

FALL 2016

COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT



Community Assessment of West Fargo, North Dakota (2016)

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Thank you to Dr. Goreham who allowed us to explore the idea of studying communities. We appreciate your guidance as we ventured to work with West Fargo.

We would like to offer our appreciation to the city of West Fargo for their hospitality as our class explored, photographed, interviewed, and participated in your community.

We would like to express special thanks to the people who were willing to sit down with us for interviews. We highly value your time and input. We would also like to say that we enjoyed this project and our time in your community. Thank You!

Executive Summary

In this report, the Community Assessment class provides an analysis of the West Fargo assets through the Community Capitals Framework (CCF). CCF is a tool for rural communities to measure resources in seven areas: Cultural, Natural, Human, Social, Political, Financial, Built, Governments, and Local Development Organizations (LDOs). The following are the highlights of each chapter:

- Chapter 1. Introduction defines the word community then focuses on what makes West Fargo a Community.
- Chapter 2. Methodology offers a list of methods that are used in each chapter.
- Chapter 3. Cultural Capital provides insight into cultural aspects of West Fargo such as history, population ethnic and religious diversity, and gender data.
- Chapter 4. Natural Capital highlights Parks in the community as well as soil, air, and water quality.
- Chapter 5. Human Capital outlines the education level and leadership potential in West Fargo, in addition to hiring characteristics.
- Chapter 6. Social Capital discusses the role different events and organizations play in gathering the community in social settings.
- Chapter 7. Political Capital illustrates power structures and stratification in West Fargo. This chapter deals with who has voice in the community and what organizations and people have the most influence in decision making.
- Chapter 8. Financial Capital shows the current economic base of West Fargo. This chapter offers insight into businesses, industries, and employment rates in the area.
- Chapter 9. Built Capital introduces resources like houses, infrastructure, and health care facilities in the West Fargo community.
- Chapter 10. Governments examines the governmental structure of West Fargo by talking about local government, emergency management, and other services.
- Chapter 11. Local Development Organizations identifies economic development projects. The current status of planning and supporting local entrepreneurship in West Fargo will also be addressed in this chapter.
- Chapter 12. The Ripple map provides a visual summary of the connections between different West Fargo community capitals.

CHAPTER 1



Source: Mackenzie Alexander, 2016

DEFINING THE COMMUNITY

Gloria Albert, Mackenzie Alexander,
Ibtissem Belmihoub, and Alec Bruns

Purpose

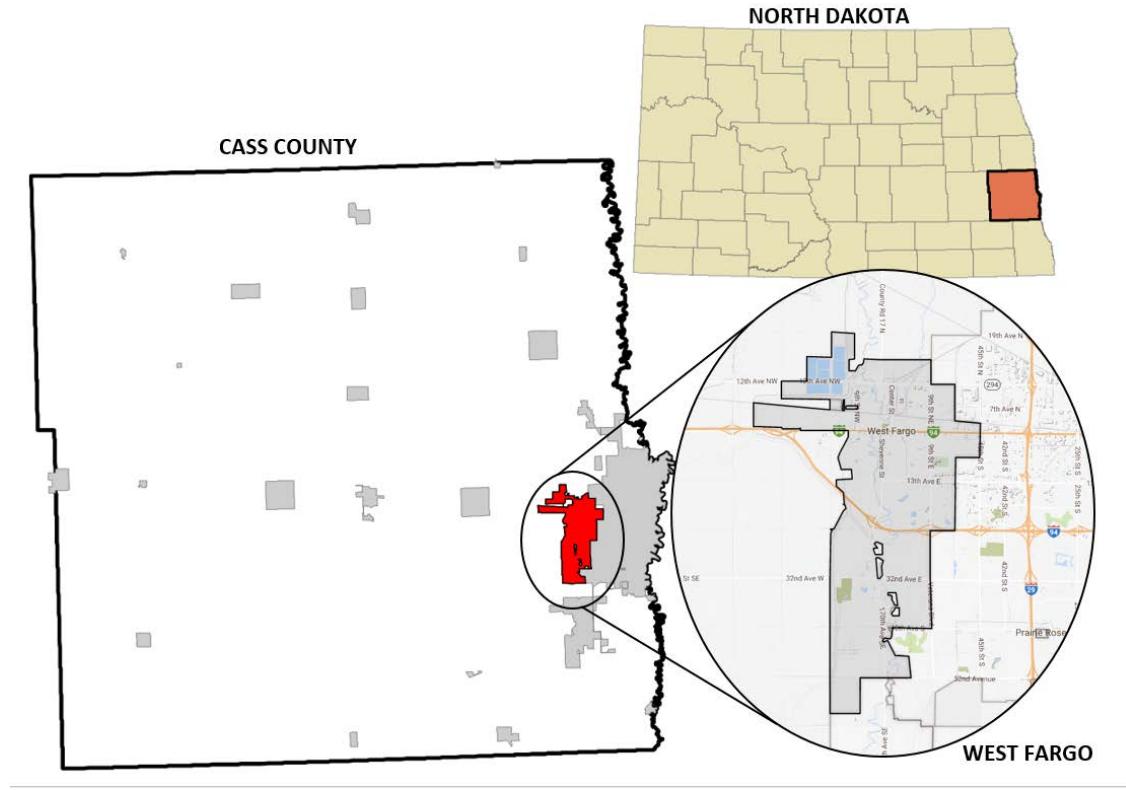
The purpose of this research is to define the community of West Fargo, North Dakota and identify its assets. In order to study the city, highlights of its resources and assets are presented using the Community Capitals Framework (CCF). CCF offers an analysis of seven main areas, or “capitals,” that define the community of West Fargo: Cultural Capital, Natural Capital, Human Capital, Social capital, Political Capital, Financial Capital, Built Capital, Governments, Local Development Organizations (Flora, Flora, and Gasteyer, 2016). This assessment was conducted by graduate and undergraduate students of North Dakota State University under the supervision of Dr. Gary Goreham in Sociology 404/604: Community Assessment.

The Definition of Community

There are different ways that sociologists have defined a community. In *Rural Communities, Legacy and Change*, (Flora et al. 2016) provide multiple definitions. A community could be in reference to the connections that individuals feel with each other or people who share common interests. A community can also be defined as a group of people in a specific geographic area who reside together. In a community, the members may feel codependent with other members. Other ways to look at community could be from the perspective of organization based on the status or role that each individual plays and their relationships with one another. Any one of these definitions is not enough, so to put all these ideas together provides a complete contemporary definition. Community can be defined as people in social interaction, who live in a geographic area and have one or more common ties (Hillery 1955 116).

The Community of West Fargo, ND

The city of West Fargo, North Dakota is located in Cass County, North Dakota (shown in Map 1.1) In 2015, the estimated population was 33,600, making it the fifth largest city in the state (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015 NP). According to the West Fargo’s city website, West Fargo is considered “one of the fastest growing communities in North Dakota with a growth rate of 72.9% between 2000 and 2010” (City of West Fargo, 2016 NP). West Fargo is known as “A City on the Grow” and is considered part of the larger Fargo-Moorhead metropolitan area (Fargo-Moorhead Convention and Visitors Bureau, 2016 NP). In the past West Fargo was mostly known as a community with a strong agricultural economy, today the city boasts “new expertise, unique advanced facilities, strong industry-university partnerships, and sophisticated business infrastructure” (City of West Fargo, 2016 NP).



Map 1.1. West Fargo Offset Map, 2009

Source: User:25or6to4, Wikimedia Commons

The team defines West Fargo as a community because the city's characteristics fit Hillery's encompassing definition. The geographic location shown above (Map 1.1) illustrates the place borders. The West Fargo people live for the common goal of growing and improving their common space and sense of community, as will be demonstrated later in the document. The people within this community all play a role in its functioning and stability. The location of the city of West Fargo is near the metropolitan area of Fargo-Moorhead opportunities to grow in all different capitals.

Community Capitals Framework



Figure 1.1. Seven Capitals in the Community Capitals Framework.

Source: Flora, Flora, and Gasteyer (2016).

The CCF is a method to organize a community's assets and maximize the benefits of these resources. Strengths in one specific capital helps all other capitals grow. The ultimate goal is for each community to become sustainable with resources in each capital for all of its residents. The class will focus on the seven capitals (Figure 1.1) that make up the CCF in this study of West Fargo. Below is Table 1.1 which offers a synopsis of each chapter's contents within this document.

Table 1.1. Chapter Overviews

Chapter	Capital	Synopsis
3	Cultural Capital	Discusses topics such as inequality, impact of gender, race and ethnicity. It also covers diversity, hierarchy, the family, and social problems.
4	Natural Capital	Focuses on things such as land use and climate change.
5	Human Capital	Discusses migration, health equity and changes in the quantity of human capital.
6	Social Capital	Touches on entrepreneurial social infrastructure and measuring social capital.
7	Political Capital	Discusses power and economic interests as well as power structure and community change.
8	Financial Capital	Talks about accounting and accountability as well as other topics like community needs, sources and changing rules financial capital.
9	Built Capital	Discusses provisions of built capital, local roles and motivation to act.

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CHAPTER 2



Source: Town Maps USA 2016

METHODS

Katie Bullock, Tia Kelley, Paul Lubbers

When looking at a community and coming to grasp what that community is all about, there are several methods to conducting research that can be utilized. By using a mixture of methods, researchers are able to triangulate their findings and get a clear picture of a community's assets. This chapter will focus on describing the various methods that are used throughout this study, as well as highlighting how they are employed in order to better understand the community of West Fargo.

Direct Observations

This type of research method is the easiest one to exercise when studying a community and it is an ideal first thing to do when starting a research project on this topic. The definition for Direct Observations is nothing short of its name; meaning the act of going to the place of interest and documenting pictures, creating short-term memories, purchasing any significant souvenirs, or people watching. One example of this is called, "Windshield Reconnaissance" meaning to drive around and take photos in your care of things that are important to the community (Goreham 2016). These photos can include images of schools, fire departments, police departments, city halls, and popular civilian hang out spots, among others. Some questions one could ask themselves with this kind of direct observation could be, 'What do you see?', 'What don't you see?' or 'What are your impressions?' (Goreham 2016). For the purpose of this project, researchers conducted direct observations by visiting the Bonanzaville museum, attending city planning and park board meetings, as well as using windshield reconnaissance in order to get a sense of the community.

Interviews

This form of research methods is common when collecting data about a community and it can also be a great source of networking. Interviewing can be more complex compared to other research methods because it requires a specific strategy. There is a list of factors that are important in interviewing: 1. Form a set of questions in advance. Make sure that these are open-ended questions because the more information one can gather, the more in depth the research project can get. 2. Make sure to include 'probe' or 'tag' questions in your interview. 3. Bring a partner so that in case you missed any important information or could not write everything down that the interviewee said, you have a partner to assist you. 4. Bringing a recorder is the most efficient strategy to use. However, permission from the interviewee to record the conversation always comes first (Goreham 2016). The researchers conducted interviews with various people throughout West Fargo, including business owners, local bankers, as well as representatives from both the city and the state.

Secondary Data

Secondary data is information that was collected before this current study. An example of this would be getting information off the US Census Bureau or American Fact Finder (Goreham 2016). This is important because it makes doing research easier, allows a faster route to completion, and it allows community developers to look in the community's past to see where it has progressed or declined. For this project, researchers took secondary data largely from the US Census Bureau, as well as through the CIA factsheets, city-data.gov, and West Fargo's official website.

Documentary Data

Documentary Data refers to written data, in this case “any written data about the community,” (Goreham 2016). This can include sources such as newspapers, city plans, economic plans, and brochures (Goreham 2016). Documentary data are important sources for understanding a community as it allows researchers to get an understanding of the “perspectives, assumptions, concerns, and activities of those who produce them,” (Taylor and Bogdan 1998). When looking at the community of West Fargo, the team used documentary data such as government documents as well as newspaper archives. The team also utilizes social media as a form of data in order to better comprehend how social groups connect within West Fargo.

Photographic Data

Photographic Data refers to photographs that allow for a visual representation of a community. These can include photos of buildings such as churches, schools, and homes, as well as other visual marks of a community such as community gatherings or welcome signs. Photographs are incredibly helpful and unique in understanding a community in that photographs “convey something that words cannot,” specifically they allow a reader to have a “sense of being there, seeing the setting and people firsthand,” (Taylor and Bogdan 1998). The team utilizes photographic data, collected from primary and secondary sources, in order to understand different aspects of the community including community events, local businesses, and city facilities.

Table 2.1 Primary and Secondary Data

Data Sources	Primary	Secondary
Built Capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Interviews· Observations· Photographs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Documents from official City of West Fargo website· Newspaper archives
Financial Capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Observations· Photographs· Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Census data· CRA data· West Fargo Comprehensive Plan· FFEIC
Natural Capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Photographs· Interviews· Observations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Photographs· Census data· City of West Fargo Water Quality Report· Documents from West Fargo Park District
Social Capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Social media· Photographs
Human Capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Observations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Census data· Photographs· Newspaper archives· West Fargo School Districts

Political Capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Interviews · Observations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Census data · Voting records
Cultural Capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Observations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Census data · City-data · Newspaper archives · Documents from official City of West Fargo website · Photographs

Data Analysis

Data analysis refers to the ways in which a vast array of data is examined and interpreted to form a comprehensive understanding of the subject, in this case the community of West Fargo. For the purpose of this study, researchers use a mixed method approach in which each piece of data is analyzed using the method appropriate for that data type. These data are then compared to other data types. Using a method known as “triangulation,” researchers compare and contrast the data types to understand where inconsistencies in the data occur, and find ways to account for these inconstancies, (Goreham 2016).

Methodological Issues

By using multiple forms of data, it is possible to limit the possibility of personal bias when conducting research. This is because multiple sources allow for data points to be lined up and find any inconsistencies that may exist. While biases can occur within different research methods, such as biased interviews or having personal experiences change the way researchers view direct observations, a mixed methods approach allows for inconsistencies within data to be found and accounted for.

Ethical Issues

The ethical definition that will be used is “the accepted standard of morality” (International, 2006). With any research that involves human participants, it is always important to place the well-being of the people above all else. Before the project could begin, the researchers completed the Institutional Review Board (IRB) training for protection of human subjects, in order to help ensure the wellbeing of all participants. The Belmont Report of 1979 also provided the guidelines to be used in the protection of research material. Additionally, the group created a code of ethics in order to guide the research in a manner that works to maximize benefits while minimizing risks.

Community Assessment Code of Ethics

- Act in a Professional manner following the IRB procedures.
- Raise awareness of residents and community leaders as to the assets and challenges of West Fargo and exercise fair and honest judgment in city planning.
- Enhance leadership capacity of community leaders and members
- Bring awareness regarding community issues to include diversity of cultures in different areas like law making and education
- Be transparent in sharing findings
- Provide space and time for sharing new ideas and allowing change

- Act as a facilitator, moderator between community members to develop future plans
- Engage and involve the residents in finding issues and solving problems in their own community

In conclusion, as the team strives to present the assets of West Fargo, a mixed methods approach is applied in order to accurately portray the community. This is done through the use of multiple methods including both primary and secondary data. By using a mixture of methods as well as adhering to a code of ethics in data collection, it is the goal of this project to present data in order to better the community as a whole.

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Other

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CHAPTER 3



Source: West Fargo Pioneer, 2016

CULTURAL CAPITAL

Erica Raguse, Michaela Thompson, and Dan Todd

Cultural capital within any given community can be “the filter through which people live their lives and their daily or seasonal activities, the way they regard the world around them, and what they think can be changed.” (Flora, Flora, & Gasteyer 2016:78) Cultural capital is important to understand so that people can help gain a clearer picture of what shapes life in a community. Taking into account what has happened in the past within a community, how a community is operating currently, and how residents shape their futures based on history are all important factors in understanding cultural capital.

There is a rich history in the quickly growing town of West Fargo. This history and a sense of closeness and unity within the community are important values of the residents. The importance of the values and history are illustrated in the following chapter.

Community History

West Fargo first began in 1871 with John Haggart buying sections of land on which he built his homestead and a packing plant. As the railway moved west from Moorhead in 1872, a village began to crop up around the land that Haggart owned. In 1878 enough children lived in the area to require a school and land was deeded to School District #6. In 1922, Haggart sold his land to a farmer named Lewis Altenbernd who in turn sold to Armour and Company in 1925. Armour and Company continued to operate a meat packing plant in the area (Thru the years to 1976)

Bonanzaville in West Fargo speaks volumes to the history and culture of the area as well. Bonanzaville is located just north of the Red River Valley Fairgrounds and is operated by the Cass County Historical Society. Within Bonanzaville there are a number of exhibits showing a wealth of information on the history of West Fargo and the surrounding area. Bonanzaville is home to Pioneer Village, which holds 43 historic buildings from the area much like the replica of a water tower shown below in Figure 3.1.

Bonanzaville is central in helping West Fargo residents stay close to the original roots of the community. Bonanzaville offers tours to local schools, residents, and tourists alike. Bonanzaville holds a number of events annually that celebrate the history of the area and include: Pioneer Days, ghost tours, craft shows, and holiday events.



Figure 3.1 Replica of a Water Tower in Bonanzaville
Source: Erica Raguse, 2016

West Fargo, like other communities in North Dakota, was prone to flooding of the Red and Sheyenne Rivers. In the spring of 1990, construction began on the river diversion project. This was to protect West Fargo from any flooding that would be caused by the Sheyenne River, which flows into the Red River. The diversion was finished in the fall of 1992 and helped to protect the city from the record level floods of 1997 and 2009. The diversion has yet to fail since the completion.

Since the very beginning, West Fargo has been a community that revolved around farming and pride and protection of the very land it stood on. Remembering the history of the town as well as exploring the current culture shows that these values continue to stand strong today through celebrations focusing on West Fargo and other events taking place to

A wealth of information on the history of West Fargo is available at West Fargo Historical Center which is located in the West Fargo Public Library. Visitors are able to browse a wide range of documents which include personal written histories of current and past residents, archived issues of West Fargo's own newspaper, West Fargo Pioneer, documentation of past flooding, and a number of other various documents.

Demographics

West Fargo is referred to as one of the “youngest and fastest growing communities in North Dakota” (cityofwestfargo.gov).

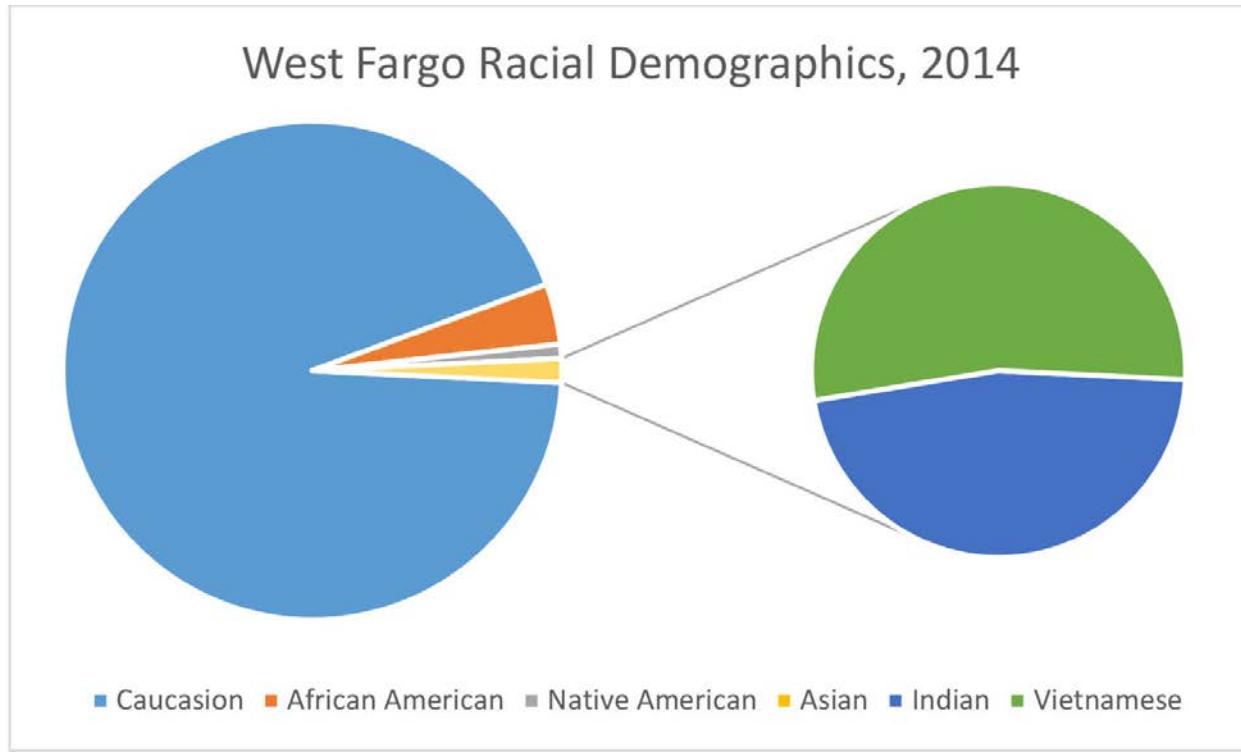


Figure 3.2 West Fargo Racial Demographics
Source: Census Bureau 2014 American Community Survey

According to the Census Bureau, the majority of West Fargo residents are white or Caucasian at 90.9%. As seen in Figure 3.2, the largest minority group as of 2014 was black or

African American at 3.8%. 1.8% of the population is of Asian origin, with the majority of these being 0.7% Indian (212 people) and 0.8% Vietnamese (238 people). Only 0.9% of the population is Native American, with most of these coming from the regional Chippewa or Dakota (Sioux) tribal groups. Only 2.2% of census respondents reported being multiracial.

