



mejorando group

March 21, 2012

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# *City of Bismarck*



## *Strategic Plan*

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Submitted By:

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March 21, 2012

Keith Hunke  
Assistant City Administrator  
City of Bismarck  
221 North Fifth Street  
Bismarck, ND 58506-5503

Re: Strategic Plan

Dear Keith,

I am pleased to provide you with the Strategic Plan that is the final culmination of much time, positive energy and thoughtful ideas contributed by a large number of interested stakeholders, especially the Project Team members and Mayor Warford and City Commissioners.

Based on our discussion at the inception of this endeavor and subsequent ones, as well, I believe the intent was achieved: to provide a thorough, collaborative process in which to engage and enlist the community about the future of Bismarck. As an inaugural Strategic Plan, its content identifies several areas where the convergence of staff time, political will and community support will enable Bismarck to get ever stronger.

I am extremely pleased with the collaboration we experienced on this project. I recognize that a project of this magnitude can be disruptive for internal staff that is focused on their primary roles and responsibilities. I appreciate the sharing of yours and theirs time, thoughts and expertise.

Sincerely,



Patrick Ibarra  
Co-Founder and Partner



## Project Background

Organizations like the City of Bismarck are continually presented with unexpected opportunities and unanticipated problems. Hard choices must be made, sometimes quickly, often under conditions in which little is certain. It can be easy to become distracted by these challenges expending time, money, and energy on activities that divert people's attention from the organization's principal goals. To avoid these distractions, organization members – including staff from top to bottom – need to understand clearly what the organization's goals are and what it will take to achieve them. This is where strategic planning plays a pivotal role. Strategic planning allows organizations to make fundamental decisions that guide them to a developed vision of the future. The result of this effort, the strategic plan, serves as the basis for action – a road map that directs all resources toward the desired future.

The strategic planning process involved the City of Bismarck Project Team formally asking and answering:

- What profound shifts are or will influence our future?
- What is our direction and response to these shifts?
- How will we describe our desired results in measurable terms?
- What are the best ways and means to get there?
- How will we measure progress?
- How will we measure success?
- How will we revise as required?

Our approach in developing the strategic plan satisfies the criteria by which successful strategic planning efforts are evaluated and the City of Bismarck is seeking:

- Leads to action
- Builds a shared vision
- Is an inclusive, participatory process in which policy makers and staff take on a shared ownership
- Accepts accountability to the community
- Is externally focused and sensitive to the organization's environment
- Is based on quality data
- Requires an openness to questioning the status quo
- Is a key part of effective management

In summary, the Strategic Plan serves as a collectively supported, integrated road map of how Bismarck will begin to move toward its desired future. Over time, the strategic plan becomes a guide for making intermediate decisions and for demonstrating progress.

## Project Approach & Recap

As a means of overseeing the entire Strategic Planning process, a Project Team was established and included the following persons:

### Project Team:

1. Josh Askvig, City Commissioner
2. Keith Hunke, Assistant City Administrator & Team Co-Chair
3. Mel Bullinger, City Engineer
4. Alyssa Conitz, PC & Network Tech
5. Mike Dannenfelzer, Communications Manager
6. Gloria David, Public Information Officer
7. Keith Demke, Director Utility Operations
8. Connie Griffin, Public Health Supervisor
9. Jerry Henke, Employee Representative
10. Sheila Hillman, Finance Director & Team Co-Chair
11. Carl Hokenstad, Director of Community Development
12. Jason Tomanek, Planner, Community Development

Strategic planning must be seen as both a product and a process. The Project Team met regularly to engage in thought-provoking exercises to explore and reach a consensus perspective on the resolution of several areas. In addition to the meetings of the Project Team, periodic progress updates were provided to the Mayor and City Commissioners at their regularly scheduled meetings.

In the spirit of collaboration, extensive community outreach was utilized to obtain valuable input and insight. A number of community meetings were held, and the use of the City's social media tools were used. Input from these sources proved extremely helpful to Project Team members during their deliberations of the various aspects involved in preparing the Strategic Plan.

Several attachments, A-I, are located in the Appendix of this Report. These attachments include meeting agendas for the Project Team, agendas for meetings of the Mayor and City Commission, summaries of meetings the Mayor and City Commission and Project Team participated in, comments from various stakeholder groups, and draft versions of the Vision, Values, Mission Statement, Goals, and Objectives.

A recap of the Project phases follows.

- **February 10-11, 2011** – The inaugural meeting of the Project Team.
  - A meeting summary is provided in Attachment A.

- **March 2011** – Input from various groups was obtained.
  - A number of community stakeholder groups were invited to attend a meeting to provide their input towards the Strategic Plan. The framework was filtered through a SWOT analysis. The list of groups invited is found on Attachment B. Several of these groups sent representatives to the meeting.
  - An entire inventory of input submitted and general themes which emerged from the SWOT framework is found on Attachment C. Groups that participated included the Mayor and City Commission, City Department Directors, City Employees, the external Stakeholder groups, and citizens at-large. A “Community Conversation” meeting was held in which citizens were invited to attend and share their input.
  - Attachment D is a list of those comments submitted by citizens using the City’s Web site and Social Media.
  
- **April 12-14, 2011** – SWOT Themes and Complete Environment Scan
  - Attachment E is a summary of the April 12-14 meeting and includes the themes which emerged from the Project Team reviewing the input submitted in March through all the various outlets, along with their own work in completing the Environmental Scan.
  
- **May 12, 2011** – Prepare a Community Vision Statement
  - The Mayor and City Commission members met to craft a draft Vision Statement for the community. Attachment F includes the draft Vision Statements created by the City Commission and the comments provided by citizens during the meeting of May 17 to review the draft vision statement.
  
- **As a result of the flooding situation in the community, the Strategic Planning process was put on hold from May through October, 2011.**
  
  
- **November 29-30, 2011** – Re-start the Strategic Planning Process
  - The Mayor and City Commission met on November 29 to review the Vision Statements they had prepared the previous May and determine if any revisions were necessary.
  - Attachment G is the list of Goals the Mayor and City Commission generated for the Project Team to consider.

- Attachment H includes those comments from community members who attended an evening meeting on November 30 as a means to gain some “fresh” comments on the draft Vision Statement.
- **December 13 & 14, 2011** – Project Team meets to re-ignite the process.
  - The Project Team met December 13 and 14, 2011 for the purposes of creating a set of Values and Mission Statement that were based on the Vision statement the Mayor and City Commission had created. The summary of the December 13 and 14 meeting is found on Attachment I and includes the Vision Statement, Values the Project Team generated, the Mission Statement prepared, and a refined set of Goals.
- **January 10 & 11, 2012** – Identify Goals and Objectives
  - The work from the Project Team meeting January 11 and 12 focused on capturing Key Areas and identifying Goals and Objectives for these areas. During this meeting, the Project Team also examined the value of utilizing Performance Measurements to monitor progress of the various elements in the Plan.
- **February 6 & 7, 2012** – Final Touches
  - The Mayor and City Commissioners met on February 6 to review the Goals and Objectives and identified Key Areas. The Project Team met on February 7 to develop tasks for the Key Areas, Goals and Objectives, and to finalize the Strategic Plan which is being considered by the governing body at their March 27<sup>th</sup> meeting.

## Re-Planning

Keith Hunke, Assistant City Administrator, in consultation with Bill Wocken, City Administrator, Mayor Warford and City Commissioners, and members of the Project Team, has assumed the responsibility for ensuring the Strategic Plan is implemented. While Mr. Hunke may be the staff person “on-point” to ensure the Plan is executed successfully, the effort to accomplish such an undertaking requires serious and substantial “horsepower” from Department Heads and their employees.

Furthermore, the frequency and substance of periodic updates to both the City Commission and City workforce should be established.

Most local governments examine outcomes from the strategic plan on a regular basis, more often than once a year or at the conclusion of the planning cycle (i.e. Operating Budget). By continually monitoring progress, the City of Bismarck and the Project Team can assess whether objectives are likely to be met. When data shows progress is

lagging, managers can adjust their activities or the level of resources invested for a mid-course correction.

In the next iteration of Strategic Planning, possibly in two years, the Mayor and City Commission should carefully and seriously consider expanding the role and involvement of various community stakeholders, including residents, to truly generate an inclusive and collaborative approach to building a stronger Bismarck.

On the following pages are the Vision, Values, Mission Statement, Goals and Objectives created by the Project Team along with the specific actions offered for consideration as tabulated in Key Areas, Goals and Objectives section. Together, these constitute the City of Bismarck Strategic Plan.



## Vision

“Bismarck is a preferred destination place and prosperous community where people enjoy living, learning, working and playing. Our community embraces our rich heritage, economic opportunity and lifelong learning to cultivate a healthy and sustainable environment fostering opportunity for all. We are a dynamic people looking to our future.”

## Values

- **Forward Looking:** We proactively identify needs and opportunities.
- **Diversity:** We embrace a multitude of experiences and cultures for the enrichment of our community.
- **Community Pride:** We uphold high standards of hard work, safety, and cleanliness to maintain and enhance our community.
- **Integrity:** We hold ourselves to be accountable for our words and actions.
- **Environmentally Sound:** We are responsible stewards of the land, the environment and its resources, both man-made and natural.

## Mission

*“To provide high quality public services in partnership with our community to enhance our quality of life.”*

## **KEY AREAS, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **Economic Vitality**

Bismarck will build upon our role as a hub for government, health care, and retail, managing development to attract, retain and create a resilient thriving community.

#### **Goals:**

##### **1. Enhance revitalization efforts for the downtown area.**

###### **Objectives:**

1. Update downtown master plan.
2. Explore funding opportunities and work with developers and partners to explore open space.
3. Lead and explore marketing the Renaissance Zone and core program.

Objective 1. Who: Community Development, MPO, Downtown Business Association, BMDA, consultant, Bis-Man Transit, Forestry, Civic Center, Public Works, Engineering, non-profits, Parking Authority.

Objective 2. Who: Community Development, Downtown Association, property owners, consultant, hospitals, Forestry, Bismarck Parks and Recreation, Engineering.

Objective 3. Who: Downtown Association, Renaissance Zone Authority, BMDA, Community Development, Parking Authority, Bismarck Mandan Chamber of Commerce.

##### **2. Proactively guide growth through partnerships and programs.**

###### **Objectives:**

1. Update growth management plan.
2. Explore strategies to proactively provide public infrastructure.
3. Sustainable neighborhoods and complete streets.

Objective 1. Who: Community Development, Engineering, Public Works, private utilities, Bismarck Parks and Recreation, Bismarck Public Schools, consultant, Board of Realtors, major property owners and developers.

Objective 2. Who: Engineering, Public Works, Bismarck Mandan Chamber of Commerce, Developers, Home builders, Board of Realtors, major property owners and developers.

### **3. Become a destination place.**

Objectives:

1. Establish a public civic square in the downtown area.
2. Create a first class full service convention center.
3. Work with community partners to develop and implement a plan for jointly promoting special events and attractions regionally and nationally.

Objective 1. Who: Civic Center, Budget Committee, Bismarck Mandan Chamber of Commerce, Convention & Visitors Bureau, Hospitality Industry, Downtowners, private property owners.

Objective 2. Who: Convention & Visitors Bureau, ND Tourism, Administration, Civic Center, Hospitality Association, Bismarck Mandan Chamber of Commerce, BMDA

### **4. Become a preferred workplace.**

Objectives:

1. Foster a competitive environment that attracts, retains and motivates a workforce that can deliver quality services and programs to the community that reflects the diversity of the community and provides for the fair and equitable treatment of all.
2. Leverage private investment that results in tax base expansion and living wage job creation.
3. Enhance air service opportunities to attract and maintain the highest possible level of commercial service.
4. Strengthen air service opportunities to include cargo and corporate aviation services.
5. Community arts, culture and recreational opportunities to attract prospective employers and employees.
6. Build on the Community's history, heritage, natural resources and livability to promote Bismarck as a preferred work place.

Objective 1. Who: BMDA, Bismarck Mandan Chamber of Commerce, Higher Education, N.D. Job Service, Human Resource Professionals, City Commission

Objective 2. Who: City Commission, State of N.D., BMDA, Bismarck Mandan Chamber of Commerce

Objective 3. Who: Airport, City Commission, FAA, Commercial Airlines, Bismarck Mandan Chamber of Commerce, BMDA, Congressional delegation, governor, N.D. Petroleum Council, Convention & Visitors Bureau

Objective 4. Who: Corporate Customers, Airport, City Commission, FAA, Commercial Airlines, Bismarck Mandan Chamber of Commerce, BMDA, Congressional delegation governor, ND Petroleum Council, Convention & Visitors Bureau, UPS, Fed Ex, Commercial Cargo Shippers

Objective 5. Who: Symphony, Civic Center, Hospitality Industry, Parks, Zoo, Schools, BMDA, Art Organizations, Bismarck Mandan Chamber of Commerce, Medical Community

Objective 6. Who: State Historical Society, Convention & Visitors Bureau, Bismarck Mandan Chamber of Commerce, Community Cultural Heritage Organizations

**5. Support a comprehensive economic development strategy which results in a vibrant, diverse economy.**

Objectives:

1. Lead an effort with community partners to jointly market the City of Bismarck as a destination.
2. Partner to expand a cohesive economic strategy for our region.
3. Strengthen efforts to develop “home grown” business expansion opportunities.

Objective 1. Who: Convention & Visitors Bureau, BMDA, Bismarck Mandan Chamber of Commerce, Administration, Civic Center, Airport, N.D. State Tourism, Hospitality Association.

