



### **ND Congressional Delegation joins Minot to celebrate massive downtown revitalization project**

Downtown business owners and city representatives joined federal and state dignitaries on Oct. 9 to celebrate the conclusion of three years of work on the complete



Downtown Infrastructure Improvements Project. The project is the largest reconstruction effort in the City's history, as three prime contractors executed work within 26 city blocks that fully replaced or upgraded all city infrastructure in the public right-of-way downtown. The massive effort included replacing miles of water, sanitary sewer and storm sewer pipes, concrete paved streets, curbs and gutters, sidewalks, benches, trash receptacles, and street lighting in areas where some of the infrastructure was between 75 and 100 years old.

Dignitaries at the event included U.S. Sen. John Hoeven (R-N.D.), U.S. Sen. Heidi Heitkamp (D-N.D.), U.S. Congressman Kevin Cramer (R-N.D.), North Dakota Lt. Gov. Brent Sanford, Minot Mayor Chuck Barney and others.

"We are so very grateful for the federal and state support that we received on this project," said Mayor Chuck Barney.

"Without that level of commitment from the North Dakota Congressional Delegation, the State Water Commission and others, we wouldn't have been able to pull off this project and our downtown public infrastructure would have continued to suffer as a result. Thank you to all those who helped make this a reality."

In total, the three years of construction, as well as engineering and construction management, will cost approximately \$34.75 million. The project is being funded by multiple sources, including the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) in the form of an \$18 million disaster recovery grant, a Community Development Block Grant(CDBG)-Disaster Recovery fund of \$4.34 million, \$1.25 million in State Water Commission funds, as well as storm sewer and street lighting district special assessments, utility bonds, and state surge funding.

[Click here](#) for more information on what was said during the event, as well as a detailed list of all new or upgraded infrastructure from the project.

### Land purchase extends lifetime of City of Minot landfill more than 60 years

The City of Minot recently signed an agreement to purchase approximately 320 acres of land that will extend the life of the city's landfill by more than 60 years. Jason Sorenson, Assistant Public Works Director for the City of Minot, said the land was necessary for future expansion of the City of Minot landfill.



"We are currently constructing cell 6 of our originally permitted seven cells, which no longer gives us room to handle composting of yard waste," Sorenson said. "It will probably be five years or more before we construct our first cell on the new land."

Sorenson said the City of Minot's sanitation department collects approximately 15,000 tons of municipal solid waste yearly from the residential customers the City serves in Minot. Private haulers collect waste from some residential customers in Minot and all of the commercial waste in the city, which brings in another estimated 15,000 tons yearly. The landfill is also utilized by other area entities in surrounding counties designated as the "regional area."

"We are a regional landfill and we accept waste from six counties," Sorenson said. "We bring in approximately 80,000 tons of municipal solid waste every year, and over half of that volume is coming from surrounding counties."

To read more about the expansion of the regional landfill, [click here](#).

### MAGIC Sky Initiative adding key partners

The MAGIC Sky Initiative grew this past month, adding three business partners that represent different fields within the Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) industry. eSmart Systems (with headquarters in Norway), Robot Aviation (established in Norway), and Ackerman-Estvold (headquarters in Minot) have now joined lead business, SkySkopes, to provide full-service solutions to customers.



The Minot Area Development Corporation (MADC) initiative is tying all of the partners together under one umbrella in a way that is unique for customers and user groups.

"Coming from Norway it feels great to come to North Dakota and Minot, both because of all the friendly and open people we meet and because of all the great opportunities we see in the Utility and Oil & Gas sector," said Knut Gustavsen, president of eSmart Systems in North America. "Together with our partner Microsoft we are all about optimizing the infrastructure using new analytics tools and IoT sensors provided by partners like SkySkopes and Robot Aviation."

"Ackerman-Estvold provides a unique service to area industries by combining qualified, licensed UAS pilots with infrastructure experts that have extensive experience in designing, building and operating infrastructure and building systems," said Ryan Ackerman, PE, president/CEO of Ackerman-Estvold. "As MADC investors and the only engineering consulting group headquartered in the Minot region, Ackerman-Estvold is excited at the potential that MAGIC Sky will unlock for the region."

"Robot Aviation couldn't be more enthusiastic to join the MAGIC Sky Initiative championed by the Minot Area Development Corporation," said Bjorn Forsdal, president of Robot Aviation USA. "With significant UAS applications expanding in Minot, MAGIC Sky is important to the overall success of this industry for the region. Robot Aviation looks forward to being a part of the initiative through utilizing its SkyRobot™ technologies along with key industry partnerships of SkySkopes and eSmart Systems."

For the latest information on the MAGIC Sky Initiative, [click here](#).

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### Key water line relocation going well

Work is under way on a \$13.5 million project that will relocate a water line from the Sundre well field that carries two-thirds of Minot's municipal water.

The project includes building a 2-million-gallon storage reservoir, constructing a booster pump station near the Sundre well field southeast of Minot, and installing miles of new pipeline that will bring raw water from the aquifer to the Minot Water Treatment Plant.

One major reason behind the project is related to future flood control projects in the city. The current Sundre line would have to be relocated in several locations once flood control project work begins.

