



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

## PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING AGENDA

Thursday, April 02, 2026

4:00 PM

**CALL TO ORDER:** Pursuant to due notice and call thereof a Regular Meeting of the Grand Rapids Planning Commission will be held on Thursday, April 2, 2026 at 4:00 PM in City Hall Council Chambers, 420 North Pokegama Avenue, Grand Rapids, Minnesota.

**CALL OF ROLL:**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

1. Consider approval of minutes from the February 5, 2026 regular meeting.

**GENERAL BUSINESS:**

2. Consider a recommendation to the City Council on the Vacation of a municipal street right-of-way near Blandin Beach.
3. Consider a recommendation to the City Council on a text amendment to the Municipal Code increasing the maximum height in R-4 zoning.
4. Consider the election of Planning Commission Officers

**PUBLIC INPUT:**

*Individuals may address the Planning Commission about any non-public hearing item or any item not included on the Regular Meeting Agenda. Speakers are requested to come to the podium, state their name and address for the record and limit their remarks to three (3) minutes.*

**MISCELLANEOUS:**

**REPORTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS/UPDATES:**

5. Zoning Administrator update on multifamily unit analysis.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**NEXT REGULAR MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR MAY 7, 2026 AT 4:00 PM.**

Hearing Assistance Available: This facility is equipped with a ready assistance system.

**ATTEST:** Aurimy Groom, Administrative Assistant



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**PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**  
**Thursday, February 05, 2026**  
**4:00 PM**

Chair Bignall called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

**CALL OF ROLL:**

**PRESENT**

Commissioner Betsy Johnson  
 Commissioner Paul Bignall  
 Commissioner David Marquardt  
 Commissioner David Kreitzer  
 Commissioner Amanda Lamppa

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

1. Consider approval of minutes from the December 4, 2025 regular meeting.

Motion by Commissioner Kreitzer, second by Commissioner Johnson to approve the minutes from the December 4, 2025 regular meeting. The following voted in favor thereof: Johnson, Marquardt, Bignall, Lamppa, Kreitzer. Opposed: None, motion passed unanimously.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

2. Conduct a public hearing to consider a recommendation to the City Council regarding a request for an amendment to the approved Conditional Use Permit granted to Target Corporation.

On December 30, 2025, RSP Architecture, on behalf of Target Corporation, requested the Planning Commission's recommendation for approval of an amendment to a Conditional Use Permit.

The requested amendment would allow for the updating of the building's current exterior paint colors to the current Target brand standard with red accent, updating of existing building signage, and minor improvements necessary to comply with ADA requirements

With the establishment of the CUP process set forth in the Municipal Code, the review and approval of new projects, as well as modifications/amendments to approved facilities, is no longer administered by staff, but is issued through a Conditional Use Permit approved by the City Council, with recommendations received from the Planning Commission.

Motion by Commissioner Kreitzer, second by Commissioner Lamppa to open the public hearing. The following voted in favor thereof: Kreitzer, Lamppa, Bignall, Marquardt,

Johnson. Opposed: None, motion passed unanimously.

There was no public comment.

Motion by Commissioner Kreitzer, second by Commissioner Lamppa to close the public hearing. The following voted in favor thereof: Johnson, Marquardt, Bignall, Lamppa, Kreitzer. Opposed: None, motion passed unanimously.

The Commissioners reviewed the considerations for the record.

1. Will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, morals, or general welfare?  
No, it will not be detrimental to the public in any way.
2. Will not cause undue traffic congestion or hazards and will not result in a parking shortage? No, there will be not be a parking shortage and it will not affect the flow of traffic.
3. Will not be injurious to the use and enjoyment or result in a decrease in value of other property in the area? No, it is routine maintenance on the building.
4. Will not impede the orderly development of other property in the area?  
No, there will be no changes to the footprint which will not impede development of other property.
5. Will not impose an excessive burden on parks and other public facilities and utilities?  
No, there will be no changes that would impose a burden on either.
6. Is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan?  
Yes, it is maintaining the buildings facade and complying with ADA requirements.

Motion by Commissioner Lamppa, second by Commissioner Marquardt that, based on the findings of fact presented here today, and in the public's best interest, the Planning Commission does hereby recommend that the City Council grant the following amendment to the Conditional Use Permit, approved under City Resolution No. 06-105, to Target Corporation, for the property legally described as: Lot 1, Block 1, Mood Addition of Grand Rapids, Itasca County, Minnesota:

- Allow for the updating of the building's current exterior paint colors to the current Target brand standard with red accent, updating of existing building signage, and minor improvements necessary to comply with ADA requirements as described in the CUP application.

and that the following conditions shall apply:

- That all previously imposed conditions under City Council Resolution No. 06-105 remains in effect.

The following voted in favor thereof: Johnson, Marquardt, Bignall, Lamppa, Kreitzer. Opposed: None, motion passed unanimously.

## GENERAL BUSINESS:

3. Consider a recommendation to the City Council to vacate an alley right-of-way within Block 26, Grand Rapids Second Division.

On January 12, the Grand Rapids Economic Development Authority applied requesting the vacation of the following described public-right-of-way: *The North-South alley lying adjacent to Lots 1-12, Block 26, Grand Rapids Second Division, Itasca County, Minnesota.*

The vacation request, if approved, would remove the unimproved right-of-way from the property, providing a clean title to the site to facilitate a potential future sale. The staff review committee have no concerns or objections regarding the petitioned right-of-way vacation.

1. Is the right-of-way needed for traffic purposes?

Why/Why not? No, it has never been used for that purpose.

2. Is the right-of-way needed for pedestrian purposes?

Why/Why not? No, there is a sidewalk on the North side of the road already.

3. Is the right-of-way needed for utility purposes?

Why/Why not? No, it is not needed for utility purposes.

4. Would vacating the right-of-way place additional land on the tax rolls?

Why/Why not? Yes, redevelopment will eventually place additional land on the tax rolls.

5. Would vacating the right-of-way facilitate economic development in the City?

Why/Why not? Yes, it will make the site pad ready for new development.

Motion by Commissioner Kreitzer, second by Commissioner Marquardt that, based on the findings of fact presented here today, and in the public's best interest, the Planning Commission does hereby forward to the City Council a recommendation to approve the vacation of public rights-of-way described as:

The North – South alley lying adjacent to Lots 1-12, Block 26, Second Division, Grand Rapids, Itasca County, Minnesota.

The following voted in favor thereof: Johnson, Marquardt, Bignall, Lamppa, Kreitzer.

Opposed: None, motion passed unanimously.

## PUBLIC INPUT:

*Individuals may address the Planning Commission about any non-public hearing item or any item not included on the Regular Meeting Agenda. Speakers are requested to come to the podium, state their name and address for the record and limit their remarks to three (3) minutes.*

There was no public input.

## REPORTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS/UPDATES:

Mr. Richter noted there are still two vacancies on the Planning Commission, if you are interested please contact the City Clerk, Kim Gibeau for an application.

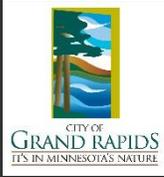
ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Aurimy Groom, Administrative Assistant





# Planning Commission Staff Report

Vacation	Community Development Department	Date: 4/2/26
<b>Statement of Issue:</b>	Consider a recommendation to the City Council regarding the vacation of a street right-of-way within Grand Rapids Second Division.	
<b>Background:</b>	<p>Community Development staff have initiated the process to vacate a municipal street right-of-way within Grand Rapids Second Division (at Blandin Beach).</p> <p>The legal description is:</p> <p><b>6<sup>th</sup> Street NW right-of-way Adjacent to Blocks 8 and 9, Grand Rapids Second Division, Itasca County, Minnesota.</b></p> <p>The vacation is being requested to facilitate a DNR grant application for improvements – including a new building – that would sit in the current right-of-way.</p> <p>Please see the attached location map with area of proposed vacation shaded.</p> <p>The staff review committee have no concerns or objections regarding the right-of-way vacation. The staff review committee consists of the Engineering/Public Works Department, Community Development Department, Fire Department, Police Department, and the Grand Rapids Public Utilities Commission – electrical and water department managers.</p> <p>Minnesota Statutes 412.851 governs the procedures for vacating right-of-way (or a portion of) in a statutory city. Under this statute the City Council has the authority to vacate a public right-of-way on its own motion or through a petition of the majority of the landowners.</p>	
<b>Considerations:</b>	When considering the vacation of public right-of-way, the Planning Commission must make findings of fact based on the attached list of considerations.	
<b>Recommendation:</b>	<p>Staff recommends that the Planning Commissioners visit the site, review the comments submitted by the Review Committee, and review the relevant sections of the Comprehensive Plan.</p> <p>Prior to making a recommendation to the City Council to approve/not approve the vacation, the Planning Commission should make specific findings to support its recommendation and reference those specific findings in their motion to either approve or not approve the right-of-way vacation.</p>	

<b>Required Action:</b>	<p>Pass a motion forwarding a recommendation to the City Council for approval or non-approval of the proposed public right-of-way vacation.</p> <p><u>Example Motion:</u></p> <p>Motion by _____, second by _____ that, based on the findings of fact presented here today, and in the public's best interest, the Planning Commission does hereby forward to the City Council a recommendation to <b>(approve) (not approve)</b> the vacation of public right-of-way described as:</p> <p><b><i>6<sup>th</sup> Street NW right-of-way Adjacent to Blocks 8 and 9, Grand Rapids Second Division, Itasca County, Minnesota.</i></b></p> <p><u>Contingent on the following stipulation(s):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• _____.</li></ul>
<b>Attachments:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Site map</li><li>• Staff Review Committee Comments</li><li>• List of the Planning Commissions Vacation Considerations</li><li>• Staff presentation</li></ul>



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# **Public Vacation Request**

## **Municipal Street ROW**

### ***6<sup>th</sup> Street, Grand Rapids Second Division***

**April 2, 2026**



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# Public Vacation Request

## Key Points from the Staff Report:

- **Subject area is a platted ROW (unimproved)**
- **Vacation is needed under Parks Dept DNR grant**
- **Request has undergone staff and committee review**
- **Not needed for a public ROW purpose**



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# Public Vacation Request

- **Initiated by: City staff**
- **Filing Date: March 12, 2026**
- **Requested Vacation: platted street ROW**

**Reason for Request: Planned improvements to Blandin Beach would sit in the ROW.**

- **Legally Described Vacation Request:**

**6<sup>th</sup> Street NW right-of-way Adjacent to Blocks 8 and 9, Grand Rapids Second Division, Itasca County, Minnesota.**

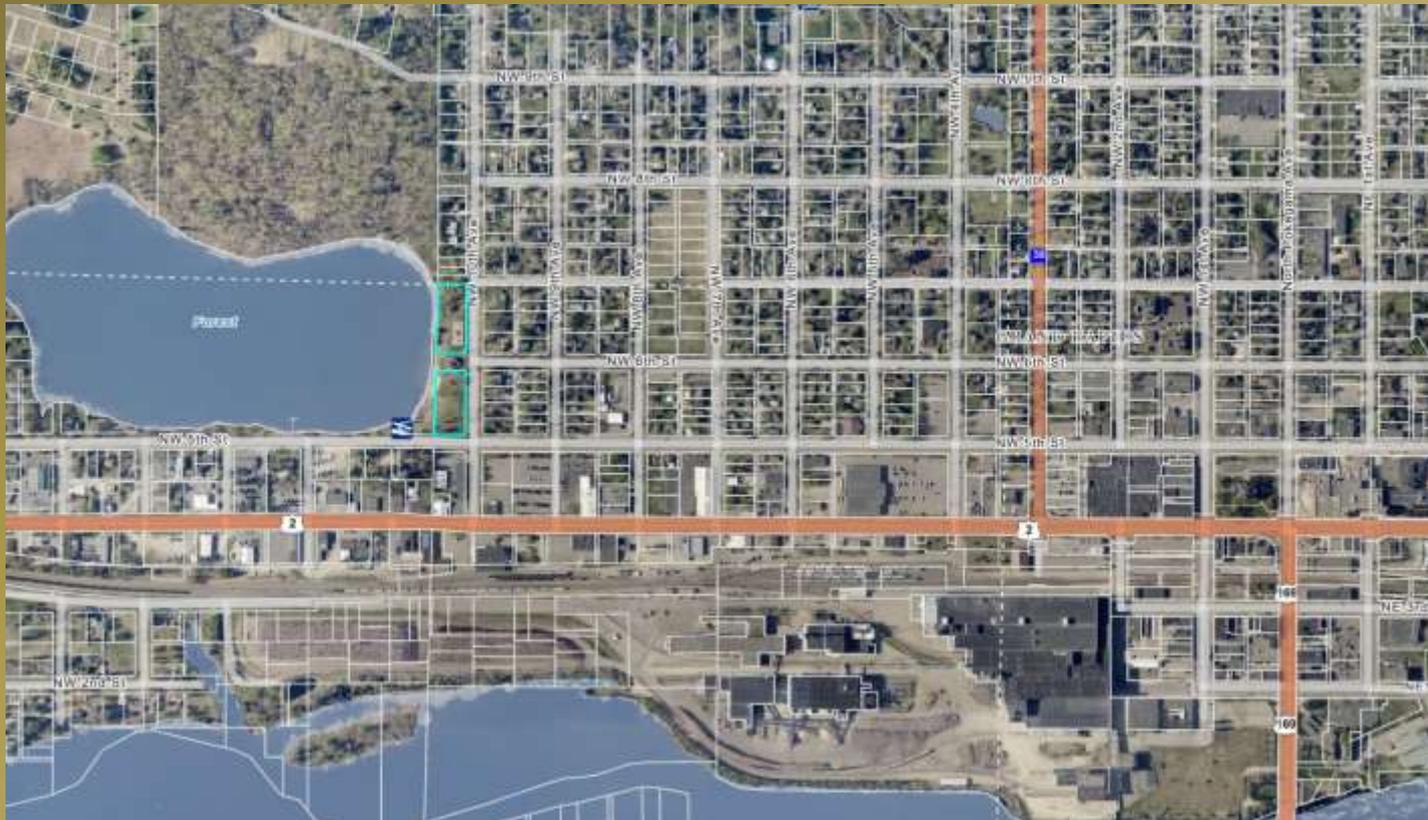
**\*Blandin Beach**





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# Public Vacation Request





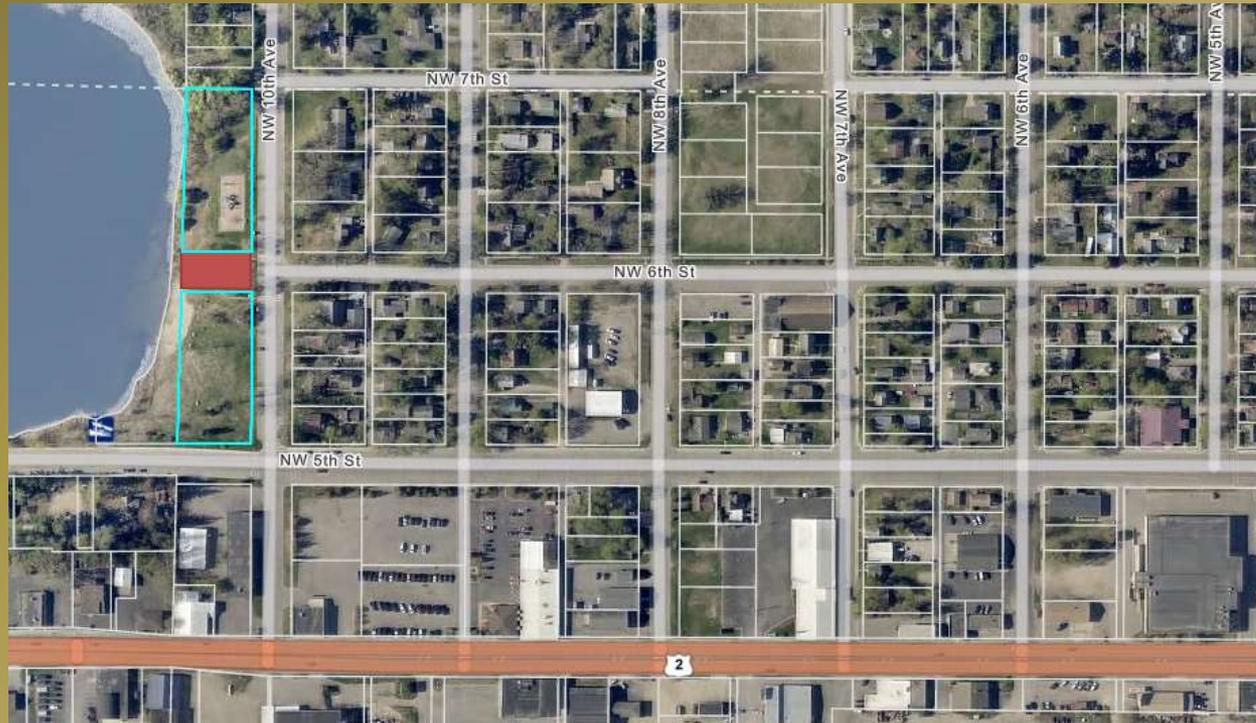
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# Public Vacation Request

Item 2.

