



**Arrowhead Area  
Agency on Aging**  
*A Division of ARDC*

# **2023 COUNTY PROFILE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

*Produced by: Jess Langer, Community Outreach Specialist*

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# FORWARD

This project highlights the Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging's broad mission of improving the health of older adults in the Arrowhead region, which helps them maintain their highest level of independence. The project was a collaborative effort pulling together internal team members, older adult service providers, state demographers, and other researchers in the Arrowhead.

Information was gathered from various trusted sources to bring together a complete snapshot of the health and wellbeing of the Arrowhead Region, the counties that make up this region, and the State of Minnesota as a whole. A complete listing of the data sources is included in the Appendix.

The goal of this tool is for organizations alongside local coalitions to use this as a resource to create systems change so all people in the Arrowhead region have the opportunity to attain their highest potential for health and wellbeing.

The project team included Lori Kangas-Olson, Community Development Manager, *Arrowhead Agency on Aging*, Georgia Lane, Aging Services Planner, *Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging*, Jess Langer, Community Outreach Specialist, *Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging*, and Gina Marsalla, Program Specialist/Grants Manager, *Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging*.

*For individual copies of the profiles, please contact [jlanger@ardc.org](mailto:jlanger@ardc.org)*

# INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted and exacerbated health disparities in previously marginalized communities, leading to a higher risk of vulnerabilities and poor health outcomes. The purpose of creating the county profiles is to distill a large amount of data down to provide an overall snapshot of county-wide demographics and to identify communities at greatest risk within this region. The goal was to illustrate disparities that may or may not exist in rural areas.

Data discovered is presented in a format that is digestible for the public and/or community partners to easily highlight disparities in rural areas. We hope that this information will inform community leaders, service organizations, elected officials, local public health, funders, and others in their processes related to community development, funding, and decision-making. This project is funded through St. Louis County Public Health COVID-19 Response and Recovery and ACL Public Health Workforce grants.

As a part of the process, a preliminary report was presented to partners for input. Using their insights, we determined what data would be most useful for these purposes. Since Older American Act funds are used specifically for those 60+, rather than the “standard” 65+, we decided to work with the state demographer to obtain data for the 60+ age group in all possible areas. It was not possible to separate by age for all topic areas, but we felt it was still important to offer the picture provided by those metrics, whether at 18+ or 65+. The goal was to include basic demographics data as well as data most relevant to our target populations and audiences; older adults (60+) and those serving older adults.

# ABOUT THE ARROWHEAD AREA AGENCY ON AGING

The Arrowhead Regional Development Commission is designated by the Minnesota Board on Aging as the Area Agency on Aging for the Planning and Service Area under the authority of Title III of the Older Americans Act. The Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging (AAAA) is committed to helping older adults maintain their highest level of independence.

