The demand for affordable housing exceeds supply.

The unmet affordable housing need through the year 2010 in Wabasha County is conservatively estimated at 1,141 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.

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 Wabasha 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 Wabasha County was $50,140 in 2006.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Needed to rent 2BR apartment</th>
<th>Needed to own median priced home</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elementary school</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police Officer</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Salesperson</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered Nurse</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$40,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Preparation</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$60,000</td>
<td>$70,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$80,000</td>
<td>$90,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Wabasha County, a median-priced home is $144,625, and the fair market rent for a two bedroom apartment is $572 per month. Since 2000, home prices have increased by 31.5% and fair market rent has increased by 28.3%.

Approximately 14% of homeowners and 29% of renters in Wabasha County spend over 30% of their household income on housing.

In Wabasha County, a family of four with two full-time wage earners needs to earn a combined annual salary of $45,720 to afford the basic cost of living.

36% of jobs in Wabasha County and counties nearby pay less than the regional wage required to afford basic needs.

The average annual unemployment rate in Wabasha County was 3.5% in 2007.

Sources:
4. Ibid.
10. Foreclosures in Greater Minnesota: A Report based on County Sheriff’s Sales Data, Greater Minnesota Housing Fund and HousingLink, 2007.
12. Ibid. 
13. Ibid. 
14. Ibid. 
16. Ibid.