

**CASS COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
AGENDA FOR September 24, 2009**

Cass County Highway Department Conference Room
7:00 AM
1201 Main Avenue West, West Fargo, ND 58078

1. Call to Order
Establish Quorum of Members
Approve June 25, 2009 Minutes
2. Fargo Moorhead Area Long Range Transportation Plan (FM Metro COG)
[Action]
3. Stanley Township concerns regarding right of way dedication (Perry Ronning)
[Information]
4. Other business and citizen comment
5. Adjournment

***Additional copies of the agenda and Planning Commission materials are available at:
http://www.casscountynd.gov/departments/planning/Planning_Commission.htm***

Planning Commissioners:
Please call Highway Department Secretary
at 298-2370 if you are unable to attend.
Please call Highway Department Secretary
at 298-2370 if you are unable to attend.

Persons with Disabilities needing accommodations should call 298-2370 prior to the meeting.

**CASS COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
JUNE 25, 2009**

1. MEETING TO ORDER

A meeting of the Cass County Planning Commission was called to order by Chairman Ken Lougheed on June 25, 2009, at 7:00 AM in the Cass County Highway Department Conference Room. The following members were present: Ken Lougheed, Keith Monson, Todd Ellig, Scott Wagner, Lou Bennett, Mike Zimney and Chad Peterson. Absent were: Brad Wimmer and Mark Johnson. Also present were County Engineer Keith Berndt and County Planner Tim Solberg. Mr. Lougheed welcomed Mr. Zimney as a new member of the planning commission.

2. MINUTES APPROVED

MOTION, passed

Mr. Bennett moved and Mr. Ellig seconded to approve the minutes from the April 23, 2009, as presented. Motion carried.

3. ODEGAARD SUBDIVISION (South ½, SW ¼, Section 33, Pleasant Township) Minor Subdivision, Revised, Approved

Mr. Solberg stated the public hearing was held and the final plat for the Odegaard Subdivision was approved at the April 23, 2009 meeting of the Cass County Planning Commission with the condition, that Lot 1 be shown as unbuildable. The developer, Mr. Odegaard was present and previously informed the commission that Lot 1 would be the most valuable residential lot in the proposed development. His desire is to find a solution, making the lot more suitable for development and acceptable to the planning commission.

The planning commission expressed concern with access to Lot 1 as it set at or above base flood elevation (BFE). They also were concerned with the setback and buildable area of the lot.

Mr. Odegaard addressed the issues as follows through information provided to Mr. Solberg:

- A one-mile section of 53rd St SE will be graveled allowing year-round access to Cass County 17 S. Mr. Solberg distributed a letter signed by Steve Brakke, Pleasant Township Board, stating the township intends to maintain a one-mile section of 53rd St running east from Cass County 17 to 171st St after it is topped with gravel. Mr. Odegaard plans to gravel the one-mile section in an effort to provide access to Lot 1 of the proposed Odegaard Estates Subdivision.
- Lot 1 will show a stream setback of 140 feet which was arrived at using an 8:1 ration from the bottom of the creek bed to the proposed building elevation per Pleasant Township floodplain ordinance (2.5' above BFE). The setback was previously 120 feet on the intermittent stream from the bottom of the creek bed to the building site. Mr. Berndt did not deem this sufficient for the safest building site. The new setback will allow the developer to move the north lot line which would provide adequate space for building. After conferring with the County Sanitarian, Mr. Solberg felt the lot size was more than adequate for a drainfield to be placed on the buildable area (outside of the setback).

Mr. Solberg reminded the planning commission that at the February 26, 2009 meeting of the planning commission a variance request to lot density restrictions from the developer

was approved. In light of the developer's alternative approach to lot density restrictions and the commission's approval of the variance, Mr. Solberg feels the development is consistent with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan.

The design standards not met include; the notation of existing FEMA floodplain requirement.

Mr. Berndt stated he would recommend illustration on the plat that anything south of the north setback line be deemed unbuildable.

Mr. Ellig expressed concern for soil stability of Lot 1 and feels Lot 2 is better suited for building. Mr. Berndt stated without further soil testing stability would be difficult to determine, however; an 8:1 slope is generally considered stable.

Jay Kleinjan, neighbor to the proposed subdivision was present and expressed concern for this area becoming a housing development in the future. Mr. Wagner said he has no objections to approving the revised plat as long as the county ordinance is followed. He stated that if an individual foresees a problem with additional homes built in the development, the concerned party may wish to purchase the adjacent land as this would not be a county planning issue.

Mr. Berndt said he would not recommend building in the area between the creeks on Lot 1 outside the setback area due to potential flooding and soil stability. Randy Cramer, Property Resources Group was present with Mr. Odegaard and stated they would be opposed to denying the right to have an outbuilding constructed and feels the elevation of the property is sufficient to keep it from flooding. Mr. Wagner questioned Mr. Berndt as to whether a disclosure could be placed on the property determining where an outbuilding could be placed. Mr. Berndt questioned the compatibility of structures, should the property owner decide to build a barn type structure next to family dwellings. He repeated it is not his recommendation to build south of the north setback line.

Mr. Peterson said it would be difficult to deny the revised plat if the developer has met all criteria.

Mr. Loughheed asked if there is roadway access to the unbuildable area. Mr. Berndt stated there would not be access when there is flooding.

Mr. Zimney questioned whether the county ordinance limits the size of an outbuilding within the setback. Mr. Solberg said the maximum allowable size for an outbuilding as defined by county ordinance, within the setback is 10' x 12'. Mr. Zimney stated the area in question is not within the setback. Mr. Solberg said it is not and further stated that a power line easement was present on the area outside of the setback.

