DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE TESTIMONY
RENAISSANCE ZONE ANNUAL REPORT
AUGUST 26, 2026; 11:30 AM
INTERIM TAX REFORM AND RELIEF ADVISORY COMMITTEE
SENATOR BRAD BEKKEDAHL, CHAIR

RIKKI ROEHRICH – DEPUTY DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF COMMUNITY SERVICES, ND DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee, my name is Rikki Roehrich, and I manage the Renaissance Zone Program for the Department of Commerce. I am here today to provide the annual report on the Renaissance Zone program in accordance with NDCC 40-63-03.2. The information in this report is for the time period of January 1, 2025, through December 31, 2025.

The Renaissance Zone program is a tool to help cities revitalize their communities. By offering both state and local tax incentives for up to eight years, both residents and business owners are provided with an incentive to invest in their community. Since the program's inception, there have been 2,213 projects approved. Of those projects, a total of 1,728 projects have been completed.

There are currently 47 active Renaissance Zones within the state. Throughout 2025, fourteen communities with established zones reached their expiration date, eleven of which applied for and received either a five- or ten-year extension. In 2025, 53 projects were approved at the state and local level, and 49 projects were completed.

The estimated property tax and state tax liability for the 49 projects completed in 2025 is as follows:

- State single family, business and investor income tax exemptions $840,947.35
- Historical tax credits $312,500
- Property tax exemption $3,719,127.21

According to a survey of Renaissance Zone communities, in 2025:

- 15 new businesses created
- 11 business expansions
- 23 commercial buildings constructed or rehabilitated for business purposes
- 15 commercial buildings or space in buildings leased
- 58 new residential units
- 132 new jobs created
- 66 new residents

The Renaissance Zone continues to be a vital economic tool for smaller communities. In 2025, 20 of the 49 completed projects were in towns with a population of less than 5,000. The program continues to be a key component in downtown rehabilitation.

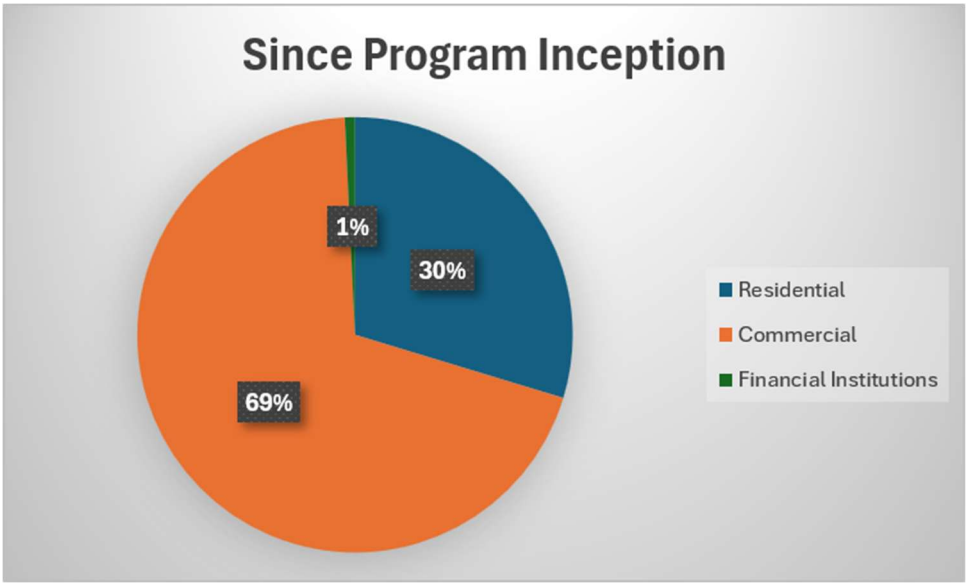
For example, the city of Wishek reports that the Renaissance Zone program has been a tremendous asset for the community. They go on to say, "Through this program, we have been able to support a major renovation of our local hotel, assist other local businesses with remodeling projects, and help residents purchase homes. These investments are making a positive difference in our community, strengthening local businesses, improving housing opportunities, and helping Wishek continue to grow and thrive. We are also going to be renewing our 10-year contract with the state to keep this program thriving in our community."

