

ORDINANCE NO. 08-5483

AN ORDINANCE MODIFYING THE URBAN RENEWAL PLAN OF THE NORTH 27<sup>TH</sup> STREET DISTRICT URBAN RENEWAL AREA; MODIFYING THE BOUNDARIES OF THE DISTRICT; ADOPTING A MODIFIED URBAN RENEWAL PLAN INCLUDING A TAX INCREMENT PROVISION; APPROVING URBAN RENEWAL PROJECTS THEREIN AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF TAX INCREMENT URBAN RENEWAL REVENUE BONDS OF THE CITY TO FINANCE COSTS THEREOF

NOW, WHEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BILLINGS, MONTANA:

WHEREAS, on July 11, 2005 the City Council adopted Ordinance No. 05-5333, which created the North 27<sup>th</sup> Street District Urban Renewal Area (hereafter "North 27<sup>th</sup> Street District") and adopted the Urban Renewal Plan of the North 27<sup>th</sup> Street District Urban Renewal Area ("N. 27<sup>th</sup> Street Plan") that included a tax increment provision and endorsed urban renewal projects.

WHEREAS, on November 13, 2006 the City Council adopted Ordinance No. 06-5394 which expanded the boundaries and amended the N. 27<sup>th</sup> Street Plan to create the Extended N. 27<sup>th</sup> Street District that included a tax increment provision and endorsed urban renewal projects.

WHEREAS, it has been determined that the Extended North 27<sup>th</sup> Street District and the N. 27<sup>th</sup> Street Plan should be modified to include additional property contiguous to the Extended North 27<sup>th</sup> Street District.

WHEREAS, this Council on November 24, 2008, conducted a public hearing on a proposal to modify the N. 27<sup>th</sup> Street Plan by adopting the Urban Renewal Plan of the Expanded North 27<sup>th</sup> Street District Urban Renewal Area - 2008, thereby establishing a modified urban renewal area to be formally designated as the Expanded North 27<sup>th</sup> Street District Urban Renewal Area - 2008 (the "Expanded North 27<sup>th</sup> Street District - 2008" or "the Property"), and to undertake urban renewal projects therein, all as authorized by Montana Code Annotated, Title 7, Chapter 15, Parts 42 and 43, as amended (the "Act").

WHEREAS, the Expanded North 27<sup>th</sup> Street District - 2008 is depicted on Attachment 1 (depicting the relationship of the Expanded North 27<sup>th</sup> District - 2008 to the Extended N. 27<sup>th</sup> Street District) and which is hereby incorporated herein and made a part hereof. Pursuant to this Ordinance, the boundaries of the Redevelopment Area are modified to reflect the addition of the Property depicted on the map on Attachment 1. The Redevelopment Area, as modified, is depicted on Attachment 1 and legally described on Attachment 2 (the "Resulting Redevelopment Area") (each of which is hereby incorporated herein and made a part hereof). The Resulting Redevelopment Area is contiguous.

WHEREAS, opportunities have been presented to the City that makes it desirable for the City to consider urban renewal projects within the Expanded North 27<sup>th</sup> Street District - 2008 consisting of demolishing certain blighted structures within the district; improving such

properties with new construction, landscaping, utilities, and other similar improvements; and making the properties so improved available for private redevelopment in accordance with the Act (the "Projects"). Development proposals to be considered for funding include mixed use projects, building renovations, services for the District and the construction or expansion of City owned parking structures within the District.

WHEREAS, the proposed modified urban renewal plan titled the Urban Renewal Plan of the Expanded North 27th Street District - 2008 is attached hereto as Attachment 3 (which is hereby incorporated herein and made a part hereof) (the "Modified Plan"). The Modified Plan contains a tax increment provision and will govern the operation and administration of the Expanded North 27th Street District - 2008.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the City Council of the City of Billings, Montana, as follows:

1. Findings. This Council hereby finds, determines and declares, based on the comments received at the public hearing and other studies and information available to this Council, that:

a. The Property presently contains structures and improvements that are in a state of substantial deterioration, are obsolete or defective, pose unsanitary or unsafe conditions, are vacant and unused, and have inappropriate uses. The present condition of the Property substantially impairs the sound functioning of the downtown area of the City and its environs, is conducive to juvenile delinquency and crime, poses the threat of vandalism or mischief and fire or loss, constitutes an economic and social liability, and is a menace to the public health, safety, and welfare of the residents of the City. Accordingly, the Council reaffirms its previous findings that the Property is a blighted area within the meaning of Section 7-15-4210 of the Act. This Council finds that the rehabilitation, redevelopment or a combination thereof of the Property is necessary and in the interest of the health, safety, morals or welfare of the residents of the City. This Council finds that undertaking measures to eradicate or diminish the blight affecting the Property will help to foster a more dynamic, livable, and vibrant downtown.

