

**MARKET ST**



**LIVE WORK GROW**

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## LIVE WORK GROW

*Market Street* brings original insights and clarity to the evaluation and revitalization of the places where people live, work and grow. Through honest and informed assessments, *Market Street* can equip you with the tools to create meaningful change. Our solutions successfully merge our experience and expertise with the economic and social realities of our clients. *Market Street's* community clients are successful at creating stronger programs, increasing operational budgets, and creating new quality jobs that improve the quality of life in their communities.

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## OVERVIEW

Mandan, North Dakota has grown from a rough-and-tumble outpost to a city poised to take the next step in its evolution as a local community of choice. To help manage and plan for the dynamics of this evolution, the Bismarck-Mandan Chamber of Commerce, the City of Mandan, Mandan Public Schools, and Mandan Parks and Recreation have partnered with *Market Street Services*, a national community and economic consulting firm based in Atlanta, to coordinate a visioning process for the city's residents, businesses and elected/appointed leadership. At the end of this months-long effort, Mandan has a more focused picture of what type of place it wants to be and a prioritized set of action areas to achieve this vision. The components of this process are outlined below.

- **Economic and Demographic Snapshot:** The first step in Mandan's visioning process was the *Economic and Demographic Snapshot*, which helped to provide a common understanding of the community's recent trends. It used official local, state, and national statistical data sources to conclusively analyze key economic and demographic indicators including what has happened in the community in the recent past.
- **Community Assessment:** This report presented a breadth of research to demonstrate Mandan-Morton County's competitive position to accommodate visionary growth and development. A combination of factors that determine a community's strengths as a place to live, work, and do business were assessed including indicators related to education and workforce development, infrastructure and land use, business costs, and quality of life. The *Community Assessment* also included perspectives of community members and project stakeholders which were gathered through interviews, focus groups, and an online survey.
- **Mandan Tomorrow:** The results of the quantitative analysis and community input serve as the basis for this *Mandan Tomorrow* plan. This plan represents the culmination of all research completed and will present action items geared toward addressing challenges and capitalizing on opportunities for visionary growth. This *Mandan Tomorrow* plan will serve as a tool to unify Mandan's public and private leadership behind a consensus blueprint for the community's future.
- **Implementation Guidelines:** *Mandan Tomorrow* represents "what" Mandan needs to do to achieve its preferred future, while the *Implementation Guidelines* determine "how" that will be done. This report will include a capacity assessment, a first year action plan, and a five year action plan and will determine which organization(s) should lead plan implementation efforts.

## STEERING COMMITTEE

A Steering Committee, co-chaired by Karen Johner (North Dakota Guaranty and Title Company) and Kirsten Baesler (Mandan School Board), was established to provide guidance and leadership over the planning process. The Committee was selected from both public and private sectors of the Mandan area to provide a broad representation of stakeholders and leadership. Support has been provided by a Technical Committee, which has been responsible for assisting *Market Street* with collecting data, organizing meetings, and attending to administrative tasks. Both the Steering and Technical Committees have reviewed and provided feedback on project deliverables and participated in discussions about the future direction of the City of Mandan.

### Co-Chairs

#### Private Sector

Karen Johner, North Dakota Guaranty and Title Company

#### Public Sector

Kirsten Baesler, Mandan School Board

### Steering Committee

Annette Behm Caldwell, Open Road Honda

Mark Bitz, Morton County Commission

Dave Clark, Bismarck State College

Norm Clark, Citizen

Tom Conlon, Missouri River Ed. Cooperative

Kristi Entzi, Dakota Community Bank

Terry Kraft, American Family Insurance

Jay Feil, Starion Financial

Jim Froelich, Missouri Valley Petroleum

Dennis Haider, Montana Dakota Utilities

Tim Helbling, Mayor, City of Mandan

Brad Hellman, Barney's Tesoro

Denny Hildebrand, Burning Desires

Damian Huettl, Citizen

Keith Kautzman, Citizen

Tom Kelsch, Kelsch Law Firm

Rob Knoll, Community Works North Dakota

Brian Kroshus, Bismarck Tribune

Laurie Leingang, Citizen

Pam Mack, Citizen

Leif Peterson, Tesoro Mandan Refinery

Tracy Porter, Mandan Park Board

Lisa Quintus, Mandan High School

Matt Schanandore, Ft. Lincoln Foundation

Mike Weiland, Dairy Queen

Arlyn VanBeek, Central Market

Del Wetsch, Mandan Progress Organization

Mark Zachmeier, Datrue

### Technical Committee

Cole Higlin, Mandan Parks & Recreation

Ellen Huber, City of Mandan

Kelvin Hullet, Bismarck-Mandan Chamber

Susie Kocourek, Bismarck-Mandan Chamber

Richard Mower, Bismarck Mandan Development Association

Jim Neubauer, City of Mandan

Wilfred Volesky, Mandan Public Schools

## INTRODUCTION

From *Market Street's* perspective, this strategic visioning process has resulted in a more focused picture of what Mandan's stakeholders would like their city to become in the future. Rather than trying to "out-Bismarck Bismarck" in terms of becoming a big-box retail hub, local residents and business owners would like Mandan to increasingly become a distinctive community with independently-owned stores and unique, family-friendly attractions and amenities. It would continue to expand and leverage its recreational infrastructure, historic architecture and destinations, and popular special events and festivals. As a "critical mass" of unique destination attracts business and proves a strong market in Mandan exists, larger retail chains will surely seek to establish a foothold in the community.

Numerous stakeholders – speaking in interviews, focus groups or via an online survey – identified Mandan's role as the place "Where the West Begins" and its pioneer history as key advantages to leverage for economic development purposes.



Thus, many components of *Mandan Tomorrow* incorporate the themes that emerged from the tremendous amount of quantitative and qualitative research conducted for Mandan's planning process. However, rather than attempt to refashion Mandan as a tourist-focused historical artifact such as Tombstone, Arizona, the City should celebrate its pioneer spirit – the can-do attitude that built and sustained Mandan through the decades. As "**21<sup>st</sup> Century Pioneers,**" Mandan would embrace progressive change, a celebration of community and the land, and seek to always move forward towards a brighter horizon.

The project's Steering Committee was charged with developing a Vision Statement that reflects their hopes for a future Mandan. The statement reads:

*Mandan is a vibrant, growing community known for its pioneering spirit and leadership in blazing the way to a welcoming, supportive and affordable hometown atmosphere and quality education system for families and residents of all ages; an environment for business innovation and success; and a historic, adventurous and exciting destination for visitors.  
Together, we make it happen!*

This Vision Statement will serve as a guidepost for future growth and development in Mandan. City leaders will be able to reference the Statement to determine if a project or program reflects the overall goals of this visioning process.

The *Mandan Tomorrow* plan is divided into key goal areas, strategies and actions. In order to be most successful, implementation of the plan should be seen holistically; each component is integral to the success of the overall strategy.

## **MAYOR'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY GROUP (MEDAG)**

It is critical that implementation of *Mandan Tomorrow* be integrated with – and leverage – other local and regional strategic efforts. In keeping with this mandate, the goals, strategies and activities included in *Mandan Tomorrow* should be coordinated with efforts to implement the **Enabling Strategy for all Global Initiatives** developed by MEDAG. MEDAG was established by Bismarck Mayor John Warford and Mandan Mayor Tim Helbling and supported by the City Commissions of both communities. The group met bi-weekly over a four-month period from October 2008 to January 2009 to produce a set of recommendations that could enable more efficient and effective local economic development efforts.

Many of the Global Initiatives and 11 sub-initiatives of the MEDAG plan have strong correlations to *Mandan Tomorrow* strategies and can be implemented in a coordinated, collaborative way. Ensuring that there is no overlap between these two critical strategic efforts will enable resources to be maximized and staff/volunteers to be leveraged at their utmost capacity.

The Enabling Strategy focused on the following components:

### **Global Initiative: Quality of Life Subcommittee**

1. Environment.
2. Arts, culture, programs, history, events, entertainment.
3. Education/Communiversality.

### **II. Global Initiative: Sustainable Infrastructure Development Committee**

4. Public and open space.
5. Energy and transportation.
6. Community Core Downtown, place to gather, facilities, current plans.

### **III. Global Initiative: Opportunity Development Subcommittee**

7. Enable, foster, support economic development and local entrepreneurial development in the area
8. Reactivate the MBBM committee. Organize efforts to enhance cooperation and collaboration between all boards, commissions, and other government entities.
9. Promote the development of the Mandan Events Center and the expansion of the Bismarck Civic Center from the perspective of promoting the Bismarck-Mandan area.
10. Enhance coordination of regional sporting and cultural opportunities and facilities.
11. Continued support of Applied Energy Technology Center.

## Mandan Tomorrow



# Leadership, Pride, and Image

*"I want the community as a whole to have more pride in their city. It seems like the same people are always trying to improve the city, but they are outnumbered by the nay-sayers and the 'good enoughs.'"*

*"Look at the big picture, not just your one area of involvement."*

*"Be more open to new ideas from people who are new to the area. Just because a company or people are not originally from the Mandan area does not mean they will not have good ideas for the future."*

*"Cooperation between Bismarck and Mandan: set aside differences and work toward common goals."*

**GOAL: MANDAN’S CITIZENS, STAKEHOLDERS, AND LEADERS WILL BE EMPOWERED TO BETTER IMPROVE THE COMMUNITY.**

Many of Mandan’s most discussed opportunity areas are also some of the community’s most difficult-to-define challenges: how to more positively reflect Mandan relative to Bismarck, how to promote a sense of community pride, and how to unite current/potential leadership to move the community towards successful and sustainable growth and development. Tapping the full complement of the area’s diverse constituent groups and key leaders – including young, emerging leaders and regional stakeholders –will be a key requirement for Mandan to achieve long-term success.

**Leadership****Strategy 1: Better leverage Mandan’s current and future leaders.**

- **ACTION 1: Seek to better engage local business leadership in Mandan and Morton County’s political discourse.**
  - Appeal to area businesses to encourage executives and employees to volunteer for local boards and committees, run for elected office, and/or participate in beneficial civic- and public-improvement activities.
    - Consider development of a database where agencies can list volunteer opportunities and individuals can sign up to participate in specific efforts.
    - Encourage businesses to provide a number of hours annually to employees to participate in civic activities.
    - Assess the potential for provision of incentives to run for office, including bonuses or “comp” time.
  - More actively promote the benefits of membership in entities such as the Mandan Progress Organization (MPO) and the Chamber.
    - Ensure that businesses stay abreast of local and regional issues of importance.
  - Consider funding the development of a local political action committee (PAC) to encourage and support forward-thinking local candidates.

- Leverage the PAC to reach out to and support candidates that embrace Mandan’s vision and can bridge public and private constituencies.
  - Assure qualified local business people that a decision to serve in elected office will be supported by efforts of the PAC.
  - Determine an effective name for the PAC for public use.<sup>1</sup>
- Partner with regional business and economic development organizations to advocate publicly for issues of concern related to Bismarck-Mandan’s competitive climate.
    - Determine the need to develop media materials and campaigns related to support of high-priority issues.
    - Engage representatives of local opposition groups in public debates on the merits of particular efforts, programs and legislation.

## Greater Phoenix Chamber of Commerce

### *Best practice in political advocacy*

The Greater Phoenix Chamber of Commerce Political Action Committee (PAC), a subsidiary Chamber organization, was established in 1978 to identify and help pro-business candidates get elected to state, county and local offices. The Chamber believes that having pro-business candidates in office helps improve the business climate in metropolitan Phoenix.

The PAC identifies key races that could impact the business community and then interviews candidates to determine who will receive the Greater Phoenix Chamber PAC endorsement and be eligible for a campaign contribution. The Chamber PAC supports candidates from both political parties that best represent the interests of the business community.

Contributions to the PAC are solicited from individuals (corporate contributions are prohibited by law) and leveraged in the public support of selected candidates.

Source: Greater Phoenix Chamber of Commerce  
[www.phoenixchamber.com](http://www.phoenixchamber.com)

<sup>1</sup> For example, one of the nation’s largest PACs, EMILY’S List, is registered with the Federal Election Commission as a political action committee but does not use the term PAC in its public discourse.

- **ACTION 2: Fully engage Leadership Bismarck-Mandan, its alumni network, and other key groups in building a better Mandan.**
  - Launch a targeted effort directed at Mandan businesses to encourage executives and top employees to participate in Leadership Bismarck-Mandan.
    - Partner with Chamber leadership to ensure that a certain number of program slots are reserved for Mandan leaders.
    - Determine the potential to expand the effort to Mandan’s civic and community leaders.
  - Consider formalizing an “elected office” track within Leadership Bismarck-Mandan enabling participants to understand the process of competitively running for office.
  - Promote the *Mandan Tomorrow* initiative at a Chamber-hosted Leadership alumni event and define specific ways they can support Mandan’s community and economic development efforts.
  - Partner in efforts to reactivate the MBBM committee as a tool to advance local and regional initiatives.
- **ACTION 3: Better engage Mandan residents in the workings of city government.**
  - One possibility is to launch a “trial” Citizen Academy focused on an aspect of city government.
    - Assess the potential to continue the Academy program as a free service to local residents.
    - Consider development of additional Academies as interest demands.

## Citizen Academies

*Best practice in civic participation and community/government relations*

The City of Sugar Land, Texas, in a commitment to increase citizen involvement and communication with local government, implemented a Citizen Academy program at no charge to residents wanting to learn more about – and become involved in – their city.

The Academies evolved from an initial course on public safety to several academies developed to cover many areas of city government. Current programs include: the Police Academy, the Community Assistance Support Team, the Fire Academy, the Community Emergency Response Teams, the Mayor’s Youth Advisory Council, Sugar Land 101, and Serve Sugar Land. As an example, the Police Academy class meets every Thursday for 13 weeks. Students are introduced to all aspects of law enforcement, including: criminal scene investigations; patrol procedures; firearms training and more.

All of the academies are very popular, typically filling within a few days after enrollment begins. Citizen Academies was awarded a 2007 Municipal Excellence Award in Communications from the Texas Municipal League.

Source: City of Sugar Land  
www.sugarlandtx.gov

- **ACTION 4: Leverage University of Mary’s position as “America’s leadership university” to create stronger linkages between its young leaders and the Bismarck-Mandan community.**
  - Explore the potential to link the University’s Emerging Leadership Academy with Leadership Bismarck-Mandan.
    - Explore jointly planned and coordinated events such as “lunch and learn” sessions or panel discussions on key local issues.
    - Consider Academy graduates for eventual entry into the Chamber’s Leadership program.
    - Reach out to the Academy’s G.O.L.D. (Giving Others Leadership Development) program to ensure that Mandan public schools are included in visitation sessions.

- Work with students in the G.O.L.D. program to determine additional opportunities for leadership-development education in Mandan.
  - Determine the potential for G.O.L.D. students to create a “leadership curriculum” to teach to regional students one day per week per semester (or some other timetable).
- Approach University of Mary administrators about working with other regional higher educational institutions to start leadership programs at their campuses.
    - Assess the desire of Bismarck State College, United Tribes Technical College, and Rasmussen College North Dakota to custom-tailor leadership-development programs for implementation at their institutions.
  - Encourage young leaders in the University’s growing healthcare and business programs to increase their involvement in the region through the potential development of pro-bono consulting services.
  - Develop service-learning opportunities for students in local governments and community development entities as for-credit course components.

## CampusCATALYST

*Best practice in collaborative community development and leadership training*

CampusCATALYST leverages the talents of undergraduate students at Northwestern University and the University of Chicago to provide pro-bono consulting services to non-profit organizations in the Greater Chicagoland area. Since the organization was founded in 2007, it has focused on providing assistance to non-profits in five areas: housing, youth and education, economic security, health, and arts and culture.

Under the guidance of MBA student mentors and faculty advisors, teams of undergraduate “community analysts” in for-credit university classes help philanthropic groups develop innovative, cost effective solutions for problems in three key areas: (1) Tactical operations, (2) Marketing, communications, and development, and (3) Partnership building. CampusCATALYST has gained a lot of support and momentum in a short period of time.

CampusCATALYST has been successful in uniting community, corporate, and university stakeholders to improve capacity and services at many of the region’s key community development organizations.

Source: CampusCATALYST  
www.campuscatalyst.org

- **ACTION 5: Ensure that local voting-age adults are aware of their Mandan City Commission and Morton County Commission candidate choices and their views on the most pressing local issues.**
  - Host pre-election information sessions in each voting district.
  - Engage the Chamber of Commerce to help promote sessions held by the Bismarck-Mandan League of Women Voters.
  - Distribute information through high school announcements so that new voters are aware of opportunities to get involved in local and state civic processes.
- **ACTION 6: Encourage greater participation among Mandan’s youth in local government and civic processes.**
  - Consider creating a Young Leadership Bismarck-Mandan program to engage the community’s high school students in civic participation.
  - Engage local youth in the workings of the City Commission.

- Propose that high school social studies, debate, or speech teachers have their students attend a City Commission meeting as part of a class assignment.
  - Alternatively, have students view a video of a Commission Meeting and present a report on a particular issue.
- Invite City and County Commissioners to Mandan schools to speak to students about government, leadership and important local concerns.

## Youth Leadership Jefferson County, TN

*Best practice in youth leadership development*

Youth Leadership Jefferson County was launched in 1998 to expand upon the success of the Chamber's Leadership Jefferson County program. After great success and enthusiasm surrounding the program in its first years of implementation, the program became a permanent course in the local high school curriculum. Leaders in public education and from the Chamber sought and obtained approval for the class from the State Board of Education and engaged the business community to provide financial sponsorship for the program.

Open to sophomores and juniors, Youth Leadership is taught each spring semester, kicking off with a retreat where students engage in teambuilding exercises and interact with Leadership Jefferson County alumni. During the course of the semester, students visit city and county government offices, participate in civic-related team projects, take a trip to the state legislature, attend meetings (including those for the city council, county commission, planning commission, and school board) and develop their leadership skills and knowledge of government and local civic engagement processes. The course is co-taught by a high school Vice Principal and a Chamber of Commerce board member, who must also be Leadership Jefferson County graduates.

Source: Southern Growth Policies Board and the Jefferson County Chamber of Commerce  
[www.southern.org](http://www.southern.org)  
[www.jefferson-tn-chamber.org/leadershiptyouth.htm](http://www.jefferson-tn-chamber.org/leadershiptyouth.htm)

## Pride

### Strategy 2: Develop an Internal Marketing campaign.

- **ACTION 1: Create a partnership between business, government and civic organizations to improve Mandanians' impressions of – and satisfaction with – their community.**
  - Create a unique page on the City of Mandan website to focus on issues related to community self-perception.
    - Consistently update the page with local news, discourse from local public and private leaders, arts and culture event listings, and elements of the City's visioning messages.
    - Consider developing a slogan to correspond to the page, i.e., "Believe in Mandan."
    - Determine ways to drive local traffic to the site, including providing printable discount coupons to area retail establishments and events.
    - Reach out to Mandan businesses, organizations, schools, etc., to post a link to the "Believe in Mandan" page on their websites.
      - Further encourage residents to visit the site by printing the URL on city stationary, service vehicles, and mailings such as water bills.
    - Assess the potential to expand the campaign to media such as billboards, radio, television and the Web.
  - Fully leverage visioning ideas generated through the community input online survey and existing efforts, like Mandan Progress Organizations "Team Mandan: Pride Community Wide" slogan.
    - Consider re-launching the "Team Mandan: Pride Community Wide" essay contest as a component of this campaign, potentially using a new tagline in the effort.
  - Develop "Believe in Mandan" merchandise and apparel for sale in local stores to help financially support the pride campaign.



- Take full advantage of the City's *Mandan Messenger* newsletter for providing positive information on current and proposed local efforts.
- Partner with Mandan schools to integrate lessons on Mandan's history and accomplishments of current and past local citizens into K-12 curricula.
  - Ask school administrators to support the lesson plan through the provision of learning resources and dedicated classroom time.
- **ACTION 2: Design a local informational campaign focused on the details and implementation of Mandan's strategic vision.**
  - Engage all key partners in the effort to craft the message and materials related to the campaign.
  - Establish a speaker's bureau to conduct outreach to key constituency groups explaining the dynamics of the visioning process and strategy.
  - Partner with the media to help communicate the vision of Mandan's strategic program.
    - Enlist media outlets to publish renderings of potential development scenarios.
    - Work with local firms to offer pro-bono work developing video "fly-throughs" and other design pieces reflecting positive transformation of Downtown Mandan and other districts.
  - Develop a unique message addressing the issue of big-box retail and the City's long-term retail-development goals.
    - Ensure the public understands that big-box retail is a component of the *Vision Plan*, but is seen as a longer-term opportunity.
- **ACTION 3: Consider creating a Mandan chapter of Keep America Beautiful (KAB) as the organization's first affiliate in North Dakota.**
  - Raise the one-time certification fee to fund the initial development of Keep Mandan Beautiful.
    - Obtain funding commitments to dedicate resources for the nominal annual service fee.

- Determine the longer-term potential to hire an Executive Director of Keep Mandan Beautiful.
- Leverage Keep Mandan Beautiful to coordinate an annual day-long “Great Mandan Cleanup” event.
  - Designate one day every summer for all local businesses and government employees to work on a project to improve Mandan.
    - Develop a Project List and coordinate volunteer opportunities with local departments, businesses and citizen groups.
    - Include neighborhood clean-up efforts to remove trash, graffiti and debris from community streets, the riverfront, greenspaces, and commercial districts.
- Assess the potential to develop additional volunteer and public-education events related to the upkeep and enhancement of Mandan’s public spaces.

## Keep America Beautiful (KAB)

*Best practice in community development*

There are more than 565 cities, towns, counties and states — even international communities — that are implementing the Keep America Beautiful System as certified affiliates of KAB. In its over 50-year existence, KAB has provided a proven framework for community education and hands-on stewardship that reduces litter and waste, promotes grassroots volunteerism, and makes sustainable improvement possible for communities of all sizes.

At the local level, KAB affiliates have built upon this framework to create innovative, locally-focused programs that address the specific needs of their diverse communities and populations. For example, Keep Indianapolis Beautiful (KIB), one of the national organization’s top affiliates, has a 30-year history of partnering with neighborhoods, the public sector, local philanthropists and corporate Indianapolis. Each year, KIB supports an average of 500 community improvement projects with 30,000 volunteers. Since 1995, KIB has helped plant more than 12,000 trees; it also coordinates city-wide Great Indy Cleanup days every weekend from April 4th through October 31<sup>st</sup>.

Sources: Keep America Beautiful, Keep Indianapolis Beautiful  
[www.kab.org](http://www.kab.org)  
[www.kibi.org](http://www.kibi.org)

- **ACTION 4: Approach Mandan’s government officials about approving time off for employees to volunteer for community-serving efforts.**
  - Provide city and county employees with eight or more hours of community-service leave per year to volunteer for activities that give back to Mandan-Morton County.

### **Strategy 3: Assess the potential to initiate and coordinate marketing messages leveraging Mandan’s “pioneer spirit” heritage and future.**

- **ACTION 1: Gauge public opinion regarding replacing or adjusting Mandan’s “Where the West Begins” slogan behind a new campaign.**
  - Consider holding an online poll – or providing questionnaires delivered in local water bills (or some other means) – to determine the public’s support of a revised local messaging campaign.

- **ACTION 2: If a new campaign is publically supported, proceed by partnering with all entities that market Mandan to ensure that a consistent theme is presented.**
  - Seek to formalize the identification of Mandan as a community where a Western and pioneer spirit has defined its past and can re-create its future.
    - Ensure the theme embodies a wide scope of ideas and pushes the idea of strong community spirit and a “pioneer energy” driving Mandan’s future.
  - Unify logos, taglines, messages and layout schemes as necessary to create more consistency in marketing related to Mandan.
  - Determine the potential to incorporate new branding and themes into existing large-scale Mandan events.
- **ACTION 3: Partner with the Bismarck-Mandan Convention and Visitor’s Bureau to effectively grow the local tourism industry.**
  - Ensure that Mandan is marketed consistently and cohesively as it relates to the an existing or new promotional theme.
    - Strive to package Mandan and Morton County historical, Western, pioneer and equestrian/rodeo attractions and destinations in a unified way.
  - Fully support local efforts to develop a Children’s Museum in Mandan.
    - Consider integrating themes, displays, and interactive exhibits focused on the role of children in the pioneer era.
    - Assess the potential to locate the Museum in Downtown Mandan.
- **ACTION 4: Devise a component of an overall marketing strategy focused on capturing west-to-east I-94 traffic through Mandan.**
  - Utilize billboards and – potentially – a broader campaign directed at compelling eastbound travelers to stop in Downtown Mandan or visit a local attraction.
    - Marketing opportunities also include: local newspapers, school bulletins, radio advertising, and direct-mailers to boost awareness of the effort.

- Purchase advertising space in Flasher, Glen Ullin, Hebron, Regent, Dickinson, Beulah, Elgin, Hettinger, etc., to promote the program.

## Image

### Strategy 4: Strive to improve the perception of Mandan in the region.

- **ACTION 1: Work with local public relations and marketing departments (or potentially solicit professional assistance) to develop a regional campaign to enhance Mandan’s image in Bismarck and Burleigh County.**
  - Create a strong message celebrating Mandan’s history and recognizing its status as a family-friendly community.
    - Choose a versatile, “universal” message that can serve to positively differentiate Mandan in the region.
    - Promote the imaging message on web pages, marketing, and advertising materials distributed by the City of Mandan, the Bismarck-Mandan Chamber of Commerce, Mandan Public Schools, and other community and regional partner entities.
  - Assess potential Bismarck-Burleigh County districts, facilities, media and events to promote Mandan’s marketing message.
- **ACTION 2: Partner with local media outlets, including local television stations and the Bismarck Tribune, to promote positive efforts and momentum in Mandan.**
  - Gain commitments to print or broadcast weekly and/or monthly stories on an aspect of *Mandan Tomorrow* implementation.
  - Engage the Mandan Progress Organization to include information about the community’s *Mandan Tomorrow* implementation, Leadership Bismarck-Mandan, and Bismarck-Mandan Young Professionals Network in addition to the community information they already provide as part of their “Welcome to Mandan” outreach to new residents.
  - Partner with local media to create an official “events calendar” section focusing on upcoming events in Bismarck and Mandan.

- Through business, government and community organizations, promote awareness of the positive impacts civic journalism can have on community development and civic engagement efforts.

## Civic Journalism

*Best practice trend in media's role in community development*

A growing movement in the United States is focused on what is called “civic journalism,” a new way of viewing the media’s role in the community it serves. According to the non-profit Pew Center for Civic Journalism, “Civic journalism is both a philosophy and a set of values... At its heart is a belief that journalism has an obligation to public life – an obligation that goes beyond just telling the news or unloading lots of facts.” A study of trends in civic journalism from 1994 to 2001 commissioned by the Pew Center found that:

- Some form of civic journalism was practiced in at least a fifth of all American newspapers, in almost every state and in every region.
- The goals of news organizations show a strong commitment to the traditional public news values of informing the public and, to a lesser extent, the civic and democratic values of problem-solving and increased deliberation.
- New ways of reporting the news have emerged that help citizens deliberate on important problems, address and solve them, and increase their voices in the community and in the pages of the papers.
- There is significant (though not yet conclusive) evidence of impact in communities where civic journalism is practiced. About a third of all cases showed some community/newspaper partnerships. More than half reported evidence of improved public deliberation. Other results included: improved citizens skills; new civic organizations formed; and increased volunteerism.

Source: Pew Charitable Trusts: Pew Center for Civic Journalism  
[www.pewcenter.org](http://www.pewcenter.org)

- **ACTION 3: Work with real estate agents in the region to educate them on Mandan’s comparative housing strengths and advantages.**
  - Partner with the local Board of Realtors to develop an educational brochure on the benefits of Mandan as a residential location.
    - Include information on average home prices, school performance, recreational amenities, and incentives like the City of Mandan’s property tax deferral program.

- Ensure that agents understand their responsibility to accurately educate their clients on the residential climates in both Bismarck and Mandan.

Mandan Tomorrow



Economic  
Opportunity  
and  
Prosperity

"[Our biggest challenge is] getting businesses - either offices or retail businesses - into the city."

"We need to find our economic niche...something unique that we can exploit; something that complements Bismarck's economy rather than attempts to compete head-on."

"We have a strong history of local business owners that were actively involved in the community, not just their businesses."

-Online survey comments

**GOAL: POSITION MANDAN’S ECONOMY TO BEST ENSURE SUSTAINABLE GROWTH AND INCREASING WEALTH**

Mandan has a diverse economy that has enabled it to experience steady growth in previous years – a trend many North Dakota communities would envy. Going forward, Mandan must ensure that it remains competitive for high-paying jobs and takes advantage of potential opportunities for even greater economic diversity. Success will require implementation of a balanced program inclusive of existing business expansion, recruitment of new companies and development of small businesses and start-up firms. New and existing partnerships with schools, colleges, workforce development organizations, governments, elected leadership, and other key constituencies will best position economic development officials to be effective.

**Policies and Programs**

**Strategy 1: Ensure that land is identified and reserved for specific economic-development purposes.**

- **ACTION 1: Maintain consistency between the Bismarck-Mandan Future Land Use Plan and the findings of the Bismarck-Mandan Development Association’s *Mandan Industrial Property Inventory*.**
  - Assess current zoning designations to determine their equivalency with property identified for industrial uses.
    - Rezone parcels and districts as necessary to ensure consistency with Future Land Use designations.
    - Proactively reach out to property owners to discuss the highest-and-best use potential for their land.
  - Reserved industrially-designated parcels for these uses even if faced with political pressure to re-zone property for residential or retail development.

- **ACTION 2: Assess the feasibility of assembling currently identified – or undesignated – land for the development of a new Industrial Park in Mandan.**
  - Partner with the Bismarck-Mandan Development Association (BMDA) to identify the park location, assemble the land and develop the park.
    - Ensure that the park's location is served by existing transportation and utilities infrastructure or source funds to provide this service to the site.
    - Seek clear consensus among local officials and adjacent property owners regarding the appropriateness of the chosen site.
- **ACTION 3: Continue efforts to identify, secure and – potentially - assemble parcels for development of big-box retail in Mandan.**
  - Persist with efforts to attract big-box stores to Mandan through outreach to specific retailers and leveraging data to prove a local market exists for additional products and services.
    - Utilize enhanced public-outreach and communications efforts to continue asking residents about their retail preferences.
  - Consistently measure local retail sales in detail to provide information on local trends, retail preferences and gaps to potential small-, medium- and big-box retail prospects.

**Strategy 2: Effectively nurture entrepreneurs and small business development opportunities.**

- **ACTION 1: Leverage and increase awareness of existing services.**
  - Ensure that small business owners and potential entrepreneurs are aware of programs offered through the Mandan Business Development Office and other entities such as the North Dakota Small Business Development Center; Bank of North Dakota's New Venture Capital Fund and Beginning Entrepreneur Loan Guarantee Program; the University of Mary I.D.E.A. Center; the SCORE chapter in Bismarck; and – potentially – the future Bismarck-Mandan Chamber of Commerce Business Academy.

- Effectively promote and manage the City of Mandan and Lewis and Clark Regional Development Council's \$1 million revolving loan fund.<sup>2</sup>
- **ACTION 2: Consider offering additional small business development and entrepreneurial assistance.**
  - Discuss the viability of developing a retail incubator facility to nurture start-up enterprises that could “graduate” to key Mandan districts.
  - Consider launching an Entrepreneur Mentoring Program in which established entrepreneurs and small-business people are paired with prospective entrepreneurs to discuss potential ventures and the keys to long-term success.
  - Work with the IDEA Center in Bismarck to determine the potential to launch a Mandan branch.
    - Alternatively, seek to enlist IDEA Center staff to spend one day per week at a Mandan location – perhaps at the BSC campus downtown.
    - Communicate to University of Mary graduates the opportunities to start businesses in Mandan.

**Strategy 3: Best communicate issues related to Mandan's tax rates and efforts to address these imbalances.**

- **ACTION 1: Continue regular and active communications with residents and businesses concerned about Mandan's comparatively high property tax rates.**
  - Integrate into enhanced government/public outreach activities consistent messages related to the need for – and reasons behind – Mandan's higher rates.
    - Seek consensus among taxpayers that continuing investments – especially as related to implementation of the *Vision Plan* – will ultimately lead to stronger local growth and the ability to lower tax rates in the future.

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<sup>2</sup> The City of Mandan and Lewis and Clark Regional Development Council recently received federal approval to form a new \$1 million revolving fund to assist business start-ups and expansions in the community. This is the second million-dollar loan pool established to help businesses in Mandan.

- **ACTION 2: Consistently assess opportunities to ease businesses and residents' tax burden.**
  - Continue providing tax breaks to first-time homebuyers.
    - Determine the potential to provide tax relief to buyers “trading up” to their next home purchase or making a significant investment to upgrade their existing home.
  - Pursue all state and local tax-abatement options to businesses that seek to make significant investments in local operations.

**Strategy 4: Continue efforts to provide sufficient public infrastructure.**

- **ACTION 1: Maintain a strong focus on constructing the utilities, transportation and telecommunications infrastructure necessary to be competitive.**
  - Ensure close inter-departmental and inter-governmental coordination of infrastructure development.
  - Prioritize projects that supply key parcels reserved for industrial, retail and residential development.
  - Manage efforts so as to most effectively limit property tax increases to fund infrastructure enhancement.
- **ACTION 2: Monitor the progress of regional efforts.**
  - Continue to closely follow the North-South Beltway project to ensure that an optimal route is developed through Mandan-Morton County.
    - Partner with local economic development personnel to strategize the best way to leverage the Beltway for growth in Mandan's retail and industrial sectors.
  - Ensure projects initiated and managed by the Bismarck-Mandan Metropolitan Planning Organization effectively serve Mandan's interests in the context of regional competitiveness.

**Strategy 5: Leverage current and potential incentives tools to facilitate local economic development.**

- **ACTION 1: Maximize the incentives potential of Mandan's Renaissance Zone.**
  - Ensure that Renaissance Zone benefits are effectively marketed to constituencies that may benefit from them.
    - Importantly, this includes retailers, investors, and developers seeking to implement the vision of Downtown Mandan as a unique commercial and residential environment.
- **ACTION 2: Promote the development and approval of one or more tax increment financing (TIF) districts in areas with strong redevelopment potential.**
  - Initiate a public-education campaign to broaden awareness for the need and benefits of TIF districts.
    - Reach out to City, Morton County and local school district administrators to explain the purpose and long-term benefits of the TIF mechanism.
  - Determine which Mandan districts would most benefit from TIF designation and launch a process to secure the approval of TIF for these areas.

**Strategy 6: Ensure that existing businesses are provided the support necessary to create jobs.**

- **ACTION 1: Optimize the local business retention and expansion (BRE) program.**
  - Work with the Bismarck-Mandan Development Association and Bismarck-Mandan Chamber to ensure that medium-sized and large employers are visited at least on an annual basis to determine priority needs and opportunities.
  - Ensure that existing businesses are aware of opportunities in Mandan related to the priorities identified in the *Mandan Tomorrow* process.

- These include positioning Mandan as a family-friendly residential community and a unique destination market for businesses and retail.

**Strategy 7: Work to better leverage the region’s Native American-owned businesses to stimulate local growth.**

- **ACTION 1: Discuss the creation of cooperative agreements that enable local governments to partner with regional tribes to secure state and federal procurement and development contracts.**
  - Work with tribal leaders to assess the optimal contract dynamics to ensure mutual benefit for all parties.
- **ACTION 2: Reach out to regional tribes to communicate the dynamics of Mandan’s vision strategy and the role tribal members can play in plan implementation.**
  - Consider opportunities to work with tribe members to start Native American-themed shops and businesses in Downtown Mandan and other districts.
    - Fully leverage the United Tribes Art Program by reaching out members regarding opportunities to display their art in Mandan galleries or launch arts-related businesses Downtown or elsewhere in the city.
  - Partner with local tribes to determine how best to leverage the annual United Tribes International POWWOW.
    - Consider what potential events, in addition to the golf tournament, could be held in coordination with the POWWOW.
- **ACTION 3: Determine the potential to increase available space at the Old Northern Pacific Railroad Depot for Native American arts and culture displays.**
  - Partner with Fort Lincoln officials to strategize on ways to increase the space available to display Native American art and artifacts.

## Energy

**Strategy 8: Capitalize on Mandan’s existing energy economy by working to become Central North Dakota’s hub of energy-related research and development.**

- **ACTION 1: Ensure Mandan energy companies fully leverage the to-be-developed Great Plains Applied Energy Technology Center.**
  - Bring the full influence of Mandan’s energy corporations to bear on state and local elected officials to ensure full funding and construction of the Center.
    - Work with organizations coordinating Center-development efforts to secure active participation for Mandan companies and industry representatives.
  - When developed, partner with Mandan energy firms to potentially locate research operations at the Center.
  - Work with Technology Center administrators and state officials to formalize and fund a technology commercialization component at the Center.
    - Ensure that Mandan properties are promoted as destinations for start-up companies spun out of Technology Center research.
  - Seek to develop linkages between the Technology Center and the North Great Plains Research Laboratory (NGPRL) in Mandan.
- **ACTION 2: Broaden awareness – as necessary – among Mandan energy companies of the National Energy Center of Excellence and the Great Plains Energy Corridor.**
  - Ensure Mandan energy firms of all sizes leverage the workforce and training resources at the Center of Excellence.
  - Partner with the City of Mandan and Bismarck-Mandan Chamber to educate Mandan energy businesses as to the programs available at the Center.

## **Agriculture**

### **Strategy 9: Strive to more effectively leverage Mandan's agricultural community.**

- **ACTION 1: Continue working to better engage the agricultural community in the regional economy.**
  - Work through the Bismarck-Mandan Chamber of Commerce's Agriculture Committee to determine how Mandan's agriculture economy can be strengthened and expanded.
  - Ensure that agricultural stakeholders are involved in local decision-making and planning.
  - Enhance the promotion of Mandan's agriculture economy, both internally and externally.
    - Increase local awareness of the percentage of Mandan employment comprised by the agriculture industry.
    - Fully leverage external marketing programs to potentially attract agriculture-sector firms to Mandan-Morton County.
- **ACTION 2: Determine how best to leverage the North Great Plains Research Laboratory.**
  - Partner with NGPRL officials to determine what assistance the City of Mandan could provide to enhance the Laboratory's impact on the local economy.

Mandan Tomorrow



# Quality Places and Destinations

*"I envision a town where there is a sense of excitement and dynamism."*

*"Continue the re-vitalization of downtown. Wonderful things have already been done..."*

*"I would like to see Mandan have its own identity rather than the town across the river from Bismarck."*

-Online survey comments

**GOAL: MANDAN WILL ENHANCE ITS IMAGE AS A “FAMILY FRIENDLY” DESTINATION BY DEVELOPING A UNIQUE CHARACTER AND STRONG QUALITY OF PLACE.**

Attractive, pedestrian-oriented, mixed-used neighborhoods are proven draws for “knowledge” workers and visitors and create an environment that can help foster a vibrant and unique community character. As a municipality in the center of a major metropolitan area, Mandan is well positioned to attract residents, businesses, and day-trip and overnight visitors. However, more must be done to improve its “product,” or quality of place. This goal area responds to community input participants’ desires to create an experience in Downtown Mandan and other districts that Bismarck cannot offer – one that plays to Mandan’s strengths and celebrates its heritage.

**Places and Destinations**

**Strategy 1: Continue the revitalization of Downtown Mandan.**

- **ACTION 1: In coordination with the Future Land Use Plan, consider updating the URS plan for Downtown Mandan.**
  - Ensure that Downtown zoning and regulations are supportive of the Future Land Use Plan and the priorities of *Mandan Tomorrow*.
    - Provide the potential for mixed-use development as a by-right element of the Downtown zoning code.
    - Through the Mandan Business Development office, work with Downtown property owners and businesses to encourage design elements and retail environments consistent with Mandan’s niche as community embodying the “Spirit of the West.”
  - Continue efforts to attract boutique and distinctive retail establishments to Downtown.
    - Conduct more active outreach to Downtown property and building owners and communicate the City’s vision for Downtown.
    - Work to develop a coalition of Downtown stakeholders that believe in the vision and will compel landlords to rent space to

businesses that contribute to the development of the district as a retail destination.

- Through entrepreneurship and small business development efforts, facilitate meetings between building owners and potential renters.
- Ensure that use of incentive monies is discretionary based on recipients' business plans and their application to overall Downtown goals.
- Assess the legality of incorporating clauses into development regulations or building covenants precluding certain types of businesses from locating Downtown.
- **ACTION 2: Determine the feasibility of launching a business improvement district (BID) in Downtown Mandan (and, potentially, adjacent neighborhoods).**
  - Utilize BID monies to enhance the aesthetics, street environment, sidewalks, landscape, signage, and marketing of the Downtown Mandan area.
    - Consider developing a mural program to paint historic local scenes on blank building walls Downtown.
    - Engage local youth in the design and development of the murals.
  - Manage the BID through Mandan Business Development office.

## Dothan, Alabama

### *Best practice in development of downtown murals*

Known as the “official mural city of Alabama,” Dothan features 19 colorful murals painted on downtown buildings depicting the history of southeast Alabama, southwest Georgia, and the panhandle of Florida. Visitors can pick up a brochure and take a self-guided tour or secure a free guide for larger groups

Some examples of the murals include a salute to the peanut industry, a history of nearby military installation Fort Rucker and women in the Wiregrass region. Other murals depict the African-American Airman group that flew during World War II and a salute to Johnny McBrown, who was a major cowboy film star from Dothan.

Every year in May, Dothan hosts the Wiregrass Festival of Murals art and music event. The festival features free concerts, children's events, a five-acre flea market, tours of Dothan's historic murals, and numerous food and crafts booths.



Examples of Downtown Dothan, Alabama murals

Source: The Downtown Group – Dothan Alabama  
<http://www.thedowntowngroup.com/tours.html>

- **ACTION 3: Integrate implementation of final recommendations from the 2009 Downtown Mandan parking study into overall Downtown development efforts.**
  - Ensure that projected long-term parking shortages are addressed.
  - Pursue development of consensus-driven projects, potentially including a Downtown parking deck, better enforcement of on-street parking limits, painting of crosswalks, etc.

- **ACTION 4: Initiate a dialogue with BNSF regarding property owned by the railroad in Downtown Mandan.**
  - Leverage the *Mandan Tomorrow* process as an impetus to discuss BNSF property that could further the revitalization of Downtown.
  - Attempt to come to consensus on the future potential of the property.
  
- **ACTION 5: Fully leverage Bismarck State College's (BSC) presence in Downtown Mandan.**
  - Partner with BSC to determine the feasibility of adding programs to the Mandan campus.
    - Work with Mandan businesses to assess the need to train for priority occupations, and the potential to house training programs at BSC-Mandan.
  - Engage the Mandan Progress Organization to reach out to students and faculty at BSC's Mandan campus.
  - Ensure that BSC-Mandan students are focused on as a market for Downtown events and businesses.
  - Explore the potential to create stronger linkages between the local campus and Mandan High School.
  
