



Board of County Commissioners Agenda Request

7B
Agenda Item #

Requested Meeting Date: January 6, 2026

Title of Item: First Reading - Amendment to Shoreland Ordinance (Discussion Only)

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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> REGULAR AGENDA <input type="checkbox"/> CONSENT AGENDA <input type="checkbox"/> INFORMATION ONLY | Action Requested: <input type="checkbox"/> Approve/Deny Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Adopt Resolution (attach draft) <input type="checkbox"/> Direction Requested <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion Item <input type="checkbox"/> Hold Public Hearing* <i>*provide copy of hearing notice that was published</i> | |
| Submitted by: Andrew Carlstrom | | Department: Environmental Services |
| Presenter (Name and Title): Andrew Carlstrom, Environmental Services Director | | Estimated Time Needed: 15 Minutes |
| Summary of Issue: <p>On November 17, 2025 the Aitkin County Planning Commission approved the proposed amendments to the Aitkin County Shoreland Management Ordinance.</p> <p>In accordance with MN Statute 394 and Rule 11 of the Aitkin County Ordinances and Procedures of the Board of Commissioners Meeting Procedures and Rules of Business Board of Commissioners, two readings shall be conducted prior to the adoption of the amendment. The three proposed amendments brought forth by Commissioners and in addition to what the Planning Commission previously recommended approving are as follows:</p> <p>Please see attached proposed memorandum with proposed summary of changes, a proposed resolution, and the complete, amended Aitkin County Shoreland Management Ordinance</p> | | |
| Alternatives, Options, Effects on Others/Comments: Discussion Only | | |
| Recommended Action/Motion: Discussion Only | | |
| Financial Impact: <p>Is there a cost associated with this request? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>What is the total cost, with tax and shipping? \$</p> <p>Is this budgeted? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Please Explain:</p> | | |



AITKIN COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES PLANNING & ZONING

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 6, 2026

TO: Aitkin County Board of Commissioners

FROM: Andrew Carlstrom, Director Environmental Services – Planning & Zoning Administrator

RE: Amendments to the 2018 Aitkin County Shoreland Management Ordinance

In accordance with the 2025 Aitkin County Strategic Plan and in an effort to streamline, improve clarity, and update the current Shoreland Management Ordinance, Aitkin County Environmental Services staff has worked collaboratively with the Ordinance Committee and with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Area Hydrologist, to propose modest amendments to the current 2018 ordinance. The Aitkin County Shoreland Management Ordinance is our most comprehensive and regulated land use ordinance. A summary of the proposed changes are as follows:

- Section 2.7 – Administrative additions to and revision of definitions
- Section 4.25 – Administrative update of the classification list for land uses
- Section 7.22 – Administrative updated language on vegetation alterations
- Section 9.82 – Open Space/Common Open Space Administrative Change

The following is the past and present tentative timeline for the proposed Shoreland Ordinance amendments:

November 2024 to May 2025: Ordinance Committee review, discussion, and revisions of the Aitkin County Shoreland Management Ordinance.

June 18 – July 18, 2025: 30 Day Press Release for written public comments to proposed amendments.

July 31, 2025: County Board “Committee of the Whole” public meeting to discuss the proposed amendments and receive comments from the public.

September 22, 2025: Aitkin County Planning Commission’s held public workshop and received public comments on proposed amendments to the Shoreland Management Ordinance.

November 17, 2025: Aitkin County Planning Commission Public Hearing on the proposed amendments to the Shoreland Management Ordinance

January 6, 2026: Aitkin County Board of Commissioners Public Hearing and First Reading of proposed amendments.

January 27, 2026: (Tentative) Aitkin County Board of Commissioners Second Reading and tentative adoption of proposed amendments.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 218-927-7342 or by email at andrew.carlstrom@aitkincountymn.gov.

Resolution #20260127-xxx Aitkin County Shoreland Management Ordinance Amendment

WHEREAS, in an effort to regulate land use practices that protect surface water quality, protect near shore habitat, and protect shoreland aesthetics, the Aitkin County Shoreland Management Ordinance regulates shoreland zoning with standards in place to mitigate possible adverse impacts to the health, safety, and welfare of surrounding properties and environments.

WHEREAS, Aitkin County is experiencing and is expected to experience a continued marked increase in shoreland zoned applications to include new buildings, vegetation alterations, and general land alterations; **AND**

WHEREAS, Minnesota Administrative Rules 6120.2500 through 3900 governs State shoreland regulations, with Aitkin County initially adopting it's Shoreland Ordinance in 1992, and making further amendments in 2001, 2005, 2008, 2011, 2012, 2017, and 2018; **AND**

WHEREAS, Aitkin County desires to amend the current ordinance in order to improve organization, understandability, and enforceability of the current Shoreland Ordinance; **AND**

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Aitkin County Board of Commissioners does hereby authorize the proposed amendments of the Aitkin County Shoreland Management Ordinance.

Adopted this 27th Day of January, 2026 By The Aitkin County Board of Commissioners.

Attest:

J. Mark Wedel
County Board Chair

David J. Minke, County Administrator
Clerk to the County Board

STATE OF MINNESOTA}
COUNTY OF AITKIN}