

WYOPASS was pleased to announce the winners of the 2016 WYOPASS Awards at the Fall Conference held in Casper, Wyoming, August 31 through September 2.

The WYOPASS 2016 New Planner of the Year went to Clara Chaffin of the City of Douglas. Clara's story is one of stepping up to the challenge. Clara was originally hired by the City of Douglas in April 2014 as a Planner 1. Between the time of her accepting the position and reporting to work, the Community Development director left. An interim director led the department for six months, after which Clara was selected as the Department director. This was during a time when Douglas was in a boom cycle. During her first year she was involved in several projects including assisting consultants with a comprehensive downtown plan, a 1,283-acre annexation and PUD review, creation of a unified development code, and several development and subdivision reviews. Her educational and prior experiences in education, private consulting, and main street management prepared her for the role she now enjoys. Congratulations Clara!

The WYOPASS 2016 Planner of the Year went to Charles Bloom of the City of Laramie. Charles is the current President of WYOPASS. This award recognizes Charles' dedication to WYOPASS, his successful efforts to organize the joint Western Planner/WYOPASS conference that was held in the fall of 2015, and his recent professional accomplishments including development of a housing study, a corridor study, and updates to the Laramie Unified Development Code. Charles has been at the City of Laramie for eleven years and is a resource for other planning professionals. Congratulations Charles!

The WYOPASS 2016 Planning Commissioner of the Year went to Kristin Paulsen, Chair and longtime member of the Fremont County Planning Commission. Kristin was nominated by County Commissioner Ray Price, who notes that Kristin is extremely dedicated to public service, does her homework, and is diligent in her duties—she is a doer. Kristin's example of developing professional relationships with elected officials and using those relationships to encourage and promote good land use planning is a benefit to the planning profession. Thank you Kristin!

The WYOPASS 2016 Urban Project of the Year went to The City of Laramie Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Adoption of the plan is a 5-year long story of good work, persistence, revisions, and measurable success. Public involvement in development and review of the plan was extensive, with 80 different meetings held—most were at the Ad Hoc Advisory Committee level, as the committee developed and wrote the plan. Cost saving measures utilizing in-house talents resulted in significant savings to the budget, without a compromise in the professional presentation quality of the draft document. Unanticipated resistance in adoption of the portion of the plan applicable to the County area within one mile of the City limits eventually led to removal of those portions for outside of the City. The revised Plan was adopted by the City on March 1, 2016. Sometimes the ideal of City-County coordination is not achieved, yet the City of Laramie now has a wonderfully detailed and illustrated Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Congratulations!

The WYOPASS 2016 Rural Project of the Year went to the 2016 Laramie County Comprehensive Plan. Not every jurisdiction can say that not one citizen rose to testify against adoption of their comprehensive plan, or that their plan was adopted unanimously by their elected officials—but Laramie County is one place that can. The three-year effort to update their plan was completed entirely as an in-house effort, with significant involvement by an active planning commission and very active citizenry. Multiple public outreach methods were used, including eight public meetings, a photo contest in which 726 residents participated, and information sharing through both traditional and social media. Congratulations Laramie County!