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Gardiner, MT - A Community Tourism Development Case Study: Resident Perceptions

Norma P. Nickerson
The University of Montana-Missoula

Meredith S. Berry
The University of Montana-Missoula

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Norma Polovitz Nickerson, Ph.D.

Meredith S. Berry, M.S.

Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research

College of Forestry
and Conservation
32 Campus Dr. #1234
The University of Montana
Missoula, MT 59812

Phone (406) 243-5686
Fax (406) 243-4845
www.itrr.umt.edu

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Prepared by

Norma Polovitz Nickerson, Ph.D.
Meredith S. Berry, M.S.

Institute for Tourism & Recreation Research
College of Forestry and Conservation
The University of Montana
Missoula, MT 59812
www.itrr.umt.edu

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Executive Summary

The purpose of this study was to assess quality of life and image perceptions of Gardiner by residents, as well as their support/attachment to their community. A door-to-door survey was administered in June, 2013. The survey was completed by 209 Gardiner residents for a 60% response rate.

Ninety-one percent of respondents were permanent residents of Gardiner who have lived, on average, 19.8 years in the community. The nine percent of seasonal respondents have returned to the community on average 6.47 years.

The positive image held by Gardiner residents is a community that is friendly, supportive, and has a unique and rich heritage. On the negative side, the community is one with roads that are not well maintained, has little parking available, and has a lack of retail shopping opportunities.

Residents were asked to identify quality of life attributes important to them, and then to indicate how satisfied they were on those quality of life attributes. In an importance/satisfaction matrix, 18 attributes emerged as areas needing improvement for Gardiner. Those attributes include:

- Availability of housing
- Fair prices for goods and services
- Quality of roads
- Enough good jobs for residents
- Zoning/land use in Gardiner
- Funding source for use in Gardiner
- Litter control
- Community leaders who make sound decisions
- Resident participation in local decision making
- Visitors who respect my way of life
- Gardiner's economy
- The prevention of drug and alcohol abuse
- The beauty of my community
- Controlling urban sprawl
- Awareness of natural heritage
- Awareness of cultural heritage
- Stores with local/regional foods
- Peace and quiet

While somewhat supportive of tourism, Gardiner residents were more lukewarm when responding to the idea that increased tourism would help their quality of life. Over one-third of residents feel that Gardiner is becoming crowded due to tourism.

Residents are fairly attached to their community. Sixty-nine percent said they would be sorry to leave Gardiner if they had to move. Slightly more than half indicated they would rather live in Gardiner than anywhere else, however nearly half of Gardiner residents find Gardiner substitutable.

Analysis of comments written by respondents along with the quantitative data results show that residents are concerned with the inability of the community to take control of their needs such as road maintenance, housing issues, jobs, sprawl and more. Some solutions include Gardiner becoming an incorporated town so the community can apply for funding sources not available to unincorporated areas. Instituting a resort tax for maintenance upgrades and infrastructure is currently being discussed as another solution for Gardiner. Other communities with a resort tax have found this tax, mostly paid for by nonresidents of the community, to be an enormous help to the needs of the community. Gardiner residents know that there are many opportunities awaiting their town. It is simply a matter of listening to all community members then moving forward for the betterment of everyone in the community.

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Introduction

Gardiner, Montana, an unincorporated town on the northern boundary of Yellowstone National Park is the world's first gateway community to a national park. Gardiner was officially founded in 1880, but has served as the gateway to Yellowstone since the parks' creation in 1872. Residents of Gardiner have catered to, and built a viable tourism economy around the needs of park visitors for over 140 years.

The intersection of growth in Yellowstone visitation numbers and the upcoming 100 year celebration of the establishment of the National Park Service, created an opportunity for Gardiner and Yellowstone National Park to jointly address infrastructure needs in the town and the entrance to the park. Gardiner will be changing. Traffic challenges will be addressed. Pedestrians will have walkways. A welcome center will be built, and the county park, Arch Park, will likely become the gathering place for dignitaries and locals year-round.

With the impending changes to Gardiner, the Montana Tourism Advisory Council along with the Montana Office of Tourism saw an opportunity to document the effects of tourism infrastructure change on a community. Therefore, the overall purpose of this project is to conduct a 'before' and 'after' analysis of resident perceptions of quality of life and image of their community as well image and satisfaction of Gardiner by visitors to the community. This report provides results of resident's perception of image and quality of life. A replica follow-up study of resident perceptions, image and quality of life will be conducted 1-2 years after the infrastructure development has been completed.

Background

"The Gardiner Gateway Project" is an unprecedented partnership between local, state and federal agencies working across jurisdictional boundaries to restore and enhance the original and only year-round entrance to the world's first national park – Yellowstone National Park – and the nation's first gateway community -Gardiner, Montana." Gardiner is a gateway community to Yellowstone National Park (YNP) and with increases in the number of visitors to YNP most years, it is important to provide safe and proper infrastructure for both residents and visitors. For these reasons, the Gardiner Gateway Project is geared towards sustainable infrastructure, tourism, and economic development. This includes pedestrian friendly zones, a historic downtown district, a welcome center with public restrooms and information and improved signage. This development project is expected to lead to improved public safety, historic preservation, community development, economic development, recreation access to public lands, tourism promotion and importantly, creation of jobs for Gardiner. The infrastructure development project will be completed by the centennial year of the National Park Service, 2016.

This project provides the opportunity to assess if tourism infrastructure development affects the perception of the community as seen by residents and visitors alike. It provides the opportunity to look at visitor spending patterns before and after infrastructure development. The assessment of perception, image, and quality of life of residents in the Gardiner community both before and after the development can be a guide for other communities contemplating development opportunities. For this reason, this will be a two-stage project. Residents will be asked questions related to their perception and image of their own community, and their quality of life during the summer of 2013. These same questions will be asked following the completion of the infrastructure developments in 2017. Gardiner will therefore serve as a longitudinal case study for future infrastructure development within gateway communities to national parks as well as any community that invests in infrastructure development. In

sum, the purpose of the present study is to understand residents' image of their community, how they view their overall quality of life, and their support of tourism as well as attachment to their community.

Image can be defined as mental impressions or perceptions. Images and perceptions of a community have been described as a critical promotional tool for the tourism industry (Schofield, Philips, & Eliopoulos, 2005). Although there are benefits and drawbacks to tourism development, tourism offers a means to improve economic conditions for communities (e.g., Andereck, Valentine, Knopf, & Vogt, 2005). Research suggests that the images residents hold may influence support for tourism. The images and perceptions that residents have of their own community, however, have rarely been researched (Haywantee & Nunkoo, 2011).

One study, conducted by Ramkisoon and Nunkoo (2011), investigated local resident images and perceptions of their community in Port Louis, Mauritius. In this study, the authors proposed four city attributes that subsequently influence resident levels of support for the tourism industry. These attributes, or predictors, were social attributes, transport attributes, government services attributes, and shopping attributes. Results showed that residents' perceived levels of shopping attributes, transport attributes and social attributes of the city tend to influence their image of their own town, and consequently for tourism support. These results provided important information to local planners for potential support for infrastructure and tourist development.

Another study which assessed resident (and visitor) image was designed to inform the development of Warrington, England. Shofield, Phillips, and Eliopoulos (2005) conducted a study in which resident perceptions of the suitability of their town for increased tourism development were measured (e.g., a day trip, an overnight stay etc.). Resident and visitor perceptions did not differ systematically, and both felt the town had potential. Socio-demographic and behavioral variables were further explored and were correlated with some differences in overall image of the town of Warrington. These methods and results highlight the importance of gathering both resident and visitor images of a town to inform potential development and infrastructure changes. Understanding these images can provide useful information to city planners. For planning of tourist and infrastructure development, therefore, resident image of their own community is important and in this way will help inform the Gardiner Gateway project.

Beyond image and perception, the Gardiner gateway project aims to improve the quality of life of Gardiner residents. Quality of life (QOL) is a subjective, multifaceted construct, and is related to an individual's thoughts and feelings. One definition of QOL is satisfaction with life, and feelings of contentment or fulfillment with one's experience in the world (Andereck, Valentine, Vogt, Knopf, 2007). Theoretically, the Gardiner Gateway project, aiming to bring economic development to the community may also improve the residents' QOL. To assess this, questions associated with the resident QOL were also asked. These questions were asked in the summer of 2013 and will again be asked after the Gardiner Gateway project is completed to assess any changes that may occur in measures related to quality of life.

Schalock (1996) noted several dimensions for QOL measurements that exist in the literature including emotional and psychological well-being (i.e., safety, happiness), interpersonal and social relationships (i.e., affection, family interactions), material well-being (i.e., employment and economic security), personal development and goals (i.e., education, skills), physical well-being (i.e., wellness, recreation), self-determination (i.e., autonomy, choices), social inclusion (i.e., acceptance, residential

environment), and rights (i.e., ownership). This provides a useful conceptualization for understanding general domains of QOL.

Andereck and Nyaupane (2011) studied resident perception of the impact tourism has on their QOL as well as relationships of QOL measures and support for tourism within the community. A mail survey was conducted with residents in the state of Arizona. Eight QOL domains were developed and analyses revealed that perceived personal benefits derived from tourism influenced QOL measures associated with the economy, as well as contact with tourists and perceptions of the role of tourism in the local economies. Andereck and Nyaupane also investigated not only how satisfied individuals were with certain aspects related to QOL, but also how important these indicators were to the individual. Similar to Andereck and Nyaupane, QOL measures and how important these were to the individual were assessed in the present study. As in Andereck and Nyuapane, eight domains were also identified and indicators were grouped in categories related to community well-being, urban issues, way of life, community pride and awareness, natural/cultural preservation, economic strength, recreation amenities, and crime and substance abuse.

