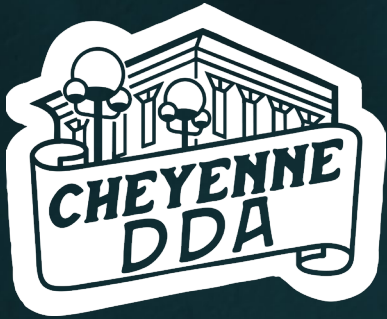




# CHEYENNE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

City Council Work Session — March 2026



A nighttime photograph of a city street. On the left, a multi-story building has a vertical sign that reads "HOTEL PIONEER". A smaller sign below it says "PIONEER HOTEL". The street is lined with parked cars on both sides. In the distance, a bridge is visible under a dark sky. Strings of warm white lights are strung across the street. The overall atmosphere is cozy and urban.

# WHY THE DDA EXISTS

History, Mandate & Legal Framework

# A BRIEF HISTORY



*Downtown Cheyenne Aerial. Date Unknown.*

# FORMATION OF THE AUTHORITY: THE EARLY YEARS

## 1980

- Vacancy rates up to **40%**
- Residents form Downtown Development Association

## 1984

- State legislation passed for Downtown Development Authority legal framework
- Cheyenne Downtown Development Authority formed by Governing Body and voters
- Cheyenne DDA selected for National Main Street urban demonstration cities

## 1989

- Vacancy rates down to **5%**
- 1989 Plan for Development created

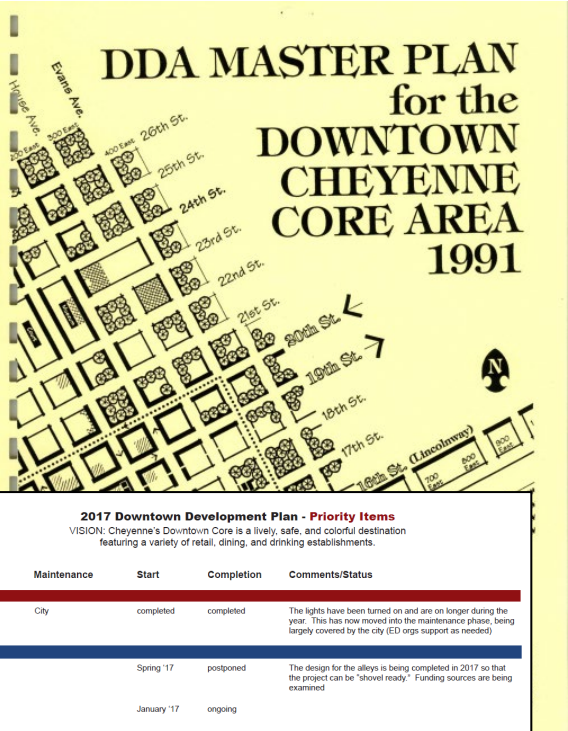
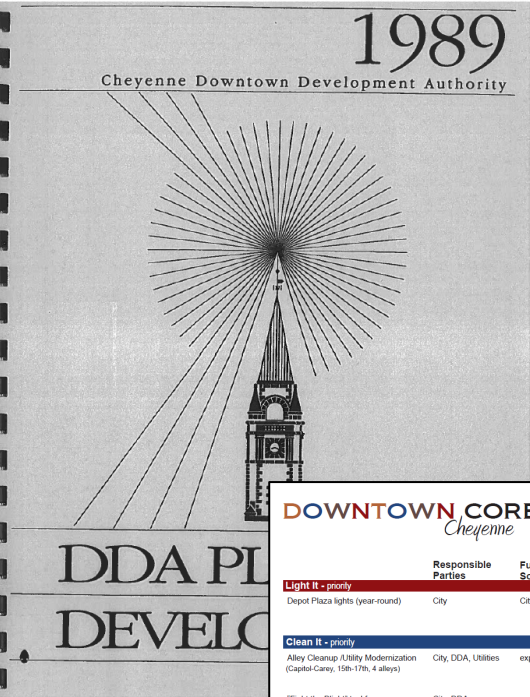
## 1990

- Spring: Cheyenne DDA faces public credibility challenges; **board resigns**
- December: Mayor appoints new board

