

Public/Semi Public Land Use

Park and recreational facilities, churches, schools, and government land and buildings are classified as public and semi public uses. These uses cover a wide range of activities and vary greatly as to their impact on other land uses.

Park and recreational lands are under the jurisdiction of either Minnehaha County, the State of South Dakota or the federal government, and together comprise the largest number of acres within this sector. County owned properties include Wall Lake Park and beach area in western Minnehaha County, and McHardy Park on the southeastern edge of Brandon. Palisades State Park, the Big Sioux Recreation Area and Beaver Creek Nature Center are state facilities. Several state and federal land parcels provide public access for hunting and fishing. Not only do these lands provide outdoor recreational opportunities, they also protect and preserve unique and scenic natural resources and environmentally sensitive areas.

Municipally owned land is prevalent in the rural area due to the needs which must be met by cities in providing public services and the necessity for some uses to be located on sites separated from populated areas. Municipal sanitary landfills were once commonplace throughout the county, usually located just outside city limits. Federal and state environmental requirements forced the closing of all but the Sioux Falls landfill, which now serves as a regional site for the disposal of solid waste. The site is located on 160 acres with an adjoining quarter section reserved for future expansion. Several cities also operate wastewater treatment lagoons beyond their municipal boundaries.

Municipal wells are located on several rural sites owned by the city of Sioux Falls. It has become increasingly common for the city to acquire sufficient land around new well sites to buffer the water supply from potential sources of contamination and reserve land for future well field expansion. These areas are located primarily above the Big Sioux aquifer north of Sioux Falls. The city has also expanded into the Middle Skunk Creek aquifer near Lyons. The Minnehaha Community Water Corporation's well field and treatment plant are located over the Big Sioux aquifer south of Dell Rapids.

The impact of public and semi public uses may be negligible but in other cases they require a higher level of support services than is normally needed in the rural area. The greatest impact generally results from excess traffic generated by users of a facility, such as visitors to a park or garbage trucks hauling to a landfill, impacting residents who live along access routes. These uses may also create objectionable characteristics such as noise, odor or unsightly appearance.

Most public and semi public uses have tax exempt status, removing the land from the tax role at a time when public service costs generally increase to support these uses.