Objective 2. Who: BMDA, City Commission, Bismarck Mandan Chamber of Commerce, Burleigh County Commission, Morton County, City of Mandan, ND Job Service

## **Community Character**

Preserve, promote and enhance our community as a clean, safe and healthy place for all to live, with diverse opportunities for arts, culture and recreation.

### **Goals:**

#### **1. Arts and Culture: To be the arts and cultural hub of North Dakota.**

##### **Objective:**

1. Create an entertainment and arts district.
2. Strengthen relationship with United Tribes Technical College (UTTC annual update);
3. Develop city-wide public arts policy;

Objective 1. Who Community Development, Civic Center, Downtowner's, Arts organizations, and Parks & Recreation district.

Objective 2, Who - BAGA, Dakota West Arts Council, City Commission.

Objective 3, Who – Mayor, City Commission, Administration.

#### **2. Safety: Ensure that Bismarck continues to be a safe community.**

##### **Objective:**

1. Ensure appropriate service levels for public safety services as community population grows.
2. Promote, enhance, and increase community based partnerships in crime prevention, fire prevention, and emergency preparedness.
3. Continue development of regional public safety training center.

Objective 1, Who – Police, Fire, Combined Communications, Metro Ambulance, Budget Committee.

Objective 2, Who – Police, Fire, Emergency Management, private security providers, Bismarck Public Schools, BSC, University of Mary, UTTC.

Objective 3: Who – State of ND, Highway Patrol, Police, Fire, Sheriff

### 3. Clean and Attractive: Promote efforts to beautify, preserve and enhance our aesthetically pleasing community.

#### Objective:

1. Support progressive building and zoning code enforcement that encourages attractive and appropriate development;
2. Ensure an appropriate service level for public works services as community population grows.
3. Integrate complete streets standards throughout the community;

Objective 1, Who – Community Development, contractors, Apartment owners association, Home builders association, and Fire Marshal.

Objective 2, Who – Public Works Service Operations, Public Works Utility Operations, Developers, Engineering, and Budget Committee.

Objective 3, Who - Community Development, Engineering, Public Works Service Operations, Forestry, Public Health, Go Bismarck Mandan, Bismarck Transit, and Parks & Recreation district.

### 4. Downtown: To have a vibrant, lively and attractive destination as the heart of the community.

#### Objectives:

1. Increase market-rate housing quantities and availability
2. Implementation of a Quiet Rail Zone
3. Relieve parking problems along the Rosser Avenue corridor between 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and 7<sup>th</sup> Street with the development of a parking structure.
4. Implement a public plaza or public open space along the north side of Broadway Avenue between 5<sup>th</sup> Street and 6<sup>th</sup> Street.
5. Update the Downtown Master Plan.
6. Help facilitate and support collaborative efforts to develop an arts and cultural center.
7. Multimodal transportation opportunities and facilities.

#### Objectives Assignments:

1. Board of City Commissioners, Chamber of Commerce (?), Board of Realtors and Home Builders Association
2. Board of City Commissioners
3. Parking Authority, Downtowners Association, Renaissance Zone Authority, Community Development – Planning Division and Board of City Commissioners
4. Downtowners Association, Renaissance Zone Authority, Community Development – Planning Division and Board of City Commissioners
5. Community Development – Planning Division, Bismarck Arts and Galleries Association (BAGA), Dakota West Arts Council (DWAC), Bismarck-

Mandan Symphony Orchestra, Dakota Stage Limited, Northern Plains Dance Studio and other arts groups, Mayors' Economic Development Advisory Group (MEDAG), Civic Center (manages the Belle Mehus City Auditorium)

6. Community Development – Planning Division: Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), Public Works, Engineering, Bismarck Parks & Rec, Go! Bismarck-Mandan Coalition, Central Dakota Cyclists and Bis-Man Transit

**5. Housing: Create policies and programs that result in a well-maintained diverse housing stock through the community.**

Objectives:

1. Recognize or assess the need for a housing feasibility study to determine the future needs of the community along with implementation strategies.
2. Strengthen communications with the Board of City Commissioners, Community Development, City Engineering and the Bismarck-Mandan Homebuilders Association.
3. Affordable and accessible housing for all ages.

Objectives Assignments:

1. Homeless Coalition, Burleigh County Housing Authority, Homebuilders Association and Bismarck-Mandan Board of Realtors
2. Board of City Commissioners, Community Development, Engineering and Home Builders Association
3. Homeless Coalition, Burleigh County Housing Authority, Homebuilders Association, Bismarck-Mandan Board of Realtors, Pride Inc. and Enable

**6. Health: Our community promotes active, healthy lifestyles.**

Objectives:

1. Formalize the City's support of the Go! Bismarck-Mandan Coalition.
2. Continued support for community-wide wellness awareness efforts.
3. Implement bike lanes throughout the community.
4. Encourage non-motorized means of transportation throughout the community.
5. Promoting locally grown food, farmers' markets and other efforts that encourage healthy lifestyles.

Objectives Assignments:

1. Board of City Commissioners

2. Public Health and Go! Bismarck-Mandan Coalition
  3. Board of City Commissioners
  4. Parks & Rec., Go! Bismarck-Mandan Coalition, Public Health, Central Dakota Cyclists, Community Development – Planning Division (MPO),
  5. Go! Bismarck-Mandan Coalition, Burleigh County Extension Services and Farmers' Market Organizations
- 7. Environmental: We will respect, protect and enhance our community's natural environment.**

**Objectives:**

1. Establish city-wide curbside recycling;
2. Incorporate open space and natural areas into new developments.
3. Ensure adequate public access to Missouri River as community grows.

Objective 1, Who – Public Works Service Operations, Private Waste Haulers, Chamber of Commerce, businesses, large institutions, Dakota Resource Council.

Objective 2, Who - Community Development, Forestry, Parks and Recreation District, Developers, Private land owners, Bismarck Public Schools, Homebuilders Association, Chamber of Commerce.

Objective 3, Who – State of ND, Game and Fish Department, Parks and Recreation District, US Corp of Engineers, Private land owners, Burleigh County Commission, Burleigh County Water Resource Board.

## **Civic Engagement**

Fully realize the talents and positive contributions of public and private entities, community leaders, non-profits and engaged citizens to develop (foster) a community that welcomes everyone by providing them with the opportunity to interact fully.

**Goals:**

- 1. Support and work to strengthen existing partnerships and develop new collaborations within the community.**

**Objectives:**

1. Support opportunities that engage citizens to volunteer time assisting to meet the social needs of the community.



Provide encouragement and leadership to community organizations and coalitions in the community.

2. Create and implement a comprehensive communications plan to encourage informed citizen participation in civic life.
3. Partner with local government's community organizations and the private sector to optimize recovery of effective and affordable services to our citizens.

Objective 1. Who: Churches, private community organizations, Human Relations Committee, Homeless Coalition, Burleigh County Housing Authority.

Objective 2. Who: City Commission, Bismarck Mandan Chamber of Commerce, private community organizations, Service Organizations, Young Professionals.

Objective 3. Who: Administration, Media, Consultant.

Objective 4. Who: MBBM, Bismarck Mandan Chamber of Commerce, Board of Realtors.

## **2. Maintain an environment of open communication that invites the public to participate in decisions.**

### Objective:

1. Develop Methods to incorporate general public input into city commission meetings.
2. Develop and support programs, events, information systems and resources to promote and advance increased civic engagement.

Objective 1. Who: City Commission, Administration

Objective 2. Who: Administration, Trade and interest groups, League of Women Voters, Bismarck Mandan Chamber of Commerce, Dakota Media Access, Boards and Commissions.

## **3. Maintain a continuous strategic planning process to communicate with citizens, progress made toward achieving city strategic goals.**

### Objectives:

1. Implement and continuously evaluate and update the strategic plan to assure that it is current, practical and adaptive to change.
2. Directly align the city budget to the goals identified in the strategic plan.

3. Establish a strategic plan manager to assess and report progress to internal and extended audiences.

Objective 1. Who: Strategic Planning Manager, Administration, Department Heads, City Commission, Project Team.

Objective 2. Who: Administration, City Commission, outside resources.

## **Community Services**

Create and maintain efficient and effective delivery of services valued by our community.

### **Goals:**

- 1. Funding: Provide adequate, sustainable funding to support the services our customers value.**

### Objectives:

1. Maintain a reserve and preserve the City's bond rating.
2. Capital improvements program – make sure it's current & updated and seek other funding services to complete projects in a timely and efficient manner.
3. Audits of fees, charges and revenues to ensure the methods are fair.
4. Ensure that the budget process and the strategic plan support each other.
5. Develop long-term financial forecasts that allow the City to annually identify future revenue & expenditure trends and prepare plans to address anticipated problems in a timely fashion.
6. The City will reevaluate employment policies, practices and compensation plans to enhance its ability to attract, reward and retain top talent.

### Objectives Assignments:

1. Board of City Commissioners, Finance Department and Budget Committee
2. Department Directors and Budget Committee
3. Finance Department and any department that charges for services (Community Development, Public Works, Engineering etc.)
4. Board of City Commissioners and Budget Committee
5. Finance Department in conjunction with other departments as needed
6. Administration and the Change Management Coalition

**2. Collaboration: To collaborate and work with local government entities to maximize the effective delivery of services.**

Objectives:

1. To annually meet with the Bismarck Park Board of City Commissioners to discuss greater cooperation to improve the delivery of services.
2. To annually meet with the Bismarck School District to discuss greater cooperation to improve the delivery of services.
3. To annually meet with the Burleigh County Commission to discuss greater cooperation to improve the delivery of services.
4. To annually meet with the State of North Dakota to discuss greater cooperation to improve the delivery of services.

Objectives Assignments:

1. Board of City Commissioners Administration

**3. Responsiveness: No matter how big the City of Bismarck becomes, we will continue to provide the level of service our community has grown to expect and appreciate.**

Objectives:

1. Monitor service levels.
2. Having a plan that identifies what we need at certain points. *Example: If we add ten lane miles of streets how many additional employees are necessary to maintain said miles?*
3. Establish a foundational gauge to measure the methodology utilized that will determine the necessary time to add employees.
4. Gauges to measure the quality of services provided – surveys, customer responses etc.
5. Establish plans, benchmarks and milestones that support the gauges to measure the quality of services provided
6. Assign staff to ensure the implementation of the strategic plan and follow-up with reporting and progress and goals.
7. Improve access to the City's technology information – research and utilize technology to improve the delivery of services.

Objectives Assignments:

1. Melded into #4 below
2. Melded into #3 below
3. Administration
4. Administration

5. Board of City Commissioners
6. Administration and other resources
7. Technology Plan – ITGC and outside consultation

**4. Infrastructure: We will provide reliable, well-maintained infrastructure with the capacity to support the growth of our community.**

Objectives:

1. Identify appropriate funding sources to enhance the City's Facilities Maintenance Plan.
2. Identify appropriate funding sources to enhance the City's master plans. Currently there are plans for transportation, water & sewer and storm water management.
3. Continue to master plan or upgrade existing infrastructure master plans and develop master plans in areas ones do not currently exist. *Example: sidewalks, ground water-impacted streets, preservation/acquisition of right-of-way etc.*
4. Investigate or explore additional or alternate funding sources.

Objectives Assignments:

1. Facility Manager – Public Works Service Operations
2. Engineering, Public Works Utility Operations and Airport
3. Board of City Commissioners

**5. Emergency Preparedness: The City will coordinate with others to be prepared to respond to emergency situations in a timely, efficient and organized manner.**

Objectives:

1. To develop a comprehensive flood control plan for the community.
2. Regional preparedness center – Police and Fire training center.
3. Continue to provide education for emergency response training.

Objectives Assignments:

1. Board of City Commissioners, Administration and Burleigh County Commission
2. Police Department, Fire Department, Board of City Commissioners and State of North Dakota
3. Police Department, Fire Department, Emergency Manager and Public Health

**KEY AREA: Economic Vitality: Build upon our role as a hub for government, health care, and retail, managing development to attract, retain and create a resilient thriving community.**

**GOAL: Proactively guide growth through partnerships and programs.**

**OBJECTIVES: 1)** Update Growth Management Plan; **2)** Explore strategies to proactively provide public infrastructure; **3)** Incorporate sustainable neighborhoods and complete streets options into existing and proposed developments.

What	Who	When	Status	Comments
Develop the scope of the study to update the Growth Management Plan. Utilize the current Growth Management Plan as a base to guide the scope of work.	Community Development will develop an outline and work with Mayor and city staff to determine final scope.	Late Spring/Early Summer 2012		
Update the Growth Management Plan, incorporate sustainable neighborhoods, and complete street options and include strategies to proactively provide public infrastructure.	Consultant and/or Community Development Department (depending on scope of study) utilizing technical and policy advisory committee structure.	Begin Summer 2012 with completion within 9-12 months.		
Adopt the Updated Growth Management Plan	City Commission.	Spring/Early Summer 2013.		
Implement the Updated Growth Management Plan	City Commission, Community Development, Engineering, Public Works, private developers, consulting engineers, home builders, Bismarck-Mandan Home Builders Association, Parks & Recreation District, Bismarck-Mandan Board of Realtors, Burleigh County Commission and Bismarck Public School District.	Ongoing, following the adoption of the Plan.		

**KEY AREA: Economic Vitality: Build upon our role as a hub for government, health care, and retail, managing development to attract, retain and create a resilient thriving community.**

**GOAL: Become a Preferred Workplace.**

**OBJECTIVE: 1)** Foster a competitive environment that attracts, retains and motivates a workforce that can deliver quality services and programs to the community.

