

# MEMO

To: City of Fargo, Planning Department

From: Lisa Wise Consulting, Inc. (LWC)

Date: 11/22/2019

Subject: Fargo LDC Diagnostic- November 5, 2019 Planning Commission Workshop Summary

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## Introduction

As part of the City of Fargo's Land Development Code (LDC) Diagnostic project, The LWC-led consulting team (including SRF Consulting Group, Inc.) met with the City Planning Commission on November 5, 2019 to introduce the LDC Diagnostic project, discuss the commissioners' experience working with the existing LDC, and opportunities to improve the LDC standards and procedures. LWC provided an overview of the project and timeline to set the context before opening up the work session to discussion with the Planning Commission. Below summarizes key Planning Commission feedback, it is not exhaustive.

## Common Themes

1. **Process & Administration.** The Planning Commission would like to see a more streamlined and efficient approval process for new applications that does not require numerous meetings for each project. Need clear and objective approval criteria.
2. **Predictable Development.** The LDC should yield predictability in terms of how new developments will look and fit in within the existing neighborhood context. Currently, there are few guarantees in form and design of new projects. Design guidelines should be strictly adhered to rather than ignored.
3. **Need for Community-Driven Planning.** There is a concern with "developer-driven planning", a lack of adherence to Go2030 walkability development goals, and the need to plan for growth appropriately with respect to neighborhoods and flood areas.
4. **Future Development Types.** While the City is looking for more density, the Commission would like more data on housing-type needs, particularly apartments.
5. **Focus on Transition Areas/Neighborhoods.** There is a need to address development and growth in transitional neighborhoods, such as areas adjacent to NDSU and downtown, where scale and compatibility are more of a concern.

## City of Fargo Land Development Code Audit Planning Commission Questions

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- 1) What is your **primary goal** for an improved LDC?
- 2) What is **effective** in the existing LDC, and should not change?
- 3) What is **ineffective** in the existing LDC, and should change?
- 4) Do the physical development standards promote appropriate and/or desired development in Fargo?
- 5) Are the **use regulations** effective in keeping out undesirable uses, but also letting in desired ones?
- 6) How well do the **administrative procedures** work? Are there types of projects or decisions that require a Planning Commission hearing that should be approved at the Staff level?
- 7) What other **questions or comments** do you have about the project and/or the process?