The downtown core is small, functionally 3 blocks by 3 blocks, but a number of older and historical buildings remain, waiting as a foundation for a new era of vitality. In 2004, the city of Dickinson established a Renaissance Zone to encourage redevelopment that relates to the long term development plans of the city through tax exemptions and credits.

Further observations shows again like most smaller communities, there are a mix of commercial and residential properties in and near the core. As downtown will want to grow and expand, to realize the area described in the renaissance zone, the community will need to move carefully through this transition.
Consistent with the older urban cores of nearly every town and city, Dickinson has an array of dispersed surface parking lots put in place to respond to parking needs for downtown commercial and retail businesses. These "vacant" sites can become the catalyst sites for early redevelopment.

They must be accompanied by a comprehensive parking strategy to provide adequate parking at every phase of expansion. This aerial of downtown indicates in red those surface parking lots in the core, that would provide significant shovel-ready development opportunities.
If we take the liberty of imagining that each of these sites were to re-develop to heights similar to adjacent buildings, this indicates that massing.
EN-'VISION'-ING DICKINSON

In October of 2012, we were retained by the city to describe a possible vision for downtown revitalization, which included the previous graphics, and concluded with the computer modeling seen in the image on the right. More than extrusions of open sites, we thought it would be helpful to portray actual buildings on each of the opportunity sites.

Worth pointing out are the suggestions for new retail/commercial buildings on the south side of Villard, flanking the former train station building. We want Villard to become an active, vibrant street, which can only occur by having businesses on both sides.

With a hint to what's about to follow, you will see that we did not indicate in this vision, a park or public square as a central place of assembly.
DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN THE RENAISSANCE ZONE

Previously, in this document, we highlighted those open sites in downtown, currently used for parking, which are the easiest to imagine for new, mixed-use infill development. We will be presenting a phased strategy for developing these sites. The plan is to cause new types of development to occur downtown, which will bring a new excitement and vitality to the core, causing other sites to develop and a vibrant revitalization will be underway.

The downtown will want to expand based on this new, 24-hour, vibrant community and this new expansion will want to move out from the existing core, in all directions. The boundary of the Renaissance Zone has anticipated this growth. The intent of this graphic is to highlight again the open "available sites" and to conceptually propose an idea of where future commercial retail and residential development will want to occur.
DISTRICTS AND GATEWAYS

Once we have forecasted those sites that are potentially available for new development, we can look at how the expansion should be organized. It is always preferable to cluster some like-minded uses into districts, such that they will benefit from proximity to similar uses. You see this on most college campuses and most actively used downtowns. This diagram illustrates the idea that there are 3 future districts in downtown, "civic and governmental", which would include the County Courthouse, City Hall, the Post Office, and the new public square. A second district, "education and institution" on the western edge of downtown, with strong links to DSU, and third, the possibility of an "entertainment" district to the east, comprised of arts, theater, performance, and larger assembly activities.

At this point the downtown will have become a vibrant day and night place, and key gateway points along the perimeter will express primary entry points into this revitalized "downtown"