

July 21, 2025

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE CITY COUNCIL
OF THE CITY OF GRAND FORKS, NORTH DAKOTA
July 21, 2025**

The city council of the city of Grand Forks, North Dakota, met in Council Chambers on Monday, July 21, 2025, 5:30 p.m., with Mayor Bochenski presiding. Present at roll call were Council Members Weigel, Osowski, Berg, Lunski, Fridolfs, Sande and Vein - 7; absent: None.

Pledge of Allegiance was led by the Mayor and City Council.

MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Bochenski commented regarding the Veteran's Memorial Park and the addition of a memorial commemorating a B-52 crew that lost their life in an accident on the Grand Forks Air Force Base, that when originally dedicated family of a crew member were unable to attend, but a special reception was held for them recently and appreciate the work of Col. Saddler, Peggy Vanyo and Mrs. Palmer for their work.

**POSTPONE INDEFINITELY DISCUSSION OF
MURAL AT NORTH DAKOTA VISION SERVICES /
SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND**

Mayor Bochenski informed Council Members relating to an item on tonight's agenda relating to the Mural at North Dakota Vision Services/School for the Blind, located at 500 Stanford Road, that due to need for more research, including an Attorney General opinion from 1998 on State buildings, recommendation is to postpone this item indefinitely to allow time for staff and legal research on the matter. City Council Members concurred with the postponement.

**GRAND FORKS POLICE DEPARTMENT DOWNTOWN
ACTIVITIES/INCENTIVES UPDATE**

Chief Freedman, provided information and statistics on calls for service and responses in the downtown area. He also shared recommendations on other means besides enforcement to assist with some of the issues including better lighting, changing access or eliminating some conveniences and environment where issues are occurring. He noted that may just relocate the issues to another part of town, and he has been working with others including the States Attorney on some grant opportunities that may provide solutions to help. Council Member Lunski asked that he also keep the Downtown Development Association included, as they have worked to make improvements in the Town Square and worked hard on some of services we might be looking at.

2026 MAYOR'S BUDGET PRESENTATION

Mayor Bochenski made general comments on the 2026 Mayor's Budget, which had priorities of People, Public Safety, Infrastructure & Capital and Quality of Life. Maureen Storstad, Finance Director, provided information on items included in the 2026 Mayor's Budget including: salary plan with a 4.4% salary increase; employee additions in public safety; full funding of Police and Fire Capital Reserve; continued implementation of the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD); Street Department Vehicles; funding of Infrastructure (Wastewater Treatment Plant, Grand Valley development area, Agristo/Hwy 81 area, Epitome Industrial Site Infrastructure (TBD); 42nd Grade Separation and 47th Interchange Build-out); and Quality of Life Initiatives including the Altru Sports Complex, Alerus Center Capital Planning, Riverside Pool, Air Service Expansion and Children's Museum. The budget includes employer contribution increase for the Public Safety Pension Plan of 1.23% and shifting the Public Safety Answering Point staff to the

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Public Safety Pension Plan. Health Insurance will be maintained with Health Partners at a 12% increase for 2026, which is the second year of a 2 year contract. Overall the 2026 Mayor's Budget is \$229.9 million, a decrease from 2025 which was \$270.6 million. This results in a 0.25 mill decrease to 92.00 mills, which is within the newly state mandated cap of 3% increase. The value of a mill grows by 4.27%, comprised of 1.025% growth and 3.245% revaluation, for a value of \$307,036 estimated. A shift in allocation of the 1% sales tax is planned, decreasing the allocation to Economic Development by 3% and increasing the General fund and Infrastructure Fund (4815) by 1.5% each. Due to this shift the allocations in the economic development fund will decrease the amount of funding for Air Base Enhancement & Retention, Grand Forks EDC and Beautification, and eliminate the funding for Special Events, Arts regranting and Human Needs. Utility Bills will see an average increase of 3.92%, which equates to a monthly utility bill for a customer using 4,000 gallons of water to \$3.58 per month. The preliminary approval of the budget is set for August 4, 2025, with public hearing and final approval on September 15, 2025 and Certificate of the Levy sent to the County by October 10, 2025. This year the legislature approved changes to the required notice sent to property owners, which will not show an estimated tax bill, but will rather provide them the dates for public hearings to be held by the taxing entities. The legislature also approved an increase in the primary residence tax credit to \$1600, which still needs to be applied for through the State.

ADOPT RESOLUTION AND FINAL APPROVAL
OF TAX INCENTIVE (PILOT) FOR AGRISTO
NORTH DAKOTA, LLC

Mayor Bochenski opened the public hearing on the request for a tax incentive in the form of a 20 year 90% Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) for their proposed construction of a new potato processing facility, producing pre-fried and frozen potato products, packaging line, and storage of finished products, to be located at 3500 27th Avenue North, with the value of the initial investment of approximately \$450 million for the first phase. No comments were received. City Administrator Feland provided an overview of the project, the funding package which includes state participation. City Attorney Gaustad reviewed the PILOT Procedure checklist, noting that both Grand Forks County and Grand Forks Public School voted to participate in the PILOT. He also reviewed the PILOT Resolution and draft PILOT Agreement. Council Member Weigel moved and Council Member Sande seconded to approve granting of the tax incentive and PILOT Agreement, subject to final review and approval of the city attorney; and to adopt the PILOT Resolution. Motion passed 6-1 with Council Member Osowski dissenting.

APPROVE CONTINUING NEGOTIATIONS WITH
NORTHRIDGE PROPERTIES 01, LLC ON AN
APPLICATION FOR TAX INCENTIVE (PILOT)

Mayor Bochenski opened the public hearing on the request for a tax incentive in the form of a 15 year step down Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) (years 1-5 90%, years 6-10 80%, years 11-15 60%) for their proposed construction of a multi-family development at 4551 South 17th St which would have approximately 155 residential rental units with underground parking at an estimated \$38 million investment. Public comments were received from Mona Leak, Mary Kapinen, Andrew Krauseneck, Shaun Beauclair, Bob Cowger and Veronica Hanson. City Administrator Feland provided an informational overview of the project and similar projects that have been constructed utilizing tax incentives. The community is in need of housing, but developers are challenged to move forward with projects due to the current economic state, including interest rates, cost for construction materials and labor. Grand Forks County and Grand Forks School reviewed the request and both approved a motion to continue negotiations on this application. It was discussed that as part of continued review examine if there is ability to look at 5 year duration for this type of project. Discussion continued on vacancy data, difficulties in fully measuring as not all owners report to or are members of rental groups, although anecdotally those looking for housing report difficulty in finding open units. UND and the Air Force Base have both eliminated older housing

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which has added to the need in the community. It was noted that with these incentives, the City does not provide any funds to the developer. The developer continues to pay taxes on the land as they do today and on the added value as construction occurs. Once the development is completed the PILOT starts, which reduces the amount of tax paid annually during the term of the PILOT, after which the property returns to full increased taxable value, which provides added revenue for all taxing entities over what they would receive without the project being completed. The granting of a tax incentive does not increase taxes for any existing property owners. Council Member Berg moved and Council Member Fridolfs seconded to continue negotiations with the developer, County and School on this project. Motion passed 6-1, with Council Member Osowski dissenting.

ADOPT ORDINANCE NO. 4917, AMENDING ZONING MAP
TO REZONE FROM U-D UNIVERSITY DISTRICT TO
R-4 MULTIPLE-FAMILY RESIDENCE, HIGH DENSITY DISTRICT,
LOCATED AT 2920 5TH AVENUE NORTH

