

Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Council of Governments

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You receive this newsletter because you are identified as person and/or agency who is considered important to the implementation of Metro COG projects and programs. If you wish to discontinue receiving this newsletter or you wish to begin receiving this newsletter electronically, please contact Nakhaly Swearingen at:

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Public Input Opportunity

2016 Metropolitan Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan

In February, Metro COG began work on the 2016 Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan. Metro COG completes a new bicycle and pedestrian plan every five years in association with its other programming activities. The most recent plan, which is still currently in effect, was completed in 2011. As part of Metro COG's efforts to accommodate all modes of transportation, Metro COG recognizes the need for active modes of transportation such as bicycle and pedestrian movements.

This year's plan will be completed in-house by Metro COG staff and is being guided by a study review committee consisting of members of the Metropolitan Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee. A series of public involvement opportunities are available the week of April 25th – 29th.

In addition, an online survey with a comment opportunity is available at www.surveymonkey.com/r/fmbp16. This survey will be open until May 23rd. We encourage all to take the survey as we value public input as a crucial component in successful planning.

Once public input is obtained, Metro COG will proceed in analyzing and incorporating the public comments and preferences into the plan. Metro COG is looking to have the plan complete by the end of 2016. For those who wish to receive updates on bicycle and pedestrian items, you can subscribe to Metro COG's Bicycle & Pedestrian Interested Persons list at by clicking on Metro COG email lists at the bottom right corner of Metro COG's website.

Metro COG is committed to ensuring all individuals regardless of race, color, sex, age, national origin, disability/handicap, sexual orientation, or income status have access to Metro COG's programs and services. Meeting facilities will be accessible to mobility impaired individuals. Metro COG will make a good faith effort to accommodate requests for translation services for meeting proceedings and related materials. Please contact Nakhaly Swearingen, Metro COG Executive Secretary at 701-232-3242 at least two days in advance of the meeting if any special accommodations are required for any member of the public to able to participate in the meeting.



PUBLIC INPUT OPPORTUNITY!

Look for this symbol

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2015 Fargo-Moorhead Metro Area-Wide Traffic Counts

During the Spring, Summer, and Fall of 2015 Metro COG collected traffic counts at 384 locations in and around the Fargo-Moorhead Area. The main purpose of the counts is for use in the Fargo-Moorhead travel demand model which Metro COG updates and analyzes every five years. For this purpose, area-wide counts are conducted every five years. The travel demand model shows where future traffic issues will arise so area officials can plan roadway improvements accordingly.

In addition to the 384 counts that Metro COG collected in 2015, the North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT) and Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) conducted counts at 550 and 44 locations respectively. These counts were coordinated with Metro COG so locations were not duplicated and a comprehensive network of roadways were counted. The counts provide data in terms of average number of vehicles per day on a section of roadway. Some locations also were setup to count trucks per day. Data was gathered over a 48-hour period and factors were applied to the counts to account for changes traffic patterns during weekends and summer months.

With the high growth in the Fargo-Moorhead area, traffic growth has followed. Areas of the community with rapid growth also saw rapid increases in traffic numbers. For example, the traffic count for Veterans Boulevard just south of I-94 increased from 14,550 vehicles a day in 2013 to 26,020 vehicles a day in 2015. That's nearly an 80% increase in just two years.

While traffic numbers mostly increased in the F-M area, some locations saw a decrease in vehicle counts. For example, both downtown Fargo and downtown Moorhead saw traffic decrease along some corridors. This could be due to many factors such as recent roadway revisions (one-way conversions), recent flood protection projects and possibly even increased use of other transportation modes. Regarding interstate traffic, both I-29 and I-94 have seen a steady increase in traffic numbers over the past years.

Metro COG is in the process of assembling a map which will show the count results at each location. Once complete, the map will be available to view on Metro COG's website (www.fmmetrocog.org). Currently the 2013 and 2010 count maps are available to view at this location. Metro COG hopes to have the 2015 map available in May.



13th Avenue South Reconstruction

13th Avenue South in from I-29 to 45th Street is one of the highest traveled roadways in the metro region, with many large retail shopping destinations. This section is currently being widened to a continuous six-lane facility in both directions. This will take place in multiple stages.

The first stage will be to take out the center medians. During this process one lane will be closed in either direction, leaving the two outside lanes for eastbound and westbound traffic. The second and third stages of the project will be to add a lane to north and south side of the street. During this time traffic will be moved to one side of the street where traffic will be head-to-head.

Businesses will be maintained throughout the project, however there will be temporary intersection closures occurring throughout the project. The project is scheduled to run from April to October of 2016. During this time speeds will be reduced 25 mph throughout the entirety of the construction zone. It is encouraged that motorist use caution, be patient, and if necessary, find alternate routes to their final destination.