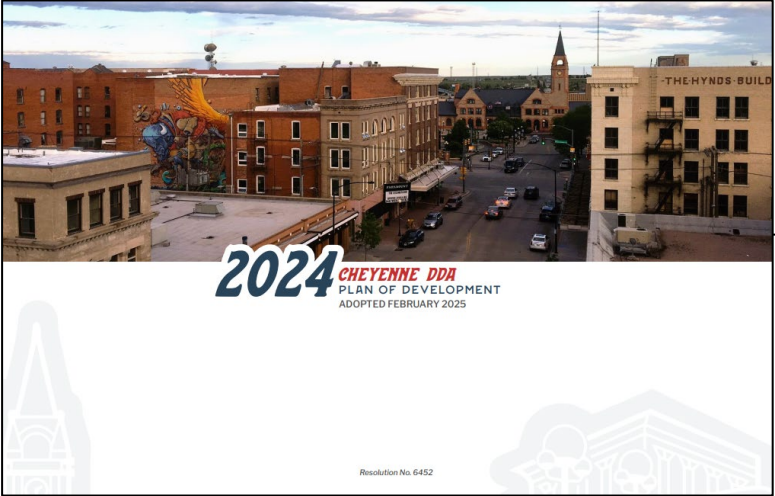
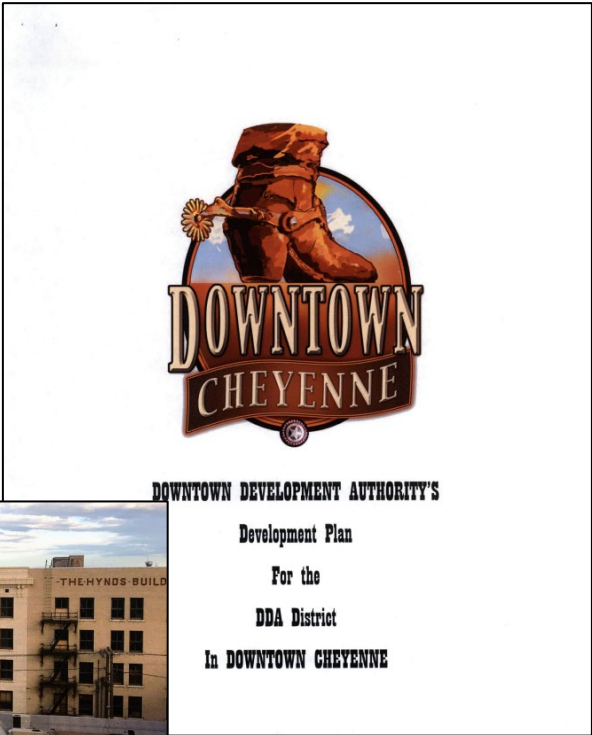
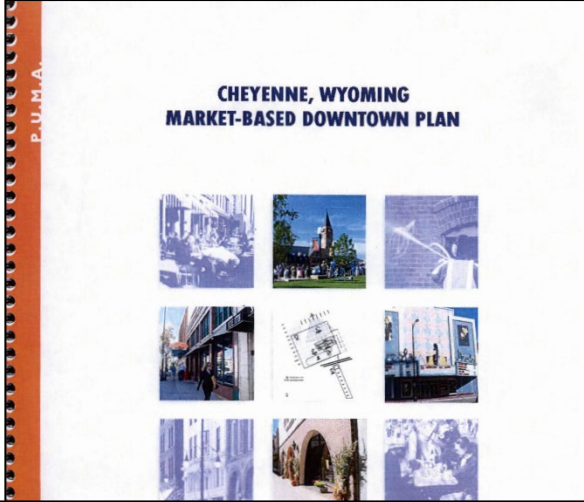
## 1991

