



*Land Use and
Community Design*

*Economic
Competitiveness*

Mobility

*Parks and
Open Space*

*Sustainability
and Resilience*

*Arts, Culture and
Placemaking*

ONWARD MOORHEAD

The City's Comprehensive Plan

Adopted March 28, 2022

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PURPOSE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The City of Moorhead's Comprehensive Plan is both a pragmatic, step by step action plan intended to accomplish specific outcomes and an aspirational vision for the community's future. Its implementation involves changes to official controls (like zoning and other codes and ordinances) and the allocation and prioritization of financial and human resources.

It is equally valuable as a guide to decision making when the City is faced with new challenges and opportunities and questions that weren't anticipated when the Plan was originally prepared. In this role, the Comprehensive Plan serves as a navigational tool, a North Star to evaluate alternative decisions and determine which are best aligned with the community's vision.

The bedrock purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is to protect public and private investment over time. It is the foundation of all land use policies, and it provides not only the rationale for the policies and actions, but also establishes the commitment to their enforcement. It is this clarity and commitment that supports investment. Once adopted, both the public and the private sector can make investments in reliance on the Comprehensive Plan.

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City Council

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Matthew Gilbertson, Ward 1
Laura Caroon, Ward 2
Heather Nesemeier, Ward 2
Deb White, Ward 3
Larry Seljevold, Ward 3
Chuck Hendrickson, Ward 4
Steve Lindaas, Ward 4

Arts and Culture Commission

Economic Development Authority

Human Rights Commission

Parks Advisory Board

Planning Commission

Moorhead Community Resilience Task Force

Technical Advisory Committee

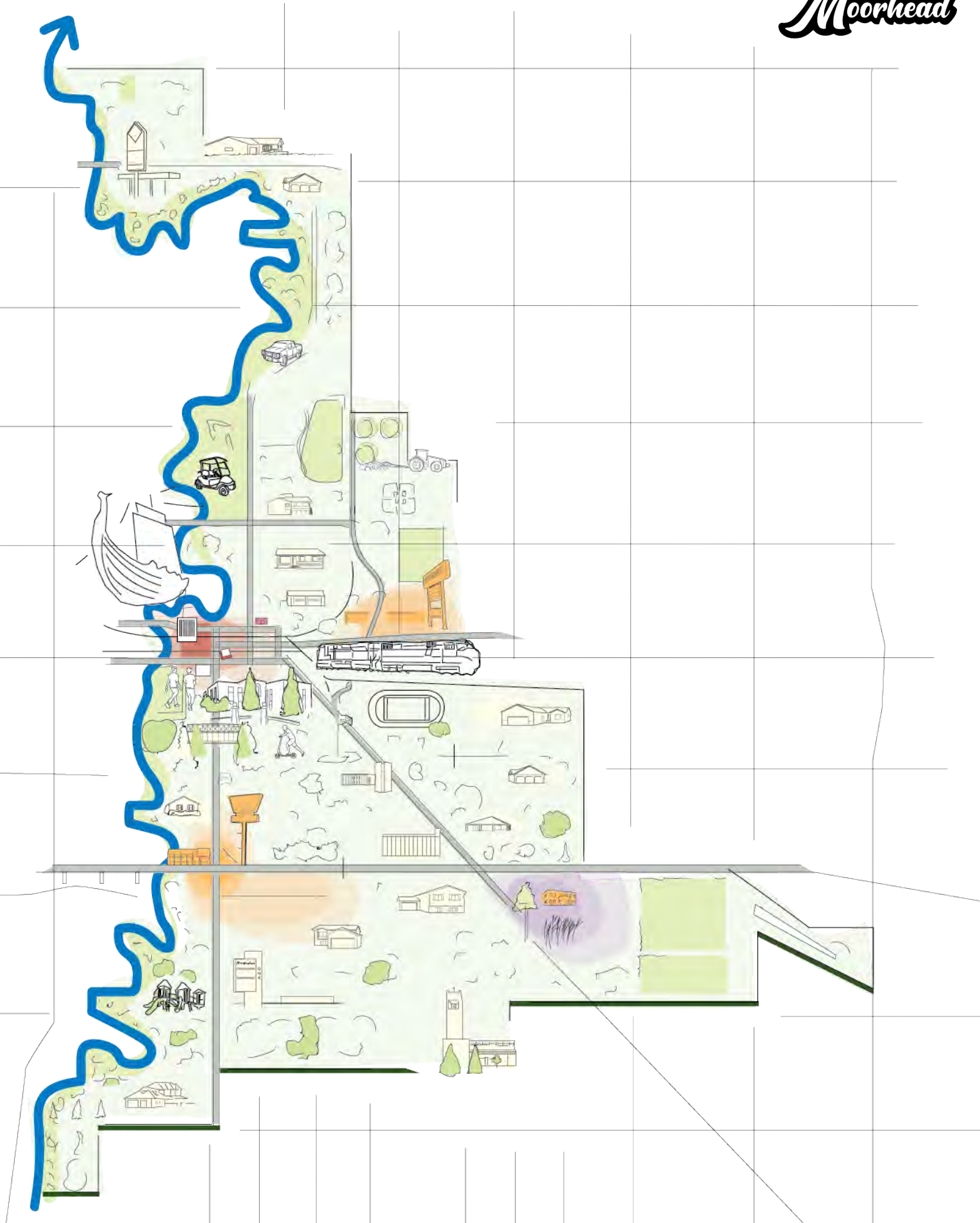
Robin Huston, City Planner/Project Manager
Kristie Leshovsky, Community Development Director
Dan Mahli, City Manager
Tom Trowbridge, Assistant City Engineer
Jonathan Atkins, Traffic Engineer
Steve Iverson, Public Works Director
Holly Heitkamp, Parks & Recreation Director
Lori Van Beek, MATBUS Transit Manager
Travis Schmidt, MPS General Manager
Jake Long, MPS Water
Taylor Holte, MPS Electric
Derrick LaPoint, Downtown Moorhead Inc.

Study Review Committee

Greg Toutges, MSUM Disability Resource Center
Linda Bartholome, Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd
Sajid Ghauri, Moorhead Islamic Center
Kawar Farok, Kurdish American Development Organization
McCall Clark, Moorhead High School Student
Jessa Mueller, MSUM Student
Christine Holland, River Keepers
Ken Foster, Concordia / Moorhead Community Resilience Task Force
Sarah Hewitt, Audubon Dakota
Earnest Lamb, MSUM
Jon Walters, Nature of the North
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Del Rae Williams, Former Mayor
Violet Deilke, Former EDA board member
Matt Jacobson, Clay County Planning
Justin Berg, Grassroots Development
Sherri Smith, Gate City Bank
Steve Moore, Moorhead Area Public Schools
Brian Cole, Moorhead Area Public Schools
Ari Del Rosario, FM Metro COG
Willard Yellow Bird, Former HRC board member

Project Team

Beth Elliott, Stantec Project Manager
John Shardlow, Stantec Principal in Charge and Resilience
Lauren Walburg, Stantec Deputy Project Manager
Jason Beske, Stantec Land Use and Community Design
Joe Polacek, Stantec Land Use and Community Design
Tom Leighton, Stantec Economic Competitiveness
Sarah McDonald, Stantec Parks and Open Space
Ciara Schlicting, Toole Design Mobility
Connor Cox, Toole Design Mobility
Joe Burgum, Folkways Arts, Culture, and Placemaking



FIVE BIG IDEAS IN FIVE YEARS

Onward Moorhead is a policy document that provides direction to decision-makers, City staff, and partners on the long-term priorities for Moorhead. While its primary purpose is to guide land use decisions, Onward Moorhead aspires to be a vision for how Moorhead can evolve and maintain its authenticity and welcoming atmosphere. To meet the community's vision for Moorhead as "a thriving and resilient community", the goals and strategic policies in this document cannot stand in isolation, but rather must complement each other to create desirable outcomes throughout the community.

To that end, Onward Moorhead's top priorities are encompassed in Five Big Ideas. These ideas reflect actions the City of Moorhead and its partners should take in the next five years to make substantial headway to implementing the

vision of this comprehensive plan. They require both small and significant steps to meet the needs of a resilient Moorhead.

The Five Big Ideas evolved as the plan's goals solidified as key strategies that transcended the various plan topics. A comprehensive plan is broad-based and high-level by its nature, but the Five Big Ideas offer a short list of salient priorities that could dramatically improve the desirability and livability of Moorhead, if done well.

The Five Big Ideas below will require continuous attention to realize their full potential. Each has some key first steps as outlined in the Implementation Chapter that will be needed in the first five years of Onward Moorhead to jumpstart this comprehensive plan.



Transform Downtown Moorhead into the 'heart of the community' by incorporating a range of housing and retail options, cultural amenities, parks, and public services.



Integrate a mix of mutually supportive land uses and experiences in redevelopment areas by building upon and strengthening existing retail centers and utilizing experience-based marketing.



Connect neighborhoods to parks and trails and provide multimodal access to downtown, the Red River, and community amenities.



Embrace resilient environmental and equitable solutions, planning for infrastructure, building development, energy, and climate adaptation while building a greener community.



Build and nurture local businesses as key partners in building and maintaining a prosperous community.

FIVE BIG IDEAS EXPLAINED

Transform Downtown Moorhead into the ‘heart of the community’ by incorporating a range of housing and retail options, cultural amenities, parks, and public services.

Building on the Downtown Moorhead Master Plan, Onward Moorhead guides the transformation of downtown through increased residential density, support of a strong business community, enhanced pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and a design aesthetic that will make it the distinctive epicenter of Moorhead. More than that, transforming downtown recognizes the unique benefits of its geography, adjacent to the Red River in multiple directions, and within walking distance of downtown Fargo.

Integrate a mix of mutually supportive land uses and experiences in redevelopment areas by building upon and strengthening existing retail centers and utilizing experience-based marketing.

A truly thriving city offers a strong downtown along with pockets of neighborhood centers. Traditionally, Moorhead has developed with land uses separated from each other, requiring people to drive to meet their daily needs. This plan incorporates opportunities to mix land uses that are beneficial in close proximity – coffee shops and apartments, daycares and offices, restaurants and college campuses. These areas are guided for redevelopment to mix these land uses either in vertical buildings or next to each other. A mix of mutually supportive land uses creates more activity and vibrancy during the day, evenings, and on weekends. The experiences offered in revitalized places create an energy in a community that helps to promote continued success.

Connect neighborhoods to parks and trails and provide multimodal access to downtown, the Red River, and community amenities.

The number one topic voiced by community members in this planning process was their love of Moorhead’s parks and trail system, particularly its adjacency to the river. Onward Moorhead seeks to provide direction to enhance these connections in a way that benefits all neighborhoods. This requires improved mobility and access to downtown, the river, and neighborhood parks, so that all residents can benefit from Moorhead’s natural resources.

Embrace resilient environmental and equitable solutions, planning for infrastructure, building development, energy, and climate adaptation while building a greener community.

Our cities are experiencing more and more extreme weather events every year due to climate change. Moorhead and adjacent communities know this firsthand, having experienced decades of Red River flooding. This has led to a designed solution in the form of the Fargo-Moorhead Diversion Project. Onward Moorhead takes a more comprehensive view of resilience to encompass the collective environmental and economic health of the community, along with the resilience and well-being of each individual resident. To that end, this plan emphasizes goals and strategic policies that focus on a more equitable and resilient Moorhead that highlights and celebrates its diverse cultures.

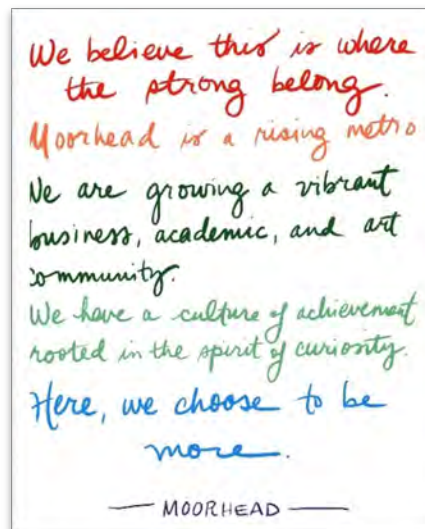
Build and nurture local businesses as key partners to build a prospering community.

To maintain and grow its economic base, Moorhead chooses to focus on what makes it unique and authentic. Local businesses – both large and small – know that Moorhead is special and want to invest in growing opportunities for jobs and commerce. Recognition of downtown as the center of this economic competitiveness is a key factor, but this plan also spotlights the role that entrepreneurs and the colleges play in driving innovation.

INTRODUCTION

Onward Moorhead Structure

The Moorhead Comprehensive Plan is structured in several topical chapters with goals and strategic policies that the City and its partners should undertake to accomplish the Five Big Ideas and longer-term goals. A lightbulb icon in each chapter's Goals section identifies the Goals or Strategic Policies that will directly contribute to the Implementation of the Five Big Ideas. Additionally, several of the chapters include concepts that are multidisciplinary and could serve as a lens for the entire plan. For example, while there is a specific Sustainability and Resilience chapter, several of the goals and strategies within the other chapters could assist the City in becoming more resilient to different kinds of shocks and stressors. There is repetition among the strategic policies as several categories and goals are overlapping.



Identity statement from 2018 Strategic Plan

Mission, Vision, Values

The mission, vision, and values within this comprehensive plan build off the recently completed Strategic Plan created by department directors, the mayor, and City Council. The mission also includes language from the preamble to the Moorhead City Charter. The mission, vision and values accompany the five big ideas as the core of this document. The statements below were vetted through engagement with City staff, elected and appointed officials, residents and businesses to create a vision and set of values that reflect the unique identity of the city.

Mission

The City of Moorhead supports self-governance, honest and accountable governance, provides appropriate municipal services, encourages resident participation, and fosters a sense of community.

Vision

Moorhead is a thriving and resilient community, sustained by the health of its natural surroundings, strong and dedicated businesses, welcoming neighborhoods, fantastic people, and exceptional educational and cultural institutions.

Values

Collaboration – Moorhead takes pride in its role as a regional partner and its numerous collaborations with community organizations, businesses, and institutions.

Commitment – Moorhead elected officials and staff members are committed to working together to develop efficient, enduring processes to achieve common goals.

Ecological Health – Moorhead is committed to the environmental sustainability and ecological health of the community.

Inclusion - Moorhead recognizes that each individual comes from different circumstances and is committed to ensuring they have the resources to thrive in the community. Moorhead is committed to achieving equity across race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and ability levels.

Innovation – Moorhead embraces innovation and strives to adapt creatively to change.

Integrity – The City of Moorhead's foundation for service and effective governance is built upon honesty, responsibility, accountability, openness, humility, and grit.

Prosperity – The City of Moorhead supports economic development and fosters a positive business climate to promote prosperity for all.

Resilience – Moorhead strives to be a resilient community, one that has the characteristics that enable it to prepare, adapt, and flourish in the face of change.

Safety – Moorhead is a safe city and provides the leadership and structure to assist partners, stakeholders, and the police department with strengthening the security and connectedness of its residents.

Service – The City of Moorhead strives to serve and build a team that puts the needs of the community first.

Public Engagement

Purpose

The City of Moorhead engaged community members and stakeholders throughout the Comprehensive Plan process to envision its future. The City created a public engagement plan and customized an engagement strategy that defined timing, strategies, appropriate audiences, and responsibilities for each phase of engagement. The engagement process described the purpose and importance of a Comprehensive Plan and gave participants a chance to meaningfully participate in shaping the vision and goals for Moorhead over the next ten years.

Goals and Intended Outcomes

Through past experiences, the City has learned that public engagement must be focused on enriching the planning process and recommendations to be valuable to the project and the public. The engagement approach and proactive stance helped to ensure success in reaching out to and communicating with different segments of the public. A key part of engagement was a “no jargon” philosophy, particularly for a high-level policy plan like a Comprehensive Plan. The yellow sticky notes throughout this Plan show quotes gathered from the public during engagement.

Engagement Goals

The first step was to set commonly understood goals for how stakeholders are involved, and decisions made to arrive at a successful outcome for Onward Moorhead. Every meeting, survey, interview, or tour was derived from and contributed to these goals.

Engage in meaningful and relevant dialogue – The community should feel that the dialogue has been meaningful and relevant to their interests and daily lives.

Prioritize inclusive representation – The perspectives and participation of a broad range of community members should be equitably represented in the process and resulting plan.

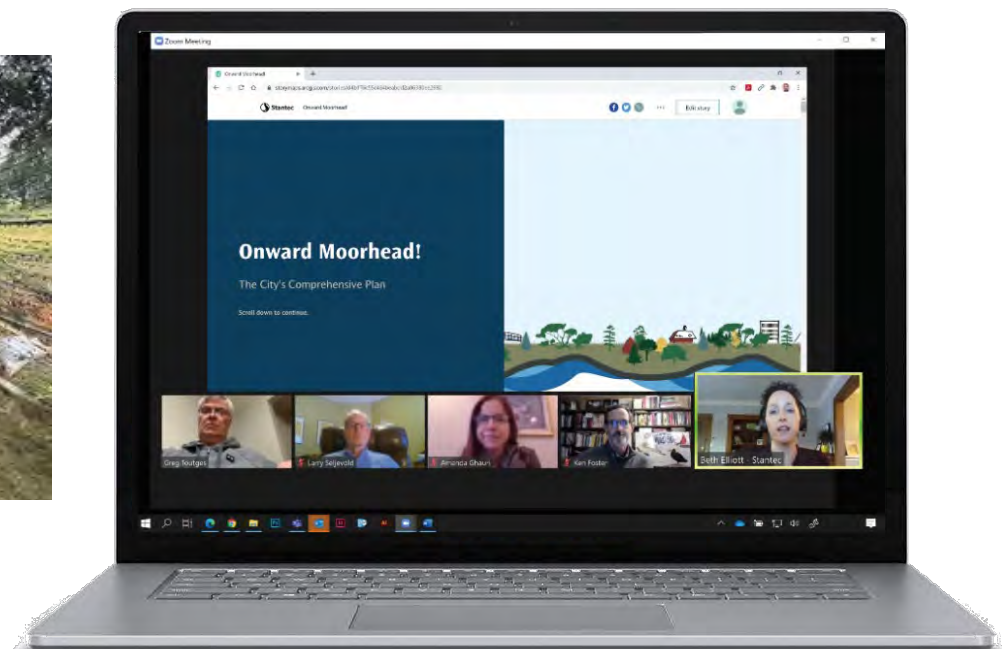
Provide access to information and opportunities – The public should have the information they need to participate in ways that are appropriate to their experiences and lifestyles.

Make sure contributions have impact – The public should feel their input has been thoughtfully considered and see their contributions reflected in the plan.

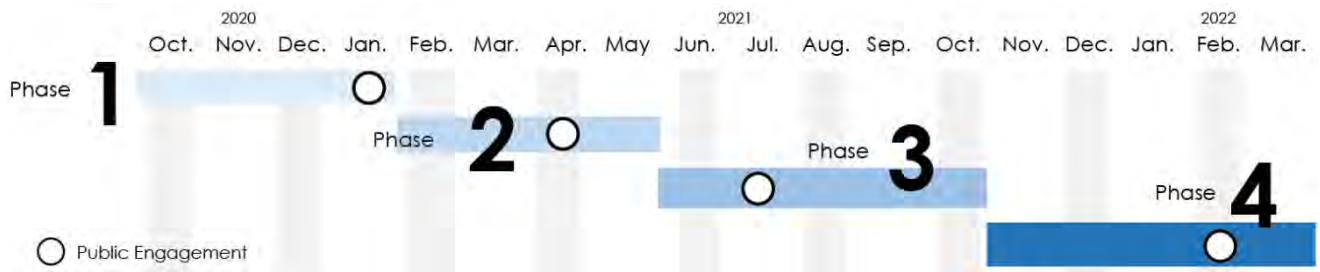
Create empowering experiences – Community leadership and capacity should be built through the process.



Walkshop participants in Viking Ship Park



Virtual meeting presentation



Onward Moorhead process timeline

Outreach Schedule

The Comprehensive Planning process was conducted over an 18-month period beginning in October 2020 and concluded with the delivery of final documents in March 2022. The four phases of engagement are described below, and further information on engagement can be found in Appendix B.

Phase 1 – Foundation Building

Community engagement for Phase 1 of Onward Moorhead was kicked off with two days of foundation-building activities in late January 2021. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and for the safety of all participants, all events were held in a virtual format. Engagement activities in this first phase of work focused on informing the public about the Comprehensive Plan process and gaining broad insights about the vision for the next 10 years in Moorhead and beyond. There were several ways for the public to get involved with the process including interactive online engagement, focus groups, and a broader community meeting. The first phase of engagement also kicked off regular meetings with a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) made up of City and related staff, as well as a Study Review Committee (SRC) comprised of a wide range of community stakeholders interested in the future of Moorhead.



Assistant City Planner Forrest Steinhoff at Bridge Bash in Viking Ship Park

Phase 2 – Vision and Goal-setting Analysis

Following the completion of Community Engagement activities outlined in Phase 1, the Project Team initiated Phase 2 in April-May 2021. This focused on developing the citywide 10-year vision framework with topical goals and solidifying focus areas, to be studied further in Phase 3. The objective was to leave this phase with a consensus among decision-makers and the public of the Comprehensive Plan’s direction before evaluating specific areas of the city. Phase 2 activities included meetings with the TAC and SRC, interactive online engagement, topical focus group meetings, and a joint Planning Commission / City Council / EDA workshop.

Phase 3 – Focus Area Plans

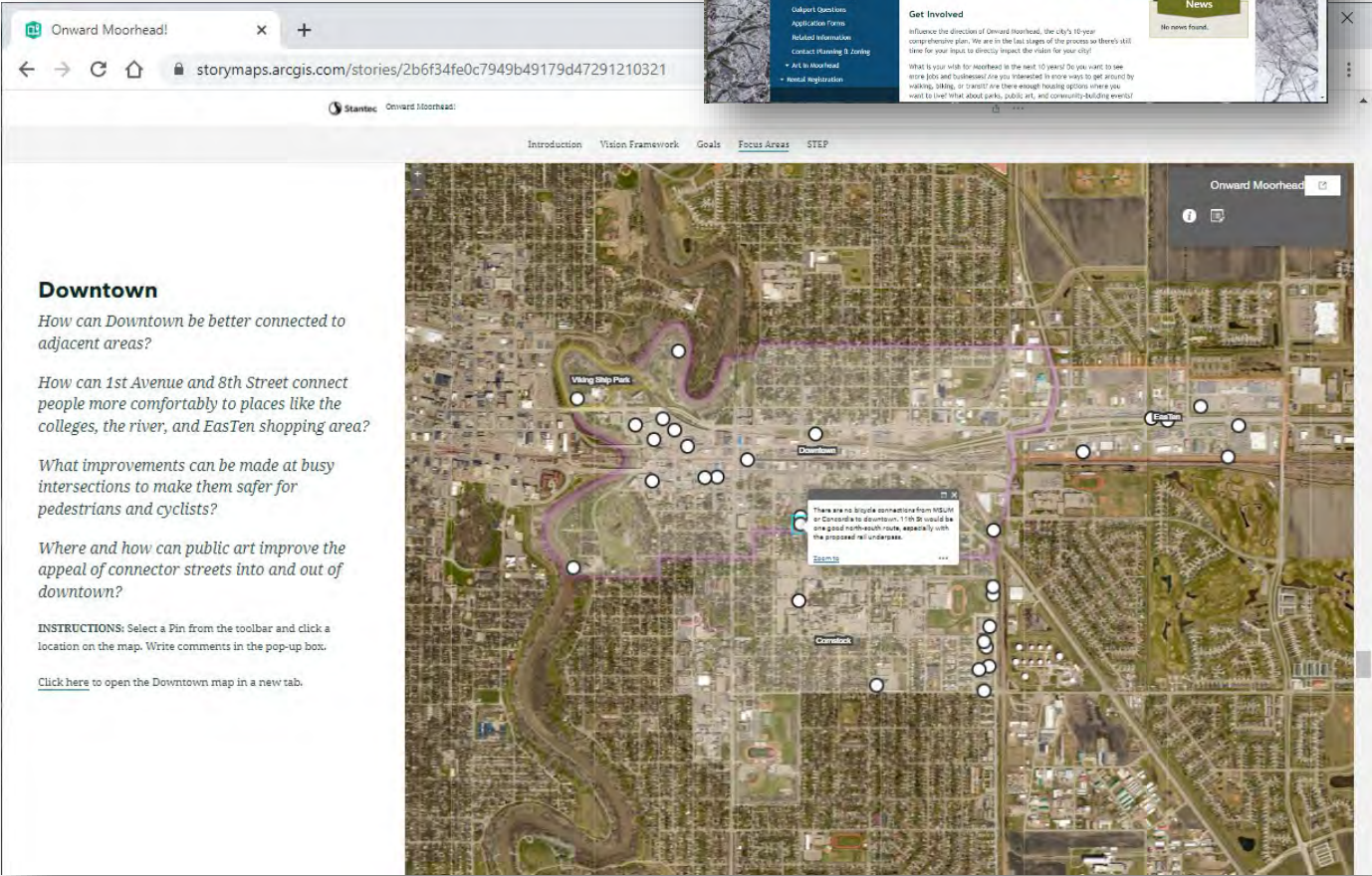
The City hosted Design Week in July 2021 with a series of engagement events aimed at testing how city-wide goals should be applied to specific focus areas. The team hosted a Design Festival open house event at the Hjemkomst Center focused on conversations about the city as a whole and specific focus areas, followed the next day by a series of “walkshops” (a play on walking and workshop) in each of the defined focus areas. There was also a virtual open house website (Story Map) with integrated survey to share information and garner feedback. City staff also held a variety of pop-ups at community events to further engage residents.

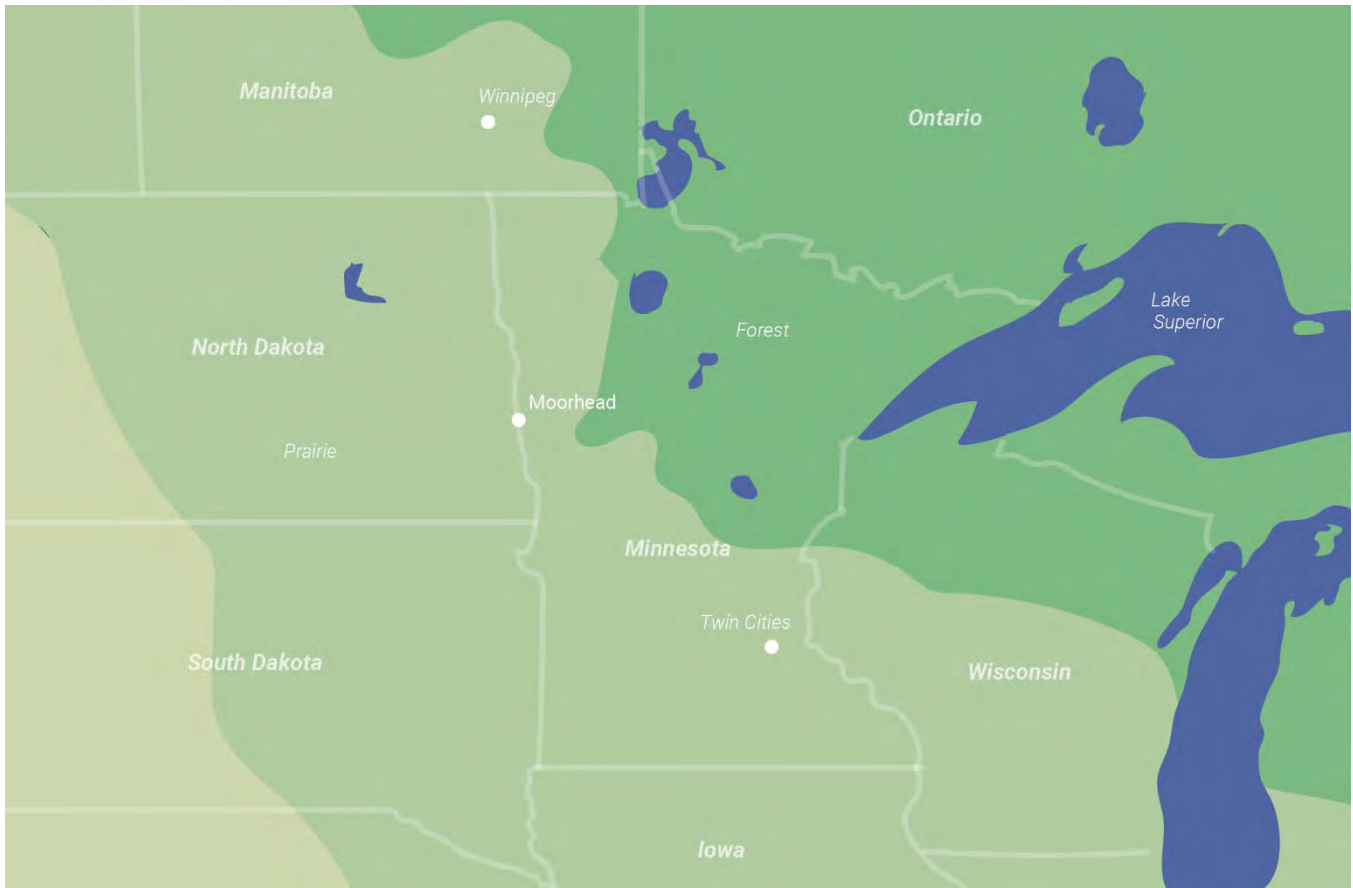
Engagement during this phase of work tested draft goals in specific areas of the city for potential implementation strategies and vetted those strategies through the City Council and boards and commissions including the Planning Commission, Parks Advisory Board, Arts and Culture Commission, Economic Development Authority, and the Human Rights Commission.

City website (right) with linked virtual open house website (below)

Phase 4 – Delivery and Approval

Phase 4 engagement included final meetings with the TAC and SRC to review the draft Comprehensive Plan and modify it to meet the community’s needs. A revised version of the plan was then vetted through the topical focus groups with attendance by the City boards and commissions from Phase 3. The final phase of engagement also included adoption hearings with the Planning Commission and City Council. The final deliverable for the Comprehensive Plan includes an interactive Story Map on the City website which can be used by the City and the public to engage with implementation of the plan over the next several years.





Geographical Context

COMMUNITY CONTEXT AND DEMOGRAPHICS



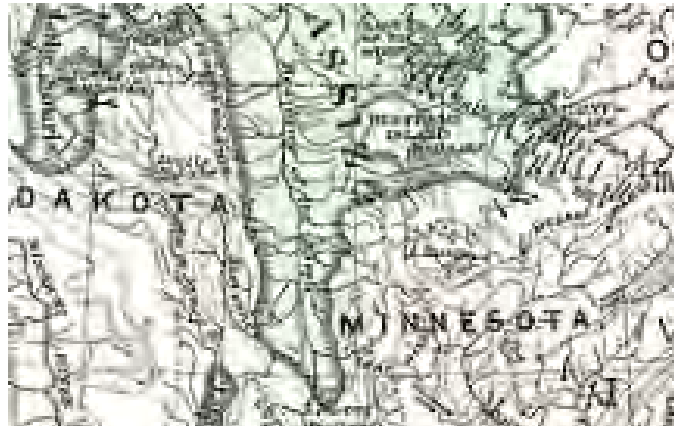
Downtown Moorhead looking northwest (Credit: Minnesota State University Moorhead)

Moorhead is located along the western border of Minnesota and is the largest city in Clay County. The city is bordered by Fargo, North Dakota to the west, with the Red River forming the physical boundary between the two cities and the city of Dilworth to the east. Moorhead is the second largest city in the Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan area. Regionally connected by Interstate 94 and Highway 10, the city is roughly 250 miles northwest of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area, and 220 miles south of Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Historical Development

Prior to European settlement nearly 150 years ago, the tallgrass prairies and forested rivers of Clay County supported a unique ecosystem of bison, wolves, beaver and communities of the Dakota, Anishinaabe (Ojibwe/Chippewa) and Otipemisiwak (Métis) people. Many other tribes such as the Apsáalooke (Crow), Notameohmésêhese (Cheyenne), Nêhiyawak (Plains Cree), Nụmákhú-ki (Mandan), Hiraacá (Hidatsa), and Sahnish (Arikara) called this region home throughout history. Native peoples interacted with the land as both hunters and gatherers and practiced early farming and cultivation of the land, using the trail and waterway system to build an economy that spanned the continent. However, by the 1880s, wars and treaties with federal and state governments forced the remaining Dakota, Ojibwe, and Métis people from the land. Today, Native Americans continue to live in the Red River Valley and Clay County is home to people of many different Native American nations who still practice their heritage and traditions including care for the land and waterways.¹

Europeans were first drawn to the area as fur traders, and later for cultivation.² The city of Moorhead was incorporated as a village in 1875 with the construction of the Northern Pacific Railroad bridge across the Red River, providing the stimulus for economic and population growth in the Moorhead area. The Homestead Act also provided for further settlement of the area, incentivizing individuals to move west by providing free land in exchange for the creation of farms and homesteads. Moorhead also served as a transfer point for passengers and freight between the Twin Cities and Winnipeg, Manitoba.³ Today, the agricultural and distribution sectors are both still important to Moorhead's economy, with the more recent addition of the education and service industries.