b. If Projects require relocation of displaced persons, a detailed relocation plan is required and will be prepared.

c. The Modified Plan conforms to the 2003 Billings and Yellowstone County Growth Policy and the City's Downtown Framework Plan.

d. The Modified Plan will afford maximum opportunity, consistent with the needs of the City as a whole, for the rehabilitation or redevelopment of the District by private enterprise.

e. A sound and adequate financial program is required for the financing of Projects, which program includes substantial private investment and financing and the sale and issuance by the City of Tax Increment Bonds in proportions yet to be determined, for the purpose of financing a portion of the costs of the Projects as set forth above.

f. Approved Projects will constitute urban renewal projects within the meaning of the

Act and are authorized to be undertaken by the City.

2. Plan Adoption. The Modified Plan is hereby adopted and approved in all respects, including without limitation, the segregation and application of tax increments as provided in Sections 7-15-4282 through 7-15-4293 of the Act as provided therein. For purposes of allocating taxes according to the Act, the "prior assessed value" of taxable property within the Expanded North 27<sup>th</sup> Street District - 2008 is that value shown on the assessment rolls as of January 1, 2008.

3. Project Approval. Authorized Projects are hereby approved.

4. Bonds. This Council approves financing the costs of Urban Renewal Projects, or a portion thereof, with proceeds of the Bonds. The City is hereby authorized and directed to undertake activities and analysis ordinarily prerequisite to the issuance of tax increment urban renewal revenue bonds in a principal amount not to exceed \$10 million for financing of the costs of Urban Renewal Projects or a portion thereof.

5. Conditional Commitment. The adoption of the Plan does not constitute a guarantee or a firm commitment that the City will issue the Bonds or undertake Projects. If, based on comments or information made available to or obtained by the City, it appears that the issuance of the Bonds or Projects is not in the public interest or consistent with the purposes of the Act, the City reserves the right not to issue the Bonds or undertake the Project.

7. Repealer. All resolutions, ordinances, and sections of the City Code inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed.

8. Severability. If any provision of this ordinance or the application thereof to any person or circumstances is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect the other provisions of this ordinance which may be given effect without the invalid provisions or application, and, to this end, the provisions of this ordinance are declared to be severable.

9. Effective Date. This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after the date that is 30 calendar days after the date set forth below.

ADOPTED by the City Council of the City of Billings, Montana, on second reading this 8<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2008.



ATTEST:

*Cari Martin*  
Cari Martin, City Clerk

CITY OF BILLINGS  
*Ron Tussing*  
Ron Tussing, Mayor





**ATTACHMENT 1**  
**Expanded North 27th Street Urban Renewal District – 2008 Boundaries, Boundaries of the**  
**Expanded N. 27th Street District (2006) and the Boundaries of the N. 27th Street District**  
**(2005)**

**ATTACHMENT 2**  
**Expanded North 27<sup>th</sup> Street Urban Renewal District – 2008**  
**Boundary Description**

Beginning at a point at the intersection of the centerlines of 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue North and North 31<sup>st</sup> St. proceeding east along the centerline of 6<sup>th</sup> Ave. North to a point at the intersection of the centerlines of 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue North and N. 22<sup>nd</sup> Street proceeding south along the centerline of North 22<sup>nd</sup> Street, crossing the centrally assessed Burlington Northern Railroad property, to a point at the intersection of South 22<sup>nd</sup> Street and Minnesota Avenue proceeding west along the centerline of Minnesota Avenue to a point at the intersection of Minnesota Avenue and South 23<sup>rd</sup> Street proceeding south along the centerline of South 23<sup>rd</sup> Street to a point at the intersection of South 23<sup>rd</sup> Street and 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue South proceeding west along the centerline of 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue South to a point at the intersection of the centerlines of South 31<sup>st</sup> Street, crossing the centrally assessed Burlington Northern Railroad property, Avenue South and South 31<sup>st</sup> Street proceeding north along the centerline of South 31<sup>st</sup> Street, crossing the centrally assessed Burlington Northern Railroad property, to the starting point at the intersection North 31<sup>st</sup> Street and 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue North encompassing all parcels and tax codes therein.