What	Who	When	Status	Comments
Meet with partners to evaluate existing incentives, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Identify collaborative opportunities that bolster existing incentives and develop new incentives.	BMDA, Bismarck Mandan Chamber of Commerce, Higher Education, N.D. Job Service, Human Resource Professionals, City Commission.	Summer 2012		
Develop measures and reporting procedures.	BMDA, Bismarck Mandan Chamber of Commerce, Higher Education, N.D. Job Service, Human Resource Professionals, City Commission.	Summer 2013		

**OBJECTIVE: 2)** Provide a workplace that reflects the diversity of the community and provides for the fair and equitable treatment of all.

What	Who	When	Status	Comments
Gather information on existing community and workplace demographics to identify programs that target potential labor force.	Human Relations Committee, N.D. Job Service, Human Resource Professionals	Fall 2012.		

**OBJECTIVE: 3)** Leverage private investment that results in tax base expansion and living wage job creation.

What	Who	When	Status	Comments
Identify areas where public-private partnerships could meet emerging needs related to growth.	City Commission, State of N.D., BMDA, Bismarck Mandan Chamber of Commerce.	Summer 2012		

**OBJECTIVE: 4)** Enhance air service opportunities to attract and maintain the highest possible level of commercial service.

What	Who	When	Status	Comments
Continue minimum revenue guarantee incentive.	Airport, City Commission, FAA, Commercial Airlines, Bismarck Mandan Chamber of Commerce, BMDA,	Fall 2012		

	Congressional delegation, Governor, N.D. Petroleum Council, Convention & Visitors Bureau.			
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**KEY AREA: Economic Vitality: Build upon our role as a hub for government, health care, and retail, managing development to attract, retain and create a resilient thriving community.**

**GOAL: Become a Preferred Workplace.**

**OBJECTIVE: 5) Strengthen air service opportunities to include cargo and corporate aviation services.**

What	Who	When	Status	Comments
Build on existing partnerships to meet emerging needs related to growth.	Corporate Customers, Airport, City Commission, FAA, Commercial Airlines, Bismarck Mandan Chamber of Commerce, BMDA, Congressional delegation Governor, ND Petroleum Council, Convention & Visitors Bureau, UPS, Fed Ex, Commercial Cargo Shippers.	Fall 2012		

**OBJECTIVE: 6) Build on the community’s arts, culture and recreational opportunities to attract prospective employers and employees.**

What	Who	When	Status	Comments
Develop marketing strategies that emphasize the community’s arts, culture and recreational opportunities.	Hospitality Industry, Parks, Schools, BMDA, Art Organizations, Bismarck Mandan Chamber of Commerce, Medical Community, Convention and Visitor’s Bureau.	Fall 2012		

**OBJECTIVE: 7) Build on the community’s history, heritage, natural resources and livability to promote Bismarck as a preferred work place.**

What	Who	When	Status	Comments
Develop marketing strategies that emphasize the community’s history, heritage, natural resources and livability.	State Historical Society, Convention & Visitors Bureau, Bismarck Mandan Chamber of Commerce, Community Cultural Heritage Organizations.	Winter 2012		



**KEY AREA: Community Character – Preserve, promote and enhance our community as a clean, safe and healthy place for all to live, with diverse opportunities for arts, culture and recreation.**

**GOAL: Be the arts and cultural hub of North Dakota and have a vibrant, lively and attractive destination as the heart of the community.**

**OBJECTIVES: 1)** Create an entertainment and arts district; **2)** Strengthen cultural relationships with United Tribes Technical College; **3)** Develop community arts policy; and **4)** Facilitate and support collaborative efforts to develop an arts and cultural center.

What	Who	When	Status	Comments
Create an arts and entertainment district, strengthen cultural relationships with UTTC and develop a community arts policy.	A committee of stakeholders and a City liaison; consider forming a new committee e.g. the Mayor’s Committee on Arts and Entertainment.	Late spring/early summer 2012		
<b>OBJECTIVES: 5)</b> Relieve parking problems along the Rosser Avenue corridor between 3 <sup>rd</sup> Street and 7 <sup>th</sup> Street with the development of a parking structure; <b>6)</b> Implement a public plaza or public open space along the north side of Broadway Avenue between 5 <sup>th</sup> Street and 6 <sup>th</sup> Street; <b>7)</b> Update the Downtown Master Plan; and <b>8)</b> Help facilitate and support collaborative efforts to develop an arts and cultural center.				
What	Who	When	Status	Comments
Update the downtown master plan to include the identification and implementation strategy for a downtown public square, update design guidelines, relieve current parking problems and address multi-modal transportation opportunities. Funding to be provided by TIF, General Fund or Special Projects Fund	Consultant, with Community Development as the primary liaison and a steering committee to be made up of other staff and downtown stakeholders. The City Commission would consider funding options for the master plan update.	Begin late Spring 2012, with completion in 12 months.		
<b>OBJECTIVE: 9)</b> Implementation of a Quiet Rail Zone				
What	Who	When	Status	Comments
Implement a Quiet Rail Zone through TIF or special assessment funding options.	Renaissance Zone Authority, City Commission, Community Development, Engineering, Finance, Downtown Business Association, Downtown property owners, NDDOT, BNSF Railroad, Federal Rail Administration.	2012, with completion in 18-24 months.		

**KEY AREA: Community Character – Preserve, promote and enhance our community as a clean, safe and healthy place for all to live, with diverse opportunities for arts, culture and recreation.**

**GOAL: Be the arts and cultural hub of North Dakota and have a vibrant, lively and attractive destination as the heart of the community.**

**OBJECTIVE: 10) Increase market-rate housing quantities and availability.**

What	Who	When	Status	Comments
Increase market-rate housing quantities and availability and increase the incentives available to encourage more housing projects in downtown Bismarck through bolstering incentives based on TIF funding.	Renaissance Zone Authority, City Commission, Community Development and the Downtown Business Association.	2012		

**KEY AREA: Community Character – Preserve, promote and enhance our community as a clean, safe and healthy place for all to live, with diverse opportunities for arts, culture and recreation.**

**GOAL: Ensure that Bismarck continues to be a safe community.**

**OBJECTIVE: 1) Ensure adequate public safety service levels as community population grows.**

What	Who	When	Status	Comments
Evaluate and discuss current levels of service and identify resources needed to accommodate growth	Police Chief, Fire Chief, Communications Manager and Budget Committee	By 2013 Department Budget meetings (Summer 2012)		

**OBJECTIVE: 2) Promote, enhance, and increase community based partnerships in crime prevention, fire prevention, and emergency preparedness.**

What	Who	When	Status	Comments
Identify and evaluate existing promotional, marketing, and community outreach partnerships.	Police Chief, Fire Chief, and Emergency Manager	By 2013 Department Budget meetings (Summer 2012)		

**OBJECTIVE: 3) Continue development of regional public safety training center.**

What	Who	When	Status	Comments
Strengthen partnerships and continue supporting Legislative effort to develop regional training center in 2013.	Police Chief, Fire Chief, and City Commission	On-going with emphasis on 2013 Legislative Session		

<b>KEY AREA: Community Services – Create and Maintain efficient and effective delivery of services valued by our community.</b>				
<b>GOAL: Provide adequate, sustainable funding to support the services our customers' value.</b>				
<b>OBJECTIVE: 1) Maintain established fund reserves and preserve the City's Aa1 bond rating.</b>				
<b>What</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Continue support of fund balance policy	City Commission, Budget Committee, and Finance Director	On-going		
<b>OBJECTIVE: 2) Continue to update the City's capital improvements program and seek other funding sources to complete projects in a timely and efficient manner.</b>				
<b>What</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Incorporate existing and new infrastructure master plan items into capital improvements program	City Engineer, Public Works Utility Operations Director, Public Works Service Operations Director, Airport Manager, City Administration, Budget Committee	As soon as possible, no later than 2013 department budget meetings (Summer 2012)		
<b>OBJECTIVE: 3) Analyze and review fees, charges and costs to ensure the methods are fair.</b>				
<b>What</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Complete solid waste utility rate study and consider recommendations. Initiate comprehensive study of fees and charges	Finance Department and any department that charges for service	As soon as possible, no later than 2013 Department Budget meetings (Summer 2012)		
<b>OBJECTIVE: 4) Ensure the budget process and the strategic plan support each other.</b>				
<b>What</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Comments</b>
City Commission accepts strategic plan. Department Heads and Budget Committee incorporate strategic planning goals into budgeting process and department budgets.	City Commission, Budget Committee, and Department Heads	March 2012. No later than 2013 Department Budget meetings (Summer 2012)		

**KEY AREA: Community Services – Create and Maintain efficient and effective delivery of services valued by our community.**

**GOAL: Provide adequate, sustainable funding to support the services our customers’ value.**

**OBJECTIVE: 5)** Develop long-term financial forecasts that allow the City to annually identify future revenue and expenditure trends and prepare plans to address anticipated problems in a timely fashion.

What	Who	When	Status	Comments
Establish long-term financial plans for all major funds	Finance Department in conjunction with other departments as needed	By 2013 Department Budget meetings (Summer 2012)		

**OBJECTIVE: 6)** Continuously reevaluate employment policies, practices and compensation plans to enhance the City’s ability to attract, reward and retain top talent.

What	Who	When	Status	Comments
Implement Workforce Planning Program recommendations	Change Management Coalition and Human Resources Director	On-going		

**KEY AREA: Community Services – Create and Maintain efficient and effective delivery of services valued by our community.**

**GOAL: Provide reliable, well-maintained infrastructure with the capacity to support the growth of our community.**

**OBJECTIVE: 1) Enhance the City’s Facilities Maintenance Plan.**

What	Who	When	Status	Comments
Update facilities maintenance plan to include energy audit recommendations.	Public Works Service Operations Director, Facility Managers.	By 2013 Department Budget meetings (Summer 2012)		
Upgrade facilities maintenance plan to a comprehensive plan that includes all facilities.	Public Works Service Operations Director, Facility Managers.	By 2013 Department Budget meetings (Summer 2012)		

**OBJECTIVE: 2) Continue to upgrade existing infrastructure master plans and develop master plans in areas where ones do not currently exist.**

What	Who	When	Status	Comments
Gather data to identify short and long term goals to prioritize master plan studies.	City Engineer, Public Works Utility Operations Director, Public Works Service Operations Director, Airport Manager, Community Development Director, City Administrator	Spring/Early Summer 2012		
Inventory and evaluate existing master plans to determine status and initiate studies for areas needing updates. Identify areas and initiate development of master plans where no plans exist.	City Engineer, Public Works Utility Operations Director, Public Works Service Operations Director, Airport Manager, Community Development Director, City Administrator	2013 Department Budget meetings (Summer 2012)		
Present Information to City Commission. Incorporate findings into Growth Management Plan	City Engineer, Public Works Utility Operations Director, Public Works Service Operations Director, Airport Manager, Community Development Director, City Administrator, City Commission	Complete in 2013		
Establish group to develop and/or update financial plans for improvements identified in the infrastructure master plans.	Finance Director, Budget Committee, City Commission	As soon as possible, no later than 2013 Department Budget meetings (Summer 2012)		

**KEY AREA: Civic Engagement: Fully realize the talents and positive contributions of public and private entities, community leaders, non-profits and engaged citizens to foster a community that welcomes everyone by providing them with the opportunity to interact fully.**

**GOAL: Maintain a continuous strategic planning process to communicate with citizens on the progress made toward achieving strategic goals.**

**OBJECTIVE: 1)** Implement and continuously evaluate and update the strategic plan to assure that it is current, practical and adaptive to change.

What	Who	When	Status	Comments
Implement, evaluate and update strategic plan.	Strategic Plan Manager, Administration, Department Heads, City Commission, Project Team.	Quarterly updates to City Commission, Annual updates before yearly budget preparation, Revisit entire Strategic Plan every three years		

**OBJECTIVE: 2)** Directly align the city budget to the goals identified in the strategic plan.

What	Who	When	Status	Comments
Align the budget and the strategic plan.	Budget Committee, Administration, City Commission, Strategic Plan Manager, Department Heads.	Quarterly updates to City Commission, Annual updates with budget preparation		

**OBJECTIVE: 3)** Establish a strategic plan manager to assess and report progress to internal and external audiences.

What	Who	When	Status	Comments
Establish a strategic plan manager.	City Commission.	Upon adoption of the Strategic Plan		

## **Meeting Summary – February 10-11, 2011**

### **What Project Team members envision about Strategic Planning**

- Reactive
- Sustainable
- Comprehensive and Integrated
- Able to be implemented
- Measurable

### **Potential Barriers to Change**

- Time
- Lack of City employees
- Lack of formal prioritization
- Funding
- City Commission
- Change as a threat/imposition
- Citizen expectations
- Resistance

### **Role of Planning Team**

- To participate
- Aggregator of content
- Filter
- Advocate
- Peer support
- Integrator and disruptor
- Success of plan going forward

### **Role of Mejorando Group**

- Facilitator
- Course corrector
- Expertise
- Push the project team
- Resource
- Stimulate and Energize
- Organizer
- Liaison



## Community Stakeholders

- Bismarck Mandan Chamber of Commerce
- Bismarck Mandan Young Professionals Network
- Bismarck Mandan Development Association
- Bismarck Public Schools
- Bismarck State College
- United Tribes Technical College
- University of Mary
- Rasmussen College
- Burleigh County
- Bismarck Parks and Recreation District
- Medcenter One
- St. Alexius Medical Center
- MDU Resources, Inc.
- Basin Electric Power Cooperative
- Bismarck Mandan Homebuilders Association
- Bismarck-Mandan Board of Realtors
- Ruth Meier's Hospitality House
- Downtown Business Association
- Bismarck Mandan Convention & Visitors Bureau
- Dakota Media Access
- North Dakota League of Cities
- Burleigh County Housing Authority
- American Red Cross West Dakota Chapter

- Bismarck Salvation Army
- Capital Facility Management
- Consensus Council
- Bismarck Chaplaincy
- Target Store
- Wal-Mart North
- Wal-Mart South
- Central Market Bismarck
- Dan's Super Market
- Kirkwood Mall Office
- Gateway Mall Office
- Aetna Service Center
- Coventry Management Services
- Unisys Corporation
- Sykes Enterprises, Inc.
- Missouri Valley Family YMCA
- Bismarck Art & Galleries Association
- Bismarck Tribune
- KFYP-TV
- KXMB-TV
- Human Relations Committee

***Attachment B***

## City of Bismarck Group Meetings – SWOT Analysis March 2011

### Overall Themes

A review was conducted of all input submitted to determine overall themes. Consistent with effective strategic planning, it is essential to not segregate the input submitted but instead aggregate it to provide a depiction of how the participants responded.