- 1991 Master Plan for the Downtown Cheyenne Core Area created

# DOWNTOWN PLANS THROUGHOUT THE YEARS



| DOWNTOWN CORE<br><i>Cheyenne</i>                                           |                             | 2017 Downtown Development Plan - Priority Items                                                                                                  |             |             |            |                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                            |                             | VISION: Cheyenne's Downtown Core is a lively, safe, and colorful destination featuring a variety of retail, dining, and drinking establishments. |             |             |            |                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Light It - priority                                                        | Responsible Parties         | Funding Source                                                                                                                                   | Maintenance | Start       | Completion | Comments/Status                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Depot Plaza lights (year-round)                                            | City                        | City                                                                                                                                             | City        | completed   | completed  | The lights have been turned on and are on longer during the year. This has now moved into the maintenance phase, being largely covered by the city (ED orgs support as needed)   |
| Clean It - priority                                                        |                             |                                                                                                                                                  |             |             |            |                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Alley Cleanup / Utility Modernization (Capitol-Carey, 15th-17th, 4 alleys) | City, DDA, Utilities        | exploring                                                                                                                                        |             | Spring '17  | postponed  | The design for the alleys is being completed in 2017 so that the project can be "shovel ready." Funding sources are being examined                                               |
| "Fight the Blight" taskforce                                               | City, DDA, Other ED Support |                                                                                                                                                  |             | January '17 | ongoing    |                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Public Safety                                                              | City, DDA, Chamber          | City                                                                                                                                             |             | ongoing     | ongoing    | The perception of public safety needs to improve in order to increase the pedestrian traffic in the Core. Efforts to begin this change have started with the Responsible Parties |
| Build It - priority                                                        |                             |                                                                                                                                                  |             |             |            |                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Depot Plaza water feature                                                  | DDA, City                   | exploring                                                                                                                                        | City        | Spring '17  | Summer '18 | The design has been completed, however we need to determine new funding sources for the construction and maintenance                                                             |
| Ice Rink in December in Depot                                              | DDA, City                   | DDA, private                                                                                                                                     | same        | ongoing     | ongoing    | The overall impact of the ice rink was positive. While there are some things that will be improved, this is something that will be continued                                     |
| Hynd's Building and Parking                                                | Chamber, DDA, LEADS         | public, private                                                                                                                                  |             | ongoing     | Fall '18   |                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Move It - full plan                                                        |                             |                                                                                                                                                  |             |             |            |                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Parking - distribution and use                                             | City, DDA, Visit Cheyenne   |                                                                                                                                                  |             | Spring '17  | Dec '17    | Work with Union Pacific, city to coordinate parking opportunities for the Core                                                                                                   |
| Support It - priority                                                      |                             |                                                                                                                                                  |             |             |            |                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Business Retention                                                         | Core Partners               |                                                                                                                                                  |             | ongoing     | ongoing    |                                                                                                                                                                                  |



# THE STATUTORY PURPOSE

## **Wyoming Statute W.S. 15-9-201 et seq**

The Cheyenne Governing Body established the DDA to carry out these duties on behalf of the municipality:

- Serve a public use
- Promote the health, safety, prosperity, security and general welfare of the people of Wyoming
- Halt or prevent deterioration of property values or structures within the Central Business District
- Halt or prevent the growth of blighted areas within the Central Business District
- Assist municipalities in the development and redevelopment of such districts
- Provide for the overall health of the district

**These aren't aspirational statements.**

**They're the statutory purpose of the DDA and the legal basis for everything we do.**

A nighttime photograph of a town street. On the left, a building has a vertical sign that reads "HOTEL PIONEER". A horizontal sign below it says "PIONEER HOTEL". The street is lined with parked cars, and string lights are strung across the road. In the distance, a bridge is visible under a dark sky. The text "HONEST ASSESSMENT" is overlaid in large, white, serif font.

# HONEST ASSESSMENT

What We Found & What We've Done

# WHAT WE FOUND

## March 2025 Downtown Development Authority

- Compliance gaps with statute and city code
- Public perception and relations issues
- A brand-new Plan of Development with unclear strategy for implementation
- Multiple structural iterations (standalone, merged with other organizations, back to City) each leaving disruption unresolved

Overall: an organization that resembled a dilapidated house more than a thriving home.

**We need to rebuild the foundation before we can build anything else.**



*The Cheyenne DDA:  
Good bones, lots of work needed.*

# 2023: RESTABILIZATION

# 2023

- City Work Program reinstated through MOU under Municipal Code 2.76.060
- All new staff needed
- Finances brought into order
- Compliance reestablished with statute and city code

The main priority: **stabilize and ensure fundamental compliance.**

# 2024: PLAN OF DEVELOPMENT

# 2024

**The Plan of Development is NOT a strategic plan for the DDA.**

The Plan of Development **IS:**

- A public planning document that outlines physical and economic improvements for the downtown district.
- The legal boundary of the DDA's authority.
  - Under statute, the DDA cannot act or spend money unless a development activity is in accordance with the plan.

