

SUCCESSFUL GARDINER

COMMUNITY MEETING SUMMARY



SUCCESSFUL GARDINER



Future West is grateful for the involvement and support of the Successful Gardiner Leadership Team in the development of this Community Profile.



Future West helps communities identify and achieve their desired future.



COMMUNITY MEETING SUMMARY

May 7 and 9, 2019

On May 7-9th, Successful Gardiner hosted a two-night community workshop to discuss options for Gardiner's future. The workshop agenda can be viewed [here](#). A total of 116 participants worked in break out groups to discuss the following 5 topics.

1. [Affordable Housing](#)
2. [Protecting Community Character](#)
3. [Sustainable Tourism & Economy](#)
4. [Strengthening Community](#)
5. [Creating A More Youth & Family Friendly Community](#)

In addition to this summary of the workshops, a Resource Appendix is provided with links to learning resources about the different topics discussed.

A heartfelt THANK YOU to all the participants who showed up and engaged in a very civil and thoughtful dialogue about our future.

To stay updated on Successful Gardiner going forward, sign up at www.successfulgardiner.org



1. AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUMMARY

On the first night, the discussion began with individuals identifying what a successful resolution to housing affordability would look like. It echoed the community vision identified in the pre-meeting public input process, which was:

- A vibrant year-round economy
- Well-functioning infrastructure
- An authentic community
- A strong sense of community
- Managed growth to protect community
- A great place for youth and families
- High quality community services
- A healthy ecosystem

See appendix for full vision statements.

After finding agreement from most of the group on defining success, the group learned about different housing tools available from the HRDC, a southwest Montana housing assistance organization, and how they can be applied in Gardiner. As a result, the group did not progress very far along on the planned discussion agenda. This topic brought out the most concerns, fears, and emotion about Gardiner's housing challenges, particularly regulations, incorporation, and the role of short-term rentals (STR) in the economy (pros and cons). While the learning was very productive and community members were good about listening to each other's concerns, the night's discussion did not allow for a full exploration all of the options, including those other than an incorporated community, that are available to Gardiner to address housing challenges.

On the second night, break out groups explored the scenarios and spent a great deal of time learning about affordable housing solutions.

1.1 CRITERIA FOR SUCCESS

QUESTION:

What would a successful outcome to affordable housing solutions look like in the future?

In 10 years, Gardiner will be successful in addressing housing affordability if:

- Existing Gardiner residents can find affordable homes to live in.
- Working families can afford to either own or rent a home.
- There are homes for both rent and/or homeownership.

- Housing allows for community socio-economic and age diversity.
- The community has implemented methods, programs, and incentives to help make it easier and less expensive for developers to build housing.
- We have worked together as a community to enhance Gardiner’s quality of life.

If we do not do this:

- The school’s viability will be threatened with decline of families and students.
- Housing scarcity for workers will threaten the ability of businesses to operate at full or desired levels.
- The median costs of housing for purchase and rents will continue to increase.
- Our community will be divided as it continues to fight about how to solve housing challenges.

1.2 TOOLS FOR ADDRESSING HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

A significant amount of the discussion involved answering questions about:

- federal and state housing assistance programs
- [community land trusts](#) for housing development
- [housing cooperatives](#)
- [weatherization assistance programs](#)
- [down payment assistance programs](#)
- incorporation and its application to housing (there were concerns regarding how a municipal boundary would be identified, property tax increases, size of municipal government and regulations enacted by municipal government)
- county zoning and its application to housing (there were concerns regarding how and what zoning regulations would be developed and how the County would manage enforcement since they’re in Livingston)

1.3 SCENARIOS DISCUSSION

Four scenarios were proposed for discussion:

1. Continue to address housing through volunteer committees.
2. Advocate for Park County to assist with implementing the Gardiner Housing Action Plan.
3. Partner with Park County on a community plan to develop a land use plan and land use regulations.
4. Incorporate to develop a land use plan, land use regulations, and property tax revenues.

The purpose of the scenario discussion was to explore what the pros and cons of each options would be, what different tools can be used, and inform a shared recommendation for Gardiner.

SCENARIO 1:

No regulations, community volunteers work with area housing organizations

What would be the positive outcomes of this approach on the community?

- Housing co-op: money where your mouth is and where community members can invest their money.
- Housing co-op: limited profitability (6%) keeps prices/rents low.
- Housing co-op: community determines structure of co-op.
- Land trust: what will the land be used for?
- NPS & other businesses have to improve housing to be competitive.

What would be the negative outcomes of this approach on the community?

- Too little too late.
- Prices continue to increase.
- View-shed ruined through taller buildings if there are no regulations.
- Fewer investors due to limited profitability of a co-op.
- Loss of community & compassion for the people who need the community.
- Loss of families impact on school (shut down) families might get booted to Livingston.
- No types of jobs to bring families into the community.

What do we perceive as the pros and cons of this alternative on the community?

