



INTERNATIONAL
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
COUNCIL

The Power of Knowledge and Leadership

County EDOs in the New World of Economic Development

Dr. Dell Gines

Chief Innovation Officer

International Economic Development Council

IEDC: Skating to Where the Puck is Going

- The International Economic Development Council (IEDC) is the largest association for economic development professionals in the world. As a non-profit organization, it is dedicated to advancing economic development globally by providing leadership, professional development, networking opportunities, and advocacy.
- IEDC supports its members through training programs, certification, research, advisory services, and conferences, fostering economic growth and community development worldwide

www.iedconline.org



No County is Alike

No two counties are exactly the same. Counties are diverse in structure and how we deliver services to our communities. Though organizational structures vary, all county, parish and borough governments are on the front lines of delivering vital services to residents. - NACO

So, then county developers will play differing roles within their communities.

The Role of Economic Development....

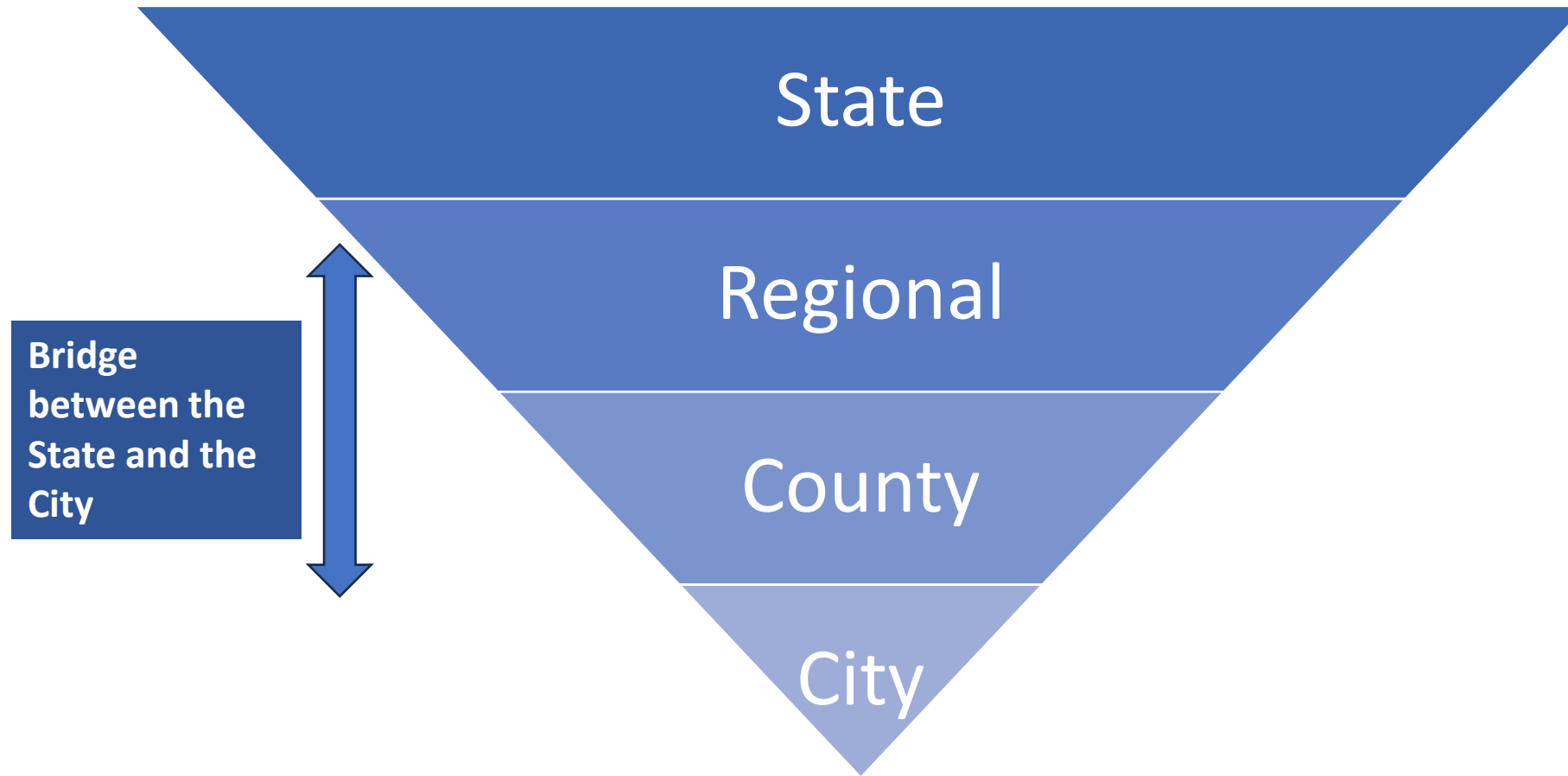
As developers, we are charged with ensuring our communities have an improved quality of life for as many as possible. Economic growth is just the process of how we achieve that.



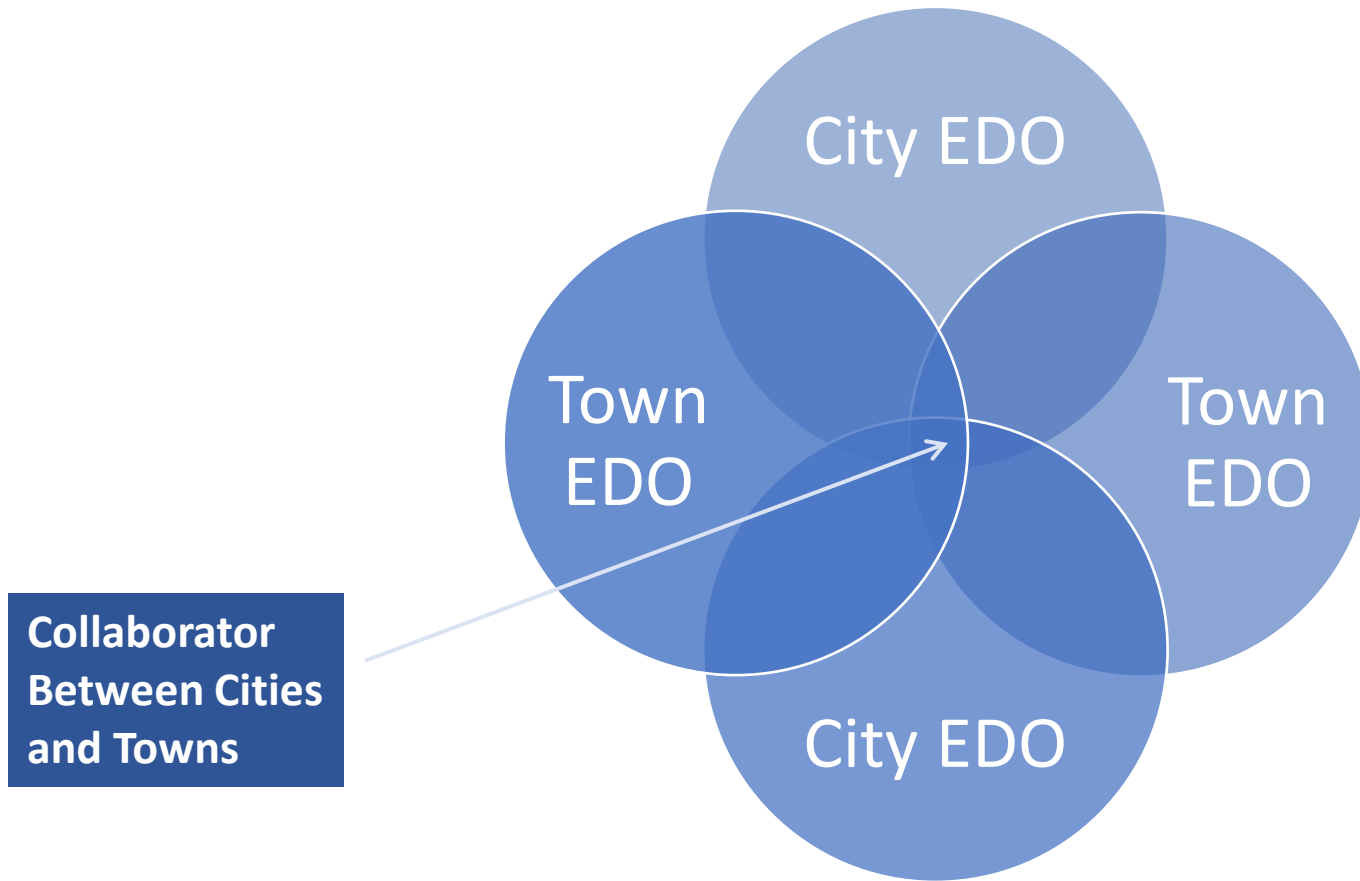
However....

County developers are in a unique position to lead around major trends in economic development. They serve both as a bridge and as a facilitator of collaboration.

Bridge....



Collaborator....



