

581st Transportation Technical Committee
Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Council of Governments
Thursday, October 8, 2026 – 10:00 AM
Metro COG Conference Room

AGENDA

- | | |
|--|--------------------|
| 1. Call to Order and Introductions | |
| 2. Approve the Agenda | Action Item |
| 3. Approve Meeting Minutes of September 10, 2026 | Action Item |
| 4. Public Input Opportunity | Public Input |
| 5. West Perimeter Roadway Study – Final Report | Action Item |
| 6. Agency Updates | Discussion Item |
| a. City of Fargo | |
| b. City of Moorhead | |
| c. City of West Fargo | |
| d. City of Dilworth | |
| e. City of Horace | |
| f. Cass County | |
| g. Clay County | |
| h. MATBUS | |
| i. Others | |
| 7. Additional Business | Information Item |
| 8. Adjourn | |

Metro COG is encouraging citizens to provide their comments on agenda items via email to metrocog@fmmetrocog.org. To ensure your comments are received prior to the meeting, please submit them by 8:00 AM on the day of the meeting and reference which agenda item your comments address. If you would like to appear via video or audio link for comments or questions on a regular agenda or public hearing item, please provide your e-mail address and contact information to the above e-mail at least one business day before the meeting. Any virtual attendees who refuse to identify themselves will be disconnected.

Please use the following link to join this meeting online:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84458148124?pwd=aokSa30liSgFmdJ00t7ZEwZq38laYe.1>

REMINDER: The next TTC meeting will be held **Thursday, November 12, 2026** at 10:00 AM.

Bolded Action Items require roll call votes.

NOTE: Full Agenda packets can be found on the Metro COG Web Site at <http://www.fmmetrocog.org> – Committees

Metro COG is committed to ensuring all individuals, regardless of race, color, sex, age, national origin, disability/handicap, and/or income status have access to Metro COG's programs and services. Meeting facilities will be accessible to mobility impaired individuals. Metro COG will accommodate all requests for translation services for meeting proceedings, and related materials. Please contact Angela Brumbaugh at 701-532-5100 at least three days in advance of the meeting if any special accommodations are required for any member of the public to be able to participate in the meeting.

**580th Meeting of the
FM Metro COG Transportation Technical Committee
Thursday, September 10, 2026 – 10:00 AM
Metro COG Conference Room**

Members Present:		
Paul	Bervik	West Fargo Engineering
Jeremy	Gorden	City of Fargo Engineering
Ben	Griffith	Metro COG
Luke	Grittner	MATBUS
Will	Hutchings	NDDOT – Local Government Division
Matthew	Jacobson	Clay County Planning
Ethan	Lehmann	Cass County Planning
Kyle	Litchy	Cass County Highway
Don	Lorsung	City of Dilworth Community Development
Nathaniel	McHaffie	Horace Planning (Alt. for J. Dahlman)
Aaron	Nelson	West Fargo Planning
Joey	Ness	GFMEDC (Alt. for Joe Raso)
Mary	Safgren	MnDOT – Dist. 4 Planning Director
Forrest	Steinhoff	Moorhead Planning (Alt. for R. Huston)
Brit	Stevens	NDSU – Transportation Manager
Cole	Swingen	MATBUS (Alt. for Jordan Smith)
Georges	Tippens	MSUM
Tom	Trowbridge	Moorhead Engineering
Members Absent:		
Nicole	Crutchfield	City of Fargo Planning
James	Dahlman	City of Horace - Planning/Engineering (Alt. present)
Robin	Huston	Moorhead Planning (Alt. present)
Kelly	Krapu	Freight
Joe	Raso	GFMEDC (Alt. present)
Jordan	Smith	MATBUS (Alt. present)
Justin	Sorum	Clay County Engineering
Others Present:		
Adam	Altenburg	Metro COG
Karissa	Beierle Pavek	Metro COG
Angela	Brumbaugh	Metro COG
Dan	Farnsworth	Metro COG
Zhang	Linghao	Metro COG
Michael	Maddox	Metro COG
Dylan	Dunn	Moore Engineering
Brent	Muscha	Apex
Max	Olson	Bolton & Menk
Dena	Ryan	MNDOT
Tom	Soucy	Cass County Highway
Sam	Trebilcock	Houston Engineering
Kyle	Wieler	Civil Science
Jordan	Woroniecki	WSB

1. Call to Order and Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 AM, on September 10, 2026 by Chair Griffith. A quorum was present.

2. Approve the 580th TTC Meeting Agenda

Chair Griffith asked if there were any questions or changes to the September 10, 2026 TTC Meeting Agenda.

Motion: Approve the September 10, 2026 TTC Meeting Agenda.

Mr. Bervik moved, seconded by Mr. Stevens

MOTION, PASSED.

Motion carried unanimously.

3. Approve August 13, 2026 TTC Meeting Minutes

Chair Griffith asked if there were any questions or changes to the August 13, 2026 TTC Meeting Minutes.

Motion: Approve the August 13, 2026 TTC Minutes.

Mr. Grifftner moved, seconded by Mr. McHaffie

MOTION, PASSED

Motion carried unanimously.

4. Public Comment Opportunity

No public comments were received or provided.

5. 2027-2030 TIP Adoption

Mr. Zhang presented the 2027-2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). All projects listed are federally funded projects located within the Metropolitan Planning Area and are fiscally constrained.

A public meeting was held on September 2nd with the comment period closing at noon on September 14, 2026.

Jurisdiction questions and clarifications were received from Fargo, West Fargo, and MATBUS.

78% of STBG funding is for new or reconstructed projects, 12% rehabilitation and the remaining 10% is split between Safety, Bicycle and Pedestrian, Transit, and Planning.

Project Solicitations will start in late October/early November.

Motion: Pending consideration of any public comments received through September 14, 2026, recommend approval of the Draft 2027–2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to the Policy Board.

Mr. Bervik moved, seconded by Mr. Gorden

MOTION, PASSED

Motion carried unanimously.

6. Final Draft 2027-2028 UPWP Adoption

Mr. Griffith presented information on the 2027-2028 Unified Planning Work Program and Budget. Adding a new section addressing UPWP revisions. There are two types of revisions: Administrative Modifications and Amendments.

Metro COG's total CPG funding for FY 2027 is approximately \$1.6M. Adding MnDOT State Planning funding and 20% local match from local jurisdictions pushes the total amount to just over \$2M for 2027.

The Complete Street funding was slightly reduced from June and the total amounts are \$40,525.95 and \$41,310.34 which will be utilized for updating Metro COG's Regional Bicycle-Pedestrian Plan.

The 2027 Overhead costs are higher because additional funds were added to the Information Systems line item for updating Metro COG's website so that it be in compliance with ADA requirements.

Motion: Recommend adoption of the 2027-2028 UPWP & Budget to the Policy Board

Mr. Litchy moved, seconded by Mr. Nelson

MOTION, PASSED

Motion carried unanimously.

7. Metropolitan Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan RFP Release

Mr. Farnsworth stated every 5 years Metro COG develops a new Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, including a comprehensive look at the networks, input from the public, and provides recommendations and guidance to meet the needs of the community. The plan will also feed into the MTP, Metropolitan Transportation Plan.

The overall projected budget is \$200,000 with \$155,000 programmed for 2027 and \$45,000 programmed for 2028.

Motion: Recommend Policy Board approval of the Fargo-Moorhead Metro Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan RFP, pending NDDOT and TTC comments.

Mr. Bervik moved, seconded by Mr. Gorden

MOTION, PASSED

Motion carried unanimously.

8. 2055 Streets and Highway Modal Plan RFP Release

Mr. Maddox stated the 2027-2028 UPWP has included the study to develop a list of street and highway infrastructure for potential inclusion in the 2055 MTP. Mode-specific plans will be appended into the MTP when it is updated in 2028.

The overall projected budget is \$175,000 with \$100,000 programmed for 2027 and \$75,000 programmed for 2028.

Motion: Recommendation of approval of the release of the RFP for the 2055 Streets and Highways Modal Plan, pending NDDOT and TTC comments.

Mr. Gordon moved, seconded by Mr. Trowbridge

MOTION, PASSED

Motion carried unanimously.

9. Draft 2026 Title VI and Non-Discrimination Plan & LEP Plan

Ms. Beierle-Pavek stated the Title VI and Nondiscrimination Plan must be updated every 3 years. Metro COG makes sure all documents meet current expectations. LEP provides meaningful access to public information and is included as an appendix to the Title VI plan.

Last year, the North Dakota Office of Civil Rights selected Metro COG for an audit. The only suggestion provided was that Metro COG report annually, even when there is nothing to report.

Motion: Recommend approval of the Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan and Non-Discrimination Plan to the Policy Board.

Mr. Bervik moved, seconded by Mr. McHaffie

MOTION, PASSED

Motion carried unanimously.

- a. City of Fargo Engineering – Bringing in 250,000-pound transformers for the data center under construction in Harwood, Construction on 32nd Ave and University will be completed next weekend, 45th Street by Scheels should be open by the 20th, NP Ave and 2nd Street should be completed in 3 weeks, 17th Ave South Highway bid in October
- b. City of Fargo Planning – Absent
- c. City of Moorhead Engineering – Nothing to report
- d. City of Moorhead Planning – Nothing to report
- e. MATBUS – Jordan Smith was selected as the Director, Comprehensive Operational Analysis to be completed as the previous Ground Transportation Center's downtown location is no longer viable
- f. City of West Fargo Engineering – 9th Street Reconstruction should be completed in October but the bridge over the railroad won't be completed until next year, communicating with Fargo regarding how to coordinate better regarding interstate construction, the Diversion construction will be completed soon, which could mean future growth
- g. City of West Fargo Planning – Adopted Growth Area Plan, utilizing past studies from Metro COG

- h. City of Dilworth – Mike Brethorst is the new City Administrator and will start on September 28th
- i. City of Horace Planning – Mixed-use development at 17th and Wall is a possibility
- j. Cass County Highway – Nothing to report
- k. Cass County Planning – Nothing to report
- l. Clay County Engineering – absent
- m. Clay County Planning – Nothing to report
- n. GFMEDC – Nothing to report
- o. MSUM – Had another meeting, left at 10:50
- p. NDSU – Had to leave
- q. MnDOT District 4 – Kicking off solicitation for TA projects and tentatively planning a workshop in Fergus Falls for October 9th
- r. MnDOT Central Office – absent
- s. NDDOT Central Office – Nothing to report
- t. FHWA/FTA – Absent

10. Additional Business

Chair Griffith welcomed Fargo City Commissioner and Policy Board Member, Nikki Gullickson, to today's meeting.

11. Adjourn

The 580th Regular Meeting of the TTC was adjourned on September 10, 2026 at 11:13 AM

**Mr. Gorden moved to Adjourn; Mr. Litchy seconded
MOTION, PASSED
Motion carried unanimously.**

**THE NEXT FM METRO COG TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL COMMITTEE
MEETING WILL BE HELD October 8, 2026 AT 10:00 AM.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Angela Brumbaugh
Office Manager

DRAFT

To: Transportation Technical Committee (TTC)
From: Michael Maddox, AICP
Date: October 2, 2026
Re: **West Metro Perimeter Roadway Study – Final Report**

Metro COG embarked on a planning study in 2023 to look at a perimeter route outside of the Metro Flood Diversion. The concept for the study was originally put forward by Cass County. Metro COG included a rudimentary analysis within the 2023 Interstate Operations Analysis Study.

Metro COG contracted with HDR to develop ring-route alternatives in consultation with a Study Review Committee (SRC) comprised of:

- Cass County
- City of West Fargo
- City of Horace
- NDDOT – Local Governments Division
- NDDOT – Fargo District
- City of Mapleton
- City of Harwood

The study originally developed alternatives for a ring route that connected to I-29 on the north and south sides of the region. However, the study was redirected in 2025 to focus on the north/south component of the ring route, knowing that east/west connections were developed as part of the Metro Flood Diversion project and those roadways would be improved by the local jurisdiction in response to localized traffic patterns.

Alternatives were developed based upon roadway ownership scenarios depending upon whether the roadway would be developed by Cass County (in coordination with local jurisdictions) or NDDOT. The plan ultimately lays a framework for the development of such a perimeter roadway at such a time that the need presents itself, especially as the need for higher-speed, limited access roadways become more necessary as the region continues to grow.

Attachment: West Metro Perimeter Roadway Study final report

Requested Action: Recommendation of approval of the final report of the West Metro Perimeter Roadway Study.



