

June/July Online Survey Summary and Results

From June 21st to July 24th, 2023, an online survey was available at FargoGrowthPlan.org as part of an online open house and completed by 103 individuals. This month-long online activity was a complement to two in-person open houses that took place on June 20th and 21st at the Carlson Library and Sky Commons.



An online survey was made available for those who weren't able to attend the in-person open houses. It was a mirrored version of the in-person open houses.

The results of the online survey are summarized on the following pages. The questions on the survey mirrored content and questions presented at the in-person open houses, which are summarized separately.

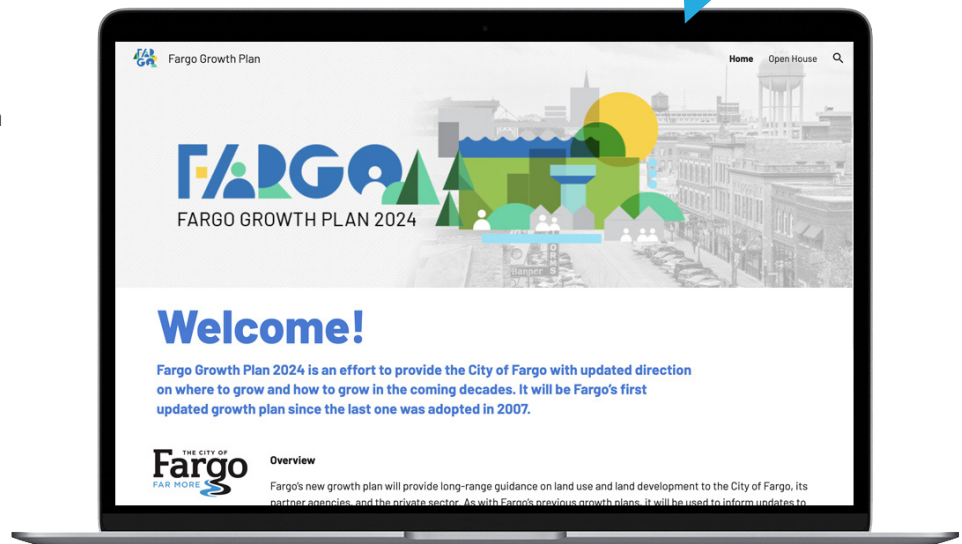
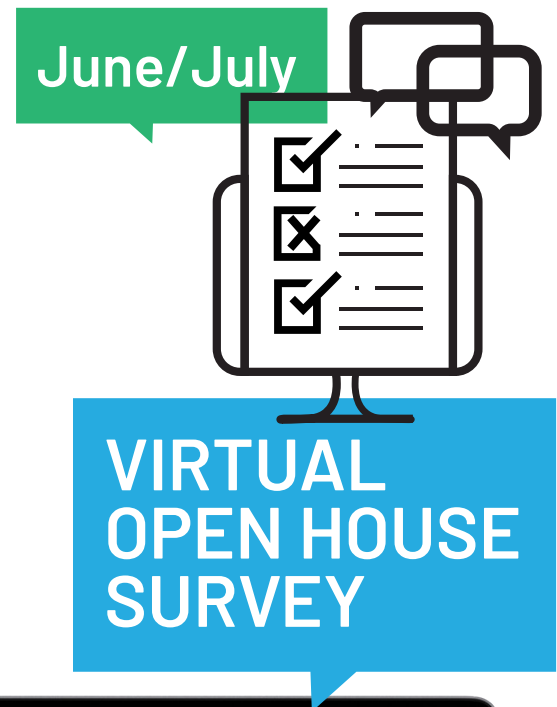
Anyone who visited FargoGrowthPlan.org between June 20th and July 24th was able to review online open house content and take the survey. Based on self-reported information from the 103 individuals who completed the survey, the following general information about the participants was gleaned:

- **Most live in Fargo's southern end or in one of the core neighborhoods.**

32% of survey takers reported living in one of Fargo's core neighborhoods, and 43% reported living south of 1st Avenue North and beyond the core. 2% live downtown, 3% live in the city north of the core, and the remaining 20% or so live outside of Fargo (especially in West Fargo or elsewhere in the region).

- **Participants tended to be younger adults.**

36% of survey takers were between the ages of 35 and 44, 30% were between 25 and 34, and 6% were 24 or younger, which means that 72% of all survey takers were younger than 45. The other 28% were over 45, with 11% of respondents being older than 55.



Responses to Survey Questions

How has Fargo been growing?

From your vantage point and experience in Fargo, how do you think Fargo has been growing?

Satisfied with current course

Fargo has been dealing with growth about as smoothly as might be expected, and I think the results are mostly positive. Fargo is doing well on its current course and it should be maintained.

11%

Some course corrections needed

While growth has brought some positive changes to the community, I have concerns about how Fargo has been growing and the impacts of growth on aspects of life here. We need to make some changes.

67%

Major course correction needed

I don't like how Fargo has been growing and the impact that growth has been having on the community. Major changes are needed.

22%

How should Fargo grow?

Looking to the future, what issues do you think need to be prioritized and receive special attention during the growth planning process (please select up to three):

Housing affordability

16.10%

Recreation and parks

15.75%

Multi-modal transportation systems (bikes, pedestrians, transit)

13.70%

Good roads and highways

11.30%

Investment in core neighborhoods

9.59%

Reliable and sustainable utility systems

9.25%

Expansion of housing supply

7.53%

Farmland preservation

6.16%

Other

4.45%

Downtown development

3.77%

Job creation

2.40%

When I think about

I get excited about Fargo's future.

A thriving downtown

the future downtown development and the upcoming projects (Ex. the FMCT Theatre, parking ramp, and multi-commercial building) that is replacing an old, dirty parking lot that is an eyesore

-influx of more diverse people with different backgrounds -new leadership on the city commission -the revamping of publicly accessible recreation areas that don't cost anything

I think about what the town could be. It could be a place where people go for fun and shopping. We are losing all of our big stores where you need to go for basic things. Things that I want to go get now, are all things I need to order online. pillows, pillow cases, comforters, basic home needs... there is no place left in Fargo to get some of these things.

The diversion

Island Park swimming pool. Courts Plus, Midtown Square, getting rid of the houses behind Duane's Pizza

The blank slate of new land available for development south of town

Being entirely honest, not an awful lot comes to mind. I feel like there have been some things in the past that have interested me but I'm failing to recall. I'm not entirely fond of this region as a whole, Fargo is an alright city in just kind of a crappy spot on the wrong side of a border. I'd be a lot more fond of it if it was on the Minnesota side. I honestly don't even know what to suggest that would make me excited to live here. I like hills and trees. Those aren't things that can be changed. Nice little crafty stores and breweries and cultural restaurants and everything are neat but they don't really make me want to live somewhere, you feel?

Investment into University Dr and providing opportunities for businesses to grow and redevelopment in a previously neglected area. The diversion and the potential expansion of parks that will come with it. Places like Brewhalla and the potential community centers similar to it, and the creative places that may come of it.

community

Urban infill, zoning deregulations and walkable neighborhoods

The influx of new people, ideas, and businesses from regions across the world

The innovation and potential for new opportunities within the startup space and small businesses as well as adding museums to the area

the Core Neighborhood Plan and the development of the areas just outside of downtown

infill opportunities in downtown and adjacent to downtown

the development of downtown and its' core areas

What the diversion getting built means for mitigating risk for companies hesitant to invest in Fargo.

Downtown Fargo

Our unprecedented growth, both in population and economic booms

The new waterpark for families

I like living in Fargo. I always say it's big enough where there is plenty to do but not too big where the commute to work is an hour. I think the city is doing well by investing in infrastructure and revitalizing areas like downtown has been over the past 10 years.

