

# Fessenden Co-operative Association

Stations at: Fessenden, Carrington, Esmond,  
Hamberg, Heimdal, Manfred, and New Rockford

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## Transportation Investments: Promoting Economic Growth Along the US 52 and 281 Corridors

My name is Mark Hovland and I am the general manager of Fessenden Co-op Association headquartered at Fessenden which is 38 miles northwest of Carrington on Hwy 52. Fessenden Co-op is a grain and agronomy co-op which was established in 1943 with 46 members, a manager, one part time employee, and handled 220,000 bushels of grain in the first year of operation. We currently have 7 members who serve on the board of directors and employ 50 full time people and 10 to 15 part time people depending on the season. Our trade territory includes a radius of about 65 miles of Fessenden. Other locations besides Fessenden include 2 facilities in Carrington, New Rockford, Hamberg, Heimdal, and Esmond. We handle grain at all of these locations and agronomy products at most of them. We currently handle approximately 20 million bushels of grain per year. 40% of the handle is spring and winter wheat, 28% is soybeans, 10% is corn and the balance is sunflowers, pinto beans, black beans, flax, oats, and whatever the grower produces.

Highways 52 and 281 are vital to our member owners for allowing them to bring their products to market. We have more than 800 active patrons in our Co-op and the majority of them rely on these 2 highways to some degree. We have approximately 350 patrons who deliver to our Carrington locations and require these highways to get here. The Co-op owns 3 semis that transport grain full time from the substations and also direct from the farms to either the Fessenden or Carrington terminals. We also have several independent truckers that haul for us as needed. Most of the wheat and soybeans are trucked into Fessenden or Carrington and loaded on 100 car shuttle trains to various destinations throughout the country. We truck corn across to the western part of the state to the ethanol plant at Falkirk or occasionally to the ethanol plant in Richardton. Most of the malt barley goes by truck to the eastern part of the state. Much of the sunflower production that we handle is trucked into one of our Carrington plants which is then processed and marketed as bird food. We load about 700 trucks per year out of that plant and the balance moves by rail. At Fessenden we have an edible bean plant where we process primarily pinto beans but also a few black beans. Although the majority of these beans are shipped in bulk hopper cars or boxcars we do still ship 100 to 150 trucks per year which all leave town on highway 52. Our agronomy business consists of about 22% of our annual sales. Most of the fertilizer and chemicals that we handle come in by truck and leave by truck. Again, much of this product comes from the east therefore travelling Highways 52 and 281.

These 2 highways are very important to all of us. Even those who are unaware of these roads are dependent on them. If they eat bread, pasta, beans, drink beer, use soy products, ethanol based fuel, or feed the birds chances are some of that product originated in central North Dakota and travelled down the Highway 52/281 corridor to the processing destination. Mr. Chairman, I urge this committee to consider the maintenance of these highways a priority. The future of our businesses and communities are dependent on good roads leading up to them. Thank you for the opportunity to share our concerns with you today and we appreciate all that you do to keep our highways maintained throughout this great state!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Hovland". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "M".

Mark Hovland, GM