

**Senate Finance and Taxation
Chairman – Senator Jessica Bell
March 17, 2021**

**Testimony of David Ashley
Chairman, Souris River Joint Board
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701.626.1566**

HB 1431

Good morning, Chairman Bell and members of the Senate Finance and Taxation Committee. My name is David Ashley, and I am chairman of the Souris River Joint Board. The Souris River Joint Board is the project sponsor for the Mouse River Enhanced Flood Protection Project. I am here to express support for House Bill 1431 on behalf of all residents of the Mouse River basin.

The current version of the bill includes \$74.5 million for Mouse River flood control activities. It is our understanding that the State Water Commission budget bill will not include any additional funding for Mouse River flood control, so this bill is incredibly important.

We have provided a four-page brochure that identifies the status of the current biennium activities, the phases that we intend to advance in the next biennium (dependent on funding), a review of previous legislative intent, and a summary of the phases of the project for which no funding has been secured. In the interest of time, I will not review that information in detail, but I would invite you to review the information and reach out to us with any questions regarding that information. We intend to share more detail with your colleagues on Senate Appropriations during the hearing on House Bill 1020, which is the State Water Commission budget bill.

For all water projects across the state to continue, bonding is necessary. Providing funding for the large water projects within this bill will provide relief to the Resources Trust Fund that will allow for funding critical rural and municipal water needs across the state.

Bonding will allow these large projects to progress in a more rapid fashion and will help to curtail the costs associated with construction inflation. In our brochure, we outlined three funding scenarios ranging from \$46 million per biennium to \$140 million per biennium. These funding scenarios included completion schedules ranging from 20 years to 7 years, respectively.

If an appropriation of \$74.5 million is made in this and subsequent biennia, the Mouse River flood control project would be completed in approximately 16 years.

We ask that you include a 'do pass' recommendation on this bill. It is incredibly important for the residents of the Mouse River basin and will free up funding in the Resources Trust Fund for water projects across the State.



