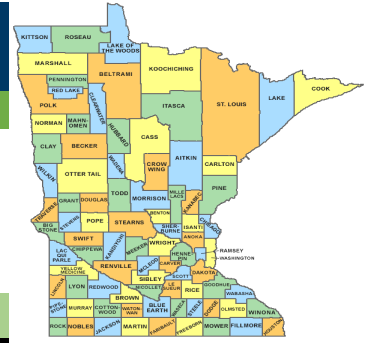


COUNTY PROFILE

Wadena Co.

Wadena Co. is a part of Economic Development Region 5, which is located in the Northwest Planning Region.



POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

2023 population:	14,241 people	Median Age:	40.0 years
Population change, 2020-2023	176 people 1.3% increase	state:	38.5 years

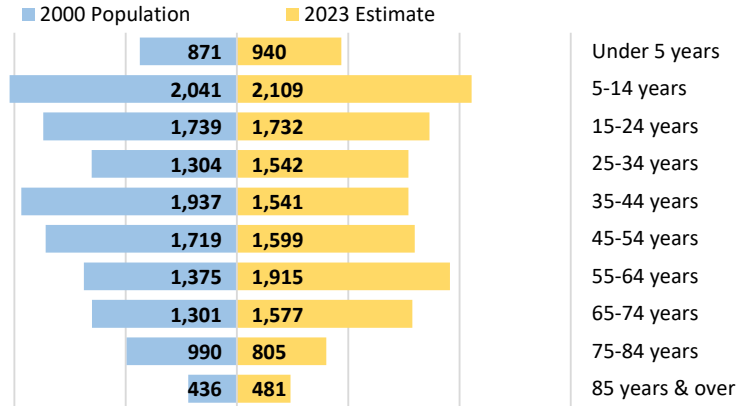
Wadena Co. is the 58th largest of the 87 counties in the state. Its population increased so far this decade, ranking as the 29th fastest growing in the state from 2020 to 2023. Wadena Co.'s population has an older median age than the state and a larger percentage of people aged 65 years and older. The population is aging, especially as the Baby Boom generation moves through the population pyramid (see Figure 1).

Table 1. Population by Age Group, 2023

	Number	Percent
Under 5 years	940	6.6%
5-14 years	2,109	14.8%
15-24 years	1,732	12.2%
25-34 years	1,542	10.8%
35-44 years	1,541	10.8%
45-54 years	1,599	11.2%
55-64 years	1,915	13.4%
65-74 years	1,577	11.1%
75-84 years	805	5.6%
85 years & over	481	3.4%
Total Population	14,241	100.0%

Source: Census 2023 Population Estimates, 2018-2022 ACS

Figure 1. Population Pyramid, 2000-2023



Wadena Co. suffered a negative natural increase - more deaths than births from 2020 to 2023, but also experienced net in-migration - meaning more people moved in than moved out. In addition to domestic in-migration, Wadena Co. welcomed net international in-migration - gaining new Minnesotans from foreign countries (see Table 2).

Table 2. Cumulative Estimates of the Components of Population Change, 2020-2023

	Total Population Change	April 1, 2020 to July 1, 2023					
		Natural Increase	Vital Events		Net Migration		
			Births	Deaths	Total	International	Domestic
Wadena Co.	179	-91	613	704	262	51	211
State of Minnesota	31,111	40,368	207,857	167,489	-11,352	34,624	-45,976

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates Program

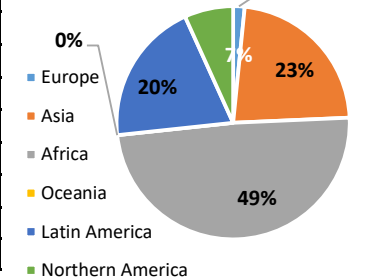
Compared to the state, Wadena Co. has a smaller percentage of foreign-born residents. From 2010 to 2022, Wadena Co. saw an increase in the number of foreign-born residents, which was faster than the statewide increase.

Table 3. Place of Birth for the Foreign Born Population, 2022

	Wadena Co.		Change 2010-2022		Minnesota	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Percent	Change
Foreign-born Population	251	1.8%	117	87.3%	8.5%	31.3%
Europe	4	1.6%	-43	-91.5%	9.3%	-0.6%
Asia	57	22.7%	21	58.3%	36.7%	30.2%
Africa	123	49.0%	123	#DIV/0!	28.1%	93.1%
Oceania	0	0.0%	0	#DIV/0!	0.4%	20.4%
Americas:	67	26.7%	16	31.4%	25.4%	7.5%
Latin America	50	19.9%	19	61.3%	22.9%	9.0%
Northern America	17	6.8%	-3	-15.0%	2.5%	-4.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey

Figure 2. Place of Birth for the Foreign Born Population, 2022



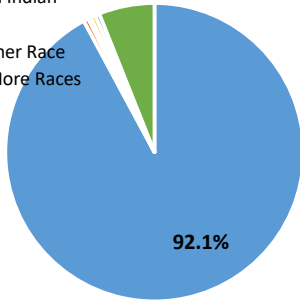
COUNTY PROFILE

Wadena Co.

Wadena Co.'s population was becoming more racially diverse over time. Since 2011, the county's white population declined, but the number of people of other races increased (see Table 4).

Figure 3. Population by Race, 2022

- White
- Black or African American
- American Indian
- Asian
- Some Other Race
- Two or More Races



	Wadena Co.			Minnesota	
	Number	Percent	Change from 2011-2022	Percent	Change from 2011-2022
Total	14,108	100.0%	2.1%	100.0%	7.9%
White	12,999	92.1%	-2.7%	79.7%	-0.4%
Black or African American	76	0.5%	-33.3%	6.7%	44.3%
American Indian or Alaska Native	43	0.3%	-54.7%	0.9%	-10.2%
Asian or Other Pac. Islanders	71	0.5%	97.2%	5.1%	37.1%
Some Other Race	67	0.5%	39.6%	2.3%	84.7%
Two or More Races	852	6.0%	407.1%	5.3%	159.6%
Hispanic or Latino origin	311	2.2%	71.8%	5.7%	34.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey

POPULATION PROJECTIONS

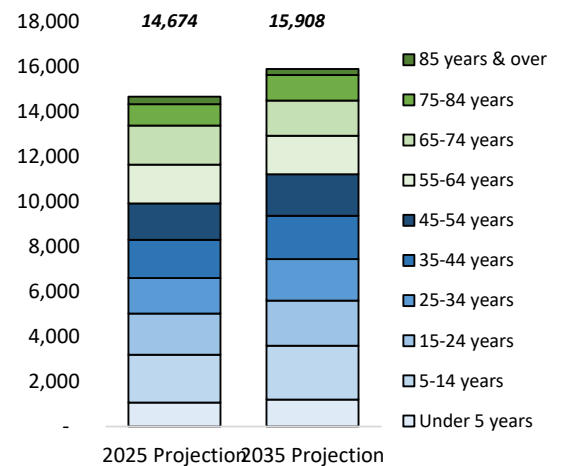
According to the Minnesota State Demographic Center, Wadena Co.'s population is expected to grow from 2025 to 2035, with a rate of change that is slower than the projected statewide growth rate (4.5%). In addition to the overall growth, the number of people aged 65 years and older is expected to decrease over the next decade (see Figure 4 and Table 5).

Table 5. Population Projections by Age Group, 2025-2035

Wadena Co.	2025 Projection	2035 Projection	Numeric Change	Percent Change
Under 5 years	1,062	1,201	139	13.1%
5-14 years	2,137	2,401	264	12.4%
15-24 years	1,834	1,996	162	8.8%
25-34 years	1,568	1,853	285	18.2%
35-44 years	1,708	1,931	223	13.1%
45-54 years	1,620	1,845	225	13.9%
55-64 years	1,729	1,712	-17	-1.0%
65-74 years	1,732	1,562	-170	-9.8%
75-84 years	959	1,139	180	18.8%
85 years & over	325	268	-57	-17.5%
Total Population	14,674	15,908	1,234	8.4%

