



*City of West Fargo*

# **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**JANUARY 2008**

**PREPARED BY:  
METROPOLITAN COUNCIL  
OF GOVERNMENTS**



**TABLE OF CONTENTS**  
**WEST FARGO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**  
**JANUARY 2008**

<b>CHAPTER 1: COMMUNITY PROFILE .....</b>	<b>1</b>
INTRODUCTION .....	1
COMMUNITY EXPANSION.....	1
LAND USE.....	3
NEIGHBORHOODS.....	5
POPULATION .....	7
RESIDENTIAL BUILDING PERMIT ACTIVITY & HOUSING GROWTH.....	7
POPULATION & EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS.....	11
SCHOOLS.....	12
PARKS & RECREATION.....	16
TRANSPORTATION.....	17
ROADWAY SYSTEM.....	17
TRANSIT .....	17
BIKEWAYS .....	19
AVIATION.....	19
RAIL .....	19
 <b>CHAPTER 2: PUBLIC INPUT SUMMARY.....</b>	 <b>20</b>
STEERING COMMITTEE.....	20
WEB PAGE .....	20
COMMUNITY EVENTS.....	20
COMMUNITY INPUT MEETING.....	20
ONLINE COMMUNITY SURVEY .....	21
FOCUS GROUPS .....	21
 <b>CHAPTER 3: STRATEGIC ISSUES .....</b>	 <b>22</b>
COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT & REBIRTH.....	22
REGIONAL & INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION .....	22
COMMUNITY GROWTH.....	22
INFRASTRUCTURE BALANCE AND PRIORITIZATION .....	23
A CITY OF NEIGHBORHOODS .....	23
PRESERVATION OF SMALL TOWN ATMOSPHERE .....	23
SCHOOL DISTRICT .....	23
 <b>CHAPTER 4: ISSUES ANALYSIS.....</b>	 <b>24</b>
COMMUNITY GROWTH.....	24
A CITY OF NEIGHBORHOODS .....	27
PRESERVATION OF SMALL TOWN ATMOSPHERE .....	29
SCHOOL DISTRICT .....	30

COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT & REBIRTH.....	30
RENAISSANCE ZONE.....	30
DOWNTOWN IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT.....	31
REGIONAL & INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATIVE .....	35
INFRASTRUCTURE BALANCE AND PRIORITIZATION .....	36
<b>CHAPTER 5: TRANSPORTATION PLAN.....</b>	<b>39</b>
CRITICAL CORRIDOR ANALYSIS.....	39
WEST FARGO LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PROJECT LIST.....	44
TRANSIT.....	45
BIKEWAYS .....	47
<b>CHAPTER 6: LAND USE PLAN.....</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>CHAPTER 7: POLICY PLAN - GOALS AND POLICIES.....</b>	<b>58</b>
LAND USE AND COMMUNITY GROWTH.....	58
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DESIGN AND HOUSING .....	60
COMMUNITY IDENTITY .....	61
COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT .....	63
TRANSPORTATION.....	63
PARKS, OPEN SPACE, BIKEWAYS, AND TRAILS .....	65
PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES.....	66
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT .....	66
<b>CHAPTER 8: IMPLEMENTATION PLAN.....</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>APPENDIX 1: 12<sup>TH</sup> AVENUE NORTH TECHNICAL MEMO</b>	
<b>APPENDIX 2: PUBLIC INPUT SUMMARY</b>	

## CHAPTER 1 - COMMUNITY PROFILE

### INTRODUCTION

Since 2000 West Fargo has changed substantially in both size and population. However West Fargo still retains many of its qualitative attributes. Among the most valued of West Fargo's community attributes is its small town flavor and well established neighborhoods. As well, the City of West Fargo is built around a well balanced school system.

West Fargo is the fastest growing community in the Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Statistical Area. Figure 1 shows West Fargo's situation within the larger metropolitan area. West Fargo was once a community geographically separated from its neighbors. Currently, West Fargo and Fargo are merged from Main Avenue to I-94. The southern growth areas of West Fargo and the western areas of Fargo will soon be a geographically un-delineated urban mass.

While West Fargo will always remain its own unique community, recognizing its position within the larger region will be critical to ensuring West Fargo is able to grow in harmony with its neighbors. The growth West Fargo has experienced in recent years would not be possible without the Sheyenne Diversion. If West Fargo wishes to grow beyond its current municipal boundaries it must again devise flood protection strategies that will facilitate this growth. Most of what is shown as West Fargo's Extraterritorial Area (ET) is flood prone and suspect to a high water table during wet periods.

What follows is a set of community characteristics for the City of West Fargo. As is demonstrated in the pages to come, West Fargo is a community which has traditionally grown rapidly. With its growth West Fargo has learned to become a community which can anticipate change and evolve to ensure the preservation of its core attributes. Over the past several decades West Fargo has built out into a community of single family neighborhoods. As it currently sits, West Fargo has the ability to geographically guide its growth for another 15,000 to 20,000 residents. From that point forward, West Fargo must develop a new strategy.

### COMMUNITY EXPANSION

Table 1 illustrates the annexation history of the City of West Fargo since 1961. Annexations occurred at a fairly constant rate in the 1970s and 1980s. The tapering which occurred in the 1990s has long been made up for with steady annexations since 2000. Annexations over the past several years now leave the City of West Fargo with large quantities of undeveloped land. Newly annexed undeveloped lands present opportunities and challenges for the City as it looks ahead. As pressure builds to develop outside of its current municipal boundary, new flood protection schemes must be developed. Premature development outside of its current municipal boundaries, coupled with shortsighted infrastructure extensions could lead to longer term growth pains for the City.



**Table 1**

<b>West Fargo Annexation, 1950-2006</b>										
	<b>1961-70</b>	<b>1971-80</b>	<b>1981-1990*</b>	<b>1991-00</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>
Annexed Acres	358	2060	1552	256	13.8	912	685	0	3026	62

\*Includes consolidation with the City of Riverside in 1989 (510 acres)

**LAND USE**

Table 2 illustrates the land use make up of the City of West Fargo at various periods of time since 1972. The 2006 land use numbers are considered to be up-to-date as of December 31, 2006. There were subtle changes made to land use categories and classifications which cause a discrepancy in acreages of various land uses between 1999 and 2006.

When looking at major land use categories West Fargo has seen an impressive increase in residential land uses, especially single-family residential. The percentage of single family land uses (as a percentage of total residential land uses) is 85%. Table 5 will later demonstrate the actual split between owner occupied and renter occupied households.

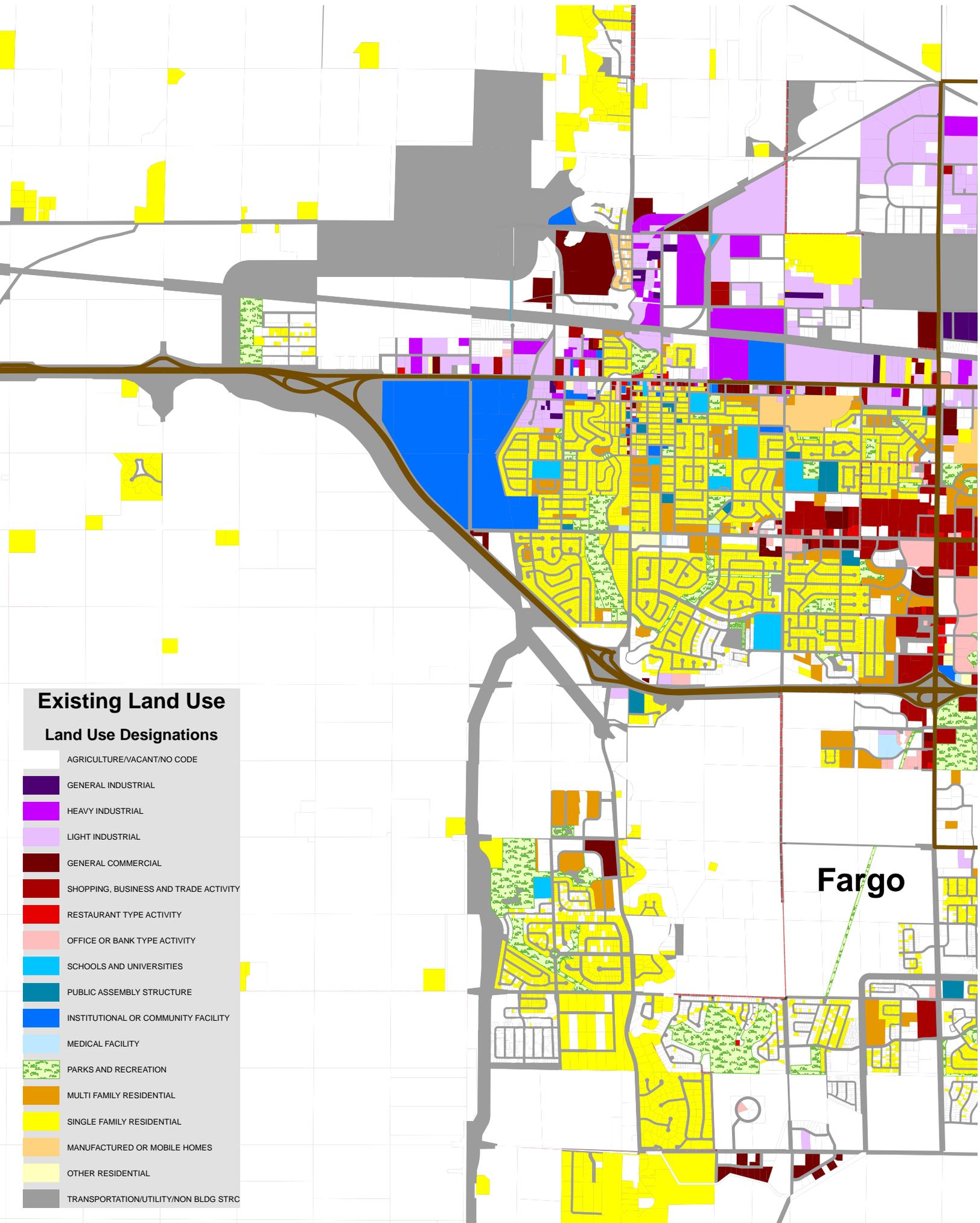
**West Fargo Land Use**

<b>Land Use</b>	<b>1972</b>	<b>1985</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2006</b>
Residential	286	621	985	2084
Single Family	210 (73%)	439 (71%)	742 (75%)	1770 (85%)
Multi-Family	32 (11%)	100 (16%)	171 (17%)	213(10%)
Mobile/Manufactured Home	45 (16%)	82 (13%)	72 (7%)	86 (4%)
Rural Residential/Other	*	*	*	16 (>1%)
Commercial	72	143	152	180
Office	*	*	22	27
Industrial	27	91	504	753
Parks and Open Space	9	80	127	336
Schools & Universities	*	*	*	109
Public/Semi-Public	41	590	725	121
Transportation/Utilities	188	564	625	2434
Total Developed Area	623	2090	3140	6043
Undeveloped	273	1877	1368	3182
Total Land Area	896	3967	4508**	9225

\*Not Given

\*\*Assumed Total

# Figure 2: West Fargo Existing Land Use



## Existing Land Use

### Land Use Designations

- AGRICULTURE/VACANT/NO CODE
- GENERAL INDUSTRIAL
- HEAVY INDUSTRIAL
- LIGHT INDUSTRIAL
- GENERAL COMMERCIAL
- SHOPPING, BUSINESS AND TRADE ACTIVITY
- RESTAURANT TYPE ACTIVITY
- OFFICE OR BANK TYPE ACTIVITY
- SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIES
- PUBLIC ASSEMBLY STRUCTURE
- INSTITUTIONAL OR COMMUNITY FACILITY
- MEDICAL FACILITY
- PARKS AND RECREATION
- MULTI FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- MANUFACTURED OR MOBILE HOMES
- OTHER RESIDENTIAL
- TRANSPORTATION/UTILITY/NON BLDG STRC

As residential development has occurred in West Fargo so has the growth in parks and open space. Park and open space acreage doubled between 1999 and 2006. The new parks and open space acreage represents new parks and green areas which accompany new residential areas. Industrial uses grew by 40% between 1999 and 2006. Much of this new industrial growth has occurred north of Main Avenue.

Table 3 demonstrates the amount of land (in acres) which has been platted by West Fargo since 1996. Since 1996 roughly 40% of the land platted by the City has been in Single Family/Twin Homes. In that same time frame another 40% of land has been platted as Heavy Commercial/Industrial. Since 1996 the ratio between plated single-family to multiple-family acres is about 4 to 1. Since 1996, 7% of the land platted by the City has been for commercial or retail use.

**Table 3 West Fargo Platted Land use by Type (acres)**

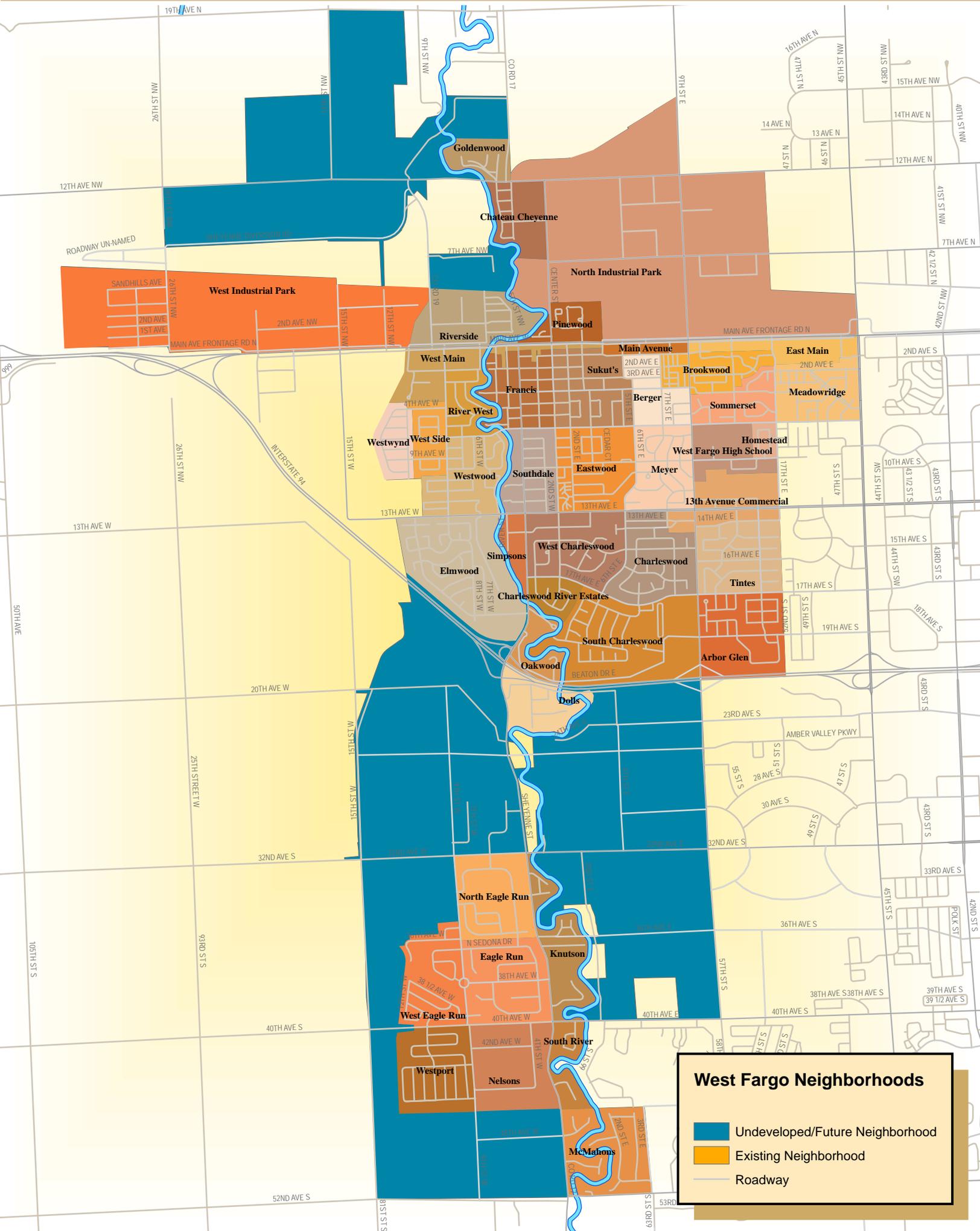
Platted Land Use	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Single Family and Twin homes	26.5	19.8	68.3	15.8	233.7	167	268	136.8	150.4	70.1	51.6
Multiple Family	0	0	0	14	41.1	0	63.1	49.8	131.9	0	0
Commercial/Retail	0	54.3	0	17.5	6.4	0	0	0	33	25.4	36.5
Heavy Commercial/Industrial	27.8	62.7	10.4	36.9	40	6.8	66.4	5	111.1	225	516.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>398</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>426</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>605</b>

Table 3 points out that West Fargo has developed into a community of single family neighborhoods and at same time continues to generate industrial uses that help to support the local tax base. While not popular in some cases, West Fargo has added significant acreages of higher density residential development, much occurring in just the last couple of years. Balancing new single family residential needs with the undeniable demand for higher density residential land uses will be an opportunity for the community as its population continues to grow.

**NEIGHBORHOODS**

West Fargo residents have grown to appreciate the unique neighborhoods of the community. Residents view the neighborhoods of West Fargo as a key community attribute. Figure 3 highlights the existing neighborhoods of West Fargo. West Fargo currently has over 30 recognized neighborhoods. About 1/3 of these neighborhoods have developed in the last decade. The parts of the city which have not yet developed are shown in blue on Figure 3. These are the areas where the West Fargo has the opportunity to continue to plant the seeds for good neighborhoods. As the current municipal boundary of West Fargo builds out in the coming years it is possible the city may see the addition of another 10 to 15 neighborhood units.

# Figure 3: Existing Neighborhoods of West Fargo



**POPULATION**

Table 4 demonstrates population growth in the City of West Fargo since 1940. As a percentage increase, growth rates over the last decade are actually similar to those experienced in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s. *West Fargo has traditionally grown rapidly* (relative to its size) with the exception being the 1980s. The 2005 and 2006 population numbers are estimates based on building permit data, but do assume a vacancy factor. The 2005 and 2006 numbers are likely high given that not all permitted units are actually built and occupied.

**Table 2**

<b>City of West Fargo Historical Population Figures</b>		
<b>Year</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Percent Increase</b>
1940	707	N/A
1950	1,032	45%
1960	3,328	222%
1970	5,161	55%
1980	10,099	96%
1990	12,287	22%
2000	14,940	22%
2005	23,327	56%
2006	24,184	4%

*Note: 2005 and 2006 are estimates based on building permit data*

**RESIDENTIAL BUILDING PERMIT ACTIVITY & HOUSING GROWTH**

Table 5 highlights building permit activity in the City of West Fargo for the decade of 1970, 1980, and 1990. Table 4 shows a permit total for each decade 1970-90. Annual permits by type are illustrated for the years 2000-2006. The decade to date number is shown in the far right column of Table 5 for the 2000s (i.e. 2000-06). Building permit activity for the current decade through 2006 has already surpassed permit levels of any prior decade. The years 2004 and 2005 were nearly equal to or in some cases surpassed an entire decade worth of permit activity in the past. As was discussed with Table 3, West Fargo’s 2006 population is based on the full build out of the permits issued through 2006, less known residential vacancy.

**Table 5**

<b>West Fargo Building Permit Activity</b>											
	<b>1970s</b>	<b>1980s</b>	<b>1990s</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2000's</b>
<b>Single Family</b>	813	342	1136	152	240	326	486	613	420	238	2475
<b>Multi-Family</b>	1105	376	336	50	84	39	151	396	653	67	1440
<b>Total</b>	1918	718	1472	202	324	365	637	1009	1073	305	3915

*Note: Multi-family number represents total number of units permitted*

Table 6 illustrates the total number of housing units in the City of West Fargo. A housing unit constitutes an occupied dwelling unit. Currently the total number of permitted dwelling units in West Fargo is closer to 10,000. A household is an occupied housing unit. The number of households in West Fargo doubled between 1990 and 2006. Table 6 highlights the percentage split between owner and renter occupied households. For the past two and a half decades the split has remained roughly two-third to one-third, owner occupied to renter occupied. Table 6 indicates median home values in West Fargo have steadily increased since 1980; though the jump from 1990 to 2000 was more dramatic than from 1980 to 1990.

<b>Table 6 West Fargo Housing Units: Growth and Change</b>				
	1980	1990	2000	2006
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	3,780	4,574	5,771	9,266
<b>%Owner Occupied</b>	64%	62%	68%	67%
<b>%Renter Occupied</b>	36%	38%	32%	33%
<b>Median Value</b>	\$51,200	\$63,800	\$97,500	\$140,300

*US Census Bureau; City of West Fargo; Metro COG  
 \*2006 % represents split between multiple-family to single-family*

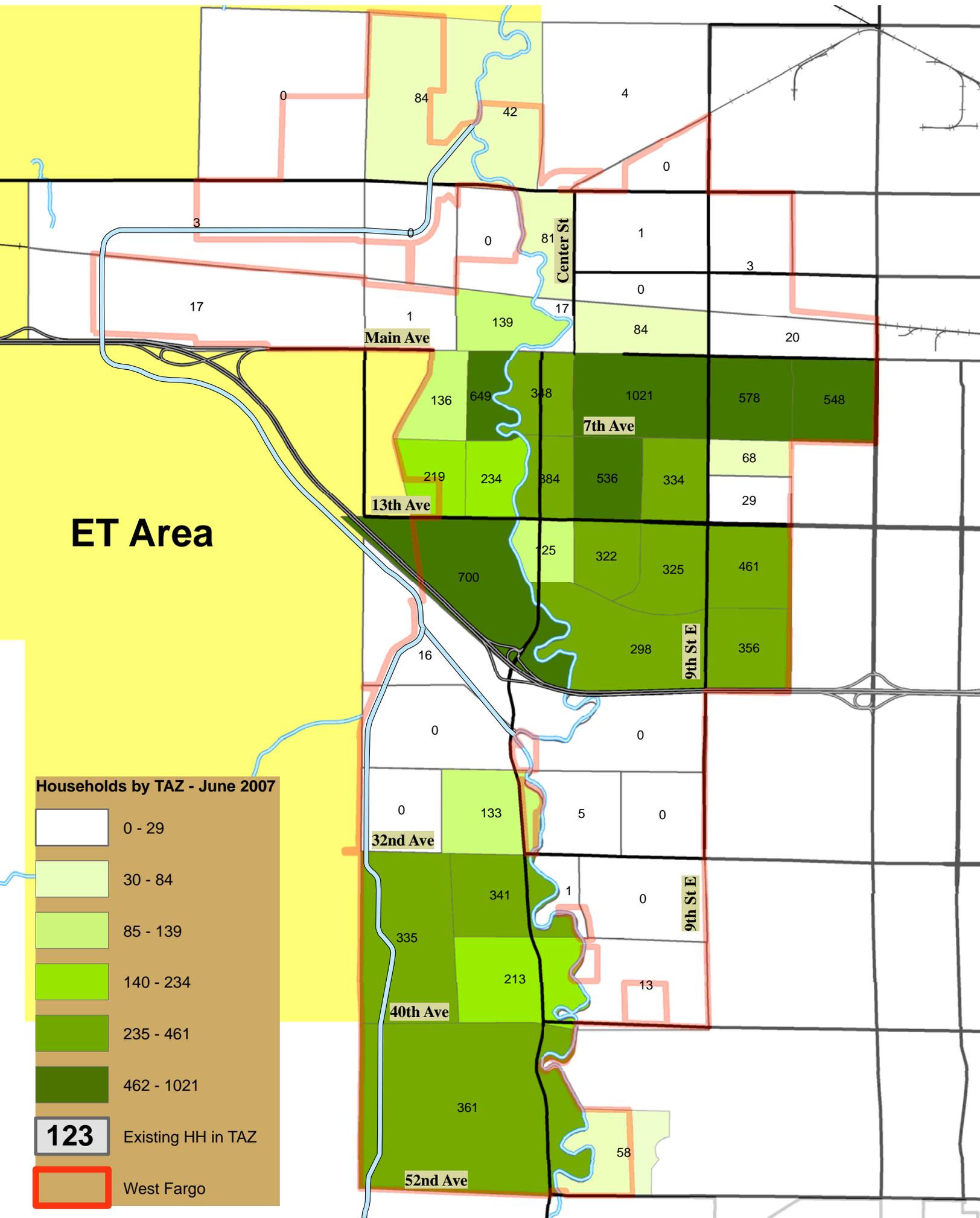
**Table 6a**

<b>West Fargo Median Household Income</b>		
1990	2000	2005
\$26,661	\$44,542	\$54,198

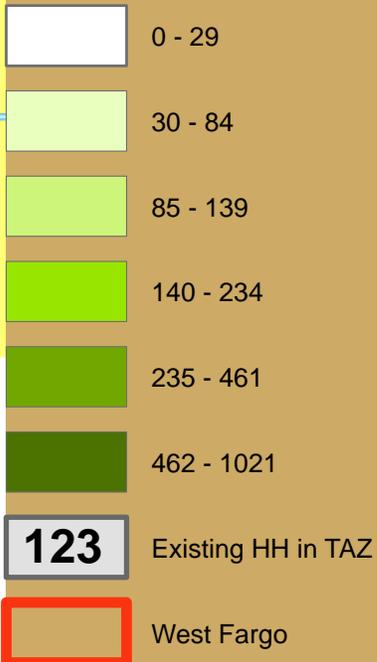
*US Census Bureau (1990/2000); Danter Company (2005)*

Figure 4 demonstrates total households in West Fargo by traffic analysis zone (TAZ) as of June 2007. Some of these households may not actually be built, however they are permitted. Figure 5 demonstrates total new households added by TAZ between 2000 and 2007. The majority of household growth in West Fargo over the past seven years has occurred between 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue and I-94; and between 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue. For the most part, the areas north of I-94 are nearly built out. Later sections of the plan demonstrate the remaining build out capacity of the existing municipal boundary of West Fargo.

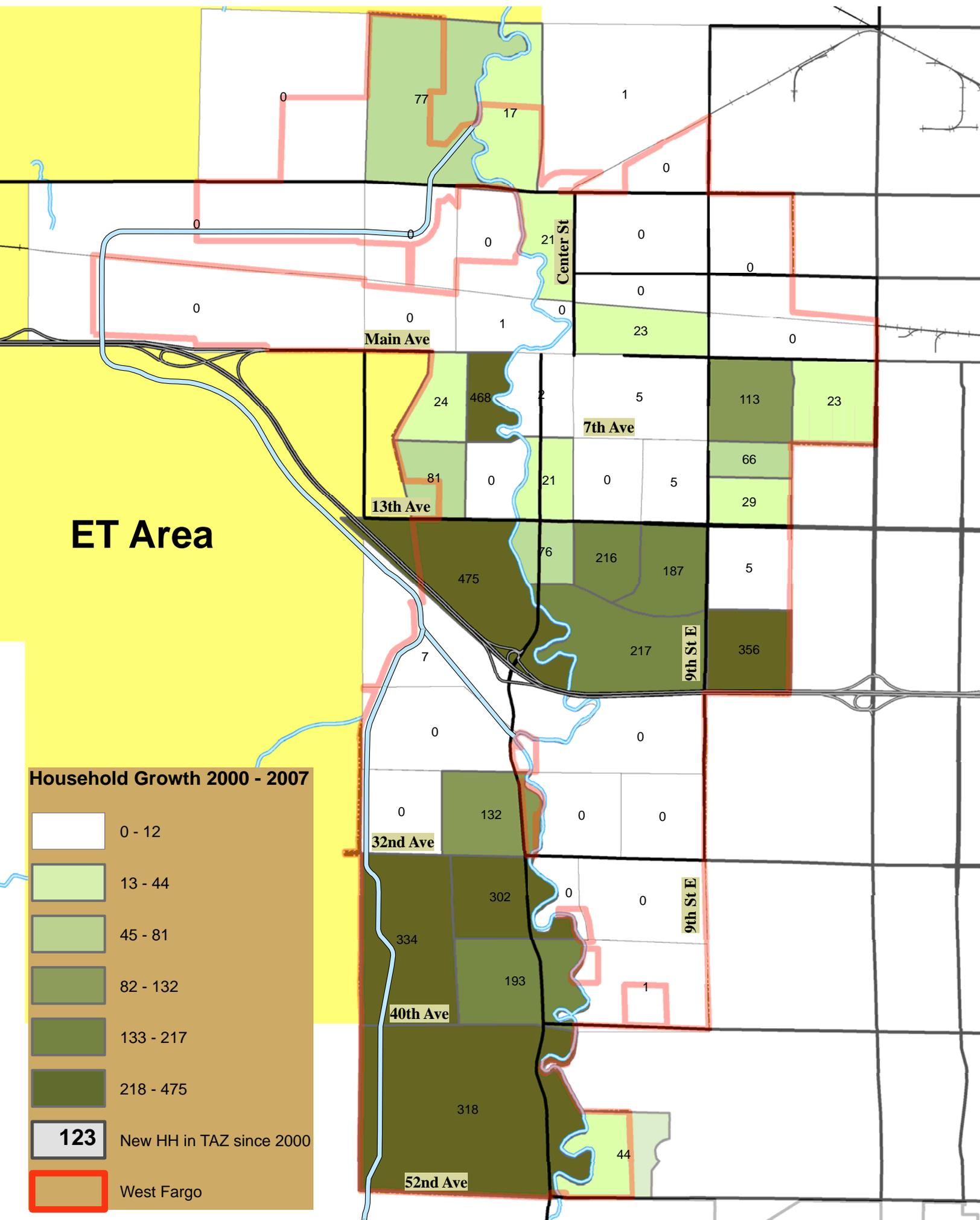
# Figure 4: West Fargo Households - June 2007



### Households by TAZ - June 2007



# Figure 5: West Fargo Household Growth (2000-2007)



**ET Area**

Main Ave

Center St

7th Ave

13th Ave

9th St E

32nd Ave

9th St E

40th Ave

52nd Ave

0

77

17

1

0

0

0

21

0

0

1

23

0

24

468

2

5

113

23

81

0

21

0

5

66

29

475

76

216

187

5

7

217

356

0

0

0

132

0

0

302

0

0

334

193

1

318

44

**POPULATION & EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS**

Table 7 shows age distribution of the City of West Fargo for each census from 1970 through 2000. Over the past two decades West Fargo has experienced a growth in the 35 to 44 and 45 to 54 age cohort. This would correspond with the growth in new residential development. The 55 and over cohort has also increased slightly over the past decade or two. Overall, the population distribution within West Fargo has remained fairly balanced, or at least constant.

	<b>0-4</b>	<b>5 to 14</b>	<b>15-24</b>	<b>25-34</b>	<b>35-44</b>	<b>45-54</b>	<b>55-64</b>	<b>65+</b>
<b>1970</b>	11.6%	24.9%	17.8%	15.7%	11.6%	7.2%	5.2%	5.9%
<b>1980</b>	10.8%	18.8%	19.6%	23.6%	11.3%	6.8%	4.7%	4.4%
<b>1985</b>	10.2%	19.2%	16.1%	22.9%	14.7%	7.6%	4.6%	4.8%
<b>1990</b>	8.4%	19.1%	14.7%	19.0%	18.0%	9.3%	5.3%	5.8%
<b>2000</b>	7.4%	16.7%	14.0%	16.4%	17.6%	14.3%	6.9%	6.7%
<b>2005</b>	6.5%	14.5%	16.9%	15.4%	16.3%	14.8%	8.1%	6.5%

*US Census Bureau; Danter Company (2005)*

Table 8 illustrates occupation by major category for employed residents of West Fargo for each census between 1980 and 2000. Over the past two decades the occupation to grow most noticeably has been managerial and professional. Technical, sales, and administrative support occupations also grew over the past two decades. Given the recent growth in the population of West Fargo its employed population has likely increased by 40 - 50% since the 2000 census. However, there is no way to gauge the occupational category of these new residents until after the 2010 census.

**Table 8**

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>1980</b>		<b>1990</b>		<b>2000</b>	
Managerial and Professional	1,028	20.1%	1,264	18.7%	2,487	29.4%
Technical, Sales and Administrative Support	1,773	35.0%	2,370	35.1%	2,740	32.4%
Service Occupations	743	15.0%	1,149	17.0%	1,136	13.4%
Farm, Forestry, Fishing	73	1.4%	34	0.5%	20	0.2%
All Others	1,442	28.5%	1,927	28.6%	2,008	24.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,059</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>6,744</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>8,391</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Table 9 compares West Fargo occupational data to the entire Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). The employment distribution of West Fargo residents is similar to that of the rest of the MSA.

**Table 9**

<b>Occupation by Major Category (2000)</b>				
<b>Occupation</b>	<b>West Fargo</b>		<b>F-M MSA*</b>	
Managerial and Professional	2,487	29.4%	31,761	33.0%
Technical, Sales and Administrative Support	2,740	32.4%	28,883	30.0%
Service Occupations	1,136	13.4%	14,807	15.4%
Farm, Forestry, Fishing	20	0.2%	598	0.6%
All Others	2,008	24.6%	20,279	21.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,391</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>96,328</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

\*Metropolitan Statistical Area

## SCHOOLS

One of the factors which have lead to the growth West Fargo has seen in recent years is the popularity and success of the West Fargo School District. The community and the School District have grown lock step for the past several decades. Enrollment numbers in the West Fargo School District have been increasing for the past ten years. Figure 6 shows the boundary map for the West Fargo School District. As is demonstrated on Figure 6, the West Fargo School District includes areas within the Cities of Fargo, Horace and Harwood.

Table 10 demonstrates enrollment by facility for the West Fargo School District for the last decade. While enrollment at various facilities has fluctuated over the past several years, overall district enrollment has grown by 22% between the academic years of 1996 and 2006.

# Figure 6: West Fargo School District

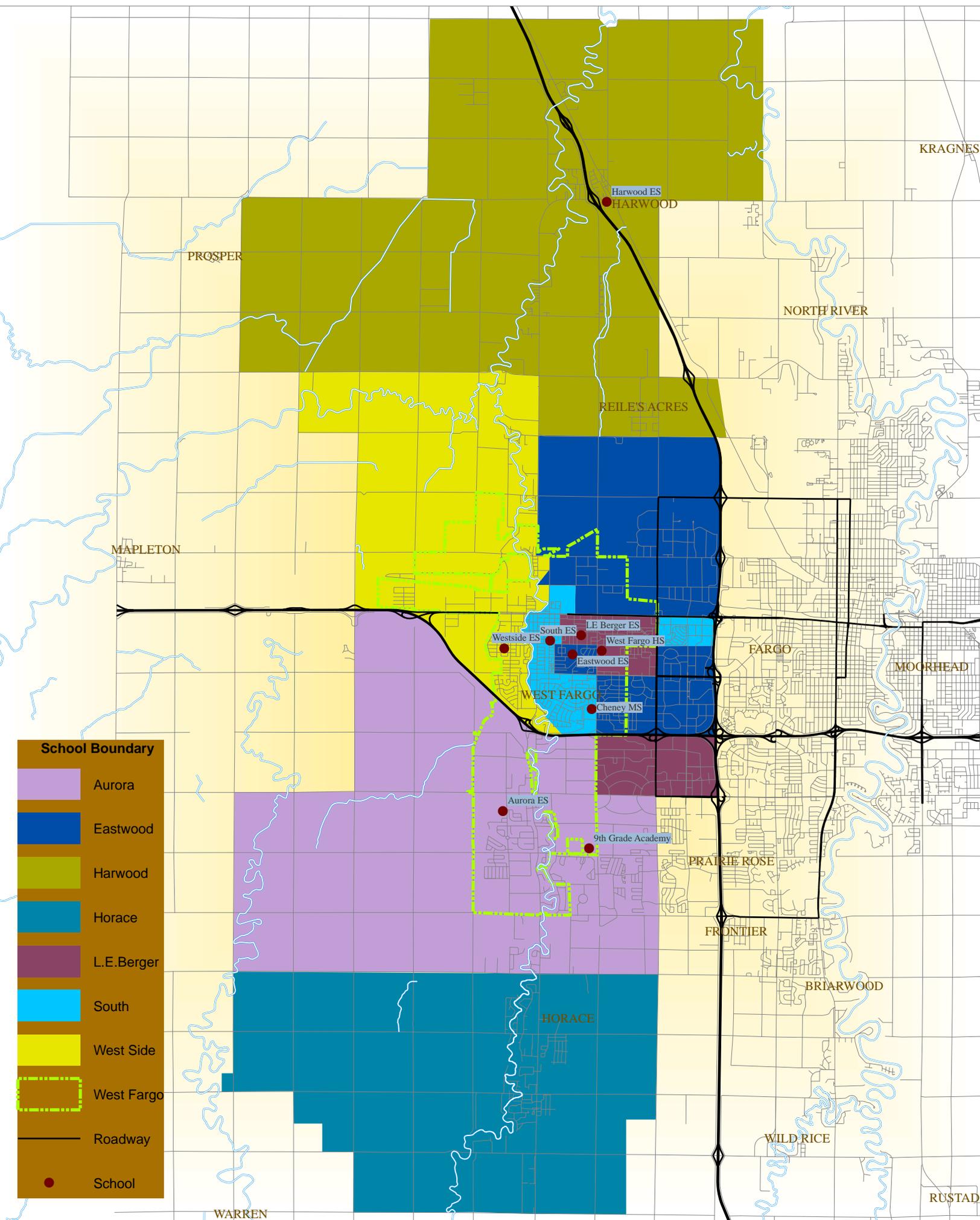


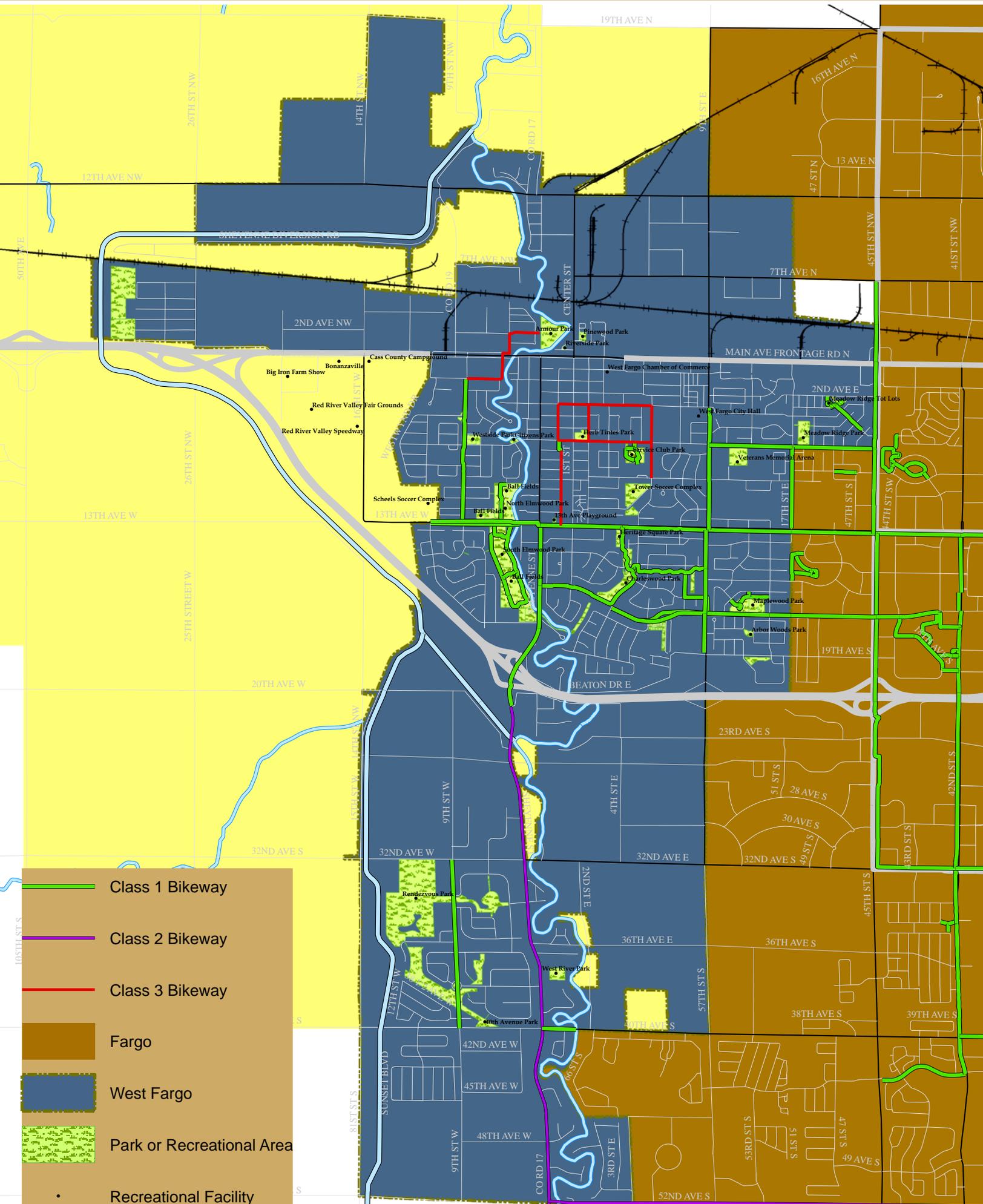
Table 10

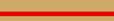
<b>Table 10 West Fargo School District Enrollment</b>											
<b>School (grades)</b>	<b>1996-97</b>	<b>1997-98</b>	<b>1998-99</b>	<b>1999-00</b>	<b>2000-01</b>	<b>2001-02</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>	<b>2006-07</b>
<b>E.C.C.</b>	377	356	403	395	372	384	411	428	383	443	470
<b>Berger (1-6)</b>	436	463	454	463	488	538	524	521	403	425	435
<b>Eastwood (1-6)</b>	558	557	536	557	553	565	570	596	477	475	478
<b>Harwood (1-6)</b>	160	118	129	144	137	139	141	147	162	151	145
<b>Horace (1-6)</b>	197	187	195	182	193	196	206	203	223	190	238
<b>South (1-6)</b>	475	480	491	521	541	547	572	619	528	517	504
<b>Westside (1-6)</b>	458	452	441	464	455	445	460	484	522	597	670
<b>Middle School (7-8)</b>	787	734	794	762	765	815	825	817	1,317	1,336	1,377
<b>High School (9-12)</b>	1369	1419	1414	1436	1526	1490	1514	1530	1508	1567	1590
<b>Community HS (9-12)</b>	45	46	44	45	46	45	45	45	45	56	59
<b>Tuition Out-of-District</b>	16	15	15	15	16	16	16	16	16	16	16
<b>DISTRICT TOTAL</b>	<b>4878</b>	<b>4827</b>	<b>4916</b>	<b>4984</b>	<b>5092</b>	<b>5180</b>	<b>5284</b>	<b>5406</b>	<b>5584</b>	<b>5773</b>	<b>5982</b>

In the Fall of 2007 the West Fargo School District opened Aurora Elementary School in Eagle Run. The addition of Aurora reduced the enrollment boundaries of Westside Elementary, which originally served Eagle Run. Aurora is the 5<sup>th</sup> elementary school in the City of West Fargo. The West Fargo School District also has elementary schools in Harwood and Horace.

In 2007 the West Fargo School District opened the 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Center. The 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Academy will remove 9<sup>th</sup> graders from the West Fargo High School. The Academy will be located at the intersection of 9<sup>th</sup> Street and 40<sup>th</sup> Avenue. As West Fargo grows it is very possible that at least one additional elementary facility will be needed south of I-94. It is possible the school district will need to contemplate a 2<sup>nd</sup> high school early in the next decade.

# Figure 7: West Fargo Parks and Bicycle Facilities



-  Class 1 Bikeway
-  Class 2 Bikeway
-  Class 3 Bikeway
-  Fargo
-  West Fargo
-  Park or Recreational Area
-  Recreational Facility

**PARKS & RECREATION**

As West Fargo has grown in recent years so have the facilities of the West Fargo Park District. Table 11 illustrates existing park district facilities in the City of West Fargo. Currently West Fargo has 19 various park facilities throughout the city. These facilities include soccer complexes, neighborhood parks, and multipurpose facilities such as Veterans Memorial Arena.

**Table 11**

<b>West Fargo Park District: Facility Index</b>																
	Picnic Shelters	Hiking/Biking Trails	Outdoor Pool	Tennis	Stedding	Cross-Country Skiing	BMX Track	Ice Hockey/Skating Rinks	Baseball/Softball Fields	Soccer Fields	Basketball Courts	Volleyball Courts	Playground	Skate Park	Horseshoes	9- Hole Disc Golf
North Elmwood Park	x	x			x	x		x	x		x	x	x	x	x	
South Elmwood Park		x				x	x		x				x			
Westside Park	x								x		x		x			
Citizens Park																
13th Ave Playground Park																
Herb Tintes Park			x	x				x					x			
Service Club Park	x	x								x	x		x			
Tower Soccer Complex										x						
Veterans Memorial Area				x				x		x		x				
Meadowridge Park		x							x	x	x		x			
Meadowridge Tot Lot														x		
Maplewood Park	x	x			x			x			x		x			
Armour Park (Oak Leaf Park)	x	x				x						x	x		x	x
Pinewood Park													x			
Riverside Park													x			
Charleswood Park Areas		x								x			x			
Arbor Woods																
40th Avenue W Park	x	x											x			
Rendezvous Park	x	x				x					x	x	x			
Scheels Soccer Complex										x						

Figure 7 shows the geographic location of West Fargo’s park facilities. Figure 7 also demonstrate bike facilities within the City of West Fargo. Currently West Fargo has a mix of recreation facilities throughout the community, both large and small. As the community grows, demand for enhanced facilities and services will increase.

**TRANSPORTATION**

**Roadway System**

The City of West Fargo is located in relation to several major roadways, including US Highway 10, Interstate 94, and Interstate 29. West Fargo has direct access to Interstate 94 at its junction with US Highway 10. Figure 8 demonstrates major transportation facilities within the City of West Fargo. As of 2007 West Fargo had approximately 141 miles of functionally classed roadways.

Currently West Fargo’s main north-south corridors include Sheyenne Street and 9<sup>th</sup> Street. Major east-west corridors in West Fargo include Main Avenue, 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue, 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

**Transit**

West Fargo currently receives transit service from Metro Area Transit through an operating contract with the City of Fargo. The City of West Fargo currently pays the City of Fargo an hourly rate for provision of the West Fargo Route. West Fargo is provided a dedicated MAT fixed route which operates 12 hours a day, six days per week on a 60 minute headway. Figure 8 illustrates the current West Fargo MAT Route. The West Fargo MAT Route transfers with the four other MAT Routes at West Acres once each hour.

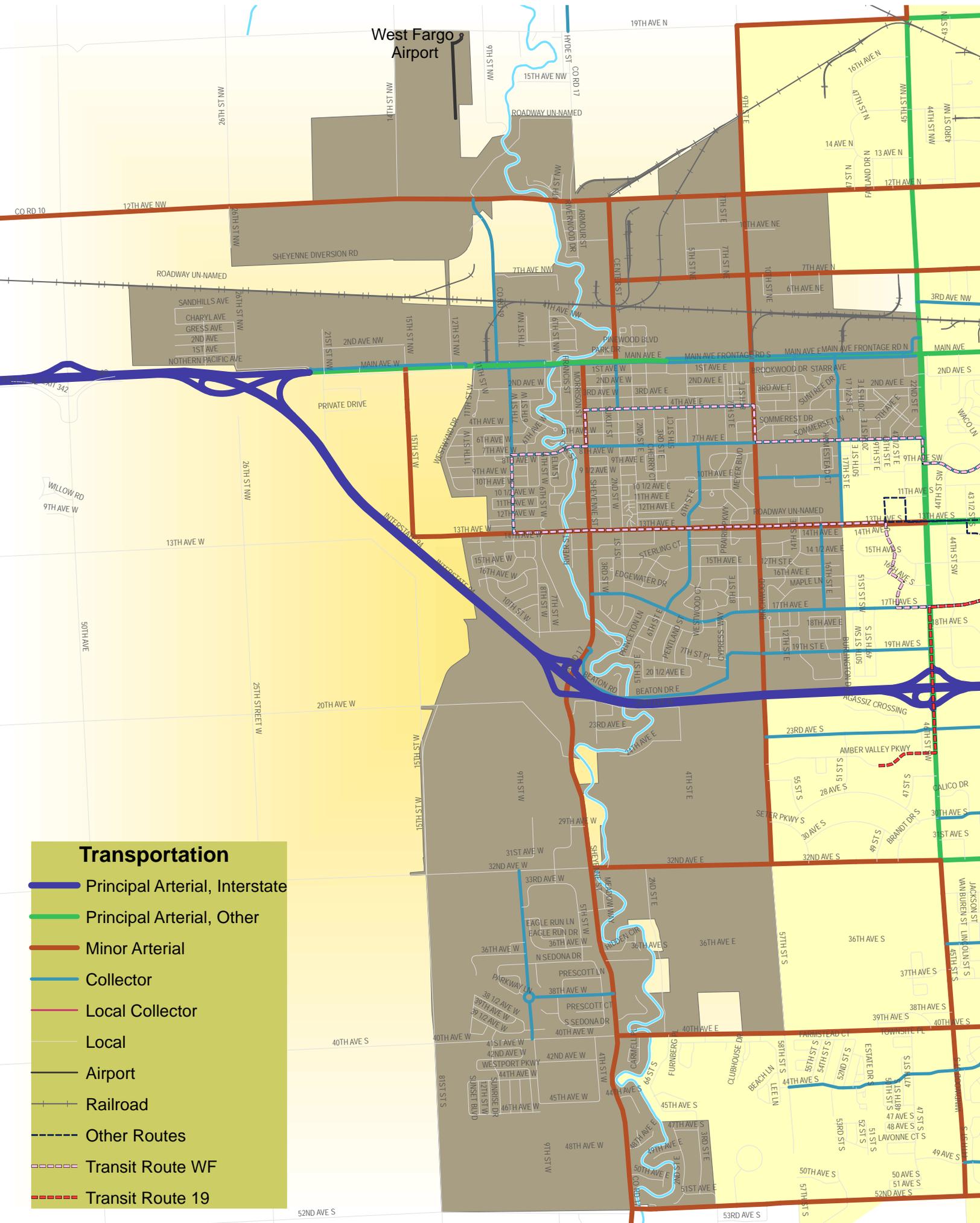
**Table 12**

<b>MAT Fixed Route Usage in West Fargo</b>							
<b>Year</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>
<b>Ridership</b>	5,640	8,060	11,458	13,776	16,380	20,632	25,127
<b>Pct. Increase</b>	x	42.91%	42.16%	20.23%	18.90%	25.96%	21.79%

Table 12 highlights fixed route ridership on the West Fargo MAT Route since 2000. As is clear ridership has grown steadily though out the last several years in West Fargo. As shown on Figure 8 transit service in West Fargo focuses on the 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue corridor and the older parts of the community. There is currently no service to the newer areas south of 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

West Fargo also receives MAT Paratransit service from MAT which is available to eligible residents who qualify for the service. Currently the MAT Paratransit service boundary covers all of West Fargo. Table 13 demonstrates usage of MAT Paratransit by West Fargo since 2000. Ridership has tripled in West Fargo since 2000. The cost to provide paratransit service is currently an issue of discussion for Metro Area Transit. Currently West Fargo pays the City of Fargo \$12.70 for each one-way ride it provides on MAT Paratransit.

# Figure 8: West Fargo Transportation Infrastructure



- Transportation**
-  Principal Arterial, Interstate
  -  Principal Arterial, Other
  -  Minor Arterial
  -  Collector
  -  Local Collector
  -  Local
  -  Airport
  -  Other Routes
  -  Transit Route WF
  -  Transit Route 19

Table 13

<b>MAT Paratransit Ridership in West Fargo</b>			
<b>Year</b>	<b>West Fargo</b>	<b>Total System*</b>	<b>West Fargo Share</b>
2000	2,214	28,512	7.77%
2001	2,377	27,829	8.54%
2002	2,635	27,978	9.42%
2003	2,573	35,163	7.32%
2004	3,802	40,151	9.47%
2005	4,464	41,619	10.73%
2006	6,424	48,989	13.11%
2007 (ytd)**	6,906	46,109	14.98%

*\*Includes ridership in all four metro cities*

*\*\* Through October 2007*

### **Bikeways**

As was demonstrated in Figure 7 West Fargo has a fairly extensive bike path system.

### **Aviation**

West Fargo currently has a municipal airport which is governed by an independent airport authority board. The airport is located just east of the city lagoons, south of 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue North. The airport operates within the airspace of Hector International Airport in Fargo. For airports in its category, the West Fargo airport is the busiest in the state. The West Fargo airport currently has one runway and several hangars, one of which is owned by the City.

### **Rail**

A set of two railroad tracks passes to the north of West Fargo, roughly parallel to Main Avenue. These tracks are owned by Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF). As shown in Figure 8, a handful of spurs run off the BNSF line which passes north of West Fargo. Many of these spurs have been in place for some time to service existing industrial and agricultural uses in the area. Given the location of the BNSF mainline in relation to West Fargo, the tracks do not create the degree of auto conflict experienced in other parts of the metropolitan area.

## CHAPTER 2 - PUBLIC INPUT SUMMARY

The West Fargo Comprehensive Plan is built on a public engagement process that maximized resident input early in the plan development process. The process was crafted with input from community leaders, stakeholders, and citizens. The public input process was multifaceted and included passive and active elements. The following narrative offers a snap shot of the public input process. Appendix 2 provides a detailed overview of the public input process which formed the basis of the West Fargo Comprehensive Plan.

### STEERING COMMITTEE

The steering committee guided all elements of the study process. The committee represented a broad range of community interests. The committee assisted in setting the tone of the study process and provided critical input into all elements of plan development. The steering committee met 7 times throughout the plan development process. The steering committee was identified in the introduction section of this document.

### WEB PAGE

The web page [www.westfargoplan.org](http://www.westfargoplan.org) was developed to allow community members and interested persons access to the planning process. The page was used to post key documents, plan elements, and meeting notices. The web page was visited a total of 589 times, primarily by community residents and other interested persons.

