

SEPTEMBER 2020

# KEMMERER, WYOMING

A COMMUNITY WITH STRONG BONES AND SENSE  
OF HISTORY

Revitalization  
Roadmap  
Setting the Course  
to a strong community



ADOPTED: OCTOBER 2020

# HISTORY OF KEMMERER, WYOMING

Kemmerer is located in Lincoln County, Wyoming. According to the United States Census Bureau, the city has a total area of 7.81 square miles. The world famous Fossil Butte National Monument is located 15 miles west of Kemmerer, Wyoming on U.S. Highway 30. Explorer John C. Frémont discovered coal in the area during his second expedition in 1843. The Union Pacific Coal Company opened the first underground mine in 1881 after construction of the Oregon Short Line Railroad from Granger to Oregon.

Patrick J. Quealy (1857–1930) founded Kemmerer as an "independent town" in 1897 when he was vice-president of the Kemmerer Coal Company. He named the company and town after his financial backer, Pennsylvania coal magnate Mahlon S. Kemmerer (1843–1925). In 1950, the operation converted to strip mining and became the world's largest open pit coal mine. Quealy sold lots at the future townsite rather than lease them, which permitted the establishment of independent businesses and the future town of Kemmerer.

The J. C. Penney company store was founded in Kemmerer in 1902. Mr. Penny operated his stores in Kemmerer building the store chain that eventually became the national retail store corporation.



## HISTORY ABOUNDS

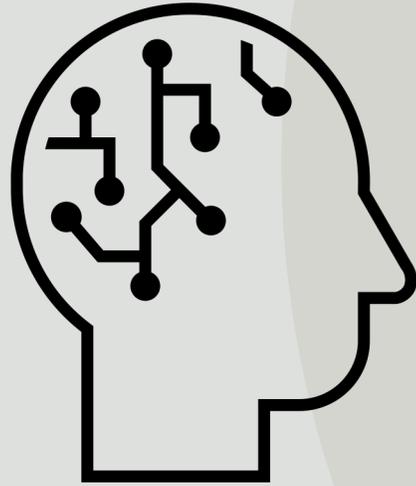
- Home to JCPenny's Mother Store
- Bootlegging History
- Historic Architecture

**SEPT 20**

**A COMMUNITY IN TRANSITION, LOOKING TO IMPROVE THEIR QUALITY OF LIFE**

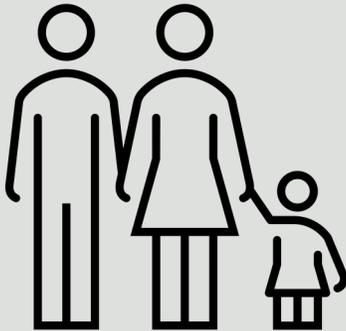
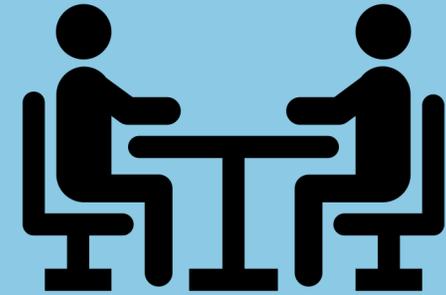
# ABOUT KEMMERER

Kemmerer Demographics



14.9% attained  
bachelors  
degree

Average of  
\$3,933.79  
spent on dining  
or similar  
services (per  
household)



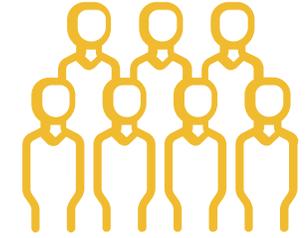
64.9% Family  
Households &  
3.19 person avg  
household size

Average Age  
43.9



52.1% male  
47.9% female

# DESTINATION DISCOVERY



Gathering existing conditions is the first step.

Identifying assets, preparing strategies and personifying character

The Kemmerer community was studied and reviewed, determining the current conditions.



## ATTEMPTS TO INFILL

The City has made attempts to infill vacant lots, but efforts fall short of matching the atmosphere of Town.



