

Regional Report

2009

Metro Residents Survey

An examination of Minneapolis-Saint Paul metro residents' concerns and attitudes about the region

February 2010



Metropolitan Council

390 Robert Street North, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55101

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The mission of the Metropolitan Council is to develop, in cooperation with local communities, a comprehensive regional planning framework, focusing on transportation, wastewater, parks and systems, that guides the efficient growth of the metropolitan area. The Council operates transit and wastewater services and administers housing and other grant programs.

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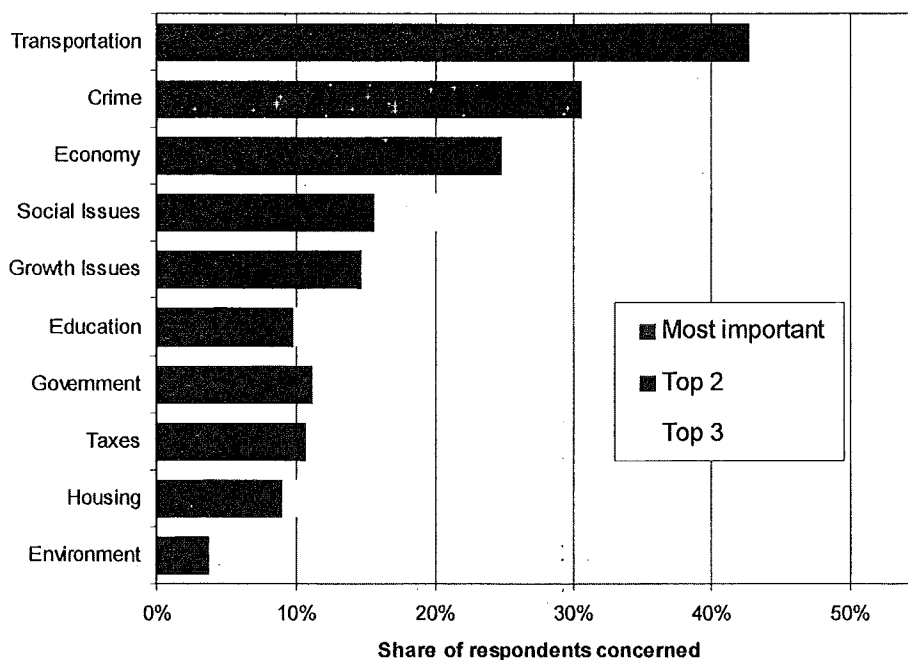
Quality of Life

- Positive feelings about the Twin Cities region have been consistent over three decades of Metropolitan Council surveys; 96 percent of residents said the region is a better or much better place to live than other metropolitan areas.
- When asked about the Twin Cities region's most attractive feature, 35 percent identified the region's parks, trails, lakes and natural environment. Other assets cited include arts and cultural opportunities (7 percent), people and population diversity (7 percent), beautiful cities and downtown areas (7 percent), good neighborhoods and neighborhood characteristics (7 percent), and other quality of life characteristics (6 percent). These results are fairly consistent over repeated, annual polls of the region's residents.

Issues Facing the Region

- Asked about issues facing the region, 29 percent named traffic congestion, road conditions, limited transit options or other transportation challenges as the region's single most important problem. Still, the incidence of transportation problems identification has trended downward for the past six years.

Overall concern: Top three problems identified, 2009



n=1337, confidence +/-3%

- This is a different way of looking at problems. Survey respondents identified a most important problem, as well as second and third additional problems.
- Respondents could list up to three problems, so the total will be greater than 100%.

- The Metro Residents Survey asks participants to name up to three major problems facing the region. This allows a broader scan of emerging regional concerns. As in past years, substantial pluralities of the public are concerned about transportation (50 percent) and crime (37 percent). However, the full set of opinions expressed was more diverse in 2009 than in the six preceding years.
- Foremost as an emerging concern is the economy: In 2009, 29 percent named the economy as a “top 3” concern. Concern over the regional economy recurs in tandem with national recessions. There was a similar level of worry during the recessions of 1992 and 2001.

Commuting Solutions

- The Twin Cities has an auto-dominated transportation environment: 78 percent of commuting workers drive alone. Drive-alone incidence is highest in rural areas (86 percent) and developing communities (85 percent) where vehicles slightly outnumber adult drivers.
- Survey participants were asked about the likelihood of trying cost-reducing commuting solutions. Fuel-efficient vehicles are the most popular cost-reducing solution: 41 percent of commuters said they are very likely to try a more fuel-efficient vehicle or have already switched to a more fuel-efficient vehicle.
- In 2009, 27 percent of commuters said they are very likely to try public transit or already use transit. The number of Twin Cities’ commuters who said they are very likely to try transit is larger than the number of commuters who currently take buses and LRT to work.

Residential Preference

- Five percent of survey respondents indicated they live in a rural setting; 8 percent in a small town; 32 percent in a growing suburb; 30 percent in an older suburb; 20 percent in a central cities neighborhood; and 5 percent in a very urban or downtown setting.
- One-quarter of Twin Cities’ residents said they would prefer to relocate or live in a different type of area.
- A trend of rural or small town preference is apparent. If all residents who said they preferred a rural setting actually lived in a rural setting, the region would experience a doubling of its rural population. The preference is problematic since greater population is what transforms rural areas and small towns into something else.

The Role of the Metropolitan Council

- Public approval of the Council’s performance in addressing regional issues is at a historical high point: 47 percent think that the Council is doing a good or very good job; 38 percent think the Council is doing a fair job; and 15 percent think the Council is doing a poor job or worse.

- Rural residents in the region and those who expressed pessimism about the region's quality of life are the most critical of the Council's performance.
- When Council programs and responsibilities are specifically listed, 9 out of 12 are considered "very important" to majorities of Twin Cities residents. The highest ratings went to water supply and quality monitoring (82 percent said very important) and wastewater treatment (76 percent said very important). Also enjoying a substantial public consensus: natural resources and land conservancy, planning to accommodate the region's growth, and the Metro Transit service network. These five programs received the highest overall importance scores in previous years as well.
- For some programs, perceived importance varies with geographic situation. For all programs, perceived importance is statistically associated with opinions of the Council's performance serving the region.

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Section 1: Introduction

The Metropolitan Council conducts the Metro Residents Survey to assess what residents think about the region's quality of life, leading regional problems and solutions, and the Council's portfolio of responsibilities. The survey provides public opinion measurement that the Council can use to make the case for regional solutions.

This report describes the findings of the 2009 Metro Residents Survey. The survey is an annual effort dating back to 1982. Many of the questions asked have been asked in past years and historical comparisons are provided.

Metro area residents were randomly selected for inclusion in the survey's geographically stratified sample. Survey data collection, via mail-returned survey questionnaires, online and telephone interviews, took place between October 16 and December 4, 2009. A complete discussion of the survey methodology is found in Section 6 of this report. The survey instrument is found in the Appendix.

Reading data in this report

The report is organized by topic. Each section features a summary of key findings, followed by a discussion of sub-topics within that section. Data tables are found in each section, after the discussion of findings.

Percentages are rounded to whole numbers; some tables may not add up to 100 percent. Not all respondents answered every question. The number of respondents answering any given question in 2009 is listed with each table and is noted as "n =."

Most results are reported through frequencies of responses and cross-tabulations. Segment analyses comparing public opinion in four geographic areas (central cities, developed suburbs, developing communities, and rural areas) are presented where results showed a meaningful difference between areas. Further analysis and survey datasets are available by contacting Todd Graham (651-602-1000) at the Metropolitan Council.

