

(BarnesCountyStrategicPlan)

Barnes County

2001

Strategic Plan

HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT

Among the first known inhabitants of the area were the Sioux Indians. They made small camps along the Sheyenne River. The river furnished water for drinking, wooded cover along the banks attracted game and supplied firewood, and the moist bottomland provided tillable soil. In the late 1700's and early 1800's fur traders, government exploratory expeditions, and hunting parties entered the area. A campsite used frequently by these early inhabitants is now known as Clausen Springs.

By the mid-1800's the fur trade had started to decline as a result of the smallpox epidemic of 1837, which had greatly reduced the Indian population. Red River Metis, who were trappers or traders and gold seekers crossing the plains, greatly reduced the amount of game available. The Indian wars in the 1860's followed by reservation life brought the fur trade to a close.

When the Northern Pacific Railroad reached and crossed the Sheyenne River in the fall of 1872 at what is now Valley City, the settlement of Barnes County began. Barnes County was organized in August 1878. It was originally called Burbank County, named after John A. Burbank, Governor of Dakota Territory from 1869 to 1874. An act of the Dakota Legislator in 1874, however, changed the name to Barnes County in honor of Alphonso H. Barnes, who was an associate justice of Dakota Territory at that time.

Initial settlement of the county was largely confined to the Sheyenne River Valley, mostly in the area adjacent to Valley City. Most of the earlier settlers were of Irish, Scotch, or English extraction. Many were former residents of Canada. One of the most important of these settlers was Hiram Walker, a flour miller. The establishment by Walker and his sons of several flour and gristmills on the Sheyenne River contributed greatly to the economic well being of the county residents.

The population of Barnes County was 1,585 in 1880. By 1910 the population had grown to 18,066. It remained near this level until 1930, when it began to decline because of drought and depression. By 1980 the population was 13,960.

Valley City, the largest town in the county, had a population of 7,774 in 1980. Other communities in the county include Dazey, Wimbledon, Pillsbury, Leal, Rogers, Sanborn, Eckelson, Oriska, Fingal, Litchville, Hastings, Kathryn, Sibley, and Nome. The North Dakota Winter Show has been held annually at Valley City since 1938. It has grown to be one of the Upper Midwest's largest agricultural expositions. A distinguishing landmark at Valley City is High Line Bridge, which crosses the Sheyenne River Valley. This trestle bridge was completed in 1908. Prior to construction of this bridge, engines were used to push heavy trains up the steep grade of the Sheyenne River Valley.

TRANSPORTATION

One federal highway and five state highways provide access to markets. Interstate 94 and North Dakota Highways 9, 26, and 46 are major east-west routes across the county. North Dakota Highways 1 and 32 are major north-south routes. These state and federal highways along with the hard surfaced and graveled county and township roads provide a good transportation network. The nearest major commercial airline facilities are in adjacent Cass County to the east. Valley City has an airport for small light planes. A bus line and two railroads also serve the county.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Soil provides a medium for crops and the grasses grazed by livestock. Other important natural resources in the county are sand, gravel, and water.

As a result of glaciations, there are areas of sandy and gravelly material suitable for commercial excavation. Onsite investigation is needed because the quality of the deposits varies. Excess silt or clay content is a common limitation for the use of these deposits. A high scale content also limits the use of these deposits.

The Spiritwood aquifer is the most important water-bearing deposit in the county. It is in the western part of the county. Other important aquifers are the Stoney Slough, the Sand Prairie, and the Valley City.

Sufficient water for irrigation is available from several aquifers in the county. The Spiritwood aquifer offers the greatest potential, and it is probable that the Sand Prairie and Stoney Slough aquifers locally would yield adequate quantities of water for small irrigation projects.

PHYSIOGRAPHY, RELIEF, AND DRAINAGE

Barnes County is in the Drift Prairie section of the Central Lowland province of the Interior Plains. The dominant physiographic features of the county are the two major belts of end moraines and the deep Sheyenne River Valley.

The principal streams in Barnes County are the Sheyenne River, the Maple River, the Bald Hill creek, and the Stoney Slough Creek. The Sheyenne River flows southward through the central part of the county and is entrenched in a valley about 2 miles wide and 150 feet deep. It is the main watercourse in Barnes County. The Maple River flows through the extreme northeast corner of the county and, along with its tributaries, drains

the eastern one-fourth of Barnes County. The Bald hill Creek is in the north-central part of the county, west of the Sheyenne River. It drains into the Sheyenne River and Lake Ashtabula.

Baldhill Dam, constructed across the Sheyenne River, is about 12 miles north of Valley City. It was completed in 1950. The body of water impounded by Bald Hill Dam is called Lake Ashtabula, an Indian term meaning "fish river." The lake covers about 5,430 acres and extends northward into Griggs County. It supplies water in times of low water flow to communities downstream. The lake also stores runoff from spring snowmelt and rainstorms, which helps to protect downstream communities from flooding. In addition, it provides opportunities for fish and wildlife management and water recreation in an area with few lakes.

The Stoney Slough Creek drains some of the southwest part of the county. It empties into the Sheyenne River near the town of Kathryn.

All of the streams drain to the Red River of the North and eventually empty into Hudson Bay. The Continental Divide, which separates the Gulf of Mexico and Hudson Bay drain ways, courses the western part of Barnes County. Areas to the west of the Divide drain into the James River, which eventually empties into the Gulf of Mexico.

Most of the county does not have an integrated drainage system. Numerous potholes, sloughs, and small lakes serve as collecting places for runoff on the end moraines and ground moraines.

DEMOGRAPHICS:

Barnes County is one of 53 counties in North Dakota. It is not part of a Metropolitan Area. Its 1999 population of 11,864-ranked 13th in the State.

PER CAPITA PERSONAL INCOME

In 1999, Barnes had a per capita personal income (PCPI) of \$19,632. This PCPI ranked 32nd in the State, and was 84 percent of the State average, \$23,273, and 69 percent of the national average, \$28,546. In 1989, the PCPI of Barnes was \$13,188 and ranked 21st in the State. The average annual growth rate of PCPI over the past 10 years was 4.1 percent. The average annual growth rate for the State was 4.9 percent and for the nation was 4.4 percent.

TOTAL PERSONAL INCOME

In 1999, Barnes had a total personal income (TPI) of \$232,913*. This TPI ranked 13th in the State and accounted for 1.6 percent of the State total. In 1989, the TPI of Barnes was \$167,791* and ranked 12th in the State. The average annual growth rate of TPI over the past 10 years was 3.3 percent. The average annual growth rate for the State was 4.7 percent and for the nation was 5.4 percent.

COMPONENTS OF TOTAL PERSONAL INCOME

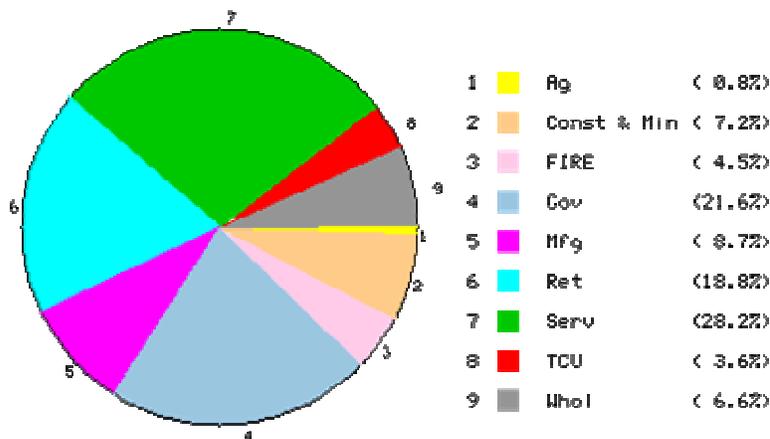
Total personal income (TPI) includes the earnings (wages and salaries, other labor income, and proprietor's income); dividends, interest, and rent; and transfer payments received by the residents of Barnes. In 1999, earnings were 48.6 percent of TPI (compared with 48.6 percent in 1989); dividends, interest, and rent were 30.0 percent (compared with 31.1 percent in 1989); and transfer payments were 21.4 percent (compared with 20.3 percent in 1989). From 1989 to 1999, earnings increased on average 3.3 percent each year; dividends, interest, and rent increased on average 2.9 percent; and transfer payments increased on average 3.9 percent.

EARNINGS BY INDUSTRY

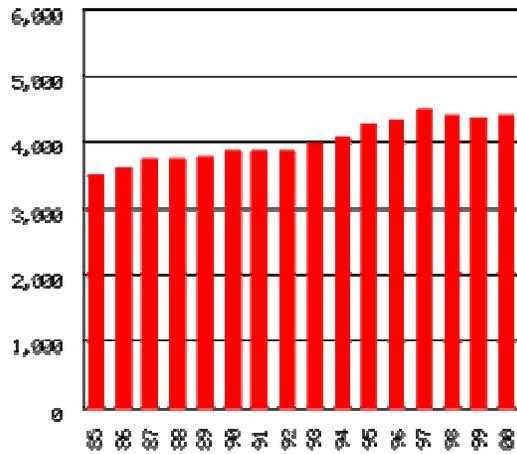
Earnings of persons employed in Barnes increased from \$85,641* in 1989 to \$118,913* in 1999, an average annual growth rate of 3.3 percent. The largest industries in 1999 were services, 25.9 percent of earnings; state and local government, 19.6 percent; and construction, 11.3 percent. In 1989, the largest industries were services, 21.9 percent of earnings; state and local government, 18.6 percent; and retail trade, 12.6 percent. Of the industries that accounted for at least 5 percent of earnings in 1999, the slowest growing from 1989 to 1999 was retail trade (11.2 percent of earnings in 1999), which increased at an average annual rate of 2.2 percent; the fastest was construction, which increased at an average annual rate of 8.0 percent.

- All income estimates with the exception of PCPI are in thousands of dollars.

**Barnes County
Industry Mix
1999**



**Barnes County
Average Employment
1985 to 2000**



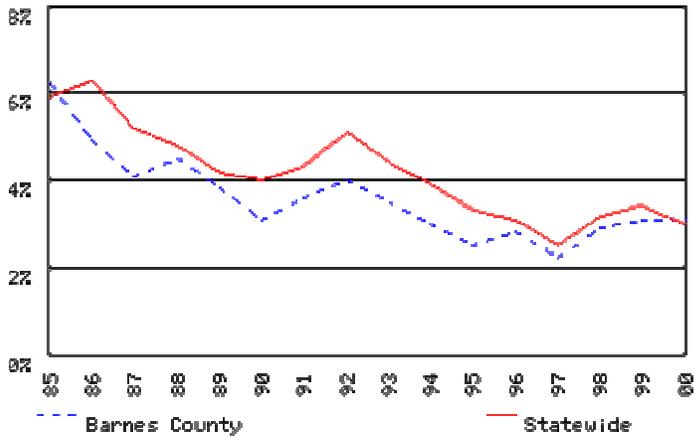
Barnes County Factoids

<u>Land Area</u>	<u>Rank</u>	
1,479 sq miles	16th	
<u>Population</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Year</u>
12,545	13th	1990
<u>Per Capita Income</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Year</u>
19,632	32nd	1999

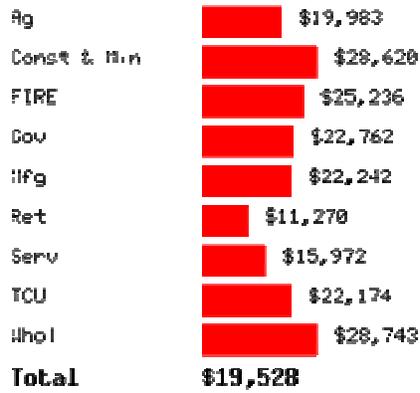
Population by City

<u>City</u>	<u>1940</u>	<u>1950</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>
Valley City	5,917	6,851	7,809	7,843	7,774	7,163
Himbleton	357	449	482	337	330	275
Litchville	438	488	345	294	251	285
Sanborn	366	324	263	255	237	164
Fingal	300	210	190	166	151	138
Dazey	215	196	226	128	143	129
Oriska	217	135	148	128	125	103

Unemployment Rates to 2000



Barnes County Annual Average Wage by Industry 1999



<u>Crop</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Year</u>
Sunflowers	3rd	1999
Winter Wheat	4th	1999
Soybeans	5th	1999
Rye	6th	1999
Barley	7th	1999
Spring Wheat	7th	1999
Corn Grain	8th	1999
All Wheat	9th	1999

CITY	2000 POPULATION	1990 POPULATION
DAZEY	91	129
FINGAL	133	138
KATHRYN	63	72
LEAL	36	35
LITCHVILLE	191	205
NOME	70	67
ORISKA	128	103
PILLSBURY	24	31
ROGERS	61	69
SANBORN	194	164
SIBLEY	46	41
VALLEY CITY	6826	7163
WIMBLEDON	237	275

THE PROCESS

A major component of all planning programs is the need and desire to provide the public and the various agencies with adequate opportunity to provide input and review the development plans and programs. In recognition of the need for public involvement, an involvement plan including the following was carried out:

- ❖ South Central Dakota Regional Council met with the Barnes County Commissioners and determined that a Strategic Plan was necessary.
- ❖ Barnes County chose Mary Lee Nielsen to Facilitate and assist South Central Dakota Regional Council to complete the plan.
- ❖ Community assessment by sending out surveys.
- ❖ Input from all towns and communities in Barnes County by holding public meetings.
- ❖ Input from all County Employees.
- ❖ Create a Mission Statement.
- ❖ Allow public to comment on the plan.

Input from the general public was provided through a series of public involvement workshops. The purposes of the workshops were to provide the general public with the opportunity to provide their needs of their community for the planning of the goals of the Strategic Plan for Barnes County.

Surveys were sent and delivered to every town in Barnes County and distributed to the businesses and residents. After the surveys were tabulated, they were used as tools for the following community meetings and workshops that were held.

Two meetings were held the first being in Wimbledon and the second meeting in Kathryn. Invitations were sent to each township board member encouraging them to invite others that would be interested, Representatives of Barnes County, Commissioners of Barnes County, and Barnes County entities and businesses. With low attendance, but good input that is part of the goals, at these meetings it was decided that another plan of action would be needed to attract the people desired for these meetings at a latter date.

Two meetings were set up for the County Employees that were mandatory to attend. At this meeting the approach that was taken was by asking the question, "if your County Commissioners had unlimited funds what would you like to see in your department and for Barnes County?" The results, that are part of the goals, turned out to be things that were accomplishable and nothing that was impossible without pre-planning for.

The Strategic Plan was then presented to key people that were involved in the plan for review and comment. These key people were to go over the plan and make any corrections that they felt

were necessary with their agencies. With the format of this plan it is the intention that every town in Barnes County will add their goals to this plan so that Barnes County can work together to make a strong and thriving County. Barnes County strongly feels that everyone working together will accomplish more, and with this plan it will be the starting basis.

Survey Results

Surveys were sent to all 13 towns in Barnes County that include Dazey, Fingal, Kathryn, Leal, Litchville, Nome, Oriska, Pillsbury, Rogers, Sanborn, Sibley, Valley City, and Wimbleton.

The surveys were tabulated and used as tools for meetings and workshops that were held for Barnes County. It helped the group to see what the other citizen's opinions were and to give them a starting point of discussion.

The surveys overall showed that they felt that the County was doing overall average. With the quality of life, local education, local government, local leadership, transportation, utilities, and real estate. The areas of labor and the market situation showed more responses of poor. The surveys showed that the biggest problem that the communities are facing is the availability of quality jobs.

Following is the results of the surveys that were distributed.

BARNES COUNTY MISSION STATEMENT

“Facilitate the needs of the Cities and Residents within the County to enhance the Quality, enhance their efforts, and of Life in Barnes County”.

INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

Two meetings were held on with the commissioners and the employees of the county to discuss the needs within each department as well as ideas to enhance Barnes County. The staff felt that there is a need to review the current facility needs and do some updating – no specific time nor dollar amounts were available.

GOAL: Develop and maintain the existing buildings and staffing of the County to deliver the best service to the residents of Barnes County in the 21st Century.

- A) Existing
 - 1) Update office equipment
 - 2) Review the physical plant needs of each department
 - i. Staffing needs and workload of existing staff
 - ii. Security and safety needs of staff and customers
 - 3) Review physical courthouse appearance
 - 4) Review communication needs

- B) Expansion Needs
 - 1) New Law Enforcement Center
 - i. New Jail
 - ii. Separate court room
 - iii. Emergency management center
 - 2) New highway department shop
 - i. Replace equipment sooner
 - ii. Install GIS equipment/software

- C) Specific Office needs
 - 1) Auditor's office
 - i. New fridge, stove and microwave
 - ii. New desks/cubicles
 - iii. Move stored historical items to the museum
 - 2) Veterans office
 - i. Secretary, additional space, air conditioner, new van
 - 3) Tax Appraisal Office
 - i. Additional help to appraise all the lake property and install GIS
 - 4) Maintenance
 - i. New Boiler, Lighting, central air in all offices

GOAL: Maintain and develop the water, roads, and other infrastructure

- A) The county needs to work with City, State and Federal officials to:
 - 1) Protect the Sheyenne River quality
 - i. Work on the Devils Lake issues
 - ii. Reduce waste/imparities from runoff into the river
 - 2) Be an advocate of Garrison Diversion water projects coming into the County
- B) The County needs to continue to be progressive
 - 1) Research the benefits and negatives of becoming a Home Rule County
 - 2) Research the need to hire a County Administrator
 - 3) Purchase computers for the Commissioners
 - 4) Establish bike paths and trails within the county
 - 5) Establish street signs within the entire county

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

As with many counties in the state, Barnes has seen a decline in population and many residents and community leaders believe job creation and the retaining the youth should be a critical focus for the public sector leaders. Barnes County is fortunate to have a larger community, Valley City, to help in its development efforts. Although all communities wish to create primary sector jobs within their town, for many it is realized that most jobs will be created in Valley City and the surrounding towns will provide housing and quality education.

Goal: Create sustainable development through the creation of new job opportunities that will promote new wealth in the county.

- A) Develop primary sector quality jobs
 - 1) Pursue angel and venture capital needed for new companies, such as IT companies.
 - 2) Secure funding for the soft costs, such as professional staff, marketing efforts, etc.
 - 3) Allocate more funding that can be used regionally for primary sector businesses plus service, retail and tourism businesses.
- B) Develop affordable quality housing
 - 1) Work with private and public entities to build new housing units.
 - 2) Through regional, state and federal funding, fix up the low income housing in the County.

Evaluation Process

This Strategic Plan for Barnes County has been developed in this manner to be a user friendly, living document. The design should make it easy for lead agencies to make it part of all their planning activities. The goal of this plan is to invite all cities in Barnes County to insert there own goals and actions so that Barnes County can work together to complete the needs of each city.

This plan will be integrated into every lead agency within the County with yearly progress meetings for any additions and/or changes to the plan, and success stories to be added to the plan. This plan is a working document and is intended to be changed as frequently as possible with a minimum of a yearly basis.

Valley City has been very successful in the past in developing projects, mainly because of strong leadership and active volunteerism. It is the hope of Barnes County that they can combine efforts on a regular basis and become a stronger County.