

GF Legislative Committee 2025 Final Report

At the beginning of the 2025 Legislative Session, the ND State Legislature had introduced **1083** bills and resolutions

The Grand Forks Legislative Committee started the session tracking **124** bills and resolutions.

In this report you will find the 2025 Grand Forks Legislative Priorities that were approved by the GF City Council in December of 2024 with a description of various bills that are directly linked to those priorities.

CITY OF GRAND FORKS

STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

City Council Approved Dec. 2, 2024

A. Infrastructure & Transportation Funding

- “Prairie Dog” Infrastructure Funding
- ND Infrastructure Revolving Loan Funding
- NDDOT Funding Buckets
- Public Transportation Funding Formula

B. Public Safety

- BCI Agents assigned to Grand Forks
- 911 Administration Fees

C. Water Projects Support

- Red River Valley Water Supply Project
- ND Municipal Water Supply Grant and Infrastructure Revolving Loan Funding

D. NDPERS/Benefits/Fiscal Solubility

- ND Public Employee Retirement System (NDPERS)
- PSAP Employees included as first responders

E. Community/Economic Development

- Tax Incentive Programs
- Child Care Program Incentives
- Quality of Life

F. Municipal Government Matters

- The City of Grand Forks opposes any legislation that would infringe on our Home Rule Authority

G. Team Grand Forks Priorities (Chamber-Led Group)

- To be determined

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES - POSITION STATEMENTS

A. Infrastructure & Transportation Funding

- Grand Forks supports legislation for the continuation of “Prairie Dog” infrastructure funding as it serves as a critical and flexible funding mechanism for municipalities throughout the state.
- Grand Forks supports continued funding for the Bank of ND Infrastructure Revolving Loan Fund and amendments in the program’s policy to increase the impact and effectiveness.
 - Raising the loan cap from \$20 M to \$30 M at 2% over 30 years
- The City of Grand Forks supports the various ND Department of Transportation Funding Buckets.
- Public Transportation Funding Formula

SB 2012 This is the budget for the ND Department of Transportation. This session Operation Prairie Dog was moved under NDDOT. The municipal infrastructure fund bucket was reduced to \$160 million total with \$80 million going to cities but it was moved higher up in the gross production tax oil stream. In the new position it is projected to fill during the next biennium. The flexible transportation fund (flex fund), which was created in the 2023 Legislative Session, was continued and expanded. The bill includes \$230 million for the flex fund

SB 2254 Addresses funding for fixed route public transportation. The original version of the bill had \$15 M available in grants for fixed public transportation routes. That \$15 M was amended down to \$2 M. This bill also has a study that would help address the state portion of funding for fixed route public transportation.

B. Public Safety

- The State of ND created a program that places BCI Agents in local jurisdictions to help combat cybercrimes. The City supports getting the state to place 2 BCI Agents with GF Police Department, fulfilling the state’s commitment to local law enforcement.
- In North Dakota a small fee for 9-1-1 service is added to a customer’s monthly phone or cellular bill – it ranges per county from \$1.00 to \$1.50 per month per device. For “pre-paid” cellular phone service, a 2% fee is added to the purchase price at the time of purchase. Currently 5% of this fee goes back to the phone companies for administration purposes. Now that collection and distribution service is conducted through one single point of contact, there is no need for administrative fees. This City would support lowering the 5% administrative fee, allowing more funds to be distributed back to the local level.

HB 1102 This bill would have placed 2 BCI agents in Grand Forks to help with cybercrimes. This bill was defeated in the House with a 20-69-5 vote.

HB 1003 This bill is the budget for the Attorney General's Office. Late in the session the 2 BCI agents for Grand Forks were added to this bill and approved.

HB 1096 This bill lowered the 5% administrative fee phone companies collected down to 2.5%. This bill passed the House with an 89-0 vote and passed the Senate 43-2

C. Water Projects Support

- Grand Forks supports the needed multi-year State of North Dakota funding strategy partnership to move forward with the estimated \$1 billion plus Red River Valley Water Supply Project.
- Grand Forks supports the continued State of North Dakota funding commitment to the ND State Water Commission Municipal Water Supply Grant Program and the Water Infrastructure Revolving Loan Fund.

HB 1020 This is the Water Resources Budget. This bill includes \$205 M for the Red River Valley Water Supply Project and \$40 M for Municipal Water Supply Grants. Regional Water Systems Governance and Finance Study to include the Red River Valley Water Supply Project.

HB 1577 This bill created a Wastewater Infrastructure Grant Program for wastewater projects around the state. The bill was funded at \$10 M and includes a study to determine wastewater infrastructure needs across the state.

D. NDPERS/Benefits/Fiscal Solubility

- Grand Forks continues to support the NDPERS Retirement and Benefit Plan. The City supports the continued funding of the closed plan
- Grand Forks also supports legislation that would incorporate PSAP dispatchers into the NDPERS Public Safety Plan.

HB 1419 This bill would allow Dispatchers to be included in the NDPERS Public Safety Plan.

