Chapter Three:
Pipestone County's Current Land Use

One of the main functions of this comprehensive plan is to guide community leaders when they make land use decisions. This Chapter is intended to provide background information on Pipestone County's current land use.

Over the years, Pipestone County's economy has remained largely agriculturally based. While recent areas of development include wind power and tourism, the County's location within Minnesota has provided it with land that is very conducive to corn and soybean farming. Some of the more undulating lands, however, are more suitable for pasture. Agricultural land uses during the last 20 years have remained productive at the same time little unincorporated urban growth has taken place.

Key Land Use Issues

The Pipestone County Planning Commission and Comprehensive Planning Task force hosted a kickoff meeting to discuss the format of the planning process and to identify preliminary planning issues. The meeting took place on April 16, 2003, at the Pipestone County Courthouse (at 6 p.m.) and had 18 participants. The following issues were discussed:

1. Proximity to Sioux Falls provides an advantage and a disadvantage for Pipestone County (located approximately 30 miles from Jasper in Pipestone County).

    - Advantage – Sioux Falls provides jobs from Pipestone County residents
    - Disadvantage – a lot of commercial business leaves the County for Sioux Falls
    - Advantage – Jasper retaining households and population as a bedroom community for Sioux Falls
    - Advantage – Jasper might develop an industrial park
    - Advantage – Jasper and Pipestone have a potential for growth by providing workers to Sioux Falls

2. Problems with empty farm places in Pipestone County
    - More and more being abandoned all the time
    - Need for maintenance on all township roads, regardless of little population
    - Becoming sites for hog confinement development

3. Split Rock State Park
    - Are there any boundary issues? The proposed boundary expansion before the 2004 legislature is 617 acres.

4. County Parks
    - Lack of County parks
    - Need for recreation?
    - Veterans park is just a rest area – should the County add to it?

5. Trail Development
    - Casey Jones
    - Working with DNR
    - Trails could occur along highway corridors
    - Issues have been raised with garbage pickup, horses, ATV use
    - Major Road crossings are an issue

6. Law Enforcement
    - Drugs and Methane development a concern in rural areas
    - Need for identifying key issues from Law Enforcement (facility issues too)
    - Incarceration population

7. Wind Transmission Lines
    - Lack of transmission capacity is a major issue

8. Mining
    - Gravel pit issues
    - Issues with permitting new areas
    - Issues with dealing with old ones

9. Rural Residences
    - Standard 1 per 40 needs to be reviewed
    - Agricultural Zoning must be discussed

10. Renewable Energy
    - Zoning a key issue
    - Includes: Bio-Mass, Ethanol, Methane Digesters, etc.

11. Small Business out in Rural Areas
    - Need to examine and avoid "spot zoning"
    - Should small businesses be allowed or not?
    - Potential Solution – level I and level II home occupation
    - County attorney interpretation is key

12. Pipestone National Monument
    - Viewsheds and scenic vistas critical to the protection of cultural and ethnographic landscapes
    - Exotic vegetation encroachment
    - Flooding and hydrologic issues arising outside the Monument's boundry

Section One:
Pipestone County's Zoning

Pipestone County's current Zoning Ordinance has been administered since 1979. The preamble to the Zoning Ordinance reads as follows:

An ordinance requiring permits for building, structures and the uses thereof; for land uses; establishing minimum lot sizes, setbacks and side yards; providing for parking and other requirements; and imposing penalties.

The Zoning Ordinance establishes nine separate zoning districts that regulate land use. The following provides a brief description of the intent of each zoning district in Pipestone County. Map 3A displays each of the County's zoning districts.

Flood Plain District (F)

The intent of this district is to encompass all of the properties within Pipestone County that lie within areas prone to flooding. These areas require special regulations, as they are necessary for the minimum protection of the public health and safety, and of property and improvements from hazards and damage resulting from floodwaters.

Agriculture District (A)

The purpose of this district is to maintain, conserve and enhance agriculture land within the County. This land has a history of being tilled and used for agricultural purposes. The Agriculture District protects this land from unnecessary urban encroachment.

Urban Expansion District (A-1)

The primary purpose of this district is to conserve for a period of time, land for farming and other open space land uses located adjacent to or within close proximity of existing incorporated urban centers within Pipestone County. It is the intention of this district to defer urban development in such areas until public utilities and services can be economically and financially reasonable to install. It is also intended that the appropriate planning bodies jointly review the status of all areas within this district once per calendar year. At this time, it shall be determined whether or not any or all of any part of these areas should be transferred to some other appropriate land use.

Rural Residential District (R-A)

It is the intent of this district to provide suitable areas of low density residential development in areas of existing development which occurs in unincorporated areas and where municipal (sewer and water) utilities or an approved community utility system is available or as substantially relates to the urban development pattern set forth in the Land Use Plan for Pipestone County.

Natural Environment Shoreland (NES)

The purpose of this district is to preserve and enhance shoreland areas, retain high quality water standards, protect these areas from pollution, to protect shorelands which are unsuitable for development, to maintain a low density of development, and to maintain high standards of quality for permitted development.

Special Protection Shoreland District (SP)

The intent of this district is to guide the development and utilization of shorelands of public waters for the preservation of water quality, natural characteristics, economic values, and the general health, safety, and welfare of all public waters in the unincorporated areas of the County. Further, the purpose of this district is to manage areas unsuitable for development due to wet soils, steep slopes, or large areas of exposed bedrock; and to manage areas of unique natural and biological characteristics in accordance with compatible uses.

Recreation Commercial District (RC)

This district is intended to provide suitable locations for, and to encourage the development of commercial recreation facilities in these areas of the County which benefit the recreational needs of both residents and tourists, will avoid land use conflicts with residential areas, and restrict incompatible commercial and industrial uses.

Highway Commercial District (HC)

The purpose of this district is to provide a district that allows for a wide range of services and goods in a compact and convenient limited highway-oriented business closely related to existing urban areas or major transportation routes. Such developments are to be developed at standards that will not impair the traffic-carrying capabilities of abutting roads and highways.

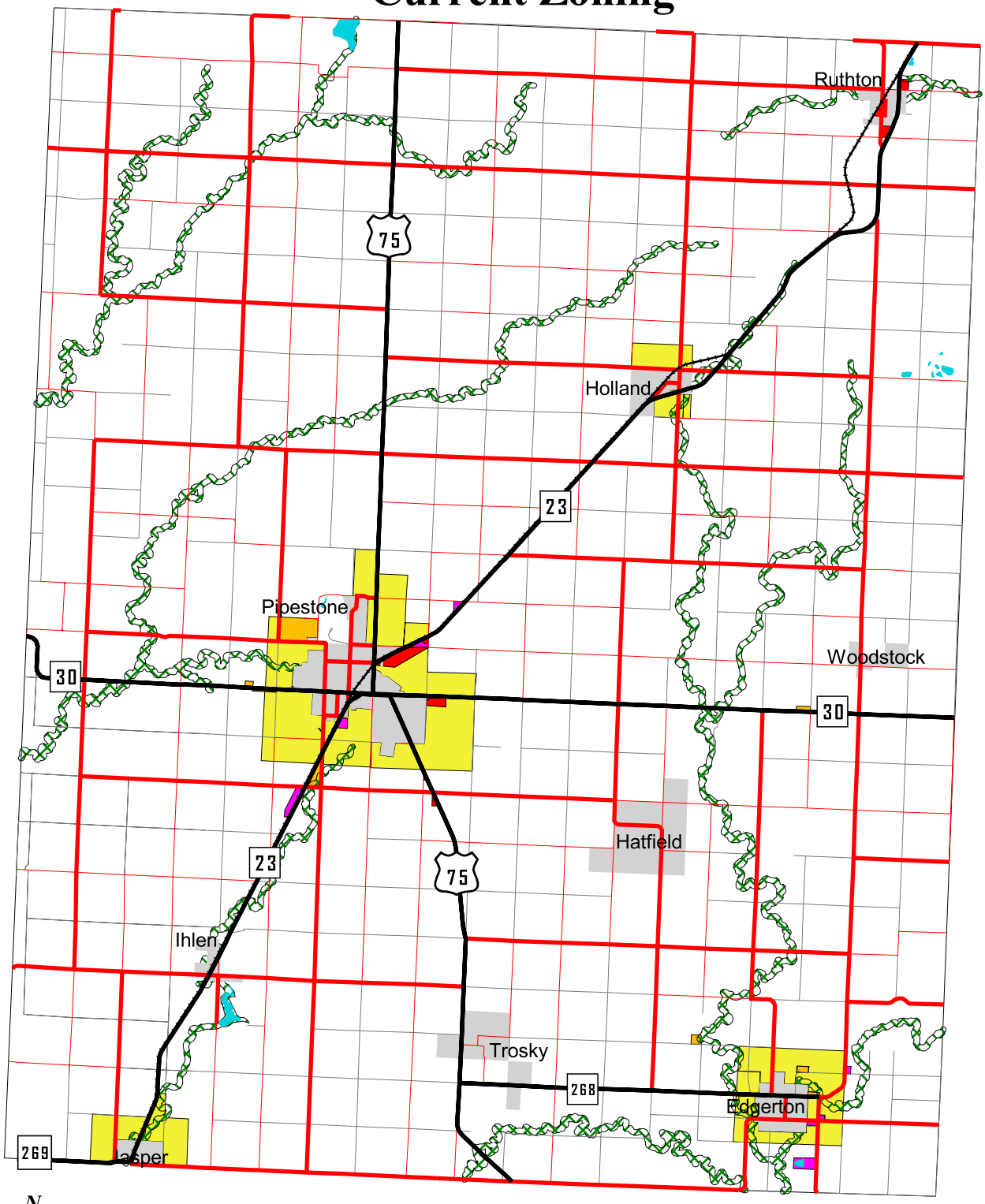
Industry District (I)

The intent of this district is to provide a district that will allow compact, convenient industry adjacent to existing urban areas in the County and will do so at standards that will not impair traffic-carrying capabilities of abutting roads and highways. This district will provide locations for industry that provide both adequate and essential utilities and insure a functional relationship among various types of land use.

