



# Mayor and Council Communication

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July 27, 2015

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**SUBJECT:** \*Consider Actions Relating to Urban Woods and Prairies Initiative

**RECOMMENDATION:** The Mayor and City Council are asked to consider resolutions to approve implementation of the Urban Woods and Prairies Initiative for the North River Drive and Riverview Circle sites.

**BACKGROUND / KEY POINTS:** In May of 2014, the Moorhead City Council approved the Moorhead River Corridor Master Plan. The Plan identified *Habitat Enhancement and Water Quality* as a key principal along the corridor. On February 23, 2015, the Moorhead City Council approved a Memorandum of Understanding with Audubon Dakota to implement the Urban Woods and Prairies Initiative on seven sites in Moorhead, including:

1. Oakport Prairie Site (*Property owned by the Buffalo-Red River Watershed District*)
2. North River Drive
3. Homestead Prairie
4. Riverfront Park
5. Horn Park
6. Riverview Circle
7. River Oaks

**Goals of the Urban Woods and Prairies Initiative include:**

- Habitat creation, enhancement and restoration, and
- Creating urban native prairie habitat areas that benefit birds and other wildlife, are aesthetically pleasing, allow for community recreational and educational opportunities, increase flood resiliency and improve water filtration.

Audubon Dakota, in partnership with the Fargo Park District, has initiated the Urban Woods and Prairies Initiative on six sites in Fargo. Audubon Dakota staff presented the Moorhead sites and information on the UW&P Initiative to the Moorhead Parks Advisory Board at their January 20, 2015 meeting and the PAB was supportive of the UW&P Initiative. The Watershed District is also supportive of the UW&P Initiative. Letters were sent to the neighbors of the N. River Dr. and Riverview Circle sites and the information was provided to staff at River Keepers. No comments have been received as of July 22.

Audubon Dakota has, through donations and sponsorships, obtained funding to proceed with implementation of prairie restoration at two sites: North River Drive and Riverview Circle South. Site restoration terms include:

- **Audubon** will prepare a restoration site plan for each site (see attached).
- Site preparation will be completed by the **City** (tilling, leveling, etc.).
- Plantings will not occur on the levee.
- All site improvements (seeding, signage, plantings, etc.) noted within the site plans will be completed by **Audubon and Prairie Restorations, Inc.**
- **Audubon, with Prairie Restorations, Inc.**, will establish and maintain each site for a 3-year period. This is the most critical period when establishing native restoration sites.
- Following the 3-year establishment period, site maintenance will be completed by the **City**. **Audubon** will provide site specific maintenance and management plans for the City to utilize.

- **Audubon** may sponsor outdoor education programming at the sites.
- The **City** retains the right to add amenities to the sites.
- The sites are within the floodplain and subject to flooding. Neither party shall be held liable for loss or damage incurred.

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

- Site preparation will be completed by the City of Moorhead and is included within the approved 2015 Capital Improvement Budget.
- Site enhancements, as outlined in the approved site plans, will be completed by Audubon and Prairie Restorations, Inc. In addition to the proposed prairie and grassland planting areas, Audubon Dakota will also preserve and manage the existing wooded areas (debris removal, buckthorn control, etc.).
- Although natural resource restoration may require larger investments at the start, cost savings are recognized in the long term compared to mowing grass.

**VOTING REQUIREMENTS:** Majority of Quorum

*Disclaimer: Voting requirements may be subject to changes in the law, parliamentary procedural matters, or other unforeseen issues. The City Attorney provides opinion on questions of voting requirements in accordance with the Moorhead City Code, Minnesota State Statutes, and parliamentary procedure.*

Respectfully Submitted:



Michael J. Redlinger  
City Manager

**Department:** Planning and Neighborhood Services, Parks and Public Works  
**Prepared by:** Kristie Leshovsky, City Planner and Zoning Administrator  
 Holly Heitkamp, Parks and Recreation Director  
 Larry Anderson, Parks and Forestry Division Manager

**Attachments:** Draft Resolution  
 Site Plans, seed list and establishment protocol  
 Neighborhood letters



# Request for Council Action

<b>AGENDA SECTION:</b> Planning and Neighborhood Services Department		<b>ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT:</b> Planning	<b>MEETING DATE:</b> July 27, 2015
<b>ITEM NO. 9.A.</b>	<b>ITEM DESCRIPTION:</b> *Resolution to Approve Implementation of Urban Woods and Prairies Initiative - North River Drive		<b>PREPARED BY:</b> Leshovsky

## DRAFT RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Moorhead City Council approved the Moorhead River Corridor Master Plan ("Plan") on May 12, 2014 (Resolution 2014-0512-E); and

WHEREAS, one of the six principles identified in the Plan was Habitat Enhancement and Water Quality; and

WHEREAS, the Moorhead City Council approved a Memorandum of Understanding with Audubon Dakota relating to the Urban Woods and Prairies Initiative ("Initiative") on February 23, 2015 (Resolution 2015-0223-A) which identified seven sites in the City of Moorhead including:

1. Oakport Prairie Site (*Property owned by the Buffalo-Red River Watershed District*)
2. North River Drive
3. Homestead Prairie
4. Riverfront Park
5. Horn Park
6. Riverview Circle
7. River Oaks

WHEREAS, goals of the Initiative and complementary to the Plan and include: habitat creation, enhancement and restoration; and creating urban native prairie habitat areas that benefit birds and other wildlife, are aesthetically pleasing, allow for community recreational and educational opportunities, increase flood resiliency and improve water filtration; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and City Council have reviewed the proposed site plan for implementation of the Initiative for the North River Drive area and are supportive of the site plan.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Moorhead, Minnesota that the site plan for the North River Drive area is herein approved and the Mayor and City Manager are authorized and directed to enter into Agreements necessary for Audubon Dakota and their representatives to access the site and maintain the site as outlined in the April 27, 2015 Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Moorhead and Audubon Dakota.

PASSED: July 27, 2015 by the City Council of the City of Moorhead.



# Request for Council Action

<b>AGENDA SECTION:</b> Planning and Neighborhood Services Department		<b>ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT:</b> Planning	<b>MEETING DATE:</b> July 27, 2015
<b>ITEM NO. 9.B.</b>	<b>ITEM DESCRIPTION:</b> *Resolution to Approve Implementation of Urban Woods and Prairies Initiative - Riverview Circle South		<b>PREPARED BY:</b> Leshovsky

## DRAFT RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Moorhead City Council approved the Moorhead River Corridor Master Plan ("Plan") on May 12, 2014 (Resolution 2014-0512-E); and

WHEREAS, one of the six principles identified in the Plan was Habitat Enhancement and Water Quality; and

WHEREAS, the Moorhead City Council approved a Memorandum of Understanding with Audubon Dakota relating to the Urban Woods and Prairies Initiative ("Initiative") on February 23, 2015 (Resolution 2015-0223-A) which identified seven sites in the City of Moorhead including:

1. Oakport Prairie Site (*Property owned by the Buffalo-Red River Watershed District*)
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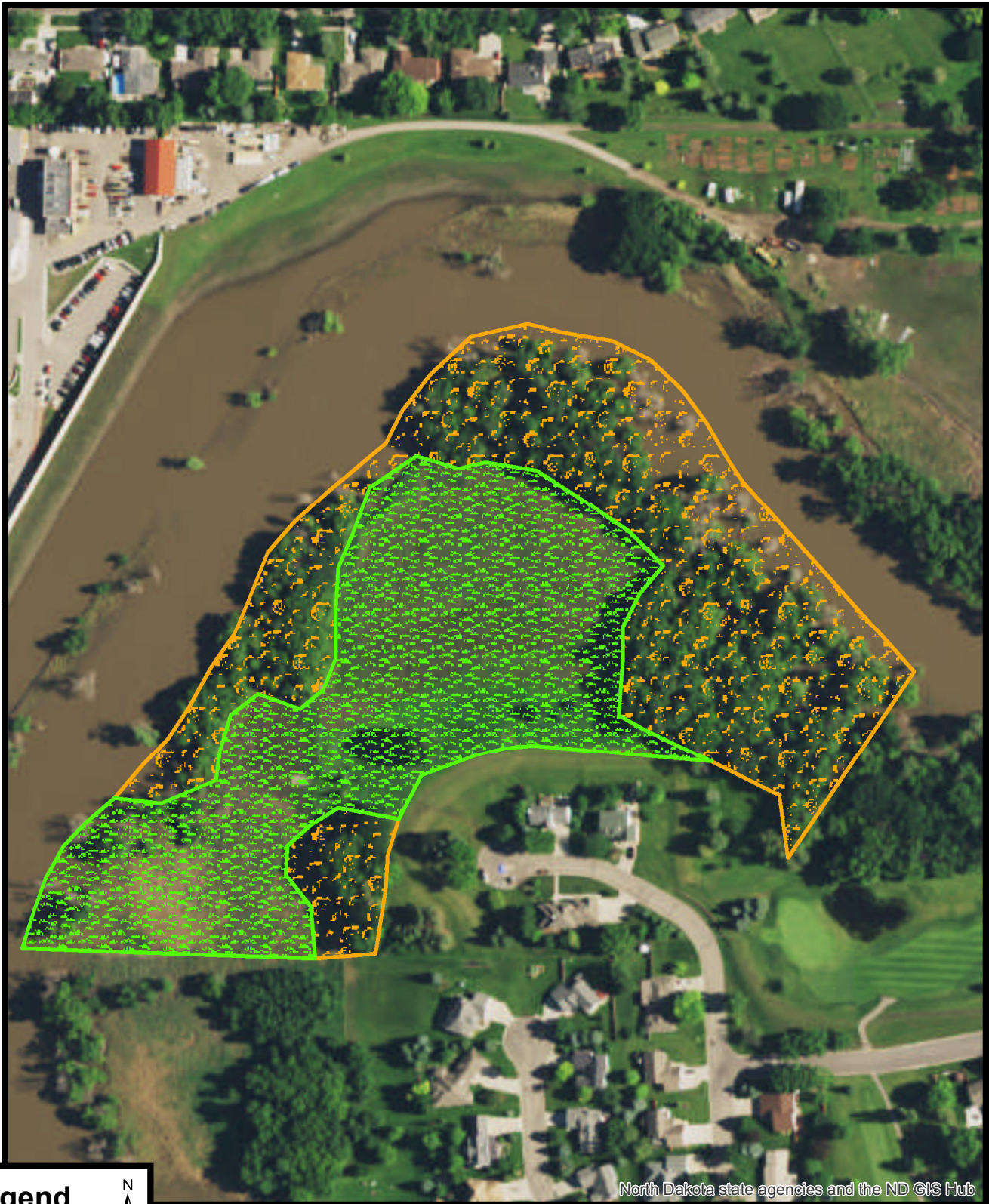
WHEREAS, goals of the Initiative and complementary to the Plan and include: habitat creation, enhancement and restoration; and creating urban native prairie habitat areas that benefit birds and other wildlife, are aesthetically pleasing, allow for community recreational and educational opportunities, increase flood resiliency and improve water filtration; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and City Council have reviewed the proposed site plan for implementation of the Initiative for the Riverview Circle area and are supportive of the site plan.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Moorhead, Minnesota that the site plan for the Riverview Circle area is herein approved and the Mayor and City Manager are authorized and directed to enter into Agreements necessary for Audubon Dakota and their representatives to access the site and maintain the site as outlined in the April 27, 2015 Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Moorhead and Audubon Dakota.

PASSED: July 27, 2015 by the City Council of the City of Moorhead.

