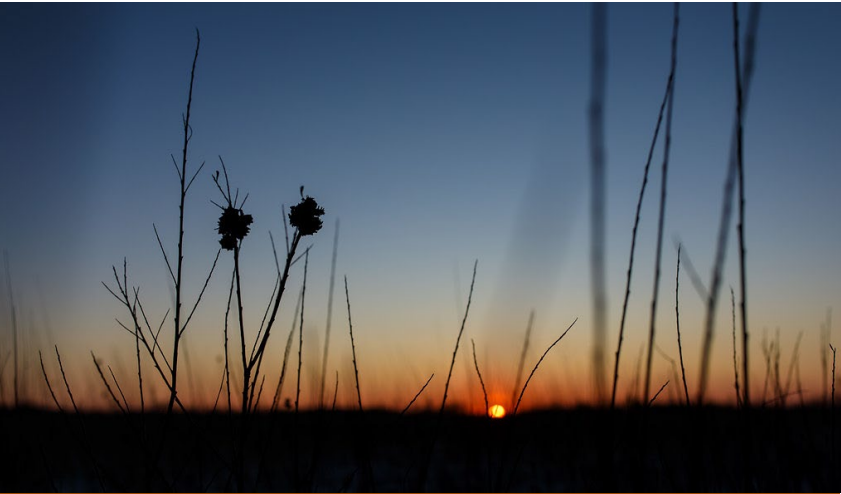


Rural Pulse™ 2019



RURAL PULSE™ RESEARCH

Rural/Urban Findings – March 2019



Russell Herder
Strategy wins.



Blandin Foundation™
STRENGTHENING RURAL MINNESOTA

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*Prepared by Russell Herder for the Blandin Foundation
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*Contact:
Carol Russell
carol@russellherder.com
612-455-2375*



Executive Summary

Project Objectives

The Blandin Foundation undertakes the Rural Pulse™ study approximately every three years to accomplish the following objectives:

- Understand the issues and priorities rural residents and leaders have within their communities;
- Learn if community needs are being adequately addressed;
- Identify emerging trends and any unmet concerns;
- Compare and contrast issue movement to past Rural Pulse studies; and
- Gain an understanding of how the opinions of urban Minnesotans, Foundation “home area,” geographical regions and those of ethnic and cultural communities compare to findings at large.

Methodology

- Telephone interviews were conducted with 1,068 rural Minnesotans, providing a statistical reliability of +/-3.0 percent at the 95 percent confidence level.
- Telephone interviews were also conducted with 492 Minnesota residents within the seven-county Twin Cities area and those in zip codes with populations of 35,000 or more, providing a statistical reliability of +/-4.4 percent at the 95 percent confidence level.
- The survey was also administered to 688 alumni of the Blandin Community Leadership Program and the Blandin Reservation Community Leadership Program, and 300 residents within the Blandin Foundation’s home area – defined as the Grand Rapids and Itasca County area, including the communities of Blackduck, Hill City, Northome and Remer.
- A study of diverse racial and cultural demographics in rural Minnesota will be completed and released in early May.

[Note: Findings for the Blandin Leadership Program alumni and Home Area studies are compiled in separate reports.]



Key Findings

An Improved Economy? It depends upon who you are and where you live.

- Three in 10 rural residents feel their local economy has improved over the past year, similar to 2016 study findings. Another half believe it stayed the same, and 16 percent indicate that their local economy has worsened.
- Seven in 10 (69%) of rural Minnesotans – and 78 percent of urban residents – feel their community successfully maintains and grows job opportunities. Women are the least likely to feel positively about job availability.
- Thirty-six percent of rural Minnesotans and 30 percent of urban residents say that living-wage job opportunities in their community are inadequate, a 13 percentage point improvement from 2016 study findings for rural residents.
- Sixty-three percent of rural Minnesotans and 75 percent of urban residents feel their communities are doing a sufficient job with economic development.
- Nearly one in four (24%) of rural residents identify job opportunities or economic development as the most critical issues in their community.
- The percentage (17%) of rural Minnesotans that saw a decrease in household income in the past year is the lowest it has been since 2010.
- The majority of rural residents with an annual income under \$100,000 report their household income remained the same within the past year – or decreased, while those with higher incomes are more likely to have experienced an increase.



Optimism Exists: Confidence continues to grow among rural Minnesotans.

- Optimism for the future of the community continues to grow among rural Minnesotans, with 78 percent indicating a favorable mindset, compared to 84 percent of urban residents.
- Rural Minnesotans largely (84%) feel confident about their ability to personally make an impact in their community.
- Confidence in community capabilities to address local issues has improved across the rural landscape, reaching an all-time high since 2010. Eighty-two percent of residents agree those in their community work together effectively to face local challenges, up nine percentage points from 2016 findings. Younger residents (ages 18 to 24) demonstrated the most optimism with 93 percent agreeing.

Quality of Life: While Minnesotans feel there are strengths, communities still have progress to make.

- Rural Minnesotans rank job opportunities, provision of adequate healthcare, opioids and drug abuse, and economic development as the most critical issues facing their community. Urban Minnesotans say having adequate healthcare, jobs, affordable housing, controlling crime, and opioids and drug crises are their top concerns.
- In terms of community performance, those in rural areas are least likely to feel that their community is performing well on addressing mental health issues, economic development, childcare availability and opioid/drug abuse. Urban Minnesotans also feel childcare availability, mental health issues and drug abuse are not as adequately addressed as other concerns, though also are less likely to agree that affordable housing is a strength in community performance.
- The most significant gaps Rural Minnesotans cite when comparing the importance of an issue to how their community is performing are addressing opioid and drug abuse, and economic development.



Rural Voice: Growing confidence. Yet, rural Minnesotans don't feel that they are being heard.

- Thirty-one percent of urban Minnesotans and 38 percent of rural Minnesotans feel metropolitan needs are more important to elected officials than those of rural communities.
- Women in rural Minnesota are more likely than men to believe that their community needs are not as important to policymakers as the metro region (41% vs. 35% respectively). Likewise, 45 percent of rural business owners feel the same.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion: Progress is slow.

- Less than half (46%) of rural Minnesotans have close friends of a different race or culture, while 70 percent of urban residents reportedly do.
- Younger rural residents are more likely to have a diverse group of friends, with 55 percent of those ages 18 to 24 and 59 percent of those 25 to 34 indicating they have at least some friends who are a different race or culture than themselves.
- Thirty-eight percent of rural respondents feel the group that experiences the most discrimination within their community are those with a drug or mental health issue. This is followed closely by 35 percent identifying transgender people as facing discrimination and 31 percent citing recent immigrants experience bias.
- Eighty two percent of rural Minnesotans are confident that members of their community are able to stand up to discrimination and hatred, should they see it occur.



Migration: Living in rural Minnesota is a growing consideration.

- Down from previous years, only 14 percent of rural residents and 16 percent of urban residents do not expect to live in their current community five years from now.
- Fewer rural residents (14%) have considered moving to a metro area within the past two years than previous research findings (20%). Additionally, urban residents are almost twice as likely as their rural counterparts (27%) to have considered moving to a different location within that time.
- Of those considering a move, both men and women in rural communities identify job opportunities as the main reason (28% and 44%).
- While rural Minnesotans with an income level below \$100,000 are most likely to consider relocation for job opportunities, those with an income more than \$100,000 are most likely to consider moving for educational opportunities (37%).

Leadership: Participation has increased.

- The majority of both rural and urban residents (54% and 60% respectively) feel their community leaders represent a diversity of backgrounds.
- Just over half (53%) of rural Minnesotans have served in a leadership role within their community. Women are more likely to have done so.
- One third (32%) of rural residents who have never served in a leadership role state they have no interest in doing so. This disinterest is more prevalent among those with an income at or below \$35,000.
- Of the rural Minnesotans who have not yet served in a leadership role, half (51%) would consider doing so if asked. Younger residents (ages 18 to 24) would be the most likely to consider this opportunity should it present itself, with seven out of 10 indicating such.

RURAL AND URBAN FINDINGS

Note: The following analysis reflects findings from rural residents with a comparison of significant differences to urban resident results.



Project Goal and Objectives

Rural Pulse™ is a research study that has been commissioned by the Blandin Foundation since 1998 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, inclusion and quality of life.

The Foundation chose to undertake this study again in 2019 to accomplish the following objectives:

Understand the issues rural residents and leaders prioritize within their communities;

Learn if community needs are being adequately addressed;

Identify emerging trends or unmet concerns;

Compare and contrast issue movement to past Rural Pulse studies; and

Gain an understanding of how the opinions of urban Minnesotans compare to at-large findings.



Methodology

The survey instrument for Rural Pulse™ 2019 was developed in cooperation with Blandin Foundation leadership, and implemented by Russell Herder, an independent research and strategic consulting firm. Where possible and relevant, certain questions from past studies were repeated for comparison purposes. Several new questions were also added for 2019.

Telephone interviews were conducted among rural Minnesotans from January 18 to February 16. A random sample of landline and mobile phone numbers was purchased for use in this study, excluding the seven-county Twin Cities metro area and those in zip codes with populations of 35,000 or more. The data was weighted by state demographics. The resulting total of 1,068 rural residents provides a statistical reliability of +/-3.0 percent at the 95 percent confidence level.

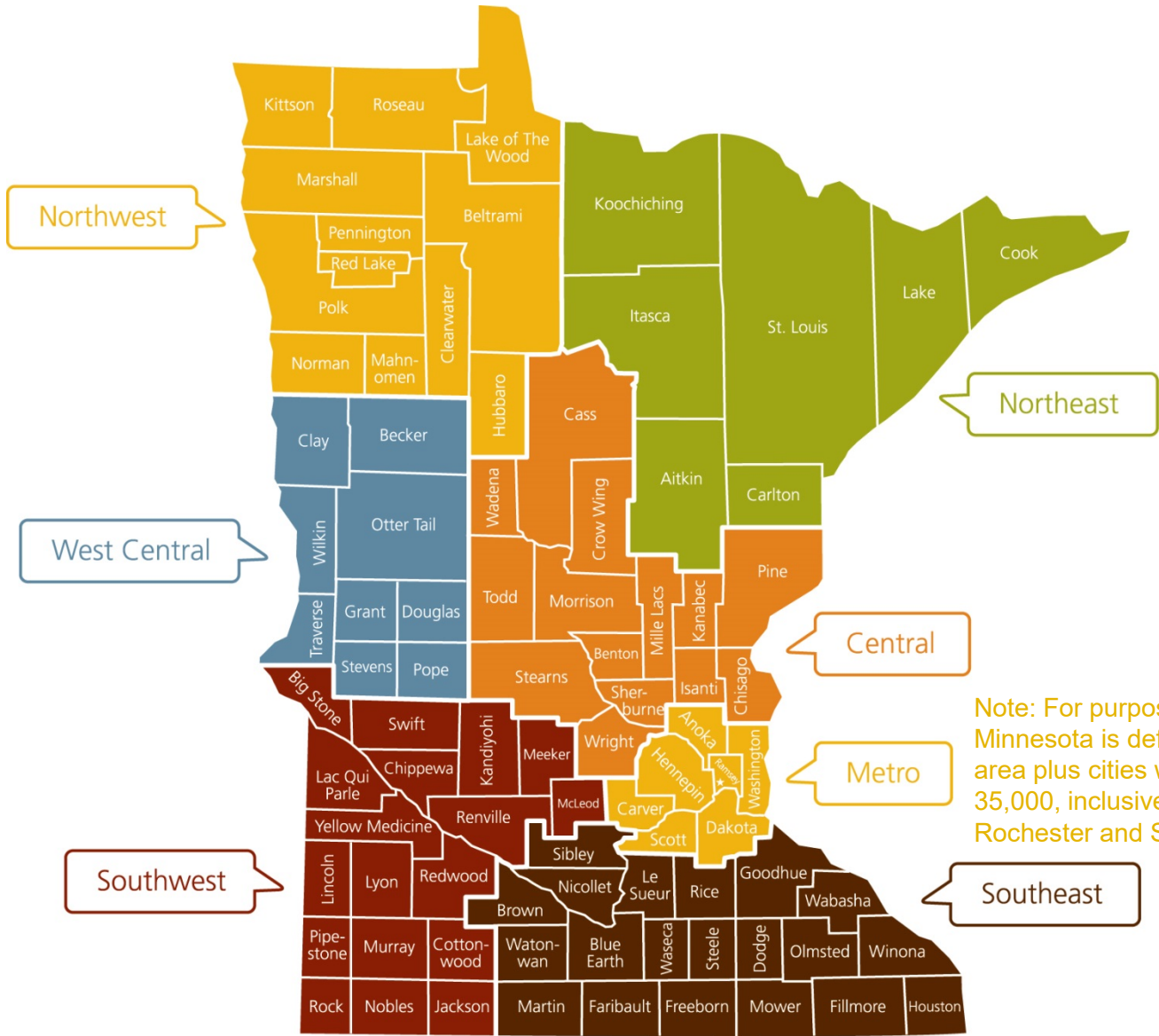
To compare rural opinions with those in urban areas, a parallel study was conducted with 492 urban residents sponsored by the Saint Paul & Minnesota Foundations, Minnesota's largest community foundation and the partner of choice for thousands of donors, professional advisors, nonprofits and community organizations. They also recently released the second volume of East Metro Pulse. For purposes of this study, urban is defined as the Twin Cities seven-county metropolitan area, plus Duluth, Mankato, Moorhead, Rochester and St. Cloud.

The survey was also administered to 688 alumni of the Blandin Community Leadership Program and the Blandin Reservation Community Leadership Program, and 300 community members of the Blandin Foundation's "home area" of Grand Rapids and Itasca County, including the communities of Blackduck, Hill City, Northome and Remer. A survey of diverse racial and cultural demographics within rural Minnesota is currently being administered. [Note: Findings for these additional studies are compiled in separate reports.]

All completed questionnaires were processed and analyzed using SPSS software.



Study Regions



Note: For purposes of this study, urban (metro) Minnesota is defined as the seven-county metro area plus cities with a population of more than 35,000, inclusive of Duluth, Mankato, Moorhead, Rochester and St. Cloud

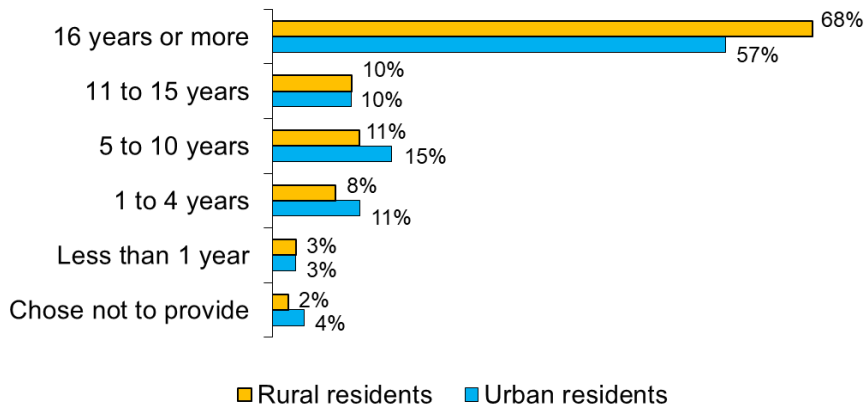


Demographics

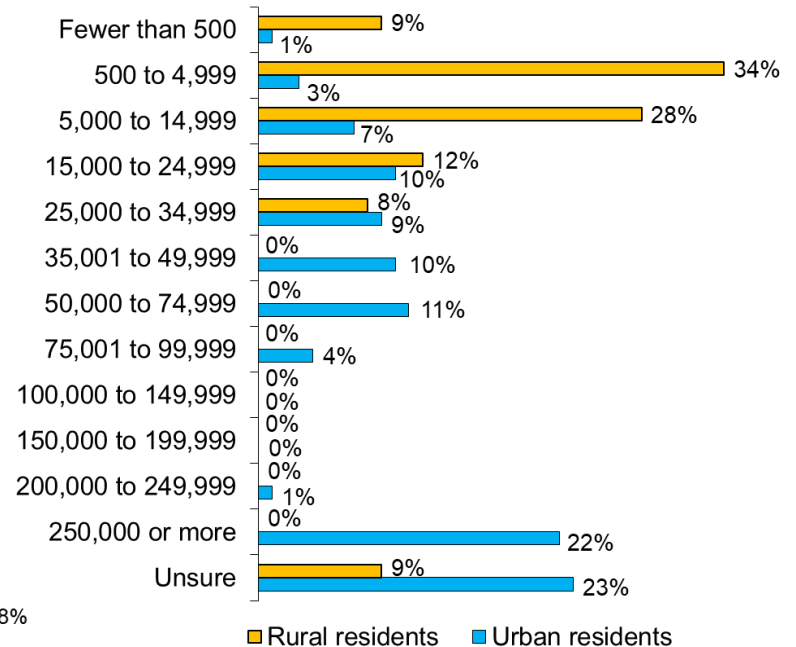
Forty-three percent of rural respondents said the community they live in, or nearest to, has a population of fewer than 5,000, nine percent of which cited fewer than 500. Another 28 percent said between 5,000 and 14,999, followed by 15,000 to 24,999 (12%) and 25,000 to 34,999 (8%). Nine percent were unsure of the size of their community.

More than half (55%) of urban respondents said they live in a city with a population of fewer than 100,000. Another 23 percent said the city they reside in has a population of 200,000 or more. Twenty-three percent were unsure.

Length of Residence



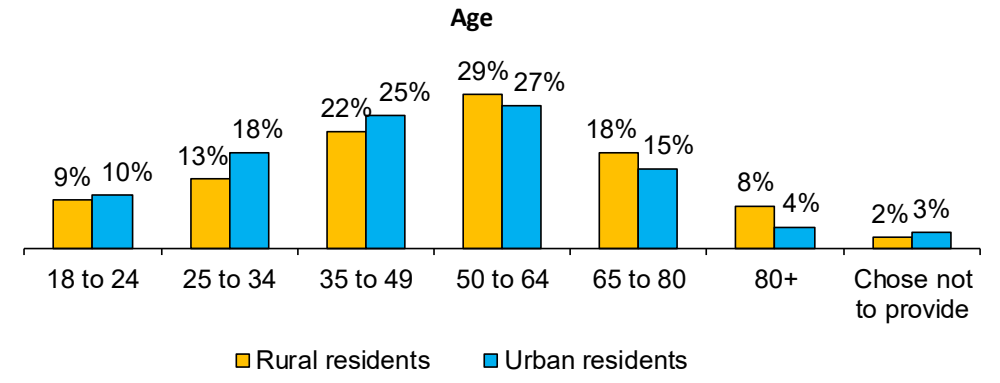
Community Population



More than two-thirds (68%) of rural respondents – and 57 percent of urban residents – said that they have lived in their community for 16 or more years, followed by five to 10 years (11% rural, 15% urban), 11 to 15 years (10% each), one to four years (8% rural, 11% urban), and less than one year (3% each). Two percent of rural respondents chose not to provide this information.

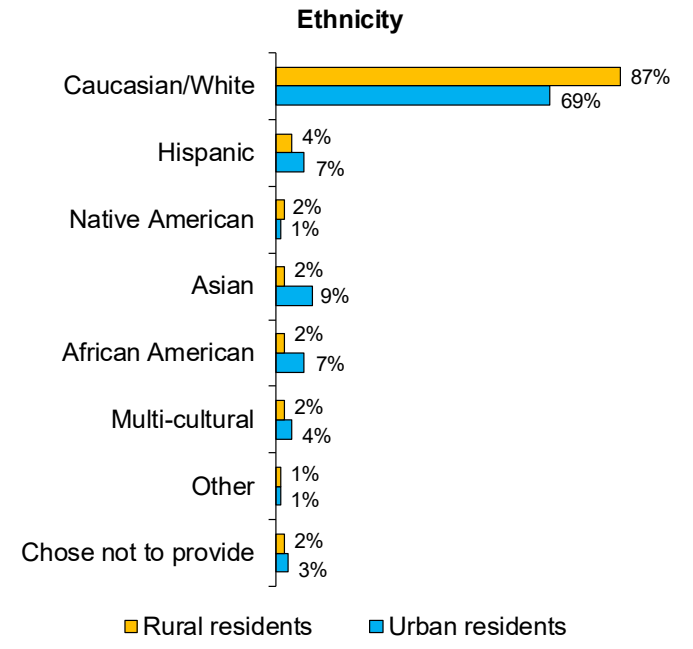
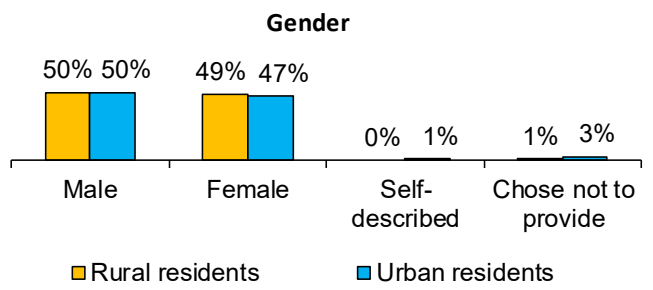


Twenty-two percent of rural Minnesota respondents – and 28 percent of urban residents – were age 18 to 34, followed by age 35 to 64 (51% rural, 52% urban), and age 65 or older (26% rural, 19% urban). Two percent of rural residents chose not to provide age information.



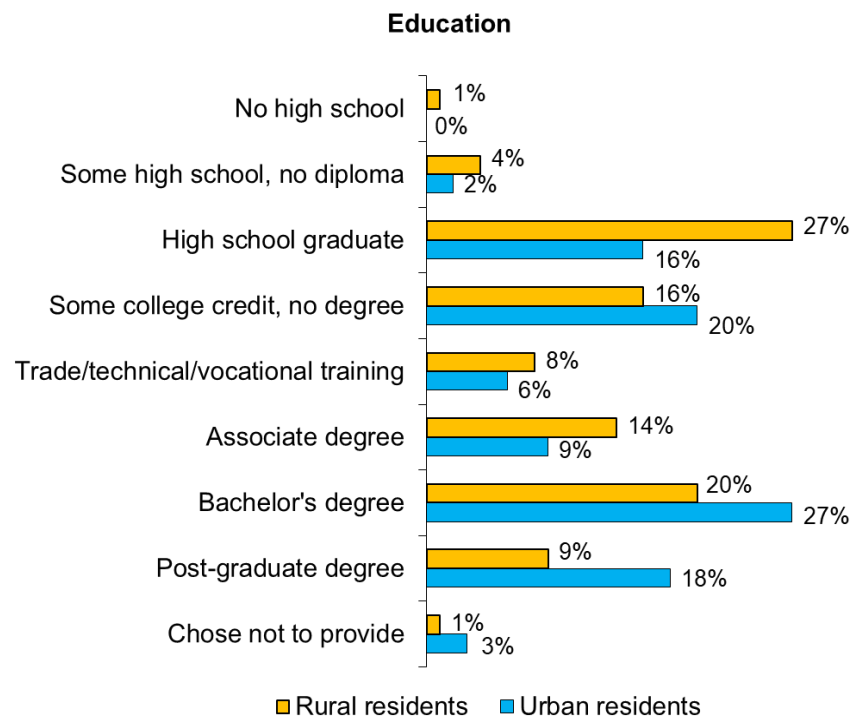
Gender was nearly equally represented, with 50 percent men and 49 percent women responding from rural Minnesota. One percent chose not to provide gender information. Urban gender composition was similar.

Eighty-seven percent of rural respondents – and 69 percent of urban residents – were Caucasian. Other ethnicities included Hispanic (4% rural, 7% urban); Native American (2% rural, 1% urban); Asian (2% rural, 9% urban); African American (2% rural, 7% urban); and about one percent were other nationalities. Two percent of rural residents – and four percent of those in urban areas – considered themselves multi-cultural, while a small percentage chose not to provide this information.





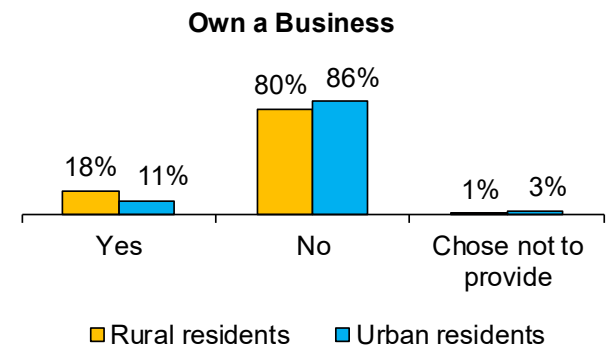
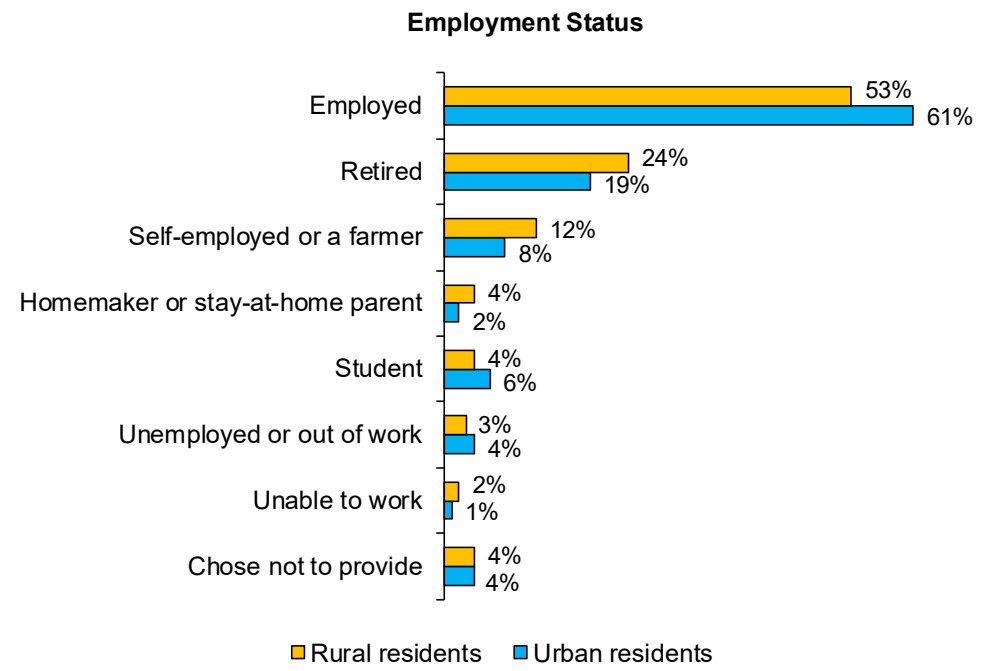
Survey respondents possessed the following educational background: high school graduate (27% rural, 16% urban); bachelor's degree (20% rural, 27% urban); some college experience, but no degree (16% rural, 20% urban); associate's degree (14% rural, 9% urban); trade, technical or vocational training (8% rural, 6% urban); post-graduate degree (9% rural, 18% urban); some high school but no diploma (4% rural, 2% urban); and one percent of rural residents said they have never attended high school. Another one percent of rural respondents chose not to provide educational information.





