

Chewelah Downtown Revitalization Workshop

Summary Report

Prepared for: Downtown Strategies Group

Workshop Date: May 5, 2025 **Workshop Location:** Quartzite Brewery, Chewelah, WA

Section 1 — Background & Purpose

The Downtown Strategies Group

The Chewelah Downtown Strategies group was formed in 2022 as a collaborative partnership between the Chewelah Chamber of Commerce and the City of Chewelah. Its founding purpose was to provide organized, community-driven direction for the long-term vitality and economic health of Chewelah's downtown business district.

The 2022 Economic Roadmap

That same year, the group engaged an outside consultant to conduct a professional assessment of Chewelah's business community and economic landscape. The result was a comprehensive economic roadmap outlining a series of strategic initiatives intended to strengthen downtown, attract new business, and support existing commerce. A dedicated group of volunteers assumed responsibility for carrying many of those initiatives forward.

Over the years that followed, progress was uneven. Some initiatives were successfully completed. Others lost momentum due to the practical realities of volunteer-driven work, including limited funding, shifting priorities, and capacity constraints.

Purpose of the May 5th Workshop

By 2025, it was clear that a structured community conversation was needed. The Downtown Strategies group organized the May 5th workshop at Quartzite Brewery to bring together a broad cross-section of Chewelah's business community, civic leaders, and engaged residents for exactly that purpose.

The workshop was not a planning session or a presentation. It was a working session designed to answer three fundamental questions:

- **What should we keep?** Which existing initiatives still have community support and merit continued investment of time and resources?
- **What should we stop?** Which initiatives no longer serve the community's needs or are no longer viable?
- **What should we create?** What new ideas and directions does the community want to pursue going forward?

The outcome of this process forms the basis of the recommendations and findings presented in this report.

Section 2 — Workshop Structure & Participants

The May 5th workshop was held at Quartzite Brewery in Chewelah, WA. The session was structured as a participatory working format, moving participants through three sequential exercises: initiative nomination, 2x2 matrix placement, and dot voting. This format was designed to surface genuine community priorities through structured dialogue and anonymous individual expression, rather than open debate or consensus-by-volume.

The following businesses and organizations were represented at the workshop:

Organizations	
49 North	Quartzite Brewery
Akers	STCU
Barnard Building	Tiffany Cox Design
Beautiful People Massage	Windermere
Chewelah Golf Course	Wuesthoff Excavation Inc.
General Store at Quartz Prairie	Mayor of Chewelah
God Fearing Brothers	Chewelah City Council Members
Hartill Saw and Tractor	New American Funding
Nina's Thai Food	

Section 3 — Nominated Initiatives

Participants were invited to nominate initiatives they believed would meaningfully contribute to downtown Chewelah's revitalization. Each nomination was also assessed for its current status relative to existing programs or infrastructure.

Initiative	Status
Retail Promotion + Meetups	Keep
Recruitment Packet	Keep
Storefront Registry	Keep
Vacancy Incentive Program	Create
Retail Promotion Program	Create
Youth Development / Career Pathing	Create
Walkway Improvement	Keep
Business Improvement District	Keep
Indoor Farmer's Market	Create
Sports Complex with Swimming Pool	Create
Event Activation	Keep
Lease Assistance Program	Keep
Facade Program	Kill

The Sports Complex with Swimming Pool generated the highest level of open discussion and visible excitement among participants during the nomination phase.

Section 4 — 2x2 Matrix Placement

Following the nomination exercise, each initiative was placed within a 2x2 strategic matrix. The matrix evaluates initiatives across two axes, **impact** and **feasibility**, producing four quadrants:

Quadrant	Description
Do First	High impact, high feasibility. Strong candidates for near-term execution.
Big Bet	High impact, lower feasibility. Worthy pursuits that require more planning, funding, and coordination.
Fill Time	Lower strategic priority but executable. Useful for maintaining momentum.
Reconsider	Lower impact or feasibility. Requires further discussion before committing resources.

Some initiatives were placed on the boundary between two quadrants, reflecting genuine participant debate about their complexity or potential.

Initiative	Quadrant	Status
Vacancy Incentive Program	Do First	Create
Storefront Registry	Do First	Keep
Retail Promotion + Meetups	Do First	Keep
Retail Promotion Program	Do First / Big Bet	Create
Recruitment Packet	Do First	Keep
Youth Development / Career Pathing	Do First / Big Bet	Create
Sports Complex with Swimming Pool	Big Bet	Create
Business Improvement District	Big Bet	Keep
Indoor Farmer's Market	Big Bet	Create
Walkway Improvement	Big Bet	Keep
Event Activation	Fill Time	Keep
Lease Assistance Program	Reconsider	Keep

Facade Program	Reconsider	Kill
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Section 5 — Dot Vote Results & Combined Priority Ranking

Following matrix placement, participants cast dot votes to express individual enthusiasm and priority. Each participant was allotted an equal number of votes to distribute freely across any initiatives of their choosing.

The table below combines matrix placement, dot vote results, and status designation into a single unified ranking, sorted by vote count.

