



Highway 85 and Watford City

By Brent Sanford

Former Watford City Mayor and
Former North Dakota Lt. Governor

Early Bakken highway impacts – destruction of roads and danger

County paved and unpaved roads after
early Bakken truck activity



Car ran a stop sign, hit by truck, truck
careened off the road into a school



Local problem –
12,000 trucks per
day through town



Local Problem – Fatalities on Highway 85 between Williston and Watford City

During the height of the boom, Highway 85 between Williston and Watford City was called North Dakota's "most dangerous road."

This section of road often led the State in traffic volumes and fatal accidents 2010-2015

State solutions - Undivided 4-lane for Highway 85 between Williston and Watford City



State solutions – truck bypasses

November 4, 2014

Watford City bypasses finally open

By Amy Robinson

(McKenzie County) *Farmer Staff Writer*

It was almost eerie in Watford City last Tuesday evening. Almost by magic, nearly a third of the more than 12,000 vehicles per day that had been congesting the junction of U.S. Highway 85 and N.D. 23, was gone. Gone too, were traffic jams and long lines of vehicles that Watford City residents had become accustomed to enduring.

But magic had nothing to do with the vanishing traffic. Instead, it had everything to do with the opening of the two long-awaited bypasses around Watford City. And when those two new routes officially opened last Tuesday, city officials and residents were thrilled to see some degree of normalcy, when it comes to traffic congestion, return to this rapidly growing community.

“It feels like we have our town back,” said (Mayor Brent) Sanford. “For those of us driving within the inner-circle of Watford City, it is so nice not having this train of tankers and white pick-up trucks. I can’t express how (good) that feels.”

State solutions – roundabouts throughout the Bakken



State solutions – Highway 85 expansion to I-94



Highway 85 4-laning. Next Steps ...
More funding and more partners
needed. From Belfield ND to Belle
Fourche SD...

Thank You
Ports to Plains!

