

**AGENDA**  
**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**  
**REGULAR MEETING**  
**CITY OF WYOMING, MINNESOTA**  
**FEBRUARY 10, 2025**  
**5:30 PM**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

**CALL OF ROLL:**

**DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM:**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

**OPEN FORUM:**

*“An opportunity for members of the public to address the City Council on items on/or not on the current agenda. Items requiring Council action maybe deferred to staff or Boards and Commissions for research and future Council Agendas if appropriate. You will be limited to three (3) minutes and we ask that you conduct yourself in a professional, courteous manner, and refrain from the use of profanity. Failure to abide by this policy may result in the loss of your privilege to speak”.*

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

1. To consider approving the minutes of the "Regular Meeting" of the Wyoming, Minnesota City EDA for January 13, 2025

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

*Items under the “Consent Agenda” will be adopted with one motion; however, council members may request individual items to be pulled from the consent agenda for discussion and action if they choose.*

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

2. 2025 Goals and Work Plan

**COMMUNICATIONS:**

3. Initiative Foundation
4. Wyoming EDA Updates

**ADJOURN**

**UNAPPROVED MINUTES  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
REGULAR MEETING  
CITY OF WYOMING, MINNESOTA  
JANUARY 13, 2025  
5:30 PM**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

**CALL OF ROLL:**

*On a Call of the Roll the following members of the Wyoming EDA were present:*

*EDA Members: Mayor Iverson, Council Member Schilling, Andrew Buccanero, Alex Bulmer, Jeff Allen, and Trent Hampton*

*Also Present: Robb Linwood - City Administrator, and Nancy Hoffman – Chisago County HRA/EDA*

**ABSENT:**

**DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM:**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

**OPEN FORUM:**

*“An opportunity for members of the public to address the EDA on items not on the current Agenda. Items requiring EDA action maybe deferred to staff for research and future EDA Agendas if appropriate.”*

1. Consider approving the minutes of the “Regular Meeting” of the Wyoming, Minnesota City EDA for November 12, 2024

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY EDA MEMBER SCHILLING SECONDED BY EDA MEMBER HAMPTON TO APPROVE THE “REGULAR MEETING” MINUTES OF THE WYOMING, MINNESOTA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY FOR NOVEMBER 12, 2024**

*Voting Aye: Iverson, Schilling, Allen, Hampton, Bulmer and Buccanero*

*Voting Nay:*

*Abstain:*

**SCHEDULED BID LETTINGS: NONE.**

**SCHEDULED PUBLIC HEARINGS: NONE**

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

*Items under the “Consent Agenda” will be adopted with one motion; however, council members may request individual items to be pulled from the consent agenda for discussion and action if they choose.*

**ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF REPORTS OF OFFICERS, BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND DEPARTMENT HEADS:**

**OLD BUSINESS:**

2. Wyoming Downtown Signage/Digital Signage

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY EDA MEMBER BULMER SECONDED BY EDA MEMBER SCHILLING TO APPROVE THE A NOT TO EXCEED AMOUNT OF \$8,079.00 TOWARDS A DIGITAL SIGN**

*Voting Aye: Iverson, Schilling, Allen, Hampton, Bulmer and Buccanero*

*Voting Nay:*

*Abstain:*

**NEW BUSINESS:**

3. Vote and assign EDA positions for 2025

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY MEMBER BULMER, SECONDED BY MEMBER HAMPTON TO NOMINATE LISA IVERSON AS EDA PRESIDENT FOR 2025.**

*Voting Aye: Bulmer, Schilling, Allen, Hampton and Buccanero*

*Voting Nay:*

*Abstain: Iverson*

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY MEMBER HAMPTON SECONDED BY MEMBER BUCCANERO TO NOMINATE SCHILLING AS EDA VICE PRESIDENT FOR 2025.**

*Voting Aye: Iverson, Bulmer, Allen, Hampton and Buccanero*

*Voting Nay:*

*Abstain: Schilling*

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY MEMBER HAMPTON SECONDED BY MEMBER ALLEN TO NOMINATE BUCCANERO AS EDA PRESIDENT PRO TERM FOR 2025.**

*Voting Aye: Iverson, Schilling, Allen, Hampton, Bulmer and Buccanero*

*Voting Nay:*

*Abstain:*

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY MEMBER IVERSON, SECONDED BY MEMBER SCHILLING TO NOMINATE ALEX BULMER AS TREASURER 2025**

*Voting Aye: Iverson, Schilling, Allen, Hampton, Bulmer and Buccanero*

*Voting Nay:*

*Abstain:*

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY MEMBER SCHILLING, SECONDED BY MEMBER HAMPTON TO NOMINATE JEFF ALLEN AS ASSISTANT TREASURER FOR 2025**

*Voting Aye: Iverson, Schilling, Allen, Hampton, Bulmer and Buccanero*

*Voting Nay:*

*Abstain:*

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY MEMBER SCHILLING SECONDED BY MEMBER HAMPTON TO NOMINATE ROBB LINWOOD EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND SECRETARY FOR 2025.**

*Voting Aye: Iverson, Schilling, Allen, Hampton, Bulmer and Buccanero*

*Voting Nay:*

*Abstain:*

4. EDA Meeting Dates for 2025

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY MEMBER IVERSON, SECONDED BY MEMBER BULMER TO APPROVE THE MEETING DATES FOR 2025.**

*Voting Aye: Iverson, Bulmer, Schilling, Allen, Hampton and Buccanero*  
*Voting Nay:*  
*Abstain:*

5. To consider a donation to the Initiative Foundation for 2025

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY MEMBER HAMPTON, SECONDED BY MEMBER ALLEN TO APPROVE A DONATION TO THE INITIATIVE FOUNDATION OF \$500**

*Voting Aye: Iverson, Bulmer, Schilling, Allen, Hampton and Buccanero*  
*Voting Nay:*  
*Abstain:*

6. EDAM Conference Request

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY MEMBER IVERSON, SECONDED BY MEMBER BUCCANERO TO APPROVE THE ATTENDANCE OF CITY ADMINSTRATOR ROBB LINWOOD AT THE 2025 EDAM WINTER CONFERENCE.**

*Voting Aye: Iverson, Bulmer, Schilling, Allen, Hampton, and Buccanero*  
*Voting Nay:*  
*Abstain:*

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

7. Pertinent EDA Documents

City Administrator Linwood provided copies of the Wyoming Strategic Plan, Chisago County Strategic Plan, Wyoming EDA Mission Statement and the Wyoming Downtown Plan Study

8. Chisago County Collaborative Initiative Event January 22, 2025

Nancy Hoffman from the Chisago County HRA/EDA discussed the event that will be a jail tour that will be held on January 22, 2025

9. January EDA Updates

## **ADJOURN**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY MEMBER IVERSON SECONDED BULMER TO ADJOURN THE JANUARY 13, 2025 "REGULAR MEETING" OF THE WYOMING, MINNESOTA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY MEETING AT 6:19P.M.**

*Voting Aye: Iverson, Buccanero, Allen, Hampton, Bulmer and Schilling*  
*Voting Nay:*  
*Abstain:*



# Request for EDA Action

Date: February 6, 2025

Presented to: EDA Members

Presented by: Robb Linwood, City Administrator

Department: Administration

Reference: 2025 Work Plan Discussion/Goals/Marketing

Method: New Business

## **Background Information:**

As part of the start for the EDA's 2025 Work Plan/Goals and Marketing effort we wanted to discuss with the group about the focus of our efforts in 2024 and utilize that to work on components for things to be completed in 2025. I have attached last year's work. We can utilize this document for some of the 2025 EDA Initiatives.

## **Strengths**

- Hwy 8 and I35
- Proximity to city for business and residential
- Labor Force
- Police and Fire
- Schools
- Parks
- Better value for land – commercial and residential

## **Weaknesses**

- Lack of commercial office space
- No real definitive downtown
- Hwy 8 – Lack of infrastructure water/sewer
- People don't want change of a developing city
- Lack of Food options/restaurants
- Workforce Housing/Starter Homes
- Lack of Industrial Land

## **Opportunities**

- Hospital Land
- School
- Housing improvements Chisago
- Empty lot in downtown across from Bank
- Land Near Lakes Gas
- Expansion of Local Manufacturers

## Threats

- Economy – cost of building
- Construction Period of Hwy 8
- Housing Legislation
- People working from home
- Fiber Quality

## 2024 Goals and Ongoing Goals

- Ongoing Goals
- Restaurants – Distillery – Brewery - Attractions
- Affordable/Workforce Housing – can we make sure that the buildings look attractive
- Different Housing options and More options – We should focus on Multi Family
- Propane Tank – Try to start conversation with Lakes Gas
- Contact Motel owner
- Looks at 2024 action items for downtown plan – review parking area
- What are some reasons to come to Wyoming
- Look at reasons to live in Wyoming that could attract employers – is it not just Wyoming is a regional look – Greater MSP Attraction – Reasons on Website – What is the story
- Showcase good schools and options
- Opportunities – City Dispensary
- Land Inventory

The Second Component of the discussion can talk about areas of focus and how we want to work on these or potential marketing efforts depending on the topic.

- **Business Retention and Expansion** – Maintaining a systematic visitation program with Wyoming’s existing businesses, providing outstanding customer service and doing everything within our power to help our local companies succeed and grow.
  - BR&E is the number one source for economic activity and growth in a community
  - Up to 90% of community growth comes from existing companies
  - Very inexpensive
  - Most effective activity in creating new jobs
  - Excellent marketing opportunity when owners and manager of businesses share what a great community they reside in.

## Strategies and Actions

- The EDA identified this as a high value activity and that the relationship building is critical. The City and County will be working on CRM that will track the business visits and the data that we accumulate

**Skilled Workforce** – What can we do to grow our own skilled workforce locally by engaging high school students and educating them about opportunities provided at local tech colleges for training and education. Chisago HRA/EDA is working to complete a Labor study that will be shared with this group.

- Businesses and especially manufacturers indicate a server shortage of skilled workers
- Available skilled workforce is driving factor of a business's looking to expand or relocate

## Strategies and Actions

- Labor Study
- Assist with Hiring events
- Manufacturing week job fair

**Business Attraction** – How do we gain a competitive advantage vs other communities of having our businesses expand here and new businesses locate here.

Key Factors:

- Skilled workforce
- Available land
- Gap financing
- Attractive community
- Collaborative – (County, City, ECRDC, County HRA/EDA, business community)
- What type of businesses do we want to attract and where can we locate them

## Strategies and Actions

The Labor study that was just completed will be extremely helpful this goal. We can continue to work with local schools and utilize manufacturing week to expose high school kids to the trades in the city. The EDA would like to try to expose more trades to students like electrical and plumbing. Construct America is an agency we may be able to work with. Contact land owners that don't have land actively for sale and make list of potential properties for development.

**Downtown Redevelopment** – maintaining an attractive area as a part of community that reinforces that it is a great place to live

- Downtowns can be a reflection of how the community sees itself
- Typically independently owned businesses that keep profits in town
- Do we have areas of priority or opportunities? I have attached the study for the EDA's review.

## **Strategies and Actions**

- The EDA thought that the downtown had opportunities for redevelopment and store fronts or multifamily housing
- Look at long term downtown redevelopment plan
- **Workforce Housing – How we develop and look for new opportunities**
  - According to the Urban Land Institute (ULI), Workforce Housing is defined as housing affordable to households earning between 60 and 120 percent of area median income (AMI). Workforce housing targets middle-income workers which includes professions such as police officers, firefighters, teachers, health care workers, retail clerks, and the like. Households who need workforce housing may not always qualify for housing subsidized by the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC)
  - Chisago County has developed a housing trust fund
  - Affordable housing is essential to a flourishing business base, especially manufacturing

## **Strategies and Actions**

- Government Financing (TIF/Abatement)
- Helpful Zoning
- Low Cost land/donated land
- Advocacy by the EDA to engage
- Partner with Forest Lake CTE and Pine Tech and Construct America about partnering with Wyoming

## **Marketing Efforts**

- Work on updating EDA website to ensure good information
- More Social media presences and the continued use of constant contact
- Site selectors are utilizing city's web pages for information
- Community image and reputation matter
- Branding is important to set us apart

## **Strategies and Actions**

- Social Media Posts (VIDEOS)
- New Businesses and New Development
- Featured Businesses of the Month



# City of Wyoming, Minnesota DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN



DRAFT

Adoption Ordinance

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# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

## City Council

Lisa Iverson, *Mayor*  
Linda Nanko Yeager, *Council Member*  
Claire Luger, *Council Member*  
Brett Ohnstad, *Council Member*  
Dennis Schilling, *Council Member*

## Economic Development Authority

Lisa Iverson, *President*  
Andrew Buccanero, *President Pro Term*  
Dennis Schilling, *Vice President*  
Alex Bulmer, *Treasurer*  
Eric Nault, *Assistant Treasurer*  
Robb Linwood, *Executive Director*

## Prepared by:

This document was prepared by MSA Professional Services, Inc. and Michael Lamb Consulting, LLC with assistance from City Staff, the Economic Development Authority, and the citizens of Wyoming, Minnesota.



Special thanks to the Initiative Foundation and the Chisago County HRA EDA for their financial contributions to the completion of this study.



# 1: INTRODUCTION

## PLAN PURPOSE

The purpose of this Downtown Master Plan is to strengthen and reaffirm downtown Wyoming as the heart of the community through a variety of actionable steps. The improvements outlined in this Plan will encourage gathering, exploration, and engagement within downtown Wyoming, welcoming visitors and long-term residents alike. These improvements aim to enhance Wyoming's existing unique features, including its historical grid structure, small-town character, and diverse business presence.

Ultimately, this document is a "living guide" to continually assist the City of Wyoming and other partner entities as they move forward with development and improvements within downtown Wyoming. The Plan represents the City's best efforts to address current issues and anticipate future needs as they relate to the downtown area. However, it can and should be amended from time to time as new conditions and challenges arise.

This document contains the following:

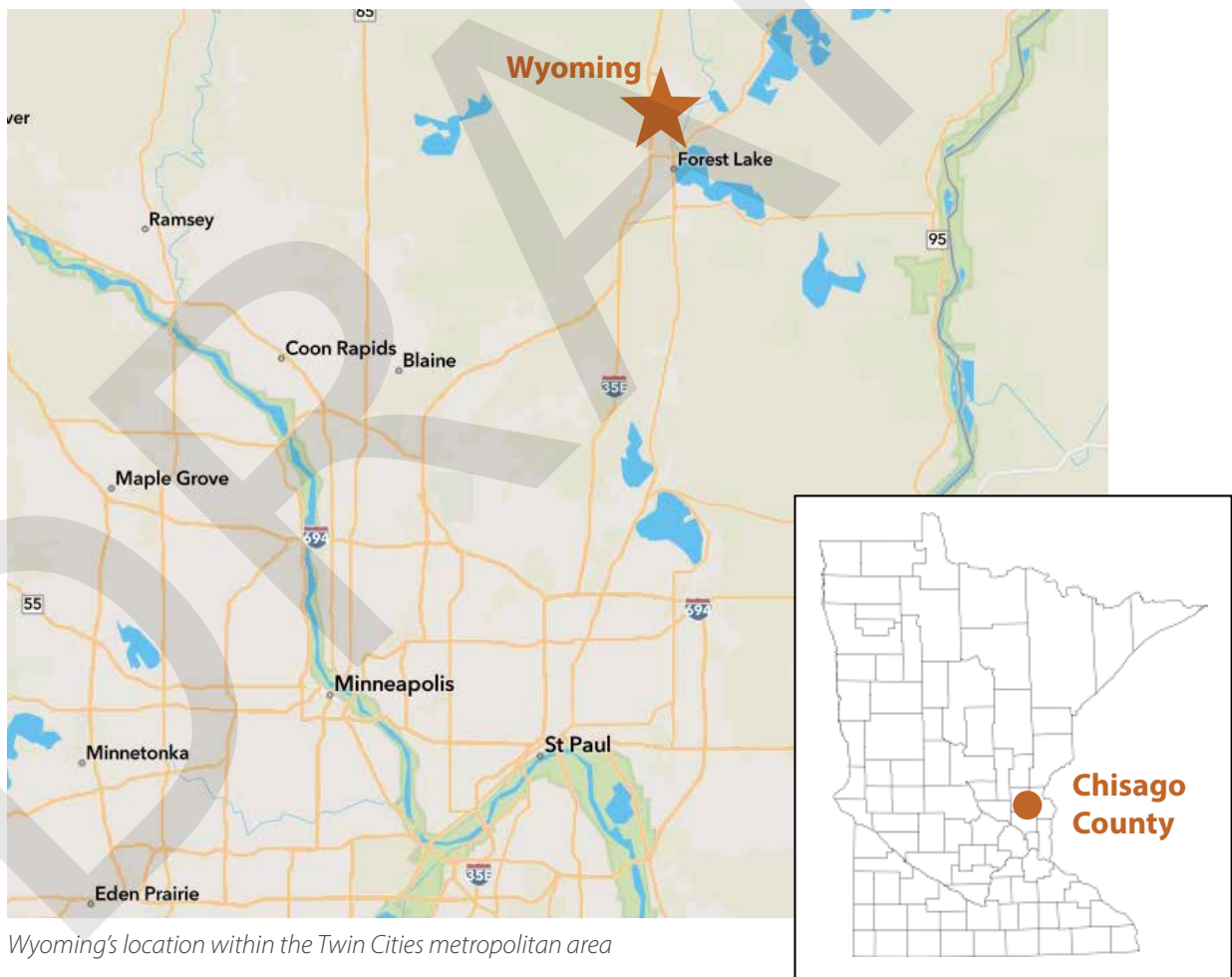
- Summaries of collaboration efforts with the community and stakeholders;
- A unified vision and goals for revitalizing downtown Wyoming;
- Economic trends and growth potential;
- Actionable strategies for enhancing Wyoming's human-scale built environment;
- Recommended policies to support retail growth, attract more amenities, reinvest in properties, create walkable livable spaces, and implementation of collaborative ideas and public/private partnerships;
- An implementation plan that identifies projects, champions, and potential funding sources.



## ABOUT WYOMING, MINNESOTA

Located on the edge of the Minneapolis-St. Paul (Twin Cities) metropolitan area, the City of Wyoming, Minnesota is a growing community with small town appeal and adjacency to numerous conveniences. In 2020, the population was approximately 8,032 (U.S. Census); the community has almost tripled in size since 2000, where its population was 3,048. Wyoming is located in Chisago County and is within easy driving distance of the Twin Cities and Duluth. It is located along the South Branch of the Sunrise River.

Originally organized in 1858 as Wyoming Township and platted in 1869, Wyoming's growth has been closely linked to transportation. It was the first stop on the stagecoach route from Rice Street (in St. Paul) to Duluth, then later a stop along the St. Paul and Duluth Railroad. In the 1960s, the I-35 freeway was built next to the community, prompting Wyoming's population to explode from roughly 1,000 in 1960 to over 8,000 in 2020. Today, it hosts many large industrial, manufacturing, and healthcare businesses such as Polaris Industries, Rosenbauer Motors, Hallberg Marine, and M Health Fairview Lakes Medical Center. Its quaint downtown has a few historic buildings, which are primarily occupied by service businesses, and immediate access to both I-35 and the Sunrise Prairie Regional Trail (a 24-mile paved trail through Chisago and Washington Counties).



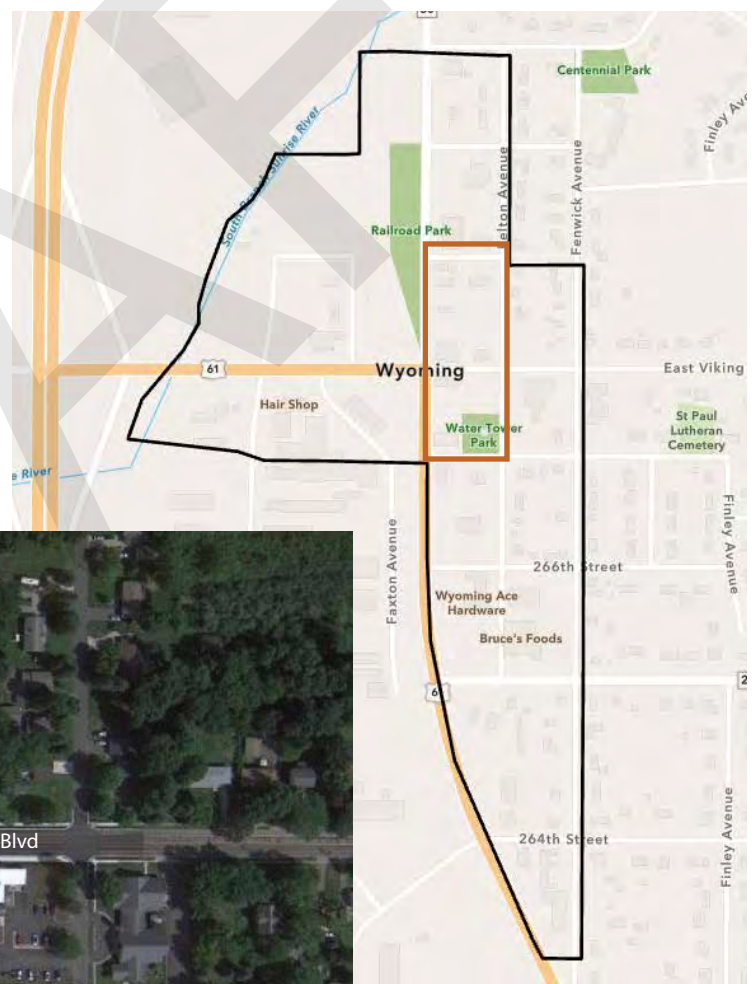
*Wyoming's location within the Twin Cities metropolitan area*

## PROJECT AREA

Wyoming's downtown central business area is located in the heart of the community and has historically been the economic hub of the City. Today, the downtown is at a turning point as Wyoming continues to face growth pressure from the neighboring Twin Cities metro; it must delicately balance adequately serving residents' day-to-day needs, supporting major industrial activities, and appealing to outsiders as a welcoming destination. The City has undergone previous efforts for continuous investment in the downtown, including major renovations of Railroad Park.

This Plan approaches "Downtown Wyoming" from two scales:

- The "Downtown Study Area" is framed by I-35 to the west, 270th St to the north, Fenwick Ave to the east, and Forest Blvd to the south (illustrated by the black outline on the right). It roughly reflects the "Downtown Core" boundary shown in Wyoming's Comprehensive Plan. This boundary was primarily used in the analysis maps in Chapter 3 to develop context for the activities and opportunities present in the Commercial Core.
- The "Commercial Core," which refers to the block directly north and south of E Viking Blvd and east of Forest Blvd, is the primary focus of the recommendations in this Plan. This area was identified as the true heart of Wyoming through community engagement activities, discussions with the EDA, and onsite observation of uses and streetscapes. However, broader recommendations for the study area can be found on page 34.

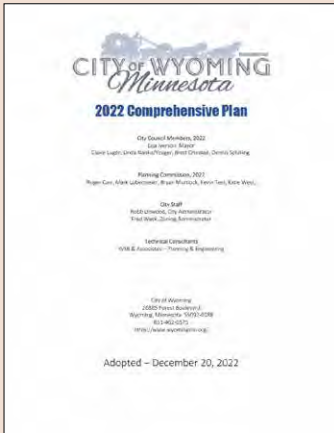


Commercial Core Boundary

Downtown Study Area Boundary

## EXISTING PLANNING DOCUMENTS

There have been many planning efforts over the last decade that address the downtown area in some way. This section analyzes the critical information in each plan and its relevance to the Wyoming Downtown Master Plan drafting process.



### Comprehensive Plan (2022)

- Land Use chapter: Identifies downtown Wyoming as the “Downtown Core”, a “more densely developed area with retail and service businesses, City Hall, County library and high-density residential neighborhoods.” It emphasizes the importance of high-quality site landscaping, building façade materials, and signage in future developments.
- Housing chapter: Encourages the addition of attached and multi-family housing in “transitional space between commercial single-family areas, and at high-amenity locations near streams, parks, and greenways.” As a centralized location with the majority of the City’s amenities and resources, downtown Wyoming could be a prime area for higher-density housing that caters to a variety of homeowners.
- Economic Development chapter: Identifies “Enhanc[ing] a Sense of Destination, Identity, and Community” as a top priority through strategic economic development and urban design/mobility improvements throughout the community.

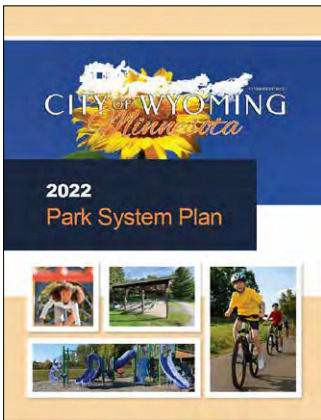


### City of Wyoming Economic Development Strategic Plan 2017

- Vision statement for Wyoming: “Regionally Located Business Friendly and Family Orientated Community.” This vision statement includes an objective to foster “family oriented amenities, a vibrant identity & centralized gathering places,” which can all be positioned, promoted, and maintained in downtown Wyoming.

One of the Plan’s strategic goals, “Enhance Sense of Destination, Identity, and Community,” contains the following suggestions that will inform this Downtown Master Plan:

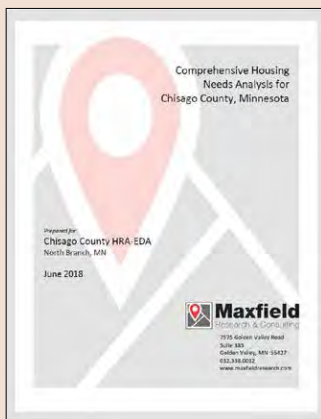
- One or more centralized gathering places can create a sense of community identity and create a sense of destination to draw together the community.
- Wyoming’s identity reflects the residents and should support a brand, which can then be used as a powerful tool for recruiting development and residents. This effort could include expanding the community’s recreational and community event schedule with concerts, art festivals, block parties, etc.
- The intersection of E Viking Blvd and Forest Blvd should be explored for centralized retail development.



## City of Wyoming Parks, Open Space and Trail System Plan 2022

Recommendations for mobility improvements that can be incorporated throughout downtown:

- Add more bike parking for cyclists utilizing the Sunrise Prairie Regional Trail.
- Install comprehensive wayfinding signage that call out parks, trails, and other points of interest.
- Improve pedestrian crossings at major and/or high-pedestrian traffic intersections, including Forest Blvd & 273rd St and E Viking Blvd & Fenwick Ave.
- Establish pedestrian routes to connect downtown to adjacent neighborhoods and commercial areas.



## Chisago County Housing Study, Maxfield 2018

The City of Wyoming is forecast to make the largest proportional growth in population, increasing approximately 27% by 2030; it also has the highest median income of all the submarkets studied (\$77,414). The Housing Study identified the following recommendations for the Wyoming submarket (comprising of Wyoming and Stacy):

- 800 for-sale units are needed to meet anticipated demand, including 641 single-family homes and 160 multi-family homes.
- There is a shortage of rental housing options, as nearly half in the Wyoming submarket are located in single-family homes, and there is roughly a 2.3% vacancy rate for rental housing. 160 rental units are needed to meet demand, including 90 market rate units and 70 affordable/subsidized units.
- The majority of senior housing demand falls within the “active adult product” category: senior cooperative, adult rental, affordable rental, independent living, and memory care.

These recommendations are important to keep in mind when planning for the future of downtown Wyoming, as new development can and should incorporate higher-density housing that accommodates residents with a variety of incomes, physical needs, and spatial requirements. For example, downtown Wyoming could incorporate vertical and horizontal mixed-use development to spur residential and economic growth simultaneously.

# 2: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

## PROJECT TIMELINE

### 1 Investigate (May '23 – July)

- Existing plan document review.
- Existing conditions analysis through mapping.
- Community input survey and pop-up event at Touch-a-Truck.



### 2 Envision (July – September)

- Ideas and opportunities identification.
- Recommendation framework development.
- Pop-up event at Stagecoach Day.



### 3 Revise (September – December)

- Draft Downtown Master Plan document.
- Recommendation development and revision.
- Document revisions based on EDA feedback.



### 4 Adopt (January '24 – February)

- Finalize Downtown Master Plan document.
- Final EDA document adoption.

## INTRODUCTION

The ideas, policies, and actions of this Downtown Master Plan support the community's vision for the future of downtown Wyoming and address any barriers to realizing this vision. This Plan was developed between May 2023 and February 2024, which encapsulated six meetings with the Economic Development Authority (EDA), two community input workshops, ten stakeholder interviews, and numerous conversations with City staff.

This input informed the underlying themes and framework of the Plan by identifying specific priorities and concerns that are most important to Wyoming's citizens, business owners, and leaders. This foundation ensures that the Plan is not just a hollow document, but a guide for future decisions in Wyoming that align with the community's ideals.

## COMMUNITY INPUT SURVEY

A short survey was created to gauge residents' perceptions, habits, and ideas regarding downtown Wyoming. The following is a summary of key findings from the 61 responses collected. For all survey results, see Appendix A.

- Highest-priority design elements:
  - Public gathering areas (e.g. bandshell, pavilion, outdoor seating areas).
  - Cohesive and attractive architecture.
  - Elements that define downtown Wyoming's boundaries and/or character.
- Redevelopment should emphasize retail/commercial and eating/drinking establishments.
- Rankings from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree:
  - Residents generally feel safe walking or cycling downtown.
  - Residents feel neutral about spending time downtown; many feel that they do not have a go-to place to meet with family and friends.
  - Residents feel neutral about downtown Wyoming having a "strong sense of place."

## SWOT ANALYSIS

SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) activities were conducted at the beginning of the planning process, inviting members of the EDA, City staff, and public to identify downtown Wyoming's issues and opportunities. The results from the exercise are found below.

### Strengths

*Characteristics that give downtown Wyoming an advantage over others.*

- Strong sense of belonging – people move to Wyoming and stay
- Close to Twin Cities but maintains independent/ small-town feel
- Many notable large companies in/around community
- Recently upsized 61 corridor sewer line & water tower
- Sunrise Prairie Regional Trail and the thru traffic that it generates
- Railroad Park improvements

### Weaknesses

*Characteristics that place downtown Wyoming at a disadvantage relative to others.*

- Old, run-down, and/or incohesive buildings
- Lack of identifiable streetscape
- Lack of eateries, shops, lodging, and housing
- Lack of gathering spaces and reasons to visit/ stay downtown
- Pedestrian/cyclist safety on major roadways
- Traffic movement within downtown, especially during rush hour
- Parking/walkability from outside downtown
- Not enough sidewalks

### Opportunities

*Elements that Wyoming could build upon to advance the downtown area.*

- Collaboration with Planning Commission to development architectural standards
- Add EV chargers to trail parking lot/ downtown area
- Multi-family housing development within downtown (along Forest Blvd)
- Lots of land for sale & willing sellers
- Collaboration with local landowners, businesses, and non-profit organizations
- Capitalize on industrial character & promote new assets
- Forest/Viking intersection could use further safety improvements
- Implementation of creative traffic calming measures
- Bringing pedestrian infrastructure into ADA compliance

### Threats

*Elements in the environment or community that have/ could hinder revitalization.*

- City development review and permitting process
- Competition with surrounding communities
- Can current infrastructure handle growth?

COMMUNITY INPUT EVENTS



**Touch-a-Truck Pop-Up Event**

On June 3<sup>rd</sup> 2023, towards the beginning of the planning process, members of the project team hosted a booth at Wyoming’s annual Touch-a-Truck event, speaking with community residents and visitors about their priorities and concerns about downtown Wyoming. Visioning activities were set up to allow participants to vote on their favorite example images in a variety of categories, as well as jot answers to broad question prompts. The following themes emerged through these discussions and activities:

- *Many consider the “Cornerstone area” (directly adjacent to the E Viking Blvd & Forest Blvd intersection) to be the “heart” of downtown Wyoming.*
- *Wyoming’s small-town character should be preserved.*
- *Downtown Wyoming should gain a new park, more restaurants and seating patios, and a splash pad.*
- *Funding should be allocated towards a park gathering space and a playground complex like the one in Hugo, MN.*
- *Minimize large open parking lots within downtown.*



**Stagecoach Day Pop-Up Event**

On September 16<sup>th</sup> 2023, the project team attended Stagecoach Day to display three concept boards for public comment. The concepts were divided into broad categories/programmatic elements: Connect and Gather focused on community gathering spaces/destinations, Walk and Play focused on activity-centered gathering spaces and pedestrian improvements, and Live and Work focused on multi-family residential and commercial opportunity expansion. Each booth patron was given the chance to fill out a comment card that indicated their preferred option.

Public comments on these concepts were overwhelmingly positive, with many residents expressing excitement towards new gathering spaces and community amenities. Of the three options, Connect & Gather was the most popular (with many respondents directly acknowledging the Farmer’s Market), then Walk & Play second, then Live & Work third. This aligns with input received from other engagement methods throughout the project (survey, stakeholder interviews, other in-person events); the most prevalent community priority for downtown Wyoming is additional gathering spaces and/or engaging destinations for residents and visitors.

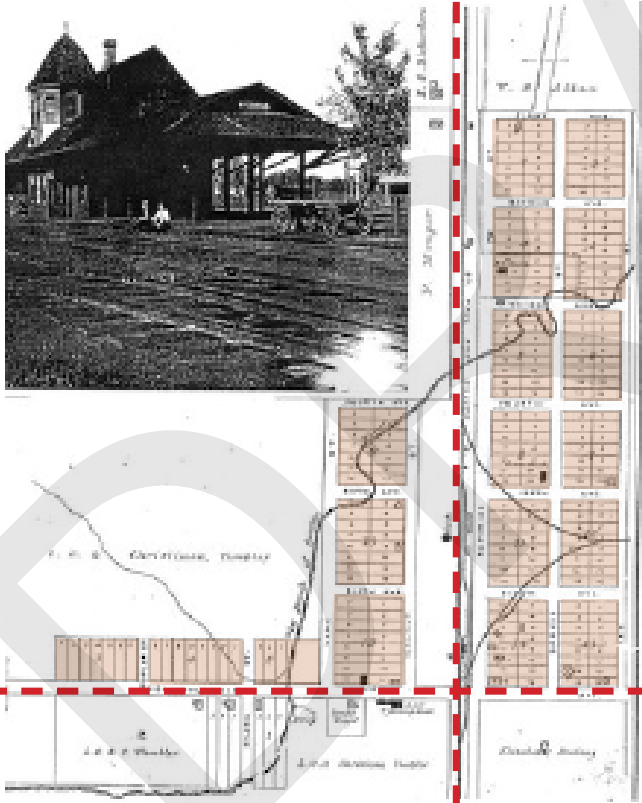
# 3: REVIEW & ANALYSIS

## INTRODUCTION

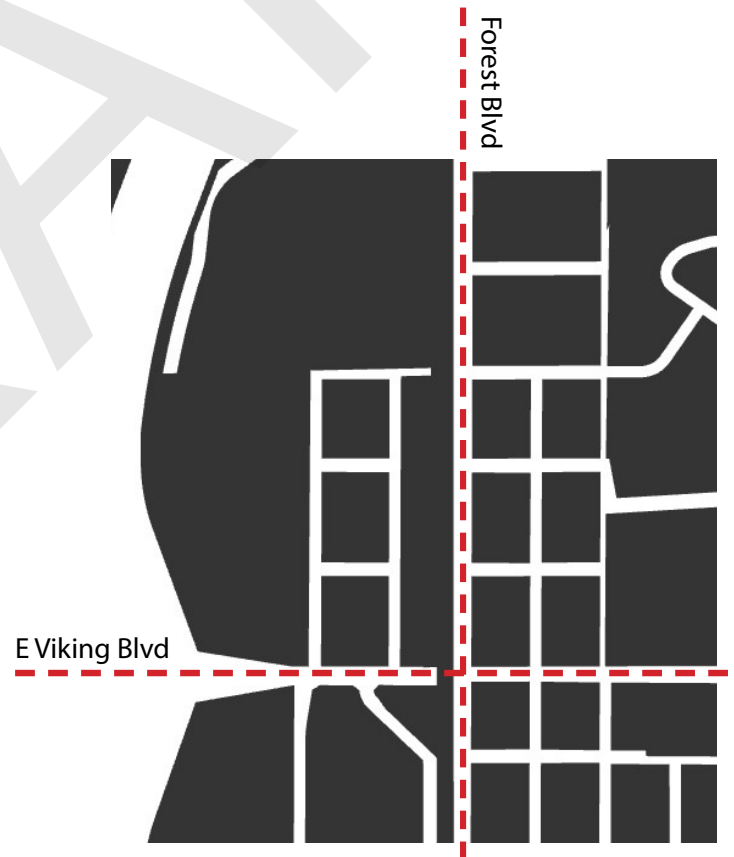
In addition to community engagement, the project team also conducted an extensive analysis of downtown Wyoming's existing conditions, GIS data, and relationships between various systems and elements within the City. This analysis revealed many ideas and opportunities that ultimately developed into the final recommendations. This chapter summarizes the key takeaways that emerged.

## DEVELOPMENT PATTERN

Platted in 1869 to coincide with the extension of the St. Paul and Duluth Railroad, Wyoming initially developed within a traditional grid pattern that straddled the railroad tracks (depicted by the vertical dotted line on the 1888 Town Plat map). While the City of Wyoming has grown considerably over the last 150 years, primarily through more organically-shaped developments, its downtown grid pattern is still evident in its current block pattern of street placement and building density.



1888 Town Plat



Current Block Pattern

## FIGURE GROUND

Figure ground diagrams depict the relationship between built and unbuilt spaces, marked by black solid masses (figures) and white voids (ground) respectively. This map reveals the following information about downtown Wyoming:

- Strong separation of industrial/storage uses (bottom left corner) and residential uses, divided by north-south Forest Blvd.
- Downtown commercial area is not immediately identifiable through building shape or density; no clear sense of commercial corridor.
- Grid pattern is lost due to undeveloped space.
- Industrial/storage buildings take up a considerable amount of space near downtown, but may not have a proportionally high number of employees.



BUILDING USES

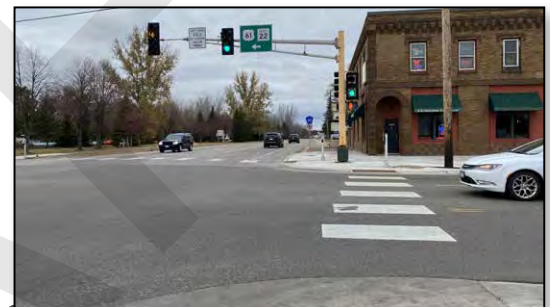
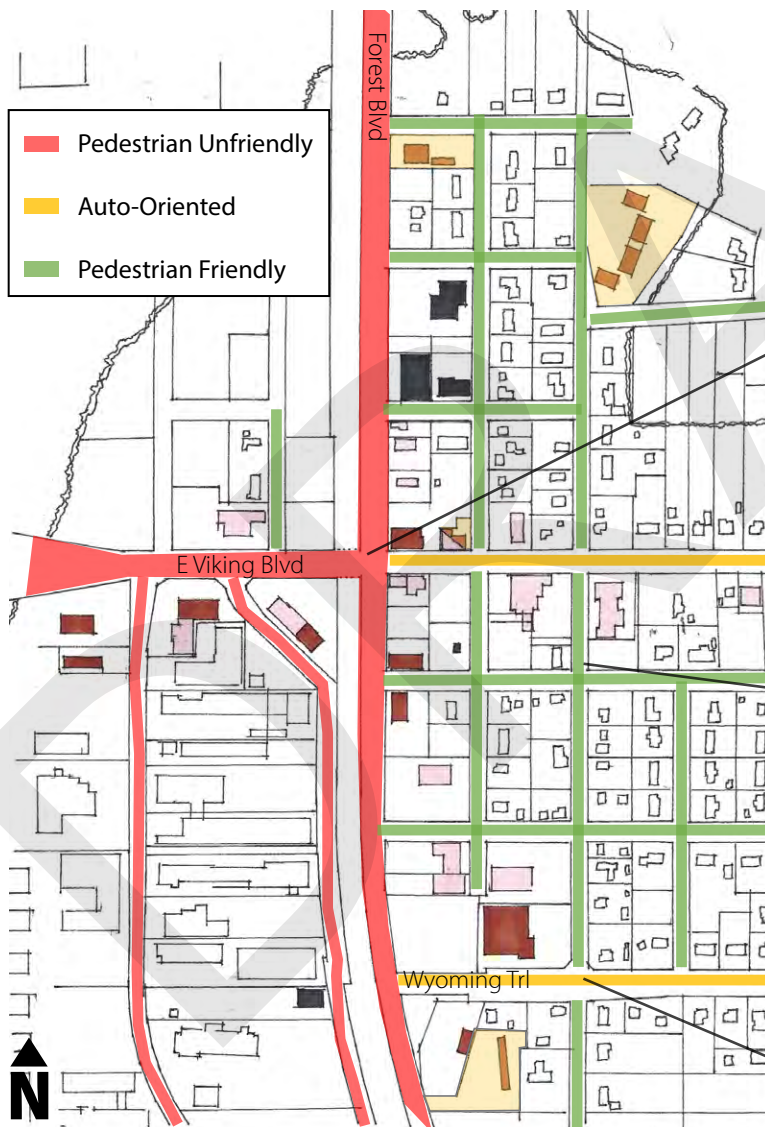
Downtown Wyoming primarily contains retail/restaurants, service offices, and public/government buildings (shown in the map below). There is also a large strip of recreational space – Sunrise Prairie Regional Trail – running north-south through the middle of the commercial area. While Wyoming contains multi-family buildings, many of them are located outside of the central commercial area.



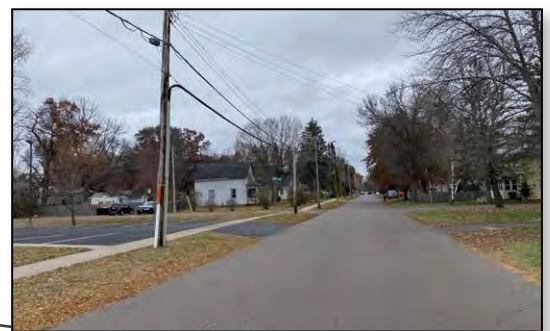
STREETS & MOVEMENT

Downtown Wyoming is primarily comprised of minor arterial roads (Forest Blvd, E Viking Blvd, and Wyoming Trl) and local roads. Minor arterial roads interconnect rural centers and provide access to major highways, bringing higher traveling speeds, higher usage, and more traffic. As a result, these roadways can be threatening to navigate as a pedestrian or cyclist.

- In Wyoming, Forest and E Viking Boulevards bring in plenty of transient traffic and visibility for downtown businesses, especially during rush hour, but also create a hostile environment for pedestrians to cross or walk along. In particular, the Forest/Viking intersection feels exposed, loud, and unpredictable.
- While still auto-oriented, Wyoming Trl and the eastern portion of E Viking Blvd are a bit more hospitable for pedestrians due to less traffic and more sidewalk coverage.
- The local roads are generally pedestrian-friendly due to slow-moving cars and little to no traffic build-up. While some of these roads do not have sidewalks, there is plenty of room for cars to pass pedestrians walking on the shoulder. The below map illustrates existing pedestrian conditions.



Forest/Viking intersection, looking north



Fenwick Ave, looking south



Wyoming Trl/Fenwick intersection, looking southeast

## SURFACE PARKING

A considerable amount of downtown Wyoming's land is dedicated to large surface parking for specific businesses or uses (shown in the map below). This presents numerous opportunities for infill development throughout the commercial core, as well as consolidating the lots into shared parking as downtown land usage continues to change or intensify.



*Cornerstone Pub and Prime parking lot*

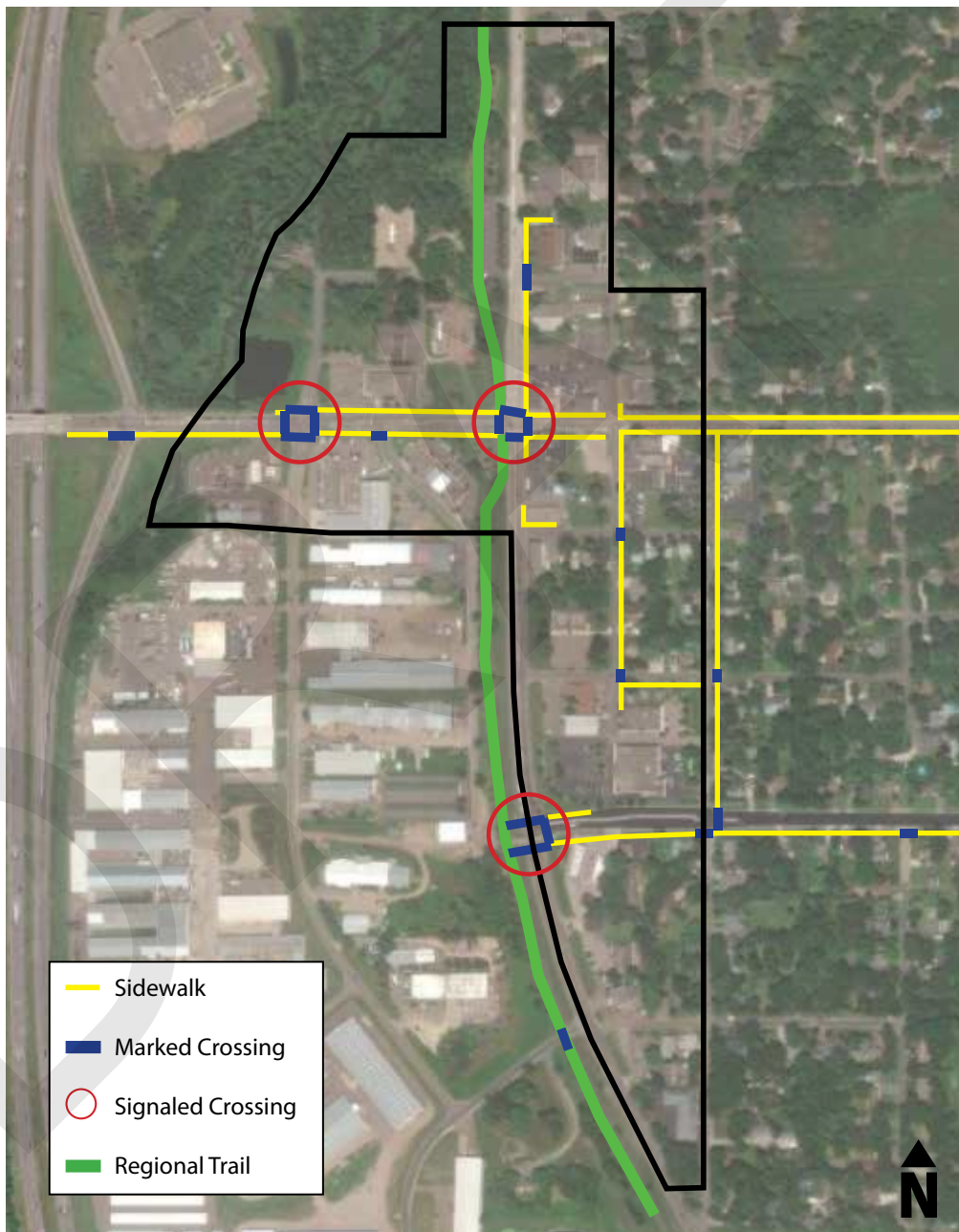


*Bruce's Foods parking lot*

PEDESTRIAN INFRASTRUCTURE

The map below indicates that there is generally good sidewalk coverage along major roadways such as E Viking Blvd and Wyoming Trl. However, despite Sunrise Prairie Regional Trail running alongside Forest Blvd, there is a lack of sidewalk coverage on the opposite side of the road to connect the downtown commercial core to other commercial areas to the south.

There are also disconnected fragments of sidewalk that lead to one business, such as the sidewalk from the Forest/Wyoming Trl intersection to Bruce’s Foods. To increase pedestrian safety and accessibility throughout the community, sidewalk coverage should be expanded and more marked crossings should be added at prominent intersections.



VACANT & UNDERUTILIZED LOTS

In total, there are approximately 4.7 acres of vacant or underutilized lots in downtown Wyoming. These lots present excellent opportunities for infill development, from the addition of new multi-family housing and single-family homes to community gathering spaces.



Gas tank storage, adjacent to Railroad Park

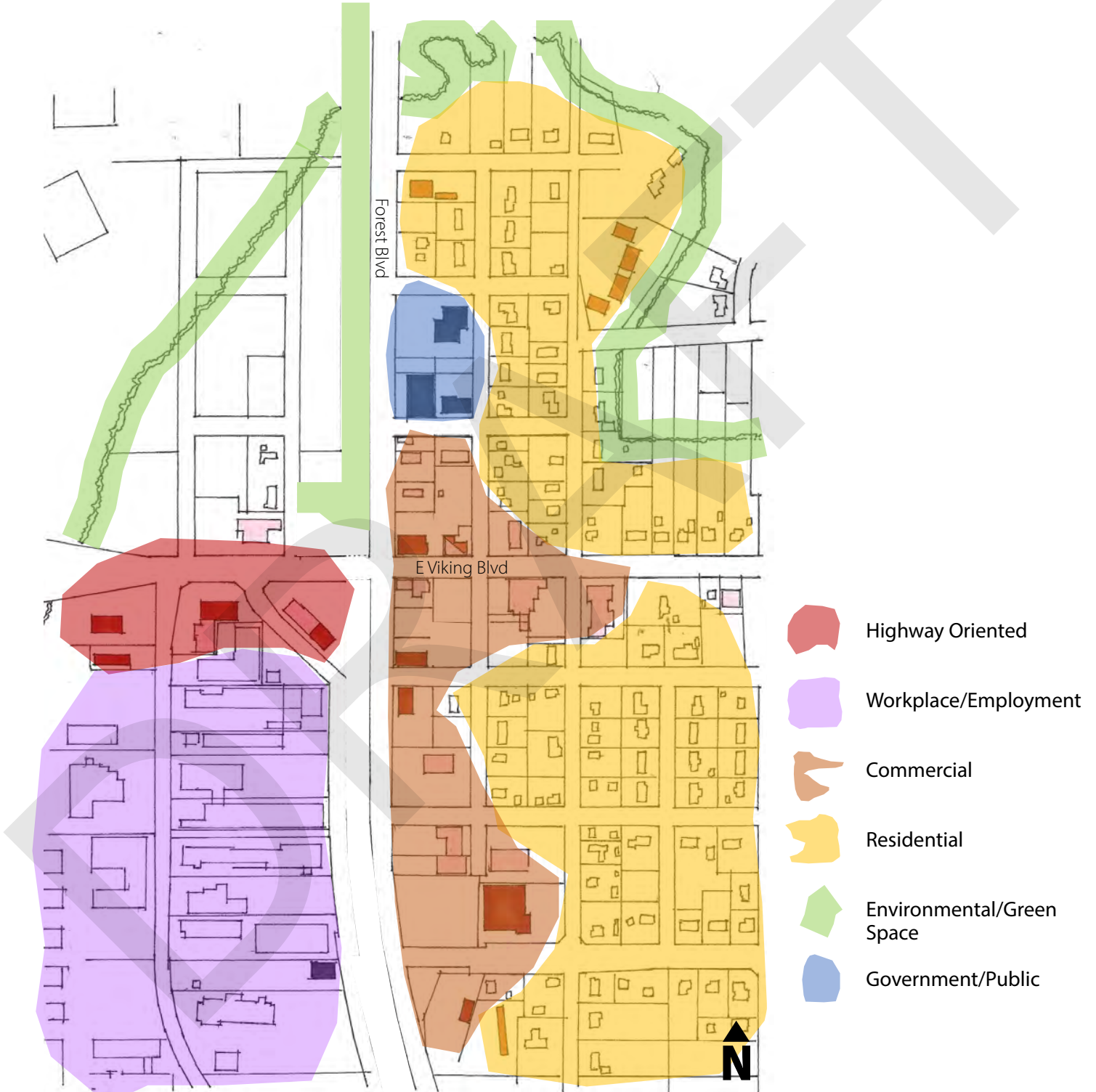


Empty lot at Felton/E Viking intersection, currently used for Stagecoach Days



CHARACTER AREAS

The downtown study area contains several character areas with distinct uses, streetscape design, and building appearance. This identification of character areas helps organize and personalize recommendations for specific areas within downtown Wyoming, which can be found in Chapter 4. A description of each character area is provided in the following pages.



## Highway Oriented Commercial

These businesses are directly visible and accessible from the I-35 exit into Wyoming. They primarily cater to interstate traffic with drive-thru restaurants, gas stations, and car maintenance stores.



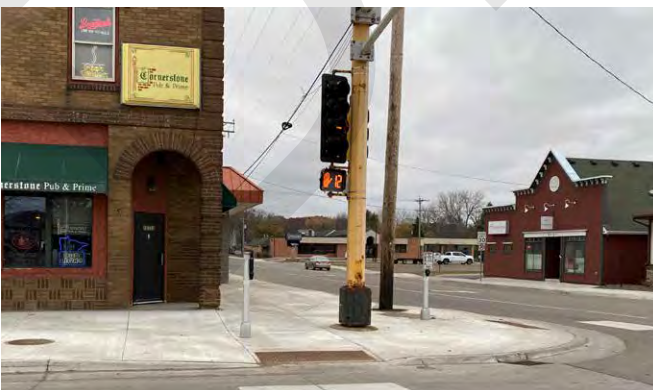
## Workplace/Employment

These larger buildings primarily host industrial, manufacturing, and storage uses. Because of the intensity of car and large truck traffic, this area is considerably more auto-oriented than the rest of downtown Wyoming.



## Downtown Core Commercial

This area encapsulates the central commercial area – located around the Forest/E Viking intersection – and the stretch of auto-oriented commercial uses along Forest Blvd.



**Residential**

Nestled just outside of the central commercial area, these areas contain single-family detached homes on small lots. Some portions are connected by sidewalks.



**Environmental/Green Space**

This area contains the Sunrise River, Railroad Park, and the access point to the Sunrise Prairie Regional Trail. It is the greenest part of downtown Wyoming.



**Government/Public**

This collection of buildings directly north of the central commercial area contains Wyoming's City Hall, Giese Memorial Library, and post office.



## STREETScape

*Ornate pedestrian-scale lighting placed throughout the highway-oriented commercial area. These light poles are not used in the downtown commercial core, but would help generate design continuity between the two areas.*

*Unmarked pedestrian crossing at the E Viking/Felton intersection. The lack of crosswalks decreases pedestrian visibility for oncoming traffic and may encourage jaywalking; this also creates a visual disconnect between the downtown core and surrounding residential areas.*



*Lack of curb/separation between Wyoming Drug parking lot and Forest Blvd. Pedestrians are required to walk on the road shoulder to reach the downtown core, leaving them vulnerable to fast-moving traffic turning into the parking lot. The addition of an elevated sidewalk and curb cuts would help control cars accessing the lot and increase pedestrian visibility/safety.*

*Underutilized sidewalk at E Viking/Forest intersection. While this sidewalk is wide enough to accommodate foot traffic in multiple directions, it feels empty and exposed to loud roadway noise. Landscaping/street trees, benches, wayfinding signage, public art, and other urban design elements could help activate the space and establish the prominence of this intersection in downtown Wyoming.*

MARKET ANALYSIS

Commercial Market

The commercial context is important to consider as a part of the downtown redevelopment process because economic activity supports the vitality of the community and helps attract customers and employees to downtown. Wyoming contains multiple different types of commercial character areas within its downtown, as identified on page 17-18, each serving a different purpose. The strip mall and stand-alone chain restaurants just west of downtown primarily serve transient customers from I-35, whereas the businesses east of the Forest/E Viking intersection and south along Forest provide locally-based amenities and daily necessities.

