

Local Planning History

South Dakota Compiled Laws provide for the preparation and adoption of municipal and county comprehensive plans, zoning ordinances and subdivision regulations. The county's planning efforts began in 1966 with the appointment of a planning commission. Their task was to work with a consultant to prepare a comprehensive plan. This work culminated in 1968 with the completion and adoption of the Minnehaha County Comprehensive Plan. As required by South Dakota Codified Laws, the plan also included zoning and subdivision regulations.

The Planning Commission worked several years without staff support until a planning department was formed in 1972 to advise both the Planning Commission and elected officials on planning related matters and to perform daily administrative work involving enforcement of the zoning and subdivision regulations. In 1974, the Uniform Building Code was adopted to regulate building construction in the rural area. Minnehaha County is one of only a few counties in South Dakota to enforce building code requirements.

The Greater Sioux Falls Regional Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 1969, marking the start of a joint planning and zoning process between the city and county. This plan covered the city and eight adjoining townships, six in Minnehaha and two in Lincoln County, and established the basis for the extraterritorial zoning jurisdiction encompassing land within three miles of the city limits. The plan was updated in 1979, establishing the Year 2000 municipal growth boundary, and again in 1996 when the 2015 urban growth area was developed.

Many of the small cities within the county have adopted comprehensive plans. The county also shares zoning authority with Dell Rapids in an area extending from one to three miles beyond the city limits.

Legal problems were encountered in 1973 when the county refused a request to rezone property. The applicant commenced court action to strike down the comprehensive plan and zoning regulations on the basis of improper adoption. The court ruled that the plan had been adopted as an emergency measure, limited by statute to a period of two years, and struck down the plan. In late 1973 the county took action to adopt a permanent plan, including zoning and subdivision regulations.