

PLANNING BOARD PROCEEDINGS

BEMIDJI, MINNESOTA

Regular Meeting – Monday, July 13, 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 (via Webex), Amy DeLap, Matthew Korpela, Matt Murray, Scott Turn.**

AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA

Chair Eaton called for any amendments to the agenda.

Motion by **Peterson** to approve the agenda as presented.

Dickinson requested to add a topic for discussion to the agenda regarding the letter received from the Chamber of Commerce.

Fiskevold Gould called a point of information and clarified that the original motion would need to be rescinded and a new motion made.

Peterson rescinded his motion to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion by **Dickinson**, second by **Fiskevold Gould**, to approve the agenda with an amendment to include a discussion of the letter provided. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

MINUTES

The following minutes were presented for approval:

Planning Board Meeting: **June 8, 2026**

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

CITIZENS WITH BUSINESS NOT ON AGENDA

- Charles Biberg, 1109 Beltrami Ave NW, addressed the board on behalf of the Sustainability Commission. Biberg expressed that at the most recent Sustainability Commission meeting, they discussed the predicted decline in national home ownership rates and noted that Bemidji's current rate is 40% home ownership versus 60% rentals, significantly below the national average of 60-70% home ownership. Biberg noted the Sustainability Commission discussed zoning restrictions, such as R4 zoning, which discourages diverse housing development, including tiny houses and multifamily units. Biberg cited Houston, Texas, as a case study where the lack of zoning laws has fostered economic growth. Biberg expressed that the Sustainability Commission proposed lifting zoning restrictions to encourage varied housing types and increase home ownership to in turn promote community health and vibrancy.

NEW BUSINESS

CONSIDER RESOLUTION FOR INTERIM USE PERMIT – 80.04537.00 – AMY DELAP REPRESENTING JUST FOR KIX

Fahrenbruch presented the planning case request: Amy DeLap representing Just for Kix is requesting an Interim Use Permit (IUP) to remodel and operate a Dance Studio (Indoor Fitness, Health Club or Spa) in the (I1) Industrial Park/Light Industrial Zoning District. The subject property is located at 1407 Naylor Dr SE (PIN 800453700) in the City of Bemidji.

The Planning Commission and staff recommend approval of the Interim Use Permit, with the conditions and findings of fact presented in the packet.

Board members made the following comments regarding the request:

- Dickinson had no comments.
- Prince inquired if applicant had any conversations with staff regarding the ordinances when they submitted their application. Fahrenbruch stated that the applicant had no concerns.
- Rivera had no questions.
- Thayer had no questions.
- Peterson had no questions.
- Fiskevold Gould had no questions.
- Eaton had no questions.

Motion by **Prince**, second by **Thayer**, to approve **Resolution 2026-13** for an Interim Use Permit, with the conditions and findings of fact as presented. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote: Ayes: **Prince, Fiskevold Gould, Peterson, Dickinson, Rivera, Eaton, Thayer**. Nays: **None**.

CONSIDER RESOLUTION FOR FINAL PLAT – 80.00344.99, 80.00505.04, 80.00505.05, 80.01166.02, 80.01166.04, 80.01166.00 – GREATER BEMIDJI

Carlson presented the planning case request: Tim Marco (Marco McLane Development) representing Greater Bemidji is requesting approval for a Final 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. The St. Michel and Hegna parcels have been added to the final plat request to accommodate a future cul-de-sac and road improvements at the end of Midway Dr. S. The whole plat lies within the Urban Renaissance (UR) zoning district and the Shoreland Overlay. The subject properties are located at multiple addresses off Minnesota Ave NW and Midway Dr. S (Parcels 800034499, 800050504, 800050505, 800116602, 800116604, and 800116600) in the City of Bemidji (also known as the railroad corridor).

The Planning Commission and staff recommend approval of the Final Plat request, with the conditions and findings of fact presented in the packet.

Board members made the following comments regarding the request:

- Fiskevold Gould had no questions.
- Peterson expressed support and had no questions.
- Thayer had no questions.
- Rivera inquired if any changes to the plat are expected. Carlson addressed that this is the final plat. Rivera requested clarification on the subdivider or who would be recording the final plat. Carlson confirmed that the City as the owner is responsible for recording the final plat and the document will be recorded with the County.
- Prince expressed support and had no questions.
- Dickinson inquired about the size of the cul-de-sac. Applicant and staff addressed that the pavement area is 95 feet and the right-of-way is 120 feet as required by the ordinance.
- Eaton expressed support.