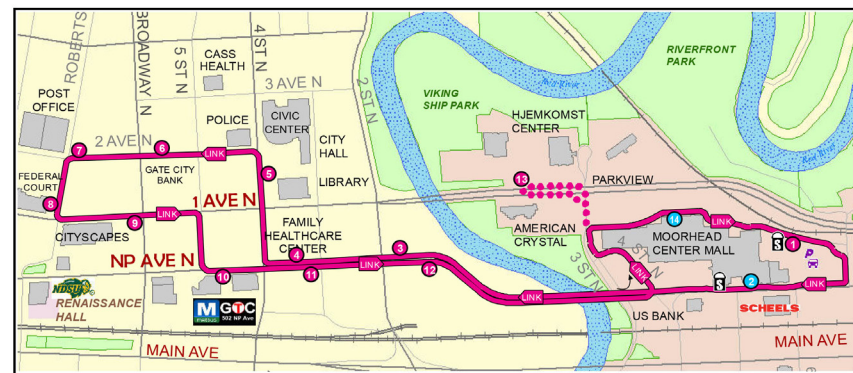
More information about this project can be found at www.13thavefargo.com

2nd Street North Flood Control Project

The construction of the floodwall and subsequent realignment of Second Street North in Downtown Fargo is currently underway. Last year, Second Street was closed between First and Third Avenues to move a sanitary sewer lift station in preparation for the street realignment.

Currently the First Avenue bridge is closed in Moorhead to Third Street North in Fargo. Center/NP Avenue and Main Avenue have been designated as detour routes. The MATBUS LinkFM route will utilize Center/NP Ave to cross between Moorhead and Fargo. The image below details the new detour route of LinkFM.

This construction will last until throughout the construction season and hopefully will reopen in the fall of 2016. There may be additional closures associated with the construction of the new Fargo City Hall.



I-94/Hwy 75 Interchange Reconstruction (cont.)

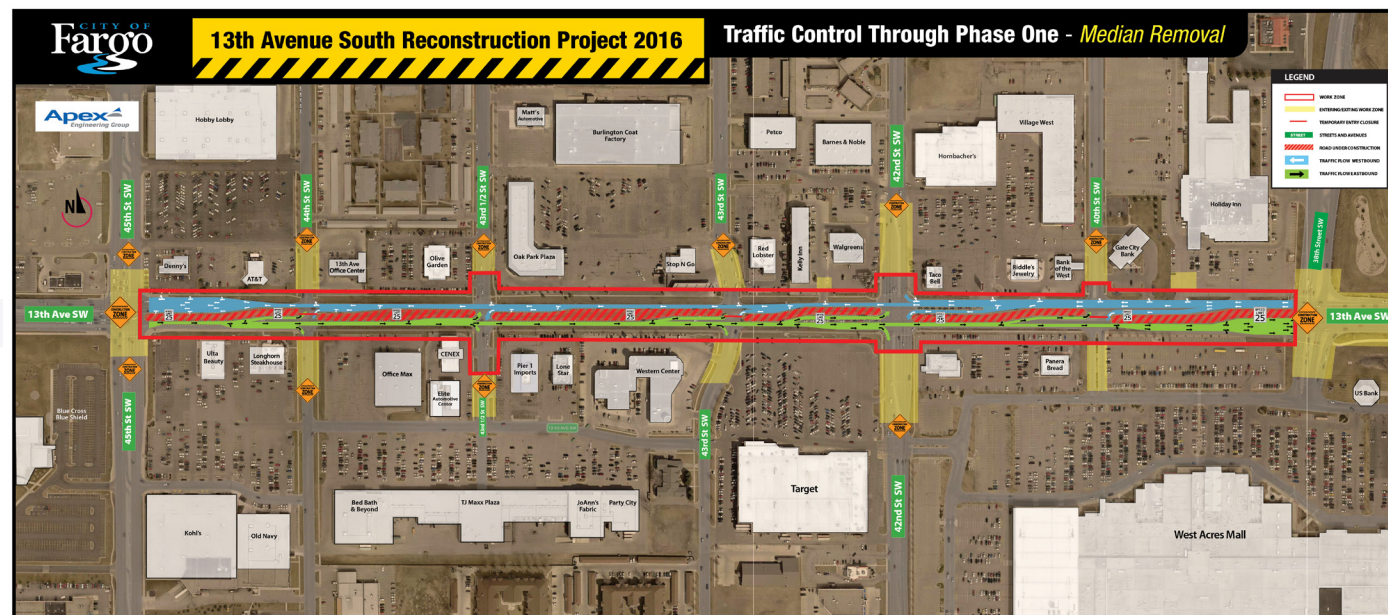
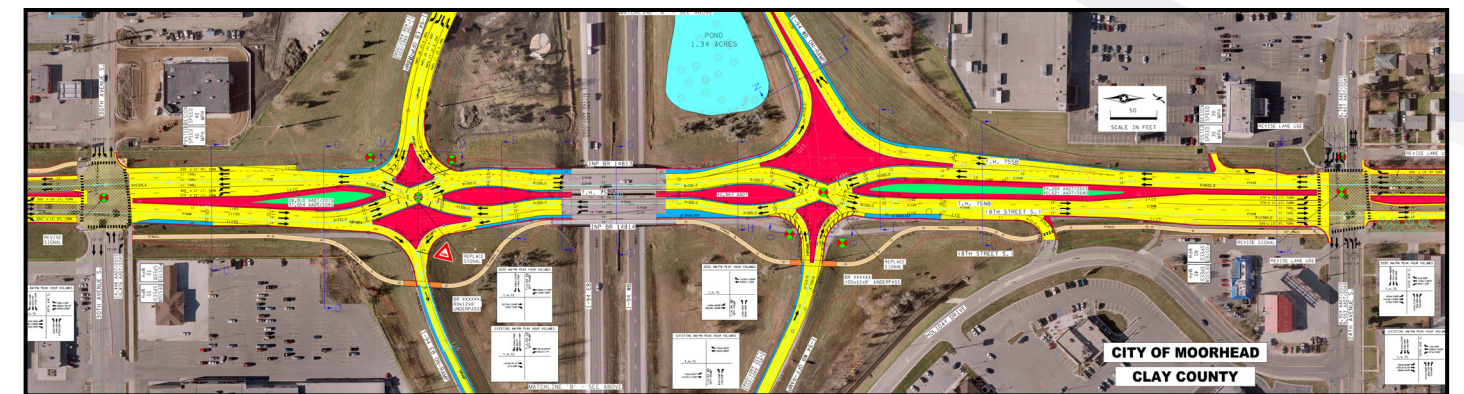
MnDOT has selected the Diverging Diamond Interchange (DDI) as its preferred alternative for the new I-94 and Hwy 75/8th Street interchange. In a DDI, traffic crisscrosses at either end of the bridge, so instead of making hard left turns, drivers veer to the left for access. It was determined that the DDI best addressed the project purpose and need. These interchanges:

- Cut overall traffic delays by up to 60 percent
- Improve safety by eliminating standard intersection geometrics and conflict points
- Provide better traffic operations and provide excess capacity 20 years into the future

Since 2009 approximately 60 DDIs have been built in the United States, in most cases replacing existing interchanges similar to the one in Moorhead. This will be the fourth DDI project in Minnesota, with others in Arden Hills, Elk Run, and St. Cloud/Sartell.



For more information, including a simulation of projected 2035 traffic volumes flowing through the DDI, please visit www.dot.state.mn.us/d4/projects/moorhead/



I-94/Hwy 75 Interchange Reconstruction

The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) has begun preparations to reconstruct the interchange at I-94 and Hwy 75/8th Street. In addition, auxiliary lanes (additional lanes in each direction) will be added to I-94 between Hwy 75 and 20th Street. This project will be designed to improve mobility and safety through the interchange and reduce delays on both

Hwy 75 and I-94. The project will be constructed in four major stages over the 2016 construction season. Some minor cleanup may be completed in 2017. From early June to mid- to late-August, Hwy 75/8th Street traffic will detour to 40th Avenue South, 20th Street South and 12th Avenue South. The 34th Street interchange will be used for some traffic movements.

2016-2020 Transit Development Plan Update

Work to update the Fargo-Moorhead transit development plan to cover the period through 2020 is entering the final stages. Public meetings were held in February 2016 to provide an overview of the range of possible changes/modifications to the current fixed route network. Since that time, the list of 20-plus ideas have been under review by MATBUS, FM Metro COG and representatives from the consulting team.

Through the individual concept review process, the team has discussed the advantages and disadvantages of each concept and for those that have the potential to address a gap in the network, support economic growth in the community, result in ridership/use that would justify using public funds to provide have been organized into a preliminary draft plan that is being reviewed and discussed with the Coordinated Transit Board.

Based on comments and recommendations by the Transit Board, the final round of public information meetings will be scheduled for May 2016. At these meetings in Moorhead, Fargo and West Fargo, recommendations for changes to the MATBUS fixed routes and paratransit service will be available for comment.

Recommendations are being organized into two main groups:

- Actions to better allocate existing resources: Early in the plan update the team reviewed the performance of each route in the system segment by segment. Using the results of the detailed assessment, route modifications that retain productive segments and reassign very poor operating segments were developed.
- New/Expanded service if more funding can be identified: Within the current system there is a limited ability to find efficiency savings that could provide funding to expand service. Thus, if new service is desired to support new development areas, to extend hours, or Sundays to the schedule, more funding is needed annually for operations and for vehicles. Thus, ideas falling in this category also bring with them the need to gain support for additional transit funding.

To view information presented at the public input meetings in February, please visit the website for Metro COG or the website for MATBUS.