



CITY OF  
**GRAND RAPIDS**  
IT'S IN MINNESOTA'S NATURE

## **CITY COUNCIL WORKSESSION AGENDA**

**Monday, March 23, 2026**

**4:30 PM**

CALL TO ORDER: Pursuant to due notice and call thereof, a Worksession meeting of the Grand Rapids City Council will be held on Monday, March 23, 2026 at 4:30 PM in the City Hall Council Chambers, 420 North Pokegama Avenue, Grand Rapids, Minnesota.

ROLL CALL:

BUSINESS:

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORT:

- [1.](#) Community Development Department Head Report

REVIEW OF REGULAR AGENDA:

ADJOURN:

Attest: Kimberly Gibeau, City Clerk



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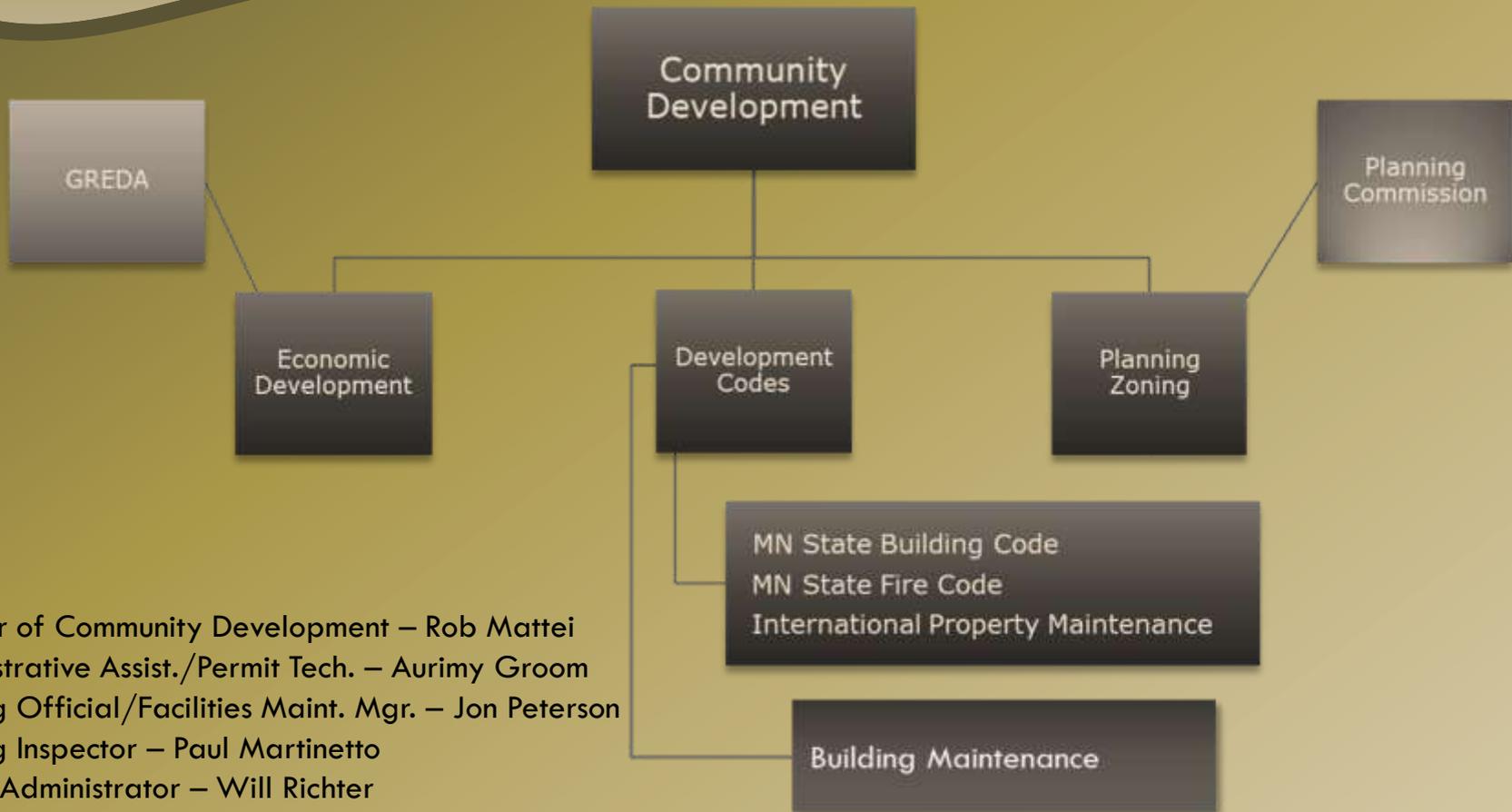
Item 1.

# **Community Development Department Report**

**March 23, 2026**



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**Staff:**

- Director of Community Development – Rob Mattei
- Administrative Assist./Permit Tech. – Aurimy Groom
- Building Official/Facilities Maint. Mgr. – Jon Peterson
- Building Inspector – Paul Martinetto
- Zoning Administrator – Will Richter
- Building Maintenance – Mike Randall

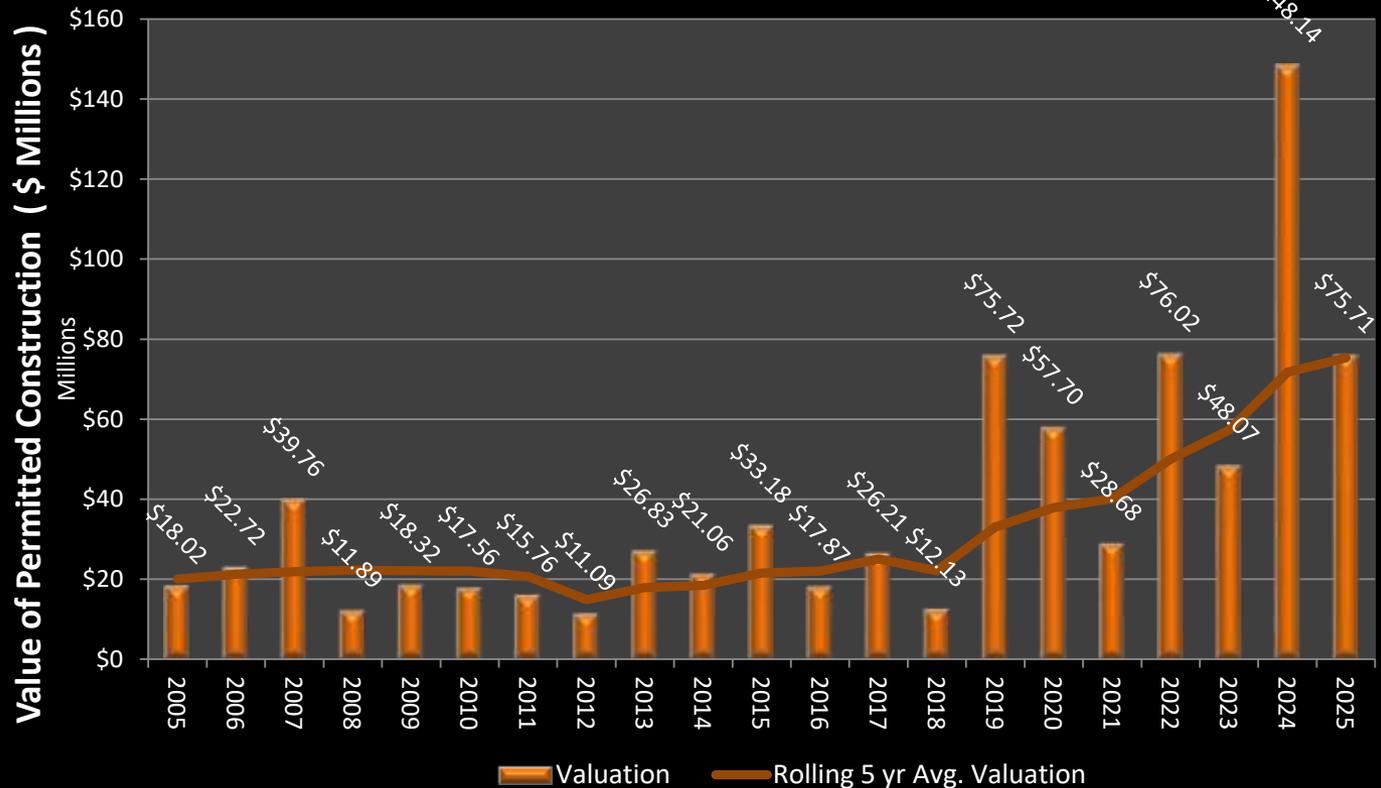


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# Building Permit Valuation Year End Statistics

Item 1.