The existing plan was outdated. The DDA updated it to reflect current downtown conditions and current community priorities.

# 2025: UNDERSTANDING & EXECUTION

2025+

- Understanding what the DDA actually is and how it should operate.
- Execution through evaluation: building systems that are repeatable, defensible, and tied directly to statutory purpose.

**3 staff members total. Only 2 staff June–October 2025 (summer season).**

- 16 of 35 Plan of Development actions started
- 4 near completion or developed into repeatable, scalable processes

# CURRENT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- **Amber Nuse** (*Appt: 03/13/23 – 06/30/26*)
- **Jamie Winters** (*Reappt: 07/01/22 – 06/30/26*)
- **Stan Hartzheim** (*Filling Danica Mrozinsky unexpired term: 07/01/23 – 06/30/27*)
- **Janelle Rose** (*Appt: 07/01/23 – 06/30/27*)
- **Brian Bau** (*Filling Judy Moss unexpired term: 07/01/23 – 06/30/27*)
- **Candice Wisdom** (*Filling John Karajanis unexpired term: 07/01/24 – 06/30/28*)
- **Lorrell Bellotti** (*Appt: 07/01/24 – 06/30/28*)
- **David Teubner** (*Reappt: 07/01/24 – 06/30/28*)
- **Wendy Volk** (*Reappt: 07/01/25 – 06/30/29*)
- **Jeff White** (*City Council, 2-year term: 01/01/26 – 12/31/27*)
- **Linda Heath, Commissioner** (*Ex Officio Member, Laramie County*)

A nighttime photograph of a city street. On the left, a multi-story brick building features a vertical sign that reads "HOTEL PIONEER". A smaller sign below it says "PIONEER HOTEL". The street is lined with parked cars, and a few vehicles are visible in the distance. Strings of warm white lights are strung across the street, and bare trees are visible on the right. The sky is dark blue.

# WHAT WE'VE BUILT

Programs, Partnerships & Communications

# KEY PLAN OF DEVELOPMENT ACTION ITEMS IN-PROGRESS

## Walkability

Sidewalk repair process for the Pilot Grant Program with City 1% created:  
2 completed 2025,  
9 applications for spring 2026.

## Enhance Bicycle and Pedestrian Amenities

GIS asset inventory started:  
comprehensive database of all downtown assets (bike racks, planters, lights, benches, etc.)

## Streetscape/Greenscape Enhancements

2025 Planter Program: Best feedback in years. Expanding to winter displays + 8 new water-efficient pilot planters in 2026

## Resource Repository

Business Toolkit created (final draft soon): Step-by-step guide through every relevant City, County, and State dept from formation to licensing. Made for downtown, usable citywide.

## Continuation of Grant Programs

Grant parameters clarified, FIP reinstated, OpenGov platform applications fixed and created, review criteria aligned to statute.

## Website Updates & Public Perception

Comprehensive Communications Plan almost complete.  
Deliverables: Communications strategy, brand clean-up, new, easy-to-use website, and video assets to promote downtown

# GRANT PROGRAM STATUS

## 2024

### Clearing the Backlog

**14 GRANTS COMPLETED**  
\$263,000+ disbursed

Focus: paying out 2022–2023 awards inherited from pre-transition period.

## 2025

### Reinstating the Programs

**6 GRANTS COMPLETED**  
\$97,000+ disbursed

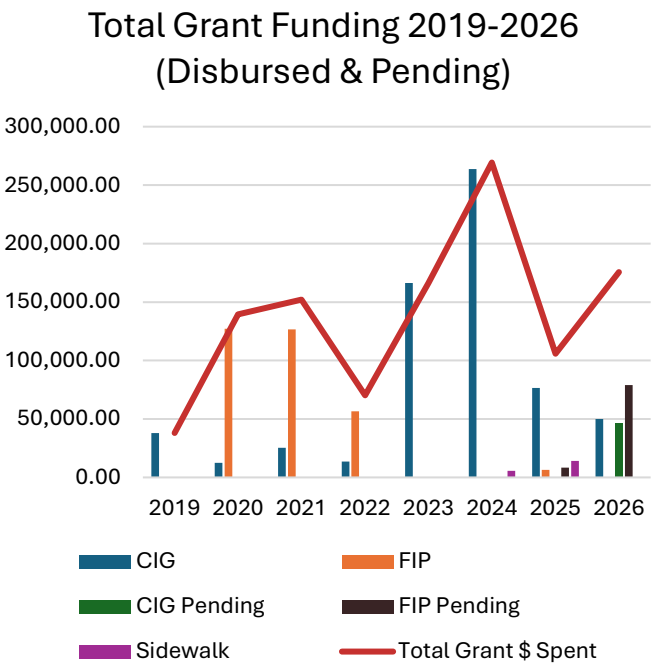
Parameters cleaned. FIP reinstated. OpenGov platform. Review criteria aligned to statute.

## 2026

### The Ramp Up (3 months in)

**\$50,000 DISBURSED**  
\$125,500+ pending

2 complete, 5 projected, 1 pending. Pending dollars already exceed all of 2025 due to large improvements.



# DDA PARTNERSHIPS

## Historic Preservation Board

Developing downtown design guidelines — 2026 priority for both orgs  
Advisory review for historic grant applications.

## Arts Cheyenne

Community call for artwork for summer banner program  
Local artists, local identity.

## City 1% Construction

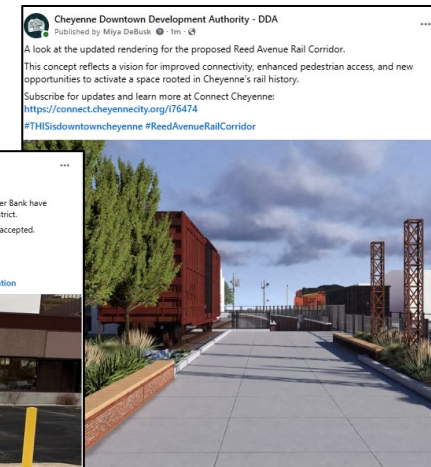
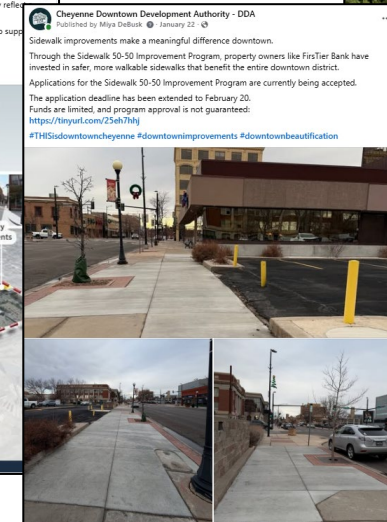
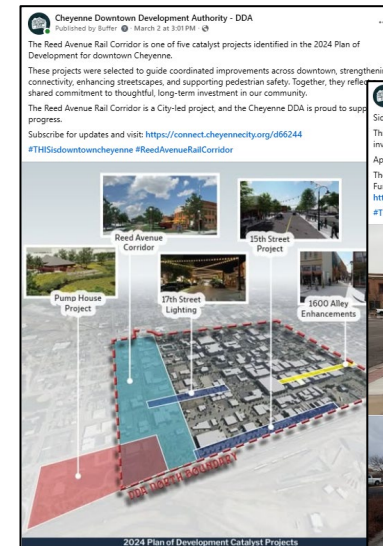
Repeatable sidewalk repair process — coordinated cross-departmentally, not project-by-project.

## City Engineering

GIS asset inventory with intern capacity  
Supporting Reed Rail & 15th Street communications.

## WY & National Networks

Connected with Rawlins, Laramie, Fort Collins DDAs  
Casper visit planned spring 2026  
IDA conference Sept 2025.



*Social media posts on City 1% and Engineering projects and programs*

# COMMUNICATIONS

## Where We Started:

34.9 / 100

2025 sentiment survey: Communications effectiveness was the lowest-rated item in the entire survey.