MOTION, passed

Mr. Wagner moved and Mr. Monson seconded to approve the revised plat for the Odegaard Subdivision subject to the recommendations of the County Planner. Members voting in favor were: Mr. Loughheed, Mr. Wagner, Mr. Monson, Mr. Bennett and Mr. Zimney. Opposed was Mr. Ellig. Motion carried.

Mr. Ellig left the meeting at 7:35.

4. **CITY EXTRATERRITORIAL ZONING LEGISLATION**

Mr. Solberg distributed and reviewed a handout and map outlining recent Extraterritorial (ET) Legislation. He stated the State of North Dakota grants cities the authority to extend the application of their zoning regulations outside of their corporate limits as defined in the North Dakota Century Code 40-47-01.1. Previously, this law allowed a city to extend their zoning jurisdiction to ½ mile out for cities with population under 5,000, 1 mile out for cities with a population greater than 5,000 but less than 25,000, and 2 miles out for cities with a population greater than 25,000. That was rolled back with a sunset date of this year from a previous law allowing for 1, 2, and 4 miles under the same population settings.

Long discussions have taken place over the past couple of years resulting in an interim legislative committee and Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (ACIR), drafting a new bill which would be a fair alternative to townships and landowners in ET jurisdictions of cities. The most compelling argument made against ET jurisdictions has been the citizens right to vote. Individuals living in the ET jurisdiction of a city did not have the right to vote in that city and felt they were being governed by an entity they had no voice in.

Following countless public hearings by the ACIR, a bill was drafted, however; they were not all in agreement. The bill was further refined by both the House and Senate before being sent to conference committee. The end result was a compromise between both sides.

A brief summary of the legislation which became effective May, 2009 is as follows:

- A city may extend its zoning regulations by ordinance to any ¼, ¼ section of unincorporated territory if a majority of the ¼, ¼ is within;
 - a. 1 mile if the city population is less than 5,000 with “joint jurisdiction” from ½ mile to 1 mile.
 - b. 2 miles if the city population is greater than 5,000 and less than 25,000 with “joint jurisdiction” from 1 mile to 2 miles.
 - c. 4 miles if the city population is greater than 25,000 with “joint jurisdiction” from 2 miles to 4 miles.
- Under “joint jurisdiction” the township or county has the authority to receive applications, impose fees, and issue permits and does so under its adopted regulations.
- For a decision to be final under “joint jurisdiction” the township or county must give written notice to the city. The city may request negotiation on the decision within 30 days of the notice, if negotiation is not requested the decision is final. If negotiation is requested and not successful within 30 days of the request for negotiation then the dispute must be submitted to a committee for mediation. The committee must be made up of two members of each jurisdiction and a Governor appointee who will reside over the mediation. If mediation is unsuccessful then the dispute must be resolved by the county commission.
- A city exercising its ET authority must hold a zoning transition meeting if the territory to be zoned (ET) is currently zoned. This meeting must take place before the city adopts an ordinance exercising this authority.
- When a portion of a city is attached to the bulk of the city by a strip of land less than 100’ wide that portion and strip of land must be disregarded in determining the ET limits of the city.

5. ADJOURNMENT

On motion by Mr. Peterson and seconded by Mr. Bennett and all members voting in favor, the meeting was adjourned at 7:50 AM.

Minutes prepared by Cindy Stoick, Principal Secretary



Long-Range Transportation Plan

For the Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Area

Executive Summary

August 2009

traffic. This underscores the need for the urban arterials to operate efficiently since some of that displaced interstate traffic will ultimately end up on the local arterial system.

Lastly, to help describe the current operating conditions, prioritize funding of solutions, and measure the impact of those solutions, regional transportation system performance measures have been developed and will be tracked over time. These performance measures are an outgrowth of the goals and objectives of the study and include such things as monitoring crash rates at intersections, tracking transit ridership, measuring travel times on key corridors, and comparing the number of total urban lane miles with the total number of households. It will be the responsibility of Metro COG to collect and report this performance measure data.

Projects

One of the more important functions of the LRTP is to identify and prioritize specific transportation-related projects, thereby making the projects eligible for federal funding assistance. However, the LRTP is not a wish list. Planning level cost estimates for each project are developed and the total cost of those projects cannot exceed the total revenues that are “reasonably expected” by the respective local governments over the time frame of the plan.

Working with staff from each jurisdiction, Metro COG developed revenue projections and project lists which reflects a coordinated effort by the jurisdictions in the metro area to improve certain aspects of the transportation network. In those cases when a need was identified, but reasonably available funding could not be identified, the project was listed as Illustrative. The Illustrative list is representative of projects that will be funded if additional (unexpected) transportation funding becomes available.

Alternative Growth Scenario

Many of the assumptions and outcomes of the plan are based on the premise that the metro area will continue to grow in the future in much the same way as it has over the past few decades. The Alternative Growth Scenario was developed, based on the expectation that transportation funding will be limited, to challenge the growth patterns of the past and try to develop a new pattern that maximizes the efficiency of the transportation network.

Using demographic projections, a target number of future households was assigned to the Traffic Analysis Zones used in the regional traffic forecasting model. Almost all of those future households are assigned to areas at the fringe of the currently developed urban area. As new households are built, more land is consumed, and services like transportation, utilities, and fire and police protection must be extended outward, resulting in significant costs.