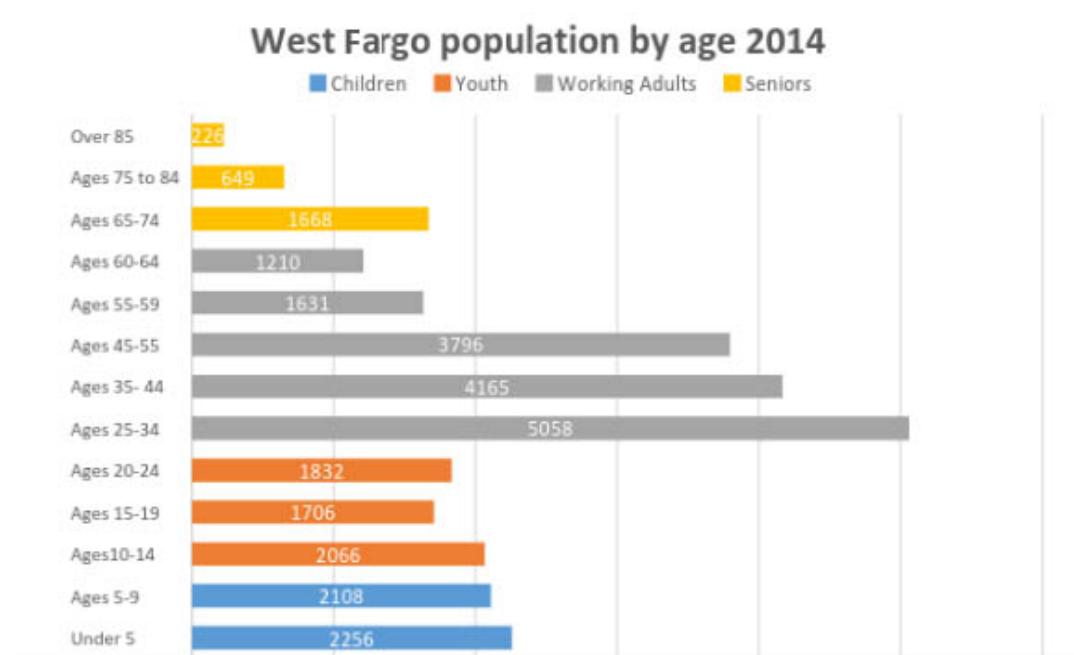


Figure 3.3 West Fargo Age Distribution

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

West Fargo has enjoyed a great deal of population growth over the last decade. Much of the population increase has been in-migration of people aged 25-45, which West Fargo Economic Developer Matt Marshall refers to as “the crown jewel” of demographics (Marshall, 2016). Because of this particular population growth, West Fargo is a very active and engaged community.

Spirituality

In West Fargo, there are sixteen established churches, all of which are Christian based faiths. The denominations represented consist of two Catholic churches, five Lutheran, one Methodist, and one Presbyterian. Seven churches are categorized as ‘other denomination’ and include Baptist and Evangelical faiths, among others. West Fargo does not have a synagogue or a mosque within the city boundaries. The breakdown of denominations are represented as follows:

Baptist

- Living Hope Baptist

Catholic

- Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church
- Holy Cross Catholic Church

Lutheran

- Faith Lutheran
- Lutheran Church of the Cross
- St. Andrew Lutheran Church
- Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church
- Triumph Lutheran Brethren Church

Methodist

- Flame of Faith United Methodist Church

Presbyterian

- Community Presbyterian Church

Other Denominations

- All Nations Assemblies of God
- Changing Lives Tabernacle
- Meadow Ridge Bible Chapel
- Heartland Community Church
- New Beginnings Assembly of God
- Prairie Heights
- Red River Church
- Shiloh Evangelical Free Church

According to the 2010 Religion Census, between 55 and 74.9% of residents of Cass County who are affiliated with a place of worship are considered adherent by their parishes. This statistic is supported by reports that 74% of North Dakota is ‘churched’, ‘churched’ meaning that residents have an affiliation with a church (Goreham, 2016).

Recreation and Community Events

West Fest Since 1992, the city of West Fargo has been celebrating community pride through West Fest. West Fest is a collection of community events commemorating West Fargo and is held in September. Events kick off with a Cruise Night on Sheyenne Street and include a parade, pancake breakfast, community luncheon, softball & horseshoe tournaments, 10k run, 5k run, vendor & craft fair, and a Fireman’s Ball. (West Fest Website and Welcome West Fargo book from library)

Red River Valley Fairgrounds The Red River Valley Fairgrounds, which, according to North Dakota State University archives, were relocated from North Fargo to West Fargo in the mid-to-late 1960s bring a number of opportunities for recreation and revenue into the community. Situated just south of Bonanzaville, the Red River Valley Fairgrounds hosts Red River Valley Fair in July. Red River Valley Fair drew over 90,000 attendees in 2016. While those attendance numbers are down slightly from the year prior, the entertainment in the grandstand, which ranges from rock and country music concerts to automobile racing continues to bring in crowds with a wide range of interests (redrivervalleyfair.com).

Red River Valley Fairgrounds also holds an agricultural expo every September called Big Iron. Big Iron, the “largest farm show in the upper Midwest” boasts over 900 vendor booths, exhibits, and demonstrations. The mission statement of Big Iron, “The Big Iron Farm Show strives to educate farmers and ranchers from around the world with the latest cutting-edge agricultural products, equipment, technology and services.” (www.bigironfarmshow.com) is a testament to how integrated the culture of farming continues to be in the area.

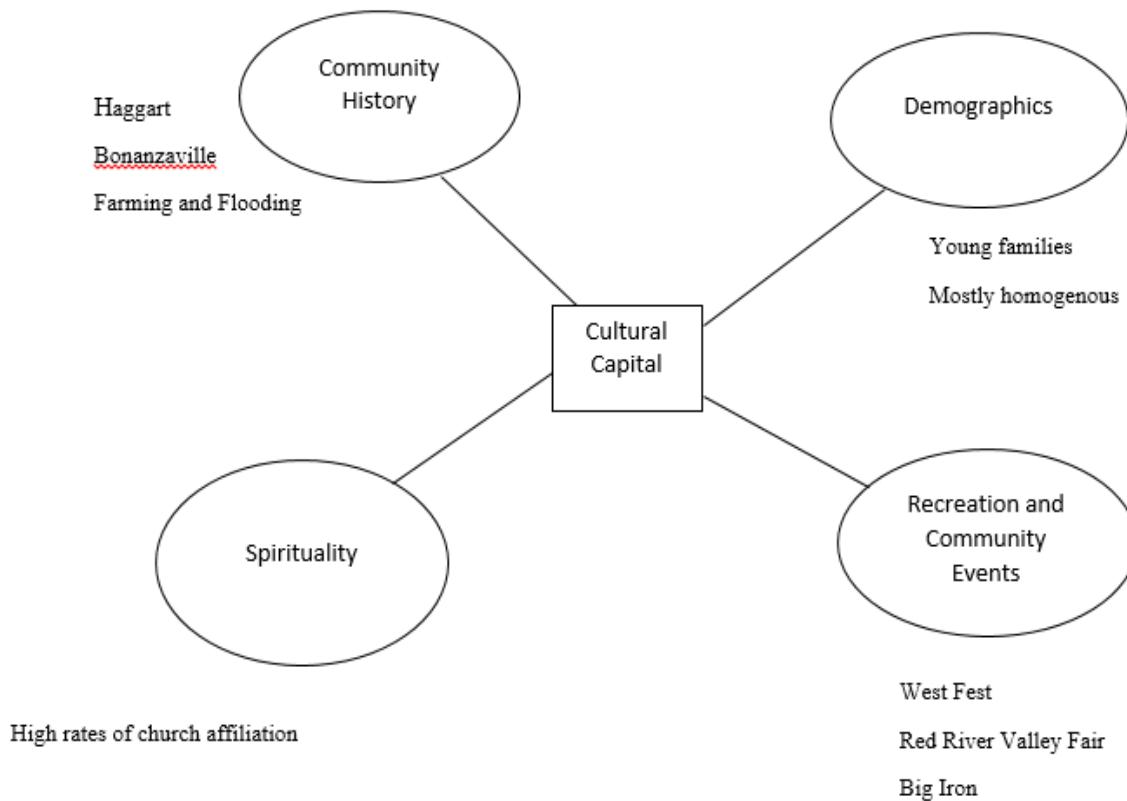


Figure 3.4 Cultural Capital Assets

Challenges and Implications

While West Fargo boasts a number of unique celebrations and opportunities for recreation, it is absolutely tied to Fargo and Moorhead in a community sense. West Fargo relies on Fargo and Moorhead for a number of cultural opportunities not necessarily listed in this chapter while people from all over the Fargo-Moorhead area and beyond travel to West Fargo to enjoy the activities only West Fargo offers. One could reasonably suppose that as the population continues to grow within West Fargo, so may the racial and ethnic diversity. Should this happen to be the case, West Fargo will continue to enjoy expanding cultural diversity.

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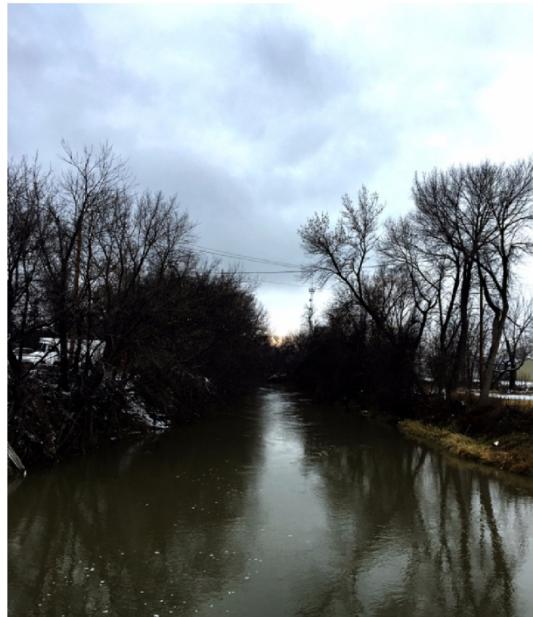
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CHAPTER 4



Source: Kimberly Morris, 2016

NATURAL CAPITAL

Kimberly Morris, Serina Moss, and Kalley Norr

Natural Capitals include the resources that are used within the region (Flora, Flora, and Gasteyer, 2013). West Fargo utilizes many of the natural capitals and adjusts as it combats population growth in the greater Fargo area. Many of the natural capitals, such as water, biodiversity, climate, and soil are shared with Fargo and the upper Midwest.

In this chapter, West Fargo's natural capitals such as water, soil, climate, air quality, biodiversity, and parks are assessed. Information was collected through various land conservation reports, interviews with public works departments in both West Fargo and Fargo, and other documentation on soil, water, and climate.

Water

Water is an essential resource for any community. Clean water allows communities to thrive, is a necessity for healthy citizens, and is a contributing factor to the success of nearly every major industry (Agency, 2016). Water for consumption can include both ground water such as aquifers and surface water including lakes and streams. It is also important to recognize that water is not an infinite source. Moving east to west across the United States, one will find that water is a scarce resource (Flora et. al, 2013). Figuring out what water sources West Fargo uses, the quality, and quantity is important to understand when looking at natural capital. This section will address the switching of West Fargo's water sources, the Red River, Sheyenne River, efforts to prevent flooding, as well as water quality reports.

Switching Water Sources

Growing communities often need to obtain new sources of water in order to survive. This was the case for West Fargo. The City of West Fargo switched water sources in 2016 in order to support the city's growth. Prior to the switch, water was obtained from an aquifer, an underground layer of porous rocks that collects water, through nine wells (James, 2015). This source was not sustainable though. The city was expected to outgrow its water supply by 2018 according to the West Fargo Public Works Director, Chris Brungardt (Francis, 2016). For this reason, West Fargo made an agreement to purchase water from the City of Fargo (Reuer, 2016). Fargo and West Fargo currently obtain water from the Red River and Sheyenne River. In case of a drought, water can also be obtained from Lake Ashtabula (Fargo, 2015). This shows that West Fargo is obtaining water from several surface water sources. Further detail will be provided on each of these water sources to better understand their benefits.

The Red River

The Red River is a main source of water for West Fargo and not only does it offer water for West Fargo and Fargo but it is a great amenity. The river is about 550 miles long and is slow moving. This allows residents in West Fargo to take advantage of a variety of recreational opportunities such as kayaking, canoeing, fishing, and birdwatching (Federation, 2016). Figure 4.4 shows people kayaking and canoeing on the Red River. Residents from West Fargo share water with Fargo which is beneficial because West Fargo can support their growing community. West Fargo also benefits in other ways such as recreational opportunities because of the close distance. It is about 12 miles east of West Fargo and about a twenty-minute drive.



Figure 4.1 Recreation on the Red River

Source: Danella Johnson, 2015

The Sheyenne River

The Sheyenne River flows through West Fargo and is a tributary of the Red River. It meanders 581 miles in North Dakota over a wide variety of terrain such as open prairies and rich farmland (Sheyenne, 2016). Following along the river's banks, one will see that the river offers unique beauty. For West Fargo, it offers recreational fishing to the community where Northern Pike, Sauger, Walleye, and Catfish can be found. Most of the river goes through residential area in West Fargo. The Sheyenne River is yet another source of water for Fargo and West Fargo and can be treated for consumption. 60 miles west of West Fargo is Valley City. Just north of Valley City is Lake Ashtabula. In a drought, water can be released from Lake Ashtabula into the Sheyenne River and can supply Fargo's needs for about two years. Fargo owns 52% of stored water from the lake (Fargo, 2015). This shows that Fargo and West Fargo have several sources of water to supply the community. The next section will go over implications with these water sources.



Map 4.1, Visual of the Sheyenne Diversion

Source: City of West Fargo, 2015

Flooding

Flooding has been an issue for West Fargo and the surrounding area often damaging property and costing the Fargo Moorhead region millions of dollars in efforts to fight the floods (FM Diversion, 2016). West Fargo has permanent flood protection from the Sheyenne River. The Sheyenne River is considered a perch river. This means that the banks are higher than adjacent ground so when the river is full the water then flows across the land and floods it. The Sheyenne Diversion was made to avoid this issue. In Horace, about ten miles south of West Fargo, the Sheyenne diversion was constructed in 1992. The diversion protected West Fargo from record level floods in 1997 and 2009 (City of West Fargo, 2016). Figure 4.2 shows where the Sheyenne Diversion is located and what area of land is protected. The creation of the diversion changed the landscape of West Fargo, “The diversion removed tens of thousands of acres from the annual spring flooding threat and development took off” (Inforum, 2010). This shows that the diversion benefitted the community by protecting residents from flooding and in turn, this increased the population and available development. This protection does not mean that West Fargo is completely unaffected by flooding that still occurs in Fargo and Moorhead from the Red River. In the case of flooding, residents in the surrounding communities help set up emergency levees when severe flooding is expected. West Fargo residents, such as students, can be seen helping Fargo in major floods by sandbagging houses by the Red River. The next section will address the quality of West Fargo’s water.



Figure 4.2 Water Testing at the Fargo Water Treatment Plant

Source: Kalley Norr, 2016

Water Quality

Quality of water directly impacts the health of West Fargo citizens as well as the biodiversity in the area. Residents of West Fargo consume water that gets treated by the Fargo Water Treatment Plant. An interview was conducted with Brian, an operations supervisor of the water treatment plant, and Mark, the water plant superintendent. The following information was provided by Mark and Brian. The plant takes water from the Red River or the Sheyenne River and treats it with conventional chemicals. The pump station for the Sheyenne River is located by Horace near 52nd avenue. The plant takes water from whichever river has better water quality, usually the Red River. It is done this way because the better the water quality, the cheaper it will be to treat thus, saving the city money. West Fargo was added onto Fargo's water supply in June of 2016. Table 4.4 shows how much West Fargo consumes of the available water that the Fargo Water Treatment Plant has to offer. The quality of this water is tested every four hours and is reported to the government. Figure 4.3 shows the water the operators test every four house. This reporting is part of the Safe Water Drinking Act, a law that protects public drinking water in the country and was passed in 1974. There is a lab attached to the building that is not affiliated with the water treatment plant and is under Fargo Cass Public Health since they do testing that certifies the plant. This is another way that water is ensured safe to drink. So West Fargo's water is ensured safe to drink by several precautions taken by Fargo Cass Public Health and the Fargo Water Treatment Plant but how is this relationship between the two cities beneficial? Mark answered this during his interview, ‘It’s a good deal

for everybody... The City of Fargo makes money off it to help with all the new regulations we have to meet and then West Fargo doesn't have to maintain a place like this" (Bergantine & Peterson, 2016). Overall, the purpose of this section was to show that West Fargo has a sustainable source of clean water to support their growing city and that The Red River and Sheyenne River are integral part of West Fargo's community.

Table 4.1 Capacity and Consumption of Water in West Fargo

	Total Capacity	West Fargo Consumption	Total Consumption (Fargo and West Fargo)
Summer	45 MGD	4 MGD	22 MGD
Winter	45 MGD	2 MGD	12-14 MGD

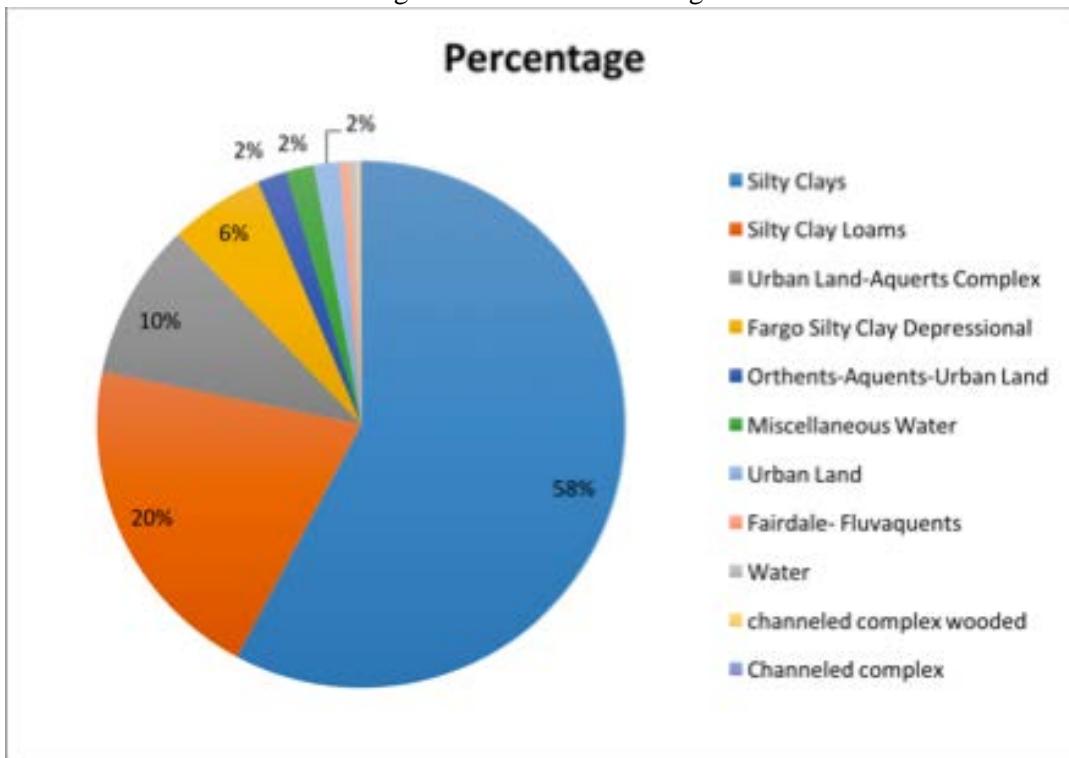
MGD = Million Gallons per Day

Source: Bergantine, B., & Peterson, M., 2016

Soil

Soil is a mixture of organisms that supports life in our community (Flora et. al, 2013). West Fargo has many different soils but mainly consists of clay, which is fine natural rock mixed with organic substances and water. When clay becomes dry it turns into a hard and extremely brittle, which makes farming in our area very difficult. Rain and topsoil are very important to the farming community in order to grow crops and support the community through agriculture.

