

PLANNING BOARD PROCEEDINGS BEMIDJI, MINNESOTA

Regular Meeting – Monday, February 9, 2026

Pursuant to due call and notice, a regular meeting of the Planning Board of the City of Bemidji, Beltrami County, Minnesota, was held at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall.

Upon roll call, the following board members were declared present: **Prince, Fiskevold Gould, Peterson, Dickinson, Rivera, Eaton, Thayer.**

Staff Present: **Planning Director Jamin Carlson, Assistant Planning Director Melissa Fahrenbruch, Compliance Inspector & Site Analyst David Wielenberg, Administrative Assistant Ainslee Krause.**

Others Present: **Troy Gilchrist, Town Law Center PLLP, Sam Anderson, Public Works Director, Tim Marco, Marco McClane**

AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA

Chair Eaton called for any amendments to the agenda. None made. Motion by **Thayer**, second by **Peterson**, to approve the agenda. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

MINUTES

The following minutes were presented for approval:

Planning Board Meeting: **January 12, 2025**

Motion by **Dickinson**, second by **Thayer**, approving minutes as presented. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

CITIZENS WITH BUSINESS NOT ON AGENDA

No appearance.

NEW BUSINESS

CONSIDER RESOLUTION FOR CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT AND INTERIM USE PERMIT REQUESTS – 80.05612.00 & 80.05613.00 – AMERCO REAL ESTATE COMPANY

Fahrenbruch presented the first planning case request: Sahithya Cheruku, Amerco Real Estate Company representing U-Haul is requesting a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to construct and operate a Mini-Storage or Self-Service Storage business and an Interim Use Permit (IUP) for operating a Truck and trailer rental business on the property.

The Planning Commission recommend approval of a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to construct and operate a Mini-Storage or Self-Service Storage business and an Interim Use Permit (IUP) for operating a Truck and trailer rental business on the property at parcel # 80.05612.00 & 80.05613.00 TBD Mag Seven Ct SW, with the conditions and findings of fact presented in the packet.

Board members made the following comments regarding the request:

- **Fiskevold Gould** questioned staff regarding the determination of which agencies are asked for input on planning cases. Carlson clarified that staff makes the determination.
- **Fiskevold Gould** addressed the Board regarding Sustainability Commission input to the planning process.
- **Rivera** addressed Board regarding the timeline of Sustainability Commission review and recommendations. Fahrenbruch clarified timeline and process.

Motion by **Prince**, second by **Thayer**, to approve **Resolution 2026-05** for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to construct and operate a Mini-Storage or Self-Service Storage business at parcel # 80.05612.00 & 80.05613.00 TBD Mag Seven Ct SW with the findings of fact and conditions as

presented. Motion carried by the following voice vote: Ayes: **Prince, Fiskevold Gould, Peterson, Dickinson, Rivera, Eaton, Thayer**. Nays: **None**.

Motion by **Peterson**, second by **Thayer**, to approve **Resolution 2026-06** for an Interim Use Permit (IUP) for operating a Truck and trailer rental business on the property at parcel # 80.05612.00 & 80.05613.00 TBD Mag Seven Ct SW, with the findings of fact and conditions as presented. Motion carried by the following voice vote: Ayes: **Prince, Fiskevold Gould, Peterson, Dickinson, Rivera, Eaton, Thayer**. Nays: **None**.

CONSIDER RESOLUTION FOR FINAL PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT THROUGH A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT REQUEST – 80.00344.99, 80.00505.04 & 80.00505.05 – MARCO MCLANE REPRESENTING GREATER BEMIDJI

Carlson presented the second planning case request: Tim Marco (Marco McLane Development) representing Greater Bemidji is requesting approval for a Final Planned Unit Development through a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) & Plat (PUD/PLAT) to develop a multi-phase project which would include a YMCA Community Wellness Center and a hotel and convention center along with other future developments within the Urban Renaissance (UR) zoning district & the General Commercial (B-2) zoning district and the Shoreland Overlay. The subject property is located at multiple addresses off Minnesota Ave NW (PIN #80.00344.99, 80.00505.04, and 80.00505.05) in the City of Bemidji (also known as the railroad corridor).

UPDATE The final plat will be completed in the upcoming months and is not included in this request as the ability to combine with the final PUD could not be attained at this time. This was due to variables to the site including property acquisition, developers, site clean-up, ROW's, and other added parcels.

The Planning Commission recommend approval of the Final Planned Unit Development through a Conditional Use Permit and Plat requests for parcel 800034499, 800050504 and 800050505, with the conditions and findings of fact as presented in the packet.

Board members made the following comments regarding the request:

- Rivera questioned staff about what aspects of the development required additional flexibility under the PUD. Carlson responded.
- Rivera questioned if these flexibilities would create issues for residents of adjacent properties. Carlson responded that it did not appear to be based on plans as there is limited residential housing in the area.
- Rivera asked about the included traffic study and how it's conclusions could affect the project in the future if those conclusions were inaccurate. Sam Anderson clarified.
- Fiskevold Gould inquired about EV charging stations being incorporated into the project. Carlson responded.
- Tim Marco addressed the Board regarding steps they had taken to bring the Sustainability Commission's input to the attention of the project developers.
- Rivera inquired if the relocation of the state trail is addressed in the conditions. Carlson clarified the conditions.