In the alternative growth scenario, these anticipated future households were assigned to the already developed urban area, representing more compact development than typically exists and reinvestment in the core urban area. In addition, jobs and households were mixed within zones to decrease the homogeneity of land-use and represent “the corner grocery store” or other nearby office or commercial center that many neighborhoods may lack. Overall, this redeployment of growth resulted in an increase of 5 to 10% of the number of households that currently exist within the zones.

Once the households and jobs had been re-assigned the cost savings were calculated from the miles of roadway that no longer needed to be built, the sewer and water lines that did not need to be extended, and the additional police and fire personnel that did not need to be hired to serve the soon-to-be developed areas. The result was that over 9,000 acres of land did not need to be developed, translating into a region-wide cost savings of over \$438,000,000 over 25 years.

While not prescriptive, this alternative growth scenario does provide some important information to the local jurisdictions regarding the choices and trade-offs that are available to them in terms of how their cities might grow. There is a public cost to low-density, relatively homogeneous growth — a cost that is ultimately paid by the residents and businesses within the city. Developing more compactly, with more mixed land-uses, with more walk-able, bike-able, and bus-able corridors can result in saving a significant amount of public money at a time when money is tight for everyone.

Metro COG’s member jurisdictions are respectfully advised to consider these trade-offs as they make future growth decisions.

The Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), developed by Metro COG in coordination with staff and elected leaders of its member jurisdictions, the Federal Highway Administration, the Federal Transit Administration, and the state Departments of Transportation, provides a regional vision for all modes of the transportation system. The LRTP is a federally mandated document that identifies regional transportation needs and issues, develops projects to address those needs and issues, and prioritizes the projects for implementation. Projects included in the LRTP are made eligible for federal transportation funding assistance. The overall goal of the LRTP is to ensure the efficient and effective use of the public’s transportation dollars.

Funding

Roadways are important and expensive investments. The average arterial costs about \$1 million per lane mile to construct. However, the gas tax trust fund, which finances much of the federal government’s transportation spending is nearing depletion. There appears to be little desire to raise taxes and borrowing is unsustainable. The future of transportation funding is uncertain at best. This means that the greatest emphasis in the coming years will need to be placed on:

- preserving the infrastructure we already have, and
- using what we have to its greatest operational efficiency

These two goals are a driving force behind all the recommendations made within the LRTP.

Bicycles and Pedestrians

The plan emphasizes the need to better develop networks to serve non-motorized forms of transportation. This needs comes both from a very clear desire expressed by the public to move beyond “car-centric” development patterns, and from a public

health need.

Through a series of focus groups and public input opportunities the public repeatedly noted their desire to be able to walk and bicycle to meet their daily needs. As one focus group participant stated, “I shouldn’t have to own a car to live in Fargo-Moorhead.” This idea was reinforced and restated throughout the public input process. We also know that a “car-centric” urban form could play a part in the rising rates of obesity, diabetes, asthma, and other health issues. As it turns out, non-motorized forms of transportation are less-expensive to build, so emphasizing their importance may help alleviate potential funding shortfalls. Future emphasis will need to be on moving people, no matter what mode of travel they choose, rather than just moving cars.

There may also be an economic development aspect to the development of non-motorized transportation networks. The fastest growing companies in the United States are in the areas of computers, telecommunications, education, finance, and other fields that are far more dependent on a talented, creative workforce rather than natural resources. There is research that suggests a correlation between the prevalence of a talented, creative workforce and a city’s dedication to non-motorized transportation and recreational opportunities.

The LRTP encourages all of Metro COG’s member jurisdictions to evaluate the potential of integrating “Complete Streets” policies into their codes to assist, in part, in the development of highly-connective bicycle and pedestrian networks. Complete Streets is a concept that balances the needs of all transportation modes rather than building streets just for automobiles.

In addition, the LRTP emphasizes the need to address gaps in the bicycle and ADA



Street before reconstruction



The same street following Complete Streets rehabilitation

compliant pedestrian network, as well as providing better signage for both networks.

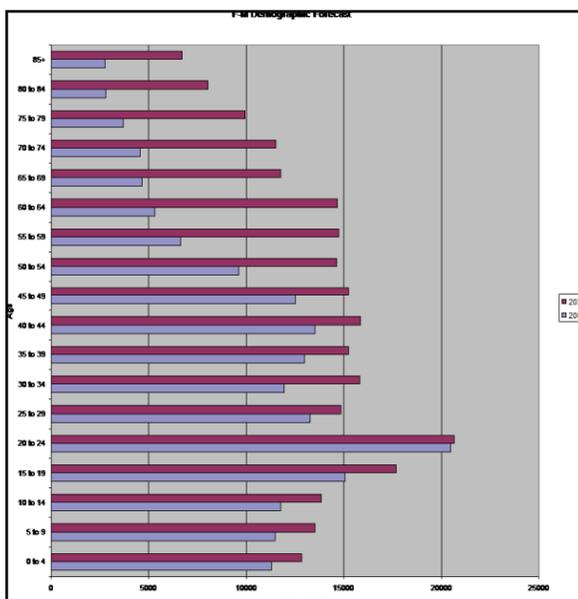
Transit

The public transit system in Fargo and Moorhead will face a significant hurdle within the planning horizon of this plan. When the population of the F-M metro area surpasses 200,000 all Federal transit operating funding assistance will cease. This represents a loss of about \$2.5 million dollars in operating revenue (2009 dollars). Current demographic projections indicate that the metro area will surpass 200,000 residents by 2020. A significant source of local funding will need to be identified in order for MAT to maintain their current level of service, not to mention additional funding needed to grow their system. A regional

transit authority seems the most likely answer.

The current public view of transit could impact the support for a future transit authority. Transit is often seen as being a transportation choice of last resort, serving those who have no other option because of their age, physical condition, or economic class. While transit does, rightly, serve many residents for one or more of these reasons it can and should play an important role beyond that by attracting a greater percentage of workforce commuters. Every person who chooses to ride the bus represents one less vehicle on the roadway network. Transit can help the region achieve more efficient use of the roadway network, thus avoiding costs, while meeting the public's demand for less significant car-centric growth. Transit needs to evolve into a transportation option of choice, even for those who own automobiles. The Goals and Objectives section of the LRTP makes a number of recommendations to that end, including the exploration of limited-stop service between high-demand destinations, increasing bus frequencies along high-demand corridors, expanding bulk-purchase opportunities (similar to the U-Pass program) to large employers or blocks of employers, and providing additional and higher-quality shelters.

It is also worth noting that demographic projections indicate that by 2035 one-in-four F-M residents will be age 60 or over. Older drivers are statistically more likely to be involved in accidents and are more likely to be seriously injured in accidents when they occur. Metro COG researched



programs and policies in other states (e.g., Florida and Arizona) that already have a high percentage of older drivers. Their recommendations fall into three categories. First, provide clearer and more redundant signage and pavement markings in order to increase the decision-making time available to drivers.. Second, mandate more frequent driver's license renewal for older drivers. And third, help older drivers avoid the need to drive in the first place by providing more opportunities for walking, biking, and transit trips.

Roadways

As stated previously, the LRTP places much emphasis on system preservation and using existing roadways more efficiently. Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) is one way to achieve greater efficiency. ITS systems include such tools as in-pavement traffic monitors, closed-circuit television cameras, dynamic message signs, and traffic signal coordination.



Example of Dynamic Message Sign

The full potential of ITS can be realized through the development of a Traffic Operations Center (TOC), which can monitor traffic operations in real-time, and make decisions to help facilitate the flow of traffic. The LRTP supports the development of a regional TOC for these specific reasons.

Travel Demand Management (TDM) can also be important to maximizing the efficient use of roadways. Organized carpooling, telecommuting, alternative shift start times, and other low-cost strategies can have a big impact on roadway operations. Of course, the sooner such strategies can be identified and analyzed for effectiveness, the better. Good planning becomes even more impor-

tant when money is tight. That is why the LRTP recommends that Metro COG begin using a comprehensive Congestion Management Toolbox, which includes ITS, TDM strategies, transit options, and other lower-cost solutions, in all planning studies. By giving explicit consideration to these solutions it is anticipated that some expensive roadway expansion projects could be avoided or delayed.

In this post-911 world, security is always a concern. In a 2008 Metro COG plan, regional transportation security was defined this way:

"...analysis, inventory, assessment, improvement, and system management of regional transportation infrastructure and investments vital to sustain the operational capability of the region during manmade or natural disasters."

To that end, the LRTP recommends the identification of Regionally Significant Transportation Infrastructure (RSTI) and the definition of operational minimums for RSTI. For example, if a particular corridor is identified as being RSTI, it may be targeted for ITS investments to help ensure the safe and efficient flow of traffic, even during an evacuation. A bridge that is RSTI may be targeted to be raised out of the 100 year flood plain. In short, RSTI are those roadways, buses, and other transportation infrastructure that must continue to function during times of disaster.

The Interstate Highways are a special sub-class of the regional roadway network. They are especially important because of the volume of traffic that they carry, and because they represent perhaps the most important F-M regional economic development connection to the rest of the world. Freight, consumer goods, manufacturing parts, food, and other important commodities flow through the F-M region on the interstate highways, even if they do not always originate or terminate here. Preserving the efficient operation of the interstate highways is a matter of concern for all of North Dakota and Minnesota. As the F-M area grows, demand for interstate capacity will increase. Unfortunately, interstate capacity is a finite resource. Right-of-way is limited and the cost of expanding an interstate highway is considerably higher than that of an urban arterial. As the supply interstate capacity reaches its limit, demand for interstate capacity will need to be addressed, which may include strategies like ramp meters, or even tolling the interstates for local

The Regional Vision

One of the most important goals of this plan is to take note of all of the input from Metro COG's cognizant agencies, the public, and Federal and State transportation guidelines and regulations, along with relevant local transportation data and information in order to synthesize it into a comprehensive vision for the future of the transportation system in the Fargo-Moorhead metro region. This textual vision will then be used to formulate a series of regional goals and objectives for the transportation system.

There appears to be growing consensus and concern among the scientific community regarding the non-sustainability of automobile-centric development and its overall impact on the environment. The debate about the global warming phenomenon and its linkage to human activity appears to be over, and transportation is a major contributor of green house gases to the environment. Other areas of transportation environmental impact, such as clean drinking water, appear to be emerging environmental issues as well.

Nationally, there appears to be a consensus regarding the need for America to be energy independent and to minimize our reliance on foreign sources of oil. This issue is often framed not just as a financial concern, but a national security concern as well.

Public health is also an issue of growing concern. The obesity pandemic, rising rates of asthma and diabetes, and other health issues have been tied to our auto-centric urban form and the lack of physical activity experienced by the average American. The presence of usable non-motorized transportation networks is often cited as a way to encourage active living and healthy lifestyles.