The area's extreme growth curve

the future of downtown

local colleges

the growth of Downtown

I am depressed about how I see Fargo's future. I am not inspired. Fargo struggles with a number of inequalities and awarenesses to resolve the larger challenges led by the state of ND. Fargo seems to be merely lip-service as a haven for LGBTQ+, Sustainability and Resiliency issues, decency and care for its neighbors. The city of Fargo is not a safe place to raise my family and we are drifting away from what seemed exciting 10-20 years ago.

a new mayor

Schools

The economy

re-thinking underutilized land within city boundaries

When I think about

I get excited about Fargo's future.

the potential for Fargo and the region to leverage the \$3 Billion in public investment into the Diversion and flood protection. Currently, the Diversion Authority lacks vision for what the recreational areas associated with the project could do for the local economy and health of the community. When you look at Army Corps flood and river projects in big cities, they always highlight the amazing parks, trails, etc that go along the route of the project. If Fargo builds the Diversion and the Recreation isn't immediately available, there is a risk that the daily benefits are lost. This is especially true as the City looks to continue to fund infrastructure through sales tax and asks the public to vote - without a daily benefit like a recreational area.

Neighborhood revitalization/reinvestment

healthy children

The potential to have input

the diversion

Entertainment options

Ample Job opportunities. Fargo has many job opportunities which should lend itself to having an extremely low homeless population.

I like the new things coming to town, businesses, etc. There are many things to do/see and it's quite a change from when I first moved here.

How vibrant downtown Fargo has become

New, local, creative small businesses

an interstate exit further south

More green space and bike paths

expanded services and opportunities

Opportunities for Small Local Businesses and the increased recognition and appreciation of diversity

Job and economic stability

The interchange on 76th Ave south

Less apartments

More and different job opportunities

The new sports complex in South Fargo

Options and opportunity

Beautiful outdoor spaces that get people active and enjoying time with family and friends.

Preservation of existing farmlands, development in current retail areas.

growth

Nothing- corners are being cut to keep up with growth

Keeping the city limits where they are

A growing economy

Forward progress

New entertainment and social events

Job opportunities

Growth

Population growth

Having new shopping and restaurants nearby

The diversion

Republican legislature at state level

Solid infrastructure and job growth

New businesses, more indoor recreation

New businesses

more parks, more greenspace, more house space (between houses)

the possibility of buses running on Sunday

Downtown

the comprehensive flood protection being implemented

new and diverse population growth

the diversity of communities in the area

my child's opportunities

When I think about

I get excited about Fargo's future.

The possibility of the city commission understanding what how big the city is, and that downtown and the core neighborhoods are not where majority of the city lives /works.

Restaurants and local food

the opportunities related to job expansion and recreation/parks and new entertainment options. I also get excited when I see that we are looking into Hemp to build homes and being more conscious of our environmental impact is huge.

Downtown in and older corridor redevelopment projects

the creativity of young people in the metro

flood protection

Activities and family-centered locations for parents and families. Ex) science museum, splash pads, water parks, winter tubing parks, community events like sampling food, drinks, networking and socializing

Parks Nature Safe neighborhoods

The population growing

Investing in north Fargo

Better options for shopping so we aren't behind the times

To be honest, not much right now. We moved here two years ago and in some ways it was a mistake. Not as safe as I expected.

New stores taking up a run down area

the family-friendly community enhancements

Diversity

downtown

Fargo continuing to grow and being able to bring in bigger name businesses

When I worry about Fargo's future, I mostly worry about

Increased crime.

the costs from specials, property tax increases, prioritizing all the new developments and not providing much needed upgrades to the core neighborhoods.

-racism embedded in many people's perspectives -the unaffordability of housing in FM -the gentrification of core neighborhoods

Safety and creeps. One of the biggest reasons I won't come to town to do my shopping. If my husband isn't able to come with me, I won't go alone.

untethered growth in the current patterns we're seeing. It's unsustainable. Benefits few. Encourages placeless-ness. Our newest neighborhoods look like suburbia everywhere, USA.

drug dealers, not enough mental health professionals, behavior caused by alcohol problems

how all the expansion in the city requires more and more roads and infrastructure extension and that the maintenance costs will become an undue burden

Crime

A continuing decline in investment both in public transportation despite a huge and growing urban sprawl that has nearly gotten out of control and made commuting the city without a car nearly impossible, along with what seems to be a state government that actively hates the city and what it stands for. I despise the state of North Dakota. Y'all built this city on the wrong side of the river.

