

Wyoming Business Council

Agency Information:

Director:

Shawn Reese, Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Contact Person:

Shawn Reese, Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
214 W. 15th Street
Cheyenne, WY 82001
(307)-777-2862

Website:

www.wyomingbusiness.org

Other Locations:

Rock Springs (Regional Office)
Cody (Regional Office)
Wright (Regional Office)
Kemmerer (Regional Office)
Casper (Regional Office)
Cheyenne (Regional Office, Co-located with State Office)

Statutory References:

W.S. 9-12-101 through 9-12-113 - General
W.S. 9-12-201 through 9-12-202 - Science, Technology and Energy Financial Aid
W.S. 9-12-301 through 9-12-307 - Partnership Challenge Loan Program
W.S. 9-12-408 through 9-12-409 – Wyoming Research and Innovation Fund Program
W.S. 9-12-501 through 9-12-502 - Wyoming Council for Women’s Issues
W.S. 9-12-601 through 9-12-603 – Business Ready Communities Grant & Loan Program
W.S. 9-12-801 through 9-12-805 – Community Facilities Grant & Loan Program
W.S. 9-12-901 through 9-12-905 - Community Workforce Housing Program
W.S.9-12-1101 through 9-12-1105 – Main Street Program
W.S. 9-12-1201 through 9-12-1203 - Energy Performance Program
W.S. 9-12-1301 through 9-12-1312 - Small Business Investment Credit
W.S. 9-12-1401 through 9-12-1404 – Economically Needed Diversity Options for Wyoming
W.S. 9-12-1501 through 9-12-1509 – Economic Diversification Broadband Services
W.S. 9-20-101 through 9-20-104 - Minerals to Value Added Products
W.S. 9-4-715 (m) - Investment of State Funds
W.S. 21-18-104 - Small Business Development Centers
W.S. 35-12-110 (b) - Industrial Facility Permitting
W.S. 37-5-103 (xi) - Natural Gas Pipeline Authority
W.S. 40-11-102 - Foreign Trade Zones
2014 Session Laws, Chapter 46 – Large Project Loan Program
2017 Session Laws, Enrolled Act 98—Large Project Loan Program

Basic Information:

Number of Employees:

48 full-time positions

Clients Served:

The mission of the Wyoming Business Council is to increase Wyoming's prosperity—for industries, businesses, communities, families and individuals. The Business Council serves Wyoming through development programs, strategic partnerships, planning and finance for industry, small business, the technology sector and innovation, communities and new markets. It does this by focusing on efforts that expand the state and local tax base and addressing economic development building blocks: leadership and the role of public policy, infrastructure, communities and quality of life, education and workforce, entrepreneurial development, existing business retention and expansion, and business recruitment.

The Business Council develops and delivers its programs at the grassroots level through Regional Offices with active local participation and partnerships from economic development organizations, chambers of commerce, downtown development organizations, private businesses, the nonprofit sector, cities, towns, counties and joint powers boards.

In addition to the information provided in this document, the Business Council's annual benchmarks report is located at:

http://www.wyomingbusiness.org/Uploads/DocumentLibrary/WBC/Annual%20Reports/benchmarks_2018_web.pdf

This comprehensive report is updated and submitted to stakeholders in December.

Budget Information/Expenditures for FY17:

The Business Council operates a 2017/2018 biennium budget of \$64,074,299. Of that amount, \$56,097,068 is general fund, \$6,236,031 is federal funds and \$1,741,200 is other funds. Expenditures for the 2017/2018 fiscal year were \$42.8 million, including federal funds of \$2.7 million.

Primary Functions:

Mission: Increase Wyoming's prosperity.

Vision: Wyoming's industries are strong, diverse and expanding. Small business is a big deal. Wyoming is the technology center of the High Plains. Communities have the highest quality of life. Wyoming knows no boundaries.

Primary functions of the Business Council are:

Industrial Development: Expand value-added opportunities, increase transportation accessibility, and improve the business and industrial readiness of our communities.

Small Business Development: Encourage business starts, grow jobs and profitability and assist expansion of small businesses.

Technology Development: Grow the technology sector to become a significant industry in the state and improve business innovation, research and commercialization.

Community Development: Improve the livability of communities and grow and sustain economic development efforts.

Market Development: Increase market penetration for Wyoming companies nationally. Internationally, increase export readiness and grow foreign investments in Wyoming.

The Business Council provides these functions through activities within a set of building blocks specific to economic development:

New Business Recruitment: A community is ready to recruit new businesses when all of the other building blocks are in place. These new businesses add jobs and diversify or enhance the existing business base. The Business Council's Business Development Division actively targets hundreds of prospects across industry clusters and addresses inquiries about business relocation and expansion into Wyoming through professional relationship development, trade shows/conferences/events, marketing and advertising. The division also works with the agency's seven regional directors, the Community Development Division and local economic development organizations and municipalities to assist businesses relocating to Wyoming.

Existing Business Development: The majority of new jobs created will come from businesses already located within the community, so it is important to address the needs of these existing businesses. The Business Council provides a variety of business retention and expansion assistance including, but not limited to, business permitting assistance, loan programs, the Trade Show Incentive Grant, the Grown in Wyoming program and the Made in Wyoming program for Wyoming-made products. The Business Council also contracts with the Business Resource Network (BRN) to provide assistance targeted to existing business expansion. This network includes Wyoming Small Business Development Center (SBDC), Manufacturing-Works (MW), Wyoming Women's Business Center (WWBC), Wyoming Research Products and Technology Transfer Center (RPTTC), Wyoming Market Research Center (MRC), Wyoming Small Business Innovation Research and Technology Transfer (SBIR/STTR), Wyoming Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) and the Wyoming Technology Business Center (WTBC).

Entrepreneur Development and Innovation: Entrepreneurs are among our most important sources of new products and technologies. They also are homegrown and have great affinities for their communities, which leads to support for local programs and other businesses. In addition to the Business Council's direct programs providing technical assistance and capital, the Council contracts with the Business Resource Network (BRN) to provide assistance to entrepreneurs in the form of business planning, technical assistance, access to seed capital, patent searches and evaluation, federal research grants, and government procurement.

Infrastructure Development: Business cannot locate or expand in a community unless the necessary infrastructure is in place. In its most basic form, this includes land that is "shovel ready" – meaning water, sewer, gas, electricity and telecommunication services are available onsite. The Business Council's Business Ready Community Grant and Loan (BRC) program helps Wyoming cities, towns and counties build infrastructure and amenities needed for development and to attract workers. Various other programs and services also provide infrastructure development resources.

Education and Workforce Development: An available workforce is a critical component of economic development. A company cannot locate or expand if the necessary workforce is not available. The Business Council works with the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services (Workforce Development Training Fund grants) and higher-education institutions to improve the workforce, attract Wyoming-born residents back to Wyoming and provide information on training programs.

Communities and Quality of Life Improvement: Quality of life makes a community worth living in: comprehensive planning/visioning, cultural and recreational opportunities, adequate and affordable housing, health care, good schools, police and fire protection and curb appeal. The Business Council assists with community enhancement in a variety of ways. Programs and services include, but aren't limited to, downtown development (Wyoming Main Street), planning and assessments, administration of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant program (CDBG) for Wyoming and the Farmers Market Promotional Grant.

Leadership/Civic Development: A supportive local government and a designated economic development organization and plan are critical for successful economic development. Effective leaders can mobilize the community to plan for and support positive growth. The Business Council supports local leadership development through its seven regional directors, rural and downtown development (Wyoming Main Street) community assessments and technical assistance, and other programs and services.

The Business Council activities also fall within several broad categories, which include the following:

Strategic Partnerships: The Business Council partners with a variety of agencies and organizations to fulfill its mission. One of the most important partnerships is with the Business Resource Network (BRN) at the University of Wyoming. The BRN includes the Small Business Development Center (SBDC), Manufacturing-Works (MW), Wyoming Research Products and Technology Transfer Center, the Market Research Center (MRC), Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC), Wyoming Technology Business Center (WTBC) and the Wyoming Small Business Innovation Research/Small Business Technology Transfer (SBIR/STTR).

Additionally, the Business council works closely with staff and board members from Economically Needed Diversity Options for Wyoming (ENDOW), the governor's initiative for increasing diversity in the State.

Planning: The Business Council participates in a number of planning initiatives to support its mission. These long-range plans include transportation plans, technical assistance for downtown development studies, workforce and labor shed analysis, value-added plans and targeted industry studies.

Programs and Initiatives: The Business Council administers a variety of programs for community development, agribusiness development and small business assistance. Business Council programs undergo an evaluation of economic development impacts and an analysis of returns to the taxpayer.

Finance: The Business Council administers or participates in financing community infrastructure, private business loan participations, Large Loan Fund and the Minerals to Value-Added program.

The Business Council also continues to partner with the Wyoming Council for Women's Issues and the Wyoming Women's Business Center (WWBC). Both organizations work toward improved economic conditions for women in Wyoming. Finally, the WBC partners with the Wind River Development Fund (WRDF) to help create jobs and improve economic conditions on the Wind River Indian Reservation.

Section 7. Department Organization Chart

