

River Bluff Cottages

Administrative Documents

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May 26, 2026

City of Mankato

Community Development Department
10 Civic Center Plaza
Mankato, MN 56001

Re: River Bluff Cottages – Updated Submission Materials
Outlot A, Sibley Parkway
PID: R010813101049

To City Staff,

River Bluff Cottages, LLC respectfully submits updated development materials associated with the previously approved River Bluff Cottages Planned Unit Development, Preliminary Plat, and Final Plat approvals.

The River Bluff Cottages project is a previously approved residential Planned Unit Development located along Sibley Parkway adjacent to the Minnesota River corridor. The original Planned Unit Development was approved in 2022, and the project later received amended Planned Unit Development, Preliminary Plat, and Final Plat approvals in 2024.

The purpose of the current submission is to provide updated architectural plans and supporting engineering documentation associated with the continued advancement of the project.

The updated plans remain substantially consistent with the development framework previously reviewed and approved by the City of Mankato.

Please contact us if additional information or supporting materials are required during the review process.

Sincerely,



Joe Richter

Factor Development

Authorized Development Representative
River Bluff Cottages, LLC

River Bluff Cottages

Updated Submission Narrative

City of Mankato

2026 Resubmittal Package

Project Background

River Bluff Cottages is a previously approved residential Planned Unit Development (PUD) located on Outlot A, Sibley Parkway, in the City of Mankato, Minnesota. The property is located north of Sibley Parkway, west of Highway 169, and adjacent to the Minnesota River.

The original Planned Unit Development for the property was approved by the City of Mankato in 2022. In 2024, the project returned to the City for review and approval of an amended Planned Unit Development, Preliminary Plat, and Final Plat associated with updated development plans.

The 2024 approval included:

- Amended Planned Unit Development approval
- Preliminary Plat approval
- Final Plat approval
- Approval of a 20-unit residential cottage-style development
- Private internal roadway access identified as Rogers Trail
- Associated grading, drainage, landscaping, and utility coordination

The applicant is now submitting updated architectural and supporting development materials associated with the previously approved River Bluff Cottages development.

Project Description

The proposed development consists of a 20-unit residential cottage community arranged around a privately maintained internal roadway system connected to Sibley Parkway.

The development is designed to provide a high-quality residential environment that complements the surrounding neighborhood while incorporating significant open space, landscaping, and coordinated site design.

The project site contains approximately 4.53 acres and includes existing drainage, dike, trail, and utility easements associated with the Minnesota River corridor and surrounding infrastructure.

The development includes:

- 20 residential cottage units
- Private internal roadway system

- Individual garages and driveway parking
- Shared green space and landscaped common areas
- Fire access hammerhead turnaround
- Stormwater management infrastructure
- Coordinated grading and drainage improvements

Requested Action

The applicant respectfully requests review and approval of the updated development materials associated with the previously approved River Bluff Cottages Planned Unit Development, Preliminary Plat, and Final Plat approvals.

River Bluff Cottages

Summary of Updates Since Prior Approval

City of Mankato

2026 Resubmittal Memorandum

Project Overview

River Bluff Cottages is a previously approved residential Planned Unit Development located on Outlot A, Sibley Parkway, within the City of Mankato, Minnesota.

The original Planned Unit Development associated with the property was approved by the City of Mankato in 2022. In 2024, the project returned to the City for review and approval of an amended Planned Unit Development, Preliminary Plat, and Final Plat associated with updated development plans.

Development Summary

Previously approved project characteristics that remain consistent include:

- 20-unit residential development
- Rogers Trail private drive access
- Shared open-space concept
- Similar parking configuration
- Existing roadway circulation framework
- Stormwater management coordination
- Fire access and emergency circulation

Architectural Updates

Updated architectural plans refine and modernize the architectural appearance, building layouts, elevations, material selections, and interior configurations associated with the previously approved development concept.

The updated plans do not substantially alter:

- Site access locations
- Overall project density
- Traffic circulation patterns
- Stormwater management intent
- Easement coordination
- Emergency access configuration

Civil Engineering & Infrastructure Updates

Updated engineering materials include:

- Grading Plan
- Stormwater Memorandum
- Drainage Routing Exhibits
- Fire Truck Turning Movement Exhibit
- Snow Management Exhibit
- Landscaping Plan

Consistency with Prior Approvals

The applicant believes the updated development materials remain substantially consistent with the development framework previously reviewed and approved by the City of Mankato.

River Bluff Cottages

July 2024 Submission

Request of River Bluff Cottages, LLC for a preliminary and final plat review of River Bluff Cottages, and for an amendment to the previously approved Planned Unit Development. The subject property is described as Outlot A, Sibley Parkway (Blue Earth County PID R010813101049).

