

CHEYENNE TOURISM MASTER PLAN

June 2021

VISIT
CHEYENNE
WYOMING

CHEYENNE MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

Economic Development Agencies

Amber Ash, Downtown Development Authority (DDA)

Domenic Bravo, Visit Cheyenne

Betsey Hale, Cheyenne LEADS

Dale Steenbergen, Greater Cheyenne Chamber of Commerce

City of Cheyenne

Charles Bloom, Planning and Development

Jason Sanchez, Community Recreation and Events

City/County Elected Officials

Linda Heath, Laramie County Commission

Pete Laybourn, Cheyenne City Council

Higher Education

Steve Farkas, University of Wyoming College of Business

Penny Fletcher, Laramie County Community College

Businesses & Attractions

Desiree Brothe, Arts Cheyenne

Hamilton Byrd, Blue Pig Productions

Heather Foster, Little America Hotel and Resort

Jon and Renee Jelinek, Lincoln Theater and Paramount Ballroom

Christy McCarthy, Cheyenne Depot Museum

Irving Mercado, Urban Art/Music Scene

State of Wyoming

Senator Affie Ellis, Chair of the Travel, Recreation, Wildlife and Cultural Resource Committee

RJ Glantz, WY Workforce Services and Ballet Wyoming

Brain Morgan, WY Dept. of Enterprise Technology Services

Darin Westby, WY State Parks and Cultural Resources and Cheyenne Frontier Days



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I. WHY A CHEYENNE TOURISM MASTER PLAN?

This Cheyenne Tourism Master Plan establishes a vision of where the Cheyenne travel industry wants to be in 10 years. The plan is a road map for action to help Cheyenne and Laramie County provide a positive experience for visitors, while enhancing the quality of life for residents. The plan will do this through collaborative development and marketing efforts for both the public and private sectors.

Because so many entities participate in the travel economy, this plan seeks to strategically align efforts to produce tangible progress and minimize duplications of effort. The Master Plan will guide year-to-year budgeting and operations of relevant Cheyenne entities, but also inspire efforts to larger, long-term objectives.

This Cheyenne Tourism Master Plan includes the City of Cheyenne and all of surrounding Laramie County.

THIS IS A LIVING DOCUMENT

This Tourism Master Plan will be reviewed and updated annually. At each year's review, the Master Plan Steering Committee (page 2) may add new strategies, provide more detail and action steps to existing strategies, mark some items as complete, and remove others as impractical or unfeasible. As a result, some of the strategies that are less developed now may become more developed and detailed in the future as more information is available.

In addition, the Steering Committee will measure and note progress on the various strategies for project refinement and accountability.

During the first year (June 2021 – May 2020), the Steering Committee will meet quarterly to fine-tune implementation and funding steps.

STAKEHOLDER INPUT

The travel industry is quite fragmented with numerous attractions, businesses, and other entities all playing roles, so inclusion and buy-in are vital for the success of a tourism plan. Consequently, the planning process put a premium on the engagement of the Cheyenne hospitality and broader business community, the public sector, area residents, and visitors. In addition, this planning process was overseen by a Steering Committee composed of 21 business and community leaders who advised and reviewed progress along the way both with online comments and in-person meetings.

II. THE PLANNING PROCESS

To coordinate and conduct the planning effort, Visit Cheyenne engaged Rudloff Solutions and students from the University of Wyoming Outdoor Recreation and Tourism Management program. (Appendix A)

The planning process was divided into two phases. Phase 1 included extensive research on the Cheyenne and Laramie County travel industry and the identification of six strategic issues affecting the industry going forward. Phase 2 included the development of actual plan elements to improve the Laramie County travel economy.

PHASE I: RESEARCH

Rudloff Solutions and two University of Wyoming tourism students implemented a comprehensive research methodology to access the current Cheyenne area travel industry and engage stakeholders in the process.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Reviewed 36 reports, plans, and research studies related to the travel industry, the local economy, and current development efforts from Cheyenne economic development agencies, the City of Cheyenne, Laramie County, Cheyenne Frontier Days, state agencies, and others (Appendix B). From this analysis, the research team identified 6 major themes as vitally important to the local travel industry. In other words, the literature review revealed the major issues previously identified and studied by several groups.