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mom & Pop STRs can supplement high housing costs.• More money to STRs.• No new taxes.• No new regulations.• The investments of property owners are not threatened. (eg, Don't tell me what I can do with my property).• Perhaps with the help of HRDC we can solve our housing problems without government.• We can use some of the tools HRDC talked about without zoning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No community say in how we grow and what gets built.• Large corporations (aka Disney) buy all the land and remove all community.• Current STR value will decrease.• Loss of ethical value.• County Commissioners don't hear us in Gardiner and respond down to our needs.• This won't stop short-term rentals (STRs) from decimating our remaining housing stock.

OVERALL SUMMARY OPINION OF THIS ALTERNATIVE

Co-op and land trust opportunities work along with the status quo and should provide citizens with voice in development of some housing; won't hurt or compete with the current Mom & Pop STRs. But without some type of control the community is at risk of a "corporate" takeover.

SCENARIO 2:

Partnership with Park County government in the implementation of the Gardiner Housing Action Plan

What would be the positive outcomes of this approach on the community?

- Moving beyond the current status quo in housing.
- Identifies Gardiner's needs, wants, issues.
- Better communication between Gardiner and the County.
- Higher level of consistency.
- Potential to increase affordable housing.

What would be the negative outcomes of this approach on the community?

- Easier to maintain status quo.
- More regulatory hoops.

What do we perceive as the pros and cons of this alternative on the community?

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not have to establish a new municipal government. • Less taxes and potential fees than incorporation. • More resources, experience and knowledge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited County staff time to attend to our needs. • Slower approach. • Not all wants and needs are addressed. • Community doesn't have final say. • Less control.

OVERALL OPINION SUMMARY OF THIS ALTERNATIVE

It would be moving beyond the status quo.

SCENARIO 3:

Partnership with County to develop a community land use plan and land use regulations.

What would be the positive outcomes of this approach on the community?

- Local input; everyone has a say.
- Structure to work with HRDC on building housing.
- Increase in housing availability.
- Stabilize the school enrollment.
- Preserve sense of community.
- More attractive for new residents.
- Incentives for new businesses.
- Ensure a balance of short-term and year round housing.
- Ensure parking pressure.
- Ordinances – noise, night sky, nuisance.

What would be the negative outcomes of this approach on the community?

- Little to no support from County Commissioners.
- Possible conflict between town, planning commissioners.
- Overtax infrastructure with new housing.
- Limits private property rights.

OVERALL SUMMARY OPINION OF THIS ALTERNATIVE

It allows the community to shape our town with a balanced approach to housing in partnership with the county without incorporating and the cost of incorporating.

SCENARIO 4:

Local control through incorporation

What would be the positive outcomes of this approach on the community?

- Issues specific to Gardiner are addressed locally, not at County level which could have varying decisions.
- Control of future of Gardiner.
- Standing and voice as a community for advocacy to talk with NPS and FS for land acquisition.
- Specific authority to advocate for Gardiner.
- Bring money and opportunities to housing issues.

What would be the negative outcomes of this approach on the community?

- Increased taxes on Gardiner proper & businesses with owners outside Gardiner with no vote.
- Zoning difficult with a lot of "grandfathered" businesses (when sold might have to comply with new policy).
- Control of future Gardiner relies on who is elected in town.
- Will not magically create more land to build housing (supply/demand still exists).
- Will not resolve difference of community perspective on housing/zoning.

OVERALL SUMMARY OF OPINION OF THIS ALTERNATIVE

Will not resolve all of housing issues immediately (may open a can of worms), but could be a stop-gap that leads to a future by design. It will be an intentional decision made by the community.

OTHER COMMENTS:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CONCERN: It wouldn't be fair to Gardiner business owners who live outside of town and wouldn't be able to vote (if we incorporated).• CONCERN: How would we ensure enforcement of any county zoning regulations if the (county) enforcers are in Livingston?• CONCERN: An incorporated Gardiner would raise taxes higher and higher every year.• CONCERN: If you do away with STRs you will lose hundreds of thousands of dollars in resort tax revenue.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• QUESTION: Would housing still be expensive in a community land trust model?• QUESTION: What would be the benefits of incorporation?• SUGGESTION: We need a bus system to transport people to places where housing is available (down valley).
---	---

2. PROTECTION OF COMMUNITY CHARACTER SUMMARY

The group participants began by identifying what values they want to protect in Gardiner that they feel makes it a unique and special place. They then explored 3 scenarios which each allow for different tools and resources to be available to Gardiner to take action to address community character.

1.1 GOALS SUMMARY

QUESTION: What are the values that make Gardiner unique?

- Small town
- River
- Human history
 - Multiple stories that help define Gardiner
- Gateway to Yellowstone
- Recreational opportunities
- Unobstructed views
- Abundant wildlife
- Specific historic buildings
- Sense of community
 - Accepting of different backgrounds
- Knowing neighbors
- Western town
- Togetherness
- Remoteness
- Next to public lands

QUESTION: What are the physical characteristics that we want to keep and not lose?