Receding glacier at end of ice age (Credit: NDSU Libraries)



Before Europeans (Credit: Mere Lock, Oglala Artist, NDSU Libraries)



View of Moorhead in 1880 (Credit: State Historical Society)

¹ [Ihdago Manipi - Historical and Cultural Society of Clay County \(hcsconline.org\)](http://hdago.manipi-historical-and-cultural-society-of-clay-county.org)

² <https://www2.mnstate.edu/northwest-mn/red-river-valley-history.aspx>

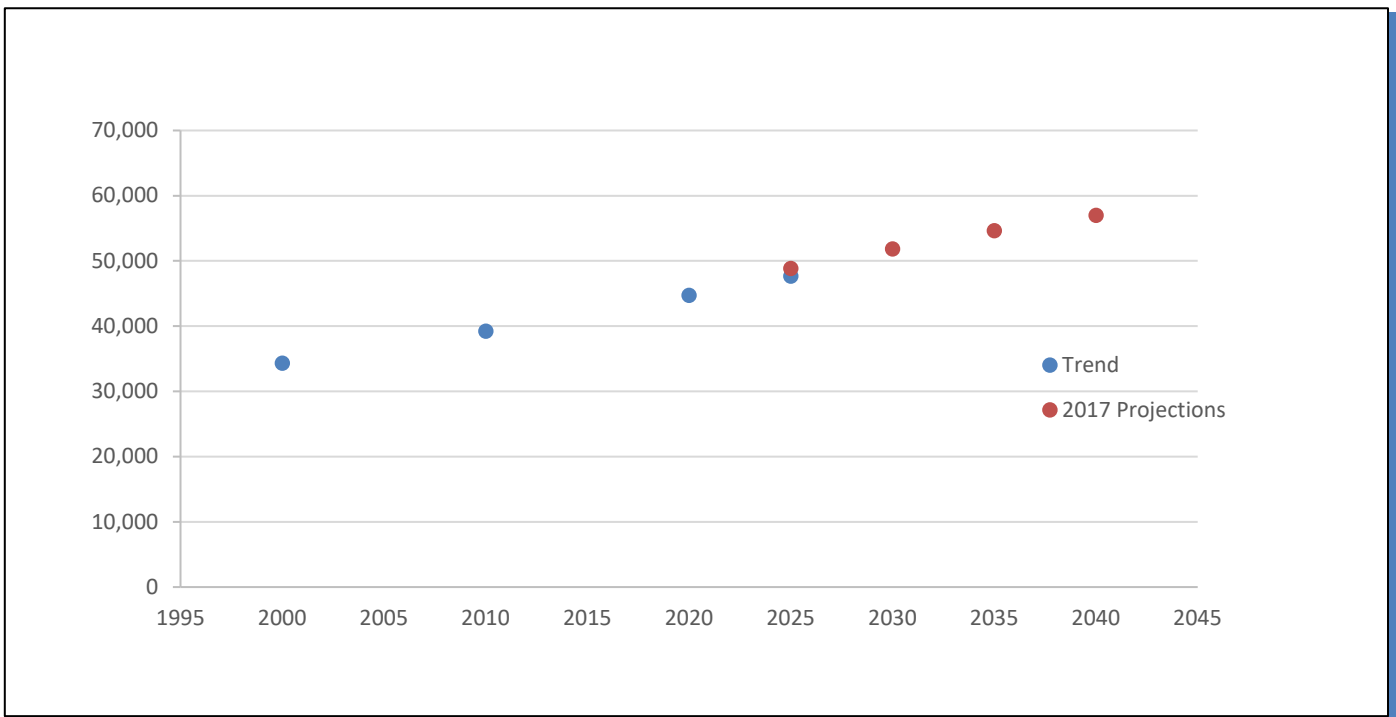
³ <http://www.cityofmoorhead.com/about-the-city/history>

Population Growth and Demographics

It is crucial to understand the population and demographic trends for the city of Moorhead and the region to determine the city’s future needs. As part of this report, population and demographic trends were analyzed and general trends are summarized below.

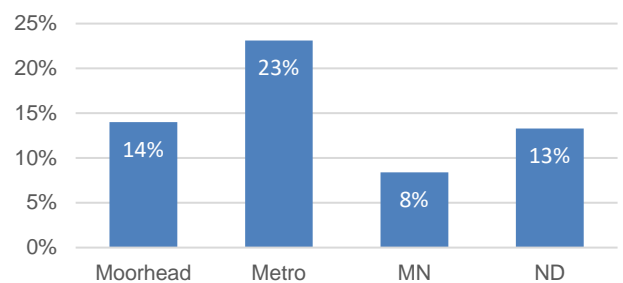
Population

Moorhead is a growing city in a growing region. The Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA aka “Metro”) has been one of the fastest growing metropolitan areas in the country over the last decade. Moorhead has benefited from being part of this dynamic region. As shown in the graph below, Moorhead has experienced an estimated growth of around 14% over the past decade.



Population Projections

Moorhead’s growth is expected to continue with population expected to grow by an additional 3,000 people by 2025 as shown in blue in the chart above (Source: ESRI, 2020). In a 2017 report for the Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Council of Governments (MetroCOG), shown in red above, it is estimated that the 2025 population of Moorhead would be around 49,000, and that it would reach around 59,000 by 2045.



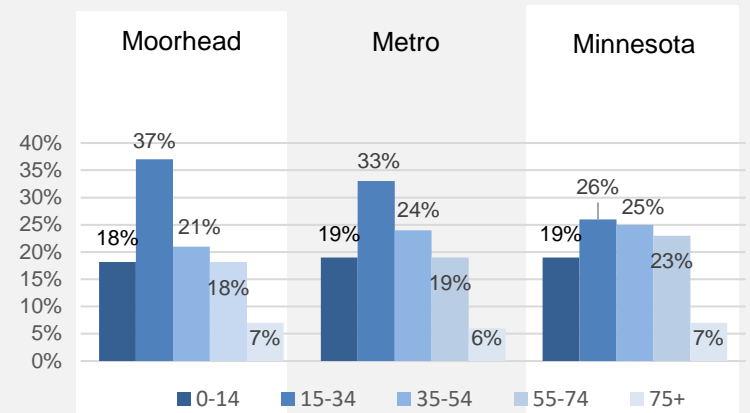
Population growth 2010 to 2020 Moorhead, Metro Area, Minnesota, North Dakota (Credit: ESRI, US Census)



Demographics of Residents

- Like the Fargo-Moorhead region as a whole, Moorhead’s population skews toward young adults
- 37 percent of Moorhead’s population is between the ages of 15 and 34
- Adults between ages 35 and 74 are a much lower share of Moorhead’s population compared with the state as a whole
- Moorhead’s share of children, and its share of adults 75 and older, are similar to the state as a whole

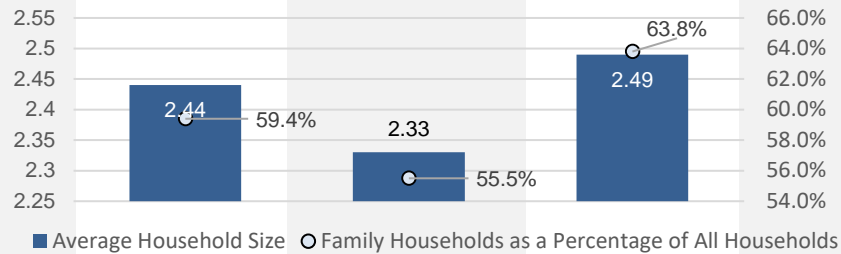
(right) Age of Residents in Moorhead, Fargo Moorhead MSA (“Metro”), and Minnesota



Families and Households

- Around 59% of Moorhead households are families ⁴, a measure that is greater than the share of family households in the Fargo Moorhead MSA
- Moorhead has fewer family households than the state as a whole

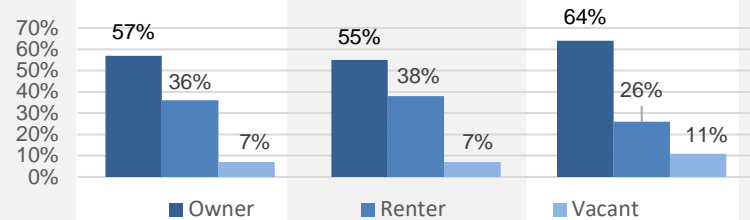
(right) Household size and family households in Moorhead, Fargo Moorhead MSA (“Metro”), and Minnesota



Housing Tenure

- Moorhead’s relatively younger population contributes to a higher than average proportion of renter occupied housing units

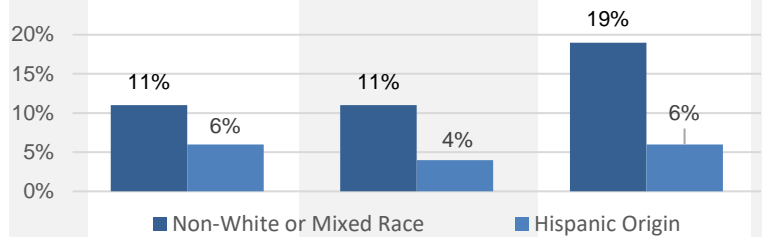
(right) Housing Tenure in Moorhead, Fargo Moorhead MSA (“Metro”), and Minnesota



Race/Hispanic Origin

- Moorhead is a less diverse community than most in Minnesota
- Around 11% of its residents are non-White or mixed race, which compares to a statewide average of around 19%
- Moorhead’s proportion of Hispanic residents is similar to the state of Minnesota, as a whole

(right) Race/Hispanic Origin in Moorhead, Fargo Moorhead MSA (“Metro”), and Minnesota



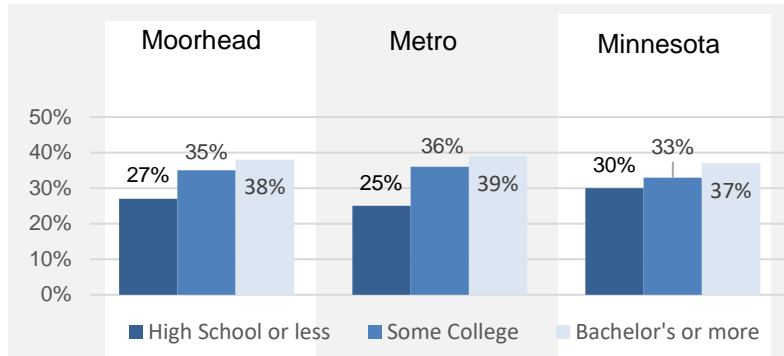
(Source: ESRI, US Census)

⁴ The US Census Bureau defines family as “a householder and one or more people living in the same household who are related to the householder by birth, marriage, or adoption. All people in a household who are related to the householder are regarded as members of his or her family.”

Educational Attainment

- Moorhead is an educated community
- The comparison in the graph to the right shows that Moorhead's share of residents with some college education is higher than the state average

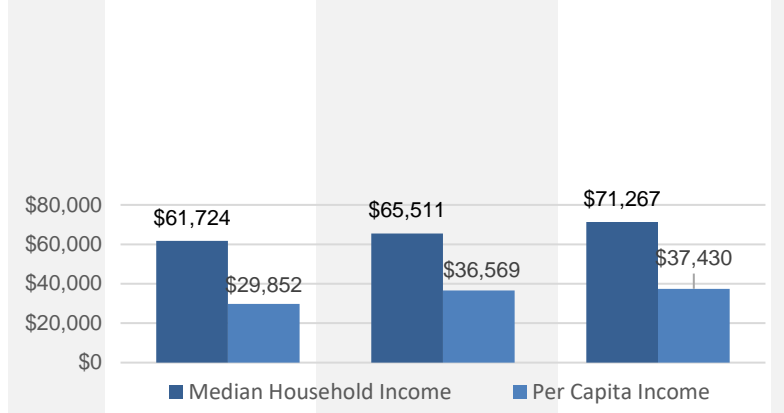
(right) Educational Attainment in Moorhead, Fargo Moorhead MSA ("Metro"), and Minnesota



Household Income

- Household income levels in Moorhead are lower than average for Minnesota, and lower than the Fargo-Moorhead metro area as a whole
- Per capita income levels are low in Moorhead as compared with the state and the region ⁵

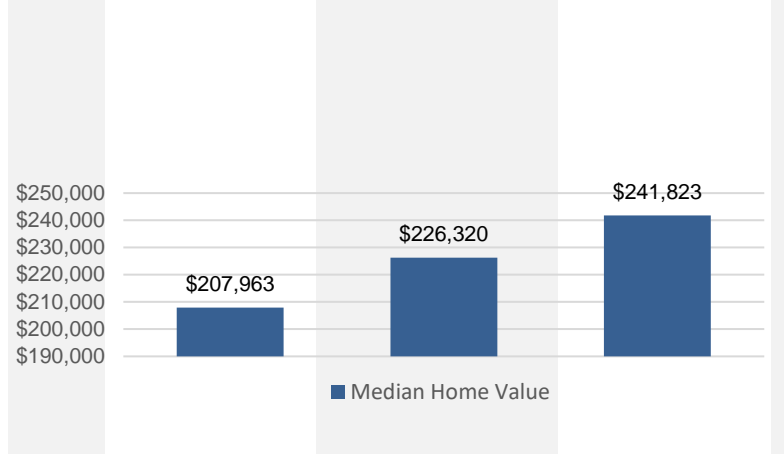
(right) Household Income in Moorhead, Fargo Moorhead MSA ("Metro"), and Minnesota



Home Value

- Similar to household income, home values in Moorhead are lower than in the Fargo-Moorhead metropolitan area as a whole

(right) Home Value in Moorhead, Fargo Moorhead MSA ("Metro"), and Minnesota



Source: (ESRI, US Census)

⁵ Median household income is the income earned by a household that is at the 50% percentile of all households. In other words, half of all households earn more and half of all households earn less. Per capita income is the total income earned in the geography by all persons aged 15 years and older, divided by the total population in the geography.

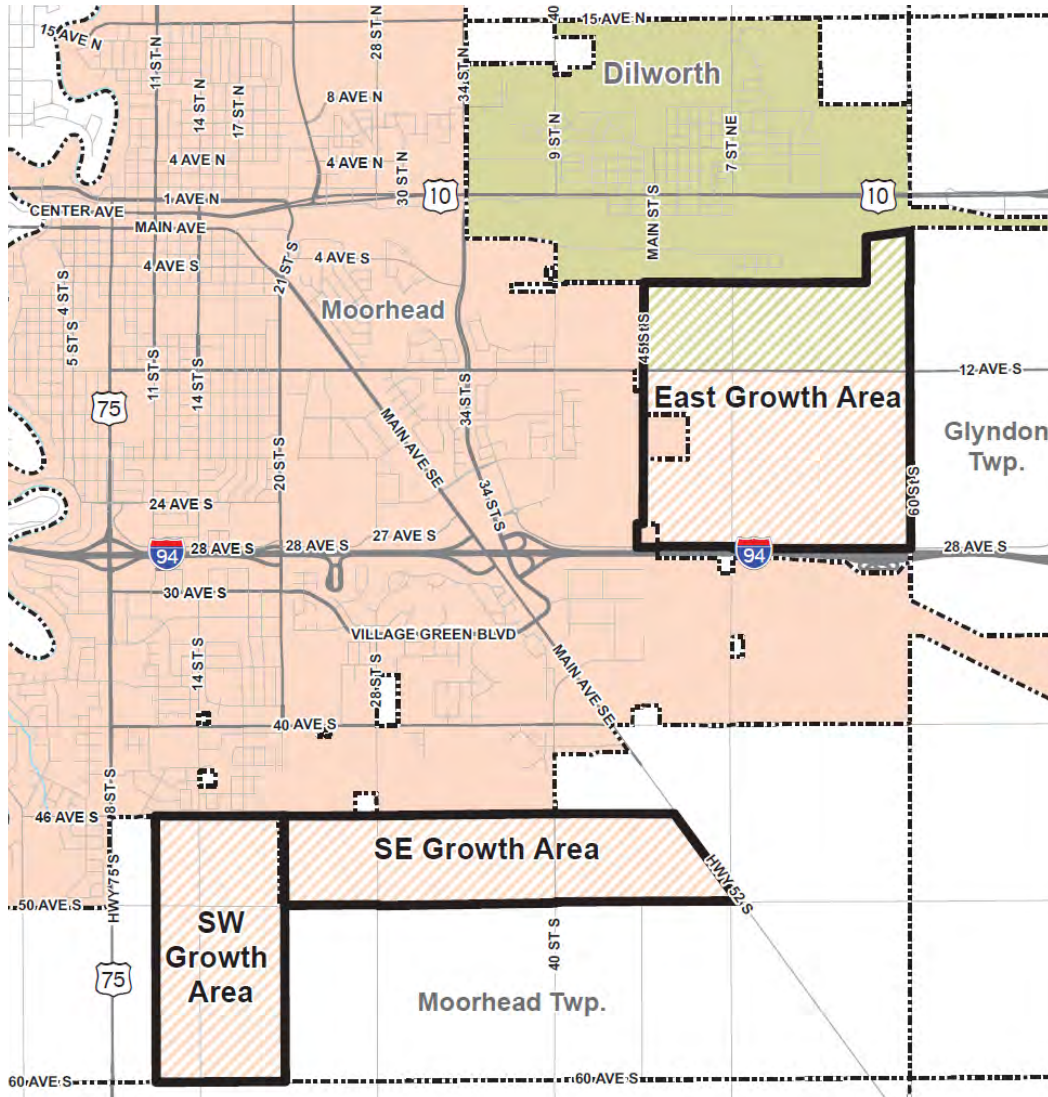
GROWTH MANAGEMENT

The 2016 Growth Area Plans for areas to the south and east of the existing city boundaries set a roadmap for long range development that guides this comprehensive plan. The key objectives of the growth area plans were to:

- Address infrastructure needs identified in past studies.
- Indicate the most suitable future land uses within growth areas
- Provide guidance to the City of Moorhead for capital improvement investments
- Inform and guide future development and zoning decisions

The Growth Areas Plans are most relevant to how growth outlined in this plan can be accommodated by infrastructure, particularly sanitary sewer. The priority of the following Land Use and Community Design chapter is to focus future development in compact, mixed-use districts that are complemented by multimodal streets and paths, parks and plazas, and other amenities that support vital and sustainable communities.

While these compact districts do not overlap with the 2016 growth areas, sanitary sewer continues to be the most challenging because of the city's topography. Planning for proposed future land uses is essential well ahead of demand for services in underdeveloped and undeveloped areas.



Growth areas (Credit: City of Moorhead)

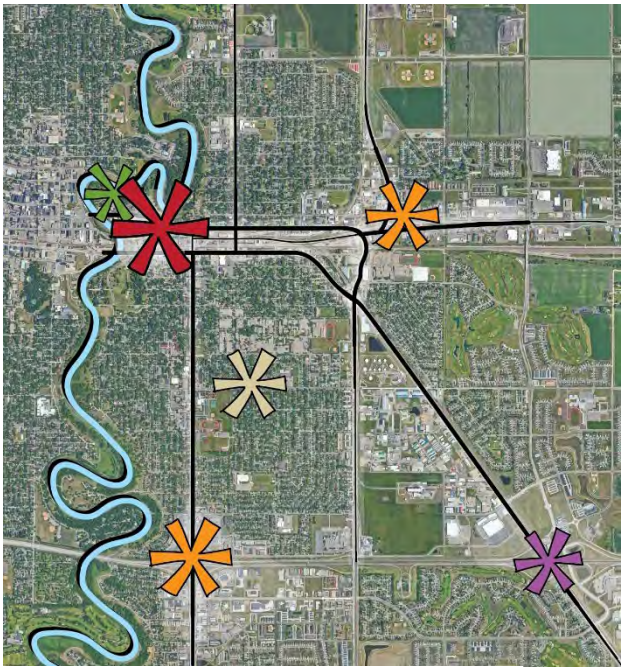
Land Use and Community Design

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY DESIGN

Land use is the foundation of any Comprehensive Plan. It shows where people are choosing to live and how dense that development is, where new businesses are locating, and whether there is a consistent distribution of amenities – like parks – throughout the city. More than that, though, it reflects how the City has directed these uses through previous planning and regulatory initiatives. This planning process is an opportunity to evaluate the location and health of existing land uses, compared to market realities. It may also reveal how existing conditions and policies may be unknowingly impacting disparities in the community.



Photo of mixed-use building (Credit: Twenty Below Coffee Co.)



Onward Moorhead focus areas

Land use goals for Moorhead promote sustainable land use that meets the needs of the future, with an objective to plan for purposeful growth, revitalization, and redevelopment. The Plan provides a land use framework to assist with defining future opportunities as a guide for directing land use recommendations throughout the community. The framework seeks to maintain and preserve existing land uses, such as open spaces and neighborhoods, while proposing infill development, or redevelopment for portions of the community with existing infrastructure and likelihood for growth.

New development in Moorhead over the next decade—and future decades— will primarily be focused on infill within areas considered already developed. While infill sites represent a relatively small percentage of the overall land area in the city, they represent a range of opportunities to redevelop underutilized sites to better utilize existing infrastructure, services and amenities. This Plan will guide redevelopment and new development to ensure that it takes the form of walkable, mixed-use, and mixed-income centers and neighborhoods that support the community’s vision and goals.

EXISTING PLANNING GUIDANCE AND CONTEXT

Existing Guidance & Land Use

The City of Moorhead previously defined its existing land uses in both the 2004 Comprehensive Plan and the 2009 Comprehensive Plan Addendum. The 2004 Plan identified 20 land use districts and five focus areas (meaning topics, not physical areas) within the city for further study. In 2016, the City also conducted Alternative Urban Area-Wide Plans (AUARs) to set the stage for sustainable growth in the East, Southwest and Southeast areas of the city. Guidance from these planning initiatives is used as a basis for the planning recommendations in this Plan.

The current dominant land use within the city is low-density residential, mainly comprised of single-family homes. There is a smaller but growing proportion of medium and high-density housing and a significant although shrinking amount of agricultural land within the city limits. Much of this vacant and agricultural land is within the city's designated growth areas and planned for more intensive land uses in the future. There are several areas of commercial development within the city including the area along Highway 10 from Downtown to the EasTen shopping center, as well as the area surrounding the Interstate 94 and Highway 75 interchange.

The main areas of industrial development within the city include the existing industrial parks (MCCARA and the Moorhead Industrial Park, including nearby Anheuser Busch), as well as the American Crystal Sugar property. The city has a robust network of parks and open space, including significant land within the floodplain of the Red River.

The City of Moorhead identified several geographic focus areas which were used as case studies to test issues throughout the planning process. These focus areas included Downtown, EasTen, and the interchange around 1-94 and Highway 75 (called Holiday Area in this plan) as areas for infill development and revitalization. Other focus areas included MCCARA industrial park, Viking Ship Park and Comstock Area Neighborhoods. These focus areas were used to test the goals and strategies ultimately included in this Plan with the public during engagement and with City staff and decisionmakers. The input received within the focus areas ultimately informed Future Land Use map guidance throughout the city.

Policy Trends Overview

A policy trends analysis identifies current and emerging trends in Moorhead and other cities within the last 10 years that impact land use, as well as trends that have been identified in past plans and studies for the City of Moorhead.

- As the city has continued to grow in population, growth area plans and AUAR (Alternative Urban Area-Wide Review) environmental reviews have been conducted to prepare for development both within and just outside of city limits. These plans emphasize limitations to the city's growth in relation to sanitary sewer constraints.
- Based on demographic shifts, more people are choosing to live in neighborhoods where they can easily walk to access daily needs. This trend points toward a demand for areas with either a horizontal or vertical mix of land uses.
- The form of sites and buildings is becoming just as important as the function, or land uses. Tying design criteria to specific sites, corridors, or neighborhoods can help new development fit into the character and context of the existing community.
- 21st century industrial uses are more eclectic than traditional manufacturing and warehousing. Comprehensive Plans increasingly encourage industrial uses that address emerging needs such as new technology, innovation, and makers spaces (e.g., breweries and art studios).
- An increased demand for walkable neighborhoods – those where residents can access services and recreation by foot or by means other than a car – have been reported, with higher price per square foot paid for homes in those areas.

Future Land Use & Community Design Framework

The land use and community design framework for Moorhead takes a holistic look at previous and existing land use, input gained from the community, emerging trends, and market demands, to create a future land use plan that will guide development and redevelopment in the community for the next decade. Downtown Moorhead will continue to play a critical role as the ‘heart’ of the community with connections to the city’s additional Activity Centers (see sidebar on page 23)—primarily Holiday and EastTen.

The land use and community design framework provides an aspirational guide for land use, although there may be limitations that will require further analysis and refinement. For example, increased density in an area may require analysis of the sanitary sewer system and may prohibit or limit density based on capacity restrictions. Studying the transportation infrastructure in an area may also be required to address increased density and various forms of mobility. An Infrastructure Master Plan should be developed following approval of the Onward Moorhead Comprehensive Plan to better define the complete picture of future developments and infrastructure modifications. This Master Plan may identify development milestones that could trigger future capital improvements.

The land use and community design framework for Moorhead is comprised of the following components:

- **STEP (Strengthen, Transform, Enhance, and Preserve) Analysis:** provides guidance for the level of intervention anticipated throughout certain areas of the community.
- **Land Use:** Future land use categories provide parcel-specific guidance for land use and related goals.
- **Community Design Principles:** Further guide the look and feel of development throughout the city, addressing elements of site development, mobility, and open space.
- **Place Types:** Provide additional land use, design characteristics, and building guidance for the mixed-use areas of the city, based on and identified by the following STEP analysis.

STEP Analysis

The framework strategy begins with an overarching analysis of the city’s existing land use, separating it into four high-level, guiding categories. The areas include places in Moorhead to strengthen, transform, enhance, and preserve—each describing varying levels of anticipated future transformation and change. The areas to strengthen, transform, enhance and preserve are shown in the map in Figure 1 and described below.

Strengthen – Places to strengthen represent areas to be improved through purposeful interventions. In most instances, these areas are shaped around retrofitting strip commercial development, older industrial areas, and other parts of the city that are or will become increasingly outmoded in the face of accelerating demographic, economic, and technological change. These areas represent a prime opportunity to harness growing market demand to create a new generation of walkable, mixed-use, mixed-income centers that offer opportunities to achieve greater walkability; a wider variety of diverse housing options; more and better local jobs; enhanced access to public spaces; and similar community benefits.

Areas to Strengthen:

- Commercial Centers
- Office parks
- Live-Work options

Transform –The primary place for transformation in the community is Downtown Moorhead. Downtown represents a prime opportunity to harness growing market demand and interest and create a renewed walkable, mixed-use, mixed-income center. The transformation of Downtown will allow for a more diverse housing options, a wider variety of jobs, enhanced public open spaces—particularly with new connections to the Red River, and new restaurant and retail options. Streetscape enhancements, safe pedestrian paths, and a range of mobility options, land uses and programmed activities will create a vibrant heart of the community and a central gathering place for residents and workers.

Areas to Transform:

- Downtown related land uses
- Expansion of the Downtown core

Enhance – Areas to Enhance include most of the city’s existing residential neighborhoods. Enhancements may introduce traffic calming measures on roadways; new connections to nearby walkable, mixed-use Activity Centers; improved bicycle or pedestrian infrastructure; or opportunities for new parks, open space, and tree canopy. In limited cases, some neighborhoods may benefit from small-scale, context-sensitive infill development that complements neighborhood character. Residential infill development, and redevelopment initiatives, in these neighborhoods should be focused on increasing the range of housing types and affordability for the city’s residents.

Areas to Enhance:

- Single-family detached
- Single-family attached
- Multifamily
- Light industrial
- Civic facilities

Preserve – Areas to preserve include public open space; private open spaces that represent important natural areas, includes valued natural resources, or offers important open space connections; and places that represent valued historic and cultural landmarks and resources. Together, these preservation areas represent a green and historic framework element that is important in defining the city’s character and quality. Change should be carefully managed to enhance the setting and protect the environmental quality of these areas and should largely be confined to park-related activities. Such an example could include trails and greenways that provide attractive, viable travel corridors for walking and biking. Where feasible, the City should acquire environmentally sensitive lands as an opportunity to enhance historic and cultural sites, parks, athletic fields, and nature.

Areas to Preserve:

- Parks/recreation
- Open space

Activity Centers

The Areas to Transform and Strengthen represent a significant opportunity for development of Moorhead’s undeveloped pockets together with redevelopment of outmoded strip retail, older industrial facilities, outmoded office buildings, and other sites ripe for redevelopment—and whose current development in most cases does not represent the City’s goals for its character and quality. Moorhead’s Activity Centers include the following three areas, which were identified throughout the planning process as location for future mixed-use development activity, with an emphasis on quality growth Downtown.

Downtown: Downtown Moorhead is the traditional core and heart of the community and is characterized by its many small, local businesses. Access to downtown is walkable to residents in nearby residential neighborhoods, with parking available to those that drive. Downtown will continue to serve as the center of Moorhead with a mobility hub that serves multiple means of transportation. Additional housing options will increase the ability for residents to live and work Downtown, as well as increase patronage of local businesses, parks, and events.

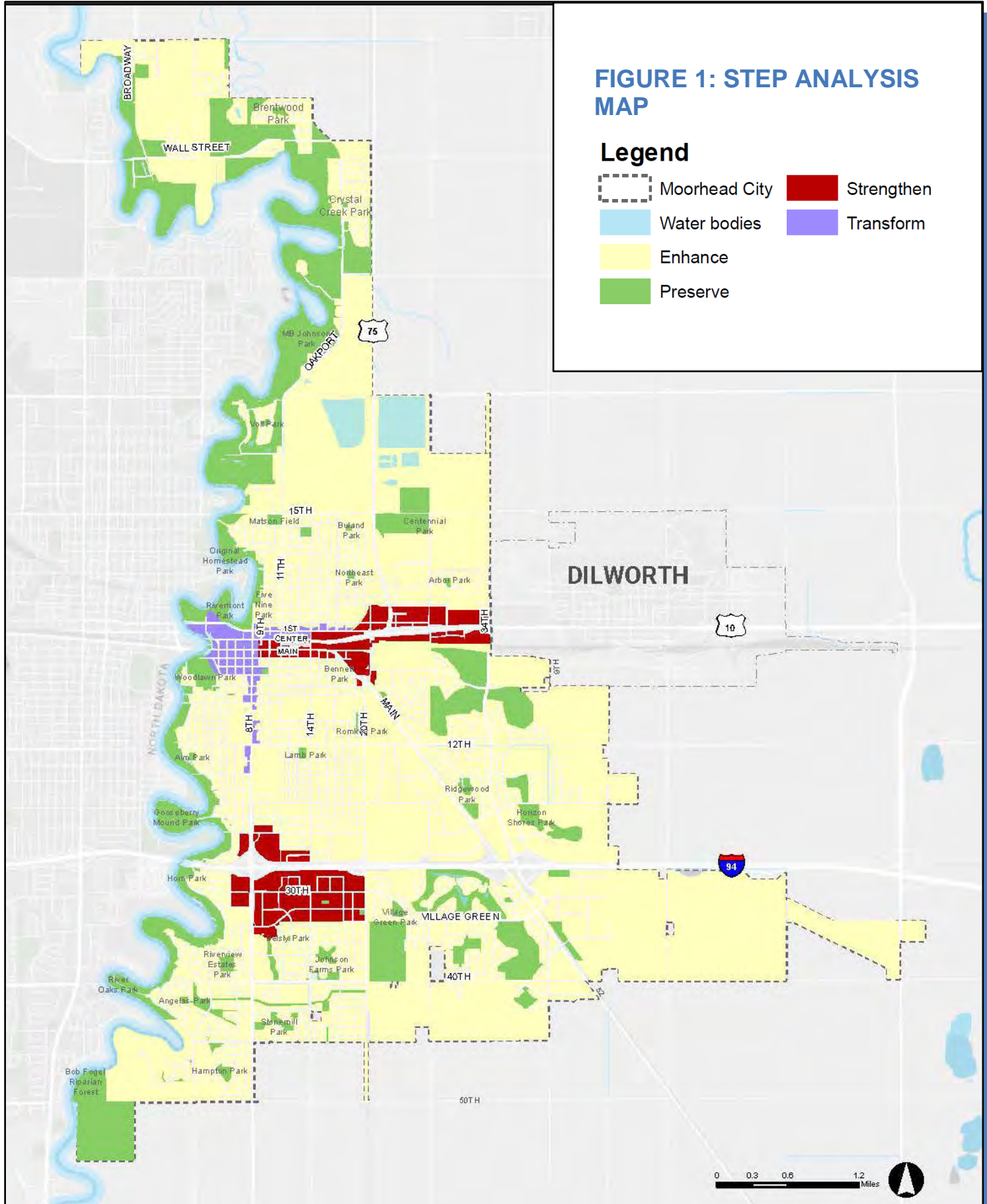
EasTen: This Activity Center encompasses the EasTen regional shopping center and is commercial in nature. Commercial development along Highway 10 includes a series of strip centers and big box stores, along with restaurants and retail services.

Holiday: This Activity Center encompasses the four quadrants at the interchange of Interstate 94 and 8th Street/Highway 75. This was one of the first commercial areas to develop after downtown and has good visibility from Interstate 94.

FIGURE 1: STEP ANALYSIS MAP

Legend

- Moorhead City
- Water bodies
- Enhance
- Preserve
- Strengthen
- Transform





Infill & Missing Middle Housing

Purposeful infill growth, in the form of well-planned and managed development, can play a critical role in enhancing existing neighborhoods and strengthening downtown—in large part by supporting their ability to adapt to the community’s changing needs and opportunities. “Missing Middle” housing types help fill the gap between traditional detached housing units and large multi-unit apartment or condominium buildings – generally including duplexes, triplexes, townhomes, and small apartment structures.

The market analysis for Moorhead illustrates that there will be a need for missing middle housing types over the next two decades, which can be accommodated primarily in the new Activity Centers (with guidance from the place types), but also as infill development in existing mature neighborhoods and along the community’s corridors. The incorporation of missing middle housing throughout the city – particularly in proximity to existing infrastructure and transit – provides a larger range of housing choice and offers increased affordability for a larger portion of the community.

Scale and form parameters are key to ensuring that missing middle housing supports the context of an area; it is not necessary to introduce large buildings in sensitive areas to create more housing options. Most of these missing middle types fit into structures that are a similar scale to existing housing: not more than 2.5 stories, no more than 55-75 ft. wide, and approximately 45-60 feet deep



Future Land Use Categories

The land use categories provide the primary guidance for development and redevelopment throughout the city—ultimately guiding the regulatory standards that will implement the goals of this plan. Residential and commercial land uses have been condensed following previous planning initiatives, with more specific guidance provided by design principles and place types that follow. Any areas for future growth, particularly the identified Mixed-Use districts, need to continue to be analyzed for sanitary sewer capacity. Any new development will also need to comply with zoning, stormwater management, and any other applicable regulations. Future land use descriptions are included below and their location is shown in Figure 2.

Low Density Residential: Low density residential is comprised of single-family homes with a density of 1 to 5 units per acre. Rural residential characterized by large lots; twinhomes, and duplexes may also fit into this category.

Medium Density Residential: Medium density residential is comprised of attached housing with a density of 5 to 9 units per acre. Examples include duplexes, triplexes, quadraplexes, attached townhomes, and manufactured homes. Many of the infill housing opportunities encouraged throughout the city are included in this land use category.

High Density Residential: High density residential describes housing that consists of up to 16 units per acre. This usually occurs with apartment buildings of two or more stories. Most housing of this nature is in or near downtown Moorhead or the college and university.

