



Economic Development Plan Review Committee Meeting

Friday, June 20, 2025, at 1:00 PM

City Council Chambers, City Hall (10 3rd Ave SW)

Any person needing special accommodation for the meeting is requested to notify the City Clerk's office at 857-4752.

1. ROLL CALL
2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

3.1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - MAY 16, 2025

It is recommended the committee approve the minutes of the May 16, 2025, Economic Development Plan Review Committee meeting.

4. OLD BUSINESS
- 4.1. COMMITTEE BULLET POINT REVIEW

5. UPCOMING INFORMATION

5.1. POTENTIAL UPCOMING MEETING DATES

The committee will need to discuss if this recommendation is complete. If the recommendation to the City Council is not complete, another meeting date can be discussed during this time.

6. ADJOURNMENT

On May 16, 2025, an Economic Development Plan Review Committee meeting was held in the City Council Chambers, City Hall (10 3rd Ave SW). Chairman Blessum called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Mike Blessum, Justin Hammer, Jordan Nelson, Paul Pitner, Tyler Neether

Members Absent: Melinda Howe, Beth Feldner

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Blessum led the City Council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – May 9, 2025

Committee Member Paul Pitner moved the committee to approve the minutes of the May 9, 2025, Economic Development Plan Review Committee meeting. The motion was seconded by Committee Member Jordan Nelson and carried the following roll call vote: ayes: Mike Blessum, Justin Hammer, Tyler Neether, Jordan Nelson, Paul Pitner; nays: None.

OLD BUSINESS

COMMITTEE BULLET POINT REVIEW

Motion 1: Committee Member Paul Pitner moved to consolidate the Renaissance Zone Board and Magic Fund Screening Committee or combination to continue the Economic Development discussion and handle any incoming inquiries.

The motion was seconded by Committee Member Tyler Neether and carried the following roll call vote: ayes: Mike Blessum, Justin Hammer, Tyler Neether, Jordan Nelson, Paul Pitner; nays: None.

UPCOMING INFORMATION - POTENTIAL UPCOMING MEETING DATES

The committee could potentially meet on the following dates, from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm in the City Council Chambers, unless otherwise specified:

- June 20, 2025

ADJOURNMENT

The motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:08 pm was initiated by Committee Member Paul Pitner, seconded by Committee Member Jordan Nelson and carried the following roll call vote: ayes: Mike Blessum, Justin Hammer, Tyler Neether, Jordan Nelson, Paul Pitner; nays: None.



REPORT FROM THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE

I. COMMITTEE BACKGROUND

The Minot City Council approved a motion by a 6-1 vote at its October 7, 2024 regular meeting to create an Economic Development Plan Review Committee. The committee was to be comprised of 2 council members and 5 community members to be appointed by the mayor. Alderman Mike Blessum was selected to chair the committee and was joined by Alderman Paul Pitner as the council representatives. Community members appointed to the committee included Jordan Nelson, Tyler Neether, Justin Hammer, Melinda Howe, and Beth Feldner.

The committee commenced its work on November 8, 2024 and has met twice monthly since. Meetings have generally included presentations from various community and regional partners including ND Commerce, MACEDC, Souris Basin Planning Council, and City of Minot staff. Question and answer sessions were held with each of the presentations. Committee discussions were interspersed with the working sessions. Throughout the process the committee worked with the City Clerk acting as secretary to record bullet points of the thoughts of the committee.

II. WHAT IS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SUCCESS?

The committee held a discussion to work through ways to determine whether the city's economic development initiatives were successful. The committee developed the following bullet points that they felt represented success for the people of Minot.

- Fill Gaps – Funding where other organizations are not, or it is not part of their scope.
- Retail/Restaurant Economic Development and Data Collection
- Expand tax base.
- Increasing discretionary income/spending.
- Strengthening our position as a regional draw.
- Foster a common sense, business-friendly environment that will work to increase entrepreneurship, new business formation, existing business growth and competition which benefits the consumer.
- Work with all stakeholders to ensure that Minot can attract a workforce with a broad skill set, both through new residents and enabling existing residents.
- Diversify Industry Sectors

Economic development activities should generally trace back to these success factors as a measurement for priority and success.

III. PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

Through its discussions, the committee prioritized the following recommendations for the city council's consideration. These items represent immediate actions the council could take to enhance the effectiveness of the city's economic development activities.