Source: Minnesota State Demographic Center

Figure 4. Projections by Age Group, 2025-2035

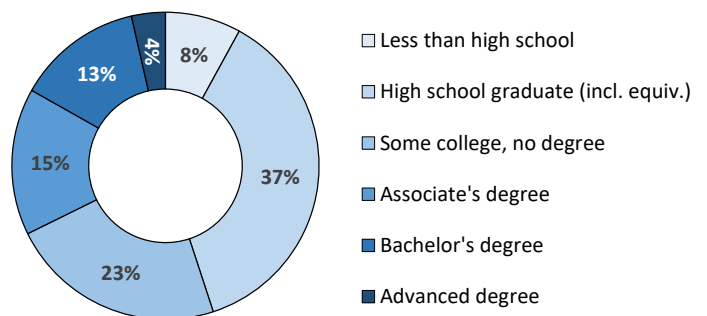


EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Wadena Co. has a lower percentage of adults (18 years & over) with at least a high school diploma than the state (93.0%), and a lower percentage of people with at least some college experience. Wadena Co. also has a higher percentage of people with an Associate's degree and a lower percentage of people with a Bachelor's degree or higher.

Percentage of the adult population (18 years & over) with at least a high school diploma:	92.0%
College-educated:	55.0%
state:	68.5%
Associate's Degree:	15.5%
Bachelor's Degree:	13.3%
Advanced Degree:	3.6%

Figure 5. Educational Attainment, 2022



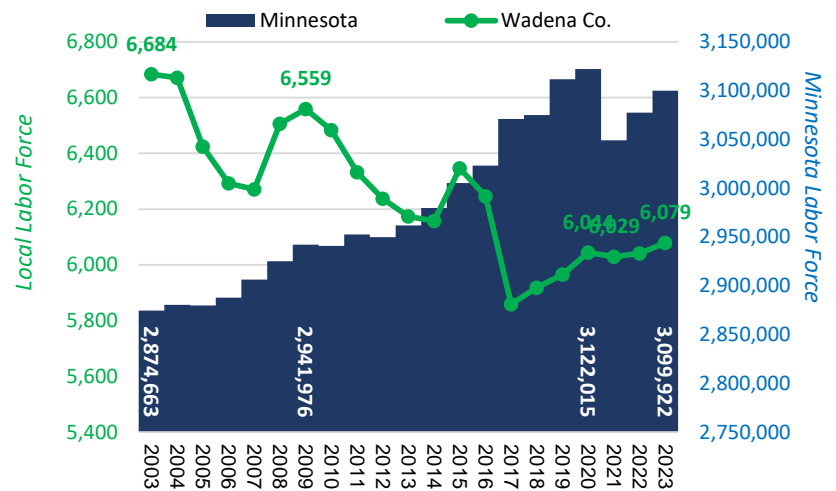
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey

LABOR FORCE TRENDS

At 4.7%, Wadena Co. had a higher unemployment rate than the state in 2023. After the pandemic recession Wadena Co.'s unemployment rate declined compared to the 6.3% pre-pandemic rate posted in 2019. The number of unemployed workers actively seeking work in Wadena Co. increased over the past year, and is down compared to 2019.

6,079 available workers	
Labor Force change, 2008-2023	-427 workers -6.6% decline
4.7% unemployment rate	2.8% state
286 unemployed workers	

