



Board of County Commissioners Agenda Request

5D
Agenda Item #

Requested Meeting Date: January 5, 2016

Title of Item: Scenic Byway Assessment for Lake Mille Lacs Area

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|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> REGULAR AGENDA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CONSENT AGENDA <input type="checkbox"/> INFORMATION ONLY | Action Requested: <input type="checkbox"/> Approve/Deny Motion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopt Resolution (attach draft) <i>*provide copy of hearing notice that was published</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Direction Requested <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Item <input type="checkbox"/> Hold Public Hearing* |
| Submitted by: Nathan Burkett | | Department: Administration |
| Presenter (Name and Title): | | Estimated Time Needed: |
| Summary of Issue: Attached is a letter to Commissioner Niemi, from Arrowhead Regional Development Commission, requesting Aitkin County adopt a resolution supporting a Scenic Byway assessment for the Lake Mille Lacs area. A copy of the proposed resolution is also attached. | | |
| Alternatives, Options, Effects on Others/Comments: | | |
| Recommended Action/Motion: Adopt the attached resolution. | | |
| Financial Impact: Is there a cost associated with this request? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No What is the total cost, with tax and shipping? \$ Is this budgeted? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <i>Please Explain:</i> | | |

By Commissioner: xx

20160105-0xx

In Support of Conducting a Scenic Byway Assessment for the Lake Mille Lacs Area

WHEREAS, Aitkin County is located within the Lake Mille Lacs area, and

WHEREAS, the Lake Mille Lacs area possesses one of the largest, most historic, and most popular recreational lakes in Minnesota, and

WHEREAS, the Lake Mille Lacs area also offers countless other amenities including scenic forests, quaint communities, resorts, two state parks, historic sites, and a casino/resort, and

WHEREAS, acknowledging and promoting the assets in the Lake Mille Lacs area is critical to improving the area economy and enhancing the tourism experience, and

WHEREAS, studies conducted by the University of Minnesota have shown that local economies historically have benefitted through the establishment of Scenic Byway routes, and

WHEREAS, the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission, the East Central Regional Development Commission, and the Region 5 Development Commission, with the support of interested stakeholders, have proposed to conduct an assessment of the Lake Mille Lacs area to determine the feasibility of, and local support for, pursuing scenic byway designation for the roadways surrounding Mille Lacs Lake.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, Aitkin County hereby supports and expresses its commitment to the process for conducting a scenic byway assessment, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Aitkin County understands this commitment is non-financially binding, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Aitkin County will designate a representative to participate in the scenic byway assessment process.

Commissioner xx moved the adoption of the resolution and it was declared adopted upon the following vote

FIVE MEMBERS PRESENT

All Members Voting Yes

STATE OF MINNESOTA}
COUNTY OF AITKIN}

I, Nathan Burkett, County Administrator, Aitkin County, Minnesota do hereby certify that I have compared the foregoing with the original resolution filed in the Administration Office of Aitkin County in Aitkin, Minnesota as stated in the minutes of the proceedings of said Board on the 5th day of January 2016, and that the same is a true and correct copy of the whole thereof.

Witness my hand and seal this 5th day of January 2016

Nathan Burkett
County Administrator



**ARROWHEAD REGIONAL
DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

Leading • Planning • Connecting in the counties of Aitkin • Carlton • Cook • Itasca • Koochiching • Lake • St. Louis

November 13, 2015

Commissioner Donald Niemi
32340 State Hwy 47
Aitkin, MN 56431

Dear Commissioner Niemi,

Recently, staff from the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission (ARDC) met informally with interested stakeholders and representatives of local government to discuss how establishing a Scenic Byway route in the areas surrounding Lake Mille Lacs might help improve the local economy and expand tourism to the area.

There are a number of Scenic Byway routes in Minnesota. A designated Scenic Byway route helps bring heightened awareness and recognition of the scenic, natural, historic, cultural, archeological, and recreational assets found in a particular area.

