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# **Pine County**

# **Comprehensive Plan**

# **2017-2030**

"Productivity is never an accident. It is always the result of a commitment to excellence, intelligent planning, and focused effort."

- Paul J. Meyer

Prepared by:

**Pine County Planning and Zoning Department**

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## Acknowledgements

Pine County extends an emphatic thank you to all of the groups and individuals that participated in the creation of this plan:

### **Pine County Residents**

Thanks to those that completed the survey and attended public meetings.

### **Steering Committee**

Richard Glattly- Willow River	Steve Hallan- Pine City	Alan Hancock- Pine City
Matt Ludwig- Sandstone	Jeff Shute- Duxbury	James Sloan- Pine City
Skip Thomson- Sandstone	John Von Rueden- Hinckley	

### **Planning Commission**

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Curt Rossow, District Four	Matt Ludwig, District Five	John Mikrot, Jr. District Four

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### **Consultants**

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### **Grantor**

Initiative Foundation

### **Mental Health and Health Equity Focus Group**

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Cheryl McHugh- Therapeutic Services Agency	Julie Wilson- Human Development Center

### **Housing Focus Group**

Jessica Seibert, City of Sandstone	Tim Burkhardt- 7 Co Senior Federation
Robert Musgrove, Pine Econ Development	Greg Kvasnicka, Pine Co HRA

## Pine County Ordinance 2017-03

### Adoption of the Pine County Comprehensive Plan 2017-2030

WHEREAS, the Pine County Commissioners recognize the necessity to promote the health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community through the a comprehensive planning process, and;

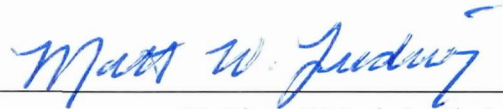
WHEREAS, the comprehensive planning process has included significant opportunity for public input through surveys, public meetings, and focus group meetings, and;

WHEREAS, the plan was drafted with this input and direction of a Steering Committee, and;

WHEREAS, the Pine County Planning Commission recommended the Pine County Comprehensive Plan 2017-2030 to the County Board for approval on February 14, 2017, and;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the County of Pine hereby adopts the Pine County Comprehensive Plan 2017-2030.

Passed and approved this 21<sup>st</sup> Day of February, 2017 by the Pine County Board of Commissioners.



Matthew W. Ludwig, Chairman  
Pine County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:



David J. Minke  
Pine County Administrator

Notice of Public Hearing Published: February 9, 2017

Public Hearing: February 21, 2017

Adopted by County Board: February 21, 2017

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## Chapter One- Executive Summary

The goal of this plan is to convey Pine County's vision for the future and lay out steps to reach that vision. The residents and stakeholders vocalized their vision through surveys, public meetings, and focus group meetings. A steering committee appointed by the County Board of Commissioners and representative of the county's geographical areas directed Pine County Planning and Zoning staff through the project.

Pine County's goals for the next 15 years include:

- Foster a diverse, productive, and sustainable **agricultural industry** including: crops, livestock, forestry, ag support services, small to large farms, value added producers, and opportunities for new farmers.
- Enhance **community and economic opportunities** by improving access to broadband internet, higher wage jobs, and affordable housing.
- Promote **property stewardship** and management in order to accommodate tourism and attract new large employment businesses such as industrial manufacturing.
- Support **small businesses** and entrepreneurship.
- Reduce crime and prevalence of drugs in order to maintain a **safe community**.
- Offer effective community services while keeping **tax rates affordable**.
- Identify, support, and promote **existing recreational assets** for tourism development and resident education.
- Develop and maintain **trails** for all user types.
- Create **recreational opportunities** on county lands to maximize their potential.
- Manage **natural resources** to optimize environmental and economic benefits in perpetuity.
- Ensure that development protects **natural areas** as well as **water quality** and habitat.
- Reduce solid waste being landfilled by providing residents and businesses education and opportunities to **reduce, reuse, and recycle**.
- Support **lifelong learning** for citizenship, a competent workforce, and a high quality of life by improving access to broadband, K12 integrated job training, and adult job training.
- Maintain a strong base of **infrastructure** for the community including: quality roads and bridges, public transportation, broadband internet, and non-emergency medical transportation.

The plan provides a series of facts and concerns to better understand each of these goals, as well as recommendations to meet the goals. The largest planning priority for the community for the next fifteen years is to improve its economy. Other topics that rank in high importance are reducing drugs and crime, improving education, maintaining lakeshore and water quality, maintaining agricultural land resources, increasing accessibility to broadband internet, increasing housing stock and improving transportation for individuals with driving limitations.



Ice Climbing at Robinson Park in Sandstone

The community's desire to improve its economy is of no surprise. Currently 57% of the county's residents travel outside of the county for work (Graph 3, Appendix C). Also, Pine County is the 14th most impoverished county in the state (US Census). As pointed out by members of the Steering Committee, many of the other community topics play a role in attracting and retaining businesses. Topics such as transportation and housing for the work force are important. Maintaining property condition and sensible zoning also play a role. Providing services for seniors maintains tax base and help keep families together, which is good for community vitality. Strategic management of natural resources and assistance to the farming community help keep our lands economically productive. Reducing crime keeps our neighborhoods desirable. Also, improving infrastructure, such as broadband internet will keep Pine County a place where businesses can compete in an increasingly technological society.

The population of Pine County is expected to grow by approximately 11.9% from 2015 to 2025. Pine County's goal is to couple that growth with improved services for a greater quality of life for all residents.

## Chapter Two- About Comprehensive Plans

### What is a comprehensive plan?

A comprehensive plan is an expression of the community's vision for the future and a strategic map to reach that vision. The plan guides future development of land to ensure a safe, pleasant, and economical environment for residential, commercial, industrial, and public activities. The plan, which is recognized under State law (MN 393.24), is to serve as the County's primary policy document, guiding County programs, regulations, investments, and practices. The comprehensive plan is meant to be broad and creates a framework to guide County Commissioners and staff in making decisions and does not make decisions in itself.

### What is Pine County's history in comprehensive planning?

Pine County has seen the value of comprehensive planning for several years. The previous plan was completed in 1993 and was preceded by a plan in 1978. In the creation of the 2017 plan, Pine County Planning and Zoning staff reviewed the 1993 plan and discovered that approximately 50% of the recommendations from that plan were implemented.

### What was the process to create this plan?

This plan was created by a steering committee of local residents, Planning Commissioners, and County Commissioners. Assistance was offered by Pine County staff and consultation from the Great Plains Institute. Resident and stakeholder input is of utmost importance in the creation of comprehensive plan, therefore, the steering committee sought as much public input as possible within the confines of budget and timeline. In January 2016 a survey was distributed throughout the community. A majority of the 521 survey responses were completed electronically. In March 2016 public meetings were held in Sandstone, Rutledge, and Pine City. In both the survey and the public meetings the public was invited to share what they value about the community, what challenges they feel the community has, and which challenges they would like to see addressed in coming years. The results are provided in Appendix D.



Mental Health Focus Group Meeting



Once the community input was summarized, the steering committee began to draft concerns and facts, as well as recommendations for the comprehensive plan. In that process two topics emerged as needing more information: mental health and housing. To gather more information focus group meetings were held in October 2016: one invited public and private mental health professionals, the other invited housing stakeholders. Both groups were tasked to identify facts and concerns as well as draft recommendations. The complete results are shown in appendices E and G respectively.



Old Pine County Courthouse. This courthouse was built in 1939. It currently houses the City of Pine City offices as well as Pine County's Health and Human Services Department.



New Pine County Courthouse . The Pine County Courthouse operations were moved to the current location in 2007.

## Chapter Three- About Pine County

### About Pine County

#### History

##### *Adapted from the 1993 Comprehensive Plan*

Long before the coming of European settlers, the region now including Pine County was well known to northern Native American tribes whose villages dotted the shores of the area's many lakes and streams. Known by the Native Americans for centuries, these same waterways were also used by the first explorers and traders who entered the area.

Among the earliest Europeans to enter the region were fur traders of the British North West Company. As early as 1804 a semi-permanent "wintering post" was built on the banks of the Snake River. This fur post has been reconstructed by the Minnesota Historical Society and operates as the Northwest Company Fur Post, seasonally offering a visitor center, tours, trails, and events. Pine County's role in the fur trade of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries represented the first organized economic activity to be carried on in the region.



Mission Creek Sawmill

By 1850, the demand for furs had slackened and the supply had decreased. New types of economic activity in the forms of agriculture and lumbering became dominant. As timber cruisers searched along the St.

Croix and its tributaries, they found tremendous stands of white pine which could be used to furnish lumber to build homes for the thousands of settlers who were seeking to establish themselves on the middle western frontier. Millions of board feet of lumber were cut and floated from Pine County downstream to the mills along the lower St. Croix River. Most of Pine County's early development came as a result of this lumbering.

Between 1870 and 1872, Pine County was given a boost by the construction of the Northern Pacific Railroad. The boom was cut short by the financial panic of 1873, and it was nearly 1880 when settlement and lumbering began in earnest.

The decades of the 1880's and 1890's saw Pine County pushed to the peak of its economic development. The county's towns and villages were founded during this period as sawmilling centers or supply depots for the multitude of logging camps operating in the vicinity. Logging

railroads criss-crossed the county and many small communities such as Rock Creek and Rutledge had as many as five sawmills.

In 1894 a great forest fire devastated much of Pine County, but complete towns were rebuilt from the ashes. By 1905 nearly all of the county's pine forests had been cut off or destroyed by fire. Often forest land was deliberately burned by farmers who believed it would be better suited for agricultural purposes. Many of these farmers were immigrants from Scandinavian countries.

Even as lumbering was at its peak in Pine County, a demand for building stone led to the opening of several quarries along the Kettle and Snake Rivers. Large quarrying operations were carried on for a number of years before the use of structural steel became popular.

Copper mining was also attempted in several places. Remains of one such attempt can still be seen near the Snake River at Chengwatana where nearly \$300,000 was spent trying to develop a vein.

By World War I, however, agriculture had fully emerged as the backbone of the county's economy. Only in recent years have new types of industry and partial realization of the region's recreational potential begun to change and move economic activity in new directions. Completion of the interstate freeway through the county, for example, has meant the bypassing of all towns, but several local communities, such as Hinckley, have taken advantage of the freeway and provided new auto service stations, restaurants and motels which cater to travelers.

Since 1970 a growth upturn was experienced, which has continued ever since. One important landmark of population and economic growth was the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe's construction of Grand Casino Hinckley in 1991, which continues to be an economic engine in the county.

Growth between 1990 and 2010 was dramatic, with a population increase of 40%. During this time period many farms were subdivided to create more land for housing. Retirees from the Twin Cities have moved in as full time residents, and individuals employed in Duluth and the Twin Cities have chosen to live here while commuting out for work.



Downtown Pine City

## Pine County Today

Pine County is located midway between the Twin Cities and Duluth along Interstate 35. That strategic location has driven many changes in the County over the last decades. The I-35 corridor, along with other trunk routes such as Highway 61, transect the County from north to south for over 50 miles. That easy proximity to metropolitan areas both north and south may be both a blessing and a curse, but it is certainly a strategic reality that has driven and will continue to drive the evolution of the County.

Education is highly valued in the community. The county is home to seven school districts, Pine County Technical and Community College, the Local 49 Training Center, and the Audubon Center of the Northwoods, which offers environmental education. Sandstone is home to the Harvest Christian School, which provides a Christian education option for preschool through twelfth grade. This will soon be followed by the Pete Seeger Renaissance Charter School, a Montessori school slated to open in fall 2017.

Pine County is rich with parks and recreation areas. There are a number of small private resorts and campgrounds that cater to both locals and tourists. Pine County is also home to two Minnesota State Parks, and five state forests. Banning State Park, St. Croix State Park, and Nemadji State Forest bring thousands of people into the area to enjoy the scenery, water sports, hiking and biking, and historic sites.

Pine County is home to a portion of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe. The band maintains trust lands from eastern Pine County westward to Mille Lacs County. There are approximately 1,000 Mille Lacs Band Tribal members within Pine County. With its operation of the Grand Casino, a regional destination, as well as a recent major development of approximately 200 homes, the Mille Lacs Band is ranked as Pine County's largest tax paying entity and provides a richness of cultural diversity to the community.



Grand Celebration Powwow at Grand Casino Hinckley



There are a number of annual festivals in the area, some of which have existed for generations (i.e. County fair and the Rutabaga Days festival). Pine County has four museums, the Pine Center for the Arts in Pine City, and the Old School Arts Center in Sandstone. The Askov school re-opened its doors to the public in 2012 as a repurposed space shared between a cafe and a greatly expanded Pine County History Museum. The Pine City High School Band and the band director have boosted the local arts community as well, placing Pine City on the "Best Communities for Music Education in America" list in 2010, 2011, and 2012.

A great deal of data can be accessed about Pine County in Appendices A and C, which provide data on the following topics: population, demographics, education, economy and employment, housing, land use, recreation, agriculture, and natural resources.

### Pine County Forecasted to 2030

The Minnesota State Demographer projects that Pine County will grow to 32,540 people by 2025. The population is then projected to plateau at approximately the same number from 2025 to 2035 (Table 1, Appendix A). Though population growth may not be rapid, community dynamics will evolve as a result of a number of high level cultural and economic trends, such as:

- **The population is aging.** The state demographer cited that in 2013 18% of Pine County residents were 54 years and older. By 2025 that number is projected to rise to 26.4%.
- **Multi-generational households are increasing.** As the population ages, more families are taking in the senior generation. Also, millennials are increasingly co-habiting with baby boomer parents.
- **Energy sources are in flux.** The energy economy is rapidly changing to clean, non-carbon based energy. This change may affect how residents power their homes as well as how they travel.
- **Telecommuting is on the rise.** As high speed internet becomes more affordable and software advances, more residents will be able to work from their homes, which may result in fewer commuting workers.
- **The sharing economy is growing.** Advances in mobile technology have made it increasingly easier for residents to create income through renting their homes, vehicles, and other property.



Electric Vehicle Charging Station, Pine City. This unit was installed in 2015 and was followed by a charging station installed in Hinckley.

## Chapter Four- Goals, Facts, Concerns and Recommendations

# **Agriculture**

### **Goals**

- 1.) Foster a diverse, productive, and sustainable agricultural industry including: crops, livestock, forestry, agricultural support services, small to large farms, value added producers, and opportunities for new farmers.



Mach Angus Farm, Windemere Township



Tamarack Lamb & Wool, Hinckley

### **Economic Facts and Concerns:**

- The total number of farms in Pine County from 1978 to 2012 decreased by 32.7% (Table 8 in Appendix A).
- Conversion of land to non-agricultural use raises the value of surrounding agricultural land resulting in an economic difficulty for farms to expand.
- The market value of agricultural products sold from Pine County is a significant economic driver. The 2012 market value of Pine County ag products sold was \$65,444,000 (USDA NASS).
- There are very few agricultural support services located within Pine County (Information gathered from public input meeting).
- The average age of farmers has continued to increase over the past 30 years. USDA survey data shows that in 2012, 52% of principal farm operators are age 55 or older. Over the course of this plan this entire segment of the industry will likely be turning over to new ownership. (Graph 8, Appendix A)
- National farm sector profitability is forecast to decline in 2016 for the third straight year. Net farm income is forecast to be \$71.5 billion in 2016, down 11.5 percent. If realized, 2016 net farm income would be the lowest since 2009 (Graph 9, Appendix A).
- The county does not have a comprehensive understanding of the Pine County agriculture producers needs in order to help assist the vitality of the industry.

## **Economic Recommendations**

- 1.) Adopt a countywide zoning ordinance to address scattered residential development and incompatible uses in agricultural areas. The ordinance shall support maintaining agricultural areas as shown in Future Land Use Map (Appendix B).**
- 2.) Facilitate University of Minnesota Extension agriculture services to be offered in Pine County in order to help existing farm businesses maximize economic efficiency, new farm businesses navigate startup hurdles, and successful farm transfer between generations. Possible programs include: "Taking Charge of YOUR Finances- How to Survive and Thrive," and "Farm Transfer and Estate Planning."**
- 3.) Develop incentives to encourage agricultural related valued-added businesses.**
- 4.) Support niche marketing opportunities for farms such as: farmers markets, wineries, community supported agriculture (CSAs), and other value added agricultural enterprising.**
- 5.) Conduct a needs assessment survey of agriculture operators to determine their educational needs, as well as procure information and data on the Pine County producers.**

## Environmental Facts and Concerns

- Agriculture is the largest land use within Pine County (Map 2 and Table 7, Appendix A).
- Pine County has 165 registered feedlots, with sizes as large as 19,224 animal units (AU) and a median size of 68.3 AU (Map 4, Appendix A). MPCA has conducted 62 total feedlot inspections in the County between 2002 and 2016, which equates to an annual inspection rate of 2.7% of the feedlots.
- Best management practices (BMPs) for agricultural activities are essential to preserve water quality and the natural environment.

