

FY 2021 Visit Cheyenne Business Plan
ADOPTED

Mission of Visit Cheyenne (VC)

Visit Cheyenne develops, promotes, and protects the Cheyenne area travel industry, thereby creating memorable experiences for visitors and economic impact for Laramie County.

Vision Statement

The Cheyenne area provides an authentic visitor experience in the American West. The Cheyenne travel industry is busy year-round and is recognized as a major economic force in Laramie County.

COVID19

As we prepared this business plan for FY 2021, the COVID19 pandemic hit the nation and obviously our community was impacted. We kept many of the strategic plans in place despite limited resources and budget as it was key to keep us moving forward. We did add in the recovery plans to this document, as they are critical for the first portion of the fiscal year and beyond.

Visit Cheyenne Strategic Plan 2021

Tactics in this Plan Addressing the Planks – In italics

1. Be the Cheyenne Hospitality Network Facilitator, bringing lodging, attractions, customers, the public, elected officials, media, etc. together to promote the area, better serve visitors, and strengthen the hospitality industry.

Experience Cheyenne events(virtual)

Work on online training possibly in partnership with LCCC

Continue with Newsletter

Continue Bandwango coupon front-line program, Create discount travel program-beverage program

Continue forward with the Destination Next outline for benchmarks (?)

2. Explore Funding Diversification Options for Visit Cheyenne – options beyond the lodging tax.

Statewide effort on TBID enabling legislation

Discover Cheyenne fundraising

Statute flexibility on overages and investments

“Top Tier” Membership packages including DTN, featured social media posts, red carpet-type events

3. Work on Hospitality Industry Product Development as appropriate.

* Attractions

* Year-Round Events

* Events

* Interactive Technologies

* Downtown Development

Marketing Grants and Sponsorships

Administrative Event Support
Vis Chey marketing of events
Google VR tours
Magic City Holiday
Legendary Days
Ticket to the Arts
Cheyenne Restaurant Week
Enhanced musical experiences support.

4. Work on the Cheyenne Brand, making sure it represents our tourism market and resonates with customers. At the same time, explore the brand's ability to provide umbrella marketing for the City, LEADs, Chamber, etc.

A. Continue consumer research to understand how visitors perceive Cheyenne and its attributes.

B. Continue to work with Cheyenne LEADs, the Chamber, City, DDA, and other organizations to determine how to create a more unified marketing brand for Cheyenne. Research from Longwoods International reveals a "halo effect" of tourism marketing that has positive effects upon business development, workforce recruitment, etc.

Partner on events like Legendary Days, etc.
Continue to support 'Live Legendary' campaign
Investigation of a community brand

5. Explore development of a Tourism Master Plan.

Work with Greater Forward Cheyenne
Comment on transportation and other master plans

FY 2021 Visit Cheyenne Goals and Strategies (Updates in *Italics*)

Major Tactics

1. Product Development / Downtown Redevelopment – Invest in developing and growing Laramie County events and attractions and work with partners on downtown redevelopment efforts.

- * Union Pacific / Train Efforts
- * Depot Plaza Splash Pad
- * Ticket to the Arts
- * Events – Restaurant Week, New Year's Eve Ball Drop, regular rodeos, holiday event, cultural festivals
- * *Legendary Days*
- * Holiday Programming
- * Air Service

2. Meeting Sales / Convention Services -- Build on success and aggressively pursue new business.

- * Continue selling aggressively and providing top-notch convention services as a competitive advantage.

- * Continue FAM tours and face-to-face meetings where feasible to increase Cheyenne’s recognition.
- * Investigate the Dallas area for meeting options.

3. Engage the Local Community / Industry – Bring positive messages and services to Laramie County residents and the hospitality industry.

- * Use social media and paid advertising to promote local events.
- * Sponsor Experience Cheyenne events for the hospitality and business community.
- * Work to grow and improve the local workforce needed for the hospitality industry with the Next Generation Workforce task force.
- *Get partners accustomed to extranet and how to best use it to their advantage.

