies at risk; build relationships and ensure service delivery to existing businesses; and provide insight and documentation to impact decision-making and resource allocation within the organizations.

Tom Lacock, previous Economic Developer for CAEDA, stated, "One of the real advantages of the survey is the fact it gets us in front of the business to find out if there are ways we can help the company, or if there are trends we need to be aware of that may be impacting the company that we aren't noticing."

According to Blane, Canada Ltd., the organization that provides the system, the Synchronist Business Information System® bundles advanced business retention strategies, sophisticated interview design, assistance with tracking/service delivery management, and an intranet and database technology software.

The Synchronist System's online software (intranet) provides the survey information to the host organization, which are the Chamber of Commerce and CAEDA in this instance.

"It's a great way for the Chamber to get to know the needs, challenges and advantages of our local businesses, and it's a good partnership with CAEDA and the Business Council," stated Lori Becker, Executive Director of the Casper Area Chamber of Commerce. "We can all provide different resources to assist the local business community, and it's good that the Synchronist Survey process allows all of us to engage and partner to address the needs of the community."

For more information regarding this survey system, please contact either the Chamber of Commerce at 307-234-5311 or CAEDA at 307-577-7011.

## Keep Casper Beautiful

What is the first thing you see when you drive into the Casper area? The beautiful view of the mountain? The inviting nature of downtown? The antelope? The litter?

For many travelers, the first impression they get of Casper is an interstate corridor with lots of litter. And that is not a good impression that makes them want to stop and enjoy our city.

Keep Casper Beautiful has acknowledged this and has decided to change the view of the Casper area from the interstate. Keep Casper Beautiful is an affiliate of Keep America Beautiful, a national nonprofit public education organization dedicated since 1953 to engaging individuals to take greater responsibility for improving their local community environments. For half a century, Keep America Beautiful has been the nation's leading community improvement organization successfully implementing an effective, systematic strategy for reducing waste, preventing litter and beautifying communities nationwide.

Keep Casper Beautiful will be hosting cleanups on various one mile sections of I-25 between Hat Six Road and the 20/26 interchanges twice a month from June until August. Best of all, each time you volunteer you will be entered into a drawing for an iPad.

Additionally, there will be door prizes at each cleanup, a wrap-up party, and drawings for other major prizes as well.

So, how can your business help? Your business can volunteer to help with one (or more) of the cleanups. Your business could also donate. Keep Casper Beautiful is in need of volunteer appreciation prizes and sponsors.

For more information, contact the Keep Casper Beautiful offices by visiting their website at [www.keepcasper-beautiful.org](http://www.keepcasper-beautiful.org) or calling them at 307-235-7562.



*Noelle Wernsman and Mindi Roylance, CAEDA, prepare to volunteer for the Keep Casper Beautiful project.*

## e2e Conference

The Wyoming Technology Business Center (WTBC) is approaching its three-year anniversary of the e2e Laramie. E2e Laramie is an educational networking program with chapter in Laramie, Sheridan, and Gillette and is designed to improve the climate for the start-up and growth of entrepreneurial companies.

In order for the WTBC to continue to provide value to its members and facilitate connections, they decided to launch an annual e2e conference which provided the equivalent of a year's worth of e2e speakers at one event. On July 28 – 29, the WTBC hosted its conference, entitled “Developing a Technology Business: Bioscience”. This conference provided a series of highly experienced and knowledgeable speakers who discussed different strategies for start-up companies, how to develop your product, how to build your team, and how to look for a successful exit.

The keynote speaker on July 28 was Dr. Diether Recktenwald, Vice President of the Advanced Technology with BD Biosciences in San Jose. Recktenwald gave his keynote address on “How Big Corporate Relationships Can

Help the Start-up.”

Joining Dr. Recktenwald in a panel discussion on July 29 was Larry Fenster, Director of ICVRx LLC and former President of CMI, Global Facility Solutions, and Natkin Energy Management; Dr. Harry Ross, CEO of DCS Surgical in Boulder and former Partner at Aweida Venture Partners; and Mona Gamboa, CEO of Happy Jack Software and the co-founder of three high tech companies. In addition, the WTBC highlighted two local bio-business companies: Dr. Paul Johnson, CEO of SoftRay and Dr. Donald Jarvis, CEO of GlycoBac.

