

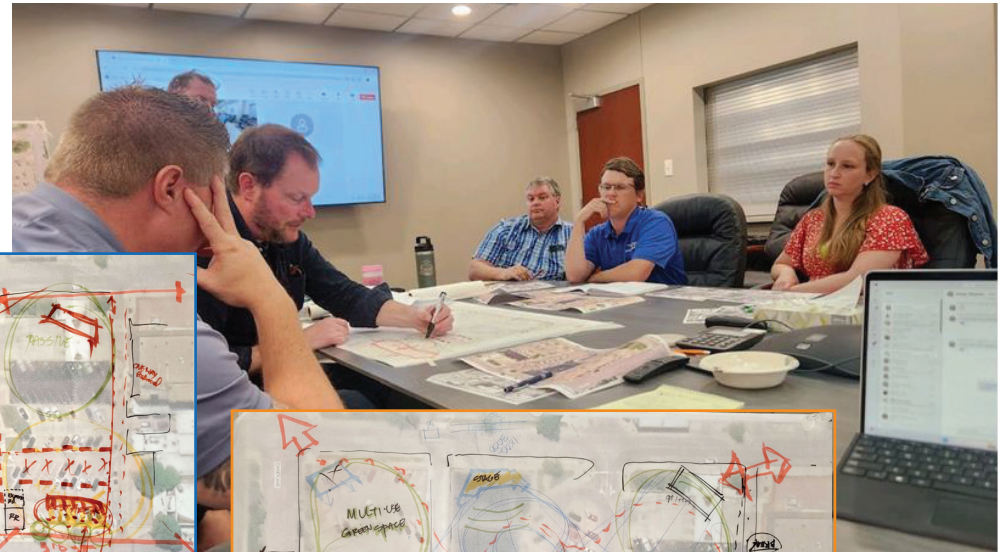
Gillette Downtown Infill

PROCESS INTRODUCTION

Through the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality’s SPURR Brownfield program, the City of Gillette was provided the opportunity to explore design ideas to begin the early visioning process, an important first step in a much longer process of re-imagining and redeveloping this important area within the Downtown core. Mayor Lundvall describes it best: “This is a starting point and gives us something to work toward over the coming decades.” The team from Ayres and WWC facilitated a design charrette with City staff in August of 2024. The charrette included a brainstorming work session, identifying preliminary goals and key design themes and programmatic features. Precedent examples in other communities of similar events and activities were discussed and documented, followed by a series of quick-draw design sessions to generate initial site organizations, themes and programmatic elements that support the community and provide year-round activities with flexibility to accommodate the future needs over the long term. The design team spent several weeks refining these ideas into three schematic-level conceptual designs, that are presented here in greater detail. The focus area of this study included the blocks between E 3rd Street and E 4th Street, and west of Carey Avenue to the alley behind S Gillette Avenue. With the existing Post Office being a challenge to relocate, the design team explored options that showed a phased approach with the Post Office to remain in the short term, and opportunities if/when the office is relocated off-site elsewhere in Gillette.

BACKGROUND & GOALS

The project originated from the Façade Program and aims to transform certain city blocks to foster community interaction and growth. Mayor Lundvall would like a visual representation of this change. The main challenge is relocating the Post Office, and there’s potential to include this land in the vision. The project involves exploring three future scenarios for the property and presenting a strategy to the City Council. The goal is to unite stakeholders, secure funding, and align the vision with the Comprehensive Master Plan. This “Dream Building” Session will generate conceptual ideas without being too rigid to help build community support.



A WYOMING BROWNFIELD INITIATIVE:
SPURR
 STATE PARTNERSHIP FOR
 URBAN & RURAL REDEVELOPMENT



EXPLORATION & INSPIRATION:

COMMUNITY AND MULTI-USE SPACE

The act of investing of community resources into public space enhancements requires juggling a wide array of stakeholder perspectives. Bringing forward a design that offers a variety of uses helps deliver value across the spectrum of our community. Locking in too many specific uses limits the ability of future uses to adapt the space to new ideas. Specific ideas included:

- Anchor for Downtown
- Blending of Active and Passive
- Functional and Maintainable
- Less of a "Park" and more of a multi-use space
- A destination venue park
- Benefit – Activating adjacent businesses and retail
- Connecting to trails system and railroad bridge
- Leverage downtown as multimodal connector hub



