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MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN MINNESOTA: ENVIRONMENT • FOOD & AGRICULTURE • COMMUNITIES • FAMILIES • YOUTH

# Rewriting the Rural Narrative

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## DIY TOOLS FOR YOU

http://z.umn.edu/ruralMNhousing

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## What would I want to know about demographics if I was working on housing in my community?

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## RESPONSE

I would want to know about:

1. How has our population changed over time? (Where have we been)
2. What's the current situation (where do people live and work)?
3. Where are new people coming from?
4. Where are we headed?
5. What can I do to get more people to choose my community?

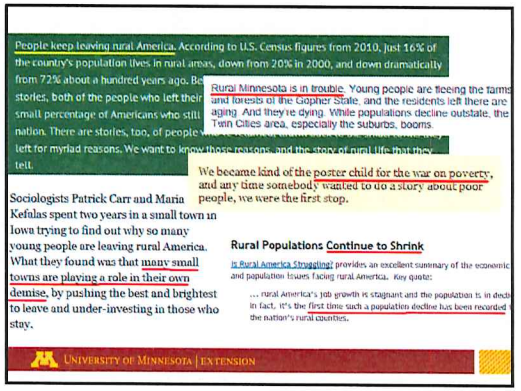
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## WHERE HAVE WE BEEN?

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People keep leaving rural America. According to U.S. Census figures from 2010, just 16% of the country's population lives in rural areas, down from 20% in 2000, and down dramatically from 72% about a hundred years ago. Be
stories, both of the people who left their
small percentage of Americans who still
nation. There are stories, too, of people
left for myriad reasons. We want to know those reasons, and the story of rural life that they tell.

Rural Minnesota is in trouble. Young people are fleeing the farms and forests of the Gopher State, and the residents left there are aging. And they're dying. While populations decline outstate, the Twin Cities area, especially the suburbs, booms.

We became kind of the poster child for the war on poverty, and any time somebody wanted to do a story about poor people, we were the first stop.

Sociologists Patrick Carr and Maria Kefalas spent two years in a small town in Iowa trying to find out why so many young people are leaving rural America. What they found was that many small towns are playing a role in their own demise, by pushing the best and brightest to leave and under-investing in those who stay.

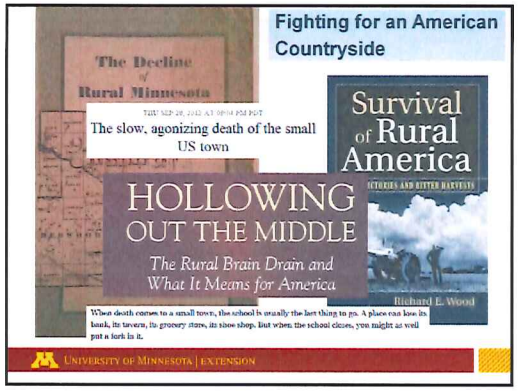
**Rural Populations Continue to Shrink**

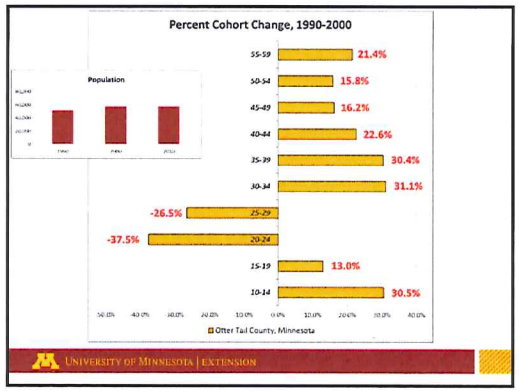
In Rural America Struggling! provides an excellent summary of the economic and population issues facing rural America. Key quote:

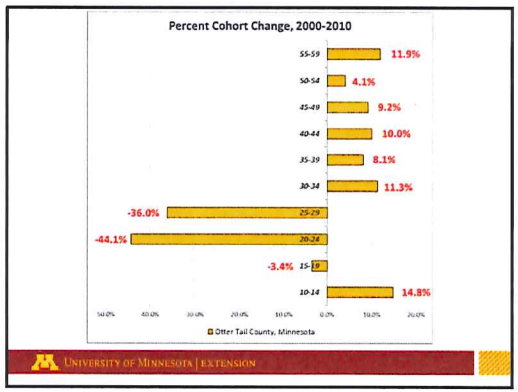
... rural America's job growth is stagnant and the population is in decl
in fact, it's the first time such a population decline has been recorded
the nation's rural counties.