Objectives of this study:

- To assess resident's image of their community.
- To assess quality of life perceptions among Gardiner residents.
- To establish the baseline image, quality of life, and resident demographics for use as comparison variables for future studies.

Methods

Door-to-door survey collection with drop-off and pick-up was the method used for this study. According to Andereck & Vogt (2000) this method has proven to provide better sample sizes than traditional mail-back and telephone surveys when conducting research in small communities. For this study, two researchers first mapped out the entire community on paper to create a plan of action for reaching every residential home in Gardiner. Since Gardiner is an unincorporated town, there are no town boundaries, therefore after consultation with the Chamber of Commerce Director and President as well as one of the "Gateway Project" leaders, it was decided that the boundaries would consist of every home connected to the community water and sewage.

The process involved knocking on a door, explaining the project to the resident, handing as many surveys to the resident as there were the number of adults 18 and over in the household, then returning to pick up the completed surveys approximately two hours later. If no one answered the door, it was marked down and the researcher returned later to try again. Each residence was contacted a minimum of two times over a four-day period to make sure every opportunity was given for residents to complete the survey. After multiple attempts to meet with the resident who was not at home during the distribution times, the researchers resorted to hanging the survey in a plastic bag from the doorknob with an explanation of the study attached to the survey and a request for the resident to complete it, then hang it back on their doorknob for later pick-up by the researchers.

The door-to-door surveying took place on a Saturday through Tuesday in mid-June, 2013. In total, 308 households were mapped out for the population base. Seventeen of those houses were

inaccessible due to "Do not enter" signs, dogs, and fortress type fences bringing the useable number down to 291 households. Seven outright refusals were encountered. There were 115 households with no answer after multiple attempts to find the owners at home resulting in 176 households contacted and completing the survey. This resulted in a 60 percent response rate (176/291). The total number of completed surveys for this study was 209 or 1.19 survey respondents per household.

Survey Design

The survey instrument used for this study was adopted from two research topics after an exhaustive review of the literature on community image and resident's perception of quality of life. As discussed in the background literature, resident's image of their own community is not a well-researched area, however the study by Schofield et al. (2005) provided survey questions which were adapted for use in this study. On the other hand, research on quality of life is abundant and upon review of numerous articles, adapting the survey used by Andereck and Nyaupane (2011) was deemed the best choice for the Gardiner area. Finally, a few questions were added that ask about resident support toward tourism and attachment to their community. The full survey can be found in Appendix A.

Results

Results of the study are presented as follows: 1) frequencies and means (when appropriate) of each topic area are displayed in table format. The topic areas are demographics, image, quality of life importance factors, quality of life satisfaction factors, and; attachment to Gardiner and tourism support for Gardiner. 2) Quality of life importance/satisfaction matrix to identify areas where Gardiner is doing a good job as well as suggested areas of improvement. 3) Open ended questions coded and discussed. All the open ended questions are provided verbatim in Appendix B for readers to understand the depth of suggestions and concerns provided by residents of Gardiner.

Demographics

Gardiner respondents ranged in age from 18 to 84, with a mean age of 51.76. Females represented 55 percent of the respondents. The majority of Gardiner respondents were employed (70%) with the next highest being retired at 24 percent. Nine percent of the respondents were business owners and seven percent were students (Table 1).

Ninety-one percent of the respondents were permanent residents of Gardiner with nine percent seasonal residents (see Table 1 for all demographic data). Permanent residents have lived in Gardiner from less than 1 year to 81 years for a mean of 19.83 years. These respondents have lived in Montana on average 26.64 years. Seasonal residents have returned to Gardiner on average of 6.47 years but the range of years returning to Gardiner was 1 to 35 years.

Table 1: Demographics of Gardiner Respondents

Demographics				
Gender	**Female:** 55% (114)		**Male:** 45% (93)	
Age	**Age Range:** 18-84		**Age Mean:** 51.76	
Employment	Employed Retired Business Owner Student Homemaker Unemployed	70% 24% 9% 3% 3% 3%		
Children in Gardiner School	**Yes:** 19% (38)		**No:** 81% (163)	
If yes, # of children	1 child 2 children 3 children	53% (20) 37% (14) 5% (2)		
If yes, ages of children	5-10 yrs. 11-13 yrs. 14-18 yrs.	6 7 11		
Residency in Gardiner	**Permanent:** 91% (191)		**Seasonal:** 9% (18)	
Years permanent residency	**Mean:** 19.83 years		**Range:** 1- 81 years	
Residency in Montana	**Mean:** 26.64		**Range:** 1-88 years	
Seasonals	**Mean number of years returning to Gardiner**: 6.47		**Range of years returning to Gardiner:** 1-35	

Image of Gardiner

About one-third of Gardiner residents have a neutral image of their town on nearly all attributes in which they were asked (Table 2). However, the remaining residents were able to distinguish between attributes. Only two attributes showed a positive image with greater than 50 percent of residents agreeing to that image attribute: 77% of residents agreed that Gardiner has a unique and rich heritage; 57% agreed that Gardiner has places to purchase local arts & crafts. On the negative side, five attributes were seen more negative than positive. Gardiner residents do **NOT** think that Gardiner has: well-maintained residential areas (53%); exciting night life (53%); a range of retail shopping opportunities (61%); ample parking (60%), and; well-maintained roads (67%) (Table 2).

Table 2: Resident image of what Gardiner has...

Gardiner has...	Strongly Disagree 1	2	3	4	Strongly Agree 5	Mean
Unique and rich heritage	1% (3)	7% (15)	15% (31)	30% (63)	47% (98)	4.13
Places to purchase local arts & crafts	1% (3)	13% (28)	28% (59)	37% (78)	20% (42)	3.61
Nice community/county parks	5% (10)	20% (41)	31% (64)	27% (57)	18% (38)	3.34
Good signage	6% (12)	17% (35)	39% (82)	29% (60)	9% (19)	3.19
Well maintained business & store fronts	4% (9)	23% (49)	37% (77)	31% (64)	5% (11)	3.09
Opportunities to experience local cuisine	9% (19)	21% (42)	35% (71)	26% (52)	9% (19)	3.05
Adequate business services	8% (17)	27% (57)	35% (74)	23% (48)	6% (13)	2.92
Acceptable traffic flow in the summer	18% (37)	24% (50)	30% (63)	22% (46)	7% (14)	2.76
New & different activities to do in town	14% (30)	31% (66)	34% (71)	16% (33)	5% (11)	2.66
Ample sidewalks	22% (47)	27% (56)	26% (55)	18% (37)	8% (16)	2.62
Well maintained residential areas	19% (39)	34% (70)	29% (60)	16% (33)	3% (7)	2.52
Exciting night life	16% (33)	37% (75)	31% (64)	12% (24)	4% (9)	2.52
A range of retail shopping opportunities	16% (34)	45% (93)	26% (55)	10% (21)	2% (5)	2.38
Ample parking	28% (60)	32% (68)	22% (47)	12% (26)	5% (10)	2.33
Well maintained roads	37% (79)	30% (63)	21% (44)	8% (17)	8% (17)	2.11

In response to seven attributes images of what Gardiner **IS**, residents were very positive on five of the seven: A friendly community (83%); a supportive community (80%); a trusting community (75%); a fun place (69%), and: a pedestrian friendly community (52%). Only bike friendly and well maintained received less than 50 percent of residents who agreed (Table 3).

Table 3: Resident image of what Gardiner is...

Gardiner is...	Strongly Disagree 1	2	3	4	Strongly Agree 5	Mean
A friendly community	2% (4)	2% (4)	13% (27)	46% (97)	37% (79)	4.15
A supportive community	3% (7)	3% (6)	13% (28)	46% (98)	34% (72)	4.05
A trusting community	1% (3)	5% (10)	19% (39)	49% (103)	26% (55)	3.94
A fun place	2% (5)	9% (18)	20% (42)	41% (86)	28% (59)	3.84
Pedestrian friendly	5% (10)	14% (30)	29% (61)	32% (68)	20% 42	3.48
Bicycle friendly	11% (24)	20% (43)	28% (58)	28% (58)	13% (28)	3.11
Well maintained	13% (27)	24% (51)	40% (83)	13% (28)	10% (20)	2.82

Quality of Life Importance

Residents were asked to respond to 40 different quality of life dimensions in terms of how important those dimensions were to them (Table 4) and then how satisfied they were with those dimensions of quality of life (Table 5).

The **most important** dimension for resident's quality of life was concern for their *personal* quality of life followed by clean air and water, preservation of wildlife habitat, and access to outdoor recreation. On a five-point scale, eight dimensions had a mean of 4.5 or higher indicating that many quality of life aspects help make their life better.

The **least important** quality of life dimensions for Gardiner residents was public transportation to and from Gardiner, plenty of retail shops, and the use of bed tax dollars for promoting Gardiner. However, the means of these dimensions were not necessarily low ranging, from 3.19 to 3.58 on a scale of 1 to 5. This indicates that all the listed quality of life dimensions are important to Gardiner residents, some just come out as slightly more important than others (Table 4).

