

COUNTY PROFILE

# Wadena Co.

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



## POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

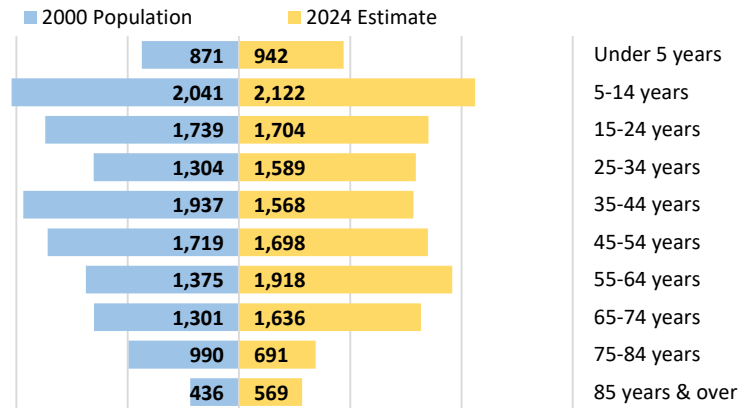
2024 population:	<b>14,437 people</b>	Median Age:	<b>40.1 years</b>
Population change, 2020-2024	372 people 2.6% increase	state:	38.6 years

Wadena Co. is the 58th largest of the 87 counties in the state. Its population increased so far this decade, ranking as the 21st fastest growing in the state from 2020 to 2024. 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).

	Number	Percent
Under 5 years	942	6.5%
5-14 years	2,122	14.7%
15-24 years	1,704	11.8%
25-34 years	1,589	11.0%
35-44 years	1,568	10.9%
45-54 years	1,698	11.8%
55-64 years	1,918	13.3%
65-74 years	1,636	11.3%
75-84 years	691	4.8%
85 years & over	569	3.9%
<b>Total Population</b>	<b>14,437</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Census 2024 Population Estimates, 2019-2023 ACS

Figure 1. Population Pyramid, 2000-2024



Wadena Co. suffered a negative natural increase - more deaths than births from 2020 to 2024, 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, 2020-2024

	Total Population Change	April 1, 2020 to July 1, 2024					
		Natural Increase	Vital Events		Net Migration		
			Births	Deaths	Total	International	Domestic
Wadena Co.	374	-89	829	918	457	84	373
State of Minnesota	86,459	51,570	268,689	217,119	33,161	81,091	-47,930

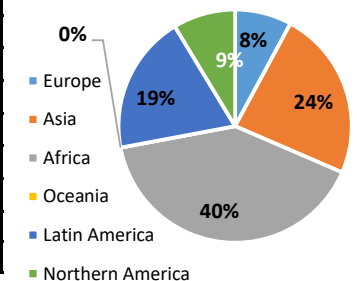
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates Program

Compared to the state, Wadena Co. has a smaller percentage of foreign-born residents. From 2013 to 2023, Wadena Co. saw an increase in the number of foreign-born residents, which was faster than the statewide increase.

	Wadena Co.		Change 2013-2023		Minnesota	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Percent	Change
<b>Foreign-born Population</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>1.8%</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>89.6%</b>	<b>8.6%</b>	<b>24.7%</b>
Europe	20	7.9%	-18	-47.4%	8.8%	-3.4%
Asia	60	23.6%	10	20.0%	35.7%	18.1%
Africa	103	40.6%	101	5050.0%	28.3%	78.8%
Oceania	0	0.0%	0	#DIV/0!	0.4%	5.4%
Americas:	71	28.0%	27	61.4%	26.7%	8.7%
Latin America	49	19.3%	17	53.1%	24.2%	9.7%
Northern America	22	8.7%	10	83.3%	2.5%	0.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey

Figure 2. Place of Birth for the Foreign Born Population, 2023



## COUNTY PROFILE

Wadena Co.

Wadena Co.'s population was becoming more racially diverse over time. Since 2013, the white population declined, but the number of people of other races increased (see Table 4).

**Figure 3. Population by Race, 2023**

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

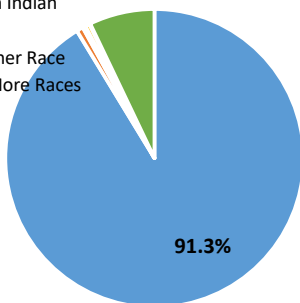


Table 4. Race and Hispanic Origin, 2023	Wadena Co.			Minnesota	
	Number	Percent	Change from 2013-2023	Percent	Change from 2013-2023
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,135</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>2.6%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>6.8%</b>
White	12,904	91.3%	-2.8%	78.4%	-2.2%
Black or African American	102	0.7%	61.9%	6.8%	38.9%
American Indian or Alaska Native	45	0.3%	-79.6%	0.9%	-11.6%
Asian or Other Pac. Islanders	67	0.5%	45.7%	5.1%	29.6%
Some Other Race	14	0.1%	-41.7%	2.7%	96.1%
Two or More Races	1,003	7.1%	626.8%	6.2%	168.3%
Hispanic or Latino origin	324	2.3%	70.5%	6.2%	37.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey

## POPULATION PROJECTIONS

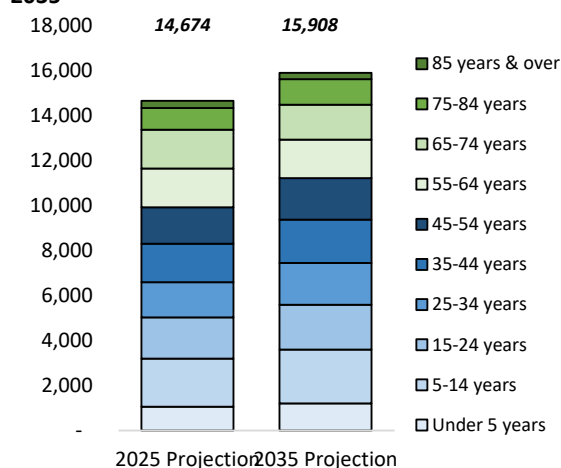
According to the Minnesota State Demographic Center, Wadena Co.'s population is expected to grow from 2025 to 2035, with a rate of change that is faster than the projected statewide growth rate (3.7%). In addition to the overall growth, the number of people aged 65 years and older is expected to decrease 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%
<b>Total Population</b>	<b>14,674</b>	<b>15,908</b>	<b>1,234</b>	<b>8.4%</b>

Source: Minnesota State Demographic Center

**Figure 4. Projections by Age Group, 2025-2035**

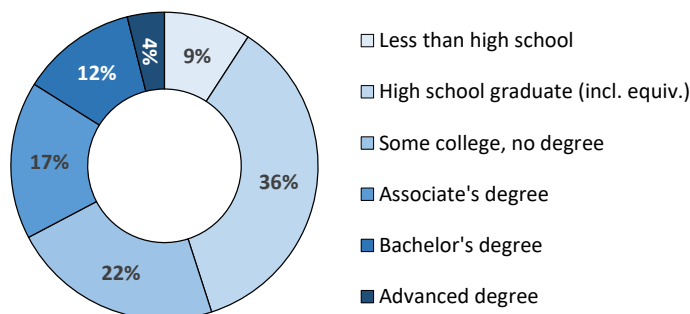


## EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Wadena Co. has a lower percentage of adults (18 years & over) with at least a high school diploma than the state (93.2%), 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.

**Figure 5. Educational Attainment, 2023**

<b>Percentage of the adult population (18 years &amp; over) with at least a high school diploma:</b>	<b>90.8%</b>
<b>College-educated:</b>	<b>55.0%</b>
state:	68.8%
Associate's Degree:	16.6%
Bachelor's Degree:	12.2%
Advanced Degree:	3.9%



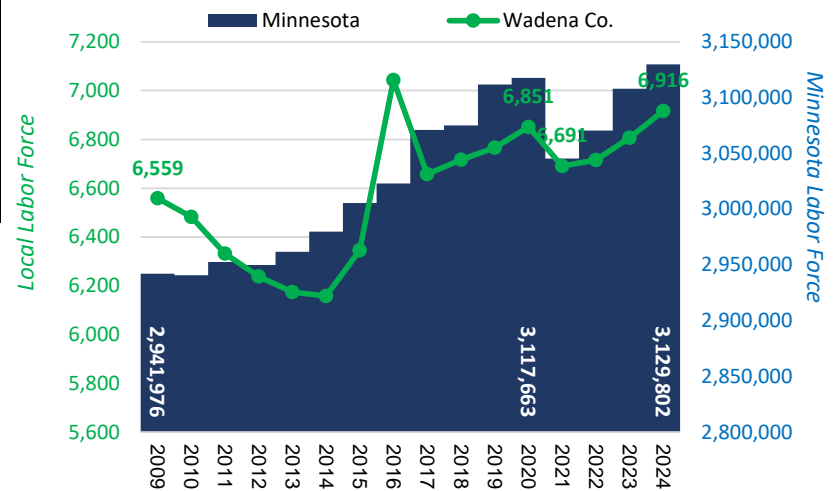
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey

## LABOR FORCE TRENDS

At 4.3%, Wadena Co. had a higher unemployment rate than the state in 2024. After the pandemic recession Wadena Co.'s unemployment rate declined compared to the 5.7% 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.

