

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE CITY COUNCIL
OF THE CITY OF GRAND FORKS, NORTH DAKOTA
April 6, 2026**

The city council of the city of Grand Forks, North Dakota, met in Council Chambers on Monday, April 6, 2026, at 6:00 p.m., immediately after the Board of Equalization meeting, with Mayor Bochenski presiding. Present at roll call were Council Members Weigel, Osowski, Berg, Lunski, Fridolfs, Vein and Sande - 7; absent: None.

Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor and City Council.

MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Bochenski commented regarding the State of the Base event held last week and all the things happening at Grand Forks Air Force Base. He also expressed condolences to the family of Jim Scheef, 10 year Street Department employee who recently passed away at the age of 46.

PROCLAMATIONS

- 1) Mayor Bochenski read a proclamation declaring April 2026 as Fair Housing Month.
- 2) Mayor Bochenski read a proclamation declaring National Public Health Week, April 6-12, 2026. In addition, Public Health Champions Awards were presented to: Brian Samson, Grand Forks Police Department; Nancy O'Hara, United Way; Jaime Zuniga & Taylor Restad, Grand Forks Housing Authority; and Ashley Bayne, UND MPOH Program.

PRESENTATIONS

- 1) Received a presentation from Bolton & Menk and City Staff on the 42nd Street and Demers Ave Project, with representatives from NDDOT also available for questions. The project with the jog handle alternative will begin this spring with anticipated completion near the end of 2027. Project was awarded by the NDDOT to Ames Construction out of Minneapolis, MN, who recently completed a large interchange project in Bismarck. Public input meetings on construction will be held. Dave Kuharenko, Asst. City Engineer, also reported that some costs have changed due to bids coming favorably and the cost saving will be shared by NDDOT with the City. The project is funded through Street & Infrastructure Fund 4815. It was also discussed that the Ray Richards Golf Course will be down for the same two year period, during which their proposed redevelopment of the site will be constructed. It was noted the great public safety improvement that will result from this project being done.
- 2) Received a presentation from Brian Kalk, Chief Research Officer at the Energy and Environmental Research Center, about natural gas supply and needs in the region. He explained the current supply stream and hope to increase the supply lines to provide redundancy and to support further development in the region.
- 3) Received a presentation entitled "Grand Forks Housing Study" from Mark Schill, Praxis Strategy Group, who was contracted by the EDC and Chamber. The study includes statistics such as vacancy rates, rent growth, apartment construction, housing supply and sales. Barry Willfahrt, President of The Chamber, explained that the study was conducted because of concerns with the current housing market, which is tight, and could be a resource for developers, the community, and city council when considering various options for the community. He stated that with plans for a new Blue Ribbon Housing Commission it would be a good resource for members. This effort is also inline with planned focus of Governor Armstrong for the next legislative session and potential resources for housing in the state. There was no city cost for the study.

24689
April 6, 2026

ADOPT RESOLUTION DETERMINING AN INSUFFICIENCY OF PROTEST FOR PROJECTS

City Council considered Resolutions of Necessity for the following projects:

- 1) Project No. 9050, District No. 797, Reconstruct 5th Ave S (Demers Ave-Washington St)
- 2) Project No. 9060, District No. 798, Reconstruct 17th Ave S (S Columbia Rd to S 20th St)
- 3) Project No. 8850.02, District No. 801, S 34th St Paving & Street Lights (45th – 47th Ave S)

City Auditor reported that no protests had been received by her office. Mayor Bochenski opened the public hearing. Chris Lipsh, 4299 Crystal Drive, shared comments related to Project No. 8850.02, District No. 801, that he was not in the district for the project, but has concerns relating to traffic flow in proximity to the school and current traffic issues in the area. He suggested looking at having right in/right out only allowed in the project area. There were no other comments and Mayor Bochenski closed the public hearing. Council Member Sande moved and Council Member Vein seconded to adopt a Resolution determining an insufficiency of protest for the projects. Motion passed unanimously.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

The following speakers addressed the City Council: Jody Lembke, 3622 10th Ave N and Andrew Krauseneck, 4953 Curran Court.

ACTION ITEMS CONSENT AGENDA

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

- 1) Approved and Encroachment and Maintenance Agreement Exhibit B modification with University of North Dakota relating to 25th Street North, subject to final approval of the City Attorney. UND is agreeing to be responsible for the construction, operation, repair, and maintenance of the modified 25th Street North and sidewalk and to maintain and keep open for public use this area alongside Albrecht Field.
- 2) Introduced an ordinance and gave preliminary approval of an amendment to City Code relating to the Tech Accelerator Board. Due to a change in the operational model, the Board is not needed and decision making authority for The HIVE will remain with the JDA.
- 3) Rejected all bids for Project No. 9050, District No. 797, Reconstruct 5th Ave S (Demers Ave to Washington St) and Project No. 9101, District No. 631, Storm Sewer for 5th Ave S (Demers Ave to Washington St).
- 4) Approved a revised Engineer's Report for Project No. 9101, District No. 631, Storm Sewer for 5^h Ave S (Demers Ave to Washington St) and Adopted resolutions to approve the plans and specifications for Project No. 9050, District No. 797, Reconstruct 5th Ave S *Demers Ave to Washington St) and Project No. 9101, District No. 631, Storm Sewer for 5th Ave S (Demers Ave to Washington St). Further, the engineering department was authorized to solicit bids for the project.
- 5) Awarded the contract for Project No. 9048, Street and Storm Sewer Repair on 2400 Block of Columbia Road to Strata Corporation in the amount of \$397, 599.10 and approved any necessary budget amendments.

24690

April 6, 2026

- 6) Adopted a resolution to award the contract for Project No. 9060, District No. 798, Reconstruct 17th Ave S (S Columbia Rd to S 20th St) to low bidder Opp Construction, LLC in the amount of \$2,333,024.70 and approved any necessary budget amendment.
- 7) Reject all bids for Project 8998.01 and 8998.02, 2026 Watermain Replacement Cottonwood St (4th Ave S to 7th Ave S) & 7th Ave N (N Washington St to N 7th St).
- 8) Adopted a resolution to award the contract for Project No. 8922, District No. 613, Hwy 81 & Associated Area Sanitary Sewer, Phase 4, to Taggart Contracting, Inc. in the amount of \$1,381,369.40.
- 9) Approve revised Engineer's Report for Project No. 8577, District No. 363, Highway 81 & Associated Area Watermain Phase III.
- 10) Approved plans and specifications for Project No. 8850.01, Paving & Street Lighting for 47th Ave S (S Columbia Rd – S 34th St).
- 11) Adopted a resolution awarding the contract for Project No. 8850.2, District No. 801, Paving & Street Lighting for S 34th St (45th – 47th Ave S), to Paras Contracting, Inc. in the amount of \$516,616.37.
- 12) Approved Revised Engineer's Report for Project No. 9081, District No. 626, Storm Sewer and Adopted resolution approving the plans and specifications for Project No. 9079, District No. 625, Sanitary Sewer; Project No. 9080, District No. 368, Watermain; Project No. 9081, District No. 626, Storm Sewer; and Project No. 9082, District No. 627, Stormwater Pond, all for Birkholz 8th Addition.
- 13) Approved plans and specifications for Project No. 8796, Shared Use Path on South Columbia Road (Knight Drive to 17th Avenue South).
- 14) Awarded the contract for Project No. 9065, Upgrade Lift Station #5, General Contract to low bidder ICS, Inc. in the amount of \$331,400.00 and Electrical Contract to low bidder John's Refrigeration & Electric, Inc. in the amount of \$305,160.00.
- 15) Awarded the contract for Project No. 9102, Menards Water Tower Overcoat to low bidder TMI Coatings, LLC in the amount of \$96,425.00.

ACTION ITEMS PULLED FOR DISCUSSION

The following items were pulled for discussion and independent vote:

- 1) Considered adoption of a resolution to approve plans and specifications for Project No. 9064, District No. 800, Paving 27th Ave N (N 36th St to N Washington St). Motion by Council Member Berg, second by Council Member Weigel to adopt the resolution approving the plans and specifications. Motion passed 6-1, with Council Member Osowski dissenting.
- 2) Considered award of contract for Project No. 9106, Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) Solid Waste Landfill Soil Treatment Pad, to lowest responsible bidder, Gowan Construction, Inc. in the amount of \$480,071.90. City Attorney provided information on Century Code requirements for awarding contracts for public improvements, which is to award to lowest responsible bidder. Also provided were criteria that can be used in analysis of the bids received. City Council received information from Sharon Lipsh, Public Works Director, regarding analysis of the bids, including the complexity of the project, compliance requirements of NDDEQ, and evaluation of capabilities of the bid respondents which led to the recommendation to award the bid to Gowan Construction, rather than the lowest monetary bidder, Dirty Deeds Dirtworks. Cordell

24691

April 6, 2026

Wimpfheimer, Dirty Deeds Dirtworks, provided information on his company, project history, and qualifications. He also expressed disagreement with staff analysis of the bid responses and questioned if unrelated past project interactions were swaying judgement. City Council discussed information provided. Council Member Berg moved and Council Member Weigel seconded to approve the staff recommendation awarding the contract to Gowan Construction, Inc. Motion passed 6-1 with Council Member Lunski dissenting.

3) Considered setting date for a public hearing on an application for tax incentive (PILOT) from CK Commercial, LLC, dba The Palmer (formerly referred to as Kingsview). Council Member Osowski commented regarding overall applications for tax incentives from developers of apartments and that she did not support those applications. Motion by Council Member Sande, second by Council Member Berg to set a public hearing date of May 4, 2026, on the application from CK Commercial, LLC, for a five year 90% Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT). Motion passed 6-1 with Council Member Osowski dissenting.

4) Considered setting date for a public hearing on an application for tax incentive (PILOT) from RTVMPS, LLC, dba The Domain,. Council Member Sande moved and Council Member Berg seconded to set a public hearing date of May 4, 2026, on the application from RTVMPS, LLC, for a five year 90% Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT). Motion passed 6-1, with Council Member Osowski dissenting.

5) Considered the Altru Sport Complex (ASC) – Deep Dive Well Facility Management and Operations Agreement, with a recommendation from the City Attorney to postpone action on the agreement as discussions with University of North Dakota are still in progress. Motion by Council Member Osowski, second by Council Member Berg to postpone final action on this item. Motion passed unanimously.

6) Considered Alerus Center Scoreboard Replacement Bidding Process and the recommendation from City Staff to move forward with a City led Option 1 – Request for Qualifications (RFQ) and Bid, with final authority of the City Council in collaboration with Alerus Event Center Commission and Manager, Oak View Group (OVG). Mayor Bochenski suggested that an action also be taken that would direct the Events Center Commission and its related committees meet at City Hall in Council Chambers, with meetings being televised, similar to all other city committee/commissions. This will also provide an added layer of transparency for actions of the commission. Motion by Council Member Osowski, second by Council Member Berg to direct the Events Center Commission and its committees hold their meetings in Council Chambers at City Hall and that such meetings be televised, to be consistent with other city boards. City Council discussed items that may be proprietary and the commission could go into executive session for those discussions. City Council Chambers has the equipment readily available for televising and hosting the meetings. Upon call for the question, the motion passed unanimously. Council Member Sande moved and Council Member Berg seconded to approve the staff recommendation regarding the process for Alerus Center Scoreboard replacement bidding. Motion passed unanimously.

APPROVE VENDOR LIST AND ENGINEERS ESTIMATES

Vendor list 26-7, dated April 6, 2026, in the amount of \$3,721,607.78 and Engineer's Estimates dated March 31, 2026 in the amount of \$9,663,448.64 was presented. It was moved by Council Member Berg and seconded by Council Member Lunski to approve. Motion passed unanimously.

APPROVE MINUTES

Minutes from March 16, 2026, City Council meeting were presented. Council Member Berg moved and Council Member Lunski seconded to approve. Motion passed unanimously.

24692
April 6, 2026

CITY ADMINISTRATOR COMMENTS

Feland expressed thanks to retiring City Engineer Al Grasser, for his years of service to the City of Grand Forks.

COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS

Several council members expressed appreciate and gratitude to Mr. Grasser for his service to the City.

Council Member Berg noted that the City is required by the State to have valuations within a set range.

Council Member Lunski congratulated Kim Greendahl on her retirement to the City and work she did with the Greenway.

Council Member Sande responded to comments relating to the valuation and abatement program and expressed appreciation for work of the Assessing Department staff.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Council Member Osowski and second by Council Member Berg to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Maureen Storstad
City Auditor

Approved:



Brandon Bochenski, Mayor

24693
April 6, 2026

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