## Building Permit Valuation History 2005-2025 Statistics



Totals do not include Zoning Permits valued at \$508,340

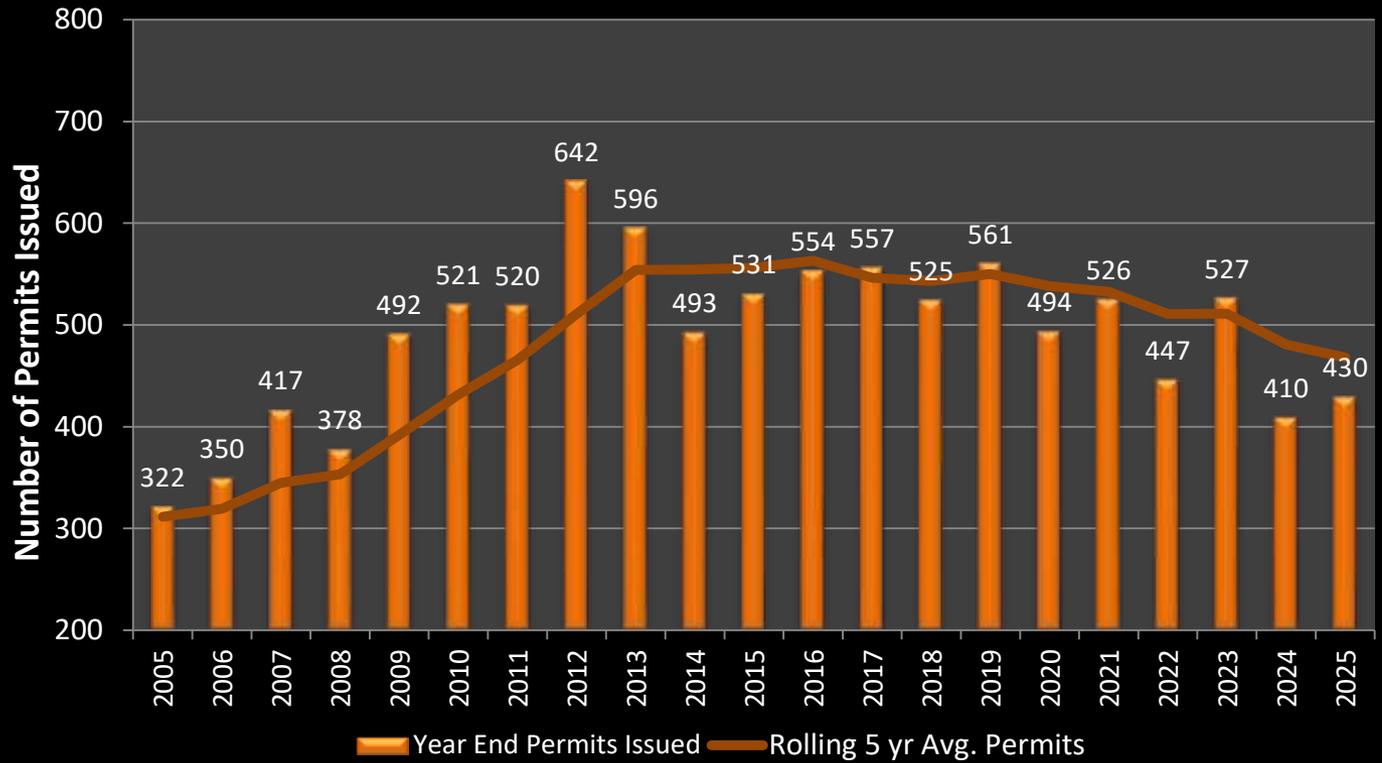


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# Issued Building Permits Year End Statistics

Item 1.

