

# Public Works Building Vision.



---

TOWN OF HOTCHKISS

2020

---





# About Report.

**This report is the product of a collaborative effort between the Town of Hotchkiss, Region 10 and Community Builders and was funded through the Colorado Department of Local Affairs' Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI). This project started in January 2020 and was completed in December 2020. Special thanks to the stakeholders and the community members who provided feedback throughout the project.**



## **COMMUNITY BUILDERS**

---

Community Builders is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping local leaders create strong and prosperous communities in the American West. CB provides information, analysis, assistance and trainings to support the many people and organizations working to build better places by aligning their community values to planning and economic goals.



## **REGION 10**

---

Region 10 leverages resources to help build strong communities. We do that by providing senior services, small business services, and regional development support to Delta, Montrose, Hinsdale, Gunnison, Ouray, and San Miguel counties.

# Overview.

Hotchkiss is a unique and special place that has experienced significant changes over the years. There have been ups and downs in the Town's economy, but its beauty and history have stayed the same. To keep the community a great place to live for generations to come, the Town has prioritized economic development, completing the Hotchkiss Prosperity Plan in 2019. One of the key priorities identified in that plan was downtown revitalization.

Towards that end, the Town began working with Region 10 and Community Builders

in early 2020 to explore opportunities for the reuse of the old Public Works Building, also known as the old Town Shop building. This town-owned property, found on the prominent corner of Bridge Street and Oak Drive, offers a unique opportunity to further the Town's goal of downtown revitalization. How can the Town ensure that this building realizes its immense potential to create a great downtown destination? This project was designed to answer this question and offer a strategy for proactively shaping the building's reuse in a way that serves the downtown and broader community.





# Process.

The Town, Region 10 and Community Builders worked to develop an authentic and robust public engagement process that provided different viewpoints a chance to find common ground and reach shared goals. The first step in the process was working with the community to understand their perspectives on the strengths, opportunities and challenges in the downtown that the reuse of the Public Works Building could address. Several engagement opportunities were offered including:

## Online Surveys

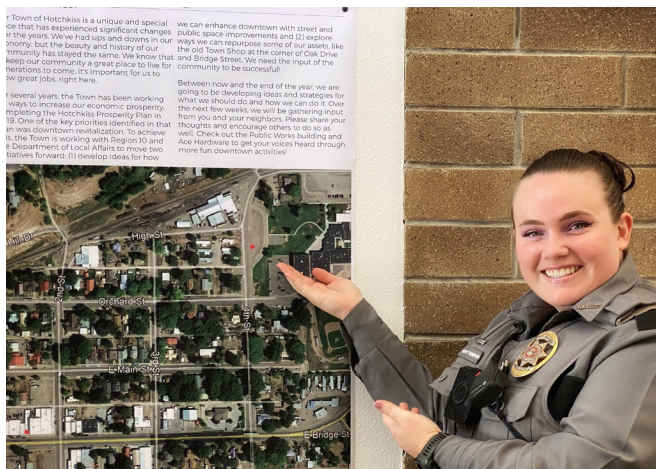
- » **Community survey.** The community survey asked residents for feedback on downtown assets, opportunities and challenges.
- » **Business survey.** A survey for business owners sought to understand the challenges of starting up and running a business in Hotchkiss.
- » **Downtown principles survey.** Once the principles were drafted, a survey invited feedback from the community on what they liked about them and what was missing.

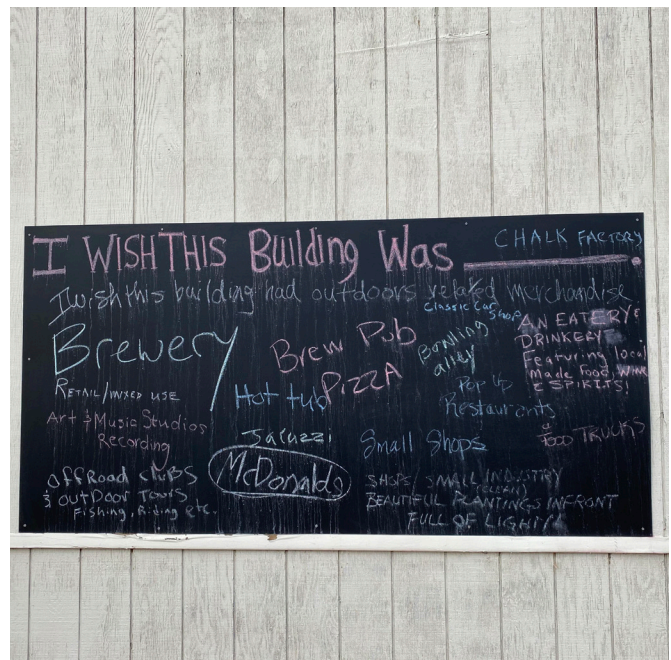
## In-person Activities

- » **Poster map activities.** Maps of downtown were displayed at Town Hall and the Creamery for residents to put dot stickers on their favorite places to understand what people love downtown.
- » **Installations downtown.** An interactive display at Ace Hardware invited residents to write with window markers what they would love to see downtown. A chalkboard installation at the old Public Works Building invited residents to draw and write what they wished to see in that building in the future.

## Virtual Workshops

- » **Zoom “Bring Your Own Lunch” Workshops.** Because this project occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic, two virtual workshops were held. The first gathered feedback on key assets, opportunities and challenges downtown. The second vetted the draft downtown guiding principles with participants and sought to apply them to reuse concepts for the old Public Works Building.





From the input gathered, seven guiding principles for downtown were crafted and refined to define what a successful downtown looks like in Hotchkiss. The draft principles were vetted through a Zoom Workshop and follow-up survey and received only positive feedback.

With the guiding principles in hand, the second step in the community engagement process was working with stakeholders and the public to vet desired future uses for the Public Works Building. A Zoom Workshop was held in November 2020 that resulted in a preferred use that was determined based on which concepts would further the most guiding principles. That preferred use, along with next steps to move toward implementation, are captured in this report.



# The Opportunity.

The reuse of the Public Works Building is viewed by the Town as a high priority. Due to its location, existing ownership by the Town, and the opportunity to transform a vacant but viable building into a vibrant space, the Public Works Building is an ideal catalytic project for downtown. Located on the northwest corner of Bridge Street and Oak Drive, the Public Works Building is at the center of downtown and within easy walking distance of many businesses and anchors.

The Public Works Building was built by Delta County in the 1950s and used as a shop to work on and store their equipment. Ownership of the building was transferred to the Town of Hotchkiss in 1985 for use by their Public Works Department. It is a 6,217 square foot space with extensive attached garage space and a large parking area at the back of the building. The Town built a new Public Works Building in 2020 and has since stopped operating out of the downtown space. The building now offers a unique opportunity for an adaptive reuse that can be a vibrant focal point for downtown.

In addition to the opportunity of improving the building itself, there are a number of vacant buildings in the immediate vicinity that offer tremendous potential for downtown. A successful reuse of the Public Works Building may serve as a direct catalyst for further adaptive reuse on adjacent underutilized property.



## Why the public works building?

The reuse of the Public Works Building is a unique and critical opportunity for downtown three key reasons:



### TOWN OWNED

When a private property is left vacant and underutilized, the Town has little control to activate those spaces. Because the Public Works Building is a publicly-owned property, the Town has both the responsibility and power to ensure that it is leveraged to support the needs of the community.



### CATALYST

Successful reuse of the Public Works Building can be an example of the vibrant potential of downtown. This has the potential to create a chain reaction to other underutilized sites spurring additional private investment.



### LOCATION

The Public Works Building is located on a key corner in downtown and has a large amount of frontage on Bridge Street with over 8,900 cars passing it daily. This highly visible location means that this site has the potential to attract visitors to stop in Hotchkiss and support downtown businesses.

# Small Town Success Story of Adaptive Reuse.

**Project:** The Hayden Granary

---

**Location:** Hayden, Colorado

---

**Population:** 1,810

The Hayden Granary connects past, present and future by adapting a historic grain elevator and an agricultural warehouse into a community space that houses several local businesses. After attending a public workshop for a Comprehensive Plan update, owner Tammie Delaney heard loud and clear an expressed need from her neighbors for more community gathering spaces. She decided to talk with her regular granary patrons about what they would like to see in the space that would encourage them to come in more often. Based on their feedback, she transformed a portion of the space into a coffee shop. As that took off, she began to convert the interior of the building into a multi-tenant space with a shared gathering area.