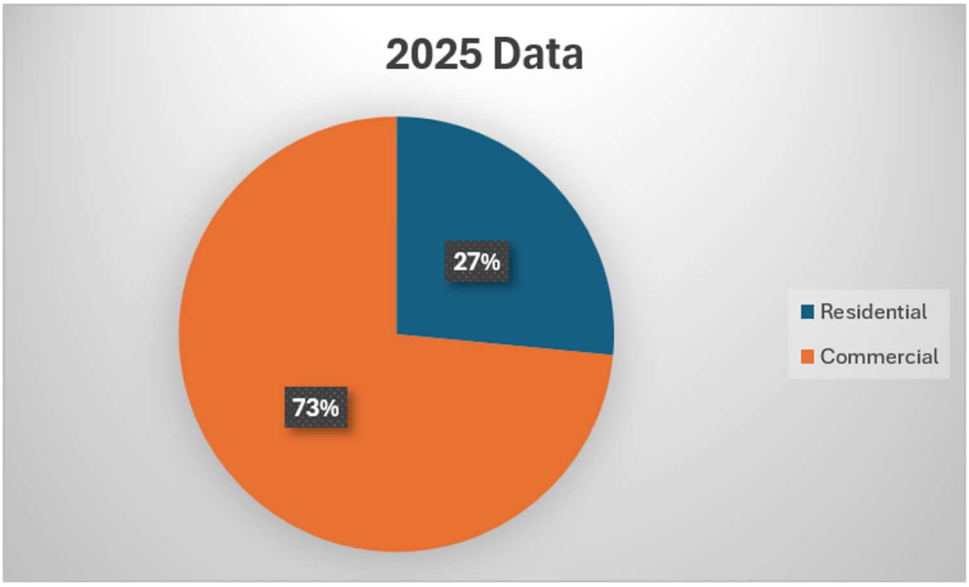
Larger cities are also seeing a revitalization of their downtown communities, as well as increased property values. For example, the City of Williston reports that the program has contributed to adding over $20 million in property tax assessment from the original building valuation pre-project. They go on to say that, "By putting value back into buildings and adding to the valuation of the building, it substantially increases the tax base to the city in the future. Approximately eight percent of our tax base is tied to the improvements in the Renaissance Zone over the years. Numerous downtown buildings are prime candidates for revitalization, but the high cost of rehabilitation poses a significant challenge. Fortunately, the Renaissance Zone program provides the vital financial incentives to make these projects viable. Without this support, the community faces the risk of losing its character-defining architecture to demolition, a major setback for downtown vitality."

The charts on the following page illustrate the number of commercial and residential projects completed in 2025 and over the course of the program. These charts reflect that the percentage of commercial versus residential projects in 2025 is generally consistent with the overall performance of the program. In 2025, 27% of the completed projects were residential compared to 30% since program inception. Similarly, 73% of the projects were commercial projects in 2025, while 69% have been commercial projects over the course of the program. A very small percentage of projects have involved financial institutions, which are no longer eligible for inclusion in the program. This data indicates that Renaissance Zone is functioning as intended. It is serving as a tool for economic development and revitalizing communities.

Following the Renaissance Zone program data is the report on properties located in TIF and Renaissance Zone with the potential to receive benefits from both programs. Only the cities of Fargo and Grand Forks have properties in both. The data indicates that most of these projects only receive benefits from one program or the other-with only two projects in Fargo receiving both.

Chairman Bekkedahl, Members of the Committee, this concludes my update. I am happy to answer any follow-up questions you may have about the Renaissance Zone program.


Since Program Inception
1%
30%
69%
Residential
Commercial
Financial Institutions


2025 Data
27%
73%
Residential
Commercial

NORTH Dakota | Commerce

Be Legendary.

2025 Report on Properties located in TIFs and Renaissance Zones
Prepared for Interim Tax Reform and Relief Advisory Committee

			Annual Renaissance Zone (RZ) Benefit			Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District Benefit		
City	Property Description	Expected Duration in RZ & TIF	Property Tax ($)	Income Tax ($)	Duration of Benefit	Description	Amount ($)	Duration of Benefit
Fargo	Highroad Partners 209 & 211 NP Ave.	2023-2027	31,043.00	10,000.00	2023-2027	Riverfront Improvements	$0	2023-2045
Fargo	Great Plains Block 3 Venture, LLC 225 4 Ave N & 419 3 St. N	2025-2029	306,159.00	0.00	2025-2029	Riverfront Improvements	$0	2025-2045
Fargo	Block 9 224 & 226 5th St. N.	2021-2026	998,967.00	0.00	2021-2026	Partial funding of bonds for garage and plaza	$198,678	2019-2043
Fargo	Mercantile Building 401 Broadway; 410 & 412 5th St. N.	2022-2026	246,433.00	0.00	2022-2026	Parking access	$0	2021-2045
Fargo	EPIC Gateway 310 Main Avenue	2022-2026	184,052.00	0.00	2022-2026	Riverfront Improvements	$0	2021-2045
Fargo	Residential Purchases (multiple units) 200 4th Ave. N.	2020-2026	291,582.00	207,232.00	2022-2026	Riverfront Improvements	$0	2021-2045
Fargo	Kelser 624 2nd Ave. N.	2023-2027	125,570.00	0.00	2023-2027	Parking access	$0	2021-2045
Fargo	Residential Purchase (Parent Project 279-F) 5th St. N	2025-2029	6,036.00	10,000.00	2025-2029	Parking access	$0	2021-2045
Fargo	Residential Purchases (326-F) 300 Main Ave. Units 601, 603 & 706	2025-2029	19,370.00	105,000.00	2025-2029	Riverfront Improvements	$0	2021-2045
Fargo	Wild Oak Group, LLC 505 Oak St. N	2024-2028	315,248.00	100,000.00	2024-2028	Riverfront Improvements	$3,592,234	2024-2038
Fargo	Residential Purchase (Parent Project 279-F) 5th St. N	2025-2029	6,036.00	10,000.00	2025-2029	Parking access	$0	2021-2045
Grand Forks	The Beacon - 701 1st Avenue North	2024-2028	0.00	0.00	N/A	25-year TIF bond funding for public improvement	$10,746,000	2024-2048

**This data reflects the reports we have received to date.*