



Downtown Cheyenne

Staff Report

November 2020

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

BIG INITIATIVES

- **Annual Report to the City** – We presented the annual report to the City Council on October 9, 2020. A copy of it is attached to this report. The file is really large so I printed it out and scanned it in so I could send it via regular email. After doing some redesign for printing, Haylee has sent it to the printers. It will cost us \$888.77 to print 350 copies. We'll have postage to mail it to all the property owners downtown. This was not a budgeted expense but I believe it is an important tool for building long-term support for the DDA and downtown investment.
- **Unemployment Audit** – The onsite audit was conducted on October 21, 2020. On November 10th, the decision was made to close the audit and accept the findings. The findings resulted in less than \$100 being owed and they do not collect anything under \$100. Since the tax difference was less than 10% of the total tax, they did not need to expand the audit.
- **Business Climate Survey** – LEADS partnered with LCCC to conduct a business climate survey. We were given the opportunity to have the survey disseminated to downtown businesses which we did. In addition, we provided LCCC with a list of all the downtown businesses so if someone downtown received the email through a different distribution list, the results could be included in our report. Businesses were given until November 6, 2020, to complete the survey. We had 14 businesses respond to the survey, considerably less than we hoped for.
- **Community Mural** – While progress has been made on the mural, the artist still hasn't finished it. I'm not sure what we are going to do if she doesn't complete it soon. We may have to resort to painting over it to restore it to its original state.
- **Dueling Pianos Fundraiser** – The dueling pianos fundraiser was held on November 17th. The Met very generously donated all proceeds from ticket sales. In addition, we had 4 auction items. The event raised \$3,508.96 for marketing and promotions downtown. We need to follow up with them and get the final check for ticket proceeds.
- **CARES Act Funding** – We received \$64,342 in CARES Act Funding. A copy of the signed packet is included in this report. In addition, I submitted the reimbursement request for \$57,491.51 for expenses incurred to date. A copy of the reimbursement request is attached to this report. The remainder is for Small Business Saturday advertising expenses which haven't been incurred yet. Those have to be submitted by December 15th.
- **City Funding** – We will be receiving \$51,328.26 from them. I hope to get the invoice out tomorrow.
- **Halloween Events** – The trick or treating event drew thousands of kids into downtown. Rough estimates would put it around 2,000 but it's difficult to say. We weren't prepared for the number of kids and some businesses ran out of candy within 30 minutes. We discussed it at the merchant meeting. Next year, we would like to coordinate it as a costume parade and have a designated route. The businesses at the meeting also understand that they will need to help purchase the candy/toys for an event of this size and scale. The pub crawl wasn't as much of a success as we hoped. Reports are that highest utilization was during the

trick or treating. Flippers served 112 drinks for example. Discussions indicate that after the trick or treating people were driving from one location to the next. Due to this and the merchant feedback that they wanted to keep it family oriented, we've pulled our resolution for open consumption during Small Business Saturday.

