

## Study Review Committee MATBUS 2021-2025 Transit Development Plan

Tuesday, January 26, 2021, 3:00-4:30pm  
Zoom Meeting – Conference Call

### Attendees

Name	Organization/Role	Name	Organization/Role
Michael Maddox	Metro COG	Malachi Peterson	City of West Fargo
Ari Del Rosario	Metro COG	Voni Vegar	MnDOT
Julie Bommelman	MATBUS	Becky Hanson	NDDOT
Shaun Crowell	MATBUS	Wayne Zacher	NDDOT
Taaren Haak	MATBUS	Jon Gilbert	Transit Rider Advocate
Matt Peterson	MATBUS	Joe Kapper	SRF
Jordan Smith	MATBUS	Menno Schukking	SRF
Cole Swingen	MATBUS	Jake Knight	SRF
Lori Van Beek	MATBUS	Will Calves	AECOM
Kevin Hanson	MAT Coordinating Board		

### Absent

Name	Organization/Role	Name	Organization/Role
Ed Pearl	First Transit	Renaë Tunison	FTA
Tim Solberg	City of West Fargo	Amar Hussein	Lutheran Social Services of ND
Peyton Mastera	City of Dilworth	Thomas Hill	United Way of Cass-Clay

## Presentation Slides Attached

The attached slides were presented at the meeting and include additional detail. The following sections in this document are summaries of discussions during the meeting.

### Welcome and Introductions

Joe Kapper (SRF) provided an overview of the agenda and led introductions among attendees of this fifth Study Review Committee (SRC) meeting.

### Bus Stop Analysis

Joe presented on bus stop spacing and bus shelter amenities guidelines. Bus stop spacing affects on-time performance and reliability for transit service and spacing guidelines will need to be context sensitive. The proposed spacing standard is 1/8 to 1/4 mile (2-4 city blocks). Exception to standards may be central business districts and major traffic generators, such as hospitals, social service agencies, educational

facilities, government centers, large housing facilities, etc. This guideline is a goal and does not set a minimum or maximum. By creating a simple metric, it will be easier to implement.

The bus shelter standards were established in 1994 and updated with the 2018 facilities study. Lori Van Beek (MATBUS) would like stops near buildings where people can wait indoors in a publicly accessible lobby, such as Park Ridge Terrace, called out on the map. This eliminated the need for shelters in these locations. Menno Schukking (SRF) and Taaren Haak (MATBUS) will connect after the meeting to identify these stops and add a few missing shelter locations to the map and GIS data inventory. Lori would provide Menno with a list of benching locations through their advertising contractor.

For the upcoming field review of bus stops, Lori asked if the presence of no parking signs could be noted, to ensure areas where bus boardings occur do not allow parking.

## Service Plan Development

Will Calves (AECOM) presented the ideas and first drafts of three scenarios of bus route alignment and service levels alternatives. The scenarios range from minor adjustments to the system to a start of a complete network redesign. Scenarios B and C introduce Sunday service. In addition, overlay routes were developed that could be implemented in any of the scenarios. There will be workshops held with MATBUS staff to refine these ideas. Will explained how each of the scenarios address comments made during the public outreach.

### Scenario A

Matt Peterson (MATBUS) asked if the consultant team had considered the ridership and subsequent National Transit Database (NTD) reporting and Federal funding implications of combining routes; doing so would create one-seat rides and change how these trips are counted for NTD reporting purposes (see note below)<sup>1</sup>. Will noted that the team had not considered that at this point, but it should be discussed moving forward. Matt noted that this type of thing was not considered in the last TDP but should be this time.

Today, with two routes interlined, two unlinked passenger trips (UTPs) are counted: once when the passenger boards the bus, and again when the bus changes from one route to another at the GTC. If the routes were combined into one, only one unlinked passenger trip would be counted (where the boarding took place), no longer counting the passenger at the GTC that results from the interlining. Joe added that the team is looking at better service products from the customer's perspective.

In response to Will's suggestion to combine route numbers of interlined routes, Lori noted the positives of maintaining the two-route structure and interlining, including allowing driver breaks at GTC and not representing the trip as a long ride.

Michael Maddox (Metro COG) asked about the Route 20 modification and whether it breaks the current hub-and-spoke system and West Acres orientation of the route, which was a priority for the system in the previous TDP. Will mentioned that this is an example of a hybrid approach; the team will explore the importance of the anchors and transfer opportunities along the existing and proposed route. Michael

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<sup>1</sup> UPT affects 5307 STIC funding for 5307 providers in urban areas under 200,000. However, after the 2020 census, Fargo-Moorhead will exceed 200,000 residents and no longer be eligible for STIC funding, most likely starting in FY 2023 (under the current federal transportation formula).

noted that the Main Avenue reconstruction project between University Drive and 25th Street could incorporate transit elements. Michael mentioned destinations serving new American communities in this area, an appropriate level of service should be considered for this area.

Jon Gilbert (rider advocate) mentioned that the former Route 7 connecting NDSU following 12th Ave and then connecting to West Acres could be considered. Will mentioned that could be explored, but that the team must also find out why a former route was altered.

## Scenario B

Michael would like to define the purpose of each route and note who it serves. Changes to routes should note how the current riders would be impacted.

Julie Bommelman (MATBUS) mentioned the old K Mart site (University Drive, south of I-94) has a proposal for 170-unit low-income development; approved by the City last night. This will likely have a ridership impact to Route 14. Matt hoped MATBUS could talk with the developer to get some transit supportive design elements in the development. Matt noted that he and Cole Swingen (MATBUS) looked at the ridership of this route, currently most boardings are at the beginning and end of the route and not many in the middle, especially the apartment loop.

Matt asked about the proposed service levels for Sunday. Ridership on Saturdays is substantially lower than on weekdays and he wondered if those resources could be applied to better weekday service instead. He was not sure if Sunday levels should be at the same level as Saturday. Matt noted the importance of accounting for the increased maintenance and operation needs (i.e., hiring staff, capital purchases) not reflected in revenue hours and revenue miles in the cost estimates for Sunday service. Will noted that those have not been calculated at this time, but would be reflected in the final documents. Will mentioned another consideration is the impact of expanded span of service, including Sunday service, on MAT Paratransit availability and subsequent resource needs. Julie clarified there is a limited paratransit availability currently on Sundays, operating only a few vehicles.

## Scenario C

Lori expects new apartment buildings along 1st avenue to increase ridership on Route 4 in Moorhead. That route also serves a homeless shelter. Malachi Peterson (West Fargo) would like to see some route alternatives for the Sheyenne Street corridor, between Main and the interstate. This area is seeing an increase in dense development, such as mixed used development and a new grocery store, and could benefit from fixed route service. Jordan Smith (MATBUS) concurred, mentioning a new development at Sheyenne and 7th St West coming soon as an example, as well as the Eagle Run area and plaza. Michael noted that there is a growing new American population in West Fargo as well. Exploring what new services could expand into West Fargo will be important, as the community is growing and may need additional fixed routes in the future to serve trips within West Fargo.

Michael asked Will to define express routes for the overlay routes proposed. Will explained it is a limited stop route, with a potential park and ride facility on one end and to downtown on the other end. Such a route could include a higher fare for a faster, direct service.

The preliminary impacts of the three scenarios see increased frequencies and service on fewer routes. There is also the potential for an overall increase in service costs through expansion in scenarios B and C.

## Coordinated Plan

Menno gave a progress update on the Consolidated Human Services Transportation Plan (CHSTP). A questionnaire was sent out to 28 (regional) transportation providers who serve people experiencing disabilities, low income populations and seniors. Ten questionnaires were returned as of January 27. A needs assessment meeting with seven provider representatives discussed transportation needs on January 13.

Julie clarified that the regular quarterly transit meetings of NDDOT were on hold due to Covid. Lori clarified that MAT Paratransit Sunday service is new in Moorhead for the past two years, but has been in place in Fargo for some time.

These inputs will be assembled into a draft report. A meeting to discuss the draft report will be scheduled for mid to late February to confirm the goals and objectives and prioritize strategies for implementation over the next five years.

## Next Steps

SRF will share the presentation slides of today's meeting. The next SRC meeting will be in early-March. SRF and AECOM will set up workshops with MATBUS staff to refine the route alignment alternatives. SRF and MATBUS Moorhead staff will connect to get the correct bus stop shelter data and share bench data. SRF will work on the Consolidated Human Services Transportation Plan (CHSTP) and the Bus Stop Analysis, in coordination with MATBUS staff.. SRC members are encouraged to promote the project website.

# MATBUS 2021-2025 Transit Development Plan

Study Review Committee  
January 26, 2021



**METROCOG**  
FM REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION

**SRF AECOM**

# Meeting Agenda

1. SRC Introductions
2. Bus Stop Analysis
3. Service Plan Development
4. Coordinated Plan Process Update
5. Next steps

# SRC Member Introductions

# Bus Stop Analysis

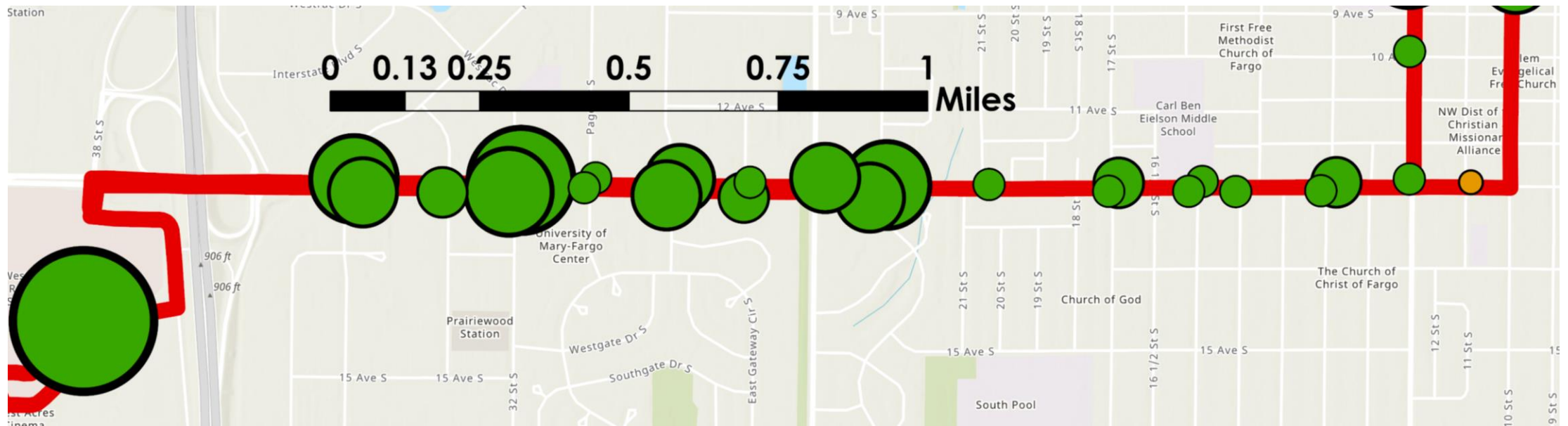


# Bus Stop Spacing

- Affects reliability and on-time performance
  - Especially along busier routes and corridors of high transit use
- No spacing standards currently
- Other transit systems set stop spacing based on:
  - Transit Mode
  - Population Density
  - Transit Market Areas
  - Land Use
  - Pedestrian Facilities

# Example: Route 15

- On-Time Performance 78% in 2019
- Bus stops almost every block along 13<sup>th</sup> Ave

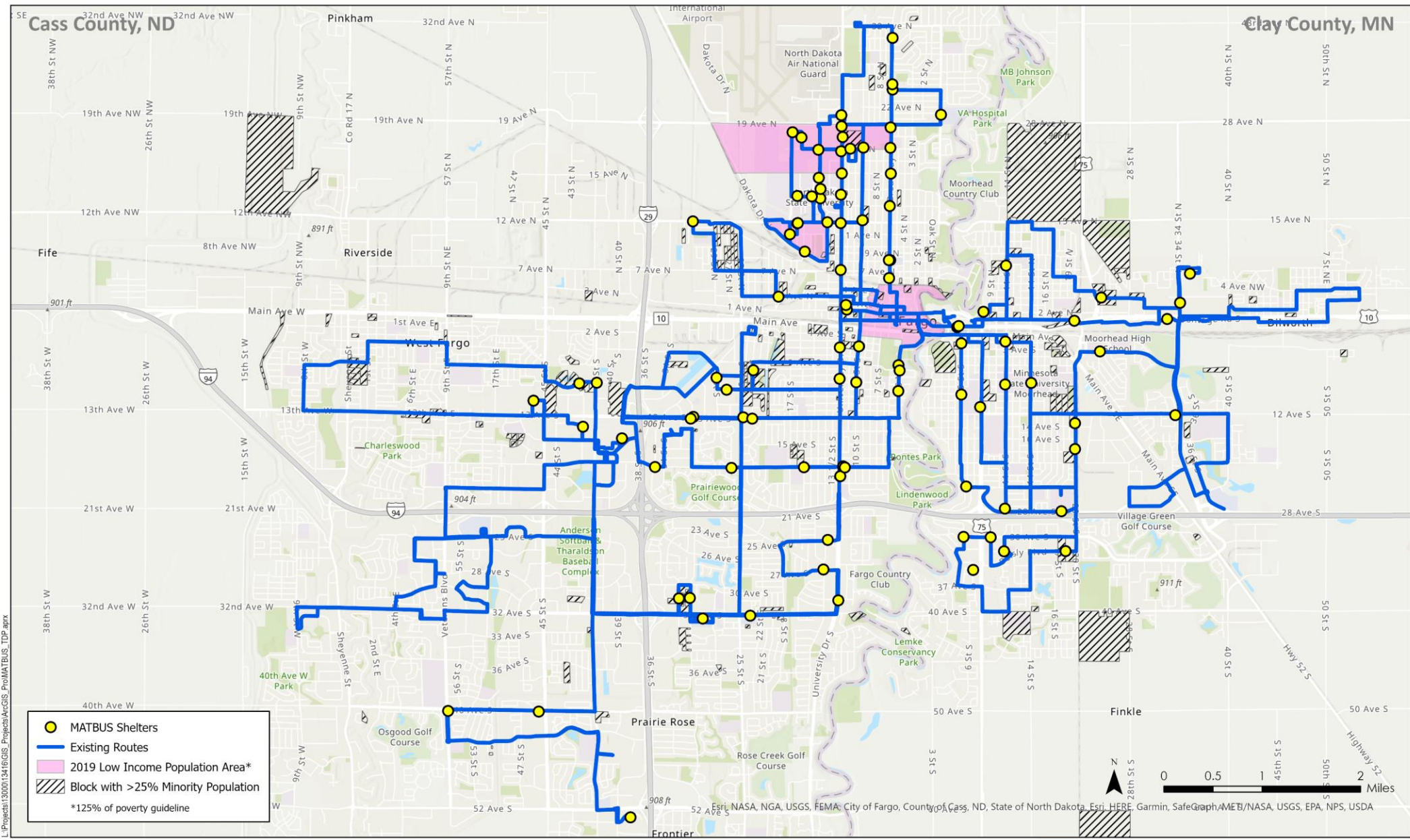


# Stop Spacing Guideline

- Context sensitive
  - Lengthier in walkable areas with higher transit use
    - Sidewalks available on both sides of the street and on connecting side streets
    - Ability to cross the street with ease
  - Ensure stops near entrances of major destinations
- Proposal
  - 1/8 to 1/4 mile (2-4 city blocks)
  - Exception to standards may be central business districts and major traffic generators.
    - Hospitals, social service agencies, educational facilities, government centers, large housing facilities, etc.
  - This guideline is a goal, not a minimum or maximum. Simplicity.

# Amenity Distribution

- Shelters 1994 Standards, updated in 2018
  - Open space (exposed to the elements)
  - Commercial areas
  - Elderly/disability housing
  - Educational institutions (with limited parking)
  - High density housing areas
  - Government and public buildings
  - Medical facilities
  - High ridership (25 daily average boardings)
  - Low-income and/or minority population residential areas
    - Low-income area defined as census block groups with an annual median household income below 125% of the federal poverty guideline (\$23,403 in 2019)
    - Minority population area defined as census blocks where more than 25% of the population indicated a race other than “white-alone” on the census



**SRF Shelters & Environmental Justice Factors**  
MATBUS Transit Development Plan



Figure X



# Shelters

- From Facility Study:
- Shelters should have waiting area capacity of 10 persons
- Include:
  - ADA Landing pad, MATBUS sign
  - Exterior lighting
- Optional:
  - Exterior bench, interior bench, trash receptable, sun shading, bike rack
  - Exterior advertising, shade trees, solar power

# Shelters

- Nine stops identified in facility study that would require shelters based on standard
  - 2nd Ave N - NDSU R H Barry Hall (Main Entrance)
  - 17th Ave N & 12th St N
  - Sanford Medical Center (23rd Ave S)
  - Dakota Dr & 18th St N
  - Albrecht Blvd & 14th/15th Ave N
  - 13th Ave S & Page Dr
  - 13th Ave S & 21st St S
  - University Dr N & Stop and Go Center
  - 1st Ave N & Broadway N

