



Bonner County Planning Department

"Protecting property rights and enhancing property value"

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September 5, 2023

Memorandum

To: Board of County Commissioners

From: Jake Gabell, Planning Director

Re: Text Amendment, Title 11

Before the Board is an amendment to update Title 11, Subchapters 110, as described below.

11-110: AGENCY AUTHORIZATIONS:

A. No building location permit shall be issued for the construction, placement, installation, enlargement or extension of any building, residence or structure unless approval has first been obtained from the agency having jurisdiction over the access serving the subject site. Where access is from a private road, confirmation shall be provided that the travelway is not within the jurisdiction of the public.

B. No building location permit shall be issued for the construction, placement, installation, enlargement or extension of any commercial, residential, industrial or public building or structure, or multi-family residence, unless approval has first been obtained from the applicable fire district and the applicable sewer district, or the fire district has provided a written waiver on file with the Bonner County Planning Department.

C. Where the designated authority of a fire district has explicitly waived the need for residential fire safety review, in writing and on record with the Bonner County Planning Department, the residential fire safety requirements on a plat need not be satisfied.

D. No building location permit shall be issued for the construction, placement, installation, enlargement or extension of any building, residence or structure without a comment letter from Panhandle Health indicating they have reviewed the file, or the comment period has passed, whichever occurs first. Upon receipt of the completed building location permit application, Panhandle Health shall review the application and provide a comment letter within ten (10) working days.

Summary of Proposed Amendment

The proposed amendment to Bonner County Revised Code (BCRC) Title 11, Section 11-110 adds language allowing a fire district to formally waive its review of certain residential building location permit applications. Currently, the code requires written approval from the applicable fire district before the County may issue a permit. There is no provision for a fire district to decline review.

This change responds specifically to a request from Chief Jeff Armstrong, who serves as Fire Chief for the Northside, Westside, and Sagle Fire Districts. These districts have indicated they wish to retain review authority for commercial, multi-family, and subdivision projects, but formally waive review for most single-family residences, small additions, barns, and similar low-risk structures.

Legal Review: _____

Distribution: Jake Gabell

(Recommendation)

Staff recommends the Board approve an ordinance for the approval of the Title 11 text amendment.

Based on the information before us, I move to approve an Ordinance of Bonner County, Idaho, the number to be assigned providing for the amendment Bonner County Revised Code Title 11 as presented. These changes will become effective upon publication.

Recommendation Acceptance: ☐ Yes ☐ No

_____ Date: _____
Commissioner Asia Williams, Chairwoman



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Proudly Serving the Sagle & Westside Fire Districts

August 6th, 2025

MEMO

TO: Bonner County Planning Department

FROM: Jeff Armstrong, Fire Chief

RE: One- & two-Family Residential Fire Signoffs

Effective September 1, 2025, "the Fire Districts" (Sagle, Westside, and Northside) will no longer perform residential fire signoffs on one (1) and two (2) family homes (R3 Occupancies).

Please accept this letter as the "*letter on record with the Bonner County Planning Department*" as outlined in the Bonner County Code, Title 11, Sec 110(c). It is my hope that we can coordinate a change of process in the next few weeks to prevent confusion with the public or unnecessary delays.

My decision to eliminate this program is based on the following:

- Lack of fire district staff and resources to provide timely reviews.
- Lack of other supporting codes, resources, and/or support/enforcement at the County level to allow for an effective process.
- Authority for interpretation and determination of compliance granted to the 'Fire Code Official' under the 2018 International Fire Code (IFC 104.2).
- My interpretation as related to the above is: one and two family Residential (R3) requirements are outlined in the Idaho Administrative Code (IDAPA), and not the responsibility of the fire districts.
- The IDAPA is not enforced by the local fire district and is typically coordinated by a state agency or local building department.
- Fire district staff have no training or experience interpreting the IDAPA and assume liability in doing so.
- With the inclusions in the IDAPA, it is unclear how the IFC applies to R3 occupancies.