Fifty-three percent of rural Minnesotans – and 61 percent of urban residents – said they are employed by others, while fewer noted being self-employed or a farmer (12% rural, 8% urban). For those who said they are not employed, 24 percent of rural residents – and 19% of urban Minnesotans – said they are retired; followed by being a homemaker (4% rural, 2% urban); student (4% rural, 6% urban), unemployed or out of work (3% rural, 4% urban) or that they were unable to work for another reason (2% rural, 1% urban). Four percent chose not to provide employment information.

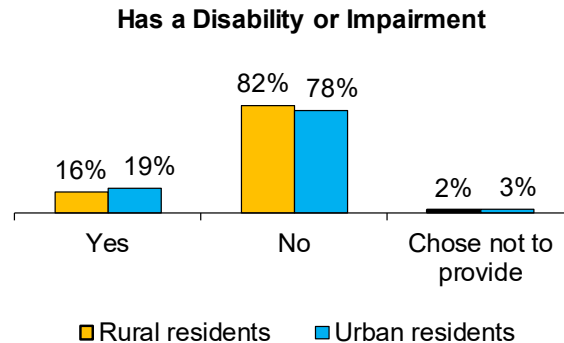
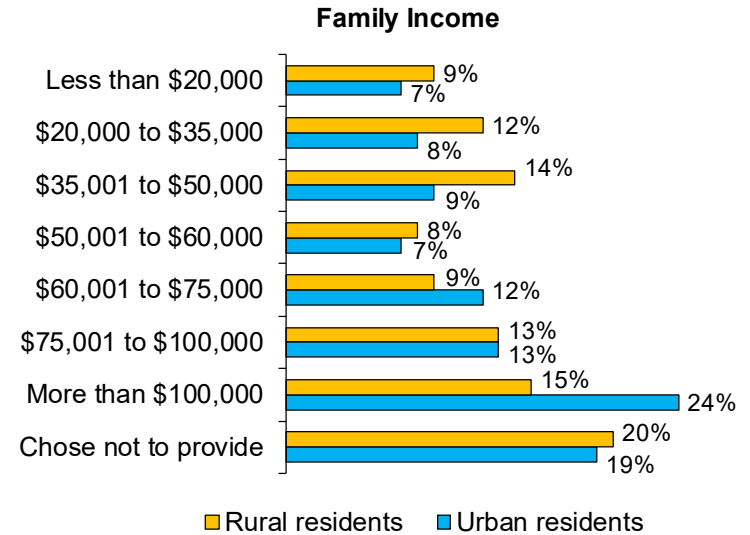
Eighteen percent of rural respondents – and 11 percent of urban residents – said they own a business of some type.





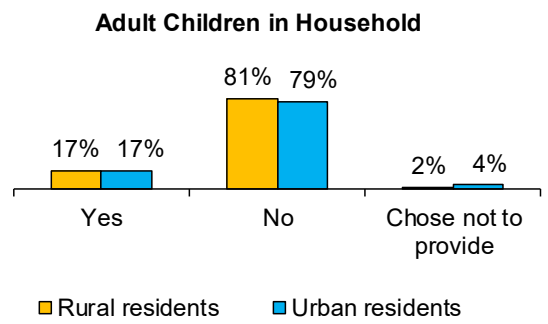
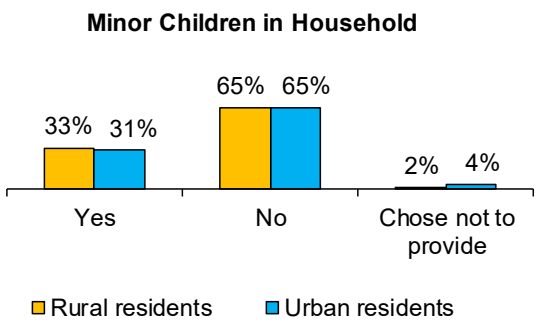
Thirty-five percent of rural Minnesotans surveyed – and 24 percent of urban residents – cited their family income as \$50,000 or less. Another 30 percent of rural residents – and 32 percent of those in urban areas – reported their household income to be between \$50,001 and \$100,000. Fifteen percent of rural residents said their household income is more than \$100,000; urban residents were more likely to have said their household income is more than \$100,000, with 24 percent indicating such. Two in five Minnesotans surveyed did not provide income information.

Sixteen percent of rural residents – and 19 percent of those in urban areas – cited that they have a disability or impairment of some type.





A third of rural Minnesotans – and 31 percent of those in urban areas – noted that at least one child 18-years-old or younger resides in their household. Another 17 percent of Minnesota residents surveyed cited that they have an adult child living in their home that they help financially support.



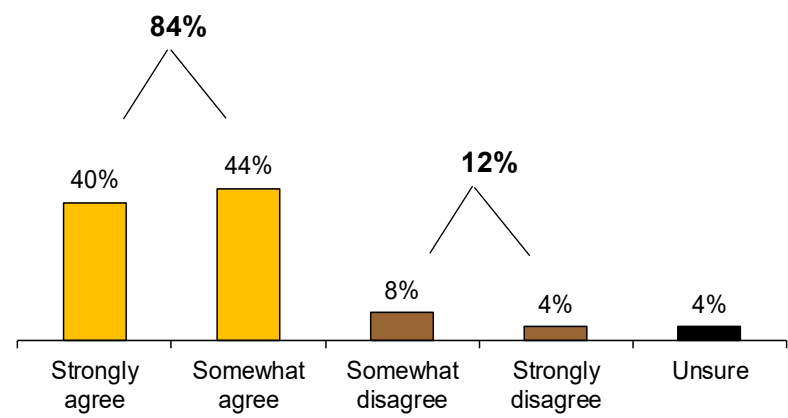


Collaboration and Contribution

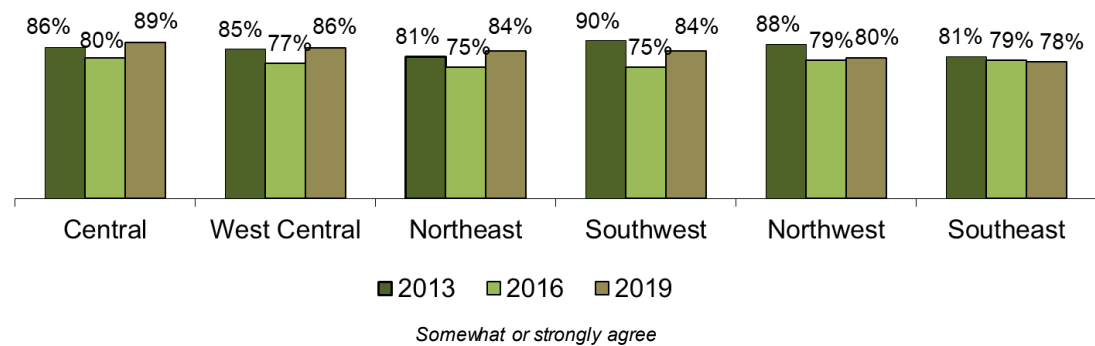
Rural Minnesotans were confident about being able to personally make a positive impact on their community. More than eight in 10 (84%) felt they can impact change, while 12 percent did not agree. Urban findings were similar.

Residents in the Central, West Central, Northeast and Southwest regions were the most likely to feel residents can impact their community, showing an upswing of nine percentage points from 2016 survey findings.

Rural Minnesotans:
Residents Like Me Are Able to Make an Impact and Make Community a Better Place to Live



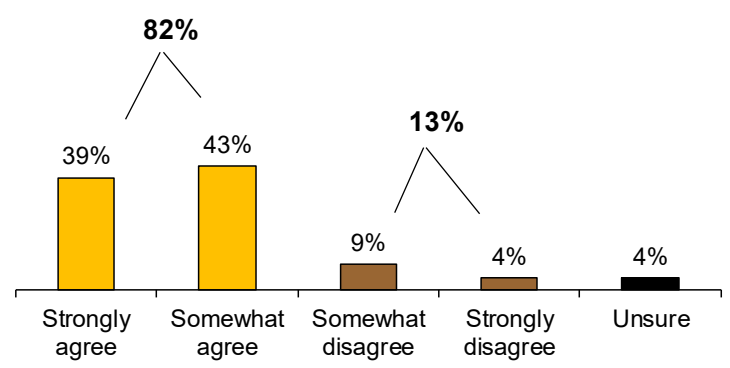
Residents Like Me Are Able to Make an Impact and Make Community a Better Place to Live



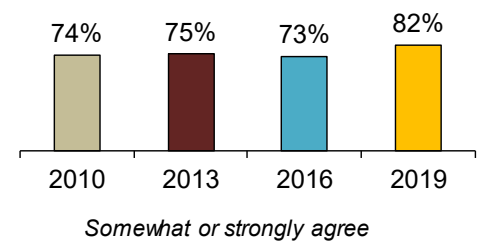


When asked whether they feel local community members work across differences to address local issues, only 12 percent of rural residents said that they feel their community is not collaborative, compared to 82 percent who said that they feel it is – a positive uptick of nine percentage points from 2016 Rural Pulse study findings.

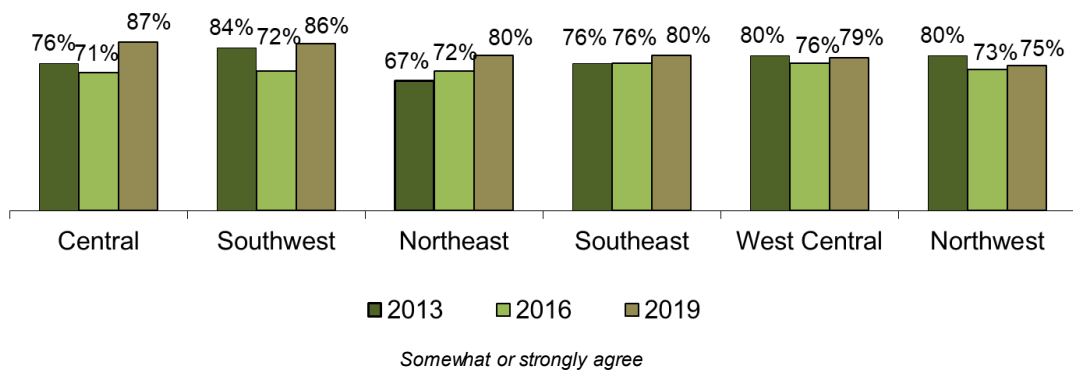
Rural Minnesotans:
Residents Are Able to Work Across Differences, such as Ethnicity, Sexual Orientation, Religion and Nationality, to Address Local Issues



Rural Minnesotans:
Residents Are Able to Work Across Differences to Address Local Issues



Residents Are Able to Work Across Differences to Address Local Issues



Residents in the Central, Southwest, Northeast and Southeast regions were the most likely to believe community collaboration exists.



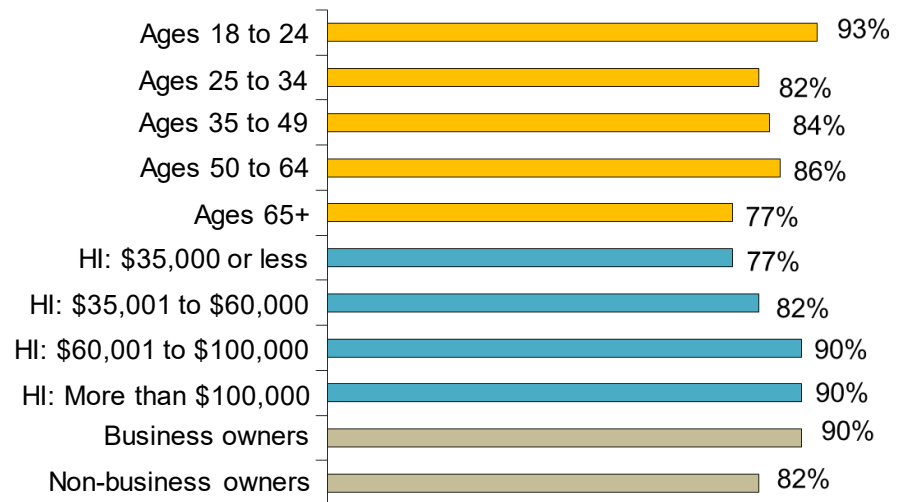
Residents Can Make An Impact And Work Across Differences To Address Local Issues

	Southwest	Southeast	Central	West Central	Northwest	Northeast
Residents like me are able to make an impact and make our community a better place to live.	84%	78%	89%	86%	80%	84%
Residents in my community are able to work across differences such as ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion and nationality	86%	80%	87%	79%	75%	80%

Somewhat or strongly agree

Residents age 18 to 24, those with incomes of more than \$60,000 and business owners felt most positively about community collaboration to address local issues.

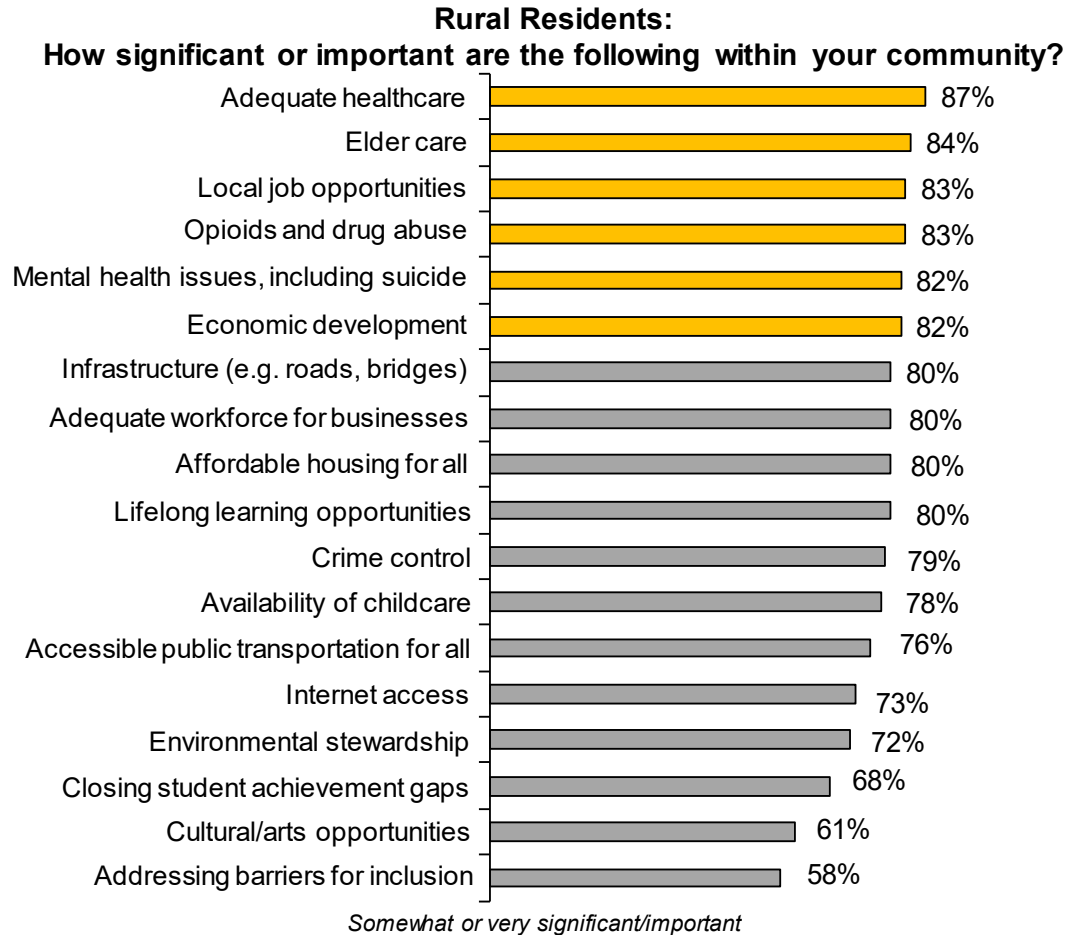
Rural Minnesotans: Residents Are Able to Work Across Differences to Address Local Issues





What is Important in their Communities?

Survey respondents were given a list of community issues and asked to rate the significance of each in their community. The most highly rated areas were healthcare opportunities (87%); caring for the elderly (84%); job opportunities, and opioids and drug abuse (83% each); and mental health issues, including suicide; and economic development (82% each). The diverse cultural/arts opportunities (61%) and inclusion barriers (58%) were of least importance.





In comparison, urban residents gave the highest ratings to healthcare and elder care (85% each); mental health issues; affordable housing for all, and good infrastructure (83% each); and opioids and drug abuse (82%). Of least importance to rural residents were inclusion barriers (66%) and cultural/arts opportunities (64%) as well.

Rural women placed higher significance on many community issues than rural men.

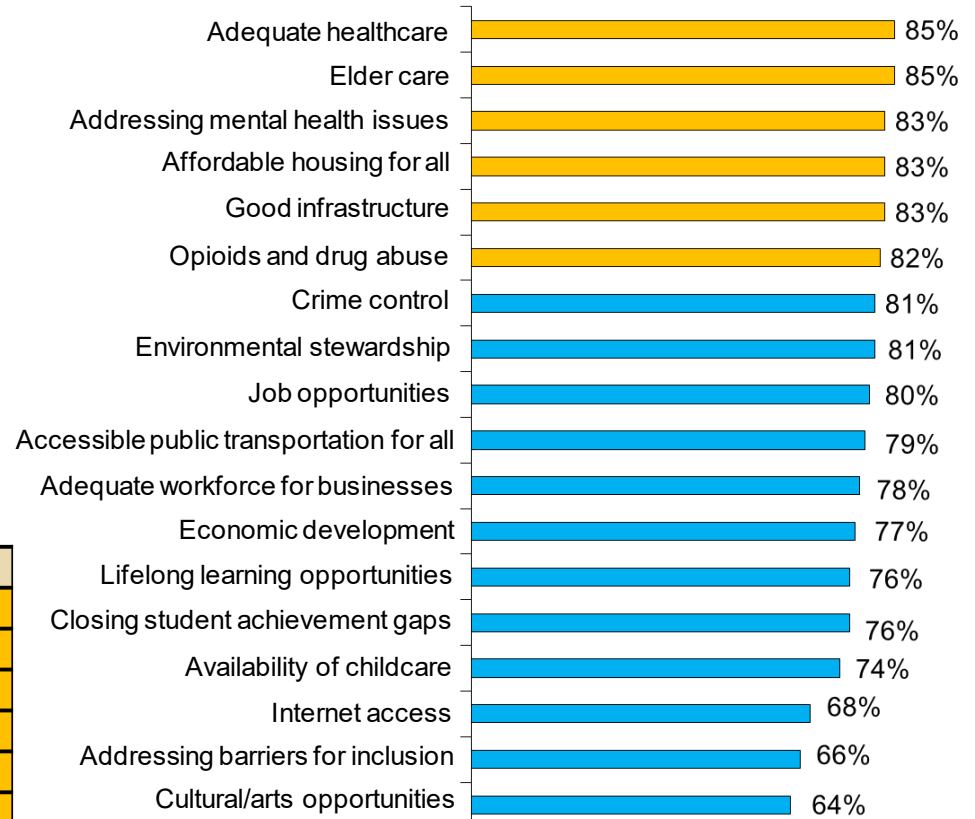
**Rural Minnesotans:
Issue Importance**

	Men	Women
Job opportunities	81%	87%
Adequate elder care	81%	87%
Addressing mental health issues	78%	86%
Affordable housing	76%	84%
Lifelong learning opportunities	76%	84%
Crime control	76%	83%
Availability of childcare	74%	82%
Accessible public transportation for all	72%	78%
Closing student achievement gaps	65%	73%
Cultural/arts opportunities	57%	64%
Addressing barriers for inclusion	52%	66%

Somewhat or very significant/important

■ Highest importance

Urban Residents: Issue Importance



Somewhat or very significant/important



Age matters as well.

Rural Residents:
How significant or important are the following within your community?

	Age				
	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Adequate healthcare services	96%	88%	90%	88%	83%
Elder care	79%	88%	85%	84%	83%
Local job opportunities	84%	80%	87%	83%	80%
Opioids and drug abuse	84%	87%	87%	84%	78%
Mental health issues, including suicide	86%	89%	87%	85%	70%
Economic Development	80%	87%	82%	84%	81%
Good roads and other infrastructure	81%	82%	80%	80%	81%
Adequate workforce for businesses	65%	83%	85%	82%	77%
Affordable housing for all	85%	76%	79%	81%	79%
Lifelong learning opportunities	90%	82%	78%	77%	79%
Crime control	85%	81%	78%	78%	79%
Availability of childcare	79%	85%	76%	79%	74%
Accessible public transportation for all	69%	77%	73%	75%	77%
Internet access	65%	76%	75%	78%	68%
Environmental stewardship	65%	69%	73%	77%	72%
Closing student achievement gaps	75%	76%	69%	69%	65%
Addressing barriers for inclusion	71%	59%	58%	59%	54%
Cultural/arts opportunities	66%	50%	61%	64%	61%
Addressing barriers for inclusion	71%	59%	58%	59%	54%

Somewhat or very significant/important

■ Highest importance within age group



Importance factors also varied by income. While the top issues overall are important at every income level, issues such as transportation, housing, crime control and childcare are more significant depending on household income.

Rural Residents:
How significant or important are the following within your community?

	Income			
	\$35,000 or less	\$35,001 to \$60,000	\$60,001 to \$100,000	More than \$100,000
Adequate healthcare services	90%	88%	92%	84%
Elder care	87%	88%	85%	79%
Local job opportunities	85%	82%	87%	83%
Opioids and drug abuse	85%	83%	85%	85%
Mental health issues, including suicide	82%	83%	88%	82%
Economic development	84%	89%	82%	80%
Good roads and other infrastructure	80%	82%	80%	81%
Adequate workforce for businesses	80%	80%	83%	85%
Affordable housing	81%	85%	78%	72%
Lifelong learning opportunities	81%	81%	81%	73%
Crime control	85%	80%	83%	72%
Availability of childcare	80%	80%	83%	74%
Accessible public transportation for all	82%	76%	75%	67%
Internet access	72%	78%	77%	72%
Environmental Stewardship	70%	74%	78%	72%
Closing student achievement gaps	72%	71%	70%	69%
Diverse cultural opportunities and the arts	65%	56%	67%	55%
Addressing barriers for inclusion	61%	60%	56%	58%

■ Somewhat or very significant/important
Highest importance within income group



Business owners placed higher importance than non-business owners on addressing mental health issues, having enough workforce available, availability of childcare and improving internet access.

Rural Minnesotans:
Issue Significance

	Business Owners	Non-Business Owners
Mental health issues	88%	81%
Availability of workforce	88%	78%
Availability of childcare	84%	76%
Improving access to the internet	82%	71%

Somewhat or very significant/important

■ Highest importance



Regionally, many of the same issues were given high priority, with a few differing.

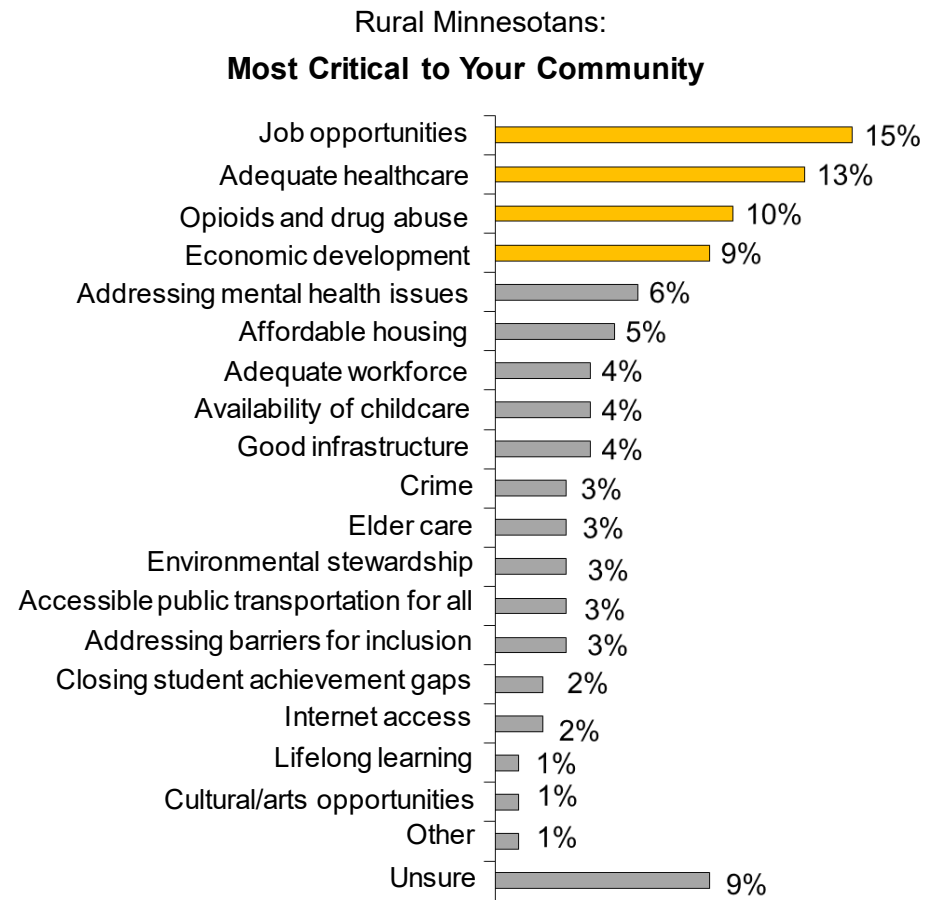
	Southwest	Southeast	Central	West Central	Northwest	Northeast
Adequate healthcare services	85%	88%	89%	84%	83%	94%
Elder care	81%	85%	86%	85%	82%	83%
Job opportunities	81%	83%	82%	82%	85%	88%
Opioids and drug abuse	81%	87%	83%	80%	81%	87%
Mental health issues	82%	77%	85%	83%	80%	87%
Economic development	81%	83%	80%	88%	78%	86%
Good infrastructure	81%	79%	84%	81%	77%	80%
Adequate workforce	79%	82%	83%	82%	79%	75%
Lifelong learning opportunities	80%	83%	77%	79%	75%	82%
Affordable housing	78%	80%	81%	81%	79%	75%
Crime control	71%	79%	80%	82%	88%	77%
Availability of childcare	80%	83%	74%	77%	76%	74%
Accessible public transportation	78%	76%	74%	77%	76%	73%
Internet access	74%	72%	76%	71%	69%	74%
Environmental stewardship	67%	75%	73%	80%	71%	69%
Closing student achievement gaps	67%	72%	69%	70%	64%	70%
Cultural/arts opportunities	62%	59%	59%	56%	78%	60%
Addressing barriers to inclusion	62%	58%	61%	51%	69%	51%

Somewhat or very significant/important

■ Highest importance within region



While many issues were considered important within Minnesota communities, residents were asked what one issue was most critical to their community. Local job opportunities (15%), healthcare (13%), drugs (10%), and economic development (9%) were mentioned most often as most critical for rural Minnesotans. Addressing mental health issues was seen as the most important priority by six percent of rural residents, followed by affordable housing for all (5%), an adequate workforce, availability of childcare and good infrastructure (4% each).





Demographically, the issues considered most critical by rural residents varied by age. While maintaining and growing local job opportunities was the top concern for most income levels, those with household incomes of \$35,001 to \$60,000 felt adequate healthcare was the most critical in their community.

Rural Minnesotans:
Issues Considered Most Critical within Local Community

Age					
	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Job opportunities	16%	18%	18%	15%	11%
Adequate healthcare	9%	14%	11%	16%	11%
Opioids and drug abuse	15%	7%	10%	9%	11%
Economic development	10%	8%	9%	10%	9%

■ Most critical issue by age group

Rural Minnesotans:
Issues Considered Most Critical within Local Community

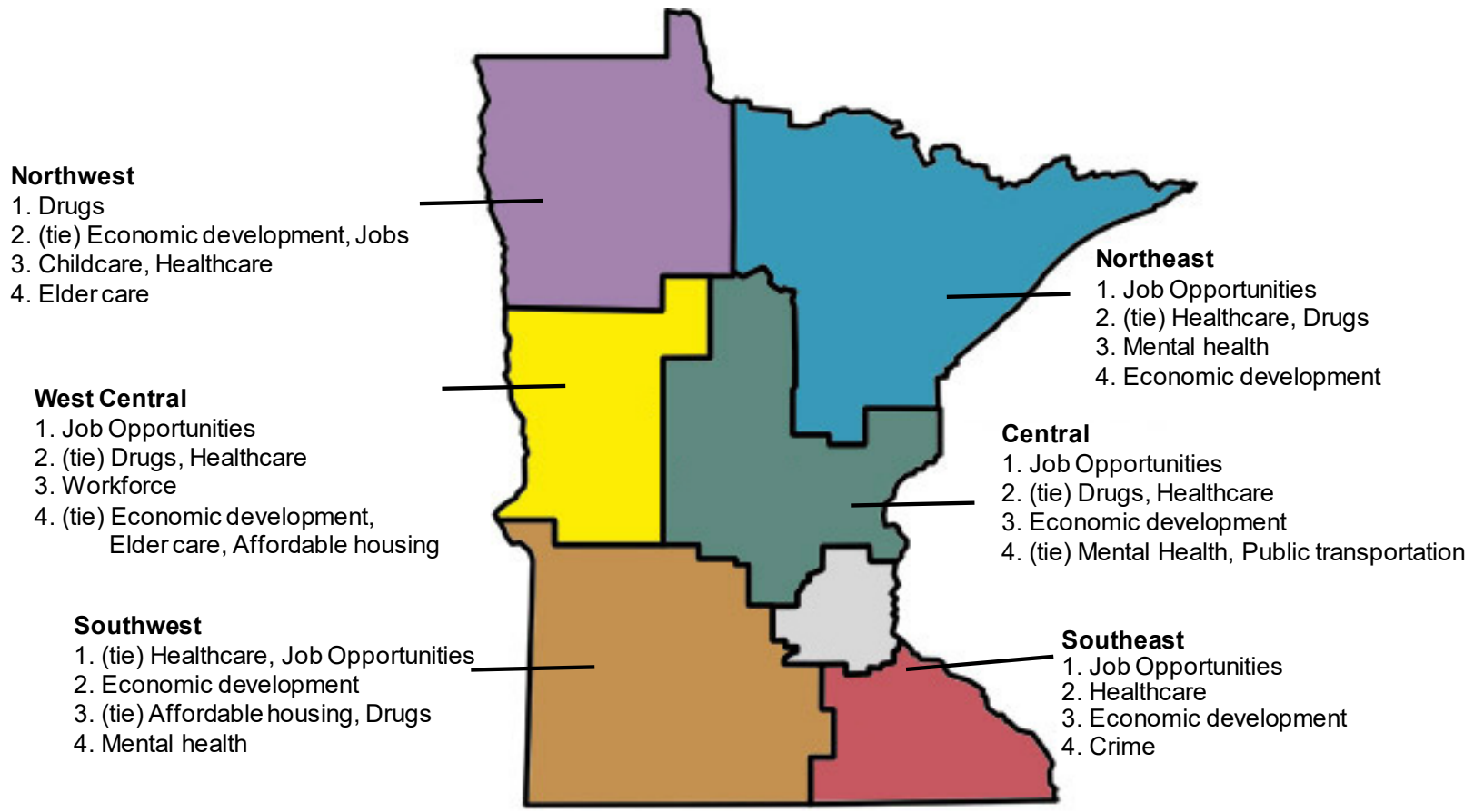
Income				
	\$35,000 or less	\$35,001 to \$60,000	\$60,001 to \$100,000	More than \$100,000
Job opportunities	14%	12%	19%	13%
Adequate healthcare	9%	20%	13%	9%
Opioids and drug abuse	13%	8%	12%	6%
Economic development	6%	8%	12%	13%

■ Most critical issue by income group



Residents in the Southeast (18%) were the most likely to say job growth is most critical to their community, followed by the Northeast (16%), West Central and Central regions (14% each). Those in the Northwest were most concerned about opioids and drug abuse (16%), and healthcare was the top priority for residents of the Southwest region (14%).

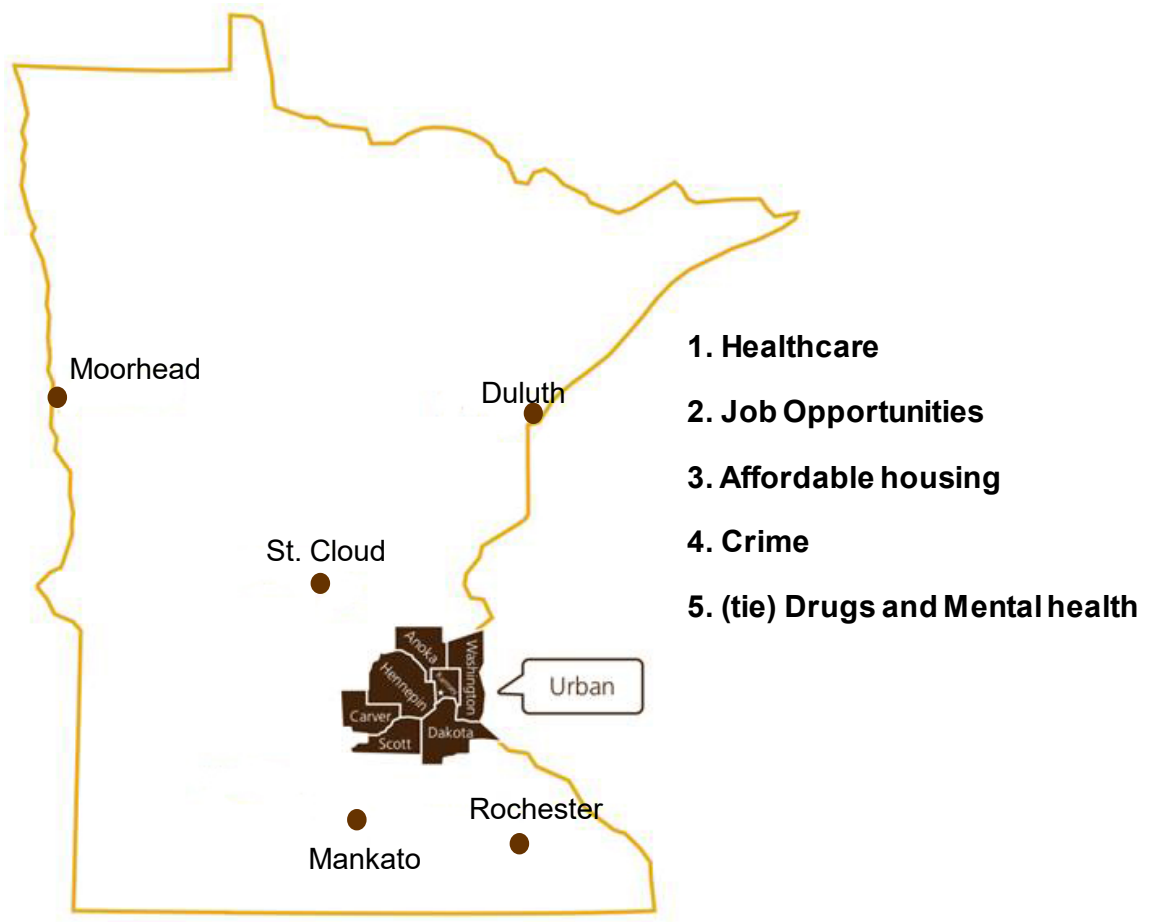
Most Critical Issues by Region





Adequate healthcare was considered the most critical local issue by urban residents (14%), followed by job opportunities (10%).

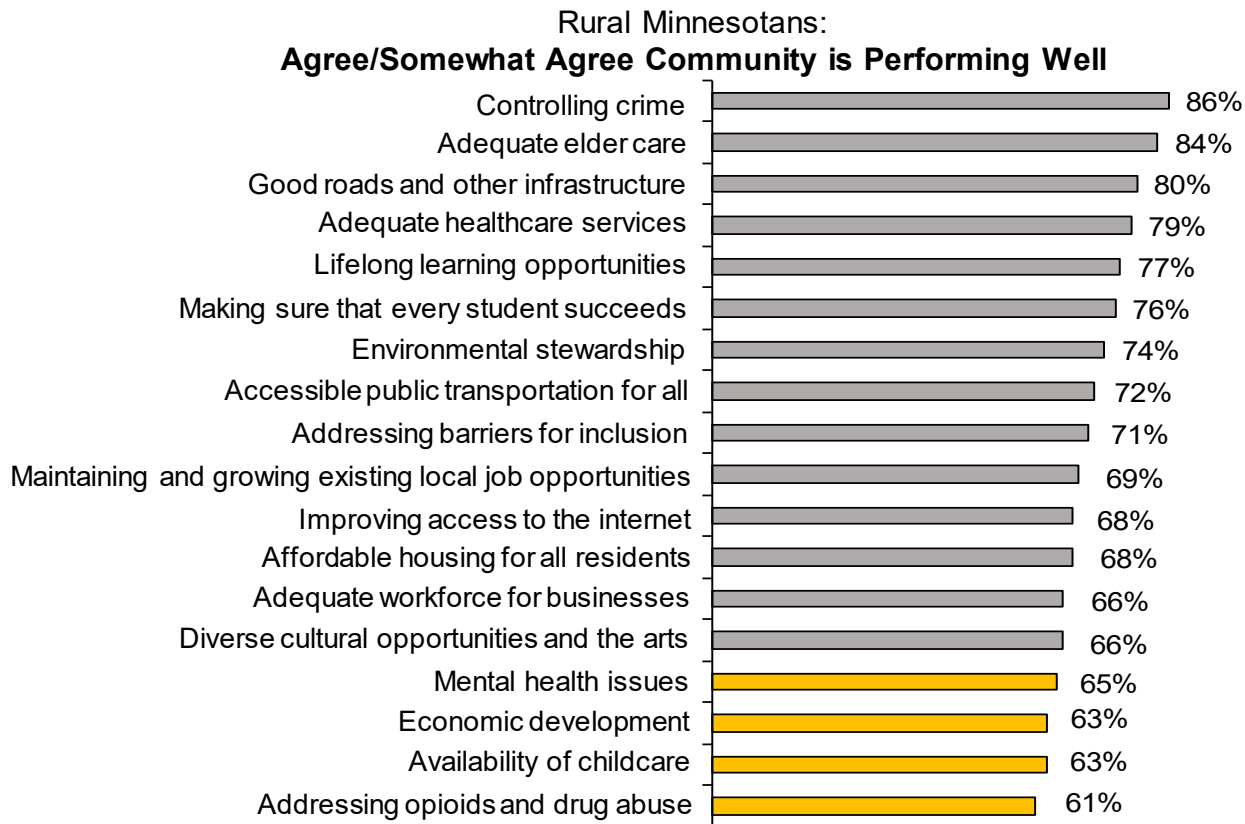
Most Critical Issues of Urban Minnesotans





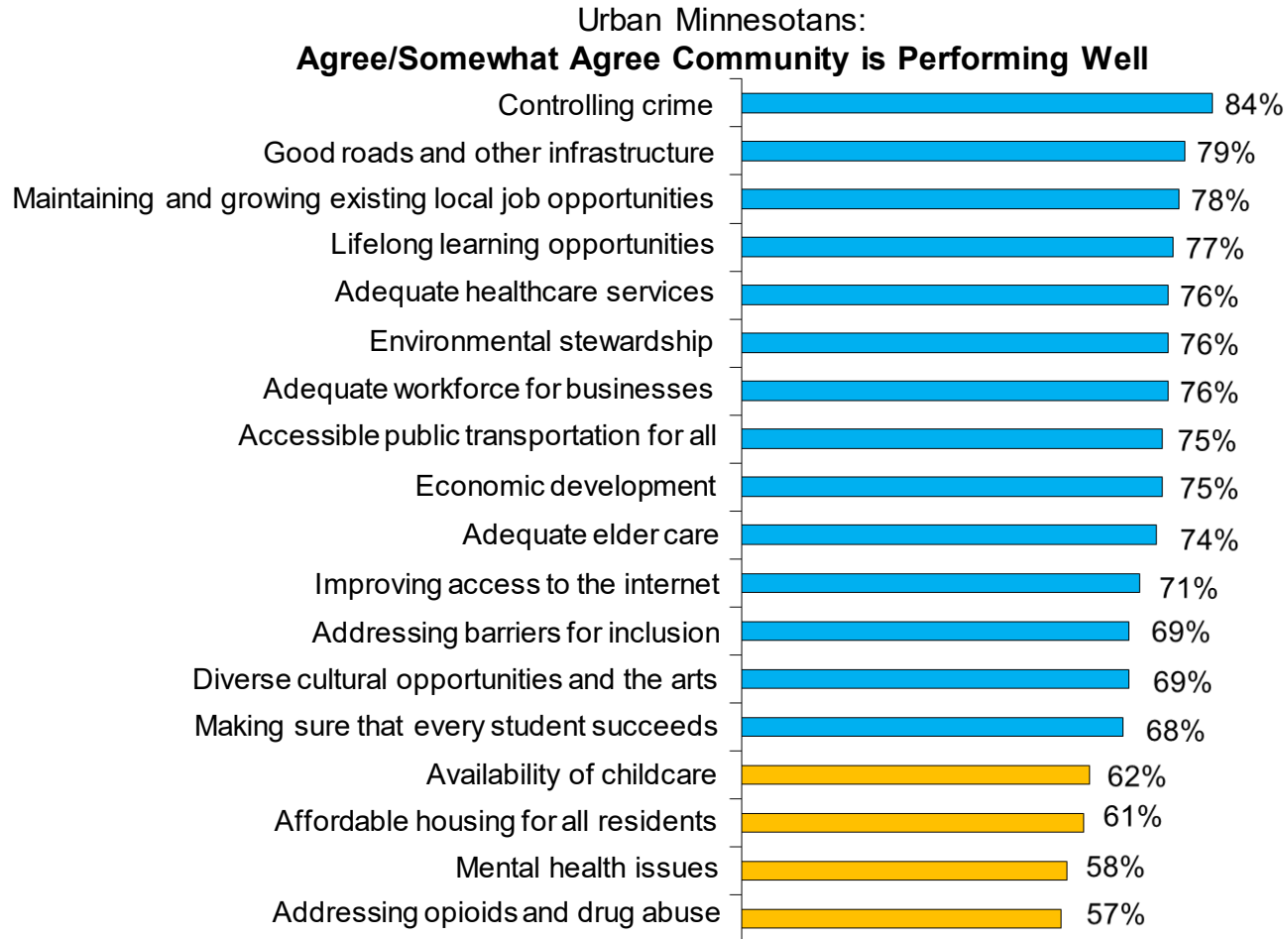
Quality of Life

Rural residents were asked if they agree or disagree that their community is doing a good job addressing local issues. Local residents had the greatest confidence in their community's performance addressing crime control, caring for the elderly, roads and other infrastructure, rural healthcare, lifelong learning opportunities and making sure that every student succeeds. They were least likely to agree that their community adequately addresses mental health issues, including suicide; economic development; availability of childcare; and addressing opioids and drug abuse.





The greatest confidence expressed by urban residents for their community's performance was for crime control, roads and other infrastructure, job opportunities, lifelong learning opportunities, healthcare, environmental stewardship and having an adequate workforce for businesses. Urban Minnesotans expressed the least agreement that their community provided sufficient availability of childcare and affordable housing, as well as address mental health issues and drugs.





Community performance by age group varied as well. Younger residents (ages 18-24) were the most satisfied with multiple service offerings and functions compared to those older.

Rural Minnesotans:
Agree/Somewhat Agree Community is Performing Well

	Age				
	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Controlling crime	95%	89%	81%	88%	96%
Adequate elder care	96%	86%	83%	80%	84%
Good roads and other infrastructure	85%	82%	81%	78%	81%
Adequate healthcare services	76%	74%	73%	82%	83%
Lifelong learning opportunities	90%	74%	76%	77%	76%
Making sure every student succeeds	90%	76%	73%	71%	79%
Environmental Stewardship	76%	74%	74%	76%	72%
Accessible public transportation for all	61%	77%	70%	72%	76%
Addressing barriers for inclusion	85%	72%	69%	68%	71%
Maintaining and growing job opportunities	75%	66%	66%	71%	71%
Improving access to the internet	85%	74%	66%	64%	65%
Affordable housing	70%	69%	65%	64%	71%
Adequate workforce for businesses	75%	69%	64%	63%	67%
Diverse cultural opportunities and arts	65%	65%	64%	66%	67%
Mental health issues, including suicide	80%	74%	62%	63%	63%
Economic Development	80%	59%	62%	61%	61%
Availability of childcare	80%	70%	65%	59%	58%
Addressing opioids and drug abuse	65%	65%	64%	58%	60%

Somewhat or strongly agree

■ Lowest agreement by service/function



Rural Minnesotans with the highest incomes were the least content with many service offerings compared to those with lower incomes. Those with incomes of \$35,000 or less were in least agreement that their community provides affordable housing for all residents.



Rural Minnesotans:
Agree/Somewhat Agree Community is Performing Well

	Income			
	\$35,000 or less	\$35,001 to \$60,000	\$60,001 to \$100,000	More than \$100,000
Controlling crime	86%	89%	88%	89%
Adequate elder care	86%	81%	89%	84%
Good roads and other infrastructure	80%	84%	81%	74%
Adequate healthcare services	78%	78%	78%	83%
Lifelong learning opportunities	77%	74%	79%	76%
Making sure that every student succeeds	77%	71%	73%	78%
Environmental stewardship	75%	78%	76%	78%
Accessible public transportation for all	78%	66%	73%	65%
Addressing barriers for inclusion	73%	71%	71%	68%
Maintaining and growing job opportunities	65%	70%	73%	70%
Improving access to the internet	67%	72%	72%	60%
Affordable housing for all residents	61%	71%	70%	66%
Adequate workforce for businesses	72%	67%	63%	65%
Diverse cultural opportunities and arts	63%	67%	69%	59%
Mental health issues, including suicide	69%	65%	65%	63%
Economic development	63%	63%	65%	63%
Availability of childcare	67%	68%	62%	59%
Addressing opioids and drug abuse	58%	60%	66%	62%

Strongly or somewhat agree

 Lowest agreement by specific item



Women were not as satisfied with their community as men in several areas.

Rural Minnesotans:
Agree/Somewhat Agree Community is Performing Well

	Men	Women
Environmental stewardship	77%	71%
Accessible public transportation	76%	68%
Affordable housing	71%	65%
Improving access to the Internet	71%	65%
Availability of childcare	70%	56%
Addressing opioids and drug abuse	64%	58%

Strongly or somewhat agree



Below is a summary of community performance by region, highlighting areas with the least agreement within each aspect of local life.

Rural Minnesotans:
Agree/Somewhat Agree Community is Performing Well

	Southwest	Southeast	Central	West Central	Northwest	Northeast
Controlling crime	93%	88%	89%	88%	78%	81%
Adequate elder care	88%	84%	82%	87%	82%	85%
Good roads and infrastructure	85%	77%	85%	87%	89%	66%
Adequate healthcare services	86%	75%	83%	83%	77%	71%
Lifelong learning opportunities	82%	76%	78%	78%	71%	79%
Making sure that every student succeeds	75%	72%	80%	77%	74%	77%
Environmental stewardship	73%	69%	79%	76%	67%	77%
Accessible public transportation	74%	73%	68%	80%	77%	66%
Addressing barriers for inclusion	74%	71%	72%	70%	69%	69%
Job opportunities	74%	69%	68%	73%	69%	67%
Improving access to the internet	75%	68%	66%	65%	71%	66%
Affordable housing	73%	69%	70%	68%	63%	57%
Adequate workforce for business	68%	65%	72%	62%	57%	67%
Diverse cultural/arts opportunities	75%	67%	58%	77%	66%	60%
Mental health issues	73%	65%	68%	64%	61%	65%
Economic development	64%	63%	63%	64%	62%	59%
Availability of childcare	66%	64%	67%	60%	54%	61%
Addressing opioids and drug abuse	65%	67%	63%	58%	61%	47%

Strongly or somewhat agree

■ Lowest agreement by service/function

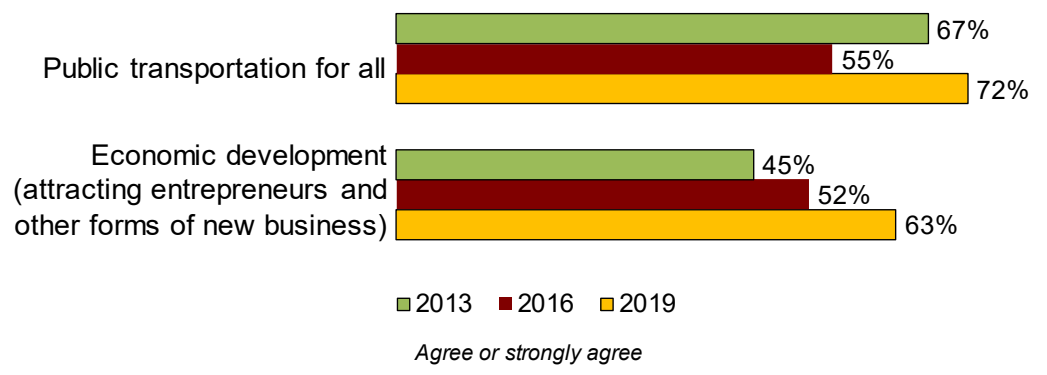


Community performance of services has significantly improved in two main areas since 2013 Rural Pulse findings, according to rural residents: public transportation and economic development.

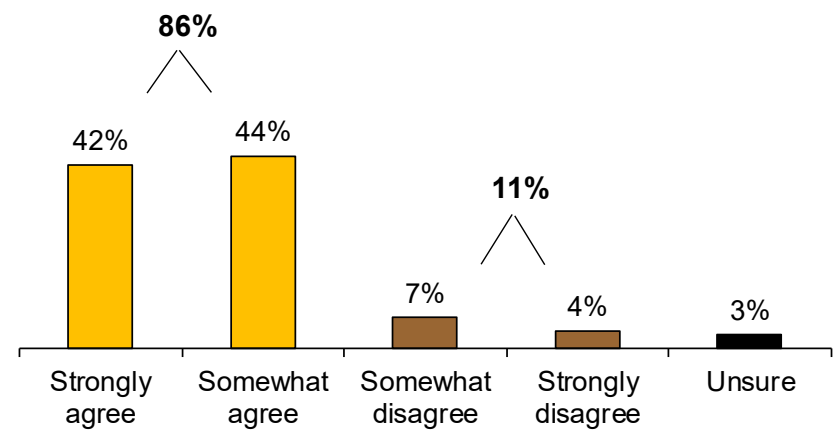
Crime Control

The majority (86%) of rural residents agreed that their community is able to control crime. Eleven percent disagreed. Those in urban areas showed comparable results.

Rural Minnesotans: Agree/Somewhat Agree Community is Performing Well

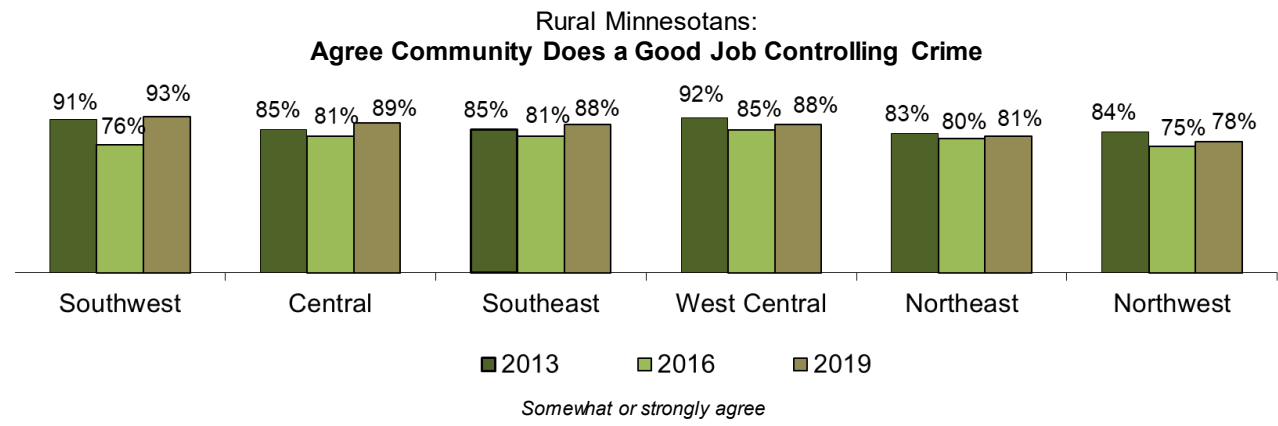


Rural Minnesotans: Community Does a Good Job Controlling Crime



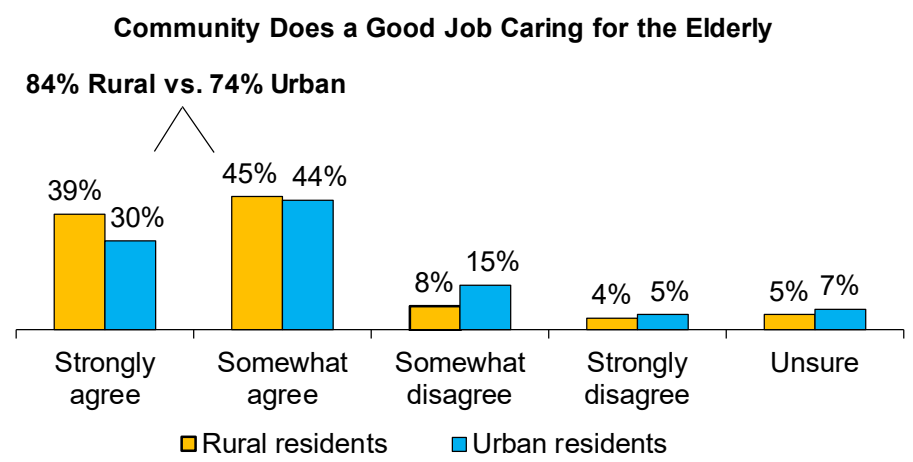


Residents in all rural regions showed somewhat higher confidence regarding crime control, with the Southwest region reflecting the highest satisfaction.



Caring for Elderly Residents

Most (84%) rural residents said that they have confidence in the elder care their communities provide, while 12 percent did not agree. Urban respondents were slightly less agreeable (74%).





Childcare

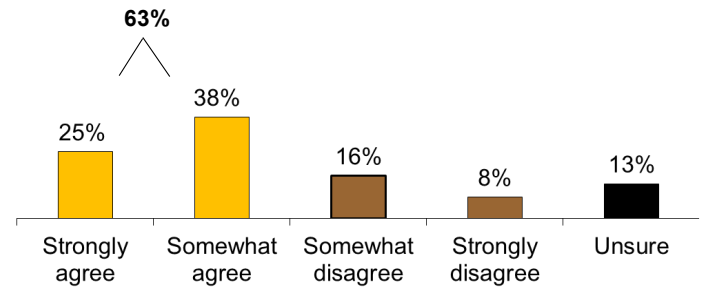
Sixty-three percent of rural Minnesotans surveyed agree that their community is doing a good job of providing childcare. A quarter (24%) do not agree, and 13 percent are unsure. Northwest region respondents are the least likely to agree.

Housing

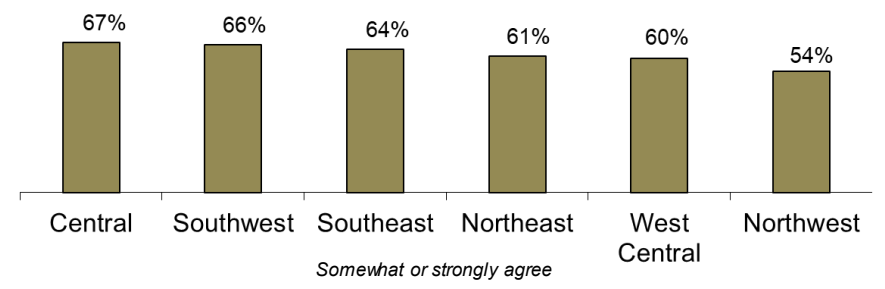
While nearly seven in 10 (68%) rural Minnesotans believe that there is affordable housing in their community, 27 percent are concerned about adequate availability. Urban residents disagreed to an even greater degree (35%).

Those in the Central, Southwest, and Southeast regions felt most positively affordable housing is available to all.

Rural Minnesotans:
Community Provides Availability of Childcare

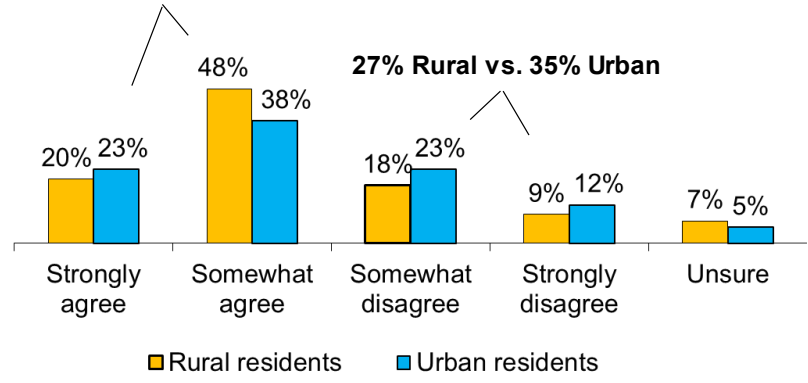


Rural Minnesotans:
Community Provides Availability of Childcare

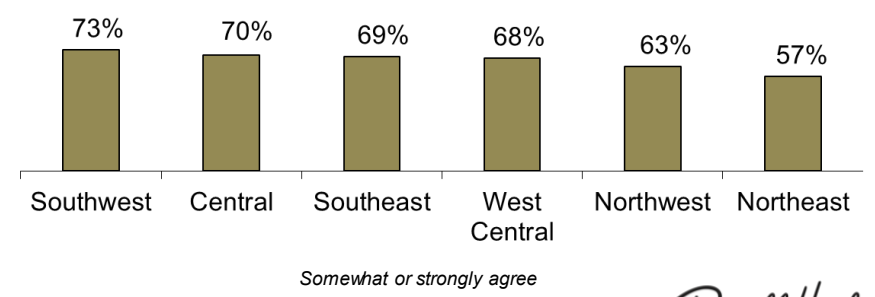


Community Ensures Affordable Housing for All

68% Rural vs. 61% Urban



Rural Minnesotans:
Community Ensures Affordable Housing for All



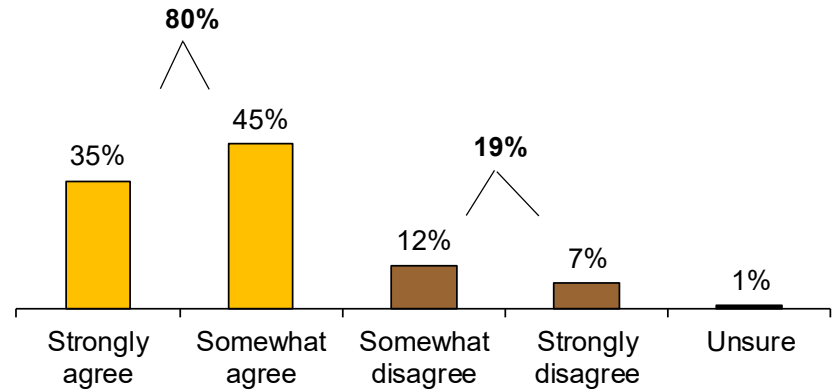


Roads and Transportation

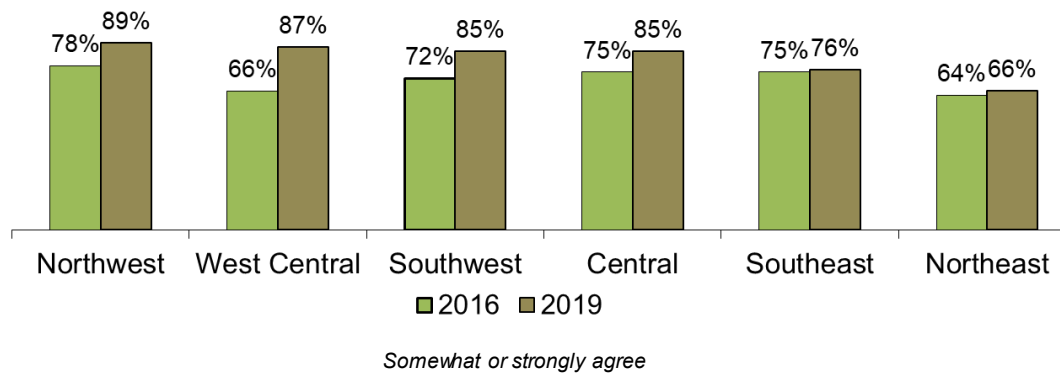
Eight in 10 (80%) rural Minnesotans agree that their community ensures good roads and other infrastructure. Some 19 percent disagree. Urban respondents had similar results.

While those in the Northwest, West Central, Southwest and Central regions were the most likely to have felt positively about road infrastructure in their community, Northeast residents were the least likely to agree.

Rural Minnesotans:
Community Ensures Good Roads and Other Infrastructure

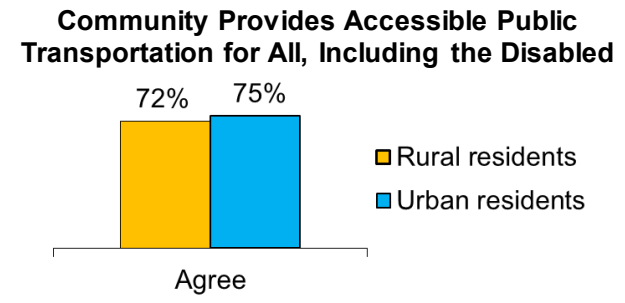
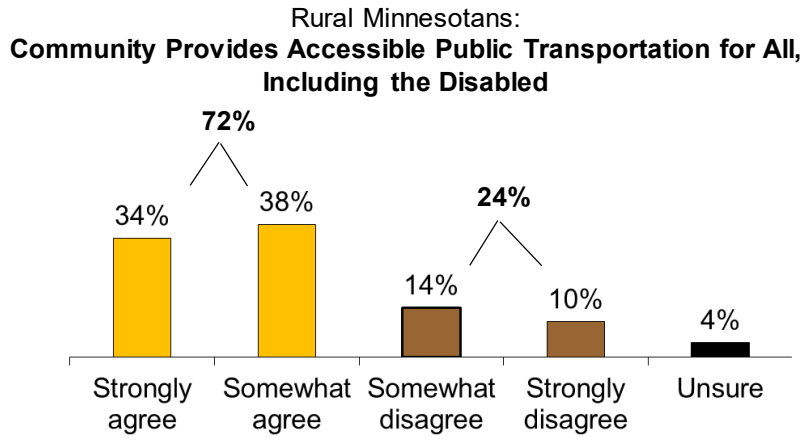


Rural Minnesotans:
Community Ensures Good Roads and Infrastructure

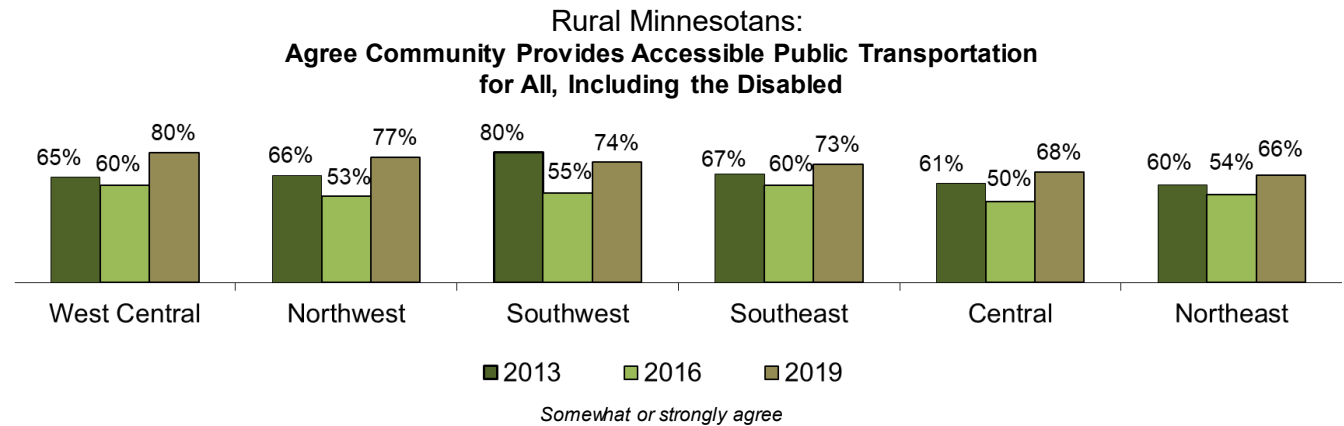




When asked if they felt their community provides accessible public transportation for all, including the disabled, a quarter of rural Minnesotans (24%) did not agree. About seven in 10 (72%) believe that their community provides adequate transportation opportunities, a 27-point upswing from 2016 Rural Pulse findings. Urban area residents had similar results.



Rural residents overall, regardless of region, were more likely than those surveyed in 2016 to have communicated satisfaction with public transportation availability, with those in the Northwest (+24%), West Central (+20%) and Southwest (+19%) regions showing the highest increase in satisfaction.



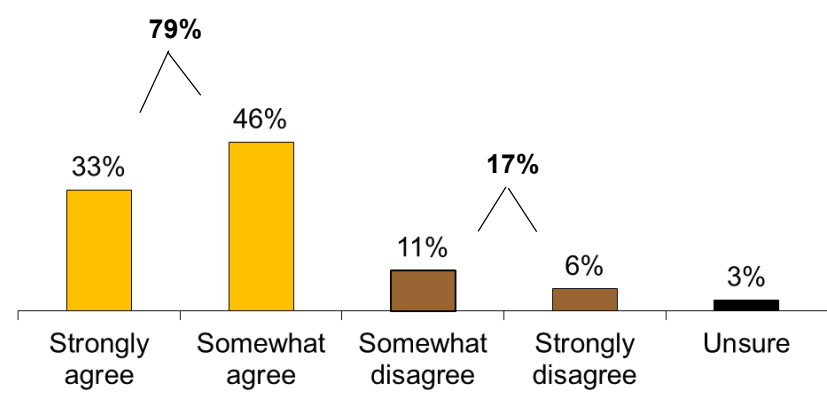


Healthcare

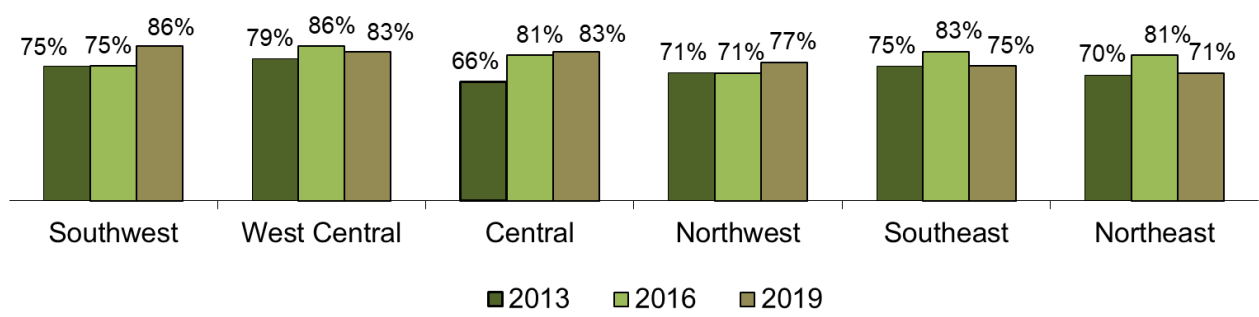
Four in five (79%) rural Minnesotans believe that their community provides adequate healthcare services to residents, while only 17 percent do not feel that this is the case – similar results to 2016 rural study findings. Urban responses were comparable.

Residents in the Southwest, West Central and Central regions held the highest agreement that healthcare offered in their community is adequate. Those in the Northeast (-10%), Southeast (-8%) and West Central (-3%) regions showed a decline in contentment with healthcare since 2016 survey findings.

Rural Minnesotans:
Community Provides Adequate Healthcare Services



Rural Minnesotans:
Agree Community Provides Adequate Healthcare Services



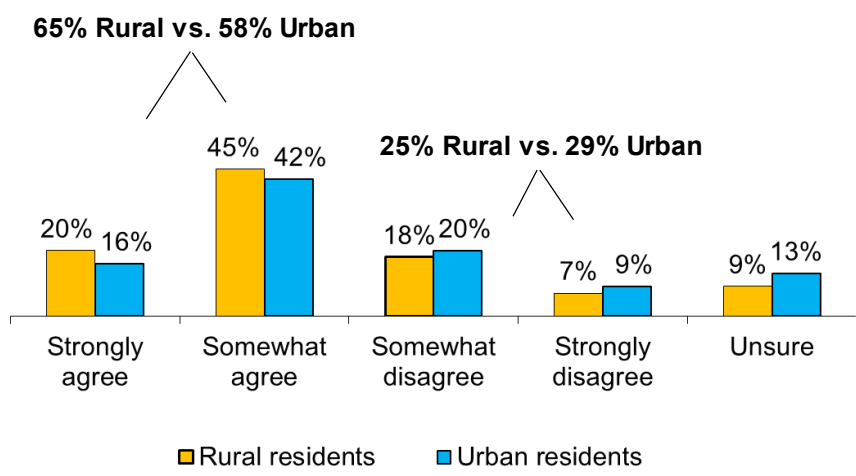


Mental Health

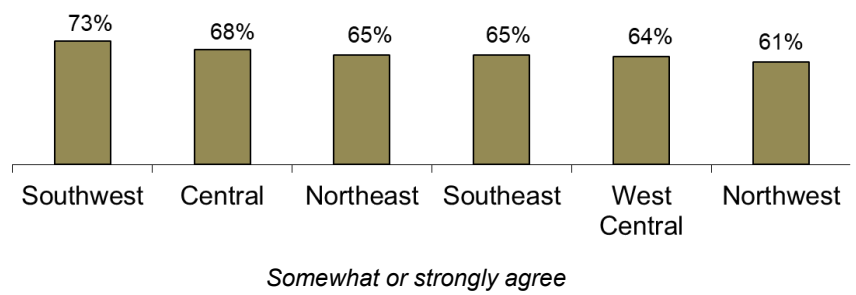
New to this year's Rural Pulse survey was asking Minnesotans how well they feel their local community addresses mental health issues, including suicide prevention. Sixty-five percent of rural Minnesotans believe that their community effectively provides for mental health needs, while a quarter (25%) do not feel that this is the case. Urban responses were even less confident (58%).

Residents in the Southwest and Central regions held the highest agreement that mental health is addressed. Those in the Northwest region showed the lowest agreement.

Community Addresses Mental Health Issues, Including Suicide



Rural Minnesotans: Agree Community Addresses Mental Health Issues, Including Suicide



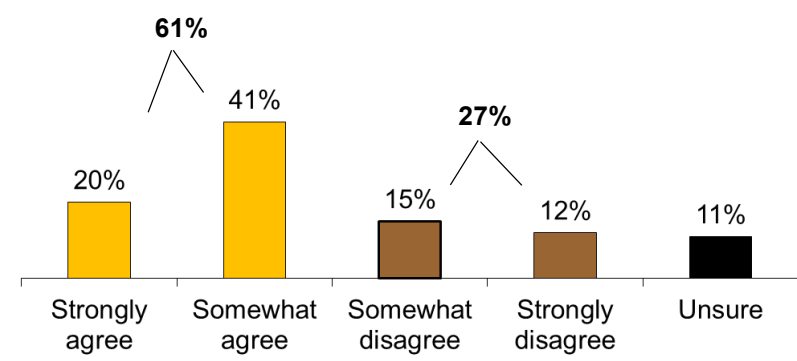


Opioids and Drug Abuse

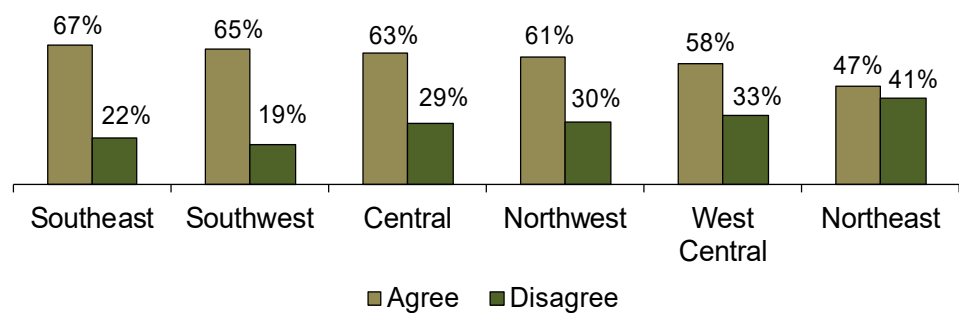
Also new to 2019, Minnesotans were asked if they feel their community adequately addresses opioids and drug abuse. Six in 10 (61%) rural Minnesotans believe that their community is doing well in this area, while 27 percent do not agree. Urban responses were comparable.

Residents in the Southeast, Southwest and Central regions held the highest agreement that the drug crisis is being addressed in their community. Those in the Northeast are much less likely to have agreed.

Rural Minnesotans:
Community Addresses Opioids and Drug Abuse



Rural Minnesotans:
Agree Community Addresses Opioids and Drug Abuse



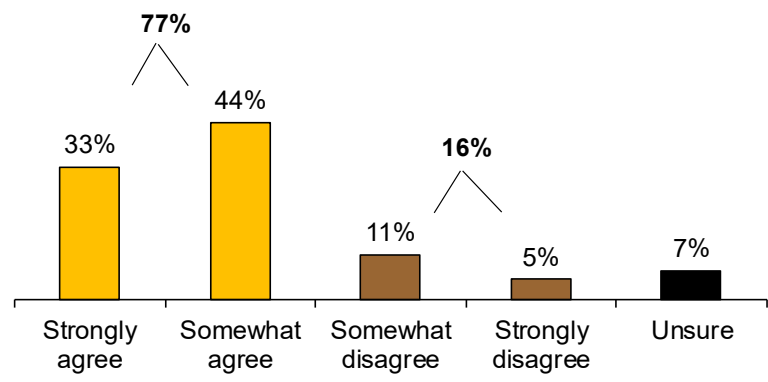


Education

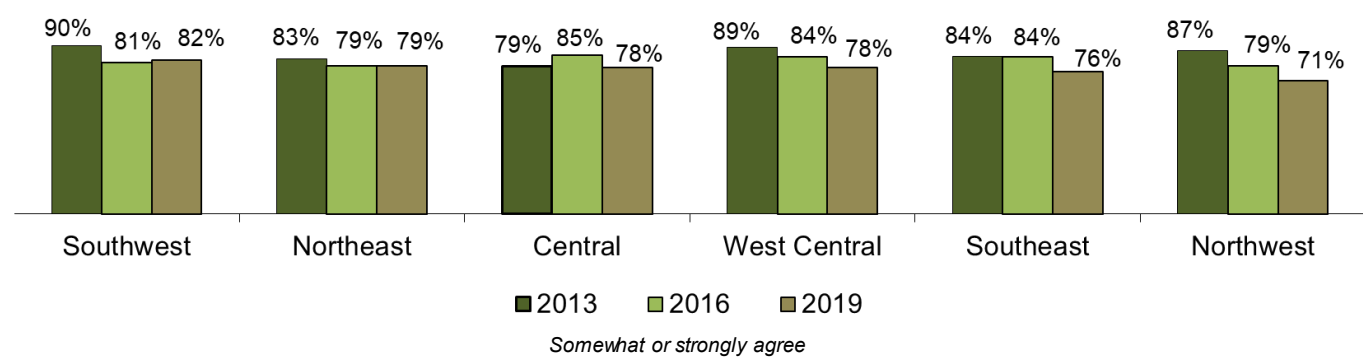
More than three-quarters (77%) of rural Minnesotans believe their community provides lifelong learning opportunities. Sixteen percent disagree. Urban residents were in similar agreement.

Residents in the Central, West Central, Southeast and Northwest regions lost some confidence in lifelong learning opportunities since 2016 survey findings.

Rural Minnesotans:
Community Provides Lifelong Learning Opportunities



Rural Minnesotans:
Agree Community Provides Lifelong Learning Opportunities

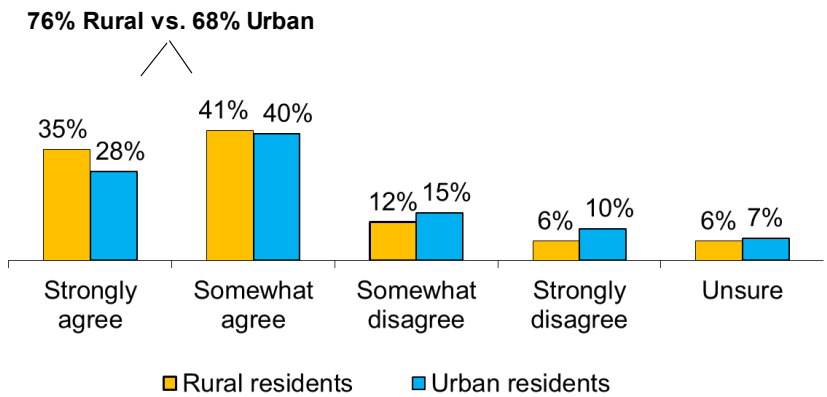




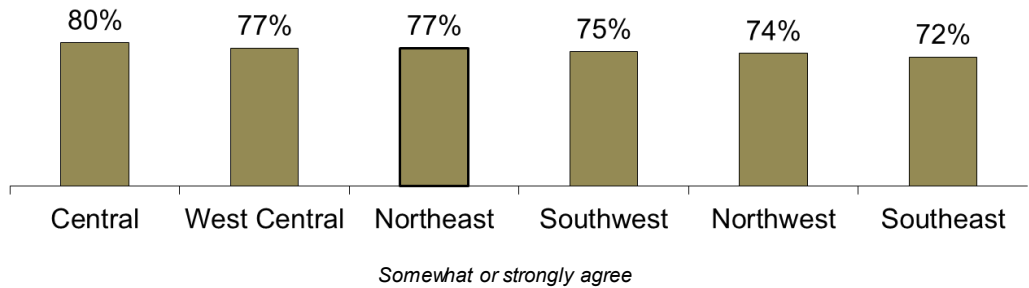
Three in four (76%) rural Minnesotans believe their community makes sure that every student in their community succeeds. Eighteen percent disagree. Those in urban areas were less likely to agree that success for all students is being addressed.

Those in the Central, West Central and Northeast regions of the state were the most likely to have said they feel that their community ensures success for every student. Southeast Minnesota residents were the least likely to agree.

Community Makes Sure Every Student Succeeds



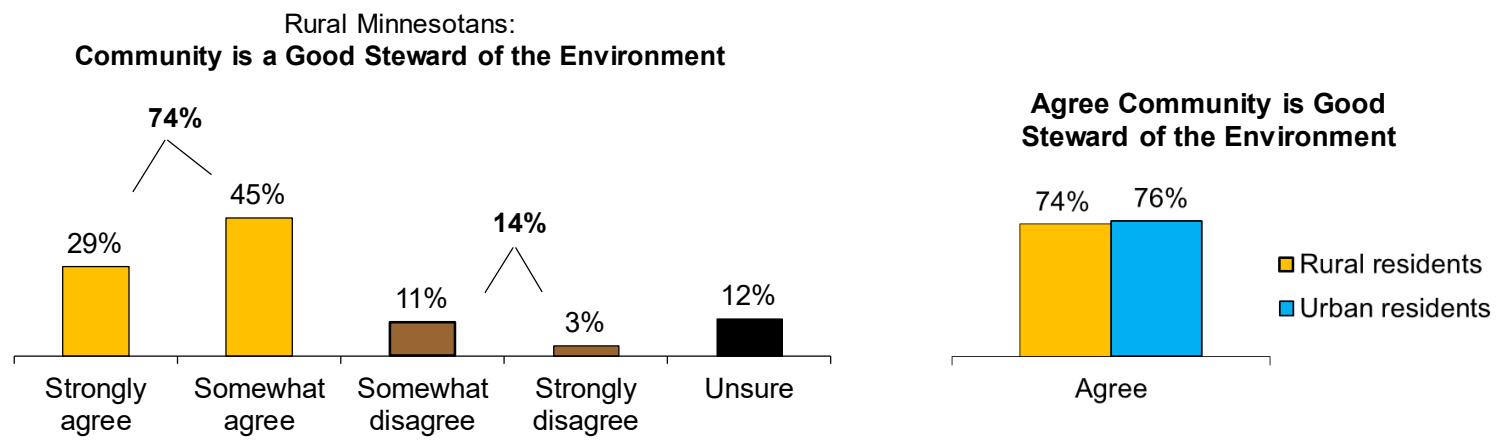
Rural Minnesotans:
Agree Community Makes Sure Every Student Succeeds



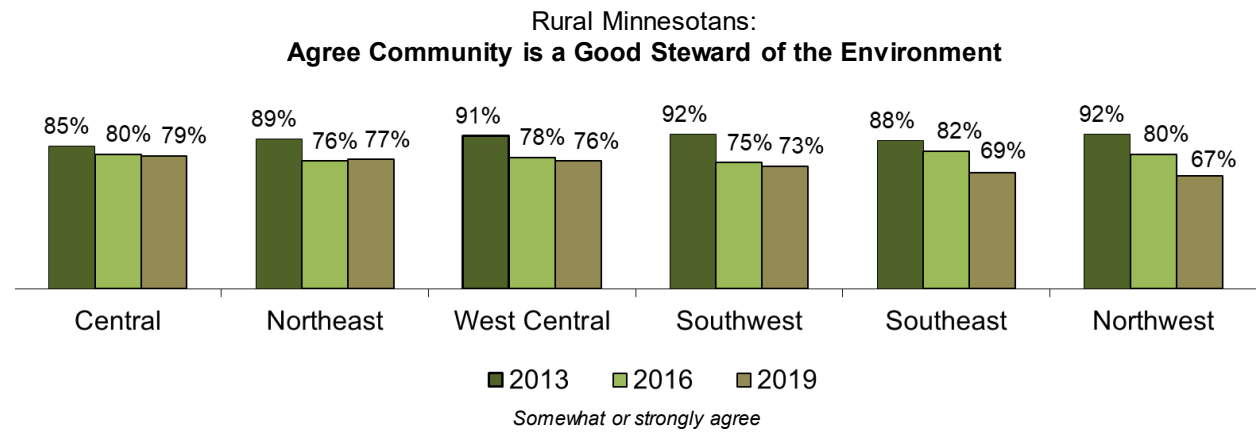


The Environment

Three-quarters (74%) of rural residents said that they believe their community is a good environmental steward, while 14 percent did not agree. Urban residents had similar results.



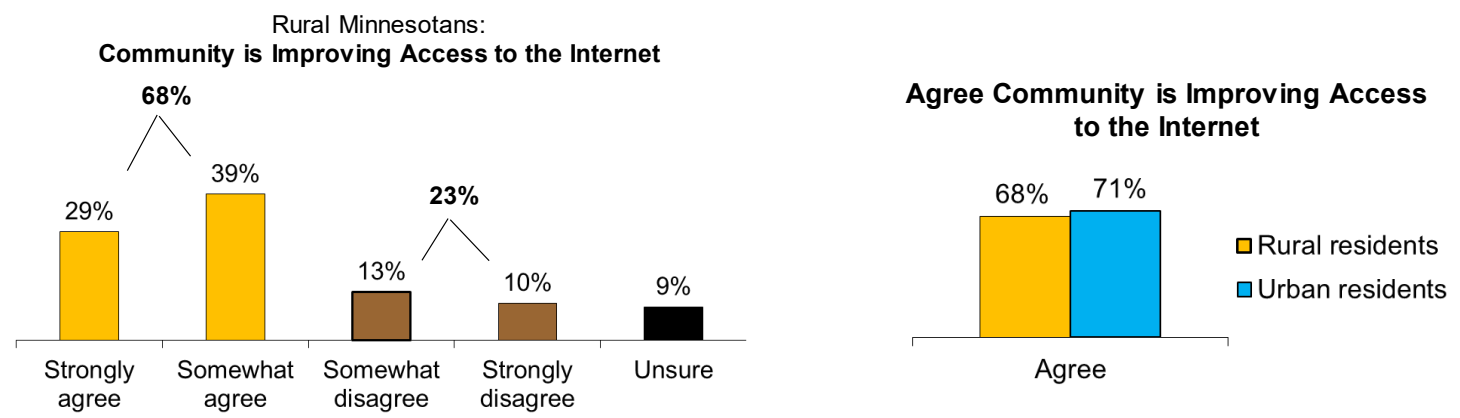
In comparing rural Minnesota regions, results were comparable to 2016, with the exception of the Northwest and Southeast regions, which showed a more noticeable decline in agreement since 2016 – 13 percentage points less than previous findings.



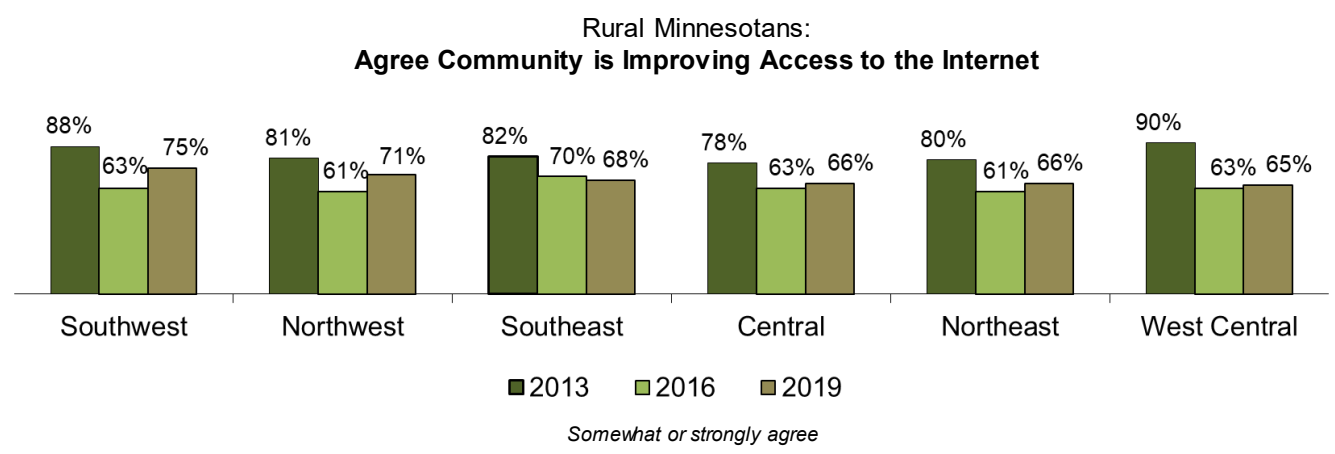


Internet Access

Nearly seven in 10 (68%) rural Minnesotans feel their community does a commendable job at improving access to the internet. Twenty-three percent disagree. Urban area residents were in agreement.



Regions showing the most significant upswing since 2016 in how they feel their community is doing with internet access were the Southwest (+12%) and Northwest (+10%).

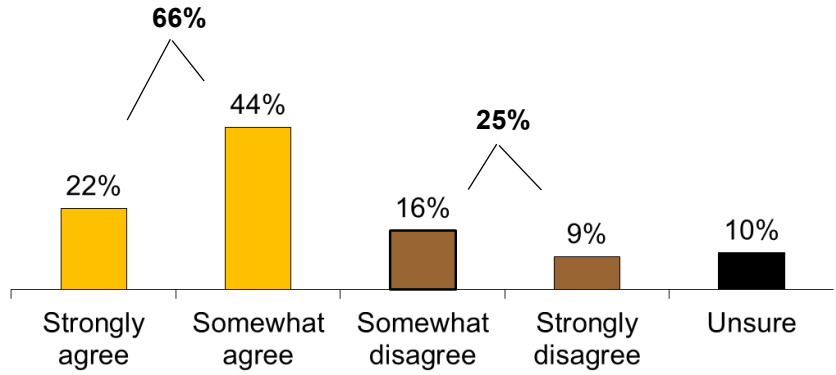




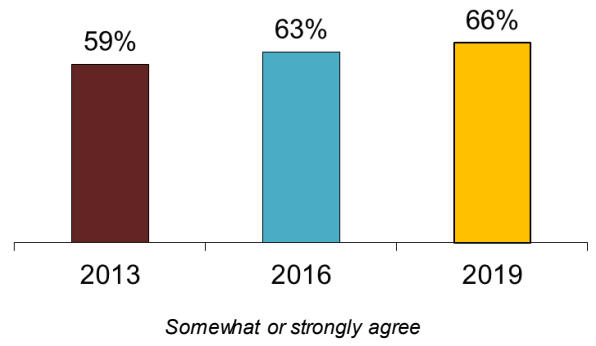
Culture and the Arts

The community's performance in providing diverse cultural and arts opportunities was a concern for one in four rural Minnesota residents (25%), a slight decrease from 2016 survey findings. Two-thirds (66%) feel local needs are being met – showing continued improvement from both 2013 and 2016 Rural Pulse findings. Results were similar for their urban counterparts.

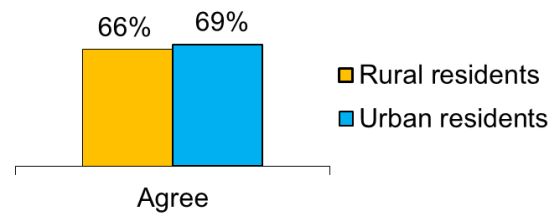
Rural Minnesotans:
Community Provides Diverse Cultural Opportunities and the Arts



Rural Minnesotans:
Agree Community Provides Diverse Cultural Opportunities and the Arts

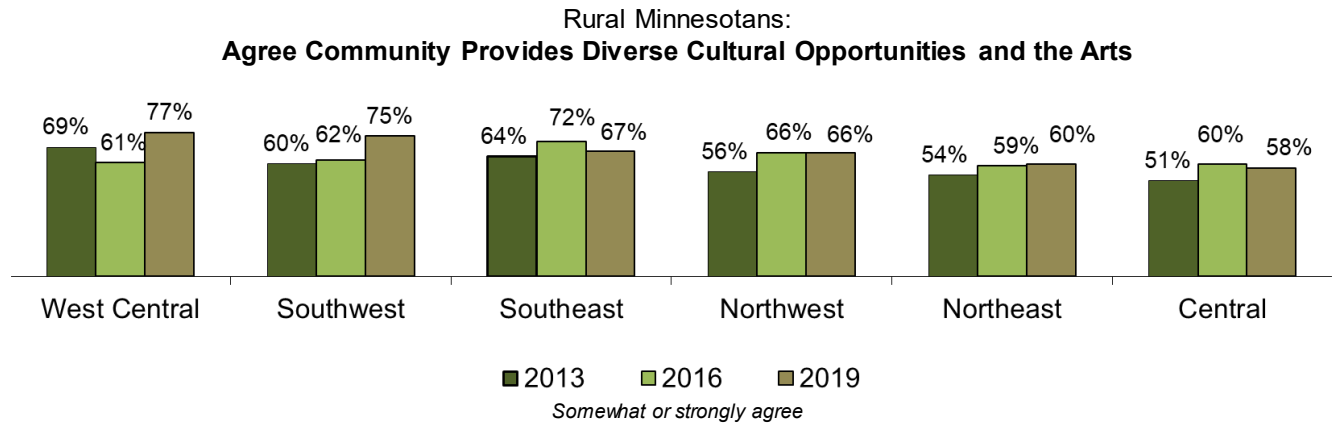


Agree Community Provides Diverse Cultural Opportunities and the Arts





While most rural Minnesota regions showed improvement in community performance regarding the arts in 2016 findings, Southeast and Central locales showed a slight decline. Those in the West Central (+16%) and Southwest (+13%) were the most positive about their communities' performance providing diverse culture and arts opportunities.





Overall, rural communities are perceived to not be meeting expectations to the most significant degree in two key areas: addressing opioids/drug abuse and economic development.

	Importance Mean	Performance Mean	Difference
Addressing opioids and drug abuse	3.4	2.8	-0.6
Economic development	3.3	2.8	-0.5
Adequate healthcare services	3.5	3.1	-0.4
Mental health issues	3.3	2.9	-0.4
Job opportunities	3.3	2.9	-0.4
Availability of childcare	3.3	2.9	-0.4
Affordable housing for all	3.2	2.8	-0.4

 **Significantly Below Expectations**

 **Below Expectations**

4 = High, 1 = Low

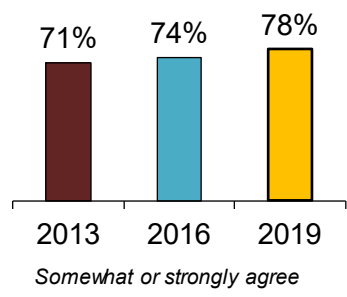


Optimism Exists About Rural Quality of Life

When asked how optimistic they feel about their community's future, nearly eight in 10 (78%) rural respondents felt positively, which shows a steady climb since 2013. Nineteen percent did not share that sentiment, however.

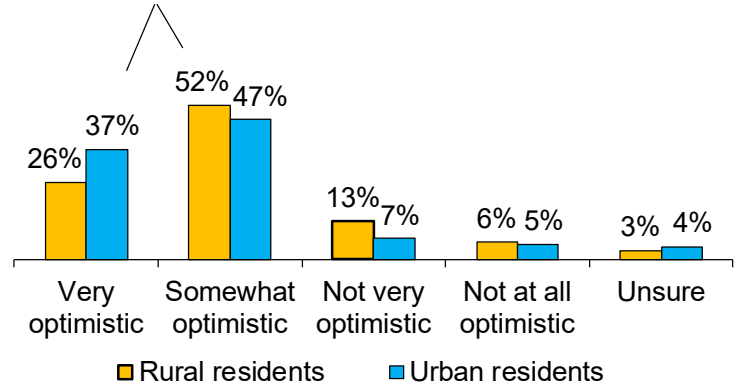
Those in urban areas showed slightly more optimism (84%), as did residents in the Central and Southwest regions.

Rural Minnesotans:
Optimistic About Future of Their Community

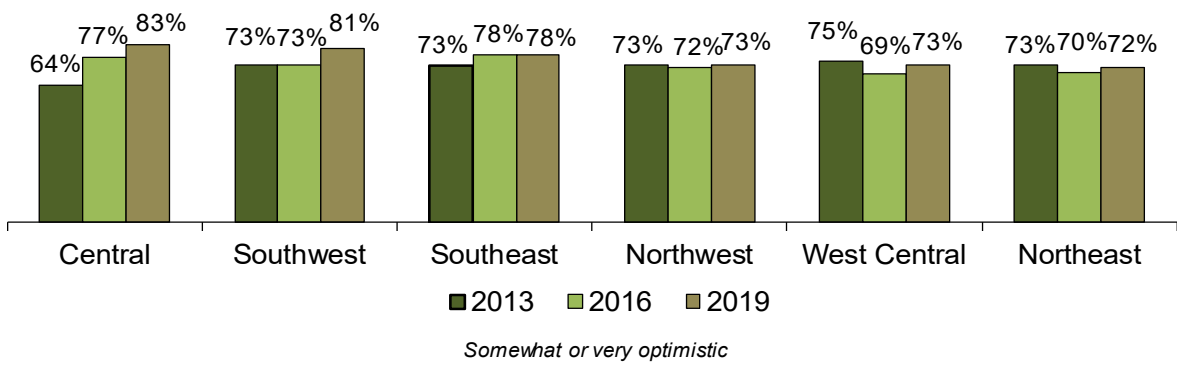


Optimistic About Future of Their Community

78% Rural vs. 84% Urban

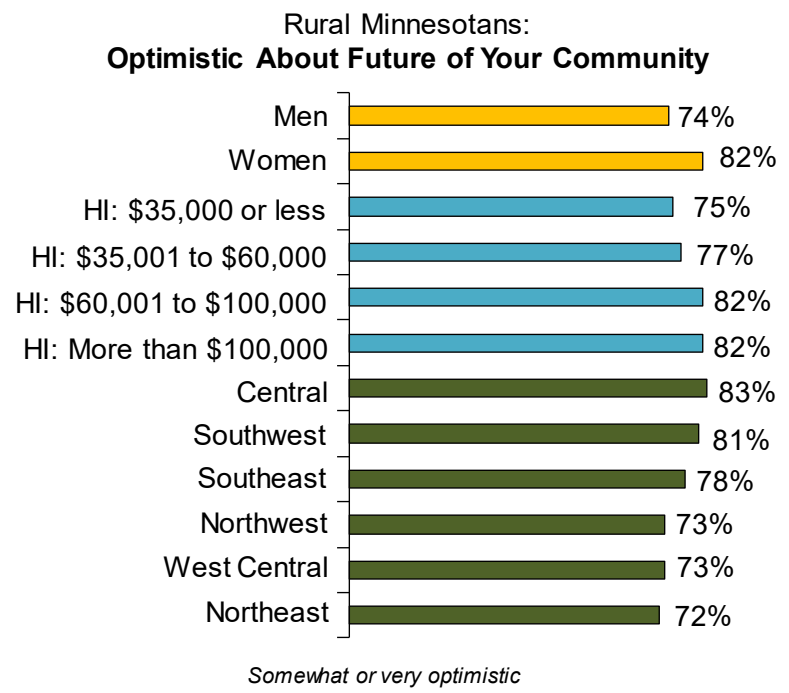


Rural Minnesotans:
Optimistic About Future of Their Community





Women were more optimistic than men about the future of their community. Those with higher incomes, as well as residents residing in the Central and Southwest regions also felt the most positively.

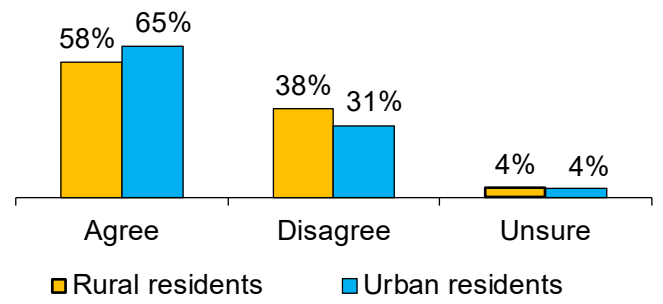




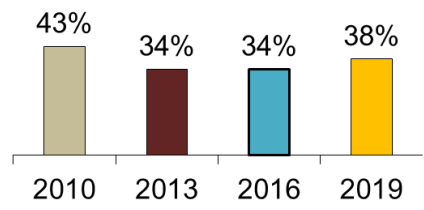
Rural Voice

Rural Minnesotans indicated a concern about the priority placed upon their interests. When asked if the needs and well-being of rural Minnesota communities are as important to legislators and policymakers as those of metropolitan cities, 38 percent felt that they are not – a four percent decrease in confidence from 2016 study findings. Fifty-eight percent were satisfied that their voice is being heard. Thirty-one percent of urban area residents also believe that rural Minnesota needs are not as important to lawmakers.

