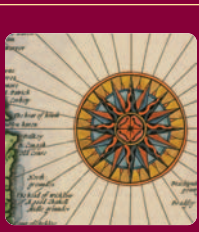
CITY CENTER RENAISSANCE





PLANNING THE COURSE FOR THE FUTURE.





A RENEWAL OF RIVERFRONT 2000.

City of MANKATO MINNESOTA

CITY OF MANKATO MAY 2007

CITY CENTER RENAISSANCE

THE PLANNING PROCESS

The long-term strategic planning began for Downtown Mankato over 25 years ago with Riverfront 2000. It is easy to conclude that measurable progress has been made. The Intergovernmental Center building and plaza were built in 1998. The entertainment district was spurred with the construction of the Civic Center/Ellerbee building in the downtown core in 1993 and redevelopment projects included preservation of the Depot, Bretts and Landkamer buildings.

In early 2006, community members joined together for a community visioning process called Envision 2020. The planning spanned over six months with 140 stakeholders charged with establishing a vision and plan for the community which would assist Greater Mankato in further establishing itself as a regional market place in 2020. Envision 2020 identified a community goal of Downtown Renaissance with a vision as *"Redefine and revitalize the downtowns of Mankato and lower North Mankato as the Valley, a center for the region that is cultural, civic, governmental, residential, entertainment heartbeat of the area."*

This vision, along with The City of Mankato Strategic Plan, echos the call for a City Center Renaissance. In order to move forward the renaissance concept, a plan needed to be developed. In August 2006, the City Council appointed a City Center Renaissance Stakeholder Task Force charged with the review and revitalization of planning practices within the City Center. The 26-member Task Force consisted of a cross section of the City Center with representation from the City Council, Planning Commission, Blue Earth County, Envision 2020, Downtown Core Hospitality, Property Owners/Tenants of City Center areas, Property Major Owners/Developers Stakeholders, Chamber of Commerce, Finance Sector, Marketing/Advertising Sector and City of North Mankato.

The City Center area is defined as bounded by the Minnesota River to the west; Madison Avenue to the north; the bluff line (North Sixth Street) to the east; the southern boundary meanderers along Stoltzman Road to the Sibley Park area. Whereas past studies and plans have founded the Downtown Core as the renewal catalyst; this plan process expanded the area to include supporting areas. The City Center is divided into five unique planning areas. They include: Downtown Core, Lincoln Park, Old Main, Old Town, South Riverfront, Sibley Parkway, South Front Street and Washington Park.

We find ourselves at a time once again, where the opportunity for bold thoughts will transform our landscape. We realize that a renaissance—a revival: rebirth—is needed as we accept that downtowns are never finished. Downtowns are a constantly evolving, dynamic, interrelated organism that require constant attention and forethought. Revitalization has preceded itself as a prominent thought for the City of Mankato. It's time to coin the next phrase acknowledging that as much as the downtown has progressed, it has truly only scratched the surface of what the area and region can become through a renaissance.

A complete version of the City Center Renaissance; A Renewal of Riverfront 2000 Stakeholder Task Force Report is available at **www.ci.mankato.mn.us/citycenter**

THE VISION

The City Center Renaissance will build upon previous planning efforts and reinforce the opportunities that created the historical community in the Valley. There will be a rebirth of the City Center by strengthening the interdependence of residential, industrial, service, and commercial sectors through revitalization, reconnection, and reinvestment. The City Center's strong employment base, civic facilities, historical assets, and unique character provide the foundation for the development of strategies that will foster the goals of the Renaissance.

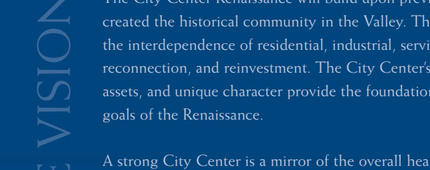
A strong City Center is a mirror of the overall health of the community. The City Center is the heartwood of Greater Mankato and reflects the community's civic, cultural, and economic vitality and identity. Public and private investment will create and support critical levels of momentum that will strengthen the City Center's role as the community's central hub. The hub is essential to provide the functional and organic community linkages between outlying neighborhoods and nodes through a common central station of service and support for a sustainable community.