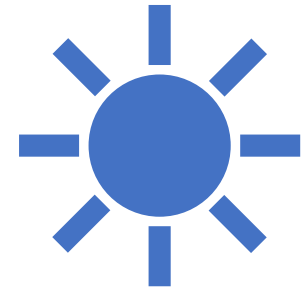
Major Trends in Economic Development



Multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder collaboration



Rapid Rise of Generative AI



Climate Events

Multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder collaboration

Economic Developers are being asked to do more than they ever have, in areas that are not their traditional wheelhouse.

- Housing
- Childcare
- Workforce

Multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder collaboration

This presents Opportunities for county developers to leverage their cross-town/city status to be an “honest broker” helping both traditional economic developers and other types of developers to work on shared development issues.

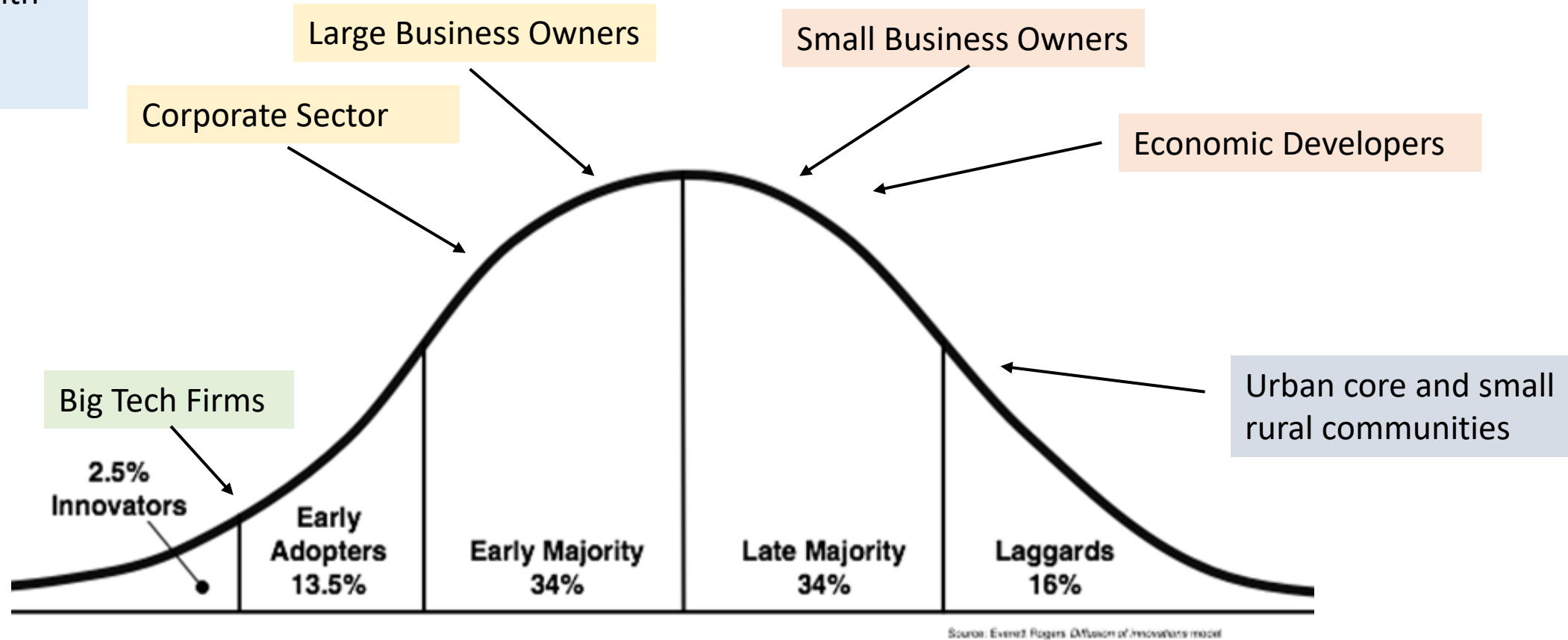


Rapid Rise of Generative AI

- ChatGPT experienced a meteoric rise, amassing 1 million users within just five days of its launch in November 2022. With 100 million users two months after launch.
- By year end 2023 OpenAI garnered a user base of 180.5 million, with 1.6 billion visits recorded in and attracts 100 million weekly users according to CEO Sam Altman.



This gap in adoption has implications on the economic health and vitality of our communities.



My Hunch on Adoption: Our Field Seems to be Late Majority Adopters

Rapid Rise of Generative AI

Challenges

The World Economic Forum has estimated that artificial intelligence will replace some 85 million jobs by 2025.

PwC estimates that by the mid-2030s, up to 30% of jobs could be automatable.

According to a report by Goldman Sachs, two-thirds of jobs in the U.S. and Europe are exposed to some degree of AI automation while generative AI could replace up to 25% of current employment, or some 300 million full-time jobs.



ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE
EXPLORATORY COMMITTEE

Rapid Rise of Generative AI

Opportunities

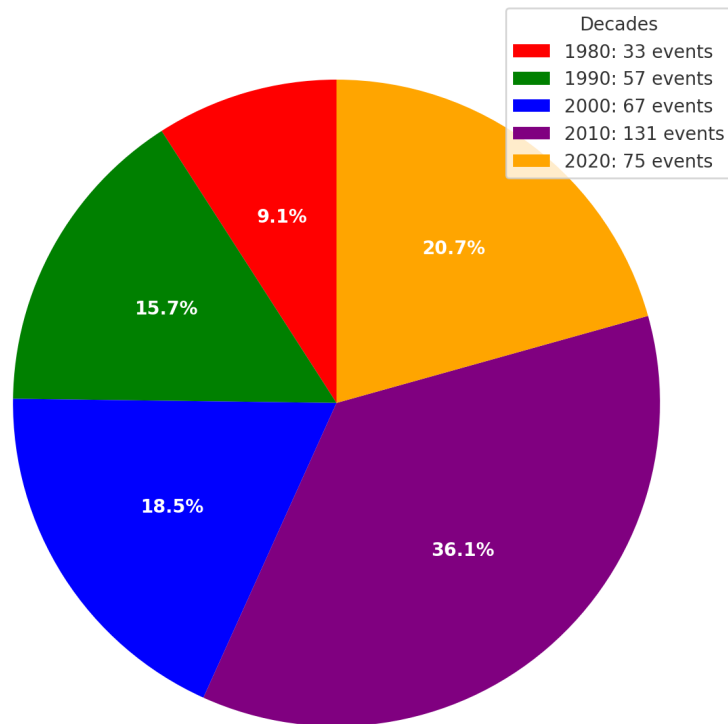
<https://www.naco.org/program/ai-exploratory-committee>