DeAnna Adams, Director of the Casper Area Innovation Center, attended this conference. She stated, “The Bioscience Biz Conference was a testimony to the bioscience advances being made in Wyoming. The e2e initiative will benefit the entire state with their educational outreach. I came away with a much greater appreciation for the many diverse bio-tech companies which are growing and thriving in Wyoming and look forward to the day that the bio labs in the Casper Area Innovation Center are a hot bed of activity.”

## Tire Distribution Center to Expand in Casper

American Tire Distributors has announced an expansion in Natrona County, resulting in substantially increased capacity for both operations and workforce.

Currently, American Tire Distributors operates an approximately 10,000 square foot warehouse and fulfillment center in Casper near the intersection of Wyoming Boulevard and Second Street. American Tire's new facility - which they hope to occupy by Jan. 2012 - will measure nearly 80,000 square feet and be located in the Salt Creek Heights Business Park. Given the substantial increase in distribution size, American Tire Distributors anticipates adding a number of new positions in the distribution facility.

"We are excited about American Tire's expansion plans" said CAEDA President Steve Elledge. "This commitment shows the company's confidence in the local business climate and will present additional job opportunities for our local workforce.

American Tire Distributors is one of the nation's largest independent suppliers of tires to the replacement tire market. It operates 94 distribution centers

servicing 39 states. American Tire Distributors employs over 2,500 employees nationwide, including 250 in its Charlotte (NC)-area field support center, distribution center and regional hub.

CAEDA is a public-private partnership which helps to recruit and retain businesses to and in the Natrona County-area. CAEDA offers itself as a referral agency to anyone seeking assistance to relocate or expand their business to the Casper, Wyoming-area. CAEDA provides help with site selection, introductions to the community and uses the financial incentive tools through the State of Wyoming to help recruit and retain business.



*The proposed American Tire Distributors, Inc. facility.*

## Wyoming Named #1 for Tax-Friendly States for Retirees

Kiplinger.com recently came out with the Top 10 Tax-Friendly states for retirees for 2011. These states impose the lowest taxes on retirees in the contiguous United States. Wyoming came in as the number one state that is tax-friendly for retirees.

According to the research, Wyoming comes in first largely due to the abundant revenues that Wyoming collects from oil and mineral companies. Due to this, Wyoming residents have one of the lowest tax burdens in the nation, according to the Tax Foundation, a nonprofit research group in Washington, D.C. Wyoming residents do not have to worry about a state income tax or an estate tax/inheritance tax. Furthermore,

Wyoming's state sales tax is 4%, and counties can only add up to 1% in additional levies. This is considered a very low ceiling compares to other states.

Finally, Wyoming is considered the most tax-friendly state for retirees because prescription drugs and groceries are exempt from state sales taxes. For most property, only 9.5% of market value is subject to tax. Thus, a home that is worth \$100,000 is taxed on only \$9,500 of assessed value.

For a list of the other states and more information, please visit their website at [www.kiplinger.com](http://www.kiplinger.com).

# CAEDA-FORWARD CASPER INVESTORS

## **Government Sector & Other Partners**

Casper Area Chamber of Commerce – [www.casperwyoming.org](http://www.casperwyoming.org)  
City of Casper – [www.casperwy.gov](http://www.casperwy.gov)  
Natrona County – [www.natrona.net](http://www.natrona.net)  
Town of Evansville – [www.townofevansville.org](http://www.townofevansville.org)  
Town of Mills – [www.millswy.com](http://www.millswy.com)  
Wyoming Business Council – [www.wyomingbusiness.org](http://www.wyomingbusiness.org)  
Wyoming Contractor's Association. – [www.wyomingcontractors.org](http://www.wyomingcontractors.org)

## **Energy/Mining**

Carpenter & Sons, Inc. – (307) 265.8895  
Wold Oil Properties, Inc. – [www.woldoil.com](http://www.woldoil.com)