Industry Indicators

	<u>FY 21(bdgt)</u>	<u>FY 20(bdgt)</u>	<u>FY 19(actual)</u>
Lodging tax collections	\$1,400,000	\$2,300,000	\$ 2,049,306

Visit Cheyenne Programs

	<u>FY 21(bdgt)</u>	<u>FY 20(bdgt)</u>	<u>FY 19(actual)</u>
Visit Cheyenne Total Budget (exp) (includes \$200K carryover for FY 21)	\$1,600,000	\$2,305,050	\$2,049,306

1. Administration

	<u>FY 21(bdgt)</u>	<u>FY 20(bdgt)</u>	<u>FY 19(actual)</u>
Administration	\$180,000	\$174,864	\$175,184

- * *Research options and partner with the WY tourism industry on future funding sources for statewide tourism promotion and local tourism efforts (Tourism Business Improvement Districts).*
- * *Implement Marketing COVID19 recovery marketing plan*
- * Benchmark national salaries/benefits both nationally and within the Western United States. Strive to maintain competitiveness when staff performance warrants it.
- * *Work with new accounting firm to ensure all bookkeeping procedures are correct.*
- * Follow established Visit Cheyenne budgeting, expenditure, and bidding policies.
- * Stay up-to-date with computer and communications technology.
- * *Modify budget reserves as necessary at the end of the fiscal year, per the reserve policy.*

- * Use “Future Year Encumbrances” in the Packaged Travel, Conventions, and Marketing budgets.

2. Packaged Travel

	<u>FY 21(bdgt)</u>	<u>FY 20(bdgt)</u>	<u>FY 19(actual)</u>
Packaged Travel	\$59,500	\$85,500	\$65,631

- * Market the Cheyenne area to travel intermediaries selling group tours and fly-drive itineraries by attending trade shows and respond to trade leads develop more packaged travel to the area. Shows include National Tour Association, the American Bus Association, RMI Roundup, and IPW.
- * *Follow-up on leads, publicity, and partnerships developed at the Tourism Alliance Partners annual convention held in Cheyenne in June, 2019.*
- * Share packaged travel leads in a timely manner with Cheyenne area hospitality providers so they can close the sale.
- * Continue partnerships with Rocky Mountain International, Rocky Mountain National Park, Yellowstone Journal, and the WY Office of Tourism.
- * Keep foreign language promotional materials up-to-date for international markets.
- * Provide new information on products and itinerary possibilities in the Cheyenne area to tour operators and receptive operators through direct mail and other means.
- * Host fam visits to area for travel intermediaries and tour operators as appropriate.

3. Conventions

	<u>FY 21(bdgt)</u>	<u>FY 20(bdgt)</u>	<u>FY 19(actual)</u>
Convention Sales	\$335,000	\$410,414	\$375,486
Convention Services	\$84,000	\$118,315	\$110,565
Leads	50	130(est)	114
Roomnights	5,000	10,000(est)	15,247
Meetings Assisted	50	115(est)	125

- * Target and pursue meeting prospects with Cheyenne's major hotel properties and off-site facilities. Be aggressive in finding regional, multi-property business; multi-year; off-season business.
- * Highlight opportunities at the new Botanic Gardens Conservatory, Archer Events Complex, *and new convention hotel by LCCC after construction begins.*

- * *Work closely with the sales team at the new Archer Events Complex to jointly pursue agricultural and other types of business that have never had an appropriate facility in Laramie County.*
- * Continue work with high school athletic directors to bid on more statewide sports competitions.
- * Offer convention services for a fee to smaller events/meetings that don't qualify for our complimentary services.
- * *Improve sales/servicing efforts using the results of VC's new meeting planner survey research.*
- * Sponsor meeting planner FAM tours for planners from the region. Organize sales blitzes to other cities to promote Cheyenne's meeting options as appropriate.
- * *Develop new relationships with meeting planners in Texas (primarily DFW) to take advantage of Cheyenne's new air service.*
- * *Pursue another major industry trade show for FY 23 to build on the success of hosting TAP Dance (FY 19), **Select Traveler (FY 22)**, and Small Market Meetings (FY 21).*
- * Build on VC convention services to make a Cheyenne convention truly a memorable experience. Monitor usage and ways to improve new online registration services, welcome receptions, phone charging stations, micro-websites, etc. Analyze policies and procedures as demand increases.
- * Foster close relations with Cheyenne's convention properties. Hold occasional meetings with GMs to brainstorm and coordinate new meeting sales/servicing strategies. Meet also with the staffs of properties to personally demonstrate and explain our services.
- * Continue to work with partners to develop more turn-key group event options like the Mini-Melodrama, Old West Museum's "Cheyenne Nights" event and others. **VC has a focus on holiday events in November and December.**
- * Promote the Meetings Express program into the local business community as a way to gather new meeting leads, develop new local partners and create awareness for Visit Cheyenne. Continue to test and fine-tune the needed incentives to encourage participation.
- * *Use new technology and tools (such as the MINT database) to increase and improve convention bids. Use our new bid presentation software and meeting services videos in bids and direct e-mails.*
- * Attend convention and meetings trade shows to generate new meeting prospects. (MPI, Affordable Meetings, etc.) and increase Cheyenne's visibility among planners. Carefully monitor the Return on Investment on these shows to determine if they are producing business.
- * Develop and use attractive e-mails with conventioners to encourage them to attend meetings in Cheyenne when appropriate.
- * Advertise the area as a meeting location in appropriate online and printed media. Test geo-fencing and other techniques to reach meeting planners. Monitor and fine-tune efforts.
- * Work with partners to develop sporting and other events during the winter months that bring competitors/parents to Cheyenne.