- State Program Matching Funds – Prioritize the funding of the Pace and Flex Pace Programs at levels adequate for their operations.
- Continue the Renaissance Zone Program - Encourage the Renaissance Zoning Board to move districts from areas who have not utilized the program, to blighted areas or entrances to our community that need improvements.
- Continue the Builders Property Tax Exemption and Homeowners Property Tax Exemption Programs
- Consider additional residential developer incentives such as:
 - Special Assessments (fund infrastructure improvements)
 - Developer Tax Credits
 - Developer Rebates
- Façade Improvement Program Recommendations:
 - Take a larger look at the areas laid out in the 2040 Comprehensive Plan. Task the Renaissance Zone Committee to make these recommendations.
 - Change the structure of the program by changing the City/Applicant Percentage and/or reducing amount offered per application.
 - Include a sunset date to the program.

IV. OTHER COMMITTEE NOTES

The committee members also had the following observations and notes during their deliberations. Although these items did not receive an approval vote for the primary recommendations, the committee forwarded all of its notes for information for the council.

TIF Program Recommendations:

- Prioritize blighted properties first, then consider new development.
- If consideration is given to new development, the applicant must provide a benefit to the city.

Direction to City Council on Retail Recruitment Services:

- Recommend City Council dissolve Chapter 2, Article V, Division 2 Community Development Advisory Board.

Ideas for further review of the committee: (David Lakefield's Finance Presentation)

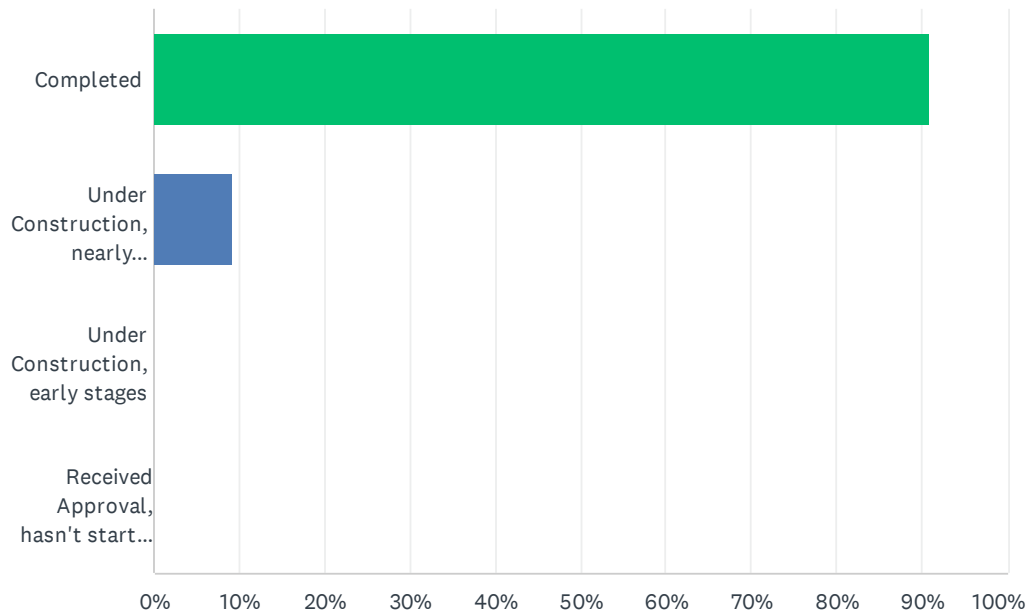
- Child Care/Workforce Shortage
 - Other Communities are utilizing the ND Department of Commerce RWHP program for larger childcare facilities (pending funding in the next biennium) and providing local grants.
- Consolidate the Renaissance Zone Review Board and Magic Fund Screening Committee or combination to continue the Economic Development discussion and handle any incoming inquiries.

Possible further discussion/consideration topics: (Partnership with MACEDC and City of Minot)

- MACEDC provides more detail on how public funds or City of Minot funds are spent yearly. (This might already be covered in the application process for each budgeting year.)
- Regular communication with the MACEDC, City of Minot staff, and Magic Fund Screening Committee.
- Consolidating the MACEDC Service Agreement deliverables.
- The role of the MAGIC Fund Screening Committee.
- Combine/consolidate the data from all the different agencies for potential site selectors.

Q1 What is the status of your facade improvement project?

