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BMC Bancshares Buys First National-Graford

By [Amy Wolff Sorter](#)

DALLAS-BMC Bancshares has added West Texas banking to its portfolio, acquiring 100% of outstanding stock of First National Bank of Graford. The buy is the Dallas company's first, and it comes with branches in Mineral Wells, Graford and the Possum Kingdom Lake region in Texas, as well as a financially sound balance sheet.

"We spent more than a year on due diligence with this, and it's a healthy bank with very strong ratios. It's roughly about 35% loan to deposit," says BMC Bancshares president Jonathan Morris.

Morris tells GlobeSt.com that another attractive part of the buy was loans made to customers who were personally known to the bank. "That gave us a lot of comfort," he says. "A few years ago, for a lot of lenders, knowing the borrowers wasn't a big component of decision-making. But time has proven that it's important."

Morris says plans call for a spruce-up of the bank's branches and a possible rebranding, though First National Bank of Graford won't carry the BMC Bancshares name. Also in the works is loan production office that will open in Dallas to expand lending capabilities into the D/FW area.

"One of our main focuses for the bank is to increase its lending, and do it in a safe and sound manner," Morris says. "We'll be super selective and take the highest-quality lenders. Morris goes on to say that BMC Bancshares isn't targeting any more acquisitions at this time, but acknowledges it's a good time to be buying banks, as long as the balance sheets are healthy.

"Major banks these days are focused internally on trying to deal with lending issues and over-expansion," he comments. "The smaller, community oriented banks are the ones issuing the high-quality loans on great terms."

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