



TO: Mayor Shaun Sipma
Members of the City Council

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

DATE: January 15, 2019

SUBJECT: **City Council Authorize \$30,000 CDBG-NDR Downtown Wayfinding Sign Strategy (NDR014)**

I. RECOMMENDED ACTION

City Council authorize use of \$30,000 of CDBG-NDR Planning Allocation to carry out a Downtown Wayfinding site location strategy undertaken through a RFP

II. DEPARTMENT CONTACT PERSONS

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

III. DESCRIPTION

A. Background

It is universally practiced in any vibrant, sustainable, thriving downtown to have as a basic, customer oriented measure using what is known as “Wayfinding signage” which external to the downtown gives directions to the downtown and within the downtown provides details in strategic locations as to the office, professional, cultural, retail, entertainment, restaurant, bar, and related enterprises’ locations street by street throughout the district. Minot does not have wayfinding signs either external or internal to the downtown. One of the underlying messages from the IEDC report is that the city’s downtown does not have an identity nor does it have a clear definition. An underlying basis for addressing this challenge is to implement a wayfinding sign strategy. A recent MSU class project which sent 6 teams of 5 to 6 students each into the downtown with these teams asked to undertake an assessment of what is missing in the downtown and what can be done to address such challenges. One consistent outcome reported by all six teams identified as a major challenge was not being able while walking in the downtown to locate businesses, restaurants, bars, professional offices, cultural entities, etc. because there were no signs listing street by street what can be found on each street nor were there any locations with maps identifying locations of the various types of businesses.

B. Proposed Project

The plan is to issue a RFP to hire a firm which will be tasked with identifying the locations throughout Minot where directional signs should be located for the downtown and to undertake a comprehensive assessment of the downtown to identify locations within the downtown where wayfinding signs should be located which are both pedestrian and vehicle friendly. The RFP will also ask to review best practices of wayfinding sign designs and content in highly successful downtowns to recommend multiple options to be considered for Minot. The RFP will also stipulate that the work will be done in concert with the City Engineer and Code Compliance Unit to assure that all potential locations are compliant, and to consult with stakeholders in the downtown and involved in the downtown for their ideas.

IV. IMPACT:

A. Strategic Impact:

The timing of this strategy is to have a range of designs and a set of site locations in place so that when decisions are made on a common branding/marketing message, and an organizational structure for the downtown, this critical piece of carrying out a downtown growth action plan will be ready for implementation.

B. Service/Delivery Impact:

This work will support other CDBG-NDR capital projects planned for the downtown including the Gathering Space, relocation of City Hall, and the CTE facility.

C. Fiscal Impact:

The \$30,000 will come from the Economic Resilience Planning allocation NDR014 which will have a remaining balance of an estimated \$140,000 for other uses

V. ALTERNATIVES

N/A

VI. TIME CONSTRAINTS

N/A

VII. LIST OF ATTACHMENTS