

BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS

2026 Proposed Executive Budget

Mission: Review business plans and hear requests for conditional uses to support ongoing development in the city



2026 Budget Summary

| | 2025 Adopted Budget | 2026 Proposed Budget | Amount Change | Percent Change |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| FTEs – O&M | 5.33 | 5.33 | 0.00 | 0% |
| FTEs - Other | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0% |
| FTEs - Total | 5.33 | 5.33 | 0.00 | 0% |
| Total Positions Authorized | 12 | 12 | 0 | 0% |
| | | | | |
| Salaries & Wages | \$396,378 | \$395,471 | -\$907 | 0% |
| Fringe Benefits | 178,370 | 177,962 | -408 | 0% |
| Operating Expenditures | 47,500 | 113,300 | 65,800 | 139% |
| Equipment | 0 | 0 | 0 | - |
| Special Funds | 0 | 0 | 0 | - |
| TOTAL | \$622,248 | \$686,733 | \$64,485 | 10% |

Operating Changes:

- New legislation increased the scope of mailing notices.

Revenues

| Category | 2025 Adopted Budget | 2026 Proposed Budget | Amount Change | Percent Change |
|----------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Licenses and Permits | \$335,000 | \$410,000 | \$75,000 | 22% |
| TOTAL | \$335,000 | \$410,000 | \$75,000 | 22% |

Revenue Changes

- Legislative Update: Application fee will no longer be creditable under the updated legislation.

Board of Zoning Appeals

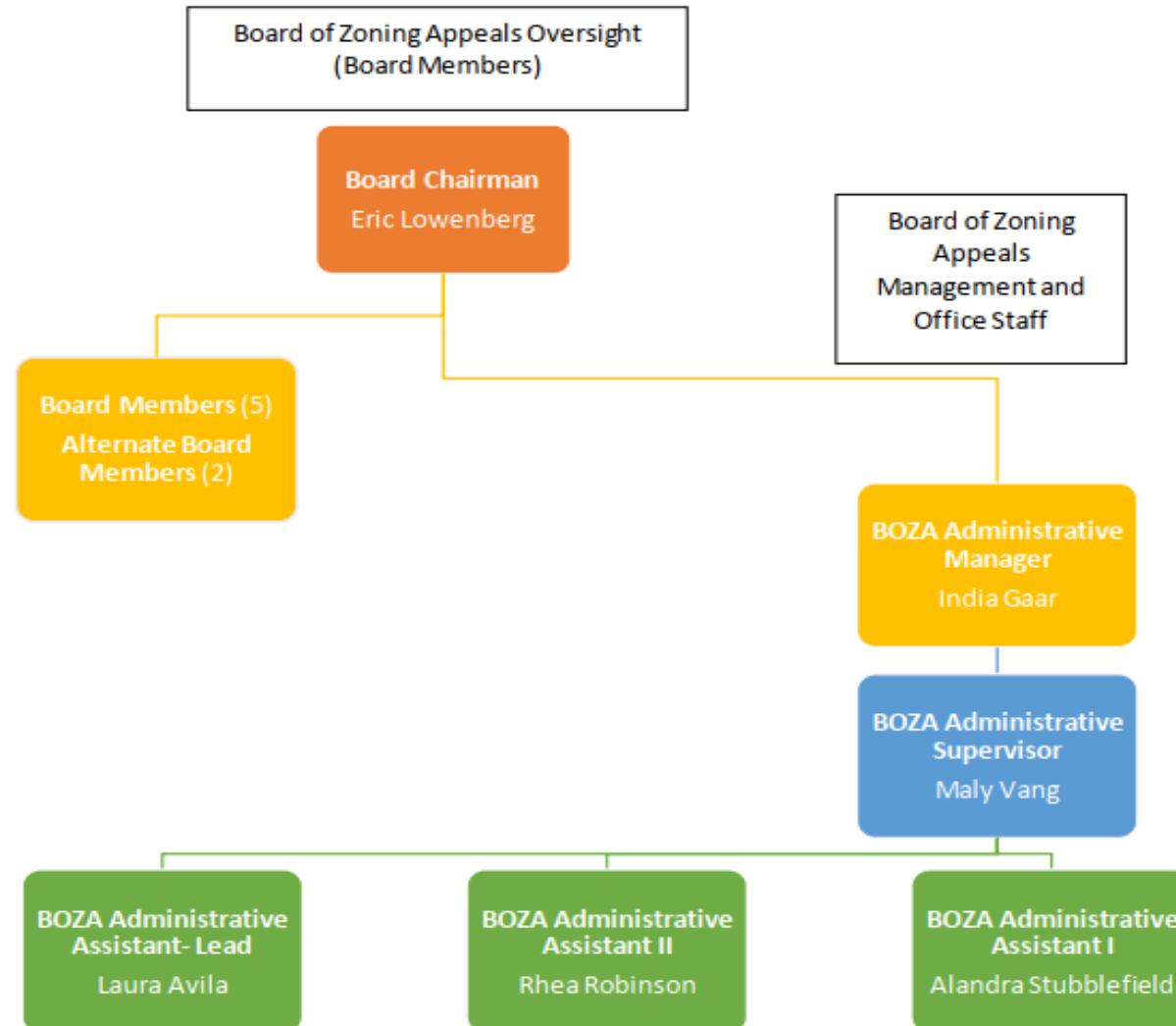
The Board of Zoning Appeals (BOZA) is an independent agency authorized to hear appeals in matters related to the zoning ordinances. The Board is required to follow procedures set forth by the City and State, and to evaluate the facts in each case. BOZA hears approximately 700 appeals over the course of 12 hearings each year.

