



JANUARY 2021

WASHINGTON

Neighborhood Implementation Brief

Welcome to the
WASHINGTON
— NEIGHBORHOOD —

City of Fargo



CORE NEIGHBORHOODS MASTER PLAN

THE CITY OF
Fargo
FAR MORE

Prepared by czbLLC

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NEIGHBORHOOD IMPLEMENTATION BRIEF

WASHINGTON

What are Washington's strongest assets? Its most important trends? The vision that residents have for its future? The characteristics that will influence how the Core Neighborhoods Toolkit is implemented at the local level?

This Implementation Brief provides answers and guidance to these and other questions based on community feedback and neighborhood analysis from the 2020 core neighborhoods planning process.

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Assets to Build Upon

A range of assets in the Washington neighborhood were identified during the planning process by asking the following:

What is **working well** in the neighborhood today?

What are the neighborhood's **top selling points** to potential residents?

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These assets represent strengths to preserve and to build a vision for the future around.

- Percy Godwin (Elephant) Park and tree canopy
- Washington Elementary, Ben Franklin Middle, and North High
- Walkability and good transit service
- Diverse housing types and an increasingly diverse population
- Visible signs of home investment
- Great location and presence of convenient commercial centers
- El Zagal Shrine
- Peaceful and quiet
- Alleys



Issues to Address

Issues or problems to address in Washington were identified during the planning process by asking the following:

What is **not working well** in the neighborhood today?

What are the neighborhood's **turn-offs** to potential residents?

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These issues should be addressed to reinforce the neighborhood's assets and promote the quality of life of existing and future residents.

- Some homes in disrepair; older owners unable to make repairs
- Incompatible design or density of recent infill development
- Tree trimming poorly done by utilities
- Small, older homes that are less marketable and costly to maintain
- Commercial vacancies
- Poor upkeep of some alleys and streets



WASHINGTON NEIGHBORHOOD

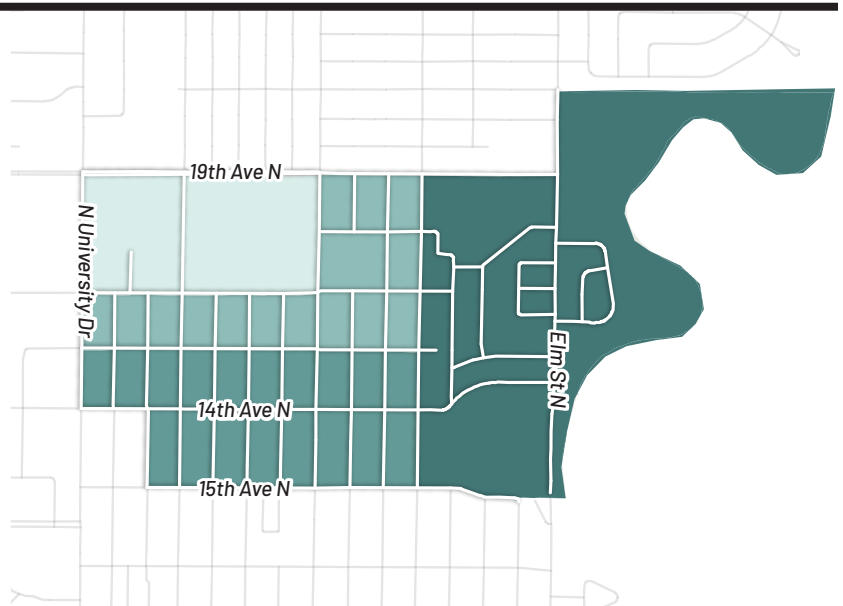
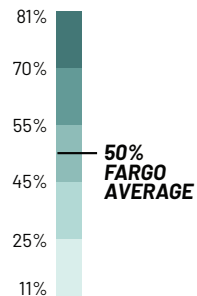
Conditions and Trends

A neighborhood of choice for families with kids

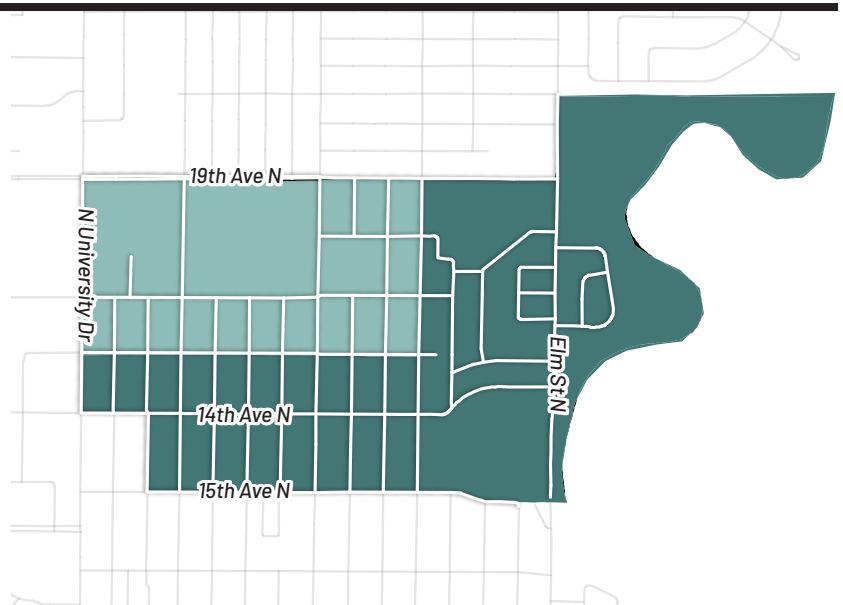
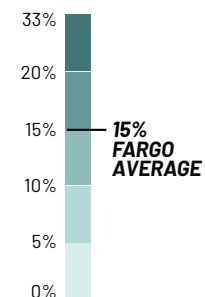
Compared to Fargo as a whole and many other parts of the core neighborhoods, Washington has a high concentration of family households. While 50% of all households in Fargo are families (with two or more related individuals), the rate is over 55% in most of Washington and over 70% in the eastern end. And unlike some other core neighborhoods where a large share of families are older couples, Washington's families tend to be middle-aged adults with children.

The large share of families partially accounts for Washington's higher-than-average concentration of large households (with four or more individuals). But the neighborhood's proximity to NDSU and growth in absentee-ownership of single-family homes also accounts for this. In the neighborhood's western end, for example, there are concentrations of large households comprised of roommates rather than family members.

Share of Family Households



Share of Large Households
(with four or more people)



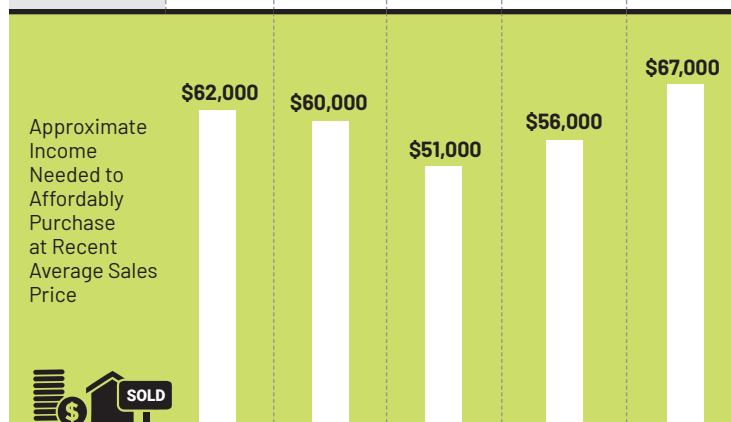
Source: 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

A diverse and affordable housing stock

Most homes in Washington were built during the first wave of suburban development after World War II to accommodate Baby Boom households, and they include a range of family-friendly configurations. While the largest homes have been selling for over \$200,000, on average, in recent years, most homes have been selling in a price range affordable to households earning at or slightly above Fargo's median income.

