

SUMMARY OF PLANNING COMMISSION PROCEDURES

STEP 1. Request application and discuss circumstances with staff (see the following page for more specific information).

Application Deadline: _____

Public Hearing Date: _____

County Board Date: _____

STEP 2. File application by the above noted deadline. An application includes the following:

- a. A completed application form with the required filing fee
- b. A complete site sketch listing all applicable distances, setbacks or other necessary measurements
- c. For shoreland requests, septic system certification is required. (Note: Noncompliant septic systems are required to be upgraded regardless of the outcome of the planning commission proceedings).

STEP 3. Processing (completed by the Environmental Services staff, with the exception of plats):

- a. Public hearing notice sent to the local paper and to the official County paper, the Cold Spring Record
- b. Notification of affected property owners:
 - Plats - property owners within ½ mile
 - Rezoning - property owners within ½ mile
 - Conditional Use/Interim Use Permits - property owners within ¼ mile
- c. Staff reviews application and generates a staff report
- d. Mailing of information packets to the members of the Commission, and
- e. Mailing of agenda and staff report to applicants

STEP 4. Staff and Planning Commission members will enter the property to perform needed inspections and review the application. All have county-issued badges. Entry may be without prior notice

STEP 5. Planning Commission conducts hearings on plats, rezonings and conditional and interim use permits on the third Thursday of the month unless otherwise stated.

It is recommended that the applicant(s) or their representative attend the hearing to answer any questions the Commission may have. The Commission will base its decision on the information presented and public testimony. Failure to have representation may result in the continuation of the item to the next meeting.

Actions of the Planning Commission are as follows:

- ✓ **Plats** are recommendations to the County Board, and will follow final plat requirements.
- ✓ **Rezoning, Conditional and Interim Use Permits** are also recommendations and will be submitted to the County Board of Commissioners generally at their next meeting. Any item may be continued or tabled by the Planning Commission. If the item is continued, the Planning Commission will state when the item is continued to (either the next meeting or a specified date). There will be no additional notification on continued items.

Step 6. The Stearns County Board of Commissioners will consider this request at their next Board meeting. Interim Use Permits and Conditional Use Permits will be placed on the consent agenda which is heard at the beginning of the agenda. To inquire how to request an item be placed under the regular agenda for discussion, please contact the Department. If the Board of Commissioners do not concur with the Planning Commission, they will hold another public hearing and new notice will be sent.

STEP 7. All conditional and interim use permits are recorded with the property deed in the County Recorder's Office. If the conditional use permit is denied, notice will be sent to the applicant(s) via mail.

STEP 8. Once the proceedings for conditional and interim use permits are recorded, a copy will be sent to the applicant(s) via mail.

Applicant _____

Parcel # _____

CONDITIONAL/INTERIM USE CHECKLIST

- Completed Application with the signature of the property owner and applicant.
- Fee \$ (_____)
- Septic Certification (1) If the project is located in Shoreland Overlay District; or 2) If there is an expansion of use of the building being served by the SSTS or a change in use of the property being served by the SSTS either of which may impact the performance of the system).
- Jurisdictional Determination Letter from Department of Labor and Industry is required for Places of Public Accommodation.
Contact: _____
- Building plans, to include existing and proposed additions and structures, including views of the front, rear, and sides of the project. Structures and facilities may be required to meet the Handicap Accessibility Code portion of the State Building Code, Minnesota Rules, chapter 1341. Accessibly review fee required. Cost to be determined based on project value. Project value \$ _____.
- Impervious lot coverage calculation worksheet or a certificate of survey showing the impervious lot coverage calculation.
- Proposed stormwater management and erosion control plan and fee, when required by Sections 7.10 and 7.25 of Zoning Ordinance #439. Fee \$ (_____)
- Site plan with the following information. All information checked must be provided. The proposed project shall be staked out prior to submitting the application to Environmental Services.
 - Location of all existing and proposed structures, their dimensions and setbacks from lot lines, road, the ordinary high water level, septic system and other structures.
 - Existing and proposed driveway, access road (s), off-street parking & sidewalks.
 - Location of septic system with setbacks related to the request, any wells and, when relevant, the location of neighboring wells.
 - Parking areas including number of spaces.
 - Sign location and dimensions-existing and proposed.
 - Outdoor Display Areas- existing and proposed.
 - Outdoor Storage Areas-existing and proposed.
 - Traffic circulation arrows.
 - Fencing and screening-existing and proposed.
- Other:
 - _____
 - _____

CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT APPLICATION – (Major Shoreland Alteration)

Stearns County Environmental Services Department

Stearns County Service Center • 3301 County Rd 138 • Waite Park, MN 56387

(320) 656-3613 • (800) 450-0852

A. Applicant Information

Applicant name (last, first, MI)

Phone

Email

Applicant address

City/State/Zip

B. Project Location

Address of property affected

City/State/Zip

Parcel #

Lot, Block, Subdivision

¼ Section – Section – Twp - Range

C. Project Information

Waterbody name, number, & OHWL

Area of disturbed ground (in sq. feet or acres)

Volume of fill or excavation (in cubic yards)

TYPE OF WORK & AREA: (check all that apply)

Attach drawings & plans

(include all dimensions – ex: Length, width & depth of altered areas)

- | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Construct | <input type="checkbox"/> Excavate | <input type="checkbox"/> Remove | <input type="checkbox"/> Access path | <input type="checkbox"/> Rip rap | <input type="checkbox"/> Shoreline |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drain | <input type="checkbox"/> Fill | <input type="checkbox"/> Repair | <input type="checkbox"/> Sand blanket | <input type="checkbox"/> Retaining wall | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | | | | | |

Will this project correct an existing erosion problem?

YES

NO

Project Purpose:

Type of Erosion/Sediment Control Proposed:

- | | | | |
|--|--|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sod | <input type="checkbox"/> Hydroseed | <input type="checkbox"/> Coir Log | <input type="checkbox"/> Seed & Straw Mulch |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disc-anchored mulch | <input type="checkbox"/> Erosion Control Blanket | <input type="checkbox"/> Silt Fence | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DATES: Proposed start of activity: _____

Proposed completion: _____

CONTRACTOR:

Licensed Contractor

Self

Stearns County Septic Cert #

Contractor

Name:

License #

I have read the enclosed materials about practices to preserve / restore healthy shorelines to protect fish/wildlife habitat and the quality of our lakes, streams, and wetlands.

AGREEMENT: I hereby certify that I am the owner of the above property and that the information contained herein is correct. I agree to do the proposed work in accordance with the ordinances of Stearns County, Minnesota and also in accordance with any additional provisions or conditions which may be attached to the permit being applied for. Signature of this application authorizes Environmental Services Staff, Board of Adjustment and/or Planning Commission members, and County Board of Commissioners to enter upon the property to perform needed inspections and review. All have county-issued badges. Entry may be without prior notice.

