



Envision Three Forks

G R O W T H P O L I C Y

ADOPTED 13 SEPTEMBER 2022
RESOLUTION #383-2022



“I love that Three Forks is very much still small town Montana. It is very blue collar and full of working class folks who are friendly and passionate.” - Tim Hawke



Contents



1. THE SETTING	1-1
City History Growth Policy Overview Existing Conditions	
2. THE VISION	2-1
Outreach Opportunities Vision	
3. FUTURE LAND USE	3-1
Future Land Use Map Categories	
4. THE PATH FORWARD	4-1
Goals and Objectives Strategies and Actions	



Cover photo credit: John Whalen, Flickr



Acknowledgments

CITY COUNCIL

Randy Johnston, Mayor 2022
Sean Gifford, Mayor 2019 - 2021
George Chancellor
Steve Dahl
Brooke McLees
Debra Mickelberry
Dennis Nelson
Nancy Todd
Gene Townsend

ZONING AND PLANNING BOARD

George Chancellor
Niki Griffis Elmore
Matt Jones
Amy Laban
Mike McDonnell
Kelly Smith

STEERING COMMITTEE

Jack Berg
George Chancellor
Steve Colberg
David Curry
Diane Furhman
Matt Jones
Justin Koller
Amy Laban
Jessica Oehmcke
Will Oliver
Chuck Wambeke

CITY STAFF

Randy Carpenter
Kelly Smith
Crystal Turner





1 | The Setting

History

BEFORE 1800

Remains of settlements from one branch of Paleoindians, known as the Pelican Lake culture, were found near Three Forks. These settlements are dated between 1200 BC and 200 AD, showing that people have made Three Forks their home for hundreds of years.

In the 1700s, writings of explorers and settlers of the day mention the tribes occupying the lands of the upper Missouri River area including the Hidatsa, Mandan, Assiniboine, Gros Ventres, and the Blackfeet, who occupied a wide swath of land around the Headwaters of the Missouri River. With abundant game in the area, this vast wilderness was the hunting and battleground for those tribes, as well as the Crow, Nez Perce, Shoshone, and Flathead who occasionally roamed into the region.

“Three Forks has maintained a sense of community that others have not.”

THE TURN OF THE 19TH CENTURY

The Lewis and Clark Expedition, also known as the Corps of Discovery, explored and mapped unknown places across the American Northwest. Consisting of Captains Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, their interpreter, Sacajawea (a symbol of peaceful intentions), and 32 men, the Expedition arrived at the Headwaters of the Missouri River on July 25, 1805. Lewis and Clark were the first white men to enter the confluence region, and they named the three rivers (west to east) for President Thomas Jefferson, Secretary of State James Madison, and Treasury Secretary Albert Gallatin. These three rivers flow together to form the Missouri River just four miles from the present-day City.

FIRST SETTLEMENTS

The original Three Forks, now called Old Town, had its origins with a man named James Shedd who built numerous toll bridges in the area between 1867 and 1881. Old Town thrived for a time but by 1907 was nearly abandoned until construction crews building the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railway helped revive the area. John Q. Adams, as a land agent for the Milwaukee Land Company, purchased nearly a section of land just south of the Old Town and platted the new town of Three Forks. The Milwaukee Railroad offered an excursion train from Chicago to Three Forks for a public auction lot sale on September 17, 1908. Construction boomed at this new location, and several buildings in Old Town, including the Madison Bridge House (now the Sacajawea Hotel), were moved from their original sites to their current locations.

THE 1900s

The new community soon had 800 inhabitants, a newspaper, three general stores, two lumber yards, a hotel, eight restaurants, two barbershops, two transcontinental railroads, a sheep shearing plant, telephone exchange, graveled streets, three real estate firms, two church buildings, a bank, two doctors, a dentist, an undertaker, and eight saloons! Three Forks was officially incorporated on February 23, 1911, with their first mayor and four aldermen elected.

Even before the town was incorporated, several additions were made to the original plat of 32 blocks. The Buttelman addition added eighteen blocks to the west side of town. The Milwaukee first and second additions added 38 blocks to the north, east and south edges of the original plat.

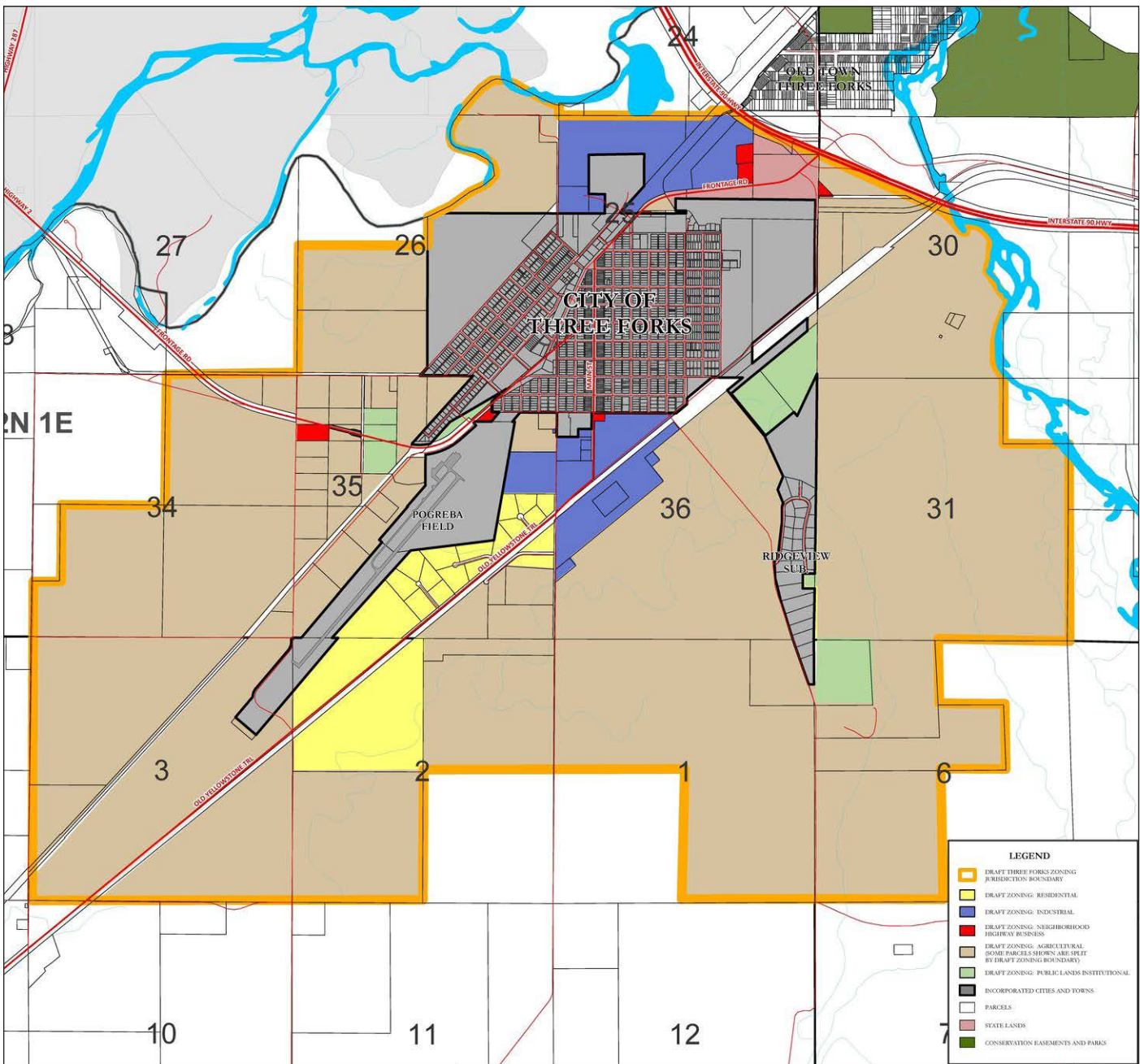
Early residents of Three Forks had high hopes for growth, eager to see a population of 10,000 by 1915. However, growth was slow and after the Northwest Townsite addition to the east was annexed into the City limits in 1916, large portions of these additions remained as empty lots for fifty years or more.

Many factors contributed to the slow pace of growth over the years. The dry years of the mid to late 1920s drove many out of Three Forks. Montana, as a whole, lost population between the 1920 and 1930 census. Many of the homes in Three Forks were abandoned and eventually seized for back taxes. The Great Recession of the 1970s was exacerbated in Three Forks when the Milwaukee Railroad pulled out of the City. The negative economic impact of the Milwaukee Railroad bankruptcy lasted for years. The creation of the Headwaters Addition through the middle of the City replaced the Milwaukee railroad right-of-way with residential and commercial properties. More recently, and similar to other communities in the Gallatin Valley, Three Forks has experienced significant growth. The Ridge View subdivision was annexed in 2009.

The most recent US Census data states 1,989 for the City's population. Using a 2% projected growth rate over the next 40 years, as referenced in the preliminary engineering report for the water system, the estimated City population by 2061 is anticipated to reach 4,073.

TODAY

Today, Three Forks is known as a charming small town located approximately 30 miles west of Bozeman at the Headwaters of the Missouri River where the Jefferson, Madison, and Gallatin Rivers merge. Three Forks' existing land use map shows single-family residential in the heart of the City, organized by a grid pattern. Most of the City's commercial is along frontage road, the main transportation corridor through the City. Much of the area surrounding the City today is rural residential and agriculture, though growth from surrounding communities is creeping closer.



CITY OF THREE FORKS EXISTING LAND USE MAP

Growth Policy Overview

Montana Code Annotated

76-1-605. Use of adopted growth policy. After adoption of the growth policy, the city council, board of county commissioners, or other governing body within the territorial jurisdiction of the board must be guided by and give consideration to the general policy and pattern of development set out in the growth policy in the:

- (1) authorization, construction, alteration, or abandonment of public ways, public places, public structures, or public utilities;
 - (2) authorization, acceptance, or construction of water mains, sewers, connections, facilities, or utilities;
 - (3) adoption of subdivision controls; and
 - (4) adoption of zoning ordinances or resolutions.
-

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Required by State Statute (Montana Code Annotated 76-1-601) the Growth Policy is meant to inform and guide the City's land use decisions. It is relied upon to reflect current conditions and to provide meaningful guidance into the future. There are several requirements and criteria that must be addressed. The Three Forks Zoning and Planning Board plays an important role in helping maintain compatibility between the Growth Policy and community goals. This citizen advisory group makes recommendations on proposed development to the elected City Council, using the Growth Policy as one of the guiding tools in their decision-making process. The City Council makes the final decision through findings of fact, which include determinations regarding compatibility with the criteria identified in this update.

PROCESS

There are several steps that go into the creation or update of a Growth Policy. The first and most important step is community outreach. Robust public input is critical in order to better understand what citizens value and where they want improvement. This public outreach is translated and distilled into a vision statement, which ultimately guides the creation of meaningful goals and policies that are intended to balance the needs and desires of various stakeholders. Another important aspect of updating a Growth Policy is mapping existing land use conditions from environmentally-sensitive lands to infrastructure service areas and established neighborhoods. Together these maps reflect existing conditions and act as important visual tools to provide context for land use decisions and help guide community growth and development. The Growth Policy is a living document and will need to be amended as the conditions of Three Forks and its residents evolve. This process is identified and outlined in State Statute and includes the requirement that the City Council approve any changes by way of a Resolution, after a legally-noticed public hearing.