Zoning Maps

Map 3A shows the location of each zoning district in Pipestone County, however, a 8½ by 11 zoning map is too small to effectively read. Chapter Five contains zoning maps for each township.

Map 3A: Pipestone County
Current Zoning



N
W
E
S
Southwest Regional Development Commission
Focused on Southwest Minnesota

2 0 2 4 Miles

Current Zoning Districts

Lakes & Wetlands
Municipalities
Pipestone County Zoning Districts
A - Agriculture
A1 - Urban Expansion
RA - Rural Residential
HC - Highway Commercial
I - Industry
Special Protection (overlay)

Railroad
US/State Highways
County State Aid Highways
County Roads
Township Roads

Note: This map is a representation of zoning in place in 2004. Contact Pipestone County Planning/Zoning Administrator for current official zoning district boundaries.

Section Two:
Parks and Trails

Typical county park systems contain three major components: county parks, county/regional trails, and special recreational areas. Pipestone County does not, however, currently possess any County owned parkland with the exception of Veteran's Park, which is considered a wayside rest area. Because of this, the County could attempt to create a diversified group of natural resources and work towards creating a system (all parks) large enough to support a range of recreational activities. Regional trails also have an impact and can be defined as "linear parks" that provide for recreational opportunities and travel that follow natural or man-made features. The Pipestone National Monument, however, serves as the County's largest tourism and recreation activity.

Split Rock State Park

(Park information acquired from www.wildernessinquiry.org)

Pipestone County is home to Split Rock State Park. The park is located 6 miles south of Pipestone on State Highway 23 while the main access point to the park is from Pipestone County Road 20. The park is open year around and has a daily admission pass of $7 or an annual pass of $25. Split Rock Creek is a somewhat secluded park area that is very family oriented. The park possesses a large improved campground site with a fairly modern restroom/shower facility and does include one designated accessible site located near it. In addition, there is a small group camp adjacent to the main campground and a swimming beach and picnic area at the southern end of the park. Finally, there is an accessible fishing pier and vault toilets. New management plans calls for an expansion of the campground by 8 to 10 more sites.

Pipestone National Monument

Visit http://www.cr.nps.gov/NR/travel/pipestone/pnm.htm or www.nps.gov/pipe/history.htm

Pipestone National Monument, created by an act of Congress in 1937, is an area of ethnological, archeological and historical significance that preserves the pipestone quarries in a natural prairie setting. For centuries American Indians have come to this site to quarry the red stone called pipestone. Through the years pipes carved from pipestone have been used for many purposes: to show intention for war or peace, to seal agreements and treaties, for trade, and for religious ceremonies. Today, only American Indians may remove the soft red stone from the area. The entire Monument is approximately 282 acres and has 54 active quarries. In 2003, the Monuments had approximately 83,000 visitors.

Purpose – The legislative purpose of Pipestone National Monument is threefold:

- To administer and protect the pipestone quarries, reserving the quarrying of pipestone for Indians of all tribes.
- To protect cultural and natural resources within the monument boundaries.
- To provide for the enjoyment and benefit of all people.

Significance – Pipestone National Monument is a culturally significant site as the location of red pipestone also known as Catlinite, quarried by American Indians from prehistoric times to the present. In addition, the National Monument is significant in the following ways:

- The national monument is significant as a sacred site for American Indian spiritual and cultural activities.

- Pipestone National Monument is significant for its history of American and European-American Indian relations; including European exploration in the early 1800s, specific quarrying rights reserved by the Treaty of 1858 and later expanded to Indians of all tribes in 1937, and the Pipestone Indian School (1892-1953).

- Pipestone National Monument protects a significant ethnographic landscape consisting of tallgrass prairie, unique geologic features, federally threatened and endangered species, and rare habitats.

A visitor study for the National Monument was completed in 2002. A few the of study's highlights are listed below. The complete results can be viewed at the following website:

http://www.nps.gov/pipe/Pipestone.pdf

- United States visitors were from Minnesota (29%), South Dakota (6%), Nebraska (6%), California (6%), 36 other states and Washington, D.C. Four percent of all visitors were international, with Canada (21%), Israel (18%) and Norway (15%) as the countries most often represented.

- Most visitors (81%) were visiting Pipestone NM for the first time during the past 5 years. Ninetyfive percent of the visitors spent less than one day in the monument. Forty-one percent of visitors stayed overnight away from home within 25 miles of Pipestone NM.

- In and outside the monument, the average visitor group expenditure during this visit was $106. The median visitor group expenditure (50% of groups spent more and 50% of groups spent less) was $60. The average per capita expenditure was $44.

A Monumental Planning Process…

The Pipestone National Monument is in the process of developing a General Management Plan that will outline the purpose and direction of park actions for the next 15-20 years. A draft of the General Management Plan and associated Environmental Impact Statement will be available for public review and comment by late Fall 2004. For more information, call 507-825-2046.

Trails

Presently, Pipestone County has all or part of five trail systems. These trails include the following:

- **Pipestone Walking Trail**
  This is a one mile paved trail on the right of way connecting the north edge of Pipestone to Minnesota West Community and Technical College and the Good Samaritan Village Retirement Center.

- **Pipestone National Monument Trail**
  This trail is a three-quarter mile paved walking trail at the National Monument.

- **Split Rock Creek State Park Trail**
  This trail consists of miles of grass walking trails within the boundaries of the State Park.

  During the public review process of developing this plan, the DNR added the following comments:

  > "Part of the Split Rock Creek State Park management plan is to develop a horse camp and day use area with trail in the park. An extension to the Casey Jones Trail to the park would provide horse riders with much greater access to an extended trail system for recreational opportunities."

- **Casey Jones Trail**
  This trail includes 10 miles of DNR owned railroad bed from Pipestone to Woodstock. This property is clear of fence and is occasionally groomed for use by the Snow Blazers Snowmobile Club. The Casey Jones State Trail was the first legislatively authorized State Trail. Thirteen miles of abandoned railroad grade were acquired in 1967. Because of the trail's railroad heritage, it was given the name of renowned American railroad engineer – Casey Jones. Trail users travel up and over a significant landscape feature, Buffalo Ridge while the location of the trail is home to a large amount of native prairie remnants. The Casey Jones State Trail legislative authorization was extended during a 2002 session to include the following segments: a connection from Lake Shetek State Park northeast to Walnut Grove; an existing asphalt loop trail from Lake Shetek State Park to Currie and End-O-Line Park; and Pipestone to Split Rock Creek State Park.

  During the public review process of developing this plan, the DNR added the following comments:

  > "The Casey Jones Trail development is proceeding, part of the trail system is to connect Split Rock Creek State Park with the trail. This would increase the recreational opportunities for visitors to the park and the region. Part of the problem is that there are no abandoned railroad tracks between Pipestone and Spilt Rock Creek State Park."

- **Kiwanis Fitness Trail**
  This is a paved walking trail that is complete with exercise stations located in Pipestone City's Westview Park.

The Southwest Minnesota Regional Trails Plan (2000) identified recent studies that show the use of outdoor trail systems is on the rise. According to a 1990 Harris poll, it was estimated that 73 percent of adults in the US walked outdoors, most notably for exercise. It is also believed that local economies receive stimulation when communities respond to the needs of trail users. Pipestone County should encourage the development of trails and trail heads within its borders, as well as trail connections with those of neighboring counties. Potential trailheads that were identified in the Regional Trails Plan are also shown and include the following (an asterisk indicates an existing trail):

- Downtown Pipestone*
- Edgerton
- Jasper Quarry
- Split Rock State Park*
- Woodstock
- Pipestone National Monument*

During the public review process of developing this plan, the DNR added the following comments regarding the Split Rock State Park:

> "As more of the land owned by the state is converted back into prairies and the current grazing leases run out, the management plan calls for the development of more hiking and horse trails within the boundary of the park."

