

2008

Metropolitan Survey

Transportation remains a top concern

For the seventh time in eight years, Twin Cities residents ranked transportation as the region's top public concern in 2008, according to the Metropolitan Council's annual residents survey.

When asked about "the single most important problem" facing the region, 36 percent of respondents cited transportation-related issues. Among the specific concerns raised in the survey were adequacy and condition of metro roads, traffic and congestion, amount of construction activity, and the need for more transit options.

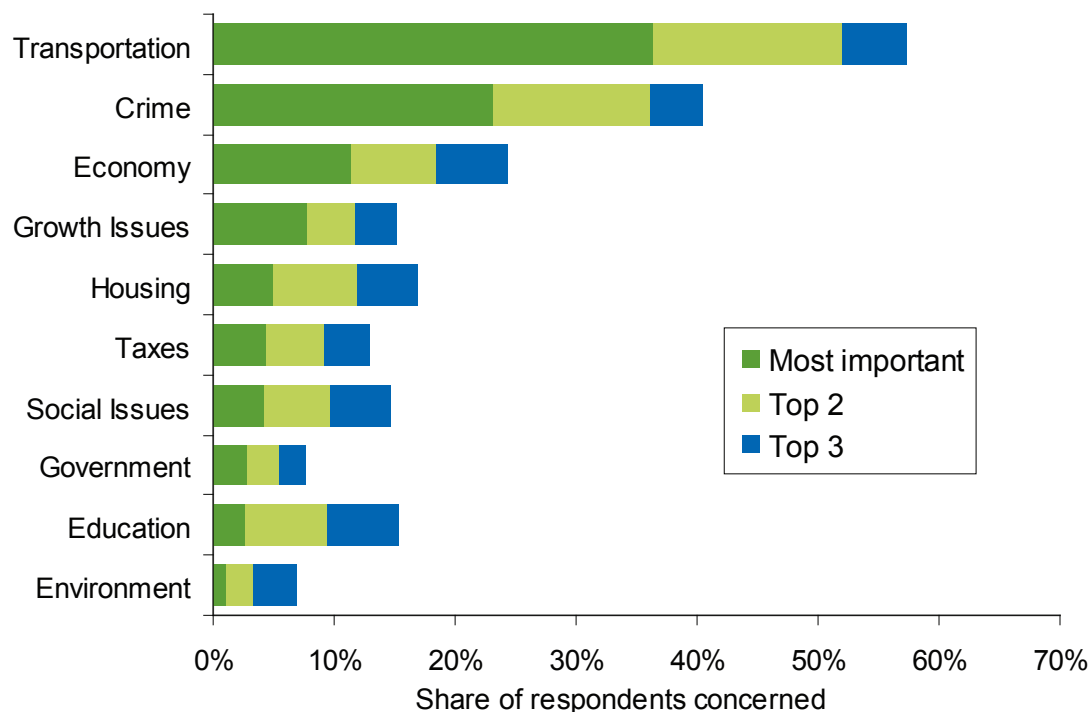
Crime was cited as a major problem by 23 percent of respondents. Specifically, respondents noted gang activity and youth crimes, drug-related crime, and the availability and use of guns as key issues.

As in 2007, transportation was a more dominant concern in the suburbs and rural areas than in the central cities, where crime was the greatest concern.

Concerns about the regional economy spiked in 2008: 11 percent of metro-area residents noted the economy as their greatest concern. Past Metro Residents Surveys – in 2001 and 1990-92 – showed similar spikes in the economy as a regional issue.

The survey was conducted during October and November 2008. Nearly 1,500 residents participated.

Top 10 concerns in the metro area - 2008



The Metropolitan Council's survey asks about the "single most important problem," but also about "other important problems" facing the region. Fifty-seven percent of those surveyed included transportation among their top three concerns for the metro area. Forty percent said crime ranked among their top three concerns. A more in-depth report of survey findings is available online at www.metrocouncil.org/Reports/