ROLE OF THE GROWTH POLICY

Public input is a critical part of the community conversation around growth and development in the City, which guides the goals and policies of this document. Using input from City residents, this document aims to support the following principles:

- Protect public health and safety
- Respect private property rights
- Guide development to suitable areas
- Deliver services efficiently
- Keep pace with the demand for new housing
- Conserve agricultural resources and functions
- Protect hydrological resources and functions
- Protect the natural environment, including critical wildlife resources
- Develop and/or improve incentive mechanisms

The land use decisions that are made using the guidance from the Growth Policy have numerous significant implications on how growth occurs in the City. It is the community's hope, and the City's commitment, that growth occurs in a coordinated, logical, and cost-effective manner that minimizes sprawl. Another role of the Growth Policy is to guide other plans and regulations. Plans and regulations can become ineffective if there is inconsistency between documents. It is important that the Growth Policy guides other City plans and regulations, and that they be regularly reviewed and updated to be consistent with the Growth Policy.

The Growth Policy also provides statements to guide the identification, evaluation, and mitigation of impacts resulting from new development as the City grows. Potential adverse impacts from development must be effectively mitigated before, or concurrent with, that development. In certain cases, avoiding the impact is more desirable than mitigating the impact. This approach should help avoid reactionary and more costly solutions later.

Lastly, the Growth Policy will provide guidance for not only planners and decision-makers, but also for developers, citizens, advocates, realtors, business owners, non-profits, and other government agencies and jurisdictions. It is a document that is meant to be practical and useful to a wide range of users.

REVIEW AND UPDATES TO THE GROWTH POLICY

Generally, the Growth Policy has been developed as a long-term document. City Council shall endeavor to review the Plan annually at its first meeting of each calendar year. An in-depth review by City staff and Elected Officials shall take place every five years, and it is recommended to undertake an update in ten years, as priorities change or other challenges arise.



Existing Conditions

INTRODUCTION

This section includes key trends that describe the existing conditions for Three Forks. During the first round of public engagement, five commonly discussed topics emerged:

*People +
Community*

Housing

Economy

*Infrastructure +
Transportation*

*Outdoor
Recreation +
Natural Areas*

The information gathered during the outreach process provided a foundation for Envision Three Forks, the City's Growth Policy Update.

Implementing a Growth Policy is one way to help the City evolve intentionally. The Growth Policy is the City's overarching tool to direct land use decisions in order to promote a healthy mix of land uses that contribute to a high quality of life, as well as prioritize strategic improvements throughout the City. This mix should include a desirable balance of homes, businesses, parks, and open space that supports existing and future residents, employers, and visitors. Understanding the foundation is a crucial first step in developing the City's vision for the Growth Policy as well as identifying major opportunities and creating a forward-thinking land use plan. This information will also steer code and ordinance revisions to implement land use strategies.

Within this Chapter, much of the included data is based on 2019 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates. Where more recent data has been made available, these numbers have been updated, specifically including 2020 population numbers as provided by the 2020 Decennial Census, and Zillow housing values, most recently available for March 2022.

PEOPLE AND COMMUNITY

Population Growth

Over the last two decades, Three Forks' population has fluctuated only slightly; in recent years there has been a greater increase due to growth from surrounding communities. The community's population grew from 1,728 in 2000 to 1,989 in 2020, a gain of 15% over the last 20 years

Unlike Three Forks' relatively consistent population numbers, Gallatin County has seen much more rapid growth, rising from 89,513 in 2010 to 118,960 residents in 2020 (a 33% increase). While Three Forks' population growth has lagged behind that of the County, it is reasonable to expect that the community's population growth will keep pace with the County's over the next 20 years. In 2020, the City's population of 1,989 represents 1.67% of Gallatin County's total. Gallatin County has grown by approximately 2.9% annually for the past 20 years, and it is unlikely that the growth rate will decrease in the future.

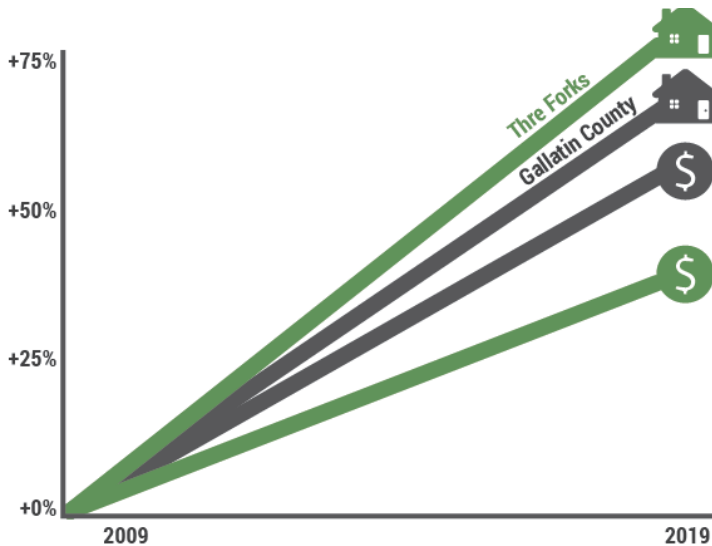
Three Forks' share of the County population is likely to remain steady in the future for two reasons: 1) while floodplain restrictions have

to an extent limited growth in Three Forks in the past, the City's plans to mitigate flood potential will open up considerable areas for development; and 2) according to the 2021 Gallatin County Regional Housing Study, the median home sale price in Bozeman tops \$800,000, and home appreciation has been far outstripping wage growth.

This housing price difference between Bozeman and Three Forks is anticipated to accelerate demand for housing in Three Forks. Cheaper housing in Three Forks will lead more Gallatin County residents to locate here, and builders will be able to meet that demand because more land will be available for development, which in turn will result in Three Forks at the very least maintaining its share of Gallatin County's population, and its population growth. In this projection, Three Forks' population could grow by roughly 1,500 people in the next 20 years, reaching a population of about 3,500 by 2042. This growth could result in roughly an additional 625 homes in the next 20 years.

These projections anticipate growth strictly within the City, and do not include growth outside the City. Growth in the southern portion of

CHANGES IN WAGES & HOME VALUES



Source: ACS 5-Year Estimate, 2019

Broadwater County, northwest of Three Forks, has significantly increased due to the availability of larger parcels and proximity to the I-90/US 287 interchange. In addition, because Broadwater County provides few services in this area, property taxes are lower than in Three Forks.

The City of Three Forks does not receive any revenue from these properties, however, the City's essential services are utilized by these additional neighbors, both residential and commercial. These out-of-district residents are served by the Three Forks Community Library. City Fire Department volunteers are used by the Rural Fire District to provide fire protection for this area. Gallatin County regularly provides law enforcement and mutual aid to cover this area of Broadwater County. City streets are heavily impacted by additional traffic from these neighbors when traveling to Three Forks schools, businesses, and medical/dental facilities.

Age Composition

Three Forks is a popular community for retirees and young families. With a median age of 45 compared to the County's 33.5, Three Forks population consists of 21% over the age of 65 and 22% under the age of 19. The high number of residents under 19 and over 65 compared

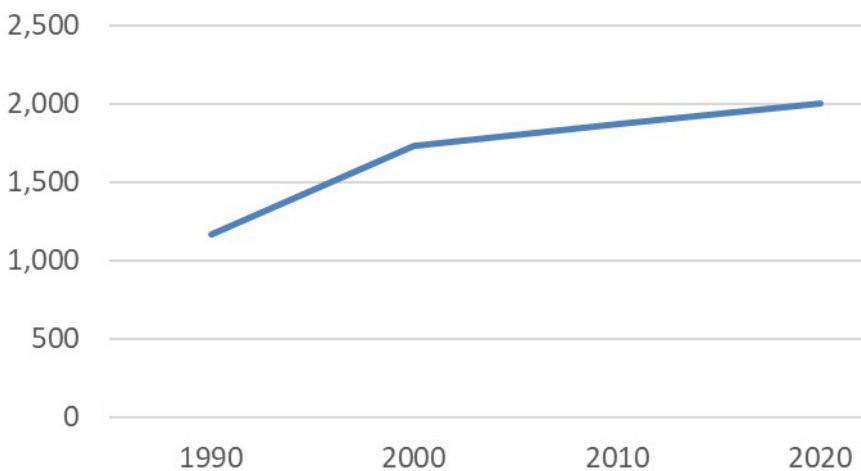
to those between 19 and 65 results in an age dependency ratio of 62.2 (62.2 dependents for every 100 workers). Age Dependency Ratios are calculated by adding the child and senior populations and dividing that by the working population. This number is often used to measure the financial pressure on the actively working population of a community. Lower ratios indicate more people are working and can support the dependent population.

Childcare and Eldercare

Within Three Forks, there are four daycares with an average child care cost of \$1,261 per month. The state average is \$697 per month. At Three Forks' median monthly income of \$5,446, a family would spend roughly 23% of their income on childcare every month. The pandemic has highlighted the impact that lack of accessible childcare has on community resiliency.

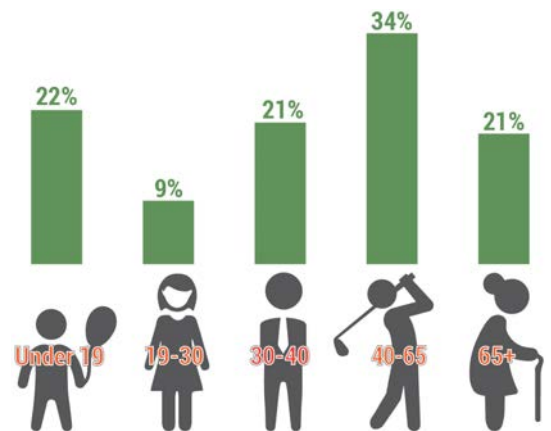
Current services for residents over the age of 65 include one assisted living center and one senior center. Ensuring the right housing types, amenities, and services are maintained and enhanced for this growing age group is important to provide them with an opportunity to age-in-place and spend their retirement comfortably.