Figure 4.3 Soil in West Fargo



The soil in West Fargo consists of 28 different forms of soil. Figure 4.3 depicts the types of soil/clays and the percentages of each form.

Climate

The climate of West Fargo is classified as humid continental under the vegetation-based Köppen classification system (City of West Fargo, 2014). The characteristics of this type of climate include large temperature fluctuations between seasons, cold winters, and warm summers. Table 4.2 illustrates the average annual high and low temperatures in the Fargo area. The annual temperature is evaluated at the Hector International Airport in Fargo.

North Dakota, and specifically the northeast region of North Dakota, has one of the most continental climates in the world (Akyuz, 2016). West Fargo and the greater area experience extreme high temperatures in the summer months and extreme low temperatures in the winter months. Adnan Akyuz, the North Dakota State Climatologist, explained these vast differences in temperature as an asset to a community because it creates a shared experience for all community members; something that many other states may not experience together.

Table 4.2 Annual Average Temperature, Fargo, North Dakota

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Avg. High °F	18	24	36	56	69	77	83	81	71	56	37	22
Avg. Low °F	0	6	19	33	45	55	60	57	47	35	20	6

Source: City of Fargo, 2016

Precipitation The precipitation in this a humid continental climate has relatively even distribution of rainfall and snowfall between months. Table 4.3 illustrates the average annual precipitation in Fargo as well as the average annual snowfall.

Table 4.3 Annual Average Precipitation, Fargo, North Dakota

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Avg. Precip (in.)	0.71	0.59	1.3	1.38	2.8	3.9	2.8	2.56	2.56	2.17	0.98	0.83
Avg. Snowfall (in.)	11	7	9	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	8	11

Source: City of Fargo, 2016

Biodiversity

The biodiversity in West Fargo includes many of the common animals and vegetation found in the upper Midwest. The vegetation in West Fargo includes a variety of grasses, perennials, shrubs, and deciduous plants (Nature Conservatory Field Office, 2014). The animals that are supported by the land and vegetation in West Fargo include deer, skunk, fox, gophers, waterfowl, and other small creatures. The biodiversity of West Fargo can be enjoyed at River's Bend Park's new nature trail in 2017 (Germundson, 2016).

Air Quality

Air quality is assessed using an Air Quality Index (AQI) by the Environmental Protection Agency. Air quality is measured by the level of contaminants in the air including carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, and ozone (EPA, 2012). West Fargo and Fargo rank in the top 10% in the nation for air quality with less than 0.1ppm of ozone and an undetectable amount of carbon monoxide (EPA 2015). North Dakota's air quality is exemplary because of the topography, spread out population, and relatively low population density (Akyuz, 2016).

Parks

West Fargo is the home to 30 Parks that offer many different assets to the community. Most of the parks offer built capital such as playgrounds, basketball courts, restrooms, and warming houses. Natural aspects of the parks include hiking trails, ski trails, and the Sheyenne River for fishing. The largest park is the Rendezvous Park with 15 different amenities (West Fargo Park District, 2016).

West Fargo Parks:

- Arbor Woods
- Armour
- Brooks Harbor
- Burlington
- Charleswood
- Citizens
- Eagle Run
- Eaglewood
- North Elmwood
- South Elmwood
- Fortieth (40th) Ave
- Goldenwood
- Herb Tintes
- Heritage Square
- Maple Ridge
- Maplewood
- Meadowridge Tot Lots
- Meadowridge
- Northridge Way
- Pinewood
- Rendezvous
- River's Bend
- Riverside
- Service Club
- Shadow Creek
- Shadow Wood Pocket
- Shadow Wood
- West River
- Westside
- The Wilds
- The Wilds South

The West Fargo Park District has continually expanded throughout the last 10 years while not increasing taxes for residents (Germundson, 2016). The West Fargo Park District plans to expand their developments as the city grows as long as there is land to continue building parks.

Community Development Implications

The natural capitals in West Fargo influence many aspects of the community. West Fargo's soil determines the success of agriculture in the area, and therefore influences the type of economy that West Fargo will have. The climate determines the growing seasons and the recreational opportunities throughout the year. It also can foster or limit the biodiversity within the area.

While both Fargo and West Fargo would like to maintain their independence, both cities share many components of natural capital. Water, an essential natural capital to communities, is a resource that creates a mutualistic relationship between both communities as both cities benefit from sharing the water source. Although resources are shared, government involvement creates a separate identity in West Fargo and Fargo through their allocation and management of these resources.

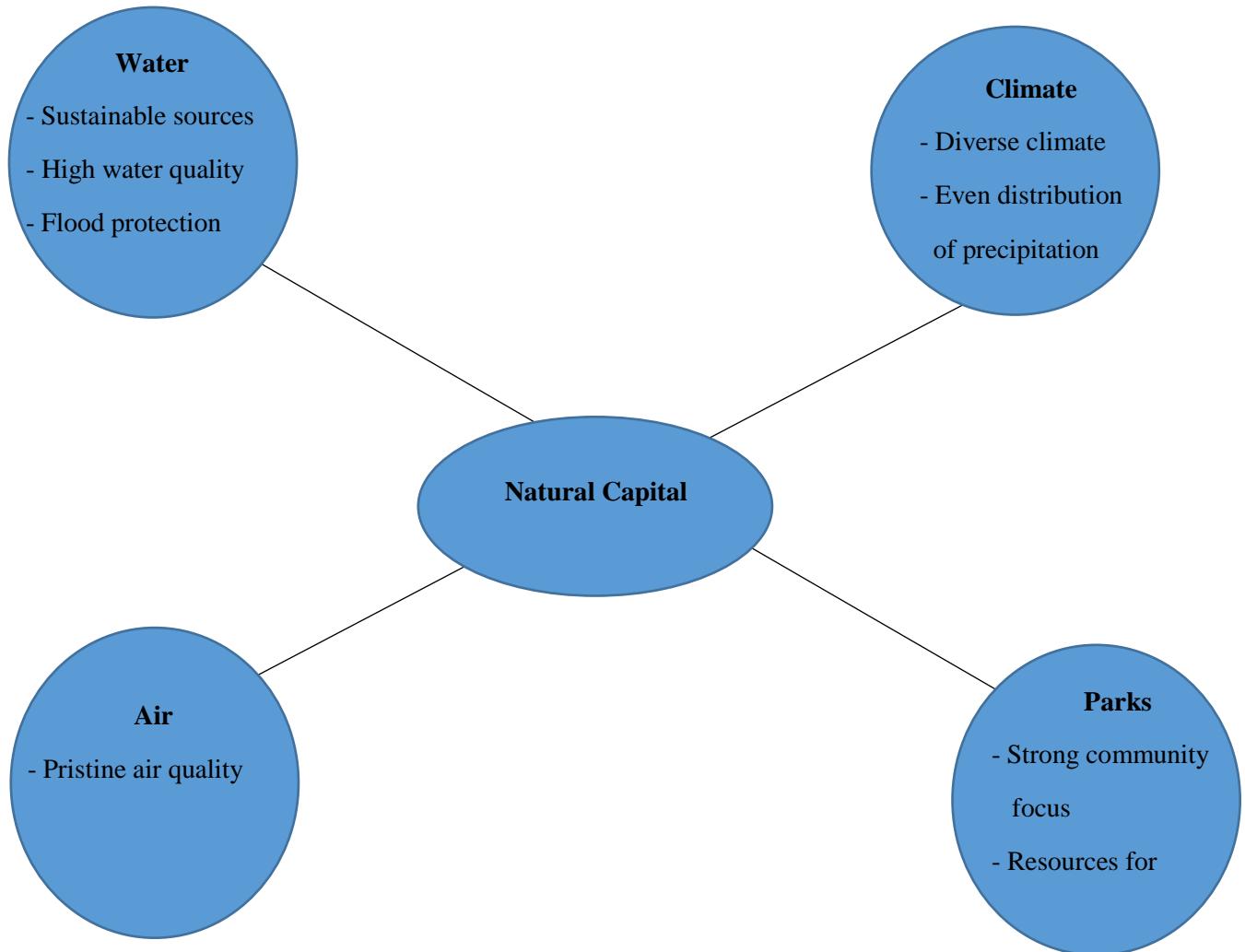


Figure 4.4 Natural Capital Asset Map

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CHAPTER 5



Source: City of West Fargo West Fest, 2016

HUMAN CAPITAL

Jesse Riley and Ashley Vangerude

Human capital is “attributes of an individual that contribute to their ability to earn a living, strengthen community, and to otherwise contribute to community organizations, to their families, and to self-improvement” (Flora and Flora, 2013, 85). This chapter will include information on the population of West Fargo, age demographic, racial backgrounds, religious backgrounds, education in West Fargo and primary occupations of the community.

West Fargo has been steadily growing in the last 15 years with 2016 reaching a record high in school attendance. Record highs in population growth, flood protection, new schools, and a diverse economic landscape has provided West Fargo with the human capital to build on. The community organizations, institutions, and professionals work to provide a sustainable community with opportunities for personal and economic development.

Population of West Fargo

With a growth rate of 72.9%, West Fargo, known as the “City on the Grow”, is one of the fastest growing communities in North Dakota. The population of West Fargo in 2015 was estimated to be 33,597. Figure 5.7 shows the extreme change in population since 2000.

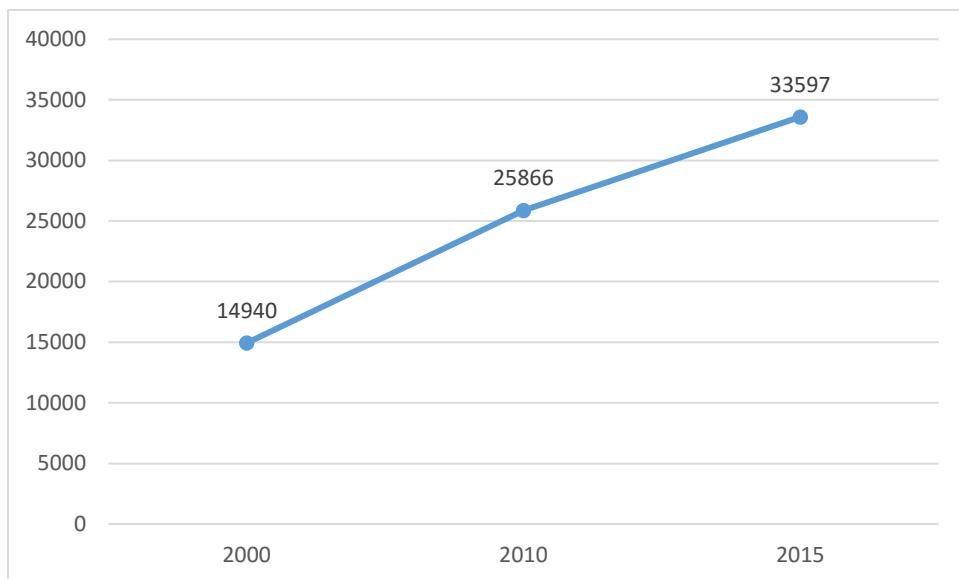


Figure 5.1 Population of West Fargo, ND

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015

Figure 5.1 shows the population of West Fargo in the years 2000, 2010 and 2015. The population has risen throughout this time period.

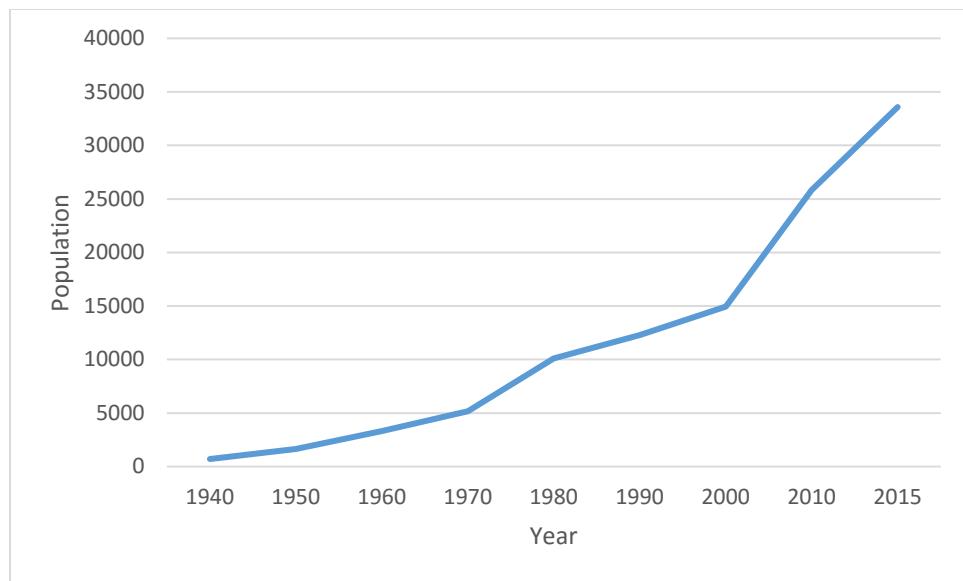


Figure 5.2 Projected Population for West Fargo in 2015

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010

Figure 5.2 shows the increasing population from 1940-2010 with an estimated population for the year of 2015 for West Fargo.

Age and Gender of West Fargo

Looking at the age and gender demographics of a community can help to show population trends occurring within that community. Figure 5.8 shows that from 2000 to 2010 West Fargo experienced a population growth for all age classes.

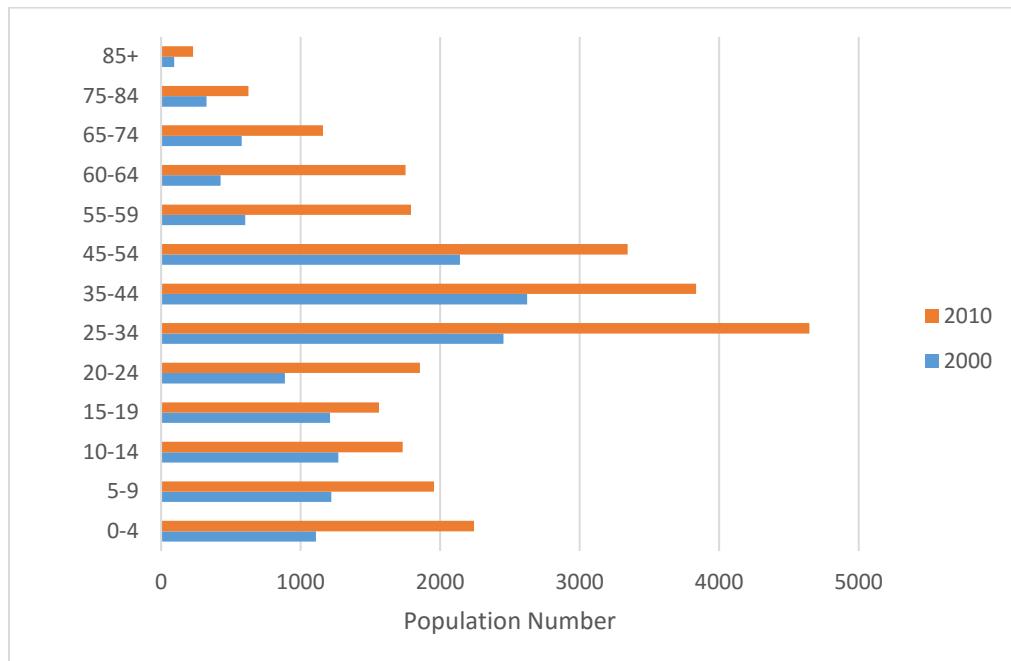


Figure 5.3 Population Age of West Fargo for 2000 and 2010

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010

Figure 5.3 shows the population of each age class in West Fargo from both 2000 and 2010. In both years the majority of the population is between 25 and 44 years old.

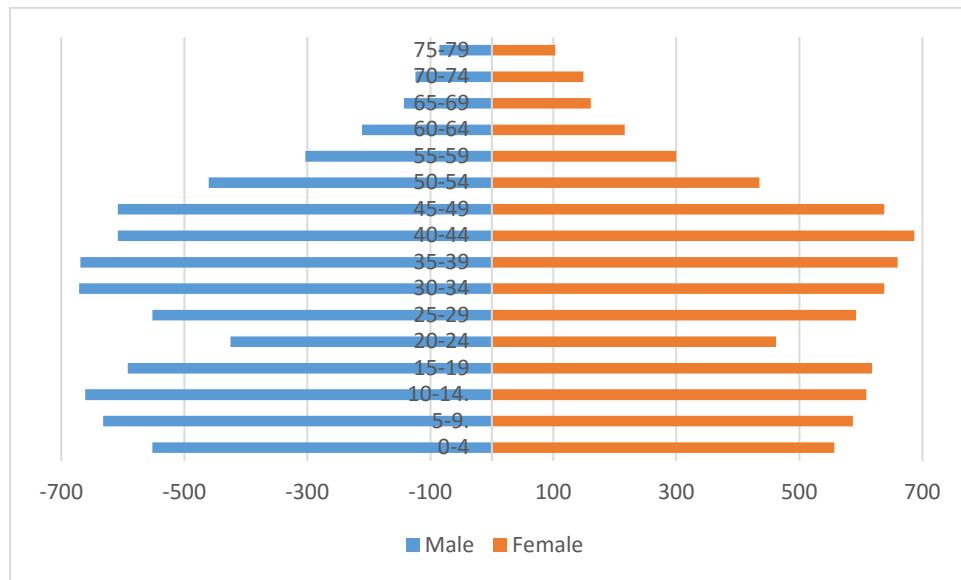


Figure 5.4 Population Pyramid of West Fargo, 2000

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

Figure 5.4 shows the population of both males and females residing in West Fargo in 2000. The majority of the population is between the ages of 5-19 and 30-49.

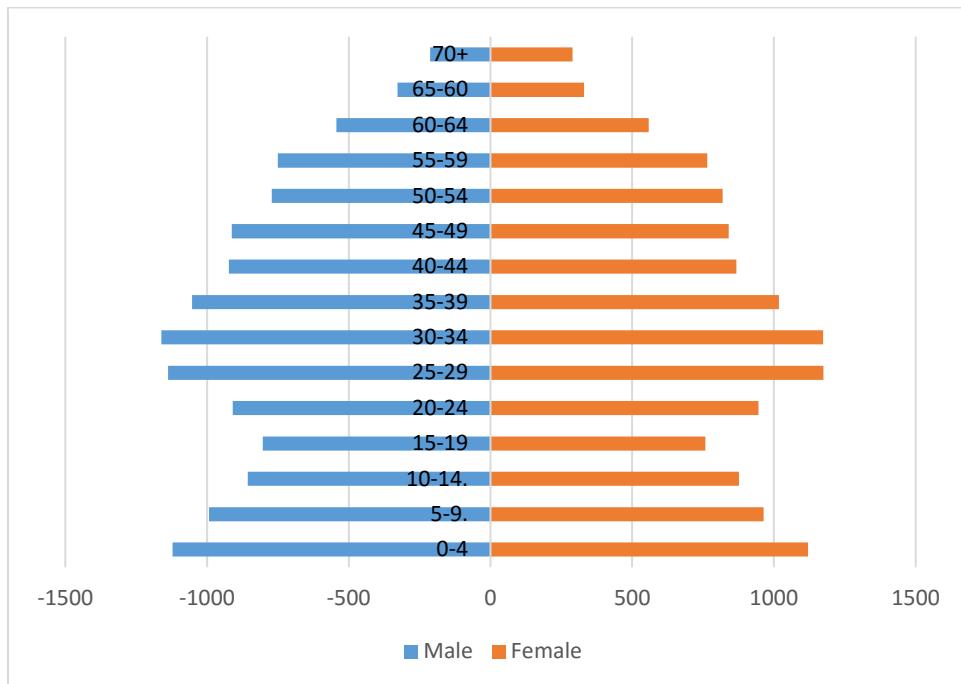


Figure 5.5 Population Pyramid of West Fargo, 2010

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010

This population pyramid shown in Figure 5.5 shows a population that is experiencing an increase in youth. This is the reason for the increased building of schools in the West Fargo area. This growing population will benefit human capitals by providing a steady stream of workers to enter the work force. This is seen as desirable by many economic developers.

Racial Background

Table 5.1 shows the racial background of West Fargo in 2010. Almost 99% of citizens of West Fargo present themselves as one race, with about 96% of them being white. The second most common racial background is then American Indian.

Table 5.1 West Fargo Race

Subject	Number	Percent
RACE		
Total Population	14,940	100
<u>One Race</u>	14,766	98.8
White	14,402	96.4
Black or African American	63	0.4
American Indian and Alaska Native	156	1.0
Asian	42	0.3
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific	3	-
Some Other Race	100	0.7
<u>Two or More Races</u>	174	1.2
HISPANIC OR LATINO		
Total population	14,940	100
Hispanic or Latino	211	1.4
Mexican	130	0.9
Puerto Rican	5	-
Cuban	6	-
Other Hispanic or Latino	70	0.5
Not Hispanic or Latino	14,729	98.6

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010

Training, Skills and Employment

The office of economic development claims that "The cost of business in West Fargo is 15% less than the national average." The city is committed to developing and sustaining an economically viable community through various tax incentives, PACE (Property Assed Clean Energy)loans ,PIOLET(payment in lieu of taxes) programs, TIF(Tax increment Financing) districts and Renaissance Zone programs. The city works with individual businesses to solve challenges on an case by case basis.

Some of the employers the West Fargo are community are.



Figure 5.6 Bobcat
www.turfmagazine.com

Bobcat is a manufacturer of light industrial equipment. West Fargo is home to their 55,000 square foot corporate office. The Bobcat Company announced their continued support of innovation in education by donating \$3 million to North Dakota State University (NDSU) to fund a STEM-related scholarship program. The State of North Dakota will match the donation, adding \$1.5 million, making the combined gift of \$4.5 million the single largest gift to establish a scholarship endowment in NDSU history. Bobcat maintains an engineering and information technology office on the campus of NDSU.



Figure 5.7 Titan Machinery
westfargond.gov

Titan machinery owns and operates a network of full service agricultural and construction equipment dealerships in eleven states and in Europe. West Fargo is home to their corporate offices. From this location they oversee several branch locations and conduct financial operations.



Figure 5.8 Trail King
Inforum.com

Trail king manufactures trailers with load capacities ranging from 6,000 pounds to 1,000,000. Their trailers service the construction, agriculture, transportation, and waste hauling industry.



Figure 5.9 Integrity Windows
Source: westfargond.gov

One of West Fargo's largest employers is Integrity Windows and Doors. Integrity windows seeks local graduates in engineering for its R&D division as well as untrained laborers to fill its production demands. They offer a wide range of benefits to entice employees. Their labor pool is diverse and multicultural. The labor need of the West Fargo plant are continuing to grow.

Leadership

West Fargo and the greater fm chamber has leadership training for business and economic development. This program is aimed at developing leaders who greatly impact the community through dedication and service. Skills learned from the chambers leadership program include; developing long lasting relationships with other leaders, discovering the inner workings of the community and challenges facing it, and fostering a commitment to community stewardship.

Education



Figure 5.10 (Left): West Fargo Cheney Middle School

Source: <http://www.yhr.com/portfolio/education/K12/CheneyMiddleSchool/>

Figure 5.11 (Right): West Fargo Sheyenne High

Source: <http://www.yhr.com/portfolio.asp?uid=19>



Figure 5.12: Sheyenne High School Football Team

Source: <http://www.westfargopioneer.com/sports/3829829-mustangs-win-first-game-new-football-stadium>

Since the 1996-1997 school year, the West Fargo district has seen record growth with 5,173 students enrolling in the past 20 years (Reuer, 2016). The educational attainment percent for West Fargo is 94.6% are high school graduates or higher. There are currently two early childhood schools, eight elementary schools, 2 middle schools, 2 high schools and one alternative school.

Table 5.2 West Fargo Schools

Early Childhood Schools	Elementary Schools	Middle Schools	High Schools	Alternative Schools
Clayton A. Lodoen Kindergarten Center	Aurora Elementary	Cheney	West Fargo High	Community High
Osgood Kindergarten Center	Eastwood	Liberty	Sheyenne High	
	Freedom			
	Horace			
	Independence			
	L.E. Berger			
	Legacy			
	South			
	Harwood			
	Westside			

Source: West Fargo School District, 2016

Asset Map of Human Capital

The city of West Fargo has assets which contribute to the local economy and give members the ability to earn a living wage. Various capitals which aid this process are social systems, institutional systems, organizational systems and professional. Together, these capitals effect each other by strengthening the community and providing leadership for further utilizing the assets of human capital.

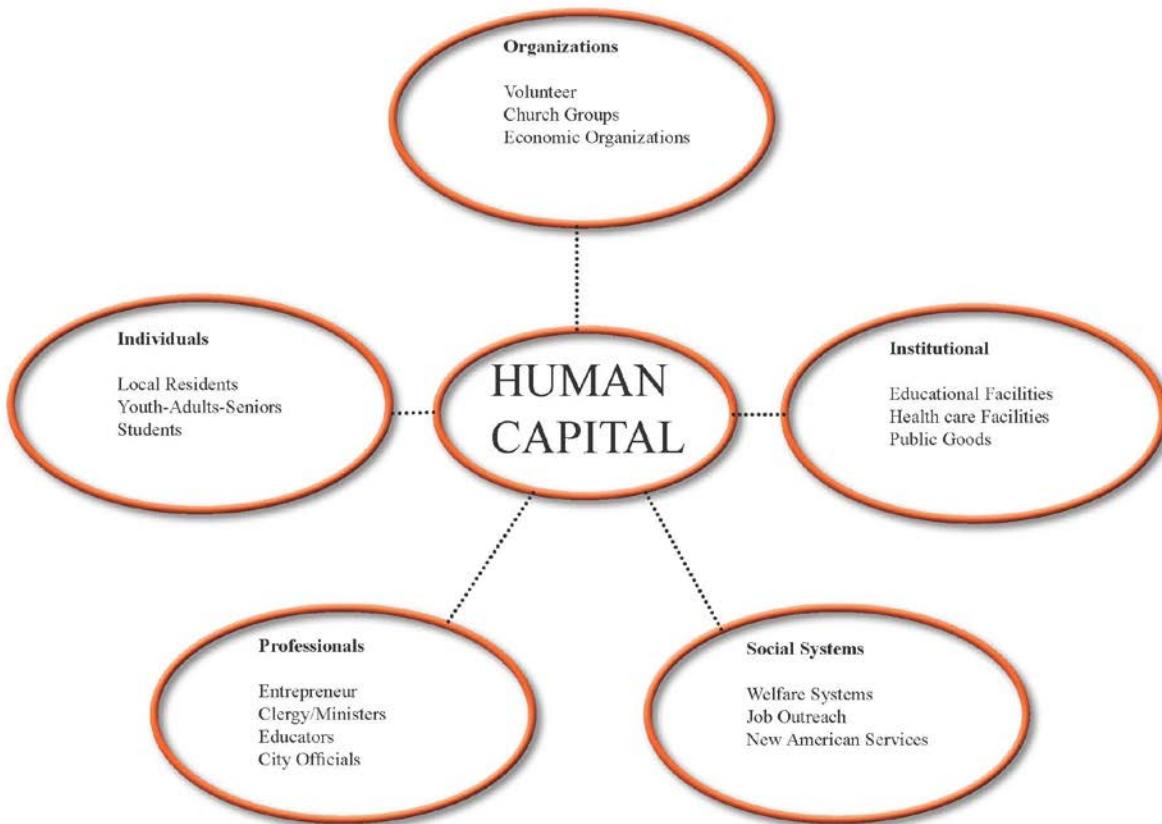


Figure 5.13 Human Capital Asset Map

To make the most of the human capital in the city of West Fargo, the community should develop and identify leadership capabilities among its citizens. Various leadership programs, economic organizations, institutions and professionals can further develop the assets West Fargo has in place. Through furthering the leverage of human capital the city of West Fargo is poised to continue providing gainful employment to its citizens and strengthen the community in the future.

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CHAPTER 6



Source: City of West Fargo West Fest, 2016

SOCIAL CAPITAL

Gloria Albert, Mackenzie Alexander,
Ibtissem Belmihoub, and Alec Bruns

Social capital is created not by the individual members of a community but by the interactions these individuals have with each other. Trust must be built for social capital to exist. According to Flora, Flora, and Gasteyer (2016) social capital is strengthened through “forming groups, collaborating within and among groups, developing a common view of a shared future, forming or reinforcing collective identity, and engaging in collective action” (159). Examples of community groups that build social capital include school groups, religious organizations, non-profit organizations, and hobby enthusiast clubs, just to name a few. All of these groups develop “networks, norms, and trust” that benefit their members through bringing together and working with new people and groups (Putnam 2000). Further, as Emory, Fey and Flora state, “social capital reflects the connections between people and organizations or the social glue that make things happen” (6)

This chapter locates social assets in West Fargo. Characteristics of the social fabric in West Fargo will be listed and analyzed in this section. A list of organizations in different domains such as education, business, and religion among others are provided.

Bonding vs. Bridging Assets

When looking at a community and its social aspects, one should look into the different social groups in the area. These groups are the core of a community's emotional health; they connect all of the residents in one way or another by creating bridges and bonds between the people (Flora et al. 2015, 165). West Fargo has hundreds of different social groups varying from knitting and gaming clubs to large churches/religious institutions and schools. No matter how large or small the group is, they all play an important role for the community's overall success by bringing people together that share a common interest.

There are two different types of social capital (Emery, Fey, and Flora 2006), the first would be bonding between community members and the other bridging. Bonding capital involves creating “connections among individuals and groups with similar backgrounds” (Flora 2016). There are many people who were born and raised in the West Fargo area but there are also hundreds of new people coming in from different parts of the U.S. in addition to New American families originally from different countries. Even though these two groups are often very culturally different they are able to come together due to their similar experiences while involved with social groups in the West Fargo area. Larger social groups are the best places to look for different examples of bonding, specifically religious institutions and educational programs. Religion is a common tie that people have with others no matter where they came from or their age. These institutions bring all kinds of people together so they can make connections with others that share common interests and have similar backgrounds. Another example of an institution that builds social capital is education. Schools and after school educational programs gather students and parents together with teachers and school administrators to provide the best learning environment and education possible.

The second type of Social Capital is bridging between community members. Bridging is connecting “diverse groups within the community to each other and to groups outside the

community” (Flora et al. 2016 165). Compared to the close ties of bonding social capital, bridging is often made up of weaker and newer ties (Emery et al. 2006, 6). Smaller social groups are perfect examples of bridging within a community. Tons of different people are coming together to express a common interest and create relationships between group members which in turn make the community stronger and more successful. All social groups help boost the morale of the community and bring the residents closer together. Schools have different clubs within them to bring students and families closer together and there are outreach organizations to bring those who are not in specific institutions together.

All communities have bonding and bridging social capital within them. The West Fargo community has a very diverse community and the different social groups in the area are what bring all of the residents closer together. By bringing people closer together the strength of the community increases which can make efforts to grow other capitals that much easier.

Social Assets of West Fargo

Social assets can be identified through organizations, businesses, and clubs present in West Fargo. The community comes together for social events by having relations with different types of organizations that include: education, non-profit/community, entertainment, religious, business, and miscellaneous organizations (Table 6.1).

Table 6.1. Social Organizations within West Fargo

Education
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● West Fargo alumni groups● West Fargo Public Schools● Youth Entrepreneurs Academy
Non-profit/community
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Kiwanis Club● The West Fargo Seniors Program● Volunteers Organized in the Interest of Children's Education (VOICE)
Entertainment
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● The Rotary Club● Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 7564

Religious
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lutheran Church of the Cross ● Holy Cross Catholic Church ● Blessed Sacrament Church
Businesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Restaurants and coffee shop ● Moore Engineering ● West 13th Hair Salon
Miscellaneous
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● American Legion ● Osgood Neighborhoods

Organizations, clubs, and businesses take on the role of providing social spaces and activities for the West Fargo community, and by bringing people together for common causes. Whether people are getting an education, participating in an event for charity, or just having fun, they are doing that by participating in local groups. These interactions between different organizations and different community members are what really transforms West Fargo from a group of individuals living in the same area to a vibrant, interconnected community.

Community Events

The City of West Fargo plays host to multiple community events throughout the year. This section of the chapter will showcase examples of events hosted by the West Fargo city government and other non- and for-profit organizations. The purpose of these events is to increase the levels of both bonding and bridging social capital that occurs within the city. For additional information regarding community events in West Fargo, refer to Chapter 3 about Cultural Capital.

West Fest - West Fest (Photograph 6.1) is a week-long series of community events hosts by West Fargo. This is the largest event put on by the city and is the biggest example of bonding and bridging social capital. It includes a pancake breakfast; tournaments; a 5k, 10k, and kids run; a magician, face painting, and family fun night; a parade; and ends with a fireman's ball. According to West Fargo's Community Services Coordinator Kathy Lewin, West Fest draws about ten thousand people to the city and is a way to "bring community members together, as well as outsiders and outside communities" (Lewin 2016). West Fest is made possible through donations by local businesses and organizations.

Cruise Night - This event, also hosted by the city, every third Thursday throughout the months of June, July, August, and September. Cruise Night (Figure 6.1) involves the city shutting down seven whole blocks of Sheyenne Street for a car show put on by Topper's Custom Car Club. This event attracts business vendors, non-profit organizations, and families and individuals from around the area.



Figure 6.1. Posters of West Fargo Community Events.

Source: Kathy Lewin, West Fargo, 2016

Taste of West Fargo - This is an event organized by the city with a stronger focus on local business development. As Kathy Lewin described it, the Taste of West Fargo involved “local businesses come together to showcase their specialties, whether it be food, drink, arts and crafts, etc.” While small compared to West Fest or Cruise Night, this event shows the willingness for the community to come together to support each other.

Social Capital Assets

West Fargo provides an abundant number of different assets to their community members. Most assets are easily accessible for all residents and are used to help and support West Fargo's overall health as a community. Some of the capitals West Fargo provides for its residents can be separated into three main categories that include: Communities, West Fargo's Organizations, and Individual Categories. Below is a map (Figure 6.2) that lists examples of all three of those categories.

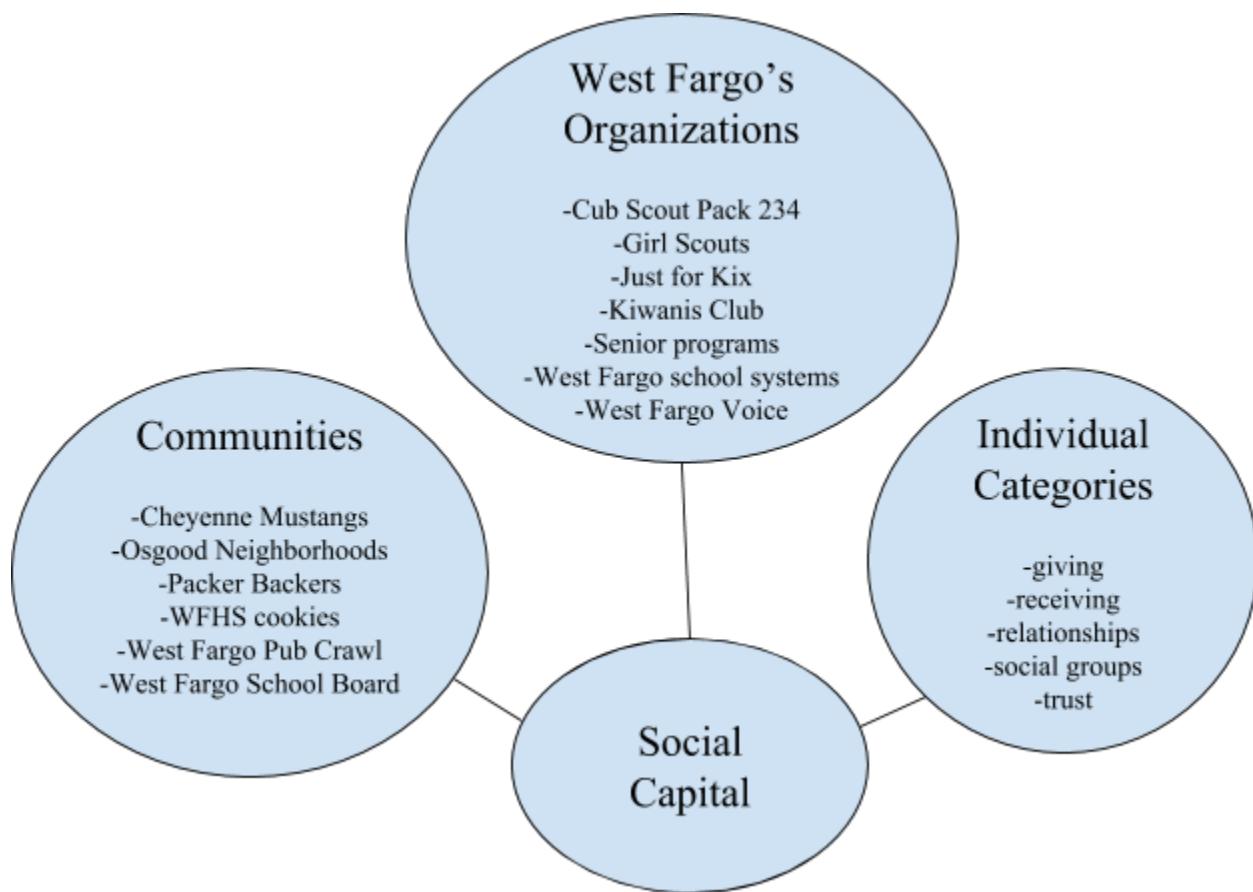


Figure 6.2. Social Capital Asset Map

Community Development Implications

Just as defined, the residents of West Fargo do form a strongly bonded and bridged community through organizations, businesses, and interpersonal connections. It is full of members that are living and working together to improve their quality of life, while coming together to connect and form social ties. Although there are a lot of organizations that are working within West Fargo to support and build their community to help it grow, it does face its own challenges, just as any other city would. It faces issues with poverty, homelessness, natural disaster and a rapidly growing population. At this time, not all of the resources are available to accommodate for all community members' needs so the residents, alongside their organizations, need to work towards building and growing together. While the city continues to grow, the interactions between the community members should help it flourish into the beautiful city that West Fargo can become. Currently, West Fargo is striving to becoming its own independent city, and breakaway it's assumed association with Fargo. In order to increase its independence, the community members should work to strengthen their own unique capitals. West Fargo should also use their symbiotic relationship with the city of Fargo to help it progress and use a sort of "upward spiraling process" which starts with social capital (Emery and Flora, 2006.) It will help create its own identity while also benefiting from its outside resources and keep a profitable relationship with Fargo.

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CHAPTER 7



Source: Paul Lubbers, 2016

POLITICAL CAPITAL

Katie Bullock, Tia Kelley, Paul Lubbers

Understanding Political Capital is an essential asset in a growing community with diverse backgrounds including income, accessible resources, and status. According to Flora, Flora, and Gasteyer (2016), “Political capital consists of organization, connections, voice, and power as citizens turn shared norms and values into standards that are codified into rules, regulations, and resource distributions that are enforced,” (184). Voice and inclusion are the most important factors for political capital.

Voice is defined as who has influence and speaks for the various stratification levels in the community. Inclusion consists of who gets invited to community meetings and/or who gets the opportunity to vote in elections. In this chapter we will focus on who has voice in this community, who holds leadership positions, and how and why it is important to get involved in the community regarding West Fargo.

Key Demographic Information

In understanding who has voice and power within a community, it is important to first know the demographics of that community in order to research who the residents are and what their background is in order to gather the factors facilitating political power. Although more detailed information can be found in Chapter 5, this section works to highlight key demographic information that can have a significant impact on who has political capital within West Fargo.

Sex When looking at sex as a demographic within West Fargo there is a fairly even split between males and females with 52.4% of the population being male and 47.6% being female as of 2014 (Census Bureau 2014). That being stated, West Fargo differs significantly from the national average of sex distribution, which is 50.76% female and 49.24% male (CIA 2016). This suggests that West Fargo is more male dominated than the nation as a whole. This gap appears to be growing when compared to demographics from 2010 in which males made up 50.9% and females made up 49.1% of West Fargo’s population (Census Bureau 2014). For more detail on sex distribution see Chapter 5.

Table 7.1 West Fargo Population by Gender, 2010 & 2014

Sex	Population 2010	Percent	Population 2014	Percent
Male	12,145	50.9	14,864	52.4
Female	11,723	49.1	13,507	47.6
Total	23,868	100	28,371	100

Source: US Census Bureau 2014

Race and Ethnicity As discussed in Chapter 5, a vast majority (90.9%) of West Fargo residents identify as White as of 2014 (Census Bureau 2014). According to Flora, Flora, and Gasteyer (2016), in general “political capital reflects the dominant cultural capital,” (184). This suggests that white residents hold the vast majority of political capital in West Fargo. This is reflected by the fact that the City Commission is made up entirely of white residents (westfargond.gov). For more detail on racial demographics see in Chapter 5, Figure 5.1.

Social Class This category is important in defining a community because it gives developers an idea of range on financial stability individuals and families have. Having knowledge of the social class also guides developers to know where to focus their projects so that no matter what class a family is in, they can still use that facility or tool just like anyone else in the community. The socioeconomic status within the community of West Fargo is

characterized by employed, in labor force, and unemployed (Table 7.2). With employment the total population over 16 years of age and over are 21,687. 44.1% from 16 to 19 years of age, and 29.1% from 65 to 74. The age group with the highest percentage of employment is 25 to 44 with 91.3% (Census Bureau 2014).