- The Arch
- Park Street – a western feel?
 - All on one side
 - Height of the buildings, limited height
 - Not more than 3 story
 - The western façade
- Views from town out to surrounding mountains
 - Height limits
- Historic stone houses
- Return dark skies
- Community center
- Balance of businesses
- Clean air
- Railroad grade coming into town
- Bridge linking two sides of town and view
- Airport
- Open space
- Montana character

1.2 SCENARIO DISCUSSION SUMMARY

The discussion explored 3 different scenarios with the intention of better understanding the options available to Gardiner in order to inform the development of Successful Gardiner goals and strategies. Not recorded in the notes was quite a bit of discussion and learning about how plans are developed; what zoning, design standards, and guidelines can do to help protect character and how the County Planning Board and a City Commission function. The group’s recommendation was to develop a community plan that would identify, prioritize, and define strategies for protecting what makes Gardiner unique and a great place to live.

**SCENARIO 1:
We Work As Volunteers**

QUESTION:
If we organize ourselves under our current community structure as volunteers, what options are available to us to protect the character of our community?

What would be the positive outcomes of this approach on the community?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Potential for variety of design and architectural styles.• Could use voluntary design guidelines and standards and education directed toward the development community on community goals.

What would be the negative outcomes of this approach on the community?

- Town may lose the physical characteristics that make it unique (like Park Street).
- Land use conflict could increase.

QUESTION:

What do we perceive as the pros and cons of this alternative for the community?

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No financial costs to Gardiner residents, less expensive.• Developers have freedom to do whatever they want. Developers do not have to consider neighbors.• Decision making at individual level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lack of ability to manage community character.• No regulations to help us protect character.• Resort tax funds are limited and there are limits to what can be used for.• Voluntary design guidelines and standards can be ignored. Not enforceable.

OVERALL SUMMARY OF CONVERSATION ABOUT THIS ALTERNATIVE

This is the status quo. Maintaining character of the community is an individual choice. Could lose history. No vision for the future.

SCENARIO 2:

We Partner with Park County on a Neighborhood Plan

QUESTION:

If we partner with the County do develop a neighborhood plan and land use regulations, what options are available to us to protect the character of our community?

What would be the positive outcomes of this approach on the community?

- A zoning district could define development standards and integrate strategies and procedures for development that protects community character and overseen by county.

QUESTION:

What do we perceive as the pros and cons of this alternative for the community?

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Zoning provides design standards that can be enforced.• Less of a cost than incorporation.• May be more acceptable than incorporation.• Can still be community driven decisions.• Could do a rural improvement district?• Can hire consultants to do the planning process including a public participation process. The plan would set goals and actions that determines what land use regulations should include to achieve goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Future County Commissioners may not have same priorities as Gardiner.• There are limited finances available to administer at County level for enforcement.• Could take away some of individual landowners rights.• Is a lot of work to create a plan and regulations. Unsure of the gain.• May not get community agreement to move forward, thus back to no action/voluntary and not moving forward.• Zoning design standards are not the same as building standards. Still can have substandard buildings.

OVERALL SUMMARY OF CONVERSATION ABOUT THIS ALTERNATIVE

This would be a citizen driven solution. Could be good first step or even interim step to develop more accepted regulations for community to preserve character.

SCENARIO 3:

We Have Local Control Under Incorporation

QUESTION:

If we were to incorporate, what options are available to us to protect the character of our community?

What would be the positive outcomes of this approach on the community?

A zoning district could define development standards and integrate strategies and procedures for development that protects community character.

QUESTION:

What do we perceive as the pros and cons of this alternative for the community?

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gardiner has local control with an elected city council who would make decisions here. • We increase capacity to make a difference. • Will get increased funding from municipal taxes to fund projects. • Do not have to take over duties of the County. Can contract with them to continue using them for what currently paying them to do with taxes paid to county already. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gardiner would have higher taxes. • Would there be more risk? • Town may have more work on roads, snow, etc. • May be unintended consequences? • Community may not accept this option.

OVERALL SUMMARY OF CONVERSATION ABOUT THIS ALTERNATIVE

Incorporation is a long process. Is citizen driven. Greatest potential for desired outcomes of maintaining community character under local control.

1.3 RECOMMENDATIONS AND RATIONALE

The recommendation was to create a community plan that would enable the community to work with the County on strategies to enhance and protect local assets. A community plan would also support and enable leveraging local dollars with grant money for community investments.