METROCOG

**West Metro Perimeter
Roadway Study**

Draft Report

August 2026

Contents

1.0	Executive Summary	1
2.0	Study Background	3
	Note on Study Naming Convention	5
3.0	Existing and Planned Conditions	6
	3.1 Literature Review	6
	3.2 FM Diversion Considerations	7
	3.3 Relevant Study Area Features	7
	Roadways	7
	Jurisdictional Authority	7
	Bicycle / Pedestrian Infrastructure	8
	Railroad Considerations	8
	Environmental Data	8
	Existing Structures	8
4.0	Engagement	9
	4.1 Engagement Introduction	9
	4.2 Study Review Committee	9
	4.3 Stakeholder Committee	10
	4.4 Additional Engagement Items	10
5.0	Vision & Agency Alignment	11
	Regional Benefits and Long-Term Role	11
	Addressing North-South Mobility Gaps	11
	Corridor Concept and Functional Shift	12
	Local Flexibility and Incremental Implementation	13
	Need for Agency Coordination and Alignment	13

	Overall Vision	13
6.0	Travel Analysis	14
	6.1 Daily Traffic Volumes	15
7.0	Development of Alternatives	17
	7.1 Initial Concepts and Background	17
	7.2 Refined North-South Corridor Concept	18
	General Considerations	18
	Northwest Quadrant	21
	Southwest Quadrant	22
	7.3 Right-of-Way Considerations	24
8.0	Implementation	25
	8.1 Right-of-Way Preservation	25
	8.2 Phased Construction Approach	27
	Initial Focus Near Interstate 94	27
	Expansion to the South	28
	Expansion to the North	29
	Cass County Road Network Considerations	29
	Facility Ownership and Operational Considerations	29
	8.3 Next Steps	31

Attachments

Attachment A: Existing and Planned Conditions Memorandum
 Attachment B: Engagement Materials
 Attachment C: Vision & Alignment Framework
 Attachment D: Traffic Forecasting Memorandum
 Attachment E: Alternatives Development Materials

1.0 Executive Summary

The West Metro Perimeter Roadway Study was initiated by Cass County in 2023 to evaluate and preserve a long-term transportation corridor west of the Fargo-Moorhead metropolitan area. The County recognized a unique opportunity presented by the Fargo-Moorhead Diversion Project, where portions of excess diversion property may be available for future transportation purposes. Building upon recommendations from previous regional transportation studies, the effort focused on preserving future transportation options that support regional mobility, economic development, and long-term growth.

A comprehensive review of existing and planned conditions, previous transportation plans, diversion infrastructure, environmental resources, railroads, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and jurisdictional considerations was completed. Input from a Study Review Committee (SRC) representing local, state, and federal agencies, along with a Stakeholder Committee representing townships, water resource districts, cities, and industry partners, guided the study throughout its development.

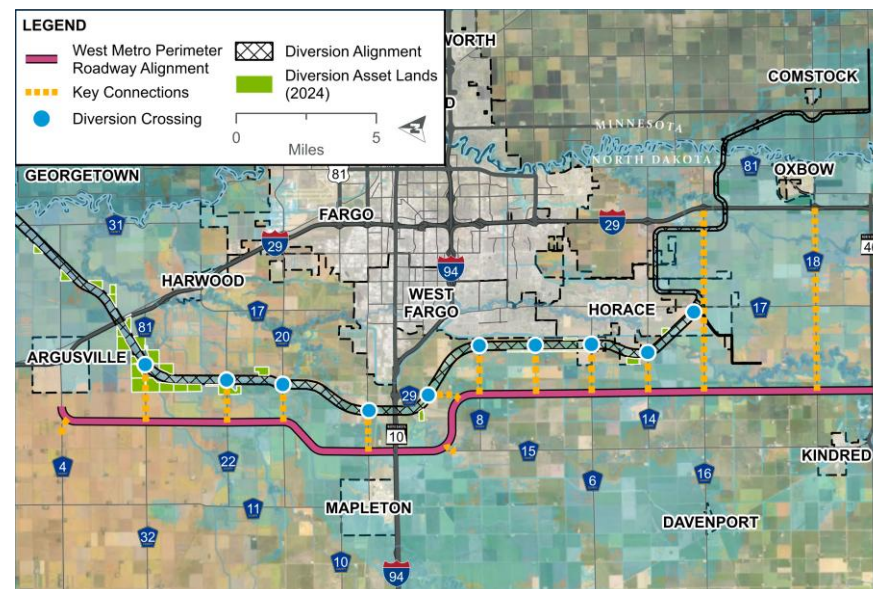
Initial study efforts explored a traditional perimeter roadway connecting Interstate 29 (I-29) and Interstate 94 (I-94) in both the northwest and southwest quadrants of the metro area. Through technical evaluation, stakeholder input, and travel demand analysis, the study evolved toward a preferred concept centered on a north-south regional mobility corridor supported by strategically located east-west connections, including those planned as part of the Fargo-Moorhead Diversion Project. This approach provides greater flexibility for incremental local implementation, distributes traffic more

effectively throughout the transportation network, and reduces reliance on a single connection to I-29 at each end of the corridor.

Travel demand modeling was conducted using both the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan growth assumptions and a long-range full buildout development scenario. Forecast traffic volumes support phased development of the corridor, with the highest projected demand occurring near I-94 and the major regional east-west connections.

The recommended facility consists of a north-south alignment as shown in **Figure 1**, extending from the I-29/County Highway 4 area near Argusville to North Dakota Highway 46 in southern Cass County. The corridor is intended to accommodate future growth in West Fargo, Horace, and Cass County while providing improved freight mobility, network redundancy, and regional connectivity.

Figure 1. West Perimeter Roadway Alignment



While excess FM Diversion lands were a primary reason for the initiation of the West Metro Perimeter Roadway Study, feedback during alternatives development as well as the shift to a north-south corridor both contributed to a refined alignment that does not go through these areas.

A primary recommendation of the study is proactive right-of-way preservation. Protecting the corridor before future development occurs will maintain implementation flexibility, reduce long-term acquisition costs, and preserve opportunities for future roadway expansion. The study recommends preserving a wider corridor between County Highway 14 and County Highway 22, where long-term traffic demand is expected to be greatest, while preserving narrower corridor widths in lower-demand segments to the north and south. This approach allows for flexibility in potential future ownership or transfer of ownership and allows for the corridor to evolve as needed over time.

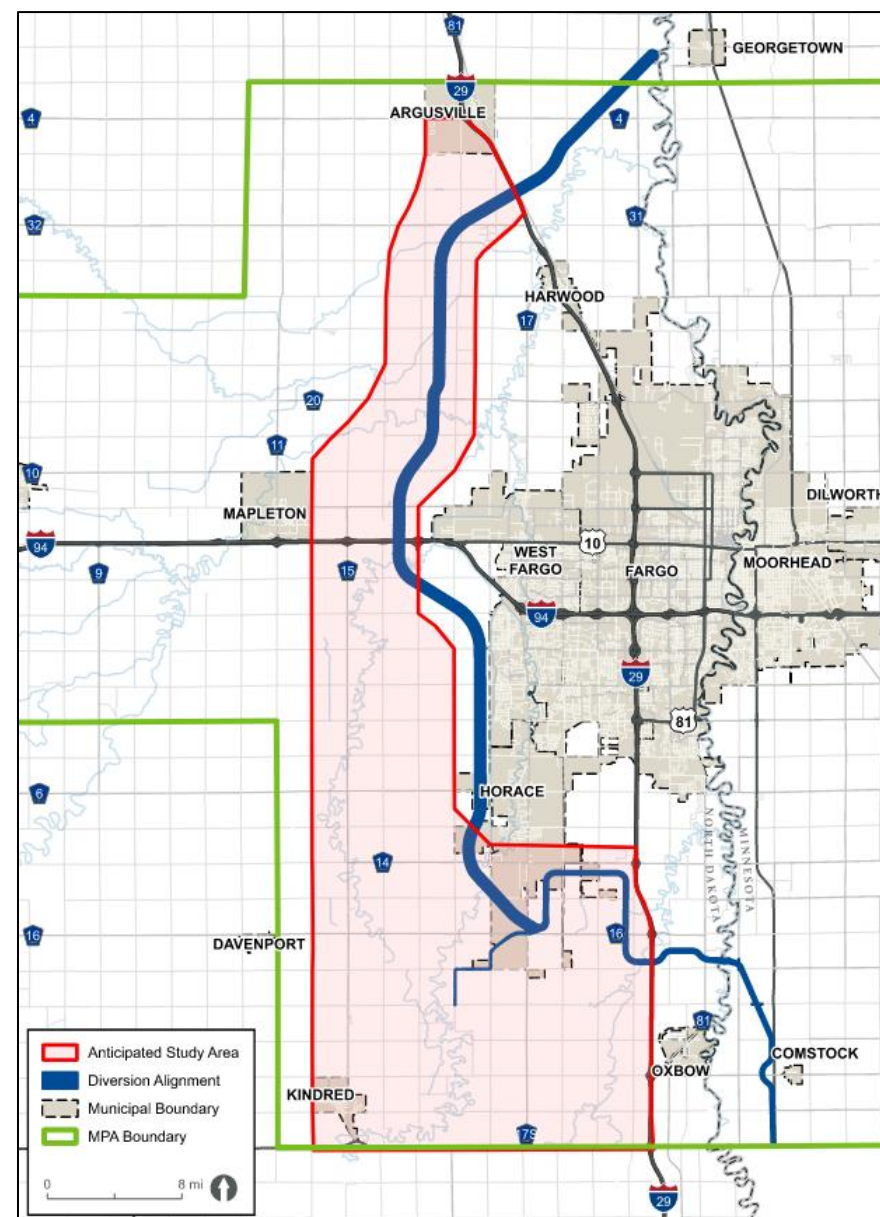
Implementation should occur incrementally over time, beginning with roadway improvements already planned near I-94 and expanding northward and southward as development and travel demand warrant. Those segments of the alternatives that are in high growth pressure areas are likely to be impacted as development occurs. In these areas, it is important to implement appropriate facilities over time. Continued coordination among Metro COG, Cass County, NDDOT, and local communities will be essential for corridor preservation, consistent access management, and successful integration with the region's evolving transportation network.

2.0 Study Background

The West Metro Perimeter Roadway Study was launched in 2023 at the request of Cass County. The County recognized that excess FM Diversion lands would be available to local jurisdictions prior to becoming available to any potential private buyers. The County understood that the opportunity to acquire any of this land for a west metro perimeter roadway would be available for only a short period of time. Cass County also saw a trend of vehicles “cutting the corner” of the Interstate system and utilizing County roadways to avoid going through the metro area. This trend has continued to increase as the region grows. The Interstate Operations Study completed by FM Metro COG in 2023 identified potential perimeter routes for the FM metro area, which FM Metro COG used as a basis for developing the study area shown in **Figure 1** to be included in the West Metro Perimeter Roadway Study.

The concept of a western perimeter route for the Fargo-Moorhead metropolitan area is not new. For several decades, regional transportation planning efforts have identified the need for a roadway system that could provide north-south mobility west of the urban area, improve regional and freight connectivity, support incident management, and serve growing communities beyond the Interstate 29 corridor. Previous planning efforts, including the 2011 Traffic Operations Incident Management Strategy, successive Metropolitan Transportation Plans, and the previously mentioned 2023 Interstate Operations Study, all recognized the potential need for a western ring-route or perimeter roadway and recommended additional study as growth continued westward.

Figure 2. West Metro Perimeter Roadway Study Area



As the western portion of the metropolitan area has experienced urban growth and development has progressively reduced the number of feasible corridors available for a high-mobility regional route. Roadways such as Sheyenne Street, 52nd Avenue South, and 76th Avenue South were historically capable of serving a larger regional mobility function when surrounding development was limited. As residential, commercial, institutional, and industrial development expanded westward, these corridors increasingly transitioned toward serving local access and community circulation needs. Development patterns have introduced additional driveways, intersections, schools, neighborhoods, parks, and other community destinations that do not fully align with the operational characteristics desired for a limited-access regional mobility corridor. As a result, opportunities to establish a true western perimeter facility near to the metropolitan core have become increasingly constrained.

The Horace area provides one example of how changing land use patterns have influenced corridor planning. As Horace has experienced substantial residential growth and expanded municipal boundaries, transportation corridors that may once have been considered for regional mobility functions have become increasingly integrated into the local street network. The development of schools, residential neighborhoods, parks, and other community facilities along corridors such as 76th Avenue South has increased the importance of balancing local access, pedestrian activity, and community connectivity with regional transportation objectives. Similar challenges have occurred in other portions of the metropolitan area where corridors previously envisioned for higher-speed regional travel have evolved into community-serving roadways as development occurred.