Figure 1 below shows the largest employers in Wyoming. Most of these businesses are located just outside of the downtown study area, in the light industrial area southeast of the Forest/E Viking intersection or further south on Forest. These employers make up a significant percentage of employment opportunities in Wyoming, attracting employees that specialize in healthcare, manufacturing, and public services.

Business Name	Category	Number of Employees
Fairview Lakes Medical Center	Health Services	1000+
Polaris Industries Inc	Manufacturing	1000+
Rosenbauer America	Manufacturing	515
Wyoming Elementary School	Education	140

Figure 1: Wyoming's largest employers. Source: ESRI Business Analyst.

Figure 2 (right) shows the inflow/outflow of labor in downtown Wyoming. The dark green arrow represents workers that live outside of Wyoming and come into the community for work, the mid green arrow represents those that live and work in Wyoming, and the light green arrow represents those that live in Wyoming and work elsewhere.

A large portion of Wyoming's daily workforce comes from other communities, indicating that many employees have not moved to Wyoming for their work and that many Wyoming residents have looked elsewhere for their employment. Because of this stratification, it is important to consider opportunities for downtown Wyoming to engage both daytime non-residents and residents that come home in the evenings.

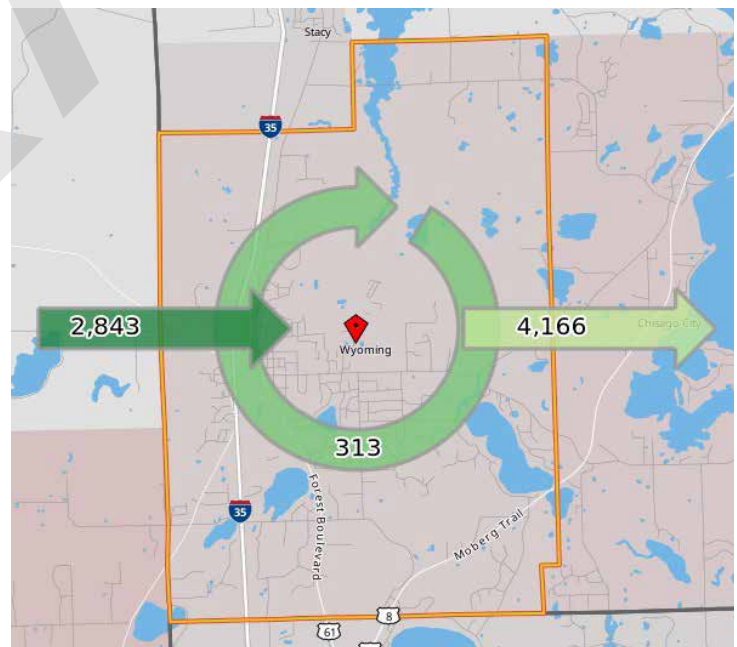


Figure 2: Inflow/outflow analysis. Source: U.S. Census OnTheMap.

Overall, Wyoming's workforce is primarily comprised of employees for the major companies listed on the previous page. However, Wyoming also contains a diverse array of smaller, locally-owned and operated businesses that cater to the daily needs of community residents. Based on Figure 3 (below), potential gaps in community businesses include communications and/or utility businesses, general merchandise stores, apparel stores, banks, and lodging options.

According to ESRI data, the two main tapestries that these residents align with are "Rustic Outposts" (country living, with older families in older homes) and "Family Landscapes" (successful young families in their first homes). In order to make downtown Wyoming more accommodating of each of these demographics, the City should seek businesses that offer a variety of goods that cater to all stages of life.

Business Type	Businesses			Employees		
	# Within Downtown	Total #	Total %	# Within Downtown	Total #	Total %
Agriculture & Mining	0	5	2.0%	1	20	0.6%
<b>Construction</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>12.5%</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>6.7%</b>
<b>Manufacturing</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>8.9%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1097</b>	<b>30.4%</b>
Transportation	1	8	3.2%	12	93	2.6%
Communication	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%
Utility	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%
Wholesale Trade	1	7	2.8%	10	57	1.6%
Retail Trade	5	39	15.7%	78	513	14.2%
Home Improvement	1	4	1.6%	4	16	0.4%
General Merchandise Stores	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%
Food Stores	1	5	2.0%	38	105	2.9%
Auto Dealers & Gas Stations	0	7	2.8%	0	89	2.5%
Apparel & Accessory Stores	1	2	0.8%	3	4	0.1%
Furniture & Home Furnishings	0	4	1.6%	0	14	0.4%
<b>Eating &amp; Drinking Places</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3.6%</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>5.9%</b>
Miscellaneous Retail	1	8	3.2%	9	71	2.0%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	5	19	7.7%	45	112	3.1%
Banks, Savings & Lending Institutions	1	1	0.4%	22	31	0.9%
Securities Brokers	1	5	2.0%	1	17	0.5%
Insurance Carriers & Agents	1	5	2.0%	3	19	0.5%
Real Estate, Holding, Other Investment	2	8	3.2%	19	45	1.2%
Services	15	104	41.9%	90	1305	36.2%
Hotels & Lodging	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%
Automotive Services	0	16	6.5%	1	76	2.1%
Movies & Amusements	1	7	2.8%	1	68	1.9%
<b>Health Services</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>9.7%</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>680</b>	<b>18.9%</b>
Legal Services	1	1	0.4%	4	5	0.1%
<b>Education Institutions &amp; Libraries</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>4.2%</b>
<b>Other Services</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>21.0%</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>9.0%</b>
<b>Government</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2.4%</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>4.5%</b>
Unclassified	2	7	2.8%	0	5	0.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>327</b>	<b>3607</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Figure 3: Wyoming's business summary. Source: ESRI Business Analyst



### Sunrise Prairie Regional Trail: Recreational and Commercial Asset

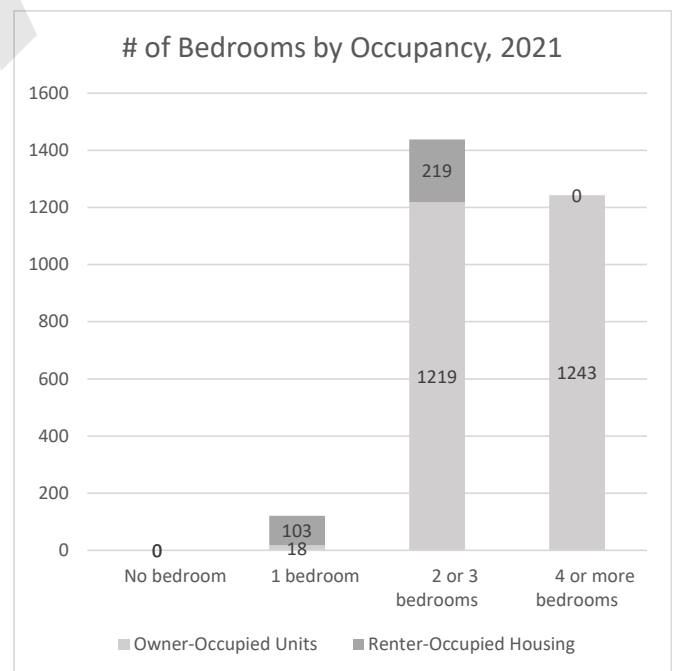
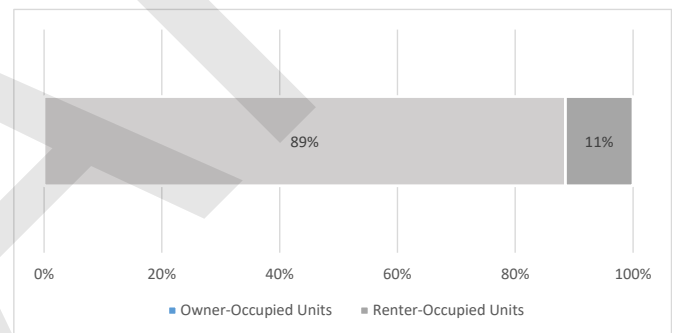
This paved, multi-use regional trail runs north-south through Chisago County, connecting Wyoming to Forest Lake, Stacy, North Branch, and numerous other communities. Attracting trail users to the community will have a significant impact on Wyoming’s economic growth, as the trail runs directly through downtown and is easily visible from downtown businesses.

According to the University of Minnesota, non-motorized trail users spend \$2.7 billion annually and support nearly 37,000 jobs. Additionally, bike tourism generated \$97 billion nationally on retail spending (pre-COVID pandemic). Strategic economic development, mobility safety improvements, and urban design additions will attract residents and trail users alike, building a stronger economic base to support further development years into the future.

### Residential Market

As a small town located just 30 minutes from the Twin Cities, Wyoming faces the unique challenge to accommodate a wide array of demographics and housing needs, from young working families looking for their first homes to long-time residents looking to age in place. At both the County and State level, the 65+ age group is the fastest-growing segment (comprising about 17% of the total population); by 2030, this population is expected grow to over 22% of the total population. Since this trend will extend to the community level, Wyoming will likely see increased demand for smaller, accessible homes such as twin homes, townhouses, and condos.

In June 2023, a developer worked with the City of Wyoming to develop a three-story apartment building to be placed adjacent to Railroad Park and the Sunrise Prairie Regional Trail, within downtown Wyoming. The project would have supplied 72 rental units to the community, 37.5% of which being three- or four-bedroom units. This proportion of larger units indicates an increased market demand for family-sized rental housing in communities just outside of the Twin Cities metro area – an important consideration for future developers.



# 4: RECOMMENDATIONS

## INTRODUCTION

As a quaint community just outside of the Twin Cities with a cherished small-town character, beloved recreational and cultural amenities, and significant commercial/industrial base, Wyoming possesses unique opportunities to cultivate a desirable future for residents and visitors alike. This chapter contains illustrated concepts, policy recommendations, and urban design best practices to communicate this future of downtown Wyoming, as well as outline actionable implementation steps to achieve this vision.

The recommendations and implementation steps outlined in this chapter were developed through multiple stages. First, the project team collected priorities and ideas from community members and the EDA through a variety of engagement methods; these priorities were then grouped into overarching goals (see page 24). From there, the goals were mapped as a sort of framework, indicating where pedestrian improvements, park and commercial development, and streetscape enhancements would be most relevant (see page 25). On pages 27-33, this framework is extruded into diagrams and sketches to show these suggested ideas in the physical context.

As development and beautification efforts commence, downtown Wyoming may not resemble the exact sketches included in this chapter. Rather, these recommendations aim to reflect the overarching vibrant vision and programmatic elements of downtown – high-quality gathering spaces, increased commercial and residential opportunities, and pleasant pedestrian facilities. Community members are encouraged to stay involved in the downtown revitalization process long into the future, to ensure that the resulting built environment continues to meet their needs and desires for Wyoming.



MASTER PLAN STRATEGIES



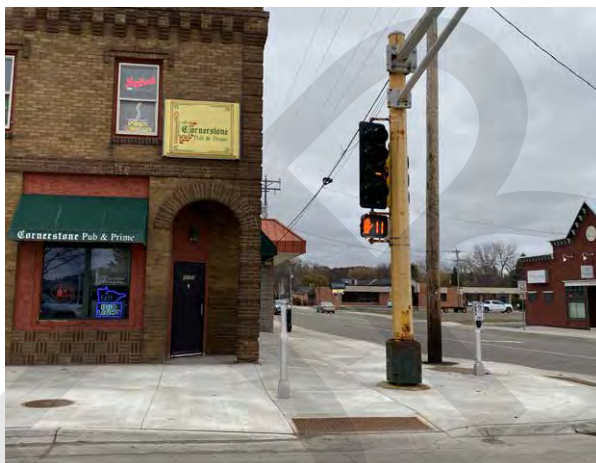
**“Connect the Dots”**

Promote downtown Wyoming’s cultural assets – namely Hallberg Center for the Arts, the Grace Church Farmer’s Market, and the Sunrise Prairie Regional Trail – to reinforce a network of downtown destinations.



**“Follow Felton”**

Enhance Felton Ave – the north-south street directly east of Forest Blvd – as a walkable connector through downtown through increased sidewalk coverage, marked crossings, and welcoming streetscaping.



**“Frame the Main”**

Complete the commercial center, through infill development and public space additions, to cultivate a sense of entry into a recognizable “downtown” realm.



**“Park at the Heart”**

Convert the underutilized lot at the E Viking/ Felton intersection into a cherished central gathering area with community amenities like a canopy and open space for group activities.

## FRAMEWORK OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The vision for downtown Wyoming started as a framework (pictured here) that identified underutilized sites, opportunities for streetscape improvements, and ideas for new programmatic elements.

While the redevelopment plan in this chapter primarily details the commercial core of downtown Wyoming (E Viking Blvd, between Forest and Felton), referring back to this framework can help integrate these changes into the surrounding community.



- 1. Potential residential redevelopment site
- 2. Potential commercial/mixed-use development
- 3. New mixed-use building, central gathering area with community events canopy and green space
- 4. Pedestrian enhancements (painted intersection at E Viking/Felton, street trees, additional street furniture)
- 5. Felton pedestrian corridor (increased sidewalk coverage, marked crossings, street trees)
- 6. Central parking consolidation and new layout
- 7. Public parks/open space (Railroad Park and new Wyoming Play Experience)
- 8. Future commercial enhancement/expansion (per 2022 Comprehensive Plan)



**PROPOSED LAND USES**

The Framework of Recommendations on the preceding page encourages the conversion of downtown Wyoming into a mixed-use district. It also retains the existing commercial and residential areas to the south and east respectively.

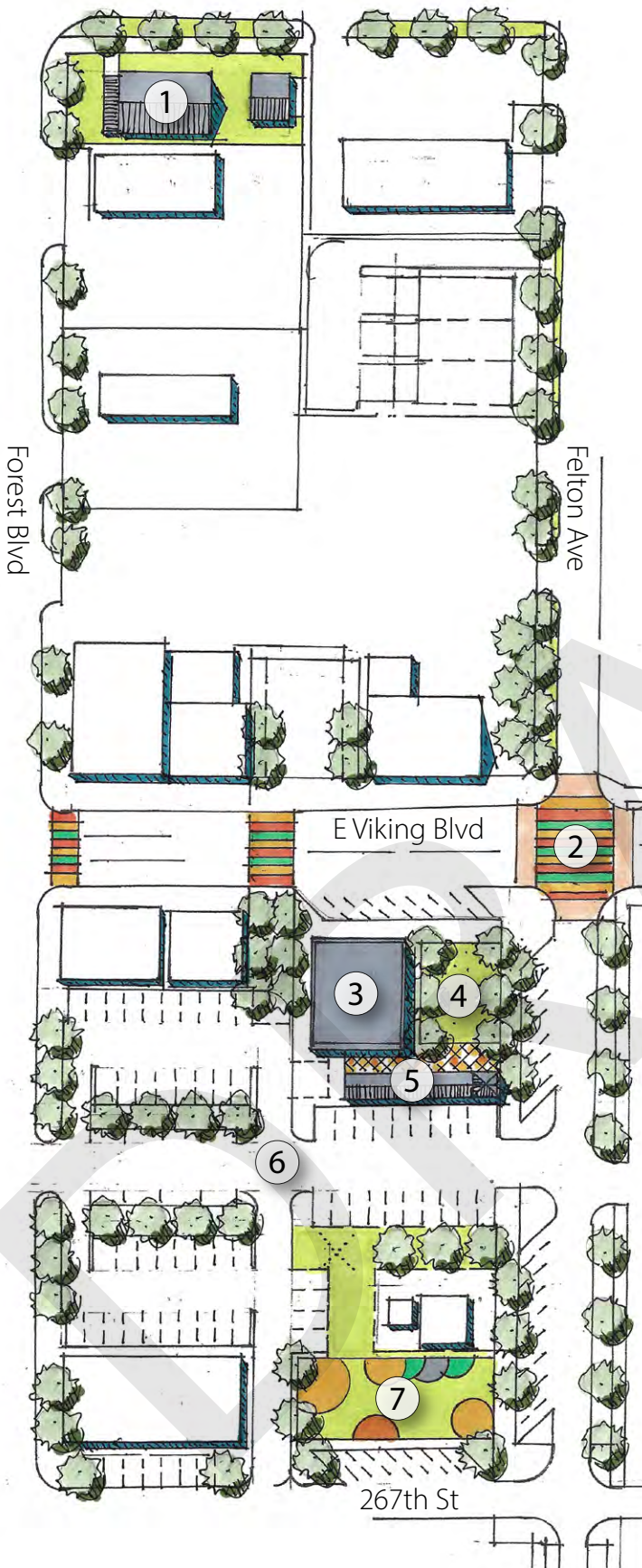
This vision generally aligns with the Comprehensive Plan’s Future Land Use map; its “Downtown Core” designation reflects a mixed-use area with shops, offices, high-density housing, and public facilities

## DOWNTOWN VISION

The primary land use and urban design goals of this planning process included creating a welcoming place for visitors to gather, enhance underutilized lots, and encourage exploration through improved pedestrian facilities. With these goals in mind, it was crucial for the resulting downtown vision to balance existing uses with new public spaces, commercial opportunities, and parking layouts.

This downtown vision details the block bounded by E Viking Blvd (north), Felton Ave (east), 267th St (south), and Forest Blvd (west). Throughout the community engagement process, residents identified this area as the “heart” of Wyoming; the project team also recognized its potential due to the ample open land and existing community events that occur there (e.g. Stagecoach Day).

To address the identified goal, this concept imagines multiple gathering spaces for visitors of all ages, locations for new residential and commercial structures, and new layouts for pedestrian and vehicular facilities to increase safety and circulation. Each facet of this design is further explained on the following pages.



- ① Infill residential development
- ② Painted intersections at significant crossings on E Viking Blvd
- ③ New mixed-use structure (commercial on ground floor, rental housing on upper floors)
- ④ Park & public event space
- ⑤ Community events canopy
- ⑥ Public parking consolidation and new layout
- ⑦ Wyoming play experience, featuring elements from major community employers

Wyoming play experience



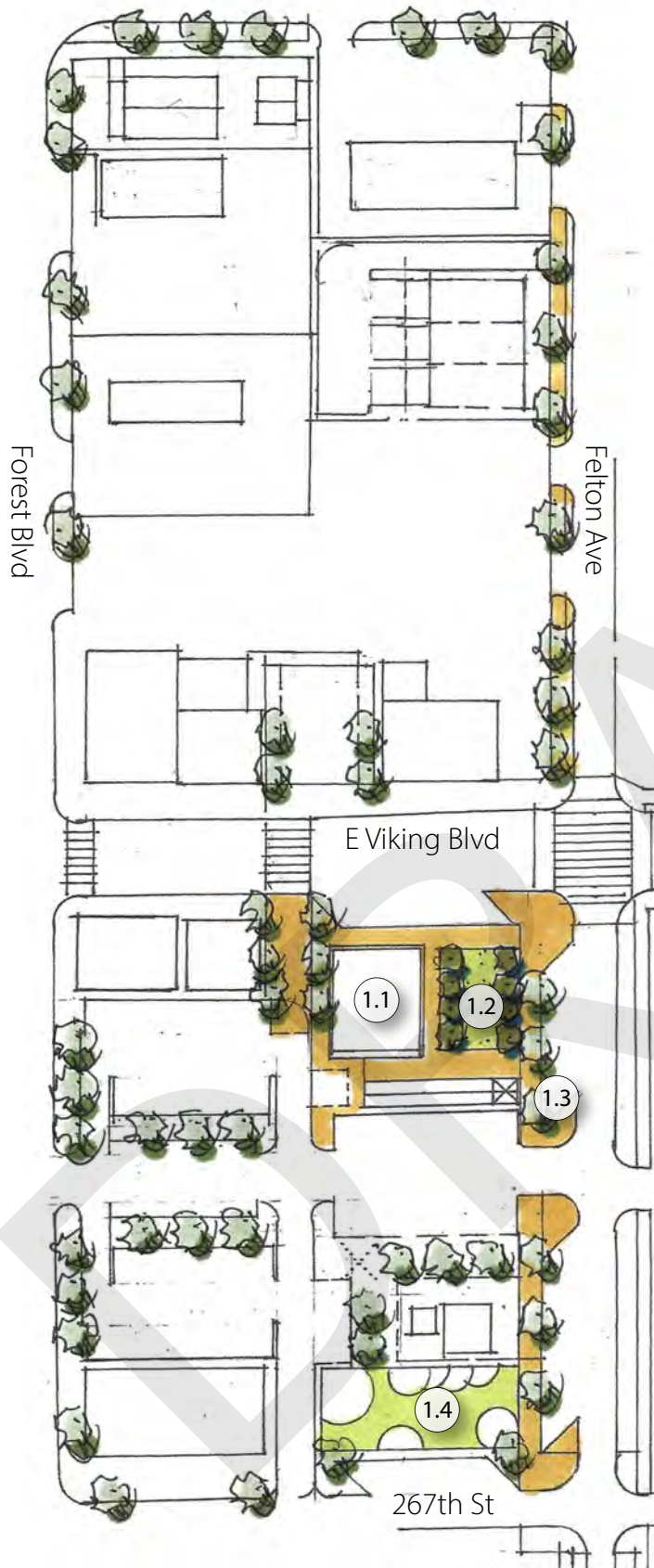
Pocket park / transitional space



Community events canopy



New mixed-use building



**1.0 PUBLIC REALM & STREETScape**

Commercial areas that are “friendly” to both vehicles and pedestrians have proven to be highly successful. A “friendly,” well-designed streetscape incorporates crosswalks, sidewalks, light fixtures, trees, planters, trash receptacles, banners/flags, benches and green spaces within the public right-of-way. A balanced mix of these components can lead to the continued successful revitalization of the downtown.

- 1.1 Pocket park / Transitional space  
*Trees, landscaping, moveable tables, and a mural.*
- 1.2 Park & public event space  
*Trees, benches, temporary stage for small events.*
- 1.3 Streetscape improvements along Felton Ave  
*Street trees, curb extensions.*
- 1.4 Wyoming play experience  
*Playground featuring interactive elements from major community employers such as Polaris, Rosenbauer, and Fairview Lakes Medical Center.*

**1.5 Street Relationship**

- 1.5.1 Encourage businesses to activate street-facing storefronts with colorful awnings, large and clear windows (70% of ground floor), welcoming building entrances, view of products/activities (if applicable), etc.
- 1.5.2 Amend zoning ordinance to include regulations that allow eateries to place tables/ chairs on sidewalk or an outdoor patio in warmer months, if applicable.

**1.6 Architectural Design and Maintenance**

- 1.6.1 Enforce the architectural design standards outlined in the 2023 Architectural Standards ordinance amendment.
- 1.6.2 Ensure that downtown façades are diverse but cohesive in style, color palette, and materiality.



Existing light poles in highway commercial area.



Example: Streetscape with street trees, planters, and contrasting sidewalk materiality.



Example: Painted electrical box.

1.7 Lighting

- 1.7.1 Add pedestrian-scale light poles within downtown (consider using the orange style found in the commercial area abutting I-35).
- 1.7.2 Illuminate parking lots and pedestrian walkways uniformly and to the minimum level necessary to ensure safety.
- 1.7.3 Use LEDs and smart lighting control systems to reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions.

1.8 Landscaping

- 1.8.1 Soften the hardscape by adding street trees and planters to wide sidewalks throughout downtown, especially near the Viking/Forest intersection.
- 1.8.2 Add in-ground planters to minimize stormwater runoff, such as within the proposed curb extensions at the Viking/Felton intersection.
- 1.8.3 Use low-maintenance and/or native plants wherever possible.
- 1.8.4 Establish a volunteer group to help maintain gardens and street landscaping, as well as a streetscape sponsorship program. Encourage residents to sponsor a planter, bench, or other streetscape feature.

1.9 Street Furniture

- 1.9.1 Add benches throughout the commercial core for additional seating.
- 1.9.2 Add trash/recycling receptacles and bike racks.

1.10 Signage

- 1.10.1 Add branded banners to light poles to enforce the downtown corridor as a destination.
- 1.10.2 Add wayfinding signage pointing visitors to important destinations (e.g. City Hall, Sunrise Prairie trailhead, Hallberg Center for the Arts, proposed Wyoming play experience, farmer’s market, etc.).
- 1.10.3 Provide an informational kiosk about Wyoming at the Sunrise Prairie trailhead that highlights the community’s history, places to eat, and notable destinations.

1.11 Public Art

- 1.11.1 Partner with the Hallberg Center for the Arts to commission installations or murals for public spaces.
- 1.11.2 Add kiosks/windows to building façades to display art, public announcements, etc.
- 1.11.3 Paint electric boxes to conceal and beautify utilitarian elements.

2.0 CENTRALIZED PARKING

While downtown Wyoming has ample parking (see page 13 for the existing parking coverage diagram), it is only accessible in large, open, privately-owned parking lots. In this master vision, parking is rearranged into smaller lots and lines that service immediately adjacent uses or businesses. Not only does this layout enhance the appearance of downtown Wyoming by lessening the amount of open stretches of pavement, it also increases pedestrian safety by slowing vehicular traffic and adding designated entrances to parking facilities.



- 2.1 Head-in parking (53 spaces)
- 2.2 Angled parking (27 spaces)
- 2.3 Parallel parking (12 spaces)
- 2.4 Acquire parcels (or reconfigure parcels, if necessary) and work with downtown property owners to create centralized parking area (PID: 21.00221.00).
- 2.5 Ensure that future developments thoughtfully incorporate appropriate parking types and volumes into the site design.
- 2.6 Prohibit large parking lots along roadways or in front of businesses in downtown commercial core.
- 2.7 If deemed necessary, convert an angled parking space on E Viking Blvd to bike rack parking.
- 2.8 Mark short-term parking stalls and stalls designated for specific businesses within the consolidated public parking area.

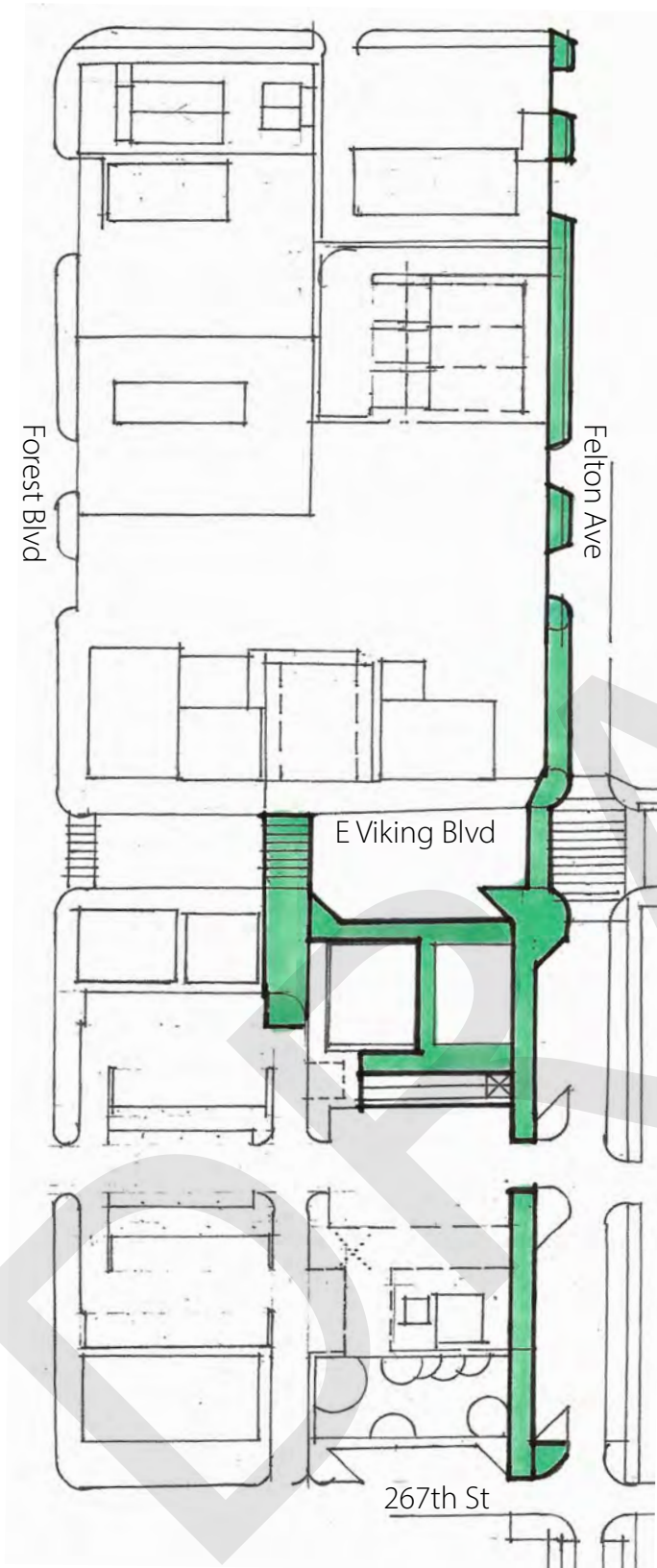


Example: Small, tree-lined parking lot.  
Source: flatrock.org.nz

3.0 SIDEWALKS & PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

Enhanced pedestrian facilities, including additional sidewalks and more visible intersections, are crucial to encourage visitor engagement within downtown Wyoming. While E Viking Blvd has sidewalks on each side, more can be added to safety connect pedestrians to nearby destinations.

- 3.1 Paint prominent intersections along E Viking Blvd, including mid-block and Felton Ave.
- 3.2 Ensure that all new curb cuts are ADA compliant; bring all curb cuts within the community into ADA compliance.
- 3.3 As a part of the public parking lot reconfiguration, extend the sidewalk along the east edge of Forest Blvd to prevent pedestrians from walking on the roadway to access Wyoming Drug and other businesses to the south.



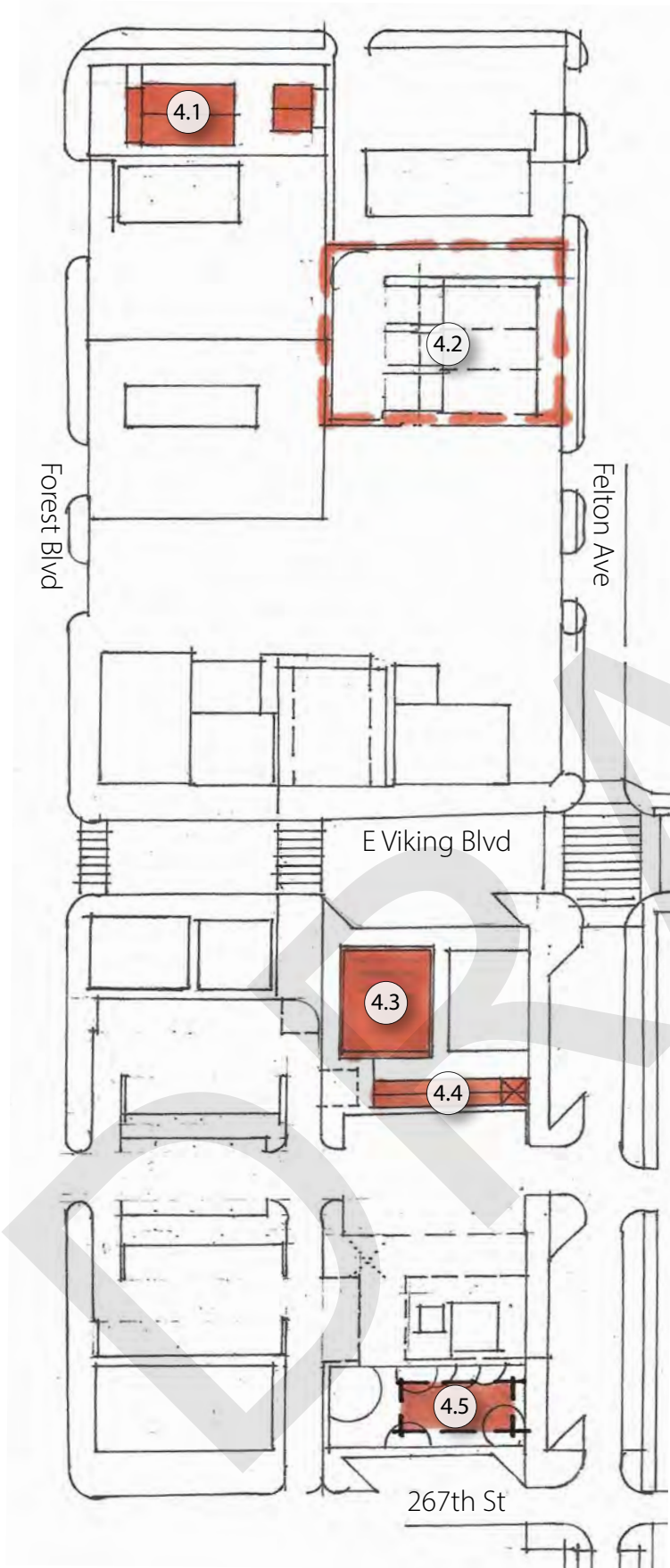
Example: Painted intersection.  
Source: [www.strongtowns.org](http://www.strongtowns.org)

4.0 POTENTIAL REDEVELOPMENT

The project team identified multiple underutilized lots within downtown Wyoming that could support infill development. The recommended redevelopment opportunities include residential, commercial, and public uses. The development processes for these lots should include careful consideration of architectural aesthetics, types of housing demand within the community, and business tenants the City is aiming to attract.

- 4.1 Infill residential units
- 4.2 Potential future infill residential units
- 4.3 Mixed-use structure
- 4.4 Community events canopy
- 4.5 Infill residential units (if Wyoming play experience is not implemented)

4.6 Continually monitor housing demand in the region to determine the most appropriate housing types for redevelopment projects.



Example: Community events canopy.

## GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

### City Processes

- Ensure that all downtown redevelopment projects align with the goals outlined in Wyoming's Comprehensive Plan; Economic Development Strategic Plan; and Parks, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan.
- Adjust the regulations in Wyoming's Zoning Ordinance as needed to achieve this downtown vision. Certain uses, parking requirements, and building forms/types may not be permitted by the current code's language.
- Revise City permit review and approval processes to encourage new projects and bring in new investors and developers.
- Continue public engagement efforts as major projects develop to ensure that the resulting changes aligns with the community's vision.

### Partnerships

- Work closely with major community employers, downtown property owners, MDOT, Chisago County, the State of Minnesota, and other relevant entities to implement downtown redevelopment projects.
- Partner with the staff of Hallberg Center for the Arts to apply for grants for arts/cultural programming throughout the community.
- Work with Grace Church to transfer the farmer's market and its resources to the new permanent canopy downtown.
- Partner with major community employers to collect interactive play/education elements for the proposed Wyoming play experience.

### Business Activity

- Start a "Buy Local" program to highlight Wyoming's many locally-owned businesses.
  - Place an advertisement with a coupon in local newspapers/social media pages, along with a message that buying local throughout the year will build a more vibrant and healthy local community.
  - Create a "Buy Local" week with themed activities such as a bingo, requiring contestants to purchase an item at enough business to complete the board. Each participating business would provide a prize to be awarded to winning contestant(s). This could be downloadable from the City's website or found at participating business locations.
- Encourage all businesses to have a website or Facebook page with up-to-date hours and helpful information.
- Continually promote existing business-related funding options and assistance programs to local businesses and entrepreneurs.

### Connecting Downtown & Surrounding Area

- Hold additional public events downtown to increase community pride, sense of place, and economic benefits. Currently, Stagecoach Day is held downtown in August; other potential events include mural installations, movies/concerts in the park, sidewalk sales, walking groups, scavenger hunts, etc.
- Champion Complete Streets principles for all future roadway improvements, including filling gaps in sidewalk coverage throughout the community.
- As land becomes available, convert parts of the industrial park to smaller-scale commercial and residential uses with high-quality architectural design and walkability.

## IMPLEMENTATION INTRODUCTION

The following pages are intended to help City officials, downtown leaders, and developers prioritize investment within downtown Wyoming. The desired vision for this area cannot be created overnight. However, by incrementally implementing the recommendations within this Plan, Wyoming can achieve the desired outcomes set forth in the preceding pages.

## ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibility for implementing this Plan lies primarily with the Economic Development Authority, Planning Commission, City Council, and City Staff.

### Economic Development Authority

The Economic Development Authority (EDA) is responsible for retaining current businesses and attracting new businesses to the City of Wyoming. As the primary supervisors of the Downtown Master Plan drafting process, members of the EDA should continue to champion this Plan and its recommendations well into the future. As new development opportunities are brought forward in downtown Wyoming, the EDA will be tasked with determining whether they align with the downtown vision and Wyoming's economic development goals.

### Planning & Zoning Commission

Land use and development recommendations are a core component of this Plan, and the Planning & Zoning Commission has a major role in guiding those decisions. Commission members shall each have a copy of this document and shall be familiar with its contents. It is generally the responsibility of the Commission to determine whether proposed projects are consistent with this Plan, and to make decisions and recommendations that are consistent with its vision. In cases where actions that are inconsistent with this Plan are deemed to be in the best interest of the City, the Commission should initiate efforts to amend the Plan to better reflect City interests.

### City Council

City Council sets priorities, controls budgets and tax rates, and often has the final say on key aspects of public and private development projects. The value and legitimacy of this Plan is directly related to the degree to which Council members are aware of these recommendations. Each Council member should have a copy of this document and should be familiar with the major goals and objectives described herein. City Council should expect and require that staff recommendations and actions both reference and remain consistent with this Plan.

### City Staff

City staff, including administrators, building officials, and public works personnel, have a significant influence on the selection and completion of all kinds of capital and operational projects. It is imperative that individuals in these key roles know about, support, and actively work to implement the various strategies and actions in this Plan.

## EDUCATION & ADVOCACY

Implementation of this Plan also depends, to a great degree, on the actions and decisions of entities other than City government. Some responsible parties that the City of Wyoming does not control or direct include, but are not limited to:

- Chisago County Economic Development Authority
- Chisago County
- Minnesota Department of Transportation
- Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

It is necessary to persuade these entities to be active partners in the implementation of the goals, objectives, and strategies of this Plan. The following City activities can support this effort:

- Share this Plan with each organization, including a memo highlighting sections of the document that anticipate collaboration between the City and the organization.
- Take the lead role in establishing a partnership.
- Know and communicate the intent of relevant objectives and strategies. Partner organizations need to understand and buy in to the rationale before they will act.

## POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

There are five broad funding sources available to help offset costs to complete the projects listed in this Plan, as described below.

- General Municipal Funding – Some general municipal funds/borrowing will be required to assist with the completion of projects or as a matching source for state or federal grants (e.g. wayfinding, signage, or streetscaping projects).
- Special Assessments – Particular projects that benefit individual properties (e.g. water, sewer, or sidewalk installations) could be funded through special assessments whereby the City recoups initial design and construction costs through increased real estate taxes on those properties for a set period of time.
- Private Donations, Developers/Impact Fees – Some of the projects, such as streetscape improvements, could be partially or fully funded through private donations or public fundraising. Funding for other infrastructure projects can also be offset by using funds from impact fees the City collects as part of the approval of new development in the area.
- State and Federal Grants – There are many different state or federal grants that may be able to offset the costs of some of the identified projects. The table on the following page outlines some of these opportunities.
- Tax Increment Financing (TIF) – Tax increment financing (TIF) is a program where the additional taxes generated from development in a TIF district would go towards specified public improvements in a community. This program helps waylay the impacts of new development on a community while improving the attractiveness of the City.

## GRANT PROGRAMS

An important source of funding is grant programs offered by county, state, and federal agencies. This table provides a summary of common state grant programs. The table is not an exhaustive list of grant programs, but rather those that are typically used by jurisdictions to supplement community development and beautification activities. Other grant programs may exist and information regarding funding details shown in the table should be verified prior to seeking grant funding.

Funding Programs	Grant Structure	Granting Agency
<b>Redevelopment Grant Program</b> <a href="https://mn.gov/deed/government/financial-assistance/cleanup/redevelopmentgrantprogram.jsp">https://mn.gov/deed/government/financial-assistance/cleanup/redevelopmentgrantprogram.jsp</a>		
Helps communities with the costs of redeveloping blighted industrial, residential, or commercial sites and putting land back into productive use. Grants can assist with the cost of public land acquisition (if public ownership is necessary to facilitate redevelopment), building and site demolition, infrastructure improvements, and environmental health and safety activities. Grants do not provide assistance for building construction, renovation, or rehabilitation.	Grants pay up to half of the redevelopment costs for a qualifying site, with a 50% local match.	MN DEED
<b>Greater Minnesota Transportation Alternatives Solicitation</b> <a href="https://www.dot.state.mn.us/ta/">https://www.dot.state.mn.us/ta/</a>		
Funds projects for pedestrian and bicycle facilities, historic preservation, wayfinding, Safe Routes to School and more.	N/A	MN DOT
<b>Outdoor Recreation Grant Program</b> <a href="https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/grants/recreation/outdoor_rec.html">https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/grants/recreation/outdoor_rec.html</a>		
Funds the acquisition, development, and/or redevelopment of local parks and recreation areas, including internal park trails, picnic shelters, playgrounds, athletic facilities, boat accesses, fishing piers, swimming beaches, and campgrounds.	Matching grants to local units of government for up to 50% of the cost of acquisition, development and/or redevelopment of local parks and recreation areas.	MN DNR
<b>ReLeaf Community Forestry Grants Program</b> <a href="https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/grants/forestmgmt/releaf-2023.html">https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/grants/forestmgmt/releaf-2023.html</a>		
Encourages and promotes the inventory, planting, assessment, maintenance, treatment, improvement, protection and restoration of trees and forest resources in communities throughout Minnesota.	No match necessary.	MN DNR

Funding Programs	Grant Structure	Granting Agency
<b>Minnesota State Arts Board</b> <a href="https://mn.gov/grants/individuals.htm">https://mn.gov/grants/individuals.htm</a>		
<b>Arts Experiences Grant</b> Funds a variety of arts programming such as creating and/or presenting concerts, plays, tours, exhibitions, arts festivals, public art, or other kinds of activities that provide Minnesotans opportunities to engage in arts activities that are instilled into community or public life.	\$5,000-\$35,000. No match required.	Minnesota State Arts Board
<b>Minnesota Legacy Grants</b> <a href="https://www.legacy.mn.gov/">https://www.legacy.mn.gov/</a>		
<b>Minnesota Historical and Cultural Heritage Grants</b> Aims to preserve and enhance access to Minnesota’s cultural and historical resources and to support statewide access to history and historic preservation projects.	Two tiers of grants: <\$10,000 and >\$10,000. Match is not required but encouraged.	MNHS
<b>Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund</b> Supports a wide variety of arts projects involving the creation, sponsorship, performance, and/or exhibition of art. Arts producing activities and an arts activity which is open to the public should result from the project. An Outcome Evaluation Plan is required for this funding program.	N/A	Minnesota State Arts Board; specific funding allocated to the East Central Regional Arts Council

Private Grants

Grants from private organizations, such as AARP and Wells Fargo, also present an excellent opportunity to apply for funding for specific projects. Many of these grants support placemaking projects, economic development initiatives, and infrastructure improvements that competitive, state-run grants do not consider. Before any project listed on the following pages is scheduled for implementation, it is highly encouraged that the corresponding Lead Agencies research available private grants.

## IMPLEMENTATION ACTION PLAN

This section contains a compilation of the various actions recommended in this Plan to translate this vision to reality. Accompanying each action are recommended time frames for initial completion, potential ongoing activity schedules, the entity (or entities) with the primary responsibility in pushing the action forward, and any potential funding strategies outside of existing City financial tools (e.g., general fund, TIF, etc.).

### 1.0 Public Realm and Streetscape

	Recommendation	Target Completion
1.1 Pocket Park / Transitional Space West of New Proposed Mixed-Use Building		
1.1.1	Plant trees and add landscaping as available room allows.	2026
1.1.2	Add moveable tables to transitional space.	2026
1.1.3	Commission mural to be painted on western wall of new mixed-use building.	2027
1.2 Park & Public Event Space		
1.2.1	Acquire parcels (PIDs: 21.00214.00, 21.00215.00, 21.00216.00, 21.00217.00) to convert to public space.	2025
1.2.2	Convert parcels to park, planting trees and adding benches as available room allows.	2027
1.2.3	Acquire a temporary stage for small events.	2027
1.2.4	Organize programming for events at the temporary stage.	2027
1.3 Streetscape Improvements Along Felton Ave		
1.3.1	Add sidewalks (where needed) and curb extensions to west side of Felton Ave.	2028
1.3.2	Add street trees and grates to west side of Felton Ave.	2028
1.4 Wyoming Play Experience		
1.4.1	Acquire interactive elements from major community employers such as Polaris, Rosenbauer, and Fairview Lakes Medical Center.	2026
1.4.2	Work with a park designer to organize and implement Play Experience.	2027

**\*Note on funding:** The “Potential Funding” column is not comprehensive and can be subject to change as grant programs change and Wyoming’s implementation needs become more concrete. Some projects may only be eligible for funding when packaged with other, community-wide campaigns; others may only be eligible if there is an ADA compliance component. Additionally, this table does not list private funding sources such as foundations, sponsorships, private organization grants, etc. Further research towards funding strategies should be completed before moving forward with any community improvement project.

Lead Agencies	Potential Funding*	Comments
City	ReLeaf	Can be incorporated into site design of mixed-use structure, in collaboration with next-door commercial neighbor.
City	Private fundraising	
City, EDA, Hallberg Center for the Arts	Arts Experiences Grant	
City, First State Bank of Wyoming	Redevelopment Grant Program	
City	Outdoor Recreation Grant Program	Park area would measure approximately 3,000 sqft.
City	Arts Experiences Grant, Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund, private fundraising	
City, EDA, Hallberg Center for the Arts, library	Arts Experiences Grant, Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund, private fundraising	
City	Transportation Alternatives Solicitation, Redevelopment Grant Program	The majority of the proposed sidewalks would be 10 feet wide with a five-foot sidewalk directly south of the Wyoming play experience. Curb extensions would total approximately 1,000 sqft.
City	ReLeaf	
City, Major Employers	N/A	
City, Hired Consultant	Outdoor Recreation Grant Program	

## 1.0 Public Realm and Streetscape (cont.)

Recommendation		Target Completion
1.5 Street Relationship		
1.5.1	Encourage businesses to activate street-facing storefronts with colorful awnings, large and clear windows (70% of ground floor), welcoming building entrances, view of products/activities (if applicable), etc.	Ongoing
1.5.2	Amend zoning ordinance to include regulations that allow eateries to place tables/chairs on sidewalk or an outdoor patio in warmer months, if applicable.	2024
1.6 Architectural Design and Maintenance		
1.6.1	Enforce the architectural design standards outlined in the 2023 Architectural Standards ordinance amendment.	Ongoing
1.6.2	Ensure that downtown façades are diverse but cohesive in style, color palette, and materiality.	Ongoing
1.7 Lighting		
1.7.1	Add pedestrian-scale light poles within downtown (consider using the orange style found in the commercial area abutting I-35).	2026
1.7.2	Illuminate parking lots and pedestrian walkways uniformly and to the minimum level necessary to ensure safety.	Ongoing
1.7.3	Use LEDs and smart lighting control systems to reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions.	Ongoing
1.8 Landscaping		
1.8.1	Soften the hardscape by adding street trees and planters to wide sidewalks throughout downtown, especially near the Viking/Forest intersection.	2027
1.8.2	Add in-ground planters to minimize stormwater runoff, such as within the proposed curb extensions at the Viking/Felton intersection.	2028
1.8.3	Use low-maintenance and/or native plants wherever possible.	Ongoing
1.8.4	Establish a volunteer group to help maintain gardens and street landscaping, as well as a streetscape sponsorship program. Encourage residents to sponsor a planter, bench, or other streetscape feature.	2027
1.9 Street Furniture		
1.9.1	Add benches throughout the commercial core for additional seating.	2025
1.9.2	Add trash/recycling receptacles and bike racks.	2025

Lead Agencies	Potential Funding	Comments
EDA, Downtown Businesses	N/A	
Planning Commission, City Council	N/A	
Planning Commission, City Council	N/A	
Planning Commission, City Council	N/A	
City	Transportation Alternatives Solicitation	
City, Property Owners	N/A	
City	N/A	
City	ReLeaf, private fundraising	
City	N/A	
City	N/A	
City	Private fundraising	
City	Private fundraising	
City	Private fundraising	

# RECOMMENDATIONS

## 1.0 Public Realm and Streetscape (cont.)

Recommendation		Target Completion
1.10 Signage		
1.10.1	Add branded banners to light poles to enforce the downtown corridor as a destination.	2026 (after installation of pedestrian-scale lighting)
1.10.2	Add wayfinding signage pointing visitors to important destinations (e.g. City Hall, Sunrise Prairie trailhead, Hallberg Center for the Arts, proposed Wyoming play experience, farmer's market, etc.).	2024, add on as destinations are added
1.10.3	Provide an informational kiosk about Wyoming at the Sunrise Prairie trailhead that highlights the community's history, places to eat, and notable destinations.	2025
1.11 Public Art		
1.6.1	Partner with the Hallberg Center for the Arts to commission installations or murals for public spaces.	Ongoing
1.6.2	Add kiosks/windows to building façades to display art, public announcements, etc.	2025
1.6.3	Paint electric boxes to conceal and beautify utilitarian elements.	2025

## 2.0 Centralized Parking

Recommendation		Target Completion
Centralized Parking Components		
2.1	Head-in parking.	2027
2.2	Angled parking.	
2.3	Parallel parking.	
Other Parking Recommendations		
2.4	Acquire parcels (or reconfigure parcels, if necessary) and work with downtown property owners to create centralized parking area (PID: 21.00221.00).	2026-2028
2.5	Ensure that future developments thoughtfully incorporate appropriate parking types and volumes into the site design.	Ongoing
2.6	Prohibit large parking lots along roadways or in front of businesses in downtown commercial core.	Ongoing
2.7	If deemed necessary, convert an angled parking space on E Viking Blvd to bike rack parking.	As needed
2.8	Mark short-term parking stalls and stalls designated for specific businesses within the consolidated public parking area.	2027

Lead Agencies	Potential Funding	Comments
City	N/A	
City	Transportation Alternatives Solicitation	Could be fundable if paired with other pedestrian improvements.
City	Transportation Alternatives Solicitation, MN Historical and Cultural Heritage Grants	Could be fundable if paired with other pedestrian improvements.

City, EDA, Hallberg Center for the Arts	Arts Experiences Grant, Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund, private fundraising	
City, EDA	N/A	
City, Hallberg Center for the Arts	Arts Experiences Grant, Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund, private fundraising	

Lead Agencies	Potential Funding	Comments
City	Redevelopment Grant Program, Transportation Alternatives Solicitation	Parking reconfiguration would supply approximately 117 stalls – 75 off-street stalls and 42 on-street stalls.
City Business Owners	Redevelopment Grant Program	
Planning Commission, City Council	N/A	
Planning Commission, City Council	N/A	
City	N/A	
City, Downtown Businesses	N/A	

## 3.0 Sidewalks & Pedestrian Facilities

Recommendation		Target Completion
3.1	Paint prominent intersections along E Viking Blvd, including mid-block and Felton Ave.	2028
3.2	Ensure that all new curb cuts are ADA compliant; bring all curb cuts within the community into ADA compliance.	Ongoing
3.3	As a part of the public parking lot reconfiguration, extend the sidewalk along the east edge of Forest Blvd to prevent pedestrians from walking on the roadway to access Wyoming Drug and other businesses to the south.	2028

## 4.0 Potential Redevelopment

Recommendation		Target Completion
4.1 Infill Residential Units (corner of Forest Blvd/268th St; PID: 21.00194.00)		
4.1.1	One or two-unit detached residential structure.	TBD
4.2 Potential Future Infill Residential Units (middle of block between E Viking Blvd and 268th St)		
4.2.1	Rowhouse units.	TBD
4.3 Mixed-Use Structure (south side of E Viking Blvd; PID: 21.00195.00)		
4.3.1	Two-story structure with residential units on second floor.	2026
4.4 Canopy		
4.4.1	Consult with Grace Church on feasibility and logistics of moving the farmer's market into permanent canopy space.	2025
4.4.2	Permanent overhead canopy with two public restrooms.	2027
4.5 Infill Residential Units (if Wyoming play experience is not implemented; PID: 21.00219.00)		
4.5.1	One or two-unit detached residential structure.	TBD
Other Development Recommendations		
4.6	Continually monitor housing demand in the region to determine the most appropriate housing types for redevelopment projects.	Ongoing

Lead Agencies	Potential Funding	Comments
City, Hallberg Center for the Arts	Transportation Alternatives Solicitation	Could be fundable if paired with other pedestrian improvements.
City	Transportation Alternatives Solicitation	Many private grants support ADA compliance improvement efforts.
City	Redevelopment Grant Program, Transportation Alternatives Solicitation	

Lead Agencies	Potential Funding	Comments
Property Owner (based on market conditions)	N/A	
Property Owner (based on market conditions)	N/A	
City, Property Owner (based on market conditions)	Redevelopment Grant Program	Community engagement overwhelmingly supported the addition of a new food/drink establishment to the ground-floor space.
City, Grace Church	N/A	
City, First State Bank of Wyoming	Private fundraising	The proposed community events area would measure approximately 1,425 sqft – 1,200 sqft for the canopy and 225 sqft for two public restrooms.
City	N/A	
City, Planning Commission	N/A	



### 3. What are three words or phrases that best describe downtown Wyoming's STRENGTHS or ASSETS?

- Quiet, spaced out,
- Gathering spaces; resources; commerce
- Keep Wyoming small
- Community
- Small town feel
- Easy, convenient, simple
- Love the Small town feel! Inclusive Police department, includes people with intellectual disabilities in their reserves program! Making us feel apart of the community!
- Community involving activities
- Casey's and crystal store
- Ease of passing through, quick,
- Charm, opportunity, quiet
- Small, ease of access
- Small and still somewhat accessible depending on traffic flow.
- Trail access, Vicinity to freeway
- Small town feel, restaurants,
- Small, quiet, dairy queen!
- Small, friendly, quiet
- Small-town, historic, location
- Nice walking/biking trail. Good restaurants.
- Location, bike path, road improvements
- Small, accessible
- Small town
- Small town feel, community, friendly
- Quaint, practical, quiet
- Local business, proximity
- Bike-friendly
- historical, hometown, easily accessible
- Convenient, necessities, supportive
- Manageable, walkable, Historical feel
- Calm, quiet, family friendly
- Highway accessibility, trail head, basic stores
- Strong sense of community
- Safe, clean, good parks
- Clean quiet
- Small town feel, low crime, friendly
- We need new roads.
- Wyoming needs to spend money on roads, not improved downtown
- Accessible, public safety, community events
- Room to start over
- Small hometown feel.
- Parks, Clean, Safe
- There's a downtown??
- Small business, sidewalks, iconic
- Walkable, basic shopping, dining
- Small town feel & quaint and clean
- Cornerstone, walking path
- Small, nice roads, local feeling
- Small
- Small town feel
- Clean, uncrowded, off street parking, violent crime free and I would never want that to change no matter how many businesses came to town.
- Infrastructure. That's it

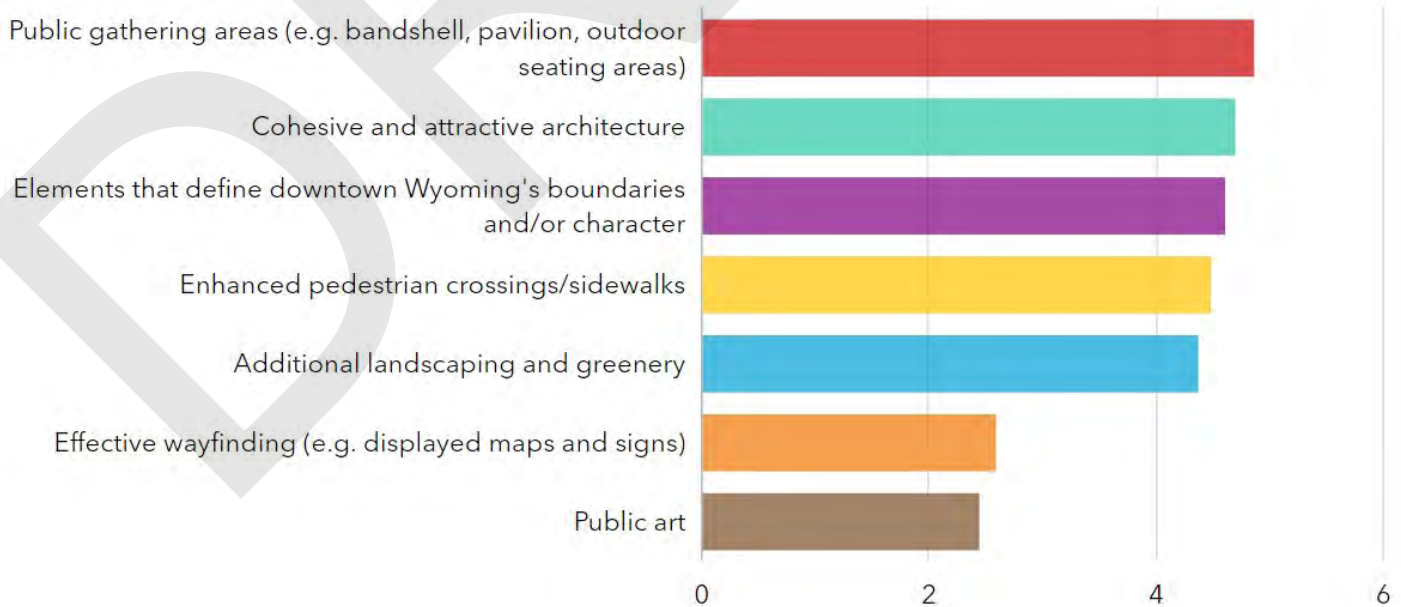
### 4. What are three words or phrases that best describe downtown Wyoming's WEAKNESSES or NEEDS?

- More businesses, more crosswalk signals, traffic
- Increased diversity and infrastructure
- Railroad park waste of money
- Cohesion, Youth Year-round
- Need more local business
- Food, entertainment, excitement
- Needs a place for people with disabilities to socialize, fitness centers, adaptive activities
- Spend money frivolously
- Needs more
- Boring, empty, super outdated
- Better way to commute (paths, sidewalks, trail system, etc), Restaurants, Stores
- Entertainment, business, options
- Variety, food,
- Nothing is needed stop building
- Needs business infrastructure, lacking a downtown, behind the times
- Traffic jams, not "walkable" businesses
- Not enough areas to go SIT, like parks, benches, or restaurants
- Round about needed... east viking and kettle river blvd.
- Boring, traffic, industrial
- Ugly, under utilized, too much empty space, too much storage, not enough shops/restaurants
- Walkability (no sidewalks makes walking feel unsafe), diversification of businesses, beautifying current structures
- Senior housing
- Lack of retail
- Boring, nothing there, dilapidated building front and

4. What are three words or phrases that best describe downtown Wyoming's WEAKNESSES or NEEDS? (cont.)

- center
- more dining or areas to socialize
- Access, more businesses
- Inaccessible, limited open space for gathering (stagecoach area is not adequate),
- messy, outdated, unappealing
- Options, activities, food
- Limited, dumpy appearance, not for young families
- Lack of fast food restaurants
- Not enough shopping options, no city center, little entertainment options
- Very little retail, not enough restaurants
- Commercial tax base, road maintenance, polaris free loaders
- Traffic control
- Crappy looking library, run down looking city hall, liberal council
- We need new roads.
- I can't get from my house to downtown because the roads are so bad.
- Boring, expensive, too industrialized
- Non existent
- There are no needs.
- Roads, snow removal, taxes
- There's a downtown??
- Roads please fix!!! We pay enough for taxes they patch a few than miss a couple right next to it
- Lacks creativity, not enough business, lonely
- Hardware store, playground
- To many blind spots at the stoplights to see pedestrians and bicyclists in crosswalk on 22&61
- Roads, not enough sidewalks for kids, Swanson park not good for kids older then 5
- Walkability, lack of retail businesses, aging buildings and infrastructures
- More activities for Kids/Teens, Streetlights are needed, Clean up City property and trails
- Small
- Roads, businesses, apartments
- No curb appeal to the town
- Good food options, lack of eye candy (flowers, sculpture, etc), a "draw" for tourism that makes Wyoming a destination
- Crowded, lack of city rules, behind the times
- Fragmented, no "main street"

5. Please rank the following design elements based on your prioritization for downtown Wyoming's redevelopment.



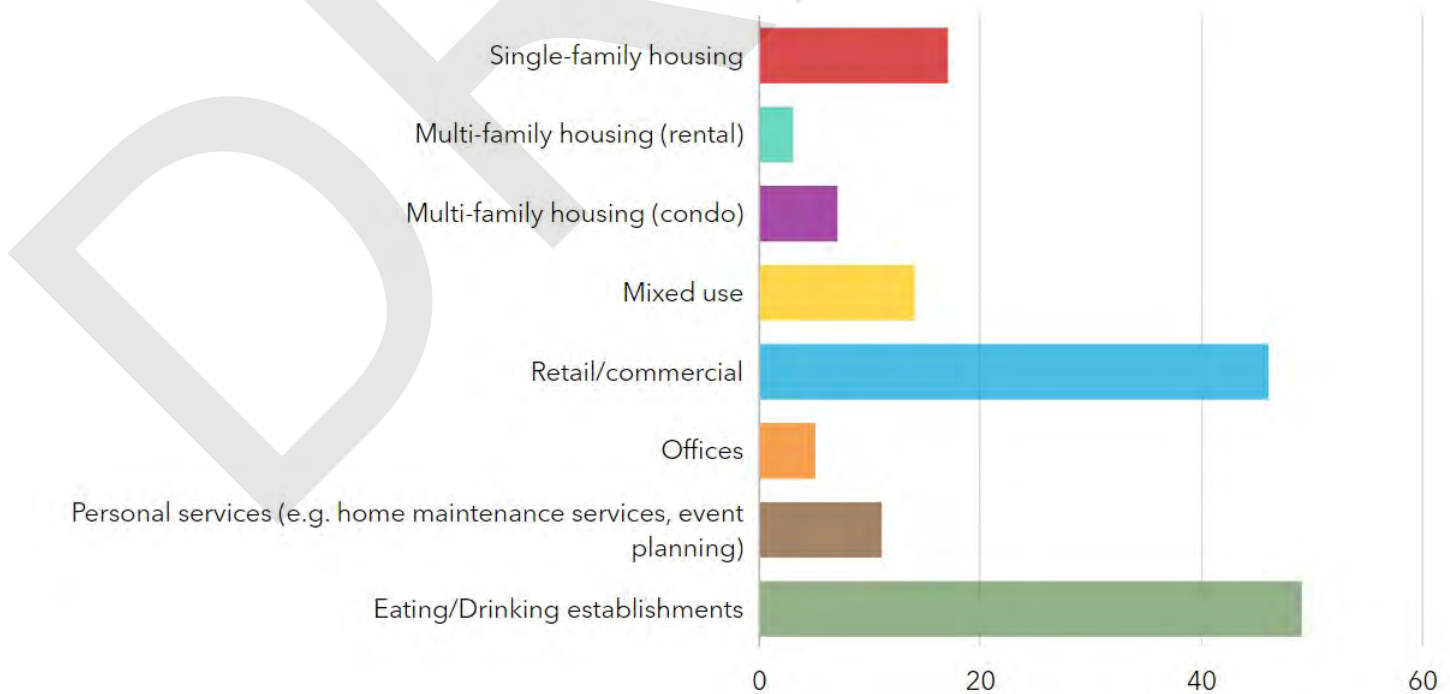
## 6. Please explain your reasoning for the previous rankings.

- I love community building spaces, while offering clean and safe spaces for the community
- Keep Wyoming small. No one wants to go to a park next to a busy smells loud street. BRING TAXES DOWN SO I DON'T HAVE TO MOVE!.
- People have maps and GPS on their phones, there is no need for displayed maps. There are a few very ugly buildings downtown.
- We need more for our youth. I think a City pool like Rush City has would not only provide a fun summer for kids and families but also employ a lot of city residence young and old..
- Wyoming is not an exciting place to be. There is no reason for people to visit Wyoming. The Cornerstone is the only bar in town and it's too expensive and lacks good service if you're not a regular. We need more tourist and local activities and options. There is a low likelihood of citizens spending their money locally.
- There needs to be a path going along the east side of 61 from Casey's to the elementary school. Kids shouldn't have to cross 61 twice if they want to walk or ride their bikes to school or walk in the grassy area. It would be nice to having a gathering area with a splash pad or even consider having an outdoor pool and charge admission. This would bring revenue to the city.
- Downtown, has almost nothing to offer and bring people in and keep people around. Wyoming is one of the best examples of a bedroom community there is. Only a few businesses in town are "destination" businesses or events( Non of which are located downtown) Everything else that Wyoming caters to is large corporate business that someone might drive in for work then turn right around and drive out. It's a "fly over" city for people to get somewhere else.
- I love the idea of public areas woven with great landscaping showing off some of the natural beauty in Wyoming
- No ranking selected when I select one the rest of the choices rank themselves. Wyoming does not need to grow keep that garbage in the twin cities.
- Wyoming, MN needs to get with the times and start upgrading infrastructure, etc to accompany for the increase in people moving here. Citizens here are paying very high taxes yet public infrastructure, ROADS, etc does not even remotely reflect this. There is a lack of green space, nature trails, outdoor locations.
- I think public gathering spaces, landscaping, and art ARE elements that would define the town's character! Would love more "featuring" of the great small businesses and community assets (library, Hallberg Art Center, etc) we already have here.
- It doesn't allow you to click and drag. It only let's you pick your #1 ranking.
- HWY 61 is too busy and isn't structured to allow people to easily stop, visit, walk around, etc. Also need more community gathering places to serve as a draw for visitors.
- Cohesiveness, there is no actual downtown beyond the Viking/61 corner. It does not feel like a destination to spend your day or your money. There are too many ugly, empty or poorly used buildings that are too spread out.
- We need safe walking paths downtown or any downtown plans will not succeed. To be frank, there are too many ugly buildings downtown. The condo building by cornerstone is an absolute eyesore and the strip malls scream early 2000s.
- Attractive small towns have a defined downtown area, with buildings that are architecturally interesting, retail shops and events that draw people to the area. Wyoming is greatly lacking all of that.
- Wyoming doesn't appear to have an identity. It needs to show the community (and strangers) why it's a great place to live. Besides random businesses there, what can be displayed to show others they should WANT to live there. (Not that I want more people moving in. I like that's it small. ; ) )
- When a downtown is accessible, unique, and clearly set apart, it can be a draw for people.
- I don't care for the veterans memorial and second phase plan and don't believe this makes sense -- it seems poorly designed and is not easily accessible, and does not have any features that I want in a park.
- more is needed about why people should visit Wyoming.
- Things that bring the community together that look nice and are accessible via bike and foot traffic are good investments. Art is subjective and should be avoided
- It doesn't feel like a downtown.
- Public park/gathering areas are awesome. Pedestrian safety is second. I couldn't click and drag on my phone.
- The city needs a face lift without spending a bunch of tax payer money on social justice crap! Lugar and the Mayor should resign!

6. Please explain your reasoning for the previous rankings. (cont.)

- I'm not answering this question. See below.
- These are not the things Wyoming needs to spend money on. We can't get to downtown to enjoy it because our roads are so terrible.
- I don't think Wyoming needs any of the above. There's really nothing to do downtown other than liquor stores and a bar. The cost to live in this city is extremely high and there's truly no reason for it. Most of downtown is commercial buildings that are nothing but an eye sore.
- Don't need the rest of the choices after the first one.
- None of these are really important to me
- None of the above. So are taxes can raise again?
- We currently have no reason to go "downtown". There is nothing to define the downtown.
- Beauty and functionality are the most important
- We need more way to attract tourists to our area but not to develop more land.
- Stated above, the town is drab with no curb appeal.
- Wyoming is lacking a "defined" downtown. Is it just the Hwy 61 corridor? Do you go down Viking east or west to include the downtown? That being said, there isn't enough space to get lost or need a map to find your way. Many other cities, even very small towns across the country, have things like flowers in hanging baskets, banners on the light poles highlighting things about the town or veterans from the area. The only thing Wyoming had was the chainsaw bear that was next to Wyoming Drug and that's been gone for years. If you wanted to open a B&B in Wyoming, what would be the draw? We are a stop on the way... to Duluth or to the cities. People know Wyoming for their stop at the Village Inn and coming "way up north" to the Dead End Hayride.
- There is no uniformity or rules for businesses. You let a damn bar have a non used ice rink in a parking lot all winter. The main intersection is unsafe with cars driving fast to beat a stoplight.
- "The "" drag doesn't work so I'll list here.
  1. Elements the define Downtown. Central business district
  2. Cohesive and attractive architecture
  3. public gathering spaces
  4. Additional landscaping
  5. Enhanced pedestrian crossings
  6. Effective wayfinding
  7. Public art"

7. Which land uses should be the highest priority of downtown Wyoming's redevelopment?

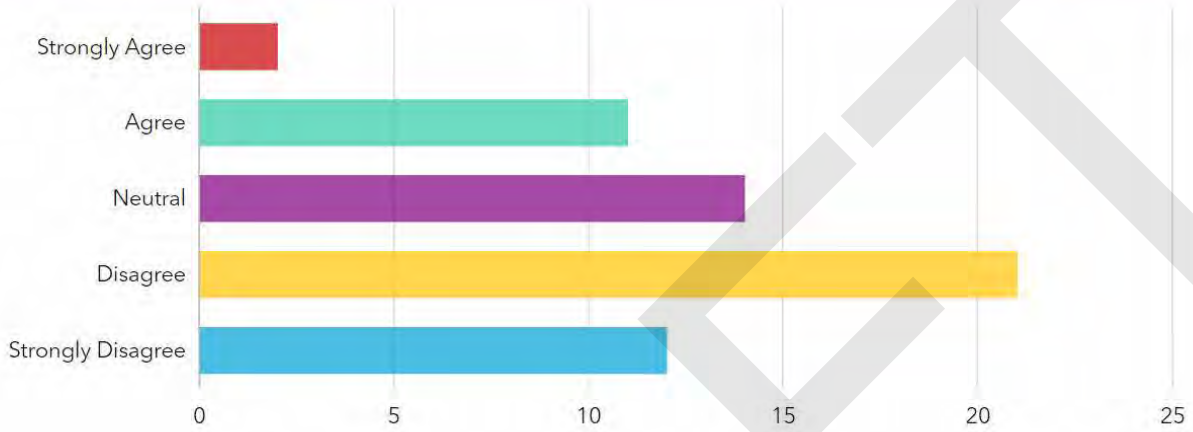


8. If you could open a successful business in downtown Wyoming, what would it be and where would it be located?

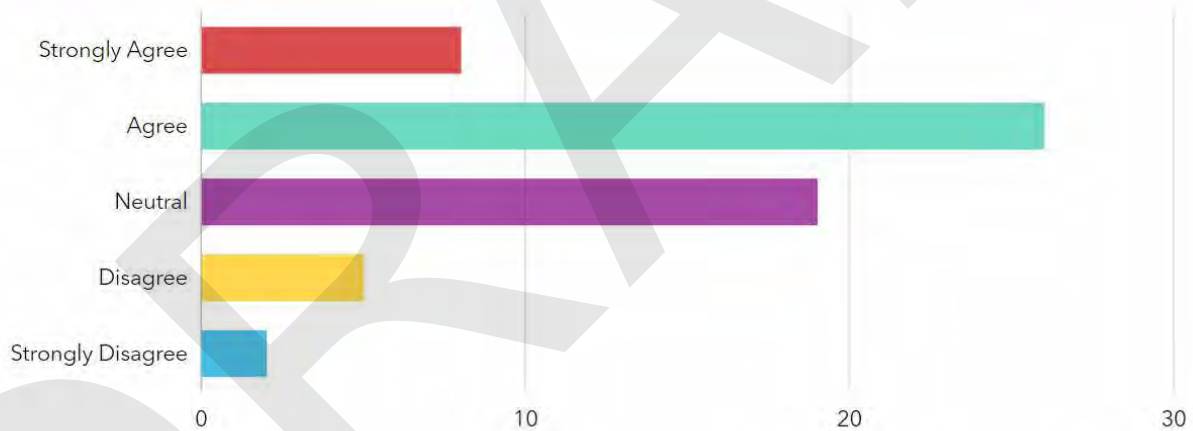
- Ice cream shoppe
- Coffee shop
- Tomato restaurant from stacy next to drug store
- A sport/rec area particularly for winter activities for kids.
- City Pool located on the open lot on Forest blvd that is in front of Splitrocks
- A restaurant that does not serve bar food. Replace the apartments on Forest BLVD next to cornerstone.
- A outdoor pool at good view park. Or a chik fil a next to Dairy Queen where the old gas station is
- Food, good retail, in any of the empty or commercial lots that are outdated or empty
- Restaurationt (anywhere), food co-op (near the library), farm to table restaurationt (anywhere),
- Sports bar on 61
- Coffee shop and bakery
- In another city.
- Located just off of 61. Some sort of competition for Cornerstone Bar and Grill.
- Cozy bookstore/coffee/yarn shop
- Community garden would be nice
- I have a successful salon in Wyoming. My only complaint is traffic control
- Bakery, near the bank
- A bakery in a new building with a bookstore and gift shop.
- A bakery near the chiropractor. Like on the empty lot that the bank owns that is wasted real estate.
- Hardware store
- Near the Viking - Hwy 61 intersection
- Sit down restaurant - Bill's car wash
- We'd love another dining/bar area besides Cornerstone. It could be located anywhere downtown, but maybe somewhere that would incorporate a natural view/patio that didn't just overlook all the commercials areas of downtown.
- Restaurant
- health and wellness shop
- Craft Brewery
- All season indoor play space for babies through teens in the warehouse district
- Chick-fil-A or bakery
- Retail near lakes gas.
- Antique shop, more restaurants like the Northern and Stone Inn, Dollar Tree?
- Archery shop. Somewhere right of 61
- Who would want to open a business here, the council makes it nearly impossible and extremely expensive!
- A decent restaurant
- Probably a restaurant or a retail building like an ace or hardware store
- Restaurant where the law firm and barber shop is now. It's a prime location with a turd building.
- We have what we need
- Hardware Store or Butcher Shop. Close to 35
- Supper club.
- A music, high end cocktail social bar on a roof of a condo building across from cornerstone
- Kwik trip,
- A gift type shop on the corner of 22 and 61
- A coffee shop in the middle of town with a Gift shop and flower shop
- Batting cages/ indoor sports facility/dome.
- A good steak house located downtown Wyoming.
- A farm to table restaurant with an outstanding wine list and it would be along 61 just north of town where there's any open space by the road to the bowling alley.
- A butcher or deli. In the strip mall by the coffee shop

9. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about downtown Wyoming.

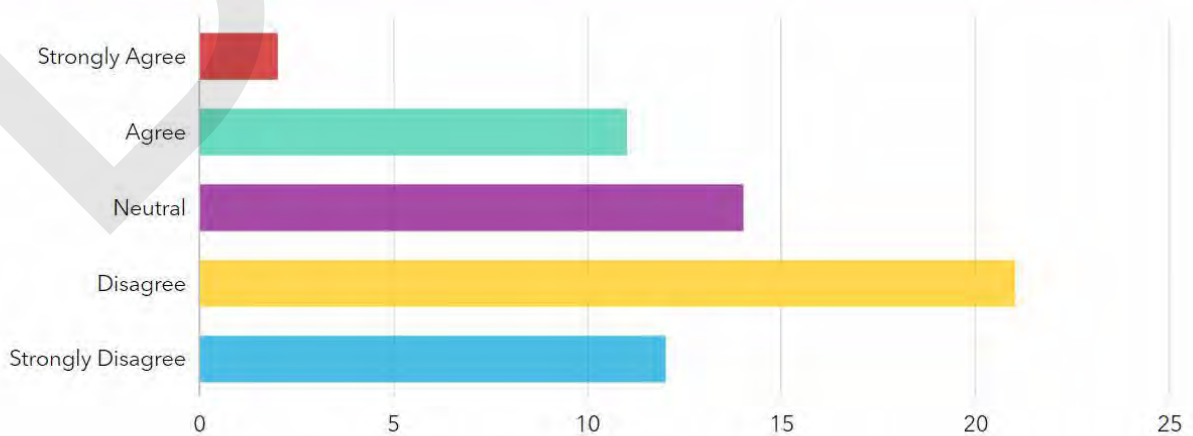
● Streets in Wyoming are well maintained Column Bar Pie Map



● Wyoming has a strong sense of place Column Bar Pie Map

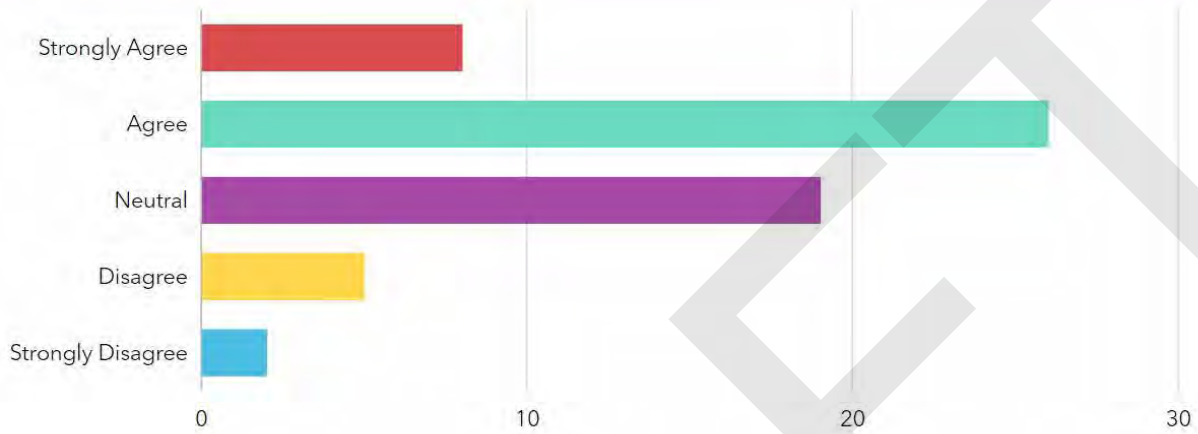


● I can often find the goods and services that I am looking for Column Bar Pie Map

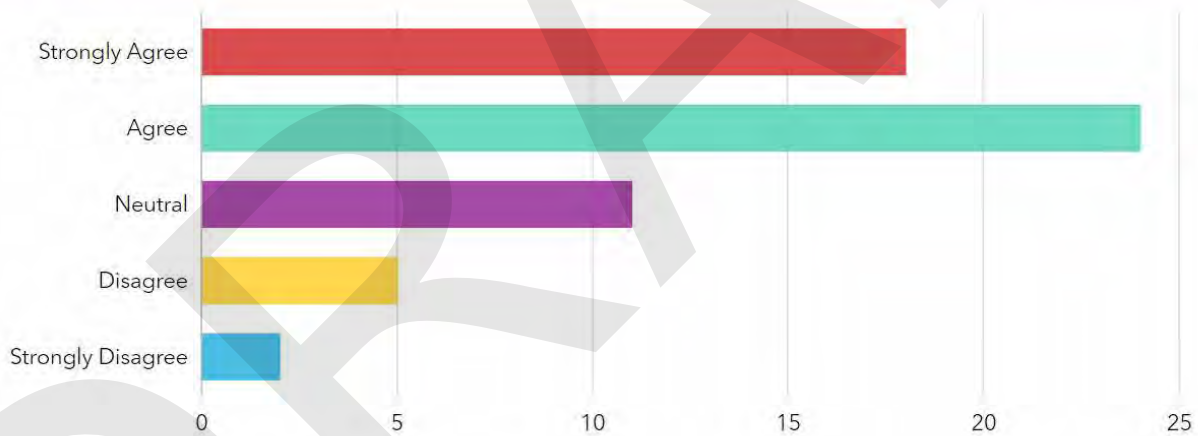


9. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about downtown Wyoming. (cont.)

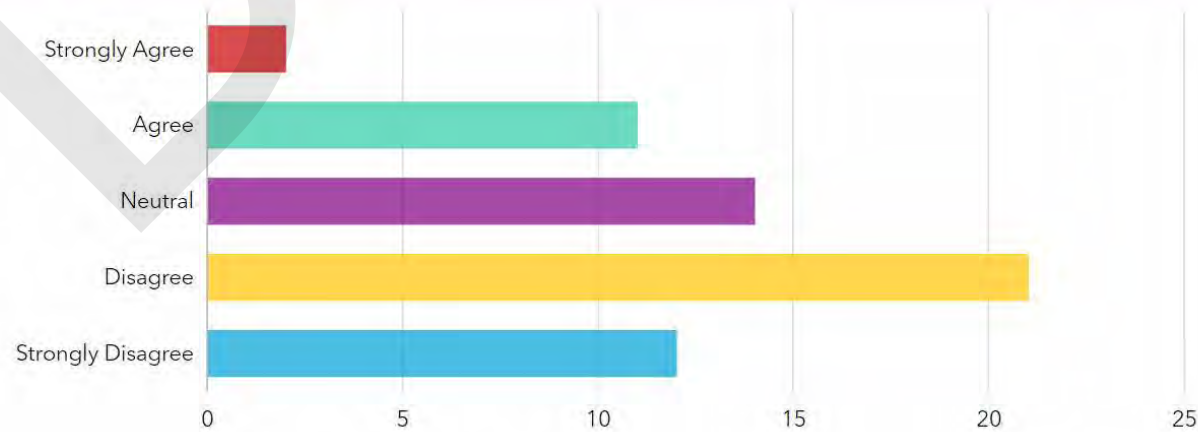
● I enjoy spending time downtown Column Bar Pie Map



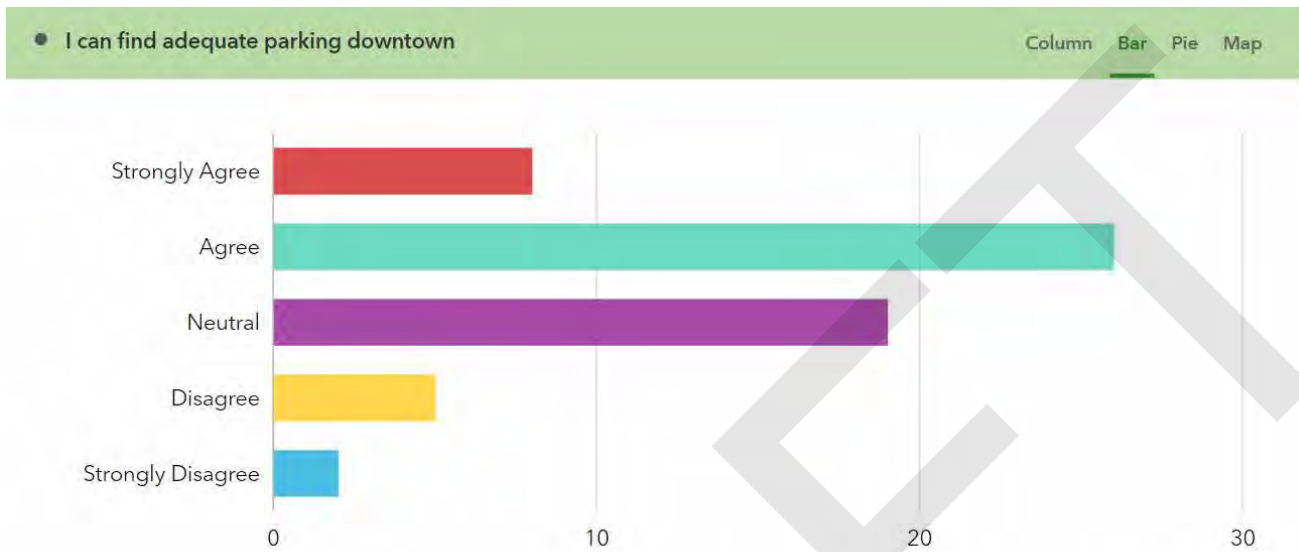
● I feel safe walking or cycling downtown Column Bar Pie Map



● I have a go-to place for gatherings with friends and family in downtown Wyoming Column Bar Pie Map



9. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about downtown Wyoming. (cont.)



10. Please elaborate on your responses to the previous statements.

- I think Wyoming has ways to improve but overall pretty decent
- The gathering places have parking lots. When 61 was redone a few years ago a turning lane should have been added by Casey's at the very least a bypass lane. East Viking is pretty rough out towards Carlos Avery.
- More parks, beaches and playgrounds
- The biggest thing Wyoming is lacking is entertainment. Again, all of the local is being spent outside of the community.
- The streets lack maintenance at times and during the winter are poorly plowed. The city needs to do more with bringing in more revenue.
- For most anything that is a night out or decent retail you almost have to leave the city. The city owned buildings are out dated, the cornerstone is about the only draw to get people to spend any money after 5 o'clock in downtown. The empty lots and buildings are starting to add up and it's easier to head south or north to get to a place to spend money at. It's sort of a personal belief that many city employees and appointed offices have made it hard to do business and have any success with business unless you have millions of dollars to "play" the game.
- The only thing we super like about Wyoming is that we have easy access to the Twin Cities, but are set apart enough that we have our own quiet space. We strongly desire to love where we live more than just those reasons - we'd love to have places we love to take people to for dinner or activities, as well as places to enjoy with our kids.
- There are minimal options for dining out, and you have to go to Forest Lake or Chisago for an evening out.
- This survey sounds like it's being conducted by an outside agency with no stake in the town. The way questions are phrased above shows no understanding of my town.
- Love living out here to be away from the Metro area. Nice rural spot with good weather.
- HORRIBLE ROADS - worse than Duluth, MN.
- LIMITED OUTDOOR RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES
- WYOMING NEEDS SOME SORT OF SET BOUNDARY TO DIFFERENTIATE ITSELF
- LOCAL GOVERNMENT MISUSES TAXPAYER MONEY - spent thousands of dollars to contract Wright Tree service to remove mature trees from parks in the city, only to spend money on more trees to plant them in place instead of focusing on the big issue items in our town such as the ROADS. They are better off being dirt roads than in this poor of condition. Currently the city has decided to pay city employees and third party companies to patch potholes in the Spring, only to have those SAME EMPLOYEES come through after the first snow and scrap every patch out of each pothole only to be repeated the next year. Over and over. Ridiculous use of funds.

## 10. Please elaborate on your responses to the previous statements. (cont.)

- The intersection of kettle river blvd and east viking is terrible. It should be a round-about. And the bridge should be widened. But number 1 should be that intersection. Especially with the future builds of homes and such behind the Village Inn.
- Firstly, there are few sidewalks and not maintained in the winter. Love the Cornerstone, we need more places like this.
- I walk everywhere because of where I live and because people speed so much and there aren't any sidewalks, it's impossible to feel safe in Wyoming.
- There is very little in Wyoming that draws people to the area.
- Streets need more work, several parks need an overhaul. Cornerstone is the only bar/full-service restaurant that I'm aware of downtown.
- There is nothing downtown but Cornerstone. Wyoming doesn't have a feel or a style—it's just a small drive thru area on 61. No one would know or remember it.
- Wyoming is a small growing town. Most people easily go to Forest Lake for shopping. It would be nice to see more options available in Wyoming.
- The side streets suck, full of pot holes all year long. Winter sucks because the streets are left icy. Our council is more interested in crappy low income housing than they are at making sure streets are taken care of.
- None of this matters because you are asking the wrong question. The only question Wyoming should be asking is how to fix our roads faster. Our roads are an abomination. And the "patches" that get put in place each summer only serve to make the roads worse. For example, when turning onto Grenada from 22 there is a long stretch of road that got some new asphalt recently. Except it's worse than before! Driving on it feels like driving on an unmaintained, rutted, washboard dirt road. Many of the other roads have holes everywhere or the asphalt is simply spiderwebbed with cracks so badly you could break the pieces out by hand. In either case, the snow plows in the winter unwittingly break up the road further. Something needs to be done to speed up the road plan in our town. By asking the above questions about modifying downtown, it seems the City must have extra money. Well that money only has one place it should be put to use for the betterment of our community: ROADS.
- Why are we focused on downtown when our streets are in awful shape and the money spent to repair problem areas of our roads is a waste due to horrible execution of the work. The repairs are temporary and they leave our roads terrible for driving and looking like a disaster. These repairs are a waste of our money and should be better spent on getting our roads project completed faster.
- Streets are terrible and they throw in quick patches instead of resurfacing the road. Can't even rollerblade down most of the roads. Also don't need Peking downtown as there is. O thing to do down there. Very high premium pricing for a very average town.
- I'm not even exactly sure the boundaries of "downtown" and I generally don't have reasons to go. There's not really good restaurants (or many to choose from) and not much going on. So I don't find many reasons to spend time in the area. It needs something more to attract people and businesses. I just think of other cute small town downtown areas and I d9nt see that in Wyoming.
- There is no downtown. It has one bar/restaurant and there is nothing else there worth visiting. Start over.
- This town doesn't need to expand or grow. Moved here 18 years ago since it was small and quiet. Since your an outside agency you have no concern over the city. You ask about downtown parking but it's a small city not someplace like Minneapolis or st paul so things like that are not needed. There is no reason to expand or build because all that will do will bring crime and too many issues to the city. Worry about another city and leave this town the way it is.
- Middle of July and street still has potholes that are not addressed. Street cleaner comes out 2x per year and snow management in cul-de-sacs has never been worse. Pay too much \$\$ in taxes and no excuse for the above.
- I'm not really sure where downtown is... But if I were to guess, Cornerstone is the area. I feel safe & everything is well maintained. I really don't want more multi housing living. Small town atmosphere goes away with all of that.
- We are missing anything related to our history or core manufacturing vibe.
- The roads around 260th st, Professional Exteriors/ rosenbauer are absolutely terrie. Crumbling apart. I feel safe, but there really isn't anywhere to walk to.
- It can use improvement but overall downtown Wyoming seems busy until about 6 p.m.
- There isn't much of a selection for gatherings, Forest

## 10. Please elaborate on your responses to the previous statements. (cont.)

lake seems to have more options. Parking has never been an issue unless it's stage coach days. Most of the streets are well maintained.

- I live in what you would call downtown, so my gathering place is my home. If friends want to get together in Wyoming, they come here for good food and plentiful drinks. Also, we walk or ride bikes to any place we want to go in the summer months so parking is a non issue. We get needed, last minute groceries at Bruce's and would be very sad if we lost that business. However, we have to go to FL to get

home improvement supplies or household goods like small appliances etc.

- No
- It's hard to comment on a downtown that is still in the "kick around ideas" stage. Downtowns in my opinion consist of a main street or a town square. Wyoming has neither. Does this mean there is no business in Wyoming? To the contrary. The problem is that all of the businesses that call Wyoming home are scattered all around the city.

## 11. Any additional ideas/comments about downtown Wyoming?

- BRING TAXES DOWN!
- The speed limit is needlessly low on East Viking East of Glen Oak.
- More restaurants, bakery and a Kwik Trip
- Pull in more businesses or things to help lower taxes as they are getting too high. The city doesn't need the best government facilities instead spend the money and decreasing taxes or creating things to creat more money for the city. Keep doing the events because that is what makes Wyoming a great place they are family oriented
- I think there's ton of potential, hopefully we'll see more businesses come in to support additional housing and justify other leisure options!
- Leave it alone it's fine the way it is.

- We strongly feel that the small town vibe is important, differentiating, and appealing. We don't want to live in a "big town" like Forest Lake or North Branch. We want to live here 'because' it's a small town.

It makes us apprehensive/sad that Wyoming would grow in population a lot. If there has to be more residential, we'd prefer if it was larger lot single-family homes where there can be big trees and walking paths. Make the neighborhoods feel more like older neighborhoods and not turn our town into a depressing sea of houses like in St. Michael (like what's going in on Kettle River). Sad.

There are also already so many great businesses and community aspects that are "invisible" if you don't know about them, and so spread out. We love our small town, but there's not really a "downtown" that you'd walk. I think of White Bear Lake and Buffalo as Main Street/"downtown" areas that would be

cool to have in Wyoming, too, for residents and as a destination for surrounding communities.

- Some smaller multi-tenant retail buildings vs. adding to the warehouse district, I feel it could bring more shoppers. Adding more retail spaces, I think wyoming could capitalize on that. There just really isn't anywhere for new businesses to to even move into here in Wyoming. Again though, please look at the intersection of kettle river and east viking. Friday afternoons are terrible w/people going north. If you are headed north and trying to turn west, good luck. Same in the fall coming from pinehaven farm. If you are coming out of there and trying to turn to cross the bridge, it's terrible. The extra 135 homes being built on kettle river will be contributing to that. + homes behind the village inn? It's going to be terrible. Apartments are the last thing we need to add to this community. Hwy 61 in wyoming should have a more welcoming look. Street lights with some hanging plants or aLANe divider with some plants. Wyoming looks like a bunch of brick buildings that is not appealing.
- Have you ever been in downtown at 4:30 on a weekday. The roads/stop lights are inadequate for the amount of people that are leaving this town. Keyword leaving, they will spend their money in a neighboring community with big box stores and malls full of restaurants because they can't do it in the city that they work in. How can you keep more of that money in your community?
- Look up the concept of "third spaces" — this is what we need in our city. More mom and pop places, not chain restaurants or fast food. There's enough of that in forest lake.

## 11. Any additional ideas/comments about downtown Wyoming? (cont.)

- Safe, clean, senior housing
- Community feels disjointed/forgotten especially on the west side of I-35.
- Please look at adding low/free event spaces for people to use. The library is too small. Look at indoor play spaces even just for winter biking or an indoor playground. Bring a hardware store to town and let companies put better signage out—especially Splitrock. That sign is 2 feet high and looks ridiculous. Let someone other than Halberg own anything in town.
- With more businesses closer together it would feel more like a walkable downtown.
- Affordable single family homes on larger lots would be great
- We need new council members that will focus on what the city really needs instead of the liberal crap that will turn Wyoming into another crime ridden Minneapolis!
- Use money towards repairing roads or lowering these high water bills. Put money back into the people who allow you to operate and not on things this city doesn't need.
- Beautify, way find, signage, better defined. A band shell and pan with a splash pad would be amazing!
- We some cool vibe apartments on 61 voff the trail, that invites ppl to go downtown.
- There are quite a few areas, it seems impersonal like a nice walking park close to the bike trail with a positive energy, like flowers, bandshell, music, Farmers Market, work out area. Places that have a entertainment use to them
- Now that I am thinking about it, Wyoming could use a laundromat as a successful business. I've only mentioned that to everyone that I know for years. Also, we lost a valuable business when ACE Hardware left. As much as I think we need businesses in Wyoming, I don't want to see a big influx of population and the crime that comes with it. I like that we have that non big city mentality that you don't come here to mess around. (Maybe that's just at my house) I'd rather see a fine wine and cheese store than an MGM. Or a small fashion boutique as opposed to a Kohls. I didn't think I had much to say about this when I started this survey, but it appears I have a lot of ideas in my head. How about an escape room business or some virtual adventure place for kids and fun family activity places besides just a bowling alley? Maybe I should be on the planning council and make my life miserable.
- Just very frustrated with the fact that on my street you forced us residents to pay for road improvements even though you used our land to expand. And did not pay us for the stolen land. But on 22 you paid residents for the land you claimed even though the price was inadequate. The city is a bunch of crooks.



DRAFT

City of Wyoming  
26885 Forest Blvd  
Wyoming, MN 55092





January 24, 2025

Robb Linwood, City Administrator  
City of Wyoming  
26885 Forest Blvd  
PO Box 188  
Wyoming, MN 55092

Dear Robb,

We have received the City of Wyoming's 2025 funding to support the work of the Initiative Foundation in Central Minnesota. Please extend our appreciation to your city council and mayor. **Thank you!**

Together, we work to build strong local economies and vibrant communities. Your investment supports economic development through business financing activities designed to create living-wage jobs, diversify economies and leverage private sector investment. Communities are strengthened through signature leadership training and capacity building programs, grants to local units of government and nonprofit organizations, early childhood initiatives and scholarships. This work will provide lasting impact on the health of the region and the future of rural Minnesota.

We truly value your partnership and your support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Brian Voerding'.

Brian Voerding  
President

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Carl Newbanks'.

Carl Newbanks  
Vice President for Philanthropy

# EDA Communication

Date: February 6, 2025

Presented to: EDA Members

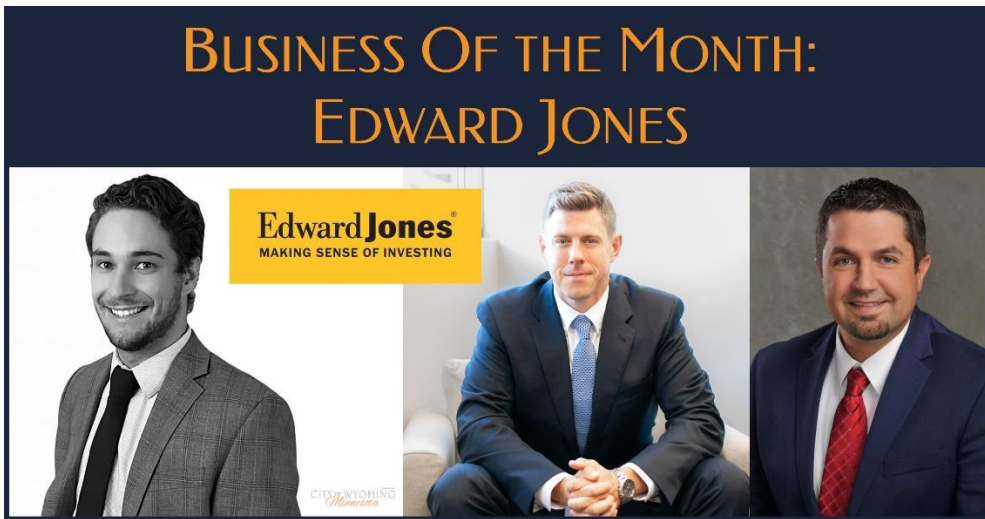
Presented by: Robb Linwood, City Administrator

Department: Administration

Reference: Updates

Method: Communications

## Wyoming EDA Business of the Month for February



Edward Jones has 2 locations in Wyoming:

1. 26727 Faxton Ave
  - A. Brandon Neumann - <https://www.edwardjones.com/us-en/financial-advisor/brandon-neumann>
  - B. Joseph Neumann - <https://www.edwardjones.com/us-en/financial-advisor/joseph-neumann2>
2. 26671 Fallbrook Ave, Suite 108
  - A. Joshua Erickson - <https://www.edwardjones.com/us-en/financial-advisor/joshua-erickson>

They specialize in helping individual investors rather than institutions. And as a privately-owned company, they're able to focus on relationships rather than shareholder returns. They've consistently been ranked among the best companies to work for by FORTUNE magazine, and our employees tend to stay with us for years. As a privately-owned company, Edward Jones has a very personal feel that's almost like family. Out of our partnership structure grows a spirit of collaboration. We have a shared focused on doing what's best for our clients, our communities and one another. They provide the attention, respect and service our clients and their investments deserve from the beginning. They live they're core values every day, creating an environment of collaboration, growth and respect that enriches the lives of our clients, associates and communities while caring for the planet.

For more information - <https://www.edwardjones.com/us-en>

## Chisago County HRA-EDA receives Outstanding Economic Development Award!

We're thrilled to share that the Chisago County HRA-EDA has been honored with the prestigious Outstanding Economic Development Award by the Minnesota Association of Professional County Economic Developers (MAPCED) for our annual "Career Exploration in Manufacturing" event. This award was presented at the Association of MN Counties conference. Joining the HRA-EDA staff on stage was the five Chisago County Commissioners and Chisago County Administrator.

This award highlights the incredible collaboration between partner organizations, local schools, and manufacturing businesses to address the workforce shortage issue. Each year, this event brings together high school students and manufacturing professionals, offering students a unique opportunity to explore careers in the manufacturing industry.

The success in this initiative is a testament to the hard work and dedication of all our partners. Together, we are making a significant impact on both students' futures and the local economy.



**EDAM Winter Workshop** – I did attend the event a few weeks ago and wanted to share three interesting PowerPoints' from presentations at the conference that may make you think as we begin some of our goal work in 2025 or just some interesting information. Each Presentation and PowerPoint offers practical insights for building economic momentum in communities—whether through storytelling, financial incentives, or fostering a supportive entrepreneurial ecosystems. I have summarized these below:

### 1. Driving Economic Growth Through Authentic Storytelling (City of Farmington)

The City of Farmington's presentation focused on the power of storytelling in economic development. The initiative, titled "**Unexpectedly Bold**," highlighted how the city used strategic branding and relationship-building to foster economic growth.

#### **Key Actions:**

- Farmington leveraged events, networking, and personal relationships to attract businesses.
- The city hired Deanna Kuennen and later brought on Stephanie Aman to develop a focused economic development strategy.
- A major branding push included a collaboration with Alan Davis, who created Farmington's logo and design for the "Unexpectedly Bold" campaign.
- The city engaged with the My Town movement, reinforcing the theme that "Rural is a State of Mind."

#### **Results:**

- Development of new market-rate apartments, including a 176-unit project.
- Increased interest in technology parks and over 600 acres of developable land under contract.
- Farmington received multiple economic development awards, including recognition from EDAM and MREJ.

\*It's an interesting approach that illustrates how consistent engagement, branding, and storytelling can attract investment.

### 2. How the State Supports Startups and Small Businesses (DEED Presentation)

Minnesota's Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) provided an overview of the resources available to startups and small businesses.

#### **Key Data Points:**

- Small businesses make up 99.7% of all businesses in Minnesota.
- Business starts increased by 47% compared to 2019.
- The state supported over 67,500 new business formations last year.

#### **Ways to Engage:**

- Monthly small business calls
- Regional pitch events
- Funding resources/training

## State Supported Initiatives

- Small Business Development Centers (SBDC): Offer no-cost consulting services. (CHISAGO COUNTY HRA/EDA)
- Launch Minnesota: Provided \$1.5M in grants to startups and \$500K to support organizations, generating a \$26.4 return on investment per dollar spent.
- Community Partnerships: Over \$150M in grants for local organizations to support small businesses.
- Childcare Grants: \$12M allocated to increase childcare availability, recognizing its role in economic participation.

### 3. Making the Case for Entrepreneurship in Your Community (University of Minnesota)

This session, led by the University of Minnesota's Extension team, discussed the importance of supporting entrepreneurship at the community level.

- **Why Support Entrepreneurship?**
  - Job creation and economic diversification
  - Poverty alleviation and local leadership development
  - Innovation and uniqueness in the local economy
- **Key Takeaways:**
  - Entrepreneurship surged during COVID-19, highlighting the resilience and adaptability of small businesses.
  - 34.7% of businesses founded in 2013 were still active in 2023, demonstrating long-term viability.
  - A public value approach—which involves aligning entrepreneurship initiatives with broader community benefits—is crucial to gaining stakeholder buy-in.
- **Community Engagement Strategies:**
  - Hosting entrepreneurship meetups and resource-sharing events.
  - Developing a working resource list for entrepreneurs.
  - Encouraging local leaders to support and advocate for entrepreneurial efforts.

The session really hit on the importance of public-private collaboration and intentional economic planning to foster local business ecosystems.



# Driving Economic Growth Through Authentic Storytelling

EDAM Winter Conference 2025

January 24, 2025



# Storytellers



**Deanna Kuennen**  
City of Farmington



**Cory Hepola**  
Brookshire Company

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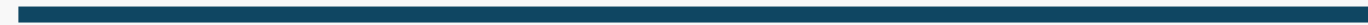
**Alan Davis**  
Creative Director



**Stephanie Aman**  
City of Farmington



# *Connection - an Introduction*



Economic Development is all about relationships and connections. This session will show how vastly different backgrounds come together to feel and share a similar message and tell a one-of-a-kind story that is driving Farmington's economic growth.

Four different people, four very different backgrounds and approaches lend their expertise to tell the story of a maybe rural community through their unique lens.



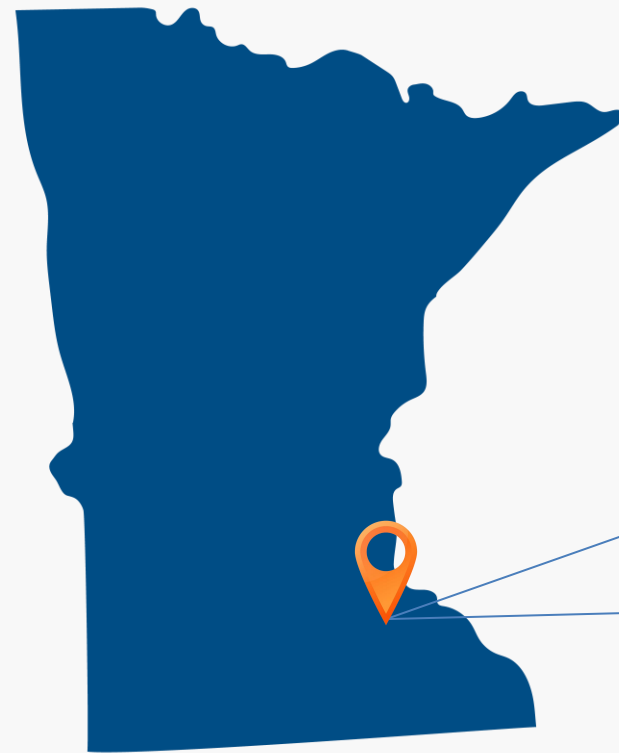
# *Get to know the storytellers*



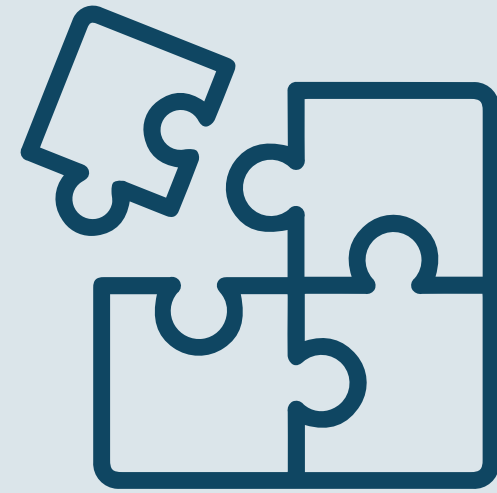
We know it's early – let's engage!



# Farmington who?



# Relationship Building



## Increase Awareness

- How?
- MREJ
- CVN
- Vikings Ad

## Develop Relationships

- MREJ - Alan
- CVN - Cory
- MREJ - Yellow Tree
- And the list goes on!



## Enact BOLD Change

- Team Farmington takes hold
- Playing in a bags - tourney unexpected!
- Data Center development

# In our Farmington Era



## City of Farmington Hires Deanna

With marching orders to go out and Be **BOLD** in actions and go after the businesses and amenities Farmington needed, Deanna got to work!

---

## Deanna Hires Stephanie

A familiar face to Deanna - new to team Farmington. The duo jump right into the tasks at hand working to meet with businesses and economic development partners.

---

## Economic Development Brand Development



## Unexpectedly Bold takes Shape

This brand has taken shape organically. Words were tossed around, until it - felt right. Lightbulb moments of - yes, this IS the tagline, this is our brand!

---

## Alan takes notice, sketches

At an MREJ event, Alan asks if he can spruce up the design and had a vision. The logo and some of our swag you see, is Alan's take on Team Farmington's vision.

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## Bold moves with My Town

After learning of the My Town opportunity from Cory, Team Farmington is all in to promote Metro-rural as the place to be!

# *Unexpectedly Bold*

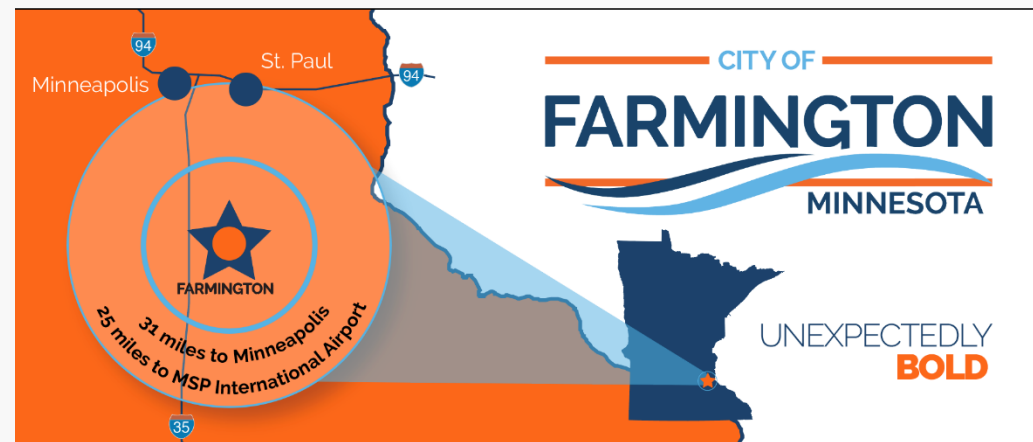
**A little unexpected and a whole lot of Bold!**

Since joining Team Farmington, staff has focused on who Farmington is and what is available. Through these last couple of years, staff have worked to build relationships with businesses, brokers and other economic development partners by, showing up, and better understanding the landscape for Economic Development. **Unexpectedly Bold** is an organic movement, that has put Farmington on the map!



# Alan Davis, Creative

To help tell the Farmington story, the City partnered with a familiar face - Alan Davis. Coming alongside the vision and including experts that were just as excited about the community vision as the City staff were, Alan created the logo and design for our unexpectedly bold campaign.



