Campbell County Convention  
And Visitors Bureau  

Gillette Visitor Center Site  
Planning Study  

May 16, 2014  

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1.0 Executive Summary

A study was conducted to define the operational needs of the Campbell County Convention and Visitors Bureau’s Visitor Center and determine the top leading site considerations for a new building location. The current Visitors Center is located at the Pilot fueling station in a small facility hidden by its recessed location along Hwy 59 and wrought with poor access for vehicles other than cars and small trucks. The signage is minimal and the surrounding environment and the building appearance do nothing to set an image of what Campbell County and the City of Gillette represent to the State of Wyoming.

The siting study criteria identified candidate co-tenants that included the local Chamber and Economic Development Councils as well as the Rock Pile Museum. These potential co-tenants offer space needs and affinities within the community that differed from those of the Visitor Center. As a result, this study concluded that the Visitor Center should remain as a stand-alone project. The criteria that drove this conclusion include:

- Location near Interstate 90
- Quick and easy access to the site
- Locate near support amenities
- Close proximity to the CamPlex

A siting workshop involving numerous community leaders was conducted with the sole purpose of collecting input from the participants for use during our study conclusions, utilize a participative process to validate the short list of candidate sites and convey the thought process used to develop the final list. This successful meeting produced the results desired through a review of leading candidate sites in four main zones tailored around the four main off-ramps leading to Gillette from Interstate 90. Pros and cons of each site were evaluated through a ranking model to numerically weigh each candidate site. The top five leading sites recommended for further pursuit include:

1. Site Number 4C - Garner Lake Road South
2. Site Number 4B - Garner Lake Road North
3. Site Number 2D - Boxelder East
4. Site Number 4D - CamPlex West
5. Site Number 4E - Garner Lake & Boxelder Roads

A concept building and site plan was prepared indicating building space needs of 3,537 sf., 27 parking spaces on 4.0 acres. Estimated costs of $1,240,000 for the building, $722,000 for civil land improvements, average land costs of $1,038,000 and soft costs of $222,000 result in a total of $3,222,000 for the project. Adding a 10% contingency finalizes a concept estimate cost of $3,545,000.

It is also the recommendation of this study that implementation begin immediately to take advantage of site opportunities and position the project ahead of other anticipated land growth activity taking place in the community. Conservative project duration of 22 months has been identified to take care of the upfront funding, approval and design activities followed by construction and commissioning.

The participants of the community workshop were very clear on what they desire of the new visitors center location: The New Gateway To Campbell County and the City of Gillette. With the site candidates derived by this siting study the objective will easily be met.
2.0 Introduction

The team of Consultech, DOWL HKM and Schutz Foss were selected on March 5, 2014 to conduct a siting study for a new location for the Campbell County Convention & Visitors Bureau (CCCVB) Visitors Center. The team consisted of Paul Andrade from Consultech as the project manager while also bringing site analysis skills. Mark Hines, Jaime Tarver and Jeff Rosenblund from DOWL HKM provided civil engineering, candidate site research and traffic analysis capabilities. Kyle Gillette of Schutz Foss brings concept building design and cost estimation capabilities to round out the team.

The siting study was issued by CCCVB based on our teams response to an RFP dated February 19, 2014. The objective of the RFP was to generate a short list of candidate sites for the CCCVB while considering options of co-location with the Campbell County Chamber of Commerce, Campbell County Economic Development Council, Northeast Wyoming Economic Development Council and the Rock Pile Museum.

The study took on a process where we first collected requirements for siting consideration as well as learn of the functional characteristics of the Visitors Center. These important factors set the stage for determining the locational characteristics, type of site desired, site size and profiled who our customer would be. We utilized a charrette, or siting workshop, process to present our findings, express conclusions our team had derived, present candidate sites and build conclusive consensus on the short list of sites to meet the study’s main objective. Following the group siting workshop the study team refined the final conclusions within this summary report for further use by the CCCVB.

3.0 Site Requirements

To gain insight to the functions of the Visitors Center a questionnaire was prepared and provided to Mary Silvernell for review. We conducted a fact gathering interview with Mary while reviewing the responses to the questionnaire. Appendix A consists of the questionnaire responses with overall highlights including:

- Location near major traffic supplies is vital
- Visibility of the site greatly improves the probability that a visitor will get to the desired destination
- Access to the site should be simple
- Adequate land should be set aside for proper vehicle circulation
- The Visitors Center has a higher volume of activity in the summer months
- The current building is inadequate for the desired mission
- The new site will become a first impression for Gillette and Campbell County, therefore the surrounding environment must be conducive to the image representing the City, County and State’s focus as the ‘Energy State’

Consideration of the previously mentioned candidate co-tenants could have an impact on the site requirements. The Rock Pile Museum would have the greatest site and building impact while trying to accommodate their increased space need of almost 40,000 sf. and associated parking needs. The Chamber and EDC’s would have less of an impact as their needs are more office and conference room in nature that increases the building size and associated parking. Brief
interviews with each potential partner were conducted to establish their candidacy levels and potential site and building needs. The results of the interviews produced the following input:

**CCEDC & NEWEDC**
- Discussions are taking place to combine the two EDC’s with no conclusions to date
- The current Burma lease for the CCEDC has been extended for five years
- The CCEDC occupies the whole basement at the current location
- Less particular about a specific locational need, desire central to the community
- Need reception, offices, large and small conference rooms and storage space
- Current amount of space would suffice for combined EDC’s, if that becomes an outcome
- Their current space is approximately 4,500 sf with parking accommodations of 10 spaces
- The current space also includes two other small office businesses that would be considered a part of the new location
- The NEWEDC consists of a couple offices and a conference space that could be absorbed within the CCEDC space declaration

**Chamber of Commerce**
- Desire to be located within the heart of the business community, their customer
- Out of space now, have approximately 3,000 sf including basement storage
- Not typically tourist related, mostly local business customers looking for info about the community, other businesses and conduct meetings with community leaders
- Need space for reception, conference room, rest/break rooms, offices storage, support and front lobby functions
- No special entrance needs
- Plan on sharing space such as the reception area, restrooms, conference rooms at 475/950 sf. respectively, seven offices at 240 sf each, shared copy room of 240 sf., plan room of 144 sf., break room and kitchen at 475 sf. and storage space of 100 sf.
- Staff parking of approximately 10 spaces and meeting related parking of 10-20 spaces
- Business members utilize conference rooms for meetings as well as the Chamber

**Rock Pile Museum**
- Commissioners committed to keeping the current location
- If they were to move then the CamPlex becomes a highly desirable location
- Currently have 22,000 SF
- Have maxed out the current space and desire and additional 15,000 sf and associated parking
- Have approximately 11,000 visitors annually

**4.0 Siting Workshop**

A site study workshop was conducted with several primary objectives. First, we were seeking consensus from the various participants on the focus of the mission. The issue of co-tenancy had presented itself and the impact could dramatically impact site conclusions through the diverse needs for each of the potential tenants to be near their customer base. Secondly, the site requirements could impact candidate sites eliminating some that could be good for one configuration while not promising for others. Third, we wanted to present our conclusive thinking leading to the siting conclusions to obtain buy in by the participants. This would make
the final conclusions more understandable by knowing and participating in how they were derived. Finally, we saw the workshop as a way to set up for a ‘move forward’ condition once the study was completed to allow pursuit of the final desired site and appropriate funding.

It was determined that a stakeholders meeting would best serve the first two objectives. This high level meeting would set the playing field for accomplishment of the following two objectives. However, in the end the stakeholders meeting and workshop were combined into one meeting. It was determined that in order to participate and meet the final two objectives all participants needed to understand and even contribute to some of the discussion points focusing on the first two objectives.

