



Board of County Commissioners Agenda Request

10A
Agenda Item #

Requested Meeting Date: November 12, 2025

Title of Item: Economic Development Update - Information Only

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> REGULAR AGENDA <input type="checkbox"/> CONSENT AGENDA	Action Requested: <input type="checkbox"/> Approve/Deny Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Adopt Resolution (attach draft) <input type="checkbox"/> Hold Public Hearing <i>*provide copy of hearing notice that was published</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Direction Requested <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Item <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Only
Submitted by: Mark Jeffers		Department: Economic Development
Presenter (Name and Title): Mark Jeffers, Economic Development Coordinator		Estimated Time Needed: 15 minutes
Summary of Issue: Economic Development staff will present an update on Economic Development Priorities. A presentation will be provided at the meeting.		
Alternatives, Options, Effects on Others/Comments:		
Recommended Action/Motion: Discussion only		
Financial Impact: <i>Is there a cost associated with this request?</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <i>What is the total cost, with tax and shipping? \$</i> <i>Is this budgeted?</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <i>Please Explain:</i>		

AITKIN COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Mark Jeffers

Aitkin County Economic
Development Coordinator



Naturally Better.

Housing

1. Bunker Hill Apartments
2. Bunker Hill Senior complex
3. McGregor Developments
4. MN Housing Participation Program
5. 6 current development opportunities
6. 2 builder incentive applications being reviewed by the ED Committee



2025 MCPP Usage Report 1.16.2025 - 11.30.2025 (Applies to Start Up Program Loans Only)					For Informational Purposes Only									
					**Additional Start Up Loans		Step Up Loans		Fix Up Loans		Total Loan Activity		Downpayment and Closing Cost Loans	
Applicant Name	Allocation Amount	Committed Loans	Committed Amount	% of Usage	Committed Loans	Committed Amount	Committed Loans	Committed Amount	Committed Loans	Committed Amount	Committed Loans	Committed Amount	% of First Mortgage	Total Amount of Downpayment
Aitkin	\$ 303,410	6	\$1,014,937	335%	1	\$ 96,000	1	\$ 91,000	2	\$ 37,520	10	\$1,239,457	80%	\$ 118,500

*Participants must use at least 50% of their allocation by the end of the program year in order to participate next year.

**Not MCPP Eligible. Borrower income is above 80% of Area Median Income.



Childcare

1. Aitkin County now has 3 Childcare Centers: McGregor, Tamarack and Aitkin
2. It takes private business commitment: *Talon is now offering a childcare incentive to employees covering 50% of costs if they utilize The Learning Center (TLC) childcare facility.*
3. At home childcare providers, Aitkin County 2025:

Childcare Businesses	2023	2024	2025	2026 (proj)
At Home Childcare Aitkin County	19	21	11	11
Childcare Centers	1	2	3	3

2 retired
 2 closed (health)
 2 moved out of County
 3 closed (other)
 1 upgraded to Center

Childcare Slots			
2023	2024	2025	2026 (proj)
266	294	154	154
49	98	147	147
315	392	301	301