THREE FORKS POPULATION BY DECADE



Source: U.S. Census, 2020

THREE FORKS AGE COMPOSITION



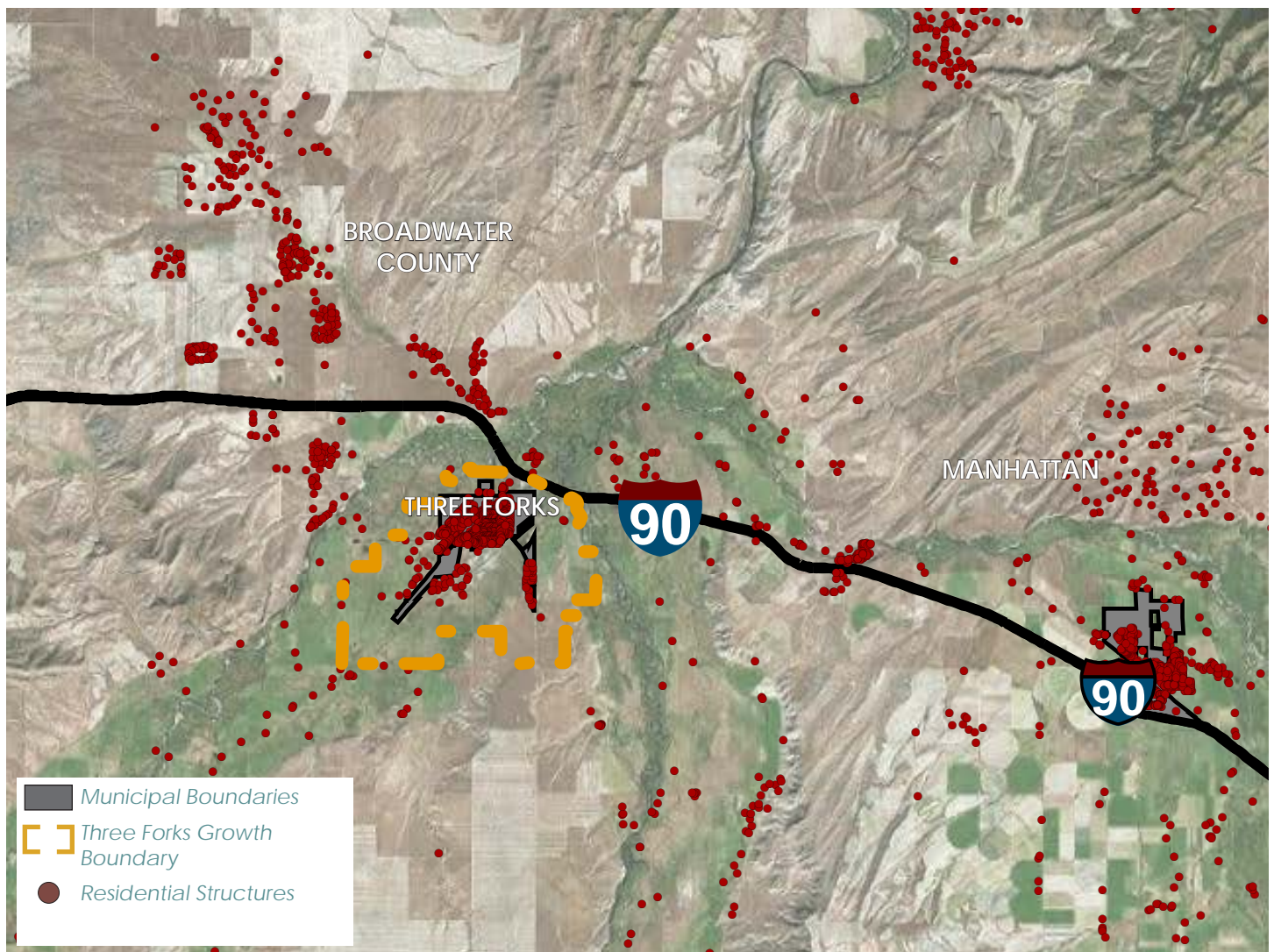
Source: ACS 5-Year Estimate, 2019

Regional Growth Context

Three Forks' existing land use is characterized by a compact commercial development pattern focused on its downtown, and surrounded by traditional residential neighborhoods on a gridded street pattern. Unlike many communities, Three Forks and the surrounding area has seen very little residential sprawl development. The map below shows limited development outside of the City and within the one-mile planning area as compared to the rest of the Gallatin Valley.

Open space surrounding Three Forks is due to the commitment to agriculture on the part of farmers and ranchers in the area, and the presence of extensive 100-year floodplains surrounding the Jefferson and Madison Rivers.

REGIONAL CONTEXT MAP



HOUSING

Housing and Transportation Links

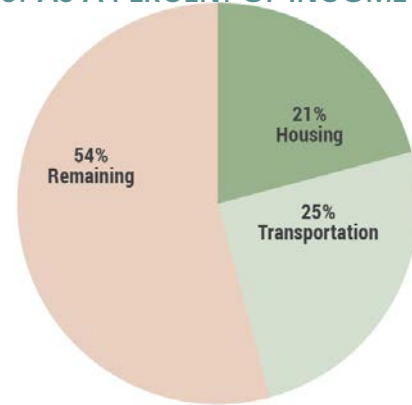
A big factor of growth in Gallatin County is Bozeman, one of the fastest growing cities of its size in the United States. With this rapid growth has come new job opportunities and an increase in housing prices, making surrounding communities such as Three Forks an ideal place to live with a relatively short, 30-minute commute.

From 2010 to 2019, the median home value in Three Forks increased 75%, rising much faster than the median household income which increased by 34% during the same time period (U.S. Census, 2019). During the same time, Gallatin County median home value rose 63% while median household income only rose 52%. This gap in increasing home values is causing many families to move further from their jobs to areas with more attainable housing options.

This trend is likely the cause of recent rising home prices in Three Forks, The rapid rise of housing costs in the last few years is best reflected using more recent data. Zillow offers more recent housing estimates showing that the current median home value in Three Forks is \$486,543 (March 2022) which is a 26.4% increase from 2021.

While families are choosing to move further from their jobs in search of more affordable housing, their household transportation costs are increasing. In Three Forks, the average household spends roughly 21% on housing and 25% on transportation, with an average annual transportation spending per household of \$14,079 (U.S. Census, 2019). This combined spending amounts to 46% of the average household's income which is just about on par with the recommended 45%, leaving 54% of household income for remaining expenses and saving.

AVERAGE HOUSING AND TRANSPORTATION COST AS A PERCENT OF INCOME



Source: ACS 5-Year Estimate, 2019

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME (MHHI) AND MEDIAN HOME VALUES (MHV) COMPARISON

Peer Community	MHHI	MHV
Three Forks	\$65,357	\$208,800
Manhattan	\$60,324	\$253,900
Belgrade	\$59,146	\$243,200
Bozeman	\$55,569	\$365,600
Gallatin County	\$66,397	\$357,100

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimate, 2019

Zillow estimates the median home value in Three Forks at **\$486,453** (March 2022)

Housing Attainability

Based on 2019 U.S. Census data, median home value in Three Forks is \$208,800 and average monthly housing costs are \$912 for owners and \$1,083 for renters. This leaves roughly 20% of households spending 30% or more per month on housing costs.

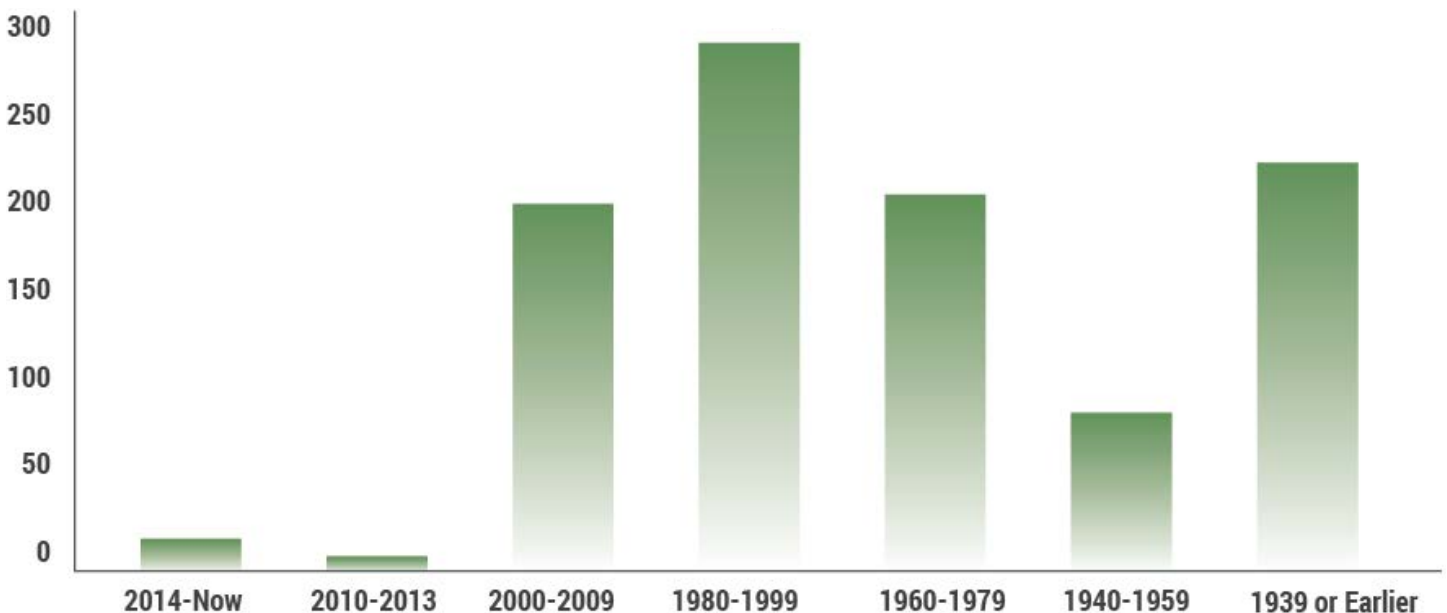
Housing Type

Roughly 77% of the housing in Three Forks are single-family detached housing units. The other large percentage of units is mobile homes or other with roughly 20%. Three Forks has few multi-family housing options. While most of these homes were built between 1980 and 2000, Three Forks has a significant amount of historic homes, with roughly 22% having been built before 1940.

Housing Tenure

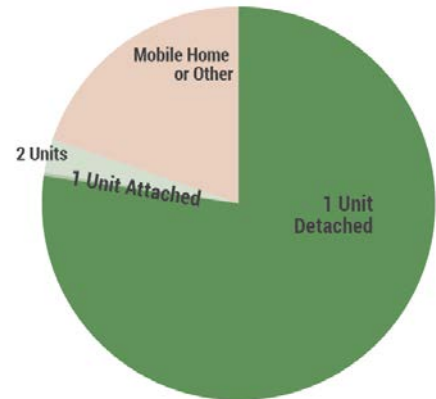
Roughly 11% of the housing units in Three Forks are classified as “vacant”. Of the units, most of them are sold but not occupied or set aside for recreational or seasonal use. This can indicate a supply of short-term rental or vacation homes. If City zoning ordinances that currently restrict short-term rentals to owner-occupied properties and require Conditional Use Permits to establish home occupations are changed in the future, then investors and second homeowners may begin converting units more rapidly to short-term rentals for additional income. This could cause the market to tighten and cause homes to become less attainable for residents.

HOMES BY YEAR BUILT



Source: ACS 5-Year Estimate, 2019

HOUSING TYPE (UNITS IN STRUCTURE)



Source: ACS 5-Year Estimate, 2019

Median Sales Price

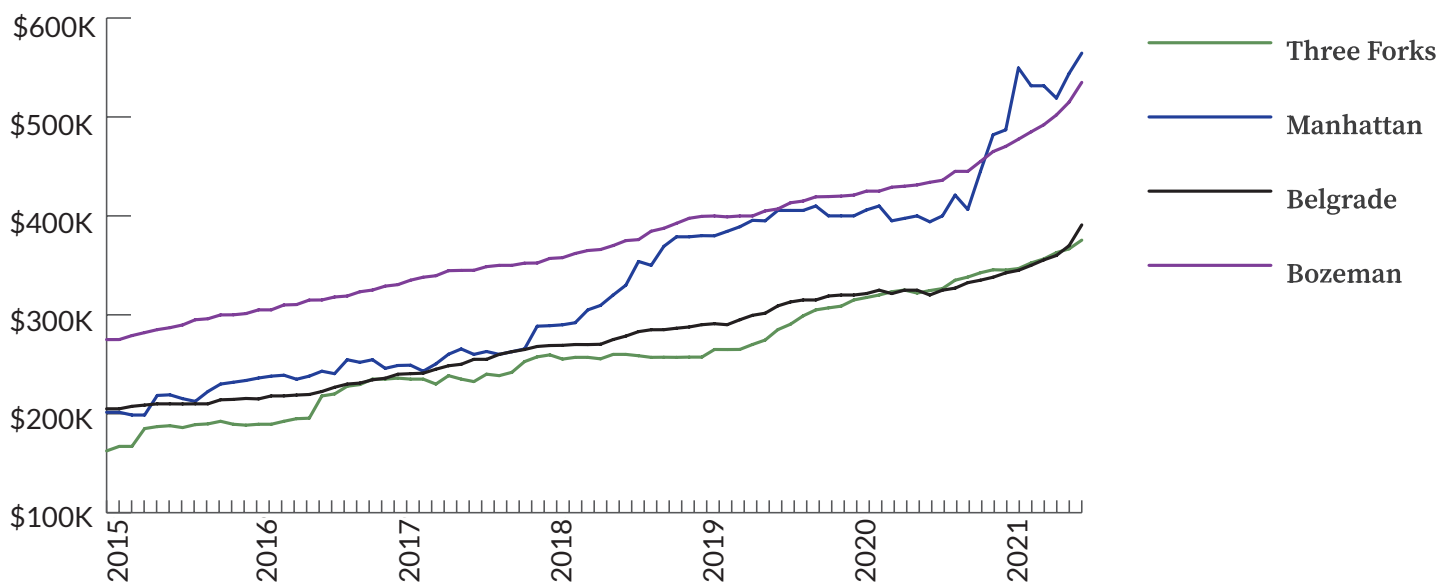
According to an annual housing report from the Big Sky Country MLS, as of June, 2021, the median sales price of a single-family home in Three Forks was \$379,500. In contrast, it was \$603,150 in Gallatin County, \$650,000 in Bozeman, \$429,950 in Belgrade, and \$575,900 in Manhattan.

