



Downtown Cheyenne Staff Report

February 2021

Report By: Amber Ash and Haylee Chenchar

DDA INITIATIVES

Banking RFP – Bruce, Steve, Amy Mahoney, and I met with Jonah Bank to begin setting up the accounts. They have been great to work with. I can't tell you how exciting it is to be able to email a real person and get an email back within a couple of hours (and sometimes minutes). Seriously, it's just awesome! Lori is the bomb! The customer service is unparalleled. I just can't tell you enough what a fabulous decision Jonah Bank has been. They will be waiving fees for 7 months to give us time to get set up. Amy has cut a check for \$100,000 to Jonah Bank from Wells Fargo to start the process of transferring funds and get us going.

Events & Special Projects Coordinator – Haylee and I conducted interviews last week for the Events & Special Projects Coordinator position. Amber completed reference verifications last Thursday and made a job offer. It was verbally accepted last Thursday and the formal acceptance of job offer letter signed on February 15th. Amy has reached out to her to begin setting her up in our payroll system. The new person will start on March 15th.

#WyoWednesday – The WyoWednesday highlight went well this month. We highlighted 6 businesses across the district with a wide range of industry focus. This month's initiative reached a total of 15,757 people.

Graffiti – Amber has been working to identify property owners impacted by graffiti and to obtain signed consents to remove it. The cold weather and snow have delayed removal. Amber sent out a second notice on February 15th asking that property owners contact her asap if they needed graffiti removed. However, in the interim, the following actions have been taken:

- David Hatch very generously donated his time and paint to whitewash the plywood on the Bell Building that got tagged. A huge THANK YOU to David for his help and generosity!
- Amber contacted Black Hills to paint over the tags on the electrical box on the Dineen Block.
- Amber got green spray paint from the City to cover the tags on the trash cans. Core Civic residents have volunteered to paint over the tags. We are working on final details, weather contingent.

Glen Garrett has expressed concerns about the removal method potentially damaging the brick and mortar on historic buildings. Amber has reached out to Top Gun Pressure Washing regarding his concerns. It is important to note, however, that there aren't a lot of companies that specialize in graffiti removal. When Amber Googled the graffiti removal locally, the only company name that came up that does any sort of graffiti removal was ServPro. We can only offer the services that exist. If anyone knows anyone locally who specializes in graffiti removal, particularly on historic buildings, please let Amber know asap.

DDA Sign – Glen Garrett presented three options to the Design Committee on February 10th. The Design Committee voted to recommend design option 3. This is on the agenda for board consideration today.

Mayor's Youth Council Initiative – The group has set a downtown scavenger hunt to take place over spring break and highlight several downtown businesses. The DDA has been heavily involved with assisting the group in identifying businesses that would be a good fit for the project, designing their promotional materials, and helping to refine the details of the project.

Social Media Tracking Project - The social media channel tracking project has been completed. Haylee was able to identify what social media channels each business within the downtown district utilizes. Additionally, each page was

added to the list of what the DDA accounts now "follow." Because this initiative was done through the organization's page instead of the administration's personal accounts, this action creates a sense of support as businesses see the DDA page following their own channels. It also provides consistency for the organization to keep us informed with what's going on both now and, in the future, as it eliminates the need for anyone to have to go back and "re-identify" what downtown businesses have accounts, as this was done on behalf of the organization's channel. In total, the DDA page is now "following" 367 business pages on Facebook and 179 business pages on Instagram.

Business Directory – Haylee has begun making contact with businesses directly to have them fill out the directory form in an effort to reach 100 directory listings by April. To date, we have made contact with 20 businesses and have received 5 responses.

Snow Removal – Anthony has been working with Jason Sanchez and Pete Laybourn on this. He is currently in the process of obtaining 3 bids. A huge thank you to Anthony for all of his help.

City Curb, Gutter, and Sidewalk Ordinance – This ordinance stemmed from Pete's Practical Plan. Amber has been working with Councilman Laybourn and City Staff on this ordinance to address the deteriorating sidewalk, curb, and gutter downtown. The ordinance was heard at Finance Committee on February 16th. It will be before City Council for second reading on February 22, 2021. A copy of the ordinance is in your board packet.

Strategic Plan – Amber is currently reworking the strategic plan. Without the TIF funding, it will need to be scaled back significantly and ultimately, implementation will be contingent on City Funding.

History Under Foot – Pursuant to the discussion regarding the strategic plan and funding going forward, Amber has returned the grant funds to the Wyoming Cultural Trust Fund for History Under Foot. A copy of the email correspondence is included in the board packet.

City Funding – Amber met with Mayor Collins on February 1st to discuss City funding. Our budget request is due to the City by March 5th at 5:00 pm. Amber has included a proposed budget for FY22 in the board packet. Please provide feedback as soon as possible so that we can get it submitted for consideration.

2021 Visitor's Guide - Haylee has started planning the 2021 Downtown Visitor's Guide. This project is expected to be completed by the end of April with an anticipated Mid-May release.

Website Upgrades - Haylee has been working on gathering information for a CIG/FIP Highlight of past DDA funded projects to include on our website. This project has an anticipated completion date of Mid-April.

BUSINESSES OPENING/EXPANDING/CLOSING

Opened: The Gathering Bakery (2/21), Prairie House Home Goods (2/21 – Expansion and New Location)

Coming: Urban Studio, (2/21), Ike's Bar and Grill (2021), Annex Gaming Café (2021), Ninja Playground (unknown if or when)

Still Looking to Expand/Currently Expanding:

Potential Business:

Closing/Closed:

Net Business Openings (since July 1st): 16

Net Job Creation: 68

Business Name - Opened	Number of Jobs Created	Notes About Job Creation	Business Name - Closed	Number of Jobs	Notes About Job Loss
The Lincoln (August 2020)			Turner's Draperies (May 2020)	0	
Powder River Art Gallery (August 2020)	1		The Lariat	1	Actual Unknown
The Omelet House (August 2020)	14		Grandpa's Pizza (November 2020)	2	
Stitches Occupational Health & Wellness Center (September 2020)	0	Expansion of Space, No Additional Staff	XESI (Moved to Carlson)	2	
gener8tor/Microsoft (September 2020)	1		RePeak (December 2020)	1	1 PT but can't enter 1 PT into MS system
Cherry Creek Mortgage (September 2020)	16				
Health Aroma Spa (October 2020)	1	Actual Unknown (Tried to Call)			
CrossFit Cheyenne (October 2020)	3	Estimated at 2 Owners plus 1 for Contract Trainers			
Encore Green Environmental (October 2020)	8				
Beach Please Drink Company (November 2020)	10				
307 Roots Salon Boutique (November 2020)	2				
Instant Attraction Women's Boutique (December 2020)	2				
Offer Cheyenne	1	Rob Horsley - Mark Kaufman's Building			
JazMinn's Events & Décor (January 2021)					
AG Photography (January 2021)	1				
Grandpa's Pizza (January 2021)	0	Reopened Under New Ownership			
Alexis Drake (January 2021)	0	Expansion to New Location			
Western Vista Credit Union (February 2021)	11	8 as of February 4th, 3 more by end of month with more expected over time			
The Gathering (February 10, 2021)					
Prairie House Home Goods (February 13, 2021)	0	Expansion to New Location			
Urban Studio (February 2021)	3	Owned & Operated by Amie Siemens, Jasmine Mallo, and Karla Walden			
Annex Gaming Company (2021)					
Ike's Bar & Grill (old Casa de Trujillo location)					
Company A (Not Public Yet)					
Total Jobs	74			6	

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Reed Rail Corridor Project – The Reed Avenue Rail Corridor Steering Committee met on December 4, 2020, to discuss Urban Use Overlay Zoning District Regulations; specifically, parking requirements, setbacks, pedestrian zones, bicycle parking, and industrial uses. A work session is planned for the Planning Commission in January and City Council in February. If all goes according to plan, it will be introduced in March and adopted in May of 2021.

