

BELONGING IN BOZEMAN EQUITY AND INCLUSION PLAN FOR THE CITY OF BOZEMAN AND GALLATIN VALLEY

BOZEMAN MT

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



Morten Group

Over 20 years of assessment,
education, and action

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At-A-Glance

OVERVIEW

The process of bringing this document together involved extensive collaboration and input from community members, partner organizations, and local government to identify needs, gather data, and create a comprehensive plan. The plan reflects a personal approach by incorporating individual experiences in the community and outlines goals and recommendations to address a range of issues, with the mutual consent and commitment of Bozeman's organizations, individuals, and government bodies.

KEY PLAYERS

- Belonging in Bozeman Internal Committee
- Belonging in Bozeman Steering Committee
- Bozeman City Commission
- Economic Vitality Board
- Community Liaisons
- City of Bozeman Executive Leadership Team

PROCESS

The development of this plan entailed extensive engagement with community members and partner organizations to delineate needs and gather pertinent data. Efforts concentrated on removing participation barriers and fostering diverse pathways for input in envisioning the plan, formulating goals, and defining specific recommendations. Building upon prior initiatives like the Inclusive City Report, commitments of the Cities for CEDAW initiative, and the 2020 Equity Indicators Report, this plan signifies a crucial milestone in advancing equity and inclusion in Bozeman. Key milestones are outlined in the timeline and elaborated upon in the key terms section.

This Equity and Inclusion Plan stands as a testament to the collaborative spirit and dedication of Bozeman's diverse stakeholders towards creating a more equitable and inclusive community. Grounded in shared experiences and fortified by comprehensive data and engagement, this plan serves as a blueprint for action, signaling a commitment to foster a community where every voice is heard, and every individual thrives. Its implementation marks a pivotal step towards a future where equity and inclusion are woven into the fabric of Bozeman's identity.

Introduction

You hold in your hands, or on your screen, a collectively-developed roadmap for ongoing shared action to create a City of Bozeman that is equitable and inclusive for all who live in, work in, and visit the city.

WHAT IS AN EQUITY AND INCLUSION PLAN?

The purpose of the Belonging in Bozeman Equity and Inclusion Plan is to ensure that all residents, visitors, and City of Bozeman employees can thrive regardless of their race, identity, or life circumstance. It builds upon the [2021 Equity Indicators Report](#) by moving forward with 8 issue areas identified by the community as Priority Needs. Through committee work and public survey, vision statements were created for each issue area. Then, committee members, community liaisons, and community members developed and refined goals and recommendations for each vision statement to move Bozeman in the direction of making those visions a reality.

WHOSE PLAN IS THIS?

This plan embodies a collective partnership involving the entire Bozeman community: it's a collaborative effort between local government, nonprofits, businesses, community groups, educational institutions, residents, employees, and visitors alike. While our organization plays a pivotal role in leading this initiative and our city government approves it for action, it's crucial to remember that no single entity or group holds more significance than others.

This isn't a checklist solely for our organization or any specific group to execute; rather, it's a comprehensive roadmap for collective action, where every individual and entity's contribution is equally valued and essential to its success.

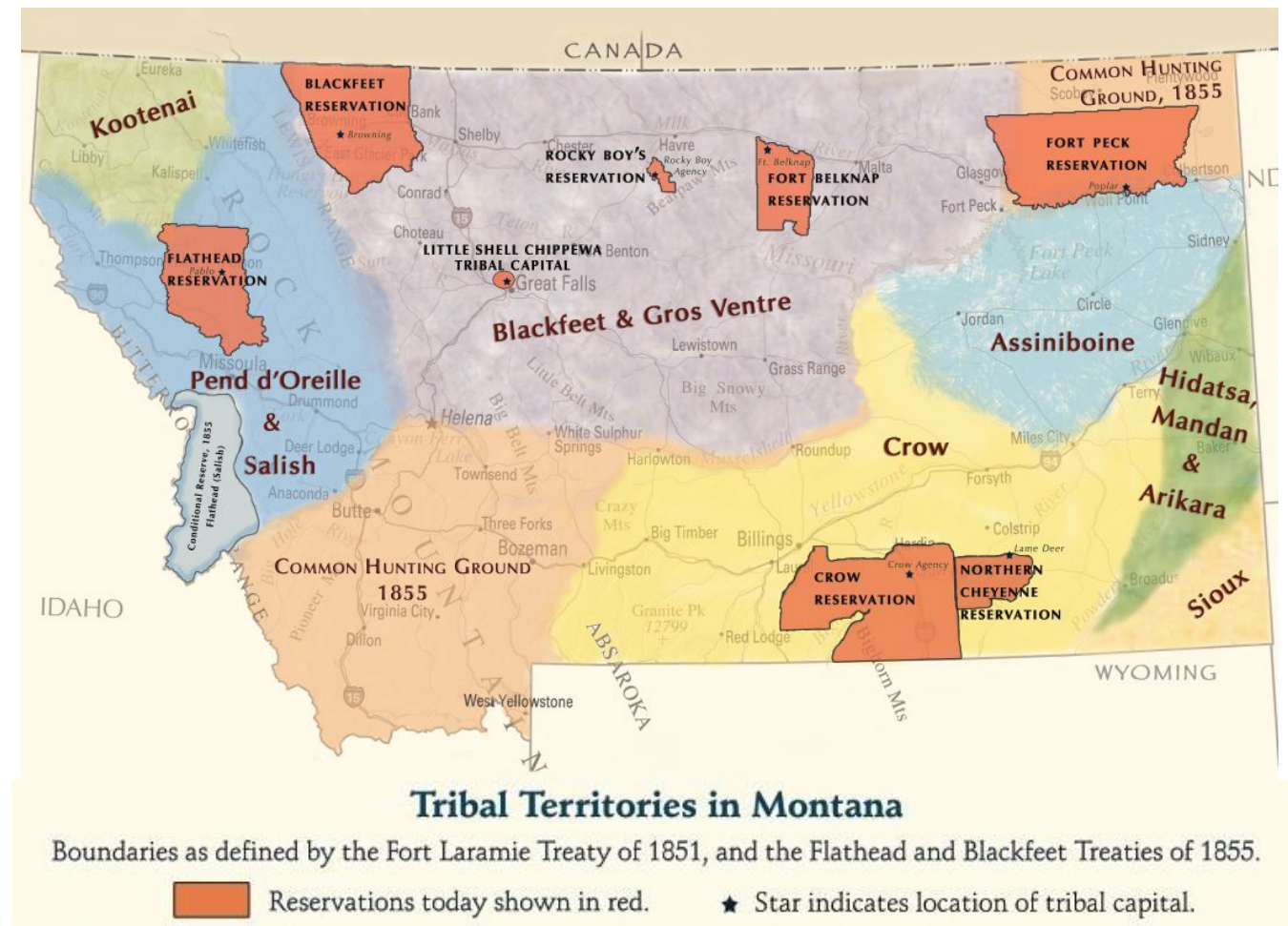


A long legacy of civic engagement in Bozeman: at left, community gathers for the kickoff event for this planning process in February 2023 (Photo credit: Vince Pagán-Hill). At right, in the late 1920s, the Montana Federation of Colored Women's Clubs convention at an unknown Montana location. Belle McDonald, who co-founded the Bozeman chapter with her sisters, is pictured in the front row, third woman from the right (photographer unknown; photo source [here](#)).

Acknowledgements

LAND

We acknowledge and honor, with respect, the Indigenous Nations on whose traditional homelands the City now stands and whose historical and cultural relationships with the land continue to this day.



Montana's intricate tribal territories, shaped by historic treaties, are highlighted in this map, offering a glimpse into ancestral lands. [Explore more with this guide from Montana State University.](#)

Among the Indigenous nations of this region are the Séliš (Bitterroot Salish), Qlispé (Pend d'Orreille), Ktunaxa (Kootenai), Pikuni (Blackfeet), Tsistsis'tas (Northern Cheyenne), Apsáalooke (Crow), Anishinaabe (Chippewa), Nehiyawak (Cree), Metis, Nakoda (Assiniboine), A'aninin (Gros Ventre), Dakota, Lakota, and others.

In acknowledging these people, the land, the plant, animal, and water relatives, it is important to recognize that our ability to live and work here, is due to colonizing policies, practices of genocide, cultural erasure, and the enslavement of Black people.

We recognize that meaningful reconciliation efforts with Indigenous peoples have not occurred in this country, and we encourage a growing awareness of our individual and shared abilities to effect changes that will lead us to a more equitable future for all in our community.

GOVERNMENT

We thank the members of the **Bozeman City Commission**: Mayor Cynthia Andrus, Deputy Mayor Terry Cunningham, Commissioner I-Ho Pomeroy, Commissioner Jennifer Madgic, Commissioner Christopher Coburn, and Commissioner Douglas Fischer.

We thank the members of the **Economic Vitality Board**: Chair Katharine Osterloth, Vice Chair Danielle Rogers, Board Member Will Shepherd, Board Member Sara Savage, Board Member Craig Ogilvie, Board Member John Carey, and Board Member Malory Peterson.

We thank Jeff Mihelich, City Manager; Chuck Winn, Assistant City Manager; Kira Peters, Assistant City Manager; Josh Waldo, Fire Chief; and Jim Veltkamp, Police Chief.

PROJECT TEAM

We thank the **leaders of this project**: Dani Hess, Community Engagement Coordinator, Belonging in Bozeman Co-Lead; Nakeisha Lyon, Associate Planner, Belonging in Bozeman Co-Lead; and Takami Clark, Communications and Engagement Manager.

We thank the **Community Liaisons** who served as bridges between specific communities within Bozeman and the larger project team to ensure their voices were heard: Chace McNinch, Kristen Newman, and Jhennifer Cifuentes.



We thank the members of the **Belonging in Bozeman Internal Team** (some individuals pictured above): Andy Knight, Deputy Police Chief; Ali Chipouras, Sustainability Program Specialist; Calvin Van Ryzin, Water Treatment Plant Operator; Renata Munfrada, Economic Development Specialist; Sarah Rosenberg, Historic Preservation Officer + Associate Planner; Kyle Kors, City Service Worker; Renee Boundy, V.E.T.S. Court Coordinator; Josh Charles, Fire Captain; Julie Hunter, Executive Assistant; Alicia Paz-Solis, Engineer I; Cassandra Tozer, Human Resources Director; Scott McMahon, Information Technology Director;

Tony Modugno, Building Inspector II; Jennifer Giuttari, Assistant City Attorney; Kesslie Carlson-Ham, GIS Analyst; Matthew Lee, Water Conservation Specialist; and Kaitlin Johnson, Budget Analyst.

We thank **Morten Group, LLC** for their support throughout this process: Mary F. Morten, President; Vince Pagán-Hill, Project Director; Jessica Kadish-Hernández, Consultant; and Lisa Gilmore, Senior Consultant.

COMMUNITY

We thank the [Bozeman Extreme History Project](#), led by Crystal Alegria and Dr. Cheryl Hendry and the contributors to the historical narrative Dr. Shane Doyle, Crystal Wong Shors, Stacey Haugland, Rachel Phillips, Dr. Mary Murphy, Scott Birkenbuel, Bob Cruz, Dr. Barbara do Amaral, Judith Heilman, Pearl Michalson, Marsha Small, Michael Spears, and Dr. Walter Fleming.

We thank our **community chat hosts**: City of Bozeman staff, [Gallatin City-County Health Department \(GCCHD\)](#), [HRDC](#), [Bienvenidos a Gallatin Valley](#), [Gallatin Valley Interfaith Association](#), [First-Generation Students Association at MSU](#), [Gender Equity Alliance at MSU](#), and [Bridgercare Peer Educators](#).

We thank each member of the **Belonging in Bozeman Steering Committee**: Krista Dicomitis, Human Resource Development Council IX (HRDC); Marilyn King, Bozeman School District #7; Bethany Davies, Big Sky Chamber of Commerce; Scott Birkenbuel, Ability Montana; Ariel Donohue, Montana State University; Michelle Bossert, Gallatin County; Mikayla Pitts, The Montana Racial Equity Project; Katie Michael, Bozeman Health; Kendall Levinson, Montana Language Services; Kaleigh Mency, Pride Foundation; Lyla Brown, Forward Montana; Lei Anna Bertelson, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women; Amber Traxinger, Community Health Partners; Becky Wilbert, City of Belgrade; Valerie Webster, Gallatin Valley Interfaith Association; Karen DeCotis, Bozeman Dharma Center; Sara Freedwoman, Queer Bozeman; Ben Frentsos, Greater Gallatin United Way; Meshalya Cox, CoEquity Consulting; Joey Morrison, Bozeman Tenants United; Tori Sproles, Child Care Connections; Sophia Fortuanto, Thrive; and Kate Batchelder, Gallatin City-County Health Department.

We thank **Montana State University faculty, staff, and students** who contributed to the plan: Dr. Kaylin Greene and SCOI 499 Sociology Capstone students; Professor Mikayla Pitts and HTH 445 Ethic of Care students; Susan Gallagher, Western Transportation Institute.