**Subject area:**

- **ROW in red.**



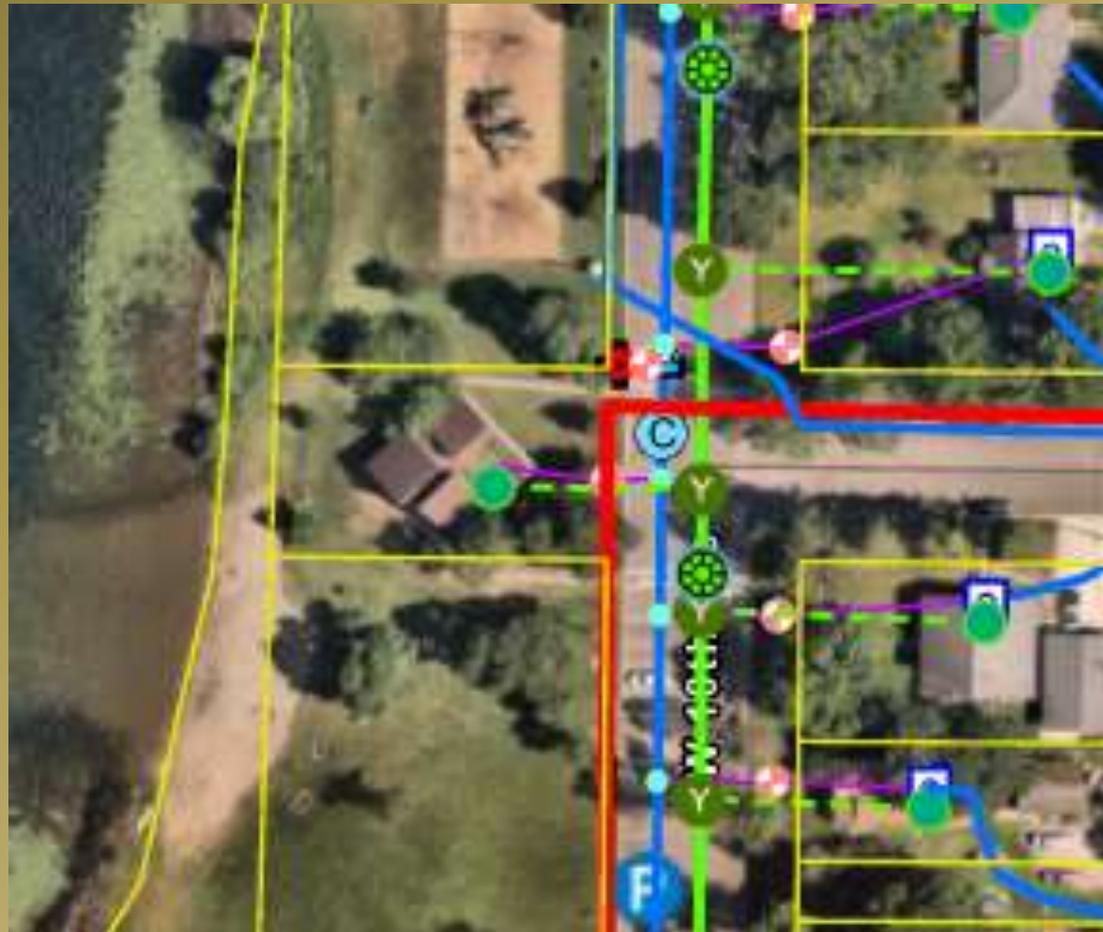


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# Public Vacation Request

## Subject area:

- **Utilities and easements in the area**





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# Public Vacation Request

## Staff Review Committee:

- **Staff review committee consists of: Engineering/Public Works Department, Community Development Department, Fire Department, Police Department, and the Grand Rapids Public Utilities Commission.**
- **No issues/concerns with vacating - the municipal street right-of-way is not needed for a public ROW purpose.**



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# Public Vacation Request

## Planning Commission Considerations:

### PLANNING COMMISSION

Considerations

### RIGHT-OF-WAY VACATIONS

1. Is the right-of-way needed for traffic purposes?  
Why/Why not?
  
2. Is the right-of-way needed for pedestrian purposes?  
Why/Why not?
  
3. Is the right-of-way needed for utility purposes?  
Why/Why not?
  
4. Would vacating the right-of-way place additional land on the tax rolls?  
Why/Why not?
  
5. Would vacating the right-of-way facilitate economic development in the City?  
Why/Why not?



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Item 2.

# Questions?

I see no immediate public safety concern- GRPD supports the vacation

## Andy Morgan | Chief of Police

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### Grand Rapids Police Department

[amorgan@grandrapidsmn.gov](mailto:amorgan@grandrapidsmn.gov)

[cityofgrandrapidsmn.com](http://cityofgrandrapidsmn.com)

Office: 218-326-3464 • Fax: 218-326-7610

---

420 North Pokegama Avenue • Grand Rapids • MN • 55744-2662

**From:** Will Richter <[wrichter@grandrapidsmn.gov](mailto:wrichter@grandrapidsmn.gov)>

**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2026 11:14 AM

**To:** Travis Cole <[tcole@grandrapidsmn.gov](mailto:tcole@grandrapidsmn.gov)>; Julie Kennedy <[jakennedy@grpuc.org](mailto:jakennedy@grpuc.org)>; Andy Morgan <[amorgan@grandrapidsmn.gov](mailto:amorgan@grandrapidsmn.gov)>; Matt Wegwerth, PE <[mwegwerth@grandrapidsmn.gov](mailto:mwegwerth@grandrapidsmn.gov)>

**Cc:** Steve Mattson <[srmattson@grpuc.org](mailto:srmattson@grpuc.org)>; Chad M. Troumbly <[cmtroumbly@grandrapidsmn.gov](mailto:cmtroumbly@grandrapidsmn.gov)>

**Subject:** Blandin Beach vacation

All;

Please review the attached memo regarding a vacation at Blandin Beach.

