



**Community Assessment  
2023-2025**

December 2025

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## Letter of Commitment



### City of Pine Island

250 South Main Street  
P.O. Box 1000 • Pine Island, Minnesota 55963  
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Cathy McLeer  
State Director  
AARP Minnesota  
1919 University Ave W  
St. Paul, MN 55104

Dear Ms. McLeer,

On behalf of the City of Pine Island, I am pleased to offer this letter to request membership into the World Health Organization and AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities. In partnership with Age-Friendly Olmsted County, Pine Island will take steps to identify and implement improvements to enhance independent living.

The City of Pine Island is actively pursuing the improvement of our community by seeking ways to meet the needs of community members through the Age-Friendly initiatives. We are currently exploring ways to be a more livable community in promoting health and wellness practices, collaborating with our local school district in a partnership between our senior residents and school age students, and creating a core team to look at improving Pine Island that includes community leadership, health care providers, first responders, and educators.

Pine Island is excited to partner with Olmsted County in moving forward to be an Age-Friendly Community. We recognize the importance of being proactive in encouraging and promoting age-friendly initiatives in our community. Planning and implementing policies to address our senior resident population is vital to making an inclusive community, while also including our younger community members in the process. Pine Island has already shown an aggressive approach to our desire to be an Age-Friendly Community in looking at the need for affordable housing, accessible transportation, welcoming public spaces, and a thriving senior center that will provide needed services. We have a foundation in place through the work of Dementia Friends and looking to ensure that our community can meet the upcoming needs of our senior citizens, while seeking projects that will benefit our whole community.

Pine Island will need the support of our partners while pursuing this designation, while challenging our community members to "step up to the plate" in making this process our own. Pine Island plans to recruit community members to assist in a community assessment to identify projects. Once we identify projects, we will share them with Age-Friendly Olmsted County to have included in the work plan and we will work to complete them. We are truly excited to be a part of Olmsted County's goal in meeting the needs of Pine Island residents and being able to say that Pine Island is an Age-Friendly Community!

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "David Friese", is written over a faint, larger version of the same signature.

David Friese  
Mayor-Pine Island

## History of Pine Island



Pine Island was given its name from the Native American term "Wa-zu-wee-ta," which translates to Isle of Pines. Located along the beautiful banks of the Zumbro River, we are an easy 15-minute drive north from Rochester and less than an hour south of the Twin Cities.

The first settlers came to Pine Island in 1854. In 1911 a group of small dairies built a prize-winning, world-record 6,000 pound cheese on a railroad flatcar. By 1920 there were 43 cheese plants in the surrounding area. Half of them formed the Minnesota Cheese Producers Association with a large plant in Pine Island.

That plant and its adjoining Butter Factory were located across from Trailhead Park.

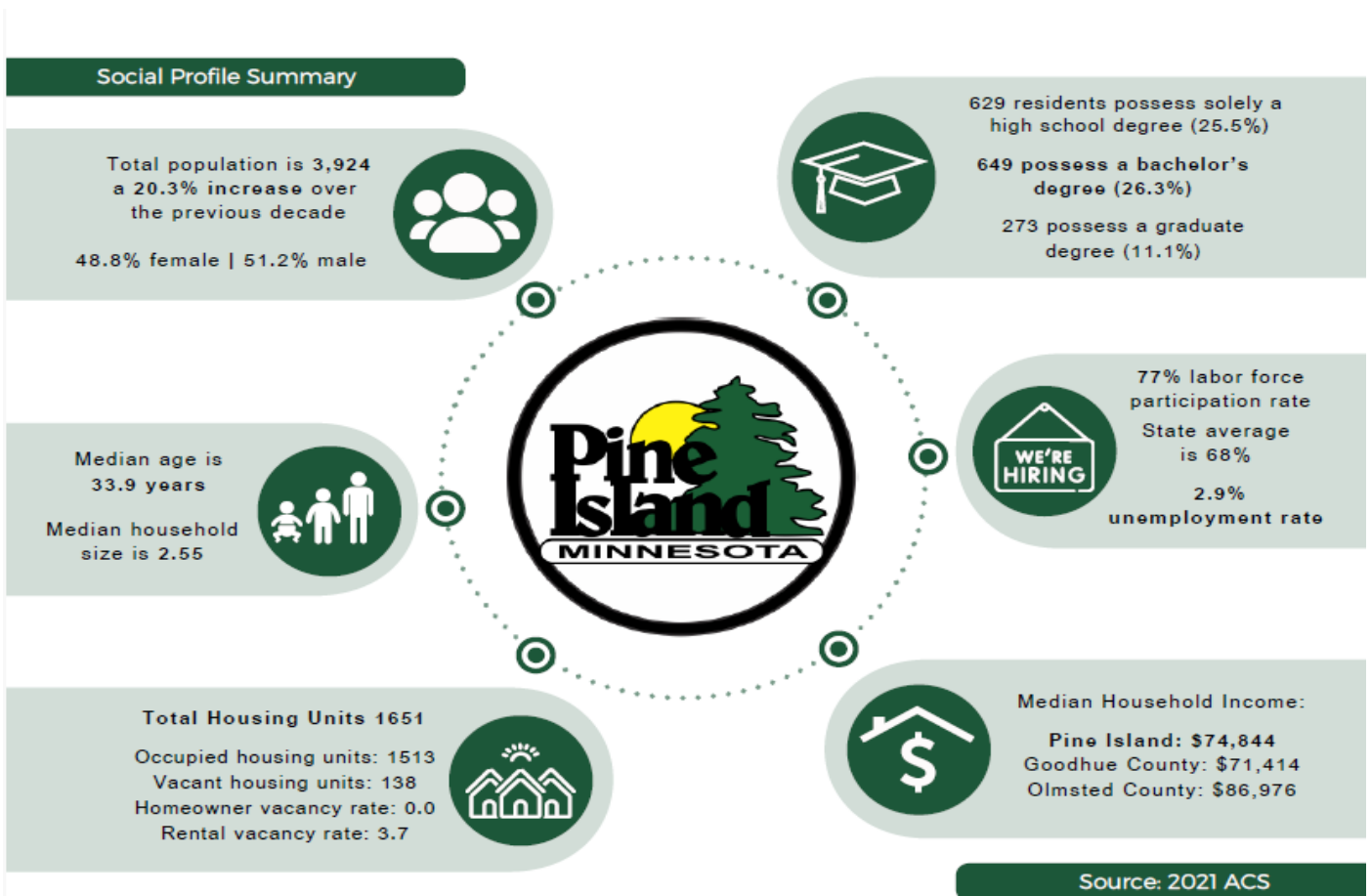
*The above is from the City of Pine Island's website, <https://pineislandmn.gov/>.*



*The Cheese Factory building near Trailhead Park.*

## Demographics and Social Profile

The City of Pine Island is currently experiencing strong growth that is projected to swell the population to 5,430 by 2045.



