



2016  
2021

Comprehensive Economic  
Development Strategy

**CEDS**



Upper Minnesota Valley  
**REGIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT  
COMMISSION**

# Introduction

## *What is CEDS? Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy*

“A CEDS is a strategy-driven plan for regional economic development. A CEDS is the result of a regionally owned planning process designed to build capacity and guide the economic prosperity and resiliency of an area or region.” EDA 2015

The Upper Minnesota Valley Regional Development Commission (UMVRDC) is a Minnesota regional unit of government established via the state statute Minnesota Regional Development Act of 1969 (MS Sections 462.381 to 462.398). The United States Department of Commerce/Economic Development Administration (EDA) designated the UMVRDC and the counties it serves as a federally-recognized Economic Development District, which allows for eligibility for program assistance under Title IV of the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965, which establishes “appropriate multicounty districts for the purpose of fostering and promoting economic growth”.

The CEDS is intended to create a roadmap for intentional collaboration, strategic program development and support for policy and investments in the counties of Big Stone, Chippewa, Lac qui Parle, Swift and Yellow Medicine.

To retain the Economic Development District designation, the UMVRDC agrees to create a CEDS through a highly-involved civic engagement process. A new CEDS is created every five years, with annual progress reports submitted to EDA. The UMVRDC also retains this designation through the establishment of a governing body made up of the UMVRDC Commissioners. 2016 marks the year that all Regional Development Commissions in Minnesota will be updating their Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS) in alignment with the 2015 DevelopMN Plan, an economic development strategy for Greater Minnesota.

Minnesota Association of Development Organizations (MADO) is comprised of 10 Minnesota Regional Development Organizations (RDOs) whose purpose is to promote and create economic prosperity in Greater Minnesota. This is accomplished through alignment of a strong network of RDOs, the communities they serve, and the federal and state agencies that share their commitment. In 2015, MADO worked collaborative on DevelopMN, a strategic plan that aligns Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS) throughout Greater Minnesota into one document that is being used to leverage resources at all levels for the greatest economic impact.

DevelopMN has created a common framework for regional economic development that is supported and used by all of the development organizations in Greater MN. This common framework is similarly being used to guide local regional CEDS plans to ensure the greatest alignment when appropriate, to create comparable baseline data as well as identify the unique opportunities and strengths in each region.

The UMVRDC CEDS is utilized to forward projects and programs that impact our regional economic prosperity, environmental stewardship and quality of life for ALL people of the region. Many federal agencies give preferred status and additional points in competitive grant applications to projects and programs that align with the CEDS. The UMVRDC works with many partners throughout the region/state/nation in a leadership or subservient capacity to implement the strategies within the CEDS.

## *How is the CEDS used?*



# Process

- The MN Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) provided data on current economic and social conditions in the region found in the 2016 Regional Profile in the Appendix.
- Study of Studies – the EDA University Center created an inventory of existing planning documents in this region and synthesize those documents to help guide/validate the direction of the CEDS. Many communities in their local plans have identified the most important issues to them and enabled us to correlate the results to our regional CEDS. A summary of this initiative is included in the Appendix.
- Survey – a regional survey was sent out in the summer of 2016 to gather input from residents of the five counties on the four cornerstones. Approximately 60 individual responded broadly representing the region with feedback coming from all corners of the region. This feedback created a baseline for measuring improvements and/or changes in perceptions about the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing the region. A similar survey was used in other regions for comparable baseline data. A summary of the survey results can be found in the Appendix.
- City staff, education, healthcare and economic development professionals responded to multiple inquiries July – August 2016 about cornerstone priorities and regional opportunities and challenges that should drive our work over the next five year.
- On September 19th, 2016, a CEDS open house was held to review survey results and discuss goals and strategies in the areas we feel we can have the most impact on over the next five years.
- During the development of this document we reviewed the best practices for economic development from EDA, NADO and CEDS from all over the U.S.
- The draft CEDS document was made available for public comment beginning October 21st, 2016 at [www.umvrdc.org](http://www.umvrdc.org)

## *Communication Moving Forward...*

- The UMVRDC will work with stakeholders on the implementation of the plan. Regular communication between the public, private, education and non-profit sectors is encouraged, with email updates, conference calls, website updates on progress, press releases when appropriate regarding project successes and regular meetings for those working on specific goals and action plans.

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*Data throughout this document unless otherwise cited can be found in in the 2016 Regional Profile Published October 1st, 2016.  
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MN Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED)*





# Overview

## Having a Vision...

The Upper Minnesota Valley region will be recognized for an abundance of place-based amenities, world-class broadband access, collaborative governments, housing opportunities for those moving in and moving over and a highly recognized branded lifestyle that attracts more newcomers each year to communities and jobs in the Upper Minnesota Valley.

CEDS STRATEGY COMMITTEE 2016

The goals within are big and bold! Success will require collaboration and innovative thinking from the public, private and non-profit organizations in the region. We are all up to the challenge! The CEDS is designed to be a living document and worked on daily over the next five years.

The cornerstone framework divides up our highest priority projects, we've organized each project under the cornerstone that was most appropriate for the region. Although each cornerstone contains multiple supporting elements, we have challenged ourselves to sharpen our focus on a specific goal with an action plan. The cornerstones are listed in prioritized order.

The outcomes expected is a substantial impact in each of the cornerstone areas that demonstrates the commitment of our regional network to advancing economic prosperity. That said, the UMRDC works on a wide-range of community and economic development projects as do our regional partners, that we will continue to work on as needed by the communities we serve and as timely opportunities arise.

Cornerstone	UMVRDC EDD	Baseline 2016	Goal 2021	Change	How does it build resilience
<b>Community Resources</b>	Develop a portal for people to connect with regional amenities, jobs and lifestyle info.	No portal No traffic	Annually increase unique visitor traffic by 20%	40-60% increase in unique visitor traffic	An online portal will make our region and information about the region more accessible
<b>Human Capital</b>	Raise the labor force participation rate of 25-44 year olds in the region	87.2%	89.2%	+2%	Labor force is the life blood of the region with a population aging faster than the state & nation, focusing on this cohort is critical to our future
<b>Foundational Assets</b>	Increase the number of households in the region with broadband access of 100/20	Current county percentages range between 19% - 99%	Increase all counties by at least 20%	20% increase or 100% access to 100/20	Creates new opportunities in jobs, business, education and healthcare and more
<b>Economic Competitive- ness</b>	Increase the number of business establishments in the region	1,528	1,600	+4.7% increase or 72 businesses	Encourages regional diversification minimizing the impacts of industry challenges



# Cornerstones

Through the DevelopMN process the following cornerstones were identified as key components of strong regions and communities. When used in the CEDS and approached in a coordinated way, these cornerstones will help create prosperity in the UMRDC region and throughout Greater Minnesota.

## Human Capital

Developing, retaining and attracting talent are critical for Greater Minnesota in order to sustain and grow rural businesses and communities. Tracking the characteristics of the labor force and the needs of employers, and creating strategies for alignment between the two, are the foundation for this cornerstone.

## Economic Competitiveness

Making Greater Minnesota an attractive environment for growth is critical to creating jobs, improving living standards and financing necessary public services. Economic Competitiveness requires communities to develop and link all available assets to support innovation and encourage business growth.

## Community Resources

Greater Minnesota communities seek to maintain rural values, their heritage and the assets that support them. Community Resources includes topics that balance the preservation and improvement of local social, cultural and natural assets that are critical for the future.

## Foundational Assets

Greater Minnesota communities require proactive and collaborative approaches/strategies to address infrastructure needs in a cost-effective manner. Managing the access to, maintenance, replacement and growth of these assets are key to preserving and maintaining communities, and provide for growth opportunities. Foundational assets include aboveground and below-ground infrastructure such as transportation, utilities and water.

Human Capital

Economic Competitiveness

Community Resources

Foundational Assets

DevelopMN's plan is based on SMART goals. SMART stands for:

**Specific:** target a specific area for improvement.

**Measurable:** quantify or at least suggest an indicator of progress.

**Attainable:** assure that an end can be achieved.

**Realistic:** state what results can realistically be achieved, given available resources.

**Time-related:** specify when the result(s) can be achieved.

The UMRDC CEDS has applied some practical principles while developing S.M.A.R.T. goals. These principles are based on the following elements:

- **Asset-Based** – Local assets grow more durable economies
- **Diversified** – Makes for a nimble and resilient economy
- **Measurable Strategy** – Responsive to trends...relevant to region
- **Disciplined & Consistent** – All ideas are not equal...priorities matter

The UMRDC CEDS will become the playbook for a collaborative region-wide transformation for regional prosperity. The goals listed in the pages ahead reflect the desires of most regional stakeholders, are realistic and are limited to a manageable number that can be executed with an intentional approach.

The goals and action plans have been prioritized with significant consideration given to the regional needs and the shared ability of regional partners to have a positive impact. The collective results of implementing the action plans are expected to bolster the long-term economic durability of the region.



# Community Resources Cornerstone

## Regional Pulse



**Tourism** – The UMVRDC's Western Minnesota Prairie Waters is a unique program asset in the region. [www.prairiewaters.com](http://www.prairiewaters.com) connects visitors and residents alike with new and existing attractions in the region. This unifying program has participation from all five counties and dedicated participation from local economic development and chamber professionals as well as leaders from the private sector.



**Social Capital** – We have many dedicated regional leaders, however many of them have been serving in their leadership roles for decades. Often times demonstrating little regional diversity. Our focus as a region is to groom new leaders and prepare them to be civically engaged. Increasing our leadership diversity will also help build resiliency and ensure all cultures in the region are represented.



**Arts & Culture** – The UMVRDC is home to the Meander Art Crawl which annually showcases 50+ artist's workshops for the general public to view and purchase art, growing each year this event is a major attraction. Community arts groups and the Milan Village Art school bring in a wide-range of experts to teach locals and visitors techniques and trades from beginners to advanced.



**Natural Resources/Water Quality** – The region prides itself on the protection of natural resources and remains active in the on-going protection of water quality often times requiring a fine balance with agricultural activities in the region.

## Call to Action

There is no single window into the lifestyle and opportunities offered throughout the Upper Minnesota Valley, while some resources do not have an online presence at all. A portal platform that integrates the regional resources associated with living in the region, doing business and working in the region is a great need. Online opportunities to explore the region are an effective solution to increasing the region's online presence and makes it easier for people to connect with our region! This is one initiative that supports several goals while building economic resiliency as we increase our opportunities to attract and retain residents and business. It is only through a collective and widely support approach will the region be successful. Get Rural is the branding initiative that the region's economic development and chamber professionals have embraced to promote the region!



*Western Minnesota*  
**PRAIRIE WATERS**  
*Regional Tourism*

[Regional Video: Click Here!](#)





## Community Resources Smart Goal

Develop a regional online portal that provides a helpful connection to the abundance of amenities, jobs available, and lifestyle that can be found in the region using the Get Rural brand.

Action Plan	Tasks	Partners	Resources
1. Create a portal concept and business plan around the “Get Rural” regional brand	Work with ED Pro’s to develop the concept for the site	EDAs Chambers DEED SWIF SWMNPIC	Vivid Image (Consultant)
	Work with a subcommittee on the business plan		
	Develop a social media marketing plan		
2. Develop a section of the portal dedicated to entrepreneurs	Available spaces/resources inventory (vacant buildings)	EDAs SWIF	SBDC Gap Lenders
	Collect Testimonials		
	Promote businesses for sale		
	Explore a youth section		
3. Continue to build a strong Regional Tourism Program	Blend tourism into the portal - connect with Prairie Waters	Prairie Waters Tourism	Explore MN Tourism
	Promote and market the growing arts culture and Annual Meander Art Crawl	Chambers EDAs	Southern MN Tourism
	Promote Visitor for a Day Campaign & Lifestyle Snapshots		
4. Strengthen the network of organizations that address workforce	Use the portal as a gateway to regional employment opportunities	EDAs SWMPIC DEED	Chambers Businesses Schools
	Develop a network of people who are willing/able to connect potential newcomers with employers to help make regional connections		
5. Work with communities to connect them with the regional portal	Meet with each city and county about the portal	EDAs Pioneer Public TV SWMNPIC	EDA (federal) DEED Explore MN Tourism Chambers
	Create a project summary we can share with public, private and non-profit organization		
	Work with realtors and employers on using the portal		
	Create measurement tools to share progress with stakeholders in the future		



# Human Capital Cornerstone

## Regional Pulse



**Labor force** – There is a misperception that there are a lack of jobs in the region, the reality is that there is a lack of labor force. Each week the newspapers advertise dozens of jobs from entry to professional. There is also a mismatch in skills and employer needs emphasizing the need for more training. Labor force was the number one challenge that in the regional survey this summer. SWMN PIC is working on a number of labor force strategies to address skills gaps. See appendix for detail.



**Educational Attainment** – the UMVRDC region has lower educational attainment than the state but this is partly due to the region's older population. Educational attainment is getting a closer look from infant stages to college levels and specialized training.



**Childcare** – Childcare and learning centers are difficult to find in the region especially for infants. The lack of childcare options are forcing professionals to stay out of the workforce while their children are young. It is very common to have childcare in a neighboring community that you don't live in or work in adding extra time and expense for families.

## Call to Action

The 25-44 year olds are the life blood of the labor force, they have a vested interest in today and create momentum as we prepare for tomorrow. Today, there is an increasing trend in labor force participation data. In 2000, the overall labor force participation rate was 61.6% compared to 64.9% in 2014. In the 25-44-year cohort, the rate increased from 83.7% in 2009 to 87.2% in 2014. However, since the region relies heavily on an older workforce that has lower rates of participation (think retirement and disability) there will be a significant decline in overall available labor from 2015-2025, projections show a -3.9% in change resulting in 908 fewer workers. Increasing the available workforce in 25-44 year olds can help offset negative changes in labor force and will make the region more resilient.







## Human Capital Smart Goal

Increase the labor force participation rate of 25-44 year olds from 87.2%.to 89.2% by 2021.

Action Plan	Tasks	Partners	Resources
1. Develop a Regional Recruitment Program  (See Community Resources for details)	Develop a marketing plan – social media Create additional online content images, stories, videos, reliable links Explore regional recruitment best practices – build a welcome network and help our communities be better at welcoming newcomers	EDAs Chambers	USDA Bush Bremer Blandin Foundation
2. Build childcare capacity in the region	Support individual community strategies Collect best practices to share with the region Explore viable grant/loan options to support child care expansion	Cities EDAs	First Children's Finance SWIF UMVRDC Employers
3. Explore career awareness programs / Encourage youth business ownership	Meet with each of the 10 school districts to discuss the idea and develop strategies to connect students to ownership opportunities in the region in the region.	SWIF School Districts Higher Education	Junior Achievement EDA Employers
4. Help employers become mobile friendly to their employees	Host a workshop on managing remote employees / how to be mobile friendly Showcase local best practices Promote job opportunities where employees can be mobile	SWMNPIC DEED	ED Pro's DEED
5. Expand high speed broadband access in the region. (See Foundational Assets for details)	Work with cities and counties who are unserved or underserved with broadband access	Cities Counties	Broadband Providers / EDAs





# Foundational Assets Cornerstone

## Regional Pulse



**Broadband** – The Upper Minnesota Valley region has a significant fiber footprint with fiber to the premise in a majority of 3 of our 5 counties. Lac qui Parle County has the largest percentage in the state of households served by fixed broadband service of at least 100/20mbps at 99.36%. They also rank 3rd in the state for the percentage of population that works from home at 10.9% (ACS 2010-2014). However, there are pockets of poor broadband within those counties while Chippewa and Yellow Medicine counties are considered unserved by Minnesota standards.



**Housing Availability** – The need to provide a variety of housing types is acute and varies significantly per community. Identifying where and how to prioritize limited resources to address housing is important to meet the needs of seniors, newcomers and workforce. Future trends have identified smaller family sizes and more single households that will not require large homes on large lots. This is a preference not completely met by today's available housing stock. Many communities are discussing how to offer a broad spectrum of housing options.



**Transportation** – Technology, climate change and personal choices are driving the transportation industry. People would rather be on their technology devices which is creating new safety risks, while flash flooding and extreme weather events are becoming more frequent testing our transportation networks (roads, bridges, culverts, etc.). Funding transportation maintenance is a high priority. Maintaining strong rail access is critical to business attraction and retention. Air transportation is limited in the region but is an important mode that many cities are investing in upgrades to maintain a high quality facility.



**Active Transportation** – Sidewalks and trails are amenities that are becoming harder to fund with cities having fewer and fewer resources available to pay for them, yet those amenities rate pretty high when it comes to attracting and retaining residents. Opportunities to connect communities regionally by trails and bike systems is increasing in popularity and demand and was mentioned several times as an opportunity in our regional survey this summer.



**Transit** – Affordable services will be key for older generations especially in our rural area, however their preference may be different than the types of transit offered today (i.e. high speed rail vs bus, car service/taxi vs bus).



**Water/Wastewater Infrastructure** – The financial costs to deal with aging infrastructure is overwhelming cities and residents. Needed upgrades for replacement water, wastewater and storm sewer facilities are a significant burden. Local units of government will need to be innovative in paying for and addressing on-going infrastructure maintenance.

## Call to Action

Access to broadband and technology infrastructure is one of the most pressing needs in the region. The region varies drastically in the percentage of households with access to fixed non-mobile broadband speeds of at least 100/20mbps. Lac qui Parle County is the highest in our region and the state with 99% of households having access to excellent broadband while Yellow Medicine struggles with only 19% of households that have access to those same broadband speeds. World class broadband in all parts of the region will be key to building economic resiliency.

All of the foundation assets listed above are critical components to regional infrastructure. As we were determining the project area where we can make the most impact, improved broadband was repeated over and over by our stakeholders as one of the region's greatest opportunities to attract and retain residents and businesses.

It should be noted that we provide technical assistance in all the components related to Foundational Assets and will continue to work on those areas with state, federal and regional partners and as requested by our local units of government.



## Foundational Assets Smart Goal

Increase the percentage of households that have access to 100/20 mbps by at least 20% or until 100% of households are reached whichever occurs first:

County	% of Household Served	Goal	Timeline
Big Stone	70.12%	90.12%	2021
Chippewa	24.45%	44.45%	2021
Lac qui Parle	99.36%	100%	2021
Swift	30.41%	50.41%	2021
Yellow Medicine	19.28%	39.28%	2021

Action Plan	Tasks	Partners	Resources
1. Help communities better understand broadband especially communities identified unserved and underserved	Meet with all cities and counties that are currently underserved with broadband access	Schools Cities Counties EDAs	DEED EDA Broadband Providers
	Provide education to local elected officials - dig once policies		
	Promote opportunities to improve and use broadband		
2. Connect communities to tools kits to start broadband conversations	Facilitate community conversations	Blandin DEED Office of Broadband	Blandin FTTH Council
	Coordinate education panels		
	Connect communities to Blandin technical assistance		
3. Meet with local providers to discuss future opportunities	Determine project/funding possibilities	Cities Counties	EDAs DEED Schools
	As requested provide technical assistance to communities with survey work to validate demand/feasibility		
4. Work with local EDAs to promote availability of high speed broadband	Determine how broadband can be included in economic development or marketing plans	EDAs Cities Counties	Realtors Employers Chambers
	Work with the private sector to promote the availability of high speed broadband (employers, realtors, chambers)		
5. Collect stories about how broadband has made a difference in the region	Meet with people who have been impacted by broadband to collect stories. Consider partnering with Center for Small Towns to do this	Broadband Providers EDA's	University of MN Center for Small Towns





# Economic Competitiveness Cornerstone

## Regional Pulse



**Small Business Growth** – A majority of businesses in the region are small businesses with 57.7% having only 1-4 employees. The Small Business Administration identifies small businesses as those with 500 employees or fewer, with only one business in the region with over 500 employees, it is evident that small businesses are critical to the region. The region's non-employers have declined 1.4 percent from 2004-2014 but generated \$141.8 million in generated sales receipts in 2014.

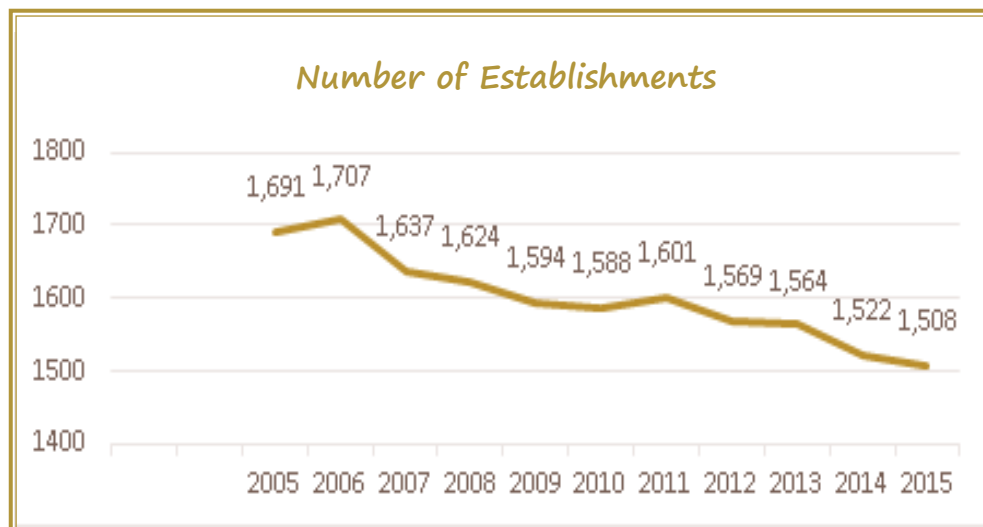


**Entrepreneurship and Innovation** – According to the Stats American Innovation Index the UMRDC region falls behind the state and nation when it comes to innovation at 82% compared to Minnesota's 105%. The factors that appear to be especially important for increasing economic growth include: educational attainment; young-adult population growth; high-tech employment growth; and the number of small establishments. Two of the four contributing indicators that have a positive and significant relationship to increases in GDP per worker that our region has the most potential to increase include: Average small establishments per 10,000 workers and population growth rate for ages 25-44.

## Call to Action

There has been a significant decline in business establishments in the Upper Minnesota Valley (-183 in the last 10 years). Retention of current businesses and the establishment of new businesses is paramount to the region's economy.

The CEDS strategy committee felt strongly that each community needs a certain level of nearby essential services: a place to buy gas, groceries, a hardware store and somewhere to eat. Local businesses that provide essential services should be recognized as important economic contributors. These anchor businesses often times go unappreciated until they are gone. Focusing on increasing the number of establishments and supporting essential service businesses could build needed sustainability and new opportunity in the most rural areas of the region.





## Economic Competitiveness Smart Goal

Increase the number of establishments in the region from 1,528 (QCEW, 2014) to 1,600 by 2021.

Action Plan	Tasks	Partners	Resources
1. Be a connector!	Assist communities in using the vacant buildings inventory to promote available spaces	EDAs	MNDEED SWIF University of MN Extension
	Encourage communities to promote the types of businesses needed in the community		
	Find places to post businesses for sale		
2. Work on retention strategies for existing businesses	Encourage communities to go through a BR&E process	EDAs	SWIF Gap Lenders
	Business roundtables – what can economic development staff do to help you be successful?		
3. Collaborate with gap lenders to explore a “start-up funding package”	Research other “start-up packages”	Gap Lenders	SBDC SBA SWIF Prairie Land EDC
	Meet with regional lenders to discuss new ideas		
	Experiment with the concept of a start-up package		
	Invite and encourage culturally diverse businesses		
4. Explore/promote the development of jobs that would help diversify the region.	Look at opportunities to increase jobs in the following industries: ▪ Arts, Entertainment, Recreation	EDAs	University of MN Extension
	▪ Professional and Technical Services		
	▪ Agriculture, Forestry, Fish & Hunt		
5. Increase the amount of resources that can help improve main streets – especially those that can provide essential services	Work with EDAs/local units of government to develop incentives for entrepreneurs willing to invest in a currently vacant building	EDAs SWIF	DEED HRAs Local Lenders USDA RD
	Help EDAs/HRAs look at models to flip properties		
	Assist communities in finding funds to demolish properties		
	Explore an “investor network”		
6. Explore cooperative and/or incubator ideas for small business	Research small business support ideas ▪ Accounting/Book keeping ▪ Legal support	SWIF EDAs SBDC	EDA (federal) Regional Workup Spaces

# Summary Background

## An Economic Development Snapshot

### PEOPLE

#### SMALL BUSINESSES



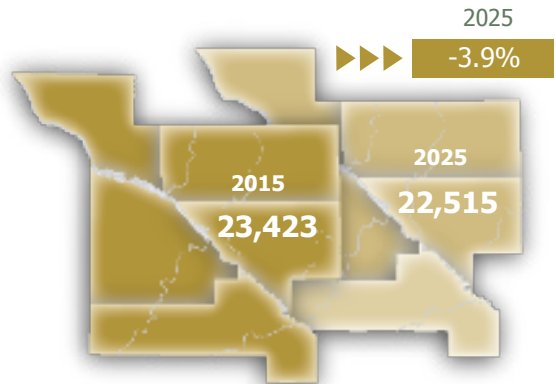
**72%**

businesses in the region that employ fewer than 10 people

**3,351**

number of self-employed businesses (2013)

#### PROJECTED LABOR FORCE LOSS



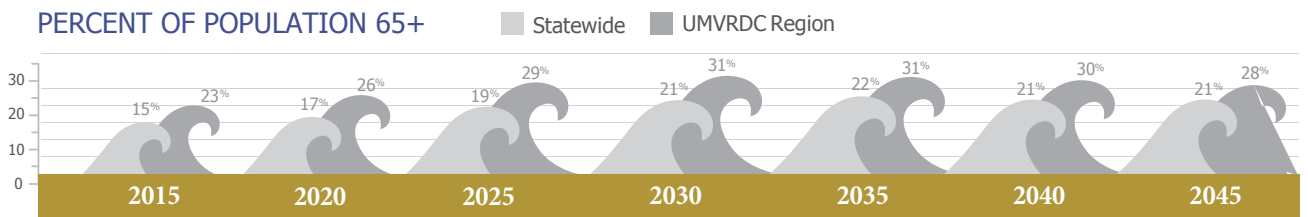
2015-2025 total projected loss: 908



**65+ AGE WAVE**

The "Age Wave" will continue and greatly impact communities, the workforce, and services.

#### PERCENT OF POPULATION 65+



### TRENDS



Need for larger workforce



Need to expand broadband access and coverage



Housing availability  
(A need for all types)



