



Greater Bemidji Area Joint Planning Board
City of Bemidji Northern Township

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Residential Developers Packet

Contact List

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Project Design Approval Process: The entire approval process can take anywhere between a few days to a few weeks depending on the type of development and the complexities involved. It is **strongly** recommended to contact the Planning Office early in the process in an effort to identify possible issues and ensure that your project receives approval well in advance of your development schedules.

The JPB is required to review and approve any building permits that propose any of the following items, other items not listed may also require review:

1. New structure construction, or the expansion of a structure.
2. New rental license.
3. Proposing new external lighting.
4. Proposing new or additional parking.
5. Proposing change of the land use, (Ex. Single-family home to a duplex, triplex or quadplex; Residential use to Commercial use or vice-versa).
6. Any project that will alter the grading and drainage on-site.

The following are a list of steps that help to identify what items you should be planning to complete and when:

Step 1: Preliminary Research

Research the property of your proposed project site to answer the following questions:

1. Is the proposed use allowed in the zoning district the property is located in?
 - a. Refer to the Zoning Map and Section 302 of Zoning Ordinance.
2. Is the use permitted, or does it require Conditional or Interim Use approval?
 - a. Refer to the Zoning Map and Section 302 of Zoning Ordinance.
3. If not, can the property be rezoned without spot zoning?
 - a. Are there any adjacent properties with your desired zoning? If not, it is likely any zoning request would create a spot zone.
4. Will the setbacks, impervious surface restrictions, and layout of the lot work for your proposal?
 - a. Refer to Section 402 of the Zoning Ordinance.
5. If not, is there a practical difficulty on the property that a variance can be applied for?
 - a. Refer to Section 1206 of the Zoning Ordinance or refer to **Findings of Fact**.

The following website link can assist in researching <https://www.jpbgba.org/planning>.

Click on the “City of Bemidji On-Line Mapping Services” link. Once you are directed to the Interactive Maps & Apps Gallery, there are two components that will help you with the pre-application process. The first component that may be of help, is the **Planning & Zoning**

[WebApp](#). With this WebApp, you will be able to zoom into the property of your interest and with a click of the button, the zoning district will be identified along with the lot size and setback requirements. The second component that may also be helpful, is the [Bemidji Area Land Records Interactive Map](#). With this Interactive Map, you will be able to search for the property of interest, as well as utilizing the many features that are offered on the site. You can use the measuring tool to measure estimated distances between buildings and lot lines, along with calculating square footage of the site or a building. Also through the Interactive Map, you are able to use the Identify Command for the selected property to identify the tax information for that parcel.

For types of residential land uses allowed in particular zoning districts, please refer to Section 302 of the [Greater Bemidji Area Joint Planning Board Zoning & Subdivision Ordinance](#) from the link above to see if your proposed land use is allowed at your location of interest.

Visit the Joint Planning Board **WEBSITE**: www.jpbgba.org for additional information relating to ordinances, schedules, fees, and application forms.

- [Greater Bemidji Area Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance](#)
- [Application Cut-Off Dates & Meeting Schedules](#)
- [Application Forms, Fee Schedule & Check Lists](#)

Step 2: Preliminary Idea Discussion

1. Contact the JPB office to speak with a Planner. This meeting can be in person, through E-mail or a conversation over the phone, if an in-person meeting is desired please schedule an appointment. The Planner will review the site and proposed residential land use with you to ensure your proposal is allowed, or review what steps would be needed to move the project forward.
 - a. At this time, it is helpful to have a rough drawing or concept site plan of the proposed site layout on the property.

Step 3: Preliminary Site Review and Approval Process Discussion

1. Schedule an appointment with a Planner for project plan review pre-application discussion. If you would like to also meet with a Building Official/Building Inspector or Engineer at this time it can be accommodated. The Planner will inform the applicant of permitting requirements for the site and timelines associated with them.
 - a. At this time, a preliminary site plan is required for review; it is recommended that a preliminary site plan be submitted prior to meeting to allow staff adequate time to review.
 - b. A preliminary site plan should be completed by a design professional (Architect, Surveyor, or Engineer)

- c. The following proposed items should be on a preliminary site plan and should meet JPB Zoning Ordinance requirements or be identified as requiring a variance or other additional approval:
 - i. Building location with setback distances
 - ii. Building size and height
 - iii. Parking with ingress/egress to adjacent streets and distances to intersections.
 - iv. Exterior lighting.
 - v. Estimated existing trees to be removed and potential locations for proposed landscaping.
 - vi. Stormwater retention location.
 - d. Provide an electronic copy of preliminary site plan, JPB staff may request hard copies for review as well.
 - e. Review of preliminary plans may vary, please allow a few days for review and response.
2. For more complex projects, the Planner or Building Official/Building Inspector may recommend you to attend a development meeting, held the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of every month, to explain the project for all departments involved in the project plan review process.
 3. Projects that will require a variance, conditional use permit (CUP), interim use permit (IUP), major or minor subdivision and/or a planned unit development (PUD), the project will require Joint Planning Commission (JPC) and Joint Planning Board (JPB) approval. Refer to [Appendix A: JPC/JPB Review Process](#) for additional information and timelines. Applications are due the last working day of every month to the JPB staff. Refer to the [Appendix B: GBAJPB Schedule](#) for a list of application submittal dates and reserved monthly meetings.

