

## **HCI Partners with Faribault Chamber of Commerce, SMIF, and Three Rivers to Launch New Childcare Space with \$500,000 DEED Grant**

**Faribault, MN – May 29, 2024**– Healthy Community Initiative (HCI), in collaboration with the Faribault Chamber of Commerce, Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF), and Three Rivers Community Action, is excited to announce the receipt of a \$500,000 Childcare Economic Development Grant from the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED). This funding will transform space in Faribo Town Square into a state-of-the-art childcare facility.

The new childcare space will offer over 100 new licensed childcare spots, with both a child care center space and a space for multiple family child care providers to offer their services. By June 2025, the facility aims to offer some spots available as drop-in care for parents working second shift, addressing a critical need for flexible childcare solutions in the community.

“We’re excited to see this project coming together. Our Vision Task Force and Board of Directors have identified day care and early education as one of our priorities, and this project checks a lot of boxes on our list of needs,” said Nort Johnson, President/CEO of the Faribault Chamber of Commerce.

Each partner brings a unique and essential contribution to this ambitious project:

- **Faribault Chamber of Commerce** will act as the local champion, ensuring long-term oversight and sustainability of the childcare spaces.
- **Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF)** has provided project strategy support and will help develop business models for participating providers.
- **Healthy Community Initiative (HCI)** is tasked with project management and financial administration.
- **Three Rivers Community Action** will spearhead the recruitment of childcare providers.
- **Families First of MN** will assist providers through the program development process.
- **Business of Childcare (BOC)** will provide ongoing support of space development concepts for the programming outcomes.

This collaborative effort leverages a proven model already successfully implemented in Northfield, aiming to replicate and enhance its success in Faribault. Families First and the WayFinders team will support providers with licensing and program development.

“Three Rivers Community Action is excited to collaborate on this effort to expand quality childcare access to the Faribault community through this unique model,” said Jane Adams Barber, Early Childhood Director at Three Rivers. “Together, we have the opportunity to make a lasting difference in the lives of children and families in the Faribault community.”

Recruitment for family childcare providers has already begun! If you are a prospective provider interested in working in this space, please contact Adams Barber at 612-508-8724 or

[JAdamsbarber@threeriverscap.org](mailto:JAdamsbarber@threeriverscap.org).

### **For Project Information:**

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**About Faribault Chamber of Commerce: [www.faribaultmn.org](http://www.faribaultmn.org)**

The Faribault Chamber of Commerce advocates for the local business community, fostering economic growth and community engagement through various initiatives and programs.

**About Healthy Community Initiative (HCI): [www.healthycommunityinitiative.org](http://www.healthycommunityinitiative.org)**

Healthy Community Initiative (HCI) advances health and racial equity by expanding educational and economic opportunity in Rice County, Minnesota. Its vision is that every youth thrives to their fullest potential. It collaborates across levels and sectors to galvanize collective action and invest in programming that positions youth for positive health, educational completion, career readiness, and economic mobility.

**About Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF): [www.smifoundation.org](http://www.smifoundation.org)**

SMIF is committed to enhancing the quality of life in Southern Minnesota through economic growth initiatives, community development, and support for entrepreneurs.

**About Three Rivers Community Action: [www.threeriverscap.org](http://www.threeriverscap.org)**

Three Rivers Community Action provides a wide range of services aimed at empowering individuals and families, promoting self-sufficiency, and improving quality of life in Southeastern Minnesota.

**About Families First of MN: [www.familiesfirstmn.org](http://www.familiesfirstmn.org)**

For over 40 years, Families First of Minnesota (formerly Child Care Resource & Referral) has been a non-profit organization in our community working as a resource for parents, child care programs, and community members in all areas of early childhood.

**About Business of Child Care: [www.businessofchildcare.com](http://www.businessofchildcare.com)**

Business of Childcare helps guide childcare business owners and the communities they serve to better outcomes through business programming and community consultations.

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