A public hearing was held on an ordinance entitled “An ordinance to amend the zoning map to rezone and exclude from U-D University District and to include within R-4 Multiple Family Residence District, Lots 10, 11, 12 & South ½ of Lot 13, Block 6 of University Place Addition, to the City of Grand Forks, North Dakota, located at 2920 5th Ave N”, with public comment received in person from Linda Olson and 2 public comments received electronically from Jennifer Tarlin and Barb Knipe. City Council discussed the proposed rezoning that would allow for the construction of a townhome style 5-plex on the property, which is a reduction in density from the current zoning which would allow for 6-unit construction. The development meets the City Code requirements for parking and greenspace. City Council discussed the comments received that would like to see single family home construction in the neighborhood versus rental units. This development would be consistent with most of the surrounding property uses. Planning & Zoning Commission recommended approval on a unanimous vote. Council Member Weigel moved and Council Member Osowski seconded to give final approval of the request and adopt Ordinance No. 4917. Motion passed 6-1, with Council Member Vein dissenting.

Council Member Osowski moved and Council Member Lunski seconded to recess for 5 minutes. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting recessed at 9:00 p.m. and reconvened at 9:05 p.m.

ADOPT ORDINANCE NO. 4918, AMENDING THE ZONING
MAP TO REZONE FROM MEADOW RIDGE PUD AMENDMENT
NO. 3 TO MEADOW RIDGE AMENDMENT NO. 4,
DENSITY INCREASE AND ALLOWANCE OF FIRST
FLOOR RESIDENTIAL, LOCATED AT 1065 47TH AVE S

A public hearing was held on an ordinance entitled “An ordinance to amend the zoning map to rezone and exclude from the Meadow Ridge PUD (Planned Unit Development), Council Development Plan, Amendment No. 3 and to include within the Meadow Ridge First Addition and Meadow Ridge Second Addition to the City of Grand Forks, North Dakota”, with public comments received in person from Dr. Mary Askim-Loveseth, Kevin Kuntz and Tim Langemo and electronically submitted comment from Nancy Wang. City Planner Ryan Brooks provided an overview of the project which is Phase II of the planned area development, that as currently zoned could be constructed up to 4 stories, but the rezoning would allow for addition of a 5th story and for ground level residential. With the additional story, the density would increase with the additional residential units. Brooks reviewed a map of the surrounding area noting other multi-family and mixed use structures, traffic design and Phase III of the development, which is a Hugo’s grocery store. He noted that when the current zoning was approved in 2009 it was laid out to plan for traffic flow once all phases were complete. Having ground floor residential could be beneficial for those with mobility issues. Council Member Sande moved and Council Member Lunski seconded to give final

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approval of the request and adopt Ordinance 4918 amending the zoning map. Motion passed 6-1, with Council Member Osowski dissenting.

POSTPONE INDEFINITELY ORDINANCES
RELATING TO BIRKHOLZ 8TH ADDITION

Three proposed ordinances relating to a development in Birkholz 8th Addition had been scheduled for public hearing and final adoption on June 16, 2025 and postponed to tonight's meeting, however were tabled indefinitely at the July 9, 2025 Planning & Zoning Commission meeting. The items are requested to be postponed indefinitely at the City Council meeting. The ordinances concerned dedication of rights-of-way on the plat and final approval of the plat of Birkholz Eighth Addition; amendment to the zoning map for Birkholz Eighth PUD; and annexation of Birkholz Eighth Addition. Council Member Osowski moved and Council Member Weigel seconded to postpone the items indefinitely, including the public hearings. Motion passed unanimously.

CITIZEN COMMENTS ON ACTION ITEMS

The following individual addressed the city council on action items: Andrew Krauseneck

Several electronic comments were also provided to City Council for their information.

ACTION ITEMS CONSENT AGENDA

Council Member Berg moved, and Council Member Weigel seconded to approve the following items on consent agenda, with the motion passing unanimously.

- 1) Approved receipt of the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) for the year ended December 31, 2025 and the Independent Auditor's Report, as well as acceptance of the Popular Financial Report (PAFR).
- 2) Approved reappointments of Dr. Douglas Munki (2 yr term as a professional in the area of Urban planning), Brian Carlson (2 year term with a background in architecture), Nicole Derenne (2 ear term member-at-large community member), and Judy Swisher (2 year term member-at-large community member). Terms will expire August 1, 2027.
- 3) Authorized staff to proceed with the 2026 CDBG Allocation process as presented with a 2026 budget of \$490,000.
- 4) Awarded contract for Project No. 8974, Central Parking Elevator Modernization at 415 1st Ave N to Otis Elevator in the amount of \$156,200.00 and any necessary budget amendments.
- 5) Approved Preliminary Engineering Agreement for Project No. 8959, Preliminary ZEngineering for S 48th St and S 42nd St (32nd Ave S to 62 Ave S), with Houston Engineering in the amount of \$349,033.98.
- 6) Approved Change Order #1 for Project No. 8921, District No. 612, Highway 81 & Associated Area Sanitary Sewer Phase III in the amont of \$814,490.00 and rest the city engineer's authority for change orders.
- 7) Introduced an ordinance and gave preliminary approval of City Code updates due to City Legislative Changes. The ordinance was entitled "An ordinance to amend Grand Forks City Code Sections 8-0515, 8-

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0615, 8-1503, 8-0701, 9-0103, and 9-0120 so as to update the Ordinances of Grand Forks to be in compliance with the new laws under the updated Century Code”.

8) Gave final approval of a replat of Lot A, Block 1, of the replat of Lot 3, Block 1, and Lots 1 and 2, Block 1, Homestead Grove Fourth Addition, located at 1051 10th Ave South, 4401 South 11th St and 1060 47th Avenue South subject to the conditions shown on the attached review copy.

9) Gave preliminary approval of a request to vacate the drainage easements lying within Lot 2, Block 1, Homestead Grove Addition, and set a public hearing for September 2, 2025.

10) Gave final approval of a replat of Lots A-Y, Block 2, of the replat of Lot 4, Block 2, Southern Estates First Addition, and Lot 23, Block 2, of the replat of Lots Z through WW, Block 2, of the replat of Lot 4, Block 2, Southern Estates First Addition, located at 4034-4208 Haven Court, subject to conditions shown on the attached review copy.

11) Introduced an ordinance and gave preliminary approval of the request to amend the zoning map, to rezone from Greenberg PUD (Planned Unit Development) Amendment 4 to Greenberg PUD Amendment 5, subject to the conditions as shown on the PUD map, locates at 3810, 3851, 390, 3950 and 3951 39th Ave S and set a public hearing for August 18, 2025.

ACTION ITEMS PULLED FOR DISCUSSION

1) Considered a tax incentive pre-application from Brookstone Apartments, LLC, a partnership of Dakota Commercial, MAK Capital/Construction, and Red River Regional Council, for a project that plans to construct a multi-family building for moderate income tenants to help fill the gap for workforce housing, with an estimated project investment of \$38,500,000. The request is for a tax incentive in the form of a PILOT. Council Member Sande moved and Council Member Berg seconded to approve an invitation to the developer to submit a full application. Motion passed 6-1 with Osowski dissenting.

2) Considered recommendations relating to the Altru Sports Complex GMP #2 Bid package in the amount of \$37,786,979.00, subject to final review and approval of budget amendments from the Finance Department and agreement from the City Attorney's Office; approval of an amendment to the JLG Architect of Record (AOR) agreement for Basic Services for Bidding Services and Construction Administration in the total amount of \$1,796,284.68; and approve and authorize Additional Services to include site infrastructure redesign services to support ASC Phase 2 in the amount of \$74,375.00, subject to final review and approval of budget amendments from the Finance Department and agreement from the City Attorney's Office. City Administrator Feland provided information on the bid award and requested contract amendments, which will include starting work toward the Phase 2 addition of courts to the facility. Council Member Weigel moved and Council Member Berg seconded to approve. Motion passed unanimously.

