

# Current Patterns of Development

# New Urbanism: The Solution

# Case Studies

## Would you want to live here?



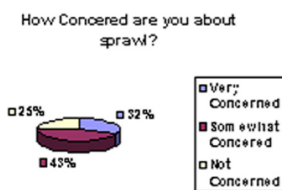
Poorly planned development is threatening our environment, our health, and our quality of life. In communities across America "sprawl" - scattered development that increases traffic, saps local resources and destroys open space - is taking a serious toll. From Connecticut to California sprawl is increasing air and water pollution, devouring wetlands and forests, and burdening our communities with the social and economic costs of unplanned growth.



South Fargo scenery

Fargo is a medium sized city that has seen unprecedented growth over the last 30 years. Along with its increase in population, its tax base has increased as well. There have been new companies coming to the area and regional facilities like the Fargodome that can attract national entertainment to our corner of the northern plains. But has all this growth been good?

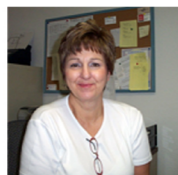
## What Does the Public Think?



"We have too much of the same, developers should keep natural land features in mind."



Kyle Canda, 35; Fargo Art Dealer



Deborah Quarve, 56; Fargo Businessowner

"Fargo has had amazing new growth, the new areas are nice, but we need more walking spaces"

"If someone wants to build a big house they should be able to as long as it looks good in the neighborhood."



Collins Mutegi, 21 Fargo College Student

So do people really care about suburban sprawl? Will people pay for something better? I found an interesting survey done by the Michigan State University in 2002. They asked people how concerned they were about sprawl: Very Concerned, Somewhat, or Not at all. 75% of respondents were either "somewhat or very concerned". So at least most people are concerned about sprawl. But what do people right here in Fargo think? I hit the streets to find out.

## What is New Urbanism?

New Urbanism is a reaction to sprawl. A growing movement of architects, planners, and developers, the New Urbanism is based on principles of planning and architecture that work together to create human-scale, walkable communities.

## Objectives of New Urbanism

A discernible center.

Dwellings are within a five-minute walk of the center, an average of roughly 2,000 feet.

Variety of dwelling types.

Shops and offices of sufficiently varied types supply the weekly needs of a household.

A small ancillary building is permitted within the backyard of each house.

An elementary school is close enough so that most children can walk from home.

Small playgrounds are not more than a tenth of a mile away.

Variety of pedestrian and vehicular routes to any destination.

Streets are relatively narrow and shaded by row trees.

Variety of pedestrian and vehicular routes to any destination.

Buildings are close to the street.

Parking lots and garage doors rarely front the street.

Prominent sites are reserved for civic buildings.



Map illustrates 2,000 feet or a five-minute walk. This is also a good distance for bus-stop placement.



Townhouses in Chaska, Minnesota. These form a strong relationship with the street.



A neighborhood playground.

## Clover Ridge: Chaska, Minnesota



Clover Ridge: (by Lander Group LLC)



Houses are close and have front porches

Clover Ridge is a development in Chaska, Minnesota: a suburb on the Twin Cities' urban fringe. Its population is expected to double in the next 10 years, so fortunately the city has had some vision. They have taken proactive measures to encourage the development of a new urbanist neighborhood, Clover Ridge. This is a successful development because the neighborhood's size is limited by the distance from the edge to the center. 63% of homes are within 1/4 mile of the center, while 99% of homes are within 1/2 mile of the neighborhood center. Additionally, the development has an affordability slant. 65% of houses for sale go for less than \$195,000.

## Georgetown: Washington D.C.

Georgetown was formally established in 1751, making it one of the older cities in the U.S. It was named after King George II and originally flourished as a shipping center. The town is actually incorporated into Washington and was affected by the development of the new U.S. capitol, yet Georgetown retained its own feel.

What we see today is a city that retains its colonial charm, this makes it a good example for us to study. Its streets are narrow and lined with trees. Its sidewalks are brick and well-used by pedestrians. The houses have character and are generally brick done in the Federal style. There is also plenty of open space; including the 27 acre public park, Dumbarton Oaks. Georgetown is an excellent community which is why my site in South Fargo takes its namesake.



Townhouses: Georgetown, D.C.



Commercial area: Georgetown, D.C.

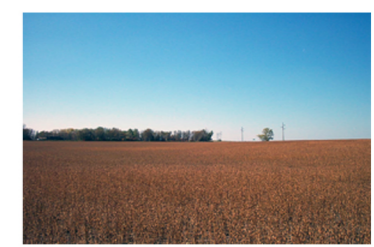
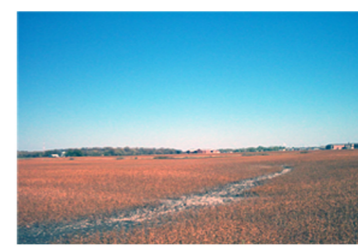
## Georgetown Park:

A New Urbanist Neighborhood on Fargo's Urban Fringe



*Project Introduction: Board 1/7*

# Introduction to the Site

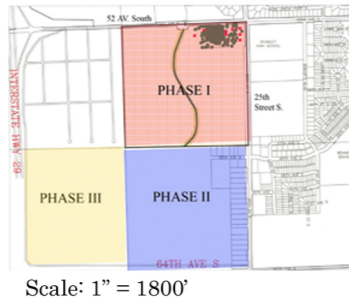


## Orientation



Georgetown Park is located on the south side of Fargo, ND. It is on a section of land that is being rapidly developed. The City of Frontier exists on the northwest ¼ section and my New Urbanist development encompasses the other ¾ of that section

The area this neighborhood sits in has been highly active. A new elementary school was constructed across the street to the east in 2002. The area is currently a mix of single family residential, apartments, and some larger single family lots. These lots are actually their own town, called Frontier. Interstate highway 29 is less than a ½ mile away also. Let's take a closer look at the site.



Scale: 1" = 1800'

## Soils

There are four main soil types on the site

5-Dovray Silty Clay

- Deep, level
- Excess water, spring floods pond for long periods
- Water table fluctuates 1' below to 2' above the surface.
- Too wet for planting if not drained.

36-Fargo Silty Clay

- Deep, level, poorly drained soil on glacial lake plain
- Occasionally flooded
- Suitable for trees and shrubs if drained
- High shrink-swell potential is a limitation for building sites

38-Fargo Silty Clay Loam

- Deep, level, poorly drained soil on low ridges and broad flats of glacial lake plains
- Rarely flooded
- Suitable for trees and shrubs if drained
- High shrink-swell potential is a limitation for building sites

## Climate

Fargo's climate is a continental one, characterized by: wide temperature swings. High temperatures hover around 15 degrees in January to 84 degrees Fahrenheit in our area's warmest season, July. Precipitation ranges from a low of 1/3 inch in January to a high of 7.5 inches of precipitation in May. The growing season is an average of 140 days.

## Site Analysis

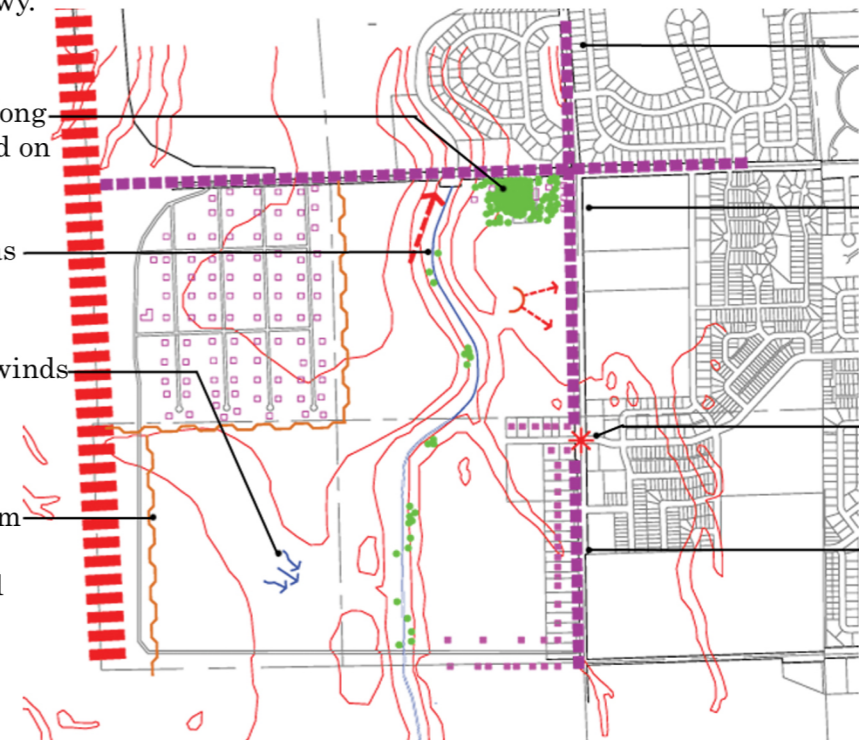
Connect to off-site destinations; mall, downtown Fargo via Interstate Hwy. 29

Retain existing trees along drain and old farmstead on northeast edge of site.

Utilize drain easment as an amenity

Shield from prevailing winds

Buffer development from Frontier subdivision, Interstate Hwy. 29, and minor arterials.



Scale 1" = 800'

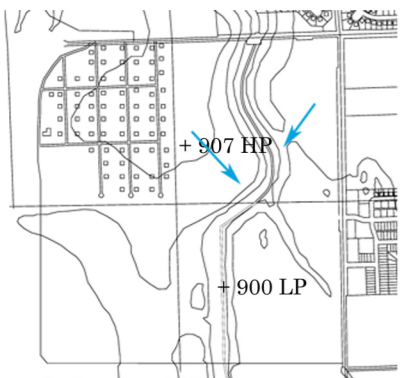
Connect with city bus system

Connect to existing bike trail along 25th street.

Connect to existing intersection.