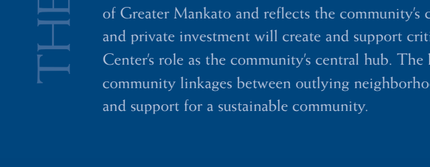
SIBLEY PARKWAY KEY INITIATIVES:

- Sibley Parkway Redevelopment
- Rail Corridor Mitigation
- Riverway Corridor
- Neighborhood Preservation and Support
- Transportation Realignment











SOUTH FRONT/LINCOLN PARK KEY INITIATIVES:

- Traffic Calming
- Mixed Use Redevelopment
- Storefront and Rear Storefront Rehabilitation
- Riverway Corridor Connection
- Neighborhood Preservation and Support
- Historic Preservation

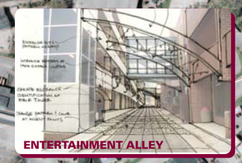




DOWNTOWN CORE KEY INITIATIVES:

- Riverway Corridor
- Riverway Plaza
- Convention Campus
- Transportation Changes
- Pedestrian Connectivity
- Rail Corridor Mitigation
- Alleyway Enhancements

















OLD TOWN/WASHINGTON PARK KEY INITIATIVES:

- Neighborhood Preservation and Support
- Traffic Calming/2nd Street Reconnection/Traffic Modifications
- Riverfront Park Development
- Storefront and Rear Storefront Rehabilitation
- Historic Preservation
- Rail Corridor Mitigation

OLD MAIN/FIVE CORNERS KEY INITIATIVES:

- Historic Preservation
- Flexible Zoning to encourage mixed use development
- Art and Culture District
- Traffic Modifications

SIBLEY PARKWAY • **DOWNTOWN CORE** • **OLD TOWN** • **WASHINGTON PARK**

SOUTH FRONT STREET • **LINCOLN PARK** • **OLD MAIN** • **FIVE CORNERS**

HWY 169 · RIVERWAY CORRIDOR · RAILROAD CORRIDOR · RIVERFRONT DRIVE · VETERANS MEMORIAL BRIDGE · MAIN STREET · CHERRY STREET · BROAD STREET

www.ci.mankato.mn.us/citycenter

PLANNING THE COURSE FOR THE FUTURE.

PLANNING

Since the 1970s, the term "downtown revitalization" has been a prominent theme for the community. As much as the Downtown has progressed through past planning efforts, it has only scratched the surface of what the area can become through a renaissance revival. In order to achieve this goal, Planning Principles and Implementation Tactics have been developed to effectuate the City Center Renaissance vision. A complete narrative of the planning principles and implementation tactics is available for review at: www.ci.mankato.mn.us/citycenter

PLANNING PRINCIPLE ONE:

Identify redevelopment areas.

Implementation Tactics:
- Old Town Redevelopment
- Sibley Parkway Phase One and Two
- Downtown Core-Front Street Connections
- Scattered Site Redevelopment

Timeline: 2008-2010

Approximate Cost: $8,123,600

Funding Source: General Obligation Bonds, Special Assessments, Tax Increment, Grants, Sale of Property, Riverfront 2000, Parking Fund, Private and Other

PLANNING PRINCIPLE TWO:

Development and design guidelines will incorporate flexibility in application to achieve the vision of the City Center Renaissance.

Implementation Tactics:
- Adopt a City Center Development Ordinance

Timeline: 2008-2009

Approximate Cost: n/a

Funding Source: In-direct Cost

PLANNING PRINCIPLE THREE:

The rail corridor will be embraced as a major transportation linkage and corridor improvements will be completed.

Implementation Tactics:
- Create whistle free corridors and implement visual screening (i.e. design and landscape) to reduce friction of uses
- Adopt the Community Railroad Corridor Plan
- Promote future commuter rail corridor

Timeline: 2010

Approximate Cost: $4,000,000

Funding Source: Federal Funding/Local Match

PLANNING PRINCIPLE FOUR:

Vehicular transportation will be balanced within the greater multi-modal transportation system.

Implementation Tactics:
- Implement recommendations of SRF Transportation Study
- Conduct Warren and Cherry Street Transportation Study
- Direct through traffic to arterial traffic routes
- Encourage pedestrian traffic through path/side-walk/trail connectivity which is enhanced by lighting and streetscaping
- Integrate alleyway integrated into the multi-modal system
- Continue evaluation of traffic movement and flow
- Establish Total Street Circuit
- Coordinate boundaries of the Parking District with public parking facilities and demand

Timeline: 2008-2012

Approximate Cost: $3,323,000

Funding Source: General Obligation, General Obligations Bonds, Sales Tax, Donations, Special Assessments and Other

PLANNING PRINCIPLE FIVE:

The City Center will be announced by gateways and streetscaping through strategies that will imprint the area, recognize the human scale, and clearly reference arrival into the area.

Implementation Tactics:
- Implement a Streetscape Corridor Policy
- Increase Urban/Boulevard Reforestation
- Bury power lines under boulevards

Timeline: 2008-2012

Approximate Cost: $1,330,000

Funding Source: Sales Tax, General Obligation, General Obligation Bond, Special Assessment and Other

PLANNING PRINCIPLE SIX:

Commit to the location of Civic and Cultural Facilities within the City Center.

