

Aitkin County Board of Commissioners Board Meeting Attendance Record

Date: February 14, 2023

Name	Please check the boxes that apply		
	Aitkin County Citizen	Aitkin County Employee	Company Representative – Please list
Jeanne Schram	X		Aitkin Age
MARK JEFFERS		X	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
Brenda Evancevich	X		
DJ Thompson		X	Land
Karla Orute		X	Sheriff
Elizabeth Eddy		X	Sheriff
Chris Satch		X	I.T.
Wendy Bright		X	Auditors Office
John Welle		X	Hwy Dept



From chasing smokestacks to chasing people

AITKIN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

FEBRUARY 14TH, 2023



About us

In 1997, a group of rural Minnesota advocates came together to create a rural policy "think tank" that would provide policy makers, rural advocates and concerned citizens with an objective, unbiased and politically unspun examination of today's rural issues.

Based in Greater Minnesota, serving Greater Minnesota.

A non-partisan, non-profit policy research organization.

Dedicated to providing Minnesota's policy makers with an unbiased evaluation of issues from a rural perspective.

19 Board members

4 Staff members in home offices

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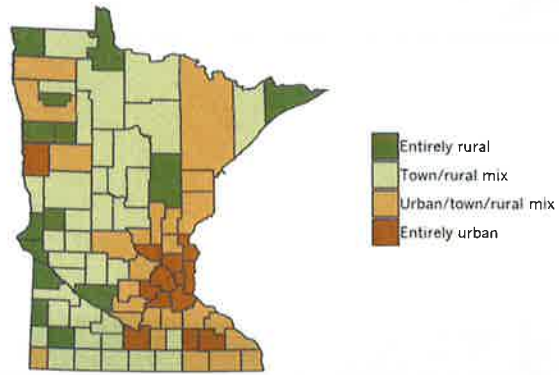
What We Do

We take complicated and complex issues and present them in ways that give them meaning and relevance.

Our research is not designed to determine public policy, but instead to inform those making the decisions.

☛ CENTER FOR RURAL POLICY & DEVELOPMENT

County categorizations based on rural-urban commuting areas



CRPD Staff



Left to right:
Kelly Asche, Research Associate in New London
Marnie Werner, VP of Research & Operations in Mankato
Julie Tesch, President & CEO in Waldorf

Our Latest Research www.RuralMN.org



Rural Child Care Solutions:
From the Ground Up



Stratosphere: The amazing
rise in the price of farmland
and its growing impact on
rural governments



Child care access for Latino
Immigrant Families in Nobles
County

Upcoming research

- ▶ Mental Health Workforce Shortage (Today)
- ▶ Who benefits from education formula? (February 2023)
- ▶ Civic Impacts on the loss of community newspapers (March 2023)
- ▶ CTE impacts on migration in Southwest Minnesota (Spring 2023)
- ▶ Labor force changes (March 2023)

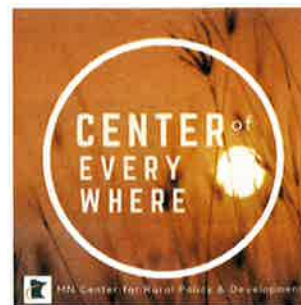
Be the First to Know



Website: ruralmn.org



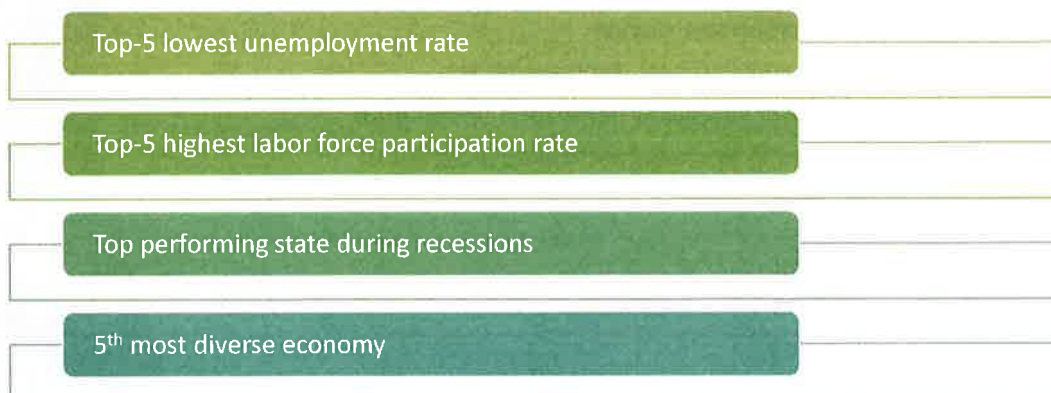
Research overview and webinars on our website and



Center of Everywhere Podcast on our website, iTunes, and Spotify.

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Minnesota – lets brag



Source: Minnesota Chamber of Commerce Foundation, Minnesota: 2030

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What may threaten our awesome-ness?

LACK OF PEOPLE!

- Labor force growth has been decreasing for 2 decades
- Terrible at keeping youth (statewide)
- Immigration policy

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Content

Not our parents labor market

- Unemployment rates
- Labor force
- Job vacancies

People-centered economic development

- Resident recruitment and retainment
- Housing
- Child Care

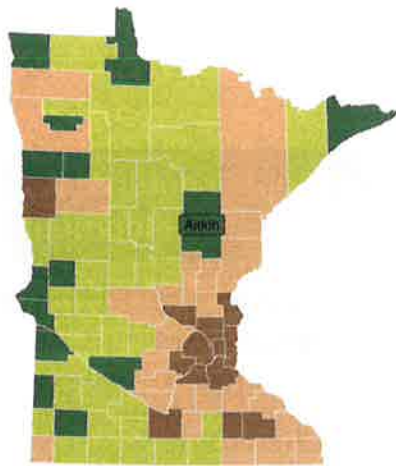
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Unemployment Rates