There are a number of community benefits of Scenic Byways as well. They can lead to increased business, tax revenues, and jobs; identification on state, federal, and auto club highway maps; and additional federal and state funding for planning and construction when a follow-up corridor management plan is done.

Designating a route as a Scenic Byway, however, relies heavily on local government support and participation. Because of this, we are asking that you consider passing a resolution supporting the development of a Scenic Byway assessment for the Lake Mille Lacs area. This would include designating someone from your organization to participate in a planning process to develop the Scenic Byway. Enclosed is a one-page description of the scenic byway process along with a sample resolution that your board may consider approving at an upcoming meeting. Please provide us with a copy of the resolution once it is acted upon.

For more information or if you would like to discuss this further, please feel free to contact me by phone at 218-529-7512 or by email at ahubley@ardc.org. Thank you for your consideration and support. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Andy Hubley, AICP
Director, Regional Planning Division
Arrowhead Regional Development Commission

Lake Mille Lacs Scenic Byway



Enhancing the lake experience.

Scenic Byways beckon the traveling public to experience our region's rich beauty, historic past, cultures, traditions, and diversity. People from around the state and beyond are drawn to the forest, shoreline and Lake Mille Lacs. They also come to experience life "up north at the lake" that reflects the cultures of the people who built the communities and those who live and work here today. Increasingly, people everywhere want to visit authentic places.

Why a Lake Mille Lacs Scenic Byway? Everyone loves to travel along the lake. We have favorite roadways that could be preserved and improved through a scenic byway designation. The roadways and the lake are regarded as a special resource, worthy of work toward some kind of official designation. By doing so, it allows our community to protect and promote its unique qualities.

There is a process to a scenic byways designation. We want to give it some thought before we plunge in. If done well, the steps taken now will lead to an excited community. Building local support at every stage of the process is absolutely crucial. How effective we are at developing our scenic byway plan depends directly on the ideas, energy, interest and expertise of many people.

We're asking for participation early in this process, and often. We're hoping to identify where our support is and work toward those strengths. Planning a scenic byway is an exciting and dynamic process, but it requires commitment to see it through to completion.

Our initial group of advocates will provide the engine that drives the process. With luck, and a little persuasion, we're hoping to find local individuals who can work together, who especially value the route, and who have contacts and influence on others in our community. We are looking for people who might welcome the opportunity to explore, discover, and share the qualities of our route with the goal to increase tourism and economic development, plus maintain this community resource—Lake Mille Lacs into the future. To learn how you can be involved, contact penny.simonsen@ecrdc.org or 320.679.4065x23

**RESOLUTION NO. ____ IN SUPPORT OF CONDUCTING A SCENIC BYWAY
ASSESSMENT FOR THE LAKE MILLE LACS AREA**

WHEREAS, Aitkin County is located within the Lake Mille Lacs area;

WHEREAS, the Lake Mille Lacs area possesses one of the largest, most historic, and most popular recreational lakes in Minnesota; and

WHEREAS, the Lake Mille Lacs area also offers countless other amenities including scenic forests, quaint communities, resorts, two state parks, historic sites, and a casino/resort; and

WHEREAS, acknowledging and promoting the assets in the Lake Mille Lacs area is critical to improving the area economy and enhancing the tourism experience; and

WHEREAS, studies conducted by the University of Minnesota have shown that local economies historically have benefitted through the establishment of Scenic Byway routes; and

WHEREAS, the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission, the East Central Regional Development Commission, and the Region 5 Development Commission, with the support of interested stakeholders, have proposed to conduct an assessment of the Lake Mille Lacs area to determine the feasibility of, and local support for, pursuing scenic byway designation for the roadways surrounding Mille Lacs Lake; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the County hereby supports and expresses its commitment to the process for conducting a scenic byway assessment; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the County understands this commitment is non-financially binding; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the County will designate a representative to participate in the scenic byway assessment process.

PASSED by Aitkin County this ____ day of _____, 2015.