Lincolnway Placemaking Plan – Amber met with WYDOT officials on February 27th to discuss this. WYDOT disagrees with the consultant's findings and thinks they understated the traffic impacts. WYDOT is concerned that the 3 lanes will constrict traffic so far, it will cause people to bypass downtown all together and instead take I-80. They said that the 5-lane plan doesn't really offer anything constructive in the way of addressing pedestrian safety. Only one island really acted as a pedestrian safety island.

We talked quite a bit about the signal crossings. All 38 signals downtown are sequenced together. They don't do this for any other community in the State. Changing the timing ricolochets throughout the system downtown. They are also concerned that adding additional time will result in people becoming impatient across the system and jaywalking.

I asked about removing the center turn lane and modeling the road system after downtown Fort Collins where diagonal parking is in the middle of the road. This isn't an option in Wyoming without a Statute change. State statute in Wyoming prohibits diagonal parking on any State highway. In Colorado, CDOT allows local government to control highways within the City but in Wyoming, WYDOT maintains jurisdiction.

I asked what we could do that would effectively improve traffic safety downtown and the answer was to get rid of free rights, basically eliminating right hand turns. They are going to review the Lincolnway Placemaking Plan and let me know if any of the elements will actually be effective.

Other things that came up were that Lincolnway is not on the STIP (Statewide Transportation Improvement Program) so it is not on the State's radar for funding. Improvements to Lincolnway will need to compete with projects across the state for funding through STIP.

ArtSpace – Betsey and I met with ArtSpace to review the pro forma. ArtSpace is currently tightening up the numbers. Mark Christensen is assisting us with getting a Phase I and Phase II site assessment completed to see if the site is eligible for Brownfield Funding. I will be reaching out to the property owner to make arrangements for the assessment.

The proposed mixed-use project will provide 37 units of live/work housing in the West Edge off the Reed Avenue Rail Corridor. The initial, very conservative and very preliminary pro-forma anticipates a build cost of \$9,680,187 not including land acquisition. Of that, approximately \$8,416,533 would be funded through LIHTC, a residential

mortgage, HOME funds, and CDBG funding. Additional resources will need to be identified for the remaining \$1.2 million as well as land acquisition.

Bell Building – Haylee and Amber attended the last Brownfield meeting via Zoom. The project is making substantial headway. All remediation has been completed. Roof repairs are complete.

Westby Edge – Haylee and Amber toured the project site. They are finalizing approvals with the City. They anticipate having a bar/restaurant along with office space. In addition, they'll be building several upscale townhome apartments for rent.

Project CP – This is a potential new mixed used development downtown. Amber spoke with the developer on February 16th. The project will add approximately 45 residential units downtown along with commercial retail space.

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 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.

MAIN STREET UPDATES

All of our outstanding reports were submitted to Wyoming Main Street on January 29th. In addition, the report due January 31st was submitted. We are in full compliance. I've already received the building permit report for January (February's MS report) so I anticipate that we'll be able to submit that on time.

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.

2019 Outstanding FIP projects:

- Pursuant to the award letter, FIP applicants have one year to complete their projects which was May 31, 2020.
- The platform for masonry work on the Mendocino has been set up. We anticipate that work will begin as the weather allows.
- 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.

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.
- Trophy Creative was awarded a \$5,000 grant in November of 2020 for new signage. This project is complete and I'm working with Sara on final invoice.

- FlyDragon Art Studio was unable to completely restore their sign. This was an approved grant from November 2019. The builder skipped town. The painting was completed and the payment for that work is on your voucher report today.

Potential CIG Projects:

- Ikes Bar and Grill – 122 W. 6th Street (old Casa de Trujillo restaurant), outdoor dining patio
- Instant Attraction Women’s Boutique – Applied and then withdrew to look for more cost-effective options.
- Hawthorn Tree – 112 E. 17th Street, exterior signage
- JazMinn’s Events & Décor – 110 E. 17th Street (old Reformation Dance studio), new sign face or potentially a new sign
- 309-311 W. 18th Street – New Awnings, Parking Lot Resurfacing, Landscaping
- Frontier Building – Exterior Painting of Annex (anticipate March application)
- Alexis Drake – Signage for New Location