Signature of Property Owner: _____

Date: _____

\$550

Application Fee

Permit #

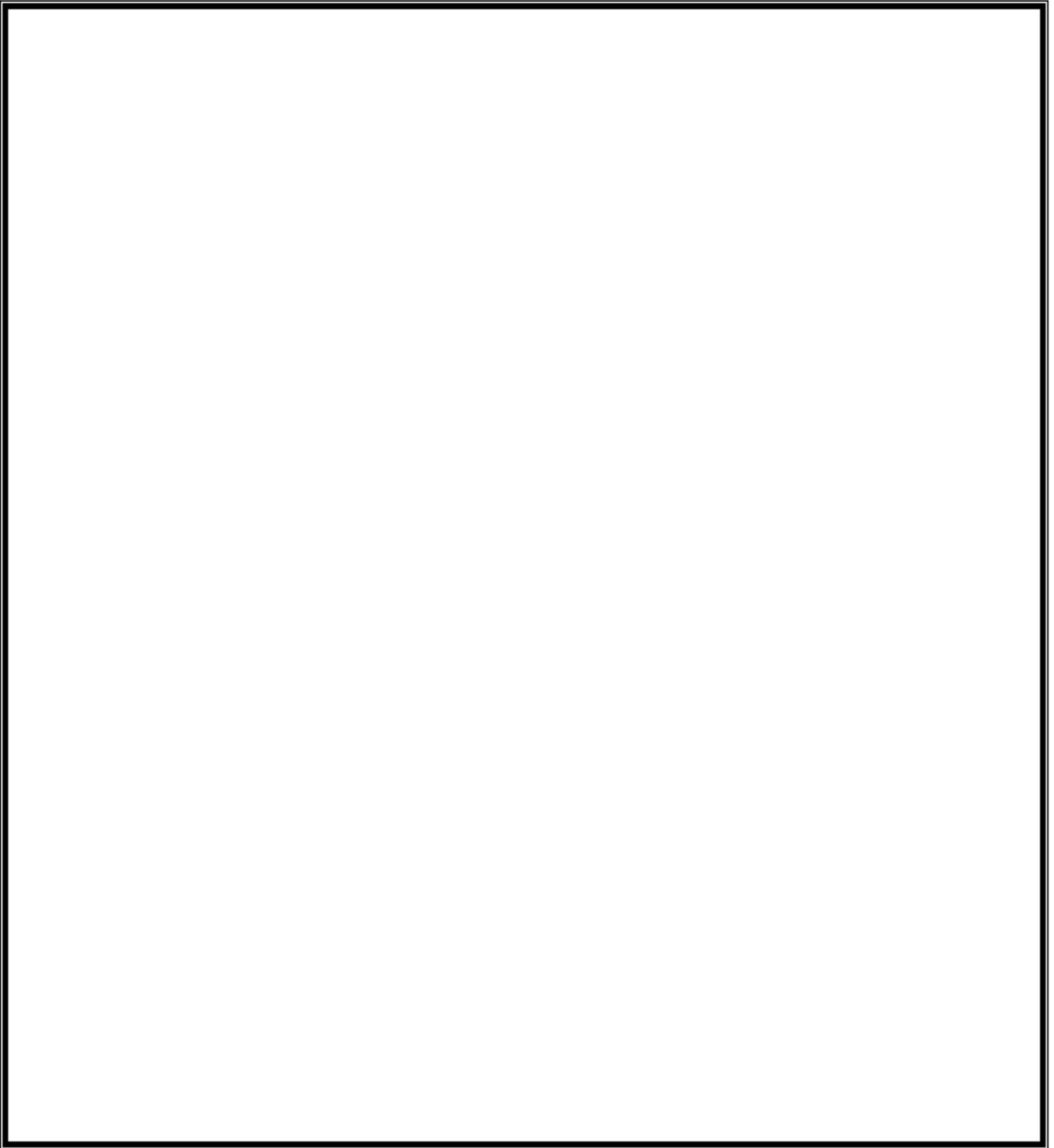
Receipt #

Date of Receipt

Site Plan

In the space below or on additional sheets please provide the following:

1. Length, height and proximity to waterbodies of all proposed retaining walls.
2. Length, width, depth and proximity to waterbodies of ALL areas to be topographically altered.
3. Cut/fill volumes and location of all disturbed areas
4. Location/type of all proposed erosion and sediment control practices.



Applicant _____

CUP File# _____

Lot Coverage Calculation Worksheet

Lot coverage is limited to 25% of the total lot. **The total may not be larger than the maximum coverage calculation below.** Please be advised that if you are over the lot coverage allowance, you must reduce your coverage or apply for a variance before your proposed project will be permitted. Please calculate out all that apply to your situation. If an item does not apply, please leave it blank.

Proposed Structure(s)	Length (ft)	Width (ft)	Total (ft ²)
1.			
2.			
3.			
Existing Structure(s)			
House & Attached Garage			
House Only			
Detached Garage			
Other Structures <i>*All sheds, utility buildings, dog kennels, greenhouses, etc.</i>			
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
Deck(s)			
Driveway/Parking Areas <i>*Asphalt, cement, gravel</i>			
Sidewalk, Patio, Paving Stones			
Landscaping (plastic under rock)			
Other			
1.			
2.			

Total Coverage (ft²)	
--	--

Lot Area (ft²):		X	25%	=	Maximum Coverage (ft²)	
-----------------------------------	--	----------	------------	----------	--	--

Lot Area: Calculate lot area by multiplying the length of the lot times the width. However, if the length and width vary, as in the example, take the average length and width:

Average Lot Width (ft):

Average Lot Length (ft):

Lot Area (sq. ft):

Or, if you know lot acreage, enter below:

X 43,560 sq. ft.