Table 7.2 Employment in West Fargo by Age, 2014

Age	Number	In Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed
16-19	1,452	46.2%	44.1%	4.6%
20-24	1,832	91.9%	87.9%	3.8%
25-44	9,223	93%	91.3%	1.2%
45-54	3,796	90.2%	88.5%	1.9%
55-64	2,841	77.6%	76.4%	1.5%
65-74	1,668	29.1%	29.1%	0%
75+	875	4.7%	4.7%	0%
Total (Residents 16+)	21,684	78.8%	77.1%	1.7%

Source: US Census Bureau 2014

Education An important way to understand the socioeconomic status of a community is by assessing the level of educational attainment. The city of West Fargo can be considered well educated considering that, of adults over the age of 25, 94.5% have received a high school diploma or higher; which is significantly higher than the national average of 88% (Census Bureau 2014). For the group ages 25 and over a large percentage have attained Bachelor's degrees (Table 7.3). One reason that West Fargo has higher percentages of education is because of the variety of colleges that exist in this part of the state. Colleges include North Dakota State University, Minnesota State University, Moorhead, Concordia College, Minnesota State Community and Technical College, and more. Each of these colleges has their own unique opportunities that help the communities to grow harmoniously and diversely which will be beneficial for West Fargo as they are growing.

Table 7.3 Education Attainment of Adults 25 and Older in West Fargo by Gender, 2014

Education Level	All	Male	Female
Less than 9 th grade	2.7%	2.2%	3.1%
9 th -12 th grade, no diploma	2.7%	3.5%	2%
High school grad or equivalent	19.7%	21.2%	18.2%
Some college, no degree	22.9%	25.3%	20.2%
Associate's degree	16.3%	15.1%	17.6%
Bachelor's degree	26.3%	22.4%	30.5%
Graduate or professional degree	9.3%	10.3%	8.3%
Total population (25+)	18,403	9,436	8,967

Source: US Census Bureau 2014

Occupations Based off the census findings in Table 7.4, almost half of the population have careers involving management. West Fargo is a new and growing community, which means the development of new businesses bring in new employers. A business owner in West Fargo discussed that most of the West Fargo growth in businesses are on the south side of the I-94 Interstate. Sales and office occupations is the second highest percent most likely due to the real-estate market since housing is expanding in West Fargo. The business owner in West Fargo explained that more development of apartment buildings has brought in more workers in the area.

Table 7.4 Occupations in West Fargo, 2014

Civilian employed population 16+ years old	Estimate	Percent
Management, business, science, and arts occupations	6,713	40.1%
Service occupations	2,056	12.3%
Sales and office occupations	4,028	24.1%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	1,767	10.6%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	2,161	12.9%
Total	16,725	100%

Source: US Census Bureau 2014

Local Leaders and Stratification

Within each of the class levels in West Fargo there are connections that can get their voice out through the vertical levels of power. The key leaders in West Fargo include the Economic Developer, Matt Marshall. He is an advocate for the local businesses and is the liaison for economic advancement for anyone in the community. An organization that has voice in the community is the Downtown Business Association (DBA). This group has a significant amount of voice for the community and works closely with the economic developer. A West Fargo business owner explained that, “Well, anyone is invited but they don’t really prompt you to come.” (K. Lepird 2016). This group is inclusive to the community by creating the opportunity to freely join their meetings if one so chooses (K. Lepird 2016). For more information on the DBA turn to, Built Capital.

The stratification structure starts with the lower class and is labeled as the unemployed or low income. Their advocates are: Senator Judy Lee (Health and Human Services), Police Chief Michael Reitan, and the Planning Director Larry Weil (M. Marshall 2016). The middle class is defined as the blue collar workers and their connections are the West Fargo VFW. The VFW has members that have lived in West Fargo for a long time and they have a great amount of voice for people in this community (M. Marshall 2016). Finally, for the upper class, the Home Builder’s Association is a connection if individuals in this class need it. Upper class workers have easier accessibility compared to the other stratification levels in the city based off income and the length of residency (M. Marshall 2016).

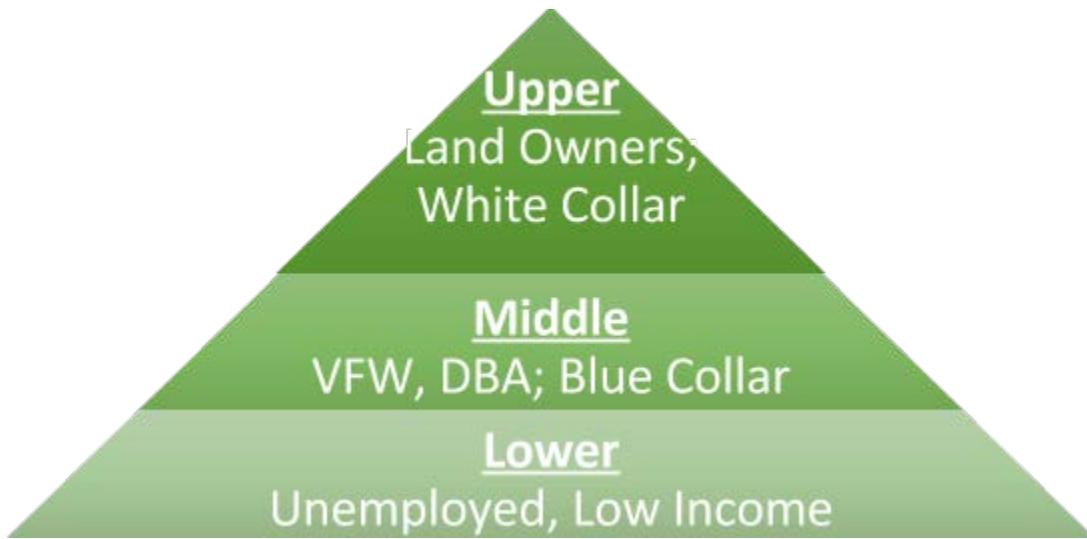


Figure 7.1 West Fargo Stratification Structure

Community Involvement

Getting involved in the community is an effective strategy to get your voice heard and make a difference for yourself and others, West Fargo is an inclusive community and highly encourages this (M. Marshall 2016). There are a few different ways to get involved such as volunteering, joining boards and committees, and voting. The West Fargo Community Services Coordinator is always looking for people to volunteer for the various events and organizations that need help (M. Marshall 2016). There are many committees such as the Visitor's Committee, Public Events Committee, Library Board, and more that need positions filled (M. Marshall 2016).

An example of community involvement in West Fargo is called 'ND Cares'. "Last year the First Lady of North Dakota Betsy Dalrymple wanted to have a support system for Veterans of every community. The West Fargo city commission took this plan and put it in place. Working with the local Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) the homeless Veterans were the first to receive care. Furniture and sometimes housing is provided for them. When we receive a call, we share that information with the liaison of the program, and they take care of everything" (M. Marshall 2016).

Voting Patterns Voting is one of the easiest ways to get involved in the community. According to Figure 7.2, voting has become more even between the political parties. A local legislature politician explained to us that unfortunately many people still do not vote, perhaps that is why the statistics in Table 7.4 are slowly evening out. One reason that people do not vote in this community is because they do not know who is running in the elections in their community and they do not care to do the research to find out (B. Hanson 2016). The West Fargo Economic Developer also agreed that since West Fargo is still new and growing, people are still settling into their homes they have now lived in for possibly less than five years at the most. This means residents are still getting to know their city and are still unsure of who to vote for, where to vote, and how to register to vote as a North Dakota resident (M. Marshall 2016).

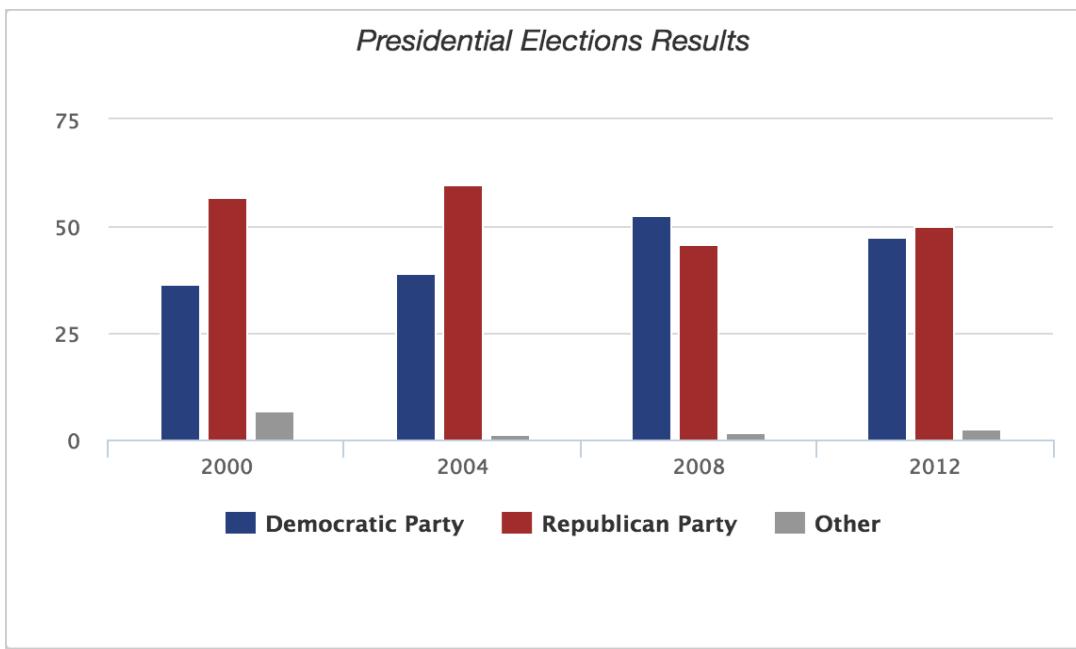


Figure 7.2 Voting Patterns for West Fargo, ND in Presidential Elections, 2000-2012

Source: City-Data.com 2012

Political Capital Asset Map

The political capital asset map as seen in Figure 7.3 is a visual representation of factors that influence Political Capital unique to West Fargo. Demographics are what facilitate stratification and class characteristics, local leadership are the key players in the community that enable voice for individuals in various classes, and involvement any individual can participate in the community.

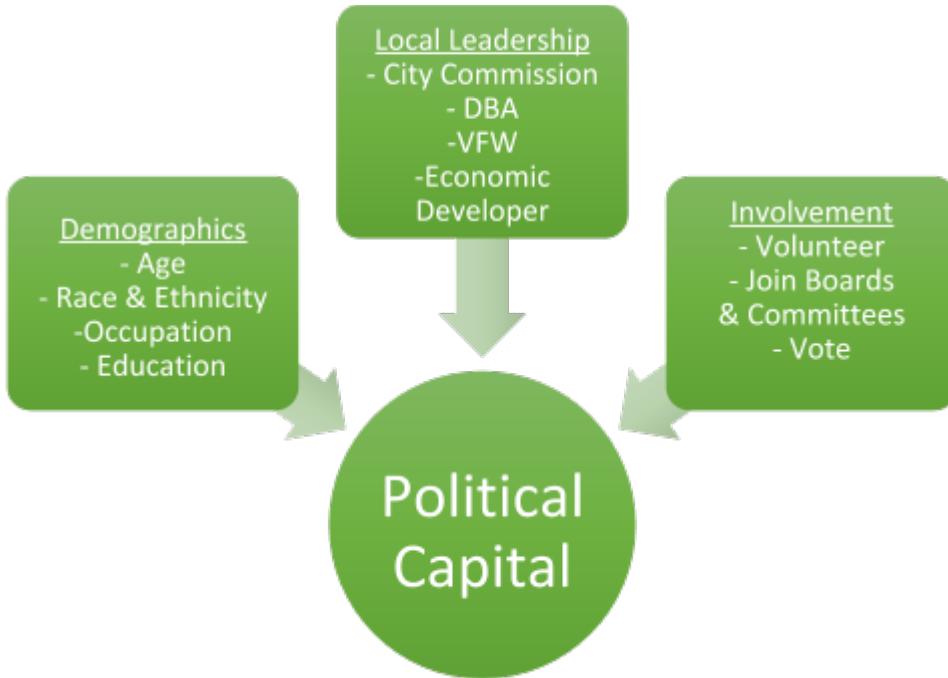


Figure 7.3. Political Capital Asset Map

Implications and Challenges

Political Capital represents who has voice and is inclusive in the community. We looked at why demographic characteristics, local leaders, stratification, and community involvement influence Political Capital. We found that in West Fargo, political capital influencers were mostly male and white, there were high numeric findings of individuals with higher education, most occupations in West Fargo were managerial positions, and community involvement is highly encouraged in West Fargo given it is a vastly growing community.

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CHAPTER 8



Source: West Fargo Economic Development Website, 2016

FINANCIAL CAPITAL

Kimberly Morris, Serina Moss, and Kalley Norr

Financial capital can accumulate in many areas of a community through businesses, individuals, and other institutions. Financial capital can be broadly defined as monetary resources that are highly liquid and that can be easily converted into other assets (Flora, Flora, and Gasteyer, 2013).

This chapter will identify the economic base of West Fargo, explore the occupations in West Fargo, assess the annual income of residents and their commuting patterns, and review the reinvestment or resources within West Fargo banks. Furthermore, an analysis of assets and implications regarding financial capital will be established.

Economic Base

The strength of West Fargo's economy is determined by the economic base. The economic base is the sectors within the community that provide citizens with a wage. This helps determine where monetary resources are coming from within West Fargo. Analyzing the economic base is done by looking at who the business's and actors in the community are, the jobs that they offer, and the income that is generated from this employment (Braschler, Croll , & Kuehn, 1993). This information is important in order to understand overall production and quality of life in the area. This section will go over how West Fargo's economic base has evolved overtime and where it stands currently.

Previous Economic Base West Fargo's economy has changed over the years. It is important to note that historically agriculture has been a major industry for the area. In the later part of the 19th century there was a great settlement boom and majority of the people were farmers (Legendary, 2016). This highlights a major industry that offered a living to many of the residents around the area. From 1961 – 2006, West Fargo annexed 8,924 acres of land (Governments, 2008). This shows that the community had the opportunity to develop land, expand industries, and increase options for citizens to earn a living. Now that the previous economic base has been explained, the current economic base will be analyzed.

Current Economic Base The current economic base of West Fargo is depicted in Tables 8.1, 8.2, and 8. The highest number of establishments is in the retail sector; this information is depicted in Table 8.1 which shows the number of establishments within each business sector. This shows how the economy has changed over the years. West Fargo encouraged new businesses to come to the area providing residents with new job opportunities. Although the highest number of establishments is in retail, the largest number employed is in the educational services. This is displayed in Table 8.2 which shows each of the occupational sectors within West Fargo and their median earnings. One can also see that the business's that offer the most jobs do not necessarily offer the highest wages. Agriculture offers the highest median earnings in the area yet this sector is listed last on number of employed. This shows that the economic base has changed over the years. It has shifted away from agriculture yet the earnings have remained the highest in the area. Table 8.3 shows the top employers in West Fargo. The largest number of employed is in educational services so it would make sense that the West Fargo Public School District is the top employer in the area. Overall, it is clear agricultural is still an important industry in West Fargo but many new sectors have risen over the years and this has shifted the economic base in the process. As the community continues to grow, this area should be continually evaluated.

Table 8.1: Number of Establishments within each Business Sector, West Fargo 2012

Sectors	Total Establishments within Sectors	Percentage
Retail trade	91	17.5%
Other services (except public administration)(609)	60	11.5%
Health care and social assistance	48	9.2%
Arts, entertainment, recreation and accommodation and food services	48	9.2%
Manufacturing	42	8.1%
Transportation and warehousing	42	8.1%
Wholesale trade	41	7.9%
Professional, scientific, and technical services	39	7.5%
Finance and insurance	38	7.3%
Administrative and support and waste management and remediation services	36	6.9%
Real estate and rental and leasing	21	4%
Information	8	1.5%
Educational services	6	1.2%
Utilities	1	>.1%
Total	521	100%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012 Fact Finder

Table 8.2: Occupational Sectors and Employment with Median Earnings, West Fargo 2012

Sector	Number of Employed	Median Earnings in Dollars
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	16,725	37,637
Educational services, and health care and social assistance:	3,910	36,748
Retail trade	2,164	28,242
Construction	1,663	34,519
Manufacturing	1,588	44,149
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing:	1,580	38,650
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services:	1,323	43,486
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services:	1,227	11,819
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities:	834	47,463
Other services, except public administration	822	31,917
Wholesale trade	665	61,211
Public administration	437	47,650
Information	313	33,313
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining:	199	69,554

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012 Fact Finder

Table 8.3: Top Employers, West Fargo 2016

Top Employers	Number of Employed
West Fargo Public School District	1432
Wanzek Construction, Inc.	800
US Post Service	350
Titan Machinery	264
Trail King Industries	255
Bobcat Company	238
Integrity Windows & Doors	223
Dakota Cat, Inc.	205
Moore Engineering	147

Source: Matt Marshall, 2016

Commuting Patterns

According to the US Census Bureau, West Fargo residents prefer driving alone and carpooling to commute to work daily. 86% of West Fargo's work force chose to drive alone, 8% choose to carpool, 0.7% use public transportation, 1.1% walk daily, 1% take a taxi, drive a motorcycle, or ride a bicycle to work. 3.2% of West Fargo's work force work from home. Out of the 8% that carpool daily to work 5.5% of them is a 2-person carpool, 1.4% is a 3-person carpool, and 1.1% is a 4-or-more person carpool.

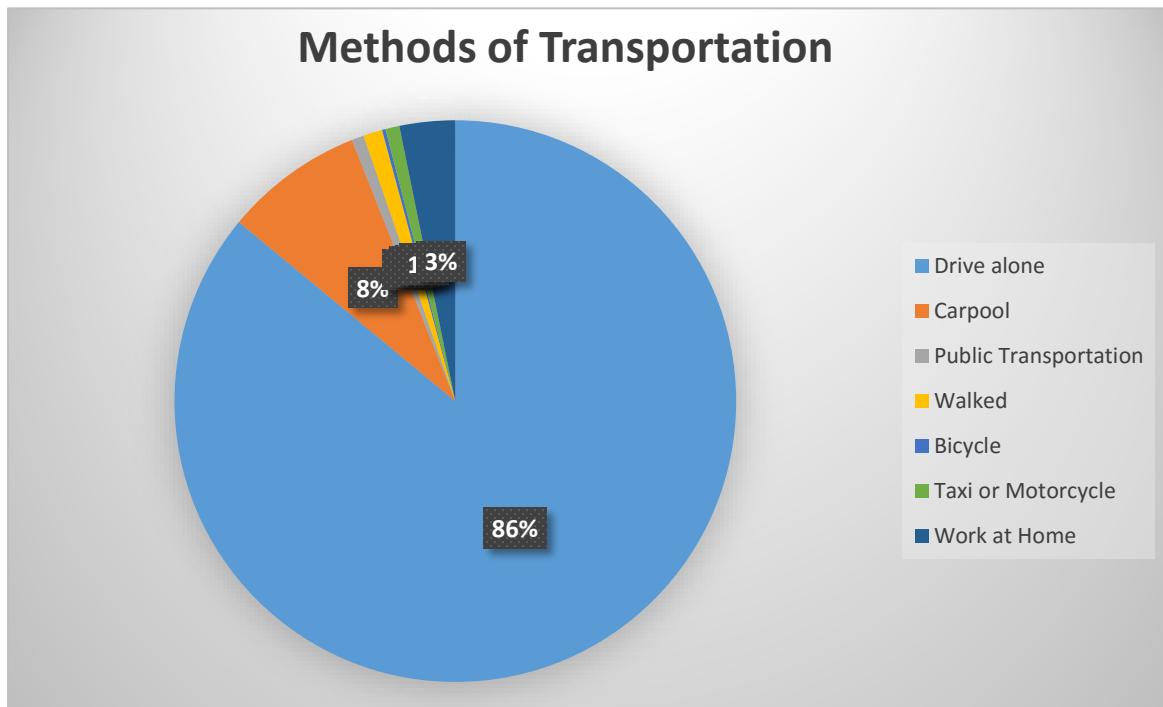


Figure 8.1 Commuting Patterns of West Fargo, ND, 58078

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014

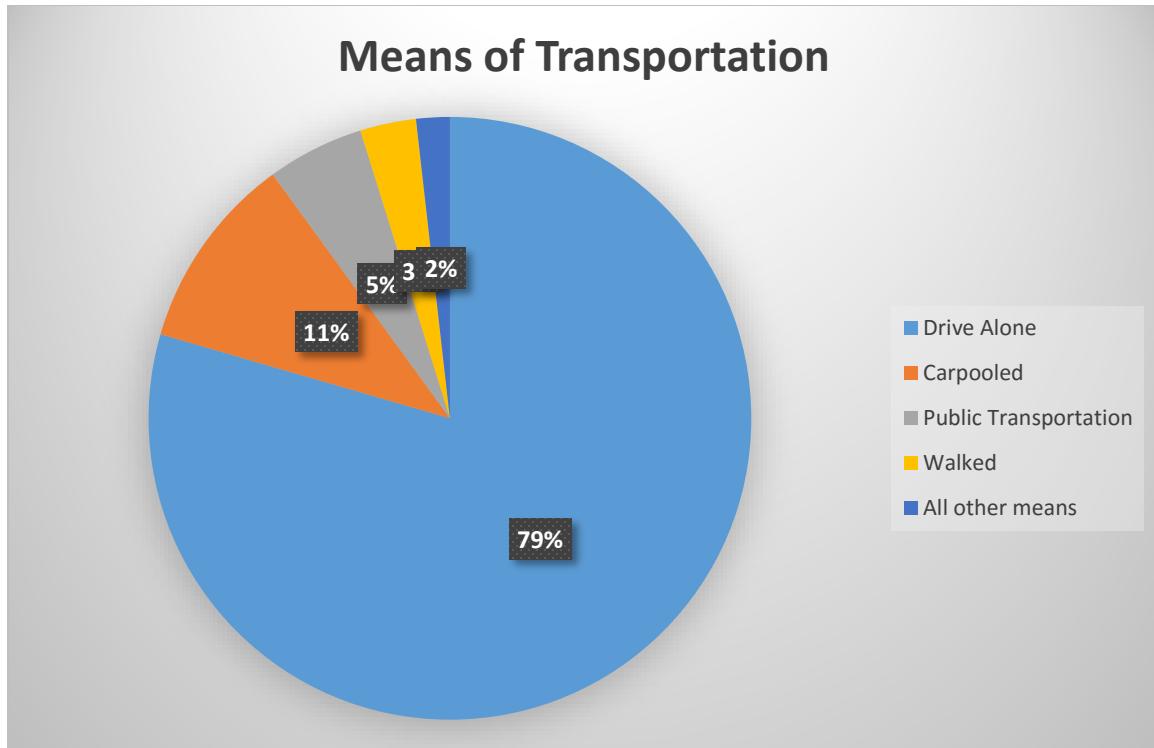


Figure 8.2 Commuting Patterns of the United States

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014

Comparing the U.S. and West Fargo, driving alone and carpooling are the leading means of transportation. For the U.S. 79.5% of the workforce drive alone, 10.5% carpool with co-workers, 5.2% take public transportation, 3% walk, and 1.8% use other means to get to work daily. The average travel time to work in the U.S is 25.4 minutes, which is a little more than West Fargo's mean travel time of 17 minutes.