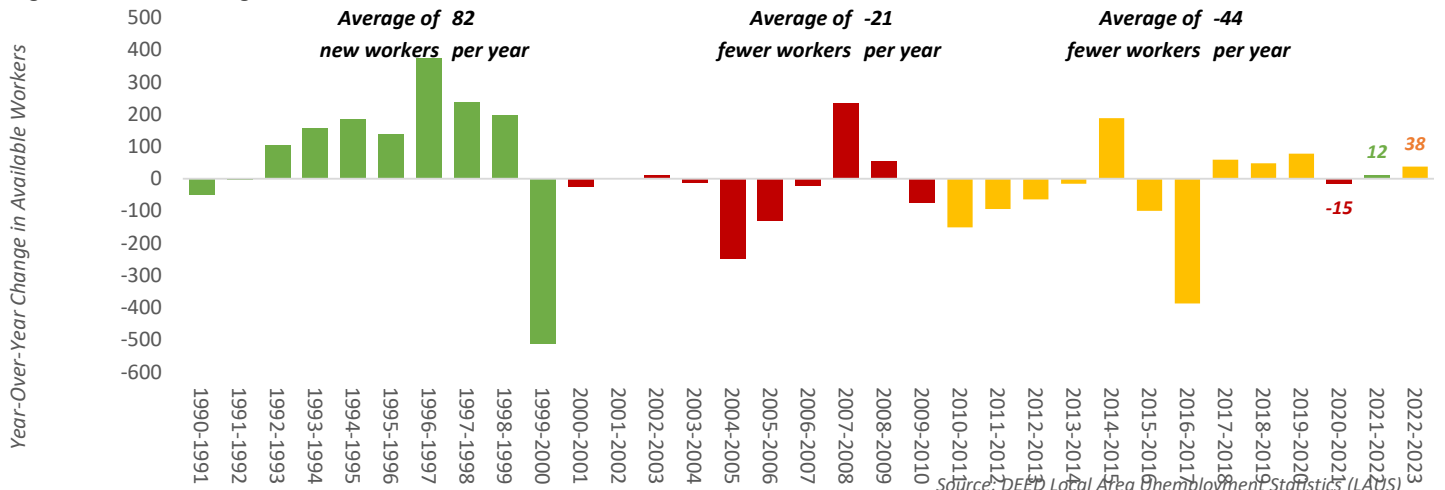
Figure 6. Annual Labor Force Estimates



Source: DEED Local Area Unemployment Statistics

Labor force growth has slowed in recent years. After experiencing a net gain of workers each year from 1990 to 2000, Wadena Co. averaged an annual loss of fewer workers from 2000 to 2010, and most recently a loss of fewer workers since 2010 (see Figure 7). Moving forward, Wadena Co. is expected to add workers from 2025 to 2035 (see Table 6).

Figure 7. Annual Change in Labor Force, 1990-2023



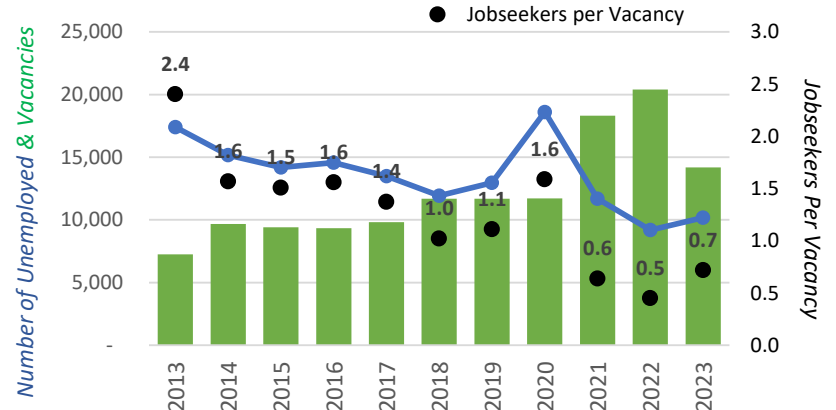
Source: DEED Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)

	Labor Force Projection	
	2025	2035
16 to 24 years	1,202	1,320
25 to 54 years	4,130	4,750
55 to 64 years	1,139	1,128
65 years & over	519	477
Total Labor Force	6,990	7,674

Source: Minnesota State Demographic Center, 2018-2022 ACS

The labor market had grown extremely tight in recent years, with less than 1 jobseeker per vacancy until the pandemic recession intervened in early 2020 and the number of unemployed workers spiked. In 2023, job vacancies in Northwest returned to pre-pandemic levels, but employers are still seeing challenges finding enough workers for open jobs (see Figure 8).

Figure 8. Jobseekers Per Vacancy, 2013-2023



Source: DEED Job Vacancy Survey, LAUS program

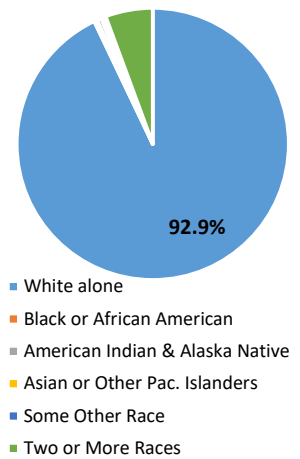
LABOR FORCE CHARACTERISTICS

Wadena Co. had a lower labor force participation rate than the state. The labor force in Wadena Co. is less racially diverse than the state (where 81.3% of workers are white alone), but is becoming more diverse over time.