# North River Drive



North Dakota state agencies and the ND GIS Hub

## Legend



-  Grassland
-  Woodland

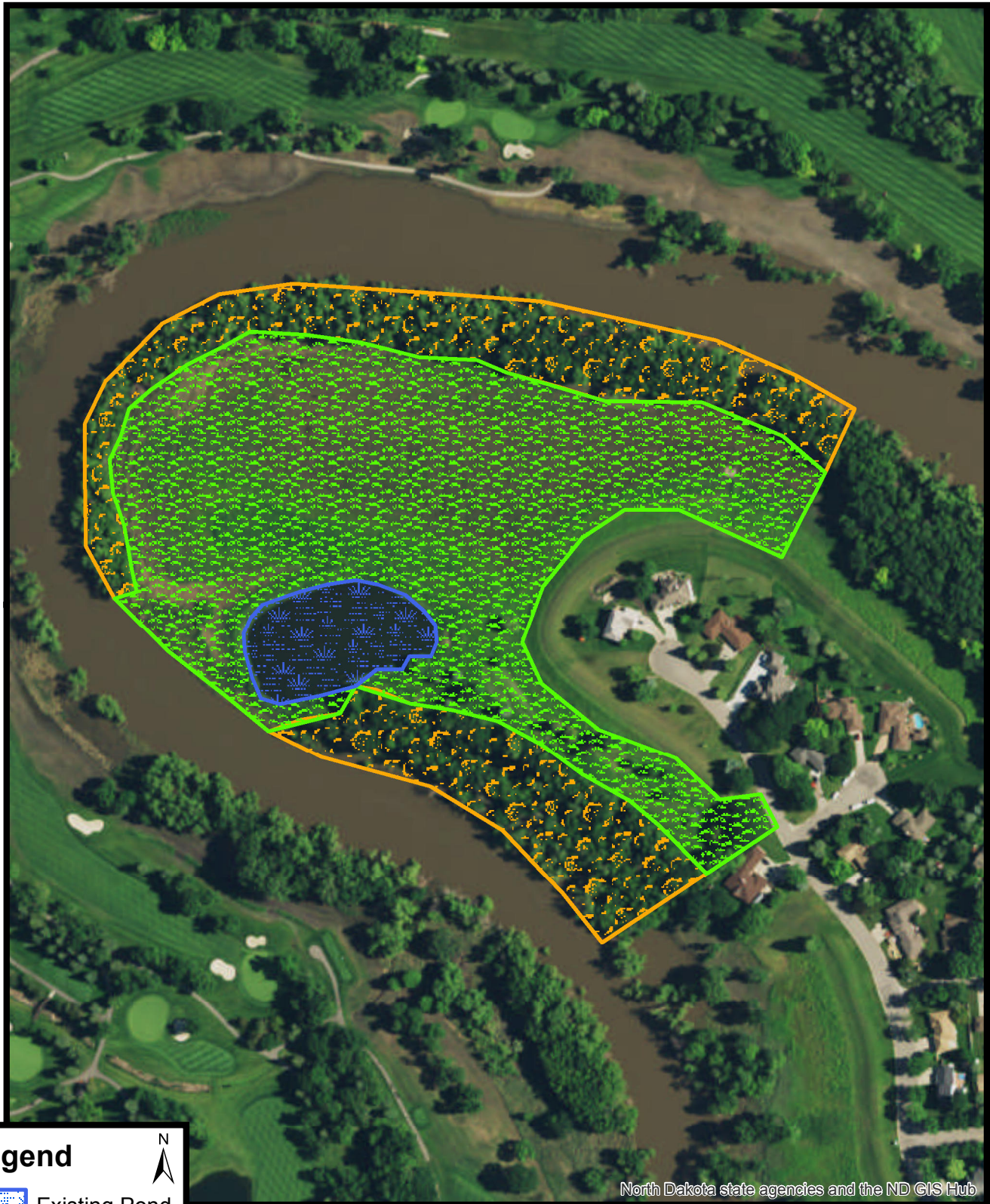
1:3,942

0 105 210 420 630 840 Feet

This map is for reference purposes.  
Final grassland/prairie planting  
areas subject to change.



