



A SEAT AT THE TABLE

Thursday, October 25th 2018

In today's world, this act of coming together has never been more important. Talking – and listening – to our neighbors is an important first step toward creating a more connected and engaged community. We can create better plans for a better future when residents, organizations, businesses, and government work together to make contributions that add up to greater solutions than we can achieve individually. That's where *A Seat At The Table* comes in.

A Seat At The Table is an opportunity to connect individuals and communities of diverse perspectives and backgrounds to create that better future. In October 2018, you can be a part of an exciting, county-wide initiative to explore the ways in which we can make our communities stronger, safer, and more dynamic in this period of unprecedented growth and change. We know big ideas can spring from small conversations, and people invest in what they help create.

WHO IS HOSTING A SEAT AT THE TABLE?

The Steering Committee is comprised of the Bozeman Area Community Foundation and Future West. With nearly 100 nonprofit leaders and 14 local government departments already on board, this initiative is showing the largest and most diverse opportunity for civic engagement in our history!

HOW WILL A SEAT AT THE TABLE WORK?

A Seat at the Table is a community-wide conversation about opportunities, issues, and challenges that our community is facing – and it starts with our neighbors. Our goal is to have neighbors come together, share a meal or coffee, and talk about their concerns, ideas, and hopes for the future of Gallatin County. Our *A Seat at the Table* planning team will invite community members to host a table in October. It can be a coffee, brown bag lunch, dinner, potluck, or picnic. Eight to twelve guests per table is ideal. A Seat at the Table is about giving everyone a chance to speak and be heard.

These conversations can be held all over the community: schools, places of worship, homes, business settings, and more. Each host will be trained and provided a toolkit on facilitating conversations. Prior to our *A Seat at the Table* initiative, our planning team will host a workshop on a civic dialogue program called Gracious Space in partnership with Leadership Montana. Hosts will also be provided a consistent structure for their conversations and direction on how to capture the perspectives shared.

WHO WILL PARTICIPATE?

During *A Seat at the Table*, community members all over Gallatin County will host conversations, collect feedback from those conversations, and share that feedback with the *A Seat at the Table* planning team. Online surveys will also be used to capture feedback from those unable to participate in one of these conversations. We will then partner with Montana State University to synthesize the data collected.

THEN WHAT?

After *A Seat at the Table*, our team will report themes from our data to the community. We will also provide our local governments with the summary of our conversations and the thousands of voices captured to inform their growth policies and strategic plans. Our initiative's website will provide information about our hosts, FAQ's, the data trends that we collect, and updates after the initiative has ended. This will help inform next steps on how to achieve our collective goals as a community.

JOIN US IN SUPPORTING A SEAT AT THE TABLE IN TWO WAYS:

1. Become a supporting partner! We are excited about this initiative's potential. To fulfill its promise, it needs the financial support of community members. Please invest today, for the future of our communities!
2. Become a host! We are looking for a diverse set of hosts to facilitate conversations during *A Seat at the Table*.

READY TO SUPPORT THE PROJECT? WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU.

We'd love to hear from you about how you want to make *A Seat at the Table* a success! Contact Bridget Wilkinson at bridget@bozemanfoundation or Randy Carpenter at randy@future-west.org for more information.