Right wing extremist representatives deteriorating our community by driving away young professionals, and creatives.

crime

Car centric development and suburban sprawl

Whether or not the city can, or will want, to eventually rival other major metropolitan areas in the Midwest, both as a place to live and as a place to visit.

The safety in the downtown core as it grows and maintaining its Fargo authenticity. Also workforce shortages.

growing the wealth gap by not allowing people to live without personal vehicles (no job, no necessities, no schools within walking/biking distance)

replacement costs of the immense amount of infrastructure built over the past couple of decades. Either infrastructure will deteriorate at a pace that can't be fixed or taxes will have to jump up greatly.

its rapid sprawl outwards making the city feel more suburban than urban.

Development without good long term planning

The lack of neighborhood and architectural diversity of the new housing developments of South Fargo

existing living conditions getting worse and worse. People are trapped in low-quality, predatory rentals. Trailer home parks are being run into the ground by management, and your average person can never hope to save up enough money to purchase their own property. I see neighborhoods being eaten away as landlords purchase residential homes and let them deteriorate, failing to provide care and upkeep. I worry about a community plagued by institutional poverty, with workers trapped in a cycle and one injury or disaster away from ruin. I worry about growing old here and knowing that, with any slip or change, I will lose my own house and be trapped paying rent to a company that lets my apartment fall apart around me.

More people and Fargo demolishing previous homes and businesses just to put up large apartments with expensive shops.

Crime and housing. Crime comes with any big city, it's just and keeping on top of it. I'm mostly worried about housing and people being forced to rent because they cannot afford a home. Then the rent becomes outrageous and you are forced to make some tough decisions with your money.

sustainability and planning for a city worth living in

Crime

taxes

Sprawl - maintenance in 30 years when all the roads fail and there are not adequate resources to fix them.

how NDSU's contraction will impact area housing stock, population growth, and the ability to attract and retain medical professionals. how much downtown has gentrified and how the RDO building has resulted in the loss of the character I loved when I moved here 9 years ago

I'm not worried so much as feeling a lot of stress of an inept set of leaders in the Fargo staff who are looking for inspiration and successes from its citizens and not clearly articulating what it is actually doing to improve its communities.

When I worry about Fargo's future, I mostly worry about

The ability to afford to buy a home

city assessors running property values too high in order for the city to bring in more property taxes

Crime

Crime

Too many apartments

endless and unsustainable sprawl

The lack of Vision and big ideas. Fargo has been an incredible community when it comes to sustainability and providing big ideas for drought and flood projects. What we need are big ideas to put us on the map. Like the Diversion recreational area. The tourist and workforce recruitment potential is incredible, but this won't get done without vision and leadership.

Funding of public services, e.g. public schools

the cost of living

The oversight authorities only being interested in potential financial gains from "stakeholders" and not being concerned with the well-being of the public, which also included themselves and their families.

running out of land

Lack of density

Over abundance of renter occupied housing. Absentee landlords and rental occupied housing tend to be heavy users of city services and put a strain on the city.

We are losing the smaller community feeling and turning into a mini-Minneapolis. I worry about the element of people being recruited to move here and the changing culture. It is becoming a city with a lot of crime, low paying wages, lots of residentially challenged people, horrible roads, etc.

Sprawl and the solvency of our city based on our growth pattern

Fargo becoming an inner city with inner city politics and problems.

Crime

Too-rapid Growth leading to lack of community feeling

future crime due to the way developers are planning neighborhoods.

Unhealthy crowding

the city outpacing the current infrastructure

The city spending money on things that don't matter and don't directly affect the people. The city should focus its budget more on things that directly help Fargo's residents, which includes increasing public library funding so they can create more programs, additional funding for the Downtown engagement center and helping the individuals who benefit from it to find housing, so they aren't on the street, creating jobs so individuals don't have to rely on government institutions as much for aid.