Today, the Hayden Granary is home to the coffee shop as well as a pizzeria and a brewery. Long term renovation plans is expected expand commercial square footage to add new tenants. However, current tenants can not support renovations and maintenance. To help financially support the cost of the commercial space, the owner is now developing 4 residential units. Residential is key to supporting the longevity of the project moving forward, because residential is a much more lucrative use that provides consistent cash flow compared to commercial. Once the project is complete, the Hayden Granary will not only provide much-needed community gathering space but also attainable housing. It is a prime example of how a former industrial building can be converted into a creative new use that supports community needs.

# The Public Works Building Vision.

Before the community could talk about an ideal future use for the Public Works Building, it was important to first take a step back and assess the community's perspective on the strengths, opportunities and challenges in the downtown. The community provided input on their hopes and aspirations for the type of place they wanted downtown Hotchkiss to become. From this input, seven guiding principles for downtown were crafted to define what a future successful downtown looks like to the community. These principles are important as they provide a framework for action and can guide decision-making for downtown Hotchkiss. Any future proposed downtown improvement project, including the repurposing of the Public Works Building, should advance as many of these guiding principles as possible.

**Downtown needs to reflect the community and highlight the character of Hotchkiss.**

**Increase anchor businesses that attract residents and visitors alike.**

**Agriculture, outdoor recreation and art culture are major drivers in the community and should be expanded and incorporated more in downtown.**

**Expand the availability and affordability of spaces to new and existing businesses.**

**Improve downtown by increasing walkability, activating underutilized buildings, providing signage, increasing public gathering spaces, and enabling facade improvements.**

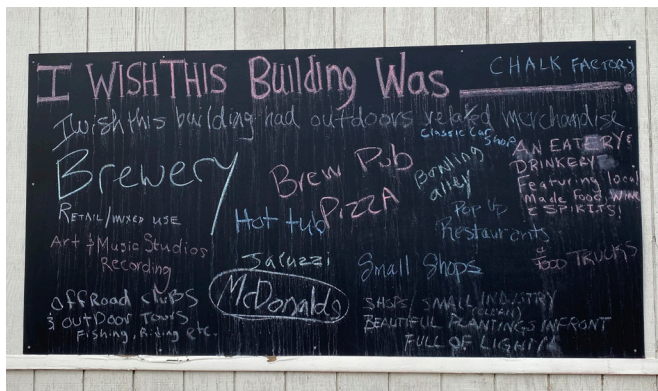
**Capture through traffic on Bridge Street by creating a welcoming downtown environment that offers services for travellers.**

**Make downtown Hotchkiss a destination for residents, visitors, and businesses by increasing nightlife activities, dining and drinking establishments, locally made goods, and workforce housing.**



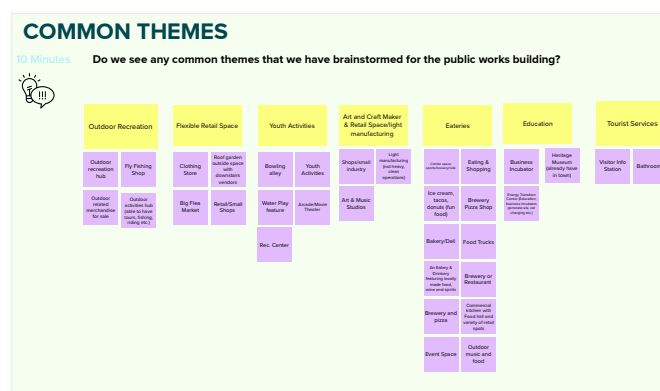
With the guiding principles for the downtown in hand, the second step in the engagement process was working with the community to identify specific uses for the Public Works Building that would further the principles. A series of activities were held in Fall 2020 that resulted in several reuse concepts. A more detailed description of the engagement process can be found on pages 4-5.

## Downtown Installations



A chalkboard installation on the building invited community members to draw and write ideas for the future use of the building.

## Virtual Workshops



	Community Guiding Principles							
	Customers benefit by seeing the community and supporting the creation of relationships	Encourage smaller businesses that attract residents and visitors alike	Support existing businesses and offerability of new and existing businesses	Support existing businesses and offerability of new and existing businesses	Support existing businesses and offerability of new and existing businesses	Support existing businesses and offerability of new and existing businesses	Support existing businesses and offerability of new and existing businesses	Concepts that do not fit the guiding principles
Common themes to repurpose the Public Works Building								
Eateries	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Youth Activities	✓							✓
Outdoor Recreation	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		
Art and Craft Maker & Small Scale/light manufacturing	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		
Education		✓	✓	✓				
Flexible Retail Space	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Tourist Services								✓

Ideas generated from the Public Works Building Opportunity Workshop.