### COMMUNITY EVENTS

Metro COG staff attended the West Fargo Spring Business Expo and one Business after Hours event. Both were sponsored by the West Fargo Chamber of Commerce. At both events Metro COG gathered passive input from a cumulative total of over 110 community residents. Both events were used to gather input into the planning process and also educate community residents about the planning process in general. The comments received at both events were generally in line with those comments portrayed in other elements of the public input summary. In an effort to further alter the community to the Comprehensive Plan update, Metro COG included an 8.5 x 11 poster in the April West Fargo Chamber of Commerce Newsletter. The newsletter had an estimated distribution of 500 businesses and households.

### COMMUNITY INPUT MEETING

A community input meeting was held on May 10, 2007 at the West Fargo Chamber of Commerce. Nearly 50 residents attended the community input meeting. The intent of the meeting was to gather early input from West Fargo residents. The information gathered at the meeting was used to assist in the update of the West Fargo Comprehensive Plan (Plan). Residents were provided with 8 interactive poster boards to help solicit input on a range of community issues. Comment cards/sheets were also provided for residents to share general comments and observations.

#### ONLINE COMMUNITY SURVEY

An online survey was developed as part of the update of the West Fargo Comprehensive Plan (Plan). The survey was designed in consultation with West Fargo Planning staff and the steering committee. The survey was designed to gather input on a battery of issues within the City of West Fargo. The survey contained questions covering a range of topics including: Demographics, Community Image & Identity, Community Growth, Community Vision, Land use & Development, Transportation and Community Facilities. What follows is a narrative summary of the sentiment gleaned from the community survey.

#### FOCUS GROUPS

A total of seven focus groups were held to help gather input and assist in the formulation of key elements of the plan development.

- Township/County/Abutting Jurisdictions – This group consisted of entities which abut West Fargo and representatives from land areas which are in West Fargo's ET.
- New/Growth Area Business – This group consisted of smaller businesses which are in the growth areas of the City.
- Redevelopment/Downtown Business – This group consisted of businesses which are in older/established parts of the city which may be undergoing redevelopment or renaissance efforts.
- Housing – This group consisted of individuals in the housing industry, including builders and developers, but also included realtors.
- Public Official – The group consisted of administration and elected officials from the Park District, School District, and City of West Fargo.
- Special Issues/Services – This group consisted of representation from the elderly, disabled, and New American communities, among others.
- Infrastructure – This group consisted of key municipal staff and administration and would focus on short and long range infrastructure needs and issues.

#### COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE

On October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2007, Metro COG and the City of West Fargo hosted an Open House at the Loeden Center to share the elements of the Draft Comprehensive Plan. Nearly 40 community members participated in the Open House and shared their ideas on the draft elements of the Comprehensive Plan. Comments received as part of the Open House were integrated into the planning process.

## **CHAPTER 3 - STRATEGIC ISSUES**

As West Fargo moves forward it needs to recognize the importance of a handful of strategic issues. The strategic issues identified below form the foundation of West Fargo's community strategy and the framework for its Comprehensive Plan. The strategic issues are a direct outgrowth of the public input process of the Comprehensive Plan itself. The strategic issues are the culmination of and combination of a broad range of ideas, issues, and opportunities which surfaced during the public input process of the Comprehensive Plan. The strategic initiatives will be sewn through out the Comprehensive Plan and will tie together the plans many parts into a cohesive document.

### **COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT & REBIRTH**

West Fargo has reached the point as a community where it must focus on its older residential and commercial areas. Maximizing existing flood protected areas and existing and future infrastructure investment is dependent on West Fargo's ability to guide development back into older neighborhoods. Neighborhood preservation and revitalization polices will prove critical in keeping West Fargo's core neighborhoods vibrant and economically competitive.

The Community Reinvestment and Rebirth strategy includes downtown West Fargo and many of the communities' older commercial and industrial areas, many of which are strung along the Sheyenne Street and Main Avenue corridor. A reinvestment and rebirth strategy covering Main Avenue and the northern portions of Sheyenne Street will be paramount to achieving an economic and social identity for West Fargo's traditional centers of commerce and living.

### **REGIONAL & INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION**

As West Fargo moves forward with the development and implementation of community facilities and infrastructure it will be critical that it reach out to its neighboring communities to discuss options for cooperation and collaboration. The City of West Fargo needs to reach out to and cooperate with the West Fargo School District and the West Fargo Park District. West Fargo is one part of a larger region, and recognizing its place with in the region will assist West Fargo in making the strategic partnerships that not only support the larger regional good, but also help grow West Fargo itself. As the fastest growing community in the region West Fargo may wish to reassess its role in brokering regional dialogue on a number of regionally significant issues.

### **COMMUNITY GROWTH**

West Fargo is making long range infrastructure plans based on a build out population of roughly 45,000. There is a desire among residents for West Fargo to keeps its population around 40,000 people. There is also a sentiment among some in the community that West Fargo should not limit its population. If West Fargo wishes to grow beyond a population of 45,000 it must begin to plan for that growth now. Growth beyond 45,000 will require the City to increase land use densities and development patterns and refocus growth at

existing neighborhoods and commercial areas. As well, substantial growth beyond 45,000 will require the City to prepare for flood protection west of the Sheyenne Diversion.

### **INFRASTRUCTURE BALANCE AND PRIORITIZATION**

The largest issue facing West Fargo is the need to provide a broad range of infrastructure and facilities to support its current footprint and the development which is expected in its southern growth area. The City of West Fargo must look at its future growth and determine how it wishes to prioritize new infrastructure development. In many cases the provision of new infrastructure will require a balance between West Fargo's growth areas and the core of the City.

### **A CITY OF NEIGHBORHOODS**

West Fargo residents value the sense of place and sense of community that comes with being a resident of the community. Residents owe this sense of place to the existence of unique and well maintained neighborhoods. As West Fargo continues to grow it must work to ensure that new residential developments contain the building blocks of strong neighborhoods. At the same time West Fargo must maintain its core neighborhoods which make up the heart of the community. The balance between the new and old neighborhood fabric in West Fargo will be critical. Sewing the varied and diverse neighborhoods and districts of the community together will help preserve the small town mood and spirit which embodies West Fargo.

### **PRESERVATION OF SMALL TOWN ATMOSPHERE**

West Fargo residents of all vintage point to West Fargo's small town atmosphere as a key community characteristic. Residents feel strongly the small town atmosphere should be preserved as the city continues to grow. West Fargo has nearly 25,000 residents and is part of metro area with a population of nearly 180,000. The small town atmosphere is really more figurative than literal. The atmosphere which residents perceive is actually more of mood and spirit which the community currently embodies.

As West Fargo grows it must continually evolve and implement tools and techniques to preserve the mood and spirit of a small town, even though it is no longer a small town. Preserving the small town sense of place has much to do with other strategic initiatives already identified, primarily building and maintaining neighborhoods and providing good neighborhood based schools.

### **SCHOOL DISTRICT**

One of the most significant factors behind the growth of West Fargo has been the growth and leadership of the West Fargo School District. Residents perceive the West Fargo School District as visionary. In many cases the school district is perceived as having a better long range plan than municipal government itself. In fast growing communities the facility planning of the school district will direct and influence the physical form of the municipality. There is the need for perpetual coordination and cooperation between the School District and the City of West Fargo to ensure symmetry in the direction of both entities.

## CHAPTER 4 - ISSUES ANALYSIS

The Strategic Issues identified in Chapter 3 are the building blocks of the West Fargo Comprehensive Plan. The following is an analysis of the Strategies Issues and an expanded understanding of how each relates to specific on the ground activities in West Fargo. The Issues Analysis provides a framework of initiatives and next steps for the City of West Fargo in the coming years. The issues analysis ties the Strategic Initiatives into measurable implementation actions for the City of West Fargo. The Issues Analysis will translate into the Goals and Policies which will be discussed in Chapter 7.

### COMMUNITY GROWTH

There is a mix of ideas on exactly how big West Fargo should be as a community. West Fargo will develop into a community of roughly 42,000 once it has filled in the flood protected areas south of I-94.

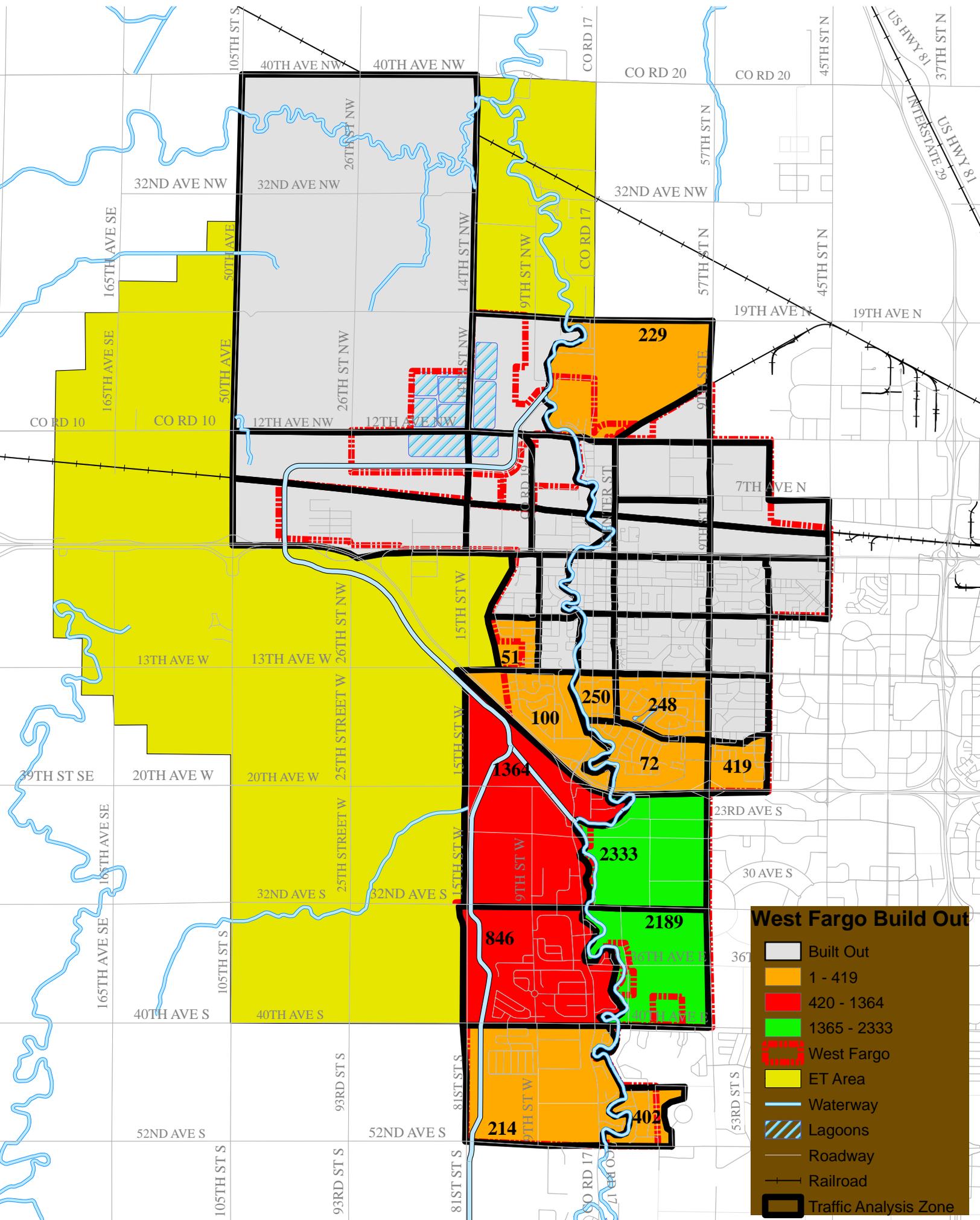
As of the preparation of this plan the area south of I-94 is 15 to 20% developed. Based on current estimates there is the potential for another 9,000 housing units south of I-94. The bulk of the remaining build out in the southern growth areas will be north and west of the intersection of 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and Sheyenne Street; and north of 40<sup>th</sup> Avenue east of the Sheyenne River. The land between 46<sup>th</sup> and 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue west of Sheyenne Street is also relatively undeveloped. Figure 9 demonstrates where the remainder of household growth is projected within the City of West Fargo. This build out projection assumes the community will build out under current land development policies. With the exception of the area northwest of West Fargo, these projections only include the existing corporate limits of West Fargo.

West Fargo can establish a vision for itself as a community of whatever size it thinks it wants to be. However the market is likely to dictate just exactly how large West Fargo eventually becomes as a city. What West Fargo can control is how it develops and grows as a community. As West Fargo grows it must protect two somewhat interrelated concepts. One is its small town atmosphere and the second is its neighborhood orientated development pattern. Development patterns determine the type of feel and sense of place a community exudes.

#### Land Use Patterns

West Fargo residents are supportive of development patterns which have typified the community's growth over the past two decades. At the same time if West Fargo wishes to maximize existing flood protected areas it may be worth exploring alternative land development scenarios in strategic locations throughout the community. Though residents tend to disapprove of large scale higher density development, they are more supportive of moderate or mixed density settings which offer a range of housing types within a geographic area.

# Figure 9: Household Buildout Projections 2008 & Beyond



West Fargo should consider flexibility from standard development practice to allow for neo-traditional development patterns. Neo-traditional principles would include the development of smaller frontage lots. Smaller frontage lots will reduce the amount of assessable front footage (i.e. lower special assessments) and also allow for slightly higher land densities. Neo-traditional development would allow for the inclusion of alleys in developments. Alleys defray on street parking needs and also allow for garages to be faced away from the street. While the creation of alleys is likely close to cost neutral from an infrastructure standpoint, they do offer an atypical setting.

Another neo-traditional development concept which may be accepted by West Fargo residents is mixed commercial uses in neighborhood settings. Better known as neighborhood commercial. Neighborhood commercial development allows for the placement of to-scale commercial development within residential areas. The type of commercial use typically permitted in residential areas is those which generate traffic from the abutting neighborhood. Typically this would be a convenience store or other store front retail.

### Infill Development

A strategy that relates back to neighborhood revitalization is infill development. Infill development is the development of empty lots and parcels within previously developed areas. In many cases these infill lots occur in older commercial, industrial, or residential areas. Sometimes the land has never been developed or in other cases the structures on the land are no longer habitable and can be redeveloped. In either case infill development is a strategy which can be used to maximize existing infrastructure investments and also used to revitalize older parts of the community. Infill development also adds to the local tax base by bringing new or improved property to the tax rolls. There is potential for infill development in the older parts of downtown West Fargo through programs such as the Downtown Improvement District (DID) and the Neighborhood Reinvestment Program (NRP), as discussed later.

### Beyond the Diversion

As West Fargo continues to build out its current municipal footprint in its southern growth areas, pressure will intensify to develop outside of the Sheyenne Diversion. Pressure to develop west of the Sheyenne Diversion will also magnify as land values increase within the diversion.

Two issues present themselves as problems as the City considers development outside of the Sheyenne Diversion. One is flood protection and the second is infrastructure costs. West Fargo has not analyzed either issue in the short-term. West Fargo is most focused on ensuring the prudent development of lands within the Sheyenne Diversion. Development outside of the Sheyenne Diversion will need to be done under a clearly understood development framework. This framework will take time to develop and will

need to be preceded by the decision that the City is prepared to extend itself beyond the Diversion.

It is recognized the areas south of 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue are generally less flood prone than those to the north of 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue. This roughly equates to about one total section (640 acres) of marginally developable land. However, it would not be wise to allow development outside of the Sheyenne Diversion under a piece meal flood protection scheme. Prior to allowing the deployment of smaller flood protection efforts outside of the Sheyenne Diversion, West Fargo should engage its regional partners in an effort to understand a method to more comprehensively address flood control outside of the Sheyenne Diversion. Beyond flood control issues, development outside of the Sheyenne Diversion will also have infrastructure ramifications for the City of West Fargo.

Premature development outside of the Sheyenne Diversion will put a burden on existing infrastructure resources. The City of West Fargo is already struggling to direct new resources into its growth areas south of I-94. Allowing large scale municipally serviced development outside of the Sheyenne Diversion will further exacerbate the situation. As part of further analyzing development outside of the Sheyenne Diversion, West Fargo should clearly document the fiscal impact on currently programmed infrastructure needs of service extension west of the Sheyenne Diversion.

West Fargo should not grow out of the Sheyenne Diversion until such time as a long range development framework plan is in place for these areas. As well, growth outside of the Sheyenne Diversion should not occur until West Fargo has programmed the necessary infrastructure needs for such into its short and long range capital improvement programs.

### Workforce Housing

As West Fargo grows it needs to ensure it is providing an adequate mix of housing types. Of importance is a recognition of affordable or workforce housing needs. Workforce housing is housing which is affordable to those households which are at approximately 80 to 130% of median income for the region. Workforce households make up roughly 30% of the metro households and are very susceptible to market and policy changes which impact housing prices. West Fargo needs to work internally to ensure workforce housing needs are being met, as well West Fargo needs to continue the regional dialogue started with approval of the Regional Workforce Housing Profile in 2006.

## **A CITY OF NEIGHBORHOODS**

### Residential Stability

Residential stability ties back into the notion of a neighborhood reinvestment program for older neighborhoods of West Fargo. Keeping neighborhoods fluid and vibrant requires the injection of new families (or homeowners) and the steady flow of new dollars into the housing stock. In addition to financing programs which work to distribute dollars into older neighborhoods, other soft tools are needed to promote neighborhoods stability. One

of the most successful tools to promote neighborhood stability is neighborhood associations.

Neighborhood associations come in many different varieties. However, the basics of a neighborhood association are simply a group of residents who meet on a somewhat regular basis and discuss issues relevant to the neighborhood. In some cases the associations will have official membership and board members, and conduct official business, etc. In other cases the association will be an informal gathering of neighborhood residents.

Neighborhood associations are a reliable way to increase communication among neighbors. Increased communication among neighbors facilitates the ability of neighborhoods to be proactive in fighting against blight, crime, and municipal issues of importance within the neighborhood; among others. A strong group of neighbors, or neighborhood associations, can go a long way to ensuring specific neighborhood interests are taken care of.

Often neighborhood level issues are tackled by a handful of residents and too often the efforts fail due to a lack of influence. The intent of a neighborhood association is to empower the entire neighborhood in order to bring adequate influence on relevant issues or topics which have an impact on the neighborhood. The ideas of neighborhood empowerment discussed here are borrowed from, and more fully thought out, in *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, by Jane Jacobs.

The City of West Fargo should promote the creation of neighborhood associations throughout the City. Additionally, the City should seriously explore the creation of a downtown business association. The downtown business association would be a formal association of member businesses dedicated to improving the downtown business environment, both physically and perceptually.

### Neighborhood Schools

West Fargo residents value their quality schools and their neighborhoods. Taken together West Fargo residents value neighborhood schools. The notion of neighborhood schools has become somewhat skewed in the era of the automobile and urban sprawl. In older neighborhoods elementary schools play a critical role in ensuring the stability of the residential housing stock around them.

It is expected that in West Fargo's newer areas the development of a school for every neighborhood is unlikely. At the same time, these neighborhoods will not depend as heavily on the school itself to protect residential stability and property values.

In West Fargo's core neighborhoods, the preservation of existing elementary schools should be considered a priority for the City of West Fargo and the West Fargo School District. Of particular importance are L.E. Berger, Eastwood, and Southside. All three of these elementary schools have an anchoring effect on the adjacent residential property.

The eventual closure of any of these facilities in the future could likely be quantifiably justified to allow for the development of additional sites south of I-94. The impact on the local neighborhoods of such a decision would have a direct impact on those adjacent residential properties. The closure or realignment of existing neighborhood schools to justify the creation of new satellite sites should be discouraged by the City of West Fargo.

## **PRESERVATION OF SMALL TOWN ATMOSPHERE**

Residents of West Fargo identify first and foremost with the small town atmosphere which pervades the community as a quality they value about the city. West Fargo long ago dropped its classification as a small town. What West Fargo currently has, and what it must endeavor to keep alive, is the internal mood and spirit of a small town. The spirit and mood can be maintained and fostered through a host of ways, some of which have already been discussed in this section.

Neighborhood identification and connectivity are important to reassuring West Fargo residents that they are part of a community of neighbors and neighborhoods. Keeping unique neighborhood development patterns in place and allowing for neighbors and neighborhoods to flow into and out of one another will assist in fostering a sense of community within the West Fargo population.

Community events and gatherings, whether community wide or neighborhood specific, help foster a sense of pride and belonging among community residents. Events such as West Fest and other smaller events are critical to keeping alive the community spirit of West Fargo. As West Fargo continues to grow it must become creative in developing new events and activities which capture all the residents of the community, new and old. Events and activities should be structured geographically to ensure residents of West Fargo are exposed to the entire community, from downtown Sheyenne Street to Rendezvous Park.

West Fargo has become a community of contrast. Capitalizing on this contrast will help demonstrate the many sides of the community. By capturing these community contrasts now, residents will have a chance to prepare for even more change and contrast as the community grows in coming years.

The value and uniqueness of downtown Sheyenne Street will only intensify as the areas south of I-94 develop in the coming decades. Drawing a connection between West Fargo's historic core and its suburban fringe is critical to protecting West Fargo mood and spirit as a community.

The public school system in West Fargo has had a unifying force on the community. This trend is not likely to change in the future. The school system must continue to play its part at reaffirming West Fargo's small town ambience.

## **SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Much of the growth which has occurred in West Fargo can be attributed to the foresight of the West Fargo School District. Among residents of the community the school district is seen as having a long range vision. It will be critical that the long range planning of the school district be coordinated with the long range planning of the City of West Fargo. Many times the acquisition of lands for future school sites is done well in advance of the actual development. The school district should consult with the existing land use and infrastructure plan for the City prior to acquiring property for new school sites.

Realignment strategies which may be considered by the School District should be done only after consultation with municipal planning staff. Changes in facility use can have a dramatic impact on adjacent traffic patterns and also on the land use dynamic of the immediate areas.

As was already discussed, the older neighborhood schools in West Fargo are critical elements of the community fabric. The School District should avoid closure or realignment of these facilities at all costs.

## **COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT & REBIRTH**

West Fargo has an opportunity to reinvest within the core of its city, both its residential and commercial core. Reinvestment within West Fargo's core gives the community an opportunity to allow for a rebirth of many of West Fargo's traditional residential areas and commercial areas. There are three primary target areas where the city needs to pursue a program of reinvestment and rebirth. All three are interrelated, and all three occur in and around the downtown. The three target areas are the Renaissance Zone, Main Avenue Investment District (DID), and the Neighborhood Reinvestment Program (NRP). All three areas are demonstrated in Figure 10.

### **Renaissance Zone**

West Fargo created a Renaissance Zone in 2000. The zone covers the area depicted in Figure 10. The intent of the zone is to provide tax incentives for property owners to improve structures and properties. Since inception the program has been successful in inciting a number of positive changes within West Fargo's downtown business district. Since inception the program has impacted over 30 properties and invested over \$3,000,000 into downtown West Fargo.

West Fargo must continue to fully utilize the program to continue the reinvestment in downtown. With the start of the reconstruction of Main Avenue in 2009 the City has an opportunity to catalyze measurable business reinvestment along the portion of Main Avenue which passes through downtown.

## **Downtown Improvement District**

The West Fargo Comprehensive Plan identifies a Downtown Improvement District (DID). The DID is the core of West Fargo's Downtown. Figure 10 demonstrates the DID. The DID has been identified by the City of West Fargo as an area that should undergo intense scrutiny in the coming years. This area is the northern tier of West Fargo's downtown, essentially running from 5<sup>th</sup> Street East to the Sheyenne River.

The DID is a smattering of commercial, industrial and residential uses. West Fargo's future land use plan calls for primarily commercial uses in this area. In an effort to work the area into a more uniform district the City of West Fargo will pursue a reinvestment strategy for this area. The DID is anchored on each side by two key community landmarks, the Loeden Center and the Leidal Center. The strategy for the DID is to work with property owners to convert the area to a mixed use district of compatible businesses and appropriate housing types.

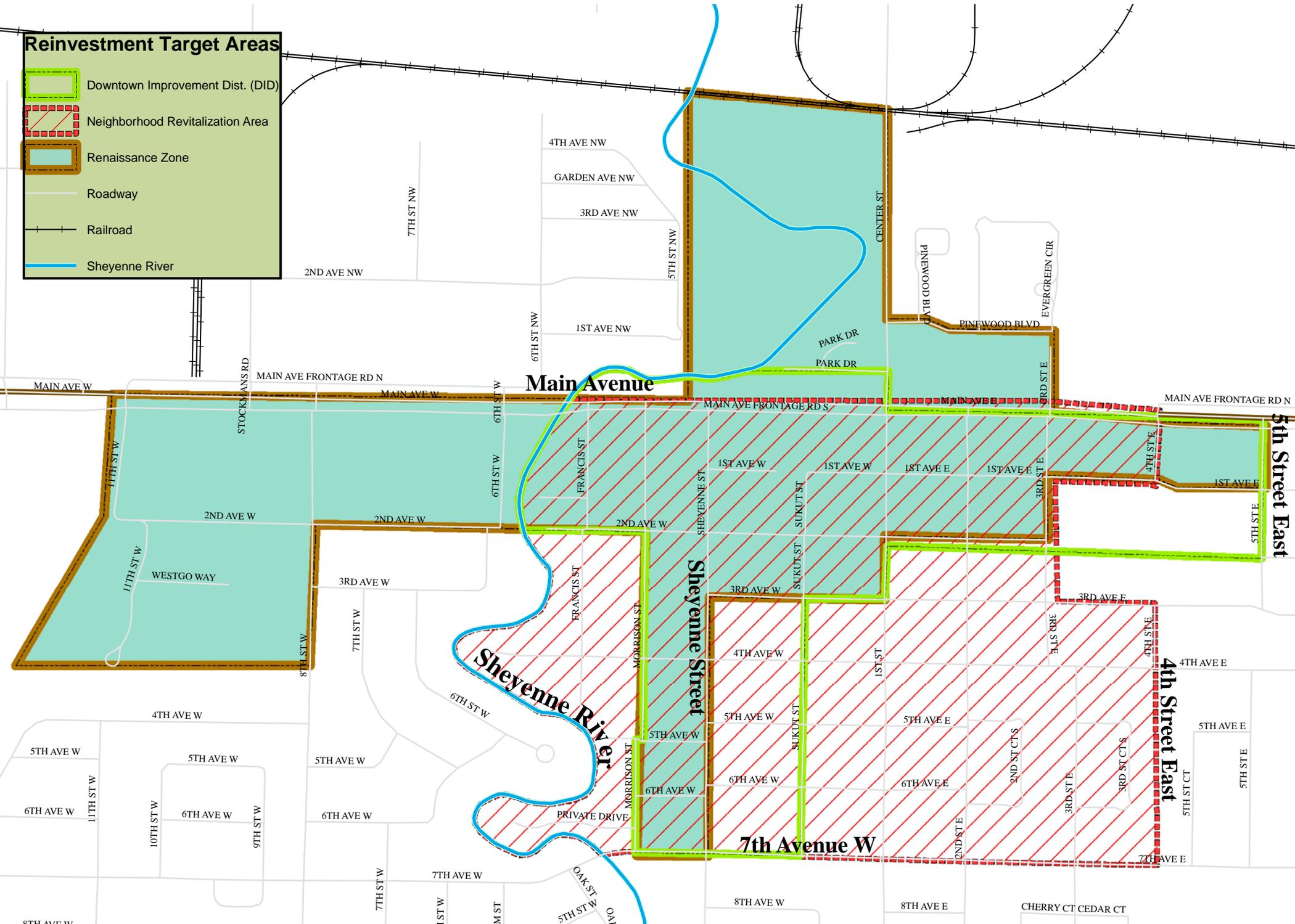
To assist with the transition of the DID to a mixed commercial and residential district the City of West Fargo may consider the creation of a reinvestment fund. The reinvestment fund would be used to acquire available properties and to also assist with the strategic infrastructure improvements in the DID. It is not recommended the City pursue an aggressive acquisition strategy; rather the City would work with willing property owners on buy out agreements, as appropriate and as the market dictates. As properties come available the City would look to use the reinvestment fund to purchase the properties. The overall strategy in the DID would be to bundle acquired property into larger developable blocks of land. While this plan recommends the transition of the DID to a mixed use district, the City of West Fargo should consider a more detailed planning study of specific opportunities for transition of the DID.