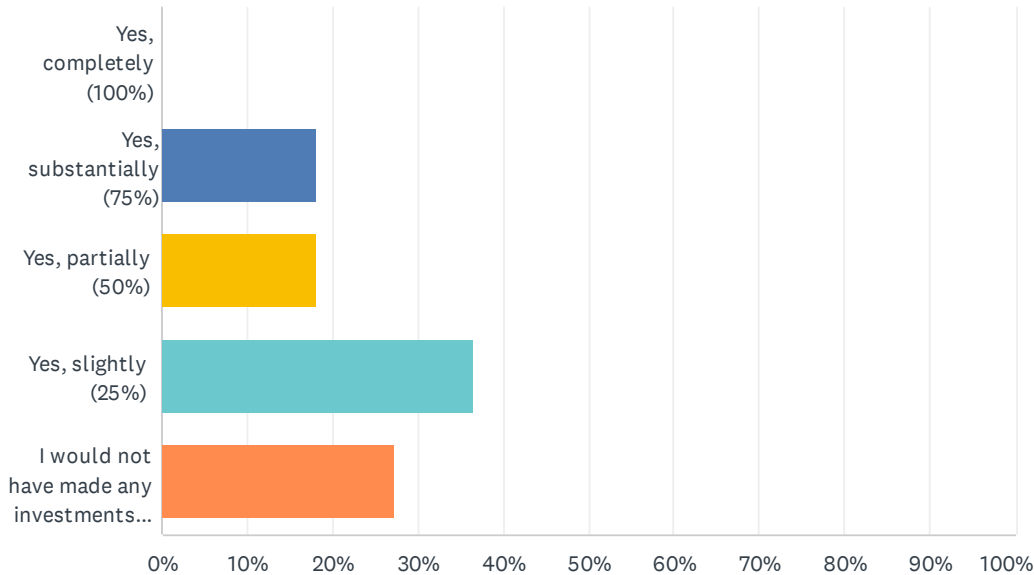
Answered: 11 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Completed	90.91%	10
Under Construction, nearly completed	9.09%	1
Under Construction, early stages	0.00%	0
Received Approval, hasn't started work yet	0.00%	0
TOTAL		11

Q2 To which level would you have renovated your building's facade if this program wasn't available?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 0

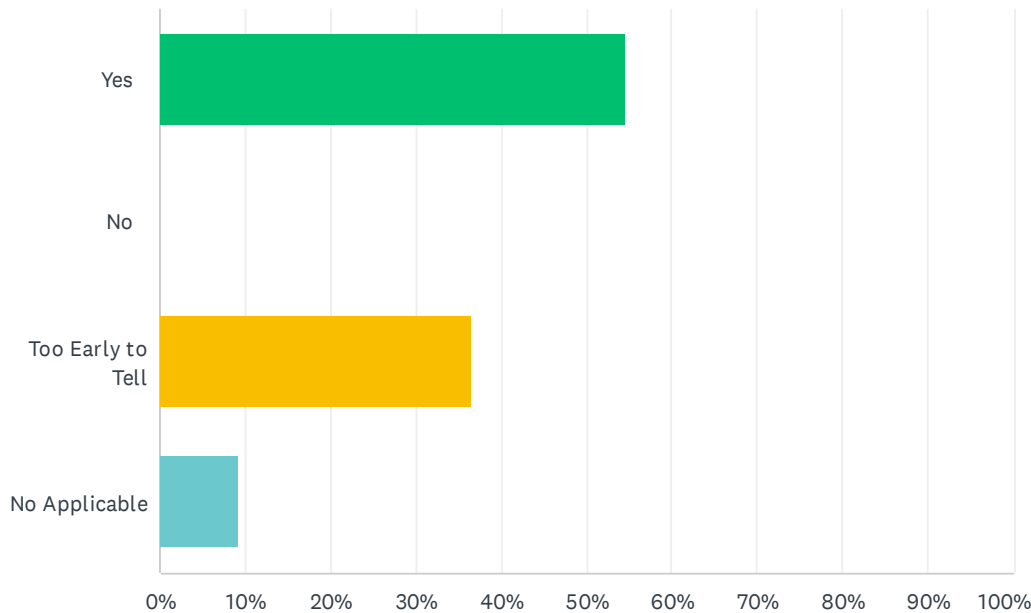


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes, completely (100%)	0.00%	0
Yes, substantially (75%)	18.18%	2
Yes, partially (50%)	18.18%	2
Yes, slightly (25%)	36.36%	4
I would not have made any investments (0%)	27.27%	3
TOTAL		11