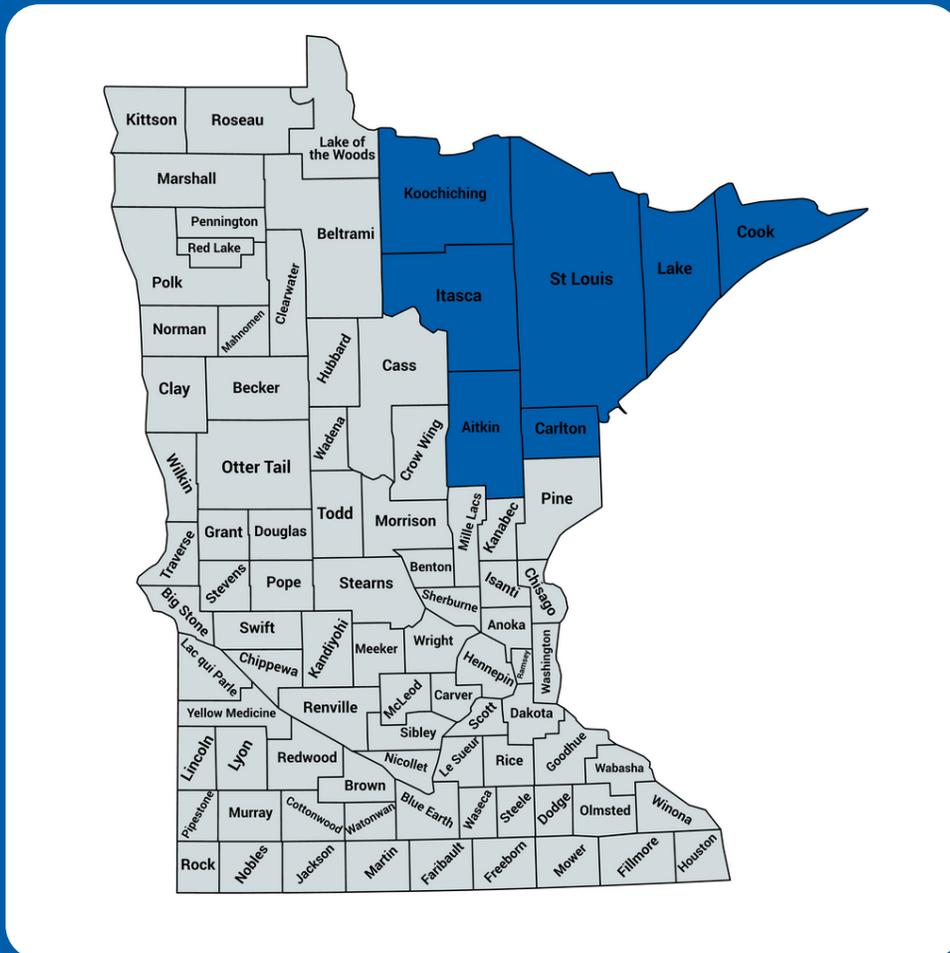
Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) are regional organizations that provide the services, supports and information for just about everything that older adults and their families could need. Minnesota has seven AAAs across the state that are the local connections to older Minnesotans and the community support they need as they age.

The Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging's Planning and Service Area (PSAs) as designated by the Minnesota Board on Aging includes the counties: Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, and St. Louis.



# GEOGRAPHIC AREA

The geographic area analyzed for this project includes the seven counties in the Arrowhead Region: Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, and St. Louis. The 9 profiles represent each county individually, the Arrowhead Region, and Minnesota as a state.



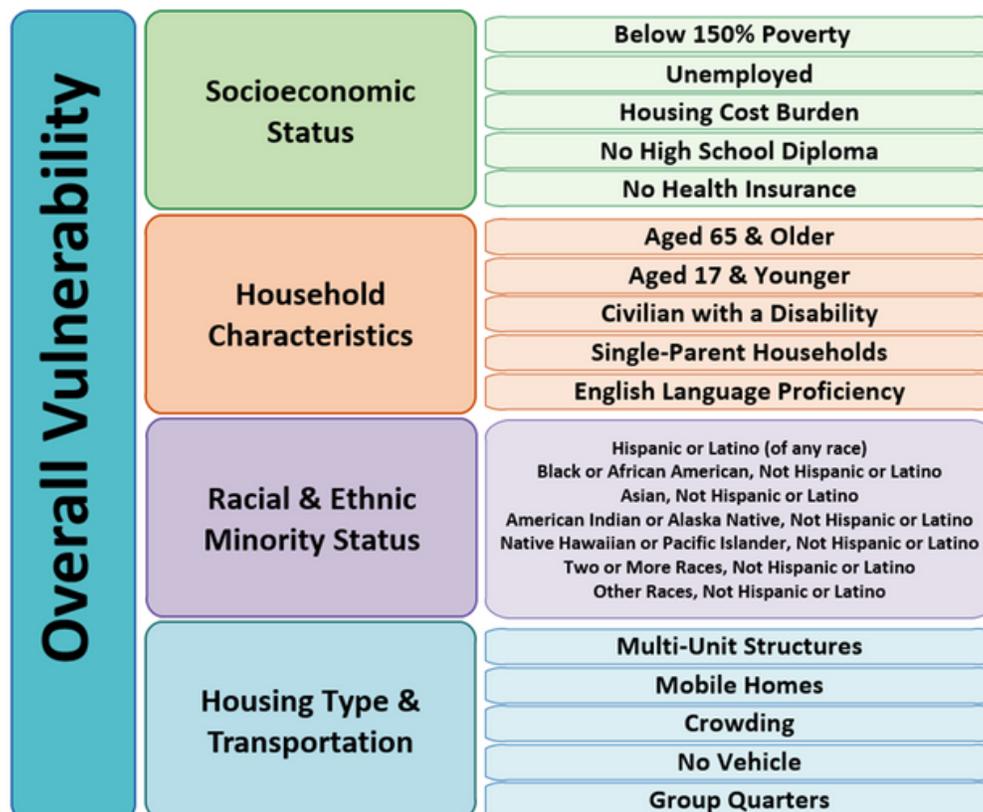
Created with [mapchart.net](http://mapchart.net)

