Stearns County

2026 COUNTY PROFILES

61,403 Households

HOMEOWNER HOUSEHOLDS
41,663 | 68% of households

RENTER HOUSEHOLDS
19,740 | 32% of households

Income and Housing Costs: Change Over Five Years

In many counties, home values outpace incomes. Housing older than 50 years may require reinvestment or rehab.

From 2019 to 2024
Owner income: **-1%** change to **$96,893**
Home values: **20%** change to **$273,400**

31% of homes were built before 1970.

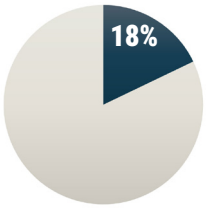
From 2019 to 2024
Renter income: **-5%** change to **$42,826**
Rent: **4%** change to **$1,068**

23% of rental homes were built before 1970.

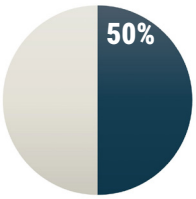
Cost-Burden Rates by Household Types

Housing cost-burdened families have less to spend on food, healthcare, and other basic needs.

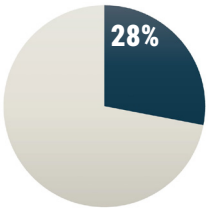
There are **16,779** cost-burdened Stearns County households, or **27%** of all households.



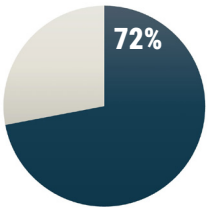
7,410
owners
are cost burdened
(**18%** of all owners)



9,369
renters
are cost burdened
(**50%** of all renters)



5,216
renters
are severely cost burdened
(**28%** of all renters)



2,608
senior renters
are cost burdened
(**72%** of all senior renters)

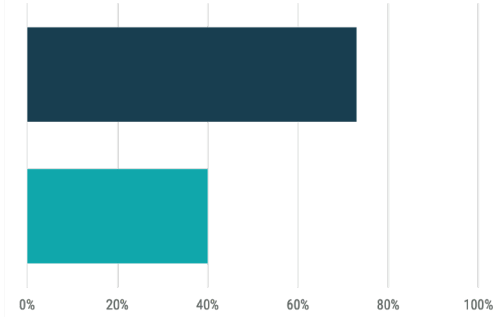
Cost burden: occurs when a household spends more than 30% of its income on housing costs. | **Severe cost burden** occurs when a household spends more than 50%.

White Compared to Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) Homeownership Rate

There are racial disparities in who owns a home in Stearns County.

White Homeowners: **38,509**

BIPOC Homeowners: **4,045**



All homeownership rates are rounded to the nearest whole number.

73% of white households own a home.

40% of BIPOC households own a home.

That means white homeownership is **33%** points higher than BIPOC homeownership in the county.

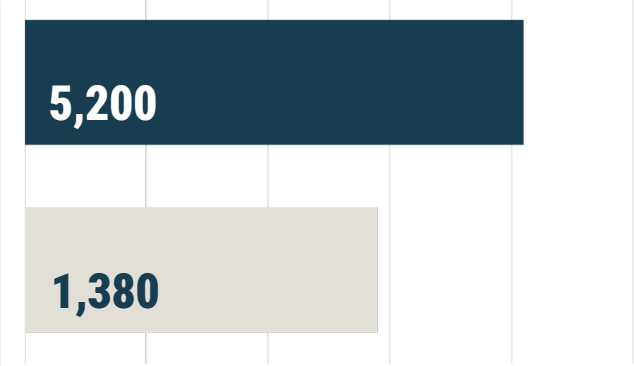
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Affordable Homes Available to Extremely Low-Income Renters in Stearns

The supply of available and affordable homes falls far short for renters with extremely low incomes.

Households with extremely low incomes (earning ≤$33,000/yr)

Homes available and affordable to renters with extremely low incomes.



3,820 (or 73%) of all renter households with extremely low incomes do not have access to a home they can afford.

Earnings in the Region's Highest-Demand Jobs Compared to the County's Housing Costs

The cost of housing is out of reach for many hard-working renters and homeowners.



Annual income required to afford:

median-priced home: **$82,020**

median apartment: **$42,720**

DATA & SOURCES

Research reflects the most recent data available. Unless otherwise indicated, data is from 2024. Income and housing cost data reflect median values. Change in income, rent, and home values have been adjusted for inflation. The top in-demand jobs are geographically organized by MN DEED's six planning areas, ordered left to right by demand.

- **Cost burden and homeownership:** U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS), 2024 5-year estimates.
- **ELI renters and affordable homes:** U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), ACS 5-year Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) county estimates, 2025 release based on 2018-2022 data
- **In-demand jobs:** Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (MN DEED), Occupations in Demand, 2025

DEFINITIONS

Affordable housing is defined as housing costing no more than 30% of a household's adjusted income.
An **affordable and available home** is housing which is both affordable and vacant or not occupied by a higher-income household.
Cost burden occurs when a household spends more than 30% of its income on housing costs. **Severe cost burden** occurs when a household spends more than 50%.
Median values are the midpoint (50th percentile) of their respective distributions, meaning half of the households earn or pay more, and half earn or pay less. Median values are used instead of averages because they are less affected by unusually high or low (outlier) numbers.

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