

“By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail.” ~ Benjamin Franklin

“If you don’t know where you are going, you’ll end up someplace else.” ~ Yogi Berra

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the start of the Hot Springs Comprehensive Plan! The State of South Dakota mandates under codified law §CH 11-6 each municipality create and update every 10 years a comprehensive plan of development. The first and last comprehensive plan created for Hot Springs was in 1981 when a huge population boom was expected in the region due to anticipated expansions in the energy fields. The boom never materialized, neither did planning updates but the citizens of Hot Springs did not lie idle.

Over the next 30+ years the citizens of Hot Springs engaged in many planning sessions, creating multiple downtown plans, river plans, transportation plans, park plans and so on. Meetings were held, goals were set, studies completed and many goals achieved – but to what end? What the city lacked was an overall plan – a plan comprehensive enough to guide the community development into the future in a singular vision.

That is what this Comprehensive Plan intends to create: A vision of how the citizens of Hot Springs want the city to be like in 10 years, by providing goals, steps and guidelines to aid us in the journey. This plan was created by the people of Hot Springs. No consultant or one-size-fits-all template was used. We began meeting in January of 2015 and worked alongside the Community Engagement Project that **Dakota Resources** was busy orchestrating with the committed citizens of Hot Springs.

[PHOTO FROM PLANNING SESSIONS]

Each section was painstakingly discussed and vetted until the language was approved. The draft document was taken before the Planning & Zoning Commission for their input and approval. The plan was then taken before the City Council in a series of public meetings to further vet the contents of the plan before approval. What you are now reading is the culmination of years of discussions, compromises, drafting and rewriting and reflects the desires, dreams and goals of a whole community.

While you are reading you may find that you develop a clear sense of who we are and where we want to go as a community - - we hope you join us!

THE CITY [INSERT PICTURE OF CITY – MT. GYPSUM VIEW?]

The City of Hot Springs is ideally located in the southern Black Hills and is often referred to as the “Southern Gateway to the Black Hills”. It is located in Fall River County just south of Wind Cave National Park. The city is accessible from all directions by use of State and Federal highways.

The city is located in the ‘Vale of Minnekahta’¹, a warm springs area between two mountain ranges creating a perfect microclimate for year-round recreation. Regionally it serves as the service hub for surrounding rural communities [See AERIAL].

Geographically, the City of Hot Springs comprises an area of 3.61 square miles. It is bounded to the north by Cold Brook Canyon; to the northwest by Hot Brook Canyon; to the west by Harney National Forest; to the southwest and south, the Seven Sisters Range and to the east Battle Mountain. Hot Brook and Cold Brook meet within the northern city limits and form Fall River. Fall River, a predominantly warm spring fed stream, flows through the city southward between Battle Mountain and the Seven Sisters towards Maverick Junction.

CLIMATE

Considered to be part of the South Dakota ‘Banana Belt’, the climate in Hot Springs is more moderate than in the surrounding plain regions. Winters can bring warm Chinook winds making the Black Hills region the warmest area in the state. Hot Springs experiences a four-season climate and although the climate tends to be very temperate, it can to swing in high or low temperature extremes.

CLIMATE	Hot Springs South Dakota	United States averages
Rainfall (in.)	17.9	39.2
Snowfall (in.)	27.5	25.8
Precipitation Days	72	102
Sunny Days	229	205
Avg. July High	89.2	86.1
Avg. Jan. Low	14.4	22.6
Comfort Index (higher=better)	69	54
UV Index	5	4.3
Elevation ft.	3,593	1,443

Table from: http://www.bestplaces.net/climate/city/south_dakota/hot_springs

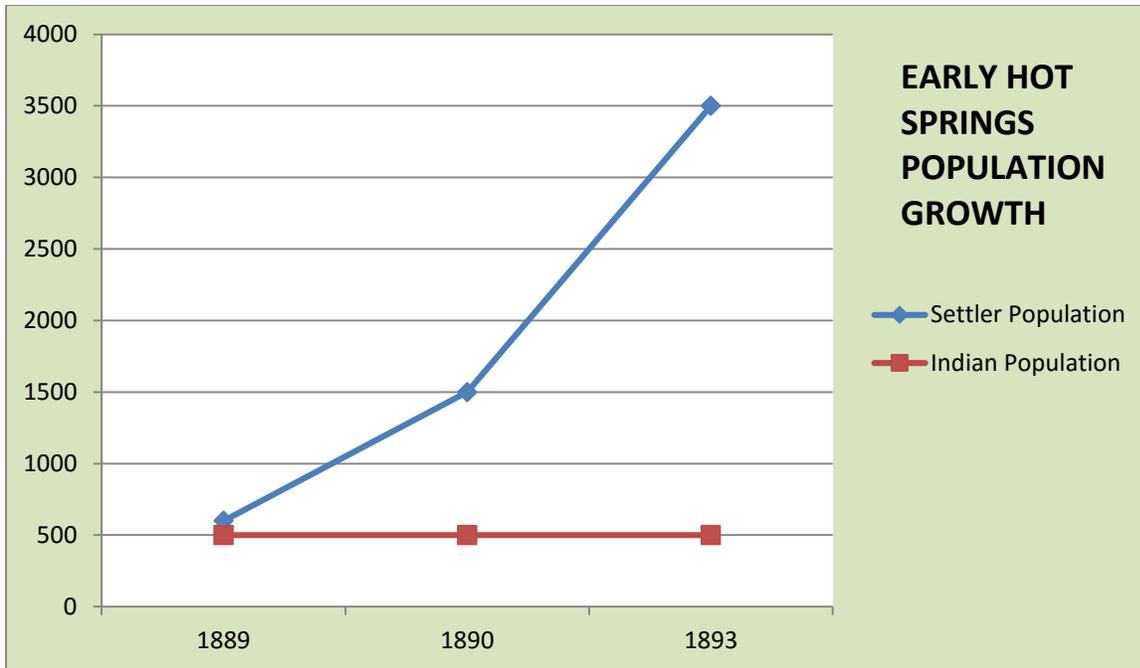
Precipitation varies throughout the Black Hills. Hot Springs tends to be a little on the arid side having just an average of 18” of rain annually and 27” of snow. Snow typically does not stay on the ground long as the warmer winter winds and thermal heated ground help melt it quickly.

Our climate, along with our warm medicinal waters, is what helped shape the development of Hot Springs. In the initial site report to the federal government regarding the possible location for the first veterans’ hospital stated, *“It is a location with advantages that cannot be found elsewhere. Advantages provided by nature, so rare in combination, that they are duplicated in only a few instances the world over.”* The Battle Mountain Sanitarium was ultimately built in Hot Springs in 1903 because of its healing climate, healing scenery and healing waters.

POPULATION

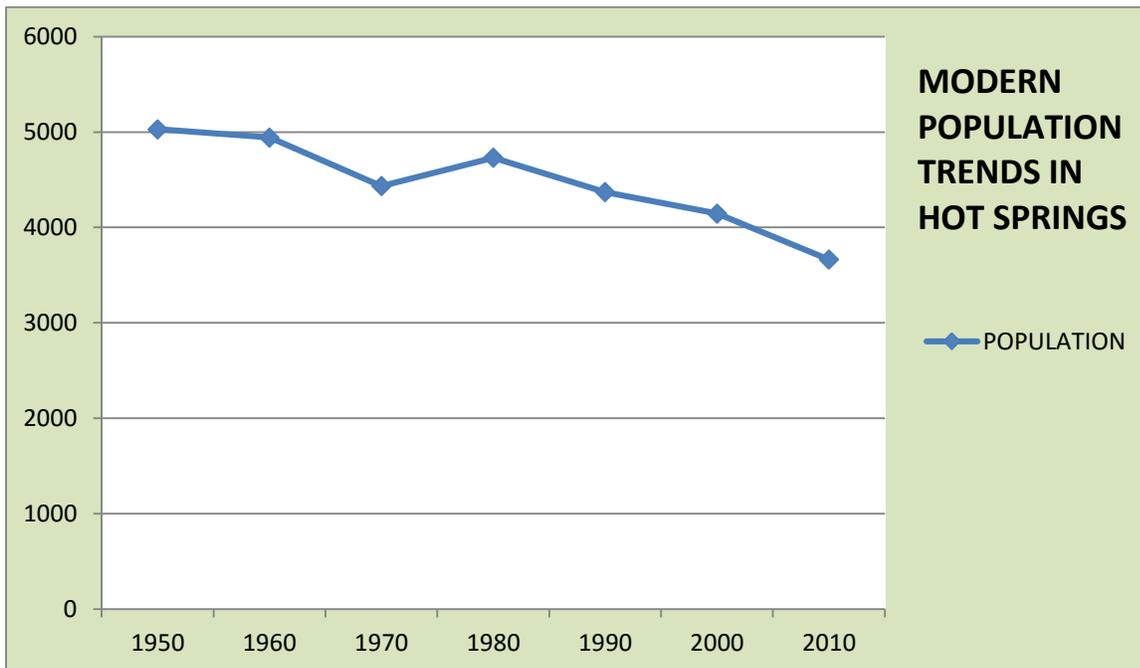
Until the late 1800’s the only population of people was that of the Indian. The Cheyenne and Lakota tribes were the primary people within the area now known as Hot Springs. It wasn’t until General George Custer brought his expedition to the Black Hills in 1874 and found gold that the onslaught of white settlers reached the area. Gold seekers and opportunists quickly built settlements and towns and forever changed the complexion of the population and the natural landscape. The population boomed as shown in the following figure:

[PICTURES OF RESIDENTS]



Early population data from Fall River Historical Society meeting: Patricia Schuh's presentation of "Hot Springs Sandstone Buildings"

Although the last twenty years has seen a steady increase in population in the Black Hills, up to 19% in the last 20 years, Hot Springs' growth has shown an overall decrease in population year after year.