*"Social Profile Summary", Pine Island 2045 Comprehensive Plan, p. 11.*

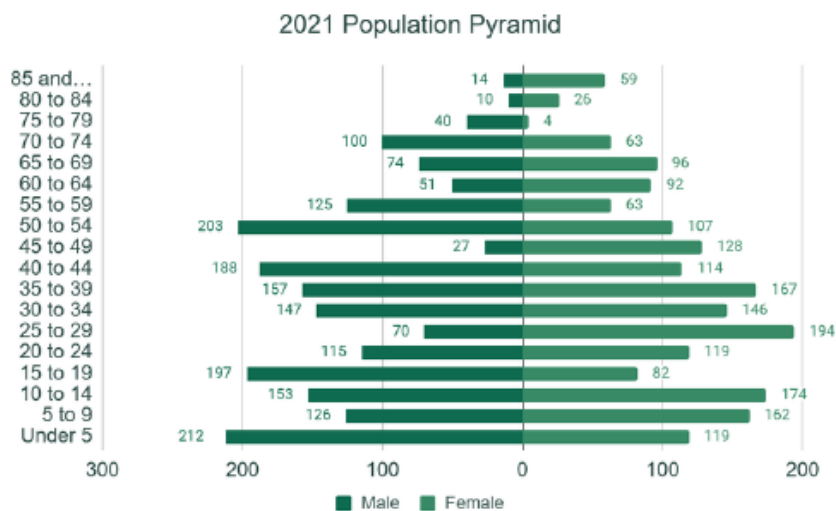
Pine Island's low median age of 33.9 years has decreased significantly since the City's last Comprehensive Plan, and the number of children in Pine Island has grown by 68%. This age group in Pine Island now surpasses the baby boomer generation.

## Population by Age

The population pyramid breaks down population data by age cohorts, which provides insight into demographic makeup and can be used to inform the community's needs. In this case, Pine Island is showing substantial growth, with more births than deaths. Pine Island has a relatively low median age of 33.9, significantly lower than the state median age of 37.

For comparison, the median age in Olmsted County is 37.9 and the median age in Goodhue County is 42.1. The 2021 population pyramid shows a dramatic change from the 2010 Comprehensive Plan. The pyramid shape indicates growth and is much more defined than in previous years.

The 0 - 19 age group has grown by 68%. The 0 - 19 age group now surpasses both the 45 - 64 age group and 65 and above. This indicates a continued need to focus on young families and young professionals in Pine Island.



## Age-Friendly Pine Island

Pine Island joined the AARP Age-Friendly Livable Communities network in May 2022. Age-Friendly Pine Island is a citizen-led initiative. Our mission is to support Pine Island as a livable community for all ages but particularly for older adults. In support of this mission, we use the AARP framework to design and promote age-friendly community initiatives. We look at the areas of transportation, housing, social participation, inclusion, communication, community & health supports and access to outdoor spaces. The idea is that if these resources are in place, they will support residents as they age in place, help them be independent and help us all engage with our community in a meaningful way.

Members of the Age-Friendly Pine Island committee are David Friese, Rachel Gray, Marie Hlava, Elizabeth Howard, Steven Scheevel, Ann Swanson and Delana Weis. Technical support is provided by Dan Conway, Eldercare Development Program Developer, Southeastern Minnesota Area Agency on Aging (SEMAAA).

## Community Needs Assessment

### Key Informant Interviews

The Committee began its Community Needs Assessment by conducting key informant interviews with local agencies and organizations providing services for older adults and their care partners in Pine Island. We interviewed the following service providers:

- Pine Island Area Home Services (PIAHS)
- Goodhue County Home & Community-Based Services
- Three Rivers Communication Action Transportation Operations
- Goodhue County Health & Human Services
- Three Rivers Community Action Adult Care Services.



Pine Island is located in both Goodhue County and Olmsted County. We chose to focus our interviews with organizations in Goodhue County because the majority of older adults in Pine Island live in Goodhue County. We asked organizations to describe their services, to identify service requests from older adults they cannot meet and to identify barriers to accessing services that older adults may encounter. We also asked for their ideas on how to better connect older adults with needed services.

In the course of the interviews, we uncovered opportunities for promotion of older adult services, uneven tracking of services provided to older adults and a pressing need for adequate mileage reimbursement for transportation and service providers.

Some barriers to accessing services that were discovered in these conversations include:

- Most nearby transportation services for older adults are concentrated in Rochester. These organizations have plenty of business in Rochester so are reluctant to travel to Pine Island where mileage reimbursement is inadequate or not provided at all.
- It is difficult to attract staff to provide nursing, personal care assistant or home health aide services when they may receive lower compensation in Pine Island and no mileage reimbursement.
- Finding volunteers to provide basic handyperson services that may allow older adults to stay in their homes longer is not easy.

- Most transport services require 2-3 days advance notice, which makes it hard to find same day transportation to Rochester for last minute or non-routine appointments.
- Hiawathaland Transit does not travel outside the City of Pine Island and is limited to Goodhue County travel. Rochester is the regional medical and retail hub for Pine Island, and is in Olmsted County. More transit options that travel to Rochester are needed.

Some of the most requested services needs that participating agencies were unable to fill are:

- Aides that can assist during transportation services
- Help with grocery shopping
- Assistance with household chores
- Respite care (non-medical)
- Home healthcare.

### Community Listening Sessions

Our committee continued our community needs assessment by hosting community listening sessions where we asked residents to share their views on Pine Island as a livable community. Over an 8-month period in 2023 and 2024, Age-Friendly Pine Island committee members conducted seven Community Listening Sessions to identify services that residents use and/or would like expanded.