Figure 8.1 and Figure 8.2 illustrate the similarities of commuting patterns and also shows the differences such as more biking and usage of Motorcycles.

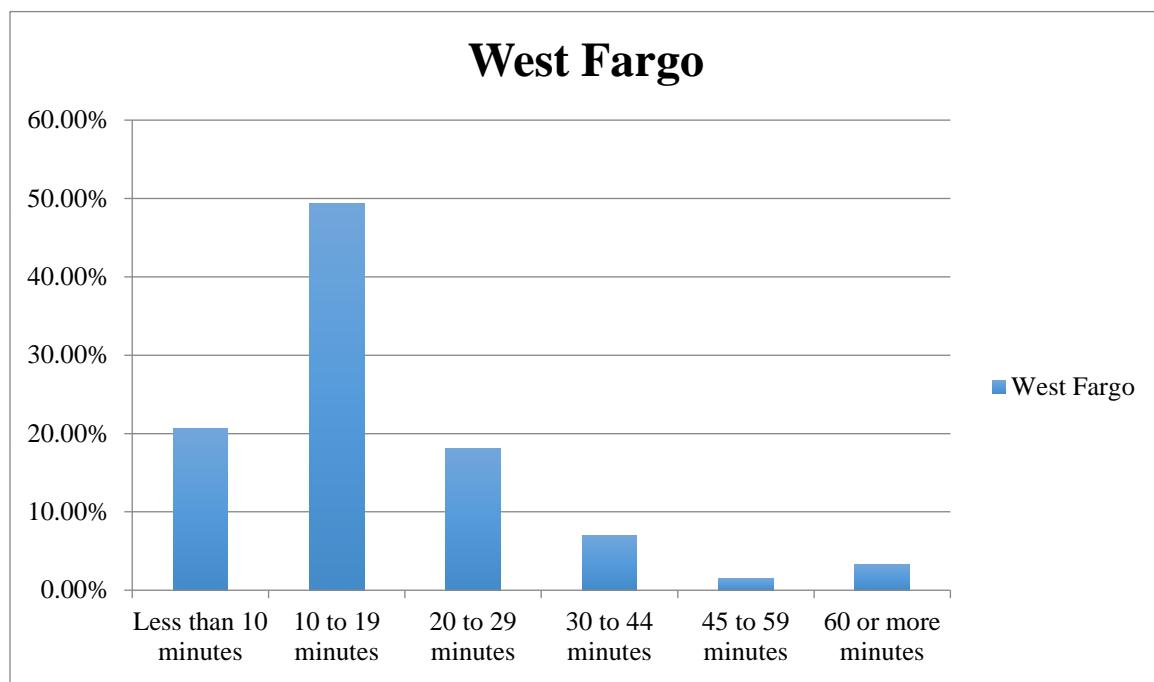


Figure 8.3 Time Spent Commuting to Work by West Fargo Residents

Income

Income is defined as income received on a regular basis before payments for personal income taxes, social security, union dues, Medicare deductions, etc. (US Census Bureau, 2016). Household income calculates the income of all household members, regardless of relation. Family income considers only those who have a familial relationship. Per Capita income measures the average income per person in the given area. The median earning (also called median income) divides the income distribution into two equal parts: one-half of the cases falling below the median income and one-half above the median. For households and families, the median income is based on the distribution of the total number of households and families including those with no income. (US Census Bureau, 2016).

The US Census Bureau collects income data annually through the American Community Survey (ACS). The data for West Fargo, North Dakota, and the United States is displayed in Table 8.4.

Table 8.4 Income and Poverty in West Fargo, AND

	West Fargo	North Dakota	United States
Household	\$69,104	\$55,759	\$53,046
Family	\$51,765	\$49,544	\$64,585
Per Capita	\$32,129	\$29,187	\$28,051
Median Earning	\$44,542	\$51,704	\$30,376
% below poverty line	6.3%	11.6%	10.2%
Unemployed	8.7%	6.7%	9.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2014

West Fargo has a higher household income, family income, and per capita income than the state of North Dakota. This data suggests that West Fargo residents are able to have a competitive income with the state and that jobs are available that are comparable to the state level. While the median earning of West Fargo's population is lower than North Dakota's, it is significantly higher than the United States' median earning.

While there is still a portion of the population that is falling below the poverty line, West Fargo has a considerably lower percentage of the population below the poverty line than North Dakota and the United States. With an employment rate of 91.3%, West Fargo has a higher percentage of people employed than the national average, but is lower than North Dakota as a whole.

Reinvestment Capital

Reinvestment is vital in a community for sustaining and growing financial capital. Businesses in the financial industry have a federal obligation to redirect funds into community development, housing, and related programs. The Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) was established in 1977 to help credit needs by the community in order to operate. The CRA requires that each institution is meeting these credit needs and holds examinations for the public to make comments on the institutions and provide feedback on whether they are providing to the community. The Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council (FFIEC) conducts the examinations, which are then passed on to lenders that are based on the institutions locations, capacity, and competitors. Outstanding, Satisfactory, Needs to Improve, and Substantial Noncompliance are the classifications the FFIEC give to the institutions based on their ranking (FFIEC, 2014).

Table 8.5 CRA Rating of West Fargo Banks

Bank Name	Examination Date	CRA Rating	Asset Size	Examination Method
Wells Fargo	09/30/2008	Outstanding	\$514 billion	Large Bank
Gate City Bank	06/20/2012	Satisfactory	\$1.46 billion	Medium-Large Bank
Bell State Bank	10/01/2015	Satisfactory	\$3,485,239	Medium Bank
Alerus	01/28/2013	Satisfactory	\$1.193 billion	Medium-Large Bank
American Federal Bank	08/20/2013	Satisfactory	\$478,857	Small Bank
BlackRidge Bank	08/01/2014	Satisfactory	\$363,330	Small Bank
US Bank	12/31/2005	Satisfactory	\$4,762,781	Large Bank
State Bank	04/07/2003	Satisfactory	\$105,399	Small Bank

Source: FFEIC, 2016

Strengths/Resources/Assets

- Economic base in West Fargo includes a variety of business sectors
- Business Sectors in West Fargo can employ numerous people
- Near I-29 and I-94 interstates
- Shorter time in commuting patterns for West Fargo residents than the national average
- Satisfactory and above CRA ratings for banks in West Fargo

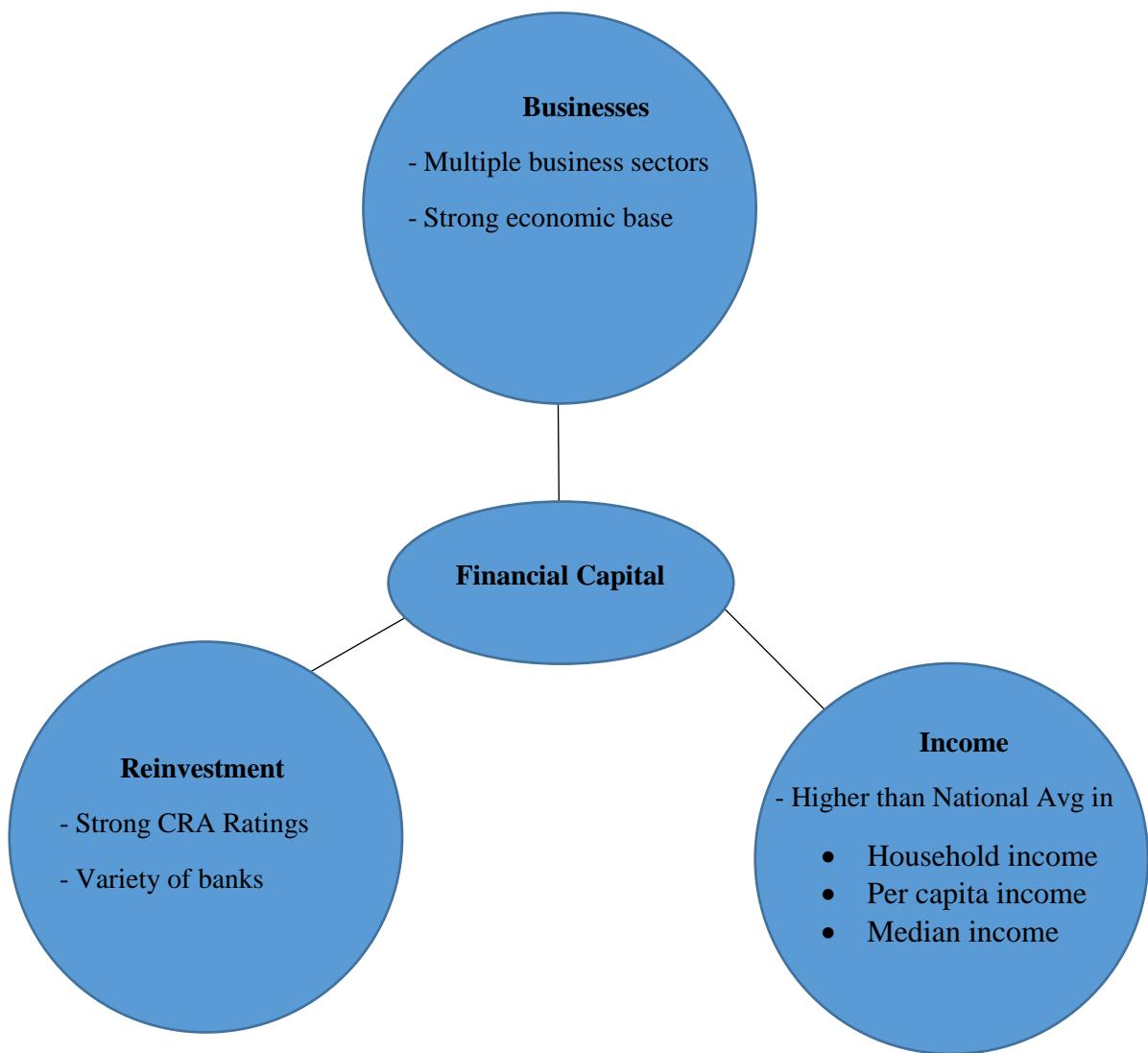


Figure 8.3 Financial Capital Asset Map

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CHAPTER 9



Source: Mackenzie Alexander, 2016

BUILT CAPITAL

Erica Raguse, Michaela Thompson, and Dan Todd

Build Capital is defined as “the permanent physical installations and facilities supporting productive activities in a community” (Flora, Flora, and Gasteyer 2016:263). Therefore this chapter will assess all physical structures including but not be limited to roads, utility systems, schools, parks, housing structures, and other public buildings.

Due to the fact that West Fargo is directly next to Fargo, there are a number of structures within Fargo that also serve the needs of West Fargo residents. Facilities located exclusively in West Fargo as well as facilities that are used by West Fargo residents but are located in Fargo are discussed below.

Zoning and Development Plans

Part of our research team interviewed Kurt Lepird, owner of the Silver Dollar Bar and Grill located on North Sheyenne Street. He discussed some of the ideas being discussed to improve the downtown area such as; plans to implement traffic calming measures such as additional stop lights and reconstructing the north end of Sheyenne Street. Another crucial step proposed is to provide parking in the city’s core as a buffer to protect pedestrians and effectively shorten crosswalks. Improving walkability and density will be vital steps to re-igniting West Fargo’s Downtown. (Fazzini, 2013). Urban core/business districts help to provide cities with identity and sense of place (RTKL Associates, 2004).

When discussing the cities rapid growth, Lepird explains “The interstate is like a wall and that’s where all of the growth has been so that’s where most of the business will go.” Formed in 2014, the Downtown Business Association has been working with developer Todd Berning towards the goal of counteracting this trend and having the two areas of town become more equitable (McEwen, 2014; Reuer, 2016). City planners have created an overlay zone to guide and help shape new construction in the area around Main Avenue and Sheyenne Street. When Lepird remodeled his business within the zoning overlay, he says Berning worked with him. Construction has started this year for a multi-phase project (that will be across Sheyenne Street from Lepird's business) for two large mixed use buildings and public park space.

Utilities and Public Services

Electricity is provided by Xcel Energy and Cass County Electric. Natural gas is provided by Xcel Energy. West Fargo Public Works Department, which is headquartered in North West West Fargo in a building designated specifically for street and forestry maintenance. The Public Works Department works diligently around the year to provide West Fargo residents with well maintained streets, monitoring of the water and sewer systems, refuse and recycling pick up, as well as an aesthetically pleasing landscape (*Welcome to West Fargo, North Dakota: 12-13*).

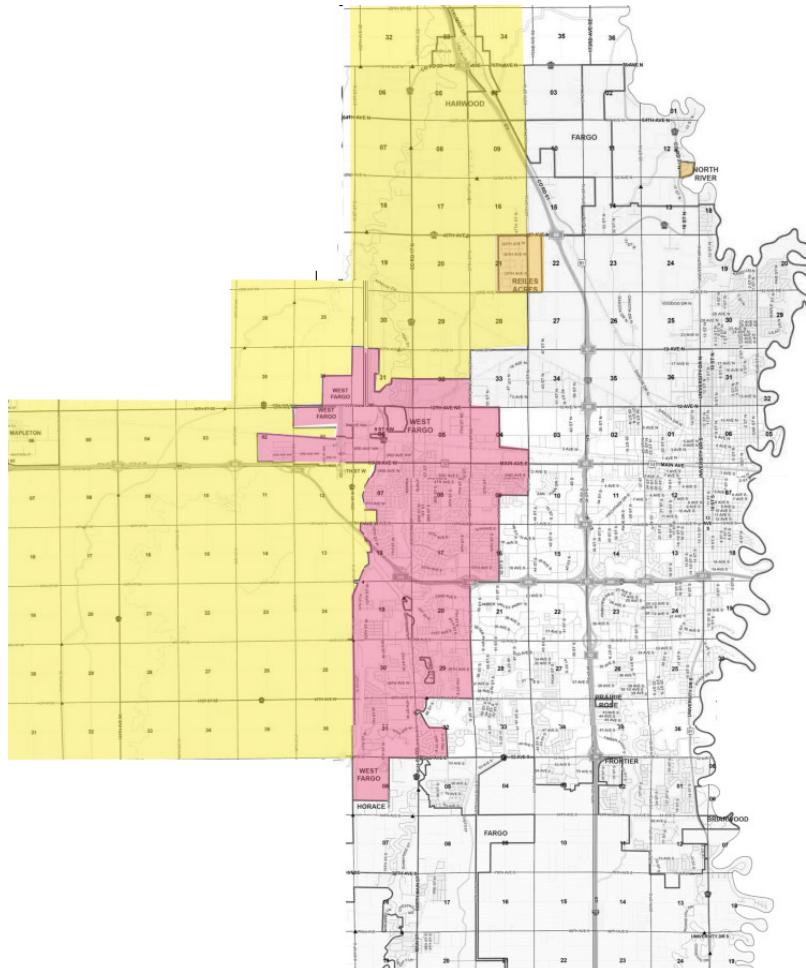
Police The West Fargo police station recently relocated to the City Hall building. The first City Hall groundbreaking was on May 9, 1975. City Hall was renovated in 2005. The latest renovation was concluded in 2016 and added secure underground police parking. This was necessary as police staff has grown from three officers in 1968 to the nearly 50 current employees today. The renovation, costing 19 million dollars, added 34,000 square feet to the building. Making it one of the most prominent buildings in West Fargo.



Figure 9.1 West Fargo City Hall
Source: Mackenzie Alexander, 2016

Fire Department West Fargo currently has a primarily volunteer based fire department with four paid full time employees. The Fire Chief, Fire Marshal, and Fire Inspectors hold managerial roles in facilitating daily operations. In 2011 a second fire station began operating on the 2900 block of Sheyenne Street, about a mile south of Interstate 94 (Fuller, 2016). This secondary station approximately doubles the department's operating space. When construction began in 2010 then current Fire Chief, Roy Schatschneider, explained the location was strategically selected for access to Veteran's Boulevard and the ability to better service any westward expansion of the city (Huber, 2010).

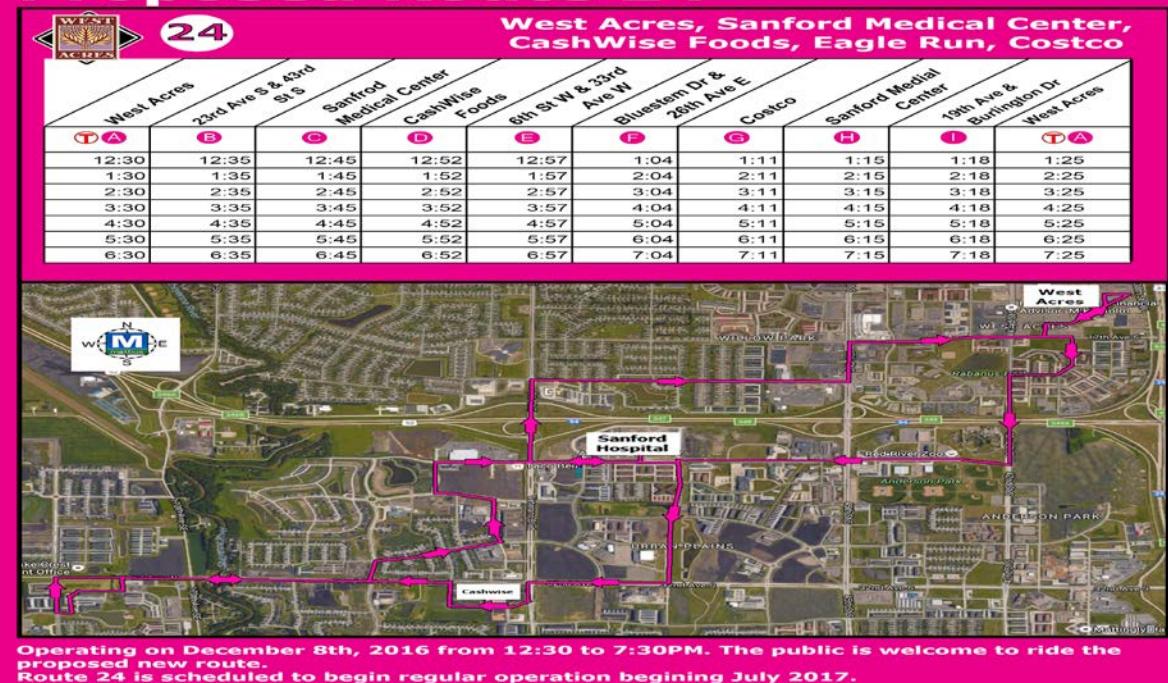
Per the city website, administratively the West Fargo Fire Department is divided into sub-departments for City and Rural services. West Fargo Fire has a coverage area of 64 square miles including several surrounding townships and the suburbs of Reiles Acres (adjacent north of Fargo) and North River (adjacent northeast of Fargo). Both local interstates cross through the coverage area, as well as a major rail line and a pipeline running through the industrial district. (Fuller, 2016) Map 9.1 below shows an approximation of service coverage areas, the exact extent of rural coverage (yellow) is estimated. The areas served by both city and rural divisions are shown in orange.