Dominant Home Configurations

	3 beds / 2 baths	2 beds / 2 baths	2 beds / 1 bath	3 beds / 1 bath	4 beds / 2 baths
# of Properties	223	210	122	66	50
% Owner-Occupied	81%	79%	84%	86%	70%
Average Field Survey Condition Score	2.53	2.64	2.66	2.65	2.67
Average Assessed Value, 2019	\$192,740	\$169,136	\$151,130	\$170,855	\$196,508
Average Sales Price, 2017-2019	\$187,446	\$179,090	\$153,806	\$167,037	\$202,017
Total Sales, 2017-2019	33	30	29	9	6

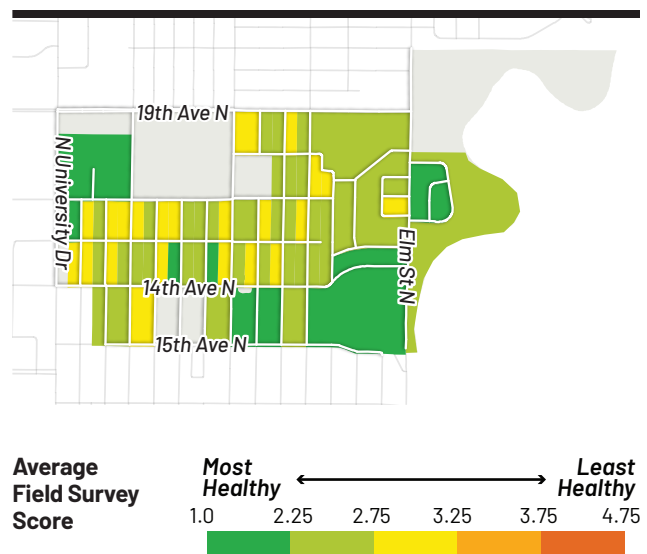
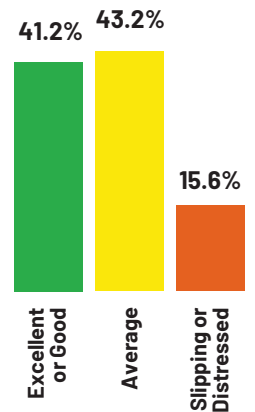


Many blocks are vulnerable to decline

Part of Washington's affordability may be attributed to a substantial number of homes in need of improvement and updating. The 2020 field survey of residential conditions found that just over 40% of properties were in excellent or good condition—showing pride of ownership and no visible evidence of deferred maintenance. A slightly larger share of homes were deemed “average”, expressing neither distress nor signs of active ownership. And nearly 1 in 6 properties showed visible signs of deferred maintenance.

Blocks with a large share of “average” homes and a few distressed properties are those most vulnerable to decline in coming years if conditions dampen confidence of existing and potential owners. This is a particular threat in the western end of the neighborhood where homes are smaller and older and conditions tend to be poorer.

Exterior Condition Survey of Homes (Field Survey)





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Vision for Washington

A vision for Washington emerged during the planning process in the form of a brand statement based (1) on the characteristics or attributes that are at the core of the neighborhood's image and (2) on the target homebuyer markets that are most likely to find the neighborhood's attributes and housing stock appealing.

The result is a statement describing the neighborhood in 2030 as a place that has reinforced its intrinsic assets and is a neighborhood of choice for its target markets. The statement and its components can be used in a variety of ways, such as guiding the development of events and activities that express this vision, as the basis for developing marketing materials, and to clarify the mission of existing or new neighborhood organizations.

Core Neighborhood Attributes

Neighborhood assets were distilled and prioritized into a set of core attributes that are most important to the Washington brand.



Great Value

Starter homes at a great value in a peaceful, cozy neighborhood.



Location

Cycle to downtown amenities or to Fargodome entertainment and other NDSU events.



Outdoor Activities

It's easy to spend time outdoors here – parks, rec trails, a par-three golf course, and low traffic make it easy to walk, bike, play soccer and pickleball, even fish and geocache with friends and family. In Elephant Park, neighbors string portable hammocks between our big beautiful trees and enjoy a quiet read, while dogwalkers stroll by and chat with other neighbors.