## Our Response:

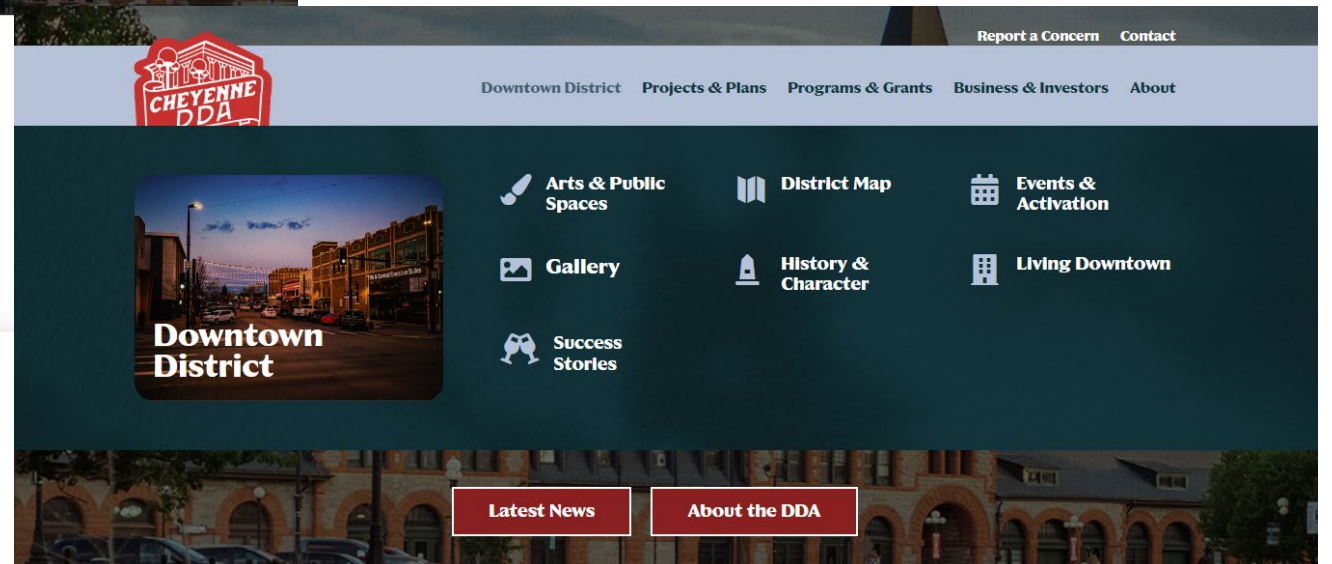
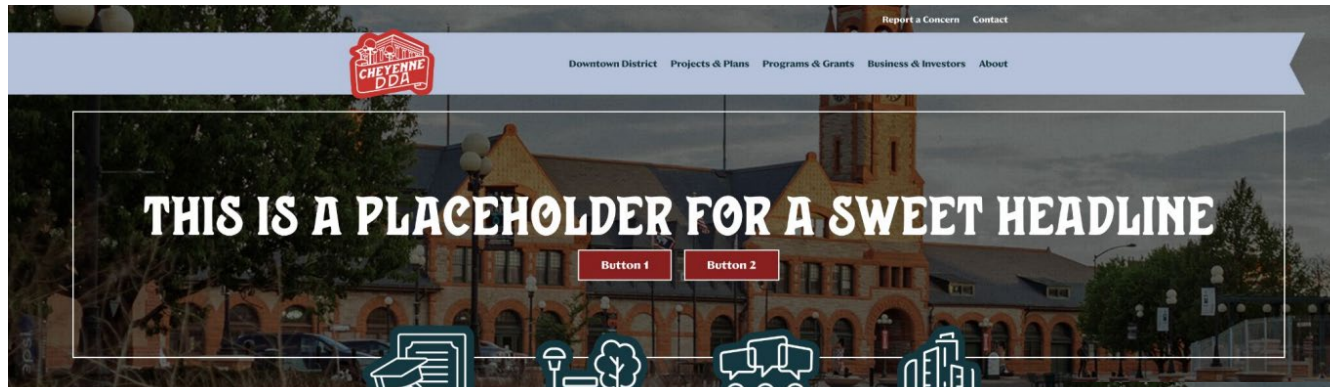
- Brand standards + campaign templates with West Edge
- Dedicated project pages on Connect Cheyenne
- New website (in process) as central resource hub for downtown
- Monthly newsletters
- Focused communications



*2026 Survey Postcard sent to all properties in Downtown District (property & mailing addresses)*



