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

**FROM:** Jonathan Rosenthal, Economic Development Administrator

**DATE:** July 1, 2021

**SUBJECT: DOWNTOWN FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT FORGIVABLE LOAN PROGRAM**

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**I. RECOMMENDED ACTION**

1. Staff recommends the approval of a resolution adopting a Façade Improvement Program in the form of a forgivable loan program and adopting design standards for the Program.

**II. DEPARTMENT CONTACT PERSONS**

Jonathan Rosenthal, Economic Development Administrator – 420-4524  
Kelly Hendershot, City Attorney – 857-4755  
Brian Billingsley, Community Development Director – 857-4147  
Harold Stewart, City Manager – 857-4750  
Dave Lakefield, Finance Director – 857-4784

**III. DESCRIPTION**

1. Background  
A number of city plans and economic development studies have concluded that the city needs to create incentives to improve downtown buildings and specifically recommended establishing a façade improvement program. A façade improvement program will address long-term market failures that have led to vacancies and underutilization of properties that are located in the Central Business District.
2. Proposed Project  
The city will establish a matching forgivable loan program for façade improvements that will respect the historic nature of downtown buildings while updating their functionality and energy efficiency.

#### **IV. IMPACT:**

1. Strategic Impact:

This Program meets all the following:

- a. It is consistent with the City of Minot's economic development goals as set forth in multiple strategic planning documents and in the city's Comprehensive Plan.
- b. It will improve downtown's attractiveness for business.
- c. It will retain and create jobs.
- d. It will encourage new investment and attract new businesses in the Central Business District.

2. Service/Delivery Impact:

This Program addresses repeated requests and comments arising in city planning efforts.

3. Fiscal Impact:

This Program will increase in property valuations and have a positive impact on sales tax revenues.

#### **V. ALTERNATIVES**

1. Instruct staff to amend the Program Guidelines and/or the Design Standards for the Council to consider at a future meeting.
2. Maintain the status quo. Do not invest in our downtown and allow deteriorating conditions to continue at current pace.

#### **VI. TIME CONSTRAINTS**

All the work to be performed is exterior in nature and subject to inclement weather. The staff would like to make the program available as soon as possible in order that applicants can design, order supplies, and contract work during 2021 building season.

#### **VII. LIST OF ATTACHMENTS**

1. Program Guidelines.
2. Design Standards.
3. Resolution.
4. Application Form.