Downtown Billings Partnership, Inc  
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Prepared by

FOR CITY OF BILLINGS AND PLANNING REVIEW  
October 14, 2008

**EXPANSION OF THE BILLINGS, MONTANA  
NORTH 27<sup>TH</sup> STREET URBAN RENEWAL AREA,  
WITH TAX INCREMENT, AND AMENDMENT TO  
THE URBAN RENEWAL PLAN**

**ATTACHMENT 3**  
Expanded North 27<sup>th</sup> Street Urban Renewal Area – 2008  
Modified Plan

The original Downtown Redevelopment District, a downtown tax increment finance district, was created on December 20, 1975 by a resolution which cited hazardous conditions existing in the district due to overhead utility wires, inefficient land use, problems of access and circulation, physical constraints to development, random location of mixed uses and deteriorated building conditions, and found that rehabilitation and redevelopment of the District would be in the public

SECTION 2 – BACKGROUND

On July 11, 2005, the City Council adopted an ordinance that (a) created the North 27<sup>th</sup> Street District Urban Renewal Area ("North 27<sup>th</sup> Street District") and (b) adopted an urban renewal plan for the district. On November 13, 2006 the City Council adopted an ordinance that (a) expanded the North 27<sup>th</sup> Street District and (b) modified the urban renewal plan for the district. For reasons discussed in this Amendment to the Urban Renewal Plan of the North 27<sup>th</sup> Street District ("Plan"), it has been determined that the North 27<sup>th</sup> Street District should be expanded again to include other contiguous blighted properties in need of redevelopment. Further, it has been determined that this area, known as the Central Business District of Billings, has been and is in need of expanded public parking, enhanced pedestrian connections and experiences, improved public safety, and infrastructure improvements to public and private properties that will lead to increased taxable values. The existing urban renewal plan may be modified by ordinance in accordance with the procedure described in M.C.A. § 7-15-4221. The Urban Renewal Plan of the North 27<sup>th</sup> Street District approved by the City Council on July 11, 2005 and modified on November 13, 2006 is hereby included by reference as part of this amended Plan and shall remain applicable hereto except to the extent the original plan is explicitly or impliedly amended by this Plan. It is recognized as part of this Plan that the basic vision of the document known as Downtown Billings Framework Plan, adopted by the Billings City Council on December 22, 1997 and by the Yellowstone County Commissioners on December 23, 1997, is still valid and should be considered a part hereof. The terms defined in "Part I – DEFINITIONS" of the North 27<sup>th</sup> Street District Plan shall have the same meanings in this Plan unless a contrary meaning is expressed herein. The expanded district proposed in this Plan is hereafter referred to as the Expanded North 27<sup>th</sup> Street District - 2008 or the "District."

SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION

The area has several pockets of low taxable value, with several lots of the land being owned by government and other non-profit entities and several buildings that are over 50% vacant.

The creation of the Expanded North 27<sup>th</sup> Street District is essential to any planned development at 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue North and North Broadway, redevelopment of the vacant Northern Hotel, improving security and expanding the clean safe and vibrant programs of the Business Improvement District, continuing redevelopment of the Civic Plaza area, developing the boundary areas of the Medical Corridor and the East Billings Urban Renewal Area, and expanding the Historic District. It could also assist with the essential remodeling of the Northern Hotel, the Babcock Theatre, the Westwood Building, the Lincoln Hotel Building. Public infrastructure construction within this expanded District could assist with the renovation and/or relocation of various City facilities, such as the public library. It is currently expected that the expanded North 27<sup>th</sup> Street District may help fund the following projects:

**I. Business Programs and Projects**

- a. Business Retention
  - i. Targeted assistance and review of existing street level businesses
  - ii. Retail market survey
- b. Business Recruitment
  - i. Development of a "chainlet" network
  - ii. Business plan development assistance
  - iii. Association networking
  - iv. Business Improvement District support
  - v. Business cluster analysis
  - vi. Pedestrian study
- 1. demographics
- 2. directions
- 3. linkages
- 4. destinations
- 5. wayfinding

**II. Parking and Transportation**

- a. Increase use of public transit
- b. Parking structures to support current and future needs
- c. Explore parking linkages to adjacent destinations
- d. Explore parking management practices and programs
  - i. Off street parking



- (b) inadequate provision for ventilation, light, proper sanitary facilities, or open spaces as determined by competent appraisers on the basis of an examination of the building standards of the municipality;
- (c) inappropriate or mixed uses of land or buildings;
- (d) high density of population and overcrowding;
- (e) defective or inadequate street layout;
- (f) faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness;
- (g) excessive land coverage;
- (h) unsanitary or unsafe conditions;
- (i) deterioration of site;
- (j) diversity of ownership;
- (k) tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land;
- (l) defective or unusual conditions of title;
- (m) improper subdivision or obsolete plating;
- (n) the existence of conditions that endanger life or property by fire or other causes; or
- (o) any combination of the factors listed in this subsection (2).