# WEBSITE TEASER



*New DDA Website (in-progress)*

# COMMUNICATIONS: THE NUMBERS

**69%**

Email average open rate —  
Apr 2025–Mar 2026  
(good rate: 15–25%)

**3.4%**

Email average click rate —  
Apr 2025–Mar 2026  
(rate is 2.5 – 5%)

**1,576**

Email subscribers

**1M+**

Facebook views,  
Mar 2025–Feb 2026

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## 2025 SURVEY

**121 responses**

Comms effectiveness: 34.9/100  
(lowest-rated item)

## 2026 SURVEY (IN-PROGRESS)

**192 responses (+59%)**

68% familiar with DDA's work  
55% moderate-to-high confidence in DDA future

A nighttime photograph of a downtown street. The scene is illuminated by warm streetlights and strings of small, glowing lights strung across the street. On the left, a multi-story building features a vertical sign that reads "HOTEL PIONEER". Several cars are parked along the left side of the street. On the right, there are more buildings, including one with a sign that says "THE BALLROOM", and a large, leafless tree. In the distance, a bridge with lights is visible over a body of water. The overall atmosphere is cozy and festive.

# STATE OF DOWNTOWN TODAY

# DOWNTOWN BY THE NUMBERS

**303**

Total unique downtown commercial properties

**~80**

Blocks in the district

**1,150**

Businesses in the Downtown District

**~20**

Active commercial building permits

**10%**

Residential Population vs  
Daytime Population (822 vs 8,260)

**\$47,401**

Median Household Income

---

## Notable Recent Developments:

- West End Flats — 100 new market-rate apartments catalyzing residential density downtown
- HealthWorks — major employer investment and renovation of a severely underutilized property
- Children's Museum — significant cultural anchor investment & amenity for the entire Cheyenne community
- West Edge district expansion — DDA boundaries extended to include additional West Edge property
- The Hynds & the Hole — Landmark capital stack (LIHTC, City Large Gap Fund, etc.) to revitalize a 40+ year eyesore

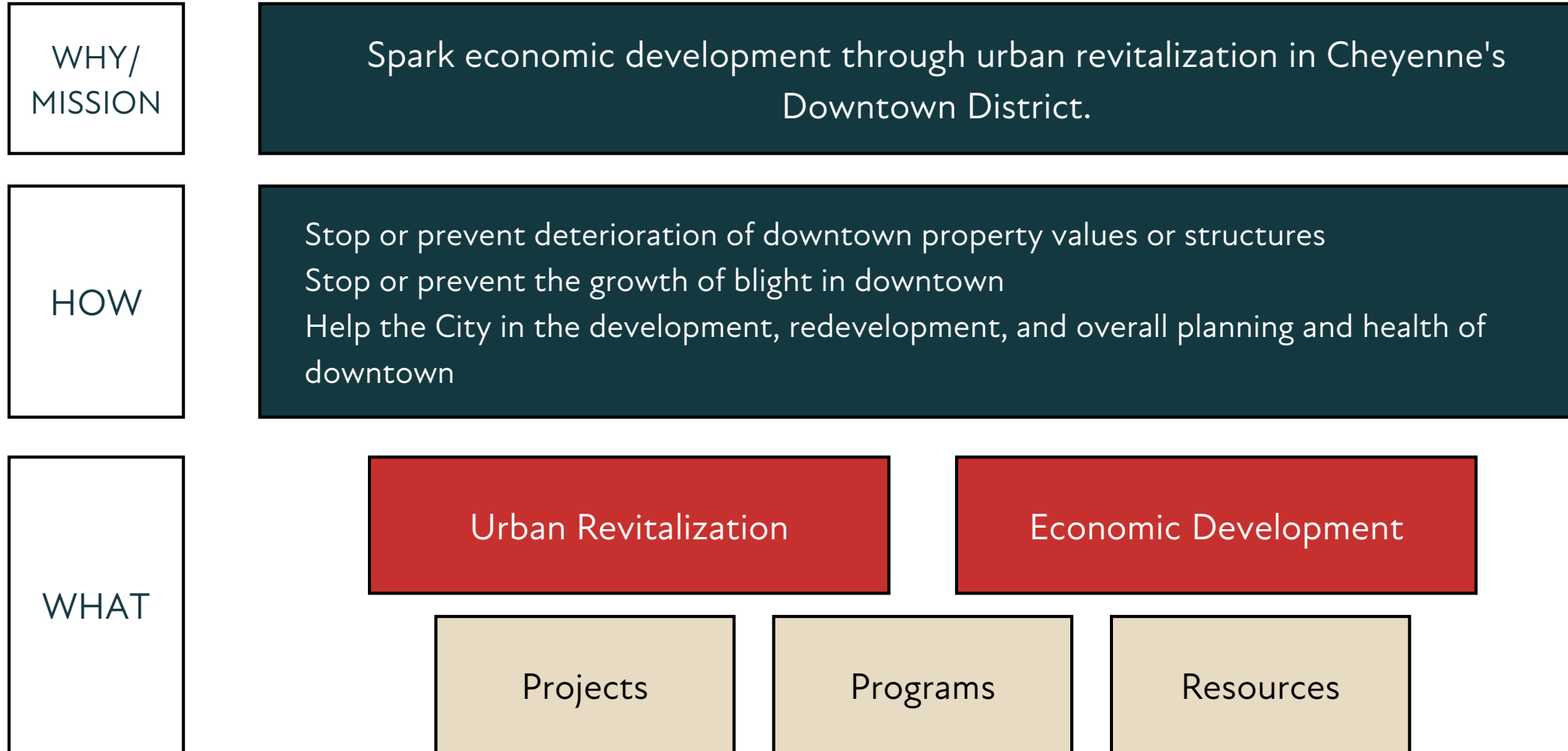
*Source: Laramie County Assessors Map, Esri 2025*