The Southwest Minnesota Regional Trails Plan did not identify potential future trail developments for Pipestone County. However, there were potential corridors for pedestrian and bicycle or multiuse trails and routes identified in the 1999 planning process and in the January 2000 comment period of the Regional Trails Plan. These included:

- Pipestone/National Monument to Woodstock to Murray County Boundary
- Pipestone/National Monument to Lake Benton/Hole in the Mountain Park
- Along the Wind Turbine Corridor
- Pipestone/National Monument to Split Rock State Park

During the public review process of developing this plan, the DNR added the following comments regarding the creation of a trail between Pipestone and the State Park:

> "A trail that connects Pipestone with Split Rock Creek State Park would be a great benefit to the park. It would increase day use at the park and would provide visitor to the region with greater access to recreational opportunities."

Section Three:
Pipestone County's Housing

According to population projections illustrated in Chapter One, Pipestone County is likely to continue to losing population for the next couple of decades. Conversely, the County could see an increase in the number of households in the future. The need for more housing despite a loss of population is best explained by a national trend of smaller families, households without children, an increase in teen parenting, and an increase in the rate of divorce – meaning that while there are fewer people, those fewer people are actually occupying more households. In addition, the County continues to remain proactive in terms of economic development, this will continue to bring added employment to the county and hence, a greater need for affordable housing. To adequately address these needs, the County should focus residential land use efforts on a wide variety of housing stock for all income and age groups. The completion of housing studies every five years that identify the location and type of housing needs should be encouraged.

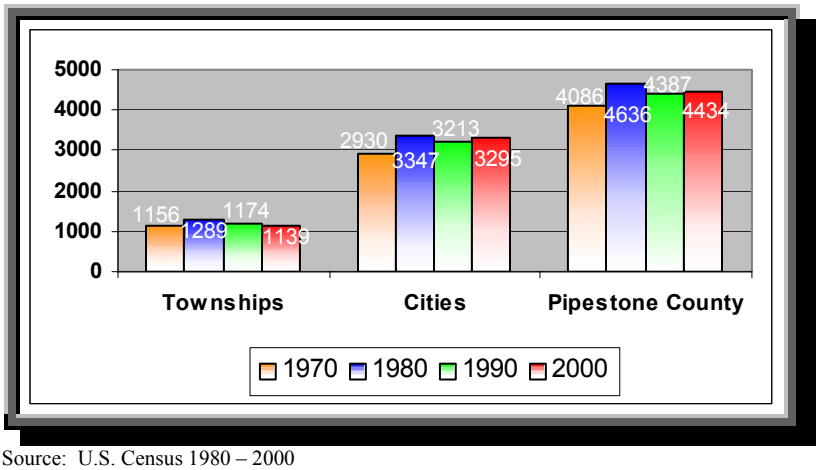
Existing Housing

Difference Between Housing Units and Households

The U.S. Census reports statistics for both total housing units and households. Housing units are the total number of liveable dwellings that are available. Households refer to the total number of occupied units.

Census 2000 provides the most current count of housing within Pipestone County. The Census reported that there were 4,434 housing units in Pipestone County in 2000; this includes all housing units (single family units, mobile homes, rental units and vacant dwellings). The 1970 Census reported that there were 4,086 housing units in Pipestone County. The 1980 Census reported 4,636 housing units and the 1990 Census reported 4,387 units. This means the County lost 249 housing units from 1980 to 1990 (-5.4%) but gained 47 housing units from 1990 to 2000 (1.1%). Overall, the number of housing units increased by 348 since 1970, but declined by 202 units (-4.4%) from 1980 to 2000. Chart 3A: compares the total number of housing units for all of Pipestone County townships, cities, and the whole County from 1970 to 2000.

Chart 3A:
Total Housing Units – Townships, Cities, County (1970 – 2000)



Source: U.S. Census 1980 – 2000

Chart 3A illustrates that far more housing units were located within the municipalities than in the townships during all three decades. The number of housing units in all Pipestone County townships decreased by 150 total units (-11.6%) from 1980 to 2000. In comparison, the number of housing units in all of Pipestone County's communities decreased by 52 total units (-1.6%) – but note that there was an increase in total units from 1990 to 2000. One factor contributing to the higher numbers of housing units within the communities as opposed to the townships could be the lack of developable lakes, wetlands, and forest areas within the County. Often times, these types of natural features are attractive areas to build homes.

Table 3A:
1970 to 2000 Housing Unit Growth (Pipestone Communities)

City	1970	1980	1990	2000	Change	Percent
Edgerton	368	442	460	477	109	29.62%
Hatfield	29	31	26	25	-4	-13.79%
Holland	107	111	113	112	5	4.67%
Ihlen	43	50	45	44	1	2.33%
Jasper	284	277	249	275	-9	-3.17%
Pipestone	1826	2156	2055	2097	271	14.84%
Ruthton	152	156	143	145	-7	-4.61%
Trosky	41	47	45	48	7	17.07%
Woodstock	80	77	77	72	-8	-10.00%
Totals	**2,930**	**3,347**	**3,213**	**3,295**	**365**	**12.46%**

Source: U.S. Census 1970 - 2000

Table 3B:
1970 to 2000 Housing Unit Growth (Pipestone Townships)

Township	1970	1980	1990	2000	Change	Percent
Aetna	93	107	90	81	-12	-12.90%
Altona	86	88	79	69	-17	-19.77%
Burke	79	98	89	88	9	11.39%
Eden	114	125	113	103	-11	-9.65%
Elmer	103	107	107	92	-11	-10.68%
Fountain Prairie	83	92	77	73	-10	-12.05%
Grange	91	95	91	92	1	1.10%
Gray	101	96	96	92	-9	-8.91%
Osborne	102	132	116	127	25	24.51%
Rock	79	87	75	74	-5	-6.33%
Sweet	116	136	130	134	18	15.52%
Troy	109	126	111	114	5	4.59%
Totals	**1156**	**1289**	**1174**	**1139**	**-17**	**-1.47%**

Source: U.S. Census 1970 – 2000

Tables 3A and 3B provide a breakdown of the number of housing units from 1970 to 2000 in each of the individual townships and cities in Pipestone County (refer to Map 1A in the Executive Summary to find the location of each city and township).

According to Tables 3A and 3B, there were many increases and decreases in total housing units per jurisdiction during this time span. The two communities that experienced the largest housing growth were Pipestone and Edgerton while the fastest growing were Edgerton (29.62%) and Trosky (17.07%) increasing by 109 units and 7 units respectively. The average housing growth was 12.46 percent for all communities as 365 units were added from 1970 to 2000. Likewise, the largest increases within the townships occurred in Osborne and Sweet. These two also had the fastest increases in housing units, increasing by 25 units (24.51%) and 18 units (15.52%) respectively. The Pipestone County townships decreased in total units on average at a rate of 1.47 percent losing 17 total units. It should be noted that in some cases, large percents occur because the total numbers are relatively small.

In 2000, 92 percent of the total housing units in Pipestone County were occupied (leaving 8 percent vacant). Of the 4,069 units being occupied in 2000, 72 percent were owner occupied while 20 percent were renter occupied. Based on data provided from the 2000 Census, single-family housing made up approximately 84 percent of the total housing stock in Pipestone County. Table 3C compares these and other housing characteristics for Pipestone County and the State of Minnesota based on the 2000 Census. As previously stated, 72 percent of the housing stock in Pipestone County was Owner Occupied while 84 percent were single family units. In comparison, the State had 68 percent owner occupied units and 68 percent single-family units.

