



# TOGETHER 2045

Bismarck's Comprehensive Plan

## HOUSEHOLD SURVEY REPORT

Final results of survey administered to households in  
Bismarck, North Dakota and its extraterritorial area  
in June/July of 2021

July 19, 2021

Created by:  
Community Development Department  
Planning Division  
City of Bismarck

With funding assistance from:  
Partners in Planning  
North Dakota Department of Commerce

## Overview of Survey Methods

In preparation for the Together 2045 comprehensive plan, City staff administered a survey to a sample of households in Bismarck and its extraterritorial area. A random sample was selected proportionally from three subsets of the population: homeowners within city limits, renters within city limits, and households outside of city limits.

Population and sample statistics:

<b>Total Households:</b>	37,291
<b>Selected Survey Sample:</b>	2,399
<b>Responses Received:</b>	377
<b>Response Rate:</b>	15.6%

Enough responses were obtained to have 95% confidence that the results are within 6% of the total population's actual responses. Participants were initially invited to participate by mail, and the survey was taken online or by phone. Street addresses from City administrative records were used. Two mailings were delivered in early and mid-June with a deadline to complete by June 30, and the deadline was extended until July 10 specifically for the rental sample group because of lower initial response rates among renters.

Survey questions were reviewed by the Together 2045 Advisory Committee on May 27, 2021 and were organized into the topics:

1. Experience in Bismarck	4. Planning for Future Growth
2. Home and Neighborhood	5. About Your Household
3. Getting Around	6. Final Questions

This report summarizes and discusses the survey results, with open-ended responses and the survey instrument included as an appendix. The complete data in digital format is available upon request from the City of Bismarck Planning Division.

## Profile of Respondents

The objective is to have a sample of responses that adequately represents the population. To test representation, the demographic characteristics of the survey responses can be compared to the data collected for the City of Bismarck by the U.S Census Bureau (noting that the year and geography are different between surveys):

	<b>Census ACS (2019)</b>	<b>Together 2045 (2021)</b>
<b>Household Type</b>		
Households with age 65 and over	28%	36%
Households with Age 18 and under	33%	29%
Single person	35%	22%
Mean size	2.36	2.50
<b>Household Income</b>		
Household income 50K or less	38%	18%
Household income 100K or more	31%	49%
<b>Rental Status</b>		
Owner-Occupied	65%	89%
Renter-Occupied	35%	11%
<b>Jurisdiction</b> (based on City GIS data, not census data)		
City of Bismarck	90%	87%
Outside of City	10%	13%

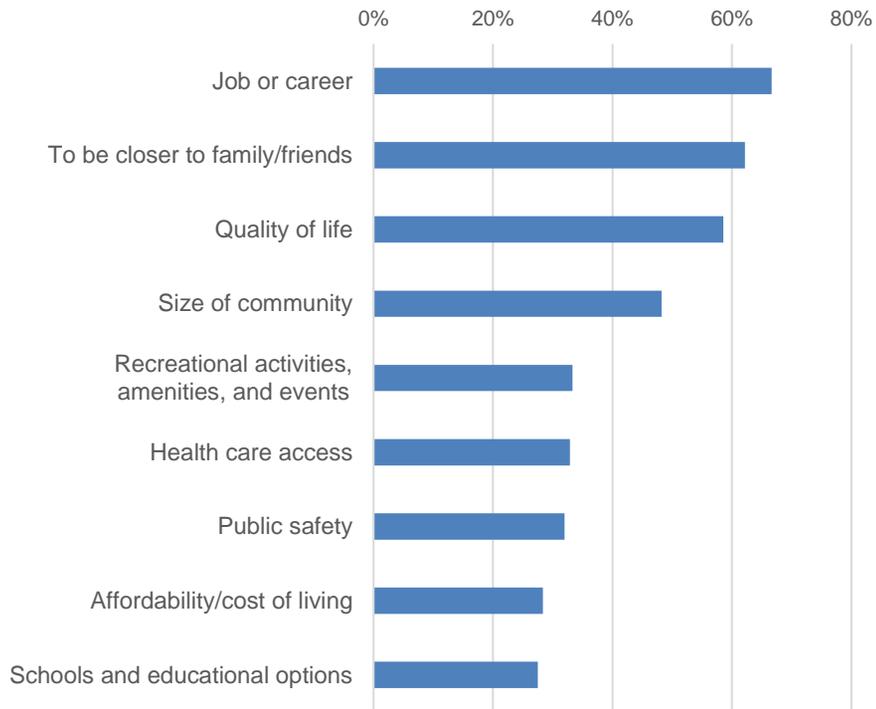
Despite all efforts, this sample is somewhat weighted toward older, wealthier, and homeowners households. This is due to different response rates among those invited to participate. However, the representation inside and outside of city limits is well-balanced.

## Results and Analysis

### Experience in Bismarck

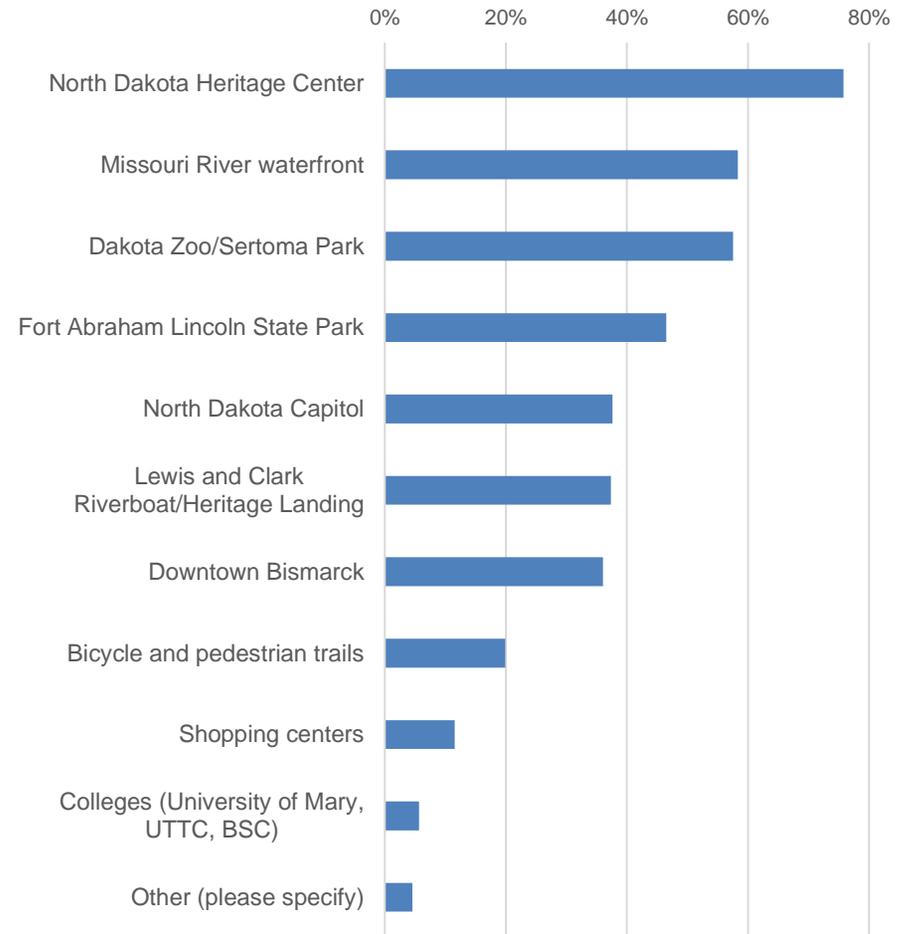
The first set of questions relate to the overall experience of living in Bismarck.

#### What have you considered in your decision to live in Bismarck?



The most common considerations listed for living in Bismarck are jobs, relationships, and quality of life. Respondents were given the option to select multiple choices. The question was intentionally left open to capture either an initial reason for moving to Bismarck or reasons for staying in Bismarck.

#### Which places in the area would you take a guest from out of town to visit?



Several local attractions, both indoor and outdoor, rose to the top of the list for visitation. Respondents were asked to choose only three. Other responses included Larks baseball games, golf courses, Veteran's cemetery, Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center, local restaurants, and other nearby recreational areas.

The following table shows ratings of quality of life indicators on a scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high) as submitted for various demographics of Bismarck. The indicators are shown in ranked order from the highest to the lowest rating. The shading indicates how the group's response compares to all respondents. The exact definitions of the groups used can be found at the end of the report.

Well Above Average	
Above Average	
Below Average	
Well Below Average	

	Residency Length		Income		Household Type			Location		
	Newer	Longer	High	Low	Under 65 with Kids	Under 65 No Kids	Over 65 Age	City	Rural	All
<b>Friendliness of people</b>	3.92	4.12	3.98	3.97	4.04	3.94	3.96	3.98	4.09	<b>3.99</b>
<b>Personal safety</b>	4.00	3.93	3.99	3.97	3.96	3.98	3.96	3.97	3.93	<b>3.96</b>
<b>Quality of schools</b>	3.62	4.08	3.91	3.97	3.90	3.88	4.02	3.95	3.83	<b>3.94</b>
<b>Cleanliness</b>	3.76	3.93	3.83	3.90	3.81	3.81	3.93	3.87	3.80	<b>3.86</b>
<b>Respect for heritage</b>	3.90	3.81	3.73	3.76	3.73	3.80	3.82	3.77	3.87	<b>3.78</b>
<b>Preservation of natural resources</b>	3.87	3.83	3.77	3.81	3.77	3.66	3.77	3.72	3.89	<b>3.74</b>
<b>Place to retire and age</b>	3.54	3.68	3.41	3.57	3.40	3.42	3.87	3.59	3.46	<b>3.57</b>
<b>Entertainment and recreational amenities</b>	3.14	3.40	3.21	3.36	3.09	3.19	3.53	3.30	3.24	<b>3.29</b>
<b>Arts and culture</b>	3.21	3.32	3.06	3.41	2.99	3.16	3.47	3.21	3.35	<b>3.22</b>

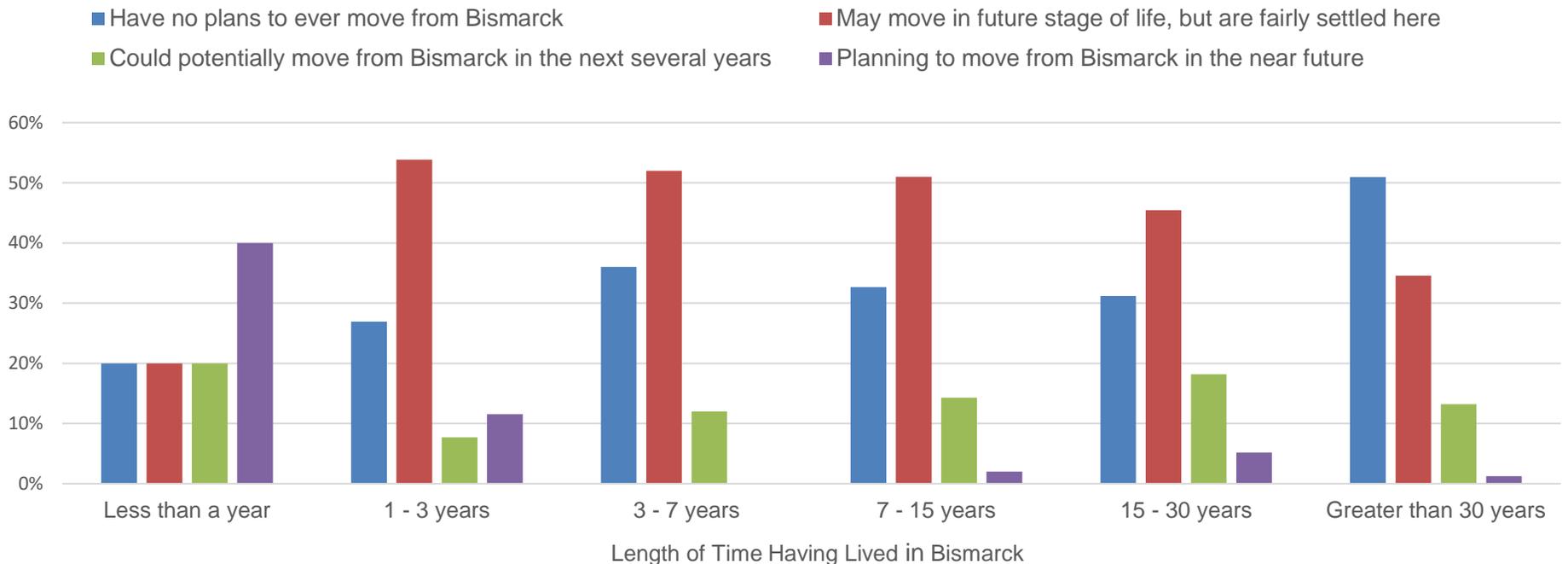
All quality of life indicators are scored above average, ranging between 3.22 and 3.99 out of five. Respondents generally agree that Bismarck is a friendly, safe, and clean community, with high-quality schools. Not all residents believe Bismarck is a good place to retire, although respondents of retirement-age disproportionately do. The lowest relative scores were given for arts and recreation topics, with families and children providing the lowest relative scores.

The survey asked for further elaboration on quality of life, and a range of topics are raised. Several responses relate to cost of living, such as water rates, housing affordability, taxes, and generally expensive goods and services. The need for more events and recreational activities is also a common theme, especially for families and during the colder months. Outdoor activities, including public river access and walking/bicycling trails, are also mentioned multiple times.

Homelessness and crime are raised, with several responses noting an increase in recent years. Several commenters prefer the smaller-scale Bismarck of the past. Many comments are generally positive.

The survey included two separate questions for length of residency in Bismarck and future plans for remaining in Bismarck. The following chart is based on a cross-tabulation of these responses:

### Plans for Staying in Bismarck



The respondents to the survey generally consider themselves committed to living in Bismarck. A clear majority (82%) state that they are at least “fairly settled” here. The longer a household has lived in Bismarck, the more likely they are to say they want to stay. Households with both members born in Bismarck/Mandan were most likely to be settled (87%), followed by households born in North Dakota

(83%), but even households with all adult members born out-of-state are still widely settled (73%). It’s possible that households who are committed to stay were more likely to respond to the survey.

Respondents who “have no plans to ever move from Bismarck” rate all of the quality of life indicators included the question above higher than less-committed residents.

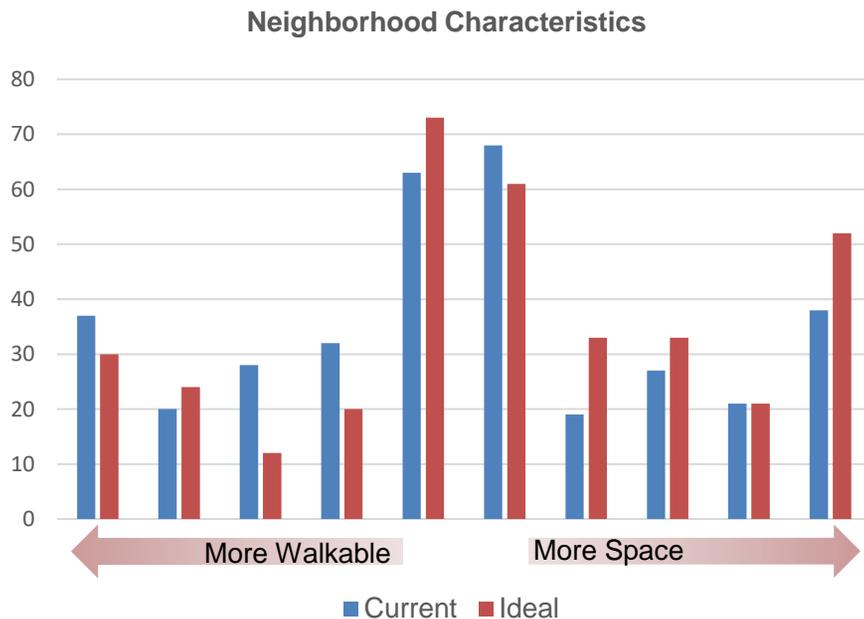
### Home and Neighborhood

The second set of questions relate to the home and immediate neighborhood. The survey asked two questions forcing a choice between less space/more walkable and more space/less walkable neighborhoods, on the premise that these physical attributes are mutually exclusive.

