





PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

Developed in collaboration with HDR and Flint Group

Updated December 5, 2017

OVERVIEW

In West Fargo, 13th Avenue has seen a steady increase in traffic patterns with residential and commercial development anticipated to continue increase and the roadway to become an even more valuable arterial for travel through the city. 13th Avenue, between 17th Street SE to Main Avenue, has failing pavement conditions making it unable to support future traffic growth.

Public input is kicking off the efforts of the corridor study with early public engagement and will continue until the technical feasibility work is complete. HDR has teamed with the Flint Group, full-service marketing and communications agency to create and implement the public engagement program for the study.

ISSUE STATEMENT

A study is needed to determine an appropriate future use of the corridor and offer alternatives to better define current and anticipated traffic patterns, right-of-way needs, bicycle, pedestrian and transit accommodations and feasibility of better connection to the interstate system.

By identifying stakeholders who have an interest in and use this section of 13th Avenue in West Fargo frequently, we'll collaborate and listen to their ideas and further research solutions to offer successful alternatives.

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY AND GOAL

Our approach to public participation work is built on first identifying critical stakeholders, then engaging with this diverse user-set of the corridor through how these audiences are best served.

Today public participation needs to involve non-traditional tactics alongside traditional means. Through incorporating grassroots ideas and leveraging already established community-based events, we're meeting the public where they already are to gain the right stakeholder's input.

By using a range of engagement tools, the study review committee will demonstrate their desire for community buy-in and the importance of sharing ideas through platforms that stakeholders choose to use.





KEY MESSAGE

Input Stage

- The Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Council of Governments, Metro COG, initiated this study of 13th Avenue in West Fargo to support smart planning and spending to ensure that the 13th Avenue corridor supports future growth.
- As the first step in this planning process, we're seeking the insight of those who use this corridor and your thoughts on how it can meet your needs into the future.
- The results of this study will be incorporated into the long-term vision for this corridor.
- Studies like this one support smart and efficient decisions on planning and construction projects.
- Gleaning your ideas and comments now will help us design for the future of the entire 13th Avenue corridor as well as validate the preliminary design and bids for the portion already scheduled for reconstruction in 2018.

Alternatives Stage

- The Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Council of Governments, Metro COG, initiated this study to support smart planning and spending to ensure that the 13th Avenue corridor supports future growth.
- The design options for the future of 13th Avenue were developed from ideas and challenges that were shared at the start of the study, together with analysis of the study area.
- The next step in the study process is to get your input on the design options, either by attending an in-person informational meeting or participating in an online meeting.
- After the project team receives the community's feedback, the next step is to refine these alternatives and do more research on each, including their economic feasibility, before the final study is presented to the Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Council of Governments, MetroCog.

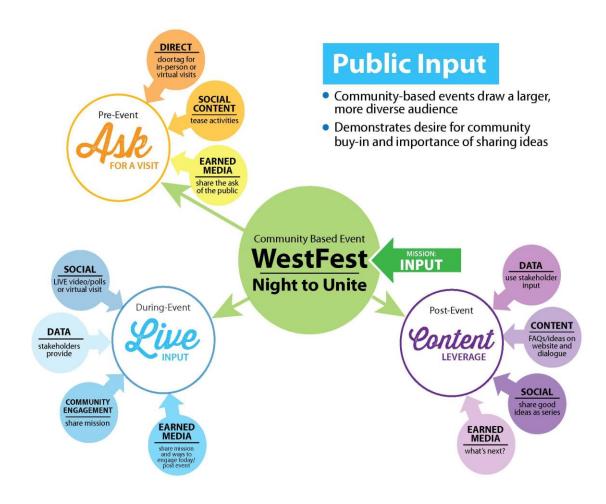
Key Message – Finalized Study Stage

- The Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Council of Governments, Metro COG, have received the final report of this study, which supports smart planning and spending to ensure that the 13th Avenue corridor supports future growth.
- The study of the 13th Avenue corridor contains operational analysis and alternatives. The complete study can be found online at 13thAveWFStudy.com.



INTEGRATED APPROACH

Capturing public input is not a one-step process. Our philosophy is to look to leverage the opportunity for public engagement across all your communication channels with your key stakeholders. This graphic depicts how this approach works when using a community-based event in the stages of pre-event, during-event and post-event.





INPUT STAGE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Why is a study of 13th Avenue in West Fargo being conducted?