FROM CHASING SMOKESTACKS TO CHASING PEOPLE
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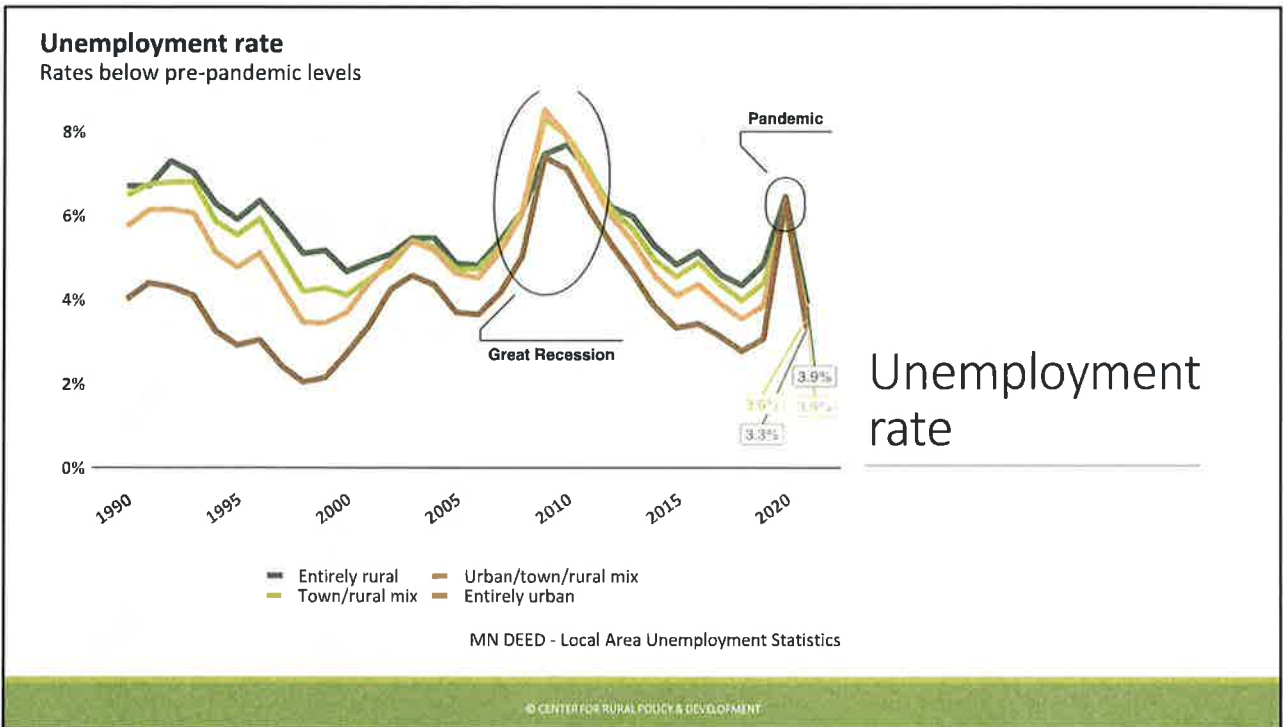
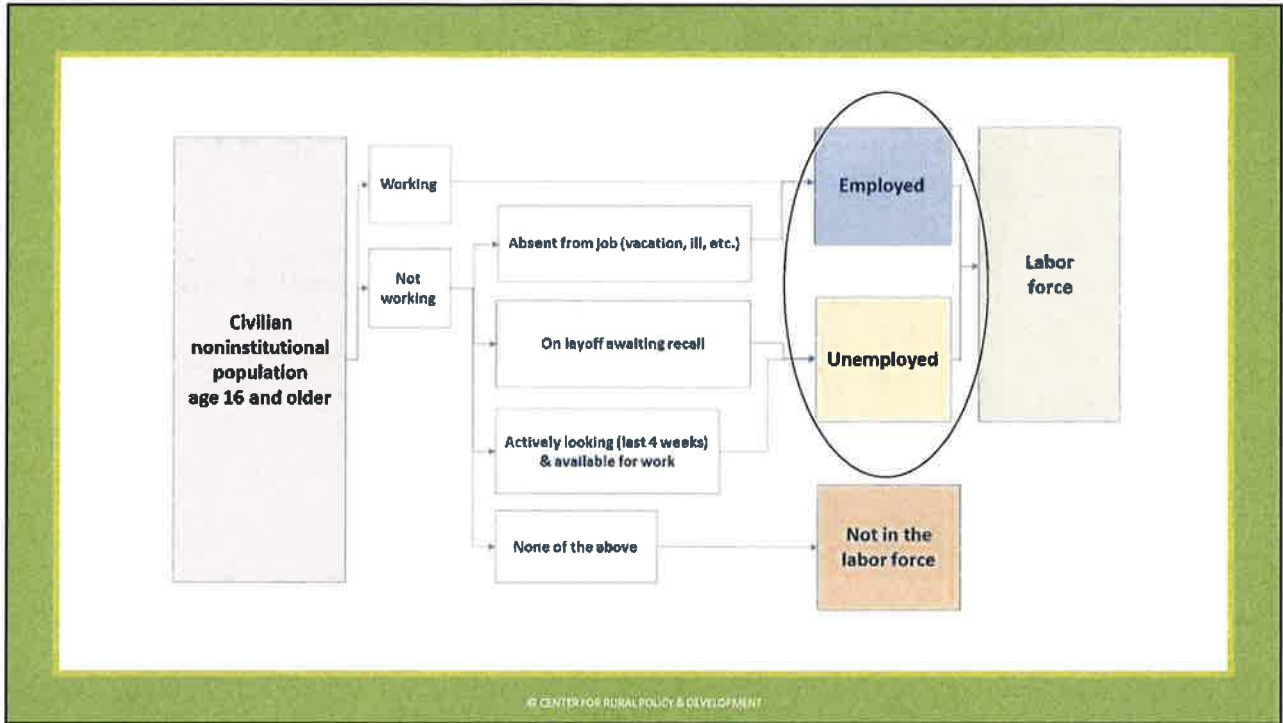
RUCA Categories



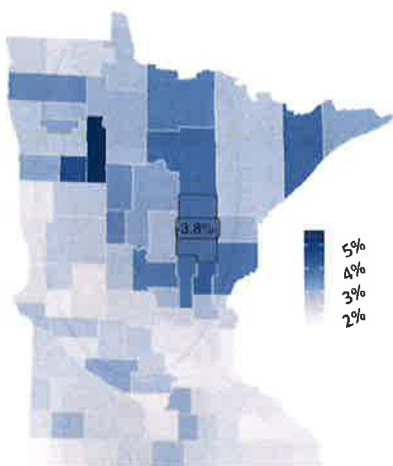
- Entirely rural
- Town/rural mix
- Entirely urban
- Urban/town/rural mix

RUCA Categories

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Unemployment rate - 2022 All time low unemployment rates



Unemployment rate

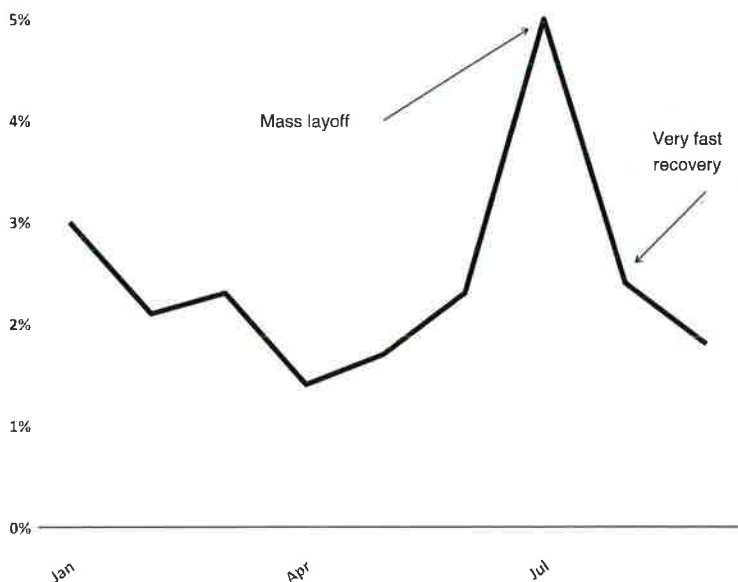
The counties with the lowest unemployment rate is Rock with 1.5%.

