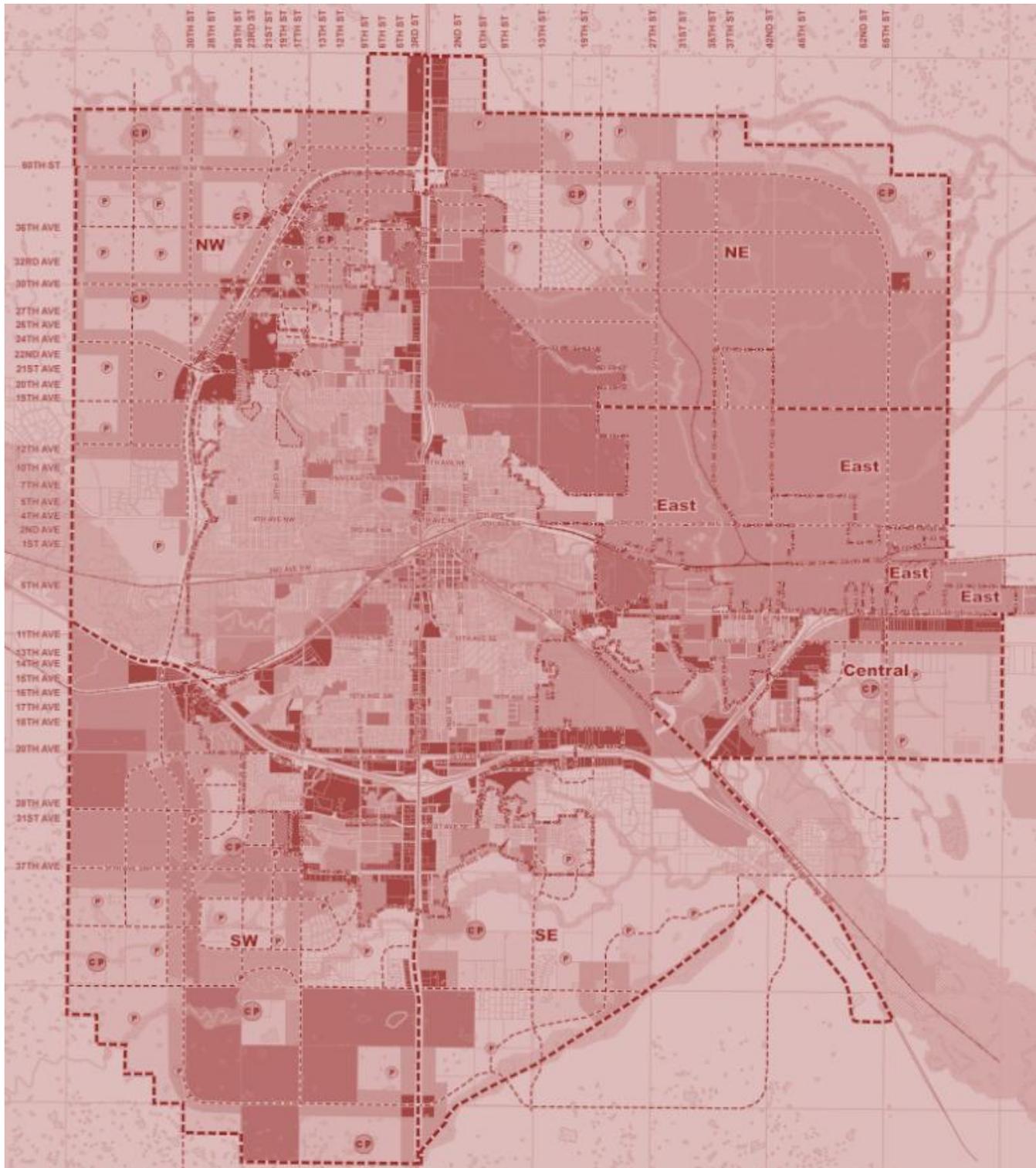




CHAPTER 2

Relationship to Other Plans



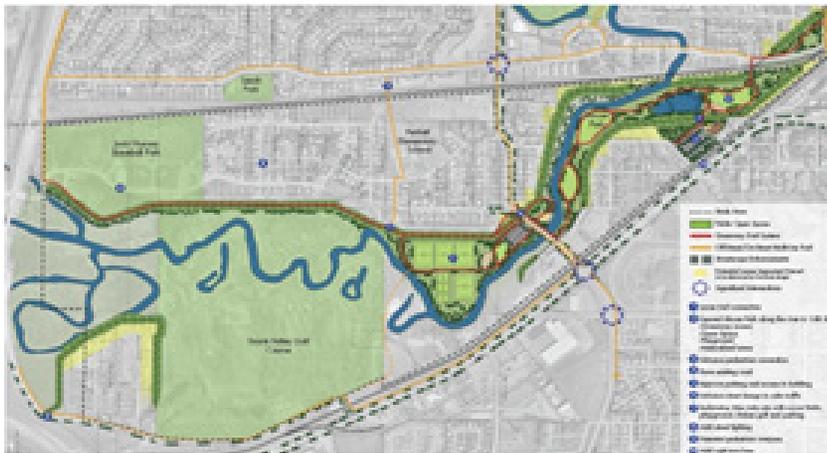


Meeting Two: Neighborhood Review of Goals and Policies and Discussion of Issues and Opportunities

Topics discussed: Review goals and issue identification.

Purpose: Receive input on draft goals and polices and share more specific strategies for rebuilding each neighborhood, learn about neighborhood connectivity and discuss opportunities and constraints of rebuilding each neighborhood.

Goals and Polices: Draft goals and policies were prepared based on input from meeting one. Eleven goals that are common across all neighborhoods were prepared in addition to neighborhood-specific goals. These were reviewed by participants. Additional mapping conversations identified options to implement these goals. A complete list of goals is included in Chapter 7.



Meeting Three: Neighborhood Concept Plans

Topics discussed: Summary of previous meetings, concepts plans and discussion

Purpose: Review input on concept plans for each neighborhood by focusing on key improvements identified on plans including such things as trails, redevelopment options, traffic congestions remedies, park enhancements, connectivity, and neighborhood safety measures.

An open house meeting format allowed participants to view all the plans to understand how neighborhoods are linked together. Feedback forms were used to query what participants liked, didn't like, was missing or needed to be changed.



A critical element of public participation is offering different opportunities to share ideas. A city project webpage was created to share meeting information and results. In addition neighborhood Facebook pages were created to announce upcoming meetings, share information and ideas. Neighborhoods will be able to take ownership of these Facebook pages to help with future neighborhood communication and organizing.



Relationship to Other Plans

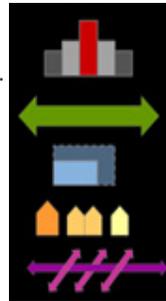
The Minot River Front and Center Neighborhood and Downtown Revitalization effort follows the completion of several important planning efforts that will inform the plans, strategies and implementation recommendations of this effort. These other plans impact the recommendations set forth in this plan.

City of Minot 2012 Comprehensive Plan

Minot was actively engaged in updating its Comprehensive Plan more than a year before the 2011 flood. The Plan was a response to the anticipated growth at the Minot Air Force Base and the development boom from the oil business. The Comprehensive Plan effort became even more vital after the flood, which exacerbated the need for immediate housing, already in short supply from oil-related development pressure.

In spring 2012 Minot adopted its citywide comprehensive plan, providing direction for future growth, transportation and greenway corridors, and future park and trail locations. The plan focuses on the following key elements:

- Revitalized Downtown
- Greenway Connections
- Compact Development
- Housing Opportunities
- Transportation



These key elements all impact the neighborhoods and downtown and are therefore pertinent to the Minot River Front and Center Plan.

Revitalized Downtown

- Keep the “heart” of Minot strong
- Connect downtown to the River and to the Park/Trail system
- Focus on redevelopment efforts, especially housing, based on market demand
- Address parking: ramp, surface, and on-street
- Implement streetscape enhancements

Successful cities have strong downtowns. Downtown Minot has many strong assets but these need to be reinforced for downtown to remain a thriving center to the city. Key among these are strengthened connections to the surrounding park and trail system, additional housing in or near downtown, convenient parking and enhancements to the public streetscape realm.

The flood recovery effort and the establishment of a new flood protection greenway system along the Mouse River will provide the opportunity to connect new open space downtown to the river and to Oak Park on the west and Roosevelt Park on the east. These connections will provide both an amenity and recreational opportunities.

Additional housing downtown can take the form of new projects or renovation of existing warehouse buildings into apartments or condominiums. With a larger base of patrons downtown, existing businesses have a better chance of success and new businesses could expand the scope and variety of offerings.

The public realm is very important in setting the stage for a revitalized downtown, and creating an attractive and functional streetscape is essential. This includes the sidewalks, paving, lighting, seating, and other amenities, plus open spaces such as parks and plazas. Public art could be a part of this overall effort.

Greenway Connections

- Protect and enhance drainage corridors
- Provide amenity
- Connect major destinations with biking/walking routes
- Provide active living choices
- Connect wildlife habitat
- Enhance existing streets



Greenways or “green corridors” are an important part of new development and redevelopment of neighborhoods in Minot. A greenway can be a natural coulee, wooded area, creek bank or manmade ditch, a strip of parkland, or a landscaped trail along a major roadway. They can provide multiple functions within the same space: drainage and stormwater management, desirable open space, connections for pedestrians and bicyclists, and habitat for wildlife.

It has become increasingly important in Minot, and in most cities around the country, to have a system of sidewalks and trails that provide long and short loops for walking and biking. When these are connected to parks, schools, shopping centers and other key destinations in the city there are not only more opportunities for fun and convenient trips, but active, healthy living. Neighborhoods where walking is possible are shown to have healthier residents.

The preliminary design for the flood control project on the Mouse River recommends an open greenway in the river valley through the city, in many cases made wider than the original banks of the river by the removal of existing structures, mostly houses. This new greenway will provide flood protection in times of serious flooding by means of new dikes or flood walls, but would be a green connection, part of the park and open space system, at all other times. Connecting across and through these dikes and flood walls will be an important design element so that this greenway can provide a positive environment for the vast majority of the time it is not needed to handle flood waters. All but one neighborhood includes areas of greenway either running through the neighborhood or bordering it. This will provide essential connection for residents in these neighborhoods to have improved access to parks, downtown and community facilities while providing new opportunities for recreation. In areas where the greenway

widens, plans will call for facilities that are flood proof while offering new recreational components such as soccer fields.

Compact Development

- Continue efficient, economical development pattern
- Provide services near all neighborhoods
- Encourage walking, biking, active living
- Reduce car trips
- Extend infrastructure in a cost-effective, staged plan



There are numerous benefits to compact, orderly development as Minot grows. The first is that the extension of basic city and utility infrastructure—streets, water, sewer, gas, electricity, etc. – all of which cost more the greater distance they have to cover. Therefore, spreading the cost of these utilities across smaller, narrower lots is much more cost effective than across a few larger, wider lots. Second, when development occurs in a compact manner more services such as shopping, schools, and parks can be provided closer to more people and be much more convenient. This allows and encourages walking and biking, which not only contributes to a desirable quality of life, but is shown to be healthier as well. Keeping Minot compact requires careful, targeted development and redevelopment in the downtown and the core neighborhoods in this study that will lessen the need to expand at the outer fringe of the city and make core neighborhoods more walkable and livable.

Housing Opportunities

- Ensure “life cycle” housing opportunities for all
- Encourage compact development to keep housing costs lower
- Identify redevelopment sites
- Provide opportunities for new housing in or near downtown



Housing is the heart of a community's structure and safe, adequate housing is essential for a community to thrive. Minot has historically had a well-balanced housing stock but suffered significant losses in the 2011 flooding and is experiencing rapid growth in housing due to the oil boom. The pressure on housing has increased housing prices and rents in the last few years, such that many current longtime residents face difficulty in finding or keeping their housing.

A commitment to housing opportunities means providing all types of housing, for all stages of the life cycle: young singles, young families, “move up” families, empty nesters, retirees, active senior citizens, senior assisted living, etc. New housing is expected in Minot not just in new developments at the edge of the city but on redevelopment sites in the middle of the existing City. This would include redevelopment in downtown where more housing has a special role, but also redevelopment in these neighborhoods.

Transportation

- Maintain a safe, efficient roadway system
- Create a network of connections vs. closed, dead-end streets/plats
- Improve north-south connections
- Integrate pedestrian/bicycle trails
- Provide improved rail crossings or overpasses



Minot's transportation system is the backbone of the community – for commerce, industry, public safety and individual mobility. The system must continue to be safe and efficient at the very least, but it must also meet other basic needs. During the height of the 2011 flooding it became obvious that Minot's roadway system had a number of weak links where the floodwaters overtopped the roads, mostly affecting north-south travel across the city since the Mouse River runs more or less east-west through Minot. In the preliminary design of the flood control project proposed for the Mouse River valley several roadways are proposed to be raised so that this doesn't happen in a future floods. Pedestrian and bicycle connections are an important part of the transportation system, even in a climate like Minot's where walking and biking happen easily only six months of the year. Providing sidewalks on all streets and wider trails along major routes is an important part of this recovery plan, discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

FEMA/Mouse Basin Recovery Strategy

In June, 2011, the city experienced a catastrophic flood that impacted the entire community and the subject area in particular. Following the floods, FEMA led a community planning effort that culminated in its report, “Mouse Basin Regional Recovery Strategy.” This report outlines a number of significant steps for the Minot community to undertake to fully recover from the effects of the floods, and revitalization of downtown was specifically called for as an important element to the city's recovery. The study also recommends a number of strategies to provide more affordable and market rate housing, development of the Mouse River Greenway, creation of pedestrian and bicycle connections, expansion of the retail base, and others strategies that overlap with the efforts of the Minot River Front Neighborhood and Downtown Recovery.

