

# LAND USE SUBCOMMITTEE MEETINGS

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## MEETING #1 – MARCH 8, 2021

Scott Harmstead with SRF Consulting Group, Inc. (SRF) began the meeting at 10:00 AM. The meeting was conducted in person at Grand Forks City Hall room A102 Conference Room and virtually via Zoom. Committee members Jamie Lunski, Alex Reichert, Steven Wasvick, Ken Vein, Brandon Bochenski, Wayne Zacher, and Kristen Sperry were present. Supporting staff members Ryan Brooks, Stephanie Halford, Andrea Edwardson, Al Grasser, Dave Korenko, Dawson Dutchak, Allen Anderson, John Bernstrom, Brandon Boespflug, Earl Haugen, and Teri Kouba were present. SRF Consulting Group team members present included Scott Harmstead, Stephanie Falkers, and Mark Schill (Praxis Strategies).

### Introductions

Stephanie Halford welcomed all attendees. Earl Haugen noted that every five years they are allowed the opportunity to update the land use plan. He noted that previous planning supports the purpose of this process, and it is important to take the time and care to lead Grand Forks for the next 5 years and beyond. Scott Harmstead provided an overview of the meeting agenda. He then asked for each meeting participant to introduce themselves, favorite and least favorite things about Grand Forks, and their favorite COVID-19 hobby.

### 2045 Land Use Plan

Scott Harmstead presented that the land use plan is technically part of the City's Comprehensive Plan by ordinance, but the land use plan looks a lot like most city's comprehensive plans. This process feeds into the MPO's transportation plan update. This plan includes, at a minimum, the two-mile extraterritorial area of the City. The previous/2045 identified growth rate was 1.2%. The 2045 Plan relied upon a growth tier system. However, this Plan includes redevelopment and infill, not just fringe growth.

### Roles and Responsibilities

Stephanie Falkers discussed that this Committee is responsible to ensure there is broad input. Five meetings are in the schedule. We will meet about every 2 months. The role of this committee is to inform the Planning and Zoning Commission, as well as the City Council.

### Public Participation Plan

Stephanie Falkers provided an overview of the Public Participation Plan. A breakdown was provided on the Land Use Subcommittee make-up. Involvement of internal and external working groups was explained, and the involvement of related focus groups. There will be two series of focus group meetings. There will be three public workshops and a community survey. Gf2050plan.com is the one stop shop for information and materials related to the project.

Ken Vein asked what is the MPO's role pertaining to public involvement? Scott Harmstead responded that the Project Management Team includes Earl Haugen, MPO Executive Director. Earl Haugen also emphasized that the project is substantially funded with federal funds that includes federal requirements. The MPO will ensure the project follows all applicable federal funding requirements.

Brandon Bochenski asked how we can achieve successful public input? Stephanie Falkers responded that a wide range of demographics will be targeted for representation. It will be important to leverage community stakeholders and their networks of contacts.

Kevin Vein reiterated Brandon. Bochenski's concerns and wondered how representative the people are who show up to the meetings. Striving to get statistically valid feedback is also important. Stephanie Falkers noted that one benefit is that the move to digital has helped broaden the scope and make it easier to participate.

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Al Grasser commented that it is important that the Plan's vision is scaled against the reality/cost of what is proposed in the Plan. Prioritization will be important. Stephanie Falkers commented on the need for grand ideas and then prioritize those. Prioritization exercises will used, helps get meaningful input.

### City Profile

Stephanie Falkers provided an overview of the Draft City Profile document. The document will be updated as data is received from the 2020 US Census. Earl Haugen commented that the numbers may never align the same, but trend lines are the same or similar between federal and MPO sources.

### 2045 Goals

Scott Harmstead introduced the 2045 Plan goal and objective structure and then led discussion about each goal in the 2045 Plan.

### Current Goal Structure

Ryan Brooks commented that in general most people on the committee have not dealt with the specific goals and objectives. There are probably a couple new goals that have arisen. A key topic coming up is hopping 62<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and where to place a lift station. Staff has not weighed in on how that reads in the land use plan.

Scott Harmstead asked how easy it is for staff to rely upon the goals and objectives, based on their structure?

Brandon Bochenski commented that we have not really been using strategic goals at all, that must happen and more can be done. Some major things are jumping 62<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, the interstate, and the 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue interchange. Need to consider incentives to not let properties get blighted, need to have strategy to set policies towards that. Ryan Brooks noted that a lot has been going on with a new mayor, not enough time to get aligned on the goals and objectives. Ryan Brooks also commented on the need to look at redevelopment policies and how it impacts tax base. How do land use decisions change neighborhoods and impact where people are moving?

John Bernstrom suggested that the farther you get from previous plan, harder it is to use it, just like census estimates.

Brandon Bochenski asked what we are doing well and what can be improved. Mixed use is good. Look at larger plots of land, piecemeal development has driven up infrastructure costs. This is great conversation that needs to be had. There may not have been a strong connection from strategy to policy in the past.

Ken Vein noted that we do not know what is in the current Plan. There may also be a difference of opinion on infill vs greenfield. The city has done some strategic growth planning in recent years. Wants to see long term master plan for the city in general and sees a lot of work to do by the city to support what Brandon Bochenski has said.

Brandon Bochenski noted that the approach seems to be ad hoc recently, supports Ken Vein on need for a solid plan, and then following that plan.

Scott Harmstead asked if the goals and objectives are hard to follow, are there too many layers?

Ryan Brooks noted that drilling down too many levels is difficult. Simplification would be helpful for everyone, simpler the better. Not having four layers would be helpful.

Scott Harmstead asked what goals have worked well with current plan? No response was provided.

Scott Harmstead moved to discussion of each 2045 Plan goal. SRF has filtered the themes of each of the goals, to understand what each goal is talking about.

### Growth Management

Scott noted that growth management is a primary issue and asked what are some growth management policies that city could benefit from?

John Bernstrom commented that balance seems good in terms of greenfield vs redevelopment growth.

Ken Vein agreed with the need for a balanced approach. Not everyone wants to live downtown, but a variety is needed.

Jamie Lunski asks about the word “preservation”. What does that mean? Preservation seems to mean keep it the way it is. Consider changing this term because it might thwart needed change.

Ryan Brooks noted that there is a thought that preservation should not get in the way of something new and better.

Jamie Lunski advocated for removing preservation, that it is a “heavy word”.

### **Residential Development**

Ryan Brooks commented that the residential goal looks good. It allows for change as the market dictates, advocates flexibility. Recently the city has been seeing demand for apartments and senior living.

### **Mixed Use**

Ken Vein commented that the mixed use goal is in line with what we are doing, University area for instance, seems appropriate.

Ryan Brooks agreed, and noted he is seeing less and less pure commercial developments, many are including a layer vertically of housing. Ryan Brooks noted he is skeptical about new big box and sees redevelopment of big box as mixed use. It is hard to make economics work on a new stand-alone commercial, the balance that mixed-use brings is attractive to developers.

Andrea Edwardson noted that most of what we are seeing is use of residential with commercial and not as much industrial/commercial mix. However, we are seeing some contractor shops blending into commercial areas, which might be a conflict of policy. Wondering whether there should be a distinction between residential/commercial vs industrial/commercial as we talk about “mixed use”.

Scott Harmstead commented that this mixed use goal is very general and could mean a lot of things. The City could us another layer to be specific about what types of mixed use we are talking about.

Jamie Lunski suggested to get rid of words about “horizontally and vertically” to simplify the goal.

Brandon Boesplug commented that the second part of mixed use statement should really be an objective.

### **Commercial Development**

Ryan Brooks is still good with the “commercial development” goal, but the associated policies could change. Due to different commercial types of shopping we could change definition of “regional shopping center”. Policies could be a further discussion off this statement.

John Bernstrom mentioned the language could be “regional hub” instead of just “shopping center”.

Stephanie Halford noted shopping is moving online more than before, maybe the language should not reference physical space as much.

John Bernstrom advocated for “regional hub” as the term shopping is too narrow. He noted that commercial is more than shopping. Want to enhance Grand Forks region not just Grand Forks.

Al Grasser agreed with comments and noted the demand commercial services, supported the “regional hub” change.

### Industrial Development

Jamie Lunski commented that the goal is general enough. Ryan Brooks stated that the goal does not exclude specific targeted industries.

### Urban Design and Land Use Planning

Ryan Brooks commented that we have design standards on major corridors and for Downtown.

Al Grasser noted a tension between attractive landscapes and costs involved, including operational and maintenance.

### Parks and Open Space

Scott Harmstead noted that the Park District will be part of the external working group.

Ryan Brooks noted he is satisfied with the current goal.

Al Grasser noted ongoing MS4 permits for storm water and working with the Park District in new growth areas. Ponds have been cost effective solution for runoff, wondering if there should be official comingling or sharing of park and open space and storm water retention facilities.

Ken Vein asked how do we maximize the collaborative use of spaces to get multi-purpose benefits? Al Grasser noted agreement. Ken Vein added that there is a difference between smaller and regional ponds. Some could become amenities.

### Transportation

Dave Korenko commented on the need to keep in mind that we are seeing remote work with COVID and we will see that further in the future. Also autonomous vehicles, ride share, and delivery services will increase in importance. How do these shifts impact land use?

Stephanie Falkers noted the need to make sure we look at all transportation choices including walking, biking, and transit not just cars. Dave Korenko noted agreement.

Jamie Lunski commented that he hates seeing plans with no sidewalks leading up to buildings.

### Natural Resources

Jamie Lunski noted the goal is OK. Alex Riechert commented we have the opportunity in the next 25 years to take the greenway to the next level, noting it is one of largest in region if not the country.

### Sustainable Development

Scott Harmstead commented that this goal could include cost issues related to multi-use efficiencies referenced earlier by Al Grasser.

Brandon Boespflug requested to cut the word “especially”.

Jamie Lunski agreed to incorporate Al Grassers earlier comment about creating mixed use resources (shared use pond/park/school for example).

### Planning Process

Scott referenced the desire for more usable and actionable plan from the RFP issued for the Plan.

Ryan Brooks commented that the goal’s wording is weird.

Jamie Lunski suggested using the phrase “diverse slice of citizens”. Stephanie Halford agreed, but suggested the phrase “all ages and abilities”.

