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Photo from landsearch Wyoming mn

Stories and Solutions to Rural Challenges

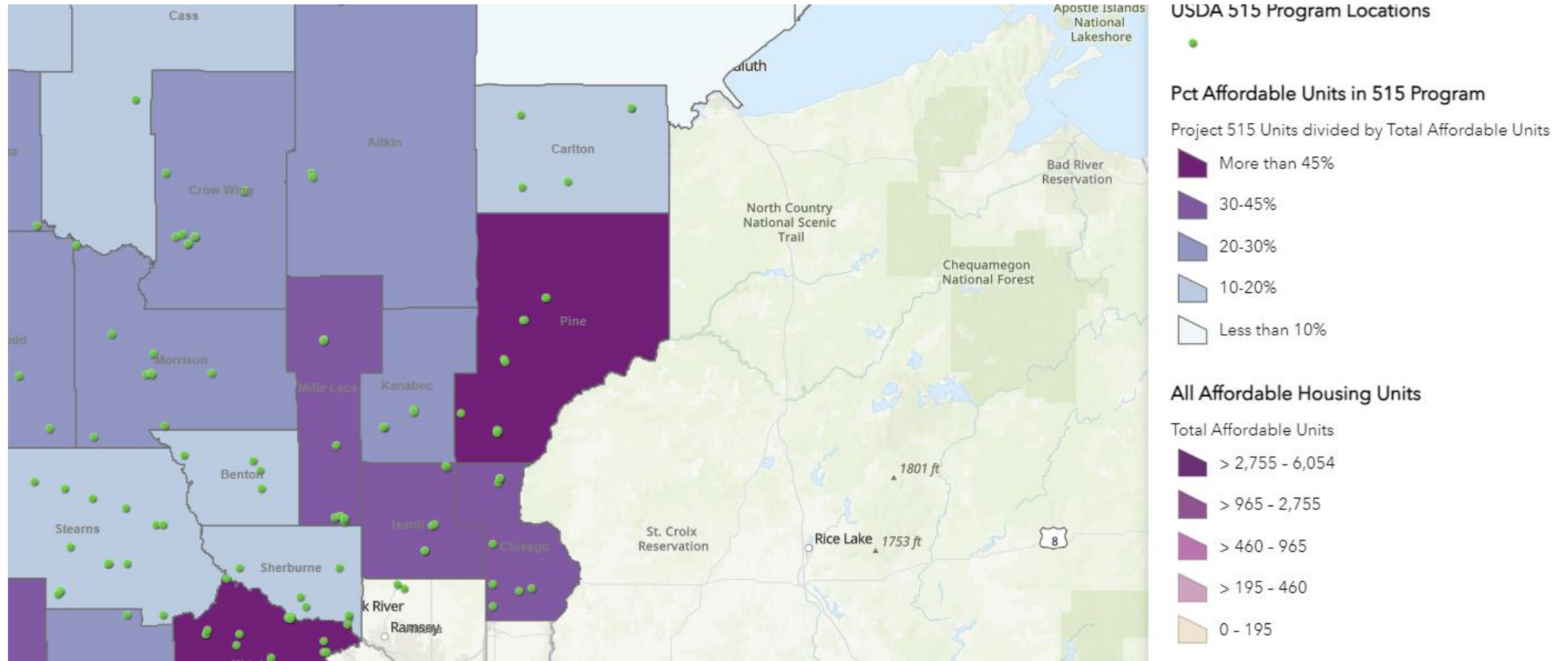
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Rural workforce housing shortage? There's plenty of workforce housing, it's currently occupied by our seniors. Ben Winchester

Challenge: Housing

The 515 Project

6.9 million (27%) of rural or small-town households are considered “cost-burdened”



<https://www.hhh.umn.edu/news/umn-research-collaboration-examines-challenge-preserving-affordable-housing-greater-minnesota>



