TO: Mayor Shaun Sipma  
Members of the City Council
FROM: Harold Stewart, City Manager
DATE: May 17, 2021

City Manager:

Over the last couple of weeks the City Manager office has recognized National Law Day (City Attorney’s Office), National Clerks Week, National Fire Fighter Day, and National Police Officer Appreciation Day. In most cases the City Manager’s secretary made baked treats for the departments. Treats were also provided to the Public Works staff during the Citywide Cleanup in appreciation of their efforts. The City is fortunate to have great staff who are passionate about their service to the public.

Another Citizens Police Academy has started this month and the City Manager is attending. Doing so has provided a unique perspective of how citizens understand their local police department, and of how many of the officers view their roles. It is time well spent for anyone looking to gain a greater understanding of the services Minot PD provides, and the challenges they face in today’s environment.

The City Manager attended the 2021 Williston Basin Petroleum Conference held in Bismarck. Overall, the future of the Bakken is bright and sustainable. The oil industry is weathering the impacts of the confrontation between Russia and Saudi Arabia, COVID, and the drastic shift in policy resulting from change in POTUS. China continues to be the predominant threat to the industry politically and economically, though cyber-attacks are common from Russia also.

Meetings attended included: Community Economic Development Task Force; monthly communication meeting with MACEDC Director; City Hall Building Committee meeting; and 10th Anniversary of 2011 Flood event planning meeting.

Finance  
Director, David Lakefield

Human Resources  
HR Director, Lisa Jundt

Recruitment

Current Openings

The recruiting emphasis over the last 90 days has been primarily focused on the Engineering Department which currently has a difficult to fill CAD position open, 2 Project Civil Engineer positions open due to pending resignations, and 2 summer intern positions. There are also upcoming test cycles set for Public Safety positions in the Police and Fire Departments. Testing for police officers positions has been scheduled for May 20th, 2021 and firefighter positions for June 3rd, 2021. The NDR/CDBG Department is still in the process of hiring for several positions, as is the Airport, including the outsourced
recruitment for Airport Director. Finally, the Human Resource department continues to recruit for a HR Generalist position.

**Positions Filled**

During this same time period, HR Staff have also recruited and filled positions for the Senior Project Manager and Project Civil Engineer in Public Works. Other positions filled in Public Works include a Mechanic for the Shop Division Utility Operator for the Water/Sewer Division, Light Equipment Operator for Streets and a Building and Grounds Worker for Property Maintenance. A successful recruitment was conducted for the Intelligence Analyst in the Police Department as well as 2 Dispatch positions. The City Attorney and Legal Division gained a Staff Attorney Position which was previously held by a contract attorney.

**Recruitment Resources**

Recruiting efforts have ranged from utilizing postings on the City of Minot website, North Dakota Job Service website, Handshake, and CareerLink websites which enables us to market to multiple local/regional and nationwide universities and colleges. Job postings are also posted directly to various University job pages. The department also utilizes social media websites such as Facebook, virtual career fairs, and in-person career fairs. Paid websites, such as Indeed, are currently used for some of the professional positions, due to the inability of the HR department to find qualified applicants through other resources. Sponsored/paid job postings are done on a case by case basis depending on the needs and budget of the applicable departments. HR Staff have also been directly marketing for technical level engineering positions to regional schools with applicable two-year programs, by emailing and advising educational staff directly and posting to the establishments online job boards.

**Public Works**
**Director, Dan Jonasson**

**Engineering**
**City Engineer, Lance Meyer**

**Fire Department**
**Fire Chief, Kelli Kronschnabel**

- Budget has been a focus over the past month. We look forward to the council coming to the station next week and learn more about our department. Budget time is always a challenging time for a department in trying to project needs. We are appreciative of finance in assisting us with the new Jarvis program and teaching us how the new software will aid us with projecting and managing our budgets.
- We are scheduling our trench prop build. We look forward to this new added training aid at the training grounds to be able to train and test our technical rescue personnel.
- We have a lot of changes and challenges happening in the next month and I will bring forward at the council tour as well as in the next report.
The Police Department
John Klug, Chief of Police

The Police Department has faced several personnel struggles in the first part of 2021. We are hopeful in our next round of testing this week, we will identify enough high-quality applicants to fill the vacant positions in our department. As of today, we have 5 vacant police officer positions to fill.