# Benches

- Moorhead
  - Mutually determined locations by city and contractor
  - Both may request sites, city has final approval
  - For the selection of each location, consideration will be given to the convenience to the public
  - The city will approve/decline any site requested by contractor within 30 days of receiving such request
  - Contractor will remove snow from the benches within three (3) calendar days of any snowfall event



# Field Review

- Validate Stop Locations
- Signage
- Pedestrian Connections
- Shelters and Amenities
- Safety Concerns

## Toolkit for the Assessment of Bus Stop Accessibility and Safety

### APPENDIX A. Comprehensive Bus Stop Checklist

BUS STOP CHECKLIST		PART A: IDENTIFICATION/LOCATION	
Route Name:	Location:	Weather Conditions:	Stop No.:
<b>PART A: IDENTIFICATION/LOCATION</b>			
<b>A1</b>	Is there a bus shelter? <i>If YES, what is the number of the shelter?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>A2</b>	<i>If NO, is there an exterior alternative shelter nearby (i.e. - awning, overhangs, underpass)?</i> Street Name:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>A3</b>	Nearest Cross Street (street name or landmark if mid-block):		
<b>A4</b>	Bus Route Direction:		
	North Bound <input type="checkbox"/>	South Bound <input type="checkbox"/>	More than one direction <input type="checkbox"/>
	East Bound <input type="checkbox"/>	West Bound <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>A5</b>	What is the purpose of the stop?		
	Park and Ride <input type="checkbox"/>	Boarding <input type="checkbox"/>	Both Boarding and Alighting <input type="checkbox"/>
	Kiss and Ride <input type="checkbox"/>	Alighting <input type="checkbox"/>	Transfer <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>A6</b>	What is the average number of daily boardings at the stop?		
<b>A7</b>	Where is the bus stop positioned in relation to the nearest intersection?		
	Nearside (Before the bus crosses the intersection)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Far Side (After the bus crosses the intersection)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Mid-block	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Not near an intersection	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Freeway bus pad	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Date:	Time:	Surveyor:	

# Service Plan Development

# Scenario Development

- **Scenarios are developed iteratively:**
  - **Scenario A** addresses relatively small-scale elements and (with bus stop rebalancing) on-time performance concerns.
  - **Scenario B** introduces Sunday service and higher frequency of service on some routes.
  - **Scenario C** is a “redesign” of the existing system and presents new TapRide service areas.
  - “*Overlay routes*” can be applied in any Scenario.

# Addressing Outreach/Analysis Findings

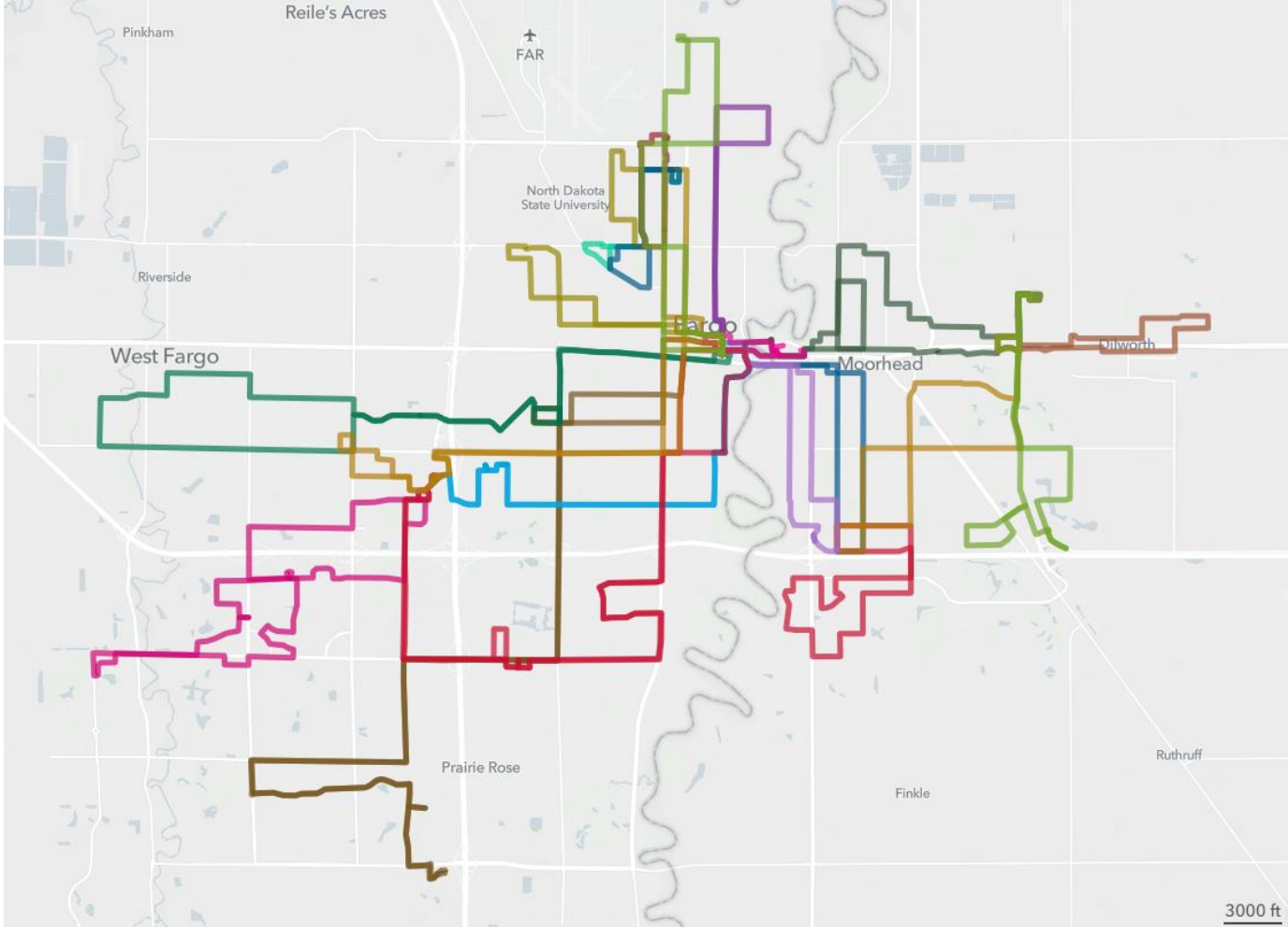
- **Key Takeaways from Outreach & Analysis:**

- Many people prefer investing resources in building up frequency and/or span as opposed to providing additional coverage.
- Sunday service is seen as **VERY** desirable.
- Service and/or service improvements desired/mentioned at several specific locations, including:
  - New Amazon distribution center
- Analysis shows strong ridership along key corridors between major activity centers.
  - Some other areas appear to have lower ridership.
- Need for effective pedestrian infrastructure and land use designs amenable to transit use.

