

CHAPTER 3

Catalysts

This chapter is a snapshot of the most emblematic recommendations of this plan for the future of Fargo. It illustrates how big ideas influence the shape of the city and the amenities available to its citizens. These ideas have the potential to catalyze growth and improve quality of life in Fargo.

Catalysts

Catalysts are ideas that have the potential to accelerate development and enhance quality of life. The following list of catalysts was created in a public process with input from the steering committee and technical committee. These ideas have the biggest potential to impact Fargo as it continues to grow and develop. Catalysts support and advance all of the guiding principles. The following list of catalysts developed through a public process that included input from the community, steering committee and technical committee.

Walkable Mixed Use Centers

Walkable mixed use centers will be catalysts for well-designed, high density development that increases walkability, access to amenities, and provides other sustainable benefits of density.

Signature Streets

Signature streets will be destination public spaces in Fargo. They will include streetscape enhancements including wide sidewalks, landscaping, benches, pedestrian scaled streetlights, and other amenities.

Active Living Streets

Active living streets will have infrastructure to support pedestrians, experienced cyclists, recreational cyclists, transit, and automobiles. A network of active living streets will enable Fargo residents to walk or bike to their destinations safely and comfortably.

All-Season City-Wide Trail Loop

The city-wide trail loop will connect existing off-street trails and encourage recreation and active transportation throughout the city. The trail loop should be designed to function in the winter and include cross country ski paths.

Regional Recreation Destination

A regional recreation destination, such as a water park, indoor athletic facility, or a conservatory, will provide a community gathering space, promote good health, and will create an attraction for the region.

Celebrate the River

Flooding from the river has been a threat in years past, but there is potential to create great public spaces next to the River. These locations would give access to the river and can potentially be combined with flood protection and development projects.

Permanent Flood Protection

Permanent flood protection is necessary for the continued advancement of Fargo. Permanent flood protection would give businesses confidence to invest in Fargo and ensure the city is protected from future flooding threats.

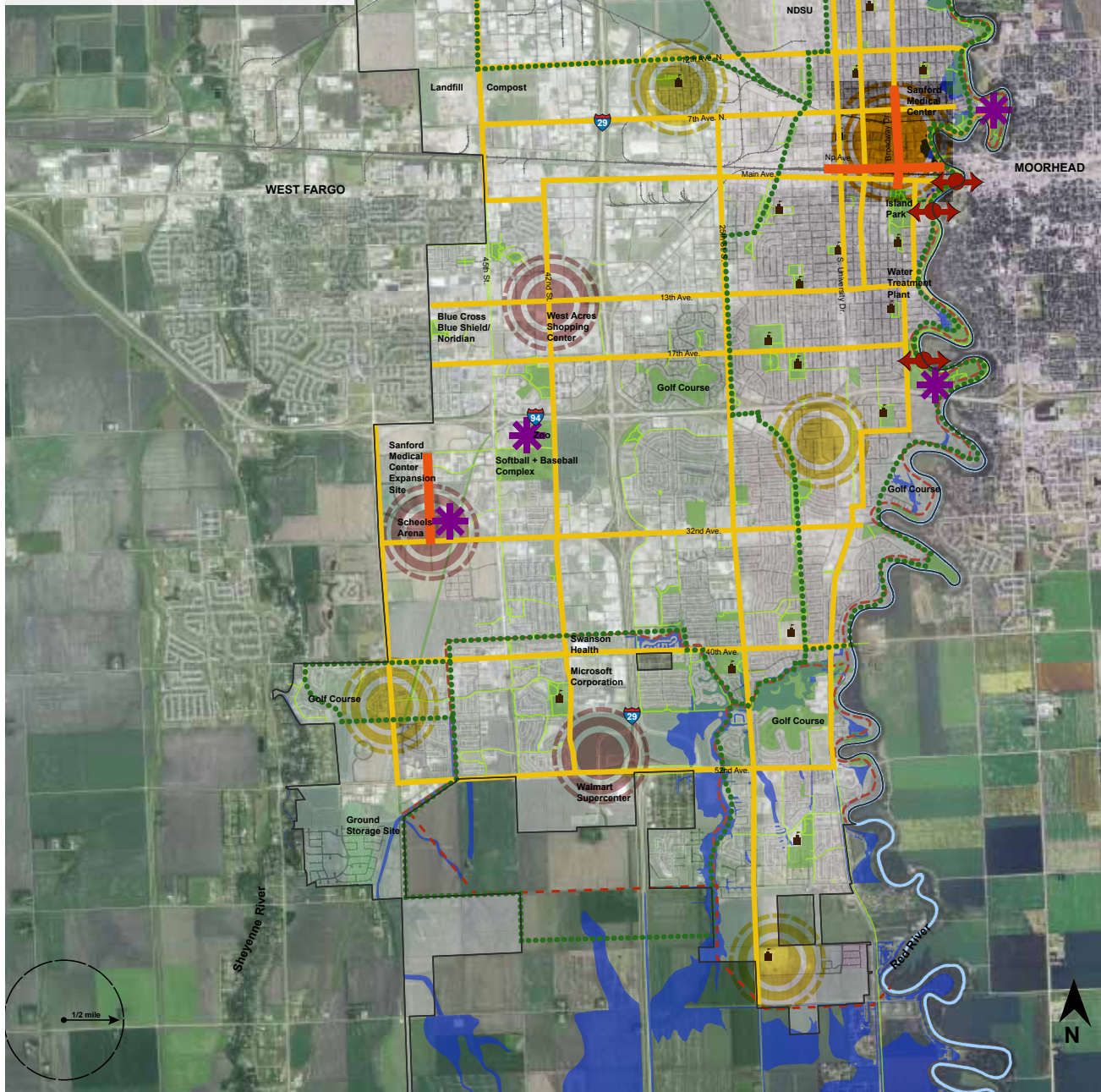
Energy Efficiency and Renewable Generation

