



**City of White Bear Lake
Community Development Department
4701 Highway 61 N.
White Bear Lake, Minnesota 55110
651-429-8561 | www.whitebearlake.org**

LAND USE APPROVAL PROCESS – INFORMATION SHEET

Applying for Land Use Approval

Deadline to apply is six weeks prior to the Planning Commission meeting. Set an appointment with a Planner to discuss your project at least a week before the application deadline, and set an appointment to submit on or before the deadline day.

Your application must include a written narrative, or request letter addressed to the Planning Commission. It should explain the reason for the request and why it should be approved.

What is approved is what must be built, so you should be fairly certain of the intended design prior to submitting for approval. A project can always be reduced in size after approval has been obtained, but it cannot be increased in size without an amendment to the approval.

An approval is only good for one year. The project must be completed within one year after approval, or a time extension must be requested in writing prior to the expiration of the initial one-year timeframe. If you are not ready to construct the project, then perhaps the request for land use approval should be postponed.

The application fee is non-refundable. The fee is the cost to process the request and obtain a determination. If the determination does not suit your liking, the money cannot be refunded. If the public notice sign is not returned, an additional \$20 replacement fee will be charged.

Public Notice

Notice is provided to your neighbors in three ways. A sign is posted on your property, a notice is published in the legal section of the White Bear Press, and notice is sent by post mail.

The orange public notice sign will be provided to you by staff at the time of application and it needs to be posted 10 days before the Planning Commission meeting. It should be posted out by the road, where passers-by can see it, not up by the house/building. It is highly recommended that you speak with your immediately adjacent neighbors about the request prior to posting the sign on the property. They always appreciate the courtesy, and the resulting conversation could help to smooth out the review and approval process.

The number of neighbors who receive mail notice varies by request. For a variance in the Old White Bear neighborhood, the distance is 200 feet from the subject site. For all other variances, only the adjacent properties are notified. This includes properties that would be abutting if roads or other right-of-ways were removed. For Conditional Use Permits, the distance is 350 feet from the subject site. The mail notice for each may include all or parts of your submittal documents, including graphics, photos, or the narrative, as deemed pertinent to convey the nature of the request as completely as possible.

Before the Planning Commission

A pdf file and 22 copies of the submittal documents are due the week before the Planning Commission meeting. Please coordinate with the Planner about which documents to include and in what order. (For example, do not include the application form – we only need the one original of that.) The copies should be collated and stapled into 22 individual packets. Any color graphics should be reproduced in color. Double-sided documents to save paper is encouraged. Please tri-fold any 11x17 sized pages.

The Planner will provide, via email, a copy of the staff report and the draft resolution the Friday before the Planning Commission meeting. You will have the weekend to look it over. Read the report, check the resolution carefully, and review the conditions attached to the approval. Give the Planner a call if you have any questions, comments or concerns. The report has gone out, so it is not possible to change it at this point, but if there are errors, or issues of concern, we would like to know about them, so we can address them during the meeting.

Public Hearing

Both the Planning Commission meetings and the City Council meetings are at 7:00 pm, in the City Council chambers at City Hall. You or a decision maker on your behalf must be available to attend the Planning Commission meeting. The Planning Commission meetings are not televised, but they are recorded (for minutes). All of the graphics in the application packet will be available that evening in a power point presentation, so you do not need to bring any graphics or displays with you. If you are unable to make it that evening, the options are to find someone you trust to speak on your behalf, or to table the meeting to the next month.

The Planning Commission meeting is a “public hearing” so anyone from the public will be allowed to comment on the request. However, you (the applicant) should be the first person to get up to speak during the public comment portion of the meeting. If you do not have anything particular to say, simply introduce yourself and allow the Planning Commission to ask any questions they might have. If you disagree with any part of staff’s recommendation, that is the time to mention it and why.

Whether or not you (or your representative) need to attend the City Council meeting depends upon how the Planning Commission meeting went. If three things occur:

- You are in agreement with the recommended conditions of approval;
- There is no objection from the public;
- The vote by the Planning Commission is a unanimous vote in the affirmative;

the item is placed on the City Council’s consent agenda, and attendance is typically not necessary. If one of the above three items does not occur, the item will be placed on the Council’s discussion portion of the agenda, and attendance is required.

Resolutions and Approval

The proposed resolution will be included in both the Planning Commission packet and the City Council packet (both of which you will receive copies of). You do not need to sign the resolution until it has been approved by the City Council and finalized by the City Clerk. It takes about a week after the City Council meeting for the Clerk to finalize the resolution. We will send the finalized resolution to you by either post mail (if originals are necessary) or by email, (if originals are not necessary). Once you sign and return the finalized resolution to us, then we can issue building permits. Conditional Use Permits and Planned Unit Developments must be filed with the County Recorder’s Office (651-266-2050) to be effective. You must provide a receipt of filing to the City prior to the issuance of building permits. The larger the project, the longer building permit review typically takes. If it is construction season, plan for *at least* a two-week turn-around for a building permit. If it is wintertime, building permits may be issued quicker, depending upon workload. Building permits are good for six months. There is a fee for a building permit separate from the land use application fee. For building permit questions, contact the building department at 651-429-8518.

Other

Please note that all written correspondence with the City is public information and therefore subject to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.

Your point of contact for this process is:

Ashton Miller
City Planner
4701 Highway 61
White Bear Lake, MN 55110
Phone: 651-429-8534
amiller@whitebearlake.org

Other Agencies

While we strive to provide you with the best guidance possible, it is impossible for us to know all of the review, approval and permitting procedures of other agencies. Therefore, we strongly encourage you to contact other relevant jurisdictions as early on in the review process as possible. Some contact information is:

If your project abuts a public waterbody, please contact the Minnesota DNR. Dan Scollan is the East Metro Area Hydrologist and can be reached at (651) 259-5754 or daniel.scollan@state.mn.us.

If your project abuts a state or county roadway right-of-way, contact the appropriate jurisdiction, as their approval will be needed.

Ramsey County: Scott Mareck, scott.mareck@co.ramsey.mn.us, (651) 266-7105

Washington County (East County Line Road, north of County Road E): Jan Lucke, Jan.Lucke@co.washington.mn.us, (651) 430-4316

MnDOT: Karen Scheffing, Karen.Scheffing@state.mn.us, (651) 234-7784

If your project involves food or a kitchen, there is a high probability that the Ramsey County Department of Health should be contacted: Mindy Stepnik: 651-266-1174.

White Bear Lake has four watershed districts. Contact the watershed district your project is in to determine their requirements.