The anticipated date of City Council action is July 8, 2024.

Applicant

The applicant is Riverbluff Cottages, LLC.

Request

The applicant is requesting the review of a preliminary and final plat of River Bluff Cottages, and for an amendment to the previously approved Planned Unit Development.

Location

The property is described as Outlot A, Sibley Parkway (Blue Earth County PID R010813101049).

Zoning

The property is zoned R-2, One- and Two-Family Dwelling District.

Environmentally Sensitive Areas

The Minnesota River is located to the north of the subject property.

Public Utilities

The site has access to public utilities via Sibley Parkway and Rogers Street.

City Code

Mankato City Code section 10.14, R-2 One- and Two- Family Dwelling District, can be found at the following link:

https://library.municode.com/mn/mankato/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=CH10LAUSZO_PTIREDI_S10.14OMIDWDI

Mankato City Code section 10.62, P-I Planned Industrial District can be found at the following link:

https://library.municode.com/mn/mankato/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=CH10LAUSZO_PTVIINDI_S10.62PIPLINDI

Mankato City Code section 10.64, M-2 Heavy Industrial District can be found at the following link:

https://library.municode.com/mn/mankato/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=CH10LAUSZO_PTVIINDI_S10.64HEINDI

Mankato City Code Section 11.05, Design Standards, can be found at the following link:

https://library.municode.com/mn/mankato/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=CH11SUDEREPL_S11.05DEST

Mankato City Code section 10.93 Planned Unit Developments, can be found at the following link:

https://library.municode.com/mn/mankato/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=CH10LAUSZO_PTXADEN_S10.93PLUNDE

Mankato City Code section 10.98 Amendments, can be found at the following link:

https://library.municode.com/mn/mankato/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=CH10LAUSZO_PTXADEN_S10.98AM

Site Plan Review Comments

The Site Plan and Traffic Advisory Committee met on June 11, 2024 and submitted the following comments were sent to the applicants and their response is italicized:

1. There is a lack of green space for onsite recreation especially in a residential setting. – *with this revised PUD we have reduced the building footprint and created more green space on site. This area can be used for outside recreation and gathering space.*
2. The interior roadway will be privately owned and maintained. As association document will be required to address construction, maintenance, and repair. – *Noted. The association documents will be prepared and presented to the City of Mankato at the time of permitting.*
3. Any parking on the street needs to conform to fire lane restrictions. Overhang of emergency vehicles beyond the wheel base needs to be contained within the private roadway for turning movements. - *Noted*
4. Provide driveway grade to public safety to determine impacts on emergency vehicles. – *The grade is provided on sheet C3.02 (refer to the “Entrance Alignment” profile) and the plan view on sheet C3.01. The profile shows two vertical curves and a maximum grade of 7.5% for ~25-ft of roadway.*
5. Development agreement will have to be addressed between the developer and the current owner, or successor, to decide which party receives TIF. At this time, under the development agreement Rehof will retain and receive the tax increment. - *Noted*
6. Have they considered a private street name? Addresses will be single digits. – *Noted. Owner would like to request the private drive to be called “Rogers Trail”.*
7. Applicant shall provide a refuse plan for the development. – *Noted. Refuse will be taken care at each cottage with their own container.*
8. Although the developer understands the property is not subject to the 25% Rental Density Ordinance, it is however subject to R-2 rental standards regarding occupancy and shall have the limited occupancy of two unrelated or a family. – *Noted*
9. Please update the plans to represent the height of the building at the mean height level between eaves. – *Noted. See updated front building elevation.*

Review

The applicant is requesting the review of a preliminary and final plat of River Bluff Cottages, and for an amendment to the previously approved Planned Unit Development.

Preliminary and Final Plat

The proposed River bluff Townhomes subdivision contains one lot and one block. The parcel is 4.53 acres and is located between the Minnesota River and Sibley Parkway. No new public streets or right-of-way dedication is proposed with the plat. The parcel encompasses several existing easements for dike, storm, drainage, and trail purposes. These easements will remain on the subject parcel and the concept plans for 20 townhomes do not show encroachments into said easement areas. The City's relief wells are noted on the plans and are covered with the existing easements on the site.

Parkland dedication occurred during the platting of Sibley Parkway when Lot 1, Block 1 of Sibley Parkway was dedicated to the City of Mankato for open space purposes.

Preliminary and Final Plat

The proposed River bluff Townhomes subdivision contains one lot and one block. The parcel is 4.35 acres and is located between the Minnesota River and Sibley Parkway. No new public street or right-of-way dedication is proposed with the plat. The parcel contains several existing easements for dike, storm, drainage, and trial purposes. These easements will remain on the subject parcel and the concept plans for 20 townhomes do not show encroachments into said easement areas. The City's relief wells are noted on the plans and are covered with the existing easements on the site.

