

# Rapid City . . .

## by the numbers



The Rapid City Metropolitan Statistical Area includes all of Pennington County.

### Region's Fastest Growing Cities

#### POPULATION

#### Percent of Increase

1. Springfield, MO	48.06
2. Sioux Falls, SD	39.17
3. Rochester, MN	38.47
4. Lincoln, NE	36.26
5. <i>Rapid City, SD</i>	35.53
6. Iowa City, IA	35.52
7. St. Cloud, MN	33.75
8. Minneapolis, St. Paul, MN	28.44
9. Fargo-Moorhead, ND/MN	26.60
10. Columbia, MO	26.32
United States Average	22.80
Plains	19.20

#### EMPLOYMENT

1. Sioux Falls, SD	56.04
2. Fargo-Moorhead, ND/MN	55.73
3. Springfield, MO	48.58
4. Des Moines, IA	48.51
5. <i>Rapid City, SD</i>	47.10
6. Cedar Rapids, IA	41.51
7. Rochester, MN	41.44
8. Lincoln, NE	41.25
9. St. Cloud, MN	40.12
10. Sioux City, IA-NE	33.03
United States	33.03
Plains	29.43

2000	2005	2010	2015	2020
<b>Population</b>				
92,240	98,470	104,880	111,530	118,270
<b>Employment</b>				
66,280	71,690	77,440	83,560	90,060
<b>Per-Capita Income (1992 Dollars)</b>				
20,109	21,277	22,488	23,726	25,029
<b>Retail Sales (Billions)</b>				
1,036	1.135	1.253	1.388	1.534

### The Beginning (65,000,000 Years Ago)

In the center of North America, in the United States of America, in the middle of the high plains country is a wonder filled land – the Black Hills of South Dakota (the beautiful Paha Sapa). It's an ancient place formed over 60,000,000 years ago when these rugged mountains were pushed up through the seas that covered this region and lifted up thousands of feet of layered sea bottom to over twice its present height.

Now it is a mixed land of granite peaks, ridges of quartz and slate, high plateaus of limestone and sandstone, hills of gypsum, towers of ancient volcanic rock and seashells and fossils from those early seas and times . . . all this with forests, rich farm and ranch lands, fresh air, clean water, and room to live.

## **The History (130 Years Ago)**

Rapid City was founded in 1876 (later than some of the mining camps in the region) when this was still Dakota Territory. The town came into being when the Brennan party settled along the creek (near the present civic center). It quickly grew and became the source of supplies for the larger mining towns.

The “Hay Camp” continued to grow and, in a few years, passed the older areas in size. Rapid City offered easy access from the East, milder weather at only 3,250 feet above sea level, and a central location. The railroad arrived next and, in the early 1900’s, Rapid City continued to grow into the major population center in Western South Dakota.

## **Great Living in a Beautiful Park (2007 & Beyond)**

Rapid City today has a population of 70,000 and serves a metro area of 118,000 including our very good neighbor (for 64 years), Ellsworth Air Force Base, just 8.5 miles to the east. The estimate for the entire Black Hills area is 146,000. Our retail trade area counts 248,000 people and our wholesale service area 464,000. Add to those numbers, our part-time population comprised of 3,000,000 tourists to Mount Rushmore, 400,000 conventioners at Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, 400,000 bikers at the 10-day Sturgis Motorcycle Rally, and so many more. The good news about those numbers is that a lot of the activity on our web sites is generated by the summertime tourist industry; but, since the federal and state governments own a major part of the area in their park systems, the area belongs to the full-time residents most of the year.

Our community was founded along the banks of Rapid Creek which flows from the hills in West Rapid City to the valley on the east side. The area now is a source of beauty, entertainment, and recreation for the community and the region. Traveling from Canyon Lake and the adjoining park on the west side to the east side of Rapid City, you’ll find fishing (two lakes), sports fields from polo to baseball, running tracks, soccer, plus swimming pools (indoors and out), ice skating (year-round), playgrounds, over 10 miles of walking and bike paths, and much more. Our convention center, fine arts center, theatre, Journey Museum (providing a high-tech trip through 2.5 billion years of Black Hills history), and many unique shops are in the city center.

## **The Arts**

The Rapid City – Black Hills community (50 x 100 miles) is a cultural center which offers a myriad of experiences in theatre (both community and traveling Broadway shows), art, music, dance, literature, Native American culture (including the Black Hills and Northern Plains Indian Pow Wow and Arts Exposition), and crafts.

The Dahl Fine Arts Center which has gallery and classroom space displays an epic mural (180 feet around and 10 feet high) that is the nation’s only mural of United States history. The New Gallery located on the SD School of Mines & Technology campus features challenging educational art and science exhibit.

