

# County Economic Development & Workforce

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Manager & President of the Minnesota Association of  
Professional County Economic Developers (MAPCED)

# What is MAPCED?

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- Minnesota Association of Professional County Economic Developers
- Organization was formed in the early 90's to provide a collective voice for county economic development professionals
- Mission is to champion economic growth through the advancement of county economic development professionals in Minnesota
- Association of MN Counties affiliate organization

# What is County Economic Development?

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- Business Retention & Attraction
- Expand the local tax base
- Enhance the quality of life of residents
- Advocate for policies that promote sustained prosperity

# The Role of Workforce in Economic Development

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- “Smokestack Chasing” is no longer the primary part of the job
- Economic developers now focus much of their time on activities related to attracting and retaining talent
- Businesses once based expansion plans primarily on financial incentives
- Access to talent is now one of the primary drivers of business location decisions

# Economic Development & Workforce

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- Workforce was already a challenge in Minnesota before COVID-19
- Pandemic simply exacerbated those challenges
- Still a lot to learn about the long-term impact of the pandemic on our workforce
- Need to be more aggressive in promoting Minnesota as a great place to live and work!

# Broadband & Workforce

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- Increasing broadband access and adoption is pivotal to workforce
- Services are increasingly online-only
- Job applications and even interviews now require quality broadband
- Virtual interviews are likely here to stay
- Remote work is great – if you have the bandwidth
- Participating in the “creative economy” requires upload speeds

# Housing & Workforce

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- Access to housing is critical to economic growth
- This is an issue across Minnesota – urban and rural
- Economic incentives tend to be aimed at income-restricted affordable housing
- Developers have a greater economic incentive to build in higher income areas (typically found in metro) than in rural areas of the state

# Childcare & Workforce

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- Economic incentives provided by State have helped stave off widespread closures due to COVID-19
- What happens if/when incentives end?
- Economic model provides a challenge for all involved
- Centers vs. In-Home Providers – Drawbacks for both
- State regulations pose a challenge – especially for in-home providers



# Moving Forward

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- Key component to economic development is relationship building and collaboration – economic development professionals want to help and we want your help!
- Federal/State/Local (American Rescue Plan) recovery funds – How can they be leveraged to address workforce concerns?
- Do economic incentive programs need to be altered as demographics change?

# Thank You!

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