

Bay Springs Visioning Plan

A visioning plan for the
City of Bay Springs, MS

2022



MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™
FRED CARL, JR. SMALL TOWN CENTER



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Fred Carl Jr. Small Town Center—2022

Bay Springs, Mississippi

Fred Carl Jr. Small Town Center

smalltowncenter.msstate.edu

Mississippi State University

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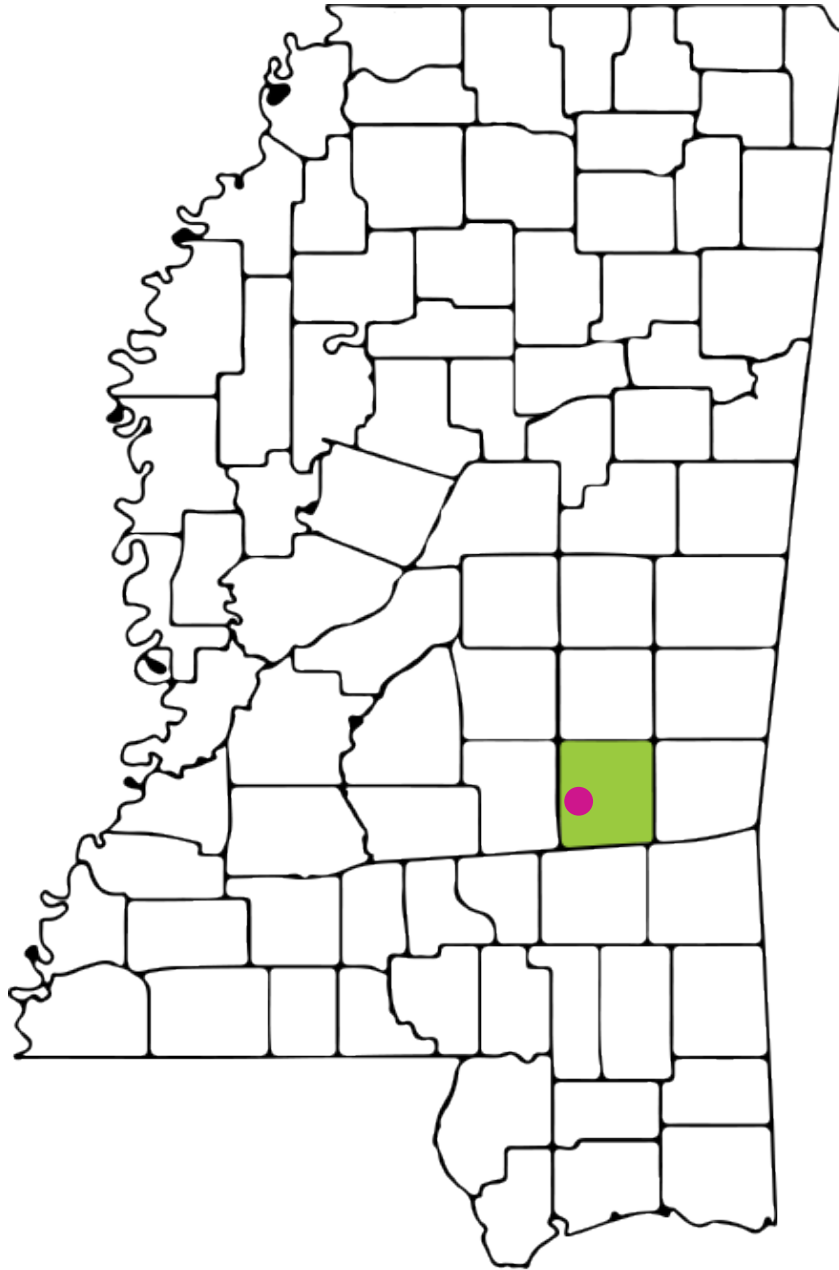


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“Communities can be shaped by chance, or they can be shaped by choice. We can keep on accepting the kind of communities we get, or we can start creating the kind of communities we want.”

– Richard Moe

National Trust for Historic Preservation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Bay Springs mayor and Board of Aldermen approached the Fred Carl Jr. Small Town Center (STC) at Mississippi State University in November of 2019 and asked them to assist the community in creating a visioning plan to guide future growth and development in Bay Springs.

The STC worked with the previous and the current mayor, and engaged the community and local stakeholders to ascertain future needs and wants in the community. The feedback from local residents and stakeholders has been incorporated into the following visioning and implementation plan.

The STC also coordinated efforts with Jeffrey Rupp in MSU's Entrepreneurship Center to recommend options for creating economic development opportunities that align with the visioning plan.

The Bay Springs Visioning Plan provides short term and long term projects beneficial for the future of the community established by those who participated in the planning process. The plan serves as a decision making guide for Bay Springs, and although

it contains suggestions for tools and resources required for implementation, it is ultimately up to the community to enact the recommendations provided in the plan. The success of any plan lies in the hands of those who are in a position to implement it.

Project Overview

In November of 2019, the Fred Carl Jr. Small Town Center (STC) at Mississippi State University kicked off a planning process which resulted in a visioning plan for the City of Bay Springs, Mississippi. Funded by the City of Bay Springs, the Bay Springs Visioning Plan sets short- and long- term goals for the Bay Springs community and establishes goals and objectives for economic development, highway beautification, downtown revitalization, and housing, among others.

During the initial phase, the STC conducted background research, collected and analyzed demographic and economic data, engaged the local community, discovered the town's assets and opportunities, and developed significant findings that informed the next phase of the project.

In Phase 2, the findings discovered in Phase 1 were used to develop a vision for the community and identify key issues that guide the direction of the plan. Goals and objectives were developed that address the significant findings and provide a framework for further plan development.

Phase 3 included the development of different elements of the plan. Two groups of Jeffery Rupp's Mississippi State Entrepreneurship Center MBA students studied housing and what attracts and retains residents of small towns. The data compiled from the MBA students has been integrated and was considered when developing goals and objectives for the Bay Springs Visioning Plan.

At the heart of the Bay Springs Visioning Plan is an implementation plan that outlines policies, projects, and management tools along with resources that will help the Bay Springs community realize the vision set in the plan. Key stakeholders and organizations have been identified as partners who have a role to play in the implementation of the plan. Bay Spring's mayor and board of aldermen certainly have a role to play, but so do business leaders, local residents, and local organizations.

Planning Team

The Bay Springs Visioning Plan is the product of the people of Bay Springs and Jasper County and the Small Town Center and its partnering organizations who worked together to create a vision for the Bay Springs community. Technical assistance was provided by the Small Town Center, but the vision set forth in the plan belongs to the Bay Springs community itself. The STC team acknowledges the following people and entities for their contributions to the Bay Springs Visioning Plan:

Fred Carl Jr. Small Town Center

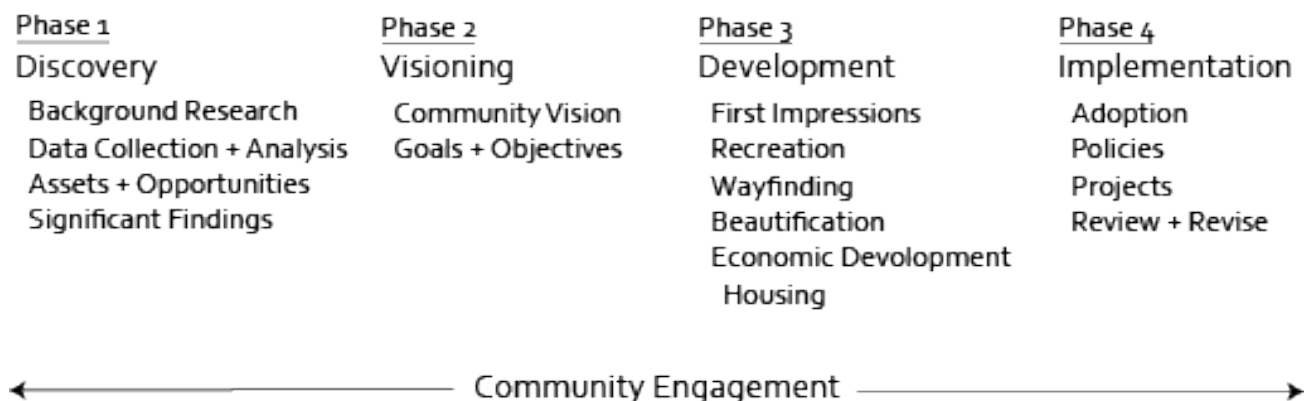
Leah Kemp, AIA - Project Director
Fran Pharis, AIA - Project Manager
Mary Lee Hyer - Intern
Abigail Stewart - Architectural Intern

City of Bay Springs

<i>Donald Brown - Mayor</i>	<i>James Knotts - Alderman, Ward 3</i>
<i>J.E. Smith - Former Mayor</i>	<i>Ron Keyes - Alderman, Ward 4</i>
<i>Steve Breland - Alderman, Ward 1</i>	<i>Bob Cook - Alderman, Ward 5</i>
<i>Mike Lucas - Alderman, Ward 2</i>	

Mississippi State Entrepreneurship Center - Jeffery Rupp and Team

THE SMALL TOWN CENTER'S PLANNING PROCESS



Community Engagement



Advertisement for Visioning Session

Visioning Session

Effective community engagement is a critical part of the Small Town Center’s approach to community planning. In fact, our planning approach is driven by ongoing input from the community, with the STC serving as facilitators of the planning process. Members of the Bay Springs community attended a community meeting designed to engage citizens and provide opportunities for open discussion and honest feedback. The STC team also received relevant feedback from meeting participants in anecdotal responses.

The result of these community engagement activities and public outreach initiatives is a plan that reflects the hopes and dreams of the Bay Springs community. The community vision reflected in this plan, along with the findings and recommendations made in response to that vision, were all created based on input from members of the Bay Springs community.



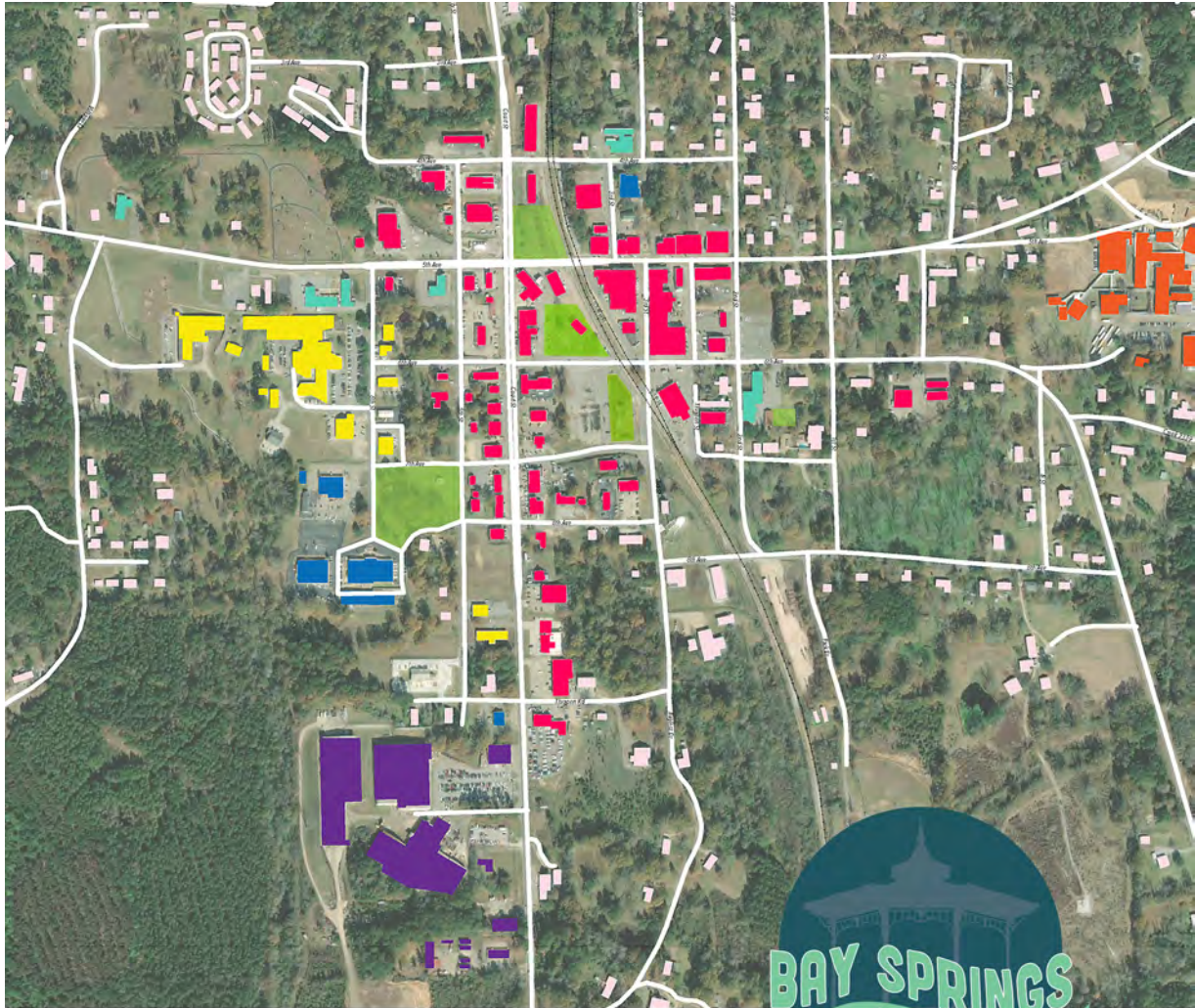
Community members participated in a survey envisioning the future of Bay Springs.

BACKGROUND + ANALYSIS

BACKGROUND + ANALYSIS

Before a community begins thinking about and planning for its future, is it important to place things in proper context by exploring the community's present conditions and circumstances. The Small Town Center conducted a thorough analysis of Bay Springs to provide the proper foundation from which to build a strong plan for Bay Springs' future.

Community Overview



LEGEND

	Industrial		Civic + Municipal
	Education		Healthcare
	Parks + Recreation		Commercial
	Religious		Residential

History

Bay Springs received its charter on March 10, 1904 in the dense forests of Jasper County. Named for the bay trees and naturally occurring springs surrounding it, the town was founded by a saw mill owner by Joe Blankenship. The same saw mill would go on to draw attention to the town, effectively making Bay Springs the trade center for western Jasper and eastern Smith County. One of the first structures to be erected in Bay Springs was a gazebo. It marks the spot where a spring was found flowing from the trunk of a bay tree. Today, the same spring is still flowing in the same spot.

Located in the rolling hills of southwestern Jasper County, the first rights-of-way for railroad companies are dated as early as 1902. Bay Springs became a transportation hub for the timber industry when the Mobile, Jackson, and Kansas City Railroad came about in 1908. The railroad connected Bay Springs with the other small towns of Jasper County between Laurel and Newton.

Bay Springs is home to one of two county seats in Jasper County and is the location of one of the Jasper County Courthouses and all of the County Departments and Services.

In 1991, the first annual BayFest was organized by Mayor J.E. Smith as a means of thanking the area's armed forces at the conclusion of the Desert Storm conflict. BayFest is a four day festival full of carnival rides, local vendors and food, and evenings of free entertainment in Smith Park. BayFest 2020 would have been the thirtieth anniversary had it not been cancelled due to the Coronavirus pandemic. To the delight of the town, BayFest will return in 2022 for the first time since 2019.

Bay Springs continues to be the center of Jasper County's industry with a variety of businesses, unique shops, and restaurants, including Hol-Mac, Bayless Diner, Hankings Motors, Wards, Georgia Pacific, Magnolia State Bank, and Alexander's.



The Historic Bay Springs Gazebo.

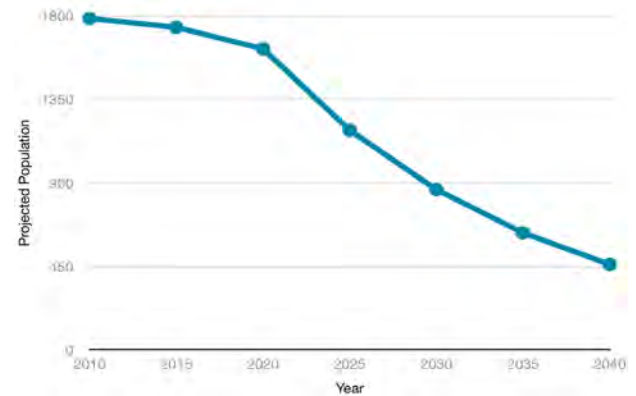
Photo courtesy of University of Mississippi Library.

Demographics

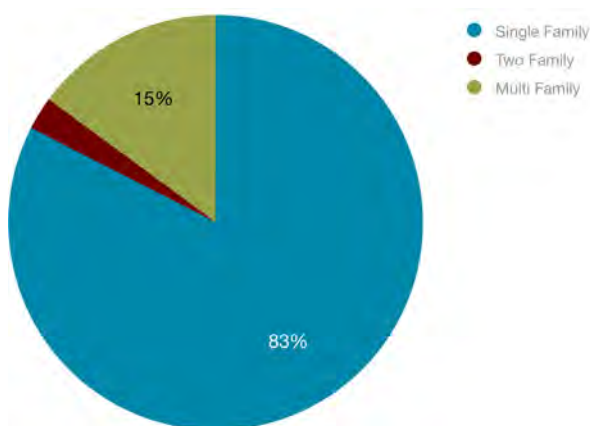
Bay Springs has an estimated population of 1,632 residents, 61.1% of which are African-American and 36.9% of which are white. Additionally, the town has a high population of infants and toddlers, followed closely by a significant population of adults age 60 to 64 years old — the age groups between these are not as well-represented.

The majority of Bay Springs' population owns a home as opposed to renting, and mortgage payments in the area are on average more affordable than rent. While the exact reason for this is inconclusive, the community's abundance of single-family homes and lack of rental housing options may account for some aspects of this disparity.

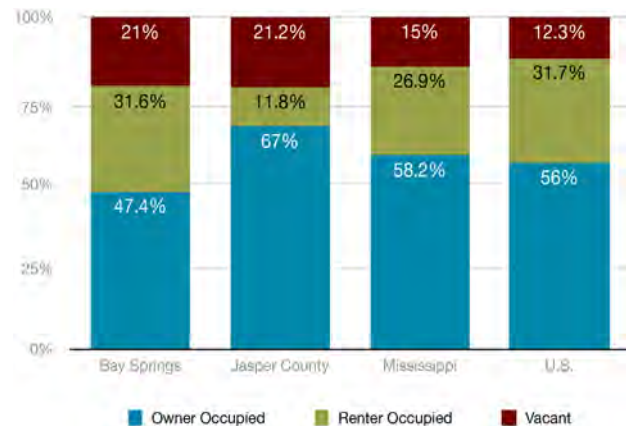
Since 2009, Bay Springs has experienced an overall steady decline in population — this trend can be anticipated to continue unless significant investments are made in the town's housing infrastructure and public amenities.



Projected Population: Bay Springs (2010 - 2040)
 Source: Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning's Office of Policy, Research and Planning, January 2019. Projections for Bay Springs made by The Small Town Center



Housing by Unit Characteristic: Bay Springs (2020)
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



Housing Occupancy: Bay Springs, Jasper County, Mississippi, U.S. (2020)
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Significant Findings

Presented hereafter are findings that we believe to be significant from the community engagement session, through our research and the research of MSU's Entrepreneurship Center, and from our general observations of the town. These findings guided us in our recommendations for the vision and future of Bay Springs. See appendix for larger images of the posters.

Community Engagement Findings

BAY SPRINGS, MS Fred Cook SMALL TOWN CENTER

What are your town's current conditions?
Rank the following by placing an "X" in columns 1-10 with 10 being the best:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Schools Additional Comments: <i>Public school system</i>	X		X			X				X
Access to Healthcare Additional Comments:		X		X		X		X		X
Safety Additional Comments:			X		X		X		X	X
Municipal Buildings (City Hall, Library, Etc.) Additional Comments: <i>City Hall</i>			X		X		X		X	X
Infrastructure (Roads, Bridges, Etc.) Additional Comments: <i>Highway 15 & 18 intersection</i>	X		X		X		X		X	X
Job Market Additional Comments:		X		X		X		X		X

Current Conditions

Residents ranked their town's current conditions. Infrastructure ranked lowest with residents voicing their concerns specifically about the **intersection between Highway 15 and Highway 18**. The job market and state of schools rank among the highest.

BAY SPRINGS, MS Fred Cook SMALL TOWN CENTER

Where do you spend most of your time in Bay Springs?
Circle your top three areas of use.

Additional Comments:
See map

Bay Springs Activity

Residents marked the busiest parts of the entire town of Bay Springs. Most activity seems to take place **along Highway 15** with the most noted areas being downtown and places of industry (day jobs).

BAY SPRINGS, MS Final Call to
SMALL TOWN CENTER

Where do you spend most of your time downtown?
Circle your top three areas of use.

Additional Comments:

Downtown Activity

Residents marked where they spent most of their time downtown. The Post Office, City Hall, the Hol-Mac Plant, the Mexican restaurant, a gas station, and the Corner Market were among those marked.

BAY SPRINGS, MS Final Call to
SMALL TOWN CENTER

What makes Bay Springs special?

The Bay Springs Park ✓	✓
Scenic view from here ✓	✓
Small community ✓	✓
Red brick walk ✓	✓
Old architecture ✓	✓
Small shops across country	
Family friendly ✓	
Safe ✓	
Walk business	
Beautiful hills and rolling hills ✓	
Peaceful quiet streets ✓	

What is your vision for the community of Bay Springs?

A good place to raise a family ✓	Small town ✓
Being close to a lake ✓	Being up to attract families looking for a community to work ✓
Be close to a school ✓	
Open - walkable streets ✓	Be able to walk ✓
Keep on streets & sidewalks	Make public streets ✓
Keep on streets & sidewalks	Good community
Keep on streets	
Safe - no bad things to happen ✓	A place that will be a good place to live and work ✓
Good - responsible community	

Community Impact

According to members of the Bay Springs Community, people and their contributions are what make Bay Springs special. Most of the suggestions under visioning for Bay Springs involve **youth and activities for them**. A few others noted a broader spectrum of **recreation**.

BAY SPRINGS, MS Final Call to
SMALL TOWN CENTER

What areas in Bay Springs need improving?
Circle areas that need the most improvement.

Additional Comments:

More parking - 2nd lot ✓

More parking - 2nd lot ✓

More parking - 2nd lot ✓

More parking - 2nd lot ✓

More parking - 2nd lot ✓

More parking - 2nd lot ✓

More parking - 2nd lot ✓

More parking - 2nd lot ✓

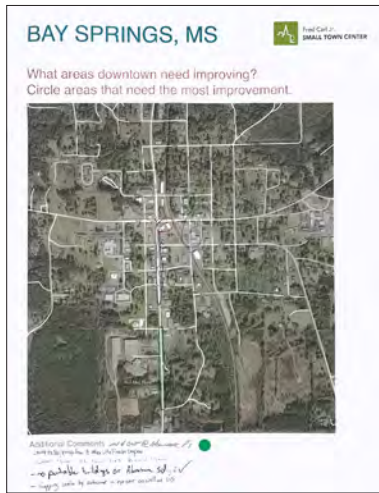
More parking - 2nd lot ✓

More parking - 2nd lot ✓

Bay Springs Development

Residents feel strongly about improving **Highway 15**. This concern is matched with a concern for the safety of **pedestrian traffic**.

Community Engagement Findings



Downtown Development

Residents feel like downtown needs to be cleaned up in order to improve it. The main concerns voiced had to do with the **lack of visual appeal**.



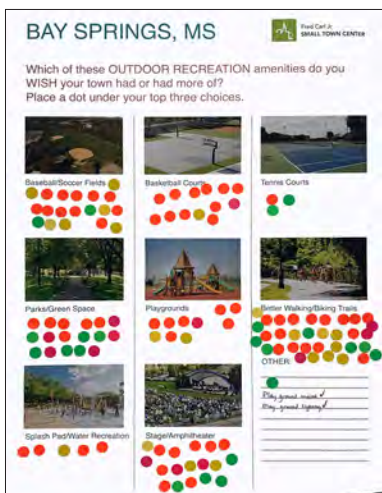
Youth Activities

Community members noted the lack of activities for youth. Many residents see the benefit of having **camp**s for engaging youth as well as a **Boys and Girls Club**.



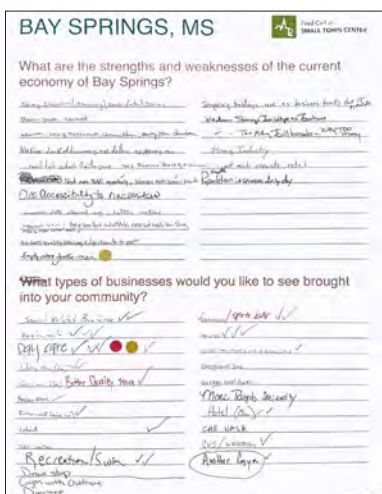
Dining and Entertainment

Most residents expressed interest in a **casual dining** facility in Bay Springs. This was closely followed by an interest in a **coffee shop and a farmer's market**.



Outdoor Recreation

In regards to outdoor recreation, most residents expressed interest in **better walking and biking trails**. Several community members also expressed interest in baseball or soccer fields and a stage or amphitheatre.



Economic Development

Many residents agree that one of the main weaknesses of the economy is the **lack of businesses** within the town. Residents noted a desire for a day care, a grocery store, and restaurants.



Areas of Interest

Residents marked the areas of service provided by the STC they were most interested in. The most popular of these were community engagement and **downtown revitalization**.

Assets

Recognizing existing assets is helpful in the visioning process. Not only does cataloging existing assets highlight what is already great about a town, but it also reveals where the opportunities for growth and development are and what additions to the town a community may need or like the most. The Small Town Center and the Bay Springs community identified the following as being the town's most significant assets.



Industry

Bay Springs is home to three major corporations that have established industrial plants nearby: Georgia-Pacific, Peco, and Hol-Mac Corporation. These corporations act as the backbone of the town's economy, providing the bulk of the jobs held by Bay Springs residents and drawing residents of the surrounding communities into the town daily.



BayFest

BayFest is a four day festival full of carnival rides, local vendors and food, and evenings of free entertainment in Smith Park. BayFest is a prime example of Bay Springs' use of its outdoor green spaces and the town's community spirit. It is also a tourism catalyst, attracting people from surrounding communities to spend time in Bay Springs.



Influx of Daily Visitors

Bay Springs experiences a daily influx of visitors thanks to its position as the industrial hub of the area. These visitors - the majority of them industrial employees - help boost the Bay Springs economy by purchasing food and other services while they are in town daily. Finding more ways to capture the spending of these visitors is necessary to grow Bay Springs.

Green Spaces

Bay Springs boasts eight distinct public parks and green spaces. These green spaces act as venues for community events, provide space for outdoor recreation, and serve as a series of green oases amidst the town's concrete and buildings.



Brick Street

Bay Springs' history is preserved along its iconic Brick Street along a block of S 3rd Street. This street - still paved with the original brick - is the heart of Bay Springs' downtown and boasts several restaurants and shops, including the iconic Alexander's.

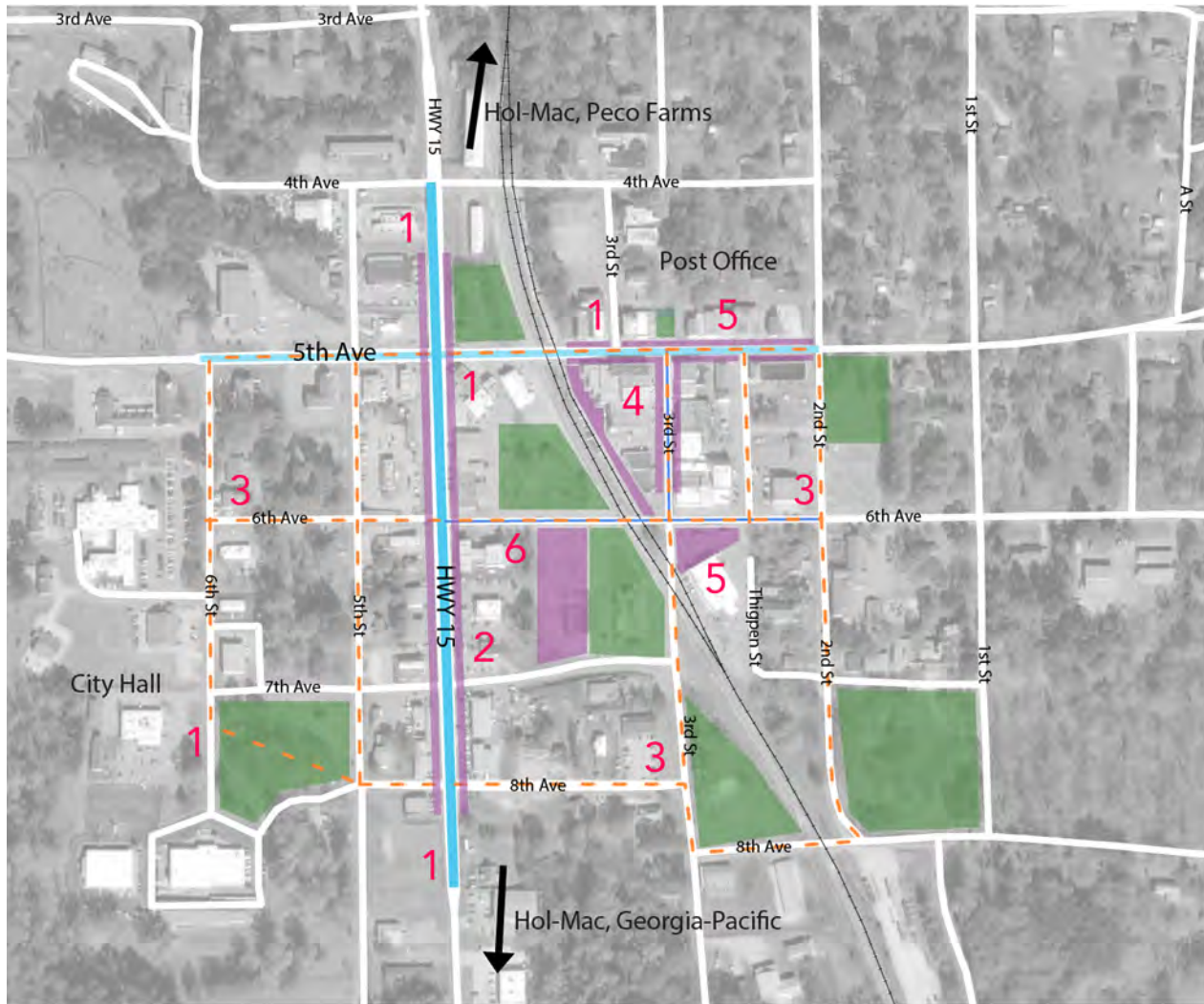




The People

Bay Springs would be nothing without its tightly knit community. Young and old, the people of Bay Springs have helped to shape the town into what it is today and continue to support the town's development and growth.

Opportunities



LEGEND

-  Existing Green Spaces + Parks
-  Areas for Proposed Improvement Projects
-  Primary Roads
-  Secondary Roads
-  Potential Path(s) for Walking + Biking



1. Wayfinding + Entry Signage

Highway 15 is disconnected from the rest of Bay Springs, and the town overall lacks cohesive or legible signage. This creates an opportunity for the town to prioritize distinctive signage with unique, consistent branding to make wayfinding easier.



2. Highway 15 Beautification

Highway 15 is currently a concrete jungle. Not only is the road difficult to navigate by car, but it is also not at all safe for pedestrian or cyclist travel. Additionally, billboards, fast food signs, and power lines create a large amount of visual clutter along the road. Beautification efforts can help to make Highway 15 both safer and more aesthetically appealing.

3. Outdoor Recreation

Despite Bay Springs having a significant amount of green space, these spaces remain overall underutilized. There is also a lack of walking and biking trails, which limits the community's options for alternative forms of transportation and outdoor recreation.



4. Downtown Revitalization

While Bay Springs has a distinct, historic downtown area, it suffers from a lack of energy and activity. Many of the downtown's storefronts are empty. The area also lacks any kind of public art or visual interest, which would make the downtown a more desirable and interesting place to spend time.





5. Facade Improvements

The Bay Springs downtown lacks visual interest for several reasons. Firstly, the downtown facades lack any kind of consistency or character. Secondly, empty concrete lots and a lack of greenery create a dreary, uninteresting aesthetic. Improvements to downtown facades will help with this lack of visual interest.



6. Mixed-Use Retail, Office + Residential

Bay Springs' residential landscape is mostly comprised of single-family, detached homes. This lack of diversified housing options makes moving to Bay Springs difficult for younger adults and others who may not want or need to buy a home. Bay Springs also has a lack of retail options. A mixed-use retail/office/residential building will take advantage of both of these opportunities at once.



**POTENTIAL
IMPROVEMENT
PROJECTS**

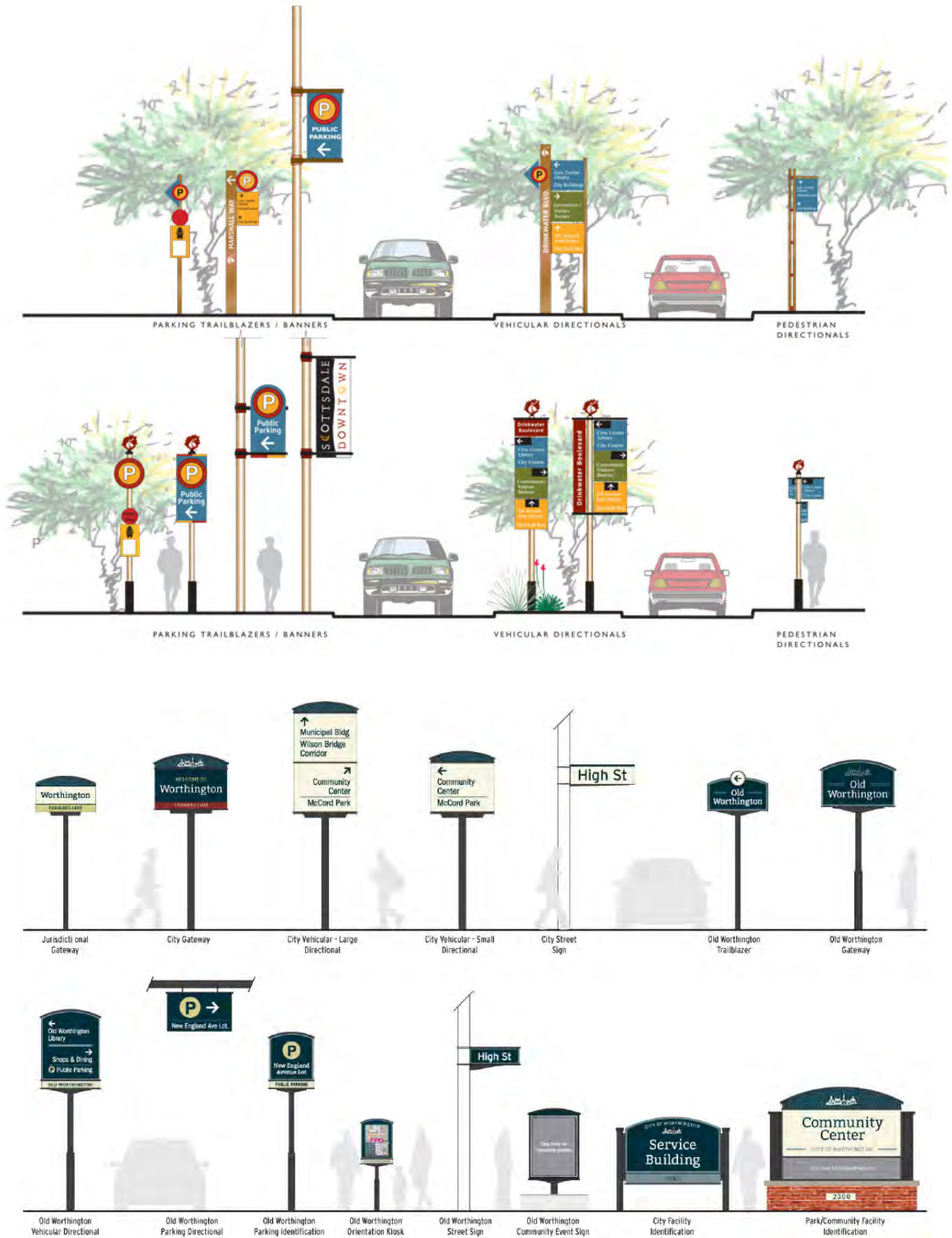
1. Wayfinding + Branding

Highway 15 is disconnected from downtown Bay Springs. Passersby on the heavily traveled Highway 15 would never know that a charming town exists beyond the busy highway. Streetscape improvements and wayfinding signage should be designed and installed so that visitors are provided with an aesthetically pleasing entryway into downtown Bay Springs.