These historical development trends were a contributing reason for initiating the West Metro Perimeter Roadway Study. Committee discussions throughout the study repeatedly emphasized the importance of identifying and preserving a corridor before future growth further limits available options. Stakeholders noted that previous decisions to defer corridor preservation efforts have reduced flexibility, increased potential right-of-way impacts, and narrowed the range of practical alternatives available today. Consequently, one of the objectives of this study became identifying a corridor that could be preserved through future planning, access management, and development review processes, even if ultimate construction occurs incrementally.

The study also builds upon broader regional efforts to establish a long-term ring-route transportation system around the Fargo-Moorhead metropolitan area. On the Minnesota side of the metropolitan area, the development of MN 336 provided one of the first major components of this long-range strategy by creating a high-mobility connection east of Moorhead that serves regional travel and freight movement while reducing reliance on urban arterial streets. The West Metro Perimeter Roadway Study represents a continuation of this regional planning approach by evaluating opportunities to establish a complementary western corridor capable of supporting future mobility, system resiliency, freight transportation, and continued metropolitan growth. Together, these efforts reflect a long-term vision of preserving strategic transportation corridors before land use patterns permanently eliminate future options.

The study team worked to form both a Study Review Committee (SRC) and a Stakeholder Committee to help guide the study and gather information and insight from local jurisdictions and organizations. The SRC consisted of members representing Cass County, NDDOT, FHWA, the FM Diversion Authority, City of Horace,

City of Mapleton, City of Harwood, City of Argusville, City of West Fargo, and the City of Kindred. The Stakeholder Committee consisted of members representing local townships, cities, water resource districts, and BNSF.

The study team began work by gathering data on existing and planned conditions and prepared a summary memo. The content of this memo is included in **Attachment A**. Next steps included developing initial alignment alternatives, relying on several rounds of feedback from the SRC and Stakeholder Committee. These alternatives were refined as the team performed travel analysis. Due to existing conditions and a shift in study vision, the alignment was refined again as the study changed course to focus on a north-south corridor, providing opportunities for key east-west connections.

Note on Study Naming Convention

At the onset of the study, it was named the West Metro Perimeter Highway Study. Since the intent of the study is primarily to identify a perimeter route, the Study has since been renamed, substituting “Roadway” for “Highway.” Some materials developed during the course of the study may reference it as the West Metro Perimeter Highway Study, though the official study name is now the West Metro Perimeter Roadway Study.

3.0 Existing and Planned Conditions

Existing and planned conditions were reviewed and summarized to provide some general guidelines for potential alignment alternatives, ROW needs, environmental considerations, and linkage to current and planned infrastructure, and considerations for modes that may use or cross the west perimeter roadway. A detailed review of considerations is shown in **Attachment A**.

3.1 Literature Review

A literature review of previous studies and plans surrounding the study area was completed, and included:

- 2023 FM-Area Interstate Operations Study (FM IOS)
- 2045 Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)
- Fargo-Moorhead Greenway Recreation Master Plan
- 2022 Fargo-Moorhead Metro Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan
- West Fargo 2.0
- Northwest Metro Transportation Plan
- Southwest Transportation Plan

The goals, issues, and recommendations of these plans were considered in how they may impact the study area and a potential corridor. The review found the potential project may impact the recommendations of existing plans and studies. Elements of each of the plans were taken into consideration during the development of alternative alignments.

The existing and planned conditions memo was submitted to Metro COG in 2024. Since then, the following projects have been completed by Metro COG:

- 2050 MTP
- Horace Downtown Neighborhood Plan

- West 94 Area Transportation Plan

The FM IOS study developed a list of alternatives to improve operational and safety needs along I-29 and I-94. As part of the recommendations, the team developed draft perimeter road alignments and planning level costs in all quadrants of the metro area, shown in **Figure 3**.

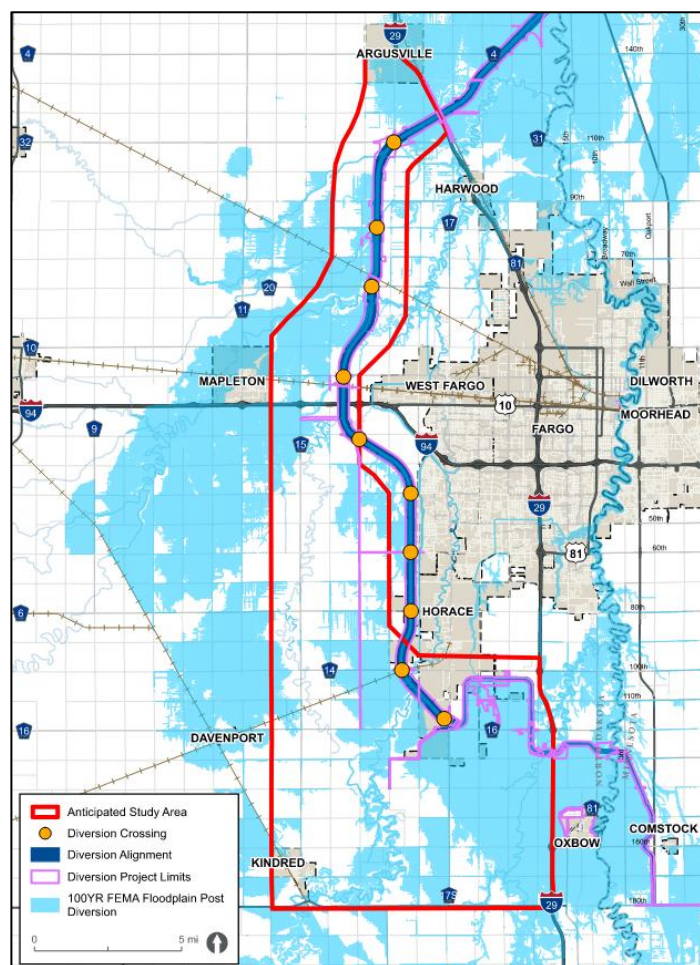
Figure 3. Perimeter Road Alignments from Interstate Operations Study



3.2 FM Diversion Considerations

The FM Area Diversion Project consists of a 30-mile diversion channel, 22 miles of earthen embankments, two aqueducts and associated infrastructure. The project is scheduled to be completed in 2027. As shown in **Figure 4**, bridge crossings which correspond to county roadways are planned to be constructed, or now have been constructed approximately every 2 miles.

Figure 4. FM Diversion Considerations



Upon completion of the diversion project, land purchased for the diversion may be available for purchase as right-of-way for the West Metro Perimeter Roadway. The 100-year flood plain, though not avoidable, was a consideration during the development of alternatives.

3.3 Relevant Study Area Features

Study area features were reviewed and summarized to provide some general guidelines for potential alignment alternatives.

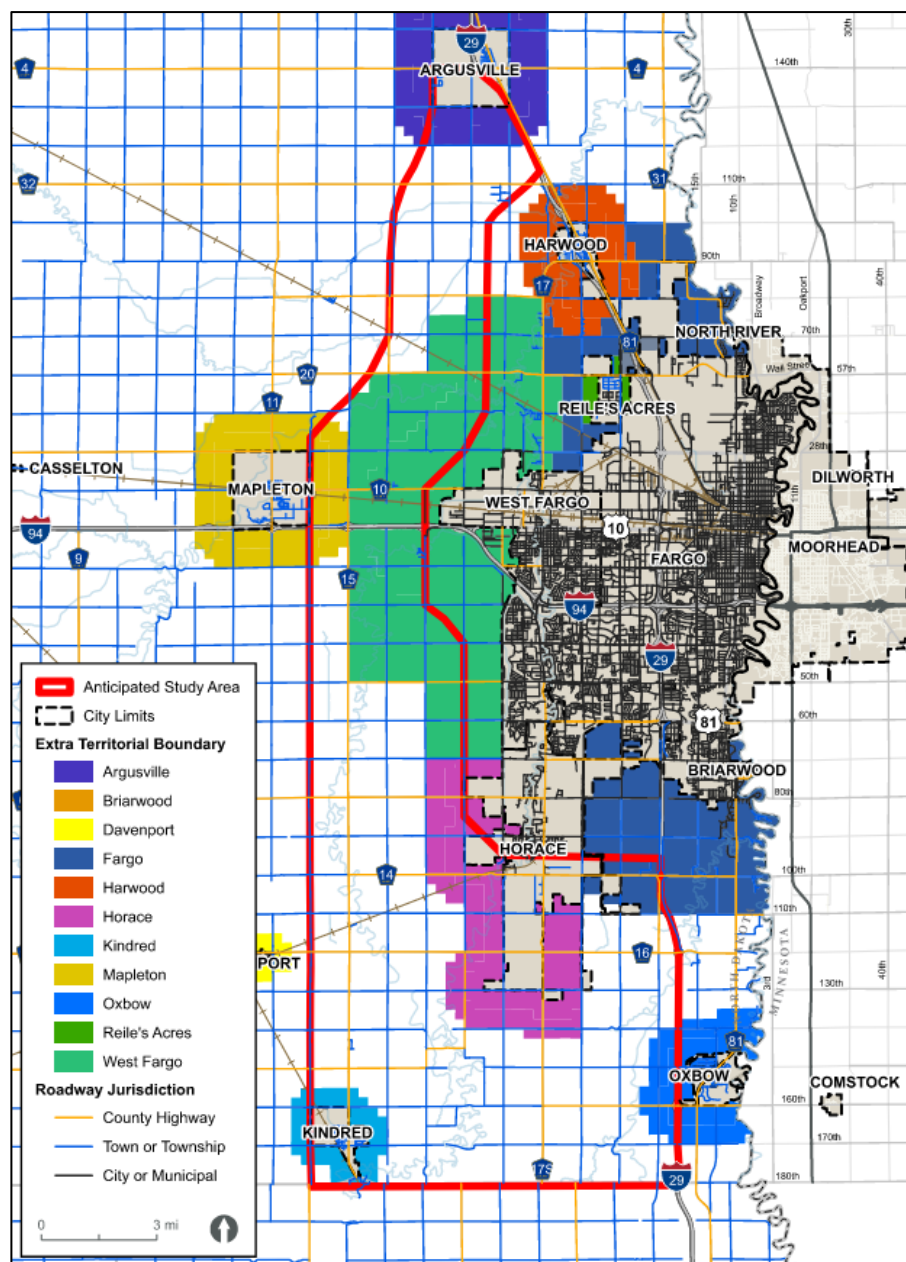
Roadways

Cass County intends for all County roads to cross the FM Diversion channel. The County will be taking over 32nd Avenue West and making it the new County Road 8. With this adjustment, the township will take over the current County Road 8 (40th Avenue West). Additionally, County Road 29 will provide a connection from I-29 through the West I-94 area, across the FM Diversion, and connect to the new County Road 8. Notably, 52nd Avenue West will remain a township road.

Jurisdictional Authority

Understanding the multi-jurisdictional nature of the potential alignment is an important piece of the overall puzzle. Jurisdictional authority of roadways and city limits / ETJ boundaries are shown in **Figure 5**. Close coordination between all parties will be important to facilitate consistent typical sections, access control, and future preservation of ROW, both in developmental stages and into future implementation.

Figure 5. Jurisdictional Authority



Bicycle / Pedestrian Infrastructure

A focus for the study team was to accommodate the potential greenway along the FM Diversion, and not to preclude any future active transportation infrastructure. Planned FM Diversion crossing points for bicycles and pedestrians were noted in the Fargo-Moorhead Greenway Recreation Master Plan including:

- County Road 20
- County Road 10
- 32nd Avenue West (New County Road 8)
- County Road 6
- County Road 14
- County Road 17

Railroad Considerations

It is important to understand railroad crossing locations during the development of preliminary alternatives. Some of the projected volume forecasts may warrant the need of future grade separated railroad crossings, so understanding the location, number of tracks, ownership, and trains per day will help determine the need for grade-separated vehicular movements. An additional figure is included in **Attachment A**.

Environmental Data

In a desktop-level review of environmental considerations, data on wetlands, waterways, potential endangered species, and migratory birds was gathered. The main environmental concerns are wetlands and waterways.

Existing Structures

Both major and minor structures were reviewed to be considered when analyzing alternatives. Structures along potential routes may result in cost savings for the initial build of a perimeter road.

4.0 Engagement

4.1 Engagement Introduction

Since the West Metro Perimeter Roadway is a long-range planning effort, engagement efforts for the study primarily consisted of the formation and subsequent meetings of a Study Review Committee (SRC) as well as a Stakeholder Committee. Five SRC meetings and three stakeholder meetings were held throughout the study. Additional coordination with SRC and Stakeholder Committee members also occurred through data collection and organizational meetings.

