



Economic Development Advisory Committee
 West Fargo City Hall, West Fargo Room
 Thursday, September 4th, 2025
 8:00 -9:30 am

Voting Members

Eddie Sheeley Chair
 Banking
 Choice Financial
 Marshall McCullough
 Service V.Chair
 Ohnstad Twichell
 Jaysen Schock
 Past Chair
 Manufacturing
 Cargill
 Melissa Sampson
 Retail Melissa Sampson
 Photography
 Chad Brousseau
 Utilities
 Cass County Electric
 Tom McDougall
 Technology
 High Point Networks
 Nick Killoran
 Small Business Owner
 Great North Insurance
 Jeffrey Volk
 Const./ Engineering
 Moore Engineering
 Cairn Reisch
 Member at Large
 Marvin

Ex-Officio Members

Shannon Full
 FMWF Chamber of
 Joe Raso
 GFMEDC
 Levi Bachmeier
 WFPS
 Robert Wilson
 Cass County

City Commissioners

Brad Olson
 Amy Zundel

City Staff

Dan Hanson
 Senior Director of Com. Srv.
 Casey Sanders- Berglund
 Economic Development
 Aaron Nelson
 Planning Director
 Paul Fracassi
 City Assessor
 Evan Frisk
 Economic Development

The Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC) meets regularly on the first Thursday of every month to review incentive applications and other items pertaining to the Economic Development within the City of West Fargo. The committee provides recommendations to the City Commission for final review. All Committee meetings are open to the public and any Executive Sessions abide by North Dakota Century Code. The Committee reserves the right to hold special meetings at its discretion to facilitate efficient development within the City of West Fargo.

AGENDA:

1. Call to order
2. Attendance roll call
3. Approval of last meetings minutes
4. Approve order of Agenda
5. West Fargo Events Review - Mike Amundson
6. Sign Badgers – Dawson Scheffer
7. Non-Agenda Items
8. Adjournment

Future Meeting Dates (1st Thursdays of each month)

Thursday, October 2, 2025

Thursday, November 6, 2025

Thursday, December 4, 2025



**West Fargo Economic Development
Advisory Committee
Thursday, August 7, 2025
8:00 am**

The City of West Fargo Economic Development Advisory Committee met on Thursday, August 7, 2025, at 8:00 am.

Voting Members Present: Eddie Sheeley (Chair), Marshall McCullough (Vice Chair), Jaysen Schock, Melissa Sampson, & Chad Brosseau.

City Staff: Casey Sanders-Berglund (Economic Development Manager), Paul Fracassi (City Assessor), Aaron Nelson (Planning Director) & Dan Hanson (Senior Director of Community Development), Evan Frisk (Economic Development Coordinator).

Ex-Officio Members:

Commissioners: Brad Olson & Amy Zundel

Eddie called the meeting to order.

Marshall moved and Chad seconded to approve the minutes for June 5, 2025 as presented. No opposition. Motion carried.

Marshall moved and Melissa seconded to approve the Order of Agenda. No opposition. Motion carried.

Casey Sanders-Berglund Introduced Jessie Rock, executive director for the FM Science Museum. As the location of the FM Science Museum is in south Fargo and very close to the border of West Fargo, Jessie's presentation was to make the City of West Fargo aware of the developments in the FM Science Museum. Jessie touched on the impact that the FM Science Museum will bring to the area such as workforce and community building that the museum will bring. Jessie stated there are approximately 188,000 children within 2 hours from the location of the FM Science, which will result in a significant increase in economic activity for the area. There was no decision or motion to be carried by the EDAC.

Casey Sanders-Berglund introduced Andrew Jason, Ecosystems Director for Grand Farm. Andrew wanted to make an introduction to the EDAC to make the City of West Fargo aware of their presence in the FMWF community. Andrew touched on the founding of Grand Farm and how it was created to help solve the biggest problems facing agriculture. This led to the creation of their innovation campus located west of Casselton ND, which brings in numerous start-ups and other ag-tech businesses to test their ideas and technology. Andrew also touched on their second location at the University of Georgia. There was no decision or motion to be carried by the EDAC.

