

INTRODUCTION

The Cass County Planning Commission began discussing an update to the county's Comprehensive Plan in the Fall of 2003. Cass County's original Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 1979 and subsequently updated in 1988. The increased growth in the county, the need to examine the need for smarter or controlled growth, and the time span since the last update all necessitated the need to update of the Comprehensive Plan. Beginning in the 2004, the Cass County Planning Commission began the process of updating the county's Comprehensive Plan. Numerous Planning Commission meetings were held to review and discuss material, listen to presentations, and review drafts of the Plans individual chapters.

By the fall of 2004 the Planning Commission had developed a working draft of the update to the Comprehensive Plan and began distributing this draft to the County's townships, cities, and various local and state agencies, groups, and associations. The complete working draft of Comprehensive Plan was also made available on the county's website and the county held a public input meeting in Casselton on the evening of December 13th, 2004.

Following the public input meeting and after the comment period for the Plan had closed all input was compiled and presented to the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission reviewed the compiled input and made the necessary changes to reflect this input. The final components of the Plan were completed and entire Plan was presented to the Planning Commission at their regular meeting on January 28, 2005 and their recommendations for the Plan were made and forwarded to the County Commission

The Plan and supplemental information was presented to the Cass County Commission at their regular meeting on February 7, 2005 and a motion to move forward with the Plan and begin the process to adopt the Plan as an ordinance was approved by the Commission. The first reading of the Plan, including Board adoption of the 2005 Comprehensive Plan with the exception of Chapter Six, which will be established by

ordinance, was held on February 22, 2005 at the regular Commission Meeting. A summary of the enactment of Chapter Six was published in the official newspaper on February 28, 2005, and the Commission held the second reading of the ordinance, including opportunity for public comment, at their regular meeting on March 21, 2005. After this hearing, the Commission approved Ordinance #2005-1.

Fundamentals of the Plan

The primary purpose of the Plan is to develop the framework or blueprint to base and establish the county's policies towards development and growth. This framework is established by developing the vision for the county's future growth; a vision based on the public's desire as well as including elements to protect the health, safety, and general welfare of the county's citizens and tax payers. The first portion of the Plan comprehensively reviews the county, townships, and incorporated cities. This review and inventory provides both a sense of the basic characteristics of the county and also helps identify the current and emerging issues impacting the county. Building upon the comprehensive review and the identification of the current and emerging issues the Plan details the components of the vision for the county's future growth and development. This section develops the general goals, the specific objectives to meet the goals, as well as policies creating the course of action or way in which programs and activities are coordinated to achieve the identified goals and objectives. The final aspect of the Plan creates a general work plan to establish how the Comprehensive Plan and all its components will be implemented.