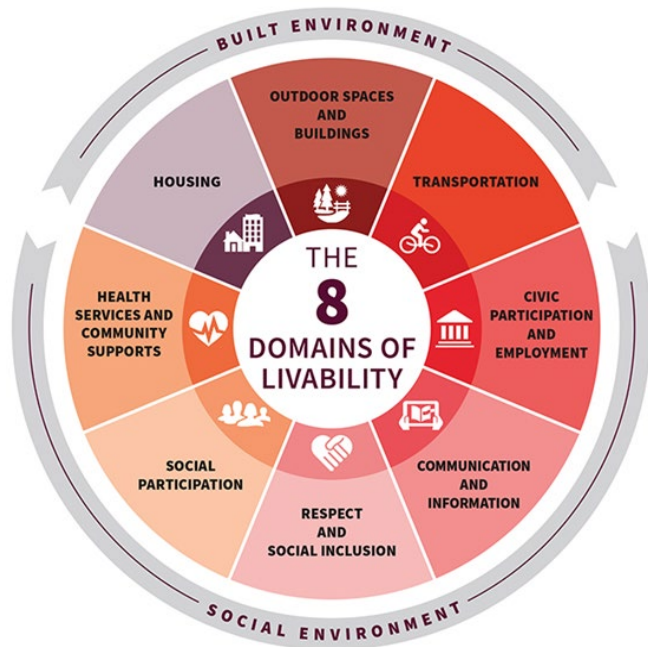


*AARP's Jay Haapala & PI Mayor David Friese.*

### **A Livable Community**

We used the AARP definition of a livable community as the basis for our discussion in our listening sessions. AARP defines a livable community as one that is safe and secure, has affordable and appropriate housing and transportation options, and has supportive features and services. Once in place, those resources

- allow residents to age in place,
- enhance personal independence and
- foster residents' engagement in the community's civic, economic and social life.



## 8 Domains of Livability

The 8 Domains of Livability framework from AARP is used by many of the communities to organize and prioritize their work to become more livable for both older residents and people of all ages.

These domains encompass many aspects of daily and community life that shape the way we live.

## Livability Discussions

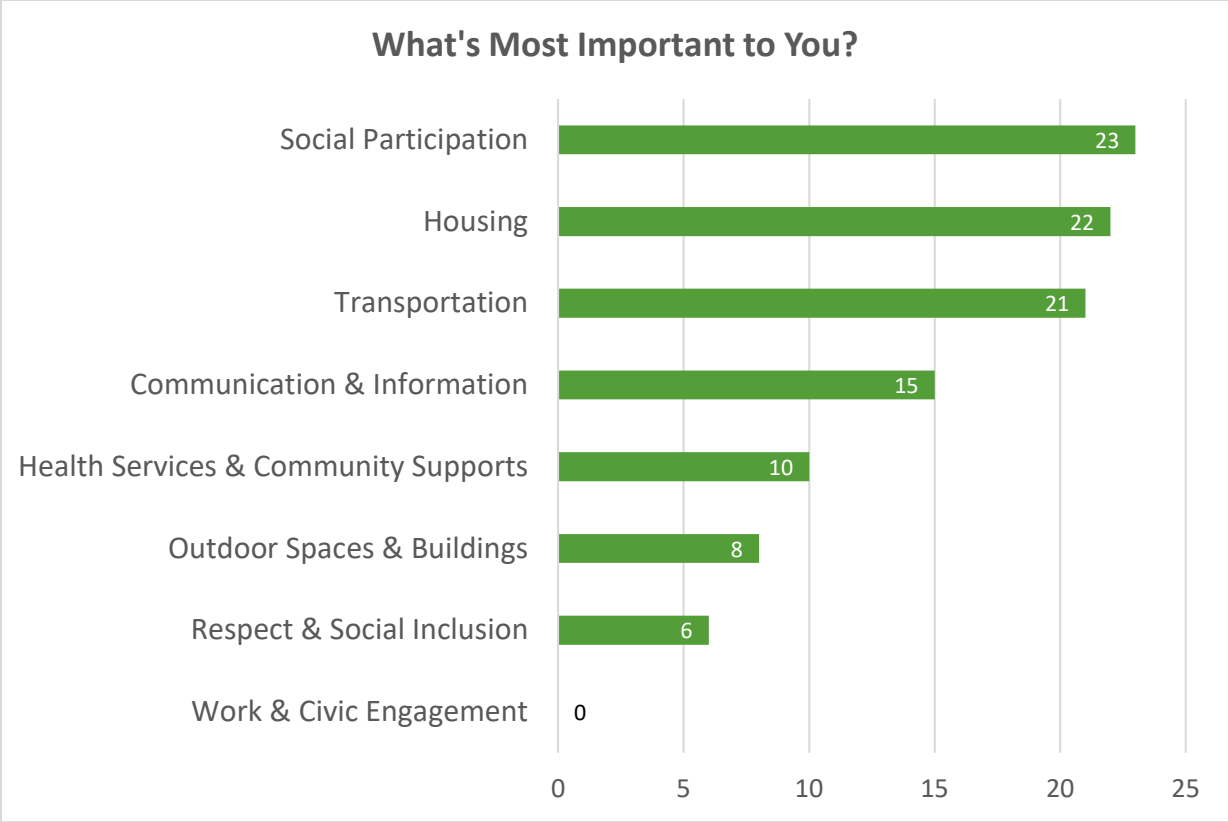
We asked listening session participants to consider both the AARP definition of a Livable Community and the eight Domains of Livability as they formulated their responses to the following three questions:

- What do you like the most about living in Pine Island?
- What's needed now - and in the future - in Pine Island?
- What would add to the quality of life in Pine Island?

We then asked each participant to list their top three priorities for today and for the future in Pine Island based upon our livability discussion and what each felt was most important to them. Their chosen priorities supported by the discussion topics are the basis for the rankings and findings that follow.

## What's Most Important to You?

We categorized the responses of participant priorities using the AARP 8 Domains of Livability model. The highest number of responses related to the Social Participation, Housing, and Transportation domains. We received no responses to the Work & Civic Engagement domain.