Above: Existing street name signage is dwarfed by the adjacent large billboard; the Bay Springs logo on the signage is too small to be seen by passersby.

Right: Examples of wayfinding signage packages that were created by design professionals



Wayfinding Signage

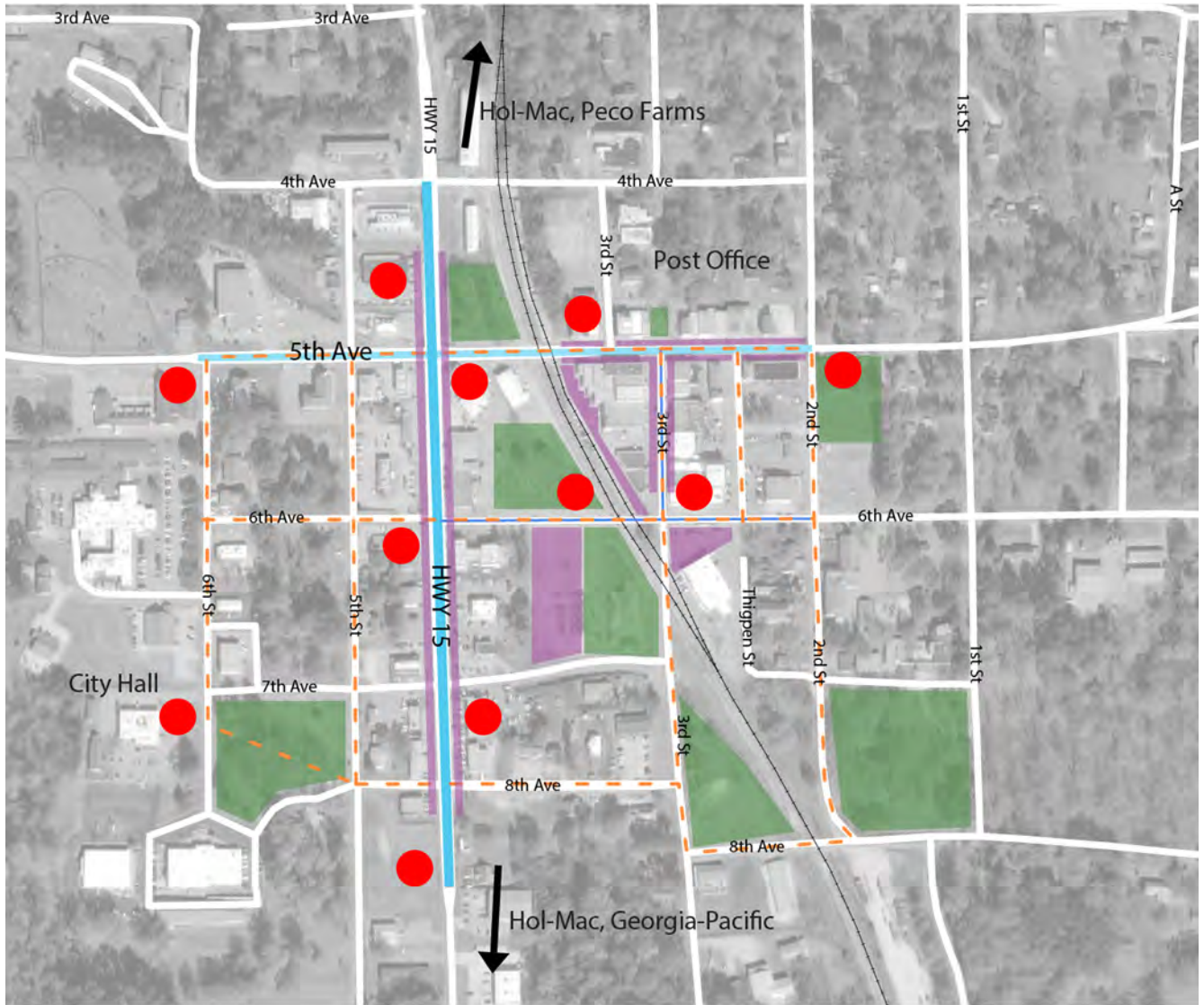
The existing shrubbery signage welcomes passersby and lets visitors know they are entering downtown Bay Springs. This welcome sign can be built upon by a network of wayfinding signage to get people from Highway 15 into downtown and near local businesses, where they will hopefully spend time and money.



Above: Existing Bay Springs shrubbery welcome sign

Right: Potential wayfinding signage locations are indicated on map, including but not limited to the following: intersection at Hwy 15 + 18, along Hwy 15, near the city hall, around downtown, other points of interest

Potential Wayfinding Signage Locations

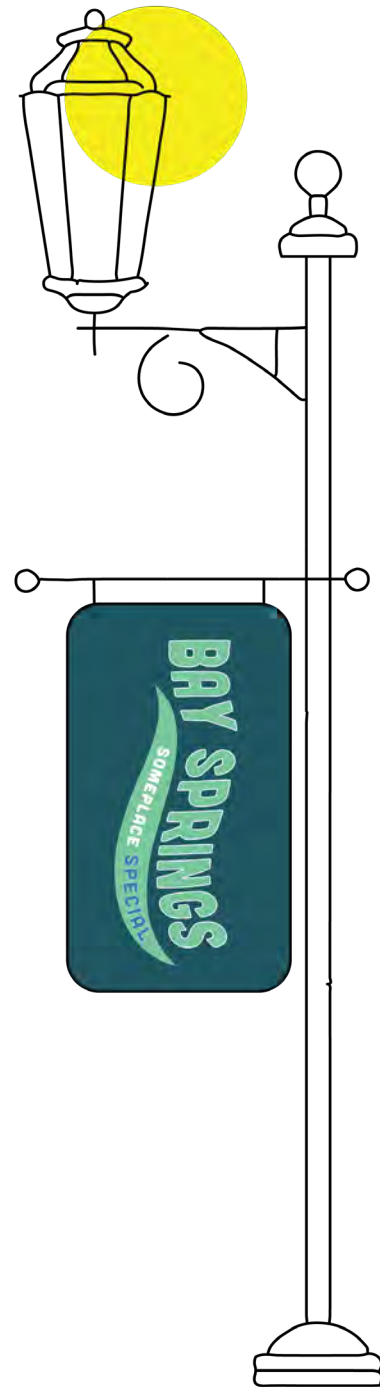


LEGEND

-  Existing Green Spaces + Parks
-  Areas for Proposed Improvement Projects
-  Primary Roads
-  Secondary Roads
-  Potential Path(s) for Walking + Biking

Community Branding

Bay Springs lacks a cohesive brand to promote the city. Local government and community development entities, including the City of Bay Springs, Bay Springs Chamber of Commerce, and Jasper County all have competing brands that each tell a different story about the Bay Springs community. These individual brands should be revised in a complementary way that allows each organization to maintain their unique identity while achieving the overall mission of promoting Bay Springs and Jasper County.





The conceptual logo above was designed by the Small Town Center to demonstrate how a unique brand and tagline can be created for the Bay Springs community.

A community logo could be used by the local tourism agency to attract visitors to Bay Springs through print advertisement in the region that promotes the town's unique character.



Bay Springs received its charter on March 10, 1904 in the dense forests of Jasper County. Named for the bay trees and naturally occurring springs surrounding it, the town was founded by a saw mill owner by Joe Blinkenship. The same saw mill would go on to draw attention to the town. Effectively, making Bay Springs the trade center for western Jasper and eastern Smith County. One of the first structures to be erected in Bay Springs was a gazebo. It marks the spot where a spring was found flowing from the trunk of a bay tree. Today, the same spring is still flowing in the same spot.

Benefits of Community Branding

The benefits of community branding include increased recognition, increased tourism, attractiveness for businesses, and attractiveness for investors and developers.

Increased Recognition

When you elevate a city with the proper place branding that city will become more recognizable. This may happen only locally or regionally first but may lead to major state and regional events.

Increased Tourism

Tourism brings in money from outside of your city and injects it directly into your local economy. Your city will have people come in and spend money and then leave. So, your city economy grows without the added hassle of additional resident clogging roadways and taking up housing.

Attractiveness for Businesses

As the city's status rises so too will the interest of businesses. Please note that it is important to consider businesses that would directly compete or potentially shut down local businesses.

Attractiveness for Investors/Developers

Raising the status of a city will lead to an increased interest from investors and developers. These two parties will work together to find areas in the city that could result in a profit for them if they either remodeled some buildings and homes or built new properties.

Source: id8agency.com/city-branding/

How To: A City Branding Checklist

Source: id8agency.com/city-branding/

Step 1 – Establish The City's Value Proposition

The essential element of any city branding campaign is the value proposition, a succinct statement that establishes the Why and the benefit - A statement that clearly communicates the benefits customers receive by giving you their business.

Step 2 – Be Authentic

Don't try to promote who you want to be or even the one aspect of the city that you like best. Be honest and open about who you are. Failure to be authentic in your advertisements will result in a poor client experience and will ruin your reputation you are trying to build.

Step 3 – Focus On A Single Reason To Visit

To build a city brand that resonates with customers, you need to focus on one single reason to visit. What aspect of the visit will provide the most benefit for your audience?

Step 4 – Redefine Public Spaces

Take advantage of the brand you are building for your city and create public spaces that reinforce why they are visiting your city. Use these areas to promote the culture, increase economic connections, or interact with a natural part of the town.

Step 5 – Deliver The Experience From Your Brand Promise

A city brand is like every other brand. Consumers trust you because your brand represents a promise. As long as you stay true to your brand and always deliver on your brand promise, customers and clients will remain loyal.

Step 6 – Include The City's Residents

Building a brand requires a "buy-in" from everyone involved. This includes all residents and business owners of the city. Hold meetings and release flyers to keep everyone up to date on what is going on with the new city brand. During the meeting make sure everyone has a chance to be heard and ask questions.

Step 7 – Support Your City Brand With A Cross-Channel Strategy

To organically increase the reach and impact of your city's brand you will need to offer physical products and interactive attractions. Setup cutouts around the town for photo opportunities that can be shared on social media. And, every store visitors go into should have city merchandise. You will want to offer physical products like T-shirts, coffee mugs, and hoodies.

2. Highway 15 Beautification

Bay Spring's Highway 15 corridor is currently a confusing mix of cluttered signage, strip commercial development, endless curb cuts, and utility poles, all of which is typical for small, rural towns. As the main entrance into Bay Springs from the north and south, Highway 15 presents opportunities for improving the curb appeal through tighter sign regulations, development standards, improved landscaping, and new wayfinding signage.

Signage ordinances are usually written with the intent of the following (taken from the City of Yazoo City Sign Ordinance):

- **Reduce advertising distractions** which may contribute to traffic accidents.
- Assure that **public benefits** derived **from expenditures of public funds for the improvement and beautification of streets** and other public structures and spaces shall be protected by exercising reasonable controls over the character and design of sign structures.
- **Provide an improved visual environment** for the citizens of and visitors to the city by reducing the number and surface area of signs.
- Provide an environment in which the **traveling public can locate a business or service** without the frustration of finding a proper sign and causing traffic problems.



AMENDED AND RESTATED ORDINANCE OF THE MAYOR AND BOARD OF ALDERMEN OF THE CITY OF YAZOO CITY, MISSISSIPPI REGULATING THE SIZE, LOCATION, AND HEIGHT OF ALL SIGNS WITHIN THE CORPORATE LIMITS OF THE CITY AND ADOPTING PROVISIONS FOR THE PURPOSE AND APPLICATION, NONCONFORMING SIGNS, REPEAL AND SEVERABILITY, VIOLATIONS AND PENALTIES, VARIANCES, SPECIAL USE PERMITS, INTERPRETATIONS, DEFINITIONS, PERMITTED SIGNS BY ZONING DISTRICT, TEMPORARY SIGNS, GENERAL PROVISIONS, PROHIBITED SIGNS, PERMIT REQUIREMENTS AND OTHER PROVISIONS OF SAID ORDINANCE.

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Above: Table of Contents excerpt from the example Yazoo City Sign Ordinance (full ordinance in Appendix)

Streetscape Improvements



The above rendering illustrates the potential of Highway 15 with the addition of landscaped medians, street trees, and a new bike lane. Policy resources and information on funding for the type of improvements shown above can be found via the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT).



Chinese Elms along this downtown sidewalk provide shade for pedestrians along with many other street tree benefits.



This community has utilized its planting areas to implement a variety of street trees. Utilizing bulbouts and medians provides ample space for your street trees to grow and prosper.

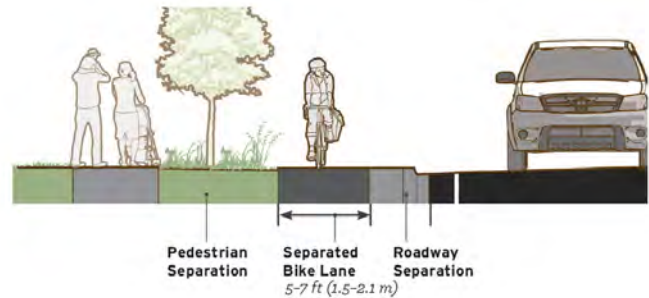
The Mississippi Main Street Association's Downtown Landscape Design Guide (msmainstreet.com) also serves as an excellent resource for downtown landscape improvements. This guide provides examples of downtown streetscapes, vegetation recommendations, and more information that could be used to help beautify Highway 15.



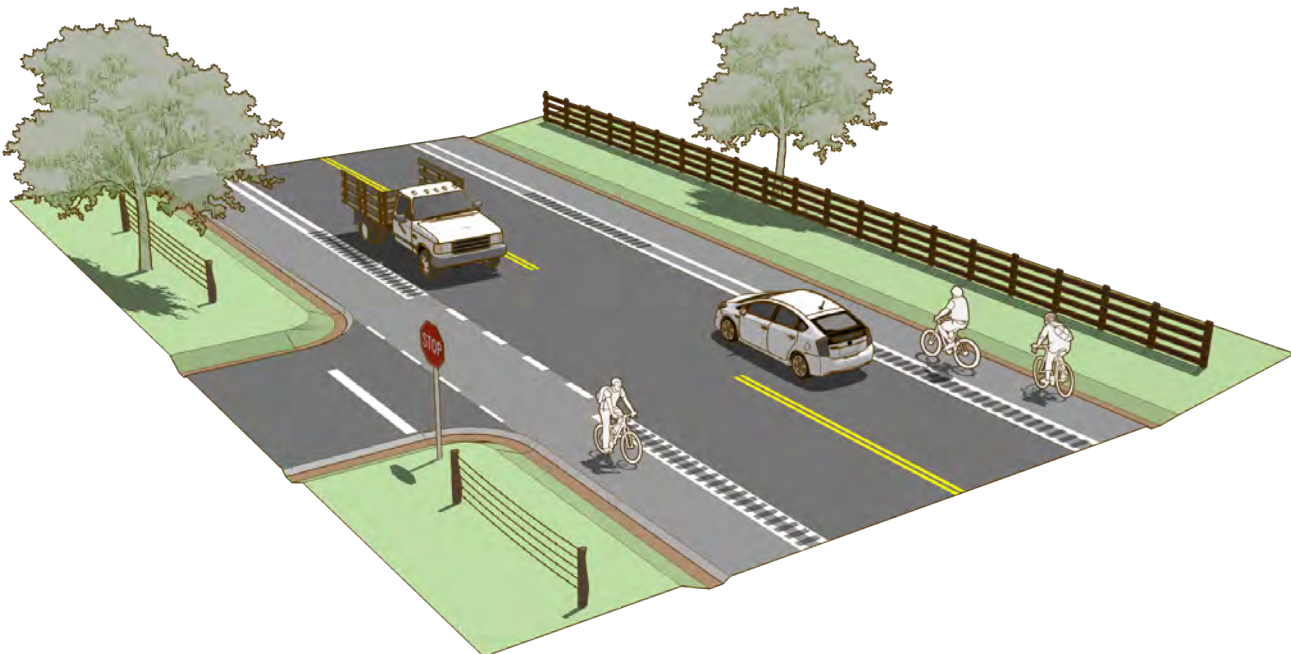
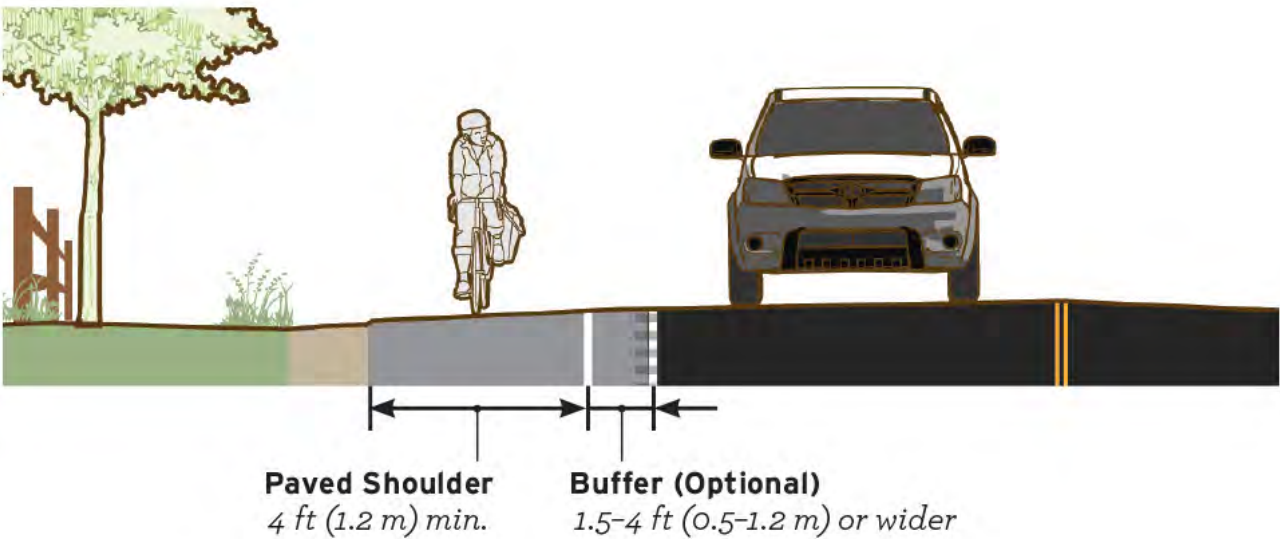
3. Outdoor Recreation

Bay Springs's transportation network neglects bicyclists and pedestrians. The town's highways, roads, and streets were all built with one mode of transportation in mind: automobiles. With more people looking to ride bikes and walk between destinations, Bay Springs should adopt a Complete Streets policy (see appendix), which seeks to consider all users when designing transportation infrastructure. This includes the provision of ADA accessible sidewalks, as well as bike infrastructure that provides easy access to alternative modes of transportation.