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Andrea Edwardson commented that there are a lot of things in planning process (such as code update or staff reports) that are guided by the land use plan where we need this emphasis on inclusivity. She suggested that the second part of the goal is too specific or limited.

### Next Steps

Scott Harmstead noted that the next Land Use Subcommittee is targeted for the week of May 3. More information is to come.

Ken Vein noted that the City Council will meet May 3rd, and that the Council could receive an update on the project at that time.

### MEETING #2 – MAY 4, 2021

Scott Harmstead with SRF Consulting Group, Inc, (SRF) began the meeting at 3 PM. The meeting was conducted in person at Grand Forks City Hall room A102 Conference Room and virtually via Zoom. Committee members Jamie Lunski, Alex Reichert, Brandon Bochenski, and Kristen Sperry were present. Supporting staff members Ryan Brooks, Stephanie Halford, Andrea Edwardson, Dave Kuharenko, Dawson Dutchak, John Bernstrom, Brandon Boespflug, and Earl Haugen were present. SRF Consulting Group team members present included Scott Harmstead, David Sweeney, and Mark Schill (Praxis Strategy Group).

### Revisiting Input to Plan Goals from Prior Meeting

Scott Harmstead introduced attendees to changes to the 2045 Plan goals as discussed during the first subcommittee meeting, and encouraged discussion around themes left unresolved from the prior meeting.

Scott Harmstead asked about whether an urban design goal similar to the one from the 2045 Plan is needed. Andrea Edwardson commented that urban design does need to stay, but in what form? It should be about how neighborhoods look and related design standards. Neighborhood design should be considered for various housing types. Currently no standards are provided about what a developer “should” be doing in terms of neighborhood design, so staff just takes what is submitted.

Mayor Bochenski asked if discussion should focus on downtown versus neighborhoods? Scott Harmstead said that the perception is that standards are in place downtown and some of the arterial corridors but asked about standards for residential, industrial, and commercial land uses outside of those areas. Ryan Brooks responded that right now there is a design overlay zone on all major corridors coming into the city. However, many of the areas are already developed, so it is more about getting new areas set up to form. Currently the overlay speaks more to materials instead of form.

Andrea Edwardson mentioned that the corridor overlay tends to focus more on new greenfield areas, but nothing for redevelopment of the traditional auto oriented commercial – not much is guiding design there. The Mayor said some neighborhoods are lacking a “distinctive place.” This could be the result of a small subset of developers focusing on new construction. The existing distinctive neighborhoods are that way due to age.

Ryan Brooks mentioned that the Sunbeam neighborhood is somewhat distinctive and that the Kings View neighborhood has a unique feel. Mr. Brooks added that the city will probably see less commercial in the future and is already seeing gaps where developers are holding out for future commercial opportunities. May need to limit how long developers can sit on commercial land. There is a staff consensus that there needs to be a more realistic expectation about the future of commercial real estate.

Dave Kuharenko said that if the 47th Avenue interchange does materialize, property owners may hold that for a commercial corridor and then residential leapfrogs may occur.

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The Mayor commented on the desires to take in unannexed islands and asked what we can do to incentivize or guide development in such areas, such as lowering carrying costs. Old handshake deals with development and annexation cannot be the process in the future. Alex Reichert mentioned that the city may have more “neighborhoods” than we realize, he is constantly hearing “don’t ruin my neighborhood” from many residents and worries that design standards might make everything look the same. A way forward might be to encourage new or more creative developers. Mr. Reichert also posed the idea of a regional design conference targeting small metros in the Upper Midwest.

Earl Haugen said more time needs to be spent on an urban design goal, and it may be helpful to show the sub-actions to show what the goal covers. The Mayor mentioned maybe design standards should go under the residential development goal. Scott Harmstead and Ryan Brooks mentioned they could have urban design objectives across many of the other goals as well.

The Mayor asked delete “land use planning” from the urban design goal.

Earl Haugen asked if the planning process goal (#11) was rewritten, and Scott Harmstead noted that it was rewritten based on comments from the first Land Use Subcommittee meeting.

Dave Kuharenko asked about how the Park District is integrated into the land use planning process. Scott Harmstead responded that the school and park districts are together in one focus group, and their contact information will be maintained for plan-related promotion.

Earl Haugen asked if the parks goal is included here because of the city influence on parks. Ryan Brooks responded that it is largely due to the 8-percent set aside for new developments.

Jamie Lunski asked if 8-percent is enough for parks and schools. Ryan Brooks and Andrea Edwardson responded that the park district will often donate part of the 8-percent to the schools. Ryan Brooks mentioned that one development area on the south side already includes some land owned by the school district, and Discovery School was built on partially donated land. Andrea Edwardson mentioned that there is a lift station adjacent to the Walmart on the west end of the city, and nothing has happened there perhaps due to a perception and lack of a school.

Ryan Brooks noted that the city has also not yet adopted the airport master plan and we will have a conversation on the airport as part of this project.

### Survey Discussion

John Bernstrom asked about open-ended questions, with a concern that they cannot be quantified.

Andrea Edwardson asked regarding UND questions, what do we hope to learn with these questions? If these questions are included, it signals to the community that this issue is important. John Bernstrom mentioned that maybe the UND topic is covered in the focus groups. Jamie Lunski suggested that UND topics could appear in the open-ended questions.

There was a discussion of breaking up the survey into phases.

There is a consensus that we should remove the interactive map function to something separate.

Earl Haugen said that each time we engage the public we need to include demographic questions.

On the discussion of how to somehow capture general comments from social media, John Bernstrom said that it is a “digital focus group” that also provide comments outside of the survey. Key themes from social media discussion can be gleaned.

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Question 7 (economic development goals) – it was requested to provide a response about quality of life.

On housing it was asked if we need a question about rentals versus owned units. Brandon Boespflug said maybe have an open comment to capture input on housing type, such as more insight on things we do not do now. For instance, there are no detached accessory dwelling units. Scott Harmstead responded that detached accessory dwelling units can be included as a separate housing type.

John Bernstrom asked if we can differentiate between low and midrise apartments. Currently, R3 zoning can only be 3-story, but anything above 5-stories requires pilings.

A point was raised about maybe adding a mixed-use category, such as commercial on the first floor with residential above.

John Bernstrom said surveys can help inform future decisions about variances, such as upcoming requests for guest houses.

Dawson Dutchak mentioned not being sure about the definition of townhomes versus duplex. It was mentioned that clarity should be added regarding 5 or more units to townhomes.

Add a N/A column to question number 14 on household types.

There is an issue with the disability question. It was agreed to make the question match the same posed in NDDOT's Title VI survey.

Add a demographic checkbox for UND student and air force personnel, such as clarifying question #24.

### Approach to Initial Public Workshop

Scott Harmstead walked attendees through the proposed agenda for the May 11 Plan workshop.

There was consensus about balancing in-person versus hybrid public meetings, and how it is good to separate the interactions between the two sides. Input on the virtual side will be typed, verbal input will not be permitted.

## MEETING #3 – AUGUST 4, 2021

Scott Harmstead with SRF Consulting Group, Inc, (SRF) began the meeting at 10 AM. The meeting was conducted in person at Grand Forks City Hall room A102 Conference Room and virtually via Zoom. Committee members Jamie Lunski, Alex Reichert, Brandon Bochenski, Mandy Burbank, Wayne Zacher, and Kristen Sperry were present. Supporting staff members Ryan Brooks, Stephanie Halford, Andrea Edwardson, Dave Kuharenko, Dawson Dutchak, Brandon Boespflug, and Earl Haugen were present. SRF Consulting Group team members present included Scott Harmstead, David Sweeney, Samantha Matuke, and Mark Schill (Praxis Strategy Group).

### Overview of Survey Results and Focus Group Input

Scott Harmstead provided a brief presentation of key takeaways from both the survey and focus group results. Information pertaining to existing land use capacity was also provided (what is currently undeveloped and planned to be developed in the existing future land use plan). Refer to meeting presentation for detail.

Mayor Bochenski asked about the survey response showing some appetite for city involvement to increase with respect to economic development—was this more so the opinion of younger people who were overrepresented in the survey? Consultant Mark Schill responded that age groups older than college age also showed support for increased city involvement in economic development.

Mayor Bochenski asked if more outreach could be done around the subject of housing needs and how can Grand Forks Air Base be more involved in the process with respect to housing need? Mayor Bochenski will provide Air

Base contact information to Mark Schill to follow up with them directly pertaining to housing needs on and off base.

The committee noted the need to include the Grand Sky facility in conversations pertaining to economic development, housing, and related needs.

Commissioner Reichert asked about the Tier 1 projections, noted that the capacity of the tier shows the ability to accommodate less employees vs. population. He noted the need to see the capacity shown in Tier 3, which has greater employee capacity vs. population. David Sweeney noted the need to balance employment and housing, especially in Tier 1 as an area of more immediate development. Scott Harmstead noted that it is also important to be generous in designating the land use the city wants to promote. For example, if the need is for industrial, it may be acceptable to provide an overabundance of industrial land use to provide a variety of options for interested developers.

Scott Harmstead noted that the land use capacity shows that no additional future land use needs to be designated in the city's area of planning jurisdiction. The focus on this planning effort should be on how to shift land use around to best accommodate existing and projected needs.

### **Presentation of Land Use Development Opportunities and Constraints**

David Sweeney provided an overview of various mapping pertaining to infill development opportunities and challenges and opportunities to development on the fringe of the community.

Earl Haugen noted another area of consideration within the city are areas of chronic poverty as identified by the federal government. Specific maps of these areas are forthcoming, but generally include Downtown, UND, and the Grand Cities mall area. The reasoning for these areas is to target additional federal funding toward these areas. With respect to transportation, this means a greater focus on funding multimodal transportation infrastructure.

Ryan Brooks noted that an opportunity zone on the south side of Downtown may be missing from the maps.

The LUS appreciated the map showing a composite of access to various development opportunities. Another similar map should be created with a focus on employment-based future land use needs.

### **Discussion of Future Land Use Changes - Infill**

Ryan Brooks noted a large undeveloped area south of 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and east of Washinton Street, referred to as the Desoto property. The area was annexed in the 1970s and is still taxed as farmland because of its annexation date—this is an allowance in state law.