Livability Domains Chosen for Action Plan Focus

After considering results from the Community Listening session, the City of Pine Island Survey and the PIAHS Survey, our Age-Friendly Pine Island Committee decided to focus our Action Plan Goals on six of the Livability Domains:

- Social Participation
- Transportation
- Housing
- Communication & Information
- Health Services & Community Supports
- Outdoor Spaces & Buildings





## Social Participation Overview

Pine Island is fortunate to have a Senior Citizen's Center within walking distance of two apartment buildings that primarily are home to older adults. The Center houses Pine Island Area Home Services, a non-profit that enlists local volunteers, including retired nurses, to create a community of care and support for adults 65+.

The Senior Citizen's Center hosts fitness classes, congregate dining, a craft group, and various other events older adults in the community enjoy. A group of local retired men also get together for coffee in the early morning during the week.

Classes and events for older adults can also be found in the Pine Island School District's Community Education brochure, at Van Horn Public Library, and in church bulletins. Options include craft classes, educational events, regularly scheduled groups such as book clubs, and bus trips from one day to overnights.

Pine Island is home to five churches, some still offering their services on-line for people unable to attend in person. Most churches offer pre- or post-service coffee and conversation as well as small groups involved in community support projects.

### **Assessment**

*In an age-friendly community, there are places for residents to go for fun, enjoyable activities for them to do, and ways to stay socially connected.*

Participants would welcome more opportunities to be a part of the community conversation directing future plans for Pine Island. Some concerns were the options



*Pottery Class fun!*



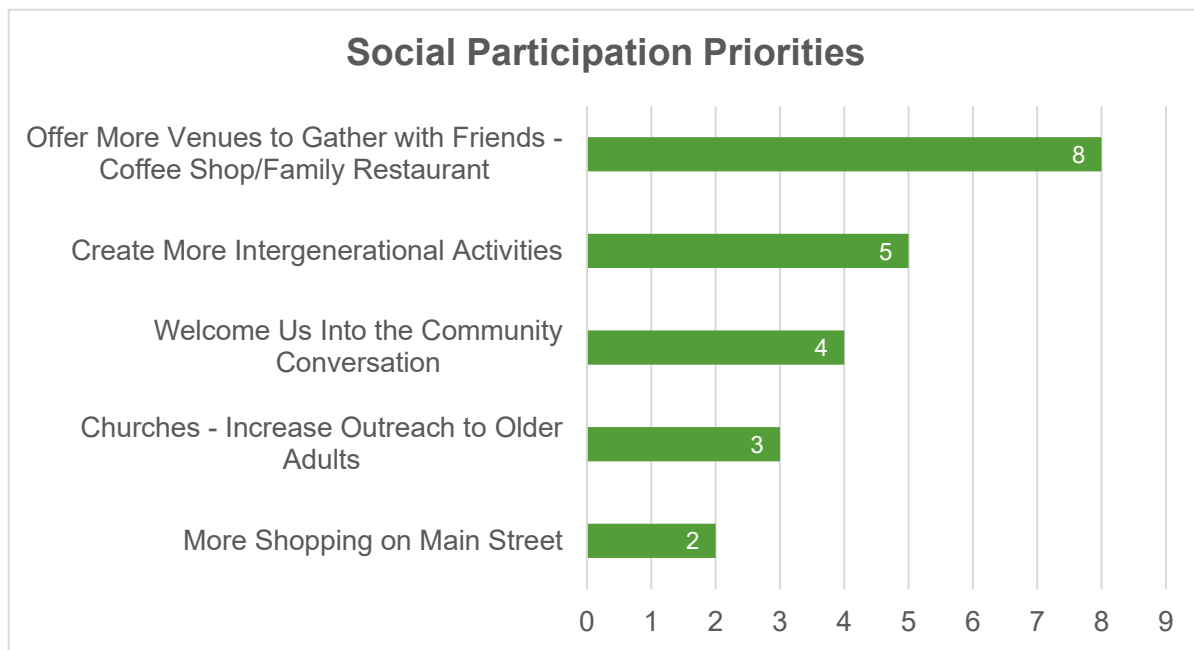
*Drumming program at the Senior Center.*

available to provide feedback such as on-line surveys (including their length) and QR codes instead of having a paper option.

Both our Listening Sessions and the City's Resident Survey in the Comprehensive Plan included the desire for

restaurants (including cafes and coffee shops). For older adults, this is one way to fill the need to meet friends, converse, and feel more connected in the community. While there are meeting spaces available in Pine Island, such as the Senior Center, the “coffee is not always on” like it would be in a coffee shop.

Many older adult participants are interested in more opportunities to interact with younger adults and students. Engaging in inter-generational social activities minimizes isolation and loneliness while increasing connections that lead to chances for improved community support.



Vista Pine Haven is Pine Island’s assisted living community. During our Listening Sessions held there, participants looked forward to all events that community members could provide including events with students from Pine Island Schools.

Other participants in our Listening Sessions also expressed enthusiasm for opportunities to be involved with middle and high school students. In the past, there have been some enjoyable intergenerational events with good attendance.



*Residents of Vista Pine Haven making scarves.*



## Transportation Overview

Most of Pine Island is in Goodhue County, but a small part extends into Olmsted County, making that portion part of the Rochester metropolitan area according to DataUSA. (<https://datausa.io/profile/geo/pine-island-mn>) This geographical separation complicates transit options because most rural public transportation provide services within specific counties.

Transportation in Pine Island's Comprehensive Plan focuses on three areas to strategically plan for growth: safety, access, and connectivity. Participants in our Listening Sessions specifically mentioned safety and connectivity, along with the availability to get rides around and outside of Pine Island.

The City Plan includes consideration of green infrastructure on Main Street to narrow the roadway to slow traffic and improve pedestrian safety. To address connectivity and walkability, the focus will be on improving future development patterns that connect neighborhoods and limiting cul-de-sacs.



*Pine Island community members after our Walk Audit event. A wide range of ages from a variety of school and community organizations participated.*

### **Assessment**

***An age-friendly community includes ways for drivers and non-drivers to get where they need to go safely.***

Older adults in Pine Island stated concerns about transportation to medical appointments, grocery shopping, and social events. Living independently requires an ability to participate in basic living needs after you are no longer driving a vehicle. As

people express a desire to live as long as possible in their community as well as in their current residence, transportation becomes a basic requirement.