Incentives

Change the
code



Spur, Texas

Pop. 1000, over 70 lots sold over 2 years



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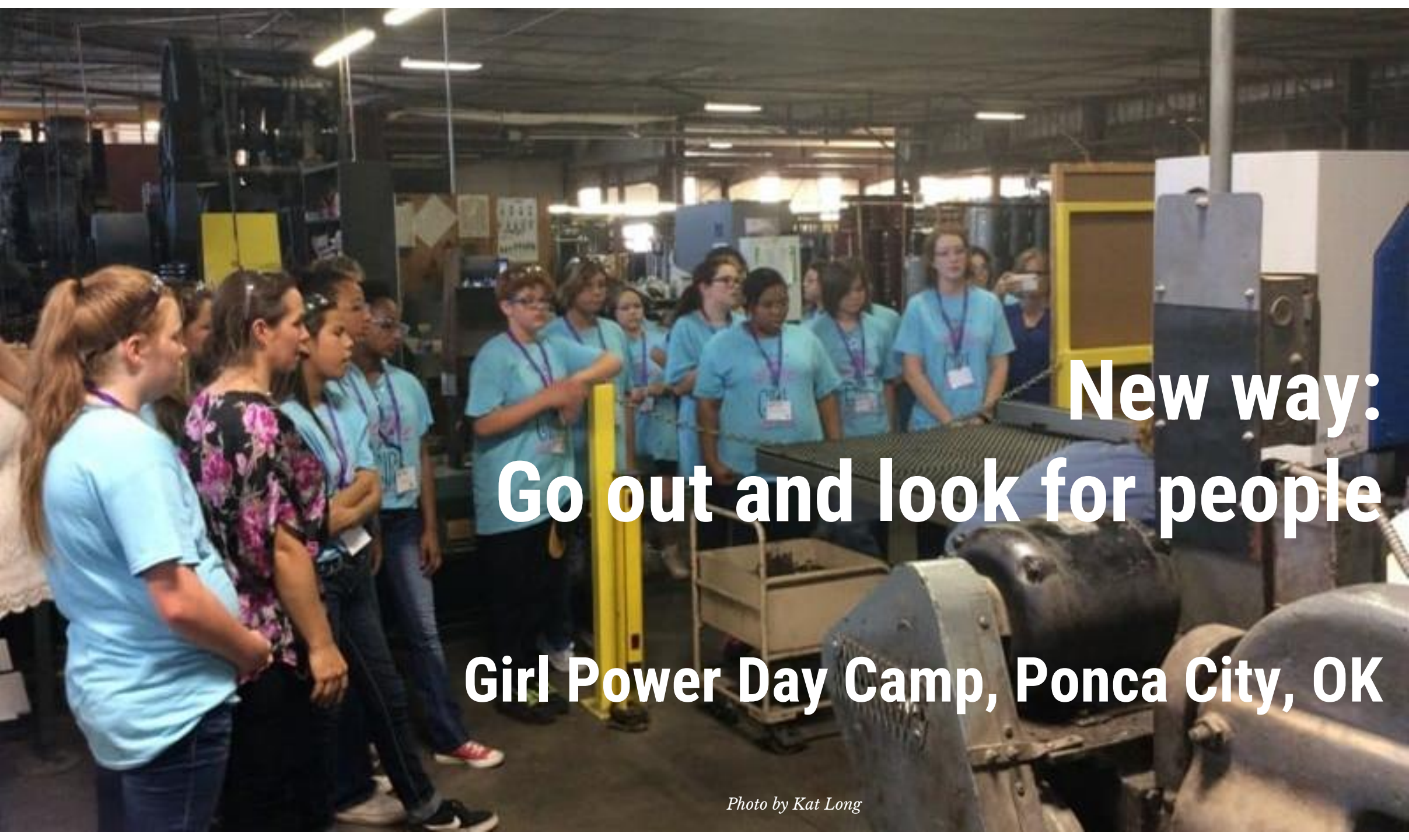


[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-NC-ND](#)

Challenge: Workforce

**“We post job openings,
but we don’t get any applications!”**

Photo by Becky McCray

A group of approximately 15-20 girls, mostly wearing light blue t-shirts and lanyards, are standing in a line in a large industrial facility, likely a factory. They are looking towards the right side of the frame. In the background, there are various pieces of industrial machinery, including what appears to be a large metal grate or conveyor system. The lighting is bright, typical of an indoor industrial space.

New way: Go out and look for people

Girl Power Day Camp, Ponca City, OK

Photo by Kat Long

Overlooked: At Risk

Try a Blue-Collar Career Fair

heavy equipment operators, an HVAC contractor, a stone mason, a plumber, an electrician, and a welder

Photo by Vance Osterhout

“Applicants don’t have the skills we need”



Photo by Ernie Journeys

Photo from All Cultures Equal FB
Page

**New way:
Connect with community resources**



A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a black graduation cap. The person's fingernails are painted with a white and pink pattern. The cap is black with a blue tassel hanging from the center. The background is blurred, showing a white surface and some greenery.

**Stop hanging on
to out of date job
requirements**

Photo by Sir Manuel

New way: Break down the requirements

Elliot Lake, Ontario

*This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under
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**Inflexible
working
hours.**

Photo by Joshua Olsen



Greycliff

**New way:
Temporary help**

Photo by Deb Brown

We can't afford to pay better



Photo by Kenny Eliason

New way: Value people enough to find a way

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Photo from Greene Bean coffee house fb page

**“We can’t do that because
we’re rural”**



Photo courtesy of wikivoyage

A woman with glasses and a green hoodie is sitting at a desk, working on a laptop. She is wearing large black headphones. The desk is cluttered with a laptop, a smartphone, and a glass of water. In the background, there are cardboard boxes and a white storage unit. The overall scene is a home office.