All ideas generated by the public for the reuse of the site were then vetted against the guiding principles for downtown to determine which concepts would advance the most principles. The preferred use that rose to the top combined several concepts: a flexible commercial space that can accommodate multiple vendors including eateries, retail, maker and/or light manufacturing uses. It is important to note that while the preferred use is flexible commercial space, it is critical that the vendor(s) are open to the public to create a destination and gathering place for patrons and the community.

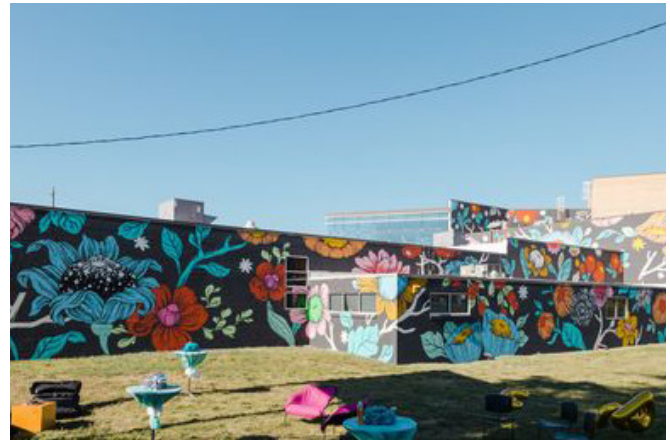
**PUBLIC WORKS BUILDING VISION: A FLEXIBLE COMMERCIAL SPACE THAT CAN ACCOMMODATE MULTIPLE VENDORS INCLUDING EATERIES, RETAIL, MAKER AND/OR LIGHT MANUFACTURING USES.**

# Examples of Interior Use & Exterior Design

## Interior Use Examples



## Exterior Design Examples





# Alignment.

The public works building vision advances the following downtown guiding principles.

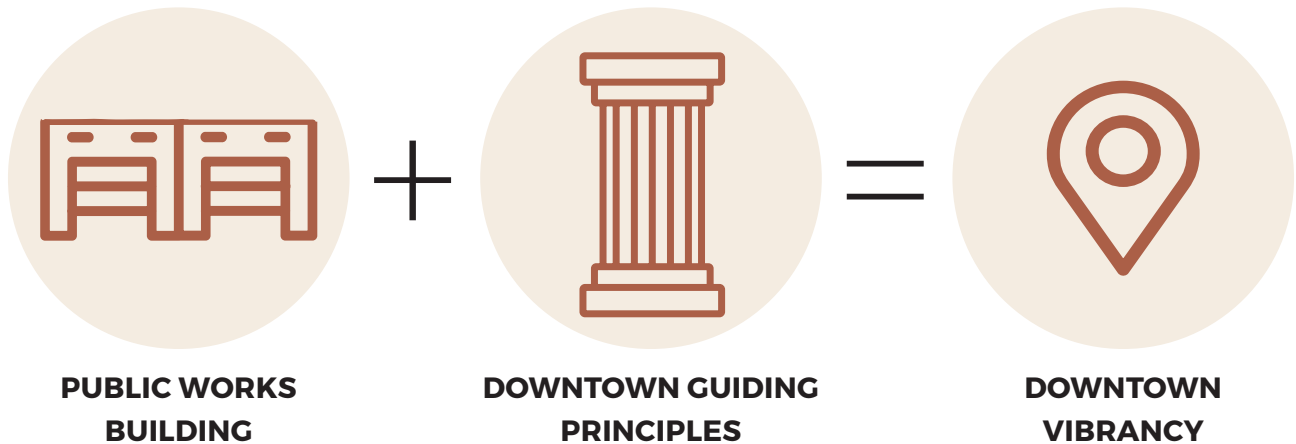
GUIDING PRINCIPLE	PUBLIC WORKS BUILDING VISION ALIGNMENT
<i>Downtown needs to reflect the community and highlight the character of Hotchkiss.</i>	The building can showcase Hotchkiss' unique economy by providing space for local retailers, makers and restaurateurs.
<i>Increase anchor businesses that attract residents and visitors alike.</i>	By housing multiple businesses in a single location, the building will become an anchor institution and draw people to other existing businesses throughout the downtown.
<i>Agriculture, outdoor recreation and art culture are major drivers in the community and should be expanded and incorporated more in downtown.</i>	While it is not a given, flexible space could serve local artists, farmers, and makers that highlight these unique aspects of the community.
<i>Expand the availability and affordability of spaces to new and existing businesses.</i>	Flexible space can be tailored to the needs of tenants, eliminating the need for them to rent spaces that are larger than their actual needs, which can save business owners a lot of money.
<i>Improve downtown by increasing walkability, activating underutilized buildings, providing signage, increasing public gathering spaces, and enabling facade improvements.</i>	The successful reuse of the Public Works Building will activate one of downtown's largest vacant spaces. Further, the potential conversion of the driveway space into a community gathering, outdoor dining or retail space creates a more walkable environment downtown.
<i>Make downtown Hotchkiss a destination for residents, visitors, and businesses by increasing nightlife activities, dining and drinking establishments, locally made goods, and workforce housing.</i>	Adding locally owned retail and dining options downtown give residents and visitors alike more reasons to be downtown.
<i>Capture through traffic on Bridge Street by creating a welcoming downtown environment that offers services for travellers.</i>	An activated building on one of downtown's most prominent corners will be a big draw for travellers passing through town. There is potential to add some services for travellers in this location, including takeaway food, visitor information and/or public restrooms.