The county with the highest unemployment rate is Clearwater with 5.6%.

MN DEED LAUS

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Monthly unemployment rate, 2022 - Cottonwood County Mass layoffs don't have long-term impacts right now



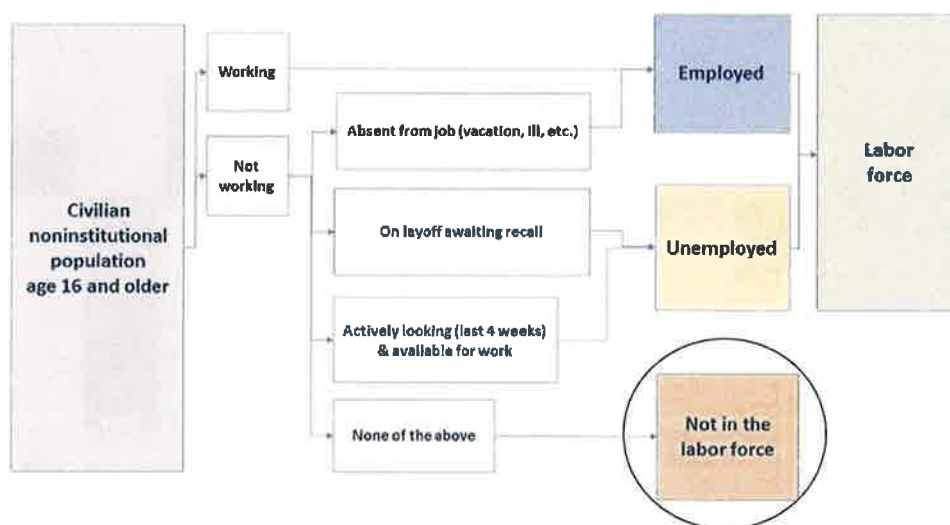
Example –
not our
grandparents
economy

MN DEED - LAUS

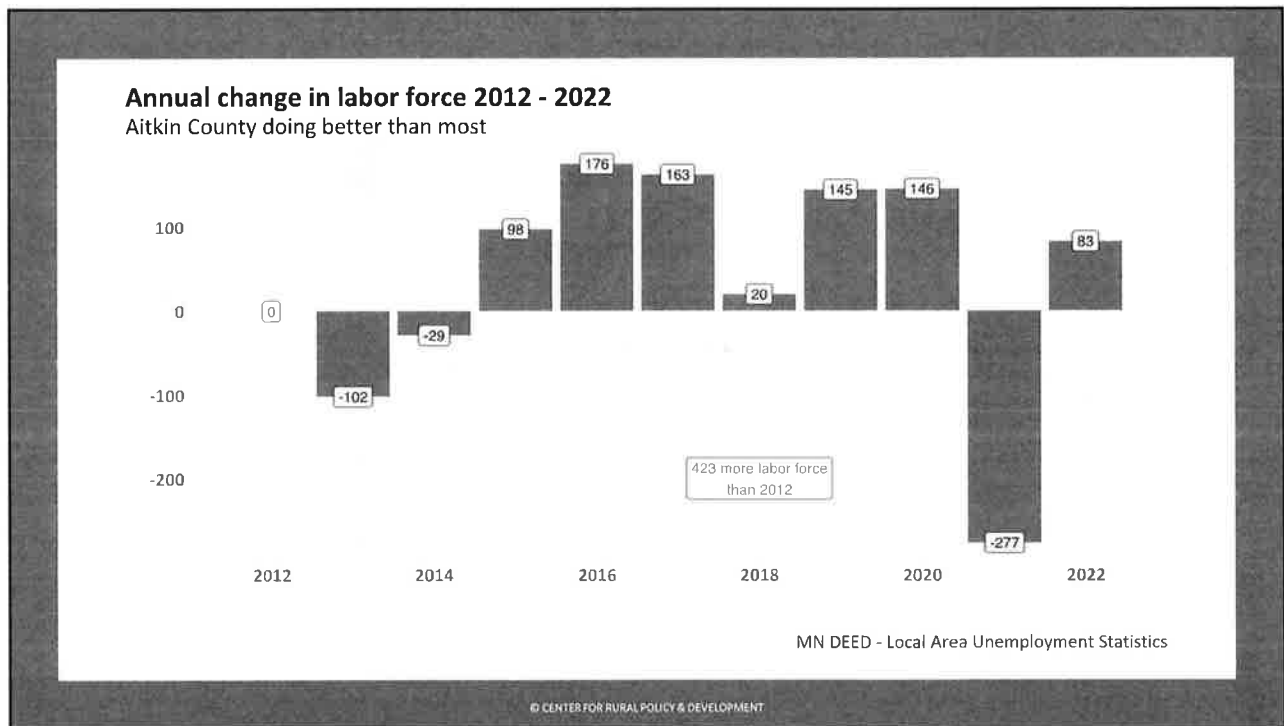
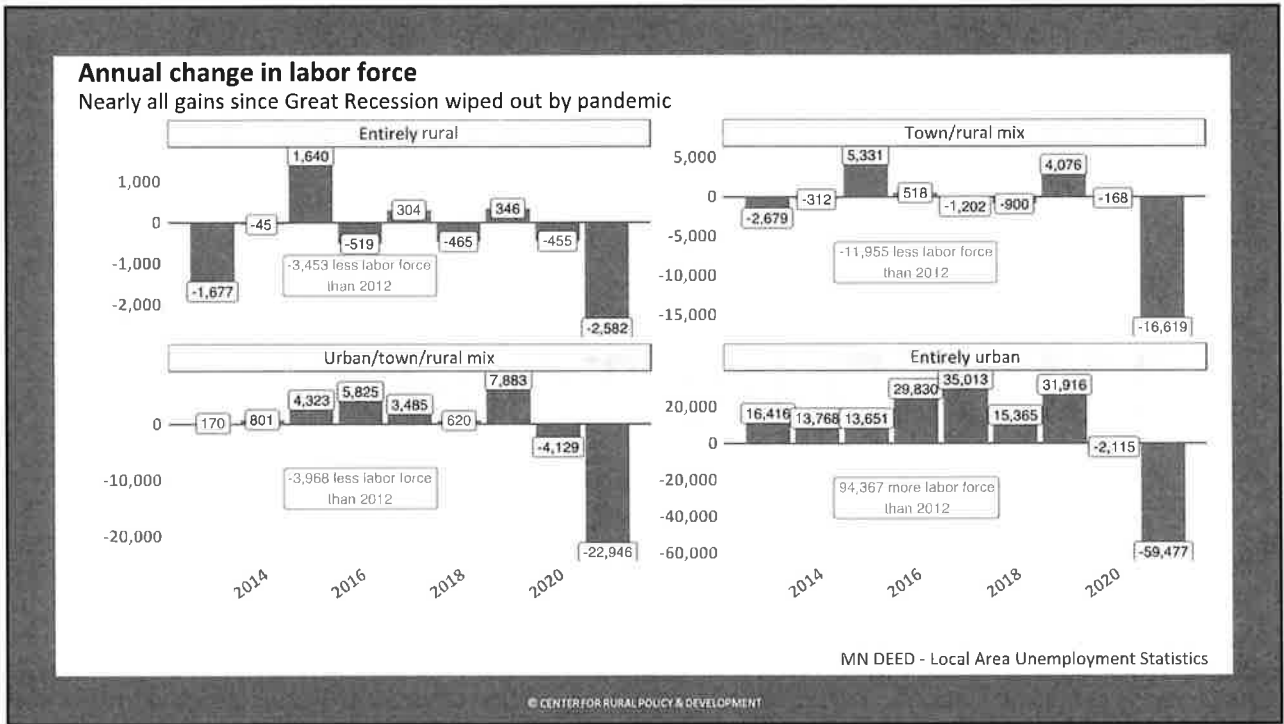
Labor Force Trends