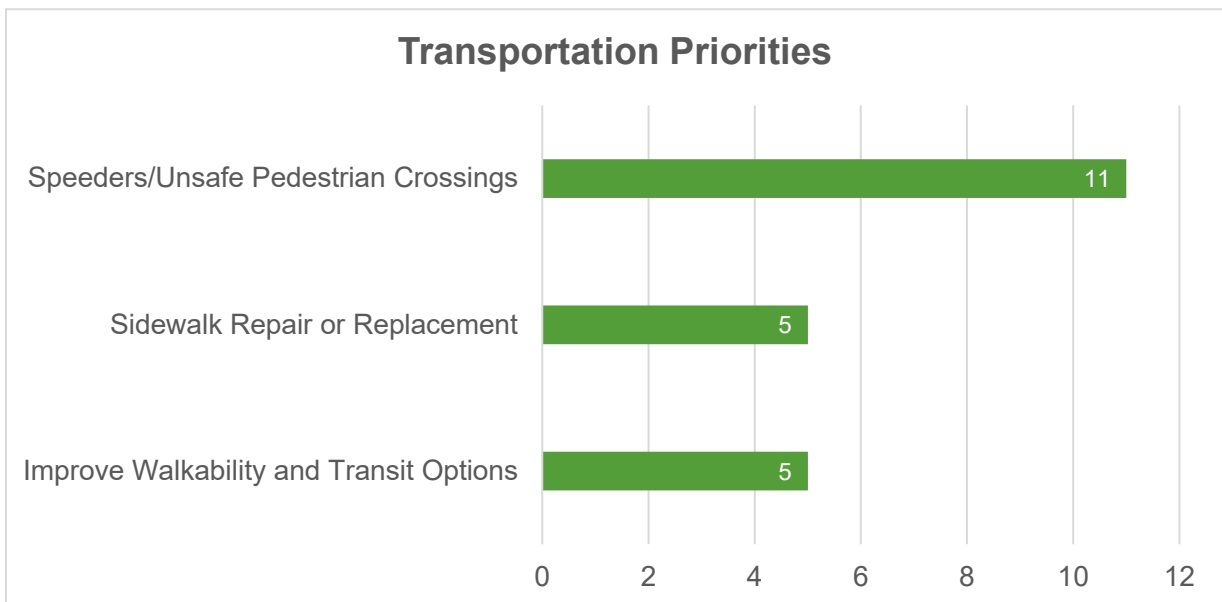


Concerns about crossing safety identified by students during walk audit.

Non-profit agencies do provide rides outside of the community using volunteer drivers, however they require advanced notice. Private services are also available and sometimes necessary for medical rides, however, the cost is often prohibitive.

Hiawatha Land's Dial-A-Ride transit bus does serve Pine Island, but does not transport outside of Pine Island. During our Listening Sessions we discovered that a few long-time residents had seen the bus and had no idea that they could use it for a ride.

Pedestrian safety and the ability to walk around Pine Island was discussed in our Listening Sessions, raising the need for better crosswalks and sidewalks. Connecting neighborhoods with both city parks and the downtown area was also expressed. Participants also noted the limitations of current transportation services especially to destinations outside Pine Island.







## Housing Overview

Pine Island is located in both Goodhue and Olmsted Counties. According to the U. S. Census Bureau’s “American Community Survey” (ACS) 2021, the majority of households where the householder lives alone or is 65 years or older are located in Goodhue County. The Edenbrook Pine Haven Community (long and short-term skilled nursing care), Vista Pine Haven (assisted living facility) and two apartment complexes occupied primarily by seniors are located in the Goodhue County side of Pine Island.

Goodhue, 2021		Olmsted, 2021	
Total Households	1,201	Total Households	312
Married couple Household:	448	Married couple Household:	186
with children of the householder under 18 years	284	with children of the householder under 18 years	94
Cohabiting couple household:	87	Cohabiting couple household:	69
with children of the householder under 18 years	0	with children of the householder under 18 years	12
Male householder, no spouse/partner present:	275	Male householder, no spouse/partner present:	32
with children of the householder under 18 years	33	with children of the householder under 18 years	32
householder living alone:	230	householder living alone:	0
65 years and over	90	65 years and over	0
Female householder, no spouse/partner present:	391	Female householder, no spouse/partner present:	25
with children of the householder under 18 years	103	with children of the householder under 18 years	17
householder living alone	227	householder living alone	8
65 years and over	112	65 years and over	8
Households with one or more people under 18 years	420	Households with one or more people under 18 years	168
Households with one or more people 65 and over	331	Households with one or more people 65 and over	25
Average household size	2.33	Average household size	3.41
Average family size	3.21	Average family size	3.26

Source: 2021 ACS

“Goodhue, 2021; Olmsted, 2021”, Pine Island 2045 Comprehensive Plan, p. 30.

Based on population projections, the City plans to average 30 new housing units per year over the next 20 years. While there is a need for all types of new housing, Pine Island’s housing priorities identified in their most recent Comprehensive Plan include multifamily options near the elementary school, additional opportunities for seniors looking for lower maintenance and continued development of single-family homes.

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines affordable housing using the “30% rule” - housing and utilities should be no more than 30% of a household’s (HH) gross monthly income. This housing is specifically for low to moderate income HHs and subject to regulatory framework as well as income limits.

As of 2023, according to the US Census Bureau’s American Community Survey, 24-30% of HHs in Goodhue County are cost burdened, meaning they do not meet the 30% criteria.

## Household by Occupant Type

Another key data point for communities to look at when looking at “households by type of occupant” is the age of the householder. This data provides insight into the percent of households occupied by different age groups, and can help communities make informed decisions when deciding what kind of housing development and projects should be prioritized.

Nearly half of the homes in Pine Island are owned by people 44 years and younger. If you include the 45-54 age group that number jumps to 65 percent. This data is also reflected in the Median Age of Pine Island discussed in the demographics section of the plan, which is quite a bit younger than most rural communities in Minnesota.