Map 9.1 Approximation of Fire Department Service Coverage Areas
 Source: westfargofire.org

Transportation West Fargo receives limited coverage from the metropolitan statistical area's public transportation system, MATBUS. For many years, there has been one strategically planned route linking West Fargo to Fargo. On the Fargo side there are two transfer points (West Acres - the region's largest mall, and the bus station in downtown Fargo), where patrons can connect to other routes. Key stops in West Fargo include: the Sanford Clinic, Westside Elementary, South Elementary, Berger Elementary, the public pool, City Hall, and West Fargo High School. It is also advantageous that this circular route goes through the main commercial corridor linking the two cities. Starting in July 2017, a second route Map 9.2, will be available to provide service to the new Sanford Hospital and as far as the Eagle Run subdivision.

Proposed Route 24



Map 9.2 Second proposed MATBUS route

Source: matbus.com

Public Facilities

Schools The enrollment report from West Fargo School District that a total of 9,585 children, grades Pre-K through 12, were enrolled as of September 2015 (www.west-fargo.k12.nd.us). There are 17 schools within the community: two early childhood centers, ten elementary schools, two middle schools, two high schools, and one alternative high school. Some sources report that because of the rapidly growing enrollment, building another high school has been discussed (sources)

Library West Fargo has one public library. In addition to the library, there is an after-school program for students K-5th grade housed within the building as well as the West Fargo Historical Center. The library is connected to the Lodoen Community Center and the Lodoen Kindergarten Center (shown below in Figure 9.2) and as such is leased from the school district. It is a well sized contemporary facility, but the library board feels it will not remain adequate for much longer as the city grows. The lease is up in 2017, and at least two proposals for a new library space have bypassed (Reuer, 2015)



Figure 9.2 West Fargo Public Library
Source: Dan Todd, 2016

Parks and Recreation

The park district is engaged with implementing parks in new neighborhood developments and improving existing facilities. Current facilities are shown in the table below, for more information see the chapter on Natural Capital. The park district coordinates a farmer's market, year-round youth recreation, as well as various adult classes and leagues/tournaments. Annual events include a children's Easter egg hunt, citywide rummage sale.

Table 9.1 West Fargo Parks

Parks with Activity Center	Parks with Shelters	Total Parks	Soccer Complex	Hockey Arena	Recreation/Community Center	Public Pools
3	13	31	2	1	1	2

Source: www.wfparks.org

Housing

The Housing Authority of Cass County has stated in their mission statement that they are striving to provide decent, safe, and sanitary housing for low-income residents of Cass County. They want to increase affordable rental housing opportunities in the community by providing different financial assistance programs. As one of the fastest growing cities in America (Forbes, 2014) West Fargo has an exponential amount of growth in the housing area.

To afford this growth it partakes in ad valorem tax, this means a tax according to value or property taxes based on the value of each specific property. In West Fargo, property taxes are an important source of revenue for local governments. It pays for those services that are provided

close to home such as schools and roads. Everybody in West Fargo who farms, owns a home or has a business pays property tax. The total amount of the property tax to be collected annually is a product of the various taxing authorities (city, county, school, park) setting their budgets.

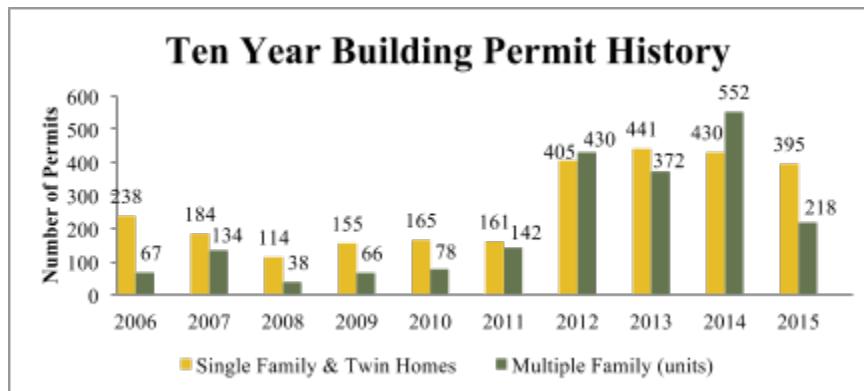


Figure 9.3 Ten Year Building Permit History 2006-2015, West Fargo, ND

Source: West Fargo Parks, www.wfparks.org

When looking at West Fargo homes there is an average listing price of \$332,033. With West Fargo continuing to grow the number of homes have also grown. 2014 showed a decrease in single family residential housing, and an increase in the number of multiple family units from the previous year. In 2014 permits were issued for 322 single family units and 108 twin home units for a total of 430 single-family detached and attached units. With 180 current homes for sale with a median rent per month, per home, landing at \$1,425. (Need to show average rent, number of vacancies, number of rentable units, number of houses/vacancies). According to Justin Germundson, Business Manager of West Fargo Park District, the housing market has continued to grow despite the economic downturn in 2008.

West Fargo in the housing area has seen very strong sales activity especially in the last ten years. As seen in figure 9.2 the number of building permits given rise to 552 multiple family units and 430 single family units and twin homes in 2014. The number of sales overall have been steadily increasing, median sales prices have been increasing, and listing times have been declining according to Justin Germundson, of West Fargo Parks and Recreation Department. West Fargo has experienced strong growth in the last ten years, increasingly so in the last four.

During 2012 the city experienced a significant boom year in all major categories, and has managed to build on that growth over the last four years. As this graph shows, the West Fargo real estate market has increased exponentially in a very short period of time. Including as listed above through the years of economic collapse.

Table 9.2 shows the total number of housing units that are available in West Fargo. Of those units, Table 9.3 shows that roughly half of the housing units available have a mortgage on them and Table 9.4 shows the distribution of the 3,828 units that are rented and occupied (95

units are occupied but rent was not reported as paid). Data from the U.S. Census Bureau indicates that of the 12,571 housing units available, 8,129 are owner occupied (either mortgaged or owned) and 3,923 are renter occupied. Overall, there are only 519 housing units, that are unoccupied as of 2015 (U.S. Census Bureau).

Table 9.2 Total Housing Units

<i>UNITS IN STRUCTURE</i>	<i>Number of units</i>	<i>Percent</i>
<i>Total housing units</i>	12,571	12,571
<i>1-unit, detached</i>	6,364	50.6%
<i>1-unit, attached</i>	2,010	16.0%
<i>2 units</i>	231	1.8%
<i>3 or 4 units</i>	223	1.8%
<i>5 to 9 units</i>	574	4.6%
<i>10 to 19 units</i>	671	5.3%
<i>20 or more units</i>	1,936	15.4%
<i>Mobile home</i>	562	4.5%
<i>Boat, RV, van, etc.</i>	0	0.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder

Table 9.3 Housing Units with a Mortgage

SELECTED MONTHLY OWNER COSTS (SMOC)	Number of units	Percent
Housing units with a mortgage	6,226	6,226
Less than \$500	43	0.7%
\$500 to \$999	978	15.7%
\$1,000 to \$1,499	2,354	37.8%
\$1,500 to \$1,999	1,384	22.2%
\$2,000 to \$2,499	980	15.7%
\$2,500 to \$2,999	259	4.2%
\$3,000 or more	228	3.7%
Median (dollars)	1,441	(X)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder

Table 9.4 Housing Units Paying Rent

<i>Gross Rent</i>	<i>Estimated count</i>	<i>Percent</i>
<i>Occupied units paying rent</i>	3,828	
<i>Less than \$500</i>	431	11.3%
<i>\$500 to \$999</i>	2,440	63.7%
<i>\$1,000 to \$1,499</i>	749	19.6%
<i>\$1,500 to \$1,999</i>	145	3.8%
<i>\$2,000 to \$2,499</i>	37	1.0%
<i>\$2,500 to \$2,999</i>	26	0.7%
<i>\$3,000 or more</i>	0	0.0%
<i>Median (dollars)</i>	751	(X)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder

Healthcare Facilities

West Fargo is in close proximity to two hospitals, Essentia Health and Sanford Health. Each of these hospitals has one clinic within West Fargo city limits while the hospitals themselves and additional clinics are located in neighboring Fargo, ND. Cass County Public Health, which serves West Fargo residents, is also located in Fargo. There are seven dental offices and five chiropractic care offices in West Fargo.

Built Capital Assets

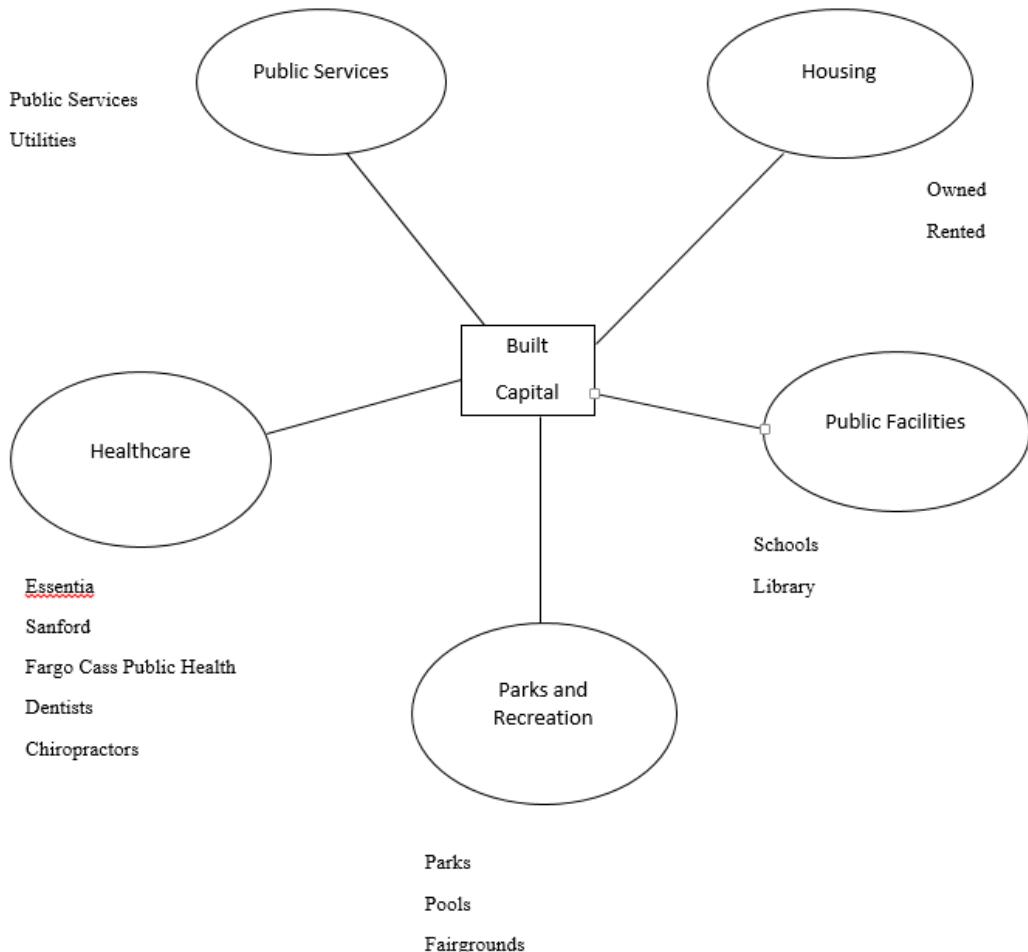


Figure 9.4 Built Capital Asset Map

Challenges and Implications

West Fargo is experiencing significant population growth. People continue to move into the area, placing increased demands on housing, schools, and other facilities in the community. West Fargo is working diligently to meet these demands. As discussed in the housing section and the schools section above, the number of residents moving in are taking full advantage of all housing units available and the West Fargo School District. What is difficult to assess, however, is the number of people who reside in West Fargo but commute to Fargo or Moorhead for work.

Being that West Fargo, Fargo, and Moorhead are in such close proximity, it has proved very challenging to separate the communities when assessing the use of the facilities in Built Capital. It is also worth noting that the close relationship of the three communities will also likely affect West Fargo in that people who live in Fargo or Moorhead are using West Fargo facilities as well, such as parks. While West Fargo maintains a sense of pride that they are standalone community, the symbiotic relationship is difficult to ignore. West Fargo, Fargo, and Moorhead are all poised to benefit from the facilities of each respective community.

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CHAPTER 10



Source: Mackenzie Alexander, 2016

GOVERNMENT

Erica Raguse, Michaela Thompson, and Dan Todd

This chapter will discuss the local government services provided by the City of West Fargo. According to Merriam-Webster dictionary, Government is defined as a group of people that control and make decisions for a community. There have been three different components of governance identified including collaboration, sustained citizen engagement and regional source leveraging. Collaboration includes crossing sectors and identifying regions. Sustained citizen engagement means to welcome new voices and regional resource leveraging includes multiple capitals to reach mutual ends (Stark, 2007). There are different types of government depending on the city, state or community.

Local Government

The governing body of the City of West Fargo consists of a Board of City Commissioners. In addition to this board there are several Committees/Boards including Airport Authority, Forestry Committee, Library Board, Park Board, Planning and Zoning Commission and Visitors Committee. Members of the community are encouraged to attend board meetings as they are open to the public. West Fargo is led by Mayor Rich Mattern along with City Commissioners Mark Wentz, Duane Hanson, Mark Simmons and Mike Thorstad, who are pictured below in figure 10.1.

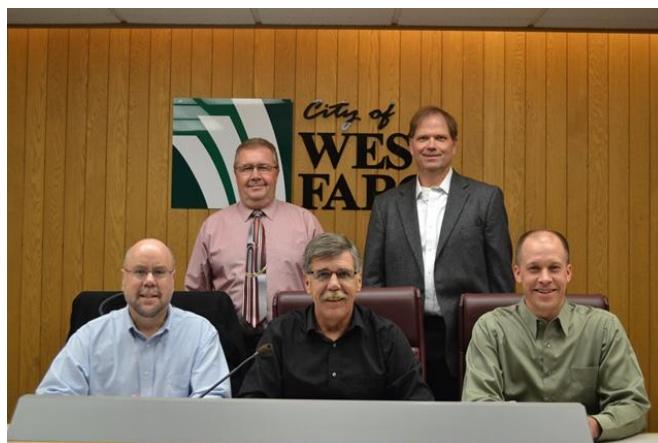


Figure 10.1 Mayor and City Commissioners of West Fargo, ND, 2016

Source: City of West Fargo Website

Budget

See Appendix

Parks and Recreation

West Fargo parks are governed by the Park Board. Park Board Meetings are held the second Wednesday of each month at 5:30 p.m. at West Fargo City Hall. For a community member to place a proposed item on the West Fargo Park Board agenda and appear before the Board, a form must be completed and submitted to the West Fargo Park District administrative office by Wednesday (10:00 a.m.) one week prior to the Park Board meeting. To download the Park Board Agenda Item Request Form community members can go to the Park Department Website. The West Fargo Park District's Mission is to provide opportunities for its citizens to enjoy their leisure time in our public programs, facilities, and parks that:

- Contribute to the physical, mental, and social development of our citizens
- Contribute to the quality of community life
- Meet citizens needs and interests through quality services at a reasonable price

Park Board President
Sharon Odegaard

Park Board Vice President
Todd Rheault

Park Board Commissioners
Jeff McCracken, Ken Zetocha, Kathy Scully



Figure 10.2 Shadow Wood Splash Pad in West Fargo, 2016
Source: West Fargo Park Board Website

Public Safety and Services

West Fargo provides several public safety services for the community including a police department, fire department and emergency management.

Police Department

The West Fargo Police Department consists of 58 members including 47 sworn officers, 11 civilian staff and seven volunteers. The Red River Regional Dispatch Center serves as the emergency communications center. The police department offers several programs for the community of West Fargo. Some of these programs include the Citizen Police Academy, Police Explorers Post 281, Night to Unite, Neighborhood Watch Program, Crime Free Multi-Housing and TRIAD.

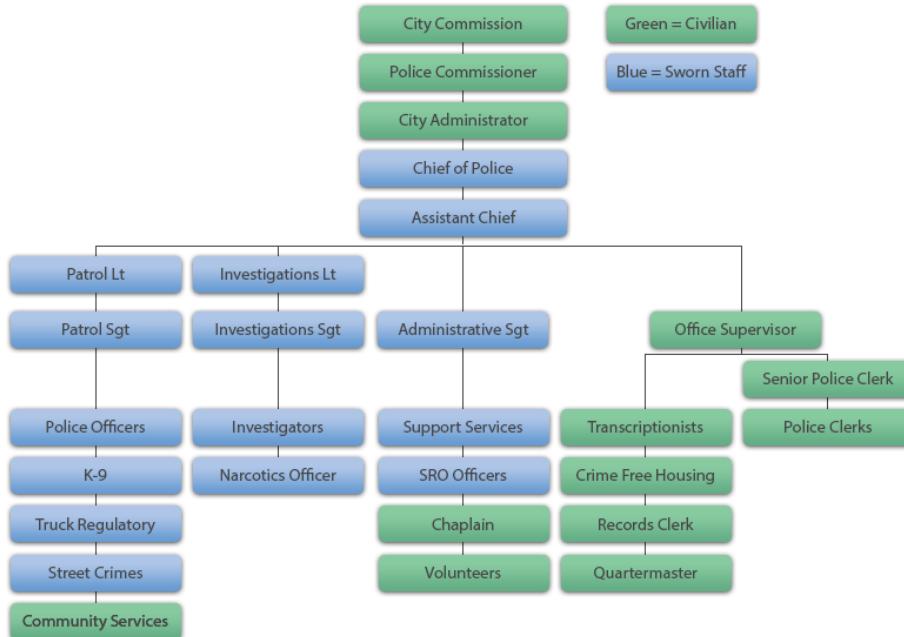


Figure 10.3: West Fargo Police Department Structure
Source: City of West Fargo Website, 2016

Fire Department

The City of West Fargo Fire Department is a private non-profit corporation. Operating funds are generated through yearly contracts with the City of West Fargo and the three Townships that they serve including Reed, Raymond and Mapleton. They also receive donations throughout the year and apply for any grants that are applicable to their operation. They are governed by a board of directors that is made up of members of the department. There are five Board members that serve three year terms. These terms are elected at the annual meeting, which is held the third Tuesday in January of every year. They have alternating terms so that for two consecutive years they will elect two Board members and then the third year they will elect only one Board member. The current President of the Fire Department is Ken Zetocha with the 1st Vice President being Brad Kommer and the 2nd Vice President being Tom Clark.

The West Fargo Fire Department is a non-profit corporation that consists of two departments under one roof. Although there are two departments, they are composed of the same officers, members and directors. The City Department covers the City of West Fargo and the Rural Department covers the Townships of Reed, Raymond and Mapleton. They both cover the cities of Reile's Acres and North River.

According to the City of West Fargo's website, the West Fargo Fire Department started in 1940, a group of residents in the village of Southwest Fargo saw a need for fire protection in their area. Approximately fifteen people worked together to lay the groundwork to acquire a building and equipment for a fire department.



Figure 10.4 West Fargo Firefighter giving a tour of the fire truck, 2016
Source: West Fargo Fire Department Website

Emergency Management

West Fargo works with the Cass County Emergency Management department to provide an integrated emergency management system that prepares Cass County for an emergency or disaster. Four phases or principles are utilized to develop this comprehensive approach.

Planning: This phase develops the plans used by communities during an emergency or disaster. It looks at the hazards within a community to determine the risks that could impact the population. Based upon the hazards and risks, a generic plan is developed which can be followed in any emergency or disaster. It provides a guide for all responding agencies, both public and private. Some common hazards within Cass County that have plans are flooding, tornadoes, winter storms, chemical storage and transportation accidents.

Mitigation: If certain hazards or risks can be minimized prior to an emergency or disaster, it can significantly reduce or eliminate the necessary response. An example of mitigation is building an earthen dike to protect the community from flooding.

Response: This phase addresses the mobilization of resources to meet an emergency or disaster. Based upon the plan developed, a coordinated response can be activated to save lives, protect property, and prevent damage to the environment. It is not always possible to avoid an emergency or disaster, but one can hopefully lessen its impact.

