

Community Profiles Introduction

For Use in **Scoring** HTC 2015 and
RFP 2014 Funding Applications

Planning, Research, and Evaluation



Introduction

While the need for more affordable housing is substantial and increasing in Minnesota, limited resources are available to meet the need. Under these circumstances, Minnesota Housing and its partners need to invest their resources strategically to maximize the effectiveness and impact of the investments. The right type of investment needs to be made in the right community and targeted to the right type of client.

The community profiles present the data elements in various formats. This report includes a description of the indicators, and RFP geographic priority areas, a discussion of the units of analysis, and an explanation of how to use the profiles. An interactive mapping and reporting tool, data, and printable map series can be accessed from the Minnesota Housing website: <http://www.mnhousing.gov/communityprofiles/>.

Indicators Related to Affordable Housing

To develop the community profiles, Minnesota Housing collected data for 33 indicator topics¹ that capture critical housing market, economy and workforce, and demographic characteristics for the state's 87 counties and 1335 census tracts. The indicators include the following

Economy and Workforce Indicators

1. Total Jobs
2. Change in Jobs (2005-2010)
3. Median Distance to Work
4. Unemployment Rate (12/2012)

Household Demographics Indicators

5. Population Age Categories
6. Percentage of Population from Communities of Color
7. Households and Change in Households
8. Percentage of Lower-Income Households Spending 30% or More of Income on Housing
9. Median Household Income
10. Median Family Income
11. Poverty Rate
12. Estimated Homeless Population (in County)

Rental and Ownership Housing Market Indicators

13. Metropolitan Council Affordable Housing Targets (not statewide)
14. Median Rent
15. Existing or Planned Supportive Housing Units
16. Rental Vacancy Rate for Subsidized Affordable Housing Developments (MN Housing and USDA RD)
17. Age of Rental Housing Stock
18. Size of Rental Buildings
19. Size of Rental Units
20. Median Monthly Homeownership Costs (w/ mortgage)
21. Homeownership Rate
22. Foreclosure Rate
23. Median Age of All Housing Stock
24. Age of Owned Housing Stock
25. Median Home Sale Price
26. Change in Median Home Sale Price
27. Average Months Supply of Homes for Sale (not available statewide)

¹ See methodology documentation at <http://www.mnhousing.gov/communityprofiles/> to review sources and processing.

MN Housing RFP Geographic Priority Areas

28. Economic Integration Priority Tracts
29. Proximity to Transit Areas (RFP Points)
30. High Need Foreclosure Areas
31. Proximity to Job Growth Communities (Workforce Areas)
32. Household Growth Tracts
33. Areas with Long Distance Commuters

Conceptually, Minnesota Housing evaluates each indicator and ranks a census tract or county in five equal categories or quintiles (approximately 267 tracts or 17-18 counties in each category). Relative ranks are mapped using the following categories:

- 20th percentile and below (lowest 20% of tracts or counties) ,
- 21st to 40th percentile,
- 41st to 60th percentile,
- 61st to 80th percentile, and
- 81st to 100th percentile (top 20% of tracts or counties).

In cases of data representing gains and losses, data breaks are altered to allow for a break at zero and ranks show relative gain or loss compared to other tracts or counties in the state. The relative rankings of gains and losses are defined and mapped as:

- significant loss (typically the lowest 20% of tracts or counties),
- moderate loss,
- minimum loss (typically the break between minimum loss and gain is around the 60th percentile),
- minimum gain, and
- moderate gain (typically the top 20% of tracts or counties).

The community profiles assess and rank some census tract indicators within a regional context rather than statewide. For these indicators, Minnesota Housing divided the state into three regions; the Twin Cities 7 County Metro (Metro), Counties in Greater Minnesota that are in a Metropolitan Statistical Area, and the balance of Greater Minnesota (Greater MN). For each region, the community profiles separately divide the census tracts into quintiles. As a result, Twin Cities Metro census tracts are only compared with other Metro census tracts, and Greater Minnesota tracts are only compared with other Greater Minnesota tracts, and so on.

Table 1 below displays a list of counties in the Metro and Greater Minnesota MSAs.

Table 1 – Metro and MSA Counties

Region	Minnesota Counties
Duluth MSA	Carlton, Saint Louis
Fargo MSA	Clay
Grand Forks MSA	Polk
La Crosse MSA	Houston
Mankato MSA	Blue Earth, Nicollet
Rochester MSA	Dodge, Olmsted
Saint Cloud MSA	Benton, Stearns
Twin Cities 7 County Metro	Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, Washington
Twin Cities MSA (outside of 7 County Metro)	Chisago, Isanti, Sherburne, Wright

Unit of Analysis

Two geographic levels are available in the community profiles, Counties, and Census tracts. Census tracts approximate the size of neighborhoods in more urban areas with, on average, 4,000 people. In more rural areas, census tracts may encompass several smaller towns.

Minnesota Housing research staff is confident in the accuracy of county level data. The census tract detail is a much finer resolution, and may have limitations in data reliability. Census tract data are based on five year estimates from the US Census Bureau, and each indicator has an associated margin of error with it (based on a 90% confidence interval). These confidence intervals are published alongside the indicators data to allow for better understanding of the data. To interpret the margin of error consider both the value and margin of error; for example, a census tract with a homeownership rate of 80% and a margin of error $\pm 5\%$, can be stated that the data has 90% certainty the homeownership rate is 75-85%². In addition, for many indicators that are not from the US Census Bureau's *American Community Survey*, the data are available at either a city level or zipcode level. Minnesota Housing staff uses methods for allocating these data to the census tract; all of which are detailed in the methodology document found on the community profiles page of the Minnesota Housing website (<http://www.mnhousing.gov/communityprofiles/>).

Using the Profiles

For funding that will be awarded in 2013, the community profiles provide applicants with a wide range of data that can be used in their applications. However, to the extent local data is readily available, are encouraged to use local data to supplement information in the profiles.

Geographic priorities documented in the consolidated RFP materials (see <http://www.mnhousing.gov> for more detail) are also found in the profiles to better assist applicants in scoring these items. The geographic priorities include: access to transportation, economic integration, high need foreclosure areas, and workforce areas.

Applicants can access the profiles data in several ways via the Minnesota Housing website <http://www.mnhousing.gov/communityprofiles/>.

- **Web Mapping Tool** – Explore tract and county level detail, map indicators or areas of need, and print maps using the PolicyMap widget on the Minnesota Housing website.
- **Printable Maps** – PDF map series containing a map for each indicator and area of need are available for both county and census tract levels. County level maps are available for the entire state, and tract level maps are available on a county by county basis. In addition, transportation access maps are available for
- **Data** – County and tract data are available for download as an excel file. A tool for finding a location's county or census tract number can be found here:
<http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/searchresults.xhtml?ref=geo&refresh=t>

Feedback

The analysis in the community profiles and the results are open for discussion, and Minnesota Housing welcomes feedback. Comments and questions about the community profiles should be directed to Jessica Deegan at Minnesota Housing, jessica.deegan@state.mn.us.

² For more information on the methods of the American Community Survey, see: http://www.census.gov/acs/www/data_documentation/documentation_main/