



Board of Adjustment AGENDA

Council Chambers, Fort Dodge Municipal Building
819 1st Avenue South, Fort Dodge, Iowa
July 7, 2026, 4:30 PM

- I. Call to Order
- II. Roll Call
- III. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes
 - a. June 2, 2026 Minutes
- IV. New Business
 - a. **Case #1193** – 2205 20th Ave N: Request for special exception to allow for installation of 6'-tall fencing within a secondary front yard in the Residential Single-Family (6RS) district (Section 17.08.01.I)
- V. Comments and questions from the public.
- VI. Adjournment

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
FORT DODGE BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
TUESDAY, JUNE 2, 2026**

Call to Order

Anderson called the meeting to order at 4:30pm.

Roll Call

Present: Troy Anderson, Nick Cochrane, Megan Moore, Michelle Tjaden

Absent: JP Mansfield

Staff Present: Thomas Leichliter

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

May 5, 2026 Minutes

Moore motioned to approve the May 5, 2026 minutes. Cochrane seconded. All ayes, motion carried.

New Business

Case #1192 – 819 N 25th St: Request for Special Exception to allow for a public owned and operated building/facility with associated signage in the Residential Single-Family (6RS) district including ongoing construction and maintenance of the usual and customary buildings and facilities associated with said function in accordance with applicable zoning regulations (Sec 17.07.04.D)

Thomas briefed the Board on the contents of the staff report attached to the meeting agenda. ISG requested a special exception on behalf of the Fort Dodge Community School District to allow for a public owned and operated building/facility with associated signage in the Residential Single-Family (6RS) district including ongoing construction and maintenance of the usual and customary buildings and facilities associated with said function in accordance with applicable zoning regulations.

The request specifically concerns allowing for construction of a proposed 19,850 square foot multi-purpose building with 348 square feet of associated signage at the Fort Dodge Senior High property, 819 N 25th St. The proposed building would be located east of the high school building and south of the parking lot, approximately approximately 30 feet west of MLK Dr and 630 feet south of 10th Ave N. The existing weight room building, two detached garages, and a shed would be removed ahead of time. The proposed building would contain a new weight room, physical education spaces, and shop space for the theater program to construct/store sets. The building would not be utilized for special events or activities drawing excess traffic to the site. Regarding signage, three wall-mounted signs are proposed on the north wall of the new building, totaling 348 square feet. Two of the three signs are proposed to be internally

illuminated. While the project remains subject to a formal site plan review, the preliminary plan appears to meet many applicable zoning requirements for such a proposal. This request was submitted for this project because public owned and operated buildings/facilities are permitted in the Residential zoning districts upon the granting of a Special Exception by the Board of Adjustment, with subsequent expansions and related projects, including new signage, requiring approval of a new Special Exception request. Upon review of the request, Staff found that approval of the multi-purpose building project with associated signage would not appear to adversely affect the public interest. Further, no public comment was received by Staff prior to the Board meeting.

Also up for consideration is a proposal to permit ongoing construction and maintenance of the usual and customary buildings and facilities within the boundaries of the Fort Dodge Senior High campus. As noted previously, public owned and operated buildings/facilities are permitted in the Residential districts upon the granting of a Special Exception, with any subsequent expansions/alterations requiring issuance of a new Special Exception. Records indicate the School District has come before the Board now on five occasions throughout the past ten years for projects at the High School ranging in scale from new signage to structural additions. Upon review of those cases and meeting minutes, Staff found no negative public comment had been received on any occasion. With that said, the Board may certainly choose to continue reviewing Special Exception requests with each project at Fort Dodge Senior High, maintaining the status quo. The Board may also consider granting the above-described permission to pursue ongoing construction and maintenance of campus facilities. Such a proposal is not unprecedented as this permission has been granted to Iowa Central Community College since 1996, covering its contiguous campus with a handful of amendments as the College's campus boundaries changed over time. While Fort Dodge Senior High's campus is lesser in overall size than the College's, it remains unique relative to the majority of school properties in the City at over one million square feet and serving the largest student population in the City behind Iowa Central.