Climate Events



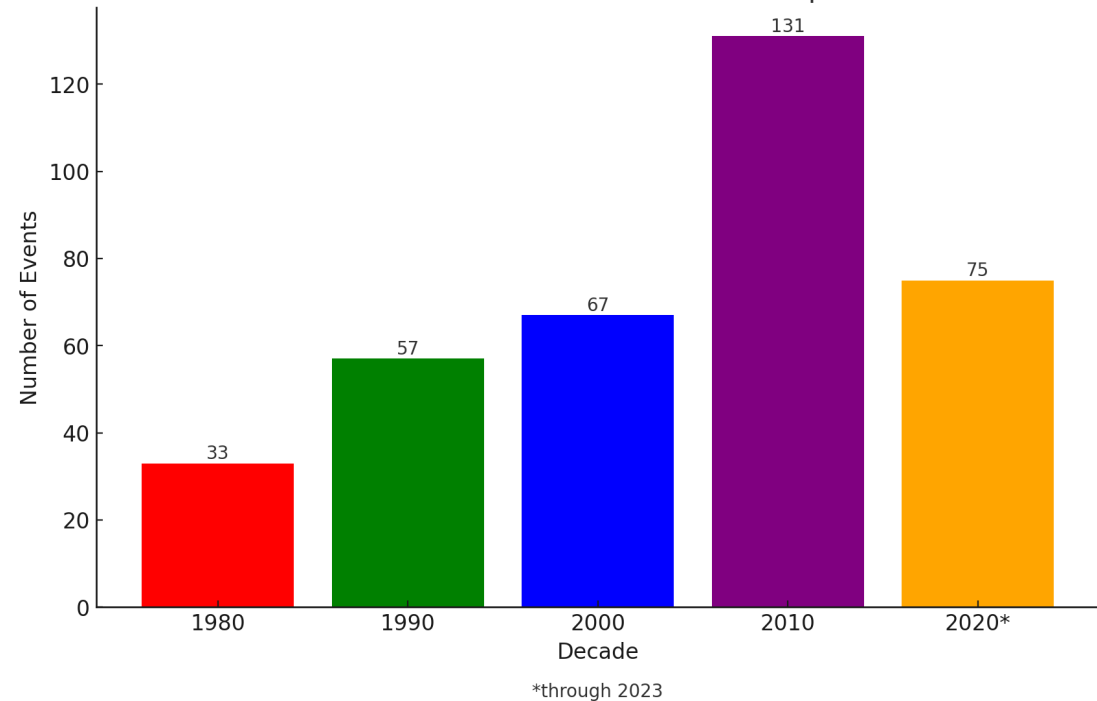
Climate Events

Distribution of Events per Decade



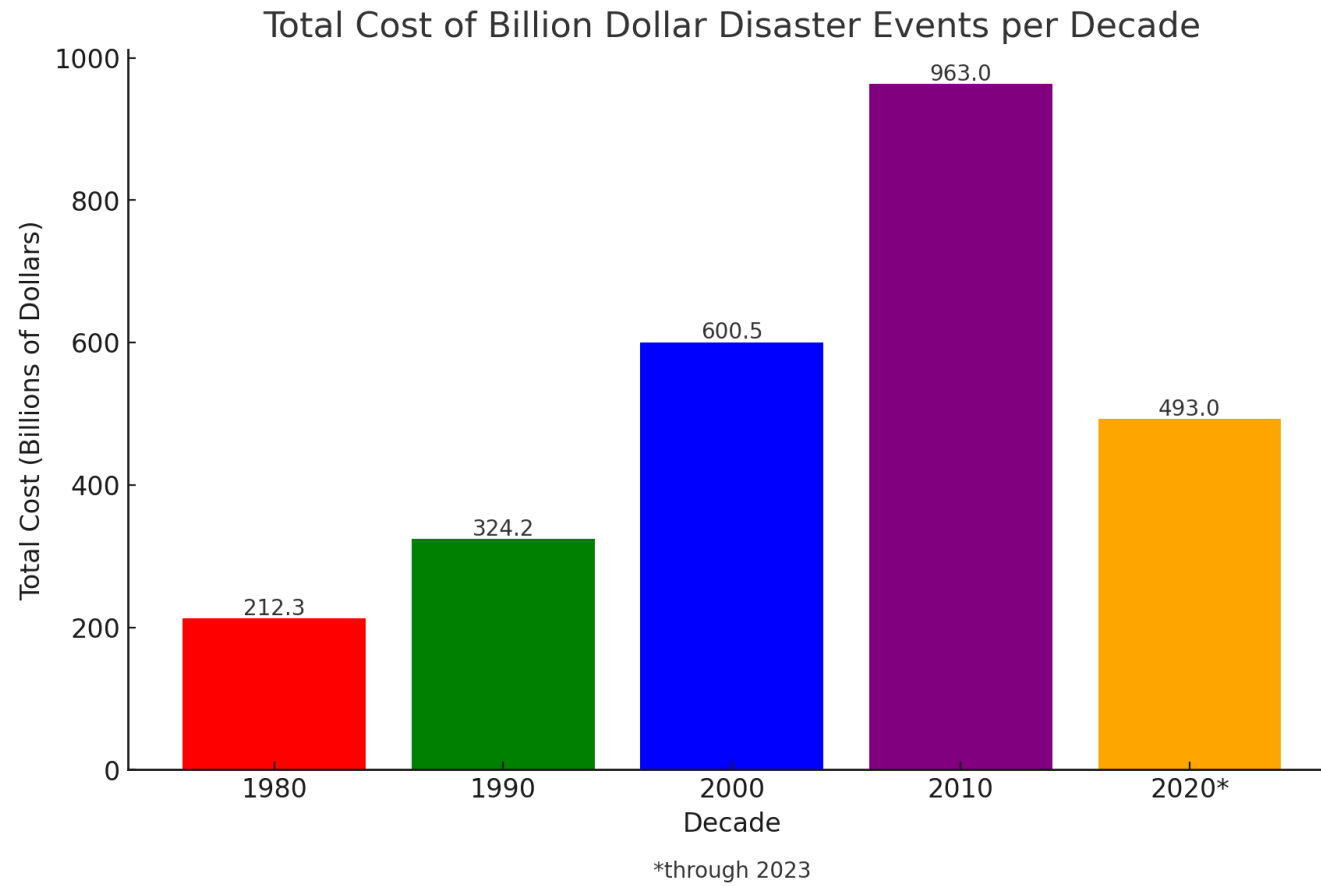
*through 2023

Number of Billion Dollar Disaster Events per Decade



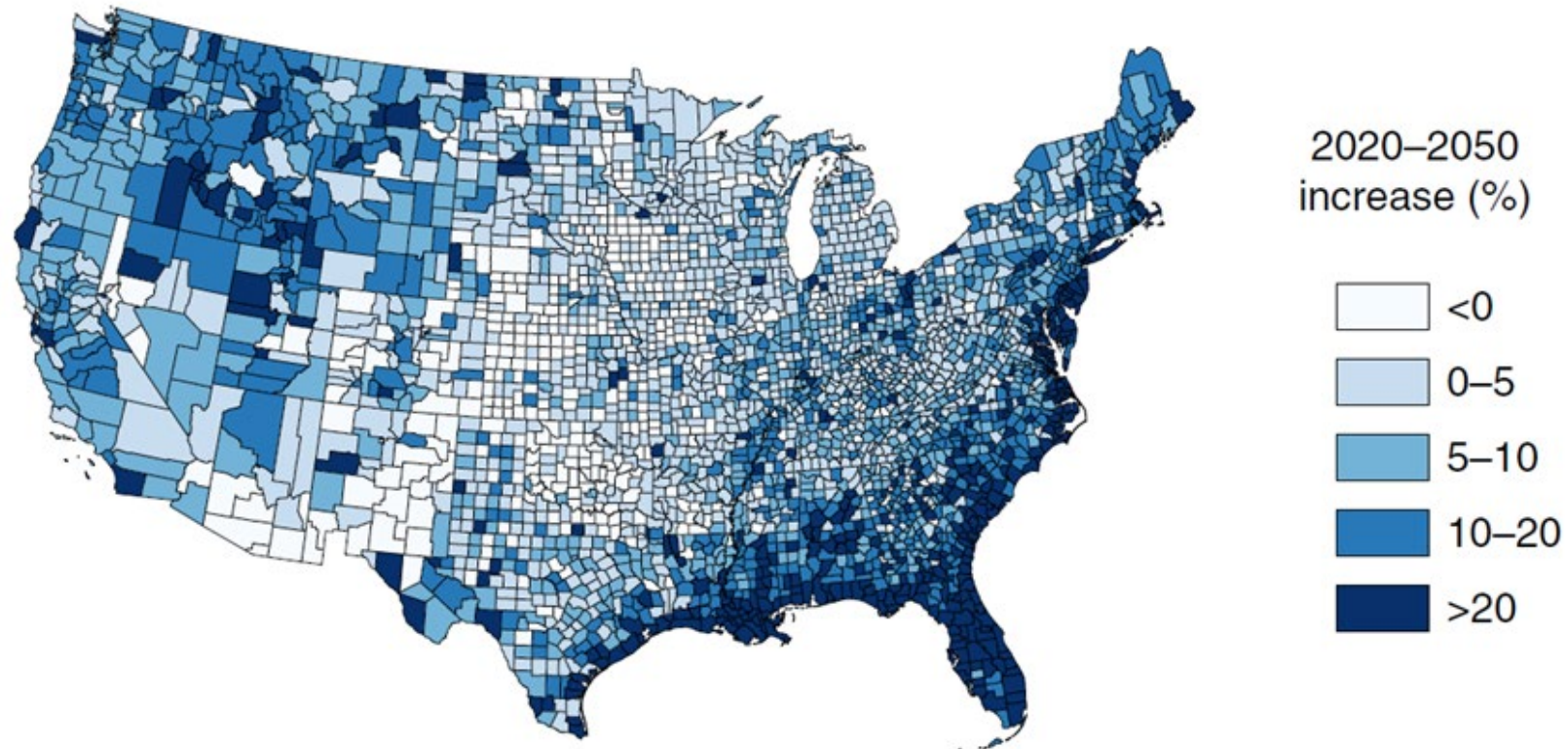
NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI) U.S. Billion-Dollar Weather and Climate Disasters (2023). <https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/access/billions/>, DOI: [10.25921/stkw-7w73](https://doi.org/10.25921/stkw-7w73)

Climate Events

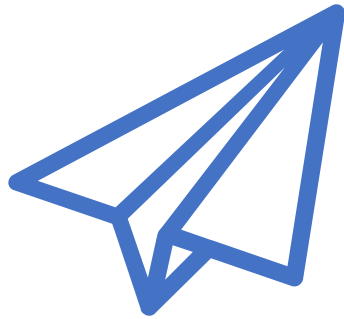


Climate Events

Estimated increase in average annual flood loss
as a proportion of total value: 2020-2050