SEASONAL AND YEAR-ROUND ACTIVITIES

Year-round activities sustain community involvement and interest, offering a continuous source of entertainment and enrichment. They contribute to the vibrancy and liveliness of communal spaces. With Gillette's weather, it is critical to identify a blend of uses that will extend activation of the space into the winter months, while considering design elements that mitigate heat in summer and wind in winter. Ideas included:

- Ice Ribbon – Winter activity
- More winter activities – Hockey is expensive
- Winter Rodeo – SkiJoring
- Fall Activities – Pumpkin Festival
- Summer activities – ice ribbon – possible roller blade?
- Christmas market
- Christmas tree in the manhole
- Splash pad



EVENTS AND PROGRAMMING

A diverse range of programming attracts a broader audience and ensures the space is welcoming to multiple generations. It enriches the community experience by offering educational, recreational, and cultural activities for all to enjoy. During the physical design of a space, it is critical to think of a wide variety of programming that could fill the space to ensure flexible use. It is also important to consider the ongoing staffing cost and effort associated with programming these spaces

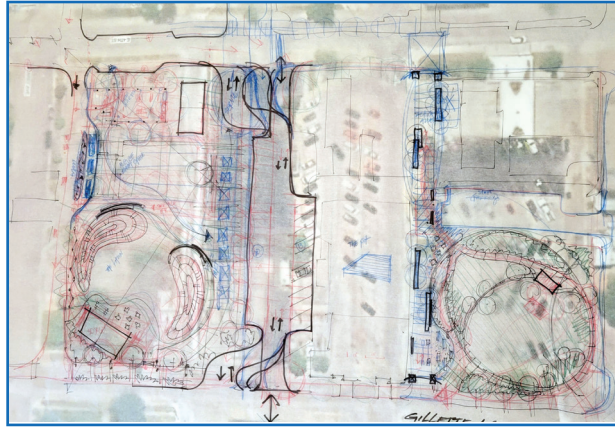
- Local bands – part of the Deadwood to Cody circuit
- Additional Festival Event programming – Themed local events
- Farmer's Market – Additional space might bring it down here
- 3-on-3 Basketball Event
- Energy Days
- Laser Light Show – Stone Mountain, GA
- Movies in the Park – Inflatable
- Pumpkin Carving Contest, Pumpkin Drop
- Camporee – Themed character areas – leveraging similar uses



FAMILY FRIENDLY @ ALL AGES

Designing spaces and activities that are family-friendly ensures inclusivity and accessibility for individuals of all ages. It creates an environment where families can spend quality time together and where people of all generations can connect. Considering the needs of immediate users is essential; people living nearby may start to consider this space their “front porch”. Specific design ideas discussed include:

- Kid-friendly
- Space for informal outdoor activities – yoga
- Activities for all ages – kids and seniors
- Girl and Boy Scouts, Volunteer Organizations, Celebrations



DESIGN + AESTHETICS

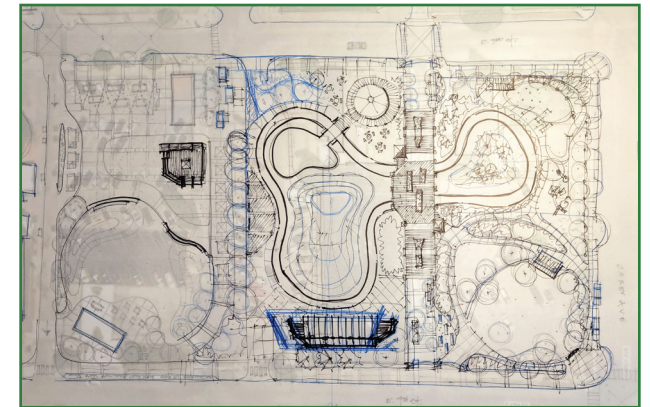
Functional design ensures that community spaces are utilized efficiently and effectively. It considers the practical needs of users, optimizing layout and amenities to enhance the overall user experience. Maintenance and long-term management are also key design issues, along with reflecting the local character and identity. Because these facilities are intended to last generations, balancing ease of maintenance with design function and aesthetics is essential. Ideas discussed included:

- Music, Stage in one corner
- Multi-use stage cover
- Visually captivating
- Green Space!!
- Canopy shade trees
- Immediate shade needs
- Wind breaks and buffers
- Lighting, color and moods, holiday themes
- Tree lighting ceremony
- “Ribbon” connecting trails in community