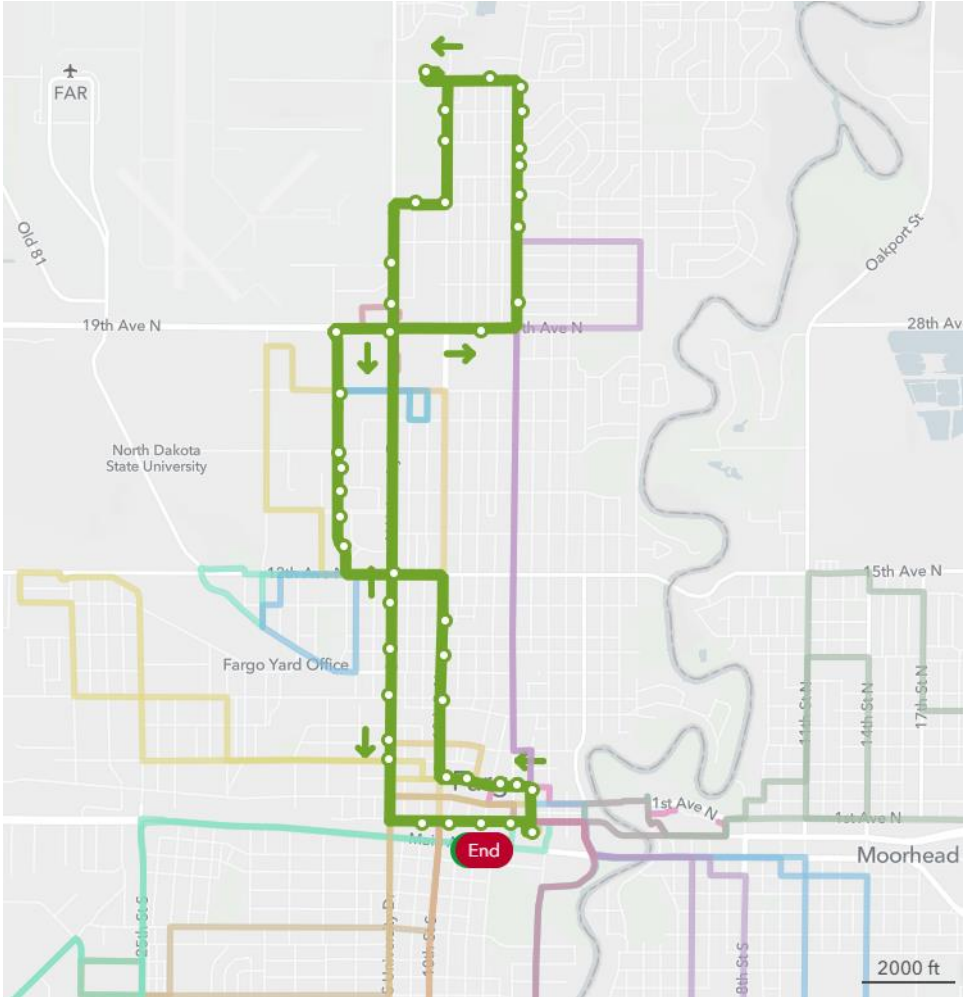
# Scenario A

- **This scenario represents relatively small-scale modifications to the current MATBUS network. This scenario includes:**
  - Routes 1 and 3 are presented as a single route (not mapped)
  - Routes 2 and 5 are presented as a single route (not mapped)
  - Extended Route 33 to GTC and merged with Route 13U
  - Route 13 was modified to not double back on itself through the NDSU campus so a small segment of 10th Avenue loses Route 13 service
  - Route 20 is modified and extended to GTC via Main Avenue

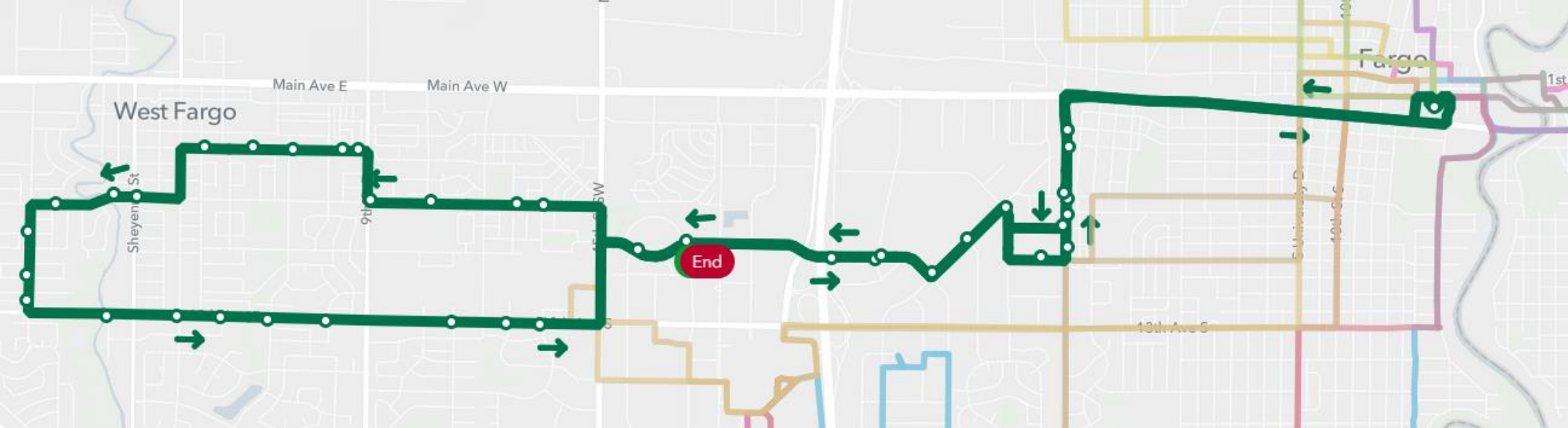
# Scenario A



# Scenario A – Route 13

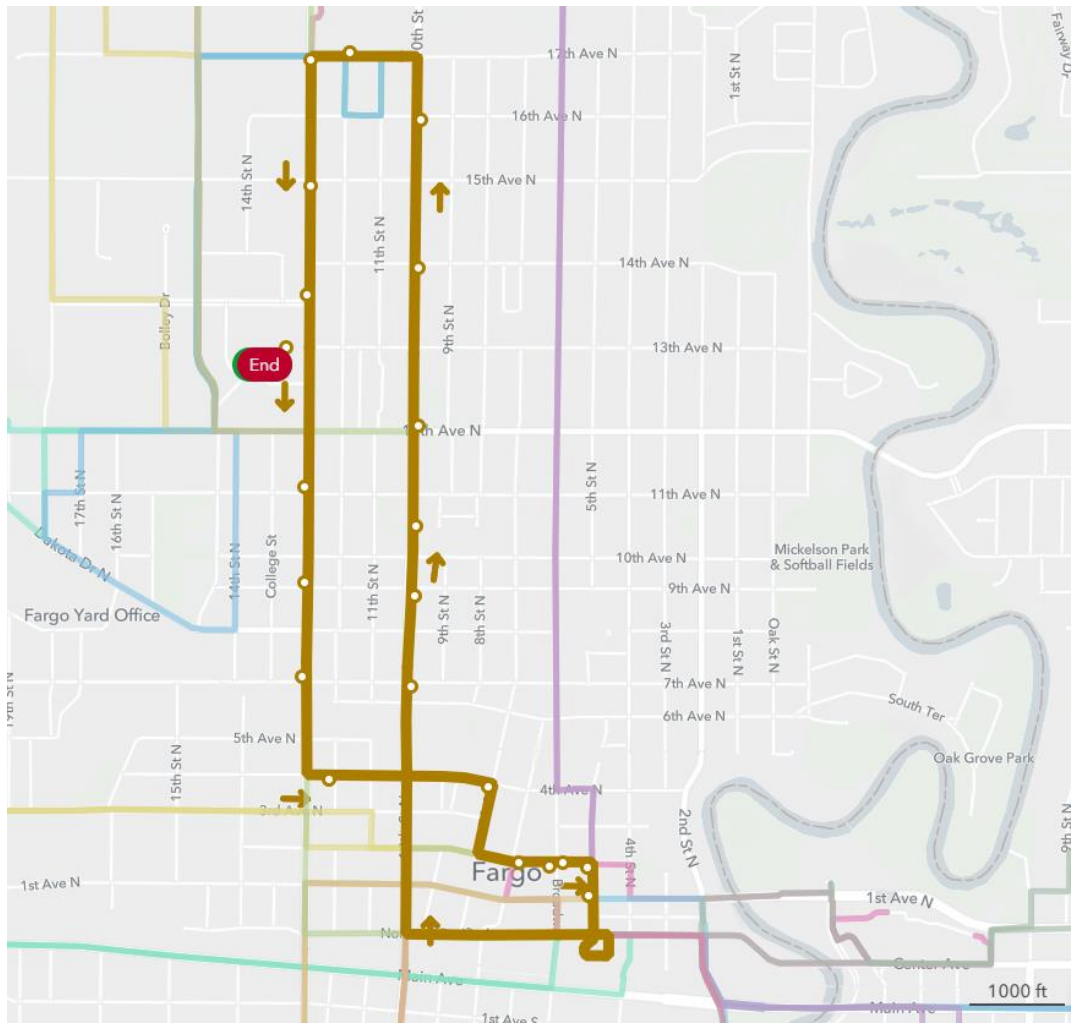


# Scenario A – Route 20





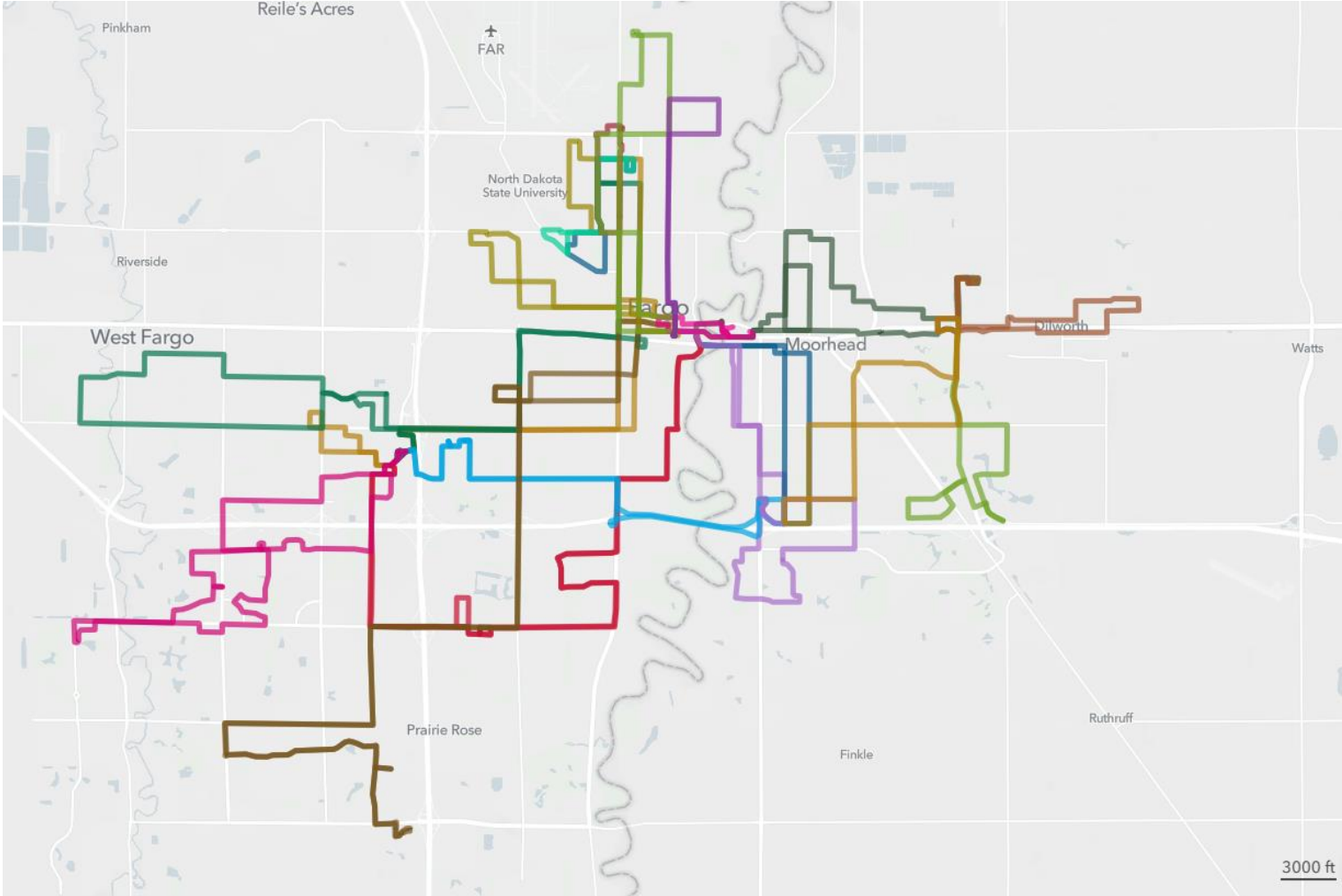
# Scenario A – Route 33



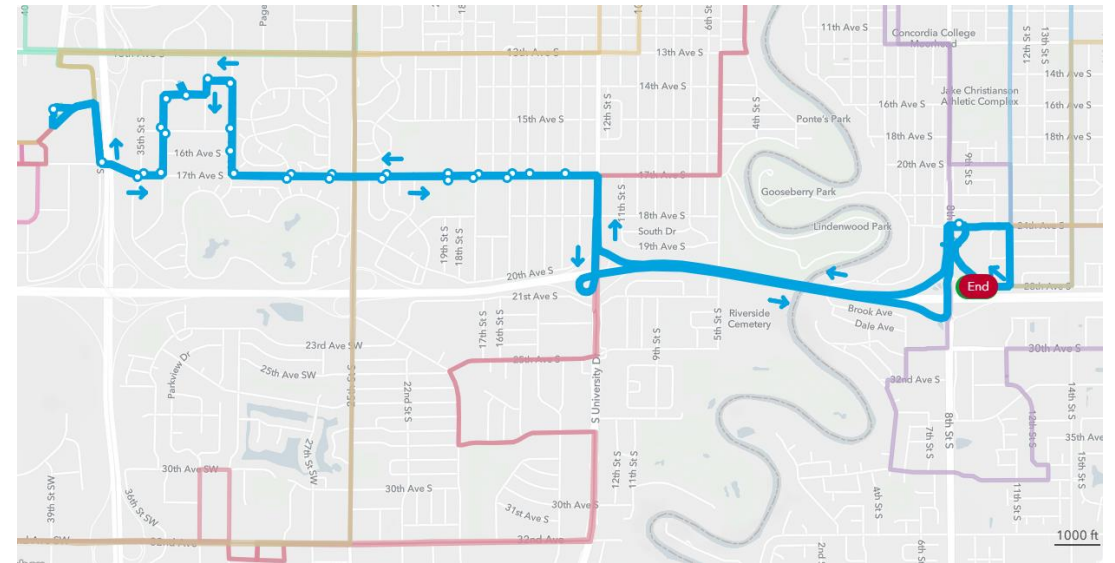
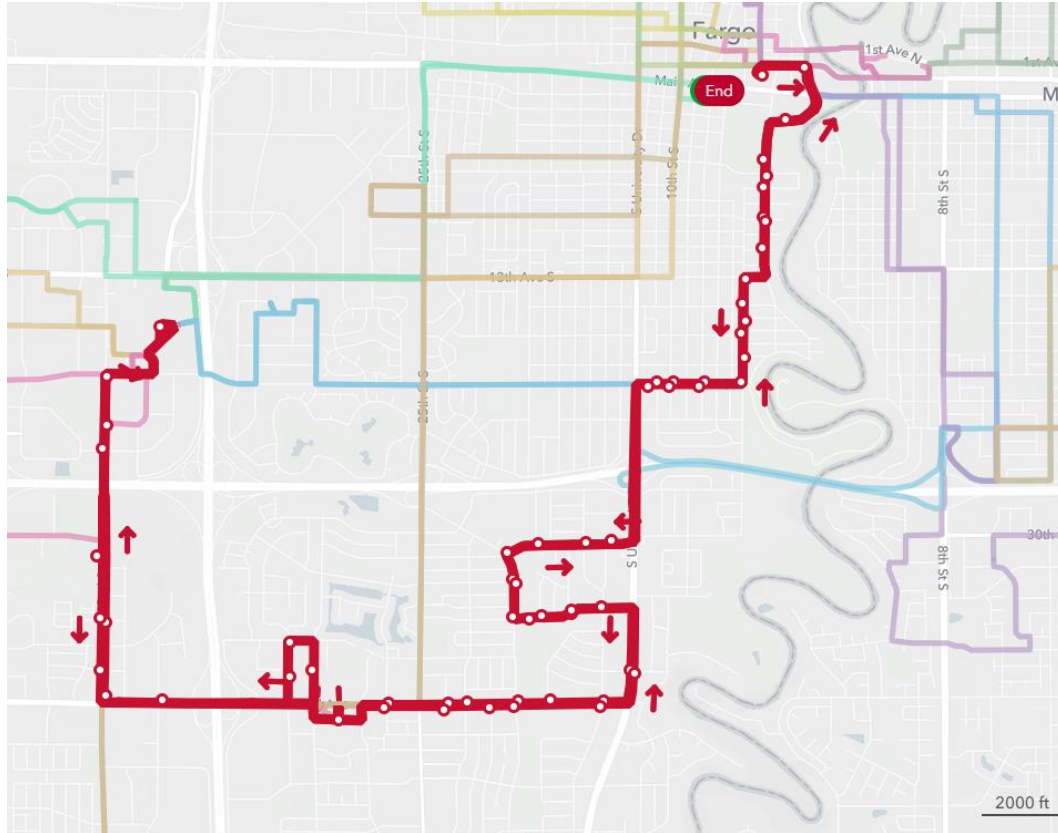
# Scenario B

- **This scenario has more substantive changes. Elements included are:**
  - Sunday service on Routes 2, 4, 11, 13 and 15
  - More frequent service on Routes 13, 11 and 15
  - Modify Route 16 to serve Marriott transfer point in Moorhead with modifications to Route 14 to continue to provide coverage in Fargo
  - Route 20 extended to NDSU via GTC