# Riverview Circle



## Legend

-  Existing Pond
-  Grassland
-  Woodland



1:5,103

0 160 320 640 960 1,280 Feet

This map is for reference purposes.  
Final grassland/prairie planting  
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## Urban Woods and Prairies Initiative: Working Seed Lists

## Grass Seed for Drier Areas

**lbs. /acre**

Big bluestem ( <i>Andropogon gerardii</i> ) .....	1
Side oats grama ( <i>Bouteloua curtipendula</i> ) .....	2.75
Blue grama ( <i>Bouteloua gracilis</i> ).....	(.2)
Canada wild rye ( <i>Elymus canadensis</i> ) .....	(.5)
Slender wheatgrass ( <i>Elymus trachycaulus</i> ) .....	1
Little bluestem ( <i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i> ).....	3
Indian grass ( <i>Sorghastrum nutans</i> ).....	(.75)
Sand dropseed ( <i>Sporobolus cryptandrus</i> ).....	(.2)
Prairie dropseed ( <i>Sporobolus heterolepis</i> ) .....	(.1)
Green needlegrass ( <i>Stipa viridula</i> ).....	(.5)

**Total .....10 lbs/acre**

## Mesic Grass Seed

**lbs/Acre**

Big bluestem ( <i>Andropogon gerardii</i> ) .....	3.2
Side oats grama ( <i>Bouteloua curtipendula</i> ) .....	(.5)
Canada wild rye ( <i>Elymus canadensis</i> ) .....	(.5)
Slender wheatgrass ( <i>Elymus trachycaulus</i> ) .....	1.25
Switch grass ( <i>Panicum virgatum</i> ) .....	(.2)
Western wheatgrass ( <i>Pascopyrum smithii</i> ) .....	(.5)
Little bluestem ( <i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i> ) .....	(.75)
Indian grass ( <i>Sorghastrum nutans</i> ) .....	(2.5)
Prairie dropseed ( <i>Sporobolus heterolepis</i> ) .....	(.1)
Green needlegrass ( <i>Stipa viridula</i> ) .....	(.5)

**Total ..... 10 lbs/Acre**

### Grass Seed for wetter areas

**lbs. /acre**

Big bluestem ( <i>Andropogon gerardii</i> ) .....	3
Canada wild rye ( <i>Elymus canadensis</i> ) .....	(.5)
Blue-joint grass ( <i>Calamagrostis canadensis</i> ) .....	(.5)
Slender wheatgrass ( <i>Elymus trachycaulus</i> ) .....	1
Switch grass ( <i>Panicum virgatum</i> ) .....	(.5)
Western wheatgrass ( <i>Pascopyrum smithii</i> ) .....	(.5)
Little bluestem ( <i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i> ) .....	(.25)
Green bulrush ( <i>Scirpus atrovirens</i> ) .....	(.25)
Indian grass ( <i>Sorghastrum nutans</i> ) .....	(2)
Cord grass ( <i>Spartina pectinata</i> ) .....	1
Green needlegrass ( <i>Stipa viridula</i> ) .....	(.5)

**Total ..... 10 lbs/Acre**

**Wildflower Mix for Drier Areas:**

17% Purple prairie clover, 16% Black-eyed Susan, 15% Hoary vervain,  
10% Leadplant, 10% White prairie clover, 4% Bush clover,  
4% Showy Penstemon, 3% Azure aster, 3% Stiff tickseed,  
3% Gray goldenrod, 2% Common milkweed, 2% Rough blazing star,  
2% Wild bergamot, 2% Prairie rose, 2% Stiff goldenrod,  
1% Fragrant giant hyssop, 1% Prairie cinquefoil, 1% Western spiderwort,  
1% Golden Alexander, 0.5% Yarrow, 0.5% Northern bedstraw,  
all by bulk weight.....**8 oz/acre**

**Mesic Wildflower Mix:**

15% Purple prairie clover, 13% Black-eyed Susan, 11% Hoary vervain,  
10% White prairie clover, 9% Leadplant, 6% Common ox-eye,  
4% Fragrant giant hyssop, 4% Smooth aster, 4% Azure aster,  
3% Bush clover, 3% Wild bergamot, 3% Stiff goldenrod, 3% Blue vervain,  
3% Golden Alexander, 2% Gray goldenrod, 1% Common milkweed,  
1% Stiff tickseed, 1% Canada tick trefoil, 1% Meadow blazing star,  
1% Prairie cinquefoil, 1% Mountain mint, 0.5% Yarrow,  
0.5% Northern bedstraw, all by bulk weight .....**8 oz/acre**