Contact



Email: dgines@iedconline.org

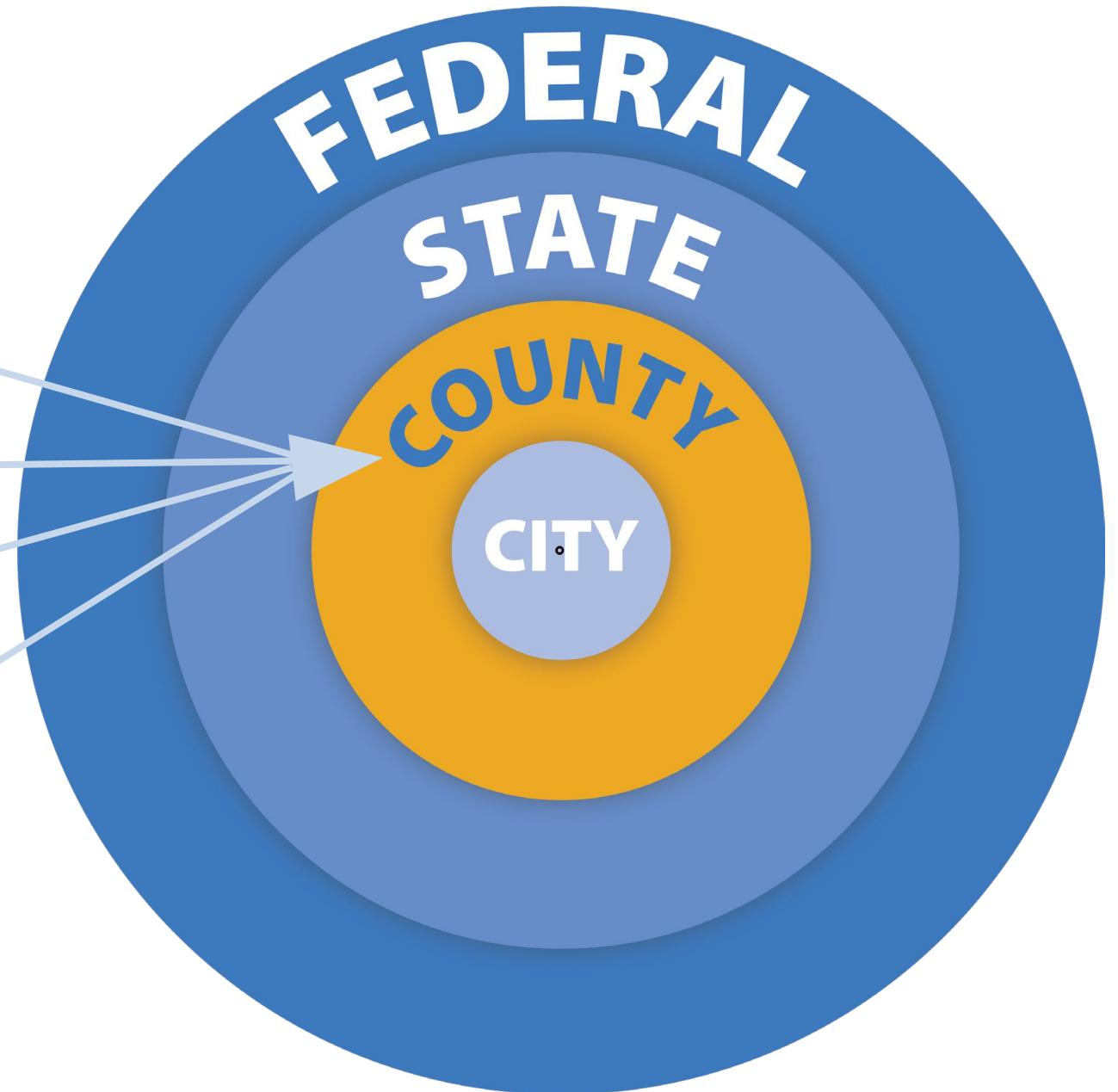


LinkedIn: Dell Gines

➤ Otter Tail County Community & Economic Development

The Partners

- Community Development Agency (CDA)
- Housing Redevelopment Authority (HRA)
- Otter Tail County
- Otter Tail Lakes Country Association





Implementation Strategies

Four broad strategies are utilized. These are a modified version of strategies developed by [Ben Winchester and the U of M Crookston EDA Center](#):

- On the map strategies
- Infrastructure strategies
- Employer strategies
- Welcoming community strategies

ON THE MAP STRATEGIES

Provide avenues for people to learn more about the region.



WHY is this important?

WHO is doing it?

HOW are they doing it?

ON THE MAP STRATEGIES

Provide avenues for people to learn more about the region.



WHY?

Who?
How?

We NEED people to live here.

Star Tribune Article:

- The U.S. population is growing more slowly than in any period after World War II. And Minnesota's population will grow at the slowest rate in state history.
- In the next decade, 50 of the state's 87 counties are projected to shrink

Census is likely to show that for the first time in MN history...we'll have more 65+ than school-age. What does this mean?

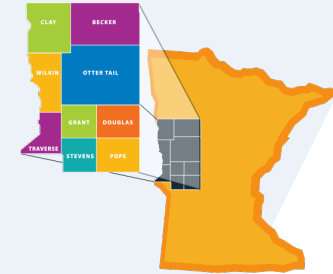
- Significant labor force reductions.
- Projections suggested 5% decrease to labor force (1500 workers) over the next decade.

ON THE MAP STRATEGIES

Provide avenues for people to learn more about the region.



Why?
WHO?
How?



Pelican Rapids



ON THE MAP STRATEGIES

Provide avenues for people to learn more about the region.



Why?
Who?
HOW?

Core Principles

1. Collaborate. A rising tide lifts all boats.
2. Lead and be bold.
3. Write our own narrative.
4. Cross promote. People live here for the same reasons people vacation here.
5. Data-based decisions about our audiences.
 - Visitors are our best prospects and tourism functions as the front door for economic development.
 - Rural rebounders are a close second.

ON THE MAP STRATEGIES

Provide avenues for people to learn more about the region.



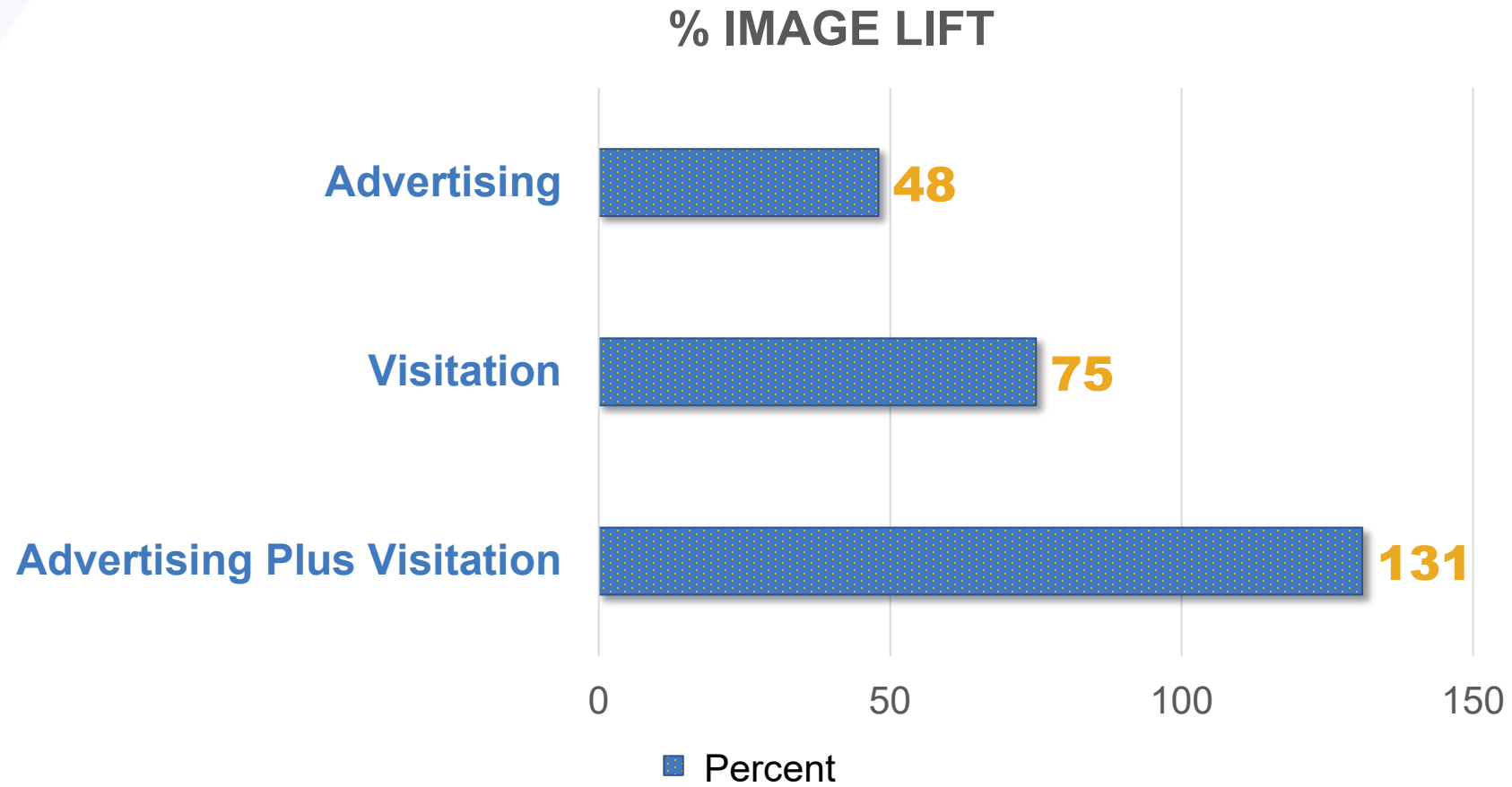
Why?
Who?
HOW?

