



URA ANNUAL REPORT 2021





CHAIRWOMAN'S STATEMENT

24

Private Buildings
Enhanced and Restored



Downtown Rock Springs is the “Home of Rock Springs Soul.” Downtown continue to grow and expand, being an incubator for budding entrepreneurs and multi-generational businesses.

In 2021 we saw the opening of 11 new businesses in Downtown. We also saw our existing businesses pivot and connect with customers and the community in new ways.

The restoration of the First Security Bank building is certainly a highlight, but many smaller projects also made a huge difference.

This annual report will feature some of the highlights from 2021; we’re proud of our accomplishments. We continue to be optimistic on the future of Downtown Rock Springs!

MARIA MORTENSEN

Rock Springs Main Street/URA Chairwoman

Rock Springs Main Street/URA Board of Directors

- *Stacy Jones - Vice-Chairwoman*
- *Gloria Hutton - Treasurer*
- *Sue Lozier - Secretary*
- *Kevin Harper*
- *Mike Hulen*
- *David Jarrell*
- *Rob Zotti - Council Liaison*

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

New businesses opened Downtown during 2021:

- Mi Ranchito Family Restaurant
- Kneeland Fine Art
- Play and Learn School
- Studio 307 Dance Center
- Leap Services, LLC
- Guardian's Watch
- Hair Candy
- Cherry Creek Mortgage
- Stef and Co.
- Loaded Waffle
- Crafting on a Budget



One of our foremost goals is to expand the business base in Downtown Rock Springs and grow the retail mix. To that end, we continued our Project Pop-Up program in 2021. The program is designed to give potential new businesses three months of free rent to get them started with a store-front.

Downtown Rock Springs is also home to a large number of women-owned businesses. For the past few years we've celebrated those owners during October, **National Women's Small Business Month**. As part of that celebration, we hosted a professional meet-up designed to help women in various fields find peers they can relate to. The event, called Celebrate You, was a huge success with over 50 women from around Sweetwater County attending.



To assist property owners with restoration of their buildings, the Rock Springs Main Street/URA provides a Façade and Paint Grant program, when our funds allow. During 2021 we provided 6 grants to the following businesses:

- 307 Dance Studio
- High Alpine Archery
- Mi Ranchito
- Mint Motel
- Nobel K Investments
- Stellar Cellar



GRANTS

- Dominion Energy - Snowman Stroll
- Rocky Mountain Power Foundation - Snowman Stoll
- Sweetwater Joint Travel and Tourism Board (three separate grants)
 - Sweetwater Blues n' Brews
 - ARTember
 - Snowman Stroll
- Wyoming Arts Council - Broadway Theater season
- Wyoming Community Foundation - Snowman Stroll
- Wyoming Cultural Trust Fund (two separate grants)
 - Brown Bag Concert Series
 - Snowman Stroll
- Wyoming Main Street (three separate grants)
 - Summer Placemaking Grant
 - Winter Placemaking Grant
 - Technical Assistance Grant
- Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) - First Security Bank



OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

- All staff completed the **Certified Tourism Ambassador** (CTA) training from Sweetwater Travel and Tourism
- One new, **large scale mural** located on 5th Street. This mural is part of artist Kayla Newman's "Murals on the Move" project which aims to a mural in all 50 states.
- **Kickin' it in Downtown** boot murals located on C street
- Working with local scout Shane Meats, installed a **Blessing Box** at our office to help those less fortunate
- Hosted the first ever **Mayor's Arts Awards** to help promote the arts in Rock Springs
- Encouraged locals to take the "**Pledge to Attend**" by attending at least one arts event each month
- To aid local bars, we hosted the Inaugural **Craft Cocktail Week**
- To highlight the National Main Street Center's Four Point Approach, we hosted **Four Point Friday** in February. Four Point Friday featured one of the four points (promotion, design, organization, and economic vitality) each Friday and what that has meant for our community and program
- May is **National Historic Preservation Month**. To create awareness about the importance and value of historic preservation we developed a historic architecture scavenger hunt featuring Downtown Rock Springs buildings.
- Rock Springs was listed as one of the **7 Best Places to Live** in Wyoming according to Zumper.com



Rock Springs

As one of Wyoming's most diverse cities, Rock Springs is the place for entertainment, arts, culture, and delicious foods. Have your pick of Asian, Italian, Western-inspired American, and many other cuisines. Enjoy concerts in the park, explore the history of the area at one of the many museums, and check out the regular events, like the county fair, a blues music festival, and Flaming Gorge Days, which celebrate the cultural diversity of the area with food, music, beer, and plenty of fun.

PROMOTIONS

Promotions position Downtown Rock Springs as the center of our community and the hub of economic activity, while creating a positive image that showcases Rock Springs' unique character. We've been making some conscious shifts away from one-day special events to more long-term promotions. These promotions are designed to be less labor intensive, more Covid-sensitive, and have a longer "shelf life" to create ongoing traffic and sales for the merchants.

One such promotion was our "**Downtown-osaurs**"

We worked with Don and Kaye Tyler to create the Downtown-osaurs then placed them around Downtown. We then developed scavenger hunts, coloring pages and special dino themed events throughout the summer to engage families and draw them Downtown. We saw hundreds of families participating in the summer-long promotion



Utilizing funding from the Wyoming Main Street program, we hosted a **Downtown Shopping Sweepstakes** for Christmas. The program was designed to drive sales to Downtown merchants while allowing us to develop a benchmark to track sales in future years. The sweepstakes encouraged Downtown shoppers to text copies of their receipts from Downtown purchases to our office. We collected over 300 entries with sales totaling more than \$16,000. While we were thrilled with the response, we know it was a just a small portion of the local sales generated.

DOWNTOWN SHOPPING Sweepstakes
\$2,000
in prizes

SHOP SMALL TO WIN BIG!

To enter, text us a photo of your receipt & your name to: **307-448-2650**

BY THE NUMBERS:*

- **42 public events** hosted at the Broadway Theater with **attendance topping 6,100****
- **79 events** hosted at Bunning Hall with **attendance just under 10,000**
- **24 private buildings** restored or updated
- **13 net full time jobs** created (FTE)
- **11 new businesses** opened
- **1,401 volunteer hours** contributed
- Facebook reach of **271,900**
- Instagram reach of **11,800**

**Events at both Bunning Hall and the Broadway Theater are returning after many cancellations in 2019 and the beginning of 2020.*

***These numbers don't include such things as weekly meetings by the Rock Springs Rotary Club, Red Desert Humane Society, or Actor's Missions auditions and rehearsals.*

THE BROADWAY THEATER

Like everyone, Covid hit the Broadway Theater HARD. For most of 2020, the theater remained dark. Bookings and shows began to return in 2021 and by the end of the year, a full season had been developed.

Highlights include:

- Receiving a grant from Sweetwater BOCES to continue our student intern program
- Continuation of our social club liquor license at the Broadway Theater
- New staff member, Kenneth McCormack, who brings an extensive theater background to our program
- Hosting the Rock Springs Rotary Club for their weekly meetings in the upstairs conference room

Shows:

- Actor's Mission production of The Rocky Horror Show
- Actor's Mission production of Beer for Breakfast
- Awaken Wyoming Holistic Fair
- "Dear Sirs" movie premier
- Disney's Dinosaur
- Divas Through the Decades
- Music of a Community
- Out at the Movies - Kinky Boots
- The Polar Express
- Preserving Our Precious Possessions-Popular Culture
- Rocky Mountain Puppets
- The Sandlot
- String Showdown
- Survivors of Suicide Loss Day
- Todd Oliver's Funniest Night Of Your Life
- T00M3R
- Weeby's World
- Welcoming The Stranger: My Origin Story - Baktash Ahadi
- Wyo Laffs
- Wyoming Business Council



Sold Out Shows:

- Tracy Byrd
- Bar J Wranglers (farewell tour)
- David Archuleta
- Kip Winger
- Cloverton



Our Friends of the Broadway Theater

patron program continues to support our social club liquor license.

Interested in joining? You can do so on our website (BroadwayRS.com), by calling the office at 307-352-1434 or stopping by at 603 S Main Street.

Membership is just \$25 and includes concession perks, special ticket offers and discounts at participating merchants.

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