

# Riverview Dairy Worker Housing

Case Study

Swift & Stevens Counties

August 2025



**Project Location**  
Stevens and Swift  
Counties



**Primary Contact**  
Matt Konz,  
Director of Human  
Resources



**Phone**  
(320) 392-6720



**Email**  
matt.konz@riverviewllp.com



**Website**  
riverviewllp.com

## Background

Riverview Dairy began as a small crop and beef farm in West Central Minnesota in 1939. Over the decades, it evolved into a diversified, employee-owned agribusiness, expanding its operations to include dairy farms, feedlots, agronomy services, and construction. As the company grew across the region and over state lines, so did its need for a dependable workforce due to local labor shortages.

To meet the workforce demands, Riverview began hiring international workers, many through the H-2A visa program. As housing needs grew, the company responded by investing in on-site accommodations and acquiring houses/lots in nearby towns. These proactive steps helped ensure safe and stable living conditions for employees while supporting long-term staffing and smooth operations. Riverview currently employs around 500 people in its Stevens and Swift County operations.



Upper Minnesota Valley  
**REGIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT  
COMMISSION**

Helping Communities Prosper



**SOUTHWEST INITIATIVE  
FOUNDATION**

# Project Description

## Purpose:

This housing initiative was driven by Riverview's recognition that dependable housing is foundational to a stable workforce, especially in remote, rural areas. Rather than rely on unpredictable rental markets or temporary fixes, the company made a long-term investment in building and managing its own housing. By integrating housing into its broader workforce strategy, Riverview created a more sustainable, self-reliant model for employee support.

## Details:

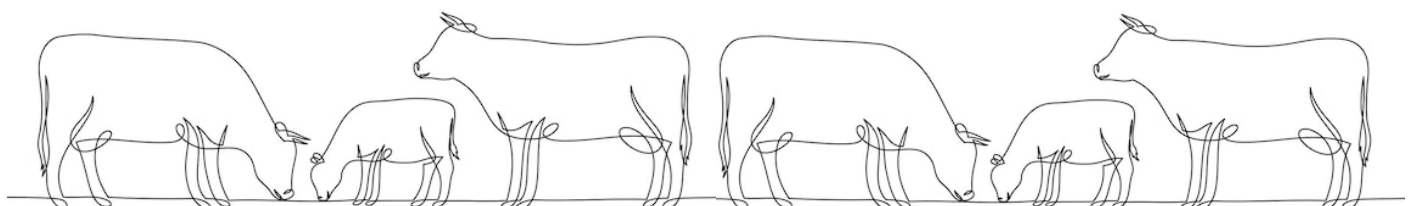
Riverview's original apartment layout was designed for six people, featuring three bedrooms and two bathrooms. Over time, the floor plans have evolved to offer more personal space, including private bedrooms and in-unit washers and dryers. While some units are designated for families, most Riverview employees with families prefer to live independently. To anticipate future demand, Riverview builds more units than immediately needed to stay ahead of growth. During construction phases, apartment designs were adjusted to house additional workers when necessary.

Housing is typically made available immediately to employees who are single or married without family in the area. Family housing is generally designated for managerial staff or site leaders, with site managers often residing in company-provided housing located directly on-location at the dairies.

Riverview Dairy's regional operations include more than ten employee-only apartments and numerous family residences, totaling over 250 individually designated employee accommodations. These units maintain a strong occupancy rate of approximately 90%. To date, Riverview has secured employee housing in the communities of Hancock and Morris in Stevens County, as well as DeGraff and Murdock in Swift County.

The construction of Riverview's on-site apartments is completed by a combination of local vendors and Riverview's own construction team. Once completed, ongoing maintenance and repairs have been managed by local service providers.

- ◆ Riverview employs ~500 employees in Swift & Stevens counties, over 1,500 nationwide
- ◆ Riverview owns over 10 housing sites located in Hancock, Morris, DeGraff, Murdock & on-site
- ◆ 250+ beds created
- ◆ 250+ employees served
- ◆ Occupancy rate – 90%
- ◆ Single and double occupancy units available
- ◆ Rent is \$8/day
- ◆ Construction done by Riverview and local vendors



# Financial

---

Rent for employee-only housing is set at an affordable rate of \$8 per day, while family housing is priced similarly to regional averages—yet remains more affordable than typical market rentals. Rent rates are structured to include most utilities. The company views housing as an employee benefit rather than a revenue-generating asset. It does not produce positive cash flow and is considered a necessary investment in workforce support and operational sustainability.

# Timeline

---

The first discussions about providing employee housing took place over 20 years ago with construction starting soon thereafter. Construction has been ongoing ever since as the business is constantly evolving and expanding its operations. Due to the success and employee response of their housing projects, Riverview plans to continue building housing as their operations grow and desires to incorporate on-site housing for future dairy projects as long as regulation allows for it.



# Outcomes

---

## Successes

- Workers enjoyed the individual housing option
- Retaining employees and their families
- Initially some concerns, but the model has been well received in the region
- Cities appreciate Riverview's effort to take care of empty lots and demolish unsafe structures
- Alleviated some of west central Minnesota's affordable housing issues
- Growth and acceptance of Hispanic and Latino culture in the area
  - Increase in Hispanic restaurants and grocery stores

## Challenges

- High costs of construction and materials
- Eliminating barriers to attraction and retention
- Housing and family concerns
- Need for employees to be part of the solution in addressing housing
- Managing the ongoing process of people moving in and out, and ensuring the properties always look tour-ready
- Cities adapted to changing demographics by seeking bilingual employees
- The high demand for single-family homes in the area has made it difficult for employees with families to find homes due to high prices and low availability.

## Lessons Learned

- Employees prefer single rooms
- Need to think beyond immediate needs and anticipate changes in labor force
- Companies should not be afraid to invest more in the initial build to ensure quality and avoid potential issues down the line