Parkland dedication occurred during the platting of Sibley Parkway when Lot 1, Block 1 of Sibley parkway was dedicated to the City of Mankato for open space purposes.

Planned Unit Development

As part of the approval of the Sibley Parkway subdivision development, a planned unit development was required for development. The applicant is now requesting to amend the previously approved planned unit development.

With the planned unit development, the applicant has requested flexibility from the 25% rental density ordinance for the proposed development and is requesting that the development is not subject to the City's rental density standard. Mankato City Code Section 5.42, Subd. 20 states that not more than twenty-five (25) percent (rounded up) of the lots on any block shall be eligible to obtain a rental license or to be licensed as a rental property. A planned unit development is intended to encourage the efficient use of land and resources, to promote greater efficiency in public and utility services and to encourage innovation in the planning and building of all types of development and in exchange for providing public benefits, the Code allows flexibility. In this case, the proposed development provided the follow:

- The proposed development preserves the characteristics of the surrounding developments. Adjoining property to the south is existing single-family homes

(R-2 single family homes) and adjoining the property to the north is the Minnesota River and to the east is an apartment building.

- The proposed project is planned on re-developed property (formerly the Hanson Concrete Plant).
- The proposed project is near other residential zoning districts and is in line with the character of the City.
- The proposed development will create a pleasing environment to the surrounding neighborhoods. The proposed development is designed to provide the residents of the development open space for gathering.
- The proposed development will provide market-rate housing for the area.
- The development is in line with the planned re-development of the former Hanson Concrete Plant.

The applicant is proposing to construct 20 single family homes on the 4.53-acre parcel. The proposal achieves the required 2.0-acre minimum area required in Chapter 10.93 of the Mankato City Code for a planned unit development in the R-2 zoning district.

The homes are proposed as slab-on-grade single family homes.

The site plan shows 20 buildings sharing an access point on Sibley Parkway and sharing open and common areas within the development. A hammerhead turnaround area is shown on the easterly side of the subdivision where emergency vehicles and service vehicles will have sufficient room to maneuver around. As noted in the conditions, an updated truck turning movement will need to be provided to the city at time of building permit submittal in the form of turning wheel radius.

Parking standards for the proposed development achieve Mankato City Code requirements. Off-street parking for one-and-two family rental properties requires 2 parking stalls for each dwelling unit. Each proposed townhome includes 2 surface stalls and 2 stalls within the garage.

Floor plans submitted for the development show a ground floor containing tandem parking garage space, mechanical room and storage, and stairs. The main floor shows the main entry area, living room area, a kitchen, bonus room, powder bathroom, closet space, and a staircase. The top floor shows 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, laundry, and closet space. The plans also depict a deck and a covered patio area below the deck. The deck and patio are not shown to encroach into the easement areas.

Exterior finish renderings show vertical siding in a white color and a stone veneer. All exterior lighting shall achieve Mankato City Code criteria.

The landscaping plan shows green space around the subject development. The plan proposes 20, 6' evergreen trees and 14, 2" sugar maple trees. Mankato City Code criteria for a planned unit development states that common open space within a planned unit development must be used for amenity or recreational purposes and that motor vehicle

parking areas and traffic corridors shall not be considered an approved use of common open space. The uses authorized for the common open space must be approved to the scale and character of the planned unit development, and consider the planned unit development's size, density, topography, and number and type of structures to be provided. The Code goes on to clarify that the common open space must be suitably improved for its intended use. Common open space containing natural features worthy of preservation may be left unimproved. The development plan must coordinate the improvement of the common open space and the construction of the permitted structures within the planned unit development. Staff recommends that the easement areas be maintained in a natural state, prairie grass, or in a manner acceptable to the Army Corp of Engineers. Staff recommends that in the grassy open area of the development a sidewalk connection be made to the trail on Sibley Parkway and that a gazebo or other development gathering area, sized appropriately, for said development be incorporated for a gathering area for the planned unit development residents.

As per the Mankato City Code for planned unit developments, all land shown on the approved development plan as common open space must be conveyed to trustees provided in the indenture establishing an association or similar organization for the maintenance of the planned unit development. Staff has recommended a condition which requires the documentation for the establishment of said association to be provided to the City at the time of building permit for the development. A recommendation has also been included that requests the submittal of a snow removal plan to demonstrate that the snow storage will not be placed in the fire truck turning area, nor will it be placed to potentially block access to the easement areas.