Of particular interest within the DID is the existence of an alley system. The alley system presents some opportunities for increasing pedestrian activity in the area. As well the alley system along Main Avenue and Sheyenne Street offer some rear-entrance gathering spaces. While the overall DID area contains a smattering of poor condition residential structures, the overall area does appear to be in good shape. Of note, too, are a handful of home-based businesses. The existing industrial and commercial structures within the DID appear to be near full occupancy.

There is the desire on the part of West Fargo to convert the DID to a more mixed commercial and residential district. The physical and structural fabric of this area does not lend itself to an easy conversion to such a district. Many of the structures within the DID are larger industrial type structures. However opportunities exist for a limited transition to more of a mixed use town center.

# Reinvestment Target Areas

-  Downtown Improvement Dist. (DID)
-  Neighborhood Revitalization Area
-  Renaissance Zone
-  Roadway
-  Railroad
-  Sheyenne River



**Figure 10 - Community Reinvestment and Rebirth**



**Sheyenne River**

**Armour Park**

**Park**

**Ped/Bike Bridge:  
Connect Armour Park to Downtown**

**Gateway to downtown**

**Landscape/Park**

**Main Avenue**

**Pedestrian Alley: Creating a Bike/Ped  
Friendly Downtown**

**Community Gathering Place  
River Access/Connection**

**Sheyenne River**

**Francis Street**

**Morrison Street**

**Sheyenne Street**

**Sulist Street**

**1st Street East**

**Center Street**

**Figure 11: Downtown Crossroads**

### Connection to Green Space

Amour Park is located just north of Main Avenue, and in close proximity to downtown. However there is no easy connection between downtown and Armour Park. The City and the Park District may wish to explore the creation of a pedestrian bridge between Armour Park and the downtown. A pedestrian river crossing could be provided in the area near the Sheyenne Street and Main Avenue Intersection. The creation of a new pedestrian crossing of the Sheyenne River near Armour Park would add a direct link to green space from the downtown, and vice versa. A pedestrian linkage in this area would make Armour Park more assessable to residential areas south of downtown.

A river crossing near the intersection of Main Avenue and Sheyenne Street could serve as the anchor for the development of a community gateway or focal point at the crossroads of downtown West Fargo. A river crossing at Main Avenue and Sheyenne would also relate well with the development of a passive green space to the east of Dan's Oil, as mentioned earlier. Figure 11 illustrates the potential in this area.

### Main Avenue Reconstruction

The reconstruction of Main Avenue will start in 2009 and will last until at least 2013. The project will provide West Fargo an opportunity to create a new sense of place along the entire corridor. West Fargo should use the creation of the DID as described earlier, as an opportunity to oversee a reasonable transition of the Main Avenue corridor as it passes through West Fargo's downtown.

The Main Avenue reconstruction has the ability to negatively impact adjacent businesses along the corridor, especially those which depend on drive by traffic. West Fargo needs to prepare for the potential that some businesses along the corridor could be seriously impacted during the construction season. West Fargo should work with existing businesses to prepare a signage and detour plan that allows motorists easy access to adjacent businesses.

West Fargo should work closely with the ND DOT to ensure that construction staging and planning is communicated with the public and adjacent business owners. West Fargo and ND DOT should work to create an ongoing communication plan that serves to update local and regional commuters as to anticipated changes in traffic patterns and times when measurable congestion will be anticipated.

### Neighborhood Revitalization

The City of West Fargo should build upon the model of the renaissance zone and develop a similar program which is aimed at its older residential areas. A neighborhood reinvestment program (NRP) is seen as critical to the overall health of West Fargo. The intent of the NRP would be to direct low interest loans at targeted neighborhoods within the city. The loans would be used to fund improvements to structures and property within the program area. Unlike federally funded housing programs, the NRP is envisioned as a

more income flexible program which uses the value of the target property as a criterion more so than the income of the household. In many cases NRP programs are locally funded through a host funding mechanisms and usually require the cooperation of a local financial institution. After working with city staff a potential NRP target area has been identified for the City of West Fargo. Figure 10 demonstrates the neighborhood revitalization program area.

The NRP keeps older neighborhoods attractive to younger and first time home buyers. Providing low interest fix up money to homeowners within the program area helps keep dollars flowing into older neighborhoods in the community. Programs like the NRP preserve home values by deterring blight.

In many communities neighborhood reinvestment programs are used to attract younger families to older neighborhoods, which also help support the enrollment in neighborhood elementary schools. With out adequate incentive for investment in older neighborhoods, many homebuyers look past older traditional neighborhoods for the recently developed or developing areas. The provision of an NRP can promote affordable housing within the community. Many older homes are affordable to a range of home seekers. Without adequate incentives for upgrade many potentially affordable housing units don't turn over into the hands of younger homebuyers.

## **REGIONAL & INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION**

### Exurban Land Use Coordination

West Fargo has the opportunity to influence rural development occurring adjacent to the urbanized area. Off-the-grid development patterns on the fringes of West Fargo are seen as incompatible with the long range growth pattern of West Fargo. Development patterns occurring in areas near West Fargo are not in sync with existing infrastructure blueprints. To the degree possible West Fargo needs to use its influence with Cass County, Townships, and smaller rural communities to promote a development pattern that not only works with the long range plans of West Fargo, but of the larger metro region.

Large scale rural development is costly from an infrastructure standpoint once the developments are annexed into a municipality. Even prior to being annexed into a city, many rural developments can place an undue burden on either County or Township financed roads and bridges. West Fargo has land use control in its Extraterritorial (ET) Area, as well as the ability to review and approve subdivisions of land in its ET. West Fargo is encouraged to scrutinize rural developments in its ET Area and to work with the County and Townships to review land division which come before the City.

West Fargo is encouraged to work with Cass County, the City of Fargo, and adjacent urbanizing communities to begin a dialogue on the long range sustainability of development patterns occurring on the fringes of the metro area. The inability of urbanizing communities to provide adequate infrastructure for themselves will place a mid-to-long burden on the larger communities of the metro area, including West Fargo.

After the fact agreements to provide infrastructure in lieu of in place development patterns are not in the best interest of West Fargo.

### Flood Control

One of the issues which West Fargo will grapple with in the coming years is ensuring flood protection west of the Sheyenne Diversion. It is not a question of *if* development pressure will occur outside of the Sheyenne Diversion; it is a question of *when*. The Sheyenne Diversion was a project almost a half century in the making. A project of its scale would take at least as long to develop if initiated today. Flood control is not an issue unique to West Fargo. There is generally a consensus among West Fargo's neighbors that a larger flood control plan is needed for areas outside of the Sheyenne Diversion.

West Fargo may be wise to engage its neighbors in a discussion to understand the commonalities of flood control planning which exist among a host of regional entities. The process of regional flood control is an issue which West Fargo has the most to gain from.

### Schools + Parks + City = West Fargo

There is clear consensus among the Park District, School District, and the municipal government of West Fargo that benefits can be achieved through collaborative efforts among the three entities. In an era of increasing demand for public goods and services and increasing skepticism of property tax increase, a strategy to provide coordinated services and facilities is viewed positively by the public.

West Fargo residents clearly understand they are dependent on the larger region for the provision of some of the services and amenities they enjoy on a daily basis. There is also a growing community desire to provide more of these services and amenities internally. Funding realities and simple economies of scale limit the production of each of the three entities by themselves. Whether it is new recreational facilities, a branch library, or a community center, all are likely to be most cost effective if brought to fruition through a collaborative effort of the City, School District, and Park District. While this Plan does not suggest any particular collaborative efforts initially, it does suggest increased communication among the entities. Key administrative staff from the City, School District, and Park District should meet several times annually to discuss topics of interest among all three entities. As well, the elected boards of each entity should have one annual meeting per year in which a consolidated agenda is prepared in advance.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE BALANCE AND PRIORITIZATION**

Looking ahead West Fargo faces a host of infrastructure challenges. To assist in meeting these challenges the City has prepared a 5 year list of projects it feels are of utmost importance to the growth of the community. Figure 12 demonstrates the *major elements* of West Fargo five year (2008-2012) capital improvement program.

### Long-range Capital Improvement Strategy

In the long range West Fargo needs to prepare a capital improvement strategy which addresses its growth over the 10 year window from 2012 to 2022. Among long-term capital needs are a host of critical improvements which will ensure the longer term growth of the City. Some long range capital projects are subject to development trends, however many have been identified at this point.

**Figure 12: Capital Improvement Program 2008-2012\***

Project	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
<b>Water &amp; Sewer</b>					
Water Treatment Plant					
9th Street Waterline (23rd to 32nd)					
12th Ave NW (Center to CR 17)					
Sheyenne Street (13th Ave to I-94)					
Sanitary Forcemain-Cargill lift to Yards					
Wastewater Lagoon Rehab					
32nd Avenue Waterline (w/land)					
Faith Lutheran Life Retrofit-Lift					
9th Grade Academy Water Tower					
Water Treatment Plant Land Acquisition					
Water Treatment Plant Construction (regional)					
Northside Well and Tower					
Water System Improvements					
7th Ave E Storm Lift					
12th Ave N Forcemain Replacement					
<b>Street Construction &amp; Reconstruction</b>					
9th St Construction (23rd to 32nd Ave)					
6th St Reconstruct (12th Ave to 10th Ave)					
7th Ave E Reconstruction					
9th Street Overpass					
9th Street Interchange					
Main Avenue Project (To be completed in 3 Phases)					2013
9th St E (13th Ave to 15th Ave) Lane Median Mod.					
32nd Ave E Box Culvert					
9th St E/13th Ave Signal-SE Quad					
9th St E 40th Ave Signals					
9th St E 12th Ave N Signals					
9th St E (15th Ave to 19th Ave) Widening					
12th Ave N Reconstruct-Center to Co #17					
Sheyenne St Widening-13th to Interstate					
<b>Pavement Management &amp; Rehabilitation</b>					
7th Ave Overlay-9th St to 45th St					
4th Ave Overlay-9th St To Sheyenne					
7th Ave Overlay-9th St to Sheyenne					
12th Ave North Rehabilitation					
17th St E Overlay-10th Ave to 13th Ave w/turn lane					
9th St Rehabilitation-Main Ave to 13th Ave					

\*This list represents only major elements of West Fargo's CIP and should also be considered illustrative.

## CHAPTER 5 - TRANSPORTATION PLAN

As a rapidly growing community West Fargo will need to maintain its existing transportation network while at the same time expand its future roadway network to keep pace with development. As West Fargo continues to develop to the south of I-94 it will need to prioritize a number of short and long range improvements to the transportation network of the community. Figure 13 shows year 2030 traffic volumes and the future functional class for West Fargo's transportation system.

Critical transportation improvements planned for West Fargo over the coming five year window were identified in Chapter 4 (Page 41) as part of the capital improvement program. The list is to be instructive as the city moves forward with budgeting local dollars and seeking state and Federal dollars.

### CRITICAL CORRIDOR ANALYSIS

In an effort to assist in the programming of both short and long range transportation improvements in the City of West Fargo an examination was conducted of several key corridors throughout the community. The process included the analysis for future operational needs based on projected traffic volumes. The analysis was done by updating the 2030 traffic demand model for the metro area.

The volumes used for the analysis were those depicted in Figure 13. The intent of the corridor analysis is to provide West Fargo with an understanding as to the operational needs on several of its major corridors. The analysis done as part of the comprehensive plan can be used to develop more detailed corridor level analysis in coming years.

#### 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue

13<sup>th</sup> Avenue in West Fargo is the western leg of one of the busiest commercial corridors in the metro area. Projected 2030 traffic volumes on 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue range from 20,000 ADT near 17<sup>th</sup> Street to 15,000 at Sheyenne Street.

Based on projected traffic volumes for 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue it is recommended the City of West Fargo continue to maintain the current 5-lane section (as either a four-lane section with medians and left turn bays, or a four-lane section with a two-way left turn lane) from 17<sup>th</sup> Street to Sheyenne Street for the foreseeable future. It appears that there is sufficient excess capacity on the existing roadway to handle any additional traffic generated by the development of the few remaining vacant parcels adjacent to the roadway. Existing right-turn bays should be preserved where they exist today, and additional right-turn bays may be necessary as the corridor nears full build-out. The emphasis on growth south of I-94 is likely to alter travel patterns somewhat in the near future. The development of commercial property south of I-94 is likely to attract trips from residential parcels south of I-94, limiting the growth potential for traffic on the 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue corridor.



### 8<sup>th</sup> Street West

8<sup>th</sup> Street West is a north-south collector on the west side of West Fargo. Based on projected 2030 traffic volumes it is recommended that West Fargo rebuild the existing two lane profile of 8<sup>th</sup> Street. There is enough existing roadway to allow for the addition of a striped center lane if deemed necessary in future years. Turn lanes should be provided along 8<sup>th</sup> Street at major intersections to avoid delays and to improve safety along the corridor.

### Sheyenne Street

Sheyenne Street is a north-south arterial and its importance will continue to grow in the coming years as development continues south of I-94. West Fargo will need to be proactive along the southern stretches of Sheyenne Street to ensure improvements to the corridor are made in a timely fashion. While a number of needed capacity changes are not currently programmed for Sheyenne Street, a number of short range actions steps are identifiable.

Sheyenne Street between Main Avenue and 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue is projected to carry between 8,500 and 12,000 vehicles daily in 2030. Projected 2030 traffic volumes on Sheyenne Street south of 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue to the I-94 Interchange will range between 16,000 and 20,000 vehicles per day. Projected 2030 traffic volumes on Sheyenne Street south of I-94 will range from 20,000 to 30,000 throughout the corridor as far south at 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue.

Recommended profile on Sheyenne Street from Main Avenue to 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue is a three lane section. The City should be flexible in the areas north of 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue to allow for measures which allow for a more appealing pedestrian environment.

From 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue to I-94 Sheyenne Street will likely function more as a through-arterial than a neighborhood street, despite the largely residential character of the surrounding area. It is recommended Sheyenne Street be re-built as a five-lane arterial, or as a four-lane arterial with left-turn bays. This will put the roadway function at odds with some of the land-use decisions that are already in place. For example, access from properties on the west side of the roadway comes in the form of individual driveways for each home, which is not desirable access control for an arterial of this nature. However, it is not insurmountable.

The City should approach homeowners along Sheyenne Street to discuss consolidation of driveways along Sheyenne Street to allow for few access points. Many of the homes west of Sheyenne Street are set back a considerable distance from the roadway, which both helps to mitigate issues such as noise and vibration of heavy traffic, and also provides potential opportunities such as driveway consolidation. For the developments on the east side of Sheyenne, good access control has been maintained. There appears to be sufficient right-of-way available between the existing west-side sidewalk and east-side multi-use path adjacent to Sheyenne Street that a five-lane section would fit without the need to disturb either. However, almost all of the existing boulevard trees would be destroyed in the process.

South of I-94 Sheyenne Street will require a four lane section with turn bays provided for at key intersections. Transition to a five-lane section south of I-94 will require the oversight and implementation of a number of short, mid, and long range actions steps. Of importance to improvements along the southern portions of the Sheyenne Street Corridor is a determination of the carrying capacity which can occur on Sheyenne Street at the interchange with I-94. There is currently some question as to the number of lanes which can be accommodated under the I-94 overpass.

In the immediate to mid-term West Fargo needs to conduct an analysis of the lane capacity at the Sheyenne Street/I-94 Interchange. West Fargo needs to scrutinize future access along the corridor; new access spacing should be limited to at least 660'. West Fargo also needs to be attentive of Cass County as they seek realignment of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue intersection.

West Fargo should look to update the Sheyenne Street/CR 17 Corridor Study which was last completed in 2002. When timely, West Fargo needs to work with ND DOT to initiate a project concept report (PCR) on the Sheyenne Street corridor from I-94 to 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue South. West Fargo would also be wise to regularly communicate with Fargo, Cass County and Horace on development proposals occurring along the corridor south of 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue.

#### 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue

Fourth Avenue runs between 9<sup>th</sup> Street East and Sheyenne Street. Fourth Avenue is a collector that serves primarily residential neighborhoods. Currently 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue operates efficiently as a two lane facility. Fourth Avenue is projected to carry 4000 vehicles per day in 2030. It is recommended that 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue be reconstructed as a two lane facility; however accommodations for left or right turn lane may be needed at various points along the corridor. Given the residential nature of the corridor accommodations need to be given for pedestrians, especially school aged children.

#### 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue

Seventh Avenue is an important east –west corridor in the City of West Fargo. Seventh Avenue is projected to carry between 6,600 and 4,000 cars a day in 2030. The higher volumes will occur on the eastern portion of the corridor with the volumes dampening in the west. Volumes on 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue have already reached projected 2030 volumes. A two-lane section should be operationally sufficient for future traffic volumes, though the addition of turn bays may be necessary at 17<sup>th</sup> Street.

#### 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue North

Seventh Avenue is a minor arterial in the industrial area north of Main Avenue. Seventh Avenue is projected to carry between 6,000 and 2,000 vehicles per day in 2030. The higher volumes occur east of 9<sup>th</sup> Street heading towards I-29. The profile of 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue between 9<sup>th</sup> Street and Center Street is adequate to meet current and future demand. West Fargo should work with the City of Fargo to rebuild 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue from 9<sup>th</sup> Street to I-29 as a three lane urban section.

Fargo should work with the City of Fargo to rebuild 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue from 9<sup>th</sup> to I-29 as a three lane urban section.

#### County Road 19 (9<sup>th</sup> Street NW)

County Road 19 is collector roadway which runs between Main Avenue and 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue NW. County Road 19 junctions with 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue NW to the west for a ½ mile and then continues to the north. County Road 19 currently operates efficiently as a two lane facility. Volumes on County Road 19 are projected to be 5600 in 2030. County Road 19 can function as a two lane facility given future traffic volumes. However, pending redevelopment of the Stockyards and the old Federal Beef site may impact volumes and movements along the corridor. Another consideration along the corridor is the grade separate with the BNSF line.

#### 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue

Thirty-second Avenue will carry between 20,000 and 25,000 vehicles by 2030, with the highest volumes near 9<sup>th</sup> Street East. West Fargo will need to widen 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue to four lanes with left-turn bays from 9<sup>th</sup> Street East to 9<sup>th</sup> West to meet future traffic demand on the corridor. West Fargo should preserve 150' to 200' of right-of-way along the corridor and pursue property acquisition as opportunity presents itself through the platting process and implement development and access controls compatible with a median-divided 4-lane urban roadway cross-section (with left-turn bays at key intersections) between 9<sup>th</sup> Street West and 9<sup>th</sup> Street East. Through the platting process West Fargo should ensure full access along the corridor is allowed no less than every quarter mile (1320').

#### 40<sup>th</sup> Avenue

Fortieth Avenue will carry between 12,000 and 16,000 vehicles a day by 2030. West Fargo will need to Implement development and access controls compatible with a median-divided 4-lane urban roadway cross-section (with left-turn bays at key intersections) between 9<sup>th</sup> Street West and 9<sup>th</sup> Street East.

West Fargo should preserve 150' of right-of-way for the corridor (120' at Sheyenne River crossing where the future center-line should shift south to avoid bank stability issues and proceed with property acquisition as opportunities arise. Monitor traffic volumes to identify when a four-lane cross section may be required and review warrants for potential traffic signals at 9<sup>th</sup> Street East. Through the platting process West Fargo should ensure full access along the corridor is allowed no less than every quarter mile (1320').

#### Center Street

Center Street provides access into and out of the industrial area north of Main Avenue in West Fargo. Center Street ends at 12th Avenue N, and has an intersection with 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE. Center Street is of one of only two roadways in West Fargo with a grade separation (underpass) of the BNSF mainline. Current traffic volumes on Center Street range from 6,000 near Main Avenue and taper towards 3,000 at the intersection with 12th Avenue N. Future traffic volumes on Center Street are projected to be similar in 2030. It is recommended West Fargo reconstruct Center Street as a two lane roadway with appropriate turn lanes at 7<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue. A long range priority for West Fargo will

be the reconstruction of the Center Street grade separation. There are currently deficiencies associated with this structure regarding vehicle clearance and lane width.

9<sup>th</sup> Street East

Once 9<sup>th</sup> Street is built over the I-94 it will become a major north-south corridor in the City of West Fargo. The overpass is expected to be complete in 2009 and the overpass will build into an interchange by 2012. Year 2030 traffic volumes on 9<sup>th</sup> Street from Main Avenue to 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue will be 7,500 in the north to 13,000 at the intersection with 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue. This section of 9<sup>th</sup> Street will need to be a 3 lane urban section. Traffic volumes on 9<sup>th</sup> Street from 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue to I-94 are projected to be 15,000 and 22,000 by the year 2030. This section of 9<sup>th</sup> Street will require a five lane section by 2030.

Traffic volumes on 9<sup>th</sup> Street from I-94 to 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue will range between 40,000 and 18,000 by the year 2030. Volumes will be highest near I-94 and tapers towards 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue. West Fargo will need to work with Fargo to construct a five lane facility on this segment of 9<sup>th</sup> Street. Through the platting process West Fargo should ensure full access along the corridor is allowed no less than every quarter mile (1320'), with limited access every 660'.

**WEST FARGO LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PROJECT LIST**

What follows are a list of long range transportation projects for the City of West Fargo. The list is considered to be up to date as of the adoption of the West Fargo Comprehensive Plan. The list is not put in a prioritized order, however simply lists projects of significance in the long range for West Fargo.

<b>West Fargo Long-Range Transportation Project List (beyond 2012)</b>
Reconstruct Sheyenne Street from I-94 to 52nd Avenue
Reconstruct 8 <sup>th</sup> Street W from Main Ave to 13 <sup>th</sup> Ave
Reconstruct 6 <sup>th</sup> Street E from 13 <sup>th</sup> Avenue to 10 <sup>th</sup> Avenue
Replace bridge on County Road 19 (Stockman's Road) at Drain 21
Reconstruct 40 <sup>th</sup> Avenue from 9 <sup>th</sup> Street E to 9 <sup>th</sup> Street W
Reconstruct 12 <sup>th</sup> Avenue N from County Road 17 Street to Eastern City Limit
Reconstruct Center St from Main Avenue to 12 <sup>th</sup> Ave N (including RR underpass)
Reconstruct 9th Street E from Main Avenue to 12th Avenue N
Widen 7 <sup>th</sup> Avenue W from Sheyenne Street to 8 <sup>th</sup> Street W
Reconstruct I-94 Interchange at Sheyenne Street (If lane capacity is needed)
Reconstruct 7 <sup>th</sup> Avenue E from 9 <sup>th</sup> Street to 45 <sup>th</sup> Street

## TRANSIT

Through the public input process it was discovered that additional transit may be warranted in the City of West Fargo. Figure 14 demonstrates existing transit service area in West Fargo. An area is considered to be served by public transit if it is within a ¼ mile of a transit route. All of the known transit generators within the core of West Fargo are essentially served by MAT. However the Main Avenue portion of downtown West Fargo is quite remote from existing MAT Service. Included within this area are both the Loeden Center and the Leidal Education Center.

MAT service ends in West Fargo at 7:30 pm. This stop time was recently increased by an hour; however does present obstacles for commuters in West Fargo who use MAT. An early evening stop time is a barrier to residents wishing to access recreational and entertainment destinations. The lack of evening transportation in West Fargo has been a documented barrier for West Fargo residents who need to access evening education classes at the Loeden Center.

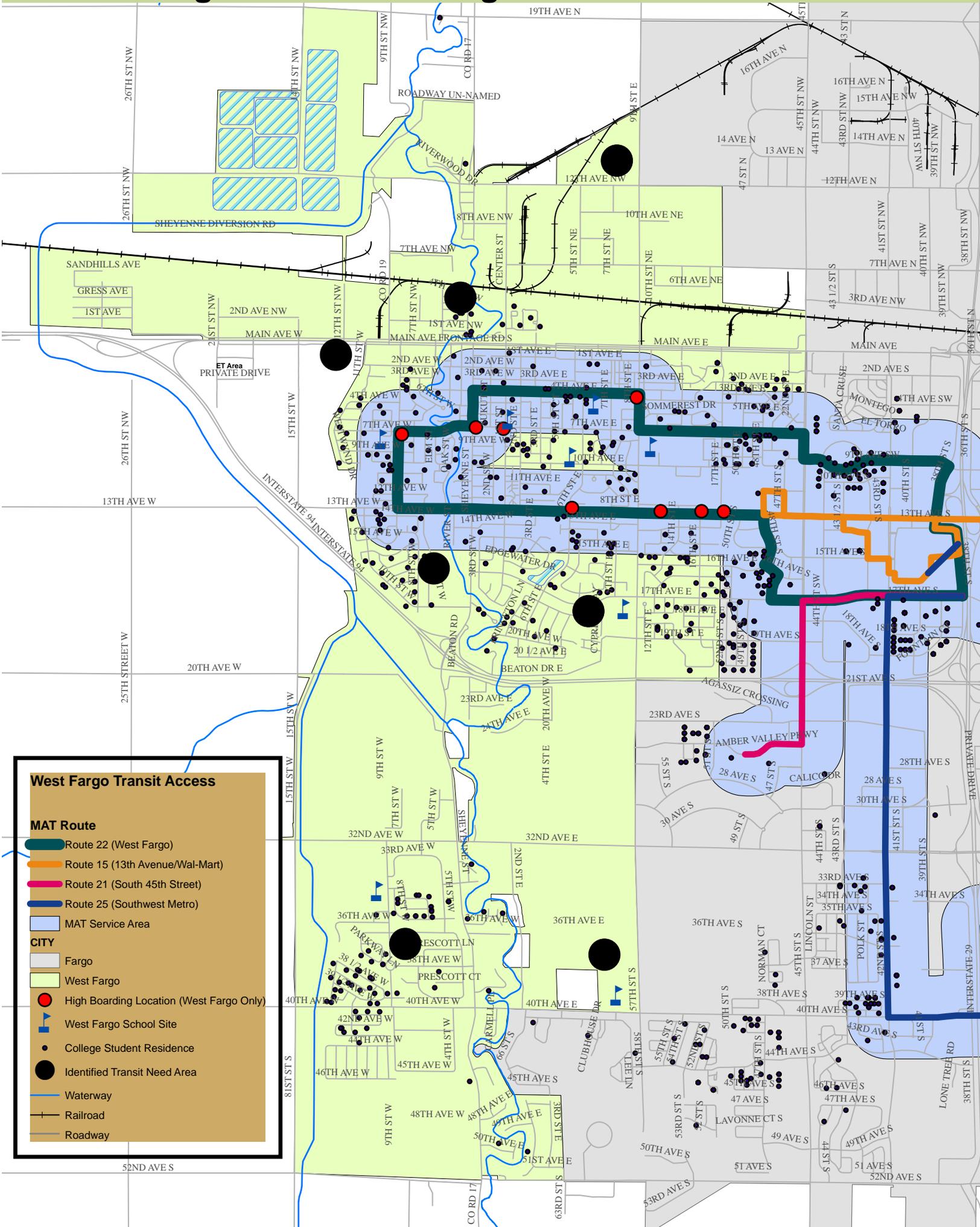
Transit use in West Fargo is growing as fast as any other geographic segment of the metro area. The fastest growing ridership demographic on MAT is college students. Figure 14 demonstrates existing metro area college students who reside in West Fargo. Through the U Pass program all college students in the metro area ride MAT free of charge. There is potential demand for increased college student use of MAT in West Fargo if expanded service were offered.