On April 8, 2014 a combined stakeholders and siting workshop meeting took place with the following attendees:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendee</th>
<th>Organization/Role</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Toni Bell</td>
<td>Chamber</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kevin McGrath</td>
<td>City of Gillette</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ted Jerred</td>
<td>City of Gillette</td>
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<tr>
<td>Louise Carter-King</td>
<td>City of Gillette</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brenda Boss</td>
<td>CCCVB Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dell Atkinson</td>
<td>NEWEDC</td>
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<td>DG Reardon</td>
<td>CCEDC</td>
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<td>Dustin Hamilton</td>
<td>City of Gillette</td>
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<td>Kevin King</td>
<td>Campbell County</td>
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<td>Sandra Bott</td>
<td>CamPlex</td>
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<td>Julie Simon</td>
<td>Chamber</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paul Andrade</td>
<td>Consultech</td>
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<td>Kyle Gillette</td>
<td>Schutz Foss</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carter Napier</td>
<td>City of Gillette</td>
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<tr>
<td>Debbie Zolnoski</td>
<td>CVB Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>Michael Surface</td>
<td>City of Gillette Planning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Megan Nelms</td>
<td>Campbell County Planning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Matt Avery</td>
<td>Campbell County Com.</td>
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<td>Bob Palmer</td>
<td>Campbell County Director</td>
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<td>Brandi Harlow</td>
<td>City of Wright</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mary Silvernell</td>
<td>CCCVB</td>
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<td>Karen Plambeck</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dave Spencer</td>
<td>Wyoming Business Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jaime Tarver</td>
<td>DOWL HKM</td>
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<td>Mark Hines</td>
<td>DOWL HKM</td>
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The workshop began with an introduction of the study team followed by a declaration that our hired objective was to find a new home for the Visitors Center, our client. It was important to make sure everyone understood our mission as part of the requirements of the project was to investigate consideration of co-tenants with other community groups.
We began with an opportunity to gain input from our audience. First, we wanted to know what the Visitors Center means to the community followed by what image should be portrayed by the Visitor Center existence. Finally, we wanted to know what brings customers to the Visitor’s Center in our audience’s mind.

Gillette is currently going through a commercial evolutionary change. Gone are the days of a small town with retail reflecting a predominant local feel with few national chains and up-to-date national retail trends. The influx of new retail and their national images brings a trend that our workshop participants recognized and conveyed with their responses to our questions. They want to see an upgraded image that reflects the change with more modern appearances and one that reflects the progressive energy focus of the state. They also see the Visitors Center providing a major function that the current one doesn’t accomplish: A Gateway To The Community. The City of Gillette has a relatively unique opportunity to fulfill this objective by already establishing the mentality of putting back into the community. For a town of this size Gillette is quite progressive and understands the need for this level of commitment to the community. It brings jobs to the community, it brings the retail its residence seeks and sets the tone for what the community stands for.

The final question dealt with understanding the profile of a typical customer. It started with discussions about why people come to Campbell County and the Gillette area. The traveler typically takes on two predominant profiles. One consists of those that are passing from east to west and vise versa on Interstate 90 while others come up Highway 59 from the Cheyenne direction. Coupled with these travelers are those that come to Campbell County and Gillette for destination purposes. Gillette is home to the CamPlex as an event center attracting over 500,000 visitors and participants from the far reaches of the country to local participating residents. The newly constructed Field of Dreams will provide additional activities and the growth of the energy industry from a business perspective brings additional business interests, workers and
business visitors all in need of information. Rounding out the list is strong annual hunting seasons full of participants with many traveling long distances to Gillette.

4.1 Partnering Options

At this point of our workshop it was time to focus on the potential partner relationships. It had been declared to our team that potential co-tenants could include:

- Campbell County Chamber of Commerce
- Northeast Wyoming Economic Development Committee
- Campbell County Economic Development Council
- Small Business Development (as part of the CCEDC)
- Rock Pile Museum
We had previously conducted information gathering meetings with each prior to the workshop. Their conclusive results were depicted in the above slide depicting their major locational influence and affinity to one another.

The emphasis here was the need for the following:
- Visitors Center closeness to the main interstate
- The Chamber’s closeness with the local businesses serving the community
- The two EDC’s need to be located within the heart of the community where their visitors would be traveling
- The Rock Pile’s desire to stay at their location

These affinities, or relationships to their primary customers, clearly dictated differing audiences, which actually support the operational definition of each of the entities. It is at this point a further understanding of the functional aspects of each group becomes increasingly important.

There is more to a siting analysis than just circulation, access and building requirements. The functions associated with services and activities offered by the occupants must take first priority under the premise of ‘Form Fits Function’. We must know how the services within the building take place along with their associated building component sizes to determine the attributes of a building as it is placed on a site. The corresponding surrounding site attributes must be considered along with the building needs to determine if some available site configurations are applicable. This often leads to answering the question: What shape site do we need? To accomplish this task we looked at the Operational Characteristics for each of the three leading tenant candidates and agreed as a group with those listed in our presentation sheet, shown below. It was also noted that one of the biggest differences of the three candidate tenants dealt with the frequency and type of activity.

![Operational Characteristics Diagram](image)

The Visitors Center is typical of high frequency visitor rates with short durations for a majority of the visits. The EDC’s had a lower frequency rate of visitors/customers with their duration a little longer typified by numerous meetings that take place. Finally, the Chamber is
characterized by numerous meetings, many of which are community based, with a combination of short visit times associated with obtaining information about local businesses. Each of the space uses had a strong need for typical vehicular parking, however the Visitors Center was characterized with needs associated with RV’s, traveling families and trailers with vehicles and contents of all types. This requirements dictates increased circulation needs not typical of those associated with the EDC and Chamber needs.

It was time to begin to formulate some conclusions based on the three tenant candidates. The below slide presented to the participants depicted the commonalities while also show how independent each of the three were becoming. The one change to the originally presented information was the added emphasis of parking associated to the Visitors Center location criteria.

4.2 Traffic Considerations

Traffic volumes and patterns in Gillette are important considerations for selecting a new site. Traffic counts and traffic projections typically do not provide classification of the various types of traffic (i.e. business, commerce, travel, local or through). As such, traffic counts alone cannot provide the information needed for a siting study such as the Gillette Visitor Center. However, some general inferences and assumptions can be made about traffic patterns based on experience and knowledge of the Gillett area.

Traffic Categories
The following are general categories of traffic in the Gillette area and their relevance in this siting study.

- **Destination Traffic.** This is traffic for which Gillette is a destination. Examples of destinations in Gillette might include school sports facilities, parks and ball fields, Recreation Center, Cam-Plex, etc. This would also include commercial and industrial traffic with Gillette as a destination. Destination traffic, which is not commerce or
industry-related should be weighted toward the east end of Gillette (Exit 129), mainly because of Cam-Plex and the Field of Dreams.

- **Local and Commuter Traffic.** This is local day-to-day traffic associated with travel to and from work, school transportation, and commerce. Local and commuter traffic includes north and south traffic associated with the mines and oil and gas industries. Oil and gas-related traffic will vary with markets, but the rest of this traffic is reasonably steady year-around with daily and seasonal peaks.

  ![Community Context](image)

  - **Through Traffic.** As the name implies, through traffic is traffic that is passing through Gillette with another ultimate destination. For the purposes of this study, through traffic is divided into commercial/industrial traffic and travel/vacation traffic.

  - **Industrial and Commercial Traffic.** There is considerable industrial and commercial traffic in and around Gillette associated with the energy industry. Much of this traffic is going north and south, however when east/west traffic exits I-90 it will generally bypass the busier sections of Gillette using the west interchange (Exit 124) or the east interchange (Exit 129). If constructed, the proposed Western Drive interchange will take much of the traffic off Exit 124, otherwise this pattern will remain the same. It is expected that very little of this type of traffic will utilize the Gillette Visitor Center.

  - **Travel and Vacation Traffic.** Travel and vacation traffic is one of the target groups for this study. Travel and vacation traffic in the Gillette Area is predominantly traveling east and west using I-90. Tourists on I-90 may stop for fuel, meals or a restroom break while passing through Gillette. Traffic counts indicate equal east and west bound traffic volumes for I-90 and do not distinguish by vehicle size or type. However, based on input from the Gillette visitor center and local hotels, the majority of visitor, vacation, and hunting seems to be westbound on I-90.
The north-south highways around Gillette (Highways 14/16, 50, 59) have some travel and vacation traffic but are generally not considered “tourist routes”. The traffic may use several north-south routes including Highway 59, Highway 50, U.S. 14/16. These travelers may also use Southern Drive and Garner Lake Road to bypass the more congested Highway 59 route.

In summary, the two key categories of traffic likely to utilize the new Visitor Center include destination traffic and travel/vacation traffic passing through Gillette.

### 4.3 City Comprehensive Plan Summary

The City of Gillette 2013 Comprehensive Plan Update, dubbed the “Gillette Plan Update”, lays out for Gillette to grow to a future population of 50,000. As described in the plan, the City has transitioned to a more proactive posture over the last decade, resulting in planned and managed growth. The proactive planning efforts of this study confirm that statement.

The plan calls for continued growth within and adjacent to the City limits as there is ample land for growth. The top sites identified for a new Visitor Center are consistent with the growth pattern outlined in the Gillette Plan Update. The plan indicated the need and desire by the community to improve and beautify the gateways to Gillette. A new Visitor Center would further that effort by providing an attractive and inviting place for visitors and travelers to experience Gillette and northeast Wyoming.

The Gillette Plan Update highlighted the strong transportation network in the community. The top sites are located on Boxelder Road and Garner Lake Road, which were both identified as major arterials and important links for future development of the community.

### 4.4 Blending

Our emphasis on blending was about taking all the considerations previous reviewed and discussed and combine them diagrammatically to show the territories within the community for the best site considerations. The below diagram clearly showed three distinct siting differences. First, the Visitors Center really wanted to be located along Interstate 90, shown in blue, where
most of the travelers come through town. Secondly, the EDC’s, shown in red, had a wide area of focus that essentially dictated locations near the higher activity areas of the city. They could be along the Interstate, Highway 59, in the Downtown area and south by Lakeway Road. Finally, the Chamber, shown in green, needs to be collocated within the business community, which it serves. Though there is some overlap between the three possible tenants there produced little commonality between the Chamber and the Visitor Center.

4.5 Final Location Criteria

In our last workshop setup slide we displayed the final primary siting criteria of the Visitors Center. All previous considerations led to the following conclusions:

1. **Locate near Interstate 90** – When the profile of the typical visitor was defined along with the functional aspects of the services provided it was very clear the proximity to the Interstate was of upmost importance. A secondary emphasis notices the projected increase of traffic over time of the Garner Lake Road access off Highway 59 from the south. These two provide the major arterials for Gillette and secondarily puts an emphasis on the east side of Gillette versus the west side of Gillette. It should also be noted that a loop road around Gillette includes a north/south interchange on the west side of Gillette. Though this will introduce traffic and influence new business growth in this area it was concluded by the participants to be too far off in the future, if it happens at all.

2. **Quick and Easy Access** – This consideration takes on two perspectives. The reference to ‘quick’ indicates the need to be within close proximity to the exits off Interstate 90. The intent is to not force a visitor to maneuver through extensive distances and traffic lights to get to the destination. Historically, it has been shown this condition inhibits Visitor Center activity. Large RV’s and longer vehicles have increased probability of visiting the site if easy unencumbered access is provided. This latter consideration was further translated to a direct need for easy circulation once on the site.

![Final Location Criteria](image)
3. **Locate Near Support Amenities** – While profiling the typical visitor to the Visitor Center, and keeping in mind most would most likely come via Interstate 90, it was further determined that many of those visitors will be stopping for fuel, rest, food and many even for hotels. For this reason the importance of such retail amenities began to surface as an important consideration not only to provide such necessities, but also to encourage visitors to acquire all such needs with the local surrounding businesses.

4. **Proximity to the CamPlex** – Our team wrestled with this consideration and wanted to be careful. Any major emphasis on this criterion would strongly eliminate numerous site considerations. We, therefore, chose to table this item with the workshop group’s approval for now. However, during later candidate site reviews it was concluded that there was significant interest and reason to have a location with CamPlex affinity considerations.

### 4.6 Summary of Site Zones

In general, potential sites were identified by looking for undeveloped and redevelopment parcels within one half mile, plus or minus, of Gillette’s I-90 interchanges. We identified four zones numbered 1 through 4 traversing west to east. It was estimated that a suitable site would consist of two to four acres. The top potential sites within each zone were given a letter designation for ease of reference. The top sites within each zone are described below starting with a look at the perspective traffic considerations.
4.7 Summary of Traffic in Zones 1 through 4

The following is a brief summary of traffic volumes, patterns and projected growth in each zone as it relates to the Gillette Visitor Center.

**Zone 1.** Traffic volumes in Zone 1 will continue to grow and will remain congested unless the proposed west interchange is built. If the proposed Western Drive interchange is built, traffic will decrease significantly at Exit 124 as most industrial and other north-south through traffic will utilize the “beltway” sections to avoid congested urban traffic.

**Zone 2.** Traffic in the Zone 2 Highway 59 corridor is estimated to be nearing its peak volume because the main north-south corridor is highly developed and approaching its design capacity. As such, traffic will increase at a slower pace and will probably decrease slightly in the future as drivers avoid this area in favor of less congested routes. While the high traffic volumes in this area are desirable for exposure and retail commerce, the associated congestion and access limitations (ease of ingress/egress) present major challenges for typical visitor center traffic.

**Zone 3.** Exit 128 (port of entry) is the original east interchange for Gillette. The traffic volumes and importance of exit 128 fell sharply upon construction of Exit 129 (Garner Lake Road) with its superior north-south connections. The importance of Exit 128 to the City’s traffic network and flow will remain low compared to other local interchanges. Traffic volume in Zone 3 will continue to increase over time, but the location of this interchange in relation to the BNSF Railroad and other developed areas limits its potential for growth.

**Zone 4.** Traffic in Zone 4 (Garner Lake Road) will increase over time as the area develops and as other anticipated roads are built. Since Northern Drive has been completed, north-south traffic on Highway 59 now has a better option for avoiding busy residential and commercial areas. Almost all Cam-Plex related traffic, northbound or southbound, will be using Garner Lake Road. While traffic in this zone will increase significantly, it will not exceed that in Zone 2 in the foreseeable future.

4.8 Site Candidates – Zone 1

Zone 1 refers to potential sites in the vicinity of the westernmost I-90 interchange in Gillette (Exit 124). This interchange connects to Highway 50, which provides north/south access into Gillette and connects to the busy Highway 14/16/59/2nd Street to the north. This is the second busiest interchange in Gillette, has a high percentage of industrial traffic and has the lowest level of service (i.e. highest congestion and wait times) of any interchange in Gillette due to congestion during peak travel periods. A large majority of the traffic coming through this interchange is going to or from Highway 59 North. Two main concerns with Zone 1 sites are the distance from the Cam-Plex Facility and potential long-term development of a West Beltway and interchange in Gillette. The development of a new west beltway interchange would divert a large portion of the traffic from this interchange.
Zone 1 Sites

A. Site A is actually a group of undeveloped lots and was eliminated due to steep terrain less suitable for development as a visitor center.
B. Site B was rated the best location in Zone 1 and meets most criteria very well.
C. Site C is another group of undeveloped lots north of Westover Road.
D. One site to the southeast of the intersection of Westover Road and Highway 50 was eliminated due to steep terrain and the presence of residential development already existing at this location.
E. Another group of sites south of Westover Road was eliminated due to lack of visibility from the Interstate.

4.9 Site Candidates – Zone 2

Zone 2 refers to potential sites in the vicinity of Exit 126 off of I-90, which connects to Highway 59. This is the busiest interchange in Gillette and the Highway 59 corridor is highly developed, with very little vacant land available. The main challenges associated with this Zone are the high level of traffic, periodic congestion, medians and signals which pose challenges for travelers in large RV’s and who are not familiar with Gillette. While this corridor is highly developed with high traffic counts, growth is projected to move more to the east and west. Even as growth moves east and west, the Highway 59 interchange will remain the busiest in Gillette for the foreseeable future.
Zone 2 Sites
A. Site A is the existing Flying J site, which also includes the current visitor center location. While this site is ideal in many ways, re-development of the site would be prohibitively expensive. Access into the site is excellent, but access back on to Highway 59 and I-90 is cumbersome.
B. Site B is vacant land with frontage along Boxelder Road. The visibility of this site is poor and access would be challenging for large RVs.
C. Site C is a cluster of parcels that include the current First Interstate Bank site, which if combined with adjacent parcels have potential as a site for the Visitor Center. However, it was determined one of the larger vacant parcels is now being developed which eliminates this site from consideration.
D. Site D is a vacant parcel located east of Highway 59 on the north side of Boxelder Road and has good visibility from I-90; challenges include longer distance from the interchange.
E. Site E was added for consideration and is a little used portion of the existing Wal-Mart parking lot. Challenges associated with this site include limited visibility and access into and out of this site requiring the use of existing Wal-Mart or shopping center streets. Additionally, the overall size of the site is marginal.
F. Another site considered is north of the interstate between Camel Drive and 12th Street. This site has very poor visibility and steep terrain making it challenging to develop as a visitor center.
G. A final site in Zone 2 consists of two developed lots zoned for commercial use on the south side of Boxelder Road (across from Site D). Since these sites are developed, complete re-development would be necessary to accommodate a visitor center; also visibility of this site is not as good as Site D.
4.10 Site Candidates – Zone 3

Exit 129 off Interstate 90 connects to Highway 51 and this area is designated Zone 3. Due to the configuration of this interchange and the adjacent BNSF Railroad, there is only one viable location in Zone 3. Site A is the northeast corner of Cam-Plex Park with access from Axles Avenue and is viable in that it is nearer to Cam-Plex and has good access. This interchange has much less traffic than either Zone 1 or Zone 2 with commercial areas and amenities located to the west, opposite the direction to the site.