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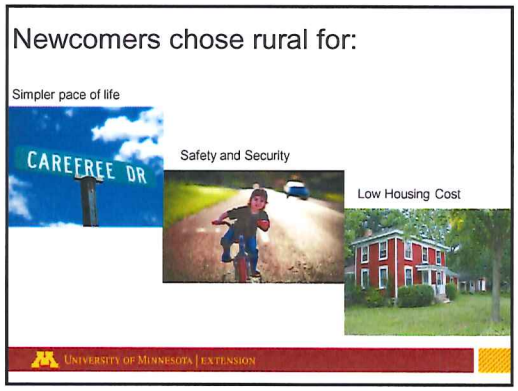


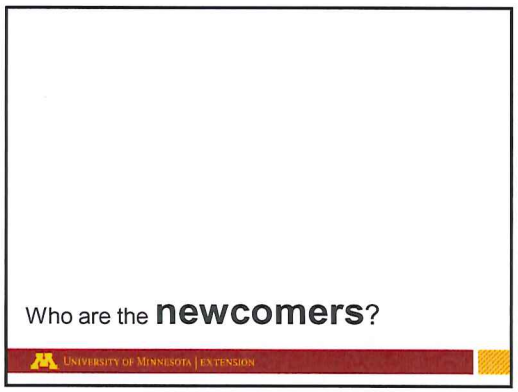










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- 36% lived there previously
- 68% attain bachelors degree
- 67% household incomes over $50k
- 51% have children in household

- May be leaving their career or underemployed
- Yet, Quality of Life is the trump card



## Reframing Rural Migration

- National **societal preferences** to live in small towns and rural places (low-density)
- People are **moving to** small towns (since 1970s)
- **Not everyone** is flocking to the city
- A new **urbanity** is found in formerly rural places



## The Rural Choice

These newcomers are:

- **Creating groups**, building their community
- **Diversifying** the economy
- **Buying/starting businesses**, working from home
- Living in a **region**
- **More** than warm bodies (employee recruitment)



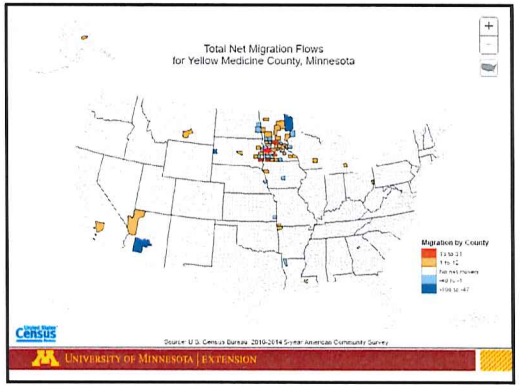
## *The Rural Choice*

The bottom line is people WANT to live and move here for **what you are today and will be tomorrow**, not what may have been!



## WHERE ARE PEOPLE COMING FROM?







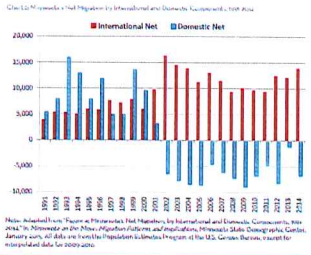

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## LIVE AND WORK – CENSUS ON THE MAP



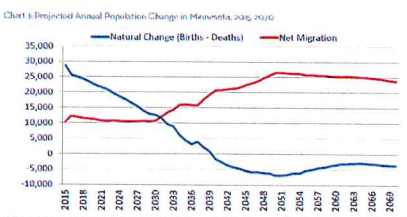
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## NET MIGRATION




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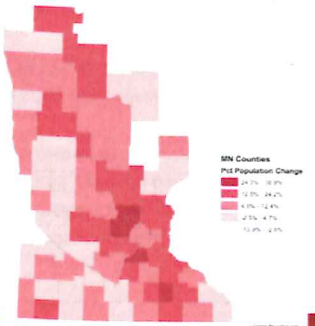
## WHERE ARE WE HEADED?




Note: Author calculations based on data from Minnesota State Demographic Center, Minnesota Population Projections (2015-2070), August 2016

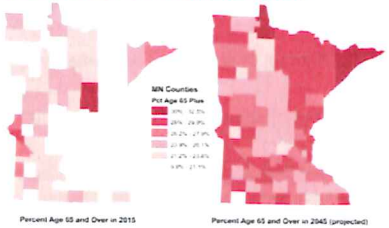
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## MAP 1: PROJECTED CHANGE IN MINNESOTA'S POPULATION, BY COUNTY (2015-2045)



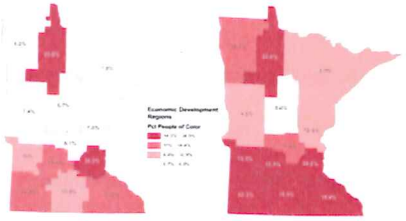

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## MAP 2: PROPORTION OF MINNESOTA'S POPULATION AGED 65 YEARS OR OLDER, BY COUNTY (2015 & 2045)