Alternative commutes

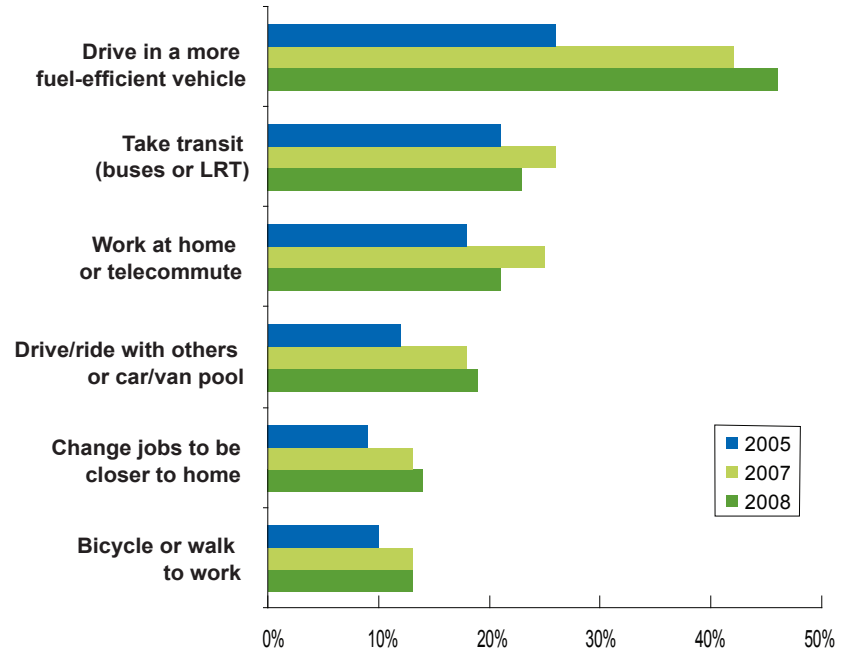
With transportation issues, namely traffic and congestion, ranking consistently among the top concerns for the region, many metro-area residents indicated interest in commuting alternatives to reduce transportation costs. The 2008 survey shows metro residents are considering or choosing these options more at slightly higher rates than in 2007.

Nearly half, or 46 percent, indicated they already drive a more fuel efficient vehicle or are very likely to do so, up from 42 percent a year ago and 34 percent in 2006.

Thirty-two percent of metro residents are already commuting via one of several traffic-reducing options, which include taking transit, working at home or telecommuting, driving or riding with others in a van or car pool, changing jobs to be closer to home, bicycling or walking to work, and moving closer to work. Another 24 percent are very likely to try one of the options.

The 2008 survey was conducted as gas prices were falling from record-high levels.

Commuters “very likely” to try alternatives



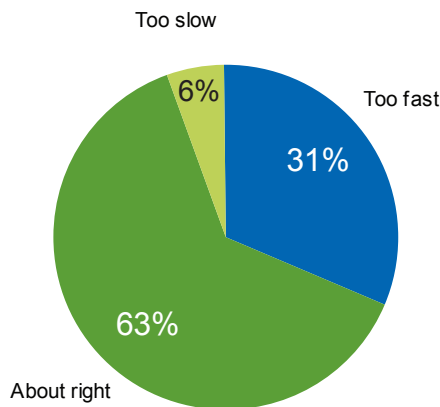
Growth pace is ‘just right’

Metro area residents’ concerns regarding the rate of growth have decreased in recent years, coinciding with other data indicating major cutbacks in new residential and nonresidential construction.

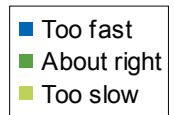
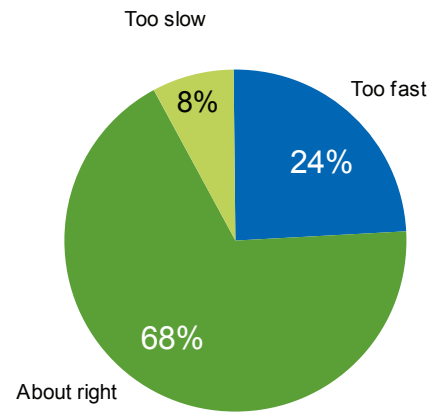
In 2008, most residents said the region as a whole is growing at the right pace, with only 31 percent of survey respondents saying the region was growing too fast. When asked whether their local communities were growing too fast, most respondents also agreed that the pace of growth was appropriate. Those who expressed greater concern regarding growth in their areas live in the region’s rural areas and developing suburbs.

The Council forecasts that the region’s population is on track to grow by nearly 1 million more people between 2000 and 2030, increasing from 2.6 million in 2000 to 3.6 million by 2030. The Council forecasts regional growth to help communities plan for local and regional services and infrastructure.