While the median sales price in Three Forks is still much more affordable than overall Gallatin County or nearby areas, during the past year the City of Three Forks has experienced a steady increase in its housing prices. In June, 2020, the median sales price of a single-family home was only \$335,000, which then increased by 13% to \$379,500 over the course of the year. Meanwhile, from June, 2020, to June, 2021, the median sales prices increased by 33% in Gallatin County, 26% in Bozeman, 23% in Belgrade, and 32% in Manhattan.

While these increasing prices represent a shared trend across the region, it is unclear at this time whether Three Forks' housing prices will continue to grow steadily as they have in recent years or if they will follow the higher rates of nearby areas.

The impact of this trend on Three Forks is even more apparent when considering the median sales prices of all residential housing types, including manufactured homes, townhomes, and single-family homes. Overall, median sales prices across the region decreased when considering other residential housing types, but it also caused Three Forks' prices to nearly surpass Belgrade's. The June 2021 median residential prices for Three Forks (\$375,500) and Manhattan (\$564,500) did not change drastically from their single-family housing prices, but Belgrade (\$390,897) and Bozeman (\$534,950) decreased significantly. This indicates that cities such as Bozeman and Belgrade have higher proportions of more affordable housing stock (such as manufactured homes and townhomes) than Three Forks does.

MEDIAN RESIDENTIAL SALES PRICE



Source: Big Sky Country MLS (a subsidiary of the Gallatin Association of Realtors), 2021

ECONOMY

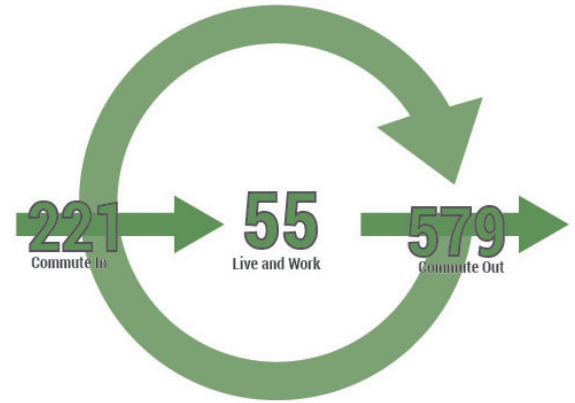
Economy

According to 2019 census data, 221 people commute into Three Forks for work, 579 people live in Three Forks but commute elsewhere for work, and 55 people both live and work in Three Forks.

Comparing employment numbers with household data indicates whether a community is a net importer or exporter of employment. A ratio above 1.0 suggests that a community is a net importer while a ratio below 1.0 indicates that residents work outside of the area due to a lack of local job opportunities. In Three Forks, there are roughly 300 jobs and 728 households resulting in a 0.45 jobs-to-housing ratio. Increasing this ratio would indicate growing success as an employment center.

With about 10% of Three Forks' residents living and working in the City, the largest share of workers (20%) commute to Bozeman for their jobs and 4% work from home. 84% of those commuters are driving a personal vehicle alone to work each day, and about 9% carpool with an average travel time of 21 minutes. These employees are commuting for a wide variety of careers. The most common jobs for residents of Three Forks are retail trade (14%), accommodation and food services (13%), manufacturing (14%), and construction (11%). It is important to note that this data was collected before the Covid-19 Pandemic, which has had profound impacts on regional commuting patterns.

COMMUTING PATTERNS



Source: On The Map, 2019

TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUTING COMPARISON

Peer Community	Average Household Vehicle Miles Traveled	Autos Per Household	Annual Transportation Cost	Transportation Costs % Income	Housing Costs % Income
Three Forks	22,410	1.99	\$14,079	25%	21%
Manhattan	24,003	2.01	\$14,447	26%	27%
Belgrade	21,245	1.77	\$12,729	23%	23%
Bozeman	19,863	1.66	\$11,918	21%	25%
Gallatin County	22,258	1.87	\$13,429	24%	30%

Source: Center for Neighborhood Technology, 2019

Peer Community	Commute In	Live and Work	Commute Out	Employed in the Selection Area	Living in the Selection Area	Jobs-to-Housing Ratio
Three Forks	221	55	579	276	634	0.45
Manhattan	412	51	574	463	625	0.74
Belgrade	1,771	422	3,606	2,193	4,028	0.54
Bozeman	27,150	10,727	8,538	27,150	19,265	1.41
Gallatin County	12,142	36,010	9,090	48,152	45,100	1.07

Source: On The Map, 2019

Local Jobs

Jobs are mostly concentrated in the heart of the City along Main Street. A large amount of the retail, dining, employment, and entertainment opportunities in Three Forks fall along Main Street. Main Street is a charming district with wide sidewalks, on-street parking, mature street trees, and a growing number of local shops.

The largest sectors of employment are educational services (31%); accommodation and food services (19%); and construction (8%). The City's biggest employers are Three Forks Schools and the Sacajawea Hotel and Bar. In addition to the jobs located within City limits, there are several major employers just outside the City such as Kanta Products Inc., GCC Trident Concrete Plant, and Magris Talc. Other accommodation and food service jobs likely fall within Three Forks' dining opportunities and at the Lewis and Clark and Broken Spur Motels.

Regional Agricultural Economy

Beginning as a colony of farmers who raised produce to supply the gold mining camps in the area, Gallatin Valley has long been known for its agricultural economy. Wagon trains passing through on their way west provided additional markets for Gallatin Valley farmers. The Manhattan Malting Company became the largest facility in the West with a capacity of 475,000 bushels until 1915 when the plant was closed due to prohibition. Throughout the Valley, the shifting demand caused by prohibition led many farmers to transition from barley to potato production, which continues to be a major driver of the agricultural economy today. Fruit, peas, lettuce, and other lesser-known crops were discovered to grow well in the valley. Livestock such as cattle and sheep also thrived in the Valley, enabling the County to diversify its agricultural economy to include additional types of crops as well as dairy and wool production.

According to the 2017 U.S. Census of Agriculture, Gallatin County has 1,123 working farms and

approximately 700,000 acres of farmland, approximately 4% of the state's working farms and 1.2% of the state's total farmland. Farms in Gallatin County average 624 acres as compared to the overall state average of 2,149 acres. 12% of all farms in Gallatin County are 1 to 9 acres in size; 45% are 10 to 49 acres; 15% are 50 to 179 acres; 13% are 180 to 499 acres; 5% are 500 to 999 acres; and 10% are over 1,000 acres.

In 2017, 30% of farmland was used as cropland and 63% as pastureland in Gallatin County. Crops accounted for 62% of all agriculture sales, with just over \$24M worth of vegetables, melons, potatoes, and sweet potato sales and nearly \$24M worth of grains, oilseeds, dry beans, and dry pea sales. Livestock and poultry accounted for 38% of agriculture sales, with approximately \$23.5M worth of cattle and calf sales and \$13.3M worth of milk from cows. Gallatin County ranks first in the state in terms of sales revenue for milk from cows and for vegetables, melons, potatoes, and sweet potatoes. Although both categories provide a relatively small share of total agricultural sales revenue throughout the County, nursery, greenhouse, floriculture, and sod sales also rank second in the state while horse, pony, mule, burro, and donkey sales rank third.

The total market value of agricultural products sold by Gallatin County farms in 2017 was just over \$112M, and represents approximately 3% of the approximately \$3.5B worth of agricultural products sold throughout all of Montana. 51% of all Gallatin County farms have total sales worth less than \$2,500; 31% from \$2,500 to \$49,000; and 18% over \$50,000.

Three Forks is surrounded by a number of farms contributing to a strong County agricultural economy. Community feedback has indicated the need to continue supporting this heritage and maintaining the rural atmosphere.

Three Forks' Downtown

Three Forks' downtown is more than a physical space – it is a key part of the community's identity. Like many cities, the downtown contributes to its sense of place, which is the unique collection of qualities and characteristics – visual, cultural, natural, and social – that provide meaning to a community. Sense of place is what makes one city different from another city, and it makes the physical environment valuable and worth caring about.

In addition to providing a unique sense of place, Three Forks' downtown is also key to its economic development. Visitors flock to attractive downtowns, motivating some to invest there.

Another key element for downtowns is what is known as the “multiplier effect” – the idea that every dollar spent at a local, independently owned business can stay in the community and help generate a far greater economic value. Multiplier effects include the spending done by a business in the local economy to operate that business, including inventory, utilities, equipment and pay to employees; the recipients of the first firm's spending take the money they received and spend it on something else; and the additional consumer spending that happens as employees, business owners and others spend their income in the local economy. Employees and others purchase goods and services for themselves and their families — purchases that they would not be able to make without their income from the first business.

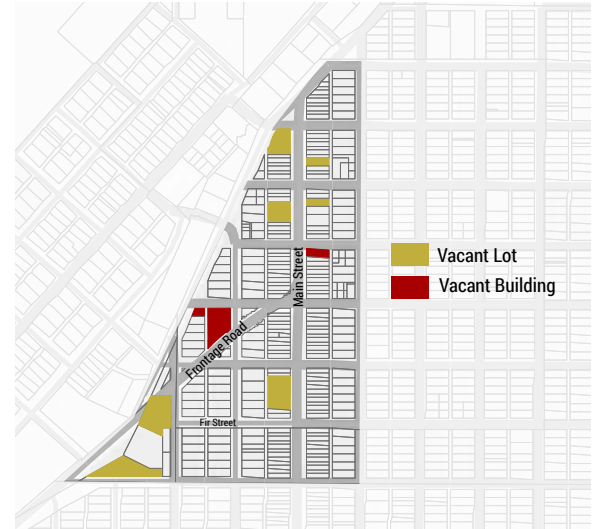
Three Forks' downtown features pedestrian-friendly 12-foot sidewalks extending along Main Street. Downtown is accessible via vehicle or foot by hopping on the 8-ft wide Headwaters Trail System with trailheads throughout the City. Pedestrian travel is possible via Main Street to the Pogreba Field Airport to attend the annual “Fly In”, or from Main Street through the east residential neighborhoods to swing your clubs in the Tobacco Root Golf Tournament. Residents and visitors are even able to grab fly rods or tubes and walk to the Droulliard Fishing Access and get in to the Jefferson River from downtown. In addition to the vibrant pedestrian atmosphere and nearby activities, downtown serves as the center for year-round annual community events such as basketball tournaments in March, the Rodeo and Headwaters Golf Course Tobacco Root Tournament in July, Pogreba Field Airport Fly-In in August, and Christmas Stroll in December.

