



TO: Mayor Shaun Sipma
Members of the City Council

FROM: Harold Stewart, City Manager

DATE: August 16, 2021

City Manager:

Most of the City Manager's schedule over the last couple of weeks has been occupied with internal meetings and projects. It would also seem some new development projects are getting some traction which could have a positive impact on Minot's future growth and sustainability.

Positive progress is also being made regarding the CTE building downtown. The closing on the purchase of the building from Trinity by the Minot State Foundation is in the process of being scheduled. The program is also scheduled to be considered for approval by the State Board of Higher Education Budget and Finance Committee at their September 21st meeting, and potential full approval by the NDUS Board at their September 30th meeting.

Meetings attended: Minot Community Leadership meeting; Open Record Training; Scandinavian Heritage Association Board meeting; Military Affairs Committee meeting; monthly communication meeting with the Parks Director; City Hall Project meeting; monthly communication meeting with Minot Area Community Foundation Director; Speaker at Kiwanis; Chief Engineer visit; and Memorial Service for Patrolman Lee S. Fahler.

**Human Resources
HR Director, Lisa Jundt**

Recruitment

Current Openings

The HR Department continues their efforts to recruit Engineering related positions in the Engineering and Public Works departments including the CAD Technician position that has been open for the past year and 2 Project Civil Engineer positions. The Public Works department also has an opening for an administrative clerk. Testing cycles for Public Safety positions in Police and Fire have been completed to establish Civil Service hiring lists. An additional testing cycle for Police has been scheduled for August due to limited applicants attending the May testing. The Police Department is also completing interviews to fill 3 open Dispatch positions. The Inspection department has an open position for Electrical Inspector, which is posted. The Airport has openings for Operations Technicians. Final interview for the Airport Director has been scheduled for August 21st.

ERP System Implementation

The HR Department has devoted most of its time to implementation of a new HCM system for the past 18 months. Ongoing issues with the computer software in both timekeeping and payroll have made it impossible to successfully implement the programs, as promised by the software company. This in-turn has

eroded confidence of the HR team that the software will ever be reliable in the future, and has prompted the need to potentially start looking at other vendor products. Due to ongoing issues, It is probable that the live conversion date will be pushed back to sometime in July 2022.

Fire Department
Fire Chief, Kelli Kronschnabel

- Finishing up the approval process for the Station 5 plans in preparation for next years bidding process.
- Focus has been on completing some outside projects before fall. The trench prop has been constructed and we are working through the punch list with the contractor before acceptance.
- Working with legal on private hydrant inspection process and fee schedule for permits and inspections. We will be submitting proposed changes to council once completed.
- We are excited to again offer the citizens fire academy on September 11th. See Facebook and website for more information.

Police Department
John Klug, Chief of Police

Our preliminary budget for 2022 is in, and we did make several cuts to our personnel requests and budget to try to keep some of the additional positions. The focus was on hiring non-sworn personnel to free up our current sworn officers to do the job they were hired to do – policing!

The police department is currently at 83% effective strength for sworn officers with 14 of the 83 sworn positions not fully effective. This is due to the following:

- 1 – light duty assignment (injury/medical)
- 3 – Field Training
- 3 – ND Air National Guard military deployment (through November 2021)
- 7 – Vacant positions

Our test and selection date for police officers is next week and we hope to have a good turnout for this round of testing. We need to fill as many of the 7 vacant positions as possible and we know there is an additional vacancy coming in the next couple months. Additionally, we have gotten word that another officer will be deployed for a 1-year military assignment starting in September.

In addition to the 7 openings for police officers, we are also in need of hiring 4 dispatchers. We are in the process of making offers to fill 3 of the positions and there will be another opening in September. Those 2 additional positions will be filled about 8 weeks after the first 3 positions are hired and filled. This will allow for the trainers to complete the training and observation of the new dispatchers.

Calls for service continue to rise from our low in activity in 2020. The ND State Fair brings a lot of activity to our community and calls for service are steady during the 9 days of the Fair. The ND State Fair parade is always a tasking assignment for our department. We commit more than 30 staff members (mostly officers) to shut down the parade route and make it safe for all who participate and attend. This takes a total of about 150 hours of overtime to accomplish.

On August 9th, Minot Central Dispatch experienced a disruption in service when fiber-optic cables were accidentally cut. We quickly notified members of our community using all available means that they would have to call our administrative line to request emergency assistance as 9-1-1 was down. All responded well under the circumstances, and we adapted to best serve our community during this disruption.

**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.

	July	Year-to-Date
Residential: Median Sale Price	\$237,200	\$217,280
Residential: Total Sales	75	631
Commercial: Median Sale Price	\$225,000	\$360,000
Commercial: Total Sales	3	37
Vacant Lot: Median Sale Price	\$17,000 *	\$17,000 *
Vacant Lot: Total Sales	15	38

* Please note that 14 vacant lots sold in the Bolton Heights subdivision is one sales transaction.

**Community Development Department
Director, Brian Billingsley**

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION:

Renaissance Zone Review Board:

The Board held a meeting in July. They reviewed the final draft of the Renaissance Zone Plan that will be sent to the City Council in the Fall for adoption. Staff also discussed holding upcoming training sessions on the newly adopted façade improvement program.

Façade Improvement Program:

Approximately ten downtown property owners have contacted staff about the façade improvement program. No property owners have yet to file an application, but several are working with local architects on designing their facades.

INSPECTIONS DIVISION:

June 2021 Permit Information (July 2020):

- Total Permits Issued: 322 (33)
- Valuations of all Permits: \$1,948,300 (\$1,549,600)
- Single-Family Homes: 0 (5)
- Multi-Family Permits: 0 (1)
- Residential Remodels: \$346,300 (\$232,100)
- New Commercial: \$584,000 (\$0)
- Commercial Remodels: \$1,018,000 (\$294,500)

Building Permits:

- Souris River Storage – Warehouse Expansion – 3000 County Hwy. 19 S.

Personnel:

- The Building Official accepted the resignation of John French, Electrical Inspector II

PLL Project:

Inspections staff attended about a dozen remote meetings with our consultant to put together workflows for all of our permitting processes. The building permit software should be ready for use around the end of the calendar year.

PLANNING DIVISION:

Planning Commission:

The Planning Commission conducted public hearings on five (5) cases on July 7. They recommended approval of all cases.

Zoning Ordinance Steering Committee:

The Zoning Ordinance Steering Committee met on July 28 and made significant progress on the Subdivision Ordinance. The Committee will reconvene in September to wrap up their work on the ordinance.

Development Review Team Meetings:

The Minot Development Review Team (DRT) held eight (8) DRT meetings during the month of July:

- July 7 – Capital RV Expansion – Parcel HA27.085.000.0010 & .0020
- July 7 – Jefferson Mobile Home Park Expansion – Outlots 13&14, Section 29-155N-82W
- July 14 – Fed Ex Ground Distribution Facility – Parcel EE35.004.000.0000
- July 14 – Sunset Mem. Gardens Pet Cemetery Lot Line Adjustment – 210 62nd Ave. NW
- July 21 – Shop Condos – 225 45th Ave NE
- July 28 – Twin Homes Residential Development – 4th Ave. NW & 27th St. NW
- July 28 – Sports Fitness Facility – Bel Air 23rd Addition
- July 29 – Redevelop proposal – Fairview Motel

Comprehensive Plan Update:

Community Development Director Billingsley formed a committee to review Statements of Qualifications from four firms for a complete update to the Comprehensive Plan. The Committee consists of Mr. Billingsley, Principal Planner John Van Dyke, Assistant City Engineer Emily Huettl, Alderman Stephen Podrygula, Alderman Paul Pitner, and Planning Commissioner Kelly Barnett. The committee interviewed three firms on July 12, 2021. The Committee selected SRF Consulting based in Bismarck as the most qualified firm. The City hired SRF to re-write the City’s zoning ordinance in 2019-2021.

Other Projects:

- Director attended one Building Committee meeting during the month of July for space planning the new City Hall and also attended the public open house on July 15th.
- Director attended the Department Head retreat on July 15.
- Staff attended an electronic document-scanning meeting on July 14.
- Planning staff attended about 10 meetings during the month of July with our PLL consultant.
- Staff interviewed Erin Iverson for a vacant position on the Planning Commission.

**Minot Public Library
Director, Janet Anderson**

The Minot Public Library’s Summer Reading/Learning Program kicked off on June 1st and as of August 2nd 719 people (children, teens, and adults) had signed up via the online registration service (Beanstack). MPL hosted more than 50 free programs in July and will be wrapping up the summer programs and preparing for fall programs over the next several weeks.

Library Director Janet Anderson continues to work with area teachers, librarians, and booksellers to promote the importance of reading every day with the #ReadFor20 campaign. On 7/24/2021, Anderson and other committee members walked in the ND State Fair Parade and gave out 2,000 coupons for free books. The committee wrapped up the Guest Readers series on 8/5/2021, but will continue to promote #ReadFor20 through various media.



Master Officer Caisee Sandusky of the Minot Police Department recently took part in the Read for 20 campaign, reading to youngsters and adults at Main Street Books in downtown Minot. Sandusky also helped some of the children in attendance try on her protective vest and answered questions about what it's like to have a career in law enforcement.

Library staff continued to attend outreach events in July and will continue to do so into the fall. The MPL Book Bike continues to be at each of the #ReadFor20 Guest Reader events and all of the Arts in the City events each Thursday and Sunday this summer. The Book Bike (and staff) were also at National Night Out on 8/3/2021 and Children's Librarian Randi Monley attended the Sabre Dogs' "Books and Baseball" event on 8/4/2021.

On 7/15/2021, the Minot Public Library Board voted to no longer charge overdue fines on all materials except tools. MPL hasn't been charging overdue fines for overdue materials date since March 15, 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. During this time, it was determined that the number of items returned actually increased slightly and the number of accounts with long overdue items did not increase substantially. Patrons with items more than 30 days overdue will still be contacted and if items aren't returned a service charge will be assessed and the account will be blocked to prevent additional items from being checked out. In the weeks since this decision, the majority of public comments and input has been very positive.

The Friends of the Minot Public Library will host a one day book sale on Wednesday, 8/18/2021. The Friends of the Library is a separate, non-profit, entity which works to support library services through volunteer and fundraising events.

On 8/4/2021, MPL was notified that the Minot Public Library reached the **Future-Focused** level of the North Dakota Library Coordinating Council's Standards for Public Libraries in 2020. Only 2 libraries received that distinction in 2020, and MPL is also the only library to be Future-Focused two years in a row.

Library usage in July 2021 was as follows:

New Library Cards issued = 210

Foot Traffic = 7,739

Participation in Library Programs = 857

Participation in Library Outreach = 195

Materials Checked Out = 16,611

The Library's revised Strategic Plan is in its final stages and was approved by the Library Board on 7/15/2021. The final Strategic Plan is attached.