The public consistently expressed its desire to move beyond automobile-centric growth and development throughout the public input process for this plan. It may also be a financial necessity. Roadway construction and maintenance is expensive and the demand for roadway capacity seems to be insatiable, while financial resources are not. Continuing to address traffic operations from the capacity side is a losing proposition because the region will never have enough money to keep up. The demand for roadway capacity must be addressed.

There is a clear and compelling need to move beyond automobile-centric growth and development. Roadways are still needed, but they have to operate as efficiently as possible so as to minimize the need to build new ones or widen existing ones. Limited transportation funds will need to be used as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Transit needs to move beyond its current role as a social safety net transportation provider and become a transportation provider of choice for an increased share of the commuting public. Having said that, demographic trends suggest that there will be growing number of older residents and possibly residents for whom English is not their first language. Both groups will require transit to serve it's transportation needs.

Non-motorized forms of transportation, along with transit, should be given equal consideration in the planning and design phases of transportation projects and should be provided with distinct competitive advantages were possible. The connectivity and contiguousness of the non-motorized transportation systems (e.g., sidewalks and bicycle routes) is an important local consideration in encouraging demand for non-motorized trips. It is also important to attracting and retaining a skilled and creative workforce.

The prioritization of transportation projects using limited financial resources will become increasingly competitive, so an objective and performance-based prioritization process will

become increasingly important. Some of the more important considerations in the prioritization process include addressing existing congestion, the prevention of congestion, the efficient movement of goods, safety of the traveling public, and the operation of the transportation system during times of natural or man-made disasters.

Finally, the linkage of land-use planning with transportation planning must be strengthened rather than one simply reacting to the other. The urban form itself can encourage or suppress demand for specific types of transportation. If the demand of single-occupant-vehicles is to be adequately addressed, land use must be part of the proposed solution.

Regional Development Framework

This regional development framework and the goals, objectives, and strategies contained herein are designed to address and consolidate all of the Federal, State, Local, and Public Input, guidance, and regulations noted on previous pages into one comprehensive regional vision for growth.

For the outline that follows, the goals, objectives and strategies are listed as:

1) Goal

a) Objective

i) Strategy

Performance measures designed to measure and evaluate overall goal attainment are listed under their own heading. More detail on the data sources and calculations for the performance measures is provided in Appendix X.

1) Reduce the number and severity of transportation system crashes

a) Improve intersection safety

- i) Identify high crash-rate intersections and analyze crash types*
- ii) Require adequate building setbacks in land-use and zoning policies for corner lots to maintain adequate sight distances*
- iii) Consider all intersection design options, including three-quarter access and roundabouts*
- iv) Install pedestrian countdown timers*
- v) Provide timely winter maintenance such as snow plowing, and ice and slush removal as appropriate*
- vi) Develop regional signal timing manual to provide uniformity in signal operations*

b) Reduce roadway and lane departure crashes

- i) Consider safety options like rumble strips, rumble stripes, and cable barriers and install as appropriate*

- ii) Minimize or eliminate skewing of lanes
- iii) Comply with good access management standards
- c) *Improve roadway safety for bicyclists and pedestrians*
 - i) Provide and maintain appropriate roadway crossing safety
 - ii) Provide additional safety standards where higher bike or ped crossings exist
 - iii) Provide appropriate bicycle and pedestrian facilities adjacent and parallel to roadways
 - iv) Support a higher measure of safety for corridors that cross major barriers like rivers, interstate highways, and railroad tracks
- d) *Recognize that driver behavior is often a significant contributing factor in crashes*
 - i) Support law enforcement efforts to decrease crash rates, such as sobriety check points, seat belt use encouragement, and speed enforcement
 - ii) Support restriction of cell phone use by drivers
 - iii) Support increased driver education efforts

Performance Measures:

Annually

- (1) Intersection crash frequency for arterial-arterial, arterial-collector, and collector-collector intersections
- (2) Crash frequency for arterial and collector links
- (3) Crash frequency for those involving bicycles or pedestrians

2) Be Good Stewards of the Public's Money

- a) *Form public-private partnerships to achieve transportation goals where appropriate*
 - i) Broaden the availability of MAT bulk purchase plans (e.g., the U-Pass program, M3TRO, etc.) to the community at large
 - ii) Explore public-private partnerships to pay for new transit services, transit shelters, and transit operations
 - iii) Build and maintain relationships with area businesses to increase the understanding of each party for the other's needs and constraints

b) Encourage infill development and redevelopment to minimize costs of new infrastructure and public services

- i) Utilize Congestion Management Toolbox (page X)
- ii) Create and/or revitalize neighborhoods for full and efficient utilization of existing services like roads, sewers, emergency services, and schools

c) Utilize good pavement management practices to extend pavement life

- i) Monitor pavement surface conditions and schedule timely investments
- ii) Schedule preventative maintenance and overlays before roadway surfaces are deteriorated

d) Identify and prioritize needs through good planning

- i) Preserve future regional corridors through right-of-way preservation and/or early purchase of right-of-way
- ii) Develop a needs prioritization matrix that allows multiple projects to be compared to one another based on objective, measureable criteria
- iii) Support and promote exurban land use coordination and encourage regional land use planning

e) Optimize value throughout the project design and construction process

- i) Use innovative contract practices (e.g., Design-Build, lane rental, and pay for performance, etc.) as appropriate
- ii) Utilize Value Engineering process to maximize project cost effectiveness

Performance Measures:

Every 5 years

- (1) Keep track of (re)developments that did not require new infrastructure
- (2) Vehicle hours traveled as reported by the regional travel demand model
- (3) Comparison of total urban area lane miles vs. total number of households
- (4) Percent of system miles that meet good ride quality index or pavement quality index

3) Maintain and Improve the Region's Economic Competitiveness

a) Maintain and improve efficient freight movement

- i) Protect operational capacity of Interstate highways in the metro area

- ii) Build and maintain relationships with area businesses to increase the understanding of their freight needs
 - iii) Establish land development code requirements that ensure adequate transportation planning and roadway design for truck stop/truck service developments
 - iv) Support the growth of regional intermodal freight capacity
 - v) Support recommendations of the 2009 Western Minnesota Freight Study
- b) Provide transportation solutions for the metro area workforce that lives in surrounding exurban communities*
- i) Provide rural transit service where demand warrants
 - ii) Organized ridesharing or van-pooling can also be options where service is needed, but funding does not allow or demand is not sufficient to justify fixed-route transit service
- c) Rehabilitate/Rebuild critical bridges as appropriate*
- i) Prioritize bridges based on ADT, truck traffic, and available alternatives
 - ii) Continue to monitor bridge conditions and schedule rehab/repair work accordingly
- d) Develop and maintain roadway connectivity that is appropriate for the facility type and land-use environment*
- i) Build arterials and collectors in a grid pattern to more evenly disperse traffic
 - ii) Identify future potential river, interstate, and railroad bridge crossing locations and preserve right-of-way
 - iii) Eliminate or minimize cul-de-sacs within developments
- e) Provide public transportation to large employers*
- i) Study potential of all kinds of service such as van pooling, organize ride-sharing, and others
 - ii) Explore extended evening service for fixed route buses
- f) Help attract growth sector businesses*
- i) Develop and maintain access to competitively-priced, reliable, and business friendly air service to the F-M area
 - ii) Keep average commute times low

iii) Improve bicycle route network connectivity

Performance Measures:

Annually

- (1) Truck volumes on arterial corridors
- (2) Average Daily Traffic, Volume-to-Capacity ratios, and Level of Service on freeways and major arterials
- (3) Rural Transit Ridership
- (4) Tracking Availability of Rural Transit Services
- (5) Bridge ratings
- (6) Number of jobs within one-quarter mile of fixed route transit
- (7) Number of freight and passenger airlines serving the F-M region
- (8) Miles of bicycle routes

Every 5 years

- (9) Average commute time

4) Manage and Operate Roadways Efficiently

a) Enhance regional coordination of traffic signal operations on arterials

- i) Develop necessary multi-jurisdictional legal and cost sharing agreements
- ii) Create a technical advisory committee to ensure timely and efficient implementation of Metro OPS
- iii) Develop uniform regional policies and standards for such items as geometric design, basic signal settings, signal timing/phasing, pedestrian countdown placement, in-street pedestrian signs, midblock crosswalk locations, dark signals, battery backup systems, etc
- iv) Enhance training of traffic operations staff and ensure a uniform level of expertise; ensure all signal operators are fluent in Synchro and are using it for evaluating signal timing and operations
- v) Develop a pool of funds to facilitate procurement of technical assistance services to support implementation of the Metro OPS Action Plan
- vi) Develop a priority list of projects, hardware, and software needed to facilitate regional interoperability

b) Evolve toward the centralized management of transportation system devices and personnel

- i) Metro COG will revalidate and gather consensus and direction for the Traffic Operations Center (TOC) Working Group
 - ii) Develop a concept of operations for a “hybrid” TOC
 - iii) Connect the Fargo Signal Shop, NDSU, and the NDDOT Fargo TOC to allow for the joint distribution and consumption of traffic related data and imagery and signals systems operations
 - iv) Metro COG will lead the regional partners in a continuous dialogue with the Regional Dispatch Center concerning the long-term relationship between regional operations strategies and incident management. This will include an open discussion as to the Regional Dispatch Center’s relationship to the longer term project of creating a regional TOC
 - v) Connect Mn/DOT and West Fargo with the existing operations center
 - vi) Implement technical elements of the 2008 F-M Metro ITS Plan (e.g., CCTV, sensors, signs, etc.)
 - vii) Create agreements necessary (e.g., MOUs, cost sharing, service contracts, etc.) to facilitate regional project deployment
 - viii) Study the formation of a regional traffic board for the administrative and technical aspects of regional traffic management
- c) *Manage congestion to improve traffic flow and conserve energy*
- i) Establish multijurisdictional protocols for special events (e.g., FargoDome events, parades, etc.)
 - ii) Develop region-wide protocols to respond to incidents and emergencies (flooding, hazmat, terrorism, etc.)
 - iii) Ensure region-wide coordination among traffic, emergency, and maintenance agencies (police, fire, DOTs, Public Works, Regional Dispatch Center, Metro Transit, etc.)
 - iv) Regularly monitor peak hour travel times on key corridors
 - v) Study corridors experiencing congestion; schedule and fund appropriate measures to relieve it
 - vi) Continue development and maintenance of regional traffic demand model to forecast future corridor levels-of-service
- d) *Utilize Travel Demand Management practices as appropriate*
- i) Implement recommendations and action steps of the 2007 TMA Feasibility Survey
 - ii) Continue to assess interest in the development of a Transportation Management Association in specific areas where driving a single-occupant automobile may not

be the most efficient form of transportation (e.g., downtown, colleges, and/or southwest area of Fargo)