Energy efficiency and renewable generation initiatives have the potential to give Fargo a competitive advantage with low energy costs, a high tech smart grid, and reliable power in the uncertain energy future. These initiatives also improve the health of the environment.

Catalysts Map

Legend

- Walkable Mixed Use Centers:
 - Downtown Neighborhood
 - Sustainable Retail Mixed Use Center
 - Neighborhood Center
- Signature Complete Street
- Active Living Streets
- Regional Recreation Destination
- Celebrate the River
- All-Season City-Wide Trail Loop
- Permanent Levees/Flood Walls
- Permanent Downtown Flood Protection
- Improved Protection for City Facilities Park
- Future or Existing Recreation Path
- 100 Year Floodplain
- School
- Railroad
- City of Fargo Boundary



WALKABLE MIXED USE CENTERS

Walkable mixed use centers will be unique, dense, and amenity-rich areas. These areas are strategic because they build on existing strengths, such as an urban grid street pattern fabric, access to commercial services, and existing infrastructure. This kind of development will conserve energy and support sustainable transit.



DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD

The downtown neighborhood has potential become more dense with infill development and incorporate a broader mix of uses including residential, neighborhood services, retail, and offices. This area will have high quality infrastructure that supports pedestrians, cyclists, cars, and transit and will feature public art and landscaping.



SUSTAINABLE RETAIL MIXED USE AREA

These areas have the potential to become denser and incorporate more retail space. These areas can incorporate more dense residential uses, walkability improvements, and public art to become a true mixed use center and a destination for shopping and entertainment.



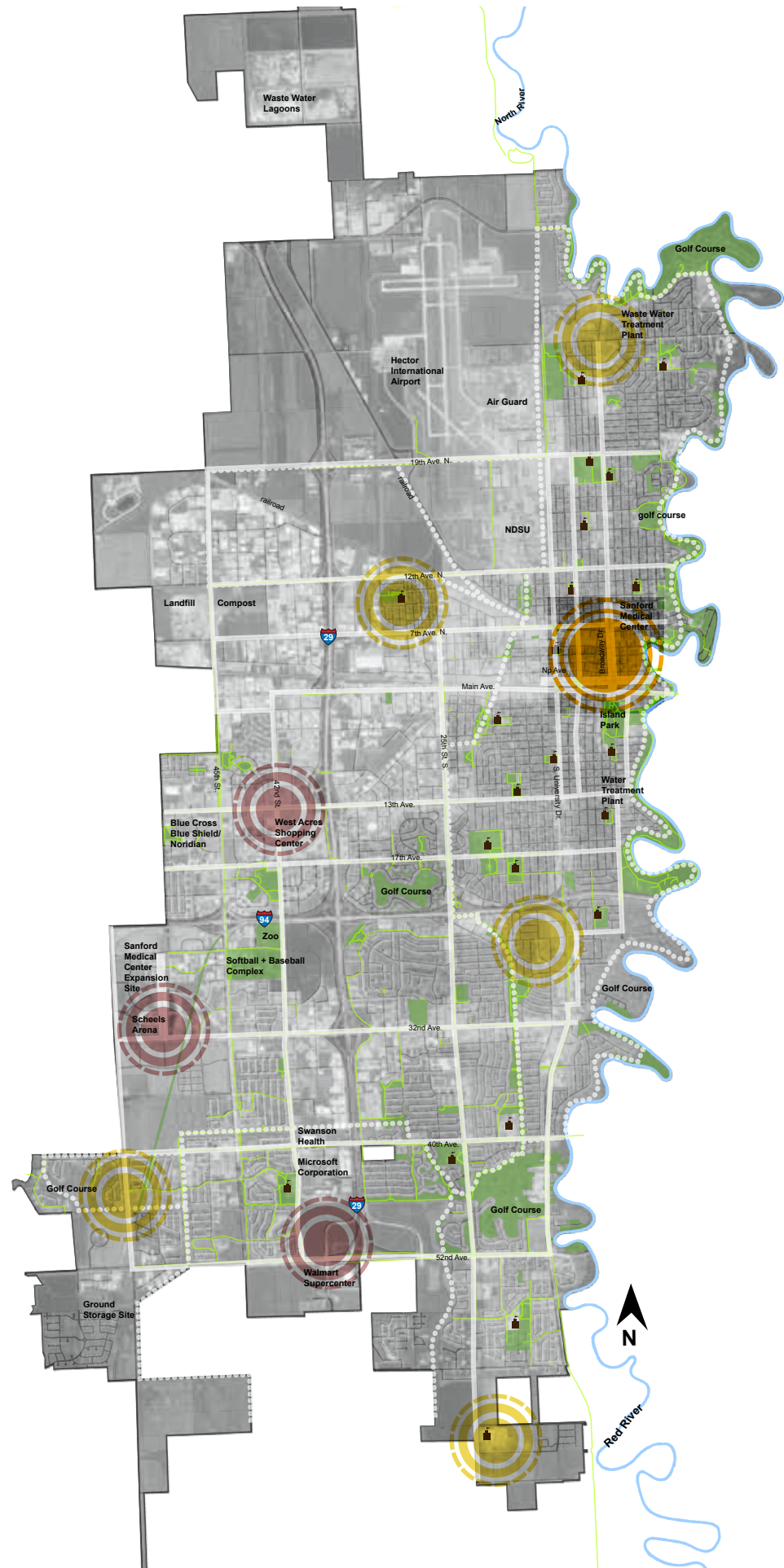
NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

