

"To develop and promote resources for Economic Growth in our community."



November 2024



Community Calendar

Add an event to the community calendar

Economic Development Priorities to Invoke Change



Priorities to Invoke Change

Promote Recreation
and Tourism

Improve
Broadband

Support
Childcare

Support Career
Development

Business Retention,
Expansion and
Attraction

Support Housing
Initiatives

County Economic Development What you need to know:

**Did you know it is Naturally Better in Aitkin
County?**



Listen to all of the reasons why

Aitkin County Economic Development offers 2025 Business Development & Recreation Grants

The purpose of this grant fund is to leverage county funds, private funds, and volunteer efforts to enhance small business development activities in Aitkin County, with a focus on increasing sustained tourism and recreational events. Organizations may apply individually or submit a joint application. To demonstrate their commitment to the grant request, organizations must provide a 1:1 match of funds in good faith. The Aitkin County Board of Commissioners has approved this funding to be used directly for the benefit of the Aitkin County community through the Aitkin County Business Development & Recreation Grant.

Application Procedure: Guidelines for applications are as follows:

1. Grant requests should be submitted by EMAIL to:
mark.jeffers@co.aitkin.mn.us, subject line: BD&R2025

or by mail to:

Mark Jeffers
Aitkin County Government Center,
307 2nd Street NW, Room 316,
Aitkin, MN 56431.

2. Funding recommendations will be considered at the regularly scheduled monthly meeting of the Aitkin County Economic Development Committee. Application deadline is **May 31, 2025.**

3. Committee recommendations will be submitted to the Aitkin County Board of Commissioners for final approval.

[acquire all documents here](#)

North Central Small Business Development Center (SBDC) offers leadership training opportunities



Hello from Your Friends at the North Central Small Business Development Center!

It's hard to believe, but 2025 is almost here. We believe that there is no better time than the new year to focus on growing your own skillset and strengthening your organization, which is why we want to share two unique opportunities from our friends and colleagues at Central Lakes College Workforce Solutions.

The first is **Leadership and Management for the 22nd Century**. This is a 4-month cohort-style training that is designed to strengthen leaders and prepare them to navigate change and growth within their organizations. The Early Bird pricing is \$400 per participant until December 1st. After that, it will be \$500 per participant.

The second opportunity is **Beyond the Mission: A Nonprofit Impact Series**. At the North Central SBDC, we do not work with nonprofits, but still believe strongly in their role in our communities. This series of workshops is perfect for nonprofit directors, board members, and volunteers looking to enhance their impact and reach. The Early Bird pricing is \$25 per workshop until December 15. After that, it is \$50 per workshop.

To learn more about these offerings and to register, [click here](#).

BEYOND THE THE MISSION

NONPROFIT IMPACT SERIES



trainings to help nonprofits and their leaders grow and succeed

GRASSROOTS ORGANIZING AND FUNDRAISING

January 7th | 5:30-7:30PM

This interactive workshop is designed to empower nonprofit leaders and volunteers with the skills needed to build impactful campaigns. This session dives deep into the 5-steps of grassroots organizing, covering techniques to mobilize volunteers, leverage local resources, and create meaningful connections with supporters. Participants will explore low-cost fundraising methods tailored for smaller organizations. This workshop is perfect for those looking to expand the reach of their nonprofit, without breaking the bank.

NONPROFIT MARKETING ESSENTIALS

January 21st | 5:30-7:30PM

In today's crowded digital and social landscape, nonprofits need to stand out to get attention and drive change. This workshop covers the core marketing strategies every nonprofit should know, with practical guidance on crafting compelling messages, leveraging social media, and reaching target audiences. Participants will learn how to build a recognizable brand, optimize content for digital platforms, and measure their marketing impact. This workshop is perfect for those looking to amplify their mission and to create a marketing campaign that will deliver results.