Implementation Tactics:
- Promote Civic Center Expansion
- Support of a Culture and Arts District
- Develop a Public Art Program
- Commit to locating civic/art/cultural facilities within the City Center

Timeline: 2009-ongoing

Approximate Cost: $200,000

Funding Source: Restricted Funds, General Obligation, Private and Other

PLANNING PRINCIPLE SEVEN:

Reconnect the River by establishing a Riverway from Land of Memories to Kiwanis Park.

Implementation Tactics:
- Accept the flood control project as a necessity of the area for safety and livability
- Development of the Riverway Connectivity Plan
- Development of Riverfront Park
- Development of the River Plaza and Promenade concept

Timeline: 2008-2015

Approximate Cost: $7,500,000

Funding Source: Charter Bonds, Donations, Sales Tax and Other

PLANNING PRINCIPLE EIGHT:

Neighborhood Organizations will be a vital entity; therefore, the programmatic structure will compliment the unique and distinct nature of these neighborhoods to address common needs and desires.

Implementation Tactics:
- Development of Neighborhood Association Program

Timeline: 2007-2015

Approximate Cost: $20,000 annually

Funding Source: General Obligation and Private

PLANNING PRINCIPLE NINE:

To build a culture of preservation bringing citizens and City resources together through encouraging rehabilitation, new development, and adaptive reuse as a way to protect historic integrity.

Implementation Tactics:
- Promote the concept of preservation through capitalizing on successful restoration projects
- Establish a facade easement program
- Create a financing program (grant/load/equity) which requires participants to have a facade easement
- Establish a preservation easement program
- Expand the current Downtown Design District boundaries to replicate the City Center boundaries
- Development of a Design Review Committee
- Establish a Heritage Preservation Ordinance
- Establish a Heritage Preservation Commission

Timeline: 2007-2010

Approximate Cost: $160,000

Funding Source: General Obligation, Private and Other

PLANNING PRINCIPLE TEN:

Identify and refine maintenance and livability norms for residential and commercial properties through implementation of pilot projects and a variety of tactics that stress a goal of compliance.

Implementation Tactics:
- Educate both residential and commercial properties on maintenance and livability norms and how to report violations
- Streamline staff response time and procedures
- Implement elements of Crime Free Design
- Use a three-point approach to enhance livability and compatibility of norms within our residential and commercial areas

Timeline: 2007-2009

Approximate Cost: n/a

Funding Source: n/a

PLANNING PRINCIPLE ELEVEN:

Recognize that the image of the City and City Center are intertwined. Therefore, a financing strategy will be developed to acknowledge density/intensity and all sharing in the investment. The financing strategy is to encourage private sector reinvestment and develop public infrastructure to support the reinvestment.

Implementation Tactics:
- Four primary funding areas: pooled funds, City Center Renaissance Loan, Redevelopment Funds - Tax Abatement, Tax Increment Financing and Economic Development Funds, and Sales Tax
- Pursue long term sales tax legislation

Timeline: 2007-2015

Approximate Cost: $10,200,000 Sales Tax,
$408,000 General Obligation

Funding Source: Sales Tax, General Obligation and Sales Tax

PLANNING PRINCIPLE TWELVE:

Prosperous and successful downtowns across the nation have developed marketing and branding tools through private and public dedication of funds.

Implementation Tactics:
- Creation of a City Center Business Association
- Branding of City Center
- Creation of a Special Service District

Timeline: 2008-2011,
2011-ongoing funded by Special Service District

Approximate Cost: $50,000 annually public private match

Funding Source: General Obligation and Special Service District



www.ci.mankato.mn.us/citycenter

City of Mankato Minnesota

PLANNING THE COURSE FOR THE FUTURE

TOGETHER

Establishing consensus and community awareness regarding the vision, planning principles and implementation tactics is a necessary first step in the effectuations of the City Center Renaissance Plan. The commitment of the public and private sectors is critical to ensuring that future public and private development, infrastructure improvements, policy decisions and other actions are consistent with this plan. It should not be expected that the sole responsibility for implementation of the plan lie within the City of Mankato. It is envisioned that a City Center Business Association and other private entities will be active and responsible partners with the City. To facilitate implementation efforts, it is essential to pursue creative financing mechanisms, new incentives, public/private partnerships and bold initiatives. Business, property owners and other private entities are encouraged to explore creative opportunities to fund improvements that are of particularly high priority.

A coordinated effort will be necessary to ensure that the plan responds to changing conditions, addresses new challenges and opportunities and continues to reflect the vision for the City Center. Through partnerships and an ongoing commitment, the City Center Renaissance vision will be fulfilled.