## ORIGINAL CHARACTER

The community is full of original and unique assets, many suffering from deferred maintenance



## LACKING INFRASTRUCTURE

The downtown has great "bones", but the infrastructure is of substandard conditions

Overall the community has incredible structures and opportunities, yet the common thread that was heard during the discovery phase was an "Us Vs. Them" sentiment, stemming from poor communication and collaborative efforts

- As a critical take away from this step, there are deep seated mistrusts between various levels of the community.
- The community is current suffering from a strong sense of apathy, stemmed by disinvestment
- Communications have been substandard between the municipality and residents



## PLACE

Kemmerer has "Place"

# STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

## SIMILAR ISSUES

Feedback from the community was of a similar mentality and vision among most residents

## SILOED EFFORTS

Due to the apathy currently running throughout the community, people feel like they are in their own little silo or division, causing the community to feel isolated



A community must have a similar vision to support

There were a few similar themes that became apparent during the public input process. They are as follows:

1

The community is not united in their visions, each having specific goals and fighting for limited resources

2

The downtown business owners feel slighted by the municipality, specifically not getting support

3

Development and permitting fees are too high in town, and the process is hard to navigate

4

Utility costs are too high

5

Taxes and community funding is not being allocated proportionately to the various parts of town

# DOWNTOWN ASSESSMENT



Downtown is the life blood and hub of activity for both Kemmerer and Diamondville. This location is where people want to gather and be seen, yet there are limited opportunities to do such.

Downtown Kemmerer has witnessed a strong series of disinvestment over the past 30 years, breeding a series of issues that are significant roadblocks for the downtown:

- Rampant Apathy
- Strong distrust
- Communication breakdown
- Residents fail to have a vision



Structurally competent buildings needing a facelift



## DOWNTOWN ASSESSMENT HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Downtown has strong bones, yet deferred maintenance is an issue
- 2 The downtown corridor has ample parking
- 3 Areas in the downtown are frequented, while other empty
- 4 Many people drive through town and have a perception that it is dead
- 5 The downtown has strong intrinsic value to the community

# BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Kemmerer has building stock that is limited in capacity due to deferred maintenance. The local business owners are attempting to maintain the structures as best as possible, yet there are still ample upgrades necessary. Additionally, the built environment is a point of apathetic nature within the community

Buildings in the downtown are showing a lack of repair or maintenance, creating an atmosphere that is detracting from the quality of life for residents.



**LIMITED BUILDINGS**

There are limited buildings in the downtown that are of adequate condition to support businesses



**MAINTENANCE**

Many buildings in the downtown can be saved, but lack of maintenance will impact their future



**APATHETIC OWNERS**

Owners in the triangle are demonstrating apathy, quoting lack of interest to allow lack of maintenance



**LIMITED FUNDING**

Much of the community is noting a lack of available funding to make necessary upgrades



# COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Kemmerer is a small community that has witnessed a series of disinvestments, impacting the quality of life for residents. This has become a source of strong apathy for all residents in Kemmerer. This is demonstrating a lack of overall unified community character.

The character of a community drives the sense of place and the quality of life. Based on this, Kemmerer is not demonstrating a defined community character, instead the residents are demonstrating a strong personal drive.



**CIVIC PRIDE**

Residents are lacking the necessary civic pride or support for the overall community



**STRONG DISTRUST**

The residents and business owners have a strong distrust for the municipality



**OPPORTUNITY**

The community currently has many assets that can provide an opportunity for character building



**CONNECTEDNESS**

The community currently lacks necessary ties or shared experiences to create a strong character



# REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT

Kemmerer is currently witnessing a lack of interest in their commercial and residential real estate market. This driven to provide the community with a lack of diversification and a stagnant business environment.

Investment in real estate or property development within the downtown of Kemmerer has diminished in recent years, causing a detriment to the economic vitality of the community.



**MAINTENANCE**

The downtown does not complete the final step in the development process, maintenance before sale.



**LACK OF SPACE**

The community does not currently have adequate spaces for small businesses at a fair price.



**MISSING TEETH**

The downtown currently has numerous parcels that are vacant, causing a negative appearance.