iii) Encourage large employers to stagger shift start times

e) Develop system operations and performance measures for the region's transportation system

i) Create the necessary physical or virtual connections among the regional partners to allow for the distribution and consumption of traffic related information/data

ii) Metro COG will review and revise its annual traffic counting program to ensure it supports the collections of timely information about the operational performance of the regional transportation system

iii) Each system operator will review its traffic counting and data collection programs to ensure it is working to address the objective of gathering data relevant to understanding the operational performance of the regional transportation system

iv) Develop a program that is regularly collecting and analyzing data on the operations of the region's transportation system; archive the data for future use

v) Regularly consult with secondary stakeholders such as the Red River Dispatch Center, Metro Area Transit, local emergency responders, and special user groups to discuss system operations

vi) Metro COG, in cooperation with ATAC, will annually prepare a joint report on the state of systems operations in the Metro Area, which will also document the current state of traffic data collection in the metro area and make recommendations for the deployment of a more coordinated and/or enhanced collection program

vii) Identify and address hot spots of operational deficiency based on available data

f) Cooperate across jurisdictional boundaries to create a seamless transportation network

i) Continue participation in Metro COG

ii) Extend Metro COG services to neighboring jurisdictions as appropriate

iii) Continue development and maintenance of regional traffic demand model to forecast future corridor levels-of-service

g) Support Complete Streets concept for the purpose of optimizing personal mobility

i) (Re)Construct roadways that balance the needs of motor vehicles, transit, pedestrians, and bicyclists without favoring one mode over the others

h) Ensure that the transportation system will operate in times of manmade or natural disasters

- i) Create redundancy for critical system elements, including CCTV, sensors, and fiberoptics
- ii) Establish Regionally Significant Transportation Infrastructure (RSTI) and establish protocol for tracking changes and modifications to RSTI
- iii) Develop contingency plans for critical network links with pre-identified emergency detour routes
- iv) Support the development of a centralized information gathering center that will operate in times of emergencies
- v) Support Metro COG's participation in groups such as Emergency Services Management and other opportunities for regional coordination and collaboration on issues of transportation security and incident response

Performance Measures:

Annually

- (1) Arterial travel times, Average Daily Traffic, volume-to-capacity ratios and levels-of-service
- (2) Annual survey of region's largest employers regarding state of Travel Demand Management practices

Every 5 years

- (3) Have local, regional, and state emergency disaster plans been reviewed and coordinated?
- (4) Level-of-service traffic modeling analysis with Red River bridge closures in order of susceptibility by flooding

5) Provide More, Better, and More Efficient Public Transit Service

- a) *MAT should mutually coordinate with local school districts to identify needs and coordinate services (e.g., buses that provide service for students involved in after school activities, etc.)*
 - i) Mutually coordinate with school district to ensure that transportation is available for Adult Education, ESL, and other educational classes.
- b) *Implement recommendations of the 2007 Metropolitan Transit Plan and supplemental studies, analyses, and reports such as the Moorhead Expansion and Alignment Study and the Southwest Metro Transit Study*
 - i) *Continue coordinating with the MAT Board on plan implementation, issue identification, and development of the next Transit Plan*
- c) *Prioritize transit corridors and provide service that corresponds to the needs and schedules of the traveling public*

- i) Explore the need for limited-stop service between high-demand destinations and implement as appropriate
- ii) Explore the need for increased bus frequency along high-demand corridors and implement as appropriate
- iii) Develop service alternatives that improve travel times from north to south and allow for the interconnection of cross-town routes
- iv) Continue working toward regional transit service regardless of jurisdictional boundaries
- v) Balance the need for better service on existing routes with route expansion

d) Make transit more accessible

- i) Consider eliminating fares or establishing a fare-free zone in the core urban area by identifying alternative forms of local match
- ii) Continue exploring corridor-specific routes (e.g., the 25th Street route and 9th/57th Street routes) and implement as appropriate
- iii) Continue U-Pass program and expand the concept to the larger community through voucher or bulk purchase policies (e.g., M3TRO)
- iv) Continue to monitor Paratransit usage by agencies and facilities
- v) Provide more shelters overall; examine possibility of providing higher quality shelters (e.g., with heat and seating, etc.) at high-boarding locations
- vi) Improve shelter maintenance and snow clearance around shelters
- vii) Manage the image of public transit to attract more choice riders. Marketing transit as an environmentally friendly transportation choice has been successful in other areas.
- viii) Balance service for non-choice riders with needs of choice riders and commuters

e) Implement dedicated local transit funding in anticipation of the loss of FTA 5307 operating funds in 2022

Performance Measures:

Annually

- (1) Transit rider satisfaction survey
- (2) Number of transit boardings
- (3) Number of transit shelters