Age of Householder

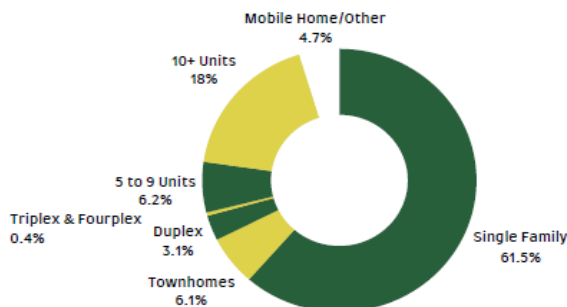
Householder	#	%
Under 35 years	418	27.6
35 to 44 years	330	21.8
45-54 years	234	15.5
55-64 years	205	13.5
65-74 years	228	15.1
75-84 years	31	2
85 years and over	67	4.4

Source: 2021 ACS

## Housing Age, Structure Type, and Vacancy

While Pine Island is a bit of an outlier compared to other rural communities in Minnesota when it comes to median age, and recent and expected growth, the makeup of the housing structure type is not, as almost 62 percent of homes in the community are single family homes. Nearly 25 percent of housing structures are complexes with 5 or more units, and duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, townhomes, and mobile homes/other make up the remaining types of homes in Pine Island.

Housing Structure Type



Source: 2021 ACS

Pine Island Occupancy Status

Status	Units	%
Occupied	1,513	91.6
Vacant	138	8.4
Total	1,651	100

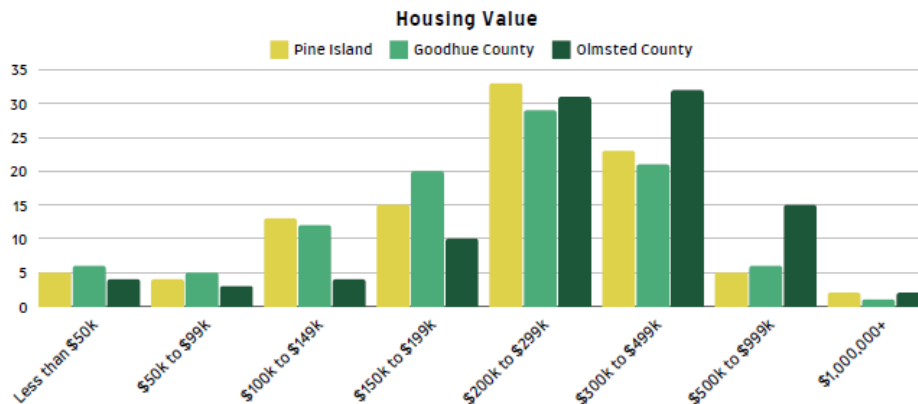
Source: 2021 ACS

## Housing Value

Despite being a rural community of just under 4,000 residents, home values are a bit higher in Pine Island than most rural areas. This can be due to a number of factors, including proximity to large metro areas like Rochester, the South Metro, and the Twin Cities, and the demand for housing in the area.

This data is from the American Community Survey for home values, which is gathered from individuals that fill out census data and provide information on current home values of their homes.

Nearly 60 percent of homes in Pine Island are valued between \$200,000 and \$500,000, with 23 percent falling in the \$300,000 to \$500,000 range. Additionally, about 22 percent of homes in Pine Island are valued at \$150,000 or less. The median home value in Pine Island is \$236,800.



Source: 2021 ACS

## Affordability and Diversity in Housing Assessment

*An age-friendly community has housing suitable for residents of all ages including older adults.*



*PI Memory Cafe members making May baskets for residents getting home delivered meals.*

Both older and younger participants in our Listening Sessions expressed a desire for housing that is affordable, accessible, and appropriately-sized. An important part of this discussion could be the concept of “missing middle” housing which promotes diverse housing options such as duplexes, fourplexes, and cottage courts in existing neighborhoods supporting

walkability and social connections. These housing options would then open up existing

housing stock for younger families or individuals looking to move into Pine Island but not able to afford a new construction.

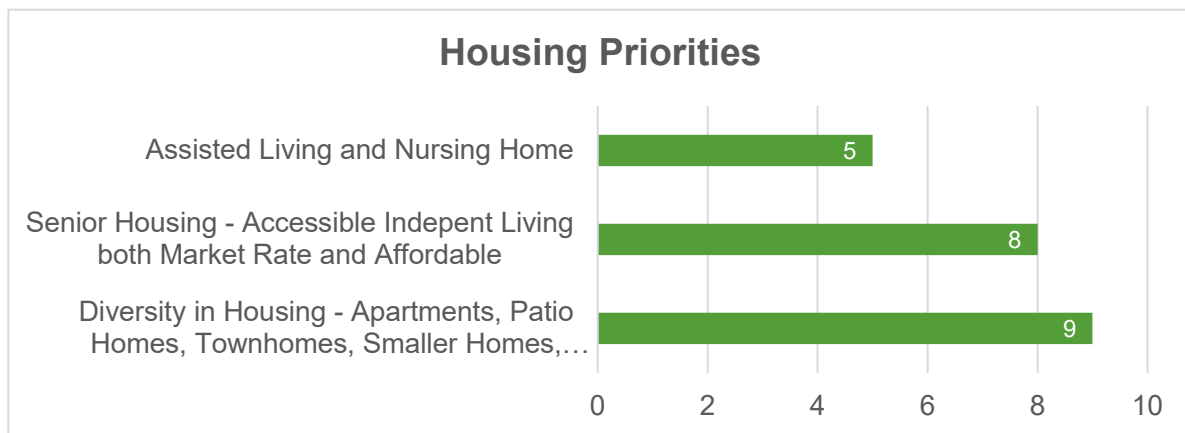


*A twin home in Pine Island.*

Older adults looking to downsize wanted a smooth transition into a space that was accessible (patio homes) and easier to maintain (apartments). Many expressed concerns about the future of assisted living and care center facilities in the community.

Younger participants spoke about the need for diversity in housing to include smaller homes or apartments with one person stating, “Not everybody needs or wants a two-story home”.

Age-Friendly Pine Island supports housing that is affordable and accessible to anyone who wants to join the community.





## Communication & Information Overview

Pine Island, like many rural communities, has access to information in many ways - even though those ways are changing as technology advances and broadband access increases.