Table 4: Dimensions important for resident's quality of life

Top 20 QOL Importance Dimensions			Lower 20 QOL Importance Dimensions	
Dimension	**Mean**		**Dimension**	**Mean**
My personal quality of life	4.76		Awareness of natural heritage	4.23
Clean air and water	4.75		The prevention of drug and alcohol abuse	4.22
Preservation of wildlife habitat	4.64		Resident participation in local decision making	4.19
Access to outdoor recreation opportunities	4.63		Community leaders who make sound decisions	4.16
Preservation of natural areas	4.60		Quality of roads	4.12
The preservation of my way of life	4.57		Controlling urban sprawl	4.06
Fire protection	4.53		Awareness of cultural heritage	4.03
The prevention of crime and vandalism	4.52		Funding source for use in Gardiner	4.03
Litter control	4.47		Zoning/land use in Gardiner	4.00
Preservation of cultural/historical sites	4.45		Flow of traffic	3.99
Peace and quiet	4.42		Law enforcement around Gardiner	3.96
Enough good jobs for residents	4.41		The image of my community to others	3.93
The beauty of my community	4.36		Stores with local/regional foods	3.92
Fair prices for goods and services	4.36		Restaurants with local/regional foods	3.89
The value of my house and/or land	4.34		Understanding different cultures	3.87
A feeling of belonging in my community	4.32		Plenty of restaurants	3.61
Community pride	4.30		Access to indoor recreation opportunities	3.59
Gardiner's economy	4.27		Use of a bed tax for promoting Gardiner	3.58
Visitors who respect my way of life	4.25		Plenty of retail shops	3.30
Availability of housing	4.24		Public transportation to and from Gardiner	3.19

Quality of Life Satisfaction

There was more diversity in the mean responses of satisfaction than in the mean importance dimensions of quality of life. It appears that most everything is important to residents, but the level of satisfaction ranged from a high mean of 4.30 for satisfaction with access to outdoor recreation opportunities, to a low of 1.94 for the availability of housing on a scale of 1 to 5 (Table 5).

Residents were **most satisfied** with access to outdoor recreation, clean air and water, fire protection, and their personal quality of life. These top four dimensions were the only ones that had a mean of 4.0 or higher on the 5 point scale.

Residents were **least satisfied** with availability of housing, transportation to and from Gardiner, quality of roads, access to indoor recreation, and zoning/land use in Gardiner. These lower satisfaction means ranged from 1.94 to 2.54, all below the mid-point of 3.0. However, 11 mean satisfaction levels fell below the mid-point of three indicating there are quite a few quality of life dimensions that could be targeted for improvement.

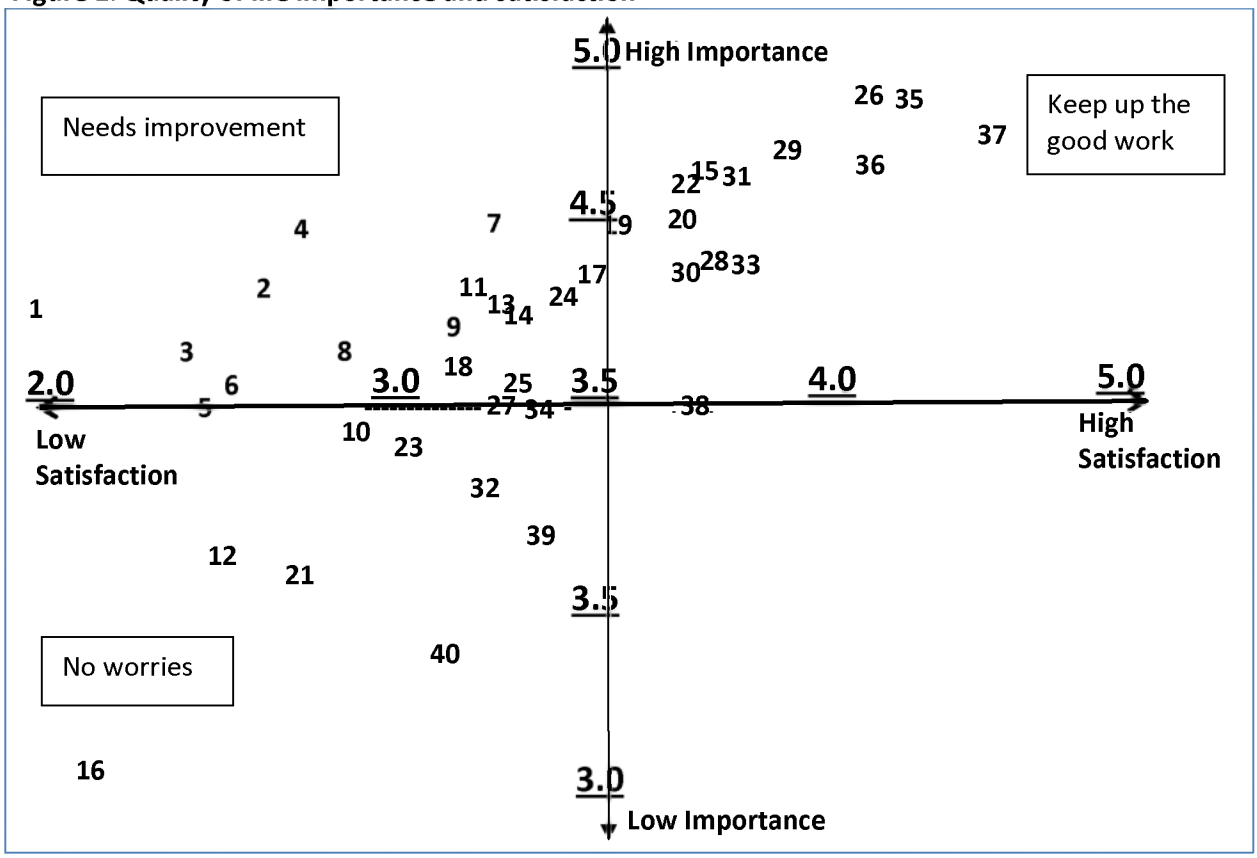
Table 5: Satisfaction of quality of life dimensions

Top 20 QOL Satisfaction Dimensions			Lower 20 QOL Satisfaction Dimensions	
Dimension	**Mean**		**Dimension**	**Mean**
Access to outdoor recreation opportunities	4.30		The prevention of drug and alcohol abuse	3.25
Clean air and water	4.28		Gardiner's economy	3.24
Fire protection	4.14		Litter control	3.22
My personal quality of life	4.04		Stores with local/regional foods	3.20
Preservation of natural areas	3.89		Controlling urban sprawl	3.16
The prevention of crime and vandalism	3.87		Visitors who respect my way of life	3.16
A feeling of belonging in my community	3.80		Plenty of retail shops	3.11
The preservation of my way of life	3.76		Restaurants with local/regional foods	3.09
Preservation of wildlife habitat	3.68		Resident participation in local decision making	3.06
Law enforcement around Gardiner	3.66		Community leaders who make sound decisions	2.97
The value of my house and/or land	3.62		Flow of traffic	2.90
Community pride	3.60		Enough good jobs for residents	2.76
Preservation of cultural/historical sites	3.60		Use of a bed tax for promoting Gardiner	2.73
Peace and quiet	3.57		Funding source for use in Gardiner	2.66
The beauty of my community	3.45		Fair prices for goods and services	2.62
Awareness of natural heritage	3.45		Zoning/land use in Gardiner	2.54
The image of my community to others	3.41		Access to indoor recreation opportunities	2.53
Plenty of restaurants	3.41		Quality of roads	2.44
Understanding different cultures	3.26		Public transportation to and from Gardiner	2.25
Awareness of cultural heritage	3.26		Availability of housing	1.94

To further understand relationships between the importance of quality of life dimensions compared to their satisfaction with those same dimensions, Figure 1 displays the importance/ satisfaction matrix. The upper left hand quadrant includes the dimensions Gardiner residents feel are important and yet, they are not very satisfied with those quality of life issues. These are the dimensions in which Gardiner needs to focus areas of improvement. The top six areas that need attention are as follows: 1) There is a lack of available housing; 2) There are not fair prices for goods and services in Gardiner; 3) The quality of roads are less than satisfactory, 4) There are not enough good jobs for residents; 5) Residents would like to see some zoning/land use regulations; 6) There is a lack of funding for Gardiner.

The top five quality of life dimensions that Gardiner residents find important and are satisfied with include: 1) Clean air and water; 2) Fire protection; 3) Access to outdoor recreation opportunities; 4) Their *personal* quality of life; 5) preservation of the natural resources, and; 6) Preservation of wildlife habitat. These are areas in which Gardiner has done a good job and should continue focusing on these dimensions (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Quality of life importance and satisfaction



1	Availability of housing	21	Use of a bed tax for promoting Gardiner
2	Fair prices for goods and services	22	The preservation of my way of life
3	Quality of roads	23	Restaurants with local/regional foods
4	Enough good jobs for residents	24	Awareness of natural heritage
5	Zoning/land use in Gardiner	25	Awareness of cultural heritage
6	Funding source for use in Gardiner	26	My personal quality of life
7	Litter control	27	Stores with local/regional foods
8	Community leaders who make sound decisions	28	The value of my house and/or land
9	Resident participation in local decision making	29	Preservation of natural areas
10	Flow of traffic	30	Community pride
11	Visitors who respect my way of life	31	The prevention of crime and vandalism
12	Access to indoor recreation opportunities	32	Understanding different cultures
13	Gardiner's economy	33	A feeling of belonging in my community
14	The prevention of drug and alcohol abuse	34	The image of my community to others
15	Preservation of wildlife habitat	35	Clean air and water
16	Public transportation to and from Gardiner	36	Fire protection
17	The beauty of my community	37	Access to outdoor recreation opportunities
18	Controlling urban sprawl	38	Law enforcement around Gardiner
19	Peace and quiet	39	Plenty of restaurants
20	Preservation of cultural/historical sites	40	Plenty of retail shops

Tourism Support and Attachment to Gardiner

Gardiner is a tourism town. While some mining has existed in the past, the economy of the town is plain and simple, tourism. Therefore it is important to look at resident's support for tourism as well as their attachment to the town of Gardiner.

