

March 25, 2008

Honorable Senator Kent Conrad and Honorable United States Senate Budget Committee Members,

Investment in our City infrastructure is a critical part of our planning for the anticipated growth coming to our community. As is seen in all phases of our national economy, prices continue to rise annually for the infrastructure we need to invest in. Currently Minot's 5 Year Capital Improvements Plan includes a total of \$57,155,900 in local investment in everything from Airport improvements, water and sewer system improvements, public service equipment needs, storm sewer investment, and numerous street and highway projects.

However, in addition to our investment, many of these projects depend on Federal assistance and Federal funding. For example, Highway improvements, NAWS improvements, and Airport improvements are all dependent on Federal infrastructure investment.

And, while we have anticipated numerous projects over the next five years, additional projects inevitably arise that demand our attention and for which we are in need of Federal assistance. One example for us is a 55th Street East overpass structure needed to provide safe and available access to our Intermodal site, Ag Park, Mill, Energy Park, and other facilities currently being located in that vicinity of east Minot. Our Intermodal operation is being constructed and is expected to begin operations later this spring. The benefit to our region in being able to tie into the Intermodal system here will be significant. The goal will be to have shippers able to have their products shipped by container without undo delay and at better rates than had previously existed locally. An Ag Park is being developed in the immediate vicinity of the Intermodal facility and we have companies currently locating in that park. In addition, several energy-related businesses are in the process of moving their operations in part, to our community. An Energy Park is also being developed in the general vicinity of the Intermodal facility. Additionally, BNSF has announced plans for the construction of a major fueling site just east of 55th Street. All of these factors have come together to put an immediacy to the need for design and construction of an overpass structure at 55th Street East. The City of Minot is cooperating with Ward County in their efforts to coordinate the construction of this structure. Both the North Dakota Department of Transportation and BNSF have also agreed to participate in the structure estimated at a total cost of \$8 million. Still, we are in need of \$5.2 million in Federal assistance in order to assure the completion of this project in a timely manner.

Again, while 55th Street has come on rapidly as a need for our county, our city and our region, the City has numerous other projects related to transportation infrastructure which are included in our Capital Improvements Plan and which include the following over the next five years:

2008

1. North Broadway (4th Avenue to University Avenue) - a secondary regional project – has been bid and will start construction in early April. The total cost is in excess of \$5 million.
2. 16th Street NW from 21st Avenue NW to 30th Avenue NW, is an urban project expected to cost \$1,992,046.
3. Engineering work will take place this summer on an additional two projects: the five-laning of 20th Avenue SE to the east edge of Minot, an urban program. And, work on the intersection of 13th Street SE and the US 2 and 52 Bypass, a regional secondary system project with ancillary work which is urban funding.

All of these projects in 2008 are vital to our transportation plan. Coordination is taking place with the Federal Highway Administration and the NDDOT.

Looking forward, the City has planned construction of a number of additional highway related projects including:

2009

Five laning of 20th Avenue SE to the east edge of Minot at 13th Street SE will be constructed at an estimated \$4 million. In addition, we will also begin work on our 6th Street Underpass which will also include some major storm sewer work and is estimated at \$3 million.

2010

Work will begin on the 13th Street SE and 2 and 52 Bypass intersection. This project is estimated at \$13 million and it is an example of the studied approach we have taken to our infrastructure needs. Over the past ten years at least three major studies have been conducted on what improvements are necessary to our Highway 2 and 52 Bypass which crosses our city from east to west. One option considered for our bypass was to build it as a full freeway with grade separations and overpasses and restricted access. This project was rejected because of concern about the excessive cost, estimated in the range of \$300 million, and issues having to do with access. As a result, we are working with our North Dakota Department of Transportation on the noted planned improvements on 13th Street SE and the 2 and 52 Bypass intersection which will involve re-alignments and at-grade intersection improvements and are expected to effectively handle traffic at this location. Over the coming decade we expect to have improvements made at a number of additional intersections, but the total cost of those improvements will be significantly less than a full freeway type system.

2011

We will be finishing work on the 6th Street SW Underpass Urban Project and we will have another regional secondary project reconstructing Burdick Expressway east from 9th Street to 15th Street SE at an estimated \$6.3 million.

2012

Construction of an urban project which will connect 20th Avenue SE from 13th Street SE to Valley Street at an estimated \$2.6 million.

In addition to these major projects we are also planning for the construction of a number of shared use paths in and around our community. With all of these planned highway projects over the next five years, in addition to the 55th Street Overpass, continued Federal investment in infrastructure is critical to us.

Another infrastructure need for our community is the Northwest Area Water Supply (NAWS) Project. This project will pump 26 million gallons per day of Missouri River water to Minot for distribution to our community, to our local rural water system, to Minot Air Force Base, and to numerous communities and rural water systems in Northwest and North Central North Dakota. The project has been under construction for six years and we are anticipating more than \$22 million in expected construction costs to be invested this year in a cooperative project being paid 35% from our 1% local sales tax and the balance primarily from the Federal government through the Bureau of Reclamation. An Environmental Impact Statement is currently underway with a Record of Decision expected to be issued by next fall on the treatment options for this water. Those treatment options could range anywhere from \$8 million \$90 million in cost, so the total amount necessary to complete this project could range anywhere from \$90 million to \$180 million. As you might expect, the Federal infrastructure investment in the project is essential in order to assure communities in this part of the country an abundant, pure and dependable source of water.

Major infrastructure investment is also planned for our Airport in the next few years. In 2010 and 2011 we are planning a Runway 8-26 Realignment Project. This is a high priority project for us because it eliminates our Runway Protection Zone (RPZ) compliance issue with the FAA. This project is currently estimated to cost \$7,675,000. FAA discretionary funding is planned. This is just one of the larger projects planned at the Airport in the next few years, but it gives an indication of our need for the Federal infrastructure investment.

In conclusion, I would like to thank you for giving us the opportunity to present to you how critical to our community the United States budget is on an annual basis. We sincerely request your positive consideration of the crucial Federal infrastructure investment for our community, our region, our state and our nation.

Sincerely,

Curt Zimbelman
Mayor
Minot, North Dakota