| Key Performance Measures | 2024 Actual | 2025 Projected | 2026 Planned |
|--|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Number of appeals filed | 833 (614 cases) | 712 (518 cases) | 715 |
| Number of cases resolved in one hearing | 427/650 | 444/653 | 487/650 |
| Percentage of cases resolved in one hearing | 66% | 68% | 75% |
| Number of days from appeal to written decision | 96 | 100 | 75 |

Types of Applications Submitted to BOZA:

- Special Uses
- Use Variances
- Dimensional Variances
- Change of Operator Requests
- Extension of Time Requests for Board-Approved Special Uses or Variances
- Condition Modification Requests for Board-Approved Special Uses or Variances
- Appeals of Orders Issued by Inspectors
- Appeals of Determinations

Organizational Chart



2026 Major Updates - Department

Improved Staffing:

- **Board Members:** As of today, the Board is fully staffed with five regular Board members and two alternate Board members.
- **BOZA Office Staff:** The BOZA office has five approved positions, all of which are currently filled.

Transition to Legistar: The Board of Zoning Appeals plans to begin utilizing Legistar to post our hearing agendas, minutes, and case files in early 2026. We recently have been working with the City Clerk's office and City Records on the training and technological adjustments necessary for this transition and will soon be focusing more on the specific procedural changes that will need to occur with our staff.

Pursuing bilingual efforts to make the BOZA process more inclusive: For 2026, we aim to research ways to make the BOZA process easier to navigate for applicants that do not speak English. We now have a staff member that is fluent in Spanish and we do already offer information sheets and forms that are translated to Spanish for our applicants that need them. Efforts are currently underway to also have our notices translated into Spanish, Hmong, and other commonly spoken languages.

Heightened Communication with Council Members: The BOZA office strives to maintain a high level of communication with Council members regarding zoning appeals that are filed in their district. Current efforts include emailed notifications of eligible cases prior to the hearing agenda's finalization, emailed notifications and calendar invitations once the agenda is published, and emailed copies of the hearing eBooks comprised of updated versions of the scheduled cases prior to the hearing.

Service Uniformity

- The vast majority of applications submitted to the Board of Zoning Appeals are typically the result of a denial of a permit and subsequent referral by a Plan Examiner due to the desired project or use's noncompliance with zoning requirements as detailed in the Milwaukee Code of Ordinances. These requirements are determined by zoning district and are applied to everyone regardless of area.
- All applications undergo the same process – BOZA provides a standard checklist for required application materials. The required materials are based on the type of special use or variance being requested. Once applications are submitted, they are processed and reviewed in the order that they are received. Once it is determined that no additional information is needed, the application is scheduled for the next available hearing date.
- Appeal fees are based on the type of appeal and size of the parcel so that everyone is charged fairly based on what they are requesting.
- All cases that are scheduled for a hearing are noticed to the public so that all owners and residents located within 250 feet of the subject premises are given the opportunity to express support or objections.