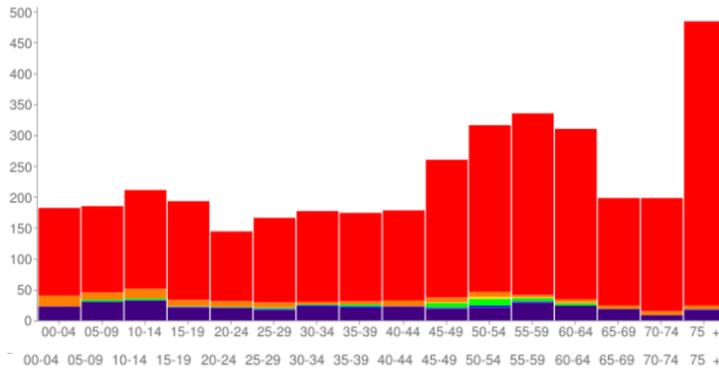


Data found in 1981 Hot Springs Comprehensive Plan and Census Data after 1980

The following population data is provided by the most recent US Census for Hot Springs, South Dakota

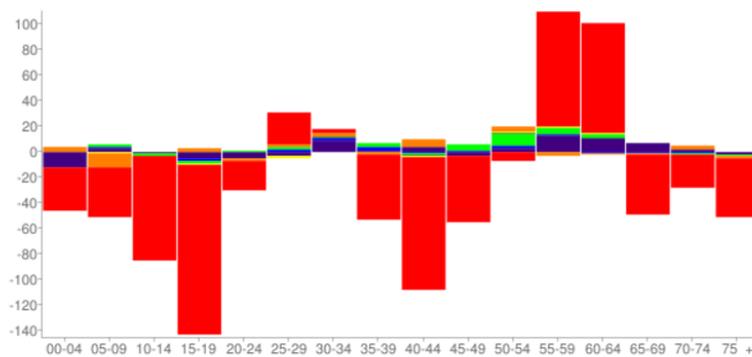
Population by Race, 2010 Census	Counts	Percentages	Color
American Indian and Alaska native alone	345	9.30%	■
Asian alone	20	0.54%	■
Black or African American alone	39	1.05%	■
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific native alone	3	0.08%	■
Some other race alone	6	0.16%	■
Two or more races	130	3.50%	■
White alone	3,168	85.37%	■

Graph: Population by Age and Race - Hot Springs, South Dakota



Change in Population between 2000 and 2010, by Race - Hot Springs, South Dakota	Change	Percentages	Color
American Indian and Alaska native alone	22	6.81%	■
Asian alone	6	42.86%	■
Black or African American alone	23	143.75%	■
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific native alone	1	50.00%	■
Some other race alone	-2	-25.00%	■
Two or more races	3	2.36%	■
White alone	-440	-12.20%	■

Graph: Change in Population between 2000 and 2010, by Age and Race - Hot Springs, South Dakota



The average household size in Hot Springs is also decreasing. In the 1990 Census the average household size was 2.25 people, in 2000 it was 2.16 and the 2010 Census showed it as 2.03

people. This trend is also seen within the county and state as more people choose to live singly and as more retirees move into the state.

POPULATION FORECASTS

Population projections are a necessary planning tool to help policy and decision makers decide critical matters such as investing in infrastructure, housing needs, school enrollment and other public facilities. They are not to be considered factual but a 'best guess' at what the future holds based on current trends. Population forecasts therefore should be revisited on a regular basis to determine if the assumptions first made are still viable.

Population forecasts for Hot Springs using *Esri's* data project a slight increase in population by 46 people between 2015 and 2020 with similar modest growth seen in Fall River County. Conversely, during the same period the *South Dakota Data Center* sees a ~5% increase in Fall River County population without stipulating individual increases for Hot Springs.

What will happen to Hot Spring's population in the future is certainly not carved in stone and will be influenced by the overall health of the regional, national and state economies, lending practices, available land for development and social trends among other influences. Needless to say, Hot Springs is planning for meaningful and healthy growth as you will see outlined further in this Comprehensive Plan.

EMPLOYMENT

The unemployment rate for the region as a whole has typically been lower than the national average. Some of this can be directly related to the tourism industry in the Black Hills. Since most of the tourism jobs are low paying and seasonal we see a higher percentage of underemployed workers – workers with higher skill sets that are forced to take lower paying jobs. For example: the South Dakota Governor's Office of Economic Development 2013 Labor Profile saw in June of 2013 17,875 unemployed workers but an estimated 81,225 underemployed workers. This trend forces many families to hold sometimes two or three jobs in order to meet living costs.

Index	Hot Springs	South Dakota	National
Income per capita	\$24,023	\$26,311	\$28,555
Median household income	\$40,943	\$50,338	\$53,482
Median income owner occupied	\$51,506	\$63,903	\$68,142
Median income renter occupied	\$24,236	\$29,541	\$33,219
Median earnings male	\$32,440	\$33,136	\$36,116
Median earnings female	\$21,597	\$23,365	\$25,692
Unemployment rate	1.2%	3.3%	5.8%
Poverty level	21.4%	14.2%	15.6%

Data supplied by <http://www.areavibes.com/hot+springs-sd/employment/>

One of the statistics that isn't normally calculated for Hot Springs are those people within our community that are veterans or those who require ambulatory assistance. Our percentage of veterans within our population averages around 9% +/- . This is due mainly to the proximity of the VA and the State Veteran's Home – we aren't called the Veteran's Town for nothing!

We also have two large public housing facilities downtown that have among their residents many disabled veterans and/or citizen residents that rely on scooters, wheelchairs, canes and other devices to get around. This group of people is very active and you can see them out using the city sidewalks, trails and streets to do their day to day activities. It is worthy to note the role these people play within the Hot Springs community and their ease of use and movement should be incorporated in any new construction or planning.

CURRENT LAND USE

Communities can manage land use in ways that will promote orderly development and limit the negative impacts of unplanned, unregulated random development. The tools Hot Springs uses to accomplish orderly development include comprehensive plans and zoning regulations. By prudently using planning tools, combined with land use regulations can accomplish planned objectives and increase the likelihood of orderly growth.

The Zoning Ordinance, adopted by the City Council in April of 1975, includes everything from zoning districts, setbacks, permitted uses, accessory structure requirements, parking and signage requirements, home occupations, non-conforming uses, enforcement, variances and

the vacating of right of ways. It specifies district or 'zone' in which certain types of uses are appropriate and defines which uses are not. This helps the city grow in ways that minimize use conflicts, devaluation of property and offers to purchasers of property within the City limits a certainty of what they can expect, within reason, to occur surrounding their land.

The Subdivision Ordinance was adopted by the City Council in March of 1976, to provide for the harmonious development of the city and its environs: for the coordination of streets within new subdivisions with other existing or planned streets within or outside of the city and in concert with the Comprehensive Plan. It allows for the preservation of open spaces, sufficient land for roads, provide needed infrastructure, and allow for recreation, light and air between buildings to create a measurable quality of life for the citizens of Hot Springs.

The Zoning Districts for the City of Hot Springs are:

- **RA - Residential 'A':** Medium density residential development with uses which are compatible with residential uses such as religious, educational and recreational facilities.
- **RB - Residential 'B':** Medium to high residential density including mobile homes and other uses compatible with residential uses such as religious, educational and recreational facilities.
- **MR - Mountain Residential:** A residential zone intended to protect and preserve natural beauty and natural growth of the surrounding landscape.
- **GC - General Commercial:** A Commercial district for personal and business services as well as general business activity. Includes the historic downtown area.
- **MXD-I - Mixed Use District I:** A mixed use development area intended to combine a variety of housing opportunities along with business opportunities such as offices, retail, service uses and live-work environments.
- **HS - Highway Service:** This district is established to accommodate specified retail and service activities that would be clustered around highway corridors.
- **GI - General Industrial:** A district established to provide areas for light manufacturing, processing, assembly plants, storage, warehousing and other similar uses.
- **GD - Greenway District:** A district created to protect drainage ways and help alleviate flooding.
- **NU - No Use District:** Certain lands in which the construction of permanent structures is prohibited pending study - often applied to newly annexed lands.
- **MGC - Golf Course:** Municipal golf course property.

- **GCRA - Golf Course Residential 'A':** A residential zone with clustered development and larger areas of space preserved to protect the natural elements of the golf course development.
- **GCC - Golf Course Commercial:** A business district adjacent to the golf course development for limited personal and business activity.

[INSERT ZONING MAP]

RESOURCES

SD Department of Labor & Regulation, 2016

“Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, 2014-2019”, Black Hills Council of Local Governments

“Comprehensive Plan 1981”, City of Hot Springs

“Hot Springs, Community Report”, South Dakota Governor’s Office of Economic Development

“South Dakota, State and County Demographic Profiles”, South Dakota State University, College of Agriculture and Biological Sciences, May 2008.

“Hot Springs Sandstone Buildings”, Fall River County History Conference 2008, Patricia Schuh

“Timeline Medicinal History of Hot Springs”, Fall River County History Conference 2010, Cindy Messinger