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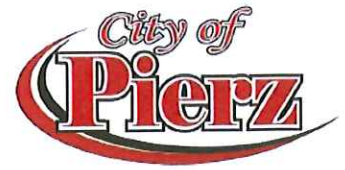
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10 City of Pierz (61)

City of Pierz 2016 Comprehensive Plan



Welcome to Pierz... Where families are raised and memories are made.

Acknowledgements

Mayor
Toby Egan

City Council
Don Bujalski
Stephanie Fyten
Mike Menden
City Clerk - Gina Funk, - 2016
City Clerk - Mary Korf, 2016 -
City Treasurer - Linda Szublewski



L to R. Top row: Mary Korf, City Clerk, Stephanie Fyten, Council Member, Linda Szublewski, Treasurer. Bottom row: Mike Menden, Council Member, Toby Egan, Mayor, Don Bujalski, Council Member.



Planning and Zoning Committee. L to R: Mary Korf, Arvin Litke, Don Bujalski, Daniel Sauer and Jim Gerwing.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	2
Table of Contents	3
Table of Tables	3
Directory of Figures	3
Directory of Appendices	3
Directory of Photos	4
Mayor's Visioning Statement	5
Executive Summary	5
History of Pierz	6
Demographics	9
Comprehensive Plan	17

TABLES

1. Historic Population Trends	10
2. Recent Population Trends	10
3. Historic Population Trends	10
4. Population Projections	11
5. Population Age Breakdowns	12
6. Average Household Size	13
7. Educational Achievement	14
8. Area Average Home Values	15
9. Owner Occupied Homes / Rental Comparison	15
10. Average Daily Traffic Counts	16

FIGURES

1. Local Context	9
2. Regional Context	9

Appendices

- A. Pierz Zoning Map
- B. Soo Line Trail Map
- C. Comprehensive Plan Community Meeting Report

PHOTOS

Illustrated Pierz City Map	Cover
Pierz City Council	2
Pierz Planning and Zoning Committee	2
Memorial Athletic Center	3
Comprehensive Plan Task Force	5
Billig Park Scene	6
Pierz Police Badge	7
Comprehensive Plan Kick Off Meeting	8
Pierz Street Light Banner	10
Residential Area	13
Street Scene	14
Street Scene	16
Historic Soo Line Depot	17
Golf Course	18
Pierz Healy High School	18
Main Street Aerial View	19
Street Scene	20
Local Area Businesses	20
Comprehensive Plan Task Force Meeting	21
Tree Line Street Scene	21
Apartments	22
Local Area Businesses	22
Pierz City Hall	23
Pierz Fire Hall	24
Business District Street Scene	25
Pierz Police Vehicle	26
Campground Scene	27
Pierz Public Library	27
St. Joseph's Catholic Church	28
Athletic Fields	29
Pierz Park Scene	30
Campground	31
Pierz Aerial View	31
Veterans Memorial	32
Pierz Pioneer's Logo	33
Pierz Photo Montage	34



Mayor's Comprehensive Plan Vision

We stand today on the shoulders of those that made our community great. We must continue to move forward to strengthen this foundation for ourselves and the generations to come.

We strive to maintain the features that make us proud to call Pierz home, and we must build upon these in an effort to attract new and retain residents, strengthen our business community, promote lifelong livability, and sow the seeds for the future.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Authority to Plan

Municipal planning is authorized under Minnesota Statute Sections 462.351—462.358 which include the authority to plan, the definition of planning terms, community-based planning, organization for planning, as well as the preparation, adoption and amendment of the comprehensive municipal plan and zoning and subdivision authority.

Comprehensive Plan

A Comprehensive Plan, or Comp Plan for short, is a statement of what the community of Pierz wants to become. It is a collection of principles-based on community defined vision; and an assembly of concepts that have been established to support the principles and the

vision. These principles and concepts reflect the community's vision in its desires for growth, maintaining a small town atmosphere, and respect for the land and the environment. The "Master Plan", which demonstrates how the community can move forward, is somewhat broad in scope, recognizing that there are many factors influencing how and why the community will change. Therefore, it deals more with concepts, patterns and relationships than specific rules and ordinances.

Previous Plans

This document is a continuation of the ongoing planning process in the City of Pierz. It legally amends the 2002 Comprehensive Plan, the latest official Comprehensive Plan for the City of Pierz. The City has used this planning process as an opportunity to evaluate and reinforce the existing growth and development policies and to evaluate previous planning efforts in order to update and reinforce past decisions that are still valid. A major premise of this Plan, therefore, is to utilize portions of previous community plans whenever applicable.

Methodology

This Comprehensive Plan is the product of several entities and systemic, ongoing, forward-looking processes including:

- An Ad-Hoc Citizen Planning Task Force appointed by the Pierz City Council composed of a cross section of the community.
- Input from the Pierz City Council.



- The gathering of demographic and historical data from a variety of sources including the City of Pierz, Morrison County, Region 5 Development Commission, the State of Minnesota and the US Census.
- Review of City ordinances, prior planning documents, reports, studies, etc., and,
- Assistance from City Staff.

Purpose

This document is the Comprehensive Plan for the City of Pierz, Minnesota. This Plan sets forth the basic guiding principles that have been embraced by Pierz to shape its future. It evolved through the interchange of information, analysis and response between the citizens, community leaders, staff and public officials within the City and surrounding areas through a planning process undertaken in 2016.

History of Pierz

The City of Pierz had its beginnings in 1869 when Pierz Township was established under the namesake of Father Francis Xavier Pierz. Incorporated under the name of Rich Prairie in 1892, the 48 citizens voted unanimously to change the name of their city to Pierz in honor of Father Pierz, a Slovenian-born Indian missionary priest who established St. Joseph’s Catholic Church. The church still stands as a prominent feature and social gathering place in the center of town. The City of Pierz grew as German Catholics settled the area and established a vibrant farming community. Over the years, Pierz has grown slowly into the City we find today.

The Plan

While the Table of Contents presents a clear listing of what is contained in this document, the reader will benefit from a brief overview of the organization of the Plan. This Introduction presents an abridged summary of the planning process and the framework within which the Plan was developed.

The Demographic Characteristics chapter provides an overview and assessment of demographic trends within the City and surrounding areas. An area’s overall population characteristics such as age, household size, etc. are critical influences on its future. Population, household and other demographic information helps define existing conditions within the community. This information also provides a basis for future expectations with regard to growth, housing needs, economic development, land use needs and other important components of the Comprehensive Plan.

The subsequent several chapters focus on specific planning topics including:

- Transportation
- Housing
- Economic Development
 - o Downtown



- Commercial
- Industrial
- Parks, Recreation & Open Spaces
- Infrastructure
- Community Facilities
- Public Safety
- Quality of Life
- Intergovernmental Cooperation
- Land Use



Each of these chapters contains an Inventory and Analysis of existing conditions related to the respective topic within and affecting the City of Pierz. Existing conditions and patterns of development in the City and surrounding area have a great influence on its future. Thus, accurate, complete and up-to-date information on existing conditions is essential to a successful Comprehensive Plan.

Each of these chapters also contains an overview of the issues identified by project participants relating to that chapter's specific topic. Following that is a Policy Plan, which includes a set of Goals and Strategies as well as suggested short and long term action items. A Goal is a general statement of community aspirations indicating a broad social, economic or physical state of conditions that the community officially agrees to strive to achieve in various ways, such as through the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. A Strategy is an officially adopted course of action, position, policy or strategy intended to be followed to implement the community Goals. The Goals and Strategies express in detail the City's aspirations for the future. Short and Long Term Action Items are suggested actions that address the goals and strategies outlined, and in no way should be considered mandatory or required – they are simply the 2016 City of Pierz Comprehensive Plan Ad-Hoc Citizen Task Force's best strategized course of action to achieve the Goals and Strategies outlined.

Experience has shown that no system of land use designation, public facilities, transportation, etc. can survive strong economic pressures without changing. Therefore, it is appropriate that such systems be periodically reevaluated in light of changing social and economic conditions.

Consequently, it is from precisely this inevitability of changing conditions that a community's Goals and Strategies derive their true value, because it is in the Goals and Strategies that the City has the opportunity to communicate its aspirations regarding the type of living environment that its citizens strive to achieve. Therefore, while external factors influencing land use, public facilities, transportation, etc. will change, the goals and strategies will continue to provide the best perspective from which to view proposed changes.

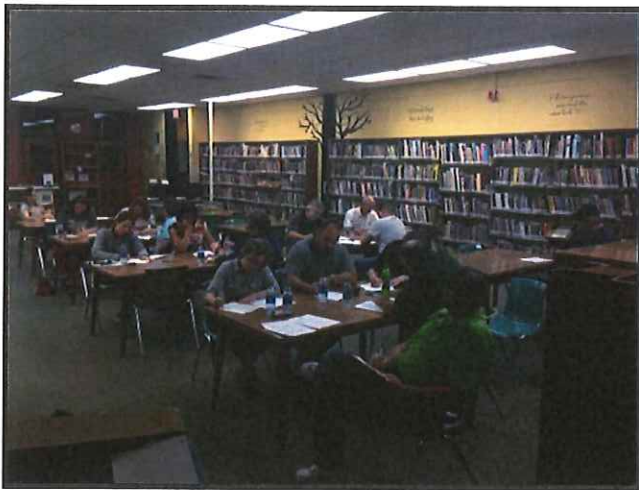
The Goals and Policies distilled from this process also contain suggested short and long term action items. These are more specific recommendations based on the input from the community meeting

and Ad-Hoc Comprehensive Land Use Plan Update Task Force related to the future growth and development of the City.

Project Participants

This project required the coordination of many participants. A group of citizens, staff, elected officials and other stakeholders whose members were appointed by the City made up the Ad-Hoc Comprehensive Plan Update Task Force. Members represented a broad cross section of interests and perspectives throughout the community, as shown below. This group reviewed and commented on all work products and focused on preparing and recommending a complete set of Goals, Strategies and Short and Long Term Action Item recommendations for inclusion in the Comprehensive Plan. The areas of interest represented on the Task Force included:

- City Council
- Planning & Zoning
- Economic Development Authority
- Businesses
- Service Organizations
- Seniors
- Residents at Large
- City Staff

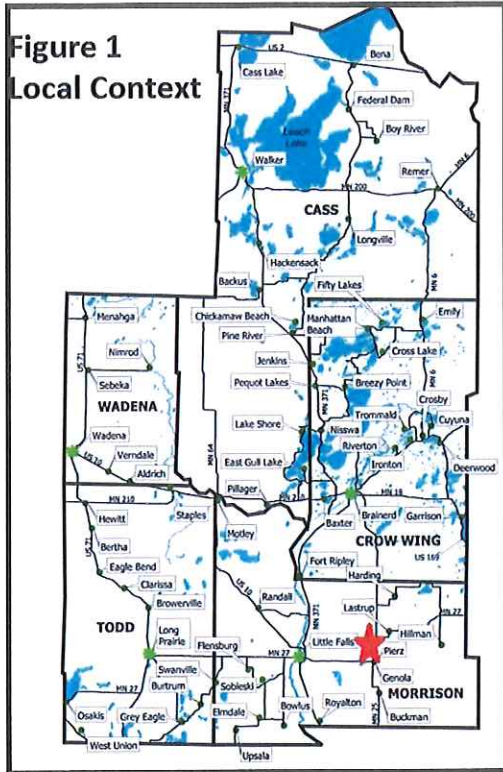


Planning Process

In 2015, the City of Pierz began discussing updating their Comprehensive Plan, last updated in 2002. In early 2016 the City created an Ad-Hoc Task Force, composed of a cross section of Pierz residents that was tasked with providing input to this process, and overseeing the creation of this new Comprehensive Plan. This Task Force first met on April 20, 2016, where it reviewed demographics and statistics on the Pierz community and surrounding area, discussed the process for completing this planning project, as well as prepared for the upcoming Community Meeting.