It is generally recognized an increased level of transit service is needed in West Fargo; there are differing ideas on how that new service is provided. Based on public input and stakeholder consultation West Fargo has two needs related to the public transit. First it likely needs a higher frequency of service. Secondly there is a need to receive a greater geographic coverage of West Fargo. All of West Fargo south of 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue and south and west of Sheyenne Street is essentially unserved by public transit.

There is emerging transit demand in the residential areas of Eagle Run west of Sheyenne Street. As the 9<sup>th</sup> Street corridor develops south of I-94 there are likely to be the creation of transit generators. The 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Center located at the intersection of 40<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 9<sup>th</sup> Street is likely to be a transit generator in the very near future. Many of the students at the Academy are not likely to have a driver's license. MAT has become an after-school transportation option in other parts of the metro. Cheney Middle School is also not served by MAT. Middle school use of transit in other parts of the metro area is well documented.

In 2008 MAT will also do a sub-area examination of the route structure in the entire southwest metro. This would include the Route 22 (West Fargo) as well other routes in the southwest such as 25 and 21. As part of the southwest transit study West Fargo should work closely with MAT to study short-to-mid range route alternatives which address transit demand both north and south of I-94 in West Fargo.

# Figure 14 - West Fargo Transit Access



**West Fargo Transit Access**

**MAT Route**

- Route 22 (West Fargo)
- Route 15 (13th Avenue/Wal-Mart)
- Route 21 (South 45th Street)
- Route 25 (Southwest Metro)
- MAT Service Area

**CITY**

- Fargo
- West Fargo

**MARKERS**

- High Boarding Location (West Fargo Only)
- West Fargo School Site
- College Student Residence
- Identified Transit Need Area

**FEATURES**

- Waterway
- Railroad
- Roadway

In 2009 MAT will study the creation of demand response general public transit service in recently developed and developing areas of the metro. As part of this study it is possible that some of the emerging transit demand areas in West Fargo may be addressed, especially those south of I-94. It is likely that Eagle Run would be a candidate for demand response service in the coming years. Eagle Run could only be served by a demand response style service until there has been a substantial build out of the areas to its east along 32<sup>nd</sup> and 40<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

## **BIKEWAYS**

**Figure 15** shows the areas identified by West Fargo residents as needing bike and/or pedestrian improvements and areas currently which are popular bike and pedestrian corridors. The 2006 Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Bikeway Plan identified gaps in the bikeway system in West Fargo. Figure 15a demonstrates the short and long range bikeway improvements identified for West Fargo. The proposed short and long range bikeway projects were identified in the 2004 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). This list is to be updated again in 2009 with the update of the MTP. Figure 15a also includes a listing of illustrative projects. The projects are identified as illustrative due to the lack of revenue to program them into either the short or long range element of the MTP. With the update of the MTP in 2009 some of these projects maybe moved into the short or long range program for the City of West Fargo.

A key element of an effective bikeway network is the provision of choice. The days of one size fits all are gone in respect to the design and provision of bicycle facilities. There are those bicyclists that need a roadway setting to ride a road bicycle at 15 to 20 miles per hour while there are those bicyclists that prefer to ride at a more leisurely pace of ten or less miles per hour. There are also those bicyclists who may commute to work during the spring, summer and fall due to need or desire. From public input it is clear that West Fargo residents are interested in developing a network of shared use paths that allow them to access the public park system within West Fargo. Analysis of West Fargo's bikeway system shows that connectivity is strong in the northern part of the City. Bikeway connections to retail centers, residential areas, recreational facilities and school sites should be of paramount concern as West Fargo plans for the future.

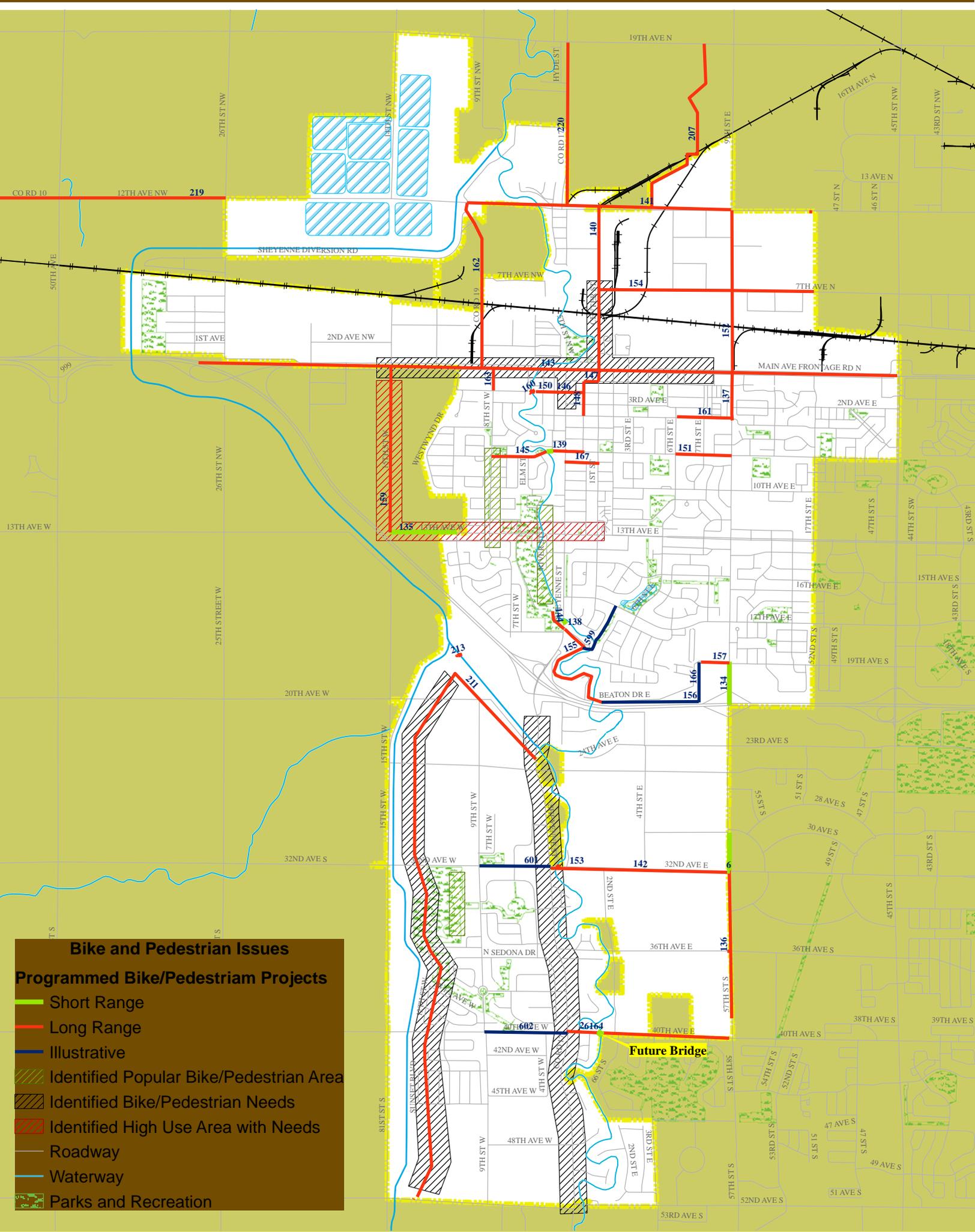
### Connections to Schools

Recognition of increases in childhood obesity and increased diagnoses of childhood diabetes makes the idea of increasing active living options for school children a wise investment. A connected bicycle and pedestrian network can get kids moving together to schools instead of being driven to school on a daily basis. Most of West Fargo's schools are within residential areas making bicycling and walking convenient. As West Fargo grows, the concept of connectivity relative to bicycling and walking should be kept in the forefront of its planning efforts.

### County Road 17

Public input spoke directly to a desire to see the County Road 17 Corridor opened up to bicycling and walking opportunities. A shared use path could provide connectivity to the Eagle Run area and connections could be made to the Sheyenne Diversion. Connecting the Eagle Run area to the remainder of West Fargo makes sense from an active living standpoint. The provision of city-wide bicycling and walking opportunities for the residents of West Fargo has the potential for long-term gains in health.

Figure 15: West Fargo Future Bikeway Needs



**Bike and Pedestrian Issues**

**Programmed Bike/Pedestrian Projects**

- Short Range
- Long Range
- Illustrative
- Identified Popular Bike/Pedestrian Area
- Identified Bike/Pedestrian Needs
- Identified High Use Area with Needs
- Roadway
- Waterway
- Parks and Recreation

**Future Bridge**

**Figure 15a: West Fargo Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Improvements\***

**West Fargo Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Improvements Short Range**

Project #	Project location	Technical Soundness	
		Priority	Facility type
134	9th Street East from 19th Avenue East to 32nd Avenue West	Priority 1	Shared Use Path
142	32nd Avenue South from 9th Street East to CR 17	Priority 1	Shared Use Path
135	13th Avenue West from 15th Street West to 10th Street West	Priority 1	Shared Use Path
137	9th Street East from 4th Avenue East to Main Avenue	Priority 1	Shared Use Path
139	7th Avenue E from Sukut St to Sheyenne River	Priority 1	Shared Use Path
138	Sheyenne River Bridge at Sheyenne Street	Priority 1	Shared Use Path
164	40th Avenue South from CR 17 to 63rd Street South	Priority 1	Shared Use Path
148	Sukut St from 1st Avenue W to 4th Avenue E	Priority 1	Shared Use Path

**West Fargo Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Improvements Long Range**

Project #	Project location	Technical Soundness	
		Priority	Facility type
164	40th Avenue South from 63rd Street South to 9th Street East	Priority 1	Shared Use Path
140	Center Street from Main Avenue to 12th Avenue North	Priority 1	Shared Use Path
141	12th Avenue North from County Road 19 to East City Limits	Priority 1	Shared Use Path
145	7th Avenue W from 8th St W to Bikeway near Morrison St	Priority 1	Shared Use Path
146	2nd Avenue W from Morrison St to Sukut St	Priority 1	Shared Use Path
147	1st Avenue W from Sukut St to Center St	Priority 1	Shared Use Path
149	Center Street from 1st Avenue W to Main Avenue	Priority 1	Shared Use Path
150	2nd Avenue W from Morrison St to Sheyenne River	Priority 1	Shared Use Path
151	7th Avenue E from 6th St E to 9th St E	Priority 1	Shared Use Path
152	9th Street East from Main Avenue to 12th Avenue Northeast	Priority 1	Shared Use Path
153	Sheyenne River Bridge at 32nd Avenue South	Priority 1	Shared Use Path
154	7th Avenue North from Fargo City limits to Center St	Priority 1	Shared Use Path
211	Sheyenne Diversion	Priority 1	Shared Use Path
213	Sheyenne Diversion Bridge	Priority 1	Shared Use Path
143	Main Avenue from I-94 to 45th Street	Priority 4	Shared Use Path
144	Along Sheyenne River from South Elmwood Park to Sheyenne Street	Priority 4	Shared Use Path
155	Along Sheyenne River from Sheyenne Street to I-94	Priority 4	Shared Use Path
157	19th Avenue East from 8th Street East to 9th Street East	Priority 4	Shared Use Path
159	15th Street W from Main Avenue to 13th Avenue W	Priority 4	Shared Use Path
160	Sheyenne River Bridge at 2nd Avenue North	Priority 4	Shared Use Path
161	4th Avenue East from 9th Street East to L.E. Berger Elementary School	Priority 4	Shared Use Path
162	County Road 19 from Main Avenue to 12th Avenue North West	Priority 4	Shared Use Path
163	8th Street West from Main Avenue to 2nd Avenue West	Priority 4	Shared Use Path

**West Fargo Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Improvements - Illustrative**

Project #	Project location	Technical Soundness	
		Priority	Facility type
	Connecting 17th Avenue to Sheyenne River Path	Priority 1	Shared Use Path
600	Connecting Future Bridge into Carmell Place and Sheyenne Street	Priority 1	Shared Use Path
601	32nd Avenue S from CR 17 to 9th Street West	Priority 1	Shared Use Path
602	40th Avenue S from CR 17 to 9th Street West	Priority 1	Shared Use Path
166	8th Street East from I-94 to 19th Avenue East	Priority 4	Shared Use Path
156	Parallel to I-94 from Sheyenne Street to 8th Street East	Priority 4	Shared Use Path

- Priority 1** Part of the Principal bikeway system
- Priority 2** Alternate principal bikeway system
- Priority 3** extraterritorial principal bikeway extensions
- Priority 4** Others

\* As determined by the 2006 Metropolitan Bike and Pedestrian Plan

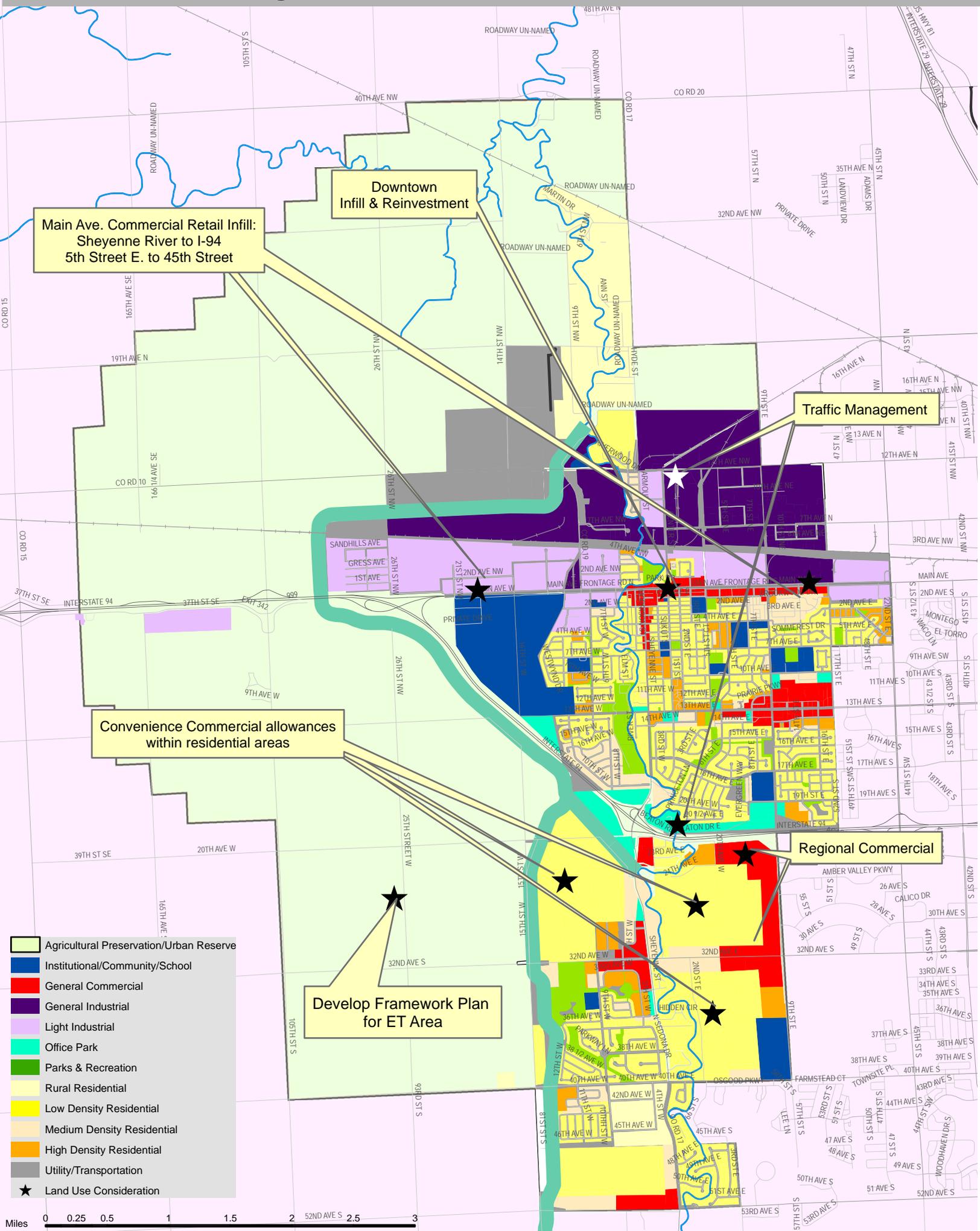
## CHAPTER 6 - LAND USE PLAN

Adherence to a well developed and comprehensive land use plan is critical to the long term growth of West Fargo. West Fargo's future land use plan is reflected in Figure 16. The future land use plan was amended in 2005 to considered growth pressure south of I-94. No major changes are recommended with the adoption of the 2007 Comprehensive Plan, however a number of emerging development or redevelopment trends require West Fargo be cognizant of land use considerations in strategic locations throughout the community.

The 2005 land use plan amendment covered the areas south of I-94 and was aimed at ensuring a uniform land use pattern throughout the City of West Fargo and took into account recent changes to land use plans in the City of Fargo. The objective of the amendment was several fold and should be considered relevant to land use throughout West Fargo:

- To provide for the flexibility in the development of land uses while maintaining compatibility of uses and sound, orderly development patters;
- To provide for a diversity of residential neighborhoods with a balance of housing alternatives;
- To provide a variety of single family homes from entry level to higher end;
- To provide a diversity of multiple-family residential units including townhouses, condominiums, and lower and higher density rental properties which would be evaluated by each section of land to ensure an equitable distribution throughout the growth area;
- To provide a housing development pattern with the ratio of single-family dwelling units to multiple-family dwelling units between 60 to 70% single-family to 30 to 40% multiple family;
- To provide a diversity of multiple-family units with a minimum of 20% of the units meeting the medium density standard of less than or equal to 16 units per acre, constructed in structures of eight units or less, and consisting of multiple family apartments, condominiums, and or townhouses;
- To provide for adequate park and open space areas for the community.

**Figure 16: WEST FARGO LAND USE PLAN**



Main Ave. Commercial Retail Infill:  
Sheyenne River to I-94  
5th Street E. to 45th Street

Downtown  
Infill & Reinvestment

Traffic Management

Convenience Commercial allowances  
within residential areas

Develop Framework Plan  
for ET Area

Regional Commercial

- Agricultural Preservation/Urban Reserve
- Institutional/Community/School
- General Commercial
- General Industrial
- Light Industrial
- Office Park
- Parks & Recreation
- Rural Residential
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Utility/Transportation
- Land Use Consideration

Miles 0 0.25 0.5 1 1.5 2 2.5 3

The future land use plan for West Fargo adheres to the Strategic Issues of Community Growth, and Regional and Institutional Cooperation, Community Reinvestment and Rebirth. In the coming years West Fargo needs to review existing zoning and subdivision regulations to ensure they allow for the concepts put forth with in the Issues Analysis. Most importantly the concepts of neighborhood revitalization, infill development, and exurban land use control and coordination. Implementation of the future land use plan should also pay close attention to the short and long range capital improvement plans adopted by the City, too.

Figure 16 demonstrates a number of areas throughout West Fargo were unique variables are at play and require additional consideration as these areas develop, or in some cases redevelop. While none of the areas require a change in the future land use, they do require some advance outreach and communication with land owners and developers to ensure appropriate site specific development occurs in these locations. A discussion of these areas follows.

Of importance is a strong awareness of the looming need to preempt development pressure beyond the Sheyenne Diversion with proactive sub-area planning for these growth areas. As was discussed earlier, West Fargo needs to put in place a development framework that outlines the growth patterns in its ET area.

West Fargo should undergo a more detailed analysis of land use and reinvestment potential with in its core, especially the Main Avenue and Sheyenne Street area as identified in Chapter 4. There is both a residential and commercial component to the reinvestment.

As Main Avenue is reconstructed through West Fargo the potential for infill and redevelopment will occur through out the corridor. For the sections of Main Avenue west of the Sheyenne River to I-94 and west of 5<sup>th</sup> Street to the city limits thought should be given to allowing for development of commercial and or retail type uses in addition to the predominantly industrial use which currently exist along the corridor. As the reconstruction of Main Avenue occurs there is significant potential for the redevelopment or infill of retail and/or strip commercial type uses. There is the opportunity along Main Avenue to allow for relocation of uses which may not be appropriate for the downtown portion of Sheyenne Street and Main Avenue.

North of Main Avenue West Fargo should continue to promote industrial land uses. Industrial uses north of Main Avenue are in keeping with the traditional growth pattern of the area and mesh with the existing transportation infrastructure in the area. The BNSF rail line acts as the primary separation of general industrial uses from light industrial uses. The areas north of Main Avenue are fairly built out.

There are several larger areas of undeveloped lands south of the BNSF line, especially on the western end of Main Avenue. The entirety of the industrial areas north of Main Avenue is currently flood protected by the Sheyenne Diversion. Industrial truck traffic

can cause conflict with the adjacent roadways. As development continues north of Main Avenue, consideration needs to be given to allowing for adequate transportation facilities to help support resulting industrial related traffic pressures.

For the areas immediately north of I-94 the land use plan supports the development of office development. One of the reasons for the office development adjacent to I-94 is to provide a buffer for residential developments to the north. While the placement of office development north of I-94 is realistic from a land use perspective, the transportation demands need to be monitored as office developments occurs. Given the geographic location of the area, new development north of I-94 will have access back into the larger network at Sheyenne Street via Beaton Drive. Eventually, Beaton Drive will be extended back to 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue and then on to 9<sup>th</sup> Street. The Sheyenne Street & Beaton Drive areas are already congested during peak travel hours. As the 9<sup>th</sup> Street corridor develops, and the interchange and overpass are implemented consideration of future transportation impacts of office development north of I-94 need to be considered.

South of I-94 West Fargo's land use plan calls for single-family development for the majority of the area. Along the 9<sup>th</sup> Street corridor there is provision made for general commercial development. General commercial development is also proposed for the areas west of the intersection of 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and 9<sup>th</sup> Street. West Fargo needs to be particular in the type of commercial uses which occur along 9<sup>th</sup> Street, especially at I-94 and 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue. Serious consideration should be given to allowing for regional scale businesses. The placement of a few regional commercial uses along the 9<sup>th</sup> Street corridor will help support adjacent smaller commercial uses. The 9<sup>th</sup> Street and 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue corridors will also need smaller commercial uses which depend on the immediate area. One use which should not be overlooked in this part of West Fargo is a grocery store. The nearest grocery store is at the intersection of 40<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 45<sup>th</sup> Street and as the area builds out another grocery store will be justified.

West Fargo should consider a limited amount of convenience commercial uses with in the larger residential areas south of I-94. Convenience commercial uses should be sited along collector streets and have strict design considerations to integrate well with in the residential areas. Currently, the only commercial uses identified south of I-94 are along major arterials. Allowances for convenience commercial uses with in areas bounded by major future arterials such as 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, 40<sup>th</sup> Avenue, 9<sup>th</sup> Street, Sheyenne Street, etc, will free up commercial areas along these corridors for larger scale retail and commercial uses.

### Land Use Classifications

#### Low Density Residential

The low-density residential designation provides areas for single family detached homes and two-family homes (duplexes), and directly related complementary uses such as educational, religious and recreational facilities. Manufactured home subdivisions are also included in this designation. The City may consider four-unit structures along arterial and collector street corridors, provided they are complementary to development in

the area. Density is up to 10 units per acre of lot area for single family detached units or 14 units of lot area for single family attached units.

#### Medium Density Residential

The medium density residential designation provides areas for single family attached homes (townhouses, condominiums and apartments) with up to eight units per structure, and directly related complementary uses such as educational, religious and recreational facilities. Manufactured home parks are also included in this designation. The City may consider 12-unit structures where creative and exemplary design considerations are given. Density is up to 16 units per acre of lot area.

#### Multifamily (High Density) Residential

The high density residential designation provides areas for multiple family buildings and directly related complementary uses such as education, religious and recreational facilities. Density is up to 24 units per acre of lot area for one bedroom units or 20 units per acre of lot area for three bedroom units.

#### Rural Residential

The rural residential designation provides areas for single-family homes on large lots. This designation is only applied to areas outside of the West Fargo corporate limits which are currently developed and to areas within the city limits which have been recently annexed. No new rural residential designations are provided for.

#### Convenience Commercial

The convenience commercial designation provides areas for limited retail sale of convenience-type products and services for the immediate neighborhood area. This designation is applied to locations that are conveniently located in proximity to residential areas on collector or arterial streets. These uses should be limited in land area to no more than one acre and reviewed under the Planned Unit Development District standards.

#### General Commercial

The general commercial designation provides areas for commercial uses that provide a wide range of goods and services to the community. This designation is applied to locations along arterial roadways that are easily accessible.

#### Office Park

The office park designation provides areas for professional offices, research facilities, wholesale showrooms, service facilities and other business uses that require limited contact with the public. This designation may also provide for other commercial uses that are complementary and compatible with office uses. This designation is applied to locations with high visibility and appropriate levels of access.

### Light Industrial

The light industrial designation provides areas for commercial and industrial establishments that are incompatible with retail commercial areas and more appropriately located near general industrial uses. This designation accommodates uses such as wholesale, warehousing, trucking businesses, and businesses with outside display of merchandise or materials.

### General Industrial

The general industrial designation provides areas for diverse industrial uses, which, due to their size and/or nature of operation, require isolation from many other kinds of land uses. This designation is applied to appropriate locations with convenient access to regional highway and railway routes.

### Public and Quasi-Public

The public/quasi-public designation is used to identify areas that are owned by public or quasi-public entities and are expected to remain under such ownership in the foreseeable future. This designation applies to government facilities, schools and other quasi-public facilities such as Bonanzaville and the Red River Valley Fairgrounds.