#	PLEASE PROVIDE SOME CLARITY:	DATE
1	Probably would have only made necessary repairs.	6/18/2025 8:12 AM
2	Without the program it would have been difficult to make this pencil out.	6/17/2025 5:55 PM
3	The program provided much needed funds to complete our renovations of the building	6/17/2025 9:41 AM
4	The cost and overall risk of purchasing older buildings is very high but programs like this provide some level of risk mitigation to where we felt comfortable taking that risk.	6/16/2025 4:42 PM
5	We would have made necessary improvements to preserve the integrity of the building.	6/16/2025 3:11 PM
6	Some the brick would have been covered up due to the amount of work involved in rehabbing it.	6/10/2025 5:06 PM
7	Since I was purchasing the building, I do not think my budget would have allowed to invest the extra 100k	5/30/2025 8:42 AM
8	We had discussed for several years the need to update the lobby of the building. The facade project provided the boost that was needed to get the updates started.	5/27/2025 11:55 AM

Q3 Has the facade improvement program increased sales, created new jobs, or improved business in your building?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 0



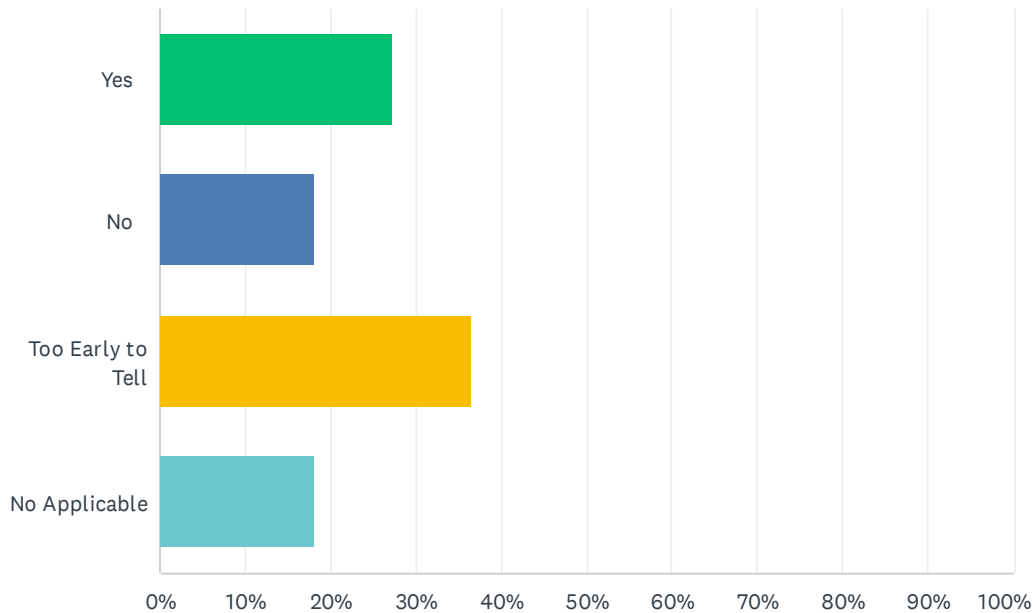
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	54.55%	6
No	0.00%	0
Too Early to Tell	36.36%	4
No Applicable	9.09%	1
TOTAL		11

#	PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS ON HOW BUSINESS HAS IMPROVED:	DATE
1	Tenants seem happy with the aesthetic improvements. We have a small amount of commercial space which has provided space for us to operate our design and music studios more efficiently.	6/18/2025 8:12 AM
2	We haven't moved in yet.	6/17/2025 5:55 PM
3	It is hard to know if sales are directly related to facade	6/17/2025 9:41 AM
4	I believe with the ex year aesthetics and accessibility of the improvements. We attract a wider range of tenants and small businesses looking to open up downtown.	6/16/2025 4:42 PM
5	The tattoo business is the same. The business in the basement has a much more inviting entrance, increasing traffic to their business.	6/16/2025 3:11 PM
6	It has helped attracted new commercial tenants to the space. We don't have great parking, so the new facade was a helpful tool in attracting businesses.	6/2/2025 11:09 AM
7	Customers LOVE the look and feel of the business and "first impressions" play a critical role in that feeling.	5/30/2025 8:42 AM