Visitors are our best prospects and tourism functions as the front door for economic development.

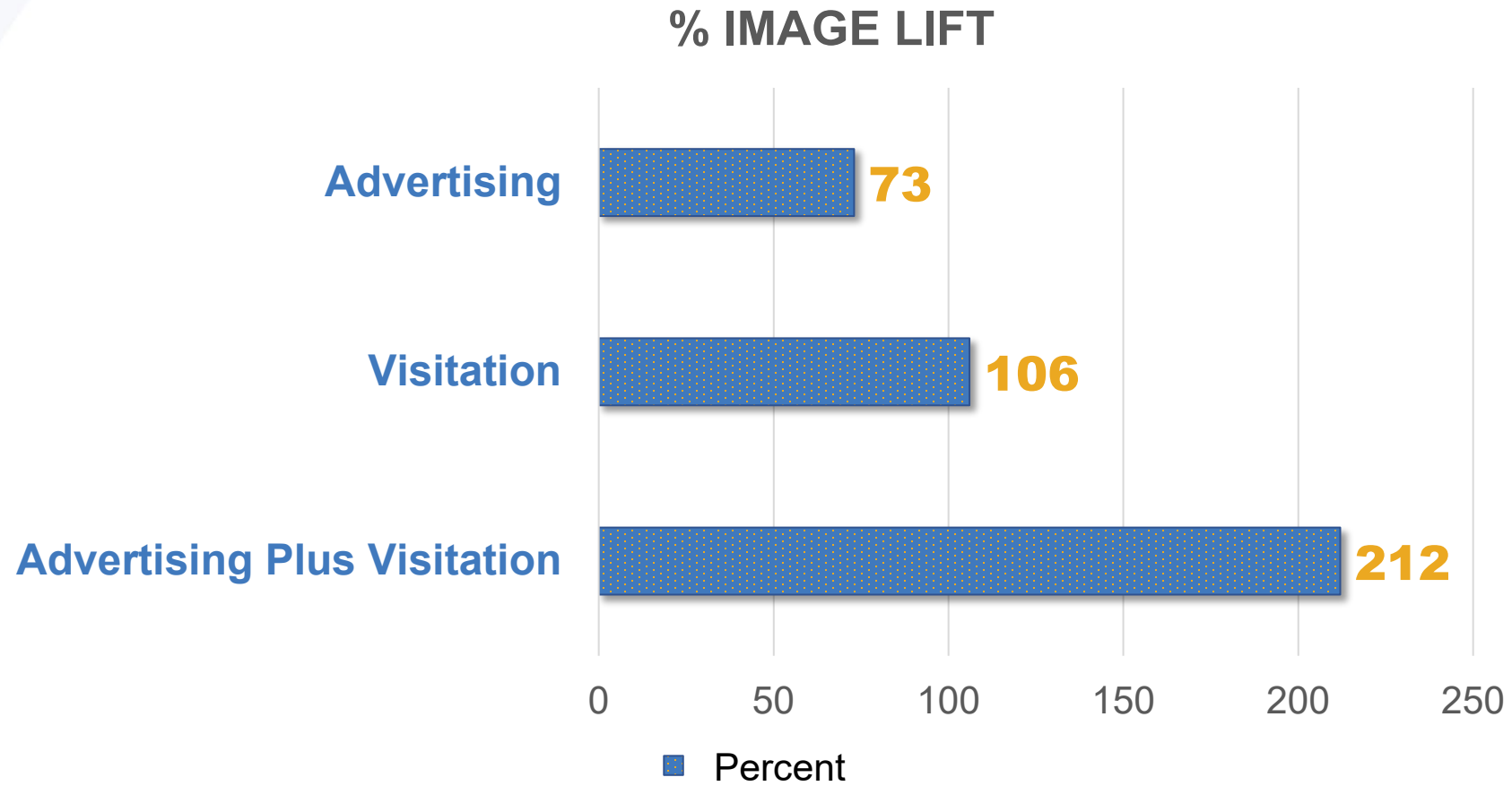
- What is the Halo Effect?
- Tourism advertising, especially when paired with subsequent visitation, significantly improves the image of a destination not only as a place to visit, but also for a wide range of other economic development objectives.
- Examples?



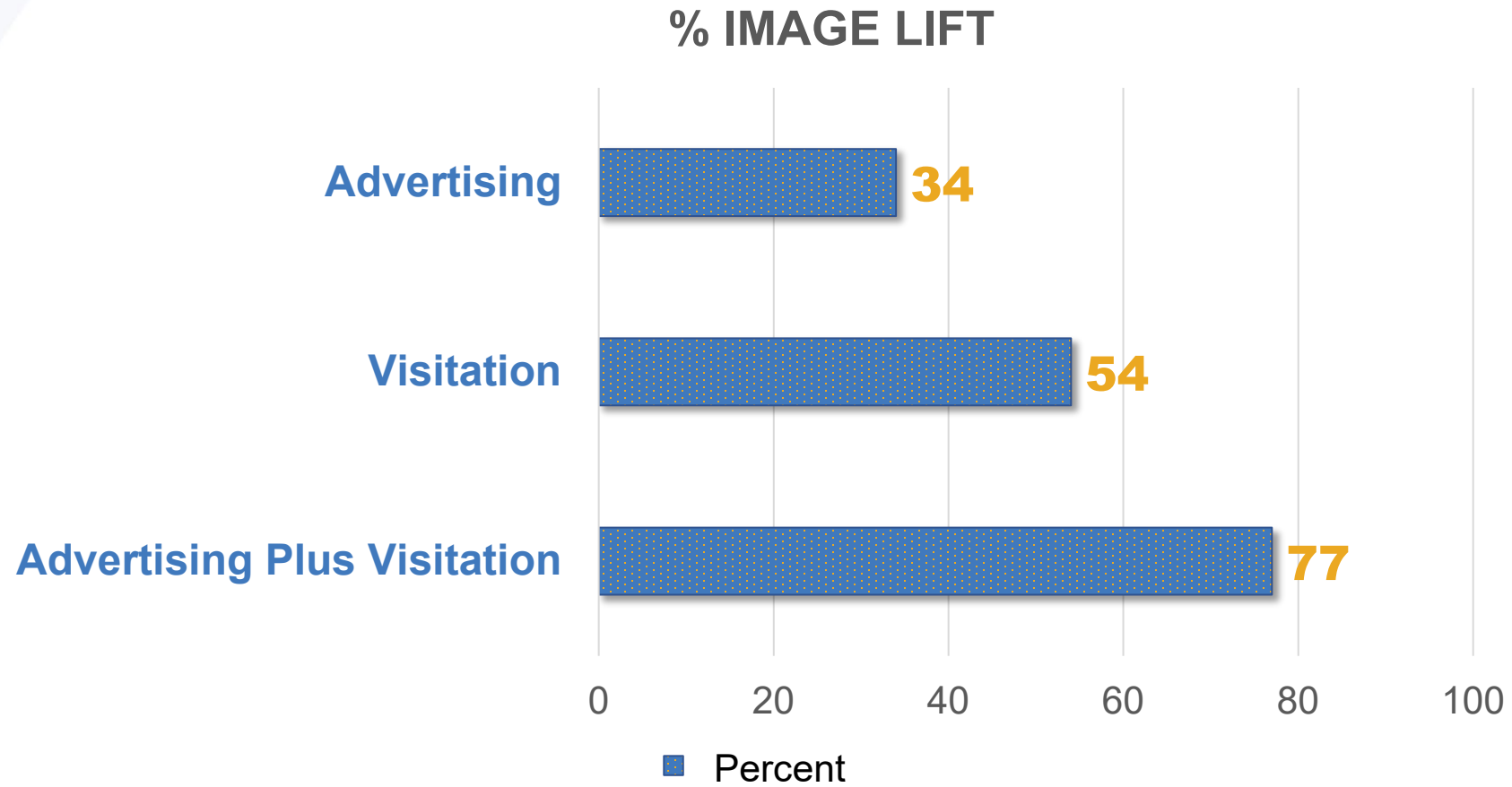
“A Good Place to Live.”