These areas are more residential in character and will be less dense than other density areas with a mix of single family detached houses, town homes, rowhouses, and apartments. These areas will incorporate more neighborhood services, schools, parks, and walkability enhancements.



Benefits:

- Provides a range of local services and amenities conveniently within neighborhoods/centers.
- Provides a variety of housing styles, densities, and price ranges to supply options and serve diverse needs.
- Encourages attractive, compact, and walkable development.
- Supports promoting and cherishing places with distinct identities, character, and appearance.
- Saves energy and fuel through more efficient development and less automobile trips.



WALKABLE MIXED USE CENTER

This typical walkable mixed use center illustrates how infill development, changing patterns of development, and amenities can transform areas in Fargo to support growth and quality of life improvements. This example demonstrates how a density node could develop around South University Drive, but the principles of development can apply to any density node.

- 1 Pedestrian oriented, mixed use streetscape
- 2 Strong pedestrian access point across busy automobile corridor
- 3 Walkable block sizes (250' - 450')
- 4 Building and parking development patterns that create people oriented spaces and street frontage which encourages a walkable environment
- 5 Connection to greenway
- 6 Neighborhood park

See Key Initiatives:**Neighborhoods, Infill, and New Development**

- Promote Infill
- Design Standards
- Quality New Development

**Arts and Culture**

- Public Gathering Spaces

**Economy**

- Amenities and Beautification as an Economic Development Tool
- Promote Connections and Infill in West Acres Commercial Area





SIGNATURE STREETS

Signature complete streets are destinations in Fargo. They have wide sidewalks and emphasize street activity over mobility. These streets will support pedestrians, bicyclists, transit, and automobile traffic and will have a wide public realm (the space between the building and the street) with streetscape improvements, public art, and landscaping. Green stormwater infrastructure will handle stormwater runoff and will bring more vegetation into the urban landscape. Improvements along these corridors will support businesses and drive economic development.

Benefits:

- Creates celebrated signature streets that enhance the identity of Fargo.
- Improves streetscape and enhances the quality and visual appearance of the city.
- Encourages pedestrian and bicycle activity.
- Public investment in infrastructure catalyzes development in walkable mixed use centers.

See Key Initiatives:



Water and Environment

- Green Stormwater Infrastructure
- Tree Canopy
- Air Quality



Transportation

- Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure
- Transit Improvements
- One Way to Two Way Conversion Study



Arts and Culture

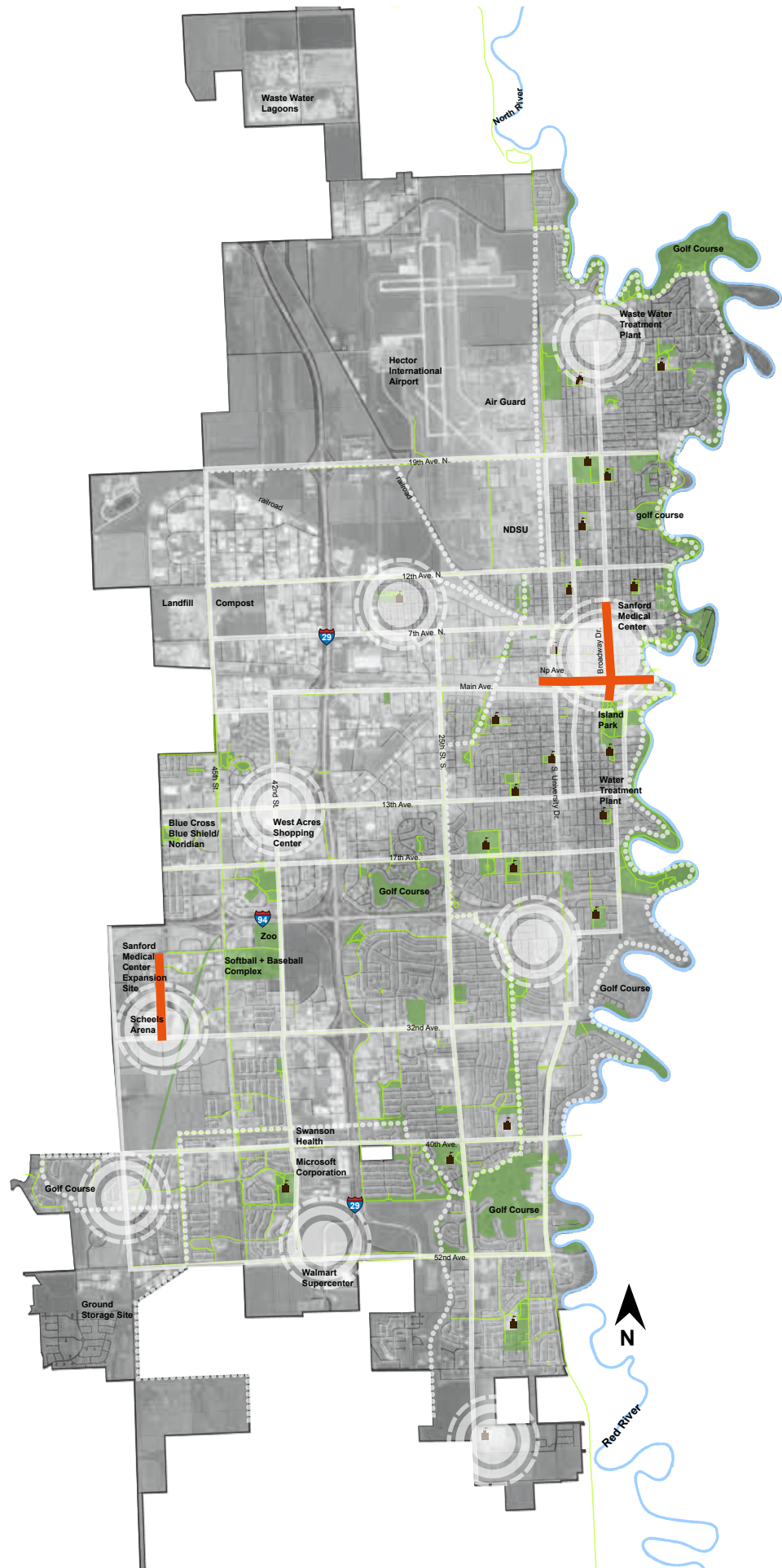
- Public Art



Economy

- Amenities and Beautification as an Economic Development Tool





ACTIVE LIVING STREETS

Active living streets are key corridors in Fargo and have the potential to support multiple modes of transportation, incorporate green stormwater infrastructure, and become great public spaces with attractive streetscapes. These streets can support pedestrians, bicycles, advanced cyclists, transit, and vehicles. They connect major employment centers in Fargo, providing sustainable transportation options for Fargoans going to work. Whereas signature complete streets are destinations, active living streets prioritize mobility for all modes of travel.

Benefits:

- Connects many neighborhoods, activity centers, employment areas, and districts in Fargo.
- Opportunity for additional viable transportation options along roadways including improved sidewalks, bicycle lanes, separated bike corridors, and transit.
- Improved streetscape that enhances the quality and visual appearance of neighborhoods.

See Key Initiatives:



Water and Environment

- Green Stormwater Infrastructure
- Tree Canopy
- Air Quality



Transportation

- Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure
- Transit Improvement
- One Way to Two Way Conversion Study



