

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 Kate Wurtzler at:

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Welcome and Introduction of Michael Maddox

Hello, my name is Michael Maddox and I recently joined the Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Council of Governments as their new Senior Transportation Planner replacing now Executive Director Bill Christian. I grew up in Davenport, Iowa, although my family's roots harken back to a farm in north-western Minnesota where my grandparents, uncles, and an aunt still farm. Growing up in Northern Minnesota, my mother attended NDSU where she received her Bachelor's in Mechanical Engineering. Much of my extended family still lives in and around this area including: my grandparents, five cousins who currently attend NDSU along with many cousins, aunts, and uncles.

I attended Iowa State University where I received a Bachelor's of Science in Community and Regional Planning. I am a Cyclone fan thru and thru! My first position out of college was with the Rockford Metropolitan Agency for Planning (RMAP) the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Rockford, Illinois region. I spent three and a half years there and still go back and visit often.

I then accepted a position with SRF Consulting Group in their Fargo office. I was involved in many projects in this region as well as in the "Oil Patch" of western North Dakota. I lived in Williston, ND for a short stint, being assigned as a contractual employee in the NDDOT District 7 office in 2012. I became certified as a planner in 2013 by attaining my American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) certificate while I was there.

I am a resident of Downtown Fargo and enjoy walking or riding my longboard to work every day. I enjoy traveling to visit friends and family in different states as well as traveling on my stomach as I am a foodie. I have completed three full marathons and four half marathons, including the Fargo Half last year. Running to me is kind of like banging your head against a wall... It feels good when you stop. Other than that you can find me on the river in my kayak when conditions allow or trying out one of the local breweries in the area.

I am excited to be a part of Metro COG and hope I can help this region grow and develop in a smart, livable, and sustainable way that creates an environment where its citizens can flourish.

Bike Share Program Successfully Launches in Fargo

On an unseasonably warm Sunday afternoon in mid-March, 101 Bison-green bicycles set forth to the eleven bike share stations in Fargo and North Dakota's first bike share program was underway. The program was found to be a success during its first week of operation and continues to exceed the expectations of both local and national organizers. The bike share program reached 10,000 bike check-outs within its first three weeks of operation. The warm March weather played a role in these larger numbers but the fact that NDSU students can enroll for free also has contributed to the program.

Named Great Rides Bike Share, the program is operated by Great Rides, a non-profit organization located at Great Northern Bicycle Co. in Fargo. The bike share program has been in the works since 2012, when discussions began between NDSU student government, the City of Fargo, and multiple private businesses. With a distance of about 1.5 miles between the main NDSU campus and the downtown campus, bike share was found to be a great transportation option for students traveling between the main campus and downtown. Bike share also assists students traveling around the main campus and any members of the public can use the bikes to simply get around town.

The system consists of 101 rentable bicycles and 11 docking stations which are located in Downtown Fargo and on the main NDSU campus. The bikes are equipped with a basket, a lock, three speeds, a bell, and pant guards. The bikes are designed to withstand the outside elements and will be regularly maintained by Great Northern Bicycle Co. Bikes will also be frequently redistributed between the stations to ensure there are enough available at each station. The system also incorporates the latest in technology. Those enrolled will be able to view their estimated distance traveled, calories burned, carbon offset, and more. The system will be deployed each spring in April and will remain operational until November.

NDSU students can enroll for free while the public can purchase a day pass for \$6, a monthly pass for \$15, or an annual pass for \$75. Once the pass is purchased, the first 30 minutes of the ride are free. The idea behind bike share is to travel from one station to another as a means of transportation.

For more information on Great Rides Bike Share, including a station map, rates, sign up, and more, visit:


<https://greatrides.bcycle.com>.



PUBLIC INPUT OPPORTUNITY!

Look for this symbol

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Food Systems Advisory Commission

The Cass-Clay Food Systems Advisory Commission held its inaugural meeting on March 25. This newly formed Commission is tasked with examining all levels of the local food system and identifying ways to improve access to healthy, safe, local, and affordable food for all residents. Examining a food system takes into account the different processes and infrastructure involved in food including growing, harvesting, processing, packaging, transporting, marketing, eating, and disposal/waste.



The Commission was formed following the recommendations of the Metropolitan Food Systems Plan completed by the Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Council of Governments in October of 2013. Members of the Commission include elected officials from Cass (ND) and Clay (MN) Counties, the Cities of Fargo and West Fargo in North Dakota and the Cities of Moorhead and Dilworth in Minnesota. The Commission also includes five at-large community members with an interest in, or expertise related to, food systems.

One of the first tasks of the Commission will be the prioritization and development of different blueprints to evaluate the benefits and concerns of different urban agricultural practices. These practices may include community and neighborhood gardens, urban beekeeping, farmers markets, composting, and general food safety. These blueprints will include background information on the different issues, current codes or policy information, and a matrix which evaluates the benefits and concerns from health, environmental, economic and social standpoints. The information and recommendations from these blueprints would then be brought back to area jurisdictions for further consideration as desired.

The next meeting of the Food Systems Advisory Commission will be held Wednesday, July 10 from 10:30am to 12:00pm in the Fargo Commission Chambers, 200 3rd Street N. Members of the public are welcome to attend.



Public Input Opportunity

2016-2020 Transit Development Plan

The Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Council of Governments in partnership with MATBUS, Valley Senior Services, Transit Alternatives, and area universities and colleges has begun an update to the Transit Development Plan (TDP), a study which will look at the current range of transit services and provide a more detailed analysis of anticipated transit needs through 2020 and beyond.

Metro COG has retained a consultant, SRF Consulting Group, to assist with the technical and outreach elements of the plan that will be completed by the end of 2015. Parts of the plan will include: identifying modifications to current service and/or new types or locations for service that would address gaps and unmet needs; preparing a financial plan detailing how current transit assets and additional recommendations would be paid for over the next five years; and creating a subplan that focuses on the unique needs of seniors, low-income persons and families, and person with disabilities.

The first round of public input meetings on the TDP was held on May 13 at the West Acres Transit Hub and the Ground Transportation Center (GTC). Future meetings are tentatively scheduled for September and November of 2015. For more information and project updates, please see www.matbus.com.

Mock TMA Certification Review

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), collectively ONE DOT, will hold a mock Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Federal Certification Review on July 21 and 22. Certification reviews are held every four years for MPOs that are also Transportation Management Areas (TMA). Under 23 USC 134 and 49 USC 5303, a metropolitan area over 200,000 population is designated as a TMA. Although the FM area has not yet reached this milestone population, it is anticipated that it will exceed the population threshold with the 2020 decennial Census. ONE DOT offered the review to identify potential issues that Metro COG may face in 2022 when the designation becomes official. Doing so will allow Metro COG to chart a course to meet the requirements of being a TMA and develop a Congestion Management System.

The mock certification review will address how Metro COG currently carries out its transportation planning process and meets federal requirements. Metro COG will hold a public open house on July 21 to provide information on the agency, its mission, and its requirements of being an MPO. The public, our member jurisdictions and committee members are invited to attend. Additional information on the open house will be available in advance of the July 21 date. Please contact Bill Christian (christian@fmmetrocog.org or 701.232.3242 x 32) if you have any questions.

2015 FM Metro Area-Wide Traffic Counts

Every five years Metro COG conducts and coordinates region-wide traffic counts in order to accurately calibrate the regional travel demand model. The regional travel demand model is a traffic computer program Metro COG uses to project traffic conditions and help determine which roadway capacity improvements will be necessary over the next 30 years. The counts are also used by area jurisdictions, businesses and developers to assist with planning and gauging traffic conditions. In addition, the public also has a great interest in the latest traffic counts.

Metro COG has hired a consultant to collect the 2015 FM Metro Area-Wide traffic counts. Counts will be gathered this spring, summer and fall and will be gathered at approximately 380 locations around the area. Locations will range from local residential streets to rural highways to the urban interstates. Most counts will be collected using tubes (black hoses) to detect vehicles. Counts along busier roadways will be gathered using non-in-

trusive methods such as radar or camera counters. Counters are deployed for several days in order to get multiple days of data and on weekdays because they provide the most typical traffic conditions.

The North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT) and Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) will also be performing traffic counts in and around the FM area this spring, summer and fall. Metro COG has coordinated with both agencies to ensure locations are not duplicated. Metro COG will also use the results of NDDOT and MnDOT's traffic counts to assist with the regional travel demand model and other planning efforts.



FM Metro Area Bikeways Map

Every year or two, Metro COG updates and prints new copies of the FM Metro Area Bikeways Map. The current version of the map was updated and printed in 2013. Metro COG prints and distributes 12,500 maps to government agencies, schools and businesses throughout the Fargo-Moorhead area. As map supplies run low and changes are made to the bikeways network, it becomes necessary to update and print new maps. The new map will include the latest on and off-street bicycle facilities, updated roadway network, Bike Share station locations, and more. Metro COG is finalizing the map and hopes to have it printed and distributed by the end of Spring 2015.

Maps are free to the public and will be available at numerous locations around the FM area. These locations include: Concordia College, Dilworth City Hall, Fargo City Hall, Fargo-Moorhead Visitors Center, FM Community Bicycle Workshop, Great Northern Bicycle Co., Hjemkomst Center, M|State, MATBUS GTC, Metro COG, Moorhead City Hall, MSUM, NDDOT Fargo District Office, NDSU, Paramount Sports, Scheels All Sports, West Fargo City Hall, Fercho YMCA, and Schlossman YMCA.

PDF versions of the maps will also be available online at www.fmmetrocog.org and www.bikefm.org.