<b>6,916</b>	available workers
Labor Force change, 2009-2024	357 workers 5.4% increase
<b>4.3%</b>	unemployment rate
2.8%	state
<b>297</b>	unemployed workers

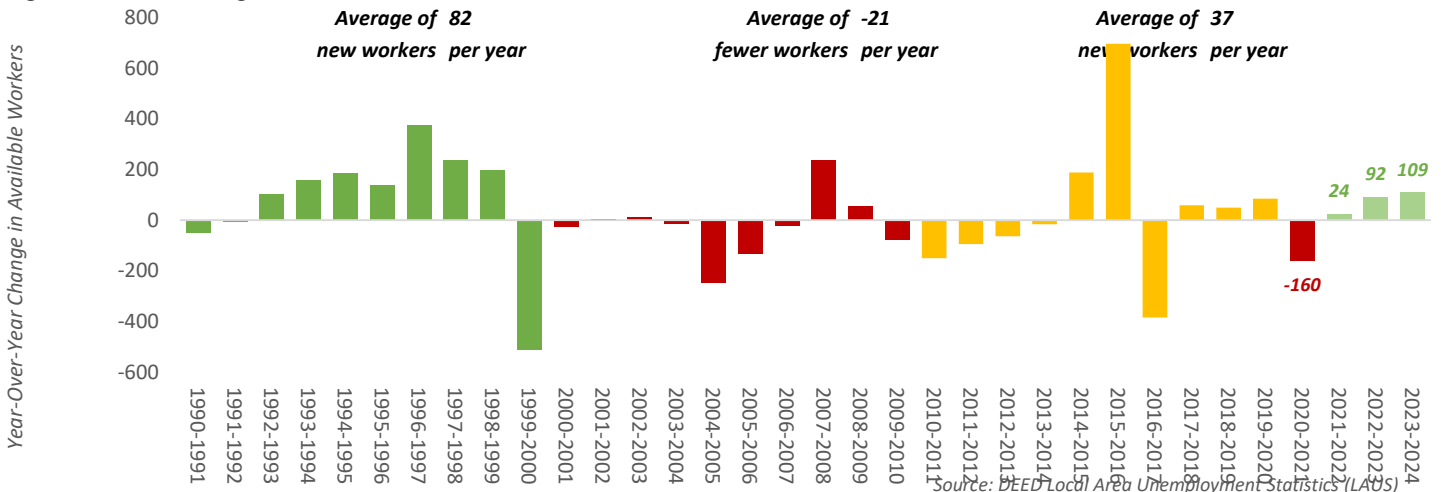
Figure 6. Annual Labor Force Estimates



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 gain of new 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, 1990-2024



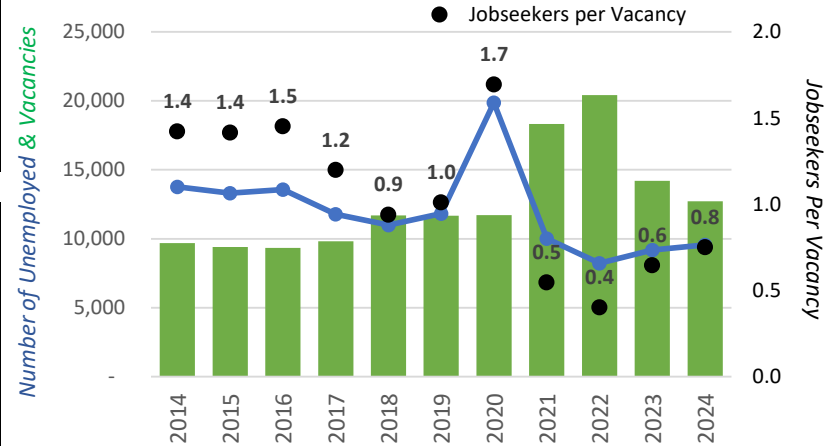
Source: DEED Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)

Table 6. Labor Force Projections, 2025-2035	Labor Force Projection	
	2025	2035
16 to 24 years	1,318	1,446
25 to 54 years	4,138	4,759
55 to 64 years	1,281	1,269
65 years & over	532	489
<b>Total Labor Force</b>	<b>7,269</b>	<b>7,963</b>

