

Wisconsin Counties Association

2025 ANNUAL CONFERENCE ***GAME DAY***

3:30 – 4:30 PM

**MakeMyMove: Bringing People and
Jobs Together**



MakeMyMove

**Growing Your Population and
Workforce with Purpose**

Trends

By 2030, it is estimated there will be a global human talent shortage of more than 85 million people.

- Wisconsin's prime age workforce will decline by 200,000 this decade.
- Fewer than 60,000 births in Wisconsin in 2023. Lowest amount since 1941.
- Declining labor force participation rate among those aged 35–44



Sources:

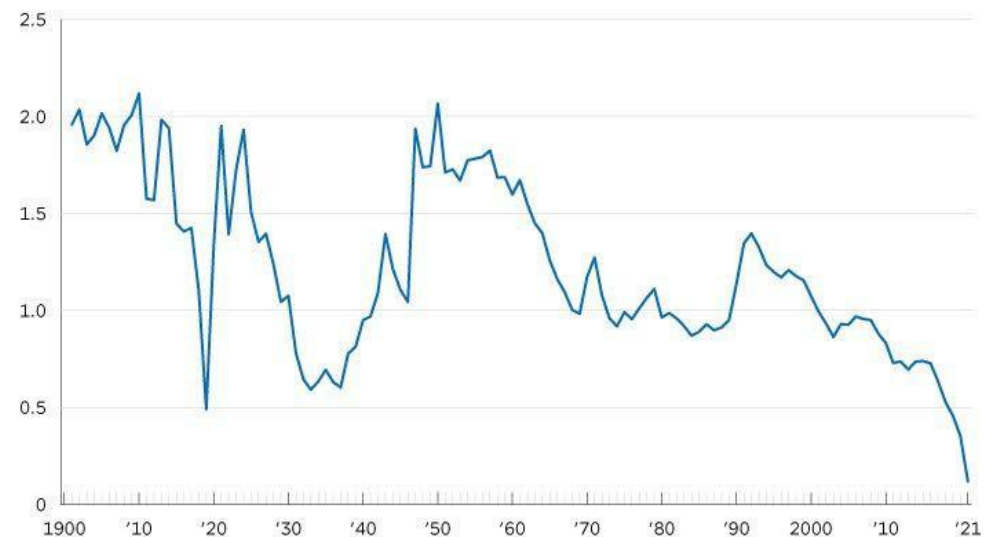
- WCA Director of Research and Analytics, Dale Knapp
- [The \\$8.5 Trillion Dollar Talent Shortage by Korn Ferry](#)

U.S. Population Growth is Slowing

2021 is the first year since 1937 that the U.S. population grew by fewer than one million people, featuring the lowest numeric growth since at least 1900, when the Census Bureau began annual population estimates.

Figure 1.

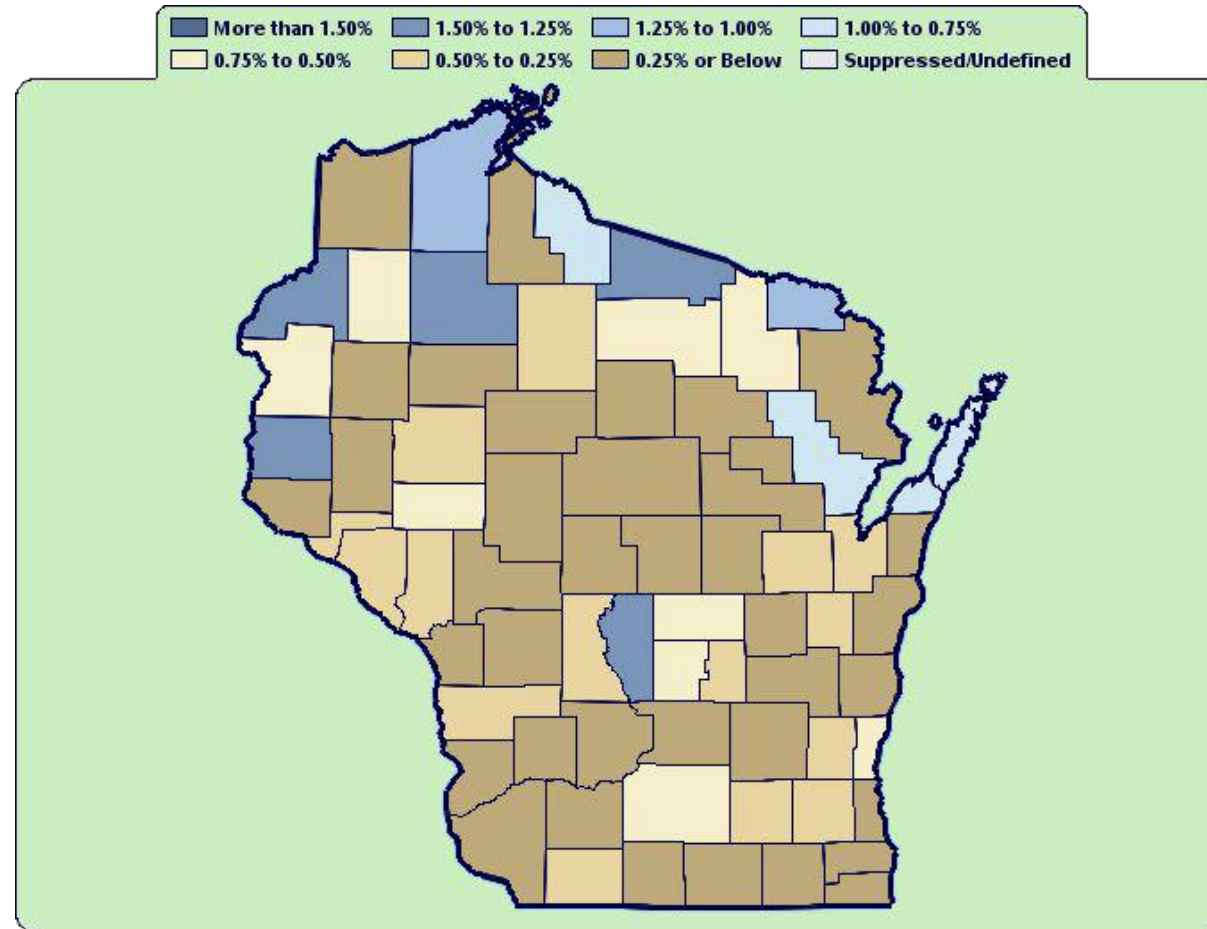
Annual Percent Change in the U.S. Population: 1900-2021