Motion by **Thayer**, second by **Peterson**, to approve **Resolution 2026-14** for the Final Plat, with the conditions and findings of fact as presented. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote: Ayes: **Prince, Fiskevold Gould, Peterson, Dickinson, Rivera, Eaton, Thayer**. Nays: **None**.

CONSIDER RESOLUTION FOR CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT – 80.04221.00 – MATTHEW KORPELA REPRESENTING LEECH LAKE BAND OF OJIBWE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Fahrenbruch presented the planning case request: Matthew Korpela representing Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Behavioral Health, is requesting a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to allow Counseling Services (Behavioral, Mental Health, Drug & Alcohol Abuse) at 614 Railroad St SE

(PIN: 800422100) in the City of Bemidji. The property is in the B-2 General Commercial Zoning District.

The Planning Commission and staff recommend approval of the Conditional Use Permit request, with the conditions and findings of fact presented in the packet.

Board members made the following comments regarding the request:

- Dickinson had no questions.
- Prince addressed that this use is allowed in the B2 zoning district and noted that the letter received stated that it is an illegal use which is incorrect. Prince requested clarification that no medications would be dispensed at this location. Fahrenbruch confirmed.
- Thayer inquired if the request would need to be amended to include the two additional neighboring properties if they were purchased by the applicant. Fahrenbruch addressed that they would not.
- Peterson had no questions.
- Fiskevold Gould had no questions.
- Eaton had no questions and expressed support.

Motion by **Thayer**, second by **Rivera**, to approve **Resolution 2026-15** for the Conditional Use Permit, with the conditions and findings of fact as presented. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote: Ayes: **Prince, Fiskevold Gould, Peterson, Dickinson, Rivera, Eaton, Thayer**. Nays: **None**.

CONSIDER RESOLUTION FOR CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT – 80.05524.00 – DENNIS BATTY REPRESENTING CROSSROADS CHURCH

Carlson presented the planning case request: Dennis Batty of The Dennis Batty & Associates Group, Inc., Architects & Planners Inc., representing Crossroads Church (Applicant), is requesting a conditional use permit (CUP) for an existing church to be able to expand the sanctuary along with the parking lot and other outside improvements. The subject property is located at 3354 Laurel Dr. NW (PIN: 80552400) in the City of Bemidji. The parcel is in the B-2 General Commercial District and the Airport Zones 3 & H Overlays.

The Planning Commission and staff recommend approval of the Conditional Use Permit request, with the conditions and findings of fact presented in the packet.

Board members made the following comments regarding the request:

- Fiskevold Gould had no questions.
- Peterson had no questions.
- Thayer inquired about the response from the church on the recommendation from the Sustainability Commission regarding providing publicly available EV. Fahrenbruch addressed no response had been received from the church on that recommendation.
- Rivera inquired about the applicant's response to required conditions. Carlson addressed that the applicant shared no concerns.
- Prince had no questions.
- Dickinson had no questions.
- Eaton had no questions and expressed support.

Motion by **Peterson**, second by **Thayer**, to approve **Resolution 2026-16** for the Conditional Use Permit, with the conditions and findings of fact as presented. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote: Ayes: **Prince, Fiskevold Gould, Peterson, Dickinson, Rivera, Eaton, Thayer**. Nays: **None**.

Discussion Regarding Submitted Letter:

- Dickinson requested to initiate a conversation regarding a moratorium on enforcement of some of the zoning requirements in the industrial park.
- Gilchrist discussed the board's ability to adopt an interim ordinance that could put in place temporary regulations/suspension of regulations for up to 12 months while the city conducts a study.

- Members discussed, highlighting the comprehensive plan update, finding the “why” behind regulations, with consensus leaning towards a broader citywide approach as opposed to focus on specific zoning districts for the moratorium to ensure fairness and equity.
- The consensus was to continue the conversation.

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:

- Board members discussed.

UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS

- August 10, 2026 5:30 p.m. Planning Board Meeting

ADJOURN

There being no further business, motion by **Fiskevold Gould**, second by **Peterson**, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at **6:38 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,



Ainslee Krause
Planning Administrative Assistant

PB Minutes approved and attested by:



Planning Board Representative