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

Interviewed 33 travel industry, business, and community leaders to gather input on the 6 strategic issues in greater detail. (Appendix C)

RESIDENT SURVEY

Surveyed Laramie County residents (500 respondents) in an online questionnaire about Cheyenne's brand, the local travel industry, and Cheyenne area attributes (downtown, attractions, hospitality, etc.). (Appendix D)

VISITOR SURVEY

Surveyed previous visitors to Laramie County (79 respondents) in an online questionnaire about Cheyenne's brand, desired activities for a return trip to the area, and Cheyenne area attributes. (Appendix D)

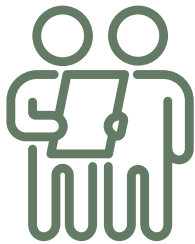
PHASE 2: MASTER PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Rudloff Solutions developed draft recommendations for the Tourism Master Plan and refined them from Steering Committee feedback provided through an online survey. During this step, it became apparent that two initiatives contained significant overlap so they were combined. The recommend strategies were presented to the Steering Committee again in person for final adjustment and approval.

Research Methodology and Resources



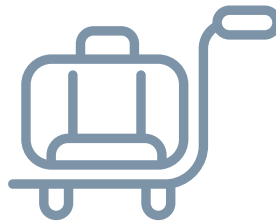
Reviewed **36** reports, plans,
and research studies



Interviewed **33** travel
industry, business, and
community leaders



Surveyed **500**
Laramie County
residents



Surveyed **79** previous visitors
to Laramie County

III. STRATEGIES

Vision for the Cheyenne Travel Industry:

Cheyenne is an authentic and dynamic destination, proud of its pioneering accomplishments and featuring year-round attractions and activities benefiting both visitors and residents.

The strategies below contain recommendations for Lead and Support Entities that will be responsible for implementation. In addition, each strategy contains implementation time frames defined as follows: Short term 1-2 years, Medium term 3-5 years, Long term 5-10 years.

I. VISITOR EXPERIENCES

- a. Develop an **events strategy** that helps create and manage a series of events for both residents and visitors with an emphasis on the winter and shoulder seasons. Commit to create and promote one or more signature winter events (either new or built on existing events). Promote them under a unified brand where appropriate.

Lead	Visit Cheyenne		
Support	DDA, City of Cheyenne		
Term	Short 1-2 years	Medium 3-5 years	Long 5-10 years

- b. Improve **entryways / gateways** into Cheyenne and downtown, especially from the interstates.

Lead	City of Cheyenne		
Support	WYDOT, County, MPO, Econ Dev Orgs		
Term	Short 1-2 years	Medium 3-5 years	Long 5-10 years

- Implement features such as medians, fencing, and vertical art elements to create “wow” experiences on W. Lincolnway and S. Central Avenue, both at the interstates and the entries into downtown. Ensure appropriate maintenance for new and existing enhancements. (Short-Medium term)
- Develop an action plan to cleanup and redevelop the Hitching Post Inn property, both as a gateway project and new business opportunity. (Short-Medium term)





- c. Create more **railroad attractions** to attract year-round visitation, engage the local population, support the Cheyenne brand, and create valuable public relations for Union Pacific (UP) and Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF).

Lead	Depot, City of Cheyenne		
Support	County, Econ Dev Orgs		
Term	Short 1-2 years	Medium 3-5 years	Long 5-10 years

- Work closely with UP to help promote and tell the UP Steam Story through steam shop tours, Depot Days efforts, Big Boy viewing opportunities, UP presentations, etc. (Short term)
- Explore options and develop feasible plans for greater access and for the development of larger attractions with both UP and BNSF. (Medium term)
- Completion of the larger railroad attraction (to be determined). (Long term)

- d. Support the implementation of the **Cheyenne Frontier Days** Trail Guide for the Future to grow the CFD experience.