### Building Permit Totals 2005-2025 Year End Statistics



Totals do not include 72 Zoning Permits Issued

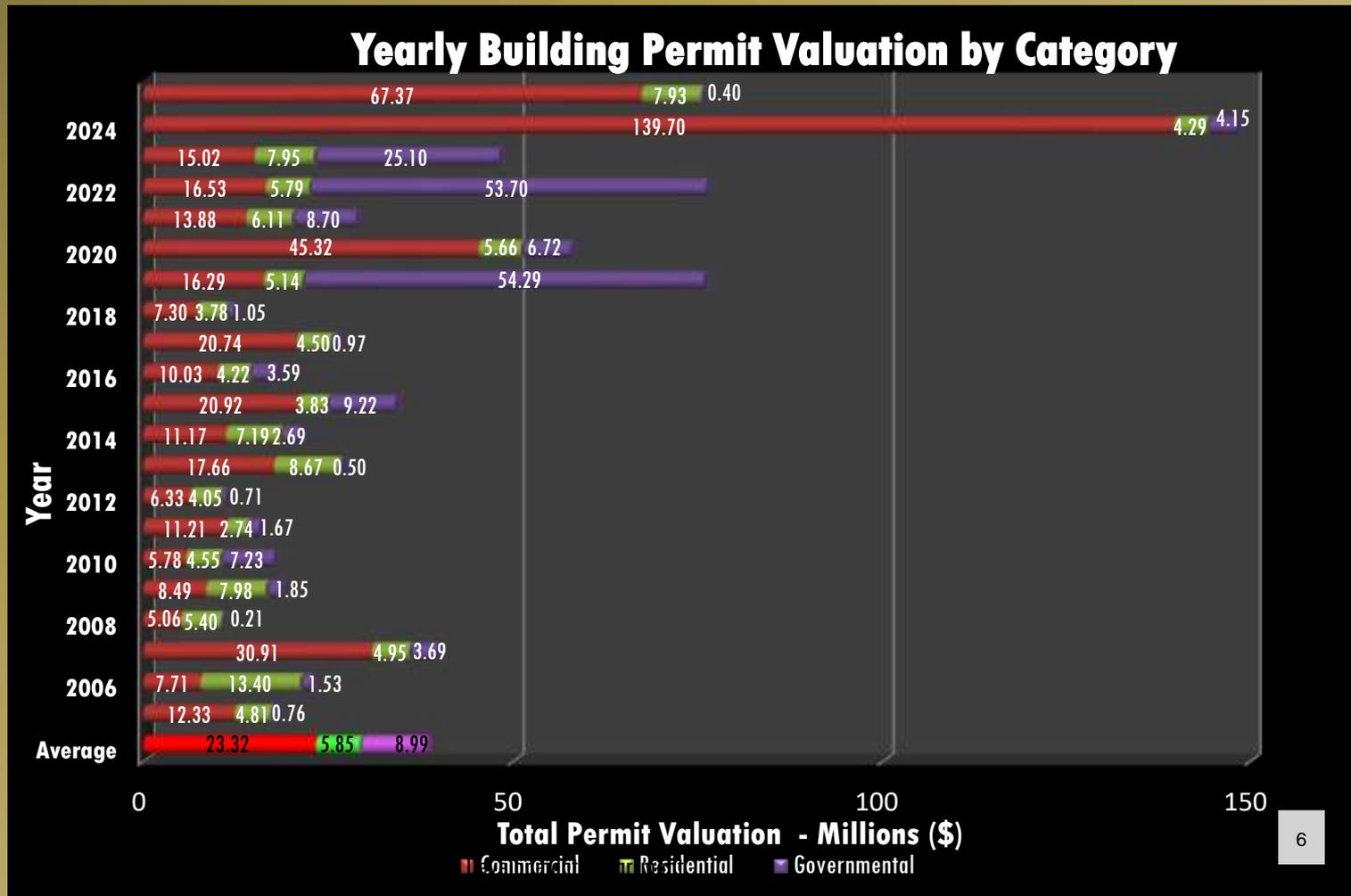


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# Building Permit Valuation by Category