No non-agenda items. Chad motioned and Marshall seconded to adjourn the meeting. No opposition. Meeting was adjourned.

Chair, Eddie Sheeley

WFE 2025 update

September 4, 2025





243 total events in 2024

2024 marquee events

- Kidchella – 2500 est.
- Essentia Health West Fargo Winter Classic expansion
- Professional Bull Riding
- Jon Pardi Sellout (Grammy nominee, 2025 WeFest Friday Headline act)
- Teddy Swims Sellout (Grammy nominee and performer)

By the numbers:

West Fest 2024 eclipsed 20,000 attendees

Stage West Community Theatre 4,130 tickets

Family Fun Nights included WFE Carnival, Bubblemania, Summer Splash, Great Outdoors & STEM.

2024 recap

340+ total events on WFE calendar across all facilities
2025 marquee events

- Stage West Expansion (2 summer musicals and year-round programming)
- Essentia Health West Fargo Winter Classic second expansion
- Professional Bull Riding
- Inaugural Buckaroo country music festival (2026 expansion to Aug. 27-29)

By the numbers:

June Cruise Night 5,800

June Street Fair 5,300

July Cruise Night 5,100

Stage West Community Theatre 5,923 tickets so far

Largest Kidchella so far! Est. 3,000



2025 highlights

- Tyler Hubbard
- Little Big Town
- Warren Zeiders
- 49 Winchester
- Charley Crockett
- Matt Stell
- Justin Moore
- Bret Michaels



CHARLEY
CROCKETT

A photograph of Charley Crockett performing on stage. He is wearing a yellow hoodie and a hat, playing an acoustic guitar. The background features a large, illuminated sign with his name 'CHARLEY CROCKETT' in a dotted, marquee-style font.



2025 Concerts

In 2025 Stage West has expanded to year-round programming having 8 shows already produced to date with many more in progress.

Stage West is not just an entertainment opportunity, WFE reaches thousands annually by giving the opportunity to learn, perform, build and practice their leisure artforms.

A variety of opportunity is supported including free and ticketed events:

- Reader's Theater x 2
- Musicals x 4
- Dinner Theater
- Plays
- Popcorn theater x 23
- Christmas shows x 2
- Youth camps x 7
- Youth education series x 3



Investing in the Arts

- New Country Music Festival in West Fargo Buckaroo Aug 27-29.
- Expanding hockey tournaments and showcases to 24 of 52 weekends
- New HS Outdoor Volleyball showcase to compliment the Winter Classic hockey
- Steady growth for traditional events (Cruise Night, Street Fair, West Fest stats)
- Below Zero Wrestling
- Professional Bull Riding
- National tournament hosting (Central Plains regional baseball, USA Hockey)
- Stage West Downtown Studio



2025-26 Economic +

2025 budget \$500,347

2026 budget request – (5%) \$525,365

- budget request offsets a portion of the full-time staff at Lights, POW/MIA, parking ramp and community event programming staff for contracts
- WFE has grown to 16 FT employees and over 200 PT since 2019 without asking for additional expansion funds beyond startup.
- WFE is responsible for entertainment, operations and event expenses

WFE operates on a \$2.5M budget including all funding sources



2026 Budget request

CITY OF WEST FARGO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

STAFF REPORT

Sign Badgers	
349 11 th Street W. West Fargo, ND 58078 (Current)	
Light Industrial	
Applicant: Sign Badgers Representative: Dawson Schefter	Staff Contact: Economic Development Casey Sanders-Berglund
Economic Development Advisory Committee:	September 4 th , 2025
West Fargo Public School District:	N/A
Cass County Board of Commissioners:	N/A
Public Hearing:	N/A
City Commission:	TBD

PURPOSE:

Sign Badgers is a light-manufacturing business which has been operating in West Fargo since 2015. This business has transitioned to new ownership as of August 2025. Their current leased space commands above market rents and the business has outgrown its useful footprint. Sign badgers support 12 jobs and an annual payroll of \$600,000. The business generates an estimated \$15-\$20k annually in sales tax for the City of West Fargo. The business requires unique fit-up to support the operation of printing equipment in a hyper-clean environment while also accommodating venting and air handling for computer guided cutting, painting and laser engraving equipment. Office and collaborative spaces are also priority requirements for their customer success, design and operations staff. Light industrial space is ideal but requires extensive fit-up. Sign Badgers is currently evaluating two turnkey lease proposals. The West Fargo site offers long term viability and modest landlord cash flow; however, the landlord cannot meet the capital needs for required tenant improvements. The Fargo site is fully turnkey and offers a reduction in our current annual rent costs and requires zero tenant investment. Each location offers +/- 5,000 q ft of space in nearly identical light-industrial structures with two garage bays and overhead doors with no existing demising walls or fit-up.



DISCUSSION AND OBSERVATIONS:

- There are 2 locations being evaluated for the new location for Sign Badgers. The buildings, structures, and sizes are almost the exact same. A new location with cheaper rent and the correct fit-up will help allow them to expand and scale.
- First location is in West Fargo located at 1154 3 Ave NW West Fargo and the second location is in Fargo located at 2701 43rd St N, Fargo, ND 58102.
- Currently Sign Badgers collects \$15,000-\$20,000 in sales tax annually.
- Sign Badgers created 12 jobs with \$600,000 in payroll a year and aims to retain and potentially increase jobs in the future.
- Sign Badgers is a Primary Sector business.
- Requesting a \$275,000 forgivable loan from the City of West Fargo to retain a high-growth business, unlock private capital investment, and ensure that a new, long-term commercial lease remains within city limits.

PROJECT ELIGIBILITY FOR INCENTIVE:

- This property falls within the Renaissance Zone and is in a newly approved project for the developer. This business would be eligible to apply for the state income tax pass through incentive as the property is already approved for a renaissance zone incentive.
- This business has been in West Fargo since inception or 10 years.
- This project supports the overall goal of the city retaining and / or increasing sales tax revenue generating businesses.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

Public assistance for this project is proposed at \$275,000 from the Economic Development Sales tax fund. The financial portion would be paid up front and forgiven based on the milestones outlined below. A business incentive agreement will be drafted upon approval.

The business will be requested in the agreement to share the maintained and potential increase in jobs as well as sales tax revenue paid to the state of ND for a period of 5 years

Amount	Milestone	Outcome
100,000	Completion of one year of operations. This is defined as the first full 12-month period of business with a starting date of when the business opens for customers and would be complete on the same date the following year.	Loan forgiven
175,000	Completion of two year of operations. This is defined as the second full 12-month period of business with a starting date of when the business opens for customers and would be complete on the same date the following year.	Loan forgiven

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The proposed project fosters a 15-year relationship with Sign Badgers by supporting the business to remain in the City of West Fargo.

The Economic Development Advisory Committee is meeting on September 4th, 2025, to review the applicant's request.



349 11th Street W.
West Fargo, ND 58078
(701) 478-4440

To: Casey Sanders-Berglund, City of West Fargo
From: B2 LLC d/b/a Sign Badgers
Subject: Request for Forgivable Loan Support
Date: August 28, 2025

Summary

We are requesting a \$275,000 forgivable loan from the City of West Fargo to retain a high-growth business, unlock private capital investment, and ensure that a new, long-term commercial lease remains within city limits.

Context

Sign Badgers is a light-manufacturing business which has been operating in West Fargo since 2015. This business has transitioned to new ownership. Current leased space commands above market rents and the business has outgrown its useful footprint. Sign Badgers supports 12 jobs and an annual payroll of \$600,000. The business generates an estimated \$15-20k annually in sales tax for the City of West Fargo.

Our business requires unique fit-up to support the operation of printing equipment in a hyper-clean environment while also accommodating venting and air handling for computer guided cutting, painting and laser engraving equipment. Office and collaborative spaces are also priority requirements for our customer success, design and operations staff. Light-industrial space is ideal but requires extensive fit-up.

Our business is currently evaluating two turnkey lease proposals:

Location	Proposed Landlord TI Investment	5-Year Rent	Landlord Cash Flow Outcome
West Fargo	\$300,000	\$306,231	+ \$6,230
Fargo	\$374,200	\$357,992	- \$16,208

- The **West Fargo site** offers long-term viability and modest landlord cash flow, however the landlord cannot meet the capital needs for required tenant improvements.
- The **Fargo site** is fully turnkey and offers a reduction in our current annual rent costs. Requires zero tenant investment.
- Each location offers +/- 5,000 sq ft of space in nearly identical light-industrial structures with two garage bays and overhead doors with no existing demising walls or fit-up.

Justification for City Support

A **\$275,000 forgivable loan** from the City of West Fargo would:

- Bridge the capital gap between the Fargo and West Fargo proposals
- Incentivize \$25,000+ in private landlord investment
- Preserve \$300,000+ in lease value and an established 12+ jobs in West Fargo
- Support a company that is scaling, investing in equipment and talent, and contributing to local economic activity

Terms & Structure

We are open to structuring the loan with standard performance criteria, including:

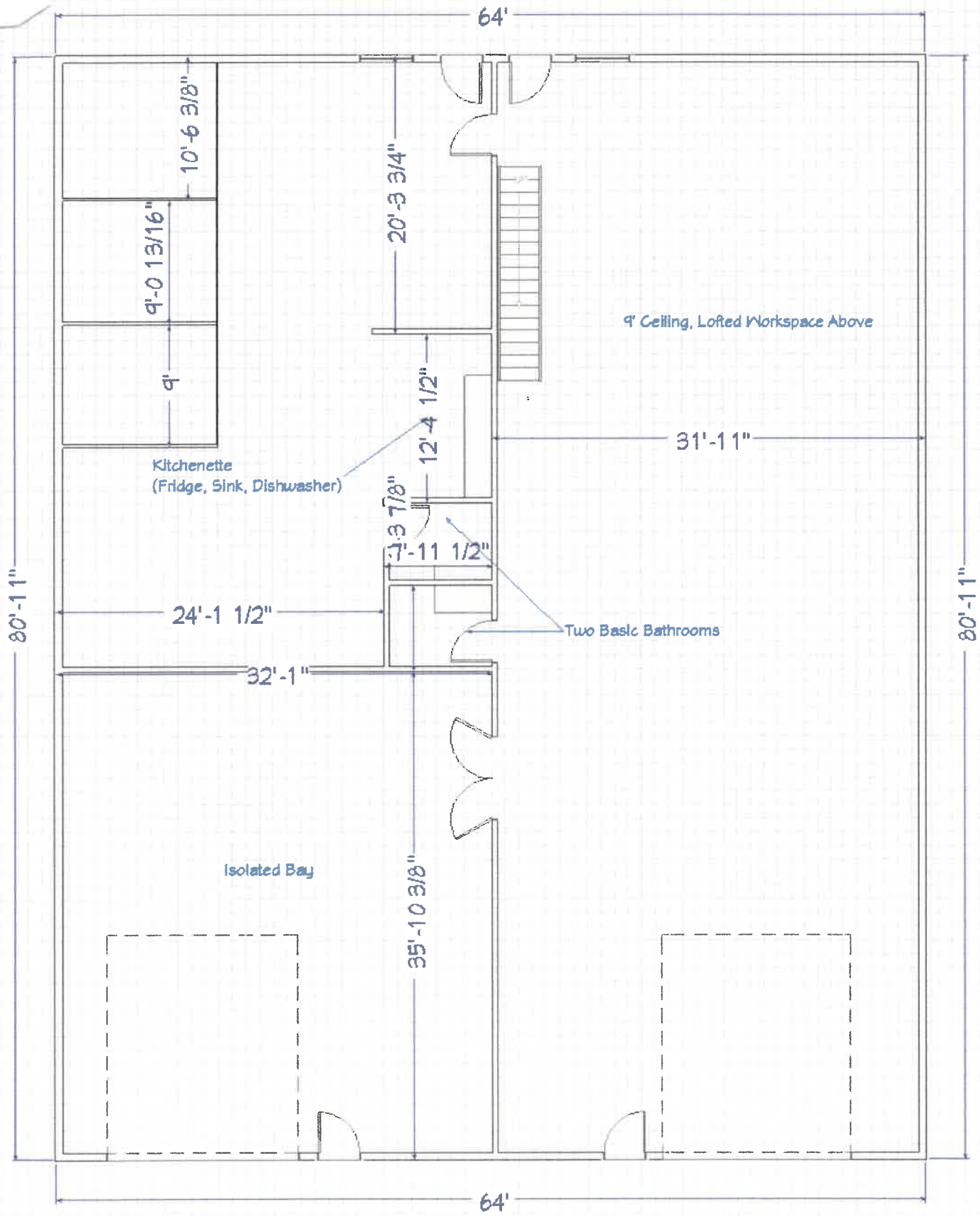
- Forgiveness tied to job retention, business operation, or lease term commitment
- Proof of landlord contribution

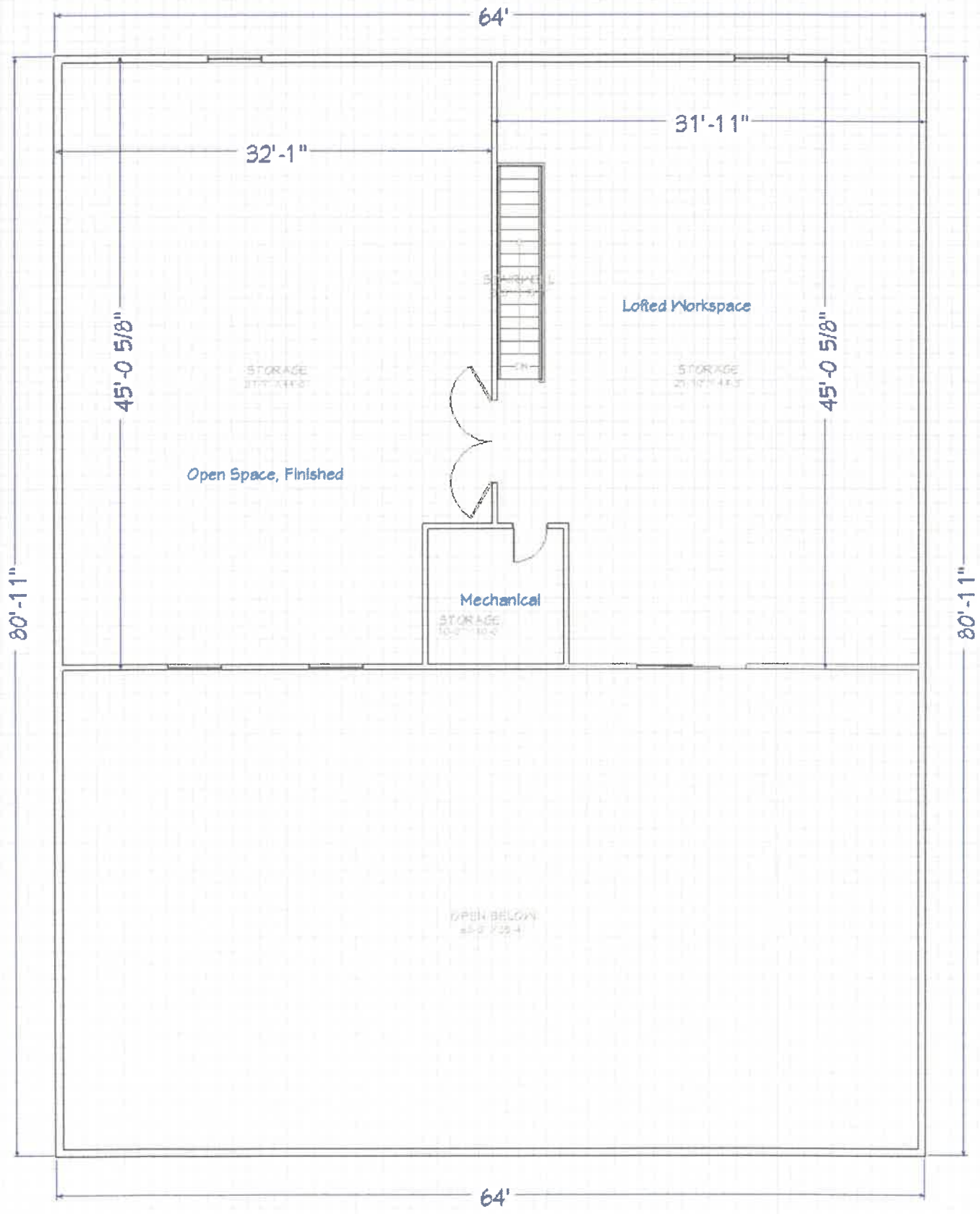
Timeline

Our current lease is on a month-to-month extension through December 2025. We must finalize a long-term location decision immediately to allow a landlord and our business adequate time for planning, permitting, and tenant improvements in the new facility.

Conclusion

With this request, West Fargo has an opportunity to retain a growing business, catalyze private investment, and ensure that long-term commercial tenancy remains in the city. Without support, we may be forced to shift operations to Fargo despite our preference to remain and grow within West Fargo.





64'

31'-11"

32'-1"

45'-0 5/8"

45'-0 5/8"

80'-1 1/8"

80'-1 1/8"

Open Space, Finished

Lofted Workspace

Mechanical

OPEN BELOW
45'-0 5/8" x 44'-0"

64'

STORAGE
21'-10 1/2" x 44'-0"

STORAGE
21'-10 1/2" x 44'-0"

STORAGE
10'-0" x 10'-0"