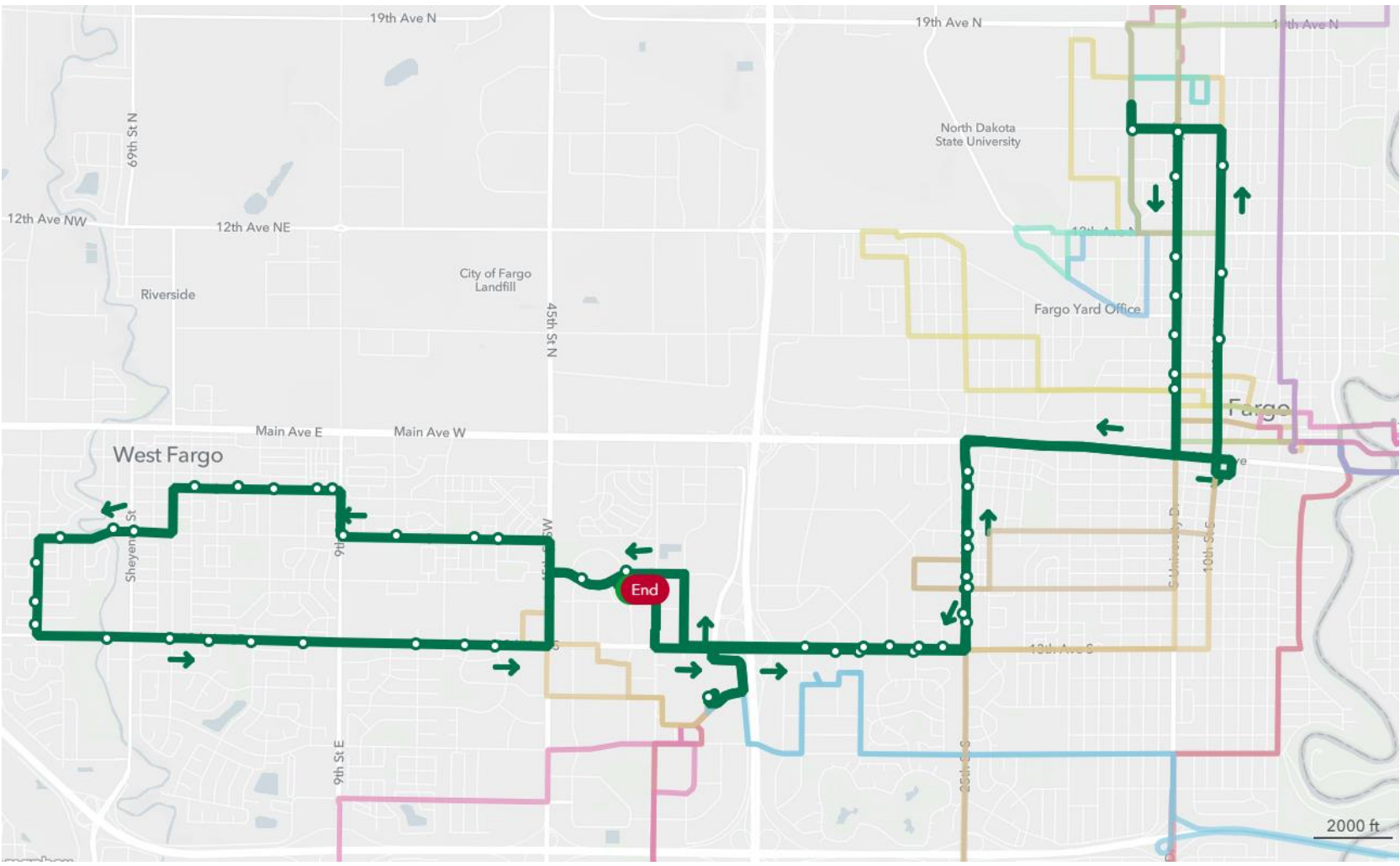
# Scenario B



# Scenario B – Routes 14 and 16



# Scenario B – Route 20



# Scenario C

- **This scenario is a complete redesign. It does include more frequent service on many routes and select Sunday service. Some elements are:**
  - Start of the development of a “grid” system of routes
  - Not every route would necessarily need to serve the GTC
  - Timed transfers would still be required in some places

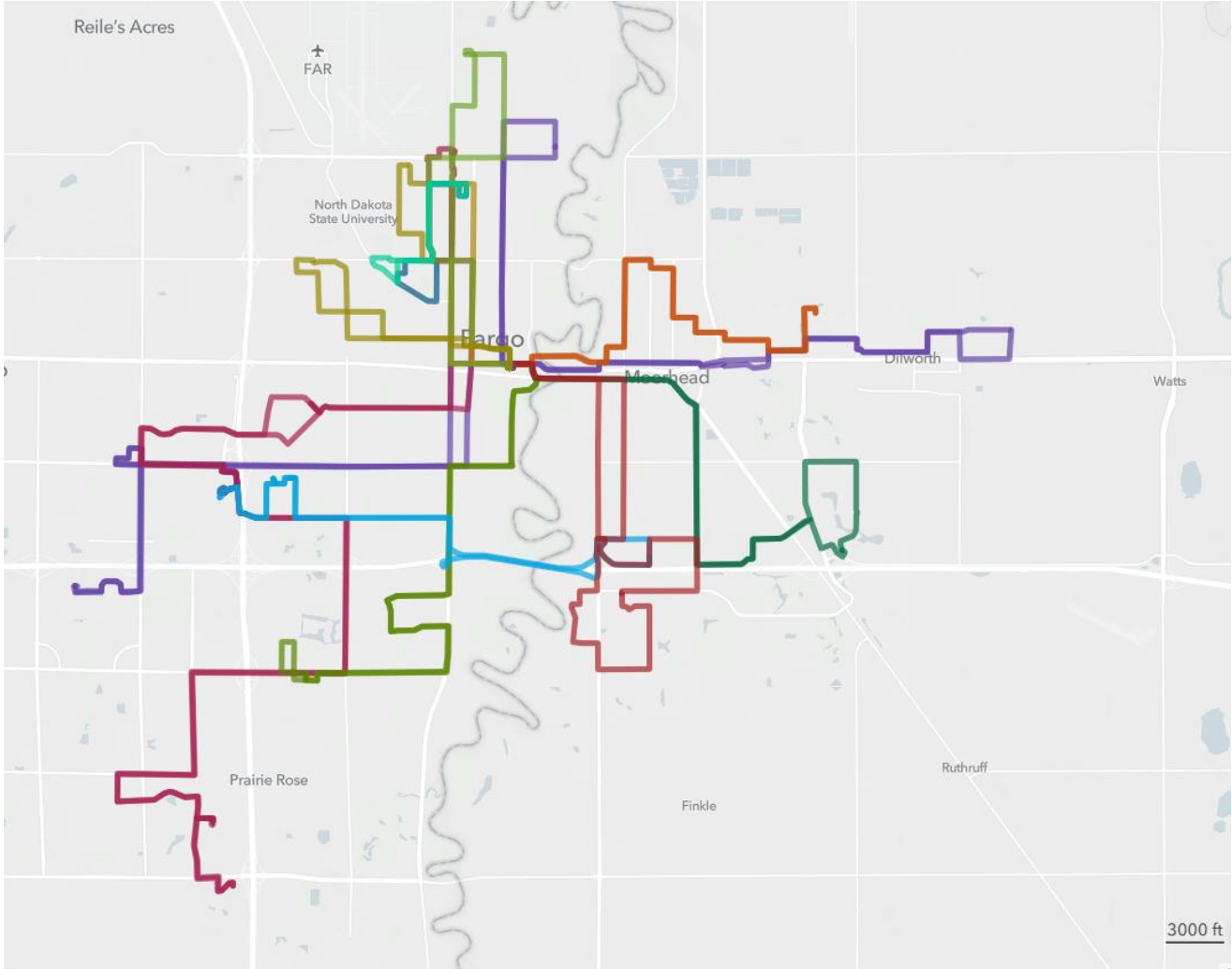
# Scenario C

## Additional Mobility On-Demand Services

- **These are additional “TapRide” service areas:**
  - “Far South” Fargo
  - South Moorhead
  - Dilworth