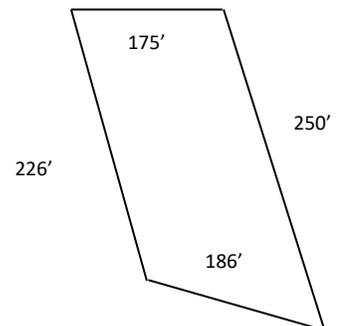
acres

Lot Square Feet

Example

Average Width: $175' + 186' = 361/2 = 181'$
 Average Length: $226' + 250' = 476/2 = 238'$
 Lot Size: (W) $181' * (L) 238' = 43,078$ sq. ft
 Lot Area: 43,078 square feet

Note: 1 Acre = 43,560 ft²



1

LAND USE DECISION FACTORS



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ALIGNMENT

This factor builds on an existing process used by decision makers to determine if a proposed project aligns with the County's Comprehensive Plan. This factor places a stronger ownership on the Townships, property owner or applicant to determine how the proposed project fits within the overall context of the Comprehensive Plan.

Directions: Select the Goal statements and Focus Areas that align with the proposed project.

AGRICULTURAL PILLAR

Stearns County's agricultural heritage is the root of our prosperity and identity. Through product diversity, innovation, and sustainable practices, we will enhance and promote the advancement of our agricultural economy.

GOALS

- Support agriculture as a desirable land use for the long term and facilitate diversification of the County's agricultural economy.
- Utilize sustainable practices to protect prime farmland and water quality for future generations.
- Retain areas with highly valued agricultural land or economically viable animal agriculture operations.
- Strive for and support higher farm profitability and family farm stability.
- Strengthen and retain areas with highly valued agricultural land or economically viable animal agriculture operations.
- Encourage cities to collaborate with the County on the review of animal agriculture issues in close proximity to boundaries or within orderly annexation areas.

FOCUS AREAS

- Agricultural Uses
- Crop/Product Diversification
- Animal Agriculture
- Clean Energy

LIVING PILLAR

Stearns County shares a broad set of values about ourselves and the place where we live. We will continue to embrace these diverse values by supporting a full range of housing choices that meets resident's needs at every stage of their lives, and ensure a healthy balance of housing types that meet the needs of a diverse population with diverse needs.

GOALS

- Collaborate with cities and townships to maintain sustainable growth patterns that align with the Comprehensive Plan.
- Manage the impacts of growth and development on the County's rural character and natural resources.
- Support housing options that give people in all life stages and of all economic means viable choices for safe, stable, and affordable homes.
- Encourage new homes to be constructed in a sustainable manner, while including energy efficient technology and in accordance with state building code.
- Respect and preserve architectural, archaeological, and cultural history, while building on all residents' cultural assets to strengthen County cohesion.

FOCUS AREAS

- Transitional Areas
- Agricultural Residential Uses
- Rural Residential Uses
- Accessory Dwelling Units
- Workforce Housing
- Lakeshore Living

BUSINESS PILLAR

Stearns County will invest in economic development strategies that are rooted in our shared values, skills, and identity. This will require a balanced economy that supports our existing businesses, while attracting new business that encourages entrepreneurship, innovation, and creativity.

GOALS

- Increase the County's regional prosperity by being globally competitive and a business-friendly region.
- Increase the value of County economic production by ensuring that operations sustain natural resources.
- Acknowledge tourism's economic value and the prospective contribution of this industry to both the diversity of the County economic base and the potential for growth.
- Enhance the ability of local retail and commercial business to sustain small cities and rural townsites.
- Continue to promote and encourage multi-jurisdictional partnerships and public-private partnerships that advance economic development opportunities.
- Support opportunities for rural businesses that are compatible with agricultural environments and residential neighborhoods.