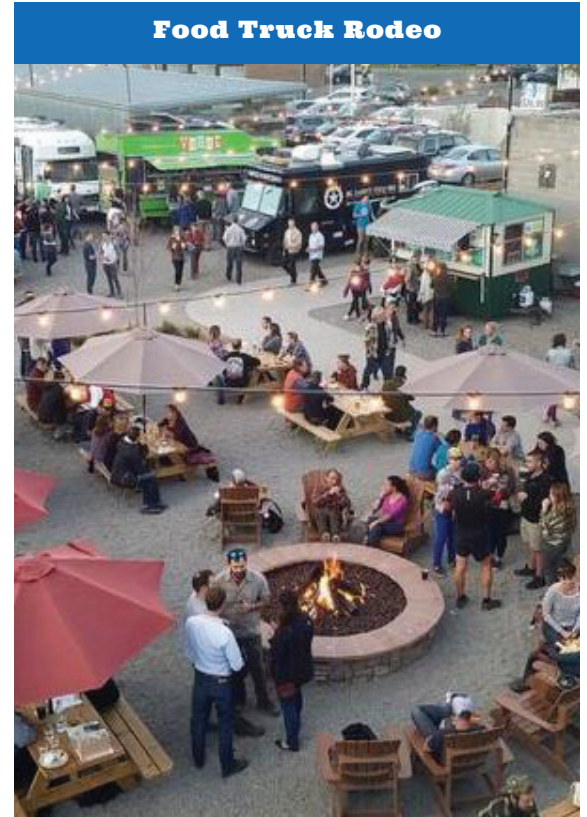
INFRASTRUCTURE + FACILITIES

Providing facilities that cater to various community needs, such as restrooms, seating areas, and recreational equipment enhances the overall user experience. Well-maintained facilities contribute to the safety and comfort of visitors. This area can also serve as a hub connecting various trails around the community. Consider long-range plans when making infrastructure investments to “future proof” plans and enable flexibility. Examine the needs of users (like power availability for food trucks and bands) when thinking about utilities.

- Food Truck Spaces (Parking lot near 3rd Street)
- Parking Garage Across from City Hall
- Tennis courts on top of parking garage
- Electrical needs
- Circulation and access



PRECEDENT IMAGES:



DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS:

Below is a brief narrative for the Post Office site's three conceptual infill plans. These plans are considered highly conceptual and drawn to an approximate working scale on Google Earth Aerials. They are intended to provide a vision with programmatic features discussed during our on-site charrette on August 19, 2024. Additional site investigations, including but not limited to Survey/SUE/As-Builts/Drainage Reports, etc., are recommended for any future detailed design drawings and construction documentation efforts

INFILL REDEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN – PHASE 1

This concept shows that the existing post office and loading dock to its north remain in place. The existing parking lot is reconfigured to accommodate approximately 40 stalls (±). The existing northeast property and associated parking are also shown to remain protected in place. The Third Street Plaza and existing restroom are also shown to remain, with a proposed expansion. The remainder of the study area assumes a complete reimagining/ redesign.

- A passive open lawn area at the eastern portion (Carey Ave & E. 4th St) provides space for 'yoga in the park'-type gatherings. It has shade trees, a pergola and tables, and xeric planting areas around the perimeter.
- Bicycle racks, enhanced pedestrian right-of-way along E 4th St., and multiple hardscape paths provide additional pedestrian and bicycle circulation across the site from the southeast to the northwest portions.

SEE FULL SIZED IMAGE ON NEXT PAGE

Additional Program:

- Expanded public restroom facility (twice as large).
- Beer garden – picnic tables and string lighting adjacent to 3rd Street Plaza.
- Two (2) separate food truck areas with 50-amp power receptacles and space for customer queuing.
- The Deck – an elevated platform area to provide a multi-use space for temporary Christmas Tree or other seasonal focal features. Linear benches are also provided oriented towards the deck.
- Promenade Market (175 LF x 25' wide) with pedestrian-scale lighting and space for market tents delineated with colored concrete bands.
- Open Lawn with berms for seating, with an 18'x26' pavilion shelter with movable furniture
- The existing alleyway east of the post office has been reimagined as an activated alley pedestrian thoroughfare, with gateway features, string lights, raised planter/seating areas, movable furniture, and an area for public art.



INFILL REDEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN - PLAN 1

Note: full size plan drawings are available at 1" = 30'-0" when plotted at 24" x 36"



INFILL REDEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN – PHASE 2

This concept shows the existing Post Office, associated parking, and loading dock as removed. The loss of parking is offset by a multi-level parking garage across from City Hall. Further design analysis and parking studies are recommended to confirm requirements. This Phase 2 concept protects all of Phase 1 improvements, except the activated alley, which gets disrupted by the pedestrian bridge and ice rink loop. Additional programming is noted below.

Additional Program:

- Winter Ice Loop / Summer Skate & Strider Loop, 15' wide x 875' Long (±).
- Kid-friendly ice rink (±55' x 70')
- Yurt and wrap-around deck for ticketing, warming hut, and fire pits around perimeter

- Sloped Berm Lawn within loop area for amphitheater-type seating
- Performance stage (35' x 70') similar to the Deadwood, SD stage in scale and structure.
- Pedestrian bridge with elevators for access, integrated planters and occupiable stairs, lighting and viewing deck for performances and park viewing.
- Picnic area, splash park, and nature playground with climbing boulders, ropes & logs, zip line etc.
- Alley-loaded row homes north of E 3rd St with pedestrian crossing and on-street parking for visitors. 11 units, 2 stories, approx. 1,400 SF ea.
- Enhanced pedestrian intersection at Carey Ave & E. 4th St to the proposed multi-level parking garage.

SEE FULL SIZED IMAGE ON NEXT PAGE



INFILL REDEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN - PHASE 2

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INFILL REDEVELOPMENT CONCEPTUAL PLAN - PHASE 2
DOWNTOWN GILLETTE, WY



INFILL REDEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN – ALTERNATE OPTION

This 3rd alternative concept has similar phasing potential as the previous concepts; however, this plan is conceived as a full infill redevelopment with the entire site reimaged. The main difference with this alternative is locating the performance stage on the southwest corner of the site, facing a larger open lawn area similar to the Cody Wy City Park and larger than Deadwood, SD venue. With the stage venue taking up much of the western area, the central area is dedicated to a 715 LF ice and skate loop with an interior kid's rink. Additionally, a sloped lawn for youth sledding with boulder terraced retaining walls on the south, which could also provide an opportunity for a decorative ice feature facing E 4th Street.

Additional Program:

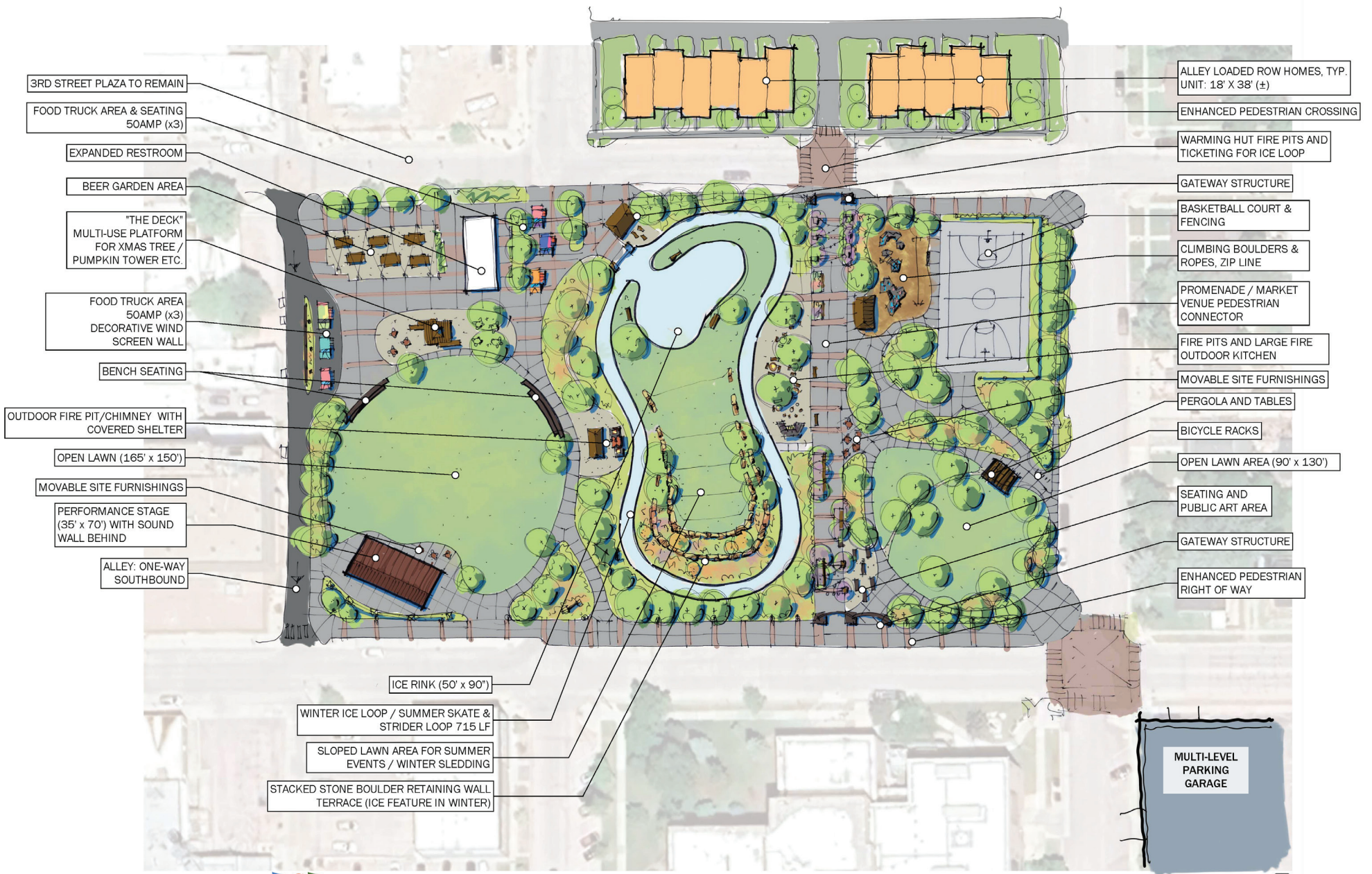
- Outdoor fire pits and stone chimney with potential cooking/grilling areas
- Activated alley can double as a market venue
- Nature playground boulders, ropes, zip line, etc.
- Full-size basketball court and fencing
- Alley-loaded row homes north of E 3rd St with pedestrian crossing and on-street parking for visitors. 11 units, 2 stories, approx. 1,400 SF ea. (same layout as Phase 2 concept).
- Enhanced pedestrian intersection at Carey Ave & E. 4th St to the proposed multi-level parking garage (same layout as Phase 2 concept).