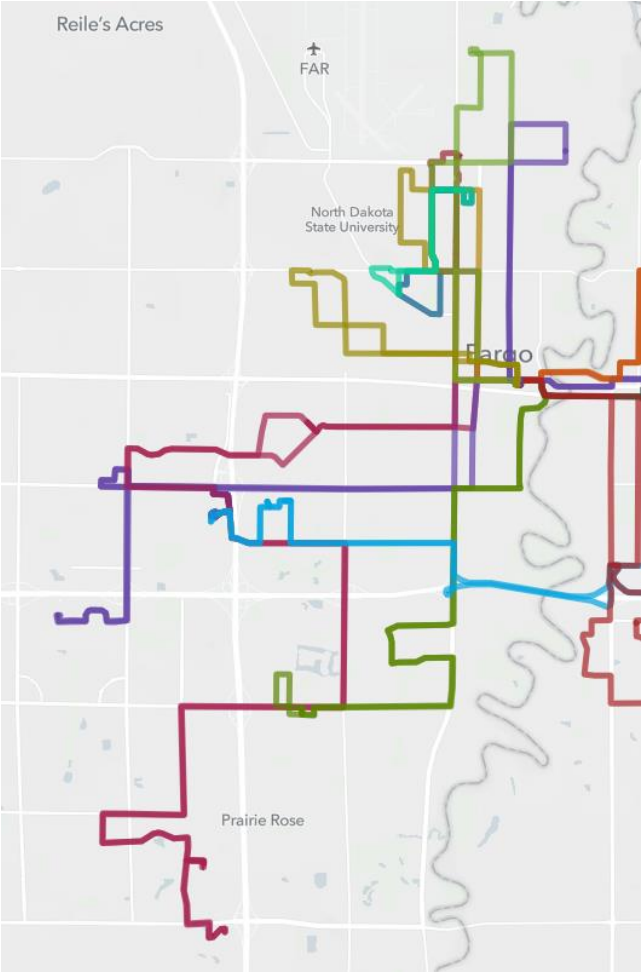


# Scenario C

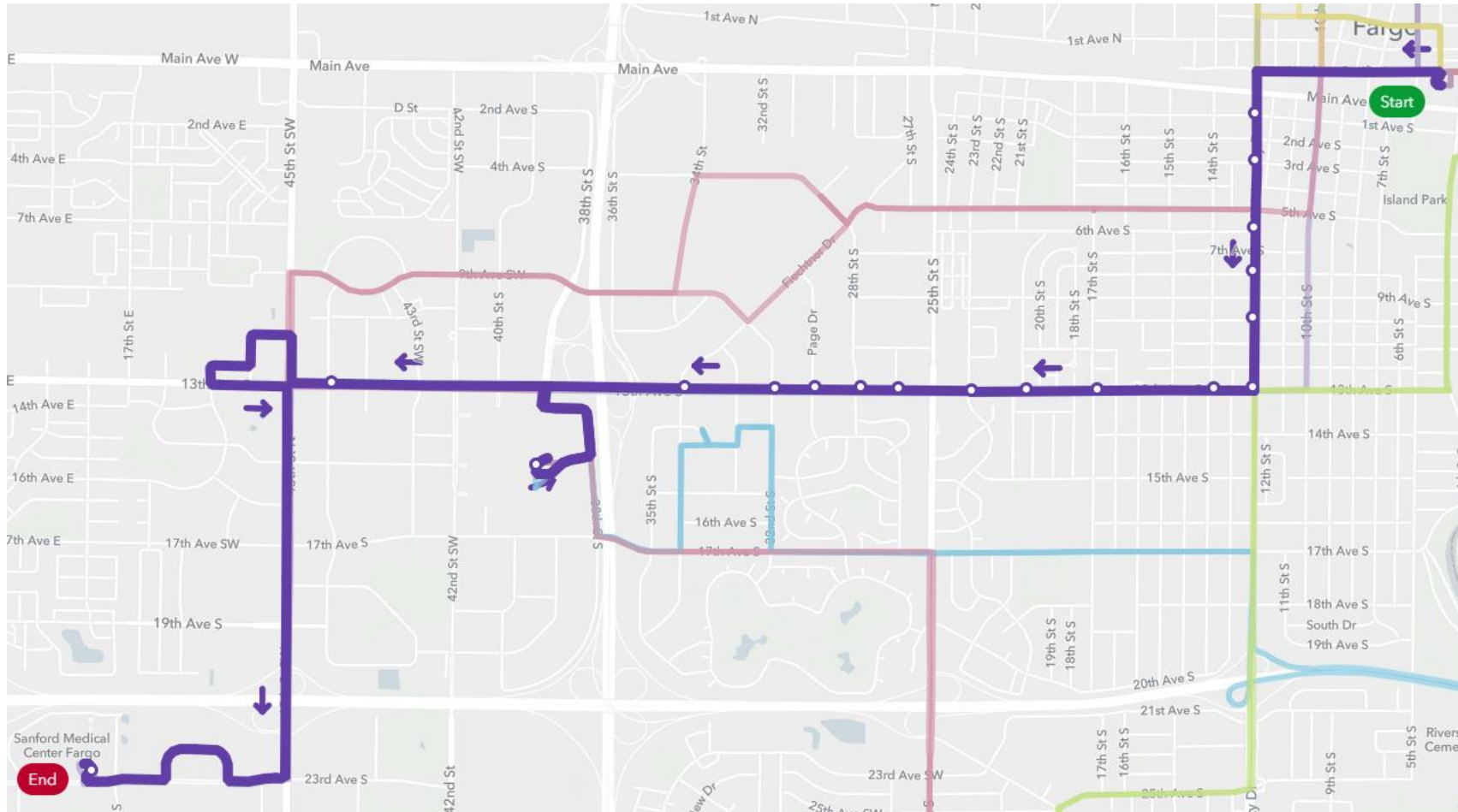




# Scenario C – Fargo Close-Up



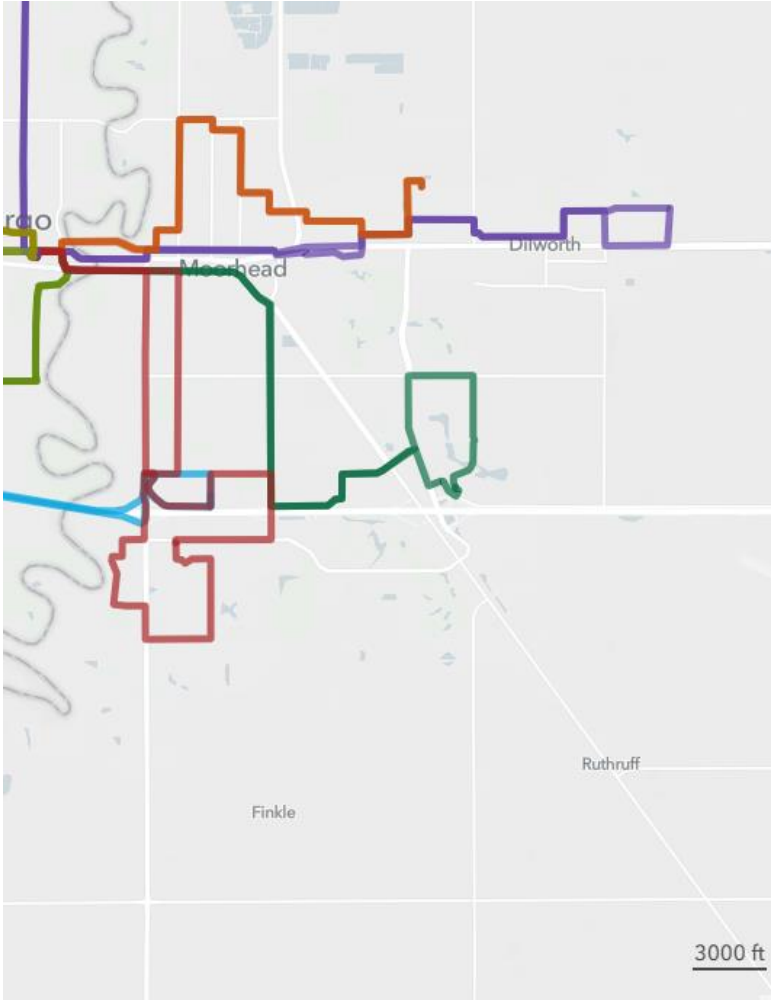
# Scenario C – Example of Fargo Modifications – “New” Route 15



