Thriving places need safe housing that people can afford. Yet some people, especially renters, are being left behind in Lincoln County. Renters make up 20% of the county’s households.

INCOMES DO NOT COVER COSTS

In most Minnesota counties, renter incomes have fallen. According to the most recent data available, in Lincoln County, real renter incomes have fallen by 22% while rents have risen by 13% since 2000.

A safe, modest 2-bedroom apartment costs $626 per month in Lincoln County. A family could affordably spend $555 per month on rent at the median renter household income of $22,212. By definition, half of the county’s renters earn less than this median, and would need less expensive housing. A minimum wage earner would have to work 66 hours per week to afford the $626 rent for a 2-bedroom apartment.

The cost of housing now consumes more than half of income for 1 in 7 Minnesota households. In 2000, only 1 in 13 households experienced this level of cost burden.
Homelessness and poverty are a reality for too many Minnesotans, adults and children alike. 10,214 Minnesotans were found to be homeless on a given night in 2012. Homelessness increased by 32% statewide from 2006 to 2012.

About half of the people experiencing homelessness in Minnesota are 21 or under. Children are especially vulnerable to the impacts of unstable, unaffordable housing and homelessness. Normal growth and development can be stunted, and school performance suffers as a result.

Locally, on a single day in 2012, 199 people were known to be homeless in the Southwest Region. 86 were children with their parents, and 22 were youth through age 21 living on their own.

In 2011, 13% of the children in Lincoln County were living in poverty, up from 12% in 2001.

Veterans in need

Statewide, 580 homeless veterans were identified on a single night in 2012. Veterans are far more likely than non-veterans to experience homelessness.

In October 2012, 2% of homeless adults identified in the Southwest Region had served in the military.

Sources: