



Planning and Development Department

2020 Annual Report

A COMMUNITY OF CHOICE

Mission:

The mission of the Planning and Development Department is to manage growth and change and support economic development in a way that preserves and enhances the qualities that make Cheyenne a Community of Choice; and to facilitate the development review process by providing quality, effective, and efficient professional planning services.

2021 Strategic Goals:

- ♦ Continue to oversee the implementation of adopted plans such as PlanCheyenne, West Edge Initiative, and the Reed Avenue Rail Corridor Master Plan.
- ♦ Update the Belvoir Ranch and Big Hole Master Plan to recognize changes in development patterns on the ranch, incorporate newly obtained lands, fiscally balance proposed improvements with future staffing needs, and focus on alleviating access barriers presented by the Union Pacific Railroad.
- ♦ Continue to improve transparency regarding the development process through continued improvement of the Department's website, revising applications, and improving stakeholder communication between departments and outside agencies.
- ♦ Utilize current and upcoming technology to aide in development review, facilitate meetings, and streamline the development process.
- ♦ Revise development regulations to provide clarity in development expectations, reflect best practices, and streamline the development process.
- ♦ Review Planning and Development related fees and financial security requirements to determine if they serve the best interests of the City, adequately represent development review costs, or create an unreasonable fiscal burden on the City.
- ♦ Update the 2006 Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
- ♦ Continue to explore options for permit/project tracking software in collaboration with other departments.
- ♦ Archive and digitize past projects.



2020 Strategic Goals Progress Report



Goal

Continue to oversee the implementation of adopted plans such as Plan Cheyenne and West Edge Initiative, and the Reed Avenue Rail Corridor Master Plan.

Improve transparency regarding the development process through improvement of the Department's website, revising applications, and improving stakeholder communication between departments and outside agencies.

Revise development regulations to provide clarity in development expectations, reflect best development practices, and streamline the development process.

Review Planning and Development related fees and financial security requirements to determine if they serve the best interests of the City, adequately represent development review costs, or create an unreasonable fiscal burden on the City.

Complete targeted updates to Plan Cheyenne, specifically the Transportation, Parks and Recreation, and Land Use elements.

Continue to explore options for permit/project tracking software.

Continue to explore opportunities to increase market competitiveness of staff salaries to aid in attracting and retaining Planning and Development Staff.

Adopt a Department document retention policy and archive past projects.

Enhance educational opportunities, including training for licenses and certifications, that aid in employee performance.

Progress Report

Engineering continued to lead the Reed Rail Project in conjunction with the Long Range Planner II to create 35% design plans for the corridor. The Planner II focused on the West Edge Initiative and other Code amendments to implement PlanCheyenne.

The department website was revamped in July of 2020. New staff report templates were introduced to the Planning Commission and Board of Adjustment in August of 2020. Also in August new City Council correspondence memos were introduced. In September of 2020, Planning Commission and Board of Adjustment Agenda Centers were unveiled increasing department transparency. Digital applications were rolled out in November of 2020.

Twelve text amendments were approved to address code deficiencies and concerns.

Staff began tracking review times for specific applications for potential amendments to the fee schedule in 2021.

Connect 2045, the Transportation Element of PlanCheyenne, and the Land Use and Transportation map were update and adopted by Planning Commission in November of 2020 and certified by the Governing Body in December of 2020.

Staff continued to evaluate permit/project tracking systems on a collaborative basis with other departments. Additionally, staff continued to offer all City staff training on existing systems.

Regional salaries were monitored throughout the year and compared with workload. Appropriate adjustments were proposed in the FY 2022 budget.

Due to the pandemic and limited in office hours, a policy was not adopted. Archive projects were scanned on a case by case basis and added to appropriate digital archives.

Due to the pandemic, travel was cancelled. Several online trainings were utilized by staff for continuing education.