4.11 Site Candidates – Zone 4

Exit 130 off Interstate 90 connects to Garner Lake Road and the sites located along Garner Lake Road are all referred to as Zone 4. This interchange ranks third in terms of current traffic load, but is anticipated to see a significant increase in traffic as development in the Gillette area moves to the east. There are large areas of undeveloped land in the Zone 4 area and a number of potential sites. While these sites are near Cam-Plex, there are presently very few service amenities in this area, though development is slowly moving in this direction.

Zone 4 Sites

A. Site A is the location northwest of the intersection of Garner Lake Road and Warlow Drive. Site A (and the rest of this parcel) has been reported to have recently been sold and may be developed soon and as such may not be a viable option.

B. Site B is just east of Garner Lake Road and north of the I-90 off ramp, across from the Wyoming Department of Transportation Facility. This site has good visibility, but sits in a low area. This site (and the entire parcel) is currently outside City Limits and significant cleanup of this area would need to be part of the overall development.
C. Site C is just east of Garner Lake Road south of the I-90 off ramp. This site has excellent visibility from I-90 and is also just outside City Limits.

D. Site D refers to a cluster of potential sites with similar characteristics just north of Cam-Plex along Garner Lake Road. Three of these sites are on lands controlled by the Campbell County Public Land Board, the other is private.

E. Site E refers to another group of potential sites with similar characteristics at the intersection of Garner Lake Road and Boxelder Road. One of these sites are on lands controlled by the Campbell County Public Land Board, the other two are private.

4.12 Building Considerations

During the early stages of this study we emphasized the importance of building considerations in a site study. We followed up with discussions about the functional aspects and how they can change a building configuration and size. The largest single factor that would impact the building configuration involves the consideration of additional tenants in the building space. As we’ve identified earlier the space needs for the Chamber and EDC’s mainly deal with office, shared and meeting spaces.

During the site consideration reviews we wanted to make sure those sites that we moved forward could accommodate the various sizes of building considerations based on grouped tenant occupancy. Below is a graphic representation of blocks of representative building space. These diagrams are not intended to represent a design merely a placeholder of space for graphic purposes.

Upon review of the four sketches we’ve identified the potential for shared space by overlapping the block components of the particular option. The base Visitor Center building is programmed for 3,000 sf for a maximum of six staff members and parking for 20 vehicles. Addition of the Chamber doubles the space at 7,200 sf. to accommodate 16 staff while supplying 35 parking spaces. The EDC’s don’t quite double the initial space at 6,000 sf. to accommodate 14 staff with the supply of 28 parking spaces. The inclusion of all three occupants produces a need for 10,000
sf. to accommodate 24 staff and 43 parking spaces. It should be noted that shared space between the Chamber and EDC’s does take place and is represented by overlapping blocks of the Visitor Center while maintaining required space for the core Visitor Center functions. Elsewhere in this report a concept building and site plan has been included as a better representation of the building, site circulation potential and accordingly site acreage.

4.13 Site Ranking

The final step in the workshop process involved the ranking of the top candidate sites. A template spreadsheet was presented where we utilized two metrics to weigh each candidate site. The first involves the assignment of a score from 1 to 10 on the direct merits of the site according to the column categories of:

- Distance to the midpoint of Interstate 90
- Ease of access to the site, particularly for RV’s and trucks with long trailers
- Visibility from the major supply arterial road
- Support amenities including food, fuel, hotels and other retail
- Development readiness for quick project schedules
- Proximity to the CamPlex (added by the participants)

A secondary score was included to weigh each of the column categories relative to importance of consideration. These included:

- Score of 5 representing the highest level of inclusion importance
- Score of 4 representing a high level if inclusion importance
- Score of 3 representing an average level if inclusion importance
- Score of 2 representing a low level if inclusion importance
- Score of 1 representing the lowest level if inclusion importance

---

**Site Ranking**

**Criteria Matrix for Gillette Visitor Center Planning Study**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Number</th>
<th>Site Name</th>
<th>Distance</th>
<th>Time of Access</th>
<th>Visibility</th>
<th>Amenities</th>
<th>Development Readiness</th>
<th>CamPlex</th>
<th>Plan Score</th>
<th>Weighted Score</th>
<th>Ranking</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1A</td>
<td>WEST TOWER &amp; HP 95 85</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>42 152 8</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>1B</td>
<td>WEST TOWER &amp; HP 95 85</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1C</td>
<td>WEST TOWER &amp; HP 95 85</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>42 152 8</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>44 148 10</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>49 171 4</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2E</td>
<td>BOULDER WEST</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td>49 171 4</td>
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<td>3A</td>
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<td>42 170 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>4A</td>
<td>CAMPUS PLAZA &amp; ANNEX</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<td></td>
<td>47 181 1</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td>44 166 6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

* Final intermediate site eliminated due to lack of available land.
* All sites 1 and 2 were eliminated due to distance from the participants of the sitting workshop.
* Score: 10 is the best score.
* Weight: 1 is the best score.
4.14 Site Ranking Conclusions

Two ranking attempts took place during the site workshop meeting as a means of determining the short list of best candidate sites while showing the pros and cons of each option. The first generated results that were presented to the workshop participants with the interest of gaining acceptance to our thoughts on the scoring of each candidate site. During this process it quickly became apparent to the participants that we could eliminate the sites in Zone 1. Only one of the sites produced a high ranking score that was discounted by the fact that we needed to capture the visitors on the east side of town. Travelers were more likely to come from the east as the eastern half of the country has a higher population density than the west. Typically, travelers will not backtrack and having them continue westward to our local retail amenities was more favorable if the site was located in Zones 2, 3 or 4.

In Zone 2, the First Interstate Bank site was eliminated. The individual bank site did not consist of enough acreage to fulfill the needs and adjoining property would be necessary. It was revealed within the discussion that the adjoining land thought to be available was indeed under contract and not available. Further discussion led to the elimination of the single site in Zone 3. This site was a stand-alone with no affinities to any other community amenities even though the access was good.

Zone 4 was much talked about due to the influence of the CamPlex proximity. Many of the participants were leading to a strong need to locate near the CamPlex due to the large amount of target visitors that visit the venue and the Visitor Center’s set up of a remote location during many major activities. Conversely, the distance to the amenities became an issue though deemed acceptable. The site north of the Interstate along Warlow Drive was eliminated for two reasons. First, it was thought there was a contract on the property and secondly, it drew visitors away from the south side of the Interstate where all the amenities would be located. This goes back to the back-tracking comment made earlier that most travelers will avoid.

It was further concluded that our use of the weighing factors might have been short for some of the categories. More emphasis needed to be allocated to the Visibility category along with setting the CamPlex consideration at a ‘three’ rating level. In the worksheet spreadsheet we characterized the above eliminations by depicting those in RED in the Revised Ranking column, shown above. This lead to the recalculation of some ranking numbers and the re-ranking due to eliminated sites and producing a new order to the top interested sites. Other discussion and conclusions pertaining to the remaining sites included:

- **2A – Flying J**: this site was considered due to its proximity to the Interstate while also located in the heart of the busiest retail corridor within the City. However, several drawbacks provide complications. The first involves the site size and the need for an agreement with the Flying J for more land or for their location to move elsewhere. Each of these options proved highly unlikely, which alleviated the dealing with the other issue of poor surrounding image being located next to a poorly maintained truck stop.