## **Environmental Recommendations**

- 1.) Facilitate University of Minnesota Extension agriculture services to be offered in Pine County in order to help farmers improve soil health and tailor best management practices to their farm system and goals.**
- 2.) Promote the use of the AgBMP Loan which provides low interest financing to encourage best management practices that prevent or reduce runoff from feedlots, farm fields and other pollution programs identified in the local water management plan.**
- 3.) Support the completion of a USDA NRCS soil survey of Pine County. The soil survey can be used by farmers and land managers to identify environmentally sensitive soils. The survey can be used to supplement the Future Land Use Map (Appendix B) in development of agricultural land.**
- 4.) Participate in implementation of Pine County Water Plan or One Watershed One Plan to address water quality on farmland.**
- 5.) Consider adopting County Feedlot Program or county wide zoning in order to increase the number of routine compliance inspections of feedlots.**

# Economic and Community Development

## Goals

- 1.) Enhance community and economic opportunities by improving access to broadband internet, higher wage jobs, and housing.
- 2.) Promote property stewardship and management in order to accommodate tourism and attract new large employment businesses such as industrial manufacturing.
- 3.) Support small businesses and entrepreneurship.
- 4.) Reduce crime and prevalence of drugs in order to maintain a safe community.
- 5.) Offer effective community services while keeping tax rates affordable.

## Economic Facts and Concerns:

- Much of Pine County does not have access to broadband internet which makes it difficult for businesses and people to thrive in today's society. 82% of Pine County homes do not meet the state's goal for internet speed (Map 1, Appendix C)
- Since 1990, the unemployment rate in Pine County has trended approximately 2% higher than the State of Minnesota (Graph 2, Appendix C).
- More citizens commute outside of the county for work than work within the county (Graph 3, Appendix C).
- The Median Household Income is lower in Pine County than the surrounding counties except Kanabec County (Table 1, Appendix C).
- The Median resale price of existing homes in 2013 was 17.5% lower than East Central Minnesota, while the rental rates trend up to 4% higher (Table 5, Appendix A).
- Food preparation and serving related occupations, which have the lowest median wage, make up 34% of the workforce in Pine County (Table 3 and Graph 5, Appendix C).
- The 2014 Housing Needs Analysis completed by Maxfield Research inc. suggests that Pine County has a housing shortage for all housing types including: market rate, affordable housing, rental housing, and senior housing. (See Appendix F)
- Work force shortage is cited repeatedly by Pine County business owners to be a problem. Lack of housing options has limited the growth of the work force.



## **Economic Recommendations**

- 1.) Work with broadband providers and other group for access to broadband including examining feasibility approaches.**
- 2.) Continue the ongoing outreach to recruit high wage sector businesses to expand or locate within the county.**
- 3.) Continue to coordinate and support relationships with the communities within the county to move joint projects forward including affordable housing projects.**
- 4.) Investigate incentives the county can provide to increase the stock of industrial buildings.**
- 5.) Work with individuals and companies to improve the amount of value-added agriculture in business in the County.**
- 6.) Continue implementing the County Economic Development Plan.**
- 7.) Provide dedicated housing professional to create and implement Housing Development Plan, participate in East Central Housing Organization, and connect Pine County developers and homeowners to federal and state resources (See Appendix G for more housing information).**
- 8.) Incorporate property stewardship standards in county wide zoning ordinance in order to limit blight.**
- 9.) Create assistance program for property owners cleaning up blighted properties (ie. property assessment loan, accessible demolition landfill)**



Pine Innovation Center, Pine City. The facility serves as a local business incubation center supporting high tech and light manufacturing entrepreneurs as well as giving Pine Technical Community College students access to internships.

### Social Well-Being Facts and Concerns:

- A lack of property stewardship and management can be detrimental to property values and the environment.
- Best management practices for industrial and manufacturing activities are essential to preserve water quality and the natural environment. 186 respondents of 397 in the community survey stated manufacturing oriented businesses are needed in Pine County (Question 9, Appendix D).
- Pine County ranks 14th in the state for poverty, which results in compromised mental health, unreliable transportation, and elevated levels of chemical abuse.
- The East Central 2014 Housing Needs Analysis shows a vacancy rate of 2.5% and 1.5% for affordable and subsidized housing respectively. Housing industry analysts suggest that rates less than 5% are extremely low. This leaves low income renters with insufficient choice, which results in occupying homes that may be hazardous to health and safety.
- Housing continues to be identified by area professionals as an issue needing immediate attention.
- Pine County's population is projected to grow by 11.9% over the next ten years. It has been demonstrated to result in fewer social problems when new residential development occurs in close proximity to services and amenities provided in towns and cities.



**Sandstone Manor, managed by Pine County HRA offers 16 units of subsidized senior housing.**

### Social Well-Being Recommendations

- 1.) Explore the expansion of services provided through the solid waste management fee to include garbage disposal and recycling.**
- 2.) Adopt countywide zoning ordinance to ensure that industrial and manufacturing business is developed in mixed use areas on Future Land Use Map (Appendix B). Said ordinance should also ensure best management practices are used via conditional use permitting.**
- 3.) Create mental health task force inclusive of law enforcement, emergency medical services, outreach workers, and case workers to network, address barriers to mental health and physical health services, and better educate residents about mental health services. See appendix E for full report of the mental health focus group's concerns and recommendations.**
- 4.) Provide dedicated housing professional to create and implement Housing Development Plan, which shall include ways to increase low income, supportive, and senior housing.**
- 5.) Concentrate residential development in residential and mixed use areas on Future Land Use Map (Appendix B), to optimize effectiveness of services, infrastructure, and amenities.**

# Recreation

## Goals

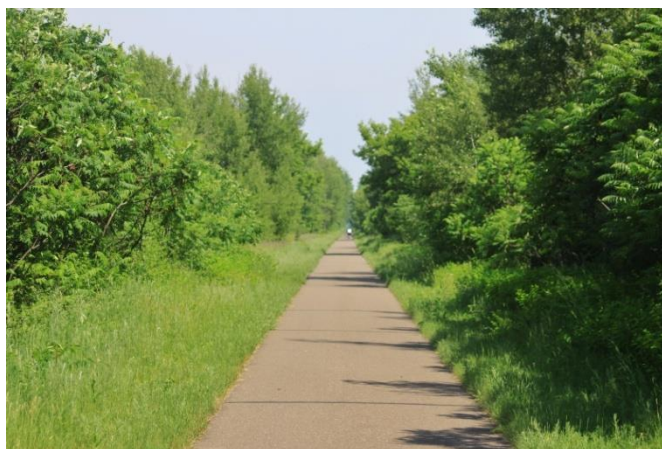
- 1.) Identify, support, and promote existing recreational assets for tourism development and resident education.**
- 2.) Develop and maintain trails for all user types.**
- 3.) Create recreation opportunities on county lands to maximize their potential.**

## Economic Facts and Concerns:

- Tourism is an important source of revenue from public lands.
- Leisure and Hospitality is the largest industry within Pine County (Graph 5, Appendix C).
- Pine County has approximately 243,000 acres of public land with numerous recreational opportunities.

## Economic Recommendations

- 1.) Consider adoption of a countywide zoning ordinance to address scattered residential development, incompatible uses, and orderly development supported by existing infrastructure to ensure opportunities for tourism and recreation.**
- 2.) Develop a Countywide recreational (parks and trails) plan.**
- 3.) Support development of the Oberstar segment of the Munger Trail, which is the missing segment from the Twin Cities to the Twin Ports.**
- 4.) Increase information on the County website about existing recreational opportunities.**



Willard Munger Trail, Hinckley. This 70 mile trail extends from Hinckley northward through Sturgeon Lake and on to Duluth.

### Social Well-Being Facts and Concerns:

- Public (federal, state, local government) land use is the second largest land use within the county (Map 2 and Table 7, Appendix A).
- The current active recreational opportunities within the county revolve around water resources or motorized vehicles (Map 3, Appendix A). In the community survey, 56.9% and 54.7% of the respondents stated they would like to see more youth-oriented facilities and hiking/biking trails provided (Question 7, Appendix D). Additionally, it was noted in the public input meetings that there are only 3 public beaches in the county, the Pine City Beach, St. Croix State Park, and Dago Lake.
- There are currently 33,971 acres of County Conservation and Memorial Forest lands designated within Pine County, which are generally undeveloped (Information per the Pine County Website).
- The 2015-2020 Kanabec-Pine Community Health Assessment identifies obesity as a priority issue. Local recreational opportunities can increase the probabilities of being active.

### Social Well-Being Recommendations

- 1.) Implement a countywide recreation plan with a focus on physical activity.**
- 2.) Develop a public land use policy to provide the framework for acceptable uses of county owned land.**
- 3.) Seek opportunities to increase public outdoor recreational areas in close proximity to residential areas, particularly in the Hinckley and Pine City areas where public land accessibility is more limited (Map 2, Appendix A).**



Kettle River, Sandstone. The Kettle enters Pine County in Sturgeon Lake Township on the north end of the county and flows to the St. Croix River in the Chengwatana State Forest.

# Natural Resources

## Goals

- 1.) Manage natural resources to optimize environmental and economic benefits in perpetuity.
- 2.) Ensure that development protects natural areas as well as water quality and habitat.
- 3.) Reduce solid waste being landfilled by providing residents and businesses education and opportunities to reduce, reuse, and recycle.

## Economic Facts and Concerns:

- In 2014, 2.6% of the labor force within the County is employed in Natural Resources and Mining professions (Table 2, Appendix C).
- Pine County's annual timber harvest is estimated at 208,635 cords per year with an estimated annual stumpage value of \$4,500,249 (Tables 10,11 Appendix A). MN DNR forest economists estimate local economic generation of \$40 for every \$1 of stumpage, equating to approximately \$180 million. Note: stumpage is the value of standing timber (paid to the landowner) and not the value of the delivered timber to the mill.
- In summer 2016 several solar development companies proposed solar farms to be sited in Pine County. Given national and regional trends toward renewable energy production, more solar farm proposals are likely.
- Emerald ash borer has infested portions of Chisago and St. Louis counties, putting Pine County ash stands at risk of infestation.
- As of December 2016 Oak Wilt has been confirmed in twelve locations in Pine County.
- The Minnesota DNR's General Andrews Nursery historically housed a robust program in Willow River, contributing average annual wages of \$350,000, and growing numerous nursery trees. The program has since closed.

## Economic Recommendations

- 1.) Explore objectives with the industries which rely on natural resources (timber, mining, etc)
- 2.) Support reforestation programs such as reviving the General Andrews Nursery.
- 3.) Support education of rural land owners on management considerations including invasive species such as Oak Wilt, Emerald Ash Borer, European Buckthorn and noxious weeds.
- 4.) Adopt countywide zoning ordinance to facilitate wise development of renewable energy production sites.
- 5.) Analyze gravel deposit inventory to forecast resource availability into future.
- 6.) Limit development in floodplain areas to minimize risk of safety and property loss (Future Land Use Map, Appendix B).



### Environmental Facts and Concerns:

- In 2015 the East Central Solid Waste Commission spent \$2 million dollars to expand its landfill in Kanabec County.
- There is a significant amount of speculative aggregate resources identified within Pine County (Map 5, Appendix A). The County does not monitor aggregate mine development or reclamation, which poses a threat to groundwater quality and resource longevity.
- In the survey of the community, 248 out of the 430 responding stated protecting natural areas and water quality should be a primary goal over the next 20 years (Question 6, Appendix D).
- A great deal of Pine County's residential development is adjacent to lakes and rivers, which poses water quality risks.

### Environmental Recommendations

- 1.) Consider adoption of a countywide zoning ordinance to address scattered residential development, incompatible uses, preservation of natural resources, and orderly development supported by existing infrastructure.**
- 2.) Ensure the current Pine County Water Plan is implemented.**
- 3.) Explore changing the County Water Plan to "One Watershed One Plan" in order to position the County water resources for greater state grant funding eligibility.**
- 4.) Adopt gravel pit permitting program via countywide zoning to guide safe site locations, best practices for reclamation, and preserve resource availability into the future.**
- 5.) Pursue opportunities to increase residential and commercial recycling convenience and accessibility in order to reduce landfill pressure.**
- 6.) Ensure that property development in shoreland and natural areas do not produce negative environmental outcomes.**



Logging in Pine County



Aggregate stockpiles. Pine County is home to approximately 100 active aggregate mines.

# Education

## Goals

- 1.) Support lifelong learning for citizenship, a competent workforce, and a high quality of life by improving access to broadband, K-12 integrated job training, and adult job training.

### Economic Facts and Concerns:

- Pine Technical and Community College and the Local 49 Training and Apprenticeship Center provide adult education within the county.
- Only 13.5% of citizens age 25+ have a bachelor's degree or higher, as compared to 32.6% of the citizens throughout Minnesota (Graph 2, Appendix A). Higher education is linked to higher paying jobs.
- Post secondary distance learning via the internet has become an increasingly available tool for non-traditional students to get college degrees.

## Economic Recommendations

- 1.) Engage with guidance counselors in order to identify the changing needs of high school students.
- 2.) Supports schools in seeking funding from the state for additional guidance counselors.
- 3.) Foster development of future employees through career fairs, job shadows, etc.
- 4.) Expand accessibility to broadband internet to support educational services.

### Social Well-Being Facts and Concerns:

- Lifelong education encourages stewardship of resources for generations to come.
- In the survey of the community, education ranked as the second highest planning priority for Pine County's future (Question 4, Appendix D).
- The Audubon Center of the North Woods in Sandstone provides a significant local opportunity for outdoor/environmental education.

## Social Well-Being Recommendations

- 1.) Support coordination with Pine Technical and Community College.
- 2.) Partner and educate the public on citizenship including providing high school social studies/civics courthouse days.
- 3.) Seek opportunities to collaborate and support local educational institutes such as the Audubon Center of the Northwoods and the 49ers Training Center.

# Transportation and Infrastructure

## Goals

- 1.) Maintain a strong base of infrastructure for the community including: quality roads and bridges, public transportation, broadband internet, and non-emergency medical transportation.

### Economic Facts and Concerns:

- Pine County has several major thoroughfares servicing the county including Interstate 35 running north to south, with Old Highway 61, a portion of one of the original highways constructed within the U.S. highway system which was later decommissioned and tuned back to the county. Additionally, the east-west connections include: State Highways 23, 18, 48, and 70 through the county.
- There are currently two public transit options within the county: the Arrowhead Transit and Chisago-Isanti Heartland Express. Additionally, Attaboys Taxi Service from Sandstone is available for a private transportation option.
- In its first year of operation (2011) Arrowhead Transit gave 25,885 rides in Pine County. Volume has since increased to approximately 100,000 rides in 2016.
- The population 65 years and older is expected to increase from 18.0% in 2013 to 26.4% in 2025, more transit options will be necessary to support this population (Table 3, Appendix A).

## Economic Recommendations

- 1.) Develop a long term adequate and sustainable plan to fund local roads.
- 2.) Consider adoption of a countywide zoning ordinance to address scattered residential development, incompatible uses, and orderly development supported by existing infrastructure.
- 3.) Continue working with Arrowhead Transit to develop programs and routes that meet the needs of the residents.
- 4.) Consider feasibility study to do rail-based economic development.
- 5.) Explore possibility of medical transport van system similar to the veteran's van.
- 6.) Participate in Region 7E Local Human Service Transit Coordination Plan. Adopt relevant plan components locally.





County Highway 61 just north of Rock Creek. County Highway 61 stretches from the south end to the north end of the County, connecting many of the County's communities.

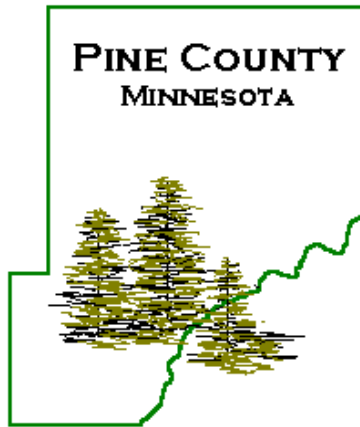
#### Environmental Facts and Concerns:

- In the community survey, sustainable built infrastructure ranked among the highest planning priorities for Pine County's future along with sustainable natural infrastructure, ranking mid-way through the planning priorities (Question 4, Appendix D).
- Public transportation offers opportunities for energy savings, decreased pollution, convenience, and service accessibility.
- New construction of transportation right-of-ways (roads, rail, trails) fragments wildlife habitat and may suppress biodiversity.
- ATV travel in road ditches has been demonstrated to cause soil erosion, impacting water quality and ecosystem health.

