

West Fargo Traffic Calming Study

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

March 25, 2021 (DRAFT)

PURPOSE

During the West Fargo Traffic Calming Study, public participation will play a critical role to involve affected and interested residents and other interest groups in actively shaping the West Fargo community. The purpose of this Public Participation Plan is to outline the goals and objectives of public engagement, Study Review Committee (SRC) members and study team, methods for public outreach, identify stakeholders, and schedule of engagement phases. Over the duration of this process, the public will be informed about the purpose and working status of the plan with the utmost transparency, accessibility, inclusivity, and collaboration.

GOALS AND INTENDED OUTCOMES

The objectives of the West Fargo Traffic Calming Study public engagement are provided below. Direct input from identified areas of the West Fargo community having traffic calming concerns will be crucial in the study process however, a balance of broader input from all interested citizens throughout West Fargo will assist the City to achieve a well-thought out plan that addresses both current and future traffic calming concerns. The public engagement efforts as part of this study will ensure approachable information that is easily digested and understood by the public, avoiding over-technical language or jargon. Public participation will be encouraged throughout the study process, any presentations to the public or otherwise will allow interactive dialogue and engagement activities, clear graphics, and clear language.

There are four main goals that will guide all areas of public engagement. They are as follows:

- (1) Accessible and Inclusive Representation** – Acknowledge an increasingly diverse community to ensure outreach to various interest groups and lift up historically marginalized voices. Metro COG will ensure that those with disabilities have equal access to public engagement activities and materials.
- (2) Open Communication** – Engagement will occur throughout the study process to ensure that the plan remains meaningful to the community and the public has easy access to relevant information. An open line of communication with clear contact information will be maintained throughout the study process.
- (3) Collaboration** – Ensure that decisions are not just made for people but with people, respecting people's opinions and feedback.
- (4) Accountability** – The community will be able to see how the final plan reflects community participation in the public engagement process.

Goal	Intended Outcomes
Accessible and Inclusive Representation	Multiple ways and opportunities for people to participate in a comfortable, accessible, and equitable way. Outreach to different stakeholders. All voices had a chance to be heard throughout the process.
Open Communication	Public engagement opportunities have been organized at the beginning and end of the study process. Meeting dates and times were effectively communicated and advertised. Project website and social media sites remained useful and up-to-date. Stakeholders had access to project staff.
Collaboration	Stakeholders were engaged during meetings through interactive activities. The process facilitated meaningful dialogue.
Accountability	The final plan reflects community feedback. The final plan includes quotes and documentation of the public engagement process.

COVID-19 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH TECHNIQUES

The current COVID-19 pandemic may impact the ways in which public participation is carried out and engagement strategies should be tailored to what is happening on the ground pertaining to public health. The situation is continuously changing and the process of engagement will need to stay flexible.

In-person public input opportunities may be most appropriate for this study however, social distancing and masking guidance will be followed as recommended by State and local public health officials. Virtual forms of engagement should also be strongly considered as an alternative participation method and may be the primary interface for SRC meetings and/or stakeholder meetings. When utilizing a virtual or online platform, the public will still be encouraged to actively participate in various interactive activities that will solicit real time feedback, ideally simulating an in-person public engagement opportunity. With regards to any future changes to the pandemic situation, all public engagement meetings will abide by safety protocols as outlined by the State of North Dakota and local safety standards. The City of West Fargo and Metro COG may pursue a hybrid and flexible approach to public participation that provides the greatest opportunity for successful public engagement.

STUDY TEAM AND PARTNERS

There are many key stakeholders to consider when designing engagement for a planning study. The following is not an exhaustive list and may not be applicable to the West Fargo Traffic Calming Study however, outreach to different groups may include:

- General public
- Residents
- Property owners
- Small business owners

- College students
- Institutions
- Cultural organizations
- Accessibility population
- Youth and families
- Seniors and aging population
- Developers and brokers
- Boards and commissions
- Advocacy organizations

Study Review Committee

The Study Review Committee includes City of West Fargo and Metro COG Staff. The committee will guide the planning process, review draft material, and provide input on the public engagement process as it evolves. The committee consists of the following members:

- Andrew Wrucke, Engineering
- Jerry Boyer, Police Department
- Malachi Peterson, Planning
- Scott Tiffany, Public Works
- Ari Del Rosario, Metro COG
- Cindy Gray, Metro COG
- Dan Farnsworth, Metro COG
- Luke Champa, Metro COG

Alternates

Alternates may be identified by SRC members on an as-needed basis.

PROJECT PHASES/DELIVERABLES

This process can be broken up in 4 distinct phases with the following deliverables included:

- a) **Data Collection** – This includes gathering information to understand how neighborhood design, larger context, and circulation patterns are affecting the street(s) included in the study; traffic counts and other traffic characteristics such as speed; right-of-way; street width and other street characteristics.
 - **Deliverables:**
 - **Direct mailing (may include assistance from City of West Fargo) postcard to introduce study, schedule, project contact information, and website/survey links**
 - **Public engagement survey to identify issues and study introduction**
 - **Existing conditions report**
 - **Traffic analysis**
 - **SRC #1**

- b) **Identification of Potential Traffic Calming Measures** – This includes a literature search to identify a complete menu of potential traffic calming solutions based on national literature; document local and regional examples of traffic calming techniques that have been implemented.
 - **Deliverables:**
 - **Menu of traffic calming options including background on what traffic calming is as a general concept**

- SRC #2 prior to Public Open House #1
 - Direct mailing (may include assistance from City of West Fargo) postcard to advertise public open house #1 and public input survey #2
 - Public Open House #1 will summarize existing conditions report, menu of traffic calming options, and survey public opinion on various traffic calming measures [the exact approach, virtual, in-person, or otherwise to hold the public open house #1 will remain flexible and is to be coordinated with the SRC to establish the preferred open house option(s) as the COVID-19 pandemic subsides or intensifies]
- c) **Determine Alternatives** – This includes identifying locations, impacts, pros and cons, and planning-level cost estimates; narrowing down solutions to two or three that have the most applicability to each of the six identified locations.
- **Deliverables:**
 - Traffic calming prioritization matrix
 - Planning-level cost estimates
 - Summary of public input results from survey #1, survey #2, and public open house
- d) **Report Preparation** – This includes drafting the report document which will document study findings with text, photos, and graphics; summarize each location, including graphics of potential techniques that could be applied.
- **Deliverables**
 - Draft and final report
 - SRC #3 to review draft report
 - Public comment period (15 days) when the final draft report is put together

SCHEDULE (working final)

As agreed upon by both City of West Fargo and Metro COG, the West Fargo Traffic Calming Study will be completed during calendar year 2021. Please see the draft schedule anticipating study completion no later than January 1, 2022.

2021