Table 7. Employment Characteristics, 2022

	Wadena Co.			Minnesota		Labor Force by Gender	
	In Labor Force (available workers)	Labor Force Partic. Rate	Unemp. Rate	Labor Force Partic. Rate	Unemp. Rate	Male	Female
Total Labor Force	6,687	61.7%	6.1%	68.7%	4.0%	3,373	3,317
16 to 19 years	481	59.8%	1.2%	53.0%	9.8%	160	321
20 to 24 years	578	87.4%	8.7%	83.1%	6.7%	307	271
25 to 44 years	2,639	86.4%	3.9%	88.8%	3.5%	1,341	1,297
45 to 54 years	1,272	80.3%	9.7%	87.8%	2.9%	689	583
55 to 64 years	1,249	65.9%	7.9%	72.8%	3.1%	630	619
65 to 74 years	426	27.3%	6.3%	27.6%	3.3%	224	202
75 years & over	46	3.6%	0.0%	6.6%	3.2%	22	24
Employment Characteristics by Race & Hispanic Origin							
White alone	6,213	61.7%	6.4%	67.8%	3.4%		
Black or African American	25	37.9%	0.0%	71.5%	8.7%		
American Indian & Alaska Native	35	100.0%	22.9%	57.6%	11.9%		
Asian or Other Pac. Islanders	26	50.0%	0.0%	73.9%	3.6%		
Some Other Race	11	24.4%	0.0%	76.1%	6.1%		
Two or More Races	377	66.1%	0.5%	74.3%	6.6%		
Hispanic or Latino	170	77.3%	1.2%	77.0%	6.3%		
Employment Characteristics by Disability, 20 to 64 years							
With Any Disability, 20 to 64 years	481	49.5%	33.5%	54.4%	10.2%		
Employment Characteristics by Educational Attainment, 25 to 64 years							
Population, 25 to 64 years	5,157	78.9%	6.3%	84.4%	3.3%		
Less than H.S. Diploma	264	67.9%	7.6%	67.2%	4.6%		
H.S. Diploma or Equivalent	1,499	74.0%	2.8%	76.8%	2.5%		
Some College or Assoc. Degree	2,407	82.2%	4.0%	85.1%	3.6%		
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	989	82.9%	2.1%	90.3%	2.0%		

Figure 9. Labor Force by Race, 2022



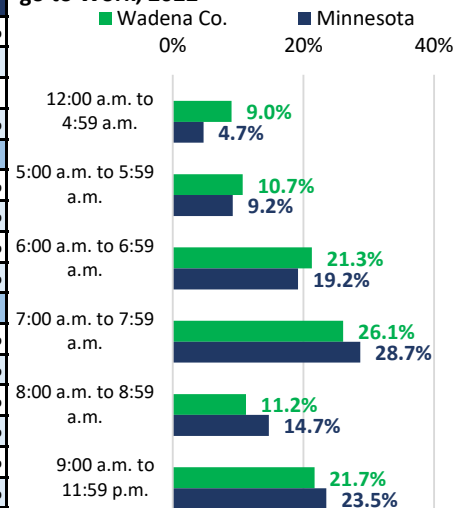
Source: 2018-2022 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates

A smaller percentage of workers in Wadena Co. worked in the same county in which they live compared to the state. Wadena Co. also had a shorter average commute time than the state.

Table 8. Commuting Characteristics, 2022

	Wadena Co.		Minnesota	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Worked in state of residence	6,055	99.2%	2,867,086	97.7%
Worked in county of residence	3,888	63.7%	1,957,366	66.7%
Worked out of county of residence	2,167	35.5%	909,720	31.0%
Worked outside state of residence	49	0.8%	67,495	2.3%
MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION TO WORK				
Car, truck, or van	5,390	88.3%	2,338,861	79.7%
Public transportation (excl. taxicab)	18	0.3%	73,365	2.5%
Other method (walk, bike, taxi, etc.)	183	3.0%	120,318	4.1%
Worked at home	513	8.4%	399,103	13.6%
TRAVEL TIME TO WORK				
Less than 10 minutes	1,605	26.3%	475,402	16.2%
10 to 19 minutes	1,874	30.7%	906,786	30.9%
20 to 29 minutes	1,019	16.7%	651,477	22.2%
30 to 44 minutes	916	15.0%	563,440	19.2%
45 to 59 minutes	366	6.0%	181,944	6.2%
60 or more minutes	317	5.2%	155,533	5.3%
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	21.4 minutes		23.3 minutes	

Figure 10. Time Leaving Home to go to Work, 2022



Source: 2018-2022 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates

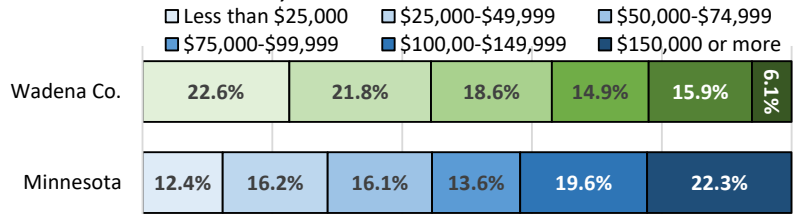
INCOMES, COST OF LIVING, & HOUSING

Wadena Co. had a lower median household income than the state, and a higher percentage of households with incomes below \$50,000. Overall, Wadena Co. had the 86th highest median household income of the 87 counties in the state.

Median Household Income	\$54,747
state	\$84,313
Median Family Income	\$75,333
state	\$107,072
Per Capita Income	\$28,011
state	\$44,947

Source: 2018-2022 American Community Survey

Figure 11. Household Incomes, 2022



Source: 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

The cost of living has increased over the past 2 years with costs up in many areas. Wadena Co. had a lower cost of living than the state, with a required hourly wage of \$14.27 for a single person living alone to meet a basic needs cost of living, and an hourly wage requirement of \$18.26 for a typical family with 2 adults and 1 child (see Table 9).

Table 9. Basic Needs Cost of Living Estimates, 2023

Single Adult, 0 children	Single Yearly Cost of Living	Hourly Wage Required	Monthly Costs						
			Child Care	Food	Health Care	Housing	Transportation	Other	Taxes
Wadena Co.	\$29,677	\$14.27	\$0	\$410	\$161	\$720	\$603	\$270	\$309
State of Minnesota	\$34,704	\$16.68	\$0	\$419	\$160	\$1,021	\$572	\$345	\$375
Typical Family: 2 Adults (1 working full-time, 1 part-time), 1 child	Family Yearly Cost of Living	Hourly Wage Required	Monthly Costs						
			Child Care	Food	Health Care	Housing	Transportation	Other	Taxes
Wadena Co.	\$56,973	\$18.26	\$338	\$934	\$576	\$864	\$1,060	\$431	\$545
State of Minnesota	\$67,320	\$21.58	\$544	\$955	\$574	\$1,285	\$977	\$536	\$739

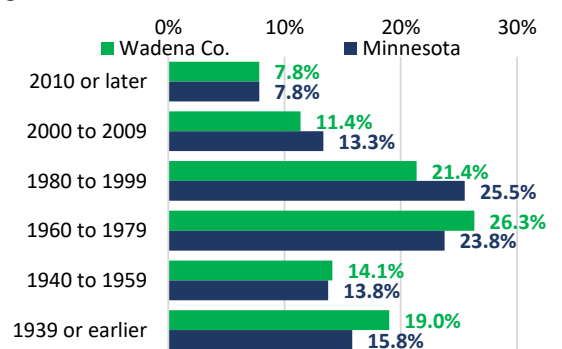
Source: DEED Cost of Living tool

Wadena Co. had a lower median house value than the state, having the 61st highest value of the 87 counties in 2022. Wadena Co.'s housing stock was older than the state's, with a lower percentage of units built since 2000 (see Figure 12).

Table 10. Estimated Value of Owner-occupied Housing Units, 2022	Wadena Co.		Minnesota
	Total	Percent	Percent
Total	4,144	100.0%	100.0%
Less than \$50,000	280	6.8%	4.1%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	735	17.7%	4.6%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	770	18.6%	7.1%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	877	21.2%	10.7%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	834	20.1%	27.1%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	540	13.0%	31.7%
\$500,000 or more	108	2.6%	14.7%
Median (dollars)	\$163,400		\$286,800

Source: 2018-2022 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates

Figure 12. Year Structure Built, 2022



Median monthly owner costs, owner-occupied units with a mortgage	\$1,248
state	\$1,818

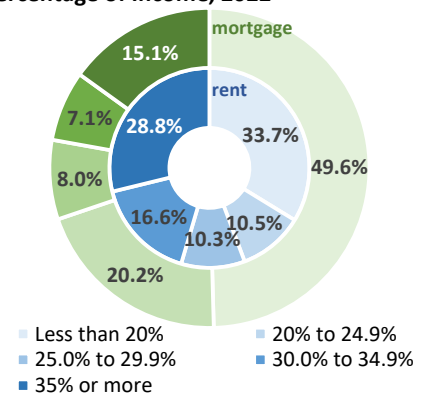
Percentage of households with a mortgage spending 30% or more of their income on housing costs	22.2%
state	22.0%

Median monthly rent costs	\$694
state	\$1,178

Percentage of renters spending 30% or more of their household income on rent	45.4%
state	46.7%

Source: 2018-2022 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates

Figure 13. Housing Costs as a Percentage of Income, 2022



OCCUPATIONS

At \$21.89 in 2024, wages were lower in Region 5 than the state. Overall, Region 5 had the lowest median hourly wage level of the 13 economic development regions in the state. Wages were highest for management occupations (\$40.32) and lowest for food preparation and serving related jobs (\$14.34) (see Table 11).

Table 11. Occupational Employment & Wage Statistics, 2024

Occupational Group	Region 5				State of Minnesota		
	Median Hourly Wage	Estimated Regional Jobs	Share of Total Jobs	Regional Location Quotient	Median Hourly Wage	Estimated Statewide Jobs	Share of Total Jobs
Total, All Occupations	\$21.89	62,970	100.0%	1.0	\$25.22	2,881,100	100.0%
Management	\$40.32	3,400	5.4%	0.8	\$57.75	201,710	7.0%
Business & Financial Operations	\$31.37	2,130	3.4%	0.5	\$39.26	202,700	7.0%
Computer & Mathematical	\$36.83	570	0.9%	0.3	\$50.83	98,240	3.4%
Architecture & Engineering	\$37.81	600	1.0%	0.5	\$42.97	58,320	2.0%
Life, Physical & Social Science	\$33.10	430	0.7%	0.7	\$39.93	29,220	1.0%
Community & Social Service	\$27.49	1,600	2.5%	1.3	\$27.92	57,930	2.0%
Legal	\$38.07	200	0.3%	0.5	\$51.15	19,040	0.7%
Education, Training & Library	\$24.35	4,510	7.2%	1.3	\$28.22	163,340	5.7%
Arts, Design, Entertainment & Media	\$23.41	470	0.7%	0.6	\$29.01	36,160	1.3%
Healthcare Practitioners & Technical	\$40.22	4,220	6.7%	1.0	\$43.01	184,410	6.4%
Healthcare Support	\$18.33	3,780	6.0%	1.0	\$18.07	169,580	5.9%
Protective Service	\$26.44	1,030	1.6%	1.0	\$28.87	45,860	1.6%
Food Preparation & Serving Related	\$14.34	6,970	11.1%	1.4	\$15.07	232,190	8.1%
Building, Grounds Cleaning & Maint.	\$17.84	2,500	4.0%	1.4	\$18.83	79,660	2.8%
Personal Care & Service	\$16.28	1,570	2.5%	1.2	\$17.60	59,420	2.1%
Sales & Related	\$16.99	5,760	9.1%	1.1	\$18.82	242,440	8.4%
Office & Administrative Support	\$21.48	7,510	11.9%	1.0	\$23.86	352,250	12.2%
Farming, Fishing & Forestry	\$20.82	140	0.2%	1.8	\$22.13	3,520	0.1%
Construction & Extraction	\$28.50	3,060	4.9%	1.3	\$32.44	110,960	3.9%
Installation, Maintenance & Repair	\$24.72	2,790	4.4%	1.2	\$29.54	104,530	3.6%
Production	\$21.03	5,010	8.0%	1.1	\$23.05	203,810	7.1%
Transportation & Material Moving	\$21.10	4,720	7.5%	1.0	\$19.80	225,820	7.8%

Source: DEED Occupational Employment & Wage Statistics, Qtr. 1 2024

JOB VACANCY SURVEY

Wadena Co. is a part of the Northwest planning region. There were 14193 job vacancies posted by employers in 2023, indicating extensive opportunity in the region, with openings across several occupations and industries (see Figure 14).