**LACK OF DESIRE**

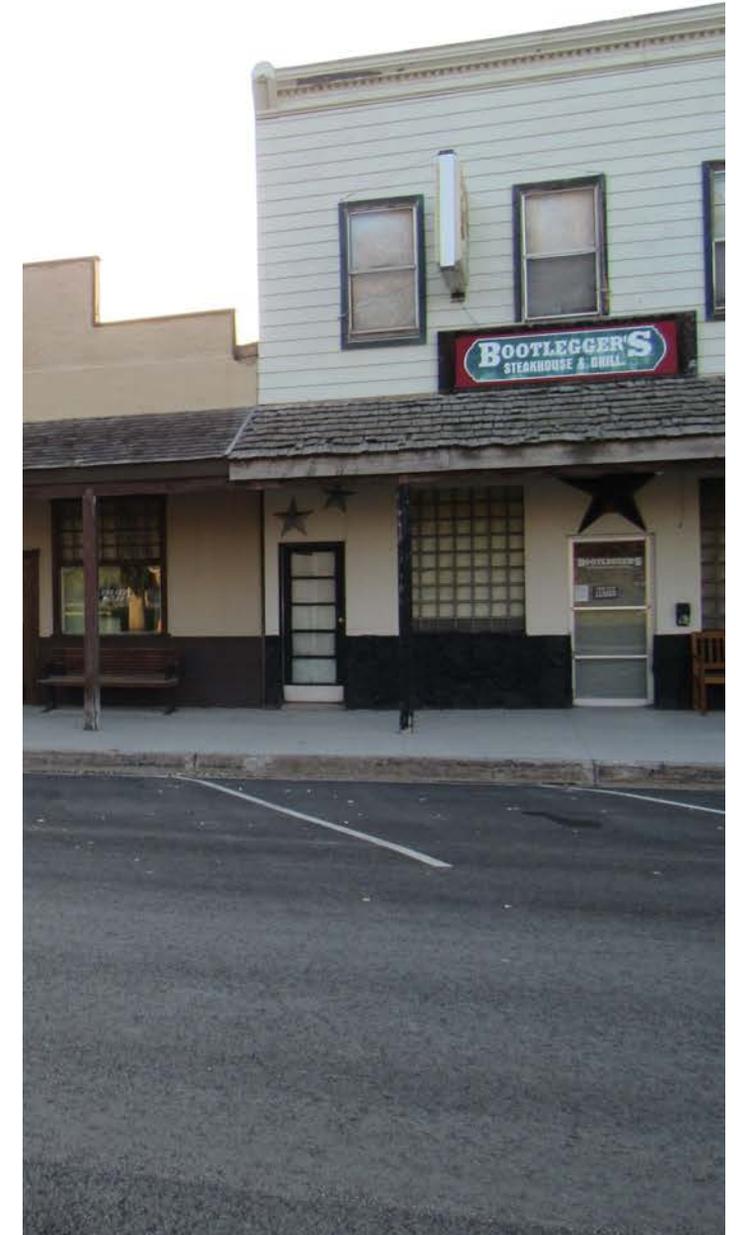
Residents and business owners are showing a strong lack of desire for further development



# COMMUNITY CAPACITY

Kemmerer is a community of where people are "Silo'ed" into their own areas. Many groups have singular visions and goals, all of which are not unified. This is stretching resources and volunteer effort too thin to continue.

There is ample capacity in the community, yet the multiple groups lack guidance and the municipality is not providing enough support, to spur revitalization



**LACK OF ASSISTANCE**

The municipality and regional agencies are not providing adequate support for the community to revitalize



**BREAKDOWN**

Communication has broken down to a point where meaningful information is not transferred



**YOUNG TRANSPLANTS**

Young transplant residents are not embraced, causing them to become apathetic quickly



**LACK OF DESIRE**

Residents are demonstrating a lack of desire to become part of community participation groups

# STREETSCAPE

Streetscapes in Kemmerer are currently in fair to poor conditions. Without adequate streetscapes the residents and visitors will not be able to utilize the downtown.

A streetscape is the realm where pedestrians interact with downtown businesses and neighbors. Current conditions in the Triangle does not allow for the residents to have the necessary "3rd" space.



**TRUCK TRAFFIC**

Currently the highway is bringing through many heavy trucks and trailers, impacting the streetscape



**POOR INFRASTRUCTURE**

Sidewalks, curbs, lighting and other infrastructure is currently not in acceptable condition



**MISSING LANDSCAPE**

Landscape elements are not present within the downtown, Affecting the "softening" of traffic