Schools

We have high-performing public and parochial pre-K and elementary schools, Ben Franklin middle school, it's just a short walk to North High, and of course, easy access to NDSU.

Target Markets

The neighborhood attributes and existing housing stock were used to identify target homebuyer markets that are primed to see the neighborhood as a good fit.

Profile 1

Young couples and singles that want to buy their first house and appreciate the design simplicity and affordability of our housing stock



Appreciate a 'pragmatic neighborhood'

Easy and low-key neighborhood

Affordable

Value our larger than average yards (but not too big)

Know they can make a house their own and express their individual character

Move-in ready and you can make it your own pretty easily

New buyers are probably in late 20s or 30s



Vision and Brand Statement

The perfect starter home—move-in ready with a nice backyard, yet affordable enough to make it your own—is what brings many people to the Washington neighborhood, and the high quality of life tends to keep them here. Neighbors cycle to downtown amenities or to Fargodome entertainment and other NDSU events, and come right home to a peaceful, cozy community.

It's easy to spend time outdoors here—parks, trails, a par-three golf course, and low traffic provide opportunities to walk, bike, play soccer and pickleball, even fish and geocache with friends and family. In Elephant Park, neighbors string portable hammocks between our big beautiful trees and enjoy a quiet read, while dogwalkers stroll by and chat with other neighbors. Kids and adults can walk or bike to our high-performing schools, ranging all the way from Pre-K through high school and college.

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Outcomes to Strive For

To complement the vision and brand statement and provide a basis for measuring progress toward neighborhood goals, specific neighborhood outcomes have been identified and translated into metrics for neighborhood stakeholder to track over time.

Households of a variety of incomes and backgrounds live here and are welcome

MEASUREMENT

Share of households making less than Fargo's median income



BASELINE → TARGET

In 2018, more than 40% of households in the northwestern part of the neighborhood earned less than the city's median income (roughly \$50,000). In the remainder of the neighborhood, the share was under 30%.

Current levels of income diversity are maintained, representing housing opportunities for a wide range of household types.

MEASUREMENT

Share of residents who are non-white compared to citywide average



BASELINE → TARGET

In 2018, 16% of Fargo residents were non-white. Beyond a few blocks dominated by NDSU student apartments, the share of non-white residents across Washington is generally under 10%.

The share of non-white residents in Washington moves closer to the citywide average.

Neighborhood has more owner-occupied units than it does now

MEASUREMENT

Share of all residential properties that are owner-occupied



BASELINE → TARGET

81%
of single-family homes
were owner-occupied
in 2020

86%
of single-family homes
were owner-occupied
by 2030

There is a community center or local coffee shop/restaurant where neighbors can meet and socialize

MEASUREMENT

Presence of places widely regarded as neighborhood gathering spots



BASELINE → TARGET

A few places fit this description in 2020, including:

Papa Murphy's
Caribou Coffee
Labby's Grill & Bar
Elephant Park

The number of well-recognized "third places" that facilitate casual interactions between neighborhood residents grows to at least 6 by 2025.



People feel safe

MEASUREMENT

Share of residents who regard crime or safety as a concern



BASELINE → TARGET

6% of Washington respondents to a 2020 survey identified crime or safety as a priority problem to address

Maintain a figure of **under 10%** on future surveys that ask about priority problems to address



New and safe bike lanes are added to the neighborhood connecting it to the downtown and core neighborhoods

MEASUREMENT

Number of streets in neighborhood with well-marked accommodations for bikes



BASELINE → TARGET

MetroCOG's inventory of bikeways identifies on-road or off-road bike facilities on the following streets in Washington:

19th Ave. N

N. University Dr.

10th St. N.

9th St. N.

8th St. N.

Elm St. N.

Streets adjacent to El Zegal Golf Course

Existing bikeways in Washington are upgraded where possible (better signage, markings, or traffic separation) to expand awareness of their presence and encourage greater utilization.



