



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Horace named 2019 City of the Year

Horace was named 2019 City of the Year by the North Dakota League of Cities (NDLC) during the League's 2019 Annual Conference, Sept. 21, in Bismarck. Council Member Bryan Schmidt accepted the award on behalf of the city.

In his presentation of the award to Horace, NDLC Executive Director Blake Crosby outlined some of highlights of their nomination.

From 2000 to 2010, Horace was designated one of the fastest growing small cities in North Dakota. They went from a population of roughly 900 in 2000 to an estimate over 2,800 now. Residential infill along a neighboring river has created a connection corridor and new growth away from the river has this city looking at a population of 10,000 to 14,000 by 2045.

Horace has a rather unique geographical location that creates the need for unique collaboration. Partnerships with neighboring cities, school district, and rural water district have encouraged regional participation and cost share in projects.

A recent \$107 million school bond referendum that passed with a 71% approval is seen as a game changer. Developers took note and from 117 available residential lots there are now over 900 lots in the platting stage.

There are many projects planned or in progress:

- A new middle school that will initially house 900 students with expansion capacity for 1,200 students and a new high school that will house 1,200 students with capacity to grow to 1,500. Both of those projects are a cost share with their school district. Infrastructure needed for the new schools is a cost share with the county, rural water and the adjoining city.
- An agreement with a nearby city to install a \$3.1 million sanitary sewer connect to support the schools and new housing.
- Working with rural water on a new one-million-gallon water tower which should go online in 2020. This is a jump from their current 75,000-gallon tower.
- Nearly doubling the number of housing units from 860 to 1,600 in the next three years as proposed by developers.

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- Developing a regional comprehensive plan for commercial, residential and industrial sector growth in cooperation with the local COG. This plan will transition away from a single use commercial zoning to a Center and Corridors approach.
- Continuing their visioning public meetings to encourage community engagement in the planning process.

With this growth and a need for planning has come recent additions to city staff. They hired their first city administrator in 2018, five additional staff in 2018, and a Community Development Director in 2019.

Horace city leaders have been active on the federal and state level also. They attended a North Dakota Elected Officials event in Washington, D.C., have had multiple meetings with Governor Burgum on city plans and communicate with their legislators on a regular basis.

Every day provides a new opportunity for Horace and they are working hard to take advantage of those opportunities.

Photo L to R: Horace Council Member Bryan Schmidt, Horace Council Member Chelsey Johnson, Horace City Administrator Brenton Holper, NDLC Executive Director Blake Crosby

The North Dakota League of Cities provides service, advocacy, leadership, education and support to the state's 357 cities. The League's mission - Strong. Dynamic. Cities" - expresses the value of services offered by the League.