This study was initiated by the Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Council of Governments (Metro COG) to help the City of West Fargo evaluate the needs of this major corridor to support both smart planning and efficient spending on construction. Metro COG is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Fargo-Moorhead metropolitan area and is responsible for maintaining a continuous, comprehensive and coordinated transportation planning process. Serving on the Metro COG are local planning partners representing cities, states and counties.

Why are you asking for public input?

Public input is the first step in our long-range transportation planning process for 13th Avenue; we're seeking the insight of those who use this corridor and thoughts on how it can better meet the needs of all users into the future.

How will my input be used?

Your input on how you travel through the area, and any challenges or improvements you'd like to see supports the long-range planning for this corridor, as well as current projects scheduled for this portion of 13th Avenue. Your input will be used during the project team's analysis of solutions to address each challenge, which will be presented as concepts for public review and discussion.

What's the whole study process?

The project team will use the community's ideas and comments to determine possible improvements for all types of transportation along this corridor. Additional analysis is completed and design options are developed. You will have the opportunity to review and comment on the alternatives developed. Further research is completed on those alternatives, including their economic feasibility, and the final study is presented to the Metro COG. The study period from start to end is approximately one year.

As projects are introduced and move forward, the opportunity for public involvement and comment is part of each project's preliminary design stage.

When will I see my ideas about 13th Avenue – and those of others – come to life?

In early 2018, we will be presenting the design options for future improvements, developed from the ideas and any challenges you've expressed together with the technical analysis of the study area from the project team. Our team will be looking at a wide range of data collected from the city, county and state. You will be able to comment on those alternatives, either by attending an in-person informational meeting or participating in an online meeting in spring 2018.





Another goal for gleaning your ideas now, at the front end of the study, is to quickly include your input into an upcoming 2018 reconstruction project. The City Council voted to move forward with the preliminary design of the 13th Avenue corridor between 17th Street E and 12th Street E. Your comments will be used to validate that we're addressing the needs already identified and to verify that these projects are integrated into the long-range plan ahead of the start of next year's construction.

Why are you asking for input now, when 13th Avenue is already under construction, with more construction expected next year?

The construction currently in-progress on 13th Avenue was the result of previous planning and analysis. However, our communities continue to grow and transportation trends change, so this study takes advantage of the opportunity to study alternatives that support both the current users and possible growth. The cities of Fargo and West Fargo are working together to examine a broad range of improvements on 13th Avenues.

The portion of this corridor that is scheduled to be reconstructed next year is in the early stages of the design process. Any new ideas we capture now in the 13th Avenue study could be incorporated into the larger plans for next year.

How is the study funded?

This project is funded with federal transportation funds and the city of West Fargo provides the local share to facilitate the study. Further questions about the funding and management of this project can be viewed at 13thAveWFStudy.com or by contacting Metro COG Project Manager, Dan Farnsworth.





SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY

Channels: Facebook and Twitter

The 13th Avenue Corridor will use the City of West Fargo and Metro COG social spaces to serve community asks and awareness of ways to participate.

Content Management

The social content will be drafted by HDR/Flint Group to connect with community members about how their input is important and vital to shaping change for a major connector in the City of West Fargo. The content will not only share information on upcoming events or engagement, but it will share the good ideas or wish lists coming from other members of the community through testimonials.

Goals

- To create better relationships with each stakeholder group and demonstrate expertise in infrastructure planning
- To increase the communities understanding about how their input works in planning for the future in West Fargo

Key Objectives

- Educate stakeholders on how they can get involved to enhance their experience on 13th Avenue
- Give background on projects to increase stakeholders understanding of why corridor studies are done
- Create messaging that is interesting enough stakeholders want to share with their peer groups
- Share completion and/or the end results of projects

Social Media Content Pillars

INPUT OPPORTUNITIES (WHERE TO SHARE YOUR INPUT)

- Events
- Online

WE'RE LISTENING

Share ideas, input already given

THIS IS SMART PLANNING

- Expert interviews
- Interesting facts, shared with project explanation (why)





Tone

• Educational, collaborative, smart, friendly

Post Types

- Video
- Links
- Images
- GIFs
- Gallery/album
- Polls
- Curated

Content Sources

OWNED

- Videos
- Project updates
- Time-lapses
- Expert interviews
- Live video

AGGREGATED

- Discussions from projects from neighboring cities that will affect the corridor
- State and national stats/stories

USER-GENERATED (UGC)

- Photo shares (emphasis on safety)
- Video shares (emphasis on safety)
- Q & A/chats with the expert

Frequency

Spaces should be updated whenever we are approaching a community engagement period as well as posts that give facts to inform public input. Consistency is the key to keeping fans engaged.