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Who dropped out of the labor force?

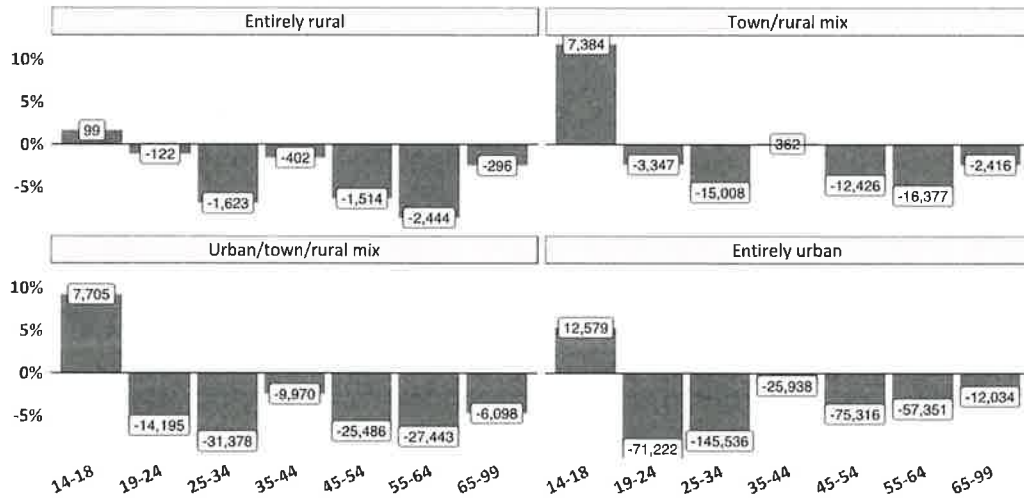
Individuals 55+

Females

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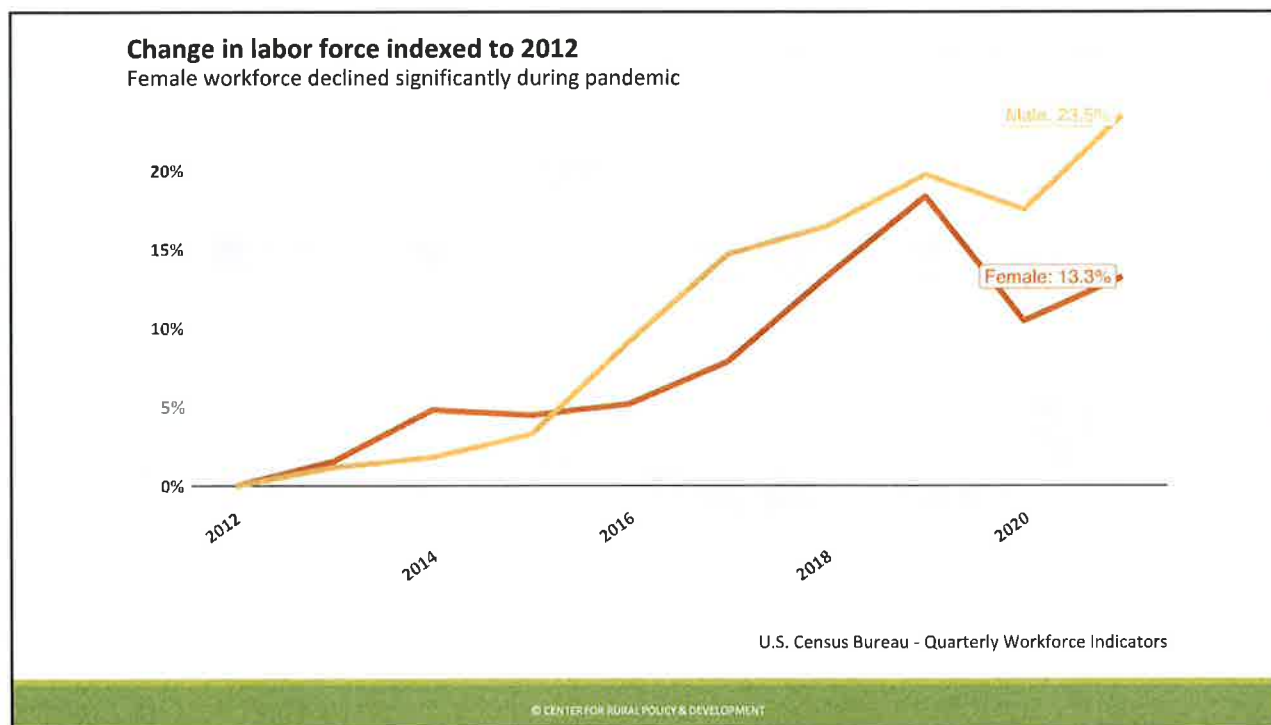
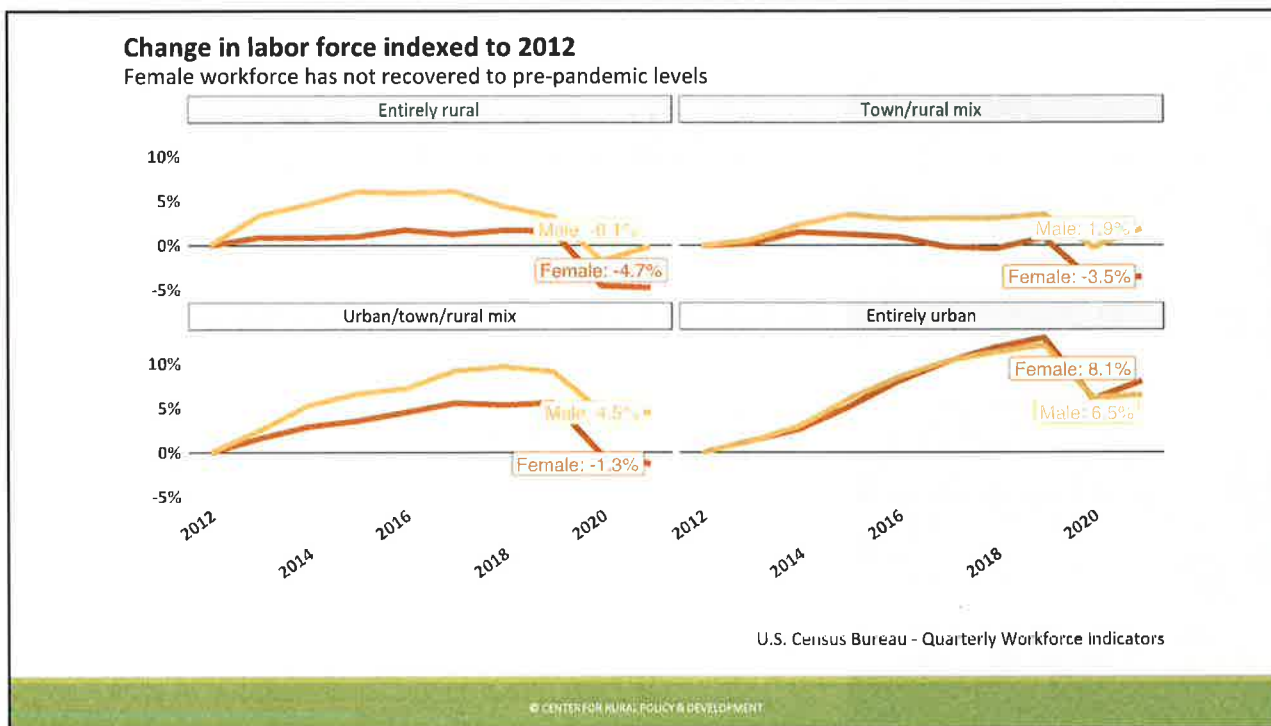
Change in labor force 2019 - 2021

