# 2003
# Metro Residents Survey

An examination of Twin Cities area residents' concerns and attitudes about the region

**March 2004**

**Metropolitan Council**

**Mears Park Centre, 230 East Fifth Street, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101**

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- **The Twin Cities area is a better place to live compared to other metropolitan areas in the nation.**
  - ✓ Ninety-six percent of residents think that the Twin Cities area is a better place to live compared to other metropolitan areas in the nation. Almost half of all residents think it is a much better place to live.

- **Metro residents think that the area has many attractive features.**
  - ✓ One of every three residents think that the most attractive feature of the Twin Cities area is the parks, trails, lakes and other natural resources.

- **Residents think that the single most important problem facing the region is traffic congestion.**
  - ✓ Traffic congestion was identified as the single most important issue facing the region by 38 percent of residents.
  - ✓ Congestion started to become a significant issue in 1997, surpassing the 10 percent mark for the first time. Identification of congestion as one of the top three issues has doubled since 2000, rising from 27 percent to 54 percent in 2003.
  - ✓ At the category level, transportation—which includes congestion, mass transit, parking and more general responses related to the transportation system—is the single most important issue for 58 percent of all residents.
  - ✓ The perceived commute time has, on average, increased to 27.5 minutes from 23.6 minutes a year ago. This is about a 17 percent increase in perceived commute time.

- **Residents think that resolving the transportation issues facing the region will require improving/increasing both the road infrastructure and mass transit.**
  - ✓ For all residents, at least one-third think that the following transportation system programs are very important for meeting the area's long-range transportation needs:

| Transportation program | Percent of all residents indicating this as being Very Important |
|---|---|
| 1. Optimizing the capacity and safety of existing roads | 64 |
| 2. Adding extra lanes to freeways | 57 |
| 3. Developing a commuter/light-rail system | 45 |
| 4. Expanding the park-and-ride/express bus program | 38 |
| 5. Expanding the Metro Transit bus system | 36 |

  - ✓ For those residents who identified transportation issues (including traffic congestion) as the single most important problem, 45 percent suggested improving/increasing mass transit, while another 32 percent suggested improving/increasing the road infrastructure.

- **Increasing the gas tax, adding a half-cent sales tax in the seven-county metro area and shifting money from other state programs are the methods preferred by residents for paying for increases in highway construction.**

- **Allowing gas tax revenue to be used for transit and adding a half-cent sales tax in the seven-county metro area are the methods preferred by residents for paying for expansion of the transit system.**

- **Residents think that most government services should be paid for through a mix of user fees and taxes at the local, county, regional and state level.**

  ✓ A majority of people think that state taxes should pay for highway construction, preserving open space, environmental restoration, assisting the poor through shelters and food, assisting the poor through subsidized housing, and education. A majority think that local taxes should pay for police and fire protection. No other service has a majority indicating one specific revenue source.

  ✓ The percentage of people supporting user fees is highest for funding transit, hospitals, public utilities and economic development in growing areas.

- **Nine Metropolitan Council programs examined are thought to be important by a majority of residents.**

| Council Program | Percent of residents indicating this as being at least Moderately Important |
|---|---|
| 1. Monitoring water quality | 92 |
| 2. Wastewater treatment program | 90 |
| 3. Planning to accommodate the region's growing population | 86 |
| 4. Regional parks system | 83 |
| 5. Metro Transit bus program | 77 |
| 6. Grants to cities and suburbs for transportation projects | 77 |
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# Section 1: Introduction

## Background

This report describes the findings of the 2003 Metro Residents Survey. The survey is representative of all adults living in the seven-county Twin Cities area. It is part of an ongoing annual effort dating back to the early 1980s that collects data from residents about issues such as quality of life, housing, transportation and the Metropolitan Council. Many of the questions asked in the 2003 study have been asked in past years of the study, and that historical data is provided in this report for comparison purposes. There was no study done in 2002, so the most recent data prior to this study is from 2001.

The 2003 study marks a departure from previous studies in the methodology used to collect the data. In years past, the study was performed as part of a larger phone survey conducted by the University of Minnesota's Center for Survey Research. However, data collection for topics of interest to the Council was limited due to the high cost of phone surveys and having the survey done by a consultant. To reduce costs, in 2003 the survey was developed and administered by the research staff of the Metropolitan Council through a mail survey format.

## Methods

Two thousand randomly selected adult residents of the seven-county Twin Cities metropolitan area were contacted via mail to participate in this study. The sample was drawn by Survey Sampling Inc., and was based on a list developed from phone books and other public records.

Each potential respondent received a survey packet consisting of a letter explaining the need for the study, a survey to be completed, and a postage-paid return envelope. The recipient was instructed to have the adult person in their household with the most recent birthday complete the survey. The birthday approach was used to help eliminate a known sample bias towards males being selected in the random sample.

One week after the initial survey packet was mailed, a reminder postcard was sent to all people in the sample. The postcard asked them to complete the survey and thanked them if they had already done so. Two weeks after the postcard was mailed, a replacement survey packet and letter were sent out to those people in the sample who had not yet returned their survey.

Data collection began the week of Oct. 27, 2003, and ran through Dec. 19, 2003.

Of the initial 2,000 contacts in the sample, 300 were determined to be bad addresses or were deceased, leaving a total of 1,700 usable contacts. Of the usable contacts, 720 surveys were completed and returned. In addition to the returned surveys, 37 people in the sample were contacted via telephone as a way to check for potential non-response bias. Together, a total of 757 people participated in the survey, yielding a 45 percent response rate for the study. In the future it is expected that a somewhat shorter survey, and data collection timed so as not to coincide with the holiday season, will yield slightly higher response rates.

With a sample size of 757, the margin of error for this study is 3.6 percent at the 95 percent confidence level. This means that if this study were to be replicated 1,000 times, in 950 of those replications results would be within 3.6 percent of the results reported in this study. Margins of error increase somewhat for those questions that were answered by smaller sub-groups of respondents.

The 37 phone interviews allowed for a check of potential non-response bias for those people who did not return the mail survey. With one exception, there were no statistically significant differences in responses

between the mail survey group and the phone survey group. The exception was for the question on the state of the region as compared to a year ago. Phone respondents were less likely to think that things had gotten worse. This difference may partially reflect a bias in phone surveys, which tend to produce more positive ratings than the more anonymous mail survey format. Consequently, the final group of completed surveys can be said to accurately reflect both respondents and non-respondents.

Weighting of the data was necessary to reflect actual gender and age distribution. The raw data overrepresented males and underrepresented people under the age of 30. The gender imbalance was likely a product of the inherent bias towards males in the original sample, coupled with some respondents not following directions about having the survey completed by the adult in the household with the most recent birthday.

The age imbalance was also likely a product of the sample, since people in that age group are more likely to have changed residences more often, and to have cell phones as their primary phone. Cell phone numbers and the associated contact information are currently not part of most sampling databases, so those who have cell phones as their only phone often are left out of raw samples.

To correct for gender and age, known gender/age distribution data for the seven-county metropolitan area was taken from the U.S. Census 2000 and compared to the sample, and the sample was then weighted to reflect the known Census distribution of age and gender. The end product is a database that accurately reflects the adult residents of the seven-county Twin Cities area.

Survey instruments are found in Appendix A of this report.

## Reading data in this report

The report is organized by topic. Each section begins with a summary of significant findings, followed by a discussion of the different sub-topics within that section. Data tables are referenced in the discussion and are found after the discussion.

Percentages are rounded to whole numbers, with the result that some tables may not add up to 100 percent. Not all respondents answered every question. The actual number of respondents answering any given question is listed directly below the data table and is noted as "n=…".

Most results are reported through descriptive statistics such as frequencies of responses. When appropriate and of interest, data was analyzed using cross-tabulations, means testing and other methods as detailed for specific tables in the report. Further analysis of the study data is available by contacting Jonathan Vlaming at the Metropolitan Council.

# Section 2: Quality of Life

## Selected Findings

- Ninety-six percent of residents think that the Twin Cities area is a better place to live compared to other metropolitan areas in the nation. Forty-seven percent think it is a much better place to live.
- Metro residents think that the area has many attractive features. One of every three residents thinks that the most attractive feature of the Twin Cities area is the parks/trails/lakes and natural resources. Other top attractive features include the arts/cultural scene (12 percent) and the sense that the area offers a "big city with a small-town feel" (10 percent). The remaining 45 percent of residents identified thirteen other features, including such things as the weather, shopping opportunities and the people who live here.
- About one of four residents thinks that the quality of life in the Twin Cities area has gotten worse over the last year.
- Residents think that the single most important problem facing the area is traffic congestion, with 38 percent indicating it as the top problem. At the category level, transportation, which includes congestion, mass transit, parking and more general responses related to the transportation system, is the single most important issue for 58 percent of all residents.
- When residents were asked to identify the top three problems facing the region, traffic congestion was also the problem identified most often (54 percent of residents). Congestion started to become a significant issue in 1997, surpassing the 10 percent mark for the first time. Identification of congestion as a top-three issue has doubled since 2000, rising from 27 percent up to 54 percent in 2003.
- Residents think that resolving the transportation issues facing the region will require improving/increasing both mass transit and the road infrastructure. Residents were asked to suggest a potential solution to their identified most important problem. For those residents who identified transportation issues (including traffic congestion) as the most important problem, about 45 percent suggested improving/increasing mass transit, while another 32 percent suggested improving/increasing the road infrastructure.
- Residents overwhelmingly prefer changing the transportation system to resolve transportation issues over changing their own behaviors. Seven percent of residents who listed transportation issues as their top concern suggested solutions such as increasing commuter incentives and programs, driver education, more law enforcement on the roads and reducing urban sprawl.
- The other problems mentioned most often include crime (34 percent), education (21 percent), housing (18 percent) and growth (17 percent).

## Discussion

Respondents were asked a series of questions about how the Twin Cities compares to other metropolitan areas, what makes the region attractive, what problems are currently facing the region and how those problems should be addressed.

### The Twin Cities as compared to other metro areas

Twin Cities area residents think this is a better place to live than most other metropolitan areas in the nation. Table 2.01 and Figure 1 looks at how the Twin Cities area compares to other U.S. metropolitan areas as a place to live. Ninety-six percent of Twin Cities area residents think that the area is a better place to live than other metropolitan areas, and 47 percent think that it is a much better place to live. This perception has not changed significantly over the past 20 years.

Another question asked of respondents was "If you could live anywhere in the world, where would you live and why?" Categorized responses to this question are found in Table 2.03. Almost half of all respondents indicate that they would stay in Minnesota (37 percent staying in the Twin Cities and another nine percent moving out state). Eighteen percent indicate that they would move to the western U.S., and eight percent would move to Europe. The most common reasons for staying in the Twin Cities include being close to family and friends, and the idea that this is already the best place to live. The most common reason for moving was to live in a warmer climate. Many respondents indicated that they would prefer to live in Minnesota most of the time but spend winters in a warmer climate.

### What makes the Twin Cities area an attractive place to live?

Residents were asked to indicate what they think is the most attractive feature of the Twin Cities metro area today. Their responses were open-ended – that is to say, they did not have a list of attractions to choose from – they simply wrote in what they thought to be the top attraction. Their responses were then coded into some general categories and the results are presented in Table 2.02.

Thirty-three percent of residents think that the area's parks, trails, lakes and open spaces are the most attractive feature. The vibrant arts and culture of the area is the second-most-often-mentioned feature (12 percent), followed by the sense that the area is a "big city with a small-town feel" (10 percent). The remaining 45 percent of residents indicate an additional 13 attractions, ranging from a general appreciation of the variety of things to do (6 percent) to the weather (1 percent).

### Changes in the quality of life

The majority (57 percent) of residents think that the Twin Cities area's quality of life has stayed the same over the past year (Table 2.04). Fifteen percent think that it has improved, and 28 percent think that it has gotten worse. The percentage of residents who indicated that it has gotten worse has risen significantly since 1999, the last time this question was asked. This increase is partially explained by the different methods used to collect data between the current study and past studies. Phone interviews were used in the past, and there is a tendency among phone interviewees to respond with more positive ratings than if they were responding anonymously through the mail. The follow-up phone interviews done as part of this study showed that phone respondents were less likely to indicate that things had gotten worse than the mail respondents. Consequently, it is accurate to say that over one-fourth of all metro area residents think things have gotten worse over the last year, but it is not accurate to say that this is a significant departure from past years. Reasons for what might be negatively impacting the quality of life are discussed below.

## Problems facing the Twin Cities metro area

Residents were asked to identify the single most important problem facing the region today. They were then asked to suggest a solution to that problem. Residents were also asked to list up to four additional important problems facing the region. Each of these questions was open-ended, with the survey respondents writing the issues and solutions in their own words. For analysis purposes, the open-ended responses were categorized by primary category and sub-categories (see Table 2.06 for categories and sub-categories used to code responses).

The single most important problem facing the Twin Cities area today is traffic congestion, according to 38 percent of all residents surveyed (Table 2.05). Crime is a distant second with 13 percent of residents indicating it as their top problem. At the category level, transportation—which includes congestion, mass transit, parking and more general responses related to the transportation system—is the single most important issue for 58 percent of all residents (Table 2.06).

Tables 2.07-08 and Figure 2 provide a historic perspective of the single most important issue. Different issues have led the list of most important problems over the years, but historically crime has been dominant, leading throughout the 1990s. Housing was the lead issue in 2001. Transportation has seen a steady increase from 1995 to the present, with the exception of 2001 when it took a slight dip and was mentioned less often than housing. When looking at the single most important issue, it is important to remember that each resident was forced to list only one issue. If transportation increases, the other problem categories are forced to decrease. Another important consideration is that the difference in actual importance between the single most important problem and the second or third most important problem varies from individual to individual. One person may feel strongly that traffic is the number one issue and that crime is second but a much less important issue, while another individual may feel that congestion is closely followed by crime in importance. Nonetheless, the data is useful in tracking the single most important issue.

A different way of looking at the important issues facing the region is to look at the degree to which residents list an issue as one of their top three concerns. This measures the breadth of the issue – showing the percentage of all residents who have that issue on their minds as one of their top three concerns for the region. Eighty-seven percent of all residents identify transportation concerns (Table 2.09 and Figure 3) as one of their top three concerns, more than double the percentage of residents in 2001. Transportation includes congestion, the need for more transit, parking issues and other topics related to the transportation system. On the more specific sub-category level, traffic congestion is identified as one of the three top issues by more than half (54 percent) of all residents.