Organic vs. Paid Content

Both types of content work to build and interact with a social community.

ORGANIC SOCIAL (UNPAID)

Organic content will be used to share progress of the corridor study and position the thought leadership of Metro COG and City of West Fargo. Organic reach is the total number of unique people who were shown your post through unpaid distribution.

- Typical content: Posting on various networks, sharing posts, events, links to other content responding to customer reviews, messages and comments.
- In-network tools provide some analytics to measure post performance.

PAID SOCIAL

Paid content will be used to launch events we're asking the public to engage in, such as survey captures and meeting notices. Paid reach is the total number of unique people who were shown your post as a result of ads.

- Typical content: Paying to share posts, images, videos; boosting posts.
- You are able to target content to specific users based on age, gender, occupation, geography, interests and myriad other factors. (You can also exclude users based on certain demographics.)
- Costs depend on the type of ad (many are cost per click).
- Some in-network tools provide analytics, and UTM (unique links) allow tracking from paid social posts to destinations.

Hashtag(s)

BRANDED

#13thAveWestFargoIdeas

UNBRANDED

Event specific hashtags

- #roadconstruction
- #transportation
- #MyWestFargo
- #WestFargo





Key Words

These will be the set of key words that will be found in most social content:

- Corridor study
- Transportation planning (not just "planning" or "urban planning")

Channel Specific Best Practices

People in West Fargo and surrounding areas are on social media to interact with people—for an organization, that means including people in photos, videos, etc., whenever possible. These will be the best practices the team will use for each channel throughout the study.

FACEBOOK

- Keep messages short and to the point
- Don't bury the lead, put the most important information at the beginning of the post
- Include multimedia whenever possible
- Boosting posts can help reach a greater portion or specific segment of your fans—when used correctly, it increases not only reach but engagement on posts
- Respond to comments and messages when it makes sense—try to avoid becoming defensive with fans, people usually choose other people over organizations

Answer questions

Alleviate concerns

Correct information when necessary

If the comment doesn't warrant a response but it's positive feedback, liking the comment is appropriate

Facebook Videos

- One of the top performing types of content on Facebook if short and to the point
- Include people and don't bury the message in the middle or end of the video
- Native video (uploaded directly to Facebook instead of linking) is usually the best option
- Always stabilize video with tripod and shoot in landscape mode (horizontal) to maximize viewing
- Most videos on social are watched without sound so try to get your point across without relying too heavily on audio
- Facebook gives you the opportunity to "go live" with video—followers will get a notification that you're going live and these videos typically have a high rate of views. Live videos are saved for later viewing your profile

As with other videos, planning is key; and be prepared for tough questions This is a great way to interact with your audience by answering questions live





Facebook Photos

- Always try to include something visual with an update; if speaking about a specific area on 13th Avenue, snap and include a photo of the current condition
- Panoramic photos that are larger than 100 degrees will now show as "3D photos on Facebook"—
 this could be a great feature for showing an entire construction area
- Try to upload square or landscape photos to maximize viewing space
- Limit the amount of text overlay to help increase organic reach—let the post copy speak for itself

Facebook Links

- Include a link if it provides relevant and helpful information
- Always explain what the link is with a call to action (CTA), such as: Learn more, sign up, subscribe

TWITTER

- Maximum of 140 characters—short and concise messaging
- Include relevant hashtags to reach a broader audience and organize conversations about a specific topic
- Try to interact with other Twitter users on similar topics of discussion
- Reply to questions/comments
- Favorite relevant Tweets
- Mention other users when relevant
 - Media
 - Other organizations
 - Key influencer individuals, etc.
- Include multimedia when possible

Twitter Video

- Include people and don't bury the message in the middle or end of video
- Native video (uploaded directly to Twitter, instead of linking from YouTube) is usually the best Native video on Twitter is limited to 30 seconds
 If a longer video is needed, link to another source like YouTube or Vimeo
- Always stabilize video with tripod, shoot in landscape mode (horizontal) to maximize viewing, and don't rely on sound to get your point across