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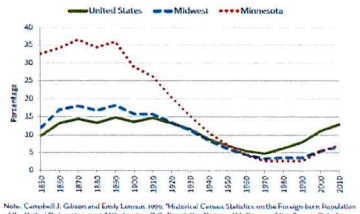
## PROPORTION OF PEOPLE OF COLOR IN MINNESOTA'S POPULATION, BY COUNTY (2015 & 2035)




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## WE'VE BEEN HERE BEFORE



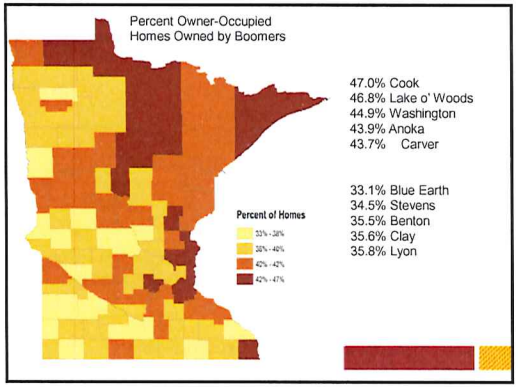

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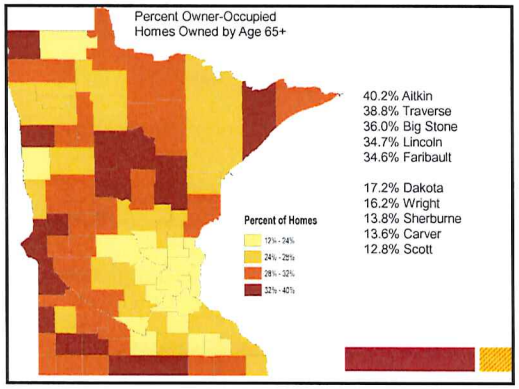


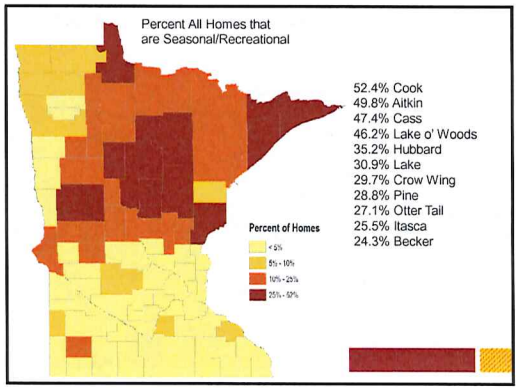
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## WHAT ON EARTH DOES THIS MEAN FOR HOUSING?

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## Moving Out, In, and Over

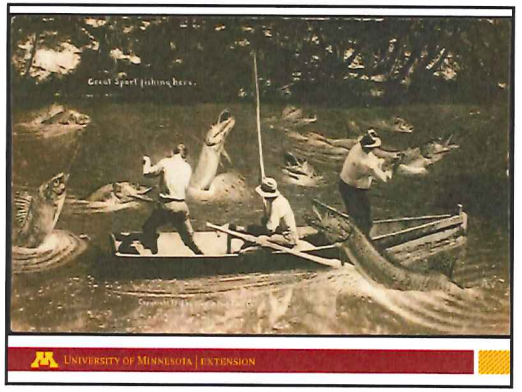
- The baby boomer sell-off is a huge opportunity for resupply. Yet, their homes may need rehabilitation
- Talk about home affordability without it being all about low-income.
- Expect more from housing studies. What is the public cost of inaction?
- Symposium on Small Towns in Morris (June 2016)



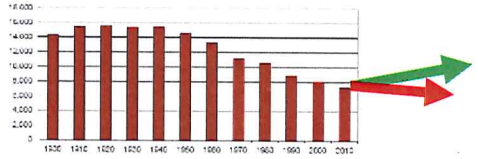
## What Aspect to Tackle?

- Vacant property
- Property entering market
  - ✓ Low, medium, high value homes?
- Existing stock
- Build new stock








Our hopes for the future…








HTTPS://WWW.EXTENSION.UMN.EDU/COMMUNITY/MAKING-IT-HOME/






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## PATH FORWARD...

1. What can we do in our community to prepare for new residents?
2. What can we do in our community to recruit new residents?
3. What can we do in our community to help new residents settle in?
4. What can we do in our community to help residents make this their home?
5. What can we do in our community to sustain the needs of our residents?
6. What can we do in our community to help residents

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