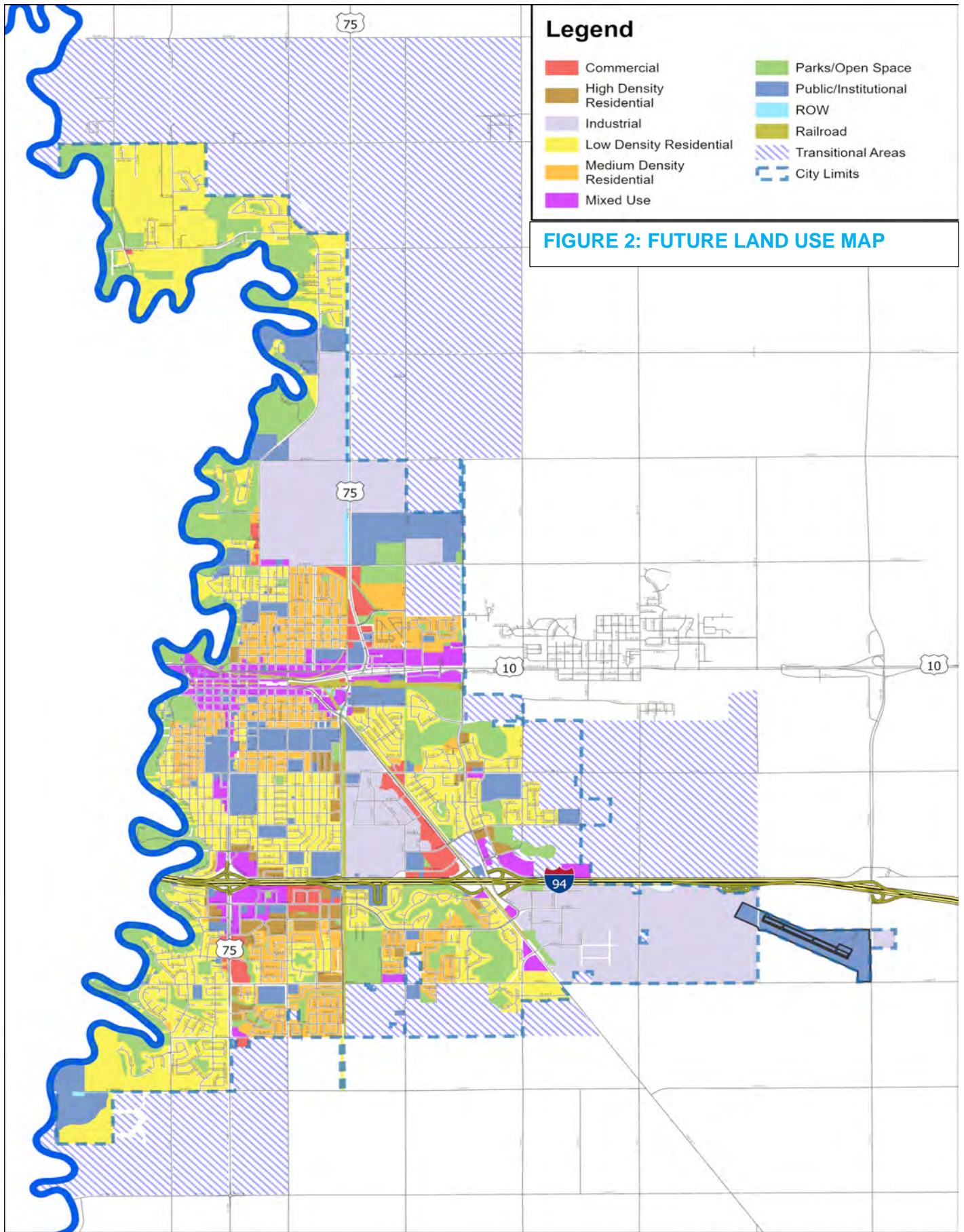
Commercial: Commercial includes a wide range of businesses that sell food, merchandise, entertainment, or professional services—including retail stores, restaurants, hotels, and professional offices.

Mixed-Use: Mixed-use includes areas that are comprised of more than one use and often include commercial and/or office uses on the ground floor and office and/or residential uses in upper floors. Place types in the Land Use and Community Design chapter provide greater guidance on site design, building form, and use in Mixed-Use areas.

Parks/Open Space: Parks describe municipal and county owned facilities such as playgrounds, ball fields and recreational trails. It also includes land which does not serve a recreational purpose but provides undisturbed natural areas for the community. Private recreational facilities, like the Moorhead Country Club, are also included.

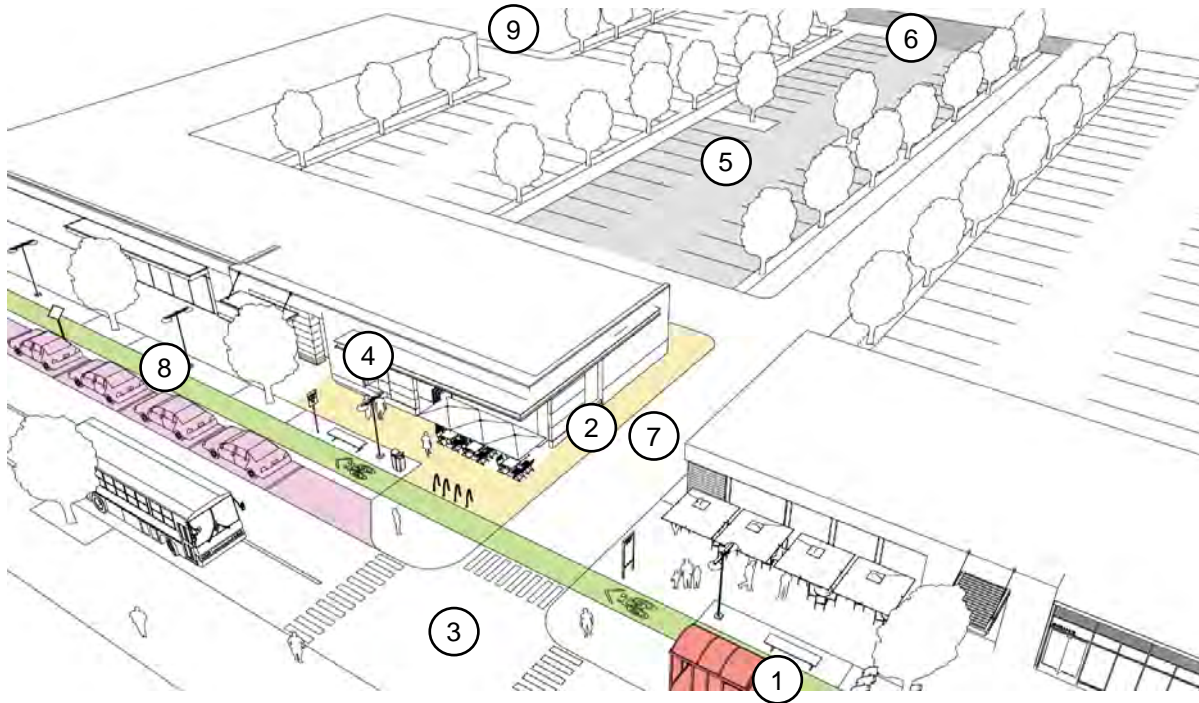
Public/Institutional: Public/Institutional refers to land owned by municipalities or counties. Facilities include libraries, fire stations, community pools, ice arenas and public power facilities. Institutional refers to land owned by institutions such as schools, religious institutions, hospitals and nursing homes.

Industrial: Industrial business describes facilities which manufacture or process food, goods or equipment. It also includes warehouses, repacking facilities and self-storage buildings. These businesses typically have little space devoted to displays and often do not sell directly to the general public. Industrial areas may include limited commercial uses.



Community Design Principles

Community design principles provide guidance for future development and redevelopment throughout Moorhead. While the principles are not prescriptive, they do provide overarching guidance for the new streets, open spaces, and buildings in the Activity Centers, corridors, and other redevelopment sites. They should serve as the basis for the review of development applications, revisions to or the development of future regulations, and as a signal to the community regarding the character and quality of development.



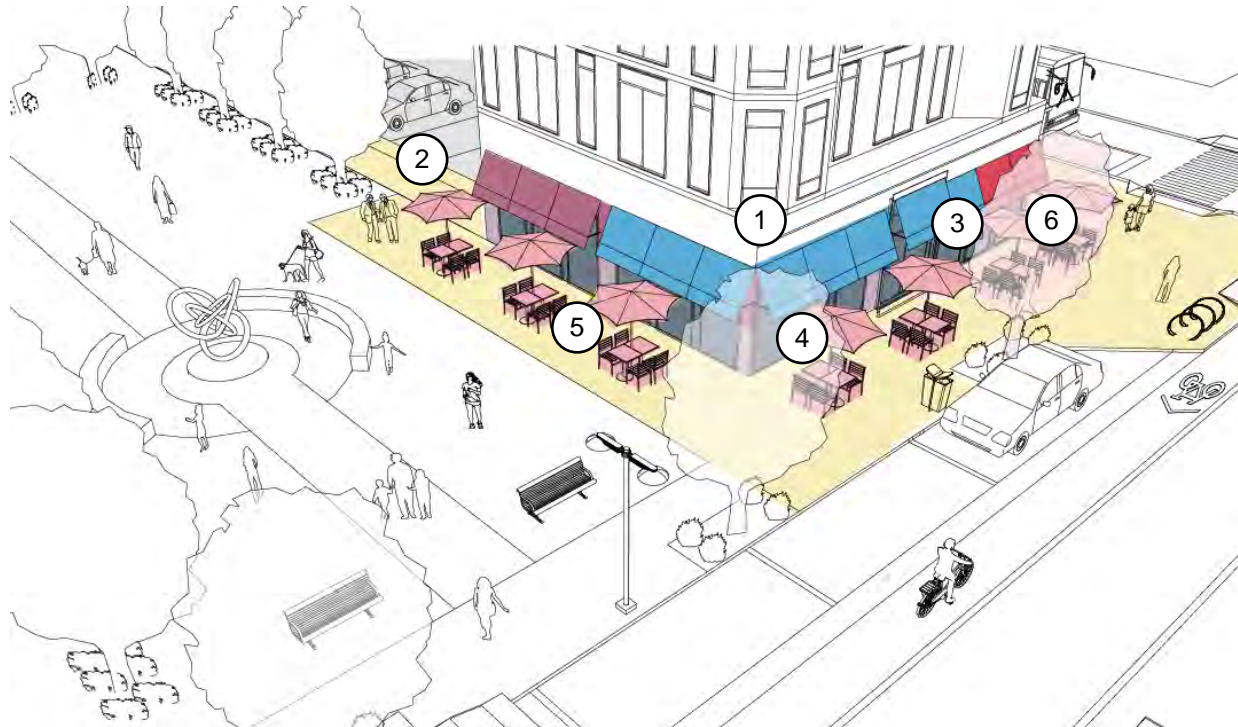
Mobility & Connectivity Principles

1. **Connectivity:** There are numerous opportunities to better connect Activity Centers and corridors to existing parks, neighborhoods, and amenities. Priority connections, including adequate sidewalks, trails, wayfinding, and bike lanes should be given to connecting to environmental assets, parks, public transit, and key community amenities.
2. **Building walkways:** An on-site pedestrian walkway system should be developed for all development and redevelopment. Walkways should provide a clearly delineated and safe path from parking areas to buildings, as well as between buildings.
3. **Scale and safety:** New streets should accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists wherever possible and create/enhance connections to neighborhoods and nearby amenities. If a new connection is shown but is not wide enough, appropriate right of way width should be provided to accommodate all modes.
4. **Wayfinding:** Wayfinding should be used to enhance connections and neighborhood identity.
5. **Parking lots:** Parking should be broken up into parking blocks that contain no more than 40 parking spaces. Parking blocks should be separated by landscape medians with street trees or green infrastructure (bioswales or raingardens) and oriented toward the buildings they serve.
6. **Intersection Parking:** Surface parking areas should not be located directly at the intersection of two thoroughfares. Intersections should preferably be defined by buildings and/or pedestrian amenities.
7. **Vehicle Entry Drives:** The number and width of vehicle entry areas into parking lots and driveways should be minimized to prioritize pedestrian traffic and safety; particularly along collector and arterial streets.
8. **On-street Parking:** On-street parking should be considered on new and existing street sections; consideration should be given to new streets in Activity Centers.
9. **Drive-throughs:** The inclusion of drive-throughs should be limited along corridors and in Activity Centers to help maintain a focus on pedestrians. If included, drive-throughs should be in the rear of development sites and should not front public streets or open spaces.



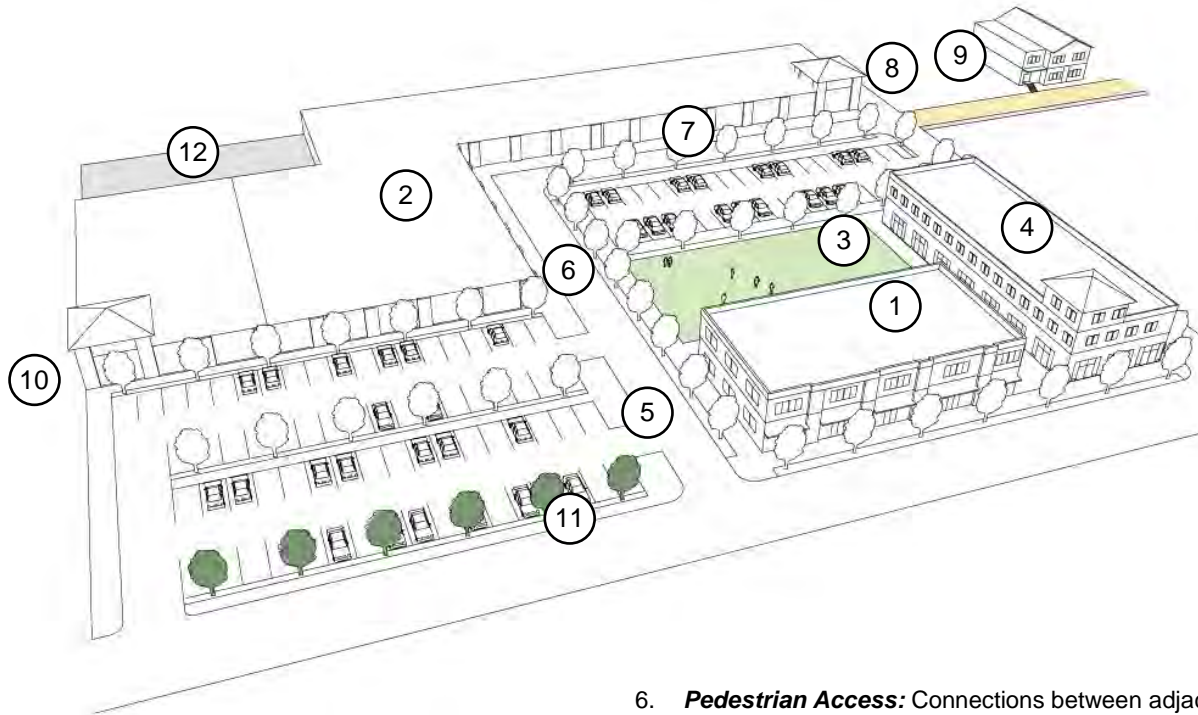
Parks & Open Space Principles

1. **Visible from the street:** Parks and green spaces/plazas intended to be publicly accessible need to be visible from the street, not enclosed by or behind buildings.
2. **Flexible use:** Public spaces must be designed to allow flexible use, including seating, lighting, and ideally a connection to retail or food close by. Incorporate programmable space in parks, with flexibility to provide 4-season experiences.
3. **Public art:** Public art and water elements make spaces inviting. Streetscapes and open spaces should incorporate public art, including state-of-the-art interactive digital public art that engages passersby, promotes informal interaction, and draws the creativity of the local arts community into the corridor.
4. **Native Plantings:** Promote the use of native plantings and include education around the ecological benefits. Low-impact design should be used to reduce impervious surfaces.
5. **Enhance comfort:** Design should enhance comfort, such as seating, shade trees, and shade structures. Wherever possible, offer seating options with back rests so people of all ages and abilities can sit comfortably, longer.
6. **Recreational and environmental purposes:** Open space should serve a dual purpose (e.g., stormwater management and recreation), wherever possible. However, maintenance is critical for keeping them attractive and functional.
7. **Maintenance and safety:** Maintenance and safety are important to maintaining the built environment and critical for keeping open spaces attractive and functional. Sidewalks and trails should be safe and inviting, and any missing segments should be completed as a priority. Interference with street trees, landscaping, and utilities should be avoided through careful planning and design—including the consideration of undergrounding utilities where feasible. Street trees should maintain clear-view triangles at intersections and driveway access points for pedestrian and vehicular safety.
8. **Scale:** The scale and comfort of open and public spaces should be maintained. Street trees should be installed in conjunction with new development. Other amenities within open spaces, including outdoor furniture and other design elements, should maintain a pedestrian scale.



Building & Site Development Principles

1. **Historic resources:** Property owners should be encouraged to pursue a National Register designation, followed by a local historic designation, for qualifying structures. Buffer areas should be created to protect historic districts and to maintain appropriate size, massing, and building setbacks within the area.
2. **Surface parking:** Site design should minimize the amount of surface parking and hide any surface parking from view of public spaces to the greatest extent practical. Additionally, trash and recycling dumpsters should be hidden from public view through building design and/or enclosures.
3. **Building orientation:** The active wall of buildings (those frontages with the most storefronts, public entrances, and windows) should be oriented toward the primary access street, an internal main street, or the active frontage of another building.
4. **Setbacks:** Site design should prioritize buildings along the setback line of new streets, as opposed to parking. When space in the right-of-way is limited, building setbacks should serve as an extension of the sidewalk and public realm.
5. **Seating:** Outdoor seating areas should be included along walkways and adjacent to restaurant/retail buildings. A cluster of buildings may include a pedestrian plaza or delineated outdoor pedestrian area.
6. **Ground-floor retail:** Along primary street frontages, ground floors should be dedicated to retail (including restaurants, cafés, etc.) and/or other activities that improve the street-level environment including arts, culture (including museum), entertainment and civic uses such as a library or other community-serving activities that animate streets and public spaces. Ground floor uses that spill out into the public realm (e.g., restaurants, cafés) should front actively used public spaces. Each separately leased ground floor space should have at least one public entrance on each street and civic space it abuts and maintain a ground floor transparency (windows) of 50% - 75%. Secondary street frontages should maintain 25% - 50% first floor transparency when abutting public streets and open spaces. Ground floor uses should be dedicated to uses that animate the street front, but may also include elements such as display windows, culturally interpretive displays, and artwork.



Principles for Redevelopment Sites

1. **Development Patterns:** Buildings should provide logical arrangements that define outdoor pedestrian space and provide an arrangement of buildings that help to define streets as public space and parking areas.
2. **Land Use:** Retrofitted or redeveloped strip centers should allow for a flexible range of uses. Uses should range from the addition of small retail kiosks and food trucks to higher density residential and mixed-use buildings. The scale of new development should be compatible with adjacent uses with effective transitions and/or screening.
3. **Open Space:** Public open space should be provided in conjunction with infill or redevelopment of strip centers. Depending on the scale of the project, a range of open spaces should be applied (e.g., small plaza to neighborhood green). Open space should be visibly and physically accessible and allow for a range of activities.
4. **Building Orientation:** Commercial and residential buildings should be arranged to define streetscapes and open space. Active building frontages should be oriented toward a common street or common open space to increase accessibility walkability.
5. **Parking:** Where possible, parking should be located to the rear or side of new buildings to reduce street- or thoroughfare-facing parking. Landscape islands should be included in parking lots to minimize the impact of parking and to increase tree canopy and impervious area.

6. **Pedestrian Access:** Connections between adjacent nonresidential development parcels and residential neighborhoods should be provided by siting access points continuous to the adjacent development.
7. **Vehicle Access:** Vehicle access and circulation in commercial developments should provide for an interconnected street network. Access points along thoroughfares should be reduced and consolidated concurrent with new development to provide safe vehicular and pedestrian environments.
8. **Connectivity:** The street system internal to a strip development should connect to the perimeter public street system to provide for both intra- and inter-neighborhood connections. Clear and delineated pedestrian connections and sidewalks should be developed from parking locations.
9. **Transitions:** Transitions from strip shopping centers to adjacent residential development should use adequate setbacks, green spaces and/or landscaping, natural features, or similar land use and scale elements to create a cohesive connection.
10. **Drive-throughs:** Drive-throughs should be compatible with the development that they are located within and integrated into the overall building development scheme. Access should be from drives/streets that are internal to the development. Drive-throughs should be sited away from primary building frontages and open space or screened from view when not feasible.
11. **Landscaping:** The perimeter of strip centers should include landscaping (street trees and shrubs) and green infrastructure (bioswales or raingardens) to ease the transition to adjacent uses, increase the city's tree canopy, and improve permeability for stormwater. Landscaping should also be used to screen the view of parking from adjacent uses and the street.
12. **Service and Loading Access:** Strip centers should have a clear and consolidated service and loading that is located away from primary building entries and pedestrian areas where feasible.

Place Types

To further guide future development within the Activity Centers (areas to Strengthen and Transform), as well as along corridors, place types provide more specific recommendations and design guidance for the land use mix, building heights and massing, density, building/parking disposition, and general development character for development and redevelopment. Most of the future development or redevelopment should be directed to the Activity Centers and along existing corridors, using the place types for high-level design guidance. On street parking needs within each place type will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

The following place types are based on input from the market analysis and guide the type and amount of growth anticipated in Moorhead for the next 10 years. The place type locations are shown in Figure 3.

1. Moorhead Center
2. Downtown Mixed-use
3. Neighborhood Commercial
4. Neighborhood Residential
5. Corridor Mixed-use

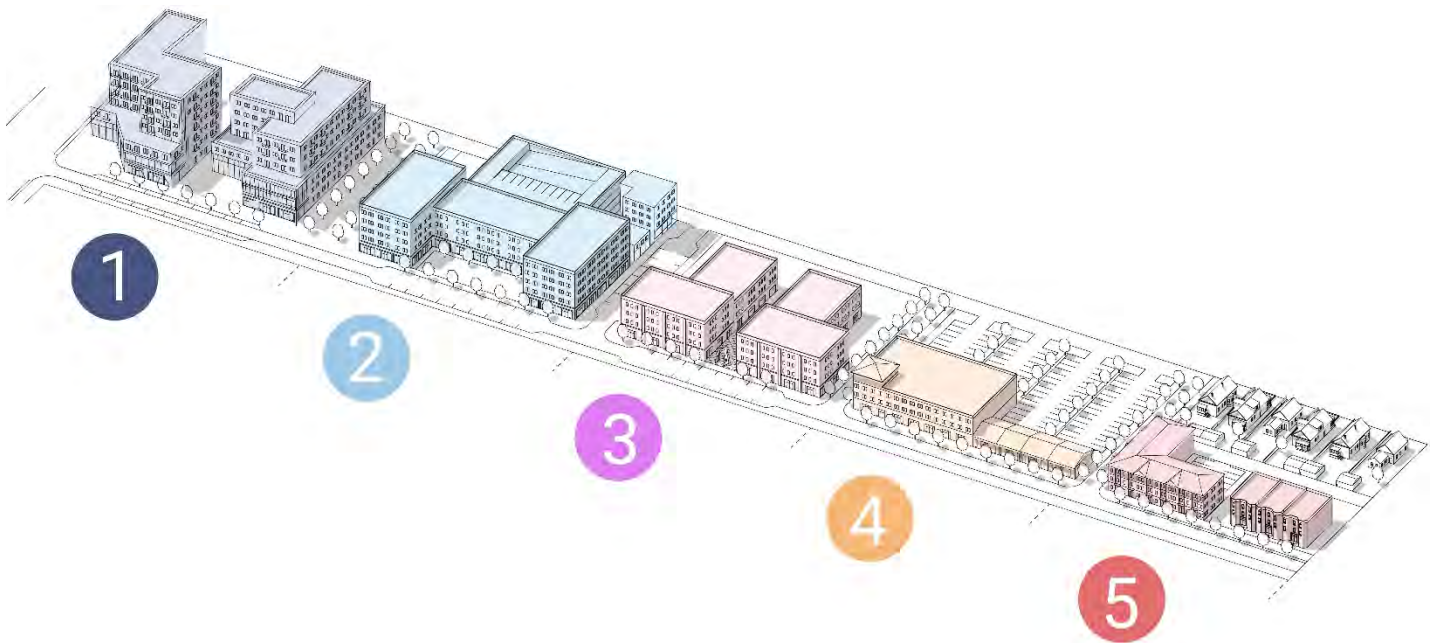
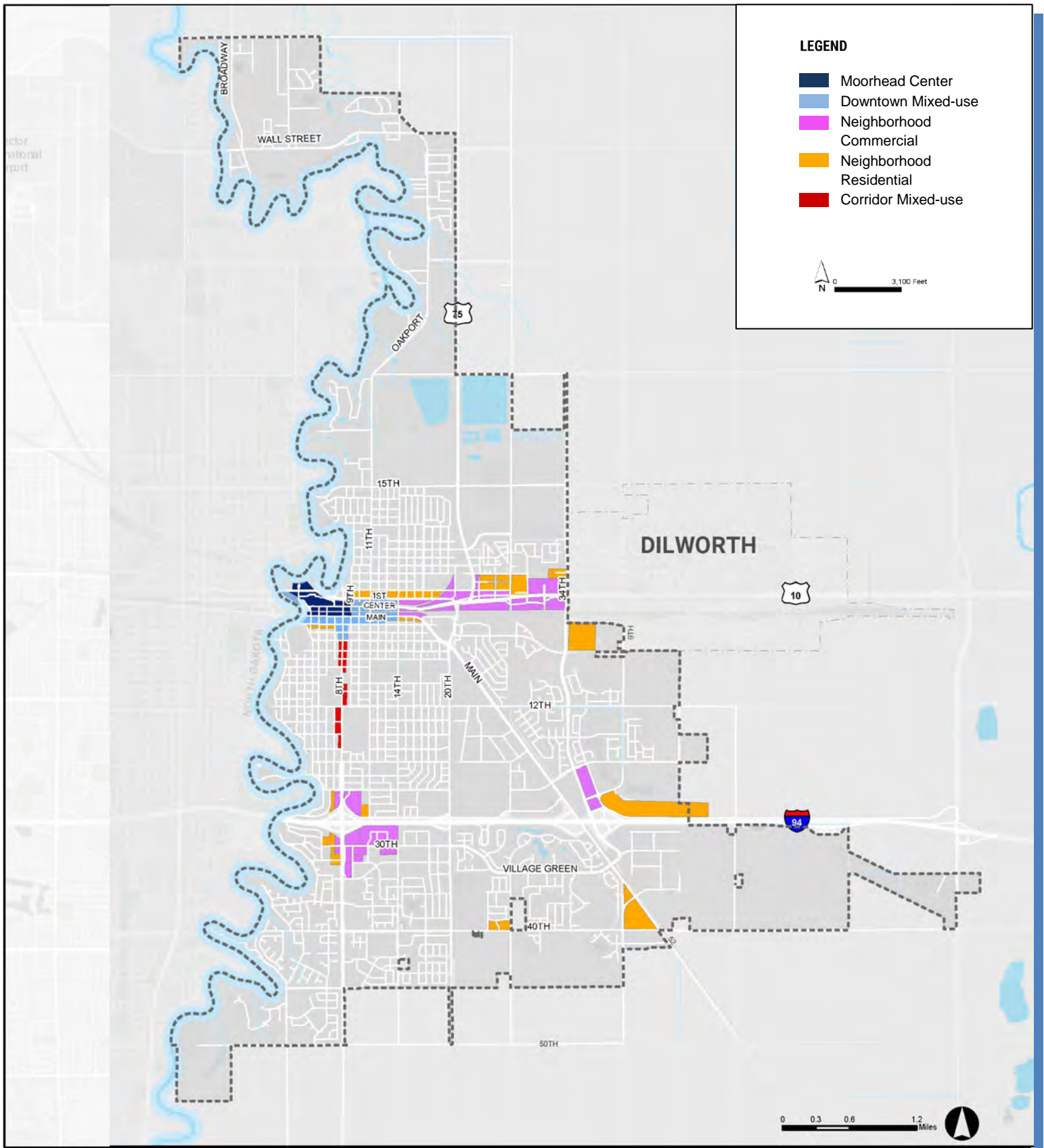
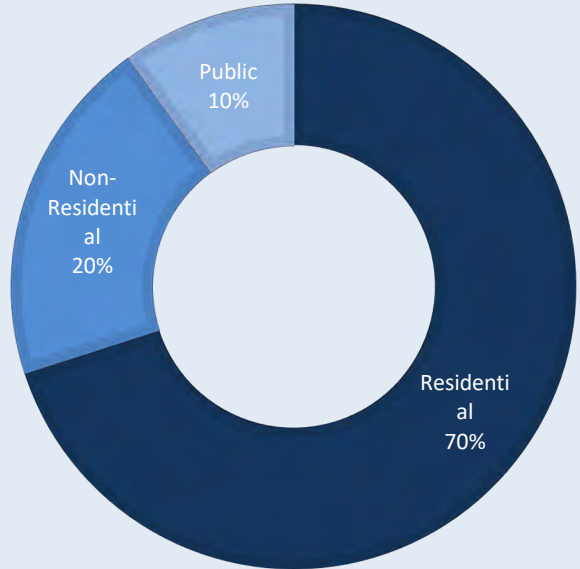


FIGURE 3: PLACE TYPES MAP



Moorhead Center

The Moorhead Center place type reinforces and builds upon the existing character of downtown Moorhead. It is reserved for the densest portions of the Moorhead Center Mall site and its surroundings, encouraging a mix of uses to create the civic and cultural heart of the community. Streetscapes are pedestrian-friendly and encourage a range of mobility options. Restaurants, retail, and public spaces enliven the district with direct connections to the Red River and downtown.



Building Height
7 Stories, 80 Feet
(up to 20' First Floor)

70% Res. / 20% Non-Res. / 10% Public

Preferred Use Mix:

- Primary
 - Multifamily, Hotel
 - Retail Commercial, Office
- Complementary
 - Live/Work
 - Civic, Institutional

Density

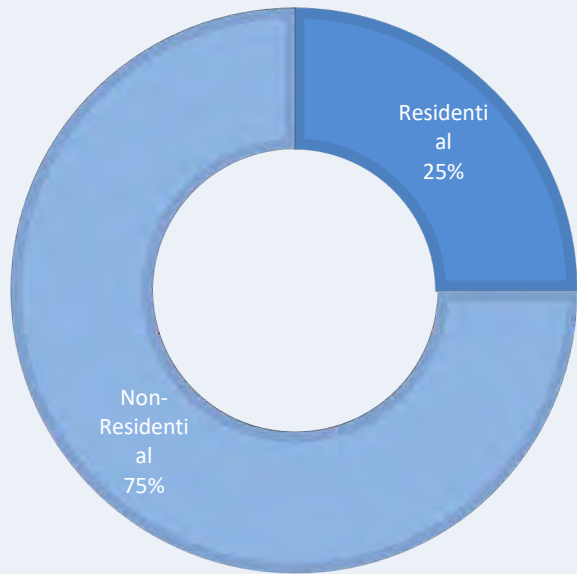
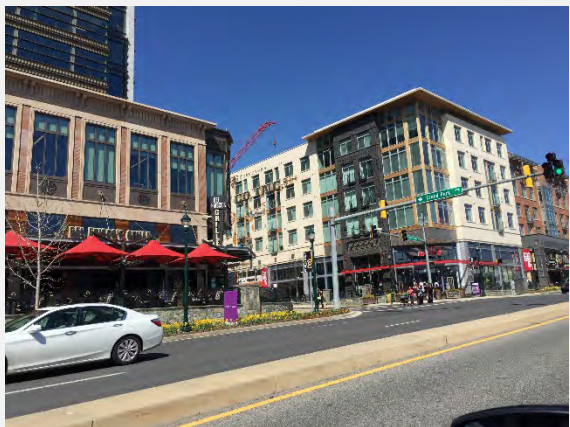
Max FAR: 2.0
DU/Acre: 55 to 75

Street Characteristics

Pedestrian Zone: 12-16 ft
Travel Zone:
1 lane in each direction
10-11 ft travel lanes

Downtown Mixed-use

This place type reinforces Downtown’s role as the historic heart of Moorhead. Walkable, pedestrian-friendly commercial destinations are supported by multifamily residential in a vibrant mix of uses that will continue to bolster downtown’s role. Retail includes a mix of local business owners and restaurants while new residential development provides housing choice. Parking should allow patrons to park once prior to accessing downtown’s amenities.



Building Height

5 Stories, 60 Feet
(up to 20' First Floor)
(1 bonus floor/70')

75% Non-Res./25% Res.

Preferred Use Mix:

Primary

- Multifamily, Hotel
- Retail Commercial, Office

Complementary

- Live/Work, Townhomes
- Public/Semi-Public, Institutional

Density

Max FAR: 1.5

DU/Acre: 48 to 60

Street Characteristics

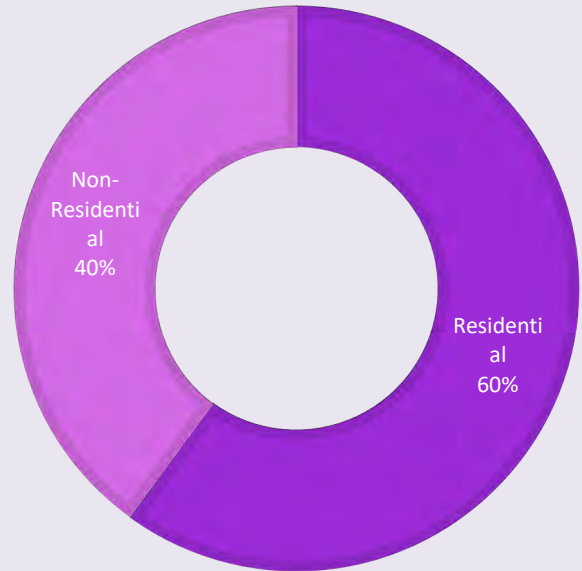
Pedestrian Zone: 8-12 ft

Travel Zone:

1-2 lanes in each direction
10-11 ft travel lanes

Neighborhood Commercial:

Neighborhood Commercial contains various neighborhood-serving retail and service uses and a mix of medium- to high-density residential uses; generally, in a shopping center format. These centers typically include grocery stores, drug stores or other small to medium-sized anchors oriented to surrounding neighborhoods. Residential uses support clustered retail development with an emphasis on adjacent public spaces—including plazas and pocket parks—to create vibrant neighborhood gathering places.