#### **Environmental Recommendations**

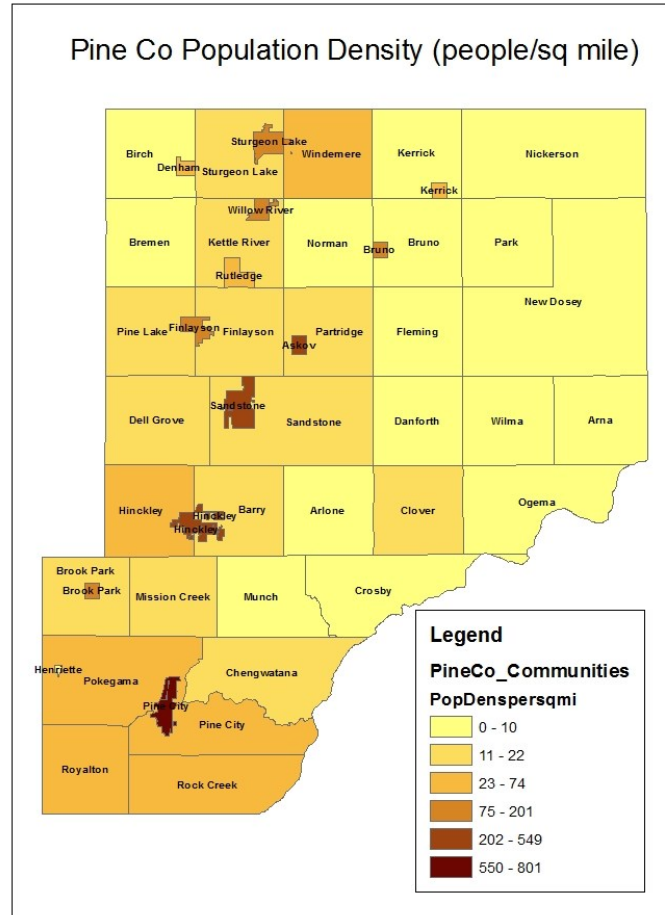
- 1.) Develop a long term adequate and sustainable plan to fund local roads to ensure best management practices are followed.**
- 2.) Adopt gravel pit permitting program via countywide zoning to guide safe site locations, best practices for reclamation, and preserve resource availability into the future.**
- 3.) Continue working towards additional mass transit opportunities such as the Rushline Corridor, including establishing a park and ride.**
- 4.) Continue to support Pine County Ordinance 2016-03, which allows the use of all-terrain vehicles on public roads within its jurisdiction.**

## **APPENDIX A**



### **2017 Pine County Community Profile**

## Population



**Map 1:** Pine County Population Densities (MN State Demographer)

**Table 1:** Current, Historic, and Projected Population of Pine County and Neighboring Counties. (US Census Bureau and MN State Demographer).

POPULATION TOTAL					
Year	Pine	Carlton	Chisago	Aitkin	Kanabec
1980	19,871	29936	25717	13404	12161
1990	21,264	29259	30521	12425	12802
2000	26,530	31,671	41,101	15,301	14,996
2010	29,750	35,386	53,887	16,202	16,239
<b>2015 (estimate)</b>	<b>29,069</b>	<b>35,569</b>	<b>54,293</b>	<b>15,702</b>	<b>15,837</b>
2020 (proj)	32,257	38,596	63,671	17,488	17,924
2025 (proj)	32,540	39,399	65,941	17,086	18,182
2035 (proj)	32,328	40,500	69,718	15,809	18,283
2045 (proj)	31,490	40,514	70,939	15,076	18,095
% increase 2015-2025	11.9%	10.8%	21.5%	8.8%	14.8%

## Demographics

**Table 2:** Median Age (US Census Bureau)

	Pine Co	State	Carlton	Chisago	Aitkin	Kanabec
2000	38.4	35.4	38.4	34.3	46.5	38
2010	41.7	37.4	40.5	39	51.7	42.1
2014 (estimate)	43.2	37.8	41.3	40.8	53.9	44.1

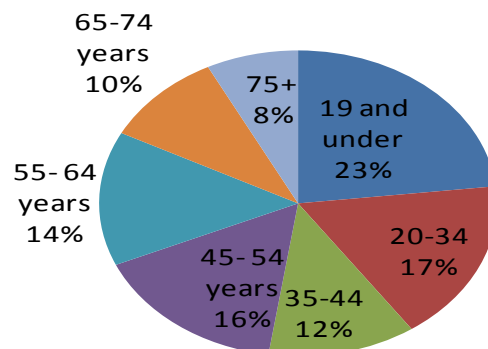
**Table 3:** Percentage of Population 65 years and older (US Census Bureau)

Year	Pine Co	State	Carlton	Chisago	Aitkin	Kanabec
2013	18.0%	13.9%	16.0%	13.4%	29.5%	18.1%
2015 (projected)	19.3%	14.7%	17.9%	14.1%	32.5%	20.0%
2020 (projected)	22.7%	16.9%	21.0%	17.1%	36.0%	23.4%
2025 (projected)	26.4%	19.4%	24.6%	20.1%	38.4%	26.9%

**Table 4:** 2014 Pine County Age Distribution (US Census Bureau)

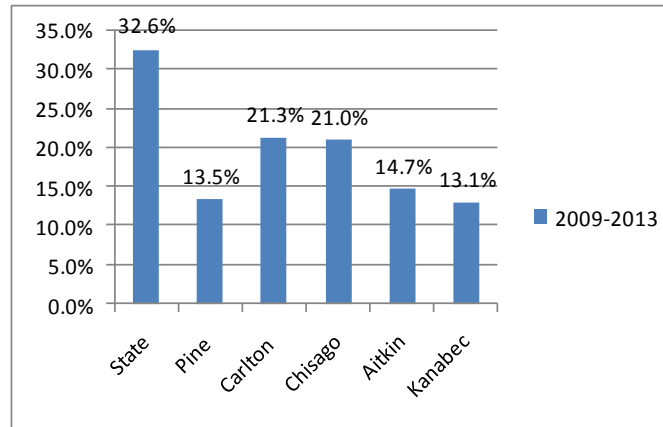
	Estimate	Percent
Under 5 years	1,571	5.40%
5 to 9 years	1,785	6.10%
10 to 14 years	1,804	6.10%
15 to 19 years	1,656	5.60%
20 to 24 years	1,456	5.00%
25 to 34 years	3,552	12.10%
35 to 44 years	3,554	12.10%
45 to 54 years	4,711	16.10%
55 to 59 years	2,370	8.10%
60 to 64 years	1,772	6.00%
65 to 74 years	2,910	9.90%
75 to 84 years	1,630	5.60%
85 years and over	576	2.00%

### Pine County Age Distribution (2014)

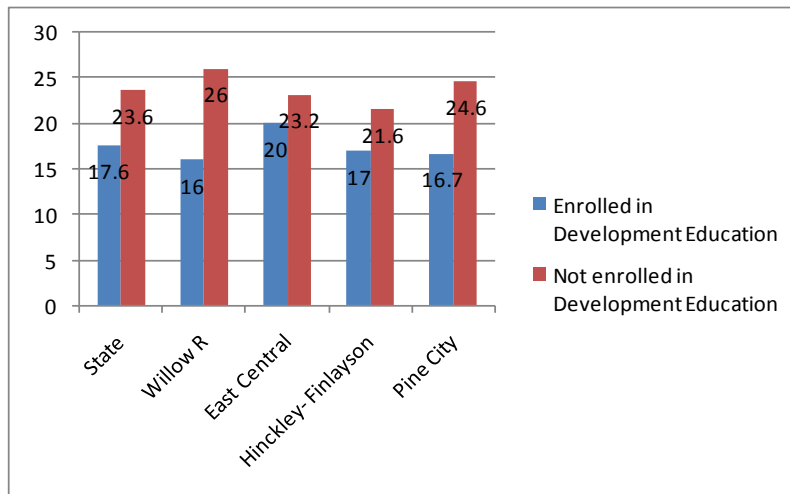


**Graph 1:** Pine County Age Distribution (US Census Bureau)

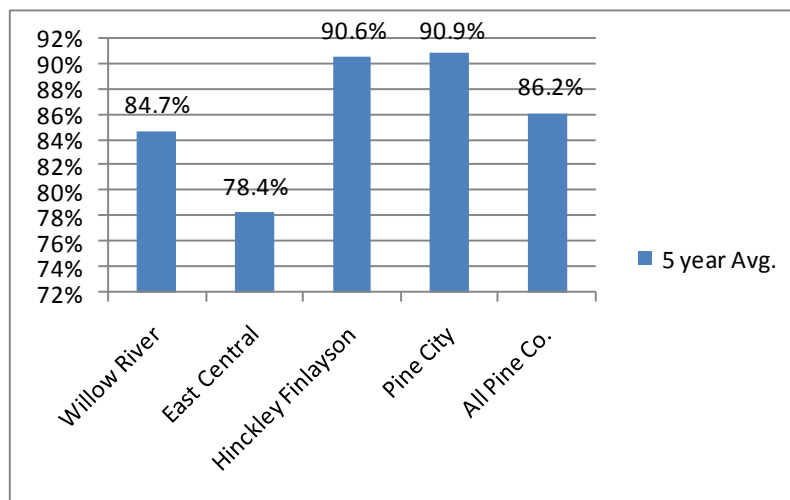
## Education



**Graph 2:** Bachelor's degree or higher, percent of persons age 25+ (2009-2013) (MN DEED)



**Graph 3:** ACT Scores (State and Pine County School districts) ( MN DEED)



**Graph 4:** High School 4 Year Graduation Rates. (Averages of 2010-2014) ( MN DEED)

## Housing

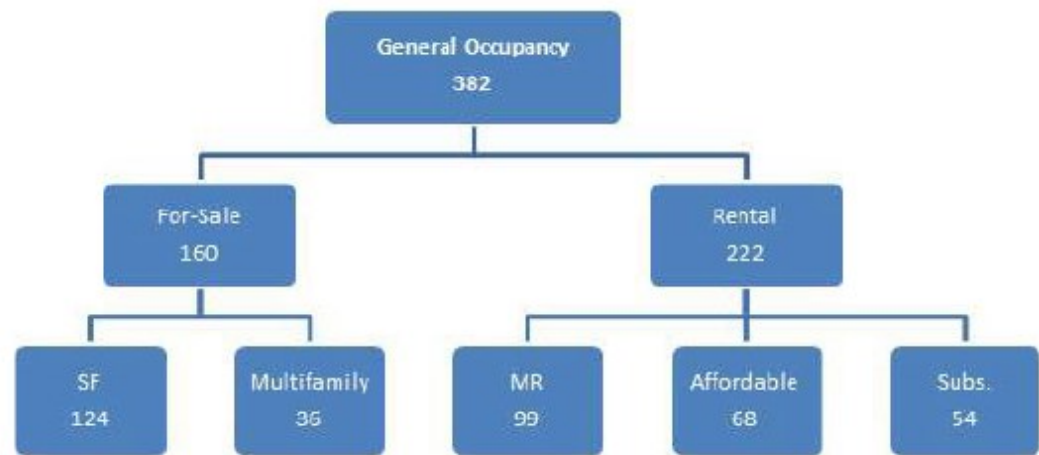
**Table 5:** Pine County Housing (East Central Regional Housing Collaborative)

	Pine	East Central
Occupied Housing Units	11373/ 66%	61802/ 78%
Vacant Housing Units	5903/ 34%	17507/ 22%
Number of housing units permitted (2000-2005)	907	10140
Number of housing units permitted (2006-2013)	499	4271
Median age of housing stock (2012)	1978	1979
Median home value of owner-occupied units (2012)	\$151,400	\$167,875
Median contract rent for renter-occupied units (2012)	\$573	\$599
Median resale price of existing homes (2013)	\$103,000	\$121,067
Median list price of actively marketing homes (June 2014)	\$139,900	\$169,900
Distribution of rental units by type (Market Rate)	184/ 45.8%	1109/ 43.8%
Distribution of rental units by type (Affordable/Subsidized)	218/ 54.2%	1425/ 56.2%
Avg. rent for market rate 1 BR	\$595	\$581
Avg. rent for market rate 2 BR	\$715	\$706
Avg. rent for market rate 3 BR	\$843	\$810

**Table 6:** Pine County Senior Housing (East Central Regional Housing Collaborative)

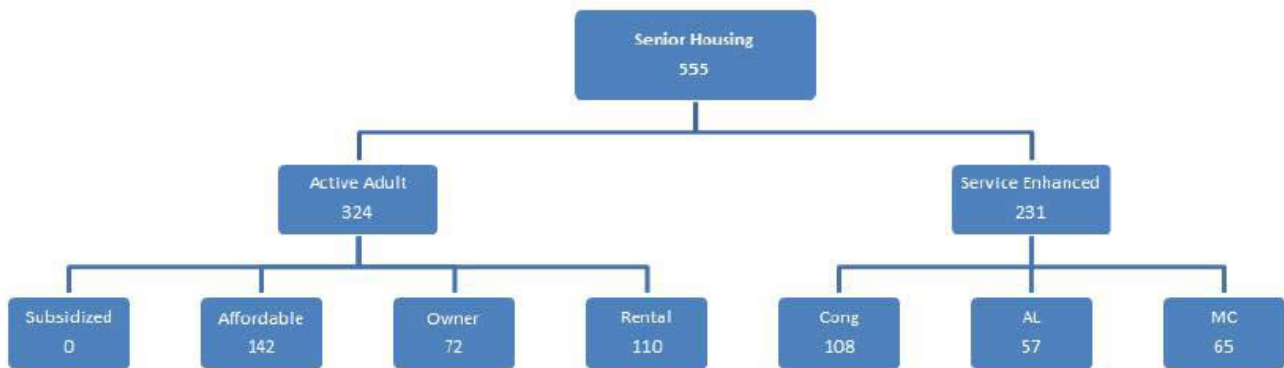
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
<b>Distribution of Senior Housing by</b>	<b>Pine</b>		<b>East Central Region</b>	
Affordable/Subsidized Active Adult	220	62.5%	1261	47.7%
Market Rate Active Adult	60	17.0%	60	17.0%
Congregate	11	3.1%	269	10.2%
Assisted Living	51	14.5%	11	3.1%
Memory Care	10	2.8%	284	10.7%

Pine County Projected General Occupancy Demand, 2014 – 2025



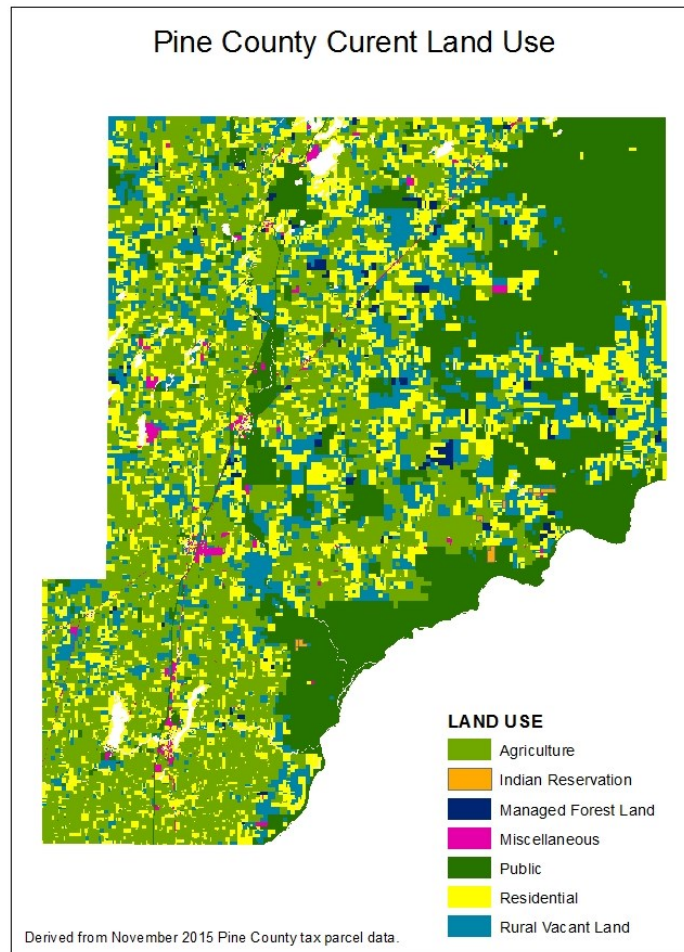
Graph 5: Pine County General Occupancy Demand (East Central Regional Housing Collaborative)

Pine County Projected Senior Demand, 2014 - 2025



Graph 6: Pine County Senior Housing Deman (East Central Regional Housing Collaborative)

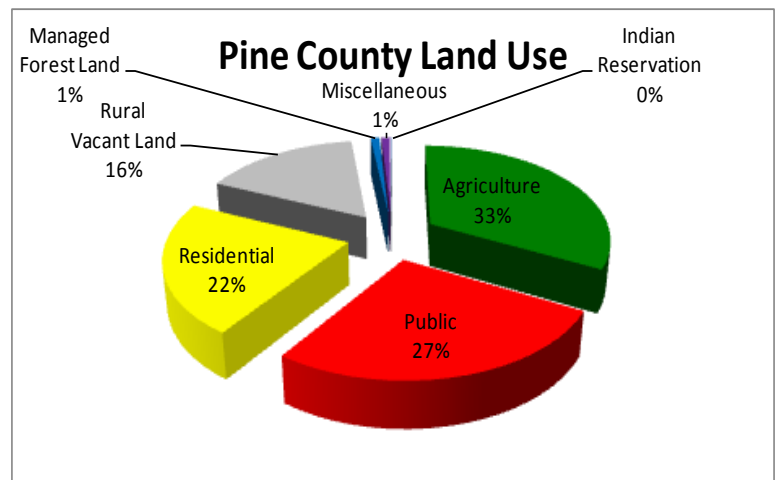
## Land Use



**Map 2:** Pine County Land Use Map (Pine County Land Services Dept.)

**Table 7:** Pine County Land Use Acreage  
(Pine County Land Services Dept.)

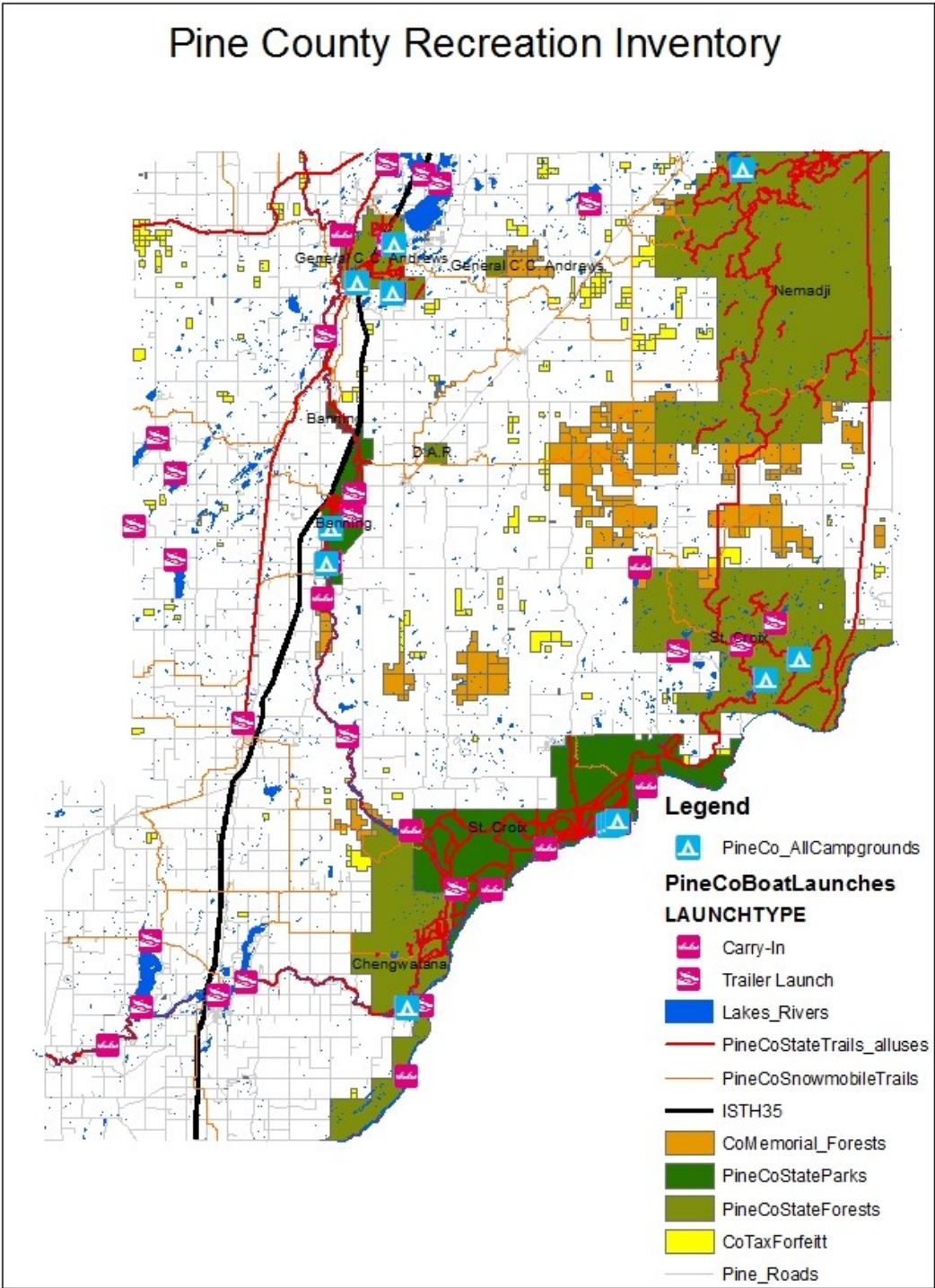
Land Use	Acres
<b>Agriculture</b>	<b>295,815</b>
<b>Public</b>	<b>242,857</b>
State	180,435
County	56,986
Federal	2,818
Municipal	2,619
<b>Residential</b>	<b>198,993</b>
<b>Rural Vacant Land</b>	<b>148,073</b>
<b>Managed Forest Land</b>	<b>8,321</b>
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	<b>7,854</b>
<b>Indian Reservation</b>	<b>1,148</b>



**Graph 7:** Pine County Land Use (Pine County Land Services Dept.)



Recreation



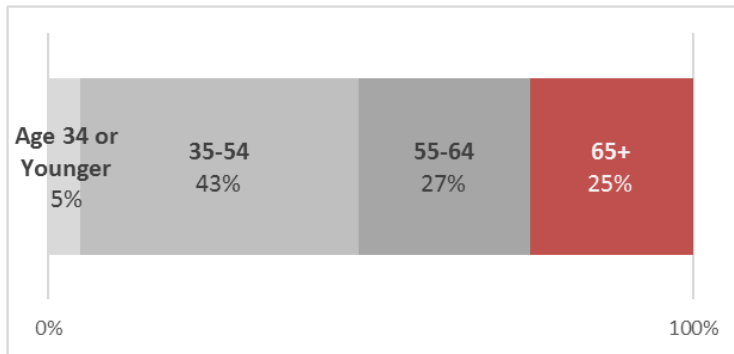
**Map 3:** Pine County Recreation Inventory Map (MN DNR, Pine County Land Services Dept.)

## Agriculture

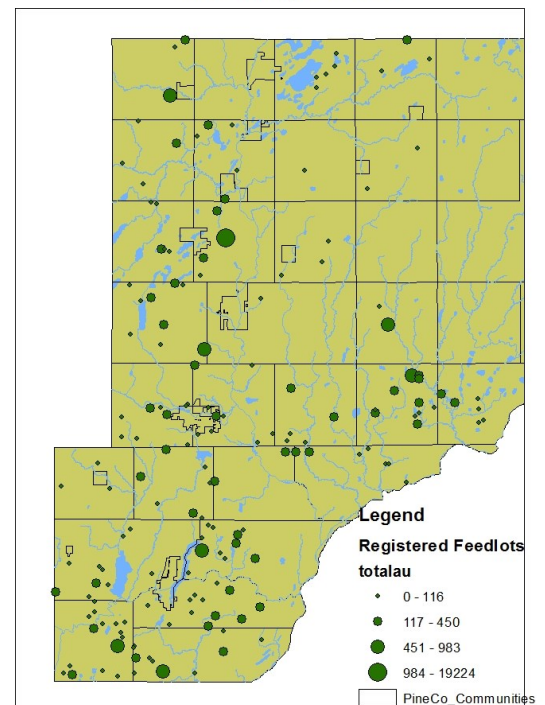
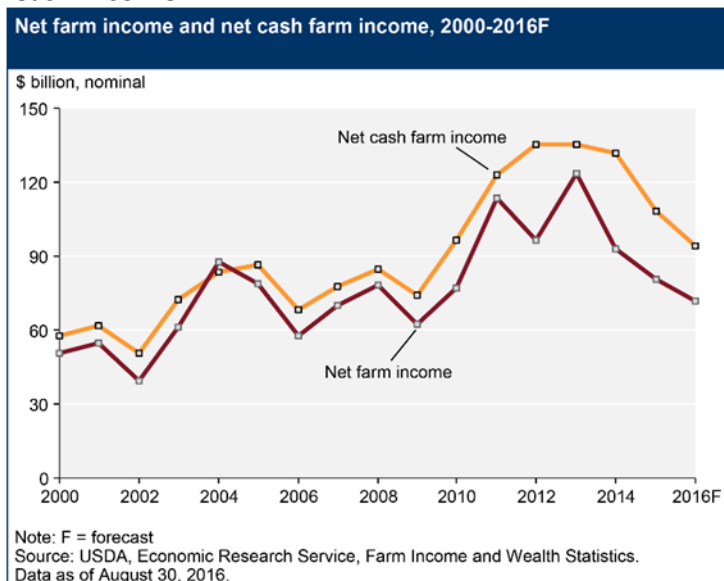
**Table 8:** Pine County Agriculture (USDA NASS)

	Number of Farms	Land in Farms (acres)	Avg Farm Size (acres)	Median Farm Size (acres)	Avg. age of Principal Operator	Percent Farmers who farm as primary occupation	Avg. Value of Land and Bldgs per farm
2012	870	203,623	234	140	55.7	47.2%	\$472,323
2002	1199	254,858	213	180	53.8	51.3%	\$311,142
1997	950	246,804	260	161	<i>not available</i>	45.7%	\$212,580
1992	979	263,274	269	<i>not available</i>	<i>not available</i>	55.1%	\$141,927
1982	1199	278,848	233	<i>not available</i>	49	56.8%	\$136,651
1978	1292	305,730	237	<i>not available</i>	49.5	56.3%	\$109,339

**Graph 8:** Age Breakout for Principal Farm Operators, 2012

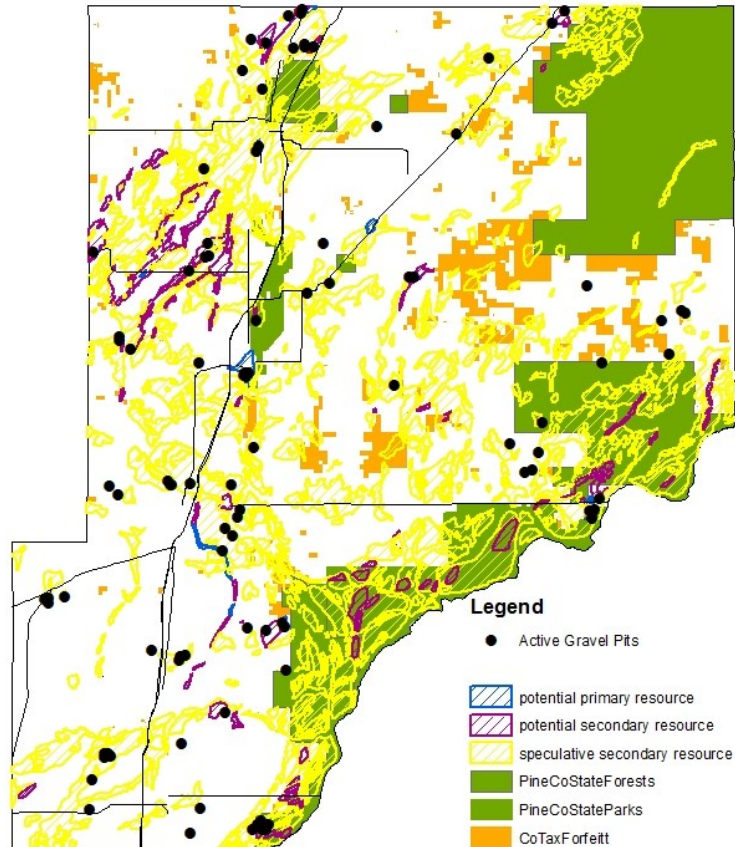


**Graph 9:** National Net farm Income and Net Farm Cash Income



**Map 4:** Pine County Feedlots and public waters (MPCA, MNDNR)

## Natural Resources



**Map 5:** Pine County Aggregate Resource Locations and Active Aggregate Mining Operations (Pine County Geologic Atlas)

**Table 10:** Pine County Forestry (MN DNR, Pine County Land Dept)

2012 Total Pulpwood harvested in Pine Co (cords)	135,444
2013 Total Saw timber harvest in Pine Co (cords)	73,190.32
<b>Estimated Annual Pine County Timber Harvest (cords)</b>	<b>208,635</b>
2012 MN average stumpage price (\$/cord)	\$21.57
<b>Estimated total timber stumpage revenue In Pine County per year (208,635 cords at \$21.57/cord)</b>	<b>\$4,500,249</b>

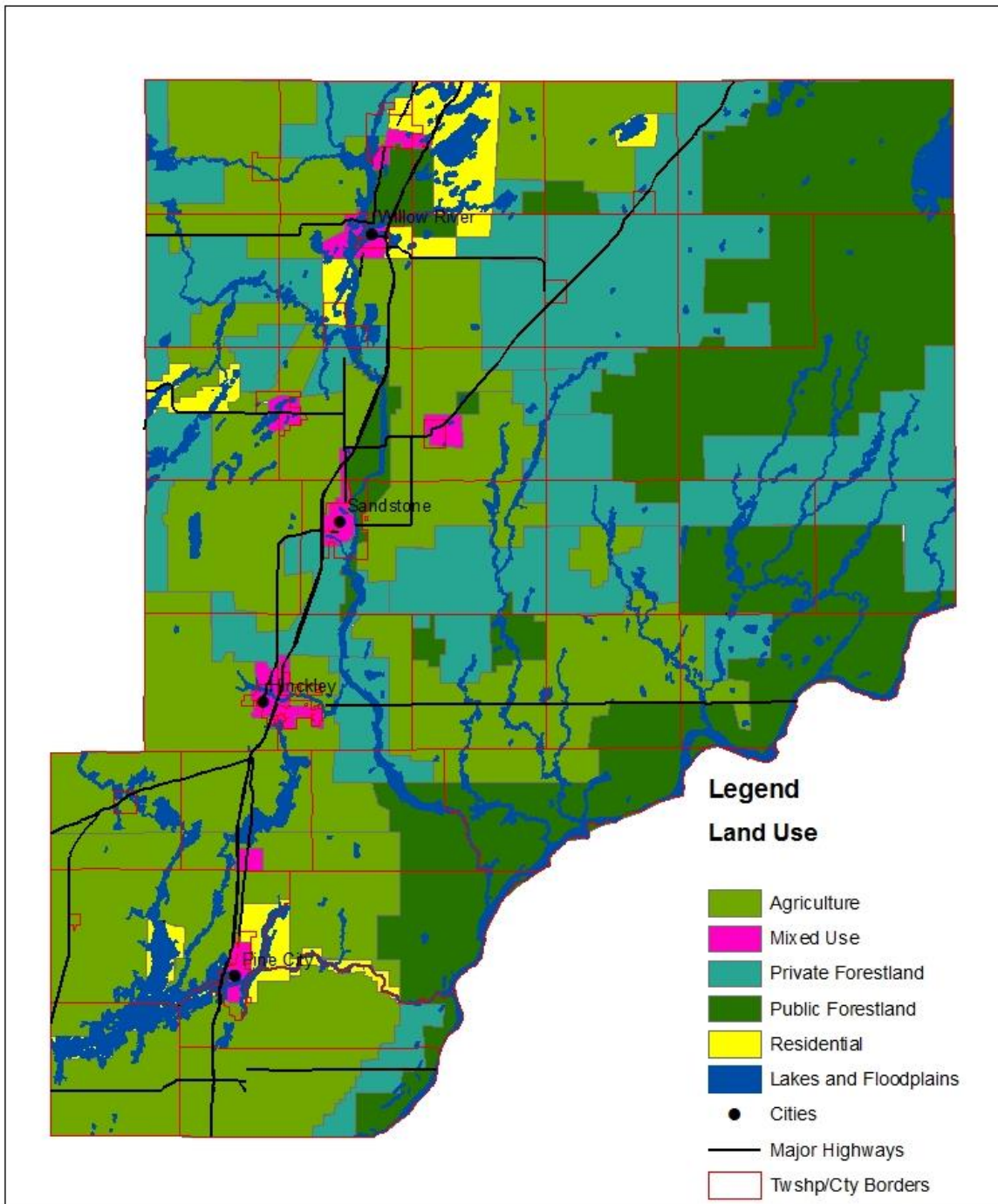
**Table 11:** Pine County Forestry (MN DNR, Pine County Land Dept)

<b>Estimated Annual Pine County Timber Harvest (cords)</b>	208,635
2012 Pine County Timber Harvest on County Owned Land	15,983
2012 Pine County Timber Harvest on State Owned Land	99,601
2012 Pine County Timber Harvest on Privately Owned Land	93,051
<b>2012 Estimated total timber stumpage revenue in Pine County on privately owned land (93,051 cords @ \$21.57/cord)</b>	<b>\$2,007,102</b>



## APPENDIX B

### Future Land Use Map

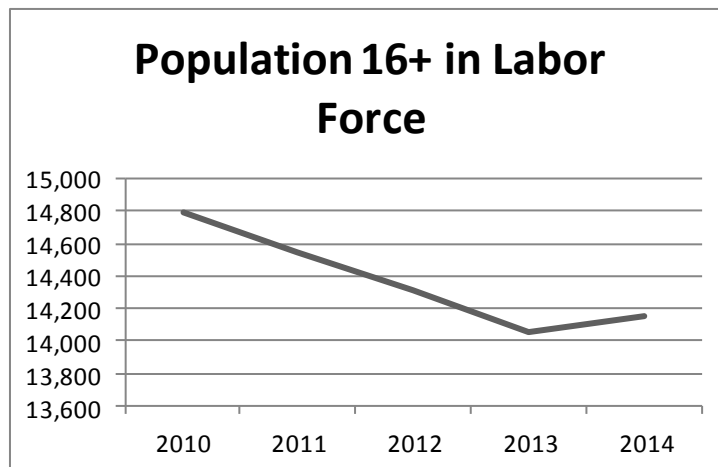


## **Appendix C**

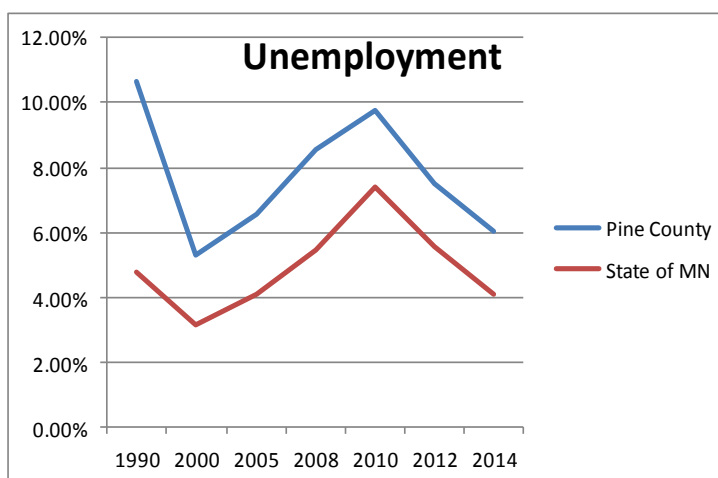


## **Pine County 2017 Community Economic Profile**

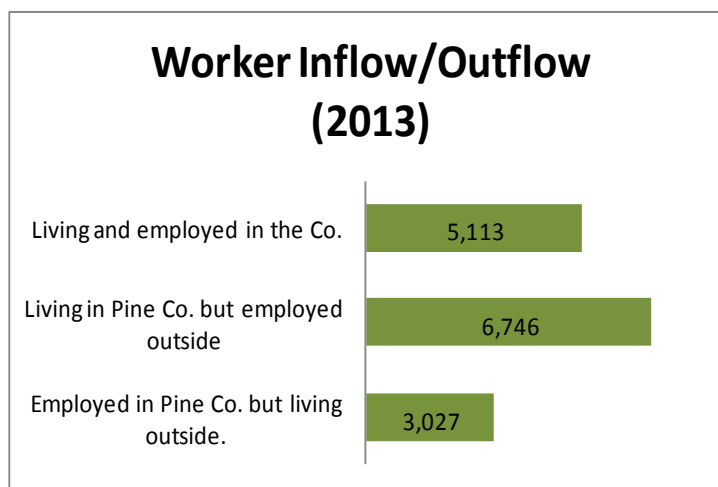
## Labor Force and Unemployment



**Graph 1:** Pine County Labor Force 2010-2014. (US Census Bureau)



**Graph 2:** Pine County and State Unemployment 1990-2014 (US



**Graph 3:** Pine County Labor Force 2010-2014. (DEED)

## Income

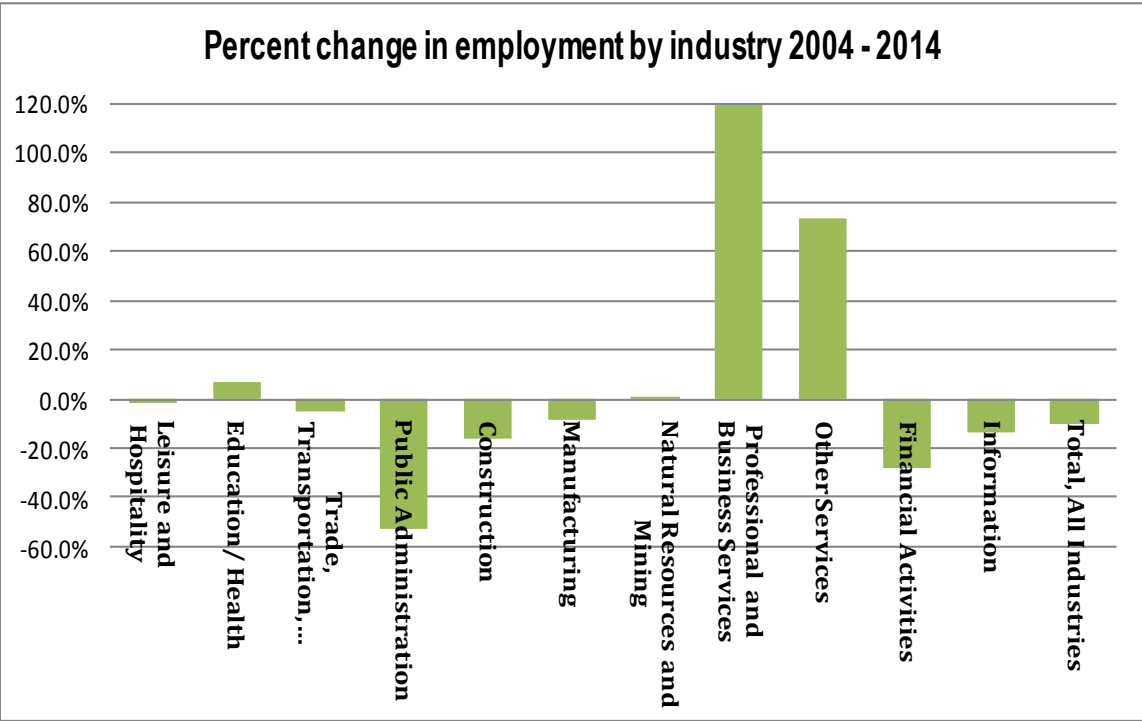
**Table 1:** Median Household Income( US Census Bureau)

<b>Year</b>	<b>Pine</b>	<b>Carlton</b>	<b>Aitkin</b>	<b>Kanabec</b>
1999	\$31,909	\$40,021	\$31,139	\$38,520
2014	\$43,760	\$47,849	\$44,239	\$43,315
2020 (proj)	\$49,393	\$53,138	\$50,376	\$48,678
2014- 2020 % change	12.87%	11.05%	13.87%	12.38%

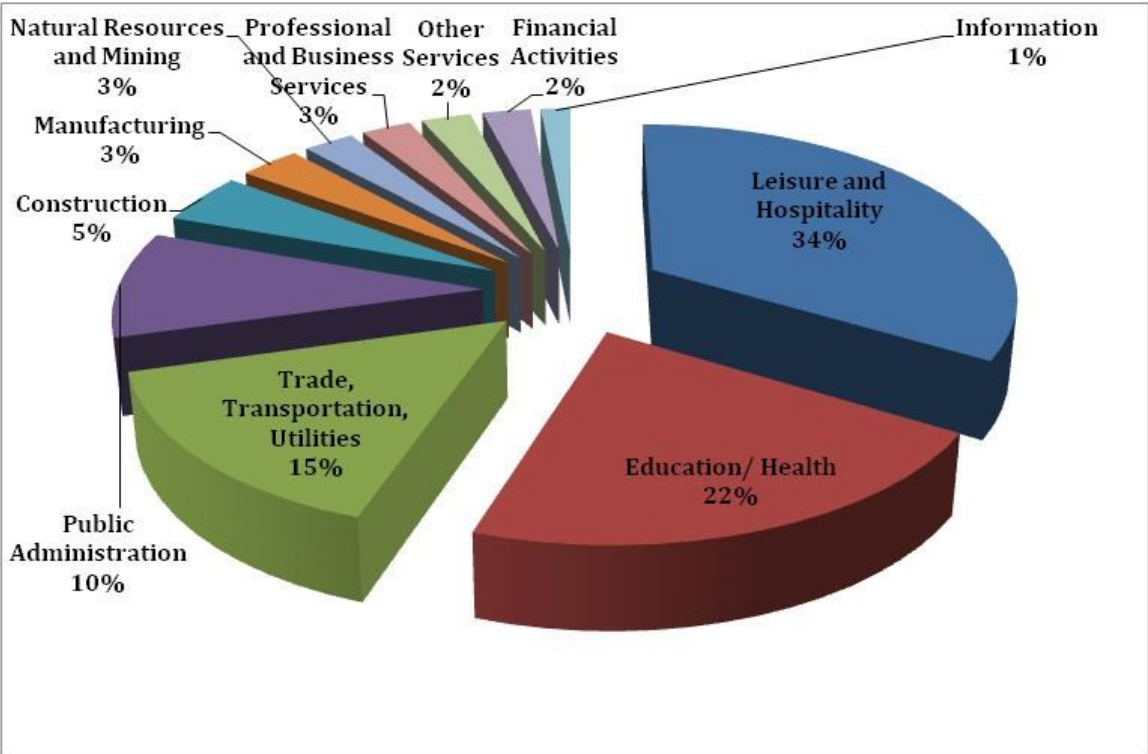
**Table 2:** Employment by industry (MN DEED)

	Pine Co 2004		Pine Co 2014		
<b>Industry Title</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Percent growth from 2004-2014</b>
Leisure and Hospitality	2755	30.8%	2706	33.6%	-1.8%
Education/ Health	1627	18.2%	1739	21.6%	6.9%
Trade, Transportation, Utilities	1306	14.6%	1242	15.4%	-4.9%
Public Administration	1690	18.9%	792	9.8%	-53.1%
Construction	450	5.0%	376	4.7%	-16.4%
Manufacturing	277	3.1%	253	3.1%	-8.7%
Natural Resources and Mining	210	2.3%	212	2.6%	1.0%
Professional and Business Services	95	1.1%	208	2.6%	118.9%
Other Services	119	1.3%	206	2.6%	73.1%
Financial Activities	277	3.1%	200	2.5%	-27.8%
Information	142	1.6%	123	1.5%	-13.4%
<b>Total, All Industries</b>	<b>8951</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>8060</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>-10.0%</b>

Employment by Sector Cntd.



Graph 4: Employment by industry (MN DEED)



Graph 5: Employment by industry (MN DEED)



**Table 3: Income by Sector (MN DEED)**

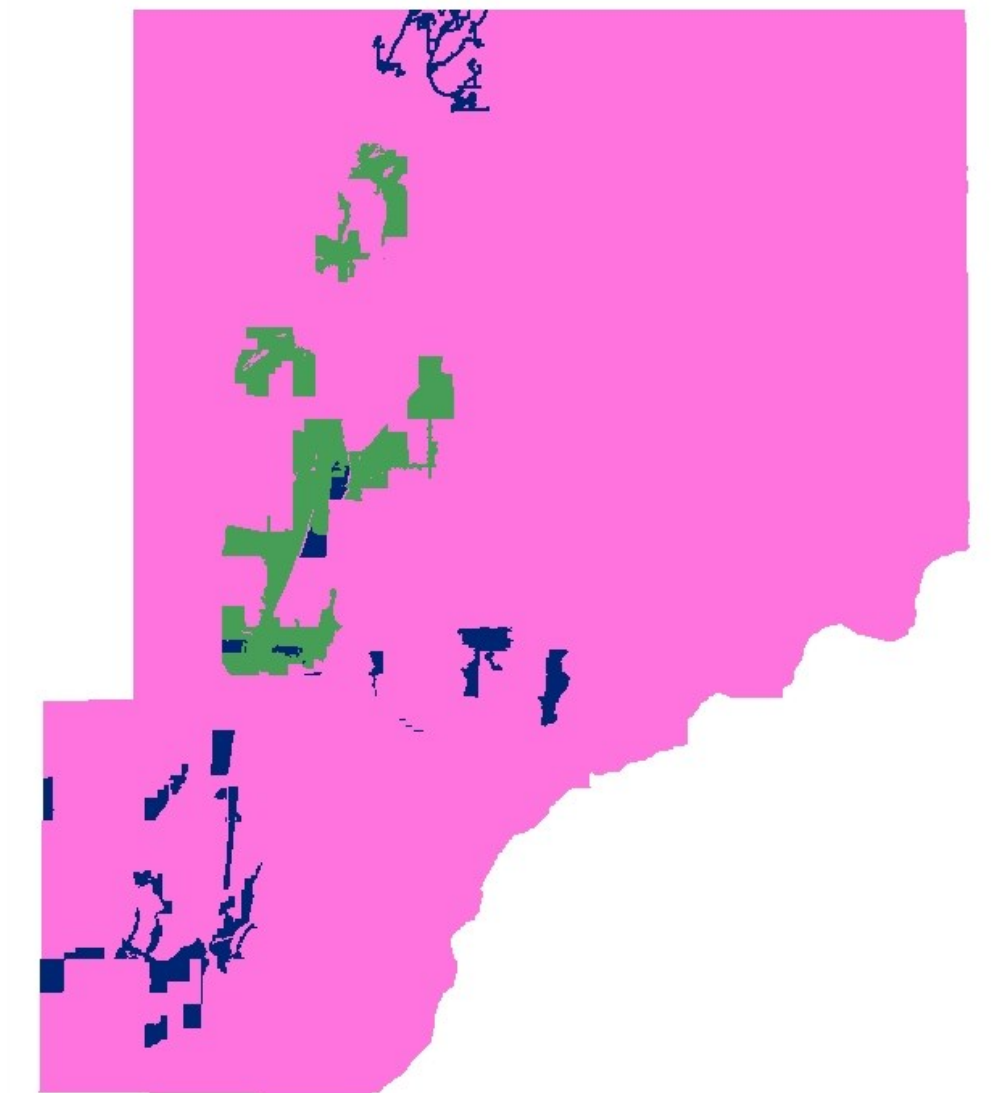
<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Median Wage</b>	
	<b>Region 7E</b>	<b>MN</b>
Total, All	\$16.43	\$18.65
Office and Administrative Support	\$16.14	\$17.27
Education, Training, and Library	\$20.02	\$22.72
Sales and Related	\$11.56	\$13.24
Production	\$15.87	\$16.61
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	\$30.63	\$31.54
Healthcare Support	\$13.01	\$13.63
Management	\$36.32	\$47.47
Personal Care and Service	\$10.79	\$11.11
Construction and Extraction	\$24.38	\$27.88
Business and Financial Operations	\$24.25	\$30.37
Community and Social Services	\$18.72	\$20.51
Food Preparation and Serving Related	\$9.15	\$9.21
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	\$12.16	\$12.03
Architecture and Engineering	\$29.53	\$34.76
Computer and Mathematical	\$29.71	\$37.96
Life, Physical, and Social Science	\$28.40	\$30.29
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media	\$11.04	\$21.82
Legal	\$22.17	\$38.48
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	\$14.91	\$14.41
Protective Service	\$20.62	\$19.43
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	\$28.91	\$21.52
Transportation and Material Moving	\$15.66	\$16.18

**Table 5: 2013 Non employer Data (MN DEED)**

<b>Title</b>	<b>Establishments</b>	<b>Sales</b>
Total for all sectors	1723	\$68,771,000
Construction	280	\$13,509,000
Other services (except public administration)	251	\$7,283,000
Retail trade	209	\$8,233,000
Transportation and warehousing	144	\$12,504,000
Health care and social assistance	140	\$4,554,000
Administrative and support and waste management	132	\$1,945,000
Real estate and rental and leasing	130	\$8,161,000
Professional, scientific, and technical services	125	\$3,225,000
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	71	\$1,200,000
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting	53	\$1,677,000
Manufacturing	49	\$1,219,000
Accommodation and food services	33	\$4,657,000
Educational services	33	\$217,000
Wholesale trade	29	\$1,854,000
Finance and insurance	28	\$1,250,000
Information	11	\$79,000
Utilities	4	\$173,000