- **2B – Boxelder West**: this site has been on the market for quite some time and has a congested entry shared with a major access to Kmart and WalMart. This unsignaled intersection can get quite congested with crossing the increasing eastward traffic along Boxelder for larger and longer vehicles.

- **2D – Boxelder East**: this site is characteristic of several conflicts. The site visibility from the highway is great, but the location of the building would have to be set northward on
the site to maintain the visibility. This plot of land also brings with it an anticipated higher price while access to the site is a bit cumbersome with a left signalized turn off Hwy 59 South and traveling past the Home Depot.

- **2E – WalMart Front Lot:** ‘Lost in the Jungle’ was the characterization of this site. Location in front of WalMart has its benefits, however getting there is a traffic congested challenge with its longer distance from Interstate 90. Signage along this heavily populated signage retail strip can be challenging to stand out.

- **4B to 4E – Garner Lake:** This collection of sites has several flexible opportunities as there is more land available than we need at each potential site. Location at these sites has great affinities with the CamPlex, but is the farthest away from the strong amenity corridor of Hwy 59, characterized by Zone 2.

### 4.15 The Final Short List

The second review of the site ranking model clearly showed an emphasis on sites along Zone 4 with a couple from Zone 2 mixed in. The CamPlex consideration added as a second consideration in the ranking model at the request of the participants produced an influence on the end results as expected. The two top rated sites were the two opportunities that flank the exits along Interstate 90 on Garner Lake Road. The one to the north has great visibility and direct access from the westward off ramp, however it is partially blocked from view of any CamPlex and other south related amenities by a rise in topography. To resolve this issue site 4-C and its south side location yields the highest ranking with a dominant 185 points. An additional benefit of the two top rated sites is the potential ability to size the site to the purchased land as more land is available than is needed. Both of these sites by far accomplished the distance to Interstate 90, ease of access and visibility categories with near perfect scores.

### 4.16 Number 1 – 4C Garner Lake Road South

One of the key attributes of sites 4-C and 4-B is their location relative to the railroad tracks just north of Hwy 16 along Garner Lake Road as you travel south from the Interstate. This favorable condition should be noted as trains along the track can and sometimes do block passage on Garner Lake Road going south. CamPlex organizers have indicated they have often diverted traffic to the next westward exit for access along Hwy 16 to avoid blockage along the railroad tracks. It was also stated during the workshop that this condition is the exception and not the rule, but should be noted.
Site Number: 4-C
Landowner: Capps, Linda R Revocable Trust
Total Parcel Size: 68.42 acres
Within City Limits: No
Current Zoning: A-L
Travel Distance to I-90: 0.0 miles

One additional consideration of site 4-B is its northern position relative to the Interstate. Site 4-A was discounted because of its northern location and the prior conclusion that the location would not be as likely to encourage visitors to seek fuel, food and hotel amenities because of the need to get back on the freeway and the lack of visible amenities to the south.

4.17 Number 2 – 4B Garner Lake Road North

Site Number: 4-B
Landowner: Capps, Linda R Revocable Trust
Total Parcel Size: 212.33 acres
Within City Limits: No
Current Zoning: M-H & A-L
Travel Distance to I-90: 0.0 miles
4.18 Number 3 – 2D Boxelder East

Site preference number three takes us back in the westward direction. Not quite to Hwy 59, this site is located east of the exiting Home Depot. It offers great visibility from the Interstate and would likely require placement of the building closer to the Interstate versus along Boxelder due to the rising topography going south and the depth of the lot. This site also produces the longest path for access by first heading south at the Hwy 59 exit off Interstate 90 to the first signal. A left turn at the signal along Boxelder to just over the hill yields the potential site entrance. It had been mentioned during the study and again at the workshop that this site has been under consideration by various interested parties, which could lead to the seller expecting higher selling prices.

4.19 Number 4 – 4D CamPlex West

The fourth preferred site identified during the ranking analysis was a single site along Garner Lake Road very near the CamPlex. For the interest of this study this single site has been expanded to four candidates as they all share the same relative site amenities, benefits and ranking. These sites share a large amount of acreage to pick from and most utilities available off the main road. The only major consideration from a utility perspective is the need for a sewer lift station, a minor element in the overall perspective. These four sites all have great close affinity to and share good common visibility to the CamPlex and far southward past Boxelder.

Sites 4D1 & 4D4 are flanked on the west side of Garner Lake Road yielding favorable direct access from what is anticipated to be the largest amount of traffic from Interstate 90. Exiting the site to the south provides great access in the direction of additional amenities without having to cross traffic on Garner Lake Road.

Site 4D2 & 4D3 are flanked on the eastern side of Garner Lake Road producing just the opposite conditions. While close to the CamPlex with direct access, and in some instances within same side of the street walking distance, exiting the site produces a need to cross Garner Lake Road.
for additional amenities and direct right out access to Interstate 90. Also within walking distance of these two sites is the Mining Outdoor Museum.

Site Number: 4-D1  
Landowner: Campbell County Public Land Board  
Total Parcel Size: 153.09 acres  
Within City Limits: Yes  
Current Zoning: A, agriculture  
Travel Distance to I-90: 0.6 miles  
Notes: Sewer lift station and force main needed

Site Number: 4-D2  
Landowner: Campbell County Public Land Board  
Total Parcel Size: 592.88 acres  
Within City Limits: Yes  
Current Zoning: A, agriculture  
Travel Distance to I-90: 0.6 miles  
Notes: Sewer lift station and force main needed

Site Number: 4-D3  
Landowner: Campbell County Public Land Board  
Total Parcel Size: 592.88 acres  
Within City Limits: Yes  
Current Zoning: A, agriculture  
Travel Distance to I-90: 0.8 miles  
Notes: Sewer lift station and force main needed

Site Number: 4-D4  
Landowner: Park Plex LLC  
Total Parcel Size: 40 acres  
Within City Limits: No  
Current Zoning: A-L  
Travel Distance to I-90: 0.9 miles
4.20 Number 5 – 4E Garner Lake & Boxelder Roads

According to the ranking model the fifth best short listed site was the current location near the Pilot Fueling Station. This study group did not contact the land owner to determine the feasibility of carving out enough land for a new building. The access off the Interstate is excellent and so to with access to fuel, food and hotel amenities. Placement of the building on the site would most likely have to be deep within the site, westward and away from Hwy 59, for adequate acreage assuming the Pilot station would remain in its current location. However, during the early stages of the workshop it was concluded that the new site location should be capable of providing a high level image and not be downgraded by its surroundings. The condition of the Pilot site and low level maintenance of the paved areas doesn’t, in the mind of the study team, lend itself to a desirable site consideration regardless of fifth place ranking.

Site Number: 4-E1
Landowner: Boxelder Development Group LLC (DHT Inc.)
Total Parcel Size: 91.18 acres
Within City Limits: Yes
Current Zoning: A, agriculture
Travel Distance to I-90: 1.3 miles

Site Number: 4-E2
Landowner: Campbell County Public Land Board
Total Parcel Size: 592.88 acres
Within City Limits: Yes
Current Zoning: A, agriculture
Travel Distance to I-90: 1.3 miles

Site Number: 4-E3
Landowner: Clinton I Pickrel & George Ann Burch Trust
Total Parcel Size: 230.43 acres
Within City Limits: Yes
Current Zoning: A, agriculture
Travel Distance to I-90: 1.3 miles
Close behind in the ranking were the sixth place candidate sites that were moved up for this consideration. These involve three potential locations in all of the corners except the southeast corner of the Garner Lake Road and Boxelder Road intersection. What did raise the consideration of these sites is the future growth in the surrounding area and this crossroad projected to become a major traffic intersection in the future. Until development of surrounding amenities takes place Boxelder would provide direct access to the Hwy 59 corridor of food, fuel and hotel accommodations. Like most other sites there is more land than needed leaving opportunities to define the shape needed. Also, beneficial are the provision of utilities to each of the candidate sites. It should be noted that the southeast corner site, not shown as available, will be a new Truck Stop development by the local Farmers Cooperative Association, a long time established business within the community. This fueling station will also have a convenience store and a fast casual restaurant planned for the new development.

5.0 Concept Site Plan

Siting studies are typically all about strategies, analysis and looking at siting candidates. However, in the spirit of thinking about how a site will be used some available sites don’t function well because of their size and shape limitations. Below is a one concept reflecting the use of 4 acres showing site circulation and available surrounding land for visitors to walk their pets, stretch their legs or even picnic. Parking for a multitude of vehicles is depicted to accommodate the various anticipated vehicles supported by easy ingress and egress.