## Year End Statistics

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# New Housing Statistics

## Quick Facts

2010 Census  
# of Housing Units  
Grand Rapids

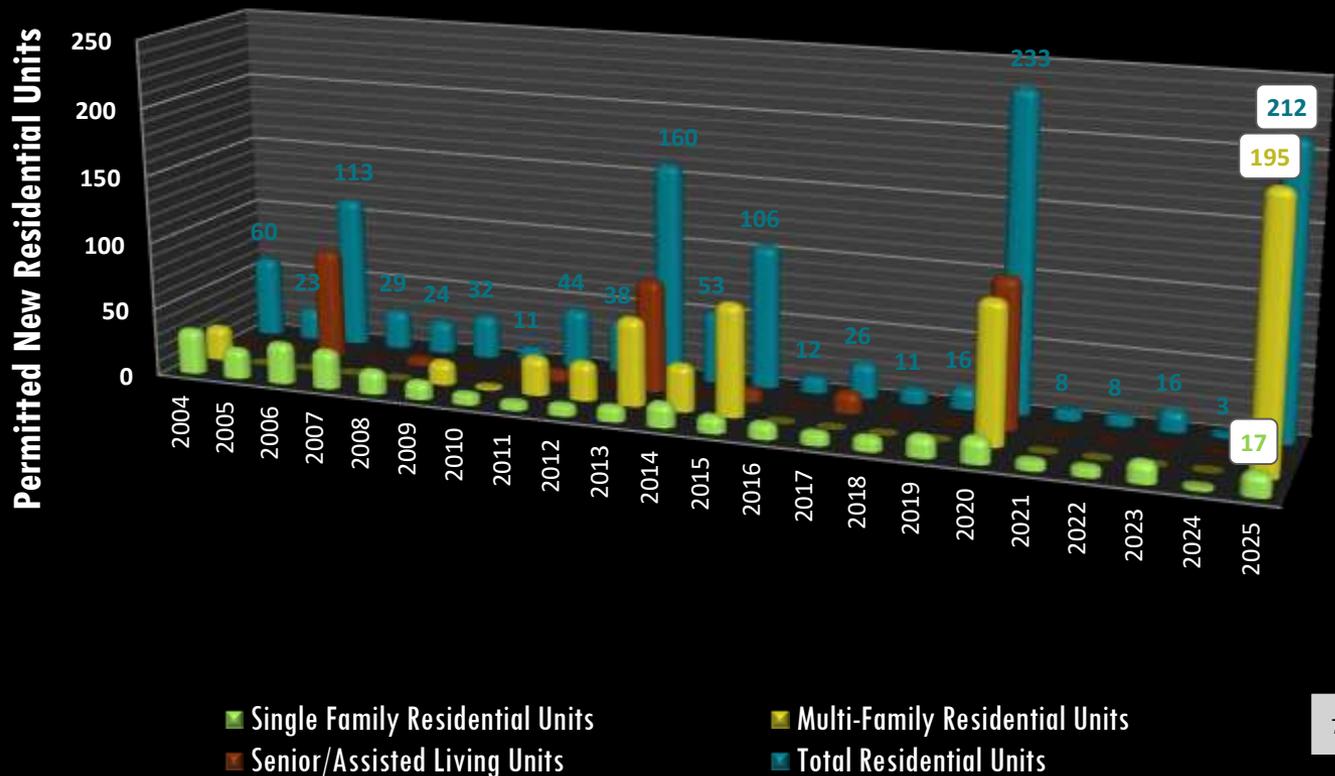
4,910

# of Housing Units  
Built 2010-2025  
Grand Rapids

957

19.5% 

## Grand Rapids New Residential Development History





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# 2025 Permitted Construction Highlights

- ❖ **17 New Single Family - \$4,045,543**
  - ( Ten-year Single-Family Dwelling average/year = 12.1)
  
- ❖ **Major New Commercial**
  - Mill & Miss Apartments - \$21,635,000
  - Riverview Apartments (Downtown) - \$7,500,000
  - Amazon - \$11,960,000
  
- ❖ **Commercial/Institutional/Governmental Additions, Remodels & Repairs**
  - Target Remodel - \$3,790,000
  - Crystal Lake Townhomes - \$4,500,000
  - The Pines - \$1,108,000
  - Ledger & Ladle - \$658,000
  - The Tied - \$340,000
  - Grand Rapids Dental - \$875,000



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# Building Safety Activity

## ❖ Building Report for 2025

- **Addressed 3 Hazardous Building/Property Maintenance Code violations**
- **Performed 810 on-site construction inspections**
- **Competed 93 commercial and 173 residential plan reviews**