AI FOR NONPROFITS

February 4th | 5:30-7:30PM

Explore how artificial intelligence can be a game-changer for nonprofits in this hands-on workshop. This session demystifies AI, showing how it can be used to streamline operations, enhance fundraising, and personalize supporter engagement. Participants will discover practical AI applications suited to mission-driven work—from data analysis and donor insights to automating routine tasks—without needing a technical background. This workshop is perfect for those looking to harness AI responsibly and sustainably, while creating more capacity for growth within their nonprofit.

STRATEGIC GROWTH FOR NONPROFITS

February 18th | 5:30-7:30PM

This workshop equips nonprofit leaders with the tools needed for intentional, sustainable growth. Participants will learn how to assess their organization's current stage, identify growth opportunities, and develop a roadmap for scaling impact responsibly. Topics include diversifying funding streams, building effective partnerships, strengthening organizational capacity, and enhancing program delivered. Tailored to the unique challenges and opportunities in the nonprofit sector, this session is ideal for leaders looking to ensure the long-term success of their organizations.

Early Bird Pricing: \$25 per workshop | After December 15th: \$50 per workshop

Questions? Contact CLC Workforce Solutions at training@clcmn.edu



Workforce Solutions

Register online

https://mnscu.rschooltoday.com/public/getclass/category_id/1194/program_id/40



CENTRAL LAKES COLLEGE WORKFORCE
SOLUTIONS PRESENTS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT FOR THE 22ND CENTURY



**Session One: Leading with
Impact - The Art of
Communication and
Conflict Management**

January 10, 2025
8:30AM - 12:30PM
Central Lakes College
E208- Brainerd Campus



**Session Two: Cultivate
and Connect - Crafting
Company Culture and
Employee Engagement**

February 7, 2025
8:30AM - 12:30PM
Central Lakes College
E208- Brainerd Campus



**Session Three:
Sustainable Success - The
Road to Change and
Continuous Improvement**

March 21, 2025
8:30AM - 12:30PM
Central Lakes College
E208 - Brainerd Campus



**Session Four: Summit
Session - Culmination and
Determination**

April 11, 2025
8:30AM - 12:30PM
Central Lakes College
E208 - Brainerd Campus

**This series is designed to be a hands-on, purposeful
learning experience. Each participant will complete:**

- CliftonStrengths for Leaders Assessment
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Assessment
- Leadership Development Plan
- Employee Engagement Plan
- Change Roadmap

**Early Bird Pricing - \$400 per participant
After December 1, 2024- \$500 per participant**

Register Online



In Partnership with the North Central Small Business Development Center **CLC** CENTRAL LAKES COLLEGE

MLEC Receives Border-to-Border Broadband Development Grant

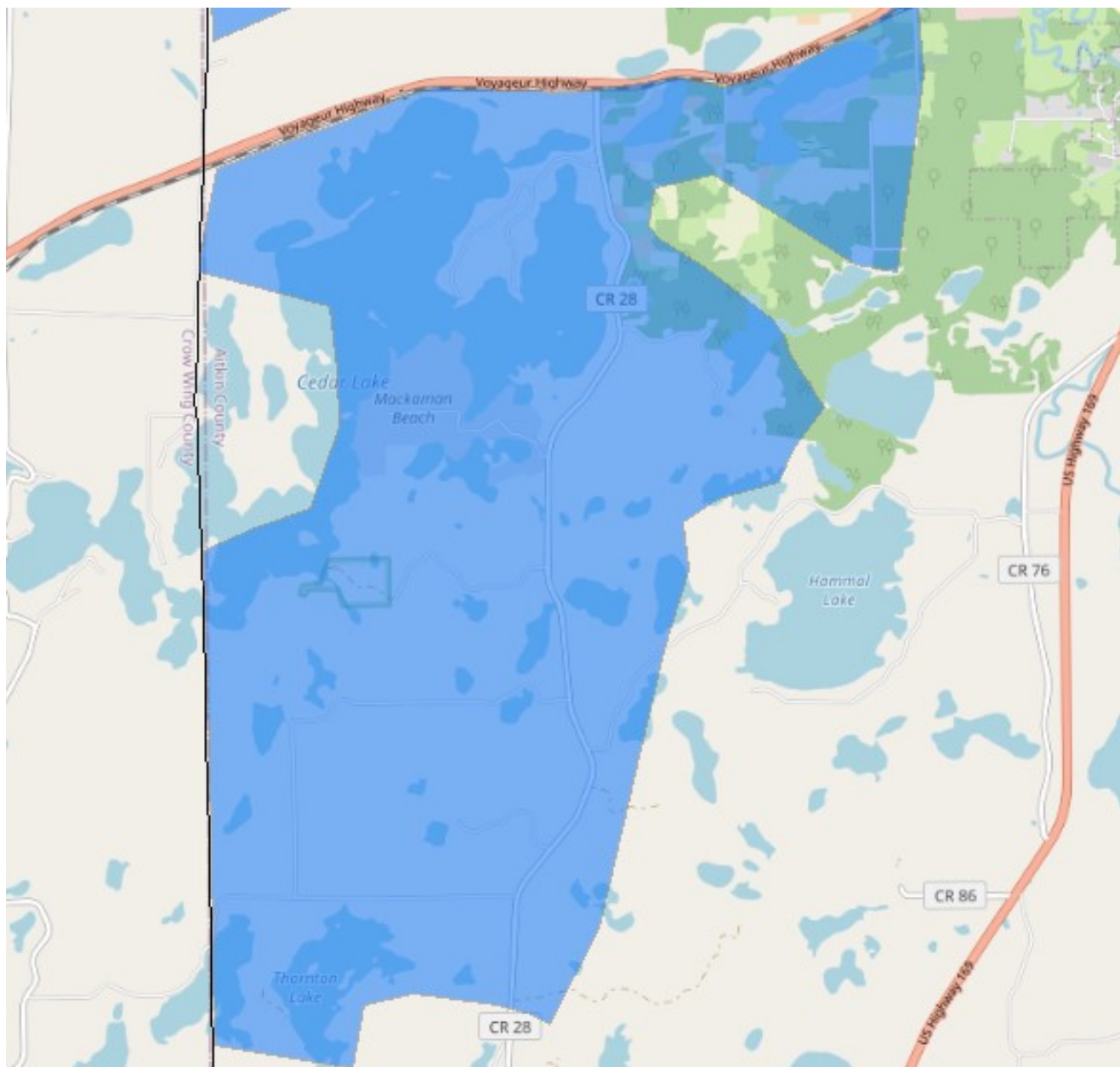
Mille Lacs Energy Cooperative (MLEC) is happy to announce that MLEC Fiber Internet will become available for more customers. Governor Tim Walz's announcement of \$52 million in grants to expand broadband access across Minnesota is a significant step in bridging the digital divide. Administered through the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development

(DEED), this initiative is part of the Border-to-Border Broadband Program, which has been providing funding since 2014. The latest round of grants marks the program's 10th funding cycle and will benefit 7,700 homes and businesses.

MLEC was awarded \$1.8 million as part of a \$4 million project to bring up to 1 Gbps internet speeds to over 420 homes in the Cedar Lake area, west of the City of Aitkin. Aitkin County, committed to working with broadband providers in the county, has also pledged \$25,000 towards this project.

Please continue to read the Outlet, Facebook, and our website for more information and updates on our upcoming fiber projects. For more information on MLEC Fiber Internet, call our office at 218-429-0433 or visit our website at www.mlecmn.net/fiber. Project area maps, Internet plans, and service agreements can all be found online.

MLEC is a not-for-profit, electric distribution cooperative owned by the members we serve. We provide service to over 13,000 members in parts of Aitkin, Crow Wing, and Mille Lacs counties. Our headquarters is located at 23483 US Highway 169, Aitkin, MN.



Tamarack Learning Center set to open soon!



TAMARACK LEARNING CENTER CHILDCARE

110 Tingdale St. Tamarack, MN 55787

OPENING SOON!