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Implementation Guidance



The Core Neighborhoods Toolkit outlined in Part 4 of the Core Neighborhoods Master Plan contains five components with recommendations that are collectively designed to address issues and seize opportunities that surfaced during the planning process core-wide. The following pages of this brief provide guidance on the implementation of each component at the neighborhood-level.

1 Development Regulation and Incentive Tools



2 Neighborhood Leadership & Engagement Tools



3 Housing Reinvestment Tools



4 Public Infrastructure Investment Tools



5 Public Health & Safety Tools



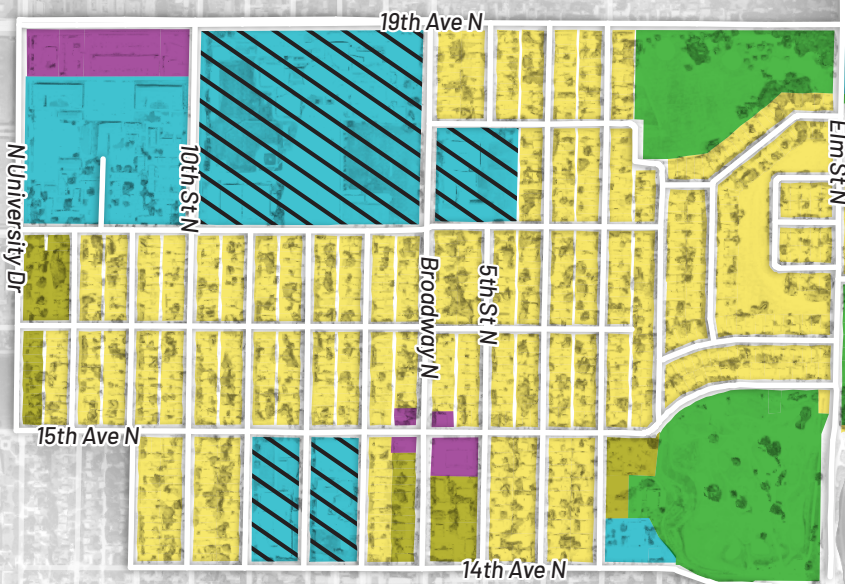
Development Regulation and Incentive Tools



The Future Land Use Map (FLUM) is the neighborhood's visual guide to future planning efforts and illustrates how land is intended to be used—what the neighborhood wants to have happen. It is not an official City map nor is it a zoning map; rather it should be used to inform any updates to a new zoning map with associated revisions to the Land Development Code (LDC).

The FLUM portrayed on the following page generally depicts land uses that currently exist in the well-established Washington neighborhood but also includes recommended changes to areas that demonstrate locational or design characteristics representing opportunities to evolve and become something that better serves the nearby residents in the future. The following list of recommended land uses includes those areas that should be considered for possible rezoning and/or economic incentives that would allow them to transform over the next decade and become enhanced neighborhood assets. Beyond those areas recommended for change, the FLUM also visually represents land uses that should be preserved to protect existing neighborhood character, specifically the single-family residential land use designation.

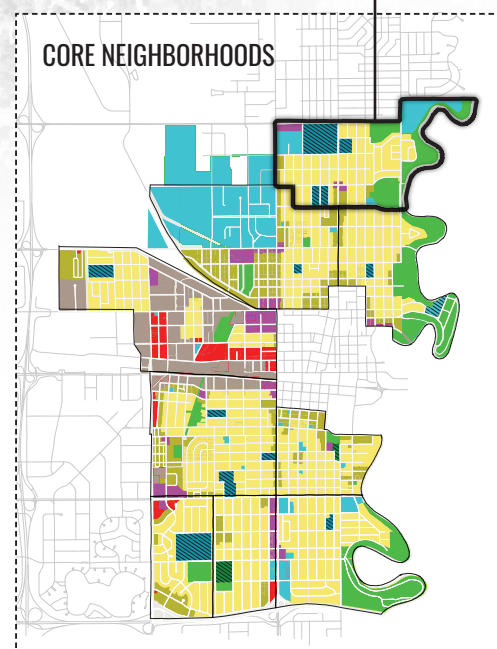
- The intersection of Broadway North and 15th Avenue North is currently commercial in character. Specifically, the Papa Murphy's has done quite well in this location and demonstrates the opportunity for this intersection to become a more robust mixed-use neighborhood center.
- The commercial center at North University Drive and 19th Avenue North is home to many viable businesses that serve the Washington neighborhood as well as university students and those residents living in the northern neighborhoods. A mixed-use land designation for this block would allow for a possible 2nd or 3rd story residential component if/when the opportunity for rehabilitation arises.
- The area from 5th Street North to Broadway North and 14th Avenue North to 15th Avenue North is primarily comprised of multi-family structures nicely integrated within the single-family structures that make up the majority of the neighborhood and provides a diversity of housing options necessary for a mixed-income demographic.