Section 2: Quality of Region

Key Findings

- Positive feelings about the Twin Cities region have been consistent over three decades of Metropolitan Council surveys; 96 percent of residents said the region is a better or much better place to live than other metropolitan areas.
- The Twin Cities region has many attractive features and amenities. A variety of these were mentioned by survey participants; 35 percent identified the region's parks, trails, lakes and natural environment. Other assets cited include arts and cultural opportunities (7 percent), people and population diversity (7 percent), beautiful cities and downtown areas (7 percent), good neighborhoods and neighborhood characteristics (7 percent), and other quality of life characteristics (6 percent). These results are fairly consistent over repeated, annual polls of the region's residents.
- There is continuing concern that the region's quality of life is slipping: 24 percent felt that the quality of life has gotten worse in the past year. As a follow-up, survey participants were asked about problems facing the region.
- Asked about issues facing the region, 29 percent named traffic congestion, road conditions, limited transit options or other transportation challenges as the region's single most important problem. Still, the incidence of transportation problems identification has trended downward for the past six years. The peak level of concern was in 2003.
- The Metro Residents Survey asks participants to name up to three major problems facing the region. This allows a broader scan of emerging regional concerns. As in past years, substantial pluralities of the public are concerned about transportation (50 percent) and crime (37 percent). However, the full set of opinions expressed was more diverse in 2009 than in the six preceding years.
- Foremost as an emerging concern is the economy: In 2009, 29 percent named the economy as a "top 3" concern. Concern over the regional economy recurs cyclically, in tandem with national recessions. There was a similar level of worry during the recessions of 1992 and 2001.
- Taxes as a concern has varied minimally over the past decade. However, in 2009, more residents (15 percent) identified government's function or effectiveness as a "top 3" concern. Among specific problems or complaints named by survey participants were: government spending, functional performance, politicians and political conduct, and stadium-building.
- A minority of Twin Cities residents (22 percent in 2009) disapprove of growth in their local community. This concern is down from peak levels in 2004-2006 as new construction and development activity have slowed dramatically.

Discussion

Survey participants were asked 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 compared to other metro areas

Positive feelings about the Twin Cities region have been consistent over three decades of Council surveys. The vast majority of Twin Cities residents (96 percent) consider this region a better place to live than other metropolitan areas. Most (53 percent) think that it is a “much better” place to live (Figure 1 and Table 2.01).

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

Survey participants were asked to indicate what they think is the most attractive feature of the Twin Cities metro area today. The question was open-ended; the survey did not provide a pre-set list of choices. Responses were coded into summary categories and the results are presented in Figure 2 and Table 2.03.

A combined 35 percent of residents think parks, trails, lakes or other aspects of the natural environment are the region’s most attractive feature (parks or trails, 22 percent; natural environment, 13 percent). Also highly rated were: arts and cultural opportunities (7 percent), people and population diversity (7 percent), beautiful cities and downtown areas (7 percent), good neighborhoods and neighborhood characteristics (7 percent), and other quality of life characteristics (6 percent).

The distribution of responses in 2009 was very similar to and consistent with the distributions found in recent years’ surveys (Table 2.03). Few significant changes are notable: More residents are indicating appreciation of the cities and downtown areas (7 percent). Also 5 percent named professional sports; specifically residents indicated excitement about the 2009 Vikings season, a new Twins ballpark, and a new stadium at the University of Minnesota.

Changes in the quality of life

More volatile than appreciation of the region is the perception of change: Is the quality of life holding steady or diminishing?

Metropolitan Council originally asked this question to measure the perceived seriousness of the region’s problems. However, the response pattern over time has been counter-cyclical to national economic health (Table 2.02). Response to this question may say more about perceived security or insecurity of the world beyond the Twin Cities. In 2009, most residents (64 percent) think the Twin Cities’ quality of life stayed the same; 24 percent think it worsened. The opinion of declining quality of life peaked during 2005-2007.

As a follow-up, survey participants were asked about problems facing the region. Over the past decade, substantial shares of the public have identified transportation or crime as the foremost major problems facing the region. Still, the full set of opinions expressed by survey participants is diverse.

Top issue facing the Twin Cities metro area

Residents were asked to identify the single most important problem facing the Twin Cities metro area today. They were then asked to suggest a solution to that problem.

Residents were also asked to list up to three other important problems facing the region. Each of these questions was open-ended, with survey respondents describing issues and solutions in their own words. For analysis, all open-ended responses were categorized. (See Table 2.04 for categories and sub-categories used to code responses.)

Transportation, which includes traffic congestion, road conditions, limited transit options, and related issues, was identified as the most important problem by 29 percent of survey participants.

Still, the incidence of transportation problems identification has trended downward for the past six years. The peak level of public concern was in 2003. Figure 3 and Table 2.05 provide a time-series perspective of the single most important problem in recent years.

Top issue by sub-regional area

To better understand local variations in public opinion, responses can be segmented by where respondents live. The 2009 Metro Residents Survey was designed to enable segment analysis for Minneapolis and St. Paul, developed suburbs, developing communities, and the remaining rural areas combined.

Table 2.06 shows opinions on the most important issues by sub-region. In 2009, responses were similar in all parts of the region. In all parts of the region, transportation, crime and economy were the first, second, and third problems of greatest concern to residents. As in past years, concern over transportation issues grows with distance from the central cities and, presumably, with time spent commuting.

Top three issues facing the Twin Cities metro area

The Metropolitan Council asks survey participants about the single most important problem, but also about second and third problems facing the Twin Cities. Identifying the “top 3” problems allows a broader survey of overall concern – the share of all residents who have an issue on their minds.

Traffic congestion and other transportation problems are still the leading concerns when problems are considered cumulatively. Fifty percent expressed concern about transportation problems in 2009 (Table 2.07 and Figures 4 and 5). Concern was substantial in all parts of the region: 56 percent majorities in developing communities identified transportation as a first, second or third issue; 46 percent in the central cities were concerned about transportation problems (Table 2.08).

Figure 6 shows a time series for traffic congestion, specifically, as one of the “top 3” problems facing the region. Traffic congestion began to emerge in the public consciousness in the late- 1990s. Measured time delays suffered by Twin Cities drivers

doubled between 1996 and 2000. Public concern about the issue followed suit, reaching a peak in Metropolitan Council's 2003 survey. The trend of public opinion since 2004 seems to indicate either an acceptance or recognition that congestion levels and travel times have reached equilibrium or are no longer worsening (Figure 6). Travel times have not significantly worsened the past eight years (see Section 3 of report).

Also notable in Figure 6 is the large share of residents who identify transportation as a regional issue without reference to traffic congestion. That is, respondents are naming transportation issues other than traffic congestion, or they are identifying transportation as a multi-faceted problem (extending beyond simply congestion), or in many cases they are identifying transportation generically (for example, with a one word answer: "transportation").

Other problems

Public concern over crime, as well as crime incidence, was very high in the 1990s. Like crime itself, the public concern persists. In 2009, 37 percent considered crime among the region's "top 3" problems.

Among emerging concerns – those mentioned more in 2009 than in past years – the economy was foremost on residents' minds: In 2009, 29 percent named the economy as a "top 3" concern. This is up significantly from 12 percent in 2007; and 24 percent in 2008. Concern over the regional economy recurs in tandem with national recessions. There was a similar level of worry during the recessions of 1992 and 2001.

Taxes as a concern varies minimally from year to year. Every year, 11 to 16 percent of Residents Survey participants comment on taxes (in 2009, 14 percent). However, in 2009 more residents (15 percent) identified government's function or effectiveness as a "top 3 concern." This could mark an emergent shift in public opinion. Among specific problems or complaints named by survey participants were: government spending, functional performance, politicians and political conduct, and stadium-building.

Growth and social issues were concerns for one in five residents. Most of these listed growth or social issues as second- or third-choice concerns.

Solutions to problems facing the Twin Cities area

Participating residents were asked to suggest potential solutions to their single most important problem. Solutions related to transportation problems are listed in Table 2.09. In coding the responses, Council researchers worked to identify the primary solution emphasized, or otherwise, the first solution mentioned.

Among Twin Cities residents most concerned about transportation issues, many suggested improving or increasing mass transit service (48 percent), or improving the road network (16 percent), or both (3 percent). Transit and roads are interdependent aspects of the problem. Respondents' detailed responses provide evidence of broad public understanding of the complex systems nature of transportation networks and mobility.

Among residents who suggested mass transit solutions, their solutions can be split into two sub-groups, with half recommending mass transit generally, and half indicating LRT or commuter trains specifically.

To resolve transportation issues, residents consistently suggest system solutions, rather than changing behavior or changing their own routines. However, elsewhere in this survey, many respondents did express interest in transit or car-pooling solutions (Section 3: Commuting Characteristics and Choices). Some of the suggestions for expanding or improving the transit system suggest a widespread, latent receptiveness of residents to transit service.

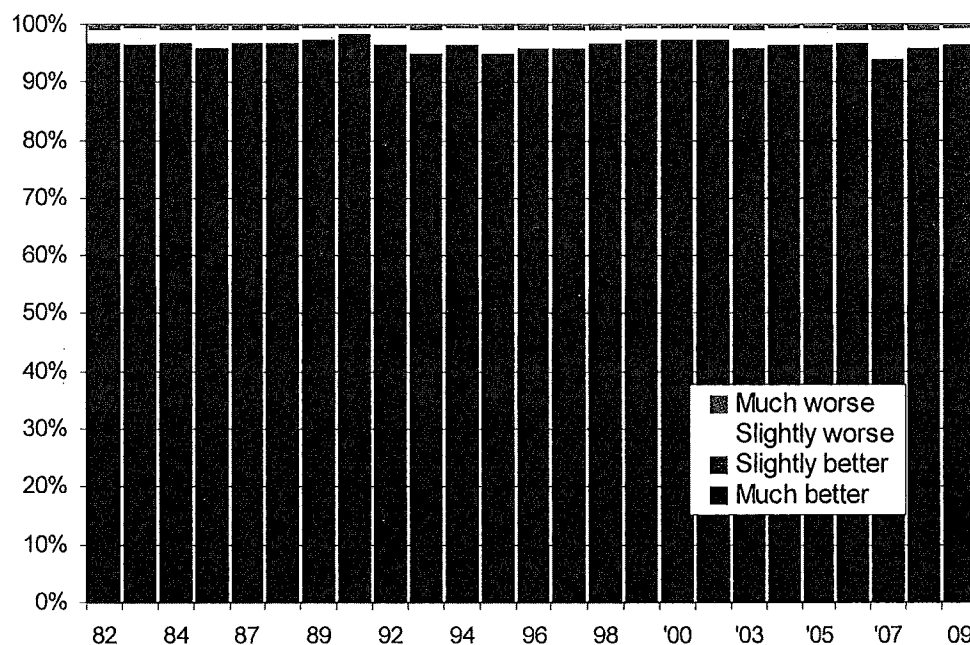
Perceptions regarding growth in the region and local communities

Seventy percent of the region's residents think the Twin Cities area, as a whole, is growing at about the right pace. Others indicate dissatisfaction: 25 percent think the Twin Cities area is growing too fast.

Participants were also asked about growth in their own local communities: 69 percent think local growth is happening at about the right pace; 22 percent think local growth is advancing too fast. Growth patterns remain a concern for a substantial minority in newer suburban communities on the developing edge of the region (Table 2.10).

Concern over local growth has moved in tandem with the boom and bust of new development activity (Figure 7). As a result, dissatisfaction is now at low ebb.

Figure 1: How would you rate the Twin Cities as a place to live, compared to other metro areas? 1982-2009



n=1427, confidence +/-3%

Table 2.01: How would you rate the Twin Cities as a place to live, compared to other metro areas? 2000-2009

	2000	2001	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
A much better place	47%	55%	47%	52%	48%	56%	52%	52%	53%
A slightly better place	50%	42%	49%	45%	48%	41%	42%	45%	43%
A slightly worse place	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%	3%	5%	3%	3%
A much worse place	<1%	<1%	1%	<1%	<1%	1%	1%	1%	<1%

n=1389, confidence +/-3%

Table 2.02: Over the past year, do you think the quality of life in the Twin Cities has gotten better, stayed the same, or gotten worse? 2003-2009

	2000/ 2001	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Gotten better	Not asked	15%	12%	14%	17%	14%	13%	12%
Stayed the same	Not asked	57%	64%	55%	51%	52%	61%	64%
Gotten worse	Not asked	28%	24%	31%	32%	34%	26%	24%

n=1394, confidence +/-3%

Table 2.03: What do you think is the single most attractive feature of the Twin Cities metro area today? 2005-2009

Most attractive feature:	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Parks and trails	23%	21%	26%	22%	22%
Natural environment	14%	13%	9%	18%	13%
Arts & culture	8%	10%	7%	7%	7%
People or population diversity	5%	5%	4%	5%	7%
Beautiful cities or downtowns	5%	4%	4%	3%	7%
Good neighborhoods, clean, safe or family-friendly	8%	6%	5%	8%	7%
Quality of life--good balance, spacious, convenient	2%	6%	7%	4%	6%
Professional sports	2%	2%	2%	1%	5%
Variety of things to do	7%	8%	8%	9%	4%
Mall of America, retail in the metro	7%	5%	5%	4%	4%
Good economy	4%	5%	5%	5%	3%
Accessibility & closeness of destinations	<1%	<1%	2%	3%	3%
Weather or climate	3%	2%	3%	2%	3%
Education	1%	2%	2%	3%	2%
Other positive responses	10%	12%	10%	7%	7%
Negative response given	1%	<1%	1%	<1%	1%

n=1291, confidence +/-3%

Figure 2: What do you think is the single most attractive feature of the Twin Cities metro area today? 2009

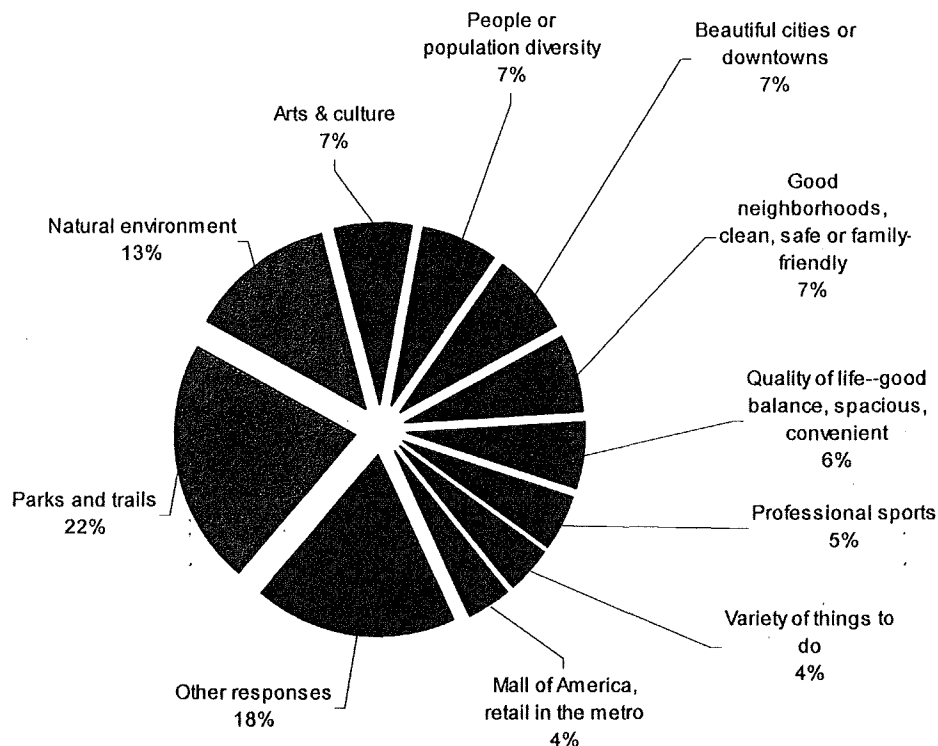


Table 2.04: What do you think is the single most important problem facing the Twin Cities metro area today? 2009