The order of the items is alphabetical.

#### Strengths

- City leadership
- Clean community
- Friendly people
- Healthcare providers
- Low crime rate
- Low energy costs
- Missouri River
- Performing Arts & Culture
- Recreational opportunities
- Schools
- State Capital
- Strong economy
- Transportation

#### Weaknesses

- Aging population of community
- Aging workforce of City
- Bad drivers
- Dedicated funding source for roadway improvements
- Downtown
- Lack of affordable housing
- Lack of child/day care providers
- Lack of community gathering places
- Lack of resources available for recycling
- Low wages/ lack of good paying jobs
- Resistance to change
- Shortage of qualified employers

- Transportation
- Weather
- Young people moving away

**Opportunities**

- Collaboration among governments
- Economy – jobs, manufacturing and skilled labor
- Energy development
- Green practices
- Missouri River
- Northern Plains Commerce Center
- Public gathering places
- Vibrant downtown

**Threats**

- Aging demographics
- Complacency
- Federal budget cuts
- Growth of city without adding staff and equipment
- Impacts from oil rush on crime and social services
- National economy
- Price of gas

**Future of Bismarck**

- Clean
- Continuing to grow
- Energy leader
- Diverse economy
- Green
- High paying jobs
- Innovative
- Safe

## **City Employees**

### **Strengths**

- Low crime
- Educational opportunities for youth
- Recreation opportunities
- Parks system
- Excellent Public Works Department
- Excellent Police Dept.
- Youth activities
- Economy
- Supportive City Commission
- Clean
- Healthy environment
- Friendly people
- Business friendly
- Diverse performing arts
- Vibrant downtown during day
- Promotes tree planting
- Health care options
- Parks and Recreation
- Clean
- Low crime
- Good local economy
- School – geographical distribution of schools
- Opportunities for higher education
- River, natural attractions
- Hospitals and medical facilities
- Good working relationship between city, businesses and residents.
- State capital.
- Hub of services.
- Facilities for elderly.
- Good opportunities for entertainment.
- Shopping
- Youth activities
- Hunting and fishing.
- Transportation
- Wind as a natural resource
- Good employers and access to good employees.
- Low energy costs.
- Good civic leadership.
- Cost of housing.
- Infrastructure
- History of growth

- Economic stability
- Strong school system
- Low crime rate
- Citizen access to public meetings
- Fairly safe
- Increasing diversity
- River and walking trails
- Low unemployment
- Active arts community
- Variety of arts available
- Concerned citizens
- Close relationship with agricultural community
- Strong leadership on boards and committees
- Young Professionals Network
- Medical services
- Friendly people
- Low pollution
- Beautiful place
- Helpful people
- Parental involvement
- Services for at-risk youth
- Low amount of homelessness
- City workforce
- K-12 education system
- Recreation
- Safety
- Stable employment
- Sustainable growth
- Good economy
- City customer service
- Low unemployment
- Good work ethic
- Good music education available
- Low crime rate
- Help each other – neighborly
- Clean, pride in ownership
- Green space
- Size of community
- Growth of industry
- Positive City Commission
- Healthcare providers
- Diverse economy
- City government employee benefits
- Recreational opportunities

**Weaknesses**

- Growing city with limited resources
- Increase in traffic congestion
- Events
- Lack of youth
- Recycling, green practices
- Downtown cleanliness
- Housing stock available for single people
- Lack of community gathering places
- Price of gas
- No dance halls
- Increase in violent crime
- Lack of manufacturing jobs
- Lack of good paying jobs
- Lack of homeless shelters and services, especially for families
- Overcrowding of schools
- Urban sprawl
- Bad drivers
- Lack of bike paths
- Lack of daycare centers
- More boat ramps
- Planning and transportation for new development
- Negative attitudes towards mass/public transit
- Nothing for college aged kids and younger to do.
- Communication among city departments.
- Growth of better paying jobs to keep young people here.
- Wages and low paying jobs.
- Implementing programs but not maintaining or updating them.
- Same city resources though community has grown.
- Utilization of commerce center.
- Not lots of resources for recycling.
- Civic Center not drawing large events.
- Automobile dependent culture.
- Accountability of city administration.
- City's performance evaluation process.
- Major retail chains.
- Job descriptions too general for different departments.
- Condition of water and wastewater facilities.
- Educating public.
- Fees for use of civic center.
- High property taxes.
- Lack of acceptance of alternative lifestyles
- Resistance to change

- Low wages
- Lack of ethnic diversity
- Lack of policy to guide new development, specifically sidewalks, bike paths, local shopping, etc.
- Public transportation
- Image
- Ride bikes to work
- Downtown parking
- Limited awareness about growing homelessness
- Limited recycling options
- Childcare options
- Affordable housing
- Access to affordable medical care
- Access to healthy foods
- High gas prices
- Acceptance of unhealthy cultural norms
- High percentage of obese kids and adults
- Difficult to change social norms
- Isolated location
- Lack of diversity
- Lack of producing economy – products instead of services
- Lack of concerts for people under 30 years of age
- Working with youth
- Lack of large facilities
- Aging population
- Services for homeless
- Affordable housing
- High paying jobs
- Cost of living
- Traffic and aging infrastructure
- Bad drivers
- Funding of roadway improvements
- Reactive vs. Proactive
- Lack of trust among employees and management, employees and community and employees and City Commission
- Lack of interaction with City Commission
- Lack of executive education among department directors
- Lack of follow through by City organization

### **Opportunities**

- Incentives for public transportation
- Vacant buildings – Bobcat, Home Depot
- Incorporate green space into new developments
- Non-motorized transportation options especially in downtown area



- Green practices with new development
- Incentives for recycling
- Adding city staff and equipment to deal effectively with growth.
- City more proactive instead of reactive to new development.
- Efficiency of departments (i.e. snow plowing) and impact on traffic operations.
- Usage of arts centers
- Low speed vehicles
- Street Department employees working at landfill during community clean up weeks takes away from their other services.
- Lack of school nurses.
- Going green.
- Preparing for growth and associated challenges.
- Community's work ethic should be publicized.
- Decent fairgrounds.
- Assistance for certain hobby enthusiasts (woodworking, welding, photography, etc.)
- Commerce Center for economic development.
- Common gathering spots downtown.
- Theater for school music groups.
- Different modes of transportation.
- Another airline carrier.
- More green space, livable community
- Young people driving more change
- City-County collaboration
- Diverse economy
- Technology for green work environment
- Fostering relationship among ethnic groups
- Establishing a vibrant downtown
- More city employee engagement and participation
- Considering current things when creating new
- Business growth
- Growth in higher education
- Impact of oil fields
- More emphasis on area farmers and buying local
- Keep environment clean
- Work collaboratively among agencies and city
- Be proactive
- Improve and educate on emergency preparedness
- State owned refinery
- Appearance of gateway corridors
- National leaders and innovator of coal, wind and oil

**Threats**

- Price of fuel
- Crime – violent and drug-related.
- Lower salaries.
- Aging population
- People working longer.
- National debt.
- Condition of infrastructure.
- Younger employees in Street Department don't like that type of work.
- Contributions by city employees towards monthly health insurance premium.
- Distrust of city government.
- Infrastructure of water and wastewater systems.
- Police staffing.
- River traffic.
- Invasive pests to natural resources.
- Traffic and lack of adequate roadways.
- Quality of new streets.
- Property tax funding for Police Department.
- Attitudes by developers towards Smart Growth practices.
- Low bid purchasing practices by City.
- City is more of a follower instead of a leader.
- Lack of focus on employee safety.
- Lack of equipment training for city employees.
- Price of fuel
- Flooding
- Weather
- Very little manufacturing jobs.
- Lack of diversified economy.
- Oil field as an employer.
- Health insurance providers.
- Limited healthcare providers.
- Inflation
- Losing and attracting good city employees from wages.
- Privatization of government services.
- Going out of state to recruit businesses to deliver city services.
- Repairing Bismarck Expressway.
- Federal budget cuts.
- Going after public pensions.
- National debt.
- Gap between old and young.
- Price of fuel
- Aging workforce
- Staffing of emergency services to keep up with growth
- Aging demographics

- Fear and opinions of a more diverse population
- Retirement savings of aging demographic.
- Urban sprawl and leapfrog development
- Poor economy outside state
- Over-development
- Lack of affordable housing
- Federal aid
- Survival of non-profits
- Viability of continued presence of United Tribes College
- Impacts of drugs and alcohol
- Loss of medical insurance
- Infrastructure
- Lack of grade levels for city jobs
- Aging population of city employees
- Growth of city without adding staff and equipment
- Employee apathy
- Exodus of talented young employees
- Change
- Attrition of city workforce

### **Future of Bismarck**

- Vibrant
- Efficient
- High quality high paying jobs
- Safe
- Green
- More affordable housing
- Innovative
- Moving forward
- Population – type, jobs, economy
- Younger people
- Maintain appropriate priorities
- Hiring people from outside community for promotional positions.
- Attract higher paying jobs.
- Attract higher paying businesses.
- Smaller version of Rochester, Minnesota as a place to be.
- Forward thinking and opening minded and consistent with this approach.
- Diversity – economy, people, religions, etc.
- Transportation hub
- Lead, instead of follow
- Safe
- On-site fitness center for city employees
- Awesome people
- Build upon and maintain quality of life

- Medical systems passes Mayo clinic
- Arts Center of Northern Plains
- Embrace change
- Host a National Energy Policy Process
- Embraces diversity
- Leaders and innovators
- Retain North Dakotanness
- End homelessness
- Be ready for anything including the future
- Prepared for variety of hazardous materials
- Funding sources

**City Department Directors, March 18<sup>th</sup>, 8 a.m.**

**Strengths**

- High quality employees
- Financially secure
- Departments operate with professional standards
- Good inter-department cooperation
- Capital Improvement Plan
- High level customer service
- Services to those who can't afford it
- Safe community
- Water supply
- High level of transparency and accessibility of city government
- Excellent education system
- Growing community
- Recreational opportunities
- Cultural opportunities
- Good infrastructure
- Responsive
- Functional downtown
- Center for medical services
- Regional location
- State Capital
- Strong economy
- Clean environment
- Good transportation
- Progressive
- Good political leadership by elected officials
- School nurses
- Open, friendly people willing to help
- Good connection between city and community groups
- Cheap energy prices
- Interest in downtown redevelopment
- Missouri River
- Active community
- Ability to handle emergencies
- Regional law enforcement
- Regional economic center
- Energy development in region
- City well layed out and planned
- Able to change social norms
- Own and manage solid waste facility
- Conservative
- Supportive business community

- Low unemployment
- Steady and upward growth
- Diverse medical solutions
- Strong airport with record numbers

**Weaknesses**

- Strengthen emergency medical system
- Lack of general community involvement
- Working relationship with County
- Unsavory characters
- Increase in homelessness and related services
- Conservatism and biases
- Resistance to change
- Lack of school nurses
- Challenging climate
- Underemployment
- Conservative approach to finances
- Under active and overweight population
- Affordable housing
- Staffing not keeping up with growth
- Lack of diversity
- Acceptance of diversity
- Lack of public education about environmental issues
- Long term financing plan for roads
- Lack of population
- Substantial unfunded mandates
- Reactive instead of proactive
- Environmental and cultural image
- Lack of openness
- Communications and coordinating among city departments
- Downtown
- Centralized decision making within city organization
- Lack of manufacturing
- Composition of large employers
- Losing young people; out migration
- Aging of city workforce

**Opportunities**

- Strategic Planning process
- Government cooperation
- Redevelopment of downtown
- Healthier community
- State of regional economy

- Large manufacturers relocation
- Greener community
- Energy development
- Use of new technology
- Status of State...
- Room for growth
- Strong foundation for business development
- Utilities for new businesses
- Northern Plains Commerce Center
- Cargo growth opportunities at airport
- Availability of educated workforce
- Use of Missouri River
- Available wealth
- Oil as a resource – refinery, operations, etc.
- Develop agricultural sector
- Economy as a source to finance improvements
- To change social norms

### **Threats**

- Anti-tax political climate
- Federal aid
- Demographics
- People moving in with greater needs
- Increase in regulations
- Missouri River silt accumulation
- Advancing city employees with increasing expectations
- Rising cost of infrastructure improvements and maintenance
- Retention of city employees
- Sustaining high quality customer service
- Erosion of local control
- Changing social norms cost money
- Public pension reform
- City health insurance premium contributions
- Cost of fuel and energy
- Lack of adequate correctional institution in region
- State of national economy
- Lack of local resources for homeless and mentally challenged
- Rapidly growing technology
- Technology-related criminal activities
- Funding city government
- Lack of understanding by taxpayers about how government operates
- Lack of individual personal responsibility
- On-line commerce

- Non-native species impact to environment
- Unprepared for environmentally related issues