Table 2.10 and Figure 4 show the percent of people who indicated traffic congestion as one of their top three issues facing the region for the years 1994 through 2003. As the table and graph show, congestion started to become a significant issue in 1997, surpassing the 10 percent mark for the first time. Concern about the issue has doubled since 2000, going from 27 percent to 54 percent in 2003. The dip down to 19 percent in 2001 does not follow the pattern of annual increase seen since 1997. In 2001, the survey was conducted in the fall following the terrorist attacks of 9/11. It is possible that this affected the perception of issues for that year's study.

## Solutions to problems facing the Twin Cities area

Residents were asked to suggest a potential solution to the problem that they identified as the single most important problem. Solutions related to transportation issues are explored here. Additional solutions for the other problems are listed in Table 2.12.

Residents think that a mix of improving/increasing mass transit (45 percent) and improving/increasing the auto infrastructure (32 percent) is needed to best address the transportation issues facing the region. For

the residents who suggested improving/increasing mass transit, their solutions can be split into two sub-groups, with 25 percent generally indicating that the mass transit system needs to be improved and expanded, and another 20 percent indicating that the LRT and/or commuter train system needs to be developed and expanded. For the residents who suggested improving/increasing the auto infrastructure, their solutions can be split into three subgroups. Fifteen percent suggest adding more lanes to existing freeways, eight percent suggest building more roads, and another nine percent suggest widening roads, improving road design and generally improving roads (Table 2.11).

To resolve transportation issues, residents prefer changing the transportation system over changing their routines. Seven percent of residents who listed transportation issues as their top concern suggested solutions such as increasing commuter incentives and programs, driver education, more law enforcement on the roads and reducing urban sprawl.

**Table 2.01: How would you rate the Twin Cities as a place to live as compared to other metropolitan areas in the nation?**

| | 1998 Percent | 1999 Percent | 2000 Percent | 2001 Percent | 2003 Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A much better place to live | 55 | 53 | 47 | 55 | 47 |
| A slightly better place to live | 43 | 45 | 50 | 42 | 49 |
| A slightly worse place to live | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 |
| A much worse place to live | 1 | <1 | <1 | <1 | 1 |

2003 n = 730

**Figure 1: How would you rate the Twin Cities as a place to live compared to other metropolitan areas in the nation?**

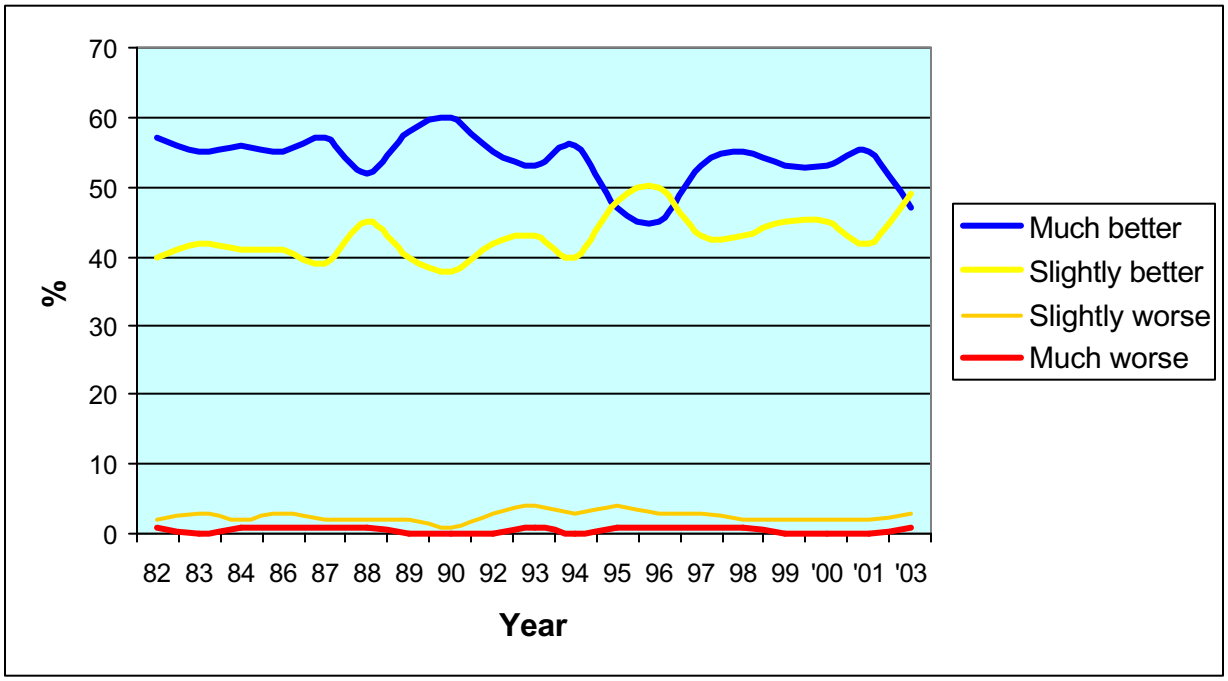


**Table 2.02: What is the single most attractive feature of the Twin Cities metro area today?**

| Most attractive feature: | Percent of people indicating that feature as the most attractive: |
|---|---|
| Parks, trails, lakes, rivers and open space | 33 |
| Arts and culture | 12 |
| Big city with a small-town feel | 10 |
| Variety of things to do | 6 |
| Quality of life – good balance | 5 |
| Good economy | 5 |
| Safe place to live | 4 |
| People | 4 |
| Clean | 3 |
| Mall of America/shopping | 3 |
| Professional sports | 2 |
| Beautiful cities | 2 |
| Education | 2 |
| Population diversity | 2 |
| Weather | 1 |
| Government | 1 |
| Other | 5 |

2003 n = 585

**Table 2.03: If you could live anywhere in the world, where would you live?**

| Where people would live: | Percent of people saying that is where they would live: |
|---|---|
| | |
| **Stay in Minnesota:** | **48** |
| Twin Cities | 37 |
| Non-metro | 9 |
| | |
| **Other USA** | **31** |
| USA West (includes Alaska & Hawaii) | 18 |
| USA Midwest | 6 |
| USA South | 5 |
| USA East | 2 |
| | |
| **Foreign** | **14** |
| Europe | 8 |
| Mexico/Central America/Caribbean | 2 |
| Far East/Australia/New Zealand | 2 |
| Canada | 2 |
| | |
| **Someplace ambiguous (e.g., a beach)** | **7** |

2003 n = 556

**Table 2.04: Over the past year, do you think the quality of life in the Twin Cities has gotten better, stayed the same, or gotten worse?**

| | 1998 Percent | 1999 Percent | 2000 Percent | 2001 Percent | 2003 Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Gotten better | 23 | 26 | Not asked | Not asked | 15 |
| Stayed the same | 62 | 60 | | | 57 |
| Gotten worse | 15 | 13 | | | 28 |

2003 n = 736

**Table 2.05: What do you think is the single most important problem in the Twin Cities metro area today? Top 10 responses**

| Single most important problem: | Percent of all respondents indicating that this was the single most important problem facing the Twin Cities metro area in 2003: |
|---|---|
| 1. Traffic congestion | 38.3 |
| 2. Crime[1] | 13.0 |
| 3. Transportation in general[2] | 9.3 |
| 4. Parking costs | 6.4 |
| 5. Housing cost/affordability | 3.6 |
| 6. Growth – sprawl | 3.3 |
| 7. Mass transit – more, better quality | 3.0 |
| 8. Taxes in general[2] | 2.3 |
| 9. Growing population | 1.9 |
| 10. Government funding priorities | 1.7 |
| **Total for top 10 problems:** | **82.8** |

2003 n = 710

**Notes**

[1] Crime includes crime in general, gang-related crime, drug-related crime, and gun-related crime.

[2] A topic followed by "in general" means that the respondent indicated the topic only but gave no further detail as to the exact nature of the problem. For example, about nine percent of all people indicated that the single most important problem was "transportation," but they did not indicate if they meant traffic congestion, lack of mass transit, road construction or some other more specific issue.

**Table 2.06: What do you think is the single most important problem in the Twin Cities metro area today? Organized by topic area**

| Single most important problem: | Percent | Single most important problem: | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Transportation – Total** | **57.8** | **Education – Total** | **3.7** |
| • Traffic | 38.3 | • Financing | 1.7 |
| • Transportation in general | 9.3 | • Education in general | 1.4 |
| • Parking costs | 6.4 | • Quality | 0.6 |
| • Mass transit – more & better quality | 3.0 | | |
| • LRT | 0.7 | **Government – Total** | **3.3** |
| • Road construction | 0.1 | • Government funding priorities | 1.7 |
| | | • Government in general | 1.0 |
| **Crime – Total** | **13.0** | • Stadium issues | 0.5 |
| • Crime in general | 10.9 | • Governor | 0.1 |
| • Drug related | 0.9 | | |
| • Gangs | 0.8 | **Taxes – Total** | **2.9** |
| • Guns | 0.4 | • Taxes in general | 2.3 |
| | | • Property tax | 0.5 |
| **Growth – Total** | **5.7** | • Income tax | 0.1 |
| • Sprawl | 3.3 | | |
| • Growing population | 1.9 | **Economy – Total** | **2.6** |
| • Urban decay | 0.5 | • Unemployment/lack of jobs | 1.6 |
| | | • Wages | 0.5 |
| **Social Problems – Total** | **4.7** | • Business climate | 0.2 |
| • Immigration | 1.1 | • Quality of jobs | 0.2 |
| • Morality, lack of | 0.8 | • Economy in general | 0.1 |
| • Welfare | 0.7 | | |
| • Drug/alcohol abuse | 0.7 | **Environment – Total** | **0.7** |
| • Discrimination | 0.6 | • Pollution | 0.6 |
| • Religion | 0.4 | • Environment in general | 0.1 |
| • Abuse | 0.2 | | |
| • Homeless | 0.1 | **Health Care – Total** | **0.4** |
| • Poverty | 0.1 | • Health care – cost | 0.4 |
| • Youth | 0.0 | | |
| | | **Weather** | **0.2** |
| **Housing – Total** | **4.4** | | |
| • Cost/affordability | 3.6 | **Other** | **0.4** |
| • Availability | 0.8 | | |
| | | **Total** | **100.0** |

2003 n = 710

Note: A topic followed by "in general" means that the respondent indicated the topic only but gave no further detail as to the exact nature of the problem. For example, about nine percent of all people indicated that the single most important problem was "transportation," but they did not indicate if they meant traffic congestion, lack of mass transit, road construction or some other more specific issue.

**Table 2.07: What do you think is the single most important problem in the Twin Cities metro area today? 1998 to 2003 in major categories**

| Single most important problem (in categories): | 1998 Percent | 1999 Percent | 2000 Percent | 2001 Percent | 2003 Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Transportation | 16 | 20 | 23 | 19 | 58 |
| Crime | 31 | 24 | 13 | 9 | 13 |
| Growth issues | 4 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 6 |
| Social Issues | 13 | 15 | 13 | 12 | 5 |
| Housing | 5 | 10 | 16 | 19 | 4 |
| Education | 5 | 6 | 7 | 10 | 4 |
| Government | 1 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| Taxes | 10 | 7 | 7 | 6 | 3 |
| Economy | 6 | 4 | 6 | 14 | 3 |
| Environment | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | <1 |
| Weather | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | <1 |
| Health care | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | <1 |
| Other problems | 4 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 1 |

2003 n = 710

**Table 2.08: What do you think is the single most important problem in the Twin Cities metro area today? 1986 to 2003 in major categories**

| YEAR | Transportation | Crime | Social | Growth | Housing | Economy | Taxes | Other[1] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1986** | 5 | 17 | 9 | n/a | 2 | 21 | 18 | 28 |
| **1987** | 8 | 12 | 14 | n/a | 4 | 23 | 15 | 24 |
| **1988** | 11 | 21 | 21 | n/a | 5 | 12 | 13 | 17 |
| **1989** | 8 | 22 | 30 | n/a | 5 | 8 | 12 | 15 |
| **1990** | 7 | 26 | 23 | n/a | 3 | 11 | 11 | 19 |
| **1992** | 4 | 41 | 14 | n/a | 0 | 26 | 4 | 11 |
| **1993** | 3 | 61 | 11 | n/a | 0 | 11 | 3 | 11 |
| **1994** | 4 | 55 | 12 | n/a | 2 | 7 | 8 | 12 |
| **1995** | 4 | 58 | 14 | 1 | 1 | 9 | 5 | 8 |
| **1996** | 8 | 53 | 12 | 3 | 2 | 9 | 7 | 6 |
| **1997** | 12 | 39 | 15 | 3 | 1 | 6 | 6 | 18 |
| **1998** | 16 | 31 | 13 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 10 | 16 |
| **1999** | 20 | 24 | 16 | 4 | 10 | 4 | 7 | 15 |
| **2000** | 23 | 13 | 14 | 3 | 16 | 6 | 7 | 18 |
| **2001** | 19 | 9 | 12 | 2 | 19 | 14 | 6 | 18 |
| **2003** | 58 | 13 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 9 |

2003 n = 710

[1] Other problems include: education, government, environment, weather, health care and energy