STAIRS



West Bay
view from overhead



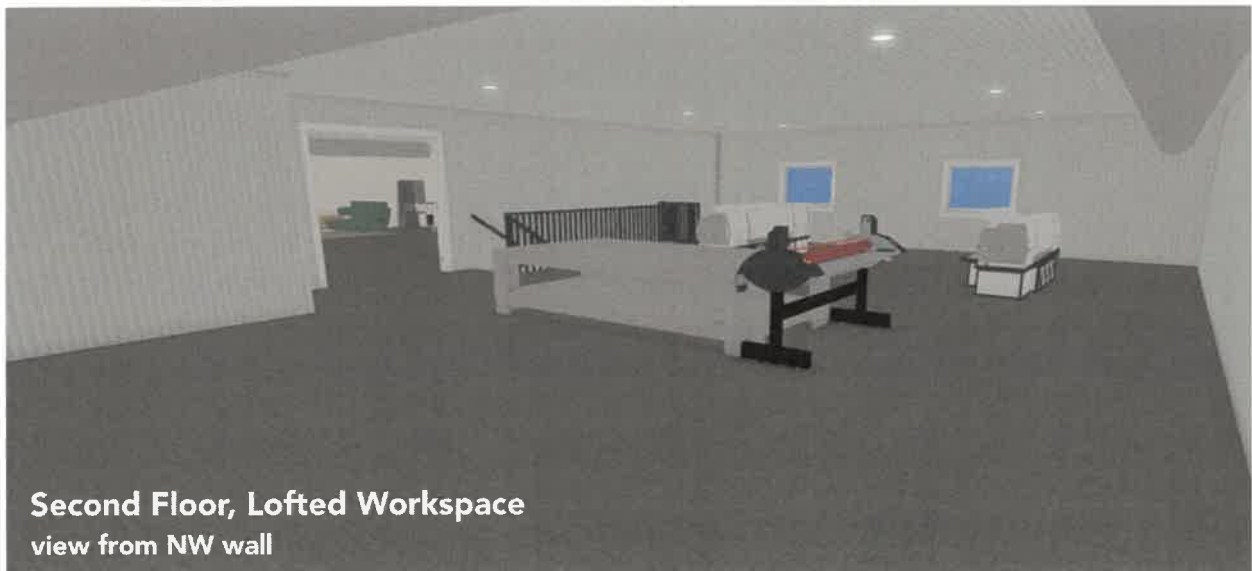
First Floor Office
view from N to S



First Floor Office
view from S entry door