6) Improve Bicycle Route Connectivity

- a) *Implement recommendations of the 2006 Metropolitan Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan*
 - i) Strive to meet the needs of all bicyclists, including commuters, children, basic adult and recreational riders
- b) *Close gaps in the bicycle network, especially the principal bikeway network*
 - i) Study gaps and recommend best solutions, which may include shared-use paths or on-road bicycle facilities like bike lanes or signed-shared roadways
 - ii) Build bike-ped bridges over rivers and other barriers (e.g., railroads, interstate highways, etc.) where feasible
 - iii) Improve usability of existing bike-ped bridges by raising them, and installing new lift mechanisms
- c) *Improve bike route signage, way finding, and pavement markings*
 - i) Provide destination signage at regular intervals on major bike routes
 - ii) Provide "Metro Trails" trailblazing signage on principal bikeway network to establish and identify the regional bikeway network
 - iii) Provide signage that directs riders to destinations or other bike routes; avoid signage that directs riders to dead-ends or non-contiguous segments of the bicycle network
 - iv) Establish system of bike route nodes which include facilities like bike racks, bathrooms, map kiosks, water, benches, garbage cans, and other needed furniture and infrastructure
- d) *Build "complete streets" that balance the needs for all modes of transportation and adjacent land uses*
 - i) Ensure safe transitions/connections between on-road bike routes with multi-use paths
 - ii) Review and revise jurisdictional codes, ordinances, and regulations to incorporate Complete Streets ideas
- e) *Encourage and support education efforts for both bicyclists and motorists regarding how best to deal with one another on area roadways*
 - i) Identify funding for bike-motorist education effort
- f) *Establish an evaluation and rehabilitation program for bicycle and pedestrian facilities throughout the metro area*

- i) Consider neighborhood "adoption" of bike routes and shared-use paths for maintenance and periodic evaluation
 - ii) Establish one phone number for the reporting of maintenance issues by the public; post the number on the back side of Metro Trails signs
 - iii) Roadway segments of the Principal Bikeway Network should be held to a pavement quality standard that recognizes the needs of bicyclists
- g) *Connect the F-M metro area by bike route with surrounding communities and areas of interest (e.g., Buffalo River State Park, etc.)*

Performance Measures:

Annually

- (1) Bicycle counts on identified bike routes
- (2) Crash frequency for those involving bicycles or pedestrians

Every 5 Years:

- (3) Number of commuting trips made by bicycle or walking
- (4) Pavement quality index for bicycle routes

7) Build a Livable Community with a High Quality of Life

- a) *Encourage more mixed-use development using compatible land-uses*
 - i) Plan for neighborhood commercial and retail such that many daily needs of neighborhood residents can be met within the neighborhood
 - ii) Keep industrial land uses separate from residential land uses
- b) *Encourage more areas of compact development for all income levels*
 - i) Provide quality green space for every neighborhood because higher densities are more attractive when coupled with quality green space (e.g., Fargo's Island Park neighborhood)
 - ii) Require appropriate easements for public access to green space
 - iii) Provide a variety of housing options and densities within each neighborhood
 - iv) Use flexible zoning to support mixed uses and higher densities
- c) *Reinvest in core neighborhoods*
 - i) Promote redevelopment in marginal neighborhoods and underutilized parcels
 - ii) Where sufficient excess transportation and utility capacity exists, encourage mixed-uses and higher densities

iii) Support and encourage historical integrity and unique neighborhoods

d) Improve connections between people

i) Consult with transit when making land-use decisions (as illustrated by Fargo's Comprehensive Policy Plan, Policy Letter 302); consider transit oriented development land use forms

ii) Provide sidewalks on both sides of each roadway

iii) Capitalize on opportunities to provide advantages for walking and biking within neighborhoods (e.g., where cul-de-sacs are unavoidable, encourage developers to use one lot to provide a shared-use path connection to adjacent streets, sidewalks or green space, etc.)

iv) Provide ADA compliant sidewalk curb-cuts at new intersections and continue retrofitting older intersections to make them ADA compliant

v) Encourage and promote public art

vi) Create overlapping systems for pedestrians, transit, cars, and bicycles that provide for ease of movement within and between neighborhoods

vii) Create opportunities for public gatherings

viii) Identify gaps in the existing pedestrian network and schedule improvements to close those gaps

e) Build and maintain neighborhood-scale schools that are easily accessed by walking or biking

i) Encourage school districts to build schools at the center of neighborhoods with enrollment areas bounded by high traffic corridors

ii) Building elementary or middle schools adjacent to arterials should be avoided

f) Conserve prime agricultural land and environmental resources

i) Require a minimum 450' setback from the center of navigable rivers

ii) Establish a program of right-of-way dedication to allow for the development and expansion of river Greenway corridors, support flood mitigation, preserve river vegetation, and bank stabilization

iii) Consider energy usage and their long-term costs for citizens in design standards

iv) Encourage native plantings or retention of native species adjacent to drainage ditches, roadways, utility corridors and within green spaces

v) Use regional stormwater ponds

- vi) Support narrower street widths to reduce impermeable surfaces and reduce special assessments for property owners
- vii) Limit sprawl and the unnecessary construction and maintenance of infrastructure
- viii) Protect the rural character or extraterritorial areas until such time as municipal facilities can support urban scale development

g) Design corridors and transportation infrastructure that is context sensitive

- i) Avoid planning residential neighborhoods adjacent to interstate highways and major arterial roadways when possible
- ii) Work with developers to provide deep lots and extra buffering when residential land use along arterials is unavoidable
- iii) Provide street trees on both sides of neighborhood collector roadways
- iv) Support traffic calming for local residential streets as needed
- v) Consider maximum parking limits in the application review process and encourage shared parking among several adjacent businesses
- vi) Encourage landscaping within large parking lots
- vii) Encourage rear parking lots in commercial areas
- viii) Use detailed, human-scale design
- ix) Establish land development code regulations further limiting the spacing and type of billboards (off-premise advertising) along arterials and collector roadways

Performance Measures:

Every 5 years

- (1) Average number of households per acre
- (2) Average population per acre
- (3) Assessed housing value ranges
- (4) Number of new households vs. number of new feet of new infrastructure
- (5) Increase in households or jobs by TAZ
- (6) Map of school locations