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Economic and Demographic Information for the Evaluation of Business and Economic Development Opportunities

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UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA MORRIS

Center for Small Towns



*“BELIEVING IN A BRIGHT, PROSPEROUS
FUTURE FOR SMALL COMMUNITIES.”*

Economic and Demographic Information for the Evaluation of Business and Economic Development Opportunities

November 17, 2008

By Michael Peterson and Ben Winchester

Prepared for the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe

www.centerforsmalltowns.org

This publication was produced by the Data Analysis and Research (DAR) team at the Center for Small Towns. For more information contact:

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Center for Small Towns

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While the focus of much of the information in this document is about Aitkin County, analysis of the region surrounding Aitkin County is also present. This region includes the following counties; Aitkin, Carlton, Cass, Crow Wing, Itasca, Kanabec, Mille Lacs, and Pine. This region is located in East Central Minnesota, north of the Twin Cities.

Section 1: Population and Workforce

Table 1
Population Projections for Aitkin County

	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
0 to 14 Years	2,416	2,490	2,570	2,450	2,260	2,170
15 to 24 Years	1,905	1,530	1,430	1,470	1,500	1,490
25 to 34 Years	1,643	1,670	1,430	1,250	1,120	1,110
35 to 44 Years	1,906	1,850	2,050	2,090	1,920	1,770
45 to 54 Years	2,299	2,510	2,300	2,170	2,230	2,290
55 to 64 Years	2,234	2,920	3,540	3,750	3,440	3,190
65+ Years	3,915	4,050	4,650	5,540	6,530	7,310
Total Population*	16,319	17,050	18,000	18,700	19,010	19,370

Source: Minnesota State Demographic Center

*Totals may not equal 100 due to rounding.

According to the Minnesota State Demographic Center, Aitkin County projections suggest overall population growth through 2030. There are projected decreases in those aged 15 to 34, while there is a large increase projected for those aged 55 and upward.

Table 2
Regional Labor Force Projections, 2005-2035

	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2035
16-24 Years	1,190	860	790	760	780	770
25-44 Years	2,970	2,970	2,940	2,820	2,550	2,410
45-64 Years	2,900	3,430	3,620	3,620	3,480	3,420
65+ Years	460	540	930	930	1,080	1,130
Total Labor Force	7,520	7,820	8,060	8,130	7,890	7,730

Source: Minnesota State Demographic Center

Table 3
Unemployment Rate for Aitkin County – January Through September 2008

Month	Aitkin County
January	9.3%
February	9.2
March	9.4
April	8.3
May	7.1
June	6.7
July	7.1
August	7.6
September	7.3
Average	8.0

Source: Minnesota State Demographic Center

The unemployment rate for Aitkin County varies month to month depending on the availability of seasonal work. The average unemployment rate for 2008 thus far is 8.0%.

Table 4
Median Household Income

County	2005 Median Household Income	2000 Median Household Income	2000-2005 Income Change
Aitkin	\$37,268	\$32,085	16.15%
Carlton	45,613	41,218	10.66
Cass	40,320	35,295	14.24
Crow Wing	42,050	38,730	8.57
Itasca	39,989	37,560	6.47
Kanabec	41,648	39,442	5.59
Mille Lacs	43,037	37,969	13.35
Pine	41,232	37,161	10.96
Region	41,395	37,433	10.58
Minnesota	52,048	49,170	5.85
United States	46,242	41,990	10.13

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, SAIPE Program

Section 2: Commuting Patterns

Table 5

Number and Percentage of County Employees Commuting to Counties in Region - 2000

Residence	Workplace	Count	Percentage
Aitkin	Region	1512	27.54%
Carlton	Region	311	3.14%
Cass	Region	3198	31.73%
Crow Wing	Region	1713	7.19%
Itasca	Region	457	2.79%
Kanabec	Region	1000	20.97%
Mille Lacs	Region	125	1.95%
Pine	Region	1213	14.74%
Total		9529	

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, Journey to Work

The number of commuters leaving each county is provided, as well as the percentage of the overall commuting pool each county's commuters represent. Commuting workers from Aitkin County represent a large percentage of overall commuter pool. At 27.54%, Aitkin County is second only to Cass County in exporting labor to the region.

Table 6

Number and Percentage of County Employees in Region Commuting to Individual Counties - 2000

Residence	Workplace	Count	Percentage
Region	Aitkin	653	6.74%
Region	Carlton	840	8.67%
Region	Cass	934	9.63%
Region	Crow Wing	3611	37.25%
Region	Itasca	572	5.90%
Region	Kanabec	684	7.06%
Region	Mille Lacs	1493	15.40%
Region	Pine	907	9.36%
Total		9694	

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, Journey to Work

A small percentage of the workers commuting within the region, work in Aitkin County. Of the total commuting pool for the region, only 6.74% travel to Aitkin County for work.

Table 7
Individuals Commuting from Aitkin County to Counties in Region by Decade

County of Residence	County of Work	1970	1980	1990	2000
Aitkin, MN	Carlton, MN	22	48	77	69
Aitkin, MN	Cass, MN				35
Aitkin, MN	Crow Wing, MN	91	102	240	524
Aitkin, MN	Itasca, MN	131	236	195	319
Aitkin, MN	Kanabec, MN	54	23	42	97
Aitkin, MN	Mille Lacs, MN	35	85	94	358
Aitkin, MN	Pine, MN		60	61	110
Total		333	554	709	1512

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, Journey to Work

The data in table 7 shows that Aitkin residents commuting to another county for work has generally been increasing since 1970. Between 1990 and 2000, the number of Aitkin residents commuting more than doubled.

Table 8
Individuals That Live and Work in the Same County

County of Residence	County of Work	1970	1980	1990	2000
Aitkin, MN	Aitkin, MN	2,522	3,250	3,360	3,979
Carlton, MN	Carlton, MN	6,851	7,615	8,393	9,599
Cass, MN	Cass, MN	3,514	4,630	4,987	6,880
Crow Wing, MN	Crow Wing, MN	9,325	12,894	16,394	22,100
Itasca, MN	Itasca, MN	8,452	12,172	13,079	15,950
Kanabec, MN	Kanabec, MN	2,816	3,313	3,677	3,769
Mille Lacs, MN	Mille Lacs, MN	3,767	5,362	5,313	6,290
Pine, MN	Pine, MN	4,025	4,911	5,324	7,015
Total		41,272	54,147	60,527	75,582

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, Journey to Work

Table 8 displays the number of workers each county retains. Each county has seen an increase in this area, which is reflected in the totals for the region as a whole.

Table 9
Individuals Commuting to Aitkin County from Counties in Region by Decade

County of Residence	County of Work	1970	1980	1990	2000
Carlton, MN	Aitkin, MN	6	14	35	72
Cass, MN	Aitkin, MN				28
Crow Wing, MN	Aitkin, MN	63	176	156	394
Itasca, MN	Aitkin, MN	8	43	53	111
Mille Lacs, MN	Aitkin, MN	57	22	9	24
Pine, MN	Aitkin, MN				16
Total		134	255	253	645

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, Journey to Work

The totals for tables 5 and 6 suggest that Aitkin is a net exporter of labor to the region. For every worker commuting to Aitkin from another county in the region, 2.34 Aitkin residents commute to another county for work.

Table 10
Characteristics of Aitkin County Workers Commuting Within Region for Work

County of Residence	County of Work	Industry	Workers	Average Wage
Aitkin, MN	Crow Wing, MN	Construction	50	33,483
Aitkin, MN	Itasca, MN	Construction	20	32,937
Aitkin, MN	Kanabec, MN	Construction	4	27,829
Aitkin, MN	Crow Wing, MN	Federal civilian + Military	10	43,122
Aitkin, MN	Itasca, MN	Federal civilian + Military	10	18,260
Aitkin, MN	Mille Lacs, MN	Federal civilian + Military	10	23,392
Aitkin, MN	Crow Wing, MN	Information + Finance and Insurance + Real Estate	35	26,997
Aitkin, MN	Itasca, MN	Information + Finance and Insurance + Real Estate	10	34,725
Aitkin, MN	Mille Lacs, MN	Information + Finance and Insurance + Real Estate	10	38,230
Aitkin, MN	Pine, MN	Information + Finance and Insurance + Real Estate	10	29,508
Aitkin, MN	Crow Wing, MN	Manufacturing	80	27,893
Aitkin, MN	Itasca, MN	Manufacturing	65	32,398
Aitkin, MN	Mille Lacs, MN	Manufacturing	45	33,944
Aitkin, MN	Kanabec, MN	Manufacturing	20	24,355
Aitkin, MN	Cass, MN	Manufacturing	15	13,131
Aitkin, MN	Carlton, MN	Manufacturing	10	32,825
Aitkin, MN	Chisago, MN	Manufacturing	10	68,889
Aitkin, MN	Pine, MN	Manufacturing	10	20,933
Aitkin, MN	Crow Wing, MN	Self-employed (part) + Unpaid family workers	30	16,717
Aitkin, MN	Mille Lacs, MN	Self-employed (part) + Unpaid family workers	25	45,321
Aitkin, MN	Pine, MN	Self-employed (part) + Unpaid family workers	20	16,542

Aitkin, MN	Itasca, MN	Self-employed (part) + Unpaid family workers	10	\$18,467
Aitkin, MN	Kanabec, MN	Self-employed (part) + Unpaid family workers	10	12,875
Aitkin, MN	Mille Lacs, MN	Services (except private households)	205	26,032
Aitkin, MN	Crow Wing, MN	Services (except private households)	190	23,673
Aitkin, MN	Itasca, MN	Services (except private households)	100	14,720
Aitkin, MN	Pine, MN	Services (except private households)	35	16,913
Aitkin, MN	Kanabec, MN	Services (except private households)	30	18,252
Aitkin, MN	Carlton, MN	Services (except private households)	20	24,030
Aitkin, MN	Cass, MN	Services (except private households)	4	15,020
Aitkin, MN	Crow Wing, MN	State and local government	55	29,138
Aitkin, MN	Mille Lacs, MN	State and local government	30	27,797
Aitkin, MN	Itasca, MN	State and local government	25	32,765
Aitkin, MN	Carlton, MN	State and local government	15	33,465
Aitkin, MN	Pine, MN	State and local government	15	26,647
Aitkin, MN	Itasca, MN	Utilities + Transportation and Warehousing	30	48,021
Aitkin, MN	Crow Wing, MN	Utilities + Transportation and Warehousing	10	32,050
Aitkin, MN	Crow Wing, MN	Wholesale Trade + Retail Trade	60	23,825
Aitkin, MN	Itasca, MN	Wholesale Trade + Retail Trade	45	14,624
Aitkin, MN	Kanabec, MN	Wholesale Trade + Retail Trade	25	28,761
Aitkin, MN	Mille Lacs, MN	Wholesale Trade + Retail Trade	25	19,518
Aitkin, MN	Carlton, MN	Wholesale Trade + Retail Trade	4	9,071
Aitkin, MN	Cass, MN	Wholesale Trade + Retail Trade	4	14,571
Aitkin, MN	Pine, MN	Wholesale Trade + Retail Trade	4	8,633

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, Journey to Work

Table 11
Characteristics of Regional Workers Commuting to Aitkin County for Work

County of Residence	County of Work	Industry	Workers	Average Wage
Carlton, MN	Aitkin, MN	Construction	25	\$23,796
Itasca, MN	Aitkin, MN	Construction	4	22,000
Kanabec, MN	Aitkin, MN	Construction	4	21,857
Pine, MN	Aitkin, MN	Construction	4	24,760
Itasca, MN	Aitkin, MN	Federal civilian + Military	10	35,833
Cass, MN	Aitkin, MN	Information + Finance and Insurance + Real Estate	4	16,380
Carlton, MN	Aitkin, MN	Manufacturing	10	14,167
Itasca, MN	Aitkin, MN	Self-employed (part) + Unpaid family workers	20	18,647
Carlton, MN	Aitkin, MN	Self-employed (part) + Unpaid family workers	4	10,867
Itasca, MN	Aitkin, MN	Services (except private households)	20	44,370
Carlton, MN	Aitkin, MN	Services (except private households)	15	23,973
Itasca, MN	Aitkin, MN	State and local government	45	30,466
Carlton, MN	Aitkin, MN	State and local government	10	32,600

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, Journey to Work

Section 3: Commercial Data/Wages

Table 12

Yearly Number of Business Establishments, Employees, and Wages by Industry – Aitkin County

Industry	Number of Establishments	Number of Employees	Average Weekly Wage	Total Wages
Total, All Industries	501	4,238	\$517	\$113,881,967
Goods-Producing Domain	135	820	574	24,492,529
Natural Resources and Mining	13	106	429	2,354,401
Construction	91	334	637	11,072,520
Manufacturing	31	380	559	11,065,608
Service-Providing Domain	367	3,418	503	89,389,438
Wholesale Trade	12	149	793	6,133,316
Retail Trade	69	687	341	12,186,272
Information	10	66	563	1,923,377
Finance and Insurance	21	105	788	4,302,267
Professional and Business Services	36	125	474	3,092,056
Professional and Technical Services	15	37	551	1,055,383
Administrative and Waste Services	21	89	443	2,036,673
Education and Health Services	39	1,087	638	36,070,828
Other Services	40	113	245	1,435,578
Public Administration	31	308	732	11,725,457

Source: www.deed.state.mn.us

Table 13

Number of Business Establishments, Employees, and Wages – Aitkin County

Year	Number of Establishments	Number of Employees	Average Weekly Wage	Total Wages
2007	501	4238	\$517	\$113,881,967
2006	511	4306	496	111,124,934
2005	511	4231	483	106,328,600
2004	490	4156	493	106,641,989
2003	481	4036	479	100,519,715
2002	472	3990	460	95,468,160
2001	467	3923	434	88,560,450
2000	468	3860	413	82,899,016

Source: www.deed.state.mn.us

Table 14
Non-Employers, Aitkin County – 2002,2006

Table 14 summarizes the number of establishments and sales or receipts of businesses without paid employees that are subject to federal income tax. Most non-employers are self-employed individuals operating very small unincorporated businesses, which may or may not be the owner's principal source of income.

	2002		2003		2004		2005		2006	
	Firms	Receipts (\$1,000)	Firms	Receipts (\$1,000)	Firms	Receipts (\$1,000)	Firms	Receipts (\$1,000)	Firms	Receipts (\$1,000)
Total for all sectors	1,178	\$40,164	1,241	\$43,303	1,255	\$51,218	1,301	\$50,111	1,258	\$47,235
Forestry, fishing & hunting, and agricultural support services	76	2,367	74	3,443	70	4,551	74	6,369	72	5,447
Mining	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Utilities	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Construction	239	9,503	262	9,612	286	13,730	280	11,781	292	11,361
Manufacturing	36	769	41	816	40	998	47	866	43	857
Wholesale trade	21	829	18	1,132	18	1,405	19	763	17	634
Retail trade	142	5,582	137	4,725	134	6,083	130	4,574	131	5,389
Transportation and warehousing	75	4,486	72	4,946	78	6,220	81	6,408	71	6,075
Information	NA	NA	10	165	NA	NA	11	234	12	165
Finance and insurance	29	1,277	29	1,090	27	1,382	41	1,702	40	1,559
Real estate and rental and leasing	89	4,129	104	4,827	104	4,474	117	5,647	122	4,759
Professional, scientific, and technical services	80	1,713	90	2,399	94	2,585	94	2,173	86	1,896
Administrative and support and waste management and remediation services	69	1,240	70	751	66	879	72	743	67	876
Educational services	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	8	40	8	64
Health care and social assistance	75	2,012	82	2,039	80	1,543	85	1,454	83	1,619
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	50	821	44	887	42	701	41	652	37	431
Accommodation and food services	28	1,238	40	1,553	35	1,454	26	1,546	28	1,280
Other services (except public administration)	154	3,923	156	4,736	163	4,974	173	5,136	146	4,758

Source: www.deed.state.mn.us

Table 15

Business Establishment Births, Deaths, Expansions, Contractions, 1998-2003

See the definitions¹ below for table 15.

Year	Births	Deaths	Net Gain	Expansions	Contractions
1998-99	33	31	2	86	86
1999-2000	34	34	0	106	77
2000-01	35	28	7	92	95
2001-02	36	51	-15	104	87
2002-03	44	32	12	84	90

Source: www.deed.state.mn.us

Table 16

Top Employers in the Region

Employers in the public sector are highlighted grey. Table 16 shows that a large portion of the workforce in Aitkin County works in government and other public agencies.

Employer	Number of Employees
Riverwood Health Care Ctr	405
Aitkin County	344
Aitkin Public Schools	190
Aicota Health Care Ctr	128
McGregor Public Schools	125
Paulbeck's Super Valu	70
Cummings Oil, Inc.	68
Floe Intl & Hoyt McGregor Payroll	67
Lake States Lumber Inc	65
Aitkin Iron Works Inc	65
Savanna Pallets	55
Mille Lacs Electric Cooperative	55
Hill City Public School	50
Savamco	45
Covenant Pines Bible Camp	44
Roll in Docks	40
Pamida Discount Ctr	40
Garrison Disposal	35

¹ **Establishment Births** - Births are establishments that have zero employment in the first quarter of the initial year and positive employment in the first quarter of the subsequent year.

Establishment Deaths - Deaths are establishments that have positive employment in the first quarter of the initial year and zero employment in the first quarter of the subsequent year.

Establishment Expansions - Expansions are establishments that have positive first quarter employment in both the initial and subsequent years and increase employment during the time period between the first quarter of the initial year and the first quarter of the subsequent year.

Establishments Contractions - Contractions are establishments that have positive first quarter employment in both the initial and subsequent years and decrease employment during the time period between the first quarter of the initial year and the first quarter of the subsequent year.

Stern Rubber	33
Holder Snyder Drug	32
Aitkin Independent Age	31
MN Dept of Natural Resources	35
CMA Camp	24
Savanna Golf & Supper Club	20
Ukura's Big Dollar	19
Riverwood Clinic of McGregor	19
Fireside Inn	17
LEMCO	12
Quadna Mountain Village	7
Lange's Nursery & Landscaping	7
City of Hill City	7
Robinson Lumber	5
Hilltop Sports	5
City of McGrath	5
Woodland Bank	4
Vie's Mobile	4
Roth Construction	4
Poor Lewy's Salloon	4
Lucky's Landing	4
Hill City Realty	4
1865 Café	3
Sam's Grocery	2
McGregor Printing and Graphics	2
Hanni Plumbing and Heating	2
Bills Service	2

Source: www.mnpro.com Community Profile

Section 4: Wages Comparison

Table 17
2nd Quarter 2008 Minnesota Salary Survey

Occupational Group	EDR 3 - Arrowhead			State of Minnesota	
	Estimated Regional Employment	Median Hourly Wage	Median Annual Wage	Median Annual Wage	Estimated Statewide Employment
Total, All Occupations	137,180	\$15.22	\$31,657.75	\$35,552.31	2,687,740
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	20,490	13.91	28,928.53	32,127.94	433,440
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	13,850	8.30	17,247.85	19,032.25	220,910
Sales and Related Occupations	12,420	9.52	19,811.20	25,543.00	276,300
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	10,190	24.70	51,384.42	60,173.35	147,650
Education, Training, and Library Occupations	7,850	21.85	45,451.80	42,643.02	150,320
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	7,030	21.37	44,431.71	54,913.27	154,590
Healthcare Support Occupations	6,360	11.65	24,241.84	26,574.89	84,010
Construction and Extraction Occupations	6,350	22.97	47,775.91	49,014.27	109,800
Management Occupations	5,450	34.15	71,015.31	92,665.50	133,760
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	4,730	10.27	21,372.54	24,219.11	80,840
Community and Social Services Occupations	4,490	16.61	34,557.58	37,333.30	50,950
Personal Care and Service Occupations	3,530	10.07	20,955.11	23,340.85	82,360
Protective Service Occupations	3,450	18.41	38,293.88	35,843.04	47,670
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	2,210	26.94	56,047.47	71,681.18	77,660
Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	2,120	25.44	52,927.75	59,739.48	29,500
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	1,910	27.14	56,454.48	62,580.28	51,910
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	1,560	16.26	33,811.74	43,614.06	36,040
Legal Occupations	730	29.77	61,927.42	74,201.75	18,090
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	380	17.89	37,209.22	26,744.52	3,700

Source: DEED Minnesota Salary Survey, 2nd Quarter 2008

The region used in table 17 differs slightly than the one used throughout the rest of this document. The Arrowhead Economic Development Region consists of the following counties; Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, and St. Louis. The highest paying occupations are high skilled or specialized. The highest paying occupational group in the Arrowhead Region is Management Occupation (which includes marketing managers, medical and health services managers, administrative managers, and human resources managers, among others). Other high paying occupational groups include Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations, Education, Training, and Library Occupations, Business and Financial Operations Occupations.

In contrast, the lowest paying groups were Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations, and Sales and Related Occupations. These jobs typically pay less than \$10.00 an hour, and require little education. The median wage in the Arrowhead Region represented 89.0% of the comparable Minnesota wage.

Table 18

Projected Long-Term, High Demand, High Pay Employment for Northeast Minnesota (Sorted by Total Openings)

Please note that for table 18, the data is presented as organized by the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development. The Northeastern Planning Area includes the following counties; Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, and St. Louis, which includes the city of Duluth.

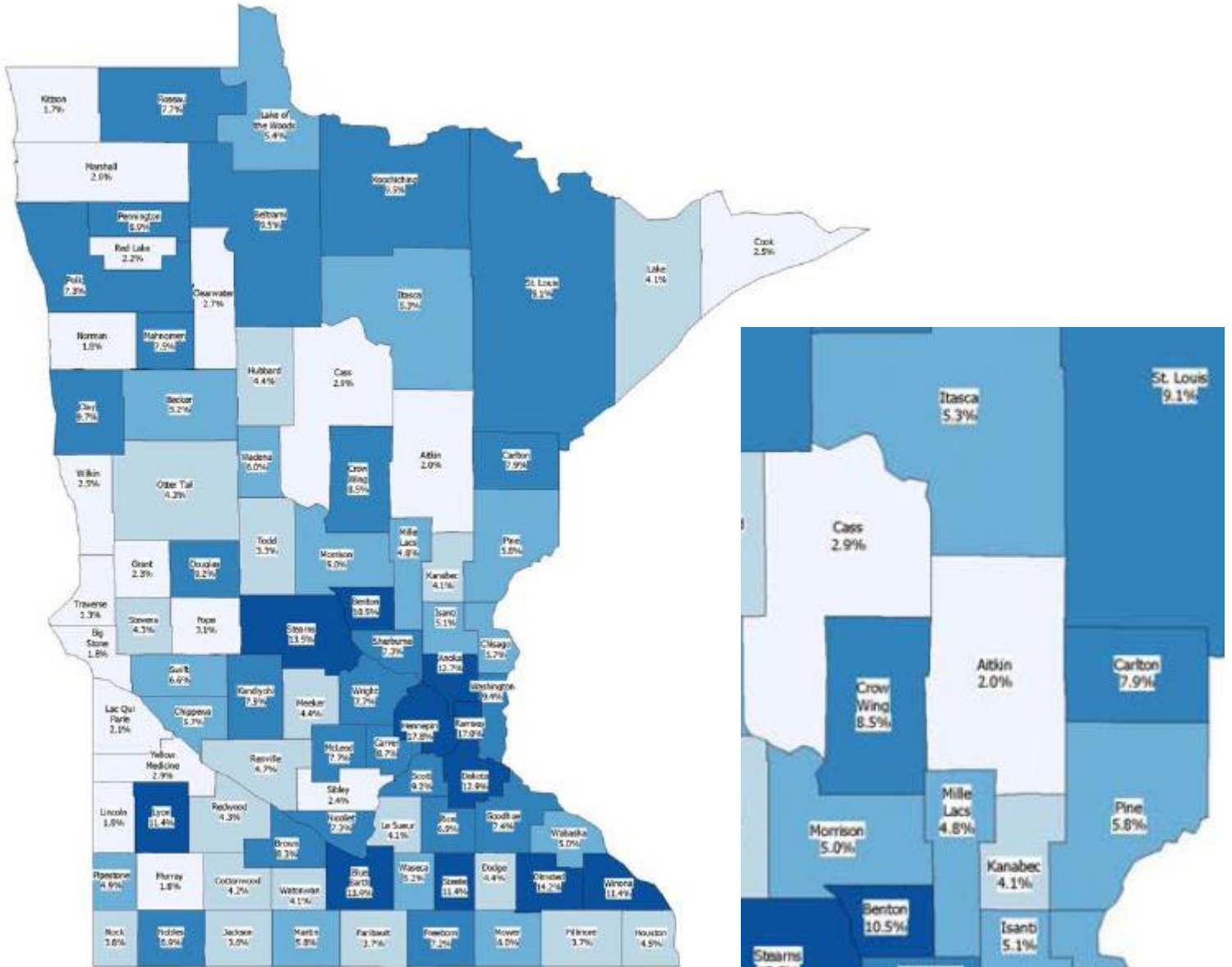
Northeastern Minnesota				
Title	2004 Employment	2004 Median Salary	Projected 2014 Percentage Change	Total Openings
Total, All Occupations	155,295	\$31,657.75	10.10%	53,515
Registered Nurses	3,681	58,969.88	27.3	1,775
Business Operations Specialists, All Other	2,218	41,000.53	26.5	968
Protective Service Workers, All Other	1,009	49,972.63	17.1	363
Accountants and Auditors	950	46,068.63	8.4	330
Fire Fighters	663	32,069.65	21.4	332
Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing	655	36,564.24	13.7	540
Community and Social Service Specialists, Other	616	47,649.85	12.7	238
Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers	574	51,029.07	14.6	214
Educational, Vocational, and School Counselors	533	32,445.22	10.9	198
Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics	435	36,474.86	52.6	309
Highway Maintenance Workers	416	42,163.72	26	168
Medical and Health Services Managers	331	73,300.69	23.3	147
Medical Transcriptionists	328	33,774.50	24.7	141
Radiologic Technologists and Technicians	315	52,975.27	25.1	139
Computer Support Specialists	305	35,069.96	28.5	127
Correctional Officers and Jailers	298	40,181.33	32.2	136
Medical Records and Health Information Technicians	297	51,434.57	19.2	107
Network Systems and Data Communications Analysts	290	44,142.01	23.4	128
Pharmacists	290	59,240.53	25.2	103
Network and Computer Systems Administrators	287	109,955.56	19.2	115
Human Resources, Training, and Labor Relations	266	38,376.92	15.8	102
Social and Community Service Managers	229	46,008.33	17.5	90
Mental Health Counselors	226	33,271.62	15.5	95
Dental Hygienists	222	36,910.37	12.6	78
Machinists	221	37,791.96	26.7	79
Payroll and Timekeeping Clerks	213	59,807.82	16	84
Cost Estimators	200	47,106.60	29	88

Training and Development Specialists	200	74,239.85	14.5	69
Computer and Information Systems Managers	185	56,372.11	34.6	104
Sheet Metal Workers	183	59,844.85	49.2	110
Paralegals and Legal Assistants	177	39,731.97	35.6	103
First-Line Supervisors/Managers of Housekeeping an	173	52,169.16	20.8	66
Appraisers and Assessors of Real Estate	172	49,342.39	18	71
Civil Engineering Technicians	172	39,858.00	27.9	68
Sales Managers	170	70,339.29	60.6	123
Medical and Public Health Social Workers	170	56,088.79	17.6	70
Surgical Technologists	170	34,390.23	0	60
Property, Real Estate & Community Association Mgr	167	46,772.00	22.8	68
Library Technicians	161	91,328.57	35.4	87

Source: DEED Minnesota Employment Outlook Tool March 2008

Section 5: Commercial and Industrial

Map 1
Commercial Industrial Value as a Percent of Total Market Value



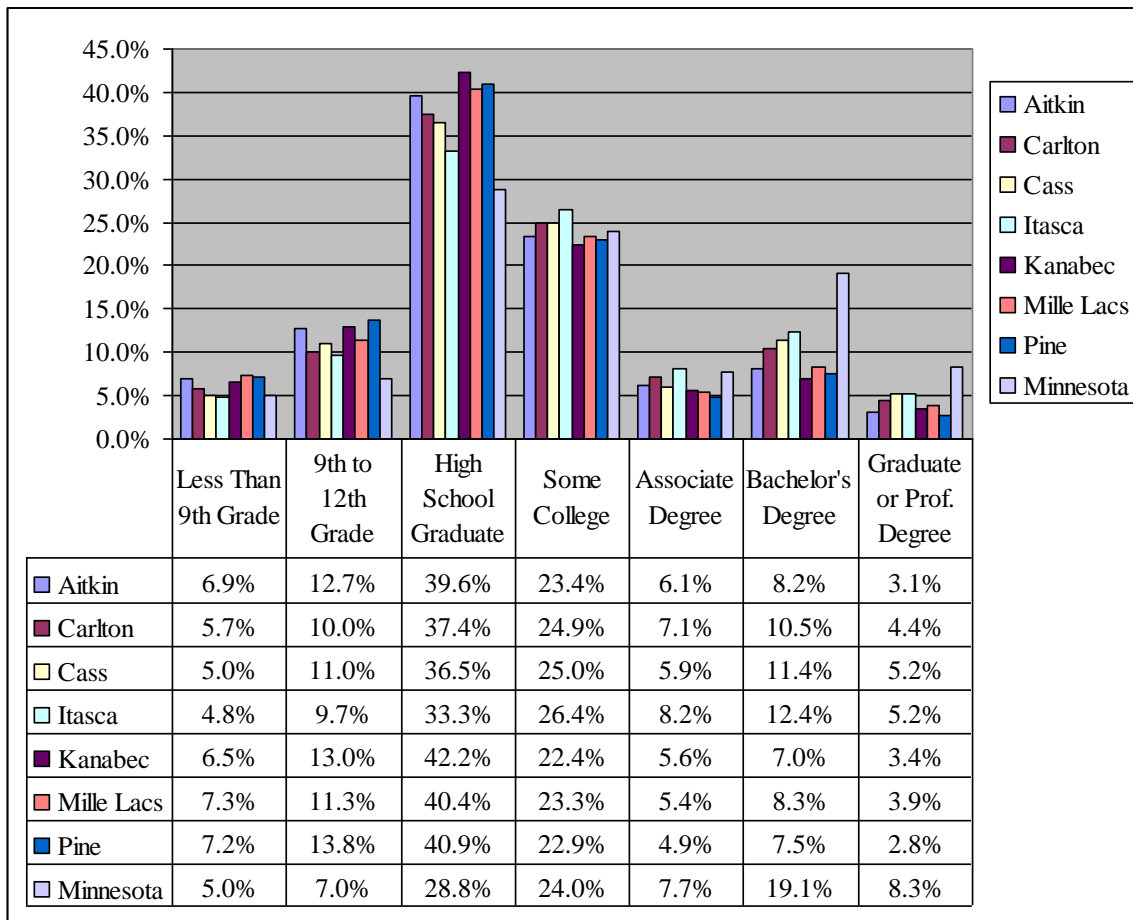
Percent of Total EMV	
■ (Darkest Blue)	10.5% to 17.8% (11)
■ (Dark Blue)	6.9% to 9.7% (24)
■ (Medium-Dark Blue)	4.8% to 6.6% (16)
■ (Medium-Light Blue)	3.2% to 4.7% (18)
■ (Lightest Blue)	1.3% to 2.9% (18)

Section 6: Education

Chart 1
Educational Attainment Trends by Year, 2000-2008

Chart 1 shows the percentage of county populations (ages 25 and up) holding various levels of education. Aitkin County, along with most of the counties in the region, has a higher percentage of its population with a high school degree or lower, than the state-wide average.

All of the counties in the region were near the statewide average for those who have completed some college, and slightly lower for those with associate degrees. The statewide percentage of those with Bachelor's and Graduate degrees is more than double the percentage found in Aitkin County.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The following graphs display the class size by year of one cohort of students traced from 1st grade to 12th grade. The districts chosen represent the larger districts within the region, with McGregor and Aitkin Public School Districts representing Aitkin County. These districts are detailed in table 19 with their respective enrollment totals for 2007 school year.

Table 19
Sample of School Districts From the Region, with Total Enrollment - 2007

School District	Total Enrollment
Aitkin	1,222
Cloquet	2,091
Cass Lake-Bena	935
Hinckley-Finlayson	973
McGregor	407

Source: Minnesota Department of Education

Charts 2 through 11 uses enrollment data from the Minnesota Department of Education to track individual cohorts from 1st through 12th grade. For each of the school districts listed in table 19, two charts are provided.

The first chart details cohort size by year of entry. For the McGregor Public School District (charts 10 and 11) most cohorts either saw slight increases or little change between 1st and 12th grade. Cohort size was more sporadic for other districts. For example, the cohorts within the Aitkin Public School District gained between 15 and 30 students between 1st and 12th grade.

The second chart details total district enrollment by year.

Chart 2
Enrollment Trends for Aitkin School District (Aitkin County)

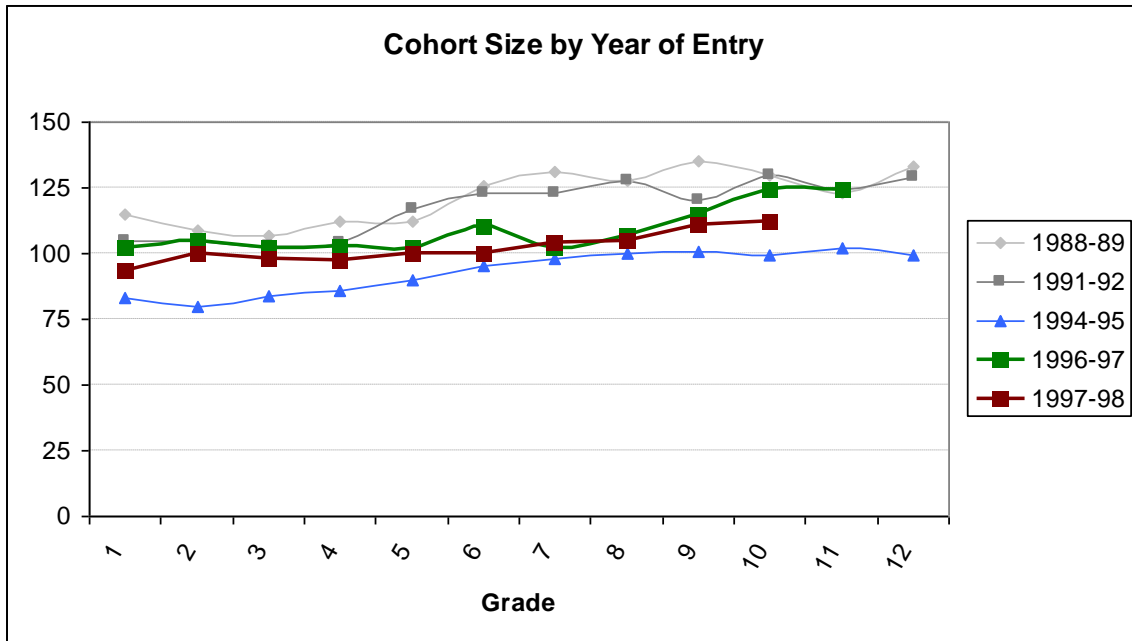


Chart 3
Enrollment Size, By Year - Aitkin School District (Aitkin County)

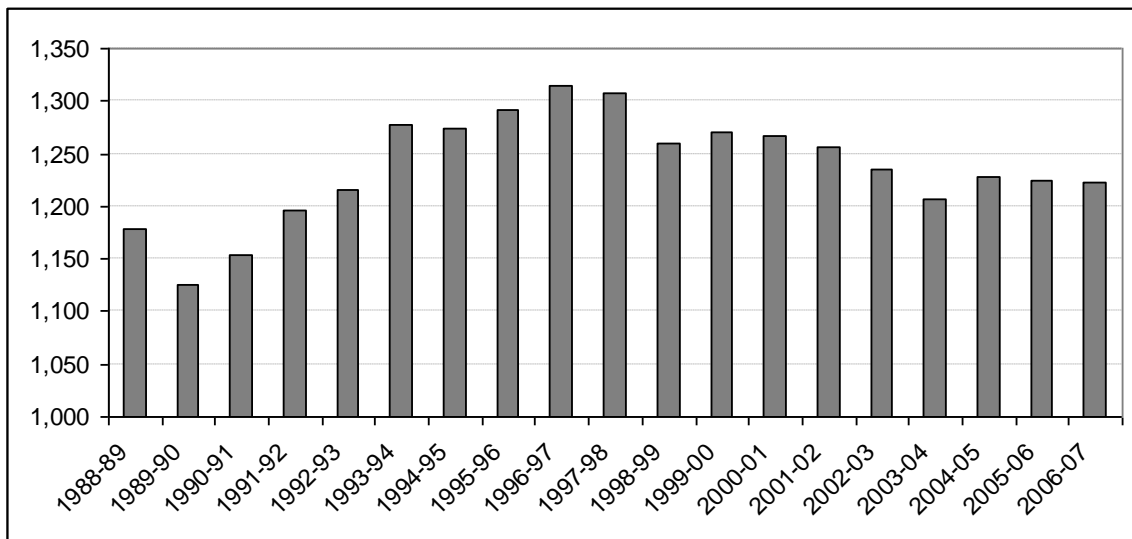


Chart 4
Enrollment Trends for Cloquet School District (Carlton County)

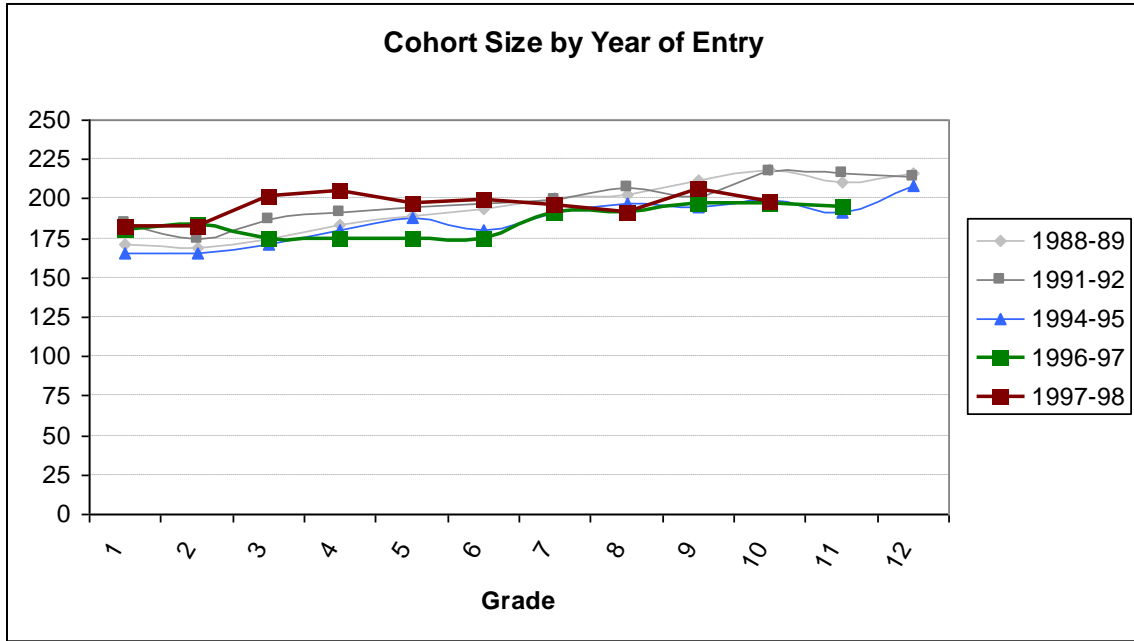


Chart 5
Enrollment Size, By Year - Cloquet School District (Carlton County)

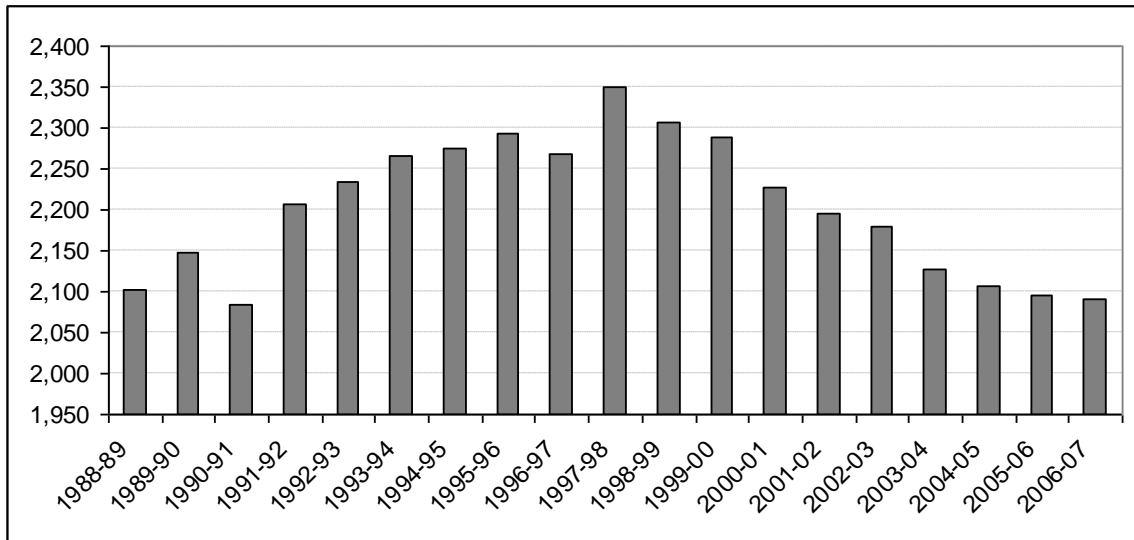


Chart 6
 Enrollment Trends for Cass Lake-Bena School District (Cass County)

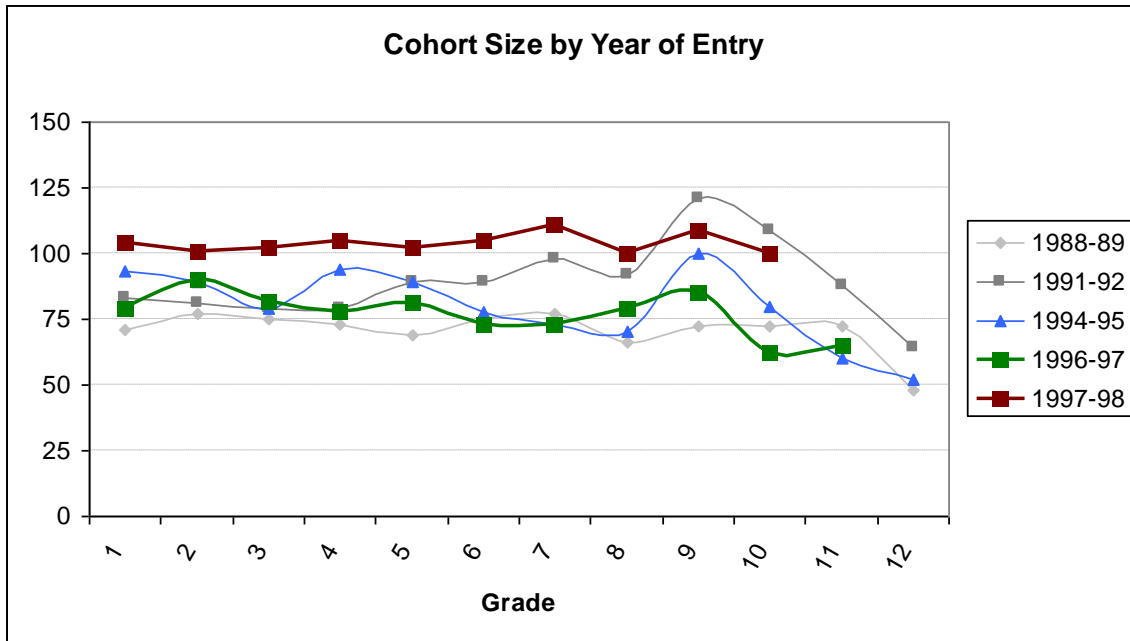


Chart 7
 Enrollment Size, By Year - Cass Lake-Bena School District (Cass County)

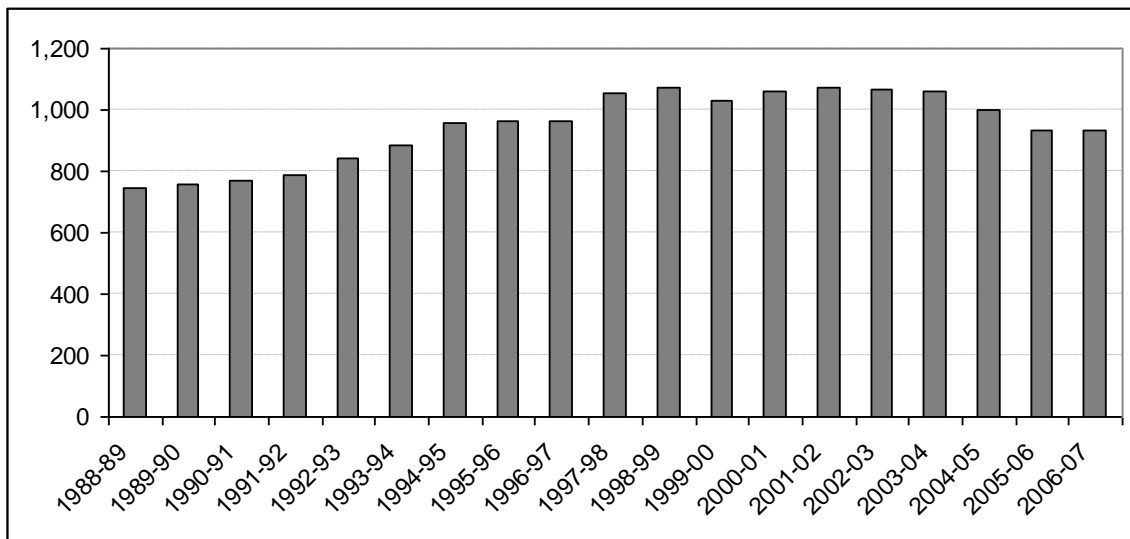


Chart 8
 Enrollment Trends for Hinckley-Finlayson School District (Pine County)

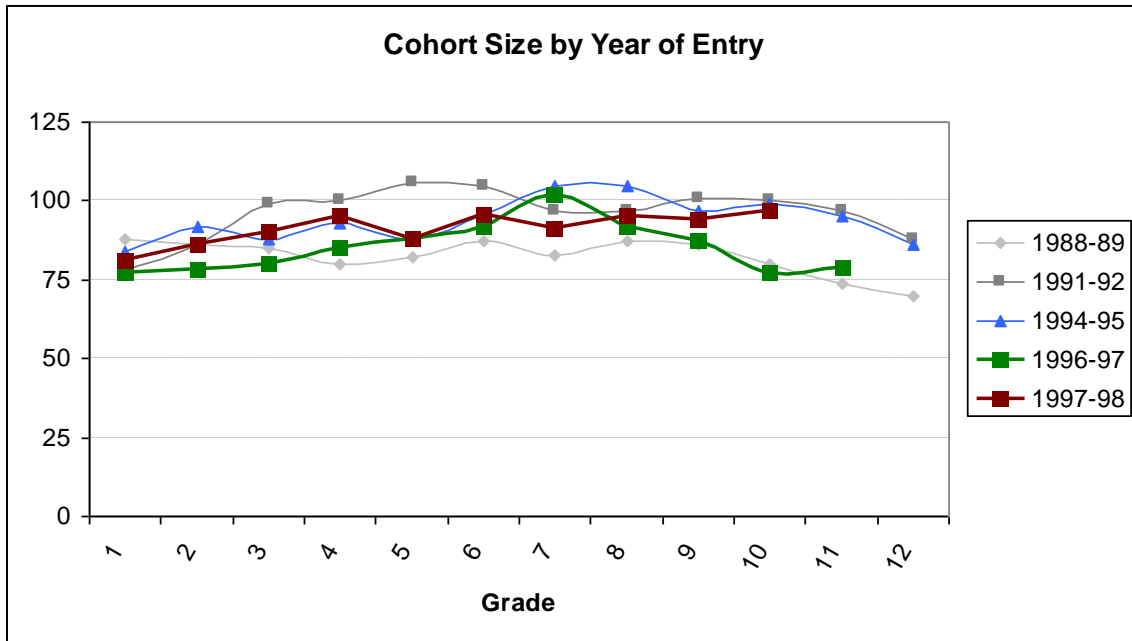


Chart 9
 Enrollment Size, By Year - Hinckley-Finlayson School District (Pine County)

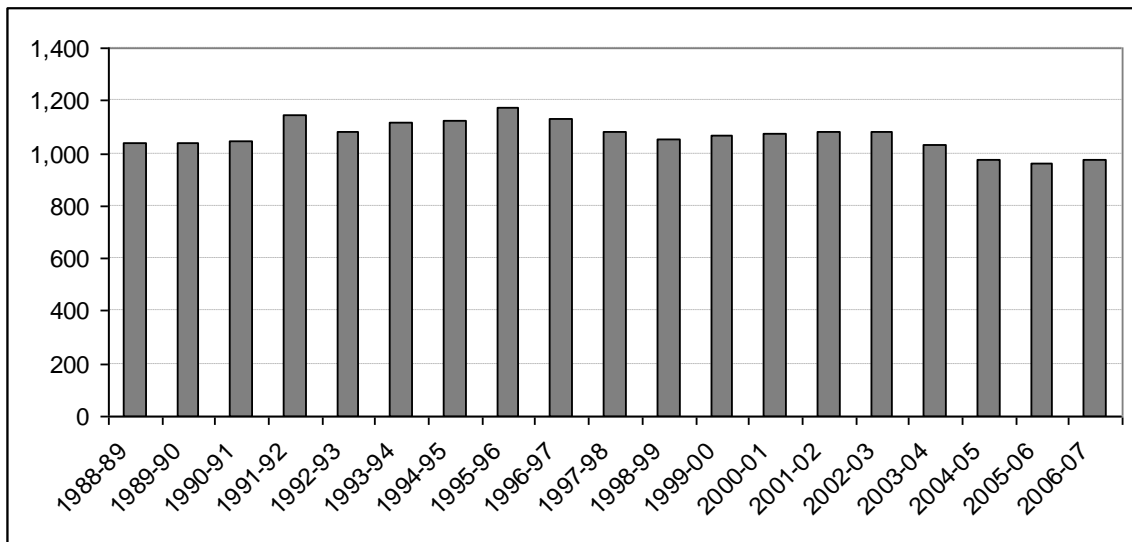


Chart 10
 Enrollment Trends for McGregor Public School District (Aitkin County)

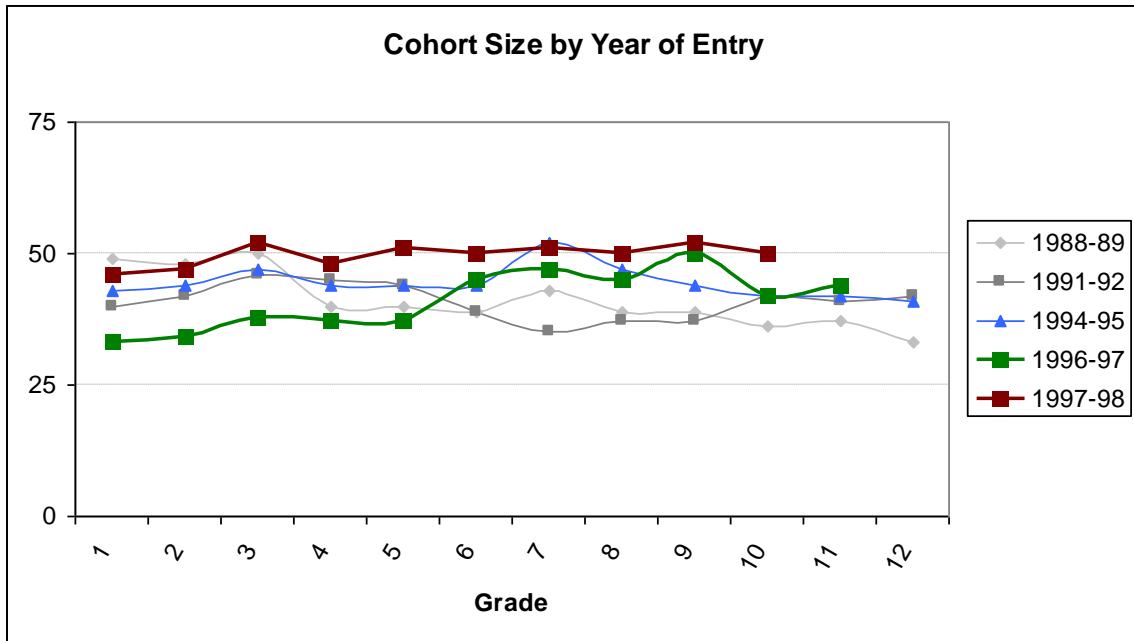


Chart 11
 Enrollment Size, By Year – McGregor Public School District (Aitkin County)

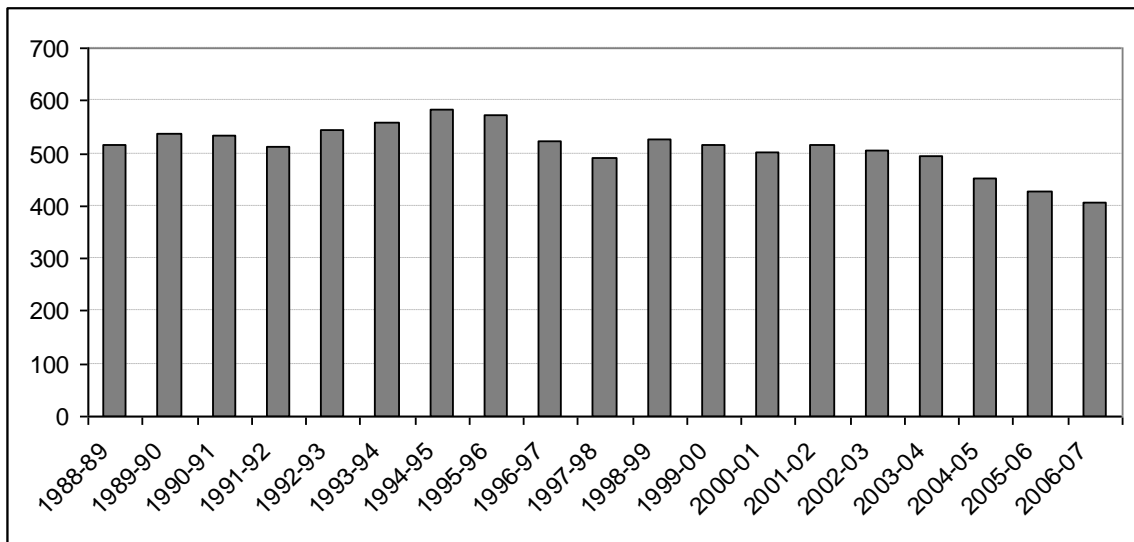


Table 20
Graduation and Dropout Rates for Region, 2007

School District Name	Total			Dropout Rate		Graduation Rate	
	County Name	Dropout Rate	Graduation Rate	Male	Female	Male	Female
Aitkin - 1	Aitkin	10.4	80.0	8.5	12.5	86.4	73.2
Hill City - 2	Aitkin						
McGregor - 3	Aitkin	9.5	71.4	9.1	10.0	77.3	65.0
Barnum - 91	Carlton	1.8	87.3	3.5		82.8	92.3
Carlton - 93	Carlton		82.4			78.1	86.1
Cloquet - 94	Carlton	9.3	67.2	12.4	6.5	60.8	72.9
Cromwell - 95	Carlton						
Moose Lake - 97	Carlton	1.5	87.0	2.6		84.2	90.3
Esko - 99	Carlton						
Wrenshall - 100	Carlton	7.5	85.0	10.0	5.0	75.0	95.0
Cass Lake - Bena Schools - 115	Cass	23.0	46.7	32.7	16.9	32.7	55.4
Northland Community Schools - 118	Cass	5.8	80.8	8.3	3.6	79.2	82.1
Pillager - 116	Cass						
Pine River-Backus - 578	Cass	0.8	76.6		1.5	75.9	77.3
Walker-Hackensack-Akeley - 113	Cass	3.3	81.5	2.0	4.8	84.0	78.6
Brainerd - 181	Crow Wing	7.1	69.2	10.3	3.6	63.6	75.2
Crosby-Ironton - 182	Crow Wing	3.7	85.1	5.1	2.1	84.8	85.4
Pequot Lakes - 186	Crow Wing	1.0	91.4	1.7		91.4	91.5
Deer River - 317	Itasca	5.6	85.4	4.8	6.4	88.1	83.0
Grand Rapids - 318	Itasca	10.9	66.7	10.6	11.2	60.3	74.3
Greenway - 316	Itasca	2.1	87.2	1.8	2.7	87.7	86.5
Nashwauk-Keewatin - 319	Itasca	11.1	76.2	7.7	16.7	76.9	75.0
Northern Lights	Itasca						
Mora - 332	Kanabec	11.8	77.8	18.8	2.9	69.4	88.2
Ogilvie - 333	Kanabec						
Onamia - 480	Mille Lacs	7.0	68.6	3.6	13.3	69.6	66.7
Milaca - 912	Mille Lacs	7.4	76.8	9.2	5.4	71.4	82.6
Isle - 473	Mille Lacs	6.7	71.1		11.5	73.7	69.2
Princeton - 477	Mille Lacs	1.2	88.9	1.7	0.8	85.7	91.9
Willow River - 557	Pine	10.9	71.7	21.7		65.2	78.3
East Central - 2580	Pine	14.9	63.4	15.5	14.0	56.9	72.1

Pine City - 578	Pine	6.0	74.7	7.1	5.2	80.0	70.1
Hinckley-Finlayson - 2165	Pine	2.5	83.8		5.0	85.0	82.5
Statewide		6.3	73.1	7.1	5.4	70.1	76.2

Source: Minnesota Office of Higher Education

Table 21
Post-Secondary Participation Rate

District	2007 Graduates	First Year Attending MN Institution	Post Secondary Participation Rate
Mora	119	54	45%
Cloquet	137	74	54%
McGregor	27	21	78%
Aitkin	92	56	61%
Pine City	136	57	42%

Source: Minnesota Office of Higher Education

Table 22
Institution Attended in Minnesota by County - Fall of 2005

Table 22 details which type of higher education the region's residents attended. This includes both recent high school graduates and non-traditional students.

County	State Universities	Community and Technical College	University of Minnesota	Private Career Schools	Private Colleges & Universities
Aitkin	18	87	14	14	11
Carlton	17	202	39	3	30
Cass	30	112	19	8	20
Itasca	23	372	28	7	45
Kanabec	12	72	13	16	17
Mille Lacs	40	124	18	12	46
Pine	23	178	16	9	16

Source: Minnesota Office of Higher Education

Section 7: Employment & Income Data

Charts 12 through 25 display employment and income data for each county in the region.

The first chart details the number of jobs available through wage and salary employment, and the number of proprietors (business owners) for each county in the region. The second chart for each county details the percentage of total income that transfer receipts, dividends, interest, and rent represent. See below for definitions²

For Aitkin County, the number of full-time and part-time proprietors increased at an equal, and in some years greater, rate as wage and salary jobs and maintains an overall upward trend. While wage and salary jobs have increased steadily in this time frame, proprietors increased steadily until the 1990s, when a number of spikes led to a higher number of proprietors in 2005 than in any previous year.

Transfer receipts represent a significant percentage of total income for residents of the region, and this percentage has largely increased since 1969. For example, Aitkin County saw an increase of nearly 10% over this time frame. Overall, transfer receipts, dividends, interest, and rent represented nearly half of total income for residents in Aitkin County in 2005.

2 Transfer Receipts: This component of personal income is payments to persons for which no current services are performed. It consists of payments to individuals and to nonprofit institutions by Federal, state, and local governments and by businesses. This includes unemployment compensation and retirement benefits.

Dividends: This component of personal income consists of the payments in cash or other assets, excluding the corporation's own stock, made by corporations located in the United States or abroad to persons who are U.S. residents. It excludes that portion of dividends paid by regulated investment companies (mutual funds) related to capital gains distributions.

Interest: This component of personal income is the interest income (monetary and imputed) of persons from all sources.

Rent: Rental income is the net income of persons from the rental of real property except for the income of persons primarily engaged in the real estate business; the imputed net rental income of the owner-occupants of nonfarm dwellings; and the royalties received from patents, copyrights, and the right to natural resources.

Chart 12
Wage / Salary and Proprietor Employment for Aitkin County

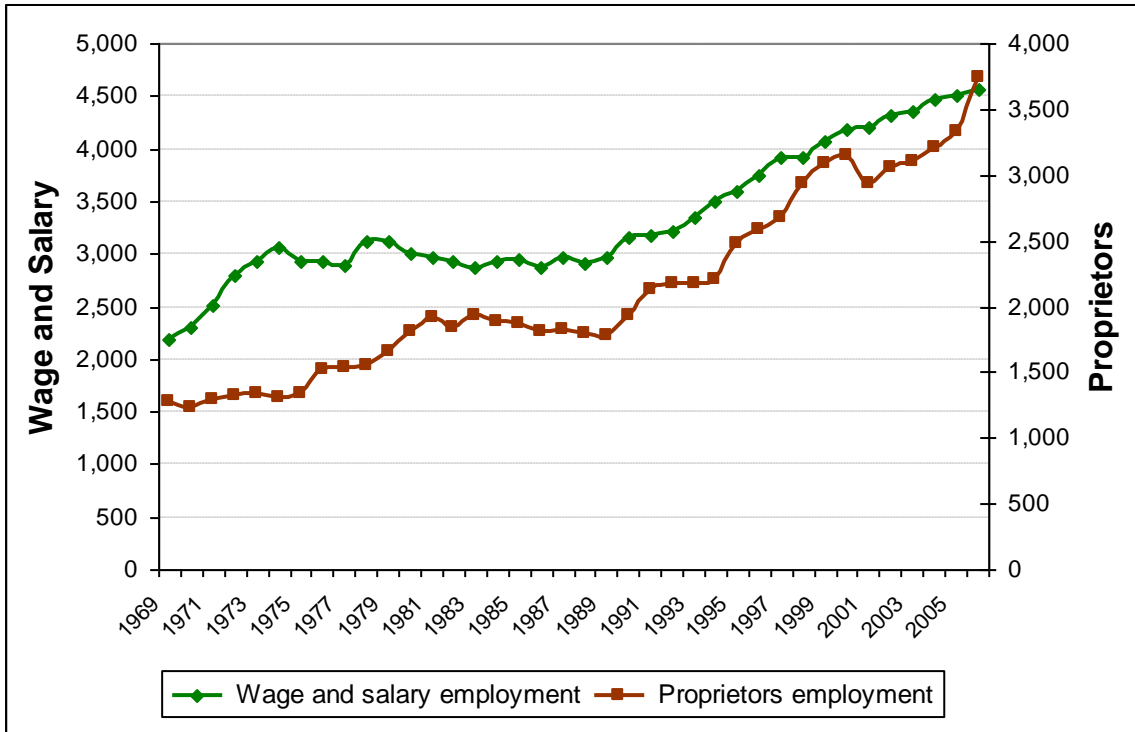


Chart 13
Transfer Receipts and Dividends, Interest, and Rent as Percentages of Total Income - Aitkin County

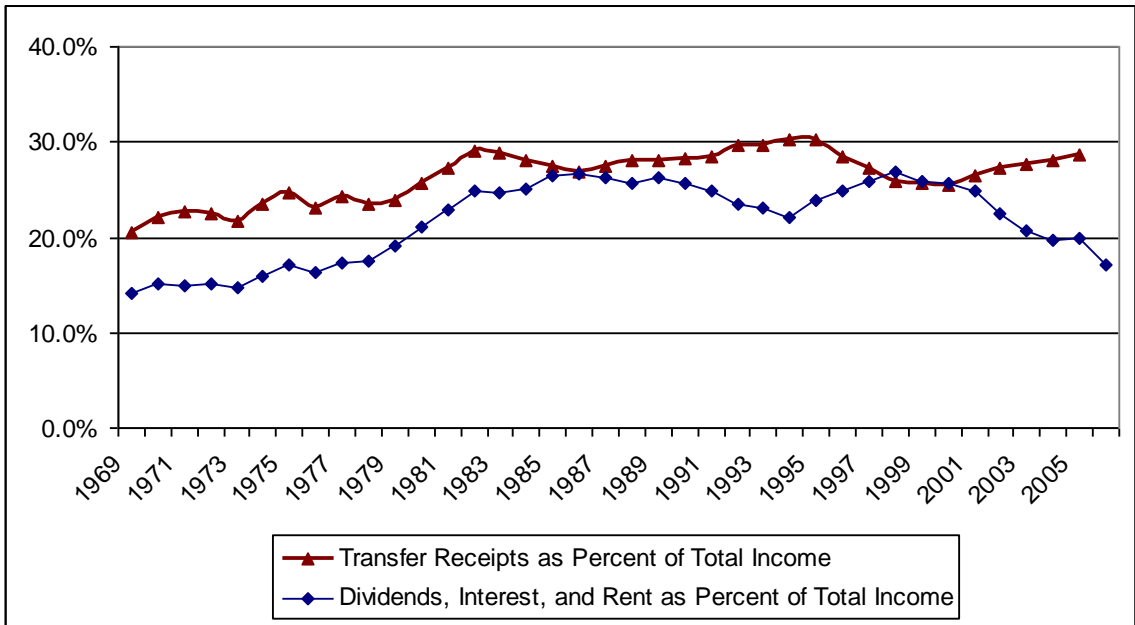


Chart 14
Wage / Salary and Proprietor Employment for Carlton County

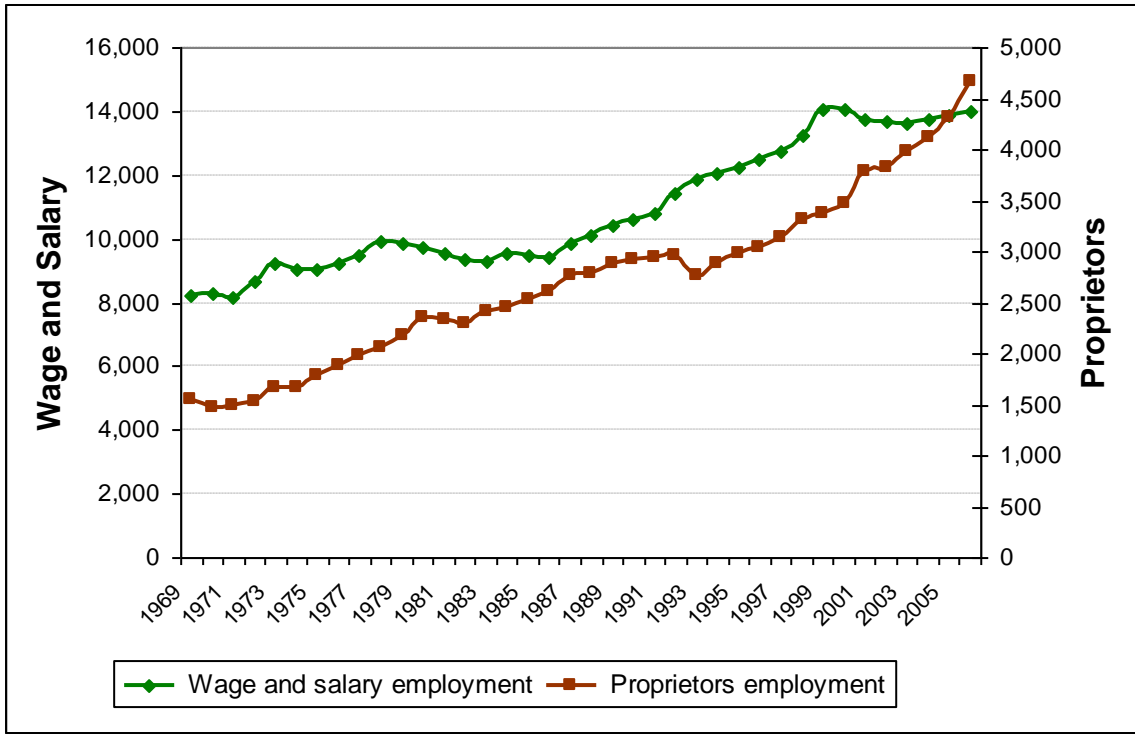


Chart 15
Transfer Receipts and Dividends, Interest, and Rent as Percentages of Total Income - Carlton County

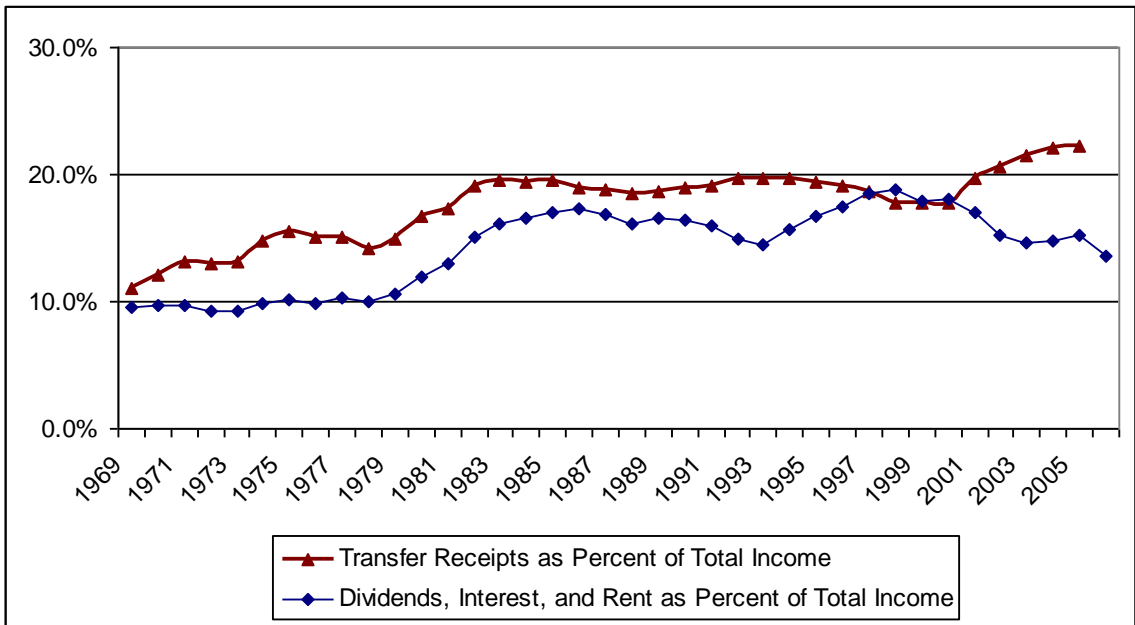


Chart 16
 Wage / Salary and Proprietor Employment for Cass County

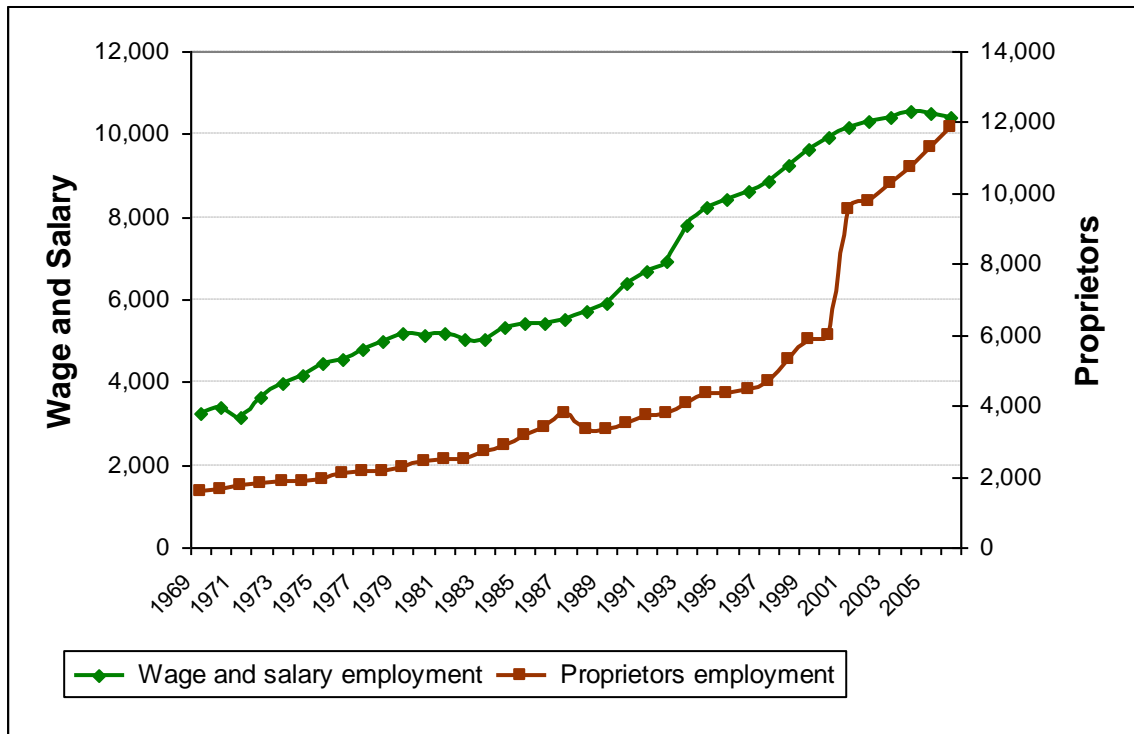


Chart 17
 Transfer Receipts and Dividends, Interest, and Rent as Percentages of Total Income - Cass County

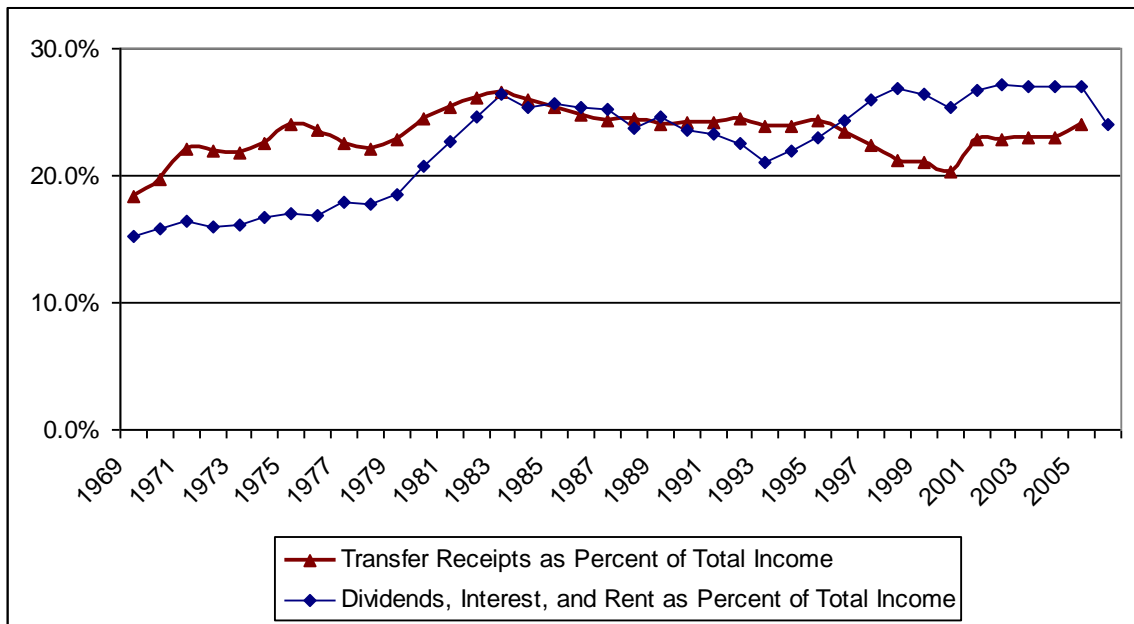


Chart 18
Wage / Salary and Proprietor Employment for Itasca County

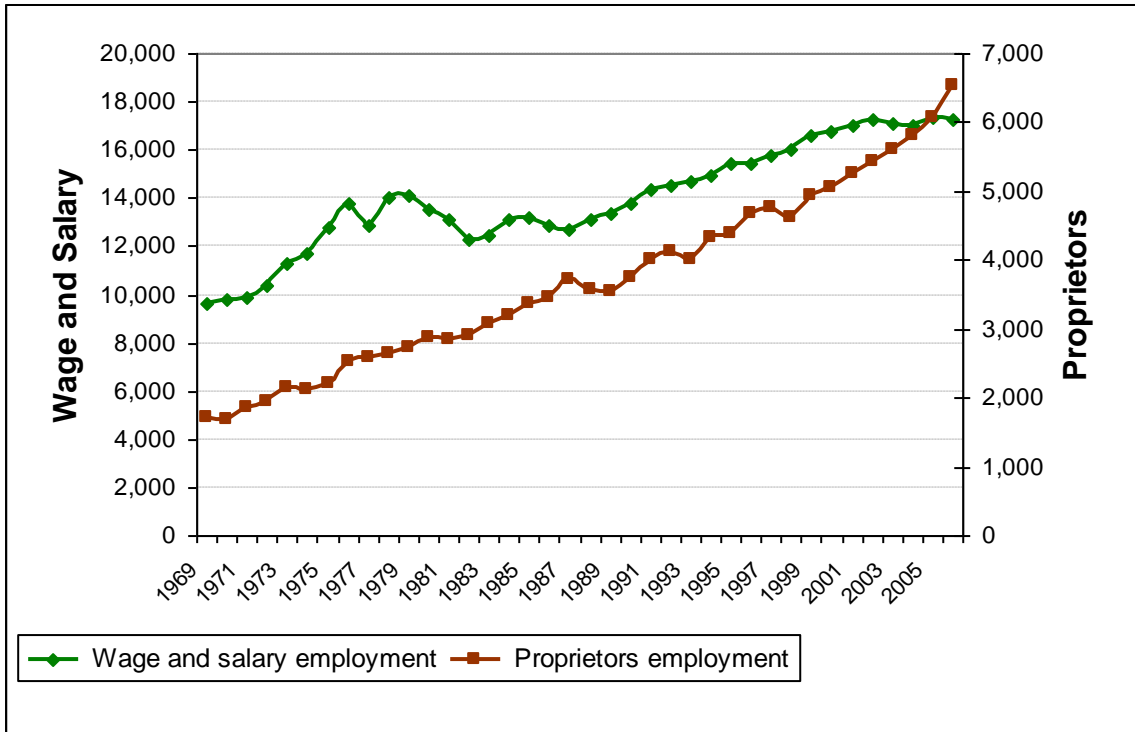


Chart 19
Transfer Receipts and Dividends, Interest, and Rent as Percentages of Total Income - Itasca County

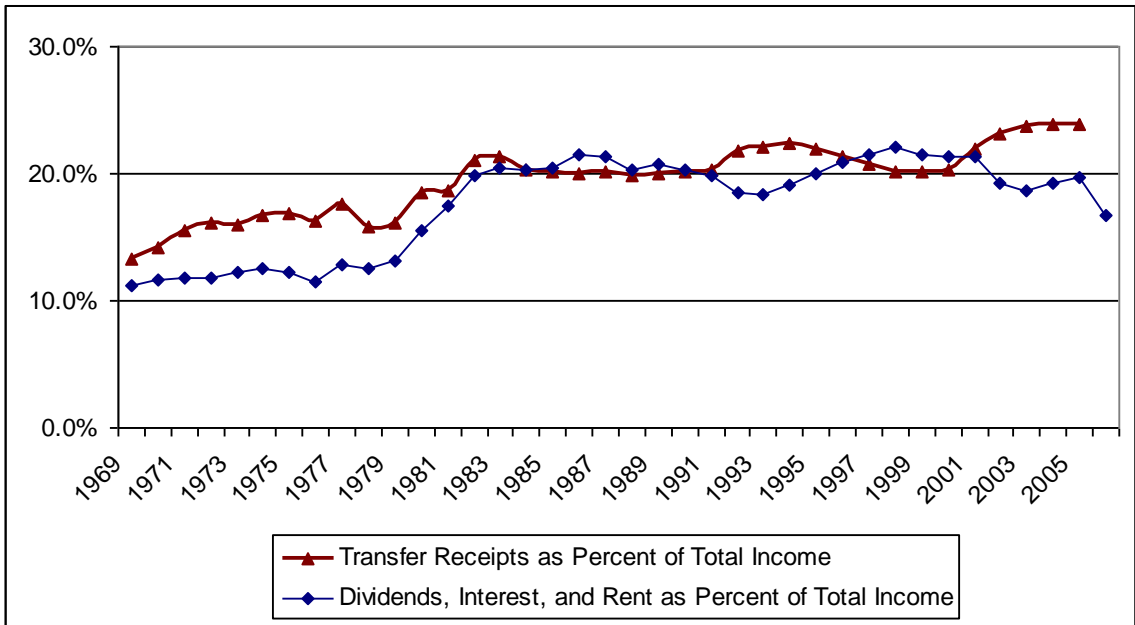


Chart 20
Wage / Salary and Proprietor Employment for Kanabec County

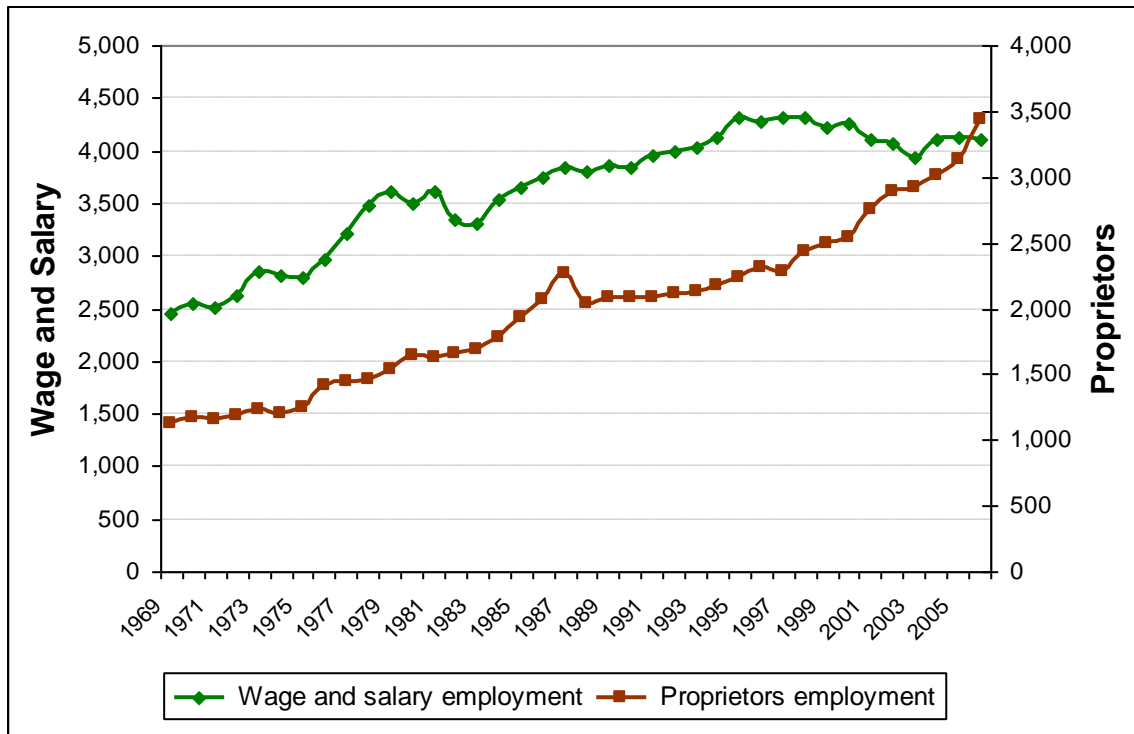


Chart 21
Transfer Receipts and Dividends, Interest, and Rent as Percentages of Total Income - Kanabec County

