

## ND Extra Territorial Zoning Law Review

### 1.23.08 Testimony

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The State Legislature has made a huge mistake. Poor planning and a lack of understanding the whole picture has allowed the city of Grand Forks to make aggressive and unwarranted zoning laws for the sole purpose of siting a municipal solid waste landfill. When the law was passed and the 4 mile extra territorial authority was granted to the city of Grand Forks, officials told land owners the city's action was for the control of urban sprawl. If hindsight is 20/20, then we in the 4-mile ET zone of Grand Forks County should have perfect vision, because now, we clearly see that they lied their way through the initial days and months of this process, and now, in February, they're planning to choose a section of land in the 4-mile Extra Territorial zone to site a landfill. No common sense, what so ever. They have the right to do this, to make this mistake, because they wrote the zoning laws. We can't vote

against them since they took our voting rights away. How sensible is it to put a landfill on land that has been a popular direction for home development? No, the Grand Forks city council has only been barreling their way through to what is now the pre-application phase of siting their long awaited source of additional income.

Yes, I said income. The City of Grand Forks is supposed to be a government, but they're thinking like a business. And like any good business managers, they're planning for high volume and low expenses. Next month they'll decide which section they'll use.

And, all along, we've been told by our County Commissioners, the only politicians we CAN vote for, that we are powerless against the Grand Forks City Council.

So, how did their action affect us, other than shock and aggravation? The new zoning rules limit development to one house for every 40 acres. The city is not projected to be growing into our area for more than 100 years. That leaves out several generations of our family who could be prospering on land kept in

the family, keeping North Dakotans living and thriving in North Dakota. No, the 4-Mile Extra Territorial zoning rules eliminates any plans we had on subdividing and developing lots on our 30 acres. We own a home and 3 small fields on both sides of Wilson Creek, and though these are currently used for agriculture, our long term plan is to subdivide. We are only one mile South of County Road 6, also known as the Merrifield Road, and it is very feasible that these lots would easily sell. They say that land is a solid investment for the future, and our retirement plans included the sale of these lots. Now, with the ET Zoning limitations, the City of Grand Forks has dashed all hopes of development, and the related income.

And, another way this affects us is through the City of Grand Forks choosing the neighboring fields, Walle Township sections 6 and 7, among others, as potential sites for their new landfill. If sited in this area, property values for our home will plummet, leaving us and our mortgage lenders in a financial quagmire.

All this started with the State Legislature hurrying through critical legislation that has real impact on real people. What's left behind is unreasonable. It's not a reasonable balance to have seven city officials controlling the lives of so many who do not have a voice, who do not have a vote in any city of Grand Forks decisions. You can see how the City of Grand Forks has abused their authority, authority you gave them.

It says in the Book of Job, 'The Lord gives, the Lord takes away, blessed be the Name of the Lord.' Well, the North Dakota Legislature gave this authority, and you have the right to take it back. The City of Grand Forks has not treated your trust with the due care it deserves. I humbly ask the State to repeal the 4 Mile ET Zoning law, especially with the City of Grand Forks who consider themselves "Grandfathered-in".

Take it back and MAKE them be GOOD NEIGHBORS!