Rank	Initiative	Quadrant	Votes	Status
1	Vacancy Incentive Program	Do First	10	Create
1	Sports Complex with Swimming Pool	Big Bet	10	Create
3	Business Improvement District	Big Bet	7	Keep
3	Indoor Farmer's Market	Big Bet	7	Create
5	Storefront Registry	Do First	5	Keep
5	Retail Promotion Program	Do First / Big Bet	5	Create
7	Retail Promotion + Meetups	Do First	4	Keep
7	Event Activation	Fill Time	4	Keep
9	Youth Development / Career Pathing	Do First / Big Bet	3	Create
9	Walkway Improvement	Big Bet	3	Keep
11	Recruitment Packet	Do First	2	Keep
12	Lease Assistance Program	Reconsider	1	Keep
13	Facade Program	Reconsider	0	Kill

The Vacancy Incentive Program and Sports Complex with Swimming Pool tied for the highest community enthusiasm with 10 votes each. The Facade Program received no votes and is the only initiative designated Kill.

Section 6 — Recommended Next Steps

Opening

The Chewelah Downtown Revitalization Workshop produced a rich and diverse set of initiatives, evaluated through two complementary lenses: the community's collective enthusiasm, as expressed through dot voting, and a strategic assessment of each initiative's impact and feasibility, as captured in the 2x2 matrix exercise. Both lenses carry meaningful weight.

Rather than prescribe a single sequencing framework, this report presents both perspectives side by side. It is the recommendation of this report that the **Downtown Strategies group**, in collaboration with engaged community volunteers, convene to determine which lens — or which combination of both — should guide the execution roadmap going forward. That conversation is itself an important next step.

Perspective A — Leading with Community Voice

In this perspective, initiatives are sequenced according to the number of dot votes received during the workshop, reflecting the priorities most strongly expressed by participants. This approach honors the energy in the room and has the added benefit of building early volunteer momentum around initiatives that already have champions.

Rank	Initiative	Quadrant	Votes	Status
1	Vacancy Incentive Program	Do First	10	Create
1	Sports Complex with Swimming Pool	Big Bet	10	Create
3	Business Improvement District	Big Bet	7	Keep
3	Indoor Farmer's Market	Big Bet	7	Create
5	Storefront Registry	Do First	5	Keep
5	Retail Promotion Program	Do First / Big Bet	5	Create
7	Retail Promotion + Meetups	Do First	4	Keep
7	Event Activation	Fill Time	4	Keep
9	Youth Development / Career Pathing	Do First / Big Bet	3	Create
9	Walkway Improvement	Big Bet	3	Keep
11	Recruitment Packet	Do First	2	Keep

12	Lease Assistance Program	Reconsider	1	Keep
13	Facade Program	Reconsider	0	Kill

In this perspective, the community's voice drives sequencing directly. The top two initiatives — Vacancy Incentive Program and Sports Complex with Swimming Pool — would be addressed first, regardless of their complexity or execution track.

Perspective B — Leading with Strategic Readiness

In this perspective, initiatives are organized into two parallel execution tracks based on their matrix quadrant placement. This approach prioritizes what is actionable in the near term while ensuring that larger, more complex initiatives are not deferred indefinitely — but rather entered into a structured planning pipeline.

Track 1 — Act Now

High impact, high feasibility. These initiatives have lower barriers to entry and can generate visible momentum for the downtown revitalization effort in the near term.

Priority	Initiative	Dot Votes	Status
1	Vacancy Incentive Program	10	Create
2	Storefront Registry	5	Keep
2	Retail Promotion Program	5	Create
4	Retail Promotion + Meetups	4	Keep
5	Recruitment Packet	2	Keep

Track 2 — Plan & Pursue

High impact, higher complexity. These initiatives require feasibility analysis, dedicated funding strategies, and broader stakeholder alignment. The recommendation is not whether to pursue them, but how to begin laying the groundwork now.

Priority	Initiative	Dot Votes	Status
1	Sports Complex with Swimming Pool	10	Create
2	Business Improvement District	7	Keep

2	Indoor Farmer's Market	7	Create
4	Walkway Improvement	3	Keep

Bridge Initiative

This initiative spans both tracks — it can begin modestly and scale meaningfully over time.

Initiative	Dot Votes	Status
Youth Development / Career Pathing	3	Create

Initiatives Requiring Further Review

These items were placed in the Reconsider quadrant during the workshop. They are not recommended for immediate action but warrant an honest conversation about their future within the roadmap.

Initiative	Dot Votes	Status	Note
Lease Assistance Program	1	Keep	Split sentiment; merits deeper discussion
Facade Program	0	Kill	No community support expressed at this time

A Call to the Downtown Strategies Group

The initiatives documented in this report represent the informed and enthusiastic voice of Chewelah's downtown community. The next meaningful step is to bring this data — and these two perspectives — to the **Downtown Strategies group** for structured discussion.

Specifically, the group is encouraged to:

1. **Review both perspectives** and determine which sequencing framework best aligns with available resources and organizational capacity.
2. **Recruit community volunteers** around the initiatives with the highest enthusiasm, particularly the top vote-getters, to ensure momentum is not lost between now and formal planning.
3. **Assign ownership** to at least one Act Now initiative as an early, visible proof point for the revitalization effort.
4. **Initiate a feasibility conversation** for the Sports Complex with Swimming Pool and Business Improvement District, given their combination of high community enthusiasm and structural complexity.
5. **Revisit the Lease Assistance Program** in a dedicated session to resolve the split sentiment captured during the workshop.

The work done in this workshop is a beginning, not an end. The community has spoken clearly about what it values. The Downtown Strategies group now has both the mandate and the material to move forward.