

Affordable Housing

Pennington County

May 2008

The demand for affordable housing exceeds supply.

The unmet affordable housing need through the year 2010 in Pennington County is conservatively estimated at 728 low-income households.¹ Meanwhile, the number of households in the state spending more than half of their income on housing increased from 1 in 15 in 2000 to 1 in 8 in 2006. **Minnesota experienced the fastest increase of extremely cost burdened households of any state in the nation during this time period.**²

WHAT IS AFFORDABLE HOUSING?

Housing is considered affordable if it consumes 30% or less of a household's gross income.

Household Income	Renters		Home Owners	
	Number of Households Paying Over 30% in Rent	Percent of Households Paying Over 30% in Rent	Number of Households Paying Over 30% for Ownership Costs	Percent of Households Paying Over 30% for Ownership Costs
Less than \$19,999	337	47%	179	40%
\$20,000-\$34,999	53	14%	64	12%
\$35,000-\$49,999	0	0%	38	7%
\$50,000 and over	0	0%	9	1%

The table above shows the number and percent of households in different income brackets that pay over 30% of household income for rental or ownership costs.³ It illustrates that the burden of housing costs weighs more heavily on lower-income families.

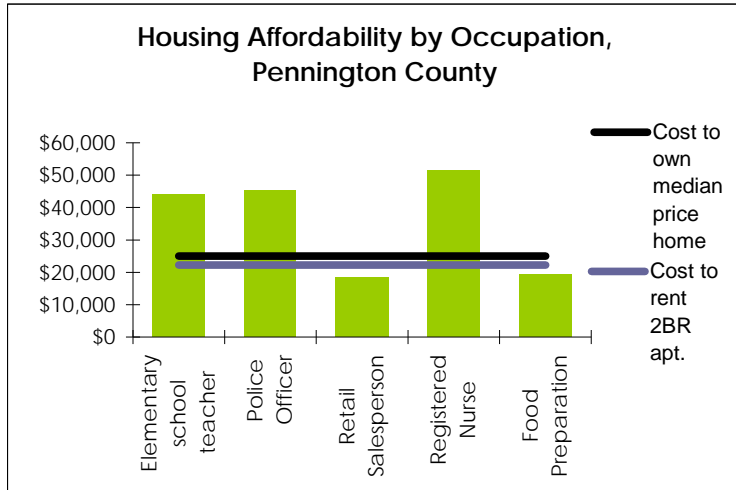
About 74% of Pennington County residents own their home and 26% are renters.⁴

Generally, when households spend more than 30% of their income to meet housing costs, they do not have enough income to meet other basic needs or weather financial setbacks.



Lower-income households face extreme affordability challenges.

The chart below compares the median earnings of different workers to the income required for affordable housing.⁵ The median household income for Pennington County was \$40,655 in 2006.⁶



In Pennington County, a median-priced home is \$82,500, and the fair market rent for a two bedroom apartment is \$555 per month. Since 2000, home prices have increased by 50.0% and fair market rent has increased by 31.2%.⁷

Approximately 10% of homeowners and 29% of renters in Pennington County spend over 30% of their household income on housing.⁸

In Pennington County, a family of four with two full-time wage earners needs to earn a combined annual salary of \$37,740 to afford the basic cost of living.⁹

30% of jobs in Pennington County and counties nearby pay less than the regional wage required to afford basic needs.¹⁰

The average annual unemployment rate in Pennington County was 5.0% in 2007.¹¹

Foreclosures in Minnesota

- In Pennington County in 2007, there were about 33 foreclosures, a 175% increase from 2005.¹²
- Left unaddressed, abandoned foreclosed properties destabilize neighborhoods, erode the local tax base and drive up the costs of municipal services.

Homelessness in Minnesota

- In 2006, 28% of all adults experiencing homelessness in Minnesota reported income from work, with 12% working full time.¹³
- 39% of Minnesota's homeless population cite the inability to afford housing as a primary reason for leaving previous housing.¹⁴
- Roughly 9,200 Minnesotans are homeless and 7,700 are precariously housed in temporary or unstable housing. Thirty-eight percent (38%) of these are children and youth.¹⁵
- On a single day in 2006, 198 people were sheltered in the Northwest Region, including 81 children.¹⁶

Extreme Cost Burden

- Approximately 12% of renter households pay over 50% of their income on housing in Pennington County.¹⁷
- For homeowner households in Pennington, 3% pay over 50% of their income on housing.¹⁸

Sources:

¹ "The Next Decade of Housing in Minnesota," BBC Research and Consulting, 2003. ² American Community Survey, 2006. ³ Census 2000. ⁴ Ibid. ⁵ OES Wage Data by economic development region, MN Dept. of Employment & Econ. Development, 4th quarter, 2007; HUD 2008 Fair Market Rents; Minnesota Dept. of Revenue Sales Ratio Study, 2006-7. ⁶ Census Small Area Income Poverty Estimates, 2005. ⁷ Minnesota Dept. of Revenue Sales Ratio Study 2006-7; HUD Fair Market Rents 2008; Low Income Housing Coalition, "Out of Reach, 2007-8" ⁸ Census 2000. ⁹ "The Cost of Living in Minnesota Family Wage & Budget Calculator," JOBS NOW Coalition, 2008. ¹⁰ "The Cost of Living in Minnesota," JOBS NOW Coalition, 2007. ¹¹ Minnesota Local Area Unemployment Statistics, Minnesota Dept. of Employment & Economic Development, Nov. 2007. ¹² "Foreclosures in Greater Minnesota: A Report based on County Sheriff's Sales Data," Greater Minnesota Housing Fund and HousingLink, 2007. ¹³ Wilder Research Center, 2007. ¹⁴ Ibid. ¹⁵ Ibid. ¹⁶ Ibid. ¹⁷ Census 2000. ¹⁸ Ibid.