Source: Minnesota State Demographic Center, 2019-2023 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 2024, 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, 2014-2024



Source: DEED Job Vacancy Survey, LAUS program

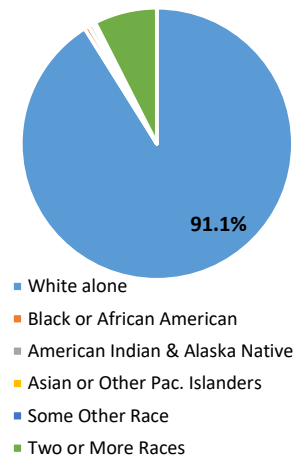
## LABOR FORCE CHARACTERISTICS

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 80.0% of workers are white alone), but is becoming more diverse over time.

Table 7. Employment Characteristics, 2023

	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
<b>Total Labor Force</b>	<b>7,012</b>	<b>64.5%</b>	<b>5.8%</b>	<b>68.5%</b>	<b>3.9%</b>	<b>3,561</b>	<b>3,453</b>
16 to 19 years	529	69.2%	3.0%	52.7%	9.9%	186	343
20 to 24 years	590	92.3%	8.3%	83.4%	6.5%	324	266
25 to 44 years	2,694	87.1%	4.7%	88.7%	3.5%	1,341	1,352
45 to 54 years	1,316	79.2%	7.7%	87.8%	2.9%	718	598
55 to 64 years	1,392	74.1%	6.2%	72.8%	3.0%	743	649
65 to 74 years	445	27.8%	6.7%	27.8%	3.4%	223	223
75 years & over	48	3.9%	0.0%	6.6%	3.1%	26	22
<b>Employment Characteristics by Race &amp; Hispanic Origin</b>							
White alone	6,388	64.1%	6.2%	67.5%	3.4%		
Black or African American	39	50.6%	0.0%	71.0%	8.4%		
American Indian & Alaska Native	36	92.3%	22.2%	57.7%	11.4%		
Asian or Other Pac. Islanders	19	33.3%	0.0%	74.6%	3.5%		
Some Other Race	6	42.9%	0.0%	75.9%	5.6%		
Two or More Races	525	73.0%	1.0%	74.2%	6.1%		
Hispanic or Latino	223	86.1%	2.2%	77.1%	5.9%		
<b>Employment Characteristics by Disability, 20 to 64 years</b>							
With Any Disability, 20 to 64 years	521	52.5%	29.8%	55.3%	9.5%		
<b>Employment Characteristics by Educational Attainment, 25 to 64 years</b>							
Population, 25 to 64 years	5,404	81.5%	5.8%	84.4%	3.3%		
Less than H.S. Diploma	331	72.6%	6.1%	67.1%	4.7%		
H.S. Diploma or Equivalent	1,641	79.2%	2.9%	76.5%	2.6%		
Some College or Assoc. Degree	2,415	82.8%	4.4%	85.0%	3.6%		
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	1,013	85.4%	2.3%	90.5%	2.0%		

Figure 9. Labor Force by Race, 2023

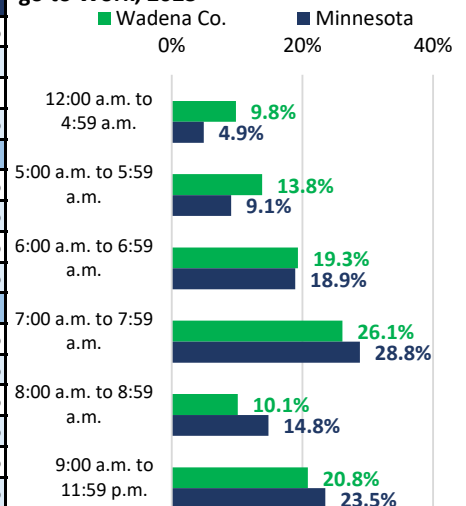


Source: 2019-2023 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates

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	6,314	98.9%	2,870,678	97.8%
Worked in county of residence	4,047	63.4%	1,984,232	67.6%
Worked out of county of residence	2,266	35.5%	886,447	30.2%
Worked outside state of residence	70	1.1%	64,576	2.2%
<b>MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION TO WORK</b>				
Car, truck, or van	5,599	87.7%	2,286,563	77.9%
Public transportation (excl. taxicab)	19	0.3%	61,640	2.1%
Other method (walk, bike, taxi, etc.)	300	4.7%	120,345	4.1%
Worked at home	466	7.3%	463,770	15.8%
<b>TRAVEL TIME TO WORK</b>				
Less than 10 minutes	1,890	29.7%	478,446	16.3%
10 to 19 minutes	1,673	26.3%	924,605	31.5%
20 to 29 minutes	1,079	16.9%	651,626	22.2%
30 to 44 minutes	1,021	16.0%	551,828	18.8%
45 to 59 minutes	345	5.4%	176,115	6.0%
60 or more minutes	364	5.7%	149,698	5.1%
<b>Mean travel time to work (minutes)</b>	<b>21.7 minutes</b>		<b>23.1 minutes</b>	