Arts and Culture

- Public Art



Health

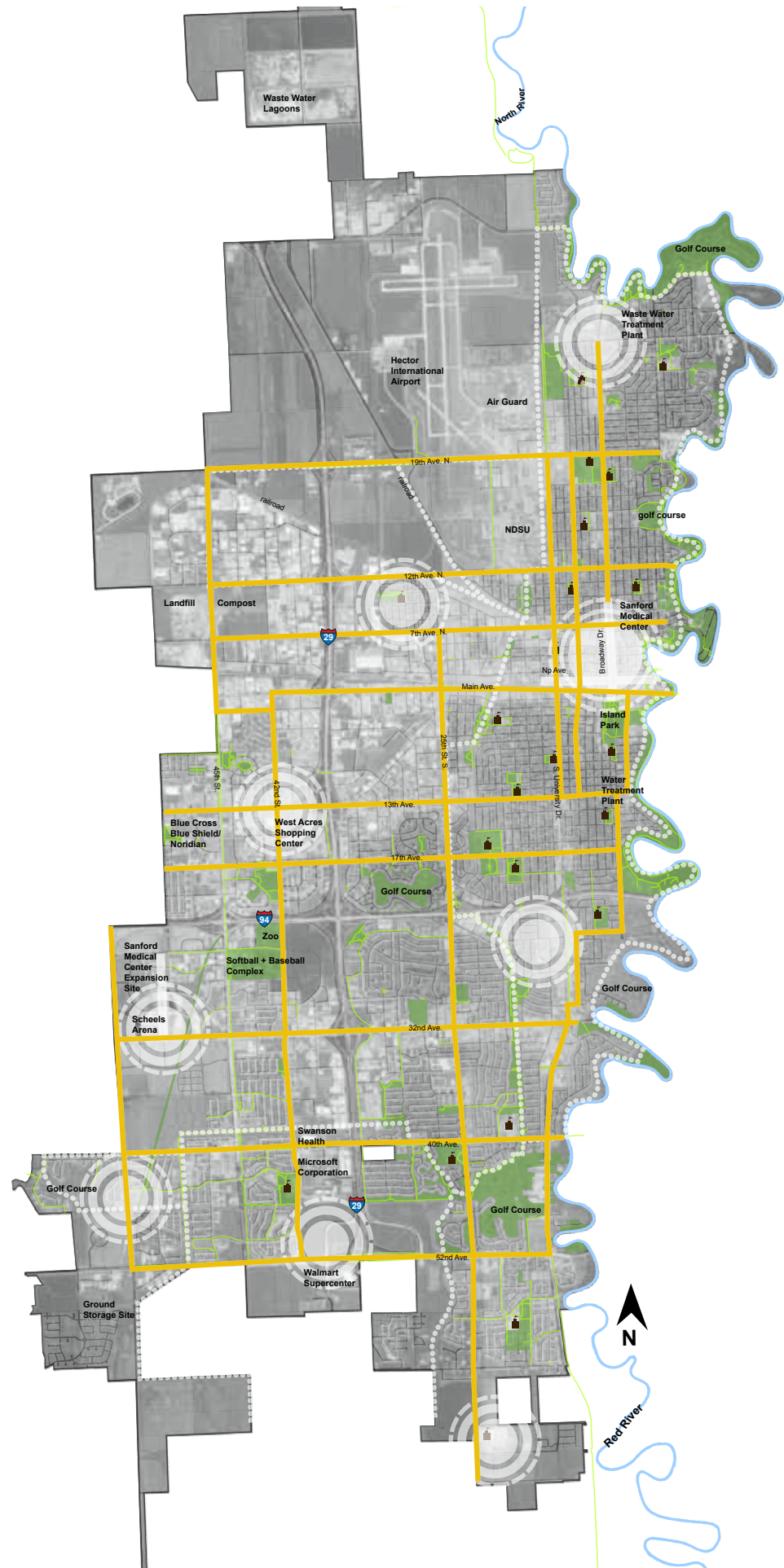
- City-Wide Trail Loop



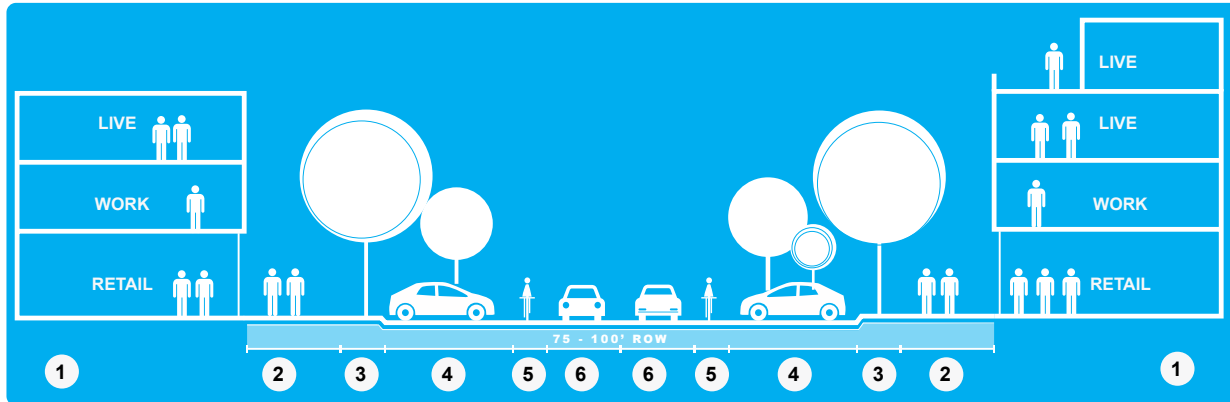
Economy

- Amenities and Beautification as an Economic Development Tool





Typical Signature Street Section



1 Land Use

Density of activity and a mix of retail, office, and residential uses make signature streets livable destinations. The uses along signature streets bring life to the streets and allow citizens to run day to day errands by walking and biking.

2 Sidewalks

Signature streets have wide sidewalks allowing for pedestrian activity and the occasional sidewalk café.

3 Amenity Zone

Bike racks, benches, trash cans, lights, art, infiltration basins (natural rainwater management solutions), and shade trees are all part of the amenity zone. The amenity zone enhances quality and visual appearance while providing opportunity for smart rainwater management solutions.

4 Parking and Curb Bump Outs

Parking for both automobiles and bicycles provides easy access and invites people to stay a while. Integrated curb bump outs calm traffic, provide safe and comfortable pedestrian crossings, and space for smart rainwater

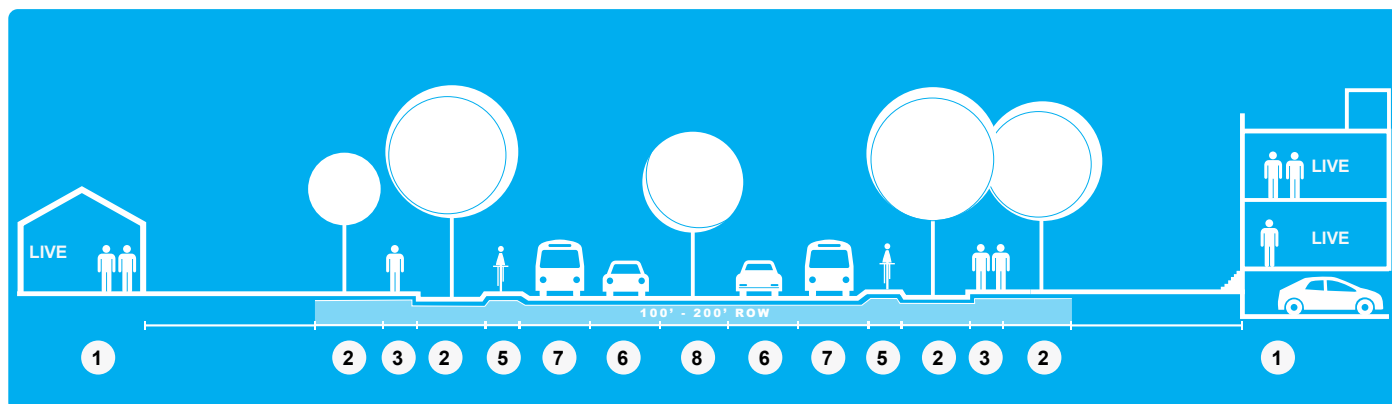
5 Bike Lanes

Dedicated bicycle lanes invite the majority of the population to consider biking as a safe and convenient mode of transportation. In most cities, about seven percent of people are enthused and confident enough to ride their bike in traffic. Dedicated bicycle infrastructure appeals to the percent of people who are capable but cautious.

6 Drive Lanes

Signature complete streets give priority to making walking and biking a comfortable mode of transportation. Minimizing the number of traffic lanes can create some automobile friction which slows down traffic (often without reducing capacity) and in turn encourages walking and biking as more convenient modes of transportation. Narrow drive lanes improve safety for bicyclists and pedestrians by encouraging slow automobile traffic and have been shown to provide an economic benefit for neighboring shops.

Typical Active Living Street Section



1 Land Use

The uses and densities along active living streets vary. The key for new development and infill should be to support walking and biking through proper building orientation that defines a public realm and parking strategies that do not isolate or add hazards to non-motorized users.

2 Sidewalks

Sidewalks on active living streets need to be wide enough to encourage walking.

3 Amenity Zone

With more Right of Way to work with there is space to provide quality amenities and integrated natural stormwater solutions within the Amenity Zone. Bike racks, benches, trash cans, lights, art, infiltration basins (natural rainwater management solutions), and shade trees remain part of the amenity zone but will likely be less frequent than on Signature Streets.

5 Bike Lanes

Active Living streets need to be just that: active. With Fargo's renewed focus on health and encouraging bicycle transportation, dedicated bike lanes are an integral part of the design. Because of the extra street widths bi-directional lanes are also a possibility.

6 Drive Lanes

On Active Living Streets drive lanes can be wider and travel speeds slightly higher than on Signature Streets, but lane widths should not be excessive. The street still must remain conducive to all modes of transportation.

7 Transit Lanes

All modes of transportation are important on Active Living streets. Encouraging transit ridership (busses and whatever future modes emerge) improves citizen health, reduces transportation costs and maximizes efficiency. Active Living streets should nurture Fargo's transit system.

8 Turning Lane or Median

The inclusion of a turning lane allows traffic to move more steadily and in the right instances can replace two lanes of traffic (one in each direction) without reducing street capacity.

ALL-SEASON CITY-WIDE TRAIL LOOP

Health, recreation, and transportation are major issues in Fargo. There is an opportunity to build a City-wide trail loop that will connect neighborhoods and walkable mixed use centers. It can be used for walking, biking, and potentially cross-country skiing in the winter. This idea incorporates the findings of the Metropolitan Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and adds momentum to this idea.

Benefits:

- Provides a year-round recreational amenity for neighborhoods in Fargo.
- Connects walkable mixed use centers and employment centers, creating an alternative transportation option.
- Enhances important centers and corridors in Fargo.
- Builds on existing plans and studies.
- Integrates with levee and drainage systems.