The land being added to the Plan area includes 405 (Exhibit A) property tax codes plus a segment of centrally assessed BN Railroad property. The complete, expanded Urban Renewal Area will have 481 property tax codes plus the segment of BN Railroad property. Within that total area, and as noted in the 2006 approved Urban Renewal Plan, there are many "target areas" that should be immediately considered for redevelopment. The properties on N. Broadway between 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue North and 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue North will need additional parking to facilitate the construction of a Stockman Bank facility. The area adjacent to the Northern Hotel on North Broadway is in need of parking due to the closure of the privately owned parking structure in that area due to unsafe and blighted conditions of the structure. The area east of the Yellowstone County Courthouse Lawn is targeted for a new federal courthouse and will need additional parking and green spaces. The area between the new MET transit facility on N. 25<sup>th</sup> Street and to the east boundary of the East Billings Urban Renewal Area (N. 22<sup>nd</sup> Street) is in need of redevelopment that could include workforce housing and parking. The status of the Battin Federal Courthouse is still unclear. The facility is contaminated with asbestos and is destined to become vacant with the completion of a new federal courthouse and office building. This vacancy will present a redevelopment opportunity in the near future. The area surrounding City of Billings Park IV contains many surface parking lots that could be developed if Park IV is sold to a private developer. This area lacks high-rise housing with mixed use occupancy on the first floor. The future use of the Lincoln Center is unclear and it could be a redevelopment

owned parking ramps within the area, except for Park IV have extensive "waiting lists" and public parking for adjacent office and commercial structures continues to be inadequate. Demand for parking will continue and additional and expanded parking structures will be required to accommodate commercial growth.

Deficient Land Use in Extended Area

In general, the area is under-utilized due to the significant amount of surface parking areas and a large number of single-story structures. The taxable value of this district must be stabilized and encouraged to grow.

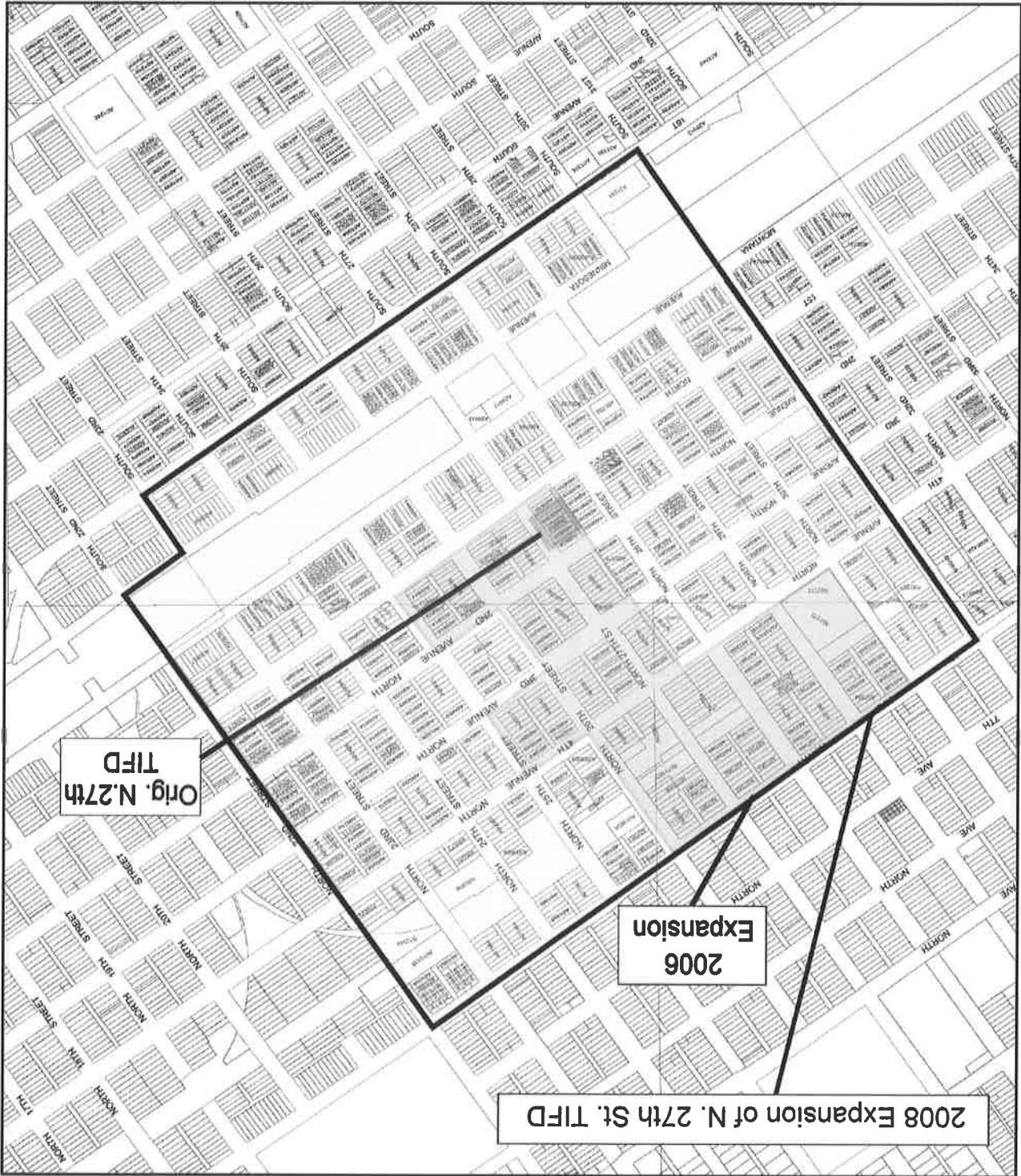
SECTION 6 – THE SITE AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO THE CITY

As noted, the expanded North 27<sup>th</sup> Street Urban Renewal Area comprises most of the Central Business District (CBD) of the City of Billings.

SECTION 7 – LEGAL DESCRIPTION

The legal description of the proposed Expanded North 27<sup>th</sup> Street District – 2008 is as follows:

Beginning at a point at the intersection of the centerlines of 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue North and North 31<sup>st</sup> St. proceeding east along the centerline of 6<sup>th</sup> Ave. North to a point at the intersection of the centerlines of 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue North and N. 22<sup>nd</sup> Street proceeding south along the centerline of North 22<sup>nd</sup> Street, crossing the centrally assessed Burlington Northern Railroad property, to a point at the intersection of South 22<sup>nd</sup> Street and Minnesota Avenue proceeding west along the centerline of Minnesota Avenue to a point at the intersection of Minnesota Avenue and South 23<sup>rd</sup> Street proceeding south along the centerline of South 23<sup>rd</sup> Street to a point at the intersection of South 23<sup>rd</sup> Street and 1st Avenue South proceeding west along the centerline of 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue South to a point at the intersection of the centerlines of 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue South and South 31<sup>st</sup> Street proceeding north along the centerline of South 31<sup>st</sup> Street, crossing the centrally assessed Burlington Northern Railroad property, to the starting point at the intersection North 31<sup>st</sup> Street and 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue North encompassing all parcels and tax codes therein, all inclusive.



Map of entire Expanded N. 27th District

**SECTION 8 – PROPERTY DEVELOPERS**

New development in the proposed tax increment district will also be accomplished through the implementation of the Downtown Framework Plan. These Projects are described in Section 2 of this plan.

**SECTION 9 – PROJECT RELATIONSHIP TO THE FRAMEWORK PLAN**

The proposed urban renewal area and expanded tax increment district is located generally in the center of the City and encompasses most of the “districts” as defined by the Billings Framework Plan (“Framework Plan”). One goal of the Framework Plan was to remove barriers to downtown circulation and development created by 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue North and 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue North and establish the area between the avenues as both a discreet district and a recognized extension of the CBD, thereby allowing potential ties to the medical corridor and MSU-Billings from the CBD. Generally, the Framework Plan stressed the downtown’s ability to make a positive impact on the entire city. The Framework Plan also recommended a private non-profit organization to assist the City of Billings with the management of the Tax Increment District through an annual work plan and contract. This Expanded N 27<sup>th</sup> Street District may be managed in a similar manner and could make use of the redevelopment and facilitation established through that management entity.

**Framework Plan Recommendation: Housing**

The Framework Plan states that housing should be a top priority and that the City should continue to work with builders and developers to encourage downtown housing through various methods. Specifically, the plan states that high-rise housing is to be located in the east transition zone and portions of the north transition zone.

The formation of an expanded tax increment district will help to raise funds that can be used for construction or rehabilitation of public infrastructure necessary to attract and retain housing in the area.

3. The Framework Plan encourages the development of the 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue North corridor. An enhanced Library, as accomplished by projects described in this Plan, will provide an excellent entrance to this corridor.
  4. Future redevelopment and revitalization of structures like the Northern Hotel and the Babcock Theatre Building are enabled by this district.
  5. This expanded district may assist with the completion of and continued modernization of City owned downtown parking structures.
- In conclusion, expansion of the North 27<sup>th</sup> Street Urban Renewal District to include the property described in this amended Plan will have a positive effect on the CBD and the City.