Overall, more Gardiner residents are supportive of tourism than not, however there is a bit of concern with the results (Table 6). While only 13 percent disagreed that the benefits of tourism outweigh the negatives, (65% agreed benefits are good and 23% were neutral), almost one third of residents felt that an increase of tourism in Gardiner would not help the quality of life for residents (36% thought it would help quality of life and 36% were neutral). In addition, 32 percent agreed that Gardiner is becoming overcrowded due to more visitors. Interestingly, it appears the town is split three ways in regards to tourism support: One third appear to think tourism is not as good on the variables asked in the survey, one third appear to be in the middle in regards to tourism and the other third are supportive of tourism.

In terms of residents' attachment to Gardiner, 69 percent agreed or strongly agreed that they would be very sorry to leave Gardiner if they had to move away, however, only 52 percent agreed that they would rather live in Gardiner than anywhere else suggesting that Gardiner is 'substitutable' for nearly half of the residents. The future of Gardiner is seen as promising for 53 percent of residents while one-third are neutral on the topic. Only 14 percent do not think the future of Gardiner is promising which is a good sign for the support of upcoming changes to the community (Table 6).

Table 6: Resident support for tourism and their attachment to Gardiner

	Strongly Disagree 1	2	3	4	Strongly Agree 5	Mean
Tourism Support						
The overall benefits of tourism in Gardiner outweigh the negative impacts.	8% (17)	5% (10)	23% (47)	36% (74)	29% (59)	3.71
If tourism increases in Gardiner, the quality of life for Gardiner residents will improve.	12% (24)	16% (33)	36% (74)	22% (45)	14% (29)	3.11
Gardiner is becoming overcrowded because of more tourists.*	11% (22)	19% (40)	38% (79)	16% (33)	16% (33)	3.07
Attachment to Gardiner						
If I had to move away from Gardiner, I would be very sorry to leave.	5% (11)	8% (16)	18% (37)	28% (59)	41% (85)	3.92
I think the future of Gardiner looks promising.	7% (14)	7% (14)	33% (69)	33% (69)	20% (42)	3.53
I would rather live in Gardiner than anywhere else.	10% (20)	14% (30)	24% (50)	26% (55)	26% (53)	3.44

*Because this is a negative statement, the higher the mean, the more of a problem crowding is to Gardiner

Resident Comments

At the end of the questionnaire, residents were asked to make any additional comments they may have about Gardiner. More than half (55%) submitted spontaneous comments ranging from a short phrase of "Need a hardware store" to a full page discussing the Gateway Project. All the comments can be found in Appendix B. There were 117 residents who wrote a comment. Those comments represented 297 unique statements that fell within 35 separate issues. To help the reader digest the variety of comments, all the comments were coded and categorized then truncated into six main categories (Figure 2). Those categories and an example statement for each category are described below.

Theme – Quality of life: 23% of comments related to this theme such as the following statements.

- " "Not enough housing! Too many rentals for visitors."
- " "Cost of living high for local wages."
- " "We need indoor activities - especially for our youth."
- " "Gardiner, as one of 5 gateway communities to Yellowstone, is a dump!"

Theme – Government: 20% of comments related to government such as the following:

- "Gardiner needs incorporation and resort tax. It is very foolish to not have this. It would benefit residents greatly without big downside."
- ""Have to remember that Gardiner is not a true""Town," it's a collection of homes and tourist driven businesses under County's jurisdiction. If we had a tax base for real improvements (i.e., roads, sidewalks etc..) things would improve. There is little to no rules of how the community lives or promotes outward appearances. This is why you have a shack trailer next to a 1/2 million dollar home."
- ""Business zoning definitely needs to be overhauled!"

Theme – Business: 20% of comments related to Business such as the following:

- ""In my opinion Gardiner does nothing for those living here. All the businesses treat you like tourists in pricing range. As everything is too darn high to live here, I think it's a greedy town with everything too darn high..."
- "I would eat out more, but food is overpriced (again - towards tourists) and there isn't much selection. With a couple of exceptions you can get burgers, Tex Mex, and pizza here. That's not a lot."

Theme – Infrastructure: 19% of comments related to this theme including:

- "Filling the potholes and paving the gravel roads, while providing adequate drainage would be nice."
- "We need a sidewalk on the Jardine Road. As more people are using bikes the need for a bike lane has increased."

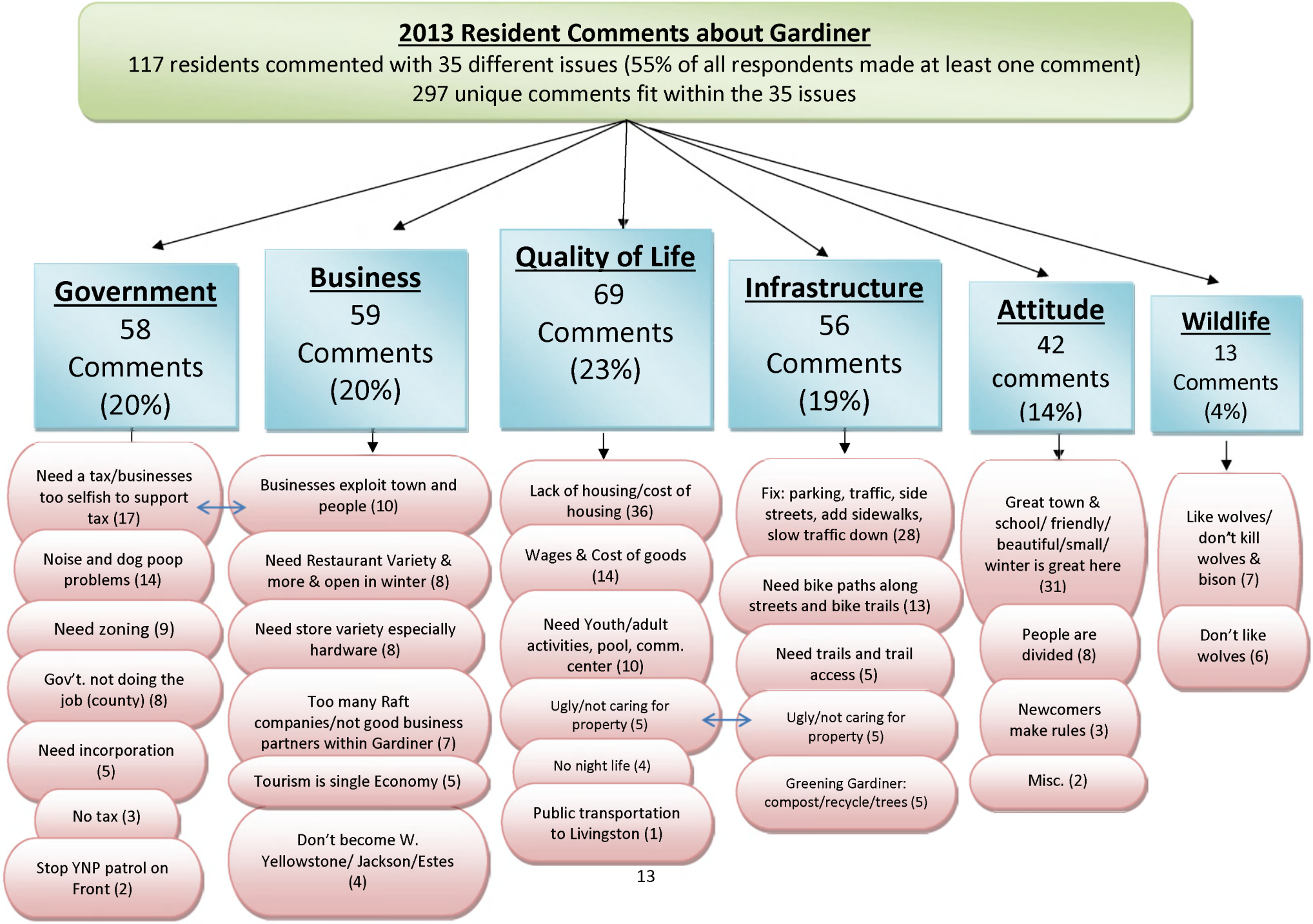
Theme – Attitude about Gardiner: 14% of comments were related to their attitude about Gardiner:

- ""Gardiner is a very friendly community"."
- ""Great little town!"
- ""This town is perfect for me. I live here 5 months a year (winter too cold). The only disadvantage is distance from hospital, but that's not a big worry." "

Theme – Wildlife: 4% of comments related to wildlife such as the following:

- "It is critical that FWP commissioners recognize that Yellowstone Park and its wolves are important to Gardiner's financial well-being."
- "Wolf population eating all the elk and sheep etc."

Figure 2: Themes and Sub-themes



Summary and Discussion

The purpose of this study was to understand the perceptions of quality of life and image of Gardiner by residents as well as their support/attachment to their community. The questionnaire was administered as a door-to-door survey and 209 residents completed the survey. According to community leaders, this is an excellent response for Gardiner.

The three top images Gardiner residents have of their community is "a friendly community," "a supportive community," and "a community with a unique and rich heritage." These three attributes were the only ones with a mean above a 4 on the 5-point scale showing almost unanimous agreement. On the other end of the spectrum, residents were also in close agreement that Gardiner does not have well maintained roads, ample parking or a range of retail shopping opportunities. These three negative images all scored below a 2.3 on the 5-point scale.