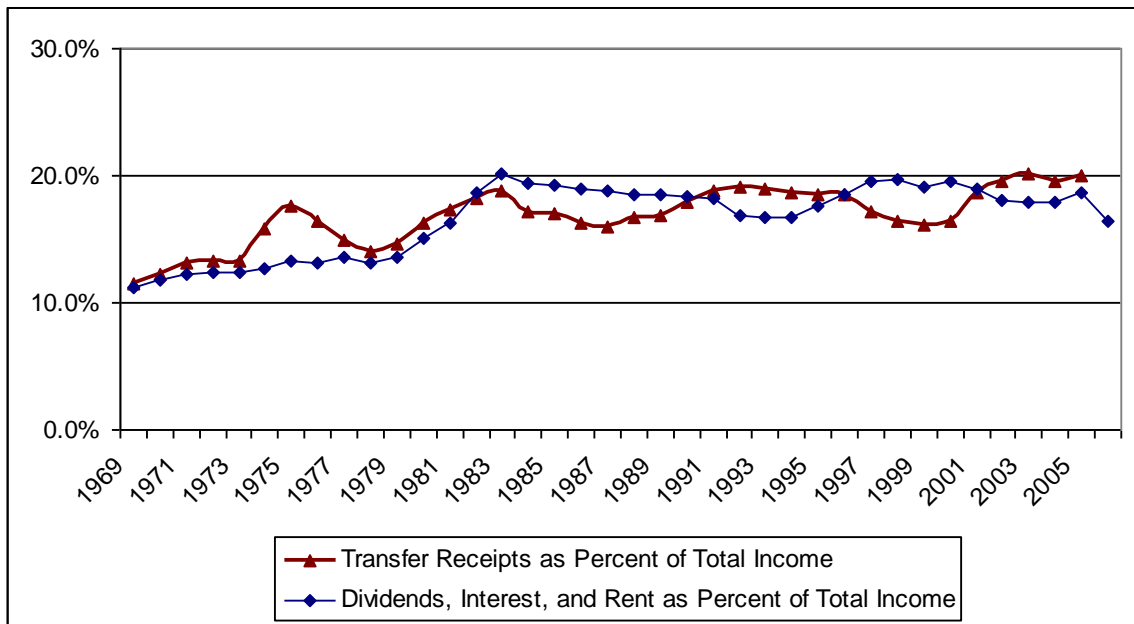


Chart 22
 Wage / Salary and Proprietor Employment for Mille Lacs County

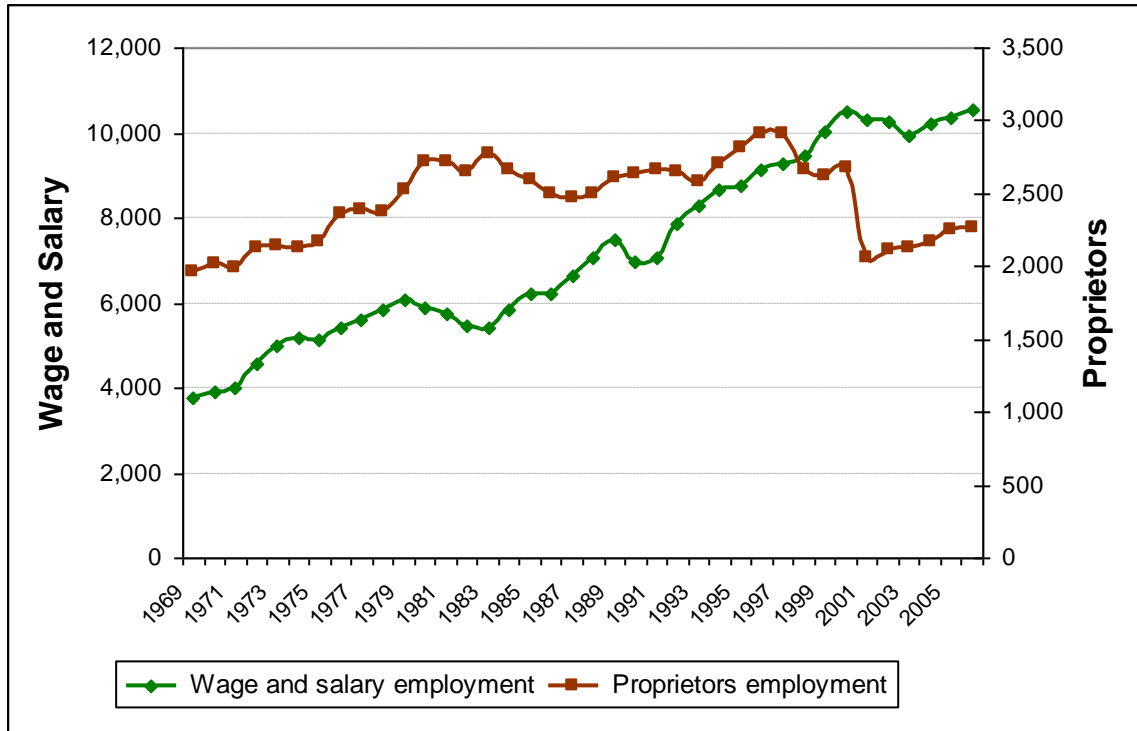


Chart 23
 Transfer Receipts and Dividends, Interest, and Rent as Percentages of Total Income - Mille Lacs County

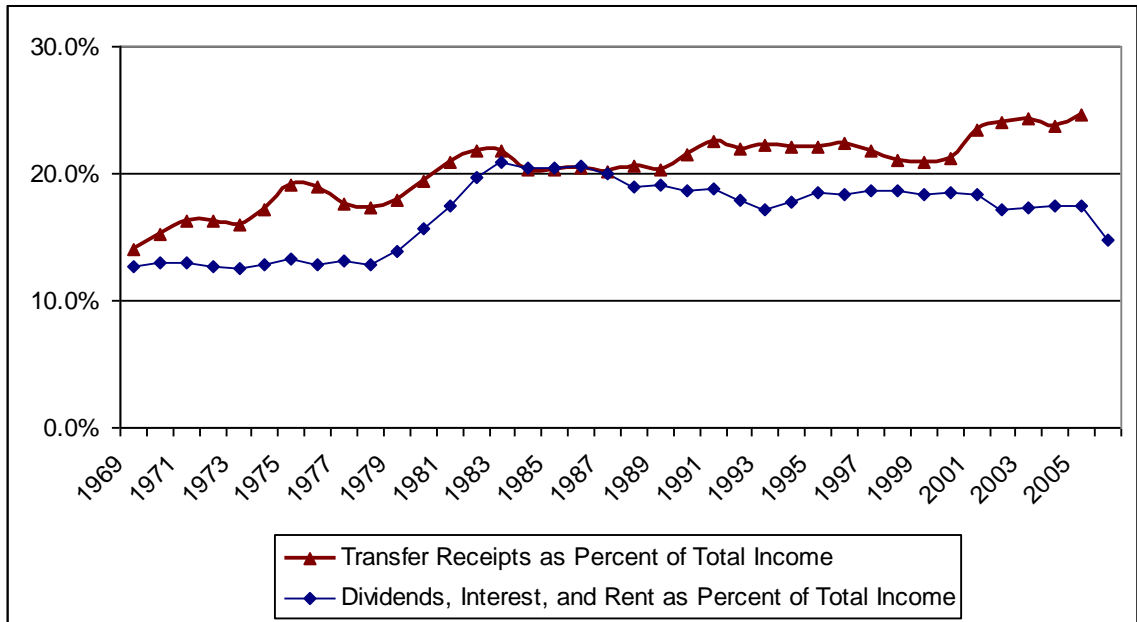


Chart 24
Wage / Salary and Proprietor Employment for Pine County

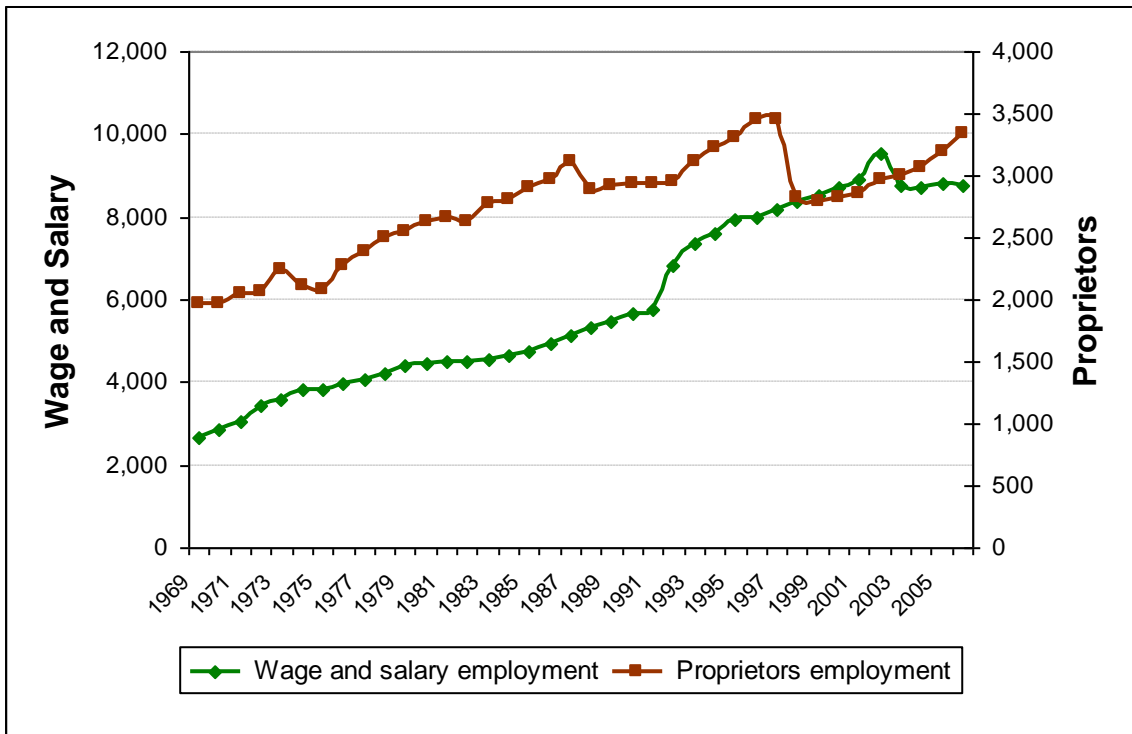
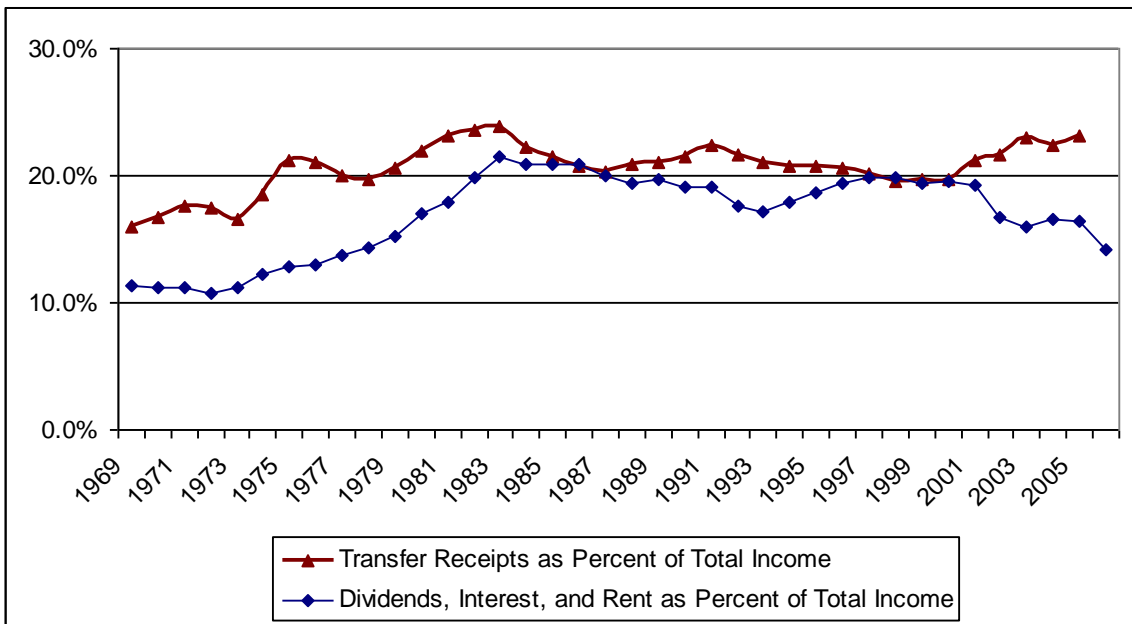


Chart 25
Transfer Receipts and Dividends, Interest, and Rent as Percentages of Total Income - Pine County



Section 8: Population Trends

The following charts show differences between expected population and observed (actual) population, by age range. Aitkin County, along with the other counties in the region, saw significantly fewer individuals in the 20-24 and 25-29 age ranges than expected, while simultaneously seeing more individuals in every other age range than expected.

Many Minnesota counties observe fewer individuals in their 20s than expected, and this discrepancy is due in part to high school graduates leaving the county for higher education opportunities. While the loss of educated youth is often viewed as a problem for rural communities, a study out of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln suggests that efforts to keep this young demographic should shift to focus on keeping newcomers ages 30 and up.

Randy Cantrell at UNL has worked to identify who these newcomers are based on survey data. Participants listed three major reasons for moving to the community; simpler pace of life, safety, and low housing costs. Demographic information on these newcomers lends to further insight. Of the total sample (n=321), 40% had attained bachelor's degrees and 48% had annual household incomes over \$50,000. Looking further, 43% had children in their households. These newcomers are generally leaving their careers, in part due to underemployment.

Overall, 60% of participants said they will be living in their current community 5 years from now, and those who rated their community as friendly and trusting have a higher percentage. Small communities could benefit from investing in this demographic, both economically and socially. Because many newcomers were underemployed in their previous situation, a continuance of working a job below their education level is unlikely to keep them. Another approach is a sustained effort to welcome newcomers as active participants with a stake in the community.

Chart 26

Differences Between Observed and Expected Population for Aitkin County, 1990-2000

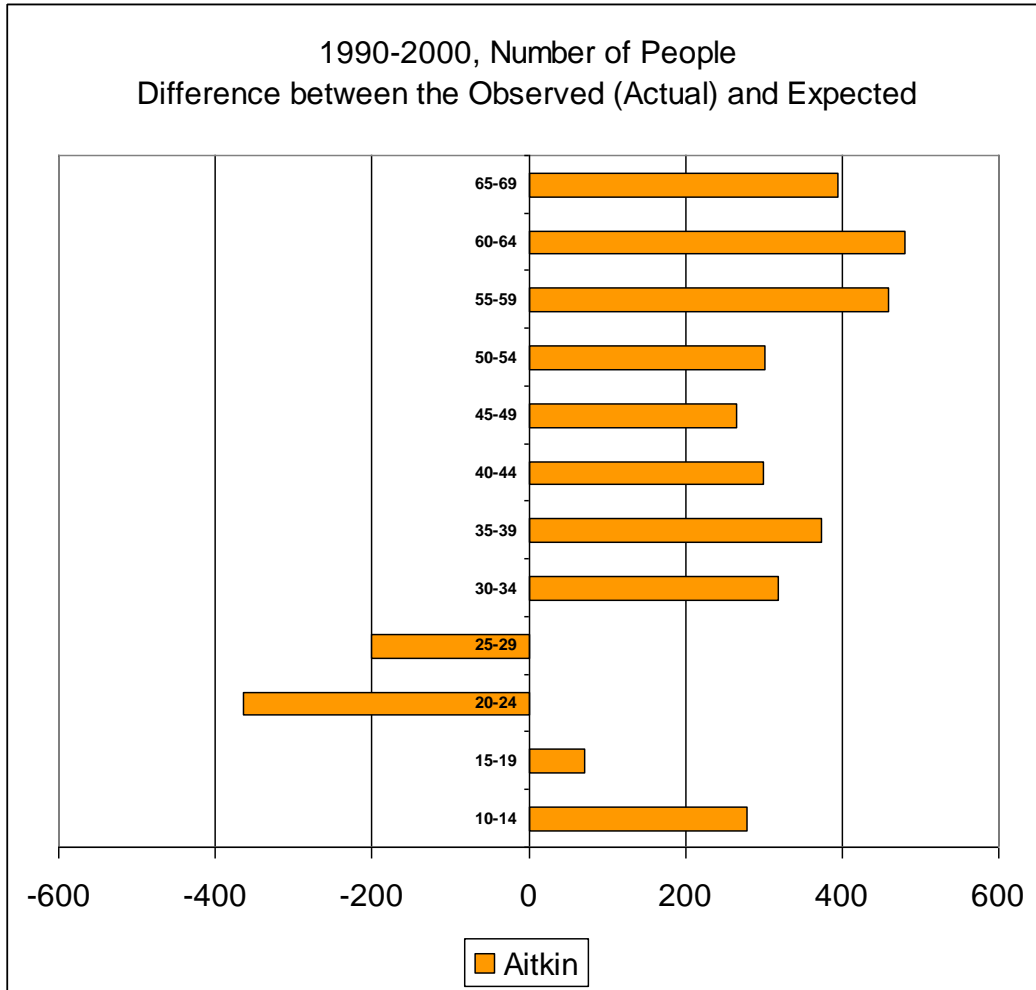


Chart 27

Differences Between Observed and Expected Population for Carlton County, 1990-2000