Declines among nearly all age cohorts



U.S. Census Bureau - Quarterly Workforce Indicators

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Why leaving
labor force?

Need for child care.

Fear of COVID-19.

Cultural changes at work.

Wage increases

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Job Vacancies

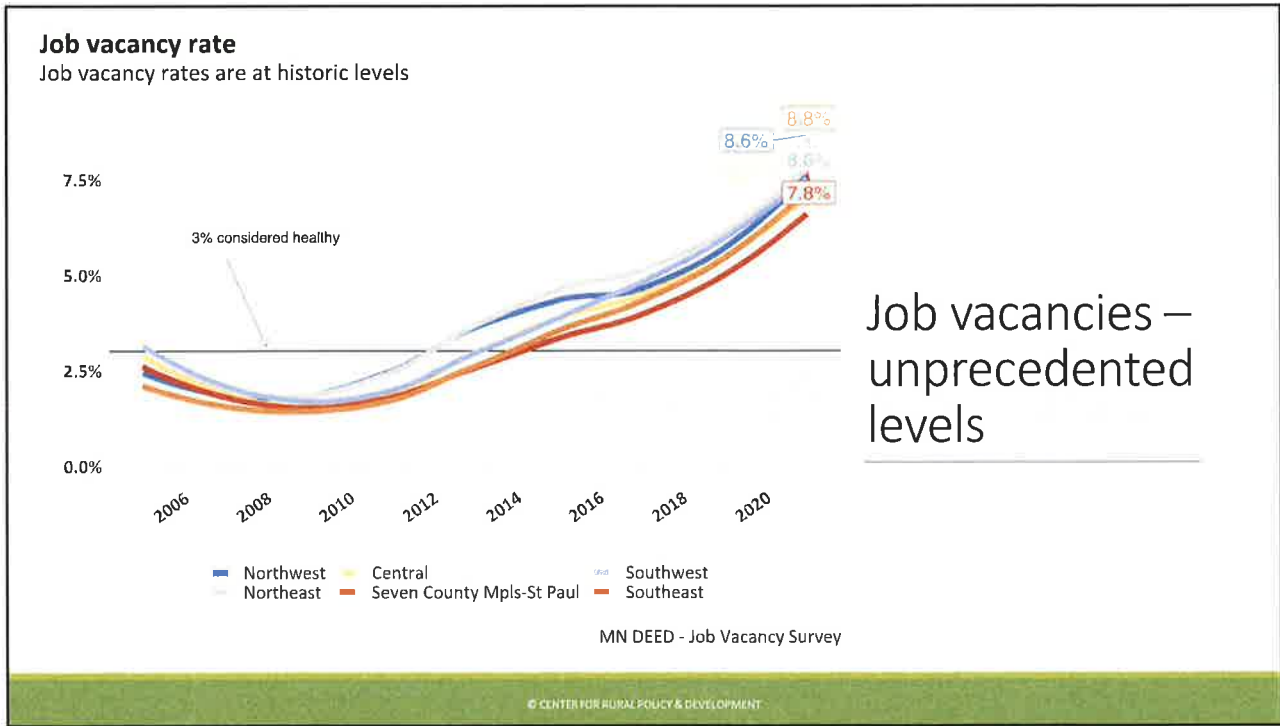
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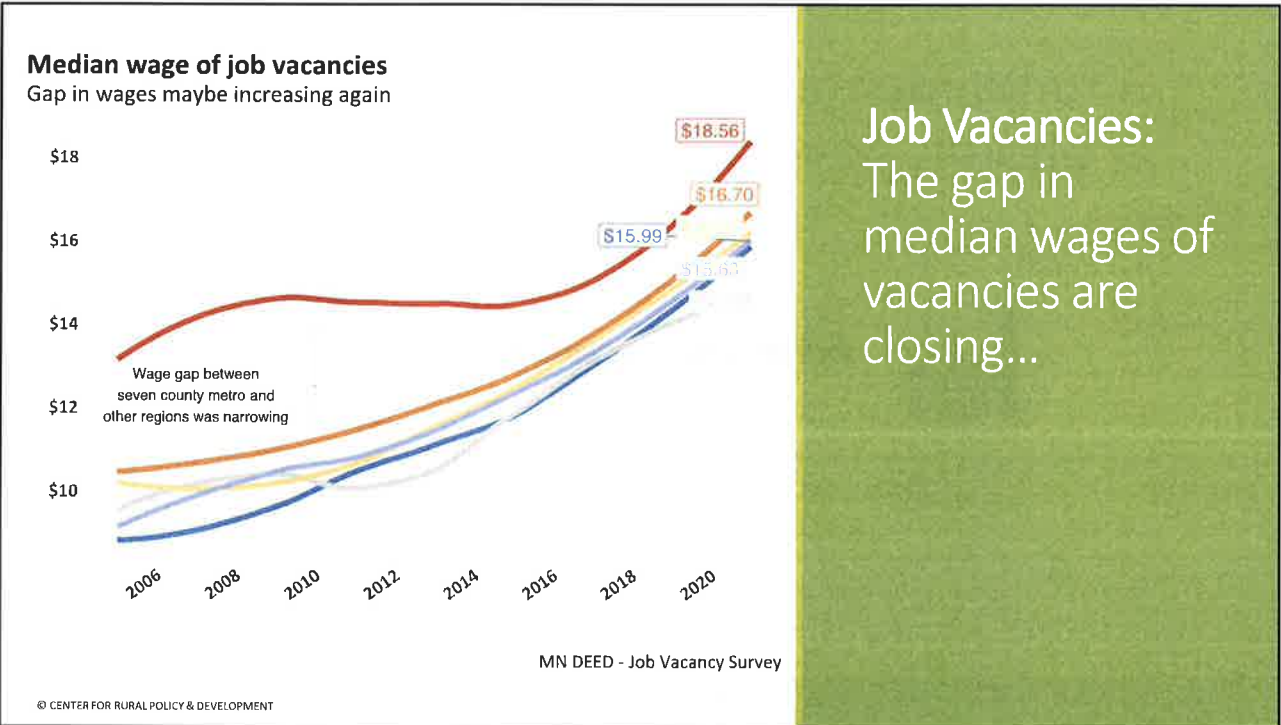
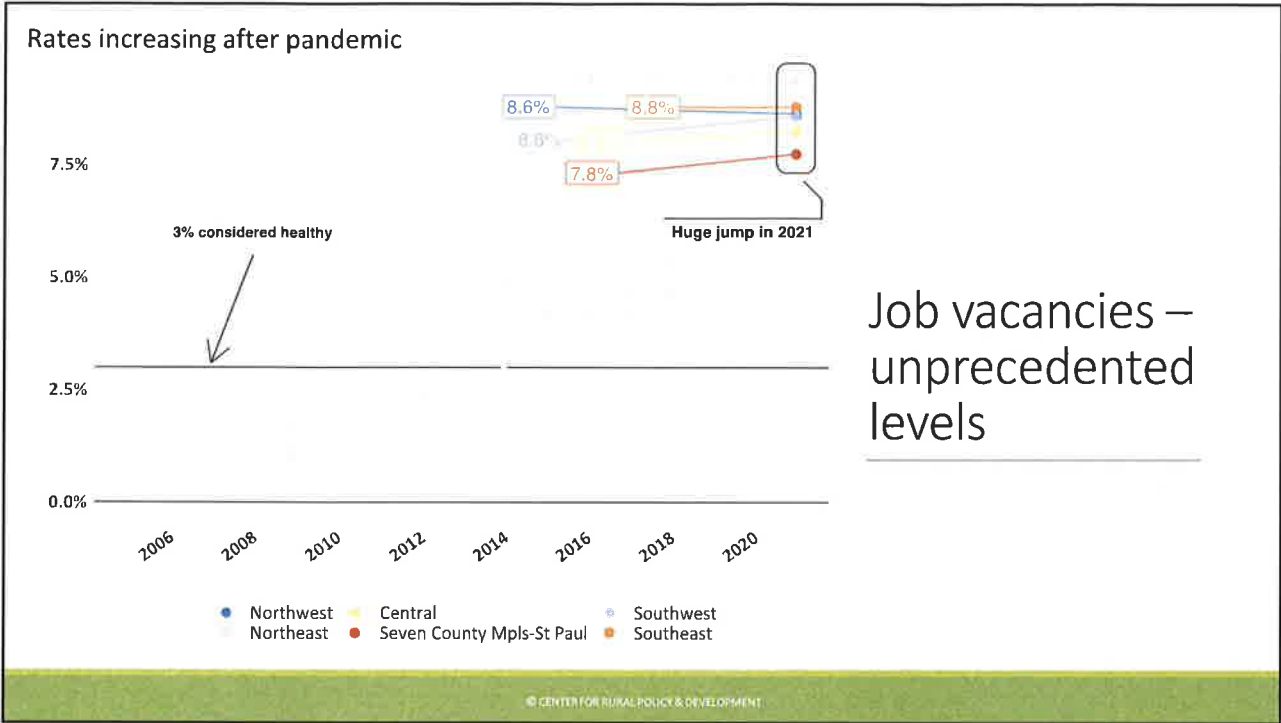
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.4 job seekers per vacancy - 2021

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Data is clear.

The pressure to fill job vacancies in Greater Minnesota at or exceeds levels experienced in the Twin Cities.

Gap in wages has narrowed.

Significantly larger number of job vacancies are full-time.

Significantly larger number of job vacancies offering health insurance benefits.

Job requirements used as lever for applicant pool.

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A fundamental shift is taking place in economic development

From Business Recruitment

To People Recruitment

This is a statewide issue!

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Policy implications: from chasing smokestacks to chasing people

JOB RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

- Tax incentives
- Infrastructure investments
- Focus on labor force

PEOPLE RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

- Housing programs
- Childcare
- Visitor strategies
- Health care
- Current resident engagement
- Investments in natural amenities
- Focus on quality of life issues

Source: University of Minnesota Extension | Center for Community Vitality

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Resident Recruitment and Retention

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GREATER MSP
 Minneapolis Saint Paul Regional Economic Development Partnership

The Region Doing Business Work & Live Our

Rural Envy

The seven-county metro has a great example of resident recruitment with Greater MSP.

MINNEAPOLIS SAINT PAUL REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP

[LEARN MORE](#)

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People Recruitment Efforts In Minnesota




MINNESOTA RISING

REGEN

OTTER TAIL

LIVE WIDE OPEN

Get Rural

Discover SOUTHWEST MN

Wertheim

Fairmont Area LIFE

GROWTH

Project FINE

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA EXTENSION

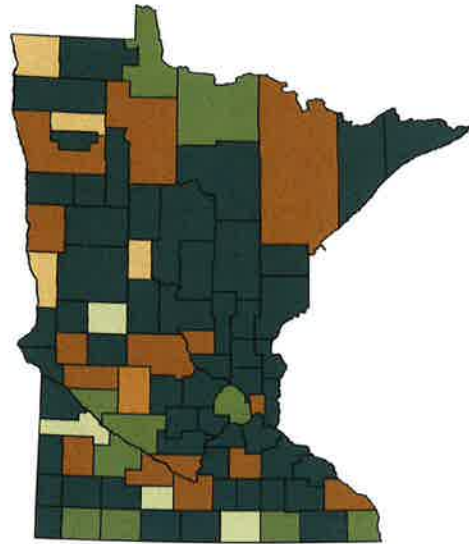
36

In-migration of 30- to 49-year-olds

People recruitment campaigns across Greater Minnesota are based on research conducted by U of MN Extension that highlights the in-migration of 30- to 49-year-olds.

U of MN Extension
Center for Rural Policy & Development
2019

Migration: % higher or lower of expected 30- to 34-year-olds (2000-2010)



Legend for Migration: % higher or lower of expected 30- to 34-year-olds (2000-2010)

Why migrating to rural areas?