Public opinion on growth in Twin Cities region



Public opinion on growth in their community



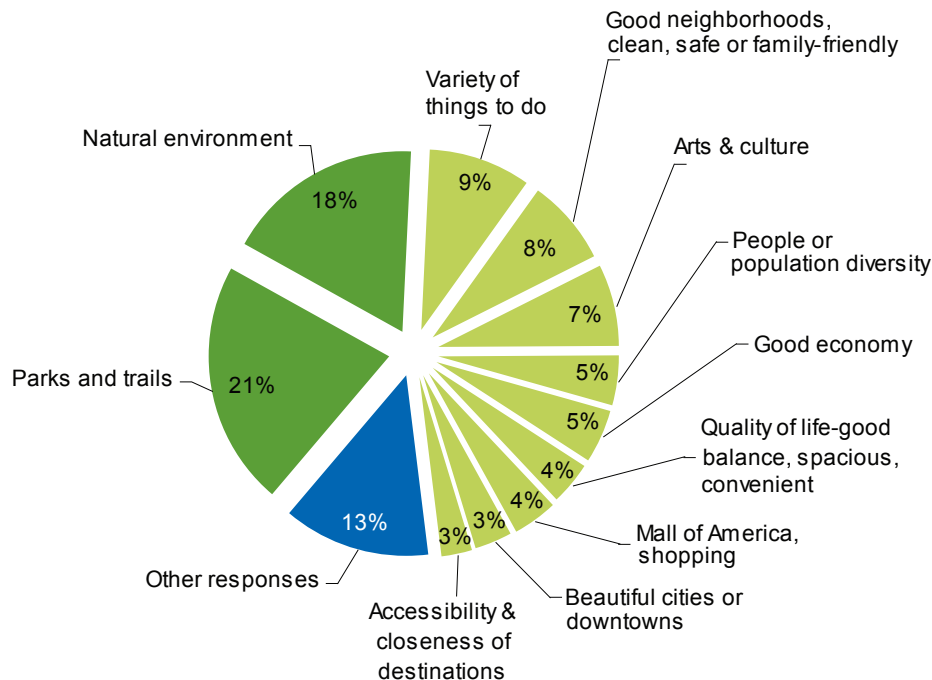
Green spaces attract residents

The region's vast network of parks and trails attract millions of visitors per year, and metro residents agree these natural amenities are among the area's most attractive features.

The regional park system boasts about 53,000 acres or 82 square miles, about the combined size of the communities of St. Paul, Roseville, and Maplewood. Favorite parks include the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes, the Como Zoo and Conservatory, and Minnehaha Falls.

Residents also enjoy the lively downtown areas, good neighborhoods, and the variety of activities available in the Twin Cities area, including arts and cultural activities, and shopping.

Region's most attractive feature

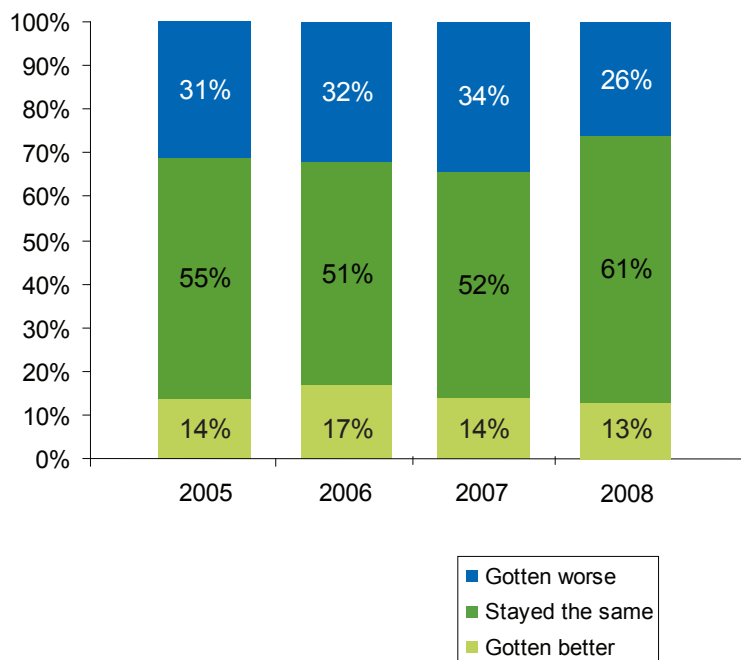


A great place to live

An overwhelming number of Twin Cities area residents – 96 percent of those surveyed in 2008 – said the region is a better place to live than other metropolitan areas. This is slightly higher than 2007 results.

In addition, 26 percent of those surveyed said the quality of life had declined over the previous year, a contrast from the 2007 survey where 34 percent of respondents indicated the quality of life had dropped.

Do you think the quality of life has changed in the past year?