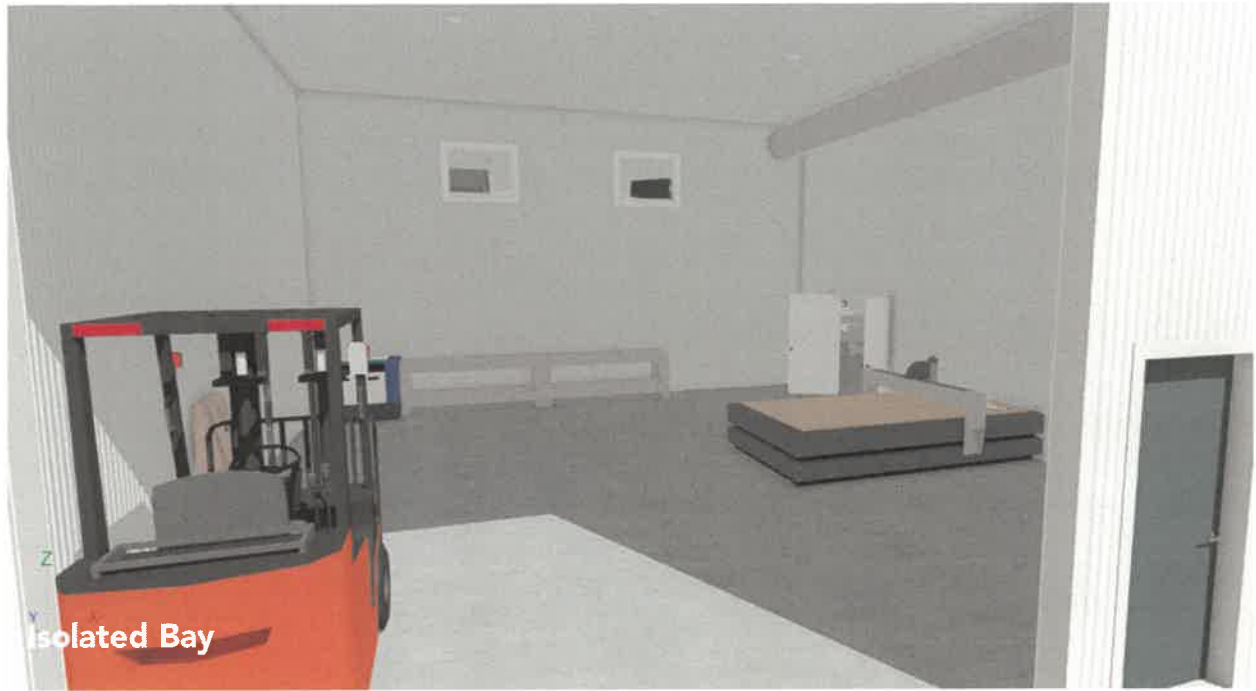
West Bay
view from SW corner



Second Floor, Lofted Workspace
view from NW wall



Second Floor, Finished Workspace



Isolated Bay