Affordable Housing



Small class sizes



Quality of life



Jobs (immigrant and refugee populations)

<https://extension.umn.edu/economic-development/rural-brain-gain-migration>

RURAL SURVEY

- Administered 2019
- 1,610 responses
- 32% of respondents moved within same zip (1,094 newcomers)
- 25% of households have lived in the community before
- 30% of respondents moved primarily for a job
- 25% of households have children



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39

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Exercise



- ★ where you live
- X where you work

Circle around:

1. Shop / eat out
2. Play / recreate



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40

www.prairiewaters.com

Get Rural Min
Come visit, better yet - make the move! to *Western Minnesota*

Housing

Online Platforms (Zillow, Realtor.com)
Local Realtors

Employment Opportunities

Online Platforms (Indeed, Monster, etc)
Local Newspapers
Employers
Broadband
Entrepreneurship

Things To Do

Outdoor Adventures
Places to Eat
Places to Stay
Places to Shop
Events

Family Essentials

Schools
Healthcare
Childcare
Cost of Living

Promoting and engaging

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Recruitment Challenges

Building a Network from Scratch

Who's responsible?

Negative Narrative and Perceptions

Diversity of skill set required for initiatives

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Changing the story for high schoolers

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Two types of influences



Relationships



Observations

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Influencers: relationships



COLLEGE ADMISSIONS



IMMEDIATE FAMILY



FORMAL ADVISORS

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Influences: observations



Career opportunities



Community opportunities

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Retention – engaging youth



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Lots of activity in Greater Minnesota

INVOLVEMENT FROM BUSINESS COMMUNITY INCREASING INTEREST IN CTE



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Build Dakota Scholarships



Program Details

- Both in-state students and out-of-state students are eligible for the scholarships.
- Scholars of all ages are welcome to apply.
- The scholarships will support tuition, fees, books and other required program expenses in the eligible technical institute programs.
- Recipients of the scholarships will commit to living and working in the state, in their field of study, for three years following graduation.
- In the first five years, a projected 300 scholarships will be awarded annually. Beyond the first five years, the endowment will support approximately 50 full-ride scholarships.

Student Commitment

- Enroll full-time in a technical institute program determined as high-need workforce area in South Dakota
- Following graduation, work full-time in field of study in South Dakota for a minimum of three years.

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Childcare: Is it economic development?

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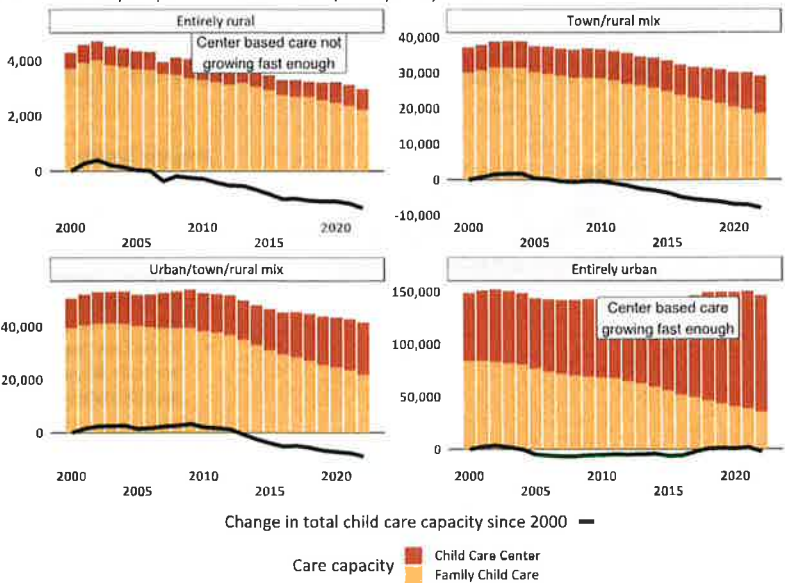
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The economics of childcare in rural Minnesota

Family childcare makes up a significantly larger portion of rural child care provider capacity. Unlike the twin cities, growth in center-based childcare has not kept up with declines in family-based child care providers.

Child care capacity

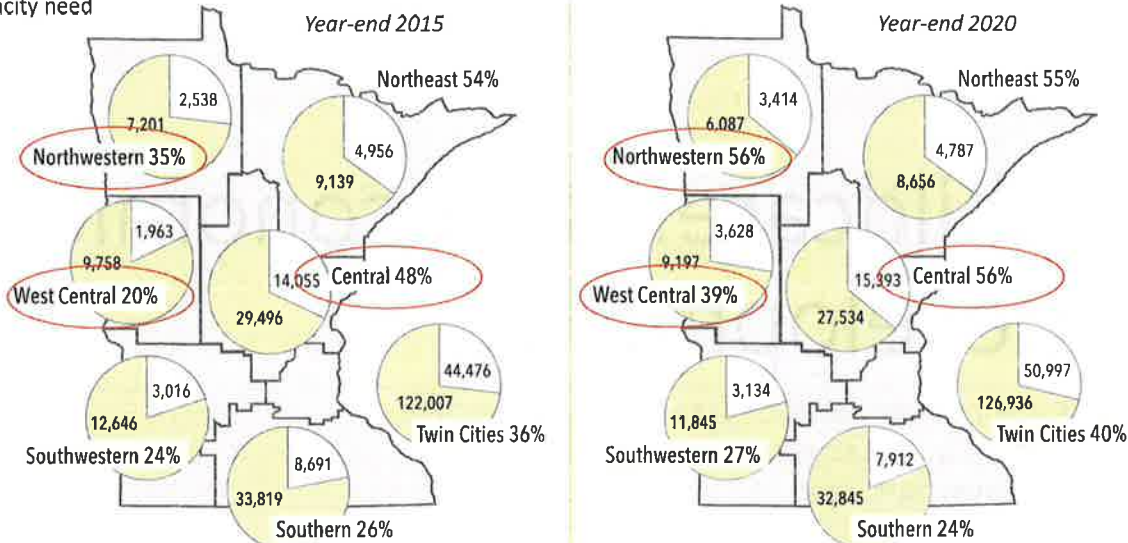
Total child care capacity in rural areas driven by family based care



MN Department of Human Resources

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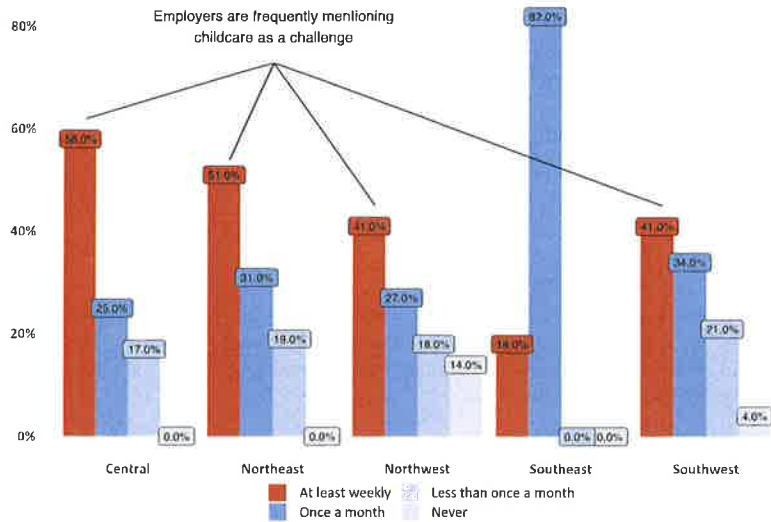
Percentage growth required to meet estimated capacity need



Data: MN Dept. of Human Services; U.S. Census
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How often do employers mention childcare as a barrier to attracting or retaining talent?