Board, Committee, and Commission Reports

Board of Adjustment

The Board of Adjustment is the appointed body of the City responsible for appeals and quasi-judicial decisions under the zoning regulations. In general, the Board of Adjustment hears appeals of decisions rendered by staff, decides on applications by landowners requesting relief to the requirements of the Unified Development Code, and approves Conditional Uses.

The Board held 10 public hearings in 2020.

Historic Preservation Board

The Historic Preservation Board works in cooperation with city officials and property owners to promote the educational, cultural, economic, and general welfare of the public through the preservation and the protection of buildings, sites, places, and districts of historic interest. They also make recommendations regarding the State's Certified Local Government (CLG) grants.

The Board held 12 regular meetings and 10 Work Sessions in 2020.

Brownfields Revolving Loan Committee

The Brownfields Revolving Loan Committee oversees grant and loan requests related to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Brownfields Program. Requests can be for brownfield inventories, planning, environmental assessments, community outreach, and property cleanup.

The Committee held one meeting in 2020.

Greenway Advisory Committee

The Greenway Advisory Committee provides community representation and specialized expertise to support the Greenway Project. They direct, set priorities, and make recommendations for decisions and suggest solutions to conflicts and problems that may arise. The Committee solicits financial support for the Project through a variety of ways, including, but not limited to personal donations, corporate donations, fund raising campaigns, sales tax ballot initiatives, and grant applications. The members serve as liaisons between their group or agency and the Greenway Project.

The Committee held eight meetings in 2020.

Planning Commission

The Planning Commission is an appointed committee comprised of seven members to review and act on matters related to planning and development. The Planning Commission's primary purpose is to review and make recommendations based on applicable codes and plans to the City Council regarding development actions such as subdivisions, rezonings, and amendments to the Unified Development Code (UDC). The Planning Commission relies on the Unified Development Code (UDC), Plan Cheyenne, and other area plans to make informed recommendations.

The Commission met 16 times in 2020.



Workload Snapshot

Despite the pandemic, actionable items remained consistent in 2020, with staff being involved in 1,440 actionable items compared to 1,460 in 2019. Actionable items can range from quick inquiries to projects requiring 2-4 months of technical review. Typical pre-application meetings require a minimum 30-minute research to prepare for the meeting, a one-hour pre-application meeting, and another hour to prepare and send a summary of the meeting to all meeting attendees. In 2020 the Planning and Development Department coordinated and implemented dedicated weekly pre-application meeting times.

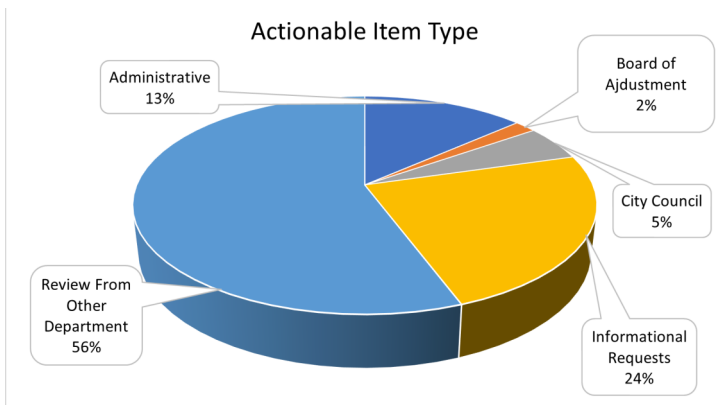
The actionable items are generally distributed amongst the Development Division, which in 2020 was comprised of two Planner IIs and one Planner I positions. Projects were generally worked on during the 250 working days (M-F, excluding holidays) of the year. Until another planning position is funded and available, actionable items will be distributed to two Planner IIs and one Planner I position. This is in absence of the Senior Planner position removed in FY21 due to Covid-19 staffing reductions.

The department continues to track building permits they are involved in. These typically require quick review and any problems identified must be addressed by Development staff promptly. Review entails permit compliance with approved site plans, zoning, and Unified Development Code requirements. Building permit review types are broken down on the following page.