The police department is currently at 81% effective strength for sworn officers with a total of 15 of the 83 sworn positions not fully effective. This is due to the following:

- 1 – light duty assignment (injury/medical)
- 4 – Field Training
- 2 – In-house new officer training
- 3 – ND Air National Guard military deployment (through November 2021)
- 5 – Vacant positions

Although it took longer than expected to prepare to hire the new Intelligence Analyst, Cameon Eisenzimmer will join our team on May 24th and become the police department’s first Intelligence Analyst. She comes to us with a vast background in analysis, GIS, and a degree in Forensic Anthropology.

Our calls for service through the end of April 2021 are down about 400 from the same time in 2020, but the activity in the Minot community is on the rise. With more businesses resuming normal operations, traffic is increasing, and more calls are starting to come into our dispatch center.

The annual report for 2020 has been distributed to the Mayor and Council Members at tonight’s meeting. If you have any questions about the information contained in the report, please let me know and we can have a more in-depth conversation.

Airport
Director, Rick Feltner

Assessor
City Assessor, Ryan Kamrowski

The following represents the City of Minot’s real estate market based on a monthly and year to date basis. The numbers listed below are based on Normal Arm’s Length Transactions as determined by extensive review by the City of Minot Assessor’s office.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>April</th>
<th>Year-to-Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential: Median Sale Price</td>
<td>$220,350</td>
<td>$213,517</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential: Total Sales</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial: Median Sale Price</td>
<td>$580,750</td>
<td>$470,375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial: Total Sales</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant Lot: Median Sale Price</td>
<td>$6,428*</td>
<td>$6,428*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant Lot: Total Sales</td>
<td>26*</td>
<td>32*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
*21 of the vacant lots listed were part of a transaction from a bank to a developer (may not be arm’s length), but used to show sales activity in the vacant lot market, will have an effect on the median sales price.

Planning
Community Economic & Development Director, Brian Billingsley

Renaissance Zone Review Board:
The Board did not meet in the month of April. Staff is working on preparing a first draft of a new Renaissance Zone plan that should be ready to review during their meeting on May 20th.

Other Projects:
The City was awarded a Partners in planning grant from the North Dakota Department of Commerce in the amount in $19,400. The grant will allow us to hire a consultant to conduct a walking study of downtown Minot that will review building conditions, non-conforming uses, and ADA accessibility and obtain feedback from downtown residents, college students and staff, and high school students on their perceptions of the downtown and types of businesses and activities that they would like to have. Staff posted an RFQ in late March. Two firms submitted qualifications. Staff selected Ackerman-Estvold as the most qualified bidder. Work will occur during the months of May and June.

INSPECTIONS DIVISION:
April 2021 Permit Information (April 2020):
- Total Permits Issued: 234 (352)
- Valuations of all Permits: $7,121,000 ($6,261,800)
- Single-Family Homes: 21 (16)
- Multi-Family Units: 10 (0)
- Residential Remodels: $407,000 ($311,100)
- New Commercial: $1,243,000 ($0)
- Commercial Remodels: $1,111,000 ($806,700)

Other News:
- Inspections issued a building permit to Schatz Office Building – 3900 13th Ave. SE.
- Inspections issued a building permit to Magic City Discovery Center – 1545 1st St. NW
- Inspections issued a building permit to Harbor Freight Tools – 3220 16th St. SW (former Gordman’s building).
- Inspections staff has spent the past several months working with our consultants from Cityworks on mapping and flow-charting our plan review and inspections processes. The new building permit software is scheduled to be ready for use by the end of the calendar year.

PLANNING DIVISION:
Planning Commission:
The Planning Commission conducted public hearings on two cases on April 6, 2021. They recommended approval on both cases.

Zoning Ordinance Steering Committee:
The Zoning Ordinance Steering Committee did not hold any meetings in the month of April. Staff was too preoccupied with wrapping up the Land Development Ordinance and is now focusing its efforts on re-writing the Subdivision Ordinance.