**Table 4: Vacancies by Sector for East Central Region (MN DEED)**

	<b># Jobs</b>	<b>Job Va- cancy Rate</b>	<b>part time</b>	<b>Temp or Seasonal</b>	<b>Requiring Post Secondary Educa- tion</b>	<b>Requiring 1+ Years Experi- ence</b>	<b>Requiring Certificate or License</b>	<b>Median Wage Offer</b>
Total, All Occupations	2138	4.6	73%	19%	21%	26%	33%	\$9.88
Management	29	1.4	0%	0%	99%	100%	72%	\$34.36
Community and Social Services	15	1	47%	7%	87%	50%	79%	\$15.48
Education, Training, and Library	117	2.5	47%	41%	65%	52%	67%	\$16.28
Healthcare Practitioners and Tech- nical O	158	4.6	64%	2%	86%	42%	93%	\$19.79
Healthcare Support	111	4	81%	1%	75%	37%	87%	\$12.43
Food Preparation and Serving Re- lated	493	32.9	93%	8%	0%	5%	8%	\$8.97
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	68	5.1	73%	39%	0%	8%	34%	\$9.35
Personal Care and Service	279	15.3	87%	70%	11%	22%	20%	\$8.00
Sales and Related	371	8.8	94%	1%	2%	2%	1%	\$8.89
Office and Administrative Support	63	1	57%	11%	18%	42%	11%	\$10.61
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	44	2.4	50%	46%	50%	50%	71%	\$11.28
Production Occupations	120	3	21%	7%	11%	42%	8%	\$11.87
Transportation and Material Mov- ing	148	5.6	65%	25%	0%	50%	99%	\$13.23



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**Legend**

- Underserved Area (Wireline Broadband of At Least 25M/3M but Less Than 10M/5M)
- Unserved Area (No Wireline Broadband of At Least 25M/3M)
- Wireline Broadband of at Least 10M/5M

**Map 1:** Broadband Availability (MN DEED)

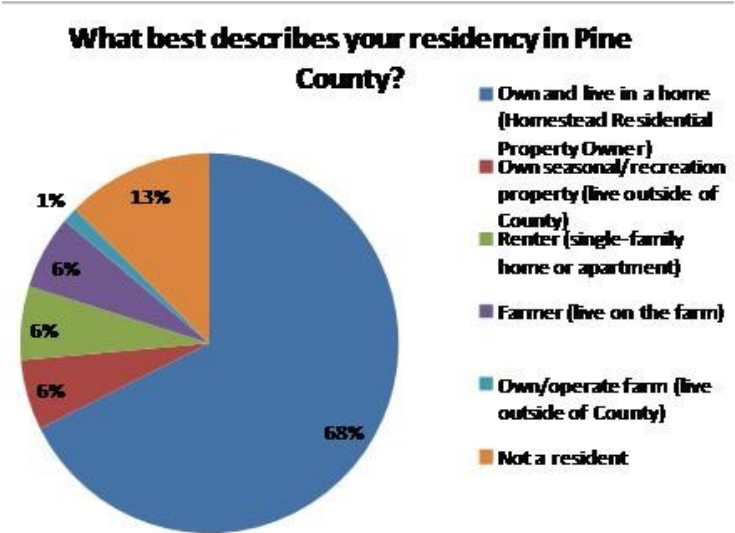
## **Appendix D**



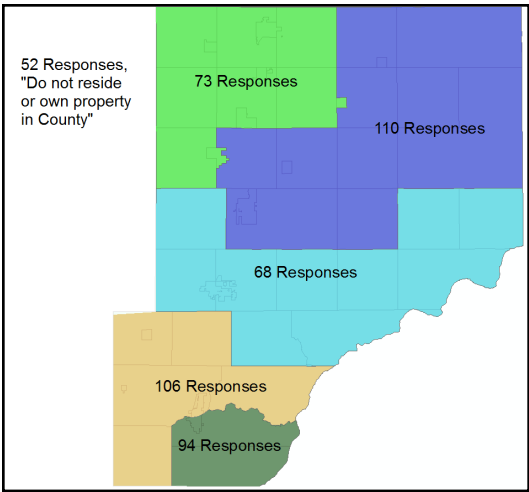
### **Pine County Community Survey Results**

The Pine County Comprehensive Plan Survey took place from January 1, 2016 through February 1, 2016. Surveys were collected electronically through survey-monkey as well as via paper copies. Surveys were dispersed via press releases, mailings to community organizations, cities, and townships, website promotion, and word of mouth. 521 responses were collected.

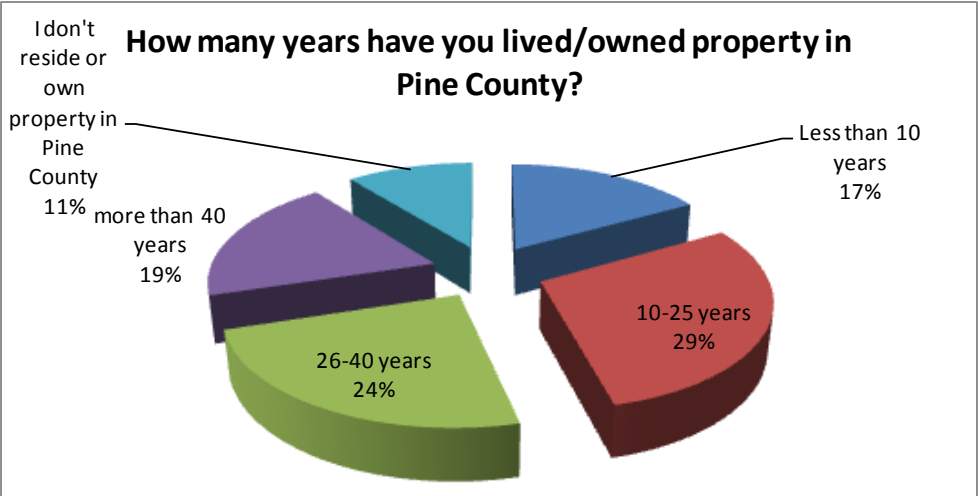
Question 1.



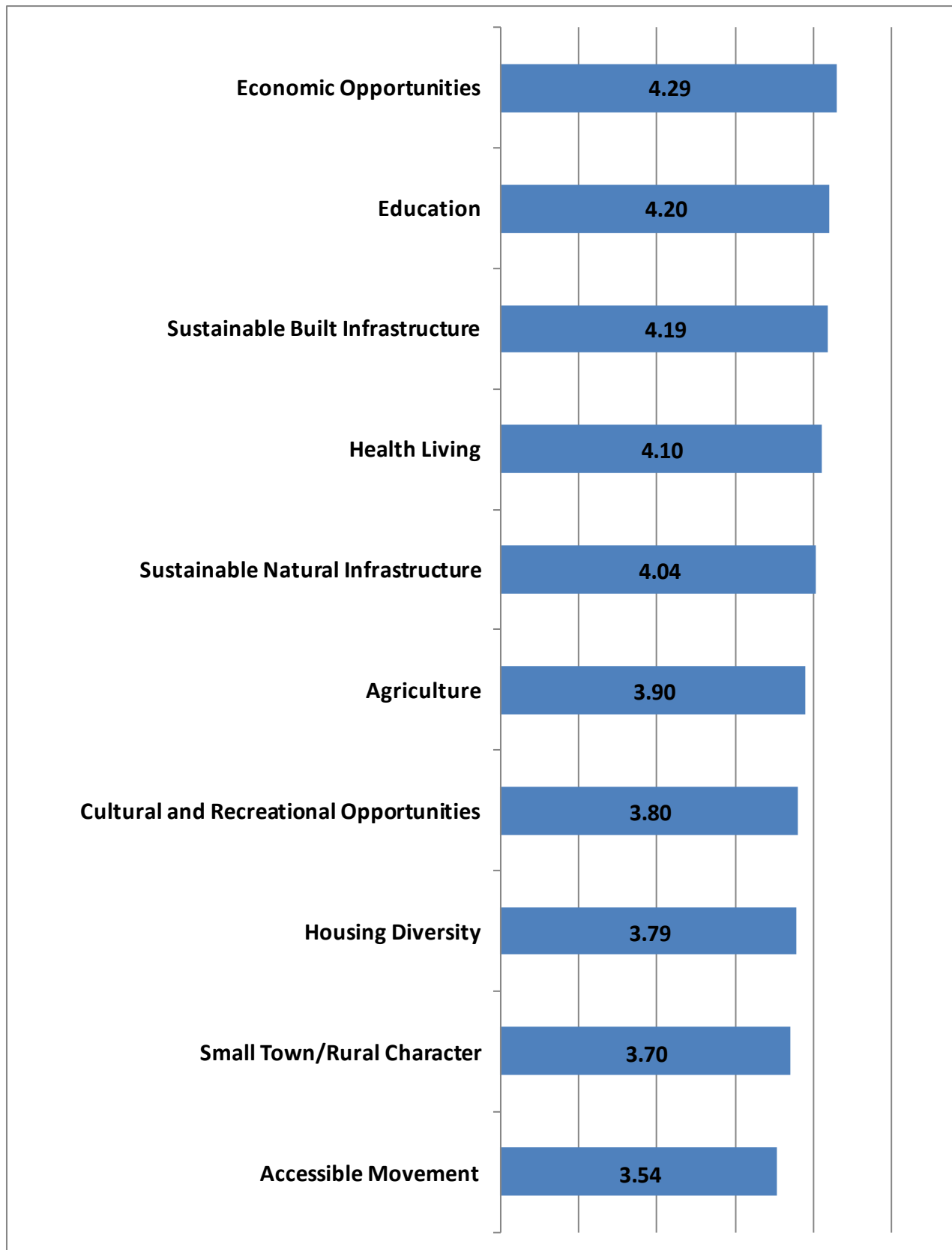
Question 2: Which commissioner district do you reside in or own property in?



Question 3.



**Question 4:** Please rank the following planning priorities for Pine County's Future from 1 to 5.  
1= not important. 2= A little important. 3=Fairly Important. 4=Very important. 5= extremely important.





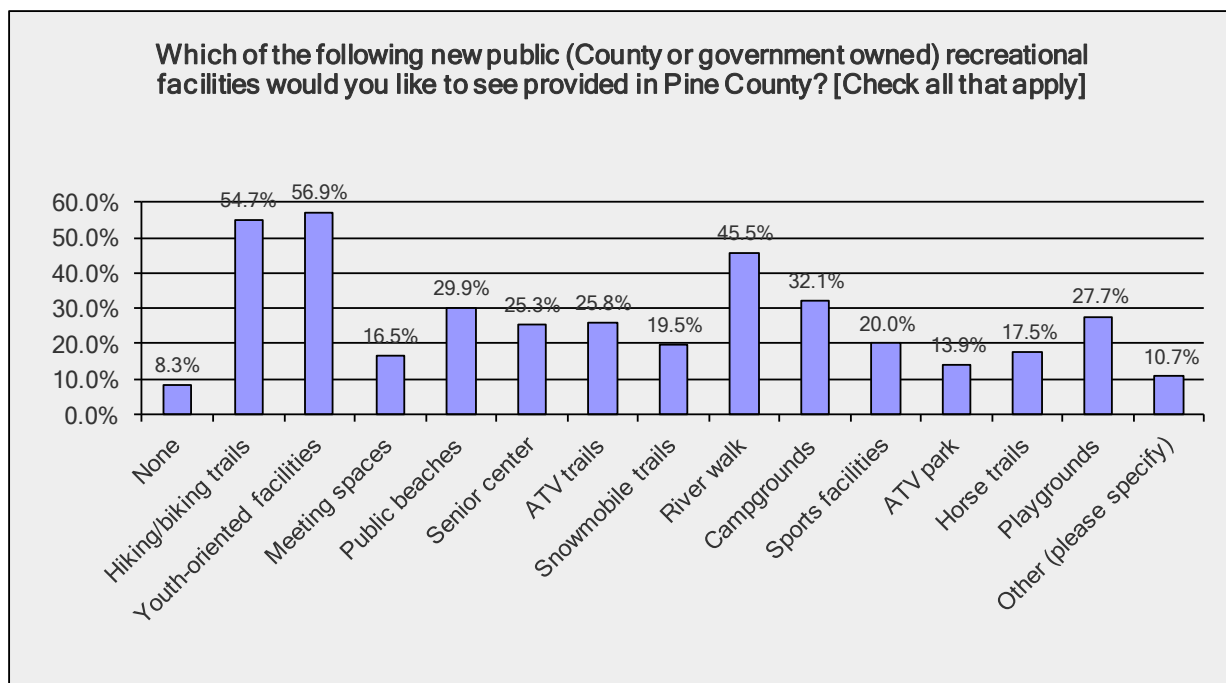
**Question 5:** What one thing do you think should be done in the next five years to make Pine County a better place? (Responses were manually categorized.)

Category	Count Of Category
Economic Development	91
Reduce drugs and crime	47
Increase recreation	21
Lower taxes	21
Fix blight	20
Better access to high speed internet	18
Protect Environment	16
Support youth and education	15
improved transportation	13
housing services	11
improve public health	10
Govt. criticism	8
NLX Support	6
Implement county wide zoning	5
Less regulation	5
Less welfare	5
Work together	5
Maintain rural character	4
Increase tourism	3
close the casino	2
Improve Infrastructure	2
Limit billboards	2
support public representatives	2
Support townships	2
Be more friendly to new people	1
Better access to public services	1
community development	1
Enhance Recycling	1
Increase amenities	1
increase tax base	1
Less Government Spending	1
Maintain agriculture	1
NLX opposition	1
Oppose county wide zoning	1
Promote Natural resources	1
Promote uniqueness	1
Regulate railroads	1

**Question 6:** Looking ahead 20 years, which of the following goals should Pine County be preparing for? 4=High, 3=Medium, 2=Low, 1=Bad idea.

Answer Options	Primary Goal	Secondary Goal	Minor Goal	Bad Idea	Rating Average	Response Count
Be an economic engine with living-wage jobs	290	115	20	5	3.6	430
Strengthen Pine County's Sustainability	49	31	6	0	3.5	86
Protect natural areas and water quality	248	137	43	2	3.47	430
Strengthen Pine County's rural atmosphere	126	180	109	14	2.97	429
Be a center for tourism and recreation	92	184	133	20	2.81	429
Become a "second home" market for visitors	30	125	215	47	2.33	417
Other (please specify)						49

**Question 7.**



**Question 8:** Looking ahead 20 years, what do you believe should be the priorities for land development in Pine County? 4=High, 3=Medium, 2=Low, 1=Bad idea.

Answer Options	High	Medium	Low	Bad idea	Rating Average	Response Count
Ensure that lakeshore development should protect water quality and habitat	271	116	19	4	3.6	410
Maintain agricultural land resources and agricultural practices	193	182	35	2	3.37	412
High quality sensitive natural areas (lakeshore, wetlands, habitat)	201	152	46	6	3.35	405
An active and self-sustaining agricultural and forestry industry	186	158	61	3	3.29	408
New and expanded commercial development along well traveled corridors	184	158	58	7	3.28	407
Protect the character of rural areas (keep rural areas rural)	166	162	74	6	3.2	408
High quality housing, no blighted housing, in higher density areas	148	174	71	11	3.14	404
High quality housing, no blighted housing, in rural Pine County	138	148	94	22	3	402
Limited non-residential uses in rural residential areas	51	147	157	40	2.53	395
A greater mix of uses (including non-residential) in rural residential areas	38	145	171	44	2.44	398
Have more residential subdivisions in County (unincorporated) areas	26	129	179	71	2.27	405
More and denser development (smaller lots) in high population areas	9	11	35	27	2.02	82
More and denser development (smaller lots) in lakeshore areas	18	53	151	184	1.77	406
Other (please specify)						24

**Question 9:** What type of business(es) do you think should be in Pine County? 4=needed, 3=Have this business but need more choices 2=Not needed, already have enough 1=Bad idea.

