Planning for the First Time: Starting from Scratch in Horace ND

Matt Lower
Community Development Director
Horace, ND
HORACE BUILDING TWO NEW SCHOOLS

City hires community director, administrator

By Angela Kolden

Twenty years ago, Horace was no more than a sleepy rural community of about 900 people located on the outskirts of West Fargo.

Today its population, at 2,700, has more than tripled, and within the next year it will be home to a brand new high school and middle school built to accommodate 800-900 students with plans to expand it in the future to accommodate as many as 1,200.

Overall, including infrastructure, the total cost of the project, with construction scheduled to begin in May, is estimated at $100 million.

Thanks to the foresightfulness of its current city council, Horace has started a Comprehensive Plan that will, according to Mayor Kory Peterson, ‘lay the groundwork for future planning, directing, managing and overseeing city planning; building inspection and code enforcement; along with assisting with economic development,’ Holper explained.

His own role will include being involved in the day to day operation of the entire city.

Most immediately, both of the new hires are busy helping develop the community’s Comprehensive Plan. They both agree the most important element of the plan is asking the question, Where is Horace going to go? And understanding the answer to that question can only be answered by the citizens and what their vision is for Horace.

“Once that is established, we will help them get there,” Holper said.

In their view, priorities for the community include ad-

The City of Horace recently hired a community development director, Matt Lower, (left) and City Administrator Brenton Holper to assist the growing community in meeting the needs identified in its Comprehensive Plan.

After the middle school project has been bid, the focus will turn to design work for the community that is facing a need for change address it by reflecting on its priorities, addressing
FIRST ANNUAL ND CARES
Argusville APPLE FESTIVAL
SATURDAY OCTOBER 19 2019

Schedule of Events

9am-10am Fun Run/Walk/Bike/Scoot/Wagon
Start @ community center, maps available

9am-Noon Brunch - Free will donation @ community center

10am start Games and activities for all ages @ community center and park

10am start Co-Ed Softball Tournament @ park – bring lawn chairs

More Details on 832-Argusville

Recognizing and honoring Argusville service members and their families by providing a family-friendly day of activities, entertainment and food.

Join us for a fun-filled day!
Past work as a tribal planner has led to a career of launching planning programs.
Horace

• First Farm Town >>> Last Suburb

• Approx. 7x2 square miles

• Often called out as the “wealthiest city in North Dakota”

• Significant portions in the floodplain
Population grew 211% in the past 18 years. But only approximately 17% since 2010.


2010 Census: 2,430*
2018 Estimate: 2,847*

Most of this growth is through voluntary annexation by subdivisions consisting of larger lot single family homes.

2018 School Bond Referendum has changed the game.

*Source: US Census Bureau
Current Vacant Residential Lot Inventory

117 - Available Residential Lots

906 - Total Potential Residential Lots in Platting Stage, of which...

410 - Residential lots on track to be available Spring 2020

All since 2018 School Bond passed
Concerned Citizens

The sprawl of southern West Fargo/Fargo is concerning to the citizens of Horace

- **Cultural:** Loss of the “small town feel” and/or perception of independence living out of town
- **Financial:** Developments financed almost entirely through special assessments
- **Political:** Diversion + Development lobby increasingly involved in city policy
Challenges leading up to the School Bond Approval

• Lack of qualified staff
• Disjunct infrastructure
• Minimal policy framework
• Development process attorney-led
Horace is truly planning for the first time
KALISPHEL TRIBE LONG RANGE PLANNING
PILLARS OF SUCCESS

Enhanced sovereignty
with maximum access to jobs, services
and the 21st century economy.

COMPLETE STREETS
The defining component of a modern
development policy.
Prioritizes public safety, economic access,
and human-scale design in planning for
transportation and land-use.

HOUSING STUDY &
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN
Informs how to deliver housing solutions
that best serve Tribal Membership.

MEMBERSHIP
ADVISORY BOARDS
Enhancing Tribal Member involvement
in their Government’s decision-making.
Active Advisory Boards include:
- Design Review
- Housing Policy Update
- Food Systems

BUSINESS SUPPORT PROGRAM
IMPROVEMENTS
Create opportunities for tribal members
to engage in the regional economy as
both producers and consumers.
Programs include:
- Pilot Vendor Permit Program
- Business Licenses
- Business Feasibility Studies

FOOD SYSTEMS SOVEREIGNTY
IMPROVEMENTS
Expand access to healthy and
traditional foods.
How are we doing it?

1. Foster a strong public vision
2. Build partnerships in common and uncommon places
3. Embrace low-cost, high impact projects
4. Promote transparency through technology
5. Integrated capital management
As planners, we are acutely aware of what makes a great place.
We're not sure why the thing works so well but the City's vision, public input, and the old road go in that end and a people and business-friendly place comes out this end.
Strong Public Vision- Horace 2045 Project

- Complete overhaul of publicly-backed guidance documents
  - Comprehensive Plan
  - Future Land Use Map
  - Small Area Plans
  - Diversion Recreation Plan
- Statistically significant survey results
Q14 How important is preserving neighborhood character?

1. Very Important: 67%
2. Important: 33%
3. Not that Important: 0%
4. Not Important at all: 0%
Q4 Should Horace work toward keeping the city’s small-town feeling?

1. Yes, it is important (57%)
2. Okay with me (24%)
3. Not a bad idea (14%)
4. Don’t bother (5%)
Partnerships in Common Places

- Restart, restore, or initiate
- Partnership building is a cultural shift
- New/Improved partners include
  - Public: Fire Department and Parks Board
  - Private: Folkways
  - Quasi-Public: Lake Agassiz Regional Council, Diversion Authority
Partnerships in Uncommon Places

• Universities (and not just your land grant extension!)
• Developers progressive in their thinking
• Cable Companies
Low-Cost, High Impact Capacity Building

- Economic Development Technical Advisory Committee
- Farmer’s Market
- Upgraded City Newsletter
- ND Moves Project
Low-Cost, High Impact Policy Changes

- Food Trucks
- Urbanized Block Length
- Parking Flexibility (Thanks Tim!)
- PUD Ordinance and Scoping Special Assessments
WHAT'S A SPECIAL ASSESSMENT?

I DON'T KNOW, BUT SPECIAL MEANS IT'S GOOD... RIGHT?
Transparency Through Technology

- Online Streaming Council Meetings
- SmartGov Online Permitting
- Horace2045 Website
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Address: 7709 FIREFLY LN HORACE, ND 58047</th>
<th>Status: Active</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Owner: VERITY HOMES OF FARGO LLC 4150 19TH AVE S STE 201 FARGO, ND 58103</td>
<td>Applications: Pending: 0 Issued: 1 Closed: 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Legal Description:

LOST RIVER 2ND ADDITION LT 3 BLK 1 **5-1-17 RE-PLAT PART OF LT 2 BLK 6 OF LOST RIVER ADDN PER PLAT DOC#1506643 FOR 2017
Integrated Capital Management

- The development process is holistic
- Plats are just a small part of the overall development
- Build a Better CIP and tie with the Comprehensive Plan
Next Steps

- Continue to foster the public vision
- Continuing education
- Leverage state programs, i.e. Renaissance Zone
- Upgrade grant writing capacity
- Building foundation for code overhaul
Thank You