### Utility/Transportation

The utility/transportation designation is used to identify utilities that are owned by public or quasi-public entities and are expected to remain under such ownership in the near future. This designation applies to the drains, storm water retention ponds, wells, water towers, transformer stations and the lagoons.

### Park & Recreation

The park and recreation system designation is used to identify areas that are owned by the West Fargo Park District and are expected to remain under such ownership in the foreseeable future. This designation applies to developed park land, undeveloped park land used as open space and linear trails.

### Agriculture Preservation/Urban Reserve

The agricultural preservation/urban reserve designation is intended to establish and preserve areas for agricultural uses and eventual future urban growth. This designation also accommodates recreational and public uses that do not significantly change the agricultural character of the land; or for residential uses allowed by conditional use. This designation is only applied to areas outside of the West Fargo corporate limits and within the extraterritorial area that are not protected by the Sheyenne diversion. Urban scale development is not recommended in these areas until adequate infrastructure arrangements have been made.

**Future Land Use Acreages**

<b>West Fargo Future Land use Acreage</b>				
<b>Land Use Designation</b>	<b>City Acres</b>	<b>Extra-territorial Acres</b>	<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Total</b>
Low Density Residential	3033	520	3,553	15%
Medium Density Residential	481	42	523	2%
High Density Residential	297	--	297	1%
Rural Residential	131	618	749	3%
Commercial	503	13	516	2%
Office Park	184	26	211	1%
Light Industrial	833	82	915	4%
General Industrial	791	479	1,270	5%
Public/Quasi-Public/School	224	425	649	3%
Parks and Recreation	301	--	301	1%
Transportation and Utilities	2372	872	3,244	13%
Agricultural Preservation/vacant	49	11,936	11,985	49%
Mixed Use	--	28	28	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9,200</b>	<b>15,041</b>	<b>24,241</b>	<b>100%</b>

## **CHAPTER 7 - POLICY PLAN - GOALS AND POLICIES**

West Fargo's Policy Plan includes goals and policies to guide future actions on the part of the City of West Fargo. The Issues Analysis, Transportation and Land Use elements of the Comprehensive Plan are the basis for the development of the goals and policies. A goal is a general statement of overall community aspirations, which highlights a community value, establishes a vision, and indicates a broad physical or social state that the community desires to achieve. An objective is a statement that refines the goals by outlining a specific course of action. The goals and objectives are further refined into the Action & Implementation Plan element outlined in Chapter 8.

### **Land Use and Community Growth**

Goal 1. To support and promote exurban land use coordination and to encourage regional land use planning

Objective a. To promote a development pattern that is harmonious with the long range plans of West Fargo and the plans of its neighboring communities.

Objective b. To scrutinize rural developments in the ET area and to work with the County and townships to review land divisions and land use changes to ensure efficient availability of city services

Objective c. To work in coordination with Cass County, City of Fargo and adjacent urbanizing communities to begin a dialogue on the long range sustainability of development patterns occurring on the fringes of the metro area

Goal 2. To prepare for growth beyond the Sheyenne Diversion

Objective a. To develop long range infrastructure plans for development outside the Sheyenne Diversion, as well as an overall development framework plan for the area

Objective b. To develop a regional approach to address flood control issues outside of the Sheyenne Diversion

Objective c. To discourage short term ad-hoc flood protection schemes and piece meal development outside the Sheyenne diversion

Objective d. To discourage development outside the Sheyenne diversion until a long range development framework plan is developed

Objective e. To protect the rural character of the extraterritorial area until such time as urban scale development is supported by municipal facilities.

Objective f. To require ghost platting of rural residential subdivisions allowed outside of the Sheyenne Diversion.

Objective g. To require new rural residential subdivisions outside of the Sheyenne Diversion to conform to urban development standards.

Goal 3. To develop and maintain a cohesive and balanced land use pattern that provides areas for a variety of residential, commercial, and industrial uses within the community.

Objective a. To encourage the appropriate integration of multiple family housing throughout the community, as opposed to segregated concentrations

Objective b. To establish a balance of commercial and industrial uses that are compatible with adjacent land uses and responsive to the needs of the community and surrounding market

Objective c. To encourage the development of offices, office showroom, and other complementary uses, such as hotels and full service restaurants, along the I-94 corridor

Objective d. To encourage the development of diverse and interrelated retail and commercial use south of I-94.

Objective e. To encourage the development of additional retail commercial uses in the established retail commercial areas along 13th Avenue, Sheyenne Street and Main Avenue

Objective f. To encourage the development regional scale commercial uses in the areas south of I-94, especially along the 9<sup>th</sup> Street corridor

Objective g. To allow the development of convenience and neighborhood commercial uses in identified areas throughout the community, including the newer areas south of I-94

Objective h. To direct the location and development of businesses generating significant large truck traffic to industrial area north of Main Avenue

Objective i. To discourage industrial development with excessive nuisance characteristics

Goal 4. To provide orderly transitions between incompatible land uses

Objective a. To encourage the provision of buffers or gradual land use transitions, such as vegetative screening, open space and berming, between different types and intensities of existing land uses

Objective b. To require private developers to mitigate the impacts of noise for new residential development adjacent to I-94

Objective c. To require deeper setbacks for new residential developments along arterial and collector streets and berming and/or vegetation along those roadways with higher traffic volumes in order to minimize noise and visual impacts

Objective d. To require a minimum structure setback of 100 feet from the riverbank for all development along the Sheyenne River.

### **Community Development, Design, and Housing**

Goal 1. To support and preserve a neighborhood oriented development pattern

Objective a. To encourage land use patterns that allow for neo-traditional development patterns, where appropriate

Objective b. To promote neighborhood stability by encouraging neighborhood associations

Objective c. To promote existing neighborhood schools and discourage closure or realignment of existing facilities

Objective d. To work with Homebuilders Association of F-M and other regional partners to recognize the relationship between infrastructure design and the cost of special assessments

Goal 2. To provide a diversity of residential neighborhoods, both single family and multiple family, and a balance of housing alternatives to meet the changing life-cycle needs of residents.

Objective a. To encourage the development of a mix of housing types that blend with the existing housing stock

Objective b. To provide opportunities for high-quality multiple family developments, including townhomes, condominiums, and higher density rental properties

Objective c. To support reinvestment in existing housing stock, both single family and multiple family, through upgrading and maintenance

Objective d. To encourage the development of independent and assisted living housing for senior citizens that wish to remain in the community

Objective e. To foster partnerships with the private sector to help diversify housing choices in the community

Objective f. To preserve the integrity of established residential neighborhoods by prohibiting the intrusion of incompatible uses

Objective g. To promote a diversity of multiple-family residential units including townhouses, condominiums, and low and higher density rental properties to be evaluated by each section of land to ensure an equitable distribution throughout the growth area. A minimum of 20% of housing will meet the medium density standard of 16 units per acre or less and consist of 4 to 8 unit apartment buildings, townhouses, and condominiums.

Objective h. To provide a housing development pattern with the ratio of single-family dwelling units to multiple-family dwelling units between 60 to 70% single-family to 30 to 40% multiple family;

Objective i. To continue to work with regional partners on the issue of Workforce Housing

### Goal 3. To encourage high quality construction in the community

Objective a. To establish site design standards and require site-specific planning and landscaping to ensure completion of adequate site beautification for development and expansion of commercial and industrial uses.

Objective b. To implement existing corridor overlay districts along strategic corridors such as, Main Avenue, 9<sup>th</sup> Street, and Sheyenne Street to ensure development occurs in an orderly and spatially desirable form

Objective c. To maintain public facilities in an aesthetically pleasing manner

Objective d. To require loading and unloading zones to be located to the side or rear of buildings

## **Community Identity**

### Goal 1. To preserve and maintain the small town ambience in West Fargo

Objective a. To develop unique neighborhood patterns that allow neighbors and neighborhoods to connect easily

Objective b. To encourage creative neighborhood and community wide events and activities to catalyze interaction among the residents of West Fargo

Objective c. To capitalize on the contrasts of West Fargo by showcasing both the old and the new of the community.

Objective d. To ensure that new developments south of I-94 are well connected to the historic core and are designed to maintain the small town flavor

### Goal 2. To continue to recognize the role of West Fargo School District in defining the City's identity

Objective a. To continue to foster the role of the West Fargo School District as a unifying force in the community.

Objective b. To encourage constructive and ongoing dialogue between the school district and the City planning and administration particularly when addressing land use and infrastructure issues

Objective c. To work proactively with the School District on issues of facility siting, realignment, or closure

Goal 3. To support efforts to strengthen and enhance community identity, contribute to a high quality of life, and enhance the image of West Fargo as a desirable place to live and work.

Objective a. To identify opportunities to enhance major entrances into the community with signage or other features that identifies the entry to West Fargo

Objective b. To enhance the image of the Sheyenne Street commercial area as the downtown of the community

Objective c. To use streetscape elements to unify and connect existing commercial areas to enhance the sense of place and community

Objective d. To develop marketing strategies to promote and strengthen West Fargo's image and identity

Objective e. To implement a way-finding system for community points of interest such as downtown, key community facilities, and other regional attractions.

Goal 4. To ensure that all areas of the city are visually appealing and well maintained.

Objective a. To support quality design and aesthetic appeal of all future development

Objective b. To establish regulations to ensure maintenance of all types of commercial and industrial properties and structures

Objective c. To strengthen the City's housing maintenance programs to ensure the upkeep of existing residential structures

Objective d. To establish a program for acquisition and redevelopment of deteriorated properties

Objective e. To encourage the underground placement of utilities where possible and the visual enhancement of utilities which must be located above ground to minimize adverse visual impacts

Objective f. To enhance signage within the community to allow for high quality and visually appealing commercial districts which appeal to potential customers from through out the metro area

Objective g. To support streetscape efforts along 13th Avenue, Sheyenne Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Street, and Main Avenue to create a unified image of the community's commercial areas

Objective h. To increase the amount of greenery and street trees within boulevards and on roadway medians throughout the community

Objective i. To encourage the use of vegetation and berms to provide visual and noise screening along I-94 to eliminate the need for noise walls in the future

## **Community Reinvestment**

Goal 1. To look for opportunities to reinvest in West Fargo existing commercial and residential districts so as to support the overall growth of the community

Objective a. To continue to utilize the renaissance zone to revitalize West Fargo's downtown and older commercial districts

Objective b. To develop a neighborhood reinvestment program to infuse resources into the older residential areas of West Fargo, specifically those areas between the Sheyenne River and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue East, north of 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue West

Objective c. To encourage infill development in the older parts of the community through the creation of commercial reinvestment district, especially in Downtown West Fargo along Main Avenue and Sheyenne Street

Goal 2. To create a West Fargo Town Center, to serve as the cultural and civic heart of the community

Objective a. To create a community focal point on Sheyenne Street

Objective b. To work to promote neighborhood retail in the areas adjacent to Sheyenne Street and Main Avenue.

Objective c. To work to infill higher density residential uses to support existing and future retail/commercial uses

Objective d. To allow for appropriate traffic calming measures along the Sheyenne Street Corridor, north of 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue East

Objective e. To create a community gateway/landmark along the Main Avenue Corridor which serves as an identity point for the community

## **Transportation**

Goal 1. To establish and maintain an effective, efficient and safe transportation system

Objective a. To provide a functional and well-maintained roadway system that is consistent with adjacent land uses and provides an appropriate level of service

Objective b. To incorporate ways to minimize non-local traffic on residential streets

Objective c. To monitor existing designated truck routes within the community and prohibit non-local truck traffic on non-designated roadways

Objective d. To require streets to be developed according to their function (pavement width, load capacity, continuity of streets and access provisions)

Objective e. To coordinate all transportation planning with Metro, County, State and Federal plans

Objective f. To support the installation of screening of residential development south of I-94 along 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, 40<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 9<sup>th</sup> Street as development occurs

Goal 2. To support the transportation policies of the Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Council of Governments ( Metro COG) and Cass County for the extraterritorial area

Objective a. To preserve mile line roadways in the extraterritorial area as future arterial roadways, including dedication of up to 150-foot rights-of-way and appropriate access management

Objective b. Coordinate the location of collector street intersections along common boundary streets with the City of Fargo

Objective c. To require the dedication of up to 150 foot rights-of-way for all arterial roadways south of I-94

Objective d. To require the dedication of rights-of-way during the platting process whenever possible

Objective e. To establish and implement access management controls along arterial roadways and collector streets to ensure that the function of the roadway is protected and maintained

Goal 3. To provide for alternative modes of transportation

Objective a. To provide bikeways/trails and pedestrian pathways and trails to connect residential areas with each other, with park facilities, school facilities and with major activity centers

Objective b. To provide connections to other bikeways/trails and pedestrian pathways within the metropolitan area

Objective c. To support enhancement of transit and paratransit service within the community

Objective d. To support efforts to provide more adequate transit service to the recently developed areas of the community

Objective e. To require maintenance/access rights-of-way or easements along the Sheyenne River wherever possible

Objective f. To look at the feasibility of a bike and pedestrian bridge from Armour Park across the Sheyenne River into downtown West Fargo

### **Parks, Open Space, Bikeways and Trails**

Goal 1. To provide a high quality park and open space system that includes both active and passive recreational opportunities to meet the needs of residents.

Objective a. To maintain a park and open space system that continues to provide the current level of service to the residents of West Fargo

Objective b. To provide neighborhood parks within close proximity to all residential neighborhoods

Objective c. To evaluate the City's park land dedication policy to ensure adequate land is being reserved for parks and open space

Objective d. To support recreational programs and facilities in cooperation with the Park District and School District

Objective e. To evaluate the feasibility of constructing and/or maintaining a municipal golf course within the community

Goal 2. To develop and maintain a comprehensive bikeway/trail system throughout the community for pedestrians and bicycles

Objective a. To evaluate the feasibility of developing a recreational trail within the right-of-way of the Sheyenne Diversion

Objective b. To support the development of the bikeway/trail system, including the construction of bikeways/trails to fill gaps in the system

Objective c. To evaluate the need for a trail dedication or development policy to be implemented during the platting process

Objective d. To encourage the development of contact points with the Sheyenne River and other natural areas

Goal 3. To protect the community's natural resources

Objective a. To require erosion control measures to be taken during all construction activities

Objective b. To provide adequate facilities to manage storm water run-off

Objective c. Identify and protect sensitive or unique natural ecosystems within the community

Objective d. To support efforts to enhance the appearance of the Sheyenne River corridor and recognize it as a community asset

### **Public Facilities and Services**

Goal 1. To prepare in advance for infrastructure challenges that might arise due to the fast paced growth witnessed by the City

Objective a. To implement the short range priority projects developed by the City

Objective b. To prepare a capital improvement strategy which will address the infrastructure needs of the City for the next 10 to 20 years, update annually

Goal 2. To provide public utilities in a responsive and cost-effective manner

Objective a. To extend municipal utilities in a fiscally responsible manner

Objective b. To provide a level of service that anticipates the most intensive level of potential development

Objective c. To maintain a high quality and reliable system of water distribution; monitor the existing system to ensure it can meet future needs

Objective d. To maintain a high quality and reliable sanitary sewer system

Objective e. To make public expenditures according to a systematic capital improvements program

Objective f. To cooperate with other governmental agencies in providing joint services or facilities, where economically feasible, to avoid unnecessary duplication

Goal 3. Provide an appropriate level of community services to the residents of the community.

Objective a. To work cooperatively with the School District in the siting of new elementary school(s) within the community

Objective b. To explore the feasibility of constructing branch location(s) of the public library, especially south of I-94

Objective c. To work with the School District, Park District, and other relevant entities to explore the feasibility of a community recreational facility/center

## **Economic Development**

Goal 1. To enhance the economic viability of the community.

Objective a. To support redevelopment and reinvestment efforts along Sheyenne Street and Main Avenue through the use of the Renaissance tax credits and through the implementation of other commercial and reinvestment strategies

Objective b. To support efforts to sustain and enhance the Sheyenne Street and Main Avenue commercial area as the downtown of the community

Goal 2. To consider economic development strategies to finance future infrastructure improvements

Objective a. To work with Greater Fargo-Moorhead EDC to develop strategies to attract high tech firms

Objective b. To encourage the construction of additional commercial and industrial development within the community to diversify the tax base and provide a variety of higher wage employment opportunities

Objective c. To foster partnerships with the private sector to market industrial development opportunities within the community

Objective d. To create a new base for economic development south of I-94

Objective e. To identify reinvestment strategies within the core of the city for economic and residential reinvestment which will increase the local tax base

## CHAPTER 8 - IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Having developed a thorough and comprehensive Issues Analysis, Transportation and Land use Plan, and a detailed Policy Plan, West Fargo can now layout its Implementation Plan. The Implementation Plan is an aggressive, yet measured, tool to assist the City in accomplishing many of the Goals and Objectives of the Policy Plan. The Implementation Plan allows the City a mechanism to address the Strategic Issues by conducting additional sub-area studies or through the initiation of more detailed staff level work programs and activities. What follows is a list of implementation actions for the City of West Fargo. Each item is followed by the departments which are responsible for the action item. This list should be used as various municipal departments establish annual work plans and program priorities.

- Establish a long range (10 to 20 year) Capital Improvement Plan (Engineering, Public Works, Planning, City Administration)
- Conduct a sub-area planning study outlining a reinvestment strategy (downtown master plan) for the areas adjacent to Main Avenue and Sheyenne Street (Planning, Engineering, Public Works, and Business Development)
- Conduct a Downtown Design Charrette (Planning, Engineering, Public Works, and Business Development)
- Establish a formal outreach/informational program aimed at business and property owners regarding the Main Avenue Reconstruction (Public Works, Engineering, Business Development)
- Implement Neighborhood Reinvestment Program (Planning)
- Conduct a Development/Infrastructure Framework Plan for ET Area (Planning, Engineering, City Administration, and Public Works)
- Facilitate the creation of Neighborhood Associations (Police and Planning)
- Explore the reestablishment of downtown business association (Business Development)
- Conduct twice annual meetings of key Administration from the City, School District, and Park District (Administration); conduct annual joint-meeting of the three respective elected boards
- Conduct a review of zoning and subdivision regulations to ensure flexibility for infill/reinvestment developments and neo-traditional development patterns (Planning)
- Continue annual outreach program to neighborhoods concerning public works/services (Public Works and Planning)
- Update Sheyenne Street Corridor Study (Planning, Public Works, Engineering)

# 12<sup>TH</sup> AVENUE NORTH – TECHNICAL MEMO

## INTRODUCTION

As part of the West Fargo Comprehensive Plan update Metro COG looked at a number of different regionally significant transportation corridors. Among them was 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue North from 45<sup>th</sup> Street to County Road 19. The City of West Fargo felt 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue North required additional analysis, beyond that typically conducted as part of the comprehensive planning process. Therefore Metro COG programmed the 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue Technical Memo within its 2007 UPWP.

The 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue North Technical Memo was prepared as Appendix 1 to the West Fargo Comprehensive Plan. The public input process which guided the technical memo partially related to the comprehensive plan update. Metro COG also utilized a project advisory committee as well as its Transportation Technical Committee (TTC), as needed, to gather insight and guidance on the development of the technical memo.

As part of the technical memo developed for 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue North Metro COG prepared the following data and conducted the following analysis regarding the existing conditions along the 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue corridor:

- Current ADT
- Traffic Operations Analysis at Major Intersections
- Access Management
- ROW Analysis
- Aesthetic Opportunities
- Multi-Modal Opportunities

When developing corridor recommendations Metro COG relied upon a full build development traffic analysis. The full build analysis was generated by utilizing the existing Metro COG travel demand model. The full build model allowed Metro COG to generate the following data and analysis.

- Forecasted ADT
- Forecasted LOS
- Forecasted ROW Needs
- Access Management
- Signal Warrant Analysis at Major Intersections
- Railroad Grade Separation Analysis
- Multi-Modal Opportunities
- Aesthetic Opportunities

## **EXISTING CONDITION**

Twelfth Avenue is a 2-lane rural section from 45<sup>th</sup> Street to County Road 19. Twelfth Avenue consists of two 10' travel lanes with no shoulder from 45<sup>th</sup> Street to County Road 17. West of County Road 17, 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue transitions to two 11' travel lanes with shoulders that vary between 4' and 6' wide. Travel speeds are posted at 40 MPH for the entire length of the study area.

The project area is almost exclusively industrial, with the exception of areas north and south of the 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue and County Road 17 intersection. The project area is a mix of light, general, and heavy industrial uses. There are a variety of business types in the project area ranging from smaller auto related maintenance shops, storage yards and facilities, as well several larger construction and agricultural related businesses.

### Traffic Analysis

Traffic volumes along 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue range between 4,000 and 5,000 between 45<sup>th</sup> Street and Center Street. A 72 hour traffic count conducted from Monday July 9<sup>th</sup> to Thursday July 12<sup>th</sup> showed an average daily traffic count on 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue just west of the 9<sup>th</sup> Street intersection of 5,600 vpd. Volumes west of Center Street start at 4,200 and decrease to 2,600 just prior to the intersection with County Road 19.

Level of service (LOS) during the peak hour along 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue is A. The peak hour as defined by current traffic patterns in the project area are 6:30 to 7:30 a.m. and from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. Over 15% of the traffic in the project area is truck traffic. Of that 15% about 2/3 is single unit (SU) trucks and the remaining 1/3 is combined unit (CU) trucks.

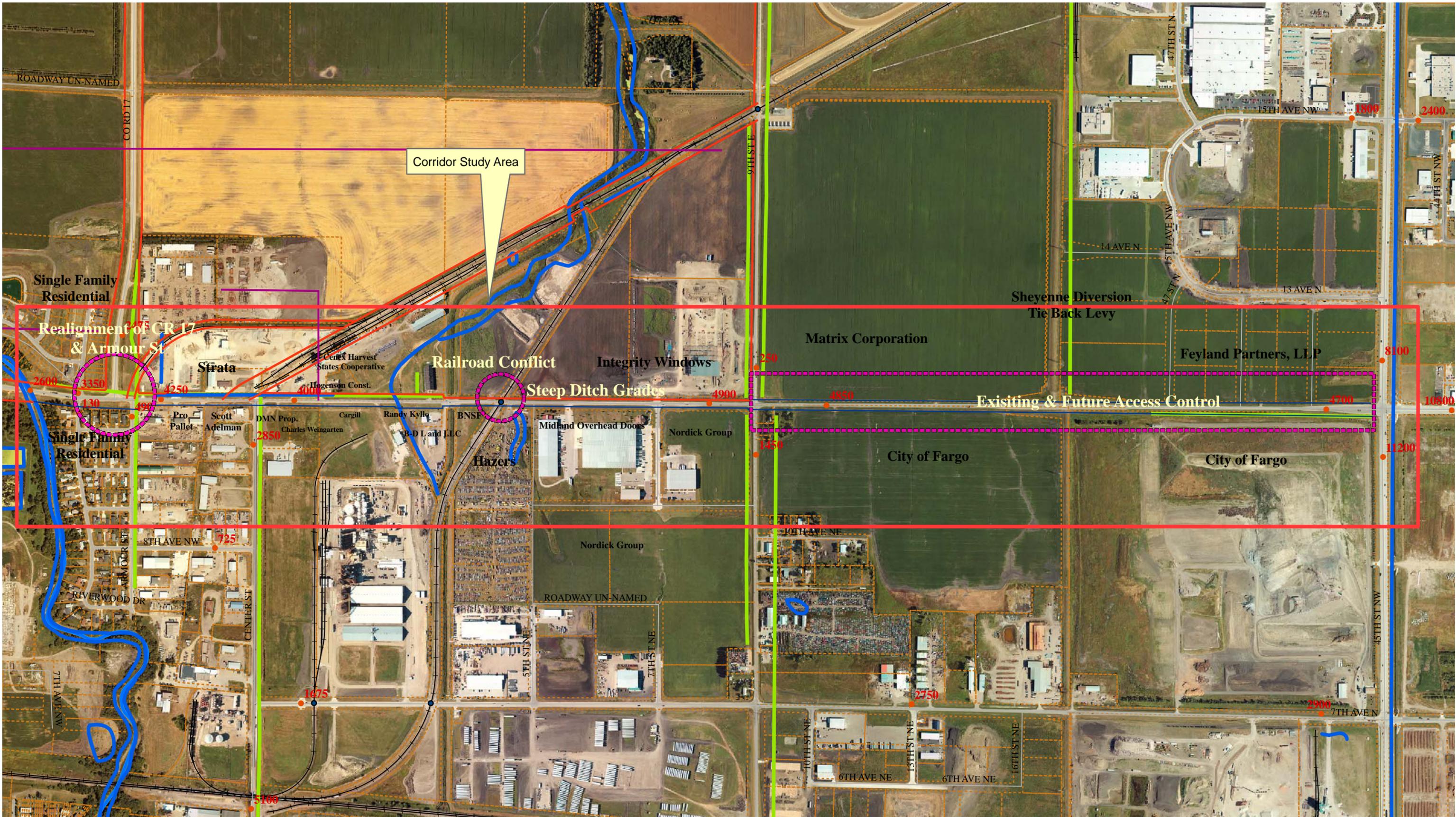
As discussed below, there are seven roadway intersections along the 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue corridor project area. With the exception of the 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue/45<sup>th</sup> Street intersection, intersection access in the project area is STOP controlled. Based on current traffic volumes, none of the STOP controlled intersections meet current signal warrants.

### Access Management

There are a number of roadway intersections along 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue between 45<sup>th</sup> Street and County Road 19.

- County 19– Access on to 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue is STOP controlled
- 4<sup>th</sup> Street West – Access on to 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue is STOP controlled
- Armour Street – Access on to 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue is STOP controlled
- County 17 (northbound) Access on to 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue is STOP controlled
- Center Street – T-intersection, 3-way STOP controlled.
- 9<sup>th</sup> Street East – Access on to 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue is STOP controlled
- 45<sup>th</sup> Street – Signal controlled

# Figure 1: 12th Avenue: Existing Condition & Issue Identification



— ROW Assumed  
 — ROW  
 — Electric  
 — Gas  
 — Petroleum  
 ● 2005-2006 AADT  
 — NWI Lines  
 — Waterway  
 —+— Railroad



Access along the corridor is provided to a number of adjacent business and larger industrial users. There are a total of 10 private access points along the 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue corridor.

Access management is currently an issue on the western half of the corridor. Measures will be considered to better control access in these areas. Based on existing conditions analysis, there appears the potential to consolidate existing access points. Opportunity exists to provide in advance for appropriate access control on the eastern half of the corridor.

### Utilities and Other Infrastructure

Another consideration along the 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue corridor is the BNSF rail line which intersects the corridor at the midpoint of the project area. The line is estimated to carry 12 trains per day. Given current traffic volumes on 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue this equates to 54,000 train-vehicle exposures daily. Two additional rail spurs exist within the project area, one to the north and one to south of 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Neither spur appears to have an impact on current traffic operations.

There is an overhead power line which runs north to south through the project area approximately ¼ mile west of the intersection of 45<sup>th</sup> Street. There are overhead utility lines which parallel the north side of 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue from west of the BNSF line to just east of 4<sup>th</sup> Street. Overhead power lines cross the 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue corridor on both sides of 9<sup>th</sup> Street. There are also overhead power lines on the east side of both Amour Street and Center Street.

