



Downtown Cheyenne Staff Report

April 2020

Report By: Amber Ash, Haylee Chenchar, and Holly Scheer

BIG INITIATIVES

- **Rolling Thunder:** Potential Event for Memorial Day Weekend. This will be similar to Cruise the Legend but with motorcycles. Hoping we can pull everything together in time!
- **Downtown Car Show & Sidewalk Show:** This is in the very preliminary, conceptual stage. Tentatively shooting for June 24th since the City has cancelled Superday this year. We hope to have a car show, bands/DJs, and seating. Merchants would also have the option to have a sidewalk sale.
- **COVID Survey:** The DDA conducted a survey to assist businesses in navigating the COVID crisis and providing an enhanced customer experience. The survey results were distributed to merchants on May 12th and discussed at the Merchant Meeting on May 13th. The WTE ran a story on May 13th: https://www.wyomingnews.com/dda-small-business-survey/pdf_8573db04-4954-57e2-9999-3fd2369294f8.html. Visit Cheyenne also shared the survey results in their weekly newsletter on May 15th. The DDA has been invited to the Hospitality/Tourism Check In on May 20th to discuss the survey.
- **COVID Resources for Businesses:** The DDA has been actively participating in meetings on the Laramie County Recovery Plan. The DDA paired up with Visit Cheyenne and the Chamber to create a sign that met the requirements outlined in the Recovery Plan for businesses to display. In addition, the publication "Safe to Work," based on the Governor's Orders, was created in conjunction with Visit Cheyenne and the Chamber which was distributed on May 15th. This publication will be updated as orders evolve. On May 18th, a summary of the WY Legislature Special Session was emailed to businesses along with a link to request PPE equipment from the Wyoming Department of Homeland Security.
- **Data Collection:** Holly has been creating a database and matching spreadsheet of DDA businesses, including finding the contact information, web presence, and matching this with the County Assessor's information. This allows us to have internal records of our businesses served by the DDA, with the size of the facility, property tax information, year the building was built, and legal owner of the space all in one place. I have also been working on digitizing records, starting with the DDA's mill levy records. Those are now available and searchable internally for reporting purposes.
- **One-on-One Marketing Assistance to Businesses:** Haylee has worked one-on-one with The Donut Shop on Central and with Grandpa's Downtown Pizzeria to develop and enhance their Facebook presence.
- **Website Analytics:** Holly has installed and formatted Google Analytics on our website and it's now generating reports so we can track traffic, referrals, search terms, pages people are using on the site, and more.
- **Business Directory:** Haylee is currently working to develop a business directory on our webpage. We've sent out a Google form for businesses to submit their information so it can be loaded onto our website.
- **Real Estate Directory:** Haylee and Holly are working with the Cheyenne Board of Realtors to feature current commercial real estate listings on our website. Apparently the DDA started

down this path about 10 years ago and the Cheyenne Board of Realtors built the infrastructure to provide a raw feed. We are investigating whether this is feasible and how to effectively load and keep current the raw data.

- **Filing System:** Holly is beginning to organize a filing system that will allow us to quickly locate records. She is also working to sort and bring our paper contact records to digital format so they can be searched and utilized more effectively.
- **Mayor's Council for People with Disabilities:** We are working with the MCPD to offer 2 online classes on ADA regulations/compliance in FY21. At the next merchant meeting, Julie will join us to survey exactly what their needs are in this area.
- **High School Banners:** The DDA has teamed up with Western Vista to have banners printed with pictures of seniors graduating high school this year. We will replace all of our banners with these. The remaining seniors will be divided up and displayed near their respective schools. The DDA logo will be on all of the banners.
- **Office Construction:** Office construction is complete finally! We still need to undergo the final inspection. The Conference Room table and chairs were delivered and installed. Haylee has been moved into her new office. Next steps: Get the storage room cleaned and organized, get files organized and back in cabinets, and acquire a small table for the front room for casual meetings/work space.
- **DDA Sign:** Amber and Bruce have met with Glen Garrett, Brian Beadles, and Randy Byers twice now to begin sign design. Glen has done an incredible job and I'm really excited to see the final project.
- **FY21 Budget:** The budget was presented to the City on May 11th. I am currently working with the Mayor on our budget for FY21 and hopefully will have an MOU to present at the Board meeting.
- **Legacy Garden:** I met with the Laramie County Master Gardeners to start working on a Legacy Garden in the planters on the South side of Rib and Chop House.
- **Planters:** It's that time again. This week I'll be identifying which planters to keep and which ones to remove. The general plan is to keep the planters on 15th, Lincolnway, 17th, and 18th and have the City remove the others. The planters are outdated and crumbling. They have no reservoir and the sheer number are unmanageable. They consume significant financial resources with no return on investment. We are also looking at putting more shrubbery/greenery in the planters so that there is color year round rather than gigantic, ugly ashtrays.
- **History Under Foot:** This week, I am meeting with Kevin to discuss placement of plaques along Warren Avenue. These plaques will be installed in 2022 when WYDOT replaces the curb and gutter. Since WYDOT is already paying for mobilization and traffic control, we will save approximately \$15,000 on installation.
- **Grills Fund for Main Street Revitalization:** Unfortunately, we were not selected for funding. This was not unexpected given that the grant will only provide five (5) Accredited Main Street America Programs \$10,000 each to fund innovative revitalization efforts to address the current and/or legacy impacts of COVID-19.
- **Re-Ride:** Holly has been working with Visit Cheyenne to transition all the Re-Ride enhancement work over to the DDA. Holly and Haylee met with Brian Dewey from Koloni. At this time, we are just reserving the funds to see what transpires going forward. However, it is expected that demand will increase for these programs and decrease for public transit due to COVID.
- **Wells Fargo:** We've continued to struggle with getting the credit card put into my name and making me the administrator. Bruce gave the bank until May 19th to rectify the situation. If

they haven't issued the card by the 19th, we've advised them that we will ask the board to select a new banking institution.