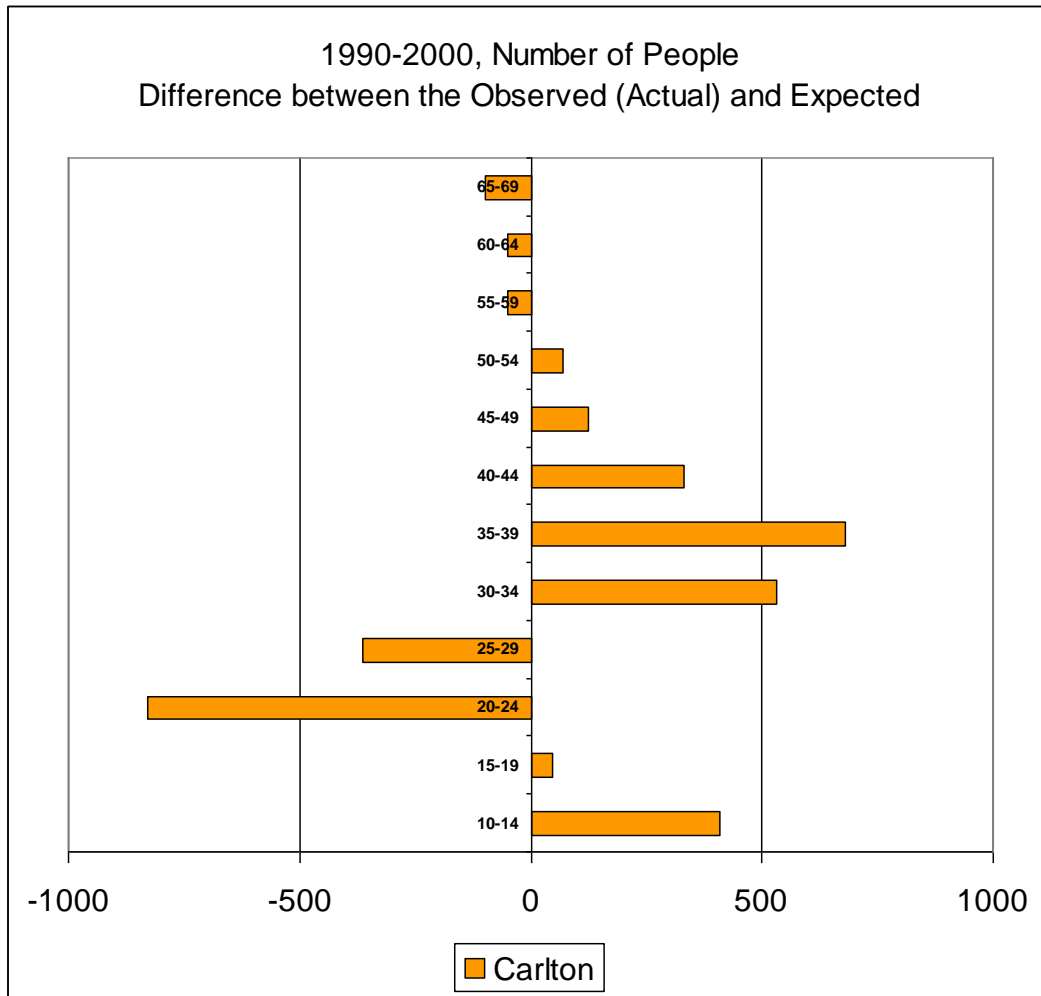


Chart 28

Differences Between Observed and Expected Population for Cass County, 1990-2000

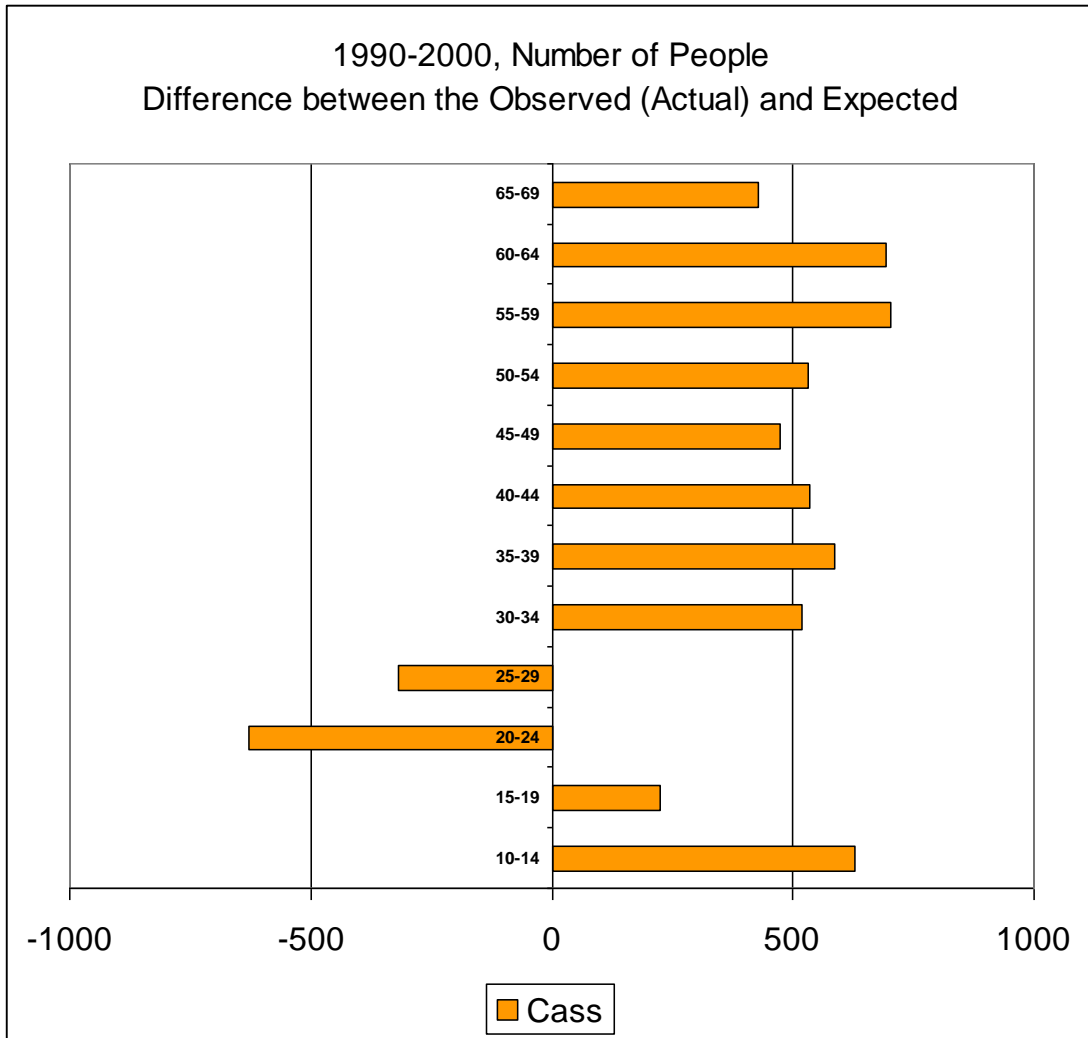


Chart 29

Differences Between Observed and Expected Population for Crow Wing County, 1990-2000

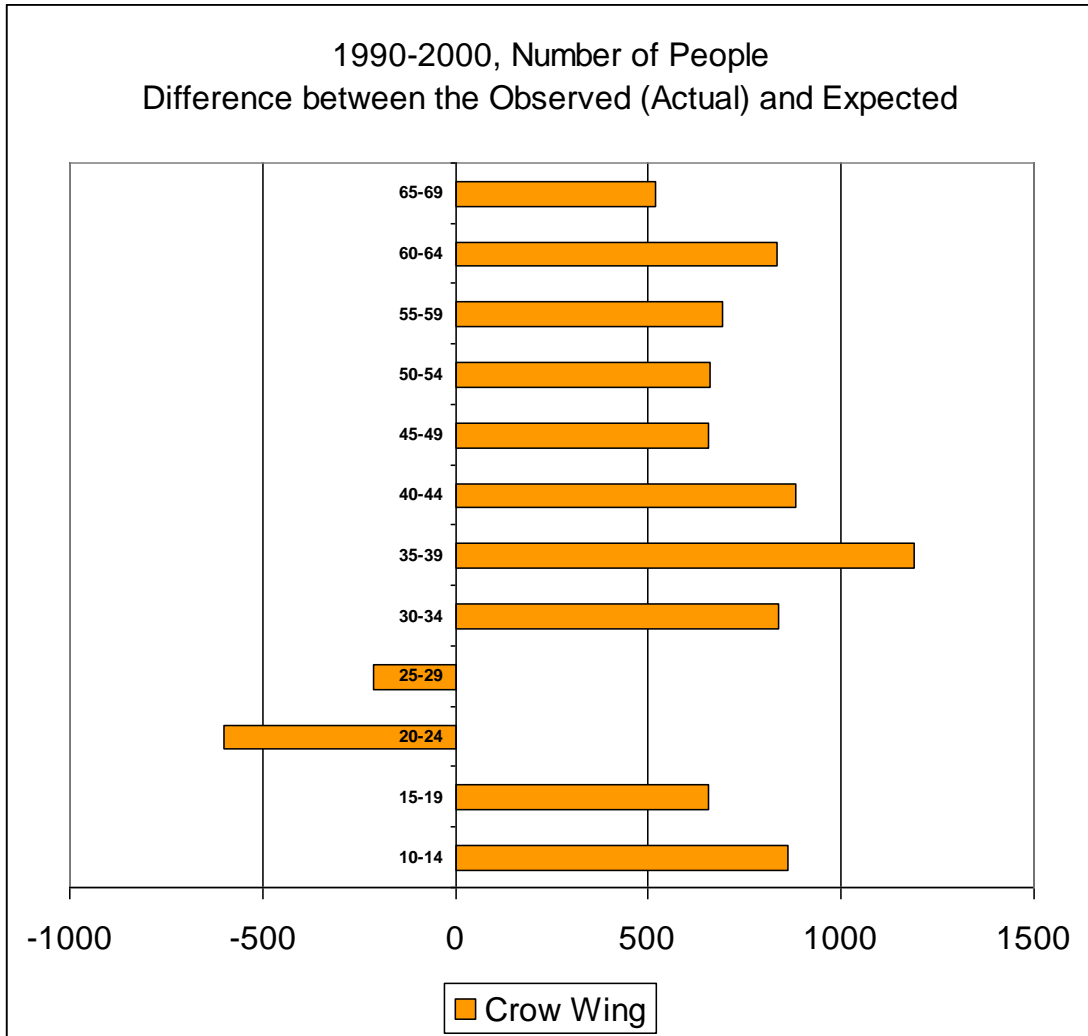


Chart 30

Differences Between Observed and Expected Population for Itasca County, 1990-2000

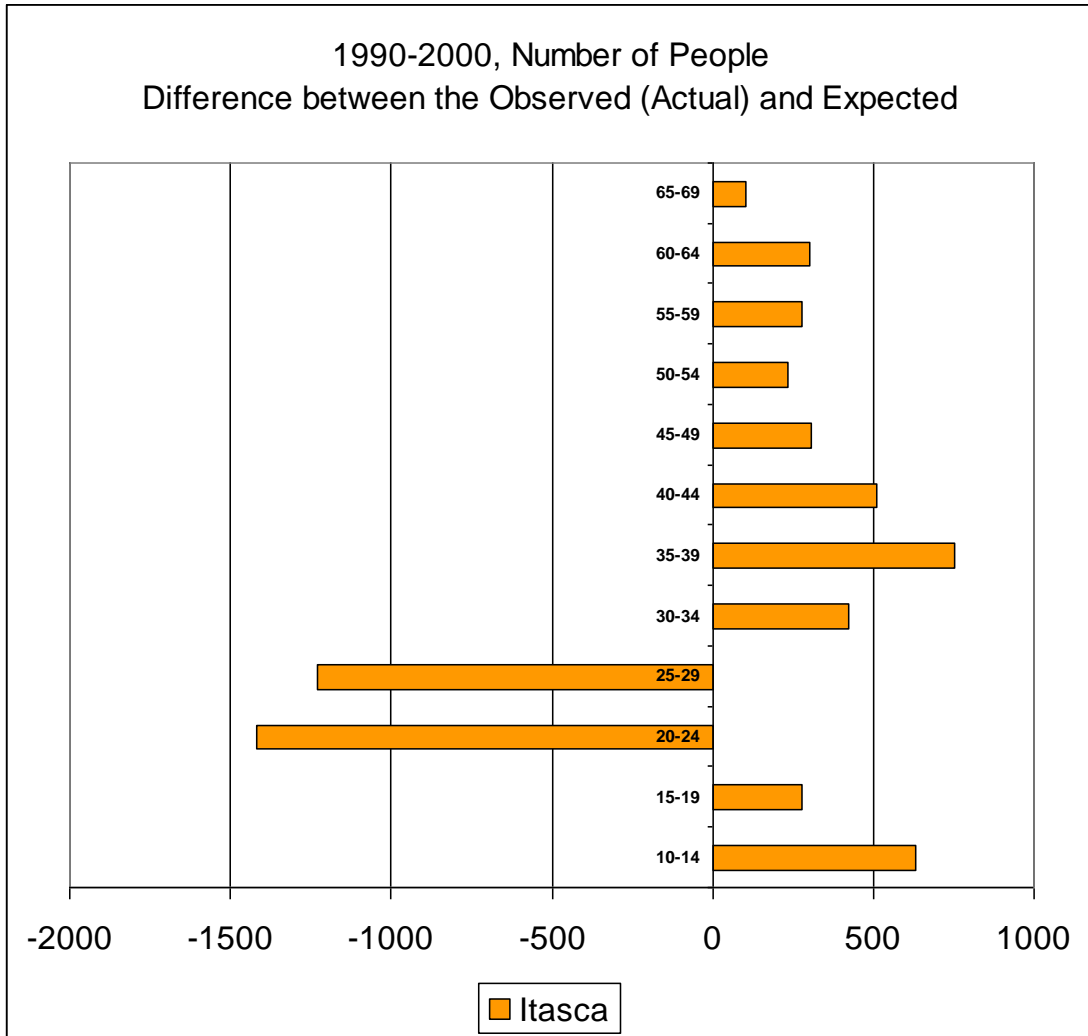


Chart 31

Differences Between Observed and Expected Population for Kanabec County, 1990-2000

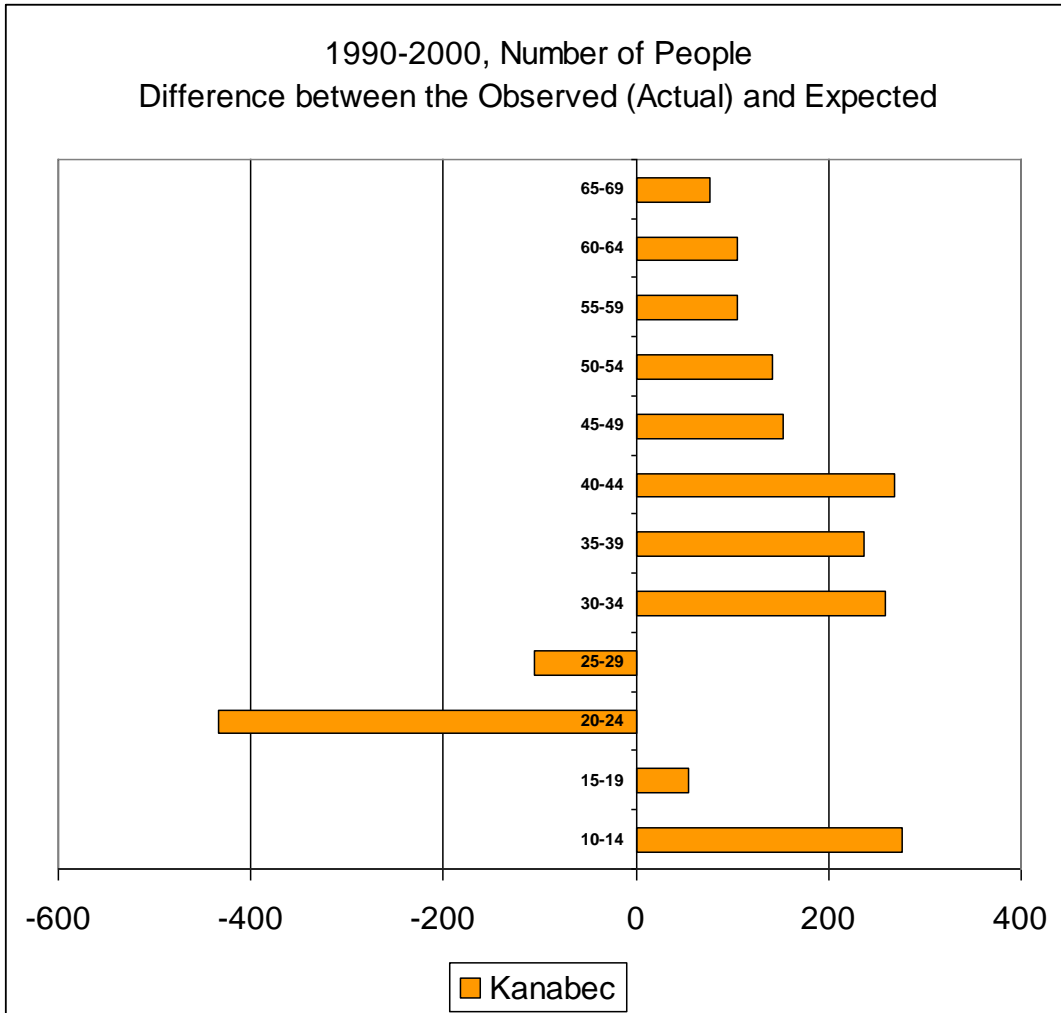


Chart 32

Differences Between Observed and Expected Population for Mille Lacs County, 1990-2000