WASHINGTON NEIGHBORHOOD FUTURE LAND USE MAP

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Single-Family Residential | Industrial/Warehousing |
| Multi-Family Residential | Park, Open Space and Trails |
| Institutional | Commercial |
| Schools with recreational amenities | Mixed Use Neighborhood Commercial |

For full descriptions of these land use categories, see page 45 of the Core Neighborhoods Master Plan





WASHINGTON NEIGHBORHOOD

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Neighborhood Leadership
& Engagement Tools

CORE BRAND ATTRIBUTE



Great Value



Location

Outdoor
Activities

Schools

ACTIVITY

EXISTING ACTIVITY

POTENTIAL ACTIVITY

Fargo Marathon begins and ends in Washington		✓	✓	
Mass bike ride (or "critical mass" event)		✓	✓	
Hammock Day – Swing in the Park		✓	✓	
National Night Out				
Soccer in the Park			✓	
Total Balance Fitness has been doing outside activities (in front of their facility); expand on these efforts			✓	
Reinstate the Street Party (shut down the streets and hold a BBQ)			✓	
Fun run through the neighborhood		✓	✓	
Festival at a park		✓	✓	

The Washington neighborhood does not currently have a neighborhood association or any other formal means of organizing neighbors. Efforts in 2021 and 2022 should focus on neighborhood engagement and programming activities to include residents of all ages in a newly formed neighborhood association. Washington has a diverse mix of households – older and younger – and should capitalize on this demographic resource.

The residents, in collaboration with the proposed Neighborhood Coordinator, should use the brand statement and the list of potential activities generated during the planning process to begin the process of cultivating higher levels of resident engagement and leadership. These initial efforts could capitalize on an existing event that brings residents together or materialize as the result of a newly proposed neighborhood event.

3

Housing Reinvestment Tools



Promising Areas for Reinvestment Resources

- Core Reinvestment "A" Blocks
- Core Reinvestment "B" Blocks

The new housing reinvestment tools proposed in the Core Neighborhoods Toolkit are intended to meet a need for programs that proactively target and turn around troubled properties, as well as programs that partner with owners who are able to invest in improvements and updates but are hesitating due to uncertainty about the neighborhood or their return on investment.

Potential target areas for these programs have been identified for planning purposes. Blocks with a combination of strong properties and some weaker properties are prioritized as areas where targeting resources is likely to bolster confidence and stimulate similar investments by other owners. On this map, "A" blocks are somewhat stronger than "B" blocks, but both types are especially strong candidates for reinvestment resources in the Washington neighborhood.

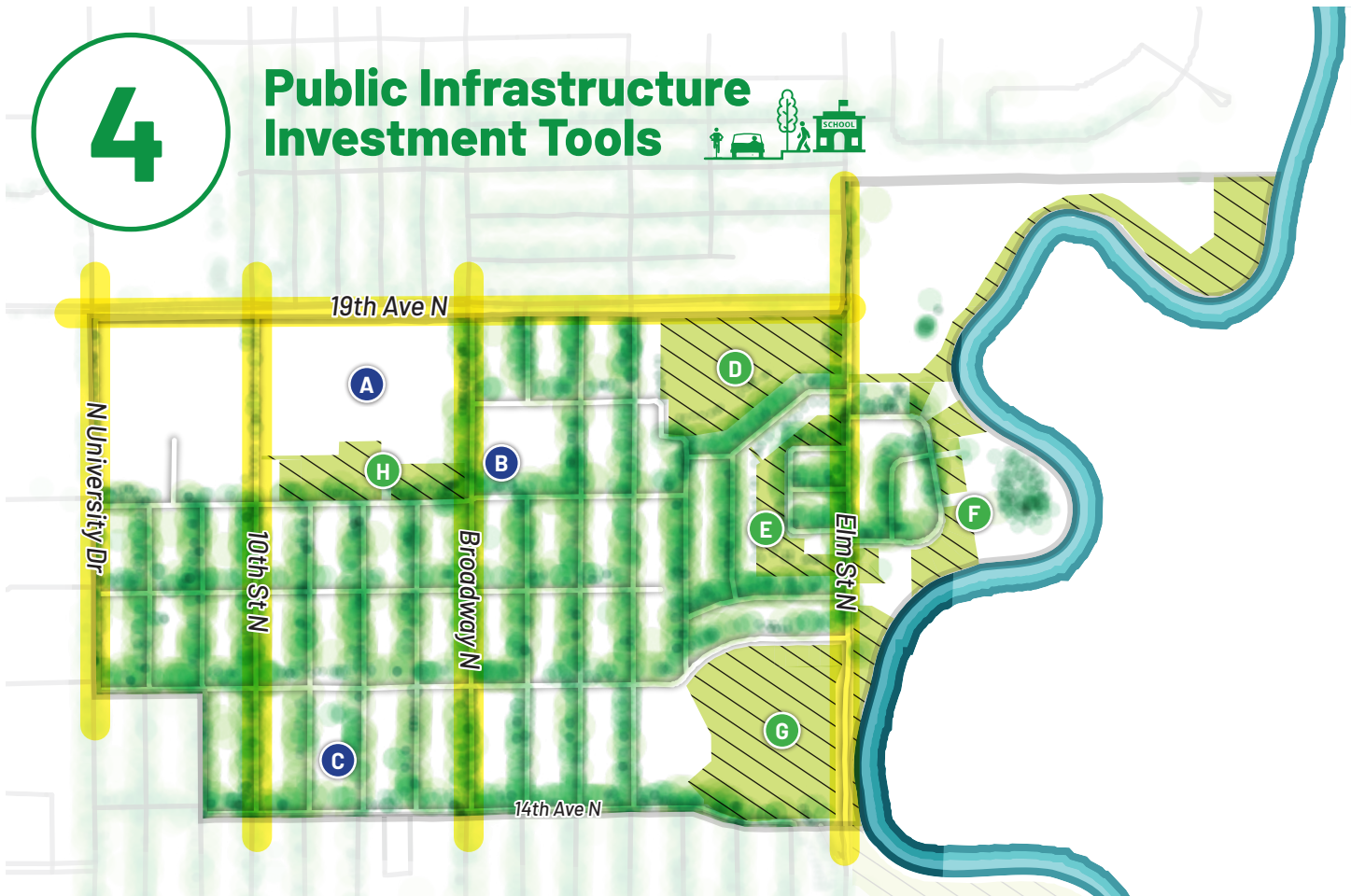
For maximum impact, new reinvestment programs should be actively promoted and paired with existing incentives, such as the remodeling tax exemption.



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4

Public Infrastructure Investment Tools



SCHOOLS & PARKS

Invest in the parks and recreational facilities in the neighborhood—including upgrades that make them as useful as possible to nearby residents—to support Washington’s long-term residential appeal. Plan all such investments in collaboration with neighborhood residents.






Invest in North High School, Ben Franklin Middle, and Washington Elementary to keep them on-par and competitive with facilities in newer parts of Fargo.