While Three Forks' downtown is full of cafes, restaurants, local shops, and tourist amenities, there are vacant parcels and buildings that the community would like to see filled. Other cities of a similar sized downtown have used strategies such as Business Improvement Districts to attract and support businesses and beautify and maintain their downtowns.

Other cities of a similar sized downtown have used strategies such as Business Improvement Districts to attract and support businesses and beautify and maintain their downtowns.

Why Do People and Community, Housing, and Economy Matter?

Understanding the community and people of Three Forks helps to prioritize what matters most to residents. With an age dependency ratio of 69.7 and four options for childcare, one assisted living center, and one senior center, the City has an opportunity to cater to their residents with more options for these age-dependent groups.



City of Three Forks, Downtown Vacancies

Though housing prices have increased exorbitantly, especially over the past few years, the City still offers housing at a more attainable range than other areas of the County, offering housing possibilities. Jobs, on the other hand, are a draw factor in neighboring areas. Many local residents travel to surrounding communities such as Bozeman for work. This is likely a result of a narrow list of employment opportunities in Three Forks. When commuters are traveling to other areas for work, they are likely spending money on groceries and goods there before returning home and increasing their cost of living by commuting to and from other places every day. Three Forks has the opportunity to attract additional workers and bring in additional revenue by identifying ways to grow local jobs and employment opportunities.

It is also important to recognize that although agriculture remains an important economic sector for Montana and Gallatin County, continued growth and development around Bozeman has brought many new residents into the valley. This rapid population growth has resulted in the replacement of fertile farmlands with new residential homes, decreasing open space, and impacting the livelihood of farmers. Gallatin County's farming sector has shrunk in recent years, despite sustained economic growth throughout other sectors and industries as well as increasing median incomes for individuals throughout the region.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND TRANSPORTATION

Sewer and Water

As the County continues to grow and place pressure on its communities, it becomes increasingly important to understand the factors limiting growth. In Three Forks, some of the most pressing limiting factors include sewer, water, and road infrastructure.

Three Forks owns water rights that are subject to Montana's statewide adjudication in front of the Montana Water Court. Three Forks also owns groundwater certificates, a permit and a reservation subject to administrative processes through the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation. Three Forks' water rights are located in three separate hydrologic basins, 41F – Madison River Basin, 41G – Jefferson River Basin, and 41H – Gallatin River Basin. Three Forks' water system serves the community within the City limits as well as to two businesses outside of City limits that have grandfathered service agreements. The City also sells bulk water to those living in outlying communities like Clarkston and the southern end of Broadwater County.

The Three Forks wastewater system serves almost the entire populated area within City limits, as well as two businesses outside of City limits that have grandfathered service agreements. The municipality also serves its residents with drinking water. Wells drawing from the Madison and Jefferson aquifers do not currently provide adequate water supply throughout the City. According to the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), the City must keep enough water stored as is needed on a high usage day (typically during the summer). This is in preparation for if or when the City's best producing wells go down, so that the City would still have the potable water capacity to cover demand. The aquifers providing water to the City's wells require a variety of treatments to address elements and aesthetics. The City is currently working on a water project to find more capacity, and expects any found will also require treatment.

The wastewater system density surrounding Three Forks is currently estimated to be low, meaning existing infrastructure can support up to 125 people per square mile. These areas may need to rely on additional infrastructure or develop at lower densities. Areas closer to the City are classified as medium and can support up to 750 people per square mile, and a higher level of development.

Commuting Patterns

The average household in Three Forks travels roughly 22,410 vehicle miles per year and there is a median of 2 cars per household. This is slightly higher than the county average at 22,250 miles annually and a median of 1.8 cars per household, costing Three Forks households roughly \$500 more in transportation costs every year. These higher averages are due to the lack of a market for public transportation serving Three Forks and the fact that many local residents commute to surrounding communities for work. On average, residents of Three Forks commute roughly 21 minutes to and from work each day.

Roads and Traffic

Within City limits, there are 12.26 miles of paved roads, 6.24 miles of unpaved/gravel roads, and 5.85 miles of alleys. There are no sidewalks on the east half of 5th Ave E through 7th Ave E, and limited/deteriorating sidewalks on the west side of the City.

Active Transportation

Much of the east side of Three Forks has sidewalks running parallel to the roads. With relatively low traffic counts throughout the City, cars, bikes, and pedestrians are able to share the roads and sidewalks to get where they need to within City limits. Residents have walking/biking access to the schools, one medical clinic, the Three Forks Airport, a grocery store, several retail/dining options, and parks due largely to the connectivity of the street network. The Headwaters Trail System (See map on page 21) runs adjacent to the City, crosses I-90, and enters Missouri Headwaters State Park, and Drouillard Fishing Access Site. There is currently a plan with the Gallatin County Open Lands Department to extend the trail to Manhattan. Aside from this, the City has no regional trail connections to surrounding municipalities and is not connected to a transit system, leaving residents reliant on personal vehicles for tasks that require leaving City limits. Transportation service for the senior community is provided on an as-needed basis through a Bozeman-foundation.

Public Facilities

Within Three Forks, there are major public facilities that enable residents in the City to avoid regularly traveling to larger communities for desirable or needed services. There is a fire station, library, medical facility with an ambulance, pharmacy, chiropractic clinic, dentist, senior center, post office, and one educational facility that includes elementary, middle, and high school. Law enforcement services are provided by the Gallatin County Sheriff's Office through a contract with the City and the City provides the County an office space free of charge.

Why Do Infrastructure and Transportation Matter?

With Gallatin County's population on the rise, it is crucial for Three Forks to understand existing infrastructure and how it limits or impacts growth. Additionally, a City's infrastructure and amenities have a direct impact on the quality of life for residents. With the large age-dependency ratio in Three Forks, the City has an opportunity to provide more services and amenities within walking distance of residents who may not have access to a personal vehicle. Creating a complete community that can support its residents' needs should be a top priority for any community.

TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNITY AMENITIES



OUTDOOR RECREATION AND NATURAL AREAS

Wildlife

The region's largely-riparian habitat supports a rich diversity of wildlife including over 100 species of birds, a threatened species of orchids (Ute Ladies' Tresses), over 22 species of fish, bison, elk, deer, wolves, and bears.

The Headwaters of the Missouri River provide hundreds of miles of blue-ribbon trout fishing and is well-known as a fly-fishing destination. Along with fishing, hunting is popular in and around Three Forks.

Local Parks

Three Forks is home to seven parks: Helton Peterson Park, Bertagnolli Park, Stevenson Park, Sacajawea Park, John Q. Adams Milwaukee Railroad Park, Veteran's Park, and Bellach Park (Three Forks Ponds). Among these parks are pavilions, playgrounds, sports and baseball fields, several basketball and volleyball courts, and an ice rink. There are several opportunities for unstructured recreation for residents to enjoy such as grassy fields and ponds with a dock for fishing access, but many residents have voiced a desire to see more unstructured recreation opportunities. Three Forks is also home to the Headwaters Public Golf Course, a 9-hole public course built in 1987.

Regional Parks

Perhaps one of the region's most defining features—and where Three Forks gets its name—is the nearby Missouri Headwaters State Park and Historical Landmark, where the Jefferson, Madison, and Gallatin Rivers merge to form the 2,300-mile Missouri River. Today, the 532-acre park serves as a habitat for much of the region's wildlife and offers an unparalleled natural landscape. Missouri Headwaters State Park provides 17 campsites, tipi rentals, paved trails to points of historical interest and scenic beauty, and interpretive displays of the areas rich cultural and natural history. Along the rivers, popular activities can include floating, kayaking, canoeing, fishing, photography, and wildlife viewing. In 2019, Missouri Headwaters State Park saw nearly 45,000 visitors and in 2020, roughly 60,000. Between January and June of 2020, the park had an estimated 30,000 visitors, a 67.1% increase from the same period in 2019 (which may partially be attributed to the COVID-19 Pandemic's impact on air travel).

Madison Buffalo Jump State Park is another defining feature of the region. The park is situated on the edge of a valley created by the Madison River. Native Americans throughout history have used this jump site to stampede herds of bison off of massive semicircular cliffs. Madison Buffalo Jump State Park provides picnicking and hiking amenities, as well as interpretive displays that describe the geographic features and the dramatic hunting style that was practiced here for thousands of years.



Trails

Three Forks is the initial point of the Headwaters Trail System, a paved network of approximately 12 miles of trails extending from Three Forks, through Missouri Headwaters State Park, to the Drouillard Fishing Access Site. This trail system was largely funded by over \$1M in grants and an annual Headwaters Bank Run fundraiser, which allowed construction without City taxpayer dollars. There are plans to expand this trail network to Manhattan. Four trailheads are located within the City, and three others are located at Three Forks Junction, inside Headwaters State Park, and just east of the City along I-90. Within City boundaries, Three Forks has an opportunity to build upon this trail system, connecting parks and neighborhoods.

Why Do Outdoor Recreation and Natural Areas Matter?

Three Forks is known for its rich culture, environmental heritage, and scenic landscape. The community values access to recreation and symbiotic relationship to the surrounding natural environment. As growth pressures rise throughout the County, the City will need to maintain and grow needed public services and infrastructure, while mitigating negative impacts on the environment.