Figure 10. Time Leaving Home to go to Work, 2023



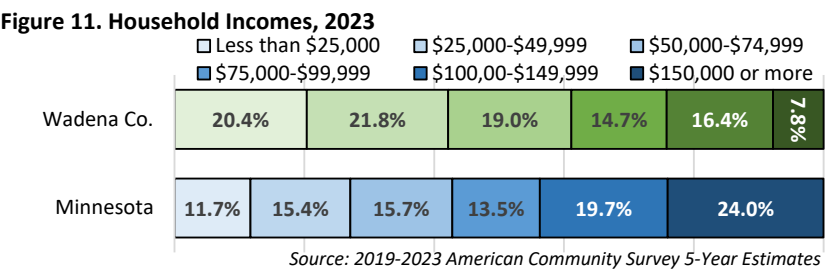
Source: 2019-2023 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates

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.

<b>Median Household Income</b>	<b>\$56,882</b>
state	\$87,556
<b>Median Family Income</b>	<b>\$78,803</b>
state	\$111,492
<b>Per Capita Income</b>	<b>\$30,037</b>
state	\$46,957

Source: 2019-2023 American Community Survey



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 \$14.61 for a single person living alone to meet a basic needs cost of living, and an hourly wage requirement of \$19.18 for a typical family with 2 adults and 1 child (see Table 9).

**Table 9. Basic Needs Cost of Living Estimates, 2024**

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.	\$30,387	\$14.61	\$0	\$414	\$150	\$766	\$621	\$273	\$308
State of Minnesota	\$36,768	\$17.68	\$0	\$424	\$156	\$1,154	\$573	\$365	\$392
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.	\$59,840	\$19.18	\$345	\$943	\$530	\$1,002	\$1,151	\$450	\$566
State of Minnesota	\$70,308	\$22.53	\$545	\$964	\$556	\$1,446	\$1,028	\$557	\$763

Source: DEED Cost of Living tool

Wadena Co. had a lower median house value than the state, having the 65th 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).

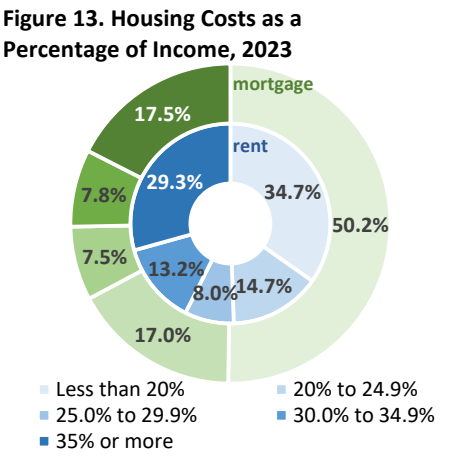
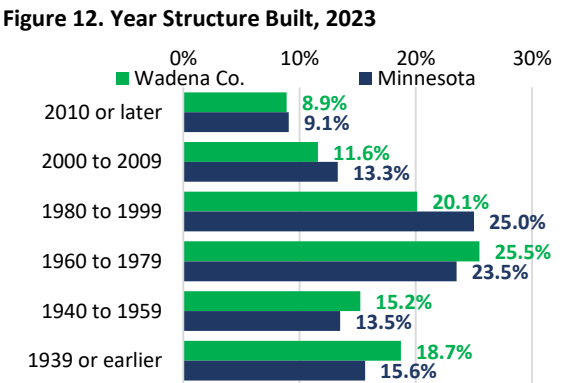
**Table 10. Estimated Value of Owner-occupied Housing Units, 2022**

	Wadena Co.		Minnesota
	Total	Percent	Percent
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,270</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Less than \$50,000	286	6.7%	4.0%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	634	14.8%	4.0%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	728	17.0%	6.2%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	912	21.4%	8.9%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	961	22.5%	25.7%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	591	13.8%	33.6%
\$500,000 or more	158	3.7%	17.5%
<b>Median (dollars)</b>	<b>\$170,500</b>		<b>\$305,500</b>

Source: 2019-2023 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates

<b>Median monthly owner costs, owner-occupied units with a mortgage</b>	<b>\$1,241</b>
state	\$1,890
<b>Percentage of households with a mortgage spending 30% or more of their income on housing costs</b>	<b>25.3%</b>
state	22.5%
<b>Median monthly rent costs</b>	<b>\$706</b>
state	\$1,235
<b>Percentage of renters spending 30% or more of their household income on rent</b>	<b>42.6%</b>
state	47.2%

Source: 2019-2023 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates





## OCCUPATIONS

At \$22.38 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 (\$42.89) and lowest for food preparation and serving related jobs (\$14.55) (see Table 11).

Table 11. Occupational Employment &amp; Wage Statistics, 2025

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
<b>Total, All Occupations</b>	<b>\$22.38</b>	<b>64,910</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>\$26.22</b>	<b>2,920,470</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Management	\$42.89	3,540	5.5%	0.8	\$59.38	200,060	6.9%
Business & Financial Operations	\$34.44	2,380	3.7%	0.5	\$39.95	208,210	7.1%
Computer & Mathematical	\$37.81	550	0.8%	0.3	\$50.02	97,460	3.3%
Architecture & Engineering	\$39.32	570	0.9%	0.4	\$45.03	57,950	2.0%
Life, Physical & Social Science	\$33.13	510	0.8%	0.7	\$38.33	32,150	1.1%
Community & Social Service	\$28.82	1,580	2.4%	1.2	\$29.82	59,290	2.0%
Legal	\$34.39	200	0.3%	0.4	\$49.52	20,750	0.7%
Education, Training & Library	\$23.71	4,660	7.2%	1.2	\$27.84	170,270	5.8%
Arts, Design, Entertainment & Media	\$21.90	480	0.7%	0.6	\$28.84	36,030	1.2%
Healthcare Practitioners & Technical	\$41.00	4,330	6.7%	1.0	\$46.51	187,480	6.4%
Healthcare Support	\$18.76	4,220	6.5%	1.1	\$18.67	176,750	6.1%
Protective Service	\$28.87	1,120	1.7%	1.1	\$29.37	46,960	1.6%
Food Preparation & Serving Related	\$14.55	7,170	11.0%	1.3	\$16.05	240,830	8.2%
Building, Grounds Cleaning & Maint.	\$17.99	2,570	4.0%	1.4	\$19.16	81,700	2.8%
Personal Care & Service	\$16.52	1,600	2.5%	1.1	\$17.54	63,300	2.2%
Sales & Related	\$16.76	5,780	8.9%	1.1	\$18.66	244,780	8.4%
Office & Administrative Support	\$22.63	7,740	11.9%	1.0	\$24.07	340,040	11.6%
Farming, Fishing & Forestry	\$23.54	130	0.2%	1.8	\$23.48	3,300	0.1%
Construction & Extraction	\$29.75	3,230	5.0%	1.3	\$34.20	114,050	3.9%
Installation, Maintenance & Repair	\$26.83	2,870	4.4%	1.2	\$30.40	105,650	3.6%
Production	\$21.96	4,640	7.1%	1.0	\$23.56	205,220	7.0%
Transportation & Material Moving	\$21.40	5,020	7.7%	1.0	\$19.80	228,260	7.8%

Source: DEED Occupational Employment & Wage Statistics, Qtr. 1 2025

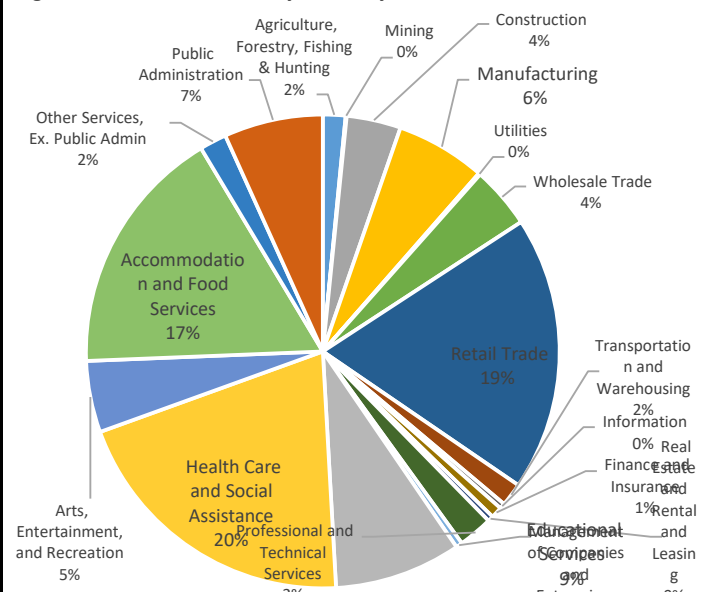
## JOB VACANCY SURVEY

Wadena Co. is a part of the Northwest planning region. There were 12718 job vacancies posted by employers in 2024, indicating extensive opportunity in the region, with openings across several occupations and industries (see Figure 14).

Table 12. Northwest Job Vacancy Survey Results, 2024

Occupational Group	Number of Vacancies	Wage Offer
<b>Total, All Occupations</b>	<b>12,718</b>	<b>\$18.57</b>
Management	171	\$30.60
Business & Financial Operations	215	\$21.51
Computer & Mathematical	63	\$19.52
Architecture & Engineering	322	\$34.28
Life, Physical & Social Sciences	57	\$25.42
Community & Social Service	386	\$21.69
Education, Training & Library	638	\$20.64
Healthcare Practitioners & Technical	1,009	\$31.22
Healthcare Support	1,082	\$18.32
Protective Service	188	\$23.57
Food Preparation & Serving Related	2,330	\$15.00
Building, Grounds Cleaning & Maint.	625	\$17.65
Personal Care & Service	327	\$18.14
Sales & Related	1,850	\$15.63
Office & Administrative Support	525	\$18.77
Construction & Extraction	441	\$23.70
Installation, Maintenance & Repair	751	\$20.05
Production	604	\$19.93
Transportation & Material Moving	662	\$18.81

Figure 14. Job Vacancies by Industry, 2024



Source: DEED Job Vacancy Survey, 2024

## OCCUPATIONS IN DEMAND

Table 13. Northwest Planning Region Occupations in Demand, 2024

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

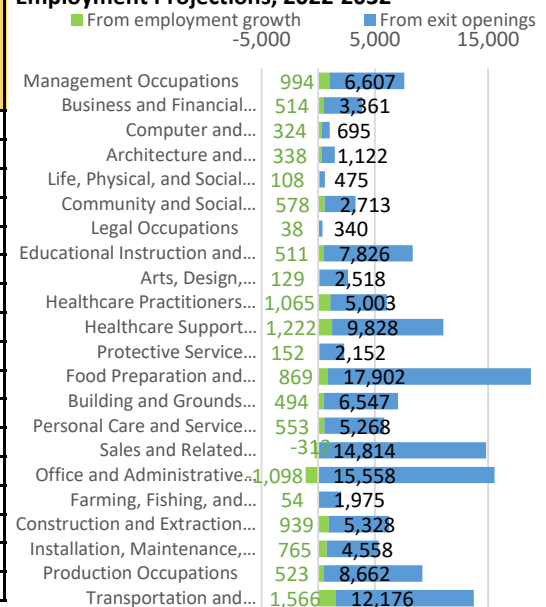
Wadena Co. is a part of the Northwest planning region, which is projected to see a 3.9% increase in employment levels over the next decade. In addition to new jobs created, there will be a much larger number of exit openings (see Figure 15).

Table 14. Regional Industry Employment Projections, 2022-2032

	Estimated Employment 2022	Projected Employment 2032	Percent Change 2022-2032
<b>Northwest Planning Region</b>			
<b>Total, All Industries</b>	<b>265,321</b>	<b>275,647</b>	<b>3.9%</b>
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



## ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

Coming out of the pandemic recession, after gaining jobs over the past year, Wadena Co. had the 54th largest economy of the 87 counties in the state. Wadena Co. was the 20th fastest growing in the past year and the 24th fastest growing since 2019. From 2019 to 2024, employment in Wadena Co. has grown since the pandemic recession.