The Fire District retains the right to continue to review plans for commercial occupancies (A – U), including multifamily homes with three (3) or more dwelling units (R1 and R2), subdivisions, residential developments of five (5) homes or more, and any other project subject to the International Fire Code. Please continue to forward those as necessary.

I have always strived to be a good partner with the County, and it is my hope that this change will have minimal impact on your staff. We will always remain a resource to you, should we be able to advise in any area. We are also willing to assist the County in developing residential driveway requirements in handout form to be given to the applicants.

I remain available should you have any other questions. Thank you for your time.

cc. fire district boards, staff, Sandpoint Law, Bonner County Fire Chiefs' Association

ORDINANCE NO. _____

AMENDMENT TO BONNER COUNTY REVISED CODE TITLE 11 (BUILDING REGULATIONS)

An Ordinance of Bonner County, Idaho, setting forth its authority; amending Title 11 Subchapter 110 of the Bonner County Revised Code, as stated below:

Whereas, the Bonner County Board of Commissioners has established a building location permit process in the unincorporated areas of Bonner County; and

Whereas, the Board of Commissioners wishes to make certain revisions to Title 11 (Building Regulations), Bonner County Revised Code (BCRC) to amend the processes; and

Whereas, the Bonner County Board of County Commissioners did consider the proposed amendments to Title 11 at a special meeting on September 5, 2025, in order to receive public comment on said ordinance changes and did approve the changes.

Now, therefore be it ordained by the Board of County Commissioners of Bonner County, Idaho that the following be and is hereby adopted as an ordinance of Bonner County:

Section 1: Authority

This Ordinance is adopted pursuant to the authority granted at Chapter 7, Title 31, Chapter 8, Title 31, Idaho Code, and Article XII, Section 2 of the Idaho Constitution, as amended or subsequently codified.

Section 2: Amending Title 11, Bonner County Revised Code Subchapter 119 of, by providing for the following:

11-110: AGENCY AUTHORIZATIONS:

A. No building location permit shall be issued for the construction, placement, installation, enlargement or extension of any building, residence or structure unless approval has first been obtained from the agency having jurisdiction over the access serving the subject site. Where access is from a private road, confirmation shall be provided that the travelway is not within the jurisdiction of the public.

B. No building location permit shall be issued for the construction, placement, installation, enlargement or extension of any commercial, residential, industrial or public building or structure, or multi-family residence, unless approval has first been obtained from the applicable fire district and the applicable sewer district, or the fire district has provided a written waiver on file with the Bonner County Planning Department.

C. Where the designated authority of a fire district has explicitly waived the need for residential fire safety review, in writing and on record with the Bonner County Planning Department, the residential fire safety requirements on a plat need not be satisfied.

D. No building location permit shall be issued for the construction, placement, installation, enlargement or extension of any building, residence or structure without a comment letter from Panhandle Health indicating they have reviewed the file, or the comment period has passed, whichever occurs first. Upon receipt of the completed building location permit application, Panhandle Health shall review the application and provide a comment letter within ten (10) working days.

Section 3: Severability

The provisions of this Ordinance are hereby declared to be individually severable. Should any provision of this ordinance be declared invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, such declaration shall not affect the validity of the remaining provisions.

Section 4: Effective Date

This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect upon its passage and publication in one (1) issue of the Bonner County Daily Bee Newspaper.

Regularly considered, passed and approved as an ordinance of Bonner County, Idaho, done this 5th day of September 2025 upon the following vote:

Chairman Asia Williams: _____

Commissioner Brian Domke: _____

Commissioner Ron Korn: _____

BONNER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Asia Williams, Chairwoman

Brian Domke, Commissioner

Ron Korn, Commissioner

ATTEST: Michael W. Rosedale, Clerk

By Deputy Clerk:

Date

Legal Review:
