

Get Rural MN



Upper Minnesota Valley
**REGIONAL
DEVELOPMENT
COMMISSION**

Helping Communities Prosper

Quick Facts

"Regional Recruitment: Strategies to Attract and Retain Newcomers" report

- (77%) Moved to find a less congested place to live.
- (75%) Moved for a better environment for raising children.
- (69%) Moved to find better quality local schools.
- (66%) Moved for lower housing costs.
- (63%) Moved to find more outdoor recreational activities.
- (53%) Moved for lower the cost of living.
- 75% of respondents moved with their spouse/partner. 25% moved alone. 51% moved with children.
- 45% have occupational skills in management, business, financial, or professional fields. A total of 50% of respondents were trained in another field or profession that they are currently not utilizing.
- In their previous community, 36% held a leadership role in a community, church, school, civic, or any other type of group or organization. This rose to 60% for those in their current community.

Why Market the Region?

To attract and retain residents.

Based off of the UMVRDC's 5-year assessment that was sent to all of the Local Units of Government within Region 6W, the TOP issue identified was marketing our communities/area to attract new residents, workers and families.

According to research completed in our region Ben Winchester, a Research Fellow at the University of MN Extension Center for Community Vitality suggests that most rural Minnesota counties including those in Region 6W are really experiencing a "brain gain". Statistics show that although our bright and talented youth are leaving for college there is an influx of 35-44 year olds that are coming into the region bringing their education, experience, wealth and children.

Many of them are not coming for a job nor have family ties, many are just looking for better **quality of life** and are willing to leave a higher paying job in the cities for the what the rural areas have to offer

Newcomers will....

1. Fill existing job openings
2. Start new businesses or take over existing ones
3. Introduce more kids into schools
4. Become new home owners
5. Become new taxpayers
6. Become new community leaders

Visitor

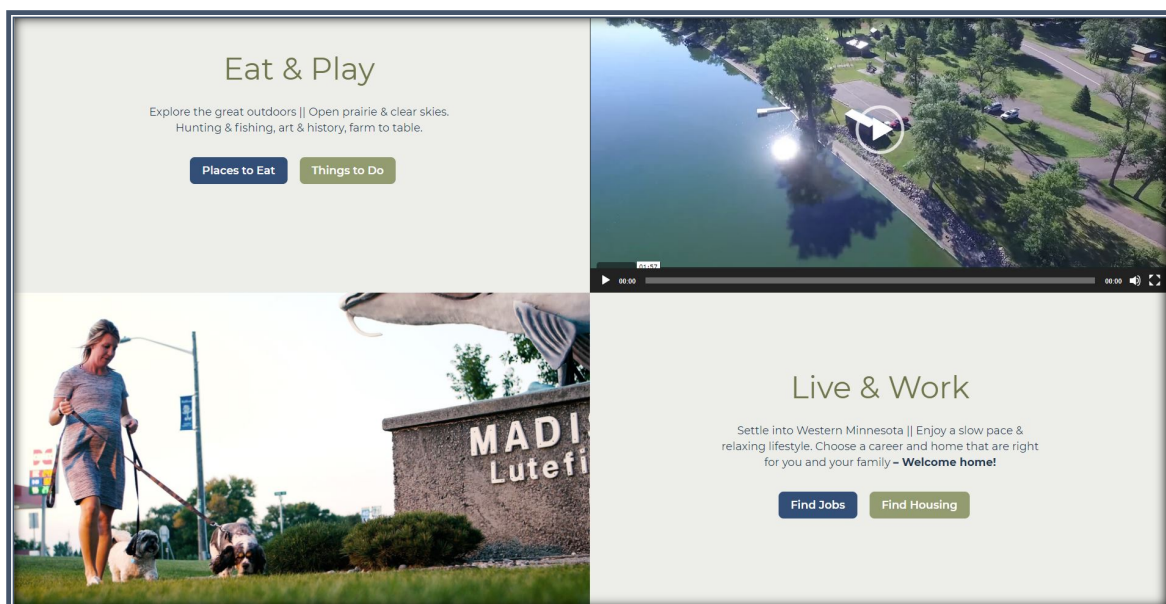
Local

Before you are a local you are a visitor. We have a well-developed and supported regional brand and marketing system already in place - **Prairie Waters Regional Tourism**. Prairie Waters is a one stop shop for all the things to do within the region. The overall goal was to expand on the Prairie Waters program and offer information to convert those visitors into new residents by creating a one stop shop of information for a potential newcomer. We have identified 4 main ingredients for a newcomer, see figure below:



What we've done...

- Conducted focus groups, surveys and interviews that resulted in the “Brain Gain” data.
- Convened local economic development professionals, chambers, city representatives and other local stakeholders to identify the next steps and goals for the efforts.
- Created a regional “lifestyle” brand and logo.
- Identified different phases of a workplan and goals.
- Expanded the Prairie Waters website to include information and links to key decision-making resources: employment opportunities, housing, things to do, resources for families (schools, healthcare, childcare etc), cost of living tool.
- Created tourism and lifestyle marketing packages for Prairie Waters Regional Marketing Members.
- Convened 10 large employers within the region to discuss workforce recruitment.
- Met with local partners such as the Private Industry Council to learn more about their efforts and ways we could collaborate.
- Collected new imagery/content of the region including photos, videos, interviews, marketing narratives for community events.
- Completed 10 high quality videos showcasing the region.
- Created multiple digital media channels: Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, Vimeo. Actively posting through all these channels.
- Created digital media campaigns on Facebook & Google Adwords





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