

Chapter 6



HOUSING

Providing housing that is adequate and affordable can be a challenge for any community. This chapter examines the characteristics of Chenoa’s current housing stock as well as the demand for future housing. The projections for housing are based on the population projections of the previous chapter.

EXISTING CHARACTERISTICS

Occupancy and Tenure

In 2007, the total number of occupied housing units in Chenoa was estimated to be 713 out of a total of 772 units. Of the number of occupied units, 585 were determined to be “owner units” while 128 units were identified as “rental units.” It is estimated that 71 of the 128 renter units were not single-family or mobile homes. According to the 2000 Census, the City of Chenoa had 22 units classified as two units. These renter units might include duplexes. The largest housing classification was reported to be single family units.

Gross rents in Chenoa ranged from less than \$300 to just under \$1,000 per month. The average gross rent for the city was \$465. The U.S. Census reported 54.7 percent of households in Chenoa paid less than \$500 per month for rental housing. Another 33.1 percent of those living in rented housing paid between \$500 to \$1,000 per month. Another 12.3 percent of those living in housing designated as rental did not pay anything. This likely includes social service and/or group quarters housing. Of those living in rental housing, 70 percent paid 35 percent or less of their income for housing while 17.7 percent reported that their rent exceeded 35 percent of their annual income (see Table 6.1).

Distribution and Density

Chenoa’s housing is concentrated along a corridor extending a number of blocks on both sides of Cemetery Avenue (Illinois Route 24). A manufactured housing development consist-

ing of 24 units in 2000 is located near the vicinity of the I-55 Interchange north of Cemetery Avenue. A few high-density pockets of homes can be found east of Division Street. Additional areas of housing are located near the elementary school (formerly Chenoa High School) on the south side of Cemetery Avenue.

Housing and Neighborhood Design

Chenoa has housing of contemporary and traditional neighborhood design. Areas around downtown feature traditional mixed uses with store fronts below and residences above. Also, homes found closer to Cemetery Avenue on both the north and south sides have more tra-

Gross Rent	Number	Percent
Less than \$200	0	0
Less than \$300	11	8.5
Less than \$500	60	46.2
Less than \$750	40	30.8
Less than \$1,000	3	2.3
Less than \$1,500	0	0
More than \$1,500	0	0
No monetary rent	16	12.3
AVERAGE GROSS RENT		\$ 465.00
Gross Rent at Percentage of Income		
Less than 15 %	49	37.7
Less than 20 %	17	13.1
Less than 25 %	12	9.2
Less than 30 %	9	6.9
Less than 35 %	4	3.1
More than 35 %	23	17.7
Not Tabulated	16	12.3
RENT AS PERCENT OF INCOME		17.4

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

Table 6.2
Residential Construction
City of Chenoa

Year Built	Number	Percent
1990 to March 2000	41	5.3
1995 to 1998	28	3.6
1990 to 1994	17	2.2
1980 to 1989	28	3.6
1970 to 1979	103	13.3
1960 to 1969	118	15.3
1940 to 1959	153	19.8
1939 or before	284	36.8
TOTALS	772	100

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

ditional design elements. Sidewalks line most streets in Chenoa. There is easy accessibility to areas of commerce since the city is laid out on a traditional street grid system.

Contemporary neighborhood design can be found along the fringe of the city where there is space to build larger homes. Characteristics of contemporary neighborhood design are wider streets, larger lots and lack of sidewalks. These designs apply to the new development areas located southeast of town as well as some areas in the northeast.

Age of Housing Stock

The majority of homes (437) were built in Chenoa before the 1960's. There is also a healthy stock of houses constructed before the 1940's. Since the 1960's, 335 homes have been built in Chenoa. More recently, 103 homes were built in Chenoa between 1970 and 1979 which is considered to be the latest housing boom. In the last 20 years, six homes were built on average per year in Chenoa. During a period from 1980 to 1998, few homes were built. Another residential building surge occurred in 1999-2000 when 41 homes were added to the local housing stock.