# Master Storyteller, Cory Hepola

- Power of connections
- CVN
- BE BOLD and be part of something super special to highlight My Town
- Rural is a State of Mind



THE BROOKSHIRE COMPANY PRESENTS

# MY TOWN

**It's Time To Re-think Rural America**

From the Emmy Award-Winning Documentarian that brought us "Rural By Choice"

**WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY CORY HEPOLA**

Filmed & Edited by Micah & Jenna Kvidt

The Brookshire Company Production

**FALL 2024**  
Streaming on YouTube & Facebook: @MyTownSeries  
MyTownSeries.com

# *My Town*

## *Rural is a State of Mind*



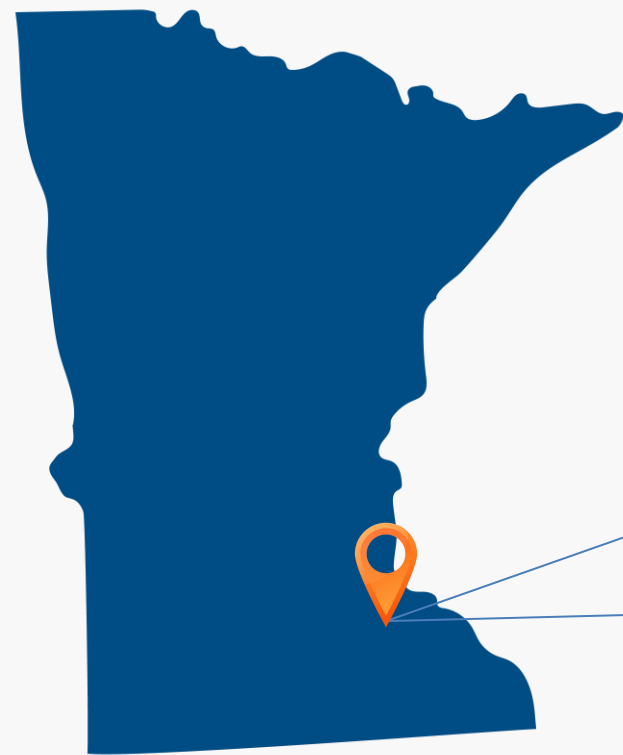
# *(un)Expected Outcomes*

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- New 74-unit market rate apartment building
  - First market rate apartment in decades!
- A new 176 market rate apartment - MREJ connection
- Technology Park interest x2
- Over 600 acres of developable land under contract
- Relationship Development comes in many forms - including a random phone call to view a building
  - Potential 30M project comes from this
- Farmington boasts the Economic Developer of the year for MREJ, last year's emerging professional of the year for EDAM, Bronze Medalist for MAGC for the Unexpectedly Bold Campaign, Finalist for City/municipality of the year for MREJ, Unexpectedly Bold was a finalist for the Leaders in Local Government - Communications/Marketing Category

# This is Farmington



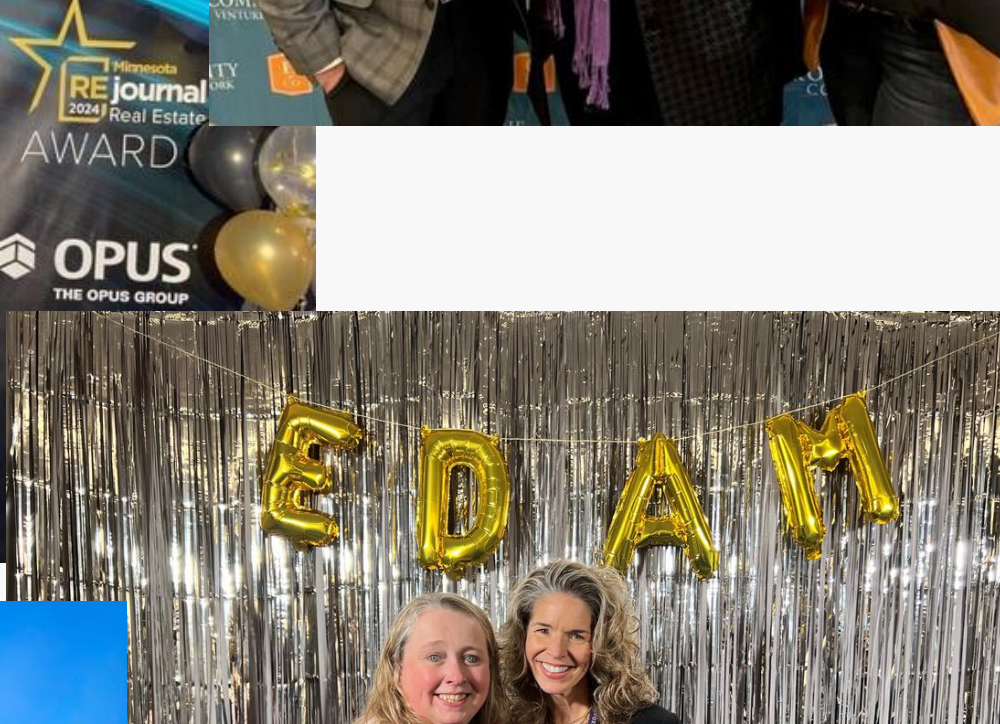
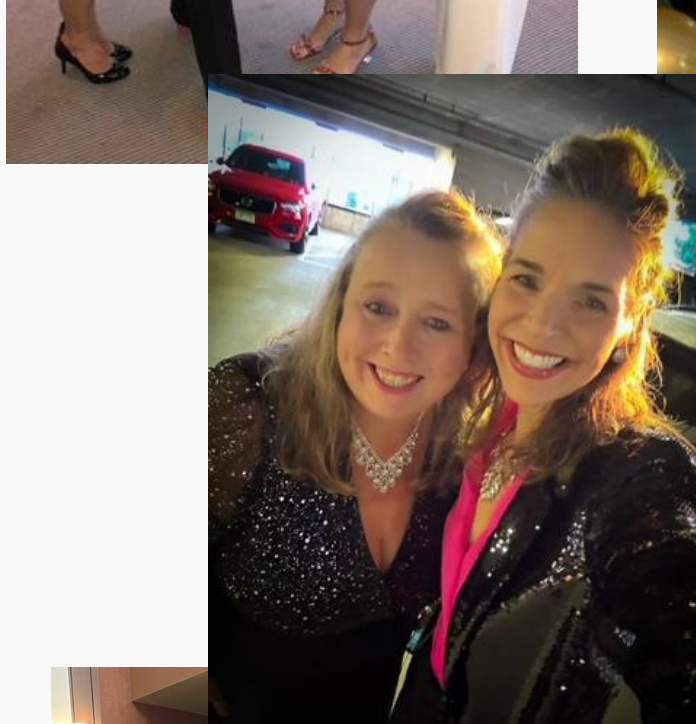
# So, what's next?



We keep doing what we are doing!

Economic Development is all about relationships. We continue to build on connections, show up, be present, tell the wonderful story of Farmington and continue to go out and be **BOLD**.





**Stephanie Aman** (She/Her) • You  
Economic Development | Marketing Guru | Relationship Developer | ...  
3hr • 🌐

Team Farmington might not have come home with the hardware at this tourney, but we made some great #connections and had a heap of fun! Thanks [Minnesota Real Estate Journal](#) for putting on this event - great people and #networking and an absolutely stunning day!

#economicdevelopment #community #champions

**Minnesota Real Estate Journal**  
2,472 followers  
1mo • 🌐

We tossed some fun into the workweek yesterday! Thank you to everyone who came out and participated in our 4th Annual Summer Cornhole Championship 🍷🏆

It was an epic clash of bags, laughter, a little friendly rivalry and some seriously impressive cornhole skills! 🙌🏆 Your enthusiasm and sportsmanship made it a day to remember!! 🍷🏆

🏆 Competitive Bracket Winners: Ryan Dussik & Bryce DeLay  
🏆 Consolation Bracket Winners: Bob Barlau & Skip Johnson



our sponsors for helping pull together this A-maize-ing event! City of Farmington, MN, Great River Community HRA - EDA, City of Owatonna, Quantum Fiber

on, Jay Kodytek, Kaitlyn LaCroix, Alan Davis, Jordan JD



# Contact Info



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*Thank you!*





# How the State supports Startups and Small Businesses



**EMPLOYMENT AND  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**  
OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS AND INNOVATION

# Small Business – BIG IMPACT

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Employs  
three-fourths  
of Minnesota  
workers



67,500 new  
businesses were  
formed in Minnesota  
last year



Small businesses  
equate to 99.7% of  
all Minnesota  
businesses



Small business starts  
increased by 47%  
over 2019. Almost  
kept pace with the  
record set in 2023.

# Economic Development

Business  
Development  
(Expand &  
Relocate)

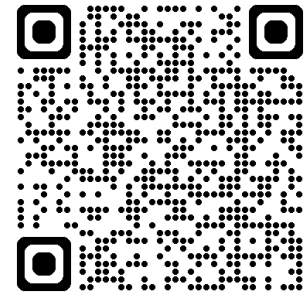
MN Trade Office  
(Foreign  
Investment)

**Small Business  
and Innovation  
(Start and Grow)**

Business Finance

Broadband, LMI,  
and others

Community  
Finance



# Our Team:

*No cost federally accredited consulting*

**Small Business Development Centers (SBDC)**  
Andy Donahue

**Launch Minnesota**  
Rob Cimperman

*Collaborative effort to accelerate the growth of startups*

*Grant funding to organizations and businesses*

**Community Partnerships**  
Brandon Toner

**Small Business Assistance**  
Charles Schaffer

*First point of contact for entrepreneurs and companies*

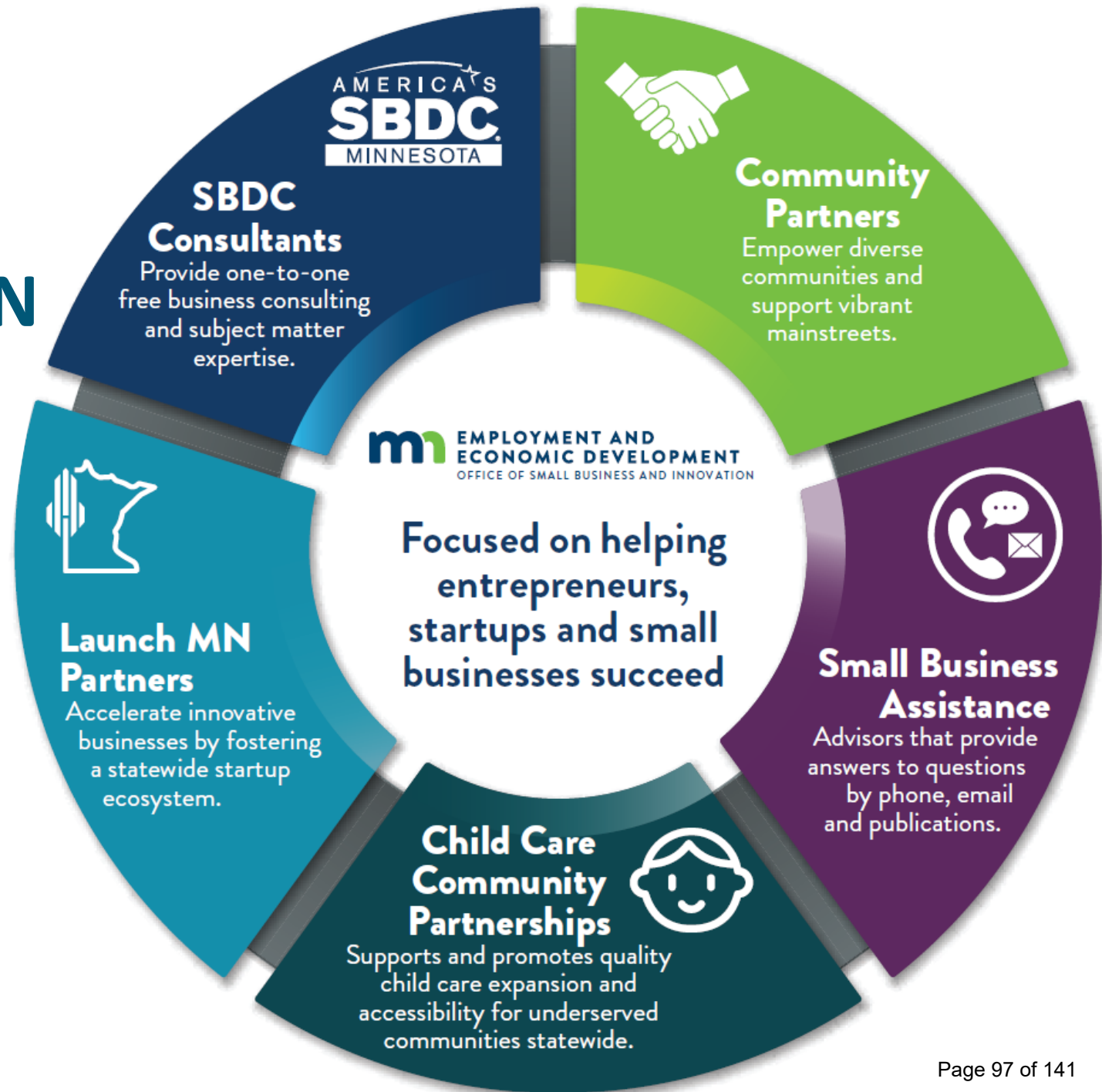
**Child Care**  
TBD

*Expanding access to child care*

# OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS & INNOVATION

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- Increasing access to capital
- Improving connectivity between businesses and resources
- Expanding capacity for businesses to start and scale



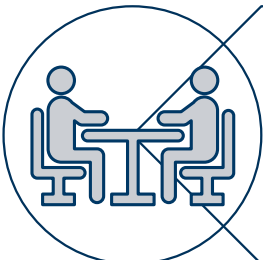
# Office of Small Business and Innovation



\$235+ million of funding deployed to startups, small businesses and organizations to support small businesses.



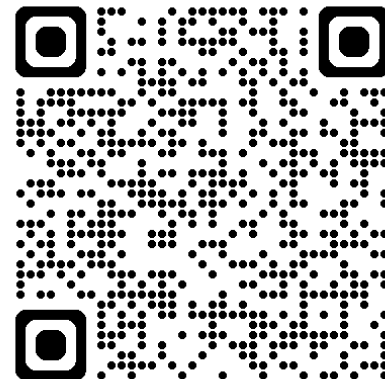
Worked collaboratively with over 65 grantees across the state, 114 support organizations, 25 Higher Ed Institutions, 36 Corporate Innovators, and 85 investors



Provided technical assistance, consulting and/or training to over 13,000 entrepreneurs and businesses. Over 335 new business starts with almost \$190 million of capital raised.

# Capital for Businesses & Support Organizations

Child Care	\$12M for communities to fund child care business start-up or expansion, facility modifications, training, subsidies or incentives to retain employees, improvements required for licensing.
Community Partnerships	\$150M + granted to organizations to support small businesses.
Launch Minnesota	\$1.5M to startups and \$500K to support organizations. To date, startups have gone on to raise \$240M in post-award funding which is a \$26.4 ROI.
Small Business Assistance	Refers businesses to potential funding sources: grants, loans, tax credits and contracts.
Small Business Development Centers (SBDC)	Assistance businesses in preparing and securing over \$200M.





# Helping businesses Start and Scale

Child Care	Provided resources to create over 3,500 new child care slots
Community Partnerships	Partner with over 40 organizations provide technical assistance to grow vibrancy, innovation and equity across MN
Launch Minnesota	239 new companies entered the pipeline, and 114 new high tech companies were formed
Small Business Assistance	Responds and educates businesses through email, phone calls, guidebooks, monthly Small Business Calls.
Small Business Development Centers (SBDC)	Federally accredited, no-cost consulting for all stages of business. Served 5,000 clients and helped form over 300 new businesses.

# Ways to Engage:

- MN Monthly [Small Business Call](#) (2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday at 2pm)
- [Statewide Calendar](#) for Startups and Small Businesses
- Interactive [Funding Matrix](#)
- [Digital Guidebook](#) to Starting a Business in MN
- Startup Showcase (3 times annually)
- Regional MN Cup feed pitch events
- Monthly Newsletter
- Reach out to [local partners](#)



# THANK YOU!



**EMPLOYMENT AND  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**  
OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS AND INNOVATION



[JoinUsMN.com/smallbusiness](https://JoinUsMN.com/smallbusiness)



[Smallbusiness@state.mn.us](mailto:Smallbusiness@state.mn.us)



800-310-8323



# Making the case for entrepreneurship in your community

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**Extension Educator,**  
**Community Economics**

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GOVERNMENT WASTE

# Abolish the Small Business Administration

Like all government perks, SBA lending creates unseen victims.

VERONIQUE DE RUGY | FROM THE DECEMBER 2024 ISSUE



<https://reason.com/2024/11/14/abolish-the-small-business-administration/>

# Why do we **NEED** to make the case?



# For & against supporting entrepreneurship

## For:

- Job creation
- Economic diversification
- Poverty alleviation
- Uniqueness
- Innovation
- Sense of place
- Local leadership

## Against:

- Free market
- Learn by doing
- Avoid picking winners
- Rare high-growth
- Labor force impact - We need workers