Scott Harmstead noted that the 42<sup>nd</sup> Street corridor was discussed with city staff previously as a unique opportunity area with a number of county islands, some of which are planned for near-term development. Mr. Harmstead asked if this area should be a priority for plan implementation? The consensus of the committee was that it should be a priority.

Ryan Brooks noted that the Planning Department is already seeing changes moving away from just stand-alone commercial development. This type of development is reserved for high-traffic locations. Staff is seeing lots of areas designated for commercial going to multifamily and/or mixed use.

Ryan Brooks also noted that several areas are "over-parked" (excess of off-street parking provided). Form example, the code formerly required 7 spaces per 1,000 square feet for retail development, now that requirement is 4.5 spaced per 1,000 square feet. He noted the current requirement may still be too high. There is still a significant opportunity in several areas to develop within parking lots.



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Ryan Brooks noted that undeveloped areas in the city designated for future commercial use are excessive. This may not be the highest and best use of many areas. Cray Real Estate is a good example of successful smaller-scale commercial/neighborhood commercial development.

Scott Harmstead asked if it would be beneficial to modify the current future land use plan to provide a more granular approach to large commercial areas, perhaps suggesting high density residential and mixed use in addition to commercial. The consensus of the committee was in support of this concept.

Scott Harmstead noted Gateway Drive as a development opportunity area, currently with some vacant buildings and sites. Other committee members noted some examples of this.

Scott Harmstead asked the committee if the “urban residential” land use category was sufficient to encourage a greater variety of housing types? The current land use model is based on a handful of basic land use categories and for the zoning districts to provide for additional detail and variety across land use types (e.g. residential, commercial, industrial, etc.). Andrea Edwardson noted that if the plan starts to force areas with different housing variety, this would be a drastic political change from the current approach and would be a difficult uphill battle.

Ryan Brooks did note that recent development and proposals on the fringe of the city have included higher residential density than earlier growth. Mr. Brooks also noted density would be beneficial from the perspective of infrastructure planning. Scott Harmstead noted that the Fargo Comprehensive Plan identifies locations for “mixed use activity centers” as areas to concentrate more density and community activity. This could allow keeping land use designations the way they are but adds enhanced direction for certain areas.

Some committee members asked if South Washington Street should be added as “underutilized” area where a focus on providing additional density should be provided? The committee supported such a designation from Demers Avenue to 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

Ryan Brooks noted the recent demand for smaller residential lots. It seems that younger adults have less of a desire for larger lots with more landscaping to tend. Younger adults are generally looking for indoor and outside amenities apart from their place of residence. Andrea Edwardson noted the design difficulties in designing neighborhood with narrow lots. It is therefore important to have language in the Plan about practical neighborhood design to spark more conversation with developers about how to make small-lot neighborhoods attractive while still accounting for needed infrastructure and utilities.

The committee indicated support for language in the Plan that provides guidance on new development form/aesthetics.

David Kuharenko commented with respect to two proposed infill opportunity nodes—Demers Avenue and 42<sup>nd</sup> St, and Gateway Drive and 42<sup>nd</sup> St. He mentioned plans for a future railroad underpass at Demers Avenue and the potential for the same at Gateway Drive. Due to land acquisition needs at both locations it would wise to remove these areas as development opportunities.

The committee indicated support for offering two new future land use alternatives for undeveloped and underutilized areas within the city.

### Discussion of Future Land use Changes – Fringe Areas

Scott Harmstead noted the planned interchange on I-29 at the 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue alignment and the need to adjust future land use appropriately around the interchange area. Ryan Brooks suggested providing commercial land use within each quadrant of the interchange. He also suggested that Tier 1 be extended ½ mile south of the future interchange on the west side of I-29. Other than commercial adjacent to the interchange within this new area, that residential land use be provided. Mr. Brooks suggested that more residential needs to be provided on the west side of I-29 due to long-term limitation on the south side of the city. Mr. Harmstead responded in agreement but

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that the city will need to work with partners to promote the expansion of community services to the west side of I-29. However, housing west of I-29 will provide for the need of housing off the air base.

Ryan Brooks noted the opportunity to provide for non-retail commercial near the new interchange.

Davide Kuharenko noted that the interchange timeline is roughly ten years. The environmental document and preliminary design alone will take two years. Due to some constraints at the current 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue alignment location (primarily RV campground on the west side of I-29), the interchange may be located approximately ¼ mile south.

Ryan Brooks noted that multifamily may need to be promoted first on the west side of I-29 and then single family residential would come later—this was the pattern in Fargo.

Scott Harmstead asked if the area of existing and future residential on the west side of I-29 south of Gateway Drive cannot be expanded due to surrounding constraints, namely the airport and industrial land use. City staff confirmed that this is the case and the existing residential future land use in the area should remain as-is. Mr. Brooks noted that this area is likely to be developed within about five years.

Scott Harmstead asked if a school is planned to be located on the west side of I-29? Whether a school is located in the area or not will likely dictate the type of housing that is developed in the area.

Scott Harmstead asked if future residential beyond flood protected areas could be shifted to other areas with flood protection? The committee was in agreement with the suggestion.

Mandy Burbank noted a potential concern with the look of new neighborhood commercial as being a main reason neighbors have been in opposition to such development.