- *Creation of digital coupon book*

4. Public Relations / Film

	<u>FY 21(bdgt)</u>	<u>FY 20(bdgt)</u>	<u>FY 19(actual)</u>
Public Relations / Film	\$150,000	\$181,387	\$145,565
Media Value Earned			
FAM writers visiting			
Non-Local Media Contacts	95	120(est)	50
Local Media Contacts	90	90(est)	65

- * Implement an integrated social media strategy across social media channels.
- * Provide hospitality awareness training to the area’s frontline hospitality workers through complimentary trolley tours.
- * Develop new videos that tell Cheyenne stories, featuring area activities and attractions. Consider recent branding research when developing the tone and feel of the videos. Update advocacy video.
- * Aggressively pursue free publicity in local and regional media in partnership with our PR firm, the WY Office of Tourism, and Rocky Mountain International.
- * Host media on FAM tours to provide in-person experiences that can lead to media coverage.
- * *Develop publicity efforts for the opening of the Quebec 1 Missile Site, the reopening of the Capitol, and UP Steam Shop activities.*
- * Maintain a county-wide Calendar of Events and add events to the WY Office of Tourism website. Keep Visit Cheyenne’s online media center up-to-date and ready for media access.
- * Respond to film prospects from state sources, web page leads, and other sources.
- * Host an annual lunch with Cheyenne council members and County Commissioners to maintain close ties and discuss local tourism issues.
- * Communicate the benefits of the travel industry and Visit Cheyenne to the public and media.
- * Promote Cheyenne events and activities in Cheyenne in social media and paid advertising. Make sure local residents know about local events and activities.
- * Develop and distribute an Annual Report to present Visit Cheyenne activities to the public and to local stakeholders.

5. Marketing (Leisure Travel)

	<u>FY 21(bdgt)</u>	<u>FY 20(bdgt)</u>	<u>FY 19(actual)</u>
Marketing	\$596,500	\$1,060,743	\$860,741
Lodging Tax Collections (Change)	1%	.1%(act)	7.5%
Website Visits	600,000	580,000(est)	489,037
Consumer Inquiries	65,000	65,000(est)	69,413

All Markets

- * Promote the CHEYENNE brand – rodeo, railroad, western heritage, outdoor adventure -- in advertising and fulfillment pieces. Integrate new attractions into the message. *Work with Forward Greater Cheyenne effort to determine if a unified community brand is feasible.*
- * Advertise in print, tv, online, direct mail, and radio in targeted ways to reach destination and stop-over visitors. Develop co-ops where it makes sense for partners to participate with us.
- * Produce segmented TV, online, and print ads and target them via ad placements.
- * Keep Visit Cheyenne’s website up-to-date, taking advantage of the latest technology/trends.
- * Working with Visit Cheyenne's PR agency, continue to develop and implement up-to-date social media strategies. Add social channels as appropriate. Improve our reporting of social media results and metrics.
- * Continue work on Visit Cheyenne's marketing and PR program for winter traffic.
- * Continue targeted e-mail marketing with Visit Cheyenne's growing email lists.
- * Update consumer research on the Cheyenne brand to determine how visitors perceive Cheyenne and its attributes.
- * *Consider performing an audit of all VC’s electronic / digital marketing efforts (website, social media, e-marketing, etc.)*
- * Produce and distribute a major Visitor Guide for use as a fulfillment piece and for brochure racks throughout Wyoming. Develop niche brochures as appropriate.
- * Consider developing an online hospitality training course for local hotel employees. Would need buy in from properties to require employees to participate.