# DEFINITIONS

- **Broadband access** is defined by County Health Rankings & Roadmaps as, “Percentage of households with broadband internet connection” (Broadband Access\*, n.d.).
- **Food insecurity** is defined by County Health Rankings & Roadmaps as, “percentage of population who lack adequate access to food” (Food Insecurity\*, n.d.).
- **Low vehicle access** is defined in the USDA Economic Research Service’s Food Research Atlas as, “Tracts in which more than 100 households have no access to a vehicle and are more than 1/2 mile from the nearest supermarket, or a significant number or share of residents are more than 20 miles from the nearest supermarket” (USDA ERS - Atlas, n.d.).
- **Poor or fair health** is defined by County Health Rankings & Roadmaps as, “Percentage of adults reporting fair or poor health” (Poor or Fair Health, n.d.).
- When determining **poverty levels**, the U.S. Census Bureau states, “The official poverty thresholds do not vary geographically, but they are updated for inflation using the Consumer Price Index (CPI-U). The official poverty definition uses money income before taxes and does not include capital gains or noncash benefits (such as public housing, Medicaid, and food stamps)” (US Census Bureau, 2023).
- **Social vulnerability** is defined by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) as, “poverty, lack of access to transportation, and crowded housing may weaken a community’s ability to prevent human suffering and financial loss in a disaster” (CDC/ATSDR SVI Fact Sheet | Place and Health | ATSDR, n.d.).

# DEFINITIONS

- **Social Vulnerability Index (SVI)** was created, “to help public health officials and emergency response planners identify and map the communities that will most likely need support before, during, and after a hazardous event” (CDC/ATSDR SVI Fact Sheet | Place and Health | ATSDR, n.d.). The SVI represents the vulnerability of U.S. Census tracts, counties, and states. “SVI ranks the tracts on 16 social factors, including unemployment, racial and ethnic minority status, and disability, and further groups them into four related themes” (CDC SVI Documentation 2020 | Place and Health | ATSDR, n.d.). The full variables can be found in the image below (CDC SVI Documentation 2020 | Place and Health | ATSDR, n.d.).



- **Uninsured** is defined by County Health Rankings & Roadmaps as, “Percentage of population under age 65 without health insurance” (*Uninsured*, n.d.).

# REFERENCES

*Broadband Access\**. (n.d.). County Health Rankings & Roadmaps.

<https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/explore-health-rankings/county-health-rankings-model/health-factors/physical-environment/housing-and-transit/broadband-access?anchor=data-methods&selected-tab=methods&year=2023>

*CDC SVI Documentation 2020 | Place and Health | ATSDR*. (n.d.).

[https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/placeandhealth/svi/documentation/SVI\\_documentation\\_2020.html](https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/placeandhealth/svi/documentation/SVI_documentation_2020.html)

*CDC/ATSDR SVI Fact Sheet | Place and Health | ATSDR*. (n.d.).

[https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/placeandhealth/svi/fact\\_sheet/fact\\_sheet.html](https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/placeandhealth/svi/fact_sheet/fact_sheet.html)

*Food insecurity\**. (n.d.). County Health Rankings & Roadmaps.

<https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/explore-health-rankings/county-health-rankings-model/health-factors/health-behaviors/diet-and-exercise/food-insecurity?anchor=data-methods&selected-tab=methods&year=2023>

*Poor or fair health*. (n.d.). County Health Rankings & Roadmaps.

<https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/explore-health-rankings/county-health-rankings-model/health-outcomes/quality-of-life/poor-or-fair-health?anchor=data-methods&selected-tab=methods&year=2023>

*Uninsured*. (n.d.). County Health Rankings & Roadmaps.