HB 2296 This bill would recognize 911 dispatchers as first responders. This bill passed the Senate with a 45-0 vote and passed the House with a 84-6 vote

E. Community/Economic Development

- Grand Forks supports continuing to allow local subdivisions to use proven economic development tools such as the Renaissance Program and Tax Increment Financing to attract, leverage, and maximize the benefit of private sector investments in North Dakota communities.
 - The City also supports residential tax relief including the continued use of the residential tax credit.
 - The City supports working with the state to help offset special assessments costs for agribusiness/industrial development.

- Grand Forks supports legislation that will result in the increased access and affordability of childcare in Grand Forks and the State of North Dakota.

- Grand Forks supports state funding for Quality of Life amenities in the State of North Dakota including \$5 M for the Children’s Museum in Grand Forks.

HB 1332 This bill will create a value-added agriculture incentive program through the Department of Agriculture. Providing a \$30 M Bank of North Dakota forgivable line of credit as an incentive for large ag facilities to build in North Dakota

HB 1176 This is the governor’s property tax plan. This bill increases the Primary Residence Tax Credit from \$500 to \$1600. The bill also imposes a 3% cap on property tax revenue year over year for political subdivisions.

HB 1013 This is the Department of Public Instruction Budget. This bill originally included \$10 M for Science Center Grants. \$5 M of this money was intended for the Grand Forks Children’s Museum. This \$10 M was amended out of this bill.

SB 2018 This is the Commerce Department Budget. This bill allocates \$1 M to the GF Children’s Museum, but this money only becomes available once the Strategic Investment and Improvements Fund (SIIF) exceeds \$402 M for the biennium

SB 2225 This bill creates a Housing, Opportunity, Mobility and Empowerment (HOME) program through the Dept. of Commerce which would help political subdivisions offset infrastructure costs on housing developments. There is a limit of \$1 M for communities over 20,000. This bill was heavily amended in conference committee and was defeated in the Senate

F. Municipal Government Matters

- Grand Forks does not support any legislative action to undermine home rule and thereby undermining the local response to issues such as local budgeting.

SB 2398 This bill would create Military Impact Zones around military facilities in the State. With in these zones there would be a commission to help determine land use around military facilities. Initially the City had concerns with the impact zones that were set at 25 miles. The 25 miles zones were amended out of the bill and it now just establishes a military commission.

SB 2376 This bill would allow the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa to establish tribal gaming on land the tribe owns in Grand Forks County. The Grand Forks City Council had approved a letter of intent to work with the tribe on their potential development. This bill failed in the Senate with a 15-29-3.

G. Grand Forks Regional Priorities

EDC/Chamber

- The Commerce budget bill included \$5 million for Regional Workforce Impact Grants and \$7 million for various other workforce programs. The Legislature invested \$2 million to support internships, the Legislature added \$1 million for a global talent office.
- \$10 Million to fund the ND LIFT Program (Legacy Innovation Technology Fund). With a goal of diversifying the ND economy through commercialization of new technology, LIFT Funds go to emerging ND Companies. Approximately 1/3 of LIFT Fund projects have historically gone to Grand Forks Companies.
- \$250,000 for Base Enhancement Grants for enhancing base with strategic advising, new missions, infrastructure, quality of life or advocacy.

GF Public Schools

- Twining PreK-8 STEM School on GFafb received 2% interest financing for the 20% local match which is the final funding piece in the over \$80 M financing package for the new STEM school on GFafb.

GF County

- Grand Sky - \$2.5 M - to develop the next tranche of infrastructure for expansion at Grand Sky.
- BVLOS (Beyond Visual Line of Sight) - \$15 M - This project continues the Vantis network buildout and is headquartered in Grand Forks.
- UAS Test Site - \$3.0 M - This statewide operation is also headquartered in Grand Forks.
- Pathfinder RADAR - \$11 M one-time funding for federal radar data feed for UAS test site to expand radar coverage in North Dakota, the first state to integrate with FAA program.

GF Airport

- Grand Forks Airport Runway replacement. \$20 M for the State's share of the Grand Forks \$75M Airport Runway replacement was funded.

Altru

- Altru Behavioral Health Center received over \$15 M in funding towards the new center which will offer increased services and inpatient beds aiming to address the growing demand for mental health care in the region.

University of North Dakota

- STEM Complex (Phase 1, Engineering): \$55.64 million - UND was appropriated \$55.64 million for the second phase of a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) complex. UND must raise at least \$23.864 million from local funds, primarily through the UND Alumni Association & Foundation. This second phase is on top of the \$57.4 million UND received last legislative session for the new engineering school/phase one.
- Medical School addition - \$5 million was appropriated this session in addition to authorization to spend up to \$40 million additionally from other sources.
- National Security Initiative: \$16 million (one-time).
- State Energy Research Center: \$7.5 million.
- Challenge Grant Funding. UND -- \$3.245 million for undergraduate Challenge grants and \$2.645 million for medical school challenge grants.