Lack of child care hinders recruitment

Center for Rural Policy and Development - Childcare Initiative Survey

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What communities are doing

Projects reflect a variety of ways to approach the problem:

- Directly subsidizing providers through loans and/or grants.
 - **Swift County Board of Commissioners** has been offering a child care grant program since 2017 to help existing providers and new providers with expenses. Family providers can apply for up to \$150 per child enrolled, while centers can apply for up to \$12,500.
- Subsidizing by paying for things directly, like training and licensing.
 - The **Initiative Foundation** in east central Minnesota works with the three community colleges in its region to help people get up to a four-year degree in early child development and education and **graduate debt-free**.
 - **Brown County** has opted to not charge providers a fee for licensing or re-licensing.

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What communities are doing

- Community coalitions and/or task forces were mentioned frequently. Some examples:
 - Duluth Partnership on Child Care
 - Meeker County Child Care Team
 - City of Worthington, Nobles County, ISD 518
- School districts: Finding efficiencies in their operations.
 - The Kasson-Mantorville school district added an infant and toddler child care program to go with their existing preschool program. Project Beginnings opened in November 2020 with space for seven infants and fourteen toddlers, and they are working on an expansion—their waitlist currently stands at 130. But their message to existing providers: We need you.
- Two examples of employers as providers.
 - Hormel Foods
 - CCM Health, Montevideo (hospital)

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What communities are doing

- Examples of communities working on pod facilities. Seems to be a lot of interest in pods.
 - Worthington, Nobles County, and ISD 518
 - Stevens County
 - City of Little Falls
- Public outreach campaigns explaining why childcare is important to the local economy and the community overall.
 - Redwood County
 - Kandiyohi County EDC

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Questions?

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Osprey Wilds

Environmental Learning Center

Aitkin County Board of Commissioners
307 2nd Street NW, Rm. 310
Aitkin, MN 56431

February 8, 2023

Dear Aitkin County Board of Commissioners,

Thank you for your support of Minnesota's Residential Environmental Learning Centers (RELCs), and specifically Long Lake Conservation Center. Because of our collective efforts, we were able to secure a \$1.6 million grant from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF), as recommended by the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota's Resources (LCCMR) in 2022 to be used for K-12 scholarships over the next three years.

The grant was approved and we thought funds were made available when the new state budget began July 1, 2022. All of the RELCs began promoting the opportunity to schools and awarding scholarships to deserving schools. Several RELCs had schools attend their centers in September and October under the impression that ENRTF grant funds were covering their financial needs. It was not until into the fall that I was made aware that we still needed our initial work plan approved with some slight edits before funds could be accessed. This technicality meant that until the final work plan was approved by the MN Department of Natural Resources, who manages the disbursement of the grant funds, we were unable to be reimbursed for any scholarships prior to that. The final work plan approval was achieved October 27, 2022. This unfortunate reality affected several RELCs who counted on ENRTF grant monies to cover the scholarships they awarded to attending schools in September and October. I appealed to the DNR and LCCMR staff, but it is a state statute that the work plan has to be approved before grant funds can be spent. This meant any of the attending schools prior to October 27 were not eligible to receive ENRTF scholarship funds.

I apologize to you all and to Long Lake for the financial hardship that has put on your 2022 fiscal year. It affected other centers as well. If there is a silver lining to this, it is that the funds are still there to be used, and we have until June 30, 2025 to do so, and any schools after October 27, 2022 were eligible for the ENRTF scholarship funds.

If you have any questions, I can be reached at 320-290-8246 or wood@ospreywilds.org.

Sincerely,

Bryan Wood
Executive Director



Board of County Commissioners Agenda Request

Agenda Item #

Requested Meeting Date: February 14, 2023

Title of Item: LG220 Application for Exempt Permit - Duck's Unlimited Aitkin Area Chapter

<input type="checkbox"/> REGULAR AGENDA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CONSENT AGENDA <input type="checkbox"/> INFORMATION ONLY	Action Requested: <input type="checkbox"/> Approve/Deny Motion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopt Resolution (attach draft) <i>*provide copy of hearing notice that was published</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Direction Requested <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Item <input type="checkbox"/> Hold Public Hearing*
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Submitted by: Wendie Bright	Department: Auditor's Office
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Presenter (Name and Title): Wendie Bright	Estimated Time Needed: 5 minutes
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Summary of Issue:

Ducks Unlimited is requesting approval for their Gambling Permit, for their Fishing for Ducks event on 2/18/23. The event will take place on Mille Lacs Lake, in Hazelton Township. They received their application back from the State on 2/10/2023, noting that they needed Aitkin County approval. (They had gotten City of Garrison approval, in error.)

Gambling Permit Application

Alternatives, Options, Effects on Others/Comments:

Recommended Action/Motion:

See attached proposed Resolution

Financial Impact:

Is there a cost associated with this request? Yes No

What is the total cost, with tax and shipping? \$

Is this budgeted? Yes No Please Explain:

CERTIFIED COPY OF RESOLUTION OF COUNTY BOARD OF AITKIN COUNTY, MINNESOTA

ADOPTED February 14, 2023

By Commissioner: xxx

20230214-xxx

Aitkin Ducks Unlimited - Fishing for Ducks

BE IT RESOLVED, The Aitkin County Board of Commissioners agrees to approve the Application for Exempt Permit – Form LG220 – of the Ducks Unlimited Garrison Wildlife Chapter, at the following location – Mille Lacs Lake, Hazelton Township. (Date of event – Fishing for Ducks – February 18, 2023)

Commissioner xxx moved the adoption of the resolution and it was declared adopted upon the following vote

FIVE MEMBERS PRESENT

All Members Voting Yes

**STATE OF MINNESOTA}
COUNTY OF AITKIN}**

I, Jessica Seibert, County Administrator, Aitkin County, Minnesota do hereby certify that I have compared the foregoing with the original resolution filed in the Administration Office of Aitkin County in Aitkin, Minnesota as stated in the minutes of the proceedings of said Board on the 14th day of February 2023, and that the same is a true and correct copy of the whole thereof.

Witness my hand and seal this 14th day of February 2023

Jessica Seibert
County Administrator