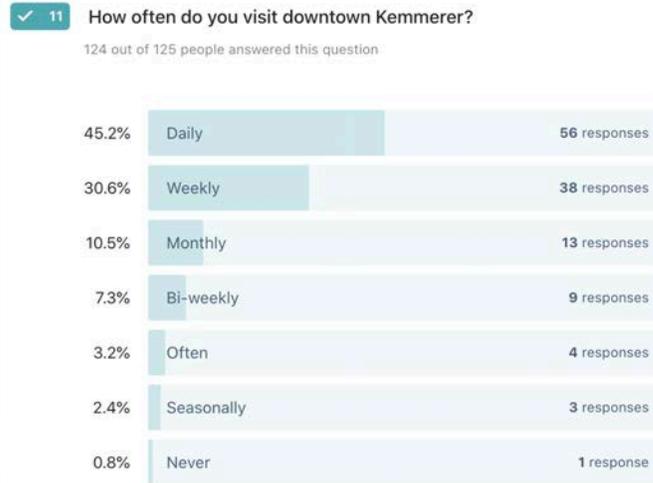
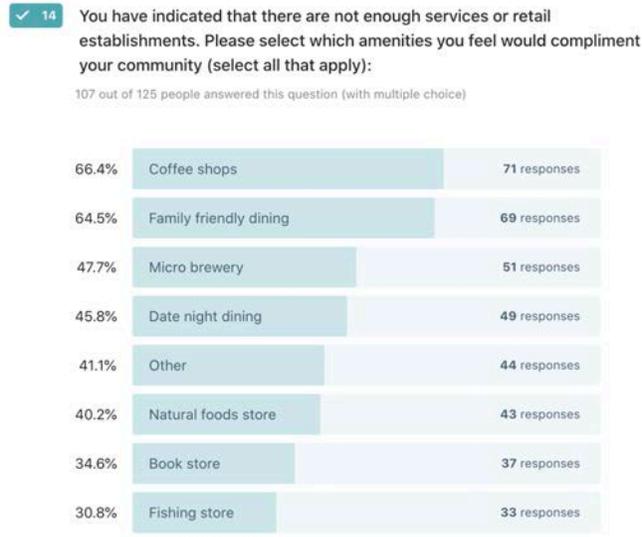


**STRIPE PARKING**

Parking along the highway is not currently striped, allowing for hap hazardous parking styles



# PUBLIC INPUT SYNOPSIS



Revitalization Roadmap  
Setting the Course for a Strong Community

## STREETSCAPE ELEMENTS

USE THE MARKERS TO INDICATE WHICH **STREETSCAPE ELEMENTS** YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE IN DOWNTOWN KEMMERER

PEDESTRIAN SPACES

ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION

BALANCED SPACE

IMPROVED CROSSWALKS

Revitalization Roadmap  
Setting the Course for a Strong Community

USE THE PROVIDED PENS AND MARKERS TO CLEARLY MARK THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:

- CONFLICT POINTS ✕
- AREAS OF CONGESTION +
- DANGEROUS PEDESTRIAN AREAS ⚠
- DEFICIENT PARKING AREAS ○

PLEASE MARK THE OBSERVED ISSUE WITH THE DISTINCT NOTATION OPTIONS ABOVE

KEMMERER, WY

**DOWNTOWN DOES NOT HAVE ENOUGH AMENITIES OR SERVICES TO MAKE PEOPLE STOP**

Downtown needs more amenities for all family members to utilize.

**VISITORS DO NOT SEE ANYTHING WORTH STOPPING FOR**

Visitors see broken down and falling over buildings. The perception does not draw them in.

**APATHY IS RAMPET IN THE COMMUNITY, CREATING AN "US VS. THEM" SCENARIO**

Lack of communication and overall distrust is causing apathy to become apparent.



Outlined on this page are details about the data gathered during the public input process

# ROADMAP RECOMMENDATIONS



Providing strategic recommendations for the downtown core is an exercise in community capacity building, not borrowing.

The following slides will break down the recommendations for each of the five (5) categories listed on the graphic to the right. All recommendations are currently in conceptual or draft format and are still open for feedback.

NOTE\* - Final surveys are not currently in and the results of these items may change based on the final survey or community input results.



## ROADMAP RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 Built Environment
- 2 Community Character
- 3 Real Estate/Development
- 4 Community Capacity
- 5 Streetscape



# BUILT ENVIRONMENT

## Purpose of the Built Environment

The built environment of a downtown embodies the physical space where users interact with stores or services, gather in civic spaces, and assimilate into the small-town culture of their community. It is this space that serves as the vital “third space” in a personal-interaction scenario (live, work, play). Without this space, residents and visitors lack a common area to congregate and share a story and cannot bond to a common thread.

## Benefits of a Strong Built Environment

The benefits of a strong and uniform built environment are numerous, but there are a few that are more important than the others. The important benefits are: People form an intrinsic bond with buildings that are significant to their childhood or have played a role in important life milestones.