Answer Options	Needed	Have this business but need more choices	Not needed, already have enough	Better suited for somewhere else	Rating Average	Response Count
Manufacturing Oriented Businesses	186	149	44	18	3.27	397
Small-Scale Restaurant/Coffee Shop/Microbrewery	181	147	59	12	3.25	399
Small-scale Retail Shopping	150	175	53	7	3.22	385
Recreation Oriented Businesses	157	158	52	23	3.15	390
Technology/Software	164	138	68	22	3.13	392
Lodging/Bed & Breakfast	143	149	81	19	3.06	392
Chain-Format Restaurants	126	115	104	52	2.79	397
Campground	94	129	136	20	2.78	379
Grocery Stores	72	150	161	8	2.73	391
Transportation Services (taxi, shuttle)	58	175	148	17	2.69	398
Personal Services (salon, auto, etc.)	41	131	214	8	2.52	394
Medical Office	50	109	223	11	2.5	393
Professional Services (legal, accountant, etc.)	37	127	222	7	2.49	393
Large Format Retail (big box or chain stores)	85	80	119	108	2.36	392
Other (please specify)						30

## **Appendix E**

### **Mental Health and Health Equity in Pine County**

#### **Pine County Focus Group Summary**

As part of the Comprehensive Plan Update process, Pine County conducted a survey to better understand concerns residents would like the County to address; mental health and health equity were identified as key topics. In order to gather more input and feedback, the County organized a focus group in Pine City on October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016, that included professionals from various health and mental health organizations that serve County residents. The goal of the discussion was to identify concerns and facts related to mental health and health equity, as well as recommendations and strategies that can be included in the Comprehensive Plan.

The following is a summary of facts, concerns, and recommendations that were raised through the discussion. There were several themes that emerged through the conversation and the summary has been organized accordingly. The themes include: Support, Collaboration, Transportation, and Education and Awareness.

#### Facts

- Pine County ranks 7<sup>th</sup> in the State for poverty. More than 15% of residents live in poverty compared to 11.5% statewide.
- The County has among the highest suicide rates in the State.
- There is one emergency room in the County.

#### Concerns

##### **1. Support**

- There is a concern that there are some people who may never be reached with the necessary services.
- Limited funding increases the challenge to sustain services.
- There are not currently services for the full family spectrum.
- There is a need for timely and coordinated mental health services at the hospital.
- Psychiatric care has a limited number of open beds to provide adequate care for patients.
- Lack of dependable supportive housing can lead to lapses in consistency of services.
- There is uncertainty around how many people want or need services, but can't access them.
- Compounding problems like homelessness and chemical abuse pose additional challenges to treating mental health.

##### **2. Collaboration of Service Providers**

- There is a need to help other players (non-mental health service providers) understand and practice the concept of the "right service and the right time".
- There is not currently of process or protocol once a patient gets into emergency care, nor a process for discharge.

- There is no formal collaboration among mental health service providers, the County, primary care providers, and other stakeholders.
- There is a need to train primary care providers on mental health.
- Past operation and management of crisis services may have reduced trust in current operations.

### **3. Transportation**

- Transportation is a barrier to receiving care given the County's geographic size and relative isolation of residents.
- Medical transportation drivers are only reimbursed for loaded miles, which creates a disincentive for them to reach remote or isolated locations.
- People may not know how to get to their provider.

### **4. Education and Awareness**

- There is limited education and access to crisis services for mental health illnesses.
- Many in the community may lack acceptance and trust of people who need affordable, supportive housing.
- There is a stigma around mental health, which may serve as a barrier to people seeking treatment.
- There is a lack of public awareness of existing services in Pine County.
- There may be a long wait before people can see their provider.
- It is difficult to identify triggers or stresses of mental health issues.



## Recommendations and Strategies

Targeted Success	Strategies
1. Increased <b>affordable supportive housing</b> for Pine County residents with Mental Illness <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integrated housing options are available</li> <li>Some agency support is offered to residents</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a market to attract housing developers               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leverage County policy tools to increase housing on County-owned land</li> </ul> </li> <li>Include supportive housing in housing plans</li> <li>Repurpose under or non-utilized buildings into housing</li> <li>Target new housing developments in close proximity to services</li> </ul>
2. County provides a forum to encourage <b>collaboration</b> among MHS providers and other health care providers. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a common understanding of services provided among all health providers</li> <li>Patients are able to receive the “right service, right time”</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a task force to look into issues”               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholders included: law enforcement, emergency medical services, outreach workers, case workers, etc.</li> <li>Hold regular meetings</li> <li>Stakeholder summit to explore this</li> <li>Create a Mental Health Court</li> </ul> </li> <li>Add relevant resources to County website               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and provide Information kit for new professionals in the community</li> </ul> </li> <li>Identify opportunities to network and build relationships with all professionals that have a capacity to address mental health issues</li> <li>Research how have other communities addressed poverty and isolation</li> </ul>
3. <b>Transportation</b> to health providers is available to residents to live outside of the County’s largest cities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify transportation needs/barriers for specific audiences</li> <li>Educate ARMS providers</li> <li>Provide an array of transportation assistance options that fit the needs of residents</li> <li>Explore new technologies as they become available (e.g. autonomous vehicles)</li> <li>Evaluate transportation options with consideration of provider locations</li> <li>Look into ITV for remote care</li> <li>Recruit volunteers to drive people in need of transportation</li> </ul>
4. There is increased <b>awareness &amp; understanding</b> of Mental Health and Mental Health Services among Pine County residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop campaigns to increase awareness about mental health</li> <li>Educate residents about mental health illnesses to reduce stigma</li> <li>Ensure all residents have access to health and mental health services</li> </ul>



# Housing in Pine County, MN

## Development Opportunities

**Robert L. Musgrove, Ph.D. ▶ Coordinator of Economic Development**

Summer 2016

In 2014, the East Central Regional Housing Collaborative commissioned a region-wide housing study of the five counties and a number of the communities in Minnesota Economic Development Region 7E. The Counties involved included Pine, Isanti, Chisago, Kanabec and Mille Lacs from 7E plus Aitkin County. Maxfield Research, Inc., of Minneapolis was the research firm for the project. The final product was a thorough analysis of the state of housing in Region 7E, along with a demographic overview, and it delineated a number of gaps and needs and recommendations for the Region to follow to improve its housing profile across the cost ranges.

This report is an extraction of the Pine County information from the Maxfield data in their housing needs analysis. It represents a tighter focus on the status of housing in the County and the opportunities for development driven by the gaps uncovered by Maxfield. This is intended to inform both government officials at the city and county level of the needs in their County and to raise awareness for potential developers of the market opportunities that exist here.

The Pine County Office of Economic Development is indebted to the Regional Housing Collaborative and Maxfield Research for the thoroughgoing and detailed analysis of the state of affairs in the region's housing in 2014. It is not the intent for this report to replicate every element of the 2014 study that pertains to Pine County. Rather, the goal here is to focus on a number of compelling and critical data points and issues. By doing so, the Office hopes to create a more succinct and compact look at some of the more critical demographic housing issues and to generate a county-wide conversation and strategy on those issues.



# Housing in Pine County, MN

## Development Opportunities

Pine County is located midway between the Twin Cities and Duluth along Interstate 35. That strategic location has driven many changes in the County over the last decades. The I-35 corridor, along with other trunk routes such as Highway 61, transect the County from north to south for over 50 miles. That easy proximity to metropolitan areas both north and south may be both a blessing and a curse, but it is certainly a strategic reality that has driven and will drive the evolution of the County.



### Demographics

Recent decades have seen considerable population growth in Pine County, but prosperity has not grown apace.

### Population

Significant gains in total population occurred in the county over the past 25 years. The immense pan-urban growth out of the Twin Cities increasingly drove northward up the I-35 corridor through Washington and Chisago counties to Pine County until the start of the recession.

Population Growth in Pine County			
Area	1990	2000	2010
Pine County	21,264	26,530	29,750
Pine City	2,599	3,043	3,123
Hinckley	946	1,295	1,800
Sandstone*	2,057	1,549	2,849
Pine City Township	950	1,249	1,394
Pokegama Township	1,847	2,570	2,743
Sandstone Township*	582	1,614	824

*\*Fluctuations in the Sandstone and Sandstone Township numbers are attributed to where the population of the Federal prison is counted.*

Conventional wisdom holds that more affordable land and housing and cheaper gas prices attracted residents of the Twin Cities to buy or build in the County and commute to work each day. This is supported by the census data: According to the 2013 estimates, 11,929 workers lived in the county. Of those, 6,785 – or 57% -- commuted out of the county for work each day. This same figure has been rising with every census and estimate since 1990.

The Minnesota State Demographer estimates that the county has grown since the last census but projects for that growth to slow and then flatten compared to the rates for the previous two decades.

Population Projections				
Location	2015	2025	2035	2045
Pine Co.	31,532	32,540	32,328	31,490

That noted, estimates in the current economic climate may be slippery. While it might not be prudent to base plans on the type of growth that the county saw from 1990 to the 2010 census (+40%), it might also not be prudent to assume that the conditions that caused that growth (the continued dynamism of the Twin Cities, the presence of I-35, cheaper land and housing in Pine County and cheaper gas prices) have entirely abated or disappeared. If those trends re-emerge, the Demographer's numbers will miss the mark. A middle course might be the wisest course. This will be covered in the final section of this report.

### Economics

Population growth has not been accompanied by economic growth to any large extent.

Unemployment has continued to exceed the state's average, while wages and income continue to lag behind, as these 2014-15 figures show:

Measure	Pine County	Minnesota
Unemployment 4/16	6.2%	3.8%
Aver. Weekly Wage	\$526	\$964
Aver. Weekly Wage in Manufacturing	\$607	\$1209
Annual Per Capita Personal Income	\$31,543	\$48,998
% Families with Less than \$50K income	45%	29%

As noted earlier, the percentage of the workforce who commute out of the county each day has continued to increase. In 2000, around 38% of the Pine County workforce commuted out of the county to work. By 2011, census statistics show that figure had risen to 57%. The upshot is that Pine County is becoming more like Chisago and Isanti – bedroom communities to the Twin Cities. The distances traveled are not insignificant:

Distance Traveled - 2011	No. of Workers	Percentage
Less than 10 miles	3161	42.9%
10 to 24 miles	2414	32.8%
25 to 50 miles	910	12.3%
Greater than 50 miles	885	12%

Principally because of the casino in Hinckley, Pine County's employment by industry sector is skewed heavily toward the Hospitality Industry and lags behind the State in other sectors. The low weekly wage in Hospitality (\$370 in Pine), combined with the high numbers of employees in that sector in the county, also depresses the other wage statistics for Pine County.

Percentages of the Pine County Workforce by Industry Sector		
Employment by Sector	Pine County	Minnesota
Leisure/Hospitality	34.7%	10%
Education & Health	21%	25%
Trade, Transport, Utilities	16%	19%
Manufacturing	10%	12%
Prof. & Business Services	3%	13%

Business growth numbers indicate that the County has somewhat recovered from the recession but more slowly than the state or Region 7E. The figures are from 2013 compared to 2012.

Measure	Pine County	Region 7E	State
Increase in no. of businesses	+1.3%	+1.2%	+1.7%
Increase in no. of employees	+0.5%	+1.8%	+1.8%

### The Status of Housing in Pine County

In 2014 a coalition of agencies and units of government in East Central Minnesota formed the East Central Regional Housing Collaborative. The lead entity was Lakes and Pines CAC in Mora, and members included the counties and some cities in the region. With grant funds and member contributions, the Collaborative commissioned a study of the housing situation in the region in 2014. Maxfield Research of Minneapolis was the contractor selected to conduct the research, and the result was a very thorough, detailed 422-page report on the status at that time of the various sorts of housing in the region according to established categories. The report not only enumerates the 2014 housing stock, but it also projects forward to 2025 what the demand might look like based on population projections.

### Current Status in Pine County

In 2014, there were 11,967 housing units in Pine County. The great bulk of those – over 85% -- were owner-occupied. This figure mirrors the breakdown for Region 7E.

<b>Housing Units by Structure – Pine County</b>				
<b>Units in Structure</b>	<b>Owner-Occupied</b>	<b>Pct.</b>	<b>Renter-Occupied</b>	<b>Pct.</b>
1, detached	8,201	85.1%	970	41.5%
1, attached	88	.9%	56	2.4%
2	17	.2%	137	5.9%
3-4	9	.1%	231	9.9%
5-9	0	0%	147	6.3%
10-19	4	0%	269	11.5%
20-49	3	0%	206	8.8%
50 or more	2	0%	95	4.1%
Mobile home	1,279	13.3%	224	9.6%
Boat, RV, etc	29	0%	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,632</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2,335</b>	<b>100%</b>

However, the proportion of mobile homes in Pine County is above the average for 7E, with 12.6% of Pine's stock categorized as mobile homes compared to 8% for the region.

The median value of owner-occupied units in Pine County is the lowest in the region at \$151,400, compared to a regional median value of \$167,875. The owner-occupied units in Pine County are slightly older, on average, than the rest of the region, with 18% of Pine's homes built before 1940 compared to 15% for the region.

<b>Measure</b>	<b>Pine Co.</b>	<b>Region</b>
Median Mortgage	\$153,300	\$171,590
Percentage Mobile Homes	13.3%	8.5%
Annual Turnover of Homes	3.9%	4.1%
Average Lot Size	1.52 acres	.82 acres
Average Lot Price	\$15,072	\$15,033
Average Cost, New Construction	\$114 sq. ft.	\$147 sq. ft.
Median List Price	\$139,900	\$169,900

Maxfield calculated the current number of month's supply of available homes as a function of listings compared to average sales closed. By that measure, Pine County had an 8.4 month supply of homes for sale. Maxfield's research indicates that a 3-year housing supply is necessary to provide adequate

consumer choice without prolonged developer carrying costs. Realtors polled in the county and the region reported a very 'tight' housing market with an inadequate inventory of homes available.

Tight as the owner-occupied market might be, the rental market is even tighter.

<b>Vacancy Rate by Type of Rental Unit – Pine County</b>		
<b>Type</b>	<b>No. of Units</b>	<b>Vacancy Rate</b>
Market Rate	184	3.3%
Affordable	85	2.4%
Subsidized	133	1.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>2.5%</b>

Housing industry analysts maintain that extremely low vacancy rates (less than 5%) restrict renter choice considerably.

Perhaps as a function of the law of supply and demand, rental rates for Pine County are slightly higher than the region's averages.

<b>Average Rents</b>		
	<b>Pine Co.</b>	<b>Region</b>
1 Bedroom	\$595	\$581
2 Bedrooms	\$715	\$706
3 Bedrooms	\$843	\$810

The same tight market conditions also exist for the different forms of senior housing in both the county and the region. In fact, vacancy rates across the board are extremely low for seniors across the entire region. Some types of senior housing in Pine County have no vacancies at all, a situation which translates into no choice and no opportunity.

Senior Housing Vacancy Rates and Numbers by Type		
Type	Pine Co. Vacancy Rate	Region Vacancy Rate
Sr. Active Adult	2.2%	1.9%
Sr. Congregate	0.0%	.7%
Assisted Living	0.0%	1.8%
Memory Care	0.0%	2.4%
Subsidized Sr.	1.9%	.4%

## Future Projections

### For-Sale Owner-Occupied

Maxfield uses formulae to calculate future demand for the different types of housing in the County and in the sub-markets within the County. The formula for owner-occupied, single family housing projects demand based on: (1) household population growth in the county from the demographers projections, (2) the historical percentage of new households that buy rather than rent, (3) the percentage of turnover (existing homeowners who buy another home), and (4) the percentage of current homeowners who desire new owner housing.

Those projections for Pine County area for 2015-2020 as follows:

Demand for Additional For-Sale Housing Pine County 2015-2020				
	Hinckley	N. Pine	Pine City	Pine Co.
<b>Demand from Growth</b>				
Household growth	0	0	0	0
X % that buy	73%	81.3%	82.6%	81%
= demand from growth	0	0	0	0
<b>Demand from Existing Households</b>				
2014 Total owner households under 65	1,207	2,689	2,515	6,411
X average percent turnover for period	21%	20%	15%	18.3%
X percent desiring to own	7%	7%	7%	7%
= demand from existing household	18	38	26	82
<b>Total Market Demand of For-Sale Housing</b>				
Totals	18	38	26	82

Note: The calculation includes a projection of zero population growth over the period.

The researchers also extended the projections from 2020 to 2025. Those calculations are as follows:

Demand for Additional For-Sale Housing Pine County 2020-2025				
	Hinckley	N. Pine	Pine City	Pine Co.
<b>Demand from Growth</b>				
Household growth	0	0	0	0
X % that buy	73%	81.3%	82.6%	81%
= demand from growth	0	0	0	0
<b>Demand from Existing Households</b>				
2014 Total owner households under 65	1,154	2,580	2,430	6,164
X average percent turnover for period	21%	20%	15%	18.3%
X percent desiring to own	7%	7%	7%	7%
= demand from existing household	17	36	26	79
<b>Total Market Demand of For-Sale Housing</b>				
Totals	17	36	26	79

Note: Again the calculation includes a project of zero population growth for this five-year period.

### Rental Housing Demand Projections

A similar methodology is used to project demand for rental housing over the 2014-2020 and 2020-2025 time periods.