Note: 1917-1919 includes U.S. Armed Forces overseas.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Vintage 2020 Estimates; Vintage 2021 Estimates; 1900-1990, 1990-2000 & 2000-2010 Intercensal Estimates.

Wisconsin's Population is growing, but unevenly



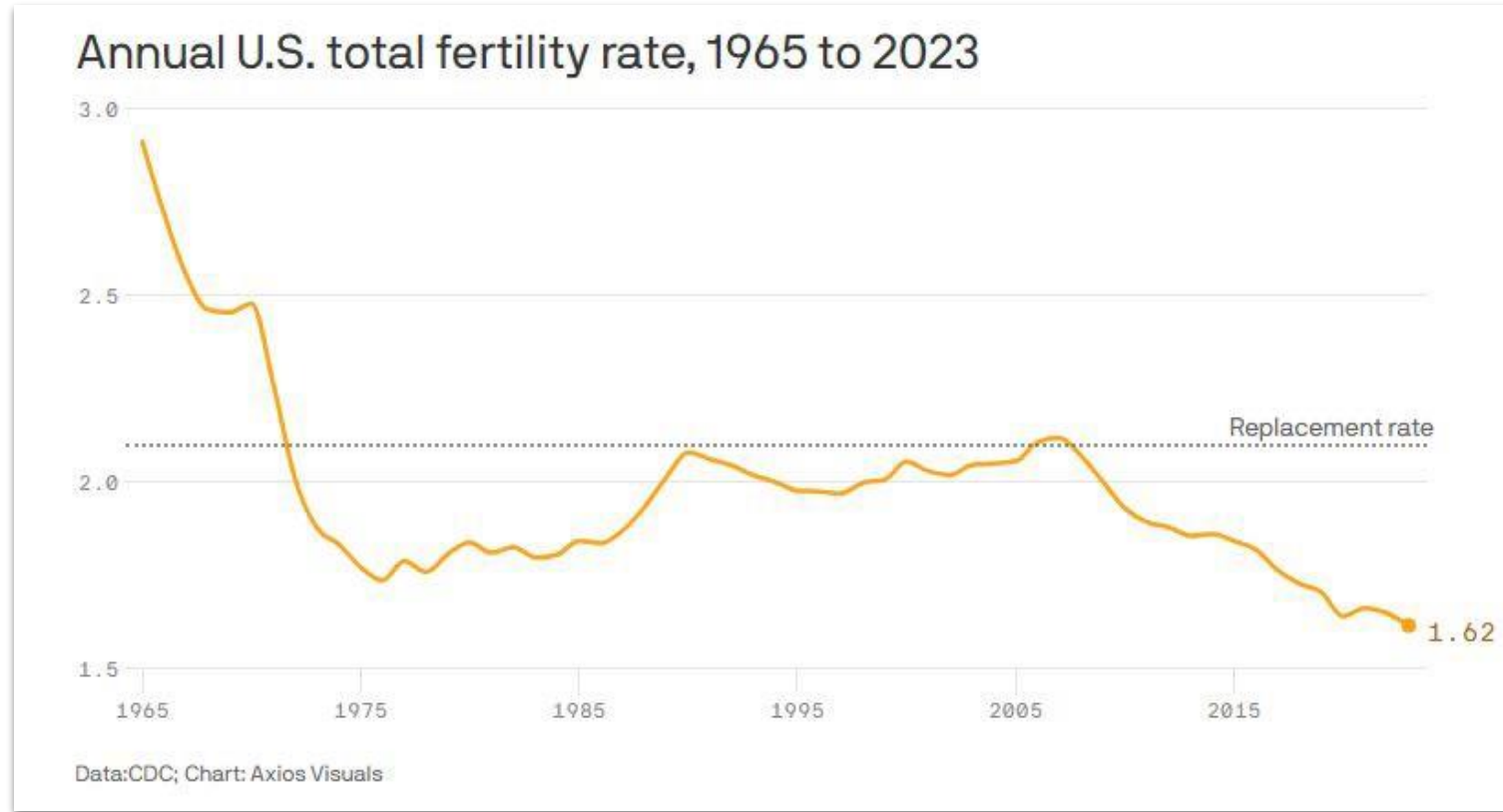
Source: Wisconsin.REAPProject.org
Data: Regional Income Division, BEA (11-16-2023)

Four Options

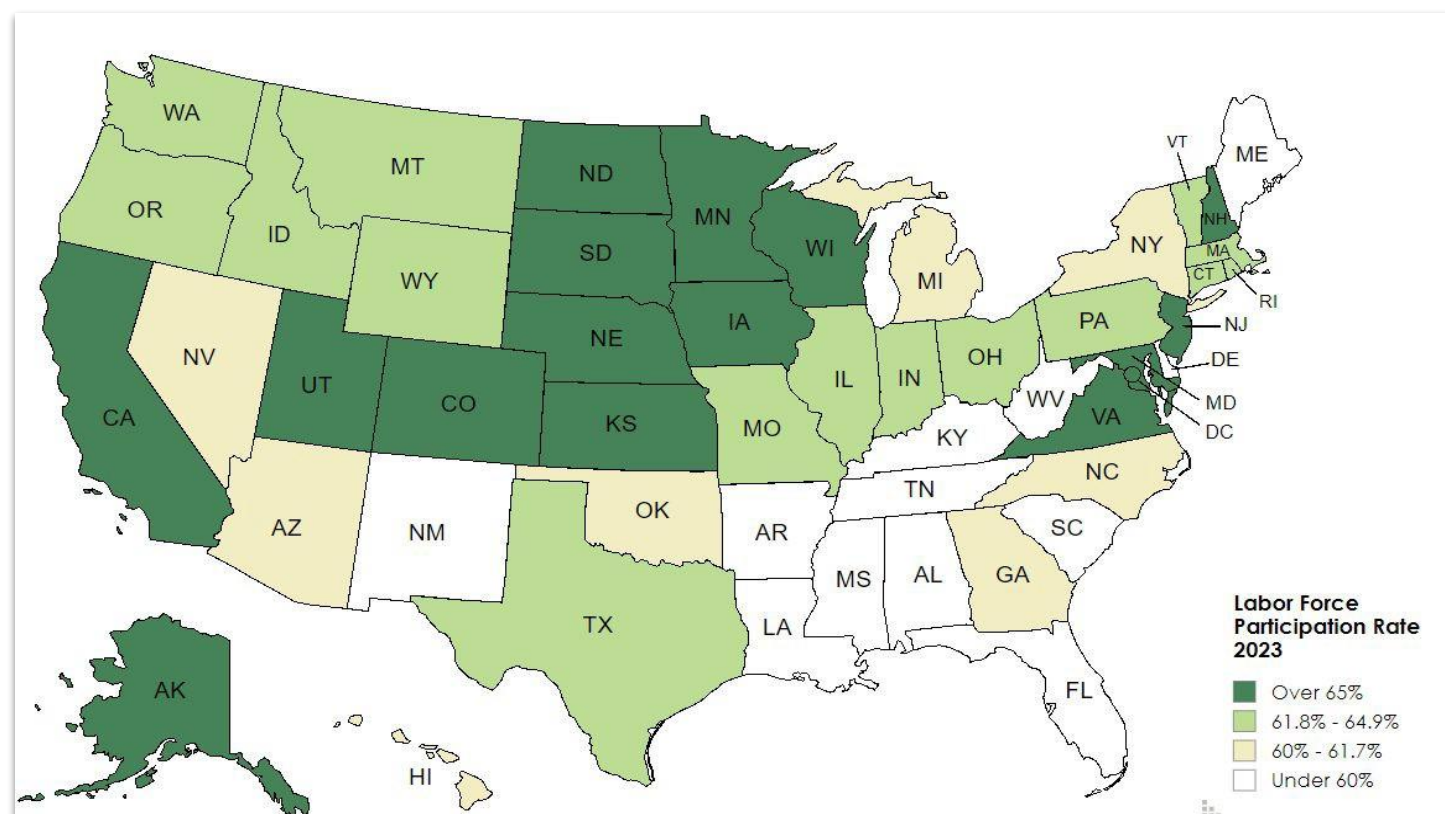
There are four options to reverse this trend:

- 1 ☐ Increase the birth rate
- 2 ☐ Increase the workforce participation rate
- 3 ☐ Increase immigrant workers
- 4 ☐ Recruit more workers to move in than out