FOCUS AREAS

Rural Business
Agritourism
Artisan Agriculture
Townsite Mixed Use
Major Transportation Corridors
Changing Economies
Partnerships & Local Coordination

CONNECTIVITY PILLAR

Stearns County's infrastructure, facilities, and services play an important role in connecting the places where we live, work and play. We recognize the inherent responsibility in maintaining these systems in a sustainable and fiscally responsible manner. Enhancing these systems will require public and private partnerships that strive to maintain our quality of life.

GOALS

- Develop and maintain a transportation system that promotes the safety, mobility, and access of all users.
- Coordinate infrastructure and service needs with development, and encourage development where the infrastructure and services are adequate to serve that growth.
- Strengthen our regional role in connecting rural and agricultural economies with metropolitan areas through reliable transportation networks.
- Deploy fast and reliable internet technologies that are equitable, affordable, and take advantage of existing infrastructure assets.
- Provide County infrastructure, services, and facilities that benefit the residents of the County in a cost-effective manner.
- Maintain a state of readiness to meet natural, man-made, and technological disasters on a local or countywide basis.

FOCUS AREAS

- Transportation Networks
- County Resources
- Internet Connectivity
- Sustainability & Resiliency



NATURE PILLAR

Stearns County recognizes the inherent values of the natural environment and connecting people to nature. We are committed to providing recreational opportunities, while recognizing the value of natural resource protection, restoration, and preservation. This will require sustainable practices that balance growth between urban and rural communities.

GOALS

- Preserve, restore, and protect important natural systems and natural resources.
- Ensure the reasonable and responsible use of the County's natural resources, including land, surface and ground water, minerals, open space, wetlands, wildlife, and woodlands.
- Recognize the significance of water resources in the County and ensure the creation and implementation of policies to manage stormwater in collaboration with land use and development.
- Protect the County's aggregate resources and provide for reasonable economic use of aggregate.
- Partner with cities, townships, adjoining counties and state agencies to broaden the potential pool for park acquisition and improvement.
- Provide park and open space areas throughout the County to meet the active and passive recreational needs of current and future residents.
- Provide a regional trail system in order to support a variety of recreational activities, offer alternative transportation modes, and support tourism and economic development initiatives

FOCUS AREAS

- Water Resources
- Natural System Corridors
- Aggregate Resources
- Future Parkland Planning
- Operations and Management
- Funding



4

FACTOR FOUR FUTURE LAND USE CRITERIA

This factor applies development standards and criteria to the Future Land Use categories (see Factor 2). This approach helps convey preferred land use patterns and expectations to minimize conflicts between adjacent land uses and natural resources.

Depending on the location of the proposed project, it may be required to address more than one land use criteria. For example, a proposed project may be located in an Agricultural/Rural Area and along a Major Transportation Corridor.

Directions: Select (check the boxes) of the design standards the proposed project is using under its future land use criteria (see Factor 2). More than one future land use category may apply.



AGRICULTURAL/ RURAL AREAS: RESIDENTIAL USE

The project has taken the LESA score into consideration and has taken the appropriate steps to preserving prime farmland soils for future agricultural activities.

Through good conservation oriented site design practices and principles, the site is able to protect and preserve significant natural resources and agricultural areas.

The project can be designed to minimize potential conflicts with agricultural uses (agricultural uses take precedent).

Proposed projects creating multiple residential lots should employ standards to minimize impacts on agricultural land.



AGRICULTURAL/ RURAL AREAS: BUSINESS USE

The project enhances the agricultural community.

The project can be designed to minimize impacts to adjacent land uses.

Through good conservation oriented site design practices and principles, the site is able to protect and preserve significant natural resources and agricultural areas.

The project utilizes existing buildings and/or structures.

The project's owner or operator lives on-site.

The project has demonstrated that it will not alter the rural character.



TRANSITIONAL AREAS

The project minimizes potential conflicts between urban and rural land uses.

The project is logically connected to existing development; zoning districts shall be identified to prevent leapfrog or isolated development within contiguous land use districts.

The delivery of other government services (i.e. fire, police, public works, and public education) have been consulted and the County is satisfied that the development can be serviced under existing or planned programming levels.

Through good conservation oriented site design practices and principles, the project is able to protect and preserve natural resources.

The project has been coordinated and aligned with the City and/or Township plans for future growth.