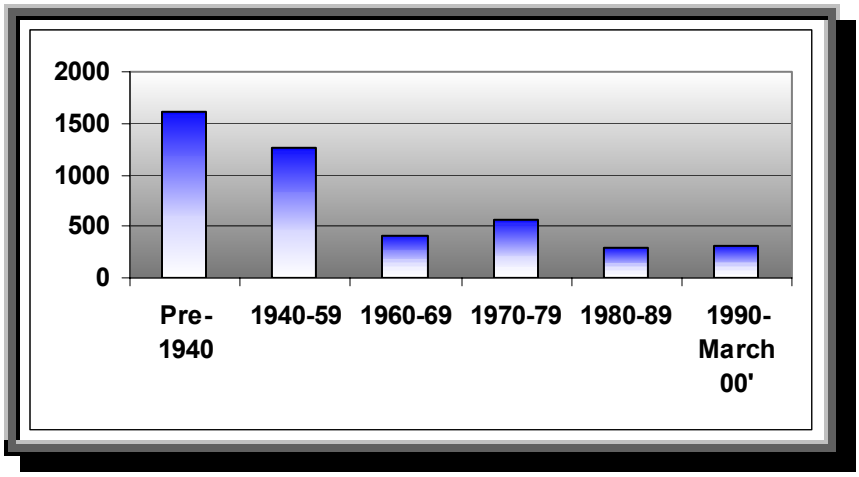
Table 3C:
Housing Characteristics (2000)

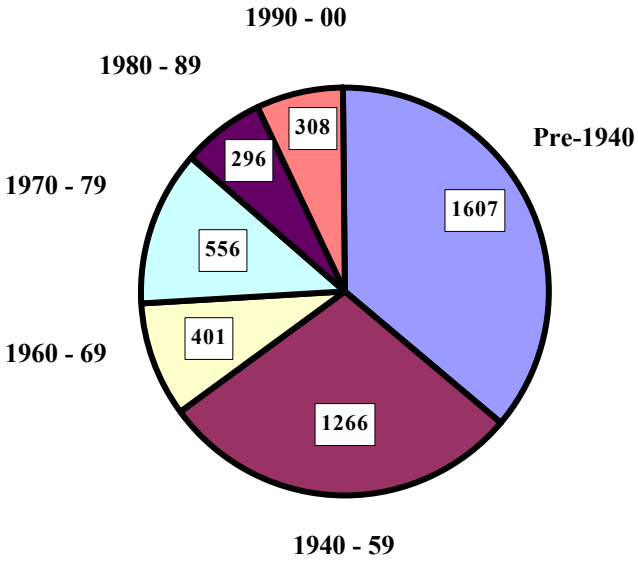
	Pipestone		Minnesota	
Characteristic	**Number**	**Percent**	**Number**	**Percent**
Occupancy				
Occupied Units	4,069	92%	1,895,127	92%
Vacant Units	365	8%	170,819	8%
Occupancy Status				
Owner Occupied Units	3,173	72%	1,412,865	68%
Renter Occupied Units	896	20%	482,262	23%
Type of Unit				
1-unit, detached	3,724	84%	1,399,993	68%
1-unit, attached	67	2%	107,385	5%
2 units	71	2%	62,137	3%
3 or 4 units	99	2%	48,235	2%
5 to 9 units	106	2%	49,307	2%
10 to 19 units	81	2%	79,019	4%
20 or more units	138	3%	220,976	11%
Mobile Home	148	3%	93,618	5%
Boat, RV, van, etc.	0	0%	5,276	0%

Source: 2000 Census

Chart 3B illustrates housing construction by decade for Pipestone County. As the Chart illustrates, a large portion of Pipestone housing was built before 1940 (36 percent of total housing units) and during the time period from 1940 to 1959 (a 20-year period comprising 29 percent of total housing units). The same information is also printed in the form of a pie chart.

Chart 3B:
Pipestone County Construction by Decade
Through 2000 (line graph and pie chart)





Increases in community housing units and decreases in township housing units are going to have a continued impact on the County's overall land use patterns. Tables 3D and 3E compare housing unit densities for all of Pipestone County's communities and townships and Pipestone County as a whole from 1970 to 2000. The densities were determined by dividing the total number of housing units for each entity by the land area in square miles for each political subdivision. The land area used to determine the housing unit densities was based on the square miles of each entity in 1990 (the most recent data available). It should be noted that the actual size in square miles for some cities and townships may have changed between 1970 and 2000.

The use of the 1990 land area size in square miles for each city and township should, however, help identify where the highest concentrations of housing are located throughout the County.

Table 3D:
1970 to 2000 Housing Density Comparison (Pipestone Cities)

City (1990 Land Area in Square Miles)	Housing Units Per Square Mile				Change	
	1970	1980	1990	2000	Number	Percent
Edgerton (1.1)	335	402	418	434	99	29.55%
Hatfield (2.8)	10	11	9	9	-1	-10.00%
Holland (.9)	119	123	126	124	5	4.20%
Ihlen (.4)	108	125	113	110	2	1.85%
Jasper (1)	284	277	249	275	-9	-3.17%
Pipestone (4.6)	397	469	447	456	59	14.86%
Ruthton (.7)	217	223	204	207	-10	-4.61%
Trosky (1.7)	24	28	26	28	4	16.67%
Woodstock (.6)	133	128	128	120	-13	-9.77%
City Average	**181**	**198**	**191**	**196**	**15**	**8.36%**

Source: U.S. Census 1970 - 2000

Table 3E:
1970 to 2000 Housing Density Comparison (Pipestone Townships)

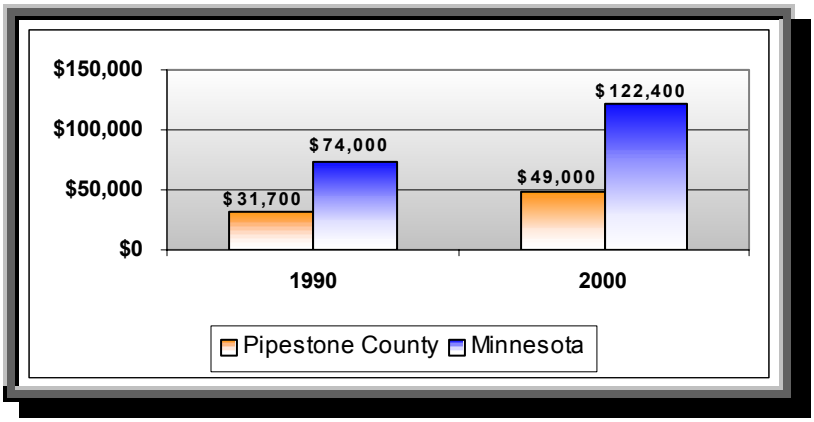
Township (1990 Land Area in Square Miles)	Housing Units Per Square Mile				Change	
	1970	1980	1990	2000	Number	Percent
Aetna (43.04)	2.2	2.5	2.1	1.9	-0.3	-14%
Altona (35.40)	2.4	2.5	2.2	1.9	-0.5	-21%
Burke (34.59)	1.8	2.3	2.1	2.0	0.2	11%
Eden (43)	2.7	2.9	2.6	2.4	-0.3	-13%
Elmer (35.23)	2.9	3.0	3.0	2.6	-0.3	-10%
Fountain Prairie (37.09)	2.2	2.5	2.1	2.0	-0.2	-9%
Grange (36.14)	2.5	2.6	2.5	2.5	0.0	0%
Gray (33.10)	3.1	2.9	2.9	2.8	-0.3	-10%
Osborne (34.98)	2.9	3.8	3.3	3.6	0.7	24%
Rock (35.9)	2.2	2.4	2.1	2.1	-0.1	-5%
Sweet (41.52)	2.8	3.3	3.1	3.2	0.4	14%
Troy (43.66)	2.5	2.9	2.5	2.6	0.1	4%
Township Average	**2.5**	**2.8**	**2.5**	**2.5**	**0.0**	**0%**

Source: U.S. Census 1970 - 2000

Tables 3D and 3E reveal that, from 1970 to 2000, Pipestone County's communities experienced an 8.36 percent increase in housing unit density, while the townships remained stable. The largest increase in housing unit development in the communities was found in the county's two largest communities of Pipestone and Edgerton. The lack of substantial changes in the number of total units within the County's townships indicate that no major land use changes should have been required as a result of an increased or a decreased number of housing units (however, changes may have occurred in relation to increased animal confinement buildings or feedlots where housing unit densities were already low).

Chart 3C shows the median housing values for owner occupied housing within Pipestone County as well as the State of Minnesota for the years 1990 and 2000. The median value of housing in Pipestone County increased from 1990 to 2000 by $17,300 (54.6%) while the median value for housing in Minnesota increased by $48,400 (65.4%). The 2000 median value of housing in the County was 40 percent of the State's median value, down from 42.8 percent in 1990.

Chart 3C:
1990 – 2000 Pipestone/Minnesota Housing Values



U.S. Census: 1990 and 2000

Section Four:
Economic Development

Within the realms of both city and county government, the responsibility of courting and retaining successful commercial or industrial enterprises is perhaps one of the most difficult types of tasks either form of government will have to face. These developments are so coveted because they not only bring jobs and people to an area, but they provide a much-needed increase to the local tax base both directly and indirectly. As such, economic development can be best defined as those actions and activities that bring additional monies into the area.

Employment Data

During the recorded time span used for this analysis, Pipestone County generally realized decreasing unemployment rates. Table 3F represents employment trends in Pipestone County during the first part of the 2000's. Steady decreases in unemployment were realized until the beginning of 2003 when the County experienced a rise of 83 unemployed persons, an increase of 1.7 percent in the unemployment rate. The prosperous beginning to the decade could have been attributed to the new wind farm developments occurring within the County. The sudden downturn within the economy is not unique to Pipestone County, as the National economy has been stagnant for the past year and a half.

