



RECESSION CONTINUES PUSHING RENTS “OUT OF REACH” IN MINNESOTA COUNTIES

— 2010 Housing Affordability Report Underscores State’s High Housing Costs —

St. Paul, MN (April 21, 2010) – As the recession drags on, families struggle to make ends meet, with rents unaffordable across the state. A just-released national report says that a 2-bedroom apartment remains beyond the means of Minnesota’s average renter.

The news for Minnesota is twofold: 1) rural areas in general saw the fastest rent increases, and 2) the Twin Cities’ already-high rents continued to increase: to be affordable, a Twin Cities 2-bedroom apartment now requires or an annual income of \$35,960. In 86 of the state’s 87 counties, a worker earning the average wage for renters needs to work overtime to rent a 2-bedroom apartment.

The report, [Out of Reach 2010](#), was jointly released by the [National Low Income Housing Coalition](#) (NLIHC) in Washington DC and the [Minnesota Housing Partnership \(MHP\)](#). The report provides data for every state, metropolitan area, and county in the country.

“*Out of Reach 2010* shows once again that prevailing incomes and wages are simply not enough to allow a family to afford a decent home in their community,” said Sheila Crowley, President of the National Low Income Housing Coalition.

Chip Halbach, MHP executive director, says one of the best ways to promote an economic recovery for Minnesota is through a stable housing market with a variety of housing choices. “We need an affordable supply of both rental and owner-occupied homes,” said Halbach. “The *Out of Reach* data again demonstrates how hard it is for the growing number of low income families to find decent homes they can afford in Minnesota. The recession made a bad situation worse. We need to act now for families to have access to the safe and affordable housing they desperately need.”

Topping the list of least affordable counties: Isanti, Chisago, Wright, Sherburne, Pine, Clay Cass, Scott, Lake of the Woods, and Mille Lacs counties.

For help analyzing your own community’s information in this rent report, contact the Minnesota Housing Partnership at (651) 925-5549 or Rick.Bernardo@MHPonline.org.

GREATER MINNESOTA RURAL & METRO:

The news for Greater Minnesota is especially sobering. Rents in rural counties not part of any metro area have increased on average 37% since 2000, compared to a 26% increase for the Twin Cities. The same time span saw rents rise more than 50% in eight rural areas—Martin, Cottonwood, Rock, Watonwan, Murray, Pipestone, Jackson, and Faribault counties.

Rents in Mankato, Duluth, St. Cloud, Fargo-Moorhead, and Rochester all increased by at least 32% since 2000. To afford a modest 2-bedroom apartment, a full-time worker must earn at least \$16.44 hourly in Rochester, \$13.12 hourly in Mankato, \$12.73 hourly in St. Cloud, and \$12.10 hourly in Duluth.

TWIN CITIES METRO:

In the Twin Cities metro, covering rent remains a struggle for many. A renter must earn at least \$17.29 hourly to afford a modest 2-bedroom apartment—yet the average Twin Cities metro renter earns only \$14.54 per hour. The region also has the highest concentration and number of renters in the state (about 330,000 households). A person earning minimum wage would need to work 95 hours weekly for a 2-bedroom apartment—or 2.4 full time jobs. (Someone earning the average wage for renters still needs to work 48 hours per week.)

The full report, including county and metro area statistics can be found at the National Low Income Housing Coalition’s website at www.nlihc.org/oor2010.

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