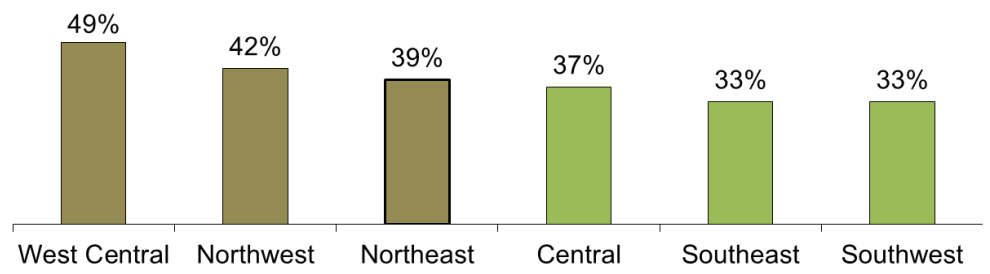
Needs and Well-being of Rural Communities are as Important to Legislators and Policymakers as Metropolitan Areas



Rural Minnesotans: Disagree Needs and Well-Being of Rural Communities are Important to Legislators and Policymakers



Rural Minnesotans: Disagree That Needs and Well-Being of Rural Minnesota Communities are as Important to Legislators and Policymakers as in Metro Counterparts

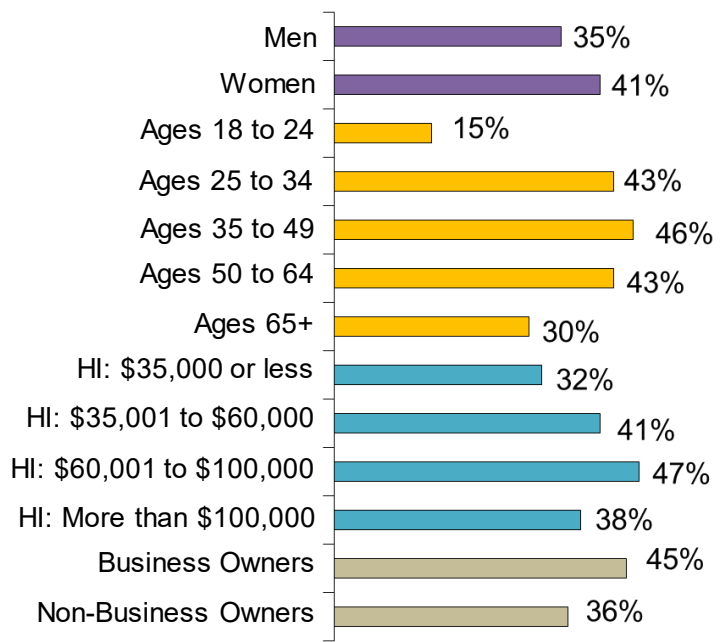


West Central, Northwest and Northeast Minnesota residents were the least likely to believe rural needs are of equivalent value to lawmakers as metropolitan areas. Those in the Central region showed the highest upswing in confidence from 2016 Rural Pulse findings (+8%).



The youngest and oldest rural residents (ages 18-24 and 65+) were the most likely age groups to believe the needs of rural communities are appropriately prioritized by policymakers. Those with household incomes of \$35,001 to \$100,000 were less likely to agree, as were women and business owners.

Rural Minnesotans:
**Disagree That Needs and Well-Being of Rural Minnesota Communities
Are As Important to Legislators and Policymakers
as in Metro Counterparts**

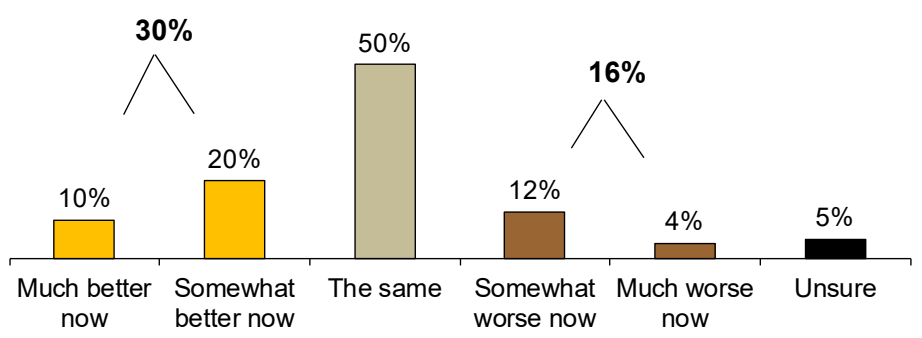




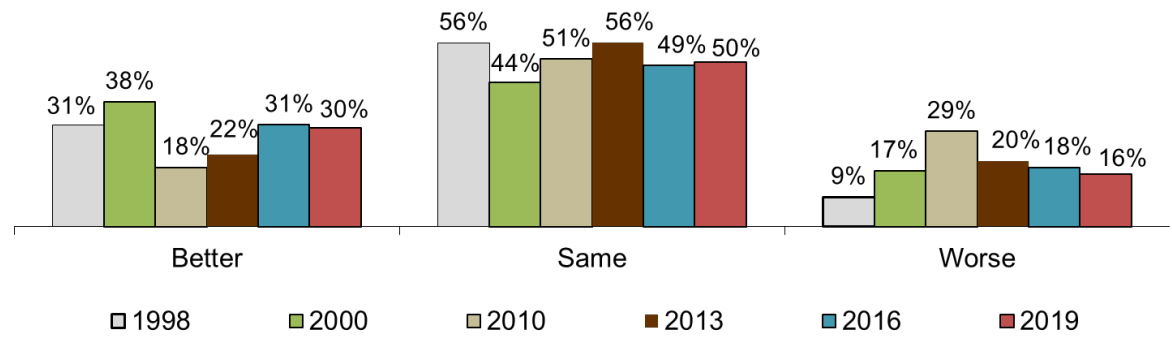
Economic Concerns Linger, But Indicate Optimism

Survey participants were asked to gauge the condition of their community's economy now compared to a year ago. Thirty percent of rural respondents said that they believed it had improved, half (50%) felt it stayed the same, and 16 percent indicated that their local economy had regressed over the last year. Urban respondents had similar results.

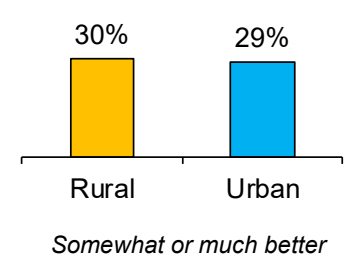
Rural Minnesotans:
Condition of Local Economy Compared to One Year Ago



Rural Minnesotans:
Condition of Local Economy Compared to One Year Ago



Local Economy Has Improved Over Past Year



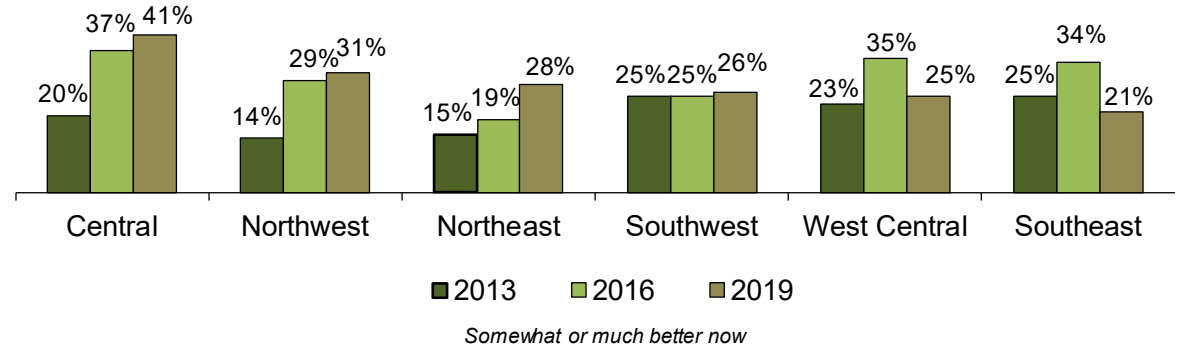


Those residing in the Southeast region were the most doubtful about improvement in the economy (-13% compared to 2016). West Central residents also were less agreeable (-10% compared to 2016).

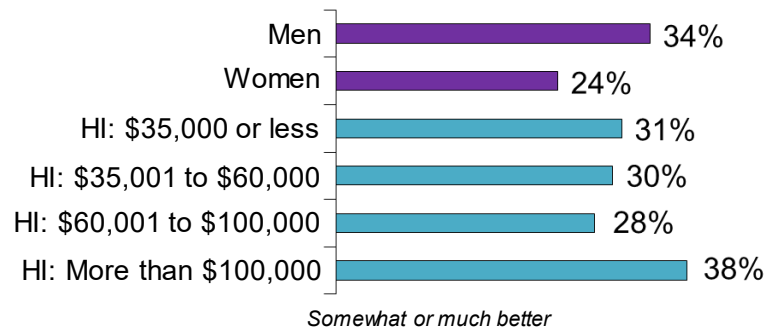
Central and Northwest region respondents were the most assured of improved local economy. The northeast showed the greatest gain (9%) over 2016.

Men and those with a household income of more than \$100,000 voiced the greatest confidence.

Rural Minnesotans:
Condition of Community's Economy Has Improved, Compared to a Year Ago



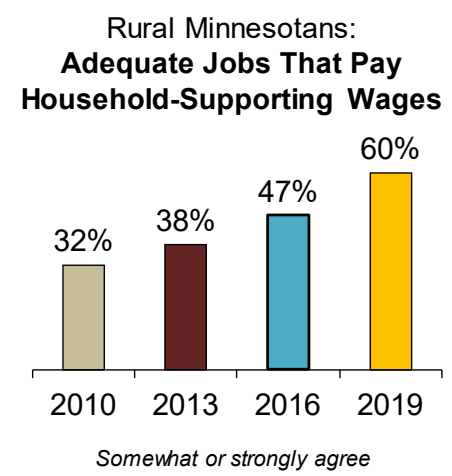
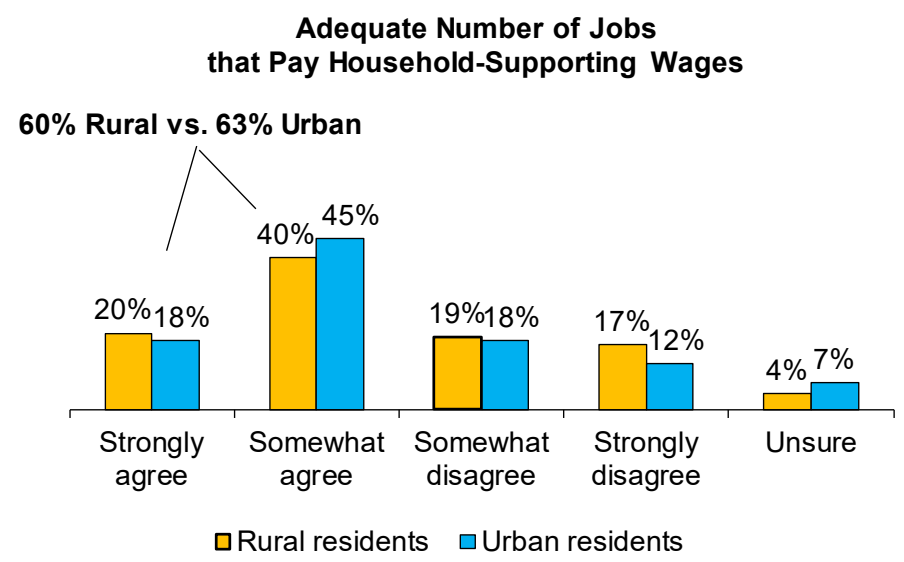
Rural Minnesotans:
Condition of Local Economy Has Improved Over Past Year





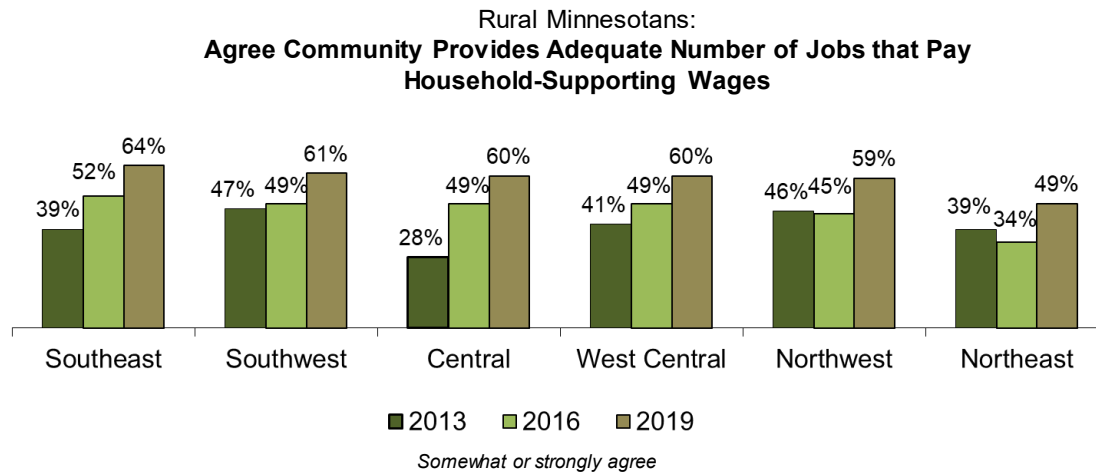
Jobs are Still a Concern, Though Improved

The belief that there are sufficient living-wage jobs increased 13 percentage points from Rural Pulse 2016, showing a significant sustained upswing since 2010 survey findings. There is still a lack of certainty by some, however; 36 percent of rural Minnesotans – and 30 percent of urban residents – feel that there are inadequate household-supporting job opportunities in their community.

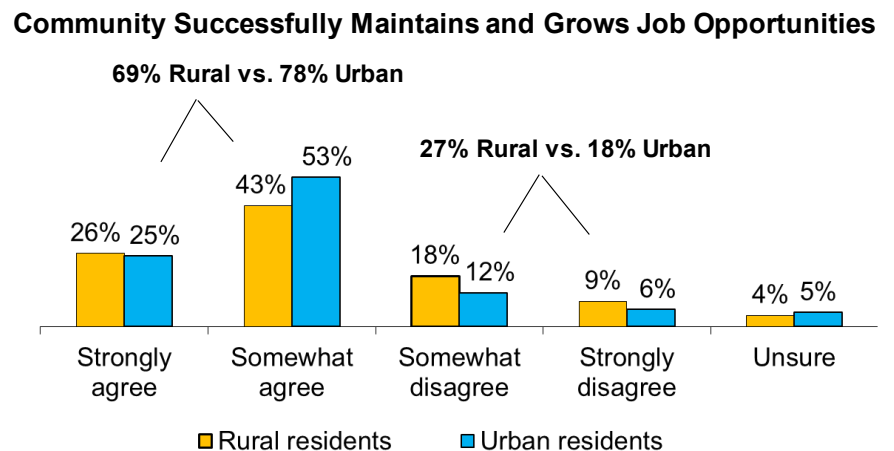




Those in Southeast Minnesota are the most likely to agree that they are afforded enough living-wage jobs (64%), that is an uptick in confidence of 12 percentage points from 2016. Those in Northern Minnesota were the least confident, while still significantly improved over 2016. The Central region showed the most dramatic increase in agreement since 2013.

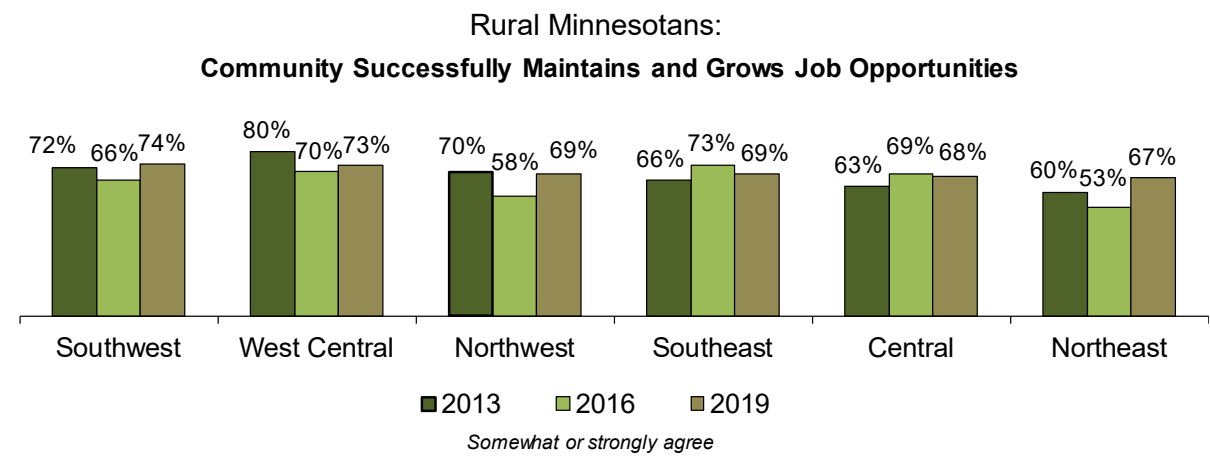


About seven in 10 (69%) rural Minnesotans – and 78 percent of urban area residents – believe that their community maintains and grows existing job opportunities. Twenty-seven percent of rural respondents – and 18 percent of those in urban cities – disagree.

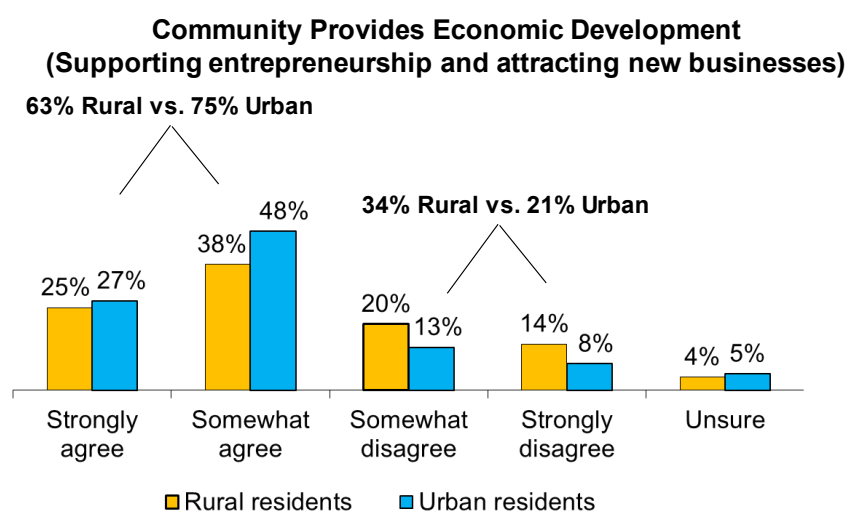




Residents in the Northeast region were the least likely to feel their community successfully maintains and grows existing jobs, even given the fact that they experienced the most significant upswing in sentiment (+14%) compared to 2016 Rural Pulse findings.



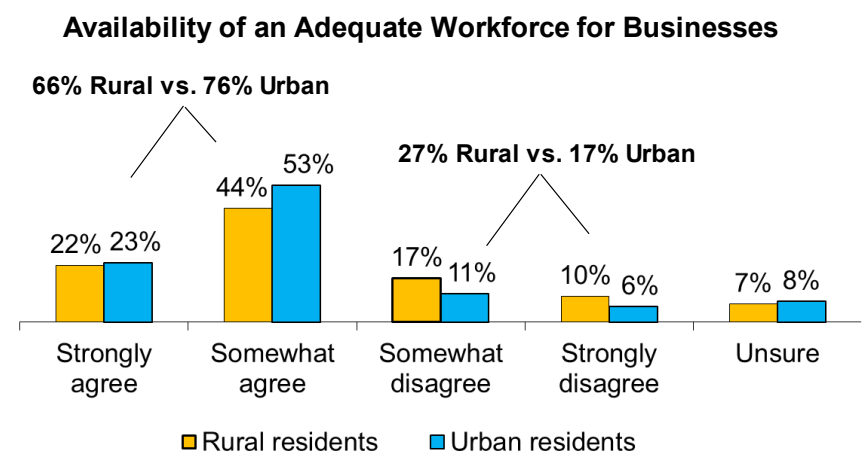
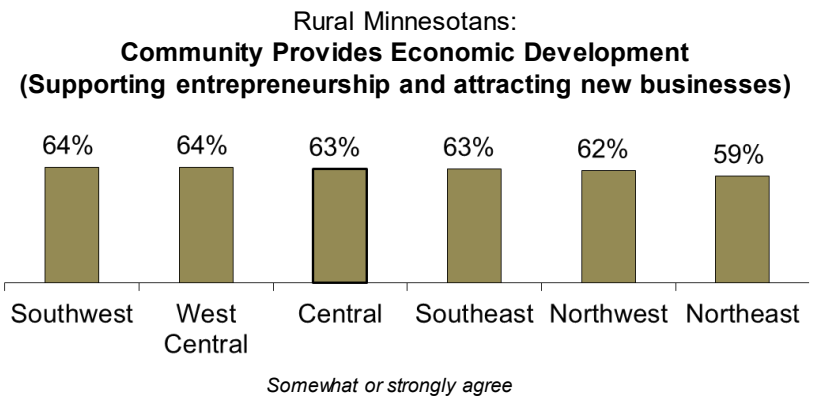
A third (34%) of rural Minnesotans – and 21 percent of urban area residents – believe that their community does not do enough to support economic growth through entrepreneurship and attracting new businesses. Sixty-three percent of rural respondents – and three-quarters (75%) of urban Minnesotans – feel positively about their community’s economic development efforts.





Those in the Southeast and West Central regions were the most inclined to believe that their community adequately promotes economic development, with the Northeast having less confidence.

When asked whether their community has an adequate workforce available, 27 percent of rural Minnesotans – and 17 percent of urban area residents – believe that their community does not possess enough workforce to assist the needs of local businesses. Two-thirds (66%) of rural respondents – and three-quarters (76%) of urban Minnesotans – feel their communities possess a sufficient labor pool.

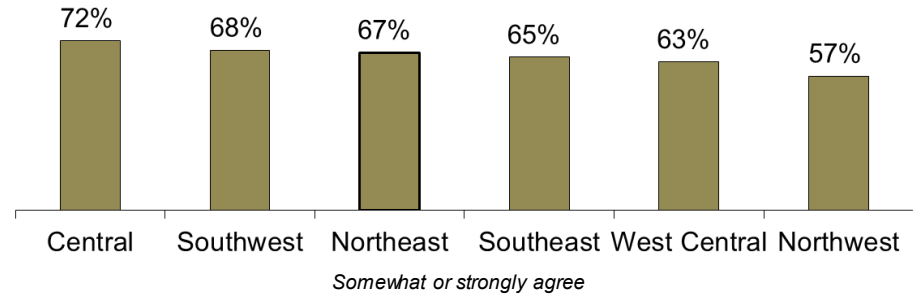




Those in the Central, Southwest and Northeast regions were the most apt to give good grades to their community regarding such, with the Northwest showing the most significant disagreement.

Personal demographics play a role in how the job and economic climate is perceived. Women in rural areas were the least confident regarding economic growth. Sentiment also varied by age.

Rural Minnesotans:
Availability of an Adequate Workforce for Businesses



Rural Minnesotans:
Disagree Community is Doing Well With Maintaining Jobs and Economic Development

	Men	Women
Adequate job opportunities that pay household-supporting wages	29%	43%
Economic development (Entrepreneurship, new businesses)	29%	38%
Maintaining and growing existing local job opportunities	24%	30%
Adequate workforce for businesses	14%	28%

Age					
	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Adequate job opportunities that pay household-supporting wages	30%	35%	39%	37%	35%
Maintaining and growing existing local job opportunities	25%	31%	33%	26%	21%
Economic development (Entrepreneurship, new businesses)	20%	40%	38%	36%	30%
Adequate workforce for businesses	20%	29%	34%	30%	20%

Somewhat or strongly disagree

■ Highest disagreement



Those with incomes of more than \$100,000 showed less confidence. Those who do not own a business felt less agreeable than business owners that rural communities offer living-wage jobs. Business owners are less confident that there is an adequate labor force available. The Northeast was the region most likely to show signs of struggle with regard to adequate jobs, wages and economic development.