- **ACTION 6: Enhance the Downtown Mandan farmer's market.**
  - Re-assess the location of the market.
    - Determine if a location closer to the heart of Downtown would increase attendance and foot traffic for the market.
  - Determine the potential to construct permanent or semi-permanent infrastructure for the market, including protective canopies, stalls, benches, etc.
  - Pursue the addition of crafts booths and live music.
    - Reach out to local artists and musicians to determine the feasibility of this effort.
    - Consider providing free or low-cost exhibition space to incentivize the participation of artists.

- **ACTION 7: Fully leverage the Mandan Commercial Historic District designation for growth in historical tourism business.**
  - Ensure that Downtown Mandan is featured in all applicable state of North Dakota and National Trust for Historic Preservation literature and media.
  - Seek to redevelop the Lewis and Clark hotel as a boutique hospitality destination similar to current national trends.
- **ACTION 8: Consider implementing a program to provide rent-free space to artists in vacant Downtown storefronts.**
  - Enable local artists to activate the street-life in certain Downtown blocks while helping to nurture the local arts and culture environment.

## Fall River, Massachusetts

### *Best practice in downtown arts development*

The Storefront Artists Project was launched in downtown Fall River by the Narrows Center for the Arts, in partnership with Arts United/Fall River, the Fall River Office of Economic Development, and the Chamber of Commerce. The project is supported in part by the Massachusetts Cultural Council. Fall River Storefront Artists (FRSA) approaches the landlords of empty storefronts to lend their vacant street-front space to an artist or arts organization – defined as an artist as anyone engaging in a creative endeavor, including the fine arts (painting, sculpture, printmaking, illustration), performance arts (music, dance, theatre, spoken word, etc.), architecture, interior design, graphic design, or new visual media (video, installation, computer programming).

Artists are transforming the windows into art projects, are visible working inside their studios, and open their spaces to viewers every Saturday and one to three evenings a month. The artists assume responsibility for their utilities and for keeping the street façade clean. In return, the landlord provides the space rent-free until they get a signed lease, whereupon they give the artist a 30 to 60 day vacancy notice. The Arts United organization can also act as a property manager when necessary, intervening to deal with legal or logistical issues and providing funds to handle emergencies. Each landlord specifies the kind of arts activities that would be appropriate to his or her space and the organization’s Board chooses the best match from the list of artist applicants.

Source: Arts Express, Fall River, MA  
<http://www.fallriverstorefrontartist.org/main.php?id=about>

**Strategy 2: Enhance the development potential of the Strip (Memorial Highway) district.**

- **ACTION 1: In coordination with the prescribed land uses in the Bismarck-Mandan Future Land Use plan, consider developing a Corridor Master Plan for the Strip District.**
  - Consider the development of a zoning overlay code for the Strip corridor that ensures consistency with preferred land uses and the priorities of *Mandan Tomorrow*.
  - Coordinate a comprehensive outreach campaign to area property owners to communicate the need for the Master Plan and the benefits of specific guidelines to promote the revitalization of the district.
  - Pursue appropriate development of uses determined to be appropriate for the Strip
    - These could include industrial, big-box retail, strip commercial and hospitality.
    - Coordinate assessment of the Strip's potential in its eastern section with efforts to identify future development scenarios for the Missouri Riverfront.
  - Determine the potential to create a special incentives zone applied to the Strip district.
    - These may include storefront-improvement grants.

**Strategy 3: Enhance the development, coordination and marketing of recreational amenities.**

- **ACTION 1: Continue efforts to build out and connect the trail system in Mandan.**
  - Through the Mandan Parks and Recreation Department, continue to identify locations to extend the trail system and ensure funding is available for these efforts.
    - Prioritize development of trail segments that link to local activity centers and/or provide connectivity to existing trails.

- **ACTION 2: Through the Land Use Master Plan process, assess the need to enhance Mandan’s recreational infrastructure.**
  - Utilize existing and proposed public-outreach methods to determine citizens’ desires for additional recreation opportunities.
    - This includes the potential development of a new recreation center in Mandan.
    - Examples of potential uses include parks, golf courses (public or private), dog parks, skate parks, athletic fields, and indoor facilities.
  
- **ACTION 3: Pursue potential development of additional recreational amenities at Fort Abraham Lincoln State Park.**
  - Reach out to the Fort Abraham Lincoln Foundation to determine viable possibilities for development of complementary recreational infrastructure at the Park.
  - Assess the potential for funding and developing additional campground and R.V. facilities, equestrian facilities, trail systems, outdoor interpretive exhibits, etc.
  
- **ACTION 4: Determine the need to create a stand-alone marketing program for Mandan’s recreational amenities.**
  - Partner with the Bismarck-Mandan CVB to assess the potential to launch a unique website and outreach campaign targeted directly to outdoor enthusiasts.
  - Identify the highest-value media and markets for the campaign to focus on.
    - Consider the potential to promote Mandan in “younger-skewing” media such as extreme sports magazines and during events such as the “Winter X-Games.”

**Strategy 4: Continue an active focus on development opportunities adjacent to Interstate-94.**

- **ACTION 1: Ensure that efforts are coordinated with the prescribed land uses in the Bismarck-Mandan Future Land Use plan.**
  - Assess existing development controls along I-94 to determine permitted uses.
    - Consider Interstate-adjacent properties for uses related to big-box retail development, strip commercial and hospitality projects.
  - Partner with landowners to rezone property if needed to ensure that parcels are reserved for their highest-and-best-use potential.
- **ACTION 2: Consider designing specific marketing pieces focused on I-94 development sites.**
  - Create one-sheets featuring priority parcels and their development potential.
    - Include contact information for property owners, city and regional economic development officials and details on any available incentives provided for the parcel.

**Strategy 5: Assess the development potential of the Missouri Riverfront.**

- **ACTION 1: Coordinate and promote a series of community discussions on future strategies for the riverfront.**
  - Bring interested constituents together for a series of local forums on stakeholders' vision for Mandan's Missouri frontage.
    - Group participants together for facilitated roundtable discussions.
    - Work to come to community consensus on strategies related to better leveraging riverfront development potential.

- Based on consensus actions, proceed with development of an action plan to pursue identified opportunities.
- **ACTION 2: If necessary, petition the Army Corps of Engineers for greater riverfront access and development.**
  - Engage in a coordinated, comprehensive effort to forge local consensus on a proposal to provide Mandan greater access to the Missouri riverfront.
    - Seek pro bono engineering assistance to provide the Corps with factual evidence that a greater intensity of riverfront usage will not degrade the River's environmental quality or pose public-safety risks.
  - Organize an executive committee of top businesspeople and local government leaders to petition state and federal elected officials to spearhead efforts to secure approval from the Corps of Engineers for greater access to the Missouri Riverfront.
- **ACTION 3: Based on Mandan's consensus Missouri River action plan and improved riverfront access, ensure that development provides amenities for a variety of constituent groups.**
  - Determine the potential to enhance recreational opportunities along the River.
  - Encourage appropriate, context-sensitive residential and retail uses that will make the riverfront a quality destination for local and regional residents and tourists.

**Reno, Nevada**

*Best practice in riverfront redevelopment*

Though the city did not have to address opposition from the Army Corps of Engineers to develop the project, Reno, Nevada nevertheless had to build a strong coalition in a short amount of time to gain approval to implement its River Recreation Plan.

As part of the Truckee River Recreation Plan, which includes the development of whitewater kayaking and other river-related recreational opportunities, Reno created a whitewater park in the center of its downtown. The State of Nevada and Washoe County partnered with the City to provide the 2,600 foot-long course which caters to people of all ages and skill levels. Two private hotel-casinos also donated \$500,000 each to help the City quickly construct the park within the short construction period required by the Army Corps of Engineers. The park has been extraordinarily popular and state and local tax revenues from river-related activities are expected to reach \$123,000 to \$263,000 per year, with total revenue projected to total \$18.2 to \$39.9 million over ten years.

In coordination with the Recreation Plan, Reno also established the Raymond I. Smith Truckee Riverwalk in the late 1990s. Today, the Riverwalk District is the heart of Downtown Reno’s entertainment district and features an eclectic array of shops, restaurants, bars, coffee houses, and art galleries.

Sources: City of Reno; Riverwalk Merchants Association  
<http://www.cityofreno.com/Index.aspx?page=311>; <http://www.renoriver.org/>

**Policies and Programs**

**Strategy 6: Create and maintain planning and regulatory processes that promote the community’s vision through effective development.**

- **ACTION 1: Effectively leverage and publicize the Bismarck-Mandan Future Land Use Plan.**<sup>3</sup>
  - Include information on the Plan and important local land-use and development issues on the City of Mandan website, the “Believe in Mandan” (or alternatively named) page, and other media.

<sup>3</sup> Coordinated by the regional metropolitan planning organization (BMMPO). More information at: <http://www.bismanregionalfuturelanduseplan.ulteig.com/default.aspx>

- Promote the active engagement of local public/private stakeholders in key efforts of the Bismarck-Mandan Metropolitan Planning Organization (BMMPO).
- Ensure that Mandan zoning and subdivision regulations are consistent with the preferred land uses identified in the plan.
  - Work to prevent any projects that deviate from the land uses determined to be optimal for that parcel or site.
  - Conduct a public process to re-zone any parcels or districts that are incompatible with the preferred use formalized by the Future Land Use Plan.
  - Ensure that residential subdivision regulations in Mandan enable development of New Urbanist<sup>4</sup> neighborhoods and mixed-use communities.
- **ACTION 2: Based on the Future Land Use Plan, enhance the City’s capacity to provide the resources necessary to enhance Downtown and other priority districts.**
  - Explore the feasibility of sponsoring an AmeriCorps VISTA volunteer to aggressively pursue available local, state, and federal grants and other monies to use for district revitalization efforts.
  - Consider creating a “Round Up” fund, where any person, firm, or corporation can opt to round up their water or property tax bill to the next whole dollar, diverting the extra change into a fund for priority infrastructure projects in key Mandan districts.
  - Continue to effectively leverage Mandan’s Renaissance Zone and remediation fund for revitalization of the Downtown.

**Strategy 7: Ensure that planning focuses on quality of life issues for families and senior citizens.**

- **ACTION 1: Promote development of family-friendly environments.**
  - Confirm that the Bismarck-Mandan Future Land Use Plan identifies opportunities for parks and recreation amenities, quality public gathering places and residential neighborhoods/subdivisions with

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<sup>4</sup> New Urbanist neighborhoods are designed to contain a diverse range of housing and jobs, and to be walkable.

sidewalks and greenspaces that provide children with safe places to play.