Twitter Photos

- To prevent cropping on mobile, photos are best when uploaded at a 2:1 landscape ratio (1080 px X 540 px)
- Including a visual on Twitter isn't as important as Facebook but still helps catch attention for scrollers

Twitter Links

- Include a link if it provides relevant and helpful information to carry on the discussion
- When character count allows, write in a call to action with links such as:

Take survey

Learn more

Come to event

• Twitter will include a link preview if possible (only if you haven't included an image with the post)



KEY STAKEHOLDERS

All stakeholders for the public participation plan are identified below:

State and local government

- Elected officials (local, county and state representatives)
- City of West Fargo
- Cass County

Area commuters, residents and businesses

- Single-family property owners
- Apartment building owners
- Tenants/renters
- Neighborhood groups, associations
- Churches
- Metropolitan Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee
- MATBUS
- Great Ride Bike Share
- FMWF Chamber of Commerce
- Red River Valley Fair Grounds
- FMWF Convention & Visitor Bureau
- West Fargo Downtown Business Association
- Businesses (retail, finance, restaurants) located on/adjacent to 13th Avenue
- Employees of businesses (retail, finance, restaurants) located or adjacent to 13th Avenue
- Large area employers
- West Fargo Service and Social Clubs (West Fargo Exchange Club, West Fargo Lion's Club, Fargo West Rotary)
- Taxi/ride share driving services
- SE Cass County Resource District
- North Dakota Motor Carriers Association





Core Community Services

- City of West Fargo Public Schools (long-range facility planning taskforce)
- City of West Fargo Park District
- City of West Fargo Police Department
- City of West Fargo Fire Department
- City of West Fargo Transportation/Public Safety Department
- Health care and long-term care facilities (Eventide, Sheyenne Crossing and local clinics)
- Emergency responders (FM Ambulance)

Local Developers

(List to be supplied by city)

MEASURES OF EFFECTIVENESS

By adopting this proactive public participation process, at the end of the study efforts the HDR/Flint team will be able to give examples of:

- The opportunity for involvement across each stakeholder group was considered or implemented

 state and local government, Area commuters/residents/businesses, core community service and local developers
 - Participants will be provided information, so they more clearly understand how their input works, is valued and how it is incorporated through the study process.
 - The survey pool will be a larger cross-section than typically gathered on similar studies through each survey capture.
- A more user-friendly and creative involvement was delivered one new type of public engagement was utilized across one of the stakeholder groups
 - Efforts to reach new and existing stakeholders will increase by a unique series of different meeting formats for discussion and interaction throughout the study process.
- A predictable process was provided
 - Through testimonials the study process could be stated as, "understandable and known well in advance" to showcase effective use of stakeholder's resources.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SCHEDULE AND TACTICS

Public engagement and participation should:

- Educate the community voices and showcase your commitment to improving the surrounding community
- Start the messages, early and share the story visually
- Create owned channels that are timely and resourceful, and bring to life the project
- Create a regular dialogue to seek new ideas
- Start a two-way conversation with new stakeholders

Strategy

- Gain input from residents in West Fargo through already established community-based events to create a more diverse conversation opportunity
- Keep stakeholders informed through owned events and information sharing

STUDY KICK-OFF: Initial Input Phase Sept - Nov 2017				
DATE SATURDAY, SEPT 16, 2017	AUDIENCE Area commuters, residents and business Core Community Services	Input – survey capture #1	 EVENT WestFest Direct marketing (door tags) Social media content (paid and unpaid) Earned media outreach Event support staffing Key messaging development Online and in-person survey capture Online survey data set #1: Wed, Sept 14 – Sunday, Sept 17 	
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2017 SRC SMALL GRP MTG/ PRIOR TO SCENARIO PLANNING)	SRC City Council	Input	 Email recap of engagement channels Summary of West Fest events Initial survey capture #1 analysis Photos, creative examples, and testimonials from event engagement 	