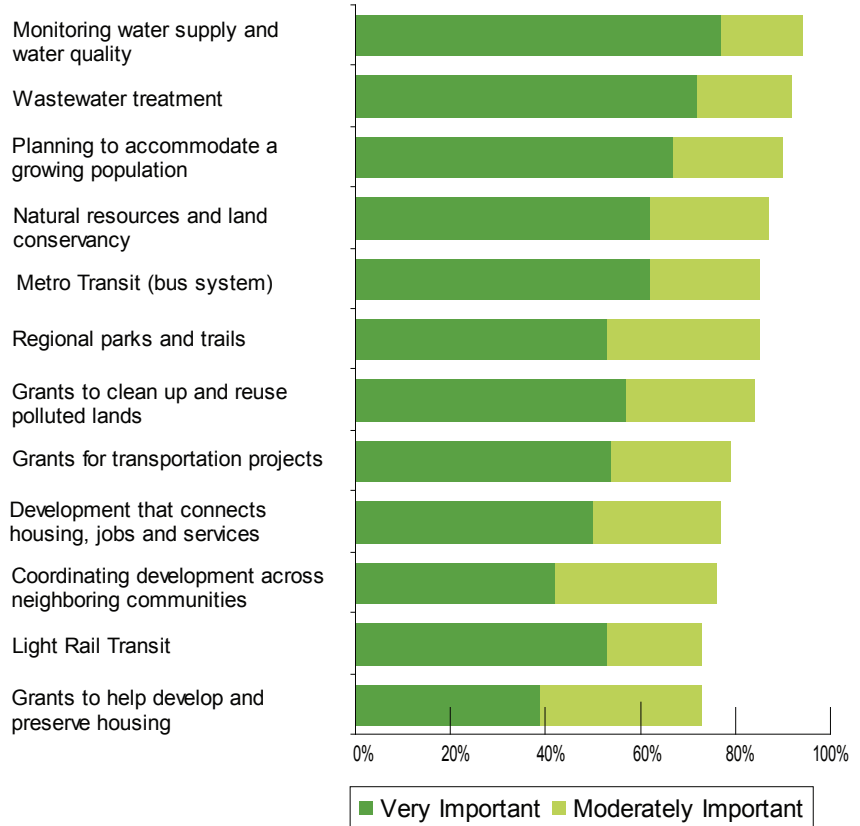


Council services enhance quality of life

More than 90 percent of residents noted the Metro Council's role in monitoring water supply and water quality, as well as its responsibility for treating wastewater (sewage), as moderately or very important to the region's quality of life. Also, for the second consecutive year, 90 percent of residents said the Council's regional planning efforts are important, followed closely by preserving natural resources.

Between 70 and 94 percent of surveyed residents evaluated every service provided by the Council as moderately or very important to the region's quality of life. From the regional parks and trails, to the transit system, to grant programs encouraging development and revitalization, residents agree the Metro Council's programs are a significant part of making the Twin Cities a great place to live and work.

Council programs considered very or moderately important

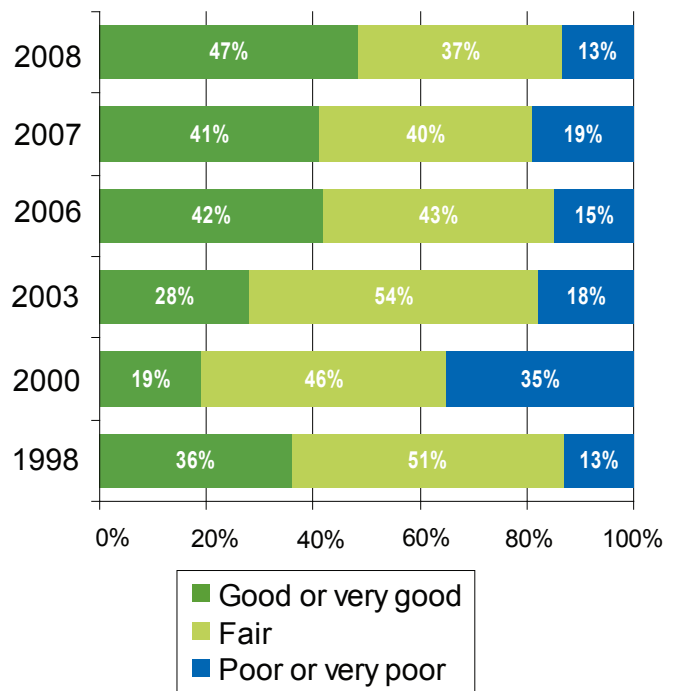


Council approval at all-time high

Three-quarters of residents can identify the Metro Council and its role, and nearly half of residents surveyed gave good or very-good ratings for the Metropolitan Council's performance – an all-time high.

The Metropolitan Council is the regional planning organization for the seven-county Twin Cities area. The Council runs the regional bus and light-rail system, collects and treats wastewater, coordinates regional water resources, plans regional parks and administers funds that provide housing opportunities for low- and moderate-income individuals and families. The Council board is appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the governor.

Public approval of Metropolitan Council performance



Methodology

Results are based on the responses of 1,495 participants, collected during October and November 2008 by Metropolitan Council research staff and Information Specialists Group, Inc. Central cities, suburban and rural residents were selected randomly and invited to participate in the Metro Residents Survey. Survey results reflect the demographic and geographic distribution of the region's adult population. Survey results have a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percent.