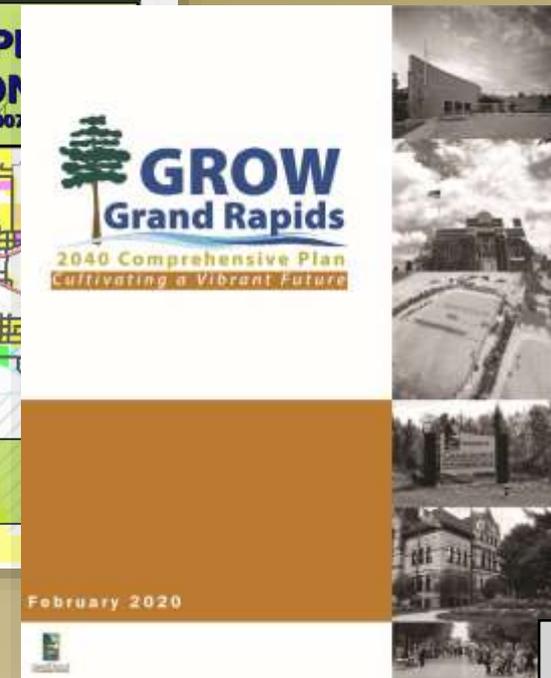
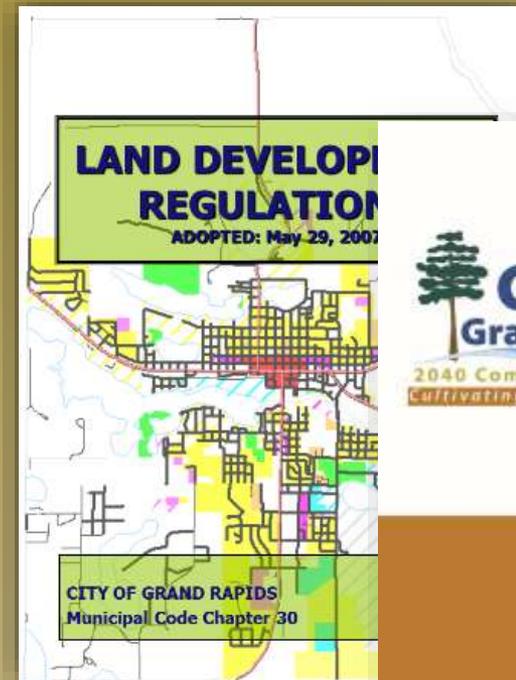


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# Planning Commission Activity

## ❖ 2025 Zoning Requests Addressed by the Planning Commission

- February (Vacation)
- April (2 Variances)
- May (Text Amendment)
- June (Variance)
- August (Text Amendment and Variance)
- October (Text Amendment)
- November (Prelim. Plat and Rezone)
- December (Final Plat)





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# Economic Development Activity



Item 1.

## Amazon Delivery Station

- GREDA closed on sale of 4 lots in Airport South Industrial Park to Amazon for their development of a 41,000 sq. ft. delivery station.
- Construction started in April 2025
- Building is complete
- Anticipated opening this spring.



Industry Advancement/Support



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Item 1.

# Economic Development Activity

## HWY 35 Cannabis Grow/Manufacturing Facility

- The 60,000 sq. ft. buildout of the first phase consists of a cannabis cultivation and manufacturing of infused products.
- The cultivation has been operational since the fall of 2025.
- The manufacturing buildout is complete, as well, and is scheduled to be operating this spring.



Industry Advancement/Support



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# Economic Development Activity

## Blandin Foundation Grant to GREDA

- GREDA was awarded a \$2.8M Grant to support their work that aligns with the Blandin Foundation's strategic focus on Community Wealth Building, Rural Placemaking and Small Communities, including the following:
  - Grand Rapids Downtown Plan Implementation:
    - Downtown Alliance Startup
    - Downtown Pedestrian Wayfinding (planning and development)
    - Downtown Branding Implementation
    - Block 19 Parking Lot Improvements
  - American Legion Park Plan & Economic Impact Analysis
  - Blandin Beach Park Renovation
  - Affordable Single-Family Housing (GREDA/ICHRA former ISD 318 Admin. Building Site)
  - Capitalization of a Dedicated GREDA Strategic Site Acquisition Revolving Fund
  - Development of an effective workforce recruitment strategy/campaign
  - Enhanced GREDA Communications (planning and implementation)





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# Economic Development Activity



Item 1.

## Downtown Plan Initiatives & Projects

- Grand Rapids Downtown Alliance
  - GREDA hired Economic Development Services to assist downtown stakeholders with the startup of a new non-profit downtown organization.
    - Filing of articles of incorp., posting and filling ED position, recruitment of initial board and committees, etc.
  - GREDA hired Pierson/Henry to assist the Downtown Alliance with branding and strategic communications, fundraising plans.
  - GREDA approved a Subgrant Agreement with the Downtown Alliance to advance GREDA's Blandin Foundation grant to support of initial operating costs.
  - The response from the downtown business community has been extremely positive.





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# Economic Development Activity

## Downtown Plan Initiatives & Projects

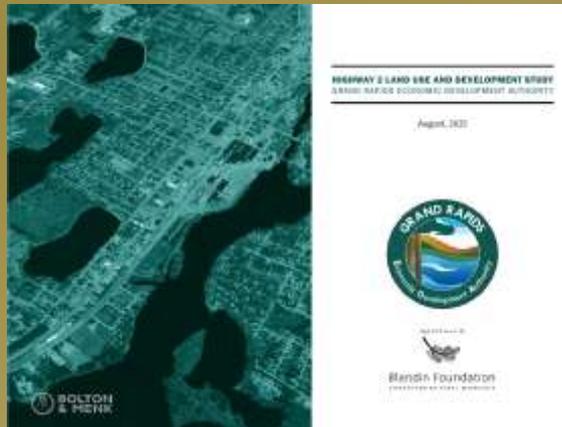
- We saw the grand openings of three new businesses in the downtown that GREDA and IRRR provided loan and grant assistance to; Ledger and Ladle, The Tied and The Pines.



## Highway 2 West Commercial Corridor

- Secured a \$175,000 IRRR Commercial Redevelopment grant for a portion of the demolition and cleanup of former Farm Co-op
- Submitted applications to MPCA and Minnesota Dept. of Agric. for approval of contaminant remediation during demo.

Redevelopment & Downtown



900 NW 4<sup>th</sup> Street (Hwy. 2 West)





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# Economic Development Activity



## Multi-Family Housing

- Oppidan Development Mill & Miss Apartment workforce housing project, 132 units, \$33.2M
  - Groundbreaking — August 2025
  - Spring 2027 anticipated opening

Housing





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# Economic Development Activity



## Multi-Family Housing

- Unique Opportunities Riverview Apartment project, 63 units, \$10.2M
  - Construction Start — June 2025
  - Spring — Early Summer 2026 anticipated opening

Housing





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# Economic Development Activity

## Single Family Housing

- **Forest Lake Addition**
  - All 16 of the ICHRA homes have been sold or are under contract to be sold.
  - The last of 3 Itasca County Habitat for Humanity Homes is under construction.
- **Crystal Lake Estates Second Addition**
  - Funding for demolition and utility services has been secured. Early summer construction.
  - Eight lots for single-family homes were platted by GREDA for homes to be developed in partnership with the ICHRA.
- **Great River Acres**
  - GREDA sold two single family home lots and executed an option with Premier Custom Homes
  - One under construction.





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# Economic Development Activity



## Grand Rapids Economic Development Authority 2026 Work Plan

* Results of Issue Identification and Ranking			* Desired Outcomes/Work Approach/Schedule			
Issue/Task/Work Item	Role	Term (years) Short 1-2 Med. 3-5 Long 6+	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<b>Industry Advancement/Support</b>						
<b>Ensure an adequate inventory of industrial sites and facilities exist to accommodate full industrial, warehousing &amp; distribution business expansion and relocation potential.</b>	Lead	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete as needed due diligence to ensure sites are "shovel-ready".</li> <li>Scope out development costs for future industrial park expansion.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue efforts to secure land for expansion of the Airport South Industrial Park.</li> </ul>		
<b>Continue to work with HWY 35 on current and future development opportunities.</b>	Lead	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborate with HWY 35 on efforts focused on workforce attraction.</li> <li>Work with spinoff developments/businesses interested in a Grand Rapids location.</li> <li>Work with HWY 35 to develop a plan for development of the undeveloped portion of their site.</li> <li>Investigate opportunities for the development of a spec industrial building with support from IRRR.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborate with GRPUC on the possible expansion of the adjacent Tioga electrical sub-station.</li> </ul>		