Step 4: Submit Final Plans for Review

1. Submit an application for JPB commercial/multi-family site plan review. See [Appendix C: Single-Family Residential Site Plan Review/Field Verification Application](#):

Step 5: JPB and Staff Review

1. The project owner or project manager will receive comments regarding the final plans from the JPB and other departments or agencies requiring review.
2. Review time can vary due to project size and complexities. Projects are reviewed on a first come first serve basis, but typical review time is a week or two from date of applicant submittal.
3. If comments from department review require design changes or additional information, applicant shall provide that information and return to Planner or Building Official/Building Inspector. Refer to Step 4 for deliverable formats of resubmittals.

4. Comments will also estimate the amount of escrow required by each department and other applications, permits or fees, that will be required including but not limited to:
 - a. Stipulation Agreement for Project Completion (if applicable)
 - b. Septic Systems ([SSTS Application](#))
 - c. [E911 Addressing Permit](#) (see **Appendix D**)
 - d. [Driveway Installation Application](#) (see **Appendix E**)
 - e. Parking

Step 6: Apply for a Building Permit (City Limits) or Land Use Permit (Northern Township) as well as other applications required.

- A. Building Permit applications can be obtained from the building office or online (find applications: [here](#)) to be used within City of Bemidji. Refer to the [Appendix F: City of Bemidji Building Permit Fee Schedule](#) for a list of the building permit fee evaluations. Typical applications required to obtain a building permit:
 - a. Building Permit Application
 - b. Mechanical Permit Application
 - c. Sewer & Water Access Charge Application
 - d. Digging/Utility Permit Application
 - e. [Stormwater Erosion Control Application and Permit](#) (see **Appendix G**)
 - f. Utility and Stormwater As-Built Deliverables (see **Appendix H**)
2. JPB Land Use Permit application to be used within Northern Township, can be obtained from Planning Office or online at: <https://www.jpbgba.org/applications>
3. If an application for a requirement is not provided in this document contact the Planner you are working with to obtain an application.

Step 7: Issue Permits.

1. Building Permit or Land Use Permit
 - a. The Planner will notify the Building Official/Building Inspector that the building permit can be issued, or issued with conditions.
 - b. The applicant will be notified when the permit is available to be picked up and the total fee required for permits and escrow.

Step 9: Erosion Control Installation and Inspection

1. The Engineer shall inspect the installation of all on-site erosion control prior to any site grading or equipment mobilization for the construction site.

Step 10: Construction Review

The following outlines the construction review process for building, engineering, planning, stormwater, and as-built requirements.

1. Construction Review Process:

- a. Planner will review required inspections with **Residential Site Plan Closeout Card provided as Appendix I** with Developer or Prime Contractor before building permit is issued. If you have questions regarding this card or you don't have one on-site, please contact a Planner.
 - i. This card is expected to be posted on-site, in the job trailer or held with the owner or project manager at all times to ensure inspection can be documented.
- b. Developer will notify Planner or Engineer 24 to 48 hours in advance for any required inspections in accordance with the inspection procedures discussed prior to building permit being issued regarding the Residential Site Closeout Card.
- c. For Site Grading & Drainage Inspection contact the Assistant City Engineer.
- d. For As-Built Deliverables contact the GIS Coordinator for questions.

2. City of Bemidji Building Department Construction Review

- a. At the time of issuing a building permit, the Building Official/Building Inspector will go over the required inspections and the **Building Inspection Documentation Card** (see **Appendix J**) that's to be placed on site.

Step 11: Project Closeout

1. Review Project for Completion

- a. The following departments, Building, JPB, Engineering, Stormwater, Fire, and GIS need to sign off acknowledging that their department has received all deliverables and the site was constructed as approved.
- b. Seasonal weather delays may be granted if required with conditions and approval from the Planning Director.
- c. The JPB will document comments regarding project status of completion, and any conditions required for final approval.

2. Return of Escrow

- a. Each department will distribute any remaining escrow funds to the applicant. If the project was completed as approved, the developer should anticipate receiving 100% of their escrow money.
- b. Landscaping escrows will be held for one year from the date trees were planted.

Appendix:

- A. **JPC/JPB Review Process**
- B. **GBAJPB Fee Schedule**
- C. **Single-Family Residential Site Plan Review/Field Verification Application**
- D. **E911 Addressing Permit**
- E. **Driveway Installation Application**
- F. **City of Bemidji Building Permit Fee Schedule**
- G. **Stormwater Erosion Control Application and Permit**
- H. **Utility and Stormwater As-Built Deliverables**
- I. **Residential Site Plan Closeout Card**
- J. **Building Inspection Documentation Card**