**Bismarck's Future**

- Leaner, more active people working and playing
- Regional center for commerce and recreation
- Smart growth
- Good place for people to live
- Sustainability
- More competition and lower costs
- Build on River Center idea
- Destination – live and recreate
- Volunteerism
- Encourage community involvement
- Clean image



**Public Meeting, March 17, 1 p.m.  
(businesses, non-profits, higher ed, etc.)**

**Strengths**

- Prosperity
- Diversity of economy
- City – long range plans in place of land, transportation, etc.
- Safety
- Low unemployment
- Trickle down effects from state prosperity
- Low cost of living
- City leadership
- Excellent education at all levels
- Strong medical community
- Partnership between education providers at all levels
- Resources and low cost of water, energy
- Missouri River
- Relatively low taxes
- Recreational opportunities
- Strong work ethic
- Capital city
- Airport and air transport access
- Abundance of arts organizations
- Strong business community that support non-profits
- Double digit population growth
- How well nonprofits work together
- By interstate highways
- Excellent media resources
- Northern Plains Commerce Center
- Quality infrastructure – water, sewer, etc.
- Many recreational opportunities
- Diverse parks and recreation outlets
- Great people
- Relative cost of utilities
- Good access to city leaders
- Large volume of independent business owners
- 9<sup>th</sup> best investment in real estate
- Favorable national and international publicity
- Public transportation
- Cooperation with Mandan
- Range of non-profit service providers
- Positive attitude
- High tolerance for risk taking

**Weaknesses**

- Range of air carriers
- Lack of diversity
- Relative high cost of living
- Relatively high taxes
- Medical District parking
- Distance to large population centers
- Racism and intolerance
- Siberian stereotype
- North-South transportation
- Potholes
- Lack of a Fine Arts Center
- Lack of childcare providers
- Average Per Capita Income
- Shortage of qualified employees in IT, management, accounting, medical, technical skills
- Speed of growth
- Shortage of industrial zoned property
- City's reliance on County to handle social services
- Young people moving away
- Bringing back young people
- Lack of entertainment arts and outlets
- Lack of communication between non-profits and businesses
- Shortage of entry level housing
- Hiddenness of homelessness problem
- Downtown development
- Acknowledge community is changing and future is coming
- Public transportation
- Slow adopter
- Speed at which we move
- Lack of open space for development
- Programs, services and facilities for seniors
- Green space
- Recycling
- Complacency
- Gang activity and drug use

**Opportunities**

- Financial wherewithal to promote growth
- Continue to capitalize on prosperity and publicity
- Ensure childcare providers are available
- New opportunities in downtown – restaurants, shopping, services, etc.
- Public gathering places

- Review plans from past to determine future
- Creating a sense of place
- Lower poverty level and impact on homelessness
- Missouri River as a resource
- Embrace and celebrate diversity and inclusiveness
- More 4 year degree programs
- Technology
- Higher education
- Significant energy opportunities
- Housing availability
- Low income and working class people
- Nonprofits and businesses talking and partnering
- Bismarck and Mandan working together for efficiencies
- Financial inequity between Bismarck and Mandan
- Urban revitalization
- 2<sup>nd</sup> YMCA
- Cover on the bowl
- Helping process change
- NP Commerce Center
- Learn from other communities

### **Threats**

- Federal government budget cuts
- Boom-Bust cycles
- Technology and outsourcing
- Lack of critical thinking
- Lack of spending power by young people
- Agriculture boom
- Time and trends
- School population and class size
- EPA
- Corps of Engineers
- Price of fuel
- Complacency
- Access by small businesses to capital
- Education process regarding trends
- Jobs and media publicity
- Mother Nature
- Legislature
- Fund raising by non-profits

**Bismarck's Future**

- A destination city
- A commercial hub
- Contingent upon sharing of information and who's best resource to deliver it
- Downtown is a busy with medical services, entertainment, walkways, and family fun
- Healthiest city in America
- Leader in energy innovation and related services
- Grandchildren can grow up here
- Center of education
- Safe community
- Clean
- One stop shop for social services and no stigma attached to those using services.
- International city

**Public Meetings - Citizens**

**Strengths**

- Friendly and non-confrontational
- Great parks system
- Good transportation
- Multi-talented community
- Sense of community
- Safe town
- Rich cultural community
- Good schools
- Lifelong learning opportunities
- Great place to raise a family
- Well respected
- Brink of something....
- Good hospitals
- Strong economy
- Agriculture driven
- Lots for seniors to do
- Small in size
- Conservative
- Great concert hall
- Strong business community
- Recreational opportunities
- Healthy and active
- Performing arts groups collaboration
- Higher education opportunities

- Non-profits
- Young people staying and returning to Bismarck
- Strong labor force
- Good city leaders who look forward
- Diverse economy
- Capital city
- Decent airport
- Small community
- Non-partisan, working together as a community
- Downtown has potential
- Aesthetically beautiful
- River
- Access to hunting, fishing and the outdoors
- Secondary educational opportunities
- Job opportunities
- Clean
- Safe
- Accessible local government and awareness by public
- Performing Arts Center
- Destination for people who live in rural communities
- Urban Harvest
- Parks and Recreation system
- Sports complexes
- Bus service and public transportation
- Small and growing
- Summers
- Low crime
- Activities for kids
- Healthcare
- Outlets for the Arts

**Weaknesses**

- Isolated
- Winters
- Great place to raise a family
- Downtown as a draw
- Museum
- High property taxes
- Conservative and thrifty
- Entry level housing
- Streets and accessibility for bike paths, etc.
- No green space downtown
- Sustainable arts venue
- Meth, drugs, alcohol, ...

- Indoor playground and neutral gathering place for families
- Arboretum
- Aging infrastructure
- Lack of diversity
- No art house cinema
- Weather
- Downtown
- Undeveloped areas of downtown
- New residential opportunities for single people
- Economically feasible occupations in the arts
- Public gathering place for music and farmers market
- Lack of industry – manufacturing
- Lack of smaller, more creative businesses
- Population density
- Urban sprawl
- Lack of bike paths
- Bad drivers
- Lack of airline carriers
- Lack of curbside recycling
- Business attitude towards environment
- Closed minded to new ways of thinking and doing things
- Afraid of change
- Lack of daycare providers
- Lack of qualified employees
- Lack of skilled, technical employees

**Opportunities**

- Green space downtown
- Economic opportunities for growth
- Reuse of Bobcat and Home Depot facilities
- Indoor playground and gathering places
- Expand arts and science facility
- Museum
- Downtown
- Land by BSC available for development
- Riverfront development
- Village concept and clustered development
- Recycling
- Capital City
- State bank
- NP Commerce Center
- Manufacturing businesses
- Grown downtown area
- Public/town square

- Green/open spaces, including bike paths, incorporated into new development
- BSC becoming four-year university
- Retaining college age people
- Utilize Bell Maze for young performing artists
- New venue for performing arts center
- Movie theater downtown
- Passenger rail travel
- Opportunities for quiet rail
- Technology – jobs, commerce, etc.
- Individual neighborhoods
- Access to purchase locally grown food
- Value-added agriculture

### **Threats**

- Nuclear fallout
- Economic collapse
- Oil activity and price of gas
- Downside of oil rush hiring
- Online marketplace
- Trends
- Increasing population and impacts on social programs and services
- Illegal immigration
- Spending money
- Low salaries
- Stressed families
- NAFTA
- Air transportation
- Increase in diversity
- Fear of change
- Oil boom
- Growing too fast
- Being too lucrative to outsiders
- Aging population
- Environmental impacts from growth and oil rush
- Online purchasing/marketplace
- Two Wal-Marts in town
- Technology and impacts on lifestyle and civic engagement
- Opposition to redevelopment of downtown

### **Bismarck's Future**

- Utopia
- People actively involved in the community

- A peaceful place to live
- Continuing to grow
- Art Mecca of North Dakota
- Multitude of places for families in Winter
- Draw visitors for the arts
- Salary Center
- A little weirder
- More opportunities for personal development
- Design center
- Music center
- River related opportunities for development and recreation
- Public square
- Thriving downtown – artsy, restaurants, entertainment, etc.
- Campus housing downtown
- Potential
- Connected walkways
- Medical clinic for low income people
- Green city – community and businesses
- Wind as a resource
- Look out for public school teachers

**City Commission, March 25<sup>th</sup>, 11:30 a.m.**

**Strengths**

- People
- Business leaders
- Education leaders
- Access to healthcare
- Natural resources
- Air service
- Heritage
- Clean
- Schools
- Parks and Recreation
- Arts and Culture
- Experienced city department directors
- Public safety
- Safe community
- Balanced economy
- Healthy – physically and economically
- Health conscious



- Accessible government
- High level of trust
- Dynamic young professionals
- Center of state government
- Financially well off
- National spotlight
- Generous with time and money
- Great faith
- Family oriented
- Articulate and engaged Mayor
- Access to continuing education
- Public access TV
- Growing downtown
- Not broke

### **Weaknesses**

- Heritage
- Small town
- New City Commission
- Ok with status quo
- Growing young
- Capital City
- Geographical positioned for oil boom
- Stress on city services from oil rush
- Racist culture
- Getting message out to residents about price for quality of life from government
- New development and loss of neighborhood character
- Private sector investment related to being in a capital city
- Individual health
- Access to childcare
- Low wages

### **Opportunities**

- Oil boom and other activities in western part of State
- Become Energy Center
- Higher educational programs
- Growing your own
- Defining role of city government
- Civic Center
- Geographic location
- Timing perfect for creating idyllic environment for which to attract and retain talent.
- Unleash potential of young people.

- Establish mentoring programs.
- Cultural heritage
- Missouri River
- Proximity to Black Hills and western part of state
- Collaborating with other governments and service providers.
- Access to transportation

### **Threats**

- Oil rush
- Land locked for industrial development
- Reduction in federal assistance
- Neighborhood togetherness
- Health
- Mounting costs for roadway improvements
- National economy
- Entitlement thinking
- Complacency
- Defining the role of city government
- Aging population
- NIMBY (Not-In-My-Backyard)
- Sacrifice

### **Bismarck's Future**

- Good to Great
- Permanently on the Map
- All people are welcome – retirees choose to retire here and keep working, young people who leave return home
- Cutting edge of technology
- Walkable community
- Great place to hang out
- Wonderful schools
- Laid back thriving community
- Character

## Comments submitted to City's Web site and Social Media – March, April, and November 2011

- Going forward, Mayor Warford, who let Bobcat company leave, spent millions of taxpayer dollars on the NPCC, should resign immediately. This would be the first best step in moving Bismarck forward. Count our losses at the Commerce Center, and recruit businesses with good paying, (\$20.00/hr plus benefits) union jobs to this community. The fast food industry jobs do not and will no keep this city afloat.
- Bismarck needs to develop a commercial area, restaurants, coffee shops, ice cream shops, bars, hotels etc. along the river; boardwalk type atmosphere. There's got to be a way to do that, and keep the tranquility, and "outdoorsy" feel to the area. There's a-lot of potential in that area!
- I think on-street parking as a cause of "uglification" of Bismarck and its downtown and high school environs is something that should attract the attention of planners. When I go around Bismarck on weekdays, and look down a street like mine, East Avenue B, there are parked cars as far as I can see. Some intersections are actually dangerous because of parked cars making it difficult for motorists trying to move across a street or avenue from a stop sign and it is often necessary to poke the front of your car well into an intersection to see if the way is clear. We all know it is very costly to build parking garages, and that employees and high school students simply will not take a bus or walk to work or to school for a variety of reasons, but the resulting visual blight is bad for Bismarck.
- I believe there needs to be more places for people to go during the winter months. I have two little boys and during the cold winter months there are not many places to go and run off some energy. We tend to go to Gateway Mall and go to their play center. A lot of parents and kids use that area. I think it would be wonderful if the city had an inside park. I live very close to the Four Seasons Golf Dome and I think that it would be wonderful to have a place like that, that is an inside park with trees, actual playground equipment, a walking trail where parents could push their kids in strollers or kids could ride their bikes, older people could walk. There could be picnic tables and swings. I believe it would appeal to young and old alike. Thank you for allowing us to comment on what our city could do to improve our image.
- I would like to see Bismarck evolve culturally to become a destination that includes a thriving arts community! With thoughtful planning which includes funding and support of the existing arts organizations such as Dakota West Arts Council (DWAC), Bismarck Art Galleries Association (B.A.G.A.) and by providing the funding and support systems necessary to develop a Community Arts Center. This center would be a central location providing performance space, working studio spaces for the visual arts and a gallery that would have exhibitions of local artist. A professional environment that would support up and coming visual artists, musicians, and stage and dance performers...ALL in one place with

classes available, and commercial space for selling art, and much more. Other communities have done similar projects successfully. Vision and open mindedness is the key to the future. ART is food for the soul and the mind.