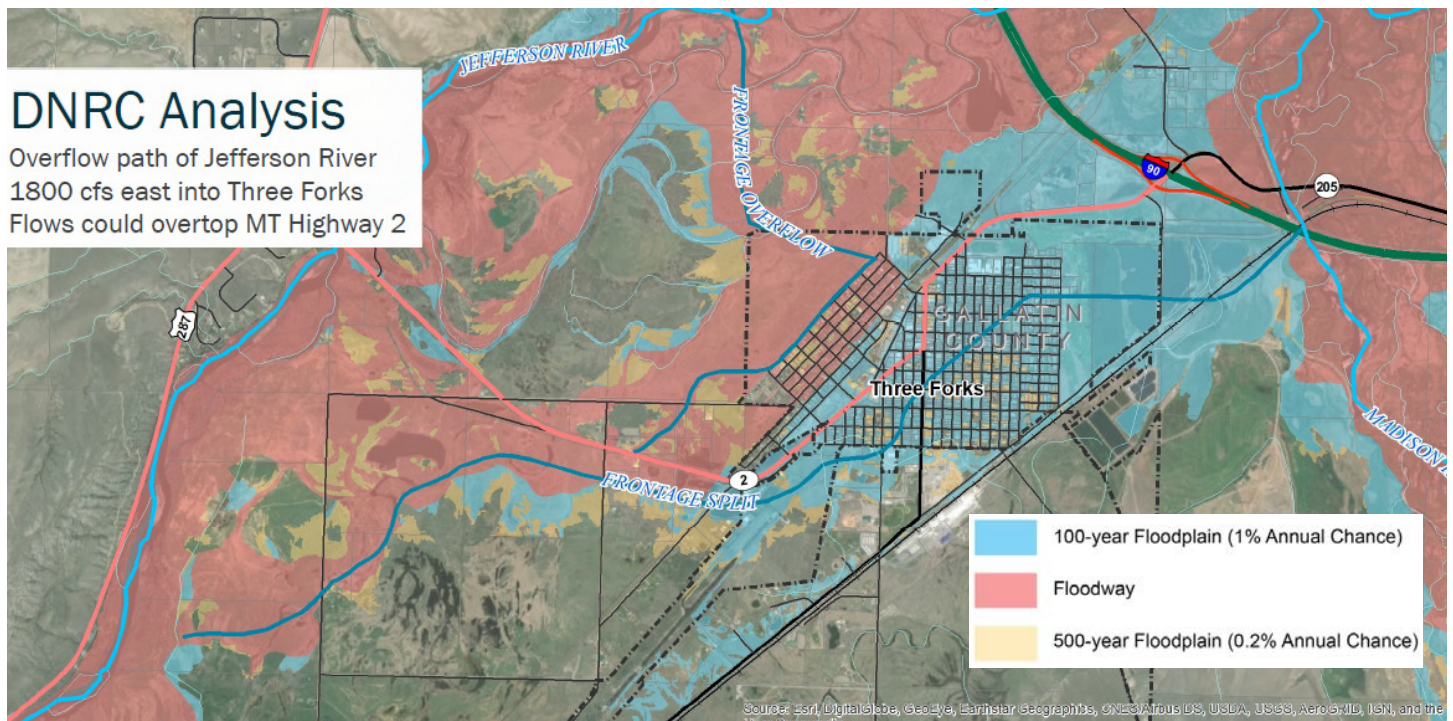
Hazards

Three Forks is located west of the Madison and east of the Jefferson Rivers. Both rivers are subject to periodic floods, which places the City in a susceptible position. Almost the entire City currently lies in the floodplain of either river. The floodway is the area within the 100-year floodplain that must be kept free from new development, so that 100-year floodwater (1% annual chance of flooding) can be carried without substantial increases in flood heights. The floodway typically sees the highest water velocities and deepest inundation during a 100-year flood event.

Today, Three Forks only has 4 acres of pasture property located in a designated floodway, but 493 acres in the floodplain. However, the City is currently part of a large study that is being undertaken by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) to produce new floodplain maps for portions of both rivers. Updated floodplain maps will depict the latest, most accurate flood risk data, and will eventually result in updated FEMA floodplain maps. The draft data was presented at open houses and updates provided in December 2020 and January 2021. Since January 2021, the City has been providing outreach to educate residents on these new maps. Preliminary maps are expected in 2022, and final Flood Insurance Rate Maps will likely not be available until 2023 (see map below).

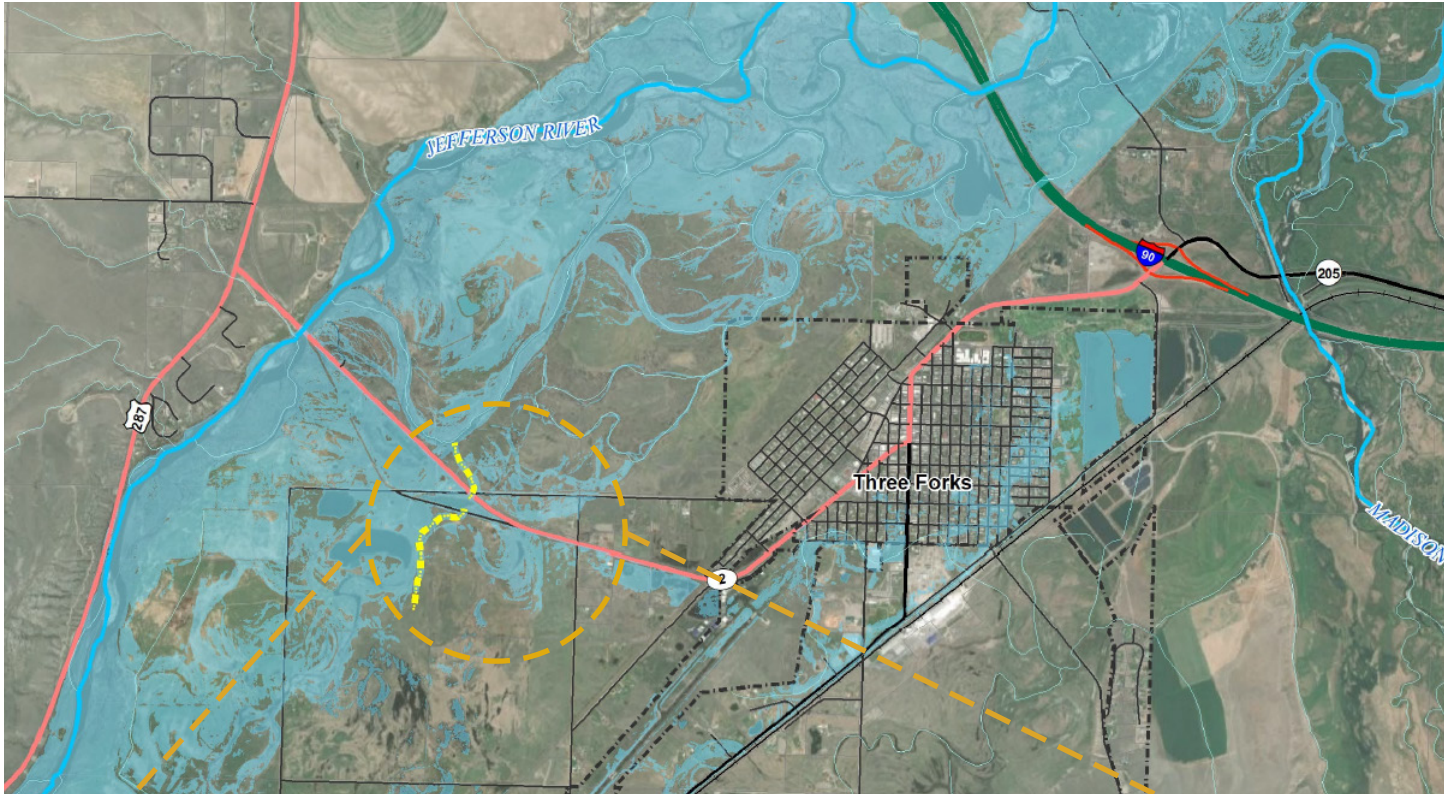
Preliminary data from the study shows a large portion of the City to be within the designated floodway (152 acres and 184 structures) and added to the 100-year floodplain areas (165 acres and 244 structures), for a total of 658 acres in the floodplain. Due to these anticipated changes, the City has already undertaken a Flood Mitigation Feasibility Study to look at three alternatives for large-scale mitigation solutions. The City has spoken with landowners and will be pursuing Alternative 2 (illustrated by the dashed yellow line on the maps at upper right, and green line at lower right) which would capture floodwater and redirect the flow back into the Jefferson River, mitigating the floodway and much of the floodplain area.

DNRC FLOOD ANALYSIS



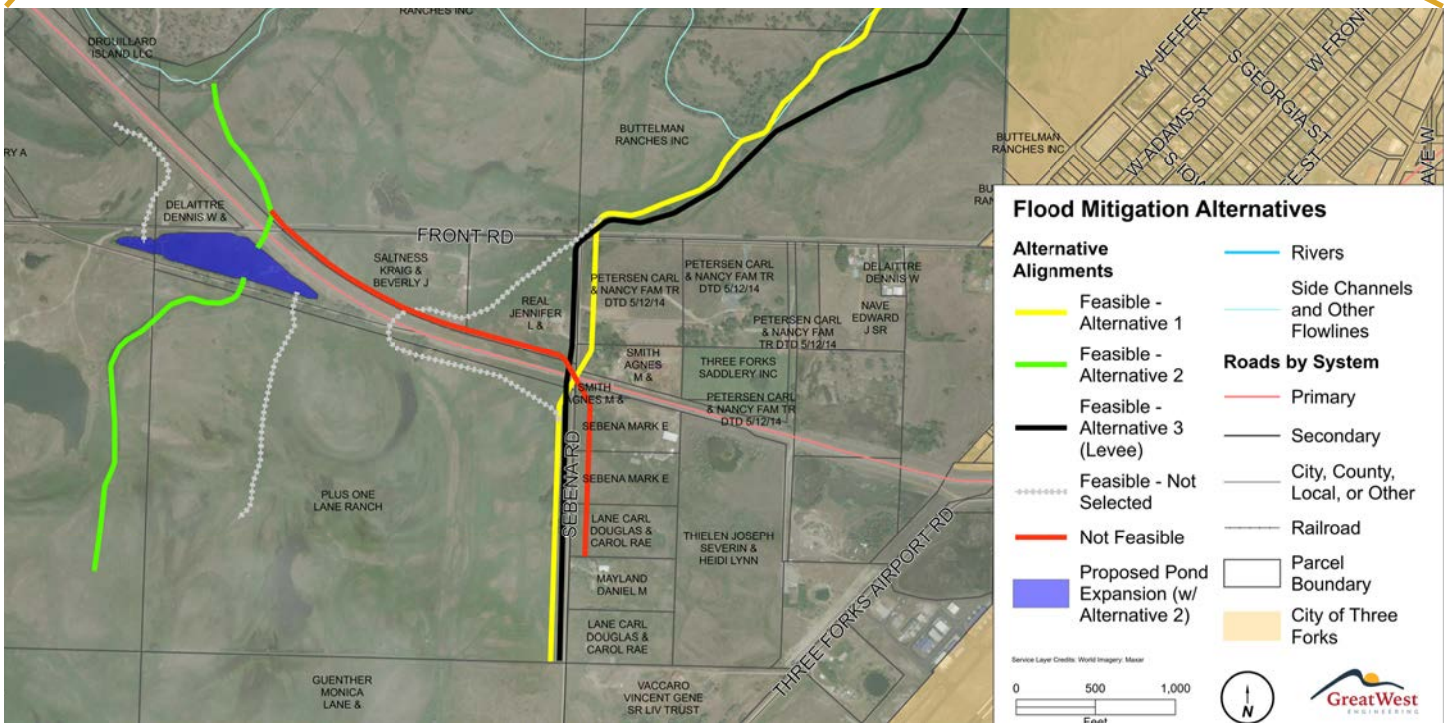
Source: City of Three Forks, 2021

FLOOD MITIGATION ALTERNATIVES (ALTERNATIVE 2)



Source: City of Three Forks, 2021

FLOOD MITIGATION ALTERNATIVES ENLARGEMENT



Source: City of Three Forks, 2021

Sand and Gravel

The city and planning area are rich in natural resources. The proximity to the geothermal activity of Yellowstone, along with being in the center of three surrounding mountain ranges, provides the valley with a variety of geologic abundance, one of which being sand and gravel supply. While the city discourages new sand and gravel extraction operations which would conflict with adjacent residential neighborhoods, it does have several existing and former gravel operations within the planning area. The image below depicts operations within the planning area.

SAND AND GRAVEL RESOURCES



Source: City of Three Forks, 2022

This page intentionally left blank.



Jefferson River



2 | The Vision

Located at the Headwaters of the Missouri River, historic Three Forks is a community built around its hard-working, friendly people that live, work, play, and enjoy a high quality of life that our excellent school system, vibrant downtown, and natural environment provide.

Our Community Vision

These elements were developed thanks to over 150 community submissions received during the first phase of the Plan update. Underneath each statement are bullet points highlighting main points we heard from the community.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE

Three Forks celebrates our small-town heritage built from strong blue-collar roots. We promote strong neighborhoods, a vibrant downtown, access to education, and the preservation of our treasured natural resources. Our people, our economy, and our environment are what makes Three Forks a desirable place to live, work, and play.