A Community Meeting was held on June 8, 2016 at the Pierz Healy High School Library. The meeting was publicized before hand and well attended. This meeting began with a presentation on what a comprehensive plan is and the planned process of creating a new comprehensive plan for Pierz. This was followed by review of demographics, statistics and other pertinent facts about Pierz and the surrounding area. Following these presentations, participants were asked to participate in a process of gathering their input, sentiments and perceptions on a variety of attributes about the Pierz community, as well as participate in a SWOT Analysis on the topic areas covered by this Comprehensive Plan. A full detailing of this meeting, along with input received at it, is attached as an appendage to this Comprehensive Plan document.

This Ad-Hoc Task Force met several times over the summer and early fall of 2016 where they reviewed demographics and statistics of the City of Pierz and surrounding area, studied the input



**Figure 1
Local Context**

received at the June 8, 2016 Pierz Comprehensive Plan Community Meeting, and developed, reviewed and edited the Goals, Objectives and Short and Long Term Action Items in this document, as well as prepared the Potential Future Land Use Map, outlining future development goals for the City of Pierz.

These Goals, Objectives and Short and Long Term Action Items as well as Zoning Map was approved by the Ad-Hoc Comprehensive Plan Task Force at their October 26, 2016 meeting, crafted into a full Comprehensive Plan document, and presented to the Pierz City Council on December 12, 2016 for their review. Public Hearings were held by the Pierz City Council on January 23, 2017 and February 13, 2017, and formally approved and adopted on February 13, 2017.

Location

The City of Pierz is located adjacent to the City of Genola approximately 80 miles northwest of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area in the east central portion of Morrison County. There is a population of 1,393 (2010 U.S. Census)

residing in the city where State Highways #25 and #27 intersect. Pierz is about twelve (12) miles east of Little Falls, twenty-five (25) miles south of Brainerd, and thirty (30) miles north of St. Cloud. The area prospers from agriculture, forestry, service professions, and governmental occupations. Natural resources such as the nearby Pierz Fish Lake, Soo Line Trail and Skunk River contribute to the unique character attracting visitors and residents to the Pierz community.

Plan Setting

Pierz is a community of about 1,362 persons (2015 estimate) covering approximately 1.35 square miles in the east central region of Morrison County. The City is adjacent to the City of Genola, Pierz & Buh Townships, and sits at the intersection of Highways 25 and 27.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

The identification of trends in population and other statistical and demographic data is an important part of the comprehensive planning process. It can provide clues to future growth patterns and indicate what types of housing, public facilities, and other attributes may be needed in the future. For example, an increase in young couples with children would require starter housing, new parks and schools, and new or upgraded community facilities; whereas, an increase in the elderly population would lessen the need for schools and increase the need for specialized housing. This section of the Comprehensive Plan contains information on Pierz’s population and household characteristics.

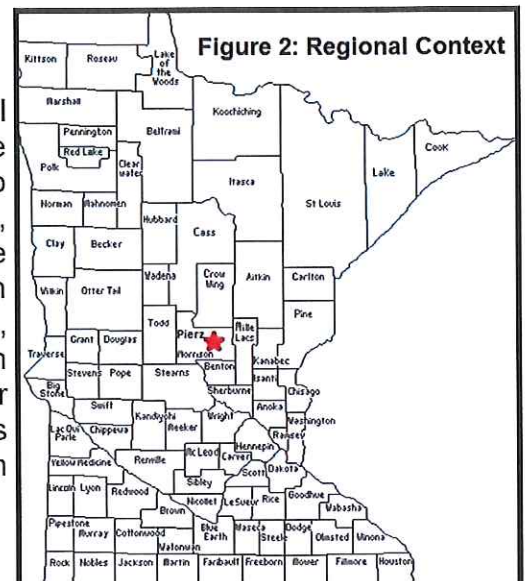


Figure 2: Regional Context

Table 1

Historical Population Trends – City of Pierz

Year	Population	Change
1900	358	—
1910	545	52.20%
1920	624	14.50%
1930	634	1.60%
1940	714	12.60%
1950	856	19.90%
1960	816	-4.7%
1970	893	9.40%
1980	1,018	14.00%
1990	1,014	-0.4%
2000	1,277	25.90%
2010	1,393	9.10%

Source: US Census

Population

Tables 1 & 2 shows the changes in population taken place over the past decades in the City of Pierz. Pierz seen periods of growth and decline over the past century, as shown in Table 1. Table 2 shows the population of Pierz hovering during the past few years.

Table 2

Recent Population Trends – City of Pierz

Year	Population Estimate
2014	1378
2013	1379
2012	1387
2011	1401
2010	1393

Source: Minnesota Demographics Center



Table 3**Historical Population Trends – City of Pierz & Area Jurisdictions**

Year	Pierz Number	Pierz	Genola	Morrison County	Little Falls
1900	358	—			
1910	545	52.20%		5.10%	5.30%
1920	624	14.50%	—	7.40%	-9.5%
1930	634	1.60%	-56.4%	-1.5%	-8.8%
1940	714	12.60%	27.90%	8.00%	20.60%
1950	856	19.90%	-9.2%	-6.0%	11.10%
1960	816	-4.7%	36.70%	3.10%	12.40%
1970	893	9.40%	-10.2%	1.20%	-1.1%
1980	1018	14.00%	-14.4%	8.80%	-2.9%
1990	1014	-0.4%	2.40%	1.00%	-0.2%
2000	1277	25.90%	-16.5%	7.10%	6.70%
2010	1393	9.10%	5.60%	4.70%	8.10%
Est. 2014	1366	-1.9%	-1.3%	-1.2%	-1.7%

Source: American Community Survey 2015

Table 3 details population changes for not only the City of Pierz, but also Genola, Little Falls and Morrison County as a whole, for comparison.

Table 4**Population Projections**

County	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
Benton County	40,522	42,460	44,386	46,086	47,594	48,927	50,088
Cass County	30,656	31,539	31,827	31,828	31,765	31,985	32,599
Crow Wing County	66,818	69,144	70,450	71,146	71,555	72,180	73,122
Mille Lacs County	28,844	30,335	31,346	32,168	32,838	33,673	34,571
Morrison County	35,023	36,322	37,388	38,238	38,898	39,527	40,182
Stearns County	153,206	156,932	160,040	162,247	164,266	165,617	166,364
Todd County	25,857	26,556	27,068	27,340	27,508	27,548	27,601

Source: Minnesota Demographics Center

The Minnesota Demographic Center periodically releases a forecast of population changes for counties throughout the state. They use four different methods of projection for this, and then average them. Table four has these projections for Morrison County and the nearby counties of Benton, Cass, Crow Wing, Mille Lacs, Stearns and Todd.

The Minnesota Demographic Center projects that the population of Morrison County will continue to gradually increase through the year 2045, as will the population of the neighboring counties.

The reasons for these projected changes in population are varied, but likely include a variety of factors including employment opportunities, population centers, and population demographics. One should also note that these are simply projections, not guarantees. By recognizing these projections, setting goals and identifying actions that can be taken to achieve these goals, the City of Pierz has the opportunity to change course and become the city it wishes to be.

Table 5

Population Age Breakdowns

Age	Pierz	Genola	Morrison County	MN
Total population	1295	82	33054	5383661
AGE				
Under 5 years	9.60%	12.20%	6.40%	6.50%
5 to 9 years	3.90%	4.90%	6.10%	6.70%
10 to 14 years	5.60%	6.10%	7.30%	6.60%
15 to 19 years	5.00%	8.50%	6.50%	6.70%
20 to 24 years	7.90%	15.90%	5.10%	6.60%
25 to 29 years	6.90%	6.10%	5.50%	6.80%
30 to 34 years	7.00%	1.20%	6.40%	6.80%
35 to 39 years	5.50%	2.40%	5.10%	6.00%
40 to 44 years	4.30%	7.30%	5.90%	6.50%
45 to 49 years	4.30%	4.90%	7.20%	7.00%
50 to 54 years	4.20%	7.30%	7.90%	7.60%
55 to 59 years	4.90%	6.10%	7.70%	6.90%
60 to 64 years	3.30%	3.70%	6.10%	5.70%
65 to 69 years	3.20%	0.00%	4.70%	4.20%
70 to 74 years	7.00%	1.20%	4.10%	3.10%
75 to 79 years	6.70%	1.20%	3.00%	2.40%
80 to 84 years	3.50%	11.00%	2.40%	1.90%
85 +	7.00%	0.00%	2.60%	2.00%

Table 6

Average Household Size – City of Pierz

Year	Average Household Size
2014	2.21
2013	2.22
2012	2.22
2011	2.23
2010	2.23

Source: American Community Survey 2015

Table 6 shows the change in household size since 2010. Summarizing, as the population held approximately steady (Table 2) 2010 and 2014, the number of households in Pierz slightly increased, yielding a slightly declining average household size.



Table 7

Educational Achievement

Age / Education	Pierz	Little Falls	Morrison County	Minnesota
Population 18 to 24 years	132	743	2435	504411
Less than high school graduate	6.10%	16.40%	16.30%	12.80%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	47.00%	47.10%	37.50%	26.00%
Some college or associate's degree	45.50%	33.10%	41.80%	49.50%
Bachelor's degree or higher	1.50%	3.40%	4.40%	11.80%
Population 25 years and over	881	5947	22675	3599228
Less than 9th grade	9.00%	5.90%	4.60%	3.10%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	5.80%	8.70%	6.30%	4.60%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	43.40%	34.30%	39.10%	26.40%
Some college, no degree	19.10%	21.90%	22.30%	22.20%
Associate's degree	11.80%	8.90%	11.40%	10.50%
Bachelor's degree	7.20%	12.70%	11.40%	22.30%
Graduate or professional degree	3.90%	7.60%	5.00%	10.90%
Percent high school graduate or higher	85.20%	85.40%	89.20%	92.30%
Percent bachelor's degree or higher	11.00%	20.20%	16.40%	33.20%

Source: American Community Survey, 2015.

Table 7 shows the breakdown of education attained by Pierz residents, and those living nearby. It is important to have an educated and well trained workforce to meet the needs of business and industry locally.