4.2 Study Review Committee

The study team owes the SRC a debt of gratitude for its participation throughout the study process. The SRC served to guide the study team while providing input on jurisdictional and oversight considerations, local issues, local preferences, and potential development trends or patterns within various FM Metro COG member jurisdictions. In addition to the five SRC meetings, members of the SRC also made themselves available for follow-up phone calls, supplemental discussions, clarifications on jurisdictional or organizational policy, and various other requests throughout the study. The alternatives developed and moved forward in this study are truly due to the collaboration and compromise of the SRC members.

SRC materials are included in **Attachment B**. These include meeting presentation materials, printout materials, and meeting minutes. Members of the SRC are listed in **Table 1**.

Table 1. Study Review Committee Members

SRC Member	Organization
Dan Farnsworth	Metro COG
Michael Maddox	Metro COG
Ben Griffith	Metro COG
Tom Soucy	Cass County
Cole Hansen	Cass County
Kyle Litchy	Cass County
Ethan Lehmann	Cass County
Aaron Murra	NDDOT
Will Hutchings	NDDOT
Kristen Sperry	FHWA
Paul Barthel	FM Diversion Authority
Nathaniel McHaffie	City of Horace
Tom Pederson	City of Mapleton
Brandon Oye	City of Mapleton (Moore)
Andrew Aakre	City of Harwood (Moore)
Parker Vander Wal	City of Argusville
Aaron Nelson	City of West Fargo
Kyle McCamy	City of West Fargo
Adam Spelhaug	City of Kindred
Jodi Smith*	FM Diversion Authority
Wayne Zacher*	NDDOT
Jace Hellman*	City of Horace
Jason Benson*	Cass County

*Left SRC and/or organization during study

4.3 Stakeholder Committee

Similar to the SRC, the Stakeholder Committee is owed a debt of gratitude for their participation throughout the study process. The Stakeholder Committee provided additional input and feedback on local issues, preferences, and potential development trends or patterns, while following prior guidance from the SRC. The first stakeholder meeting took place on August 6, 2024, and the second stakeholder meeting took place on October 24, 2024. Throughout the two Stakeholder Committee meetings, members provided valuable information and feedback on potential alternatives, and the alternatives that moved forward were a direct result of both collaboration and compromise.

Stakeholder Committee materials are included in **Attachment B**. These include meeting presentation materials, printout materials, and meeting minutes. **Table 2** lists the members of the Stakeholder Committee.

4.4 Additional Engagement Items

As noted in previous sections, **Attachment B** includes all engagement materials from the SRC and Stakeholder Committee meetings. It also contains an unsolicited post and subsequent comment thread from [reddit.com](https://www.reddit.com) as well as a formal resolution passed by the City of Horace taking a stance against the study, which is discussed further at the end of the **Initial Concepts and Background** subsection of this report.

Table 2. Stakeholder Committee Members

Name	Title	Entity
Karl Langseth	Chairman	Berlin Township
Alex Fiorini	Tentative Contact	BNSF
Nicole Crutchfield	Director of Planning	City of Fargo
Kim Citrowske	Long Range Planner	City of Fargo
Daniel Palmer	Chairman	Harwood Township
Rodger Olson	Chairman	Maple River Water Resource District
John Rutten	Chairman	Mapleton Township
David Gust	Chairman	Raymond Township
William Hejl	Chairman	Rush River Water Resource District
Keith Weston	Chairman	Southeast Cass Water Resource District
Melissa Hinkemeyer	Secretary Treasurer	Southeast Cass Water Resource District
Todd Ellig	Chairman	Stanley Township
Jeff Fuchs	Chairman	Warren Township
Brandon Kub	Chairman	Normanna Township
Curtis (Curt) Leslie	Clerk	Normanna Township
Mark Hiatt	Chairman	Pleasant Township
Nicole Bice	Clerk	Pleasant Township
Tabitha Arnaud	Auditor	City of Kindred

5.0 Vision & Agency Alignment

Regional Benefits and Long-Term Role

The West Metro Perimeter Roadway represents a long-term investment in the transportation resilience, mobility, and growth management of the Fargo-Moorhead metropolitan area. Similar to how MN 336 benefits the eastern side of the metropolitan area, a west perimeter roadway has the potential to provide significant benefits on the North Dakota side of the metro, where continued growth in West Fargo and the surrounding areas of Cass County is anticipated following completion of the Fargo-Moorhead Diversion and the removal of floodplain development constraints.

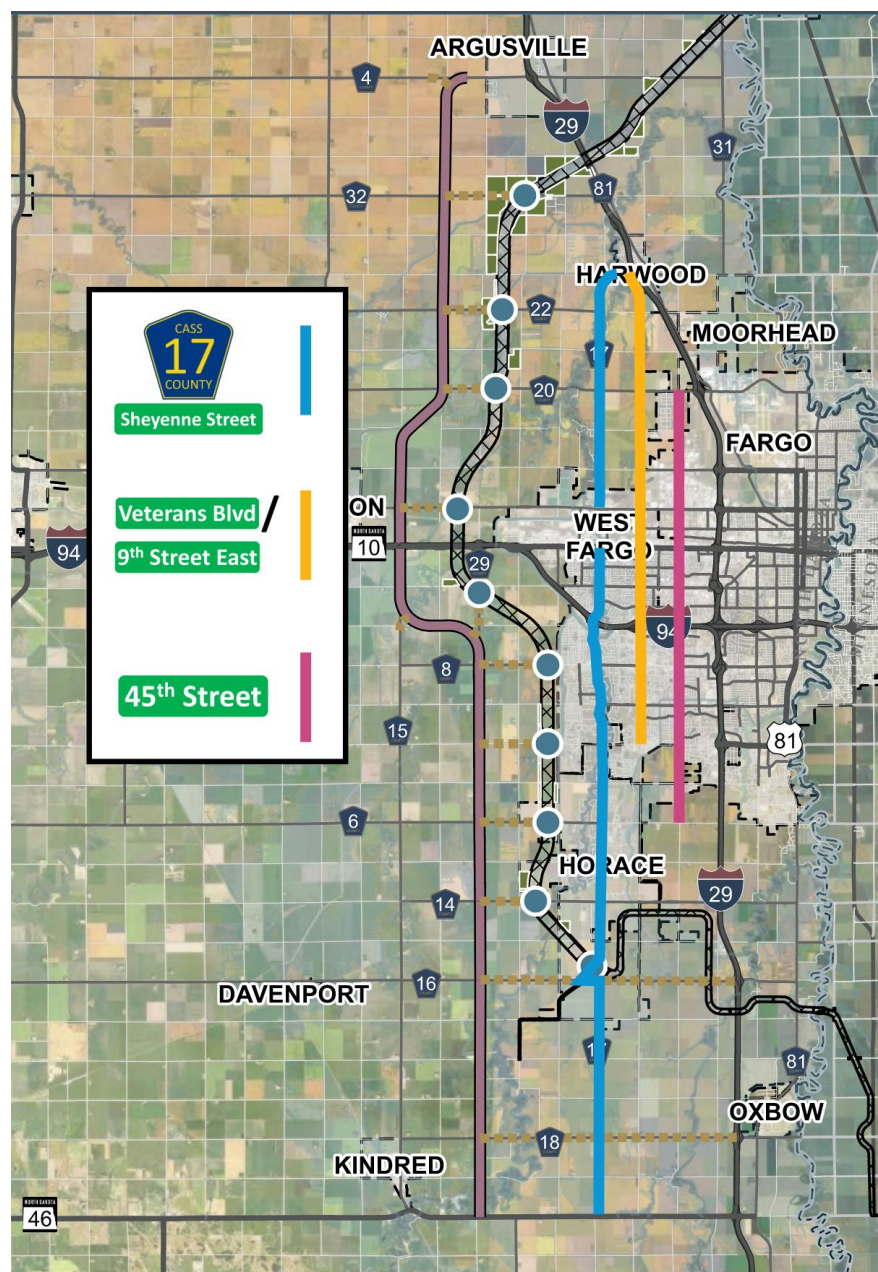
By establishing a high-capacity, limited-access corridor west of current development, the facility can help guide orderly expansion, support economic development opportunities, improve intraregional travel, and reduce pressure on existing urban and interstate facilities. This includes improving freight movement and regional goods mobility by providing a reliable alternative for truck traffic that currently relies heavily on the interstate system through the urban core. It also offers an opportunity to enhance system redundancy by providing an alternative route for regional and through traffic, thereby improving overall network reliability and travel times during incidents, peak congestion, and construction events.

Addressing North-South Mobility Gaps

In addition, the project responds to existing limitations in north-south mobility within the developed portion of the metro area on the North Dakota side. While several roadways provide important north-south connectivity, none currently function as a high-speed regional mobility corridor serving the western portion of the metropolitan area. Key corridors are shown in **Figure 6** and include:

- **Interstate 29** serves as the region's primary limited-access north-south facility and carries regional and interstate travel. However, it is located near the eastern edge of the North Dakota urbanized area, requiring many trips originating in West Fargo and western Cass County to travel east before heading north or south. As growth continues westward, this results in increased out-of-direction travel for many regional trips.
- **45th Street** is paved from 76th Avenue South to County Highway 20 on the north. It serves a mixture of local, commercial, and regional traffic but includes numerous signalized intersections, commercial access points, and urban development along much of the corridor. These conditions limit travel speeds and reduce its effectiveness as a regional mobility route.
- **Veterans Boulevard (9th Street East)** is largely serving as an urban arterial due to adjacent development. The corridor is paved from 52nd Avenue South to 19th Avenue North. Frequent intersections, commercial access, and development pressure limit its ability to function as a higher-speed regional facility.
- **Sheyenne Street/County Highway 17** is one of the most continuous north-south corridors in the western portion of the metropolitan area and provides important connectivity between West Fargo, Horace, and surrounding areas. However, the corridor directly serves residential neighborhoods, schools, commercial development, parks, and community destinations. While future improvements could potentially improve operations along portions of the corridor, existing development patterns, access needs, and community-serving functions create constraints that limit its ability to serve as a true regional mobility corridor.

Figure 6. Key North-South Corridors



As the metropolitan area has expanded westward, these corridors have increasingly evolved from transportation routes serving primarily through travel to facilities that balance regional mobility with local access, community connectivity, and adjacent development. The development of residential neighborhoods, schools, parks, commercial areas, and other community destinations has made it increasingly difficult to establish a new high-speed north-south corridor within the existing urbanized area. As a result, opportunities for a regional mobility corridor have progressively shifted farther west, reinforcing the importance of identifying and preserving a corridor before future development further constrains available options.

In this way, the corridor serves not only as transportation infrastructure, but also as a framework for preserving strategic transportation options and maintaining long-term regional mobility as the Fargo-Moorhead metropolitan area continues to grow.

Corridor Concept and Functional Shift

A key component of this vision is the conceptual shift from a perimeter roadway that directly ties into I-29 at both termini to a more flexible north-south corridor supported by east-west connecting routes. Under this framework, the West Metro Perimeter Roadway functions as a regional mobility spine. This shift changes the functional role of the corridor. Rather than acting solely as an Interstate reliever with direct Interstate-to-Interstate movements, the corridor becomes a backbone facility that distributes traffic across a broader network of arterial connections. At the southern end in particular, the absence of a direct tie into I-29 introduces a more distributed traffic pattern, where connectivity is achieved through strategically planned east-west corridors that cross the FM Diversion and/or connect to I-29 via an interchange. This approach reduces concentrated demand at a single interchange and instead spreads

traffic across multiple connection points, improving system efficiency, enhancing travel time reliability, and potentially lowering the scale and cost of individual interchange improvements.

Local Flexibility and Incremental Implementation

The north-south orientation with east-west connectors also introduces a level of flexibility and autonomy for local jurisdictions. Cities, counties, and agencies on the North Dakota side would have the ability to plan, phase, and design east-west connections in a manner that reflects local land use plans, development timing, and access management policies. This creates opportunities to align transportation improvements with growth patterns and community priorities, while still contributing to the overall regional network. The corridor can also be implemented incrementally, with individual segments or key east-west connections developed over time as demand warrants and funding becomes available, while still maintaining independent utility at each stage of implementation.

One potential drawback of this approach is that in certain portions of the West Perimeter Roadway, the cross section could be dependent upon jurisdictional ownership. A divided roadway facility, for example, would have a greater cost to construct, and different impacts to adjacent land use than an undivided roadway. Development outside the FM Diversion is another variable. Assumptions for study purposes are generally that development should not occur within areas within the remapped floodplain.

Need for Agency Coordination and Alignment

While the flexibility of shifting to a north-south facility with east-west connectors is beneficial, it underscores the importance of strong agency alignment. The effectiveness of the West Metro Perimeter Roadway will depend on how well the east-west connections function as an integrated system. Without coordination,

inconsistencies may arise. As such, continued collaboration between Metro COG, the North Dakota Department of Transportation, Cass County, the City of West Fargo, and other local jurisdictions will be essential. This coordination should focus on establishing a shared vision for corridor access, right-of-way preservation, the function of east-west connections, and the long-term relationship between the perimeter roadway and the supporting arterial network.

Overall Vision

Ultimately, the vision for the West Metro Perimeter Roadway is not simply that of a single transportation facility, but rather that of a coordinated system that supports regional mobility while allowing for some degree of local flexibility. Achieving this balance will require a clear framework for agency alignment, so decisions made by jurisdictions contribute to a cohesive, resilient, and high-performing transportation network that supports long-term growth and economic vitality for the metro area.

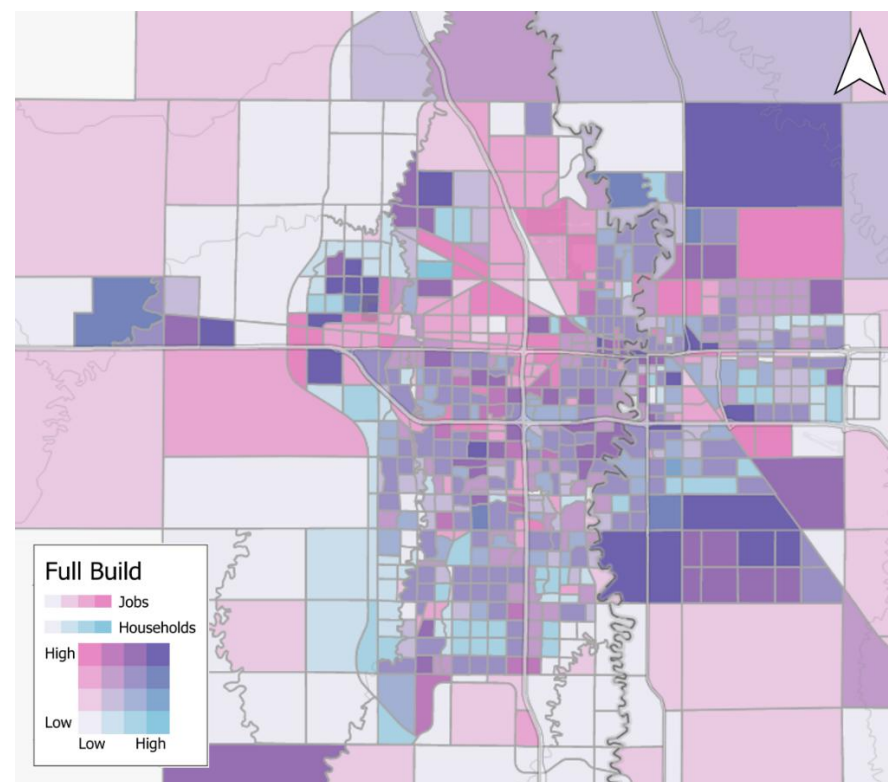
6.0 Travel Analysis

Travel Demand Modeling forecasts for the future year conditions were developed for the West Perimeter Roadway. Forecasts helped guide the development of typical section recommendations, design considerations, and intersection / interchange configurations. Metro COG's TDM was modified to test different perimeter roadway configurations and to test land use scenarios. The two future year land use scenarios tested include:

- **2050 MTP (Baseline)** – includes future re-allocation of development patterns due to lands previously in the floodplain that will no longer be in the floodplain once the FM Diversion is complete and operational
- **Full Build Out** – Metro COG developed a socioeconomic dataset during the Interstate Operations Study that assumed a fully built-out metro area where developable.

Future land use and growth assumptions in the metro area are anticipated to change significantly over the coming years once the Diversion is completed. Because of this, Metro COG developed a socioeconomic dataset that assumed a fully built out metro area in areas that are developable. **Figure 7** shows the additional growth from the MTP future land use to the Full Build Out totals. Areas of dark purple show significant increases in total households and jobs in the full build out compared to the future year MTP socioeconomic data. This added around 130,000 households and 140,000 jobs to the underlying land use in the TDM.

Figure 7. Full Build Out Growth Areas



6.1 Daily Traffic Volumes

Future 2050 daily traffic forecast ranges are shown in **Table 3** and **Table 4**, with the forecast keys shown in **Figure 9** and **Figure 10**. These planning-level estimates were developed from combining similar-type TDM runs detailed in **Attachment D**.

Additionally, daily origin and destination regional volumes were developed during the Interstate Operations Study for all vehicles and trucks utilizing I-94 and I-29. This analysis utilized Streetlight Data that provides estimates of existing travel patterns. Note that some County roads in the northwest quadrant of the metro area currently carry some regional traffic that wishes to “cut the corner” between I-94 and I-29, shown in **Figure 8**.

Figure 8. Streetlight Top Routes for NW Quadrant



Northwest Perimeter Road – Base

Table 3. Northwest Perimeter Road Daily Forecasts

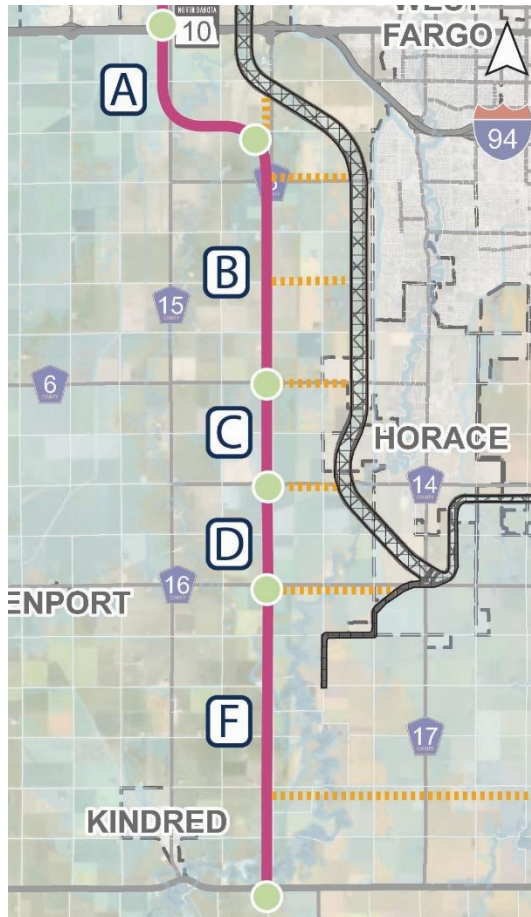
ID	2050 SE (veh/day)	Full Build SE (veh/day)
A	6,000-7,000	9,000-11,000
B	8,500-9,500	14,000-15,000
C	10,500-11,500	19,000-20,000
D	14,000-15,000	24,000-27,000

Figure 9. Northwest Perimeter Road Forecast Key



*Southwest Perimeter Road – ND 46 Connection***Table 4. Southwest Perimeter Road (ND 46) Daily Forecasts**

ID	2050 SE (veh/day)	Full Build SE (veh/day)
A	6,000-7,000	12,000-16,000
B	10,000-13,000	20,000-23,000
C	6,000-7,000	12,000-13,000
D	5,000-6,000	9,000-10,000
F	4,000-5,000	8,000-9,000

Figure 10. Southwest Perimeter Road (ND 46) Forecast Key

7.0 Development of Alternatives

7.1 Initial Concepts and Background

Initial concept development included multiple rounds of preliminary alignment identification, screening, and refinement guided by technical analysis, previous planning studies, travel forecasting, and input from both the SRC and Stakeholder Committee. A series of meetings with each group allowed the study team to present potential corridors, discuss tradeoffs, and refine alternatives using local knowledge and stakeholder feedback. Early concept development focused on identifying a western perimeter corridor that could provide long-term regional mobility while balancing operational performance, community impacts, environmental constraints, and future growth considerations. Key factors influencing corridor development included consistency with previous regional transportation plans, Fargo-Moorhead Diversion infrastructure and crossing locations, floodplain and hydraulic constraints, existing section-line roadways, Red River crossings, railroad crossings, connections to Interstate 29 and Interstate 94, projected traffic volumes, and compatibility with existing and planned land uses. Corridor preservation opportunities, including the potential use of excess Diversion lands, were also considered throughout the screening process.

Early concepts focused on developing a western perimeter facility that could provide a continuous connection between I-29 and I-94. Multiple east-west tie-in locations at the southern end of the study area were evaluated alongside several north-south corridor alignments west of existing development. With assistance from the SRC and Stakeholder Committee, the study team identified multiple routes through the area west of the Fargo-Moorhead Diversion. I-94 served as a natural dividing point, allowing alternatives to be

developed as a series of north-south and east-west segments. Four north-south segments and three east-west segments were identified north of I-94, while four north-south segments and five east-west segments were developed south of I-94. The evolution of these alternatives is shown on the left-hand side of **Figure 11**. Alternatives were evaluated based on mobility, system connectivity, compatibility with planned growth, flood risk, interaction with Fargo-Moorhead Diversion infrastructure, and overall feasibility.

Throughout the concept development process, committee discussions emphasized that the corridor should function as more than a bypass route. Participants identified the need for a facility capable of supporting regional mobility, freight movement, emergency response, system resiliency, and long-term growth while minimizing impacts to established and planned communities. Stakeholder feedback consistently highlighted the importance of reducing through-traffic and heavy truck traffic within communities, maintaining efficient travel between Interstate 29 and Interstate 94, and supporting developing areas west of Fargo and West Fargo. Transportation safety, reliability, corridor placement, and emergency access emerged as the highest priorities from committee discussions and stakeholder surveys.

A significant area of discussion involved the relationship between potential roadway alignments and the Fargo-Moorhead Diversion corridor. Alternatives were evaluated based on proximity to the Diversion, opportunities to utilize available lands adjacent to the project, compatibility with planned Diversion crossings and the FM Greenway Recreation Master Plan, and limitations associated with flood operations. Some stakeholders favored alignments adjacent to the Diversion because they could minimize impacts to agricultural properties, take advantage of publicly controlled lands, and avoid directing additional traffic through communities. At the same time,

concerns were raised regarding required setbacks from Diversion facilities, future permitting considerations, and preserving land immediately adjacent to the Diversion for project-related purposes. The spacing and relationship of the corridor to Diversion infrastructure therefore became an important factor in refining alignment alternatives. Flooding and long-term reliability were also among the most influential screening considerations, particularly for southern alignment options located within flowage easements and temporary flood storage areas. These discussions elevated resiliency and reliability as key evaluation measures throughout alternative refinement.

Local growth patterns and operational considerations further influenced alternative development. Committee members identified substantial anticipated growth around Horace, West Fargo, Harwood, Mapleton, and Kindred and emphasized the importance of preserving a transportation corridor before future development limited available options. As travel demand forecasting became available, forecasts indicated that some corridor segments could ultimately justify four-lane facilities in the ultimate build scenario. Discussions therefore increasingly focused on access management, right-of-way preservation, grade-separated railroad crossings, and reduced-conflict intersection treatments that could maintain long-term mobility while supporting phased implementation. This focus on corridor preservation became a central theme of the study, with both committees recognizing that construction of a complete perimeter roadway would likely occur incrementally.

Routes were subsequently narrowed down to those initially deemed acceptable by both the SRC and the Stakeholder Committee. The focus became identifying viable locations to connect to the interstate system and evaluating corridor performance through the travel demand model. Alternatives that were compatible with the travel

demand model structure were selected and analyzed further, as discussed in the **Travel Analysis** section of this report.

Due to several factors, work on the study was paused multiple times. The study was first paused due to budgetary issues. Shortly thereafter, the study was paused due to political concerns, particularly from the City of Horace. The City of Horace formally passed a resolution against the study because of concerns about 100th Avenue functioning as a bypass corridor in December 2024. This resolution is included at the end of **Attachment B**. These pauses led the study team to re-evaluate the vision and purpose of the study, as well as the approach to route identification. The study ultimately resumed with a focus on developing a north-south corridor supported by multiple east-west connections. This differed from the original study vision, which focused on identifying a single continuous route connecting to I-29 at both the north and south termini of the West Metro Perimeter Roadway.

7.2 Refined North-South Corridor Concept

General Considerations

As the concept development process progressed, a clear frontrunner did not emerge for a southern tie-in location to I-29. This led to a refinement of the overall concept toward a north-south corridor supported by a series of east-west connecting roadways.