Recovery: Recover is the period following an emergency or disaster that gathers resources to allow a community to return to near normal activities. During this recovery phase a community may have an opportunity to change or rebuild in such a manner to further reduce the risks to the community. This takes planning, which identifies what mitigating actions could lessen the response and the need to recover.

Government Assets and Strengths

- Board of City Commissioners
- Parks and Recreation
- Valuable City Officials
- Public Safety and Services

Asset Map of Government Capital

The assets of the West Fargo government are the elected officials of Commissioners that sit on various boards. These valuable city officials are responsible for the Park and Recreation department, public and safety services and airport authority, Forestry Committee, Library Board, Planning and Zoning Commission and Visitors Committee. This is a publicly elected commission which encourages input from community members.

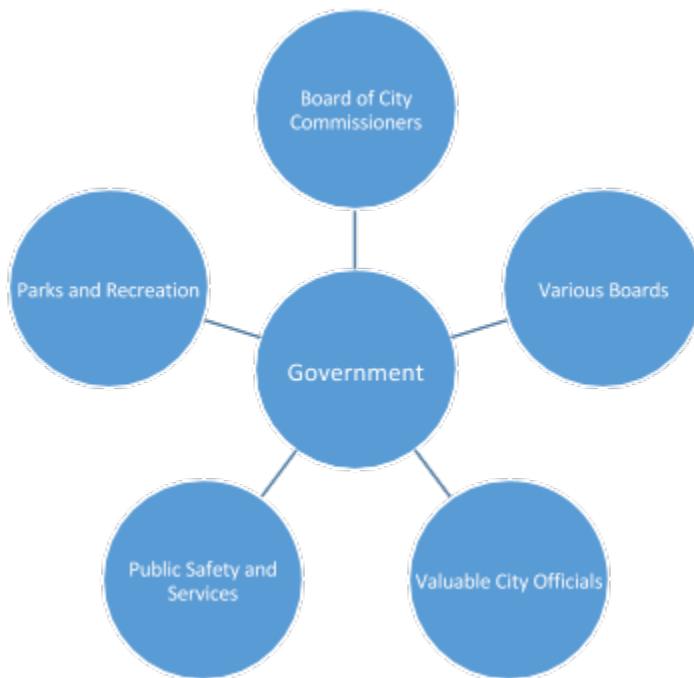


Figure 10.5: Government Asset Map

The West Fargo Government is set up to meet the needs of a growing community. The Mayor and Commission through various boards can oversee new park and recreation opportunities, growing public safety departments and handle any possible emergencies that may arise. The community of West Fargo, through growth and a commitment to individual identity, can rely on city officials to ensure it meets the needs of its constituents.

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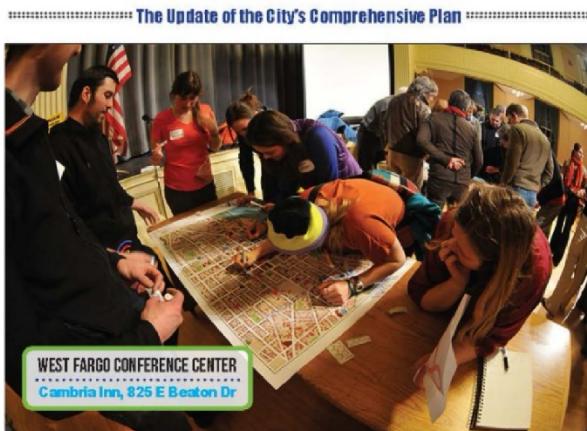
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Appendix

CITY OF WEST FARGO West Fargo, North Dakota							
STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENDITURES, AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS							
For the Year Ended December 31, 2015							
	General Fund	Sales Tax Fund	Debt Service Funds	Capital Projects Funds	Other Governmental Funds	Total Governmental Funds	
Revenues:							
Taxes	\$ 6,155,120	\$ -	\$ 1,167,938	\$ -	\$ 2,076,613	\$ 9,399,671	
Special assessments	-	-	19,763,484	-	144,624	19,908,108	
Sales taxes	-	9,690,968	-	-	-	9,690,968	
Licenses, permits and fees	3,322,800	-	-	-	-	3,322,800	
Charges for services	-	-	-	110,425	316,999	427,424	
Intergovernmental	3,198,249	-	-	-	1,957,198	5,155,447	
Fines, forfeitures and penalties	280,292	-	-	-	-	280,292	
Interest on investments	476,439	6,295	143,937	1,462	10,588	638,721	
Miscellaneous	38,698	-	-	20,000	66,333	125,031	
Total Revenues	\$ 13,471,598	\$ 9,697,263	\$ 21,075,359	\$ 131,887	\$ 4,572,355	\$ 48,948,462	
Expenditures:							
Current:							
General government	\$ 2,852,601	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 754,546	\$ 3,607,147	
Public safety	5,423,668	-	-	-	814,586	6,238,254	
Public works/streets	2,253,047	-	-	-	412,836	2,665,883	
Economic development	-	-	104,881	-	3,325	108,206	
Culture and recreation	-	-	-	-	953,625	953,625	
Other	-	2,777	26,000	-	165,151	193,928	
Capital Outlay	-	-	-	46,157,355	5,905,109	52,062,464	
Debt Service:							
Principal - Bonds	-	-	14,585,000	-	-	14,585,000	
Interest	-	-	5,650,101	-	-	5,650,101	
Fiscal charges & fees	-	-	179,904	-	-	179,904	
Total Expenditures	\$ 10,529,316	\$ 2,777	\$ 20,545,886	\$ 46,157,355	\$ 9,009,178	\$ 86,244,512	
Excess (Deficiency) of Revenues Over Expenditures	\$ 2,942,282	\$ 9,694,486	\$ 529,473	\$ (46,025,468)	\$ (4,436,823)	\$ (37,296,050)	
Other Financing Sources (Uses):							
Proceeds from bond sale	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,129,969	\$ 51,520,031	\$ -	\$ 52,650,000	
Bond premium	-	-	-	1,865,183	-	1,865,183	
Bond discount	-	-	-	(689,527)	-	(689,527)	
Transfers in	2,105,165	-	5,600,106	1,937,293	645,711	10,288,275	
Transfers out	(478,510)	(5,009,900)	(300,000)	(4,677,198)	(2,655,201)	(13,120,809)	
Total Other Financing Sources and Uses	\$ 1,626,655	\$ (5,009,900)	\$ 6,430,075	\$ 49,955,782	\$ (2,009,490)	\$ 50,993,122	
Net Change in Fund Balances	\$ 4,568,937	\$ 4,684,586	\$ 6,959,548	\$ 3,930,314	\$ (6,446,313)	\$ 13,697,072	
Fund Balances - January 1	\$ 15,805,503	\$ 2,561,066	\$ 21,707,378	\$ (29,326,194)	\$ 9,849,589	\$ 20,597,342	
Prior Period Adjustments	-	-	-	-	(17,348)	(17,348)	
Fund Balances - Jan. 1, as restated	\$ 15,805,503	\$ 2,561,066	\$ 21,707,378	\$ (29,326,194)	\$ 9,832,241	\$ 20,579,994	
Fund Balances - December 31	\$ 20,374,440	\$ 7,245,652	\$ 28,666,926	\$ (25,395,880)	\$ 3,385,928	\$ 34,277,066	

The notes to the financial statements are an integral part of this statement.

CHAPTER 11



.....PARTICIPATE.....

Source: City of West Fargo, 2016

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS

Gloria Albert, Mackenzie Alexander,
Ibtissem Belmihoub, and Alec Bruns

This chapter will discuss the Local Development Organizations (LDOs) in the city of West Fargo. LDOs are groups that work together to promote a community's economic growth, especially in the lower income areas. Their goal is to create and expand local businesses by maximizing the support from community members. Another goal is to increase employment for members of the community by creating more job opportunities while also addressing economic issues. LDOs in a community want to promote the social ties between the community members in order to aid and increase its economic development. According to Green, Haynes, Dunn, and Sullivan, (2002) "LDOs provide several benefits, including access to public resources and the ability to acquire private business support for economic development projects" (pg 399). LDOs are generally made up of delegated members of the community as well as business owners and other public, private, or nonprofit organization members within the city or town.

We list multiple types of developmental organizations and projects in West Fargo. Each organization and project is followed by a description of what they are and what resources they offer to the West Fargo community. An asset map will be included to illustrate the main resources that distinguish the community. Lastly, we will discuss implications and considerations for the city to leverage the assets available in West Fargo.

Developmental Organizations

The purpose of this chapter is to list some of the LDOs that residents have access to in West Fargo and their contributions to making the community economically stronger. Following are some of the organizations that contribute the development of the West Fargo community.

Federal Government Agencies and Resources

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) acts as the primary agency in setting policies and priorities in affordable housing development in the country. Its mission is to "create strong, sustainable, inclusive communities and quality affordable homes for all" (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development 2016 np). Many of the projects HUD administers work to strengthen the housing market, develop affordable rental homes, improve quality of life through adequate housing, and make communities inclusive and sustainable. An example of a HUD initiative is the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), a program that "provides communities with resources to address a wide range of unique community development needs" (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development 2016 np). West Fargo is identified as a "non-entitlement" city because its population is under 50,000 (ND Division of Community Services 2016 np) and has previously applied for CDBG funding through the state for infrastructure and business development (West Fargo Pioneer 2011 np).

State Government Agencies and Resources

The North Dakota Department of Commerce works to create, keep, and build economic wealth within the state. It works with local organizations to develop new business opportunities and coordinate state development resources (ND Department of Commerce 2016 np). The efforts of the ND Department of Commerce business development team's work were seen in August 2015 when the Bobcat Company announced an investment of \$9.5 million to increase the size of its headquarters in West Fargo (Figure 11.1.) The project, which will nearly double the size of the company's headquarters, is expected to boost employment in West Fargo (ND Office of the Governor 2015 np).



Figure 11.1. Caterpillar Executives, Governor Dalrymple, Senator Hoeven, WF Mayor Mattern, and GFMEDC President McKinnon break ground on headquarters expansion, West Fargo, ND, 2016.

Source: Carrie Snyder / Forum Communications Co.

The North Dakota Housing Finance Agency is “dedicated to making housing affordable for all North Dakotans” (ND Housing Finance Agency 2016 np). Works to meet the needs of low- to moderate-income families and encourages the development of affordable housing projects in North Dakota’s growing communities. The agency provides three main services throughout the state: Homeownership Assistance, a program that offers education and low-cost financing to potential homeowners; Property Management, to keep existing housing safe, accessible and affordable; and Planning and Housing Development, to identify where new housing is needed and supporting community efforts to address these needs (ND Housing Finance Agency 2016 np).

County Government Agencies and Resources

According to the Housing Authority of Cass County, it is the oldest such organization in the state. Its mission is to provide housing for low-income individuals and families through financial assistance and apartment management programs (Housing Authority 2016 np). The agency manages the Serenity Apartments in West Fargo as well as the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program. Rent for individuals or families residing in a Housing Authority apartment or in one of the agency's housing voucher programs is based upon 30% of their adjusted monthly income.

Local Government Agencies and Resources

West Fargo's Economic Development and Community Services Department serves as a link between the citizens in the community and many of its businesses, non-profits, and agencies. According to the department, they actively "connect new and existing business owners and operators with city officials" (Economic Development and Community Services Department 2016 np). The department, along with the Planning and Zoning department, helps select new business locations, guide the planning and zoning process, and locate potential funding sources. Some of the services offered by the department include the Business Retention and Expansion Program, the Two Year Incentive Program, the Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program, the Renaissance Zone Program, the Facade Improvement Program, and the PACE Loan Program (West Fargo Economic Development 2016 np).

Community Groups

The primary business advocacy group active in the area is The Chamber, an organization that represents "over 2,100 private, public and non-profit member firms" throughout Fargo, Moorhead, and West Fargo (The Chamber 2016 np). According to The Chamber, its mission is to promote "economic growth and prosperity for business and its members through advocacy, education and engagement." The Chamber acts as a connector between West Fargo's government and its residents and businesses, a role that strengthens the local economic growth and prosperity.

The Greater Fargo Moorhead Economic Development Corporation (GFMEDC) is a non-profit organization funded through private donations and public investment that seeks to "grow and diversify the economy in Cass County, N.D. and Clay County, Minn. through the attraction, retention and expansion of primary sector employers" (Greater Fargo Moorhead Economic Development Corporation 2016 np). GFMEDC's Board of Directors includes residents and business leaders of companies in West Fargo. The organization also hosts a jobs board for West Fargo businesses to attract new talent.

Knights of Columbus are a group of men who are committed to growing their church community and helping the West Fargo community by getting involved. In addition to holding faith based events for their members and the youth in the community, the Knights of Columbus also help with the food pantry.

The Lake Agassiz Development Group is a local non-profit organization supported through local, state, and federal grants to provide financial services to area businesses. It is comprised of three independent organizations each with its own focus: the Lake Agassiz Regional Council manages the HUD CDBG Program, the Lake Agassiz Regional Development Corporation runs the Regional Small Business Center, and the Lake Agassiz Certified Development Company manages the Small Business Association 504 loan programs (Lake Agassiz Development Group 2015 np). All told, the focus of supports West Fargo small businesses and coordinates affordable housing grants.

The Region V Community Development Corporation (RVCDC) is a regional charitable non-profit whose mission includes “planning, developing, owning, and managing affordable housing projects in Southeastern North Dakota” (Region V Community Development Corporation 2015 np). Established in 1994, RVCDC is a member of the Southeastern North Dakota Community Action Agency and offers “training courses that address affordable housing development, market studies, rehabilitation, new construction, and property management” (RVCDC 2015 np). RVCDC owns and manages the Sheyenne Commons senior living apartments located in West Fargo (Figure 11.2).



Figure 11.2. Sheyenne Commons, West Fargo, ND, 2016.

Source: Alec Bruns, 2016.

The North Dakota Cares (ND Cares) Coalition includes a broad spectrum of multiple service providers and partners that work with veterans and their families. The Coalition is put together at the state level, but West Fargo participates by offering the same services and giving veterans access to resources that help them.

Every major city has their own support system that is put together by their residents to make sure they community has the ability to help those in need. West Fargo's support system is built through a variety of different outreach organizations that all share a common goal: helping the community and lending a hand to those who need it. Each organization has their own way of helping the rest of the community whether it be financially, emotionally, or through supplying

basic needs like housing, all organizations are putting all their effort to make sure all community members have access to receiving help if the need it and ask for it. When looked at a broad scale and relating them back to the Community Capitals Framework, outreach organizations such as the ones listed above would be categorized as LDOs and are a key component to West Fargo's success as a community.

Local Development Organization Assets

LDOs in West Fargo fall under three main categories: Housing Development, Economic and Employment Development, and Community Service and Involvement. Each one of these assets develop several projects and programs to help achieve the LDO's goals. Within each of these three main areas of development in West Fargo there are both governmental entities and non-governmental ones that help build projects and programs that promote growth in the whole community.

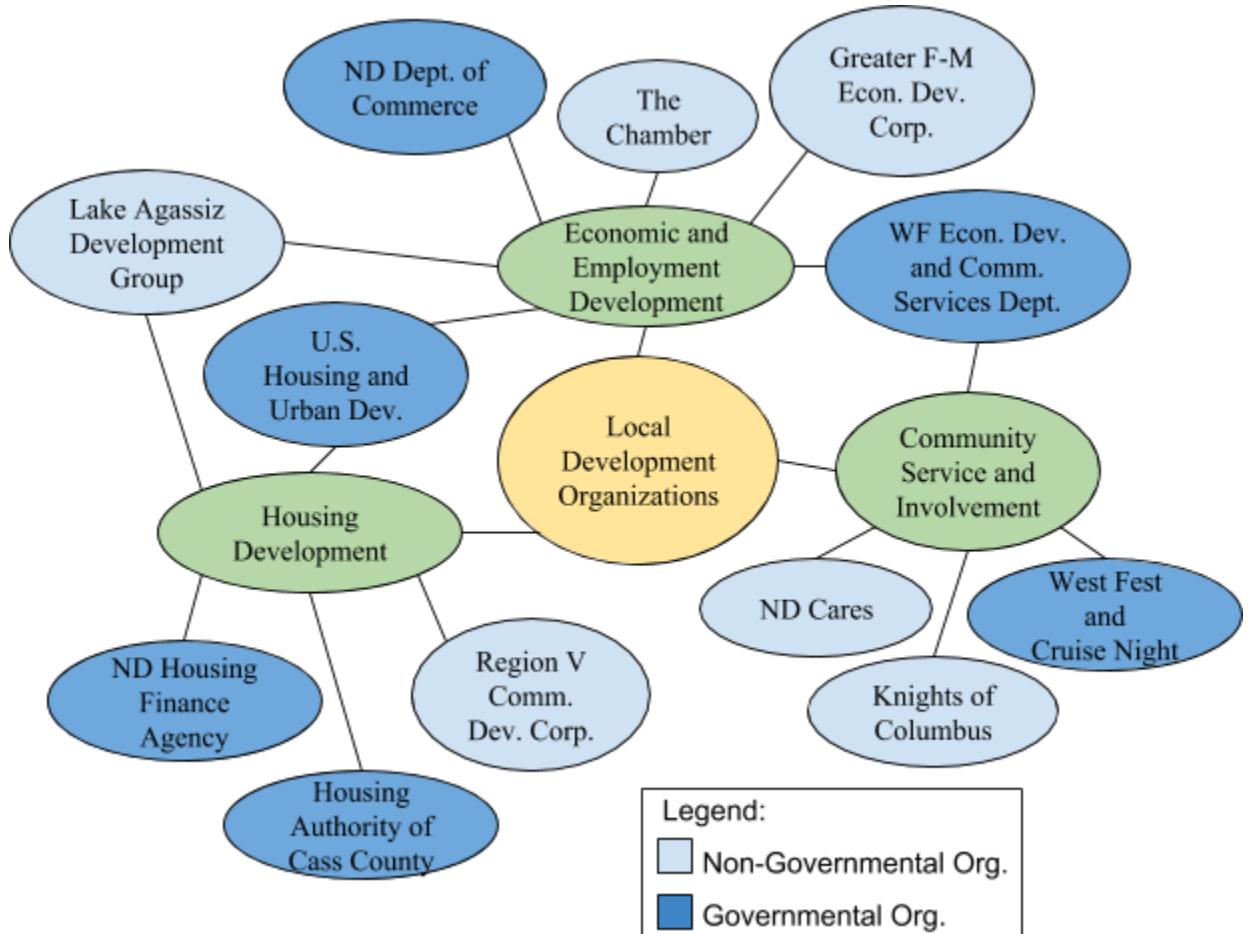


Figure 11.1 Local Development Organizations Asset Map

Community Development Implications

Although LDOs are specifically meant to help with business expansion and overall development in West Fargo, the city still needs help from the government in order to continue expanding. The multiple organizations need to be able to come together to maximize the city's possible growth. The collaboration of these organizations will help with current issues that the city may be dealing with such as housing shortages, resource deficits, and possible lack of support for local businesses. The city also needs to be aware of new incoming residents as well as commuters that may be passing through the city in their planning. The addition of new job and business opportunities will create a pressing want for outsiders to migrate into the city, which will help continued progress for the community. West Fargo has been growing in population as the result of in-migration over the last few years. When asked, Matthew Marshall, West Fargo Economic Development and Community Services Director mentioned that the issue the community faces is retention of new residents long term. By considering the needs of the incoming population when building new projects, new residents will likely feel more connected to the city and therefore choose to invest and stay.

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CHAPTER 12



RIPPLE MAP

Author: Jesse Riley

West Fargo, named 2013 " City of the Year" by the North Dakota League of Cities has grown into a destination for regional businesses and those looking for a community to establish permanent roots. The impact of the Sheyenne Diversion built in 1992 was a catalyst for expansion, reducing the threat of perennial flooding. With the land within the cities geographical footprint now safe, investors were able to build residential developments that provided a worry free alternative to land in the adjacent city of Fargo. This small migration west, caused the population of West Fargo to increase.

The expansion in population led to larger companies seeking to locate their headquarters in the City of West Fargo. This increase in employment opportunities furthered the residential growth and provided a sound tax base for the community to develop infrastructures to meet this demand. Larger municipal revenue provided the resources to build more schools and fill the need for recreational areas. These amenities attracted a more diverse population and West Fargo turned into a sustainable community. With an ability to produce an economically viable economy and continual population growth the city build up an inertia that caused it to stand on its own amongst the metropolitan cities in the area.

However, the rapidly expanding city began to experience growing pains. Loss of agricultural land, increases in traffic, and increases in water demand all began to surface. These are issues many budding communities face and are not without solutions. There for a continual plan for expansion which meets the cultural, social, and economic needs should be recognized and exist in balance with the lands natural carrying capacity to insure a healthy and prosperous future.

Ripple Map

More Schools, Restaurants,
and Stores Being Built