8	It is hard to measure if traffic has increased as a direct result of the facade, but we have received a lot of positive feedback from patrons about how nice it looks. In conjunction with the facade project, we greatly improved our signage presenting a much better street image.	5/27/2025 11:55 AM
9	It will, as soon as interior phases are completed.	5/27/2025 11:11 AM

Q4 If you are renting any portion of the building, has the facade improvement program increased rent prices?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 0

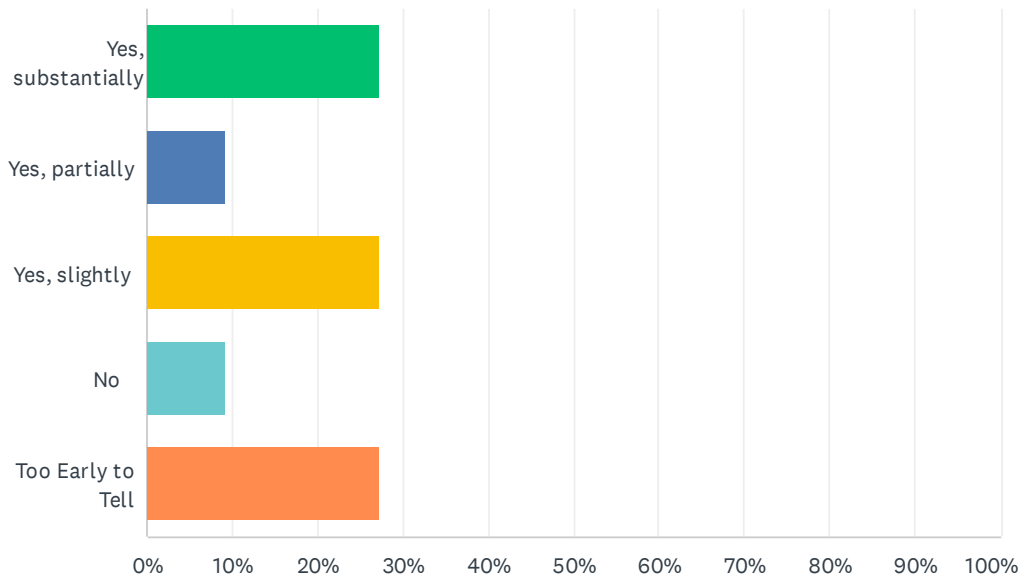


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	27.27% 3
No	18.18% 2
Too Early to Tell	36.36% 4
No Applicable	18.18% 2
TOTAL	11

#	PLEASE COMMENT:	DATE
1	Rents will slowly increase in an effort not to lose existing tenants.	6/18/2025 8:12 AM
2	I'll let you know how it goes when we move it and advertise additional office space for rent.	6/17/2025 5:55 PM
3	We purchased the building and it is only our first tenant currently in the space. So we have nothing to compare it to.	6/16/2025 4:42 PM
4	Tenants are currently in a lease.	6/16/2025 3:11 PM
5	Yes - it has probably increased my prices by 10-25%	6/2/2025 11:09 AM
6	The facade improvement gave us as building owners a vision to live above our business.	5/30/2025 8:42 AM
7	We will be raising rents for renters in the near future.	5/27/2025 11:11 AM

Q5 Have you experienced any savings in energy/utility costs?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 0

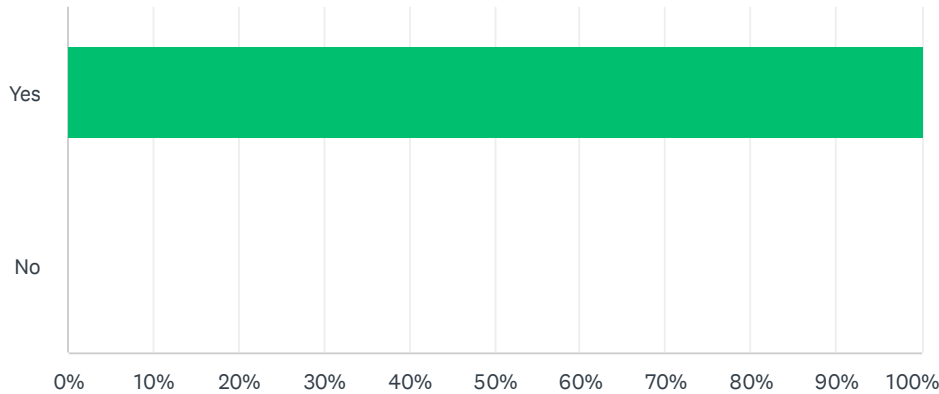


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes, substantially	27.27%	3
Yes, partially	9.09%	1
Yes, slightly	27.27%	3
No	9.09%	1
Too Early to Tell	27.27%	3
TOTAL		11