TOWNSITE MIXED USE

The project fits the surrounding areas character and takes into consideration its historical context.

The project promotes a positive image of the community through design principles (e.g., building materials and landscaping) that convey the area as an attractive place for visitors and prospective businesses.

The project provides housing options or job opportunities that support local and regional economic development goals for future growth.



CONCENTRATED RESIDENTIAL

The project can be designed to minimize impacts to adjacent land uses.

If the project is located near a water body, it can be designed to restore or preserve shoreland.

The project is logically connected to existing development.

Through good conservation oriented site design practices and principles, the site is able to protect and preserve significant natural resources and agricultural areas.

The project can be designed to easily address sewer system requirements.



MAJOR TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR

The project demonstrates a transition between commercial uses and residential or agriculture uses including retaining existing features of the landscape as defining elements of site design (fence rows, ditches, wetlands, woods).

The project promotes a positive image of the community through design principles (e.g., building materials and landscaping) that convey the corridor as an attractive place for visitors and prospective businesses.

The project has met the roadway's access management guidelines.

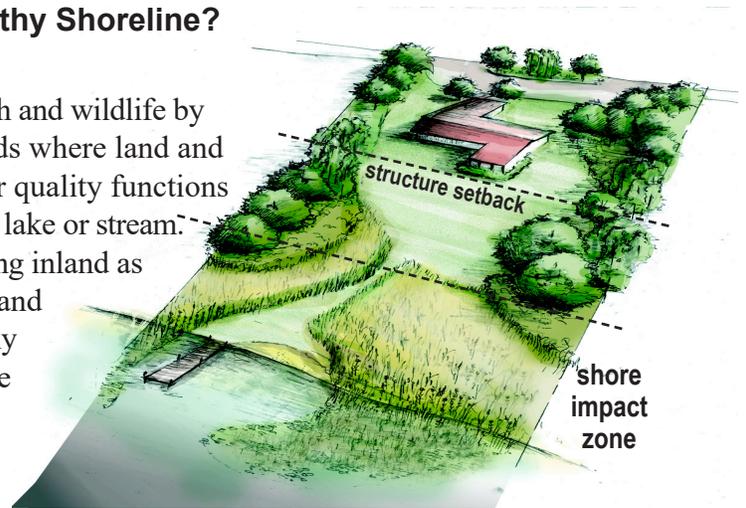
The project has taken the appropriate steps to mitigate traffic impacts.



Healthy Shorelines

What is a Healthy Shoreline?

A healthy shoreline supports a diverse community of fish and wildlife by providing native vegetation that fulfills their habitat needs where land and water meet. Native vegetation provides important water quality functions by slowing and filtering water runoff as it moves to the lake or stream. Shorelines with a diverse mixture of native plants extending inland as well as offshore of the bank are more resilient to wave and ice erosion. Our lakes, streams and wetlands need healthy shorelines to reduce runoff, filter pollutants, and provide important habitat functions that benefit fish and wildlife.



Vegetation Management in Shoreland Areas

The protection of natural vegetation in shoreland areas, especially along lakes and streambanks, is critical to maintaining water quality and wildlife habitat. Good shoreland management requires the protection of natural vegetation in shore impact zones, steep slopes and bluff areas.

Shoreland vegetation (native trees, shrubs, forbs, grasses) provides numerous ecological benefits including

- Minimizes the erosive impact of raindrops
- Holds soils and limits soil erosion from surface runoff, which is important since high velocity or concentrated runoff volumes can readily erode soils
- Removes nutrients in runoff which would degrade water quality
- Binds and strengthens the soil column with deep, dense roots which prevent and reduce the likelihood of bank or slope failure
- Provides diverse fish and wildlife habitat
- Provides privacy and helps screen shoreland development
- Provides natural and aesthetic views
- Reduces erosion by protecting the banks against wave energy

What is a Shore Impact Zone?

The shore impact zone is land located between the waterbody and one-half of the structure setback.

This concept was created in the 1989 shoreland standards to maintain existing buffers, limit the number of buildings placed in close proximity to the water, reduce soil erosion caused by construction or vegetation removal, and preserve aesthetic values. It serves to buffer the water from more intensive land uses.