- Continue to emphasize Mandan as a family-friendly community to commercial and housing developers and potential new residents.
- **ACTION 2: Provide environments and developments that enable senior citizens to enjoy quality lifestyles.**
  - Facilitate opportunities for “age-in-place” development.<sup>5</sup>
    - Advocate for policies, regulations and business practices that promote aging-in-place.
    - Work with developers to promote opportunities for senior-citizen-serving development such as “age-in-place” communities and assisted-living centers.
  - Promote the construction and retrofitting of homes according to “universal design” principles that accommodate residents of different physical abilities and ages.
  - Determine the need to provide para-transit services to transit-dependent senior citizens and physically-challenged residents of all ages.

## Special Events

**Strategy 8: Capitalize on the success of existing Mandan special events by adding at least two major annual events.**

- **ACTION 1: Support Mandan Progress Organization in its efforts to create additional Mandan special events.**
  - Ensure MPO has the capacity to effectively manage an increased slate of special events.
    - Enhance efforts to boost volunteerism in Mandan to expand MPO’s volunteer base.

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<sup>5</sup> Defined by AgeInPlace.com as “a concept that promotes living in your home as long as possible as you age, while having the proper care and support services you need.”

- Seek commitments from city officials to maintain – or increase – the government’s provision of funds to support MPO.
- Research potential opportunities for special-event themes and outreach to local partners to gauge the potential for event sponsorships and in-kind services.
  - Consider at least one additional event oriented around a Western or pioneer theme.
- Invite MPO’s leadership to present ideas at a City and County Commission meetings, so elected leaders can provide feedback and be aware of potential resource needs.

**Strategy 9: Continue pursuing the development of a mid-sized Events Center in Mandan.**

- **ACTION 1: Consistently assess public opinion related to prospects for Events Center development and a strategy to achieve it.**
  - Consider adding questions related to the dynamics of the pursuit/development of an Events Center to public-outreach efforts.
    - Utilize outreach events/sessions/meetings and/or online or paper surveys to reconfirm public support for the program.
  - Seek assurances that the public is willing to support any potential property tax increases to fund Events Center construction.
- **ACTION 2: Ensure the preferred location for the Events Center is consistent with prescribed uses in the Future Land Use Plan.**
  - Seek to program the Events Center with activities that support the overall goal of positioning Mandan as differentiated from Bismarck.
  - Gear the Center’s retail component – if feasible – to smaller square footage businesses and stores that represent potential unique commercial opportunities.

## **Sports and Adventure Tourism**

**Strategy 10: Leverage Mandan’s current – and potential – array of indoor and outdoor sports facilities to attract year-round tournaments to the community.**

- **ACTION 1: Fund the development and implementation of a specialized marketing program geared towards the attraction of sports tournaments to Mandan.**
  - Partner with the Mandan Department of Parks and Recreation, the Bismarck-Mandan Convention and Visitor’s Bureau, BMDA, the Bismarck-Mandan Chamber and the North Dakota Department of Commerce to formalize the recruitment program and allay costs of targeted marketing and outreach.
    - Ensure that Mandan’s program is integrated into all state-level tourism marketing materials and advertising.
  - Partner with the Mandan Business Development Office, BMDA and the Bismarck-Mandan Chamber to leverage existing and potential sports-tourism events for the development of additional hospitality capacity in Mandan.
    - Pursue partnerships with Bismarck hoteliers to satisfy visitor demand in the interim.
  - Work to orient recruitment of tournaments around major public events in Mandan such as Rodeo Days, Buggies and Blues, and Art in the Park.
- **ACTION 2: Seek to develop a niche in the sports tourism program for equestrian events.**
  - Leverage Mandan’s Western and pioneer past and the Rodeo Days event to carve out a local niche in equestrian events and facilities.
  - Determine the optimal location to design and develop a Mandan Equestrian Park.
    - Consider a location adjacent to Fort Abraham Lincoln, in keeping with the area’s pioneer and Old West themes.

- Encourage interested entrepreneurs and potential small business owners to open shops supportive of equestrian and Western culture in Downtown Mandan or other priority districts.
- **ACTION 3: Consider all potential sources to fund development of additional sports and recreation facilities.**
  - Conduct informational sessions with local voters to discuss the potential to leverage public monies for development of additional recreational infrastructure.

## Waco, Texas

### *Best practice in sports tourism*

The Starburst Junior Golf Classic is the largest junior golf tournament in the world. Now in its 11<sup>th</sup> year, the tournament takes place every June in Waco, Texas.

The Greater Waco Chamber created the Starburst Junior Golf Classic in the fall of 1998. A committee of volunteers and Chamber staff recruited area golf courses to host the first tournament in 1999. More than 400 kids played in the very first Starburst tournament. The tournament now hosts approximately 1050 boys and girls ages 7 to 18 from all across the United States and the world. The tournament is held on seven local golf courses. Corporate sponsors of the event include Dr. Pepper; AT&T; TimeWarner Cable; Titleist Golf; Outback Steakhouse; Adidas; and Fuddruckers, among others.

The Waco Convention and Visitor's Bureau piggybacks other events along with the Starburst Classic, including the Texas Appaloosa Horse Show. Combined, these events generated an economic impact of roughly \$3.0 million in 2007.

Sources: Greater Waco Chamber; Waco CVB  
<http://www.starburstgolf.com/>; <http://www.wacocvb.com/index.asp>

## **Strategy 11: Capitalize on and enhance Mandan's ability to attract adventure tourism visitors.**

- **ACTION 1: Work with state and local partners to coordinate efforts.**
  - Ensure that existing adventure-tourism marketing fully leverages Mandan assets.

- Partner with Bismarck-Mandan hospitality and tourism officials and businesses to integrate adventure tourism into regional marketing materials and programs.
- **ACTION 2: Consider strategies to enhance Mandan’s supply of adventure-tourism amenities, potentially at a new “complex” of facilities.**
  - Pursue private development of facilities as a component of local economic development efforts.
    - Determine the value of co-locating new adventure-tourism facilities at one location.
      - If developed, market the complex as a one-of-a-kind destination for adventure tourists and local enthusiasts.
    - Effectively communicate to potential investors the role that adventure-tourism marketing will play in the region and state’s tourism-promotion efforts.
  - Determine if Mandan-Morton county government needs to make initial investments in adventure-tourism capacity to jump-start the local market.
    - Projects could include: snowmobile circuits; moto-cross tracks; all-terrain-vehicle parks; and permanent facilities with the flexibility to accommodate both summer and winter “extreme” sports.
    - Consider all potential means to fund the projects, including public referenda, TIF districts and design-build contracts with private developers.

Mandan Tomorrow



# Education and Workforce

“The greatest strength of our workforce is their incredible work ethic and willingness to learn.”

“I do not think there is a wide spectrum of training, enough job specific training, nor enough advanced training.”

“We have an excellent school system both public and private, from top to bottom, including school boards, administrators, and teachers.”

-Online survey comments

**GOAL: MANDAN WILL INVEST IN ITS EXISTING AND FUTURE LABOR FORCE TO ENSURE LOCAL BUSINESSES THRIVE AND WORKERS EARN COMPETITIVE WAGES.**

Strained labor force dynamics at the national level due to the aging Baby Boomer generation, national immigration policies, and declining educational attainment levels more severely impact communities and states affected by outmigration. Because economic growth is largely a function of having qualified workers to fill local jobs, the strongest communities are those that invest in education and commit to developing and maintaining a well-trained workforce. Mandan has a strong reputation for providing quality public education opportunities and for the commitment and work ethic of its labor force. Continuing to support and enhance these existing strengths are key parts of this *Vision Plan* because families, workers, and the businesses they support are the backbone of any community.

## **K-16 System**

**Strategy 1: Provide the capacity to ensure that existing and future K-12 programming is available to meet the full spectrum of student needs.**

- **ACTION 1: Take full advantage of current and potential programs that contribute to student success.**
  - Facilitate a session at the end of the 2008-09 academic year with teachers and administrators to discuss fine-tuning the district's Strategic Plan.
    - Address the successes and challenges of the first year of all-day kindergarten, including the space requirements needed to continue the program into the long-term.
    - Continue efforts to develop a long-term Facilities Master Plan for the district.
  - Fully leverage Mandan's Head Start program (which often has excess capacity) to provide school-readiness and child care services for Mandan's lower income families.

- **ACTION 2: As feasible, broaden the availability of career-focused education and school-to-work opportunities in Mandan's public schools.**
  - Assess the Mandan district's ongoing fiscal capacity to support enhanced career- and workplace-focused education.
    - Leverage district strategic-development processes to assess the potential to provide additional resources to career-focused learning by decreasing funding for non-essential programs.
    - Seek all available partnership opportunities with local businesses to potentially fund key programs and/or donate equipment and software to enhance classroom learning opportunities.
    - As dictated by program-development constraints, continue to leverage Bismarck schools to supplement educational opportunities for Mandan students.
  - Consider adjusting the sequence of high school career classes to the end of sophomore year or the beginning of junior year, and increasing the level of intensity so that students can gain maximum benefits.
  - Formalize and enhance existing partnerships between Mandan Public Schools, the Bismarck-Mandan Chamber, and private-sector leadership.
    - Leverage the Chamber's Business Education Partnership Committee as a key source of industry/education dialogue and program-development.
      - Ensure that issues and opportunities in Mandan schools are adequately addressed.
  - Work to educate students, parents and teachers as to the financial benefits of occupations in all components of the local economy.
  - Incorporate job shadowing opportunities for Mandan students in selected career and technology classes and more actively promote existing job shadowing and internship opportunities.
    - Allow students to select the company they would like to visit on a special Job Shadow Day.

- Increase the variety of occupational cluster areas that provide internship-for-credit opportunities.
    - Promote Job Service North Dakota as a resource for students seeking internships and part time job opportunities in specific occupational areas.
  - Explore the financial feasibility of expanding priority vocational programs, including carpentry and welding.
  - Determine the capacity needed to launch a gifted-student program at Mandan schools.
- **ACTION 3: As viable, continue to enable high school students to take advanced curricula not currently offered by Mandan public schools.**
  - Based on local availability of programs, prioritize opportunities for Mandan students to access Bismarck-based programs.
  - Formalize a standard agreement with Bismarck high schools allowing students from Mandan to take AP courses there without having to arrange transfers of state per-pupil allocations on an individual basis.
  - Consider creation of a scholarship fund – or leverage a potential local education foundation – to allow talented, economically disadvantaged students to participate in dual enrollment at Bismarck State College in priority academic areas.
- **ACTION 4: Pursue best-practice programmatic efforts to increase parental involvement in their children’s education.**
  - Assess the potential to create a “parent institute” to provide parents the opportunity to learn techniques to help their children succeed in school.
    - Develop courses to encourage and support parents of elementary, middle and high school children to take a participatory role in their children’s studies.
    - If resources are not available to develop an “institute” program, pursue additional parental-involvement opportunities.
      - Options include: multiple parent/teacher discussion meetings; one-time parent-education sessions providing information and tools on involvement

techniques; development of resource materials with “to-do” lists for parents so support their children’s learning; etc.