Residents were asked to rate their current and ideal neighborhood on a sliding scale:

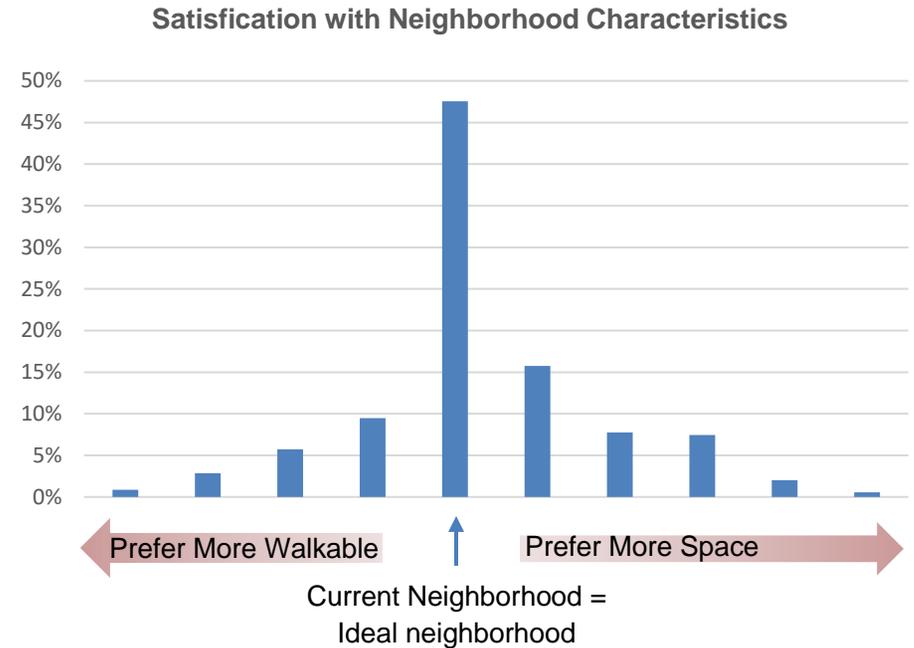
0 = “Yards are smaller and there are places to go within walking distance”

100 = “Yards are larger with open space and few places to go within walking distance”



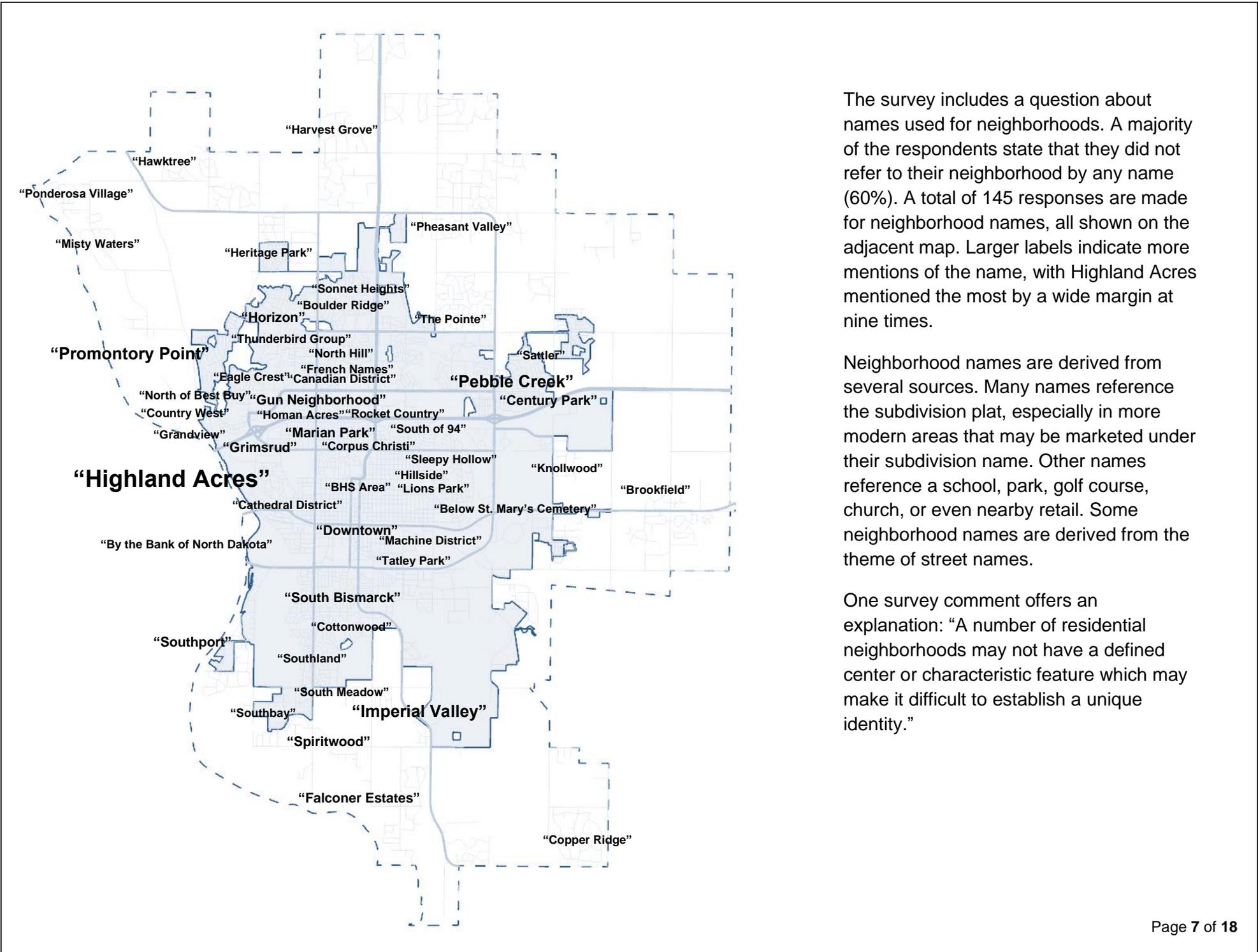
Although most rated their neighborhood in the middle range, all ranges on the scale are fairly well represented among responses.

By linking the questions together, this chart shows the difference between current and ideal neighborhoods each respondent indicated:



Almost half of all responses marked their current and ideal neighborhood similarly, within 10 points of each other, indicating they are satisfied with their neighborhood’s space. Respondents indicating a different preference are more likely to prefer more space (34%) over more walkability (19%) than they currently have.

Among the 114 respondents who want a more walkable neighborhood than they currently have, homeowners in the 50 – 65 age range are overrepresented. It should be noted that the survey did not reference costs. Larger lot sizes can be expected to have higher public and private input costs, and responses may have varied if these costs were internalized.

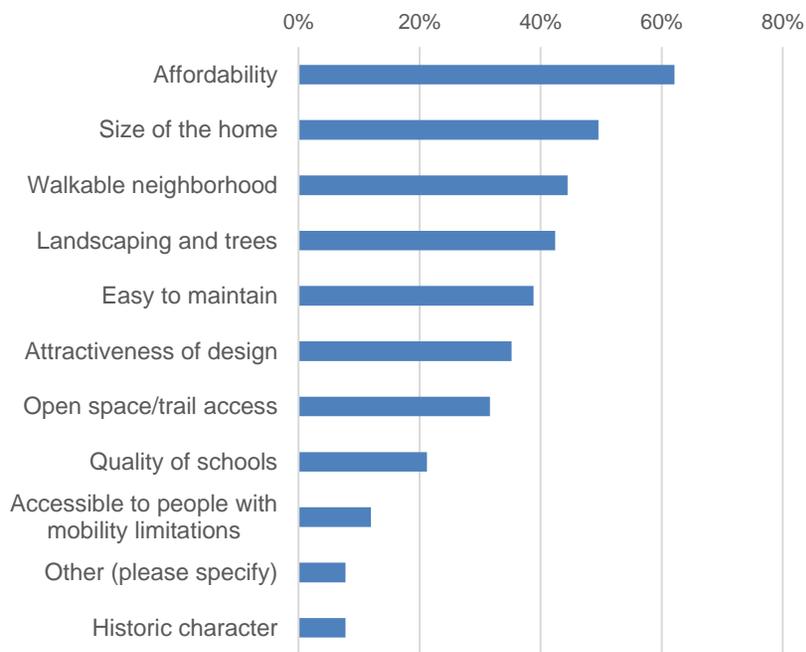


The survey includes a question about names used for neighborhoods. A majority of the respondents state that they did not refer to their neighborhood by any name (60%). A total of 145 responses are made for neighborhood names, all shown on the adjacent map. Larger labels indicate more mentions of the name, with Highland Acres mentioned the most by a wide margin at nine times.

Neighborhood names are derived from several sources. Many names reference the subdivision plat, especially in more modern areas that may be marketed under their subdivision name. Other names reference a school, park, golf course, church, or even nearby retail. Some neighborhood names are derived from the theme of street names.

One survey comment offers an explanation: "A number of residential neighborhoods may not have a defined center or characteristic feature which may make it difficult to establish a unique identity."

**If you were looking for a new home in Bismarck what would you prioritize?**



The next question relates to what aspects of a home were most valued. Results are shown in the chart to the left.

The top ranked items reinforce standard real estate practice of price and size, but walkability and landscaping come in just a few percentage points behind. Other priorities listed multiple times were rural location/more space, shopping within walking distance, quieter street, good transportation access. Water is mentioned both in terms of having access to the river, but also being away from flooding.

The final neighborhood question relates to social interaction among neighbors. Since the survey was administered after a year with social distancing, the question asked to consider social life prior to COVID-19. Social lives range widely from weekly to annual interaction among neighbors. Newcomers to Bismarck and younger households without children report less interaction, while retirement-age household report more interaction. Urban residents report more neighbor interaction than rural.

**How often did you spend time with neighbors in a typical year prior to COVID-19?**

	Residency Length		Household Income		Household Type			Location		
	Newer	Longer	High	Low	Under 65 with Kids	Under 65 No Kids	Over 65	City	Rural	All
<b>A few times a week</b>	20%	28%	24%	41%	25%	19%	38%	28%	24%	<b>27%</b>
<b>A few times a month</b>	23%	32%	29%	15%	31%	20%	29%	28%	20%	<b>27%</b>
<b>A few times a year</b>	23%	24%	27%	20%	28%	27%	22%	25%	30%	<b>25%</b>
<b>Once a year or less</b>	33%	16%	20%	24%	16%	34%	11%	19%	26%	<b>20%</b>

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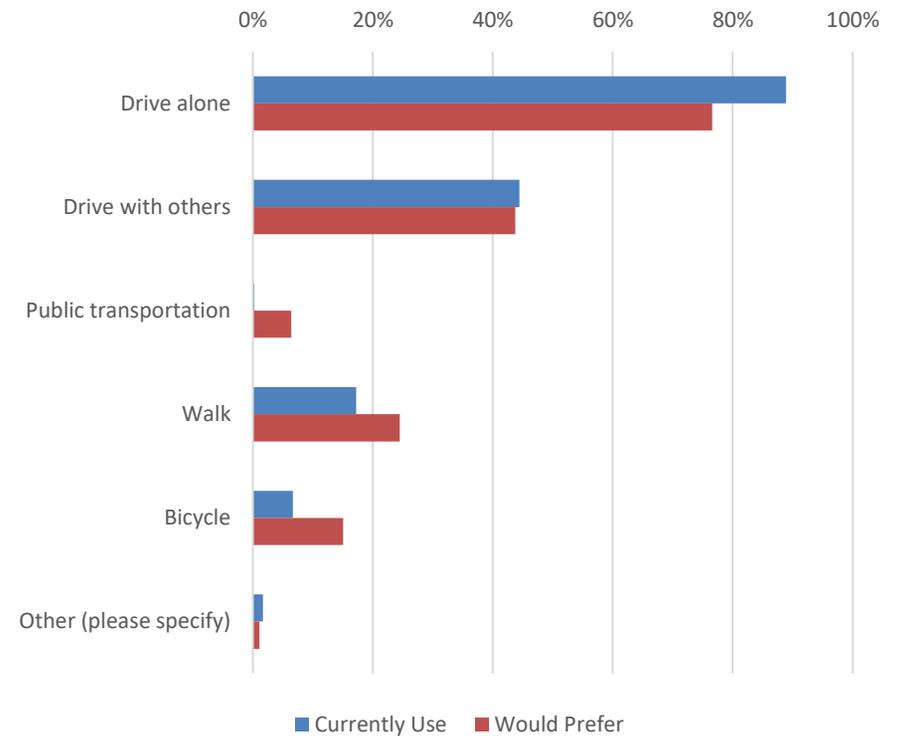
The home and neighborhood section concludes with an open-ended question about the topic. The following issues are raised multiple times, presented in order of generally most to least mentioned.

- Housing affordability. Housing, both rental and ownership, is too expensive. Bismarck is expensive in general and prices are rising. This topic was raised the most by a wide margin.
- Upkeep of Properties. Properties are not cared for as well as they used to be, but an almost equal number of respondents are satisfied with private property maintenance. Either way, this issue is important to many.
- Development Pressure. The City is growing faster than the infrastructure and services can support. Several questioned the need for so much development, saying existing buildings should be reused instead.
- Geographic Fairness. South and central Bismarck are not provided the same level of service as north Bismarck.
- Housing Preferences. There is an unmet need for smaller more centrally located homes, both for young families and elderly.
- Street Lighting. Streetlighting is inadequate, and suggestions of upgrades to LED lighting.
- Historic Areas. Older neighborhoods and downtown offer more character and should be preserved.

### Getting Around

The third set of questions relate to transportation. The survey asks which mode of transportation is typically used. This question is similar to a question asked by the American Community Survey, and the results are very similar. This survey found that 89% drive alone, compared with 87% in the 2019 5-Year ACS. However, this survey differs in that it does not specify commuting, allows up to two options for modes, and also asks about travel preference.

Methods typically used to get to most destinations



Only four other modes are mentioned, including shuttle buses, uber, and rickshaw. While the clear majority drive alone and prefer this mode of travel, a number of respondents state a preference to walk, bike, and use transit more than they currently do.

The survey asks which obstacles keep you from using this preferred transportation choice. The primary response is that they live or travel too far to make walking or biking practical, and public transportation is not available where they want to go. Several raised the cold climate in Bismarck. Safety concerns such as a lack of bike lanes, not enough pathways, or high-speed traffic were raised. Some stated that they were confused by the transit system, or there were insufficient available options.

The following table shows ratings of transportation indicators on a scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high) as submitted for various work and home locations of Bismarck. The indicators are shown in ranked order from the highest to the lowest rating. Refer to previous charts for shading explanation.

	Workplace Location				Home/Not Employed	Home Location		
	Downtown	North	South	Outside		City	Rural	All
<b>Free-flowing traffic at other times</b>	3.89	3.91	3.73	3.89	3.74	3.85	3.56	<b>3.81</b>
<b>Overall safety of travel</b>	3.64	3.78	3.63	3.72	3.62	3.65	3.38	<b>3.62</b>
<b>Ability to bike or walk places</b>	3.57	3.47	3.48	3.44	3.66	3.59	3.47	<b>3.57</b>
<b>Availability of vehicle parking</b>	3.44	3.49	3.33	3.40	3.35	3.40	3.24	<b>3.38</b>
<b>Maintenance of streets</b>	3.35	3.25	3.19	3.14	3.21	3.27	3.09	<b>3.24</b>
<b>Compliance with traffic laws</b>	3.12	3.30	3.23	3.28	3.07	3.13	3.04	<b>3.12</b>
<b>Free-flowing traffic during commuting times</b>	2.84	2.92	2.64	2.98	2.85	2.87	2.73	<b>2.85</b>

Refer to page 4 for color legend

Respondents appear sensitive to time of day for traffic, with commuting traffic scoring a full point lower than non-commuting traffic. Relatively high marks are given to safety of travel and walking/bicycling. People who work in south Bismarck or are not employed/work from home give lower ratings on most indicators. Urban residents rate transportation higher than rural residents for all indicators.

A final open-ended question was asked regarding transportation. The following issues were raised multiple times, presented in order of generally most to least mentioned.

- **Driver Misbehavior.** General concerns about driver behavior, especially running red lights and speeding. Use of electronic devices while driving is also a safety concern.