- Government has become too large and spending needs to be slowed to levels of 3 years ago. Taxpayers cannot keep providing all of the increases that are wished for by government employees.
- Any new initiatives should be undertaken by private business. Government is already involved in too many things and needs to slow spending. No new items should be paid for by the taxpayer and current spending should be reduced.
- I would really like to see some sort of location or locations downtown with green space to allow people a place to hold events or even just relax. I think what would have to occur is people deciding that a certain location (or more than one) was worth more to the community as a small park than as yet another parking lot or building. Currently, it seems as if, except for certain occasions, downtown Bismarck becomes deserted after 5:30 PM and on weekends. I think having more green space would help, especially in the summer, to entice people to stay downtown or come back downtown for evening entertainment, shopping, etc
- In an era of online shopping and big box stores, shopping malls are at risk of becoming obsolete. To remain relevant, Kirkwood Mall has some work to do and it would behoove city leaders to keep Kirkwood viable as well for the sake of the health of the local economy. Therefore, I propose a partnership between Kirkwood Mall, Bismarck Parks and Rec and other private partners to renovate the north entrance of the mall. Tear down the old travel agency, build lots of sky lights, maybe even a big fireplace. However, the new area should be, above all things, a public gathering space that features an awesome indoor playground. Bismarck desperately needs a really good indoor playground. We have so many wonderful outdoor playgrounds, but they are only usable a few months of the year. Parents need a place for their kids to run off steam so they go to bed easily at night. It would make Bismarck a healthier community. And wouldn't it be great for the local economy if parents could even drop their kids off at the playground and get some shopping done? It's the IKEA concept. Drop your kids off so they can play with supervision while you shop. I think it could be called "Play School." There are so many wonderfully designed play products out there. One of my favorites for indoor playgrounds is [www.cedarworks.com](http://www.cedarworks.com). I don't know if that is sturdy enough for lots of public use, however, it could serve as an inspiration!
- Work more with the City of Mandan.
- Regional hub in the upper midwest for services related health care, light manufacturing, accounting services and like businesses. By attracting like minded industries, the businesses Bismarck attracts and retains can also work collaboratively to attract employees and find synergy to grow their own operations. I hope we don't go down the same road of promoting business opportunities to relocate to our fair city because of low wages. We, as a city, needs to attract businesses to relocate because of our talented work force, low crime rates, excellent public school system, clean environment, recreational opportunities and low cost of doing business (energy inputs, taxes,etc). 2. A number of factors make it difficult in the economy we are dealing with right now.

However, I believe it is a perfect time to discuss with businesses how they can save money by relocating to Bismarck due to the number of factors I mentioned above. The key to the relocation MUST be how the business can save money by relocating to Bismarck. Another factor is to review how developments are being completed and assessed specials for roads, sewers, lights etc.... I would like to see a change in philosophy by adding the cost of the special assessment into the price of the home or find a way to reduce those costs for a new development. If we are to continue growing as a city there needs to be a shift of the burden somehow. Third - street improvements need to be made soon. It is rare to find a left protected turn signal in this town. Traffic congestion is becoming a problem and it detracts from the experience. I suggest adding turn lanes into some of the busier roads e.g. cars go around someone who is turning into the Northbrook Mall. the busiest street in Bismarck but NO TURN LANES - that is really unbelievable. Continue enhancing downtown area is another objective that should be continued.

- I would like to see improvements made to Bismarck's Municipal Ballpark. In my opinion, it is the least fan friendly ballpark out of all of the Class "A" cities (Fargo, GF, Williston, Minot, Mandan, Dickinson, Jamestown). Improvements to the seating, playing surface, dugouts, concession stands, bathrooms at the ballpark would benefit all of the area high schools and colleges that utilize the facility as well as the summer Babe Ruth and American Legion baseball programs. I believe improvements to the ballpark will draw more fans and events to the ballpark.
- As a longtime supporter of independent businesses over chain retail stores, I would love to see more put into the revitalization of downtown Bismarck. And while we all are enjoying the Toasted Frog and Blarney, downtown is more than just nightlife. A thriving, artistic culture paired with niche retail and GREEN SPACE would be fabulous!!!
- City needs to continue to draw traffic to Bismarck as a Medical and Shopping Center for a 250 mile range. To do that we need to continue to cultivate our retail market place. Retail will continue to find Bismarck as its future home if we continue to grow sales in this market area. How do we do that? Several ways:  
1) Bring our civic center back up to speed as a premier location for conventions, business conferences and events. To do that, we need to add a kitchen, meeting rooms and a higher quality hotel in the immediate vicinity of the Center. 2) We are considered one of the very best small metro areas to live with good job growth and the median income moving up nicely. To keep that growth moving forward we need to continue a proactive City attitude that includes a business friendly planning department and engineering department. We need to continue to fund Economic Development (our growth backbone) through the BMDA and Vision Fund. 3) The City needs to get out of the real estate business and also, needs the commerce center producing jobs and sales. Let's get the price in line to attract investors/buyers/builders/New business. The Center is an investment in our future growth not a profit center for our current government. Sell that land! 4) Help the medical community including the retirement services industry to grow and prosper here. 5) Promote Bismarck as a center for all professionals Bankers,

Attorneys, Accountants, Stock Brokers, Real Estate Developers, etc. to want to move to and ply their trades.

- Discard the idea that Bismarck has to take tax \$ to attract investment. Keep funding BMDA but don't find ways to take tax dollars to subsidize individual businesses. Sunset TIF districts. Its appalling that they can accumulate cash and use it as they have. Yes downtown is getting better but government selecting uses is not effective. For Bismarck to really prosper, funds should be spent to support K-12. Our schools are not bad but they can be much better. Don't take money from schools (TIF funds) from schools to finance making downtown prettier. Also, keep funding Parks and Recs. More trails, more nature, more activities ads to quality of life which will help offset our climate when recruiting. Naturally, keep up the good work on basic services. A fairly good job is done there. Stick with the basics and don't follow the pack of thinking every city has to divert tax money to lure or keep businesses. I've lived in a larger city and see that its a zero sum game. Schools and Parks lose, cities regret their investments, and the consultants win.
- Bismarck is the CAPITAL OF ND and as such should also be a CULTURAL CENTER. A way to start this process is to support the ARTS by way of funding and providing for a Community Arts Center. A center that would provide space for visual arts, performing arts and a Professional Gallery and more. There are several buildings in Downtown Bis. that could be used. Bismarck is desperately in need of a viable arts community. THE ARTS HAVE ALWAYS BROUGHT INTEREST AND TOURISM TO A COMMUNITY. Downtown has so much potential and could be groomed into an arts, restaurant, entertainment DESTINATION! DESTINATION is the operative word here. BUILD AND SUPPORT the ARTS in Bismarck - BUILD AND SUPPORT TOURISM and COMMERCE in Bismarck.
- I would like to see our city become more pedestrian and bicyclist friendly. I'd like to see improvements in and an expansion of the multi-use trail system with a safe connection through the downtown area. Presently, traveling via bicycle on the street alongside cars and trucks in Bismarck is not safe, in my opinion-- I'm not sure if it the attitude of drivers or the design of the roads. I've lived in many cities where there are bike lanes and other accomodations for bicyclists that made their trip safer. With fuel prices being so high and likely to continue rising, I feel that we should be encouraging and enabling alternate modes of transportation. Thank you.
- Traffic congestion, poorly timed traffic lights and small-town thinking on speed limits hinders Bismarck's future growth. I would like to see Bismarck City officials begin to treat Bismarck's needs like the small metropolitan city that it is. As an example, completion of the Century Avenue loop (by Harlow's and UPS) is finally starting, which will give Bismarck a much needed northern "Ring" road to join Centennial and Expressway to speed traffic around the city. These types of roads eliminate some of the traffic congestion within the city. Another suggestion would be to have traffic lights throughout the city timed to create an unhampered, smooth flow of traffic, rather than cause drivers to stop unnecessarily and waste

gas idling at a red light. Bismarck is a great place to live and the city has a bright future! Thank you for a chance to comment.

- I would like to see Bismarck embrace the culture and arts here in the area and enhance the downtown area. In a dream, metro tram transportation seems pretty cool. A cultural center where performances, film screenings, workshops, and artistic endeavors can take place would be nice. When the weather outside is not so pleasant (think winter), it becomes a challenge to find a location to hang out with friends and I think a cultural center or hub can help ease this. The downtown is very nice. I am even debating about moving to the downtown area because I can walk to many places. Better living opportunities would be a plus and so would be more green space. The little green space by Parks and Rec on Front Ave is beautiful and very enjoyable! As for metro tram transportation (other than buses) may not work for a metro our size, but it could be a great addition later on. A tram could run from the airport to major tourist destinations and local hot spots. I'm tired of having to commute via automobile and spending 1-2 hours in traffic every day. It would be nice to hop on the tram and multi-task while in commute!
- If we had a monorail system from the Bismarck airport through downtown to the Capitol and across the river to Ft. Lincoln, Bismarck-Mandan could become a world class community. Tourism would increase exponentially from all over the world. Everything we ever dreamed of as a community would follow.
- City should consider Community wide Wi-Fi.
- Right now, I would say Bismarck's leading issue is a complete lack of 20-30s culture. Especially for singles. It's a veritable wasteland of things for this age group. the singles scene is abysmal, and things to do even worse. A Bar-scene is not the only answer either, especially when there is so little real variety. As an example, we don't even have a dance club! Just various types of sports bars and country western bars with a few little outliers, none that specifically cater to this. this extends downwards too, honestly, even growing up here I was struck by how boring it was. There is nothing here to attract young people who do not have a family and want someplace safe to raise their kids (at the expense of their kids having very little to do) So how can this be achieved? Well, one thing that might be a tremendous boon would be to lobby to make BSC a full University. And more specifically? A State University focusing on the Liberal Arts, because right now neither NDSU nor UND focus in that area very strongly. Being an alumni of one, and having friends in the other two, if one were to appear here, it may even be possible to get some very strong talent from both of them by promises of actual funding and reasons to care about liberal arts. thus strengthening the research and specialties of the other two by allowing resources to be allocated more fairly. This would in turn bring more students here, as with a 4 year (and hopefully beyond) university here, it would mean lots of people in this part of the state could be closer to home. And people from outside the region may come as well, all leading to a burgeoning of industries that benefits younger people in general, and an increase of culture in the city to begin with. With all of that, then perhaps there would be a reason to stay. Perhaps the city wouldn't be so 'boring' for young people to the point they are desperate to get away and barring the ones who decide to raise a family here or are somehow lucky enough to get a

job, have no reason to ever come back. By that same token, encouraging more intellectual style jobs. Things that aren't just nursing, industrial, or accounting, but instead more varied types of firms and businesses in every imaginable business (And hopefully a few sorts that are completely fresh and new!) That too will attract a different sort of people to the town. In other words, we need good paying, highly skilled professional jobs (Not to deride nursing as anything but highly skilled professional, it's only on the list because it is so prevalent in any job search in the city) I say all of this from the point of view of a 28 year old who has been unemployed and desperately searching for a job here, back home, after 7 years away at school and getting my MA. There is nothing here but the dreaded "Overqualified" excuse for jobs. And singles to meet in my age group? What singles. It's a complete wasteland from 20-35 here. And that's a tremendous issue for this town if you ask me.

- I've written once before about the mess that is on-street parking in Bismarck. I'd like to suggest that Bismarck consider establishing "residents only" parking stretches on streets near Bismarck High School and the two hospitals and the clinics near downtown. The system could be controlled by issuing windshield to bona fide residents of such streets, and empowering the present roaming traffic wardens to issue citations to cars parked without stickers on those stretches. Residents could be provided, upon application, with temporary stickers for visitors to put on their windshields to allow for short-term parking, say for family members or friends staying for a time or attending a celebration at the resident's home. Some system like this might reduce the mess we have now in our neighborhoods. City planners probably already know this, but Denver has a residential parking permit system in effect, and there are details about it at <http://www.denvergov.org/ParkingOperations/ResidentialPermitParking/tabid/426437/Default.aspx> (I've never lived in Denver, I just did a Google and found the site.)
- As a major city, Bismarck needs diversity, color, arts and a real & regular farmers market. After visiting the heritage center, there is really not much here compared to other cities this size. Ethnically diverse restaurants would be a good start. There is not an identifiable specialness about this city. What is there downtown to attract people? I cannot get people to come visit here.
- Bismarck Building Inspections needs to be a stand alone department. The reasons for this are: \*Building regulations become lost and less effectual when they are a subsidiary of another department. \*Building codes are specific, sufficiently unique and too important not to have a direct contact with City Commission. \*Functions are too dissimilar under Planning - importance and uniqueness of problems in building regulations makes a direct voice to the City Commission extremely important. \*Building Inspections is an enforcement agency and should not have untrained authoritative influence. Efficiency and effectiveness are endangered by taking directions from a person who is not intimately familiar with the field. \*Permit fees should not be used for unrelated municipal costs. They should be devoted to quality of service. Bismarck is a beautiful city and this is not by accident. With all the growth in the City, it is now



seeing and will soon be facing huge issues with property maintenance. This problem needs to be addressed now before it becomes unmanageable.

- Downtown Quiet Rail must be implemented to develop/restore/revitalize downtown.
- Green fleets and clean fuel technologies.
- Beyond what the community has achieved to this point in time, what would you like to see Bismarck become in the future? I would like to see Bismarck grow into a more progressive, inviting community, welcoming in diverse cultures of all kinds beyond the white, affluent, conservative, religious norm that seems to pervade Bismarck's ideology. What do you believe has to occur to achieve your vision of our community's future? Grow and support the local arts community. With as much wealth as many people of Bismarck have, why are the many local live entertainment opportunities so poorly attended? Establish a unified performing arts center where local groups can gather resources to hone their crafts. Be welcoming of the GLBT community. Acknowledge the growing population of GLBT citizens. The City of Bismarck has never given an official welcome to the local Pride Fest, a practice that is common in most every other town that hosts a Pride Fest. Mayor Warford has never allowed a GLBT representative to serve on the Human Relations Committee. Help break down barriers between races. Foster better relations between people groups of varying ethnicities. Grow Bismarck into a better understanding that Northern European is not the only race in order to have a viable, growing community. Break the religious barriers beyond the super-majority of Catholic influence. There are more faith communities here than just the Catholic churches.
- I think the critical components in the growth of Bismarck is physically getting around the community. When you drive, walk or ride bike around the community there are many road blocks or speed bumps. I think some of these have come from not planning for future growth. Why is there only one street that goes from the north end of town to the south end of town. I believe people get frustrated and begin to make bad driving decisions that impact the safety of others. I love riding bike but is it very difficult to ride bike on our city streets. The bike trails are great but getting to them is very hazardous. I believe the community needs a long-term strategy on dealing with the moving around the community. I also hope the city keeps their in on the safety. I feel very safe in our community at this time at all times of the day and night I hope this continues. We also need to continue to have a wide variety of activities for citizens, young and old.
- Dear City, What I would like to see in the community is more cultural development in this city. I believe doing so would help keep middle aged people here, and give them a new progressive attitude towards our city! We need to create and develop cultural events like Urban Harvest. We need to think about Building a city social center like a(Downtown Green Space)also Building an Indoor Skate Park and,or a Theme Park for Children,teens,and adults. Another thing to consider is definatley Building a Serious Art Mueseum, where people can learn about different cultures, instead of just ND people and Places. I believe that doing these things would help in the winter-time boredom that we expeirence, and would help cut down on destructive behaviors, like drinking, crime, and

suicide! North Dakota Produces a lot of things but the most abundant I think, is Alcoholics! This type of environment can be fatal to the future of your community's growth and over all sense of pride. If you are interested I have a detailed Idea for a Theme Park we could build here to draw and retain people. Just give me a call! Thanks for your time and consideration-ELOI

- Hello I would like to see Bismarck become more culturally diversified. I would like to see Bismarck become the Mecca for the Arts. I would love to see more vegan friendly places to eat. I would love to see Bismarck create a green space in downtown. I would like to see Bismarck retain the youth who seem to move away to "greener pastures", they are the future leaders of Bismarck. I believe in order to achieve these visions you need to listen when the youth speak. Hopefully there has been some input here from them. To achieve Bismarck becoming the Mecca of the Arts why not build a Museum? This would be a great place for school children to have a field trip, not only from Bismarck schools but from the surrounding schools. BHS does Art field trips to Minneapolis to those museums so why not have Bismarck be that Mecca too? We have the Council On the Arts right here for brainstorming and I'd love to be on that Committee. Green Space in a downtown that sandwiches two hospitals that need space for parking eats into available land. Could a parking ramp be built to make use of the space above that land instead of spreading it all around and creating an eyesore. I'm glad that you have opened your mind to let the people of Bismarck speak. The leaders of this City have done a wonderful job of attracting a wide range of places to eat but unless or a vegetarian as I am there still is no place for me to eat. A place where the entire menu is vegan friendly instead of a few choices. Could the leaders encourage vegan dining places to locate here. There is more awareness of the food we eat now more than ever. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions. Thank You for this forum and for listening to me.
- I would like to see Bismarck become a thriving, active, vibrant city that draws young people in instead of driving them away. We need more community events and more nightlife. The city can work toward this goal by supporting downtown revitalization projects and by pushing for BSC to become a 4-year university, like UND and NDSU.
- Please, Please, Please, Bismarck MUST have a mandatory recycling program to include all plastics, glass, paper, aluminum, cardboard, etc. It's a shame that we are not as progressive as most cities our size. As far as improving the downtown area, Bismarck needs green space in the center of downtown to develop a "square" idea. Shops can be centered around the square. Storefronts should meet a continuity code in order to be pleasing to the eye and welcoming. The downtown should be friendly and accessible to people wanting to walk or bike. Allies should be cleaned up. Our city is not aesthetically pleasing or welcoming. There is nothing anchoring it. Urban sprawl is becoming a problem. If you have questions or would like further opportunity for discussion, please feel free to call me.
- Curbside recycling, more recycling for people out of city limits that include days when we could put cleanup stuff out like old furniture etc. Different sports store besides Scheels BETTER JOBS. When my son is told he's 'to educated for ND'

by job service it's pretty bad. Check into oil companies opening offices. There are rumors that majors are thinking of closing Midland TX offices and moving north since Midland is exploration HQ for the Rockies and ND, SD and MT. More things for kids/teens to do. Face it, there isn't ANYTHING for them. Movies are too expensive. How about redoing an old theater for old movies to show for reasonable prices. Bismarck/Burleigh has a great place they could have a county fair. I can't believe places like Jamestown have a fair that is almost as big as Fargo and Bismarck has nothing. How about a street dance, Renaissance Festival, things that don't cost much but get people out. We have plenty of craft fairs but nothing much to go with them.

- I would like to see Bismarck emerge as one of the Must Go To Spots in North Dakota. In order to this Bismarck needs things that will make people want to come here. Some ideas I thought of are a Christian Rock Festival, a Renaissance Festival, more concerts, relaxing the rules of pyrotechnics for events (allow trained professionals to use fireworks and other pyrotechnics in their shows), and a better marketing program for the state as a whole. Examining my ideas more closely, the Christian Rock Festival, or a music festival in general. People drive from Dickinson, Canada and other great distances to see music festivals that take place in Minnesota. Why should the state as a whole be losing revenue to Minnesota when we could easily hold a music festival in our own state? 2 years ago my sister and I drove from Bismarck to Minneapolis just to see a concert. That was money we spent on gas and a hotel room that we could have been putting into our local economy. Not only that people from South Dakota, Montana and Canada will drive to a festival in town increasing tourism and local revenues. A Renaissance Festival. Renfests are popular all over the country. They typically run on weekends for about 4-6 weeks. An event like a Renfest would generate jobs, even in the short term. Vendors all throughout the Midwest set up booths. Personally when I lived in Kansas City I made it a must to go to the Renfest at least once a year, and with nothing else similar I am toying with the idea of driving to Minneapolis's Renfest this summer. Something like this is fun for the whole family. Having food vendors, performers, and just the all around atmosphere is amazing. More Concerts. Most concerts we get in Bismarck are few and far between. When I worked at Spencer's Gifts at Kirkwood Mall I cannot tell you how many times I heard of a band spending the night in Bismarck on their way from Minneapolis to Montana. Why not get some of these bands to do a show? Elton John and Willie Nelson are great to get here, but they cater to an older generation. We need bands that are more fresh and connected to the youth of this area to make people feel proud to live here. Having concerts and activities for the younger kids will give them something to do instead of getting into trouble. The Pyrotechnics. I am a huge Skillet fan (they are a Christian Rock Band). Last year I was one of the first people to buy tickets to see them at the Civic Center, but I was disappointed that they were unable to use some of their usual pyrotechnics (a flame thrower that shoots streams of fire into the sky). I have seen them use their pyro's indoors before and was disappointed that in Bismarck they had to scale back. I think allowing bands and performers to use their pyrotechnics will help add excitement to their venues which will keep

people wanting to go back for more. All in all, I think there is much that can be done to help develop Bismarck. From an Art center to tourism. But all in all I think Bismarck needs to start looking at keeping the younger generation involved with events in their community.

- More up-to-date with recycling and renewable resources. Curbside recycling bins or more recycling centers throughout the city would be a good. Also, glass recycling anywhere in town would be nice.
- What would you like to see Bismarck become in the future: Exciting – abundant cultural and recreational activities, great shopping and restaurants. Strong – solid economy, healthy people Safe – modern police/fire departments, clean air, water and streets Attractive – downtown center, neighborhoods, traffic corridors What do you believe has to occur to achieve your vision of our community's future? Invest in Downtown. Create a center for indoor and outdoor activities and performances. Complete streetscape element (pedestrian lights, trash receptacles, landscaping, benches, crosswalks, banners) installation within the district. Restore and encourage use of CORE and Renaissance Zone incentive programs. Implement quiet rail on Third, Fifth and Twelfth Streets. Assist in establishing a Downtown Management District (e.g. Fargo's Downtown Community Partnership). Enhance the Fifth Street Downtown to Kirkwood pedestrian experience with additional landscaping, better sidewalks/lighting, remove or camouflage Civic Center's chain link fencing Other. Reduce, reuse, recycle – increase green practices. Provide more landscaping, especially in visible traffic corridors. Implement and enforce a city-wide sign ordinance. Support Schools and Parks & Rec. Maintain high standards for police/fire and public works.
- I would like to see an educational "corridor" in the BSC area, especially utilizing the HPASC and Gateway to Science to perform community involvement and outreach in the science and technology area, especially expanding on the energy industry. The science center must have a substantial expansion and continued community and financial support to expand and fill this need.
- I recently moved back to Bismarck because I really appreciate this city and the people here. This project to gather public input on how to improve our city is an excellent example of what makes me happy to relocate to Bismarck and to share my ideas with you. I'll try to be brief, but this will be difficult because I care a lot about Bismarck and have a lot of ideas for this city, so please excuse the length. Many people say, "Bismarck is a good place to raise children; however, once these educated and talented children grow up they leave." In my opinion the downtown is the key to changing this trend. Every city has to have a "heart," a center that unites people and helps give them a sense of cultural identity as well as a place for our business-minded entrepreneurs. And that is precisely what is missing in Bismarck. Our downtown needs a public space, a pedestrian zone, and a street like Fargo's Broadway. Investing in our center is the best thing we can do to improve our city and stop the "brain drain" of educated, smart people seeking more cultural cities and entrepreneurial climates. Why not build a city-center in front of the Belle Mehus, between 5th and 6th streets? Or turn our Broadway into a pedestrian zone, where we can have outdoor activities

yearround? In the summer and spring we could hold events like Urban Harvest, in the autumn we could have events like Folk Fest and in the winter we could have an outdoor ice-rink or ice-sculpture gardens or other events. The fact that it's cold does not stop people in Norway, Poland or northern Germany from having street fairs, Christmas markets and other outdoor events. People drink hot chocolate, coffee and warm wine, and the weather doesn't stop them. I've heard people complain that every time a building gets knocked down downtown we build another parking lot. There are so many parking lots downtown. I know we're lacking parking downtown, but it'd be much wiser to have more parking ramps somewhere near the center (not necessarily in front of the Belle, like Medcenter wanted), and less parking lots spread out, but I realize this is costly. However, we have such a large number of lots between the public library, post office, main street and the Belle Mehus area. It would be great to have a public square in the parking lot south of the city hall and in front of the Belle. I believe that any way we could revitalize downtown and foster more of a climate to encourage technological/artistic careers, will help make our city more competitive. In comparison with more capital cities in the USA, we are lacking a cultural and arts center downtown, somewhere that would encourage and attract those careers that thrive in today's information-technology economy: such as computer, video and graphic design, which are higher-paying jobs and cornerstones to culture in the modern world. It would be also be smart to encourage nice housing options in or near the center-- condominiums or higher-end apartments downtown. Or having apartments downtown for one of the universities, to connect the young more to our center. There is public transportation with the CAT Bus; and perhaps if there were a larger University of Mary, UTTC, Rasmussen or BSC population a route could be arranged to make it more college-student-friendly to live and get from downtown to class. Bismarck's suburbs have grown so much in the past decade, and quite frankly, I think the "urban sprawl" is not good for our economy or sense of community. Studies have shown that urban sprawl is very costly to a city, because the infrastructure to serve the new neighborhoods and maintain so many miles of roads, etc, is very expensive...much more expensive than investing in urban renewal and building housing where the infrastructure already exists. Having...We have some of this already, but – more of a destination for businesses and visitors from across the country – more of a regional music, culture and sports mecca - More of a destination for college students What has to occur? - Continued investment in downtown Renaissance Zone and Core projects. - Encourage development of additional business and recreation along the Missouri River corridor. - QUIET RAIL! - Encourage or incentivize better landscaping for projects in high traffic areas. - Cut the weeds that grow between paving blocks in the median on Tyler Parkway! - Don't be afraid to take on the tough projects. (Washington Street improvements weren't "the end of the world" as many thought they would be.) West Century to River Road Corridor is next. - Work with hospitals to address the downtown parking lot issue, while maintaining some green space for public events like 5th or 6th and Broadway. - Encourage or incentivize boulevard tree planting in treeless developments.

- Future of Bismarck: more cosmopolitan downtown area; continued thoughtful residential/non-residential development; more air flight options; safety and support for schools as top priorities. What needs to be done: Continued investment in schools, police/fire, infrastructure, downtown redevelopment, quiet rail, green spaces, public pools, etc.

### **November Vision Comments**

- I think the vision statement is encouraging and focused in the right areas. What needs to happen to make the Vision realized? Bismarck needs to focus on the age demographic it's trying to appeal to and concern itself less with where people were born. Trying to attract back native North Dakotans is a losing proposition. However, if Bismarck can appeal to the demographic, you may give those same North Dakotans a reason to stay. 1. Vision Statement - I like that it includes "healthy and sustainable environment." It speaks to prosperity, but says nothing about being a caring or welcoming community - it would be beneficial to add either or both of those two words to the statement. Prosperity is more than just economic prosperity: it needs to include social and spiritual richness, as well. 2. To realize this vision, we need to make sure we are taking care of sustaining our environment through recycling, renewable energy, and exploring obtaining more food locally. We need to be embracing people of all cultures and respectful of all backgrounds. We do have a Human Rights Committee, and that helps, but we are not there yet. In order to be a healthy community, we need to plan where we are building housing developments to include sidewalks and green spaces so that families are able to walk and play in their neighborhoods. Let's make Bismarck a walkable community with mixed zoning so we can walk or bike to work, school, shop - all part of our daily activities. Let's make sure we maintain neighborhood schools so that our kids have more opportunities for physical activity to and from schools. Let's also include Complete Streets as we plan for transportation routes so we can walk or bike places and not rely solely on cars for transportation. Let's make sure our children are not exposed to smoking and tobacco use at playgrounds. Let's work to decrease access to unhealthy foods and increase access to healthy foods at public places such as at parks and recreation facilities. Thank you for the opportunity to comment!
- I believe we have left out the health of our people ( i.e. healthy and sustainable environment). Many cities and states are getting involved with policy to change the health of their residents beyond smoking. Obesity and all that it causes requires help from policy makers & social change. To ensure a community which is supported & encouraged to eat healthier and become more active – decreasing many chronic illnesses in our population. To continue to decrease venues for second hand smoke.
- When I read the vision statement, I want to be a Bismarck citizen. The vision described is the city that I want to live in and see my family grow up in. As Bismarck develops I would like to see green spaces and parks be part of the planning and development for growing neighborhoods too, not just more housing and commercial development but a plan to always designate a portion to green spaces. This is so vital to keep our community healthy for all.