## **Construction**

71 Construction – [www.71construction.com](http://www.71construction.com)  
FCI Constructors, Inc. - [www.fcio.com](http://www.fcio.com)  
Groathouse Construction – [www.groathouse.com](http://www.groathouse.com)  
Haselden Constructors – [www.haselden.com](http://www.haselden.com)  
McMurry Construction – [www.wnmcumurry.com](http://www.wnmcumurry.com)

## **Manufacturing**

Automation & Electronics – [www.autoelect.com](http://www.autoelect.com)  
Enerflex/Toromont Energy – [www.enerflex.com](http://www.enerflex.com)  
EXCAL, Inc. – [www.excal-inc.com](http://www.excal-inc.com)  
J W Williams – [www.jwwilliams-flint.com](http://www.jwwilliams-flint.com)  
McMurry Ready Mix - [www.mcumurryreadymix.com](http://www.mcumurryreadymix.com)  
Pepper Tank & Contracting – [www.peppertank.com](http://www.peppertank.com)  
WESTECH/WOTCO – [www.wstch.com](http://www.wstch.com)

## **Retail/ Wholesale / Contracting**

Atlas Reproduction, Inc. - [www.atlasreproduction.com](http://www.atlasreproduction.com)  
Bailly's Plumbing & Heating – (307) 234.6568  
Crum Electric Supply – [www.crum.com](http://www.crum.com)  
Foss Toyota – [www.fossmotors.com](http://www.fossmotors.com)  
Greiner Ford Lincoln Mercury - [www.greinermotorco-casper.com](http://www.greinermotorco-casper.com)  
IKON Office Solutions – [www.ikon.com](http://www.ikon.com)  
Michael's Fence – [www.michaelsfence.com](http://www.michaelsfence.com)  
Modern Electric – [www.modern-electric.com](http://www.modern-electric.com)  
Mountain States Lithographing – [www.mtstlitho.com](http://www.mtstlitho.com)  
Power Service, Inc.– [www.powerserviceinc.com](http://www.powerserviceinc.com)  
Wyoming Machinery – [www.wyomingcat.com](http://www.wyomingcat.com)  
Wyoming Steel & Recycling – [www.wysteel.com](http://www.wysteel.com)

## **Transportation**

C&Y Transportation – [www.c-ytransportation.com](http://www.c-ytransportation.com)  
Casper—Natrona County International Airport – [www.ifly-casper.com](http://www.ifly-casper.com)

## **Finance**

American National Bank – [www.anbbank.com](http://www.anbbank.com)  
Bank of the West - [www.bankofthewest.com](http://www.bankofthewest.com)  
First Interstate Bank – [www.firstinterstatebank.com](http://www.firstinterstatebank.com)

Hilltop National Bank – [www.HilltopNationalBank.com](http://www.HilltopNationalBank.com)  
Jonah Bank of Wyoming - [www.jonahbank.com](http://www.jonahbank.com)  
Merrill Lynch – [www.ml.com](http://www.ml.com)  
Platte Valley Bank – [www.pvbankwy.com](http://www.pvbankwy.com)  
Wells Fargo Bank – [www.wellsfargo.com](http://www.wellsfargo.com)

## **Health Care**

Casper Orthopedic Associates, P.C. – [www.wyoortho.com](http://www.wyoortho.com)  
Elkhorn Valley Rehabilitation Hospital – [evrh.ernesthealth.com](http://evrh.ernesthealth.com)  
Wyoming Medical Center – [www.wmcnet.org](http://www.wmcnet.org)

## **Real Estate**

Broker One Real Estate - [www.broker1realestate.com](http://www.broker1realestate.com)  
Eastland Development – (307) 234.0583  
Granite Peak Development – [www.granitepeakdev.com](http://www.granitepeakdev.com)  
Phillips & Company – [www.phillips-company.com](http://www.phillips-company.com)  
Remax The Group – [www.wythegroup.com](http://www.wythegroup.com)  
South-South Property, LLC - (307) 266.0129