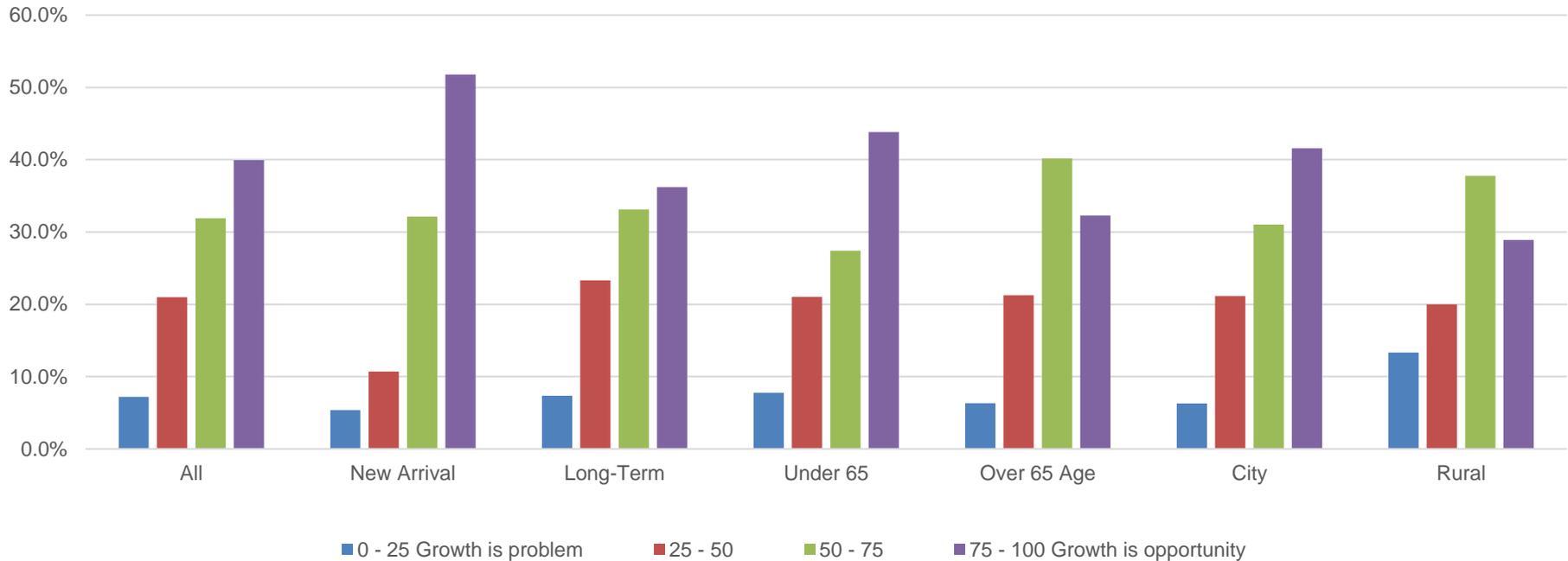
- **Traffic Congestion.** Congested travel, especially north-south, and roads may get worse with future low-density growth. Major roads should be widened.
- **Walking/Bicycling.** More path connectivity, better crosswalks, more and wider sidewalks, protected bike lanes downtown.
- **Construction Management.** Construction projects obstruct travel and should be coordinated better to minimize disruption.
- **Traffic Signal Control.** Lack of protected left turn-lanes. Improvements to traffic signal timing.
- **Downtown Parking.** More parking is needed downtown.
- **Street Plowing and Maintenance.** Streets should be plowed and maintained more rigorously.

*Planning for Future Growth*

The fourth set of questions relate planning and development. Residents were asked to rate their attitude toward future growth and development a sliding scale:

0 = “We should avoid growth and the problems that come with it.”  
 100 = “We should embrace growth and its opportunities.”

**General Attitude Toward Growth and Development**



Respondents are generally favorable toward future growth and development, believing that the opportunities outweigh any associated problems. However, over half of respondents select an option in the two middle quartiles, reflecting a balanced approach. The groups most favorable to growth are those who have moved to Bismarck recently (mean 74), renters (71), high-income households (68), and urban residents (67). The groups least favorable toward growth are homeowners (65), long-term residents (65), houses over age 65 (64), low-income households (63), and rural residents (61).

Responses to open-ended questions and provided over the phone add explanation to these attitudes toward growth. Several state that they support growth in appropriate locations, or in an orderly manner. Most commonly, responses indicate that they support growth only if the financial costs would not be a future burden to taxpayers in the community. One comment expresses a common tension related to growth: “I like the notion of building up instead of out although I also think about a nice little cottage in the woods.”

A question specific to downtown needs is asked, with the option to select up to three choices.

### What improvements would most benefit downtown Bismarck?

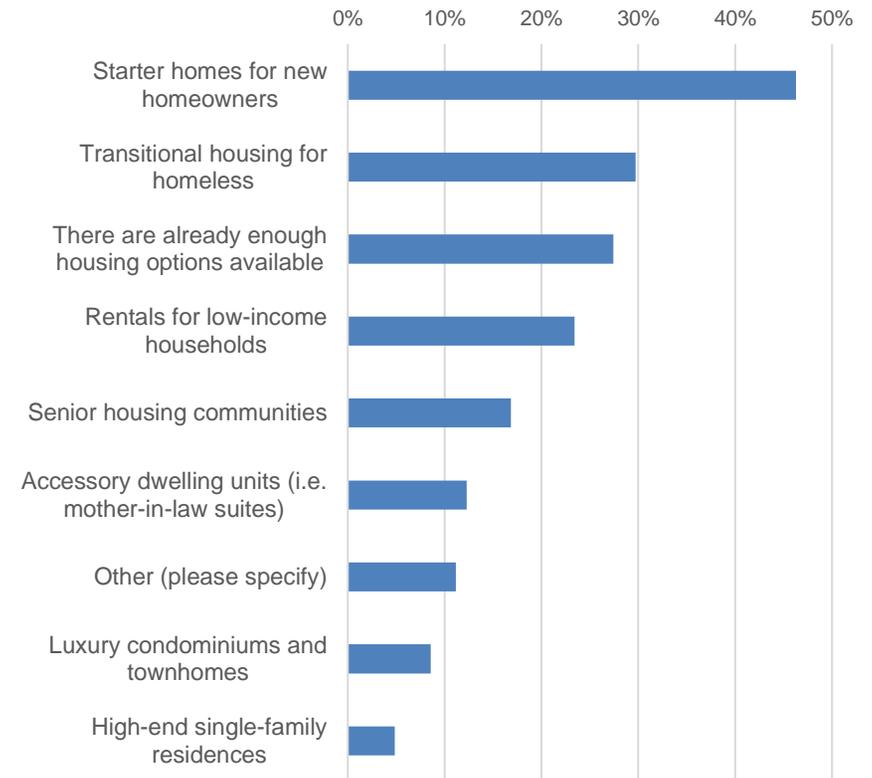


Other response listed multiple times include addressing homelessness, more green space and trails, better traffic flow on Main Avenue, public art, and less expensive and family-friendly restaurants. Several comments also emphasized the need for a public plaza.

Parking is the most commonly selected response, although less so for the 100 respondents who work downtown. An outdoor public plaza and more special events are also highly rated.

A question related to more detailed housing needs is asked, with the option to choose all that apply:

### Which kind of housing would you say is lacking in our community?

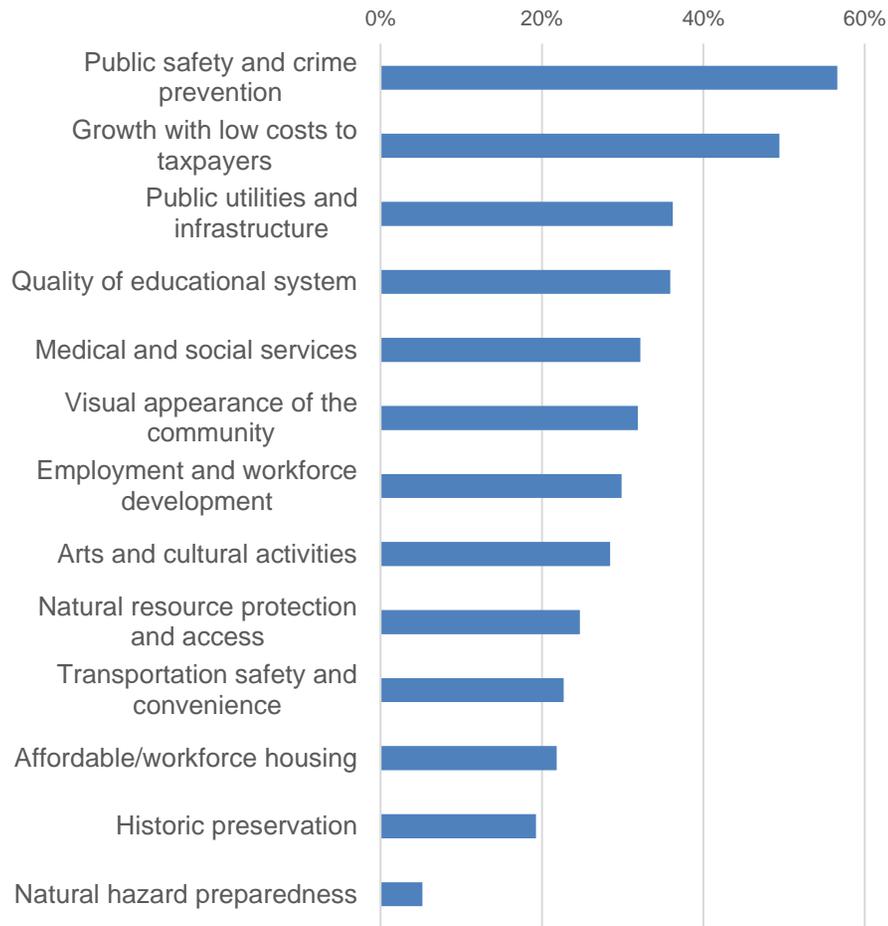


Other responses listed multiple times include downtown mixed-use housing, small houses with large garages, and mid-range homeownership options.

Starter homes were the clear choice for housing needs, although transition housing for the homeless is also cited by almost a third of the respondents. Very view stated a need for higher-end housing options.

A question is asked about various topics that may traditionally be considered in a comprehensive plan:

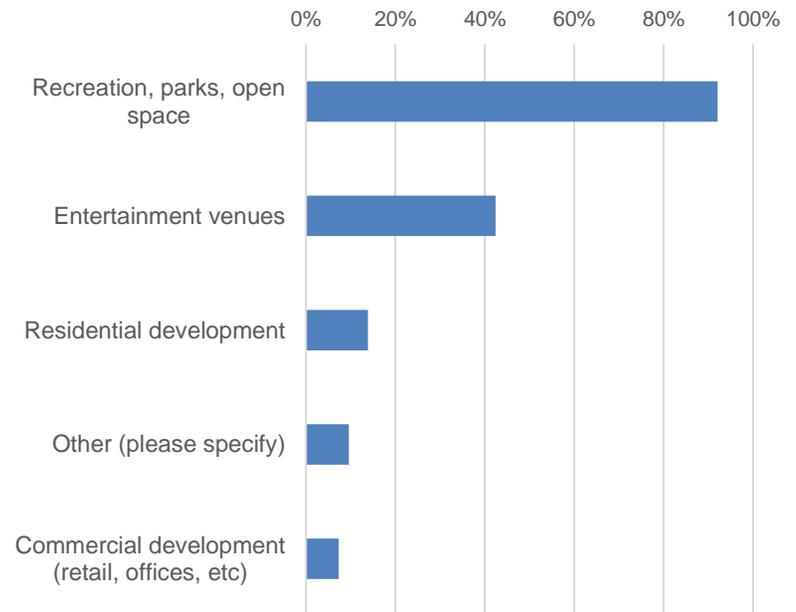
**The following topics can be included in a Comprehensive Plan?**



Respondents are allowed to choose only four options. Therefore, a low score only reflects relative importance, not necessarily absolute lack of importance. The two topics that emerge as clear priorities are public safety and crime prevention and growth with low costs to taxpayers.

The survey asks how land adjacent to the Missouri River should be used. Respondents are able to select multiple options. Recreation and natural areas are the clear preference, with a minority also opting for entertainment. Residential or commercial use of the riverfront areas are given very low scores. Most 'other' responses were to leave natural as is, although a few suggested intensive boardwalk-style waterfront development.

**How should land adjacent to the Missouri River be used?**



A series of statements are provided with the option to agree, disagree, or no opinion. The table on the following page shows the percentage of respondents who agree with each statement, excluding 'no opinion'. The statements are ranked in order from most to least agreement.

	Residency Length		Income		Household Type			Location		
	Newer	Longer	High	Low	Under 65 with Kids	Under 65 No Kids	Over 65 Age	City	Rural	All
New development should generate enough revenue for the City of Bismarck to cover all costs of providing services	98%	89%	88%	89%	88%	93%	91%	92%	84%	91%
Parks and trails should be included in all new urban neighborhoods	96%	87%	94%	84%	97%	90%	86%	91%	87%	90%
Bismarck should have a stronger role in directing future growth and development to appropriate locations	98%	89%	90%	90%	91%	90%	89%	92%	72%	90%
Trees and shrubs should be required as a screen between new commercial/industrial areas and existing residences	93%	86%	91%	90%	93%	87%	90%	89%	92%	90%
The City of Bismarck should more actively enforce existing zoning laws	71%	83%	81%	80%	76%	81%	92%	86%	67%	84%
Preserving historic resources should be a high priority for the City?	88%	77%	82%	86%	85%	78%	84%	83%	73%	82%
Areas that are already in city limits should be prioritized for development over adding new land to the city	76%	79%	76%	83%	80%	74%	82%	78%	82%	79%
The City of Bismarck should apply rules to areas outside of city limits to plan for future expansion	67%	61%	64%	64%	61%	66%	58%	68%	24%	62%
Night-time lights from commercial areas create problems for residents	36%	20%	25%	29%	24%	25%	28%	26%	24%	26%
Individuals and developers should be free to develop land without many restrictions	16%	13%	15%	21%	21%	15%	10%	15%	17%	15%

Refer to page 4 for color legend

Two final open-end questions are asked:

**What is the single biggest challenge facing Bismarck in the future?**

The following issues are raised multiple times, indicated by the number of mentions out of 266 total comments:

- Growth and Infrastructure (45). Providing the necessary infrastructure for growth in a timely and efficient manner without overburdening taxpayers or neglecting existing facilities. City should not subsidize new development.
- Taxes (31). Most say property taxes and/or water rates are too high. Some favor certain types of taxes over others.
- Traffic (23). Existing congestion, particular north-south routes, and expected future traffic. More and wider roadways.
- Crime and Homelessness (19). Increases in recent years and need for more police to enforce. Some state more resources for homeless population are needed.
- Housing Affordability (18). Home costs are too high for middle and working class households. Cost of living is high in general.
- Lack of Workforce (18). Not enough people available for open jobs. More should be done to attract talent. On the other hand, a few comments note a lack of good, career-track jobs.
- Urban sprawl (17). Low-density suburban growth is inefficient and can result in conflicts with agriculture.
- Retaining Youth (14). creating jobs, amenities, and events to attract youth to the community after their education.
- Dilapidated Core (8). Older parts of town do not receive the same attention. There is a need for reinvestment/maintenance.
- Diversity (6). A lack of respect for racial and cultural diversity in the community.

- Missouri River (4). Susceptibility to flood and erosion of the riverbanks. Management of public resources.
- Downtown Public Space (3). Need for more vibrant downtown, spaces with amenities, arts, additional parking.
- Education (3). Maintaining high-quality education with growth.
- Parks (2). The need for more greenspace or indoor recreational facilities

An additional 55 are unclassified, either because they are too general to categorize or they raise a topic only mentioned once.

**What is one thing that should be pursued to make Bismarck a better place in the future?**

The following issues are raised multiple times, indicated by the number of mentions out of 264 total comments:

- Roadway Improvements (25). New roads adequate to meet the city's growing needs, and maintenance of existing facilities.
- Law Enforcement (21). Continue to fund and support law enforcement and handle rising crime rates.
- Green Space (19). Open space, parks, and trails. Preservation of river and coulees. Expand facilities at existing parks.
- Entertainment (15). More concerts, theater, community events and the venues to support them.
- Cost-Effective Growth (15). Planning for orderly growth and providing city facilities efficiently. Efficient use of land.
- Tax Reform (15). Generally lower taxes. Get rid of special assessments. Some say rely on sales and hospitality tax.
- Older Neighborhoods (12). Maintain and reinvest in the older parts of town, even as the city grows on the fringes.

- Family Activities (11). More entertainment and recreational options for children and families, especially in the winter.
- Economic Development (11). Attract and maintain businesses, including manufacturing or emerging industries. Job growth.
- Retail Options (10). More retail options than are currently available, including restaurants.
- Housing Support (9). Need to create more affordable housing and assist those who are not adequately served.
- Missouri River (8). Highlight the Missouri River as a community asset. Both development and natural space are mentioned. More public river access needed.
- Arts and Culture (7). More opportunities for art, including visual and performing arts.
- Good Governance (7). More openness and communication with the public. Effective management and budgeting.
- Historic Preservation (5). Preserve historic resources, with two mentions of the railroad bridge.
- Indoor Recreation (5). More and expanded indoor recreation facilities, including larger sports complexes.
- Education (4). Continuing to focus on high-quality schools, including expansion of higher education.
- Ordinance Enforcement (4). Zoning and code enforcement should be more rigorous, and not just complaint-based.
- Vibrant Downtown (3). Continue to enhance downtown aesthetics and public spaces, including the Depot.
- Parking (3). Provide adequate parking for all new uses. Some sites are currently deficient. More parking ramps.

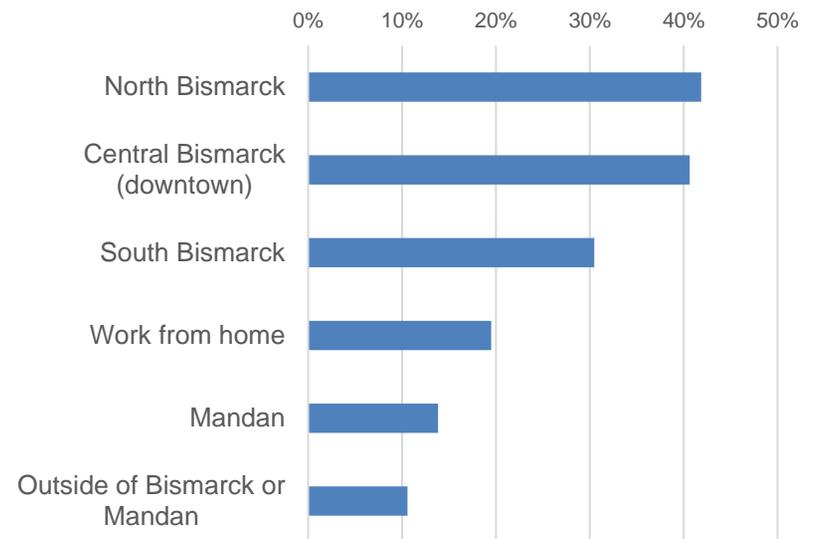
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## Demographics

General demographic questions are asked. Most of this information is available from other sources, such as the American Community Survey, and the questions are used to facilitate analysis of the results.

The survey provides insight into a recent trend of working from home:

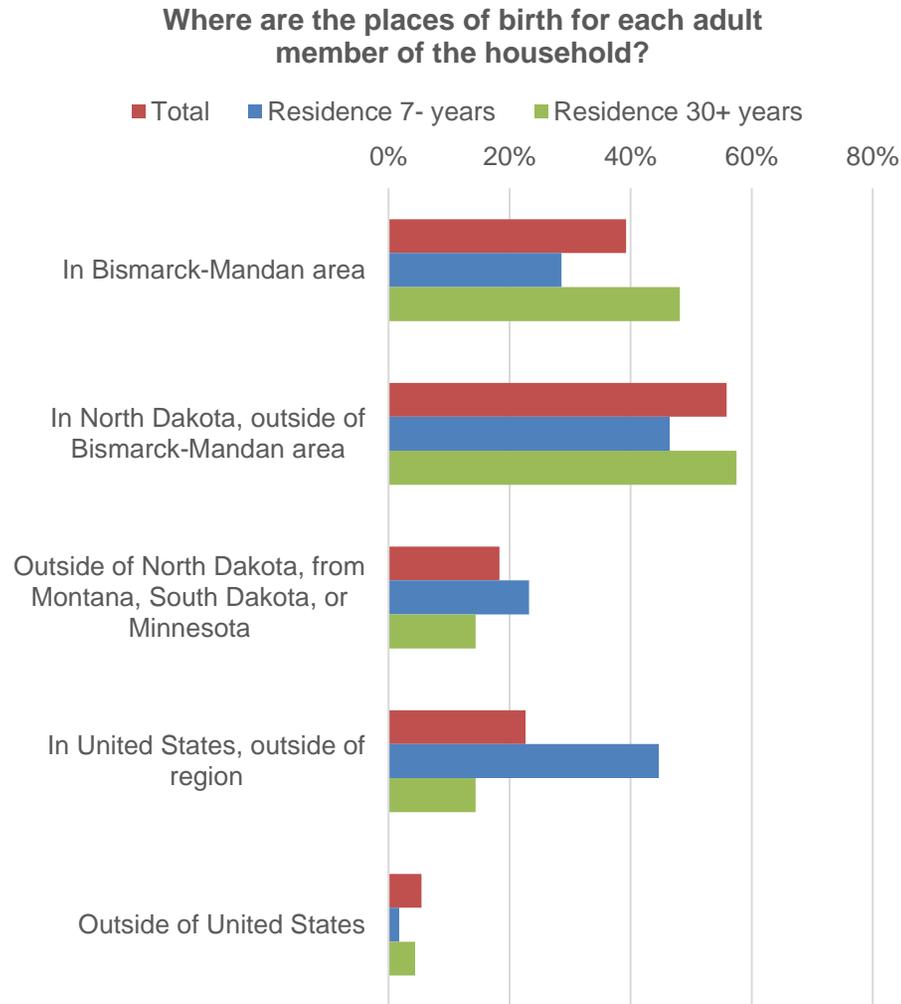
**Where is the place of employment not including changes specific to COVID-19?**



The question attempts to ascertain permanent employment, rather than temporary conditions due to COVID-19. Almost 20% of all employed households have at least one person working from home. Among single-income households, 12.4% work from home. This suggests a major increase from the 2019 census data, which showed 2.7% of all workers 16 years and over working from home.

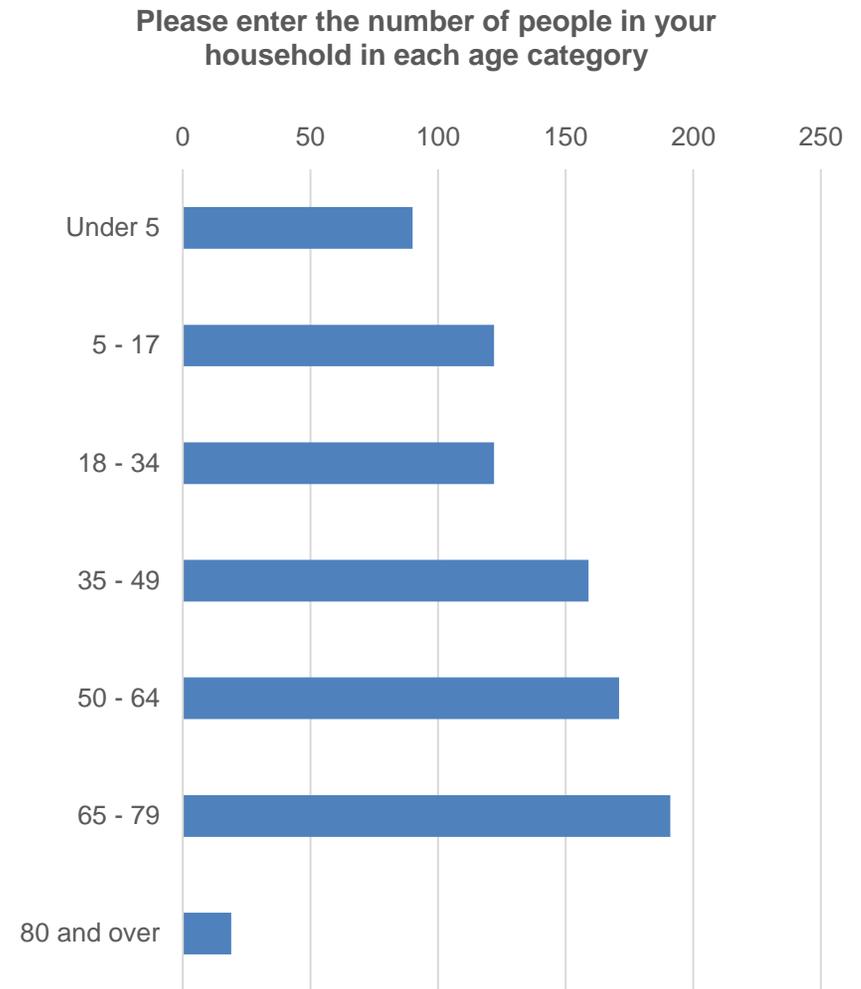
This question also reveals how connected residents of the extraterritorial area are to the city. 79% of all employed households in the ETA have at least one member who works in Bismarck.

Length of residence is combined with place of birth to show the geographic history of the households in the survey:



A majority of respondents were born in North Dakota, with more born outside of the Bismarck-Mandan metro area than within. Several households (76) include members born both inside and outside of North Dakota. Very few foreign-born households were registered in this survey. The survey was administered in English.

The size and age of households is entered by respondents:



The survey represents 874 people in 350 households (some skipped this question), for an average household size of 2.49 people per household. Household sizes are larger for rural residents (3.18) than urban (2.40), and for homeowners (2.59) than renters (1.70). Of all households, 22% are single-person households and 41% of these single-person households are over the age of 65.

## Demographic Groups

This report refers to a variety of demographic groups. It should be noted that the accuracy of the survey results relating to any subset of the population will be reduced, especially for smaller-sized groups. The definition and size of each group is shown in the table below:

<b>Group</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Size</b>
Newer Residency	Have lived in Bismarck for 7 years or less	64
Longer Residency	Have lived in Bismarck for over 30 years	171
High-Income	Household income greater than \$100K	161
Low-Income	Household income less than \$50K	59
City	Residency inside of City limits	330
Rural	Residency in Bismarck's extraterritorial area	47
Under 65 with Kids	Household with members under 18 and not members over 65	103
Under 65 without Kids	Household with no members under 18 or over 65	123
Over 65	Household with members over 65	127
Single-Person	Household with one person	76
Renters	Occupying rental housing	38
Homeowners	Occupying owned housing	311
Born in North Dakota	Adults born in North Dakota, including Bismarck/Mandan area	206
Born in/out North Dakota	Adult members born both in and out of state	78
Born out of North Dakota	Adult members born out-of-state.	65
Committed	Stated they have no plans to move from Bismarck	149
Work Central	At least one member of household works in center (downtown)	100
Work North	At least one member of household works in north Bismarck	103
Work South	At least one member of household works in south Bismarck	75
Work Outside	At least one member of household works outside of Bismarck	57
Work from Home	At least one member of household works from home	48
All	All responses to the survey	377

# Appendix A - Open-Ended Responses

## *Together 2045 Bismarck's Comprehensive Plan Household Survey Report – July 19, 2021*

The responses have been lightly edited for readability, but no comments have been removed or altered. Comments in All Caps are shown in lower-case, profanity is edited, and emojis have been removed.

### **Any further comments regarding quality of life in Bismarck?**

Its good, but when you grow older there is not enough affordable housing for older people.
I am happy here
Great but cold in winter.
Please don't push growth for growth's sake. It just brings more chain stores and restaurants and traffic jams on 83 and Washington. Careful zoning is needed.
Don't understand why south Bismarck is the target for developing for the homeless & drug addicts.
Very expensive businesses and city government greedy
I live on 4th St. north of the Capitol. Stop trying to turn this street into a freeway. You need better North South travel in Hwy 83. Not ruining the quality of living on smaller streets. If the people living up north can't get to work on time, then maybe they should be more prepared and leave earlier.
It's generally a nice place. A lot of homeless people downtown
Too much ignorance and small-mindedness, borderline racism, stupidity
Concerning about tearing down the bridge. Don't want to see that happen.
Thanks to the water dept. it has become too expensive to have a nice yard if you are a single family home. May have to move. Grass in soccer, softball diamonds and schools are beautiful since they don't have the increase in water rates. If bismarck is worried about running out of water (their excuse to increasing water rates) they should quit watering areas that don't need to be green.
Water Rates are so high now. This prevents people from the ability to have a green lawn and it makes Bismarck look bad. Also wish campers weren't out on street for months at a time without movement. There should be guidelines that are enforced for that.
Water rates too high. Discourages nice looking lawns. City looks unkept.
Use more of our taxes to support schools, the library, parks and rec. Bring more cultural events. Would love to see more live music (that isn't country). A community facility that is useable.
Friendliness of people. Amenities are plentiful. Capital city provides benefits. Ease in getting around
Free family events should be advertised to community better - possibly through the mail or a Bismarck city app would be really helpful
The water rates have increased so much many can't or won't water their lawns. This makes the city look poorly. We paid for the water capacity, now developers have been allowed to take our capacity and drive up rates without paying for the strain on the water system long term residents paid for. You are giving

<p>developers a free ride, at the experience of long term residents. Other cities make developers pay for more water capacity.</p>
<p>The only reason I rate Bismarck low on a good place to retire and age is the weather. That's no fault of the city. Just Mother Nature!</p>
<p>Expensive and will move in retirement</p>
<p>Perhaps more emphasis on public art displays - statuary, sculptures, etc. Recreationally, would development of a public beach, kayaking, canoeing, etc. area in a shallow inlet (allowing for warmer water) along the river be feasible?</p>
<p>Bismarck resident attitudes seem to be declining, especially regarding road rage. I have seen several unprecedented acts of road rage and bad acts in the past 3 years, especially during COVID. In a time when residents needed to care for each other, things seem to go in the opposite direction. I have lived in Bismarck for nearly 30 years and this was never the case. We need to make a community wide effort for cohesion and compassion for others.</p>
<p>Better road construction planning. More paved trails around the city.</p>
<p>Disappointed with removal of trees at Northridge</p>
<p>Need more fun family activities for the winter months</p>
<p>It's time for a moratorium on mobile home parks, "manufactured" housing in Bismarck / stricter code requirements. The one on 26th and Thayer looks like something you'd see in a 2nd world country.</p>
<p>Fix the water rates</p>
<p>Affordable housing. Put up cameras at corners to take pictures of everybody running stop lights, then send them a ticket!! Mandate drivers Ed in school system.</p>
<p>There is a lot more transient people walking around town and that makes me nervous. Also, there is more criminal activity that is occurring but not being released to the media - that's not fair.</p>
<p>Bismarck's natural amenities such as the River and landscape help separate it from its peers in the state</p>
<p>I feel in the last 10 years it's not as safe as it used to be. I would fully support an increased police force.</p>
<p>People are held accountable.</p>
<p>Expensive</p>
<p>Needs a larger event center and indoor recreational center for kids</p>
<p>I've lived in Bismarck for 70 years and have had several opportunities to move to other in state and out of state job opportunities- but none can replace the quality of life that I and my family have here in Bismarck</p>
<p>Safety was lowered because the drivers here are nuts!!!!!! Red lights do not mean stop.</p>
<p>need more things for the kids to do, roller rink, rock wall, teen center</p>
<p>I'm love in it</p>
<p>Wish there was more community events and activities like they have in Fargo, even in the winter months, they have "the lights" and outdoor gathers in winter months</p>

Need more walking/biking trails that incorporate more of nature and that are not "sidewalks" like many of the labeled as trails. Need more to design parks and trails whenever plan city expansion and allowing developers to just put houses all over.
It's an expensive place live and retire.
Would love to see more done in our Downtown and am loving all the plans there. Also would like more restaurants or something around the river. That could definitely be developed more.
Property taxes that give NO break to retired folks, and the frequent application of Special Assessments to property owners are unfair and make me think people should retire somewhere else.
Extreme need for cultural activities for all ages. We recently spent 10 months in St. Paul. There is a page to look at in terms of cultural aspects of a community.
Quality of life is being negatively impacted by increasing violence. Hard drug abuse and associated violence seems to be growing drastically.
Heavy investment needs to be made in PUBLIC access to river recreation
There are some places within Bismarck that are really getting run down. It looks very bad for our community. I also see a lot of areas get pretty trashy through the year. One example would be the area around North Wal-Mart. It seems like their trash blows all over and there are no consequences for companies that let this happen. I wish there was more city involvement to keep places like this clean and something we can be proud of, not drive by and think we are on our way to the city landfill.
We have lived a lot of places and Bismarck is lower on the scale comparatively. Lack of cleanliness, road disrepair, and poor city planning are among our frustrations here. We live near general Sibley and the amount of farmland being turned into multi family living units is alarming. The roads are too busy as it is. I would rather have a grocery store and gas station, which are needed, than more housing down here on some of the land for sale.
The safety of the community is very important to our family
Faith community 5 stars
Liked it 10 years ago when a little smaller
Bismarck becoming way to big -too many people for my liking. liked Bismarck as a smaller community. now traffic, especially speed and not adhering to courtesy and traffic rules is awful.
People are very friendly; variety of churches which is important to us; variety of elderly home care
Property taxes and water way to high!
Keep prices down. Rent. Restaurants. Grocery stores, clothing and hardware stores
Would like to preserve our heritage like that railroad bridge
Need more diverse entertainment options, venues, and events
Overall very good
very lonesome for single elderly people.
Costs of living is becoming prohibitive for upcoming generations, plus the new utility fee for infrastructure will force people to relocate