Building Height
5 Stories, 60 feet

60% Res./40% Non-Res.

Preferred Use Mix:

Primary

- Multifamily
- Retail Commercial

Complementary

- Townhomes, Hotel, Live/Work
- Office

Density

Max FAR: 1.5

DU/Acre: 24 to 36

Street Characteristics

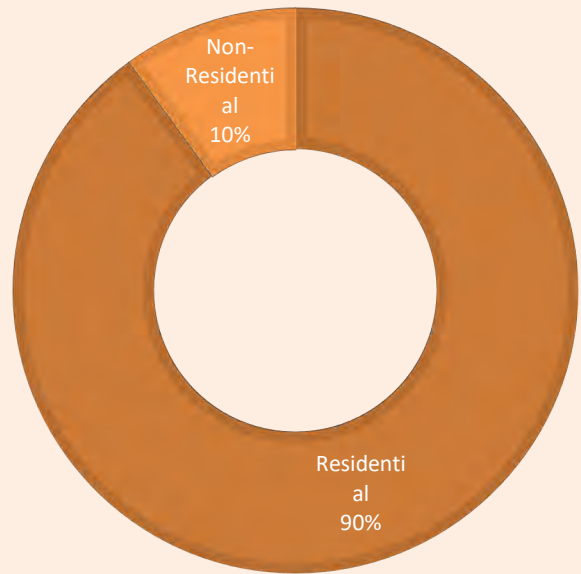
Pedestrian Zone: 8-12 ft

Travel Zone:

1-2 lanes in each direction
10-12 ft travel lanes

Neighborhood Residential

Neighborhood Residential provides opportunities for a mix of housing types including multifamily residences and townhomes. A small portion of retail provides the basic daily needs of residents and may be located near neighborhood public space to create destination locations. Residential setbacks vary to allow door yards or forecourts for medium density uses.



Building Height
4 Stories, 50 feet

90% Res./10% Non-Res.

Preferred Use Mix:

- Primary
 - Detached Residential, Townhomes
 - Retail Commercial
- Complementary
 - Multifamily, Live/Work

Density

Max FAR: -
DU/Acre: 12 to 24

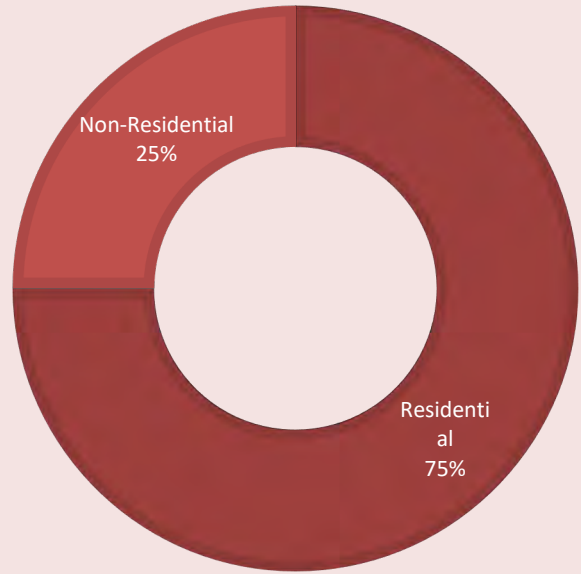
Street Characteristics

Pedestrian Zone: 6-10 ft

Travel Zone:
1-2 lanes in each direction
10-12 ft travel lanes

Corridor Mixed-use

Corridor mixed-use place types are dedicated to auto-oriented corridors and provide a mix of medium- to high-density residential uses and various neighborhood-serving retail and service uses. Standards should ensure harmonious development adjacent to existing residential neighborhoods and building types should take into consideration shallow lots and proximity to heavily traveled streets. Buildings along corridors should generally be two to three stories with setbacks that vary along street edges and open spaces. Connections and transitions to adjacent uses should be considered.



Building Height

3 stories, 35 feet
(1 bonus floor/45')

75% Non-Res./25% Non-Res.

Preferred Use Mix:

Primary

- Multifamily
- Retail Comm., Office

Complementary

- Townhomes, Hotel
- Civic

Density

Max FAR: 1.0

DU/Acre: 18 to 24

Street Characteristics

Pedestrian Zone: 6-10 ft

Travel Zone:
2 lanes in each direction
11-12 ft travel lanes

GOALS AND STRATEGIC POLICIES

Goal 1.1 Create attainable housing opportunities and options with easy access to daily needs and services.

- a) Promote and support the integration of affordable and workforce housing as integral components of neighborhoods, mixed-use districts, and downtown.
- b) Establish mixed-use and residential districts that provide a full range of housing options and sizes within walking or biking distance of amenities, including open space, retail, restaurants, and transit.
- c) Increase allowable residential densities to support a wider range of housing types where feasible in residential districts.
- d) Incorporate 'missing middle' housing and multifamily housing in mixed-use districts, near campuses, and in other areas of the community with medium to high density housing choices.



Goal 1.2 Encourage mixed-use and infill development.

- a) Proactively rezone and establish mixed-use districts in the I-94/8th Street South quadrants (Holiday), EasTen, and along portions of 8th Street near downtown and the campuses.
- b) Support development in mixed-use districts through financial and regulatory tools while placing a priority on incentives for mixed-use development in downtown.
- c) Direct future infill and mixed-use development toward downtown to encourage the critical mass necessary to create a complete vibrant neighborhood.



Goal 1.3 Preserve and enhance existing residential neighborhoods.

- a) Establish policies and design standards for where and how infill development is constructed in residential neighborhoods to promote compatible uses, necessary infrastructure capacity, appropriate transitions, and the establishment of complete neighborhoods.
- b) Develop and disseminate educational resources to residents that promote constructive community engagement and communicate the City's goals, procedures, and commitment to the protection and enhancement of neighborhoods.
- c) Evaluate and prioritize improvements that will improve connectivity within and between neighborhoods, parks and trails, and downtown/commercial areas.

Goal 1.4 Continue to evaluate and provide guidance for land use decisions.

- a) Institute a periodic review system to maintain the guidance in this Comprehensive Plan.
- b) Develop and adopt regulations that implement the land use place types and design principles in the Comprehensive Plan.
- c) Ensure subdivision regulations and land development codes outline requirements for street trees, landscaping, green infrastructure and sidewalks/paths with each new development.
- d) Ensure that environmental and ecological considerations govern land use decisions



Goal 1.5 Align land use strategies with economic development priorities.

- a) Support the location and concentration of housing, jobs, and retail to create synergy and vibrant commercial districts.
- b) Support entrepreneurial and small business growth and retention by collaborating with Downtown Moorhead Inc., Moorhead Business Association (MBA), and the Small Business Development Center and their efforts to assist businesses.
- c) Explore the implementation of a regional recreational hub within Moorhead.

Economic Competitiveness

ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS

Moorhead has a solid economic foundation. It is a growing city in terms of population, jobs, and new development. It is integrated within an economically diverse region with a strong set of base industries, higher education being a strong economic contribution from the Moorhead side of the river. The presence of college educators and students also contributes to the city's youthful energy, its creative economy, and its innovation economy. Moorhead has natural and recreational amenities with a long riverfront and strong park system. It has a downtown center and the collective will to build on its identity and vibrancy.



Offutt School of Business (Credit: Concordia College)



Red River (Credit: Fargo-Moorhead Convention and Visitors Bureau)

These economic assets and others provide a strong basis for focus and action. Multiple avenues can be pursued for the following:

- To build Moorhead's base economy
- To invigorate and demonstrate its creative and innovative energy
- To enhance the vibrancy of downtown
- To support local businesses and entrepreneurial initiatives,
- To attract new industrial investment
- To foster redevelopment at key locations

This chapter provides information on Moorhead's economic context. It summarizes the economic findings and guidance from past plans and it offers a set of goals and strategic policies to guide Moorhead's efforts in the coming years.

ECONOMIC OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

Population and Employment Growth

Population and employment growth are both indicators and drivers of economic growth. As noted in an earlier chapter, Moorhead's population has grown in recent decades, growing by around 14 percent between 2010 and 2020. It is projected to continue to grow through 2045, per a 2017 demographic forecast study prepared by MetroCOG.

Employment in Moorhead has also grown, although at a more modest rate. Employment increased by around 3 percent between 2010 and 2017.

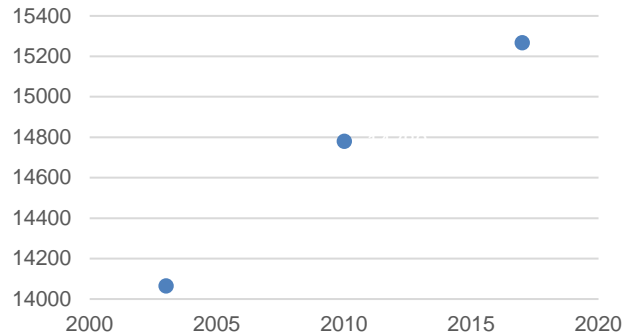
Employment Geography

Around 10,400 people live outside of Moorhead and come to Moorhead to work. Around 14,700 live in Moorhead and work elsewhere.

A map of the employment landscape in Figure 4 shows the locations of jobs and begins to highlight the industry mix in Moorhead. A central employment district is evident encompassing the two colleges, Concordia College and Minnesota State University Moorhead, as well as the commercial area around downtown Moorhead. American Crystal Sugar is also a large employer in the northern portion of the city. A southern employment district is centered on the commercial district in the I-94 and 8th Street interchange—including an area of focus in this plan called the Holiday Area. The employment district in the southeast part of the city is the MCCARA Industrial Park—the location of many commercial and industrial businesses.

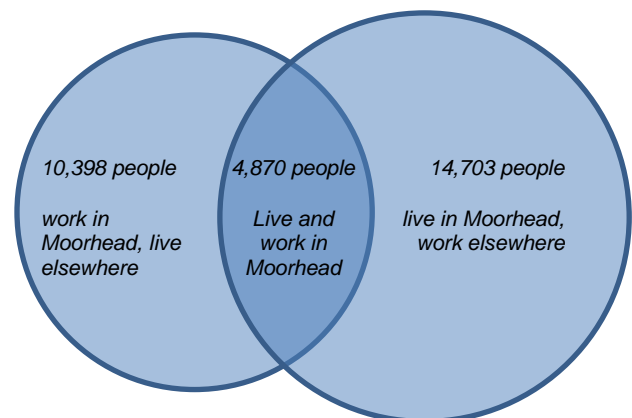
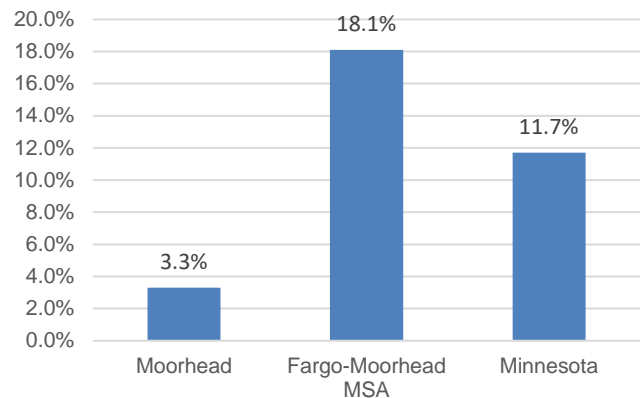
Employment Growth in Moorhead since 2003

(Source: OnTheMap, US Census)



Comparative Employment Growth

(Source: OnTheMap, US Census)



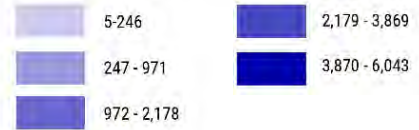
Employment Inflow Outflow

(Source: OnTheMap, US Census Bureau)

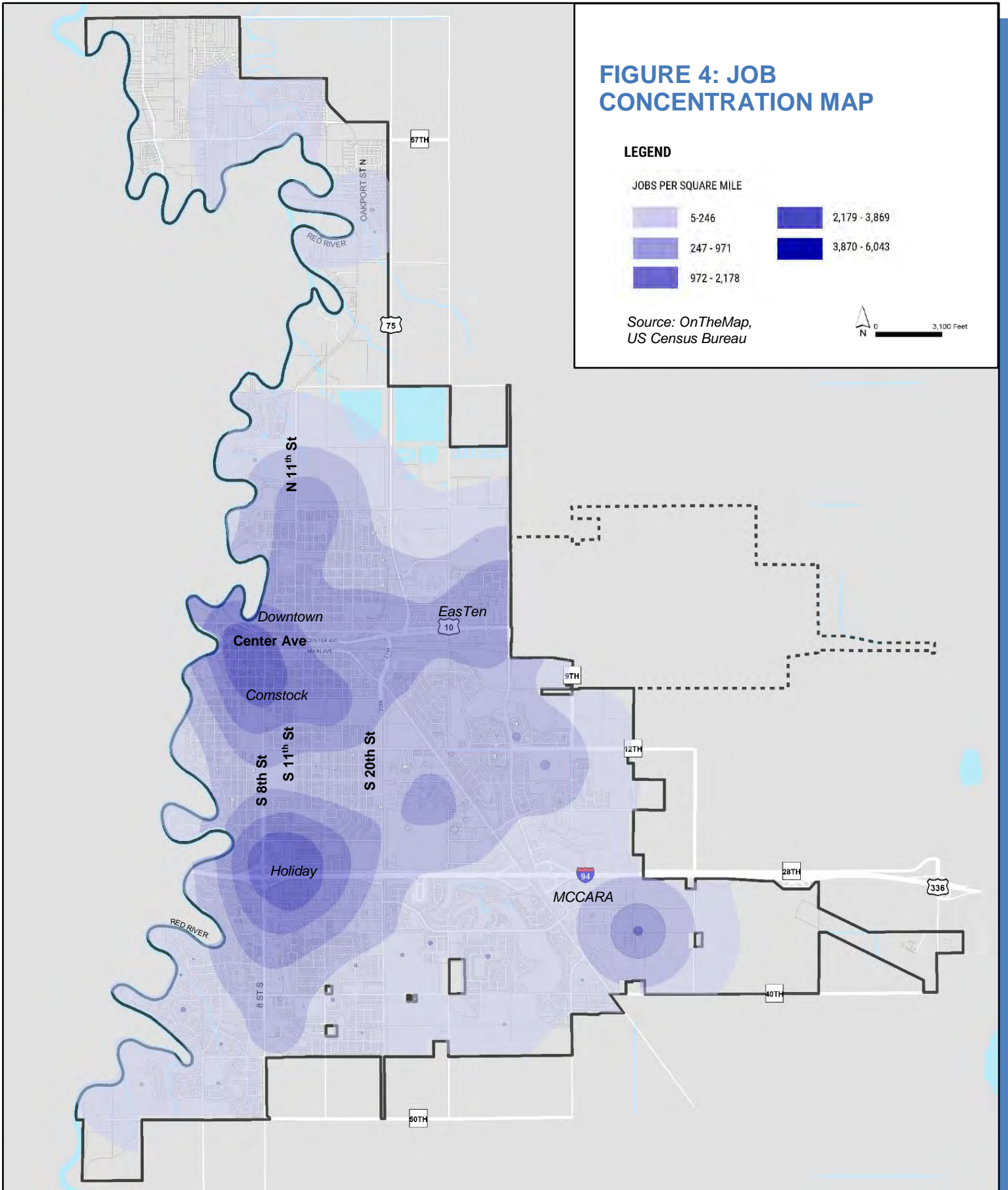
FIGURE 4: JOB CONCENTRATION MAP

LEGEND

JOBS PER SQUARE MILE



Source: OnTheMap,
US Census Bureau



Economic Drivers and Industry Mix

Moorhead is an anchor community in the robust and growing Fargo-Moorhead region. The region is powered by five key economic segments, based on an industrial park positioning study⁶ conducted for the City of Moorhead.

- **Agriculture.** The region is an agriculture service and processing center for the surrounding farming communities.
- **Higher education.** The region attracts students and faculty for education and training at four area colleges.
- **Manufacturing.** The region hosts a diverse set of manufacturers producing products in industries such as agriculture, construction, energy, and transportation.
- **Energy development.** The region provides products and services in support of the petroleum industry.
- **Consumer related retail and services.** Fargo and Moorhead provide destination retail stores and services for a broad geography.

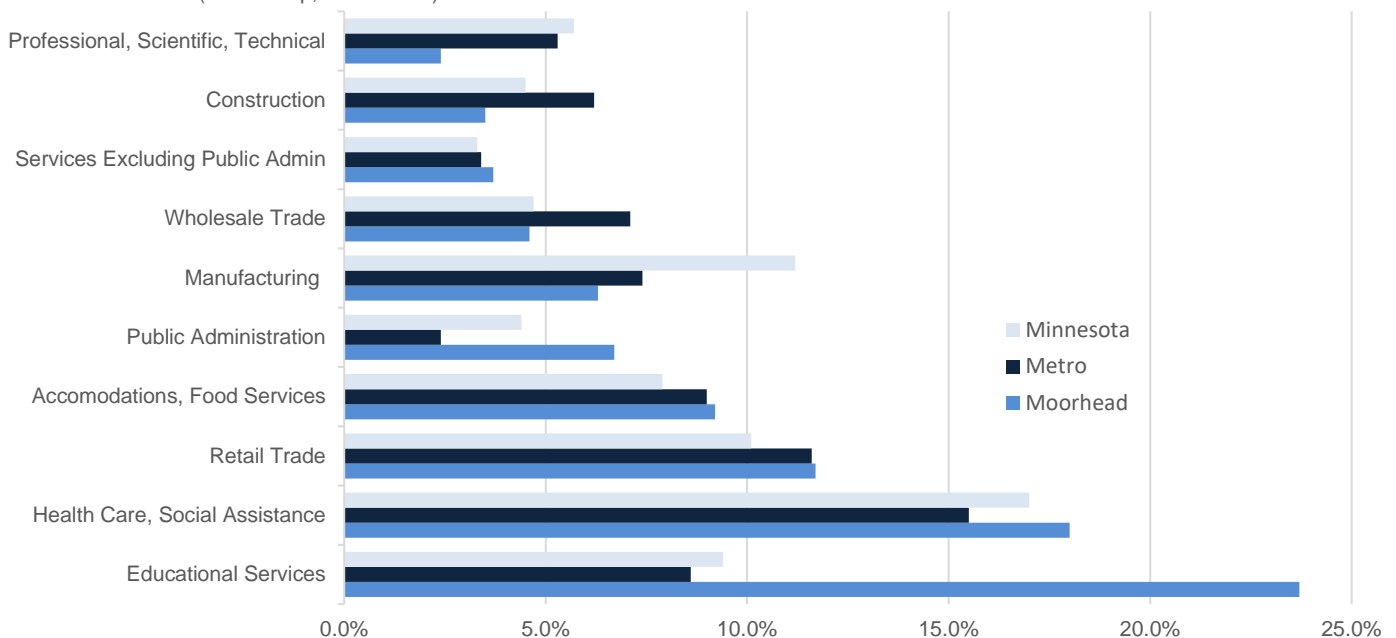
As existing regional strengths, these industry sectors are a strong anchor for the region and provide a diversified base economy. They represent opportunities for further attraction and retention of businesses. Among the five, higher education is the strongest sector in Moorhead. Almost 24 percent of Moorhead jobs are in Educational Services, compared with only 9 percent of jobs in Minnesota as a whole. Enrollment at MSUM is around 7,500 while 2,000 students are enrolled at Concordia College and 2,300 at MState.

Moorhead has several strong employment sectors that are additional to the five key drivers. They include:

- Health Care and Social Assistance
- Retail Trade
- Accommodation and Food Services
- Public Administration

Taken together, the education sector and the four bulleted sectors represent around 69 percent, or over 2/3, of all jobs in Moorhead. A chart of the top 10 industry sectors, ranked by percentage of total jobs, is shown in below.

Comparative Employment Growth
(OnTheMap, US Census)



⁶ City of Moorhead Industrial Park Positioning Strategy (<https://www.cityofmoorhead.com/home/showdocument?id=2341>), Oct 2014

Housing Development

The most robust development sector in Moorhead is housing. Moorhead’s housing stock is estimated to have grown almost 17 percent between 2010 and 2020. Steady growth has also occurred in detached home development, averaging around 140 new homes per year between 2010 and 2020.

Housing Forecast

Moorhead’s projected household growth, shown in the chart below, implies a demand for around 280 housing units per year for the next ten years. If existing rental/ownership patterns hold, that equates to a demand of 109 rental housing units per year—a number that closely matches the apartment production between 2010 and 2020.

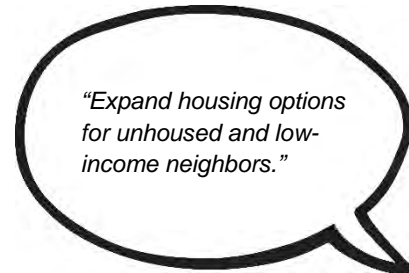
Intentional efforts may be required to ensure that the housing mix accommodates people at all income levels and life stages.

Commercial Development

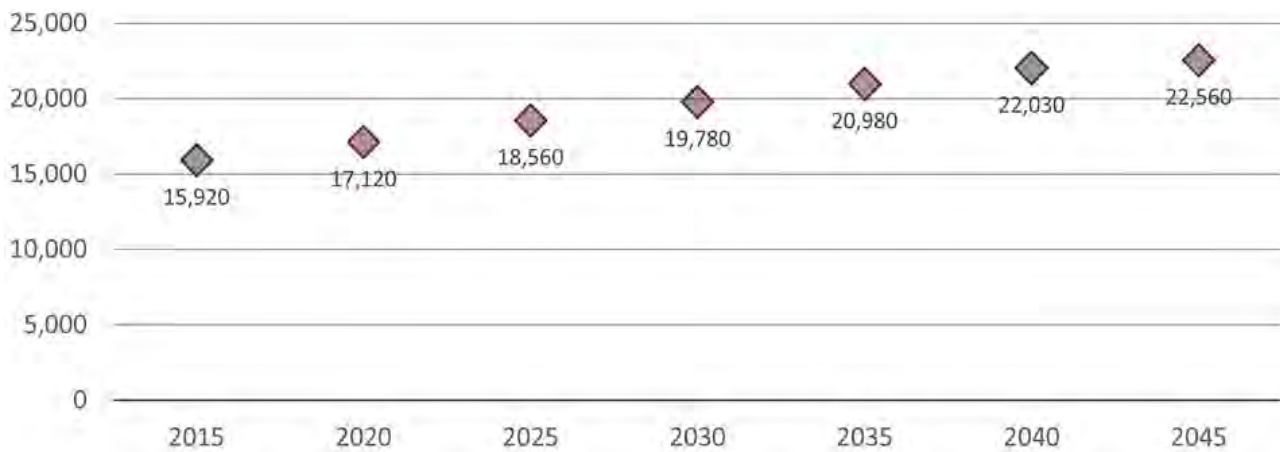
Commercial development has occurred in each development sector over the last decade. The table on the next page discusses types of retail and office commercial development and their status in Moorhead.



Block E (Credit: EPIC Companies)



Household Projections in Moorhead (Source: Demographic Forecast Study for the FM Metropolitan Area, KLJ Consultants, June 2017)



Commercial Development Since 2010 by Sector

Source: City of Moorhead Assessor Data

		New properties	2022 Inventory	Change in inventory since 2010	
Retail	<p>The Fargo-Moorhead metropolitan area serves as a regional center for shopping and retail services for a broad surrounding area. Finding a comparable selection of store offerings would require a 200-mile drive west to Bismarck, a 175-mile drive southeast to St. Cloud, or a 220-mile drive north to Winnipeg.</p> <p>Moorhead offers two of the largest shopping centers by floor area in the area—the EasTen Mall and the Moorhead Center Mall—in addition to quite a few neighborhood retail centers and a walkable retail district in downtown Moorhead.</p> <p>Store based retail is suffering from many macroeconomic factors, including the growing share of purchases made through online retailers. Nevertheless, growth in Moorhead's retail inventory was around 150,000 square feet over the decade. The largest retail development was a combination Hornbacher's grocery store and retail mall that was constructed in 2015 at the 8th Street/40th Ave S intersection.</p>	8	1,292,091 sqft	150,691 sqft	13.2%
Office	<p>Some office developments occurred over the decade—the most significant being the offices in the Sanford Medical Center. The total office floor area increased by about 15 percent.</p>	19	1,728,126 sqft	233,660 sqft	15.6%
Industrial	<p>Most growth over the 10-year period was seen in the industrial sector. A 15.9% increase in the overall industrial floor area and 121 new industrial buildings were constructed. The well positioned MCCARA Industrial Park is attractive for new industrial development because of its suitable land, utility provision, and great accessibility to the regional transportation network.</p>	121	4,353,454 sqft	583,591 sqft	15.9%
Hospitality	<p>The COVID-19 pandemic hit Moorhead's hotels and restaurants hard. Prior to 2020, one new hotel was constructed in the last decade—the Microtel Hotel in 2014 at the I-94/8th Street interchange. We did not have data for how many restaurants have closed but there have been a few during pandemic.</p>	8	594,428 sqft	59,590 sqft	11.1%

Past Plan Guidance

Economic policies and strategies have been adopted in previous Moorhead plans and strategic documents. Key excerpts from two of those sources are noted in this section. This section also highlights current thinking and fresh trends in economic development which have informed this Economic Competitiveness chapter.

Past Plans

A recent strategic planning process led to the 2018 adoption of the Strategic Plan. This is a pivotal document for establishing a set of priority economic strategies for the City of Moorhead. Some economic competitiveness strategies for Moorhead were also noted in the 2004 Comprehensive Plan.

Strategic Plan (2018)

The Strategic Plan document was developed by staff based on direction from the City Council and input from subject matter experts (plus planning and technical committees). It offers a framework for prioritizing and tackling issues of high strategic importance to the City of Moorhead. The “Strategic Initiatives and Goals” make up the strategic plan and the “Objectives and Tasks” are considered the operational plans. This document includes a more explicit focus on Moorhead’s economy than other recently adopted policies or plans. Of the seven strategic initiatives, one of them, titled “Economy” is specifically about strategies related to Moorhead’s economy. It and others, including “Identity” and “Partnerships,” are also important for building Moorhead’s economic competitiveness.

The Economic Strategic Initiative includes the following descriptor. “Expand economic opportunity by creating a climate which enables our community to thrive.” It includes five goals.

1. Ensure State and Local Policies Address Border City Disparities
2. Target Public Investments and Policies That Promote Private Investments to Create a Vibrant and Dense Downtown
3. Ensure That the Quality of Life in Moorhead is Attractive and Remains Competitive in the Fargo-Moorhead Metro Area
4. Promote an Environment for Businesses to Prosper
5. Develop Sustainable and Economic Methods for Retention or Sale of City Properties

More specific objectives are identified under each of these strategic initiatives.

Comprehensive Plan for the City of Moorhead, Minnesota (2004)

The 2004 Comprehensive Plan includes a set of seven recommended Economic Development Initiatives.

1. Establish a business call program or a system of regular meetings with existing businesses to explore needs and future opportunities through individual meetings and group forums
2. Meet with local realtors and site selectors to promote the community and its resources, as well as understand business needs and possible impediments to locating in Moorhead
3. Acknowledge and promote local businesses and their employees for their contribution to the community through press releases, newsletter articles, and recognitions for anniversaries or notable expansions
4. Identify and market to industry businesses which would complement and/or benefit from close proximity to existing Moorhead businesses, student labor pool and/or existing labor force which graduates every year from the area’s colleges and universities
5. Create a supportive business and entrepreneurial environment through connections to local resources, business networks, start-up financing, and business incubation opportunities
6. Work with businesses and residents to promote buying locally
7. Support additional legislative efforts to level the playing field for businesses in Moorhead as compared to those in North Dakota

Moorhead is . . .

“a wonderful place to grow up but doesn’t have enough opportunities.”

Policy Trends Overview

Some foundational aspects of economic development strategy are enduring. Those include: the importance of building relationships with the local business community; demonstrating government partnership through tackling solvable issues that emerge from those connections; and administering regulatory functions with a problem-solving rather than a gate-keeping orientation—even in a high standards regulatory environment.

Beyond enduring strategies such as these, other economic development trends are elevating the interrelationship of economic development with other aspects of city building.

- **Identity and vibrancy.** Improving a city's vibrancy by creating distinctive, active places is an economic development strategy. Special places that are distinctive and active build personal attachment to a city.
- **The creative economy.** The innovation and creative economies can offer as much to a region as a traditional manufacturing base. And they can serve as attractors of new population.
- **Building attachment.** Strategies that build attachment to Moorhead are retention strategies with respect to the city's population and its businesses. Building connections and attachment between college students and city amenities and neighborhoods may be a key opportunity in Moorhead.
- **Unleashing the existing workforce.** Meeting the needs of families for quality childcare has the effect of freeing up some of the city's at-home parents to participate in the labor force and strengthen the economy.
- **Preconditions for workforce attraction.** Industrial growth is dependent on the ability to attract a workforce with the right technical skills, and that is often dependent on the availability of a good set of housing options at affordable rent levels.

GOALS AND STRATEGIC POLICIES

Goal 2.1 Build a supportive environment for local businesses to thrive.

- Establish a business connection program or system of regular meetings with existing businesses to explore needs and future opportunities.
- Support a business and entrepreneurial environment through connections to local resources, business networks, start-up financing, collaborative spaces and places, mentoring, and business incubation opportunities.
- Work with businesses and residents to promote buying locally.



Goal 2.2 Bolster, expand, and diversify the base economy.

- a) Target a marketing program to businesses, industries, and the student and recent graduate labor pool that would complement and/or benefit from proximity to existing Moorhead businesses
- b) Meet with local commercial realtors and site selectors to promote the community, its resources, and its high-quality business sites.
- c) Leverage MCCARA Industrial Park to attract businesses in target industries. Simplify the MCCARA design review process while maintaining high quality design standards.
- d) Advocate for additional legislative changes that benefit Moorhead businesses and industries.
- e) In cooperation with State, regional and local partners, evaluate and enhance business incentive programs to ensure their effectiveness in current economic conditions.
- f) Provide continuous support for Moorhead's higher educational institutions through communication, advocacy, cross marketing, and fostering student/community interactivity.
- g) Provide technical support to entrepreneurs and small businesses, particularly those within minority and underrepresented communities by ensuring access to resources offered by the City and its partners.

"Target up-and-coming industries such as those related to renewable energy and sustainability goals."



Goal 2.3 Nurture the creative and innovation economies.

- a) Build Moorhead's creative economy through fostering an art and culture ecosystem in Moorhead, including venues, clubhouses, funding, and patronage networks.
- b) Promote and support the emergence of public art throughout the city, including integrating artistic elements and creative activities into public spaces.
- c) Nurture a culture of entrepreneurship and business innovation, particularly for immigrant, indigenous, women-owned, and student-driven startups.
- d) Support or develop one or more business incubators that lower the barriers to starting or growing a business venture by providing shared services and technical assistance.
- e) Encourage efforts to build on local college applied research where that can lead to advanced development, product development, and opportunities for innovation districts associated with a local college or university.
- f) Encourage live-work housing options



*Moorhead needs more:
"support for new businesses, and home-based businesses too."*

Goal 2.4 Continue to build coalitions around, and invest in, the vibrancy of Downtown Moorhead.

- a) Pursue implementation of the Downtown Moorhead Master Plan.
- b) Support a broad menu of retail vitality strategies, including marketing, programming, events, streetscaping, and facade and signage improvements.
- c) Foster the partnership with downtown business and property owners through support for and collaboration with Downtown Moorhead Inc. and the Moorhead Business Association.
- d) Promote density in downtown to increase pedestrian activity and support local businesses.
- e) Support the enhancement of downtown Moorhead with art and culture experiences, including public art, events, experience marketing and placemaking activities.
- f) Develop and implement infrastructure plans and policies that support downtown goals, such as complete streets, improved parks and trails, improved pedestrian and bicycle access, incorporation of public art in design/implementation, and street striping.
- g) Ensure that funding mechanisms such as the 5-year CIP reflect prioritization of downtown roads, sidewalks, parks, and trails.
- h) Enhance connections to the river as an opportunity to build upon recreational, experience and event marketing Downtown.



Goal 2.5 Attend to the housing, education, and training needs of Moorhead's workforce.

- a) Actively engage and encourage the development community to build the supply and variety of affordable housing options that are needed to serve Moorhead's workforce.
- b) Promote strategies and partnerships for increasing high quality affordable childcare services throughout Moorhead.
- c) Actively monitor the workforce and training needs of local businesses, and advocate for the growth of customized training services to address company-specific needs.

Mobility

MOBILITY

Mobility is the ability to move safely, freely, and easily throughout the transportation network, and it also includes characteristics and amenities that make moving around more comfortable, safe, and enjoyable. As the city of Moorhead is forecasted to grow over the next several decades, enhanced mobility and comfort of residents to be able to walk, bike, and use other modes of transportation will be increasingly important to the city's quality of life, safety, and economy.

The city's transportation network includes the system of streets, sidewalks, paths, bicycle routes, railroads, and the airport that get people and goods from one place to another. The comprehensive planning process evaluated the overall effectiveness of Moorhead's existing transportation system and analyzed trends in improving mobility to help make Moorhead more resilient in the future.

Ever since the origination of the federal highway system, most cities, including Moorhead, have been designed to primarily accommodate efficient automobile traffic. This approach to city planning has led to unintended negative consequences, and transportation systems that are challenging and unsafe for people walking, biking, or taking transit. However, in the last decade, Moorhead has placed increased emphasis on making the community safer for people using all modes of travel. The 2009 Comprehensive Plan had a strong focus on developing Complete Streets – streets that accommodate and balance all modes – and enhancing multimodal transportation options.



Timely snow clearing from sidewalks is important for year-round walkability (Credit: Toole Design)

Defining Mobility

For the purposes of this plan, mobility is defined as the ability for people to move freely and easily throughout Moorhead. Mobility refers to more than just the transportation infrastructure – the connected multimodal system of streets, sidewalks, bikeways, trails, transit routes, and highways that people use to move around. Mobility also includes the amenities, surrounding land use, and characteristics that make the experience of moving around Moorhead more comfortable, safe, and enjoyable – such as lighting, wayfinding, street trees, benches, building frontage access, and more.