Lead	Cheyenne Frontier Days		
Support	City, County, Econ Dev Orgs		
Term	Short 1-2 years	Medium 3-5 years	Long 5-10 years

- e. Encourage **sports facility** development for use by residents and visiting tournaments in a manner acceptable to Laramie County residents.

Lead	City of Cheyenne		
Support	County, Econ Dev Orgs, Sports Leagues		
Term	Short 1-2 years	Medium 3-5 years	Long 5-10 years

- f. Support development of **additional attractions or amenities** as they become feasible (Ex: Archer Complex additions, Cheyenne Children's Museum, Recreation Center, former Airport Terminal, High Plains Arboretum, etc.

Lead	City, County, Developers, Econ Dev Orgs		
Support			
Term	Short 1-2 years	Medium 3-5 years	Long 5-10 years

2. DOWNTOWN EXPERIENCES & DEVELOPMENT

- a. Improve **downtown's infrastructure and appearance** to encourage private development of retail, dining, residential, meeting space, and lodging businesses.

Lead	City of Cheyenne		
Support	County, DDA, Econ Dev Orgs, WYDOT		
Term	Short 1-2 years	Medium 3-5 years	Long 5-10 years

- Pursue modernization of the alleys in the downtown core. (Short term)
- Encourage and support improvements / updating of other infrastructure when feasible (examples: overhead lighting, depot lighting, murals, wi-fi, banners, curb and gutter improvement, interstate highway sign pole replacement, etc.). (Short-Medium-Long term)

- b. Develop and implement a plan to make the **Hynds Building** and adjacent vacant lot financially feasible for development.

Lead	DDA, LEADs		
Support	City, Econ Dev Orgs		
Term	Short 1-2 years	Medium 3-5 years	Long 5-10 years

- c. Monitor and assist with the **Reed Ave Corridor Plan** to develop the west edge of downtown. Provide input on development options during the planning phase.

Lead	City of Cheyenne		
Support	Econ Dev Orgs, MPO		
Term	Short 1-2 years	Medium 3-5 years	Long 5-10 years

- d. Support **modern downtown policies and regulations** to maintain a visitor and family-safe environment (parking, panhandling, graffiti, security, etc.).

Lead	City of Cheyenne		
Support	Econ Dev Orgs		
Term	Short 1-2 years	Medium 3-5 years	Long 5-10 years





3. OUTDOOR RECREATION

- a. Continue to develop the **Cheyenne Greenway** with an emphasis on connections into downtown and ways to activate the Greenway with activities and events. Ensure adequate ongoing maintenance.

Lead	City of Cheyenne, County		
Support	Econ Dev Orgs, Recreation Orgs		
Term	Short 1-2 years	Medium 3-5 years	Long 5-10 years

- b. Help develop and promote **existing outdoor recreation options** such as Vedauwoo Recreation Area, Curt Gowdy State Park, Pine Bluffs Recreation Areas, etc. Possible enhancements: equipment rentals, new trails connecting recreation areas.

Lead	Visit Cheyenne, WY State Parks, WY Outdoor Recreation Office		
Support	Econ Dev Orgs		
Term	Short 1-2 years	Medium 3-5 years	Long 5-10 years

- c. Foster development of the **outdoor recreation industry** (outfitters, recreation providers, recreation manufacturers).

Lead	Visit Cheyenne, WY State Parks, WY Outdoor Recreation Office		
Support	City, County, Econ Dev Orgs		
Term	Short 1-2 years	Medium 3-5 years	Long 5-10 years

- Explore opportunities for contracted services for equipment rentals. (Short term)
- Provide consumer education about how to enjoy local outdoor recreation amenities for both visitors and residents via videos, social media, trade shows, etc. (Short term)
- Investigate creating an outdoor recreation incubator, outdoor recreation business park, or a recruitment effort for outdoor recreation businesses. Possible locations: Cheyenne Business Parks, Belvoir Ranch. (Medium term)

- d. Develop and implement a **Big Hole / Belvoir Ranch** multi-year action plan that attains step-by-step progress toward opening these lands to outdoor recreation. Consider adding outdoor recreation business options to the land use plan.