Destination Visitors

- * Work with Cheyenne Frontier Days to extend visitors stays in Cheyenne around CFD. Work to place conventions in the meeting prior to and after Frontier Days. Work with CFD on being a venue for other rodeo and western experiences.

- * Investigate new targeted online advertising possibilities.
- * Work with Cheyenne Depot Days and Union Pacific to promote and develop Depot Days and other train events.

In Transit Visitors

- * Continue marketing partnerships with Yellowstone Journal and Rocky Mountain National Park to entice travelers to stop in Cheyenne on their Park vacations. Use a customized Yellowstone brochure. Place ads in “on the road” coupon books to encourage people to stop in Laramie County.
- * Use database marketing aggressively (direct mail and e-mail). Use both to encourage in-transit visitors and destination visitors. Monitor results and costs.
- * Market Cheyenne where appropriate as a stop-over to other major events like Sturgis.
- * Market Cheyenne to our existing visitors to extend the visitors’ length of stay. Provide this information at hotels, restaurants, and other retail businesses and attractions.
- * Use multiple Cheyenne billboards around the region. Use our small billboards in Fort Collins and Greeley to promote winter events and other items as appropriate.

Regional Visitors and Local Residents

- * Support local events through marketing and sponsorship grants to attract regional business to the Cheyenne area, especially for off-season and “Cheyenne” branded events. Provide direct marketing and promotional assistance to marketing grant winners.
- * Create, develop, and promote new festivals and events as appropriate with partners.
- * Administer a sponsorship program that provides support to worthy area events / attractions.
- * Market Cheyenne events and activities **in Cheyenne** and the surrounding area using social media and paid advertising. Make sure residents know about local events and activities.
- * Provide marketing grants to Cheyenne, Pine Bluffs, Laramie Co., Albin, and Burns for local events.

International

- * Maintain marketing / sales efforts aimed at the international market. Continue partnerships with Rocky Mountain International, the WY Office of Tourism, and Brand USA.

6. Visitor Services & Development

	<u>FY 21(bdgt)</u>	<u>FY 20(bdgt)</u>	<u>FY 19(actual)</u>
Visitor Services	\$275,652	\$275,652	\$250,654
Trolley (expenses)	\$	\$128,400	\$102,565
Depot Visitors	50,000	50,500(est)	51,266

Trolley Riders	21,000	20,700(est)	21,548
Trolley Charters	340	330(est)	339
Wayfinding Signs Implemented	Phase 3	Phase 2	Phase 2

- * Continue work on Visit Cheyenne’s Strategic Plan with the Board of Directors.
- * Hold Experience Cheyenne networking events for area hospitality partners. Promote with the Next Generation workforce task force.
- * *Working with the Next Generation workforce task force, create a Laramie County Hospitality Jobs website that includes job postings, worker testimonials and videos, and other tools for job seekers. Promote the benefits of working in the hospitality industry on the site and push people to the website using paid and free media efforts. Encourage partners to promote the website as well.*
- * *Working with the Next Generation workforce task force, organize/sponsor at least 1 hospitality industry job fair. Promote hospitality job fairs organized by WY Workforce, LCCC, and others.*
- * *Create and promote a suffrage tour.*
- * Research the pros and cons of the development of a tourism master plan as outlined in the Visit Cheyenne Strategic Plan.
- * Continue selling more big boots to businesses and individuals for placement throughout the community. **The Depot Foundation laws permit them from selling more than 4 per year.** Use the program as a fundraiser for Visit Cheyenne/Discover Cheyenne.
- * Consider the need to increase the capacity and oversight of Discover Cheyenne as demands upon it by community events expands (Cheyenne 150, Cheyenne Marathon, Splash Pad).
- * Continue work with economic development partners on the Downtown Core Action Plan, air service, and other local development opportunities.
- * Revise and update the cell phone audio tour and mobile website infrastructure with local museums.
- * *Work with the City to reduce the number of spots in the Parking Garage for use by visitors. Work with the city to streamline the parking in the garage: signage, price, confusion...*
- * Operate the Depot Visitor Center and Pine Bluffs Info Center with hours and staffing as appropriate. Provide visitor information, coupons and counseling at the centers with the goal of increasing visitor stays in the county. *New contract with WY Tourism*
- * Operate the Trolley as a premier attraction for both visitors and Cheyenne residents. Schedule a new round of steam shop tours with Union Pacific and the Depot Museum if UP allows them. *Consider purchasing another trolley.*
- * Use the Trolley as a public relations mechanism for Visit Cheyenne, offering transportation for City and County VIPs, visiting dignitaries, conventioners, and bus tour guests.
- * Continue Restaurant Week and create other events that have the potential to attract visitors. New examples include VIP tours to the Quebec 1 Missile Alert Facility.