Table 12. Northwest Job Vacancy Survey Results, 2023

Occupational Group	Number of Vacancies	Wage Offer
Total, All Occupations	14,193	\$17.77
Management	180	\$31.08
Business & Financial Operations	162	\$23.79
Computer & Mathematical	49	\$30.06
Architecture & Engineering	110	\$30.65
Life, Physical & Social Sciences	105	\$26.90
Community & Social Service	326	\$22.39
Education, Training & Library	668	\$18.97
Healthcare Practitioners & Technical	1,478	\$28.94
Healthcare Support	1,168	\$15.09
Protective Service	277	\$23.55
Food Preparation & Serving Related	2,518	\$14.63
Building, Grounds Cleaning & Maint.	594	\$16.01
Personal Care & Service	223	\$15.86
Sales & Related	1,918	\$15.97
Office & Administrative Support	508	\$17.18
Construction & Extraction	727	N/A
Installation, Maintenance & Repair	609	\$20.26
Production	668	\$20.44
Transportation & Material Moving	1,263	\$20.23

Figure 14. Job Vacancies by Industry, 2023



Source: DEED Job Vacancy Survey, 2023

OCCUPATIONS IN DEMAND

Table 13. Northwest Planning Region Occupations in Demand, 2023

Less than High School	High School or Equivalent	Some College or Assoc. Deg.	Bachelor's Degree or Higher
Home Health and Personal Care Aides \$36,108/yr	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers \$54,491/yr	Registered Nurses \$84,785/yr	General and Operations Managers \$77,521/yr
Retail Salespersons \$35,088/yr	Nursing Assistants \$40,033/yr	Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers \$71,010/yr	Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education \$64,121/yr
Cashiers \$30,773/yr	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses \$54,946/yr	Radiologic Technologists and Technicians \$78,771/yr	Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical \$66,299/yr
Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary \$38,126/yr	Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics \$47,486/yr	Dental Hygienists \$85,989/yr	Accountants and Auditors \$64,893/yr
Stockers and Order Fillers \$40,709/yr	Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks \$48,131/yr	Civil Engineering Technologists and Technicians \$71,227/yr	Substitute Teachers, Short-Term \$46,162/yr
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and \$38,122/yr	Substance abuse, behavioral disorder, and mental health counselors \$49,479/yr	Paralegals and Legal Assistants \$59,200/yr	Medical and Health Services Managers \$102,974/yr
Cooks, Restaurant \$36,830/yr	Machinists \$51,295/yr	Occupational Therapy Assistants \$59,627/yr	Child, Family, and School Social Workers \$63,680/yr
Food Preparation Workers \$31,855/yr	Electricians \$65,524/yr	Computer Network Support Specialists \$70,049/yr	Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education \$37,999/yr
Miscellaneous Assemblers and Fabricators \$40,826/yr	Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists \$59,152/yr	Surgical Technologists \$64,809/yr	Pharmacists \$140,993/yr
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers \$46,395/yr	Paramedics \$64,134/yr	Industrial Engineering Technologists and Technicians \$60,791/yr	Physical Therapists \$98,061/yr

Source: DEED Occupations in Demand

Wadena Co. is a part of the Northwest planning region, which is projected to see a 3.9% increase in employment levels over the next decade. In addition to new jobs created, there will be a much larger number of exit openings (see Figure 15).

Table 14. Regional Industry Employment Projections, 2022-2032

	Estimated Employment 2022	Projected Employment 2032	Percent Change 2022-2032
Northwest Planning Region			
Total, All Industries	265,321	275,647	3.9%
Natural Resources & Mining	6,095	6,335	3.9%
Utilities	1,126	1,125	-0.1%
Construction	11,719	12,715	8.5%
Manufacturing	29,871	31,429	5.2%
Wholesale Trade	12,936	14,034	8.5%
Retail Trade	27,705	27,590	-0.4%
Transportation & Warehousing	5,579	5,997	7.5%
Information	2,451	2,470	0.8%
Finance & Insurance, Real Estate	8,067	8,366	3.7%
Professional Services & Mgmt. of Companies	5,609	6,152	9.7%
Admin. Support & Waste Mgmt.	4,192	4,460	6.4%
Educational Services	22,849	22,989	0.6%
Health Care & Social Assistance	36,421	38,978	7.0%
Leisure & Hospitality	24,958	26,706	7.0%
Other Services	9,824	10,129	3.1%
Public Administration	24,161	24,869	2.9%

Source: DEED 2022-2032 Employment Outlook

Figure 15. Regional Occupational Employment Projections, 2022-2032