Need for increased wages



Increased need for daycare

#### INDUSTRIES WITH THE GREATEST PROJECTED NEED



Healthcare and Social Assistance



Goods Transportation



Retail Trade



Manufacturing

**1.5 Billion**

Market Value of Products



3,612 Farms



Declines in the number of farms



7.6% increase in the market value of products sold between 2007-2012

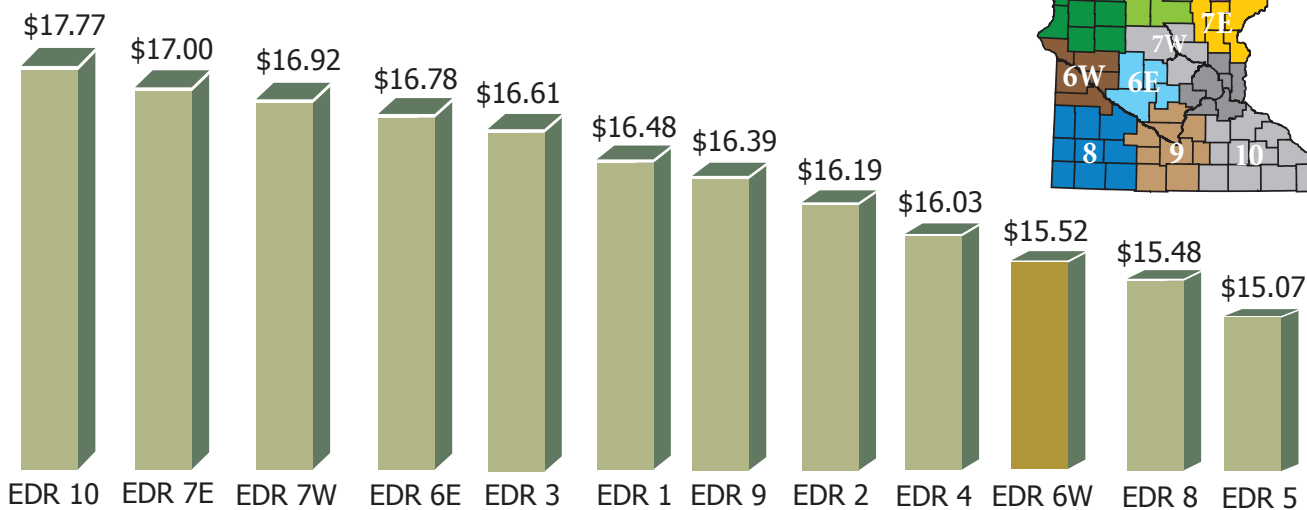


Farms got bigger and commodity prices went up



## Rural Economic Development Region (EDR)

### WAGES



### AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGES



Healthcare and Social Assistance  
\$663



Manufacturing  
\$871



Retail Trade  
\$391



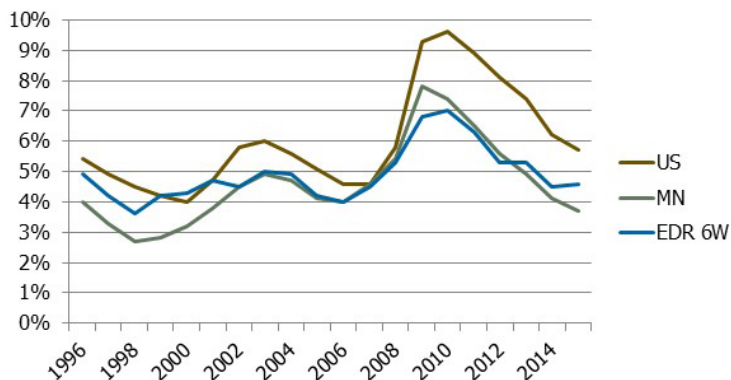
Educational Services  
\$668



Public Administration  
\$682

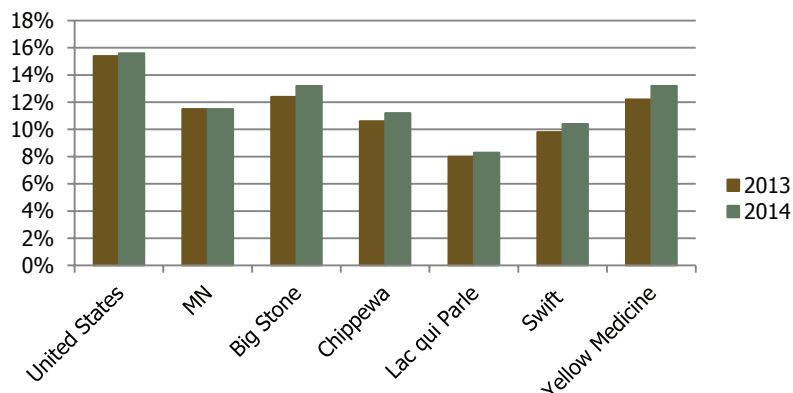
## UNEMPLOYMENT

### Unemployment Rates



## POVERTY

### Poverty Rates



# Evaluation Framework



As we prepare our regular reports on the CEDS we will look at each cornerstone comprehensively, taking into account traditional EDA performance measures such as jobs and tax base as well as the different types of wealth that may be increased or generated as a result working towards each goal. Wealth will be viewed with the lens of Wealth Works models that looks at the following forms of wealth: intellectual, individual, social, natural, built environment, political, financial, and cultural assets. We believe that these assets, when invested in, nurtured, and leveraged appropriately, can reflect the true level of a region's economic (and social) well-being and resiliency.

Our performance measures are intended to evaluate the organization's independent and collaborative contributions on the regional economy through the implementation of the CEDS. The two questions that should be asked regularly include: How are we doing? What could we be doing better? We will post these questions to regional stakeholders and our board as we document our action plan progress.

## Goal 1: Top Results



- Retained number of regional jobs
- Increased in median household income
- Increased number of self employment

## Goal 2: Top Results



- Increased number of business establishments
- Increased diversification of jobs in the region
- Improved tax base

## Goal 3: Top Results



- Greater online presence changing the rural narrative from negative to positive
- A sustainable recruitment program – investments in marketing/recruitment
- Stronger regional networks – chambers/EDAs

## Goal 4: Top Results



- Increased access to high speed broadband
- Increased in median household income
- Increased number of self employment

In 2015, the Governor's Broadband Taskforce reported that "...non-metro counties with relatively high levels of broadband adoption (i.e. county-level adoption rates greater than 60 percent) "had significantly higher levels of growth in median household income and significantly reduced growth in unemployment when compared with otherwise similar counties that did not meet this threshold."

# Appendix

Click on any of the documents below for more information.

[\*2016 Survey Summary\*](#)

[\*Study of Studies Summary\*](#)

[\*DEED Regional Profile\*](#)

[\*Broadband Access Map\*](#)

[\*Acronyms Explained\*](#)

[\*SW Private Industry Council  
Workforce Plan\*](#)



## Acknowledgements

The UMVRDC would like to thank all of the individuals and organizations who have given their time to share their vision for our region. The collaborations between our organizations continue to strengthen our alignment, increase our efficiencies and enhance our collective impact. Collaboration brought together many professional staff and community leaders to make this document possible.

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The strategy committee broadly represents the main economic interests of the region and actively work with the private, non-profit and education sectors within the region. Their help and guidance during the development of the CEDS was instrumental.





Upper Minnesota Valley  
**REGIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT  
COMMISSION**

**DEVELOP  
MN  
2016**