Note: Survey was not conducted in 1991 and 2002

**Figure 2: Single most important problem: 1986 to 2003**

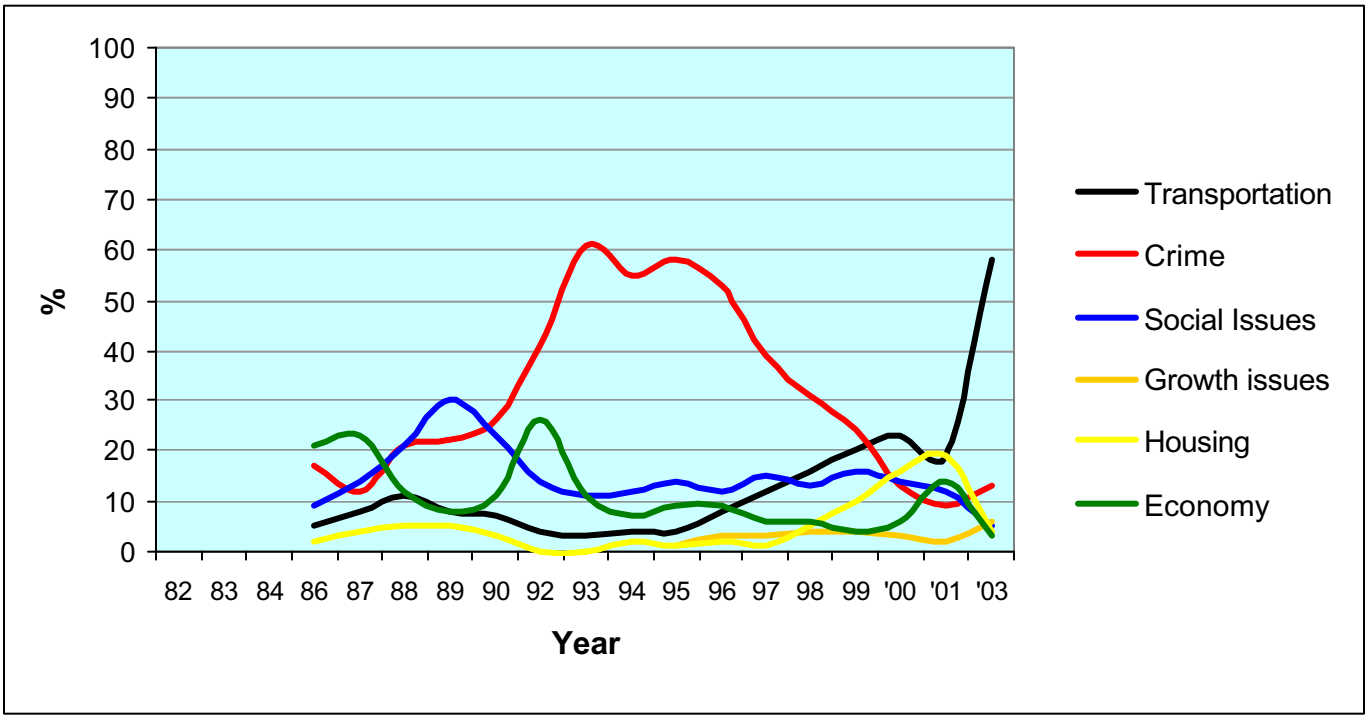
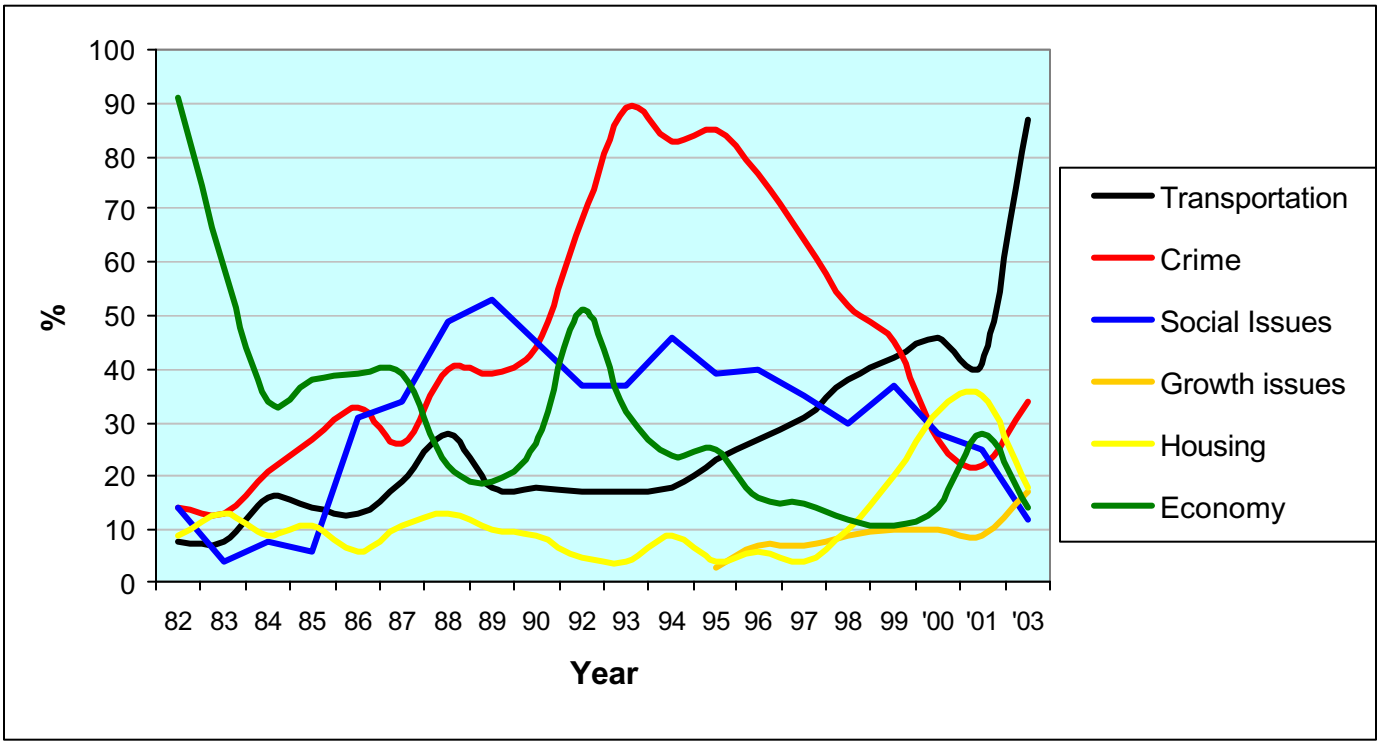



**Figure 3: Most often mentioned important problem: 1982 to 2003**



## Table 2.09: Most often mentioned problem facing the Twin Cities metro area: 1982 to 2003

| Year | Percent of people indicating that topic as one of their top three concerns: | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Transportation | Crime | Social concerns | Growth | Housing | Jobs and unemployment | Economy (non-job related) | Taxes | Education | Environment | Government | Health | Energy | Other |
| **1982** | 8 | 14 | 14 | n/a | 9 | 61 | 31 | 29 | 15 | 8 | 12 | - | 9 | 29 |
| **1983** | 8 | 13 | 4 | n/a | 13 | 38 | 21 | 36 | 15 | 15 | 7 | - | 7 | 18 |
| **1984** | 16 | 21 | 8 | n/a | 9 | 21 | 13 | 30 | 14 | 24 | 8 | - | 5 | 44 |
| **1985** | 14 | 27 | 6 | n/a | 11 | 23 | 15 | 38 | 18 | 24 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 15 |
| **1986** | 13 | 33 | 31 | n/a | 6 | 24 | 15 | 35 | 7 | 23 | 5 | 6 | - | 18 |
| **1987** | 19 | 26 | 34 | n/a | 11 | 19 | 20 | 28 | 10 | 15 | 3 | 14 | - | - |
| **1988** | 28 | 40 | 49 | n/a | 13 | 10 | 12 | 28 | 10 | 17 | 6 | 4 | 2 | 15 |
| **1989** | 18 | 39 | 53 | n/a | 10 | 9 | 10 | 29 | 9 | 23 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 6 |
| **1990** | 18 | 44 | 45 | n/a | 9 | 14 | 12 | 24 | 14 | 22 | 8 | 4 | 3 | 6 |
| **1992** | 17 | 68 | 37 | n/a | 5 | 39 | 12 | 16 | 14 | 9 | 5 | 9 | - | 11 |
| **1993** | 17 | 89 | 37 | n/a | 4 | 21 | 11 | 20 | 15 | 5 | 9 | 6 | - | 14 |
| **1994** | 18 | 83 | 46 | n/a | 9 | 15 | 9 | 31 | 18 | 6 | 5 | 9 | - | 14 |
| **1995** | 23 | 85 | 39 | 3 | 4 | 14 | 11 | 19 | 20 | 4 | 5 | 4 | - | 11 |
| **1996** | 27 | 77 | 40 | 7 | 6 | 7 | 9 | 27 | 17 | 4 | 6 | 2 | - | 12 |
| **1997** | 31 | 64 | 35 | 7 | 4 | 5 | 10 | 20 | 18 | 4 | 9 | 3 | - | 11 |
| **1998** | 38 | 52 | 30 | 9 | 10 | 5 | 7 | 24 | 17 | 7 | 4 | 5 | - | 11 |
| **1999** | 42 | 45 | 37 | 10 | 20 | 6 | 5 | 16 | 19 | 3 | 8 | 6 | 1 | 7 |
| **2000** | 46 | 27 | 28 | 10 | 32 | 5 | 9 | 19 | 19 | 5 | 7 | 7 | 6 | 7 |
| **2001** | 41 | 22 | 25 | 9 | 35 | 12 | 16 | 15 | 27 | 5 | 9 | 5 | - | 5 |
| **2003** | 87 | 34 | 12 | 17 | 18 | 10 | 4 | 16 | 21 | 10 | 10 | 4 | 1 | 3 |

2003 n = 710

**Notes:**

- This is a different way of looking at problems than the "single most important" approach. Using this approach, survey respondents indicated the top three problems. For example, a person could indicate traffic congestion, crime and education funding as their top three problems, and their responses would be counted for each of the three categories.
- Respondents could list up to three problems, so the total will be greater than 100%.
- Study not done in 1991 and 2002.
- "Other" category prior to 1986 contained a number of responses that were more precisely allocated to other categories in subsequent survey tabulations.
- Urban growth/sprawl issues were not identified prior to 1995.
- The economy as an issue was split into two groups: jobs-related and non-jobs-related. For Figure 3 the two groups were combined.

**Table 2.10: Traffic congestion as an issue from 1994 to 2003**

| Year | Percent of all respondents indicating traffic congestion as one of the top three issues facing the region: |
|---|---|
| 1994 | 7 |
| 1995 | 8 |
| 1996 | 7 |
| 1997 | 13 |
| 1998 | 18 |
| 1999 | 22 |
| 2000 | 27 |
| 2001 | 19 |
| 2003 | 54 |

2003 n = 713

**Figure 4: Traffic congestion as an issue from 1994 to 2003**

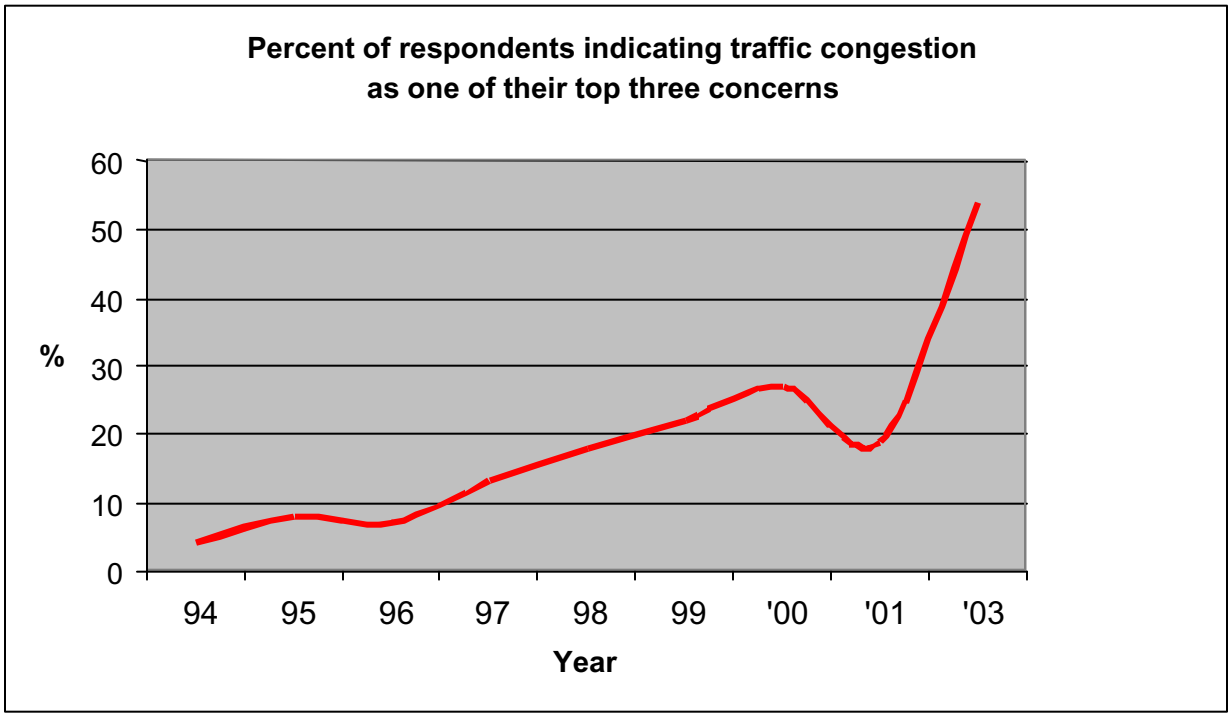


**Table 2.11: Solutions suggested by respondents for dealing with traffic congestion and transportation issues**

| Suggested solutions | Percent of people who listed **traffic congestion** as the most important problem | Percent of people who listed **any transportation issue** as the most important problem |
|---|---|---|
| **Improve/increase auto infrastructure** | **42.3** | **32.4** |
| • More lanes on existing highways | 18.8 | 14.9 |
| • Build more roads | 10.5 | 8.2 |
| • Better road design | 5.2 | 3.7 |
| • Better roads in general | 4.5 | 3.3 |
| • Widen roads in general | 3.2 | 2.3 |
| **Improve/increase mass transit** | **36.0** | **44.5** |
| • Increase/improve mass transit | 18.1 | 25.0 |
| • More LRT and/or commuter trains | 17.9 | 19.5 |
| **Modify behavior** | **8.1** | **6.8** |
| • Increase commuter incentives/programs | 5.0 | 3.8 |
| • Increase law enforcement | 2.0 | 1.5 |
| • Reduce urban sprawl | 0.7 | 1.3 |
| • Educate drivers on road rules | 0.4 | 0.3 |
| **Other suggestions** | **13.6** | **16.2** |
| • Reduce road construction time | 2.5 | 1.8 |
| • Increase funding for transportation | 2.1 | 2.5 |
| • Better long range planning | 1.1 | 0.8 |
| • Add toll roads/lanes | 1.1 | 0.8 |
| • Convert sane lanes | 0.9 | 0.6 |
| • Other miscellaneous suggestions | 5.9 | 9.7 |
| **Total** | **100.0** | **100.0** |

n for traffic congestion only = 194
n for all transportation issues combined = 270

**Notes:**
Traffic congestion is a subset of the larger transportation issue. In addition to the traffic congestion concerns, the larger transportation issue group includes those people who have concerns about the transportation system in general, mass transit, parking and other non-congestion-related transportation issues.