Demolish existing buildings on eastern side of site

## Inventory



Scale: 1" = 1600'

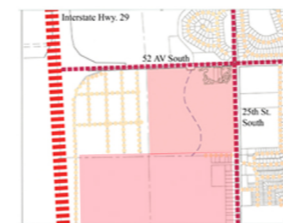
## Hydrology

The stream that runs the length of the site would be characterized as ephemeral because it can not be counted on for water. According to the USGS, the water level in this area fluctuates from 1' below to 2' above the surface. Drainage is generally toward the center of the site. When filled with water, the ditch flows in a southerly direction.

## Topography

Contours range from a high point of 907' above sea level to a low point of 900' above sea level. A drain runs through the middle of the site which accounts for the low elevation.

## Circulation



Scale: 1" = 1800'

- Interstate Hwy.
- Minor Arterial
- Collector
- Site

## Floodplain



- 100 yr. floodplain
- 500 yr. floodplain

Scale: 1" = 1600'

A major constraint to this site is that 100% of it lies within the 500 or 100 year floodplain. This is no joke, as the area has been inundated as lately as 5 years ago. Steps must be taken to ensure good foundations and the construction of basements will not be recommended. In order to alleviate flooding, the development will aim to ensure that surfaces are mostly permeable. This will allow for more water to seep into the ground and prevent flash-flooding.

# Georgetown Park:

A New Urbanist Neighborhood on Fargo's Urban Fringe



# Inventory and Analysis Board 2/7

# Master Plan



## A New Urbanist Neighborhood

Georgetown Park is named after Georgetown in Washington D.C. Its inspiration comes from Georgetown's historic style of architecture and the relationship of buildings, pathways, and open space. Inspiration also comes from sites I visited; new urbanist communities in Minneapolis-St. Paul and right here in the older areas of Fargo. The site is organized under the grid system; #1 because it is an efficient way to make use of the land, and #2 because it is a return to the tradition of city planning in the pre-WWII era. This development pattern has not been used in Fargo for 50 years but there are several virtues I hope to prove that are worth returning to.

Today's developments lack character, open space, and have poor circulation if one plans on walking or biking somewhere. My plan addresses all kinds of travel with the same importance. Utilitarian bike paths are designated on the two minor arterials on my site, alongside vehicular traffic. A leisure path runs along the 100' drain easement near the middle of the site. The easement creates an uninterrupted open space where native plants flourish, and form a natural stormwater management system. There is a large park on the north end of the site as well as smaller neighborhood pocket parks and playgrounds sprinkled throughout. One will also notice on the plan a substantial buffer zone around the entire site that mitigates traffic noise and stormwater runoff.

In order to serve the daily needs of Georgetown Park's residents, a commercial area is located on the south end of the site. This area has wide sidewalks where pedestrians experience a lively atmosphere with its sidewalk cafes and pedestrian promenade just to the east. Georgetown's use of alleyways, street trees, open space, and buildings with character reflect the tenants of New Urbanism and will hopefully have a place in Fargo's future, not just its past.

## Legend

	Commercial/ Residential
	Multi-Family Residential
	Single-Family Residential
	Off-Street Parking
	Open Space

- A: Buffer Zone
- B: Small Park
- C: Commercial/ Residential
- D: Pedestrian Promenade
- E: Pocket Park
- F: Drain Greenway and Leisure Bike Paths
- G: Farmstead Park