Several factors contributed to this shift. The 100th Avenue South corridor, also known as Cass County Highway 14, raised concerns related to long-term access control and operational performance. Continued development in Fargo and Horace may increase access density along this corridor, limiting its ability to function as a high-speed, limited-access facility capable of supporting regional mobility.

The 124th Avenue corridor, or Cass County Highway 16, presented challenges associated with its location within the Fargo-Moorhead Diversion upstream mitigation area. Flood risk and hydraulic considerations introduce additional complexity related to design, cost, and long-term resiliency. When it comes to permitting, other alternatives were likely to be more feasible. The costs and efforts incurred by requirements of acquiring necessary permits through the United States Army Corps of Engineers for grade raise work completed in this area would be massive.

Further south, alternatives such as Cass County Highway 18 and North Dakota Highway 46 were considered less effective in supporting regional mobility. Floodplain constraints were also more pronounced along portions of these routes, with the exception of North Dakota Highway 46.

Based on these considerations, the refined study approach emphasizes a north-south corridor that serves as a regional mobility spine. East-west connections provide access to this corridor and distribute traffic across the broader network, rather than concentrating movements at a single southern interstate connection.

Figure 11 shows the progression of alternatives.

Accommodation of Large Vehicles

The study area includes significant agricultural and freight use, both of which require accommodation for large vehicles. Intersection designs must account for the turning radii and operational needs of agricultural equipment and heavy trucks. Reduced conflict intersection types are expected to play an important role. These

designs help maintain corridor mobility while improving safety by reducing conflict points.

Rail Crossings

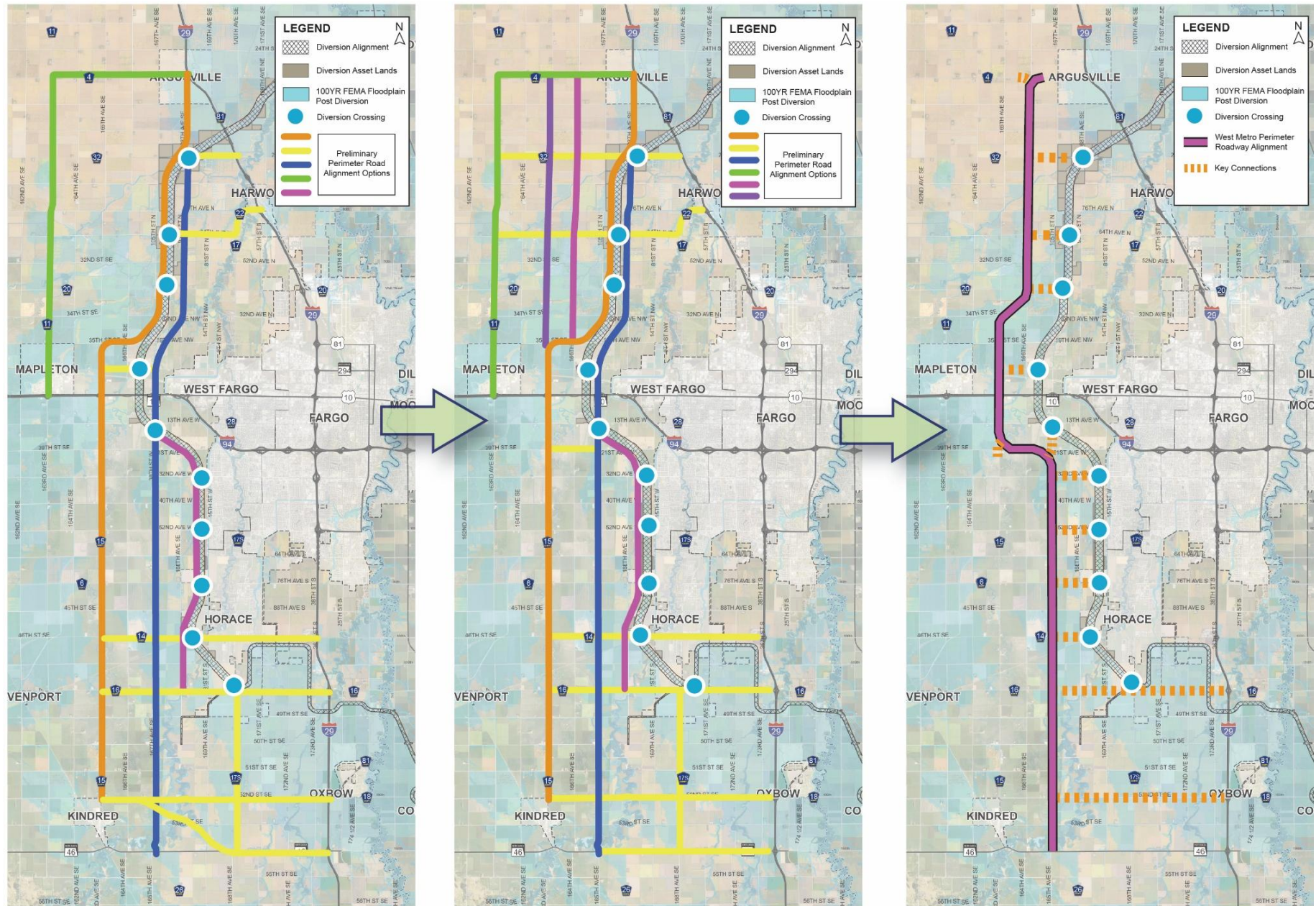
Rail infrastructure presents several considerations for corridor development. One potential crossing location south of I-94 is near a remnant spur line that previously extended into Horace. Portions of this spur line have already been removed, and this location may present an opportunity for additional track removal or abandonment, eliminating the need for a rail crossing.

North of I-94, two additional rail crossing locations would likely remain. These locations may require phased approaches to grade separation. Initial construction could include at-grade crossings, with future conversion to grade-separated facilities as traffic volumes increase and the corridor becomes more critical to regional mobility. This approach allows for flexibility while preserving long-term safety and operational performance.

Additional Considerations

Other factors influencing alignment development include environmental constraints, coordination with drainage infrastructure, constructability, and compatibility with surrounding land uses. These considerations informed concept screening and may require more detailed evaluation in future phases of project development. Additional content on alternatives development is included in **Attachment B** and **Attachment E**.

Figure 11: Progressive Alternative Development



Northwest Quadrant

Alignment Overview

Alignment development in the northwest quadrant focused on providing a continuous, high-mobility connection between I-29 and I-94 while maintaining appropriate separation from existing and planned development. Corridors were evaluated based on their ability to support a limited-access facility and integrate with established roadway infrastructure. **Figure 12** shows the northwest quadrant perimeter roadway alignment.

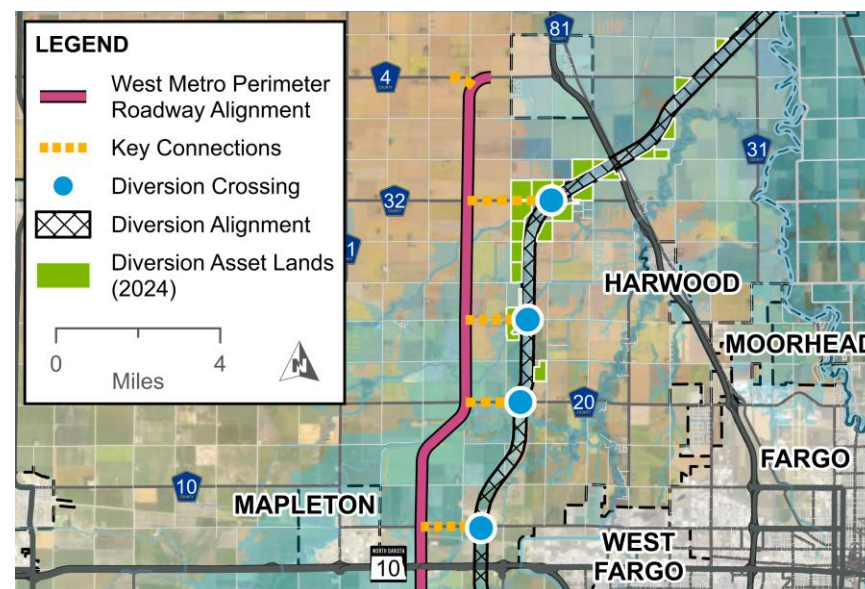
Diversion Crossing Connections

Crossing locations over the Fargo-Moorhead Diversion in the northwest quadrant were identified prior to this study and are documented in the Existing and Planned Conditions section and associated attachments. These crossings are spaced approximately every two to three miles and establish a consistent framework for regional connectivity.

Key crossings, starting on the south, at Cass County Highway 10, Cass County Highway 20, Cass County Highway 22, and Cass County Highway 32, represent primary access points to the West Metro Perimeter Roadway. These locations are expected to provide reliable and consistent connectivity due to their established roles within the regional network.

Cass County Highway 4 near Argusville is anticipated to serve as the northern terminus of the north-south corridor. This provides a logical connection to I-29 and anchors the corridor within the regional system.

Figure 12. Northwest Quadrant Perimeter Roadway Alignment



Harwood Area Considerations

The Harwood area presents a unique opportunity for regional connectivity. Cass County Highway 22 is viewed as a strong candidate for connection to the West Metro Perimeter Roadway due to its extension to a Red River crossing into Minnesota. This creates a logical east-west connection that could support cross-river travel and regional mobility.

To accommodate this connection, the study team developed a split diamond interchange concept that shifts interchange activity away from the existing Harwood community. This concept, which is detailed in **Attachment E**, includes realignment of Cass County Highway 22 to the south, allowing the interchange to minimize disruption to existing development while increasing separation between through traffic, the railroad, and local traffic. This approach improves safety, preserves community character, and enhances

operational performance. The concept also avoids conflicts with planned data center development located southeast of Harwood.

Intersection Approach

Intersections within the northwest quadrant are expected to prioritize mobility and safety through the use of reduced conflict intersection designs. Restricted Crossing Intersection (RCI) configurations are anticipated at major crossings, particularly at roadways that cross the Fargo-Moorhead Diversion. Intersection configurations should always be vetted and confirmed in the implementation stage as well.

Closer to I-94, a phased approach is anticipated. Initial improvements may include signalized intersections to address near-term conditions. Over time, these locations may transition to grade-separated interchanges with ramp systems as traffic demand increases. This approach balances early cost considerations with long-term corridor performance. **Attachment E** includes additional details on intersection treatments, including graphical examples, and potential locations.

Southwest Quadrant

Alignment Overview

Alignment development in the southwest quadrant is influenced by a combination of floodplain constraints, diversion infrastructure, and ongoing development in Fargo and Horace. As a result, the refined concept places emphasis on maintaining a strong north-south corridor while identifying effective east-west connections. **Figure 13** shows the southwest quadrant perimeter roadway alignment.

Diversion Crossing Connections

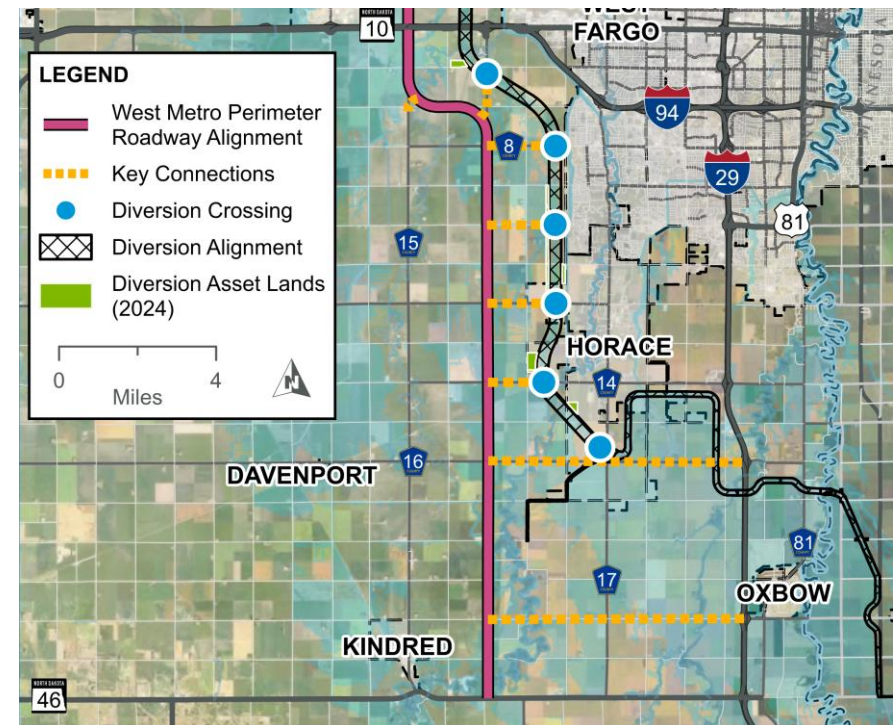
Diversion crossing locations in the southwest quadrant were also established prior to this study and are generally spaced at two- to

three-mile intervals. These crossings form the basis for access to the north-south corridor.