BUSINESSES OPENING/EXPANDING/CLOSING

- Opened: Blacktooth Brewery (May 15, 2020 with package to go April 29, 2020), Little Moon Boutique (May 2, 2020)
- Coming: Ninja Playground (unknown), Hawthorne Tree (May), The Lincoln (May), Omelet House (unknown), Crossfit Cheyenne (mid-June), Kevin Robinette Studio (unknown)
- Still Looking to Expand: Desperado Depot & Prairie Home House Goods
- Potential Business: Silversage Ceramics (no communication since March)
- Closing/Closed: Arena Training Institute (Hope to Reopen in New Location Downtown Eventually), Cheyenne Martial Arts Academy (May 11, 2020), Casa de Garcia (April 26, 2020)
- Net business openings (since last July 1st): 7

Economic Development Projects

- Hotel Development – I am currently working with REV Development to develop the Hilton Garden Inn next to the Rib and Chop House. REV Development is using PACE financing (something that hasn't been done in WY to our knowledge before) and may need a TIF. Objective is to have shovels in the ground next spring.
- Project Phoenix – Very early conceptual stages.
- Project Phoenix 2.0 – This project is moving faster than we expected. Anticipating first steps this week with objective to have shovels in ground next spring.
- Project Onyx – It doesn't appear that the original proposed location is feasible; however, we think we've identified a second site and are currently working with the City on this project.
- Residential Development – Met with a developer on the 14th who is actively seeking downtown property to redevelop into residential space.

MARKETING AND PROMOTIONS UPDATE

Please refer to the May 2020 Social Media Analytics in your board packet for Facebook and Instagram analytics.

Please refer to the May 2020 Website Analytics in your board packet for website performance. Since Analytics was installed earlier this month, it is still collecting data. There will be more to report beginning next month.

Haylee has done an amazing job with our Facebook page. For comparison purposes:

- January
 - Facebook reach: 6,937
 - Post engagement: 16,347
- May 6, 2020
 - Facebook reach: 58,900
 - Post engagement: 26,500
- May 18, 2020
 - Facebook reach: 69,961
 - Post engagement: 34,597

We continue to grow our audience by leaps and bounds! It is also very time intensive since original content is being created almost daily.

Other marketing and promotions initiatives:

- **Virtual Brewery Crawl:** To celebrate Historic Preservation Month and National Travel & Tourism Week, Haylee created a Virtual Brewery Crawl that highlighted 4 breweries: Danielmark's, Black Tooth, Accomplice, and Freedom's Edge.
- **Virtual Historic Building Scavenger Hunt:** Haylee partnered with the Alliance for Historic Wyoming to create a virtual scavenger hunt featuring 6 downtown locations.
- **Curbside & Cruise Promotion:** We continue to promote eating at downtown restaurants before/during Cruise the Legend. We worked with The Historic Plains to feature Mr. Byrd and the Perfect Strangers at the May 16th Cruise.
- **Small Businesses the Heart of Cheyenne Promotion:** Since the start of this promotion, 13 downtown businesses have been featured: Satin & Spice; A&C Feed; Grandpa's Downtown Pizzeria; Black Tooth Brewery; The Prairie Pantry; Donut Shop on Central; Sanford's; A Shade of Vintage; Meraki Massage; Underwood Flowers; Desperado Depot; Freedom's Edge; and 2 Doors Down. Businesses are selected at random.

MAIN STREET UPDATES

- **Monthly Reports:** Reports for August, September, October, November, December, January, and February were submitted. March and April have not been submitted as we are waiting for the City Building Permit Report.
- **Community Transformation Workshop:** At this time, it is unclear whether this will be held. I haven't received any further communications. Tentative dates for CTW in Fall 2020 are October 7-9 in Cheyenne at the Plains Hotel. It will be combined with the WY Working Together Conference.

FIP/CIG PROGRAMS

The Design Committee met on May 13, 2020 to review FIP and CIG applications that had been submitted.

- The Design Committee approved funding for the Phase II of the OTEL FIP Grant in the amount of \$31,534.10. This funding will pay for 65% of the costs for 2nd Floor Insulated Windows (Storms) installation.
- The Design Committee approved funding for the Hynds application in the amount of \$5,502.25. This funding will pay 65% towards the cost of a new entrance door, door transom glass, and glass replacement for 5 exterior windows. In addition, it will pay for 65% of the cost of paint, supplies, and labor to paint the awning.
- The Design Committee approved funding for the CIG application in the amount of \$2,698.75. This funding will pay for 50% of the cost for a new sign, concrete removal to plant a tree, and window/door vinyl.

2019 FIP projects:

- Pursuant to the award letter, FIP applicants have one year to complete their projects which is May 31, 2020.
- I spoke with Ron Ibsen on April 13th. He is in Colorado and unable to leave his home due to COVID-19. I have approved a 60-day extension on his project.
- I left Marc Thayer a voicemail on April 8, 2020, to get an update on the Mendicino building and where they were at with Rail Yard Coffee House negotiations.