SEE FULL SIZED IMAGE ON NEXT PAGE



INFILL REDEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN – ALTERNATE OPTION

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INFILL REDEVELOPMENT CONCEPTUAL PLAN - ALTERNATE OPTION
DOWNTOWN GILLETTE, WY



CLOSING & NEXT STEPS :

As previously stated, these concepts are intended to provide a starting point, a preliminary vision for the community to begin to see potential and generate enthusiasm and support for further explorations. While the on-site charrette was successful in identifying key design themes, we recommend a robust public outreach campaign to garner support, additional ideas, and community-driven goals to not only solicit feedback, but document support that can be leveraged to assist in grant seeking opportunities.

There are several amenities and site features proposed in these concepts that could be executed in a variety of ways. A thoughtful design exploration that further develops detailed designs, cost-analysis, including upfront costs, short and long-term maintenance, and optimal performance will be critical to the successful delivery of this downtown destination venue and park.

Outreach to communities with program precedents identified with similar activities, such as the ice skating loop in Spokane, WA is recommended to gain insights into the challenges, considerations and lessons-learned as this can be a valuable tool. Most often we find communities are more than willing to share their experiences and advice.

Working with a qualified team of designers and engineering to ensure not only the infrastructure needs are met, but also emphasis on the user-experience, with performance and event venue best practices need to be incorporated. Market-driven programming and right-sized amenities with flexibility to adapt and evolve with the ever-changing needs and priorities of the community, as well as detailed maintenance and operational planning will be vital to the long-term success of any infill development.

There are several State and Federal grant programs that should be reviewed for potential funding sources. Additionally, grant specialists can help identify and assist in the writing of applications, as these continually become more competitive with demand and availability.





WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY BROWNFIELDS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Nothing connects Wyoming people more than the places we spend our time. From our historic Main Streets, rail yards and factories to the majestic mountains and plains, these places form the backdrop of our lives, connecting us to one another. Pulling from our cowboy roots, SPURR seeks to kick economic investment into high gear and drive cleanup of neglected properties.

Wyoming DEQ is proud to present the SPURR Initiative - a technical assistance toolkit calibrated to kickstart investment in our downtown buildings, underutilized rural areas, and other neglected properties. SPURR is a Wyoming Brownfields Initiative: State Partnership for Urban and Rural Revitalization. With tools ranging from environmental assessments to redevelopment planning, **our goal is simple: dig in our heels to increase the economic vitality of our communities by enhancing environmental quality.**

Contact Us



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