Table 8**Area Average Home Values**

Value	Pierz	Pierz	Genola	Little Falls	Morrison County
Owner-occupied units	360	360	24	2,388	10,844
Less than \$50,000	13	3.60%	12.50%	9.30%	6.60%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	112	31.10%	29.20%	28.40%	17.90%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	128	35.60%	29.20%	35.40%	24.40%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	69	19.20%	12.50%	19.10%	20.60%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	33	9.20%	16.70%	5.80%	18.80%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	5	1.40%	0.00%	1.00%	9.20%
\$500,000 to \$999,999	0	0.00%	0.00%	1.00%	2.20%
\$1,000,000 or more	0	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.40%
Median (dollars)	\$124,600				

Source: American Community Survey, 2015

Table 8 details home values not only in Pierz, but in Genola, Little Falls and Morrison County, broken down as a percentage of housing stock. Communities generally strive to have a variety of housing types at all price points to allow for lifelong residency.

Table 9**Owner Occupied Homes / Rental Comparison**

Housing Type	Pierz	Pierz2	Genola	Little Falls	Morrison County
Occupied housing units	536	536	31	3,840	13,494
Owner-occupied	360	67.20%	77.40%	62.20%	80.40%
Renter-occupied	176	32.80%	22.60%	37.80%	19.60%

Source: American Community Survey, 2015.

Table 9 details the home ownership / home rental rates of Pierz, as well as Genola, Little Falls, and Morrison County. While it is typically preferred to have a higher home ownership rate, one must remember that not all families prefer to own their home, depending on their situation in life and their ability to properly maintain and care for their home.

The Minnesota Department of Transportation periodically does traffic counts of local roads. When looking at data for the same location over multiple periods of time, see Table 10, one can see periods of increases and decreases within the City of Pierz, the most traffic can be found on Highways 25 & 27. This data can be useful for not only standard transportation planning, but also in locating businesses that depend on highway traffic.

Table 10

Average Daily Traffic Counts – City of Pierz

Year	North (27/153)	South (27/251)
2015	4,600	5,200
2011	4,850	4,750
2009	4,600	5,100
2005	4,950	5,700

Source: MN Department of Transportation



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Planning Assumptions

There are many assumptions in the goals formulation process and it is necessary that they be articulated. This Comprehensive Plan attempts to, at least generally, take into account all possible factors affecting future development. There are a number of things, however, which cannot be known and certain assumptions need to be made in order to qualify the basis on which planning proposals are made.

Every plan conceived is based on both implicit and explicit assumptions. An implicit assumption, for example, would be that there will be no war or other catastrophe which precludes effective planning for the future. A number of similar assumptions could be stated, but they should not be belabored. There is, however, a need to express the explicit assumptions on which this plan is based. These assumptions need to be carefully reviewed from time to time, in order to test their validity in the light of future events and experience.

Assumptions

The explicit assumptions made for this Plan include the following:

1. Pierz's long term position in the region will continue to be an agriculture / recreational trade area as well as a "balanced, full service community" providing housing and employment opportunities for an expanding local labor force.
2. By attracting new industries, its geographic location along Highways 25 and 27, demographics, and proximity to Little Falls, St. Cloud, Brainerd and other regional centers, Pierz' population and economic standing will remain relatively constant within the county and region.
3. The basic life style and housing tastes of the general population will slowly change including acceptance of higher density of living. Social attitudes regarding family size, consumption of goods and energy will continue to change to reflect an awareness of and a concern for the natural environment.
4. Any dramatic technological changes during the next decade are not expected to fundamentally change or influence the land use pattern or life style of Pierz residents.
5. The prime means of transportation will continue to be the automobile for at least the next 10 + years.



Planning Goals and Policies

Formulating goals and policies involves a significant thought process for any planning study. These goals and policies were produced by the Pierz Ad-Hoc Comprehensive Plan Update Task Force to provide the foundation to guide future land use and planning decisions.

Planning goals are broad general statements of value concerning the long range future of the community. Goals are the desired objectives as expressed by the planning participants. They are meant to describe the kind of living, working and playing environments desired by the residents of the community. The primary goal of this planning process is to create a quality environment that will enhance the quality of life of city residents.

Goals and policies must be considered collectively. While an individual goal or policy may dictate a course, it is more likely that several policies should be considered in determining a course of action.



Formulation of Goals, Policies and Action Items

A Comprehensive Plan Community Kick-Off Meeting was held on June 8, 2016, where participants were asked a variety of questions including favored and least favored attributes of Pierz, and their vision for the future of the community. They also participated in a SWOT Analysis, where they were asked to identify perceived Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats impacting Pierz. This input was transcribed and rolled into a Community Meeting Report, which is an appendage to this Comprehensive Plan.

This Community Meeting Report was also presented to members of the Ad-Hoc Pierz Comprehensive Plan Update Task Force to serve as public input during this process. This Ad-Hoc Task Force, created by the Pierz City Council exclusively for the purpose of providing input and overseeing development of the Comprehensive Plan's Goals, Objectives and Action Items, consisted of a cross section of Pierz residents.

The Ad-Hoc Task Force met several times in the summer and early fall of 2016 where it reviewed input received from residents at the Comprehensive Plan Community Kick-Off Meeting through the Community Meeting Report. The Task Force members also drew from their own knowledge, sentiments and experiences of Pierz to create the Goals, Policies and Action Items set forth in this Comprehensive Plan.



Task Force members also created the Potential Future Land Use Map, included as an appendage to this document, which suggests, not mandates, desired future land uses for property in the City of Pierz.

The Goals, Policies and Action Items from this process are as follows:

Economic Development

The vitality of the business community is tied directly to the vitality of a community. Not only do businesses provide jobs to residents of Pierz, residents also purchase goods and services from businesses – a complementary cycle of business growth.

A vibrant business community selling their numerous goods and services will not only aid in retaining residents in Pierz, but also aid in attracting new ones. The jobs these businesses provide will also aid in growing Pierz's population base.

Statistics show that many residents leave the City for employment. One could reasonably draw the conclusion that recruiting new and expanding existing businesses in Pierz to employ those leaving the community to work could be a win-win proposition for businesses and potential employees. Businesses would find a skilled, experienced and educated workforce, and workers could lessen commuting costs and times by working in Pierz.

POLICY: To promote the growth and diversification of Pierz's economy ensuring it is a "full service" community with a broad economic base.

GOALS:
Promote Pierz as a thriving community actively seeking to partner with business and industry seeking new sites and stressing the natural amenities of the Pierz area to attract a wide range of industries in a small town environment.



Encourage a steady rate of industrial growth providing employment opportunities for a broad range of skills.

Encourage new private development.

Capitalize on opportunities provided by being located on the Highways 25 & 27 corridors.

Prepare a community inventory for development and marketing purposes. Consider using the options / RFP method of attracting amenities deemed crucial by the community.

Promote development that will strengthen the sustainability of the community (both environmentally and fiscally) over the long term through tax base, jobs, and new dollars brought into the community.

Partner with local and regional business development organizations such as the University of MN Extension Business/Retention & Expansion Program, the Initiative Foundation, Region 5 Development Commission, the MN Small Business Development Center, and others to explore new business assistance programs and learn from best practices.

POLICY: Embrace local job creation as a catalyst for the growth of Pierz.

GOALS:

Partner with local and regional business development organizations such as University of MN Extension Business/Retention & Expansion Program, Region 5 Development Commission, WSA 2/ Rural MN CEP in an effort to assist businesses with job creation.



Downtown Goals:

Work to promote and grow existing businesses in the central business district.

Consider undertaking a downtown master plan.

Capitalize on opportunities provided by being located on the Highways 25 & 27 corridor.

Commercial Goals:

Capitalize on opportunities provided by being located on the Highways 25 & 27 corridors including the large volume of traffic passing by daily, to bring new dollars into the community.

Work to promote and grow existing businesses on the Highways 25 & 27 corridor & downtown areas.

Explore opportunities for the development of additional retail areas.

Work to strengthen the community's broadband internet infrastructure.

Industrial Area Goals:

Work to promote and grow existing businesses in Pierz's industrial areas.

Connect businesses and consumers by taking advantage of Pierz's transportation & geographic attributes.

Explore opportunities for the development of additional Industrial areas in Pierz.

Leveraging existing transportation network to grow existing and attract new businesses.



Capitalize on the area's abundance of natural resources and agriculture products.

Short Term Action Items:

Encourage the Pierz Economic Development Authority in an effort to assist businesses by capitalizing on local business community technical skills, local colleges, Commercial Club, etc.

Work to create a “toolbox” of economic development tools to assist with business retention, expansion, creation and attraction. Some examples of this may include business subsidy policies, loan funds, and technical assistance programs.

Undertake a University of Minnesota Extension Business Retention & Expansion (BR&E) program in an effort to assist in growing local businesses and create new jobs.

Revisit Pierz’s zoning districts / maps on a regular basis to ensure that future development is compatible with neighboring uses.

Revisit Pierz’s zoning ordinance provisions and other regulatory tools on a regular basis to ensure that they promote healthy growth of the community.

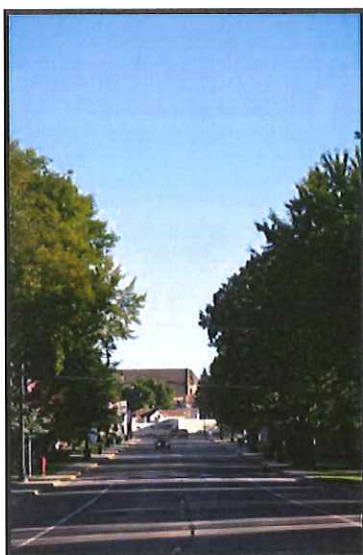
Revisit Pierz’s commercial and industrial land use ordinances on a regular basis. Pay particular attention to the needs of business.

Convene local and regional telecommunication players and advocates in an effort to promote the strengthening of local broadband internet. Explore grant opportunities to this end from the MN Department of Employment & Economic Development (DEED) Office of Broadband.

Consider retaining the services of an economic development consultant tasked to assist with creating an economic development strategic plan that prioritizes the needs and desires of the community and includes an Action Items for achieving those goals, then implementing those action items.

Long Term Action Items:

Seek partnerships with other local units of government and organizations on economic development efforts for the City of Pierz that will focus on developing and strengthening existing businesses in Pierz, as well as recruiting new businesses to the community.



Housing

Having an adequate supply of housing, in all types and price points is crucial to the survivability of any community, not to mention its ability to grow. Housing must be responsive to the needs of the community and promote lifelong livability in Pierz.

POLICY: Maintain and enhance existing residential areas and encourage new residential development.

GOALS:

Plan adequate and appropriate areas for residential land uses to ensure the economical extension of public utilities.

Upgrade older residential areas by eliminating substandard housing and conditions of blight.

Protect residential areas from industrial encroachment and other incompatible land uses.

Garner input from, and be responsive to the private sector (home builders / owners) in regard to future planning and zoning controls.

Promote financially and environmentally sustainable housing opportunities within the community through grant opportunities for housing rehabilitation, foreclosure prevention, and first time home owner programs, etc.

Ensure a safe and neat community by enforcing zoning controls mitigating occurrences of blight within the City.

Use housing to encourage life-long residency in the City of Pierz. This includes encouraging the development of apartments and assisted living facilities to allow long time residents to remain in the community while at the same time keeping their independence and quality of life.

Promote environmentally sustainable & energy efficient construction practices.

Short Term Action Items:

Collaborate with community partners in working towards common housing related goals.

Revisit the City's ordinances related to subdivisions and planned unit developments on a regular basis.

Consider applying for a "Small Cities Housing Grant" from the MN Department of Employment & Economic Development to assist homeowners with energy efficiency costs.

Make referrals to organizations that promote financially sustainable housing options. Organizations such as the Minnesota Home Ownership Center, Central Minnesota Housing Partnership and others are available to assist in counseling would be homeowners, and struggling homeowners.



Long Term Action Items:

Conduct a housing study and develop a housing plan for the City that takes into effect the needs and desires of all residents and one that encourages lifelong residency.

Infrastructure

Pierz recognizes the importance of providing quality community infrastructure in a cost effective manner to serve the residents of the City. Over the past decade, numerous upgrades have been made to municipal infrastructure to serve current and accommodate future growth.

With the population of the City of Pierz anticipated to remain fairly stable into the foreseeable future, every effort should be made to ensure that all future growth is undertaken with careful consideration of long term impacts and obligations on the community.

Creating a capital improvement plan for the City of Pierz would be a good way to plan for the future, and if carefully undertaken, eliminate surprises and dramatic increases in fees and taxes.



This plan will encapsulate projections of future growth, current capital and equipment inventories and other attributes, and provide a balanced and managed roadmap for the future of Pierz's infrastructure and assets.

POLICY: Maintain the highest standards of public services and facilities while working to minimize the tax implications on Pierz residents and businesses.

GOALS:

Recognize that certain public costs, such as infrastructure (water, sewer, roads, broadband, etc.), represent an essential investment in the future.

Use the Comprehensive Plan as the basis for capital investment programming in order to ensure that the City's

available revenues are spent wisely.

Use the Comprehensive Plan as the primary document to communicate the desired direction of Pierz's future growth to other governmental units.

Short Term Action Items:

Maintain and update the City's capital investment plan to assist with long term planning and budgeting for needs related to infrastructure and other items in an effort to bring these items forward in a cost effective way as possible.

Long Term Action Items:

Revisit Pierz's Comprehensive Land Use Plan on a regular basis to ensure it accurately reflects the changing attitudes of the residents of the community. Update as needed.

Intergovernmental Relations & Cooperation

Every day Pierz residents interact with many other local units of government. Numerous other units of government impact each of our lives.

The purpose of this section of the Comprehensive Plan is to acknowledge these other governmental units and, in a light of continuing budget restrictions, find ways to keep the lines of communication open between them in order to, when feasible, partner with likeminded groups in an effort to take advantage of unique opportunities, reduce redundancies, and lessen the costs for all.



Intergovernmental Cooperation

POLICY: Encourage communication and cooperation when feasible between local units of government to conserve resources and ensure the general welfare of Pierz residents, both present and future.

GOALS:

Cooperate and share resources between organizations when feasible to conserve resources and reduce redundancy.

Inject long range consideration into the determination of short term actions.

Take positive, proactive steps to actively participate in finding solutions to County and other area-wide problems which have a direct effect upon Pierz residents and the effective funding of local government.

Short Term Action Items:

Consider establishing an intergovernmental coordination committee represented by all governmental units affecting Pierz, including Morrison County, neighboring local units of government, and the local school district which would meet on a regular basis for the purpose of discussing common goals and mutual problems (economic development, natural resources, land use, etc.).

Long Term Action Items:

Pursuing cooperative, mutually beneficial inter-jurisdictional projects by working together and pooling resources in an effort to take advantage of unique opportunities to the benefit of all.

Transportation

A City's transportation system has a great influence on its future growth and development, as the network of streets in a community determines land use configurations. It is a challenging task for cities to provide access for shoppers and employees to local businesses and industries, provide efficient through transportation for regional travelers, and provide for recreational transportation

opportunities. These challenges are further complicated by the need to balance the conflicting needs of pedestrians and the automobile.

Pierz has a transportation system typically found in older communities, which is a grid-like pattern of streets in the older core area of the City with some “suburban-type” street layouts in the newer subdivisions of the City consisting of cul-de-sacs and curvilinear designs. Highways 25 & 27 run through the City connecting Pierz with the rest of the region.

POLICY: Find a safer, more convenient and economical way of routing traffic through the community and moving people from place to place.

GOALS:

Work to create a transportation plan that addresses access to Highways 25 & 27, encompasses a clearly marked system for the circulation of pedestrians which includes sidewalks, trails and paths linking together major pedestrian destinations in the community, integrates the City and area’s trail system, and beautifies and make these more aesthetically pleasing.

Work with other units of government, including Morrison County and neighboring local units of government, to promote more opportunities for public transit including gaining access to an intermodal transportation system.

Expand, promote and integrate Pierz’s network of trails and paths separated from the street system for use by pedestrians, bicycles, etc., which would further link together many of the community’s public facilities such as schools, churches, parks, golf course, and downtown into an existing trail system found in our region.

Work with Region 5 Development Commission and others to develop a Safe Routes to School plan to assist with safety issues relating to children traveling to school on foot and on bicycles.

Short Term Action Items:

Work with strategic partners such as Morrison County and MnDOT in regards to future development of Highways 25 & 27, as well as funneling a manageable amount of traffic through Pierz’s downtown area.

Work with partners to promote pedestrian / biking trails and signage to facilitate access to businesses and services.

Consider undertaking a downtown master plan.

Work with MnDOT regarding pedestrian / bike trail planning.



Work with MnDOT, Morrison County and other organizations on ways to make downtown Pierz pedestrian friendly by slowing traffic to a manageable speed, potentially through the use of signs and lights.

Convene regular meetings of strategic partners in an effort to create local access to a regional public transportation system.

Long Term Action Items:

Develop a community transportation plan that is financially and environmentally sustainable, reflective of Pierz's zoning and future land use, and integrates transportation planning efforts made by partners such as MnDOT and Morrison County, amongst others.

Public Safety

The safety of Pierz residents and visitors is paramount, and a vital concern to the City. While not all situations and circumstances can be controlled, the City strives to adequately plan to handle such emergencies, as well as provide the emergency staff, resources, and infrastructure, not only internally, but also in partnership with other public safety organizations.

POLICY: To be a community that provides a safe environment for all residents and visitors using collaboration and prevention programs.

GOALS:

Develop partnerships in an effort to mitigate public safety, substance abuse and related public safety issues.

Continue to support law enforcement and public safety organizations such as the Pierz Fire Department, First Responders, County Sheriff's Department, Emergency Management and others.



POLICY: Prepare for the long term safety needs of Pierz and its residents.

GOALS:

Through long and short term planning efforts, work to make Pierz a safer community.

Short Term Action Items:

In partnership with other likeminded organizations, develop an ongoing public media campaign related to awareness of substance abuse and crime including the Police Department's Wellness Class at the schools.

Prepare a capital investment plan to assist with long term public safety planning and budgeting for needs related to buildings, equipment and other items.

Continue to support the public safety organizations that serve the Pierz Community including but not limited to the Pierz Police Department, First Responders, Pierz Fire Department, the Morrison County Sheriff's Office, and Emergency Management.

Work to mitigate issues of blight, neglect and public safety in the City for not only public safety, but aesthetic purposes. Strengthen blight and public safety ordinances, and enforce them.



Quality of Life

Many residents of the City of Pierz are employed outside of the City, and frequently see the community as a “bedroom community” - often, these residents look for lifestyle amenities when choosing where to live. Schools, parks, trails and recreation facilities are often strong selling points in a community. The abundant natural resources of the Pierz area also attract and assist in retaining many residents of Pierz and surrounding areas.

A concerted effort must be made by the City of Pierz and other stakeholders to maintain and improve the quality of life of the community for current and future generations.

POLICY: Encourage development and population growth while working to maintain a small town feel.

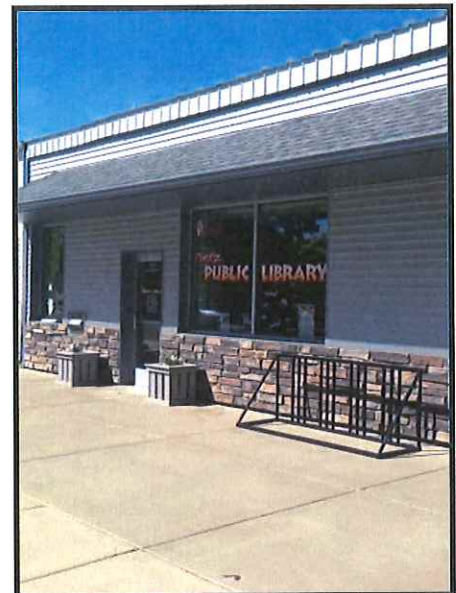
GOALS:

- Allow for a variety of affordable housing opportunities.
- Attract businesses which provide employment opportunities.
- Allow for broad range of public services and facilities and nurture local institutions such as schools, churches, medical and social services and libraries.
- Promote recreational and social opportunities for residents.

POLICY: Improve the overall environmental quality and ensure the general welfare of Pierz residents (present and future) as a whole, while protecting their individual choice.

GOALS:

- Balance the interests of the individual and community.



Inject long range consideration into the determination of short term actions.

POLICY: Preserve and promote Pierz's historical and cultural heritage of farming and agriculture and use it as a driver for our community.

GOALS:

Preserve and promote Pierz's cultural heritage by encouraging local community celebrations.

Embrace culture / art / history and integrate them into the community.

POLICY: Strive to support the positive development of the youth of the community, and recognize them as our future leaders.

GOALS:

Collaborate with partnering organizations to provide structured, safe activities for the community's young people.

Support access to wholesome recreational opportunities and facilities, partnering with other organizations where possible, that develop both bodies and minds.

POLICY: Promote and explore opportunities and partnerships to expand the cultural opportunities available to Pierz residents.

GOALS:

Explore cultural and arts opportunities through MN Arts & Legacy programs and any other available resources.

Promote cultural events that will add to the fabric of the community, and create an environment that will help attract new and retain existing residents.

Seek to partner with other organizations near Pierz to promote and strengthen existing efforts, not only for the benefit of residents, but also a driver for tourism.

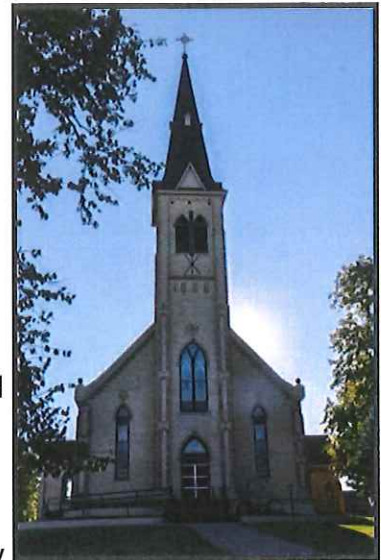
Short Term Action Items:

Partner with local schools, Commercial Club, library and other organizations to promote local historical and cultural resource events to residents and use these as a driver for tourism.