Current Fee Schedule

| Type of Application | Lot / Surface Area | Fee |
|---|-------------------------|------------|
| Dimensional Variance | All | \$450 per |
| Use Variance | 0-10,000 sq. ft. | \$450 per |
| | 10,001 – 20,000 sq. ft. | \$750 per |
| | 20,001 sq. ft. and up | \$1050 per |
| Special Use | 0-10,000 sq. ft. | \$400 per |
| | 10,001 – 20,000 sq. ft. | \$500 per |
| | 20,001 sq. ft. and up | \$600 per |
| Change of Operator Request | | \$400 |
| Extension of Time to Comply with Board Conditions | | \$400 |
| Appeal of an Order or Determination | | \$400 |
| All Other Requests | | \$400 |

Environmental Impact

Ways that BOZA has made an effort to reduce the environmental impact of our services:

- Acceptance of BOZA Referral Letters through email and utilization of the Land Management System rather than paper copies.
- Encouraging applicants to submit their materials and plans via email rather than by mail or in person.
- When digital plans, materials, and correspondence are now received for applications, BOZA staff have begun uploading those files directly into the Land Management System and Evault rather than printing/copying materials to send to City Records for scanning and storage.
- Continuing to share files with other City Staff, as well as the public digitally through email, SharePoint, and the Land Management System. Will be including the use of Legistar for 2026.
- Continuing to utilize Microsoft Teams for staff meeting purposes whenever appropriate.
- Continuing to offer a hybrid attendance option for BOZA hearings.

Amendment Updates



#31 Coggs: Insert a footnote to the Board of Zoning Appeals Administrative Manager instructing BOZA to better utilize e-notify to inform residents of activities in the neighborhood.

- Citizens can now subscribe to location based notifications to receive emailed notifications of appeal applications near them. Notifications can be based on proximity to a specific address or by aldermanic district.

▼ Address based notification

Address

Notification Radius in Feet

(Minimum 20 foot radius is recommended)

Categories

200 E Wells St

400

☐ Forestry and Sanitation Violations

☐ Licenses Applied for by Address

☐ Neighborhood Services Activity ?

☐ Police Verified Offense

☒ Zoning Appeals Applied

save

delete

⬆ Zoning Appeals Applied for by Aldermanic District

- ☐ Aldermanic District 01
- ☐ Aldermanic District 02
- ☐ Aldermanic District 03
- ☐ Aldermanic District 04
- ☐ Aldermanic District 05

- ☐ Aldermanic District 06
- ☐ Aldermanic District 07
- ☐ Aldermanic District 08
- ☐ Aldermanic District 09
- ☐ Aldermanic District 10

- ☐ Aldermanic District 11
- ☐ Aldermanic District 12
- ☐ Aldermanic District 13
- ☐ Aldermanic District 14
- ☐ Aldermanic District 15

Amendment Updates

#31 Coggs: Insert a footnote to the Board of Zoning Appeals Administrative Manager instructing BOZA to better utilize e-notify to inform residents of activities in the neighborhood.

- Citizens can also use E-notify to receive BOZA hearing agendas by email by selecting “Board of Zoning Appeals Meeting Agenda” under “City Agency Meetings”.



The screenshot shows a web interface with a dark header bar containing a white upward-pointing arrow icon and the text "City Agency Meetings". Below the header is a light gray list box containing five items, each with a checkbox and text:

- ☐ Administrative Review Board of Appeals Agenda
- ☐ Anti-Graffiti Policy Committee Agenda
- ☐ Board of Harbor Commissioners Meetings
- ☐ Board of Health Agenda
- ☒ Board of Zoning Appeals Meeting Agenda

- The BOZA homepage now includes a link to register for e-notify and office staff have added links to our email signature blocks to promote to the public.

Amendment Updates

- **#46 Coggs: Insert a footnote instructing all departments to study the feasibility of having all the department's resources and reporting available on the City Action app**
 - Will work with ITMD to see if it is feasible to develop a way for citizens to possibly use the City Action app to report issues with certain properties that either already received approval through BOZA, or are in the process of applying for a special use and/or variance.
- **#47 Coggs: Insert a footnote instructing all departments to examine possible opportunities for internships or apprenticeships that could be developed in each department.**
 - The BOZA office used to offer a summer internship position years ago. We would be interested in bringing back that position for high school or college students. Will reach out to DER to find out how to make that possible.