Imagine Downtown Minot

The \$140 million Imagine Downtown project is a complex of business and residential renewal projects that will help restore the city's downtown following last year's severe flooding. Senator John Hoeven announced in November, 2013 that Minot's \$18 million grant request to the Economic Development Administration's (EDA) for the Imagine Downtown reconstruction project was approved. There is additional work to do before the grant is awarded, but the funds have now been set aside for Minot and represent a big part of the ambitious project.

The \$18 million funding package, which comes from 2012 EDA disaster recovery funding, will improve and expand Minot's downtown infrastructure in support of the city's larger reconstruction effort. The grant will be combined with approximately \$4.5 million in local match dollars, for a total of \$22.8 million. Half of the Imagine Downtown project will consist of low and moderate income housing. In particular, the EDA grant will help to fund the replacement of destroyed or damaged public downtown infrastructure, including streets, curbs, storm sewers, water mains, street lights traffic lights and other projects, as well as create new infrastructure to support current and active redevelopment projects within the project area.

Approximate Imagine Downtown project funding includes:

EDA	\$18 million
City	\$4.5 million
HUD (CDBG)	\$5.3 million
Magic Fund	\$3.0 million
Private Equity	\$110 million
TOTAL:	\$140.8 million

Mouse River Enhanced Flood Protection Plan, Preliminary Engineering Report

This report was completed in February 2012 for the North Dakota State Water Commission to prepare preliminary alignments for levees and flood walls. The study's goal was to develop a preliminary plan that could be used as a guiding document to help reduce the risk of damages from river flows comparable to those seen during June 2011. The scope of this study was the Mouse River Valley from Burlington to Velva and Mouse River Park.

The preliminary alignment was developed through an iterative process consisting of: obtaining stakeholder input; alignment development; performing hydraulic modeling of the alignments and performing engineering analysis and design.

The preliminary alignment consists of levees, floodwalls, river diversions and closure features, transportation closure structures, interior pump stations, and 2011 floodplain buyouts. Levees comprise a majority of the alignment totaling 21.6 miles while floodwalls total 2.8 miles. These levee and floodwall improvements will have numerous impacts to the city's connectivity in and around these neighborhoods and downtown. Floodwalls will also have a significant visual impact. Therefore, an important element of the River Front and Center planning effort is to help communicate the preliminary design and establish design considerations that can be implemented when future flood control implementation occurs.

EPA- Brownfields Area-Wide Planning and Assessment Grants

In 2013 the City of Minot received \$600,000 in EPA Brownfield Area-Wide Planning and Brownfield Assessment grants. These funds will go toward creation of a corridor plan for Burdick Expressway and brownfield assessments on catalyst sites in the corridor that were flooded. The project corridor includes over 200 acres of property along Burdick Expressway from 3rd Street SE to 20th Street SE. This corridor has been recognized as an important focus area for flood recovery as it serves as the eastern gateway to downtown, connecting downtown with Roosevelt Park and Zoo and the North Dakota Fairgrounds. Burdick Expressway borders two Minot River Front and Center Neighborhoods (neighborhoods 5 and 6). Corridor planning will address land use, housing, transportation, streetscaping, greenways and corridor reinvestment and redevelopment opportunities within the corridor area and key catalyst sites. This planning effort will be a natural progression and next step to the neighborhood and downtown plans.

The assessment grant funding will also be a key component of flood recovery activities. FEMA has conducted numerous public listening sessions to determine what the community wants to see in a long-term flood recovery plan and to prioritize recovery projects. Affordable and market rate housing and a potential greenway resulting from a flood control project have consistently been identified as priorities. Assessment grant funding will contribute to meeting these identified goals.



The grant will be used to complete environmental assessment activities at potentially and previously identified brownfields located within the priority areas targeted for restoration/redevelopment as identified in the city's draft flood control plan, the downtown area, or the flooded area adjacent to the Mouse River. The project will include an inventory of hazardous substance brownfields properties located throughout the flooded downtown area. The assessment grant will also provide the city with financial incentives to discourage sprawl by covering the environmental assessment costs of developers who choose to purchase and redevelop brownfields properties located in areas with existing infrastructure, restoring currently blighted and vacant properties to productive, revenue generating uses and limiting development in green spaces. Minot will also use the assessment grant to fund environmental assessment activities associated with acquisition of brownfields for flood control/greenway creation which will result in the protection and improvement of the Mouse River, minimize uncontrolled storm water discharges and increase the recreational opportunities for residents.

The City intends to use assessment grant funds to begin assessing brownfields, with a focus on the sites located within the downtown and other flooded areas bordering the Mouse River. The City also plans to use grant funds to perform due diligence activities to support the reuse of numerous smaller, potentially impacted parcels located throughout the city.

