



# CONVERSATION #11 – OPEN SESSION

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**DATE:** February 14, 2012

**Session:** 11

**Attendees:** 15

**THEMES:**

1. Develop a system to communicate what is already going on in the community to students and the general public
2. Continue to capitalize on Education as strength. Connect UND and Community
  - a. Better connect UND/NCTC students to community – potential workforce
  - b. Workforce development. Do more to retain UND students when they graduate.
  - c. UND needs to address Parking to get the community on campus more
3. Promote/Market what Grand Forks/East Grand Forks already has locally, regionally and nationally. Our Brand
4. A desire for more diverse offerings – socially stimulating events
  - a. Signature Community Event
  - b. Concerts
  - c. River Opportunities
5. Multipurpose Complex/Wellness Center Village – sport dome on wellness site
  - a. Batting cages
  - b. Soccer
  - c. Hockey/Curling
6. Continue to focus on social offerings and recreational opportunities
7. Continue to focus on downtown development – grocery store/pharmacy/housing
8. Be more focused on specific things that will have impact – don't be all things to all people
9. Decrease the size of government/fewer non profits – partnerships and cooperation/regional approach

**IDEAS:**

1. Central on-line information hub; one stop shop online for info
2. Retirement Village
3. Casino
4. Philanthropy as a tool to do major community projects

## NOTES FROM 02.14.12 CONVERSATIONS

### WHAT ARE THE STRENGTHS OF OUR COMMUNITY FROM YOUR PERSPECTIVE?

- Terry Bjerke: People care about each other
- Ralph Kingsbury: What the community has done since 1997, we could have been destroyed but rather the community is bigger and better than ever
- Kathleen McClennan:
- Janell Regimball: The collaborative nature of providers in the community
- Father Phil Ackerman: People enjoy living here because of the people – people care about each other; religious
- Nic Thompson: Growing population and the room for growth; opportunity for young population to get education in an environment that wants them to succeed
- Michael Bergeron: Loyalty towards the community – people are staying in the community; Ralph Engelstad and arena
- Chris Wolf: The economy creates opportunities
- Mike Hedlund: Supportive police departments
- John Packett: Impact on sales tax; new hotels/apartments/dwellings; Immigration has caused very little negative impact – they are good citizens
- Terry Hanson: Economic diversity in the community; great place to raise a family; low crime rate; great education; Air Force Base; 4 season community
- Patrick Dame: We are well positioned from the highway and airport standpoint; community is in great shape from transportation standpoint; good air service and well positioned for future growth; oil patch brings money to our area
- Emily Burkland: Diverse/strong arts community

### WHAT ARE THE WEAKNESSES OF OUR COMMUNITY FROM YOUR PERSPECTIVE?

- Terry Bjerke: Government
- Ralph Kingsbury: Public business should be conducted in public
- Kathleen McClennan: The disconnect between UND and the community – how we can make it one
- Janell Regimball: Limited resources, staff, funds and access to funds; concern of not having philanthropic power
- Father Phil Ackerman: Limited resources; active religious involvement in parishes
- Nic Thompson: Weather is a drawback
- Michael Bergeron: Getting youth actively engaged and involved in the community
- Chris Wolf: More opportunities for people once they leave the University; hard to keep people here
- Mike Hedlund: The percentage of the community that's not supportive of the police department takes a lot of time/work; parents thinking law enforcement and schools should raise children

- John Packett: Impact on sales tax, oil patch impact on GF – criminal activity is increasing especially in the last 30 days; public information is taking too many phone calls – time
- Terry Hanson: Slow to respond to opportunities – other communities respond faster; wages; we analyze too much; we don't recognize that there are poor people in the community – 18.2% live in poverty which include the elderly, people with disabilities and people who have made bad choices in life
- Patrick Dame: Oil patch; taking too much time to analyze; workforce shortage at some point if we don't bring new people in; we need to get and keep the young population here; focus on what we're good at
- Emily Burkland: People aren't taking advantage of our opportunities

### **WHAT ARE YOUR BIG IDEAS?**

- Terry Bjerke: Parking at UND – free parking after 5 or 6 and designate lots – the parking has ruined citizen participation; the government doesn't evaluate what we do – refuse to recognize insufficiencies and do something about it; new library
- Ralph Kingsbury: UND will make the community grow; we need to bring more to our community – get communities together to focus on attracting industry
- Kathleen McClennan: Collaboration – art events – there is an enormous support for hockey but what about music, fine arts which would have a huge impact on night life ; information is available – getting people to the information is the problem – if people aren't looking for specific information they won't find it; find a way to get information to all populations of people (smartphones, etc.)
- Janell Regimball: More effort behind youth activities for people who don't have a connection (i.e. children/relatives in activities); amenities of a larger communities but the small town connections – want more things – make more efforts; welcoming new neighbors, specific strategies for people who come and aren't expecting to stay forever; neighborhood concepts – finding connecting strategies - how to embrace new people in the community; attaching people to the community
- Father Phil Ackerman: Develop some huge events that are unique to draw people to the community; more diversity downtown such as a grocery store – this area doesn't seem as active as it could be
- Nic Thompson: Partnership with UND and Northland Community and Technical College with businesses – retain graduates/young population with more job opportunities; build a multi-sports complex idea – facility such as a sports dome would be a huge draw (baseball, gold, mini-golf, etc.)
- Michael Bergeron: Getting high school/university students educated of opportunities in this community; there are a lot of unused resources; too many committees of certain things – where's the breakdown
- Chris Wolf: Recruit business that compliments this region – (strong agricultural) and grow off of these strengths; workforce for industry – young professionals, the Chamber working with college students