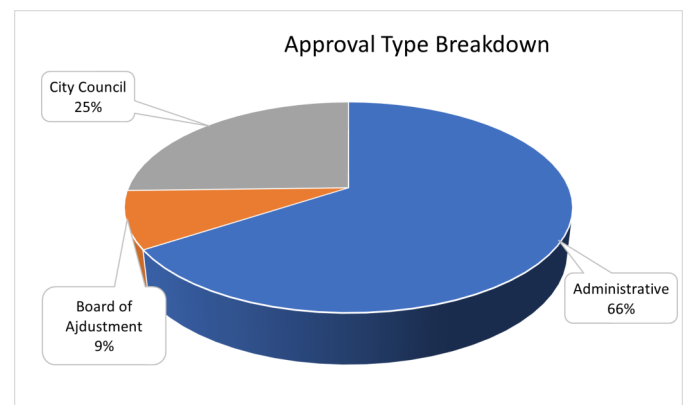
The Planning and Development Department continues to be leaders in utilization of digital application software. After trial runs in July of 2020, staff implemented a fully digital application process in November of 2020 and required digital applications mandatory at the conclusion of 2020. This has resulted in department efficiency reducing staff time required for application intake, scanning of submitted materials, and allowed staff to quickly initiate application review. Previously, intake operations could take up to one-week; the new digital submittal process has reduced that time period to less than three business days.

Type	2019	2020	Percent Change
Accessory Dwelling Unit	0	6	-
Administrative Adjustment	36	26	-28%
Administrative Plat/Replat	22	20	-9%
Administrative Use	7	12	71%
Annexation	6	4	-33%
Appeal of Administrative Decision	3	1	-67%
Conditional Use	15	13	-13%
Building Permit Review	478	663	39%
Child Care In-Home Minor	8	4	-50%
Demo of Contributing Structure	0	0	-
Engineering Plan Review	47	43	-9%
Development Agreement	2	0	-100%
Final Plat/Replat	21	14	-33%
Financial Surety	11	24	118%
Home Occupation	19	16	-16%
Inquiry	475	230	-52%
Outside User Agreement	-	3	-
Planning - UDC Text Amendment	2	12	500%
Planning Project	-	5	-
Pre-application Meeting	98	84	-14%
Preliminary Plat	10	16	60%
PUD	6	3	-50%
Sign Permits	89	96	8%
Site Plan	54	54	0%
Site Plan Adjustment	5	20	300%
Special Use	-	1	-
Subdivision Standards Waiver	13	0	-100%
Temporary Use	5	3	-40%
Vacation	3	3	0%
Variance	22	12	-45%
Wireless Modification	-	2	-
Wireless Telecom	3	7	133%
Zone Change	8	14	75%
Zoning Letter	35	29	-17%
Total	1460	1440	