Thank you,

## Will Richter | Zoning Administrator

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### City of Grand Rapids

[wrichter@grandrapidsmn.gov](mailto:wrichter@grandrapidsmn.gov)

[cityofgrandrapidsmn.com](http://cityofgrandrapidsmn.com)

Office: 218-326-7650 • Fax: 218-326-7621

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420 N Pokegama Ave. • Grand Rapids • MN • 55744-2662

No concerns

**Matt Wegwerth | Public Works Director / City Engineer**

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**City of Grand Rapids**

[mwegwerth@grandrapidsmn.gov](mailto:mwegwerth@grandrapidsmn.gov)

[cityofgrandrapidsmn.com](http://cityofgrandrapidsmn.com)

Office: 218-326-7625 • Fax: 218-326-7621

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[wrichter@grandrapidsmn.gov](mailto:wrichter@grandrapidsmn.gov)

[cityofgrandrapidsmn.com](http://cityofgrandrapidsmn.com)

Office: 218-326-7650 • Fax: 218-326-7621

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Electric has underground and overhead there but we are in the right-of-way. **No issues**

The overhead was put in for the city events like the winter golf. Technically on customer (city) side of the meter but we help.

Chad Troumbly | Electric Department Manager

Grand Rapids Public Utilities

500 SE 4th St. | Grand Rapids, MN 55744

W: 218-326-7182 | M: 218-256-9753 | F: 218-326-7499

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<[cmtroumbly@grandrapidsmn.gov](mailto:cmtroumbly@grandrapidsmn.gov)>

**Subject:** Blandin Beach vacation

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All;

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Thank you,

**Will Richter | Zoning Administrator**

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No issue from the fire department.

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**From:** Will Richter <[wrichter@grandrapidsmn.gov](mailto:wrichter@grandrapidsmn.gov)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2026 11:14:17 AM  
**To:** Travis Cole <[tcole@grandrapidsmn.gov](mailto:tcole@grandrapidsmn.gov)>; Julie Kennedy <[jakennedy@grpuc.org](mailto:jakennedy@grpuc.org)>; Andy Morgan <[amorgan@grandrapidsmn.gov](mailto:amorgan@grandrapidsmn.gov)>; Matt Wegwerth, PE <[mwegwerth@grandrapidsmn.gov](mailto:mwegwerth@grandrapidsmn.gov)>  
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Office: 218-326-7650 • Fax: 218-326-7621

---

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Will,

Sorry I was on vacation . I see that there are only service lines in that area so no issues for water/sewer.



Steve Mattson | Water/Wastewater Department Manager

Grand Rapids Public Utilities

500 SE 4th St. | Grand Rapids, MN 55744

W: 218-326-7195 | M: 218-244-5092 | F: 218-326-7499

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**From:** Will Richter <[wrichter@grandrapidsmn.gov](mailto:wrichter@grandrapidsmn.gov)>

**Sent:** Thursday, March 19, 2026 10:25 AM

**To:** Steve R. Mattson <[srmattson@grpuc.org](mailto:srmattson@grpuc.org)>

**Subject:** FW: Blandin Beach vacation

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Steve,

Touching base to see if you anticipate any issues with this potential vacation?

Thank you,

**Will Richter | Zoning Administrator**

---

**City of Grand Rapids**

[wrichter@grandrapidsmn.gov](mailto:wrichter@grandrapidsmn.gov)

[cityofgrandrapidsmn.com](http://cityofgrandrapidsmn.com)

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**PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**Considerations**  
**RIGHT-OF-WAY VACATIONS**

1. Is the right-of-way needed for traffic purposes?  
Why/Why not?

2. Is the right-of-way needed for pedestrian purposes?  
Why/Why not?

3. Is the right-of-way needed for utility purposes?  
Why/Why not?

4. Would vacating the right-of-way place additional land on the tax rolls?  
Why/Why not?

5. Would vacating the right-of-way facilitate economic development in the  
City?  
Why/Why not?



# Planning Commission Staff Report

<b>Text Amendment</b>	<b>Community Development Department</b>	<b>Date: 4/2/26</b>
<b>Statement of Issue:</b>	Consider a recommendation to the City Council regarding amendment to Chapter 30 of the Municipal Code increasing the maximum height for R-4 Multiple Family Residence (high density) zoning from 45' to 60'.	
<b>Background:</b>	<p><b>Introduction</b> Community Development staff recommend the Planning Commission consider initiating a text amendment increasing the maximum height in R-4 zoning. This suggestion comes from a review of recent R-4 multifamily (high density) projects and Planning Commission recommendations on variances and district regulations, along with feedback from various developers in the multifamily housing space.</p> <p>Through this analysis, staff have identified an increase in R-4 building height as an opportunity for review, and potential update, to better reflect current building and land use trends. Most of the text in the City's Zoning Ordinance dates to 1978, and through the guidance of the Planning Commission has gradually been enhanced and modernized several times per year as community needs change. The Last district wide height change was 2018 when the General Business (GB) maximum height increased from 35' to 50'.</p> <p><b>Goal of a Change to R-4 Maximum Height</b> Allow for economically feasible four-story projects – like those discussed below – to move forward in the zoning intended for multifamily (high density) development by creating a path for creating more housing units <b>and</b> compliance with site development requirements such as lot coverage, open space, and parking.</p> <p><b>A Note on How the Zoning Ordinance Defines Height (30-421)</b> <i>Building height</i> means the distance between the average ground level at the building line and the highest point of the roof or flat roof, to the decline of a mansard or to the highest gable on a pitched or hipped roof. In a shoreland district, the height of building means the vertical distance between the highest adjoining ground level at the building or ten feet above the lowest ground level, whichever is lower, and the highest point of a flat roof or average height of the highest gable of a pitched or hipped roof.</p>	