Neighborhood residents: Use parks and schools as locations for neighborhood activities and as selling points in efforts to encourage current and potential residents to invest in the neighborhood.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| A North High School | D Elephant / Percy Goodwin Park |
| B Washington Elementary School | E Oxbow Park |
| C Ben Franklin Middle School | F North River Grassland |
| | G El Zagal Golf Course |
| | H Athletic Facilities |

CORRIDORS

Include highlighted corridors in efforts to plan and implement “complete street” designs that better serve all modes of transportation. View all future investments along corridors as opportunities to strengthen neighborhood character and identity.

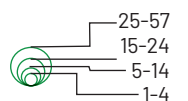
-  19th Ave N
-  N University Dr
-  10th St N
-  Broadway N
-  Elm St N

TREES

The tree canopy contributes significantly to the neighborhood’s appeal and quality of life. It is especially dense on some of the older streets in the central part of the neighborhood and the eastern section towards the river.

- Continue strong management of existing public trees on streets and in parks
- Replant aggressively as older trees come down
- Cultivate a stronger canopy in areas where it is relatively thin, such as some of the north/south streets near North High

Public Trees by Diameter at Breast Height (DBH) in inches



5

Public Health & Safety Tools



More so than with other tools in the Core Neighborhoods Toolkit, partnerships between the City and neighborhood residents will be critical to the success of tools that seek that to uphold basic standards of property maintenance.

The resident side of this equation should include:



Active participation in complaint-based code enforcement

Complaint-based code enforcement is now and will remain a central tool for enforcing Fargo's property maintenance code. For this to work, it is important that residents understand how to submit complaints (online or by phone) and the process the City follows to verify and abate code violations. Stepped-up communications by the City will play a role, but so must proactive communication by groups of residents.



Help neighbors in need with compliance assistance

While partnerships between the City and non-profits can play a role in helping property owners who lack the financial or physical ability to fix basic code issues, neighborhood residents and faith-based organizations have the potential to play the leading role in a manner that also builds the neighborhood's capacity to organize and act.



Organize alley clean-ups and maintenance

Identify opportunities to partner with the City on special clean-up events in neighborhood alleys to improve conditions and engage residents in a manner that builds connections and capacity to solve problems.

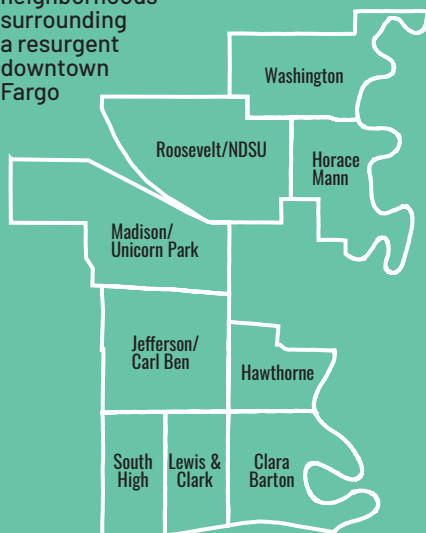


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Neighborhood Implementation Brief

What is the Core Neighborhoods Master Plan, and why was it developed?

Nine neighborhoods surrounding a resurgent downtown Fargo



Fargo's core neighborhoods are a vital part of the city's past, present, and future. As Fargo's original neighborhoods, they house many of its most important assets and offer a wide range of residential and economic opportunities to a growing and increasingly diverse region.

Appreciation of the roles that these neighborhoods play in the life of Fargo—and the issues that inevitably affect neighborhoods as they age and evolve—is the impetus for this plan. In the wake of the Downtown InFocus plan from 2018 and the earlier Go2030 Comprehensive Plan, the need for renewed and focused attention to the core neighborhoods has become broadly recognized.

Rather than a piecemeal approach to planning for the future of the core neighborhoods, a process was designed for residents and other stakeholders to come together and create a unified plan for the core that also responds to the opportunities and challenges in each neighborhood.

The result is a Core Neighborhoods Master Plan that achieves both a core-wide perspective for long-term policymaking and a neighborhood-level focus on desired outcomes and implementation.

READ THE FULL
CORE NEIGHBORHOODS
MASTER PLAN



City of Fargo



CORE NEIGHBORHOODS MASTER PLAN