Table 3F:
Employment Trends (2000 – 2003)

Year	Labor Force	No. Employed	No. Unemployed	Pipestone	Unemployment Rates	
					MN	US
2000	5,146	4,943	202	3.90%	3.30%	4.00%
2001	5,246	5,066	181	3.40%	3.70%	4.70%
2002	5,379	5,222	157	2.90%	4.40%	5.80%
2003 (Jan.)*	5,215	4,975	240	4.60%	5.10%	6.50%
Change						
2000-2001	100	123	-21	-0.50%	0.40%	0.70%
2001-2002	133	156	-24	-0.50%	0.70%	1.10%
2000-2002	233	279	-45	-1.00%	1.10%	1.80%
2002-2003	-164	-247	83	1.70%	0.70%	0.70%

Source: Minnesota Department of Economic Security
*The years 2000 – 2002 are annual averages; the year 2003 is for the month of January only.

Table 3G shows employment by industry from 1996 through 2000. This information represents the number of jobs within Pipestone County regardless of where the employees live. This is regarded as place of work data. Covered employment excludes some categories of workers such as self-employed persons, railroad workers, persons employed in very small farming operations, and some others.

Covered employment includes private sector employees as well as state, county and municipal government employees. The data from each year represents an annual average. From 1996 through 2000, the only declines occurred in the retail trade and government sectors, which decreased by 48 persons (-6%) and 15 persons (-2%) respectively. The largest growth in terms of new workers added occurred in the wholesale trade and manufacturing sectors, which grew by 110 persons (47%) and 51 persons (6%) respectively.

Table 3G:
Employment by Industry (1996 – 2000)

Industry	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	1996-1998		1998-2000		1996-2000	
						#	%	#	%	#	%
Ag, Forestry, Fishing, Mining	nd	nd	nd	nd	189	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd
Construction	135	143	161	164	164	26	19%	3	2%	29	21%
Manufacturing	809	773	822	783	860	13	2%	38	5%	51	6%
TCPU*	141	155	155	158	162	14	10%	7	5%	21	15%
Wholesale Trade	234	249	224	228	344	-10	-4%	120	54%	110	47%
Retail Trade	840	815	818	786	792	-22	-3%	-26	-3%	-48	-6%
FIRE**	163	178	183	169	167	20	12%	-16	-9%	4	2%
Services	609	622	657	654	655	48	8%	-2	0%	46	8%
Government	876	875	854	846	861	-22	-3%	7	1%	-15	-2%
All Industries	**3,807**	**3,810**	**3,874**	**3,788**	**4,194**	**67**	**2%**	**320**	**8%**	**387**	**10%**

*TCPU includes Transportation, Communication, and Public Utilities
**FIRE includes Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate
Source: Minnesota Department of Economic Security

Between 1996 and 1998, the total number of jobs increased by 67 positions, an increase of 2 percent. The largest number of jobs was added in the services and construction sectors, which increased by 48 employees and 26 employees respectively. The largest percentage increases can be found in the construction and FIRE sectors, which increased by 19 percent and 12 percent respectively. The largest employment declines were found in the retail trade and government sectors, which decreased by 22 positions each (-3 percent for each).

Employment growth continued from 1998 to 2000. Overall, 320 new jobs were added, however, the numbers are slightly skewed here because year 2000 was the only year in which the "Ag, Forestry, Fishing, and Mining" sector had retrievable data. Taking this sector out of the equation, 131 new jobs were added during this time. The largest increase came in the wholesale trade sector, which increased by 120 jobs (an increase of 54 percent). The largest decrease came in the retail trade sector, which decreased by 26 positions. The largest percentage decrease came in the finance, insurance, and real estate (FIRE) sector, which decreased by 9 percent.

The data collected from the entire time span (1996 to 2000) shows that Pipestone County increased in total employment by 198 positions (387 counting the positions in the Ag sector), this was a growth rate of approximately 5.2 percent (10 percent counting the positions in the Ag sector) over the 4 year period. The largest total gains came in the wholesale trade sector, which increased by 110 positions, a growth rate of 47 percent. The largest decrease came in the retail trade sector, which lost 48 positions, a decline of 6 percent. The only other sector to lose positions was the government sector, which lost 15, a decline of 2 percent.

The change in dependence on different industrial sectors has been difficult for most rural areas in southwest Minnesota due to continual population declines. The rural workforce as a whole is growing, but many counties lag state averages in terms of job growth. Table 3H shows the number of people employed within the southwest region and compares that to the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area, the state of Minnesota and the U.S.

Table 3H:
Employment and Establishments (1998)

Area	Employment	Establishments
Southwest	120,432	8,197
Twin Cities	1,518,653	76,909
MN	2,493,478	141,784
U.S.	124,150,723	7,379,399

Source: Department of Trade and Economic Development

Table 3I shows employment in several sectors for the southwest region and its growth rates from 1990 to 1998. It also compares these growth rates to that of the metro area, the state of Minnesota, and the Nation.

Table 3I:
Employment and Growth Rates
by Sector (1990 – 1998)

Sector	Employment:	Employment Growth Rate, 1990 - 1998			
	Southwest	Southwest	Twin Cities	MN	US
Services	37,382	129.60%	58.40%	29.80%	72.80%
Manufacturing	30,291	34.90%	2.40%	10.40%	-1.50%
Retail Trade	21,582	11.40%	14.40%	16.80%	13.70%
Wholesale Trade	7,454	8.80%	18.60%	20.50%	9.80%
Construction	5,361	33.20%	27.90%	26.70%	21.30%
Transportation	4,698	72.70%	38.70%	18.90%	41.20%
Finance	4,553	24%	27.10%	25.50%	10.70%
Public Admin.	4,394	N/A	N/A	8.30%	N/A
Agriculture	1,905	N/A	N/A	37.80%	24.30%
Mining	15	-11.80%	33.50%	N/A	-17.30%

Source: Department of Trade and Economic Development

Despite the problems of decreased employment and agricultural dependence, there are various opportunities for economic growth in Minnesota's rural areas, and Pipestone County.

Table 3J:
Fastest-Growing Industries
(1990 – 1998)

Industry	Southwest	Employment Growth Rate			
	Employment	Southwest	Twin Cities	MN	U.S.
Plastics Products	308	450%	27%	34%	14%
Livestock	1,503	78%	-38%	61%	22%
Agricultural Services	714	74%	31%	35%	38%
Lumber Products	1,104	73%	-48%	23%	11%
Social Services	4,004	68%	39%	40%	72%
Business Services	1,462	67%	70%	74%	65%
Misc. Repair Services	447	66%	-17%	-5%	-2%
Local/Suburb Transp.	709	62%	19%	28%	87%
Real Estate	575	47%	14%	21%	16%
Membership Org.	1,220	42%	8%	18%	16%

Source: Department of Trade and Economic Development

According to Minnesota Planning, total employment in Minnesota is expected to increase from approximately 2.7 million in 2000 to nearly 3.4 million in 2030, an increase of 26 percent (see Table 3K). Pipestone County on the other hand is expected to lose 9 percent of its workforce (477 workers) during the same time period. Meanwhile, Minnesota Planning has predicted that Region 8 (counties of Cottonwood, Jackson, Lincoln, Lyon, Murray, Nobles, Pipestone, Redwood and Rock) will increase its workforce 2.78 percent during the next 30 years, a growth of 1,757 workers.

Table 3K:
Labor Force Projections (2000 – 2030)

Area	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	% Change
Pipestone	5,077	5,020	4,990	4,890	4,770	4,700	4,600	-9.00%
Region 8	63,203	65,060	66,390	66,650	66,090	65,340	64,960	2.78%
Minnesota	2,691,709	2,925,900	3,112,800	3,225,100	3,287,100	3,329,500	3,385,200	26.00%

Source: MN Planning

Income information provided by the U.S. Census is a good indicator of a County's economic condition. Per capita income is the mean income computed for every person in a specified geographic area. For household income, the median is based on the distribution of the total number of housing units, including those occupants that have no income. Table 3L shows that according to the 1990 Census, Pipestone County compared slightly less favorably than the Region 8 average. In all three categories listed, median household income, per capita income, and median family income, Pipestone County ranked lower than the Region 8 average.

