
Pipestone County Comprehensive Plan Executive Summary

Background

The Pipestone County Comprehensive Plan represents the product of an 18-month planning process that began in January 2003. The Pipestone County Board of Commissioners initiated the process by contracting with Midwest Community Planning and the Southwest Regional Development Commission. They assisted with facilitating the various meetings and working with the County's Planning Task Force to develop the specific contents of the Comprehensive Plan. The Task Force consisted mainly of the County's Planning Commission with assistance from the County Board and County Staff. Finally, the Task Force met regularly (approximately once every other month) at publicly advertised meetings at the Pipestone County Courthouse. Members from the public and other local units of governments also frequently attended the meetings. In 2009 the chapters 6 and 7 were amended as required as the 5 year water plan update.



Pipestone County Aerial Photo ~ 2003

Location and Demographics

Pipestone County is located in Southwestern Minnesota along the South Dakota border, approximately 200 miles Southwest of Minnesota's Capital, St. Paul, and 45 miles Northeast of Sioux Falls, South Dakota. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, Pipestone County had approximately 9,895 people living in its nine cities and twelve townships (see Map 1A: Pipestone County). The County is predominately rural in character, although the numerous wind turbines found along Buffalo Ridge (the State's windiest area) gives the County a progressive appearance.

Authority to Plan

Under Minnesota Statutes Chapter 394, counties are given the authority to formally engage in planning and zoning activities. Chapter 394.21 states:

“For the purpose of promoting the health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community any county in the state...is authorized to carry on county planning and zoning activities.”

In addition, Chapter 394.23 states:

“The board [County Board] has the power and authority to prepare and adopt by ordinance, a comprehensive plan.”

Comprehensive Water Plan

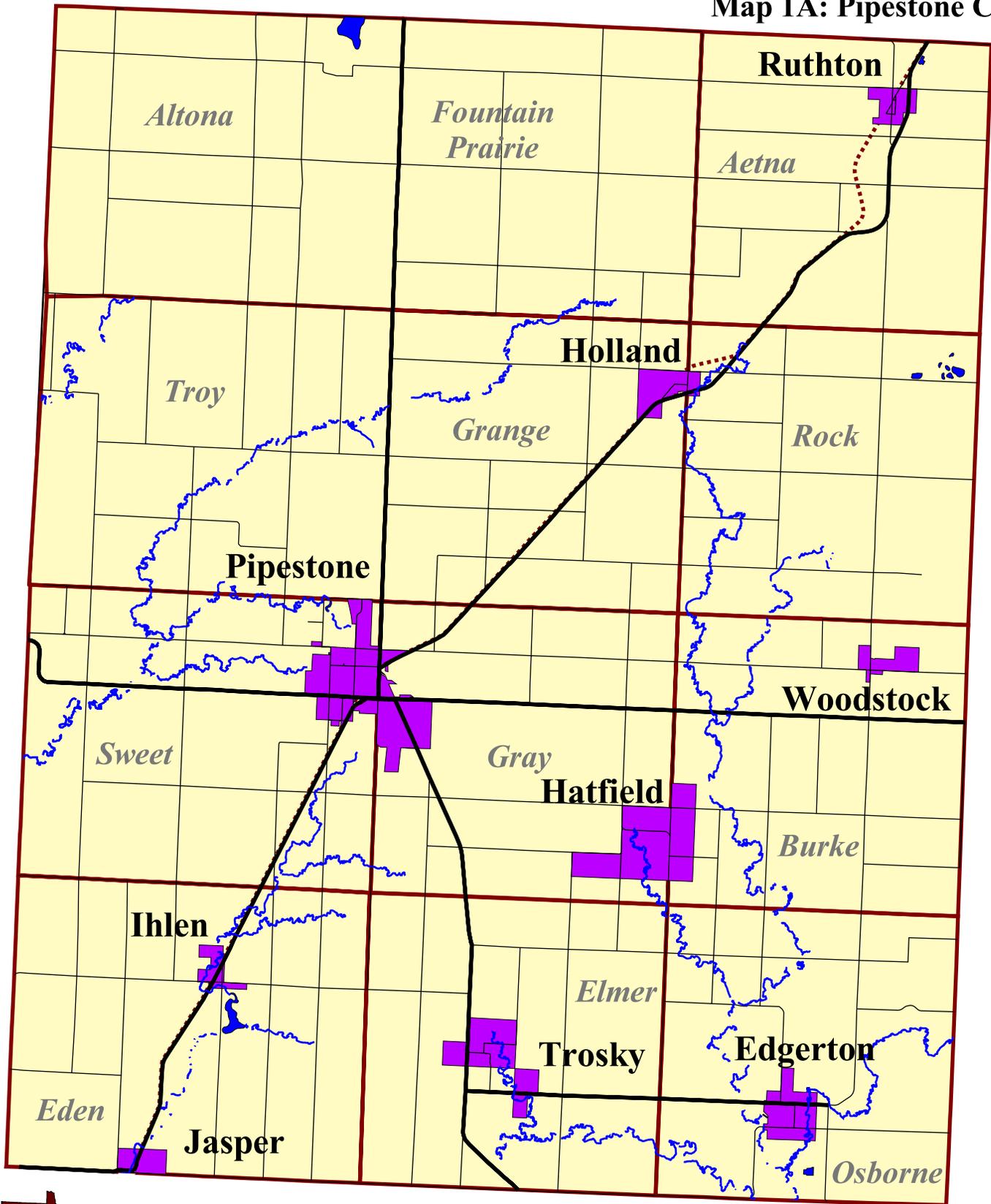
The Comprehensive Local Water Management Act (Minnesota Statutes Sections 103B.301 to 103B.355) encourages counties to develop and implement a comprehensive water plan. ***One of the goals of the comprehensive planning process was to incorporate the County's water planning requirements into this Comprehensive Plan.*** Pursuant to the requirements of this Statute, this Plan:

- Covers the entire area of the county;
- Addresses water problems in the context of watershed units and groundwater systems;
- Is based upon principles of sound hydrologic management of water, effective environmental protection and efficient management;
- Is consistent with comprehensive water plans prepared by counties and watershed management organizations wholly or partially within a single watershed unit or groundwater system; and
- This Water Plan covers a ten-year period (2004–2014), with the Goals, Objectives, Policies and Action Steps covering a five-year period (2010–2014).

To ensure that these objectives are realized, the Comprehensive Local Water Management Act further specifies the basic contents of the comprehensive water plan to contain:

- A description of the existing and expected changes to the physical environment, land use and development in the county;
- Available information about the surface water, groundwater and related land resources in the county, including existing and potential distribution, availability, quality and use;
- Objectives for future development, use and conservation of water and related land resources, including objectives that concern water quality and quantity, and sensitive areas, wellhead protection areas, high priority areas for wetland preservation, enhancement, restoration, and establishment, storm water management for developing areas, and related land use conditions, and a description of actions that will be taken.
- A description of potential changes in State programs, policies, and requirements considered important by the county to management of water resources in the county;
- A program for implementation of the plan that is consistent with the plan's management objectives and includes schedules for amending official controls and water and related land resources plans of local units of government to conform with the comprehensive water plan, and the schedule, components, and expected State and local costs of any projects to implement the comprehensive water plan that may be proposed, although this does not mean that projects are required by this section.

Map 1A: Pipestone County



- Townships
- Municipalities
- Lakes
- Railroad
- Roadways
- River / Stream

Source:
MN DNR Data Deli &
MN Planning CBP Data Sets



Comprehensive Plan Contents

The Pipestone County Comprehensive Plan is divided into seven chapters. Each chapter is briefly summarized below:

- **Chapter One: County Profile.** This Chapter establishes a County Profile for Pipestone County, including information on the County's history, population, households and population projections. Similar information for each of the County's nine cities is provided in Chapters Four (cities) and Five (townships).
- **Chapter Two: Natural Resources.** This Chapter provides a profile of Pipestone County's natural resources. As previously stated, one of the goals of planning process was to incorporate the County's Water Plan into this Comprehensive Plan. Chapter Two is where one would normally find information on the County's 55 data items (a traditional water plan requirement). In addition, the Planning Task Force identified the following five high priority water planning issues for the County:
 - Priority Issue #1: Creating Reasonable Environmental Standards
 - Priority Issue #2: Protect and Enhance the County's Surface Water Resources
 - Priority Issue #3: Protect and Enhance the County's Groundwater Resources
 - Priority Issue #4: Reduce Priority Pollutants
 - Priority Issue #5: Raise Public Awareness on the County's Key Environmental Issues
- **Chapter Three: Land Use.** This Chapter profiles Pipestone County's Land Use, with information on the County's Zoning, Parks and Trails, Housing, Economic Development, Agriculture and Transportation.
- **Chapter Four: Community Profiles.** This Chapter provides detailed information on each of Pipestone County's nine cities, including historic population, households, population projections, housing projections and a current land use map.
- **Chapter Five: Township Profiles.** Similar to Chapter Four, this Chapter provides detailed information on each of Pipestone County's twelve townships, including historic population, households, population projections, housing projections and a current land use map.
- **Chapter Six: Goals, Objectives, Policies and Action Steps.** Often referred to as the heart of comprehensive plans, Pipestone County's Goals, Objectives, Policies and Action Steps can be found in Chapter Six. This is normally the main reason why Counties develop comprehensive plans. These items specifically outline how the County should make land use decisions regarding future growth and development and which steps will be needed in order to achieve the County's Goals.
- **Chapter Seven: Implementation.** Chapter Seven establishes a five-year focus plan (i.e., work plan) for the County to use while implementing this Comprehensive Plan. In addition, this Chapter contains information on the Plan's coordination, review and amendments procedures.