Bay Springs has a great asset in its number of green spaces throughout the downtown. An argument can be made to link these green spaces with biking and pedestrian paths as a strong start to a multi-modal network that can expand in the future to other parts of the town.



Above + right: Images taken from the *Rural Design Guide* (ruraldesignguide.com) show options for what could be incorporated on Hwy 15. [Note: local roads (those not managed by MDOT) will have more flexibility in the addition of separated bike lanes and pedestrian paths like the image above.]



Walking and Biking Trail

The following maps show the distance one will travel along the notated path. These images may be helpful when deciding where to implement the first phase of the multi-modal network. All paths originate at City Hall to take advantage of the existing trails at the adjacent park.



Path Distance = 1.90 miles
Two crosswalks across Hwy 15



Path Distance = 0.93 miles
Two crosswalks across Hwy 15



Path Distance = 1.10 miles
Two crosswalks across Hwy 15



Path Distance = 1.67 miles
Four crosswalks across Hwy 15



Path Distance = 1.17 miles
Two crosswalks across Hwy 15

4. Downtown Revitalization

According to Strong Towns, a non-profit entity focused on resiliency and rethinking how we build our world, “Public art can make your town more beautiful, more beloved, and more economically productive. Public art brings unique value and character to our neighborhoods. The most successful public art is the result of community desires and goals, not top-down planning. The space behind Alexander’s, the whole block along the railroad tracks, offers an ample opportunity for public art. For events such as Bay Fest and others, a mural along the back of those buildings could serve as a striking backdrop to the park across the tracks. A large scale mural could also attract attention all the way from Highway 15 and serve as a welcome sign to Bay Springs. The space between Alexander’s and the tracks could also serve as a public event space. The addition of lights, movable seating, even turf on the ground turning it into a pedestrian only space, would activate that area and link 5th and 6th as well as the park. When community-planned activities are happening in the park, this new activated space could expand the event area across the tracks.



Right: Rendering showing the potential of an outdoor event space behind Alexander’s, complete with turf ground covering, multiple murals on the backs of buildings, a safety fence, a lighting canopy, movable furniture, and temporary vendor booths.



Lights Across Downtown

Sometimes a seemingly simple project, such as stringing lights across a downtown street, like Brick Street or 5th Avenue in the downtown area of Bay Springs, can create a destination in itself. This also has the practical application of providing lighting and ambience to a controlled area.



Top image: Lafayette Street in Starkville, MS during an event after a light canopy was installed.

Bottom image: Brick Street in Downtown Bay Springs, a suggested location for a light canopy





Temporary Storefronts

While buildings along your main downtown streets are empty, consider installing temporary graphics along the storefronts to fill in the space until investors and developers move in. This intervention offers the opportunity to celebrate the history of Bay Springs, provide a backdrop other than deserted buildings during events, and create a photo opportunity bringing recognition to the space.



Top image: Temporary storefront graphics in Laurel, MS celebrating historical figures.

Bottom image: Storefronts and a space for rent in Bay Springs, MS

Streatery + Parklet

A streatery, sometimes also called a parklet, is a small open space constructed in two or more parking spaces, or other outdoor space, that provides seating and gathering space for patrons of local businesses. The benefits of a parklet include:

- Relatively **inexpensive, easy, and quick** to install
- Can be **temporary or permanent**
- Can be **public or semi-public**, allowing the adjoining businesses to use the space during designated hours, or allowing the space to be open to the public during all other hours
- Provide **economic benefit** to communities by **increasing foot traffic and spending** in the area
- Lively, **charming places of interest**, that attract people to their location



Top image: Rendering of a streatery concept for Starkville, MS (STC)

Bottom image: Example of how a parklet can break up the sea of asphalt and the use of greenery as a defining edge; a parklet would help Bay Springs become more green and welcome people to downtown





Asphalt Art

“Art has the power to transform cities and make their public spaces safer and more vibrant.” - Bloomberg Asphalt Art Initiative

Bay Springs has an abundance of asphalt in its downtown areas. To break up the “concrete jungle” effect, consider implementing asphalt art to define street edges, energize the downtown, and slow down traffic, making the spaces safer for pedestrians and cyclists. Benefits of asphalt art include:

- Can be **temporary or permanent**
- Relatively **affordable** way to add interest to a street
- Can **bring the community together** through the design and painting process as well as through a community-centered public art piece



Top image: Street mural in Asheville, NC (Bloomberg)

Bottom image: Asphalt art intersection intervention in Pittsburg, PA

5. Facade Improvement Program

Downtown Bay Springs has a lot of potential to be the heart of the city that it once was. Currently, the buildings along 5th Avenue and 3rd Street (Brick Street) lack a cohesive character. By implementing a facade improvement program, the streetfronts can eventually come back to life. The City of Gulfport and Gulfport Main Street Association have implemented a Facade Grant Program that offers incentives to business owners to update their building facades. Offering these programs and helping with funding allows the City to implement a set of design rules so that, over time, the street begins to have a cohesiveness that is currently lacking. Gulfport's Facade Grant Program is set up online for an easy application process and with easy-to-understand guidelines. Bay Springs can use this precedent to implement something similar for your downtown area.



Right: Rendering showing the potential facade improvements that could be made in downtown Bay Springs. These improvements could be as simple as a fresh coat of paint, updated awnings and signage, and the addition of planters to downtown sidewalks.



New Paint

Reopened
Openings

Updated
Signage



Greenery

Reopened
Storefronts

Landscape Ordinance

Bay Springs has several parking lots that do not have a defined edge against the street. Not only are these blurred lines eyesores, they also make the streets feel larger which makes drivers feel like they can go faster than desirable for the area. By adding vertical elements, namely street trees, the street edges are defined, and the greenery is a welcome aesthetic improvement. Added benefits of adding street trees include shade for potential future sidewalks and parked cars, as well as decreasing the heat island effect. Implementing a landscape ordinance will help to slowly build up greenery around the town and set a precedent for any new construction. Mississippi Main Street has put together a free resource that offers detailed guidance on the implementing landscape design in a downtown area. The Downtown Landscape Design Guide is provided in the appendix.



Right: Rendering showing what implementing a landscape ordinance may look like at the Corner Market grocery store.



6. Mixed-Use Retail + Office + Residential

The lack of housing in Bay Springs, MS, is hindering local industries from being able to recruit and retain employees. Rather than build more single family homes or more low-income apartment buildings, building a mixed-use retail and residential complex offers an alternate type of housing than what currently exists, and it also provides opportunity for new businesses to come into Bay Springs.

***Right:** Rendering showing what a mixed-use building in Bay Springs could look like and what the spaces may be used for, including office spaces, restaurants, retail stores, and residences.*



Why to Prioritize Housing

Bay Springs lacks a range of diversified housing. Single family homes make up the bulk of availability, and even those are hard to come by for new residents. Industry leaders and real estate professionals were interviewed and the consensus is that the current housing conditions are not diverse enough. The housing market as it stands does not allow for industries to recruit and retain employees. Realtors are having a hard time finding housing solutions for those looking to move into Bay Springs, especially if they are not looking to purchase a home right away.





Homes in the area:

- Price range: \$75,000-\$365,000
- 3 bed/1 bath & 3 bed/2 bath single-family homes
- Tax rate for \$150,000 home with exemption in city limits: \$1,994
- Average home rent: \$1,182



Apartments in the area:

- Three apartment complexes due to proximity to local industries and target demographic preferences
- Average apartment rent: \$400-\$600, based on occupant's income

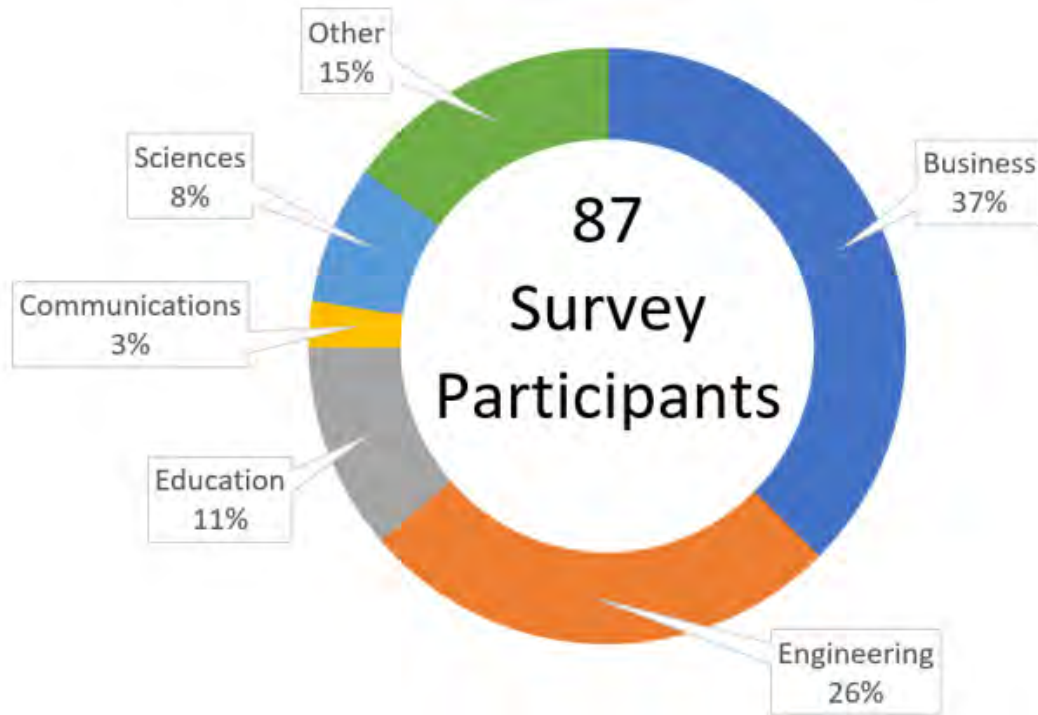
Housing Habits of Recent College Graduates

A group of recent graduates entering the job market were surveyed. The following graphics summarize those findings.

Key Takeaways:

- Most of recent college graduates surveyed are not interested in buying a home immediately after graduation
- Participants preferred 2 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms
- 84% of participants wanted to live within 30 minutes of their place of work

What is your college major?



Do you desire homeownership?

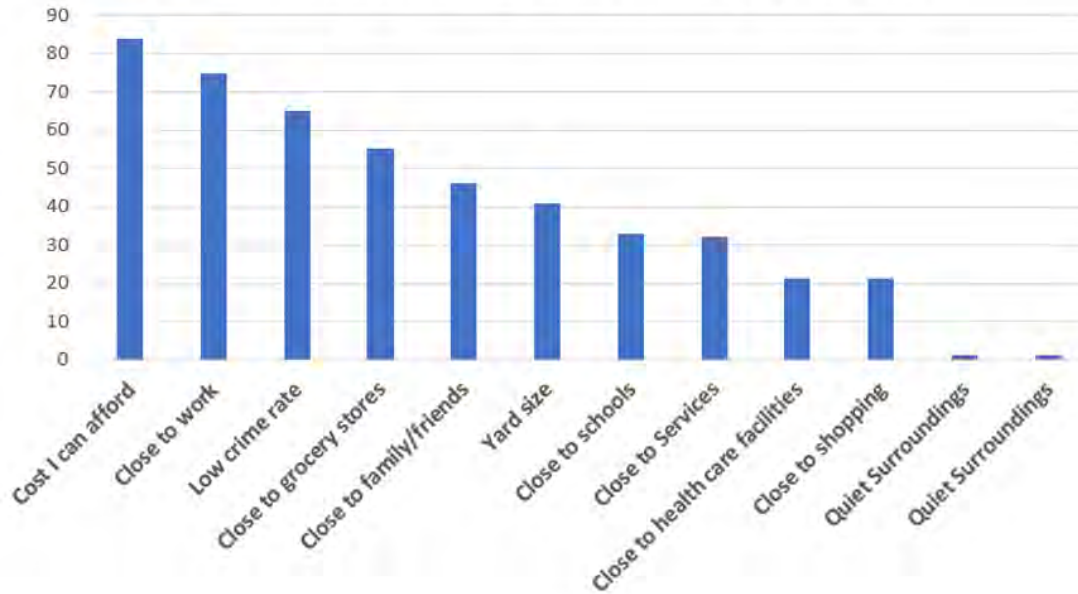
"Yes, but not straight after graduation"

"Eventually yes, but it's not a practical short-term goal"

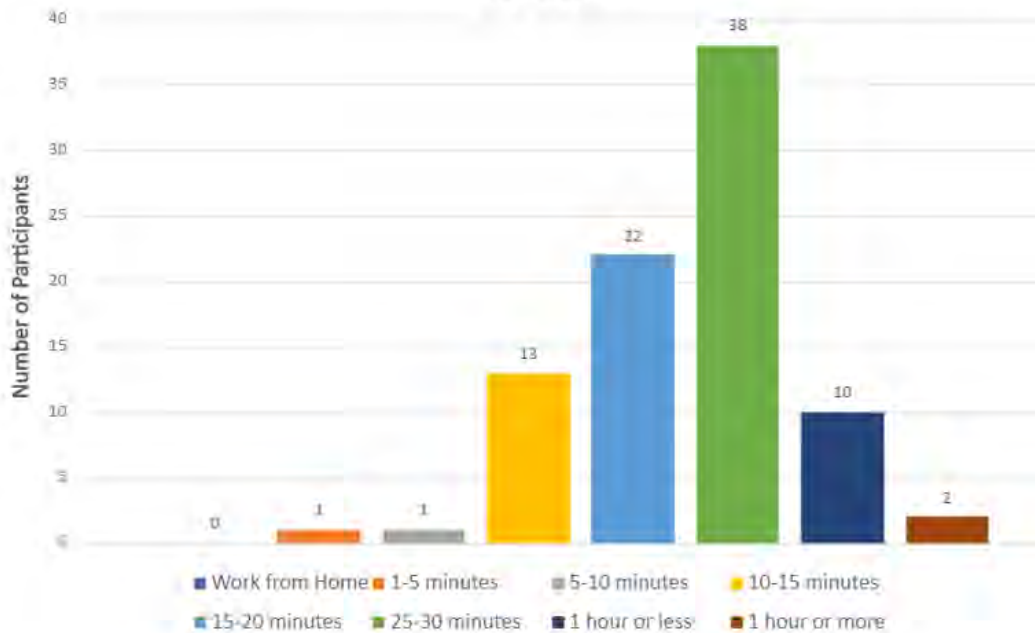
"No, it's too early for me"

"Not right now because that feels like a big commitment"

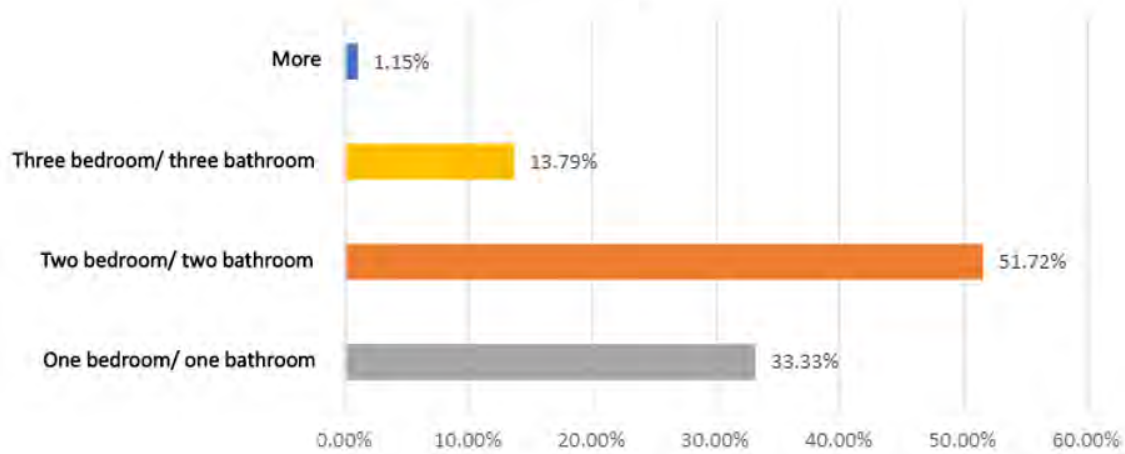
What factors are important when choosing a place to live?