- Mike Hedlund: Expand on things that we are already doing well – Blues on the Red, Farmers Market; give people a reason to stay in town during the weekends as well as the week days; better way to utilize the river – don't look at the potential resources; education; have the idea of "that's the way we do it"
- John Packett: There are serious challenges/concerns with Measure 2; Highway 2 corridor – we are growing further away from the Air Force Base/Airport rather than closer to it, we have lost resources here
- Terry Hanson: Develop an inclusive zoning on housing to integrate all segments and change annexation polity; develop life classes in grade schools – start teaching how to be good/productive citizens; take an idea to UND – have the University research, develop/create an enterprise based on this idea; ND relies on special assessments more than any other state – have to annex 2 lots at a time
- Patrick Dame: Continued effort to attract events to the community (concerts/sports/shows); consolidation of some areas in government from a community standpoint – need to promote ourselves as one community; evening soccer league with hanging canister lights (don't need all of the lighting), baseball cages, etc. – Alerus Center should be open to the community in the eventings; there is opportunity for West development; there are so many special assessments for housing developments – why; how to create more affordable housing from this standpoint; state marketing efforts; community information
- Emily Burkland: Collaboration and joining resources to create a bigger impact; find ways to get more ideas/events out there – more accessible information

## **POST IT NOTE SUGGESTIONS:**

Terry Bjerke (City of Grand Forks)

- Government – quit playing favorites with tax codes, etc., treat all people/businesses the same, study usage of services (ex. – outside ice rink usage – no use - close
- Activities – people are busy, numerous events – there is plenty to do but don't expect people to have your interests
- Be realistic – attempting to be everything to all people
- Attempting to provide everyone with whatever they want
- Accept that many college graduates are going to leave the community
- UND parking – lectures, etc., free parking after 5 or 6 pm in designated lots

Ralph Kingsbury (Kingsbury Applied Economics)

- Why is there no power plant in GFK
- Easiest, quickest way for growth GF is UND – how much of last 10 years is UND

Kathleen McClennan (UND Theatre)

- Collaboration between GF CIVC, business groups and the University
- More support for arts in grade school
- Art event co-sponsored with the City of Grand Forks and the University

Janell Regimball (Lutheran Social Services)

- Help employees to understand the need to “market” our community and its assets to prospective out of state applicants
- More effort to get behind youth activities for those without personal connection
- Continue to build culture of neighborhoods for connectedness
- Develop signature event for our community
- Centralized access to what is happening across mediums
- Addition of sports dome to Wellness Center “village” to increase winter indoor opportunities for baseball, soccer, etc. year round
- Expanded career shadowing and mentoring opportunities for youth to connect to the community
- More opportunities for welcoming of new neighbors not just new immigrants
- Downtown grocery/drug store access

Father Phil Ackerman (Holy Family Church)

- Diversity in downtown area
- Develop some huge annual event that’s unique to Grand Forks (ex. Folklorama)

Nic Thompson (Northland Community and Technical College)

- BBQ contest
- Team UND with NCTC and community businesses to create an employment funnel
- Sports complex with multi options – dome, batting cages, mini-golf, golf carts, water slides, etc.

Michael Bergeron (Ralph Engelstad Arena)

- Have a “welcome to GF” packet available to new families to Grand Forks
- Less competition between non-profit and social organizations
- Communicate the opportunities available in Grand Forks to students currently enrolled at UND

Chris Wolf (Alerus Financial)

- Recruit businesses that complement strengths of UND/NCTC and industry
- Work with young professionals to have more networking events for UND/NCTC students promoting Grand Forks

Mike Hedlund (East Grand Forks Police Department)

- Additional community events (expand on things such as Farmers Market, Blues on the Red)

John Packett (City of Grand Forks) – No notes

Terry Hanson (Grand Forks Housing Authority)

- Mayor's idea of a "retirement village"
- Casino
- Redevelop older communities – limit sprawl South, it has to be cheaper to redevelop this to continue with new infrastructure
- Develop philanthropy in ND
- UND entrepreneurship program
- Youth – 14,000 students – why do they leave
- Open up the river to more recreation
- Begin life classes in grade school – "how to be a productive citizen"
- Change annexation policy – annex larger tracts of land at a time
- Develop inclusive zoning (i.e. – affordable housing included with market rate housing)

Patrick Dame (GF Regional Airport Authority)

- National marketing efforts – promote the positive
- Push developer to develop property and slow or stop special assessments, make it part of the lot cost
- Local, state marketing efforts for those that want to move away from Bakken but stay in ND
- Continued attraction of local events (concerts/sports/shows)
- Decrease the size of city government – find ways to consolidate some functions

Emily Burkland (North Dakota Ballet)

- Create more unique, locally-identified events to attract young people/family
- A consistent way to keep people informed about social events, cultural events (social media)
- Create more large-scale events to attract young people/families
- Collaboration – joining resources we already have to create a bigger impact