Primary access points, starting on the north, include Cass County Highway 29, Cass County Highway 8, 52nd Avenue South, 76th Avenue South or Cass County Highway 6, Cass County Highway 14, and Cass County Highway 16. Additional connections south of the diversion include Cass County Highway 18 and North Dakota Highway 46.

North Dakota Highway 46 is expected to serve as the southern terminus of the north-south corridor. This provides a logical endpoint and supports broader connectivity across southern Cass County.

Figure 13. Southwest Quadrant Perimeter Roadway Alignment



West Fargo Considerations

The western edge of West Fargo and the surrounding area represent one of the fastest-growing portions of the metropolitan area and were an important consideration throughout alternatives development. As development continues, transportation corridors in this area will be expected to serve both regional mobility needs and local access demands. Several alternatives initially evaluated during the study were located within or adjacent to areas identified for future residential, commercial, and industrial growth, requiring careful consideration of how transportation investments could support development while preserving long-term corridor functionality.

The West 94 Area Transportation Plan provided additional context during alternatives refinement. The refined West Metro Perimeter Roadway alignment shown in **Figure 13** generally follows the 38th Street corridor south of the West 94 study area before transitioning west approximately one mile south of the Fargo-Moorhead Diversion and connecting to Cass County Highway 15 prior to continuing north toward Interstate 94. The FM Diversion crossing on the 38th Street corridor will be a critical link for regional north-south traffic with origins or destinations in the West 94 Area and potentially in West Fargo north of Main Avenue.

The City of West Fargo supported a route west of the FM Diversion to preserve development flexibility on the east side of the Diversion. Committee discussions frequently emphasized the importance of identifying and preserving a corridor before development patterns further constrain available transportation options. This consideration ultimately supported the study's shift toward a north-south mobility corridor that could accommodate future east-west connections while allowing local jurisdictions flexibility to phase improvements.

Horace Area Considerations

The implications of transportation facility improvements near Horace were considered and discussed at length. With the initial direction of the West Metro Perimeter Roadway Study being one that connected to I-29 on both the very south and the very north end, the community of Horace naturally had concerns about potential traffic impacts, should 100th Avenue (Cass County Highway 14) be designated as part of the perimeter roadway. Though the study changed course and primarily focuses on a north-south route with east-west connections, **Attachment E** includes additional content pertaining to the 100th Avenue corridor. This content includes traffic considerations, corridor identity (welcome features, streetscaping, pedestrian facilities), and right-of-way and access control discussion that may be relevant as the area continues to develop and naturally experience increased traffic. Additional north-south mobility improvements for routes beyond CR 17 could be valuable for the traveling public, with the downtown feel the City would like to achieve on CR 17.

Intersection Approach

As in the northwest quadrant, RCI designs are expected to serve as the primary treatment at major intersections. These configurations support safety and maintain corridor mobility.

In areas closer to I-94, particularly near Cass County Highway 29 and where the alignment overlaps with Cass County Highway 15 south of I-94, alternative intersection types such as signalized green T configurations may be appropriate. These treatments may be used in earlier phases or where traffic patterns require more direct access. **Attachment E** includes further discussion and figures regarding intersection configurations.

A phased approach is again anticipated near I-94. Initial conditions may necessitate signalized intersections, with long-term plans

allowing for conversion to grade-separated interchanges with full ramp systems as traffic demand increases.

7.3 Right-of-Way Considerations

Right-of-way preservation is a critical component of advancing the West Metro Perimeter Roadway. The long-term viability of the corridor depends on protecting key alignments and connection points from incompatible development.

Preservation efforts should focus on maintaining the integrity of the north-south corridor, identifying and securing key east-west connections, and coordinating with the Fargo-Moorhead Diversion Authority where overlap or proximity exists. Integration with local land use planning and development review processes will be essential.

Early preservation reduces future costs, minimizes disruption, and provides flexibility as the project advances into future design and environmental phases. Preservation of a wider corridor capable of accommodating a divided roadway is recommended along the West Metro Perimeter Roadway alignment between Cass County Highway 14 and Cass County Highway 22. North of Cass County Highway 22 and south of Cass County Highway 14, it is recommended to preserve a reduced-width corridor similar to that of a state highway. Corridor preservation is discussed in detail in the **Implementation** section of this report.

While excess FM Diversion lands were a primary reason for the initiation of the West Metro Perimeter Roadway Study, feedback during alternatives development as well as the shift to a north-south corridor both contributed to a refined alignment that does not go through these areas.

8.0 Implementation

8.1 Right-of-Way Preservation

Right-of-way preservation is the foundational step in implementing the West Metro Perimeter Roadway and should be prioritized across the entire corridor. Early preservation of the corridor is critical to maintaining alignment continuity, minimizing future acquisition costs, and preventing encroachment from ongoing development.

Preservation efforts should focus not only on the north–south corridor itself but also on key east–west connections that will ultimately define access to the facility. Coordination with local jurisdictions during platting and development review will be essential so that access spacing, intersection locations, and corridor widths are maintained in a manner consistent with long-term mobility objectives.

Given the potentially long implementation horizon for the West Metro Perimeter Roadway, corridor preservation should focus on maintaining future transportation opportunities while minimizing acquisition, maintenance, and administrative costs until construction becomes warranted. Preserving the corridor does not necessarily require immediate purchase of the entire right-of-way. Instead, a phased preservation approach can provide flexibility while allowing existing agricultural operations and land uses to continue in the near term. It should be noted that if federal funds are used to acquire right-of-way, construction of the roadway must generally begin within 20 fiscal years of project authorization or the federal right-of-way funding may need to be repaid, unless FHWA approves an extension.

A key first step is the consistent identification of the refined alignment within regional, county, and local planning documents.

Inclusion of the corridor in transportation plans, comprehensive plans, future land use maps, and roadway planning documents establishes a common understanding among agencies, developers, and property owners regarding the long-term transportation vision. Consistent recognition of the corridor can help avoid incompatible development and preserve future routing options without requiring immediate public investment.

If development is proposed near the corridor, local jurisdictions can utilize development review, platting, and subdivision processes to support preservation efforts. These tools can be used to establish building setbacks, preserve future intersection locations, manage access points, and, where appropriate, require dedication of right-of-way as part of future development plat approvals. This approach allows corridor preservation to occur incrementally as growth occurs rather than requiring large-scale acquisition in advance of need.

Particular attention should be given to preserving larger footprints at major

Implementation Strategy

1. **Designate the alignment in all transportation and land use plans.**
2. **Establish corridor setbacks and access management policies.**
3. **Preserve future interchange and major intersection areas first.**
4. **Require right-of-way dedication through platting and development review.**
5. **Acquire only the highest-risk parcels where development pressure is imminent.**
6. **Allow agricultural uses to continue until construction becomes necessary.**
7. **Preserve recommended corridor widths where feasible while obtaining additional land around future major intersections and interchange candidates.**

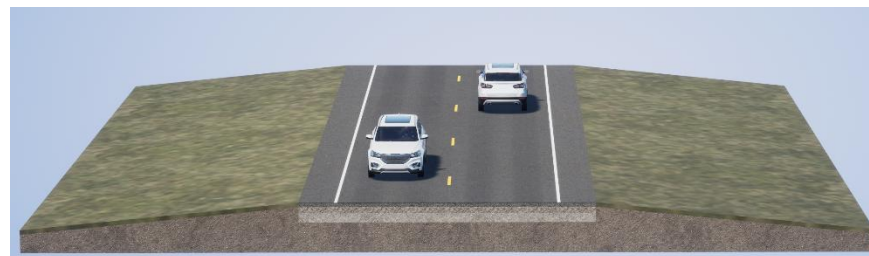
east–west connections and potential future interchange locations. These areas represent the portions of the corridor most susceptible to future conflicts with development and often become the most difficult and expensive locations to acquire after growth has occurred.

Where acquisition becomes necessary, agencies may consider targeted purchases of high-priority parcels while allowing agricultural operations to continue through lease agreements or other management arrangements until construction is programmed. This approach reduces maintenance obligations, preserves productive land use, and minimizes the cost burden associated with long-term ownership of undeveloped property.

For planning purposes, approximately 200 feet of corridor width should be preserved along the refined alignment north of Cass County Highway 22 and south of Cass County Highway 14 to accommodate the ultimate build traffic levels discussed in the **Travel Analysis** section. This would accommodate a state highway style corridor, such as that shown in **Figure 14**.

Similarly, between Cass County Highway 14 and Cass County Highway 22, 400 feet of corridor width along the refined alignment may provide sufficient flexibility to accommodate future expansion as

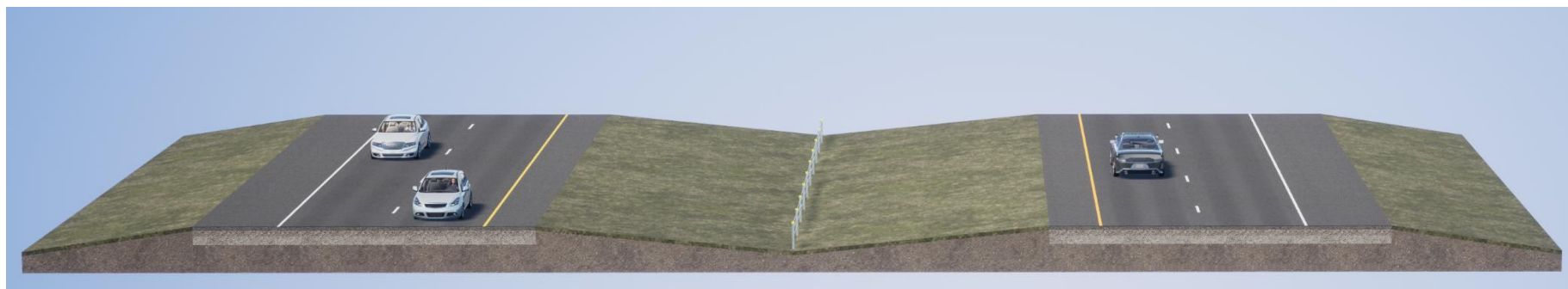
Figure 14. Two-Lane State or County Roadway



a divided expressway or freeway facility. A typical section of this type of facility is shown in **Figure 15**. Additional right-of-way preservation may be appropriate at major east–west connections and potential interchange locations where future operational needs could require a larger footprint.

By combining corridor designation, development review, strategic right-of-way preservation, and targeted acquisition, agencies can maintain flexibility for future implementation of the West Metro Perimeter Roadway while minimizing near-term costs and allowing existing land uses to continue largely unchanged until construction becomes necessary. This approach provides a practical balance between protecting an important long-term transportation corridor and limiting the financial and maintenance burden associated with premature acquisition of large amounts of right-of-way.

Figure 15. Four-Lane Divided Roadway



8.2 Phased Construction Approach

The implementation of the West Metro Perimeter Roadway is expected to occur incrementally over time, with construction generally progressing from areas of highest near-term demand outward. Based on current planning efforts and programmed improvements, development is anticipated to begin near I-94 and expand both north and south as the broader transportation network and surrounding land uses evolve. **Figure 16** shows the anticipated three phases of construction for the roadway, with Phase A taking place in the short-term, Phase B in the mid-term, and Phase C in the long-term. The numbers at east-west connections indicate a potential order or priority for improvements, though this order will be dependent upon north-south corridor developments as well.