Control the taxes
The schools truly need to be improved! They're "decent" but we need to get away from all the liberal crap that's being taught and get back to basics.
Would love to see more modern local art around the area. Murals and installations that aren't bison or wheat themed.
I'm "old school" and prefer a smaller town. Bismarck has grown so much in the 31 years we've lived here. Along with the growth has come increased traffic, more crime, higher taxes, and a less attractive quality of life.
Taxes are too high
Lots of good things, but focuses in recent years have gone to misplaced programs.
Stop make it a metro area. Keep it a simple city. We like our clean simple living.
It is difficult to live here at times as most businesses are short and/or ill staffed.
More outdoor activities and parks.
We need more for teens to do. Our community relies too heavily on restaurants and bars.
The city is getting really filthy with litter and dumping garbage on top of a hill in middle of winter!
Quality of life has dimenished in the 5 - 10 years due to a increase of crime. Drugs and murders have increased.
Can you change the weather??
More opportunities for cultural awareness. Leadership (city commission) needs to learn more about cultural diversity.
Just cost of living to damn high
Real estate taxes are making harder and harder for retired residents to remain in their homes. There should be cap on taxes at age 65.
We enjoy the waterfront but there is very, very little shoreline to fish from. It's pathetic. The so-called Events Center does not draw good entertainment and doesn't have much purpose for the little use it gets. There is no justification for the additions, it's basically an empty building. If you like sports there is plenty to do. Always money for sports.
Need more to do, utilize Convention Center, build parking and motel next to it
I want live in my home for the rest of my life
4 Seasons (climate)
There is currently sufficient parks and recreational amenities. No need to keep taxing residents for more building these such as the pickle ball courts!
Water costs are outrageous!
Not enough lap-swimming facilities.

Safety
This is a great place to raise a family! The schools and neighborhoods are safe and people generally look out for one another. Somewhat painful that this survey specifically asks about some aspects where our City fails miserably. Hard to fill this out in light of the mayor's total lack of community spirit and, together with Marquardt and Zenker, complete lack of regard for heritage resources. Also, the other leaders like Rick Becker mocking attempts to improve walkability by implementing proven traffic-calming pedestrian safety measures in high-traffic areas. Heavy investment of government funds in the City's periphery with neglect for the City's core downtown assets means that the City doesn't become more walkable or sustainable for retirees. They will continue to flee. Would love to see this reversed, at least partially, through thoughtful initiatives of efficient housing in areas with high walkability scores.
When raising children many choices for sports and activities

**Any further comments regarding housing and neighborhoods in Bismarck?**

In the future we will be looking for a twin home, patio home or something with lawn care, snow removal and outside maintenance provided. We will be ready to downsize.
I do not like noisy neighbors. People are nice.
I think it's ok. I suppose there are some poor places, homes that are poor. On the most part everything is pretty good
Very little decent, affordable housing for the elderly.
Affordable housing is going away quickly thanks to the state & city allowing out of state investors/predatory companies buy our communities
Expensive
I live in an apartment
Quality housing in Bismarck for people with mobility limitations is costly and in limited supply. Bismarck has an amazing trail system throughout the city as well as neighborhood parks that really add to the quality of life in Bismarck.
Yes, stop having the city council cater to the housing developers and stop kissing their *****
You need to build more affordable homes in the 250k range.
Could use more affordable housing
It is nice to see the development near the post office downtown
Decrease summer water rates so people's private yards look nicer increasing look of community
Some trailer courts need guidelines by City leaders so they don't get so run down and look bad. Please drop water rates so that we can afford a green lawn.
Organized well/kept
Neighborhood would be much more pleasing if it were not for the unbelievably high water rates.

Not as many streetlights in our area as we would like. Cars are often left parked blocking sidewalks making going out on sidewalks more dangerous and difficult.
The city and county have incentivized uncontrolled growth. Developers should pay for the strain on city capacity, including but not limited to water.
South Bismarck needs more attention for boulevard tree and road upkeep
Older neighborhoods that are already walkable are treated as substandard with city ordinances allowed to be routinely ignored.
No more mobile home parks, code enforcement is too lazy to keep the current ones in check. We're not an oil field town and all they are is poverty traps. If you want people to set down roots build affordable owner-occupied housing. If it rolls in on wheels and requires paying space rent it shouldn't be part of Bismarck's plan going forward.
Tiered water rates are grossly unfair and should be revisited.
Overpriced.
People do not maintain their yards / homes anymore. Bismarck used to be such a pretty town. The older parts of town are not maintained, lots of junk cars and fences down.
Hopefully Bismarck will have an adequate supply of homes in all price ranges
Some of the older neighborhoods are no longer safe and well-kept like they were 15 years ago.
People in my neighborhood, including me, tend to not be very outgoing and tend to stick to themselves - isolated.
A number of residential neighborhoods may not have a defined center or characteristic feature which may make it difficult to establish a unique identity.
New housing is too expensive and not built for single income middle class families.
Need more affordable housing
Better access to public entrances
some to stay out of...by the hospitals;
There is a lack of entry-level homes for sale.
LED streetlights! No need to say more. I'd be willing to bet prowling and theft has declined in the areas that have LED streetlights.
Really large problem in neighborhood with free running dogs. Developer did an OK job with neighborhood.
Some neighborhoods are junky with tall grass and weeds. Should not be allowed in the city limits.
Expensive!!!!
Before moving to Bismarck would hang out with neighbors daily/weekly- here the neighbors (at least by us) aren't outside as much
I like that the new homes are given lots of space and away from the center of the city and schools are being build close to those new neighborhoods to accommodate ...really important to have good school access

I like my neighborhood. There was a shooting 6 months ago in the neighborhood and that was scary and the neighborhood has changed, but I understand that our community is changing.
Please add more walking/biking trails, especially ones that are not entirely just a few feet off busy streets. Please add a center painted line on the major trails, to help encourage folks from hogging the whole trail width.
The significant increase in lawn watering rates is having a negative impact on the aesthetics of the city. Also, it appears as though an increasing number of residents take little or no pride in the upkeep of their property.
Need smaller affordable single-family homes on small lots
Everything is so expensive in Bismarck and wish it wasn't.
Too many multi-family dwellings. Too many rundown neighborhoods. Lack of amenities/infrastructure in South Bismarck along Burleigh. South Washington is overwhelmed with traffic and the city keeps adding more multi-family housing down there. Take care of South Bismarck like you do North Bismarck, including roads, schools etc. It's reprehensible the way the South has been allowed to crumble.
I like the notion of building up instead of out although I also think about a nice little cottage in the woods
Most communities are neat, and nice
Husband is in assisted living and daughter is ill. At this stage in life wish we did not have a house. Hard to keep up yard, hard to find help
Housing is way too expensive.
Over building/over developing. So many vacant lots for sale and new city developments in areas that don't need it.
Some Senior places should provide activities, and exercise equipment
keep the character of the downtown and preserving what's there instead of tearing down and putting up new.
Prices and property taxes are getting out of control
Apartments, Condos, and Multi-home plexes should all have dedicated green space with park equipment for the youth. There should be community grilling stations with canopies over shelters so are community you can eat and visit with neighbors.
Hold landlords accountable. My neighborhood has turned into a ghetto. 21st and Rosser
We look out for each other in this neighborhood even if we do not talk everyday. the HOA mows the lawn and takes care of things. This is restricted to 55+ ages.
Neighborhoods in Bismarck are always changing but don't change as rapidly as in other towns. I like the stability here. You get to know your neighbors and spend time with them for more than just a few years.
Cute and clean environment
We enjoy the .2+ acre lots and less neighborhood congestion.
Why does question #18 have anything to do with Covid?!?!?! For crying out loud! Many of us just kept living our life during Covid and only utilized the "mandates" when absolutely necessary. We knew much of the lockdowns, masking, etc was bullcrap!!! Don't believe it? Fauci's being questioned now for all the damages he caused!

Really love the Cathedral District and it's proximity to downtown, but I wish there were more affordable housing options for my age group. (mid/late 20's)
Our ideal home wouldn't be large in size, but rather smaller/central to town with premium features and amenities. We wished there were more options like that.
Some of the traffic decisions made in Bismarck are poor and reflect poor judgment for traffic flow, safety to pedestrians and planning. The City of Bismarck needs a qualified traffic engineer.
My neighborhood was built without sidewalks and i want to keep it that was.....i live on a small cul-de-sack
Things to do are all very far from any residential areas. With little public transportation options, everything has to be done by vehicle. It makes for a very inward city culture and does not promote development of arts and recreation.
Planning and zoning is suspect. Plan to live in a family-based neighborhood than all of a sudden there is commercial development allowed
Yards are too big. 2 acre lots should pay the taxes associated with them. The all use bismarck streets to get around.
Housing is too expensive
From my perspective, there isn't enough affordable housing in Bismarck.
Expensive housing
More affordable housing.
Too many people building north of the city. It would be nice to see more remodels of older houses in the middle of the city. Keep neighborhood schools open.
More housing options on south side of the city for senior citizens, restaurants/bar and grill and recreational facilities.
RE: Question 16 - my ideal neighborhood is larger yards with open space AND places to walk to for shopping and restaurants
I am not very happy with how these survey questions have been formulated
Why are Air B & B's allowed in R5 zones. Regulation states that a commercial entity is not allowed. And why when one opens up why is the neighborhood not notified
Lots are very small. Want more room between neighbors
In many new neighborhoods, houses are extremely close together, undesirable for families or some couples. Street lighting is inadequate.
Better connecting bike paths
Just want to live in peace
I question the legality of single-family dwellings being modified and rented out as mini boarding houses.
Rent is horribly high
Expensive

As long as the City continues to annex infrastructure-intensive low-density housing into City limits, people will continue to choose it. Those who want large yards and open space may well choose to live in the county--Bismarck does not have a mandate to continue providing this along with the concurrent tax hikes we're experiencing.

I prefer historic neighborhood. New developments are too cookie cutter. All homes look alike & no established yards

**What obstacles keep you from using this preferred transportation choice?**

Traffic

Expressway traffic flow is rarely at the speed limit and often well under.

Lack of options and consistency

The growth in Bismarck has hindered travel by car. Especially when moving North and South

The crappie streets a solid base when constructing or repairing streets would help but that's right politicians don't know about that

I don't understand the routes

Other people aren't trustworthy and no public transit access

Too far

I live too far out away from the core of Bismarck to make biking a practical option.

Haven't purchased a bike

The public transportation in Bismarck is not timely, it takes way too long to get anywhere and the frequency is not helpful

There aren't very many bike lanes

There is no light rail or simple mapped public transportation.

Distance and walkability of roads

Limited routes, unknown schedule, no grocery store within walking distance, no bike

Places too far, would be sweaty when I got there, specifically to work. Walking for 30 min, wouldn't be able to go home for lunch

Most destinations require driving

Lack of safety with biking (almost been hit a couple times)

We have a child in daycare a far distance from where we live and work. Additional childcare options would be helpful especially in the central part of the community which has the highest concentration of employment in the region. Additionally, many neighborhoods don't have complete set of uses such as commercial to meet daily needs so distance to needed retail and commercial uses is a barrier.

Cold weather and laziness

There are very little to none and the maps are complicated. Weather.
Bus routes are very limited
Bismarck needs more off-road trails, especially in North Bismarck.
Distance to needed services
It takes me a bit to get to a bike trail, it is hazardous
No public transportation near my house.
Public transit is less available in our area than it used to be
I have a car that runs well and is my main transportation. I would like to bike around town more but can't afford a bike that functions as a primary or even really a secondary vehicle
Distance
Winter
As long as I am able to be a safe driver I will take others to appointments or stores. there seem to be a lot of older drivers around that should no longer be driving. They are a hazard in parking lots, and putter along 5 to 10 mph.
More transit options
Lack of availability at pickup or destinations
City is spread out a lot
Distance
I drive a scooter because things are slightly too far to bike to consistently in the summer without working up a sweat.
Not available in Bismarck
CAT is very far from my neighborhood (despite living in the middle of town) and the bus schedules and routes are not conducive to my work.
None. I do it.
No bike trails in NE Bismarck along Centennial Rd and 71st and roads are too busy to be safe
Aggressive drivers, and very dangerous bike lanes, not enough places to lock my bike.
New development popping up with no decent roads to get into town
There is nothing within walking distance.
The traffic light engineer that can't even time the 1-ways properly plus they can't time most lights in Bismarck to move traffic the lights are to congest traffic, example Expressway should be called slow boat to hell
Bismarck still is not walkable. It has been designed only for cars. And bicycle trails are an afterthought. I wish transportation were more person friendly.

While walking the push to walk buttons on the signal lights is meaningless. If you try crossing expressway the turning cars have a green light the same time you have a walk light.
North to south thru streets
Bad roads.
No transit stops occurring in the neighborhood
No connecting path
Denver Downtown is nearest city with city vetted Rickshaw Drivers for getting around LoDo area
Poor transit system
Road safety.

**Any further comments regarding transportation in Bismarck?**

I would appreciate more trail connectivity as well as bicycle lanes
Need a better at providing places to sit and wait for the bus and the bus needs to have longer hours.
The maintenance of the streets has gone down especially in the winter. The new policy of not removing snow from residential streets unless at least 4 inches fell is awful. Also beginning several street construction projects all over town and then rarely working on them. Start one and get it done in a timely fashion! The majority of the major streets in Bismarck have road construction on them this year which is slowing traffic flow. Also several streets should be widened and extra lanes added. And add left turn arrows at several intersections.
Texting and driving is out of control in bismarck areas
Usually it's great, except for rush hour - then things bottle up. It's fine now, but I worry with growth it will get unreasonable.
There are many intersections with a left turn lane and not a protected left turn. Example traveling south on third St and turning left onto Expressway
The growth of the city and areas outside the city has contributed to heavy traffic during commuting times of the day and extended the time it takes to get from point A to point B.
It sucks
Washington street traffic is congestion
Washington St. reducing from 4 lanes to 2 is a bottleneck that significantly increases my travel times. Also, add more flashing yellow left turn traffic lights. During non-peak periods so much time is wasted waiting for the left turn.
Need smart lights, instead of sitting at a light forever w/out any traffic coming from the other direction. Turning lanes w/lights that actually give you a green arrow, instead of blinking yellow right away, plus more time to turn on an arrow.
Everyone is on their cell phones when driving and I never see or hear of anyone getting pulled over for it. It is so very dangerous, and I think enforcement needs to be stepped up.

