



TO: Mayor Shaun Sipma
Members of the City Council
Executive Team

FROM: Alderman Wolsky

DATE: May 27, 2020

SUBJECT: NDR ECONOMIC RESILIENCE STRATEGIC PLAN FUNDING DISCUSSION & ACTION

Background:

Economic Resilience Strategic Planning was funded by the NDR grant in the amount of \$299,025. From this line, we have previously hired the International Economic Development Council to provide an assessment of Minot’s economic development practices with a focus on our efforts in the downtown area. That work was initially completed in June of 2018. Since that time, additional resources have from this funding source have been used to advance elements of the IEDC recommendations including detailed looks at expanding use of tools such as Tax Increment Financing Districts and Business Improvement Districts.

\$105,000 remains in this planning activity line. Currently in process for near-future consideration by Council is a \$45,000 request from the Downtown Business and Professional Association in partnership with Souris Basin Planning Council to advance work on a downtown business improvement district. That leaves a remaining balance of \$60,000 available for Economic Resilience Strategic Planning.

Proposed Action: Strategic Economic Resilience Planning & Consulting with Strong Towns over multiple site visits

Strong Towns is a registered 501(c)3 Non Profit with the following mission:

“to support a model of development that allows America's cities, towns and neighborhoods to grow financially strong and resilient.”

Founder and President of Strong Towns, Chuck Mahron, has been a keynote speaker and presenter at both of Governor Burgum’s Main Street Summits. He is the author of *Strong Towns: A Bottom-Up Revolution to Rebuild American Prosperity*. He and the Strong Towns team are thought leaders in describing the factors that separate thriving places from those that merely survive and those that are dying. More information on the Strong Towns mission and event details can be found below:

- <https://www.strongtowns.org>
- <https://www.strongtowns.org/event-intro>

Strong Towns site visits typically consist of a public presentation followed by more in-depth conversations and consulting with key stakeholders. Common focus areas include a Strong Town approach to: Affordable housing, neighborhood resiliency, capital investments, jobs, growth, and economic development, public engagement, public transportation, and urban design principles.

Site visits from members of the Strong Towns team typically cost in the range of \$5,000-10,000. Given the public nature of these engagements, the expertise, perspectives, and benefits can be shared beyond the City of Minot with our regional partners and other political sub-divisions.