As can be noted by the concept sketch the site shown is relatively square in shape. The distances required for separation of two entrance points could easily stretch the site along the access road and shorten the depth of the site. Conversely, if only one access point is allowed the site plan could be rotated 90 degrees and increased is depth and narrowed along the frontage road. The point is: that prior to commitment of the land being purchased a concept site plan should be finalized and a preliminary meeting held with the appropriate municipality to confirm the access points to the site.
6.0 Concept Cost Estimation

An overall cost estimate has been developed for the Gillette Visitor Center as part of this study. Individual site development costs will vary depending on the site chosen and market conditions. This cost estimate has been kept intentionally conservative and includes a contingency.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary Estimate of Probable Construction Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gillette Visitor Center</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construction Costs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal for Construction of Visitor Center Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal for Construction of Civil Site Improvements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal Construction Cost for Building and Site Improvements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land Acquisition (6 acres – 175,000 sf @ $55.95/sf, average for all sites)</td>
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<td>Subtotal Building &amp; Civil Site Construction and Land Acquisition</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Professional Services Costs</th>
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<tr>
<td>Architectural and Engineering Design (10% of Building and Civil Site)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Entitlements</td>
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<tr>
<td>Site Plan, Permitting, Fees</td>
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<tr>
<td>Subtotal Professional Services Costs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total Estimated Construction, Land and Professional Services Costs | $3,222,000 |
| 60% Contingency on Construction, Land and Professional Services | $933,000 |

Overall Estimated Project Cost | $3,545,000

Land Acquisition Costs. The sites which have been short-listed for consideration as potential locations for the new Gillette Visitor Center are all situated along arterial roadways with good potential for many types of commercial development. As such, land costs for the Visitor Center will be considerable and likely represent the single largest line item in the cost for this facility.

In general, there were two options to determine the land price of the identified top sites. The first option is to review and evaluate the comparable sales of similar properties in the area and/or utilize a real estate appraiser to do the same. This is the customary method to determine the market value of real estate. The second more direct option is to contact the property owner to determine the price at which he or she would sell the property. This option is less reliable in that the price at which a property owner is willing to sell may be different from the market value of the property. This option may also cause the asking price of the subject properties to inflate if sellers perceive an increased demand their property.

While the budget for this study did not allow for a full appraisal of each of the top sites listed in this study, we were able to enlist the services of a local real estate appraiser who reduced his fee in support of the project. Mr. Bob Zabel of ZABEL & Associates provided a limited scope appraisal of the top sites, which included a brief analysis and range of estimate values for the various properties. With consideration of each property’s location, condition, and site preparation needs, land prices were selected from the range of estimated values provided in the limited scope appraisal. The estimate of probable land acquisitions costs are shown in the cost estimate. The limited scope appraisal is provided in Appendix 2.
Based on the market price for commercial land in Gillette, the land acquisition for a new Visitor Center will be approximately 1/3 of the project cost. Some of the top sites are publically owned and some are privately owned. It is possible that a publically owned site could be dedicated to the project, thus reducing the funding required for the project by approximately 1/3. While it is not as common for a privately owned site to be dedicated to a public project, the CVB could work to negotiate a lower land price with a private owner.

**Building Costs.** Building costs include the new building space, allowances for an inside exhibit, outdoor amenities and exhibits and landscaping. This cost estimate has been prepared utilizing a comparable square foot pricing methods that is typical until more specific design drawings become available. These projected costs also assume an average level of design and finish complexity without extensive architectural features that can become quite costly.

**Civil Site Costs.** Site development costs can vary widely depending on the specific site chosen. No field investigation work was performed on the candidate sites. Drainage conditions and access to storm sewers or channels was not assessed. Soil conditions in the Gillette area vary greatly, but are generally poor. It is likely that foundation and/or subsurface improvements will be necessary.
For the purposes of the civil site cost estimate, it has been assumed that a 300’ to 400’ long access road (80’ right-of-way width) will need to be constructed to allow proper access into most of the sites under consideration. In addition to costs for street surfacing, curb and gutter, and sidewalk, this will add approximately one acre to the area required for a site for the Visitor Center.

### Estimate of Probable Construction Cost

**Gillette Visitor Center**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Civil Site Improvements</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Unit Cost</th>
<th>Extended Cost</th>
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<tr>
<td>OPEN SEWAGE TREATMENT</td>
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<td>P ASPHALTIC CONCRETE PAVING</td>
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<td>INSTALL NEW 80” CURB &amp; GUTTER (STREET)</td>
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</table>

**Subtotal of Improvements** $668,800.00

**Contractor Floods, Insurance, and Mobilization @ 5%** $33,440.00

**Subtotal Estimated Construction Cost** $702,240.00

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### 7.0 Implementation Plan

The proposed implementation plan for this project is like all other projects. There are aspects of the work involved that are controllable by the client and in most instances there are many other project activities that are not in the control of the client. All the reviews, queuing of the project and approvals to move forward often take time. Funding the project through municipal sources have their timeframes by their established and defined processes.

We have assumed immediate transition into the funding phase with the time shown and beginning the land acquisition and design phases. The time frame column headers are shown in month numbers in case the funding process is started at a later date. Because of factors, discussed elsewhere in this report, about the advantages to moving forward with funding and land acquisition as soon as possible we show immediate action continuing after submittal of this report. It should be noted that when the implementation of the project takes place the construction difficulties of the winter months should be strongly considered to allow ‘realistic’ scheduling of the project so that preconstruction activities can take place prior to the summer construction months.

The schedule depicts activities that represent major task groups for the representation of time. Numerous other tasks will be taking place in parallel with those shown and will be detailed by the next project team that is involved with the detailed design and construction of the project.
8.0 Some Conclusive Thoughts

The short list of candidate sites provides the expected results of the study team along with how we derived the list and all other supporting considerations and information. We’ve stated in the implementation plan that direct contact with the candidate short listed sites is the next important step in finalizing the most desirable site. We also recognize the time needed for review, approval and issuance of the funding needed to pursue this project. However, we recommend action take place in a timely basis in pursuit of the site associated with the final desired location. There are several considerations that lead to this recommendation.

1. Impact of future growth – the City of Gillette and Campbell County’s master plans all point to the accommodation of future growth. The County has seen growth and projections point to various levels of future growth. There has been a recent slow down of mining activity boosted up by accelerated growth in the oilfield exploration along the Hwy 59 corridor. The traffic increases along Garner Lake Road are already starting to be realized as this corridor becomes a more important passage around the Hwy 59 retail corridor and the way to Interstate 90.

The intersection of Garner Lake and Boxelder Roads has already been targeted for signalization by the City as a result of the future anticipated traffic. Looking further, recent housing starts, the future construction of a Travel Plaza on the southeast corner of
Boxelder and Garner Lake Roads coupled with construction of the Field of Dreams all lead to recent activity supporting the growth activity claim.

2. **Land Price Trends** – the recent decline in the national economy starting in 2007 has had some lasting impact on the regions economy. Campbell County has not been impacted like many other communities, however we are still in a form of recovery. Depending on economist predictions history shows that Campbell County has experienced periods of boom and bust at varying levels. The recent down trend has yielded to an uptick in economic posterity supported by recent residential, retail and community growth. Also a component of such growth are rising land prices and expectations of those selling land and their quest for selling at higher prices. As long as it’s the prediction of the CCCVB and the community that land prices will continue to rise action sooner rather than later may be prudent.

3. **Momentum** – there has been an interest within the community for quite some time to construct a new Visitor Center. The advent of this study and talk about getting to the next step has continued to build up interest in taking action. What can hinder such progress is the long processing times for implementation and delays to obtain the funding coordinated at the right time. In this particular instance the lack of continued drive to move forward with the project could highly likely result in increased cost to obtain the land and deal with the construction costs.

The leading sites pointing emphasis towards Zone 4 in its eastern most focus brings with it several benefits. These include:

1. **Available Acreage** – unlike many other sites we looked at in the more developed areas of town the sites along Garner Lake Road offer large lot sizes that allow the selection of the space needed for our site. Another benefit of this condition is the ability to work with these land owners to configure a site efficiently to maximize the land investment.

