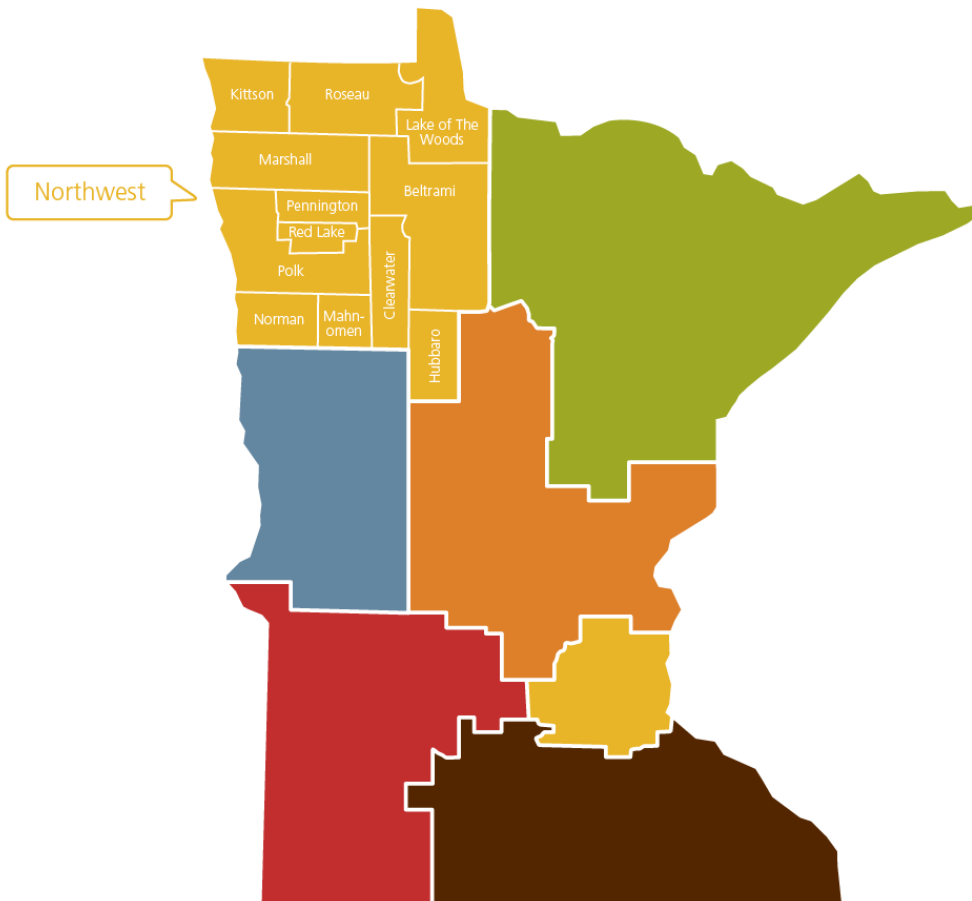




RURAL PULSE™ SNAPSHOT: NORTHWEST MINNESOTA

Rural Pulse™ is a research study commissioned by the Grand Rapids-based Blandin Foundation to gain a real-time snapshot of the concerns, perceptions and priorities of rural Minnesota residents. This initiative was last conducted in 2016 and has served to identify trends within significant, complex subject areas including the economy, education, employment and quality of life.

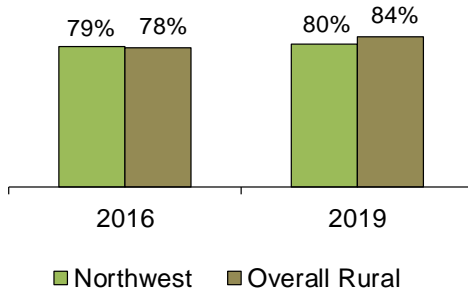
*In completing this comprehensive research study, 1,068 telephone interviews were conducted with rural Minnesotans. The full report can be found at www.RuralPulse.org. To provide a localized perspective, study findings for Northwest Minnesota are included in the following pages and contrasted with overall rural Minnesota responses. Intended to serve as a regional snapshot against full study observations, data reflects a statistical reliability of +/- 9.3 percent at the 95 percent confidence level. Also, please note that results within regional reports **do not** include communities of 35,000+; these cities are grouped within metro Minnesota findings – see full report for more information.*



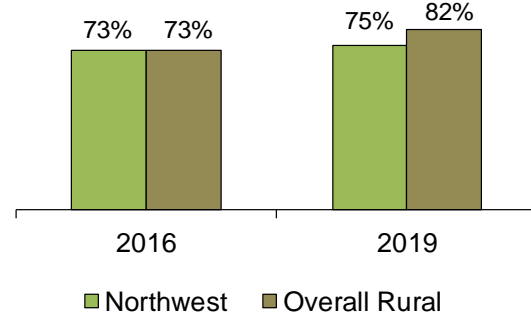
Collaboration and Contribution

Four in five residents in Northwest Minnesota felt that they can make a positive impact within their local community. Three in four believed their community works together effectively.

Able to Make a Positive Community Impact
Somewhat or strongly agree



Residents are Able to Work Together Effectively
Somewhat or strongly agree

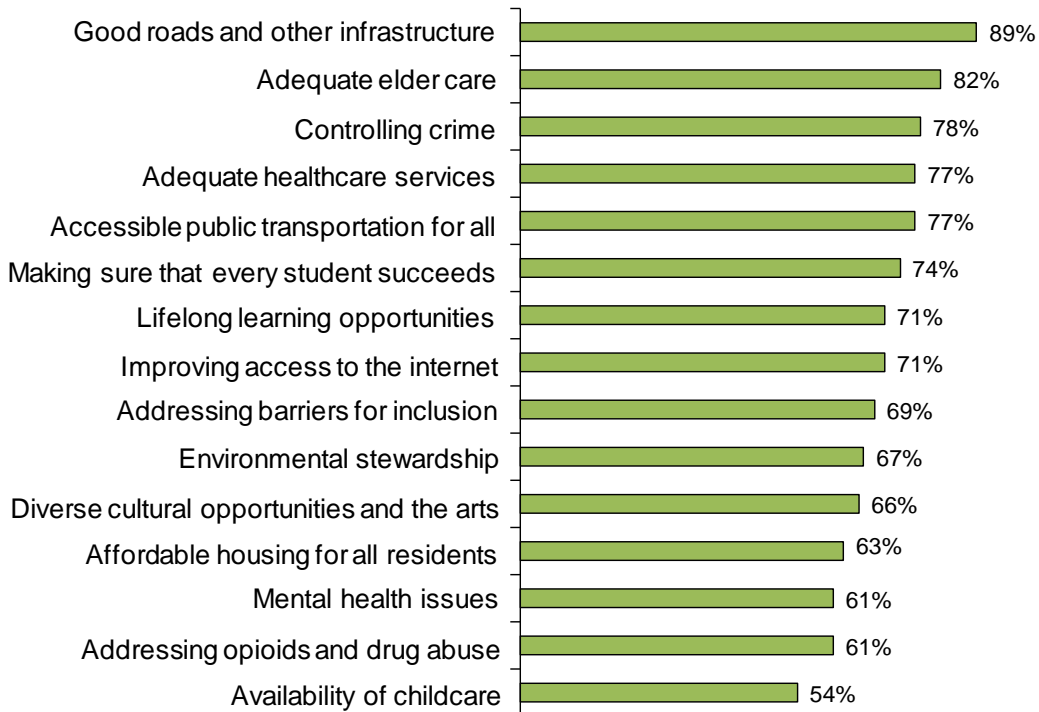


Community Performance

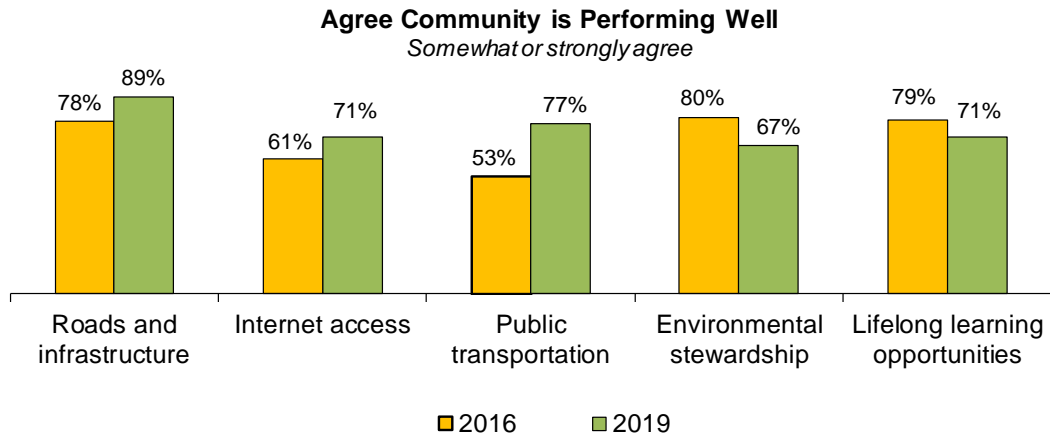
Northwest residents were most likely to agree that their community performed well in providing good roads and other infrastructure, caring for the elderly, crime control, healthcare and public transportation for all, including the disabled. They were less likely to believe their community was doing well in addressing mental health issues, including suicide; drugs; and availability of childcare.

Agree Community is Performing Well

Somewhat or strongly agree



Northwest residents' perceptions of community performance in the areas of infrastructure, internet access, and providing public transportation for all, including the disabled, have improved since 2016 study findings. Areas that decreased in satisfaction were environmental stewardship and lifelong learning opportunities.



When comparing issue significance and satisfaction, Northwest Minnesotans felt their communities were underperforming in several key areas – most specifically, availability of childcare, addressing opioids and drug abuse, and mental health issues.

Issue Importance vs. Community Performance

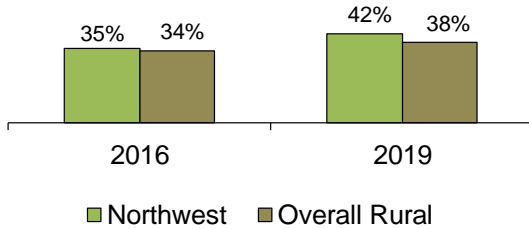
	Importance Mean	Performance Mean
Availability of childcare	3.4	2.7
Addressing opioids and drug abuse	3.4	2.7
Mental health issues	3.4	2.8
Adequate healthcare services	3.4	2.9
Adequate workforce	3.2	2.6
Affordable housing for all	3.2	2.7
Economic development	3.2	2.7
Crime control	3.4	3.0

■ Significantly Below Expectations
■ Below Expectations
4 = High, 1 = Low

Rural Voice

Forty-two percent of residents in Northwest Minnesota did not believe the needs of rural communities are important to policymakers, as those of the metro area – a significant increase since 2016.

Believe the Needs of Rural Communities are as Important to Legislators, Policymakers as Metropolitan Areas
Disagree



Critical Issues

The most critical issues to address in the Northwest region were said to be opioids and drug abuse, economic development, jobs, availability of childcare and adequate healthcare.

Most Critical to Your Community

Northwest

1. Opioids and drug abuse
2. (tie) Economic development, Jobs
3. (tie) Availability of childcare, Healthcare
4. Elder care
5. (tie) Barriers due to race, Affordable housing

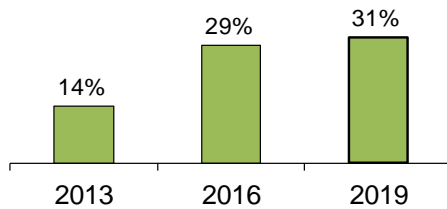
Overall Rural

1. Jobs
2. Healthcare
3. Opioids and drug abuse
4. Economic development
5. Mental health issues

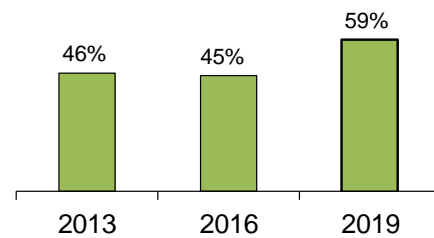
Economic Concerns Linger, But Show Improvement

Three in 10 felt the local economy had improved within the past year. Confidence in the community's ability to grow and maintain jobs has increased from 2016 findings. Additionally, more Northwest residents agreed that their community provides an adequate number of jobs that pay household-supporting wages. However, those in the Northwest region were less confident in their community's workforce than rural Minnesotans overall.

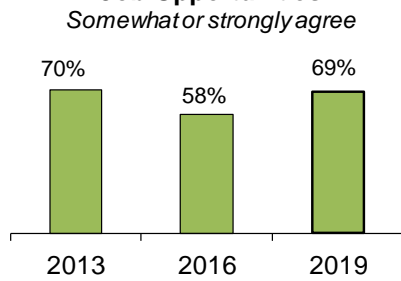
Condition of Community's Economy Has Improved, Compared to a Year Ago
Somewhat or much better now



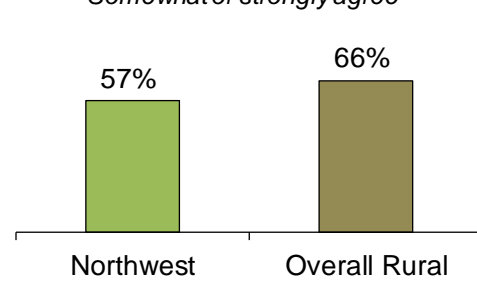
Adequate Number of Jobs that Pay Household-Supporting Wages
Somewhat or strongly agree



Community Successfully Maintains and Grows Job Opportunities

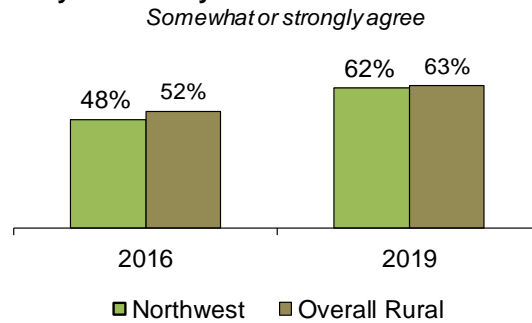


Adequate Workforce for Businesses



In both rural Minnesota, and more specifically the Northwest region, residents had increased confidence that their community is sufficiently promoting economic growth and development.

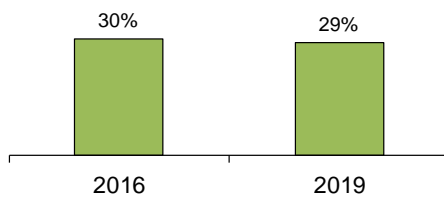
Community Sufficiently Promotes Economic Development



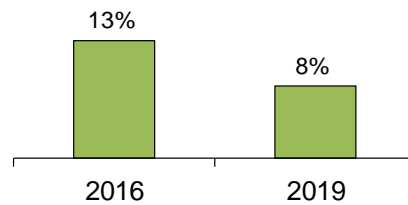
Impact of the Economy

Twenty-nine percent said their household income has increased over the past year. Job losses have declined since 2016 study findings.

Household Income Has Increased Over Past Year



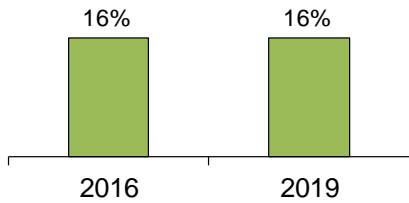
Lost a Job in Past Year



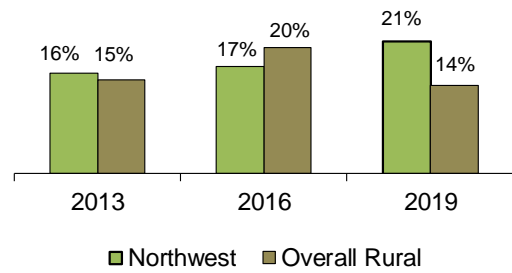
Migration

Sixteen percent said that they do not expect to live in their same community five years from now; 21 percent had considered moving to a metropolitan area – an increase from 2016 study findings. Many said quality of life was the motivating factor for considering migration, followed by job opportunities.

Do Not Expect to Live in Their Community Five Years From Now



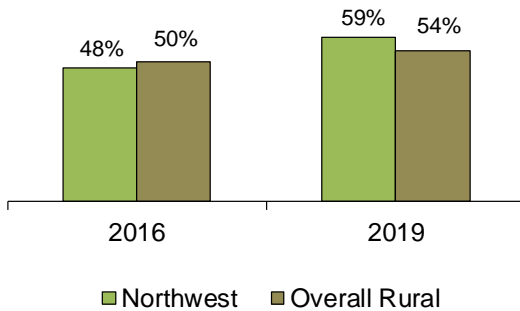
Considered Moving to Metro Area Within Past Two Years



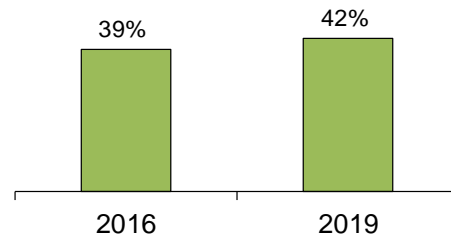
Leadership

Forty-two percent said that they have served in a leadership capacity; however, half who have not, said that they would definitely consider serving, if asked – a significant increase in interest from 2016 findings.

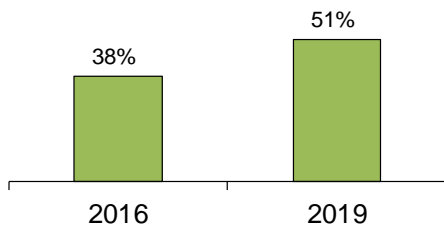
People From Diverse Backgrounds Fill Leadership Roles Within Community
Somewhat or strongly agree



Have Served in a Leadership Role



Would Definitely Consider Serving If Asked
(Of those who have not served in leadership)

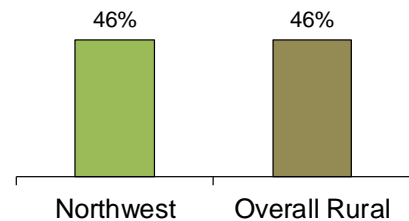


Inclusion

Forty-six percent of residents in Northwest Minnesota said that they have at least some close friends of a different race or culture.

Northwest residents were most likely to have felt the groups that experience bias, discrimination or harassment within their community include those with drug or mental health issues, recent immigrants, transgender individuals, those with liberal political beliefs and Native Americans.

Have At Least Some Close Friends of Different Race or Culture
Some, most or all



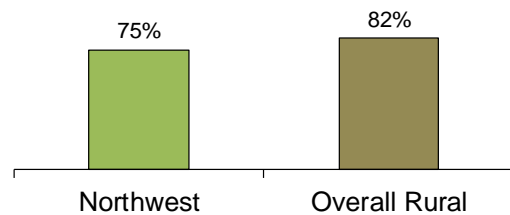
Groups Most Believed to Experience Bias, Discrimination or Harassment Within Their Community

Multiple Responses Allowed

1. Those with drug or mental health issues
2. Recent immigrants
3. Transgender people
4. Liberals
5. Native Americans / American Indians

Three in four residents of Northwest Minnesota believed people in their community are able to stand up to hatred and discrimination, if they see it.

Believe People in Community are Able to Stand Up to Hatred and Discrimination

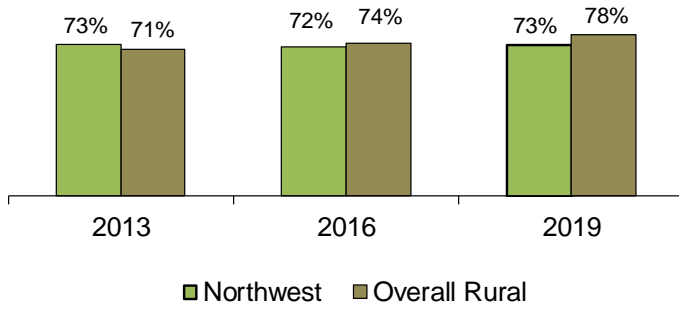


Optimism Exists

Overall, nearly three in four Northwest region residents were optimistic about their community's future.

Optimistic About Future of Their Community

Somewhat or very optimistic



For more information on Rural Pulse™ and to review the comprehensive, statewide report, visit www.RuralPulse.org. For more on Blandin Foundation visit www.BlandinFoundation.org.