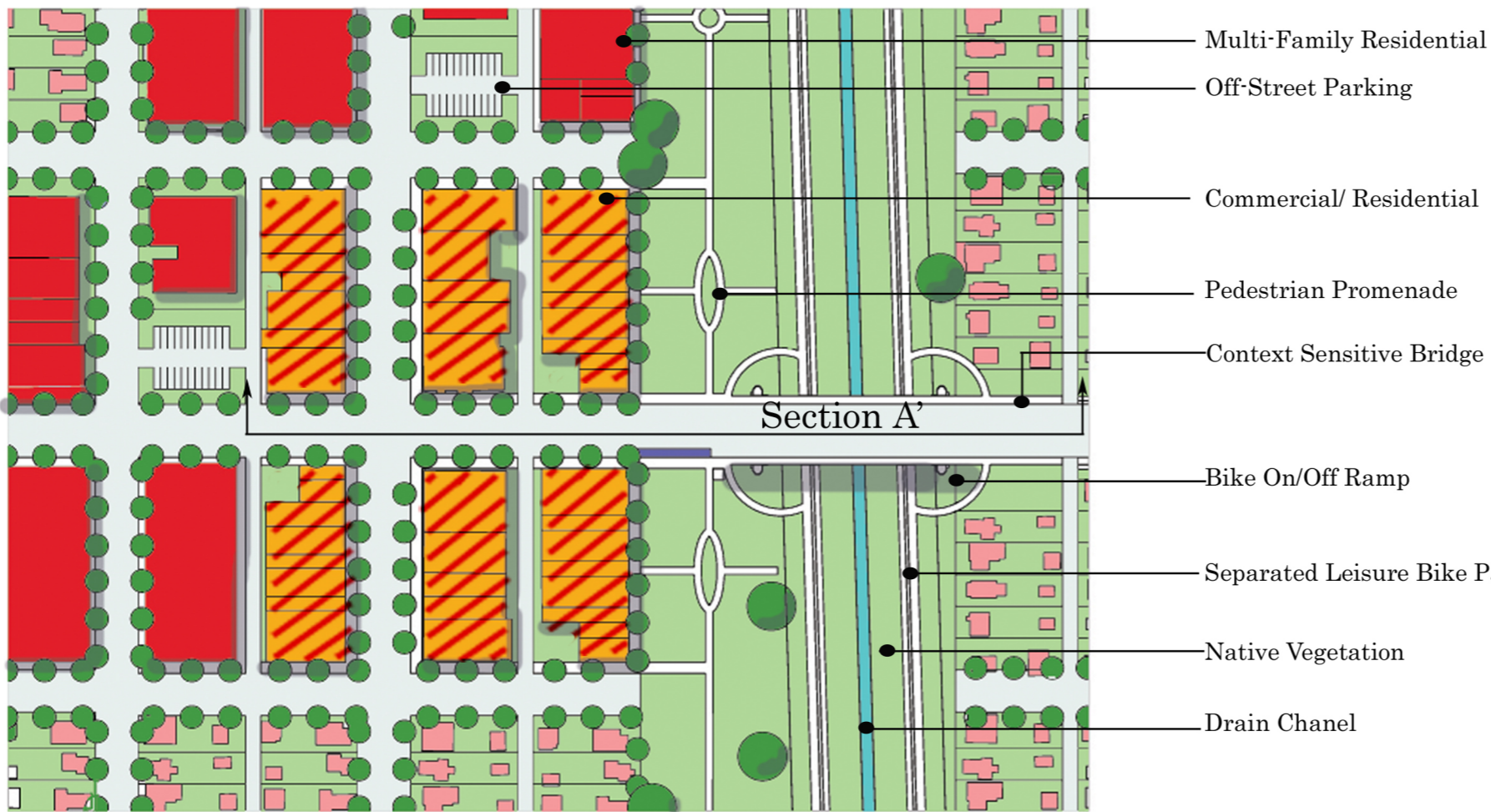
## Georgetown Park

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*Master Plan Board 3/7*

# Commercial Plan



Scale: 1" = 100'



## Commercial Sidewalk

Georgetown Park's commercial area is busy with people sitting at sidewalk cafes and taking care of the daily errands.

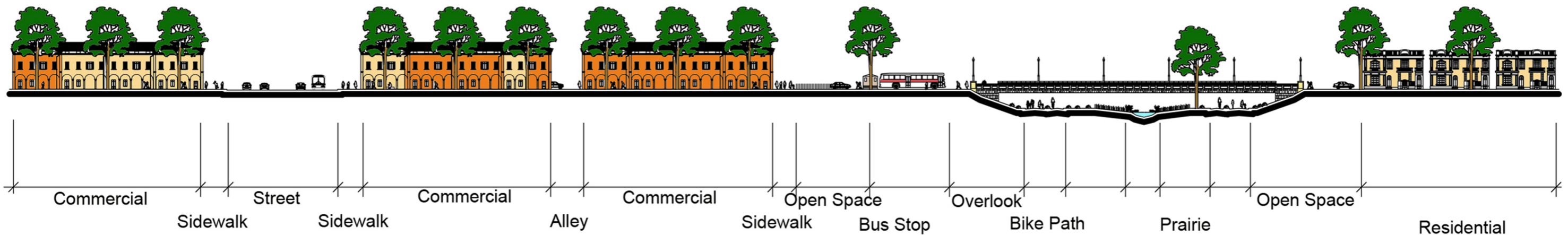


## Commercial Streetscape

Tree-lined streets shade passers by as they walk safely through the commercial area.

## Section A'

Scale: 1" = 40'



**Georgetown Park:**  
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*Commercial Board 4/7*

## Residential Plan

## A Hierarchy of Socialization

Georgetown Park's residential area is organized into blocks 300 x 300' with lots 45' wide and 135' long. There is a 15' city right-of-way with a sidewalk and street trees. Garages are placed in the back of the house. This is a tenant of New Urbanism, because it reinforces a strong streetscape and also allows for a 'front porch culture' to develop. People are more likely to become neighborly with increased social interaction caused by the front porches. Their porch is connected to the sidewalk and their sidewalk connects to the bike path along the minor arterial which in turn connects to the commercial center of the site. This is a hierarchy of circulation but one may also call it a hierarchy of socialization; as the closer one gets to one's home, the more acquaintances Citizen Jim or Jane will run into. This will create a strong sense of community cohesion; a major objective for this plan.



