



## NOTICE OF AGENDA

### CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP

[City of Forest Lake - Livestream and Recorded Meetings](#)

Forest Lake City Center – Council Chambers  
Forest Lake, Minnesota

**October 17, 2022 – 6:30 PM**

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Open Forum - Citizen Petitions, Requests and Concerns  
*The Open Forum is available for residents to express personal opinions for any item of business. Please limit your comments to three (3) minutes.*
4. MnDOT Highway 97 Discussion
5. Lake Access Points Discussion – Abbi Wittman
6. Beltz Park Master Plan Discussion (*Under Separate Cover*) – Abbi Wittman
7. Budget Update – Kevin Knopik
8. Adjourn



**Date:** October 12, 2022

**To:** Mayor Bain and City Council Members

**From:** Abbi Wittman, Community Development Director

**Re:** Lake Access Points

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## Introduction

The City of Forest Lake owns by fee title and plat dozens of lake access points. Homeowners often seek City staff guidance on the designated use of these parcels. More often than not, staff receives phone calls about watercraft access and launching, anchoring and parking, and dock construction; predominantly the calls are inquiring of potential violations to the City Code. While the City has discussed policy regarding the uses and potential vacation of these properties, the underlying mechanisms for the management of these parcels has not been established. Simply put, there is nothing in the Forest Lake City Code which addresses lake access points.

Having received numerous complaints through the summer, staff reignited an internal conversation about the current use and future management of these parcels. As there are public benefits to the City's retention of them and policies related to access and launching, anchoring and parking, and dock construction, staff believes it is important to establish regulatory framework in the City Code. Thus, the enclosed ordinance has been drafted for City Council review and discussion.

## Ordinance Review

The intent of the enclosed ordinance is to allow the City to not only better manage these parcels of land but to also give the City some ability to enforce established policies around access and launching, anchoring and parking, as well as dock construction. Without regulatory framework such as this in place, the City's police and public works departments are unable to advise citizens what may or may not take place at any given access point.

As the ordinance states:

- The City may maintain these for motorized lake access or in a natural state, designated only for foot traffic and passive, non-motorized lake access.

- Motorized lake access shall only be permitted in areas explicitly designated for motorized access and the City will sign such properties for this specific use.
- Where signage is not in place, motorized access will not be permitted.
  - Where state law allows, snowmobiles are exempt from this provision.
- Anchoring onto the access points, parking, and dock construction shall not be permitted.
- Violations of this section of the City Code shall be a misdemeanor.

As the Council can see, the ordinance merely provides some general regulatory framework for these parcels. The ordinance does not change the established use of any parcels. If the Council determines moving forward with formal ordinance consideration and adoption occurs, the City will need to install standardized signage for those access points where motorized vehicles are allowed.

City staff has reached out to both watershed districts as well as the Forest Lake Lake Association to discuss this matter. While neither watershed district was opposed to the City's consideration of regulatory framework of this nature, there was an expressed desire for further consultation if parcel uses were to change in the future. Additionally of note, both watersheds would be interested in opportunities for signage enhancements or water quality projects in these areas. To the date of memo development, staff has not received correspondence from the Lake Association.

## **Recommendation**

The City Council should review and discuss the ordinance in light of the intention of the ordinance – regulatory framework for use management and enforcement. If the Council is amenable to moving forward with the ordinance, the Council should direct staff to schedule the ordinance for formal consideration at upcoming public meetings.

**CITY OF FOREST LAKE  
WASHINGTON COUNTY, MINNESOTA  
ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_\_**

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING TITLE IX, CHAPTER 98,  
SECTION 98.05 REGARDING VEHICLE LIMITATIONS ON  
LAKE ADJACENT RIGHT-OF-WAY**

THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FOREST LAKE ORDAINS AS FOLLOWS:

**Section 1. Amendment:** Title IX, Chapter 98, Section 98.05 of the Forest Lake City Code is hereby amended as follows.

**§ 98.05 GENERAL REGULATION OF THE PUBLIC RIGHTS-OF-WAY AND  
LANDS.**

(A) Use, occupation, and obstruction of streets and sidewalks. No person shall use, occupy, or obstruct, or cause to be used, occupied, or obstructed any street, sidewalk, or other public right-of-way or ground within this city with any tangible item so as to hinder free and open passage over the specified portion of that right-of-way unless the person, firm, or corporation shall have first obtained a permit to do so from the city in the manner herein provided.

(B) Maintenance of grass in public rights-of-way abutting private property. Notwithstanding the exceptions noted in § 96.025(C) and (D), property owners whose land abuts a public right-of-way shall be responsible for maintaining the grass in compliance with § 96.025, which prohibits noxious weeds and grass over 8 inches in height or grass which has gone to seed.

(C) City owned lake access. The City owns multiple lake accesses throughout the City either through fee title or right-of-way. Some of the lake accesses are maintained and intended for motorized vehicle lake access and others are maintained in a natural state, designed and intended only for foot traffic and passive, non-motorized lake access. City owned lake accesses are not intended to be used as parkland.

1. Motorized vehicle lake access. The only City owned lake accesses that shall permit motorized vehicles shall be those designated with signage explicitly authorizing such motorized access.
2. Non-motorized lake access. Any City owned lake access without signage authorizing motorized vehicle access, prohibits the use of motorized vehicle access.
  - i. Exception. Snowmobiles shall be permitted in accordance with Minnesota Statute Section 84.87, as amended.
3. Watercraft parking and docks. No watercraft shall be docked or anchored along any non-motorized lake access and no private docks shall be installed on any City owned lake accesses.

1.4.A violation of this section is a misdemeanor.

**Section 2. Summary Publication.** Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 412.191, in the case of a lengthy ordinance, a summary may be published. While a copy of the entire ordinance is available without cost at the office of the City Clerk, the following summary is approved by the City Council and shall be published in lieu of publishing the entire ordinance:

This amendment establishes vehicle limitations for lake adjacent right-of-way.

**Section 3. Effective Date.** This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect upon its adoption and publication as provided by law.

Passed in regular session of the City Council on the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2022.

**CITY OF FOREST LAKE**

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mara Bain  
Its: Mayor

Attested:

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Patrick G. Casey  
Its: City Clerk

(Published in the *Forest Lake Times* on \_\_\_\_\_, 2022)