In a review of the three scenarios, the participants drew the following conclusions:

Scenario 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No one likes Scenario 1 – no plan, no guidance, no restrictions
Scenario 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • YES to working with the county on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighborhood plan...YES we must have standards • Need cooperation with county on timing, cost, zoning
Scenario 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How “incorporation” could help the preservation of character <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continued outreach and education on becoming incorporated • example – levels of cooperation with county but have our own governance • Look at other communities and how they preserved character

The physical character most important to protect includes:

- History
- Western design
- Height of structures
- Connection to surrounding natural setting
- Dark skies
- Significant features:
 - railroad
 - river
 - arch
 - Park Street

Going forward:

- Need for Standards: “enforced” to meet goals of maintaining character...develop the right process to get there
- Define “Grandfathered in”

III. BUILDING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM & ECONOMY

On the first night, the group focused its discussion on the first strategy (education and outreach), building local capacity, and how to redirect tourism marketing to promote other seasons outside the peak NPS season. On the second night, the group explored the strategies more deeply and worked through the different scenarios.

Strategies presented included:

Tourism Management Strategies		
<p>1. Adopt principles for sustainable or responsible tourism.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop education programs for visitors on local culture • Use principles to guide policy 	<p>2. Partner with public land agencies on a Visitor Management Plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage the supply of visitor opportunities (e.g. increase places available, times to accommodate visitors, etc.) • Manage the demand for visitation (e.g. length of stay, total visitor numbers, types of uses, etc.) • Manage the resource capability to handle uses (e.g. site management expansion or hardening, etc.) • Manage the impacts of the use (e.g. modify types of uses, disperse uses, etc.) 	<p>3. Employ local government authority to manage visitation and impacts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smooth visitors over time by promoting other seasons and times. • Spread visitors across sites. • Adjust pricing to balance supply and demand for high/low season. • Regulate accommodation supply.

1.1 TOURISM PRINCIPLES SUMMARY

What are the types of behaviors we want to see?

Types of Behaviors they want to see:	Types of Behavior they don't want to see:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People treat Gardiner like it's their home. • They show respect for the natural environment (including wildlife), private property, and people (both residents and visitors). • People are friendly, say "Hi", and make eye contact. • There is a willingness to create partnerships with others, particularly with YNP. And communication between different entities and between people engaged in tourism in general is positive. • An education campaign such as the "Mountain Manners" program be developed which promotes an ethic for outdoor recreation and community stewardship. • There is a willingness to create partnerships with others, particularly with YNP. And communication between people and different entities engaged in tourism is generally positive. • People fully engage in established tourism programs like "Super host", "Mountain Manners", which would promote an ethic for outdoor recreation and community stewardship. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of enforcement for drunken and rowdy behavior. • Littering, vomiting and not picking up their dog wastes. • Harassment of wildlife. • Some businesses closed during the winter (off season).

EXPECTATIONS FOR HOW TOURISM SUPPORTS GARDINER

- Foster recognition and appreciation of the significance of Gardiner as the first gateway of the world's first national park. And, promote Gardiner as "Wildlife's favorite entrance to YNP".
- Supports a vibrant economy both during the peak season but also sustains local businesses throughout the year.
- Serves as a catalyst for better coordination with YNP, USFS, YF and other entities.

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PRINCIPLES FOR GARDINER

Gardiner, Montana, as the first gateway to the world's first national park is a global destination and respected by both residents and visitors. To enhance both the quality of life of residents and the visitor experience, Gardiner will promote responsible tourism that fosters a respect for the people, community, and natural environment of the Gardiner area. Gardiner will work to ensure that:

1. Tourism activities foster a respect for the people, property, wildlife and natural environment.
2. Tourism activities reflect and support norms for expected visitor behavior identified by the Gardiner community.

3. Tourists have a high-quality experience and Gardiner has adequate infrastructure to support it.
4. Tourism activities are well-coordinated between all relevant entities – public, private, and non-profit.
5. Tourism supports a vibrant economy but not at a cost to the quality of life for local residents.

COLLABORATIVE SEASONAL TRAINING PROS AND CONS

PROS	CONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent messaging • Growing partnerships • Repeat business • Authenticity • Cooperation/collaboration • Trained front line staff • Local influence & increased influence • Grant opportunities • Clarify vision through planning • New housing • Local control <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ properties ○ businesses ○ appearance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Great tax allocation · Balance “have & have nots” · Handled locally · Speed of response · More money · Local eyes/ears · STR local management · Make laws 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burnout • No regulatory authority • Accountability • Lack of awareness/communication • Would require community buy-in • Would require County buy-in • Regulations and loss of control • Increases in taxes • Loss for “haves” • Due diligence • May have to enforce state laws • Decisions made by few • Increased taxation • Bureaucracy • Liability • Permits, permits! • Inadequate representation for people that don't live in limits

1.2 SCENARIO DISCUSSION SUMMARY

SCENARIO 1:

Volunteers and Partnerships

What would be the positive outcomes of this approach on the community?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open dialogue • Improved safety • Growing partnerships • Consistent messaging • Respectful visitors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeat businesses • More knowledgeable front line staff • Authentic experiences • Cooperation

What would be the negative outcomes of this approach on the community?