November 8, 2023

Bozeman City Commission
121 N Rouse Ave
Bozeman, MT 59715

Dear Residents and Visitors:

The Gallatin Valley has long been a place of opportunity. Indigenous people from across the northwest and northern plains came here to hunt, heal, gather, and celebrate. For many thousands of years, it has sustained diverse plant, animal, and human communities.

Today, Bozeman continues to have a lot to offer to those in search of a better quality of life, connection to nature, and a place to call home. However, whether all people can access these things is becoming a larger and larger concern. Disparities in people's ability to fulfill their basic needs and thrive within our growing city are more apparent than ever.

That is why the Belonging in Bozeman Equity & Inclusion Plan is so important. This community-led plan identifies areas of need and outlines the steps we need to take to address the challenges facing underserved groups in our community. It will take determined leadership, commitment of resources, and focused effort of not just the City of Bozeman, but local and regional partners, and community members themselves to make this effort a success. We all have a role to play in ensuring Bozeman is a community where everyone belongs.

This change won't happen overnight. This plan outlines the necessary goals, recommendations, and resources for the next 3-5 years. It will take changes in all aspects of our community down to the individual level to make sure we make our aspirational visions a reality and create the city we want to live in.

As a city, we aim to weave equity throughout our work and encourage others to do the same to ensure that all who want to be here can thrive regardless of race, identity, or life circumstance. This will make our city stronger and keep Bozeman as a special place of opportunity.

Thank you to all who have played a role in the creation of this plan. We look forward to our continued partnership with you to create a more inclusive, welcoming, and equitable city.

Sincerely,

*Mayor Cynthia Andrus
Deputy Mayor Terry Cunningham
Commissioner Christopher Coburn
Commissioner Douglas Fischer
Commissioner Jennifer Madgic*

A Truthful History of Bozeman

Researched and written by the Extreme History Project

The man for whom the city of Bozeman is named and his fellow wealthy white counterparts are only one group of people who have shaped life in the Gallatin Valley, yet too often their narrative is presented as the default. This framing neglects the long and complex history of the many peoples who have called this region home, including Indigenous nations, Chinese immigrants, Black migrants, and more. As part of this Equity & Inclusion planning process, **Bozeman's Extreme History Project** – whose work has already done much to educate residents and visitors on many overlooked and underappreciated aspects of the city's history – wrote a comprehensive historical account of Bozeman that **“seeks to center human experience, diverse perspectives, and the influence of individual and collective efforts in creating Bozeman.”**

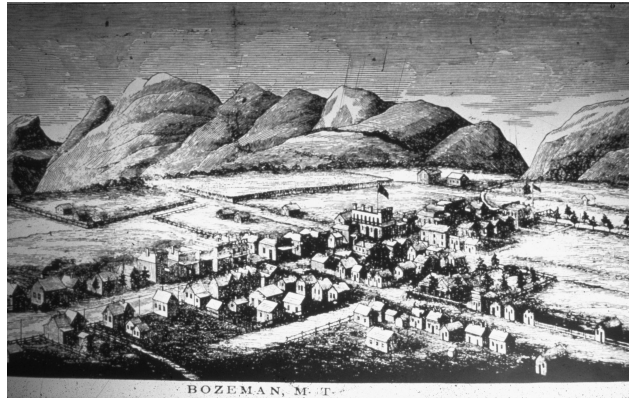
The following historical account seeks to center human experience, diverse perspectives, and the influence of individual and collective efforts in creating Bozeman. The approach centered on roundtable discussions that engaged descendant community members, local equity advocates, and historical experts. These voices shaped the structure of the narrative, guided its questions, and illuminated its focal points. It is important to note that this approach does not yield a comprehensive, linear chronicle of Bozeman's history; gaps and unanswered questions remain. However, what has emerged serves as a foundational framework – a mosaic of stories and viewpoints that collectively helps readers to reimagine Bozeman's past and invites us all to reflect, question, and participate in an ongoing dialogue about Bozeman's multifaceted heritage.



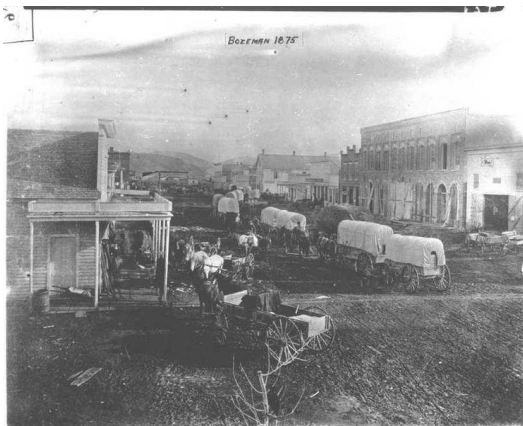
Beavers and bison, flora and fauna, were the original inhabitants of this place we now call Bozeman. Séliš (Bitterroot Salish), Qlispé (Pend d'Orreille), Ktunaxa (Kootenai), Pikuni (Blackfeet), Tsistsis'tas (Northern Cheyenne), Apsáalooke (Crow), Anishinaabe (Chippewa), Nehiyawak (Cree), Metis, Nakoda (Assiniboine), A'aninin (Gros Ventre), Dakota, Lakota, and other indigenous nations who have

millennia-long relationships with this land, also had millennia-long relationships with these plant and animal Relatives. For Indigenous people, this Valley was a gathering place, it provided seasonal sustenance and shared space. Settlers arrived in the 1860s with a vastly different understanding of land and ownership. Settlers killed the bison, dismantled beaver dams, plowed the land, and built a city on top of the water. Colonization served to sever the relationships that Indigenous people had with their Relatives, profoundly altering the landscape and its inhabitants.

In 1863, gold seekers bound for Alder Gulch invaded the Gallatin Valley, a region allocated as Lakota Territory under the 1851 Treaty of Fort Laramie. In this valley, John Bozeman recognized an opportunity to amass personal wealth. Utilizing Indigenous trails, in 1863 Bozeman and John Jacobs laid out the Bozeman Trail and led the first wagon train of emigrants through the Gallatin Valley to gold mines in Alder Gulch the following year. At the crossing of what we now call Bozeman Creek, Bozeman, William Beall, and Daniel Rouse platted a town to supply emigrants. When Indigenous people retaliated, the United States Infantry and Cavalry entered the Valley and built Fort Ellis under the guise of protecting emigrants. From Fort Ellis, soldiers enacted a brutal campaign of violent dispossession. Another fort, Fort Parker, the first Indian Agency on the Crow Reservation, marked the forced transition to Reservation life for the region's Indigenous people.



It was government-sanctioned violent dispossession of Indigenous people that enabled non-Indigenous American settlement in the Gallatin Valley in the 1860s and all subsequent economic growth. For Indigenous people, construction and operation of the Forts marked the beginning of a forced transition from their traditional buffalo hunting lifestyle. For the residents of the small town of Bozeman, the Forts signaled safety and stability. For people like Nelson Story, the Forts were the source of a massive accumulation of wealth; it is men in this latter group whose names are now given pride of place in the Gallatin Valley.



According to the federal population census of 1870, there were just over 400 people living in Bozeman, outside of Fort Ellis. These early settlers were not exclusively white Americans. Nearly 20% of Bozeman's population in 1870 were immigrants, the majority of whom came from Germanic states. The Speith and Krug brewery, opened by two German immigrants was a saloon, public hall, and focal point for social and civic activity in Bozeman that served as a cornerstone for the town's German community. By 1880,

Chinese immigrants made up at least 16% of Bozeman's immigrant population. Bozeman's Chinese residents lived in lodging rooms in hotels, at their workplaces and businesses, in residential houses, and in the area known as "China Alley" - an alleyway located between East Main Street and East Mendenhall Street, and North Bozeman Avenue and North Rouse Avenue. They ran businesses like laundries, restaurants, and boarding houses in China Alley and on Main Street in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. One particularly successful Chinese businessman, Chin Ah Ban, owned several restaurants on Main Street over the course of the early 20th century. Most of Bozeman's early Black community came to Montana as refugees from racial violence in the post-Civil War South. Some, like [Lizzie Williams](#), [Samuel Lewis](#), and [Richard and Mary McDonald](#) played pivotal roles in the community's economic and social development through their investment in real estate, businesses, and homes during the early 1870s. Like their Chinese counterparts, businesses like Lizzie Williams's restaurant and Samuel Lewis's barber shop were located on Main Street and were patronized by the entirety of the Bozeman community. Despite their contributions to the founding of Bozeman, memory of these Black and immigrant founders has been erased by a city whose streets now bear the names of their white American contemporaries - Beall, Story, Black, Cooper.

While people like Chin Au Ban, Lizzie Williams, and Samuel Lewis, became financially successful, most early Black, Chinese, and other immigrant residents worked in service roles, predominately in domestic service for Bozeman's middle- and upper-class families. As the 20th century approached, these working-class people became increasingly more segregated into the neighborhoods north of Main Street as investment and enhancement on the south side attracted residents of affluence. Main Street became an economic dividing line.

The domestic labor of the Bozeman's minority and working-class residents afforded middle- and upper-class white residents the time and ability to establish churches, clubs, and voluntary associations. During the era when the government's presence in Bozeman was relatively modest, civic organizations, churches, and volunteer associations shaped the civic and social fabric of the community. In this, women played influential roles. [Mary Alderson](#) organized with the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), fought for Montana women's right to vote and helped successfully secure this right for white women in Montana in 1914, six years ahead of the nationwide enactment of the 19th Amendment. In doing this advocacy work, she asserted white women's right to participate in the city's and state's civic affairs.



Black women in Montana also came together for social and intellectual connection and civic improvement. Founded in 1921, The [Montana Federation of Colored Women's Clubs](#) gave voice to Black women throughout the state. In Bozeman, the McDonald sisters – Mollie, Belle, and Melissa – along with club president Eva Robinson, formed a chapter called the Sweet Pea Study Club that raised money to help Black high school students attend college, advocated for civil rights legislation, and worked to improve racial relations at the state and local level.

By the turn of the twentieth century, Montana was one of the most ethnically diverse states in the country, and the population in Bozeman reflected this larger trend. Yet today, Montana is among the whitest states in the country. Legislation and formal and informal racial discrimination and exclusion accounts for this shift.

One of the first ordinances to be adopted after the City of Bozeman was incorporated in 1883 was [Ordinance No. 8](#), "Concerning Offenses Against Good Order and Morals." Ostensibly passed to protect the business district from the threat of fire, Section 5 of the ordinance allowed Bozeman police to closely monitor the Chinese and conduct raids against supposed opium dens and arrest and fine Chinese residents. Ordinance No. 8 also included gendered definitions of "morality." Section 7's prohibition against "in any public place...in a dress not belonging to his or her sex, or in an indecent or lewd dress..." reflects an early attempt to legislate gender expression.

[State laws](#) also impacted Bozeman residents. In 1909, the Montana State legislature passed an anti-miscegenation law that made interracial marriage illegal, nullified existing unions, and rejected those from other states. The number of young, single African Americans living in Montana dropped between 1910 and 1930. This bill threatened the Black family structure; with a limited choice of legal spouses in Bozeman, young Black Bozeman residents had to look elsewhere for marriage prospects. Belle Ward, the granddaughter of Richard and Mary McDonald, went to Helena to marry a Black man in 1925. Fred Harris Jr. moved with his parents to Tacoma, Washington in 1918. At that time, there was not a single person living in Bozeman that he might legally marry. The adoption of this anti-miscegenation bill, which remained in law until 1953, shows the shift from a society in Montana that offered a future for a Black community into one that did not.

Bozeman's minority communities also encountered racial discrimination in the form of threats, belittlement, harassment, and exclusion. The Chinese were seen by some as lowly and immoral, Chinese men were seen as less of "men" based upon their clothing. Mocking and finding amusement in Chinese accents or broken English was a common sentiment found in early newspapers. Chinese residents were frequent victims of conflict and assault at their places of business and on the streets of Bozeman; some faced open threats of lynching. Bozeman's Black community faced threat in the form of a resurging Ku Klux Klan in the 1920s. In August 1926, 1,000 people attended a Klan picnic and public lecture at the Bozeman Hot Springs. By the mid-20th century, Black people were increasingly excluded from public

space in Bozeman. One example occurred in 1950 when nationally recognized singer Dorothy Maynor came to Bozeman for a concert and the Baxter Hotel refused to let her stay there.

Decades of formal and informal exclusionary practices have created a sense of invisibility among Bozeman's minority residents. For Indigenous people, this goes back to the formal violent exclusion of the 1860s and 1870s. People with disabilities have also been formally excluded, displaced by



institutionalization since 1877 when Warm Springs hospital was built in western Montana. In some cases, invisibility is due to outmigration – by the 1930s, half of Montana's Black residents had left, Bozeman's Chinese community precipitously dropped in the same period. Invisibility is compounded by the rebranding of the land which has erased Indigenous history and the naming of places which celebrates specific aspects and people of our past, while erasing others.

Despite this, Bozeman residents have worked to hold on to their culture and customs, actively dismantle barriers, and create inclusive spaces. A key effort in this was and is claiming visible space as the region's Indigenous people have done for over fifty years at the annual Montana State University (MSU) Powwow. The Powwow represents an ongoing tradition spanning countless generations—stretching back hundreds, even thousands of years—where people gather, revel in each other's company, and reconnect with their origins.

Despite its complicated history, MSU has played a key role in efforts to create community and inclusive spaces. MSU was established in 1893 through the Morrill Act, a piece of legislation that utilized wealth from stolen Indigenous land to fund higher education. Through its democratization of higher education, the land grant, though problematic, provided a path to diversity. The Multicultural Resource Center, established in 1999 by the Associated Students of Montana State University with leadership by the Black Student Union. Evolving over the years, it became the Diversity & Inclusion Student Commons in 2017. The Department of Native American Studies and the American Indian Council were established to advance education for and about American Indians of Montana and to promote community and academic success for MSU's Native students. Over the past five decades, these entities have evolved into a central hub for Indigenous life in Bozeman.

The University serves as a magnet for diverse students and families, contributing to the presence of people of color in the community. However, this influx is often perceived as temporary, with the notion that diverse individuals are primarily students and, consequently, transient residents. The paradox

emerges as MSU attracts diversity, albeit temporarily. It functions as a dynamic hub for a variety of perspectives and people, yet a considerable number do not stay in Bozeman, facing challenges in establishing more permanent roots. Notably, the visibility of Native families is predominantly associated with MSU, but many can only afford to reside in Bozeman during their college years, relying on scholarships or loans for support. This dynamic raises important considerations about the sustainability of diversity within the community beyond the confines of academic pursuits.



Beyond MSU, other groups have worked to build community. In the 1990s, Stacey Haugland realized that she would have to push hard to make space for herself and other lesbians in Bozeman. She hung posters around town advertising a “Lesbian Community Potluck” to be held at her house. What began as casual gatherings evolved into the formation of Gallatin Area Lesbian Society. Haugland later became a plaintiff in a successful legal effort to decriminalize homosexuality in Montana in 1997. Meanwhile, another notable legal battle unfolded at Bozeman airport, where a lawsuit addressed accessibility issues. The lawsuit sought improvements in infrastructure and services to ensure equal access for all travelers, highlighting the importance of inclusive facilities in public spaces.

The legacy of past efforts for inclusivity and visibility endures in the ongoing advocacy of Bozeman's residents who continue to fight for a community that embraces diversity and ensures equal representation in the 21st century. In the 21st century, the City of Bozeman has passed several ordinances and resolutions to support and celebrate Bozeman's diverse population. The City Commission continued its commitment to inclusivity with its endorsement of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 2022 along with the official recognition of Indigenous Peoples' Day and Juneteenth holidays. These holidays recognize the city's rich multicultural heritage and are marked by celebratory events throughout town and on the MSU campus.

Delving into the past serves as a poignant reminder that Bozeman has always been a diverse locale, with historical factors contributing to the evolving nature of its diversity. Our historical narratives reveal harassment, discrimination, and the struggle for visibility alongside stories of community building, resistance, and resilience.

Find the full-length version of this history on the [city website](#).



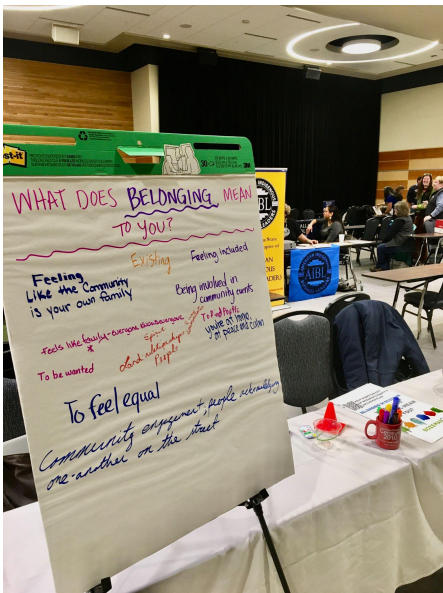
Process and Timeline

The process to develop this plan was grounded in input from community members and partner organizations to define needs, gather data, and chart a path forward. Community engagement efforts focused on reducing barriers to participation and creating multiple ways for *everyone* to help establish the vision for the plan, generate goals, and define the specific recommendations to achieve them. The content of the plan built on previous efforts defined in the Inclusive City Report, commitments of the Cities for CEDAW initiative, and the Equity Indicators Report. Key milestones in the process are outlined in the following timeline and further defined in the key terms section.

2020: Inclusive City Policy Review

On **June 8, 2020**, in response to local and national calls for action to address violence against Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), the Bozeman City Commission directed the City Manager to review the city's policies, training, and frameworks. The "[Bozeman as an Inclusive City: Review of Policies](#)" report was released on **July 22, 2020** and established the commitment to conduct a "gaps analysis" and develop equity indicators to ultimately guide an equity and inclusion plan for the community.

2021: Establishing a Baseline - Equity Indicators Project & CEDAW priorities



In 2021, The City of Bozeman launched the Equity Indicators Project to measure equity and access to resources in the City. The purpose was to establish a baseline to make Bozeman a more inclusive, welcoming, and equitable place. The resulting [Equity Indicators Report](#), released on **July 31, 2021**, revealed key needs and gaps in priority areas identified by the community such as housing, healthcare, and education.

The Equity Indicators Hub is a resource that tracks the data behind this plan. Data comes from publicly available databases like the 2020 Census, American Community Survey, and local data sharing partners. Check out the [Equity Indicators Hub](#) and find interactive data displays as well as the open data portal where local partners and community members can access the data themselves to inform and support their efforts in the Gallatin Valley.

Also in 2021, the City of Bozeman signed on to [Resolution 5384](#), Establishing Bozeman as a City for the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). This local grassroots effort defines key priorities for the city to undertake to conform with this United Nations convention. These priorities include continuing to collect data around disparities in our community as well as developing an equity and inclusion plan.

2022: Beginning Action — Belonging in Bozeman

In the spring of 2022, the City convened the internal Belonging in Bozeman team with city staff from across all departments in the organization to guide the development of the city's first Equity & Inclusion Plan. The team helped shape the definitions of key terms to be used in this plan and establish a [community engagement strategy](#) and an outline of this very document.

2022 also marked the year that the the City of Bozeman established both Juneteenth and Indigenous People's Day as officially recognized holidays. Indigenous People's Day began with the vision, followed by years of action, and ultimately success of [Indigenous Peoples Day Montana](#), a group of local and state organizers who helped make this holiday official in the City of Bozeman.

2023: Continuing Action — Equity & Inclusion Planning Process

The Equity and Inclusion Planning Process kicked off **with the official launch event on March 7, 2023**. A Steering Committee of organizational partners doing work across all eight topic areas was established to meet monthly throughout the process. **That spring, three Community Liaisons** were hired to elevate community voices and gather input from communities that often face additional barriers to participating in local government processes, such as the Spanish-speaking community, LGBTQ+ community, and the disability community. **In June, a community-wide survey** gathered input from nearly 400 community members on the plan's Vision Statements. With this input, the final Vision Statements were drafted and edited with input from both the Belonging in Bozeman Steering Committee and internal city staff team.



In August, a half-day workshop was held with these two groups to generate the goals and recommendations of the plan. Broader community input was sought on the goals and recommendations through **Community Chats, held from July-September**. Throughout the year, guidance was sought and updates were provided to the city's Economic Vitality Board on a monthly basis, and on a quarterly basis with the City Commission. With all of this input, the project team met with city staff and community partners to ensure that the plan's aspirations were balanced with what could be realistically achieved in the next 3-5 years.

With over 15 different city departments and over 30 community partner organizations, the team dug into the details like establishing lead and partner organizations, metrics, and resources needed for implementation. And, finally, this report was drafted from September to November and **considered for approval by the city's Economic Vitality Board and City Commission in December 2023**.

Key Terms

The following terms are helpful to understand as you take in the plan:

Terms Found in the Plan

Vision Statements: Vision Statements serve as bold, short, and consistent phrases that clearly state a desired outcome for all individuals in our community. This plan's Vision Statements are based on the [Equity Indicators Report \(2021\)](#), priorities of the Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) per [Resolution 5384](#), and feedback from City staff, applicable advisory bodies, and community members.

Goal: Goals put visions into practice by describing the overarching action that must be taken in order to achieve the vision.

Recommendation: Recommendations take goals to a finer level of detail by clarifying the steps that must be taken in order to achieve the goal.

Priority #1, #2, #3: A prioritization matrix helped rank the priority level of each recommendation based on "cost/difficulty" and "impact/urgency." Cost and difficulty depends on factors like existing efforts underway, staff capacity, resources available, and cost. Impact and urgency depends on alignment with existing city/partner priorities and how directly the recommendation addresses the goal, vision statement, and relevant equity indicators.

Priority #1 indicates recommendations that have relatively *high impact/urgency*, are *most difficult/costly* to implement, and may need more time to gather resources and build capacity. Begin **first**, but progress may not occur for 2-3 years.

Priority #2 indicates recommendations with relatively *high impact/urgency*, are relatively *less difficult/costly* and should be undertaken **early**, progress expected within 1-2 yrs.

Priority #3 indicates recommendations that have relatively *lower impact/urgency* and are *least difficult/costly* and should be undertaken **after** progress and/or successful implementation of #1 and #2 recommendations. Progress expected in 3+ years.

Lead org + partners: The organization that is leading the effort to carry out a particular recommendation and the fellow organizations that are contributing to the effort.

Metric: The result or action taken that indicates whether a recommendation has been advanced or partners have made progress.

Progress: The category expressing movement or headway on a recommendation. Will be updated annually by the City of Bozeman to show: "Not yet started" / "In-progress" / "Ongoing" / "Complete"

Equity and Inclusion Terms

Access: The elimination of discrimination and other physical or structural barriers that result in some people being unable to use a physical space, benefit from a service or resource, or join and participate in an activity, event, program, or organization.

Belonging: A feeling of belonging revolves around trust, openness, empathy, connection, purpose, and agency within a particular group, organization, or community. An individual feels like they belong when they can show up as their authentic self and feel valued, understood, respected, safe, and represented. Organizations can contribute to a culture of belonging by supporting policies, practices, and programs that foster a sense of security, acceptance, and celebration across identities.

Belonging in Bozeman: The initiative undertaken by the City of Bozeman to complete this Equity & Inclusion plan. Initially begun as the “Inclusive City” effort that resulted in the [Inclusive City Report & Recommendations](#), the Belonging in Bozeman effort builds off of this early work to expand and sustain the city’s work in equity and inclusion.

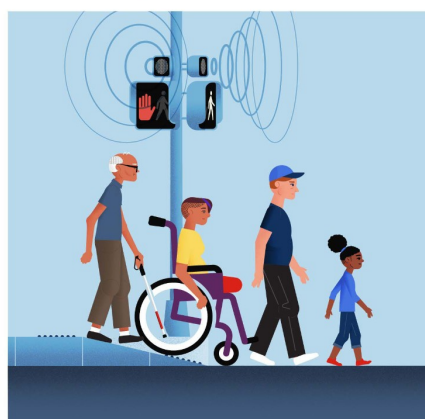
Equality: Sameness; treating everyone the same regardless of identity, life circumstance, or needs. The same resources or services may be available to all, but some people may face barriers in accessing or benefitting from them.

Equity: Recognizing differences in people’s identities, life circumstances, and needs to ensure that all are welcome, valued, and can thrive in our community. When we strive for equity, we intentionally create systems that are informed by people’s lived experiences so that everyone can access and benefit from the services and resources they need.



EQUALITY

Everyone gets the same - regardless of if it's needed or right for them.



EQUITY

Everyone gets what they need - understanding the barriers, circumstances, and conditions.

Diversity: Variation and difference across individuals in a group, organization, or community. A group can be described as diverse when it is made up of individuals of varying characteristics including (but not limited to!) race, ethnicity, language spoken, nationality, cultural identity, spiritual practice, age, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ability, and income or socioeconomic status. When we strive for diversity, we honor the richness, value, and benefits of bringing people with different perspectives, identities, and experiences together.

Inclusion: What we do with diversity. An individual, a group, an organization, or community is inclusive when it leverages and celebrates the skills, abilities, and talents of all of its members. When we strive for inclusion we are aware of how our words, actions, and beliefs impact others. Inclusive spaces are those in which people are respected, heard, and feel like they belong, even when they hold different identities, experiences, or perspectives from each other.

The Equity and Inclusion Plan

“When it comes to equity, where are our city’s gaps and needs, and what indicators would demonstrate movement on closing these gaps and addressing these needs?”

This was the question asked by the Equity Indicators Project in 2021. “How do we translate the data from the Equity Indicators Report into tangible actions to create a more equitable and inclusive city within the next 3-5 years?” This was the question asked – and, now, answered – by this Equity & Inclusion planning process. The plan directly builds upon the 2021 Equity Indicators Report by addressing eight distinct issue areas that correspond to the eight themes/categories of gaps/needs found in that report. The planning process has been grounded in the data from the Equity Indicators project every step of the way. For example, the [Vision Statements Overview](#) document made available to Community Chat hosts in the summer of 2023 contained statistics and facts from the Equity Indicators Report to guide discussions.

Each section of the plan begins with a collectively-developed **vision statement** of what an equitable and inclusive Bozeman would be like for all, followed by a list of **goals and recommendations** to make that vision a reality. View the full implementation workbook which includes **priority level, organizational leads + partners, resources needed, metrics, and progress** in Appendix B. To view the equity indicators that serve as the baseline data guiding this plan, please visit the [Equity Indicators Hub](#).

Our collective vision for the City of Bozeman:

***Housing** is available, affordable, accessible, and safe.*

*A variety of **transportation** options exist to meet mobility needs.*

***Healthcare** services and health programs that address physical, mental, and sexual & reproductive well-being are available, accessible, and inclusive.*

***Learning** opportunities allow for full participation and foster growth and success.*

***Childcare and youth programs** are high quality, affordable, and accessible.*

*A thriving **economy** offers readily available living-wage jobs and fair work environments.*

***Access** to community spaces and resources fosters social connection, health, and resilience in a changing climate.*

*Local government and major institutions prioritize **safety, inclusion, and representation**.*



Housing is available, affordable, accessible, and safe.

Housing has been an issue for Bozeman residents for many years; concern has increased as costs have skyrocketed following the COVID-19 pandemic. This is well-documented across several existing reports. The Bozeman Community Housing Needs Assessment (2019) revealed that prior to the pandemic, housing costs were already becoming unmanageable — the percentage of households paying over 30% of their income for rent plus utilities was 55%.

Bozeman’s Equity Indicators Project (2021) found housing access to affordable housing was the top need identified by survey takers (69% reported “large need”). The most recent Gallatin Valley Housing Report (2023) confirms that the post-COVID real estate price surge has been staggering: “the median price of a newly-built single-family home in 2022 was \$950,000, nearly double the amount recorded in 2019.”

This plan proposes making equitable and inclusive housing a reality in Bozeman by focusing strategically on homelessness, displacement, aging in place and universal building accessibility, increasing community knowledge, and lobbying for local solutions at the state level, so that Bozeman residents of all ages, abilities, and income levels can feel confident and secure in calling Bozeman their home.

HOUSING GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal 1. Develop a coordinated strategy to address homelessness in the Bozeman area.

1. Identify and prioritize [Housing First](#) approaches to address housing instability and homelessness.
2. Support partner organizations by funding transitional and emergency housing initiatives and programs.
3. Work with partners to leverage creative funding mechanisms, incentives, and existing assets to increase long-term affordable housing supply and housing preservation for people earning below 60% of AMI. (Federal funding, LIHTC, TIF, Community Land Trusts, Community Housing Fund, land banking, city-owned land etc.)

Goal 2. Reduce displacement of residents who work and go to school in Bozeman but cannot afford to live in Bozeman.

1. Evaluate city employee housing cost burden and consider options for employee housing assistance.
2. Convene local partners to explore the potential for co-operative housing models.
3. Strengthen coordination with MSU and partnerships with the Office of Off-Campus Student Life and student housing developers and property management companies.

Goal 3. Promote aging-in-place and universally accessible residential development.

1. Conduct an educational workshop for design, construction, and real estate professionals on universal design practices and adaptable dwellings within residential developments.
2. Codify development incentives for design that enables aging in place and universal accessibility beyond the requirements of the building code, for example:
 - *Establish requirements for the number of adaptable units in developments that utilize city Community Housing Funds;*
 - *Amend division 38.430 of the UDC to include an option in the novel public benefits section to include universal design best practices and incentives for elevators in multistory buildings*

Goal 4. Increase community knowledge in housing issues.

1. Host workshops for landlords and tenants on the Montana Tenant Act and Fair Housing Act, becoming a Housing Choice Voucher Landlord, Resident-owned community models.
2. Develop and distribute materials to support understanding of community housing approaches, programs, and terms such as:
 - *Area Median Income and how affordability in housing development is defined*
 - *Housing subsidy/financing programs and terms such as LIHTC, TIF, deed restrictions, etc.*
 - *Issues around local control, state legislation, and local incentive strategies – what can and can't we do at the local level and why?*
 - *Rental, mortgage, and down payment assistance programs*
 - *Short term rental regulations*
 - *Urban camping regulations*
 - *Definition of homelessness (McKinney Vento, HUD)*

Goal 5. Support and defend local housing solutions at the state legislature.

1. Identify and pursue local and state revenue streams for the creation of affordable housing and housing assistance programs:
 - *Available to residents regardless of immigration status or english proficiency (local)*
 - *Dedicated mills (local)*
 - *Sales tax (state)*
 - *Circuit breaker in the 70th MT Legislative session to target relief to homeowners on a fixed income and renters (state)*
 - *Preserves the ability to use Tax Increment Financing as a tool for affordable housing (state)*



TRANSPORTATION

A variety of transportation options exist to meet mobility needs.

Bozeman's main street has changed dramatically since the [25th Infantry Bicycle Corps](#), a unit of Black soldiers, passed through it in 1897, "attracting much attention and interest." Today, an onlooker in downtown Bozeman will find a mix of bicycles, pedestrians, buses, and cars, and a population ready for these varying modes of transit to be more accessible to all.

This plan proposes focusing on the most vulnerable travelers, meaning those who rely on getting where they need to go without a personal vehicle. That means people who walk or use a wheelchair, ride a bike, share rides, or take the Streamline Bus or Galavan system. There are many beneficial reasons why people choose to not drive; however, many don't even have the option - some are too young to get behind the wheel, some can't afford to own vehicles, others are unable to drive due to age or disability.

That's why these recommendations prioritize meeting mobility needs for all Bozeman residents, visitors, and employees by expanding reliable transit and paratransit services, going beyond ADA compliance, prioritizing winter mobility, and using an equity lens in parking management.

TRANSPORTATION GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal 1. Expand reliable transit and paratransit services, prioritizing winter accessibility.

1. Leverage new revenue streams to support increased frequency of fixed-route transit and paratransit service (for example, paid on-street parking, future UTD ballot measure, federal grants).
2. Ensure that city funds contribute to comparable service of paratransit to fixed-route transit operations.
3. Develop standards and formalize processes for ensuring bus stops are comfortable, safe, shaded from sun, and accessible to riders in the winter.
4. Pilot a "Snow Angels" program to connect volunteers and people with disabilities, older adults who are unable to remove snow from their sidewalks
5. Prioritize snow and ice removal at transit stops

Goal 2. Center the most vulnerable road users in transportation infrastructure design.

1. Develop and implement an Equity Impacts Tool to utilize in Transportation Planning and train staff, directors, and decision makers in this approach.
2. Mitigate implicit bias and enhance freedom of movement in transportation design and behavior, (for example, update the city's Complete Streets Resolution with an equity component).
3. Retrofit bicycle lanes to separate vehicles and bicyclists.
4. Strengthen partnership with Gallatin County and Montana Department of Transportation for safety improvements on streets not within the City's jurisdiction.
5. Leverage expertise of the disability community to educate design and building professionals on accessible community design, for example:
 - *Seasonal (summer/winter) inclusive interdisciplinary walking audits with members of the disability community, contractors, engineers, and others to assess for ADA compliance and foster co-design of built environment*
 - *Develop a Sidewalk Audit process for city staff to implement*
 - *Conduct parks accessibility audits and develop standards*

Goal 3. Prioritize equity in parking management practices.

1. Develop a public outreach and education campaign about the proper use of accessible parking spaces and access aisles.
2. Improve enforcement and responsiveness of PD/Parking Enforcement Officers when vehicles are parked unlawfully in accessible spaces, as per city ordinance.
3. Ensure accessible parking spaces are provided in areas where the city does not require the provision of on-site parking.
4. Use an Equity Impacts Tool to evaluate parking fines and fees, towing and impounding practices, and allocation of enforcement resources.



HEALTH + WELLBEING

Healthcare services and health programs that address physical, mental, and sexual & reproductive well-being are available, accessible, and inclusive.

Healthcare access and quality is only one of the five key [Social Determinants of Health](#), but it is, of course, a critical one. We know that health is greatly influenced by the other four – neighborhood, education, community, and economic stability – which you’ll see in other issue areas of the plan.

Over the last several years, Bozeman residents have consistently reported access to healthcare, mental health services, and substance use as top concerns. This is evident in the 2021 Equity Indicators Report as well as the [2020](#) Community Health Needs Assessment report. Through this Equity and Inclusion planning process, participants have identified ways to make progress in these areas and reduce disparities by amplifying the voices of groups often marginalized in healthcare settings, such as the disability community.

This plan proposes achieving equitable & inclusive health & well-being for Bozeman residents and workers through continuing education for professionals, increased coordination between agencies, support and implementation of proven efforts, and expansion of meaningful language access.

HEALTH + WELLBEING GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal 1. Support continuing education for health professionals on working with underserved communities.

1. Provide opportunities for health professionals to participate in training on: Healthcare Allies training; Disability identity, wellness, etiquette; Working with LEP (Limited English Proficiency) patients.
2. Increase access to mental health supports and training for health professionals and first responders.

Goal 2. Increase coordination between health agencies to reduce barriers to healthcare services and programs.

1. Coordinate across organizations to enable data sharing to better characterize health disparities and social needs in underserved communities.
2. Improve referral and case management processes across health care and social service providers to connect patients/clients with community resources.

Goal 3. Support and implement proven health education and healthcare access efforts.

1. Expand the use of harm reduction approaches to treat substance use disorder.
2. Increase telehealth offerings and publicly available telehealth spaces for clients (e.g. private telehealth rooms in libraries and other community spaces).
3. Support access to reproductive healthcare and comprehensive sexual education.

Goal 4. Expand meaningful language access in clinical settings and in health promotion programs.

1. Provide on-demand interpretation in clinical and public health settings, train providers and professionals in its use, and translate signage and documents.
2. Partner with organizations to reach underserved communities through mobile/pop-up health clinics and health education and promotion programs



Learning opportunities allow for full participation and foster growth and success.

Bozeman is a college town, home to Montana State University – the largest university in Montana, Wyoming, and the Dakotas, with students hailing from all 50 states. At the K-12 level, [U.S. News and World Report](#) ranks Bozeman High School as #1 in the State of Montana. When it comes to equity and inclusion both within and outside of these institutions, however, access and achievement gaps persist for some students.

This plan advocates for a more equitable and inclusive education landscape in Bozeman through expanding opportunities for multilingual learners, supporting higher education for underserved communities, prioritizing “cradle-to-career” educational systems, and increasing support for students experiencing homelessness.

EDUCATION GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal 1. Expand opportunities for multilingual learners of all ages.

1. Increase resources for multilingual education.
2. Provide meaningful language access to school services, online, and print materials to provide LEP families with the information they need.
3. Partner with local educators, organizations, and employers to provide English learning opportunities for Spanish-speaking residents.

Goal 2. Increase recruitment and resources to support higher education for underserved communities.

1. Continue to foster professional development opportunities for educators that emphasize LGBTQ+ allyship, cultural humility, supporting students with disabilities, and inclusive learning environments.
2. Support growth in resources for recruitment, retention, and graduation of American Indian & Alaska Native students at MSU.

Goal 3. Prioritize the creation of “cradle-to-career” educational systems by investing in sector-based strategies and career pathways.

1. Prioritize funding mechanisms to support early literacy interventions for 4-year olds, targeting families earning low-incomes, experiencing housing instability, or limited english proficiency.
2. Continue to engage students in budget processes and strategic planning.
3. Establish avenues for mentorship and shadowing for students at all levels who are exploring career paths in fields in which they are underrepresented (eg: women in the trades, BIPOC in executive leadership or local government).
4. Target professional development in alternative energy technologies to existing contractors to grow their skills and experience.
5. Increase opportunities for underserved youth in Junior Leadership Programs geared towards photonic, aviation, and manufacturing sectors.

Goal 4. Increase wrap-around support and resources available to students experiencing homelessness.

1. Partner with local schools and universities to assess the needs of affected students and assist with support delivery.
2. Distribute materials to educators around the prevalence of homelessness, resources to support students and families, and the intersectionality of this issue.
3. Partner with educators and schools to build a coordinated strategy to address homelessness.



CHILDCARE + YOUTH PROGRAMMING

Childcare and youth programs are high-quality, affordable, and accessible.

In Bozeman's 2021 Equity Indicators Report, early childhood care and education was identified as a large or moderate need across all demographic subgroups. An April 2023 [article](#) published by Bozeman radio station *The Moose* ran with the headline, "How on earth do Bozeman families afford preschool or daycare?" In addition to affordability, availability is limited. The current number of licensed childcare providers and the number of available preschool and infant spots only meet about half of the demand for childcare in Gallatin County ([Child Care Connections](#)).

This plan envisions a City of Bozeman in which programming for children and youth is affordable, of excellent quality, inclusive of young people of varied backgrounds, and accessible to all. To this end, the plan's co-authors have identified the following goals: reducing barriers for underserved children, increasing program capacity, increasing program and provider subsidies, and recruiting and retaining quality staff.

CHILDCARE + YOUTH PROGRAMMING GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal 1. Reduce barriers to out-of-school opportunities and programs for underserved children.

1. Evaluate and address barriers around participation in out-of-school programs, including transportation and cost.
2. Support participation in city programs and activities for families of children with disabilities.
3. Explore opportunities to integrate indigenous food systems, languages, and culture into summer and after school programs.

Goal 2. Increase capacity of after-school and summer programs.

1. Perform an equity impact analysis of the city's enrollment processes, level of subsidy, and scholarships for recreation programs and youth camps.
2. Establish and continue partnerships with governmental and non-profit organizations for free use of space access, subsidies, and other mechanisms to support youth programming within Gallatin Valley.
3. Develop a quick response plan for providing childcare in the case of emergency school closure or other community emergencies.

Goal 3. Increase subsidy for childcare programs and providers.

1. Lobby for additional local, state, and federal funding/subsidy of quality childcare.

Goal 4. Recruit, develop, and retain quality staff.

1. Support efforts to recruit multilingual and multicultural staff for recreational programming.
2. Implement a mentorship and training program for youth who want to work as future recreation/camp leaders.
3. Spotlight the value and contributions of child care and youth programming employees through a communications campaign.



ECONOMIC SECURITY

A thriving economy offers readily available living-wage jobs and fair work environments.

Bozeman's unemployment rate was just 1.8% in September 2023, but this is just one piece of the overall economic picture. In the words of a stakeholder in the 2021 Equity Indicators Project, "I wish my salary kept up with cost of living expenses." This need for more livable wages given the high local cost of living continues to be prevalent in 2023, and the state's most recent [Labor Day](#) report affirmed this, stating that Bozeman and the surrounding area was one of the "most expensive areas of the state relative to income levels." Additionally, gender-based wage gaps continue to persist, as do race-based disparities in median household income.

This plan proposes moving Bozeman towards an economy that is equitable, inclusive, and thriving, by fostering fair and inclusive work environments, supporting and recognizing inclusive businesses and employers, expanding access to city contracts and funding for local businesses, and supporting the growing Hispanic and Latino workforce.

ECONOMIC SECURITY GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

GOAL 1: Serve as a model for fostering fair and inclusive work environments.

1. Introduce a Minority and Women-Owned Business criteria into the city's RFP scoring process.
2. Bolster guidance and accountability measures for city vendors in adhering to: The city's Non-Discrimination and Equal Pay requirements; Federal labor law as it relates to fair treatment of workers.
3. Continue to narrow the gender pay gap among city employees.

Goal 2. Support and recognize inclusive businesses and employers.

1. Distribute guidance on being a fully accessible workplace/employer for people with disabilities.
2. Develop an Inclusive Businesses Toolkit (LGBTQ+, Disability, BIPOC) and recognition program.

Goal 3. Expand access to city contracts and funding for local firms, businesses, and vendors.

1. Evaluate TIF funding eligibility criteria to:
 - *Target TIF benefits to communities that have been historically disadvantaged*
 - *Prioritize the development or preservation of workforce housing*
 - *Consciously and proactively work to reverse patterns of racial inequity in investment and development*
2. Provide training on how to apply for city contracts/become a city vendor and connect experienced city vendors with small business owners to subcontract and gain experience.

Goal 4. Support the growing Hispanic + Latino workforce to our economy and community.

1. Support the Montana Compact on Immigration.
2. Partner with local financial institutions to provide access to banking and lending opportunities for Hispanic + Latino workers.



COMMUNITY RESILIENCY

Access to community spaces and resources fosters social connection, health, and resilience in a changing climate.

Individuals from all over the world come to the Gallatin Valley to appreciate its vast open spaces and natural resources. However, when it comes to resources for residents and employees, our city's most vulnerable residents disproportionately struggle to afford basic utilities and bear the brunt of the effects of extreme weather and climate change most deeply. The human resources offered by the diversity of identities and experiences of our city staff and residents are also not yet fully appreciated.

This plan proposes to create a more equitable and inclusive Bozeman in this area by increasing knowledge and use of resources for underserved communities, recognizing and celebrating diversity among city staff and the community at large, responding to climate change and extreme weather's disproportionate impact on vulnerable community members, and alleviating the utility cost burden for low-income residents.

COMMUNITY RESILIENCY GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal 1. Increase knowledge and use of resources for underserved communities.

1. Coordinate to develop shared platforms and spaces for underserved communities to connect with resources and service providers and share information about meeting individual and community needs.

Goal 2. Recognize and celebrate diversity among city staff and community at large.

1. Actively support events like Juneteenth, ADA Month, and Indigenous People's Day and learning opportunities for the broader community on equity issues
2. Evaluate city employee engagement through an intersectional lens.

Goal 3. Respond to the disproportionate impacts to vulnerable community members due to climate change and extreme weather.

1. Develop emergency preparedness programs that:
 - a. *Ensure multilingual communication and outreach during extreme weather events (cold, heat, flooding, smoke/fire)*
 - b. *Develop policies for employers to mitigate impacts of extreme heat and wildfire smoke/poor air quality for people who work or live outside*
 - c. *Establish guidance for safe, accessible, ADA compliant, and inclusive use of alternative facilities*
 - d. *Identify ways to provide food access during supply chain disruptions*
2. Work with partners to ensure investments in the urban tree canopy are equitably distributed across neighborhoods.

Goal 4. Alleviate utility cost burden for low-income residents.

1. Support home energy efficient and weatherization for low-income residents through:
 - [Assistance programs, rebates and incentives for upgrades and improvements](#)
 - *Installation of heat pump water heaters*
 - [Solar for All](#) programs
 - *Outreach about how to improve indoor air quality during wildfire smoke events*
2. Incorporate water equity considerations into the city's Water/Wastewater Rate Study and its implementation.

Goal 5. Prioritize food access for low-income communities.

1. Work with partners to improve access to healthy local food and nutrition programs through the sharing and celebration of cultural and indigenous foods.



COMMUNITY SAFETY + CIVIC HEALTH

Local government and major institutions prioritize safety, inclusion, and representation.

Bozeman's inclusive city review process began in 2020 in the context of national calls for action to address violence against Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) and the roles that the policies, training, and frameworks of local governments play in the same. During the 2023 equity and inclusion planning process, rebuilding of trust between city government, police, and marginalized groups was identified as an important ongoing process. The City realizes that equity and inclusion are not one-time projects but ongoing work to ensure that all can truly belong in Bozeman. As the City looks to continue embedding equity- and inclusion-based policies, practices, and programs into the fabric of its existence, this section of the plan elaborates how that will come about.

This plan proposes a more equitable and inclusive City of Bozeman in the areas of community safety and civic health by creating an organizational structure to sustain and grow Belonging in Bozeman efforts, deepening engagement with underserved communities, addressing language barriers, ensuring city staff and law enforcement demographics reflect the city, elevating equity in decision-making processes and policy development, providing ongoing training, and promoting transparency and open communication between the City, Police Department, and community.

COMMUNITY SAFETY + CIVIC HEALTH GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal 1. Create organizational structure to sustain and grow Belonging in Bozeman efforts.

1. Create a new staff position, a dedicated budget, and an outline of how this position will fit and grow within the organization to advance the work of Belonging in Bozeman.
2. Retain interdepartmental Belonging in Bozeman committee with representation from City of Bozeman departments and update the committee charter.
3. Continue to convene external partners to implement the Belonging in Bozeman Plan.
4. Create a full time position to serve as ADA Coordinator.

Goal 2. Deepen engagement with underserved communities.

1. Identify funding, resources, and partners to develop a Civic Academy program to create a pipeline of talented, connected, and diverse staff, advisory board members, elected officials and non-profit leaders.
2. Evaluate and formalize the Community Liaison roles, for example: Hire a part-time Disability Community Liaison and a full-time Bozeman PD Community Liaison.
3. Establish a Community Engagement Compensation Policy that outlines ways in which community members who face barriers to participation may receive compensation for providing input on city initiatives.
4. Foster relationships with student organizations at MSU to reduce barriers to accessing community spaces and events.

Goal 3. Address language barriers to local government services and public engagement processes.

1. Implement on-demand interpretation services and train frontline city staff in utilizing them.
2. Develop and implement a comprehensive Language Access Plan.
3. Consider multilingual learning opportunities (language classes/training) and benefits for multilingual staff (add-pay for multilingual staff in qualifying languages).

Goal 4. Ensure city staff and law enforcement demographics reflect at minimum the demographics of the community.

1. Evaluate advertising and recruitment strategies to reach more diverse applicant pools.
2. Update City of Bozeman Hiring Practices Policy.
3. Continue to review minimum qualifications in Class Specifications.
4. Track the factors that contribute to employee turnover, candidate withdrawals, and rejections of offers.
5. Create a Second Chance Background Screening Process.

Goal 5. Elevate equity in city decision-making processes and policy development.

1. Develop an Equity Impacts decision-making tool and train elected officials, advisory board members, and staff in its use.
2. Establish a Disability/Accessibility Advisory Board that meets quarterly and as needed to provide guidance on accessibility and design of city facilities, policy, and programs.
3. Build staff capacity and resources needed to broaden communications and engagement in the city budget development process.
4. Neutralize gendered language in city policies and municipal code.

Goal 6. Provide high-quality, ongoing, and relevant training to all city staff and decision-makers.

1. Establish a budget and menu of annual Governing for Racial Equity training for city staff (including elected officials and advisory board members; department directors and managers/supervisors).
2. Promote the exchange of knowledge between City of Bozeman staff, Bozeman PD, and local community leaders on topics such as: De-escalation, implicit bias, and bystander intervention; Mental Health First Aid; LGBTQ+ Everyday Allies; Know Your Rights; Disability awareness and etiquette training for first responders).

Goal 7. Promote transparency, open communication, and responsiveness between the City, Police Department, and the community.

1. Develop standard procedures to ensure timely communications and response to address incidents of hate in the community.
2. Provide city staff and leadership with media training on the city's community engagement framework and share learning opportunities with community partners.

*To view the full plan in workbook format, including **priority level, organizational leads + partners, resources needed, metrics, and progress**, please refer to Appendix B.*

Community Liaison Report Summaries

As we stated when we began this planning project, the Equity Indicators Report found that not everyone has equal access to the opportunities or resources they need in order to thrive in Bozeman. This reflects a common theme in equity and inclusion assessments across the country: that different people may experience the same place in a profoundly different manner, especially when considering groups that are often marginalized, underrepresented, or under-resourced. People of all identities have been important participants in the civic life of Bozeman for hundreds of years. That has continued to be true for this process, and highlighted below are the perspectives of several communities within the larger Bozeman community.

Community Liaisons were hired as paid city staff members for the duration of this project and played an instrumental role in bringing more voices from the community to this effort. Liaisons hosted and participated in community chats, amplified messages and engaged their networks in providing input, and incorporated their expertise and lived experience into crafting the goals and recommendations of the plan. Complete Community Liaison reports can be found at engage.bozeman.net/belonging.

Jhennifer Cifuentes is a healthcare professional in Bozeman whose years of experience have informed her focus on health & well-being recommendations of the plan. As a Community Liaison, Jhennifer supported a bilingual Community Chat held with Spanish-speaking community members. Attendees shared their stories of working hard to support their families, build community, and learn English. Issues they face include employment discrimination, wage theft and lack of access to healthcare and reliable transportation. Jhennifer then helped convene partner organizations in the health & well-being topic area to discuss how to elevate the need for more support and coordination across organizations to address issues like language access raised by the community.

The results of her work are reflected in Health & Wellbeing recommendations under Goals #2 and #4.

Kristen Newman is a local disability advocate and Certified ADA Coordinator who works as an ADA Accessibility Specialist with Ability Montana. Along with her Service Dog, Cricket, Kristen worked to understand existing gaps in policies and protocols at the City of Bozeman and organized and facilitated three Community Chats. She successfully worked on a mayoral proclamation to proclaim July as Americans with Disabilities Month in the City of Bozeman. Kristen advanced the input from the community by working with city staff to develop actionable steps such as increasing funding allocations to provide comparable service for Galavan paratransit, addressing winter mobility issues on sidewalks and at transit stops, deepening engagement with people with disabilities, and prioritizing public and private accessibility through development codes, advisory bodies, staff positions, and community outreach.

Kristen's efforts are woven into each of the topic areas of the plan.

Chace McNinch is a talented local entertainer who has performed as a musician across the country and was recently named “Montana’s Funniest Human Person” in a local comedy competition. Chace’s work in Bozeman connects her to many diverse communities in settings that allow tough topics to unfold in approachable settings. As a proud Bozeman resident and member of the LGBTQ+ community, Chace hosted a pop-up activity at the 2023 Bozeman Pride Stroll, organized and facilitated two Community Chats, and gathered input through one-on-one conversations on how to create a more inclusive city for LGBTQ+ residents. Voices from her engagement efforts emphasized the need for safe community gathering spaces to connect with others and learn about resources, recognize and support local businesses who are welcoming to all, foster opportunities and policies that build trust between local government, law enforcement, and marginalized communities, as well as invest in affordable housing solutions at the local and state level. *The results of Chace’s efforts are reflected in the Housing, Community Resiliency, and Community Safety & Civic Health topic areas.*



Chace (right) hosting her community chat with members of Bozeman’s LGBTQ+ community.