Table 3L:
Comparative County Income Levels (1990 – 2000)

County	1990 Median Household Income	2000 Median Household Income	1990 Per Capita Income	2000 Per Capita Income	1990 Median Family Income	2000 Median Family Income
Cottonwood	$21,661	$31,943	$10,335	$16,647	$26,756	$40,237
Jackson	$23,157	$36,746	$11,287	$17,499	$28,370	$43,426
Lincoln	$19,211	$31,607	$9,616	$16,009	$24,286	$38,605
Lyon	$24,689	$38,996	$11,121	$18,013	$30,582	$48,512
Murray	$22,673	$34,966	$10,871	$17,936	$26,889	$40,893
Nobles	$22,942	$35,684	$10,860	$16,987	$28,427	$43,076
Pipestone	$20,737	$31,909	$10,050	$16,450	$26,995	$40,133
Redwood	$22,827	$37,352	$10,489	$18,903	$27,182	$46,250
Rock	$24,483	$38,102	$11,383	$17,411	$28,811	$44,296
Region 8 Avg.	**$22,487**	**$35,256**	**$10,668**	**$17,317**	**$27,589**	**$42,825**

Source: 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census

According to Census 2000, Pipestone County did not fare much better when compared to the Region 8 average. Pipestone County again ranked lower than the average in every category. In terms of average weekly wages in the year 2000, Pipestone County ranks fairly well as it has the 4th highest average weekly wage in Region 8 (only Lyon, Nobles and Redwood Counties have higher average weekly wages).

It should be noted that wages are typically higher in rural counties that surround the metropolitan area and in the northern and eastern parts of the state where a greater amount of economic diversification has occurred. During the 1980's, the rural areas of Minnesota were not only decreasing in terms of economic potential, but they were losing population and a skilled workforce.

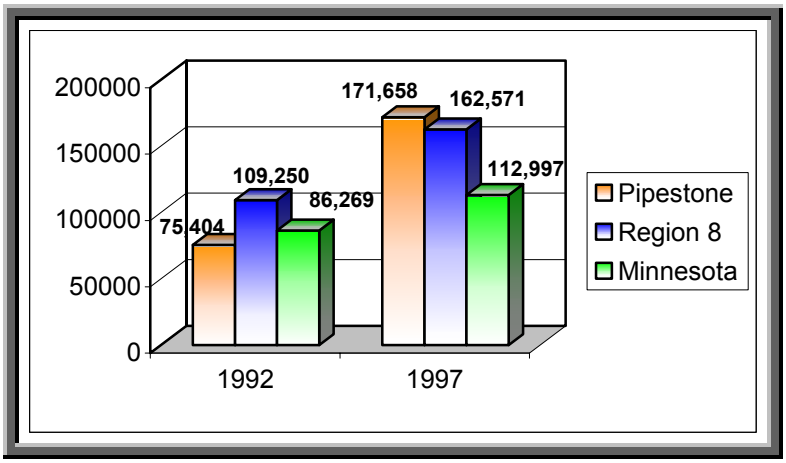
Although Pipestone County is still experiencing a decreasing population, other rural areas adjacent to Pipestone are experiencing population increases and job growth. Pipestone County can continue to offer a supply of qualified workers and will be able to sustain employment in various industrial and economic sectors both within the County and in neighboring counties. By continuing to improve telecommunications and information technology, economic growth will have a greater chance of progressing forward and Pipestone County can continue to move towards a sustainable economic future.

Section Five:
Agriculture

The economy of Pipestone County remains heavily dependent upon agriculture. While the County does have a large portion of prime farmland, this dependence can be a problem for the County, as agriculture no longer supports as many jobs as it once did due to a variety of factors. Employment within the agriculture sector has decreased over the last few decades and this trend will likely continue in the future. Farmers remain a unique group of laborers who actually produce a product incurring retail costs but sell the product they produce at wholesale prices. To remedy this, government programs/incentives typically encourage farmers to produce more, further lowering the value of their commodity. In an attempt to spread costs, farmers continually strive for more and more land. In terms of economies of scale, this makes it virtually impossible for the medium sized farmer to compete without having an "off-farm" income. Small-scale "hobby farms" are able to stay in operation usually due to a special "niche market" (i.e. organic farming, vegetables for the local farmers market, or Christmas trees, etc) or also because of a significant amount of off-farm income.

According to figures from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the total market value of Pipestone County Ag products sold in 1997 exceeded a $170,000 average per farm. In comparison, the average total per farm for all nine counties in Region 8 was just over $160,000 while the average total per farm for all of the counties in Minnesota was just over $110,000. Chart 3D compares the average change in market value of Ag products sold per farm for Pipestone County, Region 8, and Minnesota from 1992 to 1997. The chart illustrates that the average market value of products sold from Pipestone County increased by $96,254 (an increase of 128 percent!) from 1992 to 1997. The chart also shows that the average market value of products sold per farm from Region 8 increased by $53,321 (an increase of 49 percent) while the average for all Minnesota farms was an increase of $26,728 (a 31 percent increase) during the same time span.

Chart 3D:
Value of Agricultural Products Sold
1992 - 1997



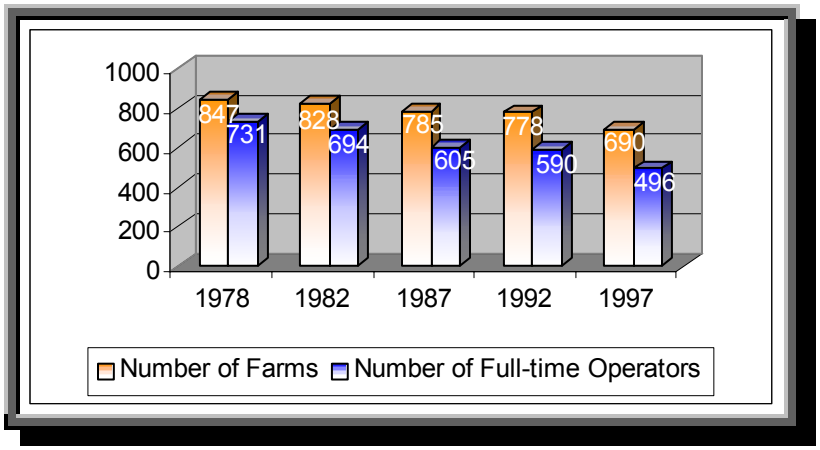
Source: U.S. Agricultural Census 1992 – 1997

In 1997, cropland sales accounted for 30 percent of the market value of Pipestone County agricultural products sold while livestock sales accounted for 70 percent. In comparison, 51

percent of agricultural products sold in Minnesota were from cropland while 49 percent was from livestock. The higher percentage of livestock sales in Pipestone County in comparison to Minnesota indicates that animal feedlots are an important part of the agricultural activity in the County.

As previously mentioned, agriculture remains a primary part of the Pipestone economy, however, the number of people the Ag industry supports and the total number of farms operating within the County is declining. Chart 3E illustrates that between 1978 and 1997, the number of farms decreased from 847 to 690 (a loss of 18.5 percent). In addition to the reduction in the number of farms in Pipestone County, the number of full-time farm operators has decreased from 731 in 1978 to 496 in 1997 (a decrease of 32 percent).

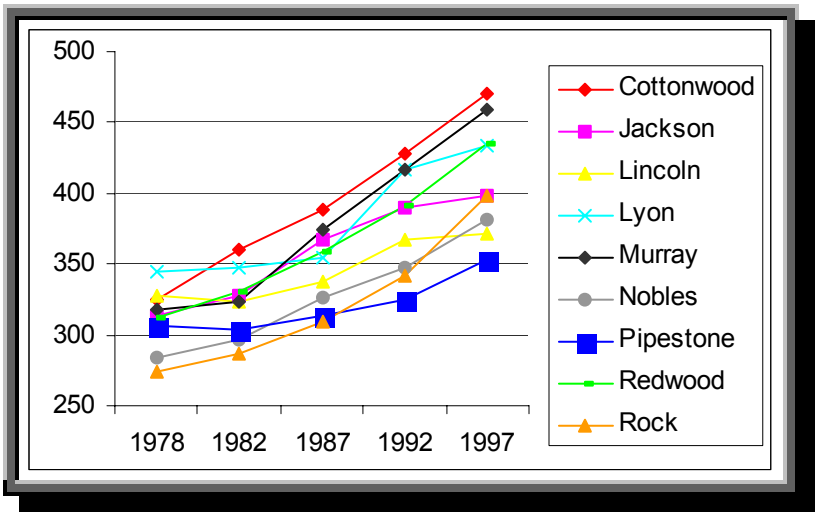
Chart 3E:
Total Farms and Farm Operators (1978 – 1997)



Source: U.S. Agricultural Census 1978 – 1997

The loss of farms and farm operators is a common trend and concern across Minnesota as well as all rural areas in the Midwest. The loss of farmers within Pipestone County is generally due to a changing agricultural industry. Farming operations have generally seen a trend towards increasing specialization and falling away from diversity. With the dependence on government payments, farmers are basically encouraged to farm as much land as possible, thereby increasing their government payments and spreading out the costs of inputs and machinery over more acres. This displaces families away from rural areas as the younger populations move off the farm to look for educational or employment opportunities elsewhere. With the lack of demand for farmers, comes an increased strain on municipalities. Not only are there less total people around to support local businesses, but also some farmers need to find a supplemental income and look for employment within nearby municipalities increasing competition for available jobs.

