

Comprehensive Policy Plan  
"Working Spaces"

Policy Letter 104: Public Ownership of Land for  
Commercial/Industrial Development

**BACKGROUND:**

At one point in history, the City of Fargo was, to an extent, giving land away and knocked the bottom out of the industrial land market for private developers. The public ownership and marketing of land for industrial development can act as a deterrent to private interests entering the industrial development market. At the same time, such land can be an asset to a community in its efforts to promote economic and job development.

This counterproductive situation resulting from City held industrial land should be resolved to reduce the unpredictability and non-productivity of the situation. The City will continue to acquire industrial land through tax default or other means, but is searching for the best alternative for rapidly returning this land to the open market. The Fargo-Cass County Economic Development Corporation (F-CCEDC), through a cooperative agreement with the City, may be an organization that can facilitate this return of public industrial land to the private sector with minimal impact on the open land market.

**POLICY STATEMENT:**

**The City of Fargo, in the management of land acquired through tax default or other means, should adopt a sale or disposal policy that does not serve to undermine commercial/industrial development held by private interests.**

**CONCLUSION:**

The unpredictability and non-productivity of the situation where the City is caught holding industrial land must be avoided. City policy relating to providing incentives for industrial development or the coordination of public actions through prioritization criteria can strengthen the land market and detour the number of land failures that return in default to the City.

City programs or policies that assist and enhance economic development in Fargo, without competing with private land developers, are appropriate and necessary in bringing predictability into the market place of industrial land development.

\* See also policy 105 and 106