



THE HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THE JOINT MINERALS, BUSINESS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE, AND
THE HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THE JOINT APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

Here is the heart of it: Wyomingites see enormous potential in this state, and at the same time, many experience the economy as stagnant. When we asked people to describe Wyoming's economy in a single word, "stagnant" and "potential" were the two most common answers – often from the same person. That is not apathy, and it is not pessimism. It is the sound of a state full of people who can see what's possible and can't quite reach it.



Close the gap between the potential Wyoming clearly has and the opportunity people can actually access, and you unlock the thing Wyomingites are asking for most.

Underneath that paradox, people named a consistent set of needs and, importantly, they did not describe them as separate problems. They described one connected system:

- **Housing** – Named more often than anything else, and tied directly to hiring. Employers told us plainly: they can't find workers because workers can't find homes.
- **Workforce and Education** – The state's most-selected priority, from early career exposure through the trades and community colleges.
- **Childcare and Healthcare** – Increasingly understood not as personal concerns, but as economic infrastructure that determines whether people can work and stay.
- **Infrastructure and Community Capacity** – The water, roads, broadband, and local wherewithal that make growth possible in the first place.

Pull any one of these out on its own, and it looks like a line item. Put them back together, and you see what Wyomingites see: the conditions that determine whether a community can turn its potential into a future.

One finding deserves your particular attention: opportunity is not converted evenly across Wyoming. Smaller and more isolated communities face the same challenges as our larger ones, but with thinner staffing, smaller markets, higher logistics costs, and far less capacity to turn an idea – or even an available state program – into action. A program that is technically available everywhere can remain practically out of reach for the communities that need it most. In Worland, the question came to us directly: *"What is WBC's plan for smaller communities?"*

That question frames how we see our own role. Across every conversation, Wyomingites were clear they don't want economic development handed down to them. They want to lead it, and they want a partner that helps them reach the scale and capacity to succeed.

Our job is not to be the hero of this story. Wyoming's people are the heroes. Our job is to be the partner who helps a business get from "we'd love to grow here" to "we can," and the coach who helps a community get from "we've been talking about this for 10 years" to "here's what we're doing next."

The highest-value role we can play, and the place where state support goes furthest, is not driving growth but building the connective capacity that lets communities convert shared priorities into coordinated action – through regional collaboration, planning and execution support, and help navigating the systems already in place. That's a role we're ready to own, and one that fits Wyoming: locally led, practically minded, built on partnership rather than mandate.

I'll leave you with the finding that stays with me most. When we asked Wyomingites how much confidence they have that what they say actually shapes what gets decided, most told us "some" or "very little." I don't think the answer to that is to explain it away. I think the answer is to prove otherwise – by carrying what people tell us into rooms exactly like this one, and then showing them what came of it.

Being here today is part of that promise. We told Wyoming we'd bring what we heard to you, and we meant it.

There's one more finding worth holding onto, because it's the one that gives me the most hope. When we asked Wyomingites what gives them the most confidence in this state's economic future, the number-one answer wasn't a program, an industry, or even our natural resources. It was the people who care about this state. After a summer of listening, I know exactly what they mean – and you'll meet many of those people in the pages that follow.

For those who want to go deeper, the accompanying brief – **A Message from the Team of Thousands** – lays out what we heard, what our programs are teaching us, and the role Wyoming is asking us to play. My team and I welcome the chance to go deeper on any of it, today or whenever it's useful. Thank you for your service to Wyoming, and for your attention to the people who took the time to be heard.

Respectfully,



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The full brief, "A Message from the Team of Thousands," is attached.

What Wyoming Is Telling Us

And why we believe Wyoming is ready to build something extraordinary together.

37

listening sessions

23

counties reached

1,000+

Wyoming voices

20+

audience types

Wyoming Business Council summer listening effort and Team Wyoming Huddle, June–August 2026.

WE DELIVER RESULTS

We are your people – and this is what we do. Before we tell you what Wyoming asked of us, here is proof we can deliver on it. Every dollar invested since 2021 is projected to generate \$25 in business activity over five years.

\$25 : \$1

projected business activity per dollar invested

5,000+

jobs created – about 1 of every 60 in Wyoming

\$9 : \$1

private capital leveraged per federal dollar (WYVC)

✓ CLEAN AUDIT, TRUSTED STEWARDS

The Wyoming Department of Audit's special audit – delivered July 2026 to this committee and the Governor – found no improper spending and no violations of law across nearly seven years and \$38.98 million, with a single documentation finding affecting at most 0.09%.

Wyoming Department of Audit special audit (period July 2019–March 2026); Other results: WBC program outcomes, 2021–2026; Wyoming Venture Capital: \$19.7M deployed alongside \$164M+ in private investment.

WHAT WYOMING IS ASKING US TO BUILD

Four things we heard, again and again

Over the past year, we have had one of the great privileges of this work: sitting down with Wyoming people and asking what they want our economy to make possible. We listened in community rooms and businesses, at playgrounds and pancake breakfasts, through [statewide polling](#), the [Team Wyoming Huddle](#), [Assessment to Action](#), and the everyday work of helping companies and communities move an idea forward.

Our listening did more than identify problems. It gave us a picture of the Wyoming people want to live in – and a remarkably practical sense of what it will take to get there.

1 OPPORTUNITY IS THE OUTCOME

Good jobs matter, but so do competitive wages, career mobility, entrepreneurship, and the ability to stay near family. Especially in rural Wyoming, people see enormous potential that doesn't always translate into usable opportunity.

2 THE ECONOMY DOESN'T STOP AT THE JOB

Housing, healthcare, childcare, transportation, broadband, and places to gather all shape whether people and businesses can thrive. Housing was the most consistently reinforced cross-cutting constraint.

3 GROWTH HAS TO FEEL WORTH IT

People are open to growth when benefits are visible locally, communities keep their identity, and housing, infrastructure, services, and natural resources can keep up. They're asking for prosperity and preservation together.

4 THE WORK SHOULD BELONG TO WYOMING

Communities want collaboration over competition. Smaller communities often lack the staff, expertise, or scale to pursue opportunities alone – and are asking for help connecting resources, defining problems, and executing locally led solutions.

Source: Listening-session synthesis: 37 sessions across 23 counties; audiences included business owners, parents, young professionals, students, agricultural producers, educators, elected officials, and community leaders.

THE MESSAGE

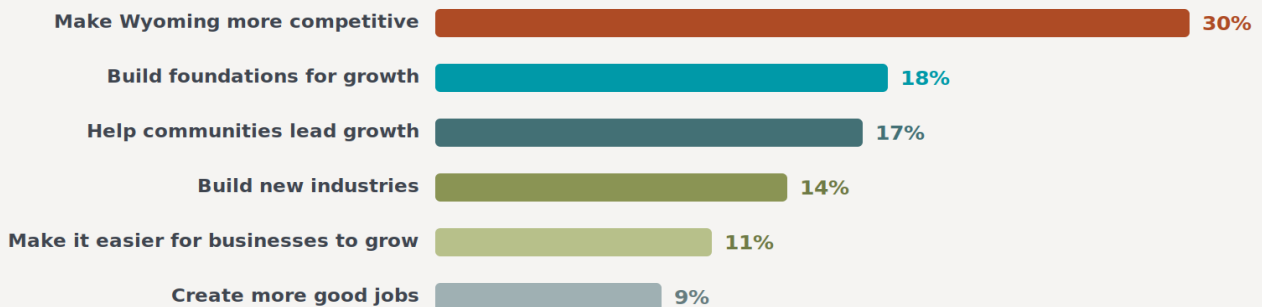
Wyomingites believe in this state's potential. They want more opportunity, and they judge growth by whether it helps people build a good life here. Growth is the means. A stronger, more resilient Wyoming is the outcome.

What we're hearing gives us a lot of hope. People believe in this place. They want to build here. They want their kids to have a future here. They want businesses to succeed, communities to thrive, and Wyoming to grow in a way that still feels unmistakably like Wyoming.

All these voices and people coming together have built a Team of Thousands. It is not an organization, and it does not require everyone to agree. A team does not have to agree on every answer – it has to believe there is something worth building together. Across communities, generations, and perspectives, we heard that belief again and again.

If Wyoming could make progress on ONE thing first...

What Huddle participants said should come first



Source: Team Wyoming Huddle, Aug. 13, 2026. Participants selected their single top priority.

THE CONVERGENCE

The more we listened, the more the picture came into focus

No single meeting speaks for Wyoming. That is why the convergence matters. Statewide polling, local conversations, the Huddle, young people, employers, parents, entrepreneurs, and community leaders all point toward the same possibility: **a Wyoming where opportunity is easier to turn into a real life, a growing business, and a stronger community.**

75%

said what we heard statewide matches what they're living*

61%

said costs are rising faster than income**

35%

said progress would make their community stronger + more stable**

*Team Wyoming Huddle, Aug. 13, 2026 (n=301-325 depending on question). **Statewide context: Tarrance Group survey of 500 likely Wyoming voters, Sept. 20-24, 2025 (±4.5% MOE).

The challenges are real, but the story is not one of decline or scarcity. It is a story of potential that is not yet fully connected. People increasingly see jobs, wages, housing, healthcare, childcare, infrastructure, amenities, career mobility, and civic participation as pieces of the same system. Fix the right connection, and an opportunity that seemed out of reach can suddenly become possible.

WHAT WE'RE LEARNING FROM WYOMING PEOPLE DOING THE WORK

The strongest reason for optimism is what happens after the listening

Across our work with businesses and communities, we keep seeing the same thing: when people get clear about the real problem, bring the right partners together, and use the right tool, they move. They don't wait for WBC to solve it for them – they build the ability to solve the next problem, too. That is exactly what we are seeing from communities engaged in Assessment to Action (A2A).

A2A IS TEACHING US SOMETHING BIGGER THAN A PROGRAM

Participants tell us the most valuable outcome isn't a workshop or even a completed project. It's learning how to see a hard problem differently, break it down, build trust around it, and act together. 100% of post-survey respondents said the process helped them identify a root problem. 87% said collaboration improved. 88% said the collaboration and teamwork they built was what they were most proud of. And 3 out of 4 said they plan to use the process on other problems. That means the capability stays in the community.

Assessment to Action participant survey; A2A Progress Report, December 2025.

"I walked through the door with a mental snapshot of my community in the future... and left with a plan to move forward – not just one project, but many projects."

– Hudson Mayor Sherry Oler

"The impact for me was to see everybody honestly come together."

– Gillette Mayor Shay Lundvall

Greybull's Danae Bales called the process "life changing" for helping leaders get to the core of an issue.

WHAT THE REST OF THE WORK IS TEACHING US

Wyoming already has many of the tools it needs

MESA + BRC: WHEN A WYOMING BUSINESS WANTS TO GROW HERE, MAKE "YES" POSSIBLE

Mesa Solutions wanted to stay and grow in Wyoming. Evansville and WBC worked through the site and infrastructure needed to make that decision executable – helping enable a roughly 220,000-square-foot facility. The lesson is simple and hopeful: when a good opportunity is real, Wyoming can organize around it and deliver.

WYVC: WYOMING CAN PULL MORE CAPITAL TOWARD WYOMING IDEAS

Wyoming Venture Capital (WYVC) is showing the value of state capital as a catalyst for private investment and startup growth – and teaching us where the next gaps are, especially as companies move from startup to scale. The opportunity isn't simply to spend more; it's to make sure great Wyoming companies can find the capital they need when they need it.

HOUSING + CHILDCARE: REMOVE THE BARRIER THAT KEEPS A GOOD JOB FROM BECOMING A GOOD LIFE

Our housing and childcare work reinforces what employers and families told us: workforce is not just a recruiting problem. When housing or childcare is the thing preventing someone from taking a job, staying in a community, or growing a business, solving that constraint is economic development. And those are solvable problems.

KICKSTART + ENTREPRENEURS: BACK THE PEOPLE TRYING TO BUILD SOMETHING

Founder conversations teach us to design around how companies actually get built – unevenly, iteratively, with different needs at different stages. The most promising role for WBC is to strengthen a statewide ecosystem of local mentors, investors, peers, and partners so more Wyoming ideas can become Wyoming companies.

THE BIG LESSON

Wyoming does not need a program for every problem. It needs people and institutions that can identify what is actually in the way, assemble the right partners, and access what is needed at the right time to address the problem. As economies and communities change, their challenges do too. It may be housing, childcare, infrastructure, capital, workforce, regulation, market access, or capacity. The solution changes. The discipline does not.

THE ROLE WYOMING NEEDS WBC TO PLAY

Not the hero of the story – the partner

The more we listen and work alongside Wyoming communities and businesses, the more confident we are in what the Business Council can be at its best. Not the hero of the story – Wyoming people are the heroes of this story. Our job is to be the partner who helps a business get from “we’d love to grow here” to “we can.” The coach who helps a community get from “we’ve been talking about this for 10 years” to “here’s what we’re doing next.” The connector who can see that a housing problem, a workforce problem, and a business opportunity may actually be the same economic development problem. Wyoming is small enough that we can connect those dots – and that can be one of our greatest competitive advantages.

→ STEWARD THE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

Make Wyoming a place where a good business can say yes. See the whole problem – connect sites, infrastructure, capital, workforce, and markets – and help Wyoming companies start, stay, and grow.

→ PARTNER + COACH COMMUNITIES

Believe in local leadership and make it stronger. Help communities get clear about the real problem, connect the right people, build capability, and turn locally owned ideas into action.

CREATE OPPORTUNITY FOR PEOPLE

Keep the outcome in view: more Wyoming people able to build the careers, businesses, families, and communities they imagine right here.

WHAT GIVES US HOPE

The people who care about this state

We spent months asking Wyoming people what they imagine for the future. Their answer was not small. They described a Wyoming that is thriving, growing, diverse, stable, vibrant, strong, and resilient – a place where a great company can start and stay, where a teacher, a welder, a nurse, or a young family can afford to build a life, and where our kids can leave to see the world and know there’s an opportunity waiting if they want to come home.

What Wyoming hopes to be known for in 10 years

In their own words — the most common responses at the Team Wyoming Huddle

diverse **thriving** **growing**
diversified **stable** **vibrant** **strong**
sustainable **robust** **resilient** **innovative** steady
prosperous expanding **opportunity** healthy booming flourishing
welcoming dynamic inclusive attractive affordable accessible
progressive promising creative connected forward-looking

Source: Team Wyoming Huddle, Aug. 13, 2026. Word size reflects how often each response was given.

When we asked Huddle participants what gave them the most confidence in Wyoming’s economic future, the number-one answer wasn’t government, a program, a new industry, or even our natural resources. It was the people who care about this state. We’ve met those people. They’re everywhere – mayors learning a new way to solve problems, founders betting on an idea, employers trying to grow, parents working to make their communities better for their kids, local leaders willing to sit at the same table and try again, and legislators willing to make hard choices about the future. **That is the Team of Thousands.**

WHAT THE TEAM OF THOUSANDS DESERVES

Wyomingites love this place fiercely – you can hear it in every hard thing they tell us. But too many have lost confidence that their voice reaches the rooms where decisions get made. When we asked nearly 600 people at the Huddle how much they believed what they say shapes what gets decided, the top answers were "some" (39%) and "very little" (29%). That's the action gap – the distance between what people say and whether it changes anything. Wyoming's people did their part by showing up. **Closing that gap is ours to do, together.**

Wyoming is ready. We are ready. Let us build it together.

Key brief sources: 2026 Listening Sessions Weekly Synthesis Briefs; Team Wyoming Huddle Poll Results (8/13/26); Tarrance Group statewide polling (Sept. 2025); A2A Progress Report (Dec. 2025); WBC program outcomes, 2021–2026.

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