Reach out to the schools and other youth related organizations to find ways to work together to support constructive youth activities and opportunities.

Strive to keep the channels of communication open between other local units of governments including, but not limited to, Morrison County, etc. and neighboring local units of government by holding regular meetings of staff and elected officials.

Work to maintain, improve and supply the amenities that aid in retaining and attracting residents and visitors.



Long Term Action Items:

Support local / regional housing organizations to encourage and create additional senior living developments and services in the community to encourage lifelong livability.

Community Facilities

Community Facilities are at the core of any community. These public facilities are not only at the center of the City's business and enterprises, but also serve another purpose of uniting residents and guests.

POLICY: Maintain the highest standards of public services and facilities while working to minimize the tax implications on Pierz residents and businesses.

GOALS:

Recognize that certain public costs represent an essential investment in the future.



Use the Comprehensive Plan as the basis for capital investment programming in order to ensure that the City's available revenues are spent wisely.

Use the Comprehensive Plan as the primary document to communicate the desired direction of Pierz's future growth to other governmental units.

Short Term Action Items:

Maintain and update the City's capital investment plan to assist with long term planning and budgeting for needs related to infrastructure, buildings, equipment and other items in an effort to bring these items forward in a cost effective way as possible.

Long Term Action Items:

Revisit Pierz's Comprehensive Land Use Plan on a regular basis to ensure it accurately reflects the changing attitudes of the residents of the community. Update as needed.

Parks / Recreation / Open Spaces

The Pierz area is blessed with an abundance of natural beauty and environmentally sensitive areas. The City lies adjacent to the Skunk River, with dozens of lakes, rivers, streams and wildlife management areas in close proximity. These features are the area's primary source of natural beauty. The area also provides home to a variety of plant and animal life, and is a source of recreation and enjoyment for residents and visitors alike.

POLICY: Improve and protect the physical environment of Pierz as a setting for human activities, making it more attractive, healthful and efficient.

GOALS:

Protect and enhance the natural resources and amenities to preserve Pierz's outdoor environment.

Create, retain and promote attributes that will add to the fabric of the community and create an environment that will help attract new and retain existing residents and businesses.

Maintain and grow Pierz's open space system for recreation and other uses, taking advantage of natural features, and using land not suitable for intensive development whenever possible.

Develop the area surrounding Pierz, partnering with the private business community to find the highest and best use for the property.

Promote and explore the financial and environmental sustainability of Pierz's parks, open spaces and related business community by exploring grant opportunities, marketing initiatives, and strategic partnerships with like minded groups and organizations.

POLICY: Capitalize on the many advantages of Pierz's location in the State and the amenities of its setting.



GOALS:

Promote its location attribute of being located "on the way north" and in close proximity to regional population centers for the purpose of promoting tourism and business.

Promote the improvement, expansion, beautification, promotion and maintenance of transportation systems including highways and trails.

Work with stakeholders, including the Commercial Club, Morrison County, the Initiative Foundation,

Region 5 Development Commission, and the MN Department of Natural Resources and others to develop a branding and marketing campaign for the community and use it to not only promote tourism in our area, but also tout it as a great place to live.

Capitalize on location on Highways 25 & 27, and the large amount of traffic that passes through the City on a daily basis.

Capitalize on Pierz's proximity to recreational amenities such as lakes, parks, trails, local Wildlife Management Areas and forests, and the like.

Consider exploring resources to expand trails and walking paths to interconnect parks, trails, and the community, etc.

Short Term Action Items:

Consider creating a Pierz marketing and branding campaign in conjunction with strategic partners.

Long Term Action Items:

Build upon the existing parks and trails plan for the City of Pierz, outlining development of both new and existing parks and trails, as well as capital improvements, financial and environmental sustainability, and connectivity within neighborhoods, the community, and existing local trails, etc.

Develop a long term strategic plan for the City's recreational entities that factors in financial sustainability and competitiveness.

Convene regular meetings of strategic partners such as the DNR, Morrison County and local units of government to discuss the current state of area parks, trails, rivers, lakes and fishing / swimming locations. Collaborate to make these resources as interconnected as possible. Strive to maintain

what is currently there and formulate a plan to improve and expand these resources as cost effectively as possible.

Revisit Pierz's Comprehensive Land Use Plan and land use ordinances and update as needed to ensure they are in line with the goals and values of the community.



Land Use

Because of a variety of conditions and reasons, Pierz has experienced a measured pace of growth over the past several decades. This makes careful consideration of the City's future land use very important. A continued increase in population of Pierz will pose many land use challenges. The ability of the City to provide suitable land to accommodate growth while maintaining its unique character and providing an adequate level of urban services will be at the forefront of this struggle. The strain between the demands of an rural community and the natural / open space character of the surrounding area will also become increasingly challenging.



POLICY: Guide development in logical, compatible groupings according to their functions, thereby insuring against land use conflicts and development inefficiencies while maintaining property values.

GOALS:

Plan adequate and appropriate areas for residential land uses and allow only progressive development to insure the economical extension of utilities & infrastructure.

Revisit Pierz's zoning districts / maps on a regular basis to ensure that future development is compatible with neighboring uses.

Correct land use conflicts where they now occur through redevelopment, landscape buffering and other means.

Ensure that all the major public and private decisions reflect the spirit of the Comprehensive Plan.

Protect and enhance the natural resources and amenities to preserve Pierz's outdoor environment.

Develop the area surrounding Pierz, partnering with the private business community to find the highest and best use for the property.



Short Term Action Items:

Review the Comprehensive Plan on a regular basis to ensure it accurately reflects the values and goals of the community, updating as necessary.

Review Pierz's zoning ordinances on a regular basis to ensure it accurately reflects the vision, goals and needs of the community, updating as necessary.

Establish and maintain relationships with our district County Commissioner, Morrison County Zoning, the local medical providers and school district, and neighboring local units of governments and communicate often on land use issues in an effort to be proactive on future use and potential conflicts.

Strive to keep the channels of communication open between other local units of governments including, but not limited to Morrison County, and neighboring local units of government on the topic of future land use by holding regular meetings of staff and elected officials.

Long Term Action Items:

Partner with local and regional development organizations such as the Initiative Foundation, Region 5 Development Commission, the Minnesota Design Team, University of MN Extension (Business/Retention & Expansion Program), and others in areas of community development technical assistance and efforts.

Carefully consider orderly annexation as a way to provide opportunities for the growth of Pierz.

Implementation

Use and flexibility is required for a Comprehensive Land Use Plan to be an effective tool. Things will no doubt change dramatically in the City of Pierz over the next 10 + years. This plan will need to have flexibility to react to these changes.



Providing suggested implementation strategies / action items is one of the best ways to implement a Comprehensive Land Use Plan. Focusing on these action items allow the use of many tools over time to achieve your desired results and outcomes. The methods and ways of today may be outdated in ten years. Elected officials, appointed Commission members and City staff will need a current working knowledge of all of the means in which the goals, policies and action items presented in the plan can be attained.

This plan lists a number of strategies that, when combined, have the potential to positively impact the future of Pierz. The City's resources are typically scarce, so it is not realistic to assume that Pierz can implement all of them at once. Therefore, it's necessary to focus the City's resources on those that have the most potential to have the biggest impact.

Review and Revision

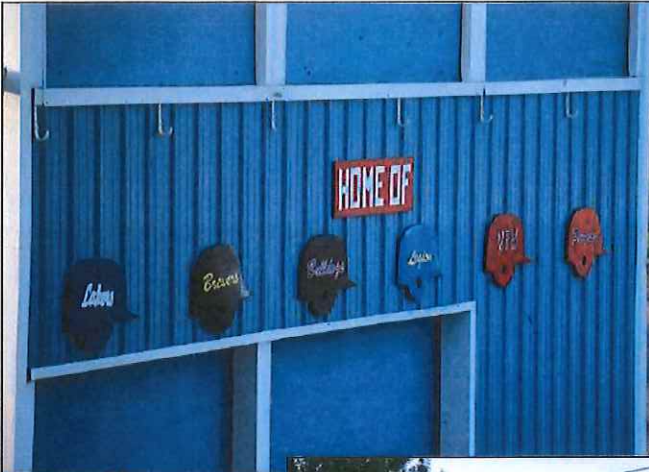
Comprehensive planning is a continuous process and thus this Comprehensive Plan should be monitored and updated when necessary. The City Council should carefully review proposed changes and their implications and actively seek citizen comment on such proposals. If changes are found to be appropriate, they should be formally added to the Plan by legal amendment. In addition, every five years, the entire Comprehensive Plan should be reviewed and modified to ensure that it is an up-to-date expression of community goals and intentions.

Implementation Steps

Not less than twice per year, a special meeting should be called composed of the City Council, Planning & Zoning Committee, Comprehensive Plan Task Force Members and City Department Heads to review the Comprehensive Plan Goals and Action Items to ensure that the City's work plans are aligned with Comprehensive Plan.

Each year, City staff should brief the City Council on the "state of the Comprehensive Plan." This briefing should reacquaint the City Council with the content of the Plan, discuss emerging facts that have a bearing on the accuracy of the Plan projections, discuss land use and development activities within the last year and those on the docket for the upcoming year, and suggest an annual agenda of planning activities to assist in the implementation of the Plan.

Review the Plan in five years and again in ten years to determine whether the Plan recommendations are still current. Revise those sections that are determined to be in need of an update.



RESOLUTION OF CITY OF PIERZ

RESOLUTION NO. 02132017-01

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PIERZ, MINNESOTA, APPROVING THE ADOPTION OF THE 2016 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Pierz desired to create a new Comprehensive Plan to replace the current Comprehensive Plan last updated in 2002, and in such, retained the services of JZP. LLC to facilitating the creation of their new Comprehensive Plan, and outlined topic areas to be covered by said plan; and

WHEREAS, the Pierz City Council created an Ad-Hoc Comprehensive Plan Task Force to oversee the creation of goals, objectives and action items for the above referenced topic areas for this 2016 Comprehensive Plan. The Pierz City Council gratefully acknowledges the assistance of the Ad-Hoc Comprehensive Plan Task Force for their efforts in creating this document; and

WHEREAS, the Pierz City Council ordered a Community meeting be held on June 8, 2016 for the purpose of informing the public about this project, it's process, and to garner feedback from residents on a variety of topics for inclusion in this plan, and

WHEREAS, the Ad-Hoc Comprehensive Plan Task Force met on a monthly basis to develop the draft Comprehensive Plan based on the citizen input garnered at the Community meeting and the Ad-Hoc Comprehensive Plan Task Force's experience living in Pierz, and

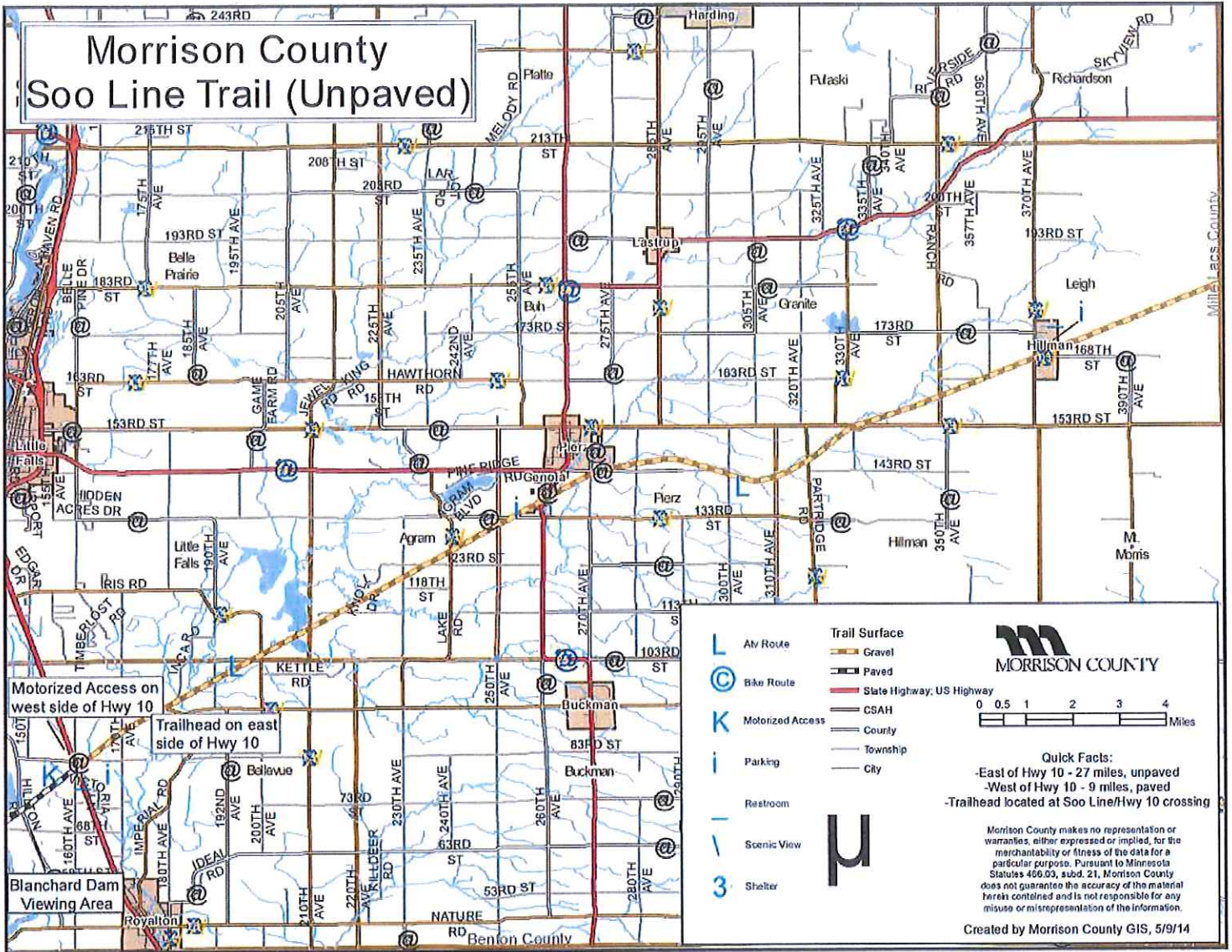
WHEREAS, the City of Pierz, at their December 12, 2016, City Council meeting reviewed the draft 2016 Comprehensive Plan, and ordered a Public Hearing for the purpose of receiving public comment on said document on January 23, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. at the Pierz City Hall; and

WHEREAS, on January 23, 2017 the City Council sent the Comprehensive Plan to the Ad Hoc Comp Plan Task Force for additional review and updates, including the addition of the City's zoning map; and

WHEREAS, the Pierz City Council, at their January 23, 2017 meeting, ordered a Public Hearing for the purpose of receiving public comment on said document on February 13, 2017 at 6:30 p.m. at the Pierz City Hall; and

WHEREAS, the City Clerk is instructed to make said document available for public review and inspection at the Pierz City Hall during its normal business hours, post notice of this Public Hearing at the Pierz City Hall, Farmers and Merchants State bank, Pierz Post Office, publish notice as required by statute in the Morrison County Record the designated newspaper of record for the City of Pierz, as well as send copies of the draft 2016 Comprehensive Plan along with notice of the Public Hearing and request for comment to the Pierz City Attorney, Morrison County Planning & Zoning, Pierz Area District Commissioner, the area DNR Hydrologist, the

Morrison County Soo Line Trail (Unpaved)

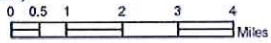


Motorized Access on west side of Hwy 10

Trailhead on east side of Hwy 10

Blanchard Dam Viewing Area

- | | | | |
|--|------------------|--|---------------------------|
| | Av Route | | Trail Surface |
| | Bike Route | | Gravel |
| | Motorized Access | | Paved |
| | Parking | | Slate Highway, US Highway |
| | Restroom | | CSAH |
| | Scenic View | | County |
| | Shelter | | Township |
| | | | City |

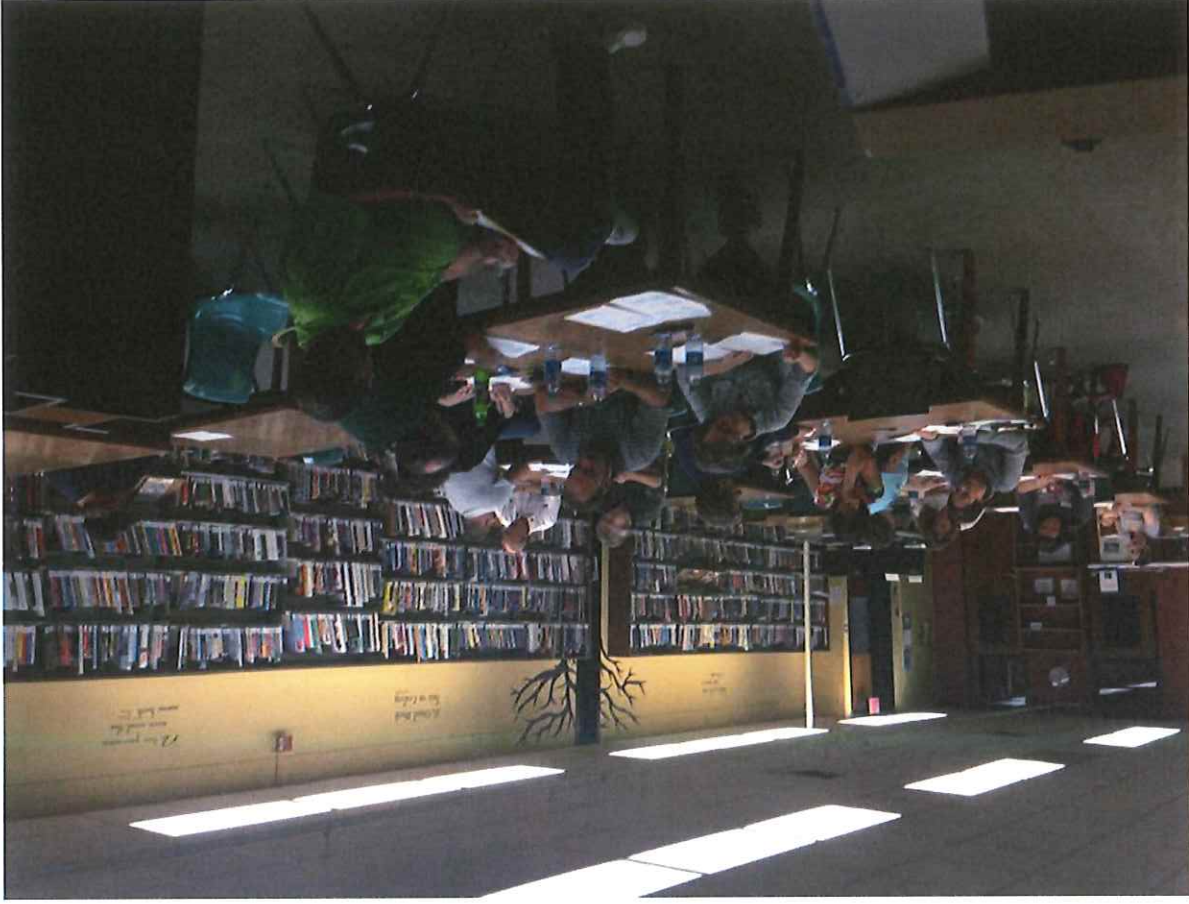


Quick Facts:
 -East of Hwy 10 - 27 miles, unpaved
 -West of Hwy 10 - 9 miles, paved
 -Trailhead located at Soo Line/Hwy 10 crossing

Morrison County makes no representation or warranties, either expressed or implied, for the merchantability or fitness of the data for a particular purpose. Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes 466.03, subd. 21, Morrison County does not guarantee the accuracy of the material herein contained and is not responsible for any misuse or misrepresentation of the information.

Created by Morrison County GIS, 5/9/14

June 8, 2016



City of Pierz
2016 Comprehensive Plan Project
Community Meeting Report

City of Pierz 2016 Comprehensive Plan Community Kick Off Meeting Report

Acknowledgements

Mayor
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Linda Sczublewski- City Treasurer

City Administrator
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Deputy Clerk
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Planning Assistance Provided By:



Table of Contents

- 2. Acknowledgements
- 4. Background
- 6. Visioning Questions
 - 6. Why do you live in Pierz?
 - 7. Why do you continue to live in Pierz?
 - 8. Looking 10 years into the future, if you could retain one current attribute about Pierz, what would it be?
 - 9. Looking 10 years into the future, if you could change one current attribute about Pierz, what would it be?
- 10. SWOT Analysis
 - 10. Transportation
 - 11. Housing
 - 13. Economic Development / Business
(Commercial, Industrial & Downtown)
 - 14. Parks / Recreation / Open Spaces & Cultural Arts
 - 16. Infrastructure
(Utilities, Energy, Broadband, Roads, Water / Sewer, etc.)
 - 17. Community Facilities
 - 18. Public Safety
 - 19. Quality of Life
 - 21. Intergovernmental Cooperation
 - 22. Land Use and Natural Resources

Background

As part of the City of Pierz's Comprehensive Plan Project, a Community Kick Off Meeting was held on June 8, 2016 at Pierz High School. Comprehensive Plan Ad-Hoc Citizen Taskforce Members, appointed by the Pierz City Council as a cross representation of the Pierz Community as a whole, were in attendance along with many member of the Pierz community. The agenda for this meeting is as follows:

- 1) Welcome – all we welcomed to the meetings.
- 2) Introductions – all were introduced; facilitators, staff and participants.
- 3) Background – a presentation was made regarding Pierz and Pierz Area demographics and statistics, what a comprehensive plan is, and the planned steps for creating a new Comprehensive Plan for the City of Pierz. Questions were answered as they arose. A copy of this presentation was handed out for participants to take.
- 4) Gathering of input– several questions were asked to participants in an effort to garner input on a variety of topics. A SWOT Analysis was undertaken, and participants were asked to write their answers on provided slips of paper. The facilitator also asked everyone to comment verbally – comments were written down and both written and verbal comments are included in this report.

Participants were asked for their opinions and experience on the four below questions, which help set the stage for the livability of the community.

Visioning Questions asked of participants include:

- 1) Why do you live in Pierz?
- 2) Why do you continue to live in Pierz?
- 3) Looking 10 years into the future, if you could retain one current attribute about Pierz, what would it be?
- 4) Looking 10 years into the future, if you could change one current attribute about Pierz, what would it be?

A SWOT Analysis was then undertaken where participants were asked to identify their perceived Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats to the City of Pierz on the following topics:

- Transportation
- Housing
- Economic Development / Business
(Commercial, Industrial & Downtown)
- Parks / Recreation / Open Spaces
- Infrastructure
(utilities, energy, broadband, roads, water / sewer, etc.)
- Community Facilities
- Public Safety
- Quality of life
- Intergovernmental Cooperation
- Land Use

Written and verbal input from the meeting have been transcribed and are as follows. This document is being presented to Ad-Hoc Comprehensive Plan Task Force Members for review and consultation as they work to craft the 2016 City of Pierz Comprehensive Plan.

Visioning Portion

Why do you live in Pierz?

(Verbal)

Jobs (3)
Born & Raised (6)
Safe Community (2)
School (4)
Business Owner (4)
Family (2)
Rent (2)
Community Support (2)
Values (3)
Parks (2)
Church (3)

(Written)

Great education
Small town (rural) values
Involved and active community
Businesses support the community
After college I happened to be hired & I worked in Pierz – so we stayed, fully intending on moving someplace else 2-3 years down the road. This was a starting block for us.
My husband
Nice parks
Close or my husband's job and serve on Fire Department.
Nice School
Close to the school for activities
Christ following Bible believing Church
Clean & quiet
Wanted to move to small town
Family
Born and raised in the area
Married spouse from Pierz
Currently renting
Fire Department
Grew up and farm here
Own business in town
Grew up here
Relatives here
I do not live in Pierz but own a business
Grew up in this town
Born / raised
Safe
Former business owner
Work
Born in Pierz
School
Work here
Love the "small town" feel
Great place to raise kids
Good school system
Small town

Nice people
Cost of living

Why do you continue to live in Pierz

(Verbal)

Homey (4)
Clean (6)
Low Crime (2)
Family (5)
Caring (4)
School (3)
Friends (2)
Business (4)
Jobs (4)
Everything is available locally (2)
Community Support (3)
Library (2)

(Written)

Great place to raise a family
20 years later we are still here. We love Pierz. We love the community and the fact that everyone looks out for one another. I love our strong school district. Ability to rally in times of need.

It's a great place to raise a family- school, parks, churches / faith, rural. \$35,000 in scholarships from businesses. I believe in Pierz -- want to make it a better place. My kids will be better people living here. Pierz strong. People would do anything for you.

Clean
Well kept
Local businesses
Job for husband
Great school and library
Family
Close lakes
Parks
No large / tall buildings
Like living here
Good place to raise kids, strong school district
Job (working for the school) district
Fire Department
Good place to raise kids
Good school district
Retired here and not dead yet
Clean
Friendly
Own business
Nice clean town
Low crime
Family is here
Retired
Caring community
Grandkids
School district
Work
Own a business

Have home
Community on the rise

Attributes we'd like to keep about Pierz looking 10 year into the future.

(Verbal)

Necessities are here (2)
Clean Main Street (4)
Safe (3)
Small town feel (8)
Sense of community (2)
Clean town (3)
School (3)
Heritage (2)

(Written)

Small town feel
Small town atmosphere
Safe town
School!
We really do have everything we need: friends, school!, grocery, gas, family, exercise / parks.
I don't have to leave for anything
Library
School
Nice main street and nice looking buildings
Safe
Sense of community
People friendly
Strong schools
Local support of local causes – kids, seniors
Friendliness & kind people
Thriving school district
Small town
Main street thriving
Keep supporting school, brings in a lot of people to town
Main Street
Retain small town atmosphere
History of Pierz “Germany”
School system
Church building down town
Main street setting
Hometown “feel”
Overall look / position our City is in
How neat and clean the town is
Small town living
Safe

Attributes we'd like to change about Pierz looking 10 year into the future.

(Verbal)

More restaurants (3)
Pride in businesses (2)
Public transportation (3)
More land (4)
More senior housing (2)
Add to golf course / camp ground (4)
Keep simplicity (2)
More collaboration (2)
Bike path (2)
City building complex (3)
Not losing Main Street (2)
Amenities (2)

(Written)

This is hard because I see so much positive in our community. My current biggest concern in our community is the loss of Main Street – small towns closing left and right (Sebeka, MN) (New York Mills, MN)

What does this town offer young people? Families? What attracts tax payers to come here? Mentally – we need to be more open to communicating and collaborating. One organization, agency, etc. can do a lot, but imagine what we could do if we all worked together.

Nice City Hall complex

More businesses so we can stay in town

Something for the farming businesses

Someone said they only leave town for restaurants

Transportation around town, shuttle busses for elderly, children, etc.

Quality places to eat besides bar

Bike path

Strengthen business community / Main Street

Improve / increase workforce

Amenities to attract and keep strong families

More restaurants & family eating

City beach

Add land to golf course and more camping

Recreation area

Golf, etc.

Be willing to invest in the future

More progressive

Better public transportation for the elderly

A town and community that is more supportive (proud) of its business community

More area to grow city limits and businesses – industrial park

More jobs in town

Non subsidized public transportation, senior housing, more employment

Growth and more land for both city and new business

More business / industry

More parks / recreational land

More restaurants

Land acquisitions

Amenities

Bridges of land

SWOT Analysis

Transportation

(Verbal)

Strengths / Opportunities

Two state highways (6)
Volunteer drivers (2)
Walkable community (3)
Sidewalks (2)
Middle of everywhere (2)
Good roads (3)

Weaknesses / Threats

No public transportation (4)
No bike lane (2)
Crosswalks (2)
Stop traffic (2)
Crossing highways traffic (6)
Narrow streets (4)
Updating roads (2)
Bypass (3)
Train (2)

(Written)

Strengths / Opportunities

No stoplights
Quick travel
Parking
Cost of living
Business opportunities
Main street highways
High traffic volume
Great access to town
Lots of traffic
Good streets
Well maintained
Highways 25/27
No overpass / bypass
Good roads – well maintained
No stoplights
Good streets
Good traffic moving through on weekends
Main highways
Walking / biking – new sidewalks!
Weekend up north traffic
Junction of two State Highways
On main highway
Good quality roads
Nice streets in town
25 is nice semi main road to Brainerd Lakes Area
Volunteer program
Local community member willing to volunteer to drive people to appointments

Quick, efficient
Walk to work
No stoplights
Main highway
In-and-out walking
Middle of everywhere
Walk ability
All roads lead here

Weaknesses / Threats

No bike lanes
No bypass of town
Change in surrounding comm.
Narrow Main Street / street view when turning is low
Zoning not there many years ago
Public transportation
No public transportation (mainly for elderly or for youth activities)
Trying to get that drive through traffic to stop at our business
Terrible crossing Main Street at intersections. Yikes! Dangerous!
Crosswalks should be marked on highways
Snow removal on highways is delayed (limits parking)
No public transportation for seniors
Street maintenance
No public transportation
Taxi service
Distance from hub – public transportation does not exist. Expensive to provide
Bike lanes non-existent (especially on Main Street)
No bussing / taxi service
Narrow streets and can get busy, bad curve by old bank & that intersection can get hard to see.
No bike lane
Visibility at corners
Visibility around corners
Accessibility – easy drive from the Cities, don't want more crime... LF has a lot of struggle with this
Wider main street and more areas to bike – think county wide... attraction

Housing

(Verbal)

Strengths / Opportunities

Housing options (9)
Senior housing (2)
Clean (3)
Healthy markets (2)

Weakness / Threats

Neat, Safe, Clean & Affordable (5)
Senior housing (5)
Areas to build (2)
Not many options on market (4)
Apartments (3)

(Written)

Strengths / Opportunities

Homes retain value
Affordable homes
Healthy home market
Lots of business opportunities
Assisted living – more complexes
Houses sell quickly
Well kept / maintained housing within community
Pretty adequate
Variety of homes with various value
For the majority – well kept, well maintained
Variety of housing options – apartments, rental, senior and ownership
Clean and well kept
Reasonable priced homes
Assisted living facilities
A lot of room to grow to the west
Good foundation of options
Senior housing / assisted living
Clean
Many neighborhoods / styles of homes
Many different options like rental, assisted living, nursing home, apartments... well rounded for all.
Quality

Weaknesses / Threats

Few rental options
Low rental stock
More non-subsidized apartments
Affordability
No apartments for families
Need more apartment buildings
Non subsidized assisted living
Low income housing – do we have enough safe, clean housing?
Do we have clean, safe rentals? 20 years ago hard to find – not sure what is there today.
Limited space for more developments
Baby boomers will make more of a demand than can be met
Not many houses for sale – limiting young families from moving to Pierz
Rental housing is limited – need more apartments
Not enough non subsidized housing
Need more rental apartments
Limited supply of some types of housing
No land available for future development
Need to attract more affordable housing for young families
Few apartment options – non low income
Few houses on the market – currently, homes selling for high costs
More trees lining streets – especially in newer developments
Need to keep the rental units neat and managed well, mobile home area needs to stay neat and safe and clean.
Not many
No land

Economic Development

(Verbal)

Strengths / Opportunities

TIF (2)
EDA (3)
Industrial Space (3)
Businesses (8)
Business Owners (2)
Farming (2)

Weakness / Threats

Land (4)
Clothing store (2)
Hardware store (2)
EDA Funds (4)
Restaurants (4)
Industry (2)
Workforce (2)
Education (2)
Support for farmers (3)

(Written)

Strengths / Opportunities

Gym
Coffee shop
EDA
TIF Financing
Downtown Main Street storefronts
EDA
Main Street
Growing / Expanding businesses
EDA Loans
Industrial Park has grown
Educate and Communicate that we can get anything in town – bud do you?
A nice variety of businesses (floral, clothing, grocery, furniture & such)
Industry is stable
We have core businesses
We need to all work together to maintain / grow
Lot of industrial businesses – can get almost everything
Lots of service jobs
For a small town, there is lots of businesses
Committed business owners
Fairly good support to purchase locally
Good businesses
Main street business full
Thielens Meats
Nice, clean buildings & main street
Great faces on the buildings
Farming area
Growth in this area
Have everything we need
Ag business
Have a main street

Weaknesses / Threats

Few restaurants – sit down
Fund availability and land
More area to expand commercial industrial
Restaurant
No room for more
No land for new businesses
General clothing – hardware a must!
Pierz will be devastated if no hardware store. Horrible for the community and all the commercial businesses.
I don't know what is available – so im sure others don't know as well. "Fend for yourself"
Since the small town feel is so valued, what is our city doing to capture that and keep that? How can we work together to grow the city to entice shoppers, to entice people to visit, to entice people to stay here.
We need workers!
Need more eating facilities as an option
People leaving town for restaurants then doing their other shopping
We need to grow industry sectors
Having 5 small companies with 10 employees is better than having one with 50 or 100 employees – more stable.
Not much industry that employ lots of people
Lot of elderly people in town
Need restaurant
Try to get a few large companies in town
Lack of shared vision for future development
Lack of economic incentives to attract new businesses or support new ideas
Lack of work force
Need to attract more restaurants
Businesses to supply jobs to keep money in town
Limited restaurants – mostly bars – and places to eat besides bars.
Coffee shop limited hours – need restaurant to catch the Sunday church crowd
Workforce available to work here
Need people to shop locally
Space to grow – cost of land expensive
Family restaurant
No people to work
Many manufacturing business
Support... what do we do to help?
How do we maintain success?
If main dies, Pierz dies.