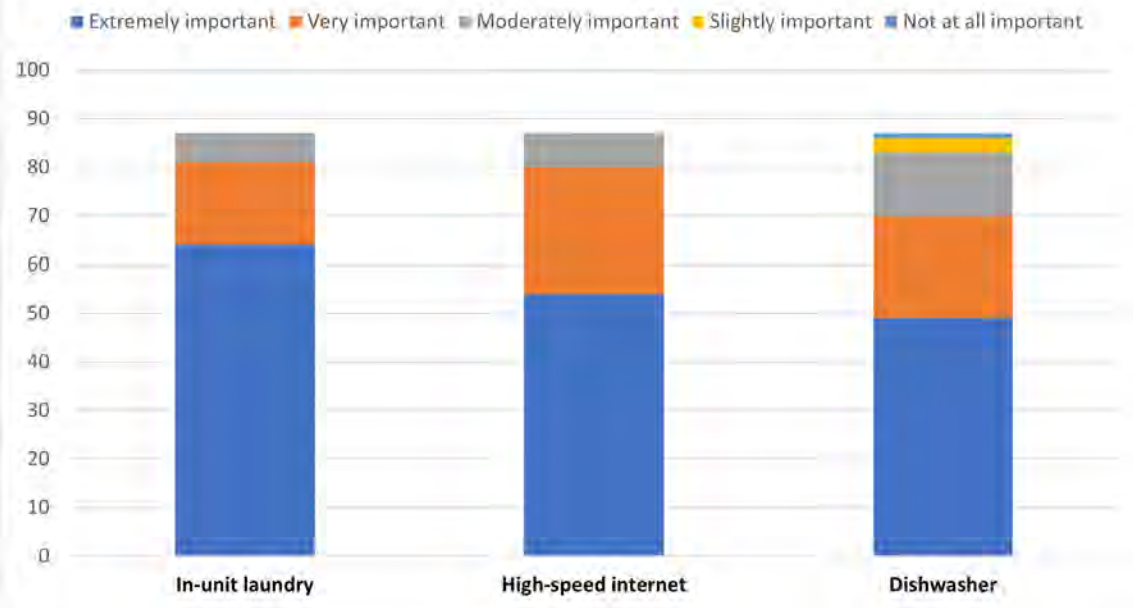
What is the maximum amount of time that you are willing to commute daily to work?



What is your ideal number of bedrooms and bathrooms?

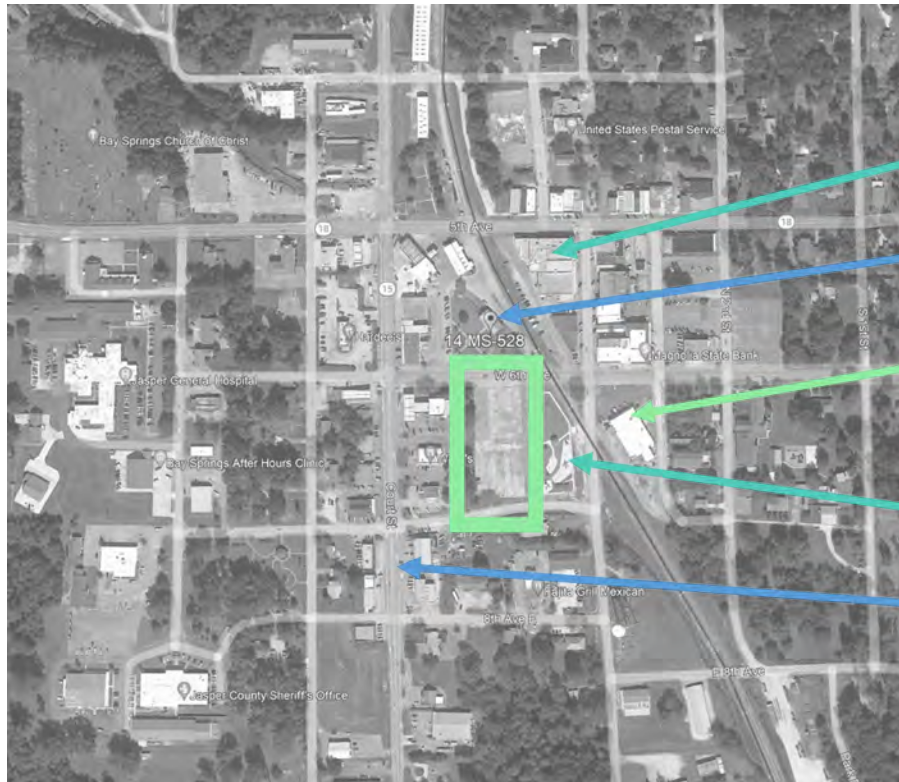


Rank the following amenities from "Extremely Important" to "Not Important at All"

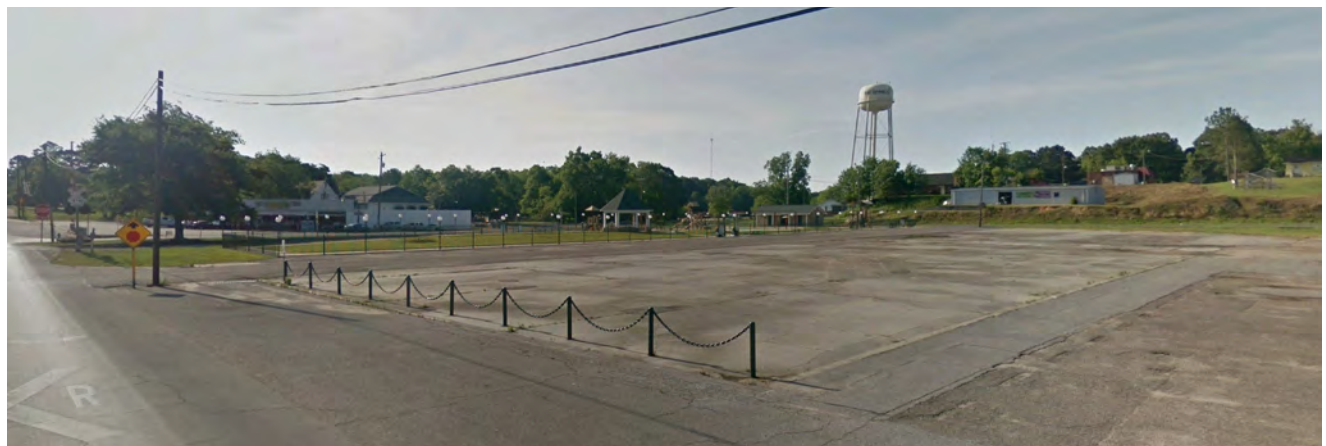


Mixed-Use Building Location

Taking advantage of an empty lot downtown places the proposed mixed-use building adjacent to multiple green spaces and a block away from the heart of downtown.



- Alexander's
- Neco Park
- Corner Market
- Splash Pad
- HWY 15



Recommended Business Types

The following business recommendations can benefit residents and daily commuters and boost the local economy:

- Office space for rent
- Coffee shop
- Bakery
- Casual dining (weekday lunch)
- Boutique
- Bookstore

These are all businesses mentioned in the engagement session as being desired options for the community. Conducting a retail linkage analysis will also help identify suitable businesses for the area.



IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Implementation Team

Throughout this visioning plan, the Small Town Center has shared ideas and recommendations that were stimulated by feedback from the Bay Springs community. The key to implementation of these ideas, however, lies with people and organizations that together comprise the Bay Springs community. The STC has identified the following key partners as critical components to the success of the improvement projects. Each organization has a role to play in the implementation of this visioning plan, which is expanded on further in the implementation matrix that follows this section.

—City of Bay Springs: The City of Bay Springs, including the mayor, administrative and professional staff, and the board of aldermen, has wide-ranging authority within the city limits of Bay Springs. The City of Bay Springs oversees all public infrastructure, including streets, parks, and other public rights-of-way. Through the provision of services such as police and fire protection, streets, water, sewer, and solid waste collection, the City has a daily impact on Bay Springs's quality of life. The City also has the power to administer grants and enact legislation that impacts the manner in which Bay Springs grows and develops in the future.

—Jasper County: With Bay Springs being the county seat of Jasper County and home to the Jasper County Courthouse, the county government leaders, including the board of supervisors,

county administrator, and chancery clerk have an impact on the lives of people who live in Bay Springs. Opportunities for partnership between the City of Bay Springs and Jasper County can bring about positive change in Bay Springs.

—JCED: The Jasper County Economic Development District is the county-wide organization that oversees economic development. The JCED works to recruit industry to the community, to promote and develop local businesses, and to market the area to visitors. The JCED plays a vital role in the success of the community by influencing the local economy, creating jobs, and bringing tourist revenue to the community.

—ECPDD: Jasper County is part of the The East Central Planning and Development District which offers resources to new and expanding businesses.

—School District: The West Jasper School District, which is based in Bay Springs is responsible for the education of nearly 1,400 children in Bay Springs and Stringer. District administration, as well as parent organizations, impact the community by providing quality education for young Bay Springs residents and by hosting events and activities that reflect pride within the Bay Springs community.

—Community Organizations: Organizations within the Bay Springs community, including church groups, garden clubs, civic organizations, social circles, youth organizations, and other formal and informal community organizations each have an impact on the Bay Springs community through their projects, volunteer efforts, and the ways in which they knit the community together through social connections. In many cases, non-profit organizations are eligible to receive grants to improve their communities.

—Residents: The people who make up the city of Bay Springs are those who have a vested interest in the success of Bay Springs. Residents contribute to Bay Spring’s quality of life by volunteering in the community, serving on the boards of local organizations, keeping their property clean, electing good representatives at the city, county, and state level, and getting involved in the activities that make a city great.

FOR CONSIDERATION

—Become a Mississippi Main Street

Community: The Main Street organization is a non-profit that works to make downtown communities viable place to live, work and play. Their four point approach to downtown development includes organization, design, promotion, and economic development. Main Street has the ability to contribute to the quality of life by organizing festivals and events, providing design guidance for downtown

businesses, and by working to recruit businesses and other development to the downtown area. In addition, as a non-profit, Main Street has the capability to apply for grants and create programs such as a facade improvement plan that improves a downtown district.

Implementation Matrix

At the heart of the visioning plan is the implementation matrix, the collection of all the good ideas and recommendations that will help Bay Springs achieve the vision that was created by the community for the community. The following table is divided among the ten categories listed in the Potential Improvement Projects section of the plan. The table includes the following categories:

Recommendations will be listed in a prioritized order for each category, starting with the recommendation that is most important, followed by the second most important recommendation, and so forth. All other things being equal, the community should begin working on recommendation #1 first.

—Recommendation: This section includes a brief description of the recommendation being made.

—Type: This describes whether the recommendation is a policy, a project, or a management activity. In general, policies are adopted by a legislative body, usually the board of aldermen, board of supervisors, an organization’s board of directors, or a similar group of people. Projects are physical actions that are taken within the city to create something new, improve existing infrastructure, develop a new program, or something similar. Projects are often funded with a combination of public resources and grant funding. Management includes activities that occur within the executive branch of an organization, either by the mayor, county administrator, or executive director of an organization.

—Partners: These are the organizations or groups of people most likely to be able to make the recommendation a reality. Descriptions of the various potential partners are listed in the previous section.

—Time frame: This is a general guideline for the amount of time the recommendation should take to implement once all partners are on board and necessary funding is in place.

—Cost: This is an estimate of the amount of funding that would be needed to implement the proposed recommendation. \$=\$0-\$100,000; \$\$=\$100,000-500,000; \$\$\$=\$500,000+

—Resource: This is a list of any resources that are available to help bring the recommendation to reality. These may include grant programs, organizations, reference materials, and other resources.

—Reference: This is a list of places within the Bay Springs Visioning Plan that reference the recommendation being made.

Wayfinding + Branding

#	Recommendation	Type	Partner(s)	Time Frame	Cost	Resources	Ref.
1	Work with all community development entities to develop a singular brand for the community, while maintaining individual identities	Management	City, County, Hired Design Professional(s), JCED, ECPDD	2-3 years	\$	National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)	Page 36
2	Promote Bay Springs's uniqueness through community events, wayfinding signage and regional advertising that attracts visitors.	Management	City, Hired Design Professional(s)	Ongoing	\$\$	Visit Mississippi; Mississippi Arts Commission; Mississippi Main Street Downtown Toolbox (see Appendix); Sign Research Foundation	Page 32

Highway 15 Beautification

#	Recommendation	Type	Partner(s)	Time Frame	Cost	Resources	Ref.
1	Adopt and enforce a Complete Streets Policy	Policy; Management	City	1-2 years	\$	Complete Streets Ordinance (see Appendix); AARP; Smart Growth America	Page 42
2	Adopt and enforce stronger sign regulations that reduce sign clutter along Highway 15	Policy; Management	City	1-2 years	\$	Precedent: Yazoo City Sign Ordinance (see Appendix)	Page 40
3	Redesign Highway 15 to provide improved traffic signals, ADA accessible crosswalks, lighting, and landscaping	Project	City, County, MDOT	5-10 years	\$\$\$	Mississippi Department of Transportation	Page 40
4	Install wayfinding signage near the intersection of Highways 15 and 18, and the intersection of Highway 15 and 8th Avenue	Project	City, Hired Design Professional, MDOT	2-3 years	\$\$	Mississippi Main Street Downtown Toolbox (see Appendix); Sign Research Foundation	Page 35
5	Adopt site and design standards to improve the quality and appearance of commercial development along Highway 15	Policy	City, MDOT	1-2 years	\$	Form-based Codes; Overlay Districts; Precedent: Advisory Standards for the Downtown Starkville Historic District	Page 42
6	Construct a multi-purpose bike and pedestrian path along Highway 15 that connects to the community-wide route	Project	City, County, MDOT	5-10 years	\$\$\$	Transportation Alternatives Program; Recreational Trails Program	Page 42
7	Develop and adopt street design standards for arterial and collector streets	Policy	City	1-2 years	\$	N/A	Page 43

Outdoor Recreation

#	Recommendation	Type	Partner(s)	Time Frame	Cost	Resources	Ref
1	Renovate existing sidewalk infrastructure that has fallen into disrepair and construct new sidewalks to fill gaps in connectivity	Project	City	5-10 years	\$\$	Transportation Alternatives Program; Safe Routes to School	Page 44
2	Retrofit existing streets to provide bike lanes, sharrows, and related signage	Project	City, County	3-5 years	\$\$	Transportation Alternatives Program; Safe Routes to School; Rural Design Guide (see Appendix); Blue Cross Blue Shield Healthy Hometown Grant; MS Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks Outdoor Recreation Grants	Page 45
3	Revise Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations to require sidewalks in new residential and commercial development	Policy	City	1-2 years	\$	N/A	Page 46
4	Implement a scooter and/or bike share program	Policy; Management	City, Scooter/Bike Sharing Company	1-2 years	\$	Bird, Lime, Lyft	Page 49

Façade Improvement Program

#	Recommendation	Type	Partner(s)	Time Frame	Cost	Resources	Ref
1	Create a façade grant program that incentivizes downtown property owners to restore buildings to historic standards	Policy	City, JCED, ECPDD	2-3 years	\$	Mississippi Main Street Association; MDAH; Precedent: Advisory Standards for the Downtown Starkville Historic District Precedent: Gulfport Façade Grant Program (see Appendix)	Page 56
2	Adopt and enforce a Downtown Landscaping Ordinance	Policy; Management	City	1-2 years	\$	Mississippi Main Street Downtown Landscape Design Guide (see Appendix)	Page 58

Downtown Revitalization

#	Recommendation	Type	Partner(s)	Time Frame	Cost	Resources	Ref
1	Retrofit the alley between the block of buildings including Alexander's and the railroad tracks to provide the community with an outdoor public space	Project	City, Hired Design Professional, Local Artists	1-2 years	\$	AARP Community Challenge; AARP Pop-Up Placemaking Toolkit (see Appendix); Project for Public Spaces Placemaking Grants	Page 50
2	Create a Public Art Plan for the city of Bay Springs with emphasis on the downtown areas and make an attempt to employ local artists	Policy	City	1-2 years	\$	MS Arts Commission; NEA; Our Town Grant	Page 50
3	Install temporary art or lighting in empty storefronts and other places downtown lacking activity in order to create a shared public space and points of interest	Project	City, Residents, Local Artists, Local Organizations, Hired Professional Designer, Mississippi Power	Ongoing	\$	MS Arts Commission; NEA; AARP Pop-Up Placemaking Toolkit (see Appendix); Project for Public Spaces Placemaking Grants	Page 52
4	Install a streatory or parklet downtown on 5th Avenue	Project	City, Local Businesses, Hired Professional Designer	3-4 months	\$	NEA; Small Town Center Streatory Toolkit (see Appendix); AARP Pop-Up Placemaking Toolkit (see Appendix); Project for Public Spaces Placemaking Grants	Page 54
5	Design and implement asphalt art to define edges of streets, crosswalks, parking lots, bulb-outs, and other areas to cut down on the concrete jungle effect	Project	City, Local Businesses, Local Artists	1-2 years	\$	Bloomberg Philanthropies Asphalt Art Initiative; AARP Pop-Up Placemaking Toolkit (see Appendix); Project for Public Spaces Placemaking Grants	Page 55

Mixed Use Retail + Office + Residential

#	Recommendation	Type	Partner(s)	Time Frame	Cost	Resources	Ref
1	Design and build a mixed-use retail, office, and residential building near downtown with 10-20 rentable units on top floors and several leasable retail spaces on the first floor	Project	City, Hired Design Professional(s), JCED, ECPDD, Developer/ Investor	3-5 years	\$\$\$	FHA/HUD 221 (d)(4) program; Mississippi Main Street Downtown Toolbox (see Appendix); MDA; The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Economic Development Program	Page 60
2	Conduct a retail linkage analysis	Management	City; MSU Extension	>1 year	\$	Dr. Rachael Carter at MSU Extension	Page 69

APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1

Bay Springs Research

Population

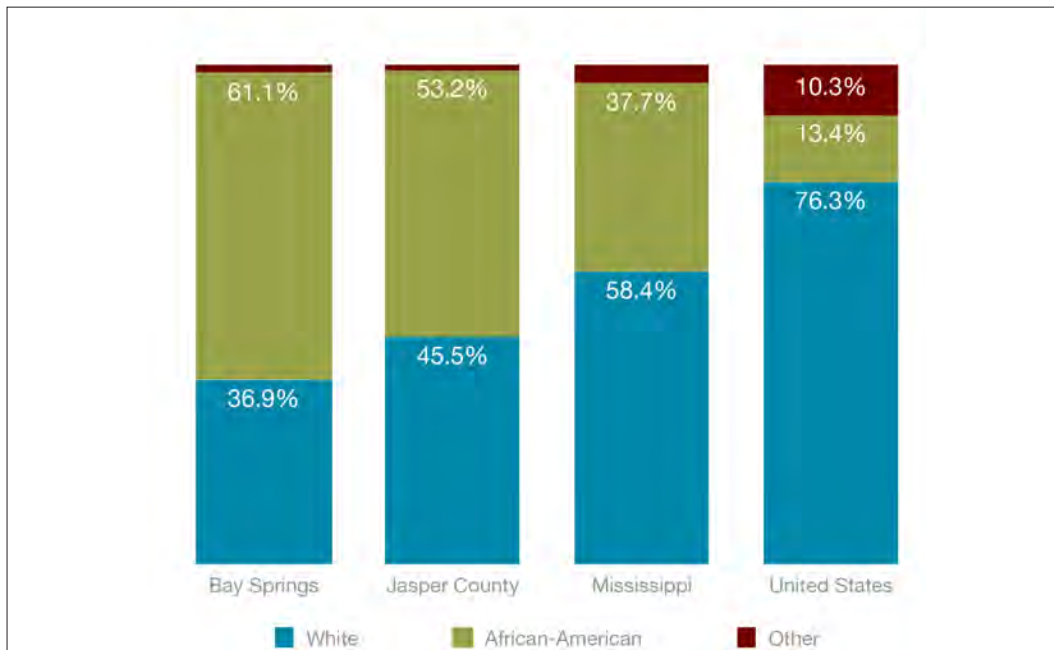
To plan for Bay Springs' future, it is important to understand the demographic characteristics of the people who live in the community. Attributes such as race, age, and gender create a picture of what a community looks like and historic population trends can be analyzed to project future population growth.

Race + Ethnicity

Bay Springs has an estimated population of 1,632 residents³, 61.1% of which are African-American and 36.9% of which are white.

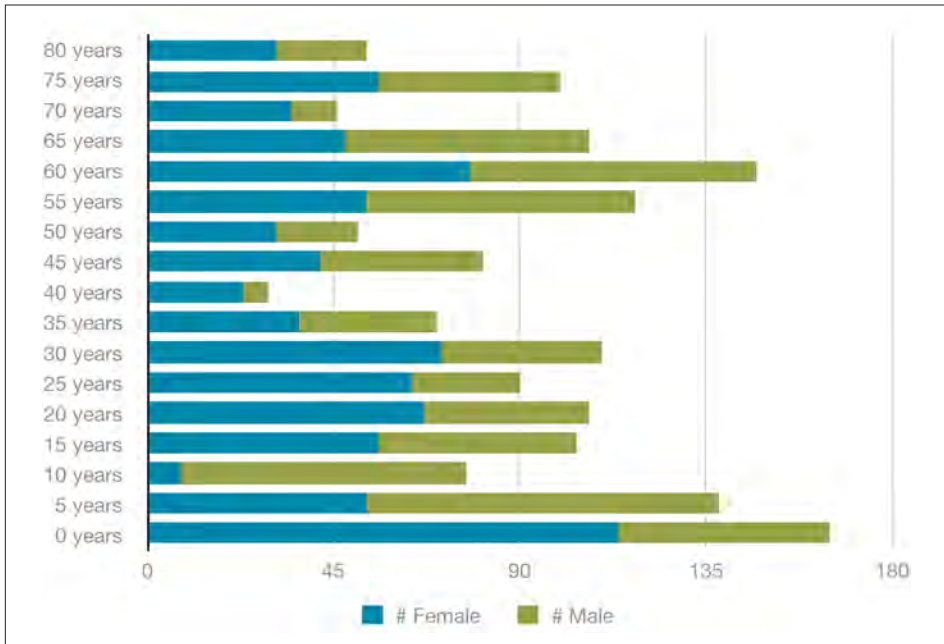
As a percentage of total population, Bay Springs is less white than the United States and is 8.6% less white than Jasper County and also 39.4% less white than the State of Mississippi.

Members of the Bay Springs community report good relations among the various racial demographics, including an integrated public school district, community wide youth sports programs, and other community events.



Population by Race: Bay Springs, Jasper County, Mississippi, and U.S. (2019)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2016-2020 Am. Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

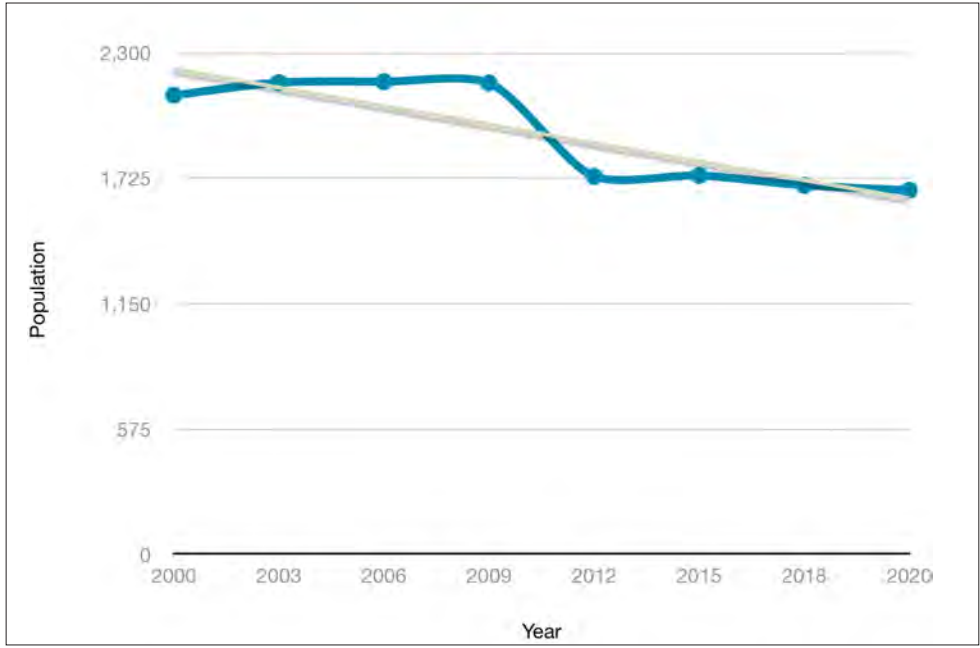


Population by Age and Gender: Bay Springs (2019)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Age + Gender

A large portion of Bay Springs' population is comprised of infants and toddlers, along with older adults age 60 to 64 years old. At the time of the 2020 Census, Bay Springs' population was 44.5% male and 55.5% female, with the oldest age groups having a significantly higher ratio of females to males.

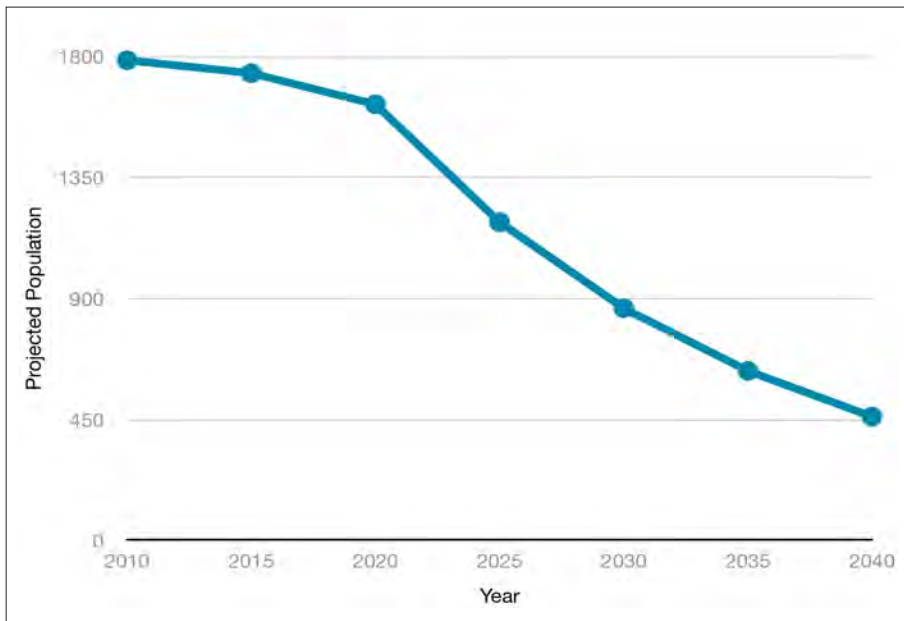


Population Change Over Time: Bay Springs (2000 - 2020)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Change Over Time

Over the past twenty years, Bay Springs' population has both increased and decreased, with its largest decrease in population occurring between 2009 and 2012. However, since 2015, population decline has remained stalled, resulting in a net loss of 68 people over the past 5 years, a 4% population decrease.



Projected Population: Bay Springs (2010 - 2040)

Source: Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning's Office of Policy, Research and Planning, January 2019. Projections for Bay Springs made by Small Town Center

Projected Growth

Future population is difficult to project, with birth and death rates, as well as in-migration and out-migration impacting population growth and decline. Community factors also contribute to population change, including the availability of jobs, the quality of healthcare, and the performance of the public education system.

In 2012, the Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning released a 15 year projection of population by county using the cohort component method to make projections based on 2010 Census data. The cohort component method uses fertility and mortality rates for population sub-groups along with migration rates to estimate future population.

Based on the 20-year time horizon for the Bay Springs Visioning Plan, it is necessary to project population through at least 2038. Assuming the trends for Jasper County are the same for Bay Springs, county data was extrapolated to produce population projections for Bay Springs through 2040. These projections show a slow, but steady decrease from 1,800 residents in 2010 to nearly 450 residents in 2040.

Based on the population projections and trends over the past 35 years, it is reasonable to assume that Bay Springs' population will remain in the 1,000-2,000 range for the foreseeable future. It is important to note, however, that a significant economic investment in the Bay Springs community would bring about growth in Bay Springs' population compared to what is projected.

City	Distance (miles)	Population
Montrose, MS	11.9	123
Sylvarena, MS	6.5	146
Louin, MS	7.3	378
Soso, MS	17.4	582
Raleigh, MS	15.3	1,152
Taylorsville, MS	15.7	2,080

Population Comparison with Nearby Cities (2019)

Source: Google Maps, U.S. Census Bureau, 2016-2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Comparable Cities

Bay Springs is within 20 miles of several comparable cities. It's two largest neighbors are Raleigh and Taylorsville, which are both 15 miles away, respectively. Within a short drive, Bay Springs residents can be in any of seven similar sized cities. It's nearest neighbor, Sylvarena, is 6.5 miles northeast with a significantly smaller population. A little over seven miles to the north is Soso, with nearly half the population of Bay Springs.

Company	# Jobs	Industry
Peco Foods, Inc.	650	Poultry Product Processing
Hol-Mac Corporation	620	Machinery Manufacturing
Jasper Nursing Home	260	Long-Time Care Facilities
Jasper West Consolidated Schools	190	Public Education
Denson Oil Company	120	Petroleum and Products Wholesalers

Largest Employers: Jasper County (2018)

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018 Annual Averages

Employment + Economy

A diversified economy combined with good opportunities for employment is one of the foundations for a prosperous and sustainable community. Towns with one or two major companies who employ a disproportionate percentage of a town’s residents are at risk of a major setback should that company shut down or move its operations to another location. An understanding of Bay Springs’ existing economic conditions helps to inform the Small Town Center’s recommendations for strengthening the local economy.

Top Employers

Based on an estimated labor force of 6,614 persons⁴, Jasper County’s largest employer, Peco Foods, Inc., provides jobs for nearly 9.8% of the

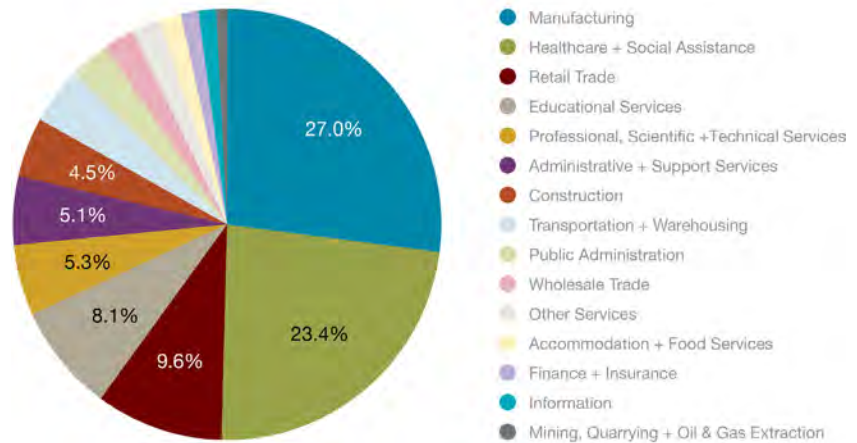
labor force in Jasper County. Hol-Mac Corporation, the second largest employer in Jasper County, provides jobs for more than 9.3% of the Jasper County labor force.

Because of the positive impact these companies and organizations have on the community, special care should be given to ensure the success of existing industry in Jasper County.

Employment by Industry

Bay Springs’ economy is heavily dependent on manufacturing and healthcare/social assistance, with 50.4% of jobs in those two sectors alone. Bay Springs’ manufacturing sector represents 27% of the town’s total jobs, compared with Mississippi’s 14%, a difference of 13%.

This means that Bay Springs' workers are almost twice as likely to have jobs in the manufacturing sector as those in the rest of the state. Also of note, the professional, scientific, and technical services sector comprises nearly double the percentage of total jobs in Mississippi (2.9%) as compared with Bay Springs (5.3%). This presents an opportunity for employment growth in the technical services field in Bay Springs.



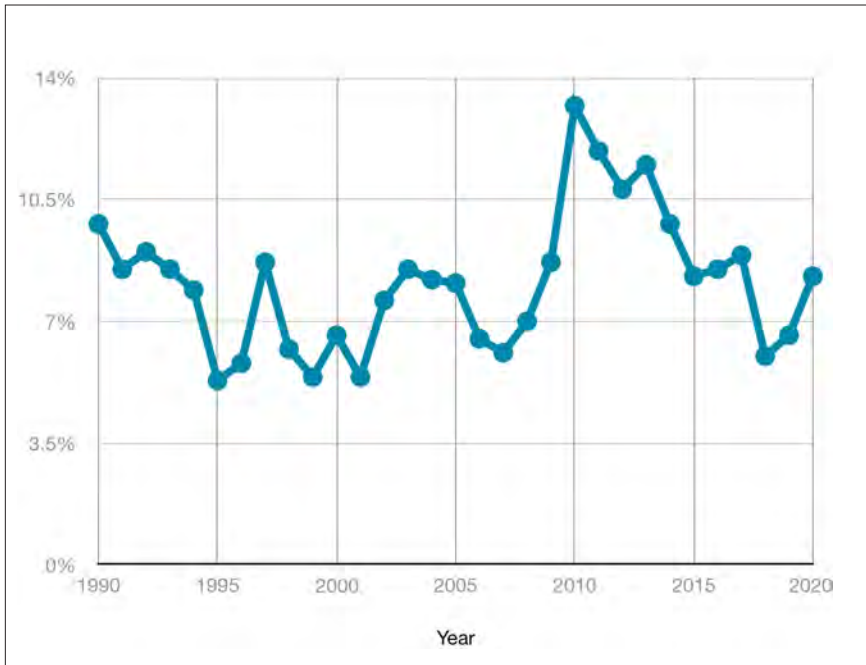
Industry as a Percentage of Employment: Bay Springs (2020)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2016-2020 Am. Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Industry	Bay Springs		Mississippi		Difference
	# of Jobs	% of Total	# of Jobs	% of Total	
Manufacturing	163	27.0%	160,542	14.0%	13.1%
Healthcare + Social Assistance	141	23.4%	170,664	14.8%	8.5%
Retail Trade	58	9.6%	130,605	11.4%	-1.7%
Educational Services	49	8.1%	139,288	12.1%	-4.0%
Professional, Scientific + Technical Services	32	5.3%	33,151	2.9%	2.4%
Administrative + Support Services	31	5.1%	36,653	3.2%	2.0%
Construction	27	4.5%	65,282	5.7%	-1.2%
Transportation + Warehousing	26	4.5%	81,563	7.1%	-2.6%
Public Administration	18	3.0%	62,011	5.4%	-2.4%
Wholesale Trade	14	2.3%	27,202	2.4%	-0.0%
Other Services	13	2.2%	62,032	5.4%	-3.2%
Accommodation + Food Services	10	1.7%	117,745	10.2%	-8.6%
Finance + Insurance	8	1.3%	28,301	2.5%	-1.1%
Information	8	1.3%	12,174	1.1%	0.3%
Mining, Quarrying + Oil and Gas Extraction	5	0.8%	23,149	2.0%	-1.2%
TOTAL	603	100%		100%	0%

Employment by Industry: Bay Springs vs. Mississippi (2020)

Note: The total # of jobs for Mississippi includes the following industries, which did not employ people in Bay Springs: arts, entertainment + recreation, agriculture + forestry. Table data source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2016-2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



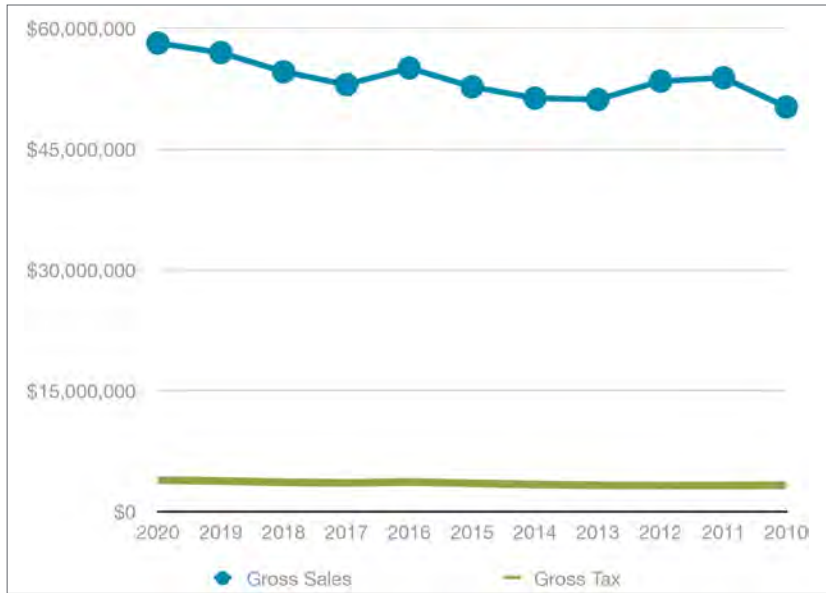
Average Annual Unemployment: Jasper County (1990 - 2020)

Source: Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, Economic Research Division

Unemployment

A community's unemployment rate is defined as the percentage of individuals in the labor force who are currently unemployed. The unemployment rate is often viewed as an indicator of economic conditions, rising during tough economic times and falling when the economy is growing and jobs are plentiful. It is important to note that the unemployment rate is considered a "lagging indicator," meaning that it generally rises or falls in response to changing economic conditions, as opposed to anticipating them.