Current Activities



# Economic Development Activity

Current Activities

* Results of Issue Identification and Ranking			* Desired Outcomes/Work Approach/Schedule				
Issue/Task/Work Item	Role	Term (years) Short 1-2 Med. 3-5 Long 6+	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
<b>Industry Advancement/Support</b>							
Pursue strategic property acquisitions in key commercial, industrial, and residential areas.	Lead	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In addition to the strategic acquisition of commercial and industrial sites, review the current inventory of land available for housing and determine if there is a need for GREDA to secure a site or sites.</li> </ul>	●—————→			
Take proactive steps to ensure that Grand Rapids can both position itself to attract new, emerging industries and sustain its current industries	Lead	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue work to re-establish 48C Tax Credit eligibility for the Grand Rapids industrial parks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborate with and advocate for the GRPUC's development of competitive industrial utility rates and make that information readily available to prospective industries.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet with existing large industrial employers to discuss potential impacts of the impending Boswell Energy decommissioning.</li> <li>Support efforts to revise sulfate standards.</li> </ul>		
Support business retention and attraction by leading and partnering in efforts focused on workforce recruitment, workforce development and childcare availability.	Lead & Partner	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participate in the Iron Range working group assembled to explore use of the recently expanded Federal Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit program, Section 45F.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interview major employers to document challenges experienced in recruiting workforce.</li> <li>Issue an RFP seeking professional assistance with specific expertise in developing a workforce recruitment plans/strategies for like positioned rural communities.</li> <li>Begin and implement of the plan.</li> </ul>	●—————→		



# Economic Development Activity

Current Activities

* Results of Issue Identification and Ranking			* Desired Outcomes/Work Approach/Schedule			
Issue/Task/Work Item	Role	Term (years) Short 1-2 Med. 3-5 Long 6+	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<b>Industry Advancement/Support</b>						
Lead and partner in initiatives addressing housing shortages.	Lead & Partner	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advance the redevelopment of the former ISD 318 Admin. building site in collaboration with the Itasca County HRA.</li> <li>Support local development interest in the development of a multi-family cooperative housing development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with housing developers, area employers, MN IRRR, MHFA, GMHF and Blandin Foundation to incentivize and remove financial barriers for projects.</li> <li>Support 2026 applications to MHFA Housing Tax Credit program for Grand Rapids projects.</li> </ul>	●————→	
Provide as needed support for wood product industries.	Lead	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue ongoing regular communications with Blandin Paper management regarding as needed assistance.</li> </ul>	●————→		
<b>Transportation/Logistics</b>						
Continue to advocate for highway transportation route improvements to improve linkages between Grand Rapids and the interstate and the Duluth Port.	Lead	L		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet with Yanmar, Blandin, L&amp;M and other major employers that use this transportation corridor to understand their current and future needs.</li> <li>Continue to explore funding/opportunities for a transportation study to document need for improvements.</li> </ul>	●————→	



# Economic Development Activity

Current Activities

* Results of Issue Identification and Ranking			* Desired Outcomes/Work Approach/Schedule			
Issue/Task/Work Item	Role	Term (years) Short 1-2 Med. 3-5 Long 6+	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<b>Redevelopment &amp; Downtown</b>						
Continue implementation of the Downtown Plan	Lead	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide continued support to the newly established Downtown Alliance.</li> <li>Utilize the Blandin Foundation grant funds to help the Alliance achieve two significant goals in their three-year plan. Those being the planning and implementation of pedestrian wayfinding and the implementation of Downtown branding.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assist with the redevelopment of downtown sites, specifically the Plumers Building, GREDA lots and Block 36 (Free Range Food Co-op)</li> <li>Continue to market the Downtown Mandated Building Improvement Loan and the Commercial Building Improvement Loan programs.</li> </ul>	●————→	
Continue implementation of the Hwy. 2 Land Use and Development Study	Lead	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secure funds and complete the demolition of the former Farm Service Cooperative building and market the site for development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to pursue the acquisition of other key redevelopment sites along the corridor.</li> <li>Support private redevelopment efforts.</li> </ul>	●————→	



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# Questions?