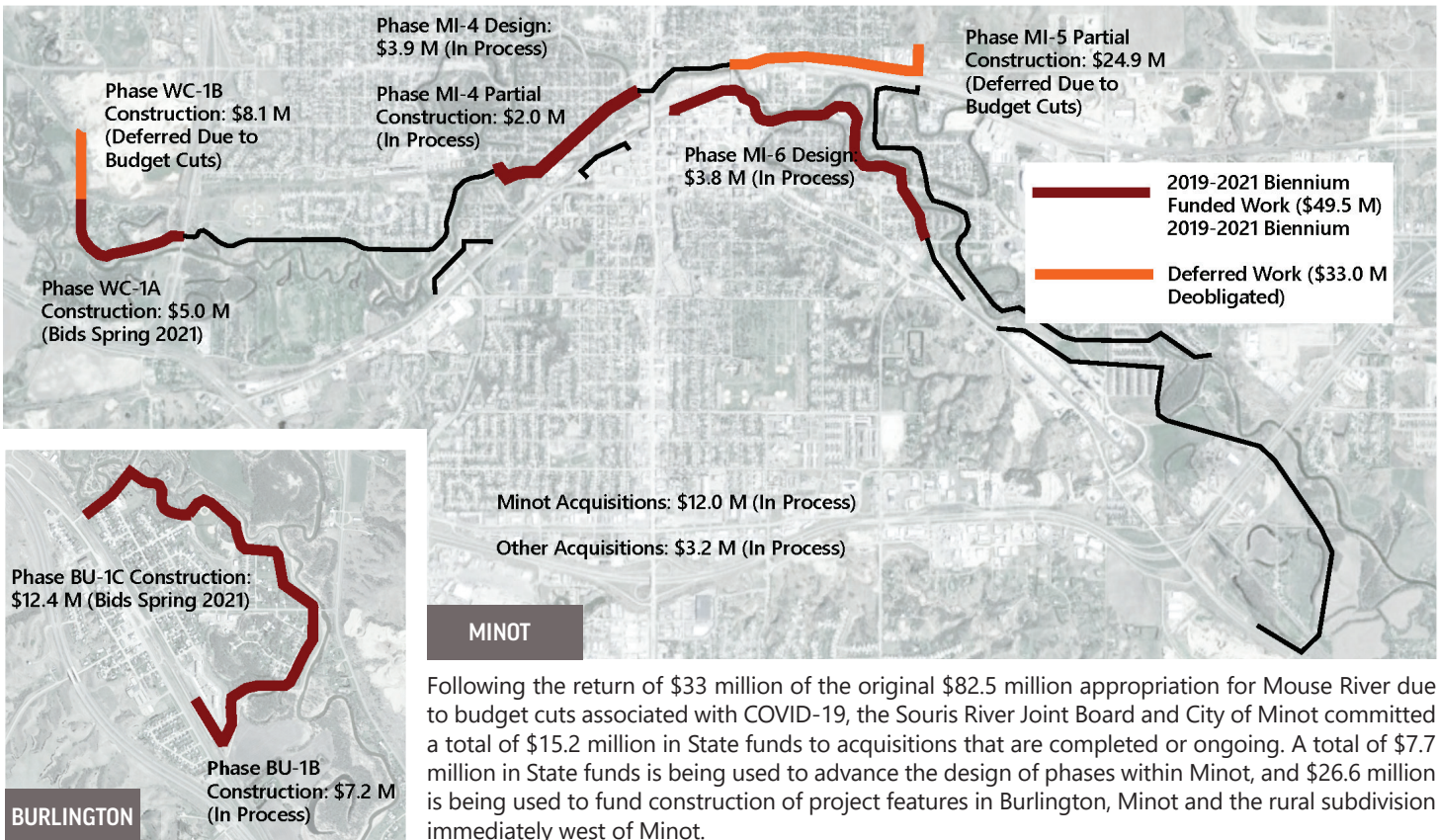
MOUSE RIVER PLAN

BASIN-WIDE FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT

FOR MINOT, RURAL COMMUNITIES, AND BASIN RESIDENTS

PROJECT SUMMARY : JANUARY 2021

2019-2021 Biennium Work Status Update:



Following the return of \$33 million of the original \$82.5 million appropriation for Mouse River due to budget cuts associated with COVID-19, the Souris River Joint Board and City of Minot committed a total of \$15.2 million in State funds to acquisitions that are completed or ongoing. A total of \$7.7 million in State funds is being used to advance the design of phases within Minot, and \$26.6 million is being used to fund construction of project features in Burlington, Minot and the rural subdivision immediately west of Minot.

2021-2023 Biennium Request

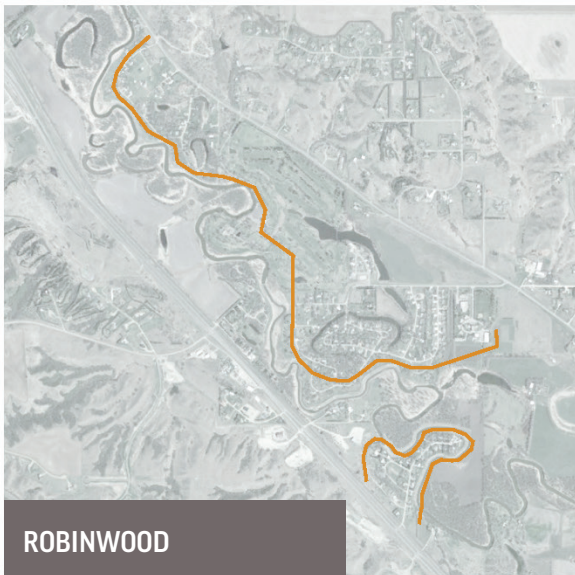
		TOTAL ESTIMATED COST
PROPERTY ACQUISITIONS	Minot	\$10M
	Outside of Minot	\$4.7M
DESIGN & PERMITTING	Phase WC-2: Robinwood Levee	\$4M
	Phase MI-7: Valker Road South Levee	\$3M
	Phase RU-1: Rural Conveyance Improvements	\$1M
CONSTRUCTION	Phase MI-5: Northeast Tieback Floodwall	\$64M
	Phase WC-1B: Tierrecita Vallejo Levee North	\$13M
	Phase SA-1: Sawyer Bridge	\$4M
	Phase VE-1: Velva Bridge	\$4M
	Phase RC-1: Mouse River Park Bridge	\$4M
	Phase RU-1: Rural Conveyance Improvements	\$3M
The executive proposal includes \$76 million in State funds, which will be used to advance additional acquisitions, design and construction of features as shown in this table.		Total
		State Funds
		Local Funds
		\$114.7M
		\$76M
		\$38.7M



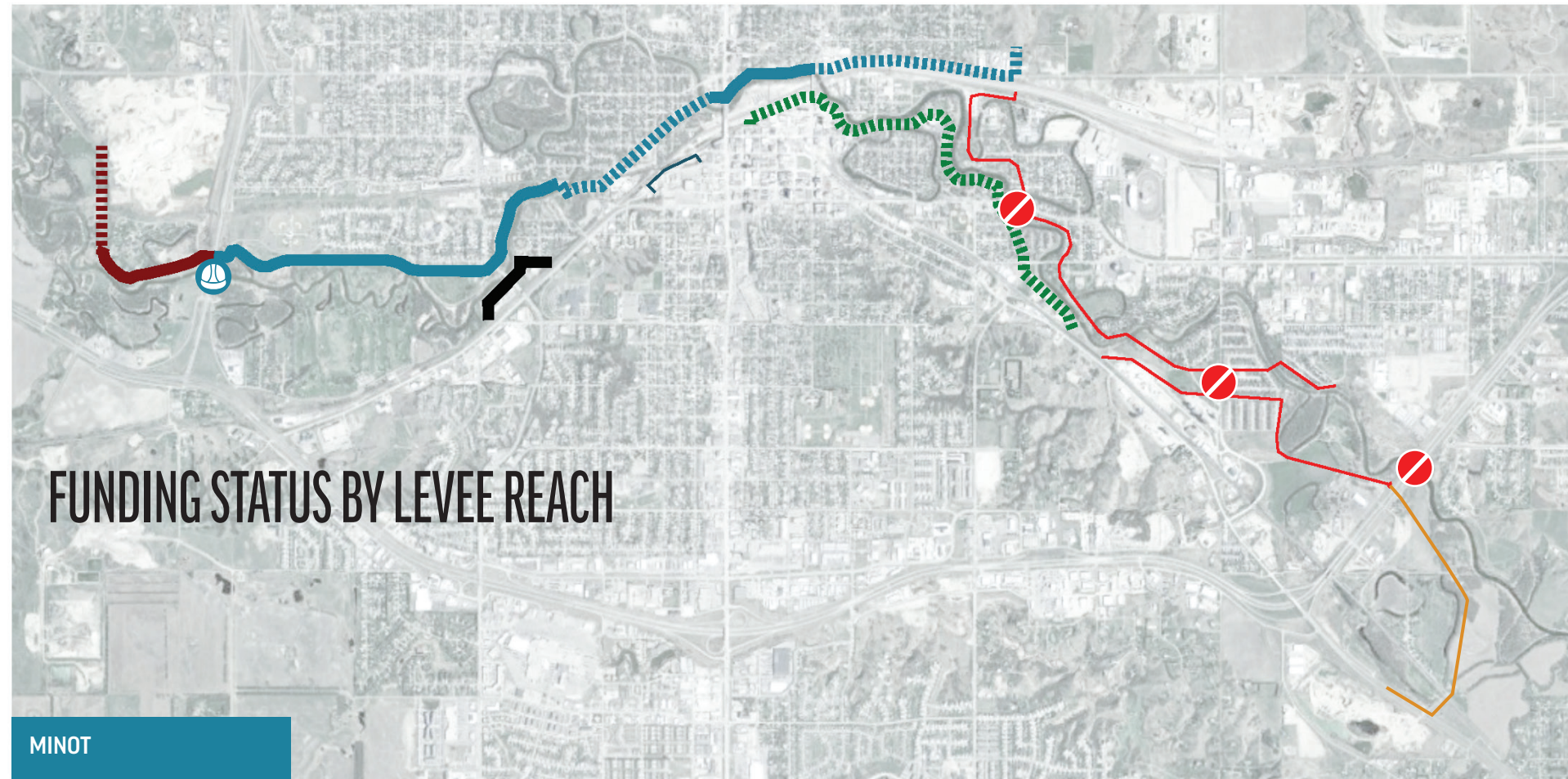
MOUSE RIVER PARK



BURLINGTON



ROBINWOOD



FUNDING STATUS BY LEVEE REACH

MINOT

MINOT SYSTEMS

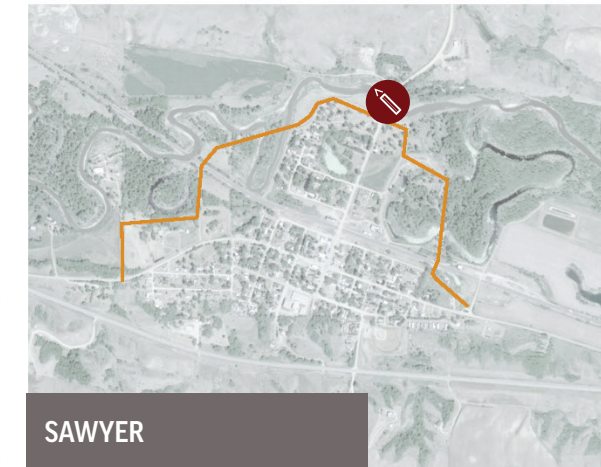
- Levee/Floodwall Construction Funded
- MINOT MILESTONE 1**
 - Levee/Floodwall Construction Funded
 - Levee/Floodwall Design Funded
 - Bridge Construction Funded
- MINOT MILESTONE 2**
 - Levee/Floodwall Design Funded
- MINOT MILESTONE 3**
 - Unfunded Levee/Floodwall
 - Unfunded Bridge