A nighttime photograph of a city street. On the left, a building has a vertical sign that reads "HOTEL PIONEER". String lights are strung across the street. A semi-transparent dark blue rectangle is centered over the image, containing the text "WHERE WE'RE GOING" in large, bold, white, serif capital letters. Below this, in smaller white sans-serif font, is the text "Our Strategic Framework".

# WHERE WE'RE GOING

Our Strategic Framework

# THE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK



# PROGRAMS

## Public Improvement Programs

- **Planter Program**

Beautifies district, currently 100+ planters. Expanding to winter displays for 23 planters, and an 8 water-efficient planter pilot for summer 2026.

- **Downtown Banner Program 2026**

Community call for artwork with Arts Cheyenne for summer-themed banners, and again for fall. Local artists, local identity.

## Property Grant Programs

- **Capital Improvement Grant (CIG)**

Supports private investment in downtown properties and businesses. For signage, benches, larger sidewalk repairs, etc.

- **Facade Improvement Program (FIP)**

Reinstated in 2025 after lapsing. Helps owners improve building facades, with higher incentives for historic preservation.

- **Sidewalk 50-50 Improvement Program**

City-DDA partnership. Cost-share with property owner, full sidewalk repairs. 9 applications awaiting spring estimates.

# PROJECTS

## Facilitator Role (City Projects)

We run communications, gather public input, facilitate stakeholder alignment, and have cost-share elements. The City leads construction and budget.

- Reed Rail Corridor
- 15th Street Experience
- Pump House Project
- 17th Street Light Expansion
- 18th Street Stormwater Project
- 1600 Block Alley Improvements

## Manager Role (DDA Projects)

We manage the full lifecycle — pre-development through post-mortem.

- Public Improvements
- Planter Replacements & Refurbishment
- Pedestrian-Scaled Lighting
- Wayfinding Signage
- Gateway Enhancements

# RESOURCES

## Overall Promotion of Downtown

- Event sponsorships in downtown
- Targeted campaigns to primary & secondary markets
- National representation of Cheyenne at IDA conference representation (Sept 2024 & 2025)

## Toolkits & Repositories

- Business Toolkit — step-by-step City dept guide
- State of Downtown report (annual publication)
- Market analysis reports — public access
- Downtown property development resources

## Community Partnerships

- HPB — design guidelines (2026 priority)
- Arts Cheyenne — banner program
- City 1% — sidewalk repair process
- Casper, Laramie, Rawlins DDA connections

# CONCLUSION

## DOWNTOWN DOESN'T NEED A HERO.

It needs strategic movement.  
Scalable results.  
Empowerment of the community.  
And steady, positive progress.

That's what the DDA is built to be.  
And that's what we're becoming.