Too noisy. More noise ordinances necessary
speeding in residential areas. running red lights. no stopping before turning on red light.
Too much construction work at one time. Very hard to get around at times.
Too much car parking, decreases walkability of the area.
Motorists do not seem to respect and obey traffic laws.
Sidewalks could use better maintaining and larger sidewalks would be nicer. North to South travel is really difficult and lights north and south don't seem to line up nearly as well as they do from east to west. It would also be really helpful to have Amtrak come through Bismarck
Walking and biking are an afterthought, bike lanes end where inconvenient. Walking in some areas is ill-advised. Try crossing State Street around Divide. Washington and Boulevard. Several areas along these roads are just plain dangerous for pedestrians or bikers.
I previously lived in Fargo and regularly biked all over the city, but Bismarck isn't as well laid out. It would be nice if more sidewalks were converted into the wider multi-use trails.
North South commuting is getting more congested.
Red light runners and terrible drivers are out of control. Bismarck easily has the most dangerous drivers of any city I have lived in. Also why are the stoplights so poorly timed across town on main thoroughfares? It is ridiculous.
Bismarck needs much more enforcement of traffic laws. As stated earlier, road rage is a major issue due to poor traffic flow and lack of adherence to traffic laws. Running red lights and obviously distracted drivers are noticeably more frequent. I would absolutely support an increase in financial penalties for traffic violations, especially red lights
More turning lanes on busy roads are needed!
You need to know how to defensive drive. Wish there was mandatory driver's education, to watch out for people who are biking or walking.
Narrow two-way, one lane streets create safety hazards frequently and have caused accidents, but concerns expressed to city traffic engineer were dismissed. Claim it reduces traffic speed is naive and does not happen. Older neighborhoods with denser population are treated as unimportant and whatever happens is just fine. Lack of safety and services is just fine.
Most streets (specifically downtown) are unnecessarily one-way streets. This makes navigation more difficult and is worse for businesses.
People are in to big a hurry. Been passed on city street going speed limit.
A lot of rude/speeding drivers, especially on Interstate between Bis/Man
Stop the people going through red lights
Too many people run red lights
The city traffic engineer should be fired. There's an incentive to run red lights in this down and a lot of it boils down to awful traffic light programming and poor planning on the city's part.
Fix the streets

Traffic during commuting times is not good, parking downtown and traffic downtown is not good. Didn't fix anything - just messed it up made it dangerous on main street with the one street parking. does like that the one-ways downtown have been removed
Red lights seem to be optional in Bismarck
Continue to landscape, provide sidewalks & generally beautify streets
Main Street between 7th & 5th is a nightmare, it's dangerous!
The perception of traffic congestion can be quantified however from a user perspective is very much influence by perception. Increased frequency for public transportation on strategic locations in the community including hard to park areas could help those both captive and choice riders
More emphasis needs to be placed on traffic flow and not on slowing traffic down. Main Street is a disaster.
Bismarck streets and roads were never designed for the current population. I liked the size of Bismarck when I moved here in 1975.
Newer streetlights with turning signals
I strongly feel we need traffic cameras. Fine people large amounts of money for running red lights. Dangerous.
drivers disregard yellow lights all the time
A lot of cars running red lights
Too many people running red and yellow lights
State streetlight sync is god awful.
People don't obey traffic laws
Stop lights or sensors need adjustment especially at night. You can sit at a red light for more than a minute with no traffic on green light street. Frustrating and unnecessary.
Road construction everywhere and yet somehow all the roads still suck! East Century avenue speed limit is too slow. Why are right turn lanes so bad??! ninth street is NEVER all lanes. How is it always under construction or down to two lanes? Do cops enforce people who run red lights?? I don't trust any driver in bismarck.
I think the flow of traffic has been laid out very smartly
Something needs to be done around Ave C and Washington area, very narrow and congested. I do NOT think any trees should be removed to make the street wider, but needs to be more double lane driving in town to help the flow of traffic
Lights do not seem to promote traffic easy mobility. Also maybe flashing yellow arrows especially at low traffic times at 43rd and N Washington. Many times nobody around and have to sit to make left turn especially in low traffic times.
Main Avenue is not safe. Not enough parking downtown. People do not obey traffic laws.
Bismarck wastes its People's money on streets. Maintenance on major roads is decent, but neighborhood roads are too-often poorly patched and/or resurfaced, at homeowners significant expense, but the repairs are of low quality, and don't last. Police prefer sped trap ticket writing on 20 mph sneaky roads, when they

<p>should focus on the many people running red lights, which is a MUCH bigger safety hazard. Bismarck's bus routes make no sense. It takes too long, with too many transfers to get anywhere. Often, one can walk faster than taking the bus.</p>
<p>7th and 9th streets need better flow. Time the lights better</p>
<p>The blue light on the traffic signals seems to be a joke and someone's way of giving someone they like some work that was in the business. I still see people running reds and law enforcement doing nothing. There can be a cop right at the same intersection and nothing happens.</p>
<p>Wider roads for busy areas, turning lanes, and sidewalks are so nice. Repair roads before potholes start swallowing the tires on my car. Extend trails to Sibley park</p>
<p>Some streets need repaving</p>
<p>Not good with amount of traffic now. good luck for the future</p>
<p>At night motorcycle and loud jazzed up cars speed and make a lot of noise. Busses hard to use and not sure how to use or where the bus stops are located.</p>
<p>We would like to see more police presence on Ward Road especially when classes dismiss at the Career Academy and BSC. Going 55 miles an hour is not safe! Also, late Friday and Saturday nights, motorcycles use Ward Road as a speeding thoroughfare.</p>
<p>People need to be educated on what to do when there are no signs at intersections. There are many close calls because without clear signage people just do whatever they want and it's dangerous</p>
<p>Need more indicated right turn lanes.</p>
<p>Definitely need a traffic light on Calgary and Washington before someone gets killed trying to make a turn off of Calgary. It is very dangerous. A lot of older people and Washington St going north has A lot of speeders !!!!!!!</p>
<p>South Washington from Expressway to Burleigh Ave. Should be a five-lane roadway. Two lanes for north bound traffic. Two lanes for south bound traffic and a dedicated center turn lane.</p>
<p>Running red lights is common in Bismarck and not enforced. It is a dangerous norm.</p>
<p>Some of the lights that only have green arrows to turn left should be adjusted to have the yield arrow when traffic is slower (State street and divide for example)</p>
<p>I'd like to see less texting and driving than I do. It seems unchecked.</p>
<p>Wish they would enforce red lights. Century and State Street is terrible.</p>
<p>Parking downtown is hard and not easy to access.</p>
<p>Drivers don't obey speed limits or traffic rules in general. Bismarck drivers are some of the worst, and with increased traffic, they are becoming more dangerous.</p>
<p>Downtown is often avoided due to the challenges with parking, particularly in winter</p>
<p>Why is it that so many Bismarck drivers put their signal indicators on when they're already turning!?!? And why do so many wave you through when they have the right of way?!?!? Doesn't anyone have to take driver's tests anymore? If they did, they'd know these two issues are wrong.</p>

<p>Would love to see more protected bike lanes in the central downtown core. The quiet rail was a huge win for downtown but I'm still annoyed by the obnoxious engine revving trucks/cars on Main St. that disrupt conversation on outdoor restaurant patios.</p>
<p>Bismarck has many discourteous drivers who seem to be in a hurry, don't respect other drivers, and don't observe traffic laws.</p>
<p>We have plenty of parking, people just don't like the inconvenience of walking a few blocks or using a parking ramp. Our city is amazing in comparison to others in this area.</p>
<p>Some of the traffic decisions made in Bismarck are poor and reflect poor judgment for traffic flow, safety to pedestrians and planning. The City of Bismarck needs a qualified traffic engineer.</p>
<p>Not enough parking downtown</p>
<p>Very few options outside of driving everywhere.</p>
<p>More enforcement of red lights and speeding</p>
<p>Stop turning this into Fargo or worse Minneapolis. That will bring its own set of problems.</p>
<p>People always run red lights and never get a ticket</p>
<p>There aren't enough north-south roadways to get across town. The locations of businesses, shopping, and other destinations in relation to schools and residential areas pushes all traffic to just a couple of corridors. The sprawl of single-family residential housing is going to cause traveling in Bismarck to get worse, and create further congestion at commuting peak times.</p>
<p>Ryan Dr and Divide Ave intersection is so scary every day (especially during commuting time). The YMCA parking lot entrance is offset with Ryan Dr. and incredibly dangerous due to volume of speeders and people going to the YMCA.</p>
<p>Plan infrastructure before allowing developments. Centennial road from north has been a nightmare for 15 years!</p>
<p>More traffic and more congestion in the lay 5 to 10 years</p>
<p>Need more cops</p>
<p>Drivers in Bismarck speed excessively and frequently run red lights. I would not feel safe riding a motor scooter or a bicycle in many areas</p>
<p>Get rid of the bike lanes on the streets until you make those bicycle owners buy license plates to pay for the cost of the lines &amp; signs for them instead of us taxpayers that don't use those bike lanes that clog traffic &amp; also police those bike riders that don't obey the traffic laws</p>
<p>Same comments as before. It is unfortunate that Bismarck has been designed only with vehicles in mind. And there has not been enough attention paid to open green spaces.</p>
<p>Would like to see the red light violators get tickets</p>
<p>Many drivers run traffic lights</p>
<p>Lack of North to south through streets</p>
<p>Need to widen roads.</p>

Traffic flow from 3:30 pm to 6:00 pm is difficult. Traffic is backed up on the main roads and allow extra time to get to destination. The main roads (Divide, 43rd, Washington, Expressway, 7th, 9th) are getting more congested because of traffic flow. Are other routes being planned that may or may not currently exist to counter the increased traffic as Bismarck grows?
People who don't use turn signals should be ticketed with fines of no less than \$100. Use of cell phones while driving should have the same consequences as driving under the influence. The traffic lights are set to make cars stop at every one. East-west travel is guaranteed to have to stop at every light every time. Some north- south streets are convenient to use.
Time lights better. Time the lights on 7th and 9th so a person will rarely see a red light, makes it easy to get from north to south and vice versa
Downtown is confusing to me, the streets and timed parking. I don't like driving there
Where are the rickshaws for historic downtown area?
No or little enforcement of speeding and carelessness violations of drivers.
Main roads are too small for growth
The speeds on Washington street north of Calgary are horrendous and basically unpatrolled since it has gone from 2 to 4 lanes. There are times when it is treated as a straight racing track and the volume of some vehicles is very intrusive and obnoxious. Rarely does anyone travel within the speed limit!!!! There needs to be a light at Calgary.
Every street should have a sidewalk on both sides.
Some traffic lights at busy intersections allow only one or two vehicles through before turning red.

**What is the single biggest challenge facing Bismarck in the future?**

Our street. A lot of the street in Bismarck have gotten really bad
Population growth and infrastructure challenges.
Parking
excessive spending and high taxes
Covering costs of infrastructure and growth without overly burdening taxpayers.
Urban Sprawl
cost of water services
As someone who went to school in a cosmopolitan city, my views may be skewed. However, many Bismack residents seem hesitant to accept any form of change when it comes to creating a bold vision for their city
Not to get hoodwinked into trying to satisfy all the different wants of citizens. Too many people want a lot of recreation and fancy schools, and then later on after the facility is built they move on and are not here to pay the taxes to support these structures.
Public Safety.

Overcrowding
Sprawl
Taxes are too high.
Streets and infrastructure that can handle the growth of the population. So far the city is way behind on keeping up with handling the increase in traffic.
Keeping young people in ND, High cost of housing rental and owning
Traffic
Not enough park services. Williston, Watford City, Fargo, Dickinson all have large indoor recreational facilities I-Bismarck strongly lacks in this area. Bismarck needs a larger facility to accommodate winter sports and indoor recreation during the colder months
Enough jobs
Roads
Higher cost of living.
Lack of growth
Affordable housing for the middle class or working class
Growth for the low income or the senior community
Kindness
Lack of high paying jobs to drive growth in the community.
Over taxing, big government, and over-spending.
Keeping their first responder and public works employees stop the patronizing it's discouraging to have them say we are expendable
Affordable housing for middle-income families
We would need more police if we experience growth
Housing over-development
Having contractors pay for infrastructure of new developments
Housing Cost
Money to do everything everyone wants
Homophobia and transphobia. Love is love and all people are valid.
Aging population - fewer in the workforce
Cooperation
Don't know how much longer Lake Sakakawea will be able to control floods. A major flood could drastically affect the city, since we've seen a lot of growth of housing at the riverfront.

Parking downtown
Republicans
Apparently enough water for planting trees and parks
The commute time from north Bismarck to south Bismarck is over 25 minutes. This includes getting to Capital Ice Complex. Big shared venues like this should be centrally located. Not placed towards the outskirts of town where residents have to commute from one side to another given the lack of infrastructure to get through town.
Road equipped to handle traffic. Affordable cost of living. Wages that keep up with the costs of living
Traffic flow
Compromise
Traffic
Workforce development and available workers, reasonable water rates,
Growth = crowding
Keeping up with growth. Embrace the change and update infrastructure to keep residents safe
Attitudes - too many believe they know what is best without having the background and/or facts necessary for decisions.
how to handle the growing number of school aged children
Cost of infrastructure needed to support growth.
affordable housing
Providing resources for the homeless
To manage growth in an economy which I believe is going to slow down greatly in the next year or two. And to get people back to work.
Crime and homeless
Traffic flow in developing areas
Growing so fast that input and communicating with the community suffers. Work to develop stakeholders and good will ambassadors.
Managing future growth opportunities
Defending women sports and other activities from allowing men participation (men who identify as women). Protecting the right to life by not allowing abortions. Recognizing the dignity of all people and keeping critical race theory ideologies out of Bismarck policies and schools
Infrastructure, especially water capacity. The City has allowed developers to go wild and now our water utility cannot supply affordable water to long term residents.
Crime - drug problems. Every single day the Bismarck Tribune reports another drug-related crime or arrest.
Affordable housing

Government interfering in personal health issues and the destruction of family values
Youth not staying after education
How to satisfy the diverse and numerous public desires at a reasonable tax burden.
Getting the 25-45 group to stay & contribute to city. Keeping younger ages to come back "home"
Balancing growth of the community with the feeling of connection (the feeling of Bismarck being a big small town)
Rising cost of living and taxes
Urban sprawl negatively interacting with agriculture and other rural business. Reverse zoning setbacks should be developed so home builders can't build within the zoning setbacks of agriculture. This has led to major social issues in other states, ie complaints about livestock and crop odors, tractor noise, cattle and truck traffic
Employment
Having green spaces and developers not dictate. They should have to put up trees. We shouldn't tear something old down and paved where things should be growing for future generations.
Traffic. We don't have the roads that we need to cover traffic at certain times of the day.
Recognizing that residents who live south of 43rd avenue are as important as those north. Older neighborhoods should be respected and valued as much as new.
It is too expensive to travel in and out of. The airport is too small and flights are too expensive. This causes both business and personal/ family growth to be difficult to plant here permanently. My family considers moving since it is too expensive to regularly travel to visit out of state family.
Brain drain from a lack of affordable starter housing combined with a lack of career-oriented employment.
Long-term, on-going costs associated with distanced growth
Leadership
Policing of drugs, crime and speed
Urban sprawl
Growth pains
Crime and drugs
Property tax
Children growing up in unstable households that do not value education or a good work ethic.
making older people pay specials on property taxes.
Racism
Having enough low income housing
Racists. Social media.