Development Review Team Meetings:

The Minot Development Review Team (DRT) held five (5) DRT meetings during the month of April:

- April 7 – Restaurant in front of Candlewood Suites.
- April 14 – Proposed Paintball Arena in Two-Mile ETJ.
- April 14 – Vehicle Storage Building on the 27th Street SE
- April 14 – Coffee Shop and Commercial Building next to proposed Bremer Bank building on the corner of 16th Street SW and 37th Ave SW.
- April 21 – Bertsch Addition (two-lot subdivision plat in ETJ).

Other Projects:

- Staff is working with the Engineering Department on an RFP for an abatement contractor. We hope to have a contract ready for Council approval in June.
- Staff attended two Building Committee meetings during the month of April for space planning the new City Hall.
- Staff attended a meeting on April 15th with the Minot Park District, Alderman Podrygula, and the North Dakota Audubon Society. The meeting centered on a proposal by the Audubon Society to plant trees on flood buy-out properties. A working group of city staff, park district staff, and Audubon Society representatives will be formed to study the proposal further.

Minot Public Library
Director, Janet Anderson

The Minot Public Library’s Summer Reading/Learning Program will start on June 1st with a kick-off event at the Library starting at 2:00 pm. A live children’s concert will be held this day and a variety of community partners will be present to share information. The Summer Reading/Learning Program will go through early August and will include more than 100 free programs for people of all ages to attend. In addition, those who participate in the program by reading are eligible to win prizes worth hundreds of dollars thanks to generous business partners, grants, and donors.

Library staff are partnering with area literacy leaders to begin the #ReadFor20 campaign. This campaign will be a non-branded effort to encourage people of all ages, but especially children, to read for 20 minutes each day. Planned events include a launch event at Main Street Books on 6/3/2021 in conjunction with the kick-off of the Arts in the City programs and partnering with the Ward County Public Library join the WCPL Bookmobile in the State Fair parade. The group hopes to get out into the community throughout the summer and give away books. Teachers and others will also be available at the Minot Public Library on Thursdays throughout the summer for “Thursday Takeovers” which will allow children (and others) to visit with local leaders and educators.

All MPL staff participated in a nine-hour training day Monday, May 10th. Training included basic First Aid and handling customer injuries with the Minot Fire Department, Defensive Driving with the Minot Police Department, software/app training, policy and procedure training, and more.
An employee committee continues to work on the Library’s Strategic Plan. The committee hopes to have a final draft to the Library Board later this summer.

The Library will be updating its website over the next several months. A committee has been assigned to work with the company selected to assist with this project and the new site will be ready this summer.

**Library usage in April, 2021 was as follows:**

New Library Cards issued = 151  
Foot Traffic = 11,976  
Participation in Library Programs = 1,368  
Materials Checked Out = 11,347  
Digital Resource Usage = 11,850

**HUD Resilience**  
**John Zakian**

- Based on current information regarding available funds in the state’s new biennium budget related to flood control, new money that will be made available for State Water Commission match to CDBG-NDR will not be sufficient to undertake any new acquisitions. It will be sufficient to cover costs related to current acquisitions. It is not expected there will be any balance of available funds once acquisitions are completed. Remaining active acquisitions involve 17 property owners plus two under Eminent Domain.

- Interest in the Resilient Homebuyer Gap Financing program continues to remain strong in which forgivable second mortgages are offered to qualifying LMI households to purchase single family home within the city limits but outside the flood zone. If the current trend continues, we will attain the original allocation of $3 million before the end of summer. Additional funds within the CDBG-NDR LMI single family home category are available to be moved to this program which based on current trends looks to be another $500,000 to $750,000.

- The current agreement with outside counsel to handle Eminent Domain cases is due to expire June 30, 2021. Based on the first note in this report, it makes no sense to rebid this contract. Rather, before the end of June, decision will be made on which of the remaining acquisitions should be recommended to the City Council for Eminent Domain. The agreement will be extended specifically to reach conclude on all cases assigned to outside counsel by June 30, 2021 which will be consistent and compliant with HUD rules and regulations.

**Public Information**  
**Dereck Hackett**