**Table 2.12: Solutions suggested by respondents for dealing with other problems besides transportation**

| Topic and suggested solutions | Number of responses | Topic and suggested solutions | Number of responses |
|---|---|---|---|
| Crime (61 suggestions) | | Taxes (21 suggestions) | |
| More police | 21 | Reduce spending | 9 |
| Tougher sentences | 17 | Better management of state resources | 3 |
| Deal with poverty and the cause of crime | 9 | Reduce services | 3 |
| Get drugs off the streets | 3 | Lower taxes | 2 |
| Increase police involvement w/ community | 2 | Increase revenue sources | 2 |
| Cut welfare benefits to keep people away | 2 | Taxes - miscellaneous | 2 |
| Crime – miscellaneous | 7 | | |
| | | | |
| Growth (51 suggestions) | | housing (17 suggestions) | |
| Make urbanized area more desirable | 13 | Increase government subsidies/programs | 6 |
| Reduce immigration (legal and illegal) | 10 | Encourage dev. of mixed income housing | 3 |
| Need stronger regional planning | 6 | Lower property tax | 2 |
| Discourage people from moving here | 5 | Housing - miscellaneous | 6 |
| Discourage moving to outlying areas | 5 | | |
| Increase mass transit | 3 | Education (15 suggestions) | |
| Discourage large families | 2 | Increase education funding | 7 |
| Integrate business and residential | 2 | Pay teachers more | 2 |
| More roads to deal with growth | 2 | Education - miscellaneous | 6 |
| Growth – miscellaneous | 3 | | |
| | | | |
| Government (21 suggestions) | | Jobs (14 suggestions) | |
| Need new politicians | 6 | Tax incentives to attract and retain business | 4 |
| Cut spending | 2 | Raise wages | 3 |
| Raise taxes | 2 | Economy - miscellaneous | 7 |
| Make government accountable | 2 | | |
| Government – miscellaneous | 9 | | |

Note: Data is provided in this table to provide a general idea of solutions that people offered for non-transportation problems. If a solution had only one person suggesting it, then it was considered to be a miscellaneous solution for that problem topic. The economy in general, environment, health and weather topic categories had five or fewer suggested solutions each and are not listed in this table. Social problems are quite varied, as are their proposed solutions. Consequently, a summary of those solutions did not meet the requirement that there be two or more similar solutions offered and are not included in this table.

# Section 3: Commuting Characteristics and Choices

## Selected Findings

- Eighty percent of residents think that traffic congestion has increased over the last 12 months.
- The perceived commute time has, on average, increased to 27.5 minutes from 23.6 minutes a year ago. This is about a 17 percent increase in perceived commute time.
- Most residents are not willing to change where they live to make their trip to work more convenient. Twelve percent indicated that it is at least somewhat likely that they might move in the future to make their trip to work more convenient.
- Thirty-six percent of all residents indicate that it is at least somewhat likely that they will choose a future job in part on making their trip to work more convenient.

## Discussion

### Perceptions of congestion

Four out of five residents think that traffic congestion has increased over the last 12 months. Approximately the same percentage of residents thought this in each of the five studies conducted from 1998 to 2003 (Table 3.01).

### Commuting modes and times

Sixteen percent of adult residents are not currently working. Of those who do work, 80 percent get to work by driving alone – the same as was found in the 2000 study. Another 14 percent of all residents use alternative means to get to work. Six percent car- or van-pool, another six percent take the bus, and two percent walk or bike to work. The remaining six percent of those who work do so at home (Table 3.02).

Commute times are perceived to be increasing (Table 3.03). For those residents who were working at a place other than home, they estimate that on average, their commute time a year ago was 23.6 minutes. Respondents in that same group estimate that their commute time is now 27.5 minutes – a 17 percent increase in 12 months. However, 51 percent of all respondents indicate that their commute time did not change, and eight percent indicate that it actually decreased. The average increase is due to the 41 percent of respondents who indicate that their commute time increased.

Table 3.03 also shows the historic mean (or average) commute time as reported by the U.S. Census Transportation Planning Program (CTPP) for 1980, 1990 and 2000. In 1980, the average commute in the Twin Cities was 19.8 minutes, increasing to 20.8 minutes in 1990 and 23.0 minutes in 2000. The average reported commute time by survey respondents was 23.6 minutes for a year ago (2002), which fits well with a rudimentary trend line provided by the CTPP data. However, the current average commute time reported by respondents (27.5 minutes) does not fit well with the CTPP data. Analysis of the raw current commute time data provided by respondents indicates that people who reported increased commute times tended to report their increase in five-minute increments. Of the 41 percent of respondents who reported increases, 16 percent indicated a five-minute increase, 10 percent indicated a 10-minute increase and 9 percent indicated a 15-minute increase, for a total of 35 of the 41 percent using the five-minute rounding approach. Future studies will allow comparison between what was reported now and what will be reported next year as "a year ago." Over time this will allow for refinement of the commute data and should be useful for tracking commute time.

Table 3.04 and Figure 5 show the distribution of commute times for all workers not working at home. The primary changes are a five percent reduction of workers with a commute of 15 minutes or less, and an eight percent increase in workers with commutes between 45 and 60 minutes.

Some of the change in commute time may be attributable to a change in the location of a job or location of the residence of the survey respondent. These factors were not isolated in the study and the degree of their influence cannot be directly measured.

### Housing choices related to the commute

Most residents are not willing to change where they live to make their trip to work more convenient (Tables 3.05 – 06). Twenty-three percent of residents indicated that they had moved to their current residence so that they or someone in their household could make their trip to work shorter or more convenient. However, twelve percent indicate that they might move in the future to make their trip to work more convenient. For those whose past move was related to the trip to work, 80 percent moved, in part, to get closer to work. Less than 10 percent did so to be able to walk or bike to work, or to be near a transit route to work.

### Work choices related to the commute

Choice of future jobs will be more influenced by trip-to-work considerations than in the past (Tables 3.07 – 08). With regard to their current jobs, 16 percent of residents indicated that they chose their job in part because it makes their trip to work more convenient. However, just over one-third of all residents indicate that they would choose a future job in part on making their trip to work more convenient. For those who chose their current job in part to make their commute shorter or more convenient, 74 percent did so to be closer to home. Fifteen percent did so to be able to bike or walk from home. Five percent did so to be near a transit stop.

**Table 3.01: Over the last 12 months, do you think the traffic congestion in the Twin Cities metro area has increased, stayed the same, or decreased?**

| | 1998 Percent | 1999 Percent | 2000 Percent | 2001 Percent | 2003 Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Increased | 82 | 82 | 77 | 76 | 80 |
| Stayed the same | 16 | 16 | 22 | 22 | 19 |
| Decreased | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 |

2003 n = 740

**Table 3.02: How do you normally get to work?**

| Method of transportation | 2000 Percent | 2003 Percent |
|---|---|---|
| DO NOT WORK | 11 | 16 |
| Drive alone | 80 | 80 |
| Car/van pool/get dropped off | 7 | 6 |
| Take the bus | 6 | 6 |
| Ride bike | <1 | 1 |
| Walk | 1 | 1 |
| Some other way | 6 | <1 |
| Work at home | Not asked | 6 |
| TOTAL for those who work | 100 | 100 |

2003 n = 669
Note: Question not asked in 1998, 1999 and 2001

**Table 3.03: Perceived commute time: One year ago and now**

| | Census TPP Mean (in minutes) | | | Respondent Mean (in minutes) | | Change in perceived commute | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Method of Transportation: | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | Year ago | Now | Minutes | Percent |
| **All workers who do not work at home** | **19.8** | **20.8** | **23.0** | **23.6** | **27.5** | **3.9** | **16.5** |
| **Workers who:** | | | | | | | |
| Drive alone | 18.4 | 20.1 | 22.3 | 22.7 | 26.7 | 4.0 | 17.6 |
| Car/van pool/get dropped off | 21.6 | 23.1 | 24.3 | 25.4 | 29.9 | 4.5 | 17.7 |
| Take the bus | 31.1 | 32.0 | 36.4 | 37.9 | 44.0 | 6.1 | 16.1 |
| Ride bike | n/a | n/a | n/a | 22.5 | 20.0 | (2.5) | (11.1) |
| Walk | n/a | n/a | n/a | 12.8 | 14.5 | 1.7 | 13.3 |

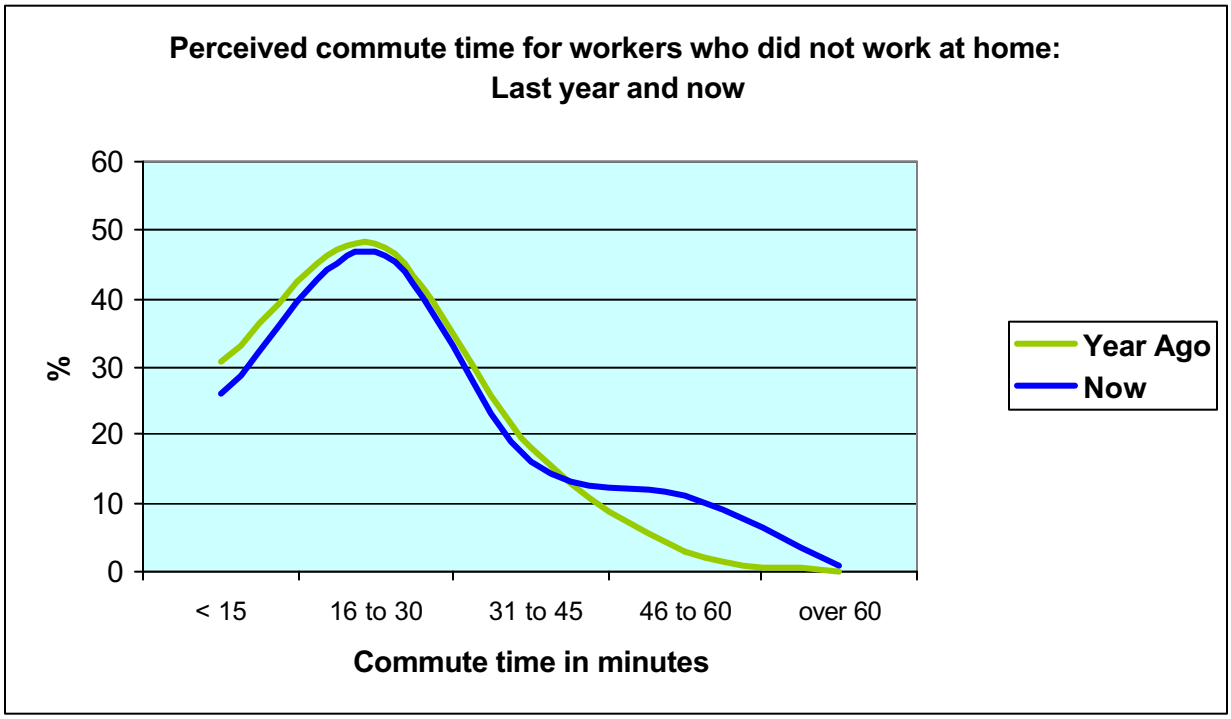
2003 n = 493
Note: The Census TPP refers to the Transportation Planning Program produced by the Census every 10 years. The mean is the average commute time.

**Table 3.04: Distribution of perceived commute time: Now versus a year ago**

| Time category | All workers who do not work at home: Percent indicating that their commute falls in this time category | |
|---|---|---|
| | Year ago | Now |
| 15 minutes or less | 31 | 26 |
| 16 to 30 minutes | 48 | 47 |
| 31 to 45 minutes | 18 | 16 |
| 46 to 60 minutes | 3 | 11 |
| Over 60 minutes | <1 | 1 |

2003 n = 493

**Figure 5: Commute time in minutes: Last year and now**



### Table 3.05: Did you move to your current residence so that you or someone else in your household could make their trip to work shorter or more convenient?

| | Percent of all people indicating |
|---|---|
| No | 77 |
| Yes | 23 |

***For those who said "Yes": Possible reasons for the move of residence***

| | For the initial 23% who said "Yes": the percent indicating that they moved: |
|---|---|
| To get closer to work | 80 |
| To reduce traffic congestion | 22 |
| To be able to walk or bike to work | 7 |
| To be near transit or the bus | 6 |
| To be able to carpool/vanpool | 3 |
| For other reasons related to commuting | 15 |

2003 n = 683 for first half of question
2003 n = 155 for second half of question
Note: Respondents could indicate more than one reason for the move so totals are greater than 100 percent.

### Table 3.06: How likely is it that you will move in the future to make the trip to work shorter or more convenient?

| | Percent of all people indicating |
|---|---|
| Very likely | 3 |
| Somewhat likely | 9 |
| Not very likely | 39 |
| Not at all likely | 50 |

2003 n = 641

**Table 3.07: With regard to your current job, did you choose to take that job in part because it makes your trip to work shorter or more convenient?**

| | Percent of those who work indicating: |
|---|---|
| No | 84 |
| Yes | 16 |

***For those who said "Yes": Which of the following played a role in choosing your current job?***

| | For the 16% who said "Yes": the percent indicating that they chose the job: |
|---|---|
| To be closer to home | 74 |
| To reduce traffic congestion | 30 |
| To be able to walk or bike from home | 15 |
| To be near transit or the bus | 5 |
| To be able to carpool/vanpool | 2 |
| For other reasons related to commuting | 17 |

2003 n = 563 for first half of question – question does not include those who do not work
2003 n = 90 for second half of question
Note: Respondents could indicate more than one reason for the choice of job so totals are greater than 100 percent.

**Table 3.08: How likely is it that you will choose a future job based in part on making the trip to work shorter or more convenient?**

| | Percent of all people indicating that it would be: |
|---|---|
| Very likely | 14 |
| Somewhat likely | 22 |
| Not very likely | 31 |
| Not at all likely | 33 |

2003 n = 620

**Table 3.09: In the last 12 months, have you heard of or read anything about Metro Commuter Services?**

| | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 Percent | 2001 Percent | 2003 Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | n/a | n/a | 42 | 50 | 35 |
| Percent of those who had heard of MCS who actually used it in the last 12 months | | | 14 | 16 | 18 |

2003 n = 637

# Section 4: Transportation System – Quality, Importance and Funding

## Selected Findings

- Thirty percent of all residents think that the quality of the current highway system design is good or very good.
- A majority of all residents think that the current number of highway/freeway lanes is poor or very poor.
- Nearly everyone has an opinion regarding the quality of the highway system, but three of every five residents have an opinion regarding the quality of bus service in the metro area. Of those residents with an opinion regarding the quality of Metro Transit service within Minneapolis/St. Paul, 60 percent think that the quality of that service is good or very good. A majority (53 percent) of residents with opinions on Metro Transit service in the suburbs had an unfavorable opinion of bus service in the suburbs.
- Residents think a variety of transportation system components are very important for meeting the area's long-range transportation needs:

| | System component | Percent of residents indicating this as being Very Important |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Optimize the capacity and safety of existing roads | 64 |
| 2. | Add extra lanes to freeways | 57 |
| 3. | Develop a commuter/light-rail system | 45 |
| 4. | Expand the park-and-ride/express bus program | 38 |
| 5. | Expand the Metro Transit bus system | 36 |
| 6. | Build new freeways | 27 |
| 7. | Expand Metro Commuter Services program | 22 |
| 8. | Develop more bicycle commuting routes | 11 |

- Increasing the gas tax, adding a half-cent sales tax in the seven-county metro area and shifting money from other state programs are the methods preferred by residents for paying for increases in highway construction.
- Allowing gas tax revenue to be used for transit and adding a half-cent sales tax in the seven-county metro area are the methods preferred for paying for expansion of the transit system.

## Discussion

### Quality of transportation system components

Residents were asked to rate the quality of highway/freeway design, maintenance and number of lanes (Tables 4.01) using a five-point scale with 1 being "very poor" and 5 being "very good". Nearly everyone has an opinion regarding the highway system (only one percent indicated that they "did not know"), but their opinions vary depending on the system component. Over half (55 percent) think that maintenance is good or very good and 11 percent think that maintenance is poor or very poor. With regard to design, 26 percent of residents think that the highway system design is good, and four percent think that it is very good. Twenty-two percent think that the design is poor and another 14 percent think that the design is very poor. With regard to the number of lanes on highways, the majority think that it is poor (35 percent) or very poor (17 percent), while 15 percent think that it is good and two percent think it is very good.

Residents were also asked to rate the quality of bus service within Minneapolis and St. Paul proper, and in the suburbs. In both cases, about 40 percent of residents had no opinion regarding those systems. Of those who did have opinions, 60 percent had favorable opinions on the quality of bus service within the core cities. However, a slight majority (53 percent) of residents had an unfavorable opinion of bus service in the suburbs.

Residents were also asked to rate the quality of commuter bicycle routes within Minneapolis and St. Paul proper, and in the suburbs. In both cases about 60 percent of residents had no opinion regarding those systems. For those residents who had opinions on commuter bicycling routes, a majority (54 percent) had favorable opinions on commuter bicycle routes within the core cities, while about one-third (37 percent) had favorable opinions on commuter bicycle routes within the suburbs.

### Importance of transportation programs to meet long-range needs

Residents were asked to rate the importance of eight different components of the transportation system as they relate to meeting the area's long-range transportation needs (Table 4.02). Residents rated each component using a four-point scale, with 1 being "not at all important" and 4 being "very important."

Two of the eight components have a majority of residents indicating that they are very important to meeting the long-range transportation needs of the region. Optimizing the capacity and safety of existing roads ranked first with 64 percent saying it is very important, followed by adding extra lanes (57 percent saying it is very important). Three components have one-third to almost one-half of residents indicating that they are very important to meeting the long-range transportation needs of the region. Developing a commuter/light-rail system is very important for 45 percent of residents, expanding the park-and-ride express bus program is very important to 38 percent of residents, and expanding the Metro Transit bus system is very important to 36 percent of residents. The remaining three transportation system components have less than one-third of residents saying that they are very important for meeting the long-range transportation needs of the region. Building new freeways is very important to 27 percent of all residents, expanding Metro Commuter Services is very important to 22 percent of residents, and developing more bicycle commuting routes was very important to 11 percent of all residents.

Another way of looking at this data is to compare the mean scores for each transportation component. The mean, or average, is based on assigning points to each rating, with 1 = not at all important, 2 = somewhat important, 3 = moderately important and 4 = very important. The distance between each of these importance ratings is thought to be equivalent, so measures such as means are appropriate. Those people who did not have an opinion are not included when calculating the mean.

Four of the eight system components have a mean score between moderately and very important. They are: optimizing the capacity and safety of existing roads; adding extra lanes to freeways; expanding the park-and-ride program; and expanding the Metro Transit bus system. Three more components have mean scores of less than moderately important but still between 2.5 and 2.99, indicating that they are thought to be important (the natural break on a scale of 1 to 4 is 2.5). They are: developing a commuter/light rail system; expanding the Metro Commuter Services program; and building new freeways. One system component – developing more bicycle commuting routes - has an average score of less than 2.5 indicating that, on average, it is thought not to be important.

### Ways to pay for increased highway construction

Residents were asked what they think is the best way to pay for increasing the amount of highways constructed (Table 4.03). They were limited to one choice of a list of nine potential funding mechanisms, but were given the opportunity to write in their own preferred method if it was not listed. Increasing the gas tax is the most preferred funding mechanism (29 percent of residents support this), followed by adding a half-cent sales tax in the seven-county metro area (20 percent) and shifting money from other state programs (18 percent). All other funding mechanisms have 10 percent or less support among residents. Seven percent of residents think that additional highway construction should not be funded.

### Ways to pay for expanding the transit system

Residents were asked what they think is the best way to pay for expanding the transit system (Table 4.04). They were limited to one choice of a list of nine potential funding mechanisms, but were given the opportunity to write in their own preferred method. Allowing gas tax revenue to be used for transit is the most popular funding option, with 25 percent of all residents indicating that as the best way to pay for expanding the transit system. Adding a half-cent sales tax in the metro area is supported by 19 percent, and shifting money from other state programs is supported by 15 percent of residents. Seventeen percent of residents think that the transit system should not be expanded and six percent think that rider fares should be increased.

Increasing rider fares was not listed as one of the original nine funding mechanisms. The rationale for not including it as a choice stems from Metro Transit studies that show any further increase in fares would result in decreased ridership and decreased overall funding despite the increase in fares. However, six percent of all survey respondents wrote in "increase rider fares."

**Table 4.01: Quality ratings for components of the transportation system in the Twin Cities metro area**

| Component: | Percent of those with opinions on that component saying that the quality is: Very poor | Poor | Fair | Good | Very Good | Don't know/no opinion |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Highways/freeways: design | 14 | 22 | 34 | 26 | 4 | 1 |
| Highways/freeways: maintenance | 2 | 9 | 35 | 44 | 11 | 1 |
| Highways/freeways: number of lanes | 17 | 35 | 31 | 15 | 2 | 1 |
| | | | | | | |
| Bus service within Minneapolis and St. Paul | 7 | 12 | 22 | 42 | 18 | 39 |
| Bus service in the suburbs | 20 | 33 | 21 | 21 | 5 | 42 |
| | | | | | | |
| Commuter bicycle routes within Minneapolis and St. Paul | 5 | 14 | 28 | 36 | 18 | 60 |
| Commuter bicycle routes in the suburbs | 15 | 23 | 26 | 25 | 12 | 59 |

2003 n = 654

**Table 4.02: How important are each of the following programs for meeting the Twin Cities metro area's long-range transportation needs?**

| Component: | Percent of people indicating that programs as being _____ important | | | | | Mean rating[1] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Not at all | Some what | Moder-ately | Very | Don't know/no opinion | |
| Optimizing the capacity and safety of existing roads | 2 | 13 | 17 | 64 | 4 | 3.48 |
| Adding extra lanes to freeways | 6 | 13 | 22 | 57 | 2 | 3.36 |
| Expanding the park-and-ride/express bus program | 2 | 19 | 30 | 38 | 11 | 3.16 |
| Expanding the Metro Transit bus system | 5 | 22 | 28 | 36 | 10 | 3.04 |
| Developing a commuter/light-rail system | 16 | 17 | 16 | 45 | 6 | 2.96 |
| Expanding the Metro Commuter Services program for car and van pooling | 7 | 22 | 27 | 22 | 22 | 2.82 |
| Building new freeways | 17 | 24 | 27 | 27 | 5 | 2.67 |
| Developing more bicycle commuting routes | 22 | 28 | 20 | 11 | 19 | 2.25 |

2003 n = 654

[1] The mean rating is an average score assigned on a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 = Not at all important, 2 = Somewhat important, 3 = Moderately important and 4 = Very important. Those people who had no opinion were not included in the mean rating.

**Table 4.03: If you were going to increase the amount of highways constructed, what would be the best way to pay for it?**

| Best way to pay: | Percent of all people indicating that as the best way to pay for increased highway construction: |
|---|---|
| Increase the gas tax | 29 |
| Add a half-cent sales tax in the 7-county metro area | 20 |
| Shift money from other state programs | 18 |
| Increase license tab fees | 10 |
| Would not fund additional highway construction | 7 |
| Increase the automobile sales tax | 4 |
| Increase property taxes | 3 |
| Tolls* | 3 |
| Increase state income taxes | 2 |
| Gambling revenue* | 1 |
| Taxes on cigarettes and/or alcohol* | 1 |
| Use existing money better* | 1 |
| Other* | 1 |

2003 n = 645

* volunteered responses

**Table 4.04: If you were going to expand the transit system, what would be the best way to pay for it?**

| Best way to pay: | Percent of all people indicating that as the best way to pay for expanding the transit system: |
|---|---|
| Allow gas tax revenue to be used for transit | 25 |
| Add a half-cent sales tax in the 7-county metro area | 19 |
| Would not expand the transit system | 17 |
| Shift money from other state programs | 15 |
| Increase rider fares* | 6 |
| Increase the automobile sales tax | 5 |
| Increase license tab fees | 4 |
| Increase state income taxes | 4 |
| Increase property taxes | 3 |
| Gambling revenue* | 1 |
| Other* | 1 |

2003 n = 635
* volunteered responses

# Section 5: Housing Choices

## Selected Findings

- Half of all adults in the region have lived in their current residence for six or fewer years. The region has a fairly mobile population.
- Two-thirds of all residents indicate that they live in either an older suburb (30 percent) or a growing suburb (36 percent). Eighteen percent live in an older city neighborhood, nine percent in a rural area, four percent in a small city and three percent in a very urban or downtown setting.
- Primary reasons for having moved from one type of area to another type of area in the past include job relocation (27 percent), buying a house and desiring a bigger house/lot/land (16 percent each).
- Twenty-one percent of residents think they may move from one type of area to another type of area in the next five years.
- As with previous moves, job-related reasons are the top reason that would precipitate a move to a new area (for those intending to move). Attractiveness of the area was the second-most-common reason given for the intention to move areas in the next five years. Other reasons for the potential move include affordable housing, more space, school concerns and retirement.

## Discussion

### Home ownership and type of residence

Four of every five adult residents own the home in which they live (Table 5.01). This percentage has been relatively constant, rising slightly in the past five years from 78 percent to 84 percent. Nearly 80 percent live in single-family homes, with another 10 percent in attached housing with fewer than five units. Census 2000 data indicate that 77 percent of all residents of the seven-county metro area live in owner-occupied housing. The difference between Census figures and the data reported from this study is partially due to the exclusion of residents under age 18 in this study's data set, and a sampling bias that tends not to include more transient residents.

### How long people have lived in their current home

Half of all adults have lived in their current home for six or fewer years (Table 5.03). The average length of residence is 12 years. Eleven percent of all adults have lived in their current residence for 30 or more years.

### The type of area where people currently live

The area where people indicated they live was self-selected from a choice of six areas: a rural setting; a small city or town; a growing suburb; an older suburb; an older city neighborhood; and a very urban or downtown setting. The region is composed of areas that incrementally become less urban and more rural in nature as the distance from the urban core increases, with the very urban/downtown setting area representing the urban core, followed in order by older city neighborhoods, older suburbs, growing suburbs, small cities/towns, and rural areas.

Table 5.04 shows that two-thirds of all residents indicate that they live in either an older suburb (30 percent) or a growing suburb (36 percent). Eighteen percent live in an older city neighborhood, nine percent in a rural area, four percent in a small city or town and three percent in a very urban or downtown setting. This question was also asked in 1999 and 2000 and found similar results.

### Movement between areas in the past

Within the region, migration trends can be examined by looking at where people currently live and where they moved from in the past (Table 5.05). Approximately 51 percent of metro adults moved from one type of area to another type of area when they last moved.

A geographic pattern is apparent when looking at the movement to the current area from where people used to live. Generally, people who have changed areas tended to move out from the next incrementally urban area. For example, eighty-nine percent of those people currently living in rural areas originally moved from another area, and the majority of that group moved from a growing suburb. Fifty-two percent of those people currently living in a growing suburb moved from another area, with the greatest amount (35 percent) of that group coming from an older suburb. Forty-eight percent of those people currently living in an older suburb moved from another area, with the majority coming from an older city neighborhood. However, the trend reverses for those people who have moved into an older city neighborhood or very urban area, with a majority in each of those areas coming from the suburbs.

Respondents were asked to describe why they moved to their current area from a different area. Their responses were then categorized and are shown in Table 5.06. Primary reasons for having moved to their current area from a different type of area include job relocation (27 percent), buying a house (16 percent), and desiring a bigger house/bigger lot (16 percent).

### Expected movement between areas over the next five years

Twenty-one percent of metro adults expect to move to a new type of area within the next five years (Table 5.07). Older city neighborhoods have the greatest percent of residents (35 percent) thinking that they might move to a new area, with nearly two-thirds indicating that they would move to the suburbs. However, the data in this table is particularly broad due to the small number of respondents representing each of the areas (a product of the fact that only 21 percent of all respondents thought they might move). The table is useful for discerning general trends but the actual percentages could vary dramatically. A much larger number of study participants would be needed to more accurately forecast where people might move in the next five years.

Respondents were asked to describe why they might move from their current area to a new area (Table 5.08). As with previous moves, job-related reasons are the top reason that would precipitate a move to a new area (for those intending to move). Attractiveness of the area was the second most common reason given for the intention to move areas in the next five years. Other reasons for the potential move include affordable housing, more space, school concerns and retirement.