#	PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS:	DATE
1	New hvac was required for our upper level units which are larger and more efficient than the old units so that savings is passed along to the tenants.	6/18/2025 8:12 AM
2	This building will be way more efficient!	6/17/2025 5:55 PM
3	new windows are more energy efficient	6/17/2025 9:41 AM
4	Again this project began shortly after purchasing the building so not much to reference with utilities	6/16/2025 4:42 PM
5	Fuel costs were down for this past winter.	6/16/2025 3:11 PM
6	I can't comment on this particular building before the improvement as a different person occupied it. Coming from my previous location to this one, I have seen a vast improvement in energy savings.	5/30/2025 8:42 AM
7	As stated earlier, the facade was only a part of the improvements. However, without it the rest of the improvements may not have happened. Part of the rest of the project was a new HVAC system. During the coldest months, it appears that our combined electricity and natural gas billing have dropped by as much as \$500-\$600/month.	5/27/2025 11:55 AM

Q6 Do you support retaining the program to help rejuvenate the appearance and economic vitality of downtown Minot?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 0

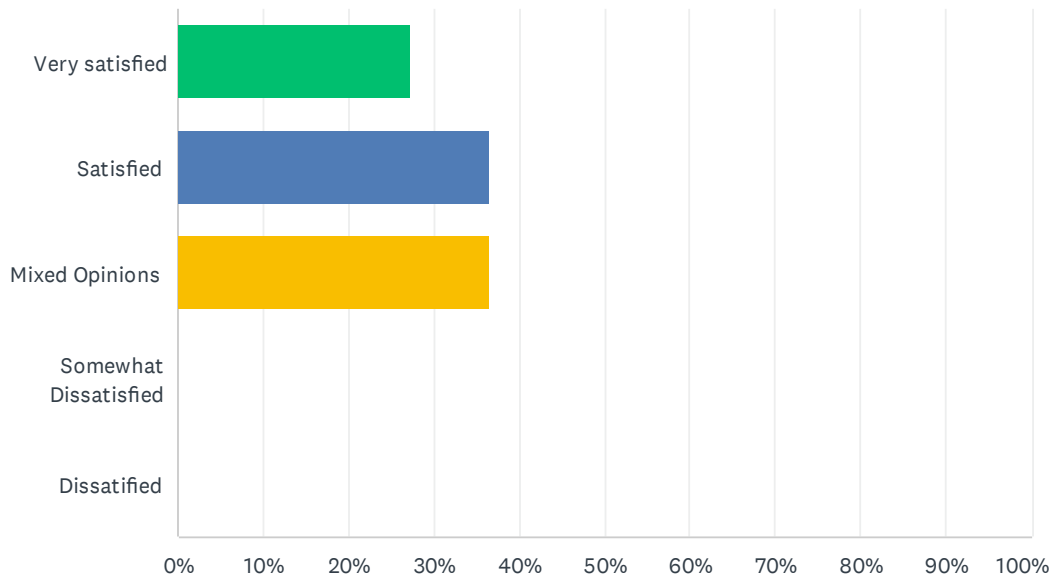


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	100.00%	11
No	0.00%	0
TOTAL		11

#	WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK ON THE FUTURE OF THE PROGRAM:	DATE
1	Without this program, much of the working to improve downtown would not be happening. It is a jump starter to many of the improvements we have been seeing. These old buildings are expensive so the City's help is appreciated and necessary.	6/18/2025 8:12 AM
2	I think we should keep the program but put an end date to it. Maybe it's 2 years from now or 5? But I suppose we should look at allocating that money elsewhere or start another program to help others renovate their buildings. Like on Broadway or other older commercial areas.	6/17/2025 5:55 PM
3	The program needs to at least come close to breaking even for the community to support.	6/17/2025 5:22 PM
4	It is program such as this that they didn't even possible a simple move forward on this type of project/investment into an older/downtown building	6/16/2025 4:42 PM
5	Absolutely is a phenomenal program. Would highly recommend keeping it AND working on other programs that improve downtown and preserve what is here.	5/30/2025 8:42 AM
6	I believe that improving the street appeal of any property in the area benefits every property.	5/27/2025 11:55 AM