The City's goal is to provide community members of all ages and abilities a safe, comfortable, and enjoyable experience traveling throughout the city. That includes a transportation system with many modal options – walking, biking, driving, riding the bus, paratransit, car and ride-sharing, and more. Enhanced mobility includes more than just infrastructure; it also means creating streets and places where people feel safe and comfortable traveling because they have traffic calming features that slow motor vehicle speeds, street trees that provide shade, adequate lighting, benches for seating, among other elements. Looking into the future, the City will continue to improve community mobility by focusing on developing Complete Streets with an emphasis on safety. Using a Complete Streets lens when planning and designing transportation improvements will enhance mobility while continuing to accommodate growth.

What is a Complete Street?

An approach to street design and planning that is context-sensitive and addresses the needs of all travelers, including people who walk, bicycle, take transit or drive (passenger, freight, emergency vehicles).

Developing a connected, multimodal transportation system enhances mobility and strengthens the safety and effectiveness of the system for all modes. Sidewalks and trails connect to bus stops; streets designed with traffic calming features make them safer for people driving, bicycling, or walking; street trees provide shade, reduce urban heat islands, increase placemaking, provide stormwater benefits, and also calm traffic; buses with bike rack accommodations can increase both bus ridership and bicycling; providing on-street parking is convenient for motorists but it also helps slow motor vehicle speeds and provides a buffer space between motor vehicle traffic and people walking on the sidewalk. The symbiotic nature of these characteristics provides multiple benefits to the transportation system while enhancing community members mobility experience overall. The goals and strategies outlined later in this chapter reflect the City's goal of a transportation system that provides community members choices for how to travel around Moorhead safely and conveniently while also providing an experience that is enjoyable and comfortable.

EXISTING TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

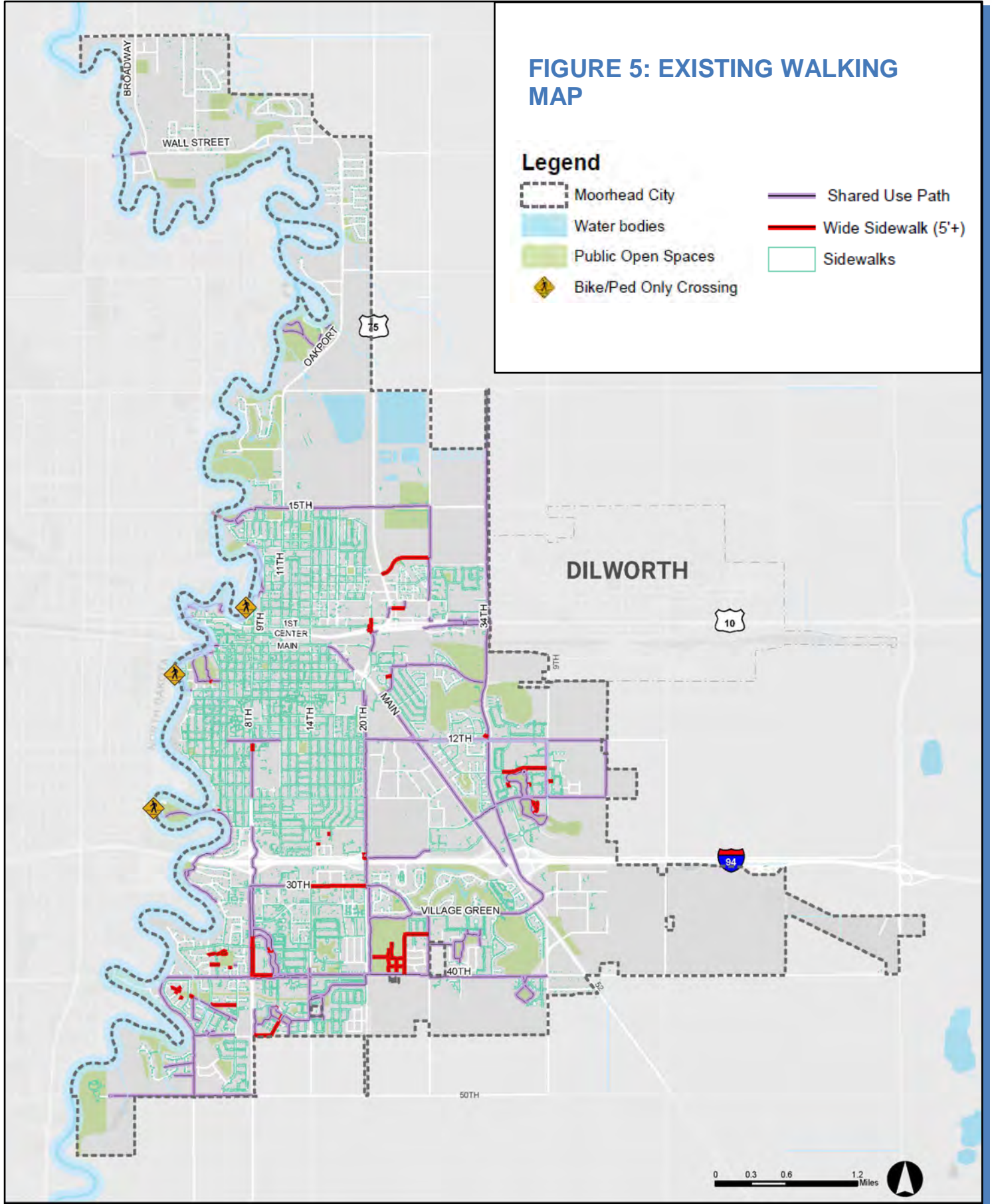
Walking and Biking

Moorhead's walking and bicycling network is made up of a variety of facility types including sidewalks, shared use paths, on-street bike lanes, bike routes (streets with "bike route" signs), and wide shoulders that can be used for bicycling or walking (Figures 5 and 6). Most residential neighborhoods in the city have sidewalks on both sides of the street as well as in downtown and other commercial areas. The City's Sidewalk Infill Policy is also applied to all new projects, adding sidewalks in neighborhoods with deficiencies as the opportunity arises. There are several planned local and State trails and bikeways in the city as well, including U.S. Bicycle Route 20 and the Heartland State Trail Extension which will link the current western end of the trail at Park Rapids to Moorhead and connect Moorhead to the communities of Park Rapids, Wolf Lake, Frazee, Detroit Lakes, Audubon, Lake Park, Hawley, Glyndon, and Dilworth.



Bikeshare system station (Credit: Toole Design)

On-street bike lanes are dedicated facilities for people bicycling, marked by striping, pavement markings, and bike lane signs. On-street bike lanes in Moorhead are relatively limited and disjointed. Examples include 11th Street North which turns into Oakport Street at 28th Avenue North. Some roads considered on-street bike lanes lack pavement markings and bike lane signage, such as Oakport Street North/CSAH 96. Signed bike routes are more prevalent in Moorhead, including 2nd Avenue North and 7th Avenue South. While these routes are signed to indicate they are a designated route for people bicycling, they do not provide any dedicated or protected infrastructure for bicyclists. Roads with shoulders of 8 feet or greater are considered 'wide shoulders' and are often used by bicyclists. Examples of roads with wide shoulders include 28th Avenue North and 28th Street North.



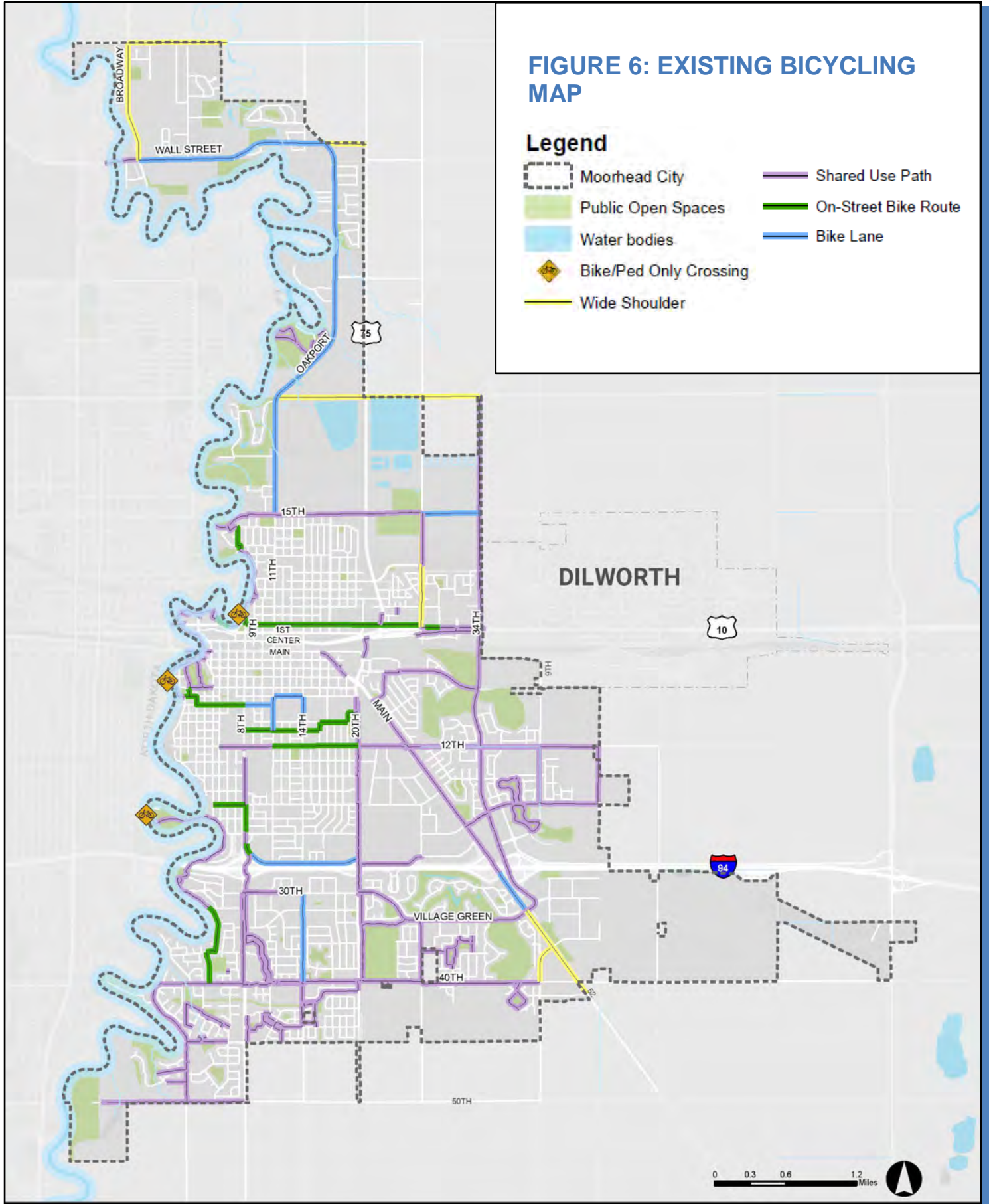


FIGURE 6: EXISTING BICYCLING MAP

Legend

- Moorhead City
- Public Open Spaces
- Water bodies
- Bike/Ped Only Crossing
- Wide Shoulder
- Shared Use Path
- On-Street Bike Route
- Bike Lane



MATBUS – Fargo-Moorhead Metro Council of Governments

Bus System

Metro Area Transit (MATBUS) serves as the public transit agency in the Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Area. MATBUS operates Monday through Saturday in the communities of Moorhead & Dilworth, Minnesota and Fargo & West Fargo, North Dakota. As shown in Figure 7, there are seven MATBUS routes and nine buses operating within the City of Moorhead – Routes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 9.

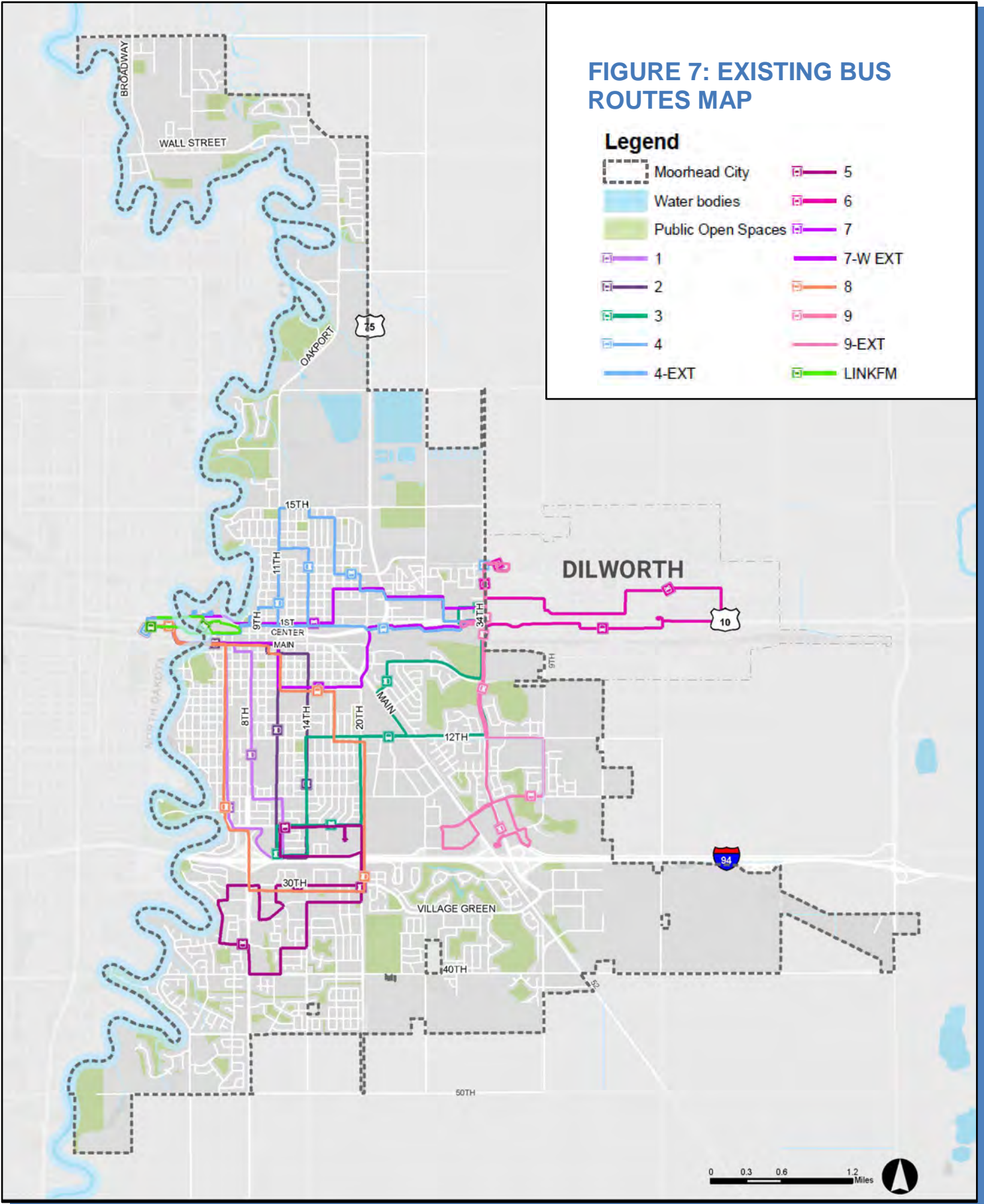
In late 2019, LinkFM, a fare-free circulator route that connects downtown Moorhead with downtown Fargo, was discontinued as a regular service route. LinkFM was initiated as a circulator route between the two cities to provide easy access to the downtowns' amenities and alleviate parking concerns. The route circulated between the two downtowns every 15 minutes with stops at Center Mall and Hjemkomst Center in Moorhead and the library, post office, federal court building, and bus depot in Fargo. With the elimination of this service, riders can still take a bus between the two downtowns, but it is at the standard rate and every 30 minutes. Both City Councils agreed to continue using LinkFM for major events.

Most of the routes in Moorhead connect to Downtown Moorhead or cross the Red River into downtown Fargo. Some routes require a transfer to connect to the downtowns. MATBUS offers Paratransit, a public transportation option available on request for persons with disabilities who are unable to use MATBUS Fixed Route Bus Service without assistance. The City of Moorhead also contracts with the Fargo Park Board and Valley Senior Services for Metro Senior Ride, an on-demand public transportation option for senior citizens 60 and older. Riders may transfer to the Fargo Metropolitan Area Transit System at the Ground Transportation Center in downtown Fargo. Key transit destinations in Moorhead include downtown, the East Highway 10 shopping area (EasTen), Center Mall, Hornbachers Foods, MSUM, M State, Concordia College, Essentia Health, and the Courtyard by Marriott transfer point. MATBUS vehicles also have bicycle racks that can accommodate up to three bicycles.

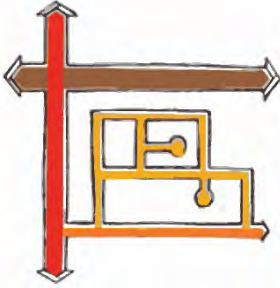
FIGURE 7: EXISTING BUS ROUTES MAP

Legend

- Moorhead City
- Water bodies
- Public Open Spaces
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 4-EXT
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 7-W EXT
- 8
- 9
- 9-EXT
- LINKFM



Functional Classification



Functional class system
(Credit: MnDOT)

Roadways are classified based on the role they serve in the transportation system for motor vehicles – known as functional classification. Each roadway type is designated based on its need or priority for motor vehicle access or motor vehicle throughput, and not necessarily on the context and character of the adjacent land use. Throughput can be defined as the number of

motor vehicles that can travel through the system in any given time period. The city's roadway functional classification system is presented in Figure 8. The functional classification system includes interstate highways, principal arterials, minor arterials, major collectors, collectors, and local roads. Generally, roadways that provide the highest throughput for motor vehicles are the least safe for people walking and biking.

Roadways with highest speed and limited access are classified as Interstate Highways and principal arterials. These roadways carry high volumes of traffic at high speeds. Interstate Highway 94 travels east-west through the center of Moorhead. Principal arterials in Moorhead include 8th Street South or Highway 75 (north of 40th Avenue) and Highway 10. They are very efficient at moving vehicles; however, they can be dangerous for people walking, bicycling, or other non-motorized travel. Because access is limited on these roadways, so are potential crossings for pedestrians. These roadways are typically very wide, making crossing even more difficult or infeasible. Certain characteristics of roadways (i.e., high traffic speeds and volumes) make on-road use uninviting for pedestrians and bicyclists, so it is important to provide off-street paths for people walking and bicycling. Principal arterials in Moorhead often lack bicycling and pedestrian facilities, but 8th Street South is an example of a principal arterial in Moorhead that features a shared use path between 24th Avenue South and 40th Avenue South.

Minor arterials provide more access and slightly decreased motor vehicle speeds than principal arterials. These roadways connect smaller centers of activity within and between neighborhoods and connect principal arterials. Minor arterials in Moorhead include 8th Street South or Highway 75 (south of 40th Avenue), Main Avenue Southeast, 1st Avenue North, 11th Street North,

15th Avenue North, 34th Street, 20th Street South, 12th Avenue South, 30th Avenue South, Village Green Boulevard, and 40th Avenue South. High traffic speeds (even though almost all roads have 30MPH speed limits) and volumes on minor arterials may pose obstacles and safety risks for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Collectors provide relatively equal amounts of motor vehicle access and throughput. Traffic volumes and travel speeds are generally lower on collectors than arterial roadways. Collectors provide higher vehicle throughput within residential neighborhoods, serving to gather traffic from residential (local) streets and channel it onto the arterial system. Collector streets often connect residential areas to commercial areas and employment centers in the city, so it is important to provide infrastructure for walking and biking to help promote active transportation. Collector streets in Moorhead include all or portion of 28th Avenue South, 24th Avenue South, 11th Street South, and 14th Street South, 5th Street South, and 4th Street South.

Local streets provide many points of direct access and limited throughput. Speeds and traffic volumes are relatively low and through traffic is discouraged. Nearly all residential, neighborhood streets in Moorhead are considered local streets. These streets typically have lower motor vehicles volumes and travel speeds, which make them more pleasant for people walking and bicycling.

Airport

The Moorhead Municipal Airport is a general aviation airport owned by the City of Moorhead with an active Airport Committee to oversee the operation, growth, and promotion of the airport. The airport includes a 4,300 foot runway, full taxiway, and private and public hangars. It is staffed by Moorhead Aviation Services, offering aircraft maintenance, fuel sales and onsite management. The Moorhead Municipal Airport has an Airport Layout Plan (ALP) showing future expansion of the airport. The ALP includes a proposed expansion of the existing runway and a new north-south crosswind runway along with other growth opportunities, such as expanded hangar areas. Figure 9 shows airport safety zones established by the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) around the airport for current and future aviation activities. Land use controls are most restrictive in Safety Zone A and B and least restrictive in Safety Zone C.

FIGURE 8: FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION MAP

Legend

Moorhead City

Water bodies

Function Class - Moorhead

Interstate

Collector

Principal Arterial

Local Collector

Minor Arterial

Local

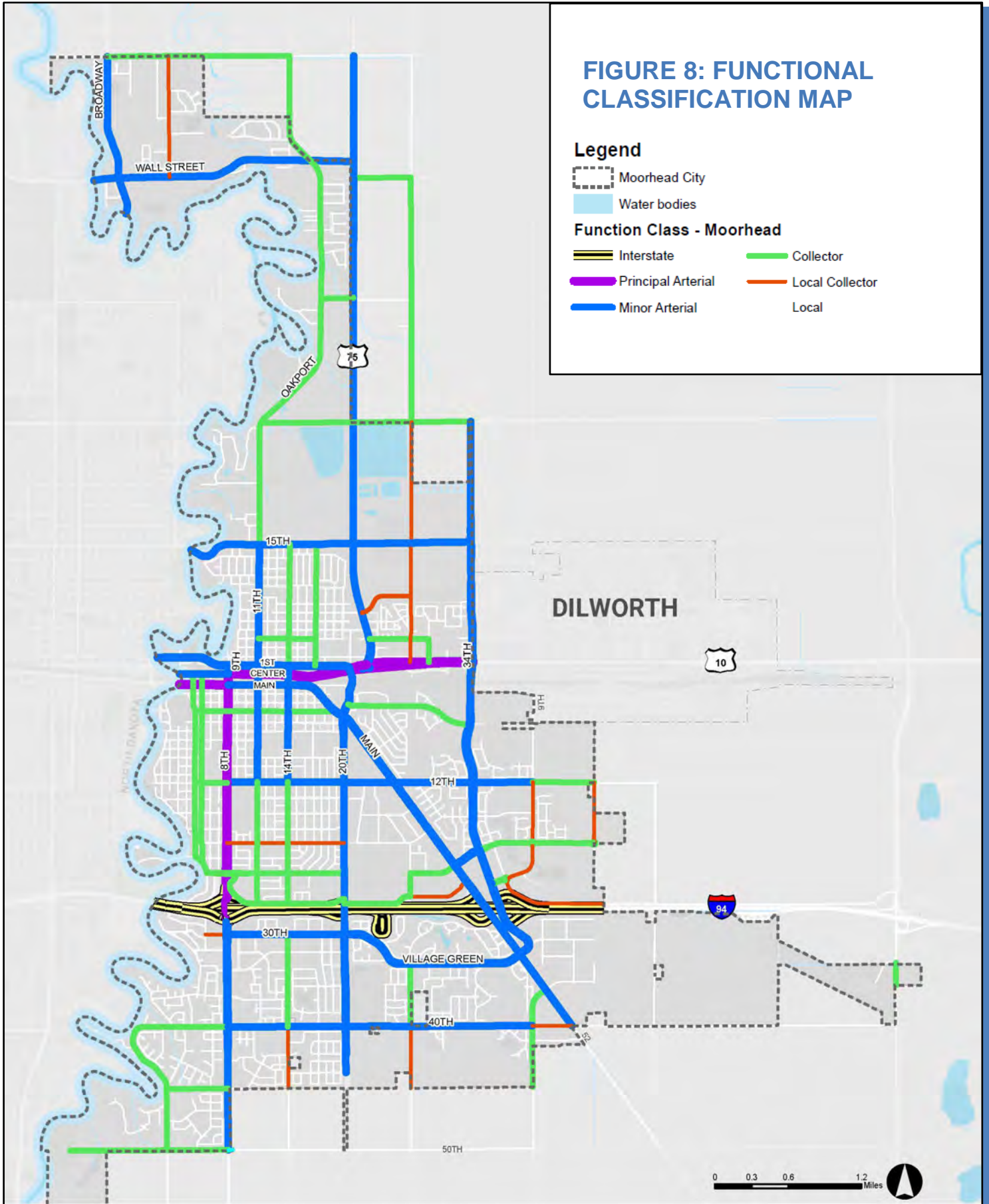
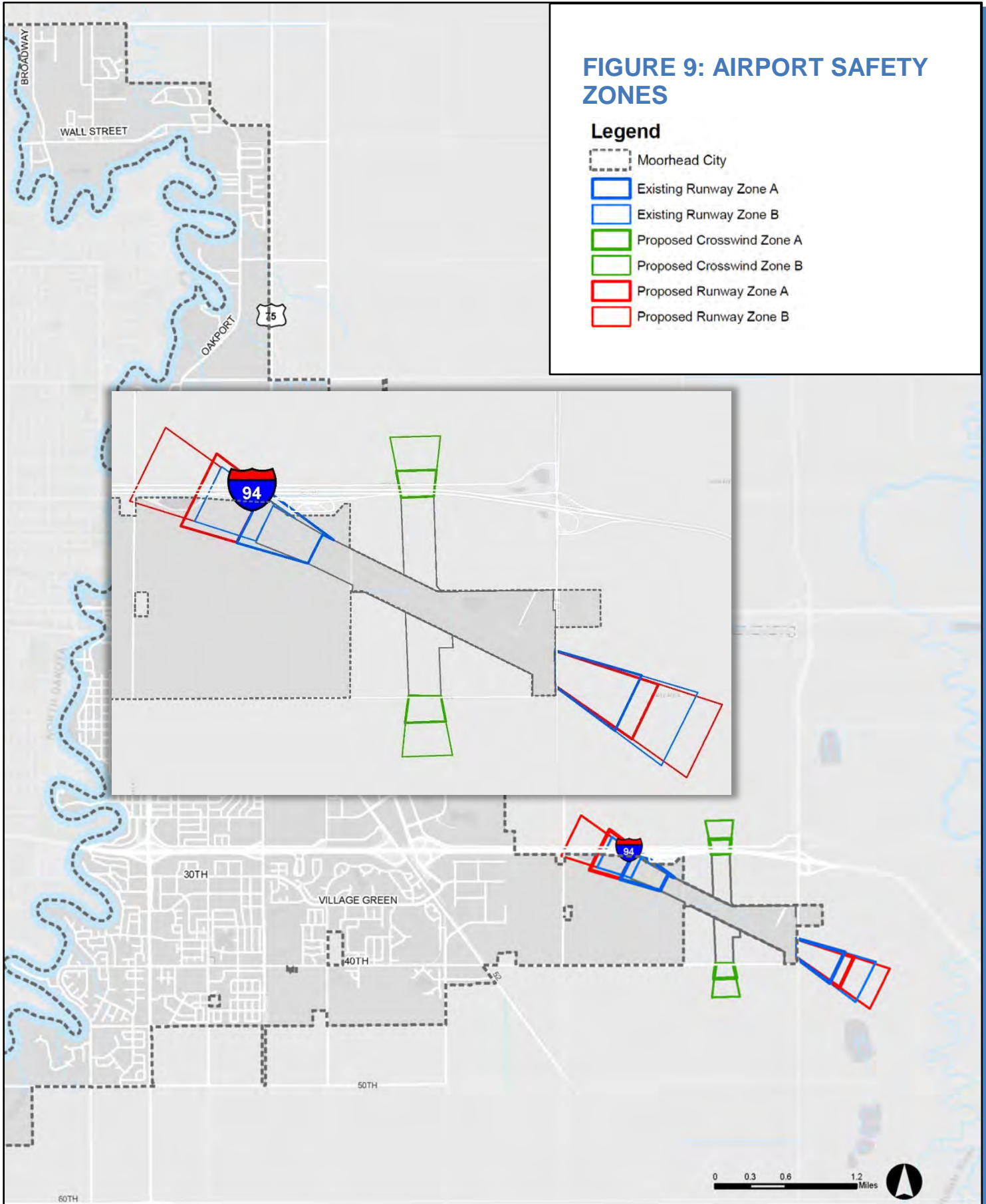


FIGURE 9: AIRPORT SAFETY ZONES

Legend

- Moorhead City
- Existing Runway Zone A
- Existing Runway Zone B
- Proposed Crosswind Zone A
- Proposed Crosswind Zone B
- Proposed Runway Zone A
- Proposed Runway Zone B



Past Plan Guidance

2009 Comprehensive Plan

The 2009 Comprehensive Plan included “strategic initiatives” which were recommendations for public and private actions to achieve the communities’ vision for the plan. The Plan identified seven strategic initiatives with many related to future mobility in Moorhead. Among the recommendations related to mobility are:

- Strategic Initiative #2: Downtown/Infill Redevelopment Area Framework Plan that includes streetscaping improvements along the public realm
- Strategic Initiative #4: Supporting the Active in Moorhead (AIM) partnership by creating and promoting environments that are safe and convenient for people to integrate physical activity such as walking, biking, jogging, in-line skating and cross-country skiing into their daily lives.
- Strategic Initiative #5: The adoption of a “Complete Streets” Design philosophy

The Plan recommends that sidewalks and trails should connect to neighborhood attractions such as schools, churches, parks, or neighborhood retail centers so that they can serve a transportation purpose as well as recreational. Strategic Initiative #4 also recommends working with MATBUS to improve access to transit and to identify future transit needs and service areas.

Strategic initiative #2 recommends “Streetscaping improvements along the public realm are critical for building a comfortable and attractive environment for all users, including bicyclists, pedestrians and transit users as well as motorists.” Strategic Initiative #5 has the largest and most direct impact on future mobility in Moorhead. It recommends implementing a “Complete Streets” design philosophy, which moves away from a design philosophy that focuses primarily on moving motor vehicle traffic and shifts to a more balanced, multimodal approach that safely accommodates other transportation modes such as transit riders, people walking, people bicycling, and more. Since the last Comprehensive Plan, the City adopted the FM Metro COG Complete Street Policy.

The 2009 Comprehensive Plan also addressed other mobility infrastructure such as airports and railroads. During visioning exercises, Planning Commission members identified measures to improve mobility and safety along the railroad tracks including underpasses, overpasses, and quiet zones. The plan also recommended an airport overlay zoning district to prevent land use conflicts when anticipated development occurs in east Moorhead. The plan recommended the overlay district be established long before development pressures reach the airport’s influence area so that residents, landowners, and developers can make informed decisions about development and investment decisions.

2018 Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan has a set of goals and objectives that apply to the intersection of infrastructure and land use. They ensure well-maintained, functional, and sustainable infrastructure (streets, utilities, housing, facilities, transportation, and parks) to support the existing community and opportunities for growth. These goals and objectives relate to effectively managing land and facilities, providing safe and sustainable transportation and infrastructure systems to support smart growth, and supporting environmental sustainability.

Policy Trends Overview

The trends described in this section offer ideas and strategies from successful mobility initiatives in other cities, or from City or regional plans adopted since the 2009 Comprehensive Plan Addendum.

Micromobility

Micromobility solutions encompass conventional and dockless bike-sharing programs, e-scooters, and other small personal mobility devices, such as e-skateboards. While many of these devices originate in a human-powered form, the availability of electric versions and the on-demand nature of recent deployments has increased their appeal. Micromobility devices can support access to transit and promote a car-free lifestyle. However, they also increase conflicts on sidewalks and raise safety concerns. Because the widespread use of these devices is a relatively recent phenomenon, standards for where and how they should be used have not been established.

Shared Mobility

The sharing economy has led to the rise in shared mobility which allows people to gain access to a certain mode of transportation without owning the vehicle. Shared mobility is a broader term that includes all forms of micromobility as well as carsharing. Shared mobility programs increase travel options for residents and can provide first- and last-mile connections. Carshare and bikeshare have historically been the most popular forms of shared mobility. However, scooter share programs have become extremely popular in cities throughout the country in the last few years. The City does not currently have plans for sharing programs, however the 2045 Fargo Moorhead Transportation Plan (Metro Grow) recognizes the need to prepare for these changes and has identified the goal to “incorporate transportation trends and new technologies in regional transportation plans”. Three different types of shared mobility are:

- Bike Sharing Systems (Docked and Dockless) - A service that allows people to rent bicycles for a short period of time for a small fee through a docked or dockless system. An example is Fargo’s Great Rides system or Concordia’s COBBikes.
- E-Scooter share - Systems where electric scooters are available publicly as short-term rental options. Rules and regulations vary by municipality, but scooter use is often prohibited on sidewalks, and municipalities encourage users to utilize bikeways or roadway shoulders while riding.
- Car sharing - Allows individuals or businesses access to a car on an as-needed basis. Carsharing provides people with the benefits of individual car ownership while reducing some of the burdens like cost, maintenance, and parking.



Shared scooter parking and bikeshare parking can be co-located with bus or transit stops to form a multimodal mobility hub (Credit: Toole Design)



Moorhead needs more:

“bike share (once actually becomes bikeable) or scooter share.”