Disagree Community is Doing Well Maintaining Jobs and Economic Development

Income				
	\$35,000 or less	\$35,001 to \$60,000	\$60,001 to \$100,000	More than \$100,000
Adequate workforce for businesses	21%	27%	31%	35%

	Business Owners	Non-Business Owners
Adequate job opportunities that pay household-supporting wages	29%	38%
Adequate workforce for businesses	33%	26%

	Southwest	Southeast	Central	West Central	Northwest	Northeast
Adequate job opportunities in my community that pay household-supporting wages	33%	32%	34%	37%	37%	48%
Maintaining and growing existing local job opportunities	23%	28%	27%	26%	29%	30%
Economic development	31%	34%	31%	35%	36%	38%

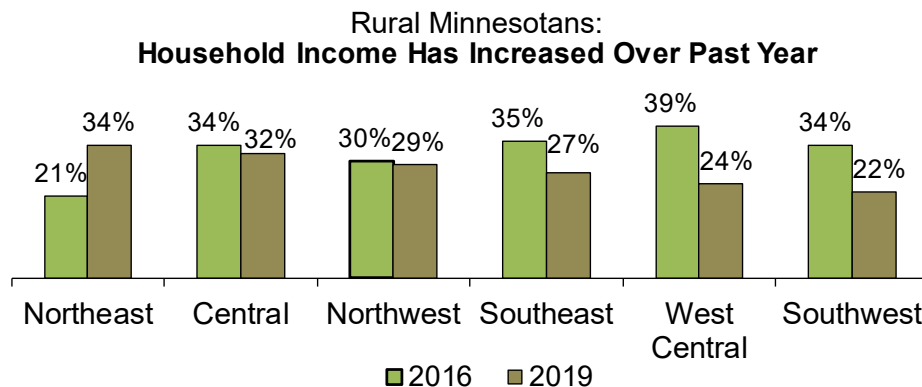
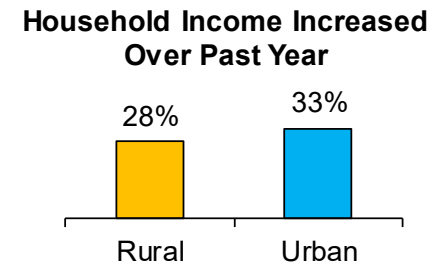
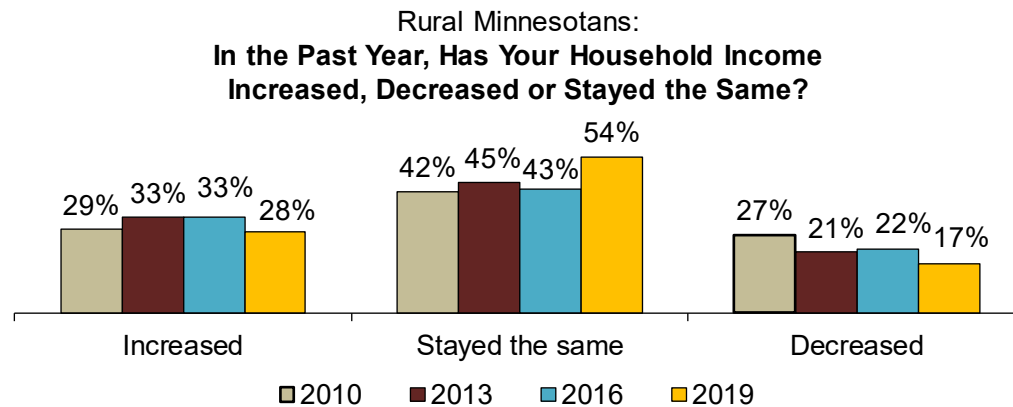
Somewhat or strongly disagree

■ Highest disagreement



Impact of the Economy

About a third of Minnesotans (28% rural, 33% urban) noted that their household income has increased over the past year – a decline in rural from 2016 study findings. Some rural households are still coping with a decrease in wages (17%). More than half (54%) said their household income did not change within the past 12 months.



Southwest and West Central residents were the least likely to say their income rose. Northeast is the only region to rise—and significantly.

Women are slightly more likely than men to say their household income has increased (32% vs. 26%).



Rural Minnesotans ages 35 to 49 and those with higher incomes were most likely to have paycheck gains, while those with the lowest incomes (\$35,000 or less) were most likely to have been impacted negatively in the financial realm.

One in 10 (10%) rural residents – five percentage points fewer than 2016 Rural Pulse findings – said that someone in their household lost their job. Job loss impacted 13 percent of urban Minnesotans.

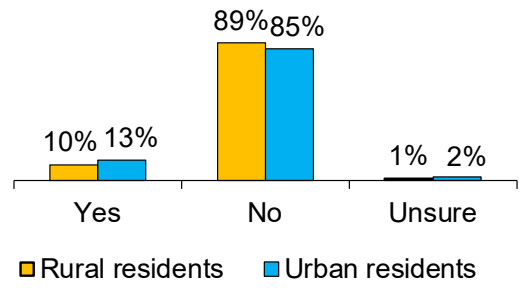
Rural Minnesotans:
In the Past Year, Has Your Household Income Increased, Decreased or Stayed the Same?

Age					
	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Increased	32%	37%	42%	28%	13%
Stayed the same	59%	44%	46%	49%	67%
Decreased	9%	18%	11%	21%	18%

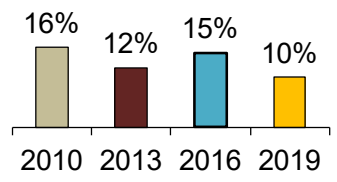
Income				
	\$35,000 or less	\$35,001 to \$60,000	\$60,001 to \$100,000	More than \$100,000
Increased	13%	21%	35%	56%
Stayed the same	61%	57%	56%	33%
Decreased	25%	22%	9%	11%

■ Highest agreement

Household Job Loss in Past Year

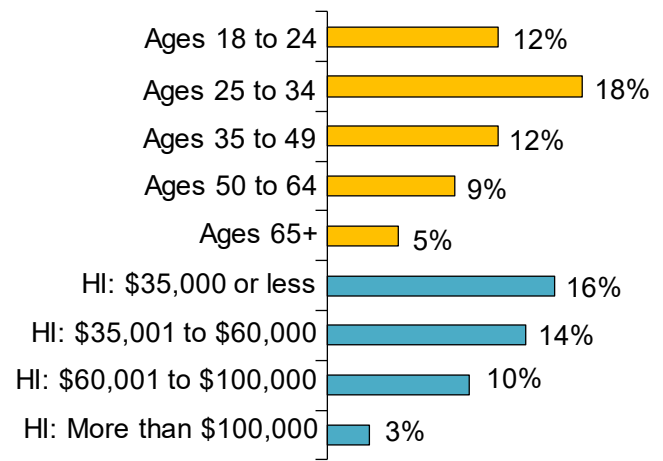


Rural Minnesotans:
Someone in Household Lost a Job Over Past Year





Rural Minnesotans:
**Someone in Household Lost a Job
Within Past Year**

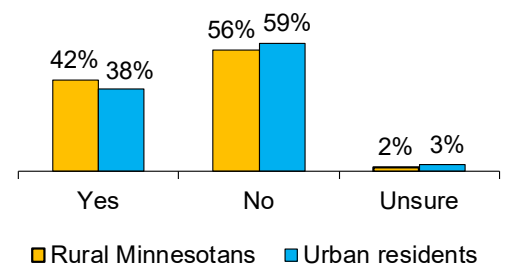


Rural residents most likely to have experienced a job loss were between the ages of 25 and 34, and those with lower household incomes.

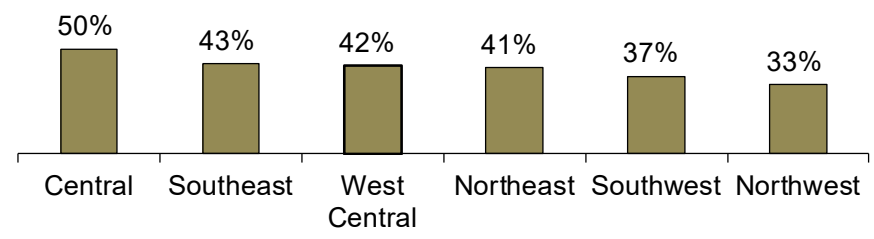
A new question to the Rural Pulse study this year was whether residents had ever experienced poverty. Forty-two percent of rural residents – and 38 percent of those in urban areas – said they have at some point in their life. More than half said that they had not (56% rural, 59% urban). [Note: Definition of poverty was left to personal interpretation.]

Regionally, those in Central Minnesota were the most likely to have said they have experienced poverty. Residents in the Northwest and Southwest sectors of the state were the least likely to have said such was true.

Ever Experienced Poverty



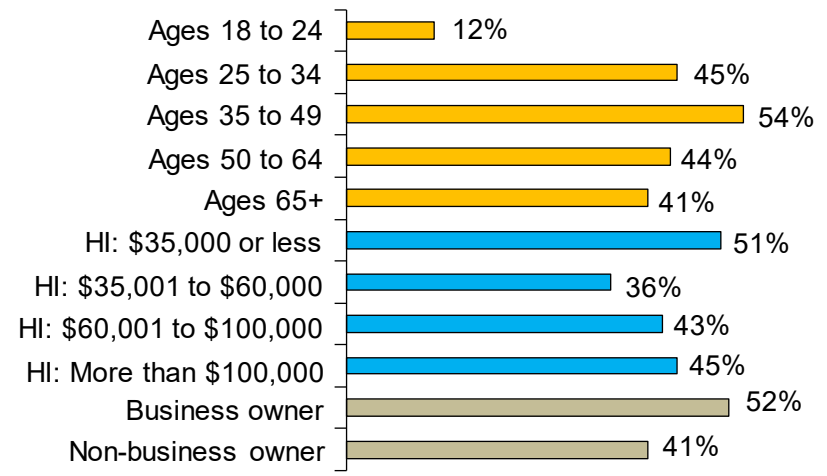
Rural Minnesotans:
Ever Experienced Poverty





There was wide variation to this question when it came to demographics. The youngest residents in rural Minnesota (ages 18-24) were by far the least likely age group to have said that they have experienced poverty. Those with the lowest incomes (\$35,000 or less) were most likely to have cited having lived, or currently live in, hardship.

**Rural Minnesotans:
Have Experienced Poverty**

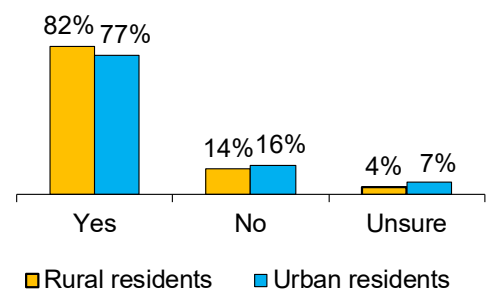




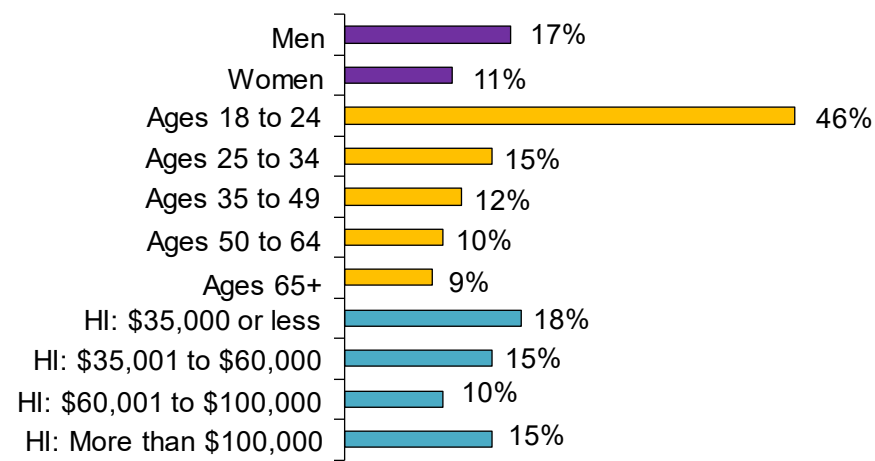
Migration

Some 14 percent of rural Minnesotans – and 16 percent of urban area residents – said that they do not expect to be living in their current community five years from now. Markedly among rural Minnesotans, nearly half (46%) of the youngest surveyed generation (ages 18 to 24) said that they have considered relocation.

Expect to Live in Same Community Five Years From Now

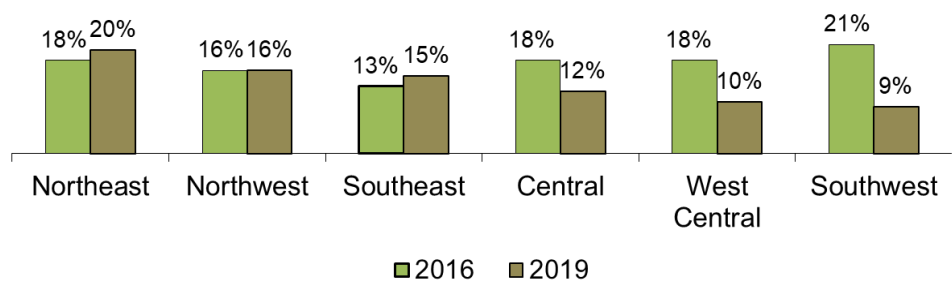


Rural Minnesotans: Do Not Expect to Live In Their Community Five Years From Now



Rural Minnesotans:

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

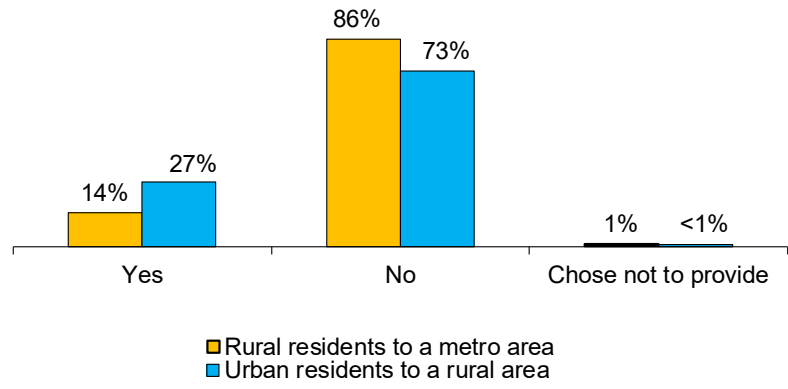


Northeast residents were most likely to expect relocation. Notably, those in the Southwest, West Central and Central sectors lowered their relocation possibility by significant margins compared to 2016 study findings.

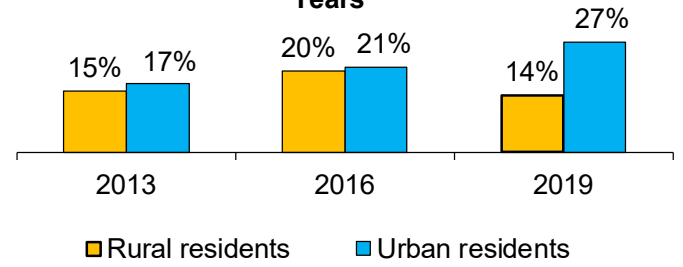


Fourteen percent of Minnesotans in rural areas indicated that they have considered leaving their community for a metro area within the past two years, down from 2016 findings (20%). Urban residents, however, were nearly twice as likely (27%) to have said they weighed their option of migrating to a less-populated, rural area – a significant increase since 2016.

Considered Moving Within the Past Two Years

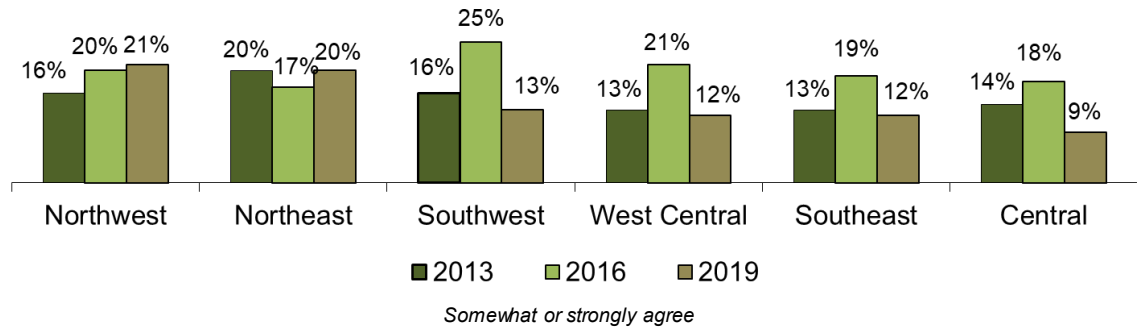


Considered Moving Within the Past Two Years



Those residing in the northern area of the state were also the most willing to migrate. Residents of the Central, Southeast, West Central and Southwest regions significantly decreased their thoughts toward relocating compared to Rural Pulse 2016 findings.

Rural Minnesotans: Considered Moving to Metro Area Within Past Two Years



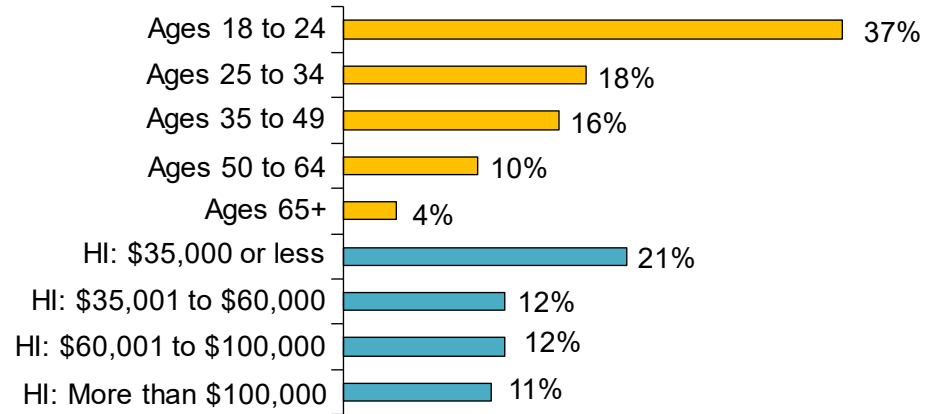


Rural residents ages 18 to 24 were significantly more likely than their older counterparts to have considered such a move, as well as those with the lowest incomes (\$35,000 or less).

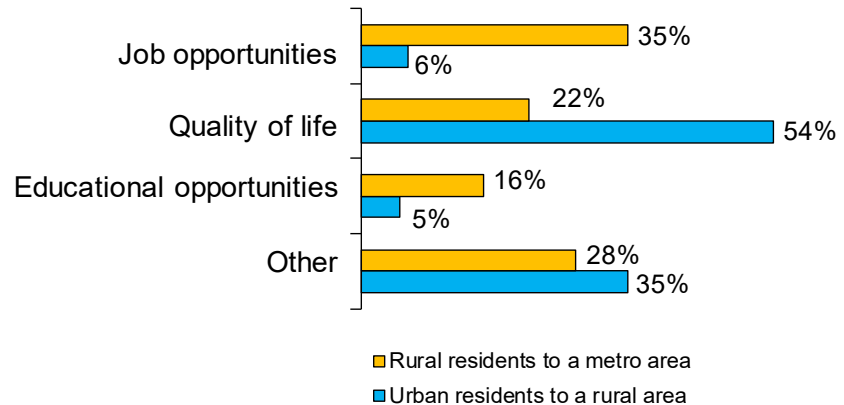
Of those who have contemplated a move, more than a third (35%) of rural residents, compared to only six percent of those in urban areas, said it would be to pursue job opportunities. Quality of life was cited as the primary factor for more than half (54%) of urban residents and 22 percent of those in rural areas. Educational opportunities was also noted by a few as a consideration for a potential move, especially those currently in rural parts of the state (16% rural, 5% urban). Other responses included being closer to family and housing availability, among others. *(See Appendix for full listing of other responses.)*

Job opportunities was the most significant migration motivator for all rural regions with the exception of those residing in the Northwest, who cited they would be seeking a better quality of life.

Rural Minnesotans:
**Considered Moving to Larger City or Metropolitan Area
Within Past Two Years**



**Of Those who Considered Moving,
Main Reason for Doing So**





Women were much more likely to have said the pursuit of job opportunities would be their main goal for migration, while men were more likely than women to identify quality of life and educational opportunities as a reason to consider a move.

Job opportunities were at the top of the list for ages 25 to 49, while older respondents leaned toward quality of life. The younger demographic (ages 18 to 24) were by far the most likely to have said educational opportunities were the main reason for potentially making a move away from their rural community.

Income-wise, jobs topped the list for those making \$100,000 or less, while seeking lifelong learning opportunities was by far the motivator for rural Minnesotans with the highest incomes.

Rural Minnesotans:
Of Those Considering Moving to a Metro Area, Main Reason for Doing So

Region						
	Southwest	Southeast	Central	West Central	Northwest	Northeast
Job opportunities	47%	24%	36%	39%	27%	34%
Quality of life	10%	16%	25%	35%	33%	19%
Educational opportunities	20%	15%	10%	0%	20%	24%

	Men	Women
Job opportunities	28%	44%
Quality of life	23%	17%
Educational opportunities	19%	7%

Age					
	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Job opportunities	27%	54%	56%	19%	0%
Quality of life	14%	23%	20%	24%	34%
Educational opportunities	32%	7%	9%	17%	0%

Income				
	\$35,000 or less	\$35,001 to \$60,000	\$60,001 to \$100,000	More than \$100,000
Job opportunities	35%	43%	50%	21%
Quality of life	19%	18%	23%	11%
Educational opportunities	4%	13%	6%	37%

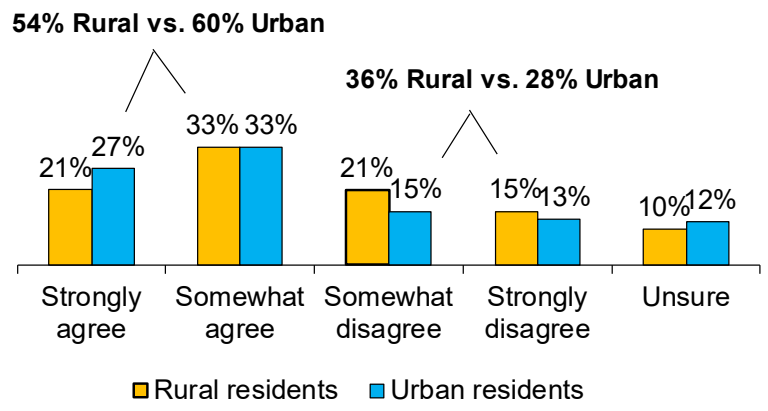
Top reason within demographic



Leadership Composition

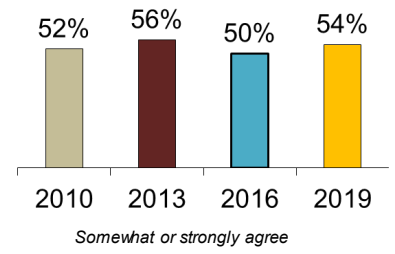
Rural Pulse study findings showed a slight shift from 2016 to 2019 in rural resident opinions about diversity within community leadership roles. More than half (54%) of rural residents – and 60 percent of urban Minnesotans – believe that local community leadership encompasses people from differing backgrounds; however, many still did not agree (36% rural, 28% urban).

People from Diverse Backgrounds Fill Leadership Roles Within the Community

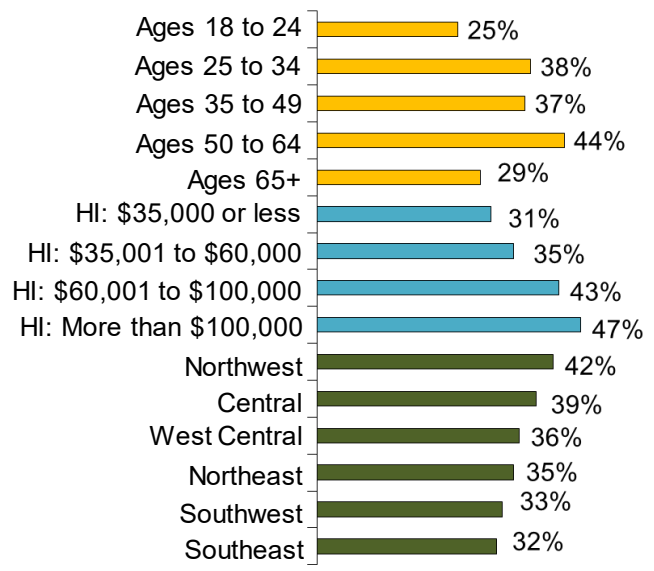


Responses varied by age. Rural residents with higher household incomes were more likely to disagree that leadership within their community is diverse. Those residing in the Northwest and Central regions were also less confident in local leadership diversity.

Rural Minnesotans: Agree People From Diverse Backgrounds Fill Leadership Roles



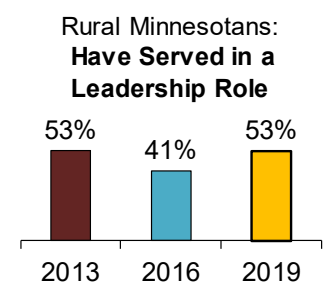
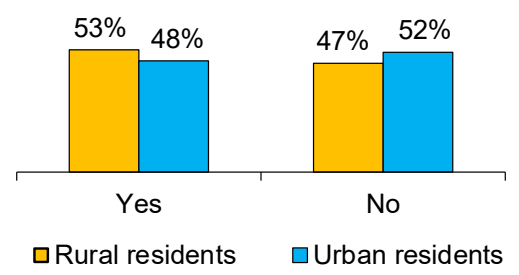
Rural Minnesotans: Disagree that People from Diverse Backgrounds Fill Leadership Roles Within Their Community





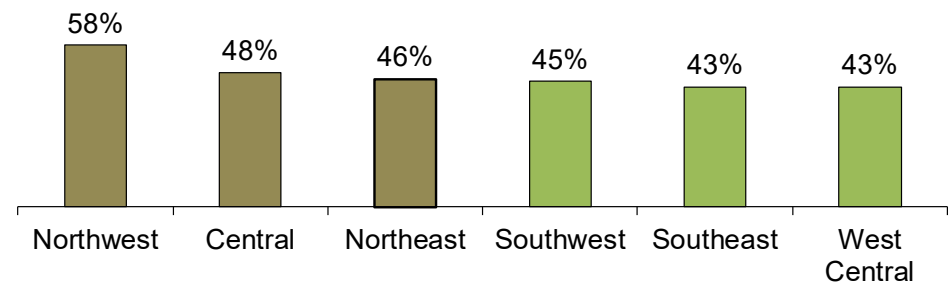
More than half (53%) of rural residents said that they have served in a leadership role, whether it be youth sports, city government, a local nonprofit organization or other. This constitutes a significant 15 percentage point increase since 2016 study findings. Urban area residents were slightly less likely to have said that they have served as a local leader (48% urban, 53% rural).