**Wildflower Mix Wetter Areas:**

10% Blue vervain, 8% Swamp milkweed, 8% Joe-pye weed,  
8% Mountain mint, 7% Black-eyed Susan, 6% Boneset,  
6% Golden Alexander, 5% Common ox-eye, 4% Smooth aster,  
4% New England aster, 4% Sneezeweed, 4% Blue flag iris,  
4% Ironweed, 3% Sweet flag, 3% Canada tick trefoil,  
3% Meadow blazing star, 3% Tall blazing star, 3% Stiff goldenrod,  
2% Purple prairie clover, 2% Tall meadow rue,  
1% Grass-leaved goldenrod, 1% Swamp goldenrod,  
all by bulk weight.....**8 oz/acre**

## **URBAN WOODS AND PRAIRIES INITIATIVE: ESTABLISHMENT PROTOCOL**

### **Site Preparation**

1. The project area will be fine graded before the seeding work begins (to be done by the general contractor or excavator).
2. Mow the existing vegetation, preferably with a sickle or flail type mower, to a height of 4" to 6".
3. In fall, apply a glyphosate herbicide (Roundup® or equivalent) and a triclopyr herbicide (Garlon 3A® or equivalent) with the appropriate surfactants, as per manufacturer's directions, to the actively growing vegetation in the project area. Site preparation will resume the following spring.
4. Disk or till the soil to stimulate weed seed germination.
5. Harrow or cultipacker the soil to create a smooth seedbed.
6. Respray with a glyphosate herbicide (Roundup® or equivalent) when regrowth of vegetation occurs and when it reaches approximately 8" to 12" in height.

### **Seed and Seeding**

1. Seeding dates will be in the spring or summer before August 10<sup>th</sup> or in the fall between September 20<sup>th</sup> and freeze-up.
2. As a means to stabilize the site, the project area will be planted with native grasses only.
3. All grass seed will be applied with a seed drill designed for native seeding (Truax® or equivalent).
4. Wildflower seed could be applied by broadcasting after a prescribed burn at the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> growing season.
5. The seed mixes will consist of the following species and amounts:

### **Management**

1. Management (maintenance) plays a vital role in the eventual success of any native landscape installation, especially during the establishment period.
2. During the first growing season the project area may need to be mowed to control annual weed development. If a "closed canopy of weed cover develops, it should be mowed to aid in the growth of the prairie seedlings by reducing competition. Mowing may also be necessary if the weeds are about to set seed. Optimum cutting height, depending on the wildflower species present, is typically 4" to 6".
3. In years following the first growing season, management services should include site monitoring, prescribed burning, mowing, spot spraying, spot mowing, herbicide wicking or hand weeding.



## City of Moorhead and Audubon Dakota – Urban Woods and Prairies Initiative Update

For more information: [www.CityofMoorhead.com/river](http://www.CityofMoorhead.com/river) [Audubon Society Urban Woods and Prairies Initiative link]

Greetings,

In May of 2014, the Moorhead City Council approved the Moorhead River Corridor Master Plan. The Plan identified *Habitat Enhancement and Water Quality* as a key principal along the corridor. In February 2014, the City of Moorhead and Audubon Dakota partnered to implement the Urban Woods and Prairies Initiative on seven sites in Moorhead, including:

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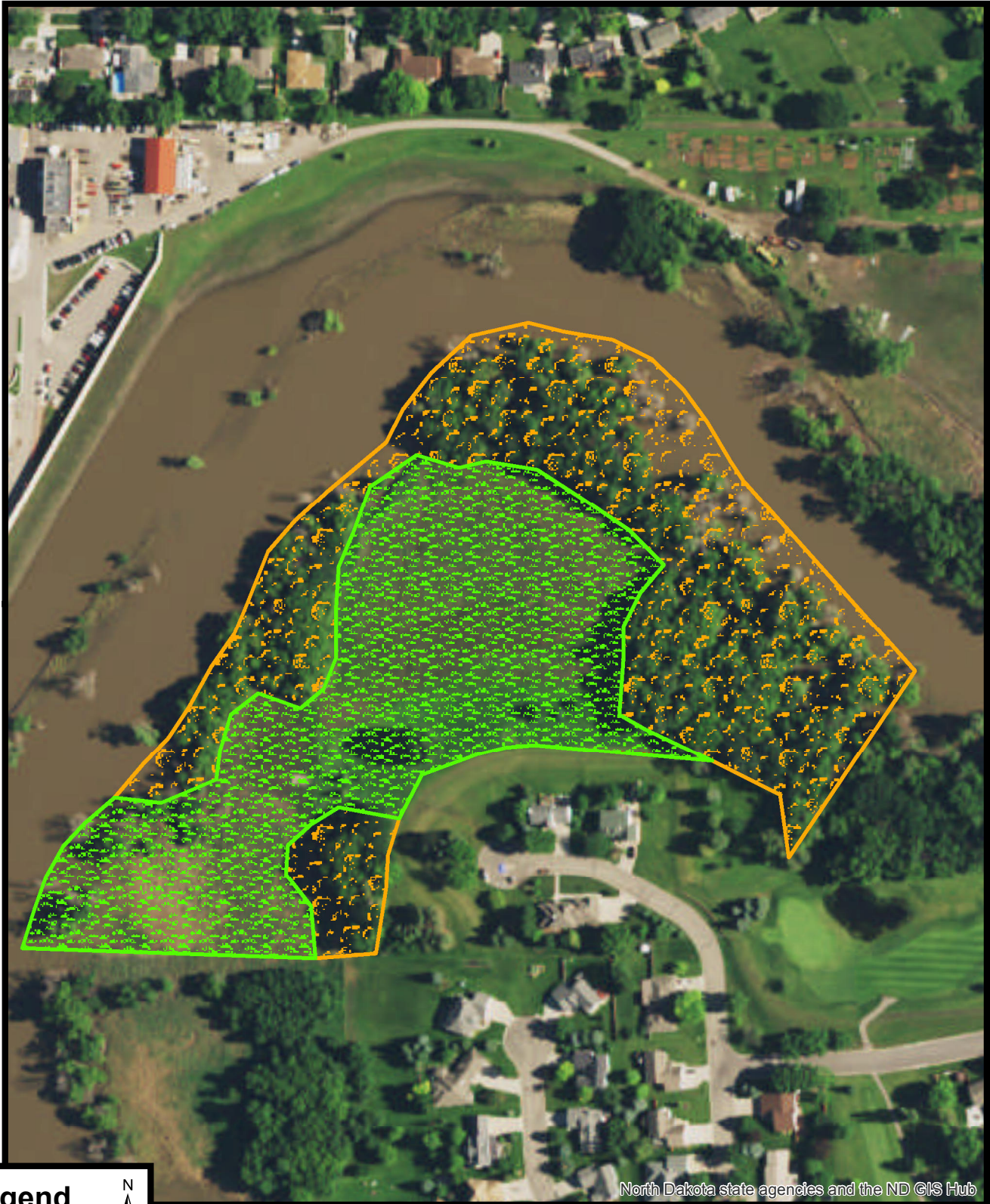
It is anticipated that the Mayor and City Council will consider the prairie restoration plan for the North River Drive area at their July 27 meeting. Site restoration includes site preparation (mowing, tilling, weed spraying, etc) and plantings as well as a multi-phased plan for establishment and maintenance of the prairie plantings.

This letter is intended to notify you of this prairie restoration process work in your neighborhood that implements the Urban Woods and Prairies Initiative. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Kristie Leshovsky  
City Planner & Zoning Administrator  
218.299.5332  
[planning@cityofmoorhead.com](mailto:planning@cityofmoorhead.com)

# North River Drive



## Legend



Grassland



Woodland

1:3,942

0 105 210 420 630 840 Feet

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## City of Moorhead and Audubon Dakota – Urban Woods and Prairies Initiative Update

For more information: [www.CityofMoorhead.com/river](http://www.CityofMoorhead.com/river) [Audubon Society Urban Woods and Prairies Initiative link]

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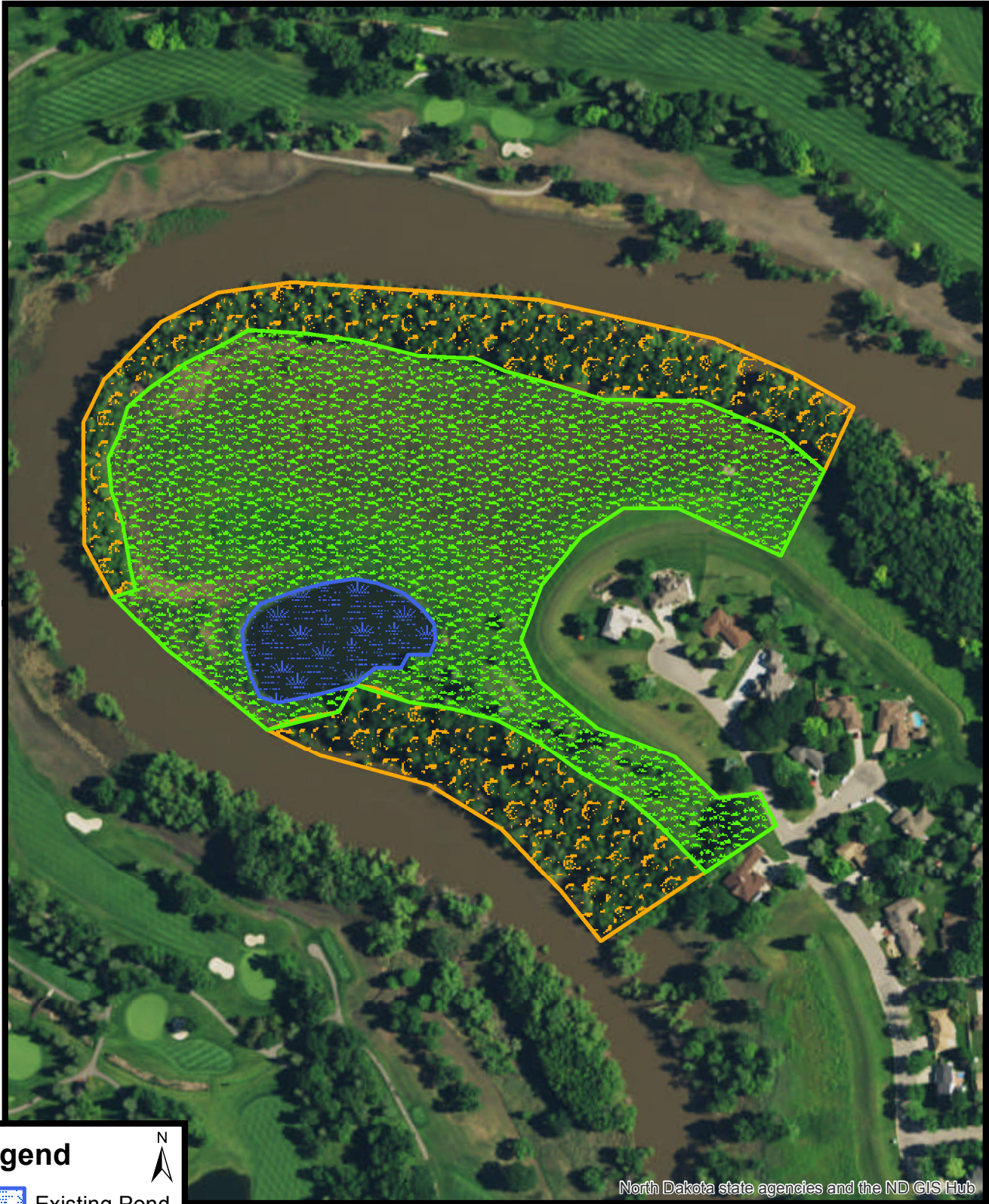
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 Woodland

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