- * *Hold training sessions for hospitality partners on how to use GOOGLE tools and other promotional methods more effectively.*
- * *Provide virtual reality tours and updated Streetview video for area attractions.*
- * *Provide assistance and support to the Greenway Activation initiative of the Forward Greater Cheyenne process, particularly in regard to designing wayfinding signage.*
- * *Provide oversight with the City and partners on the construction (maintenance) of the Depot Splash Pad.*
- * *Raise awareness of the downtown homeless person safety issue with elected officials as appropriate.*
- * *Work with businesses or other entities to create new visitor products or services where appropriate. Help with the planning for such needed visitor products and infrastructure.*
- * *Work to extend the summer travel season from the beginning of May to the end of September by using Visit Cheyenne resources (trolley, carriages, visitor center) and by encouraging others to stretch the season as well.*
- * *Participate in and support (where appropriate) efforts to develop new travel and tourism products in Laramie County. These groups include:*
 - Greater Cheyenne Chamber of Commerce Downtown Development Authority
 - Cheyenne LEADs
 - Economic Development Joint Powers Board Cheyenne Frontier Days
- * *Raise non-tax funds for Discover Cheyenne that can be used for development without lodging tax restrictions (ex: big boot program).*
 - **Upgrading and improving on-line trolley ticket sales**

Data analysis, SWOT, DNext

SeeSource Data

Analysis of this data (appendix 1), points to regional markets that include the Denver metro area, the greater Salt Lake City area and Areas of Nebraska

SWOT

Area Strengths (items we can influence)

- * Cheyenne has a very strong western brand. People throughout the world know the name and envision cowboys, rodeos, railroads, and bison. The brand is strongest among people older than 40 years old. The image of the west is not as strong among younger people who respond better to the outdoor recreational amenities of the area.
- * The Cheyenne area has many western activities that visitors expect - Frontier Days, gunslingers, melodrama, rodeos, bison, horseback rides, carriage rides, train depot, western museums, etc.

- * Cheyenne has several train attractions, such as the Depot, Depot museum, Big Boy engines, Engine 1242, French Merci train, and Ames monument. UP's 150th anniversary along with its renovation of a Big Boy has generated significant publicity and visitation for both its unveiling and the Steam Shop tours Visit Cheyenne (VC) created with the Depot. These tours have all sold out, with many international customers in the mix. However, UP has experienced some layoffs in Cheyenne and has not announced ongoing plans for the Steam Fleet or visitation to the Steam Shop.
- * WY State Parks opened the Quebec 1 missile alert facility as a Cold War attraction in August of 2019. While the facility is 25 miles north of Cheyenne it is one of the only missile facilities that the public can access in the country. Before the COVID situation we were working with base for an add-on tour. We are also looking at partnering on some bill-board upgrades that would incorporate Q1 depending on budget.
- * The Cheyenne area is adding to its collection of events facilities. The Archer Events Complex, CFD Headquarters Building, and the Metropolitan Restaurant/Banquet Room have all opened. The restoration of the Lincoln Theater is under way.
 - There are 2 trampoline parks and a ninja training center that have opened.
- * VC has developed or supported several new events in the past few years such as Cheyenne's 150th Anniversary, Cheyenne Restaurant Week, and the Cheyenne Marathon. New Cheyenne Christmas Festivals are being planned under VC's guidance.
- * Wyoming celebrated 150 years of women's suffrage in 2019. VC along with the City of Cheyenne purchased an 8' big boot and commissioned an artist to paint a suffragette scene. The boot was installed at the location where the first Cheyenne woman placed her vote.
- * The Cheyenne Depot is quite active as a visitor destination. Visit Cheyenne's lobby Visitor Center is inviting and attractive with the information desk, information kiosks, and photo kiosk. This area has been adjusted to comply with best practices for COVID19.
- * Cheyenne is a regional shopping hub. Shopping is quite popular for WY conventioners. Working with Bandwango we created a digital coupon book.
- * The Cheyenne Street Railway Trolley is a solid visitor attraction during the summer months, a quaint transportation option for conventions, and a visible ad for Visit Cheyenne to the community.
- * *A major new hotel with convention space near LCCC has been announced is currently under construction.*
- * *Cheyenne's attractive new airport terminal has opened, and daily service via American Airlines (SkyWest) was successful for a few months. Visit Cheyenne provided colorful murals, videos, phone charging stations, and a marketing grant to help support the successful launch of the terminal and air service. We are currently working with Visit Las Vegas on some possible partnerships due to COVID19 and the slated construction scheduled for the Cheyenne Airport.*