Findings

Staff respectfully submits the following findings of fact for the preliminary and final plat:

1. General Requirements
 1. The site is designed in conformance with the location and widths of streets, the general drainage situation, lot sizes and arrangement.
 2. A grading and drainage plan has been submitted for review by the public works staff.
 3. The Minnesota River is located to the North of the subject property and there are no noted encroachments into the existing areas.
2. Streets
 1. The applicant will not construct any new public streets, rather a driveway will provide access to the development from the already developed Sibley Parkway.
 2. The applicant shall construct a private street to serve the subdivision and assign it the name "Rogers Trail".
3. Easements
 1. The plat maintains the existing drainage, storm, dike and trail easements.
 2. The plat provides the standard easements required in Chapter 11 of the Mankato City Code.

4. Block Standards
 1. The proposed block layout conforms to the previously approved Sibley Parkway subdivision.
5. Lot Standards
 1. The subject parcel is not a corner lot and is not subject to extra width or depth for those purposes.
 2. The proposed lot depicts a development that achieves a front yard setback of 30'.
 3. The side lot lines are as established on the previous Sibley Parkway plat.
 4. The subject development is a double frontage lot and is not, thus, subject to said standards.
 5. The subject parcel conforms to the parking standards in Chapter 10 of the code.
 6. The lot abuts a watercourse and drainage water and is designed to accommodate the existing easements which protect those areas. A condition is included with this approval that, prior to work occurring, the Army Corp of Engineers provide their consent to said development.
6. Public Sites and Open Spaces
 1. Open space was dedicated as part of the Sibley Parkway development.

Staff respectfully submits the following findings of fact for the amended Planned Unit Development:

1. The development for the planned unit development will conform to the approved development plan; including all proposed covenants, easements, conditions of approval, and other provisions relating onto the bulk, location, and density of permitted structures, accessory structures, parking, and other public facilities.
2. A condition is included with the approval that requires that all land shown on the approved development plan.

Staff respectfully submits the following findings for the amended planned unit development:

1. The planned unit development satisfies the intent of the City of Mankato ordinance and does not jeopardize public health, safety, or welfare.
2. The development of the planned unit development will conform to the approved development plan; including all proposed covenants, easements, conditions of approval, and other provisions relating to the bulk, location, and density of permitted structures, accessory structures, parking, and other public facilities.
3. A condition is included with the approval that requires that all land shown on the approved development plan as common open space must be conveyed to trustees provided in the indenture establishing the association or similar organization for the maintenance of the planned unit development.
4. A condition of approval is included for the development of the open space for use of the residents, and no common open space may be put to any use not specified in the approved development plan.

5. The development identifies public benefits, which allows for flexibility from the 25% rental density ordinance.

Recommendation

Staff recommends the approval of the preliminary plat and final plat.

Staff recommends the approval of a planned unit development with the following conditions:

1. The proposed buildings shall be constructed as approved.
2. The development's rental licenses will be limited occupancy; occupancy will be limited to a family or no more than 2 unrelated adults.
3. Applicants shall receive approval from the Army Corp of Engineers for the project prior to the submission of a building permit for the project.
4. The easement areas shall be clearly delineated onsite by a surveyor licensed to do work in the State of Minnesota, and protected using BMP's. BMP's shall be in place prior to construction occurring and a pre-construction meeting with the developer, contractor and City staff will be required prior to construction occurring.
5. The private driveway/street shall be given the name "Rogers Trail" for addressing purposes. The applicant shall install private signage to the specifications provided by the City of Mankato, and the signage shall be installed prior to the issuance of a building permit and shall remain in place and be verified on the final certificate of occupancy.
6. The proposed hammer-head areas shall be clearly identified as a fire accessway only and shall be clearly designated as a no-parking area.
7. Applicant shall provide a refuse plan for the subdivision.
8. The applicant shall provide a snow removal plan. If snow storage is proposed onsite, the plan should depict snow storage areas not in the hammerhead or truck turning area nor in the easement areas.
9. A sidewalk trail connection and a gazebo or other similar gathering feature be included in the planned unit development as an amenity.
10. All exterior light fixtures shall achieve Mankato City Code lighting standards including, but not limited to, full-cut fully shielded light fixtures and a photometric plan shall be submitted demonstrating no more than 1/2 foot candle lighting levels at the property line.
11. All land shown on the approved development plan as common open space must be conveyed to trustees provided in the indenture establishing an association or similar organization for the maintenance of the planned unit development. Applicant shall submit documentation of said association to the City at the time of request for the first building permit for the development.
12. Prior to occupancy, the applicant shall obtain rental licenses for each unit intended for rental purposes.
13. Applicant will need to submit a turning wheel radius for emergency vehicles at the time of building permit submittal.