Single most important problem:	Percent	Single most important problem:	Percent
Transportation – Total	29.0%	Growth Issues – Total	6.4%
Traffic congestion	13.0%	Sprawl, outward growth	2.0%
Mass transit	7.4%	Immigration	1.6%
Transportation (general) – including road adequacy, maintenance	7.3%	Population, crowding, density	1.3%
Construction is too prevalent	1.0%	Infrastructure, public spaces	0.6%
Bicycle-related issues	0.2%	deterioration	0.6%
		Urban decay	0.3%
		Amenities and attractions	0.3%
		Not enough parks, open space	0.2%
Crime – Total	18.8%	Taxes – Total	5.0%
Crime (general)	14.9%	Taxes (general)	4.1%
Gangs	2.8%	Property taxes	0.9%
Drug related crime	0.4%		
Policing and criminal justice	0.3%	Education – Total	4.0%
Crimes by youth	0.2%	Education (general)	2.0%
		Finance, support of education	1.6%
Economy – Total	14.8%	Quality of education	0.4%
Unemployment, lack of jobs	11.4%		
Economy (general)	2.4%	Housing – Total	3.3%
Business climate	0.5%	Housing cost and affordable housing	1.8%
High cost of living	0.5%	availability	1.8%
		Foreclosure crisis, market instability,	
Social Issues – Total	7.8%	declining values	1.2%
Homeless, homelessness	1.9%	Housing (general)	0.2%
Welfare use, welfare abuse	1.2%		
Poverty and social disintegration	1.1%	Health care – Total	1.5%
Drug use (not including crime)	0.9%	Health care cost and access	0.9%
Community, social compact	0.5%	Health care (general)	0.6%
Discrimination or segregation	0.5%		
Minorities	0.4%	Environment – Total	1.4%
Abuse and family violence	0.3%	Pollution (general)	0.4%
Politeness, neighborly consideration	0.2%	Trash, litter, graffiti	0.4%
Youth problems	0.2%	Environment (general)	0.2%
Child rearing	0.2%	Air pollution	0.2%
		Water quality	0.2%
Government – Total	6.7%		
Government funding, spending	2.8%	Energy – Total	0.2%
Government (general)	1.2%	Energy prices, conservation	0.2%
Politics, politicians	1.1%		
Stadium issues	0.6%	Other	1.1%
Metropolitan Council	0.5%		
Federal government	0.2%	Total	100.0%
Minnesota's governor	0.2%		

n=1337, confidence +/-3%

Table 2.05: Single most important problem in the Twin Cities metro area, grouped into major categories, 2003 to 2009

Year	Transportation	Crime	Economy	Social	Growth	Taxes	Housing	Other*
2003	58%	13%	3%	5%	6%	3%	4%	8%
2004	49%	17%	2%	6%	12%	2%	4%	8%
2005	35%	26%	3%	9%	11%	3%	4%	9%
2006	33%	36%	1%	5%	11%	4%	2%	8%
2007	37%	32%	5%	6%	7%	3%	2%	8%
2008	36%	23%	11%	4%	8%	4%	5%	9%
2009	29%	19%	15%	8%	6%	5%	3%	15%

n=1337, confidence +/-3%

- Other problems here include: education, government, environment, health care and energy.
- Prior to 1995, growth/spawl issues were grouped as "other."

Table 2.06: Single most important problem, by planning area, 2009

Minneapolis and St. Paul	%	Developed Suburbs	%	Developing Communities	%	Rural Areas	%
Transportation	21%	Transportation	28%	Transportation	34%	Transportation	36%
Crime	19%	Crime	19%	Crime	19%	Crime	18%
Economy	13%	Economy	18%	Economy	14%	Economy	12%
Social Issues	11%	Government	7%	Social Issues	8%	Social Issues	7%
Growth Issues	9%	Social Issues	6%	Government	6%	Taxes	7%
Government	7%	Growth Issues	5%	Growth Issues	6%	Government	6%
Taxes	5%	Housing	5%	Taxes	5%	Growth Issues	6%
Education	4%	Taxes	5%	Education	4%	Education	4%
Housing	4%	Education	4%	Environment	2%	Housing	3%
Other	3%	Healthcare	2%	Healthcare	1%	Environment	1%
Healthcare	2%	Environment	1%	Housing	1%	Healthcare	1%
Energy	1%	Other	1%	Other	<1%	Other	1%
Environment	1%						

For geographic segments, n varies from 318 to 378, confidence +/-6%

Figure 3: Single most important problem, 1986 to 2009

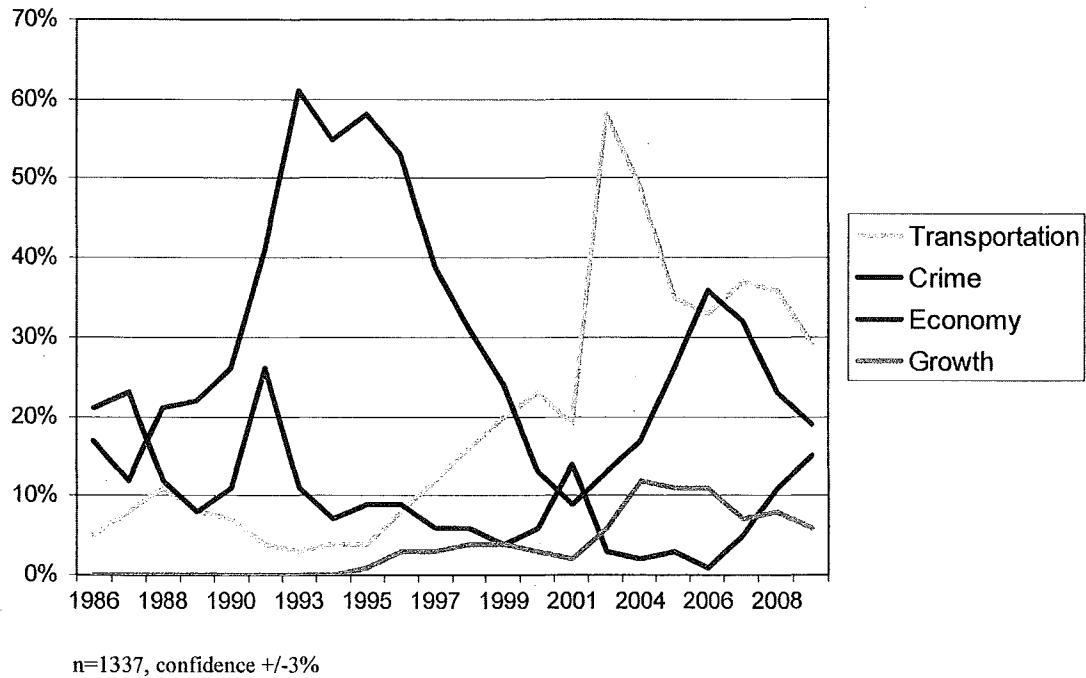


Figure 4: Overall concern: Top three problems identified of issues facing the Twin Cities, 1986 to 2009

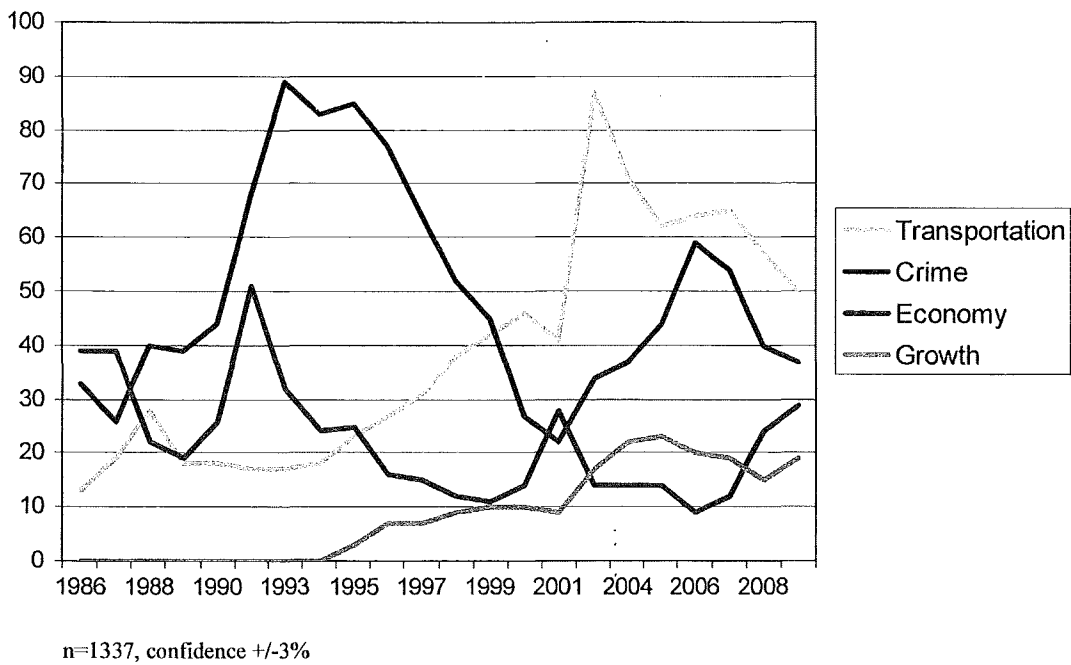


Table 2.07: Overall concern: Top three problems identified of issues facing the Twin Cities, 2003 to 2009

	Transportation	Crime	Economy	Social Issues	Growth Issues	Education	Government	Taxes	Housing	Environment	Healthcare	Energy	Other
2003	87	34	14	12	17	21	10	16	18	10	4	1	3
2004	71	37	14	13	22	25	11	11	20	6	5	1	6
2005	62	44	14	21	23	13	11	14	17	7	4	4	4
2006	64	59	9	16	20	21	7	15	10	6	8	1	4
2007	65	54	12	19	19	16	9	12	11	8	4	1	4
2008	57	40	24	15	15	15	8	13	17	7	3	1	3
2009	50	37	29	21	19	16	15	14	12	6	6	1	3

n=1337, confidence +/-3%

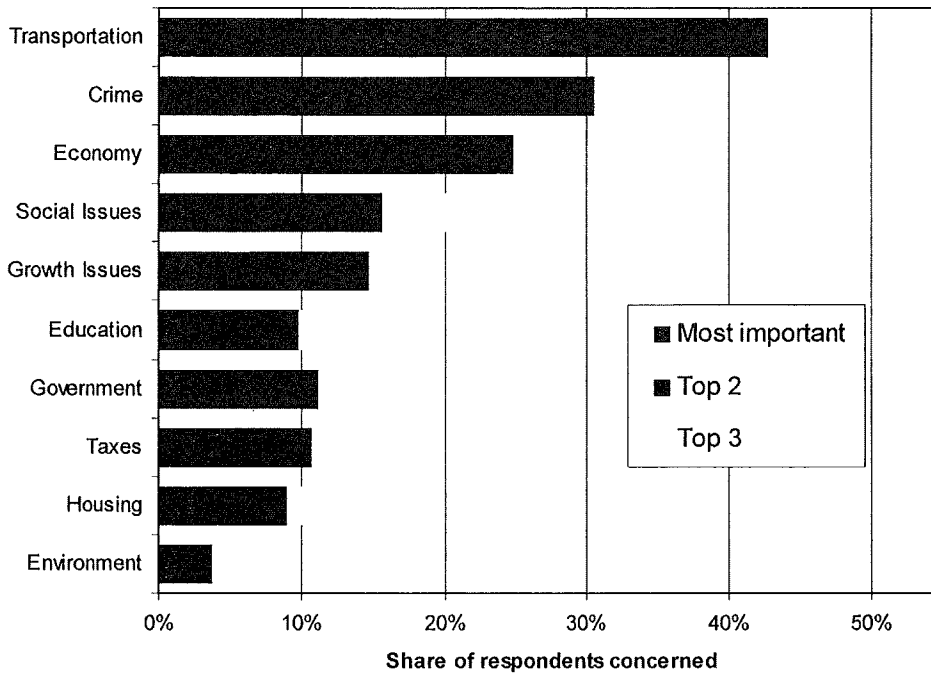
- This is a different way of looking at problems. Survey respondents identified a most important problem, as well as second and third additional problems.
- Respondents could list up to three problems, so the total will be greater than 100%.

Table 2.08: Overall concern by planning area, 2009

Minneapolis and St. Paul	%	Developed Suburbs	%	Developing Communities	%	Rural Areas	%
Transportation	46%	Transportation	45%	Transportation	56%	Transportation	54%
Crime	41%	Economy	32%	Crime	40%	Crime	37%
Economy	28%	Crime	30%	Economy	29%	Economy	26%
Social Issues	27%	Social Issues	19%	Social Issues	19%	Taxes	20%
Growth Issues	25%	Government	18%	Taxes	17%	Growth Issues	19%
Education	19%	Growth Issues	17%	Growth Issues	16%	Social Issues	18%
Government	13%	Education	16%	Government	14%	Government	15%
Housing	12%	Housing	13%	Education	14%	Housing	13%
Taxes	12%	Taxes	12%	Housing	12%	Education	10%
Environment	8%	Healthcare	6%	Environment	7%	Environment	7%
Healthcare	6%	Environment	4%	Healthcare	5%	Healthcare	4%
Other	6%	Other	4%	Other	1%	Other	2%
Energy	1%	Energy	2%	Energy	1%	Energy	1%

For geographic segments, n varies from 318 to 378, confidence +/-6%

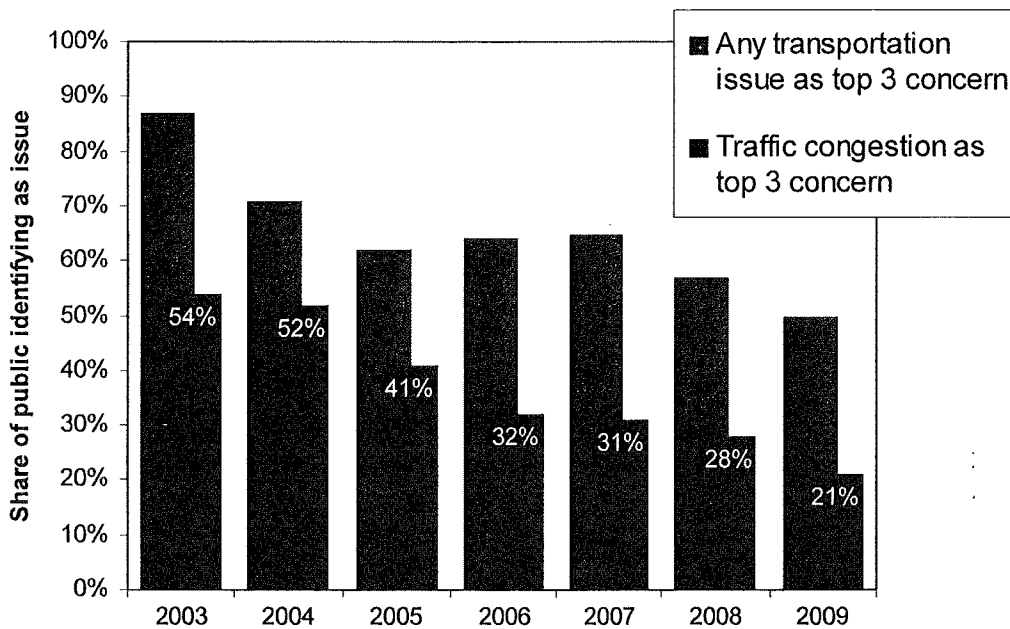
Figure 5: Overall concern: Top three problems identified, 2009



n=1337, confidence +/-3%

- This is a different way of looking at problems. Survey respondents identified a most important problem, as well as second and third additional problems.
- Respondents could list up to three problems, so the total will be greater than 100%.

Figure 6: Traffic congestion and transportation as concerns (top three problems identified), 2003 to 2009



n=1337, confidence +/-3%

Table 2.09: Solutions suggested for dealing with traffic congestion and transportation issues, 2009

Suggested solutions	Among those who think traffic congestion the No. 1 problem*	Among those who think any transportation issue the No. 1 problem
Improve/increase road infrastructure	24%	16%
· More lanes on existing highways	8%	5%
· Build more roads	8%	5%
· Better design and layout	5%	4%
· Better roads, and better maintained	3%	2%
Improve/increase mass transit	43%	48%
· Increase/improve mass transit	28%	24%
· More LRT and/or commuter trains	15%	24%
Roads AND transit both mentioned	4%	3%
Other transportation suggestions	22%	25%
· Better long range planning	6%	5%
· Increase funding for transportation	3%	6%
· Reduce road construction time	1%	3%
· Other miscellaneous	12%	11%
Don't know	7%	8%

n for traffic congestion only = 188, confidence +/-8%

n for all transportation issues = 384, confidence +/-5%

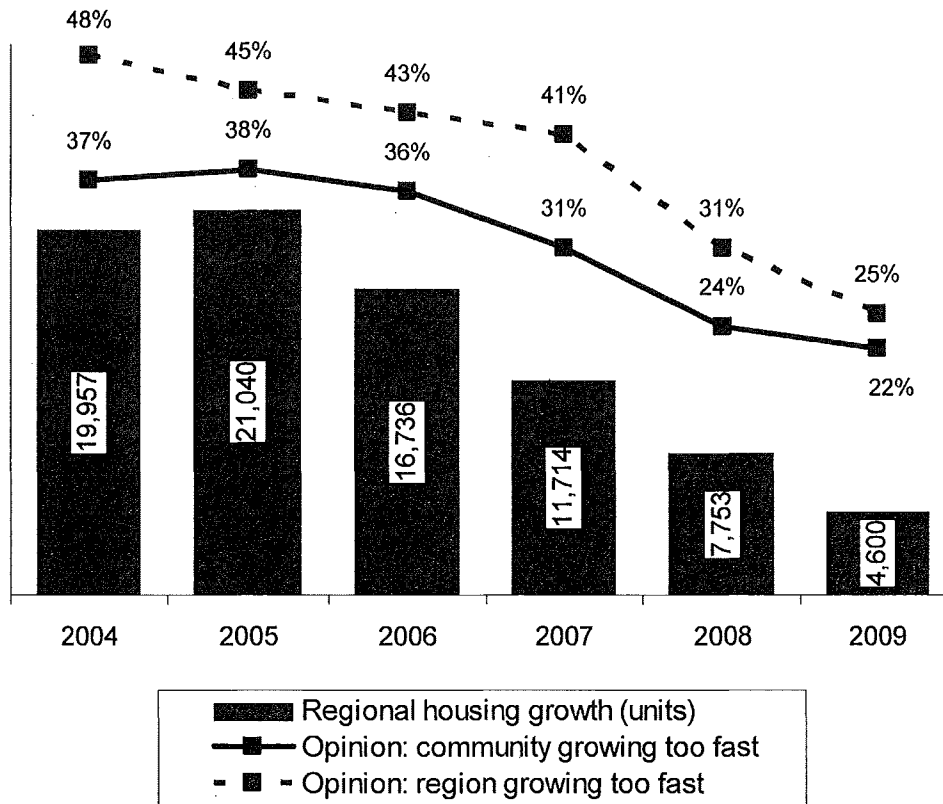
* Traffic congestion is a subset of the larger set of transportation problems.

**Table 2.10: Do you think the Twin Cities metro area is growing too fast, at the right pace, or too slow?
How about the city, suburb or town where you live?**

<i>Respondents' place of residence:</i>	<i>Twin Cities area growth:</i>			<i>Local community growth:</i>		
	Too fast	About right	Too slow	Too fast	About right	Too slow
Minneapolis and St. Paul	26%	62%	12%	15%	72%	13%
Developed Suburbs	24%	72%	4%	16%	75%	10%
Developing Communities	25%	73%	3%	33%	63%	5%
Rural Areas	33%	65%	2%	22%	60%	18%
Twin Cities Region	25%	70%	5%	22%	69%	9%

For geographic segments, n varies from 311 to 368, confidence +/-6%

Figure 7: Public opinion on metro area and local pace of growth, compared to actual housing growth rate: 2004-2009



n = 1368 (metro area question), n = 1340 (community question), confidence +/-3%

Section 3: Commuting Solutions

Key Findings

- The Twin Cities has an auto-dominated transportation environment: 78 percent of commuting workers drive alone. Drive-alone incidence is highest in rural areas (86 percent) and developing communities (85 percent) where vehicles slightly outnumber adult drivers.
- Survey participants were asked about the likelihood of trying cost-reducing commuting solutions. Fuel-efficient vehicles are the most popular cost-reducing solution: 41 percent of commuters said they are very likely to try a more fuel-efficient vehicle or have already switched to a more fuel-efficient vehicle.
- In 2009, 27 percent of commuters said they are very likely to try public transit or already use transit. The number of Twin Cities' commuters who said they are very likely to try transit is larger than the number of commuters who currently take buses and LRT to work.

Discussion

Commuting modes

While transit ridership is high – 73 million rides in 2009 – transit use is still outweighed by almost one billion car-based commute trips. There has not been significant change in the overall commuting mode distribution. (Slight fluctuations measured by past years' surveys have not been statistically significant changes.)

Of residents who worked outside the home, 78 percent got to work by driving alone; 10 percent took transit (9 percent on bus, 1 percent on LRT); 7 percent car-pooled, van-pooled or rode with others; 2 percent walked; and 2 percent bicycled (Table 3.01).

Commute mode choice is shaped by at least two factors: personal access to a vehicle and location. Among central cities residents, 18 percent of commuters took transit to work (16 percent on bus, 2 percent on LRT); 8 percent biked; 6 percent car-pooled, van-pooled or rode with others; and 6 percent walked. In contrast, among rural commuters 1 percent walked and less than 1 percent biked or took transit to work (Table 3.02).

In households with only one vehicle, 65 percent of commuters got to work by driving alone. In households with two vehicles, it was 81 percent (Table 3.03).