## **Professional Services**

ARC Integrated Program Management - [www.arcimp.com](http://www.arcimp.com)  
Brown, Drew & Massey, LLP – [www.browndrew.com](http://www.browndrew.com)  
Civil Engineering Professionals, Inc. - [www.cepi-casper.com](http://www.cepi-casper.com)  
Elliott & Associates – (307) 234.2241  
Grooms & Harkins – [www.groomsandharkins.com](http://www.groomsandharkins.com)  
GSG Architecture – [www.gsgarchitecture.com](http://www.gsgarchitecture.com)  
Inberg-Miller – [www.inberg-miller.com](http://www.inberg-miller.com)  
Lenhart, Mason & Associates LLC – [www.wyocpa.com](http://www.wyocpa.com)  
Lincoln Financial Advisors – (307) 235.5822  
Lovelett, Skogen & Associates – [www.cpawyoming.com](http://www.cpawyoming.com)  
Porter, Muirhead, Cornia & Howard, CPA – [www.pmch.com](http://www.pmch.com)  
Raymond James Financial Services - [www.raymondjames.com](http://www.raymondjames.com)  
SOS Staffing – [www.sosstaffing.com](http://www.sosstaffing.com)  
Willis of Wyoming, Inc. - [www.willis.com](http://www.willis.com)  
WLC – [www.wlcwyo.com](http://www.wlcwyo.com)  
World Wide Travel - [www.worldwidetvl.com](http://www.worldwidetvl.com)

## **Utilities**

Qwest – [www.qwest.com](http://www.qwest.com)  
Rocky Mountain Power – [www.rockymountainpower.net](http://www.rockymountainpower.net)  
SourceGas – [www.sourcegas.com](http://www.sourcegas.com)

## **Hospitality**

Casper Petroleum Club – [www.casperpetroleumclub.com](http://www.casperpetroleumclub.com)  
Timberline Hospitalities – [www.timberlinehotels.com](http://www.timberlinehotels.com)

## **Education**

Casper College – [www.caspercollege.edu](http://www.caspercollege.edu)  
Natrona County School District #1 – [www.natronaschools.org](http://www.natronaschools.org)  
University of Wyoming/Casper College Center - [www.uwo.edu/outreach/uwcc](http://www.uwo.edu/outreach/uwcc)

## **Media**

Casper Star-Tribune - [www.trib.com](http://www.trib.com)

## Airline Revenue

by Glenn Januska, Casper/Natrona County  
International Airport Manager

In the last CAEDA newsletter I wrote about airline seat pricing, how the airlines price seats, and their rationale (even when it does not seem very rational). Once you understand these complexities, or at least that the airline revenue model is complex, you start to understand that determining airline profitability in a market is difficult for us, and maximizing profitability is an ongoing challenge for the airlines. I often have people make statements to the effect of, 'United must be doing really well in Casper since their flights are always full.' Filling up an airplane does not automatically translate into profitability. Offer round trip fares out of Casper for \$50 and you can fill up a plane every day of the week, but of course the service is not going to be profitable.

So, why does understanding airline profitability matter to us, other than the obvious fact that if an airline is not profitable, or more specific, if an airline is not profitable in our market, the service will not continue? While it is true there is not a lot communities can do to increase revenue for an airline beyond the obvious action of using the service, that often times elicits a strong response.... 'if the airlines would lower their fares we would use the service more.' While it does not take a rocket scientist to understand that reducing airfares will increase usage, the question is always, will it increase the airlines profitability? Like it or not, airlines are in the **business** of providing air transportation, not being good community partners.

While being a good community partner may help with the business end of providing air transportation, the airline's shareholders' bottom line is, well, the bottom line. So, if we want the airlines to be profitable, and they want to be profitable, then logically the airlines will respond better to

'here is a plan to lower fares, capture leaked passengers, and stimulate demand to increase profitability' than to 'our fares are too high...you need to lower them.' The challenge, of course, is developing such a plan.

While airlines are not public entities, they are heavily regulated, and are required to report a great deal of information to the government. We can determine pretty accurately what a particular airline's cost is to operate a particular type of aircraft they fly on a block hour basis (total cost to operate the aircraft for an hour). We also contract with Sabre, a company that provides among other things computer reservation systems to a number of airlines and who owns Travelocity. So, while we can't tell that John Smith flew out of Casper on May 5th on United Airlines to San Diego and paid \$430, we can determine how many people flew out of Casper, say, last year, which airline they flew on, where their end destination was, and what airfare they paid.