**42 percent of the U.S. labor
force now working from home
full-time**

Photo from ISS Insights

Let them work from home

The strength of this trend will be determined by how communities position themselves to leverage this growing interest in rural and small towns.



New way: Keep up with technology

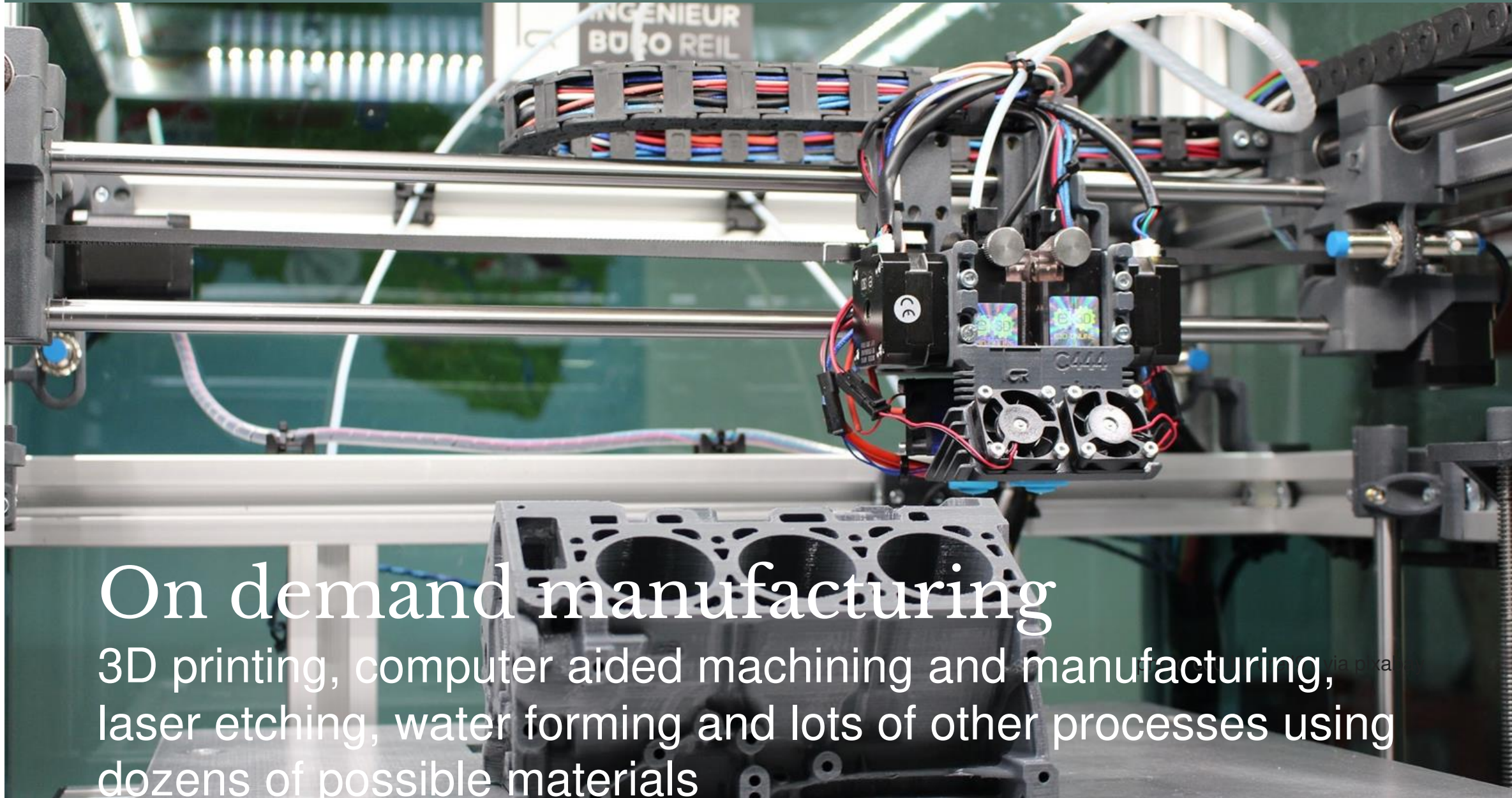
Photo by Deb Brown

Look outside your local workforce

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On demand manufacturing

3D printing, computer aided machining and manufacturing, laser etching, water forming and lots of other processes using dozens of possible materials