- **17th Street Lights** – 24 of the 32 poles were wrapped with lights on November 6th. Black Hills Energy brought out two trucks to assist. This project wouldn't have been possible without their help. In addition, a huge thank you to Anthony, Bruce, and Katie for dropping everything to come help on very short notice. Only 1 pole turned on that night so Holly wound up calling Pole Mountain Electric to come out and see what the problem was. Most just needed the breaker button reset but some had to have new breaker boxes installed. In spite of it all, they are amazing and were totally worth the extra expense. We're still hoping to wrap the remaining light poles on 17th but are quickly running out of time.
- **Rocking V Metal Decorations** – The decorations were delivered on November 11th. We had them sandblasted and powder coated. They turned out fabulously. We are currently in the process of wrapping them with lights. That turned out to be more time consuming and complex than I imagined. I'd hoped to use some of the leftover lights from 17th but they just didn't have the effect we hoped for. Instead, Holly went on a mission to find rope lights and wound up going to Fort Collins to purchase additional lights so we could complete the project on schedule (hopefully!).
- **Christmas Banners** – Well, this too has been an adventure. The banners arrived a week later than we hoped. The printers just didn't print any of the blue banners. The red banners that we received were printed incorrectly. We're making the red banners work and have adjusted the design on the blue banners to mirror the red banners we received (I think). We're hoping the blue banners arrive anytime now. Sara and Shawndae have been very helpful in trying to get this resolved with the printing company. On a positive note, we will have some extra banners at a discounted price.
- **Small Business Saturday** – I submitted our application for American Express Small Business Saturday on October 22, 2020. It was approved that day. Our stuff arrived on November 16th. We probably got around 50 bags, some posters, and some stickers. Thankfully, we also received 250 bags from Wyoming Main Street for Small Business Saturday. We will be distributing the swag to businesses to give out on a first come, first serve basis. We received CARES Act funding for advertising to cover the cost of a full-page ad for 5 days in WTE and a KGWN commercial. Holly called 151 businesses to ask if they had promotions for the advertising. 63 businesses provided us with promotions. Haylee is working with the WTE and KGWN on that (see marketing section of report). With the funding I had in the budget for SBS, we'll also run a full page ad in the Cheyenne Post. I'll go over the budget by \$500 but we get another ad later in the year of the same size for free and this issue is being mailed to 47,000 households.
- **DDA Sign** - This custom design has taken more time than first imagined. Welding and Machine has had the quote in process and Glen checks in with them twice a week. They did some refinement of the design details but they have had to get quotes from others to outsource the fabrication of the big letters - "DDA". They checked two sources which took weeks but paid off at \$300/letter. These letters still need mounting studs fitted and rolling to match the curve of the sign.
- **Audit** – I spoke with Hailey at MHP. Since we are included in the City's report, we most likely won't see a draft of the audit until the City's draft is ready.
- **Television for DDA Window** – The new television has been installed and is currently running. We are featuring upcoming events as well as information on COVID-19. Holly manages the

content for our office and does a fabulous job of keeping it updated. She can push updates instantly. It's really a pretty slick operation.

- **Department of Audit Report** – The Department of Audit report was submitted on October 23, 2020. We also submitted the local government cover sheet on October 28, 2020. A copy of our audit must be submitted before December 31, 2020. The report that was filed on October 23, 2020, is included in the board packet for your review.
- **History Over Head Banners** – We've finished the design on 17 banners. Holly called State Archives to get a photo of Police Chief Byrd. That is all we need for the 18th banner. I'm finishing up the information on 19 and 20 and then these will go to the printers. These will be hung on the Depot Plaza.
- **Golf Tournament Thank You Cards** – Holly got all of the thank you cards sent out for the golf tournament. Approximately 50 cards were mailed.
- **PayPal Account and Residential/Commercial Industrial Leases/For Sale Listing** – Holly called and left a voicemail. She hasn't heard back but as near as she can tell, Christie Deporter is no longer the Grand Island DDA Director. This issue remains outstanding. We haven't had a lot of time to wrestle with it this month.

BUSINESSES OPENING/EXPANDING/CLOSING

- Opened: Crossfit Cheyenne, Beach Please Drink Company
- Coming: Ninja Playground (unknown), The Gathering, Kevin Robinette Studio (occupied – unknown if opening to the public), **EQ Capital (1912 Capitol Avenue, Ste 500)**, Venezuelan Restaurant, Annex Gaming Café (2021)
- Still Looking to Expand:
- Potential Business: 307 Roots Salon (established in Wheatland), Potential Restaurant (Dell Jimenez), Brandon Roberts 214-3841
- Closing/Closed:
- Net business openings (since last July 1st):

Economic Development Projects

- **Reed Rail Corridor Project** – We've received the report from Dan with EPS on potential solutions for the funding shortfall. Next step is 60% design.
- **REV Development Hotel Development** – Last contact was June 18, 2020. Objective is to have shovels in the ground next spring. Project will need PACE and TIF to move forward.
- **Project Phoenix** – On hold pending outcome of Phoenix 2.0.
- **Project Phoenix 2.0** – We've had no communication from this project since June 18th. I've spoken with the building owner and a letter of intent was submitted. Conversations with the building owner and his agent indicate due diligence runs through March 31st. The original objective was to have shovels in the ground by early Spring so it will be interesting to see if that progresses.
- **Project Onyx** – We received their proposal on September 28th and have provided them with feedback. The proposal hinges on \$3 million in utility upgrades (expanded power capacity) and the acquisition of the building. I don't anticipate this proposal moving forward as it stands now.
- **Project Chupacabra** – This is a local, organic project that has enormous potential. We're working with them to shore up financing and accelerate development. This mixed-use proposal will have industrial, retail, and residential components.
- **Artspace** – Anja, Brendan, and I had a Zoom meeting with Wendy and Naomi from ArtSpace on October 7th. While our original intent was to identify 2 potential locations, we've really settled on one site. We believe the potential for this site is so strong that Brendan went

ahead and put together some renderings. We are also exploring a potential partnership with a speedy bank.