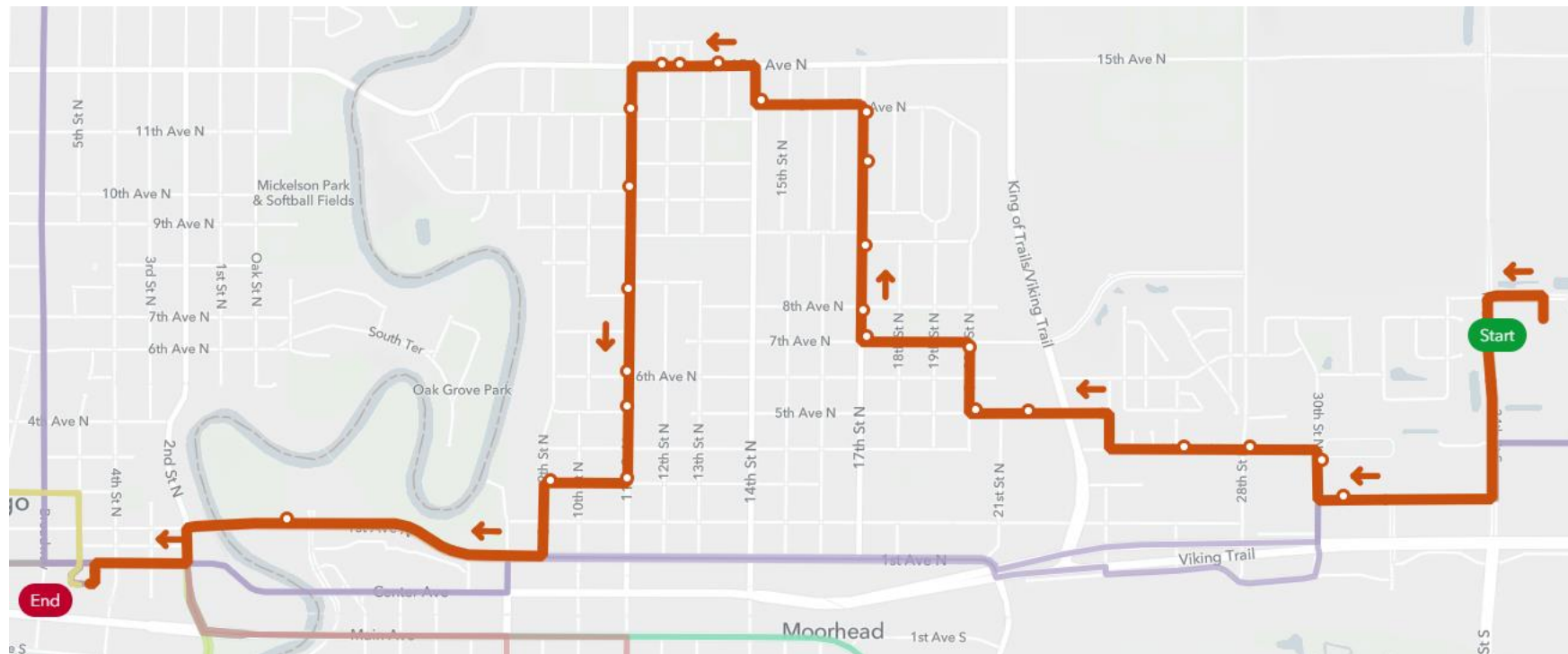
# Scenario C – Example of Fargo Modifications – “New” Route 19



# Scenario C – Moorhead Close-Up



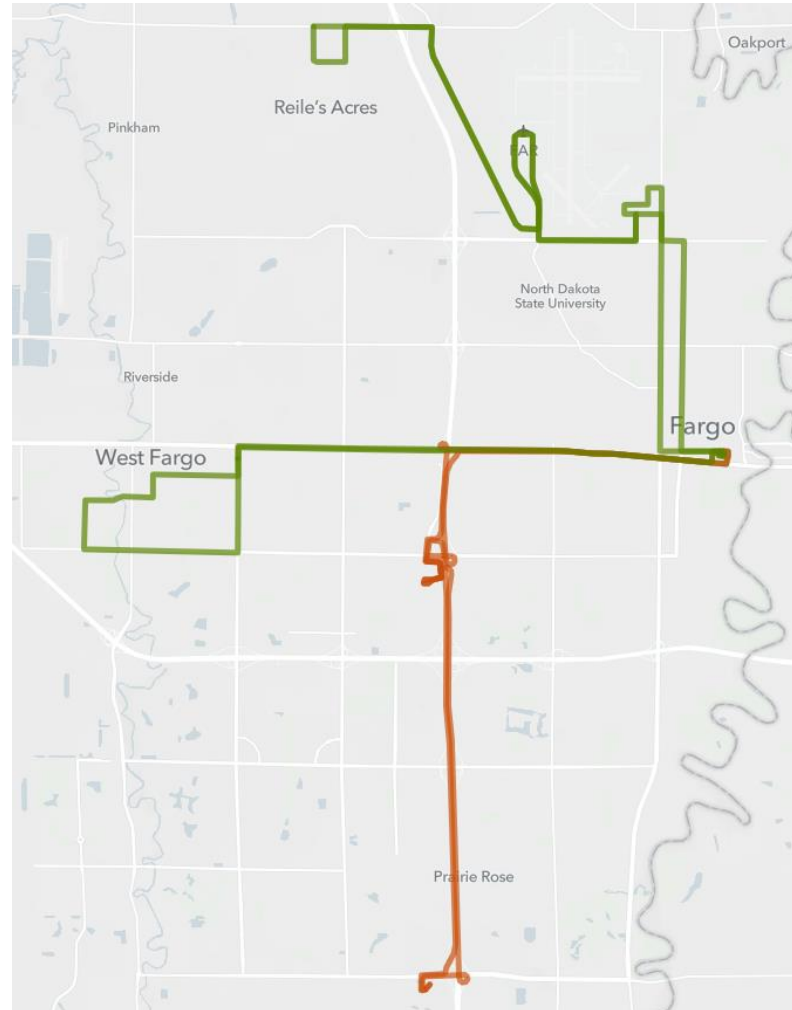
# Scenario C – Example of Moorhead Modifications – “New” Route 4



# “Overlay” Routes

- **Three overlay routes that extend service coverage and could be utilized in any scenario.**
  - Northwest Fargo Area
  - South Walmart Express
  - West Fargo/Main Avenue

# “Overlay” Routes





# Estimated Impacts (Subject to Revision)

		Current	Scenario A	Scenario B	Scenario C
<b>Fixed Route</b>	Routes	23	22	21	16
	Peak Buses	37	35	38	42
	Annual Hours	123,092	121,990	139,382	138,748
	Annual Miles	1,587,845	1,558,991	1,792,482	1,728,860
<b>Mobility On-Demand Service</b>	Routes	2	2	2	5
	Peak Buses	2	2	2	5
	Annual Hours	8,670	8,670	8,670	21,675
	Annual Miles	130,050	130,050	130,050	325,125
<b>Total</b>	Routes	25	24	23	21
	Peak Buses	39	37	40	47
	Annual Hours	131,762	130,660	148,052	160,423
	Annual Miles	1,717,895	1,689,041	1,922,532	2,053,985
<b>Difference</b>	Routes		(1)	(2)	(4)
	Peak Buses		(2)	1	8
	Annual Hours		(1,102)	16,290	28,661
	Annual Miles		(28,854)	204,637	336,090
<b>Percent Difference</b>	Routes	0.00%	-4.35%	-8.70%	-17.39%
	Peak Buses	0.00%	-5.41%	2.70%	21.62%
	Annual Hours	0.00%	-0.90%	13.23%	23.28%
	Annual Miles	0.00%	-1.82%	12.89%	21.17%





# Estimated Impacts – Overlay Services (Subject to Revision)

		NW Fargo	South Walmart Express	West Fargo Main Street
<b>Fixed Route</b>	Routes	1	1	1
	Peak Buses	1	2	1
	Annual Hours	3,787	4,352	4,316
	Annual Miles	80,659	95,705	70,950
<b>Total</b>	Routes	1	1	1
	Peak Buses	1	2	1
	Annual Hours	3,787	4,352	4,316
	Annual Miles	80,659	95,705	70,950



# Consolidated Human Services Transportation Plan (CHSTP)

# Task Update

- Emailed out questionnaire to 28 (regional) transportation providers
  - Nine returned questionnaires (as of 1/25)
- Needs Assessment Meeting (January 13)
  - Seven transportation provider representatives, plus staff
- Draft Report Meeting (TDB)
  - Confirm goals/objectives
  - Prioritize strategies

# Themes

- Since 2016:
  - MATBUS added paratransit on Sundays, and TapRide
  - New Sanford hospital
- COVID-19 response and lasting impacts
- Desire for more accessible curb-to-curb service. There are paratransit requests from areas too far from fixed route service.
- Need for travel training for people experiencing disabilities
- Coordination efforts in rural Minnesota through Region 4 RTCC
- No regular transit coordination meetings in the metro or in ND
- Vehicle purchasing and federal funding requirements

# Next Steps

# Next Steps

- Refine Service Planning Alternatives
  - Set up meeting with MATBUS staff
  - Schedule engagement for draft alternatives
- Consolidated Human Services Transportation Plan (CHSTP)
  - Draft the plan
  - Schedule provider meeting #2
- Bus Stop Analysis
  - Conduce field review

# Next Steps

- Next SRC Meeting: Early March

Action Items	Metro COG	SRF + AECOM	SRC
Distribute meeting slides and summary		X	
Promote project website through your networks	X	X	X
Send Doodle poll for next SRC meeting		X	
Deliver Preliminary Service Concepts/Finalize Draft Deliverables		X	