



# URA

## ANNUAL REPORT 2022





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

In 2022 we saw the opening of a whopping 18 new businesses in Downtown. We also saw our existing businesses pivot and connect with customers and the community in new ways.

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

# CHAIRWOMAN'S STATEMENT

This annual report will feature some of the highlights from 2022; 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*
- *Tim Robinson - Council Liaison*



# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## New Businesses in 2022

- AAA Taxi
- New York Life
- The Art of Integrative Medicine & Wellness
- Details Boutique
- Wyoming Freight Company
- Debernardi Law Office
- El Catracho Barbershop
- Not Your Mama's Tattoo Parlor
- Desert Keep Games
- Rogue Plumbing, LLC
- Sweet Dayz Bakery
- Roots to Rise
- Mind Works Behavioral Health, LLC
- Frankie's Silver Linings
- Taxes by Tiffany, LLC
- Nell's Coffee
- Fetal Fotos
- Lola B Boutique

One of our foremost goals is to expand the business base in Downtown Rock Springs and grow the retail mix. To that end, we introduced a new program in 2020 - Project Pop Up.

A Pop-Up Shop is a short-term retail store that offers new, unique, local or specialized products or services. Project Pop Up was designed to fill empty storefronts and prospect new, long-term businesses. It gave one entrepreneur an opportunity start a pop up for the holiday season with a minimal investment with the goal of long-term occupancy after program completion.

Our 2022 recipient was Crystan Wilkinson with Lola B. Boutique

***"The Project Pop-Up program is an amazing program for my new business. It's a great way for me to see how my business will succeed in a brick and mortar store while I save up enough money for rent and expenses. I'm grateful to the URA for giving me the opportunity to fulfill my dream of owning a boutique in Downtown Rock Springs."***

***Crystan Wilkinson  
Lola B. Boutique***



# GRANTS

- Sweetwater Joint Travel and Tourism:
  - Sweetwater Blues n' Brews
  - Wyoming International Film Festival - Rock Springs Encore
  - Snowman Stroll
  - ARTember
- Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office - First Security Bank, terra cotta restoration
- Certified Local Government Grant - expansion of the National Historic District
- Wyoming Arts Council - Broadway Theater programming
- Wyoming Cultural Trust Fund - Snowman Stroll
- Wyoming Main Street:
  - Summer Placemaking Grant
  - Technical Assistance Grant

## OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

- In order to drive traffic during January and February, we developed the **Snowman Stroll** in 2022. Six life-sized snowmen were created by local artists and placed throughout Downtown with accompanying activities.
- At the direction of the City Council, we suggested updates to the **Vacant and Abandoned Building Ordinance** and identified eleven Downtown buildings that meet the criteria. The ordinance was originally adopted in 2013 to help eliminate blight, increase property values, and improve overall quality of life
- Because Downtown Rock Springs is home to a large number of women-owned businesses, we partnered with Casey Kuckert Consulting to host monthly **Ladies Who Lunch** focused conversations. The lunches are designed to tackle topics faced by women entrepreneurs throughout Sweetwater County.
- Building on our mission to grow the economy in Downtown Rock Springs, we hosted a **Small Business Week** celebration in May. The celebration included workshops and webinars as well as a Business After Hours networking event.
- 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.
- We hosted monthly **Community Conversations** to further engage our community. The conversations alternated between morning coffee conversations and evening cocktail conversations so anyone could participate. The conversations are a way to solicit ideas and input from the community at large and were very well attended.
- In November we began working with Downtown Development Services to improve our strategic plan. The plan will be fine-tuned and rolled out in 2023.



# 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 Monsters**"

We worked with Kaye Tyler to create the monsters and then placed them around Downtown. Merchants got into the spirit with window paintings and we developed scavenger hunts, coloring pages and special monster-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 **nearly 350 entries** with sales totaling more than \$17,000. While we were thrilled with the response, we know it was a just a small portion of the local sales generated.



## BY THE NUMBERS:

- **101 public events** hosted at the Broadway Theater with **attendance topping 8,000\***
- **107 events** hosted at Bunning Hall with **attendance just topping 13,000**
- **20 private buildings** restored or updated
- **\$181,550 Private Investment** in Downtown Rock Springs
- **20.5 net full time jobs** created (FTE)
- **18 new businesses** opened
- **1,871 volunteer hours** contributed
- Facebook reach of **250,711**
- Instagram reach of **13,202**

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



# THE BROADWAY THEATER

Each year since it's opening, the Broadway Theater continues to expand in attendance and offerings and 2022 was no different. The theater hosted over 100 productions with attendance topping 8,000 - the biggest numbers yet!

## Highlights include:

- Continuing our grant from Sweetwater BOCES to continue our student intern program
- Continuation of our social club liquor license at the Broadway Theater
- Hosting the Rock Springs Rotary Club for their weekly meetings in the upstairs conference room
- Serving as the home theater for three community theater groups - Actor's Mission, Horizon Theater, and the Starling Company.

## Shows:

- A Christmas Carol - A New Musical
- Polar Express
- Eric Henry Andersen in concert
- Drag Me to '23: A New Year's Eve Dragstravaganza
- Floyd Collins and the White Angels of Sand Cave
- 2022 Wyoming International Film Festival
- Greasewood Redemption Live on Broadway
- Where the Wild Things Are
- Shadow Cast showings of The Rocky Horror Picture Show
- A Sissy in Wyoming
- The Actor's Mission presents a 24 Hour Happening "Page To Stage" One Acts
- Utah Shakespeare Festival
- Buffalo Bill's Holiday Roundup
- Jarabe Mexicano
- Jason Dea West
- David Rogers
- Michael Martin Murphey
- The Horizon Theater presents The Importance of Being Earnest
- Primary Election Debates
- A Dreamer's Showcase
- Monsters, Inc.
- The Sweet Delilah Swim Club
- Carvin Jones - Live in Concert
- The Passion of Christ
- Actor's Mission presents, "A Reason"
- Men of Worth
- 2022 Downtown First Awards Night & Volunteer reception
- Ryan Stevenson LIVE
- Actor's Mission presents And So We Come Forth
- Imagine: Remembering the Fab Four!



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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](http://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.