17 STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS



145 QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES



2,500+ WEBSITE VISITS

THEMES DISTILLED



VIBRANT HISTORIC DOWNTOWN



SMALL TOWN, FAMILY-FRIENDLY



HIGH-QUALITY EDUCATION



PRESERVED HERITAGE, FARMLAND & OPEN SPACE



WELL-PLANNED GROWTH



ACCESS TO SERVICES



CONNECTED



SELF-SUSTAINING COMMUNITY

OUR PEOPLE

Three Forks fosters a culture of togetherness that is maintained by a hard-working population that values high-quality education, a strong downtown, Montana heritage, and a protected natural environment.

Our Big Ideas:

- Address stormwater infrastructure needs
- Maintain housing affordability and investigate accessory dwelling units
- Small town feeling of being welcome, safe, and engaged
- Preserve agricultural heritage
- Enhance cultural experiences
- Promote access to services and healthcare
- Achieve educational excellence



OUR ECONOMY



Three Forks' blue-collar roots, established in part by the agriculture, rail, and lumber industries of the 1800s, are furthered by the self-sustaining nature of the City's residents, regional affordability, and the ability to access amenities and services all without leaving City limits.

Our Big Ideas:

- Establish a downtown beautification program
- Attract more retail, restaurant, and entertainment options
- Maintain necessary existing commercial land uses (grocery and hardware)
- Promote outdoor cafes, art galleries, hobby shops
- Pursue broadband enhancement
- Promote tourism through marketing our natural amenities
- Encourage light industrial or manufacturing businesses

OUR ENVIRONMENT

The City of Three Forks exists to some extent due to its proximity to the Madison, Gallatin, and Jefferson Rivers. Residents and visitors value the physical, mental, and financial benefits that these natural amenities provide and support their continued preservation and enhancement.

Our Big Ideas:

- Address the floodplain
- Increase access to natural amenities and trails
- Support infill and strategic development over sprawl
- Support community and youth-based activities and spaces that bring neighbors together
- Maintain our relationship to surrounding natural lands and agricultural uses
- Encourage safe transportation systems that support neighborhoods and businesses







3 | Future Land Use

Overview

Future land use designations, shown in the Future Land Use map on the following pages, are separate from zoning and do not change the City's existing zoning and land uses. The purpose of a Future Land Use Plan (FLUP) is to guide future development and growth in a direction the City can support and in a way that enhances the quality of life of existing and future residents. FLUP land use categories should be general enough to allow for some design flexibility, but specific enough to give landowners and developers some direction as to what the City is looking for in uses and style and patterns of future development. The FLUP should also recognize and acknowledge the expectations of current landowners with regard to allowable future zone changes, while providing an understanding of the City's own expectations.

This FLUP illustrates desired growth patterns by identifying the characteristics and location of land use within the City. Constraints such as existing development, water and sewer service area boundaries, hydrology and floodplain, and conservation easements have been considered in development of the future land use map. This plan assumes floodplain mitigation to the northwest of the City boundary, allowing for additional residential development. In addition, land to the southeast of the City is expected to annex and develop as residential uses.

There are approximately 150 acres of undeveloped residential land within the City today. At an average density of 5 homes per acre, these parcels could accommodate about 750 homes in the future. As noted earlier, if the City grows by 1,500 people in the next 20 years, there will be a need for about 625 new homes in Three Forks through 2042. In other words, the vacant residential land within the City limits today could accommodate the community's needs for residential growth through infill, without annexing new land. However, it is likely that owners of some lands adjacent to City limits will seek to annex before all vacant lands are developed through infill growth. Therefore, the Future Land Use Map includes areas currently outside the City and which could in the future be served with urban infrastructure and services. Those future residential areas total 360 acres.

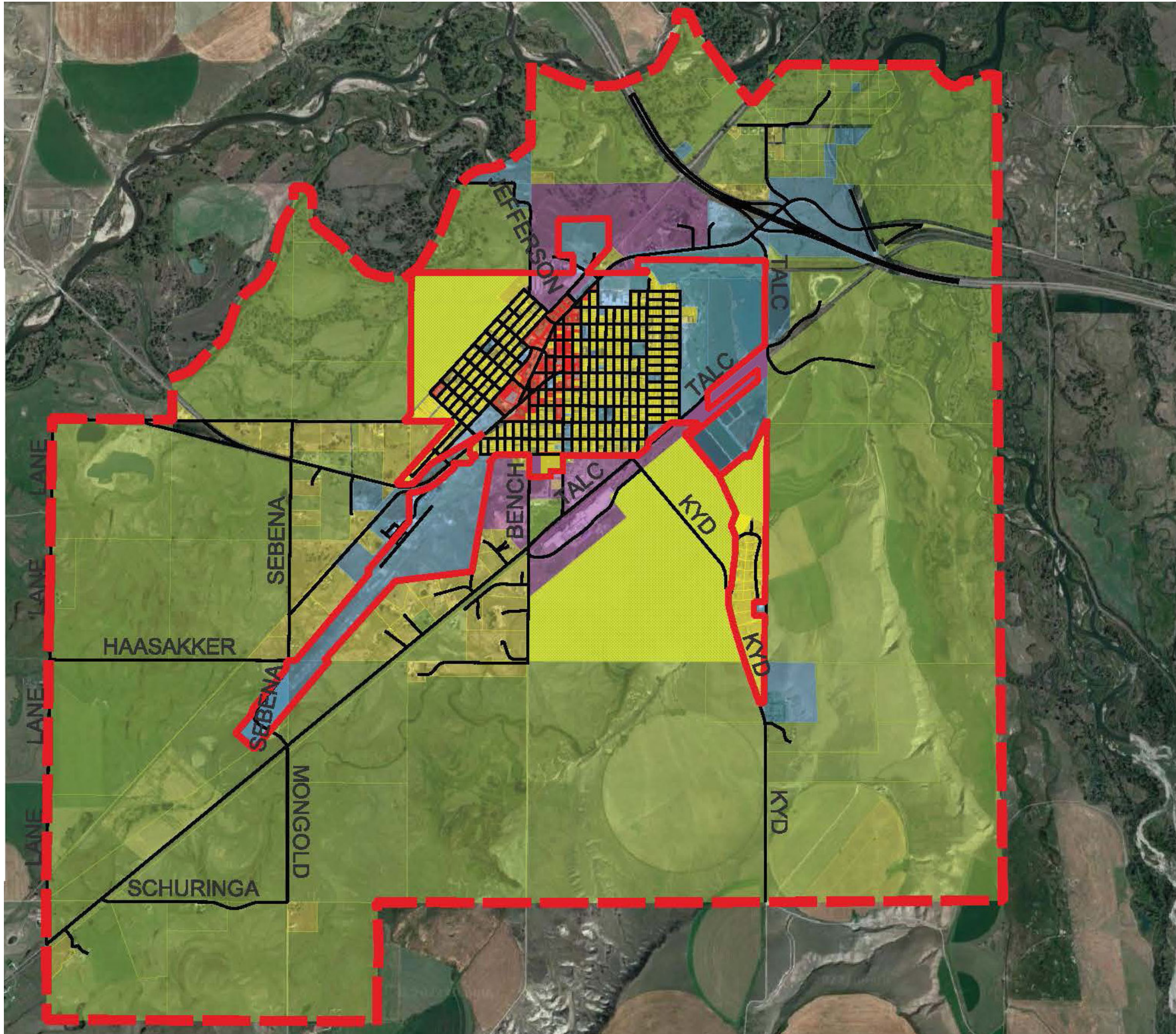
The City's current residential pattern is characterized by low density, detached single-family neighborhoods. This pattern is formed by the community's zoning code, which has only one residential district. That zoning district requires relatively large lot sizes and restricts most development to single-family homes while allowing multifamily dwellings, such as townhomes, condos, and apartments by special use permits only.

The challenge created by this homogeneous zoning is that it results in more expensive homes than what could be attained by slightly higher density development - smaller lots and attached "missing middle" housing types such as moderate-scale condos and townhomes and smaller apartment buildings which are more economical to develop.

The Future Land Use Plan encourages the City's traditional grid street design. It also envisions slightly more homes per acre than existing neighborhoods through smaller lot sizes and the development of more attached homes, such as townhomes. In the Future Land Use map, future residential areas are located to the northeast and southeast parts of the City. Commercial and industrial development will continue to infill and expand in the areas where it exists today.

Overall, natural features such as wetlands and open space serve as borders for the extent of growth for Three Forks. At the south end of the City, this plan suggests the City expand industrial areas and allow for greenway buffers and mixed use development between new neighborhoods and existing or new industrial uses. Redevelopment efforts should be focused along the Railway Avenue and across to Main Street.

In addition to land uses, this map takes into account certain design elements, such as gateways. Gateways into the City and major intersections should be improved to realign the roadways, add signage or public art, and clean up existing commercial areas along intersections to serve as a desirable entrance to the City and key areas. These gateways should include: John Q. Adams Milwaukee Railroad Park and Depot, near the airport and rodeo grounds, and near downtown.



Future Land Use Map and Categories

The future land use categories are described on the following pages. Each category outlines:

- general characteristics, features, and amenities;
- desired primary and secondary uses;
- suggested residential density range (i.e. dwelling units per acre);
- photo examples of typical land use and options.

PREVIOUS FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORIES	NEW FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORIES
Residential/Agricultural	Agricultural
Residential	Future Residential
Commercial and Industry	Downtown Commercial, Mixed Use/ Light Industrial, Industrial
Parks/Open	Public Land/Institutional

CITY OF THREE FORKS FUTURE LAND USE MAP

This map indicates growth opportunity to the northwest, assuming completion of planned floodway improvements. In the event these improvements are not completed, development will likely be focused to the southeast.

- Three Forks City Boundary
- Growth Policy Planning Area
- Existing Residential
- Future Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Public Land-Institutional
- Agricultural

Future Residential



OVERALL DESCRIPTION

Future Residential areas reflect the traditional development pattern of Three Forks, while allowing slightly higher densities. These areas will still be characterized by detached single-family homes but will also encourage more “missing-middle” housing types such as moderate scale condo and townhome development and smaller apartment buildings. These neighborhoods should include a mix of densities, multi-use trail networks, neighborhood parks and amenities, and public facilities. These neighborhoods should encourage the use of accessory dwelling units.

KEY NOTES

Primary Uses: Single-family residences; duplexes and fourplex condos and townhomes; small apartment buildings

Secondary Uses: Accessory dwelling units, civic uses, schools, neighborhood and community parks, including urban agricultural features

Suggested Residential Density Range: 5 to 15 homes per acre

Downtown Commercial



OVERALL DESCRIPTION

Commercial areas, primarily concentrated downtown, serve as the destination for dining, entertainment, culture, arts, and shopping, and is a centralized location for public gathering and events. Expanded pedestrian sidewalks, outdoor eating areas, and alleyways with amenities such as pedestrian walkways and art create interesting public spaces on the northern end of Main Street. A focus on additional development downtown should encourage the preservation of historic buildings and infill development that reflects the existing scale, character, and eclectic nature of existing buildings.