### Residential Front Porches

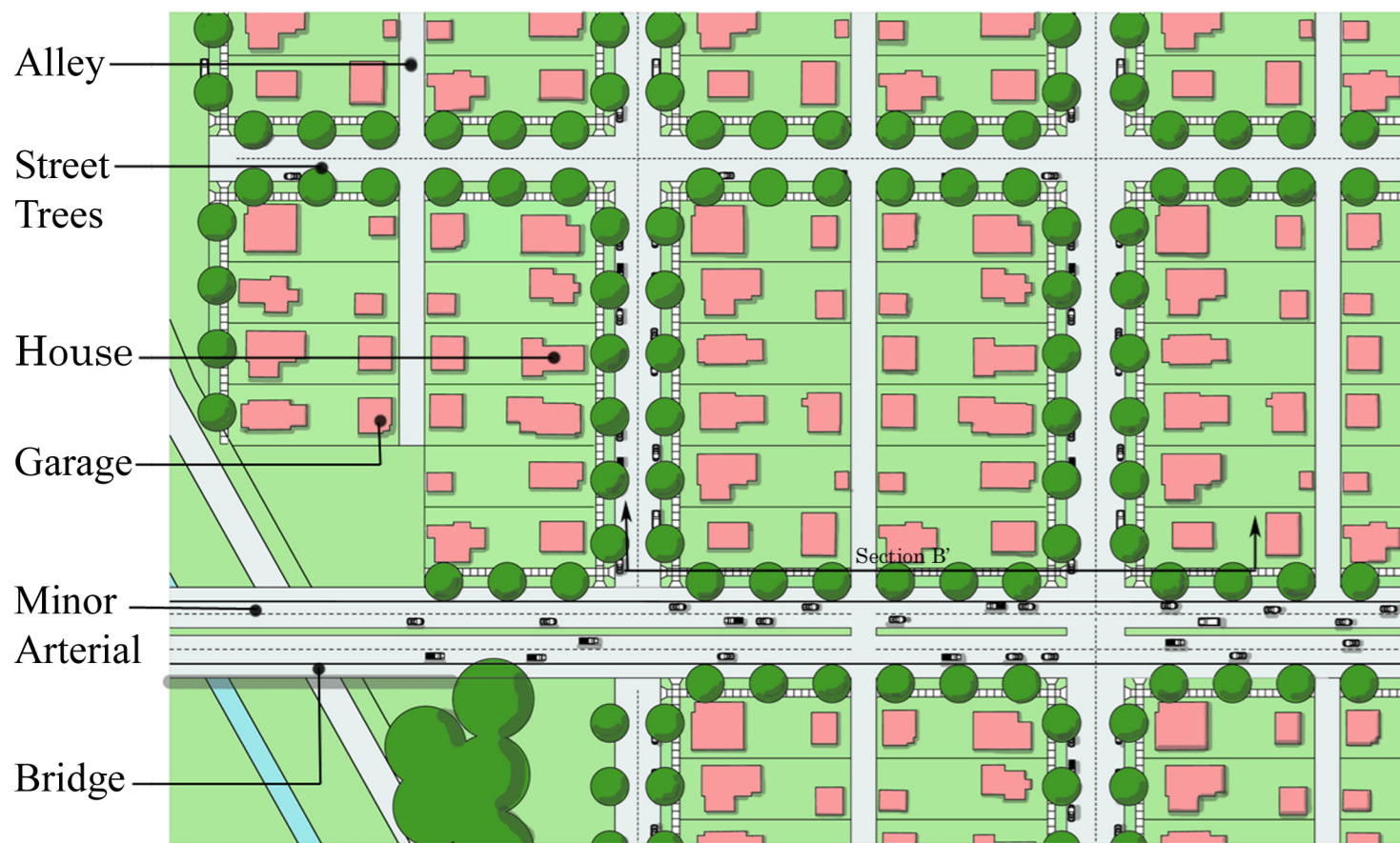
Front porches encourage social interaction leading to an enhanced sense of community



### Conservative Housing in the Farm Style

Housing character is no great departure from existing homes in the older parts of Fargo. This type will be more palatable to the consumer.

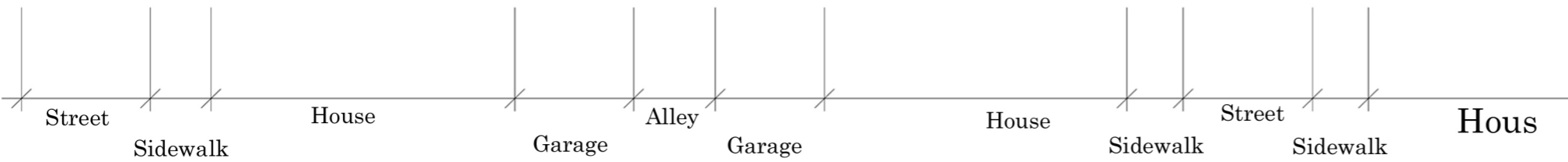
One will notice the minor arterial on this planview. It has four lanes in addition to two that are designated for bikes only. Its access is somewhat limited as the green median spans most local street intersections. This is a residential area, so the speed limit is 25 mph.



Scale: 1" = 60'

### Section B'

Scale: 1" = 40'



**Georgetown Park:**  
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*Residential Board 5/7*



Typical Neighborhood Children's Park

### Street Trees

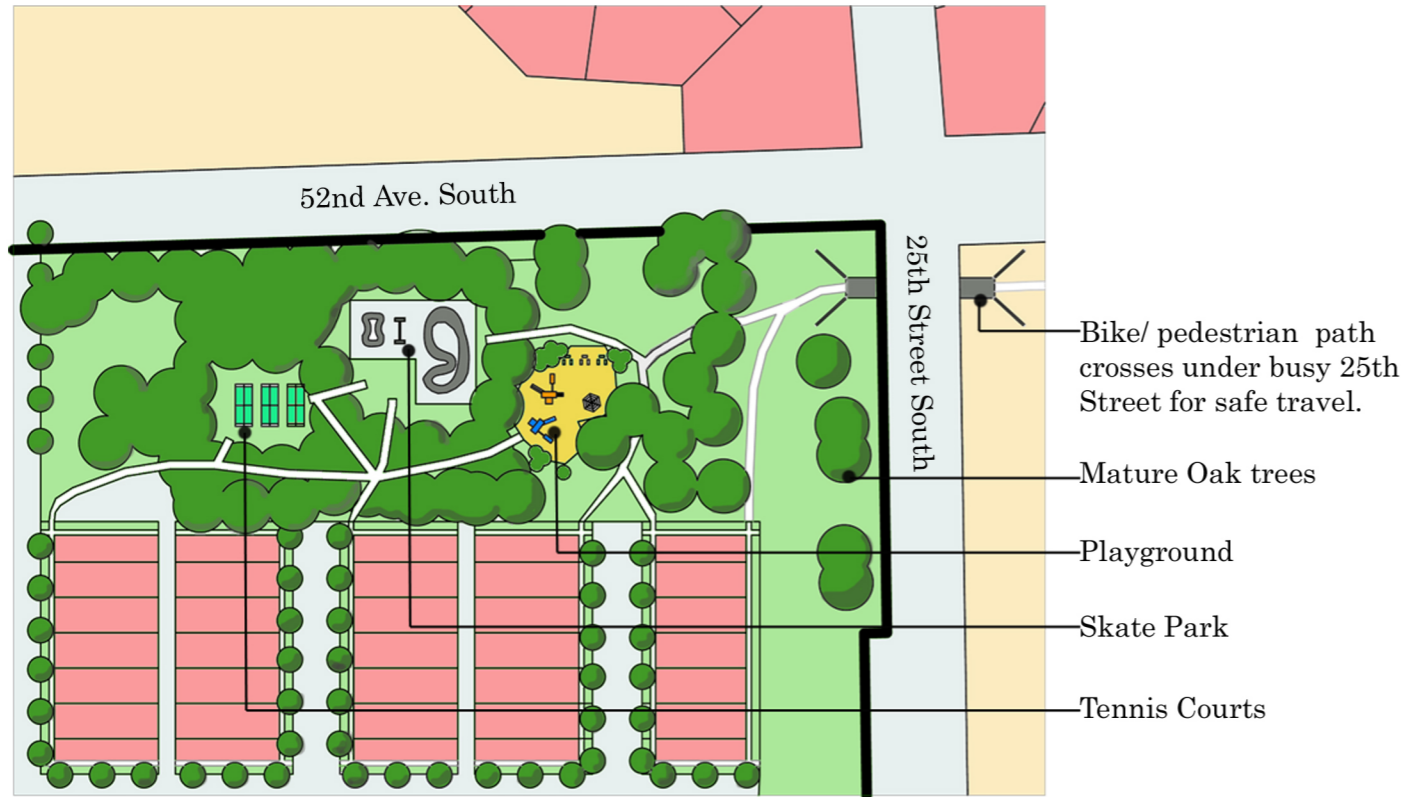
Extensive street trees are used on the site. They are primarily Ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*). Trees are used to define and organize the street. They provide unity and scale while creating a sense of enclosure. Bicyclists and cars alike benefit from their cooling canopies. In addition to shade and cooling, they are used as a buffer on the edges of the site, screening the view of the interstate as well as diminishing traffic noise.

### Parks are Important

Open space is an integral part of a neighborhood. It is used for recreation, preservation of natural features, or simply for visual relaxation from the built environment. Because my plan is denser than most developments, I wanted to create plenty of shared open space. The open spaces form a hierarchy with the pocket parks and block-size parks being more on the neighborhood scale, while Farmstead Park and the drain easement are more community-scaled. The recreational bike path for example, may draw people from all over Fargo since it connects with the city's existing bike trails.