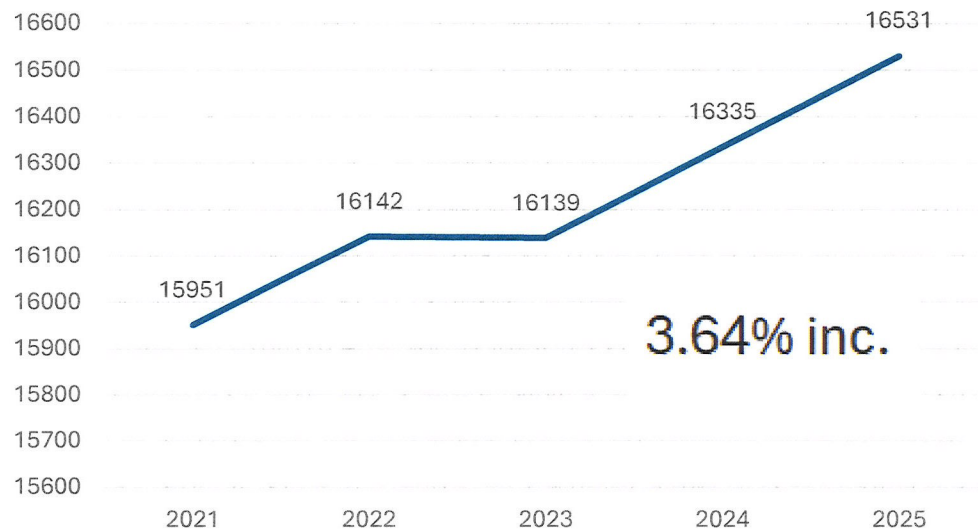
14 slots Family

49 slots Center

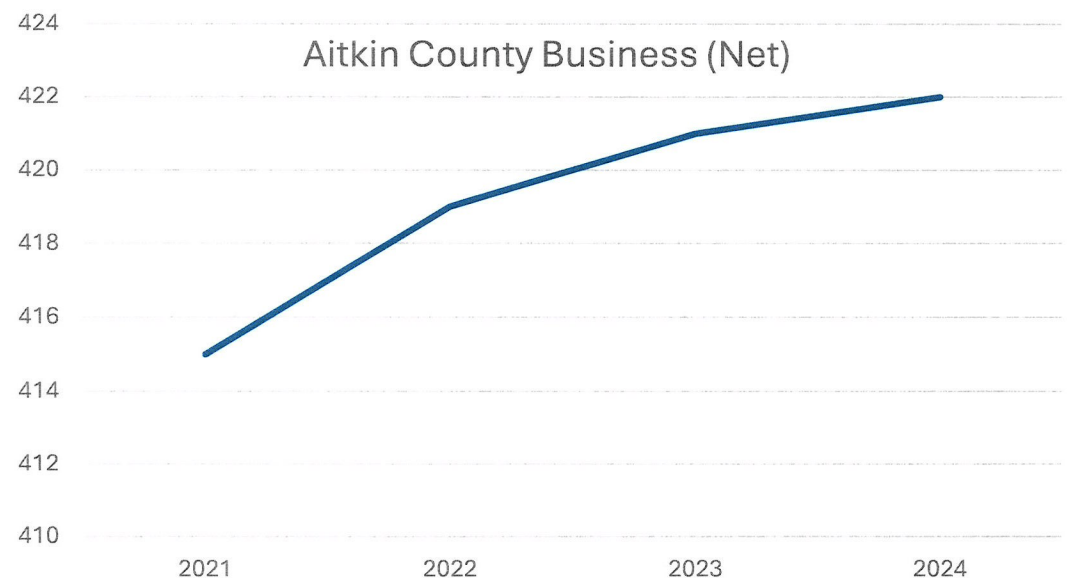


Business Retention and Expansion

Aitkin County Population



Aitkin County Business (Net)



All data comes directly from the FRED QCEW series for Aitkin County. [FRED](#)

Recreation and Tourism

Minnesota - Aitkin County							
Impact	Year						2024 Growth
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	
Visitor Spending (\$ millions)	\$43.4	\$40.6	\$44.9	\$44.0	\$44.9	\$46.6	3.8%
Lodging*	\$27.0	\$28.3	\$29.6	\$26.6	\$27.0	\$27.7	2.5%
Food and Beverage (F&B)	\$6.3	\$4.6	\$5.6	\$6.4	\$6.5	\$7.0	6.7%
Recreation	\$2.5	\$1.9	\$2.2	\$2.6	\$2.7	\$3.1	13.5%
Retail	\$2.7	\$2.3	\$2.7	\$2.9	\$2.9	\$3.0	4.1%
Transportation**	\$4.8	\$3.6	\$4.7	\$5.6	\$5.7	\$5.8	2.3%

*Lodging spending includes second-home spending

**Transportation spending includes both ground and air transportation

Direct visitor spending and impact by year and category - single county view

Minnesota - Aitkin County		
Employment (number of jobs)	2023	2024
Direct	274	285
Total	380	388
Income (\$ millions)		
Direct	\$8.9	\$9.3
Total	\$15.5	\$15.8
State Tax Revenue (\$ millions)		
Direct	\$2.8	\$2.9
Total	\$4.1	\$4.2
Local Tax Revenue (\$ millions)		
Direct	\$1.4	\$1.5
Total	\$2.0	\$2.1



Outreach

- September 10-12 AMC Fall Conference
- September 17: IRRR State of the Range meeting
- September 26: MAPCED Quarter 3 meeting
- September 29: Northspan Board recruitment meetings
- October 3: Marketing Mornings Watch Party
- October 3: IRRR/Aitkin County tour: Angie's Acres- Palisade City Meats
- October 5: host AMC lunch and learn- ED projects
- October 10: AMC Board Meeting- MAPCED presentation
- October 15: APT business breakfast
- October- December- Leading on Purpose leadership training
- October 30: Initiative Foundation-Initiators Fellowship Finalist Day (interviewer)
- October 31: Mississippi Headwaters Board Annual Conference- Breezy Point
- November 3: IRRR/Aitkin County tour
- November 6: HHS Advisory presentation- public health and economic development
- November 7: Marketing Morning SBDC watch party
- November 12: Minnesota Association of Workforce Boards meeting St. Paul
- November 19: Itasca/Regional 10-year strategic plan- virtual

Where do we go from here?



1. Complete tax abatement update for Senior complex
2. Utilize HTF dollars for builders
3. Support McGregor projects to move forward
4. Build houses in McGregor
5. Execute the 2026 Revitalization Grant Program
6. Execute the 2026 BD&R Grant Program
7. Focus on Family Childcare opportunities
8. AMC annual conference workshop presentations