What's Next

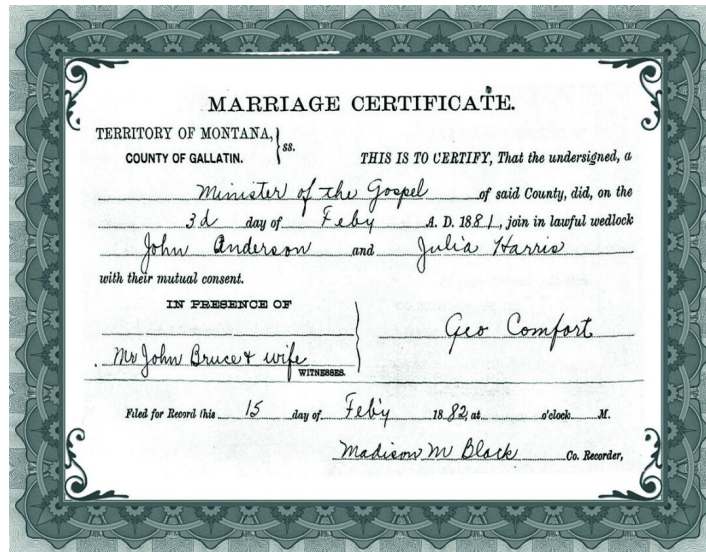
The above section outlined the **what** of the Equity & Inclusion plan: the goals to realize the vision, and the recommendations to achieve the goals. Next comes the **how** and the **who**. The full plan, presented in an implementation workbook in Appendix B, includes categories that address **organizational leads** for each recommendation and partners who will collaborate, **priority levels** and corresponding timeline for completion, **resources** needed to undertake the recommendation, and **metrics for tracking progress**.

This plan is a 3-5 year plan, which means it will be updated at least every five years as the contexts and needs of our community change. Each year, the City of Bozeman will provide an update to the public and the City Commission on the progress of implementing the plan. Community partners and lead organizations will help provide insight into their work to inform annual progress updates.

You can stay in the know about how this work will unfold on the city's website at engage.bozeman.net/belonging.

Conclusion

On February 3, 1881, [John Anderson and Julia Harris](#), two early Black settlers of Bozeman, were married in Gallatin County. Both were born into slavery elsewhere and arrived in Bozeman by the early 1870s. Their marriage certificate notes that they were “join[ed] in lawful wedlock...with their mutual consent.”



(source: Bozeman Magazine)

With their mutual consent.

Two formerly enslaved individuals found, in Bozeman, a place that valued and affirmed their personhood, a place where the government noted that their will as free people was essential to their union and their forward movement in their life together.

Bozeman in 2023 is still a city that deeply values and affirms individual freedom and personhood. And, like the Anderson-Harris marriage, individuals in our city come together to create forward movement in their collective lives, *with their mutual consent*.

With the commitment and *mutual consent* of Bozeman’s organizations, individuals, and government bodies, it is our deepest hope and aim that the vision outlined in this Equity and Inclusion Plan will become reality.

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Appendix B

Complete Belonging in Bozeman Plan

Implementation Workbook

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HOUSING | *Housing is available, affordable, accessible and safe.*

Goal 1. Develop a coordinated strategy to address homelessness in the Bozeman area					
RECOMMENDATIONS	Priority	Lead Org + Partners	Resources needed + notes	Metric	Progress
1. Identify and prioritize Housing First approaches to address housing instability and homelessness	#1	City of Bozeman, HRDC , One Valley's Regional Housing Coalition	Staff time, partner participation in HUD Consolidated Plan development	White paper/report published and incorporated into strategy to address homelessness	Not yet started
2. Support partner organizations by funding transitional and emergency housing initiatives and programs	#2	City of Bozeman, HRDC, Family Promise , Haven	City generals funds allocated via non-profit grant award process	Dollars allocated each year to housing	In-progress; Ongoing
3. Work with partners to leverage creative funding mechanisms, incentives, existing assets to increase long term affordable housing supply and housing preservation for people earning below 60% of AMI (Federal funding, LIHTC, TIF, Community Land Trusts, Community Housing Fund, land banking, city-owned land etc.)	#1	HRDC, City of Bozeman, Headwaters Community Housing Trust , Family Promise, Haven, Local lenders, One Valley's Regional Housing Coalition	City staff support and collaboration on projects, grant opportunities, HUD Consolidated Plan development, political support from local, state officials	Number of units produced for people earning below 60% AMI (MT data from NLIHC illustrates need at different income levels)	In-progress; Ongoing
Goal 2. Reduce displacement of residents who work and go to school in Bozeman but cannot afford to live in Bozeman					
RECOMMENDATIONS	Priority	Lead Org + Partners	Resources needed + notes	Metric	Progress
1. Evaluate city employee housing cost burden and consider options for employee housing assistance	#2	City of Bozeman	HR staff time/potential outside consultants to survey staff, propose options with cost estimates, examples from other communities and program implementation guidance	Report shared with City Management	Not yet started

2. Convene local partners to explore the potential for co-operative housing models	#3	City of Bozeman, NeighborWorks MT , HRDC, Bozeman Tenants United , local landlords, North Missoula Community Development Corporation	Staff time, coordination meetings, align with equity and engagement priorities of HUD Consolidated Plan	Create partner list, host partner meeting	Not yet started
3. Strengthen coordination with MSU and partnerships with the Office of Off Campus Student Life, student housing developers and property management companies	#3	City of Bozeman, MSU Office of Off Campus Student Life	Staff time, support from organizational administration/leadership	Create partner list, host partner meeting	Not yet started
Goal 3. Promote aging in place and universally accessible residential development					
RECOMMENDATIONS	Priority	Lead Org + Partners	Resources needed + notes	Metric	Progress
1. Conduct an educational workshop for design, construction, and real estate professionals on <i>universal design</i> practices and <i>adaptable dwellings</i> within residential developments	#3	Ability MT , City of Bozeman	Funding for developing and implementing resources and workshops	Host workshop, share materials and resources on city and partner websites	Not yet started
2. Codify development incentives for design that enables aging in place and universal accessibility beyond the requirements of the building code, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Establish requirements for the number of adaptable units in developments that utilize city Community Housing Funds B. Amend division 38.430 of the UDC to include an option in the novel public benefits section to include universal design best practices and incentives for elevators in multistory buildings 	#2	City of Bozeman, Ability MT, AARP Livable Communities	Staff time, potential consultant assistance, City Commission support, support from the development community, public	Code amendment adopted	Not yet started

Goal 4. Increase community knowledge in housing issues					
RECOMMENDATIONS	Priority	Lead Org + Partners	Resources needed + notes	Metric	Progress
1. Host workshops on the Montana Tenant Act and Fair Housing Act for landlords and tenants, becoming a Housing Choice Voucher Landlord, and Resident-owned community models	#2	City of Bozeman, HRDC, Neighborworks MT, Montana Fair Housing 501c3 , Bozeman Tenants United	Staff time, coordination meetings to develop resources, workshop objectives, plan and host workshops	Host up to 3 workshops on the different topics recommended	Not yet started
2. Develop and distribute materials to support understanding of community housing approaches, programs, and terms such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Median Income and how affordability in housing development is defined • Housing subsidy and financing programs and terms such as LIHTC, TIF, deed restrictions, etc. • Issues around local control, state legislation, and local incentive strategies – what can and can't we do at the local level and why? • Rental, mortgage, and down payment assistance programs • Short term rental regulations • Urban camping regulations • Definition of homelessness (McKinney Vento, HUD) 	#3	City of Bozeman, HRDC, NeighborWorks MT, Montana Fair Housing 501c3, Bozeman Tenants United, One Valley's Regional Housing Coalition	Staff time, coordination meetings	Share materials and resources on city and partner websites	In-progress

Goal 5. Support and defend local housing solutions at the state legislature					
RECOMMENDATIONS	Priority	Lead Org + Partners	Resources needed + notes	Metric	Progress
<p>1. Identify and pursue local and state revenue streams for the creation of affordable housing and housing assistance programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available to residents regardless of immigration status or english proficiency (local) • Dedicated mills (local) • Sales tax (state) • Circuit breaker in the 70th MT Legislative session to target relief to homeowners on a fixed income and renters (state) • Preserves the ability to use Tax Increment Financing as a tool for affordable housing (state) 	#1	City of Bozeman, HRDC, Bienvenidos a Gallatin Valley , Montana Housing Coalition , MT Infrastructure Coalition , MT League of Cities and Towns , state legislators, state-wide TIF administrators, Chamber of Commerce , One Valley's Regional Housing Coalition	Staff time, coordination meetings, funding for lobbying efforts	Increase local and state funding sources for affordable housing creation and assistance programs	In-progress

TRANSPORTATION | *A variety of transportation options exist to meet mobility needs.*

Goal 1. Expand reliable public transit and paratransit services, prioritizing winter accessibility					
RECOMMENDATIONS	Priority	Lead Org + Partners	Resources needed + notes	Metric	Progress
1. Leverage new revenue streams to support increased frequency of fixed-route transit and paratransit service, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paid on-street parking • Future UTD ballot measure • Federal grants 	#1	HRDC/ Streamline and Galavan , City of Bozeman	Political support from local and state officials, voter support, city and partner staff time and coordination for grant applications and administration	Local ballot initiatives proposed/passed, Amount of new revenue sources, dollars allocated each year, increase in frequency of these services	In-progress; Ongoing
2. Ensure that city funds contribute to comparable service of paratransit to fixed-route transit operations	#1	City of Bozeman, HRDC/Streamline, UTD Board , MPO , ASMSU	City and partner staff time and coordination	Proportion of city funding dedicated to fixed route vs paratransit is increased and reported to support staff/operations/capital	Not yet started
3. Develop standards and formalize processes for ensuring bus stops are well lit, comfortable, safe for women and girls, shaded from sun, and accessible to riders in the winter	#2	City of Bozeman, HRDC/Streamline, UTD Board, MPO, ASMSU, CEDAW Task Force	Staff time; Revisit MOU between city and HRDC that outlines responsibility to maintain bus stops (signage, snow removal, etc.)	Creation of standards and of added capacity needed to adhere to standards and processes	In-progress; Ongoing
4. Pilot a “Snow Angels” program to connect volunteers and people with disabilities, older adults who are unable to remove snow from their sidewalks	#2	City of Bozeman; MSU Office of Student Engagement ; Greek Organizations ; County Community Service Workers program	Staff time; Volunteers	Pilot program implemented	In-progress
5. Prioritize snow and ice removal at transit stops	#1	City of Bozeman, HRDC	Staff time to update MOU; Additional staff capacity to respond to calls and maintain locations; potential coordination with Snow Angels program	MOU updated	Not yet started

Goal 2: Center the most vulnerable road users in transportation infrastructure design					
RECOMMENDATIONS	Priority	Lead Org + Partners	Resources needed + notes	Metric	Progress
1. Develop and implement an Equity Impacts Tool to utilize in Transportation Planning and train staff, directors, and decision makers in this approach	#2	City of Bozeman	Staff time; training (eg: use Equity Impacts Tool to help prioritize major capital investments that require voter approval like the Bozeman Community Center, or are multi-year infrastructure investments like Fowler or Kagy Ave)	Tool and training developed and piloted	Not yet started
2. Mitigate implicit bias and enhance freedom of movement in transportation design and behavior, for example: A. Update the city's Complete Streets Resolution with an equity component	#3	City of Bozeman	Staff time	Complete Streets Resolution updated, integrated into new project/reconstruction processes and designs	Not yet started
3. Retrofit of bicycle lanes to separate vehicles and bicyclists	#2	City of Bozeman	Staff time; Budget for technical assistance/ consulting may be needed; Included in process to develop bicycle master plan	Bicycle Master Plan adopted, retrofits included in CIP	Not yet started
4. Strengthen partnership with Gallatin County and Montana Department of Transportation for safety improvements on streets not within the City's jurisdiction	#2	City of Bozeman, MDI , Gallatin County, MPO, MT League of Cities and Towns	City and partner staff time	On-going meetings with Gallatin County and MDT	In-progress; Ongoing

<p>5. Leverage expertise of the disability community to educate design and building professionals on accessible community design, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Seasonal (summer/winter) inclusive interdisciplinary walking audits with members of the disability community, contractors, engineers, and others to assess for ADA compliance and foster co-design of built environment B. Develop a Sidewalk Audit process for city staff to implement C. Conduct parks accessibility audits and develop standards 	#2	City of Bozeman, Ability MT	City and partner staff time and coordination; Budget for technical assistance/ consulting and implementation of design changes may be needed	Development of Mobility, Sidewalk, and Accessibility Audit Tools, audit reports and evaluation process for design changes	Not yet started
Goal 3: Prioritize equity in parking management practices					
RECOMMENDATIONS	Priority	Lead Org + Partners	Resources needed + notes	Metric	Progress
1. Develop a public outreach and education campaign about the proper use of accessible parking spaces and access aisles	#1	Ability MT, City of Bozeman	Staff to develop educational programming and tools, and coordinate public outreach	Educational materials on City's website	Not yet started
2. Improve enforcement and responsiveness of PD/Parking Enforcement Officers when vehicles are parked unlawfully in accessible spaces, as per city ordinance	#3	City of Bozeman	Staff time and capacity to enforce and respond	Increased amount of citations by PD/Parking Enforcement Officers for this issue	Not yet started
3. Ensure accessible parking spaces are provided in areas where the city does not require the provision of on-site parking	#2	City of Bozeman	Staff time	Adoption of process for review during development and retrofit of streets	Not yet started
4. Use an Equity Impacts Tool to evaluate parking fines and fees, towing and impounding practices, and allocation of enforcement resources	#2	City of Bozeman	Staff time; training (eg: use Equity Impacts Tool to help evaluate areas with high amounts of parking citations, towing and impounding occurrences, audit of existing fines and fees for citations, and prioritize allocation of enforcement funds, staff, and other resources)	Tool piloted by PD and Parking Division	Not yet started

HEALTH & WELLBEING | *Healthcare services and health programs that address physical, mental, and sexual & reproductive wellbeing are available, accessible and inclusive.*

GOAL 1: Support continuing education for health professionals on working with underserved communities					
RECOMMENDATIONS	Priority	Lead Org + Partners	Resources needed + notes	Metric	Progress
1. Provide opportunities for health professionals to participate in training on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthcare Allies training Disability identity, wellness, etiquette Working with LEP (Limited English Proficiency) patients 	#2	Bridgercare , Ability MT, MT Language Services , GCCHD, Clinic + hospital partners	Coordination meetings to discuss scope/cost with potential trainers and organizations receiving training; training budget; staff time	Number of trainings hosted by trainers; number of staff trained at various organizations	In-progress
2. Increase access to mental health supports and training for health professionals and first responders	#3	City of Bozeman, Gallatin Behavioral Health Coalition (GBHC), local law enforcement, Clinic + hospital partners	Centralized directory of trainers/training is being developed by GBHC training budget; staff time, Employee Assistance Programs specific to mental health	Directory of trainers/trainings created and shared across orgs, number of trainings hosted	In-process, Ongoing
GOAL 2: Increase coordination between health agencies to reduce barriers to healthcare services and programs					
RECOMMENDATIONS	Priority	Lead Org + Partners	Resources needed + notes	Metric	Progress
1. Coordinate across organizations to centralize and share data to better characterize health disparities and social needs in underserved communities	#2	GBHC, Bienvenidos a Gallatin Valley - MCC, Proyecto Salud , GCCHD , GBHC, HRDC, Clinics + hospitals	Staff time; data sharing agreements; coordination meetings with GBHC, Help Center, Bienvenidos/MCC	Number of organizations participating in data coordination efforts	In-progress; Ongoing
2. Improve referral and case management processes across health care and social service providers to connect patients/clients with community resources	#2	GCCHD, GBHC, Proyecto Salud, Bienvenidos a Gallatin Valley, Clinics + hospitals, social service providers	Coordination across organizations to utilize referral tools	Increased utilization of referral and case management tools	In-progress; Ongoing

GOAL 3: Support and implement proven health education and healthcare access efforts					
RECOMMENDATIONS	Priority	Lead Org + Partners	Resources needed + notes	Metric	Progress
1. Expand the use of harm reduction approaches to treat substance use disorder	#3	CHP , Clinics + hospitals, GCCHD, Help Center , GBHC	Continuation of Medication-Assisted Treatment options, Naloxone distribution, Coordination with local law enforcement; alignment with GBHC's Strategic Plan ; State Opioid Response Program	Info about harm reduction approaches posted on websites, 2-1-1 directory	In-progress; Ongoing
2. Increase telehealth offerings and publicly available telehealth spaces for clients (e.g. private telehealth rooms in libraries and other community spaces)	#3	Bozeman Public Library	Staff time to develop and post info about flexible use of these spaces, Open Door at BPL	Info posted at locations and on websites	Not yet started
3. Support access to reproductive healthcare and comprehensive sexual education	#1	Bridgercare, Proyecto Salud, CEDAW Task Force	Collaboration across organizations, avenues for delivery of education/materials	Additional avenues created for curriculum/materials	Not yet started
GOAL 4: Expand meaningful language access in clinical settings and in health promotion programs					
RECOMMENDATIONS	Priority	Lead Org + Partners	Resources needed + notes	Metric	Progress
1. Provide on-demand interpretation in clinical and public health settings, train providers and professionals in its use, and translate signage and documents	#1	Clinics + hospitals, GCCHD, MT Language Services	Funding for tools and technology needed; training for staff	Number of organizations publicizing language accessibility and effectively providing language access	In-progress; Ongoing
2. Partner with organizations to reach underserved communities through mobile/pop-up health clinics and health education and promotion programs	#1	Proyecto Salud, Clinics + hospitals, Bienvenidos a Gallatin Valley, Bridgercare, GCCHD, Cover Montana	Staff time to participate/support Health Fairs, Community Health Worker programs, "Pop-up" clinics	Number or organizations attending and supporting Health Fairs	In-progress; Ongoing

EDUCATION | *Learning opportunities allow for full participation and foster growth and success.*

GOAL 1: Expand opportunities for multilingual learners of all ages					
RECOMMENDATIONS	Priority	Lead Org + Partners	Resources needed + notes	Metric	Progress
1. Increase resources for multilingual education	#2	BSD7	Potential grant funding	New staff positions	In-progress; Ongoing
2. Provide meaningful language access to school services, online, and print materials to provide LEP families with the information they need	#1	BSD7, Thrive , MT Language Services	Potential grant funding	Materials are translated, professional interpretation is available	In-progress; Ongoing
3. Partner with local educators, organizations, and employers to provide English learning opportunities for Spanish-speaking residents	#1	World Language Initiative , Bozeman Adult Learning Center , Bozeman Public Library, Bienvenidos a Gallatin Valley, <i>English Para Todos</i>	Classroom space, coordination meetings, continued grant funding	Classes are held	In-Progress, Ongoing
GOAL 2: Increase recruitment and resources to support higher education for underserved communities					
RECOMMENDATIONS	Priority	Lead Org + Partners	Resources needed + notes	Metric	Progress
1. Continue to foster professional development opportunities for educators that emphasize LGBTQ+ allyship, cultural humility, supporting students with disabilities, and inclusive learning environments	#2	MSU	Event space, coordination meetings	Professional development courses are hosted, see progress in MSU's annual Diversity Report	In-progress, Ongoing

2. Support growth in resources for recruitment, retention, and graduation of American Indian & Alaska Native students at MSU	#2	MSU's American Indian/Alaska Native Student Success Services , Gear Up , Tribal colleges & universities	Staff support	AI/AN identifying student enrollment at MSU	In-progress, Ongoing
GOAL 3: Prioritize the creation of "cradle-to-career" educational systems by investing in sector-based strategies and career pathways					
RECOMMENDATIONS	Priority	Lead Org + Partners	Resources needed + notes	Metric	Progress
1. Prioritize funding mechanisms to support early literacy interventions for 4-year olds, targeting families earning low-incomes, experiencing housing instability, or limited english proficiency	#2	BSD7/ Bozeman Reads , HRDC + Head Start , Preschools	Additional funding to cover the costs of certification/ standards needed for the co-enrollment process with Head Start programs	Increased literacy heading into Kindergarten	In-progress; Ongoing
2. Continue to engage students in budget processes and strategic planning	#2	BSD7, ASMSU	Staff/Administration time, Engage students in the development of school budgets, and strategic planning	Meeting is held or information is presented	In-progress; Ongoing
3. Establish avenues for mentorship and shadowing for students at all levels who are exploring career paths in fields in which they are underrepresented (eg: women in the trades, BIPOC in executive leadership or local government)	#1	City of Bozeman, MSU/ Gallatin College , Chamber of Commerce	Coordination meetings	Mentor connections are established	Not yet started
4. Target professional development in alternative energy technologies to existing contractors to grow their skills and experience	#1	City of Bozeman, MSU/ Gallatin College , SWMBIA , Chamber of Commerce	Coordination meetings, networking meetings	Enrollment from local contractors increases	Not yet started

5. Increase opportunities for underserved youth in Junior Leadership Programs geared towards photonic, aviation, and manufacturing sectors	#1	City of Bozeman, MSU/Gallatin College, 4-H , Chamber of Commerce	Staff time, Coordination meetings	Increased number of youth in leadership programs geared towards photonic, aviation, manufacturing sectors	Not yet started
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GOAL 4: Increase wrap-around support and resources available to students experiencing homelessness

RECOMMENDATIONS	Priority	Lead Org + Partners	Resources needed + notes	Metric	Progress
1. Partner with local schools and universities to assess the needs of students experiencing homelessness and assist with support delivery	#2	BSD7, MSU, HRDC + Blueprint , local and state McKinney Vento staff	Staff time	Available data is compiled, Report is shared	Not yet started
2. Distribute materials to educators around the prevalence of homelessness, resources to support students and families, and the intersectionality of this issue	#2	HRDC + Blueprint; BSD7, MSU	Staff time	Resources are distributed	In-progress, Ongoing
3. Partner with educators and schools to build a coordinated strategy to address homelessness	#1	City of Bozeman, BSD7, HRDC, MSU	Staff time	Meetings are held	Not yet started

CHILDCARE + YOUTH PROGRAMMING | *Childcare and youth programs are high quality, affordable, and accessible.*

GOAL 1. Reduce barriers to out-of-school opportunities and programs for underserved children					
RECOMMENDATIONS	Priority	Lead Org + Partners	Resources needed + notes	Metric	Progress
1. Evaluate and address barriers around participation in out-of-school programs, including transportation and cost	#2	City of Bozeman, Eagle Mount , Bienvenidos a Gallatin Valley, YMCA , local sports clubs and camps	Staff time, funding	Increased participation in out-of-school programs from those who face barriers	Not yet started
2. Support participation in city programs and activities for families with children with disabilities	#2	City of Bozeman, Eagle Mount, Ability MT	Staff time	Increased participation by children w/ disabilities	In-progress; Ongoing
3. Explore opportunities to integrate indigenous food systems, languages, and culture into summer and after school programs	#1	City of Bozeman, YMCA, Native American Studies faculty, staff, students	Staff time; coordination meetings	Programs have indigenous elements embedded	Not yet started
GOAL 2: Increase capacity of after school and summer programs					
RECOMMENDATIONS	Priority	Lead Org + Partners	Resources needed + notes	Metric	Progress
1. Perform an equity impact analysis of the city's enrollment processes, level of subsidy, and scholarships for recreation programs and youth camps	#1	City of Bozeman	Staff time	City has equity impact analysis report	Not yet started
2. Establish and continue partnerships with governmental and non-profit organizations for free use of space access, subsidies, and other mechanisms to support youth programming within Gallatin Valley	#1	Greater Gallatin United Way, YMCA, City of Bozeman, BYEP	Staff time	Space has little to no charge for partners	Not yet started

3. Develop a quick response plan for providing childcare in the case of emergency school closure or other community emergency	#1	City of Bozeman, YMCA, Greater Gallatin United Way, Gallatin County Emergency Management	Staff time	MOU/Plan is developed	Not yet started
GOAL 3: Increase subsidy for childcare programs and providers					
RECOMMENDATIONS	Priority	Lead Org + Partners	Resources needed + notes	Metric	Progress
1. Lobby for additional local, state, and federal funding/subsidy of quality childcare	#1	City of Bozeman, Child Care Connections , Early Childhood Community Council , Greater Gallatin United Way, state legislators	Lobbyist, staff time, elected official support	Representatives attend and provide comment on bill hearings, write letters	Not yet started
GOAL 4: Recruit, develop, and retain quality staff					
RECOMMENDATIONS	Priority	Lead Org + Partners	Resources needed + notes	Metric	Progress
1. Support efforts to recruit multilingual and multicultural staff for recreational programming.	#1	City of Bozeman	Staff time	Share job postings with Bienvenidos/MCC	Not yet started
2. Implement a mentorship and training program for youth who want to work as future recreation/camp leaders	#1	City of Bozeman, BSD7, YMCA, MSU	Staff time	Meetings are held	Not yet started
3. Spotlight the value and contributions of child care and youth programming employees through a communications campaign	#2	City of Bozeman, Child Care Connections	Staff time	Communications campaign runs	Not yet started

ECONOMIC SECURITY | *A thriving economy offers readily available living-wage jobs and fair work environments.*

GOAL 1: Serve as a model for fostering fair and inclusive work environments					
RECOMMENDATIONS	Priority	Lead Org + Partners	Resources needed + notes	Metric	Progress
1. Introduce a Minority and Women-Owned Business criteria into the city's RFP scoring process	#2	City of Bozeman	Staff time; guidance from SBA on Disadvantaged Businesses and Women Owned Business programs	RFP criteria developed and included in RFP scoring template; guidance and info provided on city website	Not yet started
2. Bolster guidance and accountability measures for city vendors in adhering to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The city's Non-Discrimination and Equal Pay requirements Federal labor law as it relates to fair treatment of workers 	#1	City of Bozeman, CEDAW Task Force	Staff time	Update equal pay/non-discrimination affirmation that vendors sign to include additional resources and information regarding equal pay best practices and City of Bozeman's commitment to CEDAW on city website	Not yet started
3. Continue to narrow the gender pay gap among city employees	#1	City of Bozeman	Staff time; policies outlined in Res. 4601 and Res. 5169 (Sec. 1.E)	Annual pay equity report	In-progress; Ongoing
GOAL 2: Support and recognize inclusive businesses and employers					
RECOMMENDATIONS	Priority	Lead Org + Partners	Resources needed + notes	Metric	Progress
1. Distribute guidance on being a fully accessible workplace/employer for people with disabilities	#2	Ability MT, City of Bozeman; Downtown Bozeman Partnership ;	Staff time; coordination meetings	Guidance available online, shared by lead orgs and City of Bozeman	Not yet started

		One Valley Community Foundation			
2. Develop an Inclusive Businesses Toolkit (LGBTQ+, Disability, BIPOC) and recognition program	#2	City of Bozeman, Downtown Bozeman Partnership, Ability MT	Staff time; coordination meetings	Guidance available online, shared by lead orgs and City of Bozeman	Not yet started
GOAL 3: Expand access to city contracts and funding for local firms, businesses, and vendors					
RECOMMENDATIONS	Priority	Lead Org + Partners	Resources needed + notes	Metric	Progress
1. Evaluate TIF funding eligibility criteria to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target TIF benefits to communities that have been historically disadvantaged Prioritize the development or preservation of workforce housing Consciously and proactively work to reverse patterns of racial inequity in investment and development 	#3	City of Bozeman	Staff time; Consultant support	TIF criteria updated	Not yet started
2. Provide training on how to apply for city contracts and become a city vendor, connect experienced city vendors with small business owners to subcontract and gain experience	#3	City of Bozeman; Prospera	Staff time; coordination meetings; additional budget to host trainings/hire trainers	Guidance posted on city website; training hosted	Not yet started
GOAL 4: Support the growing Hispanic + Latino workforce to our economy and community					
RECOMMENDATIONS	Priority	Lead Org + Partners	Resources needed + notes	Metric	Progress
1. Support the Montana Compact on Immigration	#2	South North Nexus , Bienvenidos a Gallatin Valley	Support from organizations across Gallatin Valley, to learn more, visit the website .	Number of organizations supporting the compact	In-progress; Ongoing
2. Partner with local financial institutions to provide access to banking and lending opportunities for Hispanic + Latino workers	#2	Bienvenidos a Gallatin Valley; local banks and lenders	Staff time; coordination meetings	Resources developed for bank staff and immigrant workers	Not yet started

COMMUNITY RESILIENCY | *Access to community spaces and resources fosters social connection, health, and resilience in a changing climate.*

GOAL 1: Increase knowledge and use of resources for underserved communities					
RECOMMENDATIONS	Priority	Lead Org + Partners	Resources needed + notes	Metric	Progress
1. Coordinate to develop shared platforms and spaces for underserved communities to connect with resources and service providers, and share information about how to meet individual and community needs	#1	Help Center, 2-1-1, City of Bozeman, Bienvenidos, Rainbow Collective , MTREP , MSU DISC , Thrive, Ability MT, CEDAW Task Force	Staff time, coordination meetings	A resource sharing platform is developed, implemented, and maintained between partner organizations	In-progress, Ongoing
GOAL 2: Recognize and celebrate diversity among city staff and community at large					
RECOMMENDATIONS	Priority	Lead Org + Partners	Resources needed + notes	Metric	Progress
1. Actively support events like Juneteenth, ADA Month, and Indigenous People's Day and learning opportunities for the broader community on equity issues	#2	City of Bozeman, Gallatin County, Belonging in Big Sky , MSU DISC, Ability MT, CEDAW Task Force	Staff time, coordination meetings, funding for event development and promotion	Number of events supported, educational materials on City and partner organization websites	In-progress; Ongoing
2. Evaluate city employee engagement through an intersectional lens	#3	City of Bozeman	HR staff have begun development of survey	Survey complete and results are reported	In-progress
GOAL 3: Respond to the disproportionate impacts to vulnerable community members due to climate change and extreme weather					
RECOMMENDATIONS	Priority	Lead Org + Partners	Resources needed + notes	Metric	Progress
1. Develop emergency preparedness programs that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Ensure multilingual communication and outreach during extreme weather events (cold, heat, flooding, smoke/fire) 	#2	City of Bozeman, Gallatin County Emergency Management, Southwest MT Community Organizations Active in	Emergency and Risk Management staff position recommended in FY26 (Bozeman Fire), coordination meetings, budget request	Developed emergency preparedness/response management plan	Not yet started

B. Develop policies for employers to mitigate impacts of extreme heat and wildfire smoke/poor air quality for people who work or live outside		Disaster (COAD), HRDC, BSD7, GCCHD			
C. Establish guidance for safe, accessible, ADA compliant, and inclusive use of alternative facilities					
D. Identify ways to provide food access during supply chain disruptions					
2. Work with partners to ensure investments in the urban tree canopy are equitably distributed across neighborhoods	#2	City of Bozeman, Branch Out Bozeman initiative, local landscaping companies and nurseries	Staff time, coordination meetings, budget for tree plantings	Increased funding for tree plantings in low tree canopy areas	In-progress; Ongoing
GOAL 4: Alleviate utility cost burden for low-income residents					
RECOMMENDATIONS	Priority	Lead Org + Partners	Resources needed + notes	Metric	Progress
1. Support home energy efficient and weatherization for low-income residents through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistance programs, rebates and incentives for upgrades and improvements • Installation of heat pump water heaters • Solar for All programs • Outreach about how to improve indoor air quality during wildfire smoke events 	#1	City of Bozeman, HRDC, Gallatin College, MT DEQ, local and regional solar energy companies	Staff time, coordination meetings, funding; HRDC's weatherization program; Solar for All EPA grants	Quantity of energy efficient upgrades and weatherization improvements, incentives created, training and outreach conducted, and educational materials available on City's website and physical locations	In-progress; Ongoing
2. Incorporate water equity considerations into the city's Water/Wastewater Rate Study and its implementation	#1	City of Bozeman	Staff time, funding for consultation regarding water equity considerations	Water equity considerations incorporated and implemented in Water/Wastewater Rate Study	Not yet started
GOAL 5: Prioritize food access for low-income communities					
RECOMMENDATIONS	Priority	Lead Org + Partners	Resources needed + notes	Metric	Progress
1. Work with partners to improve access to healthy local food and nutrition programs through the sharing and celebration of cultural and indigenous foods.	#2	City of Bozeman, HRDC, BSD7, MSU, local food producers and non-profits	Staff time, coordination meetings, Library and HRDC's MarketPlace Teaching Kitchen	Events held and participation; resource information on City's website and physical locations	In-progress; Ongoing

COMMUNITY SAFETY + CIVIC HEALTH | *Local government and major institutions prioritize safety, inclusion, and representation.*

GOAL 1: Create organizational structure to sustain and grow Belonging in Bozeman efforts					
RECOMMENDATIONS	Priority	Lead Org + Partners	Resources needed + notes	Metric	Progress
1. Create a new staff position, dedicated budget, and an outline of how this position will fit and grow within the organization to advance the work of Belonging in Bozeman	#1	City of Bozeman	Staff time, FY25 budget recommendation	Staff position hired	Not yet started
2. Retain interdepartmental Belonging in Bozeman committee with representation from City of Bozeman departments and update the committee charter	#2	City of Bozeman	Staff time	Charter is updated	Not yet started
3. Continue to convene external partners to implement Belonging in Bozeman Plan	#1	City of Bozeman	Staff time, coordination meetings	Annual progress on recommendations reported	Not yet started
4. Create a full time position to serve as ADA Coordinator	#1	City of Bozeman	Staff time, FY25 budget recommendation	Staff position hired	Not yet started
GOAL 2: Deepen engagement with underserved communities					
RECOMMENDATIONS	Priority	Lead Org + Partners	Resources needed + notes	Metric	Progress
1. Identify funding, resources, and partners to develop a Civic Academy program to create a pipeline of talented, connected, and diverse staff, advisory board members, elected officials and non-profit leaders	#2	City of Bozeman, Forward Montana, MSU Extension's Local Government Center	Staff time; coordination meetings; potential grant funding	Grant/funding options identified, and program proposal developed	Not yet started
2. Evaluate and formalize the Community Liaison roles, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hire a part-time Disability Community Liaison Hire a full-time Bozeman PD Community Liaison 	#1	City of Bozeman	Staff time, recommendation in FY25-FY26 budget	Community Liaison report, staff positions hired	Not yet started

3. Establish a Community Engagement Compensation Policy that outlines ways in which community members who face barriers to participation may receive compensation for providing input on city initiatives	#2	City of Bozeman	Staff time, dedicated budget	Compensation policy adopted	Not yet started
4. Foster relationships with student organizations at MSU to reduce barriers to accessing community spaces and events	#3	City of Bozeman; MSU DISC, Disabled Student's Association	Staff time; coordination meetings	Community Engagement staff meets regularly with student leaders, DISC staff	Not yet started

GOAL 3: Address language barriers to local government services and public engagement processes

RECOMMENDATIONS	Priority	Lead Org + Partners	Resources needed + notes	Metric	Progress
1. Implement on-demand interpretation services and train frontline city staff in utilizing it	#1	City of Bozeman	Staff time; Training; Interdepartmental coordination	Number of customer-facing department staff trained and utilizing on-demand interpretation tools	In-progress, Ongoing
2. Develop and implement a comprehensive Language Access Plan	#2	City of Bozeman	Staff time; budget in FY25	Language Access Plan implemented	Not yet started
3. Consider multilingual learning opportunities (language classes/training) and benefits for multilingual staff (add-pay for multilingual staff in qualifying languages)	#3	City of Bozeman	Staff time; Identify qualifying languages and potential cost	Training implemented and policy proposed and implemented	Not yet started

GOAL 4: Ensure city staff and law enforcement reflect the diversity within our community

RECOMMENDATIONS	Priority	Lead Org + Partners	Resources needed + notes	Metric	Progress
1. Evaluate advertising and recruitment strategies to reach more diverse applicant pools	#2	City of Bozeman	Staff time	Report details the efficacy of strategies used	Not yet started
2. Update City of Bozeman Hiring Practices Policy	#2	City of Bozeman	Staff time	Updated Hiring Practices Policy established	In-progress; Ongoing

3. Continue to review minimum qualifications in Class Specifications	#3	City of Bozeman	Staff time	Education and experience requirements reviewed	In-progress; Ongoing
4. Track the factors that contribute to employee turnover, candidate withdrawals, rejection of offers	#2	City of Bozeman	Staff time	Data is collected	Not yet started
5. Create a Second Chance Background Screening Process	#3	City of Bozeman	Staff time	Screening tool and protocol is developed and implemented	Not yet started

GOAL 5: Elevate equity in city decision making processes and policy development

RECOMMENDATIONS	Priority	Lead Org + Partners	Resources needed + notes	Metric	Progress
1. Develop an Equity Impacts decision making tool and train elected officials, advisory board members, and staff in its use	#1	City of Bozeman, Government Alliance on Race & Equity (GARE), CEDAW Task Force	Staff time; Coordination meetings with GARE staff; Training and resources shared with community partners	Tool developed, training conducted, Tool is piloted for key projects (Transportation Master Plan, Recreation program enrollment/subsidy)	Not yet started
2. Establish a Disability/Accessibility Advisory Board that meets quarterly and as needed to provide guidance on accessibility and inclusive design of city facilities, policy, and programs	#3	City of Bozeman, Ability MT	Staff time (ADA Coordinator position to act as staff Liaison)	Board established	Not yet started
3. Build staff capacity and resources needed to broaden communications and engagement in the city budget development process	#3	City of Bozeman	Staff time	Community Engagement staff training, Community Engagement Plan developed in coordination with Finance + City Manager	Not yet started
4. Neutralize gendered language in city policies and municipal code	#3	City of Bozeman	Staff time	Ordinance passed	In-progress

GOAL 6: Provide high quality, ongoing, and relevant training to all city staff and decision makers

RECOMMENDATIONS	Priority	Lead Org + Partners	Resources needed + notes	Metric	Progress
1. Establish a budget and menu of annual Governing for Racial Equity training for city staff: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elected officials and advisory board members Department Directors and Managers/Supervisors All city staff 	#1	City of Bozeman	Training budget request; staff time	Number of people trained	In-progress
2. Promote the exchange of knowledge between City of Bozeman staff, Bozeman PD, and local community leaders and advocacy groups with community members on topics like: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> De-escalation, implicit bias, and bystander intervention Mental Health First Aid LGBTQ+ Everyday Allies Know Your Rights Disability awareness and etiquette training for first responders 	#1	City of Bozeman; Bridgercare; Community Connections; MT Legal Services ; Ability MT	Staff time; Coordination with PD for training schedule and budget	Number of trainings held for community members; Number of trainings held for staff	Not yet started
GOAL 7: Promote transparency, open communication, and responsiveness between the City, Police Department, and the community					
RECOMMENDATIONS	Priority	Lead Org + Partners	Resources needed + notes	Metric	Progress
1. Develop standard procedures to ensure timely communications and response to address incidents of hate in the community	#1	City of Bozeman	Staff time; Coordination between Communications & Engagement Manager, PD, City Manager, City Commission	Standard Operating Procedures developed	In-progress; On-going
2. Provide city staff and leadership with media training and training on the city's community engagement framework, share learning opportunities with community partners	#2	City of Bozeman	Staff time	Staff trained	Not yet started