Subject to public comment, staff recommended approval of the special exception request to allow for a public owned and operated building/facility within the Residential Single-Family (6RS) district to include ongoing construction and maintenance of the usual and customary buildings and facilities associated with said function by means of construction of the proposed multi-purpose building with associated 348 square feet of wall-mounted signage at Fort Dodge Senior High, subject to formal site plan review.

The Board had a brief discussion regarding whether to address both parts of the request in one motion or separately. It was decided to vote on them separately.

No public comments were presented and no further discussion was had.

Cochrane motioned to approve the special exception request allowing for a public owned and operated building/facility in the 6RS district by means of construction of the proposed multi-

purpose building and associated 348 square feet of signage at Fort Dodge Senior High School. Tjaden seconded. All ayes, motion carried.

Moore motioned to approve the request to further allow for ongoing construction and maintenance of the usual and customary buildings/facilities within the boundaries of the Fort Dodge Senior High School campus. Tjaden seconded. All ayes, motion carried.

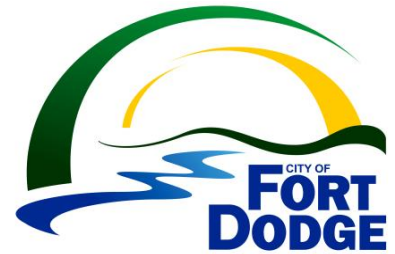
Comments and questions from the public.

None presented.

Adjournment

Cochrane motioned to adjourn. Tjaden seconded. All ayes, meeting adjourned at 4:44pm.

June 30, 2026



From: Thomas Leichliter
To: Board of Adjustment
Subject: Case #1193 – 2205 20th Ave N:
Request for special exception to
allow for installation of 6'-tall
fencing within a secondary front
yard in the Residential Single-
Family (GRS) district (Section
17.08.01.I)

ACTION: For vote on July 7, 2026

REQUEST:

Request for special exception to allow for installation of 6'-tall fencing within a secondary front yard in the Residential Single-Family (GRS) district (Section 17.08.01.I).

APPLICANT:

Rod Guerin, property owner

LOCATION:

2205 20th Ave N

EXISTING ZONING:

Residential Single-Family (GRS)

LAND USE PLAN:

Single-Family Detached

Brief History

Rod Guerin requests a special exception to allow for installation of six-foot-tall white vinyl privacy fencing within the secondary front yard at 2205 20th Ave N, extending west of the house, then southward along the west property line to the southwest corner of the lot, then eastward along the south property line, as shown on the attached map, so as to enclose the secondary front yard. Section 17.08.01.I.2.i.c reads:

"Secondary Front Yard – maximum height is seven (7) feet, so long as situated in the rear yard, and no building is situated on the adjacent lot. Where there is a building on the

adjacent lot, the seven (7) foot fence shall not extend closer to the street than the principal building.”

Given that the lot adjacent to the south contains a house, the above referenced section requires fencing within the secondary front yard on the subject property be no higher than four feet from grade.

The applicant expressed to Staff that they wish to install the proposed white vinyl privacy fencing in order to better separate their yard from the new public trail adjacent to the property in the N 22nd St right-of-way. Further, as part of the trail project, the City previously agreed to pay for a portion of fencing for the property. Should this request be granted by the Board, the applicant would then coordinate fencing installation with their contractor and City Engineering. Attached to this report is a statement provided by the applicant further discussing the circumstances surrounding this request.

Analysis of Issue

Per Section 17.06.02.B, the Board of Adjustment must consider the request and make a finding that granting of the special exception will not adversely affect the public interest. In reviewing this request, the Board may consider the appropriateness of the request per the Ordinance, the existing character of the neighborhood, visibility concerns, and public comment received from the public hearing. Based on these considerations, the following is provided for the Board’s review:

Ordinance Requirements & Visibility:

Section 17.08.01.1.2.i.c states the following regarding permitted fencing height within secondary front yards in the Residential districts:

“Secondary Front Yard – maximum height is seven (7) feet, so long as situated in the rear yard, and no building is situated on the adjacent lot. Where there is a building on the adjacent lot, the seven (7) foot fence shall not extend closer to the street than the principal building.”

Given that the lot adjacent to the south contains a house, the above-mentioned section requires fencing within the secondary front yard on the subject property be no higher than four feet from grade, as permitted by Section 17.08.01.1.2.i.b regarding permitted fencing height within front yards in the Residential districts.

The proposed 6' tall fencing is situated parallel to N 22nd St, terminating at the northwest corner of the house and approximately 65 feet from the intersection of said N 22nd St and 20th Ave N, and would align with an existing chain link fence situated on the neighboring property to the south. Upon review of the request, the City Engineer voiced no concerns regarding the placement of the proposed fence. Given the presence of utility poles and aerial lines in the vicinity of the proposed fence, MidAmerican Energy was also given the opportunity to review this request. Upon review, MidAmerican noted an existing easement along the west side of the

subject property. They further noted no concerns with the fencing proposal so long as a 10-foot-wide gate is installed to facilitate access to their equipment. The property owner previously noted their intent to install such a gate in conversations with staff.

Existing Neighborhood Character:

Installation of 6' tall fencing along secondary street frontages is allowed in residential areas only where fencing is installed back behind the rear plane of the dwelling and only where there are no dwellings immediately adjacent to the rear yard. This 'adjacent dwelling' language is taken into account to help address any concerns of adjacent neighbors regarding safety and aesthetics. Regarding safety: engineering staff indicated no concerns regarding positioning of the fence or visibility as the fence is an adequate distance away from the intersection and N 22nd St. Further regarding safety, MidAmerican Energy noted no concerns so long a 10-foot gate is installed as proposed. Regarding aesthetics: the proposed fence is to be constructed of white vinyl and will align with an existing chain link fence on the neighboring property to the south. Further, no comments or concerns have been received from the neighborhood as of the writing of this report.

Easements:

As discussed previously, MidAmerican Energy noted the presence of an easement along the west side of the subject property to facilitate access to its utility poles and aerial lines in this area. They further noted no concerns with this fencing proposal so long as a 10-foot gate is installed as proposed.

Public Comment Received:

No public comment has been received as of the writing of this report.

Staff Conclusions / Recommendations

Subject to public comment, staff recommends approval of the special exception request to allow for a six (6) foot tall fence within the secondary front yard at 2205 20th Ave N subject to the condition that a 10-foot-wide gate be installed to facilitate access to utilities.

Alternatives

After review and discussion of the special exception request, the Board may take any of the following actions:

1. Approve the special exception request as presented.
2. Approve the special exception request with conditions established by the Board of Adjustment.
3. Deny the request.
4. Table the request pending additional information or comment from the public.

Approved By:

Thomas Lechliter, Planner II

Department:

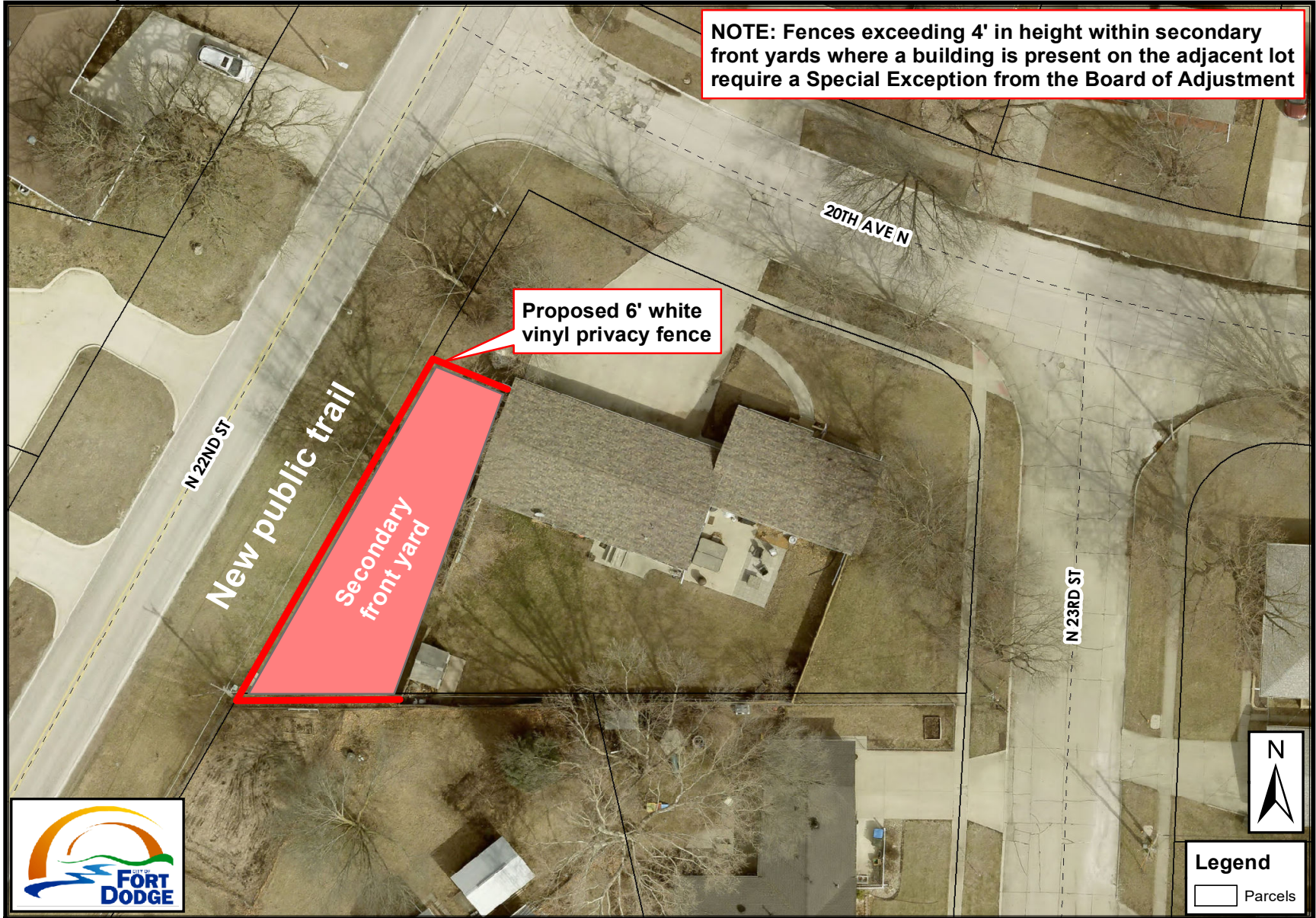
Development Services

Status:

Approved - 30 Jun 2026

Fence Map - 2205 20th Ave N

NOTE: Fences exceeding 4' in height within secondary front yards where a building is present on the adjacent lot require a Special Exception from the Board of Adjustment



0 12.5 25 50 75 100 Feet

All locations are approximate | Map created 04/29/2026

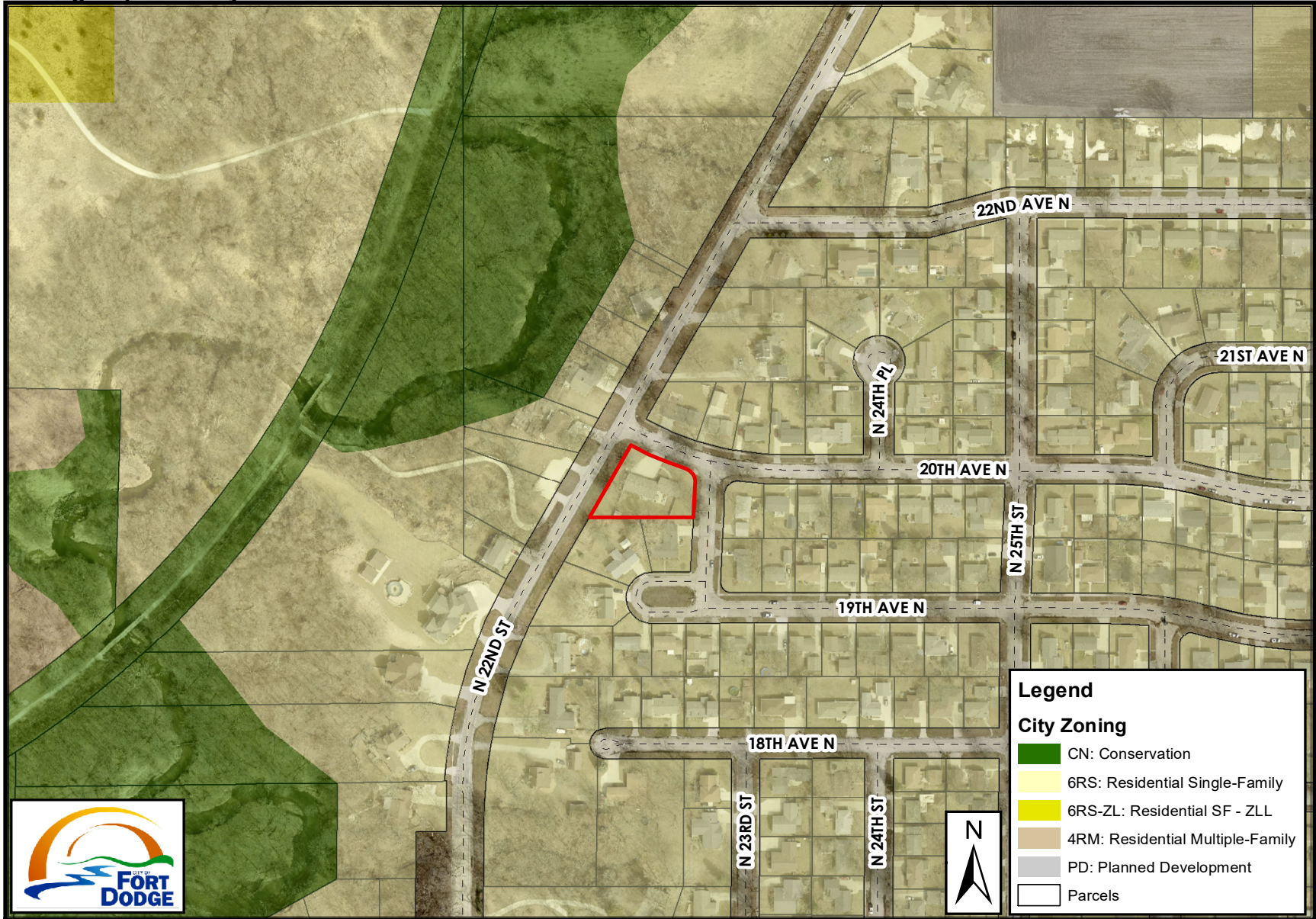


Image 1: Secondary front yard at 2205 20th Ave N viewed from N 22nd St, looking southeast. Chain link fence to align with proposed fence placement seen on neighboring property in the background. New public trail seen in foreground.



Image 2: Secondary front yard at 2205 20th Ave N viewed from intersection of 20th Ave N and N 22nd St, looking south. New public trail seen to the right.

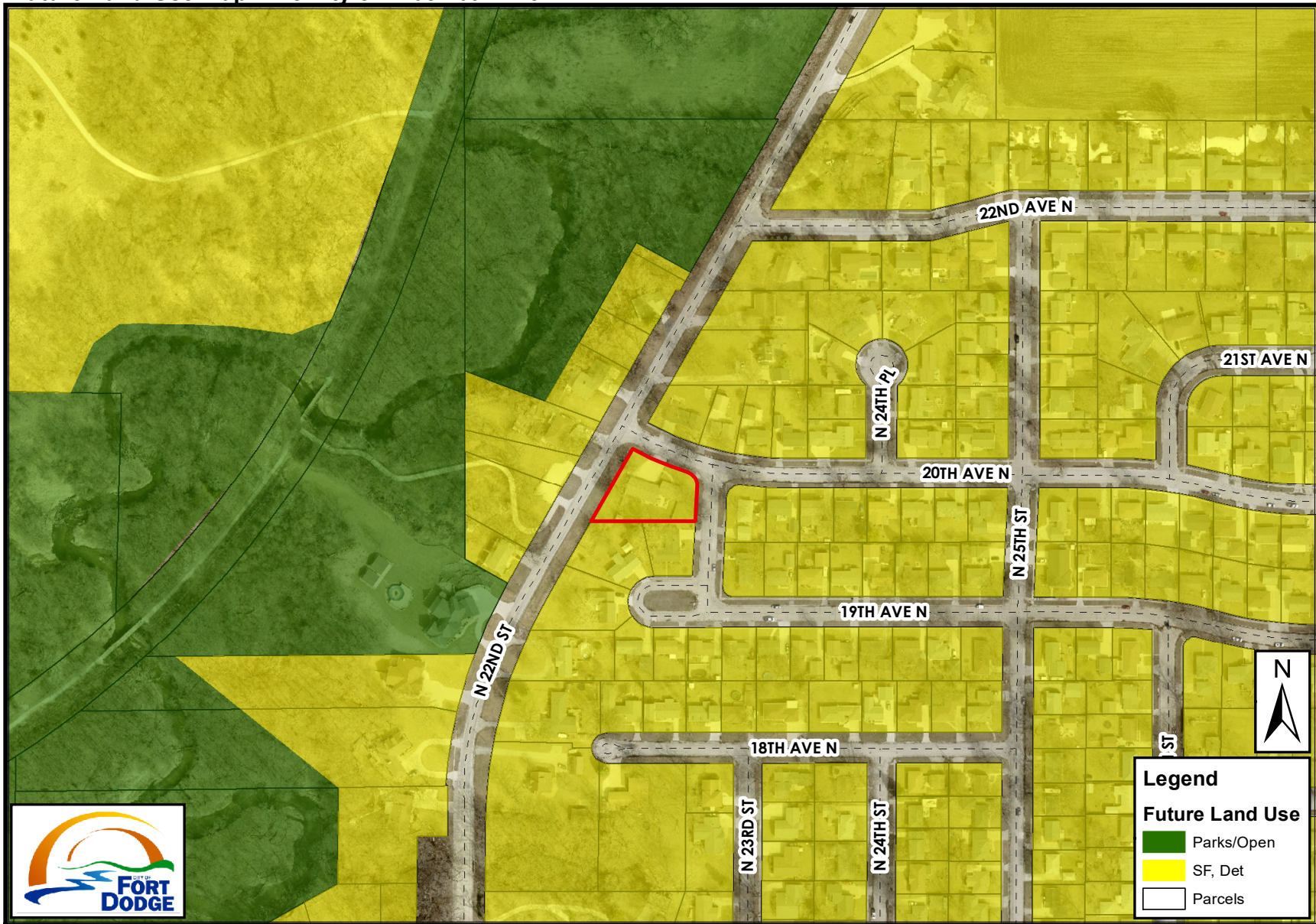
Zoning Map - Vicinity of 2205 20th Ave N



0 125 250 500 750 1,000 Feet

All locations are approximate | Map created 06/24/2026

Future Land Use Map - Vicinity of 2205 20th Ave N



0 125 250 500 750 1,000 Feet

All locations are approximate | Map created 06/24/2026



Statement provided by applicant:

With our property located adjacent to a public natural trail, we have found it increasingly necessary to install a fence that ensures privacy, security, and clearly defined boundaries.

Trail-adjacent landowners frequently experience trespassing, littering, and unwanted access from recreational trail users. These intrusions not only diminish our enjoyment and sense of safety on our property but also create liability risks. People and pets sometimes wander — or even drive — onto private land, whether intentionally or accidentally, particularly when there are no designated trail exits nearby.

In our case, we anticipate increased foot and vehicle traffic due to the trail's close proximity to the road. Without a physical barrier, individuals seeking a shortcut or alternate exit may attempt to cross through our yard. This is **both intrusive and unsafe**: a trespasser could easily injure themselves on private property or be harmed by a pet protecting the premises.

For these reasons, we are seeking the City of Fort Dodge to construct a **durable fence and visible boundary markers** to:

- Protect personal privacy and property rights,
- Enhance safety for both residents and trail users,
- Prevent unauthorized vehicle access, and
- Maintain the integrity and enjoyment of our property.

We believe that establishing this barrier serves the mutual interests of the landowner, trail users, and the broader community by promoting safety and respect for private boundaries. We thank you in advance for this consideration.