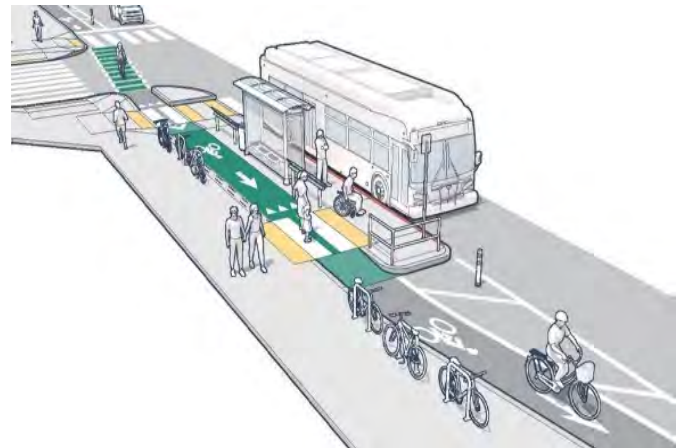
Electric scooter sharing programs are a form of shared mobility growing in popularity (Credit: Toole Design)

Increased Demand for Active Transportation Infrastructure

Cities across the country have seen an increased demand in providing safer, more connected infrastructure for active transportation – walking and bicycling. More and more communities have developed plans and policies aimed at developing more walking and biking infrastructure, including bicycle master plans, pedestrian master plans, active transportation plans, complete streets policies, vision zero plans and policies, trail master plans, and more. Several recent plans or studies by the City of Moorhead or its partners call for additional trails, sidewalks, and bikeways, including the *FM Greenway Recreation Master Plan*, the *FM Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan*, the *FM Metro Bikeways Gap Analysis Study*, *City of Moorhead Safe Routes to School Study*, the *Heartland Trail Master Plan*, the *2045 Fargo-Moorhead Transportation Plan*, and the *2016 Moorhead Growth Area Plan*. These plans provide direction for:

- **Complete Streets** – An approach to street design and planning that is context-sensitive and addresses the needs of all travelers, including people who walk, bicycle, take transit or drive (passenger, freight, emergency vehicles). Developing Complete Streets was a key recommendation in the City's 2009 Comprehensive Plan, and the City has worked to incorporate complete streets as project opportunities presented themselves.
- **Separated bicycle lanes** – Bike lanes that feature some form of vertical separation between the bicycle facility and the motor vehicle lane with concrete curbs, flexible delineators/flex posts, planter boxes, and other materials. There are currently no separated bicycle lanes in Moorhead, although they have been studied as part of the FM Metro Bikeways Gap Analysis.
- **Vision Zero Plans/Policies** - In recent years, communities across the nation have strengthened their commitment to transportation safety by adopting Vision Zero policies and action plans. The objective of vision zero planning is to create a transportation system with no serious injuries or fatalities. In Minnesota, so far Minneapolis is the only community to adopt a Vision Zero policy and plan that focuses on the safety of people walking and bicycling.

- **Traffic Calming** - Street design features that are used to manage motor vehicle speeds and volumes, improve safety, and enhance neighborhoods. The City of Moorhead has incorporated traffic calming measures such as curb extensions into recent roadway rehabilitation or reconstruction projects and has evaluated some traffic calming measures as part of the 17th Street North corridor study. The City's Traffic Calming Policy limits traffic calming measures on arterial and major collector streets to measures that do not alter the pavement, number of lanes, or limit the existing capacity.



A floating bus stop is a dedicated bus stop platform located between the street and a bike lanes, which helps reduce conflicts between modes (Credit: Toole Design)

- **Floating bus stops** - Sidewalk-level platforms are built between the bicycle lane and the roadway travel lane that are designed to mitigate safety challenges between various modes. Floating bus stops have notable safety benefits for bicyclists because they eliminate bus and bicyclist interactions while reducing interactions between bicyclists and bus passengers. There are currently no floating bus stops in Moorhead, however the FM Metro Bikeways Gap Analysis did identify locations where floating bus stops may be appropriate.
- **Rapid Implementation / "quick build" infrastructure** – Programs that work to install bicycle and pedestrian facilities quickly and with minimal budget. There are various reasons for adopting a rapid implementation approach including: safety improvements to a road segment or intersection in response to a crash, creation of a demonstration "backbone" bike network that increases demand for bicycling and justifies future investments and expansion, and gap closures to enhance the connectivity of bike and pedestrian networks. The City of Moorhead has not completed any rapid implementation infrastructure projects to date.

Moorhead needs less:

"roads that are difficult for walking and biking – particularly in older neighborhoods."

GOALS AND STRATEGIC POLICIES

Goal 3.1 Increase multimodal connectivity and equitable access to destinations such as downtown, parks, trails, the river, and surrounding communities.

- a) Enhance street crossings near popular destinations, areas with underserved populations, and areas with high pedestrian traffic by adding treatments such as high visibility crosswalk markings, raised crosswalks, pedestrian crossing islands, curb extensions and traffic calming measures.



- b) Design and build all new infrastructure to meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements and consider adopting the draft Public Right of Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG).
- c) Leverage new development and planned street improvement projects (local, county, or state) to fill sidewalk gaps, build upon the existing trail system, and expand on-street bicycle facilities.
- d) Work with agency partners such as Clay County, MnDOT, Fargo, and Metro COG to implement regional bicycle and pedestrian network recommendations.
- e) Collaborate with Metro COG and local area schools to update the Moorhead Safe Routes to Schools Study.
- f) Consider converting one-way streets to two-way streets to enhance access, connectivity, and reduce traffic speeds.
- g) Prioritize routine maintenance, snow removal, and upkeep of existing infrastructure for all transportation modes.
- h) Increase enforcement of the sidewalk snow removal policy, with a focus on downtown and other areas with high pedestrian traffic. Explore the creation of a downtown partnership group such as a Special Service District (SSD) to coordinate snow removal, among other responsibilities.
- i) Work with Metro COG and other regional partners to develop a regional trails system that includes a defined regional trail network.
- j) Develop and implement a recognizable signage and wayfinding system that highlights popular destinations such as downtown, parks, and the river.



“More use of on-street parking to enhance pedestrian safety.”



Goal 3.2 Adapt and prepare for new forms of transportation, technology, and infrastructure to enhance mobility.

- a) Establish and promote electric vehicle charging stations through creative funding mechanisms such as partnerships with Moorhead Public Service and private entities, federal and state funding.
- b) Support new multimodal transportation options (e.g. bike, car/scooter sharing programs, etc.) that enhance mobility and benefit Moorhead residents, businesses, students, and visitors.



- c) Support and encourage a variety of curbside uses such as bike parking, scooter parking, parklets and other seating areas, food trucks and mobile vendors, electric vehicle charging stations, carshare parking, and ride hailing pickup/drop off zones.



- d) Support the implementation of best practices and innovative infrastructure treatments that improve safety for all transportation modes.
- e) Create a strategy to increase lighting on sidewalks and paths to improve pedestrian safety and comfort.

Enhancing Street Crossings Downtown

Moorhead has a robust network of connected sidewalks throughout the majority of downtown, however, crossing many streets can feel unsafe and challenging. As part of the Comprehensive Plan development, potential intersection safety considerations at several key intersections in downtown are identified. See Appendix A for more information.

Goal 3.3 Incorporate a “Complete Streets” design philosophy into all aspects of mobility planning and design.

- a) Update the Moorhead Subdivision Design Standards to be consistent with recommendations in the Comprehensive Plan and to reflect current best practices in bicycle and pedestrian design documented in the MnDOT Bicycle Facility Design Manual and multimodal MnDOT Facility Design Guide.
- b) Develop a Street Typology Framework that incorporates land use context (not just roadway functional classification) to help guide street design decisions on new or reconstructed roadways.
- c) Work with MnDOT and Clay County on road design and reconstruction projects to implement Complete Streets with amenities such as pedestrian scale lighting, benches, and street trees.
- d) Encourage green infrastructure city-wide such as permeable pavement, street trees, rain gardens, and bioswales.
- e) Establish a funding strategy to address priority intersection and street characteristics that will prompt the City to mark street crossings, dictate the recommended type of crosswalk markings, and prioritize areas with high pedestrian traffic (like downtown).

Why a Complete Street?

Complete Streets provide a holistic, balanced approach to planning and designing safe streets for people traveling by all modes of transportation, especially for pedestrians.



Goal 3.4 Work with MATBUS to identify areas to support existing transit lines and identify future service needs and areas.

- a) Work with MATBUS to incorporate and carry out recommendations from the Transit Development Plan.
- b) Provide amenities such as real-time information, lighting, benches, and shelters at highly used transit stops and encourage seating at stops within the downtown area and near facilities such as clinics, schools, and senior facilities.
- c) Provide accessible, safe, and easy access to bus stops by filling sidewalk gaps and adding crosswalks and other infrastructure safety improvements, including curb extensions, and raised crosswalks.
- d) Increase transit services to provide equitable access to residents who work jobs on nights and weekends and ensure transit is accessible to all work centers.
- e) Provide higher frequency bus routes between popular destinations such as college and university campuses and downtown.
- f) Consider alternative transit options other than fixed-route service in areas that are not currently supported by transit services.
- g) Support the transition to a regional transit authority as outlined in the MATBUS Transit Authority Study.

Goal 3.5 Support existing infrastructure and plan for sustainable expansion of future infrastructure.

- a) Continue efforts to review and increase the City-Wide Pavement Condition Index.
- b) Develop a 5-year Sidewalk/Path/Trail Capital Improvement Plan.
- c) Create plans and systems that support a safe, well-maintained, and sustainable transportation system and infrastructure that supports our community.
- d) Promote growth and development of the Moorhead Airport along with ensuring a safe and well-maintained airport. Complete aeronautical zoning at the Moorhead Airport.



Parks and Open Space

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

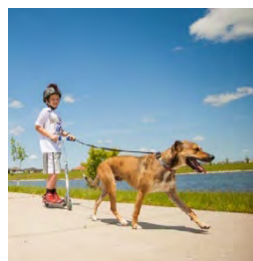
The pandemic has emphasized the importance of access to parks and open space for physical and mental health. Opportunities for outdoor physical activity increase fitness and lower levels of obesity while enabling people to connect with nature to enhance well-being and mental health. Parks and trails also create opportunities for social interactions, connect people to major destinations through walking and biking, and can be both free and accessible ways to recreate.

The open space system in any city, including Moorhead, is a significant driver for where residents purchase homes and how amenity-rich they find their neighborhoods. Access to parks, open space, and recreation has a direct impact on quality of life. Positive neighborhood impacts and development of parks and park programs that support neighborhoods should be a driving force for new parks, facilities, maintenance priorities, and culturally specific programming.

During this comprehensive planning process, one of the most beloved parts of Moorhead identified over and over was the park and open space system. This is a significant reason residents call Moorhead home which means it needs to be equally cared for and expanded so all residents have access to these rich amenities. Funding is often the limiting factor in implementation and maintenance of park improvement projects that advance community goals. This chapter emphasizes the successful and ongoing collaborations between the City of Moorhead and its partners to achieve a more expansive and accessible open space program for current and future generations.



Park users (Credit: City of Moorhead)



Parks, Facilities & Trails (Credit: City of Moorhead)

EXISTING INVENTORY AND CONTEXT

Parks and Recreation Facilities

Moorhead has a robust network of recreation opportunities available to the community. City owned and operated facilities are managed by the City's Parks & Recreation Department and Public Works Department. The City has valuable online resources for residents and visitors, including maps provided for: Moorhead Parks and Trails, Moorhead: A City with "Walkability", M.B. Johnson Park Trails Map, Viking Ship Park Cross Country Ski Trails Map, Gooseberry Park Trail Map, Bike Trails Map, River Corridor Trails, Snowmobile Trails Maps and a list of Walking and Running Tracks in Moorhead.

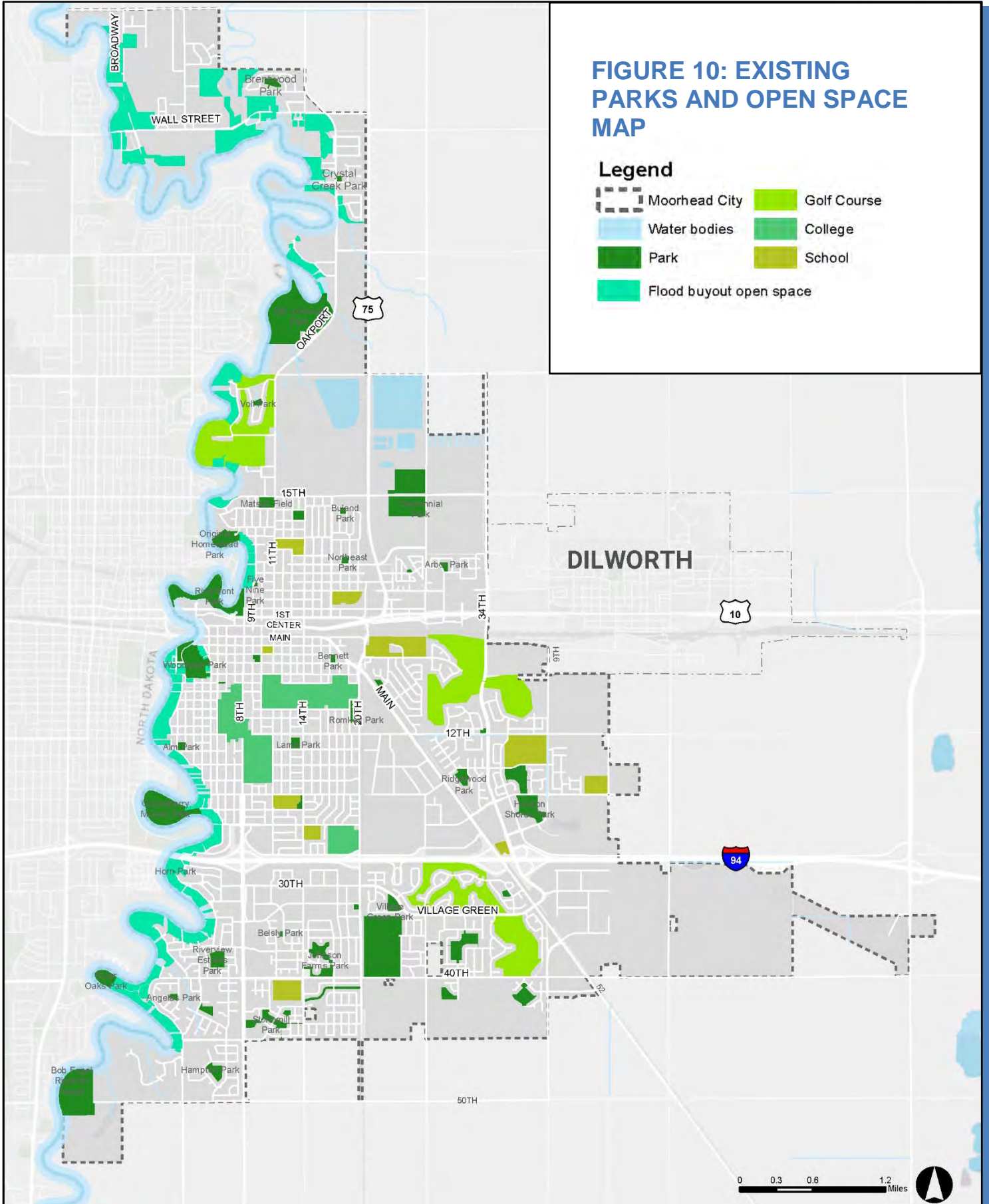
There is also an interactive Parks and Trails Finder which allows the user to look for the locations of specific recreational facilities in specific park(s) or locations within the community. Searchable activities include: ball fields, basketball and bocce courts, cross country skiing, disc golf, drinking water, grills, hockey rinks, horseshoe pits, neighborhood recreation centers, pickleball courts, picnic shelter rental, picnic tables, playgrounds, pleasure skating rinks, restrooms, sand volleyball, sledding hill, soccer nets, tennis courts and wading pools.

The City classifies its parks and recreation facilities using the following categories: Neighborhood, Community or Regional Park, Park Facilities or Non-Park Facilities. Figure 10 shows the location of park facilities within Moorhead.

FIGURE 10: EXISTING PARKS AND OPEN SPACE MAP

Legend

- Moorhead City
- Water bodies
- Park
- Flood buyout open space
- Golf Course
- College
- School



Park classification	Count	Total Acreage
Neighborhood Parks	37	200.69
Community Parks	4	125.62
Regional Parks	5	288.92
Park Facilities (includes public golf courses)	12	522.18
Non-Park Facilities (i.e. pools, private golf courses, hockey arenas, and schools)	13	372.85

Moorhead Recreation Facilities

The City manages the Moorhead Sports Center, an indoor recreation center owned by Moorhead Area Public Schools. The Sports Center is an indoor ice-skating rink that is open year-round. The Center is located adjacent to Moorhead High School and is home to the Red River Valley Skating Club, and the Moorhead High School Hockey team also uses the facility. The Moorhead Youth Hockey Arena is a City-owned facility operated by Moorhead Youth Hockey that offers additional Hockey programming. The City also owns and operates the Hjemkomst Center, a unique multi-use facility that is adorned on the City's Logo. Other park facilities include several golf courses, ten neighborhood recreation centers, Southside Regional Park, Centennial Park/Athletic Complex/Dog Park, River Oaks Dog Park, and the historic log cabin. Non-Park Facilities are school properties and can be found in the Moorhead Recreational Partnership section below.

Moorhead Trails

Trails play an important part in connecting residential neighborhoods and other amenities with parks. Moorhead has a trail network made up of a variety of facility types including sidewalks, shared use paths, walking loops, on-street bike lanes, bike routes and wide shoulders that can be used for walking or biking. These facilities are discussed further in the Mobility chapter of this Plan and shown in Figures 5 and 6 of that chapter.

The City adopted the River Corridor Plan in 2014 that envisions a continuous trail along the Red River and would connect M.B. Johnson Park on the north side of the city to the Bluestem Center for the Arts on the south side. Since

the adoption of the plan the City has made progress implementing improvements to make that vision a reality.

While a significant benefit of the trail system is providing healthy access to parks and open spaces, many parts of the city are cut off from parks due to physical barriers like major roads, large sites, or railroad tracks. Figure 11 shows existing parks in comparison to residential and industrial areas. The analysis also emphasizes a 5-minute walk radius to each park with many radii cut off by these physical barriers.

Moorhead Swimming Pools

The City owns the Moorhead Municipal Swimming Pool which has two wading pools and a full-size swimming pool. A variety of programs and events are offered including swim lessons, water exercise, lap swim, adaptive swim lessons, and the annual Dive into Summer and Summer Splash events. The City also owns six neighborhood wading pools at the following parks: Hansmann Park, Northeast Park, Ridgewood Park, Riverview Estates Park, South Park, and Village Green Park.

Moorhead Recreational Partnerships

The Moorhead Parks and Recreation Department has several successful partnerships with other local agencies, providing additional resources to residents. Specifically, the City has an agreement with Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd for shared use of the gym. The Moorhead Community Fund allows residents the ability to fund a variety of park amenities, recreational opportunities, and artistic and cultural opportunities. Donors to the fund may choose specific parks or activities or donate to general categories such as river trails or a youth scholarship fund. The Bluestem Center for the Arts / Trollwood Performing

Arts School is on City-owned property with the building owned and operated by Fargo School District. Moorhead public and private schools offer additional opportunities to residents for both active and passive recreation. Other important partners include Audubon Dakota, River Keepers, FM Trailbuilders, athletic groups, developers, Moorhead Business Association, Historical and Cultural Society of Clay County, FM Community Theater, Gooseberry Park Players, and the Moorhead Public Library.

Minnesota State Parks

Moorhead residents have access to one of Minnesota's State Parks - Buffalo River State Park is located 14 miles east of Moorhead along US Highway 10. The Park offers picnic areas, camping, fishing, a swimming beach, 6.25

miles of trails, and a native bluestem prairie. MSUM also operates the Regional Science Center adjacent to the State Park. Proposed Regional Trails include the Heartland, and Paul Bunyon trails.

Minnesota State University-Moorhead (MSUM) Campus

MSUM has recreational facilities on their campus such as the Scheels Field Football Stadium, softball, (6) tennis courts, track, long jump, and pole vaulting, shot put, and other multi-sport fields.

Moorhead School Facilities

The following is a list of Moorhead's schools, including their amenities.

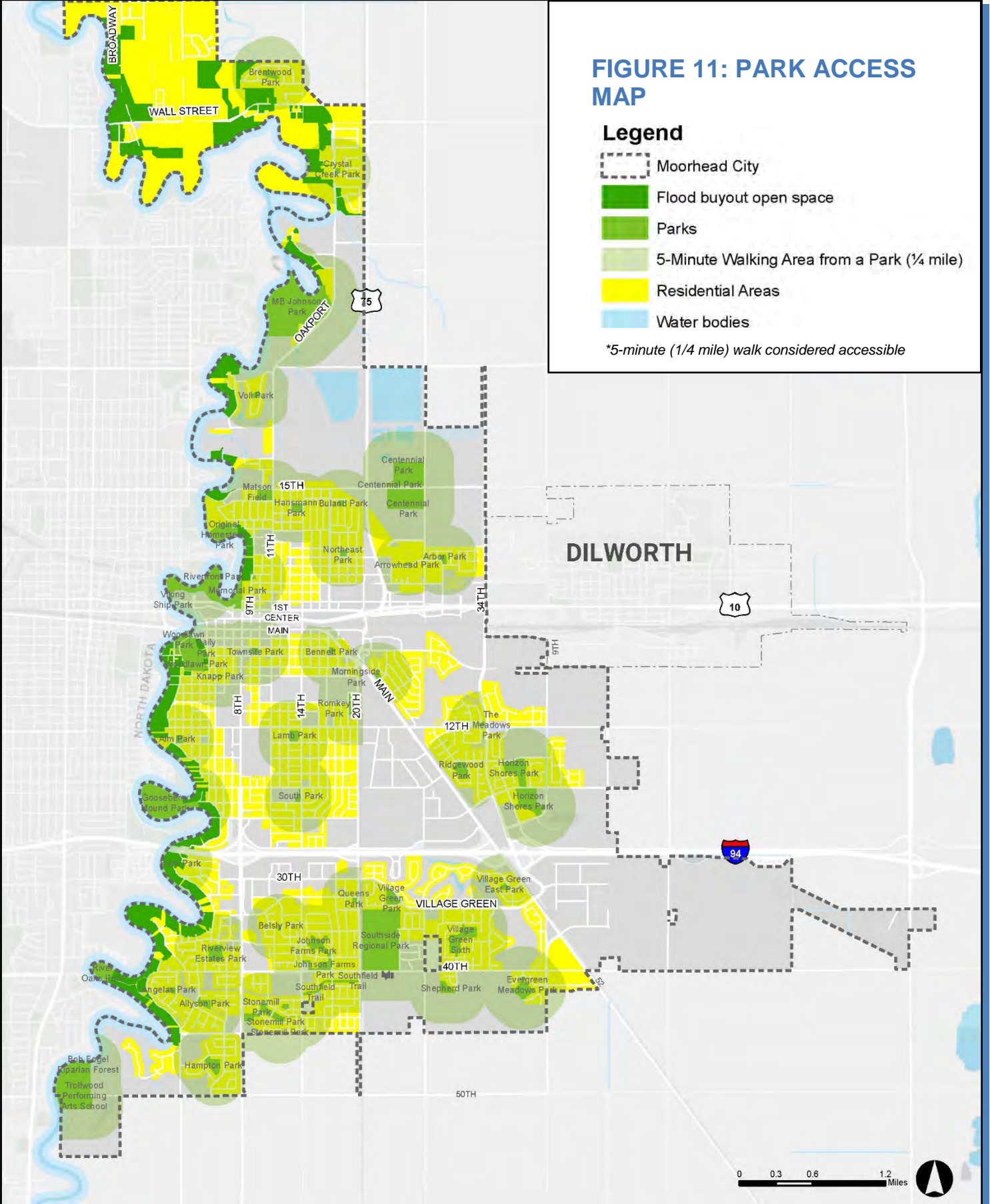
School	Facilities
St Joseph Church	None (Proximate to Townsite Park)
Red River Area Learning Center	Daycare Facility (None)
Probstfield Center for Education	Playground, Open Field
Park Christian School	Playground, Football field, open space
Robert Asp Elementary	Playground, track, baseball/softball diamond, soccer field, open space
Ellen Hopkins Elementary	Playground, running track, football field, pole vaulting, long jump, basketball courts, soccer field, outdoor ice rink
Dorothy Dodds Elementary	Track, synthetic turf, (2) playgrounds, open space
SG Reinertsen Elementary	(2) Playground, track, open fields
Moorhead High School	Moorhead Sports Center, track, football, pole vaulting, gyms, (8) tennis courts, (1) pool
Horizon Middle School	Baseball diamond, (2) softball diamonds, running track, long jump, pole vault, football field and various other multi-use fields, (12) tennis courts

FIGURE 11: PARK ACCESS MAP

Legend

- Moorhead City
- Flood buyout open space
- Parks
- 5-Minute Walking Area from a Park (1/4 mile)
- Residential Areas
- Water bodies

*5-minute (1/4 mile) walk considered accessible



PAST PLAN GUIDANCE

Past Plans for Parks and Open Space

Past Plans that provide guidance for Parks and Open Space planning include the 2004 Comprehensive Plan, 2009 Comprehensive Plan Addendum, 2014 River Corridor Plan, and the 2018 Strategic Plan.

2004 Comprehensive Plan

The 2004 Comprehensive Plan provided a park system matrix highlighting regional parks, park facilities, neighborhood parks, school parks & non-park facilities. Since the time of the last Comprehensive Plan, the City has successfully added many new parks to the system and the parks have been reclassified as regional park, community park, park facilities, non-park facilities and neighborhood parks.

The Comprehensive Plan highlights the importance of parks within two Focus Areas - Neighborhoods and Public Realm. The following criteria were identified:

- Neighborhoods – within walking distance (1/2 mile) of every resident, mix of active and passive recreation opportunities, caters to all ages, designed with public right-of-way as street frontage, linear park system as connectors, and stormwater management features as natural amenities.
- Public Realm-Parks and Recreation Policy – 10 percent of buildable land set aside for park space, park facilities built concurrently with housing development in new neighborhoods, barrier-free access to neighborhood parks, co-location of park and recreation facilities with school facilities, parks as central feature of neighborhoods, a balance of active and passive park areas available year-round, trails linking parks to major activity areas, and park design to enhance the community's image.

2009 Comprehensive Plan Addendum

The 2009 Plan Addendum talked about increasing recreational opportunities such as community centers, dog parks, easily accessible neighborhood parks, and community gardens.


2014 River Corridor Plan

As previously noted, the City adopted the River Corridor Plan in 2014 that envisions a continuous trail along the Red River and would connect M.B. Johnson Park on the north side of the city to the Bluestem Center for the Arts on the south side. Since the adoption of the plan, the City has made progress implementing improvements to make that vision a reality.

Policy Trends Overview

The trends described in this section offer ideas and strategies from either city or regional plans adopted since the 2009 Comprehensive Plan Addendum.

- As neighborhoods are developed, land set aside for park space increases the facilities and recreational opportunities to residents.
- School facilities provide recreational opportunities to their students/residents. Dorothy Dodds Elementary School is the newest school built in the city and has new outdoor recreation amenities along with additional facilities at S.G. Reinertson Elementary School and Horizon Middle School.
- The City continues to purchase properties along the Red River for flood mitigation efforts, some of these areas may also provide opportunities for parks, open space and/or trails. The City recently received a grant from GMRPTC (Legacy Grant) for Midtown Trail – one of the trail segments along the River Corridor, adding to the miles of existing trails along the river.
- Efforts are ongoing to connect parks and open spaces with trails.
- Pickle ball courts have been installed in the community, a sport growing in popularity nationally. The City recently transitioned a tennis facility into a three court Pickleball facility at Horizon Shores.
- Public art has been added in parks and is anticipated to continue.
- The City has made an effort to increase winter related outdoor activities to embrace the colder months. The city has a special event in January called Frostival with activities such as group ski, sledding, snow sculptures and educational programs on skiing, winter camping, snow-shoeing and fat tire biking. It is also generally important for the City to keep paths cleared in the winter and ski trails groomed along with maintaining outdoor skating rinks.
- Pandemic-related adaptations are increasing with additional City-owned ski grooming equipment to keep up with increased trail use, and continuation of existing river paddling rental and excursions during the summer months.



"Every residential area should have walkable open space."

GOALS AND STRATEGIC POLICIES

Goal 4.1 Conserve and connect parks and open space.

- a) Seek partnerships and grant opportunities to conserve, restore, and protect ecologically sensitive areas and those prone to flooding.
- b) Continue to work on connecting parks and open spaces with safe on-road and off-road trails.
- c) Work with regional partners such as Metro COG to develop regional trail connections.
- d) Develop a prioritization plan and capital improvement plan for future park improvements to guide funding.
- e) Complete master plans for parks in most critical need of improvement throughout all parts of the city.
- f) Engage residents through multiple formats to guide future neighborhood park planning and needs.
- g) Work with MnDOT to integrate a linear park/open space concept throughout the EasTen corridor.
- h) Account for future operating budgets in planning for new parks, including potential partnerships with developers on new park maintenance and funding.



Goal 4.2 Build long lasting, innovative, and ecologically friendly parks.

- a) Take advantage of grant opportunities to implement stormwater management best management practices.
- b) Continue to evaluate durability and resiliency of materials used in park and trail development.
- c) Continue to partner with Audubon Dakota to plant native no-mow species along the river and throughout the city.
- d) Integrate pollinator-friendly native landscapes and best management practices into park and stormwater improvement projects.
- e) Research Green Step Cities practices for herbicide application in parks.

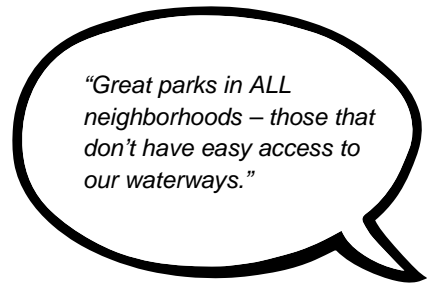
Goal 4.3 Use parks as centers to promote physical and mental health and wellness of all residents.

- a) Continue demonstration projects that promote health and wellbeing, including community orchards and educational opportunities offered by River Keepers.
- b) Expand recreational programming offerings to promote community health.
- c) Integrate arts and culture into the parks system to develop a sense of identity and place.



Goal 4.4 Ensure that all Moorhead residents have access to high quality parks and green spaces, recreation facilities, youth sports and programs.

- a) Prioritize equitable access to Moorhead's parks, open spaces, and playfields.
- b) Continue to offer and expand recreational programming offerings that are available and accessible to all Moorhead children and residents.
- c) Explore the implementation of a recreation facility and/or aquatic center in Moorhead.
- d) Solicit feedback and ideas from residents on how to implement agricultural uses in residential zoning districts to increase access to fresh, healthy food.



Goal 4.5 Advocate for a holistic approach to parks, open space and recreational programming through strong regional partnerships.

- a) Continue to partner with Fargo, Metro COG, and Clay County on regional park and trail initiatives.
- b) Continue to partner with organizations like the library, school district, colleges and universities, Audubon Dakota, River Keepers, Fargo-Moorhead Rotary, and others to enhance and expand community events, experiences, and opportunities.
- c) Seek new opportunities for partnerships.



Goal 4.6 Explore all potential sources of funding that support current and new parks and open space opportunities.

- a) Increase and target funding support for parks maintenance, improvements, and events.
- b) Continue to partner with organizations like River Keepers and Audubon Dakota to increase community resources and further resiliency goals.
- c) Explore a sustainable funding mechanism for park capital projects such as a tax to fund improvement projects.

Sustainability and Resilience

SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCY

Sustainability is defined as meeting the needs of the present generation, without jeopardizing the ability of future generations to meet their needs. In the context of community planning, a sustainable plan is viewed as one that balances the natural environment, economic vitality, and community health.

Resilience and sustainability are often discussed together. Strategies that are deployed to achieve resilience are those that increase the ability to adapt to changing conditions and recover rapidly when disruptions or events occur. In relation to major weather events, resilience is often discussed as a system that is designed to better withstand the impact and recover more readily after a major event occurs.



Diversion construction (Credit: Metro Flood Diversion Authority)



*(Credit: City of Moorhead)
March 28, 2022*

For many reasons, the comprehensive planning process is an ideal time for a community to take inventory, complete assessments, engage a broad cross section of stakeholders, and foster conversations about sustainability and resilience. The health and well-being of the entire region is threatened by climate change. In the Midwest, those threats are manifested in more severe storms, more numerous flood events, and temperature extremes. These risks impact infrastructure, as well as the health and prosperity of residents and frequently impact socially disadvantaged populations disproportionately.

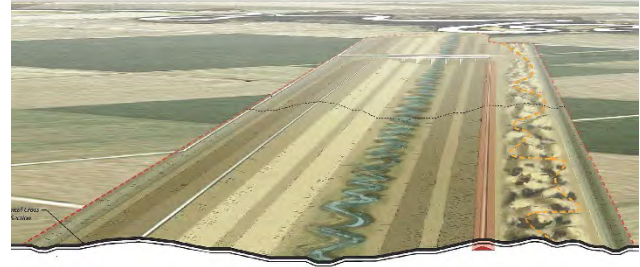
Existing Inventory and Context

Flood History

Flooding from the Red River has been a significant challenge for Moorhead which has been greatly improved with the construction of flood mitigation infrastructure. In terms of sustainability, addressing both the cause and impact of flooding is possibly the most important step the City can take to improve its resiliency. The current FEMA floodway and floodplain map is shown in Figure 12, showing the 100-year and 500-year floodplains. Significant amounts of land in Moorhead are within floodways or floodplains.



Flooding on the Red River resulted in roadway damage (Credit: U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit)



Artist rendering of Diversion (Credit: Metro Flood Diversion Authority)

Fargo/Moorhead Flood Diversion Project

It would be hard to overstate the magnitude of the Fargo/Moorhead Flood Diversion Project. Well over 230,000 people have been regularly threatened by serious flooding of the Red River. In addition to the risks to human life, the damage to property and infrastructure and major disruptions to the lives of impacted residents has been perennially frustrating and expensive.

The 36-mile long and 1,500 foot wide diversion channel and related bank stabilization and infrastructure systems were designed by the US Army Corps of Engineers and the Diversion Board of Authority. The \$2.2 Billion project will be operational in 2026. Once completed, the cities can apply for revisions to the National Flood Insurance Map. When approved, this revised map will certify that the project has protected extensive acreage from the 100-year flood event.

This flood diversion will provide direct protection from major flood events and greatly improve recovery post-flooding. In addition to these obvious and direct benefits, the project presents tremendous opportunities for natural resource restoration and conservation activities which will yield multiple environmental and community health benefits.