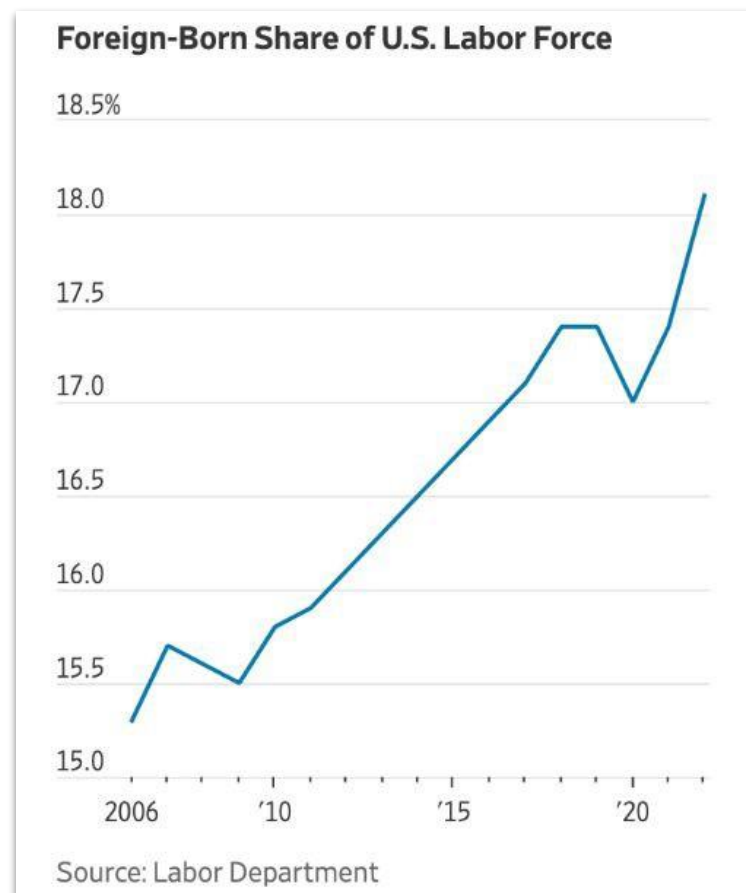
Option 1 ☐ More Children



Option 2 ☐ Increase Workforce Participation Rate

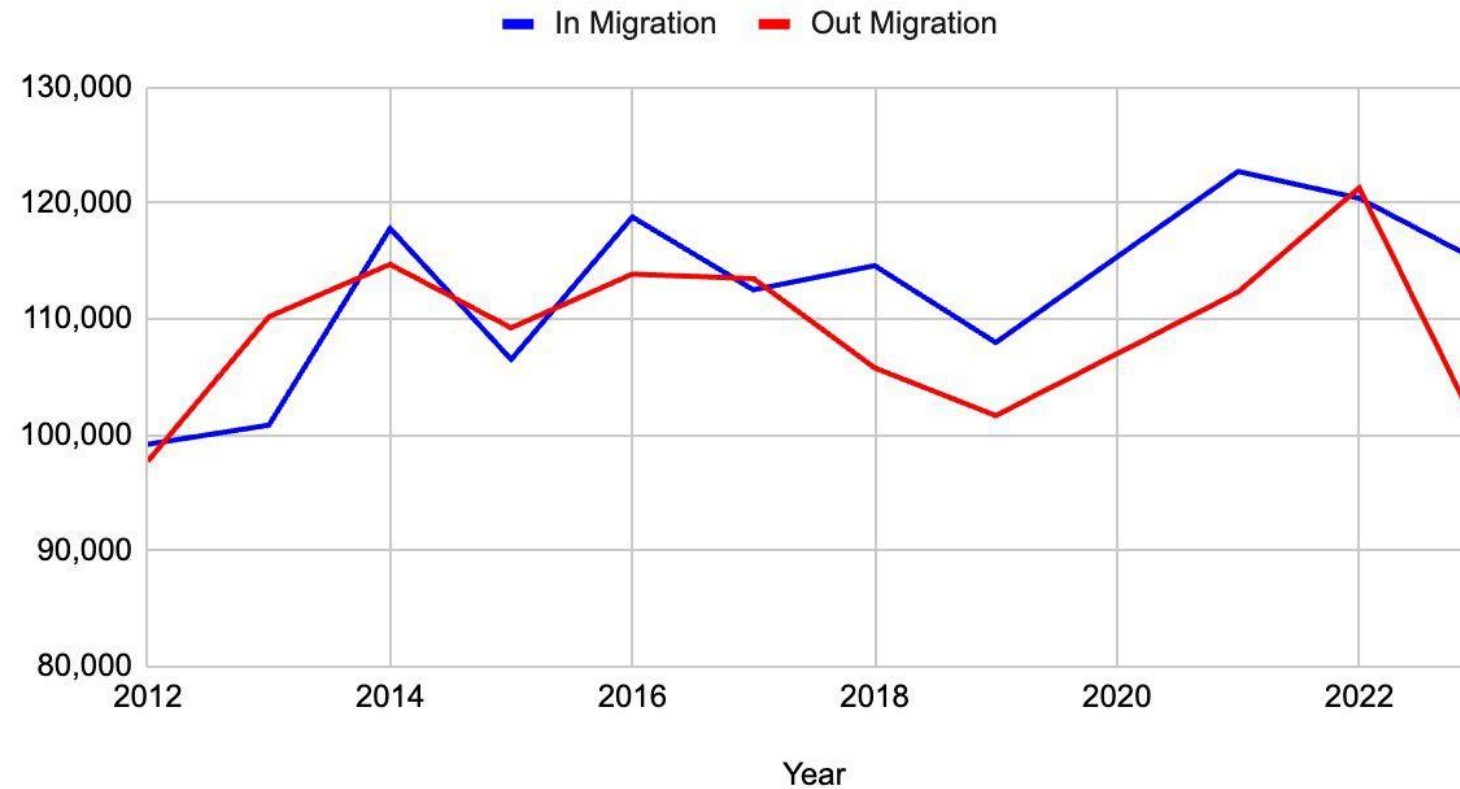


Option 3 ☐ Increase Immigrant Workers



Option 4 ☐ Increase In-Migration

In Migration and Out Migration





Recruiting New Residents

The Opportunity

Every year, over 7 million Americans move to a new state. This is a large opportunity for communities to grow their workforce and population.

Workers are mobile, and many will move in the coming years driven by preference rather than profession. They are in search of quality of life, and a place they feel like they can belong.

States across the country have committed over \$200,000,000 over the past few years to recruit new residents.

Economic Sense

Recruiting new residents makes for sound economic policy.

- **Sustainable-** New programs can start within 30 days, and pay for themselves in 18 months.
- **Efficient-** Every dollar spent is expected to yield \$15 in economic returns.
- **Incremental-** Net new Wisconsinites. Does not create new vacancies.

Role of States and Communities

Role of the State

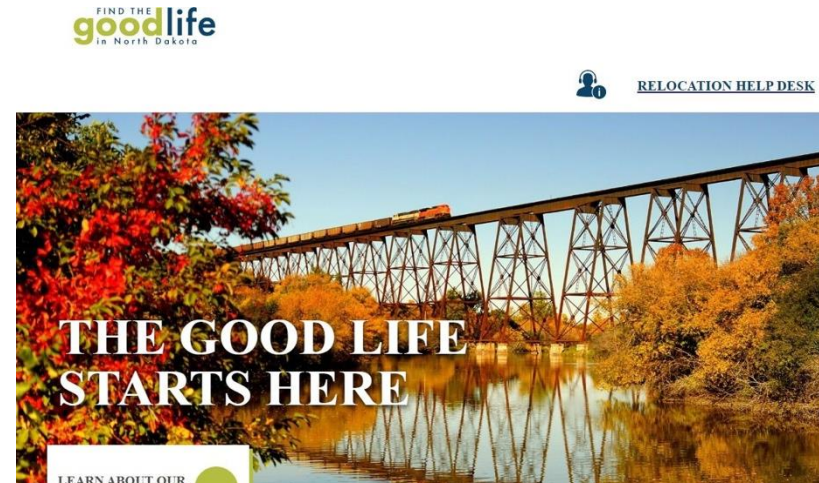
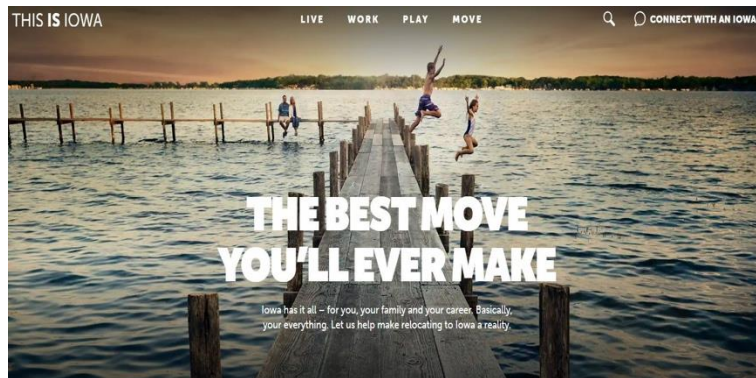
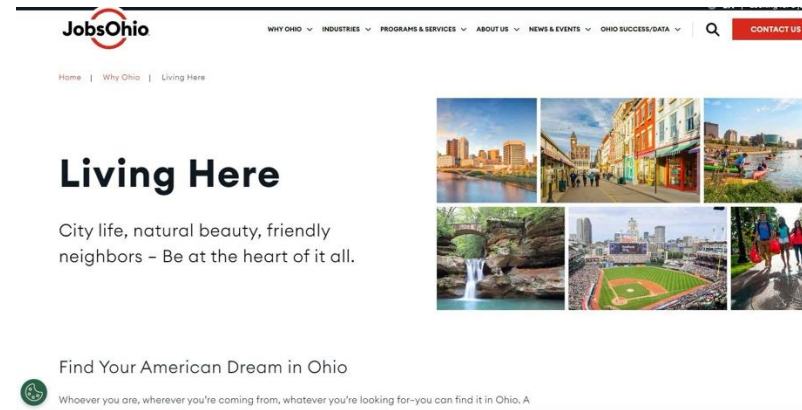
- **Funding**
- **Infrastructure**
- **State-Level Branding**

Role of the Community

“People don’t move to states, they move to communities.” □ Dale Knapp

- **Programming and Incentives**
- **Welcoming**
- **Retention**

People Don't Move to States, They Move to Communities



Politics

Aligning stakeholders and constituents is crucial.

Successful communities articulate:

- The dangers of population decline
- The economic value of recruiting new residents and growing tax base.
- New jobs that come with recruiting new residents.
- **A willingness to invest**

“For us to have more and more opportunities in West Virginia, we have to have more people. We have to have a bigger tax base. That's all there is to it.”

□ Jim Justice, Governor of West Virginia on the Today Show

“We've got to continue to grow if we're going to have the jobs of the future, the housing of the future, the infrastructure of the future...we have great amphitheaters we have quality schools we have low cost of living and awesome quality of life and we've got to drive that home.” □ Chris Jensen
Mayor of Noblesville, IN, State of the City Address, 2024

Marketing- Audience

Finding an audience and converting them is expensive. We've seen programs with large media and marketing budgets have costs per movers of more than \$30,000□.

Successful communities:

- Know their audience
- Take advantage of highly targeted audiences- move-ready, highly skilled professionals looking for a new community
- Recruit remote workers- they are fast and easy to move

Create a Value Proposition

Communities who can tell their unique story and value proposition to potential movers will get more applicants and more movers. Communities can bring them to life through marketing and programming for movers.

