



9721 JAMES AVE. BRINE BUILDING AND SALT STORAGE BUILDING VARIANCE APPLICATION 1.14.2026

Property Information:

Address:

9721 James Avenue South
Bloomington, MN 55341
DRC Application # PL202500212
PID # 16-027-24-24-0029

Zoning District:

- I-3 General Industry

Building Program:

Construction of a 5,985SF Brine Building with Wash Bays and 16,456 SF Salt Storage Building for the City of Bloomington Public Works department. The Brine Building with Wash Bays will be cast-in-place concrete with a steel-framed sloped metal roof. The building will contain (4) brine tanks, a restroom, a mechanical room and (3) vehicle wash bays.

The Salt Storage Building will have cast-in-place concrete side walls with a steel-framed tensile fabric roof. The building provides covered storage of approximately 5000 tons of salt and 500 tons of sand which is loaded onto trucks that drive into the building and exit onto James Avenue S.

The site area is 2.12 acres (48,958 SF). The site will accommodate outdoor wash areas, equipment storage and sufficient space for truck turning on site to navigate all areas and access into the buildings.

Variance request:

- We are requesting a reduced setback from Irving Avenue South from 30 ft. to 25 ft.

Why the Variance is needed:

- The City of Bloomington's Water Resources Department requires the final top of grade for the proposed development elevation in the range of 1-2 feet above the 100-year Flood elevation on this site.
- The 100-year Flood elevation for this site is 812.2 feet. To meet the Water Resources Department, the final top of grade elevations must be between 813.2 and 814.2 feet
- To accommodate the final top of grade for the proposed buildings within the required elevation range and provide lower slope transitions for vehicles at the driveway connecting to West 97th Street.

State the Ordinance Requirement

- Section 21.302.02 Structure Placement, Item (e) of the City Code indicates the setback along a Public Street in an I-3 Zoning district is 30 ft minimum.

Describe the circumstances preventing normal requirements of the Ordinance:

- Reducing the setback along Irving Avenue from 30 ft. to 25 ft. allows the final top of grade elevations to meet the Water Resources Department requirement to exceed the 100-year floodplain elevation by 1-2 feet. The 25 ft. setback along Irving Ave S allows grades to be resolved on site and provides optimal vehicular driveway slopes to meet the existing elevations along West 97th Street.
- With a 25' setback from Irving Avenue S (Variance Request)
 - Large vehicles transporting salt can access West 97th Street at a drive slope of 7.8%. This slope does not require the driveway transition to extend into the Salt Storage Shed itself. *See Exhibit E: Site Studies*
- With a 30' setback from Irving Avenue S (Ordinance Requirement)



- Large vehicles transporting salt will access West 97th Street at a drive slope of 8.2%. This drive slope is steeper and will require the driveway to extend into the Salt Shed impacting building use. Steeper driveways pose more difficulty in bad weather and require longer transition areas to prevent vehicle scraping. *See Exhibit E: Site Studies*
- To meet the Water Resources Department's requirements of the final top of grade elevations to be within 1-2 feet above the 100-year Flood Elevation:
 - The existing top of grade elevation is 812.7. *See Exhibit A: Survey*
 - Brine Building's proposed final top of grade will be at 813.7 feet (1'-6" above 812.2 feet). *See Exhibit B: Site Grading Plan & Exhibit F: Grading Plan*
 - Salt Storage Building's proposed final top of grade will be at 814 feet (1'-9 1/2" above 812.2 feet). *See Exhibit B: Site Grading Plan & Exhibit F: Grading Plan.*

Will a 25' setback along Irving Avenue South impact any other site requirements of the City Code?

- No other requirements of the City Code will be impacted.
- All sidewalks and landscape plantings will be installed to comply with the City Code.

List of Exhibits attached to this Variance request:

Exhibit A: Site Survey (Existing Conditions)

- Survey of existing site with property information

Exhibit B: Site Plan

- Site plan shows proposed building placement, proposed final grade elevations and site plan layout with driveway

Exhibit C: Grading Plan

- Plan showing proposed grading on site with final building floor elevations.

Exhibit D: Floor Plans (2 pages)

- Proposed building floor plans

Exhibit E: Site Studies

- Sketches from Loucks Engineering studying drive slopes and transitions with 25' and 30' setback from Irving Avenue South.
- The studies show:
 - 25' setback along Irving Avenue South allows shallower driveway slopes for vehicles on site without a transition zone encroaching into the Salt Storage Building. This is the basis of the Variance.
 - 30' setback along Irving Avenue south creates steeper driveway slopes for vehicles on site and a transition zone encroaches into the Salt Storage Building. This is the condition if a 30' setback is enforced along Irving Avenue S.

Exhibit F: Building Exterior Elevations (3 pages)

- Proposed building exterior elevations

End of Narrative