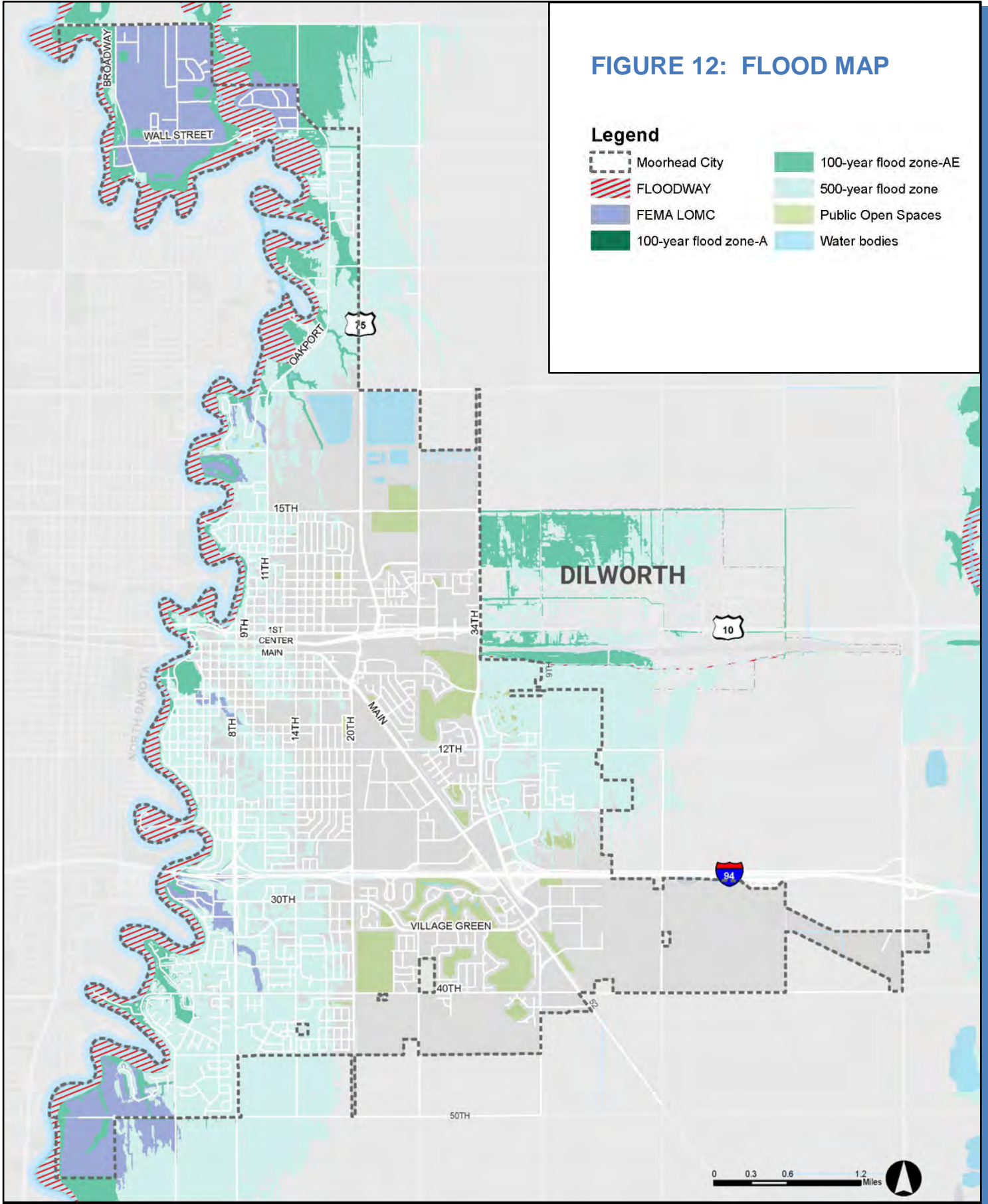


FIGURE 12: FLOOD MAP

Legend

- Moorhead City
- FLOODWAY
- FEMA LOMC
- 100-year flood zone-A
- 100-year flood zone-AE
- 500-year flood zone
- Public Open Spaces
- Water bodies

Past Plan Guidance

Policy Trends Overview

Adopted plans for Moorhead, the region, and best practices in resiliency were identified early in the process to set the stage for the goals and strategic policies in this chapter. Successful policies and strategies that could be carried forward, ones that should be left in the past, and good ideas and practices that had not yet been implemented were tested with the public and decision-makers. Since this is a forward-thinking plan and the topics of sustainability and resilience are only now being prioritized in comprehensive planning, trends happening in long-range planning were also evaluated and part of the engagement process to determine what should be applied in Moorhead.

Sustainability and resiliency trends are intimately tied to land use patterns, design and function of parks and open space, economic development, and alternative mobility options. Trends identified early in the process from adopted plans and best practices included:

- Planting trees and other landscaping along streets and in parks play a vital role in storm water management and quality improvements. There is also a renewed awareness about the public health benefits associated with urban forests.
- Select species of trees for urban forests that are adaptable to climate change and disease resistant.
- Using structured underground stormwater management systems with new tree plantings in highly impervious areas such as along streets and in parking lots.
- Rather than designing stormwater ponds, instead creating native planting amenity areas that can be used as open space.
- Participating in programs and partnerships that encourage City-led sustainability actions such as Green Step Cities, and Regional Indicators Initiative.
- Healthy buildings include aspects such as indoor air quality, lighting, access to open space, etc.
- Shift towards electric vehicles and the installation of charging infrastructure that is more reliable and convenient.
- Policies that focus on multiple energy sources, transition to new renewable energy options, and energy conservation should be explored.
- Partnerships that promote and support access to food, health services, housing, emergency preparedness, and overall community wellbeing should be encouraged.



Example of Green Infrastructure (Credit: Stantec)



Growth boundary (Credit: Modern Farmer Media)

2009 Comprehensive Plan

While topics like sustainability and resiliency can be tied to a variety of planning initiatives related to the environment, the economy, or the social health of a community, it was the 2009 Comprehensive Plan Addendum that most directly discussed sustainability and resiliency strategies.

- Strategic Initiative #3 (Flood Risk Reduction) emphasizes the need for a comprehensive and long-term flood risk reduction strategy, acquiring flooded properties, preserving undeveloped land in the river corridors, and updating regulations. The Flood Diversion Project has since been initiated and the City has acquired many properties.
- Strategic Initiative #6 (Planning in a time of Economic Distress) discusses a theme from 2009 that is ever present today during the pandemic. Public revenue streams were challenged, businesses were failing, and

there was a decline in property values. This strategy focuses on enhancing a neighborhood monitoring program, reviewing existing housing programs, tracking foreclosures, reviewing business incentive programs, engaging businesses early that may be in distress, and aggressively seeking grants.

- Strategic Initiative #7 (Growth Management) places importance on proactive planning for coordinating infrastructure expansion for development. This strategy recommends maintaining a database of vacant land supply and then actively monitoring those properties, identifying critical natural resource areas, mapping growth and staging areas, maintaining rural development standards, evaluating infrastructure funds, and prioritizing phased extensions of utilities. The 2016 Growth Area Plan and 2018 Alternative Urban Area-wide Reviews (AUARs) supports this strategy.

GreenStep Cities Program

The Minnesota GreenStep Cities Program is sponsored by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. It is a voluntary program that challenges cities to achieve their sustainability and quality of life goals. The program recognizes 29 best practices within the following five categories: Buildings & Lighting, Land Use, Transportation, Environmental Management, and Resilient Economic Development.

Within the best practice areas, cities complete one or more actions at a 1, 2, or 3-star level. Moorhead chose to pursue: energy efficient lighting, Comprehensive Planning, solid waste management and recycling, renewable energy, communication, wastewater efforts, urban forestry, mixed-use development & infill planning, and transit and mobility options.

The City started the program in 2017 and reached step 4 of 5 in May 2021. To reach step 5, the City will need to demonstrate improvement on three eligible metrics in Step 4, from one data year to the next. River Keepers, the Audubon Society, and Moorhead Public Service were active partners with the City in pursuing this important work.

The platform created by the Green Step Cities program presents the City with the opportunity to evaluate its work on each of the best practices previously pursued and to consider other opportunities. It is also an opportunity to continue to engage with existing partners and seek others to accomplish even more.



Moorhead Public Works crews improve efficiency by picking up no-stor roller carts full of recyclables (Credit: Municipal Magazine)



(Credit: River Keepers)

Moorhead Community Resilience Task Force

Another opportunity for collaboration and cooperation is presented by the Moorhead Community Resilience Task Force. Started in 2019 at the initiative of Concordia College, the Task Force consists of representatives from a diverse set of governmental, educational, and nonprofit organizations. This work is currently being funded by a Bush Foundation Community Innovation Grant and is being led by Concordia College Professor Dr. Kenneth Foster.

The task force has focused on:

1. Building relationships, trust, and a culture of collaboration
2. Investigation into various aspects of resilience and deliberation on how Moorhead can become more resilient in the face of climate change and other stressors
3. Community engagement and the infusion of resilience thinking into the work of organization in Moorhead
4. Pilot/demonstration projects
5. Social equity and ecological health as essential foundations for community resilience

The work of the Task Force presents great synergy with the Comprehensive Plan and the Task Force itself represents an important set of stakeholders to continue engaging.

A representative from the Task Force participated on this plan's Study Review Committee (SRC). An intern from the City Manager's office worked in conjunction with the Task Force in the summer of 2021.



Volunteer in Storm Drain Marking Program (Credit: River Keepers)

GOALS AND STRATEGIC POLICIES

Goal 5.1: Evaluate infrastructure improvements through an environmental resiliency lens.

- a) In conjunction with scheduled pavement maintenance, continue to utilize and encourage neighborhood processes that add sidewalks in locations that lack sidewalk access.
- b) Leverage the flood diversion project as an opportunity to commit to greening and reforestation along the river corridor.
- c) Focus on planting more trees in Moorhead using local champions such as the Moorhead Community Resilience Task Force.
- d) Continue to partner with Audobon Dakota to plant native no-mow species along the river.



Green infrastructure and stormwater management is important to a resilient community and where we have room to be creative and improve."

Goal 5.2: Promote the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions through alternative energy sources and sustainable transportation solutions.

- a) Take advantage of Federal and State programs promoting the installation and supporting infrastructure for EV charging stations, including for infill and redevelopment.
- b) Support MATBUS in implementing hybrid or electric buses.
- c) Encourage bike parking facilities in commercial center infill and redevelopment areas.
- d) Continue to advance work and partnerships in Minnesota's GreenStep Cities Program and explore joining the Regional Indicators Initiative.
- e) Explore renewable energy options – such as solar and wind energy technologies - for businesses, institutions, and residential buildings.
- f) Explore and encourage implementation of reduced and renewable energy options for public facilities, including both the transportation fleet and public buildings.



"Interested in opportunities to create racial and social equity → broadband access, food security, accessible and affordable."

"Community gardens please!"

Goal 5.3: Advance the health of individual residents and communities in adapting to a changing environment.

- a) Continue demonstration projects that promote health and wellbeing, including community orchards and educational projects by River Keepers.
- b) Promote water conservation through City, Moorhead Public Service, and County policies and wellhead protection efforts that support programs that offer alternative consumption methods that lower utility bills (ex: smart water sensors that reduce water consumption).
- c) Develop policies that support individual and community projects such as native landscapes, rain gardens, local food production, and pollinators.
- d) Continue partnership with and support efforts of the PartnerSHIP 4 Health initiative at Clay County.
- e) Support legislative and policy efforts that reduce the community risk of flooding. Implement flood mitigation efforts within Moorhead including finishing the intown levee and flood protection projects.

Goal 5.4: Build a diverse local economy to sustain Moorhead through times of opportunity and times of economic distress.

- a) Support entrepreneurs in getting to the next level by creating spaces where people gather and share ideas.
- b) Work with local school districts to create training programs and connections with colleges and local businesses.
- c) Highlight and develop programs that support full and productive employment, entrepreneurship, and small-scale industries.
- d) Encourage more housing units downtown while advancing infrastructure improvements to encourage downtown development.
- e) Support private-public partnerships that highlight downtown as an employment center, especially for nonprofits and other uses with locational flexibility.



Goal 5.5: Advocate for a holistic approach to sustainability and resiliency through strong regional partnerships.

- a) Continue to support the Moorhead Community Resilience Task Force.
- b) Expand partnerships for Red River flood mitigation and management.
- c) Continue to partner with Metro COG, especially to build on shared strategies such as complete streets and multimodal transportation.
- d) Continue to partner with Clay County on shared resilience strategies.
- e) Develop a Language Access Plan to effectively communicate city programs, services, and activities to non-to-limited English-speaking residents and business owners.



Goal 5.6: Promote land use strategies that reduce the urban heat island effect.

- a) Expand the efforts of city forestry to plant a diverse mix of pest resistant and climate change adaptive trees.
- b) Develop criteria for projects that might contribute to heat island effect and require evaluation and implementation of mitigation techniques.
- c) Consistently include a base level of new trees in any new road construction protect.
- d) Reduce parking requirements to reduce impervious coverage impacts and allow new eco-friendly parking technologies such as pervious pavement, pervious pavers, etc.

Moorhead needs more:

“trees – specifically along walking paths. Also more walking paths.”

Arts, Culture and Placemaking

ARTS, CULTURE, AND PLACEMAKING

The arts and culture scene in Moorhead is part of what makes the city a great place to live, work and play. The City has intentionally fostered partnerships and organizations that enhance the vibrancy of Moorhead. The sections below describe the efforts the City has taken to build on its strong cultural resources.

As Moorhead moves into the next decade, community arts, culture, placemaking, and quality of life will continue to be key to the vibrancy and livability of the community.

Arts and culture already play a central role in the community's sense of identity. The Rourke Art Museum in Downtown Moorhead, Theatre B in North Moorhead, Bluestem Center for the Arts, and the Hjemkomst Center on the river, home of the Historical Society and more recently the Fargo-Moorhead Community Theater, are anchors of Moorhead's arts and culture network. In addition to more traditional theater arts and visual arts, Moorhead has started to explore placemaking through community projects like murals, traffic signal boxes, Stick Garden, and the Viking Ship Park Light Tunnel.

Celebrating Moorhead as a city along the river will involve more support, investment, and leadership from City leaders and partners as new and old initiatives work to promote this place. Success will occur through a strong vision and invitation to individuals and businesses to be involved in developing events, programs, pop-ups, and more.



Mary's Tunnel, Viking Ship Park (Credit: InForum)



56560 Mural by Mara Morken (Credit: City of Moorhead)



Game on sidewalk during Design Week

Existing Inventory and Context

The City has created an inventory, shown in Figure 13, that maps the city's arts and cultural features including historic properties, works of art, cultural and community organizations, and businesses. The map was developed in 2018 with art points, and the historic data and oral history points were added in 2019 in partnership with Concordia. The map also shows the properties on the National Register of Historic Places. This inventory shows a cluster of historic and art spaces in downtown Moorhead, as well as south along 8th Street. Several of these works of art include sidewalk stamps, which explains the frequency of works of art along Main Avenue and 8th Street. A few of the important cultural spaces in downtown include the Rourke Art Museum and the Hjemkomst Center. In the northern part of the city is the Probstfield farm and house, which is on the National Historic Register. Finally, in the southwest portion of the city, the map shows two cultural assets including the Bluestem Center for the Arts and the Trollwood Performing Arts School.

Arts and Culture Commission

In June 2015, the City established an Arts and Culture Commission to advise the Mayor and City Council on the development of arts and cultural activities, projects, organizations, and facilities within the city. The following summarizes the roles and responsibilities of the Arts and Culture Commission:

"The Commission is tasked to develop, update and recommend Arts and Culture vision, goals, public agenda and strategic plan for arts and culture in Moorhead; provide leadership for completing the Comprehensive Plan sections regarding civic arts and culture goals and planning and providing input for plan revisions; plan and advocate funding from individuals, corporate, foundation and City funding for arts and culture activities approved by the City Council; and facilitate collaboration and joint planning among public and private agencies involved with related issues such as economic development, tourism, and arts education."

A few accomplishments of the Commission include creating policies related to public art, streetlight banners, and special events. The Arts and Culture Commission also led the development of the 2018 Arts and Culture Framework Plan, which is discussed further in the Past Plans section below and sets a vision and path for the development of Moorhead as a city known for its arts and culture.



"Preserve and incorporate the few historic buildings that have survived from Moorhead's past. It's our cultural heritage."

Arts and culture boost North Dakota, Minnesota economies, studies show (Credit: Duluth News Tribune)

A series of projects have been completed across the community with support from the City. This is not a comprehensive list of arts and culture activities but a glimpse into the work that has been completed:

- Arts and Cultural Map Project in partnership with Concordia College
- Bench and Box Art in partnership with Moorhead High art students
- 'Moorhead Proud' Art projects - Florence Klingensmith Mural & Storm Drain Community Art Project
- Water Tower Art
- Sidewalk Art & Poetry Project
- CenturyLink's Moorhead Box Art
- Mary's Tunnel in partnership with Folkways

The Art and Culture Commission has also drafted and received approval from the City Council for policies relating to arts and culture including:

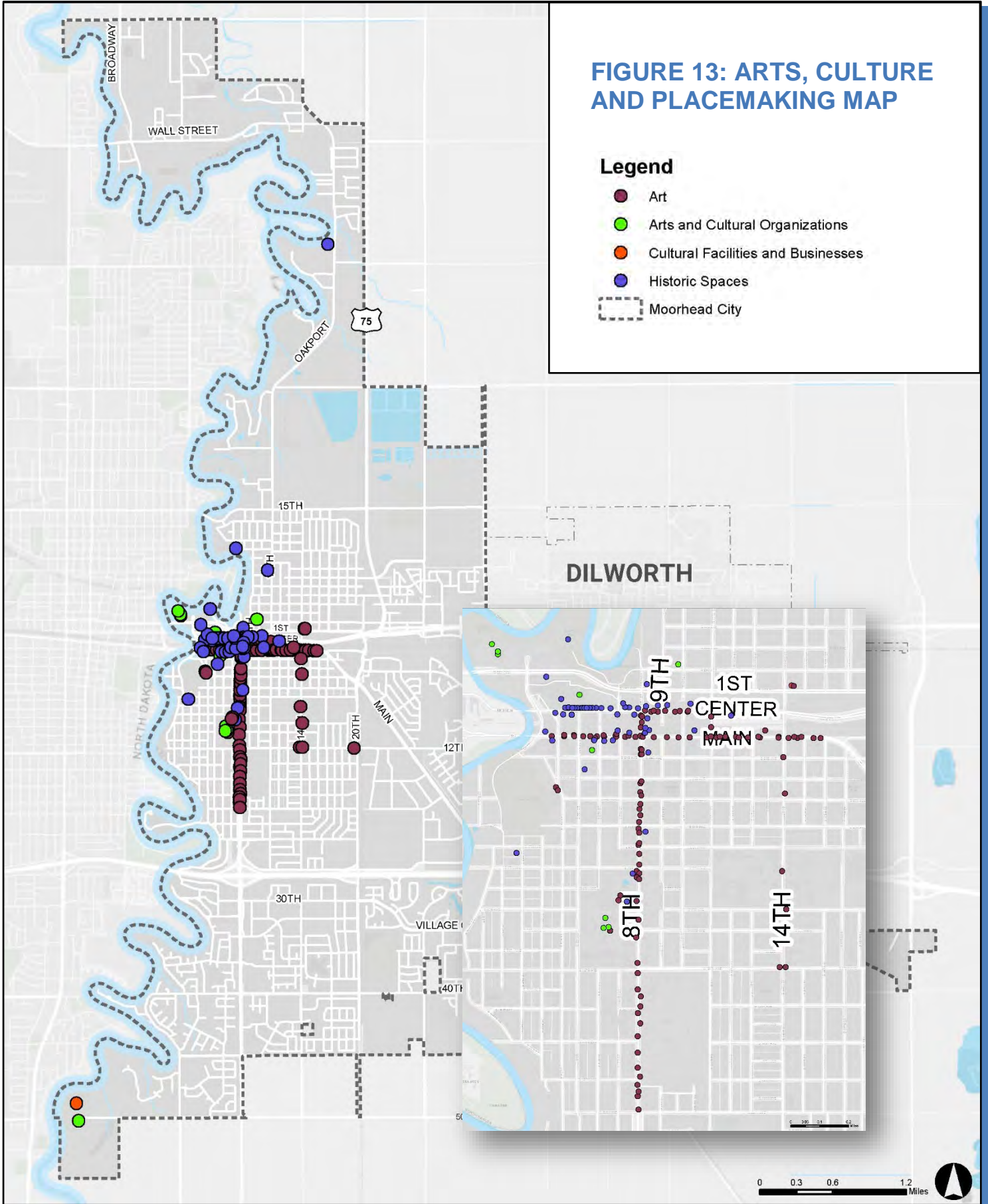
- Public Art Policy
- Streetlight Banner Policy
- Special Event Policy

"Sanctioned graffiti/murals! Good idea!"

FIGURE 13: ARTS, CULTURE AND PLACEMAKING MAP

Legend

- Art
- Arts and Cultural Organizations
- Cultural Facilities and Businesses
- Historic Spaces
- ▭ Moorhead City



Art in Moorhead Website

The City highlights the arts on its website, including information about public art installations, the Art and Culture Commission, and the Arts and Culture Framework Plan. Highlighted public works of art include water tower art, storm drain community art, utility box art, sidewalk art and poetry, and various murals in downtown.

Past Plan Guidance

Comprehensive Plan

There are several past plans that address arts, culture, and placemaking, including the 2004 Comprehensive Plan and the 2009 Comprehensive Plan Addendum. Both plans discuss arts and culture as a defining feature in Moorhead's community identity. Specifically, the plans discuss the university, colleges, schools, and community organizations that serve both residents and visitors and showcase the diversity and partnerships within the community. The 2009 Plan identifies areas for redevelopment including Downtown Moorhead, 1st Avenue Corridor, Main Avenue, Center Avenue, and the power plant site (Woodlawn Pointe). One of the guidelines within these redevelopment areas suggests incorporating "vibrant sidewalks and public spaces, characterized by farmer's markets, public art, gathering spaces, and community spaces." The 2004 Comprehensive Plan also discusses the historic nature of some of the buildings in downtown Moorhead, and the importance of preserving this character. The Plan discusses creating small gathering spaces throughout Downtown which are described as "small [with a] combination of landscaping, lighting, art, and furniture to create a place that feels separated from the adjacent public uses." While these elements are not specifically captured in the Comprehensive Plan policies, it shows the importance of arts, culture, and placemaking in the Comprehensive Planning process.

2018 Arts and Culture Framework Plan

The City has a 2018 Arts and Culture Framework Plan that specifically addresses how Moorhead can build on its rich cultural assets. This plan discusses the cultural assets that Moorhead already has including the colleges and schools, natural environment, and significant creative



Moorhead High School alumni Kate Stafford stands next to a utility box she designed (Credit: Moorhead Area Public Schools)



Gardens & Public Art (Credit: Plains Art Museum)



Gardens & Public Art (Credit: Plains Art Museum)

and cultural presence. The plan envisions a future Moorhead with community cohesion, known for its arts and culture as well as celebrating diversity, a respected place to learn and a city that celebrates its natural environment. The plan also discusses the benefits of embracing arts and culture including their importance in community vitality, arts and culture as a catalyst for growth, cultural inclusion, drawing skilled workers, and overall civic engagement. The framework provides a “creativity and cultural roadmap” providing the City and members of the community with guidance on investing dollars and effort to accomplish specific goals and ultimately achieve measurable long-term objectives.

One of the areas for strategic investment is placemaking and creating places where people want to gather, specifically in Downtown and neighborhoods with public art and gathering spaces. The plan also emphasizes the importance of working together with public and private partners to grow the creative sector. To enhance this growth, the plan also emphasizes branding and positioning the city as a home for creativity, progressive, and youthful culture. Finally, the plan suggests that for the framework to be successful, champions will be needed to plan and implement the framework – this includes champions in both the public and private sectors. This plan called out several key steps towards these goals:

- Enhance Moorhead’s visual appeal through streetscapes, murals, green space, public art, and cultural activities to contribute to Moorhead’s relevancy, community value, and livability. Based on a series of listening sessions, Moorhead residents take pride in their community and value investment into city elements that improve the appearance and vibrancy of their community.
- Work with neighborhoods to develop a strong sense of place, ensuring that arts and culture are integrated as a key vehicle for defining neighborhood identity. As Moorhead continues to grow, it will be critical to establish unique neighborhoods to attract and retain residents, especially within neighborhoods in the city’s core.
- Develop an intentional approach to building cultural inclusion, responding to the needs of, and celebrating, diverse communities. With a growing diverse population, it is paramount for Moorhead to celebrate stories of residents with diverse backgrounds.
- Invest in placemaking and creating places where people want to gather, specifically in the downtown and riverfront area. Based on existing plans and the Downtown Moorhead Master Plan completed in 2020, investment in placemaking in downtown Moorhead is a high community priority.



Sleigh ride through Viking Ship Park (Credit: City of Moorhead)



Frostival (Credit: Fargo-Moorhead Convention and Visitors Bureau)



Frostival heats up the calendar with winter fun (Credit: InForum)

Moorhead is...

“a community full of passionate, engaged and creative people who want to better the world around them.”



2015 Sidewalk Art & Poetry Project (Credit: City of Moorhead)

Other Plans

The City has also woven arts, culture, and placemaking into several other planning efforts including the 2014 Moorhead River Corridor Master Plan. The Plan includes preserving and promoting “the history and culture of the region through education” in its vision for the River Corridor. The plan also includes a goal that the “Moorhead River Corridor will include opportunities pertaining to the local communities, natural environment, local culture and history of the area.” This focus on interpretation shows that the city values preserving its culture and history.

The 2018 Strategic Plan is another plan that incorporates the importance of partnerships to fostering a vibrant Moorhead. One of the goals within the Plan encourages new partnerships with the objective of developing “short and long term strategies to leverage partnerships and grant funds to support community parks, trails, river corridor enhancement and art and culture opportunities.” Within the broader strategic plan, this objective acts as an operational plan for City Staff and elected officials, instructing them to create and maintain these important partnerships as part of the City’s mission and vision.

Policy Trends Overview

Arts and culture trends help provide context to what is happening across the country within cities that are investing in arts and culture. It is important that best practices from other communities, both big and small, become standard practice for this community.

Municipal Arts and Culture policies help to establish funding sources for all mediums. This covers events, performance, public art, and placemaking. These include:

- Creating a dedicated funding source for public art and placemaking that can be incorporated into the Municipal Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). Best practices dedicate between 1-2% of the overall budget.
- Instituting a public art investment requirement as a component of all new development.
- Consider additional staff or partnership to support funding increase.

Placemaking not only establishes community spaces on both public and private property but takes these spaces one step further by programming them in collaboration with local organizations. These include:

- Add amenities in public spaces for community use that private businesses and events organizers are encouraged to activate. Example: Dog Parks near food and drink, public plaza with turf and splash pad, urban ice skating rink.
- Work with local community groups to develop authentic community identity. An example is hiring Nature of the North to lead guided snowshoe hikes, increased hours and days of Moorhead Park’s canoe and kayak rentals with further marketing, deepening relationship with FM Trailbuilders to continue the bike trail network, furthering investment into signs and wayfinding.

GOALS AND STRATEGIC POLICIES

Walkable neighborhoods and vibrant downtowns are integral for community success. Moorhead is in a strong position to be a city that will continue to thrive in the next decade. With a focus on the following Arts and Culture goals, the City can continue to build on the strong foundation that includes access to the Red River, an emerging downtown, and strong neighborhoods.

With the Comstock Area neighborhoods situated south of downtown and encompassing two higher education institutions, there is potential for future placemaking and arts integration.

Downtown continues to see interest from the development community and business alike. With the creation of a Special Service District, a structure for capturing growth value to reinvest into marketing, cleanliness, and placemaking in the central core of the city.

Viking Ship Park is a flagship park not just for Moorhead but for the entire region. The opportunity for festivals, both large and small, along with enchanted outdoor recreation make Viking Ship Park a star in Moorhead's public spaces.

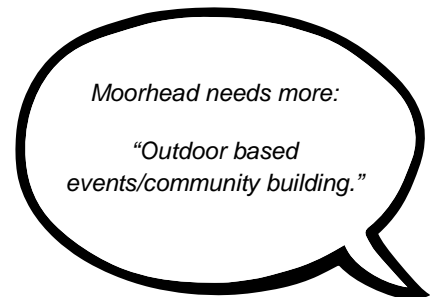
Goal 6.1 Enhance Moorhead's visual appeal through public realm improvements, public art, and cultural activities.

- a) Support opportunities for individuals, neighborhoods, cultural groups, and promoters to develop new or existing events that enhance the unique culture of Moorhead.
- b) Collaborate to find funding sources that support placemaking and cultural events.
- c) Support a dedicated funding source, and staff or partnership for public art and prioritize projects/project areas and develop an application and assessment process for granting funds based on City goals and objectives.
- d) Support signature events such as Frostival that are key for developing community identity.
- e) Promote design and artistic element application with infrastructure projects.



Goal 6.2 Collaborate with neighborhoods to develop a sense of place and pride.

- a) Identify and partner with local community-building groups to elevate the ideas of local neighborhood leaders.
- b) Prioritize the promotion of community events and public arts grants.
- c) Update resources on the City website to include ways for neighbors to engage with City staff, public officials, and any established neighborhood or cultural groups.



Goal 6.3 Develop an intentional approach to building cultural inclusion, responding to the needs of, and celebrating diverse communities.

- a) Develop and maintain a contact list of community and cultural groups that can be used for communications and invitations for City activities such as open houses at the library and other community facilities, coffee with the Mayor, and other community events.
- b) Feature local cultural groups through City of Moorhead communications. This could be through highlighting a citizen or organization of the month.

Goal 6.4 Invest in placemaking and creating places where people want to gather, with a focus in the downtown and riverfront areas.

- a) Support the planning, development, and partnership opportunities relating to a new Regional Library/Community Center Destination.
- b) Explore the creation of a Special Service District to support promotion, placemaking, enhanced maintenance and cleanliness in downtown Moorhead.
- c) Audit and improve street vending and performance policies to invite more food vendors, creatives and artists to the downtown and riverfront areas.
- d) Establish designated food vendor and performance spaces.
- e) Explore and seek funding for downtown art and experience-marketing opportunities.
- f) Fund and support unique placemaking ideas and events.
- g) Establish a signage and wayfinding plan including parks, open space, river trails, neighborhood amenities and cultural nodes. Ensure signage is accessible for all types of mobility.



Implementation

IMPLEMENTATION – A PLAN FOR ACTION

At its core, Onward Moorhead sets a policy direction for decisions made day-to-day by the Moorhead City Council, Planning Commission, other boards and commissions, and City staff. The Plan itself does not have regulatory authority but instead offers the policy foundation for other official controls, like the zoning and building codes, subdivision regulations, City budget, Capital Improvement Plan and other tools, as listed below.

There are four key tools the City of Moorhead already has available to implement this comprehensive plan:

1. Zoning ordinance and other regulatory tools
2. Capital Improvement Program
3. City funding programs
4. Departmental work plans

Beyond these key tools, partnerships with other agencies and institutions will also be critical to realizing the full vision of this plan. Clay County and the Fargo-Moorhead Metro COG have their own funding priorities that can financially support implementation of these goals and strategic policies but require a common set of priorities that this comprehensive plan may influence. Many non-profits and higher educational institutions have already built programs and partnerships that need to be perpetuated with further funding and staff participation from the City of Moorhead.

Overview

A comprehensive plan's purpose is to guide decisions of local government with a long-range direction, usually 10 to 20 years. Moorhead City staff determined early in the process that Onward Moorhead needed to be an actionable 10-year plan. This plan, and specifically this chapter, is designed to guide implementation from the first day after adoption by the Moorhead City Council.

Information in this chapter highlights the critical steps that need to be taken in the next five years to make this a truly actionable comprehensive plan. The strategies identified in the Five-Year Strategy are listed below. Other strategies throughout this plan will occur as part of the City staff's regular practices, in furtherance of this Five-Year Strategy.

Many Strategic Policies did not either concretely aid in implementing the Five Big Ideas or have a longer life span than five years. To that end, this plan proposes a structure for the City Council, Boards and Commissions, and City staff to evaluate decisions against the intention of Onward Moorhead.

This structure uses Onward Moorhead's Values as the platform for asking key questions that relate to day-to-day decisions that affect departmental work plans, permitting, funding, and partnerships.

Additionally, this chapter also offers best practices for the City of Moorhead to strengthen neighborhoods. A focus group of residents and other relevant stakeholders were brought together during Design Week in July 2021 to discuss issues related to neighborhood strengthening and organization. The discussion was guided by the trends analysis in Phase 2 and led to further direction on Comprehensive Plan issues that directly impact and support neighborhood strengthening, identity, and communication strategies.

Five-Year Strategy

The Five-Year Strategy is dedicated to implementing, or at least advancing the Five Big Ideas in a meaningful way. As described at the beginning of this plan document, the Five Big Ideas evolved as the Goals and Strategic Policies solidified as key strategies that transcended various topics. A comprehensive plan is broad-based and high-level by its nature, but the Five Big Ideas offer a concise list of salient priorities that

could dramatically improve desirability and livability of Moorhead if implemented effectively.

The Five Big Ideas below will require continuous attention to realize their full potential. Each has some key first steps that will be needed in the first five years of Onward Moorhead to jumpstart implementation of comprehensive plan.



BIG IDEA #1 –

Transform downtown Moorhead into the ‘heart of the community’

1. Redevelop Moorhead Center Mall and surrounding properties.

The momentum from the Downtown Moorhead Master Plan is driving a conceptual design process from the developer of the Moorhead Center Mall site in collaboration with the City of Moorhead and Downtown Moorhead Inc. Redevelopment of the site into a mixed-use, walkable development will strengthen the role of downtown Moorhead as the ‘heart of the community’ while providing additional options to live, work, play, and learn. Most of the conceptual site design work for the mall site will be completed in February 2022.

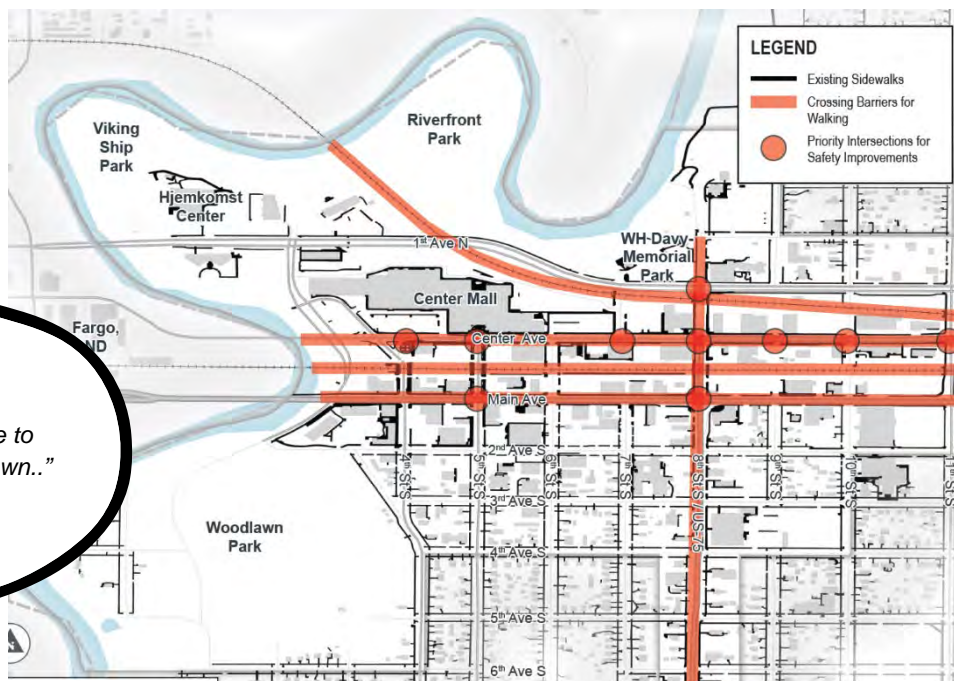
2. Improve key crossings in downtown for pedestrian safety and comfort.