3) Considered a grant funding agreement between North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department with City of Grand Forks for Downtown Gateway and Greenway Project Phase 1, Project No. 8525. The grant award is \$3,489,750.00 with a 1:1 local match, for a total project cost of \$6,979,500.00. Funds are specific to the proposed project and area and can not be transferred for other uses. If the agreement is approved, staff will work with consultants RDG and Houston Engineering, with any project coming back to City Council for bidding. City Council discussed funding for the local match, with some not agreeable to using Flood Protection funds as a source, although those funds are authorized for use in Greenway improvements as well as flood protection project maintenance. Council inquired whether there was ability to accept a lower amount and modify the project. Discussion also included if there was an availability of any funding in Economic Development Fund 2163. Motion by Council Member Fridolfs and second by Council Member Lunski to postpone this item to August 4 City Council meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

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4) Considered proposed enhancements to the area of the Flood Protection/Greenway System near Rivers Edge in the form of trail improvements and fishing spot funded through a Garrison Diversion grant in the amount of \$50,000 and Outdoor Heritage Fund in the amount of \$155,450.00. Staff shared information on the improvements, that it would improve safety and address access to the area for public safety response. Motion by Council Member Weigel, second by Council Member Osowski to approve the proposal. Motion failed 2-5, with Council Members Weigel, Osowski, Berg, Fridolfs, and Sande dissenting.

5) Considered a revision to the Citizen Comment Policy coming forward to bring the policy in compliance with recent legislative changes in Century Code. Discussion of the proposed changes which would change the policy to have one citizen comment period for all types of comments, which would be located just before Action Items on the agenda; change the allowed per speaker time from 5 minutes to 3 minutes; and set a total time for citizen comments at 30 minutes. Council Member Sande moved and Council Member Osowski seconded to approve the revised policy. Motion passed 5-2 with Berg and Weigel dissenting.

6) Considered a request for Conditional Use Permit (CUP) from Nutrien Ag Solutions at 5301 North Washington St. The company is relocating their chemical storage area due to address access issues with rail traffic blocking access to their old location. Motion by Osowski, second by Sande to approve. Motion passed unanimously.

7) Considered a request to amend the zoning map – rezoning multiple properties to address non-conformance issues, which hinder a property owner from selling or getting financing for their property. This is the start of working with property owners to adjust zoning on affected properties within the city. These properties are located at 1302 5th Ave N, 623 S 16th St, 1412 N 1st St, 1411 N 1st Street, 1415 12th Ave S, 702 S 14th St & 1221 6th Ave N and would rezone from their current business zoning districts to new conforming residential districts as described on attached listing. Motion by Council Member Osowski, second by Council Member Berg to give preliminary approval of the request and introduce the zoning ordinance. Motion passed unanimously.

8) Considered a request to amend the zoning map to rezone from I-1 Light Industrial District to B-3 General Commercial District, to B-3 General Commercial District, Lots G, H, J, and K, Replat of Lots A, B, C, D and Lots 13 & 14, Block 4, Westacott's Resubdivision, locates at 1307 North 20th Street; 2001, 2003, 2005 Gateway Drive; and 2010, 2012, 2014 13th Avenue North. Council Member Osowski moved and Council Member Weigel seconded to give preliminary approval of the request and introduce the zoning ordinance. Motion passed unanimously.

APPROVE VENDOR LIST AND ENGINEER ESTIMATE

Vendor list 25-15, dated July 21, 2025, in the amount of \$2,636,392.86 was presented. It was moved by Council Member Berg and seconded by Council Member Sande to approve. Motion passed unanimously.

APPROVE MINUTES

Minutes from the July 7, 2025, City Council meeting were presented. Council Member Sande moved and Council Member Berg seconded to approve. Motion passed unanimously.

MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS

Council Member Berg commented that approved with the vendor list was a payment of \$17,000 toward the cost of installation of the Coca-Cola mural downtown.

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ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Council Member Sande and second by Council Member Osowski to adjourn the meeting at 10:10 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Maureen Storstad", enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

Maureen Storstad
City Auditor

Approved:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Brandon Bochenski", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Brandon Bochenski, Mayor