	<p><b>Survey of Recent Projects</b></p> <p>R-4 maximum height is currently 45'</p> <p>Pillars SR-4 Height to peak measurement = 56' – 6" Variance allowed for the construction of a four story, 120-unit senior living community building with an average building height to the mid-point of the roof of 50' 4"</p> <p>Mill + Miss SR-4 Height to peak measurement = 57' 6" Variance allowed for the construction of a four story, 132-unit multi-family housing community building with an average building height to the mid-point of the roof of 48'</p> <p>Riverview Apartments CBD Height to peak measurement = 50' 6" Underlying Central Business District (CBD) zoning permitted a Maximum Building Height of 60'</p> <p><u>All</u> these projects exceed the maximum height for R-4 zoning.</p> <p><b>Increased Multifamily Housing is a Community Need</b> The HRA Comprehensive Housing Study for Itasca County suggests strong demand for multifamily housing – especially affordable and workforce rentals. Please see the Grand Rapids Submarket Housing Dashboard included with this report.</p> <p><b>Result of Last Maximum Height Change</b> Previous district level changes in maximum height have encouraged developments in General Business zoning including Best Western Plus and My Place.</p> <p><b>Staff recommendation:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Amend 30-512 Table 2A District Development Regulations; Principal Structures by increasing the Maximum Height for R-4 zoning to 60'.</li></ol>
<p><b>Considerations:</b></p>	<p>The Planning Commission should make specific findings of fact regarding the proposed amendments to the ordinance:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Will the change affect the character of the neighborhood?</li><li>2. Will the change foster economic growth in the community?</li><li>3. Would the proposed change be in keeping with the spirit and intent</li></ol>

	<p>of the Zoning Ordinance?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Would the change be in the best interest of the general public?</li> <li>5. Would the change be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan?</li> </ol>
<b>Recommendation:</b>	<p>Based on the above findings the Commission should consider a recommendation to the City Council regarding these draft changes.</p>
<b>Required Action:</b>	<p>Pass a motion, based on the findings of fact, to forward either a favorable recommendation, either with or without changes to the draft amendments, to the City Council, or pass a motion, based on the findings of fact, forwarding an unfavorable recommendation to the City Council regarding and amendment to Chapter 30 of the Zoning Ordinance.</p> <p><u>Example Motion:</u></p> <p>Motion by _____, second by _____ that, based on the findings of fact presented here today, and in the public’s best interest, the Planning Commission does hereby forward a <b>(favorable)(unfavorable)</b> recommendation to the City Council regarding a draft amendment to Table 2A District Development Regulations; Principal Structures - increasing the Maximum Height for R-4 zoning to 60’.</p>
<b>Attachments:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff presentation</li> <li>• Housing Study (Grand Rapids submarket dashboard)</li> <li>• Text Amendment Considerations</li> </ul>



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# **Text Amendment**

## **Maximum Height in R-4 Multiple Family Residence Zoning**

### ***Recommendation to City Council***

**April 2, 2026**



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## Text Amendment

### Key Points from the Staff Report:

- **Recommendation to Council for text amendment originates with the Planning Commission**
- **Based on analysis of recent multiple family projects in various zoning designations**
- **Request has undergone staff review**
- **Current R-4 maximum height restricts projects otherwise appropriate for the zoning**



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## Text Amendment

### A Note on How the Zoning Ordinance Defines Height:

- ***Building height*** means the distance between the average ground level at the building line and the highest point of the roof or flat roof, to the decline of a mansard or to the highest gable on a pitched or hipped roof. In a shoreland district, the height of building means the vertical distance between the highest adjoining ground level at the building or ten feet above the lowest ground level, whichever is lower, and the highest point of a flat roof or average height of the highest gable of a pitched or hipped roof.

**R-4 zoning height is measured to the peak or highest point of the roof.**



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# Text Amendment

- Pillars of Grand Rapids
- 56' 6"





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# Text Amendment

- Mill + Miss
- **57' 6"**





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# Text Amendment

- Mill + Miss





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# Text Amendment

- Riverview (near library)
- 50' 6"





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## **Text Amendment**

### **Updating the Municipal Code to reflect current building and land use trends:**

- **The Last district wide height change was 2018 when the General Business (GB) maximum height increased from 35 ft. to 50 ft.**
- **A couple of GB developments have utilized the increased height**
- **Recent projects in other zoning show what potential R-4 projects might look like with an increase in maximum height**