Making zoning laws apply equally to each part of the city, so that junky areas are made more attractive. Invite developers to match Bismarck zoning regulations.
Lack of roadways leading north and south. It's time to start bulldozing homes on Washington, historic or not.
Infrastructure for providing affordable water - current system is obviously inadequate and rates are exorbitant! Look around the city at residential yard appearance - way too many lawns are just dried up because sprinkling costs way too much!!!
Infrastructure
Law enforcement dealing with growing population.
Unfair pricing of water to homes. If new infrastructure for utilities it should be priced fairly for all users. NOT just placed on 700 homes.
Traffic
Developers are developing areas outside city limits which will eventually be city owned. Developers are not building adequate streets, utilities, parks, trails, schools etc. Developers not paying fair share of this expansion resulting in outrageous profits. Developers have too big of a voice on city commission.
Traffic flow. Are city planners high school drop outs?
Keeping streets in good condition.
Employment
Adequate workforce
Keeping people here. A huge problem is getting staffing at the hospital. If there was more to do here, there would be less of a problem obtaining workers from outside ND. Bismarck needs to start evolving from its small-town atmosphere. That way people (like me) who love the area but are bored out of their minds, might want to stay instead of moving (which I will be).
Management of ever-increasing traffic flow during commute times.
Lack of workforce.
Growing in a way that the community desires and balanced with the ability to afford it.
Increased crime with no increase in police force.
Socioeconomic disparities
Medical facilities to accommodate the city's growth.
Growing too fast, and placing the tax burden on existing residents
Affordable housing for single income homeowners
Traffic
Housing
Infrastructure
Too many people moving in that can't even speak English

Keeping stores open. Attracting new businesses.
Traffic flow north and south.
Not enough people to cover jobs that are already available.
The urban sprawl. Bismarck is growing so far north; the areas left behind are/will become obsolete. That worries me. I no longer want to go down to the library or activities at the Capitol.
Attraction of employment and economic opportunities.
Traffic in established areas. Main and Washington especially.
Affordable housing
Keeping up with the infrastructures on new developments without being a greater tax burden to current residents
Missouri River development & erosion
Cost of watering lawns makes for ugly yards which is appalling.
Managing growth while maintaining existing infrastructure and facilities
Population increase
Limit tax increases
Taxes
Taxes
Urban sprawl
Missouri River flooding
Retaining the next generation with better employment corporations and entertainment venues
Rapid development of perimeter housing development- needs to be closely monitored and strategically developed
Developing and maintaining utilities and roadways.
Parking. The worst drivers in the world. Potholes you could swim in
Orderly growth
Infrastructure as the city spreads out farther and farther into the country. Doesn't seem to be a synchronized plan for growth. Need a better working relationship between the county and the city.
Keeping up with all the growth and getting businesses (or something) in older buildings vs all the new growth- terrible to see run down abandoned buildings..... something needs to happen with KMart and hopefully Gateway mall survives
Providing services; police, fire protection, snow removal, etc., without raising taxes so much.
Poor engineering/city planning with roadways and future growth

Developers having too much influence with current mayor.
Infrastructure
Financial and growth.
Taxes. The homeowner cannot be expected to pay for the majority of the city taxes.
We need to stop sprawling and focus our efforts in the City. Some of the older parts of town are falling apart - not fixing streets in these areas.
Keeping its small city benefits and safety, as it grows to become a larger city.
Maintaining the existing quality of life.
Growth w/o increasing crime and taxes.
Urban sprawl increasing the tax burden on property owners in dense areas of the city
Not letting certain areas of Bismarck get too rundown. It seems like all the focus is to the North right now and the South side is looking pretty bad.
Lack of attracting high paying employers and companies.
Keeping businesses
Keeping up with roads/streets that meet future needs up front instead of fixing things over and over again.
The bums and the homeless will take over the city sooner than you think.
Keeping up with the growth with roadways and services that are available.
Traffic, unplanned growth, maintaining infrastructure, public services and safety
The roads/ city is not yet built for how large Bismarck of a city is becoming. Washington needs more lanes
Affordability
City Commissioners
Expansion and zoning.
Lack of activities and things to do
Not enough through streets
Keeping young individuals from moving away
We are over developing. Clear Sky Addition is a prime example. At least six houses have been built and it doesn't even appear that one has sold due to high price. Also, the City Commissioners shouldn't have passed the city zoning of it. Must have like-minded areas around it with the ability to continue to grow. There is no other "city" land around that development and there is nowhere else for the city to technically grow by that development.
Continue growth that is honestly getting our of hand. I don't think the city can subsidize the continued expansion of housing north. Something needs to change.
Traffic and property taxes

Maintaining current level of safety for its citizens!
Parking
Lack of good education, opportunities, and entertainment for the youth.
Increased taxes.
Funds
Lack of progressiveness in pursuit of diversity, and willingness to push the limits of change
Crime
Quickly and efficiently moving traffic from one end of town to the other.
The ETA residents telling the City residents what to do
Infrastructure (water demands) with all the new houses
Keeping up with the necessary infrastructure for growth while not increasing the burden on tax payers
Maintaining affordable housing
Bringing young people into the community and creating reasons for them to stay
Crime
Over-taxing it's residents and causing them to leave the area or state
Keeping the young here
Housing, income
Keeping the community safe from crimes while assimilating newcomers to the community. Having ample schools available for the growth projected. Maintaining an affordable living costs to older citizens on fixed or low incomes. The city is outpricing itself to be deemed affordable by all those that prefer staying here.
Taxes too high
Traffic
Taxes
Racism
Population growth
Lack of cultural and entertainment events that other places offer.
Controlled growth
Attracting young people to stay in the region. Growth opportunities for them in other areas for employment.
# of people space development
Reconfiguring the flow of traffic throughout the inner part of the city. There was a lack of planning many years back and now Washington, State Street and 9th / 7th carry the north-south traffic and they are not

equipped for our amount of population. Almost any other large city that I've been to has in interstate-like system that runs north south and east west. Traffic is a pure bottled up mess in this town.
Keeping older part of Bismarck looking nice and have people move into these older homes
The greatest challenge may be in the educational system since our population has increased substantially.
Providing services without raising taxes
Having not enough reception and touristic development.
High house taxes. High water bill.
Traffic at peak times.
Diversifying our economic base
Cost of living is high compared to cities of similar size in other areas of the country. Sometimes one wonders what all these taxes are actually paying for.
Urban sprawl.
Bringing downtown to life and creating a family space there. Grand forks and Fargo both have park and skating rinks downtown along with places for musicians to play and people to sell their goods. I would love that for Bismarck too. Also have artists make their mark on downtown with sculptures and other things that would bring it to life
Traffic
Not using special assessments and using sales tax instead.
Adjusting for growth without raising taxes.
The increase of urban sprawl is hurting the core of Bismarck and will continue to create an imbalance across all areas (financial, community life, etc.)
High taxes
Keeping property taxes low so that is affordable for new homeowners to purchase that first home.
Slowing down big government
Education
Lack of a defining city culture or recognizable subcultures means that any development, both existing and new, will struggle to have a cohesive vision for what our city should look like.
Cost of affordable housing and taxes
Traffic flow
Keeping the nucleus of the city alive. Rather building new outside city limits.
Growing too fast
Balancing all of the needs with available resources. ie, Financial, environmental, educational, public safety, etc.

Growing too fast.
Finding good employees
Property taxes and value
Keeping young people
Affordable Housing
City government
North to south rush hour traffic routes
Workforce
Enough people to supply proper staffing for businesses.
Affordability
Downtown growth and parking.
not enough workers for jobs
The homeless
Roadways unable to handle population growth
How to handle the infrastructure of new growth.
Taxes and unfair assessments
Population
Lack of Sense of community and lack of respect for cultural diversity.
Infrastructure
Crime
Too much growth outside of town north of the city. Nobody wants to live in older houses within the city. Make inner city houses more appealing and affordable. Keep smaller schools open so these neighborhoods are more attractive for younger families who are smart and want to live within their means.
Community support
Growth of Bismarck, infrastructure, public safety, both k-12 and higher education and indoor recreational facilities.
Infrastructure to handle growth
Rise in violent crime, i.e. gang activity
Jobs inflation housing too high don't meet the wages
Right-wing extremism
Property Taxes.

Too high of taxes, & that Sandpoint water system that doesn't work & whoever sold it to the city & the city personnel that spent our taxpayers dollars for a piece of junk should be held accountable & hung by their manhood for a retarded decision like that
Policing the river in the summer, should strongly consider adding to police force/ game fish patrol. This will become a problem if it is not addressed soon
Attracting more people to want live and visit in Bismarck.
New businesses and not enough people to staff them.
Too high a priority on sales tax and not real estate tax
Enticing young people to move here or stay here
Increase in crime and drugs.
Crime and lack of city leadership
Keeping young people
Handling traffic flow.
High property taxes and high city sales tax
Infrastructure and maintenance
Getting more events here. Bismarck is boring, kids move to Fargo because there is more to do, concerts etc.
Right to vote
Gentrification
The cost to residents in taxes.
Poor planning of zones. Very small roads
Influx of outsiders from larger metro areas who try to change the culture, atmosphere, and lifestyle of long-time residents.
Keeping home taxes down and not raising water costs again.
Too many people.
Lack of entertainment
Infrastructure
Creating affordable housing for minimum wage employees.
The city seems to think everything important should be downtown. If we can't open up, we will always be a "town" and never a city .
Very cozy relationships between the few powerful developers and employed and elected City officials, with a penchant for raising taxes and new fees, making thoughtful planning nearly impossible.
No train or much bus service to other states. Reinstate Amtrak through Bismarck.

**What is one thing that should be pursued to make Bismarck a better place in the future?**

Lowering the cost of housing/taxes
Infrastructure
More Parking
A crackdown on public intoxication and open containers in public.
better retail opportunities. we seem to be losing so many stores. We have only one choice in the department store category and no shoe stores.
Riverfront development; mixed-use housing/retail, waterfront restaurants, riverfront amphitheater, etc. Also, downtown development; additional downtown hotel, connectivity with event center, downtown plaza (ice rink) - see Block 9 Fargo. Wayfinding signs and general city beautification; decorative medians, less concrete, tree plantings, etc.
I think Bismarck does a good job in providing the necessary things people need to live a good life. Spoiled people never will be satisfied, and the City just needs to hold the line on spending.
Safe and cost-effective growth and installation of public infrastructure and plan for a City for all ages.
Against having illegal immigrants, citizens are ok
Maintain and preserve our law enforcement system
Be open to new ideas, like the one planned to go down to civic center. That would be so amazing and it keeps getting squashed.
Improving traffic flow, widen streets, add traffic lights, add more lanes not take them away, add green arrows for left turns, get rid of roundabouts
Activities for children that do not require payment, and are not swings and slides.
Indoor recreational facility
Crime prevention
New businesses and restaurants
Better street planning for future expansion
Continue to work towards a more aesthetic and vibrant downtown area. Street concerts, the Depot as an attraction/historical location/destination, etc.
There are no ice cream places here, and few Italian restaurants.
Focus on safety for people & affordable housing
More affordable events in our community
Affordable housing
More options for recreation and entertainment.
Continue to make downtown and riverfront areas attractive. Keep schools a high priority.

Listen to the people, the taxpayer not the developers and politicians
Lowering taxes
Better street lighting
Street maintenance
Manufacturers for more employment opportunities
More green space
Finding people who really care about the city to serve in positions/offices to make the best choices for all of us.
No religion in politics
Fewer nut job Republicans
Better understanding by everyone
Parking lots, street development, etc. should have areas for trees, scrubs. flowers to enhance beauty, appeal.
Lower property taxes from oil revenue so people can spend more money in the businesses they want to promote
More entertainment. e.g. a rec center like Fargo/Grand Forks.
Better planning with parking such as the baseball diamond in south Bismarck. Roads to handle traffic. Better wages
Always fund & back our police officers
Stop noise pollution. Cars. Motorcycle
Growth of commercial & professional businesses to provide employment opportunities
Focus on making homes in town more affordable and cleaned up rather than build out of town and have the inner city turn into ghetto like other large cities
Pairing growth with history. Don't smother history for a fresh coat of paint
Roads are severely neglected and have been for years. It is miserable driving anywhere this summer in town because of all the projects going on should have been thought through better.
Improve the educational system while keeping drugs out of the schools. Too many students graduate without the necessary tools for work or additional education.
Expand and maintain public parks and green areas for public use
Offer opportunities to attract young people to the area
Creating a conducive environment for new or expanding job creator businesses (i.e. affordable and ready to build industrial property) we should be a manufacturing hub but we are not creating an environment for those types of businesses to thrive
Arts venues

Keep supporting the police and fire departments, and ambulance services and other first responder organizations.
Dont kill the older parts of town!
Positive traffic flow. Adequate parking
Being very mindful of keeping the balance between the historic Bismarck feel while encouraging development that fits in and does not stand out as apart from/different than her roots.
better fiscal management leading to lower property taxes. City provided services are over-priced.
Defending women sports and other activities from allowing men participation (men who identify as women). Protecting the right to life by not allowing abortions. Recognizing the dignity of all people and keeping critical race theory ideologies out of Bismarck policies and schools
Get control of the developers and stop urban sprawl.
Development of the arts.
Better healthcare access.
More trails and green spaces.
Activities and environments that promote family values
More appealing to stay
Capitalize on the recreational, historical, and tourism opportunities presented by the Missouri River.
I would like to see more entertainment such as concerts and plays.
Multi-cultural anything! Inclusion
Facilitating opportunities for connection and community among residents of Bismarck
Encourage transparency about proposed changes in order to better facilitate relationships across ages and social groups
Education
Crime prevention and maintenance and improved infrastructure.
Get rid of those stupid cul-de-sacs where you don't know how to get out. This creates a problem for police and fire when there is one entrance and one exit.
Building more parking ramps.
Enforcement of existing ordinances should be enforced without dependence on citizen complaints which cause neighborhood friction. Enforcement of some parking ordinances is "flexible" per PD. Commercial signs in residential neighborhoods is not allowed except when on a trailer. Commercial trailer can be stored on street for 8 months as long as it moves on Wednesdays. Can be stored next to property owned by others, nothing they can do. Trailer can park up to intersection with no limit, preventing view of traffic. Ordinances are meaningless when not enforced or when enforcement process makes ordinance irrelevant.
More entertainment and recreation options for families.

Walkable liveable neighborhoods that reduce the total cost of living.
Increased culture/arts venues/resources
That city officials do what's right for all residents, not special interest groups
Don't let areas become 'bad neighborhoods' or run-down neighborhoods
More recreational buildings and a place for kids to do stuff.
River development
Keeping nature in our city
Keep the city clean
More group homes and therapeutic institutions for preteens and teenagers to break the cycle of drug use and poverty
Stricter traffic laws
Police oversight and making community safe for all.
More wintertime activities for families
Drug tests.
Easier access to free parking downtown so that everyone can enjoy downtown shopping, and eating.
No mobile home parks!
Keep property taxes from going up more than inflation.
Keep taxes under control.
Better traffic flow from south to north.
Affordable housing
I think Bismarck is great the way it is.
Preserve our river, coulees, and beautiful green spaces.
Get rid of pet projects.
Outdoor concert/theater venues like Bluestem in Fargo/Moorhead
Infrastructure - streets, clean community, police
High quality civic design & rigorous building code standards
Increase in entertainment. Over the last few years we've seen bank after bank pop up in areas that would be perfect for entertainment areas (the pitch, the Kelly Inn, etc). Start pursuing things for people to do.
Having enough law enforcement personnel to keep our community safe and have a presence in the community. Persuading more well-known department/shopping stores to come to the area.
Provide a modern state of the art auditorium with seating capacity of at least 2,000. Stage large enough to accommodate performing groups of up to 100 people and flexible in design for theater and music theater

productions. The Event Center is not a concert hall. The Belle Mehus is nice but too small, both stage and audience seating. The balcony seating is not very comfortable.
More police presence downtown, enforce public intoxication, there are several unsavory individuals downtown that hinders people from walking downtown.
Identifying and minimizing barriers to affordable housing.
Reduce the crime rate.
More things for kids to do indoors during colder months.
A strong Police presence.
Use what we have instead of adding new. Shopping centers being built with existing buildings empty.
Get rid of Special Assessments
There is nothing to do in the winter months
Good leadership
Public facilities
Traffic
Bismarck should discontinue special assessments and rely on sales taxes.
There is not just one thing
Homeless and other people around downtown doesn't help at all.
Higher minimum wage
Not to expand too quickly.
Encouragement for social acceptance for all races, backgrounds, sexual preferences, and political opinions.
Traffic flow, greater police presents
Expansion of Cottonwood Park
higher paying job creation
Creating city council districts to better represent entire city.
A better variety of shops and restaurants
Find ways to reduce criminal element and illegal activities
Keeping the city safe and clean - I support law enforcement but need to work harder on the drug problems; need to enforce laws that areas are maintained, grass mowed, trees cleaned up, sidewalks shoveled. Treat all property same regarding water rates so we can have a beautiful green city.
More indoor recreation
Unsure as great place now would like a stadium to bring in larger events as civic center is small for many

Bigger police force and more presence. Educate and interact more with public. As Bismarck grows, so does crime and illegal activity. Keep the riff raff out.
Waterfront entertainment
Maintain the historical uniqueness of the community while thoughtfully developing new growth of the city
Get Friendlier People
Better indoor parks and rec facility. Volleyball courts!! A nice wellness facility
Recently, shopping has really taken a hit. This is very limited as more and more stores close.
I am all about community events and inclusion, let it be for individual neighborhood gatherings or large community ones- just feeling a part of something or involved it key
Concentrate on filling vacant buildings & lots in already developed areas rather than always expanding to outer areas & leaving vacant lots full of weeds, critters, etc.
More top level concerts
Areas of the city should be encouraged to regenerate. Older communities should be regenerated so it doesn't become less than desirable.
More nature spaces. Limit taxes so homeowners are not taxed to death.
Try to keep the small town "feel" of the community while continuing to grow.
Eliminate "'Specials' Property taxes. Raise taxes on hotels, Conventions, cigarettes, alcohol.
Cultural focus needs to be enhanced. Cultural Center would enhance Bismarck's image immensely
Public investment in public access to river activity
Getting the rundown parts of Bismarck looking good again.
Clean up the city, take some pride in its appearance. Entice companies that pay high wages to come into the community.
Encourage businesses to move to Bismarck. Work with businesses to keep them open.
Do something to for the B's and homeless out
Employment opportunity
Enforce the laws that we already have and keep it a safe community, which it already is.
Less people, better paying jobs, less crime
Better access to all the heritage sites.
Roads for high traffic times of day
Activities that we don't already have. Rock climbing for example any new activities that we don't already have.
New Mayor