Lead	City of Cheyenne		
Support	Econ Dev Orgs, WY Outdoor Recreation Office		
Plan	Short 1-2 years	Medium 3-5 years	Long 5-10 years
Development	Short 1-2 years	Medium 3-5 years	Long 5-10 years

- e. Make modifications or significant enhancements to **Crow Creek** to create a waterway attraction and Greenway extension from FEW to downtown.

Lead	City of Cheyenne		
Support	Econ Dev Orgs		
Term	Short 1-2 years	Medium 3-5 years	Long 5-10 years

4. COMMUNITY BRANDING

- a. Develop and use a unified **community brand** for Cheyenne and Laramie County to promote the benefits of Laramie County externally and create pride among residents.

Lead	Visit Cheyenne		
Support	City, County, Econ Dev Orgs		
Term	Short 1-2 years	Medium 3-5 years	Long 5-10 years

- Establish a committee of economic development and local government entities to:
 - Review existing brands;
 - Consider the branding needs of the organizations (for instance, how local brands interact with state brands);
 - Review research on brand perceptions of both visitors and residents; and
 - Decide how best to implement a county-wide brand. (Short term)
- Consider Live Legendary as either the brand or an option to build upon. Share Live Legendary creative / explanatory documentation with branding committee. (Short term)
- Formally adopt and use the brand and promote it to local attractions, events, and the private sector for their use. (Short term)

- b. Use the new brand in a community **pride campaign** targeted at Laramie County residents.

Lead	Visit Cheyenne		
Support			
Term	Short 1-2 years	Medium 3-5 years	Long 5-10 years



5. TRAVEL INDUSTRY FRAMEWORK

- a. Broadly adopt and implement this **Tourism Master Plan**. Communicate the benefits and economic impact of the plan and its projects to residents. Paint the picture of an improved community.

Lead	Visit Cheyenne		
Support	City, County, Econ Dev Orgs		
Term	Short 1-2 years	Medium 3-5 years	Long 5-10 years

- Adoption by economic development boards, planning commission, city, county, and others. (Short term)
- Promote the plan to entities in destination services and marketing to build networks of partners working together on unified efforts (restaurants, transportation, etc). Develop new communication tools as needed. (Short term)
- Integration into government master plans and annual budgeting (Cheyenne Plan, County Comprehensive Plan, etc.). (Short-Medium-Long term)
- Provide regular updates to elected officials, the travel industry, and the public on the status of this plan. Highlight successes to engage residents and the hospitality industry. (Short-Medium-Long term)

- b. Develop and implement strategies to address **workforce** availability and quality challenges (recruitment, hospitality training).

Lead	Visit Cheyenne		
Support	Econ Dev Orgs		
Term	Short 1-2 years	Medium 3-5 years	Long 5-10 years

- Promote positives of working in the hospitality industry and available positions. (Short - Medium term)
- Provide hospitality training to workers already in the industry at area lodging, dining, and retail operations. (Short-Medium term)

- c. Advocate and support **transportation** infrastructure developments (road, air, rail).

Lead	City, County, Chamber, WYDOT		
Support	Econ Dev Orgs		
Term	Short 1-2 years	Medium 3-5 years	Long 5-10 years



d. Monitor and support development of **funding** options for projects and organizations critical to this plan and overall economic development.

Lead	Econ Dev Orgs		
Support	City, County		
Term	Short 1-2 years	Medium 3-5 years	Long 5-10 years

- Support 2021 Capital Facilities/6th penny election items included in the Master Plan. Take lead in preparing Master Plan projects for consideration for future Capital Facilities ballots. Lead or support promotion campaigns to support passage of future Master Plan projects by the voters. (Short-Medium-Long term)
- Be ready for possible covid-related funding options (CARES, ARP, EDA). (Short term)
- Develop and use funding options and tools for economic development purposes as appropriate (examples: urban renewal district, tax increment financing, business and tourism improvement districts, economic development sales tax). (Short-Medium-Long term)

e. Support overall Laramie County **business vitality and activity** that creates year-round business travel.

Lead	LEADs, Econ Dev Orgs		
Support	City, County		
Term	Short 1-2 years	Medium 3-5 years	Long 5-10 years

IV. APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: CHEYENNE MASTER PLAN PROJECT TEAM

Darren Rudloff, Rudloff Solutions

University of Wyoming Outdoor Recreation and Tourism Management program

Levi P. Kaiser, B.S. Outdoor Recreation and Tourism Management

Hailey Moss, B.S. Outdoor Recreation and Tourism Management

Dan McCoy, Ph.D., Degree Coordinator & Associate Lecturer

Visit Cheyenne

Domenic Bravo, CEO

Jim Walter, Vice President / Director of Sales and Marketing

Andi Jaspersen, Experience and Marketing Manager

APPENDIX B: CHEYENNE AND LARAMIE COUNTY DOCUMENTS REVIEWED AND USED IN THE PLANNING PROCESS

Visit Cheyenne Destination Next Assessment 2015

Visit Cheyenne Destination Next Assessment 2018

Visit Cheyenne Business Plan FY 2021

Visit Cheyenne Strategic Plan 2017

Visit Cheyenne Meeting Planner Research 2018

Cheyenne and Laramie County
Economic Development Grid

Downtown Core Working Plan 2016

Cheyenne Downtown Development Authority
Strategic Action Plan FY 21-22

Cheyenne Chamber Priority Assessment 2019

LEADs Strategic Plan 2020-2025

LEADS Cheyenne Competitive Assessment 2021

Forward Greater Cheyenne Community &
Economic Development Strategy 2018

Forward Greater Cheyenne Implementation Plan 2018

Cheyenne Frontier Days Strategic Trail
Guide to the Future (2020 Update)

Downtown Alleyway Enhancements 2017

Reed Ave. Rail Corridor Master Plan 2018

West Edge Area Wide Plan 2016

Cheyenne Lincolnway Placemaking 2016

Arts Cheyenne Visioning Framework
FY 2020 - FY 2025

Arts Cheyenne Strategic Plan FY 2021

Artspace – Preliminary Feasibility Report 2014

Laramie County Comprehensive Plan 2016

Plan Cheyenne Community Plan (2014 Update)

Connect 2045 - Plan Cheyenne Transportation update

Pine Bluffs Community Analysis 2008

Archer Trail Connector Plan 2019

Laramie County Community College
Strategic Plan 2020

The Belvoir Ranch and Big Hole Master Plan 2008

Indoor Sports Facility Cost and Revenue
Projections 2019 (UW MBA project)

WY State Parks & Cultural Resources
Strategic Plan FY 20-23

Report of Wyoming Governor's Task
Force on Outdoor Recreation 2017

WY Outdoor Recreation Office Strategic Plan 2019

WY Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor
Recreation Plan 2019-23