- The local people who will welcome them and get them ingrained into the community
- The organizations that will get the movers ingrained into the community
- Unique stories and places that make the community a great place to live

What is important to movers:

- Things to do with families
- Professional opportunities
- Recreation and Outdoors



1 / 8

Recruiting Now Kansas

Move to Lincoln County, KS

- \$ \$5,000 cash for relocation
- \$ 100% Kansas state income tax waiver through the 2026 tax year (if eligible) ✓
- \$ Up to \$3,000 a year for five years to help pay off student loan debt (if eligible) ✓
- 🚴 1-year membership at Post Rock Fitness ✓
- 🥚 A Dozen Farm-Fresh Eggs Every Month for a Year
- 🍲 Welcome Potluck Dinner
- 📺 Welcome Basket including movie tickets to the Finch Theatre ✓
- 🍵 Tea Time with Marilyn, the Mother of Lincoln County Tourism ✓

Programming and Incentives

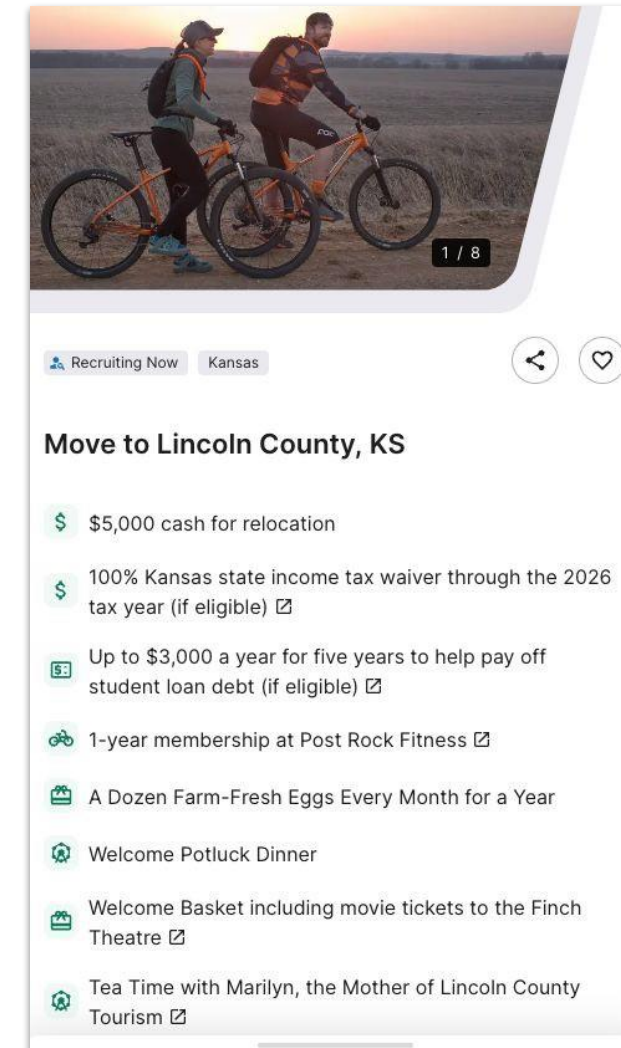
- Financial incentives de-risks the move for a potential mover
- Creates a call-to-action that allows a community to start engaging with a potential mover
 - A call-to-action also allows a community to effectively measure the impact of a talent attraction campaign
- Value Proposition
 - People
 - Organizations
 - Stories
 - Places

“The financial incentive is the hook, it's what gets people to click. But the connections will make them move and make them stay.”

*□ Kelly Gourley Lincoln County, KS
Stand Up Rural America, 2024*

Make People Feel Welcome and Wanted

- Create emotional bond through content and programming
- Provide excellent customer service
- Offer financial support to make the moves



Engagement



Hi Gabi,

Thank you for submitting your application to our program! It's fantastic to have you interested in Abilene, and I'm eager to learn more about your motivations for considering this amazing city.

A bit about myself: I'm originally from Abilene, but I spent most of my childhood in Fort Worth before returning in 2020 to attend Hardin-Simmons University. Since then, Abilene has been my home. I knew I needed to stay immediately after coming back because as someone who grew up in a big city, Abilene is the perfect blend of big city and small town. Everything you need is only 15 minutes away, and Abilene offers everything you can find in an area such as the DFW Metroplex. The city is bustling with great restaurants, shops, and impressive art, especially in the downtown area, which is my personal favorite.

Next up, we'll find local employment in Abilene. To qualify for this program, we'll be searching for a role that earns \$40,000 or more annually. You'll find job opportunities on our board below:

[View Available Jobs](#)

If you have other questions about the area or the program, please don't hesitate to reach out, my phone number is included in my signature below. I'm here to help!

Looking forward to connecting soon,

Thank you,



Cameron Sloan
Talent & Emerging Business Specialist

400 Pine St., Ste. 500 Abilene, Texas 79601
www.abilenechamber.com

Ask me how we work on behalf of Abilene's business community!

o: 325.677.7241 c: 817.975.8983 cameron@abilenechamber.com

Once you get an interested potential mover, making connection matter and making it fast matters. Based on internal data, communities with fast response times and engagement levels, see a 4-6x increase in their move-in rate than communities with low engagement levels.

In this example, the Abilene program owner made an automated, personal introduction to each qualified lead.

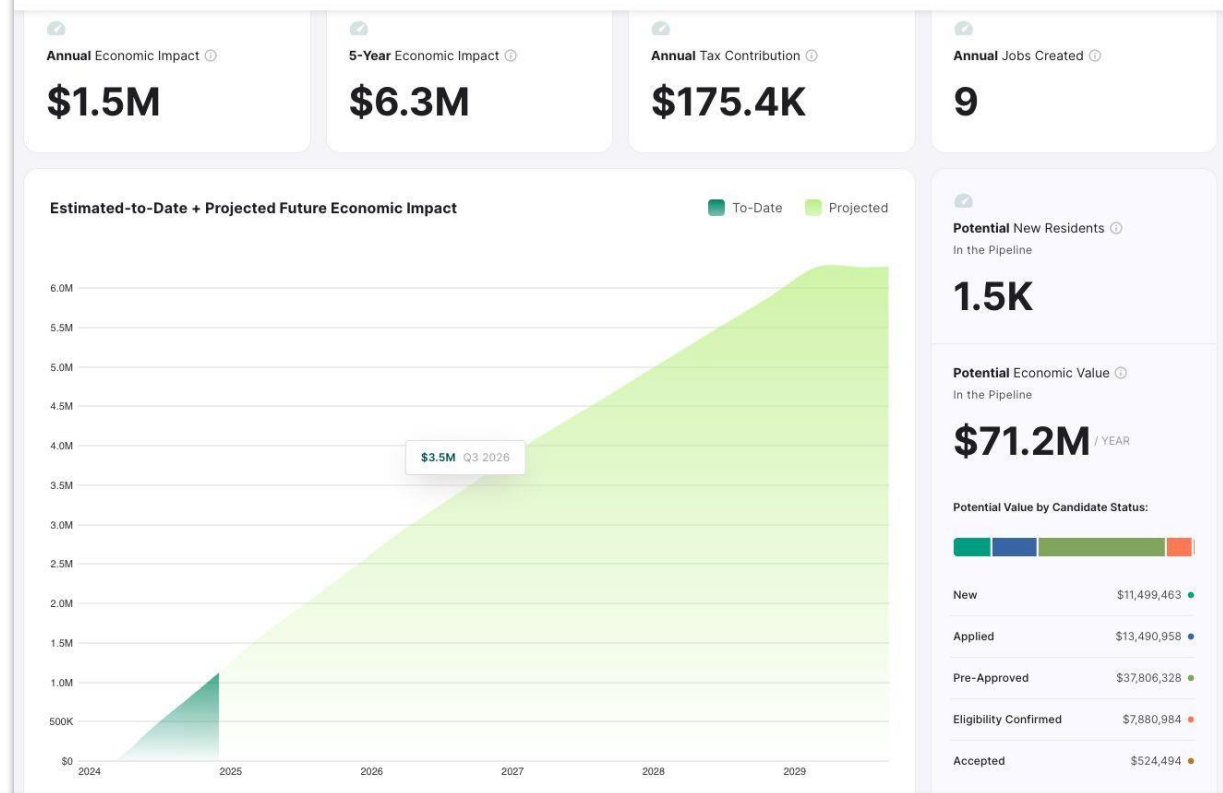
"These leads come in, they're hot leads! We have to respond quickly."

Colby Hall, Executive Director
SOAR, Eastern Kentucky, Stand
Up Rural America 2024

Measurement

- New residents have a huge impact on a local community's businesses and tax base.
- Measuring the impact of marketing and recruitment efforts helps keep stakeholders aligned.

Pipeline Value Dashboard - Columbus, GA



Applications

7.7K**903 Met Your Criteria**

Movers who meet your program's eligibility criteria are viewable in your [Pipeline](#).



Likes

12.4K

Program Likes

11.9K

Community Likes

513

Impressions

315.5K

Program Impressions

139.4K

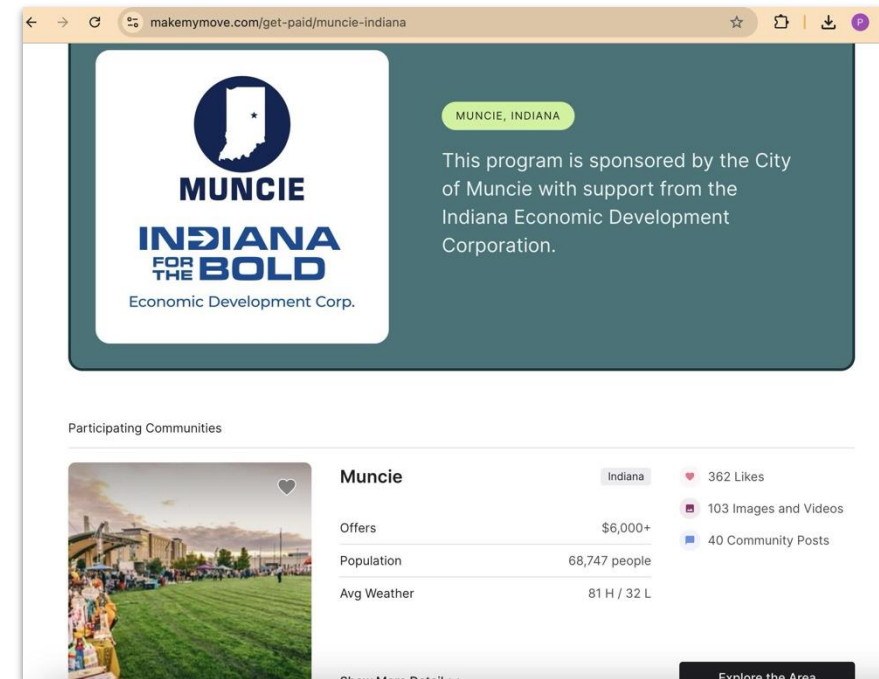
Community Impressions

176.1K

Funding and Resourcing

Support can be in the form of:

- Private funds from employers or foundations
- Matching funds for participating communities
- Line items in budgets for new resident recruitment





Programming and Incentives

Incentives

Communities build tailored incentive programs to attract and retain talent. These incentives can be strategically designed to appeal to specific demographics based on the type of individuals the community seeks to attract.



