

City of
Binford, North Dakota



STRATEGIC PLAN



June 1, 2005

TABLE OF CONTENTS

for

Binford Strategic Plan

	Page
I. Executive Summary	1
II. Organizational Description	2
III. Vision, Mission, and Values Statement	4
IV. Goals and Strategies	5
V. Recommendations	7
VI. Conclusions	8
VII. Sources	9
VIII. Appendices	10
Appendix A: Minutes from the April 26, 2005 and May 23, 2005 Binford Strategic Planning Meetings	
Appendix B: Results from <u>Why Plan?</u> Questionnaire	
Appendix C: Action Planning Worksheets for Binford	
Appendix D: List of Businesses and Organizations in Binford	

I. Executive Summary

To improve the viability of the community economy and maintain the quality of life, Binford is working to ensure a prosperous future. Preparing for the future, Binford began a Strategic Planning process on April 26, 2005. Community members who attended the planning meeting provided information for the foundation for the Binford Strategic Plan. People at the meeting stressed the importance of Binford's "small town atmosphere", "supporting the businesses that are here", "knowing your neighbors", "good paying jobs", "more housing", and having "a good place to raise your family".

The business sector in Binford fuels the economy. It is the mainstay. Areas of employment and industry are in a number of categories including retail trade, education, transportation, and agriculture. The school children in kindergarten through Grade 6 attend Midkota Elementary School in Binford. Junior high and high school students attend school in Glenfield. Keeping young people in the community is a challenge and solutions for "keeping the population steady" are an important aspect of the Strategic Plan.

According to results from the planning meeting, Binford values, above all, its **community attitude** of friendliness, cooperation, and volunteering. Feedback from the community indicated four primary areas that are addressed by the Strategic Plan:

- **Jobs,**
- **Safe and Healthy Environment (including water),**
- **Loss of Population, and**
- **Housing.**

Other areas selected for action in the plan are: **maintaining the school system, researching value-added agriculture industries, tourism, day care, and improvements to Main Street.** These strategic issues are worked out in detail in the Action Planning Worksheets used by the committees working on the Strategic Plan. Timelines are attached to each goal. Clearly the existence of a Strategic Plan will assist Binford in securing state and federal funding. Governmental agencies often require a community have a Strategic Plan for inclusion in its written application for funds.

In reviewing the plan, it is important to note that all the members of the community in Binford are welcome to contribute to the process of maintaining and updating the Strategic Plan. In order to keep the community working together for success, several recommendations are offered. First, the community leadership and core planning groups will need to promote the Vision, Mission and Values of Binford. Everyone will need to work to promote the plan and keep it in the public eye. In addition, a specific committee will monitor progress, make changes as necessary, and ensure that the plan is a working document for the benefit of the community.

II. Organizational Description

In April 2005, the community of Binford and four other communities from the Griggs-Steele Empowerment Zone began a series of Strategic Planning meetings. The results of the community meetings in Binford were used to create a Strategic Plan. This plan was developed by Binford residents for the benefit of the community. Binford is proud of its friendly, safe, small-town environment and wants to maintain a viable economic future.

As a rural northeastern community in North Dakota, Binford is situated amid scenic rolling hills surrounded by farmland, wildlife, and lakes. The community has a population of 235 people, 94 occupied housing units, and a median household income of \$25,375. (Year 2000 U.S. Census) Located on Highway 1, 52 miles north of Interstate 94, Binford was incorporated in April of 1906. The Griggs County Centennial History summarized the community philosophy with these words: “As we recall the past, we will look to the future with the hope that our town will continue its good way of life for generations to come.”

An essential part of the present and future for every community is employment. Areas of employment in Binford are in the sectors of:

- Agriculture,
- Food Services, Entertainment, and Recreation,
- Education and Social Services,
- Transportation and Utilities, and
- Retail trade.

To provide for the health and well-being of the community, Binford has access to services in the following categories:

- Midkota Elementary School, Grades K – 6
- Midkota High School in Glenfield, ND (20 miles away)
- Main Street and Other Businesses – Refer to Appendix D for List of Businesses and Organizations in Binford
- Recreation Facilities at Sibley Lake National Wildlife Refuge, Red Willow Lake Resort, and Binford Rodeo Arena

- Health Care Services - Cooperstown Medical Center (17 miles away), Nelson County Health System (19 miles away in McVile) and Binford Ambulance Service
- Binford Fire Department
- Airport Service – Cooperstown Regional Airport (17 miles), Jamestown Regional Airport (50 miles), Grand Forks International Airport (86 miles), Devils Lake Municipal Airport (54 miles)
- Churches - Binford Assembly of God, Trinity Lutheran Church, and Bethany Free Lutheran Church

III. Vision, Mission, and Values

Strategic Planning is purpose, meaning, and values. Vision is moving forward with a clear sense of *what* the community should look like and *how* the community should perform. Mission provides a sense of purpose to the community as to *why* the plan is carried out. And finally, the Strategic Plan should reflect the philosophy or values important to the community. (Bryson)

The Binford Vision of Success

With small town values of friendliness and respect, maintain a healthy and safe community, where our citizens can live, attend school, work, and enjoy quality business services and recreation facilities.

The Binford Mission Statement

Work together providing community services and supporting business opportunities for our citizens.

The Binford Values

To maintain public confidence and trust in Binford, all aspects of community business will be done with integrity and fairness. To be successful, Binford will:

- Ensure that committee members work together to accomplish the goals and strategies outlined in the Action Planning Worksheets. It is understood that timelines and goals may change as new information is gathered.
- Make decisions based on objective information as it impacts the economic, political, social, and technological environment of the community.
- Communicate progress and changes in the Strategic Plan to the community in a timely and clear manner.
- Encourage public input so the plan continues to reflect the Mission, Vision, and Values of Binford.

IV. Goals and Strategies

The results from the Community Strategic Planning Meeting in Binford on April 26, 2005, were used to identify immediate and long-term goals. The goals were selected based on written answers to a series of five questions about the community as well as group discussion about the future. The minutes from the meeting and the results are found in Appendices A and B. In addition, a description of actions, strategies and committees is presented in the Action Planning Work Sheets in Appendix C.

Immediate Goals (3-5 Years)

The goals are not prioritized since various committees will be working simultaneously to achieve results. Some goals are already near completion, while others will be worked on through December 2008.

Water Quality

With recent changes in water quality standards from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, community water treatment requirements have become stricter regarding allowable levels of arsenic in community water supplies. In response to this new standard, Binford must find a solution for improved water quality. Plans are underway to change the Binford water system so that a local rural water supplier, Ramsey County Rural Water System, will supply water.

Streets, Sidewalks, Curb and Gutter Improvements for Main Street

To improve the appearance and make necessary repairs, Binford will upgrade the paving, sidewalks, curbs and gutters for two city blocks on Main Street. The improvements are limited to the two blocks on Main Street due to the cost of the project.

Housing

To improve the available housing in Binford, the Strategic Plan calls for construction of new single-family homes and for the conversion of an existing building to an apartment complex. The core-planning group for the Strategic Plan selected these goals to support further development in the community and as an incentive to bring new people to Binford.

Processing Plant

To create more jobs in Binford, the Strategic Plan outlines an approach for advertising and promoting the existing, unoccupied processing plant. If the building were used to house a new business or light industry then jobs would be created. The plant building is privately owned. Tax incentives for business will be explored and an approach presented to City Officials.

Research Value-Added Agriculture Production and Processing

To achieve this goal, a community committee will research avenues for establishing a value-added agricultural production and processing plant in Binford. Some research has already been completed regarding hog and dairy feedlots.

Expand Tourism Opportunities

Binford will create a more formal strategy for attracting visitors to the community. The strategy will look at existing community events including class reunions, community events, and an advertising campaign.

Business Development

The Strategic Plan emphasizes the retention and expansion of business services to improve the community economy and create jobs. The new businesses being considered are: a Laundromat, an automated Car Wash, and Massage Therapy Services. For a list of current businesses in Binford, see Appendix D.

Day Care Center

To provide childcare services to the families in Binford, the community has been working to establish a day care center. Arrangements are being made for upgrading an existing building and hiring staff for safe and affordable day care.

Long Term Goals (Beyond 5 Years)

More specific information for these three goals will be identified as committees meet. These are goals with a longer timeline for completion. The core planning group felt confident that responsible committees will put action steps in place as resources are identified and research is finished.

The three long term goals are to: construct a Motel, maintain the School System with grades Kindergarten through 6th and consider expansion to offer middle school and high school education, and build a Community Complex with indoor pool. These are major community projects and will take considerable time, effort, and resources for feasibility studies.

V. Recommendations

The Strategic Plan will serve as a guide for success in Binford. Communities who take the time and effort to plan for the future are more successful than communities without a mission and vision. Binford has organized community meetings for discussion and selection of goals. The decision-making remains a shared process, broadly based with support from citizens, governmental agencies, private business, and public organizations.

At the first Strategic Planning Meeting, the written answers from each of the participants demonstrated a number of qualities and challenges for Binford. Participants were asked, “*What do you like or appreciate about your community?*” The majority of written answers related to **community attitude** (friendliness, cooperation, volunteering). A positive community attitude is a strong attribute that will carry a community through hard times and provide the fuel for success.

Participants were also asked, “*What are the most important challenges your community is facing right now?*”. The answers were in these top four categories: **jobs, a safe and healthy environment (including water), loss of population, and housing**. The results guided the participants at the Strategic Planning meeting as they set goals for the future. For more information about the written answers from the meeting, refer to Appendix B.

One of the concerns voiced throughout the planning process for Binford is the importance of having a plan that’s practical and useful to the community. The simple existence of a plan shows that the community of Binford is organized and progressive. When applying for state and federal funding, the funding agencies often require that a community have a Strategic Plan. Binford is prepared and positioned to receive funding because of its Strategic Plan.

To maintain planning energy and community focus, the Strategic Plan must be a visible part of community awareness. The Vision, Mission, and Values along with current projects will need to be communicated to the community in a clear and continuous manner. Recommendations for methods to promote the Strategic Plan include:

- Post the Vision, Mission, and Values in buildings and on bulletin boards.
- Give citizens a bookmark, postcard or other written materials with highlights from the plan.
- Publish reports in the local newspaper.
- Use the web site of the Griggs-Steele Empowerment Zone to provide information and get out important messages.
- When training city officials and committee members, make the Strategic Plan part of the training information.
- Conduct meetings for regular progress updates about the Strategic Plan.
- Select a committee responsible for monitoring and reporting the progress of the plan.

All members of the community are welcome to contribute to the planning process as the Strategic Plan is updated. The plan will be a working document for the community.

VI. Conclusion

To conclude the Strategic Plan, the following quotes are presented from Binford citizens. The quotes are from “Developing a Visionary Statement” where members of the community were asked about creating the ideal community. The answers demonstrate why Binford is a community moving forward.

“I’d like to see the services that we have now—definitely, but I’d like to see growth. Houses built, more businesses in town.”

“Main Street is full of businesses. Kids are still playing in the schoolyard. Young families are supporting our town, older people have a housing unit to live in.”

“There is the smell of Johnsonville brats all over the neighborhood as neighbors go from yard to yard tasting each other’s BBQ. Friendly is the key word and quiet and peaceful is the scene...”

“Our Community would be self-sufficient in providing perfect jobs, lots of children to fill our schools, great water, lots of wildlife and clean lakes for great fishing.”

“Binford is truly unique because of the community spirit. The community is just that “ a community”! Helping neighbors on the street or in their homes, helping and welcoming strangers into the community. Binford is a friendly and active community.”

For additional information about the Binford Strategic Plan, you are welcome to contact:

Kristi Halvorson, City Coordinator
503 Whinery Street
Binford, ND 58416
Telephone: 701-676-2805 www.binfordnd.com

The Griggs-Steele Empowerment Zone
P.O. Box 335 Finley, ND 58230
Phone: 866-852-1132 www.griggs-steeleez.org

VII. Sources

Strategic Planning for Public and Nonprofit Organizations, John M. Bryson, Jossey - Bass Publishers, San Francisco, 1989.

Population Characteristics by City, Year 2000 Census Data, U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Griggs County History: Griggs County North Dakota 1879 – 1976, Taylor Publishing Company of Dallas, 1976.

Prepared in cooperation with the Community of Binford
Susan J. Fugere, business consultant
sfugere@idctech.net

APPENDIX A

MINUTES FROM THE BINFORD STRATEGIC PLANNING MEETINGS

April 26, 2005

and

May 23, 2005

Minutes from
Binford Strategic Planning Meeting
Tuesday, April 26, 2005
Binford Caf 

The Strategic Planning Meeting for Binford began at 6 p.m. with introductions by Kristi Halvorson, City Coordinator for Binford. Ms. Halvorson had contacted citizens from the community and invited them to meet and set priorities for the community Strategic Plan. Ms. Halvorson introduced Susan Fugere and Barb Burgum Lee, Consultants hired by the Empowerment Zone to conduct Strategic Planning meetings with each community within the Zone. The results of the meetings, along with background information from the City Coordinators, will be used to write a Strategic Plan for each community. (The eleven people attending this meeting were asked to sign in with their name and address. A list of participants is available from the Griggs-Steele Empowerment Zone.)

Susan Fugere, Consultant, presented the following program and led the discussion to identify goals for the community. A Handout titled, "Eight Steps to Strategic Planning", was given to each participant and used to review the process typically used in Strategic Planning. Then Ms. Fugere discussed characteristics common to many communities, using a Health, Wealth, and Wisdom theme. An example of a mission statement was also discussed and how a mission statement might be completed.

A new concept called Appreciative Inquiry was also presented. The concept is based on a positive environment for exchange of ideas in the community. Ms. Fugere asked the meeting participants to do two things. First, they should be positive about the projects their community will work toward. Second, they should be positive when discussing ideas and projects with other members of the community.

To allow each participant the opportunity to offer ideas for the Strategic Plan, a handout called, "Why Plan?", was given to each participant. An additional handout, "Developing A Visionary Statement" was filled out by each participant. The results from the handouts were used to open to the discussion concerning short and long-term goals for the community. The results will be used in the Strategic Plan.

The group discussed at length how to grow the community and how much growth was acceptable. There is concern within the community about how much growth and change is needed. Specific projects for job growth need to be smaller operations rather than larger. The Binford community wants small, controlled growth.

Immediate Goals (3 – 5 Years)

- Water- in progress, hook-up to rural water
- Sidewalks and Gutters
- Paving Roads
- Housing – single family, apartments converted to 2 bedroom
- Processing Plant – Identify lease holder
- Research Agriculture Production and Processing, value-added, hogs, dairy
- Expand Tourism Opportunities
- Laundromat
- Build a Carwash
- Massage Therapist
- Day Care Center

Long Term Goals (Beyond 5 Years)

- Motel
- K-12 School Maintenance
- Community Complex – indoor pool

The meeting concluded at 8:30 p.m. The core group of participants agreed to meet again in a week and review a draft of the Strategic Plan. The consultants may be called to come back for a meeting with the community.

Recorded by:
Barb Burgum Lee
Strategic Planning Consultant

Strategic Planning Meeting
Binford Fire Hall
May 23, 2005
6 p.m.

The meeting was called to review the draft of the Binford Strategic Plan. A group of seven people attended the meeting. Kristi Halvorson, City Coordinator, had contacted people from the community and asked for feedback about the Plan. Mrs. Halvorson suggested several changes in wording on pages 3, 4, 5 and 14. Susan Fugere, Strategic Planning Consultant noted the changes and stated that the final copy of the Binford Strategic Plan would be available in early June, and delivered to the Empowerment Zone office. Completed copies will be given to both the Empowerment Zone and to Kristi Halvorson.

The group discussed challenges to maintaining thriving rural communities and explored possible solutions to meeting those challenges. In addition, the group talked about the importance of community volunteers to implement the Strategic Plan. Based on past performance, the group agreed that serving food during meetings is an effective way to generate larger than normal attendance. Kristi Halvorson and other community leaders will be meeting with the volunteers for the Strategic Plan. A coordinated approach to the work ahead will help insure that the Plan is implemented in a timely way.

The goals of increased housing availability and business development were briefly reviewed. Susan Fugere and Warren Enyart presented information about Renaissance Zone incentives. Brenda Dissette offered new information about Essential Function Bonds for housing development.

Mrs. Halvorson will plan a follow-up meeting to make sure everyone stays involved and informed about the Strategic Plan. The meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Recorded by:
Barb Burgum Lee
Strategic Planning Consultant

APPENDIX B

RESULTS FROM
WHY PLAN? QUESTIONNAIRE

APPENDIX C

ACTION PLANNING WORKSHEETS
FOR BINFORD

Appendix D

List of Businesses and Organizations in Binford

Businesses

Edlund Motors	Services with Integrity
Halvorson Sales	Binford Grocery
Commercial Safety Installation	Binford Cafe
Hoyt Electric	T& K Tools
Strangeland Repairs	Bin-City Bulk
Beaver's Bait Shop	Hoyt Trucking
Halvorson Skid Steer Service	HP Auction Service
Red Willow Lake and Resort	Sedler Fencing
A&A Insurance	Lee's Truck Service
Binford Fertilizer, Feed & Seed	Floyd's Bar
Gilbertson & Sons Dirt Moving and Road Construction	Busch Agriculture Resources
Frappier Livestock Supply	Farmers Union Oil Company
Binford Hardware	Rickford Trucking
North American Fish Cooperative	Beavers Place
McVile State Bank	Sheyenne Financial Bank
Farmer's and Merchant's State Bank	The Cosmo Hair Salon
Permanent Hair Removal by Electrolysis	

Public and Nonprofit Organizations

U.S. Post Office	Binford Fire Department	Binford Ambulance Service
Binford Park		

Churches

Binford Assembly of God	Trinity Lutheran Church	Bethany Free Lutheran Church
-------------------------	-------------------------	------------------------------