Wyoming's Comprehensive Statewide
Historic Preservation Plan 2016-2026

Wyoming Arts Council Strategic Plan

WY Cultural Trust Fund Revised Strategic Plan 2019

APPENDIX C: STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

Economic Development Agencies

Amber Ash, Cheyenne Downtown
Development Authority

Domenic Bravo, Visit Cheyenne

Betsy Hale, Cheyenne LEADs

Andi Jasperson, Visit Cheyenne

Dale Steenberg, Greater Cheyenne
Chamber of Commerce

Jim Walter, Visit Cheyenne

City of Cheyenne

Charles Bloom, Planning and Development

Jillian Harris, Metropolitan Planning Organization

Tom Mason, Metropolitan Planning Organization

Jason Sanchez, Community Recreation and Events

Jeanne Vetter, Cheyenne Greenway

City/County Elected Officials

Patrick Collins, Mayor of Cheyenne

Gunnar Malm, Laramie County Commission

Tom Segrave, Cheyenne City Council

Jeff White, Cheyenne City Council

Businesses & Attractions

Astrid, Plains Hotel

Chad Banks, Pine Bluffs Malting

Desiree Brothe, Arts Cheyenne

Curtis Crowton, Outlaw Saloon

Sam Galeotis, The Metropolitan Restaurant

Bryan 'Alf' Grzegorzczak, Alf's Pub

Tom Hirsig, Cheyenne Frontier Days

Mike Kassel, Old West Museum

CJ Kopek, WY Rib & Chop House Restaurant

Morgan Marks, Old West Museum

Tyler McLachlan, Towneplace Suites

Bob Nelson, Nelson Museum of West

Tony O'Brien, Little America Hotel & Resort

John Rimmasch, Wasatch Railroad Contractors

Bryan Thompson, Terry Bison Ranch

State of Wyoming

David Glenn, WY Parks Outdoor Recreation Office

Stephanie Lowe, WY Dept. of Transportation

Diane Shober, WY Office of Tourism

APPENDIX D: PHASE 1 RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

Word or Phrase that Represents Cheyenne

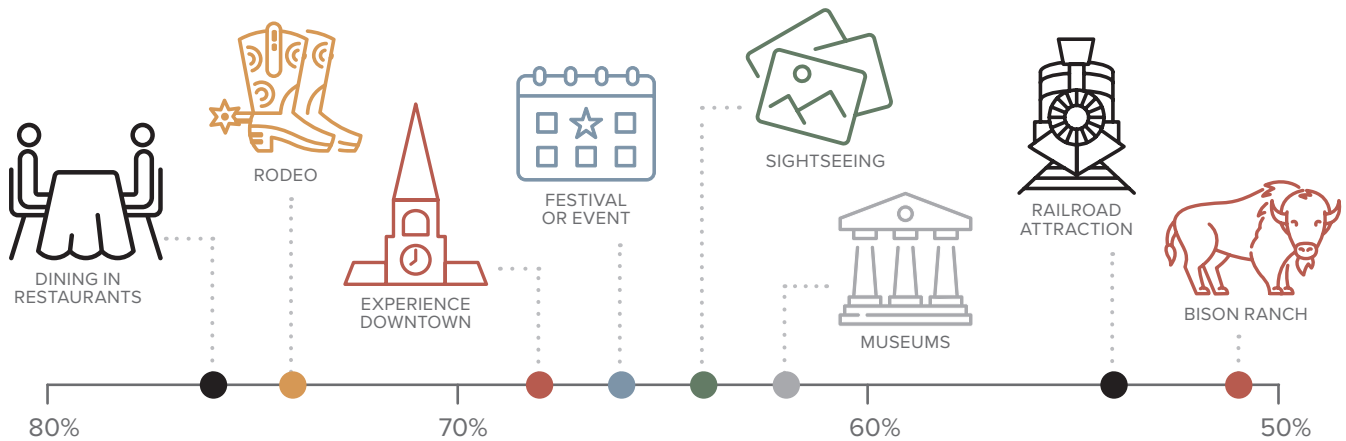
VISITORS



RESIDENTS



Top Activities **VISITORS** Want To Do on their Next Cheyenne Trip



RESIDENT Views on the Local Tourism Industry

82% Agree or Strongly Agree that the Laramie County travel industry has a **positive economic impact** on Cheyenne and Laramie County

81% Agree or Strongly Agree that the **benefits of the travel industry** outweigh its negatives

RESIDENT Support for Development Options

Percentage that Agree or Strongly Agree Cheyenne/Laramie County should:

- ...actively pursue **new attractions** for visitors and residents **90%**
- ...develop/host more **major events** for residents and visitors **90%**
- ...actively work to improve **downtown Cheyenne** **91%**
- ...develop and promote local **outdoor recreation** options **89%**