<https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/explore-health-rankings/county-health-rankings-model/health-factors/clinical-care/access-to-care/uninsured?anchor=data-methods&selected-tab=methods&year=2023>

# REFERENCES

*US Census Bureau.* (2023, June 15). How the Census Bureau Measures Poverty. Census.gov. <https://www.census.gov/topics/income-poverty/poverty/guidance/poverty-measures.html>

*USDA ERS - go to the Atlas.* (n.d.). <https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-access-research-atlas/go-to-the-atlas/>

# APPENDIX A:

## **DATA SOURCES**

For this project, a wide variety of sources were utilized for obtaining data and visualizations. For ease of access, each piece of data represented on the profiles will be listed below with its corresponding data source.

### **Minnesota only:**

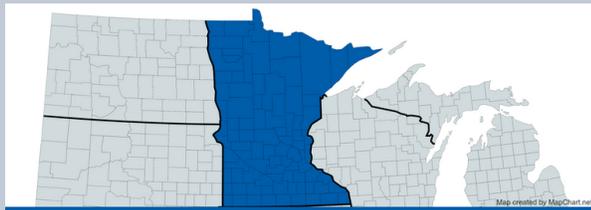
- Race/Ethnicity 60+, Veterans 60+ & Living Alone 60+: [ACS 2019 - 5 YR](#)

### **Counties/Regional:**

- Total Population & Veterans 18+: [U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts 2023](#)
- 60+ Population: [ACS 2021 - 5YR](#)
- Below Poverty Level 60+: [ACS 2021 - 5YR](#)
- Living Alone 60+ & Race/Ethnicity 60+: [ACS 2019 - 5YR - via AGID](#)
- Low Vehicle Access 18+ Map: [USDA Food Research Atlas](#)
- Rural Food Distribution: AEOA in-house data, 2023
- Diabetes, High Blood Pressure, & High Cholesterol: [Bridge to Health Survey 2020](#)
- Poor or Fair Health, Food Insecurity, Broadband Access, & Uninsured: [County Health Rankings & Roadmaps](#)
- Social Vulnerability Index (SVI): [CDC/ATSDR Social Vulnerability Index 2020](#)
- Language Spoken at Home: [ACS 2021 5-year](#)
- Broadband Access Map: [The Minnesota Broadband Map 2023](#)
- Suicide Rates: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. National Vital Statistics System, Mortality 1999-2020 on CDC WONDER Online Database, released in 2021. Data are from the Multiple Cause of Death Files, 1999-2020, as compiled from data provided by the 57 vital statistics jurisdictions through the Vital Statistics Cooperative Program. Accessed at <http://wonder.cdc.gov/ucd-icd10.html>

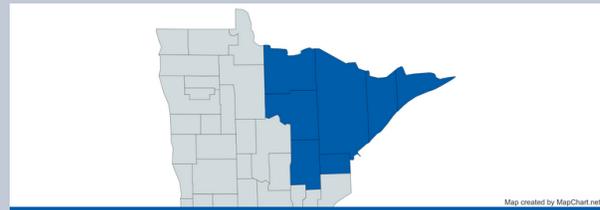
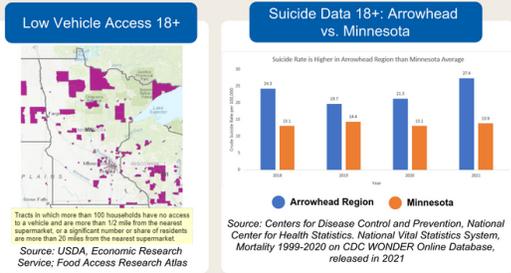
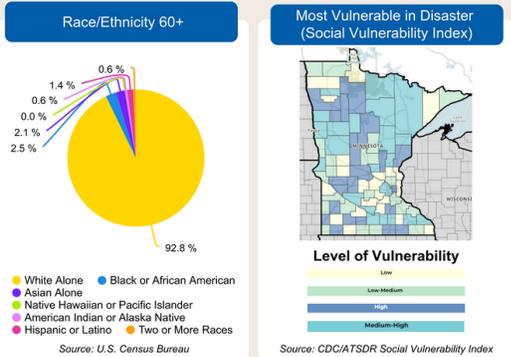
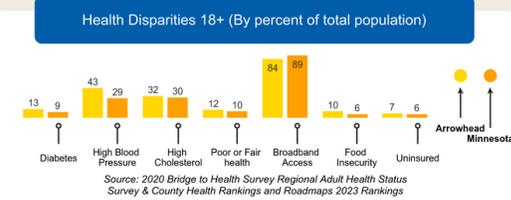
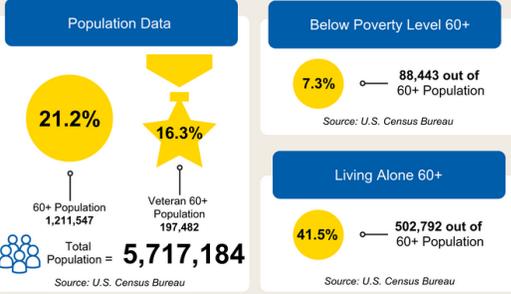
# APPENDIX B:

## STATE & REGIONAL PROFILES



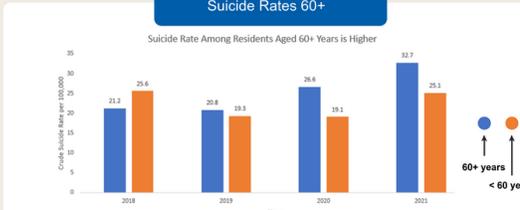
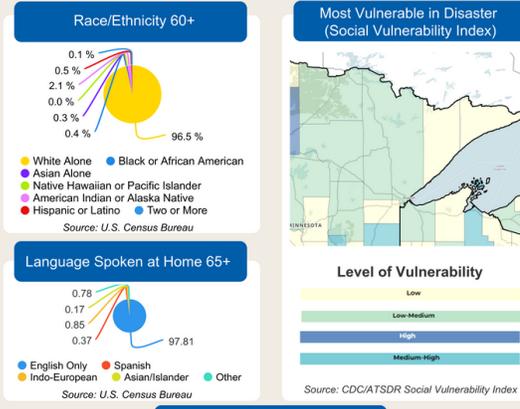
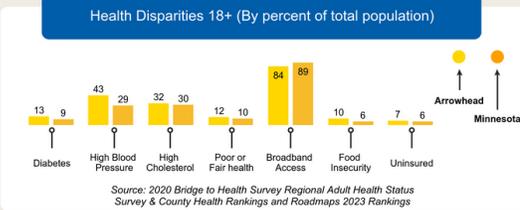
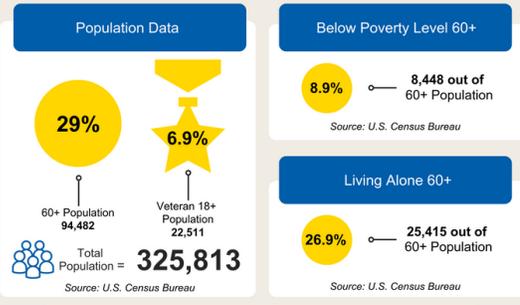
### 2023 State Profile

Minnesota



### 2023 Regional Profile

Arrowhead



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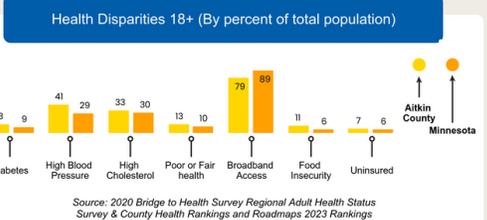
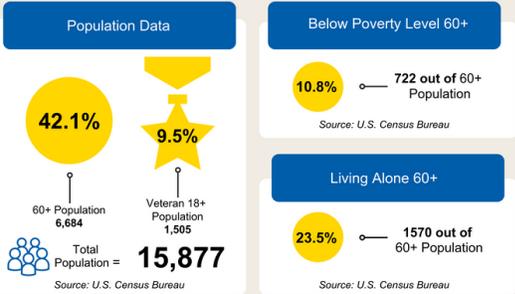
# APPENDIX B:

## COUNTY PROFILES



### 2023 County Profile

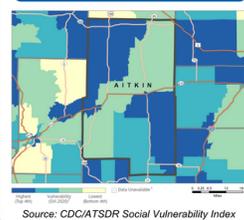
**Aitkin**



#### Title III-C Rural Meal Distribution



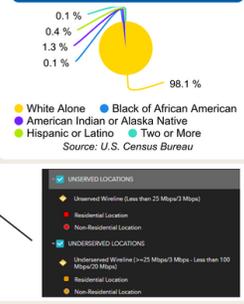
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#### Broadband Access Map