A top priority from the July 2021 Downtown Walkshop was to improve the experience and safety of walking on downtown sidewalks and crossing downtown streets. The City of Moorhead needs to first establish a funding strategy that addresses priority intersection and street crossings, dictates the recommended type of crosswalk markings, and prioritizes areas with high pedestrian traffic. Downtown is an ideal place to pilot this strategy, but it could also benefit other areas of the city like EasTen, Holiday, and near the colleges.

The map below identifies ten critical downtown intersections for pedestrian improvements. Most of the intersection improvements are along major corridors that connect Downtown the EasTen and Holiday focus areas like Center Avenue and 8th Street. Key design elements to consider include:

- Adding high-visibility crosswalk markings
- Reducing number of turn lanes (e.g. Center Avenue approved design)
- Eliminating free-right turn lanes (e.g. Center/4th) to lower vehicle turning speeds and shorten crossing distances
- Eliminating dedicated right turn lanes and adding curb extensions
- Better define and reduce curb cuts (e.g. east side of 8th north of Center)

More details can be found in the Downtown Moorhead Intersection Safety Considerations in Appendix A.



“Create accessible sidewalks for people to actually use downtown..”

Ten critical intersections for pedestrian improvements



BIG IDEA #2 –

Integrate a mix of mutually supportive land uses and experiences in redevelopment areas

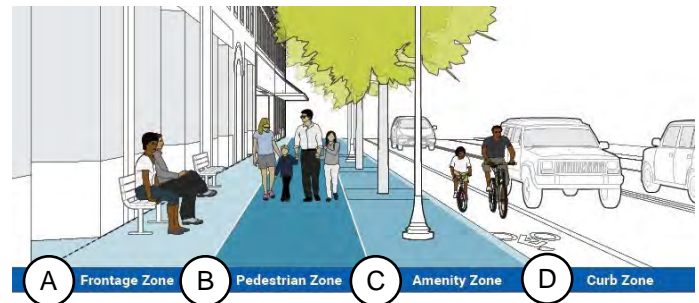
1. **Rezone mixed-use areas to implement the land use and community design guidance in this plan.**

Offer additional flexibility in the zoning code to permit a mix of compatible uses in mixed-use areas as identified on the future land use map. A revised use table should consider permitting a variety of housing types and defining commercial uses that are mutually supportive with residential uses. Any potential uses that could be beneficial in these mixed-use areas, beyond the permitted uses, can be conditional with performance standards guided by the place types. These standards will ensure appropriate transitions in bulk, height, and design.

2. **Develop complete sidewalk zones**

The look and feel of the public realm are equally important in mixed-use areas to the type of development. While this is also important in transformational areas like downtown, being thoughtful of the function and comfort of streets inside other redevelopment areas will better establish them as desirable places to live, grow businesses, and visit. The place types in mixed-use areas provide guidance on design priorities within streets and along sidewalks.

As the City of Moorhead continues to focus on developing Complete Streets over the coming decades, an important design component is the **sidewalk zone** – the space within public right-of-way between the property line and motor vehicle travel lanes. Safe and accessible space for people walking and rolling is important for supporting public health, economic development, and mobility. The graphic to the right illustrates the four sidewalk zones that create a “kit of parts” that can be put together in different ways depending on the adjacent development, expected pedestrian volumes, frontage type, street function, and space available. Descriptions of each zone follows.



Complete sidewalk zone (Credit: Toole Design)

- A. **Frontage Zone** – The Frontage Zone is located between the Pedestrian Zone and the property line, which provides a buffer for pedestrians from the property entrances and a space for public realm improvements. Elements present in the Frontage Zone are architectural features and may accommodate public realm improvements such as sidewalk cafés, outdoor retail displays, and landscaping.
- B. **Pedestrian Zone** – The Pedestrian Zone is designated for pedestrian mobility. The Pedestrian Zone must comfortably accommodate expected pedestrian volumes, including those using mobility assistance devices, pushing strollers, or pulling carts. The area should function in all weather conditions, must be kept clear of any physical obstacles and be wide enough to allow pedestrians to walk next to each other and pass one another comfortably.
- C. **Amenity Zone** – The Amenity Zone is located between the Curb Zone and the Pedestrian Zone. The Amenity Zone provides a buffer between people walking and motor vehicle traffic and a place for a variety of public realm and public infrastructure improvements. This zone can be a space for elements such as lights, trees, bicycle racks, landscaping, benches, signs, public art, transit facilities, and green infrastructure.
- D. **Curb Zone** – Curbside uses can be a vital and flexible element of the street. The area provides for a transition between the pedestrian domain and the vehicular domain. Curbside uses can vary throughout the day and day of the week to respond to changes in land use and street activity. Curbside uses may include transit stops, parklets, bicycle facilities, parking, loading/unloading zones, and motor vehicle travel lanes. The curb coupled with adjacent gutter and stormwater inlets, also plays a specific role in the drainage of the sidewalk, roadway, and adjacent land uses.



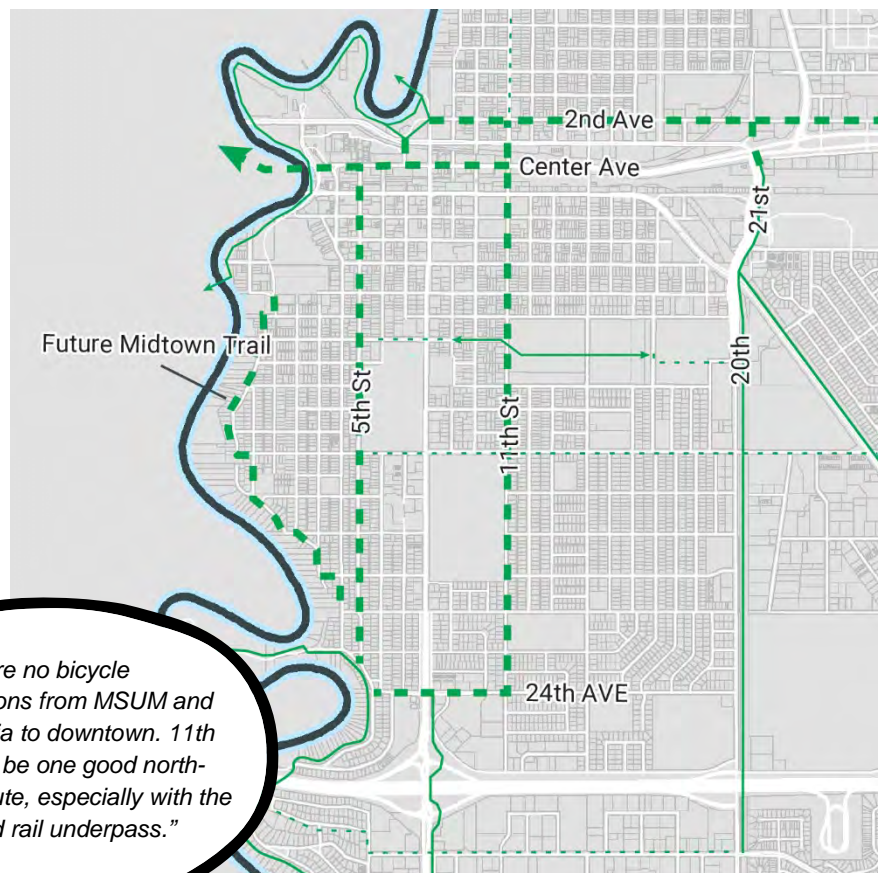
BIG IDEA #3 – Connect neighborhoods to parks and trails

1. **Build on the work of the Fargo-Moorhead Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan Update.**

The place types in this plan set the stage for use and design of redevelopment as well as high-level design standards for streets and sidewalks. Downtown, EasTen, and Holiday are guided to grow in a way that promotes improved livability and vibrancy but they are not isolated and separate areas – they are interconnected by streets, outdoor spaces, and residential neighborhoods. To achieve a multimodal system in Moorhead, a significant step is to create a citywide pedestrian and bicycle master plan that both meets the needs of Moorhead residents but also the larger region. Metro COG is currently working on the Fargo-Moorhead Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan Update that can be a jumping off point. They will identify routes throughout the region and then providing specific facility types and cost estimates on the fifteen highest priority routes. The City of Moorhead can use their methodology to get detailed on their own routes that did not get included in the top fifteen region-wide. The map below identifies a starter network that connects major centers and destinations via to-be-determined bicycle facilities.

- **5th Street** – The 2019 Fargo-Moorhead Metro Bikeways Gap Analysis recommended adding a shared use path on the eastern side of 5th Street South from 7th Avenue South to 12th Avenue South that would travel adjacent to Concordia College. Extending this route north and south would connect to additional destinations like the Moorhead Center Mall site, Gooseberry Park, and the Holiday area. On-street limitations along this corridor like parking, one-way traffic, and travel lanes will need to be evaluated. A benefit to this route is its adjacency to 8th Street while avoiding its high-traffic levels and demands.

- **11th Street** – 11th Street offers another north-south route adjacent to busy 8th Street that connects south through Holiday to I-94. It will provide access to MSUM, Ellen Hopkins Elementary, and the Concordia sports complexes. It was also a recommended bike route in the 2017 Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.
- **2nd Avenue North** – 2nd Avenue North is already considered a bicycle route but lacks true bike amenities. Enhancements can include bike boulevard treatments or dedicated bike lanes. This route connects west to the bike/ped bridge over the river at Riverfront Park and to the proposed trail and bikeway along 17th Street North to the east. The primary benefit, however, is that it is a direct connection from downtown to the EasTen area. Leaving through traffic on parallel 1st Avenue North is also consistent with the Downtown Moorhead Master Plan.



“There are no bicycle connections from MSUM and Concordia to downtown. 11th St would be one good north-south route, especially with the proposed rail underpass.”

2. Complete the Midtown Trail Corridor.

The City of Moorhead received a \$661,000 state grant in November 2020 for construction of the Midtown Trail – a 1.25-mile pedestrian and bicycle trail in the middle of the city that will connect Woodlawn Park to the Blue Goose Trail, a concrete trail constructed in 2020 starting near Gooseberry Mound Park. The Midtown Trail is one segment of the larger Moorhead River Corridor. The new Midtown Trail will include 0.83 miles of off-road pathway with 0.45 miles on the street.

The trail will be constructed in 2022, although the state Legislature must sign off on the grant that was approved for the City by the Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission. When the new Midtown Trail segment is completed, the Moorhead River Corridor Trail will offer residents a 16-mile continuous paved trail that runs along the Red River for 9 miles and on street for the remaining 7 miles from Wall Street Avenue North to 50th Avenue South near the Bluestem Center for the Arts.

3. Develop a prioritization plan and capital improvement plan for future park improvements.

To make park funding a holistic practice, convene public partners and nonprofits to evaluate current prioritization and funding practices. Public funding for parks is significantly limited so taking a broader view of the resources available will be necessary. Besides potential sources through partners, the City should look for opportunities to combine project benefits to make them eligible for multiple grant sources. One example of this is to design park improvements that increase equitable access or environmental sustainability which are current grant priorities at the State and Federal level. Look for grants that are flexible for both master planning and capital improvements.

4. Create a wayfinding plan for downtown.

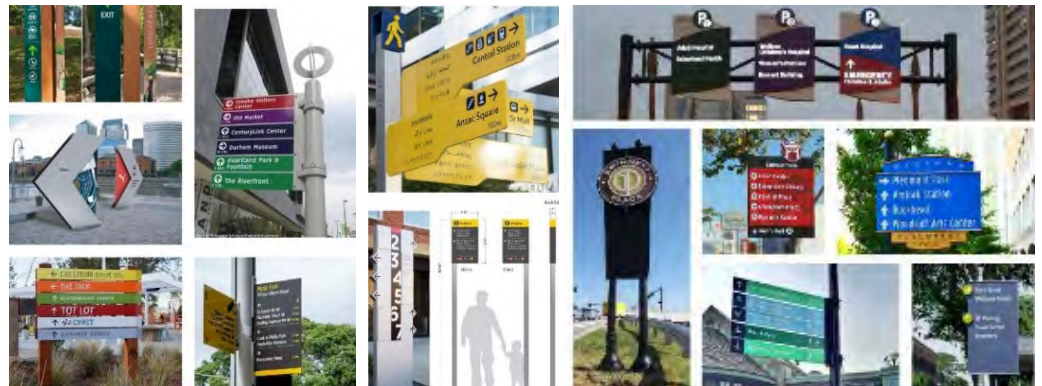
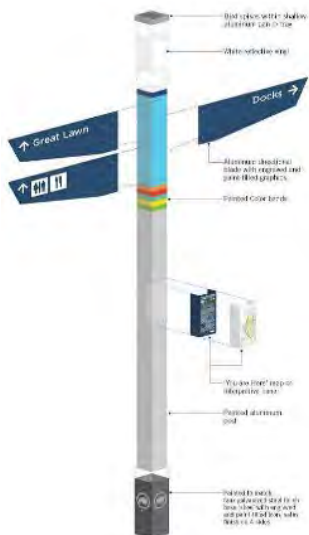
Wayfinding is not just a strategy for where to put signs. It has the benefits of better branding a certain area, encouraging walking via legible routes, and supporting economic development by highlighting key landmarks and businesses. The July 2021 Viking Ship Park Walkshop represented how close the park is to Moorhead Center Mall but without any clear sight lines to know how to walk between the two. This is just one example of how a wayfinding strategy connecting major downtown destinations with the river and other open space amenities can prove beneficial for both those recreating and visitors shopping. As a first step, evaluate wayfinding plans from other cities to customize a scope that fits best for Moorhead and then research possible funding sources to complete the plan.

Moorhead needs more: “wayfinding → directing people to amenities (Viking Ship Park)”

5. Require new residential developments to include a comprehensive sidewalk, bicycle, and trail system.

Leverage new development and planned street improvement projects (local, county, or state) to fill sidewalk gaps, build upon the existing trail system, and expand on-street bicycle facilities. Any comprehensive sidewalk and trail system will have sidewalks on each residential block face that connect to both trails interior and peripheral to the new development.

“I have lived in three homes, not one had a sidewalk in front of it. We need more sidewalks”



Examples of pedestrian (left) and vehicular (right) directional signage from a wayfinding plan in Downtown Greensboro, NC

BIG IDEA #4 –

Embrace resilient environmental and equitable solutions

1. Perform a Regional Indicators Assessment as part of achieving Step 5 in the Green Step Cities program.

To assist with implementation of Step 5 of the Green Step Cities program, and to further the sustainability initiatives driven by both the City and Resilience Task Force, Moorhead will consider joining the Regional Indicators Initiative (RII). The initiative is an opt-in program that assists cities with measuring the impact of their Green Step Cities best practices and other sustainability initiatives. This program measures annual performance metrics related to four primary indicators – energy, water, travel, and waste. The result is a measure of economic and environmental impacts of these indicators for greenhouse gas emissions and costs. The Regional Indicators Initiative was created through a collaboration between LHB and the University of Minnesota’s Center for Science, Technology, and Environmental Policy. More information on how to participate can be found at <https://www.regionalindicatorsmn.com/>.

The RII can be a useful tool in messaging the City’s sustainability and resilience steps, as well as assisting the city in implementing the most impactful sustainability measures. Additionally, City staff can access experts in sustainability and resilience initiatives to tailor RII initiatives to City priorities.

2. Leverage the Fargo-Moorhead Flood Diversion Project.

The diversion project is a pivotal flood management project for the region. It can also act as an opportunity to further amenitize the corridor through a commitment to greening and reforestation along with expansion of the river trail network.

3. Propose a neighborhood structure for the purposes of communication and connectedness.

Social capital is the ability for individuals to weather their own life events – social connectedness and support gives them a better opportunity to land on their feet. While it is difficult for the City enterprise to strengthen the relationship of neighbors with each other, it does have systems in place to play a facilitation, and coordination role to help establish entities whose job is to strengthen the identity and social cohesion within neighborhoods. As a first step, City staff will evaluate examples of neighborhood structures for ones that best fit the priorities of the City of Moorhead to better communicate opportunities and decisions broadly into the community.

As another element of neighborhood connectivity this plan also recommends a mix of land uses to increase opportunities for housing diversity and neighborhood commercial services. The recent pandemic has shown that we will thrive better if we can walk to a park, grab coffee down the street from our house or apartment, eat at locally owned restaurants, and ride a bike safely around the neighborhood. These are all occasions to interact with neighbors, weathering the collective storms that we face together.

4. Pursue strategies to increase the number of eco-friendly, pollinator-friendly plantings on public and private land.

Pollinator and eco-friendly plantings help to maintain our ecosystem and promote biodiversity. The City can work with partners to promote eco-friendly plantings both on their public parks lands, as well as encouraging and incentivizing businesses and individuals to pursue these plantings on private land.

BIG IDEA #5 –

Build and nurture local businesses.

1. Eliminate outdated deed restrictions in the MCCARA industrial park.

Restrictive Covenants were first recorded in 1981 on City-owned land platted by the Moorhead Clay County Area Redevelopment Authority (MCCARA). Throughout the years, there have been several amendments to the original covenants (MCCARA 1st & 2nd Additions) and, as more of the land was platted, new covenants were recorded for those additions (MCCARA 3rd & 4th Additions).

Generally, the covenants provide for use, development, and design consistency and are reviewed by the MCCARA Development Control Board with final approvals by either the Economic Development Authority (EDA) or Moorhead City Council. There are minor differences in covenants between the Additions within MCCARA as well as approval requirements.

Now that most of the parcels are improved, the process of bringing each small improvement request to the MCCARA Development Control Board is overly burdensome. In 2020, members of the MCCARA Development Control Board requested that the City Attorney look at removing the EDA/City from the review process. Whether that can be accommodated is being reviewed by the City Attorney. Furthermore, the overall goals and needs of future Additions should be discussed by the MCCARA Development Control Board to determine their role in approvals and if covenants should be recorded or if the zoning ordinance could be relied on to insure consistent development.

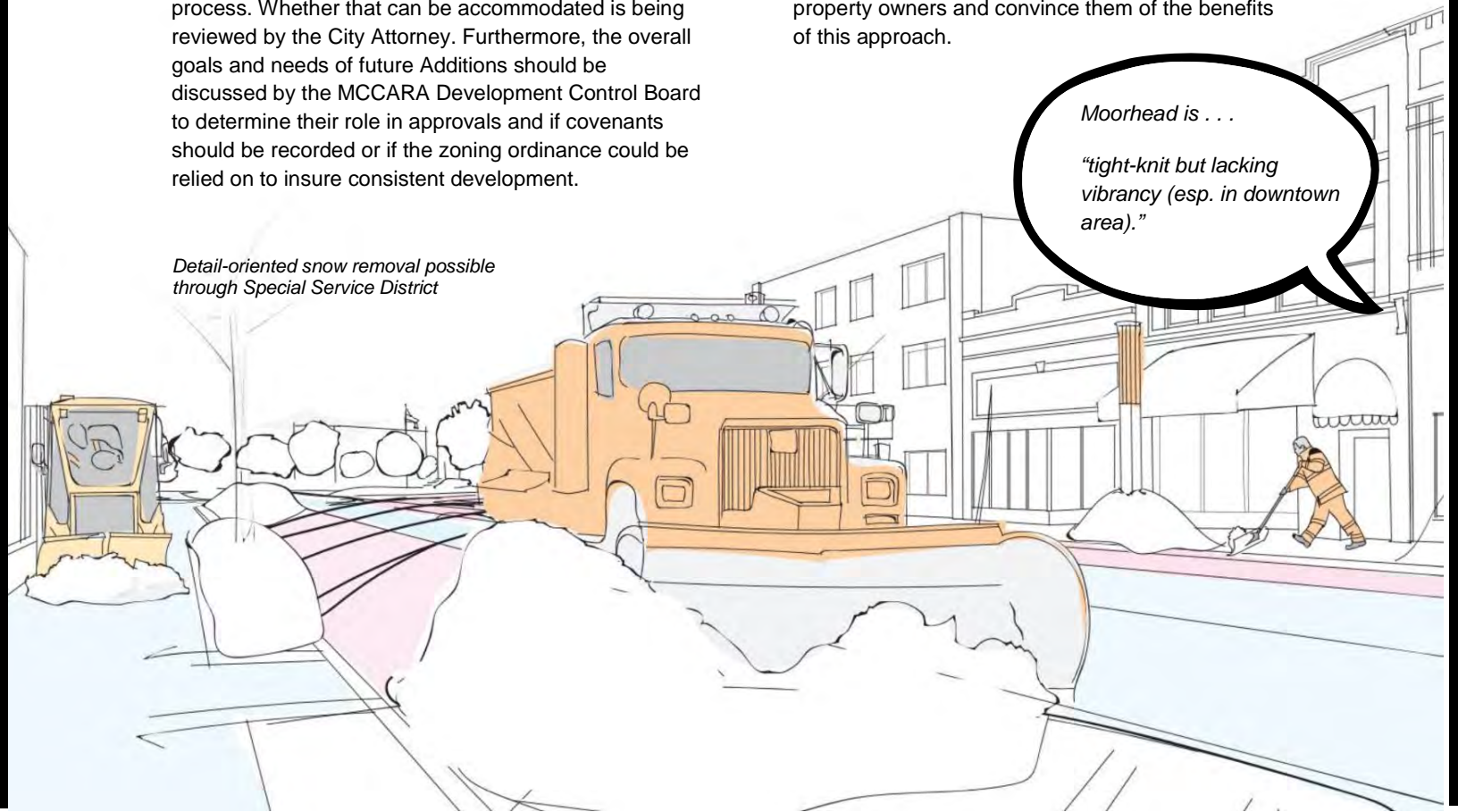
Detail-oriented snow removal possible through Special Service District

2. Establish a Special Service District (SSD).

As Minnesota’s version of a Business Improvement District (BID), Special Service Districts (SSD) allow a city to provide an increased level of service or infrastructure in a defined commercial area. They are created through a petition of commercial property owners within the designated area based on representation of a combination of land area, tax capacity, and a proposed fee. Once passed, the City Council can create an Advisory Board to advise them on construction, maintenance, and operation of improvements. These increased services are paid through a service charge to commercial (and industrial) properties.

The Moorhead Center place type in the heart of downtown Moorhead is a logical minimum boundary for an SSD. Not only can a district like this address issues like spotty sidewalk maintenance and poor snow removal, it can also be a conduit for placemaking through streetscape amenities and festival coordination. Downtown Moorhead Inc. (DMI) is a trusted business leader and is in a good position to recruit commercial property owners and convince them of the benefits of this approach.

*Moorhead is . . .
“tight-knit but lacking vibrancy (esp. in downtown area).”*



3. Create a dedicated funding source for public art.

As highlighted in the Art & Culture Framework Plan, the Moorhead’s arts and culture sector accounted for almost \$10 million in economic impact back to the community in 2018. This is a business sector that generates entrepreneurs, supplies a diverse base of jobs, exemplifies a community’s rich variety of cultures, and as we heard in our engagement process, is a top source of pride for Moorhead residents. This plan proposes a key next step is to create a dedicated funding source for public art and placemaking that can accelerate Moorhead’s creative economy.

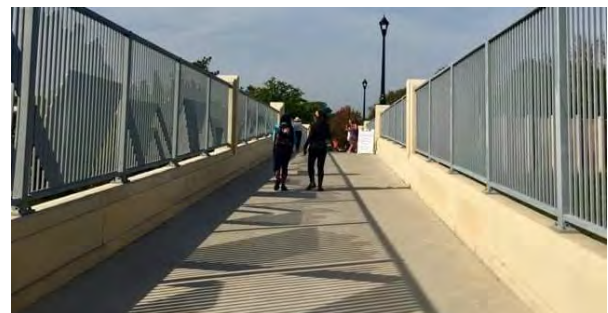
One of the most widely used and stable dedicated funding sources is a percent-for-art program that is tied to the Capital Improvement Program (CIP). This percent (1 to 2) is dedicated to individual projects funded through the CIP. It is an effective way to distribute responsibilities among a variety of departments that rely on the CIP but, more importantly, to implement public art more broadly throughout the city. The first step is utilizing a percent-for-art program is for the City to adopt an ordinance authorizing the collection of these funds.

Other methods of creating dedicated public art funding are more reliant on the market. Some cities receive a percentage of hotel sales taxes, while either requiring public art with developments that exceed a set size threshold, or through the use of public funds like Tax Increment Financing (TIF). More information on dedicated funding sources for public art and placemaking can be found through Project for Public Spaces: Funding Sources for Public Art (pps.org).

The images on this page show examples of how to cost-effectively incorporate public art into infrastructure projects. Railings were already incorporated into the base cost of each of these bridge improvements – adding public arts to the design team created unique and bellowed artistic elements that showcase surrounding environments. The photo on the left is of a piece designed by Minnesota artist Seitu Jones to represent the former skyline of a neighborhood separated by the construction of a freeway – the new bridge is a representation of knitting those two communities back together. The photo on the right is a bridge included in the Eau Claire River Walk (unknown artist) showing the flow of water in the below river.

4. Develop a program to support entrepreneurs and small businesses.

Provide technical support to entrepreneurs and small businesses, particularly those within minority and underrepresented communities, by ensuring access to resources offered by the City and its partners. Any program should connect business owners to local business networks, offer resources for start-up financing, and advise on business incubation opportunities. Collaborative spaces and places can be a key differentiator for a City to show their support of the small business community, so the City of Moorhead should start proactively reaching out to co-working companies to determine methods to support their entry into the Moorhead market. Seeking guidance from the EDA and Human Rights Commission will be valuable to this program’s success.



Public art by Lucy Thompson, Minneapolis

VALUES-BASED DECISION MAKING

Opportunities to implement Onward Moorhead will arise in the day-to-day governance of the City. The table below offers a structure for evaluating decisions to determine their consistency with the intent and values of this plan.

VALUE	QUESTION	MEASURE
<p>Collaboration – Moorhead takes pride in its role as a regional partner and its numerous collaborations with community organizations, businesses, and institutions.</p>	<p>Is this action influenced by substantive input from affected partner agencies, businesses, and institutions?</p> <p>Will this action financially support a partner or organization to achieve a desired outcome on the City’s behalf?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of committees or task forces with representatives from outside City organization • City resources allocated to supporting outside organizations or partners (dollars and %)
<p>Commitment – Personal commitment from each staff member and elected official to work together and develop efficient, enduring processes to achieve common goals.</p>	<p>Does this action encourage a collaborative process among departments?</p> <p>Will this action create broader representation or input on a board or commission?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New or enhanced City services offered • Creates broad representation on boards and commissions
<p>Ecological Health – Moorhead is committed to the environmental sustainability and ecological health of the community.</p>	<p>Does this action support ecological health of the community?</p> <p>Will this action help the City achieve Step 5 in the Green Step Cities program?</p> <p>Will this action increase citywide reforestation?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of community organizations involved in ecological health • Increase in level of Green Step Cities program • # of new trees
<p>Inclusion - Moorhead recognizes that every individual is coming from different circumstances and is committed to ensuring they have the resources they need to thrive in the community. Moorhead is committed to achieving equity across race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and ability levels.</p>	<p>Does this action welcome and/or sustain Moorhead’s diverse population?</p> <p>Has this decision been vetted through diverse and underrepresented communities and boards and commissions?</p> <p>Is this action encouraging entrepreneurship and/or diverse business growth?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in ethnic mix, city-wide and by neighborhood • # of public facilities and/or buildings with universal design (accessibility measure) • Trends in business types (number and % of tax base)
<p>Innovation – Moorhead embraces innovation and strives to adapt creatively to change.</p>	<p>Is this action strengthening relationships with a college or university?</p> <p>Is the City staying up to date on State and Federal grant opportunities?</p> <p>Is this action updating City buildings or fleets to a new technology?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of grant applications • % of City budget used to upgrade assets

<p>Integrity – The City’s foundation for service and effective governance is built upon honesty, responsibility, accountability, openness, humility, and grit.</p>	<p>Is this process transparent and open to members of the public?</p> <p>Has the issue been reviewed by boards/commissions?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget devoted to communication, including printing, mailing, social media participation, and website updates
<p>Prosperity – The City supports economic development and fosters a positive business climate to promote prosperity for all.</p>	<p>Does this action target the needs of local businesses and entrepreneurs?</p> <p>Does this action allow for creative redevelopment of a site?</p> <p>Will this action create employment opportunities for “good jobs” (i.e. jobs with living wages, benefits, and steady hours) for Moorhead residents?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trends in business types (number and % of tax base) • # of permits issued for locally owned businesses • # of Moorhead residents working for Moorhead businesses • Increase in average wages
<p>Resilience – Moorhead strives to be a resilient community, one that has the characteristics that enable it to prepare, adapt, and flourish in the face of change.</p>	<p>Does this action create variety in housing products in terms of size (square footage and/or # of bedrooms) and ownership/rental type?</p> <p>Does this action enhance the walkability or bikeability of the city?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trends in housing types • Walk Score trends • Miles of dedicated bicycle facilities
<p>Safety – Moorhead is a safe City and the city provides the leadership and structure to assist partners, stakeholders, and the police department with strengthening the security and connectedness of its residents.</p>	<p>Is natural surveillance, where people can see what is going on in public spaces from private ones, increased?</p> <p>Do regulations allow for, if not encourage, activity in public spaces?</p> <p>Can pedestrians safely walk down a sidewalk or cross a street?</p> <p>Does this action support community policing and crime-free housing?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of functioning street lights • Number of crosswalks that have clearly painted markings • # of pedestrians in centers and public spaces • Enforcement of parking lot lighting requirements
<p>Service – The City strives to serve and build a team that puts the needs of the community first.</p>	<p>Does this action enable neighborhoods to build a sense of identity and participate in decision making?</p> <p>Can people with language and accessibility needs participate thoroughly in City decision-making?</p> <p>Are we allocating appropriate City resources to support community and cultural events?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in neighborhood organizations, neighborhood-based events, and meetings. • City resources allocated to supporting community events (dollars and %) • # of events that are attractive to the full range of demographics

NEIGHBORHOOD STRENGTHENING STRATEGIES

As the City of Moorhead further cultivates and develops the city and its communities, neighborhoods will be an integral part of progress. Communicating and collaborating with residents via neighborhood channels can aid in emergency preparedness, public notifications, community engagement, and community funding distribution. These channels can have flexible uses, making them highly adaptable to city needs in the long-term.

For cities, neighborhoods are important geographic, social, and political features. Their identities and boundaries develop from a variety of influences – cultural, social, geographical, historical, or from phases of real estate development. With multiple influences to accommodate, definite boundaries are difficult to establish. Cities can address this in a variety of ways, and the greatest pathway to success starts from clearly establishing and communicating neighborhood boundary policies. These policies should incorporate City goals for the neighborhood/city connection, provide guidance to residents, and be detailed enough to outline process but allow for flexibility as both City and resident goals evolve.

Any of these strategies can be combined, trimmed, or expanded to fit the city's identified needs. Flexibility and clarity will be crucial in creating well-informed neighborhoods and residents with high resilience and social cohesion. Additionally, these systems will take time, and utilizing current City resources will help accomplish goals and address needs now while developing long-term processes.

Understand how the City will operate and collaborate with neighborhoods

A realized vision of how neighborhoods will support and accomplish City goals will influence the depth of the neighborhood policies. Goals can include communication, emergency preparedness, community social strengthening, enriching land use decisions, better utilizing overlay districts, preserving historical features, etc. The list of goals does not need to be exhaustive but comprehensive enough to create clear process and support actionable steps forward.

Determine which City Staff will be responsible for neighborhood engagement

This could mean adding new staff for community engagement or splitting duties between existing staff. Determining responsibilities and adjusting expectations will be a necessary part of recommendations to ensure City staff capacities are maintained and resident needs are being met. Further research for capacity building methods is needed; contacting peer cities with neighborhood engagement goals or resources would be helpful.

Create a neighborhood map and definitions for official City use

Many Minnesota cities have neighborhood maps for official City use. How these maps are created vary, but Edina's Neighborhood Association Guidebook and Neighborhood Association Policy from 2015 stand out in a few specifics:

- The map is accompanied by definitions for neighborhoods, neighborhood associations, and neighbors.
- The maps are clearly marked with "boundaries as defined by the City." Also, there is a process for boundary changes and neighborhood name changes, providing avenues for neighborhoods to make technical corrections or suggest larger geographic changes to boundary maps.

In Moorhead maps, the City can mark intersectional zones that help guide City action – these zones could be an overlay that include homes and business within a certain distance of a neighborhood boundary that prompts the City to distribute additional communications or notices that cross neighborhoods.

Consider enabling and encouraging neighborhood associations

Neighborhood associations, by and large, are fully resident formed, maintained, and steered by the residents within those neighborhoods. Identifying responsibilities and expectations for neighborhood associations, the City, and interactions between the two ensures that both residents and the City are aware of operation capacities with regards to associations.

Neighborhood associations rely on the capacity and motivation of residents, and associations could be slow to form. There is also no guarantee that every neighborhood will form an association, meaning the City will still need to find reliable ways to accomplish their goals in communication, social rapport strengthening, etc.

Utilize established communication platforms

Facebooks groups, Nextdoor, and other social media, library bulletin boards, and City communication are already being used in Moorhead but could be enhanced methods for communicating with neighborhoods. These platforms will not reach everyone but are often familiar and popular methods that can communicate and address high priority topics.



APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – Downtown Moorhead Intersection Safety Considerations

APPENDIX B – Engagement Summaries



FOLKWAYS

