



CGF Meeting Feedback Form

City of Grand Forks

Submitted On:

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Meeting Type:	Planning & Zoning
Full Name	First Name: Evan Last Name: Shtulman
Full Address	Street Address: 257 E Main Street Suite 200 City: Barrington State: IL Zip: 60010
Agenda Item Number / Topic:	4-1 Ordinance to amend the zoning map to rezone from Day-Hud PUD Amendment No. 2 (PUD B-2 Shopping Center Uses) to Day-Hud Amendment No. 3 (PUD B-3 General Business Uses), located at 2800 South Columbia Road.
Comments:	<p>As the owner of Columbia Mall, we urge the Planning and Zoning Commission, and City Council to reject any requested change in zoning for this property. The intent of the existing zoning uses was to stay consistent with the Reciprocal Easement Agreement governing the property and its uses between the different property owners. A change in zoning that would allow non-retail uses will have a significantly negative impact on the value of the mall, its ability to lease to retail tenants, and the possibility for any future redevelopment of the overall site for the benefit of the community</p> <p>The potential purchasers reached out in August of 2025 with the intention of trying to convert the former Macy's building to indoor self-storage, which is the key reason they are trying to rezone the site. We explained to them that an indoor self-storage use is not allowed under the Reciprocal Easement Agreement, and changing the building to that use would have a huge negative impact on the retailers that currently use the mall and on the community which wants more retail and dining uses at the site. That is why the Reciprocal Easement Agreement was originally created and why it remains the governing document between the owners at the mall.</p> <p>We own other malls across the country, and the instances where an indoor self-storage use was allowed to backfill former department stores has sent those malls into a death spiral. It eliminated the ability to lease the center to retail and restaurant users, and ultimately emptied out the existing tenants that relied on retail foot traffic from the department stores or their retail replacements as the main traffic driver for inline small shop space to survive. The current state of the mall vacancy at Columbia Mall has been the direct result of the closing of Macy's and Sears. Unfortunately, the mall does not own or control either of those buildings, but we have started to gain momentum on the leasing side with more local, small businesses inline. Also, we are working with larger national retailers to convert some of the interior space to exterior access to allow for better retailer success. That leasing momentum will be eliminated if the former Macy's is converted into an indoor self-storage use.</p>

If the City allows a change in zoning to indoor self-storage use, it would be as negatively impactful as a condemnation for the remainder of the property. The former Macy's building is the front main entrance to the property, and any use other than retail would be disastrous for any future for this site.

We have had several conversations with Mayor Bochenski and Todd Feland regarding a change in zoning and use for the building, and how negatively impactful that would be for not only the site but for the city and any future use for that real estate.

We strongly urge the City to not allow a change in the zoning that would allow non-retail use, and to keep the current zoning in place.