Traditionally, newspapers, radio, television, community and organizations newsletters, church bulletins, and “word of mouth” were the main sources of information in most rural areas. As technology advances, email, websites, social media, and virtual meetings are gaining popularity with majority of people. This leads those who do not embrace these new technologies to feel left out, isolated, and less important in their community.



*PI Volunteerism meeting*

Pine Island has a few of the more traditional communication sources such as the Bevcomm’s Channel 7, which provides information on non-profit events in the community. The News-Records newspaper is published weekly and covers Pine Island and neighboring communities as well. More recently, a number of community Facebook pages have been started to promote local activities and provide information. The latest addition to available sources would be the City’s “Pines” newsletter, available both by email and paper copy, and includes current and upcoming City government happenings and some city-wide events.

### Assessment



*Storytelling at PI High School.*

***An age-friendly community helps residents access the information they need.***

Participants in our Listening Sessions identified the desire for better access for more information. Many people felt they did not find out about social events or City activities until they were over. While their most reliable way to get information was “word of mouth”, they also felt a central community calendar would be useful where

non-profit events and other community-wide events could be available. Both online and printed versions were suggested.

Individuals requested tools to educate the community on basic facts and areas of need in Pine Island. This discussion included a lack of knowledge about Main Street being a County road, for instance.

Additional information about available services for older adults, especially helping them maintain their independence and also assistance with relocating when it becomes necessary to move to an assisted living or care center.

There was also hope that Pine Island residents would engage in community conversations with open minds and open ears to make the discussions more productive.

OCTOBER 2025

## Newsletter

EDITION #12

# PINES

## Pine Island Notification and Engagement System

### Fall Reminders



With fall changes come fall clean up! City workers will be out completing sewer and storm sewer maintenance, leaf clean up, and street sweeping. Please keep an eye out for them and drive with caution.

Leaves are not allowed to be disposed of in the streets or storm water system. Please take all leaves to the city brush dump.

### Park Updates

Park rental availability will officially close October 1<sup>st</sup> as we prep our parks for winter. Rental availability will resume in May. Book your rentals up to 3 years in advance online [HERE](#).

Park Bathrooms will remain open into

### City Council Meeting September 16<sup>th</sup>

The Pine Island City Council meets the third Tuesday of every month at 6pm.

- City council adopted the final Alternative Urban Areawide Review (AUAR) for project Skyway
- A preliminary budget presentation was given followed by the adoption of the 2026 city budget and tax levy. The city council adopted a levy increase of 4.25%. Once the preliminary levy is adopted it cannot increase by the final levy approval in December, however it may decrease.
- A public hearing was scheduled for the October City Council meeting on October 21<sup>st</sup> for the proposed 2026 street project.

### Upcoming Events:

*Pine Island City Council Meeting  
October 21<sup>st</sup> @ 6pm  
Second Floor City Hall or [ONLINE](#)*

*Project Skyway Open House  
October 8<sup>th</sup> 5pm - 8pm  
Council Listening Session 7pm-8pm*



## FARMERS MARKET

Every Thursday 3pm - 7pm!



## Health Services & Community Supports

### Overview

Access to medical appointments can be challenging in Pine Island. Our Key Informant survey with Pine Island Area Homes Services (PIAHS) indicated that, in 2021 and 2022, the number one request for services was transportation to appointments. In their 2024 community survey, transportation was the second most desired service after chore services. Twice as many individuals indicated a need for medical rides outside of the Pine Island/Oronoco area as individuals needing medical rides inside that geographic area.



*Intergenerational knitting at the Senior Center.*

Edenbrook Pine Haven offers skilled nursing and long-term care as well as residential rehabilitation. It is connected to Vista Pine Haven, which offers assisted living and memory care. Both offer local residents an opportunity to remain in Pine Island when they can no longer live independently.

Our Key Informant survey from Goodhue County Health and Human Services (GCHHS) states the most difficult services to provide are nursing, PCA or Home Health Aide and minor repairs/changes (ie., installation of grab bars) due to a lack of providers and lack of staffing/volunteers at agencies. An additional unmet need is last minute and same day transportation to Rochester; normally 2-3 days is required to find transportation.

In both of these services, mileage reimbursement is an additional burden to overcome. Transportation companies only get paid when a person is in their transport and hourly wages for PCA and HHA staff are inadequate to encourage travel outside of Rochester.



*Van Horn Public Library program attendees learning more about Fire Dept services.*

## Assessment

### *An age-friendly community cares for its older adults and also provides ways for them to care for themselves*

Fortunately, some residents are served locally by the Olmsted Medical Center clinic and its Pine Island pharmacy. For residents requesting services in other medical facilities, there are options for rides if driving to an appointment is not possible.

Continuing the services provided by Pine Island Area Home Services (PIAHS) and Three Rivers was strongly supported. As previously noted, because the community lies in two counties, medical transportation can be confusing. PIAHS can provide rides to residents in the Pine Island School District. They can also refer Goodhue County residents they cannot serve to Three Rivers Community Action's Volunteer Driving program or Olmsted County residents to Elder Network or Family Service Rochester.

Pine Island's unique geographic location creates a complex service area that increases the importance of HCBS providers communicating and cooperating to avoid duplicating services for older adults. Age-Friendly Pine Island prioritizes finding the requested service for an older adult even if that service is provided by another agency. One area that participants felt needed attention was advocacy services including assistance with making choices to help someone remain in their home.



*Chair Yoga @ PI Senior Center*

Community supports include local non-profits such as the Pine Island Lions, Pine Island Boy Scout Troop 69, and Pine Island FCCLA with histories of working on projects including for older adults. A possible future project suggested by a Listening Session participant is assisting with grocery delivery.



## Outdoor Spaces & Buildings

### Overview

Pine Island has 12 parks and open spaces totaling approximately 35 acres. The two largest city parks are Trailhead Park and Collins Park. Both are equipped with picnic tables, playgrounds and bathrooms. Trailhead also has electricity, a pavilion that is available to reserve for events, water fountains, horseshoe pits and canoe launch access.

Trailhead Park also includes two historic buildings: the Cheese Factory and the Butter Factory. The Cheese Factory can be rented and the Butter Factory houses the Borrow-A-Bike program, which rents out bicycles for visitors during the summer months. It is also used as fairgrounds for Cheese Fest on the first weekend of June.