Chart 3F:
Average Farm Size in Acres (1978 – 1997)



Source: U.S. Agricultural Census, 1978 – 1997

Through the decrease in the number of operators, the average farm size within Pipestone County continues to increase. The average farm size per operator increased from 306 in 1978 to 353 in 1997. Chart 3F illustrates the change in farm sizes for Pipestone County as well as the rest of the counties in Region 8 from 1978 to 1997.

This increase in average size farms is most highly attributable to the loss of midsize farm operators as well as mid size farmers consolidating or adding land to their current operations. Small-scale farms (farm operators) are able to stay in business because they are, in most cases, living off of an "off farm" income. These small-scale operations are typically called hobby farms. For mid-sized farms to compete with larger operations they either must acquire more land, greatly increase efficiency (if possible), or forego raising a "commodity" and start raising a "brand". Commodities have no customer loyalty. Brands generally feature value-added (higher) pricing and a higher perceived value. The key with specialty crops is to find farmers that have a passion for the product they are promoting. An example of this effort would be Columbian coffee growers who developed the Juan Valdez promotional effort to promote "100 percent Columbian coffee."

Table 3M shows the size of farms (in acres) for Pipestone County in 1987 – 1997. Notice that the blue boxes highlight large decreases in the numbers of those respective farm sizes while the orange line highlights the largest increase during this time span. While the smaller farms (10 – 179 acres) are seeing some increases, the mid-size farms lost a large percentage of their total during this time span (a decrease of 29.9 percent). Large percentage increases continue to be seen in the 500+ acre farm sizes.

Table 3M:
Farm Size (in acres)
1987 - 1997

Farm Size	Total Farms 1987	Total Farms 1992	Total Farms 1997	Percent Change
1 to 9 acres	88	68	38	-56.82%
10 to 49 acres	70	87	91	30.00%
50 to 179 acres	179	184	182	1.68%
180 to 499 acres	311	277	218	-29.90%
500 to 999 acres	106	132	123	16.04%
1,000+ acres	31	30	38	22.58%
Totals	**785**	**778**	**690**	**-12.10%**

Source: U.S. Agricultural Census, 1987 – 1997

Although the average farm size has largely increased in Pipestone County during the last couple of decades, the total acres of farmland has decreased from 259,267 acres in 1978 to 243,525 acres in 1997 (a loss of 6.1 percent). Changes in cropland closely mirrored those for farmland going from 226,772 in 1978 to 213,407 in 1997 (a loss of 5.9 percent). As Chart ?? indicates, these were not straight line decreases in total farm and crop land. Factors causing these increases and decreases include an increase (or decrease) in Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) signups or other programs that take marginal or environmentally sensitive lands out of production. In some cases (relatively few in Pipestone County), loss of total land can be attributed to an increase in urban and rural residential land uses.

The economy of Pipestone County has been and will most likely continue to be largely dependent on agriculture. As such, urban development should generally take a secondary role to agriculture in all areas except those that are legitimately required for such development. Appropriate urban development lands are found within or adjacent to established developments or along paved highways at strategic locations. This is necessary to help avoid urban and rural conflicts that arise when these different types of land uses are required to exist adjacent to each other. Finally, the loss of prime agricultural land to urban development places more pressure on area farmers to cultivate marginal lands, negatively impacting not only the economy but the environment as well.

Section Six:
Transportation

The purpose of any transportation system is to move goods and people efficiently. An efficient and balanced transportation system includes highways, railroads, mass transit and aeronautics. While the most influential mode of transportation is the automobile, the other types of transportation play an important role in the overall transportation system. The current road network in and around the County has been built in response to an increasing public demand for improved travel mobility. The local units of government and Mn/DOT are all responsible for assuring that the total highway system operates properly and the roads owned by the different levels of government are integrated into the overall highway system. The County is well served by an extensive roadway network that connects with the rest of the region and Minnesota. State, county, city and township roadways all are included in the roadway network. It is the primary means of transportation for goods and persons within the County and to points outside.

Road Jurisdiction

The jurisdiction of roads entails determining who is responsible for the construction and maintenance of roads. During the days of early statehood, the primary jurisdiction of roads was considered to be the responsibility of the town boards, counties played a secondary interest, and the state was responsible for few to no roads. From early statehood to the 1930's, the state took the responsibility for the 70 constitutional routes, in order to provide a network of uniformly constructed and maintained roads. During the Depression years (1930's) the prevailing sentiment shifted to placing jurisdictional responsibility at higher levels of government, where it was thought they could be better maintained. Currently, almost all roads under state jurisdiction were established 50 - 60 years ago. The following four roadway systems:

1. ***Trunk Highway System (TH).*** Statewide, 70 routes were established under a 1920 Constitutional amendment (6877 miles). In Pipestone County, these state and US highways include: 23, 30, 75, 268, and 269.

2. ***County State Aid Highways (CSAH).*** These refer to roads or streets that were established and designated under county jurisdiction in accordance with Minnesota Statutes Chapter 162. The state provides funding assistance to maintain the CSAH system.

3. ***County Roads (CR).*** These roads are established, constructed, and improved by the County Boards. They are under the sole authority of the County Board.

4. ***Township Roads (Twp).*** A road established by and under the authority of the town board, or reverted to township jurisdiction by the County Board. These roads are constructed and maintained by Town Boards.

5. ***Municipal or City Street***. Any street under the jurisdiction of a municipality not otherwise designated as a Trunk Highway, County State Aid Street/Highway or County Highway.

6. ***Other***. These roads refer to the leftovers, such as the National Park Roads.

Functional Classification

The Functional Classification System is a method used to describe the main function each road performs in the highway network. It is essentially a hierarchy of roads using criteria that describes the function that a particular road performs in a highway network (typically access and mobility). There is a general agreement among the public that the responsibility for the most important roads should be assigned to the highest level of government. In this fashion, the greatest resources for road maintenance and construction are devoted to the most heavily traveled roads. It follows that less traveled roads become the responsibility of lower levels of government. Map 3B displays the functional classification for roads in Pipestone County. These roads are defined as:

Principal Arterial - These highways provide an integrated network of routes which carry the highest traffic volumes, serve the longest trip movements and provide for Statewide or interstate travel. They serve all major urbanized areas and population centers. Principal arterial routes provide for through movement with minimum interference. There are 30.08 miles of Principal Arterial roads in Pipestone County.

Minor Arterial - These highways link cities and other major traffic generators, such as major resort areas, to each other and to principal arterial routes. They form an integrated network which provide for movements within the State and between counties. This classification includes all the remainder of the Trunk Highways within the County (46.86 miles).

Major Collectors - These routes provide service to the County Seat and larger cities not served by the higher systems. They predominately serve trips within the County and link locally important traffic generators with their service areas and other nearby larger cities with higher order routes. In the County, 6.184 miles on the State Highway System and 134.63 miles of the CSAH system make up the Major Collector System.

Minor Collectors - These routes link smaller cities and locally important traffic generators and provide developed areas reasonable access to a higher functioning roadway. In Pipestone County, this includes 95.15 miles of the CSAH system, 9.53 miles of the County roads, and 0.3 miles of township roads.

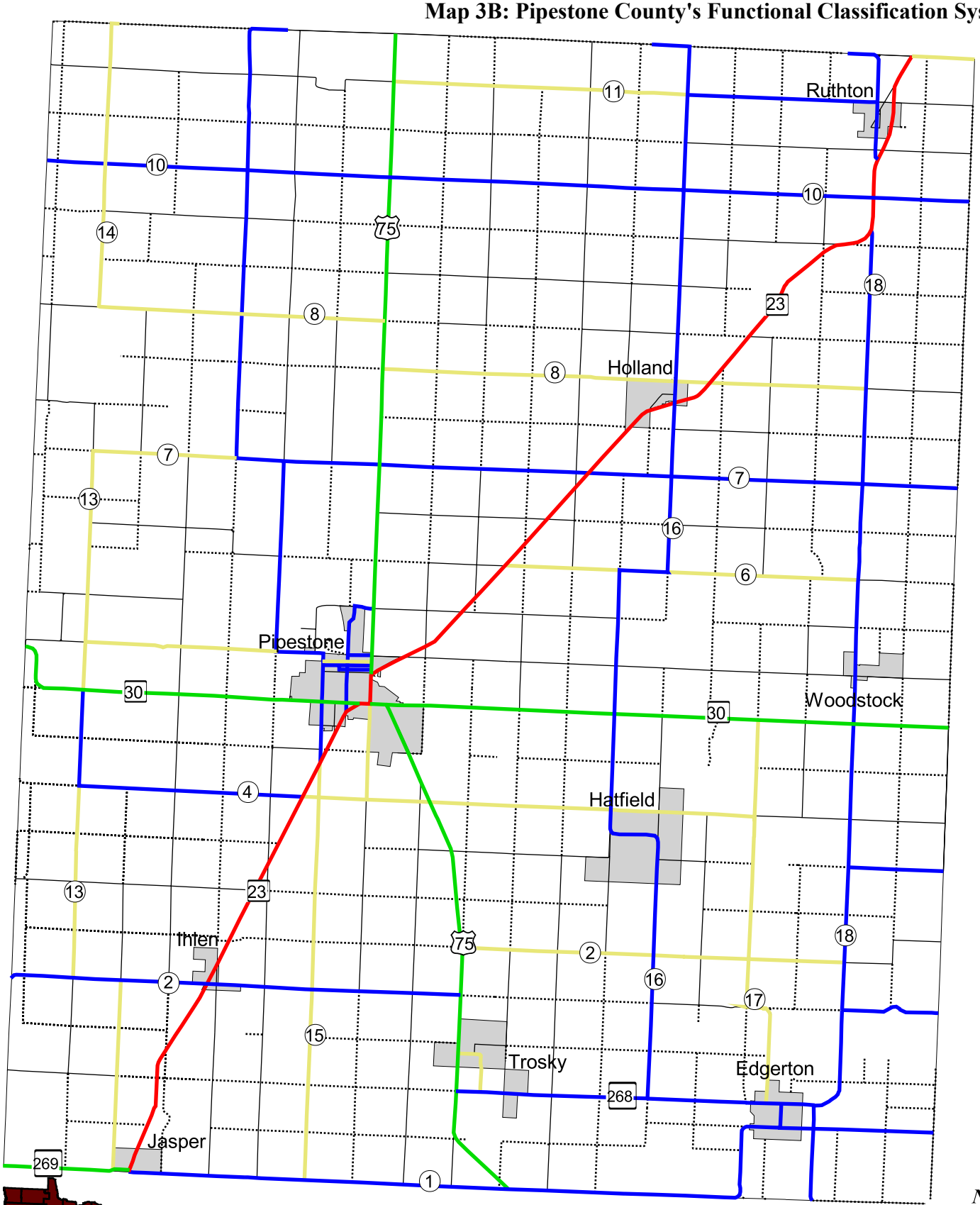
Local Roads - These roads serve as access roads to and from Minor Collectors. But also serve as access to Collectors and Arterials. Most often these roads are under township jurisdiction. These are roads not classified as arterial or collectors and include some county roads and most township roadways. In Pipestone County, there are 5.607 miles on the CSAH System, 218.509 on the County Road System, 361.617 miles on the Township roads, 52.275 on Municipal Streets, and 0.871 miles in Parks.

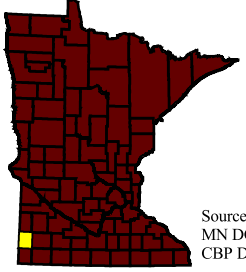
Table 3N:
Functional Classification Miles in Pipestone County

Principal Arterial	**Minor Arterial**	**Major Collector**	**Minor Collector**	Local	**Other**	**Total miles**
30.075	46.856	140.814	104.98	638.879	0.871	961.604

Source: MnDOT Central Office and SRDC

Map 3B: Pipestone County's Functional Classification System





Source:
MN DOT & MN Planning
CBP Data Sets

Principal Arterial
Minor Arterial
Paved Roads
Major Collector
Minor Collector
Township Roads

N
W
E
S
Southwest Regional Development Commission
Focused on Southwest Minnesota

1 0 Miles 1 2

Weight Restrictions

During the spring of each year, the load carrying capacity of highways is reduced as a result of thawing and excess water in the sub grade. Spring axle load restrictions are determined by testing the road while simulated truckloads pass over the road sections. The spring load restrictions for axle load are set when 85% of the road section is able to handle the weight.

The Minnesota Department of Transportation has a policy to maintain the Truck Highway network at a ten ton capacity. When road segments fall below this capacity, the District Office makes a determination of whether to allow ten ton loads, placing the section at higher risk of deterioration or to post the road at a lower level. Spring Weight Restrictions are applied to routes less than 10 tons year round and cause the greatest difficulty to commerce and industry where there is limited access.

Land use activities in the County that generate heavy traffic and are at times affected by the Spring Weight restrictions include, but are not limited to: grain elevators, animal confinements, cement plants, feed supply companies, wind tower companies, contractors, farmers, and other businesses in communities such as Edgerton.

Current Highway Condition

Pipestone County annually updates the County Five-Year Road and Bridge Plan. This is a Capital Improvements Plan, which is fiscally constrained and is available from the County Engineer.

Bridges

The Minnesota Department of Transportation maintains an inventory of bridges in the state and record of an inspection report that identifies the condition of the bridges. Until recently, this information was in two separate databases. The bridge inventory and inspection has been combined to form a more comprehensive database program called BRINFO.

Bridge deficiency needs are identified by bridge sufficiency ratings. A sufficiency rating includes many factors, including actual structural condition of a bridge, detour length, traffic count, the approach, bridge length and width, and structural characteristics.

Minnesota Department of Transportation database has identified 271 bridges, 10 feet or longer. Normally, a bridge with a sufficiency rating of 50 or lower is the trigger for replacement. According to the MnDOT data, there are 8 bridges at or below a sufficiency rating of 50.

Table 3O: Number of Bridges by Road designation and sufficiency rating ranges						
Rating	**US & TH**	**CSAH**	**County**	**Township**	**Municipal**	**Total**
Sufficiency rating of <30	1					**1**
Sufficiency rating of 30 to 50	2	1	1	3		**7**
Sufficiency rating of 50+ to 60		3	2	3		**8**
Sufficiency rating of 60+ to 70		3	2	5		**10**
Sufficiency rating of 70+ to 80		3	5	8		**16**
Sufficiency rating of 80+ to 90	3	14	11	4		**34**
Sufficiency rating of 90+	28	64	60	40	3	**195**
Total	**34**	**90**	**81**	**63**	**3**	**271**

Source: Minnesota Department of Transportation, District 8 Office, 2001

Local roads play an essential role in the overall state transportation network and local bridges are the critical component of the local road systems. The State support for the replacement or rehabilitation of local bridges continues to be crucial to maintaining the integrity of the local road systems and is necessary for the County and the townships to proceed with the replacement or rehabilitation of the high priority deficient bridges. State Transportation Bond Funds are often the funding source to replace or rehabilitate bridges. Pipestone County has identified specific deficient bridges on the CSAH, County Road and Township systems that are a high priority and require replacement or rehabilitation within the next four (4) years. Pipestone County has committed to proceed with the design and contract documents for bridges identified in the County Four-Year Bridge Plan.

Stub routes. Stub roads are those roads that are owned by one jurisdiction and end without connecting to another road of the same jurisdiction or higher jurisdiction. The following roads are stub roads in Pipestone County:

- County Road 75 at the SD border
- County Road 73 at the SD border
- County Road 71 near the SD border
- County Road 42 at the SD border
- County Road 51 at the SD border
- County Road 64 at the Murray Co border
- County Road 67 at the Murray Co border
- County Road 85 one mile east of CSAH 18
- County Highway 86 at the Murray Co border
- County Highway 89 at the Murray Co border
- County Road 88 at the Murray County
- County Highway 78 one mile E of TH 75

Jurisdiction changes. The County is currently examining the jurisdiction of roadways. TH 268, from TH 75 to Edgerton is in the process to change from State to County jurisdiction. Also being discussed are a transfer of 4 miles of township road for 2 miles of county road in Sweet Township to accommodate the anticipated increased traffic flow generated from the new school.

Pipestone County also has a very high number of miles on the County Road network, many of which are low volume and function as local roads. An examination of the entire road network to determine if there should be additional road jurisdiction transfers should be completed.

Railroads

The Burlington Northern Sante Fe Railroad runs parallel to Highway 23. This is a Class I Railroad that operates 16 trains per day through Pipestone County. The Track Classification is Class 4, which means it is rated for 60 mile per hour and is a primary line. Safety of rail crossings is an important issue in Pipestone County, to the track speed as well as the railroad transecting at an angle over the grid-iron layout of the roadways.

Airports

There is one Public Airport and one Private Airport located in the County. The Pipestone Municipal Airport is located one mile southeast of the City of Pipestone. Services available at the airport include aviation fuel and airport management. There are 21 aircraft based at the field, 20 single engine and one jet engine. Average daily aircraft operations is 30; 39% of which are transient general aviation, 37% local general aviation, 24% air taxi, and <1% military. The private airport is located three miles north of Pipestone, and is for personal use.

Transit

Until mid-2000, Public Transit was available only in the City of Pipestone. Through Joint Planning between the City of Pipestone, the County of Pipestone and the remaining communities in the County, a countywide public transportation system has begun operation.