Dan Jonasson, Public Works Director for the City of Minot, said officials studied how many times the Sundre water line would have to be relocated during flood project construction, and concluded that building an entirely new line to the treatment plant would be more cost efficient.

The project is expected to cost \$13.5 million, with 65% of the cost being paid for by the State Water Commission. The City of Minot is paying for the project up front, and then the City will get an equal amount of credit from the State Water Commission on future water projects, including flood control.



The Sundre booster station project is scheduled to be complete and operational by March 2, 2018, before any substantial work begins on phases of the flood protection plan. The Sundre aquifer provides roughly two-thirds of the water for Minot, with five wells drawing water from an aquifer southeast of Minot. For more details, [click here](#).

**School District passes tight annual budget**

The 2017-2018 Minot Public School Budget was passed by the school board at their regular October meeting. The budget includes a reduction in total projected expenditures from 2016-2017 of \$700,000, a reduction in projected revenue of \$3.4 million, and a projected deficit of \$3.3 million.



The school-related property tax dollars requested from the county is estimated to be down \$1.3 million, county revenue down \$790,000 and state revenue down \$1.78 million. However, even with a \$1.3 million reduction in property tax dollars requested, it is estimated that the school mill levy will increase approximately 1.6 mills, because of a reduction in taxable valuation throughout the district. The 1.6 mill increase will result in a \$14.66 annual school-related property tax increase on a \$200,000 home.

Approximately eight teaching related positions have been eliminated and there have been reductions to equipment purchases and building maintenance projects. Additionally, baseline wages for school employees increased by only ¼ of 1%. The School District employs approximately 1,400 teachers, administrators and support staff. Wages and benefits for all staff account for nearly 85% of the annual budget.

**Trinity Health Opens Walk-In Clinic**

Calling it a significant step in non-emergent care, Trinity Health announced it has opened a walk-in clinic at Health Center – Medical Arts called FirstCare



Walk-In Clinic. FirstCare welcomes patients without appointment seven days a week, with extended hours from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. on week days and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on

weekends and holidays.

"FirstCare gives patients the direct accessibility of walk-in care without compromising quality," said Thomas M. Warsocki, FACHE, vice president of Physician Network Services. "In addition to lab, pharmacy and imaging services, patients have ready access to the full range of integrated services available through the Trinity Health system."

Dr. Marisa Albertson added, "We're happy to offer FirstCare to get through those conditions that can't wait. If you need care, we will see you."

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#### **40th Annual Norsk Høstfest outperforms pervious years**

The 40th Annual Norsk Høstfest was a resounding success at the State Fair Center in Minot. Visitors from around the world traveled to experience the largest Scandinavian festival in North America. David

Reiten, president of Norsk Høstfest, said it was the best year for the event since the flood back in 2011.

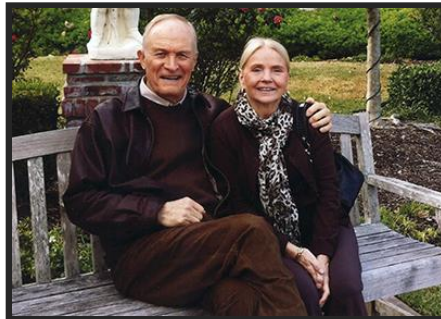


Although final numbers aren't available, more than 50,000 attendees came to the Magic City. The Great Hall of Vikings' shows sold more tickets than the previous year. In fact, famous ventriloquist Jeff Dunham's show sold out. The next Norsk Høstfest is scheduled for September 26-29, 2018.

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#### **Dale and Vonnice Brown Scholarship Endowment established at MSU**

The Minot State University Advancement Office is proud to announce that family and friends of Dale and Vonnice Brown have established a scholarship in their name. The scholarship



endowment was established by a lead gift of \$10,000 by Gary and Connie Tharaldson.

The endowment will help incoming freshman at Minot State University who demonstrate financial need and are a resident of North Dakota.

"I received a superior education at Minot State," said Dale Brown. "I am eternally grateful for the excellent instructors and athletic scholarship I received."

Dale and Vonnice (Ness) are both graduates of Minot State, as Dale – who earned an impressive 12 varsity letters in football, basketball and track & field – graduated in 1957. Vonnice received a Bachelor of Science degree from Minot State in 1958.

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### MSU student awarded Bakken U Scholarship

Minot State University student Nicole Walther is one of two individuals who was awarded the Bakken U Scholarship for 2017-18, the North Dakota University System announced.



The scholarship is given through donations from the North Dakota Petroleum Council. Walther, a Williston native, is currently pursuing a degree in finance. She earned a degree in math in 2012 at MSU and worked for five years for Pilot Thomas Logistics until May 2017 to return to school.

During her five years with the company her duties included working with inventory, logistics and customer service. She believes that getting a degree in finance will help her become a more efficient and valuable employee.

"I am hoping with the continuation of my finance degree, I can apply my knowledge of operations to a company that helps balance their needs financially as well as operationally," Walther said. "I want to be able to take the information I've learned in the classroom and utilize it in a functioning form. My dream job is to help establish proper procedures and future planning for companies that works financially, but still help maintain a strong operational setting."

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