Motion by **Prince**, seconded by **Thayer**, to approve **Resolution 2026-07** approving a Final Planned Unit Development (PUD) through a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to develop a multi-phase project which would include a YMCA Community Wellness Center and a hotel and convention center along with other future developments within the Urban Renaissance (UR) zoning district & the General Commercial (B-2) zoning district and the Shoreland Overlay located at multiple addresses off Minnesota Ave NW (PIN #80.00344.99, 80.00505.04, and 80.00505.05) in the City of Bemidji (also known as the railroad corridor), with the findings of fact and conditions

as presented. Motion carried by the following voice vote: Ayes: **Prince, Fiskevold Gould, Peterson, Dickinson, Rivera, Eaton, Thayer**. Nays: **None**.

CONSIDER RESOLUTION FOR INTERIM USE PERMIT REQUEST – 80.04204.00 – FIRST CITY CANNABIS
Carlson presented the third planning case request: Julie Canty representing First City Cannabis is requesting an Interim Use Permit (IUP) for operating a Cannabis Retail Business in a leased building located at 920 Washington Ave S (PIN 80.04204.00).

The Planning Commission forwarded without recommendation due to a tie vote the consideration of an Interim Use Permit (IUP) for operating a Cannabis Retail Business in a leased building located at 920 Washington Ave S (PIN 80.04204.00) with the conditions and findings of fact presented in the packet.

Board members made the following comments regarding the request:

- **Fiskevold Gould** inquired how setbacks/buffers are uniformly determined in practice and if the City required any special licensing for child related businesses. Carlson responded.
- **Peterson** questioned applicant and staff if any concerns regarding the proposed location came up during initial meetings. Fahrenbruch responded that staff had worked with the applicant for close to a year to find a location and no concerns had been raised.
- **Thayer** addressed gray areas in code and the need to address these issues to prevent problems going forward.
- **Rivera** addressed the Board's responsibility to interpret the ordinance, that previously the medical marijuana ordinance contained a building edge to neighboring property line measurement definition, but that it was left out of the new cannabis ordinance, and that no public feedback was received regarding special protection zones when the cannabis ordinance was passed.
- **Rivera** questioned which method of measurement (building to building, property line to property line) was more restrictive.
- Troy Gilchrist replied that buffers are used in a unique fashion regarding cannabis, that the method of measurement was not dictated by the state, and that ultimately it is up to the Board to determine.
- **Rivera** and Gilchrist discussed the wording of the cannabis ordinance.
- **Rivera** addressed safety concerns stating that she had spoken with the City's Police Chief, as well as those from surrounding cities with dispensaries.
- **Rivera** addressed that she had visited dispensaries in surrounding cities, and discussed the economic development aspect of the project.
- **Prince** addressed the feelings of the community, the need to clarify measurement processes, and questioned what would happen if a building currently meeting the buffer requirement is expanded in the future.
- Gilchrist clarified how land use ordinances are applied in those situations. **Prince** and Gilchrist discussed.
- **Prince** addressed that the first finding of fact has a broad sweep. Gilchrist responded that the broad terminology is used because not every situation can be planned for, but that findings of fact need to be specific to the result.
- **Prince** addressed that buffer zones seem designed to protect kids, but that the definitions given don't cover all aspects.
- **Dickinson** inquired of staff if consumption of product was allowed on property, Carlson replied that it was not.
- **Dickinson** inquired about how the retail parking requirements affect the proposed property. Carlson clarified ordinance requirements.
- **Eaton** addressed the community input, the community's concern for children, and the fact that an IUP can be reviewed or revoked if problems arise.
- **Fiskevold Gould** acknowledged community input and feedback, addressed that buffer zones in State statute generally refer to environmental issues, not child protection, and

that zoning laws cannot be so restrictive so as to completely block cannabis businesses from existing.

- **Prince** inquired which conditions being violated could bring the IUP back before the Board. Carlson clarified the conditions and violations that would trigger a review. **Prince** and Carlson discussed.
- **Prince** asked Gilchrist if a conditioned annual review could be attached to the IUP. Gilchrist replied that he was not in favor of short terms on IUPs, but that reviews can take place at any point once violations are noted.

Motion by **Fiskevold Gould**, second by **Thayer**, to approve **Resolution 2026-04** for an Interim Use Permit (IUP) for operating a Cannabis Retail Business in a leased building located at 920 Washington Ave S (PIN 80.04204.00), with the findings of fact and conditions as presented. Motion carried by the following voice vote: Ayes: **Prince, Fiskevold Gould, Dickinson, Rivera, Eaton, Thayer**. Nays: **Peterson**.

STAFF REPORTS

Director's Report

Carlson presented the Director's Report.

Board members had the following comments:

- No comments.

Site Analyst & Enforcement Report

Wielenberg presented the Site Analyst & Enforcement Report.

Board members had the following comments:

- No comments.

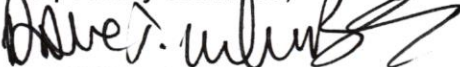
UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS

- March 9, 2026 5:30 p.m. Planning Board Meeting

ADJOURN

There being no further business, motion by **Prince**, second by **Peterson**, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at **6:41 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,



David Wielenberg

Compliance Inspector & Site Analyst

PB Minutes approved and attested by:



Planning Board Representative