May 2008

The demand for affordable housing exceeds supply.

The unmet affordable housing need through the year 2010 in Meeker County is conservatively estimated at 1,415 low-income households. 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household Income</th>
<th>Number of Households Paying Over 30% in Rent</th>
<th>Percent of Households Paying Over 30% in Rent</th>
<th>Number of Households Paying Over 30% for Ownership Costs</th>
<th>Percent of Households Paying Over 30% for Ownership Costs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than $19,999</td>
<td>422</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$20,000-$34,999</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$35,000-$49,999</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000 and over</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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. It illustrates that the burden of housing costs weighs more heavily on lower-income families.

About 82% of Meeker County residents own their home and 18% are renters.

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. The median household income for Meeker County was $48,314 in 2006.

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In Meeker County, a median-priced home is $138,400, and the fair market rent for a two bedroom apartment is $583 per month. Since 2000, home prices have increased by 60.6% and fair market rent has increased by 28.1%.

Approximately 16% of homeowners and 32% of renters in Meeker County spend over 30% of their household income on housing.

In Meeker County, a family of four with two full-time wage earners needs to earn a combined annual salary of $47,436 to afford the basic cost of living.

38% of jobs in Meeker County and counties nearby pay less than the regional wage required to afford basic needs.

The average annual unemployment rate in Meeker County was 4.7% in 2007.

Sources: