

BISMARCK-MANDAN METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
POLICY BOARD MEETING
May 19, 2026

The Bismarck-Mandan Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Policy Board met May 19, 2026, at 1:30 p.m. in the Tom Baker Meeting Room, City/County Building, 221 N 5th St, Bismarck, ND. Chair Schmitz presided.

Members present or participating via Zoom included Mike Schmitz, James Froelich, Steve Bakken, and Paul Tokach. Keli Berglund joined the meeting while it was in progress.

Others present or attending via Zoom included Kim Riepl, Stephen Larson, Tracy Walters and Paulette Jacobsen of the Bismarck-Mandan MPO; Deidre Hughes, Bis-Man Transit; and Will Hutchings, NDDOT.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND CALL TO ORDER

Chair Schmitz called the May 19, 2026, meeting of the Bismarck-Mandan Metropolitan Planning Organization Policy Board to order.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Schmitz called for public comments on items on the current agenda or the prior Policy Board meeting agenda, excluding public hearing items. Seeing and hearing none, he closed the public comment period.

CONSENT AGENDA

Chair Schmitz called for a motion to approve the items on the Consent Agenda.

MOTION: Mr. Bakken made a motion to approve the items on the Consent Agenda. Mr. Froelich seconded the motion and with Mr. Froelich, Mr. Bakken and Chair Schmitz voting in favor, the motion was approved.

BISMARCK FUNCTIONAL CLASS CHANGE REQUESTS

Mr. Larson stated the City of Bismarck has completed the extension of East Century Avenue and 52nd Street and approached the Bismarck-Mandan MPO in regard to these roads being functionally classified. A meeting was held in April between the BMMPO, City of Bismarck and Burleigh County in which a determination was made to withdraw the functional class request as 52nd Street is a township road designated as a local road. The City of Bismarck and Burleigh County staff agree the complexity of securing federal funding would outweigh the potential benefits at this time. Mr. Larson noted TAC recommended approval to withdraw the Bismarck Functional Class Request changes at their meeting.

MOTION: Mr. Bakken made a motion to withdraw the Bismarck Functional Class Change Requests. Mr. Tokach seconded the motion and with Mr. Froelich, Mr. Bakken, Mr. Tokach and Chair Schmitz voting in favor, the motion was approved.

2026 CURB MANAGEMENT STUDY (CMS) RFP

Mr. Larson stated the 2026 Curb Management Study (CMS) is in the 2026-2027 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and has a budget not to exceed \$150,000 with the City of Bismarck providing the 20% local match. The goal of this study is to provide recommendations to the City of Bismarck for the efficient and responsible use of its urban curb space. Urban curb space is utilized for purposes such as bus stops, bike lanes, delivery zones, dining pickup zones and parking. The study will focus on Bismarck's downtown areas and other high activity areas within the city limits. The consultant will inventory available curb space in the study area; evaluate potential curb space uses and demand management of curb space. The goal is to provide various key recommendations for parking policies. Mr. Larson noted the recent update to the Bismarck Land Development Code and adequacy of existing parking, signage and regulations will also be studied. The RFP states there will be two public engagement opportunities in Bismarck that will encourage creativity and collect data for the study. He stated that the study will provide a creative, prioritized, multimodal range of alternatives for curb space management within the study area to assist with planning as the City of Bismarck continues to grow. He noted the deadline for submittals is June 12, 2026, and consultant interviews will take place in July. The project is anticipated to start in August and conclude on June 30th, 2027. TAC recommended approval of the 2026 Curb Management Study (CMS) RFP at their meeting.

Mr. Bakken asked why Kirkwood Mall parking lot is included in the study.

Mr. Larson replied that Kirkwood Mall parking lot borders the southern line of the study but is not included in the study.

Mr. Schmitz asked for clarification if the City of Bismarck is to pick up the local share of the project cost.

Mr. Larson replied yes, that is correct. The study only pertains to the City of Bismarck.

MOTION: Mr. Froelich made a motion to approve the 2026 Curb Management Study (CMS) RFP. Mr. Bakken seconded the motion and with Mr. Froelich, Mr. Bakken, Mr. Tokach and Chair Schmitz voting in favor, the motion was approved.

2026-2027 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP) AMENDMENT

Ms. Riepl stated the Amendment 2 was required because the MPO received an increase to the overall total federal and local match amounts from federal funding authorized by the Federal Transit Administration exceeding estimated funds for 2026 by an additional \$1,030.91.

Ms. Riepl provided an overview of the changes to the 2026-2027 UPWP which included:

- The cover of the document was changed to reflect the amendment date.
- A change to the 2026 UPWP revenue table.
- An increase to the totals for the federal and local match on the revised budget table.
- An increase to the overall operations line to reflect a change in FTA funding.

Ms. Riepl stated the City of Bismarck approved their local match to be increased by \$258. She noted that TAC recommended approval of the 2026-2027 UPWP amendment at their meeting and if the Policy Board does approve the amendment, it is not final until Federal Highway Administration approves the amendment.

MOTION: Mr. Bakken made a motion to approve the 2026-2027 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Amendment. Mr. Froelich seconded the motion and with Mr. Froelich, Mr. Bakken, Mr. Tokach and Chair Schmitz voting in favor, the motion was approved.

BASICS ACT LETTER OF SUPPORT

Ms. Riepl stated the surface transportation reauthorization is set to expire on September 30th, 2026. She noted that it was pertinent for the four North Dakota MPOs to jointly voice support for the BASICS Act. The four ND MPO Executive Directors agree that the BASICS Act includes several benefits; however, it is subject to the amendment process and will go through several iterations before it is passed. The drafted BASICS Act letter of support identifies several outcome-based provisions within the act. She stated that pending approval by the four MPO Policy Boards, the BASICS Act letter of support would be signed by the four North Dakota Policy Board Chairs and sent to Julie Fedorchak, U.S. Congress Representative for North Dakota; Kevin Cramer, United States Senator for North Dakota; and John Hoeven, Senior United States Senator for North Dakota.

Ms. Riepl gave an overview of the revised BASICS Act letter of support. She noted that the major change to the document was the language refining that “Metropolitan Planning Organizations” (MPOs) play a key role in coordinating regional transportation needs across the country. They provide the technical assistance to understand long-range transportation needs and facilitate prioritizing regional funding to address those needs based on local participation and input. She noted that TAC had recommended approval of the BASICS Act Letter of Support at their meeting.

MOTION: Mr. Bakken made a motion to approve the BASICS Act Letter of Support. Mr. Froelich seconded the motion and with Mr. Froelich, Mr. Bakken, Mr. Tokach and Chair Schmitz voting in favor, the motion was approved.

***SECRETARY’S NOTE:** Keli Berglund joined the meeting while it was in progress.*

2026 FRINGE AREA ROAD MASTER PLAN (FARMP) UPDATE

Mr. Mann stated the study’s progress and status of the Major Regional Corridor (MRC) network are being defined along with potential hotspot solutions among the steering committee. The team met with NDDOT staff representing both the Central Office and Bismarck district office on April 13. This discussion provided an overall explanation of the FARMP concepts and began exploring ideas of how NDDOT would be involved in major projects. He noted that subsequent updates should begin exploring draft document recommendations and they are working towards having a draft plan to share with staff in late May. Mr. Mann presented a draft plan concepts map to the Board which focuses on policy and provides a detailed review of the core network for regional connections. The draft FARMP defines the processes and details the steps of the non-Major Regional Corridor (MRC) network:

- **SITE PLAN:** Applicants submit site plans through the typical intake process and work with cities/counties
- **SYSTEM IMPACT:** Review process notes major impacts on system: new access/intersections, traffic operations, etc.
- **MITIGATION MEASURES:** Applicants work with Cities/Counties to develop mitigation approaches
- **UPDATE DATA LIBRARIES:** Cities/counties update fringe area network as built centerlines and remove planned links from network
- **PROGRAM PROJECTS:** Based on mitigation measures, City /Counties may also advance capital projects as driven by developmental impact
- **MPO AND LOCALS JOINTLY ASSESS CORRIDOR CONDITION:** Assess how developments are adding to MRC corridors and keep track of overall needs for future MTP/TIP updates

- **POLICY BOARD APPROVES WHEN A DEVELOPMENT DIFFERS FROM FARMP:** TAC acts as a reviewing body to make formal recommendations to Policy Board, who has a deciding vote.

Mr. Mann addressed how the network serves overall regional needs and how key links demonstrate importance. He noted forecasting traffic levels, based on growth in the area, will provide guidance on long-term capacity needs. An example of a potential FARMP opportunity may include 66th Street East to 71st Avenue North, which would add a bridge crossing to connect north Bismarck with a north river crossing and access to I-94.

Mr. Mann provided a map and gave an overview of how the MRC network and the typical FARMP network work together. He noted major connections to other infrastructure sets the context to ensure that development isn't placing intersections or driveway access too close to natural barriers such as water crossings. He explained different processes for all roads in the FARMP network:

- **RIGHT-OF-WAY:** Defines overall expected needs for section-line roads. Setting a standard may not be as important on internal roads (previously known as collectors), especially with prevailing development patterns
- **ACCESS:** Determines generally acceptable areas from major intersections. This will be applied primarily on MRC, but guidance can be used for all roads
- **ALIGNMENT:** Determines acceptable areas for alignment change previously identified as 'safe areas' outside of site/environmental constraints

Mr. Mann stated TAC and Policy Board will be involved in making decisions on regionally significant corridors and connections, especially if land development will lead to changes in alignment or roadway function. One idea currently being explored is that formal Policy Board approval will be needed for any amendments to the major corridor network as proposed in the FARMP. These changes could range from access locations to alignment modifications and will be documented within the FARMP to function as a long-term blueprint for other recommended projects. Any non-critical corridors may be built according to the guidance of the FARMP; however, the plan will include specific details on how non-critical roads and critical roads interface with one another and other essential components. The three major corridor types outline typical sections and access standards that are cross-regional connections, major crossing links and destinations. These will select future design conditions from regional traffic assignment, identify potential for non-forecast in new developments, and identify major utility upgrades and needs. The plan sets general spacing guidance for streets and driveways and outlines flexibility for changing these along corridors.

Mr. Bakken asked what the process is for getting information out to the public regarding the public engagement sessions.

Mr. Mann invited Mr. Larson to speak about the MPOs advertising policy.

Mr. Larson stated the MPO has reached out to their jurisdictions, advertised in the Bismarck Tribune, the Mandan News, the City of Bismarck website, and on social media. The next public engagement session is Wednesday, May 20, at Public Works and Thursday, May 21, at the Mandan Library.