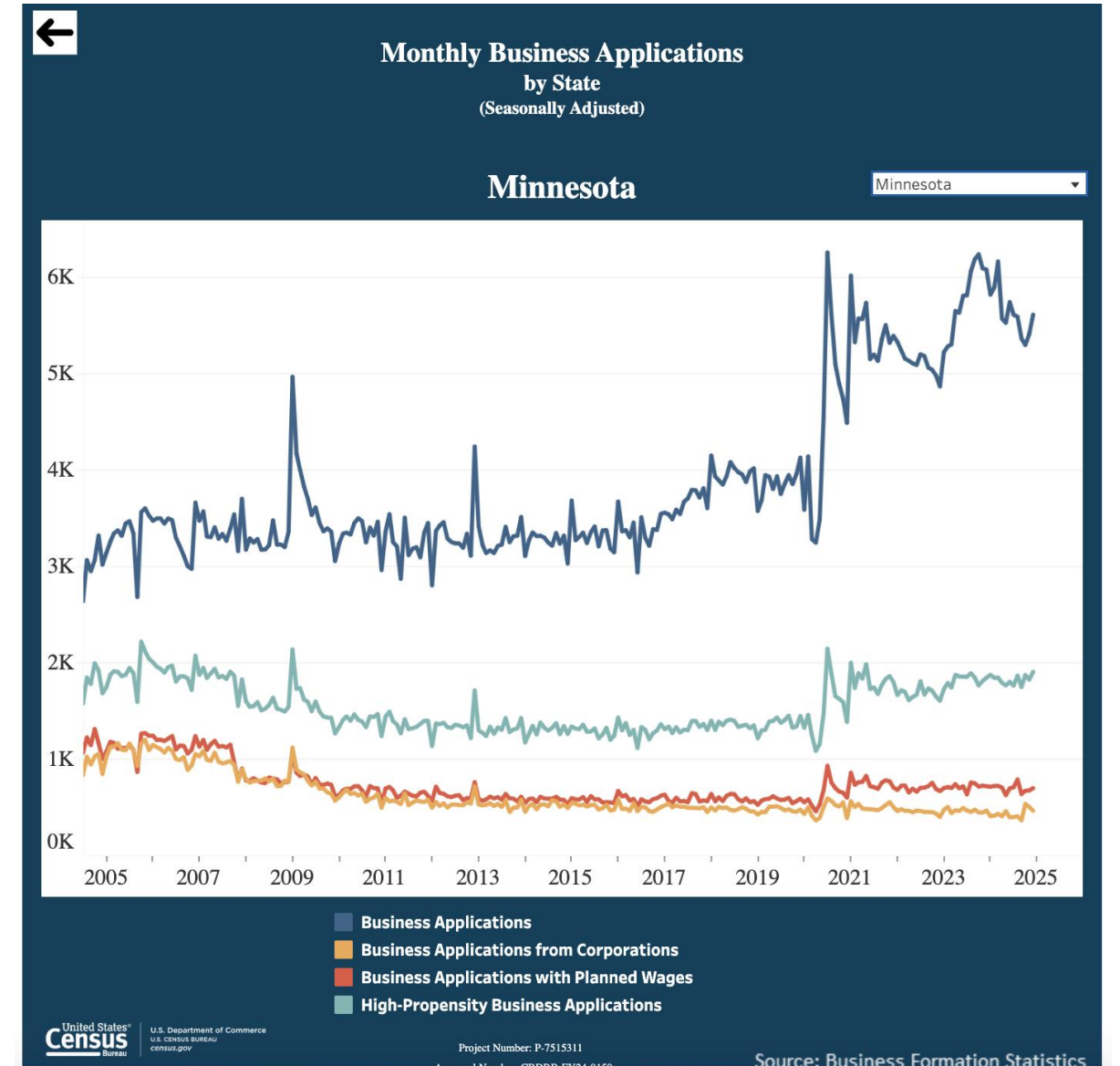


# Entrepreneurship Data



# Business Applications

Business applications spiked during the COVID-19 Pandemic

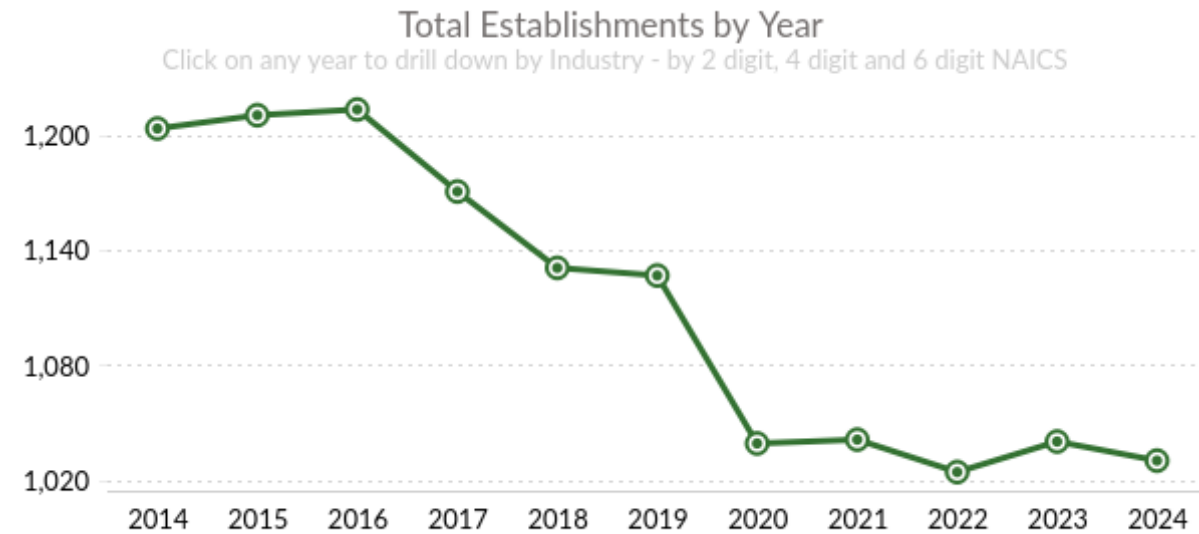


# Total Establishments

## Minnesota



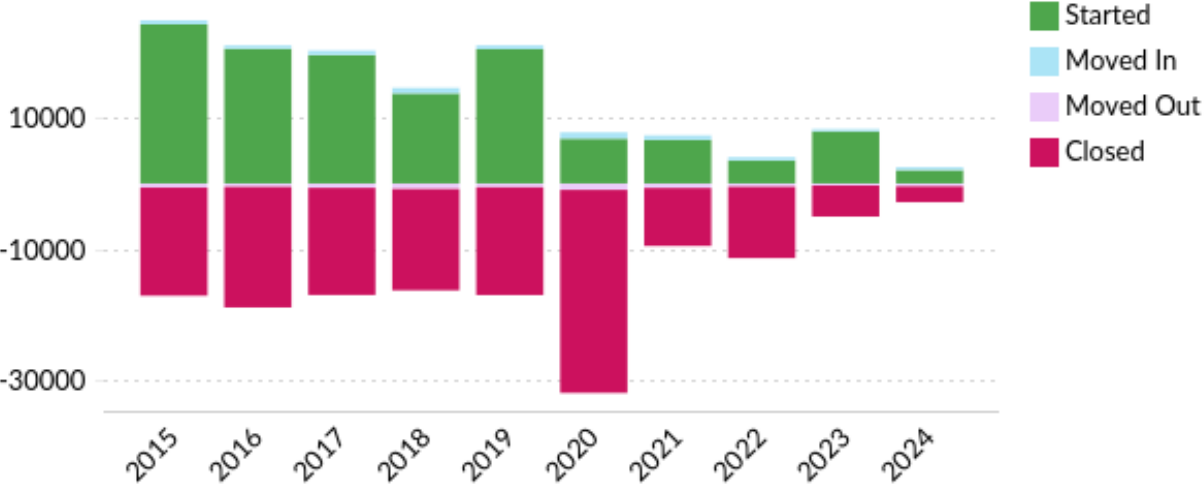
## Martin County



# Establishment Change by Source

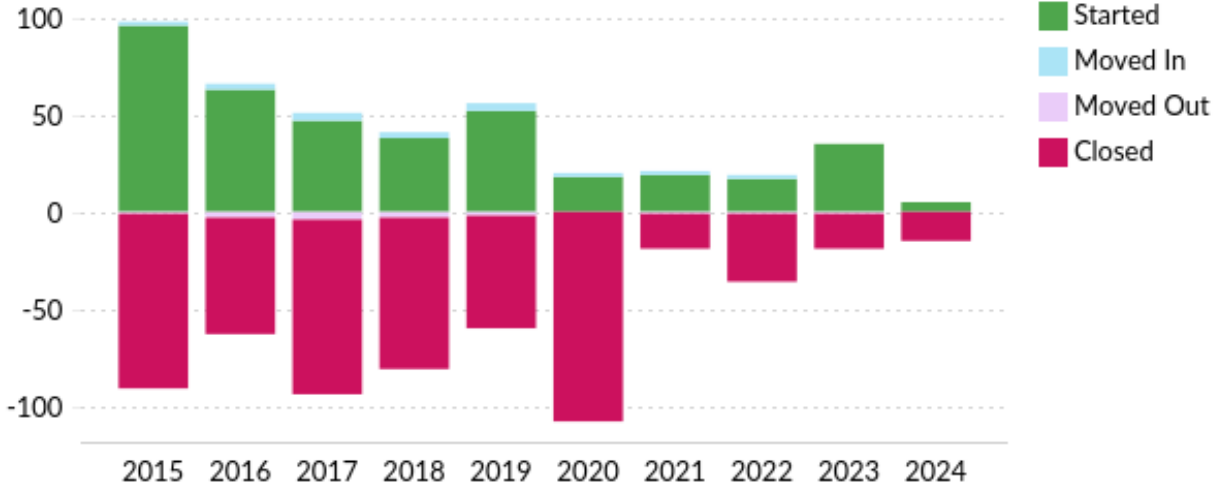
## Minnesota

Establishment Changes by Source



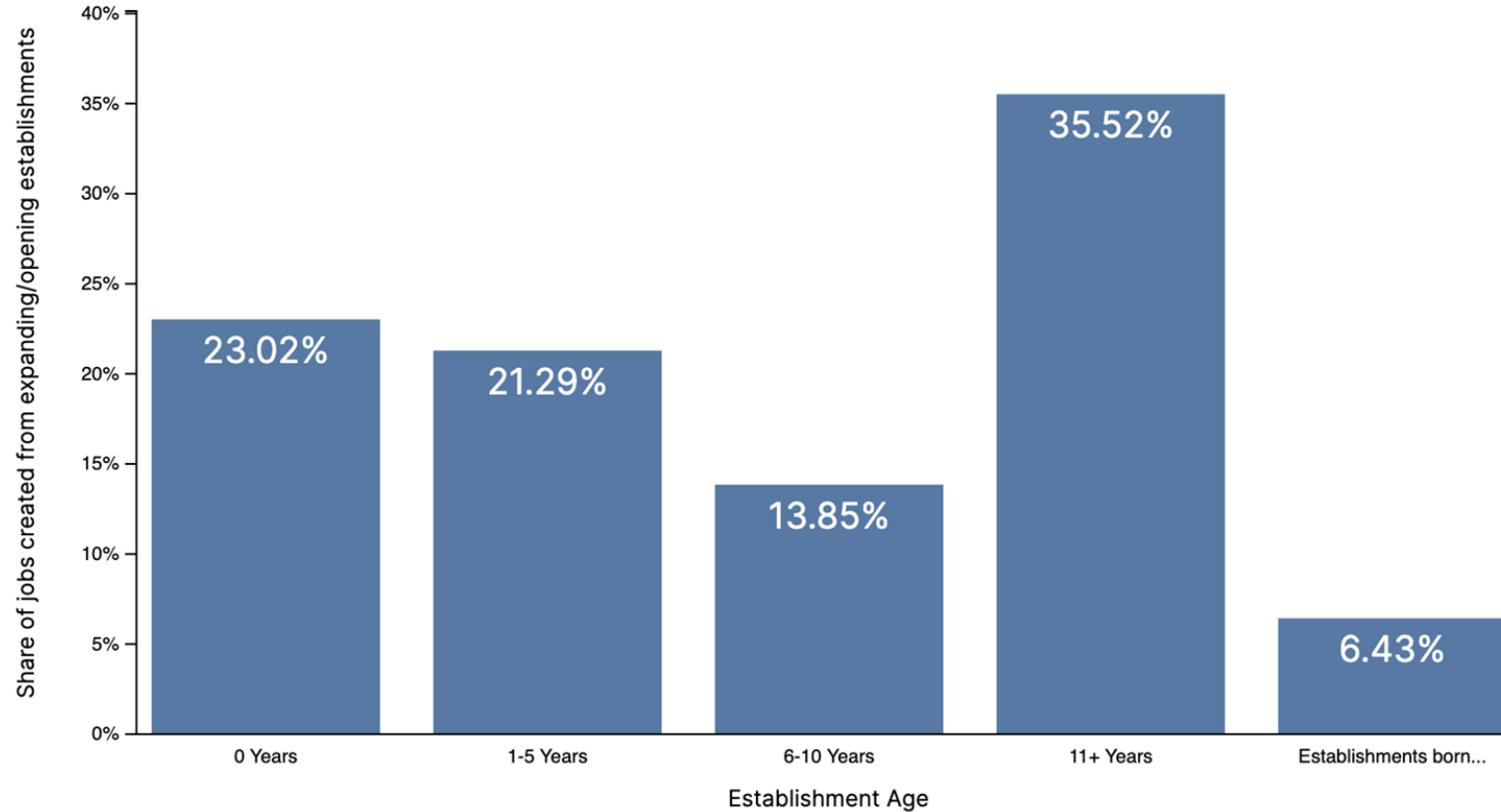
## Martin County

Establishment Changes by Source



# Young businesses create jobs

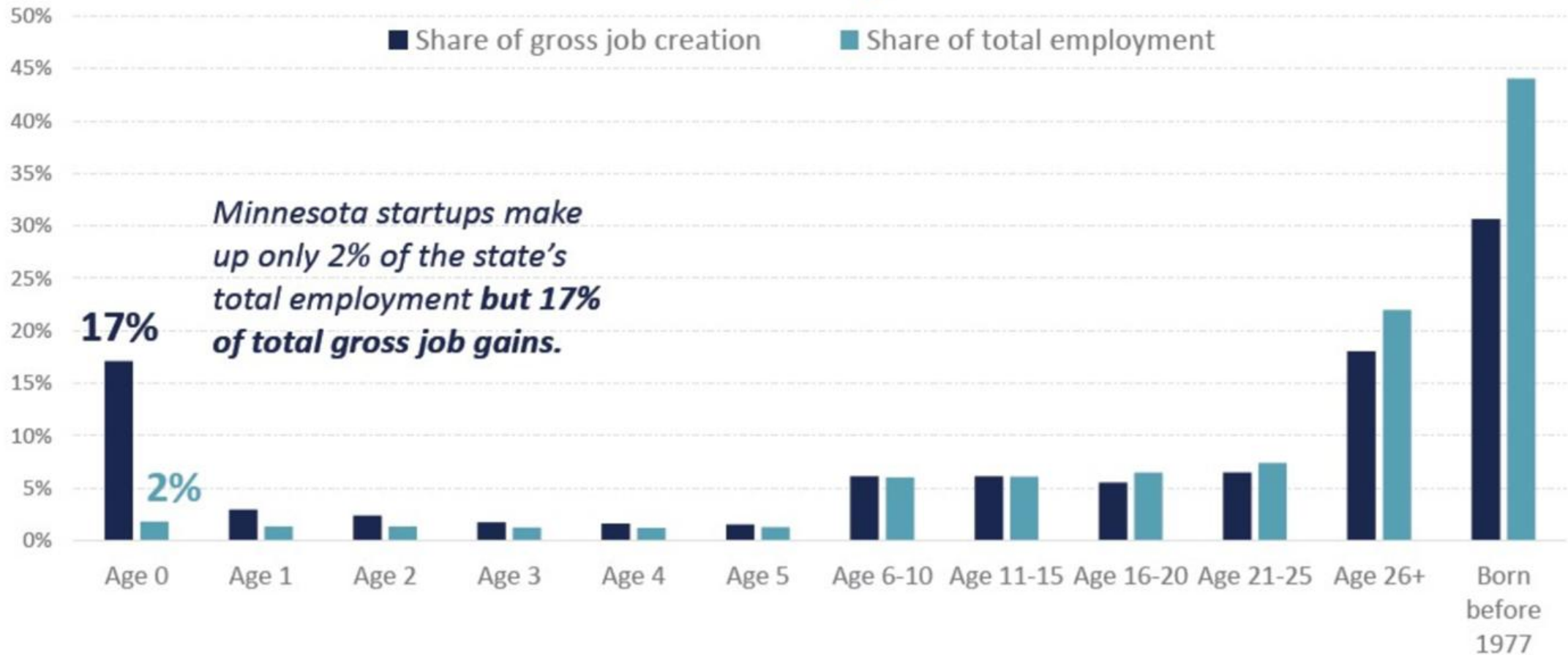
JOB CREATION AS SHARE OF ALL ESTABLISHMENT AGES  
Year: 2022



Source: U.S. Census Bureau - Center for Economic Studies - Business Dynamics Statistics (2022)



# Share of gross job gains and total employment by firm age: Minnesota, 2019



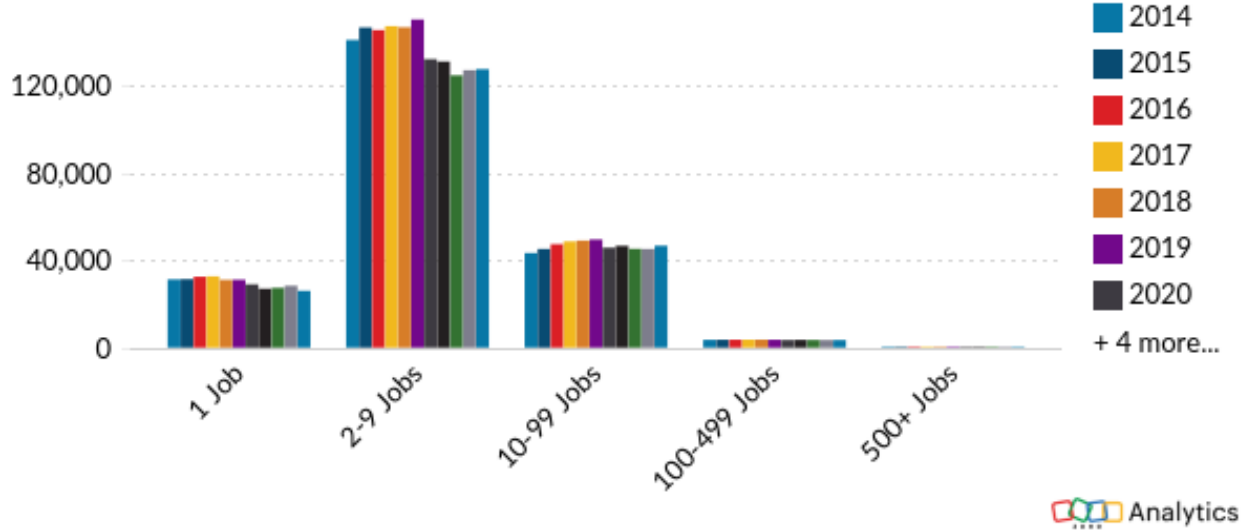
Source: Minnesota Chamber Foundation analysis of U.S. Census, Business Dynamics Statistics

Minnesota Entrepreneurship a Turning Point: <https://www.mnchamber.com/minnesota-chamber-foundation/why-entrepreneurship-important>

# Establishments by Size

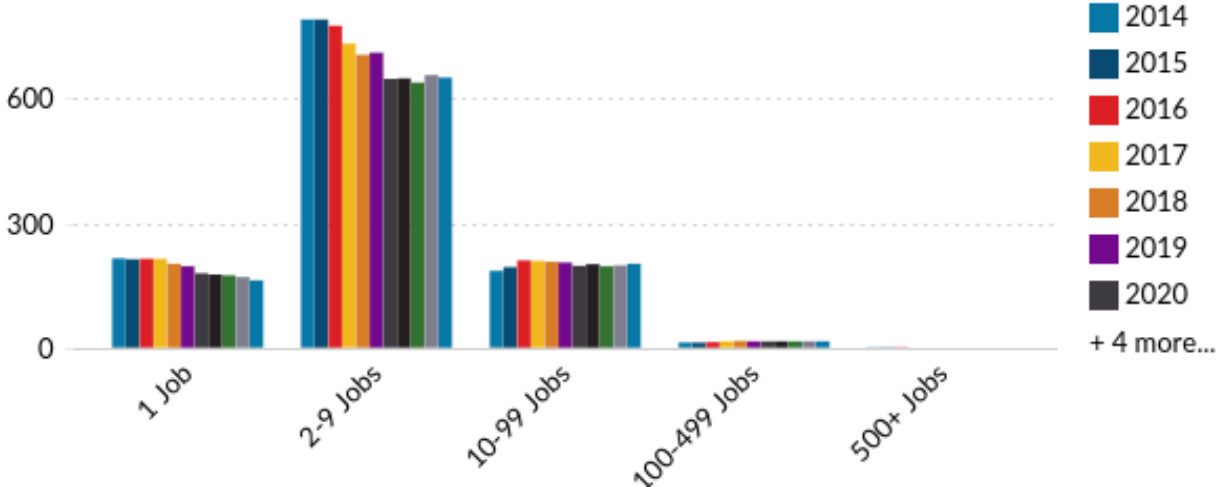
## Minnesota

Establishments by Size



## Martin County

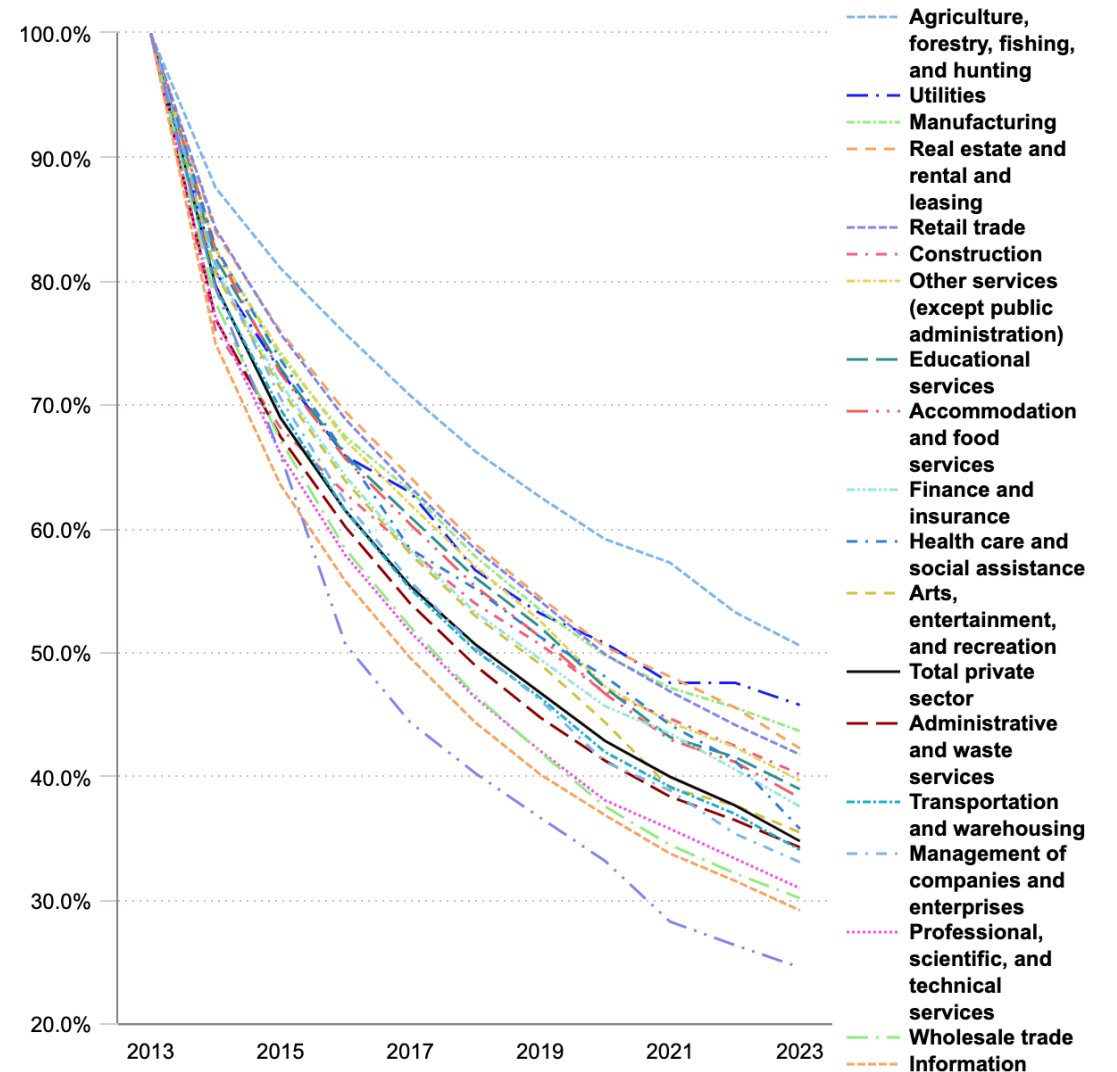
Establishments by Size





**34.7%**  
of US business  
establishments born in  
2013 were still  
operating in 2023

Survival rates for private-sector business establishments born in 2013, by industry, 2013–2023



Click legend items to change data display. Hover over chart to view data.  
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

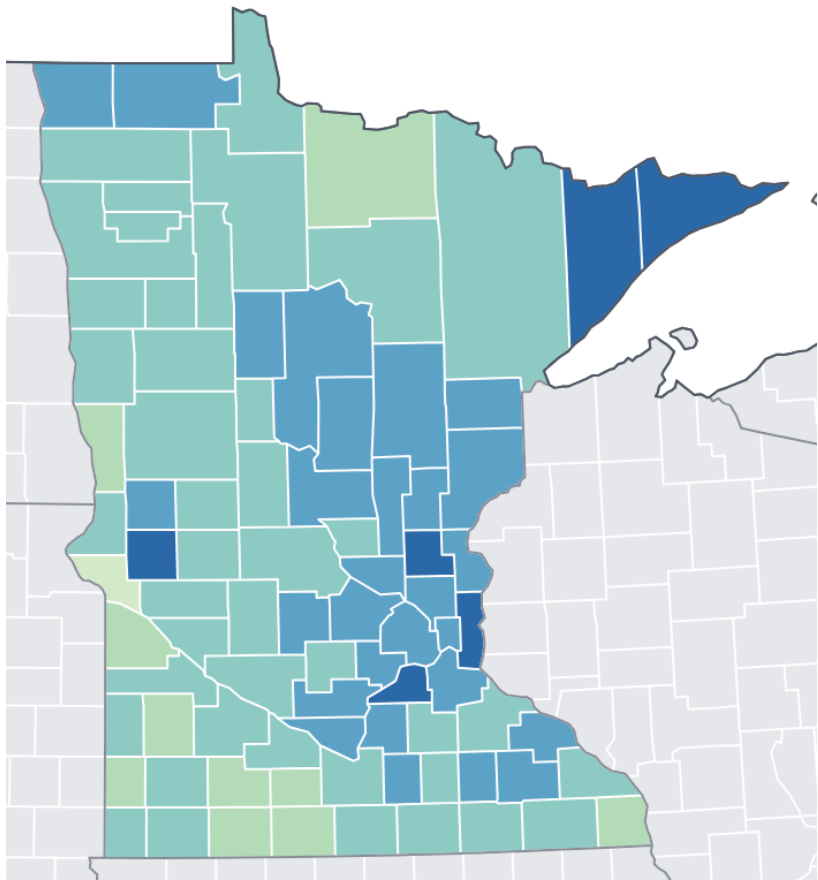
▲ 1/2 ▼



<https://www.bls.gov/opub/ted/2024/34-7-percent-of-business-establishments-born-in-2013-were-still-operating-in-2023.htm>

## ESTABLISHMENT ENTRY RATE

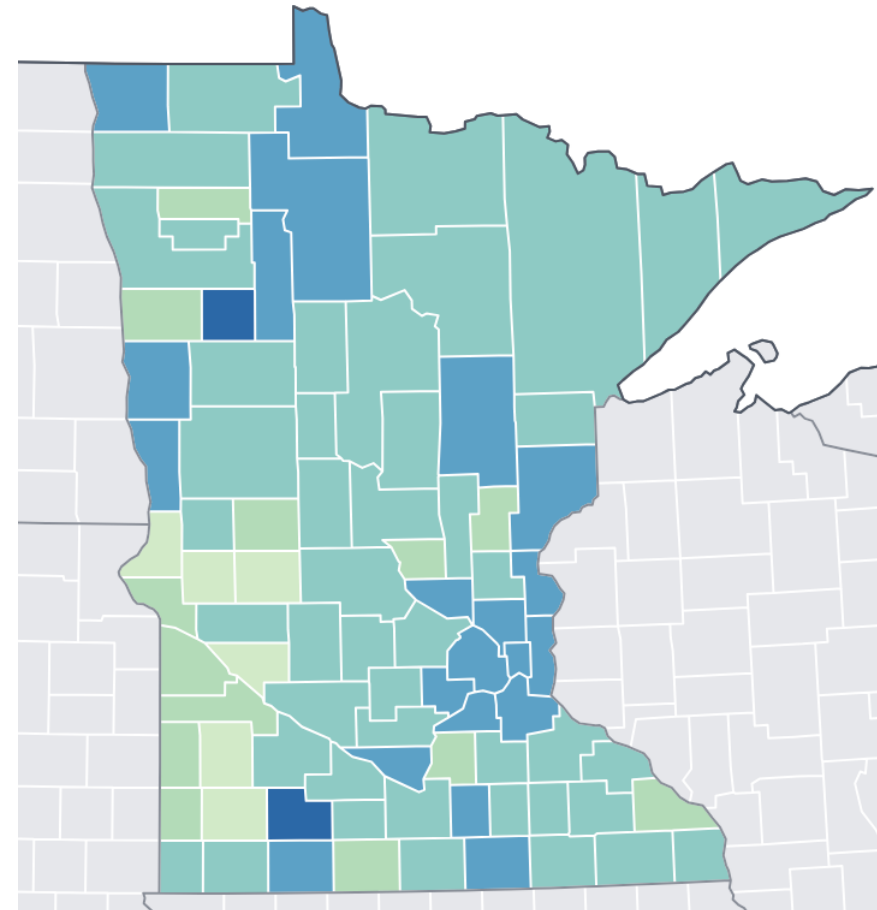
Year: 2022



1.00 - 3.60   3.60 - 6.20   6.20 - 8.80   8.80 - 11.40   11.40 - 14.00

## ESTABLISHMENT EXIT RATE

Year: 2022



3.00 - 5.00   5.00 - 7.00   7.00 - 9.00   9.00 - 11.00   11.00 - 13.00

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - Center for Economic Studies - Business Dynamics Statistics (2022)



# How to make the case...



# Public Value + Community Engagement

We recommend taking a public value approach to  
making your case

&

Engaging your community in the conversation and  
action



# Public Value Approach







## Your stakeholders challenge you:

“I’ve seen the evidence that your entrepreneurship efforts are effective; I just don’t think I should pay for it. I think the people who attend the programs should pay for them.”

## Support from “satisfied customers” is:

1. crucial
2. not enough



# Who are your skeptical stakeholders?



# CRITERIA FOR PUBLIC SECTOR AND NONPROFIT ACTION: SOURCES OF PUBLIC VALUE

- Providing **information** that allows consumers and business owners to make better choices.
- Addressing a crucial concern about **fairness**.
- Consumers or businesses **create benefits** for others or **impose costs** on others.

# Summary of **public costs** and **benefits**

Source of market failure	Consumer or business response	Market outcome	Public or nonprofit sector solution
Public <b>benefits</b>	Failure to fully consider the <b>benefits</b> to others	<b>Too little</b> of the activity	<b>Encourage</b> the activity
Public <b>costs</b>	Failure to fully consider the <b>costs</b> to others	<b>Too much</b> of the activity	<b>Discourage</b> the activity

# Demonstrating your program's public value

Program participants...

have been shown to change their behavior in specific ways...

that have been shown to lead to specific outcomes...

that directly benefit the participants.

that generate public value.



Participants in an entrepreneurship program...

are more likely to adopt “best practices” for starting up a businesses...

which improves their chances of having a successful business...

which increases the entrepreneurs’ financial security.

which contributes to local economic vitality.

# DEMONSTRATING PUBLIC VALUE

- Choose a **program** to work on.
- Choose a **stakeholder**.
- Questions:
  - Identify some **changes** program participants make.
  - Identify some **outcomes** that result from those changes.
  - How do those outcomes **benefit the participants**?
  - How do those outcomes **benefit others** (create **public value**)?
- Which **public benefit** will be most important to this stakeholder?



## A PUBLIC VALUE MESSAGE:

When you support \_\_\_\_\_program,

→participants will \_\_\_\_\_,

**(changes)**

→which leads to \_\_\_\_\_,

**(outcomes)**

→which will benefit other community members by

\_\_\_\_\_.

**(public value)**



# Plan your case

Claim About the Program or Project	Evidence to support this claim	Evidence that is weak, outdated, or missing	Whom could we consult to strengthen our evidence?
Entrepreneurs we work with are more successful than those we don't work with.	Evaluation data and followup surveys.	?	

# Community Approaches

# Our approach

Half-day workshop to strengthen your local entrepreneurial network.

- Education
- Relationship building
- Action planning



# Find your starting place with others

How can we...

Connect more  
entrepreneurs to  
available  
resources?

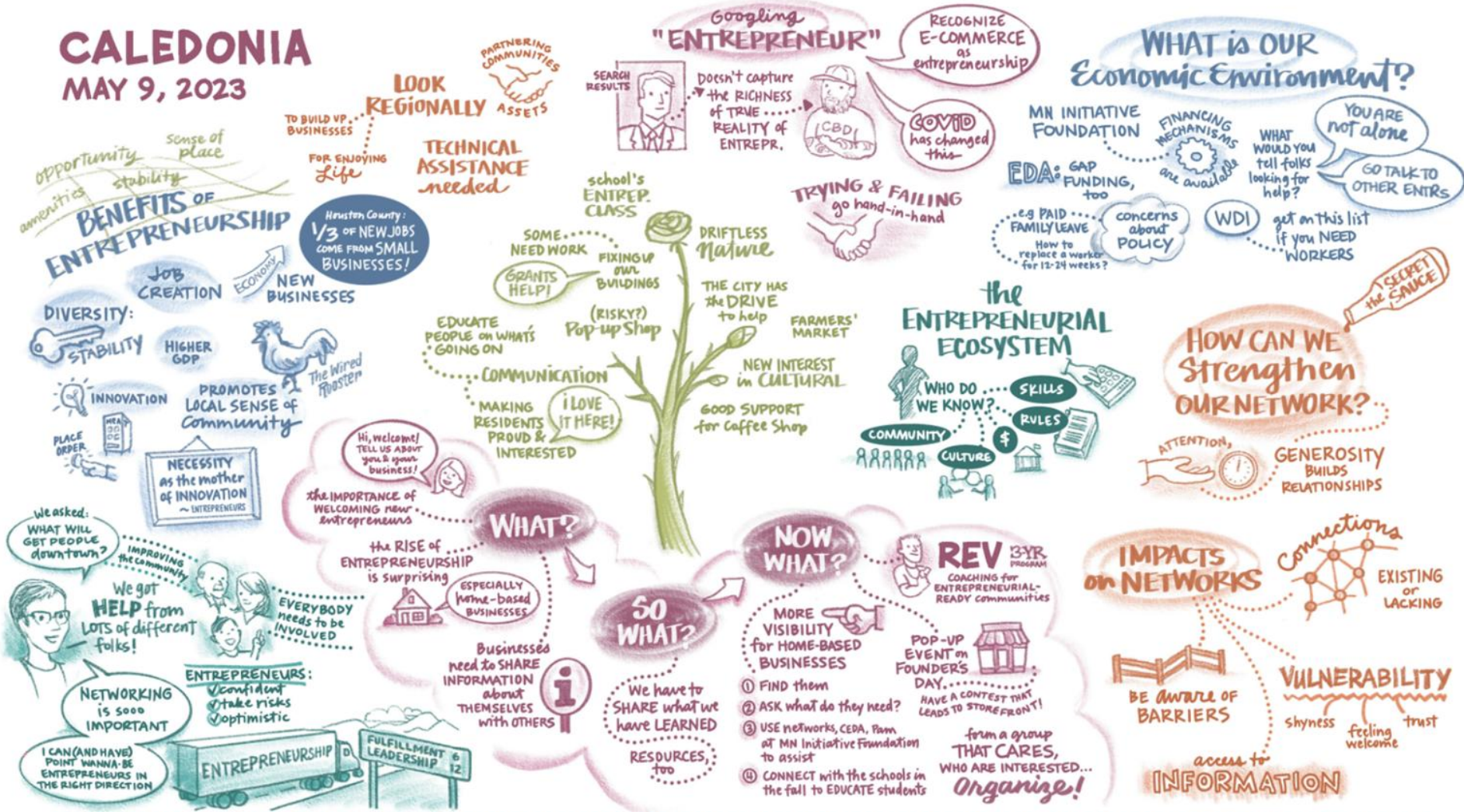
Support  
entrepreneurs amid  
economic changes?

Bring new  
entrepreneurs into  
the business  
community?



# CALEDONIA

## MAY 9, 2023



# HOME GROWN

## ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN YOUR COMMUNITY



GRAPHIC RECORDING BY [RebekahAndersonCreative.com](http://RebekahAndersonCreative.com)

## TIP #1

# Tell me more...

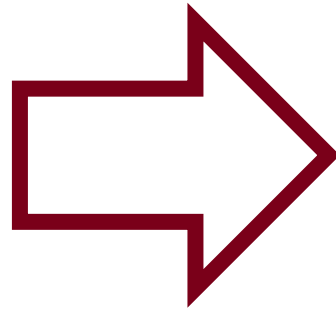
- Check your assumptions and get more specific
- Information comes from both sides
- Give to get



Adapted from UNICEF's Availability, Accessibility, Acceptability and Quality framework

## TIP #2

# Start small, win, build momentum



Working resource list

+

Monthly entrepreneur meetups



## TIP #3

# Leverage entrepreneurs' drive (within reason)

- Focus on shared interests
- Think cooperatively
- Clarify roles



# Making the case

- Resources need to be activated
- Supporters need support
- Attendance speaks
- Entrepreneurs create communities



Photo credit: Carson Hughes (southernminn.com)

# REV Communities

- Learn/share with other communities what's working
- Build a team to engage and advocate for entrepreneurs
- Find and encourage talent
- Engage the community in the conversation (make it a thing)



We recommend a strong public value case along with an engaged community of entrepreneurs and community leaders as the best way to make the case for entrepreneurship.