Scott Harmstead suggested converting areas of mixed use designation west of 48<sup>th</sup> St and north 32<sup>nd</sup> Ave to industrial to account for the demand for industrial and potential access to rail spurs. Staff indicated support for such changes and that the mixed use designations do not make sense.

The committee recommended that mixed use not be shown as light purple on the future land use map but should be changed to a different color to show its uniqueness.

### MEETING #3 FOLLOW-UP WITH KEN VEIN

Scott Harmstead with SRF Consulting Group, Inc, (SRF) met with LUS member Ken Vein. The meeting was conducted virtually via Zoom.

#### Overview of Survey Results and Focus Group Input

Scott Harmstead provided a brief presentation of key takeaways from both the survey and focus group results. Information pertaining to existing land use capacity was also provided (what is currently undeveloped and planned to be developed in the existing future land use plan).

#### Presentation of Land Use Development Opportunities and Constraints

Scott Harmstead provided an overview of various mapping pertaining to infill development opportunities and challenges and opportunities to development on the fringe of the community. Other LUS comment pertaining to 2045 future land use was also provided for Mr. Vein's benefit.

Mr. Vein noted that the development at 42<sup>nd</sup> St and Demers Ave is questionable not only due to potential railroad underpass, but any impacts to the golf course may involve Section 4(f) issues.

Mr. Vein asked how the plan will respond to the current Bridge Study.

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Mr. Vein noted that the rural water issue with respect to growth to the south of the community cannot be ignored. This issue should be taken into account as part of the planning process.

Mr. Vein favored additional industrial land use to the northwest of the city, roughly between the airport and US Highway 81. There is good opportunity to connect to wastewater and potable water supply in this area, and rail connections can be made.

Mr. Vein said that industrial future land use makes sense west of I-29 and north of Demers due to rail access there. South of Demers Ave residential makes sense.

He said there needs to be more coordination with the school district, as the location of an elementary school will drive residential development.

He noted that the Plan needs to call attention to redevelopment opportunities along University Ave., especially given the recent plan for the corridor. Related to this are redevelopment opportunities around UND.

### MEETING #4 – SEPTEMBER 1, 2021

Scott Harmstead with SRF Consulting Group, Inc, (SRF) began the meeting at 4:30 PM. The meeting was conducted in person at Grand Forks City Hall and virtually via Zoom. Committee members in attendance included Alex Reichert, Kristen Sperry, Ken Vein, Steven Wasvick, Jamie Lunski, Wayne Zacher. Supporting staff members Ryan Brooks, Stephanie Halford, Christian Danielson, Mandy Burbank, and Earl Haugen were present. SRF Consulting Group team members present included Scott Harmstead, David Sweeney, and Mark Schill (Praxis Strategy Group).

#### Review and Adoption of Population Projections

Scott Harmstead said that the 2020 population projections do not account for the 2020 Census update. He said that an undercount is suspected in three Census tracts in and around UND where the current Census shows a population loss. Projections were modified by assuming no change in population within those tracts. The modified projection added about 1,400 to the 2020 population count, which suggests a 1.5% annual growth rate from 2010-2020. This growth rate was used for the high-growth scenario, resulting in a population of 94,634 in 2050.

Ryan Brooks said that it is good to show that growth is much higher. Planning needs to account for increased growth and UND needs.

Alex Reichert asked about the pros and cons of picking a projection that ends up being too high or too low. Scott Harmstead said that a higher number means the plan needs to account for more land use, more growth. That could be looked at in a number of ways, positive and negative.

Ryan Brooks said that we still update these plans every 5 years, so there are opportunities to adjust growth assumptions. If the plan shows more growth, that doesn't mean that City is going to go out and annex that land today.

Alex Reichert asked if the projections would have significant impacts on the interchange and the travel demand model. Earl Haugen said that more growth means more trips. The travel demand model is based on the land use plan. Impacts to infrastructure depend on where growth occurs. If growth is located to the north, impacts are small. If growth is located near planned infrastructure, impacts are bigger.

Stephanie Halford asked if the plan would affect funding. Ryan Brooks said that funding is allocated based on historic growth, not growth projections.

Alex Reichert asked again if there was a downside to assuming the high-growth scenario. Earl Haugen said there isn't really, because the growth plan is reconsidered every 5 years.

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Ryan Brooks said that the MPO estimates, which are based on local building permits, are closer than the decennial Census estimates. He recommended going with the 1.5% growth rate. Earl Haugen concurred.

Alex Reichert moved to adopt the 1.5% growth rate. Ken Vein seconded the motion.

Ryan Brooks asked if there was any discussion. He explained that if the 1.5% growth rate is adopted, the plan would have to account for about 10,000 more people in 2050. He said the 2045 plan used a growth rate of 1.2%, but growth from 2010 to 2020 was closer to 1.5.

The motion to adopt the 1.5% growth rate carried unanimously.

### Summary of Input on 2045 Future Land Use

Scott Harmstead summarized comments received at the 3<sup>rd</sup> LUS meeting on August 4, 2021.