County Drain 46 bisects the 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue project area just west of the BNSF rail line. Country Drain 46 runs north south through the project area. Drain 46 appears to have established in place a natural drainage which is identified on the NWI layer.

There are several underground gas lines within the project area. One terminates just south of 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue east of 9<sup>th</sup> Street. A line runs north and then west on the north side of 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue onto the Strata property. Two additional gas lines exist within the Goldenwood subdivision, one of which runs from the west of County Road 17 and continues easterly to the north and parallel to 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The other line in Goldenwood spurs off the previously mentioned line and then heads east by north east under County Road 17 and on to the east.

### Right of Way

Current right of way along the 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue corridor varies from 100' to 125' between 45<sup>th</sup> Street and County 17. Right of way west of Country Road 17 is 160'. Figure 1 demonstrates existing ROW along the corridor from 45<sup>th</sup> Street to County Road 19.

## Other Modal Considerations

There are currently no bike or pedestrian facilities along the 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue corridor. There are currently no public transit routes which operate on 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue or within the project area.

## Steep Ditch Grades

The 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue corridor is currently a rural section, with open drainage ditches running adjacent to and parallel to the roadway surface. If a vehicle were to leave the roadway surface, the ditch grades are steep enough to not allow easy recovery to the roadway surface. Given the fairly high posted speed and the significant amount of large and heavy truck traffic on the corridor, these steep ditch grades create a potential safety issue.

## **EMERGING ISSUES**

A number of existing issues present themselves within the project area; those issues were identified in Figure 1. The primary issues in the study area will be access management. As is discussed in part below, the western portion of the 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue corridor has several existing access points. Some of which have been recently consolidated (e.g. Strata), however others exist which are likely to see increased volumes in the future.

## Existing and Future Industrial Development

The eastern section one mile of 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue from 9<sup>th</sup> Street to 45<sup>th</sup> Street is fairly undeveloped and access is not yet an issue. The western one mile section of the 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue corridor will undergo a significant amount of land. The Fayland Industrial First Addition is located northwest of the intersection of 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 45<sup>th</sup> Street. The northern part of the addition is developed. There are several lots which abut 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue which are platted but not developed. The current plat for this area will create three new accesses onto 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue in the ½ mile section west of 45<sup>th</sup> Street. Full build out of the Fayland Addition is estimated at 3 to 5 years. It is projected that development will be large industrial users with 5 acre minimums with 100,000 to 200,000 square foot facilities.

The ¼ section of land to the west of the Fayland Addition is currently undeveloped. The land is owned by Matrix Properties and the future use will be industrial. The Matrix Property is listed for sale and has not yet been subdivided. Matrix Properties has indicated that the land is likely to be subdivided into lots of between 3.5 and 10 acres each, similar to the Fayland Addition to the east. It is reasonable to assume that there will be at least 2, possibly 3 future access points onto 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue North in the ½ mile east of 9<sup>th</sup> Street.

Immediately south of the Matrix property, between 9<sup>th</sup> Street and the existing Fargo Land Fill, is land owned by the City Fargo. The initial intent for this land was to use it for solid waste activities; however further analysis has deemed the land is not suitable for solid waste functions. Fargo currently has not identified a future use for this land.

## Development north on County Road 17

The Goldenwood subdivision located northwest of the intersection of County Road 17 and 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue has been developing for two years. As currently platted the first, second and third additions of Goldenwood contain 93 lots. At full build the subdivision will have 240 lots. The current access into and out of Goldenwood is provided via 4<sup>th</sup> Street West on to 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue North. The 4<sup>th</sup> Street access is just west of the County Road 17 intersection with 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The next platted access into and out of Goldenwood will be at 13<sup>th</sup> Ave NW. Thirteenth Avenue will access on to County Road 17 approximately 1,200' north of 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue. At full build out a third access out of Goldenwood will be provided at 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue N which will be approximately 1,650' north of 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue North.

Thirteenth Avenue NW will also serve as access into and out of a recent industrial plat directly to the east of Goldenwood (just to the north of Strata). This Industrial Builders plat is 112 acres and will contain upwards of 8 to 10 acre industrial lots. As development continues within Goldenwood access conflict issues are likely to develop in the areas adjacent to the confluence of 4<sup>th</sup> Street, County Route 17, and 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue. As is discussed below, the Strata property generates a significant amount of heavy truck traffic at the intersection of 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Center Street.

### Strata Site Access

The Strata property is located on the north side of 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue, roughly between Center Street and Country Road 17. Strata generates a measurable amount of large truck traffic which originate and terminates at the Center Street and 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue intersection. The intersection is currently a three-way STOP controlled and functions efficiently.

## **BUILD OUT LAND USE POTENTIAL**

Metro COG updated the travel demand model used as part of the 2004 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) to more accurately reflect recent development patterns in the study area. The 2004 model used year 2000 land use development and traffic counts as base assumptions, and was calibrated to that data. For this study, the base year data was updated to reflect conditions on the ground in 2007 for the “Base” modeling scenario.

The Metro COG travel demand model was then adjusted to assume full build out within the project area for the “Build-Out” scenario. A full build projection is in keeping with recent Metro COG modeling efforts on other regionally significant corridors. While no specific planning horizon is identified as part of the “Build-Out” scenario, it does assist planners in recognizing issues and opportunities that may ultimately exist within the corridor, such as right-of-way needs, future intersection control, and ultimate capacity needed within the corridor.

**Figure 2**

**Buildout**

**VC\_PEAK**

- 0.00000 - 0.50000
- 0.50001 - 0.70000
- 0.70001 - 0.90000
- 0.90001 - 1.00000
- 1.00001 - 1.28396



The “Build-Out” model scenario data reflected the following assumptions:

- The GoldMark property in the Northwest quadrant of 45<sup>th</sup> Street and 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue was assumed to be fully developed with industrial lots
- The Matrix property was assumed to be fully developed with industrial lots
- The Goldenwood subdivision was assumed to be fully developed with single-family residential homes
- The Industrial Builders property located north of the existing Strata property was assumed to be fully developed with industrial lots
- The property in and around the former meat packing plant (located between the Sheyenne River and CR 19 on the south side of 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue North) was assumed to be fully redeveloped with industrial lots
- An additional 60 acres of land was assumed to be fully developed in the area between 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue North, west of 9<sup>th</sup> Street.

### **BUILD OUT TRAFFIC CONDITION**

The “Build-Out” scenario model results indicate that 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue North will continue to serve as an important and heavily traveled arterial for the foreseeable future, with projected traffic volumes of between 10,000 and 11,000 over the entire length of corridor within the study area. These volumes are similar to traffic volumes that currently exist in the built areas of Fargo’s industrial park east of 45<sup>th</sup> Street.

Additionally, traffic volumes on some intersecting roadways also showed increases in the build-out scenario results, indicating a potential need for additional or up-graded intersection controls. **Figure 2** demonstrates build out volumes in the project area.

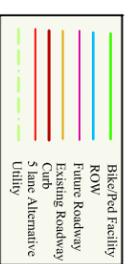
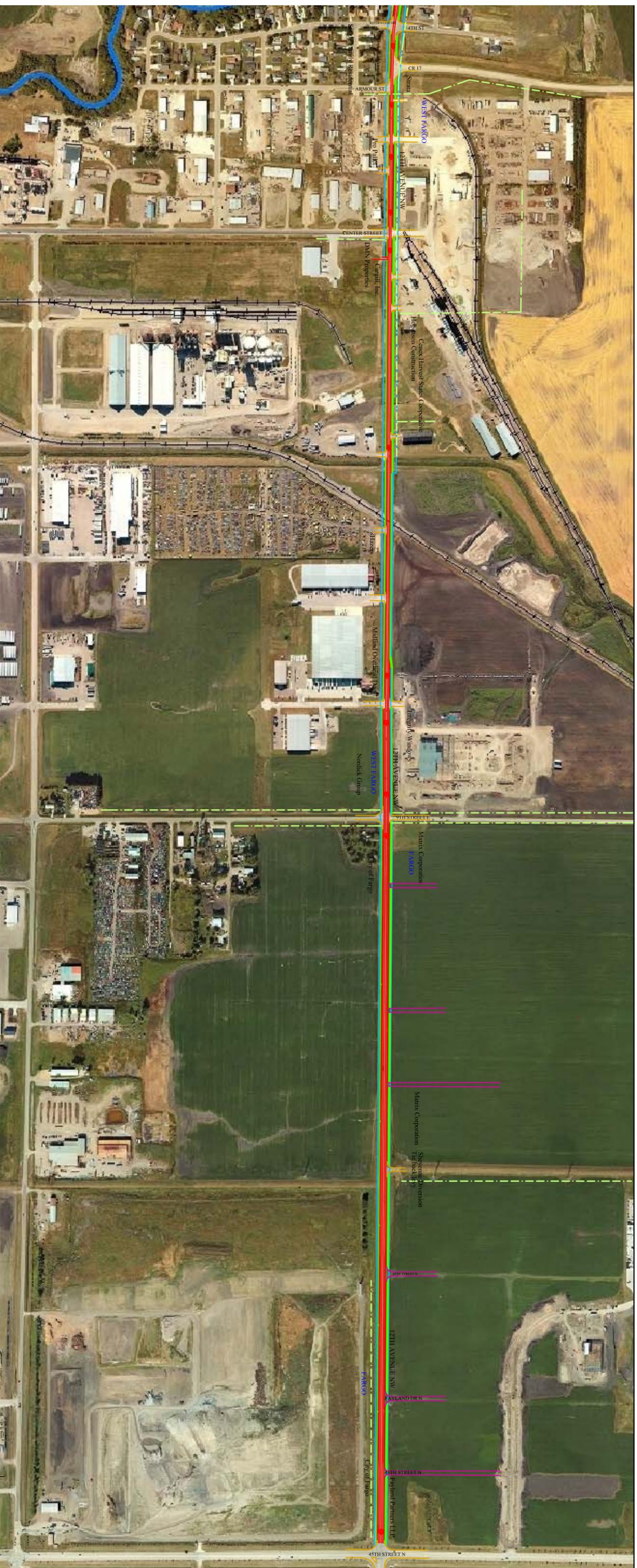
### **12<sup>TH</sup> AVENUE RECOMMENDATIONS**

As part of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan in 2004 Metro COG prepared an Alternatives Analysis for 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue between 45<sup>th</sup> Street and County Road 17. Based on 2030 traffic volumes for the 12th Avenue Corridor, the 2004 MTP recommended that 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue be reconstructed as a three lane urban section; with preservation for a five lane urban section. Based on the updated travel demand model work done as part of this Technical Memo, the initial recommendations made as part of the 2004 MTP are still valid.

At build out it is recommended 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue be reconstructed as a five-lane urban section from 45<sup>th</sup> Street North to 9<sup>th</sup> Street East. From 9<sup>th</sup> Street to CR 17 Twelfth Avenue should be reconstructed as a three-lane urban section. Right-of-way for a five-lane section should be preserved west of 9<sup>th</sup> Street. Future analysis will be needed to determine at exactly what point 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue transitions from a five-lane to a three-lane facility, however it is recommended at this time that the transition occur between 9<sup>th</sup> Street and the BNSF tracks. Figure 3 demonstrates the recommended three and five layout for 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

# Figure 3: Five Lane/Three Lane Urban Section Alternative for 12th Avenue NW

(14 ft middle lane, 12 ft drive lanes, 10 ft shared use path on the north side and 5 ft sidewalk on the south)



Based on the type of development which is anticipated along the 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue corridor, reconstruction as a five-lane section is recommended for the segment between 45<sup>th</sup> Street and 9<sup>th</sup> Street. The level of development, at build out, between 45<sup>th</sup> Street and 9<sup>th</sup> Street will warrant a five-lane section. However in the interim the eastern stretch of 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue should be reconstructed as a three-lane urban section. A 10' shared use path should be constructed on the north side of 12<sup>th</sup> avenue and a 5' sidewalk on the south side.

It is recommended that new access along 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue between the SE Cass tieback levy and 9<sup>th</sup> Street be allowed no less than every 660'. At such time as a concept plan for the land it owns on 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue, new access should be aligned with access to the north.

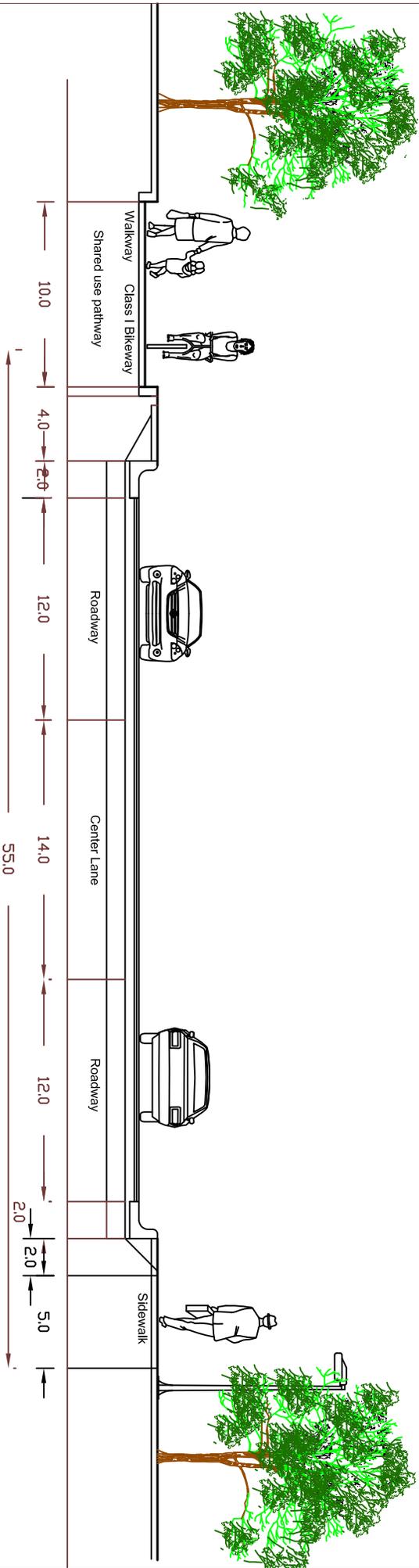
To the west of 9<sup>th</sup> Street the 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue corridor changes slightly. The section of 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue west of 9<sup>th</sup> Street is more fully developed, and no new access anticipated. The only exception is the continuing build up of manufacturing capacity at the Integrity Windows Plant, which will likely impact operations at 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 9<sup>th</sup> Street. Short term recommendations are suggested for the 9<sup>th</sup> Street and 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue Intersection (discussed below).

West of 9<sup>th</sup> Street 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue should transition back to a 3 lane urban section between 9<sup>th</sup> Street and the BNSF tracks. The transition should occur at our just beyond the existing Integrity Windows access/7<sup>th</sup> Street East on 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue. A transition from five to three lanes between 9<sup>th</sup> and the BNSF tracks prevents significant modifications to the BNSF at-grade crossing. However, even under a three lane alternative, modifications are likely necessary. If a grade separation is implemented along 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue, the addition of lane capacity should be analyzed at that time.

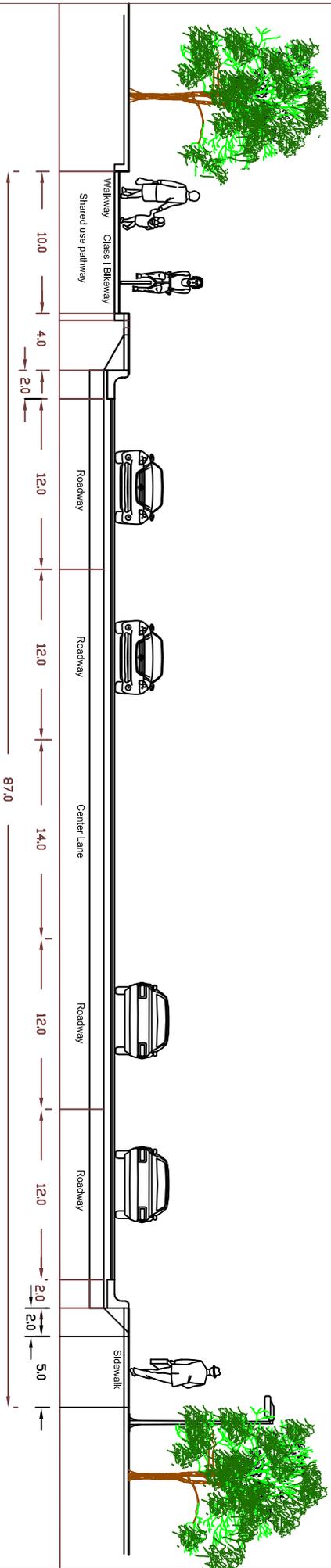
A westbound right turn lane/bay should be considered on 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue at CR 17. Consideration should be given to allowing for a right turn lane/bay into the Goldenwood subdivision at 4<sup>th</sup> Street NW. An eastbound left turn lane on 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue at CR 17 will emerge as part of the three lane reconstruction, however should be considered in advance of a major reconstruction of the corridor.

To the west of Country Road 17 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue should transition back to its current profile as a rural two lane section (4-12-12-4) prior at or near the West Fargo Public Works Facility. A transition at or near the West Fargo Public Works Facility will allow for modifications to accommodate turning movements into and out of the facility.

The West Fargo Public Works Facility will generate measurable traffic movements, including larger vehicles and heavy machinery which have the tendency to impede traffic flow along the corridor. Consideration should be given to adding a westbound right turn lane on 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue prior to the West Fargo Public Works Facility. As well, an eastbound left turn lane or a right hand bypass lane should be added to 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue in advance of the West Fargo Public Works Facility.

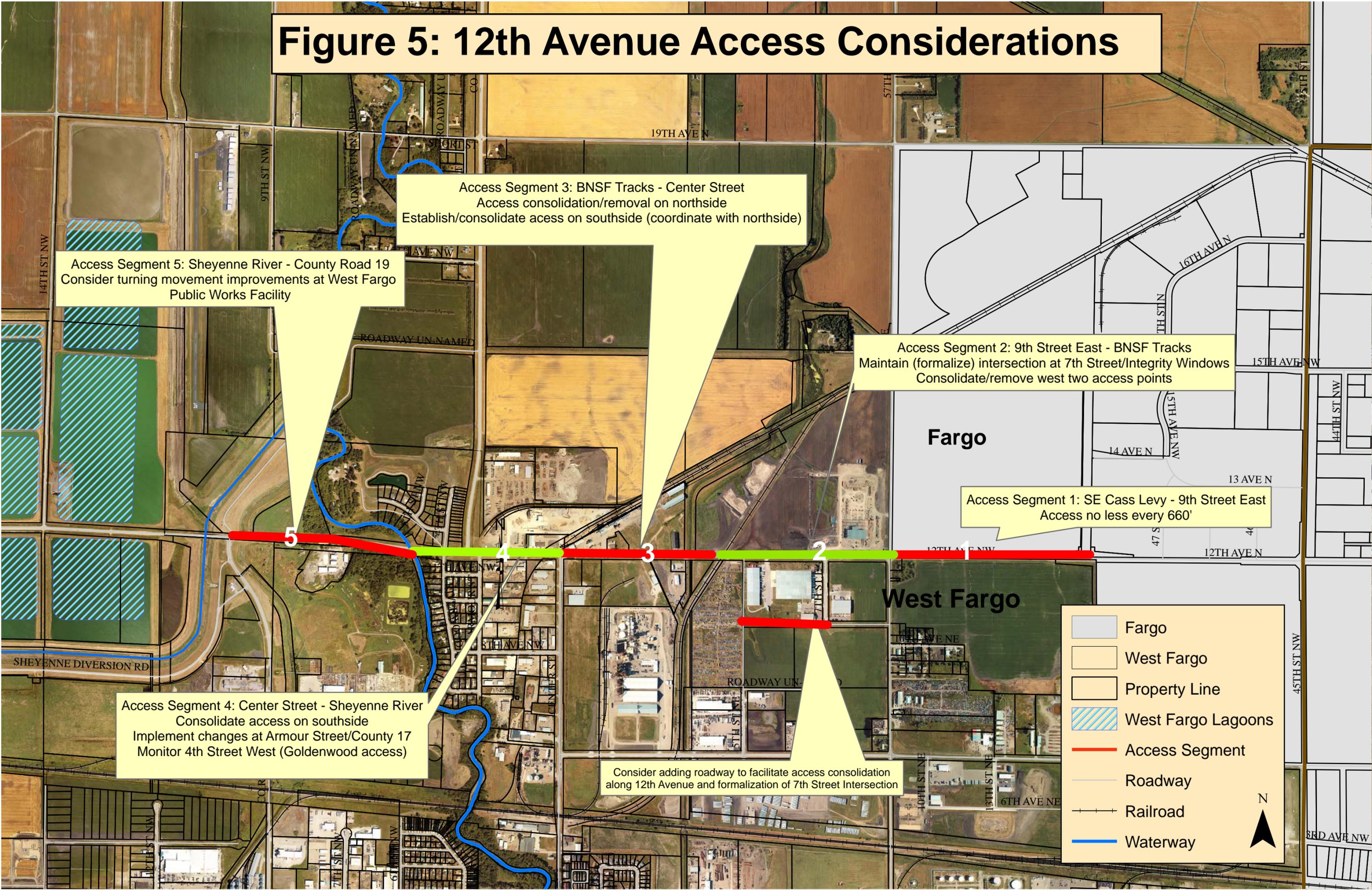


12th Avenue N: Three Lane Typical Section



12th Avenue N: Five Lane Typical Section

# Figure 5: 12th Avenue Access Considerations



Access Segment 3: BNSF Tracks - Center Street  
 Access consolidation/removal on northside  
 Establish/consolidate access on southside (coordinate with northside)

Access Segment 5: Sheyenne River - County Road 19  
 Consider turning movement improvements at West Fargo  
 Public Works Facility

Access Segment 2: 9th Street East - BNSF Tracks  
 Maintain (formalize) intersection at 7th Street/Integrity Windows  
 Consolidate/remove west two access points

Access Segment 1: SE Cass Levy - 9th Street East  
 Access no less every 660'

Access Segment 4: Center Street - Sheyenne River  
 Consolidate access on southside  
 Implement changes at Armour Street/County 17  
 Monitor 4th Street West (Goldenwood access)

Consider adding roadway to facilitate access consolidation  
 along 12th Avenue and formalization of 7th Street Intersection

	Fargo
	West Fargo
	Property Line
	West Fargo Lagoons
	Access Segment
	Roadway
	Railroad
	Waterway

N

## Access Considerations

There is the opportunity to consolidate or realign several existing access points from 9<sup>th</sup> Street to CR 19. There are several access points/intersections along the 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue corridor which are in need of elimination, consolidation, and continue observation and/or future analysis.

The 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue corridor was broken into five segments, each containing a loose set of observations and recommendation. **Figure 5** demonstrates the segments and recommendations.

Segment 1: Southeast Cass Levy to 9<sup>th</sup> Street East – New access no less than every 660’.

Segment 2: 9<sup>th</sup> Street East to BNSF tracks – Maintain (formalize) intersection at 7<sup>th</sup> Street East/Integrity Window access; consolidate or remove two western most access points.

The unimproved right-of-way south of 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue (10<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE) should be constructed to facilitate consolidation of access along 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue and to assist in formalization of intersection at 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE.

Segment 3: BNSF Track to Center Street – Consolidate/remove access on north side of 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue; consolidate/establish access on south side (coordinate with new access on north side).

Segment 4: Center Street to Sheyenne River – Consolidate access on south side; implement changes at Armour Street and Country Road 17 (discussed below); monitor 4<sup>th</sup> Street East (Goldenwood access).

Segment 5: Sheyenne River to County Road 19 – Consider improvements to facilitate safe turning movements at the West Fargo Public Works facility.

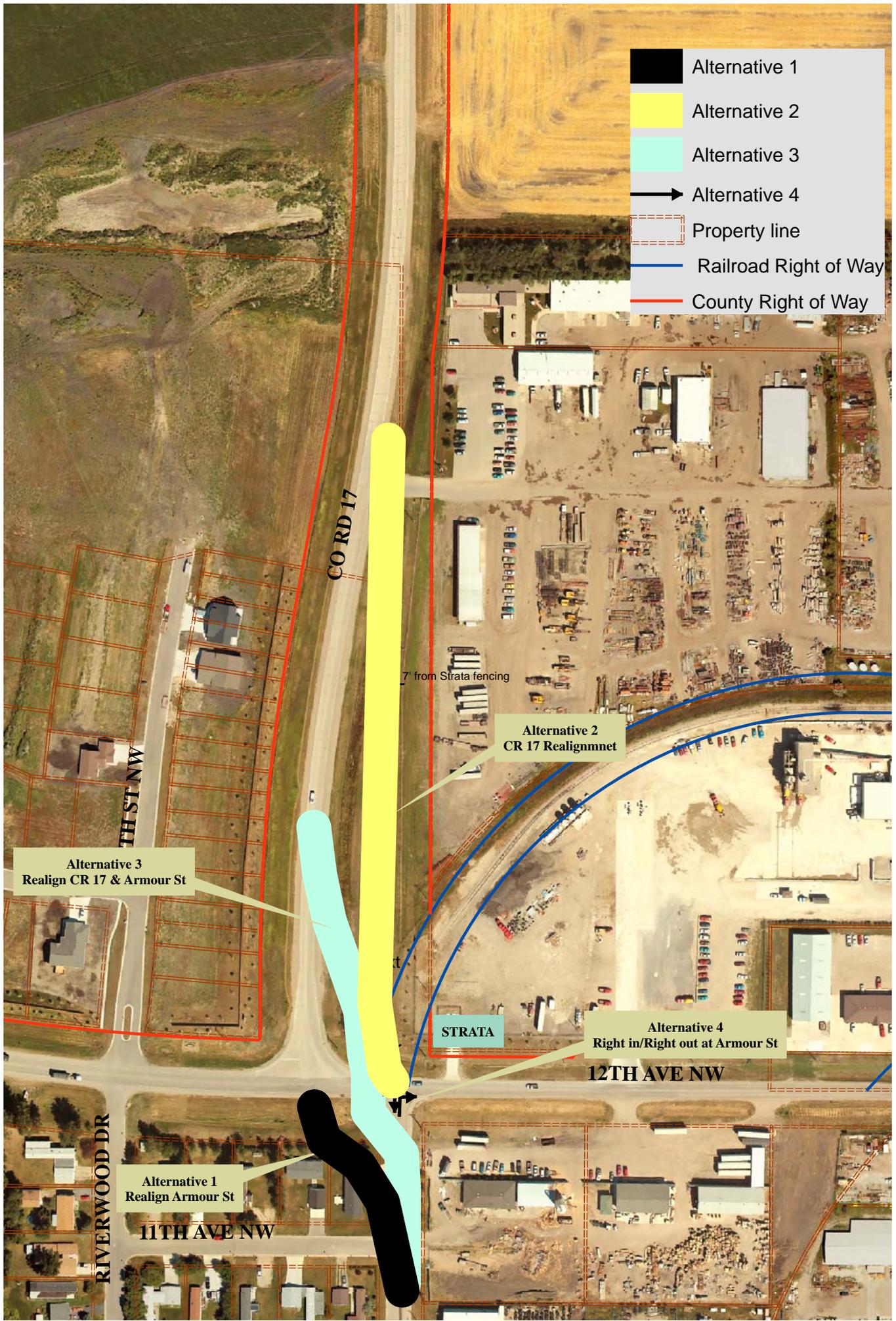
## **COUNTY 17/ARMOUR STREET REALIGNMENT**

As part of the 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue Technical Memo Metro COG developed alternatives by which to alleviate the misalignment of Armour Street and CR 17. The existing condition provides for a number of unsafe turning movements. Figure 5 highlights the alternatives identified at Armour Street and County Road 17.

### Alternative 1 – Realign Armour Street to Intersect with CR 17

Alternative 1 would shift the alignment of Armour Street to the west so as to intersect with the current alignment of CR 17. Alternative 1 will require the acquisition of as many as three residential properties. Alternative 1 would keep CR 17 on its current alignment. Alternative 1 is likely to face substantial neighborhood opposition.

Figure 6 - County Road 17/Armour Street Realignment



- Alternative 1
- Alternative 2
- Alternative 3
- Alternative 4
- Property line
- Railroad Right of Way
- County Right of Way

Alternative 3  
Realign CR 17 & Armour St

Alternative 2  
CR 17 Realignment

Alternative 4  
Right in/Right out at Armour St

Alternative 1  
Realign Armour St

CO RD 17

TH ST NW

RIVERWOOD DR

11TH AVE NW

12TH AVE NW

STRATA

7' from Strata fencing

### Alternative 2 – Realign CR 17 to intersect with Armour Street

Alternative 2 would shift CR 17 to the east so as to allow an intersection with Armour Street. Alternative 2 will require minimal property acquisition; however will require the relocation of existing fencing on the Strata property. Alternative 2 will require the reconstruction of 900' of CR 17. There are variations to Alternative 2 that would allow the shift of CR 17 to occur at any number of points north of 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

### Alternative 3 – Realign Armour and CR 17

Alternative 3 would shift the alignment of CR 17 to the east starting approximately 400' north of 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Alternative 3 would shift Armour Street to the west starting approximately 105' south of 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Alternative 3 would avoid the degree of acquisition as identified in Alternative 1, however would require some level of acquisition. Alternative 3 would require the reconstruction of 400' of CR 17.

### Alternative 4 – Right in/Right out control on Armour Street

Alternative 4 would provide for right in right out only traffic movements at Armour Street. Eliminating left in and left out movements at Armour Street will remove the most dangerous turn movements in this area. Alternative 4 would require no takings, and has the potential to influence traffic patterns in the area. Eliminated left in and left out access into the area south of the Armour Street and 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue intersection can be accommodated via Center Street and 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

### **SHORT TERM CONSIDERATIONS**

Pending the timing of the actual recommended improvements along the corridor short term improvements may be needed along the corridor. Local staff needs to stay cognizant of changing traffic patterns along the corridor, especially the 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 9<sup>th</sup> Street intersection. As the Integrity Windows plant continues to expand, operations at the intersection of 9<sup>th</sup> Street and 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue need to be monitored. While the placement of traffic control devices may not meet warrants at this intersection, the placement of control measures may alleviate pending safety issues (especially given the prevalence of large truck traffic). The 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 9<sup>th</sup> Street intersection may require short term modifications to allow for additional capacity.

## **PUBLIC INPUT SUMMARY**

Metro COG prepared the 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue Technical Memo in consultation with a project advisory committee consisting of representatives from the City of Fargo, City of West Fargo, and Cass County. In August of 2007, Metro COG mailed out a letter of intent to adjacent property owners along the 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue corridor informing them of the technical memo. The letter encouraged property owners to submit written comments on the technical memo to Metro COG. The letter also informed property owners that a public meeting was to be held on the findings and recommendations of the technical memo as part of the overall adoption of the West Fargo Comprehensive Plan. Public input on the findings and recommendations of the technical memo were presented as part of the public input meeting on the West Fargo Comprehensive Plan, held on October 16, 2007.

## Appendix 2

### Public Input Summary

## **PUBLIC INPUT SUMMARY**

The West Fargo Comprehensive Plan was built on a public engagement process that aimed to maximize resident input early in the plan development process. The process was crafted to gather input from community leaders, stakeholders, and citizens. The public input process was multifaceted and included passive and active elements. The following narrative offers a snap shot of the public input process and a summary of the commentary received.

## **STEERING COMMITTEE**

The steering committee guided all elements of the study process. The committee represented a broad range of community interests. The committee assisted in setting the tone of the study process and provided critical input into all elements of plan development. The steering committee meet X times throughout the plan development process.

## **WEB PAGE**

The web page [www.westfargoplan.org](http://www.westfargoplan.org) was developed to allow community members and interested persons access to the planning process. The page was used to post key documents, plan elements, and meeting notices. The web page was visited a total of 1024 times, primarily by community residents and other interested persons.

## **COMMUNITY EVENTS**

Metro COG staff attended the West Fargo Spring Business Expo and one Business After Hours event. Both were sponsored by the West Fargo Chamber of Commerce. At both events Metro COG gathered passive input from a cumulative total over 110 community residents. Both events were used to gather input into the planning process and also educate community residents about the planning process in general. The comments received at both events were generally in line those comments portrayed in other elements of the public input summary. In an effort to further alter the community to the Comprehensive Plan update, Metro COG included an 8.5 x 11 poster in the April West Fargo Chamber of Commerce Newsletter. The newsletter had an estimated distribution of 500 businesses and households.

## **COMMUNITY INPUT MEETING**

A community input meeting was held on May 10, 2007 at the West Fargo Chamber of Commerce. Nearly 50 residents attended the community input meeting. The intent of the meeting was to gather early input from West Fargo residents. The information gathered at the meeting was used to assist in update of the West Fargo Comprehensive Plan (Plan).

Residents were provided with 8 interactive poster boards to help solicit input on a range of community issues and ideas. Comment cards/sheets were also provided for residents to share general comments and observations. What follows is a summary of the comments received from residents on the various issue areas presented at the community input meeting.

### Community Vision

Residents were asked to identify their preferences on a range of statements and concepts related to the community vision for West Fargo. With the exception of tourist destination, residents were generally supportive of the concepts presented for inclusion as part of an updated community vision.

Community Vision		
	Yes	No
Regional Leader	8	3
City of Neighborhoods	12	1
Family Orientated	17	0
Small town flavor	16	0
Diverse community	12	0
Tourist Destination	3	10
Unique Business	11	1
Reinvestment & Rebirth	16	0

Residents feel strongly that the community vision for West Fargo needs to embrace the communities’ family orientation and its small town flavor. Residents are equally interested in seeing the concept of reinvestment and rebirth become a part of West Fargo’s community vision. Residents also favor a community vision which emphasizes a diverse community and a community of neighborhoods.

### This or That

Residents were provided with 9 different sets of paired images which compared different types of development patterns. Residents were asked to choose which they preferred.

This or That?	
Grid Street Pattern	18.5
Suburban Street Pattern	7.5
Wide Local Streets	18
Narrow Local Streets	13
Traditional Traffic Control	13
Roundabouts	14
Open Roadway	10
Parkway	17
Neighborhood Commercial	15
Single Use Neighborhood	8
Wide Frontage	15
Narrow Frontage	10

Less Density	16
More Density	10
Garage in Front	5.5
Garage in Back	22
Separated Bike Facility	23
Bike Lane	4

Of interest was the support shown for concepts such as putting garages in back of the house, mixed residential/commercial developments, and a grid street pattern. Typically, none of these features exist in the areas of which West Fargo which have developed in the past 10 to 15 years.

**Visual Preferences**

In addition to the *This or That?* poster board residents were allowed to choose preferences among a range of images depicting different types of community settings and development patterns. Some of the images were specific to West Fargo, others were general in nature.

Visual Preferences		
	Like	Dislike
Dense Single Family Development	2	8
High Density (complex) Multi-family	2	17
Low density larger lot Single Family	12	1
Manufactured Housing	1	13
Twin home development (treeless)	2	9
Downtown Streetscape	14	2
Big Box Commercial	6	7
Strip Commercial	1	8
1950s era single family	21	0
Infill SF attached/town home	7	5
Neighborhood Commercial	16	1
Neo-traditional commercial facade	10	1
Pocket park	17	0
Landscaped gateway	16	0
Elevated gateway signage	2	15
Existing gateway signage	22	1
Light pole gateway signage	17	3
Separated bike/ped facility	10	1
MF - SF integration (older)	1	13
Condominium (medium density)	4	16
Mixed use density - Downtown setting	0	12

West Fargo residents appear in favor of traditional development patterns as have been the standard since the 1970s. West Fargo residents appear open to deviate from current development patterns to allow for nontraditional traffic control, housing/site design, and integration of neo-traditional development facades and patterns. Residents also appear in favor of mixed residential commercial facilities. Residents do not support the complex style high density pattern of development which has become the norm over the past 20 years in the metro area.

**Population & Growth**

Residents were provided an opportunity to comment on the ideal size of the City of West Fargo. As well residents were asked to choose among three growth/development strategies if West Fargo intends on expanding beyond a population of 42,000.

Population & Growth	
Population	
Less than 30,000	0
30,000	1
35,000	3
40,000	7
50,000	4
60,000 +	2
Growth Strategies	
Continue current development patterns and make provisions for development outside of Sheyenne Diversion.	6
Revise land use policies to maximize available land with in flood protected areas by increasing commercial and residential development densities.	7
Develop policies that encourage reinvestment and redevelopment in the core of West Fargo.	13

Residents appear to lean towards a smaller West Fargo, perhaps a community around 40,000. Residents also appear to support policies that will help support the reinvestment in the existing community and maximize existing flood protected areas.

**Parks & Recreation**

Residents were asked to comment on existing park and recreation facilities in the community. What follows is a summary of the comments received.

Park & Recreation	
1	Bridge from Armour Park to Riverside park
2	Bike improvements at Center Street RR Underpass

3	Armour Park needs to be better utilized; add ball diamonds & walking paths
4	Multiuse path along CR 17
5	Multiuse path along 40th Ave
6	Multiuse path along entire River (greenway) to connect parks
7	same as 5
8	Rename Amour Park to Oak Leaf; add skating rink east of shelter
9	create an arena/rec center at Elmwood
10	No comment provided: Diversion area north of 32nd Ave
11	No comment provided: I 94/Sheyenne interchange
12	Add equipment to Charleswood park/greenspace areas

### Future Land Use & Community Growth

Residents were offered a future land use map of the City of West Fargo and asked to provide alternative land uses. As well, residents were asked to identify areas which should be considered for reinvestment or redevelopment.

<b>Commercial Reinvestment &amp; Redevelopment</b>	
Location	Responses
West Main/Meadow Brook Park	5
Fairgrounds	1
Sheyenne Street	2
Main Avenue	3
<b>Residential Reinvestment &amp; Redevelopment</b>	
Main Ave to 4th Ave on 9th Street	4

<b>Land Use Changes &amp; Comments</b>		
	<b>Location</b>	<b>Comments</b>
1	Main/Sheyenne	Change to Park, north of Main, south of river
2	SW of 22nd Ave W/Sheyenne	Residential with buffer
3	32nd Ave/2nd St E	Retail/commercial with mixed use buffer
4	CR 17/25th Ave W	Retail/commercial with mixed use buffer
5	Main/8th St W	Change to Commercial Retail
6	SW quad of 9th St/19th Ave	Restaurant/food service related
7	North of Main, West of 14th St NW	Change to Commercial Retail
8	14th Ave E/Prairie Parkway	Change to Commercial
9	same as 8	same as 8
10	South of Main, West of 14th St NW	same as 8
11	6th NW/4th Ave NW	Buffer residential and commercial
12	West Main Frontage between 22nd/26th St NW	Change to commercial (hotel, conf. center)
13	Armour Park area	Create Community gathering area, make center of city (restore original name, Oak Leaf Park)
14	River from 7th Ave to 13th Ave	Riverwalk/greenway
15	Center Street/Pinewood	add trails & path/put in a bridge to Armour Park
16	Armour Park area	Skating Rink at Oak Leaf (Armour) Park
17	Bonanzaville Area	Residential/Commercial Mix

18	Lagoons	Control Lagoon odor
19	Main to 4th Ave on 9th Street	Aesthetic Improvements
20	Main Ave just W of 45th (north side)	Change to Commercial/retail
21		same 20
22	32nd Ave just W of River	Retail/commercial
23	9th St (between 32nd & 40th Ave)	Commercial
24	40th Ave W of 9th Grade Acad.	Commercial
25	Sheyenne River near Beaton Rd.	convert to park space (part of subd.)

Residents point to the Main Avenue Corridor and areas south of I-94 as the parts of West Fargo which need to undergo additional land use scrutiny. With the pending reconstruction of Main Avenue many opportunities will exist for improved access and the potential for redevelopment and financial reinvestment. The areas south of I-94 have the potential to be planned on a sub-area basis to allow for the development of unique and recognizable neighborhoods and commercial areas.

**Transportation**

Residents were provided a poster board that focused on transportation issues with in the City of West Fargo. Residents were asked to identify transportation corridors which they feel require capacity increases (existing congestion points) and corridors which required aesthetic improvements. Residents were also asked to identify areas of the community where bus service is needed.

<b>Congestion Points</b>
Sheyenne/I -94
Main/6th St W
13th Ave/9th St
CR 17/32nd Ave
CR 17/40th Ave
CR 17/52nd Avenue
13th/Sheyenne (left turn needed)
13th Ave/16th St
<b>Bus Service</b>
West Main/16th St
Areas north of Main near 4th Ave NW
Integrity (12th Ave Industrial area)
Areas south of 13th/west of Sheyenne
Eagle Run
<b>Aesthetic Improvements</b>
13th Ave (whole corridor)
Main Ave (whole corridor)
Sheyenne (Main to 10th)

9th St north of 13th
40th Ave/9th St W

Not surprisingly residents are most concerned about Sheyenne Street (County Road 17). The Sheyenne Street corridor was overwhelmingly identified as the communities’ most deficient corridor on a number of fronts. There does appear to be some support for bus services in various parts of West Fargo. Many of them, such as the 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue industrial areas and Eagle Run are fairly distant from existing Metro Area Transit routes.

**Bike and Pedestrian Issues**

Residents were given an opportunity to comment on areas in the community where they currently enjoy riding bike and/or walking. Residents were also asked to identify locations in the community where they feel improvements are needed for both pedestrians and bicyclists.

<b>Places currently used for biking &amp; walking</b>
Elmwood Park
15th Street W
Rendezvous Park
8th St W
13th Ave/9th Street
Sheyenne S of Charleswood
<b>Bikeway improvements</b>
15th St W
13th Avenue near 15th St W
CR 17 (I-94 to 52nd Avenue)
2nd Street W 4th Ave W
Main Ave/6th St W
West Main 14th St to 21St
Center Street/Armour Park Area
<b>Pedestrian Improvements</b>
12th Ave/Center Street
Main/Center
Main near Bonanzaville
West Main 14th St to 21St
CR 17 (I-94 to 52nd Avenue)
Sheyenne Diversion N of 32nd Ave
40th Ave/2nd St E

A major issue identified was the connectivity of the newer parts of West Fargo with the core of the City. Along those lines the issue of connectivity between the newer parts of West Fargo and Southwest Fargo was also identified as an issue. The biggest bike and pedestrian issue in West Fargo is the lack of a safe option on Sheyenne Street, south of I-

94. The majority of comments both positive and negative concerning the bicycling and walking were centered in the western part of West Fargo.

**Business District & Downtown**

Residents were asked to identify the area of the community which they identify as West Fargo’s business district. Residents were then asked to identify which part of the community they identify to be West Fargo’s downtown.

<b>Commercial/Business District</b>	
13th Avenue	13
9th Street/I-94	4
CR17/32 Ave	1
Sheyenne/Main	2
West Main	2
<b>Downtown</b>	
Sheyenne/Main	14
13th Avenue	1

Residents overwhelmingly identify segments of Main Avenue and Sheyenne Street as the downtown of West Fargo. Residents point towards the 13th Avenue area as West Fargo’s business district. Though not asked overtly, a number of participants pointed to the I-94/9<sup>th</sup> Street Interchange and the 9<sup>th</sup> Street corridor south of I-94 as the future commercial and business center for West Fargo.

**ONLINE COMMUNITY SURVEY**

An online survey was developed as part of the update of the West Fargo Comprehensive Plan (Plan). The survey was designed in consultation with West Fargo Planning staff and the steering committee. The survey was designed to gather input on a battery of issues with in the City of West Fargo. The survey contained questions covering a range of topics including: Demographics, Community Image & Identity, Community Growth, Community Vision, Land use & Development, Transportation and Community Facilities. What follows is a narrative summary of the sentiment gleaned from the community survey.

When choosing a community in general, West Fargo residents value schools, neighborhoods, city services and amenities, and affordable living. On a list of factors which specifically influenced their decision to choose West Fargo the residents placed a high value on good schools, small town atmosphere, and the cities neighborhoods. Other factors which ranked high as influencing resident’s choice to live in Wet Fargo were the community’s affordability, work, and its location. Taxes, flood protection and city services appear least influential on current residents of West Fargo.

When asked to think about what the vision for the City of West Fargo should be, residents overwhelming point back to a community of neighborhoods, small town flavor, and family orientation. Interestingly, residents also feel strongly that as West Fargo

grows its vision needs to also focus on reinvestment and rebirth. The notion of reinvestment and rebirth is also expressed through the desire of residents to see more emphasis put on redevelopment strategies in the downtown and in other older commercial and industrial areas.

Of note is the value residents place on neighborhoods, schools, and small town atmosphere, especially when viewing resident's desire for community growth. Seventy percent of residents surveyed felt the ideal size for West Fargo is a population of less than 40,000.

As the community grows there appears a growing recognition that existing services must be supported to ensure a uniform level of service across the whole community. There tends to be at least some consensus that existing services are not keeping pace with community growth. Residents also sense an imbalance in services between the newer and older parts of the community. There was much concern over the growing pains that will follow the continued rapid expansion of the community.

When looking at a future of continued southward expansion of the community, residents don't tend to favor infrastructure sacrifices in the older parts of the community. Residents appear to support a balanced approach to infrastructure and service investments.

It could be this developing sense of service imbalance, looming growth pressure, and future growth demands that lead residents to vision a West Fargo as a community of 30,000 to 40,000 people.

As residents of West Fargo look forward to the continuing growth of the community, residents clearly put their priorities for new transportation infrastructure in the south and west. Residents feel the highest transportation priorities are Sheyenne Street from 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue to 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, 9<sup>th</sup> Street from 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue to 40<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue from the City limits to Sheyenne Street. Overall, the highest transportation priority among residents is the interchange at 9<sup>th</sup> Street East and I-94.

Residents are less supportive of improvements to northern corridors such as 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue North and 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue North and are mixed on corridors such as 8<sup>th</sup> Street West and 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue East and West. There did appear to be a concern with the traffic speeds on I-94 between 45<sup>th</sup> Street and US 10 and the resulting noise pollution created for the neighborhoods to the north of I-94. The issue of sound walls was mentioned on a few occasions.

Though few existing residents indicated that city services were a factor which influenced them to move to West Fargo, almost half indicated city services are an important community characteristic in general.

Residents appear supportive of an infrastructure sales tax. West Fargo currently has a 1% sales tax dedicated to infrastructure which has been in place since 1994. As the city

continues to grow and as infrastructure needs mount, additional sales tax revenues may be supported by the residents.

When looking at infrastructure cost allocation, residents generally appear in favor, though not strongly, to allocating costs directly to those who benefit the most (abutting properties). However, larger facility needs and infrastructure investments may require the support of the entire West Fargo tax base.

Taxes ranked in the middle of a list of community characteristics which influenced residents to move to West Fargo; and ranks equally neutral among a range of general community characteristics. However, West Fargo residents are generally mixed on the current property tax burden in the city. In fact, several open ended comments on the survey pointed towards a growing frustration with existing property taxes and special assessments.

A strategy which can sometimes help reduce new facility and infrastructure costs is regional or institutional cooperation. West Fargo residents feel strongly the city should work with both its abutting communities and with the West Fargo Park District and West Fargo School District to assist in meeting future facility and infrastructure needs.

In general residents feel West Fargo's image is improving, with in West Fargo and with in the region as a whole. Of note, too, is the recognition that West Fargo's identity is more realistically tied to that of the metro area. In keeping with this later comment, residents also recognize the quality of life in West Fargo is tied to the production of goods, services, and facilities of the large regional/metro area.

One of the areas residents were surveyed on related to parks and recreational facilities. Residents place the highest priority on new neighborhood parks and bike trails among all other recreational improvements. Residents also responded favorably to a community recreation center. There were several open ended comments which called for the development of a community based recreational/fitness center in West Fargo. The emphasis on the recreation center was placed on affordable to all and homegrown in nature (i.e. created by West Fargo for West Fargo).

Residents responded favorably to both an indoor and outdoor swimming pool. Several open ended comments were received which pointed towards the need for expanded indoor swimming facilities for the local swim programs. Residents were fairly split on the idea of a public golf course, soccer fields, and indoor running facilities. Residents place a low priority on a public skateboard park and skating/hockey facilities.

## **FOCUS GROUPS**

A total of seven focus groups were held to help gather input and assist in formulation of key elements of the plan development.

- Township/County/Abutting Jurisdictions – This group consisted of entities which abut West Fargo and representatives from land areas which are in West Fargo’s ET.
- New/Growth Area Business – This group consisted of smaller businesses which are in new growth areas of the City.
- Redevelopment/Downtown Business – This group consisted of businesses which are in older/established parts of the city which may be undergoing redevelopment or renaissance efforts.
- Housing – This group consisted of individuals in the housing industry, including builders and developers, but also included realtors.
- Public Official – The group consisted of administration and elected officials from the Park District, School District, and City of West Fargo.
- Special Issues/Services – This group consisted of representation from the elderly, disabled, and New American communities, among others.
- Infrastructure – This group consisted of key municipal staff and administration and would focus on short and long range infrastructure needs and issues.

## **Public Facilities**

- Recreational Center
- Increase utilization of Veterans Arena
- Study Golf Course Options in relation to other recreational needs
- Swimming pool
- Bike Trails and recreational paths with regional connectivity
- New fire facility needed in south
- Soccer fields
- Community growth has outpaced the provision of new community facilities
- Residents depend on the services/amenities of the larger region
- Coordination is needed between Park Districts from Fargo/West Fargo
- Recreational development along Sheyenne River
- Library needs through out community (study feasibility of branch option)

## **Economic Development**

- Regional strategy of Greater FM Economic Development Corporation (GFMEDC) may not be in keeping with the needs of West Fargo
- West Fargo should consider high tech/office development (attract white collar jobs)
- Establish retail/commercial tax base
- Southern growth areas is a potential to create new base of economic development
- Economic Development can help finance future infrastructure improvements

## **City Growth**

- New growth needs to be unique and creative
- City needs to work with private sector to establish a consensus on the type and pattern of growth in the southern growth area; private sector can help set vision
- 35,000 to 42,000 is full build out of City limits
- Balance uncontrolled growth with measured growth
- Identify reinvestment areas within the core of the city

## **Exurban Development**

- West Fargo needs to be a leader in promoting sensible growth in its ET area
- Scrutinize extension of utilities into rural areas (rural communities)
- Establish a utility service boundary
- Establish coordinated land use plans for urban/rural transition areas
- Scrutinize sporadic development in rural areas
- Development around CR 17 and 76<sup>th</sup> Ave S needs to be controlled

## **Schools**

- Schools are the backbone of the community
- Need for a 2<sup>nd</sup> high school (2<sup>nd</sup>) by the early part of the next decade
  - 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Academy can convert to high school
  - Concern about what changes to the image of the city with the 2<sup>nd</sup> high school
- New school likely in Osgood in the near future
- Increase coordination between the Fargo and West Fargo School District

## **Infrastructure**

- West Fargo needs a 20 to 30 year capital improvement plan
- City needs a plan for scenario at which population goes beyond flood protected areas
- West Fargo has lost pace with the current development trends

- Water/waste water issues need to be dealt with to ensure long term growth.
- County Road 17 is a long term issue, no quick fix
- Transit service is lacking even with in the core parts of the City; demands in growth area likely to develop in the coming 3 to 5 years.
- Congestion in southern areas will be a constant
- Existing priorities
  - 9<sup>th</sup> Street overpass/interchange
  - Water Plant
  - Southern roadway/utility infrastructure
  - Maintenance of core city
  - Expansion of economic development to help fund infrastructure (e.g. sales tax)
  - Sheyenne Street
  -

### **Regional Infrastructure**

- City/County should explore a 20 year levy plan
- NDDOT resources are spread thin; Federal funds are not always going to meet the total regional demand
- Metro/Regional transportation planning needs to become more proactive and long range
- Regional visioning and planning is needed for urban/rural coordination on issues of water, waste water, solid waste, etc.
- Political attitudes need to become less parochial
- Cooperation between the School District, City, and Park District
  - Help keep property taxes low by providing coordinated services/programs/facilities
  - Traditionally, coordination and cooperation among entities has been positive but not resulted in major initiatives or outcomes
- Large infrastructure projects require cooperation from more than just the specific jurisdiction

### **City Image**

- Look to the future
  - Newer residents are not familiar with the West Fargo of the past; many in the region have a new perception of West Fargo
- Expand the positive (marketing of the city within the City is needed)
- Quality of life (for all ages)
- Balance the contrast between small town of the past and city of the present
- Balance new city and old city
- Aesthetic Revitalization needed along Main Avenue and Sheyenne Street
- More common green space along river

## Community Vision

- West Fargo as a Regional Leader
  - Working with rural communities and townships
  - Initiating regional partnerships on infrastructure
    - Flood protection
    - Growth management/coordination in rural areas
- Small town atmosphere
- Family orientated (broad sense of family)
- Neighborhood centered
- A community for all ages and lifestyles

## Housing

- City needs to maintain market share of regional housing production
- Commercial/retail services will help in continuing housing growth
- Community facilities will also aid in attracting new housing.
- City needs to input local dollars to help with first time homebuyers.
- Work to provide low cost public facilities through good sensible engineering standards and practice
- City needs a housing strategy
- Seek clustered/mixed density as opposed to consolidated blocks of large high density complexes.

## Flood Protection

- The diversion will meet West Fargo needs for another 20 to 30 years.
- Pressure west of the diversion (per higher land values in the city, etc.) is causing poor development patterns.
- Regional flood protection plan is needed; larger vision is needed.
- Major new flood control will require a long range vision and will likely come with out significant federal inputs.

## OPEN HOUSE

On October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2007, Metro COG and the City of West Fargo hosted an Open House at the Loeden Center to share the elements of the Draft Comprehensive Plan. Nearly 40 community members participated in the Open House and shared their ideas on the draft elements of the Comprehensive Plan. Comments received as part of the Open House were integrated into the planning process.