- * WYDOT and the City of Cheyenne have completed road beautification of the West Lincolnway entrance into Cheyenne and are working on new trackside landscaping. The repainted BNSF bridge is another great addition. Expanding the landscaping farther would improve the entryway.
- * VC operates a system of 5 cell phone audio tours (4 museums, 1 big boot art tour). Visit Cheyenne helped several museums take the next step by creating new mobile websites that incorporate video, audio, etc. Support for these systems among our museums is uneven.
- * Visit Cheyenne has a 501 c3 organization --DISCOVER CHEYENNE-- established to pursue educational and infrastructure grants with the City of Cheyenne and other groups. *Demands for use of Discover Cheyenne may be getting too great (Cheyenne 150, Cheyenne Marathon, Splash Pad), and the Discover Cheyenne board has considered recalibrating its efforts.*
- * *Visit Cheyenne played a leadership role with economic development partners to convince the City to provide seed funding for a Depot Plaza splash pad. Visit Cheyenne led fundraising efforts from the community to match the City's contribution, and the new facility will be operational in late 2019. 20*
- * Visit Cheyenne has a strong social marketing effort with a presence on Twitter, Facebook, Youtube, Pinterest, and Instagram.
- * Visit Cheyenne offers substantial convention services: Opening receptions, a branded registration desk, phone charging stations, photo kiosk, and online convention registration. Meeting planners recognize the value of these services and are requesting VC assistance more frequently.
- * *VC created a new Ticket to the Arts pass along with local arts organization. The Ticket provides entrance to a number of arts events at a discounted rate. VC handles administration of the program. Due to COVID19, we have added a driving tour plan to this type of event offering and is now included as an built asset within our offerings.*
- * VC has helped create new evening event options for conventions and leisure groups: Old West Museum Frontier Nights, Freedom's Edge Tasting Party, Atlas Theater Mini-Melodrama, etc.
- * *VC and other community organizations are working together under a new Forward Greater Cheyenne organization and plan. The plan includes 8 broad initiatives.*

<i>1. Downtown Development</i>	<i>2. Greenway Activation</i>
<i>3. LCCC Expansion to 4 year degrees</i>	<i>4. Entrepreneurship</i>
<i>5. Business Retention</i>	<i>6. Community Beautification</i>
<i>7. Community Pride</i>	<i>8. Infrastructure</i>

Visit Cheyenne is the lead implementing agency for #7 Community Pride, has a role in #8 with recreation facilities, and assists with #2 Greenway Activation.
- * *Some new distilleries/breweries have opened in Cheyenne and Pine Bluffs, staying in line with the national trend.*

Area Weaknesses (things we can influence)