More importantly, we can determine how many passengers should have flown out of Casper but didn't, which airport they did fly out of, which airline they used, where their end destination was, and what airfare they paid. The benefit of this information of course is being able to describe the market. While we had roughly 170,000 passengers use the Airport last year, that is not the market size. 31% of the passengers in the geographic area of the Airport used Denver for their air travel, and 4% used other airports. That does not include the people who drove down to Denver instead of flying. Factoring in those passengers is a better description of our market size and demographic, and shows what the carriers are losing, assuming they are not picking up those passengers in the other airports.

Next time - how we use this information to get air fare adjustments and service improvement.

## CAEDA Welcomes New Board Member

Keith was born in Casper, Wyoming, January, 16, 1953. He attended Castleberry High School in Fort Worth, Texas, and graduated from Texas A&M University in 1974 Magna Cum Laude with a B.S. in economics. He then worked for two years in Houston, Texas for Philadelphia Life Insurance Company, moving back to Wyoming in 1977. He attended the University of Wyoming Law School 1977-1980. Keith clerked for one year with the Seventh Judicial District Court



and has been a solo practitioner since 1981. His law practice emphasis since the late 1990's has been business matters and real estate development. Keith has also been involved as an owner in a number of real estate developments.

Keith has been involved with the development and growth of the Platte River Parkway and the Casper Mountain Trails. Keith and his wife enjoy sailing, bicycling, and cross country skiing.

*New CAEDA Board  
Member Keith Tyler*



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*Just a reminder, Forward Casper renewal notices will be going out in September.*

*Board Elections will be held in December. If you are interested in running or know someone who would be a good candidate, please let us know!*

## Welcome Economic & Business Developer Bill Edwards

A long time resident of Casper, Bill Edwards is very excited about being back at CAEDA. Edwards and his family moved to Casper in 1986 with Pacific Power, where he began his career in business and economic development. He has worked with CAEDA since its founding in 1987, and



then joined the CAEDA staff in 1998 after retiring from Pacific Power. He served as vice president until taking a position at Casper College. In recent years, Edwards has owned and managed his own consulting firm offering training, planning, and management services to organizations throughout the region.

Edwards stated, "Steve [Elledge] and I have worked together on economic development projects for years, so I am looking forward to being a part of the CAEDA staff again!"

*CAEDA would like to welcome new Economic & Business Developer Bill Edwards to its staff.*

## 20-40 Demographic Meetings

*by Rachel Bailey, Campaign Manager, Smokefree Natrona County; and Heidi Foy, Executive Director, 12-24 Club, Inc.*

It seems that there are more young professionals moving back to Casper. In order to benefit all, CAEDA thought it was time to hear what this 20-40 year old demographic thinks about economic development in our community. In May, CAEDA held two listening sessions hosting around 20 young professionals each, mediated by Tom Lacock. Participants expressed some strong opinions about how to grow this community.

CAEDA felt the listening sessions were so productive that we invited 12 professionals to form an advisory council focused on building a greater representation of 20-40 year old citizens. While many good ideas have been thrown on the table, it was determined that there are three different areas where Casper's young professionals would like to be involved and see development.

The three areas of interest are politics, downtown development, and investment/entrepreneurship. The young professionals currently feel a lack of representation in

local politics and would like to have more interaction with community leaders. They would also like to see greater downtown area development - as opposed to the eastside of town - with more restaurants, bars, music venues and shops which stay open later to create more nightlife as well as a more centralized and vibrant community. The third area is investment in good ideas and diversified businesses. One point that came out of both sessions is that Casper is a place where young people come to create their own niche - some have to in order to earn a living here, while others know that it is a place ripe for entrepreneurs who can spot and exploit a niche.

The next step is to host three more listening sessions focused on the discrete development areas with selected political leaders, community members and potential investors. The listening sessions are scheduled as follows: August 18th - Downtown Development, August 25th - Political/ Leadership, and the final one on September 9th - Investments/Capital. All sessions will start at 12:00p.m. at the Bank of the West, 300 S. Wolcott Street.