451 business establishments

\$50,364 annual average wage

5,649 jobs

\$284,505,097 total industry payroll

Job change,  
2019-2024

413 jobs  
7.9% increase

Figure 16. Industry Employment Statistics, 2005-2024

Source: DEED QCEW program

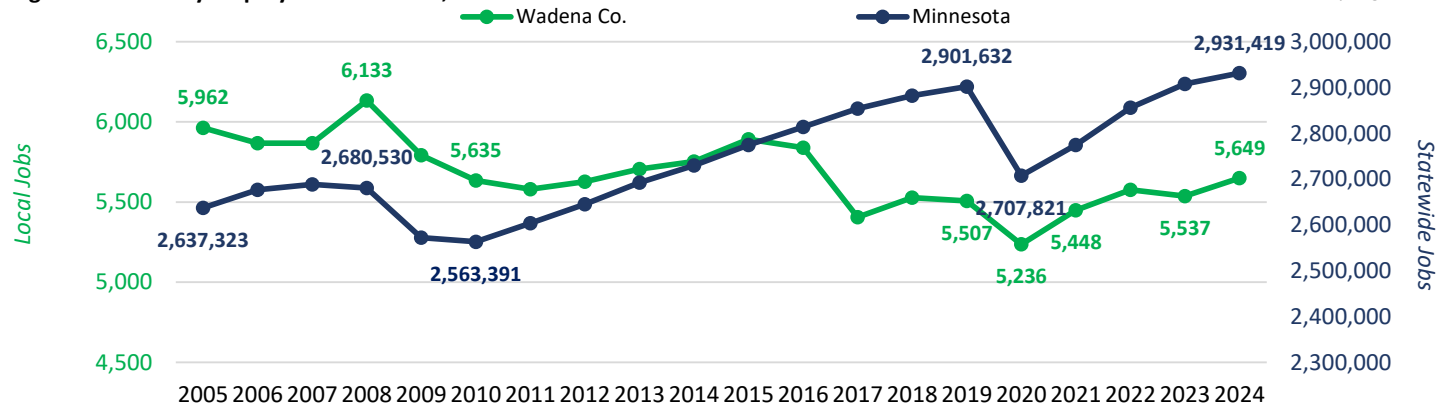
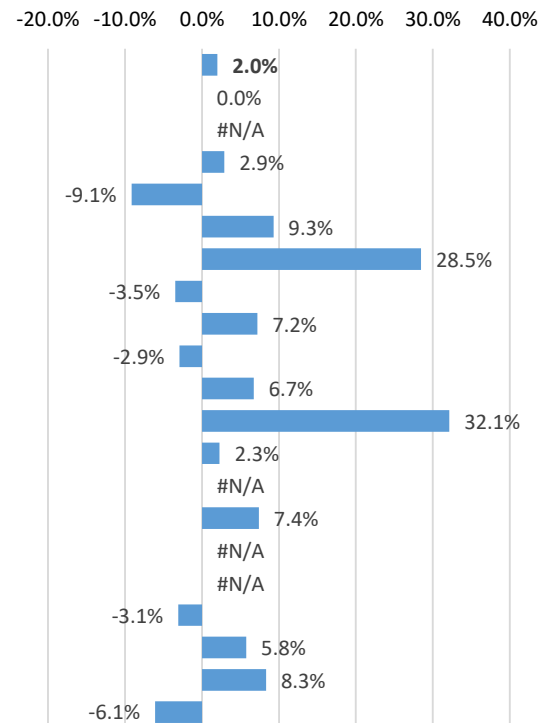


Table 15. Wadena Co. Industry Employment Statistics, 2024	Number of Jobs	Percent of Total Jobs	Average Annual Wage
<b>Total, All Industries</b>	<b>5,649</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>\$50,364</b>
Agriculture, Forestry, Fish & Hunt	33	0.6%	\$40,509
Mining	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A
Construction	282	5.0%	\$65,842
Manufacturing	447	7.9%	\$56,951
Utilities	47	0.8%	\$119,911
Wholesale Trade	537	9.5%	\$54,295
Retail Trade	614	10.9%	\$33,809
Transportation & Warehousing	253	4.5%	\$50,603
Information	67	1.2%	\$53,867
Finance & Insurance	111	2.0%	\$61,349
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	37	0.7%	\$31,400
Professional & Technical Services	89	1.6%	\$70,899
Management of Companies	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A
Admin. Support & Waste Mgmt. Svcs.	29	0.5%	\$27,059
Educational Services	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A
Health Care & Social Assistance	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	63	1.1%	\$21,915
Accommodation & Food Services	349	6.2%	\$17,780
Other Services	182	3.2%	\$31,644
Public Administration	324	5.7%	\$56,857

Figure 17. Change in Jobs, 2023-2024



Source: DEED Quarterly Census of Employment &amp; Wages (QCEW)

For more information on Wadena Co.'s population, labor force, and economic trends, contact:

**Anthony Schaffhauser** | Regional Analyst, Northwest Minnesota  
 CareerForce Bemidji | 616 America Avenue NW, Suite 210 | Bemidji, MN 56601  
 Office: 320-441-6594 | Email: [anthony.schaffhauser@state.mn.us](mailto:anthony.schaffhauser@state.mn.us)  
 web: [www.mn.gov/deed/data/regional-lmi/](http://www.mn.gov/deed/data/regional-lmi/)

Data updated: May 23, 2025