Parks / Recreation & Open Space

Verbal

Strengths / Opportunities

Nice (12)

Weaknesses / Threats

Expand (7)
Walking / biking (4)
Junior High (2)
Beach (2)
Advertising (2)
Replacing equipment (3)
Trail Access (2)

(Written)

Strengths / Opportunities

Beautiful
Well kept
Good amount of parks
School has space for rec.
City library
Nice parks
Great parks, clean
The golf course
Full campground
Well kept golf course
Memorial in park
Great parks
Great parks
Clean
Even hockey nets and rink had snow shoveled this weekend
Clean, neat and attractive parks
Well maintained
We do a great job with camping, golf, parks
Could use more / large camping sites, golf course
Good clean parks
Golf course
ATV trail
Golf course
ATV trail
Parks
Beautiful spaces
Willingness by local organizations to support our green spaces
Taken care of very well
Golf course
ATV trails
Multiple parks
High school has open spaces, track, tennis courts
Community garden
Many to go to

Weaknesses / Threats

Water and bathrooms near by? Can go to businesses
Needs to keep them in good repair and find good replacements when things break
No city beach / pool
City should consider expanding park by fire department which was former car sales lot
Could use more
Facility for Jr. high and high school age
Plan to expand – if possible
What amenities – green space will attract and keep young, healthy families.
Need more camping – buy land
Need bike and walking paths
Need adequate camping sites that don't flood
Local sidewalks
Better access to trail
Flooding camp grounds, limited sites, as returning groups grow the need to go elsewhere
No public or private space within town that can be reserved or used
Need to advertise our MN beauties better – lakes, camping, Soo Line Trail

Walking / hiking / biking path
Need more camping, walking paths – explored before, and outcome?
Need more campground space
Outdated playgrounds
No room
Land – campsites
No room
No city beach – boat landing is bad option but popular
Bike path, hiking path, aging infrastructure, beautiful from afar... maybe not up close up. Sometimes city does great community support, gardening

Infrastructure

Verbal

Strengths / Opportunities

Sewer / Water (2)
Roads (2)
Utilities (3)
Quickness (2)

Weakness / Threats

Internet (3)
Phone (3)
Sewer / water rates (2)

(Written)

Strengths / Opportunities

Working on improvements and replacements are good
Access to cable and internet
Clean town
Power outages taken care of promptly
Utilities as a whole are great
Good roads, electric is reasonable
Good broadband
Sewer / water on main street new
Sewer plant new
City offers great public service – sewer, water and garbage
Roads are well maintained
Electric, water, sewer is affordable – I don't use a lot of sewer and water
Beautiful main street
City electric and sold waste rates compared to other cities
Roads are well maintained
Newer sewer and water system
We've got it – great!
Roads in decent condition

Weaknesses / Threats

Need to build them to last with heavy tractors and semis that travel our roads. Farming community
We really need better internet service
High water rates
High water bills
Taste of water – received complaints

Internet, channel 10
High costs
Water quality
Fiber?
Poor internet and phone service
Need a better and more improved internet service
Snow removal on highway 25 should be addressed sooner (limits parking space)
High sewer / water
Internet cable –Midcontinent
Century Link horrible
Midcontinent only option for internet
Internet access is terrible – limited options
Terrible internet service, always down
Very expensive water and sewer
Phone service – no options / limited

Community Facilities

Verbal

Strengths / Weakness

Library (2)
Opportunities / Threats
Space (7)
Joint ventures (2)
City Hall (2)

(Written)

Strengths / Opportunities

Skating rink
School gyms
Bowling
Baseball fields
Pavilion @ golf course
City hall
Library
Fire hall
Senior center
Would like to see joint venture with the school
City hall community use
Great library
Library
Library that meets the needs of the community
Library that offers support to the school system
Taking care of needs at city hall
Library
Excellent school
Library
Churches
Opportunity for tourism (main highway)
Library
Buildings – some available

Weaknesses / Threats

Need advertisement of what is an option to use and pricing for the rules to use / rent them
City should make some \$\$ on rentals for the upkeep. City also needs to keep them nice to be used
Multipurpose community center – currently use pavilions, school, or ballroom for events.
Could use nicer senior center
Nicer government facility
Better parking or City Hall
Needs improvements
Need a plan – communicate the plan
Need a new city hall
Need community center – event center
Need updated city hall
Poor impression of the city to prospective new businesses coming to look at Pierz
Police department needs a facility that meet their needs – security, space, up to date space
We lack these – need community space indoor, outdoor space
We heard reasons for families to move here and stay here.
Splash pad?
No community facility except for school
No meeting areas without alcohol
Small city hall
Lack of additional space
Aging
Not “really” open to public
Main street – busy traffic business lot
Community center not available

Public Safety

Verbal

Strengths / Opportunities

Fire / Police (4)
Committed (3)
Active in the community (2)
First responders (2)

Weakness / Threats

Accessibility (3)
Rising Crime (3)
No activities (2)
Crosswalks (2)
Drugs (2)

(Written)

Strengths / Opportunities

2 full time officers
Part timers available
Decent squads
Tight knit 2 full time officers
Good police staff and involvement with the whole community
Low crime
Great helping officers
Awesome!
Great law enforcement – active in our community and very active in our schools. Great role models. Works with

residents. Great, willing FD, First responders
Police chief that gets out into the city
Community and school system
Good EMS & police / fire
1st responders are good
Whole community
Good police
Good fire
Great police force / fire dept.
Committed and caring police officers
Great police chief
Feel very safe
Solid fire department
Low crime rate
Close fire hall
Close police officers, make good rounds and seem to keep things going. Good in the schools.

Weaknesses / Threats

Not 100% - 2 full time officers + part time – times not covered by city police
Not all housing areas / neighborhoods are connected to schools / downtown with sidewalks.
Keep speeds down, older people still drive, keep crime down
Need more sidewalks
More crime moving closer
The major highways that go through the city. We could be more of a threat to “big” crime over time
More crime moving closer
Growing crime rate
Drugs
Need more staff at major events
Loud cars
Speeders
Crosswalks
Hold and give out speeding tickets when warranted
Drug related issues
Young people not having things to do
Times w/o officer on duty

Quality of Life

Verbal

Strengths / Opportunities

Active, Involved (2)
Healthcare professionals (2)
Good (2)

Weakness / Threats

Walking (2)
Biking (2)
Frisbee golf (2)
Winter (2)
City Hall
Meeting space (2)
Restaurants (2)

(Written)

Strengths / Opportunities

Clean air
Freedom fest
Rock & roll stroll
Sue's ice cream
Most citizens work / have opportunity
Great place while young and summer
Lower cost of city services
Small town
Churches, schools – great
Clean
Everything is here
Golf
School
Grocery
Great small town feel
Clean community
Neighborhood / community is friendly
Medical care / dental / vision
Strong family and community ties
Active & involved community
Strong church involvement in the community
Provide doctor, eye doctor, chiropractor and pharmacy within city
Parks
Golf course
Friendly people
Small town atmosphere
Good (illegible)
Good
Rural feel
Strong heritage
Strong schools
Faith community
Small town feel
Close to major towns
Great schools
Great churches
Clean
Lots available in affordable ways
People who care
Retirement area
Raising a family

Weaknesses / Threats

Limited restaurants – travel for food and variety
Young people moving away for jobs – threat.
Lack of work ethic – desire to work
Better restaurants, healthier food options for lunch
Rank high in poor health
Walking (illegible)
Community event center needed
Need a larger variety of rec. opportunities (bike trail, Frisbee golf)
Young families moving out of Pierz instead of choosing to raise their families here

Negative people in community
No place to walk / bike
Need activities and functions for all ages to get together
Drugs
Aging population – nothing for them.
Winter
Too many chicken barns surrounding Pierz

Intergovernmental Relations

Verbal

Strengths / Opportunities

Collaboration (2)
Quick communication (2)

Weakness / Threats

Collaboration (2)
Communication (3)

(Written)

Strengths / Opportunities

County support
Know each other, easy to get in touch with each other
Business districts
Input from residents + area for advancement of city
Could be even more collaboration
Average to good. Things are taken care of and handled as required
Good working relationship
City that supports school, library & business
Good
Active city council.
Main street city hall complex
Not sure of this – city hall seems to be the headquarters and ideas go through there.

Weaknesses / Threats

I like the spider web idea. Needs to be a body working together, communicating together and supporting each other. Communication with the school, businesses and city hall – also employees.
Less room for town to grow and develop (main street)
Limited interaction with other communities
Limited communication from city leaders with other organizations
Pierz goes beyond city limits!
Connect to other Morrison County amenities
City could invite business owners a few times a year to gain input what is needed in town.
Unsure
For more changes – a major increase in taxes
My view of government with locals: (not sure if this is intergovernmental) Lack of communication – lack of listening. I don't feel a lot of support from our city. I feel like they do enough just to get by, when working on topics not important to them. (I was very sad at how his went. My heart hurts that you have a room full of people wanting to work together and I was made to feel very uncomfortable) Why???

Lack of public understanding
Could use even more collaboration
Towns thinking we have to be just like them

Bring water & sewer rates down to the average of state costs
Need to update city hall – new setup or new facility
Need more open mind to collaborate – example RRS Garbages
Be willing to look at other places and hear new ideas (outside the box of Pierz)
Lack of sports / cooperation between schools to allow students to play hockey in Little Falls

Land Use

Verbal

Strengths / Opportunities

Organized (2)
Opportunity (2)

Weakness / Threats

Land (4)

(Written)

Strengths / Opportunities

Open lots affordable to build in new developments
Everything located on main street (tourism opportunity)
Need more
Businesses are all together
Land is filled with businesses
Opportunities to expand campground
A few buildings available
Industrial park is greatly used
Attractive main street
Using many stores
Organized town
Not much unused land
Very clean
Long main street, maybe a few houses to create business space in the future
Lots for sale in newer development
School has space to grow

Weaknesses / Threats

More trees should be planted in boulevards
More use of renewable power (ie: solar, wind)
I don't know a ton about land use, but know we are nearly land locked... would like to know camp ground –vs- permanent living – what do they generate city / comm.. over 25 year period.
Land availability
Opportunities for getting smaller
Buy land
Need more space in town or the town
Need more and for new businesses
Empty lots not available
Needed – for many reasons
Very limited amount of available land left
Lack of development land – both residential and commercial
A few empty buildings
Not many uptown for new or expanding current businesses
More trees lining sidewalks on edge of town
Public boat landing used as a beach (could be great to develop one!)