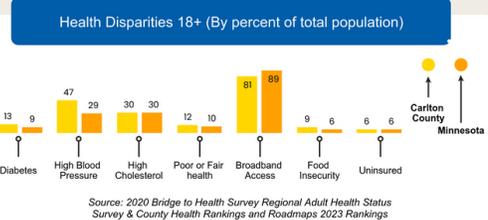
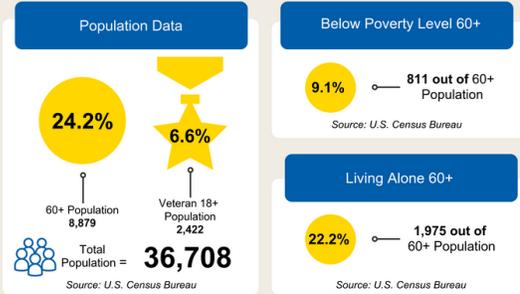


#### Race/Ethnicity 60+



### 2023 County Profile

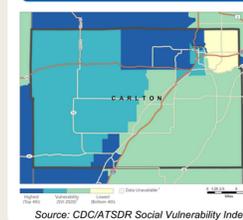
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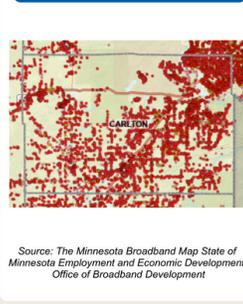
#### Title III-C Rural Meal Distribution



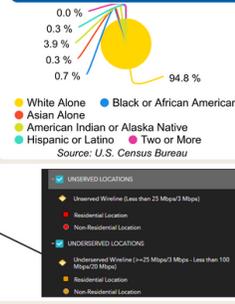
#### Most Vulnerable in Disaster (Social Vulnerability Index)



#### Broadband Access Map



#### Race/Ethnicity 60+



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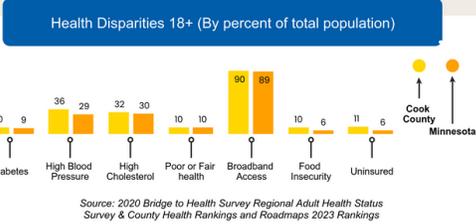
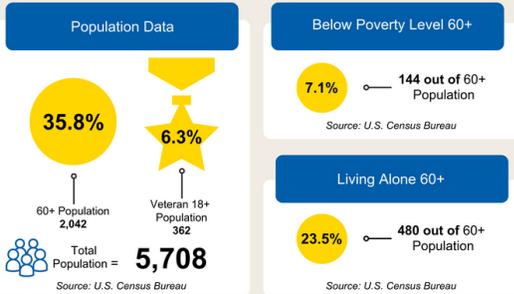
# APPENDIX B:

## COUNTY PROFILES



### 2023 County Profile

**Cook**



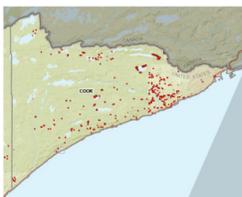
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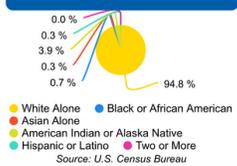
#### Most Vulnerable in Disaster (Social Vulnerability Index)



#### Broadband Access Map



#### Race/Ethnicity 60+

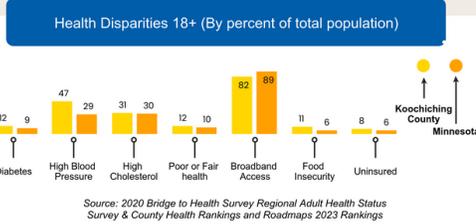
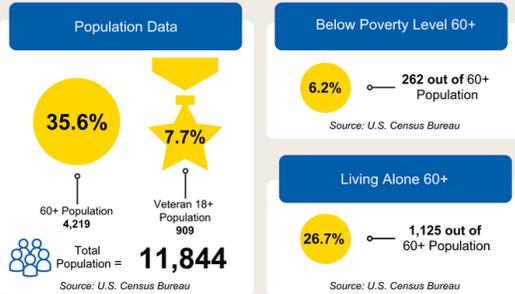