2. **Choice** – again, unlike many other sites we looked at in more developed areas of town the sites along Garner Lake Road offer selection opportunities. We have choices close to the freeway for quick direct access while also having sites farther south closer to the CamPlex and other avenues accessible to developed amenities.

3. **A New Hub** – history has taught us that just because a city has a master plan that doesn’t always mean it will develop according to that plan. The County and City’s master plan for the Garner Lake corridor shows a group of developments involving strong build up around the intersection of Boxelder and Garner Lake and northward. The reasons include the recognition of the CamPlex’s drawing power. In the case of the current retail corridor along Hwy 59 what you see today is what you get tomorrow. There isn’t room for larger future retail developments without redevelopment of existing sites. Proof of this was very apparent within our study as few sites along this corridor exist today and those that did exist were small in available acreage. This projected new hub will never replace the attractiveness of the Hwy 59 corridor, however it will take on a feel and attractiveness of its own.
Appendix A

Questions for CCCVB Meeting
Monday March 17, 2014

Service Offerings
• What do you see as the primary function of the VC?
  To promote Campbell County sites, attractions, events, restaurants, retail and lodging. Assist guests in their traveling needs, and provide exceptional customer service We are the Ambassadors for Campbell County!
• What are the service offerings?
  Information, directions, suggestions, Coal Mine, Dry Fork Power Plant and Durham Buffalo Ranch tours, hunter assistance, brochures and maps. Geo cache location, a place to picnic, free WiFi, and lodging ring down phone/directory (can go away!). NO PUBLIC RESTROOMS!
• Do you consider the offerings lagging, about right or leading edge relative to today's current smart phone technology and the amount of info at a visitor’s fingertips?
  Lagging. We’d like to have a flat screen TV or two showing mining DVD’s and other local info, including current weather conditions, event information and road/highway conditions.
• Do you have the service offerings categorized or grouped?
  I don’t think so, but we don’t know what you mean?!
• What percentage of information is available elsewhere in the community?
  The hotels and the Museums have small brochure racks, the offerings not being consistent with each other. Maybe 5-10% of what we have here. The Chamber has a couple items, and if we didn’t exist, would have to answer questions, vs. sending them to us like they do now. We’d have to rely on the restaurant, retail, etc. employees to answer questions, give directions. YIKES!
• How do you see the service offerings changing over the next 5 years?
  Obviously to more digital and social avenues. But still feel older generation people like to stop at a VC to get the “inside scoop” and the “local’s” suggestions on where to eat, stay, etc.
• What do people ask for when they come in that you don't have?
  Restrooms, a US map to go, a world map, more of the surrounding states’ info, which we just don’t have room for. A place to walk around to stretch their legs. Free coffee and water. Need more VC type amenities.
• What do you think the impact will be of an increasingly "information at your fingertip" society on your service offerings?
  Because we do the tours from our VC, we will maintain a certain traffic level, but could lose regular traffic unless we add interpretive type elements to see here. We need to continue to be the “one stop shop” for information, but we don’t have the space to display it.
• Do you provide information to local hotels, etc. about community activities and events? (Fliers and other hard copies)
  We offer an “Ambassador Program” service where we go out in the community to where events are happening and groups are gathering, to provide mobile information vs. them having to come to us. We also have a monthly Lodging Association meeting where we provide information, and include the Chamber, Cam-Plex, and Economic Devt the forum to share their info as well. We also do tours and hands on activities for them to experience
as a visitor would. A hard copy calendar of events is provided at these meetings, but we also encourage them to check our website calendar and FB page too.

Activity Levels
- Do you have visitor counts by month?
  Yes, by day and by hour as well. How many years back does the data go? From the reopening of the GVC in February, 2010. Fluctuations by season? We have it year-round
- What is the frequency of activity of each category?
  The reports are attached separately
- Does your 8 AM – 4:30 PM hours of operation work?
  This is only winter hours. We are open 7 days/week, 8am to 6:30pm Mon thru Fri, 8am to 4:30pm Sat and Sun, from Memorial Weekend through Labor Day, then additional hours for Hunter Assistance Program in Sept and Oct. In Wright, we’re open 8:30am to 4pm, 7 days/week, Memorial through Labor Day, then additional Mon thru Fri after Labor Day until 1st weekend of Oct (Opening Gun Season) If not how would you change? Don’t think so- we’re pretty consistent with WY Office Tourism VC locations, being seasonal here. But with a new building, we hope to see increased activity, like Wright did, and would certainly add hours as needed.
- How much phone activity is there on an average day?
  6 calls during winter, 20 plus during the summer Is this increasing or decreasing? Increasing, hunters add a lot during licensing times, and with new Dry Fork and Durham Ranch tours, expect to receive more.
- How much e-mail activity is there on an average day?
  Not much- maybe 4 to 5/day to Karen, Chamber (which gets forwarded to us to answer), and the “Front Desk” email. Is this increasing or decreasing? About the same

Visitor Profiles
- Do you have profile data on the visitors that come in?
  Yes- 2010 and 2012 data from Randall Travel Marketing Hotel Surveys and Visitor Profile Surveys, sending separately. We will do a Destination Assessment survey with RTM as well, starting in June though…
- Do the visitors predominately drive cars/trucks?
  Yes Percentage of RV’s, long haul trucks, travelers with trailers? Don’t have that. Don’t see where they’re parking, the way the Center windows are situated. I think 8% fly in and rent cars
- Do you know the percentage of visitors that are local versus those passing through?
  More locals in the winter, about 20% due to local hunters and new residents
- Any idea on how many people walk in and quickly leave?
  Not many, only when tours are happening and it’s too crowded to get to the brochure racks, and if they’re thinking we have the propane fills here, the dump pay station, we’re a restaurant because of the Flying J sign, or no public restrooms.Would you know why they leave so quickly? Yes, unless it’s so busy that we miss someone, but try really hard not to let that happen
- Do you get companies that are considering setting business up in Campbell County coming in and seeking information?
  Absolutely! How frequent? We’ve had maybe 3 or 4 total in person, and some by phone

Technology
- What technology improvements do you see incorporating at the new site that you don't have
today?
All wireless office equipment, accessible charging outlets for visitor phones, iPads, etc., digital sign with rolling events info, community notices, etc., this century TV’s for videos, news. Believe it or not, either a pay phone for international calls, for the stranded who don’t have phones, etc.

• Do you see more video screens with weather reports, road conditions, advertisements about the community, events and activities, etc.? That’s what we want!!! And we didn’t even read ahead when we mentioned all this earlier!! 😊

• Do you want to become a wifi hot spot to download information to customers rather than provide a flier?
Well, we have the WiFi… It’s still traffic in the building, and we’re still offering assistance

Site & Building
• What comments have you received about your location, building, image? (Good and bad)
  Can’t find us, missed the turn, can’t get out past the semi’s, couldn’t see the sign, not enough signage, no place to park nearby (due to the carpooler workers who leave their vehicles here for the day, and the stupid wheels for the food service semi that are left here next to the building) Too hard to access from the south, unless you know to turn at Boxelder and come in from behind the Flying J building. In the summer the tree out to the east hides us. Some don’t know what we are, came in to see what was inside. We feel like the temporary building placed years ago has been completely forgotten

• What do you feel the new VC should say when someone drives up and sees the building?
  You’re in the Energy Capital! Current and state of the art, Gillette’s got it going on, and cares about their visitors and guests

• What is the first thing a visitor should see when they come in the door? A smiling, welcoming face!

• Have you thought of setting up a two-stage arrangement?
  The first is for when you are closed and still receive visitors to disseminate limited information and the second stage is when you are open and have staff to interact with the customers? Absolutely!

• Will you or could you hold outdoor events that would require outside ‘activity space’?
  We do have the Game and Fish hunter’s map that we attach to the outside of the building, from September to December, and would love to do a “hunters feed” type event if we had the space, and do a May National Hospitality and Tourism Week event to kick off the season. We could also do a Lodging, Dining and Retail Appreciation event at the end of the season if we had the space!

• If you had to guess how much bigger your building space had to be what would you estimate?
  We think the public space in Wright’s VC is about right, except needs more display rack space against solid walls (lots of nice windows, but…), or free-standing. Would need more back of the house space for my office and Karen’s, and would love a conference room for client/small group meetings, and a break room for staff. Wright has a small fulfillment area and an employee restroom, so we would need the RR, a bigger fulfillment area and a LOT more storage (we have an outdoor separate storage shed now that is nasty and everything gets dirty and water damaged from the wind through the cracks)

• Do you see having vending machines or other limited food offerings?
  No, as we send ppl to Flying J for that, which FJ appreciates, but if no facilities are nearby then maybe, but in a separate breezeway near the restrooms, like at highway rest
• Does a gathering place for group meetings have any benefit?
  YES! We meet with group event coordinators all the time, and have to book other locations to do so, for those, and for our monthly Board meetings. Would be great to have those on site so we don’t have to close the VC, and we could do the Lodging Assoc meetings here and have them catered. We might consider charging for the space too as an additional revenue stream.

• Does a mobile VC for special events at off-site locations have any value?
  Yes- that’s our Ambassador program- the CCCVB “Welcome Team”! Especially during non-VC operating hours, we go to them!

General
• What deficiencies are you experiencing today?
  Space! Technology! A toilet that doesn’t run and have to be manually flushed! (We don’t make Plumbers wages 🙁). No space to do info packets, mailings, or the Board meeting books. Not enough counter space. Not enough seats for waiting area for elderly, kids waiting for tours. Not enough RV parking, safe parking/access, signage, etc., etc., etc. Only 1 way in, 1 way out! Very scary and dangerous for staff and guests.

• What are the top three comments received when visitors come in?
  According to our Guest Book/Visitor Register, “very helpful”, “thanks for the maps/info”, “loved the tour”, “friendly, kind staff”

• Is your image/branding working?
  Can definitely improve- Fairly new branding, since early 2011, recently changed out images for ads in 2013. Since we are not western, but are in the west, we have used the “Energy Capital” tag line and focus on Energy and Ag Tourism offerings. Does it need improving? Yes, always If so why and in what way? I think we’re past the old opinions that Gillette was too expensive and too blue collar, and hotels were not available, but…

• Who do you have the strongest affinity with in the community?
  Cam-Plex, mine tours, buffalo ranch, Museums, hotels, Game and Fish, some restaurants

• Do you want to be a public restroom or for use by visitors only?
  Public, as long as it’s a safe location for staff and public, and the restroom building is separated from the VC, with separate entrances

• What trends do you see in Visitor Center industry?
  VC’s are more interactive, interpretive centers, reflecting the industry and offerings/amenities of the area, and technology Which are most attractive to you? Interactive for all ages, interpretive displays, technology bringing the historic to present day. I’d love to shoot a video from a haul truck driver’s helmet cam as an example, to get visitors excited about the tour they will be going on. Things to look at, a comfortable place to rest, maybe some souvenirs???

• Have you coordinated with the Wyoming Office of Tourism for the site selection?
  Yes- I sent various documents from the WOT to Mark with VC info
Appendix B
Vacant Land Sales Data

ZABEL & Associates

A Wyoming Corporation
email zabelwyo@vcr.com
Fax: 720-528-7834

6305 Tassel Ave.
Gillette, Wyoming 82718
307-682-3021

May 6, 2014

Jaime L. Tarver, P.E.
1901 Energy Court, Suite 170
Gillette, Wyoming 82718

Dear Jaime:

In response to your request for a market price or value for five prospective sites for the proposed Visitor Center, I have selected a group of sales that are representative of the overall market for commercial land in Gillette. The nature of the request results in a limited scope appraisal. Accordingly, the analysis is brief and does not provide a specific estimate of value for each site.

Because of the limited scope of the request I have offered comments about the sales intended to provide you with a range of values or a direction in value related to certain specific sales. Based on the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice, these comments result in an appraisal by definition.

Attached is a summary table of vacant land sales, general descriptions of each of those sales, and a detailed recording of each sale. I hope these will be sufficient to meet your requirements. Please feel free to call if you have questions.

Thank you for the opportunity to be of service.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Robert L. Zabel,
Wyoming Certified General
Real Estate Appraiser,
Permit No. 279

file: 96814

Real Estate Appraising and Consulting
Summary of Comparable Sales

The following table includes the majority of the recent commercial land sales in Gillette along with two older sales along Garner Lake Road. I have included several sales that are in the prime retail area of Gillette which is between I-90 and Lakeway Road along South Douglas Highway and for a short distance on either side of the highway. They are Sales 5, 6, 10, 12, 14, and 16 in italics and they sold for $10.84 to $16.40 per square foot; these sales are presented as a benchmark only. You will observe that outside the prime retail area only one sale (Sale 4) sold for more than $7.00 per square foot. Even the Bomgaars property, Sale 8, which is close to the prime retail area, sold for less than $7.00 per square foot, in part, because it was bigger then most of the prime retail area sales.

The supply of commercially zoned land around Gillette is very high compared to the amount of it that is sold each year. The supply of industrially zoned land is very low and demand, although low, has been increasing with the growth of the oil field related businesses over the past year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Sale Date</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>Size in SF</th>
<th>Price/ SF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>3910 Boxelder Road - Coop</td>
<td>2/28/2014</td>
<td>$611,282</td>
<td>2.005</td>
<td>87,326</td>
<td>$7.00</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>3844 Boxelder Road - Coop</td>
<td>10/17/2012</td>
<td>$1,524,600</td>
<td>5.002</td>
<td>217,906</td>
<td>$7.00</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Westover Rd - McDonalds</td>
<td>5/1/2013</td>
<td>$1,275,000</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>112,385</td>
<td>$11.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Shoshone - truck wash</td>
<td>12/31/2012</td>
<td>$485,000</td>
<td>1.305</td>
<td>56,833</td>
<td>$8.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>820 &amp; 902 Country Club Rd - Jimmy Johns</td>
<td>12/31/2012</td>
<td>$504,000</td>
<td>1.067</td>
<td>46,488</td>
<td>$10.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>815 Madison Street - Pinnacle</td>
<td>11/30/2012</td>
<td>$971,386</td>
<td>1.749</td>
<td>76,195</td>
<td>$12.75</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Lakeview School land</td>
<td>10/25/2012</td>
<td>$1,728,000</td>
<td>10.89</td>
<td>474,347</td>
<td>$3.64</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>469 E Lakeway - Bomgaars</td>
<td>10/24/2012</td>
<td>$1,593,381</td>
<td>5.34</td>
<td>232,610</td>
<td>$6.85</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>4301 &amp; 4305 S Douglas - Maverik</td>
<td>10/12/2012</td>
<td>$725,000</td>
<td>2.774</td>
<td>120,834</td>
<td>$6.00</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>1100 E Boxelder - Old Chicago</td>
<td>7/2/2012</td>
<td>$862,680</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>71,890</td>
<td>$12.00</td>
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<td>11.</td>
<td>4003 S Douglas Highway</td>
<td>5/25/2012</td>
<td>$280,000</td>
<td>1.557</td>
<td>67,802</td>
<td>$4.13</td>
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<td>12.</td>
<td>2533 S Douglas - Auto Zone</td>
<td>5/9/2012</td>
<td>$752,500</td>
<td>1.151</td>
<td>50,125</td>
<td>$15.01</td>
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<td>13.</td>
<td>1213 Four J Road - Dentist</td>
<td>4/23/2012</td>
<td>$315,000</td>
<td>1.256</td>
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<td>14.</td>
<td>1110 East Boxelder - Campco</td>
<td>12/15/2011</td>
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<td>15.</td>
<td>4201 S Douglas Highway</td>
<td>8/24/2011</td>
<td>$525,000</td>
<td>2.707</td>
<td>117,920</td>
<td>$4.45</td>
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<td>17.</td>
<td>4501 Tanner Drive - School</td>
<td>2/3/2011</td>
<td>$1,478,337</td>
<td>10.58</td>
<td>460,856</td>
<td>$3.21</td>
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<td>18.</td>
<td>4403 Running W Drive - Big Horn Dental</td>
<td>9/10/2010</td>
<td>$265,260</td>
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<td>44,210</td>
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<td>19.</td>
<td>400 S Garner Lake Road</td>
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<td>1.83</td>
<td>79,715</td>
<td>$3.95</td>
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<td>20.</td>
<td>Garner Lake &amp; Martingale - Arbuckle Inn</td>
<td>8/15/2007</td>
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<td>10.0</td>
<td>435,600</td>
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