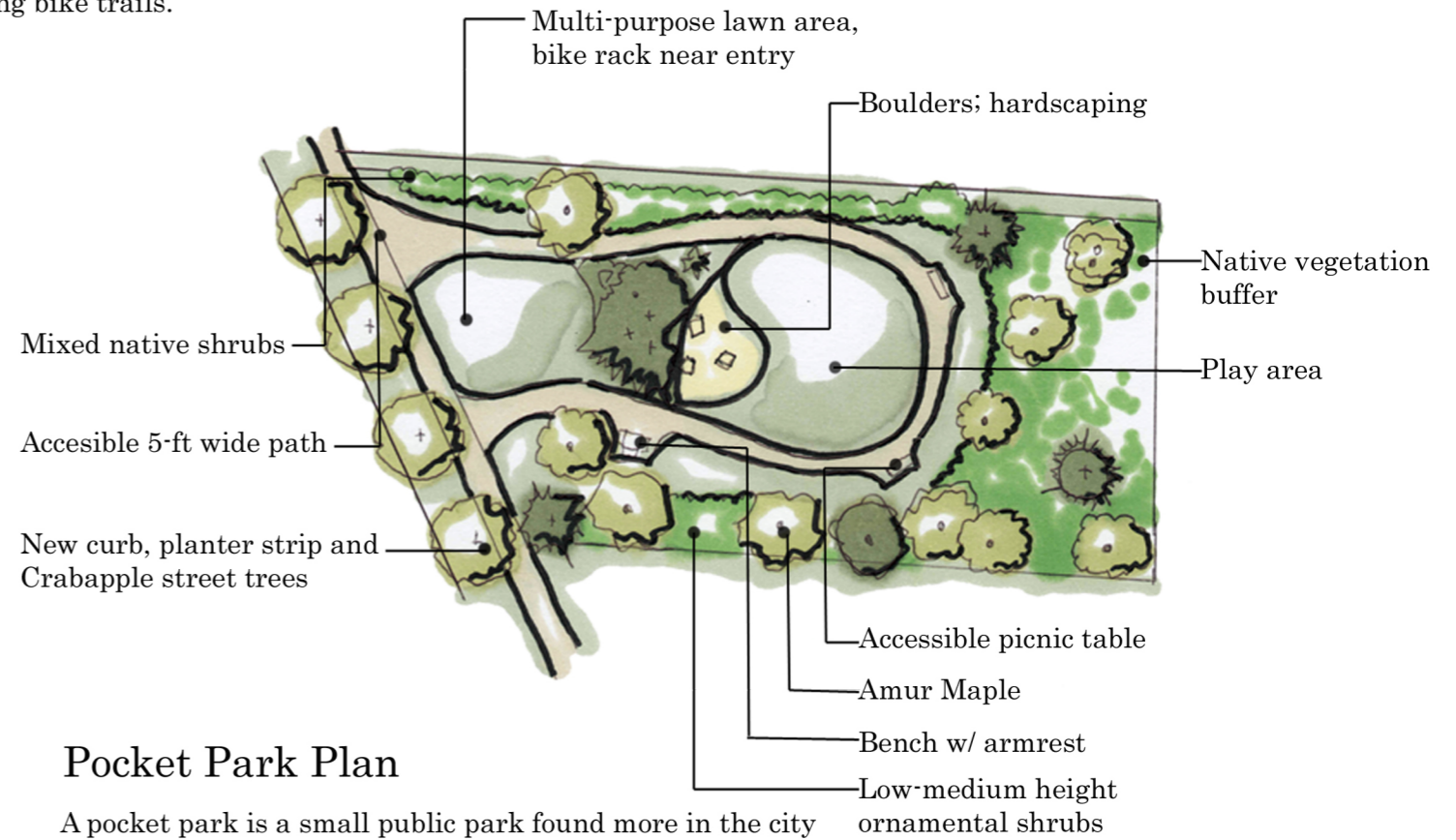
Pocket Park Perspective



Farmstead Park

Scale: 1" = 100'

This green space was preserved with a larger park in mind. The existing trees are large Oaks. It is set on a former farmstead. Although not as large, it is the 'Dumbarton Oaks' of my site. Tennis courts, a skate park, and playground give everyone something to do.



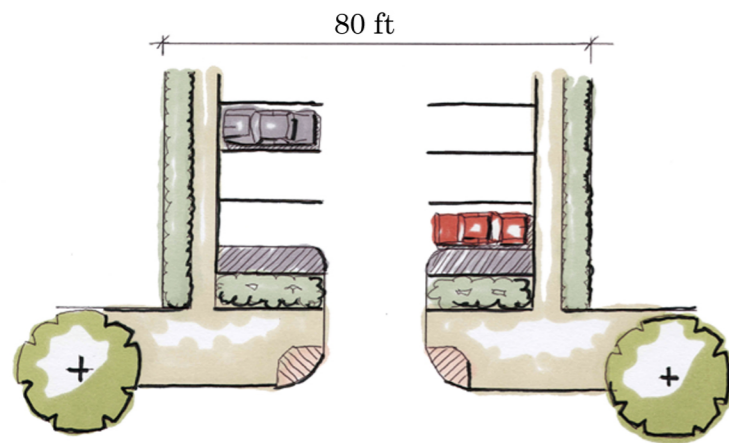
Pocket Park Plan

A pocket park is a small public park found more in the city than in the suburbs. It can be as small as a lot in size. This one is about 3 lots big. Although it does have a designated active area, this park is mainly passive in nature. It features accessible benches and would make a great place to have lunch or just a conversation. The dense evergreens at the park entrance make it a little more secluded feeling than most parks, the small scale also adds to the intimacy.