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# Text Amendment

- Benefits of General Business GB height increase





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# Text Amendment

- Benefits of General Business GB height increase





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# Text Amendment

## Planning Commission Considerations:

### PLANNING COMMISSION

#### Considerations

#### ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT

1. Will the change affect the character of neighborhoods?  
Why/Why not?
  
2. Would the change foster economic growth in the community?  
Why/Why not?
  
3. Would the proposed change be in keeping with the spirit and intent of the ordinance?  
Why/Why not?
  
4. Would the change be in the best interest of the general public?  
Why/Why not?
  
5. Would the change be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan?  
Why/Why not?



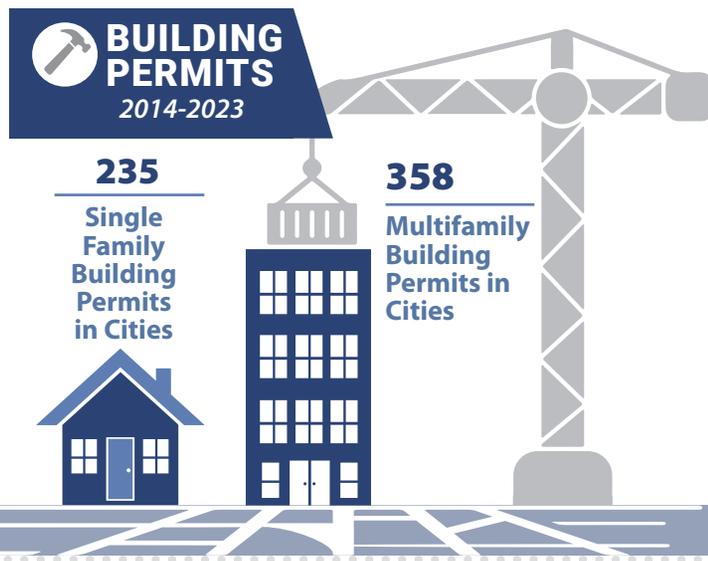
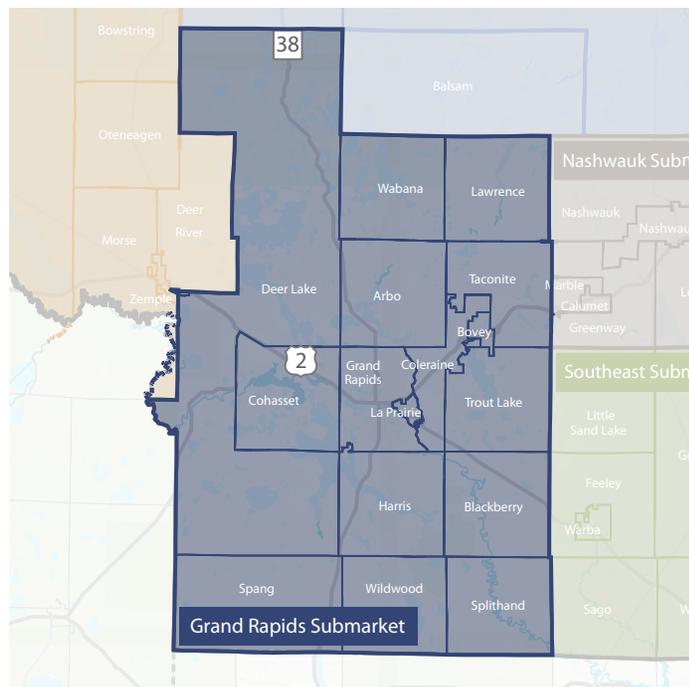
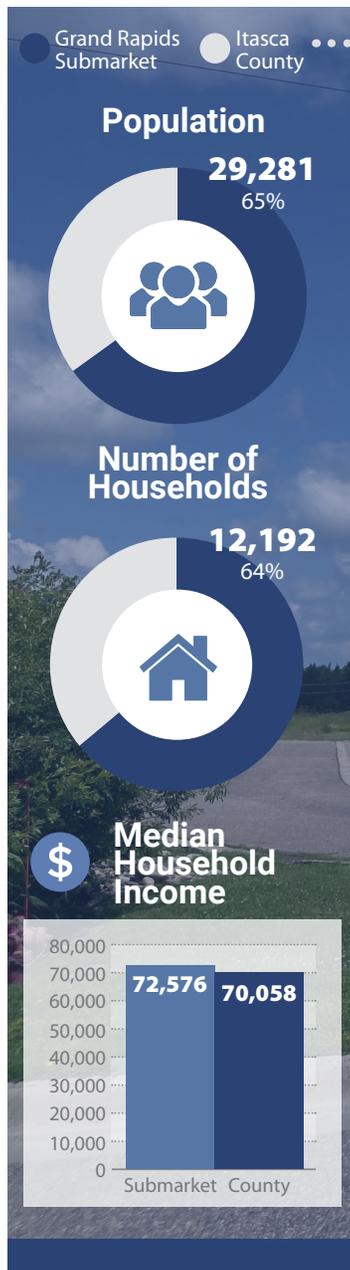
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# Questions?

# HOUSING DASHBOARDS

Item 3.

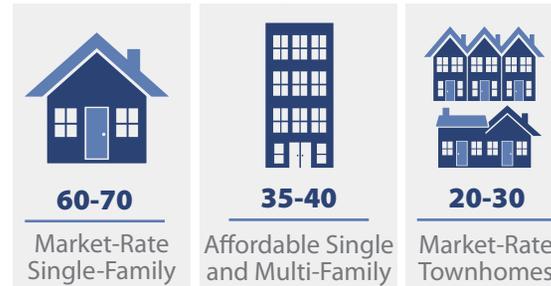
## GRAND RAPIDS SUBMARKET



## ESTIMATED HOUSING DEMAND

(2024-2029)

### For Sale Housing Units



Total For-Sale Housing Demand

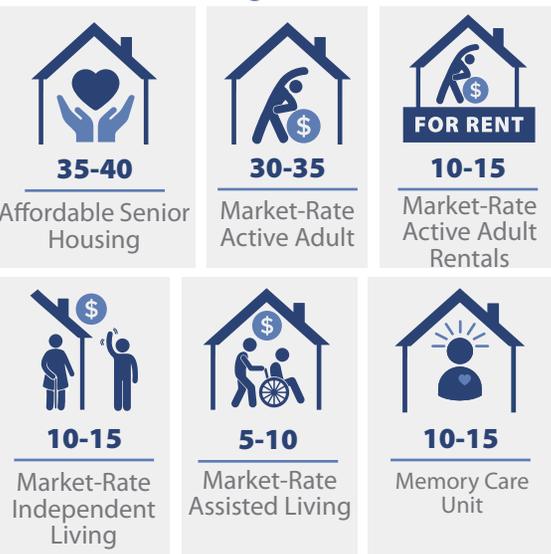
**115-140**

### Rental Housing Units



**240-265**

### Senior Housing Units



**100-130**

PLANNING COMMISSION

Considerations

**ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT**

1. Will the change affect the character of neighborhoods?

Why/Why not?