The chart above shows the impact the Great Recession had on the Jasper County economy between 2008 and 2015. Currently, Bay Springs' average unemployment rate is at 8.3%, indicating a weak economy.

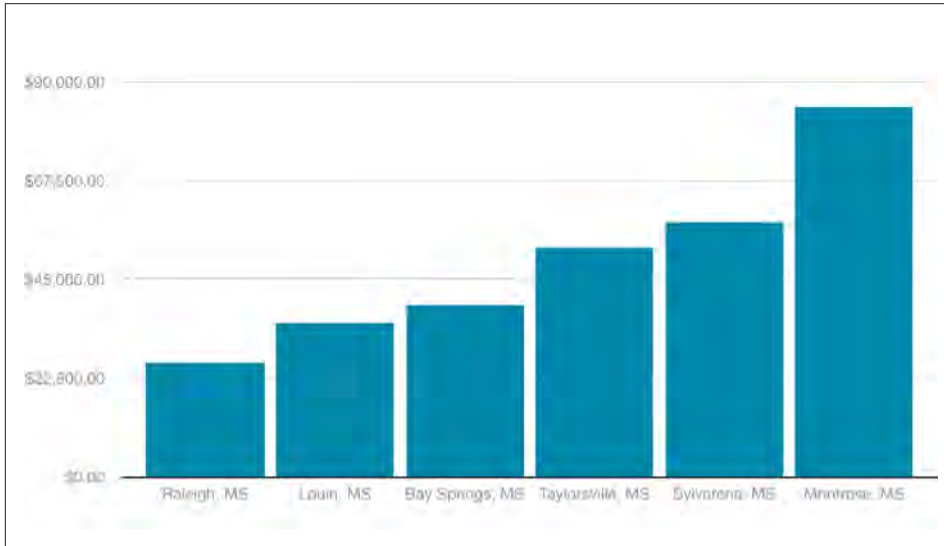


Sales and Gross Tax: Bay Springs (2010 - 2020)

Source: Mississippi Department of Revenue, Annual Reports 2010-2020

Sales Tax

All sales of tangible personal property and many services in the State of Mississippi are subject to a 7% sales tax, which is based on gross proceeds or gross income, depending on the business type. Each month, the Mississippi Department of Revenue distributes 18.5% of the sales taxes collected within a municipality during the previous month back to the municipality.



Median Household Income: Comparison with Nearby Cities (2020)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2016-2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

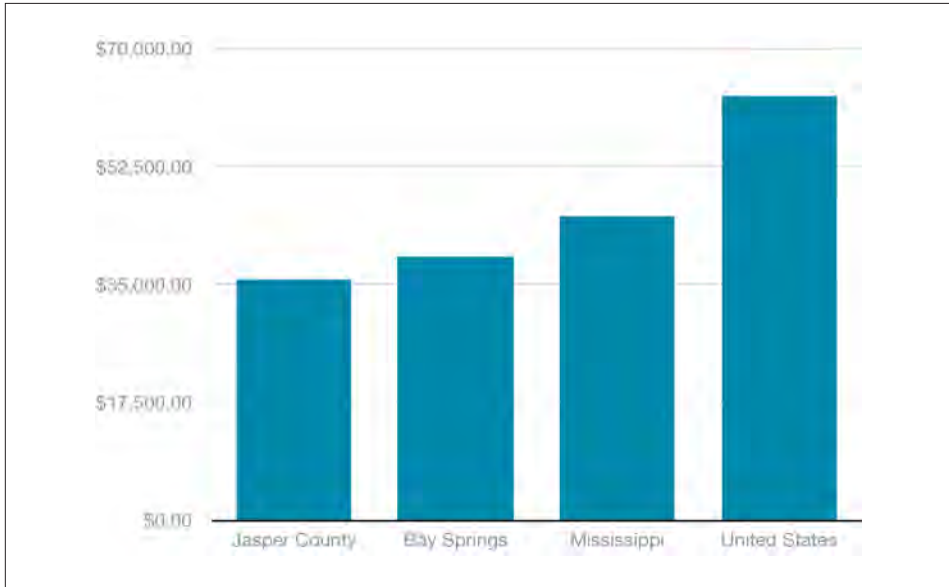
Household Income

A community’s median household income (MHI) refers to the income level at which half the households in the community earn more and half earn less. MHI is often used to determine housing affordability and is a good predictor of a community’s wealth.

Comparing Bay Springs with the same cities previously used to compare population, Bay Springs fares worse than most of the other communities with an MHI of \$39,097.

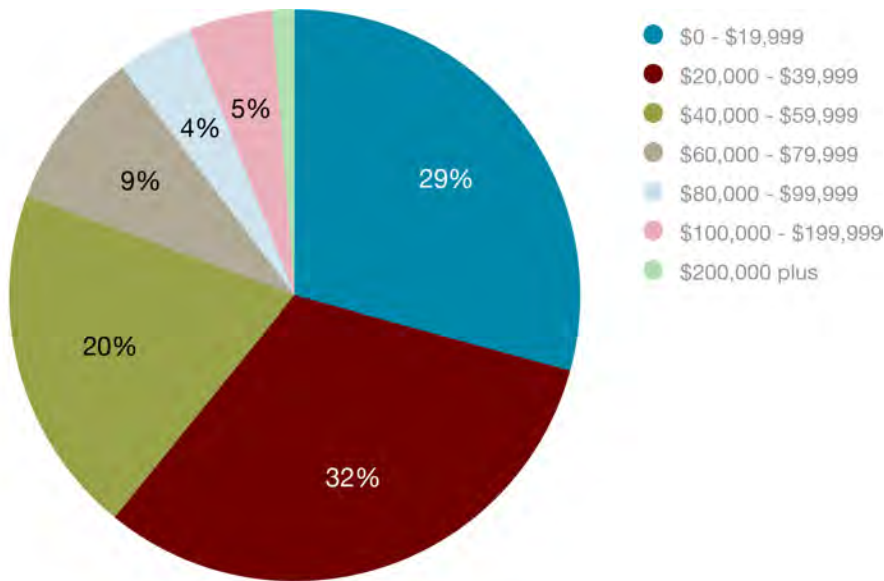
Additionally, when compared with Jasper County, the state of Mississippi, and the United States, Bay Springs’ median household income (MHI) falls below the others.

The chart on the opposite page shows how household income is distributed among income ranges. As you will see, nearly one-third of households in Bay Springs make less than \$20,000, with nearly another one-third of households earning between \$20,000 and \$40,000. The remaining one-third is divided among higher income ranges.



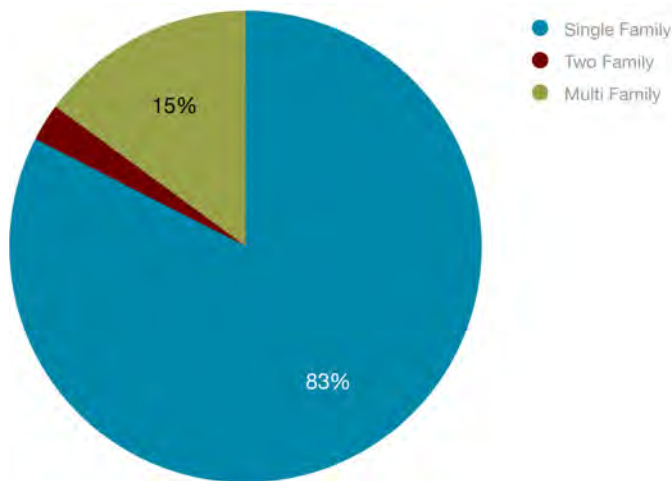
MHI: Bay Springs, Jasper County, Mississippi, and U.S. (2020)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2016-2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



Household Income Distribution: Bay Springs (2019)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2016-2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



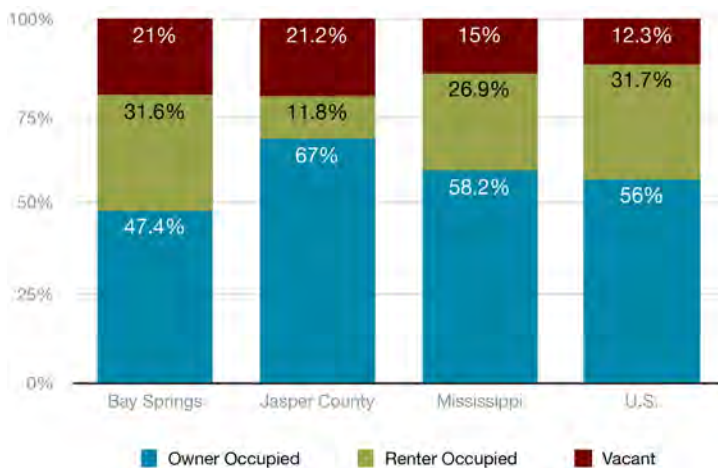
Housing by Unit Characteristic: Bay Springs (2020)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Housing Characteristic

The vast majority (83%) of Bay Springs' housing stock is comprised of single family, detached housing, with smaller single-digit percentages represented by mobile homes, 3 or 4 unit multi-family units, and duplexes.

Multi-family housing in all categories, including duplexes and dwellings with 3+ units comprises 15% of the housing stock in Bay Springs.



Housing Occupancy: Bay Springs, Jasper County, Mississippi, U.S. (2020)

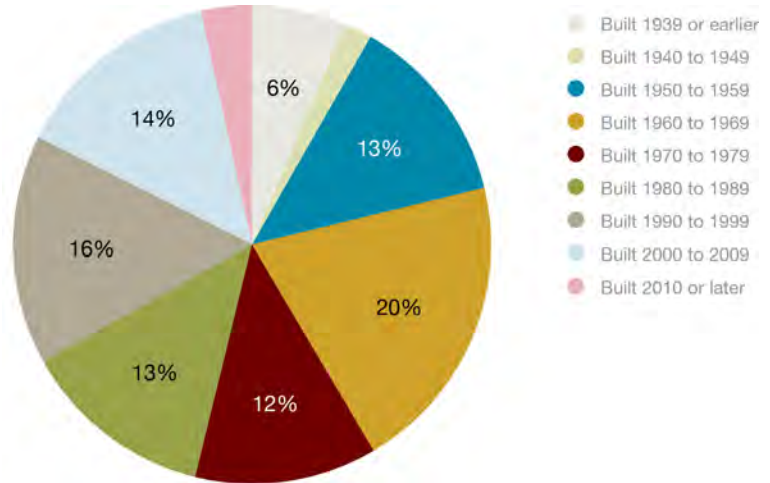
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Housing Occupancy

Of Bay Springs' estimated 812 homes⁶, nearly half are owner-occupied, with 31.6% of them renter-occupied, and the remaining 21% vacant. Bay Springs has a higher proportion of renter-occupied housing than Jasper County and the state of Mississippi, but a lower proportion of renter-occupied housing than the U.S.

Housing Age

The majority (58%) of Bay Springs' housing stock has been built within the last 50 years. Only 28 new homes have been built since 2010, representing just 3% of total housing in Bay Springs.

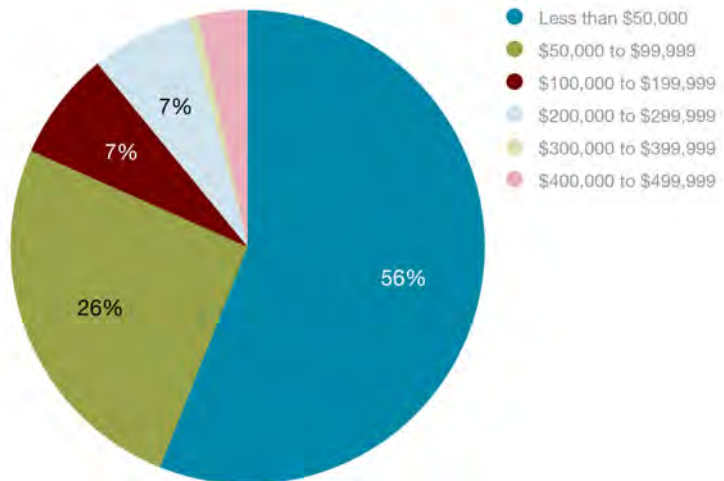


Housing Age: Bay Springs (2020)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

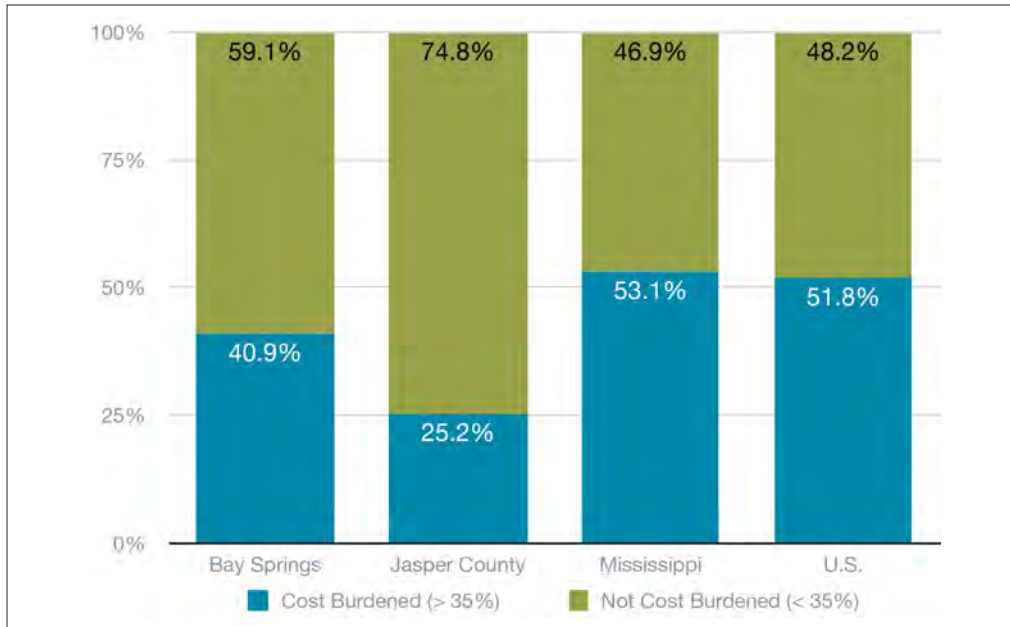
Housing Value

Bay Springs' median housing value for owner occupied houses is \$78,900, meaning half the homes in Bay Springs have a value higher than \$78,900 and half the houses have a value lower than that. More than half of Bay Springs' housing is valued at less than \$50,000, while 26% of Bay Springs' housing is valued between \$50,000 and \$100,000.



Owner Occupied Housing Value: Bay Springs (2020)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



Rent Affordability: Bay Springs, Jasper County, Mississippi, U.S. (2020)
[Rent as a % of Household Income]

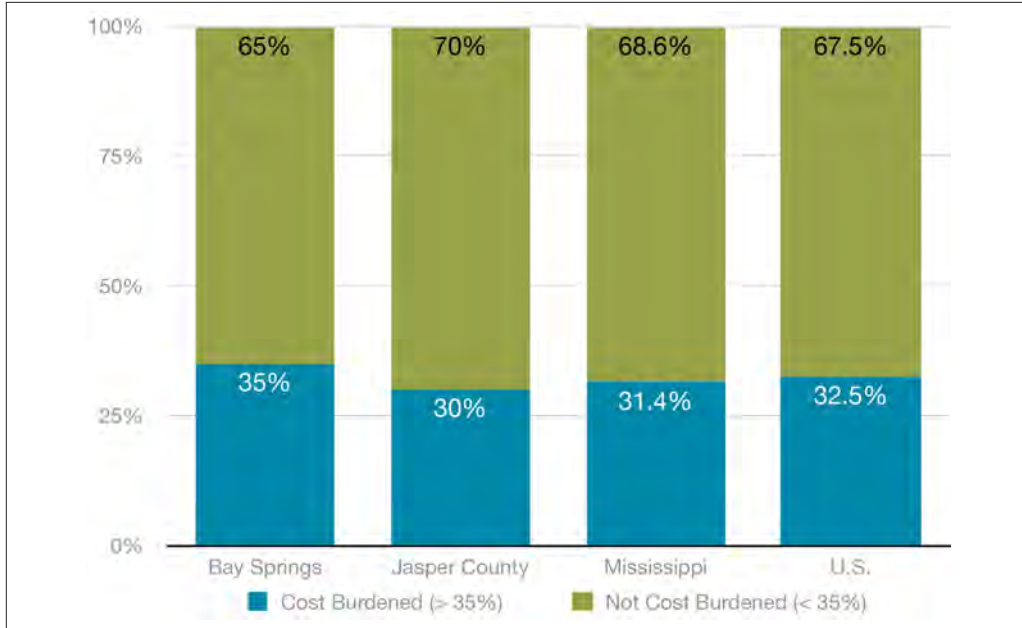
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Rent Affordability

Housing affordability is defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development as spending less than 30% of gross household income on housing expenses. This includes principal, interest, taxes and homeowner’s insurance for homeowners, and rent payments for those who rent or lease their home. When a household pays more than 30% of household income on housing expenses, they are said to be “cost burdened.”

In Bay Springs, renters pay \$297 less per month on housing expenses than homeowners with a mortgage. However, homeowners without a mortgage pay the least amount per month on housing expenses at just \$334 per month.

When compared with larger geographies, Bay Springs renters are marginally more cost burdened than their counterparts in Mississippi and the United States, with 35% of renters paying more than 30% of their household income on rent. Jasper County residents are 5% less likely to be cost burdened than Bay Springs residents.



Housing Affordability: Bay Springs, Jasper County, Mississippi, U.S. (2020)
 [Housing Expenses as a % of Household Income]

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Homeowners in Bay Springs pay a much smaller percentage of their household income on housing expenses than renters, proving the point that homeownership is a more affordable option for Bay Springs residents. Bay Springs homeowners are less likely to be cost burdened than residents of Jasper County, Mississippi, and the United States.