Themes for residential development include:

- More of the recent growth in fringe areas is higher density; newer single-family development includes smaller lots.
- There's a greater focus on providing common outdoor amenities (more than large private backyards)
- Future residential development should be considered west of the 47<sup>th</sup> Ave interchange
- The future residential area shown south of the Gateway Drive Walmart cannot expand any further than what is shown
- There has been ongoing coordination with the school district.

Themes for commercial and mixed use development include:

- Standalone commercial should be reserved for high-traffic locations, such as major intersections and interchanges. There is a sense that current commercial is overbuilt.
- Opportunity remains to continue to fill in some areas that are overparked.
- Large undeveloped commercial blocks could be considered for mixed use
- The plan could consider promoting major corridors and nodes for more intensive development (i.e., "activation areas")
- Redevelopment recommendations could be considered in the University Ave corridor and adjacent to UND (consistent with University Ave Corridor Study)

Themes for industrial include:

- Expand industrial west 48<sup>th</sup> Street and north 32<sup>nd</sup> Ave S.
- Expand industrial on the northern fringe.

Scott Harmstead described two documents that previously identified redevelopment opportunities. (The Bus Rapid Transit Study and the University Ave Corridor Study). Specific redevelopment opportunities are reflected in the future land use alternatives.

Earl Haugen said that portions of the BRT study was drafted by a student and presented to the City for consideration. The City/MPO have not moved forward with the BRT study.

David Sweeney said that public feedback received on Wikimap includes comments supporting redevelopment opportunities on Dyke Avenue and University Avenue. Comments specifically suggested exploring commercial opportunities adjacent to UND to support employees and students.

Ken Vein asked how redevelopment plans in this area should address the North Washington railroad crossing. Is this a future issue to be resolved?

Earl Haugen said that there has been no real continued effort to implement the BRT route. However, there is substantial redevelopment opportunity in this part of town. He said that with the underpass project, the idea to use Dyke Avenue as a BRT route that crosses Washington St is moot.

Ken Vein said that this idea has been around for a long time, but one of the major issues has been that crossing.

### **Presentation of Future Land Use Alternatives**

Scott Harmstead walked through the changes to the 2 future land use alternatives. He said that alternative 1 reflects more outward growth, with more residential and industrial growth on the fringe, and alternative 2 has a bigger focus on infill.

Alternative 1 shows a greater expanse of industrial north of the city. Right now, future industrial is limited south of the diversion. New alternatives add industrial north of the diversion. Airport zoning will limit what can be built, but there are opportunities for industrial.

Scott Harmstead pointed out the area that is currently planned north of Demers Ave and West of 55<sup>th</sup> St. This area shows no change from the 2045 Plan.

Scott Harmstead explained that some large areas west of I-29 were also switched to industrial because of rail access. Alex Reichert pointed out that industrial should be expanded all the way to the diversion. Scott took note of this comment to change the land use maps.

Ken Vein asked if the school had plans in any residential areas west of the interstate. Scott Harmstead said that he spoke with School District Facilities Manager Chris Arnold and did not hear that there was.

Ryan Brooks said that the only potential school location he was aware of is east of I-29 on 62<sup>nd</sup> Ave S. Ken Vein said that he thinks it will be hard to cross the interstate without schools. There should be more discussion about that possibility.

Scott Harmstead said that future land use alternatives expand residential in south Grand Forks all the way to I-29 and 12<sup>th</sup> Ave S (Merrifield Rd).

Scott Harmstead described the second future land use alternative. In addition to showing the future land use categories, it also identifies activation corridors and nodes – areas where there could conceivably be more intensive development. These areas might include vacant parcels, underutilized parcels, large parking lots, or rundown property. Example locations include Gateway Drive from Columbia Road to the interstate; 42<sup>nd</sup> Street (annexation opportunity); the malls; the Desoto property on 32<sup>nd</sup> Ave; the potential new interchange; and the north side railyard. Alternative 2 shows these areas as mixed use. Scott Harmstead said the idea is to provide flexibility for development to respond to whatever the market says is the highest and best use. He said that showing mixed use redevelopment opportunities on Dyke Avenue and University might be a good idea regardless of the BRT reality. He pointed out a mixed use area at the intersection of Washington St and 62<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, where there has already been development interest in mixed use. Alternative 2 also shows less residential west of the interstate. Industrial is also curtailed somewhat west of the interstate and north Gateway Drive. Alternative 2 is projected to accommodate 1,500 more people within the city, but employment will be lower within the city if areas currently shown as commercial are developed as mixed use.

Scott Harmstead explained that typically, when two future land use alternatives are compared, ultimately a middle ground or hybrid scenario is selected. He opened the floor for comments.

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Alex Reichert said that a future interchange should be located at 62<sup>nd</sup> Avenue or 12<sup>th</sup>, not 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue. He suggested that the growth plan should be adjusted to reflect this.

Steve Wasvick commented that an interchange at 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue would be unlikely. He cited the Sheyenne St interchange in Fargo. Because this interchange was constructed in a wide open area, it opened up significant development opportunities. If we move development down where there's an open slate, there would be massive opportunities to expand commercial on both sides of the interstate, and there would be fewer neighborhood complaints.

Ryan Brooks pointed out that the distance between University Avenue and 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue (Merrifield Rd) is 3 miles. He said that the MPO is essentially looking at something in between 47<sup>th</sup> and 55<sup>th</sup> Ave S. He said that the City still supports an interchange at 47<sup>th</sup> Ave as a way to provide support to 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue to relief detrimental traffic impacts.

Steve Wasvick said that the reality is that development will occur in south grand forks before development occurs west of 55<sup>th</sup>. 10 years ago, the 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue interchange was a good idea, but not now.

Ken Vein said that an interchange at 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue was needed to reduce congestion on 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue. Traffic forecasts show 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue will need to be converted to a 6-lane arterial if the interchange is not constructed.

Earl Haugen confirmed that 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue would become more congested with continued growth around the discovery school, and additional through lanes would need be added. A 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue interchange would provide relief for 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue so that it could continue to operate as a 4-lane facility, with implementation of planned safety improvements.

Ken Vein suggested that if the interchange is placed at 62<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, it would not have the same effect of alleviating traffic on 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue.

Alex Reichert suggested that reducing the amount of future residential shown west of I-29 could lighten traffic. If an interchange is installed at 62<sup>nd</sup>, an interchange could still be installed at 47<sup>th</sup> if needed. He said that the problem is that city is going to grow more east and south of the interstate, and planning doesn't reflect the reality of what is going to happen. South Washington St is taking the brunt of traffic impacts from development in south Grand Forks.

Ryan Brooks said the City hasn't had funding for the interchange. He said that it's difficult to get funding if there's not already development there, but it's difficult to attract development without the interchange.

Earl Haugen said that the official policy is that FWHA will allow at least 1 mile spacing if you can make the movements work. He said the NDDOT's preference is 2-mile spacing, with lessons learned from the Fargo area.

Steve Wasvick said that the City doesn't get to decide where development occurs. The market decides, and growth trends are showing that future development will go east of I-29 and south along Washington St.

Ken Vien said that discussion showed how land use planning intersects with transportation planning and public infrastructure systems. These elements need to be considered collectively. If the city keeps growing south, infrastructure costs will keep getting more expensive. The plan needs consider the future location of lift stations, schools, etc. If development extends all the way to 62<sup>nd</sup> Ave, there will need to be improvements in this area, likely in addition to a 47<sup>th</sup> Ave interchange.

Scott Harmstead said that showing more residential west of I-29 could provide more flexibility for future development opportunities.

Steve Wasvick said that the city outgrew the previous land use plan in 3 to 5 years. Earl Haugen said this was not the case.

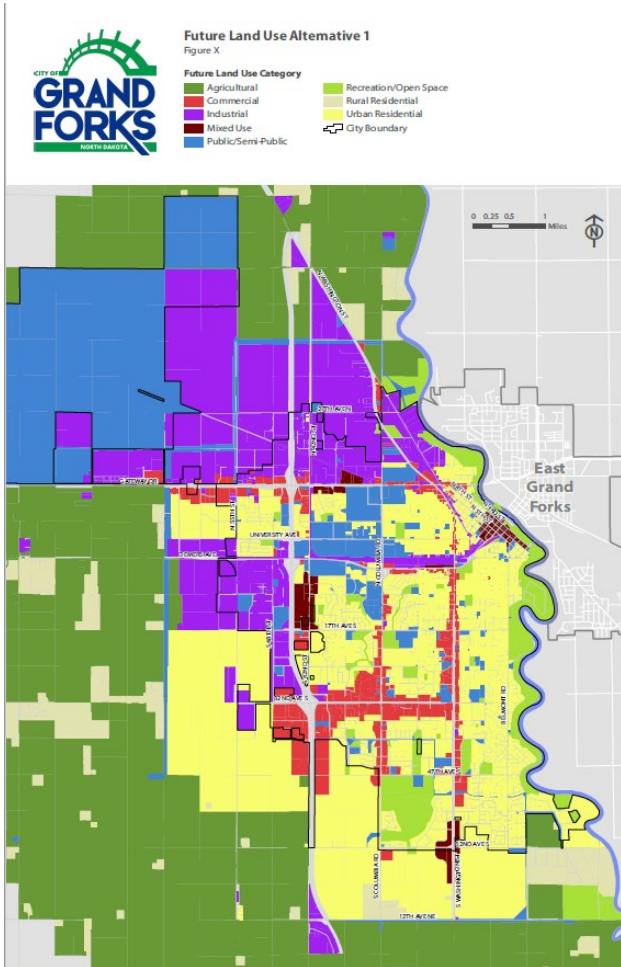
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The meeting ended at 4:25 when LUS members Wasvick, Lunski, and Reichert as well as staff members Brooks and Halford had to leave for the monthly Planning and Zoning Commission.

## Ryan Brooks Discussion with LUS members Wasvick, Reichert, and Lunski

Ryan Brooks discussed the alternative land use maps after a Planning and Zoning Commission meeting later the evening of 9/1/21. All three LUS members stated that they understood the 47th Ave interchange and how it fit into the future traffic need. While interchanges are not specifically listed on the future land use map, the connection is there including the Activation Site as shown on the draft provided by SRF. The consensus from all three members was that alternative 2 (inward growth alternative) was good and they would support that.

### Alternative 1



### Alternative 2