Use augmented or virtual reality as training tools

Be like Boeing
Or car mechanics
Or surgeons
Or construction workers

Photo by [ThisisEngineering](#)

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Economic Development Starter Ideas

Hard way

Photo by Becky McCray



Easier Way: Innovative Rural Business Models



Pop Ups

Photo by Deb Brown

Photo by Deb Brown



Temporary: Artisan Markets



Photo via Zuni Pueblo Main Street, Facebook

Sheds and Traveling Businesses

- Inexpensive
- Good incubators
- Easy to build or modify
- portable



Photo by Austin Moore



Photo (CC) by Jeffrey Grandy

Tiny Sheds: Artist Shanties

Photo from Binyard Facebook page
in Kingman KS

Tiny Sheds: Grain Bins





Photo by Julia McCray

**Sheds Mean You
Can Stop Waiting**

Photo by Julia McCray

Tiny Market Village





Photo by Deb Brown

Business Inside a Business



Photo by Deb Brown

Simple Incubators



Photo by Deb Brown

Simple Incubator Success: Grocery Store Owners Test A Restaurant Idea

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What People Want: Quality of Life

Photo by Deb Brown



**Paint by
Numbers**

Get them in the door



Photo by Becky McCray



Anyone can do it



Outdoor museum



Photo by Deb Brown

Hashtag it

Photo by Timothy Goodman



Two seasons: Winter and Construction



Photo by Deb Brown

Let the kids try things

Placemaking, walkability and public spaces are all big trends in urban planning. And they all point to people wanting what you have right now.

Stop comparing yourself to unattainable urban goals. Start where you are and build on what you are best at.



Pic by onlyinyourstate.com

Rush City Grant Hotel

In Isanti area there are more than 90 trails covering 1094 miles

Photo by Joseph Mailand

<https://www.traillink.com/city/isanti-mn-trails/>

Parks and Trails

NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA DESIGNATION BRINGS ECONOMIC VALUE

NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA ECONOMIC IMPACT

ST. CROIX WATERSHED
OF MINNESOTA & WISCONSIN

Within 2 Years
of Designation



6,000 total jobs generated and supported

<https://northwoodsandwaters.org/economic-impact-of-national-heritage-areas>



\$7 MILLION

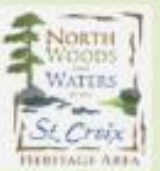
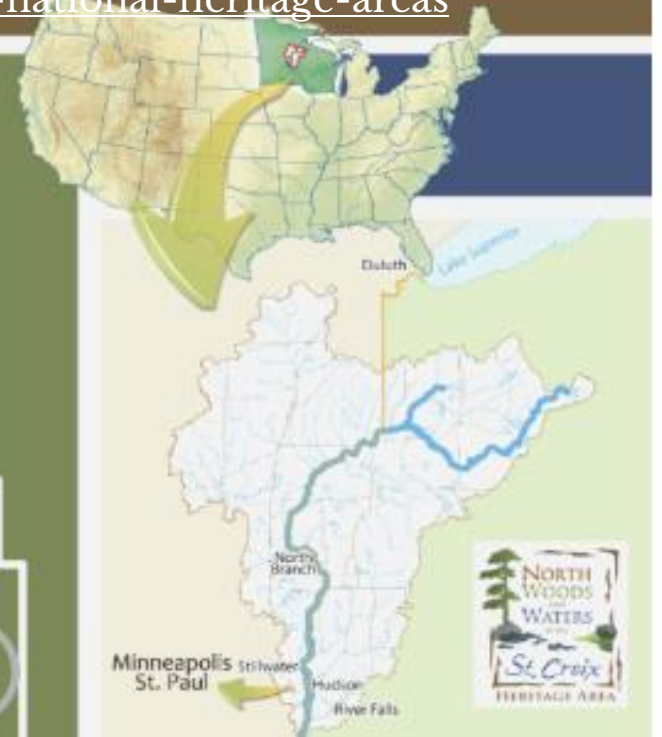
of economic impact on
the St. Croix Watershed
regional economy

1,300

leisure & hospitality
jobs created

\$5.4 MILLION

in tax revenue generated
for state & local economies



Festivals



Photo from North Branch River Dental

Invest in your community

<https://ilsr.org/do-it-yourselfes-downtown-investment-cooperative-model/>



Who are the new residents now?

Iowa State University 99 town study

The towns that prospered the best
were the ones that were open to new
ideas and welcomed new people into
making decisions about the future of
their town



Photo by Chicago Reader

We don't have to move anywhere; we have to transform where we are.

**Receive practical steps every
week, at no charge, in your email!**

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Find the presentation here: <https://buildingpossibility.com/gp-4593/>