Grey = internal | White = external





FALL/WINTER 2017 (TENTATIVE, DECEMBER 2017)	Core Community Services	Input – survey capture #2	Share purpose and online survey to gain insights from critical City of West Fargo employees/users of the corridor: • Draft email with survey link; distribution to be determined • Discuss if meeting opportunity exists to integrate with Database – from City of West Fargo • TBD • Long-range facility planning taskforce Online survey data set #2: TBD (open for 2 – 3 week period?)
DECEMBER 2017	Area commuters, residents and business Core Community Services	Input – survey capture #3	Community Pop-up December 10 Park District Event Santa's PJ Party – Dec 10 Online survey – pre-event In-person and online survey – during event Online survey data set #3 (December 8 – 31, 2017) Online survey data set #3 continues through December promoted through: Paid social ad Digital trailer message boards in corridor (City of West Fargo)
DECEMBER 2017	Area commuters, residents and business Core Community Services	Input	 Launch of project specific website for study Dedicated sponsored social content (paid and unpaid) Trigger for proactive earned media, tag with next community pop-up awareness Editorial board meeting with West Fargo Pioneer/Forum News Service Corridor Roadway Sign – Work with Public Works to install
TDB	SRC City Council	Input	Dashboard recap of engagement channels and summary of event:



			 Share survey capture #2 and 3 analysis
			 Photos, creative examples, and testimonials from event engagement
TBD	SRC	Review	Study Review Meetings

Grey = internal | White = external

Alternatives Developed, Input Phase Dec 2017 – March 2018 (tentative)					
DATE	AUDIENCE	STAGE	EVENT		
FEB 2018	State and local Government Area commuters, residents and business Core Community Services	Alternatives – Survey capture #4	Launch virtual meeting alongside traditional public meeting at location along 13 th Avenue corridor Direct marketing (door tags to business and resident adjacent to the corridor) News release (Metro COG to distribute) and earned media outreach Paid newspaper ad (box ad/legal ad, HDR to place) Launch available event at services clubs or city council meeting Talking points for Mayor/City Council Draft updated survey questions specific to input stage Research City of West Fargo planned meeting, host public meeting before or after? One-page take away		
FEB 2018	Local Developers	Alternatives – survey capture #5	Online survey data set #4: TBD Developer Pop-up • Draft separate set of survey questions for audience and input stage • One-page take away		



			Online survey data set #5: TBD
TBD	Committee	Alternatives	Dashboard review of engagement channels

Grey = internal | White = external



Study Complete, Post Public Input Phase Late summer/fall 2018 (tentative)					
DATE	AUDIENCE	STAGE	EVENT		
TBD	State and local Government	Post Input	Completed study posted to Metro COG website and WestFargoStreets.com		
	Area commuters, residents and business		 Social content (paid and unpaid) Earned media outreach – highlights and success 		
	Local Developers Core Community Services		 Talking points/fact sheet updated – printed copies at City Hall 		
TBD	SRC	Final Presentation	Study Presentation Meetings		

Grey = internal | White = external

Individual Event Tactics West Fest September 15 – 17			
PRE-EVENT			
DIRECT MARKETING/ INPUT CAPTURE	Door hangers (QTY: 1,000) with survey link and booth presence awareness were distributed: • 1st CTA: enter to win reserved parade seating ("golden wish chairs") • 2nd CTA: stop by our booth 15 winners were informed prior to parade of chair access.		
SOCIAL MEDIA	Event presence/activity awareness for Metro COG, City of West Fargo channels		
EARNED MEDIA	Position golden chairs opportunity and start of public participation KVRR – Reporter called to visit booth, did not stop by West Fargo Pioneer – Discussion with Wendy, planned to stop by (continued follow-up)		
ACTIVE EVENT			
GRASSROOTS EFFORTS	Kids activity – created make-your-own bubble wand (craft station) A range of ideas for activities to hold kid's attention was researched to allow for time for guardians to answer survey/question, including: Branded large bubble sticks (cheap, available, customizable,), or; Soap bubbles/Paint with bubbles (craft station), or; Monster bubble station (contest)		



INPUT CAPTURE	Public input survey work – Gather responses to input survey (paper and iPad) from stationary and mobile position.		
	 Incentive for survey completion: Giant bubble wands for kids 		
	Other ideas:		
	Comment bar – Priority question to be used as comment station:		
	 Coins tossed in pool/well into three available answers; ask for pennies from local bank for donation to local organization 		
	Wish Pad, oversized post-it to write number one change/wish		
EDUCATIONAL	Informational materials available included:		
EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY	Infographic on the path of the input		
OTT ORTONITI	Vicinity map of corridor		
	Fact sheet (one-pager)		
POST EVENT			
DATA	Add input to content management database		
CONTENT -	Update materials with good questions or FAQs		
UPDATES	WDAY-TV – Melissa Richard shared as story idea		
SOCIAL MEDIA	Share survey link with good idea examples (multimedia-based)		