**18.5 K**

Average amount of visitors to a small town annually

Outlined below are the recommendations for the Built Environment section. All recommendations provided are formulated to create catalysts for change within the community or to meet comprehensive plan recommendations

**1** Code Modification and Design Guidelines

**2** Code Enforcement

**3** Façade Grant Programs

**4** Signage Unification and Implementation

**5** Property Maintenance Standards



# COMMUNITY CHARACTER

## Purpose of Community Character

Community character is the atmosphere that makes a downtown feel like a desirable place to be. Without this character, a downtown begins to feel like a lifeless shopping mall or lifestyle center. Community character helps residents and visitors alike feel a connection to the community, forming a symbiotic relationship. By identifying and personalizing the unique community character within downtown Kemmerer, the residents have a more tangible connection with their community and can begin to interact more frequently within the downtown.

## Benefits of a Strong Community Character

Unique community character is what ties a group of local residents to their hometown. It is through this connection that people feel a sense of shared ownership for their downtown and take pride in preserving the amenities or services it provides. Through creation of this strong tie, the following is offered:  
A strong sense of "HOME"

75%

Of tourists prefer experiential tourism

Outlined below are the recommendations for the Community Character section. All recommendations provided are formulated to create catalysts for change within the community or to meet comprehensive plan recommendations

1

Communication Improvements

2

Personify & Pay Homage to Your History

3

Civic Pride to Combat Apathy

4

Integrate External Influences

5

Identify and Rebuild your Unique Architectural Style





# REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT

## Purpose of Development

The purpose of real estate development in a small downtown is to create spaces for business creation and expansion. Without local real estate development, buildings within a downtown often slip into disrepair and will never meet their full economic potential. Local developers will provide the community with necessary spaces for business location and job creation. As regional, state, and federal grants continue to become harder to attain and more complicated to administer, local developers have been turned to more and more to pick up the slack for downtown revitalization efforts.

## Benefits of a Development

Incentivizing LOCAL developers will drive the small downtown economy, preserving jobs and generating a new tax-base. It is through successful incentivization that Kemmerer could realize the benefits below:

- Improved rental spaces (residential and commercial)
- Larger clientele for downtown rentals
- More jobs created and retained within downtown
- Local tax dollars being spent at local stores

**\$7.75**

Average Sq Ft rental rate for downtown spaces

Outlined below are the recommendations for the Community Character section. All recommendations provided are formulated to create catalysts for change within the community or to meet comprehensive plan recommendations

**1** Diversify Services & Amenities

**2** Detailed Building Assessments

**3** Create Due Diligence Reports

**4** Incentivize Local Owners

**5** Expand Incentives Past Finances, Offer Support





# COMMUNITY CAPACITY

## Purpose of Community Capacity

A community is made up of talented individuals, all of whom have a unique skill set and the common goal of downtown revitalization. Each individual has a certain capacity and part to play in the overall process of downtown revitalization. By understanding the roles and responsibilities of the many different groups, a municipality will be better able to create a comprehensive volunteer base for community-based projects.

## Benefits of Community Capacity

Through identifying the unique capabilities of each individual or group, the downtown will be able to:

- better leverage volunteer efforts
- capitalize on available resources and expertise within the community
- allow locals to build a deeper connection and sense of ownership with the community
- increase civic pride
- provide a more cost-effective option to consultant-led projects.

LOCALS ARE THE  
TRUE EXPERTS ON  
THEIR DOWNTOWN.  
ALLOW THEM TO  
HELP AND PROVIDE  
THEIR MEANINGFUL  
INPUT

Outlined below are the recommendations for the Community Capacity section. All recommendations provided are formulated to create catalysts for change within the community or to meet comprehensive plan recommendations

### 1 Creation of Main Street Program

### 2 Unify Downtown Programs Into a Single Program

### 3 Coordinate Fundraising Within the Local Community

### 4 Empower Citizens to Create Catalyst

### 5 Create a Unified Vision



# STREETSCAPE ENHANCEMENTS



## Purpose of Streetscapes

A community is made up of talented individuals, all of whom have a unique skill set and the common goal of downtown revitalization. Each individual has a certain capacity and part to play in the overall process of downtown revitalization. By understanding the roles and responsibilities of the many different groups, a municipality will be better able to create a comprehensive volunteer base for community-based projects.

## Benefits of a Strong Streetscape

Through identifying the unique capabilities of each individual or group, the downtown will be able to:

- better leverage volunteer efforts
- capitalize on available resources and expertise within the community
- allow locals to build a deeper connection and sense of ownership with the community
- increase civic pride
- provide a more cost-effective option to consultant-led projects.

Outlined below are the recommendations for the Streetscape section. All recommendations provided are formulated to create catalysts for change within the community or to meet comprehensive plan recommendations

**1** Comprehensive Streetscape Enhancements

**2** Delineate Parking

**3** Install Wayfinding Signage

**4** Install Historic Murals & Artwork

**\$4.25**

AVERAGE RETURN ON  
INVESTMENT FOR EVERY  
\$1 INVESTED AFTER 5  
YEARS.



# ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

## MATRIX

14

Determining Who,  
What, When, Where &  
How

Creating accountability to ensure implementation

The chart below will help outline a framework for the prioritized recommendations out of the Revitalization Roadmap process:

| Recomm. Number | Project   | Category                | Town of Kemmerer | Lincoln County | Main Street Group | Kemmerer Business Owners | Chamber & Businesses | Milestone/ Completion Date |
|----------------|---|-------------------------|------------------|----------------|-------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|
| 1              | Code Modification and Design Guidelines         | Built Environment       | •                |                | •                 |                          | •                    | 7/1/2021                   |
| 2              | Code Enforcement                                | Built Environment       | •                | •              |                   |                          |                      | 8/1/2021                   |
| 3              | Façade Grant Programs                           | Built Environment       | •                | •              | •                 | •                        | •                    | 3/15/2021                  |
| 4              | Signage Unification and Implementation          | Built Environment       | •                |                |                   |                          |                      | 12/1/2020                  |
| 5              | Property Maintenance Standards                  | Built Environment       | •                | •              |                   |                          |                      | 1/1/2022                   |
| 6              | Communication Improvements                      | Community Character     | •                |                | •                 | •                        | •                    | 11/1/2020                  |
| 7              | Personify & Pay Homage to Your History          | Community Character     | •                |                |                   | •                        |                      | 4/1/2021                   |
| 8              | Civic Pride to Combat Apathy                    | Community Character     | •                | •              | •                 | •                        | •                    | 11/1/2020                  |
| 9              | Integrate External Influences                   | Community Character     | •                |                | •                 | •                        |                      | 11/1/2020                  |
| 10             | Identify and Rebuild Unique Architectural Style | Community Character     | •                |                |                   | •                        |                      | 7/1/2022                   |
| 11             | Diversify Services & Amenities                  | Real Estate/Development | •                | •              |                   |                          |                      | 1/1/2021                   |
| 12             | Detailed Building Assessments                   | Real Estate/Development |                  |                | •                 | •                        | •                    | 3/15/2021                  |
| 13             | Create Due Diligence Reports                    | Real Estate/Development | •                |                |                   | •                        |                      | 4/1/2021                   |
| 14             | Incentivize Local Owners                        | Real Estate/Development | •                | •              |                   |                          |                      | 7/1/2021                   |
| 15             | Expand Incentives Past Finances                 | Real Estate/Development |                  |                | •                 | •                        | •                    | 11/1/2021                  |
| 16             | Creation of Main Street Program                 | Community Capacity      | •                |                | •                 |                          |                      | 1/1/2021                   |
| 17             | Unify Downtown Programs                         | Community Capacity      | •                |                |                   | •                        |                      | 10/1/2022                  |
| 18             | Coordinate Fundraising                          | Community Capacity      |                  |                | •                 | •                        | •                    | 6/1/2021                   |
| 19             | Empower Citizens to Create Catalyst             | Community Capacity      | •                | •              |                   |                          |                      | 11/1/2022                  |
| 20             | Create a Unified Vision                         | Community Capacity      | •                | •              | •                 | •                        | •                    | 1/1/2021                   |
| 21             | Comprehensive Streetscape Enhancements          | Streetscape             | •                | •              |                   |                          |                      | 4/1/2023                   |
| 22             | Delineate Parking                               | Streetscape             | •                |                |                   | •                        |                      | 4/1/2022                   |
| 23             | Install Wayfinding Signage                      | Streetscape             | •                |                | •                 | •                        |                      | 7/1/2023                   |
| 24             | Install Historic Murals & Artwork               | Streetscape             |                  | •              | •                 | •                        | •                    | 7/1/2024                   |



## REVITALIZATION ROADMAP PROCESS

The Revitalization Roadmap was crafted to identify assets in a community and strategies to personify them, capitalizing on catalyst efforts with limited upfront costs

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**REVITALIZING COMMUNITIES,  
EMPOWERING PEOPLE**