2. Would the change foster economic growth in the community?

Why/Why not?

3. Would the proposed change be in keeping with the spirit and intent of the ordinance?

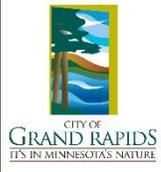
Why/Why not?

4. Would the change be in the best interest of the general public?

Why/Why not?

5. Would the change be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan?

Why/Why not?



**Planning Commission**  
**Staff Report**

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Community Development Department</b>	<b>Date: 4/02/2026</b>
<b>Statement of Issue:</b>	Conduct the election of Planning Commission Officers	
<b>Background:</b>	<p>In accordance with the bylaws of the Planning Commission, the officers include a chair, vice-chair/secretary.</p> <p>The present officers are:</p> <p>Chair – Paul Bignall Vice-chair/Secretary – Amanda Lamppa</p> <p>When conducting elections, the Chair shall first request nominations from Planning Commission members. If only one member is nominated, the election may be by unanimous consent. Otherwise, on hearing no further nominations, the Chair shall announce the names of all members nominated, and then conduct a vote on each nominee, in the order nominated, until someone is elected. The favorable vote of a majority of the full membership of the Commission is necessary to elect a member as Chair or Vice-Chair/Secretary.</p>	
<b>Considerations:</b>		
<b>Recommendation:</b>	Pass a motion electing the Planning Commission Officers	
<b>Required Action:</b>		
<b>Attachments:</b>		



# Planning Commission Update

<b>Update</b>	<b>Community Development Department</b>	<b>Date: 4/2/26</b>
<b>Task:</b>	Study the feasibility of developing an alternate multifamily unit calculation using a flexible bedroom allowance for projects in GB, LB, and R-4 zones.	
<b>Issues for analysis:</b>	<p>There is considerable demand – currently and into the foreseeable future - for multifamily housing units in Grand Rapids. The number of suitable building sites near existing sewer and water utility service is limited. The current method of determining unit count for a multifamily project tends to underutilize the potential of available building sites - creating a dynamic where demand is strong and the economics of creating multifamily housing are made especially challenging with limited unit count.</p> <p>Is there a way to meet market demand by creating higher unit count without sacrificing important site development requirements such as green space, stormwater requirements, and parking?</p>	
<b>Municipal Code:</b>	<p>How unit count is calculated in the Municipal Code:</p> <p>Table 2A District Development Regulations list Area S/F Unit in column 2 – this is a key factor in establishing density. R-4 Area S/F Unit is 2,500 and GB/LB is 3,000.</p> <p>Example calculation for a 6-acre site:</p> <p>Project A (R-4)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Determine Gross Area by multiplying the number of acres by square feet per acre. <math>(6 * 42,560) = 255,360</math> Sq. Ft.</li> <li>2. Divide Gross Area by Area S/F Unit. <math>(255,360 / 2,500) = 102.144</math></li> </ol> <p>Project B GB/LB</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Determine Gross Area by multiplying the number of acres by square feet per acre. <math>(6 * 42,560) = 255,360</math> Sq. Ft.</li> <li>2. Divide Gross Area by S/F Unit. <math>(255,360 / 3,000) = 85.12</math></li> </ol> <p>The Municipal Code considers <b>BOTH</b> a three-bedroom apartment and a one-bedroom apartment as one unit. Project A and B could potentially have 306 and 255 bedrooms if all units were three-bedroom. However, multifamily developments typically have a mix of unit types.</p> <p>Example calculation for Project A using a mix of bedrooms:</p> <p>102 units * 3 bedrooms per unit = 306 bedrooms</p> <p>102 units * 1 bedroom per unit = 102 bedrooms</p>	

	<p>Mixed project</p> <p>6 - 4 bedrooms          10 - 3 bedrooms          42 - 2 bedrooms          26 - 1 bedroom          18 - studio (count as 1 bedroom)</p> <p>Total units = 102          Total bedrooms = 182          Potential bedrooms if all were three-bedroom = 306</p> <p>Is there a way to consider bedroom count in calculating number of allowed multifamily units to offer flexibility for developers to create and market economically viable projects?</p>
<p><b>Potential Solution:</b></p>	<p>Using a flexible bedroom allowance for multifamily unit calculations using an average – i.e. <math>4+3+2+1 = 10</math></p> <p><math>10 / 4 = 2.5</math></p> <p>Example calculation for Project A:</p> <p>Project A (R-4)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Determine Gross Area by multiplying the number of acres by square feet per acre. <math>(6 * 42,560) = 255,360</math> Sq. Ft.</li> <li>2. Divide Gross Area by Area S/F Unit. <math>(255,360 / 2,500) = 102.144</math></li> <li>3. <math>102.144 * 2.5 = 255.36</math> bedrooms distributed across a flexible number of units.</li> </ol> <p>This is 51 bedrooms less than if all R-4 units were three-bedroom and the same number of bedrooms were less dense GB and LB district unit counts maxed out with all three-bedroom units.</p> <p>Is this a reasonable alternative?</p>