### Table 5.01: Do you own or rent your residence?

| | 1998 Percent | 1999 Percent | 2000 Percent | 2001 Percent | 2003 Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Own | 78 | 78 | 83 | 81 | 84 |
| Rent | 22 | 22 | 17 | 19 | 16 |

2003 n = 734

### Table 5.02: What type of residence do you live in?

| | 1998 Percent | 1999 Percent | 2000 Percent | 2001 Percent | 2003 Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Single-family home | 76 | 78 | 76 | 78 | 79 |
| Attached housing (townhome, duplex, triplex or fourplex)[1] | 10 | 9 | 11 | 10 | 10 |
| Apartment (five or more units)[1] | 12 | 10 | 11 | 10 | 5 |
| Condominium or co-op | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| Mobile home | 1 | 1 | 1 | < 1 | 1 |
| Other | < 1 | < 1 | < 1 | < 1 | 1 |

2003 n = 665

[1] Attached housing was a new category in 2003; apartments were defined as five or more units. Prior to 2003, the studies defined apartments as 3 or more units and also included co-ops within that category.

### Table 5.03: How many years have you lived in your current residence?

| Years in current residence: | 2003 |
|---|---|
| Less than 5 years | 40 % |
| 5 to 9 years | 21 % |
| 10 to 19 years | 21 % |
| 20 to 29 years | 7 % |
| Over 30 years | 11 % |
| | |
| Maximum | 80 years |
| Mean (average) | 12 years |
| Median (50% above and below) | 6 years |

2003 n = 731

### Table 5.04: What best describes the area in which you live?

| Area in which respondent lives: | 1998 Percent | 1999 Percent | 2000 Percent | 2002[1] Percent | 2003 Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A rural setting | Not asked | 7 | 6 | 10 | 9 |
| A small city or town | | 7 | 9 | 10 | 4 |
| A growing suburb | | 34 | 34 | 35 | 36 |
| An older suburb | | 27 | 29 | 24 | 30 |
| An older city neighborhood | | 18 | 16 | 14 | 18 |
| A very urban or downtown setting | | 6 | 5 | 7 | 3 |

2003 n = 665

[1] Data from the 2002 Rural Area Study, based on a sample of 400 metro area residents.

**Table 5.05: When you last moved, did you move from a different type of area than where you currently live? If so, what type of area did you move from?**

| Percent of people who moved to a new type of area when they last moved | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 51 % | | | | | | | | |
| | | | **Where they moved from**<br>*Percent of those who moved from another area to current area* | | | | | |
| **Currently live in:** | **Percent who currently live in this area** | **Percent in this area who moved from other area** | Rural setting | Small city or town | Growing suburb | Older suburb | Older city neigh-borhood | Very urban or downtown setting |
| Rural setting | 9 | 89 | | 5 | 54 | 13 | 18 | 10 |
| Small city/town | 4 | 60 | 13 | | 43 | 18 | 19 | 7 |
| Growing suburb | 36 | 52 | 6 | 12 | | 35 | 25 | 22 |
| Older suburb | 30 | 48 | 4 | 12 | 23 | | 51 | 10 |
| Older city neighborhood | 18 | 34 | 1 | 8 | 38 | 30 | | 23 |
| Very urban or downtown setting | 3 | 29 | < 1 | < 1 | 84 | < 1 | 16 | |

2003 n = 731 for part 1, n = 334 for part 2

**Table 5.06: Reasons given for moving to their current area from a different area**

| Reason | Percent of those who moved giving that reason |
|---|---|
| Job related | 27 |
| Bought a house | 16 |
| More space - bigger house/lot or land | 16 |
| More affordable | 8 |
| Escape violence and crime | 6 |
| Nature - to be near natural resources | 5 |
| New construction - to get a newly built home | 5 |
| School concerns | 4 |
| Attractiveness of the area | 2 |
| Family - close to family or friends | 2 |
| Other | 9 |

2003 n = 163

Note: This was an open-ended question. Responses were categorized for analysis.

**Table 5.07: Do you expect to move to a new type of area within the next five years?**

| Percent of people who expect to move to a new type of area within the next five years: | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 21 % | | | | | | | | |
| **Currently live in:** | **Percent who currently live in this area** | **Percent in this area who think they will move within five years** | **Where they think they will move to** *Percent of those who think they will move from current area to new area* | | | | | |
| | | | Rural setting | Small city or town | Growing suburb | Older suburb | Older city neigh-borhood | Very urban or downtown setting |
| Rural setting | 9 | 22 | | < 1 | 4 | 5 | 91 | < 1 |
| Small city/town | 4 | 11 | < 1 | | 38 | < 1 | < 1 | 62 |
| Growing suburb | 36 | 14 | 30 | 15 | | 13 | 6 | 36 |
| Older suburb | 30 | 21 | 31 | 19 | 42 | | 7 | 1 |
| Older city neighborhood | 18 | 35 | 18 | 17 | 33 | 31 | | 1 |
| Very urban or downtown setting | 3 | 24 | < 1 | 13 | < 1 | 16 | 71 | |

2003 n = 635 for part 1, n = 132 for part 2

**Table 5.08: Reasons given for potentially moving to a new type of area within five years**

| Reason | Percent of those who may move giving that reason |
|---|---|
| Job related | 25 |
| Attractiveness of the area | 14 |
| More space - bigger house/lot or land | 9 |
| More affordable | 9 |
| School concerns | 8 |
| Retirement | 8 |
| Nature - to be near natural resources | 5 |
| Buy a house | 3 |
| New construction - to get a newly built home | 3 |
| Downsizing/simplifying | 3 |
| Family - close to family or friends | 2 |
| Escape congestion | 2 |
| Other | 8 |

2003 n = 80

# Section 6: Government Services

## Selected Findings

- Residents made little distinction when asked about the degree to which services provided by different levels of government affect their lives. Five out of seven governmental service levels had an average score of about 6 on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being "not at all" and 10 being "completely."
- Residents believe that most government services should be paid for through a mix of user fees and taxes at the local, county, regional and state level. For six services, a majority of people think that state taxes should pay for them. Those services are highway construction, preserving open space, environmental restoration, assisting the poor through shelters and food, assisting the poor through subsidized housing, and education. A majority think that local taxes should pay for police and fire protection. No other service had a majority indicating one specific revenue source.

## Discussion

### How government services affect people's lives

Residents were asked to indicate the degree to which seven different government services affect their lives, using a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being "not at all" and 10 being "completely" (Tables 6.01 – 02). Results indicate that residents do not differentiate the effects of different levels of government services. They gave equal scores to city services, county services, state services, regional wastewater services and regional park system services. Each of these services had an average score of about 6 on the scale of 1 to 10. Neighborhood board programs had an average score of about 4. Regional transit services had the lowest average score (3.5 on the 10-point scale).

### Who should pay for different government services?

Residents were asked to indicate who should pay for 14 different government services (Table 6.03). Five revenue sources were offered and any combination of sources could be chosen for each of the services. The revenue sources were user fees, local taxes, county taxes, regional taxes and state taxes. People think that most government services should be paid for through a mix of user fees and taxes at the local, county, regional and state level. For six services, a majority of people think that state taxes should pay for them. Those services are highway construction, preserving open space, environmental restoration, assisting the poor through shelters and food, assisting the poor through subsidized housing, and education. A majority think that local taxes should pay for police and fire protection. No other service had a majority indicating one specific revenue source. The percentage of people supporting funding through user fees is highest for transit, hospitals, public utilities and economic development in growing areas.

**Table 6.01: The degree to which different governmental service providers affect your life**

| Reason | Average score, on a scale of 1 to 10 (1 = "Not at all" and 10 = "Completely") |
|---|---|
| Neighborhood board programs | 3.87 |
| City services | 6.40 |
| County services | 6.00 |
| Regional transit services | 3.46 |
| Regional wastewater treatment | 6.03 |
| Regional parks and trails | 6.23 |
| State services | 6.11 |

2003 n = 632

**Table 6.02: The degree to which different governmental service providers affect your life, by type of area where you live**

| Government service: | Average effect-on-life score by type of area where people live | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Rural setting | Small city or town | Growing suburb | Older suburb | Older city neighbor-hood | Very urban or downtown setting |
| City services | 5.27 | 6.06 | 5.93 | 6.87 | 7.19 | 6.09 |
| Regional parks and trails | 4.66 | 6.52 | 6.18 | 6.36 | 6.74 | 7.00 |
| State services | 6.29 | 6.12 | 5.89 | 5.94 | 6.70 | 6.61 |
| Regional wastewater treatment | 4.29 | 6.03 | 5.70 | 6.66 | 6.63 | 5.06 |
| County services | 6.38 | 5.85 | 5.72 | 6.25 | 6.12 | 5.07 |
| Neighborhood board programs | 4.64 | 3.46 | 3.58 | 3.69 | 4.38 | 4.50 |
| Regional transit services | 3.01 | 3.28 | 2.85 | 3.50 | 4.58 | 6.01 |

2003 n = 632

**Table 6.03: Who should pay for different government services?**

| Service | Percent indicating that service should be funded through _____: Those who benefit (fees) | Local taxes | County taxes | Regional taxes | State taxes |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Highway construction | 14 | 15 | 22 | 26 | **77** |
| Environmental restoration | 13 | 23 | 31 | 32 | **62** |
| Assisting the poor - subsidized housing | 13 | 22 | 32 | 25 | **59** |
| Education | 15 | 40 | 24 | 18 | **59** |
| Assisting the poor - shelters/food | 11 | 29 | 34 | 27 | **56** |
| Preserving open space | 12 | 27 | 34 | 35 | **53** |
| Police | 6 | **61** | 39 | 17 | 27 |
| Fire protection | 11 | **58** | 34 | 18 | 23 |
| Transit | 29 | 17 | 20 | 39 | 43 |
| Parks | 22 | 36 | 44 | 37 | 41 |
| Hospitals | 24 | 19 | 35 | 32 | 37 |
| Economic development in older areas | 19 | 35 | 29 | 31 | 37 |
| Economic development in growing areas | 22 | 33 | 29 | 30 | 33 |
| Public utilities such as sewer and water | 24 | 45 | 33 | 27 | 17 |

2003 n = 636

Note: Shaded cells indicate a majority of residents identify that source as an appropriate funding source. Respondents could indicate more than one funding source for each government service, so totals do not equal 100 percent.

# Section 7: Perceptions of Environmental Quality

## Selected Findings

- Two-thirds of residents think that the air quality in the Twin Cities is good or very good. Air quality in their own neighborhood is thought to be better than in the metro in general, with four out of five residents indicating that the air quality in their own neighborhood is good or very good.
- Seventy-one percent of all residents rate the quality of drinking water in their home as good or very good.
- Residents rate the water quality of the St. Croix River and the region's lakes as being between fair and good. They rate the water quality of the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers as being between poor and fair.

## Discussion

### Perceptions of air and drinking water quality

Two-thirds of residents think that the air quality in the metro area as a whole is good or very good (Table 7.01). For the air quality in their neighborhood, 85 percent of all residents think that it is good or very good.

Looking at the average rating for neighborhood air quality and drinking water quality for groups of residents based on the type of area where they live yields some interesting results. With one exception, the less urban the area, the higher the average rating for neighborhood air quality. The average neighborhood air quality as indicated by rural residents is 4.70 on a five-point scale, with 1 being "very poor" and 5 being "very good." The average air quality rating then drops to 4.52 for small cities and towns, 4.33 for growing suburbs, 4.29 for older suburbs, and bottoms out at 3.80 for older city neighborhoods. Very urban residents, on the other hand, reporting a local neighborhood air quality average rating of 4.30.

Seventy-one percent of residents think that the quality of their drinking water at home is good or very good (Table 7.01). Twenty percent think it is fair, and eight percent think that it is poor or very poor. As with neighborhood air quality, an inverse relationship between degree of urbanization and perceived water quality exists – the more urban a place is, the lower the perceived quality. Again, residents of very urban areas reverse this trend, rating their water quality higher than older city neighborhoods.

### Perceptions of the quality of lakes and rivers in the area

Residents were asked to rate the quality of the Mississippi, Minnesota and St. Croix Rivers, as well as the region's lakes overall, suburban swimming lakes, and the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes (Table 7.2).

On a scale of 1 (very poor) to 5 (very good), respondents gave the Mississippi River a mean rating of 2.59 (between poor and fair), and the Minnesota River, 2.68. Respondents rate the water quality of the St. Croix at an average of 3.42, between fair and good.

Overall, residents rated lakes in the region an average of 3.19, in the "fair" range. Swimming lakes in the suburbs were rated slightly higher, at 3.31, and the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes slightly lower, at 3.06.

### Table 7.01: Perceived quality of air and drinking water

| | Percent of respondents indicating the quality as being: | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Very poor | Poor | Fair | Good | Very Good | Don't know/ no opinion | Mean rating[1] |
| Air quality in your neighborhood | < 1 | 1 | 11 | 44 | 41 | 2 | 4.26 |
| Air quality in the Twin Cities metro area as a whole | < 1 | 5 | 24 | 52 | 15 | 3 | 3.79 |
| The quality of drinking water at your home | 2 | 6 | 20 | 38 | 33 | 1 | 3.94 |

2003 n = 669

[1] The mean rating is an average score assigned on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 = very poor, 2 = poor, 3 = fair, 4 = good, and 5 = very good. Those people who had no opinion were not included in the mean rating.

Note: In previous years a satisfaction scale was used, so comparison between years cannot be drawn.

### Table 7.02: Perceived quality of rivers and lakes in the metro area

| | Percent of respondents indicating the quality as being: | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Very poor | Poor | Fair | Good | Very Good | Don't know/ no opinion | 2001[1] Mean rating[2] | 2003 Mean rating[2] |
| Mississippi River | 9 | 35 | 33 | 12 | 2 | 9 | 2.39 | 2.59 |
| Minnesota River | 8 | 23 | 35 | 10 | 2 | 22 | 2.48 | 2.68 |
| St. Croix River | 2 | 9 | 31 | 30 | 7 | 21 | 3.28 | 3.42 |
| The lakes (overall for the entire metro) | 3 | 13 | 43 | 28 | 3 | 10 | 3.13 | 3.19 |
| Swimming lakes in the suburbs | 4 | 9 | 30 | 32 | 5 | 20 | n/a | 3.31 |
| Minneapolis Chain of Lakes | 4 | 13 | 40 | 20 | 3 | 20 | n/a | 3.06 |

2003 n = 659

[1] This question was first asked in 2001.

[2] The mean rating is an average score assigned on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 = very poor, 2 = poor, 3 = fair, 4 = good, and 5 = very good. Those people who had no opinion were not included in the mean rating.

# Section 8: Metropolitan Council

## Selected Findings

- About three-quarters of adult residents in the metro area have heard of the Metropolitan Council. Recognition of the Council has increased steadily since 1999, when 58 percent had heard of the Council.
- TV news is the most common source of information about the Council for residents of the area, followed by the Star-Tribune newspaper, local community newspapers and radio talk shows.
- A majority of residents think that the Council is doing a fair job in addressing and resolving regional issues. Twenty-eight percent think that the Council is doing a good or very good job. Eighteen percent think that the Council is doing a poor or very poor job. These rating have not changed significantly since the last time people were asked this question in 2001.
- All nine Council programs listed in the survey are thought to be at least moderately important by a majority of residents. Five of the nine programs are thought to be very important by a majority of residents. They are: monitoring water quality; wastewater treatment; the overall planning effort to accommodate the region's growing population; Metro Transit; and the regional parks program.

## Discussion

### Knowledge of the Metropolitan Council

Seventy-four percent of adult residents in the metro area have heard of the Metropolitan Council. Recognition of the Council has increased steadily since 1999, when 58 percent had heard of the Council (Table 8.01).

Over the last 12 months, TV news has been the most common source of information about the Council for residents of the area (58 percent indicated it as a source of information), followed by the Star-Tribune newspaper (52 percent), local community newspapers (33 percent) and radio talk shows (27 percent). The totals are greater than 100 percent because residents often indicated that they had heard of the Council from more than one information source (Table 8.02).

Thirty percent of all residents visited one of the Council Web sites (for example, metrocouncil.org and metrotransit.org) in the last 12 months (Table 8.03). This is a increase from 2001, when eight percent had visited the Web site. The increase is due, at least in part, to the difference in the way the question was asked in 2003 from previous studies. In 2003, respondents were given a list of several Council sites and were asked to check each site they had visited. In previous surveys, respondents were simply asked if they had visited the Council's Web site. It is possible that in past years, respondents who had visited the Metro Transit site may have missed the fact that Metro Transit is part of the Council.

The most widely visited Council Web site is Metro Transit, with 19 percent of all residents indicating that they had visited that site in the last 12 months. Sixteen percent of residents had visited the regional parks Web site. Less than five percent of residents had visited the light-rail transit site, the Environmental Services site, the Metro Commuter Services site, the regional data/Census site, or the general Council site (Table 8.04).

## Rating of the Metropolitan Council

A slight majority (54 percent) of residents think that the Council is doing a fair job in addressing and resolving regional issues. Twenty-six percent think that the Council is doing a good job and two percent think the Council is doing a very good job. Fourteen percent think that the Council is doing a poor job and four percent think that the Council is doing a very poor job (Table 8.05). These rating have not changed significantly since the last time people were asked this question in 2001.

## Rating of importance of Council programs

Program importance was rated by respondents using a four-point scale of "not at all important," "somewhat important," "moderately important" and "very important." The words used represent common social-psychology measurement intervals for importance, where the distance between "not at all" and "somewhat" is considered to be the same as the distance in importance between "moderately" and "very." Consequently, the use of this scale allows for importance to be measured in multiple ways. Most simply, a program can be thought of as either being important or not important, with the split occurring between the second and third point on the scale. Alternatively, the full scale can be used to differentiate between the degrees of importance.

Using a simple measurement of important/not important, all nine Council programs studied were thought to be important by at least 60 percent of residents.

Using the full scale provides additional insight. Five of nine Council programs examined are thought to be very important by a majority of residents. Seventy-nine percent of all residents think that the Council program on monitoring water quality is very important, followed by: the wastewater treatment program (77 percent); the overall planning effort to accommodate the region's growing population (68 percent); Metro Transit (53 percent); and the regional parks program (52 percent). Four programs had less than 50 percent of all residents indicating that they are very important. They are: encouraging development of housing for all income groups (45 percent of residents indicate this is a very important program); grants to cities and suburbs for transportation projects (40 percent); coordinating development across neighboring communities (37 percent); and grants to cities and suburbs to revitalize their city centers (25 percent).

### Table 8.01 Have you heard of the Metropolitan Council?

| Percent indicating that they have heard of the Metropolitan Council, by survey year: | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2003 |
| 58 | 58 | 62 | 68 | 74 |

2003 n = 739

### Table 8.02 Information sources used to learn more about the Metropolitan Council

| Information source used to learn more about the Metropolitan Council | Of those survey respondents who had heard of the Council, the percent who had used this information source to learn more about the Council |
|---|---|
| TV news | 58 |
| Star-Tribune newspaper | 52 |
| Local community newspapers | 33 |
| Radio talk shows | 27 |
| Pioneer Press newspaper | 25 |
| Friends | 13 |
| Internet sites | 12 |
| Public meetings | 5 |
| Other sources | 11 |

2003 n = 495
Note: People could indicate more than one information source so totals are greater than 100%.

### Table 8.03 Have you visited the Metropolitan Council Web site?

| Percent indicating that they had visited a Council Web site, by survey year: | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2003[1] |
| n/a | 4 | 6 | 8 | 30 |

2003 n = 683
[1] See the discussion section on this topic for an explanation of the large increase since 2001.

### Table 8.04 Which of the following Council Internet sites have you used in the last 12 months?

| Council Internet site | Percent of all people indicating that they visited this site in the last 12 months |
|---|---|
| Metro Transit (bus) site | 19 |
| Regional Parks site | 16 |
| Hiawatha LRT site | 4 |
| Environmental Services site | 4 |
| Metro Commuter Services site | 3 |
| Regional data/Census information site | 2 |
| General information about the Council site | 2 |

2003 n = 683
Note: people could visit more than one Council site.

**Table 8.05: Impression of the job the Metropolitan Council is doing in addressing and resolving regional issues**

| | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2003 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ***Percent of total population who had heard of the Metropolitan Council*** | ***58%*** | ***58%*** | ***62%*** | ***68%*** | ***74%*** |
| **Of the population subgroup who had heard of the Metropolitan Council, the percent indicating that the Council was doing a ____ job:** | | | | | |
| Very good job | 5 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 2 |
| Good job | 31 | 27 | 17 | 26 | 26 |
| Fair job | 51 | 50 | 46 | 52 | 54 |
| Poor job | 7 | 14 | 23 | 12 | 14 |
| Very poor job | 6 | 7 | 12 | 6 | 4 |

2003 n = 460

**Table 8.06: How important is each of the following Council programs for maintaining the quality of life in the Twin Cities metro area?**

| Council Program | Percent of all respondents[1] indicating a program as being _____ important | | | | Percent who did not know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Not at all | Somewhat[2] | Moderately[2] | Very | |
| Monitoring water quality | 1 | 3 | 13 | 79 | 3 |
| Wastewater treatment | 1 | 5 | 13 | 77 | 4 |
| Planning to accommodate the region's growing population | 3 | 7 | 18 | 68 | 3 |
| Metro transit | 5 | 15 | 24 | 53 | 3 |
| Regional parks and trails | 1 | 13 | 31 | 52 | 3 |
| Encouraging development of housing for all income groups | 10 | 18 | 25 | 45 | 3 |
| Grants to cities and suburbs for transportation projects (roads, bicycle and pedestrian paths) | 6 | 14 | 37 | 40 | 3 |
| Coordinating development across neighboring communities | 6 | 20 | 32 | 37 | 4 |
| Grants to cities and suburbs for revitalizing their city centers | 9 | 25 | 36 | 25 | 4 |

2003 n = 639

[1] All survey participants were asked this question, even if they had not previously known of the Metropolitan Council.

[2] A four-point scale such as this can be simplified into two groups (those who generally think the program is not important and those who think the program is important). The split-point would be between "somewhat important" and "moderately important." When looking at the data in this manner, all programs are though to be important by at least 60% of all residents.

### Table 8.07: Have you visited a regional park or trail in the last 12 months?

| Percent who had visited a regional park or trail in the last 12 months |
|---|
| 71 |

2003 n = 666

### Table 8.08: Reasons for not visiting regional parks and trails

| Reasons for not visiting | Percent of people not visiting a regional park or trail who stated this reason: |
|---|---|
| My local parks meet my needs | 39 |
| I am too busy | 34 |
| No interest in visiting | 25 |
| The parks and trails are too far away | 15 |
| I have no one to go with me | 11 |
| I'm physically not able | 10 |
| Do not feel safe in regional parks | 10 |
| Do not feel safe on regional trails | 10 |
| No facilities geared towards my interests | 10 |
| It's too expensive | 9 |
| They are too crowded | 7 |
| I was unaware of their existence | 6 |
| I don't have transportation to get to them | 3 |
| Other reasons | 7 |

2003 n = 183

Note: People could indicate more than one reason, so totals are greater than 100%.

# Section 9: Demographics, Job Characteristics, Technology

## Discussion

The information presented in this section was used primarily for internal purposes such as checking for response/non-response bias, determining weights for data analysis, and for use in other Council reports. Consequently, the data are not interpreted for the general reader.

**Table 9.01: County of residence**

| County | 2000 census Percent | 1998 Percent | 1999 Percent | 2000 Percent | 2001 Percent | 2003 Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Anoka | 11 | 12 | 13 | 13 | 11 | 9 |
| Carver | 2 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 2 |
| Dakota | 13 | 15 | 14 | 15 | 14 | 12 |
| Hennepin | 44 | 42 | 41 | 40 | 44 | 47 |
| Ramsey | 20 | 19 | 19 | 17 | 16 | 18 |
| Scott | 3 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Washington | 7 | 8 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 8 |

2003 n = 713

Note: The study percentages reflect the distribution of adults (age 18+) only. The Census percentages were adjusted to also reflect distribution of adults only.

**Table 9.02: Gender**

| Gender | 2000 census Percent | 1998 Percent | 1999 Percent | 2000 Percent | 2001 Percent | 2003 Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Male | 49 | 48 | 49 | 45 | 48 | 49 |
| Female | 51 | 52 | 51 | 55 | 52 | 51 |

2003 n = 737

Note: The study percentages reflect the distribution of adults (age 18+) only. The Census percentages were adjusted to also reflect distribution of adults only.

**Table 9.03: Age**

| Age category | 2000 census Percent | 1998 Percent | 1999 Percent | 2000 Percent | 2001 Percent | 2003 Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 18 to 24 | 13 | 14 | 12 | 12 | 12 | 12 |
| 25 to 34 | 21 | 17 | 19 | 17 | 18 | 21 |
| 35 to 44 | 24 | 25 | 28 | 28 | 24 | 24 |
| 45 to 54 | 19 | 22 | 21 | 22 | 24 | 19 |
| 55 to 64 | 10 | 11 | 9 | 11 | 12 | 10 |
| 65 and older | 13 | 11 | 10 | 9 | 11 | 14 |

2003 n = 737
Note: The study percentages reflect the distribution of adults (age 18+) only. The Census percentages were adjusted to also reflect distribution of adults only.

**Table 9.04: Did you have a paying job last week, other than being self-employed?**

| | 1998 Percent | 1999 Percent | 2000 Percent | 2001 Percent | 2003 Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 79 | 78 | 84 | 77 | 73 |

2003 n = 660

**Table 9.05: Of those who are employed but not self-employed, how many jobs they had last week**

| | 1998 Percent | 1999 Percent | 2000 Percent | 2001 Percent | 2003 Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| One full-time job | 76 | 80 | 80 | 78 | 82 |
| One part-time job | 22 | 17 | 19 | 21 | 8 |
| Both a FT job and PT job | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 8 |
| Multiple PT jobs | <1 | 1 | <1 | 1 | 2 |

2003 n = 466

**Table 9.06: For those who are employed, but not self-employed – What situation best describes where you work?**

| | 1998 Percent | 1999 Percent | 2000 Percent | 2001 Percent | 2003 Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Always at a place other than my home | 88 | 82 | Not asked | 87 | 91 |
| Always at home | 1 | 1 | | 3 | <1 |
| Work at home some days | 11 | 17 | | 10 | 8 |
| • Average number of days working at home per week | 1.3 days | 1.4 days | | 1.5 days | 1.9 days |

2003 n = 465; n = 38 for average days worked at home

**Table 9.07: Are you currently self-employed?**

| | 1998 Percent | 1999 Percent | 2000 Percent | 2001 Percent | 2003 Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Percent of respondents who are self-employed | 16 | 16 | n/a | 14 | 11 |

2003 n = 629

**Table 9.08: Work arrangements for those who are self-employed**

| Percent of all adult workers: | 1998 Percent | 1999 Percent | 2000 Percent | 2001 Percent | 2003 Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Those who are self-employed FT or PT** | **16** | **16** | **n/a** | **14** | **11** |
| • and work at home | 7 | 6 | n/a | 6 | 5 |
| • and work at a site away from home | 9 | 10 | n/a | 8 | 6 |
| **Self-employed PART-TIME** | **n/a** | **n/a** | **n/a** | **6** | **4** |
| • and work at home | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 2 |
| • and work at a site away from home | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 2 |
| **Self-employed FULL-TIME** | **n/a** | **n/a** | **n/a** | **8** | **7** |
| • and work at home | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 3 |
| • and work at a site away from home | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 4 |

2003 n = 68

### Table 9.09: Do you have a personal computer in your home?

| | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2003 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Percent with a personal computer at home | 66 | 76 | 79 | 82 | 81 |

2003 n = 667

### Table 9.10: Access to information on the Internet

| | 1998 Percent | 1999 Percent | 2000 Percent | 2001 Percent | 2003 Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **No access to the Internet** | **26** | **19** | **10** | **10** | **10** |
| | | | | | |
| Access from both work and home | 26 | 35 | 46 | 42 | 55 |
| Access through home only | 19 | 23 | 22 | 28 | 22 |
| Access through work only | 19 | 14 | 13 | 12 | 8 |
| Access through friend/family only | 5 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 |
| Access through the library only | <1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| Access through other means | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| Access through school only | 2 | 2 | 1 | <1 | <1 |

2003 n = 665

# Appendix: Survey Questions

**Q1 How would you rate the Twin Cities as a place to live as compared to other metropolitan areas in the nation?** *(check one)*

☒ A much better place in which to live
☒ A slightly better place in which to live
☒ A slightly worse place in which to live
☒ A much worse place in which to live

**Q2 In your opinion, what do you think is the SINGLE most important problem in the Twin Cities metro area today?**

1. _____

**Q3 Do you have any suggestions as to how this problem can best be dealt with?**

_____

**Q4 What other important problems are facing Twin Cities residents today? Please list up to four additional problems in their order of importance:**

2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

**Q5 Over the past year, do you think the quality of life in the Twin Cities has gotten better, stayed the same, or gotten worse?** *(check one)*

☒ Gotten better
☒ Stayed the same
☒ Gotten worse

**Q6 In your opinion, what do you think is the single most <u>attractive</u> feature of the Twin Cities metro area today?**

_____

# Questions on traffic and transit in the Twin Cities

**Q7 Over the last twelve months, do you think the traffic congestion in the Twin Cities metro area has increased, stayed the same, or decreased?** *(check one)*

☒ Increased
☒ Stayed the same
☒ Decreased

**Q8 How do you normally get to work - do you work at home, drive alone, car-pool or van-pool, get dropped off, take the bus, walk, bike, or get there some other way?** *(check one)*

☒ Do not work
☒ Work at home
☒ Drive alone
☒ Car-/van-pool/dropped off
☒ Ride bike
☒ Walk
☒ Take the bus
☒ Some other way

**Q9 If you normally work at a location outside of your home, please write in the number of minutes it currently takes you to get from your home to your place of work. Then estimate and write in the number of minutes it took you to get from your home to your place of work one year ago.**

_____ minutes to get to work from my home now

_____ minutes to get to work from my home a year ago

**Q10 Did you move to your current residence so that you or someone else in your household could make their trip to work shorter or more convenient?**

☒ No ⋁ *Please go to the next question*
☒ Yes

9 Did you move to reduce traffic congestion, to get closer to work, to be near transit or the bus, or for some other reason listed below? *(check all that apply)*

☒ Moved to reduce traffic congestion
☒ Moved to get closer to work
☒ Moved to be near transit or the bus
☒ Moved to be able to walk or bike to work
☒ Moved to be able to car-pool/van-pool
☒ Moved for other reasons related to commuting

**Q11 How likely is it that you will move in the future to make the trip to work shorter or more convenient: very likely, somewhat likely, not very likely, or not at all likely?** *(check one)*

☒ Very likely
☒ Somewhat likely
☒ Not very likely
☒ Not at all likely

**Q12 With regard to your current job, did you choose to take that job in part because it makes your trip to work shorter or more convenient?**

☒ No ⋁ *Please go to the next question*
☒ Yes

**9 Which of the following played a role in choosing your current job?** *(check all that apply)*

☒ Chose job to reduce traffic congestion
☒ Chose job to get closer to home
☒ Chose job to be near transit or the bus
☒ Chose job to be able to walk or bike from home
☒ Chose job to be able to car-pool/van-pool
☒ Chose job for other reasons related to commuting

**Q13 How likely is it that you will choose a future job based in part on making the trip to work shorter or more convenient - very likely, somewhat likely, not very likely, or not at all likely?** *(check one)*

☒ Very likely
☒ Somewhat likely
☒ Not very likely
☒ Not at all likely

**Q14 In the last twe lve months, have you heard of or read anything about Metro Commuter Services, a service that matches potential van-pool or car-pool riders and offers them preferred parking and promotes using the bus and bicycling?**

☒ No
☒ Yes ⋁ **If "Yes," have you used Metro Commuter Services in the last twelve months?**

☒ No
☒ Yes

**Q15 Please rate the quality of the following components of the transportation system in the Twin Cities metro area.**

| Transportation system component: | Very poor | Poor | Fair | Good | Very good | Don't know / no opinion |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Highways/freeways: design | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |
| Highways/freeways: maintenance | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |
| Highways/freeways: number of lanes | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |
| Bus service within Minneapolis and St. Paul | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |
| Bus service in the suburbs | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |
| Commuter bicycle routes within Minneapolis and St. Paul | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |
| Commuter bicycle routes in the suburbs | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |

**Q16 What transportation programs would best meet the Twin Cities metro area's long-range transportation needs? For each of the programs listed below, please indicate how important that program is for meeting the area's long-range transportation needs.** *(check the box that corresponds to your importance rating)*

| Transportation Program | Not at all important | Somewhat important | Moderately important | Very important | Don't Know/ No Opinion |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Adding extra lanes to freeways | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |
| Building new freeways | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |
| Developing a commuter/light-rail system | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |
| Developing more bicycle commuting routes | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |
| Expanding the Metro Transit bus system | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |
| Expanding the park-and-ride/express bus program | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |
| Expanding the Metro Commuter Services program for car and van pooling | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |
| Optimize the capacity and safety of existing roads | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |

**Q17 Currently highway construction is funded primarily from the gas tax, the sales tax on automobiles, and the fees from automobile license tabs. If you were going to increase the amount of highways constructed, what would be the best way to pay for it?** *(Check one only)*

- ☒ Increase property taxes
- ☒ Increase license tab fees
- ☒ Increase the gas tax
- ☒ Increase state income taxes
- ☒ Shift money from other state programs
- ☒ Add a half-cent sales tax in the 7-county metro area
- ☒ Increase the automobile sales tax
- ☒ Add a payroll tax
- ☒ Would not fund additional highway construction
- ☒ Other: _____

**Q18 Currently the transit system is partially subsidized from the automobile sales tax and from general state revenues. If you were going to expand the transit system, what would be the best way to pay for it?** *(Check one only)*

- ☒ Increase property taxes
- ☒ Increase license tab fees
- ☒ Add a payroll tax
- ☒ Increase state income taxes
- ☒ Shift money from other state programs
- ☒ Add a half-cent sales tax in the 7-county metro area
- ☒ Increase the automobile sales tax
- ☒ Allow gas tax revenue to be used for transit
- ☒ Would not expand the transit system
- ☒ Other: _____

## Now some questions about housing choices

**Q19 Do you own or rent your residence?**

☒ Own ☒ Rent

**Q20 What type of residence do you live in?** *(check one)*

☒ Single family home
☒ Attached housing (townhome, duplex, triplex or fourplex)
☒ Condominium or co-op
☒ Apartment (5 or more units)
☒ Mobile home
☒ Other (Describe): _____

**Q21 How would you describe the area where you currently live? Please check the description that best matches the area where you live.** *(check one)*

☒ A rural setting
☒ A small city or town
☒ A growing suburb
☒ An older suburb
☒ An older city neighborhood
☒ A very urban or downtown setting

**Q22 How many years have you lived in your current residence?**

_____ Years

**Q23 When you last moved, did you move from a different type of area than where you currently live?**

☒ No ♠ *Please skip to Question 24*
☒ Yes

9 What type of area did you move from? *(check one)*

☒ A rural setting
☒ A small city or town
☒ A growing suburb
☒ An older suburb
☒ An older city neighborhood
☒ A very urban or downtown setting

Briefly describe why you moved to a new type of area:

_____

**Q24 Do you expect to move to a new type of area within the next five years?**

☒ No ♠ *Please skip to Question 25*
☒ Yes

9 What type of area do you want to move to? *(check one)*

☒ A rural setting
☒ A small city or town
☒ A growing suburb
☒ An older suburb
☒ An older city neighborhood
☒ A very urban or downtown setting

Briefly describe why you would move to a new type of area:

_____

# Questions about government services

**Q25 Please indicate the degree to which the different levels of government service providers affect your life, using a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being "Not at all" and 10 being "Completely".** *(Circle the number that best corresponds to your answer)*

| | Degree to which _____ government services affects me | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Government service level | Not at all | | | | | | | | | Completely |
| Neighborhood board programs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| City services | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| County services | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| Regional transit services | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| Regional wastewater treatment | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| Regional parks and trails | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| State services | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

**Q26 Who should pay for different types of government services? For each service listed, please indicate who should pay for that service.** *(check all that apply)*

| | | Shared by all (taxes) at the _____ level | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Service | Those who benefit (fees) | Local | County | Regional | State |
| Fire protection | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |
| Police | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |
| Hospitals | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |
| Education | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |
| Highway construction | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |
| Transit | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |
| Public utilities such as sewer and water | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |
| Parks | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |
| Preserving open space | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |
| Environmental restoration | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |
| Assisting the poor – subsidized housing | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |
| Assisting the poor – shelters/food | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |
| Economic development in growing areas | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |
| Economic development in older areas | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |

# Questions about the environment and parks

**Q27 What is your perception of the air and drinking water quality in your neighborhood and the region?**

| | Very poor | Poor | Fair | Good | Very good | Don't know / no opinion |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Air quality in your neighborhood | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |
| Air quality in the Twin Cities metro area as a whole | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |
| The quality of the drinking water at your home | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |

**Q28 What is your perception of the water quality of the following rivers and lakes in the metro area?**

| | Very poor | Poor | Fair | Good | Very good | Don't know / no opinion |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mississippi River | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |
| Minnesota River | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |
| St Croix River | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |
| The lakes (overall for the entire metro) | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |
| Swimming lakes in the suburbs | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |
| The Minneapolis Chain of Lakes | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |

**Q29 Were you aware that there is a regional system of parks and trails in the Twin Cities metropolitan area?**

☒ No

☒ Yes ⋁ How many times have you visited these parks or trails in the last 12 months? _____ times

**Q30 We are interested in identifying the reasons why people might not visit regional parks and trails. Listed below are several potential reasons why you might not have visited a regional park or trail. Please check all of the reasons that apply to you.**

☒ I DID visit a regional park or trail in the last 12 months *(please skip to next question)*

☒ No interest in visiting
☒ I'm physically not able
☒ Do not feel safe in regional parks
☒ Do not feel safe on regional trails
☒ I don't have transportation to get to them
☒ I have no one to go with me
☒ No facilities geared towards my interests
☒ The parks and trails are too far away
☒ I was unaware of their existence
☒ They are too crowded
☒ I am too busy
☒ It's too expensive
☒ My local parks meet my needs
☒ Other: (please describe:) _____

# Questions about the Metropolitan Council

**Q31 Have you heard of the Metropolitan Council?** *(check one)*

☒ No ⋁ *Please skip to Question 34*
☒ Yes

**Q32 In the last twelve months, which of the following information sources did you use to learn more about the Metropolitan Council?** *(check all that apply)*

☒ TV news
☒ Pioneer Press newspaper
☒ Star-Tribune newspaper
☒ local community newspapers
☒ Radio talk shows
☒ Public meetings
☒ Friends
☒ Internet sites
☒ None of these
☒ Other information sources: (describe): _____

**Q33 What is your impression of the job the Metropolitan Council is doing in addressing and resolving regional issues?** *(check one)*

☒ Doing a Very Good job
☒ Doing a Good job
☒ Doing a Fair job
☒ Doing a Poor job
☒ Doing a Very Poor job

**Q34 The Metropolitan Council owns, manages and/or does regional planning for a variety of regional programs. Please indicate how important the program is for maintaining the quality of life in the Twin Cities metro area.**

| Council Program | Not at all important | Somewhat important | Moderately important | Very important | Don't Know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Metro Transit (bus system) | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |
| Wastewater treatment | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |
| Regional parks and trails | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |
| Monitoring water quality | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |
| Planning to accommodate the region's growing population | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |
| Coordinating development across neighboring communities | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |
| Grants to cities and suburbs for transportation projects (roads, bicycle and pedestrian paths) | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |
| Grants to cities and suburbs for revitalizing their city centers | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |
| Encouraging development of housing for all income groups | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ |

## Questions about your use of computers

**Q35 Do you have a personal computer in your home?**

☒ No
☒ Yes

**Q36 Do you have access to information on the Internet at work, at home or somewhere else?** *(check one)*

☒ No access to the Internet
☒ Yes – at work only
☒ Yes – at home only
☒ Yes – both at work and at home
☒ Yes – at a friend's or family members only
☒ Yes – at the library only
☒ Yes – at school only
☒ Yes, other (SPECIFY) _____

**Q37 The Metropolitan Council's Web site includes service sites such as Metro Transit bus route information, carpooling sign-up with Metro Commuter Services, a regional parks locator service and several other sites of potential interest. Which of the following Council Internet sites have you used in the last 12 months?** *(check all that apply)*

☒ Metro Transit (bus) site
☒ Regional data/Census information site
☒ Regional Parks site
☒ Environmental Services site
☒ Metro Commuter Services (car-/van-pooling)
☒ Hiawatha LRT site
☒ General information about the Council sites
☒ DID NOT VISIT ANY COUNCIL INTERNET SITES

## Now some questions about you!

*The following questions ask for some personal information. The information you provide is completely confidential – it can not be related directly to your name or mailing address.*

**Q38 Did you have a paying job last week, other than being self-employed?**

☒ No ⋁ *If "No," please skip to Question 41*
☒ Yes

**Q39 How many jobs did you have last week?** *(check one)*

☒ One full-time job
☒ One part-time job
☒ Both a full-time and a part-time job
☒ Multiple part-time jobs

**Q40 What situation best describes where you work?** *(check one)*

☒ Always at a place other than my home,
☒ Always at home,

or…
☒ Work at home some days

9 On average, how many DAYS do you do work at home each week?

_____ Average # of days working at home

**Q41 Are you currently self-employed? If you are, please also indicate your working arrangement.** *(check one)*

☒ No, I am not self-employed
☒ Yes, I am self-employed part-time and work at home
☒ Yes, I am self-employed part-time and work at a site away from my home
☒ Yes, I am self-employed full-time and work at home
☒ Yes, I am self-employed full-time and work at a site away from my home

**Q42 Are you male or female?**

☒ Male
☒ Female

**Q43 What year were you born?**

_____ Year

**Q44 What county and city do you live in?**

Please write the name of your county here: _____

Please write the name of your city here: _____

**Q45 How many adults and children live in your household?**

_____ Adults age 18 and over (including yourself)

_____ Children age 17 or younger

**Q46 One last question: If you could live anywhere in the world, where would you live and why would you want to live there?**

---

*Thank you for completing this survey. If you have any additional comments, please write them in the space below.*

***Thank you for completing this survey.***

***Please return the survey in the postage-paid return envelope provided.***