

Brooke Wright

Kristina

October-November

Phase 2

## Phase 2

What exactly does the city of Casper and Natrona county spend their budgets on. As I have not been a native of Casper, I can't help but notice things that need change. With this being said, I think it is important for me to understand how much money the budget entails, and which issues the money is put towards.

With my time being in Casper, and making simple observations, I have noticed the homeless population is rising. When taking the Wyoming Boulevard exit into town, underneath the bridges there are usually at least three people asking for money, or sleeping under the bridge. While this is quite crazy to me, since I am a Wyoming native, it is something that needs to be noted. When I came to Casper when I was younger, I did not see such a homeless population. I wonder why this is growing so rapidly, and that leads to my ultimate question of what the county and city spends their money on. I have done some digging into local sources and found some interesting information. According to [natronacounty-wy.gov](http://natronacounty-wy.gov), most of the budget is spent on paying county and city employees, maintenance for buildings, and maintaining roads and highways. While these are all super important issues that deserve attention, I wonder if there is a way to address the homeless population as well. According to [oilcitynews.com](http://oilcitynews.com), Natrona county just approved raises for a bunch of these employees. While I am sure that these raises were earned, I wonder if some of the money could have gone to this ongoing issue.

This homelessness issue is rather new in Natrona county and in Wyoming. I think that this is why there are limited solutions and information available. I think that as this issue continues to rise the county and the city are going to have to address it. I hope that the budget committee seriously considers making

changes within the next year to fix this ongoing problem. Unfortunately, this problem isn't going to go away on its own. It is going to require assistance from the county and the city. As we look at this problem in bigger scaled cities, the problem only grows. It is our responsibility to fix the problem before it grows past fixing.

My proposal would be to carefully examine the budget, pull funds that may be generous for the cause, and move that money into a separate account. With this account I would open a homeless shelter, and provide common necessities. I would also advertise for people to generously donate items and food. This would allow the people to be taken care of, and start a charity as well. We could get people off the streets, and solve this issue before it grows more.

#### References

Adopted FY 24 budget July 17, 2023 - Natronacounty-wy.gov. (n.d.).

<https://www.natronacounty-wy.gov/DocumentCenter/View/8172/ADOPTED-FY-23-24-BOCC>

Hirst, G. (2022, July 25). *Natrona County approves budget with employee raises, deputy vehicles, Gas Money*. Oil City News.

<https://oilcity.news/community/city/2022/07/25/natrona-county-approves-budget-with-employee-raises-deputy-vehicles-gas-money/>



## Interview

Jada Clarkson, why interstates close so frequently around Casper. I appreciate the artwork because it demonstrates the real issue. I had not considered that there are not enough plow drivers, and is why the roads close. I feel like it is an important problem because without people to plow the roads, they don't get plowed and it is dangerous. I would look at a bigger section of interstate across the state of Wyoming, and research ways to solve the problem. I would also research what other neighboring states do to solve this problem