Q7 How was your experience in dealing with city staff?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very satisfied	27.27%	3
Satisfied	36.36%	4
Mixed Opinions	36.36%	4
Somewhat Dissatisfied	0.00%	0
Dissatisfied	0.00%	0
TOTAL		11

#	WE WELCOME YOUR COMMENTS:	DATE
1	Jonathan was tricky to work with and might have required more renovation work than was necessary on our project. Brian came in and was quite helpful and easy to work with!	6/18/2025 8:12 AM
2	It's handled efficiently and fairly in my opinion.	6/17/2025 5:55 PM
3	👍	6/10/2025 5:06 PM
4	The previous administrator of the program made up a lot of his own rules. We felt pressured to do "extra" things that were never in the original contract which added to the cost and, frankly, diminished the look and quality of the facade. He was very difficult to work with and was very obtrusive.	6/2/2025 11:09 AM
5	John was amazing to work with and would do so again.	5/30/2025 8:42 AM
6	During the process of applying and during construction, I was in frequent contact with Jonathan Rosenthal and others who were involved. It was at times frustrating, but overall it turned out very well.	5/27/2025 11:55 AM

Q8 Do you have any suggestions on how we can improve this program for future customers?

Answered: 8 Skipped: 3

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Some of the expense involved in my project might have fallen into the "historical renovation" category so the money from the grant may have gone further is those restrictions would have been loosened up (example: \$60,000 to have the leaded prism glass windows rebuilt - was this necessary? Although they look great now, it is difficult to find people to do this type of work in Minot). Getting bids for a project like this is not always possible so I appreciate the flexibility in letting the owner take care of some of the tricky items (example leaded glass) required.	6/18/2025 8:12 AM
2	No, it's being managed very well in my opinion.	6/17/2025 5:55 PM
3	call me	6/17/2025 9:41 AM
4	It was an easy decision for me to want to maintain the historical integrity of the building. However, I can see where this may contradict with the feasibility of renovating some of these spaces. I think, as long as there is an effort to maintain the historical time of the finishes, this should be satisfactory.	6/16/2025 4:42 PM
5	My one critique is the requirement for replacement insurance. I know there needs to be an insurance requirement to protect the City's investment, and I'm not sure what the ideal alternative could be. Replacement insurance is very, very costly. By the end of our ten year loan term, we'll have paid as much (or more) in replacement insurance as we saved by participating in the program.	6/16/2025 3:11 PM
6	No - hopefully new management will make the program more welcoming and inviting to prospective applicants of the program.	6/2/2025 11:09 AM
7	It's hard to criticize a program like this. From my experience, everything went smoothly.	5/30/2025 8:42 AM
8	I understand that the original premise was limited to Main Street. I believe that it was absolutely the right move to expand to the whole of the downtown area.	5/27/2025 11:55 AM

Q9 Is there anything else that you would like to share?

Answered: 7 Skipped: 4

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Thank you for the help and the hand holding! I hope this program continues because I think it is making an impact on downtown and the City of Minot.	6/18/2025 8:12 AM
2	I personally think that maybe other areas should be explored with in Minot. That would keep the program alive and create more fairness I guess you could say.	6/17/2025 5:55 PM
3	Keep up the good work!	6/16/2025 4:42 PM
4	Old buildings can be treasures but they take a certain amount of energy to restore. They are infill projects usually, so they are efficient from other angles. It also creates a good vibe for downtowns and people desire to be in cool spaces with some history.	6/10/2025 5:06 PM
5	I believe this program is absolutely critical to the future success of downtown Minot. The investment economics of renovating downtown buildings in Minot are nearly impossible without this program.	6/2/2025 11:09 AM
6	Would love to discuss other programs that help downtown. I know John was working with banks (Town and Country & the Bank of ND) to create a program that would help get the living quarters up to code. Would love to discuss that further. I know the crux was getting the loan terms extended to make the payment more manageable AND possibly doing a grant program for part of the initial down payment on the loan.	5/30/2025 8:42 AM
7	We have received many positive comments from our patrons, and the project as a whole have made the patron experience better, so I would have to say it has been a net positive.	5/27/2025 11:55 AM