Building incentive programs helps:

1. **Attract** potential new residents through eye-catching and unique elements that highlight what is special about the community.
2. **Retain** new residents through thoughtful, community integrating elements. The more opportunities the mover has to engage with the community, the higher likelihood they call the community home long term.



Broad Appeal

Some elements of incentive programs are “table stakes”. Your program should include these things to compete in the marketplace and appeal to a wide audience. Those things are:

- **Relocation cash-** It grabs the attention of potential movers and reduces friction
- **Regular programming** to connect movers to each other and the community. This is how you ensure that movers turn into long lasting community members.
- **Coworking Space memberships.** This provides movers the opportunity to work and network from a place that is not their home.
- **“Welcome Baskets”** including community swag, gift cards to local businesses and eateries and more. Movers want to feel a part of their new homes and what better way than with a basket of goodies introducing them to the local hot spots.



Incentive Metrics

Through working with communities of all sizes, we have built some best practices for communities building a compelling incentive.

- Once a program crosses \$7K in program value:
 - Click-Through Rate is on average 107% higher
 - Application rate is on average 66% higher
- Once a program crosses \$10K in program value:
 - Click-Through Rate is on average 177% higher
 - Application rate is on average 170% higher

Recruiting Now Indiana

Thrive in Richmond

- \$5,000 cash
- A VIP Community Pass which includes:
 - Free 1-year membership to co-working space in downtown Richmond
 - 1 month of full membership to the Forest Hills Country Club
 - Free 1-year membership to the Wayne County Area Chamber of Commerce
 - Ambassador Network to help you get connected to locals with similar interests and leadership opportunities
- PLUS your choice of one of the following packages:
 - Arts Package / symphony season tickets, theater season tickets, art museum membership and more
 - History Package / three local history museum memberships
 - Outdoor Recreation Package / public golf course and two nature preserve memberships
 - Fitness Package / pool, gym membership, and race season passes for runners

Total Incentive **\$7,500**

[Apply Now](#)



Examples

We've had several partners take a "package approach" to building their incentive programs. For example:

Arts and Entertainment

- Opera tickets, wine tastings, festival tickets, etc.

Outdoor Amenities

- Park passes, Golf course membership, local sports teams tickets, etc.

History Centered

- Museum membership, historic building tour, etc.

This approach provides movers the opportunity to choose how they would most like to engage with the community. The single, young professional may select a different package than the family with young children but in both scenarios, they are able to engage with the community in the way that most excites them.

Move to Richmond

\$ \$5,000 cash

A VIP Community Pass which includes:

Free 1-year membership to co-working space in downtown Richmond

1 month of full membership to the Forest Hills Country Club

Free 1-year membership to the Wayne County Area Chamber of Commerce

Ambassador Network to help you get connected to locals with similar interests and leadership opportunities

PLUS your choice of one of the following packages:

Arts Package / symphony season tickets, theater season tickets, art museum membership and more

History Package / three local history museum memberships

Outdoor Recreation Package / public golf course and two nature preserve memberships

Fitness Package / pool, gym membership, and race season passes for runners

Total Incentive

\$7,500



Examples

[Noblesville, Indiana](#) offers a competitive incentive program valued at \$15,000 designed to help newcomers connect with locals and feel at home in the community.

- Mover Meetup with the Mayor provides a unique opportunity to gain insights into the heart of the community.
- Access to a coworking space caters to remote workers, fostering a sense of belonging among peers in similar roles.
- Multiple passes to Noblesville's unique local experiences allows newcomers to explore and enjoy the community.

Move to Noblesville

-  \$5,000 Relocation Grant
-  1 year membership to COhatch Noblesville Coworking Space 
-  1 year membership to the Noblesville Chamber of Commerce 
-  1 year membership to Conner Prairie, a Smithsonian affiliate and one of the most visited outdoor museums in the country 
-  Ruoff Music Center VIP Concert Experience 
-  Mover Meetup with the Mayor 
-  Community Connection Consultation
-  Dine Around Town Package
-  1 Season Pass for Unlimited Play at 2 Golf Courses 
-  Noblesville Parks Pass 
-  Forest Park Aquatic Center Season Pass 
-  \$500 Health & Wellness Stipend

Total Incentive

\$15,000





Use Cases

Use Cases- *Community Success Stories*

South Bend- Elkhart Region □Urban, population 166K□

- 70 Households Moved
- 146 People Moved
- 6,189 Applications
- \$116k Average HH Income
- \$6.49M in New Annual Economic Output Generated

Axios, June 2023

Noblesville, IN □Suburban Indianapolis, population 75K□

- 103 Households Moved
- 241 People Moved
- 9,983 Applications
- \$138K Average HH Income
- \$10.83M in New Annual Economic Output Generated

Eastern Kentucky-(26 counties in rural Appalachia, largest town population 13K□

- 74 Households moved or are on the way
- 218 People moved or are on the way
- 8,692 Applications
- \$125K Average HH Income
- \$6.49M in New Annual Economic Output Generated





Thank you!

Mike Rutz

CEO MakeMyMove

Cell: 317.698.6599

Mike@MakeMyMove.com