The influx of additional people

High taxes

Lack of vision Strip malls, apartments, and homes with tiny lots

How growth is too fast in the south and roads and schools can't keep up

Funding for our schools and maintaining teaching staff

overcrowding

The over population of people from other countries that are getting the giant share of our cities resources that even our own citizens are struggling to get. Not that it is their fault but it appears not much forethought has gone into the idea that if we keep bringing in people with so many needs, our resources are stressed and then we start to see issues of poverty, crime, etc that is not good for anyone in our community.

Main artery roads too close to residential homes or through them, and apartment complexes or retail in residential neighborhoods.

the cost to build and maintain infrastructure

My child- his schools, the parks and what would make him want to stay here. The schools are overpopulated. The parks are not kept up in South Fargo.

The loss of farmland, the fabulous views, loss of that North Dakota vibe.

Too many apartments being built

Not considering adding larger parks

The number of rental apartments and townhouses popping up everywhere. Everytime you see open land, it's about at 85% chance two years later that's filled with apartments or townhomes

When I worry about Fargo's future, I mostly worry about

Education! Our school system is greatly affected by the growth patterns in Fargo and the student:teacher ratio varies greatly between some N. Fargo schools & the southern most schools. We need to focus some efforts on revitalizing the existing homes and making neighborhoods more "modernized" to attract people. It was more cost effective for me to build a Cracker Jack house with neighbors close enough to touch, than to try to find a character home in an existing neighborhood and fix it up.

Lack of investment in certain neighborhoods leading to high rates of crime

Mass transit and winter activities

Traffic, crime

The liberals ruining it

school boards

The focus being put on social issues and diversity programs

Too many houses squished in

Traffic/road accessibility

crime

Rents that only the richest people can afford. And buying a house, forget it.

Expansive suburban sprawl

increasing crime and deterioration of core neighborhoods

the city becoming too expensive for most families to buy and house and thrive

lack of housing and increasing prevalence of drug use

housing costs

How out of touch and lack of understanding our city government has of the city. Even in this survey, you talk about core neighborhoods. Yes they are important, but should not be a focus. We have huge growth south and the city government doesn't understand the impact

Sustainability and unrestricted growth

affordable housing, gentrification in core neighborhoods and outwards, and not having a walkable or bikeable city. I also worry about access to basic needs and making sure our most vulnerable populations have transportation to get to these basic needs. I also worry that we are letting developers and bankers make decisions in these neighborhoods to make a profit than to actually help our communities. We don't need anymore highend expensive apartments. We need homes that folks can buy or rent to buy and we need multi-family units. No more buildings with shops and apartments.

ensuring neighborhoods are strong and healthy with amenities that suit a diverse population's evolving needs to create a strong sense of place that draws people to Fargo.

growing hatred of minorities and LGBTQIA+ community, impacts of climate change, lack of communication about what citizens need to know about from City Hall (why isn't there a City Snapshot anymore??? That was so helpful!), growing homeless population, decreasing civility in public life —yes public urination by drunk frat boys & homeless, but also racial epithets & gay slurs shouted at colleagues by stone cold sober tech bros & businessmen when colleagues are just trying to get lunch downtown.

Too many tax breaks and special treatment of rules to the well connected and well organized special interest groups. Easy persuasion when they only need 3 commissioners to get their way.

Overcrowding, limited resources, limited activities, sustainability

Crime Drugs Lack of green space

The resistance from people who want Fargo to stay small!

Lack of investing in north Fargo and only improving south Fargo

Destroying the ecosystem, pollution, letting older neighborhoods fall apart

The current trajectory of crime, litter, antisocial behavior.

The living costs for the poor or new incomes who just got out of high school/college.

Childcare sustainability and affordable housing challenges facing working families

Over development and destruction of nature and open prairies and agricultural land.

crime

Housing

crime rates rising, habitat loss