*Trailhead Park*

As the name suggests, Trailhead Park is the beginning of the 12.5 mile Douglas State Trail - a paved trail developed on an abandoned railroad - that ends in northwestern Rochester after passing through the community of Douglas. Collins Park also has trail system access and is within a block of Edenbrook Pine Haven and Vista Pine Haven.



*Van Horn Public Library*

Other community spaces include Waletzko Park near Trailhead Park, RV camping, and Community Gardens. In between two buildings on Main Street lies the Band Shell with outdoor seating.

The City of Pine Island has a variety of public buildings including City Hall, Fire Hall, and the Van Horn Public Library.



Main Street Pine Island

## Assessment

*An age-friendly community includes public places to gather indoors or out, and places where residents can get some fresh air, such as by visiting parks, walking nature trails or just sitting on a bench.*

For its size, Pine Island has a respectable number of parks and open spaces. The Comprehensive Plan indicates the City's support for setting a standard for City parks in new housing developments as well as expanding the location of parks. (Currently, most spaces are centrally located and on the West side of Highway 52.)

In our Listening Sessions, participants wanted better and safer connections between neighborhoods and parks. Those connections may include improved sidewalks, safer road crossings and trail connections. They also suggested more walking paths of varying lengths and more trees for shade along streets and paths with benches to rest and converse. Others asked for amenities such as grills, picnic tables, and more attractive park rental spaces.

The Pine Island Lions contribute a number of benches for parks and on Main Street. When participants mentioned the difficulty of getting in and out of picnic tables, one idea the group brainstormed was to provide unattached benches with tables as well as benches facing each other to facilitate conversation.

Older adults taking grandchildren to parks brought up the concerns of bathroom access and the idea of having "playground equipment for us". Suggestions for bathrooms included more parks with bathrooms and existing bathrooms being open more hours. Regarding equipment for older adults, there was discussion about types of fitness equipment for parents and older adults to enjoy.

## Community Feedback

### Key Findings from the Listening Sessions

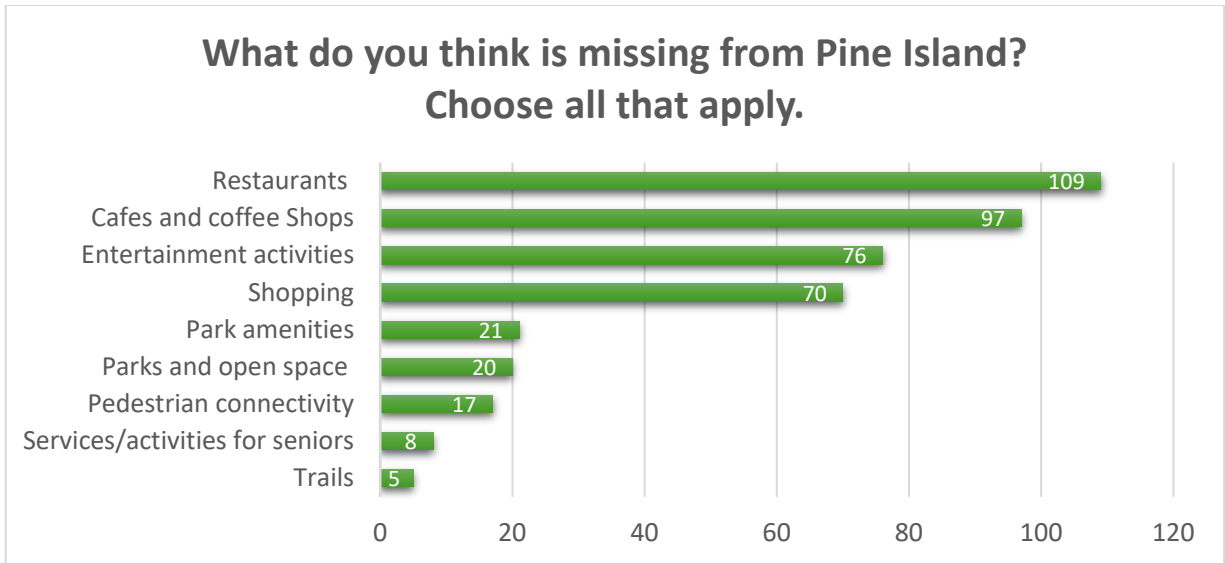
- Aging in place in Pine Island is a desired outcome for older adults.
- Older adults need additional resources to age in place successfully in our community.
- Finding affordable, accessible and appropriately-sized housing is a pressing issue in Pine Island.
- Safe walking routes are needed.
- Transportation options for older adults living in Pine Island and surrounding rural areas are limited.
- Connecting neighborhoods with parks and downtown is desired.
- People want to feel heard and feel connected with their community.
- People want to be safe and feel safe in their community.
- Communication regarding services and events needs to be proactive and inclusive.

### City of Pine Island Survey, 2024

The Committee also reviewed the City of Pine Island Resident Survey completed in 2024 to better understand resident's preferences and concerns. In the survey, respondents were asked to rate the three most important reasons for choosing to live in Pine Island. The top four responses included:

- Small Town Character
- Near Friends/Family
- Good Place to Raise a Family.
- Quality of Schools

Respondents were also asked what they felt was missing from Pine Island. The responses given by survey participants echoed many of the observations we had heard in our Community Listening Sessions.



*"Resident Survey - Amenities", Pine Island 2045 Comprehensive Plan, p 110*

## Pine Island Area Home Services Survey, 2024

PIAHS conducted a survey of residents of the Pine Island school district with a goal "to raise awareness, improve services for aging adults in the Pine Island and Oronoco communities and explore volunteer opportunities". The survey results confirmed that approximately 80% of the respondents agreed it is extremely important or very important for them to remain in the Pine Island/Oronoco area as they age. PIAHS, friend/relatives, church, internet and local fliers topped the list of sources for finding information on services available for older adults and caregivers.

Respondents were asked whom they would call for help if they had a problem they couldn't solve by themselves. The top four choices were:

1. Family
2. Friends
3. Neighbors
4. PIAHS.

The survey also asked participants what services they would use or activities that interest them. Those services and activities have been included in the Action Plan.