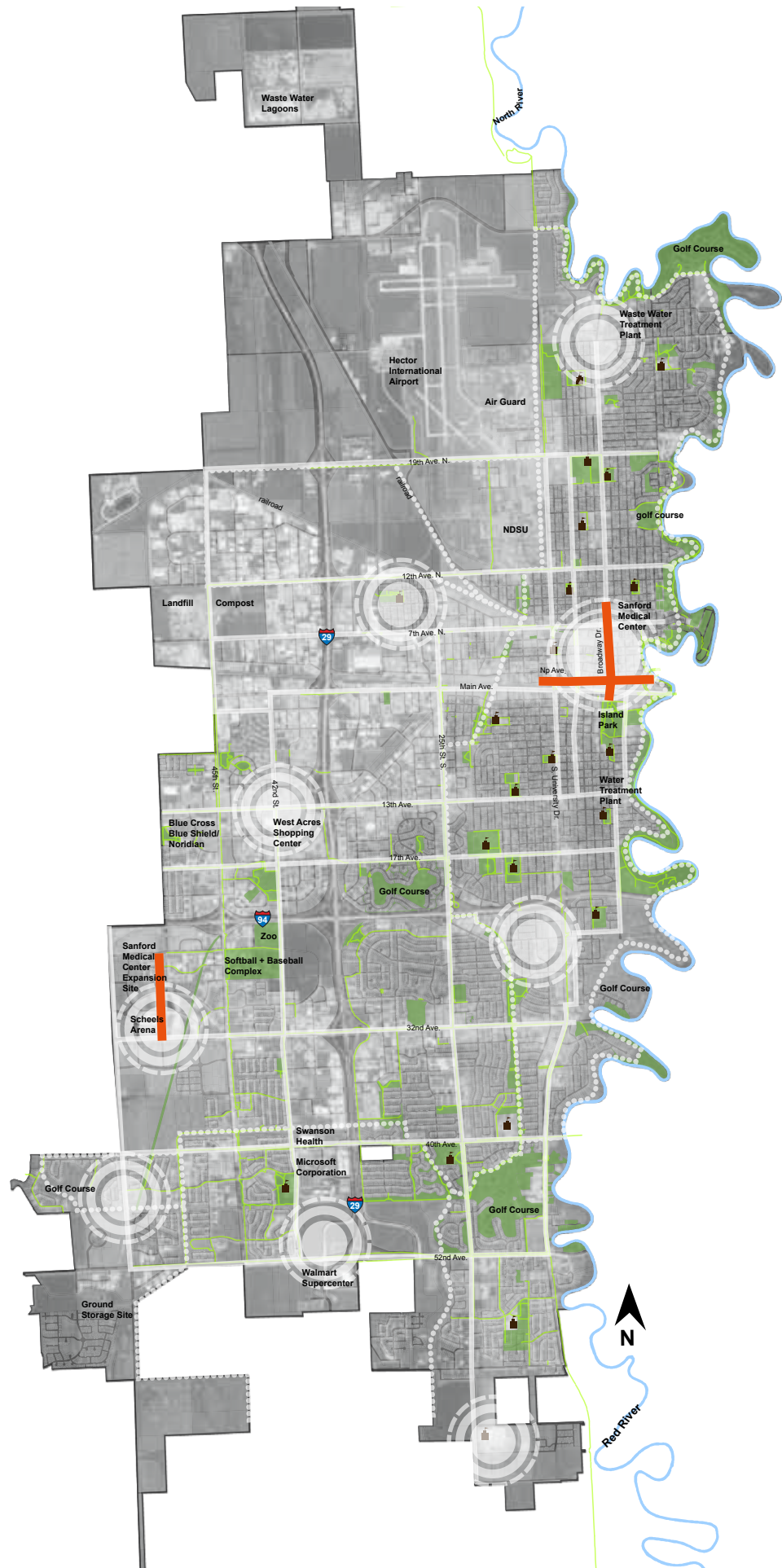
See Key Initiatives:**Health**

- City-Wide Trail Loop
- Year-round Recreational Amenities

**Transportation**

- Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure





REGIONAL RECREATION DESTINATION

These sites have the potential to support a regional recreational amenity, such as a water park, indoor athletic facility, or a conservatory. This amenity should provide year-round recreation in Fargo and will attract regional visitors. These sites support the goal of infill development because they are within the built out area of Fargo and will add to the urban vitality of these neighborhoods.

Benefits:

- Provides a year-round recreational amenity.
- Draws people from the region to Fargo and supports economic development goals.
- Supports guiding principle of infill development because potential areas catalyst development within the built out areas of Fargo.

See Key Initiatives:



Health

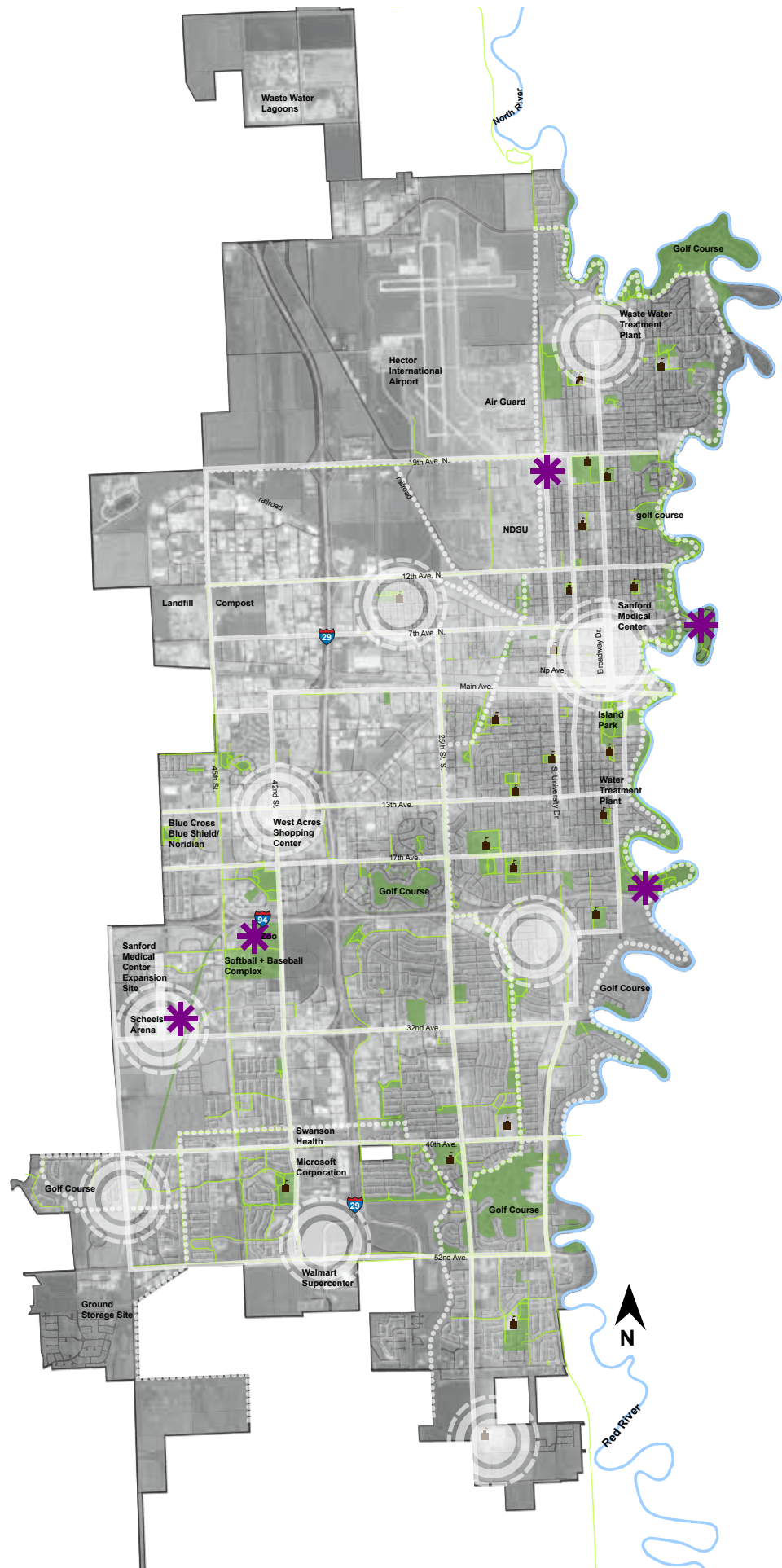
- Regional Recreational Amenity
- Year-round Recreational Amenities



Economy

- Amenities and Beautification as an Economic Development Tool





CELEBRATE THE RIVER

These areas can become a public gathering area and recreation venue on the Red River. The idea is to make improvements around these river crossings to provide better pedestrian access to the River and space for community events, such as an arts festival. There is potential to combine this idea with improvements to City Hall and enhanced flood protection.

Benefits:

- Provides a connection to the Red River.
- Creates a unique space for gatherings and festivals.
- Potential to combine with improvement to City Hall and flood protection.

See Key Initiatives:



Water and Environment

- Permanent Flood Protection
- Watershed Management
- Green Stormwater Infrastructure
- Parks, Open Space, and Habitat



Arts and Culture

- Public Art
- Public Gathering Places
- Festivals and Cultural Events





PERMANENT FLOOD PROTECTION

Flooding is the biggest threat facing Fargo. Flooding impacts homeowners, businesses, and can be a deterrent for new investment in Fargo. Permanent flood protection via a diversion of the Red River and levee/floodwalls along the Red River will advance the community vision.

Benefits:

- Protects existing homeowners and businesses from property damage, insurance expenses, and time consuming sandbagging.
- Protects Fargo's existing infrastructure and public investments, and can be integrated with other improvements, such as trails and recreation facilities.
- Encourages future investment in Fargo.

See Key Initiatives:**Water and Environment**

- Permanent Flood Protection

ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND RENEWABLE GENERATION

Energy efficiency and renewable generation initiatives will give Fargo a competitive edge as energy prices continue to be volatile in the future. Pursuing energy efficiency and renewable energy generation will protect Fargo citizens and businesses from rising energy costs and support national goals of energy independence and green house gas reductions.

Benefits:

- Gives Fargo a competitive edge against an uncertain energy future.
- Encourages development in an emerging economic sector, supporting the economic guiding principle.
- Supports national goals of energy independence and green house gas reductions.

See Key Initiatives:



Energy

- City Led Energy Efficiency, Reduced Carbon Footprint
- Incentives for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Production
- Smart Grid

Energy

This plan aims to transform Fargo with smart growth initiatives, sustainable transportation, along with initiatives directly related to energy efficiency and renewable generation. See the following initiatives to learn how they also make Fargo more energy efficient:

Water and Environment

- Water Conservation
- Green Stormwater Infrastructure
- Light Pollution
- Tree Canopy

Transportation

- Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure
- Transit Improvements

Economy

- Workforce Training (Green Jobs)

Neighborhoods, Infill, and New Development

- Quality New Development
- Design Standards
- Promote Infill

