



Staff Report

To: Planning and Zoning Commission
From: City of Dickinson Community Development Team
Date: May 8, 2024
Re: **REN-001-2024 Renaissance Zone Development Plan Extension**

APPLICANT

Name: City of Dickinson Development Services
 Address: 38 1st Street West
 City: Dickinson ND 58601

Public Hearing:	May 8, 2024	Planning and Zoning
Final	May 21, 2024	Commission
Consideration		City Commission

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

City Development Services staff recommends approval of the extending the City Renaissance Zone Development program for 10 additional years.

CONTEXT

A. Background – The Renaissance Zone Program was created by the State of North Dakota as a tool to encourage redevelopment and economic investment in central cities. Created in 1999, the Renaissance Zone Program encourages investment through the use of property, income and financial institution tax incentives.

The Dickinson City Commission approved the original Renaissance Zone Development Plan in January 2004. The City’s stated mission of the zone is to create opportunity, encouragement and support to property owners and lessees of properties within the renaissance zone with the anticipation that the business climate and attractiveness of zone buildings is greatly improved.

In 2017, the City of Dickinson revised its Renaissance Zone Development Plan by increasing the size of the City’s Zone from 25 blocks to 36 blocks. As there were four government-owned buildings in the expanded Renaissance Zone the City also added four half blocks.

The City of Dickinson’s original 15-year Renaissance Zone memorandum of understanding expired at the end of June, 2019. A memorandum of understanding extending the Renaissance Zone through June, 2024 was approved in June 2019.

As result of the 2020 U.S. Census, the City of Dickinson was able to add two more blocks to its Renaissance Zone. In 2022, the City of Dickinson added a two-block noncontiguous island to its Renaissance Zone.

In 2024, the City of Dickinson amended its Renaissance Zone Development Plan to include the following:

- Increase the tax exemption period for residential rehabilitation projects from five years to eight years;
- Increase the benefit period for commercial projects to eight years if the investment amount is least 75% of the current true and full value;
- Allow properties that had previously received Renaissance Zone benefits additional benefits after 30 years have lapsed from the completion of the initial project; and
- Allow for two exceptions, or “islands”, to the primary contiguous zone.

During the 2023 session of the North Dakota State Legislature approved several amendments to Chapter 40-63 Renaissance Zone of the North Dakota Century Code. One of those changes allows local governments to extend the term of its Renaissance Zone for 10 years.

B. Analysis

Since 2012, the City of Dickinson has done the following to promote development in downtown Dickinson:

- Completion of a plan for creating a downtown public square;
- Restoration of an existing downtown park;
- Installation of new street trees and decorative light poles;
- Adoption of overlay districts to preserve existing single-family residential structures for either continued use as residences or for conversion to commercial structures;
- Improvement of existing downtown public parking facilities;
- Encouragement of additional private downtown parking facilities;
- Proposal of conversion of an existing parking lot in an entertainment venue; and
- Adoption of downtown district design standards to help create an architectural consistency between new and existing structures in the downtown core.

Additionally, the City of Dickinson actively supports and promotes the Stark Development Corporation façade improvements grant program to assist downtown business and property owners. This program is aimed at downtowns in all Stark County cities.

Upon approval of the proposed ten-year extension the State Department of Commerce and the City will enter into a new memorandum of understanding extending the term of the City's Renaissance Zone program for 10 additional years.

City staff has received letters of support for the proposed Ten-Year Extension of the Renaissance Zone from the following organizations:

- Stark County Commission;
- Dickinson Public Schools School Board; and
- Dickinson Parks and Recreation Board.

Attachment A includes letters of support.

C. PUBLIC INPUT

As of the date of this report, City staff has not received any public comments.

D. STAFF FINDINGS- Staff finds the proposed Ten-Year Extension of the Renaissance Zone consistent with the following objective of Chapter 3-Local Economy and Economic Development of the Dickinson 2035: Roadmap to the Future Comprehensive Plan:

Objective 1: Increase private and city investment in the downtown area to reestablish the downtown as the civic center of the city.

Staff finds the proposed Five-Year Extension of the Renaissance Zone consistent with the following objective of Chapter 4-Land Use of the Dickinson 2035: Roadmap to the Future Comprehensive Plan:

Objective 4: Promote the sustainable redevelopment of the downtown area.

Staff finds the proposed Ten-Year Extension of the Renaissance Zone meets the following mission of the current Renaissance Zone Development Plan:

The mission of the zone is to create opportunity, encouragement, and support to property owners and leases of properties in the Dickinson Renaissance Zone with the anticipation that business climate and the attractiveness of zone buildings is greatly improved.

Based upon those finding, staff would recommend approval of this amendment.

E. Attachments:

- A – Letters of Support

MOTIONS:

*****Approval*****

I move the City of Dickinson Planning and Zoning Commission recommend Approval of the proposed Ten-Year Extension of the City of Dickinson Renaissance Development Plan as being compliant with the City of Dickinson Comprehensive Plan and the City of Dickinson Renaissance Zone Development Plan, as meeting all the requirements of the Dickinson Municipal Code and also being in the interest of the public health, safety and welfare.

***** Denial *****

I move the Dickinson Planning and Zoning Commission recommend Denial of the proposed Ten-Year Extension of the City of Dickinson Renaissance Zone as NOT as being compliant with either the City of Dickinson Comprehensive Plan or the City of Dickinson Renaissance Development Plan and not meeting all the requirements of the Dickinson Municipal Code and being contrary to interest of the public health, safety and welfare.

ATTACHMENT A – LETTERS OF SUPPORT