A proliferation of accessory structures (boathouses, fish houses, sheds, etc.) clutters shores and displaces natural vegetation. Moreover, construction near the shoreline brings grading and filling activities and increases erosion. In order to protect shoreland soils, vegetation and aesthetics, the Shore Impact Zone was designated to protect important amenities of the lake while still allowing for access to the waterbody.

Healthy Shorelines

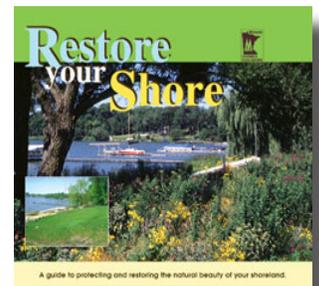
So What's the Problem?

There are many shorelines where the banks were long ago stripped of the native plant community, including trees and shrubs, and converted to turf grass-type lawns. The loss of this vegetation encourages soil erosion and nutrients to flow directly to the lake. As these practices spread around a lake, there are fewer areas left to treat runoff water and provide habitat. Studies of Minnesota lakes have shown that the removal of natural vegetation near the shoreline reduces the amount of habitat available to songbirds and amphibians and reduces fish-nesting. Many of these problems could be prevented or minimized if an area of native plants is maintained or restored.

Shoreland ordinances allow a limited number of trees and shrubs to be cleared to accommodate stairways and access paths. However, the applicable standard for such removal is that the screening of structures, vehicles or other facilities as viewed from the water may not be substantially reduced. Dead or diseased vegetation can be removed although they may be important for songbirds and other wildlife. Invasive species can be an overwhelming problem both on the shore and in the water. The local zoning office or DNR area hydrologist should be contacted for guidance before proceeding with any lakeshore alterations or removal of live vegetation.

What Can You Do?

- Protect the health of the vegetation growing on your property.
- Invasive species tend to spread rapidly. Learn to identify the most common invasive species. Invasives should be removed, but replanting native species may be needed to protect shorelines from erosion.
- Use herbicides that are labeled for an aquatic site or use a more precise method of application, like a wick applicator or a cotton glove over the top of a chemical resistant glove to apply the product only to those plants you want to control.
- Leave vegetation in place to screen structures, vehicles or other facilities as viewed from the water.
- Consider leaving dead or diseased vegetation in place as they may be important for songbirds and other wildlife.
- Most importantly, leave an area of native plants between the house and the shoreline area. Limit the removal of trees and shrubs.
- If you have been mowing near the shoreline, simply discontinue that practice to allow growth of native plants or restore and replant with native flowers, shrubs or trees.



Contact the local Soil and Water Conservation District, DNR area hydrologist or your county zoning office to get assistance. There are also a number of books and "on-line tools" (*Restore Your Shore* <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/restoreyourshore/index.html> and *Score Your Shore* <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/scoreyourshore/index.html>) and other literature available to help you support shorelines that promote healthy lakes and streams and the biotic communities that depend on them.

Glossary of Terms

Shore Impact Zone: land located between the waterbody and one-half of the structure setback

Bluff Impact Zone: bluff and land located within 20 feet from the top of a bluff

Steep Slopes: land having an average slope greater than 12 percent

Runoff: precipitation or snow melt, which is not intercepted by vegetation, absorbed in soil, or evaporated, that moves over the land surface to streams, lakes, ditches, and depressions in the ground

DNR Contact Information



DNR Ecological and Water Resources
website and a listing of Area Hydrologists:
<http://mndnr.gov/waters>

DNR Ecological and Water Resources
500 Lafayette Road, Box 32
St. Paul, MN 55155
(651) 259-5100

*This information is available in an
alternative format on request.*

© 2012 State of Minnesota, Department of Natural Resources

DNR Information Center

Twin Cities: (651) 296-6157
Minnesota toll free: 1-888-646-6367
Telecommunication device for the deaf (TDD): (651) 296-5484
TDD toll free: 1-800-657-3929

Equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from programs of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is available regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, age, or disability. Discrimination inquiries should be sent to Minnesota DNR, 500 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155-4049; or the Equal Opportunity Office, Department of the Interior, Washington, DC 20240.