



**TO:** Mayor Shaun Sipma  
Members of the City Council

**FROM:** Karen Rasmusson, Magic City Discovery Center Board President

**DATE:** June 18, 2020

**SUBJECT:** **MAGIC CITY DISCOVERY CENTER DOD DCIP PROGRAM (G&A021)**

**I. RECOMMENDED ACTION**

We request approval to apply for the Department of Defense Program entitled “Defense Community Infrastructure Pilot” (DCIP) using the City of Minot as a pass-through entity. The primary purpose of this program is to improve the quality of life for military families and we believe our discovery center will be a significant quality of life enhancement not only for the Minot Air Force Base but for all of our region. We will request funds to complete the Magic City Discovery Center building on North Hill. If our proposal is selected to move on to a grant application, we would bring the required Grant Agreement for Sub-award back to council for approval.

**II. DEPARTMENT CONTACT PERSONS**

Karen Rasmusson, Board President, (701)721-1971  
Wendy Keller, Executive Director, (701)858-7529 / (701)240-4678

**III. DESCRIPTION**

A. Background

According to the Association of Children’s Museums, North Dakota is the last state to have a children’s museum. Children’s museums serve as interactive educational laboratories, advocates for children, local destinations and a community resource. We believe our area needs this valuable asset as a healthy, educational, family-oriented space designed just for children. This quality of life enhancement will greatly improve our community. During the 4 winters of operating our interim museum inside the Dakota Territory Air Museum, we had over 20,000 visitors and gained incredible support from our community.

B. Proposed Project

This grant will provide the remaining funds to open the Magic City Discovery Center on Minot Parks North Hill land. The Magic City Discovery Center will be a state-of-the-art children’s discovery museum that will provide 11 educational STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math) exhibit galleries full of rich, hands-on and developmentally appropriate learning. Because our center is designed to be a children’s museum / science center hybrid, we will serve children from birth to age 14. With the current turbulent times, it is more important than ever that we provide this needed resource. This dynamic community facility will be a tangible gift to current and future generations of children and their families, one that can be unwrapped time and time again in new and exciting ways. Both the building and its exhibits will provide an outstanding and memory-making destination for all who enter its doors. If approved, it would enable us to move forward immediately.

- C. Consultant Selection  
N/A

**IV. IMPACT:**

A. Strategic Impact:

The 2019 Annual Report states that the City of Minot’s purpose is to serve the citizens and the surrounding community and this project aligns perfectly with your goals. We believe in investing in our children which is a direct investment in our community. Our mission is to engage children and families in the magic of lifelong learning through discovery, creativity, and play. Our vision is to become a destination to bring young children, caregivers, and families together in an interactive environment that inspires creativity, encourages play and enhances education. Since our region does not currently have access to this valuable resource, we feel it will greatly improve the quality of life for citizens in Minot/MAFB and help attract and retain young families in our area.

B. Service/Delivery Impact:

Many of today’s children arrive at school without the skills in place for learning and success. The Magic City Discovery Center will be an interactive environment where children can discover and explore spaces designed just for them. We will provide experiences to help youth learn foundational skills, preparing them to collaboratively reason through difficult problems and develop creative solutions to the challenges of tomorrow.

C. Fiscal Impact:

We have raised \$5,630,516 toward a goal of \$9,000,000 for Phase 1 of our project. Funds have come from the City of Minot Community Facilities Fund, the Minot Park District along with many other individual, corporate and foundation supporters. Once open, we will charge admission for ongoing operations costs.

Due to the DCIP requirement that the requested funds “result in a complete and usable project” we changed the scope of our project to include completion of the lower level which was intended to be completed in a second phase.

Project Costs (completion of entire 22,099 sq. ft. facility)  
\$11,924,336

Project Funding (DCIP request )  
\$6,293,820

**V. ALTERNATIVES**

We are not eligible to apply for this grant without involvement of a governmental agency set up with online grant access through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). If the City denies our request, we will be unable to apply for the grant.

**VI. TIME CONSTRAINTS**

The deadline for submission of the proposal is Friday, June 26<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 PM. We learned about this funding opportunity on June 11.

**VII. LIST OF ATTACHMENTS**

N/A