RURAL COMMUNITY SYSTEMS

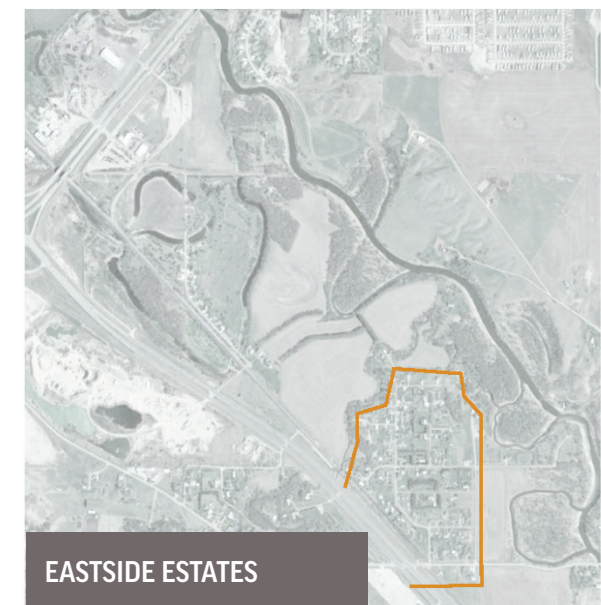
- RURAL COMMUNITY SYSTEMS**
 - Rural Community Levee Construction Funded
 - Rural Community Levee Design Funded
 - Rural Community Bridge Construction Funded
 - Rural Community Bridge Design Funded
- Unfunded Rural Community Levee



VELVA



SAWYER



EASTSIDE ESTATES

Previous Legislative Support:

To date, the State of North Dakota has committed a total \$228.7 million for flood risk management activities in the Mouse River basin since the record flood of 2011. In the current biennium, a total of \$82.5 million was originally appropriated. However, due to the anticipated reductions in revenue related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Souris River Joint Board voluntarily released a total of \$33 million in State funding back to the State Water Commission. The activities originally planned for implementation in the current biennium that were voluntarily deferred include the construction of the Northeast Tieback and Minot Milestone 1 and the north portion of the Tierrecita Vallejo levee (rural community immediately west of Minot).

Past Legislative Intent:

During the 2017 Legislative Session, Legislative Intent was established to fund up to \$193 million for improvements within the city limits of Minot. The basis for that amount was the State's share of the total estimated costs to construct only Minot Milestone 1. The previously established Legislative Intent does not provide a funding commitment for the construction of Minot Milestone 2, Minot Milestone 3, or any of the improvements within the rural communities outside of Minot city limits.



Current Biennium Design:

Through the current biennium, design has been funded for several phases inside and outside of Minot. Within Minot, the design of multiple phases of Minot Milestone 1 is ongoing, including the Northeast Tieback and the Maple Diversion. Design is beginning on Minot Milestone 2 as well. Outside of Minot, design has been completed for levee systems at Burlington and Tierrecita Vallejo. In addition, the design of bridge replacements for Mouse River Park, Sawyer and Velva is ongoing.



Current Biennium Construction:

In the current biennium, construction has been funded for levee improvements at Burlington and Tierrecita Vallejo. In addition, construction for relocating utilities associated with the Maple Diversion has been funded.

FASTER IMPLEMENTATION WILL SAVE MILLIONS

SCENARIO 1

\$902M

SCENARIO 2

\$735M

SCENARIO 3

\$767M

City of Minot
Shaun Sipma, Mayor
515 2nd Avenue SW
Minot, North Dakota 58701
Ph: (701) 721-6839



Souris River Joint Water Resource Board
David Ashley, Chairman
P.O. Box 1516
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PREVIOUS FUNDING

To date, the project has received funding from State, federal and local agencies totaling \$409 million, with \$228.7 million being provided by the State of North Dakota. This funding has been used for acquisitions, relocations, design, permitting and construction activities. Taking into account the reduction in funding during the 19-21 biennium, the average State appropriation level for the Mouse River Enhanced Flood Protection Project has been \$45.7 million per biennium since 2011. It is estimated that the total new appropriation (State, federal and local) needed to complete the project is \$674 million.

INFLATION

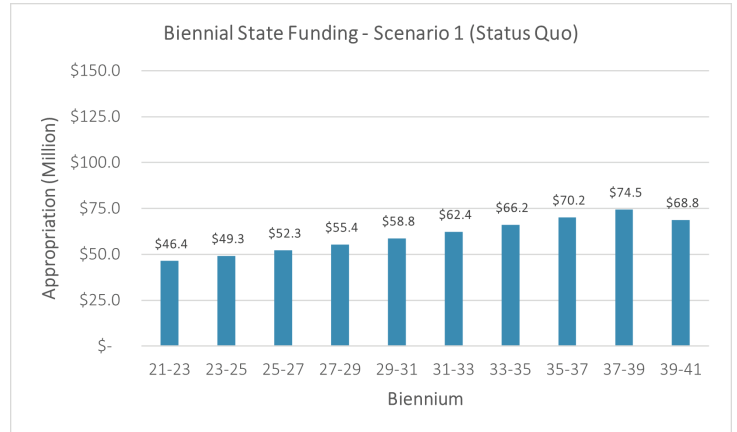
Thus far, the project has been able to counteract the effects of inflation through value engineering. The initial budget for the project, established in 2013, was \$1.028 billion. The current total budget for the project is \$1.083 billion, with \$674 million currently unfunded. The estimated State share to complete the project is \$452 million (2021 dollars), assuming no additional federal funding.

As the schedule for the project is extended, the costs will increase due to inflation. Three funding scenarios have been developed for the project based on varying degrees of funding.

Scenario 1 is based on assuming the average of the State appropriations since 2011 in the 2021-2023 biennium with a 3% annual escalator. Based on this assumed funding scenario, the project will be completed in 2041, and the total cost to complete the project would be \$902 million.

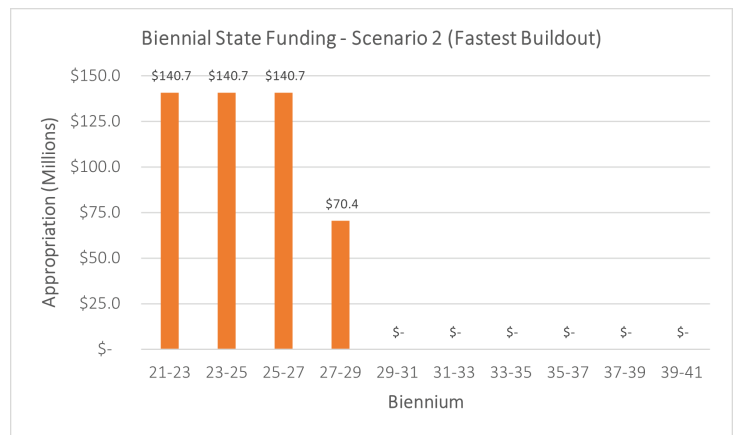
Scenario 2 is based on assuming funding being made available during a fast-track project implementation over the next 7 years. Based on this assumption, the project will be completed in 2028 and the total cost to complete the project would be \$735 million. This represents a \$167 million reduction in the total project costs as compared to Scenario 1.

Scenario 3 is based on assuming funding being made available during a 10-year project implementation. Based on this assumption, the project will be completed in 2031, and the total cost to complete the project would be \$767 million. This represents a \$135 million reduction in the total project costs as compared to Scenario 1.



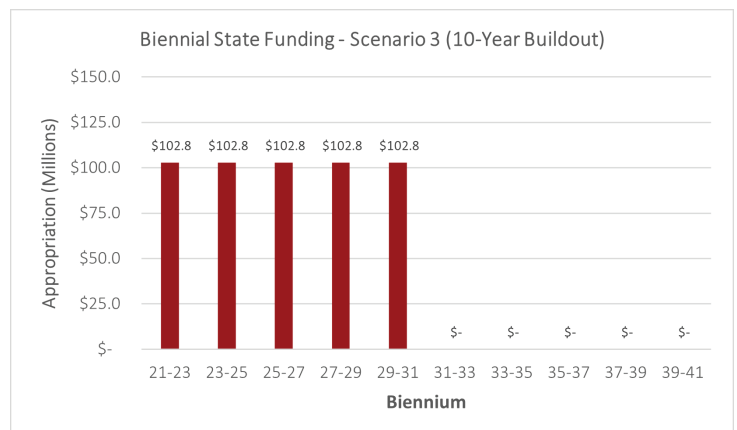
Total Cost to Complete: \$902 million
State Share to Complete: \$604 million

COMPLETION DATE 2041



Total Cost to Complete: \$735 million
State Share to Complete: \$493 million

COMPLETION DATE 2028



Total Cost to Complete: \$767 million
State Share to Complete: \$514 million

COMPLETION DATE 2031