**Parent Institute for Quality Education (PIQE)**

*Best practice in parental involvement in education*

PIQE’s stated goal is “to bring schools, parents, and community together as equal partners in the education of every child to provide all students with the option and access of a postsecondary education.” Courses are designed and offered in morning sessions and repeated in the evening. Classes are taught by credential teachers and professionals trained by PIQE. The initial planning session asks parents what they would like to include in the course.

The goal of the Institute is to enable parents to:

- Create a home learning environment
- Navigate the school system
- Collaborate with teachers, counselors and principals
- Encourage college attendance
- Support a child’s emotional and social development

As of this year, PIQE has worked in more than 1,500 schools in 155 different school districts in California. On February 7, 2006, PIQE signed an agreement with the California State University (CSU) system; the system provided \$575,000 for three consecutive years to implement the PIQE nine-week classes in fifteen schools in each of the twenty-three campus regions. In addition, each child of a PIQE graduate received a “college identification card” reserving them a spot at the university once they graduate from high school and meet the admission requirements.

Source: PIQE  
www.piqe.org

- **ACTION 5: Work to secure broader community support for Mandan schools’ academic programs and student achievement.**
  - Leverage the internal marketing effort described in **Strategy 2** to increase public awareness of the ongoing and planned activities at Mandan schools.
  - Consider creating a “Student of the Month” program similar to Mandan High School’s “Athlete of the Month” program that would award students with specific prizes.

- Work with the Bismarck Tribune to prominently feature Mandan's Students of the Month in the newspaper.

**Strategy 2: Maximize the potential of Bismarck State, University of Mary, United Tribes Technical College, Rasmussen College North Dakota, and other workforce development resources.**

- **ACTION 1: Enhance the training capacity of regional two- and four-year higher educational institutions.**
  - Ensure that Mandan businesses are actively involved in workforce development efforts coordinated by – or involving – campuses outside of Mandan-Morton County.
  - Explore the potential to add four-year bachelor degree programs at Bismarck State College.
    - Consider the viability of offering local 2+2 programs through Bismarck State in partnership with one or more public North Dakota universities.
      - Determine whether faculty can temporarily or permanently relocate to Bismarck-Mandan.
  - Support University of Mary's efforts to expand curricula offerings in health care, business, and recreation management.
    - Ensure that new programs are developed based on the needs of regional businesses.
  - Effectively integrate United Tribes and Rasmussen into regional workforce development discussions.
    - Fully leverage the campuses' capacity to assist with preparing graduates to work in occupations demanded by regional businesses.
- **ACTION 2: Seek to broaden the awareness of the Job Service North Dakota office in Bismarck.**
  - Integrate into internal marketing efforts information on the location and programs found at the Job Service center and how they can benefit local workers and businesses.

- Leverage all potential partnerships – including efforts related to community outreach detailed in this *Vision Plan* – to increase awareness among eligible local adults of free- or subsidized-training opportunities available at the JSND office.

## Funding

### Strategy 3: Pursue strategies to augment available funding for local education.

- **ACTION 1: Consistently assess the available resources to enhance public funding for K-12 education in Mandan-Morton County.**
  - Determine ongoing public consensus to leverage local tax money in support of public education.
  - Rigorously pursue Federal Title I funding to promote student performance in mathematics and continue to promote excellence through Title I reading programs.
  - Assess all potential opportunities to increase state and federal funding for public education in Mandan.
    - Continue attempts to secure state funding for a Pre-K program in Mandan.
    - Partner with state and federal elected officials to secure federal stimulus monies to support local education.
- **ACTION 2: Assemble a public-private exploratory committee to consider the feasibility of creating a school foundation to provide support for educational programs, scholarships, and professional development.**
  - Conduct outreach to local and regional public and private partners to capitalize the foundation.
  - Seek state and federal grants to augment local public education through the auspices of the foundation.
  - Consider the potential to eventually provide full-time staff support for the foundation.

## Spencer Community School Foundation (Iowa)

*Best practice in effective partnerships to enhance public education*

Located in Northwest Iowa, Spencer is a small community of 11,000 residents with a public school district that serves nearly 2,000 students. The Spencer Community School Foundation was founded in 2003 (as a 501(c)3 organization) to provide enhanced learning opportunities for students, teachers, and staff not possible under the school district's limited budget. By leveraging effective partnerships among the schools, alumni and expatriates, businesses, and community stakeholders, the Foundation has been successful in raising funds to fill critical needs in local public education.

The organization employs a part-time executive director – a former school board member – and receives administrative support from the school district. Some of the Foundation's key accomplishments include:

- Bolstering vocational programs through rewritten curricula, enhanced student-business connections, and raising \$75,000 for new vocational technology equipment.
- Enhancing Spencer Middle School's choir room with state-of-the-art equipment and making upgrades to the space so it may be used for school and community meetings.
- Increasing learning opportunities by securing a \$400,000 grant to bring in educational speakers and authors, further enhance partnerships with the business community, provide technology training for teachers, and fund field trips.
- Coordinating and establishing a Spencer High School Alumni Association.

Source: National School Foundation Association and the Spencer Community School Foundation  
[www.schoolfoundations.org](http://www.schoolfoundations.org)  
[www.spencerschoolfoundation.com](http://www.spencerschoolfoundation.com)

## Talent Recruitment

### Strategy 4: Support state and regional efforts to attract and retain young professionals in North Dakota.

- **ACTION 1: Explore the potential to expand BMDA's current talent recruitment efforts in partnership with state partners in economic development.**
  - Fully leverage existing employer's contacts, regional college and university alumni networks, and the Bismarck-Mandan Young

professional's network to identify former local residents by market area.

- Use these existing contacts to inform decisions related to existing target marketing efforts (including “Experience North Dakota”) and to develop potential new out-of-state marketing and recruiting events (see Best Practice “Louisville Resident Reunions”).
- Approach State leaders about developing a Young Professional Advisory Board to help elected leaders make strategic decisions on incentives and policies to promote young professional attraction and retention in North Dakota (see Best Practice “Generation Iowa Commission”).
- **ACTION 2: Partner with regional businesses to identify key markets in which to source talent that fills existing gaps in the region’s workforce.**
  - Create location- and industry-specific marketing campaigns through BMDA to raise awareness of the core strengths and economic opportunities of the Bismarck-Mandan metro area.
  - Determine the potential to advertise for specific metro job openings at key industry events to connect top prospects with businesses-in-need.
  - Rigorously support North Dakota’s developing partnership with Monster.com to launch a potential “best practice” pilot program to recruit workers with specific skill-sets to North Dakota.
    - Ensure a system is in place so that prospective workers are connected to opportunities in the Bismarck-Mandan area at a similar rate (where appropriate) as other key in-state market areas.

## Louisville Resident Reunions

*Best practice in state supported young professional recruitment and retention*

Every year, the Greater Louisville Metro Chamber of Commerce and City of Louisville host a reunion of former Louisville residents now living in other areas. Reunion sites have included Tampa in 2008, Chicago in 2007, Atlanta in 2006, Dallas in 2005, and San Francisco in 2004. The reunions have attracted hundreds of attendees, and aim to raise awareness about the low cost of living, job opportunities, and amenities Louisville offers.

The events include an hors d'oeuvre and cocktail hour (including Louisville local favorite bourbon balls), and a presentation at which speakers from the public and private sector boast about Louisville's arts and cultural amenities, revitalized downtown, and low cost of living. For example, at the 2005 Dallas reunion, a representative of Louisville-based Yum Brands Inc. used the opportunity to announce 100 new marketing and technology jobs.

To advertise the events, the Chamber maintains email lists of Louisville expatriates in the target metro areas (selected based on the large number of former Louisville residents now living there). People can sign up for the email list on the Chamber website or at a table at the Louisville International Airport during peak travel times (i.e., holidays, Kentucky Derby week). The Chamber also proactively tracks past residents via local high school and college alumni groups.

The Chamber and City's annual renewal of this initiative proves the hosts and sponsors' belief that the events successfully attract former residents back to the community. The organizers, speakers, and sponsors of the events include the Chamber, City of Louisville, Greater Louisville Convention and Visitors Bureau, and area employers such as UPS, Ford Motor Company, Humana, Inc., and Mercer Human Resource Consulting.

Source: The Greater Louisville Chamber  
[www.greaterlouisville.com/content/events/reunion/](http://www.greaterlouisville.com/content/events/reunion/)

## Generation Iowa Commission

*Best practice in state supported young professional recruitment and retention*

In 2007, Governor Culver established the Generation Iowa Commission to drive the state's young professional retention and recruitment activities. Appointed by the governor, each of the 15 voting commission members serve three-year terms and must be between the ages of 18 and 35. The responsibilities of the Commission include:

- Advising the Department of Economic Development in affairs related to young professional recruitment and retention;
- Submitting biannual reports to the Governor on the states of the Department's efforts, migration patterns, changing demographics, and opportunities for young professionals in Iowa; and
- Developing best practice guidelines for recruitment and retention.

In its first report, *Road Map to Recruit and Retain Young People in Iowa*, the Generation Iowa Commission made four prioritized recommendations to the Governor and the Department of Economic Development.

1. **Bridge Iowa's wage gap and reduce student debt.** This could be achieved through several measures including a Higher Education Tax Credit (ranging from \$1,500 to \$2,000) that could be claimed annually up to 10-years after graduating from a college or university and a student loan repayment assistance program in "critical need professions."
2. **Expand career pathways.** The Commission recommended creating an Iowa Merit Scholars Program. It would provide full tuition and room and board at in-state schools for a select group of talented students. The Program would be open to both in-state and out-of-state applicants but would require scholars to reside and work in Iowa for a certain length of time after graduation.
3. **Invest in amenities for young professionals.** The Commission recommended that the state renew financial commitment to its Main Street programs, the Arts Council, and other existing programs that strengthen quality of place and expand arts, cultural, and entertainment amenities.
4. **Improve Iowa's image through marketing.** The Commission cited the perception that "Iowa is nothing but corn fields, hog farms, and old white people." To make Iowa more attractive to young professionals, the Department of Economic Development must address the issue of perception.

According to a recent article in *The Wall Street Journal*, Iowa officials say efforts to lure former residents have brought about 2,200 of them back to the state.

Source: Road Map to Recruit and Retain Young People in Iowa. (2007).

## **CONCLUSION**

The City of Mandan, North Dakota has experienced steady growth in its population and economy – notable trends in the face of recent economic challenges. However, in order to become an even more dynamic location for businesses, workers, families and visitors, Mandan must come together around a shared vision for its future and a plan to achieve it.

The process of developing *Mandan Tomorrow* resulted in a chorus of feedback that crystallized Mandan's future around a set of key themes and opportunities. The majority of stakeholders involved in this process want their city to continue as a welcoming, family-friendly community with dynamic recreation and neighborhood amenities. But they feel the city would benefit from a future focus on filling a key niche in the region for unique, non-chain, boutique and high-end retail establishments, taking better advantage of Mandan's Western and pioneer history and maximizing the potential of Downtown Mandan, the Strip and other local districts. While pursuit of all beneficial retail opportunities will continue, the establishment of a strong base of diverse retail businesses would likely advance efforts to attract national chain stores and restaurants.