- **Residential Development** – Goodyear Building is considering adding apartments/condos above the existing building. Project Chupacabra has a residential component. Westby Edge will develop townhomes. Bell Building is progressing and will have substantial residential impacts.

MARKETING AND PROMOTIONS UPDATE

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

Please refer to the November 2020 Website Analytics in your board packet for website performance.

-Our Downtown Trick or Treating Event went well. In addition to our interactive map on the website we were also able to run a list of all of the participating businesses on our social media channels. This post reached 32,195 people in total.

-We have created a private Downtown Cheyenne Business Owners Facebook group for our business owners to connect and better stay in the know about what is happening downtown. The group currently has 70 members.

-We are working with various news outlets to run the Small Business Saturday ad that highlights many of the businesses who are running sales for SBS. We have provided each outlet with logos of each participating business, a sample script that they can use to build the ad from, a list of the participating businesses and their respective sale(s) and verbiage about COVID-19 shopping precautions.

MAIN STREET UPDATES

- **Main Street Community Impact Toolkit Workshop** – Ben Muldrow and Matt Ashby conducted the workshop on October 26, 2020. In addition to meeting with the board, they met with 6 members of the community. On October 27, 2020, they did the report out. Linda Klink and Kayla Kler from Wyoming Main Street joined us for this. Outcomes include new marketing material; “Powered by DDA” logo which utilizes elements of our destination logo “Downtown Cheyenne”; a 4-color version of our destination logo; and identified and purchased the font package for us. Ben is working with Haylee to finalize our City Report design using the elements and marketing material that were created.
- **Main Street Business Assistance Workshop** – The DDA hosted the Main Street Business Assistance Workshop on October 19th and 20th. We had 9 people participate. It’s unfortunate that more people did not attend. Jennifer Ford did a great job. As Jennifer said though, they have to want it and be willing to “lean in”. I can’t want it for them.
- **Monthly Reports:** I submitted our June report on October 21st so we are current. Our September report has not been submitted and is late. I’ve been up to my eyeballs in report and I’m just behind.

FIP/CIG PROGRAMS

At this point, no further FIP applications will be accepted until City funding is restored or the DDA becomes more financially stable. They have been removed from the website.

The Design Committee met on November 10th. They approved the CIG application for Trophy Creative which is on the agenda today for approval. They also discussed the proposed changes to

the FIP for Mendocino Building. This was postponed to give us a chance to work with Matt and Marc on the proposed design.

2019 Outstanding FIP projects:

- Pursuant to the award letter, FIP applicants have one year to complete their projects which was May 31, 2020.
- Matt Mateo submitted and was approved for his building permit for the Mendocino Building. Mark Christensen was also able to provide me with the architectural report prepared by Studio RED. Work to be completed is as follows:
 - Removal of existing top façade panels, canopy, storefront and column surrounds. (completed)
 - Uncover 2nd floor windows; clean and paint.
 - Install new cornice.
 - Restore existing masonry.
 - Create new storefront to represent early 20th century archetype; including the creation of a separate entrance to access the second story (future housing)

The Design Committee met this month and discussed the changes that Matt Mateo proposed to the original approved plan. They felt like it deviated too much from the original design. I have emailed Matt, Marc Thayer (owner and original awardee), and Barbara to schedule a meeting to try to find a compromise. I haven't heard back from Matt yet.

- On the Goodyear Building, we are still waiting for the parklet to be finished for final payout. The lot was occupied by a hail dent repair company and is now vacant. I am waiting to hear if work will be completed this year or next, given that we have moved into fall/winter season.
- I'm anticipating receiving an invoice for 318 W. 17th anytime now. I spoke with Michael Radican on the phone and understand that the work has been completed.

2020 FIP projects:

OTEL Building – Work has begun to replace the windows. Edwards Construction has had the interior windows since 9/28. Ongoing work and hunting season has delayed the start. Greg repaired and readied the plaster on the windows jambs and prime painted them. Five-R Construction awaits re delivery of the windows for the 3rd and 4th levels.

Outstanding CIG Projects:

- Curb and gutter were completed at 1920 Thomes. We have not received an invoice for this project yet.
- The tree for the Bell Building is still outstanding.