Demand for Additional Rental Housing Pine County 2015-2020				
	Hinckley	N. Pine	Pine City	Pine Co.
<b>Demand from Growth</b>				
Household growth	0	0	0	0
X % that rent	27%	18.7%	17.4%	19.9%
= demand from growth	0	0	0	0
<b>Demand from Existing Households</b>				
2014 Total renter households under 65	447	618	530	1,595
X average percent turnover for period	61.7%	73.1%	76.1%	76.1%
X percent desiring new rental housing	10%	10%	10%	10%
= demand from existing household	28	45	40	113
<b>Total Market Demand of Rental Housing</b>				
Totals	28	45	40	113

Note: The calculation includes a projection of zero population growth over the period



<b>Demand for Additional Rental Housing Pine County 2020-2025</b>				
	<b>Hinckley</b>	<b>N. Pine</b>	<b>Pine City</b>	<b>Pine Co.</b>
<b>Demand from Growth</b>				
Household growth	0	0	0	0
X % that rent	27%	18.7%	17.4%	19.9%
= demand from growth	0	0	0	0
<b>Demand from Existing Households</b>				
2014 Total renter households under 65	427	594	512	1533
X average percent turnover for period	61.7%	73.1%	76.1%	76.1%
X percent desiring new rental housing	10%	10%	10%	10%
= demand from existing household	26	43	39	109
<b>Total Market Demand of Rental Housing</b>				
Totals	26	43	39	109

Note: The calculation includes a projection of zero population growth over the period.

The study also breaks down this demand into separate figures for market-rate, affordable and subsidized rental housing.

<b>Demand for Additional Rental Housing Pine County 2015-2020 by Type</b>				
	<b>Hinckley</b>	<b>N. Pine</b>	<b>Pine City</b>	<b>Pine Co.</b>
Market-rate	10	22	19	51
Affordable	9	13	12	35
Subsidized	8	10	9	28

### Senior Housing Demand

Projections on demand for senior housing are based on more solid numbers, as the bulk of the population of seniors and future-seniors already lives in the County.

The Maxfield formula is longer and more involved for senior housing demand as it takes into account different age levels of seniors, the percentages who qualify for some types of housing based on income. It calculates total demand and then deducts existing and pending units from that total. For the sake of brevity, the entire formula table is not presented here, only the totals needed in each time frame. The figures show a substantial immediate demand for a large number of units. This demand will increase slightly

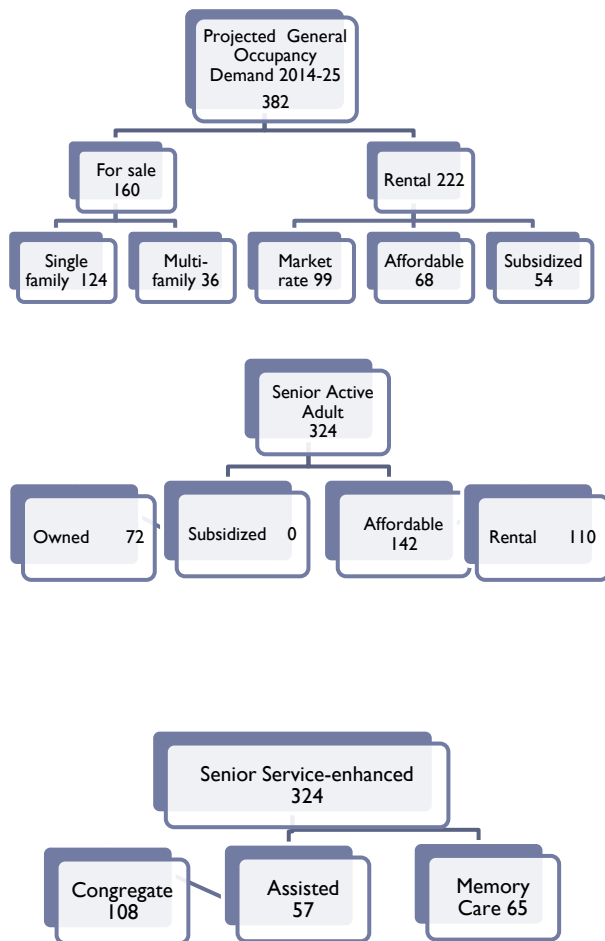
over time as more households move into senior status and as existing senior households need to change their type of accommodations. Note that these formulae do not take into account population growth and deal only with the existing aging population with only a minor influx from out of the market area.

<b>Demand for Senior Housing by Type - 2014</b>				
	<b>Hinckley</b>	<b>N. Pine</b>	<b>Pine City</b>	<b>Pine Co.</b>
2014 Market Rate Active Senior Housing	42	96	91	229
2014 Subsidized /Affordable Rental	38	65	31	132
Congregate Rental	21	47	35	103
Assisted Living	0	39	14	51
Memory Care	11	30	22	62

<b>Demand for Senior Housing by Type - 2020</b>				
	<b>Hinckley</b>	<b>N. Pine</b>	<b>Pine City</b>	<b>Pine Co.</b>
2014 Market Rate Active Senior Housing	45	100	95	240
2014 Subsidized /Affordable Rental	54	119	109	281
Congregate Rental	32	49	37	109
Assisted Living	1	41	16	57
Memory Care	12	31	24	67

<b>Demand for Senior Housing by Type - 2025</b>				
	<b>Hinckley</b>	<b>N. Pine</b>	<b>Pine City</b>	<b>Pine Co.</b>
2014 Market Rate Active Senior Housing	38	85	80	204
2014 Subsidized /Affordable Rental	54	119	108	281
Congregate Rental	22	49	47	118
Assisted Living	1	41	16	56
Memory Care	11	31	23	65

Totaling the demand from the Maxfield study for the entire period of 2014 to 2025 shows the following



### Planned and Pending Developments

Maxfield surveyed real estate industry professionals and developers regarding planned housing or housing developments in the near term in the County. In 2014, there were no developments planned anywhere in the county except for Hinckley and Pine City.

In Hinckley, Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures was planning a 28-unit development on the east side of the Interstate to consist of a mix of affordable (including some for long-term homeless) and market-rate units at reasonable pricing. That plan has moved

forward, and MLCV officials anticipate that construction and 100% occupancy to be complete by April 2018.

In Pine City, there were 10 speculative developments at some stage of planning. Six of those were north of the Snake in the Woodpecker Ridge neighborhood and involved single family lots. Others were to involve multi-family housing, rental housing or assisted living. None has progressed to the construction stage as of this report. Some had not yet progressed to the property acquisition stage.

### Implications for Economic Development

The Office of Economic Development is vitally interested in housing availability as either a stimulant or an impediment to economic and business growth in the County.

Every business owner interviewed by this office over the past 12 months has expressed a frustration at their inability to attract skilled labor. One specifically mentioned the difficulty of recruiting workers to migrate to Pine County for a job. All of them cited the lack of available, quality workforce housing as a barrier to hiring workers and persuading them to move here.

The presence of Pine Technical and Community College can be an antidote to the lack of available workers, and the PCEDO will partner in the future with Pine Tech and the K-12 districts on workforce development.

However, that will not address any housing gap.

As it is a target of this office to create more high-wage jobs – either through industrial recruitment or the growth of existing businesses -- then housing rises in importance as an economic development issue.

### The Population Growth Dilemma

As mentioned early in this report, Pine County grew significantly from 1990 to 2010 – by nearly 40%. That growth curve had flattened slightly over the latter

years, with the county growing only by 12% from 2000 to 2010, compared to the 25% growth from 1990 to 2000. These are historical figures – not estimates or projections.

Time Frame	Pine County Population	Change
1990	21,264	NA
2000	26,530	+25%
2010	29,750	+12%

In calculating future demand, Maxfield used its own estimates for population growth. In the narrative, the study notes that Maxfield researchers decided that the State Demographer projections were ‘overly aggressive.’

Despite the Demographer’s projection of a 3% population growth in their demographic numbers, Maxfield’s researchers chose to use 0% growth in their housing demand projections. This reflects how they scaled back the Demographer’s ‘overly aggressive’ estimates.

The Demographer projects fairly high levels of population growth for the 2015-2025 time frame for all the counties south of Pine.

County	2015 Estimate	2020 Projection	2025 Projection	Chng
Hennepin	1,152,488	1,182,186	1,217,498	+6%
Chisago	60,491	63,671	65,941	+9%
Isanti	41,857	44,172	45,748	+9%
Washington	256,136	268,482	278,841	+9%
Pine	31,532	32,257	32,540	+3%

Seen against this backdrop, the State projections do not appear too overly aggressive for Pine County. Rather, they seem somewhat modest.

If the demand calculations are re-done assuming, with the State Demographer, a 2% growth rate from 2015

to 2020 and a 1% growth from 2020 to 2025, the market demand becomes much more dramatic.

Demand for Additional For-Sale Housing Pine County 2015-2020 Assuming 2% Growth				
	Hinckley	N. Pine	Pine City	Pine Co.
<b>Demand from Growth</b>				
Household growth	49	102	87	239
X % that buy	73%	81.3%	82.6%	81%
= demand from growth	35	83	72	193
<b>Demand from Existing Households</b>				
2014 Total owner households under 65	1,207	2,689	2,515	6,411
X average percent turnover for period	21%	20%	15%	18.3%
X percent desiring to own	7%	7%	7%	7%
= demand from existing household	18	38	26	82
<b>Total Market Demand of For-Sale Housing</b>				
Totals	53	121	98	275

When this is brought forward to 2025 and a modest 1% growth rate is projected, the totals still are compelling.

Demand for Additional For-Sale Housing Pine County 2020-2025 Assuming 1% Population Growth				
	Hinckley	N. Pine	Pine City	Pine Co.
<b>Demand from Growth</b>				
Household growth	25	52	44	122
X % that buy	73%	81.3%	82.6%	81%
= demand from growth	18	42	36	99
<b>Demand from Existing Households</b>				
2014 Total owner households under 65	1,154	2,580	2,430	6,164
X average percent turnover for period	21%	20%	15%	18.3%
X percent desiring to own	7%	7%	7%	7%
= demand from existing household	17	36	26	79
<b>Total Market Demand of For-Sale Housing</b>				
Totals	35	78	62	178

Note that the numbers for 2025 projected demand are on top of the 2020 totals – not inclusive of them.

The same growth estimate also increases the estimated demand for rental housing.

<b>Demand for Additional Rental Housing Pine County 2015-2020 Assuming 2% Population Growth</b>				
	<b>Hinckley</b>	<b>N. Pine</b>	<b>Pine City</b>	<b>Pine Co.</b>
<b>Demand from Growth</b>				
Household growth	49	102	87	239
X % that rent	27%	18.7%	17.4%	19.9%
= demand from growth	13	19	15	48
<b>Demand from Existing Households</b>				
2014 Total renter households under 65	447	618	530	1,595
X average percent turnover for period	61.7%	73.1%	76.1%	76.1%
X percent desiring new rental housing	10%	10%	10%	10%
= demand from existing household	28	45	40	113
<b>Total Market Demand of Rental Housing</b>				
Totals	41	64	55	161

Again, a 1% growth rate is used here to project additional demand by 2025.

<b>Demand for Additional Rental Housing Pine County 2020-2025 Assuming 1% Population Growth</b>				
	<b>Hinckley</b>	<b>N. Pine</b>	<b>Pine City</b>	<b>Pine Co.</b>
<b>Demand from Growth</b>				
Household growth	25	52	44	122
X % that rent	27%	18.7%	17.4%	19.9%
= demand from growth	7	10	8	25
<b>Demand from Existing Households</b>				
2014 Total renter households under 65	427	594	512	1533
X average percent turnover for period	61.7%	73.1%	76.1%	76.1%
X percent desiring new rental housing	10%	10%	10%	10%
= demand from existing household	26	43	39	109
<b>Total Market Demand of Rental Housing</b>				
Totals	33	53	47	134

Because the demand figures for senior housing do not rest on any assumption regarding population growth, those calculations are not modified here.

Comparing the Maxfield 2015-2025 projections (with zero population growth) to the projections assuming 3% population growth shows how much of a gap there might be if growth does occur.

<b>Pine County Housing Demand 2015-2025 Under Two Scenarios</b>		
<b>Type of Housing</b>	<b>Maxfield Projected Demand</b>	<b>Projected Demand with 3% Growth</b>
For sale single or multi family	160	453
Rental – all types	222	295

## Conclusions

Without exaggerating or over-generalizing, it is fair to say that a housing shortage exists across Pine County in every sub-category: market for-sale, market rental, affordable, subsidized, all categories of rental housing and all categories of senior housing. The shortage exists currently and will grow over time as the population demographics grow. Further, if a modest growth rate is factored into the calculations, the shortage will be even more severe over time.

This shortage takes slightly different forms in the different communities. Hinckley's much larger percentage of rental housing creates a somewhat different dynamic there than in the rest of the county.

Anecdotal data from city administrators and planners shows that not much new construction is underway or planned

## Discussion

Some questions to stimulate a conversation at the County Board level about what – if anything – Pine County government should do about this situation:

1. What should or can the County Board's role be in addressing the housing shortage?
2. What tools does the Board have at hand to deal with the housing market?
3. What examples do you know of where County Boards successfully addressed a housing market issue?
4. What do the Board members feel is the most appropriate next step?

## **Appendix G**

### **Housing in Pine County**

#### **Pine County Focus Group Summary**

As part of the Comprehensive Plan Update process, Pine County conducted a survey to better understand concerns residents would like the County to address; housing was identified as key topics. In order to gather more input and feedback, the County organized a focus group in Pine City on October 21st, 2016, that included professionals from several local entities with an interest in housing. The goal of the discussion was to identify concerns and facts related to housing, as well as recommendations and strategies that can be included in the Comprehensive Plan.

The following is a summary of facts, concerns, and recommendations that were raised through the discussion. There were several themes that emerged through the conversation and the summary has been organized accordingly. The themes include: improving existing housing stock and properties, connecting to regional, state and federal resources, transportation, and County staffing needs to develop housing.

#### Facts

- The County has a role to play in housing development in Pine County.
- It can be difficult to attract private developers to create new housing.
- There are many resources available to develop housing and navigating those resources can be complicated.
- Pine County Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) does not have any "in house" employees.
- We have a substantial, though not complete, grasp on the county housing needs as a result of the 2014 Housing Needs Analysis for the East Central Regional Housing Collaborative.
- The 2014 Housing Needs Analysis suggests that Pine County has a housing shortage for all housing types including: market rate, affordable housing, rental housing, and senior housing.
- There are other counties in the region that can serve as models for housing development involvement.
- Research at University of Minnesota Extension suggests that if you provide desirable new housing development in rural Minnesota, there will be a market for it.

#### Concerns

##### **1. County involvement**

- The County has historically had very limited activity in housing development so this will be a new concept to the County and its residents.
- It is difficult know where to focus County effort.
- It is not well understood which entities are working on housing development in the County and where the County fits in amongst those other entities' activities.
- Pine County currently has limited staffing availability and expertise to work on housing.

## **2. Community trends**

- A high rate of blight in the County may hinder the County's ability to attract development.
- Current housing could benefit from updating and rehabilitation.
- The County needs a clear understanding of what type of housing residents and potential residents are looking for in order to meet the needs of the community.
- Housing needs to be approached from a systems perspective so that unintended consequences or failures are not experienced.

## **3. Transportation**

- Pine County is geographically large and very rural so transportation needs must be considered in housing development, particularly for senior, disability, and low income housing.



## Recommendations and Strategies

Targeted Success	Strategies
1. Reduce <b>blighted</b> housing, preserve <b>current</b> housing, and attract <b>new</b> development. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Blighted housing reduces the ability of neighborhoods to attract new development.</li> <li>Existing housing will be critical to maintain for the future.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compile resources and collaborate with stakeholders to connect resources to users.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are a number of state and federal resources available for housing development.</li> <li>Stakeholders include cities, townships, and tribe.</li> <li>Users include: homeowners, cities, townships, and tribe.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Participate in East Central Housing Organization (ECHO) to tune into housing programs and trends               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apply knowledge gained and utilize network to advance Pine County housing</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
2. County has a full grasp of its housing <b>needs</b> and a <b>plan</b> to address it. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The 2014 regional housing study provides great information but there may be more detailed research required to move forward.</li> <li>Well planned development creates and enhances community.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a housing development plan               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Housing plan will identify information gaps for further study and prioritize topics to pursue and/or study.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Hire or contract for a county wide planner</li> </ul>
3. <b>Transportation</b> needs must be integrated in housing development planning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimize transportation barriers by focusing housing development in areas well connected to amenities.</li> </ul>
4. Dedicated <b>housing professional</b> on <b>staff</b> at county or Pine County HRA.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hire a staff person to focus on housing.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff person would develop and implement the housing plan.</li> <li>Support would be provided to Pine County communities in development.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>