## **Outdoor Activities**

**Rapid City’s Amazing Park System** - approximately 2,000 acres of parkland in 26 different areas.

**Bike Path** – 13.5 miles of bicycle paths extending from the east to west side of Rapid City along Rapid Creek (our “green belt”)

**Tennis** – 36 city-operated tennis courts in ten locations.

**Golf** – 3 municipal golf courses (one 18-hole and two 9-hole), one of which ranks among the nation’s top 50 public courses. There are also private courses and many additional courses throughout the Black Hills in picturesque mountain settings.

**Baseball** – Rapid City is well known for its extensive youth baseball program and has 12 softball/baseball complexes.

**Racquetball** – 6 courts are available, 4 of which are lighted

**Swimming** – 3 municipal pools convenient to all areas of the city

**Ice Skating** – Indoor ice arena offering public skating, figure skating, ice hockey, and curling.

**Other Rapid City Activities** – 10 soccer fields, lawn bowling, 18 horseshoe courts, volley ball courts, and so much more.

**Boating & Water Skiing** – The Black Hills area has 14 mountain lakes and more than 300 miles of streams and reservoirs for water sports and fishing.

**Hunting** – The Black Hills offer a variety of year-round hunting experiences. Our timbered canyon country, river-bottom meadows, and sagebrush prairies offer habitat for a very diversified wildlife population.

**Fishing** – Year-round opportunities exist for the pursuit of many species of trout in our many streams, rivers, and lakes plus northern pike, yellow perch, and largemouth bass in select areas.

**Hiking** – Because it is one of the oldest mountain ranges in the world, the forces of nature over eons of time have mellowed the Black Hills into a highly user-friendly area, and none benefit more than the hikers who take to “the Hills” to enjoy the many trail systems in the area. There are over 400 miles of nature walks and hiking systems in the Black Hills.

**Other Hills Activities** – The Black Hills area lends itself to rock climbing in the summer and skiing (two area ski resorts) in the winter months.

**Snowmobiling** – The Black Hills snowmobile trail system (over 200 miles of groomed trails) has been ranked in the top ten places to ride by two national magazines.

**Spelunking** – Caves encircle the central granite of the Black Hills and comprise the 2nd-longest cave system in the world. Of the 72 known crystal caves in the world, 68 are located in the Black Hills (eight of which have been carefully developed to accommodate public tours).

**Volkswalking** – The volkswalking highlight is the 10K Crazy Horse Memorial march which attracts thousands of hikers every summer.

## **Rapid City and Black Hills Attractions**

**Mount Rushmore** – The monumental granite carving of Presidents Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln and Roosevelt (Theodore) was completed in 1941 and is the most visited attraction in the Black Hills, drawing millions of visitors each year.

**Crazy Horse Memorial** – A work in progress, this monument was started in 1941 and, when completed will be 563 feet high (taller than the Washington Monument) and larger than the Sphinx.

**Museums & Historic Sites** - The Black Hills area has many museums that cover the spectrum of Black Hills life and lore – past and present. A partial list includes the SD School of Mines & Technology Museum of Geology, The Journey Museum, and the Sioux Indian Museum (all in Rapid City); the SD Air & Space Museum (Ellsworth Air Force Base); the Mount Rushmore National Memorial Interpretive Center; the Mammoth Site (Hot Springs); the national Presidential Wax Museum and Borglum Historical Center (Keystone), the Adams House Museum (Deadwood); the Institute for Geological Research (Hill City); the High Plains Western Heritage Center (Spearfish); and the Indian Museum of North America at Crazy Horse Memorial and National Museum of Woodcarving (both in Custer); and the Wall Drug Store Collections (Wall).

**The City of Presidents** – A great walking tour: Twenty-seven life-size bronze statues of United States Presidents are located on the street corners of downtown Rapid City with four more to be added each year until project completion.

**Storybook Island** – Storybook Island opened in Rapid City in 1959 and is a dream world of outdoor stage settings pertaining to fairy tales and nursery rhymes beloved by generations.

**Dinosaur Park** – Seven life-sized dinosaurs created of concrete and steel dwell on a hilltop overlooking Rapid City. They were dedicated in 1936, and “live” in a 22.5-acre park hosting 1,000 visitors daily in the summer months.

**Custer State Park** – 73,000 acres in the park which includes South Dakota’s highest mountain, Harney Peak, a bison herd, 4 lodges, and numerous activities.

**Caves** – Wind Cave National Park has more than 50 miles of mapped cave passages, and Jewel Cave national Monument is a giant underground labyrinth with a myriad of beautiful crystals.

**Reptile Gardens** – Reptile Gardens houses the largest collection of reptiles in the world.

**Stavkirke Church** – This is an exact replica of the picturesque 841-year-old Borgund Church in Norway with intricate woodcarvings, fancy shingles and dragons’ heads.