Served in a Community Leadership Role



Northwest region respondents were significantly more likely to have said they serve, or have served, in some leadership capacity.

Rural Minnesotans: Have Not Served in Leadership Role

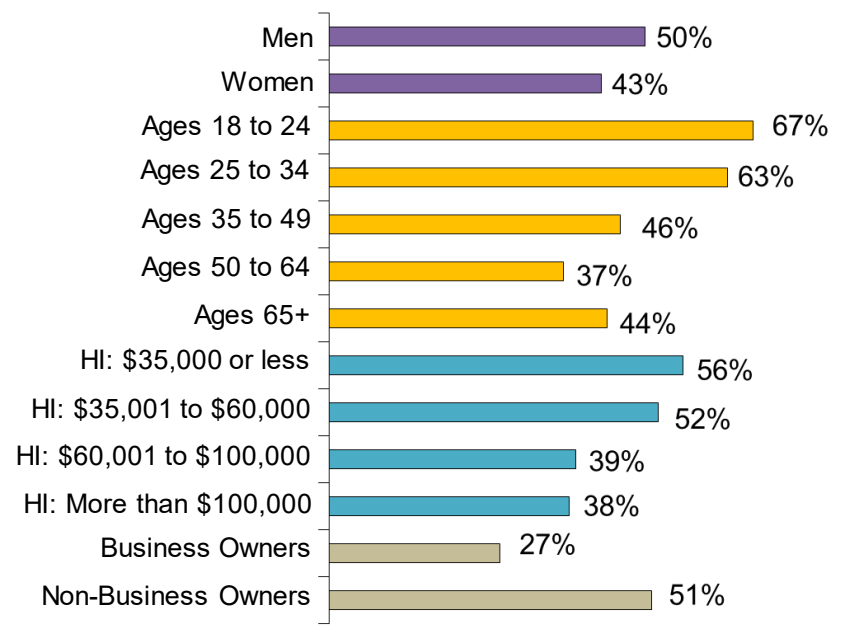




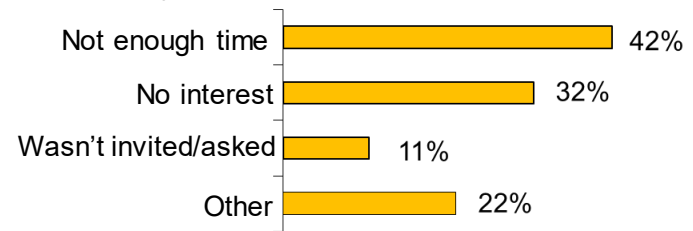
Demographics seemingly play a role in the likelihood to serve. Women, residents ages 35+, and those with incomes of more than \$60,000 were the most likely to have said that they have served in leadership. Entrepreneurs were nearly twice as likely as those who do not own a business to have cited leadership experience.

More than two in five (42%) who had not served as a leader said that the primary reason was lack of time. A third (32%) said they would have no interest in doing such. About one in 10 (11%) noted that they have never been invited to participate as a leader. Another 22 percent gave other reasons such as a being new to the area or having a disability, among others. *(See Appendix for full listing of other responses.)*

**Rural Minnesotans:
Have Not Served in Leadership Role**



Why Haven't Served in a Leadership Role



*Multiple responses allowed;
those who have not served*



Demographically, across the board, all ages and incomes cited not having time to serve as a significant factor.

Although many had not served in a leadership role within their community to date, about half (51%) of rural residents expressed at least some interest in doing so, although that was an 11 percentage point decline compared to 2016 study findings. Forty-one percent indicated that they would definitely be interested in an invitation to serve, and another 10 percent said they might consider such an opportunity. Forty-nine percent said they had no interest.

Why Haven't Served in a Leadership Role

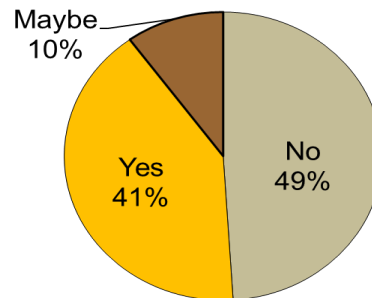
Age					
	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Wasn't invited/asked	15%	4%	7%	3%	4%
No interest	15%	25%	12%	13%	15%
Not enough time	34%	26%	19%	17%	16%

Income				
	\$35,000 or less	\$35,001 to \$60,000	\$60,001 to \$100,000	More than \$100,000
Wasn't invited/asked	16%	10%	11%	8%
No interest	37%	28%	33%	20%
Not enough time	39%	45%	47%	67%

Multiple responses allowed; those who have not served

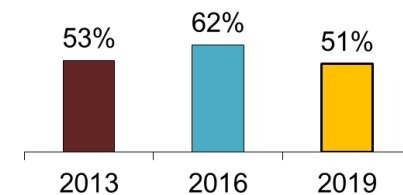
■ Top reason by demographic group

Rural Minnesotans: Would You Consider Serving if Asked?



Those who have not served

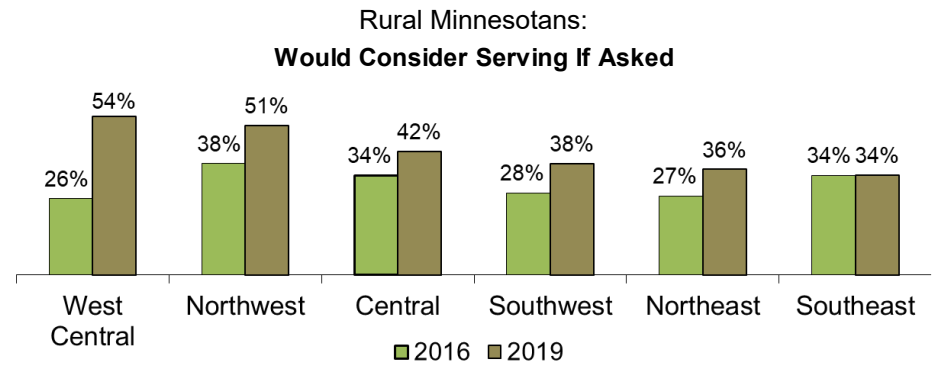
Rural Minnesotans: Would At Least Consider Serving in a Leadership Role if Asked



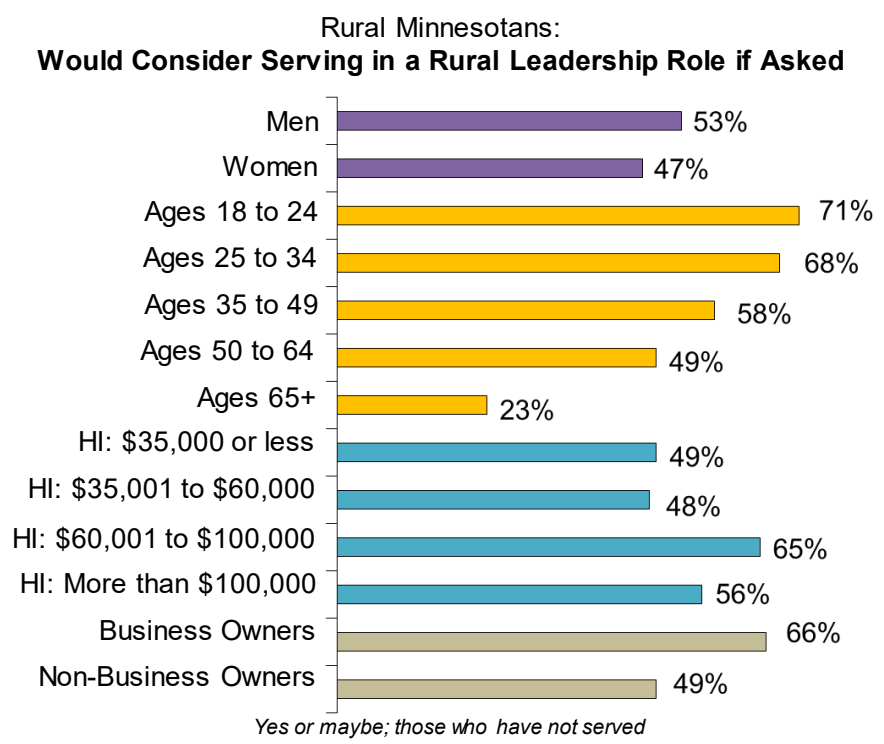
Yes or maybe; those who have not served



Residents of West Central Minnesota were more than twice as likely as 2016 study findings to say that they would definitely consider serving in a leadership role. Northwest residents also gained 13 percentage points in this area since 2016. Survey respondents from the Southeast sector of the state were the least likely to have been definitive about considering a leadership role, if asked to participate.



Those who have not served in leadership in the past



Gender, age, income and whether or not the person owns a business plays a role in contemplation of serving in rural community leadership. Men, younger residents, those with household incomes of \$60,001 to \$100,000 and business owners were the most likely to say they would at least consider a leadership role if asked.

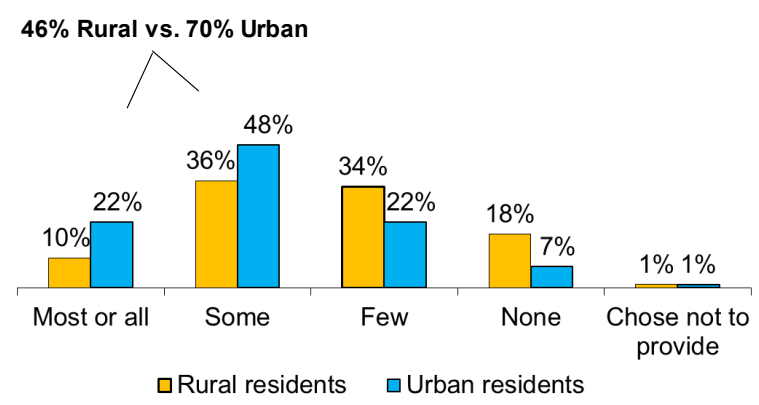


Inclusion

When asked how many of their close friends are of a different race or culture, close to half (46%) of rural Minnesotans reported at least some are. Even more urban Minnesotans (70%) cited close friendships within other racial or cultural groups. Fifty-two percent of rural residents – and 29 percent of their urban counterparts – said that they had few, if any, close friends from other cultures. One percent chose not to respond.

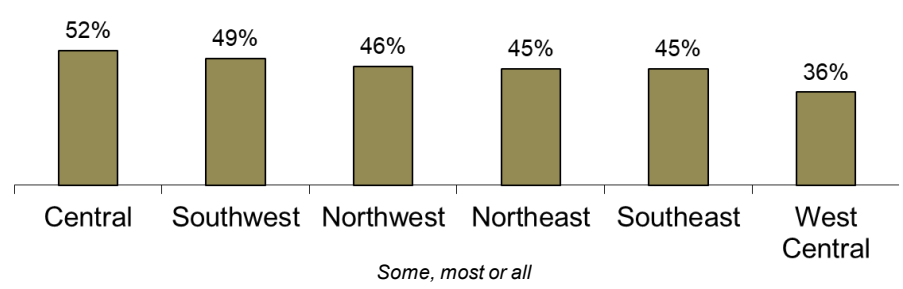
Regionally, respondents in West Central Minnesota were the least likely to have a racially/culturally diverse friend group. Those in the Central and Southwest regions possessed the highest inclusivity within their personal inner circles.

Have at Least Some Close Friends of a Different Race or Culture



Rural Minnesotans:

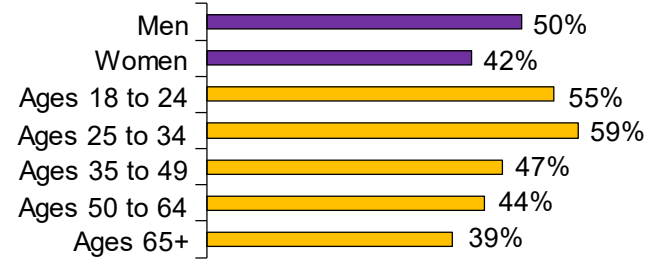
Have At Least Some Close Friends of Different Race or Culture





Demographics play a role as well. Men and younger rural residents were more apt to be inclusive with regard to their close friendships.

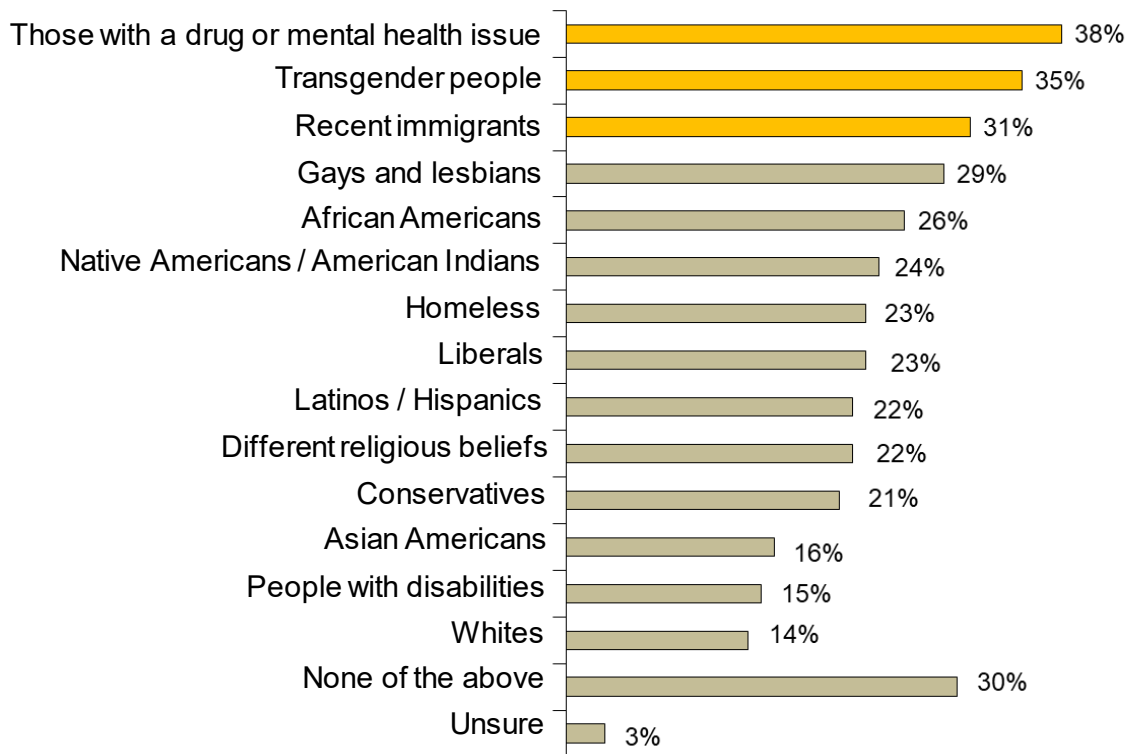
Rural Minnesotans:
Have at Least Some Close Friends of a Different Race or Culture





Another new question for Rural Pulse 2019 was asking Minnesota residents which groups of individuals experience discrimination, bias or harassment within their community. Nearly four in 10 (38%) rural respondents identified those with a drug or mental health issue among those most commonly mentioned, followed by transgender individuals (35%), recent immigrants (31%) and gays and lesbians (29%). A special Rural Report highlighting the perspectives of racial and cultural groups also will be available at ruralpulse.org.

Rural Minnesotans:
**Groups that Experience Discrimination, Bias or Harassment
in Their Local Community**

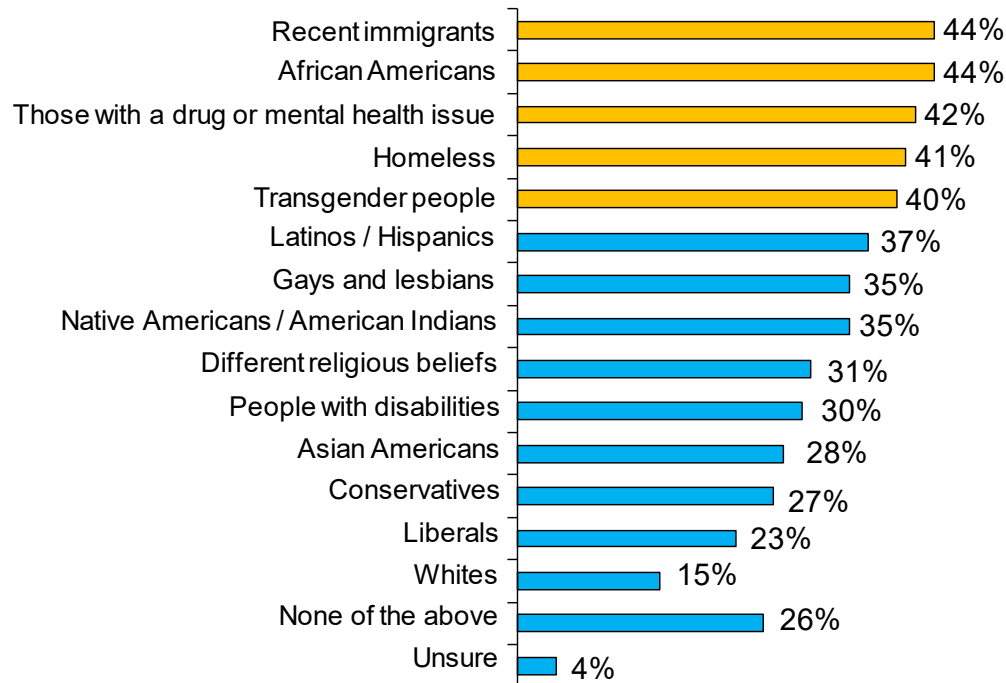


Multiple responses allowed



More urban residents feel discrimination is prevalent than those in rural Minnesota for nearly all groups. Those they most likely felt experience discrimination are recent immigrants and African Americans (44% each), those with a drug or mental health issue (42%), homeless individuals (41%) and the transgender population (40%). Thirty-seven percent felt Hispanics experience bias or harassment, followed by gays/lesbians and Native Americans (35% each), different religions (31%), people with disabilities (30%), Asian Americans (28%) and those with conservative beliefs (27%). Urban respondents felt the groups least likely to experience discrimination were Liberals (23%) and Caucasians (15%). About a quarter (26%) did not feel discrimination is experienced by any particular group, and four percent were unsure.

Urban Minnesotans:
**Groups that Experience Discrimination, Bias or Harassment
in Their Local Community**





Responses varied somewhat by region. Liberals were named as one of the top groups who is likely to experience bias or harassment in the Northwest region. Residents in the southern part of the state felt most strongly that Hispanics experience bias. Those in the Southwest and Central regions added African Americans to the list. Native Americans were felt to be a primary group who experience discrimination by those in the Northeast.

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

Multiple Responses Allowed

Northwest

1. Those with drug or mental health issues
2. Recent immigrants
3. Transgender people
4. Liberals

West Central

1. Transgender people
2. Those with drug or mental health issues
3. Gays and lesbians
4. Recent immigrants

Southwest

1. Those with drug or mental health issues
2. Transgender people
3. African Americans, Latinos/Hispanics

Northeast

1. Those with drug or mental health issues
2. Native Americans / American Indians
3. Gays and lesbians
4. Transgender people

Central

1. Transgender people
2. Those with drug or mental health issues
3. Recent immigrants
4. African Americans

Southeast

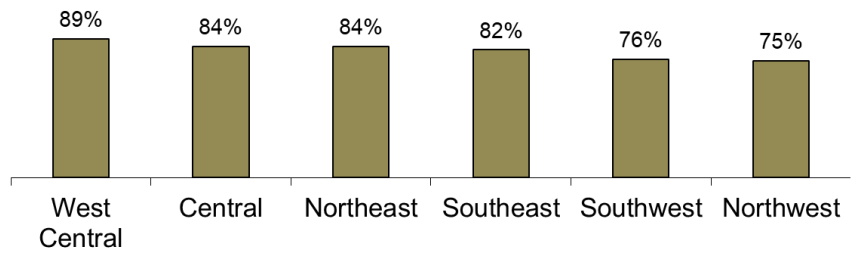
1. Those with drug or mental health issues
2. Transgender people
3. Gays and lesbians
4. Latinos/Hispanics



When asked if they feel people in their community are able to stand up to hatred and discrimination if they see it occur, more than eight in 10 (82%) rural residents agreed. Twelve percent disagreed and six percent were unsure. Urban residents had similar beliefs.

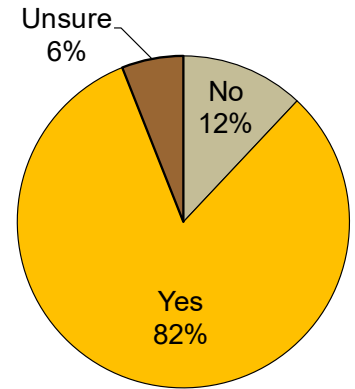
Residents in the Northwest and Southwest regions were less likely to have felt that community residents have the ability to stand up to discrimination if they see it happening. Those in West Central Minnesota held the highest confidence.

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

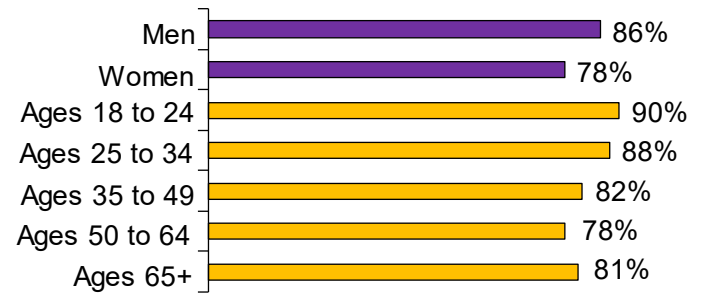


Demographically, men and younger rural residents were the most confident that local people are able to stand up to hatred and discrimination.

Do They Believe People in Their Community are Able to Stand Up to Hatred And Discrimination When They See it Occur?



Rural Minnesotans: Believe People are Able to Stand Up to Hatred and Discrimination



APPENDIX



Blandin Foundation 2019 Rural Pulse Verbatims: Rural/Urban

47. Why have you not served in leadership?

Rural

- New to the area – 9
- Disabled/health issues – 9
- Age – 4
- Retired – 3
- On the road – 2
- Barely care
- Bedroom community; if not a native, you are an outsider
- Busy with family and live on a farm
- Busy working
- Conflicts with employment
- Dairy farmer
- Depends who you know
- Didn't think I was smart enough
- Different board
- Don't belong to anything around here
- Good ol' boy town
- Hard time hearing
- Have no desire
- Have two jobs and a baby
- I haven't seen the necessity
- I ran for school board and wasn't elected
- I travel extensively for work
- I worked
- I'm a private person
- I'm an outlaw
- I'm busy working so I can pay for my healthcare
- In an area
- In army
- Kids
- Like being at home
- Need help
- Never occurred to me
- No reason
- Not confident of skill to fulfill the roll
- Not good at it
- Not involved

- Not my thing
- Not religious
- Not social
- Nursing and retail
- Other guy got more votes
- Sick wife
- Small kids
- Something else
- They wouldn't let me
- Too busy working, raising a family
- Unsure
- Volunteer, but not in a leadership position
- Work
- Worked all my life

Urban

- New to the area – 8
- Disabled – 3
- Retired – 2
- I just haven't – 2
- No one voted for me
- Our society is biased older white males
- I prefer to work by myself rather than lead others
- Little bit of everything
- Just a common housewife
- There isn't a whole lot of need in rural
- Worked full-time and had a disabled husband
- Raising kids
- I am outside the city
- Move on
- Just not able to
- People in leadership have businesses . . . people who have money
- I'm 87 years old
- I was working a lot
- I'm too old and worked all the time
- I've been involved with organizations, just not in a leadership role
- I was more of follower
- Better as a helper
- Timing
- Never heard about it
- Family first
- Haven't pursued
- Rather this is done by the elders
- Not my thing
- It's not for me
- I got sick
- Busy raising kids and working
- Haven't had the opportunity or the interest

- Not a leader
- I don't think it matches who I am

50. What would you say was the main reason you have considered moving?

Rural

- Closer to family – 9
- Retirement – 2
- Kid and opportunities
- Something else
- Reduce mileage to work
- Taxes
- Infrastructure
- Dating pool and job opportunities
- Like country
- Change of pace
- Another because its warmer
- Job opportunities and finances
- Combo of all, city is more of a cultural hub
- Relative passing
- Weather
- No growth in the town, taxes are very high, no business and school is declining
- I recently widowed
- Combination reasons
- Closer to family
- All of the above and family
- Considered moving to a different state
- Going south because it's so cold here
- Advanced age; downsizing
- Personal
- More private family structure
- Warmer climate

Urban

- Closer to family – 4
- Retirement – 4
- Taxes – 4
- Climate – 3
- A farm girl
- Access to nature
- All but education
- Culture
- Downsizing
- Expense
- Having more space around my house and the freedom to do what you want
- Houses are cheaper up north
- I grew up in the country
- I have dogs and want room for them

- I like my space and don't want to be bothered
- I like solitude and less people
- Immigrants
- More space
- Mostly my husband
- Move in with boyfriend
- New aspect of life
- No more kids
- Not represented by city
- Smaller town, slower pace
- Something else
- To live in the country
- Unsure
- Wildlife

59. How would you describe your ethnic and cultural background?

Rural

- American – 4
- Diverse
- Lot of things
- 50/50

Urban

- Mid-Eastern

72. How would you describe yourself today . . .

Urban

- Both genders

Russell Herder

275 Market Street, Suite 319
Minneapolis, MN 55405

612.455.2360