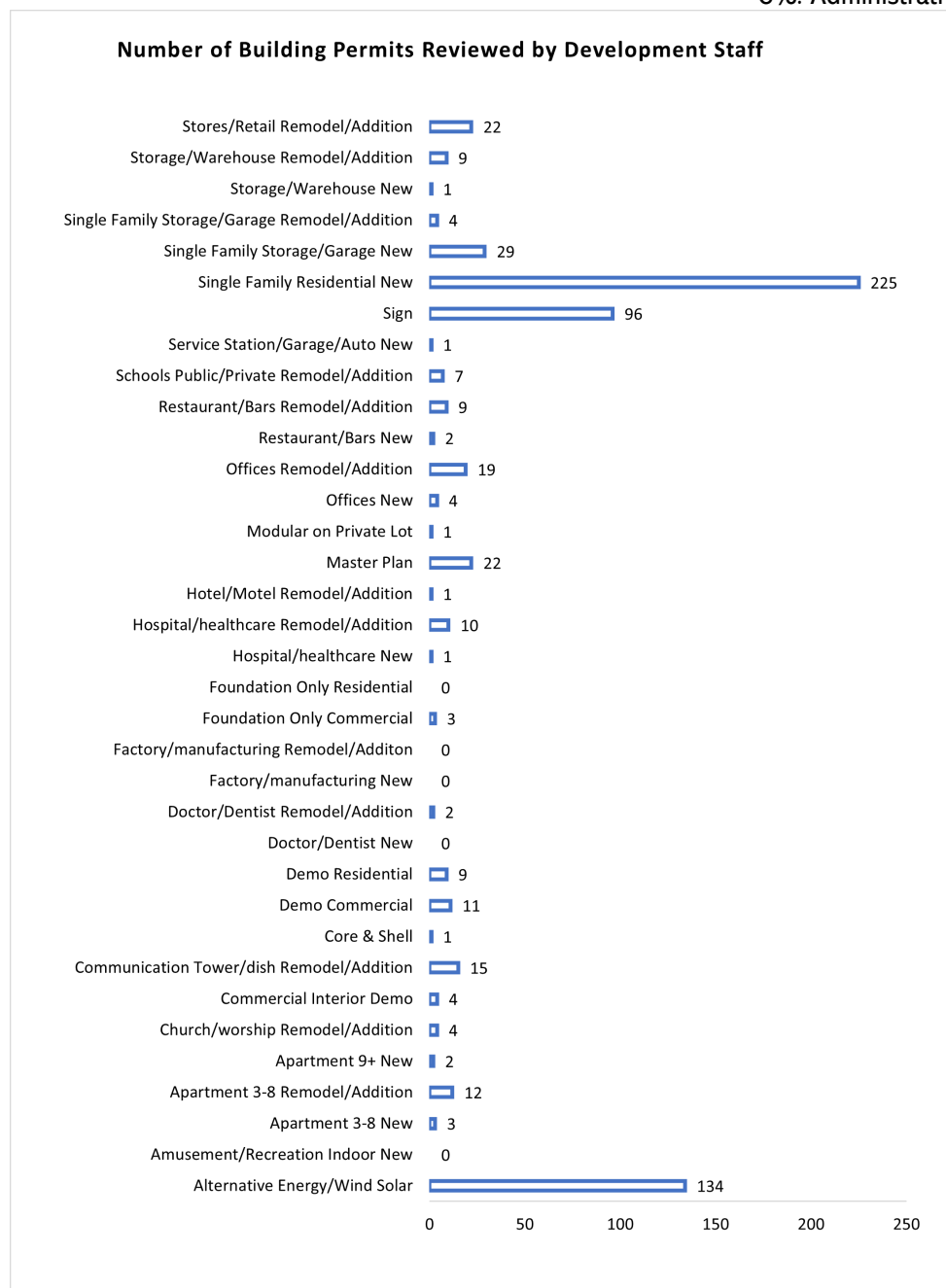
Actionable Item Type	Number	Percent
Administrative	194	13%
Board of Adjustment	26	2%
City Council	75	5%
Informational Requests	343	24%
Review From Other Departments	802	56%
	1440	



Between 2019 and 2020, Administrative applications increased slightly and Informational Requests decreased from 40% of the workload to 24%.



Between 2019 and 2020, Council Approvals increased by 5% and Board of Adjustment Approvals increase by 6%. Administrative approvals increased by 1%.



The most notable increases were in Single Family New Construction and Alternative Energy/Solar Applications, which both saw increases of 36.5% and 45.7%, respectively.

Enforcement Statistics:

In 2020 the Planning and Development Department received 44 zoning enforcement complaints. Zoning enforcement addresses properties that are not in compliance with the Unified Development Code or approved site plans and development of or establishment of uses on properties without necessary approvals. Zoning enforcement does not include junk or nuisance violations, abandoned vehicles, or right-of-way use violations.

Common violations included:

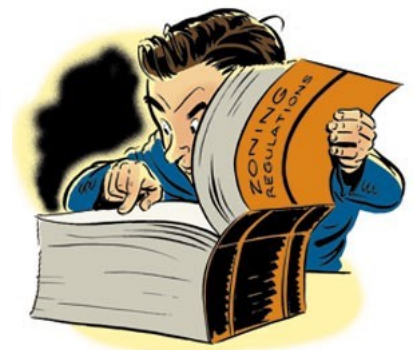
- ◆ Persons living in a recreational vehicle on private property.
- ◆ Fences exceeding height allowance or constructed within the setback.
- ◆ Unlawful Home Occupation
- ◆ Establishment of use without approvals
- ◆ Accessory building in setback
- ◆ Illegal signs

Of the 44 violations, 42 were concluded by staff and none were forwarded to the City Attorney's office for prosecution.

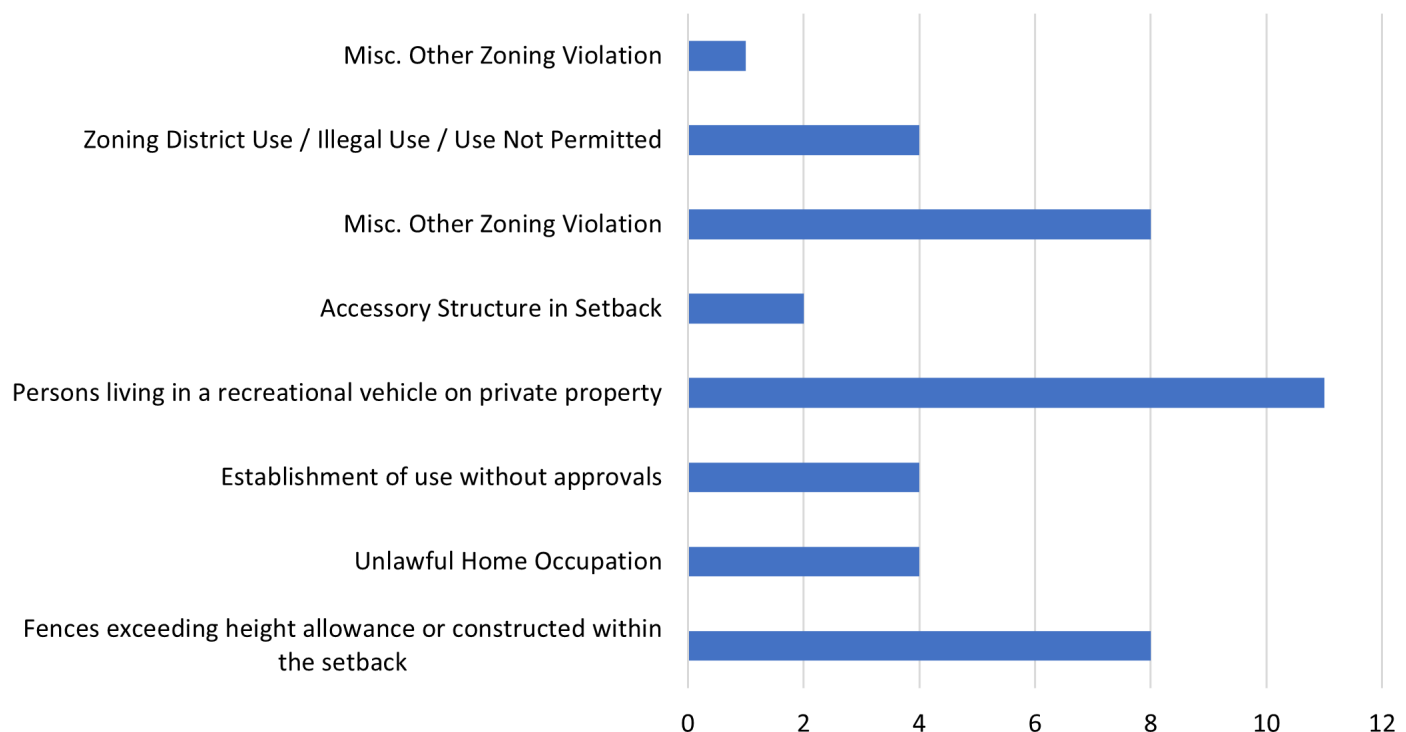
The department does not have a staff member dedicated to zoning enforcement so the duties are primarily absorbed by a Planner II and partly by a Planner I. Staff continues to work on public education of rules and regulations to prevent accidental violations.

When Does Staff Investigate?

- ⇒ Citizen compliant with complainant identified.
- ⇒ Elected official complaint based on citizen complaint.
- ⇒ Development staff initiated in the following cases:
 - ⇒ Is an imminent threat to the public safety, health, and welfare of the community.
 - ⇒ The violation is on a high visibility property.
 - ⇒ The violation may enable other to pursue similar violations.
 - ⇒ The violation blatantly disregards approved development plans.



Zoning Enforcement Breakdown



Notable Parks and Greenways Projects:



- Ongoing design and coordination of multiple Greenway connector projects to include Dey Avenue, Downtown Connector, South Park Connector, and Avenues/Airport Connector.
- Coordination of Sweetgrass underpass, Sweetgrass Greenway, and enhanced landscape maintenance agreements.
- Installation of Phase I Wayfinding signage and completion of Phase II Wayfinding plan set for bidding.
- Assistance with development review and coordination of Greenway and Parks improvements associated with new developments.
- Management of the Adopt-a-Spot Greenway maintenance program.
- Coordination of bid package, bidding, and Council approval for Dey Avenue Greenway project.
- Coordination for the new East Cheyenne Community Open Space including, parking lot/trailhead design, bid package, bidding, and Council approval for intended opening to the public in early summer 2021.
- Construction and opening of the new Henderson Connector closing a missing link in the Greenway network.



Henderson Connector ribbon cutting in September of 2020.

Notable Preservation Projects:

- Completed Phase One of the Airport Fountain Restoration in July of 2020. Phase Two is to be completed by Summer of 2022.
- Received a \$20,000 grant from the State Historic Preservation Office for Phase II of the Fountain Restoration
- Updated the Governor's Mansion Protective Overlay District regulations.
- Worked with the City Attorney's Office to draft a Demolition by Neglect Ordinance.
- Continued the ornament fundraiser and raised over \$14,000 selling limited edition ornaments depicting the Cheyenne Depot to promote the Airport Fountain Restoration project.
- Awarded the LeClercq Jones award in December 2020 to "The Lincoln" for their work in preserving the historic Lincoln Theatre and giving it a new use as a music venue.
- Updated the strategic plan to serve as a guide for the Historic Preservation Board.
- Updated the Historic Preservation Board's Rules of Practice.
- Held the Cheyenne Cruise Night Fundraiser to celebrate the completion of Phase I of the Fountain (October 20, 2020)
- Held twelve monthly meetings, two work sessions, two new-member orientations, and multiple events.
- Transitioned to staff support being led by Planner I, Sam Crowley.