- Vision Statement - LIKE IT!! What Needs To Happen Suggestions: 1. Make all public places tobacco free. 2. Require the placement of sidewalks and green spaces (such as parks) in the development of new neighborhoods. 3. Increase Access to healthy foods at public places (and decrease unhealthy foods). Consider making the healthy foods a cheaper option. 4. Add Bike Lanes to major city streets.
- I think if we are looking to the future. We as a community need to incorporate and enforce accessibility in both housing and business. There is a housing concept called visitability that has been around for many years and has three main features. They are one zero step entrance on an accessible route to the home, wider doorways, and a usable bathroom. By incorporating these features in homes it allows individuals with mobility impairments to visit family and friends and also opens up the housing market to people with disabilities to have more options in purchasing homes.
- I think it would be good to consider involving all public entities in the strategic planning process. Think of the impact of the city, schools, parks and county ALL working together toward the same, common, powerful vision. The four political subdivisions, in working together with the community, could do this, and everyone would benefit. Thanks for reading!
- I truly think your vision statement is waayyyyy too long and speaks too much of who we are, rather than where we should be going. Vision means forward and something to reach for, not a statement of present condition and praise.
- Strategic planning should provide consideration for open space and park dedication. Too many developments are without any play space, park space or green space. The economic, environmental and quality of life benefits are huge. If Bismarck truly considers itself a city that's a great place to live, work, and play, just where is the "play" element?? Please consider this in your planning. Now is the time for wise land use planning.

### **Facebook Comments**

- "Dakota West Arts Council would very much like to be a part of any plan for Bismarck's future. The arts fuel economic growth and bring people together. Please take in to consideration what other regional communities are doing in their downtown; Fargo, Sioux Falls,SD, Rochester,MN, and Rapid City,SD. We can do this, too! Dakota West Arts Council is willing to help with the process in any way."
- I just returned from the first meeting for the Bismarck Strategic Planning Project. I encourage residents to go to the next meetings; tonight March 17th) at the public library from 7-9:30 and Saturday, March 19th from 10-11:30 at the library. This is your opportunity to give input on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, weaknesses and the future of Bismarck."
- We need an Art Facility that does not overcharge. We are the capital city and I do not feel the city does enough in support of the arts."
- "Create an ARTS STRONG Community... CREATE a TOURISM DESTINATION. Bismarck needs a Community Arts Center, downtown would be a perfect location. This is the right time. Support and fund the arts.

**City of Bismarck  
Meeting Summary  
April 12-14, 2011**

**ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN**

*Economic/Financial:*

- Federal reductions
- Lack of local financing tools
- Taxpayer resistance
- Taxpayer ignorance
- Political difficulty in addressing funding issues (i.e. tax or fee increases)
- Department/Division funding

*Demographic:*

- Aging
- Out migration of young people
- Dealing with diversity in workforce and citizenry
- Differentiate groups want/support very different goals
- Loss of an experienced workforce

*Managerial:*

- Reactive
- Lack of communication
- Communication
- Style conflict
- Resistance to change
- Centralized control makes innovation difficult
- Over cautious
- Complacent – status quo is ok

*Competitive:*

- Lack of cooperation – wouldn't we have a better outcome if worked together.
- Lack of Brand.
- Protectionism
- Perceived barriers
- Conflicting "community" strategies



When government tries to design sustainable projects, it can be seen as interfering with other competitive businesses.

- Public vs. Private – where to draw the line and allow business to drive the market and take care of itself.

#### Legal/Regulatory:

- Lawsuits
- Federal/State mandates
- Title VI compliance
- Lack of law enforcement to keep us safe – need to keep up with growth
- Policy compliance
- Use of taxpayer money

#### Physical/Environmental:

- Lack of preparedness for environmental threats
- More need for green space in future development
- Lack of future solid waste facility site
- Sprawling development – unsustainable
- Recycling needed
- Status quo
- A lot of things that are great in the summer need dual purpose for the winter or they won't be utilized (i.e. bikepaths = cross country skiing)
- Rural subdivisions

#### Sociocultural

- Embedded stereotypes hard to change
- Complacency
- Reluctance to change
- Poverty and homelessness in community
- Reluctance to accept new ideas and people
- Reactive vs. proactive
- Health challenges of aging population
- Some expect instant gratification/lack of patience for programs and improvements

#### Technological

- Not all population have computers, internet – so may be harder to reach
- Heightened expectations/responsiveness due to method/ease of citizen contacts
- Ability to maintain technology
- Technology changes “too fast” for many
- Internal coordination (or lack of)
- Reactive approach to new technology

## **SWOT Themes**

### Strengths:

- Performing arts and culture
- Sense of community
- Public safety – low crime
- Education system
- Missouri River
- City employees
- Regional health care
- Capital city – access and resources
- Clean and attractive community – trees, streets, housing,
- Recreational opportunities
- Strong and diverse economy
- Regional transportation hub
- City leadership

### Weaknesses:

- Aging population of workforce and community
- Downtown
- Resistance to change
- Lack of recycling opportunities
- Lack of good paying jobs
- Lack of public gathering places
- Lack of communication within city organization
- Lack of understanding about social good/outcomes.
- Too territorial and infighting
- Lack of daycare providers
- Lack of affordable housing
- Lack of diversity
- Public transportation and multi-modal
- Lack of dedicated funding source for roads

### Threats:

- National economy
- Price of fuel
- Negative impacts of oil boom
- Level of city service to keep up with growth

- E-commerce and technology
- Complacency
- Aging demographics

Opportunities

- Downtown (vibrant)
- Collaboration among governments.
- Public gathering spaces and arts and culture.
- Environmentally sound community.
- Missouri River
- Energy development
- Economic: higher paying jobs, affordable housing, daycare providers
- Heritage, culture, destination and tourism
- Integration of non-profits
- Embrace diversity

## City of Bismarck Strategic Planning

### Vision created by Mayor and City Commission at meeting of May 12, 2011

*“Bismarck is a preferred destination place and community where people enjoy living, working, playing, and learning. We strive to be a safe, innovative, well-educated community that provides prudent, prosperous economic opportunity for our diverse and culturally engaged citizens. Our efforts to embrace our rich heritage, natural resources, and lifelong learning empower our ability to cultivate a healthy, unique and sustainable environment fostering ownership and opportunity for all. We are a dynamic people looking to the future.”*

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### Suggested revisions offered by Commissioner Grossman, May 17, 2011

*“~~Bismarck is a preferred destination place and~~ prosperous community where people enjoy living, working, playing, and learning. We ~~strive to be~~ are a safe, innovative, well-educated, destination community that ~~provides~~ providing prudent, ~~prosperous economic~~ opportunity for our diverse and culturally engaged citizens. Our ~~efforts to embrace~~ Community embraces our rich heritage, ~~natural resources,~~ economic opportunity and lifelong learning ~~empower our ability to~~ cultivate a healthy, ~~unique~~ and sustainable environment fostering ~~ownership and~~ opportunity for all. We are a dynamic people looking to the future.”*

**Feedback, Input, and Thoughts regarding “Draft” Vision Statement – Community Stakeholders Meeting Audience Response at meeting of May 17, 2011**

1. Fewer words
2. More direct words
3. “embracing” vs. “efforts to embrace”
4. Speak directly to children and family
5. What is “ownership”? “I live in Bismarck!”
6. “welcoming community”
7. Embrace – embrace diversity
8. Preferred destination, safety, educational opportunities – all three are keepers
9. Innovative –important to keep this
10. Missed capital city – Bismarck is the capital city
11. One statement vs. several – combine 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence
12. Use only one sentence for the vision statement
13. Safety – definitions? “Sense of security”
14. Growing, improving...not static
15. Strive to get better
16. Sharper, use less words
17. Recognize all levels of people (all population types)

**City of Bismarck  
City Commission Meeting Summary  
Goal Topics  
November 29, 2011**

1. Plan to Plan
2. Being proactive
3. Managing/steering growth
4. Healthcare
5. City's role in steering/leading development/growth
6. Good paying jobs
7. Use of public space
8. Exploring funding sources for arts, river and parks
9. Leading edge of social media and web-based services
10. Downtown – Housing, Parking and Quiet Rail
11. Civic Center expansion
12. Center for Public Service
13. Destination for retirees
14. Young people returning
15. Partnering with other governments to improve efficiencies
16. Maintain sense of community

***Attachment G***

17. Regional Public Safety Center
18. Integration of cultures
19. Role with business community
20. Safe community – police, fire, etc.
21. White collar jobs related to oil industry
22. Encourage universities and colleges
23. New ways/approaches to economic development
24. Family friendly community – daycare services, etc.
25. Creative community
26. Air service including cargo, expanding Fixed Based Operator and corporate aviation services
27. Community health
28. Branding

**City of Bismarck  
Strategic Plan about Draft Vision Statement  
Community Input  
November 30, 2011**

- Role of the Arts
- More welcoming
- Not a vision, more about now
- Capital City missing
- Global
- Clean
- Technical
- Livable northern city
- Growing community
- Nurturing community
- Diversity and multi-cultural
- Moving forward to future
- Phrasing – present to future
- Maintain high standards
- Destination?
- Dynamic?
- Safe and clean
- Efficient government



- Lacks a sense of place
- Lacks a call to action
- Lacks emphasis on values
- Ramp it up
- Smart growth: less oil and retention of oil related businesses
- Manageable and sustainable growth
- Community communications

## **Vision**

The vision is a description of Bismarck's "desired future". In other words, where do the stakeholders believe the community will be in five to ten years? The emphasis is on the future as it describes the organization as the stakeholders would like it to become – in the future:

A draft vision was prepared by the team and shared with the Mayor and City Commission, who, in turn, generated two versions before deciding on the following

*"Bismarck is a preferred destination place and prosperous community where people enjoy living, learning, working and playing. Our community embraces our rich heritage, economic opportunity and lifelong learning to cultivate a healthy and sustainable environment fostering opportunity for all. We are a dynamic people looking to our future."*

## **Values**

The inherent values of the community and the city organization provide the foundation on which the strategic plan is constructed. They are the basis for all decisions and actions. The focus of the Project Team was to craft a set of collective values and standards of behavior which will affect the manner in which programs are defined and resources allocated. These are:

- **Forward Looking:** We proactively identify needs and opportunities.
- **Diversity:** We embrace a multitude of experiences and cultures for the enrichment of our community.
- **Community Pride:** We uphold high standards of hard work, safety, and cleanliness to maintain and enhance our community.
- **Integrity:** We hold ourselves to be accountable for our words and actions.
- **Environmentally Sound:** We are responsible stewards of the land, the environment and its resources, both man-made and natural.

## **Mission Statement**

The mission statement identifies the role of the City of Bismarck in pursuing the community's Vision. Based on the values clarification and vision creation that occurred in the previous steps, the intent here was to determine:

- What are the needs and wants of Bismarck's citizens?
- How does the City of Bismarck go about in fulfilling the wants and needs?

A well-worked-out mission statement provides everyone involved a sense of purpose, direction, significance, and achievement. In short, it will communicate the purpose of the City of Bismarck organization to the community. It is instructive for employees, residents, and others.

The Project Team recommends the following Mission Statement:

*“To provide high quality public services in partnership with our community to enhance our quality of life.”*

The outcome of adopting a Mission, Vision and Values provided the context necessary for creating Key Areas accompanied by Goals and Objectives enabling their achievement. These begin on the following page. The adoption of Goals will allow the City of Bismarck to accomplish the mission and advance to the vision. Essentially, the setting of Goals and Objectives serve to manage the gap between the present and desired future (i.e. the Vision) by defining where the city and community wants to be and establishing the steps needed for the desired outcome.

**Draft Goals:**

1. Create public space and amenities that increase diversity within the City.
2. Provide more opportunities for local arts and culture.
3. Support public transportation opportunities.
4. Provide diverse housing choice.
5. Utilize the river as Bismarck's major recreation opportunities.
6. Continue revitalization of downtown.
7. Manage growth.
8. Proactively provide infrastructure to guide growth.
9. Promote healthy lifestyles.
10. Encourage development of public parks as the City expands.
11. Provide necessary resources to maintain high quality of life as City grows.
12. Provide greater access to quality day-care.
13. Continue to promote intergovernmental cooperation.
14. Maintain high standards of safety and cleanliness.
15. Maintain a continuous strategic planning process in coordination with other entities.
16. Emphasize area heritage and tourism opportunities.

17. Independent sound environmental programs and practices.
18. Support improvements that contribute to medical hub.
19. Support development of emergency-related support services.
20. City leads community development in growth areas.
21. Government cooperation
22. Maintaining Heritage – diversity.
23. Maintaining environment.
24. Integrated core Bismarck investments – 1<sup>st</sup> class downtown.
25. Center for Public Service
26. Preferred workplace including city organization.
27. Foster Open Public dialogue about strategic initiatives.
28. Recreational opportunities.
29. Provide opportunity for all.
30. First class city.
31. Safety and clean.
32. Education hub.
33. Community health.