

# BEMIDJI SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

Thursday, February 12, 2026

City Hall – 317 4th Street NW  
3:30 PM



**1) CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

**2) APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**3) APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

a) January 8, 2026

**4) PUBLIC COMMENT**

Please state your name and address; please use appropriate language and no derogatory comments towards any individuals; please keep your comments limited to 3 minutes or less; and the chair may limit speakers and times accordingly.

**5) OLD BUSINESS**

b) Member Appointments and Officer Elections

a. New Officers Seated

- Chair - Jordan
- Vice Chair — Charles
- Secretary - Linda

b. Open Positions

- City or Non-City Resident 12/31/2027
- City or Non-City Resident 12/31/2028

c) Goal Setting for 2026

a. Review of Past Goals & Best Practice Accomplishments

- Native Landscaping - DNR Grant Update
- Waste & Recycling
- Energy Efficiency

b. New Goals

d) Comprehensive Planning — Updates

**6) NEW BUSINESS**

e) Reports

- f) Transportation Electrification Survey
- g) Upcoming Events or Grant Opportunities

**7) ADJOURN**

## **City of Bemidji Sustainability Commission,**

January 8, 2026 starting at 3:30PM at the Bemidji City Hall

Commissioners Present: Jordan, Charles, Linda, Josafina

Commissioners Absent: (two open seats) Lisa

City Liaisons: Audrey Thayer, Melissa Fahrenbruch,

Guests: Kathryn Burke, GreenCorps member from HRDC

The meeting was called to order by Jordan at 3:32 at City Hall .

APPROVAL OF AGENDA - M/S by Charles/Linda to approve as presented, motion carried

### APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

a) November 13, 2025 M/S by Charles/Jo to approve, motion carried.

b) December 11, 2025 M/S by Charles/Jo to approve, motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT: none

### OLD BUSINESS

a) Member Retention and Recruitment:

- Renewed - Charles Biberg and Lisa Weiskopf for 3-years, ending 12/31/28
- Renewed - Jordan Lutz for 1-year term ending 12/31/2026.

b) . Election of Officers

- Officers start terms on February 12, 2026.
- Three offices are up for election: Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary.
- Linda nominated Jordan for Chair, second by Charles, carried.
- Jordan nominated Charles for Vice Chair, second by Jo, carried.
- Jordan nominated Linda for Secretary, second by Charles, carried.

### Comprehensive Planning

As noted last month, the Comp planning process is in a bit of a reset. The team is in the process of gathering surveys to inform the four focus areas.

### NEW BUSINESS

#### Goal Setting for 2026

This is largely put off until February when we hope to have 2 appointments to fill the 2 vacant seats . Generally, consider sunseting some of the goals that are handed off to staff or departments and identify the new emerging goals that need focused attention of SustComm. Food systems, Storm-ready community, Native vegetation-storm recovery focus, are some possibilities for discussion.

#### Reports

- Melissa received certification from AICP recently - she is now a Certified Planner!

- Melissa is taking control of the Transportation Electrification grant.

Planning Cases - comments are due early on Jan 16th.

- U-Haul - planting plan - consider boiler plate language that recommends a variety of native tree and shrubs, emphasizes pollinator support, suggests resources. Energy efficiency and energy generation - again, consider boiler plate language that recommends efficiency in the design, refers builder to local utilities, and recommends incorporating solar in the design.
- Rail Corridor - similar to th preliminary comments, focus on electric charging in parking lot, parking space for bikes and EVs, PHEVs, Roof-top solar. Site development to include native trees and shrubs and pollinator support.

Upcoming Events - none noted

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned. M/S by Charles/Jo to Adjourn, carried



City of Bemidji  
Planning and Zoning Department  
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[www.ci.bemidji.mn.us](http://www.ci.bemidji.mn.us)

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**February 4, 2026**

V-2026-0001: - John Johannson, representing Division 25, LLC and Willow Creek Center, is requesting a variance for section 28-409 off-street parking, loading and surfacing standards of a redevelopment of a parking area setback to the side property lines. The subject properties are abutting parcels (parking area for a new Chipotle [former Rod's Meats] and the Willow Creek Center) at 1718 & 1710 Paul Bunyan Dr NW (PIN:800301700, & 800301600) in the City of Bemidji. The properties are in the B-2 General Commercial District and the HWY 197 & Airport 3 Overlays.

The City of Bemidji Planning and Zoning Commission will consider this proposal at its meeting on **Thursday, February 26, 2026, at 5:30 p.m.** in the Council Chambers at Bemidji City Hall or may be viewed on Local Channel 2.

If you have any comments, you may present them to the Commission at that time. It would be encouraged to direct your comments in writing to the Planning and Zoning Planner assigned to the Case, **Melissa Fahrenbruch's** attention at the Planning office at 317 4<sup>th</sup> Street NW, or by email to **SGAdmin@ci.bemidji.mn.us**. If possible, your comments should be submitted by **Friday, February 20th, 2025**, so they may be incorporated into our report to the Planning and Zoning Commission. The report, along with any other pertinent information regarding this planning case will be available prior to the meeting on our website ([City of Bemidji/Boards, Commissions, and Committees/Planning Commission](#)) and at city hall. Attached is a copy of the application and other supporting documentation.

If you have any questions or need further information, please feel free to contact our office at 218-759-3579 or email the planner assigned to the case (see email address above). City departments may access through SmartGov application **V-2026-0001**.

Respectfully,

Planning and Zoning Staff  
City of Bemidji



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Dear Commission Member,

Thank you for taking a few minutes to share your perspective on electric vehicles (EVs) in Bemidji. This survey is designed to help us understand what matters most to community members as electrified transportation becomes more common. Your input will be used to develop a Community-Wide EV Vision Statement that connects the community's goals, values, and priorities to the future of EVs in Bemidji.

A community-wide EV vision statement helps set the direction for transportation electrification and ensures that future decisions align with the broader community's goals. It brings different voices together to identify both the opportunities and the challenges associated with EVs. The result is a shared vision that can guide policies, programs, and investments, and can be updated periodically as technology and community needs evolve.

Your responses will help Bemidji focus on practical steps that fit local priorities. Please answer as honestly as you can, based on your experience and what you want to see moving forward. This survey should take less than 10 minutes, and results will be used to inform the EV vision and Bemidji's next actions related to EVs.

[Link to survey.](#)

Thank you,

Great Plains Institute and City of Bemidji