Keep or make sure it has the major metropolitan area designation.
Better and cheaper flights
Moving traffic
Invest in keeping young individuals
Focus on current city areas for growth versus continuing to annex in new land for city.
Reuse and modernize the inner city.
Better roads and more roads to move traffic a lot better!
More responsibility in garbage and recycle collection. Do not collect in high winds. Garbage ends up everywhere!
Parking downtown
Better planning of commercial, industrial and residential zones. Everything is so mish-moshed together and necessary services aren't places where they would be best utilized.
Lower taxes
Improve what we have
Expansion of new businesses and companies to the area
Place for homeless and veterans to live
Not taking away lanes of traffic to add bike lanes. Expanding existing roadways to allow for greater traffic flow.
Providing parks and green spaces and other public areas and better zoning for it.
A green city is a beautiful city but water prices are outrageous, so lawns are starting to look terrible. We shouldn't have jacked up prices to a certain few people so they can't afford to water their yards!
Developing the riverfront property. Most cities with access like this developed it and it draws visitors from the community and beyond. Huge opportunity!
Build a new sport complex
Large commercial ventures that are typically found in larger urban areas to bring people that would normally travel to Minneapolis for; Top Golf, concerts and venues, quality higher education, unique stores and large chains (trader Joe's, cheesecake factory), etc.
Stricter laws
Continue to be a landing spot for incoming people and residents by keeping taxes low, offering affordable housing and good medical care.
Put God back in the schools
Areas for children ages 2-14 to have an enjoyable day at a low cost. Areas for children ages 15-21 safe get together area

Not influencing infrastructure costs onto the residents that have no direct usage of the newly created infrastructure. Also, not going against the wishes of the community (defeated ballot measures) and building a community recreational center that only preferred masses will use.
Moving traffic
The city should determine what infrastructure we can accommodate now and then 10 years from now and plan accordingly.
Outdoor space for concerts in summer and ice rink in winter
Traffic planning
Trees and diversity
Improved infrastructure
Better access to mental health services for children and young adults.
Development of river front area
Larger indoor arena to attract sports and indoor activities.
Cleanliness safety and welcoming
Like mentioned above, probably get a better handle on our traffic issues within the city.
Put a plan together so older parts of Bismarck can make improvements to homes and get tax credits. Not just the Rich new parts
There should be tougher laws for criminals and enforcement of those laws by the judicial system to prevent further offenses. There are too many thefts and assaults happening that were once very uncommon here. Support for the law enforcement agencies is a must. Without our law enforcement, the rest is insignificant.
Stop raising taxes
Have more public access to the river including day tours and amenities. Having more distractions and activities places that people can use the free time.
Better planning of major roads in all these new developments. More four lane north and south options.
More outdoor recreational opportunities.
Not lose our existing values for the sake of diversity
I simply cannot limit myself to answering just "one thing". There are many issues that could/should be addressed. One thing is to honestly listen to residents at public meetings rather than saying "You have a voice" but then disregarding the voice of people only to so what they (eg. city commissioners) decide.
Let's keep the iconic railroad bridge.
Community and family space downtown
Traffic flow and waterfront development
Get people off unemployment and other gov't programs unless they actually need them.

We need more outdoor communal areas integrated into new developments, especially those central to town so that everything is more accessible and community minded.
Better traffic control and better enforcement of traffic violations!!!
The traffic movement in Bismarck needs to be improved
All nature
Deliberate development of accessible and affordable arts and recreation throughout the city.
From my prospective I am not sure of what that one thing should be. I think to make any community better requires foresight and planning in many directions at the same time, just like any business does. Things change and one has to adapt.
More places for kids of all ages to go for activities. Things for families to do.
A more open government. City planning and engineers have a hidden agenda. Why?
Better road condition and address tragic jams during high commuting times
Plans for another bridge(s) across the Missouri River.
Public and road infrastructure
Shopping
Filling empty commercial buildings
Better parks and more concerts/events
Keeping young people
Promote growth
Don't take in all the immigrants that keep showing up
Strive to maintain transparency when pursuing development while striving to hold onto small town values
Lower taxes
Don't let developers alone dictate how and where growth occurs. Lands shouldn't be developed until or unless it falls into an orderly growth pattern that works in concert with road networks, utility availability, and timing.
Lower cost
Attracting and developing businesses, particularly small business.
Cheaper housing
Operating Homeless shelters with enough space to accommodate (especially with our severe winter weather)
More running/biking paths and safe routes to travel through town and away from heavy traffic.
Strategically placed green space.

Young people activities
Jobs
Make the future train bridge park a music/entertainment venue that will draw people from around the region to our beautiful city. Thank you
Infrastructure
Anything that promotes family values. Family as a community.
Less new home building and more house remodels/ flipping in the inner city.
The city should pursue establishment of a state university in Bismarck.
Education enhancements
Jobs that offer full-time employment with benefits
Get drugs out of here
Appropriate zoning and development of roads that can manage larger traffic flows efficiently
Recreation facilities
Get rid of bike paths on the streets, lower taxes, get a light engineer that can time a 1 way, & get rid of that \$50 million Sandpoint water system that's a failure
Taxes and proper spending of money
Many things, but this year I have been particularly distressed to watch all the boulevard trees being allowed to die in Bismarck, particularly in the commercial areas. The 43rd Ave street development is a good example. I wish the city would ensure that when trees are planted, the trees are provided at least some water. But it seems that most commercial property owners could care less in Bismarck. Another example of this is Bismarck Expressway. Bismarck commercial districts should be well landscaped with healthy growing trees. This year many are being allowed to die. It is very unfortunate for a city that wants to be attractive.
Keeping the park spaces we have.
More restrictions and responsibility on developers to cover all expenses
Keeping the small town fell while creating more events that would give us the big town value.
Infrastructure
More police force activity
Less waste of money
Proper plan in place for housing development.
Lower taxes. No special assessments.
In the years I have lived here I have paid more than 180,000 in real estate taxes, not including specials. I sure don't think I got my monies worth. We live near an abundant water source and yet have high water rates???

Keep our police and fire departments visible and friendly. We can be professional without being authoritarian when dealing with the public. We have very good leadership in these departments today. We just need to instill that leadership down the ranks.
More bike paths and events as noted above
Good representatives that are elected by the people with easy access to voting polls and mail in ballots without being rushed
Civility amongst and between all residents. No need for overt racist activity.
Budgeting and reducing the tax-payers burden.
Stop crowding main arterial roads
Better traffic control. It's almost like the rules for driving are ignored and self absorption is the driving force in sharing the roads.
More restaurants.
More efficient road systems and traffic lights.
Lower tax
Maintenance of streets
Keep everyday prices such as foods, transportation costs in check, instead of always raising prices to meet demand.
A state-of-the-art concert hall holding 1,500-2,000 people, overlooking the beautiful Missouri River. We are fools to have not done this years ago. The opportunities and conferences this would open up to us are incredible! Just don't put it downtown!
Cost analysis of why, after a decade of strong growth, we have to raise taxes left and right, instead of having excess tax revenue to accompany the growth. Clearly, new development is not truly funding the corresponding increased infrastructure costs. This would likely lead to a moratorium on our aggressive sprawl.
Tolerance for persons from different cultures, backgrounds & political beliefs

## Appendix B – Survey Instrument

### *Together 2045 Bismarck's Comprehensive Plan Household Survey Report – July 19, 2021*

The survey instrument was administered online and by phone, using the SurveyMonkey platform. The questions are presented in this appendix in written form, although they were never viewed by the respondents in this form. A postcard mailing was sent to invite participants. All participants were sent two mailings, and renters were sent three mailings.



You have been selected to participate in a  
**COMMUNITY SURVEY**

Help shape the next 25 years of growth and development of the City of Bismarck by taking this **10 minute survey**. Please select one adult member of your household to complete the survey by **June 30, 2021**.

**1** Point your smartphone camera here: 

or **2** Type into your computer web browser:  
[www.research.net/r/Together2045](http://www.research.net/r/Together2045)

or **3** Call 355-1840 and press 1 between 9am and 5pm and ask to take the survey

Only 1 out of 20 households receive this invite.  
Your input is critical to understand our community

*An example of the first mailing sent*

## Experience in Bismarck

**Thank you for taking the survey to prepare for Bismarck's Comprehensive Plan. All answers will be anonymous and the survey should take approximately 10 minutes to complete.**

1. What have you considered in your decision to live in Bismarck? (check all that apply)

- |                                                          |                                                                         |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> To be closer to family/friends  | <input type="checkbox"/> Health care access                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Job or career                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Public safety                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Quality of life                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Recreational activities, amenities, and events |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Schools and educational options | <input type="checkbox"/> Affordability/cost of living                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Size of community               |                                                                         |

2. Which places in the area would you take a guest from out of town to visit? (Choose top 3)

- |                                                       |                                                                     |
|-------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> North Dakota Capitol         | <input type="checkbox"/> Lewis and Clark Riverboat/Heritage Landing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Missouri River waterfront    | <input type="checkbox"/> Colleges (University of Mary, UTTC, BSC)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Downtown Bismarck            | <input type="checkbox"/> Shopping centers                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dakota Zoo/Sertoma Park      | <input type="checkbox"/> Bicycle and pedestrian trails              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> North Dakota Heritage Center | <input type="checkbox"/> Fort Abraham Lincoln State Park            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)       |                                                                     |

3. How Long have you lived in Bismarck?

- |                                        |                                             |
|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Less than a year | <input type="radio"/> 7 - 15 years          |
| <input type="radio"/> 1 - 3 years      | <input type="radio"/> 15 - 30 years         |
| <input type="radio"/> 3 - 7 years      | <input type="radio"/> Greater than 30 years |

4. What are your future plans for living in Bismarck?

- Have no plans to ever move from Bismarck
- May move in future stage of life, but are fairly settled here
- Could potentially move from Bismarck in the next several years
- Planning to move from Bismarck in the near future

**Please rate these aspects of Bismarck's quality of life from low (1 star) to high (5 stars):**

5. Friendliness of people



6. Preservation of natural resources



7. Arts and culture



8. Cleanliness



9. Personal safety



10. Respect for heritage



11. Entertainment and recreational amenities



12. Quality of schools



13. Place to retire and age

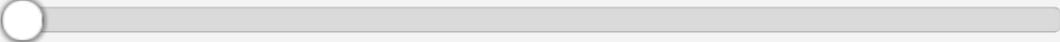


14. Any further comments regarding quality of life in Bismarck?

## Home and Neighborhood

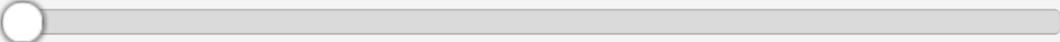
15. Which best describes your current neighborhood

Yards are smaller and there are places to go within walking distance	In between	Yards are larger with open space and few places to go within walking distance	<input type="checkbox"/>
----------------------------------------------------------------------	------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------



16. Which best describes your ideal neighborhood

Yards are smaller and there are places to go within walking distance	In between	Yards are larger with open space and few places to go within walking distance	<input type="checkbox"/>
----------------------------------------------------------------------	------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------



17. If you were looking for a new home in Bismarck what would you prioritize (choose top 3)

- |                                                                                    |                                                              |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Affordability                                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Quality of schools       |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accessible to people with mobility limitations | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Walkable neighborhood    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Historic character                             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Open space/trail access  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Easy to maintain                               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Size of the home         |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Landscaping and trees                          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Attractiveness of design |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)                         |                                                              |

18. How often did you spend time with neighbors in a typical year prior to COVID-19?

- A few times a week
- A few times a month
- A few times a year
- Once a year or less

19. What name would you use to describe your neighborhood?

- I don't refer to my neighborhood by name
- please specify

20. Any further comments regarding housing and neighborhoods in Bismarck?

## Getting Around

21. What method(s) do you typically use to get to most destinations? (choose up to 2)

Drive alone

Walk

Drive with others

Bicycle

Public transportation

Other (please specify)

22. What method(s) would you prefer to use to get to most destinations? (choose up to 2)

Drive alone

Walk

Drive with others

Bicycle

Public transportation

Other (please specify)

23. What obstacles keep you from using this preferred transportation choice?

I'm satisfied with my current options

please specify

**Please rate these aspects of Bismarck's transportation from low (1 star) to high (5 stars):**

24. Maintenance of streets



25. Ability to bike or walk places



26. Availability of vehicle parking



27. Free-flowing traffic during commuting times



28. Free-flowing traffic at other times



29. Compliance with traffic laws



30. Overall safety of travel



31. Any further comments regarding transportation in Bismarck?

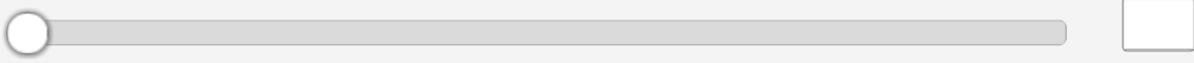
## Planning for Future Growth

32. Which best describes your attitude toward the growth and development of Bismarck?

We should avoid growth and the problems that come with it

In between

We should embrace growth and its opportunities



33. Which kind of housing would you say is lacking in our community? (choose all that apply)

- Rentals for low-income households
- Transitional housing for homeless
- Starter homes for new homeowners
- Senior housing communities
- Other (please specify)
- High-end single-family residences
- Accessory dwelling units (i.e. "mother-in-law suites")
- Luxury condominiums and townhomes
- There are already enough housing options available

34. How should the land adjacent to the Missouri River be used? (choose all that apply)

- Recreation, parks, open space
- Commercial development (retail, offices, etc)
- Entertainment venues
- Residential development
- Other (please specify)

35. What improvements would most benefit downtown Bismarck? (choose top 3)

- More entertainment (restaurants, bars, etc)
- More housing options
- An outdoor public plaza
- Better connections to nearby areas
- Improvements to streets and sidewalks
- Other (please specify)
- More parking
- More retail and services
- More police presence
- More special events

36. The following topics can be included in a Comprehensive Plan. Choose the top 4 most important to you.

- Affordable/workforce housing
- Visual appearance of the community
- Arts and cultural activities
- Natural hazard preparedness
- Quality of educational system
- Growth with low costs to taxpayers
- Employment and workforce development

- Public utilities and infrastructure
- Transportation safety and convenience
- Natural resource protection and access
- Medical and social services
- Public safety and crime prevention
- Historic preservation

## About your Household

37. Please enter the number of people in your household in each age category

Under 5

5 - 17

18 - 34

35 - 49

50 - 64

65 - 79

80 and over

38. Where are the places of birth for each adult member of the household? (choose all that apply)

In Bismarck-Mandan area

In United States, outside of region

In North Dakota, outside of Bismarck-Mandan area

Outside of United States

Outside of North Dakota, from Montana, South Dakota, or Minnesota

39. How many members of your household are currently employed?

Full Time

Part Time

40. Where is the place of employment not including changes specific to COVID-19? (choose all that apply)

Central Bismarck (downtown)

Outside of Bismarck or Mandan

North Bismarck

Work from home

South Bismarck

Not Employed

Mandan

41. Please select the status of your current residence?

Homeowner

Rental

42. What is your total household income from all sources?

Less than \$20,000

\$20,000 - \$24,999

\$25,000 - \$29,999

\$30,000 - \$34,999

\$35,000 - \$49,999

\$50,000 - \$74,999

\$75,000 - \$99,999

\$100,000 - \$199,999

\$200,000 or more

## Final Questions

43. Do you agree with the following statements?

	Yes	No	No Opinion
Bismarck should have a stronger role in directing future growth and development to appropriate locations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Individuals and developers should be free to develop land without many restrictions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
New development should generate enough revenue for the City of Bismarck to cover all costs of providing services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Areas that are already in city limits should be prioritized for development over adding new land to the city	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The City of Bismarck should more actively enforce existing zoning laws	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Night-time lights from commercial areas create problems for residents	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Parks and trails should be included in all new urban neighborhoods	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Trees and shrubs should be required as a screen between new commercial/industrial areas and existing residences	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The City of Bismarck should apply rules to areas outside of city limits to plan for future expansion	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Yes

No

No Opinion

Preserving  
historic resources should  
be a high priority for the  
City?

44. What is the single biggest challenge facing Bismarck in the future?

45. What is one thing that should be pursued to make Bismarck a better place in the future?