In reviewing the image scores, it appears as if one-third of the residents were scoring Gardiner in the middle or neutral category. This could mean that Gardiner is not strong on most image variables and therefore residents had to take the mid-point in their assessment. Or, it might mean that in certain attributes Gardiner was good and bad. For example, when answering the question, "Gardiner has good signage," residents may have thought in some places signage is good, in other places, it needs improvement. It is recommended that community leaders look at the attributes with higher scores in the middle to determine if an emphasis needs to be placed on some of these 'neutrally' scored items.

In any community it is important to understand what the residents think their community has, and is, in order to understand where possible gaps exist. For Gardiner, the friendly and supportive people are important attributes for the well-being of the community. Maintaining this attitude into the future will help in keeping Gardiner a welcoming place to live and work. While the 'friendliness and supportiveness' of the residents is still strong, the open ended comments point to a community that may be challenged in the future relative to these attributes. As we conducted the door-to-door survey and as results in the study tend to lean, there are some unhappy people in Gardiner who need to be heard. We heard repeatedly that there are too many raft companies in Gardiner parking buses in front of other businesses and homes, running their exhaust fumes directly into homes/businesses, and simply having an apparent 'disregard' of others in the community. These types of comments show a strain on the relationships between businesses and residents. While all communities have some disgruntled residents and while it is impossible to please everyone, a small community needs to embrace their differences even more, or it can unravel quicker than larger towns.

The image of a town is important as it shows the pride (or lack thereof) that residents have towards their community. But image is sometimes viewed as more of a surface (first impression) attribute. Therefore, along with assessing image, it was necessary to understand what was important to their quality of life and how satisfied Gardiner residents were on those important attributes.

Results of this study found 18 quality of life attributes that are important to residents but the residents are not very satisfied with those attributes as it pertains to Gardiner. These attributes are displayed in Figure 2 in the upper left-hand quadrant. Dissatisfaction in areas that are important to people, show a community where improvements need to be made. It highlights where a community should put their resources for the betterment of the community and to keep current residents happy

about their lives as it relates to where they live. In this instance, Gardiner should focus on improving the following:

- Availability of housing
- Fair prices for goods and services
- Quality of roads
- Enough good jobs for residents
- Zoning/land use in Gardiner
- Funding source for use in Gardiner
- Litter control
- Community leaders who make sound decisions
- Resident participation in local decision making
- Visitors who respect my way of life
- Gardiner's economy
- The prevention of drug and alcohol abuse
- The beauty of my community
- Controlling urban sprawl
- Awareness of natural heritage
- Awareness of cultural heritage
- Stores with local/regional foods
- Peace and quiet

As researchers (who both collected the data and analyzed the data), we 'heard' the following: Gardiner residents love their community and see it as a town full of potential but there are numerous barriers to reaching that potential. 1). The county government either doesn't listen to the needs of the Gardiner residents, or are unable to respond to those needs due to what is and isn't in the law. 2). Gardiner leaders don't listen to the residents (at least that is what is perceived). Once a person feels they don't have a voice, their commitment to helping the community is no longer there. 3). The lack of zoning or ordinances has allowed businesses to 'do whatever they want with little regard to nearby residences.' It has also allowed owners of structures and land (both businesses and residences) to have a disregard to what the place looks like – creating a 'dump' as one resident said. All of the above suggests that Gardiner residents should seriously look into how they can have more control over what happens in their community. Because Gardiner is unincorporated, it is difficult to suggest that the town get together and work out the "how's' and why's" of making Gardiner a better place to live. It's one of those "chicken and egg" questions...which comes first? Do they aim to become incorporated so they can elect their own leaders? Or do they somehow allow leaders to emerge who can guide the community in the right direction? Incorporation would create the opportunity to elect their own leaders who live in the community (as opposed to the county commissioners who live elsewhere) to be responsive to Gardiners' needs. This seems like a viable option for Gardiner to seriously consider.

Gardiner is already being guided by leaders who decided to jump at the opportunity that the Gateway Project provided to them. With the north entrance to Yellowstone undergoing changes, it seemed appropriate to merge the changes being made by Yellowstone National Park with needed infrastructure changes in the community. While on the surface, this is an excellent idea, apparently some folks felt 'unheard' and now feel that Gardiner is on the wrong track. On the other side, however, it seems that more people are in favor of changes and truly support the

idea that Gardiner needs an upgrade in infrastructure, maintenance of roads, and the development of employee housing.

As with any community, there are many areas that could be targeted for improvement. The data in this study point to one quality of life attribute that is more important than any other attribute: Availability of housing. This is not a new piece of information to residents of Gardiner, but this study puts the issue at the top of the list. Whether it is housing for permanent residents or housing for seasonal employees, there is a serious problem in Gardiner. Solving this issue may be tied to the idea of incorporating as a city. As a recognized city, funds for planning and development including affordable housing are available from a variety of sources such as from the state, federal, or through non-government foundations. Currently Gardiner cannot apply for such funds as it isn't an "entity." As one resident said, "Gardiner is not a true "Town," it's a collection of homes and tourist driven businesses under the county's jurisdiction." Because of that, the ability for Gardiner to address their issues, such as housing, is seriously challenged.

At the time of this writing, the resort tax is currently being considered as one avenue for funding. From the view of these researchers, this is a promising idea. A resort tax in the town of Gardiner could start to generate dollars for the many improvements needed in town. It would be the first opportunity for residents to collect, and have control of, dollars specifically set aside for their community.

Finally, one attribute that is always a problem with tourism communities is the "gouging" philosophy – residents feel businesses take advantage of the visitor (and in turn it hurts locals). We live in a capitalistic country and the business owner can charge whatever they want for their goods and services. Unfortunately, when people are on vacation, they pay higher prices for that week or two but do not have to continue paying it when they return home. Local residents, on the other hand, either have to pay those high prices all the time or travel to another community for those goods and services. This is not a new phenomenon, but does create a challenge and an opportunity. Could the community of Gardiner put their resources toward a non-profit community owned mercantile that would provide the basic goods needed in the community? Visitors could be assessed a 'one-time' membership fee to shop in the store while residents would automatically have a membership. But this is just one idea from a researchers' perspective. The residents of Gardiner can continue to struggle with the concerns listed in this report, or they can step forward and start making a difference.

In summary, Gardiner is a town of many views - both the landscape view of Yellowstone National Park and the human views about their town! Gardiner is in a unique position, as the original entrance to the world's first national park, to take control of what they like about their town and make sure the positive qualities of the people and place are sustained and improved for the future generations.

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Appendix A: Survey

This study is being conducted by the Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research (ITRR) at the University of Montana. The objective of the study is to learn how residents of Gardiner view their community. The results will help community residents and leaders identify areas of satisfaction and concern. The study is completely anonymous. Your name is never known. If you have questions please use the attached business card and contact ITRR Director, Norma Nickerson. Thank you for your assistance in this important study.

Please circle the number that best corresponds with your level of agreement with each statement below.

1. Gardiner has...	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
A range of retail shopping opportunities	1	2	3	4	5
Unique and rich heritage	1	2	3	4	5
Exciting nightlife	1	2	3	4	5
Opportunities to experience local cuisine	1	2	3	4	5
Good signage	1	2	3	4	5
Places to purchase local arts/crafts	1	2	3	4	5
New and different activities to do in town	1	2	3	4	5
Nice community/county parks	1	2	3	4	5
Adequate business services	1	2	3	4	5
Acceptable traffic flow in the summer	1	2	3	4	5
Well maintained roads	1	2	3	4	5
Well maintained residential areas	1	2	3	4	5
Well maintained business and store fronts	1	2	3	4	5
Ample parking	1	2	3	4	5
Ample sidewalks	1	2	3	4	5

2. Gardiner is...	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
A trusting community	1	2	3	4	5
A supportive community	1	2	3	4	5
A friendly community	1	2	3	4	5
A fun place	1	2	3	4	5
Pedestrian friendly	1	2	3	4	5
Bicycle friendly	1	2	3	4	5
Well maintained	1	2	3	4	5

Please circle the importance level of each item on the left side and then circle your satisfaction with each item on the right side.

	3. How IMPORTANT are the following characteristics to you?					4. How SATISFIED are you with the following characteristics of Gardiner?				
	Not at all Important				Extremely Important	Not at all Satisfied				Extremely Satisfied
Peace and quiet	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Clean air and water	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Law enforcement around Gardiner	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Fire protection	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Community leaders who make sound decisions	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Public transportation to and from Gardiner	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
The beauty of my community	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Quality of roads	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Flow of traffic	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Controlling urban sprawl	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Litter control	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Zoning/land use in Gardiner	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
My personal quality of life	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
The preservation of my way of life	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
A feeling of belonging in my community	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Resident participation in local decision making	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Visitors who respect my way of life	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
The image of my community to others	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Understanding different cultures	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Awareness of natural heritage	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Awareness of cultural heritage	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Community pride	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

Please circle the <u>importance</u> level of each item on the left side and then circle your <u>satisfaction</u> with each item on the right side.

	5. How IMPORTANT are the following characteristics to you?					6. How SATISFIED are you with the following characteristics of Gardiner?				
	Not at all Important				Extremely Important	Not at all Satisfied				Extremely Satisfied
Preservation of wildlife habitat	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Preservation of natural areas	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Preservation of cultural/historical sites	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Gardiner's economy	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Stores with local/regional foods	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Restaurants with local/regional foods	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
The value of my house and/or land	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Enough good jobs for residents	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Plenty of retail shops	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Plenty of restaurants	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Fair prices for goods and services	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Access to outdoor recreation opportunities	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Access to indoor recreation opportunities	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
The prevention of crime and vandalism	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
The prevention of drug and alcohol abuse	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Funding source for use in Gardiner	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Use of a bed tax for promoting Gardiner	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Availability of housing	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

Please continue on the back.

7. To what extent do you disagree or agree....	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
If I had to move away from Gardiner, I would be very sorry to leave.	1	2	3	4	5
I would rather live in Gardiner than anywhere else.	1	2	3	4	5
I think the future of Gardiner looks promising.	1	2	3	4	5
Gardiner is becoming overcrowded because of more tourists.	1	2	3	4	5
The overall benefits of tourism in Gardiner outweigh the negative impacts.	1	2	3	4	5
If tourism increases in Gardiner, the quality of life for Gardiner residents will improve.	1	2	3	4	5

8. What best describes your residency in Gardiner? (check one then answer the questions that follow)

_____1. Permanent resident

1a. **How long have you lived in Gardiner?** _____year(s)

1b. **How many total years have you lived in Montana?** _____years

_____2. Seasonal resident

2a. **How many years have you returned to Gardiner?** _____year(s)

9. Do you have a child in the Gardiner public school system? (Check one. If yes, answer the questions that follow)

_____1. Yes

1a. **If yes, number of children in Gardiner school system?** _____

1b. **What age (s)?** _____

_____2. No

10. What is your age? _____years old

11. Are you? Male Female

12. Are you currently: (circle all that apply)

1. Business owner 2. Employed 3. Unemployed 4. Student 5. Homemaker 6. Retired

13. Please provide any additional comments about Gardiner.

Thank you for your time!

The final report for this study will be available to you at www.itrr.umt.edu in late 2013.

Appendix B: Resident Comments

103 I have lived in Gardiner/Mammoth area for 33 years. All the positives far outweigh the negatives. Only reason I would move from Gardiner is after retirement, to be closer to golf courses and hospitals and warmer winters.
108 Housing is hard because everything is vacation rentals and jobs are hard for residents because internationals take a lot of the jobs. Plus the only thing to do at night here is hang out in bars so underage people don't do much.
109 Gardiner seems to be a town divided - those who resist change and those who embrace the opportunity to change and make it better - more welcoming, more functional. Driving through town it is evident who is open to improvements and who is not. We have new businesses that are visually inviting older businesses making improvements and several are just plain embarrassing.
111 Our wildlife tourism business participate in Chamber and Bear Creek Council dislike some Gardiner people's attitude toward wolves and bears which makes us look like dumb hicks, a PR problem for tourists. Gardiner needs incorporation and resort tax, is very foolish to not have this. It would benefit residents greatly without big downside. County gov't is disappointing - not good for Gardiner.
117 Have to remember that Gardiner is not a true "Town," it's a collection of homes and tourists driven businesses under County's jurisdiction. If we had a tax base for real improvements (i.e., roads, sidewalks etc..) things would improve. There is little to no rules of how the community lives or promotes outward appearances. This is why you have a shack trailer next to a 1/2 million dollar home. The only reason for Gardiner's existence is Yellowstone Park and everything is driven by that with businesses exploiting that opportunity with little give back to Gardiner in general.
119 Retired from Dept. of Defense. Now work in Yellowstone.
120 The problem is Gardiner is not incorporated so there are no rules/zoning etc.. The cost of living is going up and we are landlocked. It is becoming increasingly difficult to find affordable housing because so many people are converting their houses to vacation rentals. This will eventually hurt businesses and the park because there is not enough housing for employees. We need better roads, more sidewalks. It would be nice to have a community center with a pool for the community and local kids. There isn't enough space for kids to safely travel. Incorporate, bed tax etc... is needed!!!
127 Cost of living high for local wages.
132 Gardiner is a very friendly community. The influx of vacation rentals is a negative influence as it makes a very tight housing market even tighter. This situation reflects the lack of zoning/planning plus vacation rentals do not create a sense of community and distract from it. A bicycle path along the river would be great!!
133 Summer vacation visitors impact local residents. Noise late at night affects working people who have to get up early to go to work. Summer vacation rental adversely affect housing availability for local and seasonal residents.
134 Business interests seem to dictate how town is run (i.e., anti- town tax). No control over vacation rentals - seems that they can build more Attitude about "less government' is out of place being next to park. I'm glad the NPS is working towards more community involvement. Residents should accept it. Old rail line should be bike trail! Trail to confluence of Gardiner and Yellowstone Rivers need maintenance.
139 It is critical that FWP commissioners recognize that Yellowstone Park and its wolves are

important to Gardiner's financial well-being.

141 Positives: small town in the Yellowstone ecosystem. Low crime and feel safe. Negatives: Very GREEDY town. Many cliques. Needs to do more for wildlife, especially buffalo. The Montana tourism lobby needs to be stronger than the cattle lobby concerning wildlife and buffalo.

144 The biggest problem in Gardiner is housing. Rentals have been turned into "vacation rentals" if tourism increases the overall economy improves - but where will the workers live?

146 Pet peeve is people who moved in make a big change then want to make rules so others can't.

150 The last couple years appears everybody is doing their own thing. Not a community. Sorta dog eat dog now. If I can make a dollar and close you down, so be it, and Yellowstone association isn't helping any. You pay and they don't have to tax exempt! Hardly pay any taxes on all their property. No wonder Park county hasn't any money. I have to tax records also same business use if county fund.

151 no new taxes!!

192 Thanks!

197 Filling the potholes and paving the gravel roads, while providing adequate drainage would be nice.

204 The roads are awful anytime you get off of HWY 89 - its embarrassing. We need indoor activities - especially for our youth. There YA, the local nonprofit has bought many residences and some businesses in Gardiner thus limiting the availability of housing. There are numerous vacation rentals in town which ALSO limits the availability of housing and drives process up. The lack of affordable housing is detrimental when we are trying to attract employees including teachers and a principal for the school Although I am a homeowner and happy to see my property value increase, homes and land around town are prohibitive for most residents and locals. Gas is regularly .20 cents per gallon, more than in Livingston which is ridiculous. It cannot cost that much more to haul it here Night life in Gardiner is limited to bars - no other choices for kids of non-drinkers. I would love to see a lodging tax to help support the community - we need more places to clean up and dispose of dog poop, a pool for kids, more sage biking opportunities and a movie theater. Is nowhere safe to ride bikes in or around town. There is no enforcement of the speed limits in town - especially in busy summer months. The lack of zoning has negatively impacted many homeowners.

64 Gardiner, as one of 5 gateway communities to Yellowstone, is a dump! This community is the only one that is at a YNP entrance that is open year round....and yet offers few services! Gardiner needs to get over the fact that the service industry and the government are the only employers. If Yellowstone weren't there, Gardiner would not be a destination for anyone. Embrace tourism, capitalize on it and develop a money pool to make this town respectable. Funny how property values are way out of balance with wages. Affordable housing is a major problem that needs to be addressed.

65 It's hard to accept gov't funding for improvements and be opposed to gov't influence at the same time. Gardiner needs to decide to improve with other funding sources or decide to go it alone.

66 Great little town!

69 Gardiner needs other restaurant options. Ones with fresh salads, soups and sandwiches instead of pizza and burgers. Drivers need to slow down on Jardine road and pet owners need to pick up after their dogs on the sidewalks in town.

70 Gardiner has tremendous potential but lack of zoning and local government could eventually create real problems.

73 Need a hardware store

74 More than anything, wish they would change the rules on fireworks. Gardiner can shoot fireworks year round and I believe it is hard on the animals and a lot of people's peace of mind.

75 I only live here because of Yellowstone. In my opinion Gardiner does nothing for those living here. All the businesses treat you like tourist in pricing range. As everything is too darn high to live here, I think its a greedy town with everything too darn high to have money.

78 Gardiner years ago used to be a fun place to live as far as night life goes. But I do have to say that the Rangers who should be patrolling Yellowstone National Park instead of sitting in front of the businesses has really put a damper on town functions? No one likes to go out any more in fear that they will get hassled. They need to show up to businesses when called upon not wasting tax payers money just sitting and watching just waiting for an incident to occur. Very Bad for local businesses!!!

82 Great community - we are moving and we are very sad. Best small town we have ever lived in. County often seems to put us on backburner when it comes to maintenance. Needs better parking/traffic flow around down town and especially in summer. More sidewalks on side streets.

83 I have lived through war days - earthquake - church Universal and good and bad times in Gardiner. The worst thing is the introduction of wolves in 1995. It changed everything here.

90 Gardiner is a very nice community. Yes it needs help to both clean/spruce it up and make better roads and sidewalks.

93 I love Gardiner but do not like how housing continues to be converted to summer tourist rentals. Soon there will be no housing left for permanent employees. I also wish local shops would offer locals discounts. I'm always a good local customer until summer arrives: the prices are jacked up. Also, the Iron Horse should never have been allowed in the middle of a residential area. Too loud of people every night.

97 Gardiner has serious parking issues along Highway 89.

98 Protecting the park wildlife during hunting season should be a top priority. Killing our wildlife kills our tourism.

#106 We need a sidewalk on the Jardine Road. As more people are using bikes the need for a bike lane has increased. [in regards to the question about sales/bed tax this person said: "not sure how to answer on 1-5. Really want to have one so it is either 1 or 5"

#113 While overall Gardiner is a nice place, it's difficult seeing properties bought by some newcomers or a few people in town that can afford it - then developing into tourist-oriented businesses. And other buying homes and turning them into vacation rentals. I would love to own a home here, but can't afford it. Good apts. are hard to come by. I would eat out more, but food is overpriced (again - towards tourists) and there isn't much selection. With a couple of exceptions you can get burgers, Tex Mex, and pizza here. That's not a lot. Gardiner market selection for a small grocery. Would LOVE to see some of the residential streets get fixed - horrible potholes.