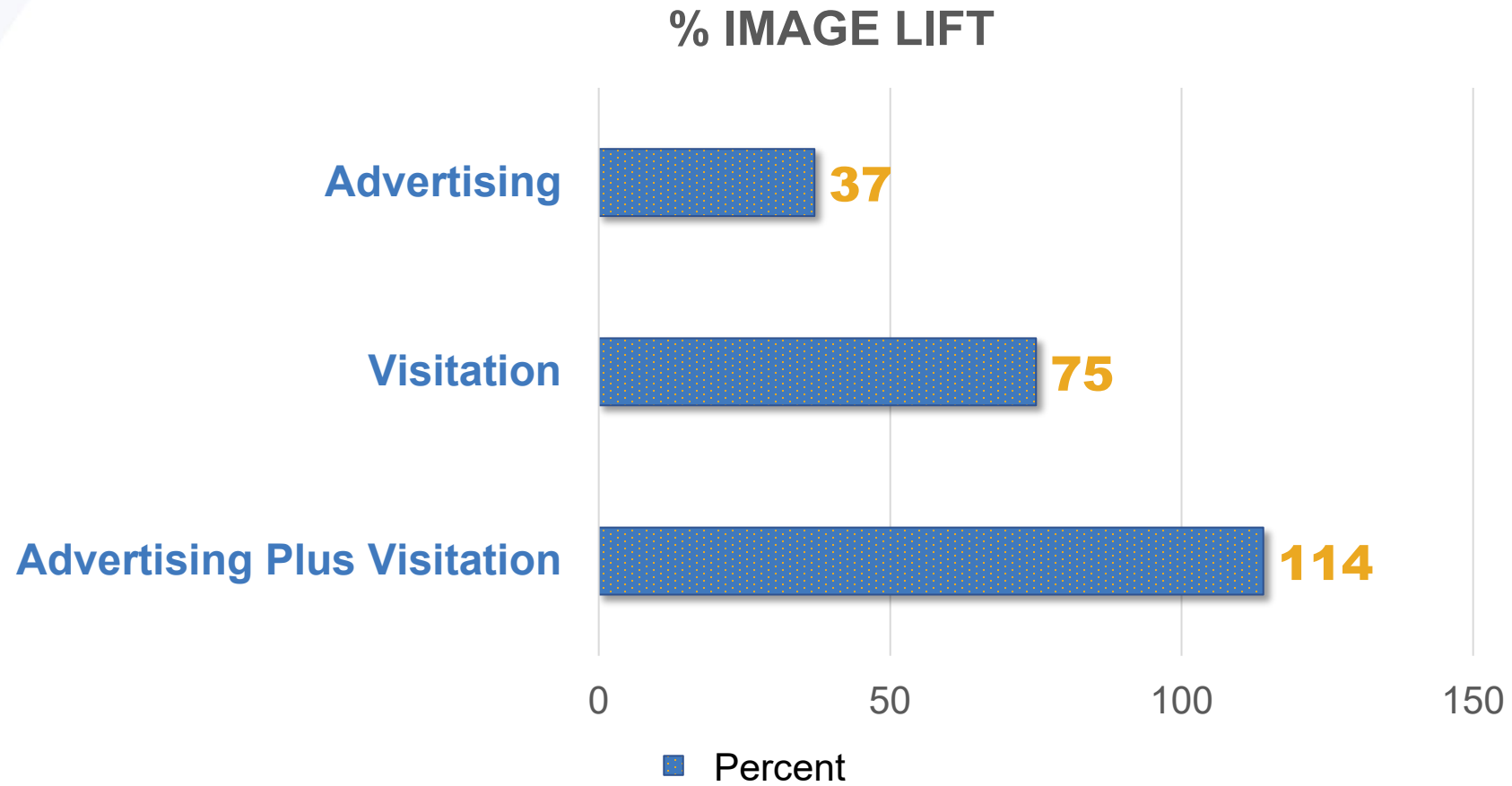
“A Good Place to Start a Career.”



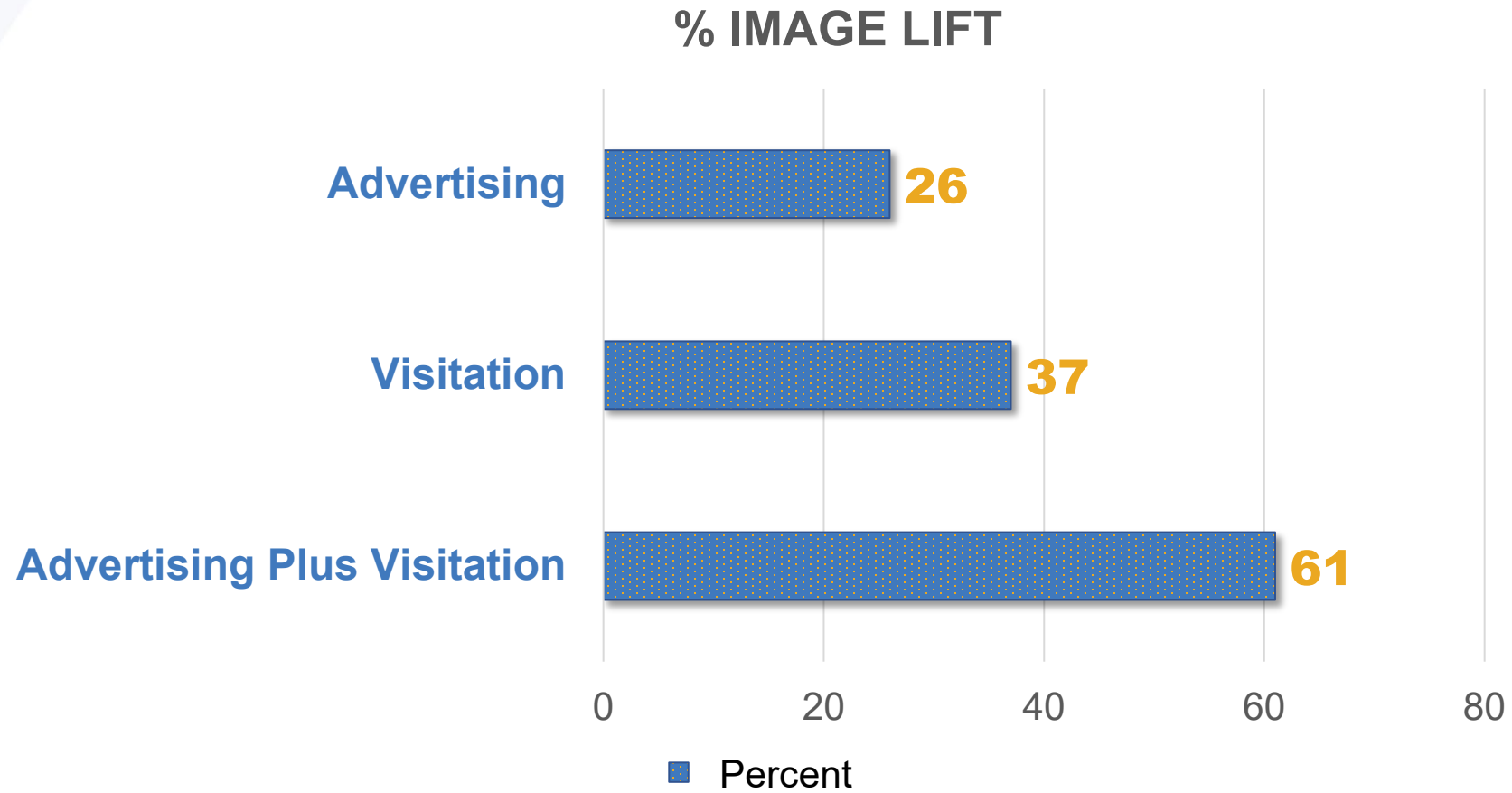
“A Good Place to Start a Business.”



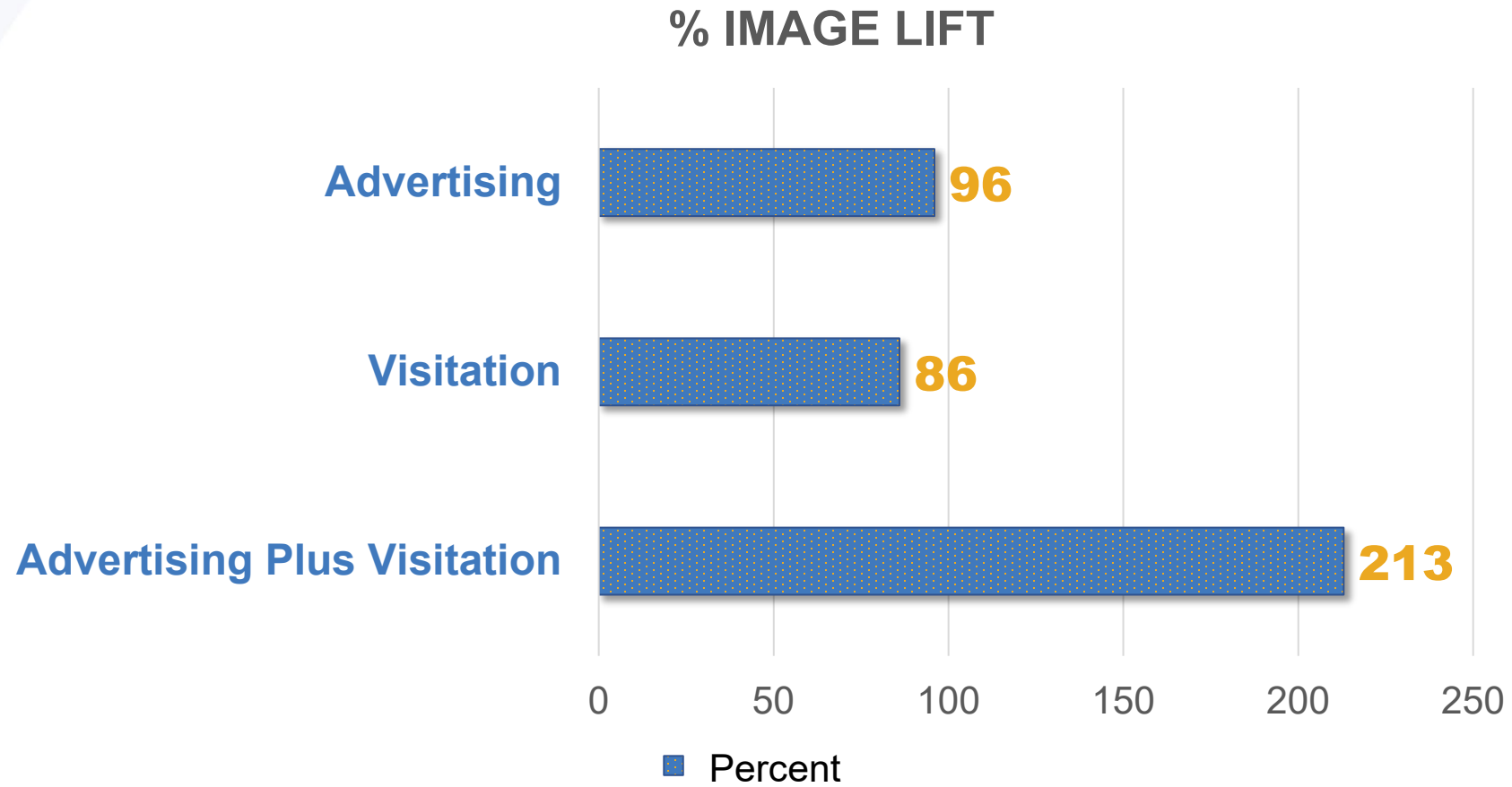
“A Good Place to Attend College.”



“A Good Place to Purchase a Vacation Home.”



“A Good Place to Retire.”



ON THE MAP STRATEGIES

Provide avenues for people to learn more about the region.



Why?
Who?
HOW?

The Rural Rebound

- Based on the research of Ben Winchester.
- Small towns aren't dying – they are changing.
- Rural areas are experiencing a loss of young adults age 18-25 — commonly known as the “brain drain.”
- They are also experiencing an in-migration of adults aged 30-49 and their 10-14-year-old children – the “brain gain.”
 - From 1990-2000, nearly every rural county in Minnesota experienced growth in the 35-44-year-old group.



INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGIES

Housing, broadband, childcare, and outdoor recreation.



WHY is this important?

WHO is doing it?

HOW are they doing it?

INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGIES

Housing, broadband, childcare, and outdoor recreation.



WHY?

Who?
How?

Build and grow the things people need to live in our region.

- › **Housing:** safe, decent, and affordable housing meets basic needs as well as broader housing preferences
- › **Broadband:** more than ever, access to high quality internet is needed by families and businesses to work, learn, and connect
- › **Childcare:** beyond keeping children safe and providing a learning environment, childcare is a workforce need
 - › Maintain the current available labor force
 - › Shape the future workforce
- › **Outdoor recreation:** provides an outlet for physical and mental wellbeing and an expectation of visitors (i.e., prospective residents) and current residents

INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGIES

Housing, broadband, childcare, and outdoor recreation.



Why?

WHO?

How?



The Partners

Community Development Agency

- › Established in late 2018
- › 9 Board Members (2 need to be County Commissioners)
- › Six-year terms
- › Community Development Director hired in 2019

Housing & Redevelopment Authority

- › Established in 1972 by County Resolution
- › Declares a “need” for a HRA
- › Statute enables HRA with “autonomous” tools
- › 6 or 7 Commissioners
- › Five-year term

INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGIES

Housing, broadband, childcare, and outdoor recreation.



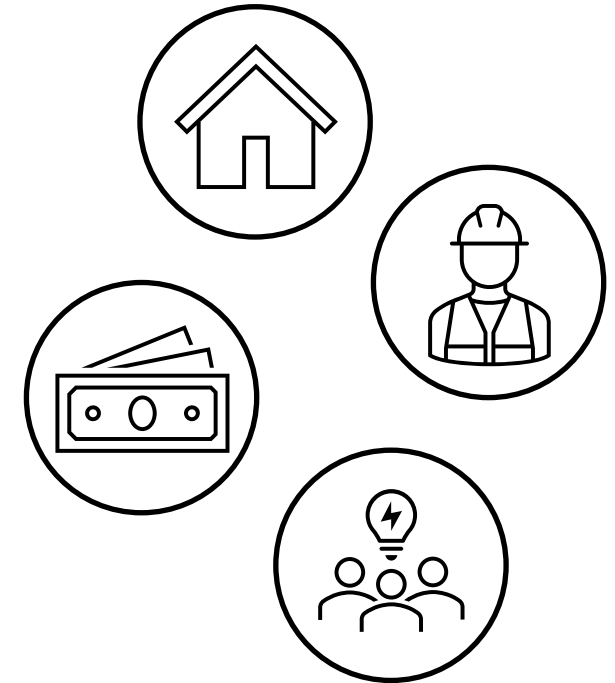
Why?

WHO?

How?

Private Sector Partners Critical

- › Real estate community
- › Builders and developers
- › Landlords
- › Financial and lending community
- › Employers



INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGIES

Housing, broadband, childcare, and outdoor recreation.



Why?

Who?

HOW?

The Big Build

- Housing growth initiative to build new, preserve, or rehabilitate 5,000 housing units by 2025.
- Aligns with the County's Long Range Strategic Plan

ACTIONS



Increase the construction of new housing units to meet the various needs of household types and income levels



Build partnerships with and expand the capacity of non-profit organizations, community partnerships, private developers to collectively respond to the housing challenge



Seek funding opportunities to support new housing development, ownership opportunities and reinvestment



Advocate for increased funding and support of housing at the state and federal levels

INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGIES

Housing, **broadband**, childcare, and outdoor recreation.



WHY?

Who?
How?

Investment in Broadband

- › Access to broadband impacts individual careers, health, connection, and learning
- › Allows people to work where they live instead of living where they work
- › More broadly, access to broadband is needed for businesses, workforce recruitment, youth learning, and community health
- › Large areas of OTC do not have access to quality, high speed internet

INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGIES

Housing, **broadband**, childcare, and outdoor recreation.



Why?

WHO?

How?

mn EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGIES

Housing, **broadband**, childcare, and outdoor recreation.



Why?

Who?

HOW?

Background

- › Feasibility study completed in 2018
- › Blandin Broadband Community efforts to:
 - › Increase broadband access to families/individuals without internet access (Tech Packs, Smart Rooms, public wi-fi locations)
 - › Increase youth access to coding, exposure to technology, and awareness of career options (Virtual Career Fair, STEAM offerings in summer child care programs, etc.)
 - › Make business more resilient through business technology assessments and education (Business Tech Assessments and Business Resilience Coaching)
- › Partner with providers on Border to Border Broadband grant applications
 - › Providers making investments to fill in the balance of areas without access

INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGIES

Housing, broadband, **childcare**, and outdoor recreation.



WHY?

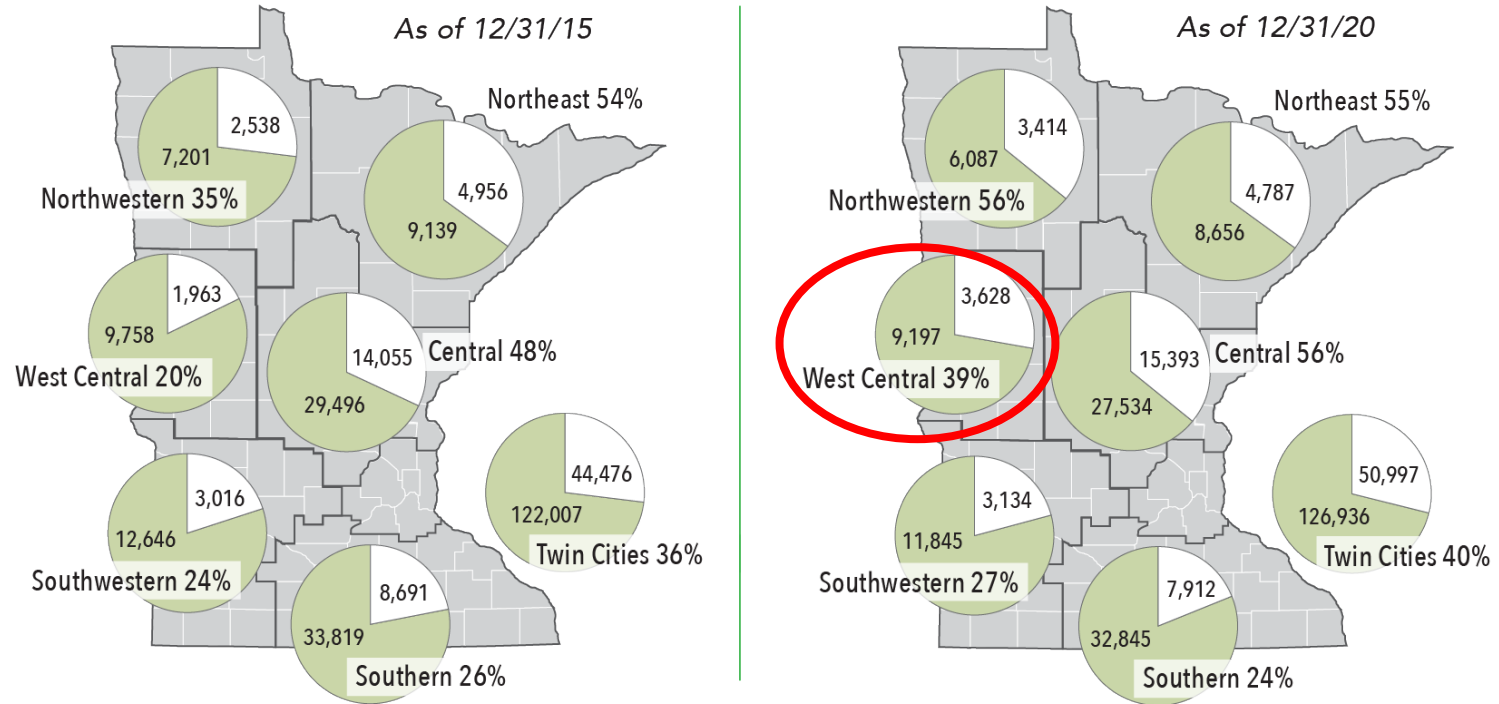
Who?
How?

Investment in Childcare

- › 2 biggest barriers to attracting workers in rural areas is a lack of childcare and a lack of housing
 - › See Disruptions in childcare access show its importance to the economy
- › Beyond keeping children safe and providing a learning space, childcare is a workforce need
 - › Maintain the current available labor force
 - › Shape the future workforce
- › 39% shortfall in childcare capacity in West Central MN

Childcare Shortages

Percentage growth required to meet estimated capacity need



■ Current Licensed Capacity
 Shortfall in number of spaces needed to accommodate est. number of children under 6 with both parents working.

37% Growth needed in licensed child care capacity to fill shortfall.

Data: MN Dept. of Human Services; U.S. Census
 © Center for Rural Policy & Development

INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGIES

Housing, broadband, **childcare**, and outdoor recreation.



Why?

WHO?

How?

mn EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

mn DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

 **First Children's Finance**

M MAHUBE-OTWA
COMMUNITY ACTION PARTNERSHIP



OTTER TAIL
COUNTY - MINNESOTA



INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGIES

Housing, broadband, **childcare**, and outdoor recreation.



Why?

Who?

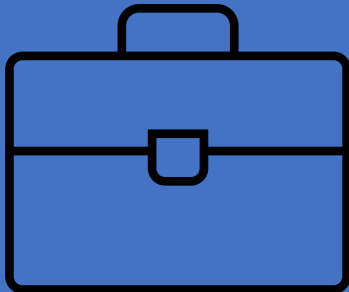
HOW?

Community and County-Driven Successes

- › New York Mills and Perham duplexes
- › Tiny Tykes in Battle Lake
- › PioneerKids in Fergus Falls
- › DEED Child Care Economic Development Grant
 - › Children's Corner expansion with Perham Health and KLN
 - › Providers subgrants

EMPLOYER STRATEGIES

Support business retention and workforce development.



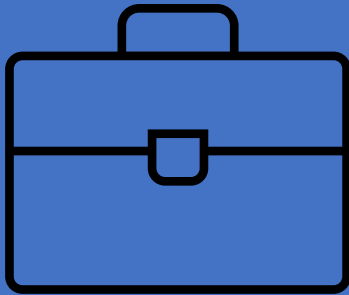
WHY is this important?

WHO is doing it?

HOW are they doing it?

EMPLOYER STRATEGIES

Support business retention and workforce development.



WHY?

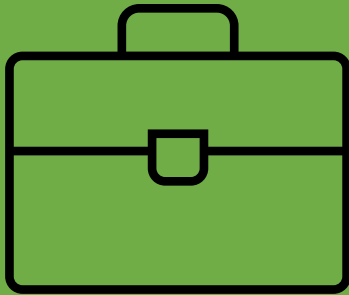
Who?
How?

Preparing, recruiting, and developing workforce to support a resilient employer community.

- › **Fact or Myth?** There are nearly 1,500 available job opportunities in Otter Tail County today.
 - › Current population is not enough to meet workforce demands
 - › Projected 4.6% reduction in available labor force
 - › Workforce is key to retaining and supporting resilient businesses in the county

EMPLOYER STRATEGIES

Support business retention and workforce development.



Why?

WHO?

How?

mn EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

CareerForce™

LIVE WIDE OPEN
WEST CENTRAL MINNESOTA

West Central Initiative

Rural Minnesota CEP

Minnesota State
Community and Technical College

OTTER TAIL
COUNTY - MINNESOTA

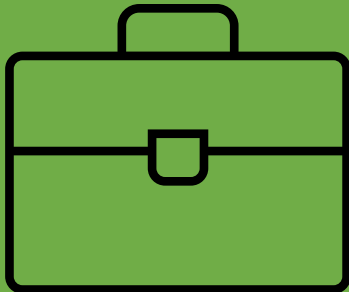
GREATER
FERGUS FALLS

Perham
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

NYM
Small town, big life!
NEW YORK MILLS, MN

EMPLOYER STRATEGIES

Support business retention and workforce development.



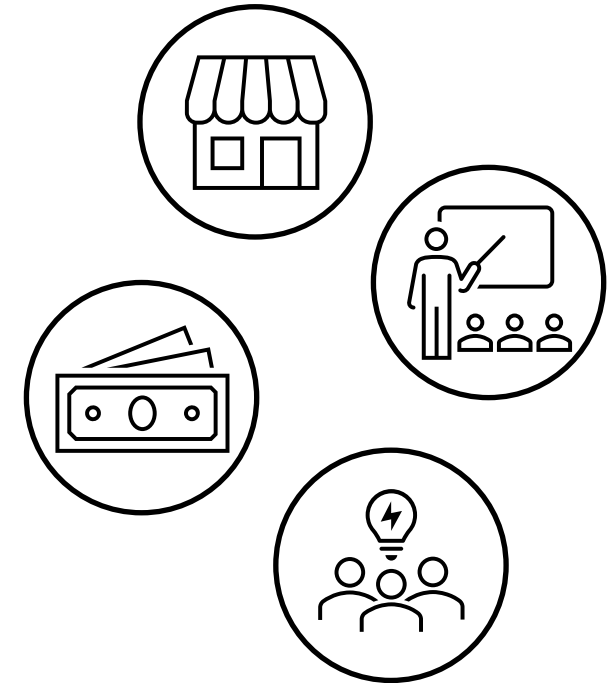
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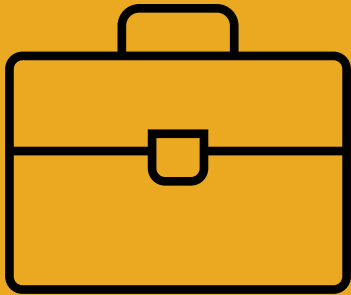
Public & Private Partners are Critical

- › Chambers of Commerce
- › School districts including Lakes Country Service Cooperative
- › Nonprofit and government partners
- › Businesses and employers



EMPLOYER STRATEGIES

Support business retention and workforce development.



Why?
Who?
HOW?

OTC Work Initiatives

- › Youth Workforce Navigation
- › Talent Tourism
- › Empowered Workers



WELCOMING COMMUNITY STRATEGIES

Create an environment and sense of place that welcomes everyone.



WHY is this important?

WHO is doing it?

HOW are they doing it?

WELCOMING COMMUNITY STRATEGIES

Create an environment and sense of place that welcomes everyone.



Why?

WHO?

How?



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
EXTENSION



> LIVE YOUR *best life* HERE.

WELCOMING COMMUNITY STRATEGIES

Create an environment and sense of place that welcomes everyone.



Why?
Who?
HOW?

Welcoming and Inclusive Communities Project

- › Supported by the University of Minnesota (UMN) Extension Central Regional Sustainable Development Partnership (Central RSDP)
- › Provide a platform for working with rural Minnesota communities to connect, train, and equip community stakeholders to lead local welcoming efforts in their hometowns, ensuring all voices are heard
- › Welcoming & Inclusive Community Assessment



**Pelican Rapids
Multicultural
Committee**