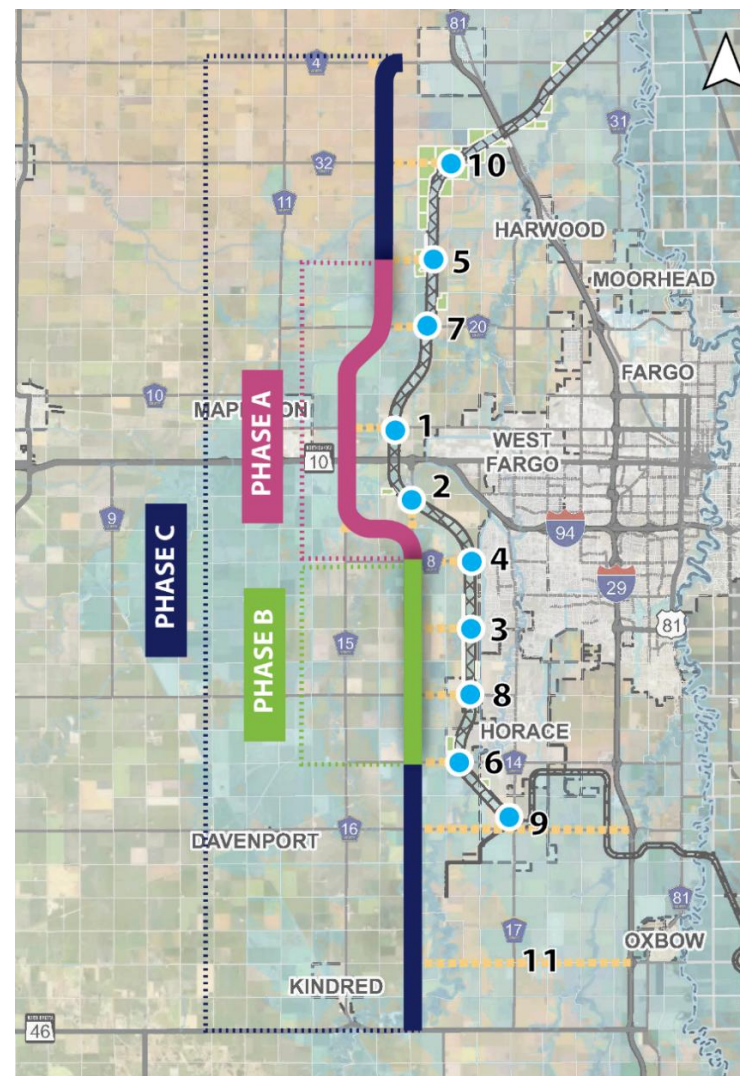
Initial Focus Near Interstate 94

Early phases of construction are expected to concentrate in proximity to I-94, where existing and planned improvements are already underway. Cass County is currently evaluating grading and paving improvements to 38th Street, which transitions into Cass County Highway 29, between 32nd Avenue South and I-94 within approximately the next five years. This project aligns well with the long-term vision of the West Metro Perimeter Roadway and represents an early segment of infrastructure that could support the corridor's function.

In addition, the current version of the Cass County 2027-2031 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), which was completed after existing conditions were analyzed for this study, includes 2027 grading and surfacing improvements for Cass County Highway 6, also known as 76th Avenue South, extending west to Cass County Highway 15, with this same segment being paved in 2028. This is shown in **Figure 17**. This project establishes an east–west connection that will exist prior

to full buildout of the perimeter roadway in this area. In the interim, Cass County Highway 15 will function as a north-south route providing access to I-94, creating an early network condition that supports regional connectivity even before the north-south corridor is fully realized.

Figure 16. Phased Construction Approach



Expansion to the South

As development pressures increase and travel demand grows, the West Metro Perimeter Roadway is anticipated to extend further south from the I-94 area. Cass County Highway 14, or 100th Avenue South, is expected to be extended west in coordination with future phases of the perimeter roadway. This connection will provide an additional east–west linkage to the corridor and serve as a complementary route to 76th Avenue South.

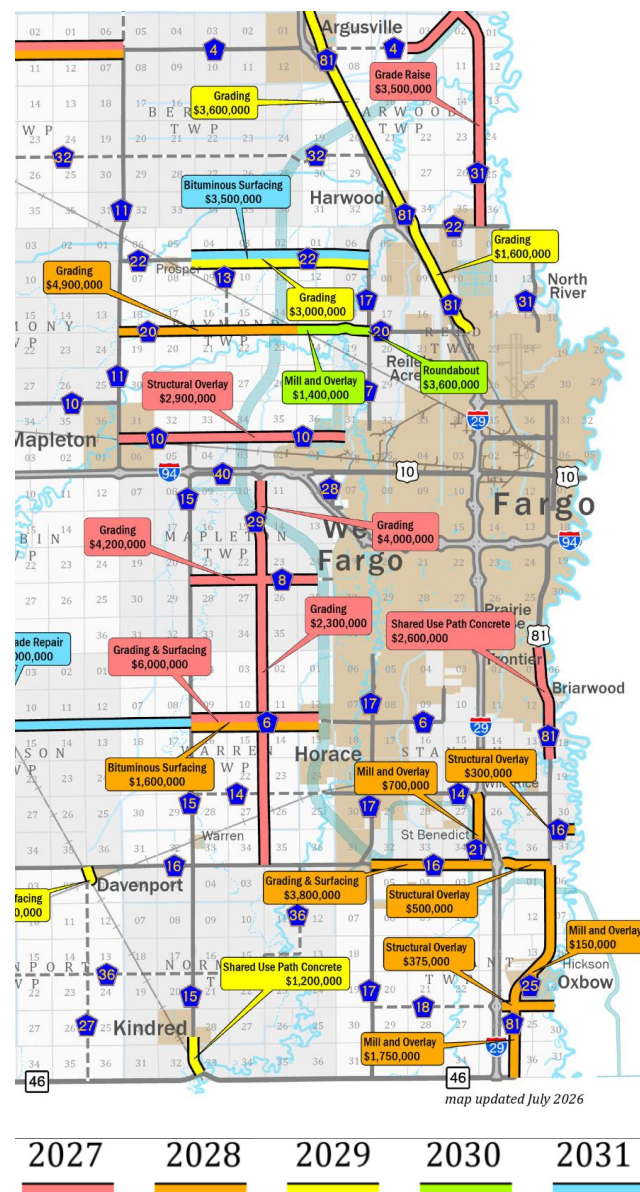
Extending Cass County Highway 14 westward could help distribute traffic more evenly across the network, reducing reliance on a single east-west facility and improving overall system resilience. It may also provide opportunities to limit heavy truck traffic from traveling further east and north through the Horace community, thereby supporting both mobility and local quality of life.

Subsequent phases of construction would likely continue extending the corridor further south to Cass County Highway 16. **Figure 17** shows a snip taken from the current version of the Cass County 2027-2031 CIP. Grading of the new Cass County Highway 29 (38th Street) from I-94 south to Cass County Highway 16 is noted for 2027. Notably, this does not include surfacing. This is another step toward establishing north-south routes with east-west connections south of I-94 and west of the FM Diversion. Additional projects currently identified for the next 5 years are also shown in **Figure 17**.

Further into the future, the new Cass County Highway 29 (38th Street) could potentially extend even further south, to Cass County Highway 18, and ultimately to North Dakota Highway 46. These later-stage segments represent longer-term investments that will correspond with continued regional growth. The southernmost connection at North Dakota Highway 46 is particularly important from a resiliency

standpoint, as it is located outside of key floodplain areas and provides a stable southern anchor for the corridor.

Figure 17. Cass County Capital Improvement Plan for 2027-2031 (July 2026)



Expansion to the North

North of I-94, early phases are expected to focus on extending the corridor to Cass County Highway 22, given its strong potential for regional connectivity. As previously discussed, this corridor provides a direct connection to Harwood and includes access to a Red River crossing into Minnesota. This makes it a valuable component of both local and regional travel patterns. This segment would encompass connecting the north terminus of Cass County Highway 15 to the south terminus of Cass County Highway 13, over a length of approximately 3.5 miles of new roadway. This same connection would also allow for access to Cass County Highway 20. The connection would skirt the edges of extraterritorial zoning jurisdiction between the City of Mapleton and the City of West Fargo.

Developing the connection to Cass County Highway 22 in earlier phases would allow vehicles traveling between southbound and westbound routes, as well as eastbound to northbound movements, to avoid traffic within the core metro area. This would improve efficiency for regional trips while reducing congestion on urban roadways.

Further northern extension to Cass County Highway 4 near Argusville would likely occur in later phases of implementation. While this segment represents a lower immediate priority, preserving right-of-way between Cass County Highway 22 and Cass County Highway 4 remains critical to ensure this future connection can be implemented as regional demand grows.

Cass County Road Network Considerations

During the phased buildout of the West Metro Perimeter Roadway, close coordination with Cass County's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) updates is crucial. Depending on the timing of various improvements, there may need to be modifications to the West Metro

Perimeter Roadway phasing or Cass County CIP updates to help provide access across the diversion that connect to various paved county routes in area.

As development and travel demand continue to expand west of the metropolitan area, additional segments leading to or from the West Metro Perimeter Roadway may be implemented to support mobility in the area. Although portions of the roadway network may already exist along the proposed alignment, timing of improvements will likely not align with traffic needs. During this time, county routes like Cass County Highway 15 may act as a de facto perimeter road, so special consideration should be given to the east-west routes connecting to Cass County Highway 15.

Facility Ownership and Operational Considerations

Ownership and operational responsibility for the West Metro Perimeter Roadway will play a significant role in determining how the corridor is developed, funded, maintained, and operated over time. While the study identifies a preferred corridor and corridor preservation strategy, decisions regarding long-term ownership will ultimately influence roadway design standards, access control policies, funding opportunities, and implementation timelines.

Agricultural Access Considerations

Future access management strategies will need to balance the mobility function of the corridor with the needs of adjacent landowners. While North Dakota law recognizes the importance of maintaining reasonable access to property, including agricultural land, access does not necessarily need to be provided directly at every location along a roadway. As a result, future access management may include consolidated field approaches, access via intersecting roadways, frontage roads, or other designated access

locations that maintain reasonable property access while protecting the long-term mobility and safety objectives of the corridor.

State Ownership

If portions of the corridor were to become part of the North Dakota State Highway System, the facility would likely be developed as a high-mobility regional route intended to accommodate long-distance travel, freight traffic, and system resiliency needs. Under this approach, the roadway could ultimately function as a divided state highway with a high degree of access control, limited access points, and widely spaced intersections. Preserving sufficient right-of-way for future roadway widening, intersection improvements, and potential interchange development would be especially important. State ownership could also expand opportunities for statewide transportation funding; however, any future addition of mileage to the state highway system would require coordination with NDDOT and consideration of statewide system priorities.

County Ownership

County ownership represents the most likely near-term implementation path for much of the corridor. Cass County has already constructed and is planning roadway improvements within portions of the study area, particularly south of Interstate 94, utilizing Fargo-Moorhead Diversion-related funding. Under a county ownership model, implementation could occur incrementally as traffic demands warrant improvements and funding becomes available. Initial roadway segments may function as two-lane county highways with at-grade intersections and limited access management, while preserving sufficient right-of-way to allow future expansion. As traffic volumes increase, the county could phase in enhanced access control, intersection improvements, and eventual roadway widening consistent with the corridor preservation recommendations of this study.

Municipal Ownership

Regardless of the ultimate ownership structure, coordination with local jurisdictions will be a critical component of successful corridor preservation and implementation. Communities including Fargo, West Fargo, Horace, Mapleton, Harwood, Argusville, and Kindred have unique growth plans, transportation priorities, and land use objectives that will influence how the corridor develops over time.

Municipal planning decisions have the potential to affect the long-term function of the corridor through subdivision approvals, zoning changes, utility extensions, school siting, park development, trail connections, and access requests. As development occurs near the corridor, local jurisdictions will play an important role in preserving right-of-way, protecting future intersection locations, maintaining appropriate access spacing, and ensuring that land use decisions do not unintentionally constrain future transportation improvements.

Early and ongoing coordination between municipalities, Cass County, Metro COG, NDDOT, and other transportation partners will be important to balance local development objectives with the corridor's intended regional mobility function.

Regardless of ownership, maintaining a consistent corridor vision will be critical. This includes preserving adequate right-of-way, managing access to maintain long-term mobility, coordinating land use decisions among jurisdictions, and designing improvements that can be implemented incrementally over time. Establishing these corridor preservation principles today will help ensure the West Metro Perimeter Roadway can continue to serve its intended regional transportation function as the metropolitan area grows.

8.3 Next Steps

As Cass County continues to update its CIP to reflect county road network changes related to the FM diversion and advances implementation efforts, an important next step will be a more detailed evaluation of roadways that can remain accessible during flooding events. Cass County has already begun this process to identify routes that need to be modified to remain above floodwaters once the FM diversion is operational.

Once official flood maps become available, an extensive mapping exercise with and without the West Metro Perimeter Roadway should be performed to lay out the future county road network. This effort should consider official floodplain mapping, future development and roadway grid patterns, the feasibility of raising or improving existing routes, and anticipated traffic volume impacts. Evaluating these scenarios may help refine the ultimate alignment and function of the West Metro Perimeter Roadway, identify critical links on Cass County's system, and potential ROW preservation needs.