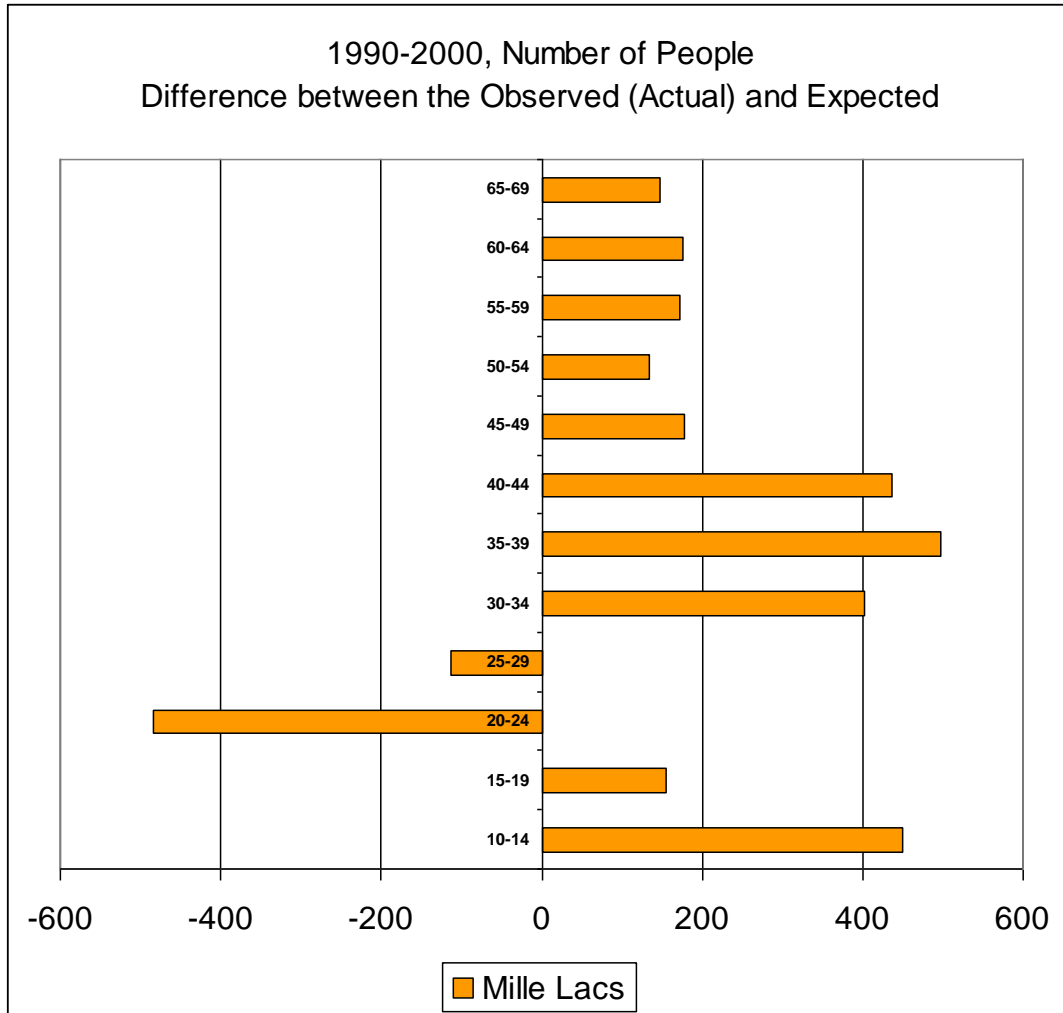
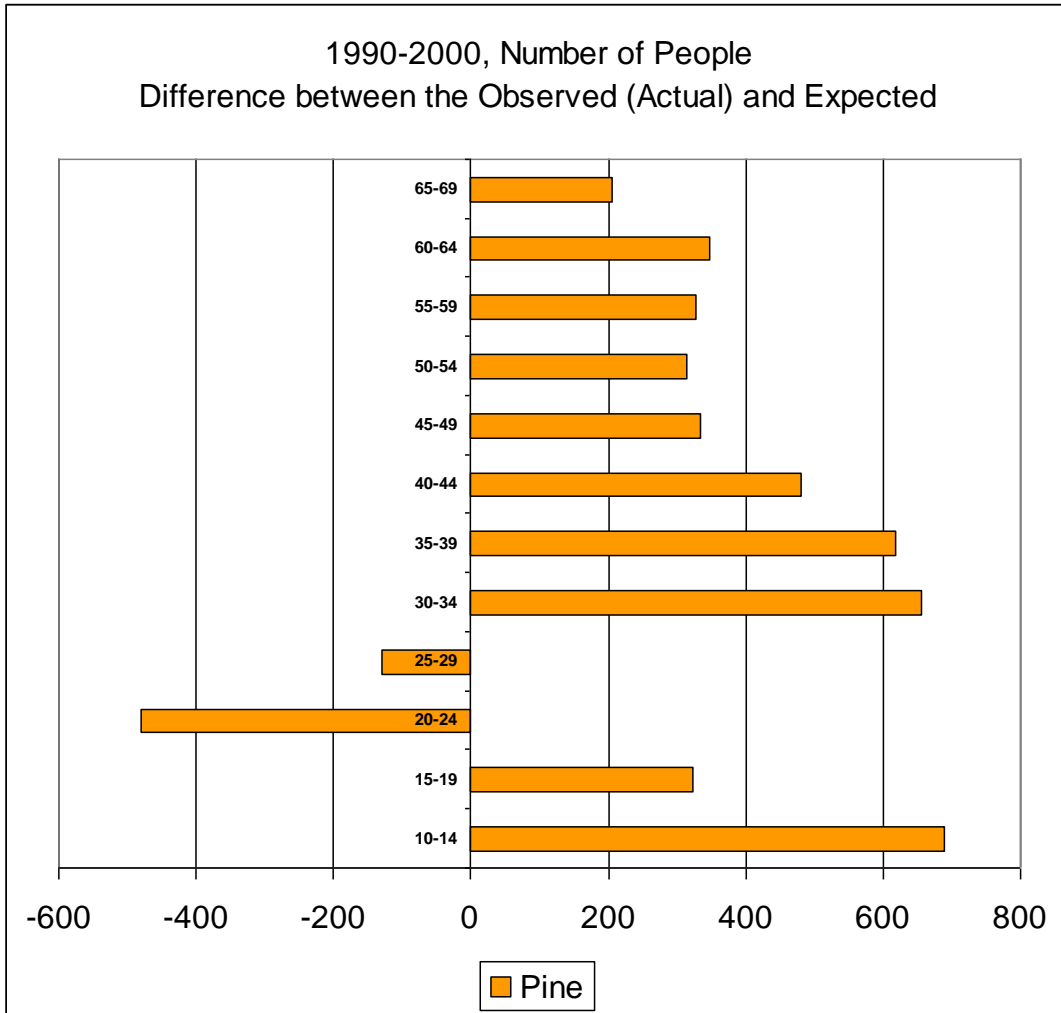


Chart 33

Differences Between Observed and Expected Population for Pine County, 1990-2000



Section 9: Housing

According to data from the HousingLink April 2008 report, the region saw 1064 sheriff's sales of houses in 2007. Of these 1064 foreclosures, only 47 occurred in Aitkin County (4.4%). Looking at Minnesota as a whole, 2007 foreclosures tended to be higher north and west of the metro area, and this includes most of the counties in the region.

For the map below, foreclosure rate = number of foreclosures as a percent of households projected for 2007. This is an estimate based on the number of sheriff's sales reported for Q1-Q3 (except where stated). Actual rates will vary depending on conditions over the remainder of the year (source: Housinglink2008 Report).

Table 23

Privately Owned Residential Permits with Construction Costs by Year – 2000-2007

Year	Privately-Owned Residential Permits Issued (Units)	Construction Costs
2007	250	\$38,023,940
2006	263	39,251,871
2005	352	48,081,921
2004	346	44,733,685
2003	374	39,955,000
2002	322	37,352,947
2001	303	33,774,202
2000	183	17,984,965

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Housing Starts Database

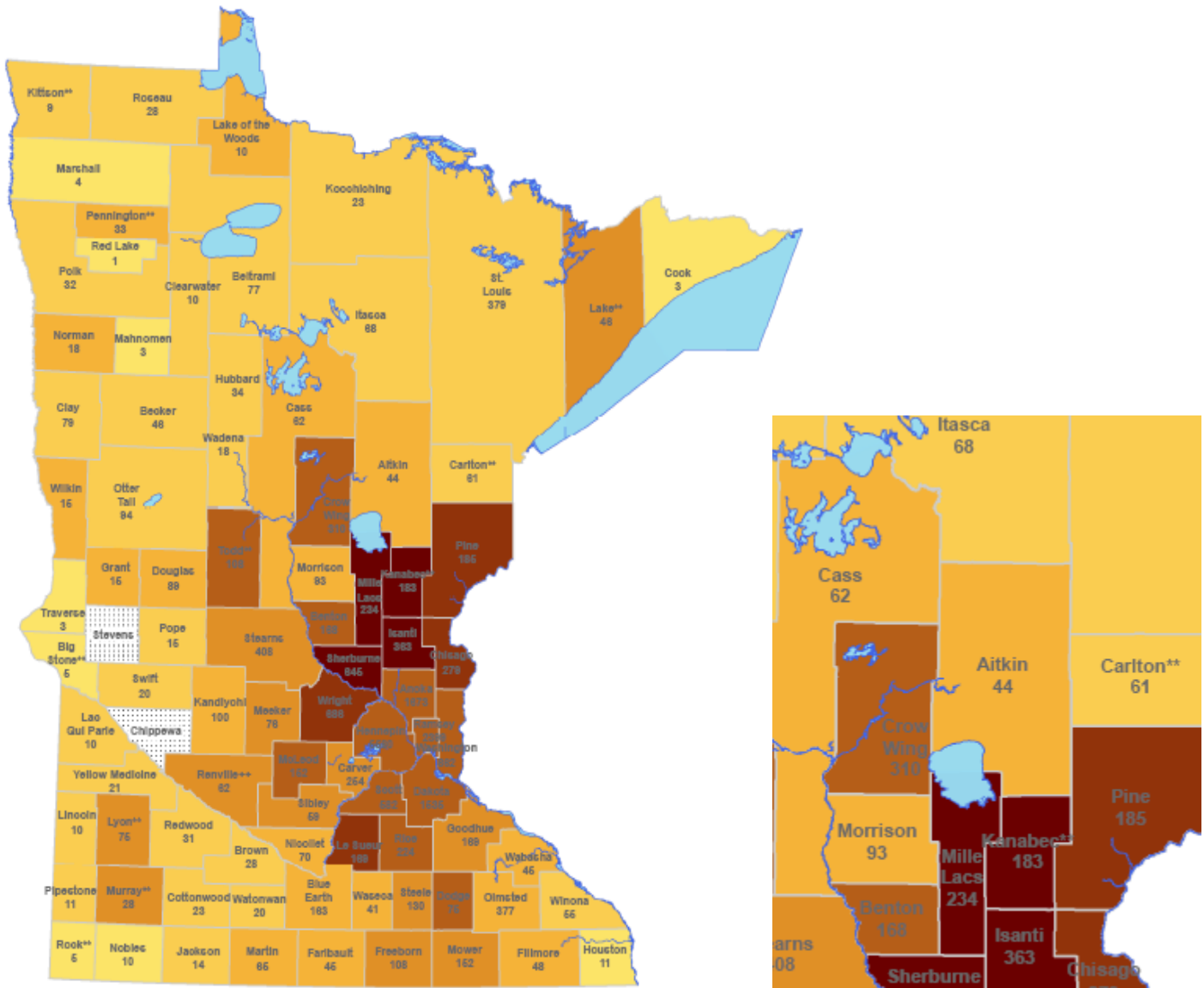
Table 24

2007 Foreclosures by County









County	2007 Foreclosures
Aitkin	47
Carlton	79
Cass	91
Crow Wing	231
Itasca	73
Kanabec	97
Mille lacs	229
Pine	217
Total	1064

Source: HousingLink 2008 Report

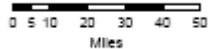
Map 2
2007 Foreclosure Rates – Minnesota



Foreclosure Rates

-  Do not maintain data (n=2)
-  0% - 0.25% (n=9)
-  0.26% - 0.50% (n=26)
-  0.51% - 0.75% (n=19)
-  0.76% - 1.00% (n=11)
-  1.01% - 1.50% (n=12)
-  1.51% - 2.00% (n=4)
-  >2% (n=4)

** Rate based on Q1 2007 data
 ++Rate based on Q2-Q3 2007 data, Q1 data unavailable (Renville County)



Section 10: Transportation Access

The major highways running through Aitkin County include;

- Minnesota State Highway 210
- Minnesota State Highway 169
- Minnesota State Highway 47
- Minnesota State Highway 65

According to Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDot) data, the areas surrounding McGregor with the highest traffic volume are at the intersection of major highways. In 2006, the average daily traffic volume at the intersection of highways 65 and 210 was at 6700. The 2006 average daily traffic volume intersection of highways 169 and 210 was recorded at 5200.

Arrowhead Transit, based in St. Louis County serves part of the region including Aitkin, Carlton, and Itasca counties. Its service includes planned routes, as well as a dial-a-ride service.

Aitkin County offers bicyclists some paved, 6” shoulder bike lanes, running alongside the highways 210, 232, 65, and 27.

A number of organizations and governments within the region offer senior groups and disabled riders a transportation option through the Minnesota Department of Transportation known as MnDot 5310. This is a grant for federal funding of proper lift equipment to replace or expand upon current public transit vehicles. Recipients within the region include;

- Itasca DAC
- Kanabec Community Senior Citizens
- Mille Lacs Health System
- Pine County Citizens Committee on Aging
- Pine County DAC

The Isedor Iverson Airport is located one mile north of McGregor and is open to the public.

Section 11: Crime

According to statistics from the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, the region's crime rate in 2007 was 904.1 per 10,000 residents. Crime rates for individual counties within the region varied, and these rates are detailed in table 44. As a whole, the region suffered 6,249 part 1 offenses (aggravated assault, burglary, larceny, and other serious offenses) and 16,070 part 2 offenses (other assaults, driving under the influence, vandalism, and other less serious offenses).

Table 25
Crimes Per 10,000 Residents, by County

County	Crimes Per 10,000 Residents	Part 1 Offenses	Part 2 Offenses
Aitkin	765.8	440	807
Carlton	889.8	886	2,126
Cass	551.1	491	1,113
Crow Wing	807.1	1,487	3,381
Itasca	729.8	847	2,414
Kanabec	1002.2	474	1,162
Mille lacs	1605.1	893	3,269
Pine	881.9	731	1,798
Average/Total	9,04.1	6,249	16,070

Source: Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension

Section 12: Poverty

According to *Small Area and Poverty Estimates* from the U.S. Census Bureau, 14.4% of the population in Aitkin County was considered living in poverty in 2005. This is higher than both the Minnesota percentage (9.2%), and the national percentage (13.3%) in 2005.

The percentages for individual counties within the region varied (see table 16).

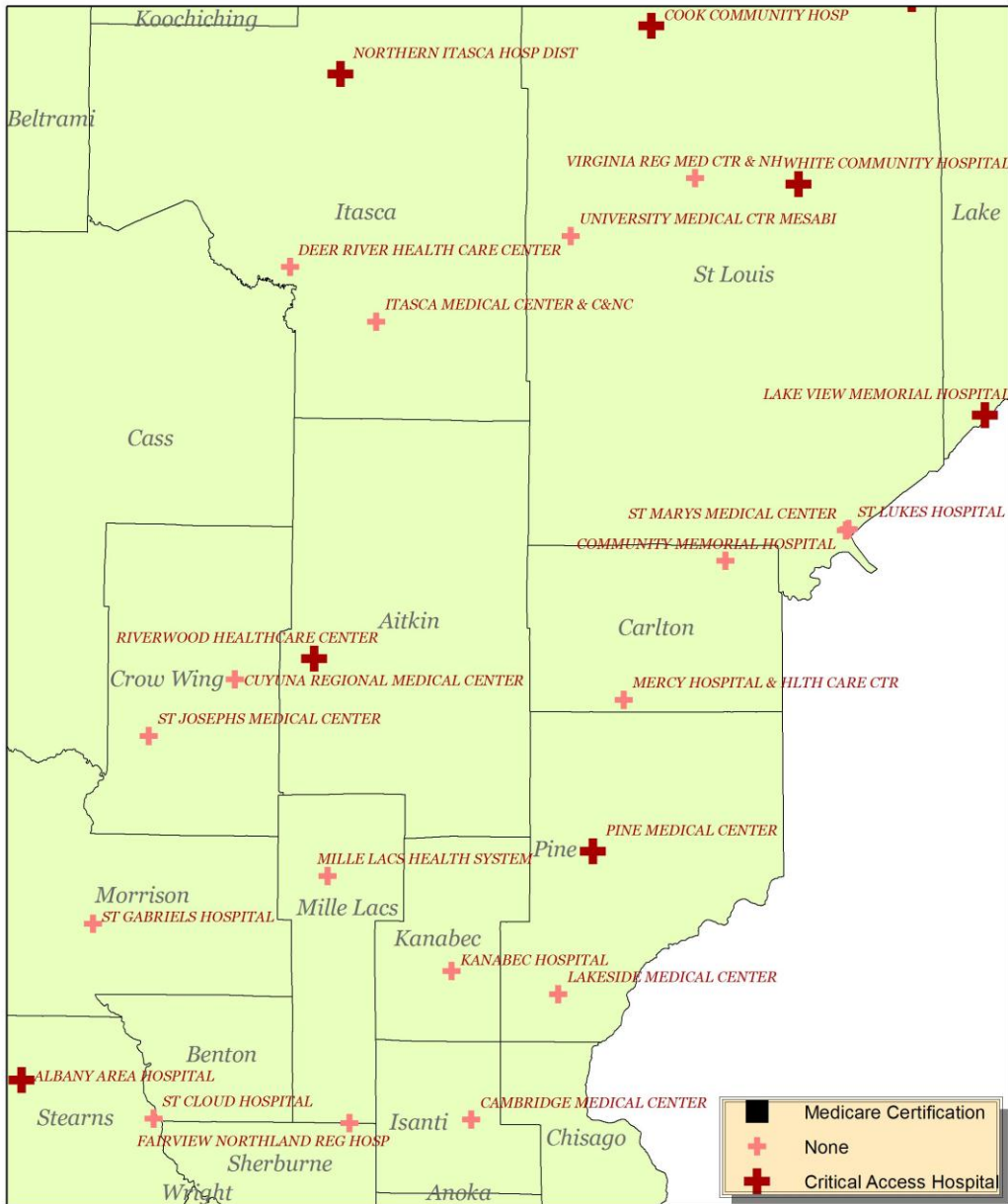
Table 26
Percentages of Population Living in Poverty, 2005

County	Poverty Rate
Aitkin	14.4%
Carlton	9.8
Cass	14.5
Crow Wing	9.1
Itasca	11.8
Kanabec	10.5
Mille Lacs	10.2
Pine	11.2
Average	11.4

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Section 13: Health Services

Hospitals in Minnesota, 2003



Created by the Center for Small Towns at the University of Minnesota, Morris

Source: Minnesota Department of Health