## Georgetown Park: A New Urbanist Neighborhood on Fargo's Urban Fringe



# Vehicular



## Parking Lot Between Buildings

Small parking lots are concentrated mainly in the commercial area to alleviate any congestion, as there is no on-street parking in the commercial zone.



Bus Stop

Buses are another tool for moving people around. They are efficient because they use less fuel per individual. With a higher density population and frequent stops along the route, they can be a successful part of the transportation mix.

# Bicycle



## Alleyway and Bike Lane

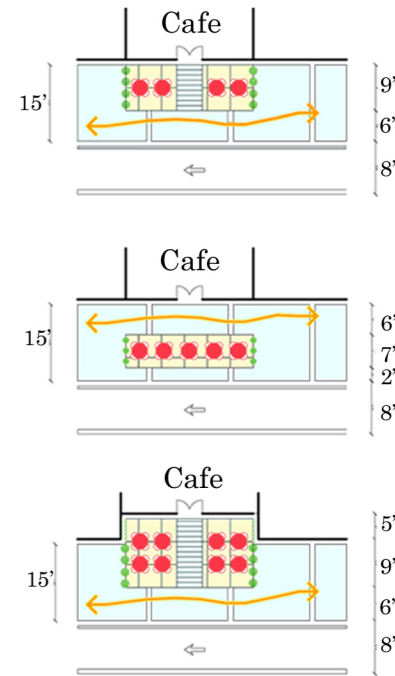
Alleyways don't have to be ugly, they are paved and also function as service roads for residential waste pickup. See also the bike lane, it is marked by a yellow thermoplastic stripe.



## Bike and Pedestrian Underpass

In order to ensure safe travel of pedestrians and bicyclists, two underpasses were created. The underpass on the north end of the site connects directly with a spiritual center while the one at 58th Avenue South connects with an elementary school.

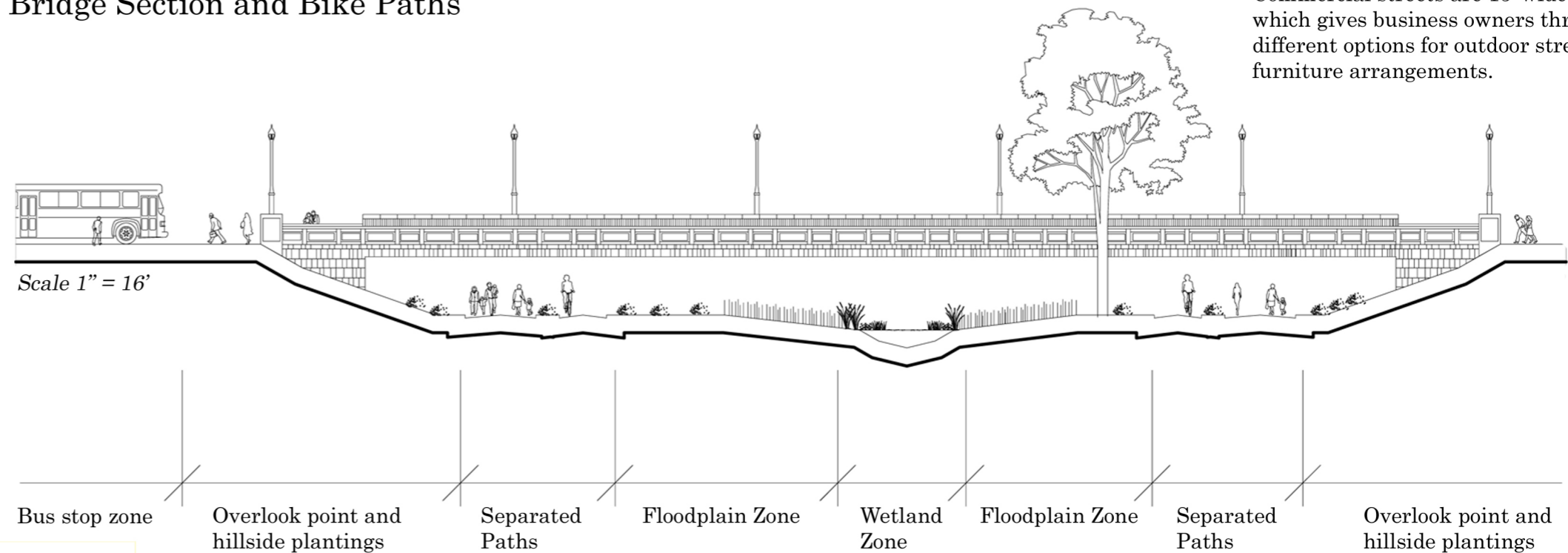
# Pedestrian



## Sidewalk Cafe Options

Commercial streets are 15' wide which gives business owners three different options for outdoor street furniture arrangements.

## Bridge Section and Bike Paths



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