- » Licensed Child Care Center - *tentative opening January 2, 2025*
- » DHS Qualified & Trained Staff to care for up to 49 children ages 6 weeks - 12 years old

**For more information or to
be put on a waiting list:**

Please Email:
tlcchildcare1@outlook.com

or

Call / text: Niki
(763) 232-3836



It is our Philosophy that
"Our children Are Our Future" and
**"When Child Care Works, Everyone
Can Work"**

Our Mission is to provide a loving, high quality, affordable program using "Best Practices" in which all children, as unique as they are, can be healthy in a safe, loving and nurturing environment that will help them Learn & Grow developmentally, cognitively, physically, socially and emotionally.

About the Team & Program...

Niki has been providing high quality care in Minnesota for over 40 years. She started working Fulltime in a child care center when she was 16 years old, and after attending college for Early childhood, opened her 1st center when she was 27 years old. Since then her & her husband Jim, have opened 3 other centers from scratch, and currently owns & Directs an Accredited & 4 Star Parent Aware Rated DHS licensed child care center in the Anoka County Human Service Center located in Blaine, MN since 2004.

TLC will staff only DHS Qualified Teachers & Trained Aides to promote cognitive development, social & emotional growth, offer creative play to encourage physical development & lots of opportunity to perfect fine motor skills through Art & Dramatic play with prompt, gentle & responsive care. TLC will always provide a healthy, clean, safe, loving & exciting environment that gives children emotional security and intellectual challenge, with nutritional snacks & 2 meals provided on site, daily. Children will always be supervised & in a smoke free environment.



Tamarack Learning Center

**Minnesota Housing Finance Agency offers
homeowner opportunities**

Contact a Lender



m MINNESOTA HOUSING

**Dream it. Do it.
We'll help you
afford it.**

Hassle-free home improvement loans up to **\$75,000** from the Minnesota Housing Fix Up Loan Program.

[LEARN MORE](#)

In connection with Single Family Division loan programs, Minnesota Housing is neither an originator of loans nor a creditor and is not affiliated with any Lender. To find out if you are eligible, or to apply for a loan, please contact a participating Lender.



m MINNESOTA HOUSING

**Home sweet
renovated
home.**

Hire it out or DIY with flexible home improvement loans from the Minnesota Housing Fix Up Loan Program.

[LEARN MORE](#)

In connection with Single Family Division loan programs, Minnesota Housing is neither an originator of loans nor a creditor and is not affiliated with any Lender. To find out if you are eligible, or to apply for a loan, please contact a participating Lender.

[learn more](#)

Properties Available in the Aitkin Area

[Tour the Properties](#)



COMMERCIAL PROPERTY FOR SALE

Offered at
\$1,500,000

Features & Amenities

45,504 SF industrial building located on a 21.57 acre +/- site at 36559 US Highway 169, Aitkin, MN. The building functions as the headquarters for Mille Lacs Energy Cooperative.

- Highway traffic, visible location
- High-speed Fiber-to-the-Premise Internet
- Spacious yard and maintained landscaping
- Semi truck assessable driveway
- 2 large storage buildings
- Fenced equipment yard
- Recent interior renovations



About the property

Take the opportunity to move your business or add another location! Office spaces with a combination of heated and cold storage. This industrial site provides room for large trucks and equipment to keep them out of the weather.

The property includes a main office/shop and two pole buildings. The main office/shop (100 ft. x 125 ft.) constitutes about 60% of the total Gross Building Area, with concrete block construction and a mix of office and shop space. The pole buildings include one 60 ft. x 120 ft. insulated storage building with in-floor heat and one 60 ft. x 170 ft. cold storage building with concrete floor. The quality/appeal and condition of the improvements is rated average. The property includes a fenced/secured outdoor storage area and significant frontage on US Highway 169.



Contact details

Jeff Borling, Great River Energy
(218) 355-8088
jborling@greenergy.com

Mille Lacs Energy Headquarters

36559 US Hwy 169, Aitkin, Minnesota 56431 - Aitkin County



Property Details

Latitude/Longitude: 46.5344, -93.6834

Type of space: Industrial, Commercial

Min Size: 45,504 sqft

Max Size: 45,504 sqft

Last Updated: 6/4/2024

Northspan Contact

Company: Northspan

Contact Name: Shaun Hainey

Address: 202 W Superior St, #600

City: Duluth

State: Minnesota

Phone: 218.481.7737

Email: shainey@northspan.org

Website: <https://www.northlandconnection.com>

NORTHSPAN

Documents

[Listing Flyer.pdf](#)

Availability

For Sale: Yes

Sale Price: \$1,500,000.00

Description

Take the opportunity to move your business or add another location! Office spaces with a combination of heated and cold storage. This industrial site provides room for large trucks and equipment to keep them out of the weather. The property includes a main office/shop and two pole buildings. The main office shop (100 ft. x 125 ft.) constitutes about 60% of the total Gross Building Area, with concrete block construction and a mix of office and shop space. The pole buildings include one 60 ft. x 120 ft. insulated storage building with in-floor heat and one 60 ft. x 170 ft. cold storage building with concrete floor. The quality/appeal and condition of the improvements is rated average. The property includes a fenced/secured outdoor storage area and significant frontage on US Highway 169.

Building Details

Total Building sf: 45,504 sf

Office sf: 12,500 sf

Amenities: 45,504 SF industrial building located on a 21.57 acre +/- site at 36559 US Highway 169, Aitkin, MN. The building functions as the headquarters for Mille Lacs Energy Cooperative. •Highway traffic, visible location •High-speed Fiber-to-the-Premise Internet •Spacious yard and maintained landscaping •2 large storage buildings •Fenced equipment yard •Recent interior renovations •Semi truck assessable driveway

Site Details

Total Acres: 21.57 acres

Incentives

Opportunity Zone: Yes

Transportation

Nearest Airport: Aitkin Municipal Airport

Distance to Airport: 1.2 miles

Port: Yes

Distance to Port: 86.0 miles

Nearest Interstate: I 35

Distance to Interstate: 50.4 miles

Nearest Highway: Hwy 169

Distance to Major Highway: .04 miles

Utilities

Electric Service Provider: Mille Lacs Electric Cooperative

36559 US 169, Aitkin MN

Contact me directly for any details and additional opportunities: mark.jeffers@co.aitkin.mn.us.

Are you ready to move you, your family and/or your business to an amazing area? We welcome you to visit anytime. Tour any of our available properties, enjoy our recreational assets, amazing dining and our unique entertainment offerings. We think you will agree, it is Naturally Better here. Aitkin County is a community with

momentum. We are confident once you visit, you will live here!

naturallybetterhere.com

Aitkin County Business Spotlight



Big Dave's Auto Repair

212 Main Street Palisade, MN

218.845.0576

Lifelong Palisade resident and United States Navy veteran, David Kearney has opened a new business in Palisade, Big Dave's Auto Repair.

Located in the former Palisade Co-op, Kearney has been working on remodeling and updating the business and hopes to have "fuel flowing" soon. In the meantime he has been working in the shop performing oil changes and other vehicle maintenance and repairs.

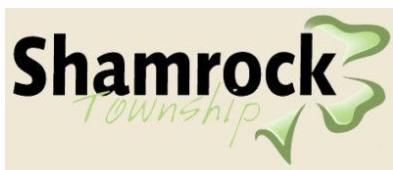
Kearney said he plans to hold a grand opening event in the future.

Closed Monday and Tuesday.

Contact Big Dave's Auto Repair:

218-845-0576 or 218-429-2012.

Community



Palisade Events Committee



Cities



Contact Us



AITKIN COUNTY

Mark Jeffers
Economic Development Coordinator
mark.jeffers@co.aitkin.mn.us
218-513-6188



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