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A Division of ARDC



### 2023 County Profile

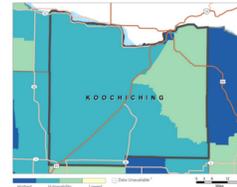
**Koochiching**



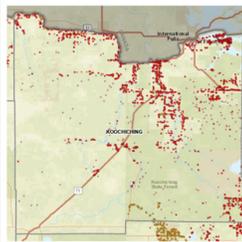
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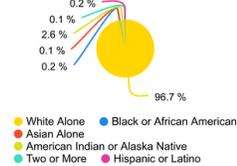
#### Most Vulnerable in Disaster (Social Vulnerability Index)



#### Broadband Access Map



#### Race/Ethnicity 60+



Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging  
A Division of ARDC

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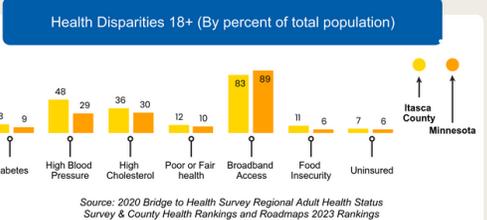
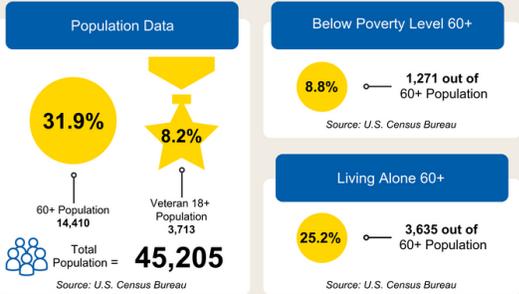
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## COUNTY PROFILES

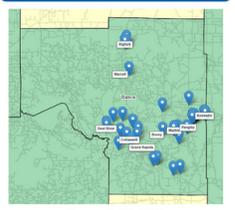


### 2023 County Profile

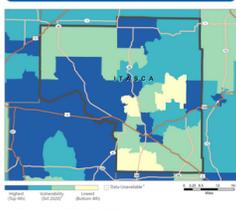
**Itasca County**



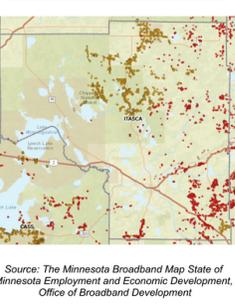
#### Title III-C Rural Meal Distribution



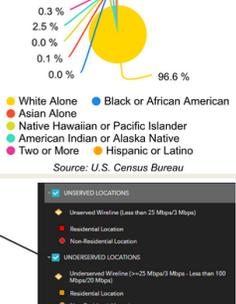
#### Most Vulnerable in Disaster (Social Vulnerability Index)



#### Broadband Access Map

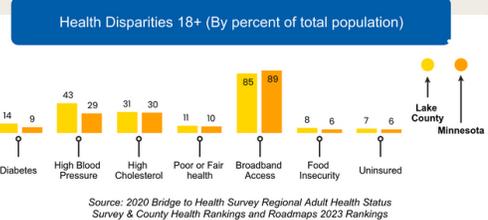
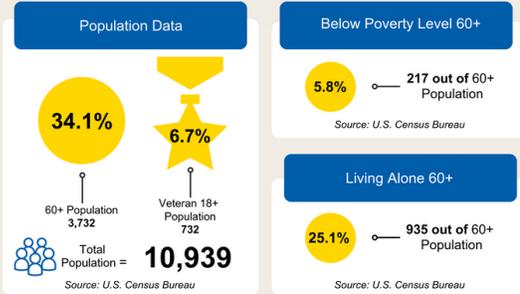