- Burn out of volunteers
- No regulatory authority
- Time constraints

OVERALL SUMMARY OPINION OF THIS ALTERNATIVE

- Move away from competition and more towards cooperation for max benefits.
- Benefits = higher quality experience, more return business, authentic experiences.
- Maximizing unique, authentic experiences.
- "Super hosts!"

**SCENARIO 2:
Partnership with County**

What would be the positive outcomes of this approach on the community?

- Local influence for local plan.
- More grant opportunities.
- Clarifies vision, plan with traffic, etc.
- Greater influence because the County is bigger (influence NPS).
- Control new housing for locals or not (25 acres).
- Control of existing properties.
- Control over new business types and town appearance.
- Try not to increase taxes; may allocate + tax/revenue/grant locally?

What would be the negative outcomes of this approach on the community?

- County must approve/agree.
- Vacation rental owners/business/property owners have some regulation and loss of control.
- May increase County taxes.
- Giving more control to the County.
- Loss for "haves"?
- Local community participation and agreement challenges.

What do we perceive as the pros and cons of this alternative for the community?

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balance between "have & have nots". 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permit process for STRs.

OVERALL SUMMARY OF OPINION OF THIS ALTERNATIVE

Viable enough to perform due diligence.

Next Steps

- GGCC/County Commissioners contact NPS re: visitor management plan.
- Understand how County collaboration would work – example where it already works.

SCENARIO 3: Total Local Control through Incorporation

What would be the positive outcomes of this approach on the community?

- Handled locally.
- Speed of response.
- Making of/governing laws.
- More money.
- Local eyes, local ears, etc...
- Local management of short term rentals.

What would be the negative outcomes of this approach on the community?

- Inadequate representation of business and homeowners that don't live in the city.
- Understanding and interpreting and enforcing state law.
- Decisions made in the hands of very few.
- Higher taxation for local residents.
- Bureaucracy and liability.
- Local management of short term rentals.
- Permits...permits...permits...

OVERALL SUMMARY OPINION OF THIS ALTERNATIVE

- Boiling down to local representation not adequate representation?
- R&D...what are the things we want vs. don't want.

Other discussion notes:

- **MONEY** → Maximize profit, minimize problems.
Equal to national GDP growth.
- **ENVIRO ECOLOGY** → Maintain quality experience, environmental integrity
- **STANDARDS** → Setting the standard for expectations, ie “rules” for both collaboration with YNP/USFS/town and overnighters in Gardiner...code of ethics.
- **SUSTAINABLE TOURISM** → Long-term visitation with minimal impacts to the natural environment and the community
 - Eco-friendly
 - Balanced
 - Affordable
 - Stable
 - Tourism that supports and builds the community as opposed to break it down
 - Ecologically friendly, vibrant, respectful
 - Local needs/desires are not over-run by tourism and balanced for the long-term
 - Tourists not overrunning the town
- **INFRASTRUCTURE** → Can the current local infrastructure handle the current level of tourism?
- **SERVICES** → Ability to provide enough services.
- **LIFESTYLE** → Maintain acceptable lifestyle for locals.
- **QUALITY COMMUNITY** → Quality experience for residents/visitors.
- Balance, respect (can you teach this to tourists?), quality experience, less people in the summer and more in other seasons.

1.3 TOURISM IDEAS FOR ACTION

- Spring training (perhaps repeat later in the year) for businesses and employees as well as YPN on visitor services, management, principles of sustainable tourism, etc. (perhaps offer businesses that participate a free pass to the park).
- Coordinate outreach to seasonal employees before they arrive at the park to better prepare them for the work experience and life in the community and surrounding region.
- Coordinate messaging related to visitor outreach (such as “Gardiner’s Principles for Sustainable Tourism” or “Gardiner’s Mountain Manners.”). This messaging could be repeated on literature in businesses, in bathroom stalls etc. Make it a consistent, ubiquitous message that helps to reduce negative impacts of tourism and maximize positive impacts.
- Continue and enhance Chamber of Commerce shoulder season (especially winter) marketing efforts.
- Fully implement the “Superhost Program.”
- More effectively coordinate tourism activities and goals with local (including NGOs), county, state and federal entities. Help them understand how Gardiner “operates” and the relationship between these operations and the tourism industry.
- Increase number of trash cans around town.
- Develop interpretive signage related to natural and cultural history of the town and create a “walking tour” that can build appreciation for Gardiner’s rich heritage.
- Add benches in strategic locations.
- Mentioned but did not discuss:
 - Partnering with YNP on their Visitor Management Plan.
 - Utilizing local government authority to manage visitation and impacts.

1.4 POTENTIAL SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PLAN

GOAL: Minimize Negative Impacts of Tourism & Enhance Positive Impacts of Tourism

Strategy A

Conduct an outreach and educational campaign to reinforce community values

ACTION 1: Coordinate messaging related to visitor outreach (Gardiner's principles for sustainable tourism) around community.

Strategy B

Develop other community assets to distribute/promote other seasons

ACTION 1: Continue and enhance Chamber of Commerce shoulder (winter) season marketing efforts.

ACTION 2: Develop interpretive signage related to natural and cultural history of the town. Create walking tours to build appreciation for Gardiner heritage.

Strategy C

Build local capacity to better manage tourism

ACTION 1: Develop a spring training for businesses and employees as well as NPS on visitor services, management, principles of sustainable tourism, etc. (offer incentive to participate).

ACTION 2: Fully support the “Super host” program.

ACTION 3: Coordinate outreach to seasonal employees prior to arrival in Park to orient community.

ACTION 4: More effectively coordinate tourism activities and goals with local, county, state and federal entities.

Strategy D

Manage tourism impacts to community character/quality of life.

Strategy E

Invest in community infrastructure that enhances community and resident quality of experience/life.

ACTION 1: Increase number of trash receptacles.

ACTION 2: Add benches in strategic locations.

Other Potential Strategies

- YNP Visitor Management Plan
- Regulate supply of accommodations
- Pricing strategies

1.5 RECOMMENDATIONS AND RATIONALE

The recommendation from the group was to:

- Move forward with super host idea.
- GGCC/CC contact NPS in reference to visitor management plan.
- Better understanding of how county collaboration would work and where neighborhood plans have been drafted and how they are working.

IV. STRENGTHENING OUR COMMUNITY & FAMILY FRIENDLINESS

The group made it through the entire group discussion guide, first identifying recommendations for discussion. This group shared similar recommendations to the Youth & Family Friendly group. On Thursday night the two groups were combined to develop priorities and a draft action plan.

1.1 SUMMARY OF GARDINER’S FOUNDATIONS SUPPORTING COMMUNITY

3rd Places	Trails, Bars, Arch park, school, community center, Gardiner Market, river access points, churches, Confluence Park, restaurants, pocket park, YNP, National Forest, hot springs, skating rink
Social Events	Community Center fundraisers, Christmas stroll, Library Bazaar, horse drive, Jardine Ski Run, Mammoth Tree Lighting, Rodeo, School events, EPAC Arts events, Brewfest, Earth Day, Warm the Soul in Mammoth, Homecoming, Fish Fry

Organizations	Ski Team, Leadership 49, EPAC, Entre Nous (scout house), Boy and Girl Scouts, Soccer, baseball
Civic Engagement	Infrastructure Boards, Water and Sewer, Gateway Hose Company, Resort Tax, Greater Gardiner Community Council, Chamber of Commerce, Ham Radio, School Board, Food Pantry, Bear Creek Council,, Meals on Wheels, NYEF, Bruins Booster Club, Search and Rescue, Wilderness Foundation, Xanterra backpack supplies, Snoopy Preschool
Neighborliness	Earth Day, Adopt a Highway, Meal train, Funding for people in need, FFA Bridge shoveling
Communication Channels	FB Mammoth Gardiner Community Board, Chamber Newsletter, Posters at the market, Enterprise, Employee communication Channels

QUESTION: What is strong and should be maintained?

- Youth Rec Athletic Teams
- School
- Community Center
- Christmas Stroll
- EPAC Shows
- Brewfest
- NYER
- Booster Club

QUESTION: What, if strengthened, would benefit the community most?

1. Community Center
2. School – adult access, Adult Ed opportunities, youth access
3. Kids and adult rec league – need help with insurance
4. Library Facility > Depot Center
5. Greater Gardiner Community Council
6. Mental health
7. Gateway Hose Company – support emergency services
8. Tele “medicine”, health options in Gardiner once a month
9. Additional infrastructure (sidewalks – Jardine road)
10. Community Cleanup (trash, weeds, snow shoveling)

What is Missing that Would Help?

1. Youth activities – things to do
2. Community garden
3. Public transportation
4. Movie Theater
5. After school programs
6. YMCA - pool, racketball
7. Affordable Housing!

1.2 RECOMMENDATIONS AND RATIONAL

We need more gathering spaces for community to interact/be social

School > Community Center > Community Access

- Youth access after hours
- Library Access
- Adult Movie Night

Community Center – Needs preservation, has a lot of potential

- YMCA – Swimming Pool
- Adult Movie Night

We need ways to share everything we are doing and is happening

Strengthen Communication Channels – relay information

- School students report on community boards
- Use different forms of media to reach different people
- Community Survey – what events do people (including HS kids) want?

We need to better understand health needs

Mental Health, “Tele” medicine

- Youth concerned about access

V. BUILDING A MORE YOUTH & FAMILY FRIENDLY COMMUNITY

The group made it through the entire group discussion guide, identifying recommendations for discussion. This group shared similar recommendations to the Strengthening Community group. On Thursday night the two groups were combined to develop priorities and a draft action plan.

1.1 SUMMARY OF GARDINER’S FOUNDATIONS SUPPORTING YOUTH & FAMILIES

Question: What Exists Today?

Activities	Scouts, school sports, club sports, organized leagues, church youth camps, Y2 DAK, 4H, FFA, School Extra Curriculars, Summer Adventure Camp, Vacation Bible School, Yoga
Professional Development:	School to Work, Summer jobs
Education	Speech and Drama, World Quest, Band/Choir, National Honor Society, FFA, Volleyball, Football, Basketball, Track, Golf, Weight Training
Youth and Family Services:	Little Peoples Learning Center, Snoopy School, Gardiner Food Bank, Gardiner Facebook Message Board

What is strong and should be maintained?

- Sports for all ages
- Youth groups
- Extracurricular programs
- FFA

Ideas to Improve?

- Need for teen opportunities

What, if strengthened would benefit the community most?

- Arts, music, theater, dance, art
- Child care –programs for Middle School age
- Youth “hangout” – Community Center
- Youth Movie Night
- Mental Health – need more info on what students asked for

Ideas to Improve?

- Parent participation
- Transportation
- Need for teen opportunities
- More affordable housing

What is missing that would help?

- Support for Julie – School Counselor
- Grant Writing for Arts Program
- Accessibility of Mental health support – Outreach Programs
- Park programs
- Shop opportunities
- Safe places to bike, skateboard

1.2 YOUTH AND FAMILY RECOMMENDATIONS AND RATIONALE

1. Mental Health Services

- School Board or community therapist
- Peer-based mentor programs
- During lunch have guest/inspirational speakers
- More info from youth directly – Needs/wants/ etc.

2. Youth Arts and Cultural Based Programs

- Dance/music classes
- EPAC
- Artist in Residence
- Field trips to concerts, museums, etc

3. A Youth “Hangout” Center

- Youth night @ local businesses
- Movie nights
- Dance nights
- Game nights

4. More Parent/Child/Community Participation

- Transportation
- Volunteers
- Involvement
- Grant writing

1.3 RECOMMENDATIONS AND RATIONALE FOR COMBINED STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY AND CREATING YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES

The group recommendation was to prioritize gathering spaces and community wellness, especially mental health. However, recruiting community volunteers was essential to moving either of these ideas forward. Additionally, strengthening how the community shares information about existing resources was viewed as a critical first step.

1. MENTAL AND GENERAL HEALTH

Form advisory council to identify issues and needs

- Include school, community, Livingston Hospital resources
- Find funding through grants
- Big Bear
- NYEF
- Communicate with community
create public health Facebook page – community newsletter

2. GATHERING SPACES AND PROGRAMS FOR ALL AGES

Now we have:

- Mammoth Community Center
- Gardiner Community Center – access research that was done – survey
- School
- Arch Park
- Confluence Park
- Churches

Ideal space may include:- Wifi, comfortable seating, ping pong, big screen tvs, accessibility, gym, weight room, hoops

- Would need a volunteer representative or two from different demographics – kids, adults, seniors
- Community council could use more volunteers from kids, adults and seniors

3. STRENGTHEN COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

- Newsletter – including a school news events page
- Facebook
- Flyers in grocery stores, banks, schools, churches, local businesses
- Block party
- Emails
- School newsletter written by students
- Chamber of Commerce
- Local community text
- Personal invitation – nominate George Baumann
- Board for postings provided to businesses
- Digital marquee
- When? Ongoing!
- Who? Chamber – Sandy Bierle via FB message board

4. OTHER:

- Booster club stipend for evening bus for after school activities
- Form advisory board

APPENDIX | PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

Annual Income	
Less than \$10,000:	0
\$10,000-\$24,999:	6
\$25,000-\$49,999:	29
\$50,000-\$99,999:	51
Over \$100,000:	17

Community of Residence	
Gardiner	90
Jardine	8
Mammoth	3
Other Park County	6

Age	
18 & under	0
19 - 44	28
45 – 64	52
>65	29

Gender	
Male	Female
64	44

Residency	
Full-time	99
Part-time	7
Seasonal	2
Visitor	1

Length of Residency	
0 – 5 years	17
6 – 10 years	18
10 – 20 years	30
20+ years	43

APPENDIX | A VISION FOR GARDINER

A community vision is a combination of two basic elements:

- An understanding of the community's timeless unchanging core values, and
- A clear picture of what it wants for its own future – both huge and audacious goals and incremental actions.

So, what did we say we wanted for the future?

COMMUNITY VISION

A Vibrant Year-Round Economy

- Create balanced tourism
- Develop a year-round diverse economy with thriving local business
- Develop a town investment fund for business district

Managed Growth to Protect Community

- Create local leadership structure (e.g. city council, community council, etc.)
- Develop a plan for the community
- Utilize our limited land wisely
- Use zoning to protect town from short term rentals and hotels
- Utilize ordinances to protect character (e.g. dark skies, regulate short term rentals, prevent sprawling McMansions, increase density, protect neighborhoods, etc.)
- Historic or unique structures/places protected

A Great Place for Youth & Families

- Programming for youth
- Opportunity for future generations to live here
- A stable school that continually strives to support a high-quality education

High Quality Community Services

- Develop better medical services
- Create more recreation amenities

The Ecosystem Is Healthy

- Live in balance with wildlife
- Restored landscapes

Well-Functioning Infrastructure

- Safe pedestrian & biking routes in & around town
- Better stormwater management

Gardiner Is Authentic

- A place where people can live, work, and raise a family
- Vibrant neighborhoods with year-round residents
- Quality housing that is affordable
 - Large employers (school, NPS, Xanterra, hotels) support and develop housing for employees
 - A public land swap create land for housing
 - Incentives for property owners to meet local housing needs
 - Taxes and fees on short term rentals to fund housing program
 - Land and/or properties bought to provide permanent housing for residents (FT and seasonal)
- More public spaces like a community center and park

The Sense of Community Is Strong

Regenerate our sense of community by bringing the community together more in annual events

- Mentor new leaders
- Welcome new people into community
- Build commitment to problem solving through civil dialogues
- Foster community involvement
- Create pride in community appearance

APPENDIX | FEEDBACK ON VISION AND VALUES

Concerns, a vision and values were developed from the initial community input (surveys and interviews) prior to the workshops. Posters were used to collect feedback on the drafts and check for validity.

CONCERNS (ranked, from pre-workshop surveys and interviews)

1. Affordable Housing
2. Economy
3. Education
4. Tourism Impacts
5. Manage Growth & Change
6. Demographic Change
7. Governance
8. Health

Do you agree or disagree that these are the issues facing Gardiner? With 1 being strongly disagree and 10 being strongly agree.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	0	1	4	14.5	1.5	18	23	31	8.5

ADDITIONAL CONCERNS:

- A large hospitality corporation comes to Gardiner and starts purchasing the majority of businesses on Park and Main Streets, such as Disney, MGM, Boyd Gaming.
- Governor recently signed sports betting into law.

ADDITIONAL VISION COMMENTS:

- Large employers build some housing but their employee’s needs are not met in the form of housing and the amount available. Not sure what the town investment fund is – can we have one of these for housing?
- The ecosystem is healthy
 - Live in balance with wildlife
 - Restored landscapes
 - View-sheds preserved
 - High quality air and water
 - Balanced use of natural resources and human needs

VALUES (from pre-workshop surveys and interviews)

1. A Connected and Caring Community
2. Good Stewards of Yellowstone
3. Civic-Minded and Engaged
4. A Unique Small Town
5. A Great Place for Families
6. A Safe Community

Do you agree or disagree that these are Gardiner’s shared community values? With 1 being strongly disagree and 10 being great.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
0	0	1	2	3	11.5	13	25.5	24	19

APPENDIX | RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Historic Preservation Resources

1. Overview: What is Historic Preservation: <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/historicpreservation/what-is-historic-preservation.htm>
2. National Park Service Basics of Historic Preservation Resources <https://www.nps.gov/tps/education/workingon-thepast/roletheyplay.htm>
3. NPS Historic Preservation Grants Program <https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1623/historic-revitalization-subgrant-program.htm>
<https://www.nationalparkstraveler.org/2019/02/national-park-service-accepting-proposals-historic-revitalization-subgrants-rural>
4. State Historic Preservation Office Grants and Funds List <https://mhs.mt.gov/Portals/11/shpo/docs/HPFunding.pdf>
5. National Association of Preservation Commissions Resources on Historic Preservation <https://napcommissions.org/resources-2/>
6. Montana Preservation Alliance <http://www.preservemontana.org/mtmain-street-renaissance>

Open Space and Trails Planning Resources

7. National Park Recreational, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program <https://www.nps.gov/orgs/rtca/community-projects.htm> (June 30th grant deadline)

Community Planning & Development Resources and Grants

8. NEA Our Town <https://www.arts.gov/grants-organizations/our-town/introduction>
9. EPA Recreation Economy for Rural Communities <https://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/recreation-economy-rural-communities>
10. State of Montana Community Development Division: <https://comdev.mt.gov/>

Dark Skies Best Practices and Designations

11. International Dark Skies Association <https://www.darksky.org/>

Sustainable Tourism Best Practices

12. Successful Gardiner Post <https://www.successfulgardiner.org/blog/gardiner-we-are-not-alone-managing-the-negative-impacts-of-tourism>

Affordable Housing Tools

13. Successful Gardiner Webinar and Posts <https://www.successfulgardiner.org/blog/listen-affordable-housing-webinar>

Governance System

14. Successful Gardiner Webinar and Community Profile <https://register.gotowebinar.com/recording/4377649869376754951> and Resource Guide

School System

15. Successful Gardiner Webinar and Community Profile <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/5483974071091279885>