- * Despite Cheyenne's proximity to Denver and the Front Range, most Colorado residents do not know about Cheyenne's amenities beyond Cheyenne Frontier Days. (Some of this may be solved by our aggressive regional marketing as part of our COVID19 response)
 - * *Workforce availability and quality is a major problem for different reasons than before. As businesses were shuttered for two months due to COVID19, getting the workforce back in place under various conditions is difficult.*
 - * The Cheyenne area lacks major year-round attractions capable for holding visitors for more than a few hours. Many of Cheyenne's attractions operate only during the summer months.
 - * Cheyenne's major hotels and meeting spaces are not located near one another, requiring added transportation and logistics. Cheyenne does not have a private bus company that can help provide group transportation.
 - * Laramie County lacks hotels that are certified as "green" properties, which can be important to some groups and guests.
 - * Cheyenne is not united behind a "brand" for Cheyenne (economic development organizations, elected officials, civic organizations). *However, the new Greater Forward Cheyenne organization may provide a vehicle for the development of such a unified brand.*
 - * Cheyenne lacks extensive sports facilities and a unified effort to develop these amenities.
 - * Cheyenne is not very attractive on main entranceways into the community or along the interstates.
 - * Many area residents think that the visitor industry lasts only the 10 days of Frontier Days. Many locals are not aware of local attractions and events.
 - * *Cheyenne has limited commercial air service. While improving, this weakness hinders our ability to attract certain multi-state conventions. Airport will be closed summer 2021 for required upgrades*
 - * Because of security concerns, Visit Cheyenne and visitors are unable to access Warren Air Force Base and its attractions.
 - * In the past few years, Cheyenne Frontier Days has been targeted by animal rights groups regarding its treatment of rodeo animals.
 - * Visit Cheyenne's older 3 trolleys are becoming quite expensive to repair. The cost of housing the trolleys has increased.

- * State and Federal government budget cuts are drastically reducing government travel and meetings.
- * *Funding for the WY Office of Tourism has been decreasing, and efforts to raise funding through a variety of means failed in the last legislature.*
 - * *VC performed a major Destination Next Study in FY 19. A full summary of the results is at the end of this SWOT analysis.*
 - * *There are no Bed and Breakfasts in Cheyenne currently.*
 - * *Lack of CDL drivers in Laramie County and nationally. Staff served on a focus group for LCCC.*

Opportunities (items out of our control)

- * The use of mobile devices to access the internet is booming, as are various types of social media. These trends are opening new channels of two-way communication with customers.
- * New state lodging tax
- * Cheyenne is located on the northern tip of the vibrant and populous Colorado Front Range, only 95 miles from Denver. Cheyenne is at the intersection of two interstate highways – I80 and I25.
- * Because of Cheyenne's location between major attractions (Yellowstone, Rocky Mountain NP, Mt. Rushmore) and our interstates, many travelers come through Cheyenne on their trips in our region.
- * Cheyenne is home to Warren Air Force Base with its visitor attractions and military heritage. The base supports a vast network of veterans and family members who once were housed at the base.
- * WY Air BnBs are now paying sales/use taxes, offering new lodging opportunities for our visitors.
- * *Laramie County and the Front Range are enjoying solid economic growth.*
- * *Staff served on a focus group for LCCC. They are now going to add a training program for Commercial Drivers to their roster.*

Threats (items out of our control)

- * Except for the CO Front Range, the Cheyenne area is relatively far from major population centers. Cheyenne is not centrally located in Wyoming which is important to some statewide associations and groups for their meetings.
- * Because of Wyoming's low population, there is limited Wyoming participation in regional associations, making it difficult for some associations to hold their multi-state meetings in the state.

- * Severe weather can hinder travel to the Cheyenne area, particularly during the winter months. Often, the external perception of this problem is greater than the actual problem. Interstate 80 often closes due to wind, ice and snow.
- * Cheyenne lacks a downtown convention hotel. Other convention hotels are aging and are in need of renovations.
 - * Difficult staffing situation in Pine Bluffs with WYDot controlling facility and maintenance staffing.

DESTINATION NEXT STUDY RESULTS

In late 2015, Visit Cheyenne organized a major tourism industry study called **Destination Next** that allowed Cheyenne to compare its tourism industry with cities worldwide. VC developed a number of programs and tactics to tackle the top weaknesses.

2015 Most Significant Issues to Address

Destination Strength

Iconic Attractions & Events
 Downtown Development
 Conv. Center & Headquarter
 Hotel Capacity
 Brand
 Wayfinding
 Wifi access
 International Readiness
 Air Service

Community Support

Hospitality Culture
 Customer Service
 Workforce

In 2018 Visit Cheyenne performed the Destination Next study again to measure progress on our issues.

Overall, the Cheyenne hospitality industry made significant progress in the three years. The community is performing BETTER in 2018 in terms of both destination strength and community support for tourism.

2018 Most Significant Issues to Address

Destination Strength

Iconic Attractions & Events
 Downtown Development
 Conv/Mtg Facilities
 Unique Shopping and Dining
 Wifi access
 Suppliers for outdoor recreation
 Air Service
 Known for being walkable

Community Support

Funding Support & Certainty
 Workforce Attraction & Customer Service