KEY NOTES

Primary Uses: Restaurants, retail, office, entertainment, civic, artisan, and multifamily high-density uses in a walkable, pedestrian-oriented environment

Secondary Uses: Neighborhood parks, live-work units, apartment and condominium units, short-term and hotel lodging

Suggested Residential Density Range: 12+ units per acre net density

Mixed Use/Light Industrial



OVERALL DESCRIPTION

This category includes areas with a variety of office, retail, and light industrial, integrated with essential services. Building types may include one-to-two story retail, office, and medical buildings with high-quality design integrated with urban elements such as pedestrian connectivity and green space. Live-work development, which contains separate residential and non-residential areas intended for both residential and non-residential uses concurrently, with the residential use of the space being secondary to the primary use as a place of work, is encouraged. **While not shown on the future land use map, these uses are intended to be located along Frontage Road, adjacent to the airport, and as transitional uses between residential areas and commercial or industrial areas.**

KEY NOTES

Primary Uses: Office, commercial, retail, light industrial, live-work, and service

Secondary Uses: Neighborhood and community parks, agricultural

Suggested Residential Density Range: One unit for every ten acres when used for agricultural operations

Industrial



OVERALL DESCRIPTION

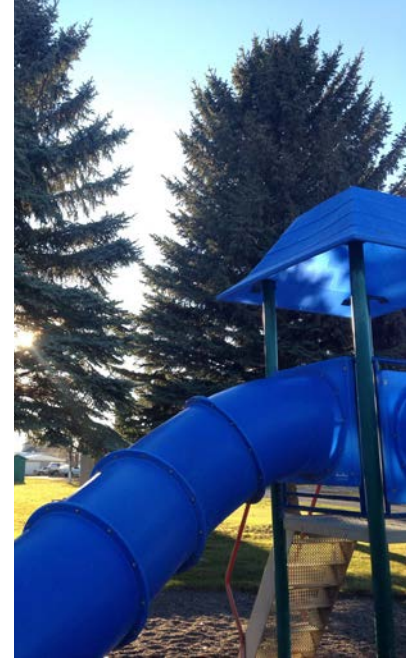
This category includes areas of industrial, construction and manufacturing, and shipping areas which may be associated with higher traffic, noise, and air quality impacts. Community parks and open space should be used as a buffer between residential uses. These areas are located within the southern portion of the City, generally along Talc Road.

KEY NOTES

Primary Uses: Industrial

Secondary Uses: Community parks, agricultural

Public Land–Institutional



OVERALL DESCRIPTION

Public and Institutional lands consist of parks, open space, civic uses, etc. Open Space provides opportunities for large areas of nature-oriented, outdoor recreation, including multi-purpose trails, while preserving habitat areas as well as large- and small-scale agricultural operations. Residential housing may be included as low-density, clustered neighborhoods. Greenways are areas of maintained green spaces, typically consisting of linear pathways and connections between neighborhoods to open space areas.

KEY NOTES

Primary Uses: Undeveloped, natural open space, drainageways/floodplain areas, agricultural uses

Secondary Uses: Recreation uses such as parks and trails, civic uses

Agricultural



OVERALL DESCRIPTION

Areas designated as agricultural will remain largely undeveloped until the City is ready to serve them with urban infrastructure, including roads, water, and wastewater.

KEY NOTES

Primary Uses: Agriculture

Secondary Uses: Open space, public lands, and rural residential

Suggested Residential Density Range: One unit for every 3 - 10 acres maximum

Allowed Zoning: Agricultural, Agricultural/Residential, Public/Institutional





4 | The Path Forward

Overview

The goals and policies in this document are organized into the same categories found in the Guiding Principles in Chapter 2 - Our People, Our Economy, and Our Environment, to reflect the community's priorities. The accompanying policies provide guidance in relation to each goal for new development and redevelopment. A detailed implementation table with specific, action-oriented strategies to accomplish these goals can be found at the end of this chapter.

Our People

GUIDING PRINCIPLE

Three Forks fosters a culture of togetherness that is maintained by a hard-working population that values high-quality education, a strong downtown, Montana heritage, and a protected natural environment.

OUR PEOPLE: GOAL 1 - OFFER ACCESSIBLE HOUSING FOR RESIDENTS OF ALL AGES, BACKGROUNDS, AND ABILITIES

Policies

- 1-1. Maintain a diverse population by providing workforce housing.
- 1-2. Support the development of diverse housing types.
- 1-3. Support the rehabilitation of underutilized/unsuitable housing stock.
- 1-4. Support reduced impact fees related to low income and moderate-income housing development.
- 1-5. Support the reduction of parking requirements for residential development where residents are less likely to rely on their own vehicle (i.e. retirement communities, live and work development).
- 1-6. Reduce regulations and requirements for Accessory Dwelling Units.
- 1-7. Review the existing zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations with regard to lot sizes, setbacks and percentage of lot coverage in residential districts.
- 1-8. Develop public design standards that include:
 - » Encourage that sidewalks are included in new residential developments
 - » Encourage that alleys are included in new residential developments with maintenance plans.
 - » Encourage that street tree-plantings are included in new residential developments.

**OUR PEOPLE: GOAL 2 - PRESERVE
OUR SMALL-TOWN CHARACTER AND
AGRICULTURAL HERITAGE**

Policies

2-1. Encourage a continuation of the existing grid street pattern found in established neighborhoods.

2-2. Encourage agricultural properties to apply for Montana's agricultural property tax exemptions.

2-3. Review existing ordinances to remove potential barriers to the success of agricultural properties and encourage additional diversification of uses.

2-4. Encourage the preservation of historic properties.

**OUR PEOPLE: GOAL 3 - INCREASE ACCESS TO
SERVICES, EDUCATION, HEALTHCARE, AND
CULTURAL EXPERIENCES**

Policies

3-1. Develop a Street Maintenance Master Plan and Street Capital Improvements Plan and schedule.

3-2. Conduct joint School Board and Planning Board meetings annually, identify future school system needs in conjunction with the School Board, and create a plan for integrating school system requirements with the City of Three Forks land use planning.

3-3. Study the use of impact fees as a mechanism for funding expanded fire and police services.

3-4. Continue Joint Three Forks Rural Fire District meetings annually.

3-5. Enhance cultural experiences by supporting unique public events and groups.

3-6. Promote access to services and healthcare.

3-7. Encourage the development of a new school and update to existing schools, as needed.

3-8. Begin conducting Joint Law Enforcement meetings annually.

Our Economy

GUIDING PRINCIPLE

Three Forks' blue-collar roots, established in part by the agriculture, rail, and lumber industries of the 1800s, are furthered by the self-sustaining nature of the City's residents, regional affordability, and the ability to access amenities and services all without leaving City limits.

OUR ECONOMY: GOAL 1 - ENHANCE OUR BEAUTIFUL AND VIBRANT DOWNTOWN

Policies

- 1-1. Identify the needs and opportunities available to serve existing commercial enterprises.
- 1-2. Establish a downtown beautification program.
- 1-3. Attract more retail, restaurant, and entertainment options.
- 1-4. Encourage outdoor cafes, art galleries, hobby shops.
- 1-5. Create Main Street Design Guidelines to enhance the character of public spaces downtown.

OUR ECONOMY: GOAL 2 - INCREASE ACCESS TO LIVING-WAGE JOBS

Policies

- 2-1. Review regulatory requirements and procedures in an effort to make desired employment development viable.
- 2-2. Pursue broadband infrastructure enhancement.

OUR ECONOMY: GOAL 3 - PROMOTE A DIVERSE AND RESILIENT ECONOMY

Policies

- 3-1. Review regulatory requirements in an effort to make desired commercial development viable.
- 3-2. Conduct a social/economic study to determine the commercial needs and opportunities for the City of Three Forks.
- 3-3. Study tax increment financing to determine its potential for public improvements appropriate to encouraging commercial development in the City of Three Forks.
- 3-4. Maintain necessary existing commercial development.
- 3-5. Promote tourism through marketing our natural amenities.
- 3-6. Encourage light industrial or manufacturing businesses.

Our Environment

GUIDING PRINCIPLE

The City of Three Forks exists to some extent due to its proximity to the Madison, Gallatin, and Jefferson Rivers. Residents and visitors value the physical, mental, and financial benefits that these natural amenities provide and support their continued preservation and enhancement.

OUR ENVIRONMENT: GOAL 1 - COEXIST WITH THE NATURAL WATER SYSTEMS SURROUNDING THREE FORKS

Policies

- 1-1. Prioritize the floodplain mitigation project and work with property owners to implement the project, mitigating the amount and area of floodplain-affected properties and increasing the growth area within City boundaries.
- 1-2. Market the availability of contents insurance for renters that is available through the National Flood Insurance Program.
- 1-3. Support the relocation of structures within the 100-year floodplain zone.
- 1-4. Coordinate with the Montana Watershed Coordination Council and other communities within the Upper Missouri watershed when setting policies or adopting regulations that could impact the volume or velocity of runoff from storms.
- 1-5. Work with FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program Community Rating System to lower flood insurance rates for residents.
- 1-6. Integrate stormwater management with an updated stormwater infrastructure plan.
- 1-7. Adopt low impact development (LID) standards for development and promote the use of green infrastructure for stormwater filtration and the reduction of impermeable surfaces on a site.

OUR ENVIRONMENT: GOAL 2 - PRESERVE OPEN SPACE AND NATURAL LANDS

Policies

- 2-1. Develop a master plan to identify appropriate locations and development patterns for residential infill and future annexations.
- 2-2. Support clustered residential development to preserve open space.
- 2-3. Support infill and strategic development over sprawl.
- 2-4. Promote the responsible use of, and recreation in, public lands.
- 2-5. Support development that mitigates or avoids negative impacts to riparian and other wildlife.
- 2-6. Support the development of multi-use drainage basins.

OUR ENVIRONMENT: GOAL 3 - SUPPORT A HEALTHY AND ACTIVE COMMUNITY

Policies

- 3-1. Contribute to community and youth-based activities and events.
- 3-2. Provide adequate access to natural amenities and trails.
- 3-3. Plan for future trail, park, and natural open space connections.
- 3-4. Develop a master plan to identify appropriate pedestrian and bicycle trails throughout Three Forks.
- 3-5. Develop a park master plan to identify future park locations, types, development, and financing techniques.
- 3-6. Undertake a feasibility study to determine the potential for a recreation center, swimming pool, tennis courts, and banquet facilities.

Strategic Action Plan

PRIORITY	STRATEGY	TIMEFRAME
1	Mitigate the amount and area of floodplain-affected properties and growth area within City boundaries by continuing to pursue the floodplain mitigation project and working with property owners.	0-3 Years
2	Review Accessory Dwelling Unit regulations to make them more accessible, and update the City Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map to reflect the goals of the Growth Policy.	0-3 Years
3	Develop a Capital Improvements Plan to identify needed infrastructure investments and timelines for improvements.	0-3 Years
4	Pursue interlocal planning and a land use agreement with Gallatin County within the Three Forks extraterritorial planning area.	0-3 Years
5	Update the Impact Fee Schedule, based upon the Capital Improvements Plan, to identify how infrastructure investments are funded.	0-3 Years

PRIORITY	STRATEGY	TIMEFRAME
6	Update the Subdivision Regulations and include standards for low impact development (LID) to promote use of green infrastructure for stormwater filtration and the reduction of impermeable surfaces.	0-3 Years
7	Implement a tax increment financing district to assist in the development of new commercial and light industrial.	0-3 Years
8	Create Main Street Design Guidelines and establish a Downtown Beautification Program.	0-3 Years
9	Develop a Parks and Trails Master Plan that identifies appropriate pedestrian and bicycle trails throughout Three Forks as well as future park locations, types, development, and financing techniques.	3-5 Years
10	Undertake a feasibility study to determine the potential for a recreation center, swimming pool/splash park, tennis courts, and banquet facilities.	3-5 Years



MISCO FEEDS
AUTHORIZED DEALER

RECIPE
FOR
DISASTER
The Home Fruit



L O G A N S I M P S O N