



August 13, 2021

City of Minot
Mayor Shaun Sipma
515 2nd Avenue Southwest
Minot, North Dakota 58071

Re: **Mouse River Enhanced Flood Protection Project Phase MI-6
Anne Street Pedestrian Bridge Design Considerations**

Dear Mayor Sipma:

The Souris River Joint Board has entered into a contract with Houston Engineering to design Phase MI-6 of the Mouse River Enhanced Flood Protection Project within Minot. This is the phase of the project located from approximately 1st Street NW to approximately 8th Street SE along the south side of the Mouse River. This is generally located along the northern edge of downtown Minot.

One of the challenges with this phase is attempting to find the appropriate balance between (1) the cost of the project; (2) the footprint and acquisitions associated with the project; (3) preserving pedestrian access that currently exists; and (4) enhancing pedestrian access when it also provides a benefit to the flood control project. One of the design considerations which will influence all four of these areas is the Anne Street Bridge.

As you know, the City of Minot, following the design and approval of the plans and specifications for Phase MI-1 (4th Avenue Floodwall) of the project, requested that the Souris River Joint Board add an opening within the floodwall to accommodate more convenient access to the Anne Street Bridge. The SRJB subsequently issued a change order to the project contractor, and the opening was constructed per the City of Minot's request.

Since that time, the City of Minot has performed additional assessments of the Anne Street Bridge which identified structural deficiencies. As a result, the City closed the Anne Street Bridge to public access. During budget deliberations regarding capital improvement projects, the City Council recently deferred any action to address the structural deficiencies identified in the City's assessment. This inaction essentially renders the Anne Street Bridge useless to pedestrians, as it will remain closed due to safety reasons. With no plans to invest in the maintenance or rehabilitation of the bridge, continued degradation is a certainty for the bridge, and the opening which was added for the convenience of accessing the Anne Street Bridge seems to have very limited value.

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The SRJB has a longstanding policy of mitigating its impacts to public and private infrastructure. If the project impacts something negatively, the project generally makes an attempt to correct it and even looks for creative ways to enhance the infrastructure that was affected for the mutual benefit of the flood control project and the affected parties. One such example is the SRJB's grading enhancements at the Wee Links Golf Course. In this instance, excess river bank excavation was utilized to create rolling topography at the junior golf course, adding depth and character to the course, while also saving the project the costs associated with hauling the excess material off site to the City landfill.

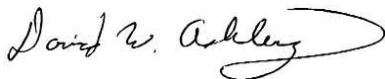
We are currently attempting to understand the City's intent with the Anne Street Bridge. If the City intends to rehabilitate the bridge and restore public access to the bridge, the flood control project will accommodate its presence and will need to make provisions for the bridge to cross over the new levee or floodwall that is to be constructed downtown. It currently appears that in order to accommodate the flood control features, a public access road (1st Avenue North), and a southern ramp for the Anne Street Bridge, additional property acquisition may be necessary. Reconstructing the south ramp of the Anne Street Bridge would also come at a cost to the flood control project. While these social and economic costs may be acceptable to the SRJB and the project, they would seem to make little sense if the City does not intend to restore public access to the Anne Street Bridge.

The SRJB respectfully requests that the City of Minot make a firm commitment to the future of the Anne Street Bridge so that we may proceed with the design of this phase of the flood control project. We respect the City's position on this piece of infrastructure and will accommodate its presence, provided that the City commits to its rehabilitation and maintenance with a definitive timeframe. The scenario we wish to avoid is one in which the flood control project invests to accommodate its presence on both sides of the river only to have the connecting link between the two ends abandoned or demolished in the future.

We appreciate the City's commitment to flood control throughout the region, and we acknowledge that these decisions are rarely easy to make. But we need our partner, the City of Minot, to make a firm decision on this issue so that we can continue to efficiently move forward for the citizens of Minot and the Mouse River basin.

Sincerely,

SOURIS RIVER JOINT BOARD



David Ashley
Chairman

Cc: Souris River Joint Board
Ryan Ackerman
Jerry Bents