#### Race/Ethnicity 60+

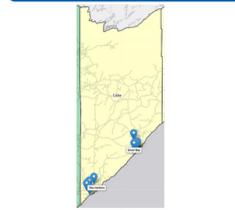


### 2023 County Profile

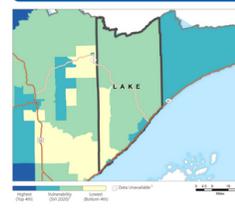
**Lake**



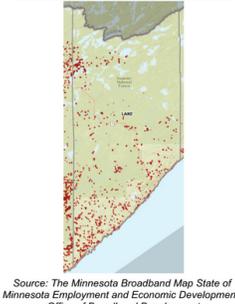
#### Title III-C Rural Meal Distribution



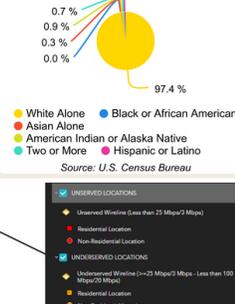
#### Most Vulnerable in Disaster (Social Vulnerability Index)



#### Broadband Access Map



#### Race/Ethnicity 60+



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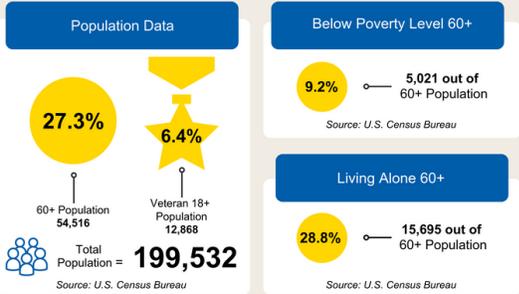
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## COUNTY PROFILES

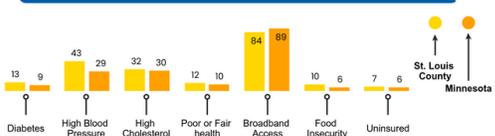


### 2023 County Profile

**St. Louis County  
(with Duluth)**



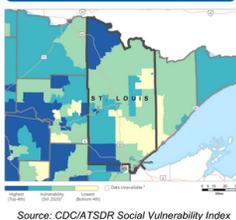
#### Health Disparities 18+ (By percent of total population)



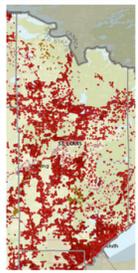
#### Title III-C Rural Meal Distribution



#### Most Vulnerable in Disaster (Social Vulnerability Index)

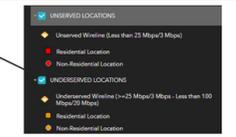
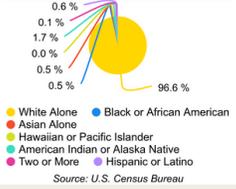


#### Broadband Access Map



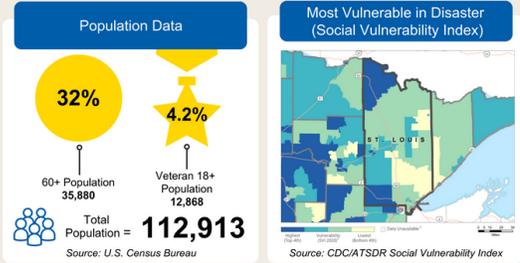
Source: The Minnesota Broadband Map State of Minnesota Employment and Economic Development, Office of Broadband Development

#### Race/Ethnicity 60+

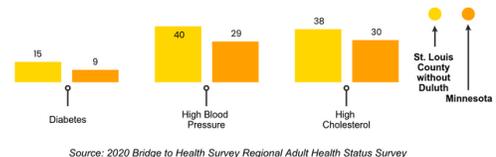


### 2023 County Profile

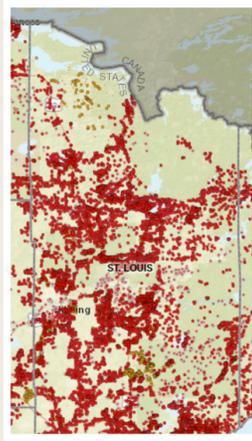
**St. Louis County  
(without Duluth)**



#### Health Disparities 18+ (By percent of total population)



#### Broadband Access Map



Source: The Minnesota Broadband Map State of Minnesota Employment and Economic Development, Office of Broadband Development

#### Title III-C Rural Meal Distribution



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# THANK YOU

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*A Division of ARDC*



**Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging**



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**[AAAInfo@ardc.org](mailto:AAAInfo@ardc.org)**



**221 West 1st Street, Duluth, MN, 55802**