In order to achieve its vision, Mandan must also address issues that have the potential to hold the city back. A poor community self-image, perceived lack of consensus on major strategic issues, a need for more proactive local planning, a school system facing limited resources and an increasing percentage of students-in-need, and other key challenges must be met head on. All attempts to grow and diversify the Mandan economy will be in vain if not coordinated with actions to improve the community as a whole.

## APPENDIX A: PERFORMANCE BENCHMARKS

It is critical that those officials and organizations implementing *Mandan Tomorrow* are able to monitor their progress towards effective development of the strategy's goals and objectives. The following table provides performance benchmarks for attainment that reflect the effective implementation of *Mandan Tomorrow*. They will enable implementers to assess the impact that strategic activities are having, and adjust efforts as necessary to "move the bar" on key programs. Because *Mandan Tomorrow* is a comprehensive plan, the benchmarks are also comprehensive. As Mandan becomes an even more attractive destination for residents, businesses and visitors, this will be reflected in a growing population, economy, retail sector and will positively impact poverty rates, incomes, educational attainment and student performance. Officials should update performance data annually to determine progress towards benchmark attainment.

Strategic Cycle		Latest Figure	Goal
			2015
Overall Performance Benchmarks	Total population*	17,736 (07)	21,000
	Population, ages 25-34	13% (07)	15%
	Total employment	9,288 (Q2,08)	10,668
	Average annual per capita income	\$29,920 (06)	\$38,000
	Average annual wages	\$31,753 (Q2,08)	\$40,000
	Total taxable sales and purchases	\$205,169,071 (08)	\$271,948,081
	Consolidated mill levies*	497.61 (08)	400.00
	Labor Force Participation Rate	90% (07)	92%
	Total poverty	9.1% (07)	8.5%
	Youth poverty	12.8% (07)	11.5%
	Percentage of adults with Bachelor's degree or higher	20% (07)	23%
	High school graduation rate	88% (07-08)	95%

\*Data at the city of Mandan level - all others for Mandan-Morton County

## APPENDIX B: ORGANIZATIONAL RESOURCES

This appendix includes an alphabetized list of Mandan's primary organizational resources related to economic and community development. It is not meant to be an exhaustive list, but rather an overview of the key groups and their work objectives and planning activities.

### **Bismarck-Mandan Chamber of Commerce**

[www.bismarckmandan.com](http://www.bismarckmandan.com)

The Chamber provides business networking opportunities, legislative lobbying services, small business development support, and cost effective marketing opportunities for regional businesses. It works cooperatively with the BMDA, CVB, and other regional entities to pursue effective community and economic development. It is one of the principal sponsors of the *Mandan Tomorrow* planning process.

The Chamber is supported by its membership, which includes the cities of Bismarck and Mandan, Burleigh and Morton counties, and members of the private business community. It hosts a number of committees (each comprised of business and community leadership and one Chamber staff member), which are focused on supporting the overall mission of the Chamber. Current committees include:

- Agriculture Committee
- Air Service Committee
- Ambassadors Committee
- Business Education Partnership Committee
- Excellence in Business Committee
- Government Affairs Committee
- Leadership Bismarck-Mandan Committee
- Local Issues Committee
- Military Affairs Committee
- Transportation Committee

### **Bismarck-Mandan Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB)**

[www.bismarckmandancvb.com](http://www.bismarckmandancvb.com)

The CVB works to develop and sell a positive image for region as a place for business conventions and visitors, with specific focuses on student travel, Lewis and Clark historical tourism, and recreational tourism. Like the Chamber of Commerce, it is supported by its membership, which includes the cities of Bismarck and Mandan, Burleigh and Morton counties, and members of the private business community. It

assists member businesses through the identification new target markets, sales strategies, promotional activities, and developing business contacts and networks.

### **Bismarck-Mandan Development Association (BMDA)**

[www.bmda.org](http://www.bmda.org)

BMDA is a regional economic development organization concerned primarily with the creation of new jobs through new business development and existing business retention and expansion. Like the Chamber of Commerce, it is supported by its membership, which includes the cities of Bismarck and Mandan, Burleigh and Morton counties, and members of the private business community. In addition to promoting the region as a competitive place to do business, it also responds to specific business inquiries by hosting visitors, connecting businesses to resources, and the dissemination of demographic, workforce, cost of living, and building and site information.

Major recent initiatives include the development of the Northern Plains Commerce Centre (a multimodal logistics and technology park) and studying the region's available labor and current business needs.

### **Bismarck-Mandan Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)**

[www.bismarck.org/city\\_departments](http://www.bismarck.org/city_departments)

The federal government requires urban areas with populations of at least 50,000 to maintain a metropolitan planning organization to coordinate regional transportation planning and development in order to be eligible to receive federal transportation funding. The region's MPO includes the cities of Bismarck, Mandan, and Lincoln as well as portions of Burleigh and Morton counties, and is over seen by a technical committee comprised of representatives from each jurisdiction.

The MPO has a planning process that supports the development of an integrated, intermodal regional transportation system that facilitates the efficient movement of people and goods. The primary plan the MPO is responsible for developing is the region's five-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which outlines short and long-term priority investment areas. Other current and recent planning initiatives include:

- Long Range Transportation Plan Update
- Bismarck Traffic Signal Optimization Study
- Regional North-South Beltway Corridor Study
- River Road Study
- Bismarck Mandan Expressway Study
- US Highway 83 Study - scroll down to see study

- Lincoln/Bismarck Connection Study
- Transit Development Plan 2006-2007
- Regional Land Use Study
- 71st Avenue-Centennial Road Corridor Study

These studies can be viewed online through the City of Bismarck's Department of Community Development's website.

### **City of Mandan**

[www.cityofmandan.com](http://www.cityofmandan.com)

City of Mandan Business Development Office works to grow employment and investment in targeted business areas including industrial, manufacturing, technology, retail and service sectors. Through the administration of business services, recruiting, and incentives, Mandan's **Business Development Office** serves many small businesses and strives to enhance the base of businesses within the community. Some of its key incentives are outlined below.

- **Mandan Growth Fund:** For businesses hoping to locate to or expand in Mandan, the city sales tax-supported Mandan Growth Fund provides a variety of assistance and individually-tailored financing incentives and exemptions, such as interest buy downs, grants, equity positions, and reduced interest loans.
- **Mandan Renaissance Zone:** Established in 2005, the Mandan Renaissance Zone program provides tax incentives for the revitalization of residential and commercial properties within the specified 25 block area on the south side of Main Street. Significant improvements to homes and businesses in the zone may be eligible for property tax exemptions as well as up to five years of state income tax exemptions on income derived from the project. Currently, private investments totaling \$4.7 million are committed to 33 projects that rehabilitate, expand, and construct 19 buildings in the Mandan Renaissance Zone. This initiative is managed by the Bismarck-Mandan Development Association and the City of Mandan.
- **Storefront Improvement Program:** The Storefront Improvement Program offers forgivable loans as a dollar for dollar (up to \$10,000) to small existing businesses for building façade improvements such as doors and windows, signage, and awnings. The program began in 2006 through the Mandan Growth Fund for central business district improvements.
- **Industrial Revenue Bond (IRB):** The City of Mandan may lend its name to sell Municipal Industrial Revenue Bonds to help fund an industrial or

economic development project. Taxable IRBs have no restrictions on use or the amount issued, while tax-exempt IRBs are issued to finance land and depreciable property for manufacturing facilities. The maximum tax-exempt IRB amount is \$100,000; these are sold at a lower interest rate since the interest earned is exempt from federal income tax.

The City's **Engineering and Planning Department** oversees activities throughout the city related to water and sewer infrastructure, cemetery operations, comprehensive planning, traffic control, development plan review, and zoning requests. Departmental activities are overseen by the Planning and Zoning Commission.

### **Lewis and Clark Regional Development Council**

[www.lewisandclarkrdc.org](http://www.lewisandclarkrdc.org)

The LCRDC serves the state's ten-county south-central area with lending, grant, and technical assistance programs to promote community and economic development. It administers a \$1 million Community Development Loan Fund (CDLF), allocated from Community Development Block Grant funds, to aid in the retention and expansion of existing businesses and the development of new businesses. Mandan is eligible to receive funds to finance infrastructure for economic development or equity for job creation projects through the CDLF.

### **Mandan Parks and Recreation**

[www.mandanparks.com](http://www.mandanparks.com)

Mandan Parks and Recreation is a taxing entity (affiliated with the City), which is governed by a Park Board that meets bi-monthly to make strategic decisions related to operations, budgets, facilities, and long-term initiatives. It offers youth, adult, and senior programming in a variety of recreational areas including baseball, basketball, volleyball, softball, dodgeball, soccer, aerobics, track and field, aquatics, tennis, hockey, arts and crafts, golf, and equestrian. Parks and Rec also hosts many regional tournaments and offers a number of recreational amenities, events, and classes at the Community Center. It recently collaborated with the City to commission a feasibility study for the construction of a larger events center in Mandan, so that the community can host midsized events too small for the Bismarck Civic Center. The full feasibility study can be viewed on the City of Mandan's website.

## **Mandan Progress Organization**

[www.mandanprogress.org](http://www.mandanprogress.org)

The mission of the Mandan Progress Organization is to “enhance Mandan's business climate, create and promote public events and generate community pride.” It supports and promotes many community events, most notably Buggies’ n’ Blues and Rodeo Days. It promotes community pride through its “Team Mandan: Pride Community Wide” slogan and welcomes new residents through the delivery welcome bags and invitations to community events. MPO has also developed *Mandan Bucks*, which are gift certificates good at most Mandan businesses available for purchase at any bank in the city.

The organization’s goals for 2009 include:

- Create a third major community festival for residents and visitors;
- Coordinate additional downtown activities;
- Establish a go-to location for visitors and citizens seeking information about local businesses, attractions and events;
- Improve and promote the Mandan Bucks program; and
- Foster joint marketing efforts amongst Mandan businesses.

## **Mandan Public Schools Board of Education**

[www.mandan.k12.nd.us/schoolboard](http://www.mandan.k12.nd.us/schoolboard)

Mandan Public Schools are overseen by a nine member Board of Education. Each Board member is elected to a three-year term and there is no limit to the number of terms a person may serve. The Board meets bi-monthly to shape policy directing Mandan Public Schools’ superintendant, teachers, and staff members. More specifically, the Board establishes district goals and priorities, approves the budget, and makes key decisions related to facilities and programmatic needs.

The Board is actively involved in short and long-term planning activities, driven by the development of two key reports.

- *Demographic Change Recommendation Report*: Addresses the anticipated effects of demographic dynamics on district finances, school personnel and students, curriculum, facilities, and extra-curricular activities.

- *District Strategic Plan:* Addresses short to mid-term goals related to the new middle school, personnel and human resources, revenue, curriculum, and district and school organizational structures