#123 Accommodating the resident is as important (and is reflected) as well as the desire to draw consumers. Business zoning definitely needs to overhauled!

#128 .....#9 - had children in Gardiner public school, both have chosen to go out of state for college.

#135 Don't want it to be a west Yellowstone. Too many raft companies. Better year round restaurants. YMCA would be good!

#136 The town has too much litter. Too much dog dirt laying around. People need to pick up after their pets.

#137 My husband and I started visiting Yellowstone annually in 1999 and found Gardiner as a place to stay when we visited. We fell in love with the town and community and decided to buy a house here in 2010. I don't want major changes to Gardiner just maintenance improvements. I don't want any major chains to set up business here but just want local businesses to continue to build.

#138 The tourist leave their brains at the gate - who stops in the middle of the road and gets out of cars to take pictures. How would they like it if we did it in their town.

#140 Worst things about Gardiner: Low wages, expensive housing, washboard roads. Best things: Good community spirit, natural beauty, public land.

#149 This should be in the Livingston Enterprise first part of the weeks say June 17 or 18 going to be worded a little different in spots. April 5, 2013 Dear_____, On the Gardiner Gateway Project, Park County Commissioners get up date the picture shown is a drawing of the proposed Gardiner Gateway Project in the paper. Road into the Park. My proposal Map and write up has never been shown to the public, even after it was put up for view to some folks attending the meeting. All we got from the two attending on the panel was the road into the park from Third street. Even when a couple gals said that the map and picture shown on the other proposal is a better plan, one member on the panel said that was for discussion next time. It was time to close down for the evening. It has never been shown always an excuse: 'not on the program tonight.' I, and the community sure don't support the third street entrance into Yellowstone National Park, say within 300 feet you have three left hand turns = bottleneck! My plan comes straight in off the Yellowstone River Bridge on Second Street into the Park and meets the road coming from the Arch. Arriving on Park Street you could also go right into the Park via the Arch. You would have a two way into the Park from Second and connecting with the Arch road from there to the Ranger Station would be a two way in the Park. Since 80-85 percent of the cars don't stop at the Arch. Now coming from the Ranger Station to Third Street is a mile long and cars and buses waiting in line from 25-35 minutes later get through the gate Ranger Station and arrive at Mammoth and the Restroom area Parking space is full of cars and buses, so another 15-30 minutes later you may use the bathroom like a lady from England said after one of the meetings, she would have gladly paid $200 for a use of a bathroom! Working with tourists for years, bathroom areas are the main problem. Also a complaint that the Arch is too narrow and they had to wait 30 minutes with this RV to come out of the Sharp curve. Yes my plan is to use second street out, which takes care of the narrow curve with only a one way in. As shown on National Historical Register as the Arch Park Road to Yellowstone National Park. We have as many tourists in one day what we had in a week a few years ago. My plan calls for a bathroom between Park Street and Arch Park Road say about 100-150 feet into the area, lots for room for buses, RVs and Cars to park. And use the bathrooms. I bet you $100.00 it will clear the traffic jam at Mammoth. We do agree on making more room on Park Street with parking, sidewalks and lights. My plan also calls for moving the fence back 20-30 feet and level the area for RV parking. Yes you could also put up a boardwalk form Third Street across and meet the welcome sign to Yellowstone National Park. Make a walkway around the Arch, maybe a tree or two, and a couple of picnic tables. In June 2012, Governor Brian Schweitzer stood beneath the historic Roosevelt Arch in Gardiner and signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Park superintendent and representative from Park County and Gardiner Community groups. This is a WAKE UP CALL, if we are building a road into Yellowstone National Park for years and generations to come and use County State and Federal money for the road - let's build it so people can use it and not a road that's obsolete before it is built. Not a special drive-in for private businesses as their plan calls for and really does not say much. Money in Park County coffers-anybody got any questions? I will be glad to visit with you, facts are facts-nonfiction and ace is still an ace. If you need pictures to see where cars are parked, I have two sizes available for viewing. I also have additional write-ups on roads, Arch Park another project etc... Respectfully, XXX Gardiner. Bozeman chronicle on April - 13 2013 also carried small article on the road in the opinion section write by me chronicle write up on June 15-2013. When the Governor was here community don't agree.

#152 Tourism is Gardiner's business - it's only business. there is no future other than non-skilled work in the service industry for Gardiner's youth or citizenry, nor is there any interest in providing

any service business or industry other than that which is related to tourism.

#154 Gardiner has business developments with no concept of impact. No business parking in lots of places, total congestion in summer. A total lack of concern of how property owners are impacted with business development. Poorly maintained streets.

#155 Tourism controlled (the amount) - Raft companies loading/unloading clients somewhere else than the streets 9Scott). Their customers take up the parkway spaces on Scott Street making it difficult for residences.

#158 Gardiner has turned greedy. It is all about making money and not investing back into the community. Business do not want to pay taxes to improve the quality of life. They want everything free and let the local home owner to pay the price. Most do not live in the community. They hire @ low wages to manage and work the guest for maximum profit. As a result the harassment of longtime residents had become an enjoyable pastime for the seasonals.

#162 #We don't need property, bed, or any other taxes. We could use additional fire fighters. Wolf population eating all the elk and sheep etc...

#163 I love Gardiner, it's my favorite place at this time in my life.

#164 # 166 Gardiner's location is its saving grace. Access to Yellowstone NP, Gallatin, NF, the Yellowstone River for floating and fishing and reasonable proximity to larger towns/cities makes living in Gardiner a treat. Things that could be better include: trail access from town to surrounding public lands, community gardens, dog park (S); public transportation, public library (existing library is very limited) more community center activities (music, classes, arts crafts, health); greening Alt energy, more recycling and composition facilities. Thanks!

#165 Don't like killing bison

#167 Needs more support for access to recycling. All the hotels and lodging don't use...very sad! Also could have community compost, for use, re-use in gardens! Co-op garden. :) Community center could offer a much wider variety and amount of classes: arts, crafts, music, instrument lessons language training, massage, yoga lessons, adult dance/movement, physical activities etc...Gardiner really needs a swimming pool and access to public trail dog park, gardens, like a river trail, and xeroscaping! It is a nice town that could improve through the quality of housing, lodging and dining facilities for all residents and tourists, and Is surely lacking in open0-mindedness to diversity whether American or foreigner. Plus very limited opportunities for indoor activities, library extremely limited, diversity of retail, medical opportunities. Has potential! Lovely quiet in winter respect need for tourists dollars and business in Summer. This has always been Gardiner's heritage. Market redesigning is awesome!! Needs more recycling (not just plastic 1 and 2) but all, plus glass). and solar/wind energy use. So much could be utilized and hydrothermal! Sorry my comments are so disorganized and messy! Thank you for doing this survey! Wonderful idea! :)

#168 I stay because I love Gardiner just the way it is! Am a photographer and enjoy the closeness of the park and the surrounding natl. forests, mountains etc.. Turning Gardiner into Mt. Rushmore or West Yellowstone is not progress. Park will look ridiculous. We have Western Charm!!

#169 It's a good town with lots of good people, the town not to small or big, just in between. And like it the way it is. with peace and quiet.

#173 Yes we are a tourist town. But October through April it's just us. The school is hugely important. There are no adult recreation facilities. There is no transportation to and from Livingston for the ones without cars to stop or medical appts.

#174 The reintroduction of wolves to YNP and the improper management of the wolves have been devastating to Gardiner's winter economy. I favor having wolves as part of the Yellowstone ecosystem, however, their management to this point has been terrible.

#175 I sometimes miss the Gardiner I moved into 20 yrs. ago.

#176 Some questions are meant for summer and not winter!

#177 Do not promote bicycle use here. I come from a big city that was ruined by bicycles on roadways. Trails would be fine but not sharing the road. Plan on being out of Gardiner in Aug. I have told other not to come and visit in Aug due to the bikes.

#178 You should have questions about the wolves and there negative effect on the economy and their effect on the eco-balance of the region.

#181 Gardiner is a desert. we need more trees planted along the streets as in the old days. We also need much less lighting in town.

#182 Need better paying jobs. Need better housing. Need noise regulations – esp. in residential areas. Bombarded with Iron horse noise.

#183 Grocery store too expensive on many items. Gas pricess outrageous for locals. Good restaurant variety in summer - too many close in winter. Side streets in disrepair - very pot-holey!! Need zoning regulations - Iron Horse bar in middle of housing area - noisy and stress inducing on residents. Wild animals are amazing, as is view of electric peak. can be very dusty here. Alcoholism seems high esp. with seasonal employees.. Traffic at stop sign by Sinclair is gnarly in the summer. Need better services for RV'ers - dump station etc..

#184 The last frontier town in the lower 48.

#188 Need to pave more of the roads, fix potholes need more sidewalks some people need to clean up their properties/face lifts need to create a biking trail on the old railroad track need more affordable housing need a swimming pool/recreation center

#189 Slowing down the traffic June 1st to Sept 1st between the grocery store down to the flying pig would make it safer for both bike and pedestrian travelers. That area really gets crazy busy in mid-summer. Any improvements for bike riders would be great - even signs to remind people that kids are on bikes in the summer and to be aware.

#190 First season in Gardiner, and so far it has been amazing. I plan on returning after this season.

#194 Locals need places to love. Stop vacation rentals. Otherwise, Gardiner is a wonderful place to live.

#196 Gardiner is a very special town. I wish that there were a few stores which provide items that are needed in our homes. Must go to Livingston or Bozeman to find basic as well as get better pricing on food and home items.

#200 Lack of zoning makes for an unplanned and distorted community. What used to be primary residential area now is scattered with businesses, parking lots, etc... Limits sidewalks. No bike lanes, dangerous to walk or bicycle on most streets. Not many activities or places to go/do for youths. An indoor pool was an option when the school was rebuilt, but votes turned it down. The base is eroding with non-profit Yellowstone association buying up property.

#201 Many changes over the years, I have always loved Gardiner's free spirit and open-minded that business and residential was mixed, until the raft companies moved in. they have taken over houses , some historic, parking and the rail fishing is nearly impossible. Gardiner is not incorporated and they can do as they please. It is very sad.

#203 Does not have much to offer for a retired person.

#205 :) Thanks for doing this for our community.

#206 The ITRR does an amazing job at gathering statistics for the state of Montana!

#208 I raft guide but I'll probably stay through the year.

#209 Gardiner is a nice place to live. We enjoy fishing and the area is beautiful. We do most of our shopping in Livingston and Bozeman.

#211 Put a sidewalk in going up the Jardine road by Rocky MT campground - very dangerous

walking area Put sidewalk in and around the north entrance for the locals who like to walk year round. Also would be safer for the tourists. Which I think is in the new reconstruction plan! :) Provide more apartments /housing for year round people at affordable prices - low income. Get the county to do their job by grading and fixing the roads. Fix all the pot holes or re do the road where both of the laundry mats are. Old Yellowstone road trail when they grad this road (which is rare) but good...all these old nails are pulled up that cause a ton of flat tires. Ask the county if they can do anything to at least eliminate some of the nails. I tried for years with the county to do something but they did nothing. In the 3/12 years I lived out there I probably got 25 flat tires at 22 to get fixed at the tone Iron. You would think nails on a road are a hazard but apparently the county didn't care or shall I say Ed from the county didn't care. Would like to recommend a place where we have a compost collection at the dump. Also maybe a covering for the dump so the birds don't get into in and so the wind doesn't scatter the litter all over. Thanks for asking our opinion!

#61 None!

#77 This is f...ing awesome

#84 Gardiner is influenced too much by Yellowstone Park. Ex: wolves, Bison (their low enforcement). A plus for Gardiner would be to govern front street (Park Street) instead of Rangers from Yellowstone Park.

#88 Limited housing for permanent residents.

#89 We need a resort tax.

#92 Gardiner, MT is a wonderful gateway community to Yellowstone National Park. However, improvements do need to be made. The passage of bed tax for Gardiner will help this community in many many ways. There also needs to be more housing for year round employees. The people of Gardiner are VERY friendly, supportive, kind, and unique.

#99 Self-employed It has been extremely difficult the past few years to witness the astronomical development in Gardiner with no regard for anything except who can make the most money. And to learn that the put alive "property rights" of the business owners trumps all personal property and personal property rights. Development is taking place with absolutely no conscience as to the community and those who actually live here - and some of us for a very long time. Without incorporation and in the absence of zoning and codes personal/residential property owners have absolutely NO recourse as our residential neighborhoods are being invaded by summer/tourist businesses. I have seen my property value plummet as the house across from me was moved to make space for a raft company bus parking lot. And the tiny ally, which was never designed for traffic larger than a pickup truck - and a 1910 one - now sees constant bus and trailer traffic in and out, in and ou t. My safety is compromised as the busses back within several inches of my fence, my yard, and my house fills up with diesel and the alley is blocked while the busses hitch and unhitch the raft trailers. By midsummer the alley is so full of potholes it is almost impossible to drive. ALL of us who live on the alley - which was quiet and peaceful - have been majorly impacted. The county commissioners have been worthless. This is only one story of which is happening all over Gardiner. Historic houses are being gutted and turned into store fronts/raft companies. Buildings are constructed without any consideration of the view shed or the impact on the neighbors. The Iron Horse was built in a residential area and near the historic jail with no concern to its impacts - traffic, view shed, or noise levels. The rumor about town is that the historic tour cafe building has been sold to a National hotel chain who intends to construct a multi-story building (8?)on the site restaurants owned by locals, and which stayed open year-round, have been replaced by T-shirt shops, or restaurants owned by "out-of-towners", which are open only for the summer season. Housing for "locals" continues to dwindle as absentee landowners buy property and convert them to vacation rentals. The reasons I moved to Gardiner are quickly disappearing as Gardiner morphs into a full-out

Estes Park. The community which was here 20 years ago is disappearing into a tourist economy, where is is only that economy that matters. It is a very sad time.
All side streets need lots of work. Jardine Rd too.
Gardiner desperately needs to become incorporated. We needs a tourism tax to improve our community and utilities. We own a wildlife tourism business and many of our guests boycott staying in Gardiner because of the bad P.R. problem from anti-wolf sentiment, and the MT fish wildlife and Parks aggressive hunting stance on wolves. We should have an annual wolf festival in Gardiner during the low season to boost our economy.
Gardiner has a wonderful opportunity in front of it for future economic growth but the leadership (past/present) is so afraid of growth they have allowed the community to fall into dire straits. And will continue on that path unless they begin to embrace the change for development/growth potential. Even with the opportunities in front of them. The community is afraid of investment Want to provide good experience for visitors Nightly accommodations are not adequate for summer months Concern with retail space leadership both state and regional is a concern
Gardiner has become very business oriented. Everywhere you look there is a B&B or raft company. Houses have been bought up for these businesses leaving fewer residences. The parking on Scott Street thru town has become increasingly congested with buses used by rafters leaving locals nowhere to park.
Gardiner has been a wonderful town to live in. I retired from the park service plus we own several businesses in town. We've been very happy here watching all of the changes and improvements in our town. We plan to sell our home in the near future, moving closer to medical facilities.
Gardiner has the potential to become a great gateway city to YNP. Right now it has very little to offer the tourists, very few decent restaurants, very little nightlife other than bars. Employees are underpaid so don't stay at their jobs so businesses have a hard time in the summer. More emphasis could be made to maintain the city and give the residents a sense of pride - maybe they would take care of their property and stores. Bike paths and trails needed. Develop front street for visitors. More maintained sidewalks. A lot to do. Need money to get them done.
Gardiner lacks many of the facets that make one's life easier - for instance no hardware store. But the benefits of living here make up for most of the inadequacies.
Great community
Housing is an extreme problem. "Outsiders" moving in and taking over has changed the community feel of Gardiner. Real estate prices cause a lot of people to leave the town they love.
Housing is the biggest problem in Gardiner. Owners are choosing to turn their properties into weekly rentals, creating a housing shortage. The prices of homes are so overinflated it makes it impossible to buy.
I have high hopes the resort tax initiative will pass this fall! Gardiner needs: better roads, more garbage cans, dog poop bags, more bike paths/bike friendly roads, and more sidewalks! It's a wonderful place to live now that we've moved off of hwy 89/Scott St. where parking needs improvement, vegetation, needs to be planted to cut down the noise and speed limits need to be obeyed! Thanks
I love living around YNP
I think it's silly/stupid we don't take advantage of the resort tax to improve Gardiner facilities and infrastructure.
I want to see a resort tax voted in, then bed tax and sales tax used for public improvements, River access improved, public info/restrooms, trial access improved.
Limited medical, limited services with business in winter (off season) side roads mainly dirt, vacation rentals have taken over and they are often loud late at night. It would be nice to have improved bike

trails or indoor space for cooler weather activities.
Loss of a way of life is happening now. 6 generations of my family lived here. It's changing quickly.
Love it here and see a bright future for Gardiner.
Needs a recreation center (better than the one we have) and needs a community pool.
Not enough housing! Too many rentals for visitors
The best government for Gardiner is no government.
There should be a resort tax and limit on raft companies in Residential areas. If the historic depot will be reconstructed at Arch Park a pond should be installed as well to keep with the original integrity of the area.
These questions are fairly leading. I feel that it is important to improve Gardiner, but not at the cost of longtime local families. Changes that have already occurred have negatively impacted my family's way of life. We are losing a lot of the local heritage, it is being replaced by the views and opinions of many that don't live here or have been here a short time. The views of ALL need to be taken into account. Not just the many and the loud.
This town is perfect for me. I live here 5 months a year (winter too cold. The only disadvantage is distance from hospital, but that's not a big worry.
This woman put "40's" in the age bracket. So I put 40. Remove if needed.
Too many raft companies without parking available. Opportunists make it crowded
Very seasonal community. Access to stores and restaurants very limited in winter. Hard to answer all questions thinking how different community is in summer and winter.
Very seasonal economy and difficult for good folks to buy homes and stay long term - Things seem to be changing - the old pissed off at the world guard is dying off/moving - we need resort tax!!!
We don't want our town to turn into Jackson Hole.
Would love to see more sidewalks - especially from King Lane or Solar Mtn. Rd down to the Cenex (lower portion of Jardine rd). We should promote walking, biking and running in such a small town where pedestrian traffic can replace many of the cars. At this time, however, it is unsafe to walk or bike around the curve by the Rocky Mtn. RV park. Would rather see bed tax go first toward pedestrian sidewalks or bike lanes than on PR to promote the town for tourism.
Would love to see a sidewalk on the Jardine Rd from the Absaroke Lodge to the residential streets (King Ln/Solar Mtn. Rd). Also there's lots of pedestrian traffic from the campground to town. Increase in vacation rentals has resulted in limited housing/rental for employees/lower income families. No zoning has plusses and minuses for residents. Businesses beside residential areas create parking problems and noise problems. Many businesses are only seasonal and may not be as tied to overall community.