Housing Quality

Homes in Chenoa have stood the test of time. Many older homes (those 50 years or older) are in good condition. These homes are decorated with traditional accents and property is generally well-maintained. Homes located in the southern portion of the city are of newer construction and are not in need of repair. A few mobile homes are also located in this area with some needing repair or updating. These residences need to be monitored and owners informed if housing conditions are not up to code. Most of the housing in the city can be considered of adequate quality and above.

Affordability

Nearly 84 percent of the people in Chenoa live in owner-occupied housing. Like most communities, the price of homes in Chenoa varies. According to the latest census data, homes in Chenoa range from less than \$50,000 to more than \$200,000. It is estimated by the 2000 Census that approximately 19.5 percent of homes in Chenoa are valued below \$50,000. More than 3.9 percent of the homes in Chenoa are valued at \$150,000 or more. The median home value in Chenoa was determined to be \$74,800. Homes in Chenoa are considered quite affordable since many residences in McLean and Livingston County are more costly and some neighboring communities have homes valued at \$1 million or

Table 6.3
Value of Owner-Occupied Housing

Estimated Value	Number	Percentage
Less than \$50,000	103	19.5
More than \$100,000	404	76.5
More than \$150,000	15	2.8
More than \$200,000	6	1.1
Median Home Value	\$74,800	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

more.

According to the U.S. Census, the median monthly mortgage for Chenoa is \$800. Of the estimated 1,553 home owners in the area, 193 utilized less than 20 percent of their annual income on housing while another 81 used between 20 to 30 percent of their income for housing. Another 50 homeowners were reported to be using more than 30 percent of their income to pay housing costs.

FUTURE HOUSING DEMAND

Chenoa's demand for future housing will depend in large part on the amount and rate of commercial and industrial development that is realized. With an anticipated population increase of between 400 and 450 persons over the period of the plan, and with the assumption that new residential development will include a mix of housing types and densities, Chenoa will require between 130 and 180 new housing units. The range in this projection is a function of the variability of household sizes; the trend towards smaller households may foster an increased emphasis on more compact housing units, built at greater density than has been typical in the past. This trend also reflects the development of housing options targeted to an aging population, a demographic trend expected to affect communities across the country over the next 30 to 50 years.

Should more aggressive growth take place resulting from significant increases in available local employment created by the development of the city's new industrial and commercial districts, approximately 1,300 additional persons might reside in Chenoa, a very substantial population increase for the period of the plan. Should such a population boom take place, considerable quantities of new housing would be required. As many as 450 to 650 new housing units could be needed. As noted above, residential development on this scale will require careful and thoughtful neighborhood design and planning, to minimize the impact on the city.

Table 6.4 Mortgage Status & Selected Monthly Owner Costs (With Mortgage)	
With Mortgage	
Less than \$300	1
Less than \$500	16
Less than \$700	87
Less than \$ 1,000	132
More than \$1,000	90
Median Monthly Mortgage	\$ 800
Without Mortgage	
Less than \$250	69
Less than \$500	109
More than \$500	24
Median Monthly Payment	\$ 289
Mortgage Status as Percentage of Household Income	
With Mortgage	
less than 20 percent	193
20 to 24 percent	44
25 to 29 percent	37
30 to 34 percent	11
35 percent or more	39
Not computed	2
Median Percent	18.4
Without Mortgage	
less than 20 percent	166
20 to 24 percent	10
25 to 29 percent	3
30 to 34 percent	4
35 percent or more	15
Not computed	4
Median Percent	11.3
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000	

New housing development should be planned to maximize the efficient use of existing and planned city services and infrastructure. As noted above, the trend towards more compact residential development offers a path towards this goal. In addition, development directed towards the smaller families will make it more practical for residents to age in their homes and thus aid in maintaining stable neighborhoods.