FY 2028 TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES (TA) UPDATE

Mr. Larson stated NDDOT recently announced grant awards for FY 2028 Transportation Alternatives (TA) program. He noted that out of the four applications received, NDDOT selected the Bismarck State Street Trail Rehab project from Divide Avenue to Calgary Avenue. The Bismarck City Commission has recently accepted this project to move forward and this project will appear in the FY 2028 TIP. Mr. Larson congratulated the City of Bismarck for being selected and being able to move forward with their project.

PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE UPDATE

Ms. Riepl stated the MPO held a passenger rail roundtable discussion on April 28th which included local leaders and elected officials from Beach, Dickinson, Medora, Mandan, Bismarck, Lincoln, Jamestown, Valley City and Steel. The purpose of the meeting was to present the status of the Big Sky Passenger Rail Authority (BSPRA) Corridor ID project, share information pertaining to local passenger rail readiness, and identify community needs, challenges and opportunities. The group also explored future collaboration opportunities to strategize advocacy efforts and noted it was a productive meeting.

Ms. Riepl stated that she spoke before the Local Issues Committee for the Chamber EDC on Tuesday, May 12, 2026, to present the status of passenger rail service in the MPO area and seek support of the Chamber EDC for local efforts of preparing for passenger rail to the area. The Local Issues Committee's primary concern is economic development. Ms. Riepl was invited to convene a meeting amongst the BMMPO, Chamber EDC, and the Mayors of Bismarck, Mandan and Lincoln to discuss cost analysis figures, economic challenges and opportunities for the communities along the proposed passenger rail line.

Ms. Riepl stated the MPO's Passenger Rail Station Siting Study's deadline for proposals was Friday, May 15th. She noted the MPO received one responsive proposal. Because the MPO received fewer proposals than required by NDDOT to conduct interviews, Ms. Riepl has placed a request with NDDOT explaining the MPO's process for advertising and promoting the RFP. Ms. Riepl stated she received notice from NDDOT authorizing the MPO to move forward with the review of the responsive firm, KLJ. KLJ has named their sub-consultants' firms, which are the David Evans Group and Mobile Designs. The consultant interview will occur the week of June 8th through June 11th.

Mr. Tokach asked if there was any strong opposition from the participants at the round table discussion pertaining to the return of passenger rail.

Ms. Riepl replied Dickinson CVB and the community of Dickinson have been on board with the return of passenger rail since 2019. Recently, with the Big Sky Passenger Rail Corridor ID project and the restoration of passenger rail, coinciding with the new Presidential Library opening in Medora, Mr. Miller with the consulting firm for the Presidential Library expressed their excitement to have passenger rail return to Medora. It was initially thought that the Presidential Library might potentially take away from Dickinson's support for the return of passenger rail; however, the representative from Dickinson indicated that they are supportive of the return for passenger rail and look forward to a collaborative effort including shuttle service and transportation to Medora from Dickinson. She also noted that Dickinson State University (DSU) is the research arm for the Presidential Library in Medora which added to the existing cooperative effort.

OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Riepl stated that the MPOs mid-year review conducted by NDDOT, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is on June 4, 2026. At this meeting, NDDOT, FHWA and FTA will review the programs of the MPO and make sure that the MPOs processes and tracking are as expected. This is a good time to discuss any items of concern or emergent issues that arise and receive their approval to continue with our programs. Ms. Riepl extended the invitation to the Policy Board members if they wish to be present at the mid-year review meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chair Schmitz adjourned the meeting at 2:09 p.m. The next scheduled meeting will take place June 16, 2026, at 1:30 p.m. in the Tom Baker Meeting Room, City/County Building, 221 N 5th St, Bismarck.

Respectfully submitted,


Tracy Walters
Recording Secretary

APPROVED: 
MPO Policy Board Chair

Fringe Area Roads Master Plan Update

TAC and Policy Board Updates

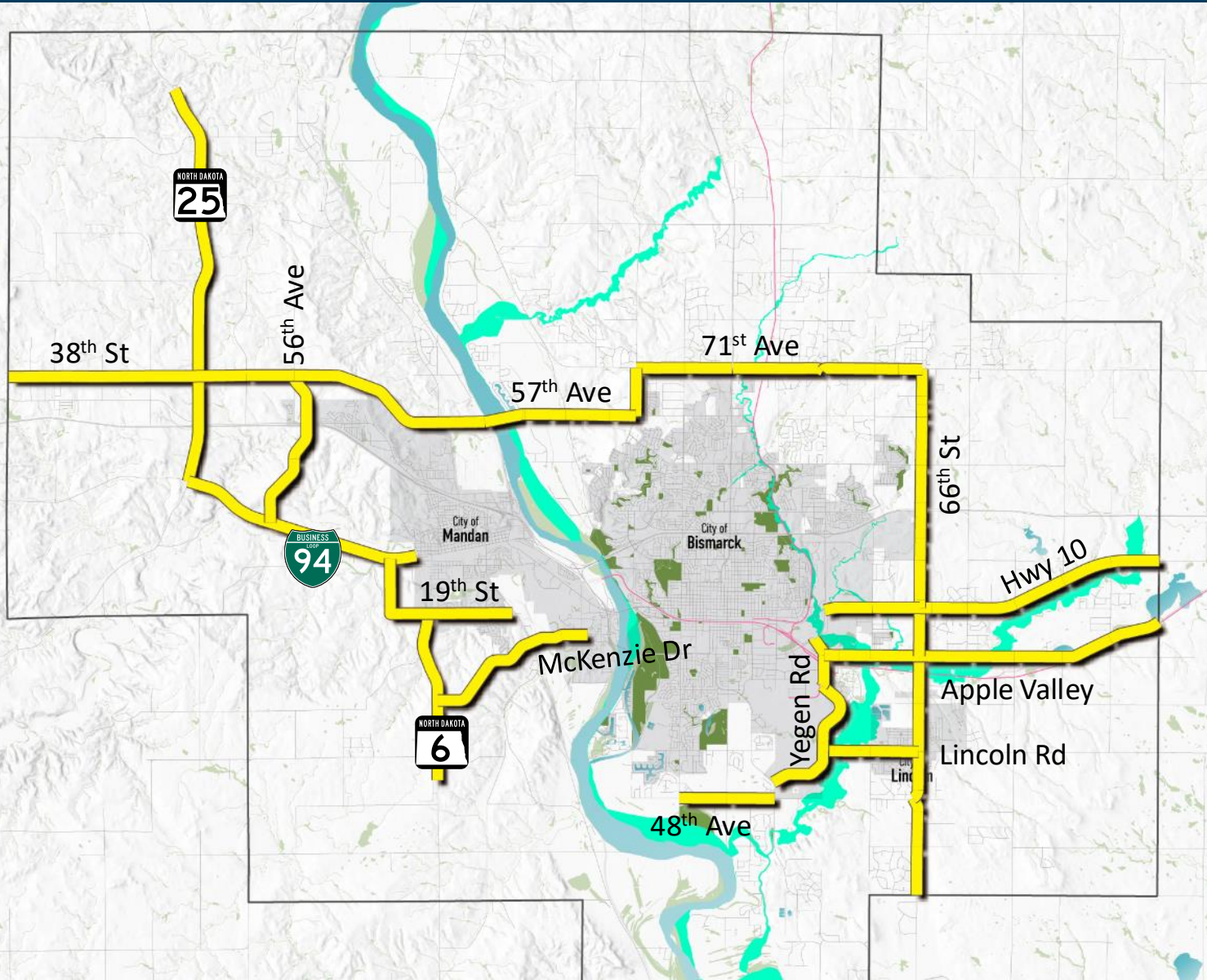
May 18-19, 2026

Major Update Items

Study Progress and Status

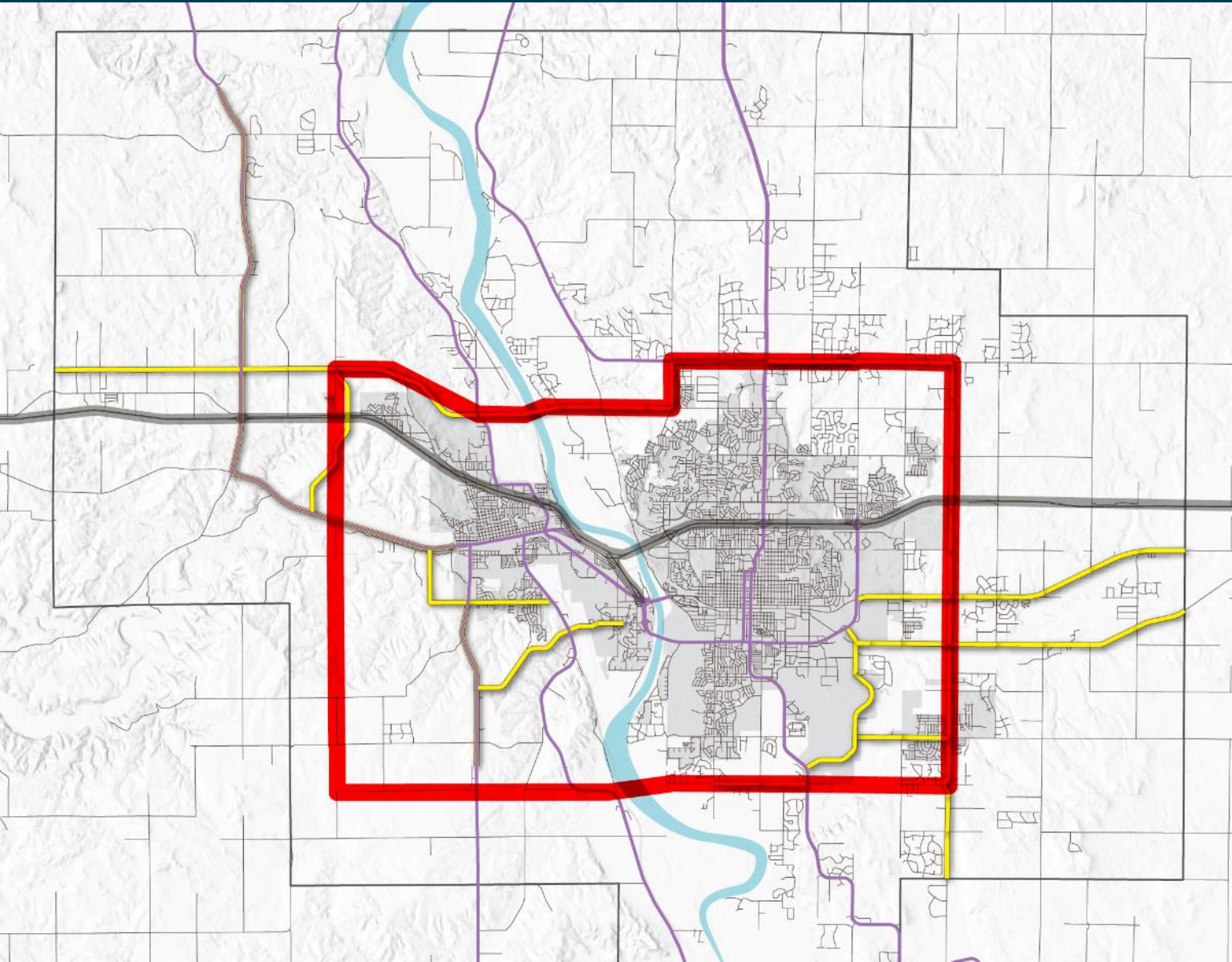
- Major Regional Corridors Network Largely Defined
- Working toward draft plan to share with staff in late May
- Subsequent updates should begin exploring draft document recommendations

Plan Concepts Previously Presented



FARMP focuses
policy and
detailed review
on a core
network for
regional
connections

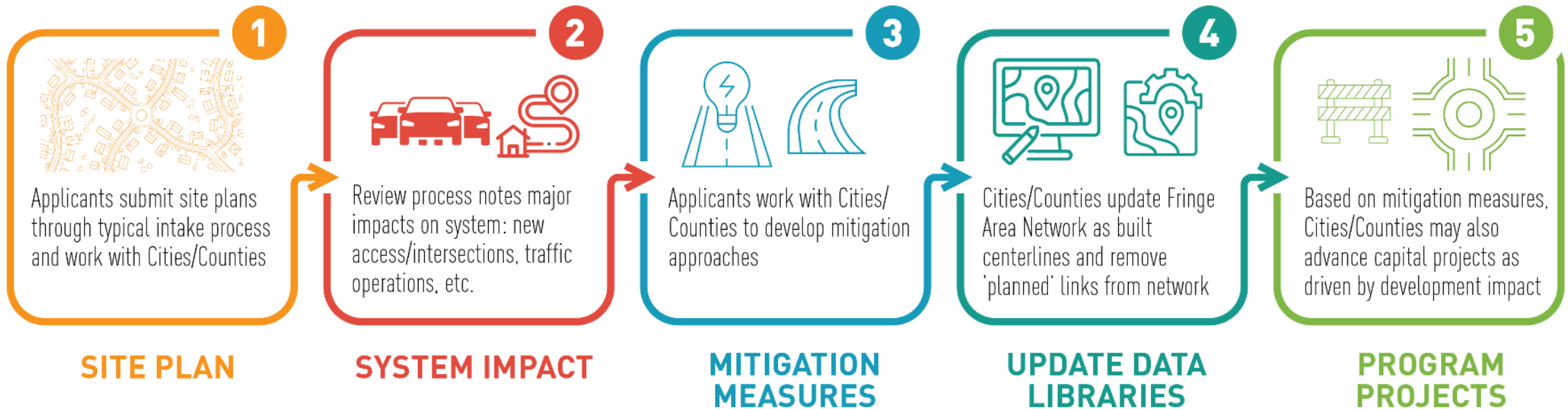
FARMP Opportunities



The MRC
incorporates
most of the
North-South
Beltway
concepts from
previous plans

The Draft FARMP: What to Capture

Define the processes: the non-MRC network



Cities and Counties

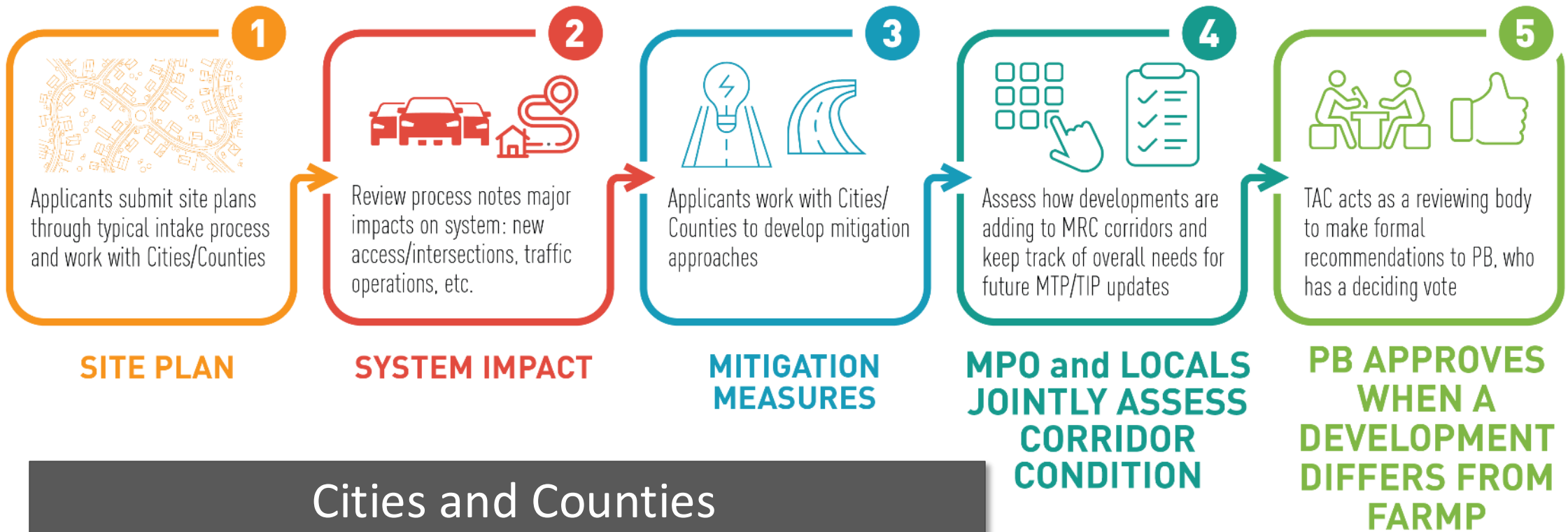
Follows FARMP Network Guidance and design best practices

Coordinate with BMMPO

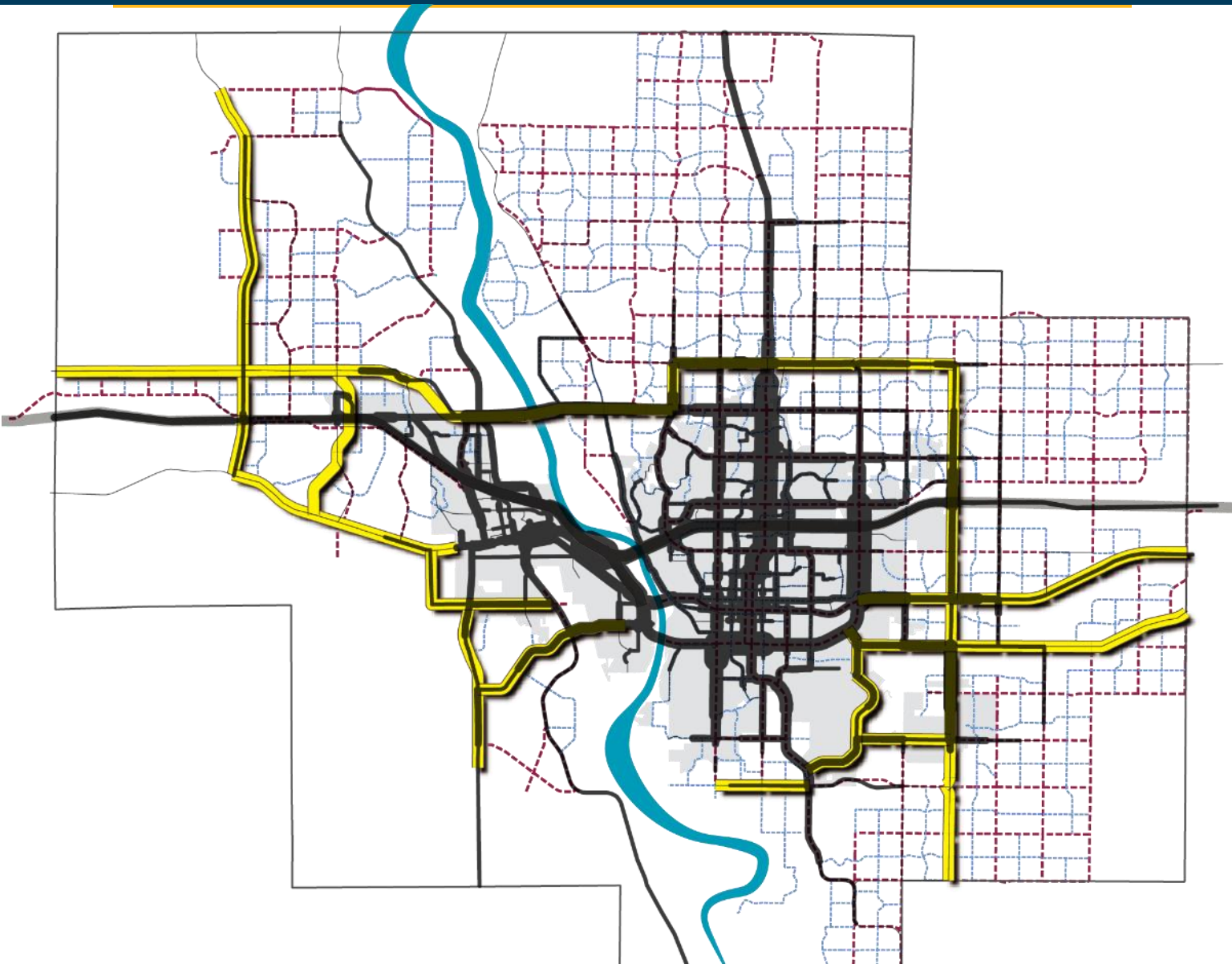
- Ensure consistency in datasets
- Seek MPO guidance and submit project candidates for MTP/TIP

The Draft FARMP: What to Capture

Define the processes: the MRC network



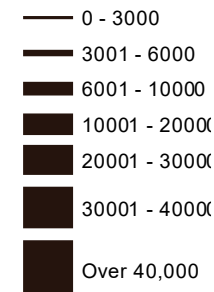
Selecting the Major Corridors



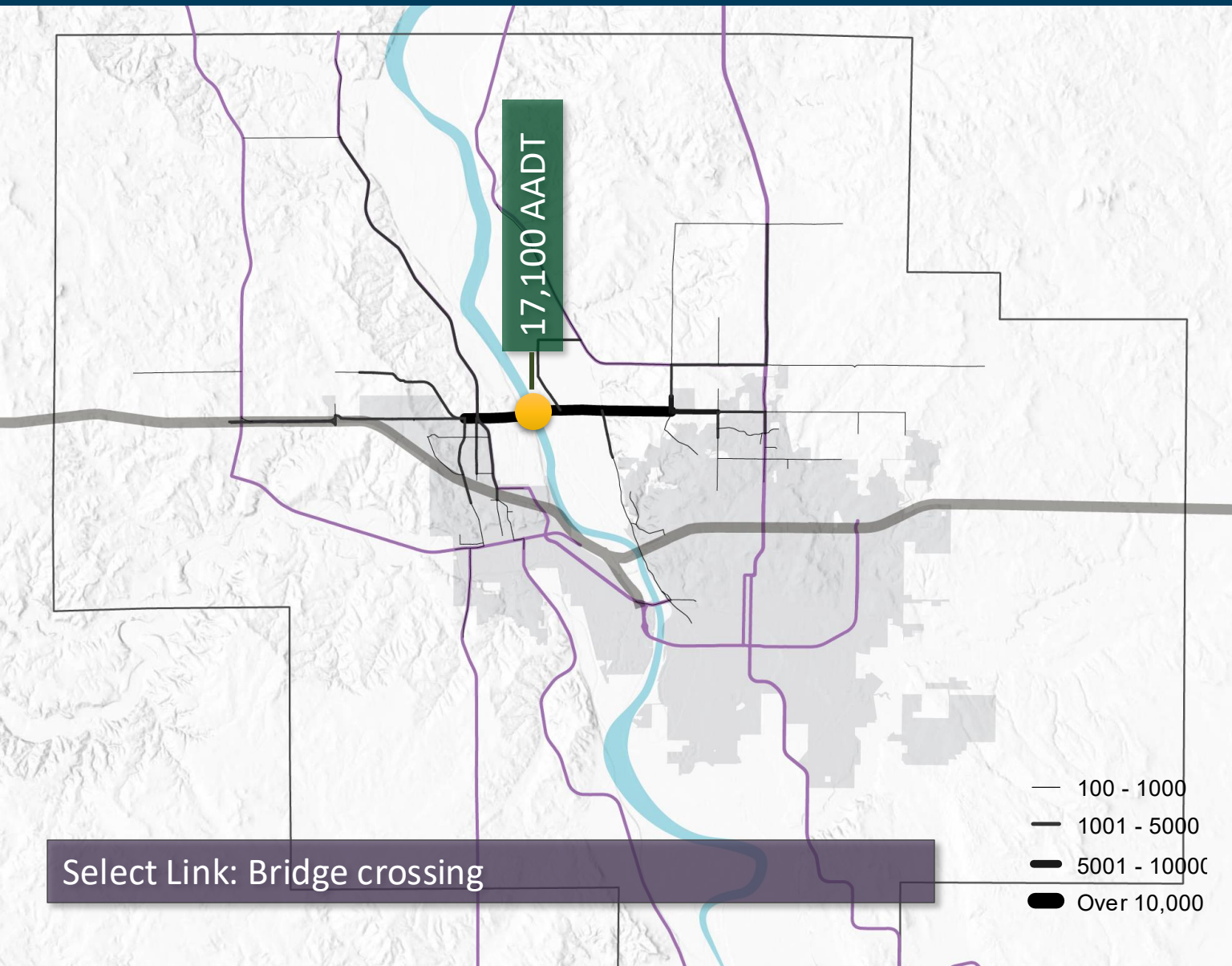
How the network serves overall regional needs can vary, but key links demonstrate importance

Forecast traffic levels, based on growth, provide guidance on long-term capacity needs

These would not all be planned for or programmed in the near term



FARMP Opportunities



66th Street East to 71st Avenue North

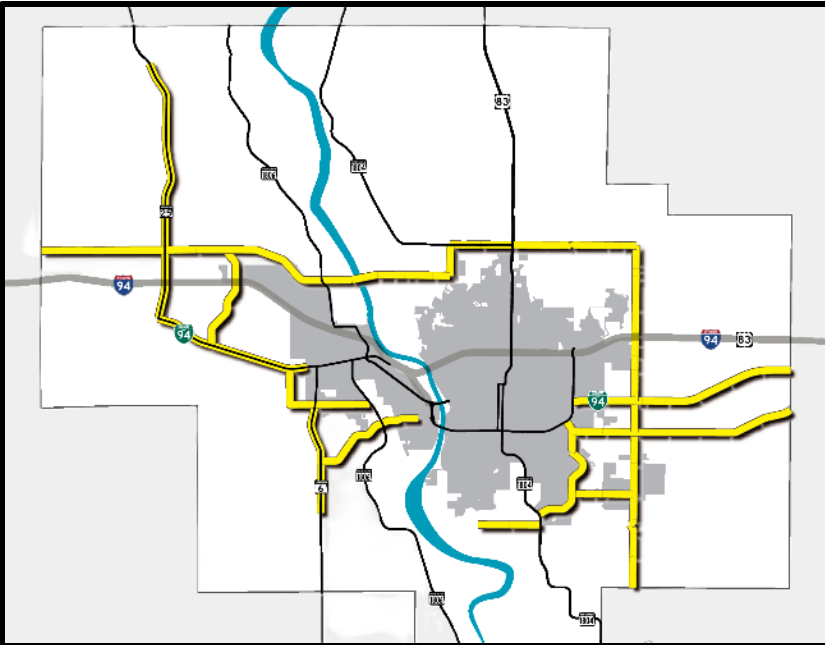
Previously identified as part of North-South Beltway alignment

Connects north Bismarck growth areas and provides regional ties with potential north river crossing and access to I-94

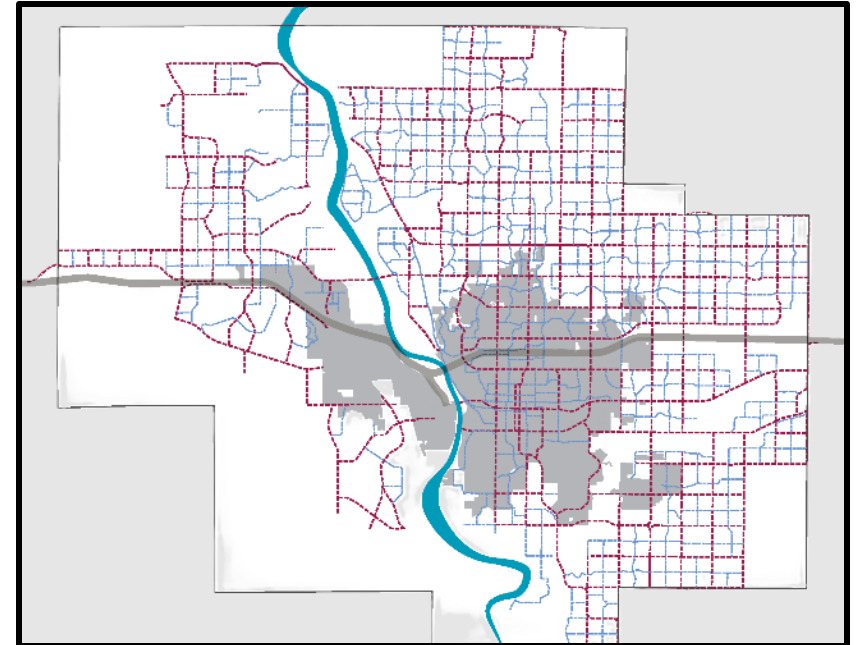
The Draft FARMP: What to Capture

When FARMP recommendations take priority over local development review

MRC Network/MPO Review



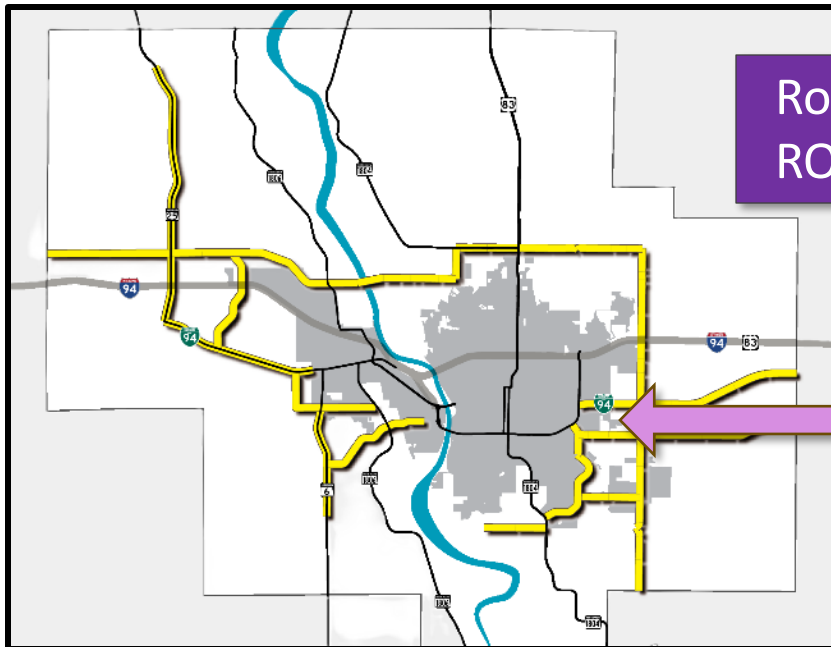
Typical FARMP Network



The Draft FARMP: What to Capture

When FARMP recommendations take priority over local development review

MRC Network/MPO Review

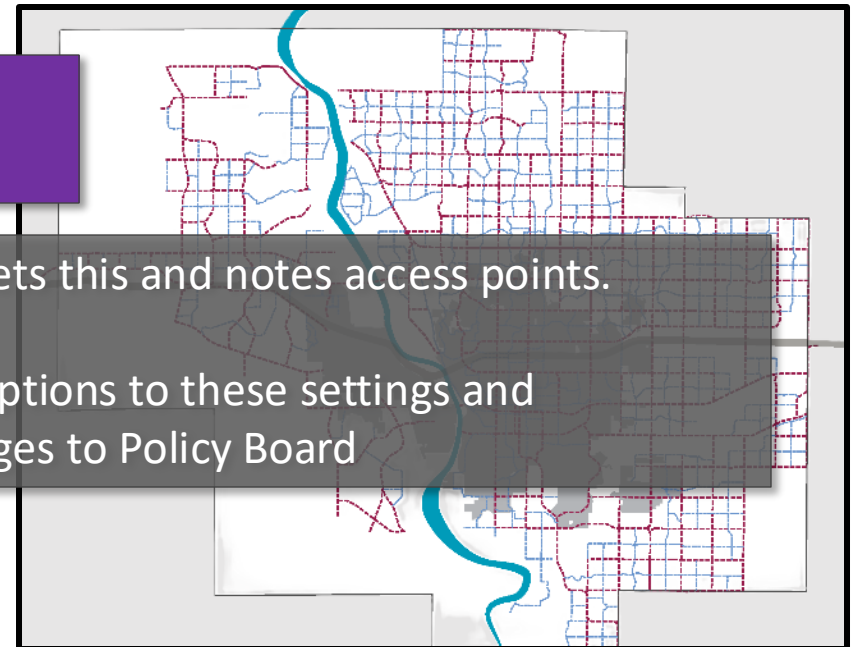


Roadway typical section and ROW dedication

For MRC, FARMP sets this and notes access points.

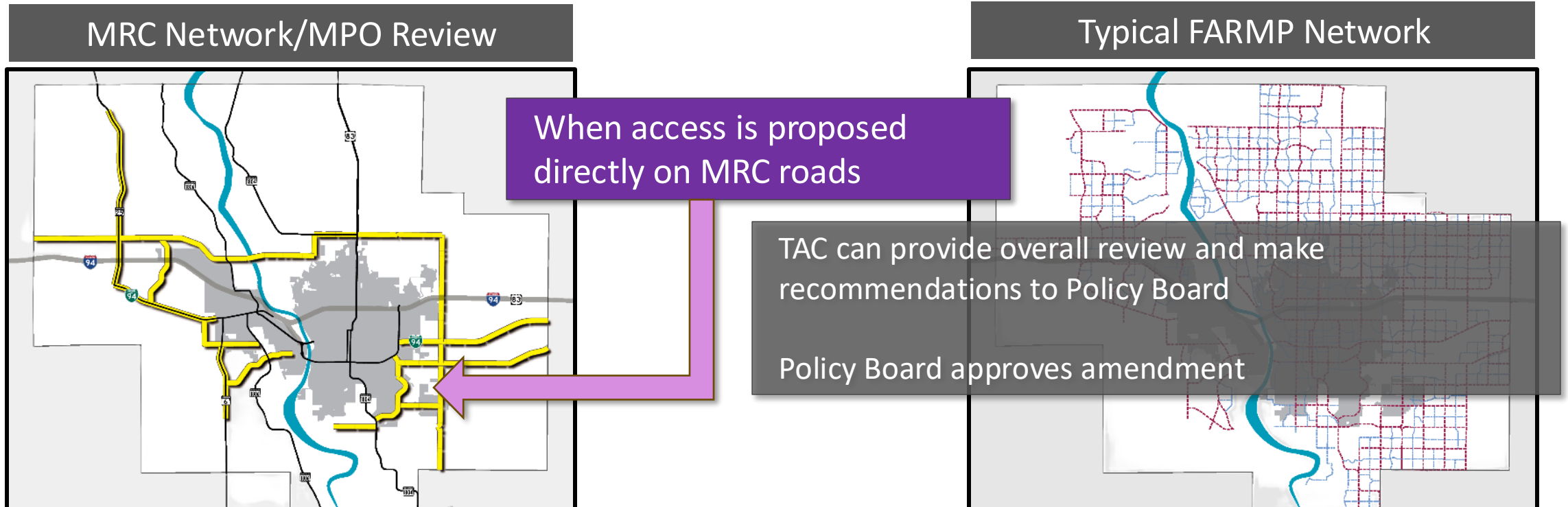
TAC considers exceptions to these settings and recommends changes to Policy Board

Typical FARMP Network



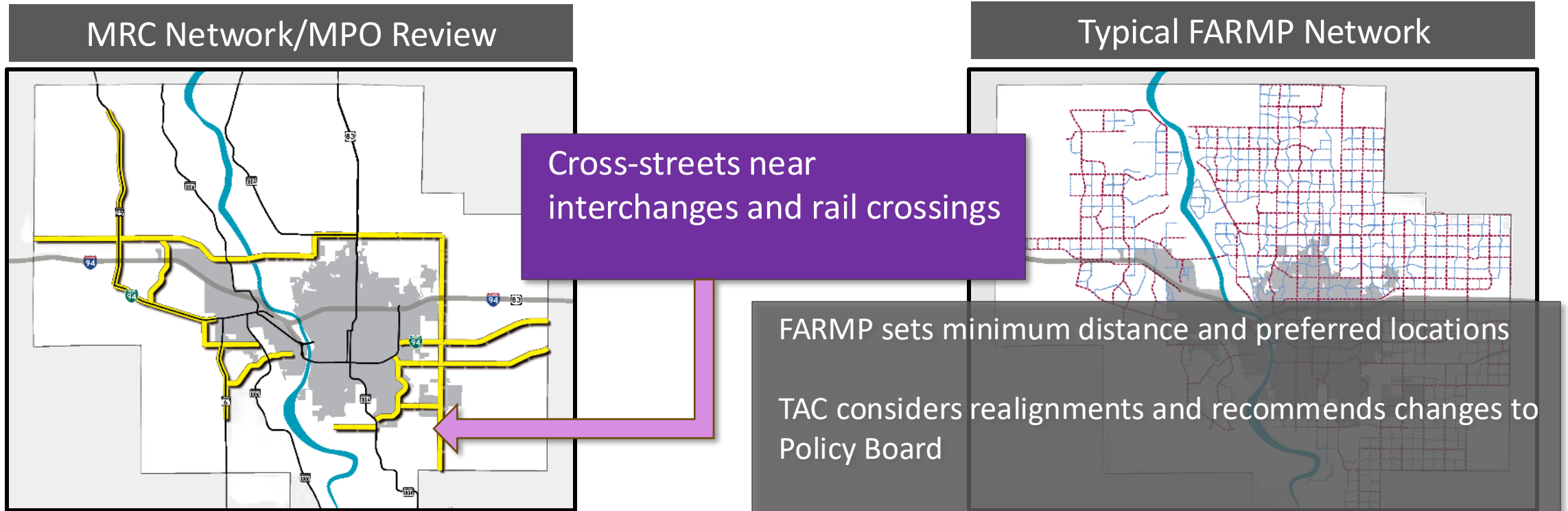
The Draft FARMP: What to Capture

When FARMP recommendations take priority over local development review



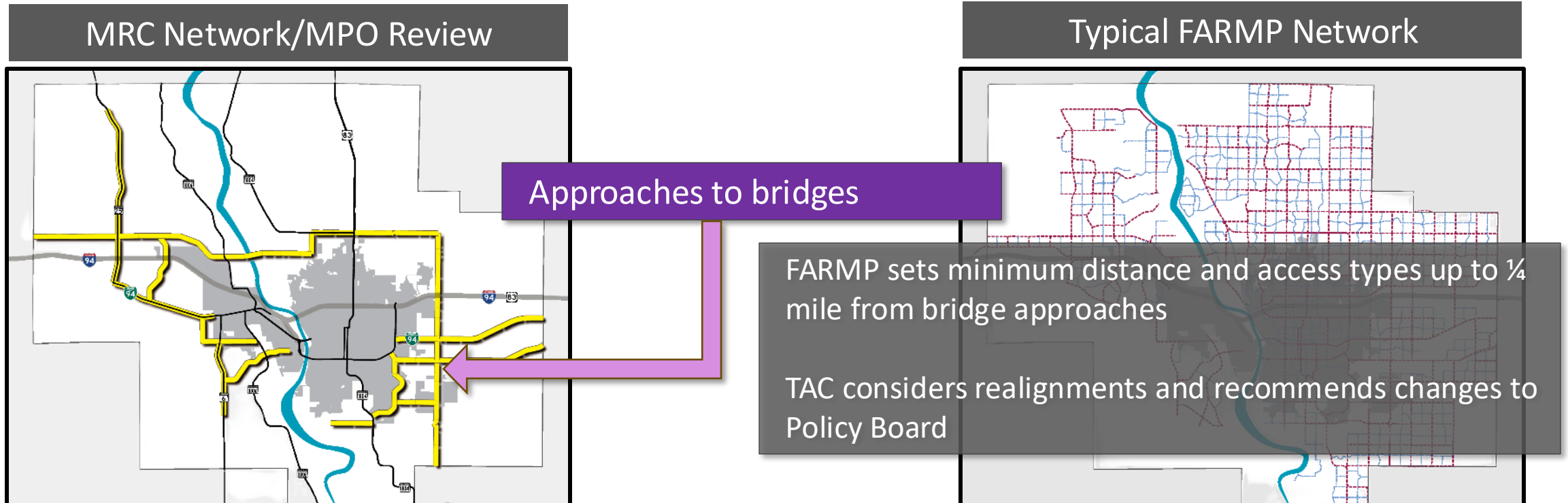
The Draft FARMP: What to Capture

When FARMP recommendations take priority over local development review



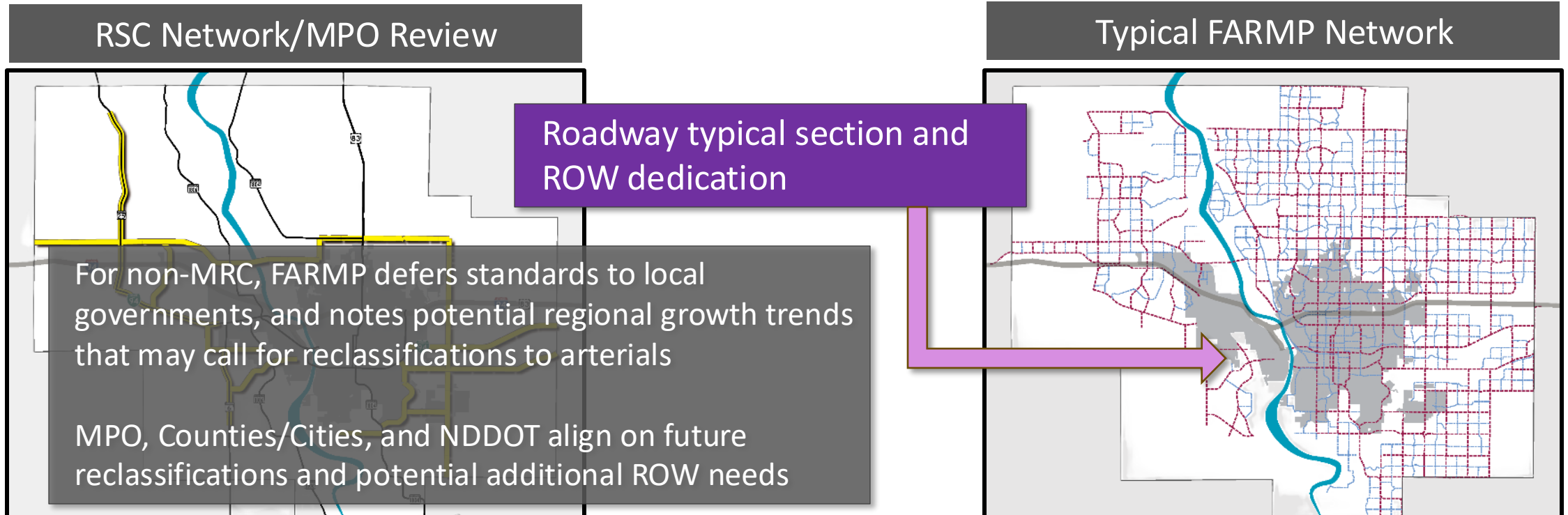
The Draft FARMP: What to Capture

When FARMP recommendations take priority over local development review



The Draft FARMP: What to Capture

When FARMP recommendations take priority over local development review



The Draft FARMP: Implementation Process

For all roads in the FARMP Network

R.O.W. DEFINITIONS

RIGHT-OF-WAY: define overall expected needs for section-line roads
Setting a standard may not be as important on internal roads (previously known as collectors), especially with prevailing development patterns

ACCESS ALLOWANCE

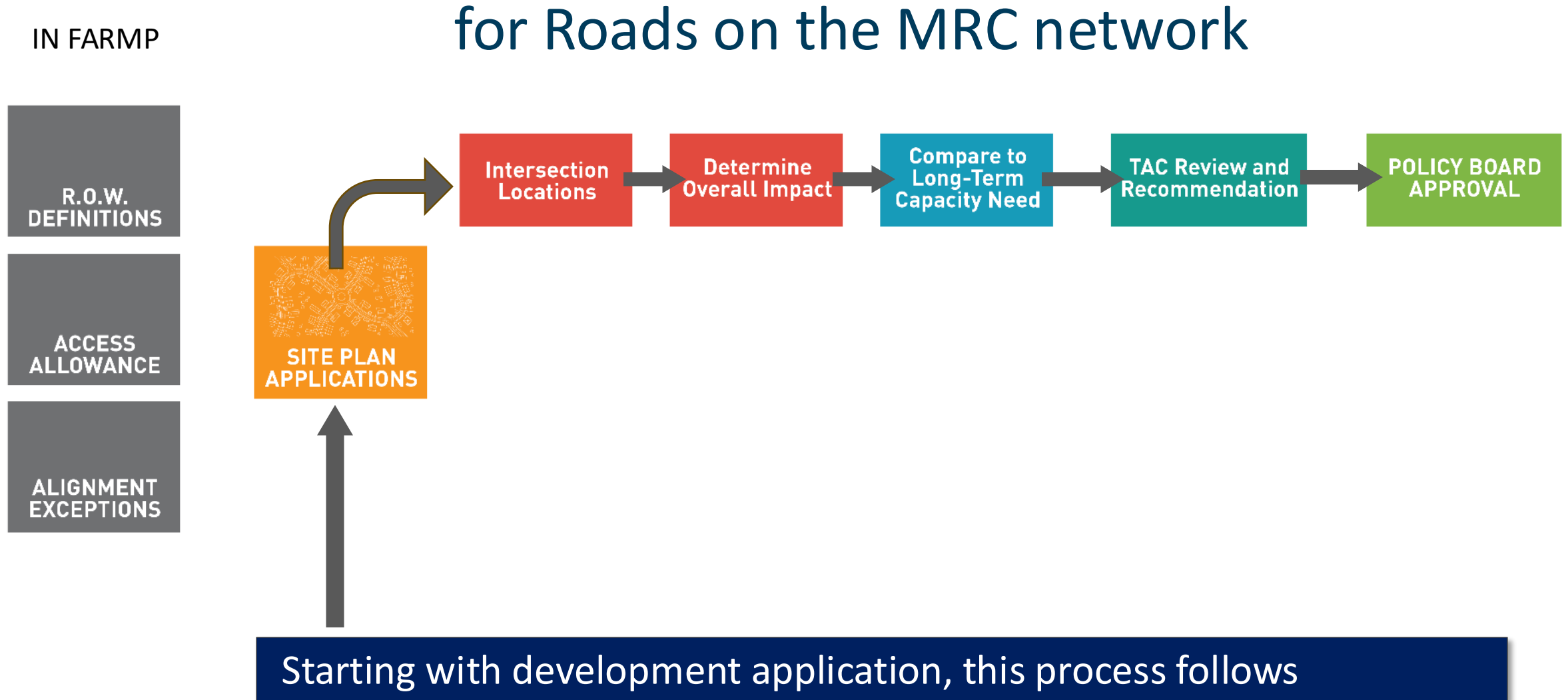
ACCESS: determine generally acceptable areas from major intersections
Will be applied primarily on MRC, but guidance can be used for all roads

ALIGNMENT EXCEPTIONS

ALIGNMENT: determine acceptable areas for alignment change
Previously-identified 'safe areas' outside of site/environmental constraints

FARMP will have defined these parameters

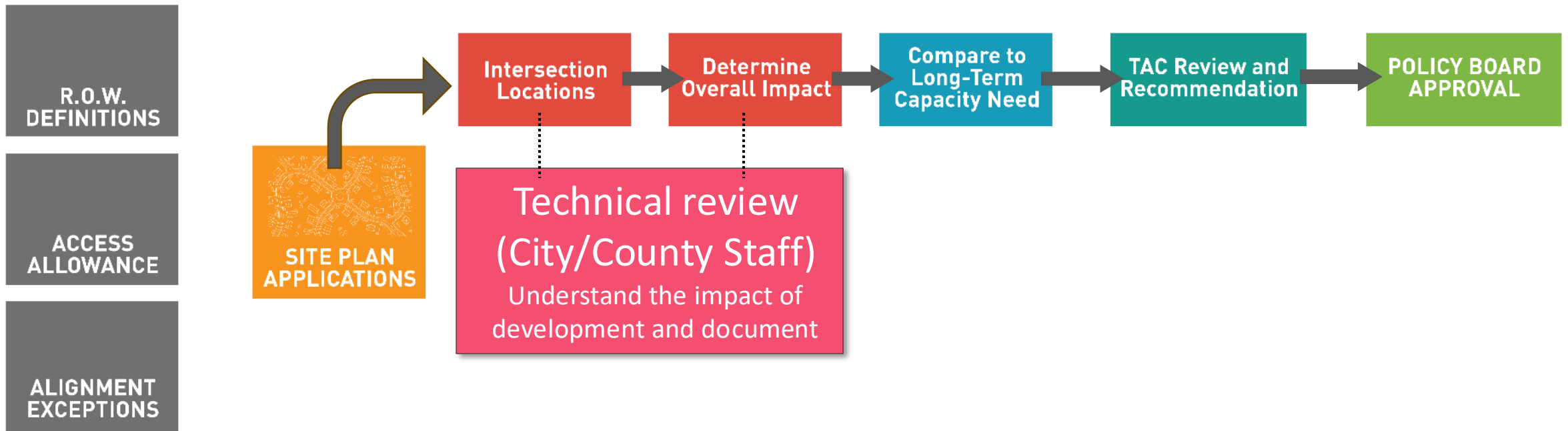
The Draft FARMP: Implementation Process



The Draft FARMP: Implementation Process

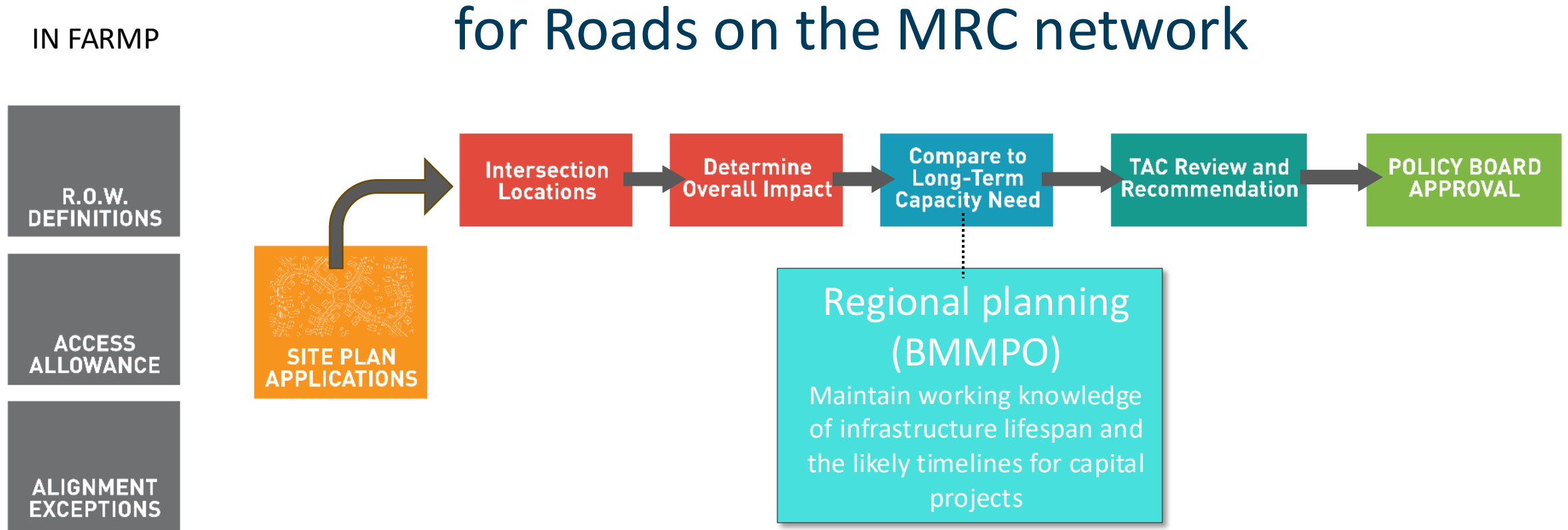
IN FARMP

for Roads on the MRC network



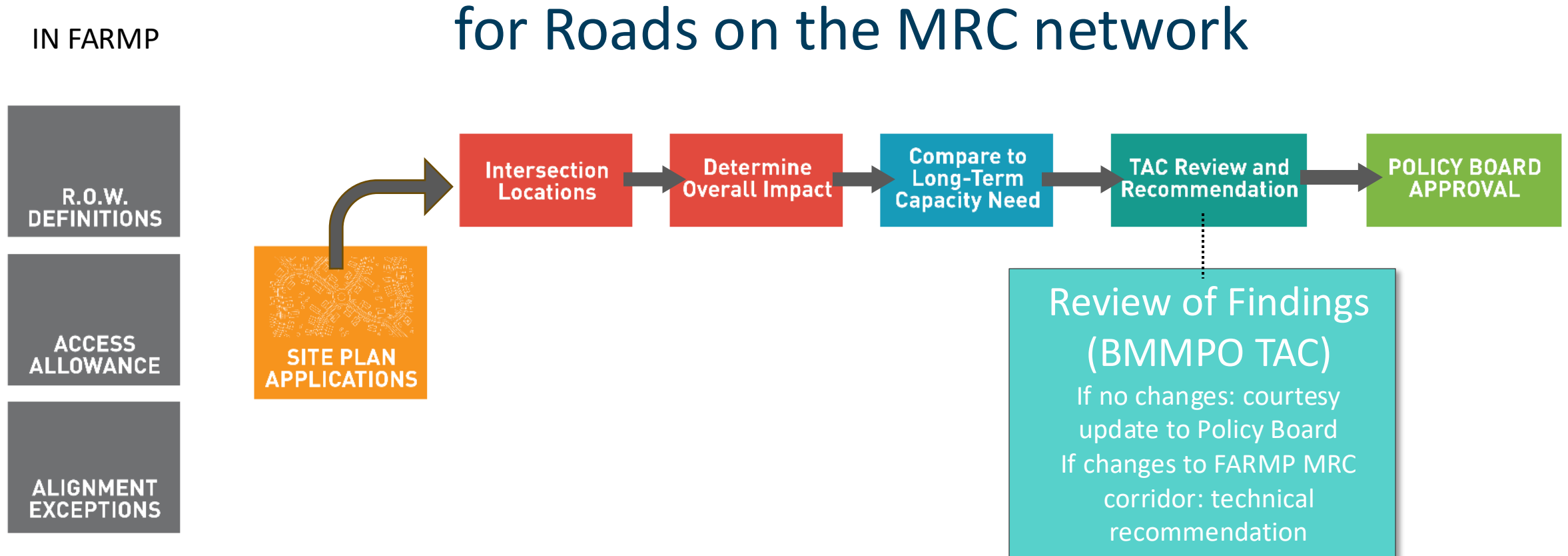
Starting with development application, this process follows

The Draft FARMP: Implementation Process



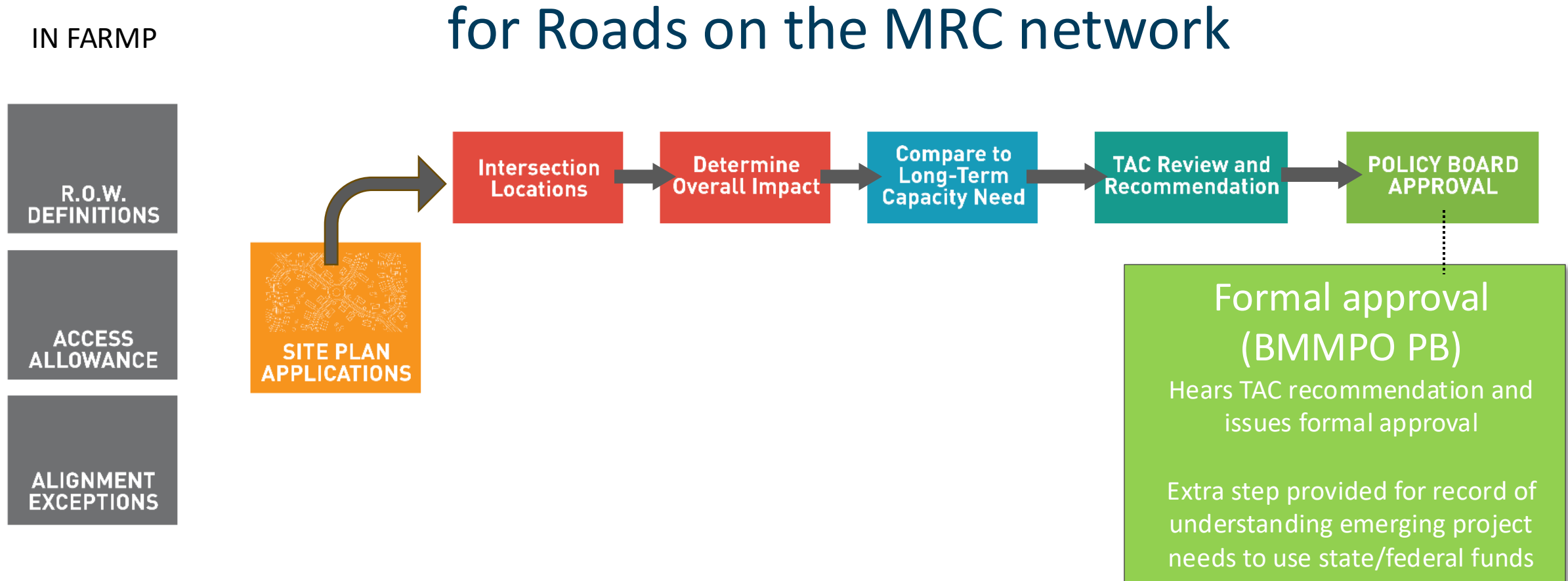
Starting with development application, this process follows

The Draft FARMP: Implementation Process



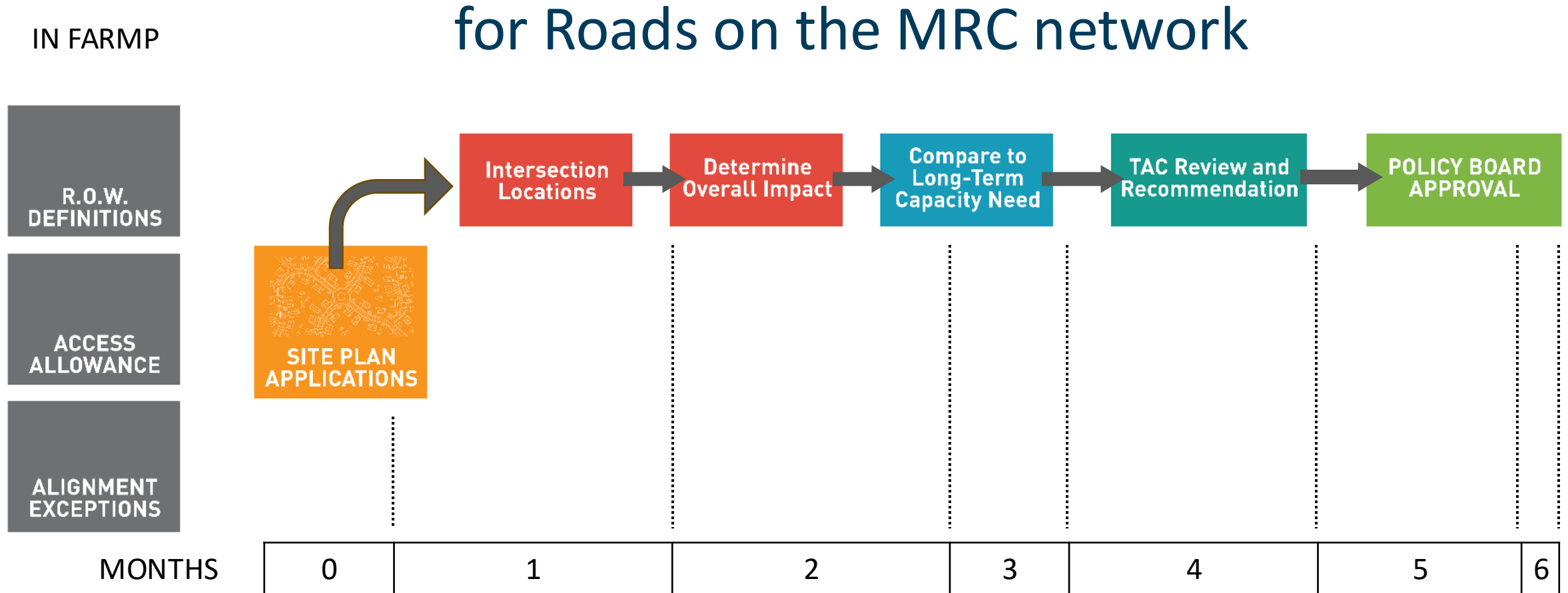
Starting with development application, this process follows

The Draft FARMP: Implementation Process



Starting with development application, this process follows

The Draft FARMP: Implementation Process

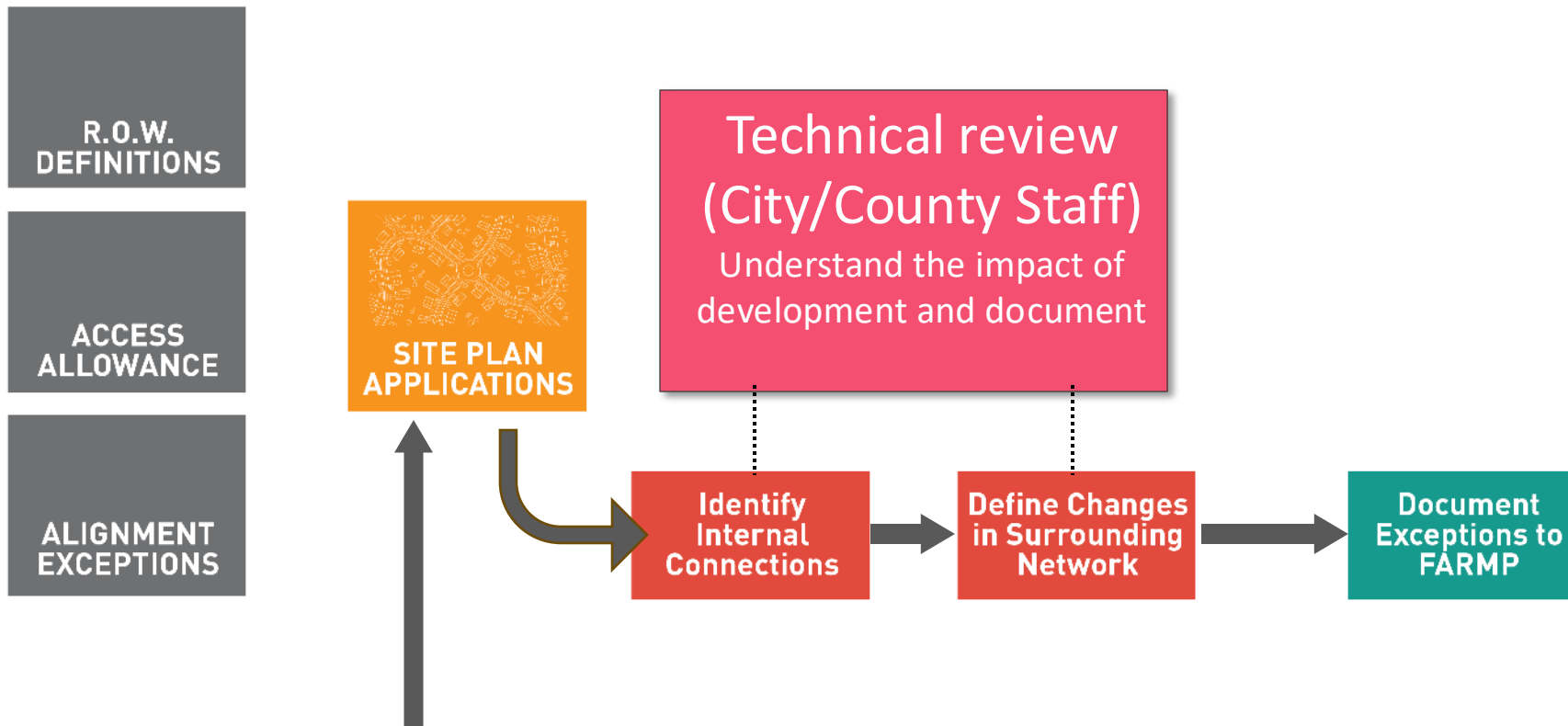


What does this look like timing-wise?

The Draft FARMP: Implementation Process

for Roads NOT on the MRC network

IN FARMP

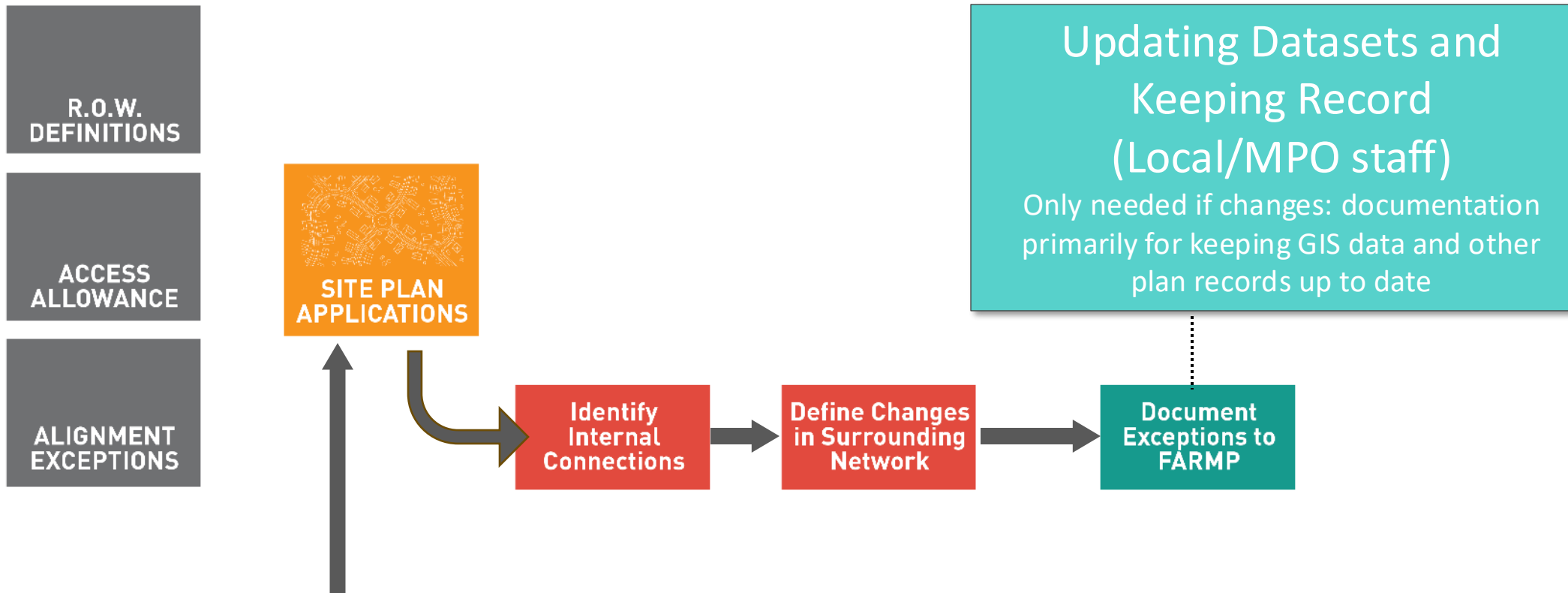


Starting with development application, this process follows

The Draft FARMP: Implementation Process

for Roads NOT on the MRC network

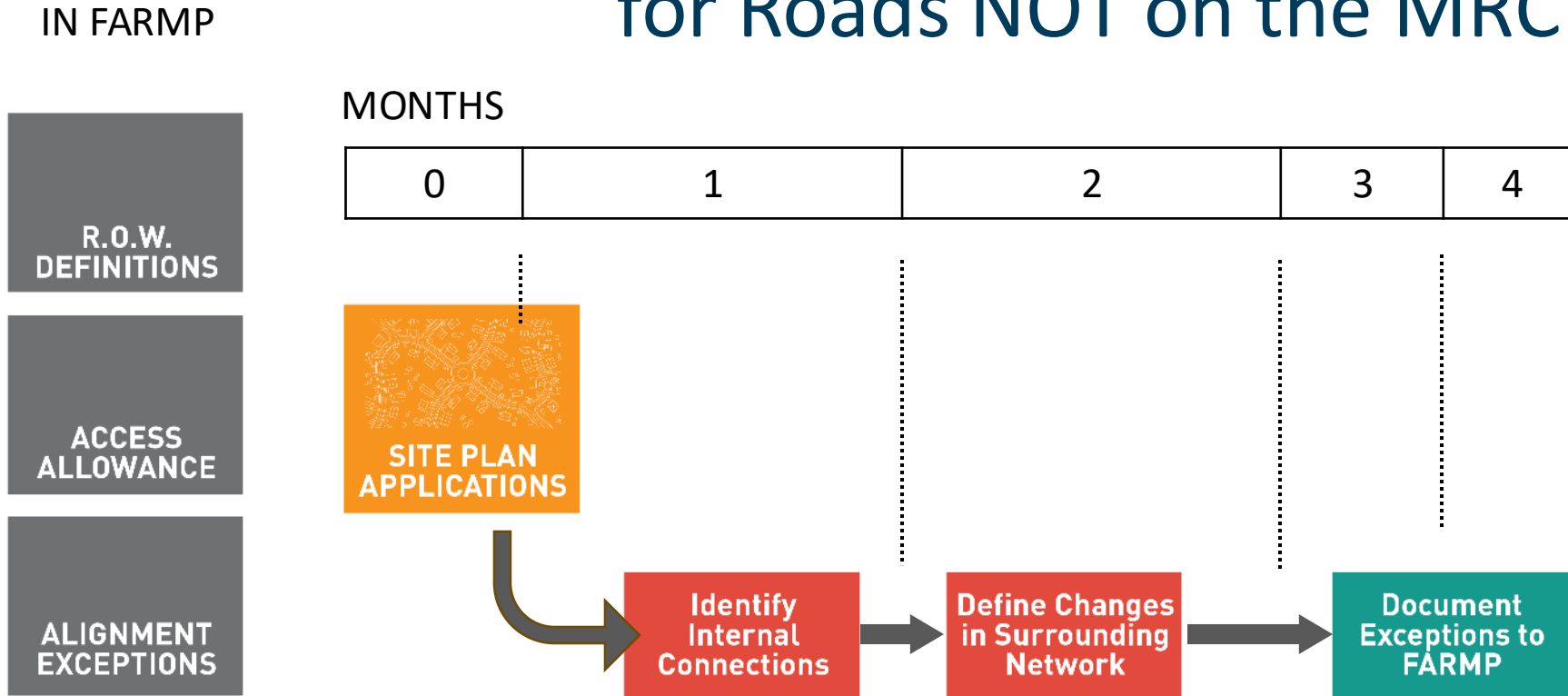
IN FARMP



Starting with development application, this process follows

The Draft FARMP: Implementation Process

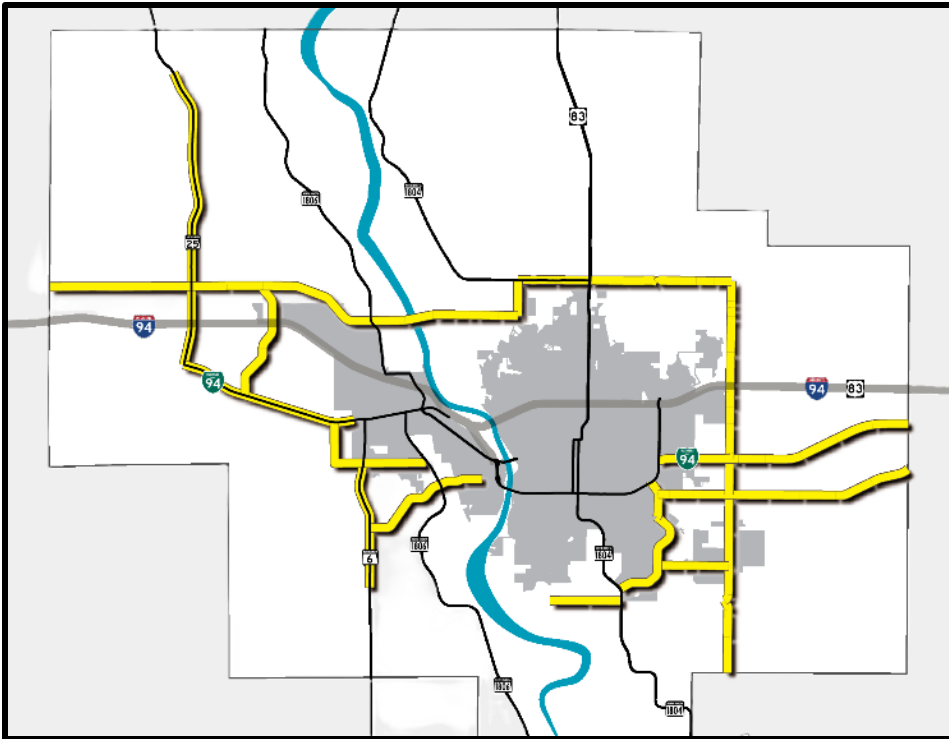
for Roads NOT on the MRC network



What does this look like timing-wise?

The Draft FARMP: What to Capture

Define the processes: the MRC network



Define a Major Corridor Type

- Current proposal is for three types: cross-regional connections, major crossing links, and destinations
- Plan will outline typical section and access standards

Outline Significant Infrastructure Needs

- Select future design conditions from regional traffic assignment
- Identify potential for non-forecast new development
- Identify major utility upgrades and needs

Establish Controls for Development Decisions

- Plan sets general spacing guidance for streets and driveways
- Outlines flexibility for changing these along these corridors

June Updates

Transportation Hotspots

- More detailed concepts to discuss, along with potential implications

Deliverables / Recommendations

- A more formal presentation of process and what the TAC and Policy Board would be expected to do in taking action/adoption

Fringe Area Roads Master Plan Update

TAC and Policy Board Updates

May 18-19, 2026