

# Grow McCook “30 under 30”

What is it, what are the benefits, why should we care?



**“Goals help you control the direction of your future.”**

**-Brian Tracy**

## **What is it?**

“30 under 30” is a collaborative planning effort focused on setting a course for McCook’s future. In academic circles it is often referred to as a strategic planning tool. But for us, it is simply aligning on 30 project priorities which can grow McCook over the next 30 years.

## **What is its purpose?**

Certain jobs require specific tools. The 30 under 30 is a planning tool used to help us:

- Focus on high impact projects which are a fit for our community
- Encourage multiple organizations to partner and work towards the same goals
- Secure resources from local, state, and federal sources (public and private)
- Help us keep score on how we’re doing against pre-determined goals which can pay it forward and make a difference for our community, for future generations



## What are the Benefits of “30 under 30”?

### 1) Understood priorities

30 under 30 highlights 30 long term capital projects which are identified as priorities for McCook. The projects will help our entire community understand where McCook has decided to focus resources, what’s important to us, where we’re heading, and where they can get involved. Each project will be tracked based upon three phases of development: planning phase, design phase, and construction phase.

### 2) Rowing in the same direction

When various organizations who share the same vision for their community operate in silos and do not share information, a myriad of missed opportunities occur. This lack of alignment can drain energy and resources by failing to leverage the power created when everyone is on the same page. When you have alignment, all oars in the water, rowing in the same direction, progress moves faster, the work is more efficient, and it’s more fun when everyone is playing and working towards the same goals.

### 3) Shares a consistent community brand

A unified community approach can help each organization achieve their respective service goals while lifting up a broader community vision and brand image: the McCook Chamber, City Council, County Tourism, MEDC, Community Hospital, McCook Community College, our Schools, McCook Community Foundation, our Service Organizations (i.e. Rotary, Optimists, etc.) Main Street, The Kiplinger, local industry, retail and community partners, all moving in sync together can complement each other while creating a town brand experience resulting in real momentum which can be felt both within and outside the community.

### 4) Creates excitement by communicating our story

30 under 30 is intended to be clear, concise, simple, highly visual, compelling and accessible. We believe when people know what you want, where you are going, and how they can get involved, it creates engagement and excitement. We want everyone to know what we have planned for McCook and where we’re going. 30 under 30 is not a secret, in fact, just the opposite. We want everyone in our community; across the state (and abroad) to know what we’re working on and how we’re doing. We want others enthusiastically sharing our story and we want individuals who are committed and passionate about growing rural America involved and helping us move forward.



## Why should we care?

McCook has an extraordinary legacy of leadership and is a community which has forged ahead despite droughts, tornados, floods, the rise and fall of industries (i.e. railroad), and weathered through recessions. Southwest Nebraska people do what they do not because it is easy, but because it is simply the right thing to do.

Research data suggests rural growth is on the decline and experts suggest “new thinking, nontraditional jobs and economic strategies are required” to reverse this trend. This challenge and coaching from the academics and researchers is a call to action and an exciting opportunity for us.

Today in McCook, we “stand on the shoulders of giants” tasked with the responsibility to take new steps forward to grow southwest, Nebraska. There is tangible evidence all around us of the positive impact a focused group of committed leaders can have on a community when they get involved and partner together.

Our Chamber tagline affirms, “...McCook is a *great place to live work and play.*” We ARE a great place to live, work, and play AND our goal is to continue to build upon this foundation of excellence. Our philosophy of building for the future needs to be, “...*more is not always more - but better is always better!*”

The net results of our 30 under 30 projects will build upon our current quality of life, bump up area tourism significantly, add new jobs and expand our current housing options. In addition, we believe it will help McCook do a better job of attracting and retaining residents, as well as involve and engage our youth and young adults in actively developing our community.

## Ask how you can get more involved to help us Grow McCook

