



TO: Mayor Shaun Sipma
Members of the City Council

FROM: John R. Zakian, DR Grant Program Manager & Chief Resilience Officer

DATE: October 22, 2018

SUBJECT: **City Council Guidance on Pursuing National Main Street Accredited Status**

I. RECOMMENDED ACTION

City Council offer guidance on whether to pursue Main Street accredited status with the national Main Street Center for the downtown

II. DEPARTMENT CONTACT PERSONS

John R. Zakian, DR Grant Program Manager & Chief Resilience Officer, 423-4528

III. DESCRIPTION

A. Background

The National Trust for Historic Preservation began the national Main Street program in 1980 to promote revitalization and sustainability of downtowns. In 2013, the National Main Street Center was spun off as a subsidiary of the National Trust with a distinct and defined focus on downtowns. There are currently 1600 members many of which represent accredited Main Streets. The accreditation is a nationally recognized standard which is used by those communities which have attained it as a key marketing tool for additional private investment and small business growth for their downtowns. The Main Street Center, itself, for its participants offers a wide range of technical assistance and resource assistance covering all aspects of Main Street revitalization and growth. While the organization, itself, does not provide grants, it does partner with other governmental and foundation sources such as there is a current \$2 million competitive grant program for accredited Main Streets being offered by American Express in conjunction with the Main Street Center. In the intense competitive grant atmosphere among federal agencies, a designation is an added value. To become accredited, there is a distinct set of standards which must be met some of which the downtown does not meet but could be useful in serving as a guide as to what needs to be done. Also, to be able to be fully accredited, the Main Street Center since its inception has required that in a state there be an affiliated coordination program formally connected with Main Street Center. North Dakota is one of the few states which does not have such an approved coordinating program with Main Street Center.

Key requirements of becoming accredited which could be a policy baseline for the city and the Stakeholders to pursue include:

- Comprehensive Main Street Work Plan
- Active Board of Directors and Committees supporting and overseeing the Work Plan
- Have an adequate budget to support the Work Plan
- Have a paid professional manager
- Has a vision and mission statement supporting sustainable Main Street viability

B. Proposed Project

A City Council policy statement supporting the pursuit of becoming an accredited Main Street through the Main Street Center encouraging city staff within available resources and expertise to support such an effort can serve as a baseline for the Technical Committees and Stakeholders involved in the Downtown in their planning and needs assessment efforts. It would also serve to present a clear framework for efforts underway by the city through the CDBG-DR and CDBG-NDR grants such as the Gathering Place and creating a small business revolving loan fund to be coordinated and committed to supporting and helping to accomplish a Main Street designation. It would also be in sync with the Governor's efforts to shine brighter light on the need for cities to focus on downtown sustainability perhaps serving as means for the city of Minot to provide support and encouragement to the North Dakota Department of Commerce to take the steps necessary to establish a statewide coordinated program with the National Main Street Center.

IV. IMPACT:

A. Strategic Impact:

Creates a vision and framework set of goals for the Technical Committees and Stakeholders involved in Downtown planning and needs assessment efforts as well as advancing the city's commitment to making important connections at the national level for technical resources

B. Service/Delivery Impact:

Clearly articulates the coordinated intent by the city with its CDBG-DR and CDBG-NDR investments in the downtown area to advance sustainable measures for growth in the downtown in sync with downtown stakeholders

C. Fiscal Impact:

N/A

V. ALTERNATIVES

N/A

VI. TIME CONSTRAINTS

N/A

VII. LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

- i.* List of Main Street Center coordinate programs with states and regions
- ii.* Complete set of requirements to become accredited as a Main Street