



# COMMUNITY MEETING SUMMARY

## Successful Gardiner Community Workshop

### Night 1, May 7, 2019

On May 7<sup>th</sup>, Successful Gardiner hosted the first of a two-night community workshop to discuss options for Gardiner's future. The workshop agenda can be viewed [here](#). A total of 86 participants in five break out groups discussed the following 5 topics.

1. Affordable Housing (pages 1-3)
2. Protecting Community Character (pages 3-6)
3. Sustainable Tourism & Economy (pages 7-8)
4. Strengthening Community (pages 9-10)
5. Creating A More Youth & Family Community (pages 10-12)

The following is a summary of the discussions from Tuesday night. These represent how far the dialogue got on night one and do not represent the final recommendations. This summary will inform where the dialogue picks back up on night two, Thursday, May 9<sup>th</sup>.

A *Resource Appendix (page 13-14)* to this meeting summary is provided based on some of the questions and outcomes of Tuesday night to help inform next steps and opportunities, including grant resources.

Please join us to help advance these discussions and discover where Gardiner should focus its energy in the future.

**A heartfelt THANK YOU to all the participants on Tuesday night!**

To stay updated on Successful Gardiner going forward, sign up at [www.successfulgardiner.org](http://www.successfulgardiner.org)

## I. AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUMMARY

*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. After finding agreement from most of the group on defining success, the group learned about different housing tools available from the HRDC, a state-wide technical 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 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 Thursday night, the goal will be to complete the planned scenarios exploration and identify what direction, if any, Gardiner wants to take to address housing affordability.

## 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.
- The demographics are diverse socio-economically and across age groups.
- Identified methods, programs, and incentives are available to help make it easier and less expensive for developers to build housing.
- We work 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 along current upward trend.
- 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 pros and cons for housing (concerns expressed over how municipal boundary would be identified, costs, number of employees, costs, etc.)
- county zoning (how zoning regulations would be developed, who would manage enforcement if done through a county plan options since they're in Livingston, etc.)

An explanation of these tools is being developed for Thursday's discussion.

## 1.3 SCENARIOS DISCUSSION

*Four scenarios were proposed for discussion:*

1. Continue to address housing through all volunteer committee
2. Advocate for Park County to expand housing authority to support program development and delivery.
3. Partner with Park County on a community plan to develop a plan and land use regulations

4. Incorporate to develop a plan, land use regulations, and revenue

The purpose of the scenario discussion is 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. This will be continued on Thursday night.

Pros of Current Volunteer Approach	Cons of Current Volunteer Approach
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The investments of business owners is not threatened. (Don't tell me what I can do with my property)</li> <li>• Perhaps the help of HRDC we can solve our housing problems without government.</li> <li>• We can use some of the tools HRDC talked about without zoning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County Commissioners don't hear us in Gardiner and respond down to our needs.</li> <li>• This won't stop STRs from decimating our remaining housing stock.</li> </ul>

**Other comments:**

- Concern: It wouldn't be fair to own a business owner in Gardiner but lives outside town and not 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.
- Question: Housing would still be expensive in a community land trust model?
- Question: What would benefits of incorporation be?
- Suggestion: We need a bus system to transport people to places where housing is available (down valley).

## II. PROTECTION OF COMMUNITY CHARACTER SUMMARY

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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. The group did not

### 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 group 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. There 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; how the County Planning Commission and a City Council function that is not recorded in the notes below. The group did not get to a discussion comparing the different scenarios nor on what recommendations for future action should be for Gardiner. This discussion will pick up where the group left off on Thursday May 9<sup>th</sup>.*

### **Scenario One: 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?**

<i>What would be the positive outcomes of this approach on the community?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential for variety of design and architectural styles</li> <li>• Could use voluntary design guidelines and standards and educate development community on community goals</li> </ul>
<i>What would be the negative outcomes of this approach on the community?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Town may lose the physical characteristics that make it unique (like Park Street)</li> <li>• Land use conflict could increase</li> </ul>

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

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

<b>OVERALL SUMMARY OF CONSERVATION ABOUT THIS ALTERNATIVE</b>
<b>This is the status quo. Maintaining character of the community is individual choice and there is not policing. Could lose history. No vision for the future.</b>

### Scenario Two: 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?*

<i>What would be the positive outcomes of this approach on the community?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A zoning district could define development standards and integrate strategies and procedures for development that protects community character and overseen by county.</li> </ul>
<i>What would be the negative outcomes of this approach on the community?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>

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

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zoning provides design standards that can be enforced.</li> <li>• Less of a cost than incorporation</li> <li>• May be more acceptable than incorporation</li> <li>• Can still be community driven decisions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Future County Commissioners may not have some priorities as Gardiner.</li> <li>• There are limited finances available to administer at County level for enforcement.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could do a rural improvement district?</li> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could take away some of individual landowners rights</li> <li>• Is a lot of work to create a plan and regulations. Unsure of the gain.</li> <li>• May not get community agreement to move forward, thus back to no action/voluntary and not moving forward.</li> <li>• Zoning design standards are not the same as building standards. Still can have substandard buildings.</li> </ul>
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**OVERALL SUMMARY OF CONSERVATION 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 Three: 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?*

<i>What would be the positive outcomes of this approach on the community?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A zoning district could define development standards and integrate strategies and procedures for development that protects community character.</li> </ul>
<i>What would be the negative outcomes of this approach on the community?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>

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

<b>Pros</b>	<b>Cons</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gardiner has local control with an elected city council who would make decisions here.</li> <li>• We increase capacity to make a difference.</li> <li>• Will get increased funding from municipal taxes to fund projects.</li> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gardiner would have higher taxes</li> <li>• Would there be more risk?</li> <li>• Town may have more work on roads, snow, etc.</li> <li>• May be unintended consequences?</li> <li>• Community may not accept this option.</li> </ul>

**OVERALL SUMMARY OF CONSERVATION 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

To be developed May 9<sup>th</sup>

## III. BUILDING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM & ECONOMY

The group made it through a part of the discussion, but not exploration of the different scenarios. 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 Thursday, the ideas will be reflected back and the group will continue to explore the other strategies and scenarios.

Strategies presented included:

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

### 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"> <li>People treat Gardiner like it's their home</li> <li>They show respect for the natural environment (including wildlife), private property, and people (both residents and visitors)</li> <li>People are friendly, say "Hi," make eye contact</li> <li>There is a willingness to create partnerships with others, particularly with YNP. And communication between different entities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of enforcement for drunken and rowdy behavior</li> <li>Littering, vomit and not picking up their dog wastes</li> <li>Harassment of wildlife</li> <li>Some businesses closed during the winter (off season)</li> </ul>

<p>and between people engaged in tourism in general is positive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People fully engage in coordinated tourism efforts like the “Superhost” Program.</li> <li>• An education campaign such as the “Mountain Manners” program be developed which promotes an ethic for outdoor recreation and community stewardship.</li> </ul>	
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## SUSTAINABLE 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:

1. Foster recognition and appreciation of the significance of Gardiner as the original gateway community to the world’s first national park.
2. Promote Gardiner as “Wildlife’s Favorite Entrance to Yellowstone.”
3. Supports a vibrant economy during the peak season as well as sustains local businesses throughout the year.
4. Promote tourism activities that reflect and support norms for expected visitor behavior reflective of the community’s values.
5. Ensure a high-quality visitor experience with adequate infrastructure to support it.

## 1.2 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.

## IV. STRENGTHENING OUR COMMUNITY

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

### 1.1 SUMMARY OF GARDINER’S FOUNDATIONS SUPPORTING COMMUNITY

3 <sup>rd</sup> Places	Trails, Bars, Arch park, school, community center, Gardiner Market, river access points, churches, Confluence Park, restaurants, pocket park, YNP, National Forest, hot springs, Cutlet, 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, AM AM Ass., 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
  - School – adult access, Adult Ed opportunities, youth access
  - Kids and adult rec league – help with insurance
2. Library Facility > Depot Center
3. Greater Gardiner Community Council
4. Mental health
5. Gateway Hose Company – support emergency services
6. Tele “medicine”, health options in Gardiner once a month?
7. Additional infrastructure (sidewalks – Jardine road)
8. 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, racket ball
7. Affordable Housing!

**1.2 RECOMMENDATIONS AND RATIONAL**

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

1. School > Community Center > Community Access
  - Youth access after hours
  - Library Access
  - Adult Movie Night
2. Community Center – Needs preservation, has a lot of potential
  - YMCA – Swimming Pool
  - Adult Movie Night

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

3. 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?

**C. We need to better understand health needs**

4. Mental Health, “Tele” medicine
  - Youth concerned about access

## V. BUILDING A MORE YOUTH & FAMILY FRIENDLY COMMUNITY

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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 will be 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, Sumer 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
- TSA and 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 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

# APPENDIX | RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

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## 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/workingonthepast/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

8. NEA Our Town <https://www.arts.gov/grants-organizations/our-town/introduction> (May 2019 grant deadline)
9. EPA Recreation Economy for Rural Communities <https://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/recreation-economy-rural-communities>

## Dark Skies Best Practices and Designations

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

## Sustainable Tourism

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

## Affordable Housing

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

## Governance System

13. Successful Gardiner Webinar and Community Profile

<https://register.gotowebinar.com/recording/4377649869376754951> and [Resource Guide](#)

## School System

14. Successful Gardiner Webinar and Community Profile

<https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/5483974071091279885> and [Resource Guide](#)