The town owned public works building located on the corner of Bridge Street and Oak Drive.

# Going Forward.

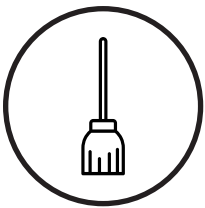


Going forward, as the Town considers selling the Public Works Building, it will be important to ensure that the future use and design of the building furthers as many of the guiding principles as possible. Developing and issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the purchase and reuse of the building is an option and will be explored further in 2021. Other next steps are described in the following section.

# Next Steps.

The community engagement process and this document serve as a foundation for making the community's vision for the Public Works Building real. Successful reuse of the building will depend upon collaboration among Town staff, elected and appointed officials, stakeholders and the community. Further work on the following next steps will be necessary in order to better understand the path toward implementation. The Town will continue work with Community Builders and Region 10 in the first quarter of 2021 to move forward with the following.

## **Partner with the Colorado Brownfields Partnership.**



Because the building was previously used as a shop for equipment repairs and was built in the 1950s, it will be important to determine if any environmental clean-up will be necessary. The Town can partner with the Colorado Brownfields Partnership in 2021 to assess the presence of environmental contamination on the property and determine potential resources if clean-up is needed. This resource is available free of charge to the Town through the Colorado Brownfields Partnership, which is funded by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

---

## **Assess Parking Needs.**



Parking requirements can place unintended limitations on the way a building or site is used. An important next step is determining the number of parking spaces that would be required for the preferred use of flexible commercial space per the existing zoning code. Can the amount of required spaces be accommodated on-site? If they can, is that the most desirable use of the space?

Many communities allow on-site parking requirements to be reduced if it is demonstrated that spaces can be accounted for through on-street and other public parking nearby. This can be a great advantage to the community and property owner because it means more of the site can be used for outdoor dining, gathering space, retail space, or other use. The Town should determine what the on-site parking requirements will be for the Public Works Building if it is converted into commercial space and if it is open to a reduction in those requirements or having them be met with on-street and public parking. This will allow greater flexibility and predictability for the future building owner.

## Explore Requirements for Purchase.

To enable the sale of the Public Works Building to a developer that can achieve the community's vision, the Town has discussed potentially issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP). Beyond converting the building into a flexible commercial space, the Town should consider if there are other requirements desired for the sale of the building. To ensure the community's vision comes to fruition, some key considerations to explore before moving forward with an RFP are described below.



### **TARGET RENTS.**

One of the guiding principles to come out of the process was to expand the availability and affordability of spaces to new and existing businesses. Through a light assessment, the Town can estimate whether or not affordable rental rates would be feasible given the desired sale price of the building. It is a possibility that to offer space at a truly affordable rate to vendors, it may be necessary to reduce the sale price of the building.

### **BUILDING ACTIVATION.**

The Town should consider adding a requirement that the building be occupied and operating after a specified amount of time following the sale to ensure that it does not sit stagnant and underutilized.

### **BUILDING EXTERIOR.**

The guiding principles touch on the desire for downtown to highlight the character of Hotchkiss, be walkable and increase public gathering spaces. The Town should consider if it wants to request certain exterior design elements be incorporated for the sale of the building.

## Next Steps