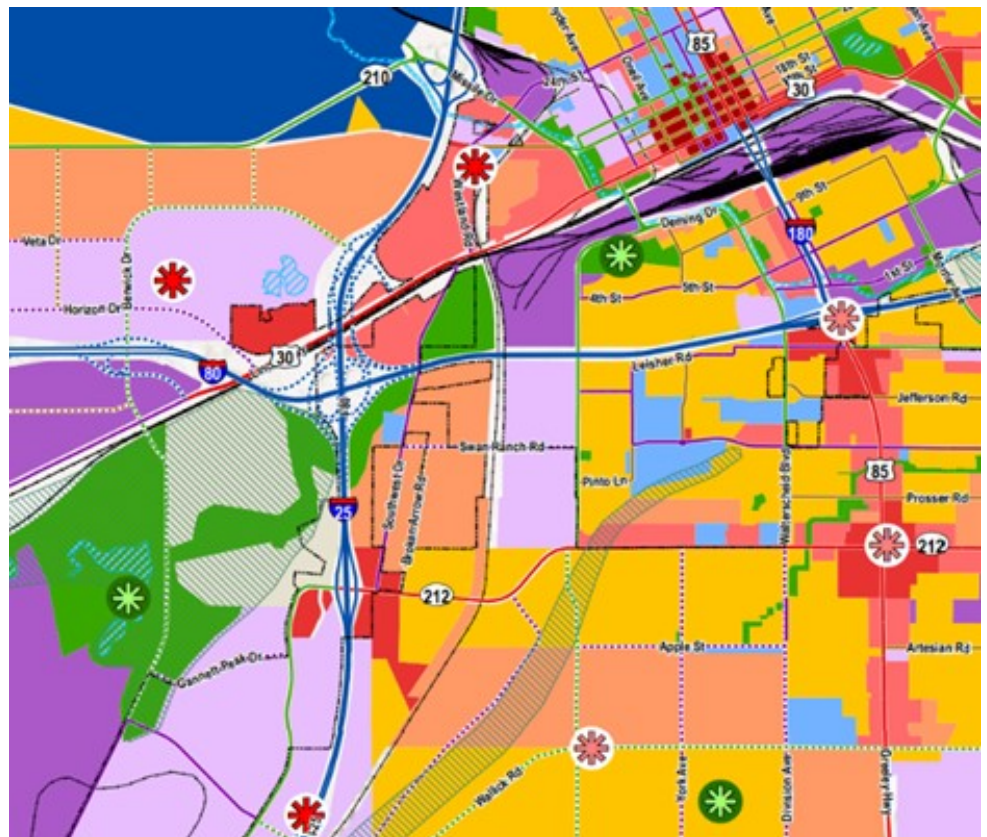
The historic airport fountain was in operation for the first time in decades in October of 2020.

Notable Long-Range Planning Projects:

- ♦ West Edge Zoning implementation continuation
 - ♦ Draft regulations created.
 - ♦ Explored multiple online interaction methods to reach out to different stakeholder groups, including the Reed Avenue Rail Corridor Steering Committee and the Downtown Development Authority.
 - ♦ Scheduled for introduction of new regulations to Planning Commission and Council in April-May of 2021.
- ♦ Phase I assistance with EPA Brownfields assessments were performed at several properties at no financial cost to the City or property owner to assist in reinvestment in potentially contaminated sites.
- ♦ Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund Program
 - ♦ Bell Building remediation has been completed.
 - ♦ Program management continues and includes entering projects into the ACRES tracking site, preparing quarterly reports, and documenting the City's match tracking for the revolving loan fund grant.
 - ♦ Reconvened the RLF Committee in December of 2020 with plans to hold regular meetings.
 - ♦ Creation of Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund webpage.
- ♦ Coordination with the Crow Creek Revival effort.
- ♦ Future Land Use Map corrections adopted with the Connect 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan
- ♦ Multiple Future Land Use Map Amendments to Support concurrent zoning map amendments.
- ♦ Initiated investigation into cost estimates for annexation of County pockets.



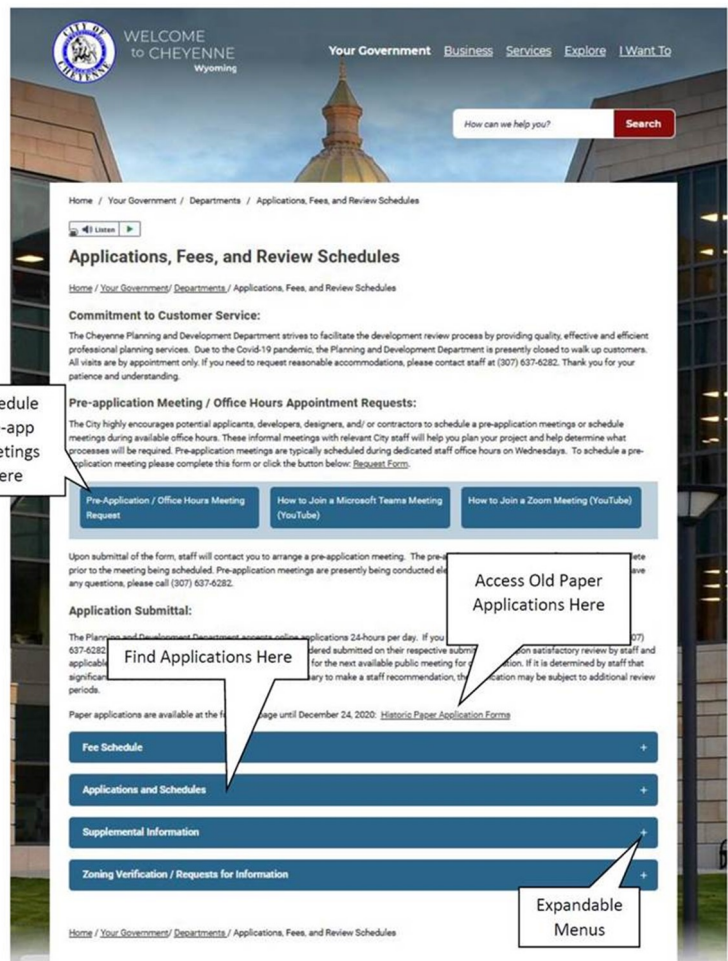
City of Cheyenne Brownfield Revolving Loan Fund



In December of 2020 the City's Future Land Use Map and Transportation Plan were updated and combined to reflect land use changes and enhance the symbology for ease of interpretation.

Notable Operational Improvements:

- ◆ In January of 2020, the Long Range Planning Division and Deputy Director workspaces were consolidated into office and workspaces within Room 202. The new workspaces provided private working environments while furthering team collaboration.
- ◆ Implementation of digital platforms such as Cisco Webex, Teams, and Zoom for digital meetings within hours of the onset of social distancing requirements related to COVID-19.
- ◆ May of 2020 introduced weekly staff office hours for pre-application meeting / formal development inquiry requests. This established a dedicated afternoon (Wednesdays from 1:00—5:00 p.m.) for meetings with potential developers. Office hour attendees include all City departments and divisions involved in development review, BOPU, and other regional agencies. Dedicated office hours give developers and staff predictability for pre-application meetings.
- ◆ In conjunction with the new OpenCities website launch in July of 2020, staff consolidated web information into a single website for the department. Easy to find links to all applications, past projects, applicable plans, and resources were added to help citizens find information online, instead of having to call or come into the department.
- ◆ In August of 2020, new Planning Commission and Board of Adjustment staff report formats were introduced. The new format provided clarification on staff's recommendations and how specific applications met applicable review criteria.
- ◆ In September of 2020, new Planning Commission and Board of Adjustment Agenda Centers unveiled increasing department transparency. All current agendas and future agendas and staff reports will be publicly available 24-7-365. Previously, a Constant Contact subscription was required and was only available by request.
- ◆ After several months of beta testing with developers, digital applications were unveiled in November of 2020. This has reduced staff time for intake, review of application completeness, and consistency of applications.



Planning and Development: Site Plan

General Information

Applicant Name: [Text Field]

Applicant Address: [Text Field]

Applicant City: [Text Field]

Applicant State: [Text Field]

Applicant Zip Code: [Text Field]

Applicant Phone: [Text Field]

Autofill Information

Planning and Development Department

200 North Lincoln, Suite 202, Cheyenne, WY 82001

(307) 637-6282 (Fax) 307-637-6283

Letter of Authorization: [Text Field]

Project Location (Street Address): [Text Field]

Applicant's Report ID number(s): [Text Field]

Applicant's Report ID number(s): [Text Field]

Applicant's Report ID number(s): [Text Field]

Links To Necessary Documents

Transportation Worksheet / Study: [Text Field]

Building Drawings / Photographs / Site Photographs: [Text Field]

Other Information: [Text Field]

Links To Checklists

Direct Upload Availability

New applications were debuted in November 2020. Staff has utilized applicant feedback to continue to provide a better user experience.