	Owner, with Mortgage	Owner, without Mortgage	Renter
Median Housing Expenses	\$875.00	\$334.00	\$578.00

Housing Expenses: Bay Springs (2020)

U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Bicycle Infrastructure

Bay Springs' bicycle infrastructure is currently non-existent, with no dedicated bike lanes, multi-use paths, or share-the-road signage currently present in town. Although bicycles are always allowed as vehicles on roads and streets, infrastructure such as striping, signage, and barriers create an environment that makes bicycle riders feel safe on the road.

Railroad Infrastructure

Bay Springs is served by the Mississippi Southern Railroad, a 156-mile long railroad that runs from Bay Springs to Ackerman, Mississippi. Owned by Watco Railcorp, the railroad primarily runs parallel to Highway 15, but diverges into downtown Bay Springs before crossing over Highway 18 via an underpass north of Highway 18's intersection with Highway 15. The railroad runs through the Jasper County Industrial Park and primarily transports agricultural and lumber products⁷. The Mississippi Southern Railroad connects with KCS railroad in Newton, Mississippi.



Mississippi Southern Railroad, courtesy of MississippiRailroads.com

APPENDIX 2

Community Engagement Posters

The following images are scanned images of the posters used in the community engagement meeting to gain feedback from residents.

BAY SPRINGS, MS



Fred Carl Jr.
SMALL TOWN CENTER

What are your town's current conditions?

Rank the following by placing an "x" in columns 1-10 with 10 being the best:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Schools Additional Comments: <u>Public School needs improvement</u> ✓	X		X	X X	X X X X X X X X	X X X X X X			X X		X X X X X X X
Access to Healthcare Additional Comments:	X		X X	X X	X X X X X	X X X	X X X	X X X X X X	X		
Safety Additional Comments:			X X	X X		X		X X X X X X X X	X X X X X X	X X X X	X X X
Municipal Buildings (City Hall, Library, Etc.) Additional Comments: * to have separate library & city Better directions			X	X	X	X X	X X X X X X X X	X X X X X X	X X X X		
Infrastructure (Roads, Bridges, Etc.) Additional Comments: * Hwy 18 + 15 intersection needs a south bound turn signal! * Badly	X		X X	X X X X X	X X X X X X	X X X X X X X X		X X X X			
Job Market Additional Comments:		X X X X	X X X X	X X X X	X	X X X X	X X X X	X X X X	X X X X X X	X X X X X X	

BAY SPRINGS, MS



Where do you spend most of your time in Bay Springs?
Circle your top three areas of use.



Additional Comments:

DOWNTOWN

BAY SPRINGS, MS



Fred Carl Jr.
SMALL TOWN CENTER

Where do you spend most of your time downtown?
Circle your top three areas of use.



Additional Comments:

BAY SPRINGS, MS



Fred Carl Jr.
SMALL TOWN CENTER

What makes Bay Springs special?

The People, Safe Place ✓✓✓
 Gemmety Safe, Pretty Flowers, Lights ✓
 Small Community ✓✓
 Low Crime rate ✓✓✓
 Job opportunities ✓
 Small, family-oriented community
 Family Atmosphere ✓
 Safety ✓
 RURAL ATMSHERE
 Beautiful Parks and Christmas lights ✓✓
 Downtown Street Signs + Lights Look good!

Churches
 Home
 the people ✓✓

What is your vision for the community of Bay Springs?

A great place to raise a family ✓
 Better Education to give kids a brighter future
 More things for young folks to be in town 100% ✓
 A pretty safe, nice family hangout place to eat - not to have to leave here
 Increase job opportunities & partnerships
 Lights down back streets
 rate to... to leave the city for shopping Better Corner Market
 Growth & competitive community

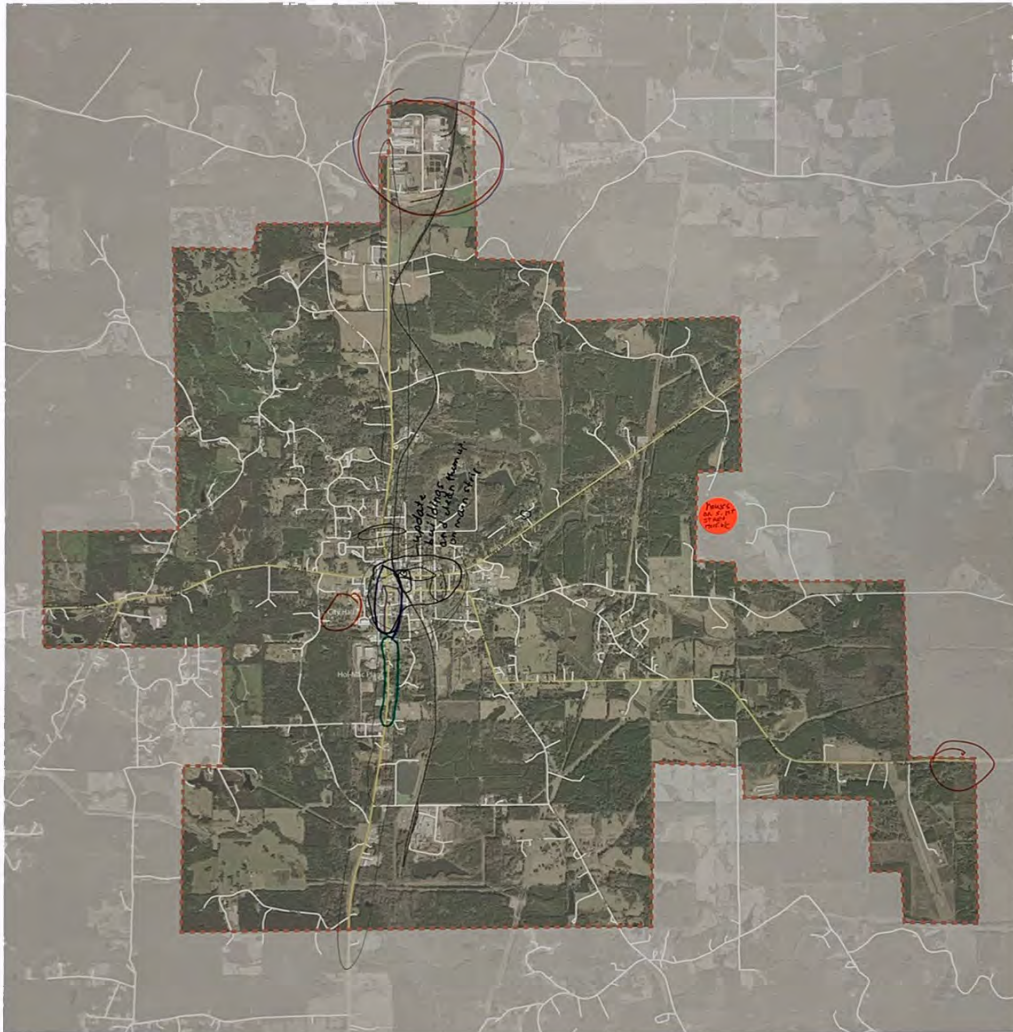
better private & public schools ✓✓
 housing opt. To Attract Families & individuals To the community to work ✓✓
 Possible for... + address
 Better Public schools ✓
 gated community
 A place that allows me to not ~~have~~ have to leave in order to accomplish shopping or recreation ✓✓

BAY SPRINGS, MS



Fred Carl Jr.
SMALL TOWN CENTER

What areas in Bay Springs need improving?
Circle areas that need the most improvement.



Additional Comments:

4 lane between new town + Laurel (Hwy 15) @ GREEK

- DOWNTOWN
- Shops in downtown area ●

- Litter Pickups (littering campaigns)

they
- 15 in the town is an eyesore. business need
+ refacing
Side walks to keep pedestrians
safe + improve aesthetics

BAY SPRINGS, MS



Fred Carl Jr.
SMALL TOWN CENTER

What areas downtown need improving?
Circle areas that need the most improvement.



Additional Comments. *in & out @ Hol-mac P1* ●
Coming into Bay Springs from 18 after Little Miracles Daycare
- water tower SE town has brown stain
- no portable buildings or Aluminum siding ✓
- Shopping center by autozone is eye sore as well as D&D

BAY SPRINGS, MS



Fred Carl Jr.
SMALL TOWN CENTER

Which of these YOUTH ACTIVITIES do you WISH your town had or had more of?

Place a dot under your top three choices.



Science/STEM Camps



Coding Camps



Culinary Camps



Sports Camps



Art Camps



Laser Tag



Trampoline Park



Boys and Girls Club



OTHER:

bowling alley
skating rink
Dancing facilities / mini-golf
Swimming
Career shadowing

BAY SPRINGS, MS



Fred Carl Jr.
SMALL TOWN CENTER

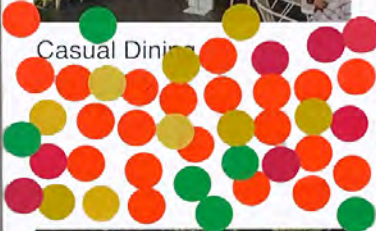
Which of these DINING and ENTERTAINMENT amenities do you WISH your town had or had more of?
Place a dot under your top three choices.



Fine Dining



Casual Dining



Coffeeshop



Food Trucks



Farmers' Marke



Movie Theater



Comedy Club



Concert Venue



OTHER:

- new corner mart
- McDonald's
- McDonald's
- Krispie Kreme
- McDonald's
- Bojangles
- Waffle House
- Click-It-A
- Donut Shop

BAY SPRINGS, MS



Fred Carl Jr.
SMALL TOWN CENTER

Which of these OUTDOOR RECREATION amenities do you WISH your town had or had more of?
Place a dot under your top three choices.



Baseball/Soccer Fields



Basketball Courts



Tennis Courts



Parks/Green Space



Playgrounds



Better Walking/Biking Trails



Splash Pad/Water Recreation



Stage/Amphitheater



OTHER:

- Play ground maint ✓
- Play ground lighting ✓
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

BAY SPRINGS, MS



Fred Carl Jr.
SMALL TOWN CENTER

What are the strengths and weaknesses of the current economy of Bay Springs?

Strong Industrial Economy / Weak Retail Options	Temporary buildings use as business fronts that is ^{by} _{assist}
Strengths: people, industrial	Weakness - Storage Buildings as Business
Weakness: Lack of Restaurants, Clothing Stores, empty stores downtown	✓ - Too Many Billboards - Why Too Many
Weakness: Lack of businesses, tax dollars supporting run	Strong Industry
small high schools facilities poor need Promote Board of Aldermen	not much corporate retail
Need more Need more Retail opportunity, Wazeen Motel appears unsafe	Population increases ^{smoothly} every day
Accessibility to necessities	
unused lots cleaned up, better contact	
Weakness: Whis - base neo Park out of style, neo lot needs building like a new corner mart	
We need quality housing + Apartments to rent	
Empty store fronts - main ✓	

What types of businesses would you like to see brought into your community?

Social Retail Business ✓	Restaurants / sports bar ✓
Restaurants ✓ ✓	day-care ✓ ✓ ✓
Day care ✓ ✓ ✓	retail store that is not a dollar store ✓
Deli's / pizza (low) ✓	consignment store
grocery store (low) Better Quality store ✓	niche market / hotel
grocery store ✓	MORE People friendly
restaurant (dine in) ✓	Hotel (clean) ✓
retail ✓	CAR WASH
info on the	CVS / Walgreens ✓
Recreation / Swim ✓ ✓	Another Gym ✓
Donut shop	
Gym with children	
Daycare	



Fred Carl Jr.
SMALL TOWN CENTER

The Fred Carl, Jr. Small Town Center is a community design center in the College of Architecture, Art and Design at Mississippi State University. We provide a range of design and planning services for communities and research about small town challenges.

BIKE + PEDESTRIAN STUDIES



Communities of all sizes are seeking to provide better access for bicycles and pedestrians. Let us help you develop a complete streets plan that will expand your transportation options.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



All towns need a vision for the future. We engage residents and stakeholders of all ages and backgrounds to establish a community vision that is reflective of your town's needs.



CREATING AND BUILDING



Developing ideas for a community project isn't the end game for us. We like to get our hands dirty by creating and building the projects we help communities envision.



DESIGN WORKSHOPS



We help educate community leaders about the importance of community development and public interest design through various seminars and workshops.



DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION



The heart of any small town is its historic downtown. We can help provide the tools you need to begin a revitalization in your town that will celebrate your unique sense of place.



GRANT WRITING



Not all communities have the cash on hand to implement their vision. We take your ideas and help you find the funding needed to make your project a reality.



MASTER PLANNING



Whether it is a community-wide comprehensive plan or a master plan focused on a specific neighborhood or site, we can help you create a road map for achieving your goals.



RESEARCH



Our staff works with Mississippi State University faculty and students to conduct research and provide answers to some of the biggest issues facing America's small towns.



PROJECT FEASIBILITY STUDIES



Before you invest a lot of money in a project you aren't quite sure about, let us help you weigh your options through a detailed study of your project's feasibility.



APPENDIX 3

Complete Streets Sample Ordinance

Section 1. Statement of intent.

The city seeks to plan for, design, and construct all new city transportation improvement projects to provide appropriate accommodation for pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and persons of all ages and abilities, while promoting safe operation for all users. Complete Streets may be achieved through single projects or incrementally through a series of smaller improvements or maintenance activities over time. It is the Mayor and Board of Aldermen's intent that all potential sources of transportation funding be considered to implement Complete Streets principles. The city believes that maximum financial flexibility is important to implement Complete Streets principles and that implementation should complement the context of the community.

Section 2. Incorporation of Complete Streets principles.

The city recognizes the importance of a well-connected network of streets, sidewalks, and bicycle paths and will incorporate the Complete Streets principles as follows:

1. Planning, design, and construction of new streets and roadways shall encourage connectivity with existing streets and roadways in an effort to create a comprehensive, integrated, and connected transportation network for all users and modes of transportation.
2. A four-foot wide paved shoulder shall be included with construction of all new roadways or with the resurfacing or reconstruction of existing roadways when roadway traffic is greater than 1,000 vehicles per day. Paved shoulders have safety and operational advantages for all road users in addition to providing a place for bicyclists and pedestrians.
3. Sidewalks, shared use paths, street crossings (including over and under passes), pedestrian signals, signs, street furniture, transit stops, and other facilities, shall be designed, constructed, operated, and maintained so that all pedestrians, including people with disabilities, can travel safely and independently.
4. Bicycle and pedestrian ways shall be established in new construction and reconstruction projects undertaken by the city in keeping with the proposals of the city's comprehensive plan unless one or more of these conditions exist:
 - a. Bicyclists or pedestrians are prohibited by law from using the roadway. In this instance, a greater effort may be necessary to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians elsewhere within the right-of-way or within the same transportation corridor.

- b. The cost of establishing bikeways or walkways would be excessively disproportionate to the total cost of the transportation project.
 - c. Severe topographic or natural resource constraints exist that preclude expanding roadway paving without incurring excessive costs.
 - d. There is very low population density and scarcity of residents or other factors indicate an absence of present and future need.
- 3. Where other parallel accommodation exists; or
 - 4. Where there is a demonstrated absence of present and future need.

Section 3. Complete streets principles not applicable.

Complete Streets principles will not apply where extraordinary circumstances exist, such as:

- 1. During ordinary maintenance activities designed to keep assets in serviceable condition (e.g., mowing, cleaning, sweeping, spot repair and surface treatments such as chip seal, or interim measures on detour or haul routes);
- 2. Where the Board of Aldermen issues a documented exception concluding that application of Complete Streets principles is inappropriate because it would be contrary to public benefits or safety;

APPENDIX 4

Resource Links

The following resource links provide grant and project opportunities mentioned in the implementation matrix.

AARP Community Challenge: aarp.org/livable-communities/community-challenge

AARP Complete Streets: aarp.org/livable-communities/getting-around/info-2018/complete-street-example.html

AARP Pop-Up Placemaking Toolkit: aarp.org/livable-communities/tool-kits-resources/info-2019/pop-up-tool-kit.html

Advisory Standards for the Downtown Starkville Historic District: smalltowncenter.msstate.edu/sites/www.smalltowncenter.msstate.edu/files/2021-05/Downtown%20Starkville%20Design%20Guidelines%20V3.pdf

Bird: bird.co

Bloomberg Philanthropies Asphalt Art Initiative: asphaltart.bloomberg.org

Blue Cross Blue Shield Healthy Hometown Grant: healthiermississippi.org/healthy-awards/hometown

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG): hudexchange.info/programs/cdbg/

FHA/HUD 221 (d)(4) Program: hud.gov/program_offices/housing/mfh/progdesc/progsec221d4

Fred Carl Jr. Small Town Center: smalltowncenter.msstate.edu

Gulport Facade Grant Program: downtowngulport.org/facde-grant-program

Lime: li.me

Lyft: lyft.com/bikes

Mississippi Arts Commission: arts.ms.gov

Mississippi Department of Archives and History (MDAH): mdah.ms.gov

Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT): mdot.ms.gov

Mississippi Development Authority: mississippi.org

Mississippi Main Street Association: msmainstreet.com

Mississippi Main Street Downtown Landscape Design Guide: msmainstreet.com/Downtown%20Landscape%20Guide

Mississippi Main Street Downtown Toolbox: msmainstreet.com/Downtown%20Toolbox

Mississippi Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks Outdoor Recreation Grants: mdwfp.com/parks-destinations/outdoor-recreational-grants

National Endowment for the Arts (NEA): arts.gov

Our Town Grant: arts.gov/grants/our-town

Project for Public Spaces Placemaking Grants: pps.org/community-placemaking-grants

Rural Design Guide: ruraldesignguide.com

Safe Routes to School: transportation.gov/mission/health/Safe-Routes-to-School-Programs

Sign Research Foundation Grants & Scholarships: signresearch.org/grants-scholarships

Small Town Center Resources: smalltowncenter.msstate.edu/resources

Small Town Streatery Toolkit: smalltowncenter.msstate.edu/sites/www.smalltowncenter.msstate.edu/files/2021-01/FINAL%20TOOLKIT%201.8.2021.pdf

Smart Growth America Complete Streets Coalition: smartgrowthamerica.org/program/national-complete-streets-coalition

Transporation Alternatives Program: transalt.org

Visit Mississippi: visitmississippi.org

Yazoo City Sign Ordinance: cityofyazoocity.org/images/city-government/code-enforcement/sign-ordinance.pdf