Individual Event Tactics Santa's PJ Party December 10, 2017			
PRE- EVENT			
SOCIAL MEDIA	Event presence/activity awareness for Metro COG, City of West Fargo channels		
ACTIVE EVENT			
GRASSROOTS EFFORTS	Kids activity – branded "Holiday Wish List" for kids to fill in and share with Santa		
	A relevant to the event child's activity will allow for time for guardians to answer survey/question.		
INPUT CAPTURE	Public input survey work – Gather responses to input survey (paper and iPad) from stationary and mobile position.		
	 Incentive for survey completion: Holiday wish list for kids to share with Santa 		





EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY	 Informational materials available included: Infographic on the path of the input Vicinity map of corridor Fact sheet (one-pager) 	
POST EVENT		
DATA	Add input to content management database	
CONTENT - UPDATES	Update materials with good questions or FAQs	
SOCIAL MEDIA	Share website and survey links with good idea examples (multimedia-based)	



PUBLIC PARTICIPATION TOOLS

Webpage/website

The project specific website is currently being developed to house virtual meeting, comment management system and project background. The City of West Fargo's page, WestFargoStreets.com, and Metro COG, will link out to the project site.

A specific 13th Avenue Corridor Study section has already been created on WestFargoStreets.com.

WEBSITE MANAGEMENT

HDR Team will be developing the project-specific website and managing content and comment form response.

There will be a secure online comment and contact database to track, respond and report all comments received during the Corridor Study. The City can have access to the database if interested in adding or viewing input.

WEBSITE REPORTING

A monthly comment report will be provided to the City. The HDR Team will provide a final contact and comment report (excel and PDF) with the Final Corridor Study Report.

PROJECT WEBSITE OUTLINE

Homepage

Project statement/introduction

Feature: Take our survey

• About the project

Project Description

Project Benefits

- Project map
- FAQ
- Contact the project team
- Comment form

PROJECT PAGE URL

13thAveWFStudy.com



Online survey

Questions will be refreshed depending on the specific community engagement event. There will be multiple capture periods that will allow for analysis specific to core stakeholders. The online survey will be used in social content, media outreach and CTA (call to action) in direct marketing tactics ahead of each stakeholder event.

Pop-up survey cart

This will be the physical vehicle used to take the mission of the study and opportunity for stakeholders to conduct the survey at already established West Fargo area events (community and developer focused) throughout the public participation input stage.

Virtual meeting

This will be the technology vehicle used to present the mission of the study and opportunity for stakeholders to see the initial suggestions of how 13th Avenue could look in the future to a wider audience and share future input to validate technical direction of the study at the stakeholder convenience. This will be held after alternatives are ready for the public to review.

The virtual meeting will include embedded video of a presentation, similar to what will be provided at the in-person public open house. The virtual meeting will live in the project website, which will be a branded project page with a 24/7 access option. The online meeting will be active for several weeks. The virtual meeting will open in tandem with a traditional meeting/presentation held in West Fargo near the corridor.

In-person meetings, pop-up and community-based events

A range of meeting formats – traditional open-house meeting, pop-up meetings and leverage of established community events – will be utilized through the input and alternative stages of the study. These meetings will allow direct access to gather survey response and listen to ideas from the public on what 13th Avenue could look like in the future. Community-based events and pop-up meetings will be used to increase diversity and participation where a larger crowd is already gathering. The event presence during the input stage will tie an incentive or activity for completing the input survey.





TEAM ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Metro COG and City of West Fargo study review committee and consultants will work together in the following capacities throughout the public participation:

METRO COG/CITY OF WEST FARGO	HDR/FLINT GROUP
Content approvals and supporting requests for additional information	Draft PPP and community engagement strategy
Project Spokesperson	Define and implement community event participation (logistics and material development)
Provide existing stakeholder list	Define and update stakeholder list
Post website content on Metro COG and WestFargoStreets.com	Launch and manage project specific website
Meeting attendance at community events	Input stage survey content and data analysis
Updates to internal stakeholders	Develop and launch virtual meeting platform and comment management system
Share email distribution for internal survey work	Generate meeting attendance interest
	Social media content management
	Media contact



PROJECT CONTACTS

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