Cost-reducing and traffic-reducing commute solutions

Receptiveness to commuting alternatives is on the rise. Public attitudes and behavior are adjusting – the result of volatile fuel prices and possibly greater environmental awareness.

The survey asked participants to assess their interest in various cost-reducing commute solutions. Driving a more fuel-efficient vehicle was of interest to 26 percent of survey

participants in 2005. That share has risen to 41 percent in 2009. Over time, the largest gains in public interest occurred mid-decade, when gas prices were above \$3 per gallon or rising toward that mark (Figure 8).

In 2009, the second and third most-commonly cited solutions were to use transit (28 percent said they sometimes use transit or are very likely to try) and to work at home or telecommute (21 percent do this or are very likely to try) (Table 3.05).

As discussed above, there are Twin Cities' commuters who already practice alternative commuting solutions. The 2009 survey reveals the market potential for traffic-reducing solutions. Based on the number of Twin Cities commuters who said they are “very likely” to try transit, but do not currently do this, amounts to 16 percent of all commuters.

Differences between geographic areas

Location is a key factor in travel behavior and stated preferences. Central cities residents were significantly more receptive to trying transit, biking and walking than were suburban and rural residents.

Forty-three percent of central cities commuters said they sometimes use transit or are very likely to try; 33 percent of central cities commuters said they sometimes walk or bike or are very likely to try (Table 3.06). These numbers are two to three times higher in the central cities than in the suburbs and rural areas. Location and accessibility to destinations are major determinants of the stated preferences. Transit service is far more convenient in the central cities than in the outlying suburbs. Walking and biking may also be more viable due to pedestrian-friendly urban design and proximity of amenities and relevant destinations.

Geographic comparisons of receptiveness to other commuting solutions – such as telecommuting and driving a fuel-efficient vehicle – did not show statistically significant differences.

Commuting time

The 2009 Metro Residents Survey did not include a question on perceived commuting time. Journey-to-work survey data is available, with a one year delay, from US Census Bureau's American Community Survey. Twin Cities area statistics from the Census are presented in this section (Table 3.07 and Figure 10).

The most striking finding of the American Community Survey data on commute time is that the distribution in 2008 was very similar to the distribution in 2000. The share of commuters driving 30 minutes or more each way was 31 percent in 2000 and 33 percent in 2006 and 2008.

Table 3.01: If you work outside of your home, how do you normally get to work? 2007-2009

Mode of travel	2007	2008	2009
Drive alone	83%	82%	78%
Take the bus	6%	9%	9%
Drive/ride with others or car/van pool	7%	5%	7%
Bicycle	1%	1%	2%
Walk	1%	2%	2%
Take the LRT	<1%	<1%	1%
Some other way	<1%	<1%	<1%

n = 889, confidence +/-4%

Table 3.02: Commuting mode, by planning area, 2009

Mode of travel	Minneapolis and St. Paul	Developed Suburbs	Developing Communities	Rural Areas
Drive alone	62%	78%	85%	86%
Take the bus	16%	10%	4%	<1%
Drive/ride with others or car/van pool	6%	6%	10%	10%
Bicycle	8%	1%	<1%	<1%
Walk	6%	3%	<1%	1%
Take the LRT	2%	2%	<1%	<1%
Some other way	<1%	<1%	<1%	2%

For geographic segments, n varies from 213 to 233 confidence from +/-7%

Table 3.03: Commuting mode, by vehicles available to household, 2009

Mode of travel	1 vehicle	2 vehicles	3+ vehicles	All households
Drive alone	65%	81%	86%	78%
Take the bus	19%	6%	3%	9%
Drive/ride with others or car/van pool	7%	7%	9%	7%
Bicycle	4%	2%	1%	2%
Walk	4%	3%	<1%	2%
Take the LRT	2%	1%	<1%	1%
Some other way	<1%	<1%	1%	<1%

For demographic segments above, n varies from 183 to 425, confidence from +/-7% (one vehicle) to +/-5% (two vehicles).

Very few survey participants reported no vehicles available; therefore this group is not presented above.

Table 3.04: Vehicles available to household, by planning area, 2009

Mode of travel	Vehicles per adult in household	No vehicle available	1 vehicle	2 vehicles	3+ vehicles
Minneapolis and St. Paul	0.86	11%	34%	44%	11%
Developed Suburbs	0.96	1%	27%	55%	17%
Developing	1.04	3%	15%	52%	30%
Rural Areas	1.13	<1%	10%	52%	37%
Twin Cities Region	0.98	4%	23%	51%	22%

For geographic segments, n varies from 317 to 395, confidence from +/-6% to +/-5%

Table 3.05: "If you work outside of your home, how likely are you to try new commuting solutions to reduce your transportation costs?"

	Not at all likely	Slightly likely	Moderately likely	Very likely	Made change
Drive in a more fuel-efficient vehicle	21%	18%	20%	21%	20%
Take transit (buses or LRT)	53%	11%	9%	16%	12%
Work at home or telecommute	58%	14%	8%	13%	8%
Drive/ride with others or car/van pool	53%	21%	9%	10%	8%
Bicycle or walk to work	67%	10%	7%	7%	9%
Change jobs to be closer to home	60%	15%	7%	10%	8%
Change homes to be closer to work	69%	10%	7%	7%	7%

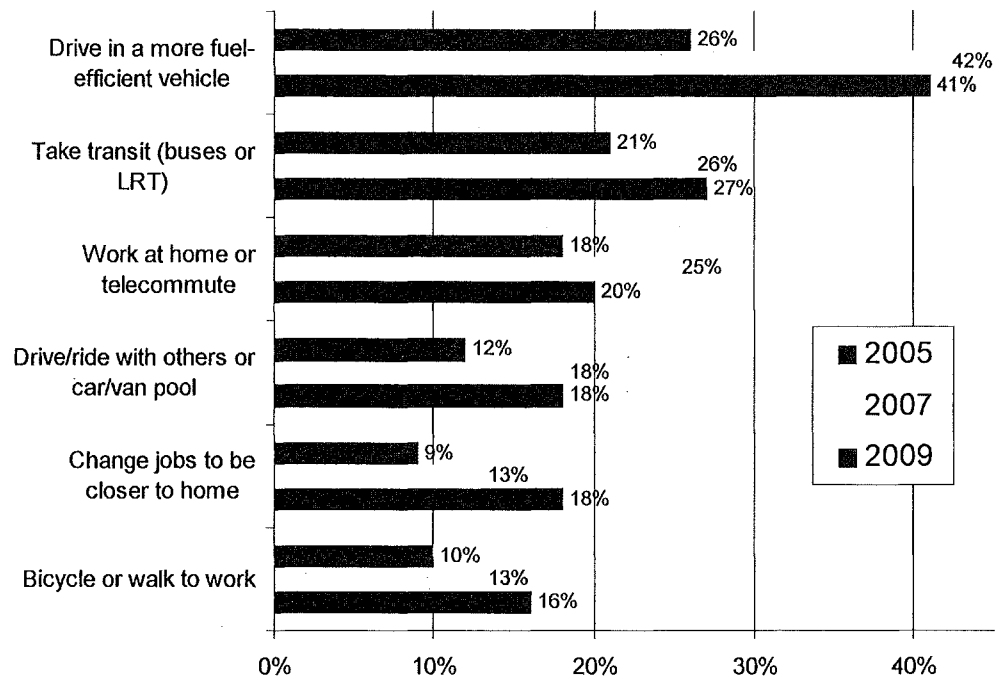
n varies from 874 to 897, confidence +/-4%

**Table 3.06: "Very likely to try" or "made change" to new commuting solutions:
All commuters, by planning area, 2009**

	Minneapolis and St. Paul	Developed Suburbs	Developing Communities	Rural Areas
Drive a more fuel-efficient vehicle	40%	42%	40%	44%
Take transit (buses or LRT)	43%	25%	22%	15%
Work at home or telecommute	19%	24%	17%	21%
Drive/ride with others or car/ van pool	20%	16%	17%	17%
Bicycle or walk to work	33%	13%	10%	4%
Change jobs to be closer to home	21%	21%	14%	14%
Change homes to be closer to work	20%	14%	11%	12%

For geographic segments, n varies from 206 to 245, confidence +/-7%

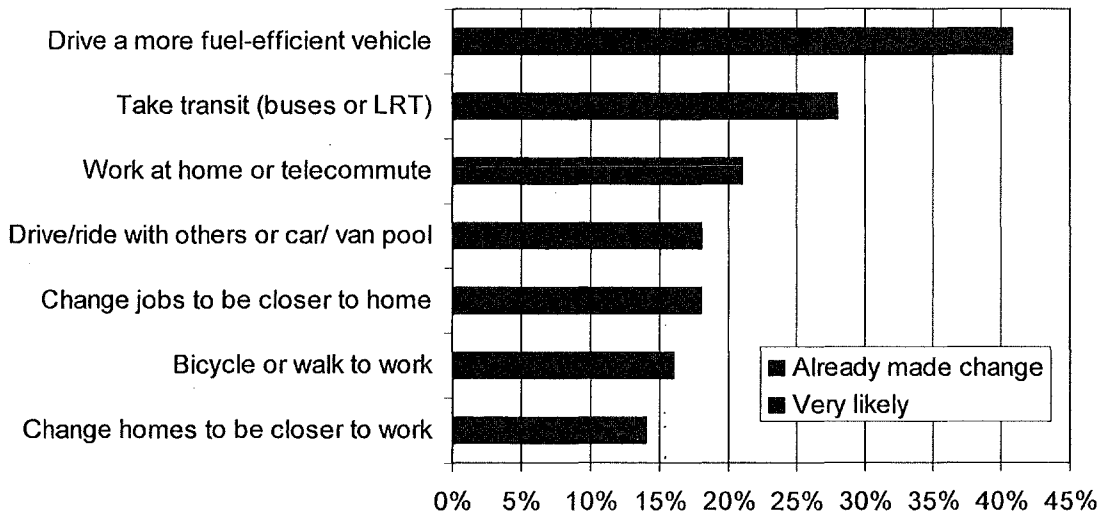
Figure 8: “Very likely to try” or “made change” to new commuting solutions: 2005, 2007, 2009



n varies from 874 to 897, confidence +/-4%

Note: For 2009, responses of “very likely” and “already made change” are added together. “Already made” change was not a response option in the 2005-07 surveys.

Figure 9: “Already made change” and “very likely” to try new commuting solutions: All commuters, 2009



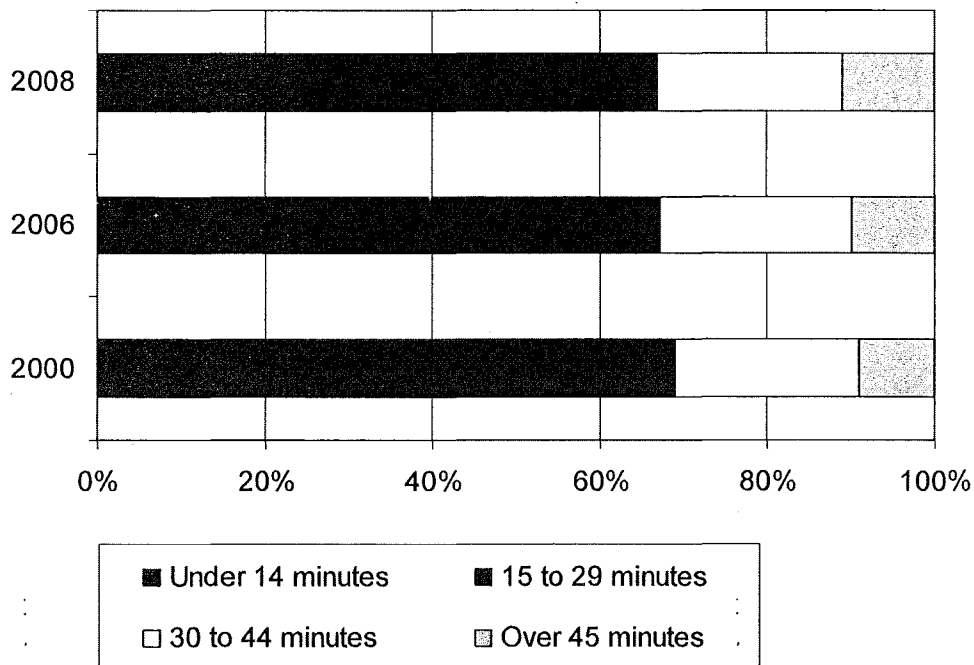
n varies from 874 to 897, confidence +/-4%

**Table 3.07: Commute time among commuting workers:
7-County Twin Cities area, 2000, 2006 and 2008**

	Census 2000	ACS 2006	ACS 2008
Less than 5 minutes	2%	3%	2%
5 to 9 minutes	9%	9%	9%
10 to 14 minutes	15%	14%	14%
15 to 19 minutes	17%	17%	16%
20 to 24 minutes	18%	17%	18%
25 to 29 minutes	8%	8%	8%
30 to 34 minutes	15%	15%	15%
35 to 39 minutes	3%	4%	3%
40 to 44 minutes	4%	4%	4%
45 to 59 minutes	6%	6%	7%
60 or more	3%	4%	4%

Source: US Census Bureau, Census 2000; American Community Survey 2006 and 2008.
ACS 2006 published confidence varies by data cell, from +/-2% to +/-7%
ACS 2008 published confidence varies by data cell, from +/-2% to +/-7%

**Figure 10: Commute time among commuting workers:
Twin Cities area, 2000, 2006 and 2008**



Source: US Census Bureau, Census 2000; American Community Survey 2006 and 2008.
ACS 2006 published confidence varies by data cell, from +/-2% to +/-7%
ACS 2008 published confidence varies by data cell, from +/-2% to +/-7%

Section 4: Residential Preferences

Key Findings

- Five percent of survey respondents indicated they live in a rural setting; 8 percent in a small town; 32 percent in a growing suburb; 30 percent in an older suburb; 20 percent in a central cities neighborhood; and 5 percent in a very urban or downtown setting.
- One-quarter of Twin Cities' residents said they would prefer to relocate or live in a different type of area.
- A trend of rural or small town preference is apparent. If all residents who said they preferred a rural setting actually lived in a rural setting, the region would experience a doubling of its rural population. The preference is problematic since greater population is what transforms rural areas and small towns into something else.

Discussion

Where people currently live

The Twin Cities region includes a continuum of communities at different stages of development, with varying patterns of community form. As distance from the region's center increases, community form becomes less urban and more rural.

For this section, analysis draws on survey respondents' self-identified community type. Survey participants were asked to characterize their community by choosing one of six descriptions: a very urban or downtown setting, a central city neighborhood, an older suburb, a growing suburb, a small town or a rural setting. (For example, the Metropolitan Council considers Dayton, Minnesota, to be a developing community. Hypothetically, survey participants from Dayton could also self-identify as small town or growing suburb).

Figures 11 and 12 show most survey participants living in either an older suburb (30 percent) or a growing suburb (32 percent). Twenty percent live in a central cities neighborhood and 5 percent in a very urban or downtown setting. The remainder identify themselves as rural area (5 percent) or small town residents (8 percent).

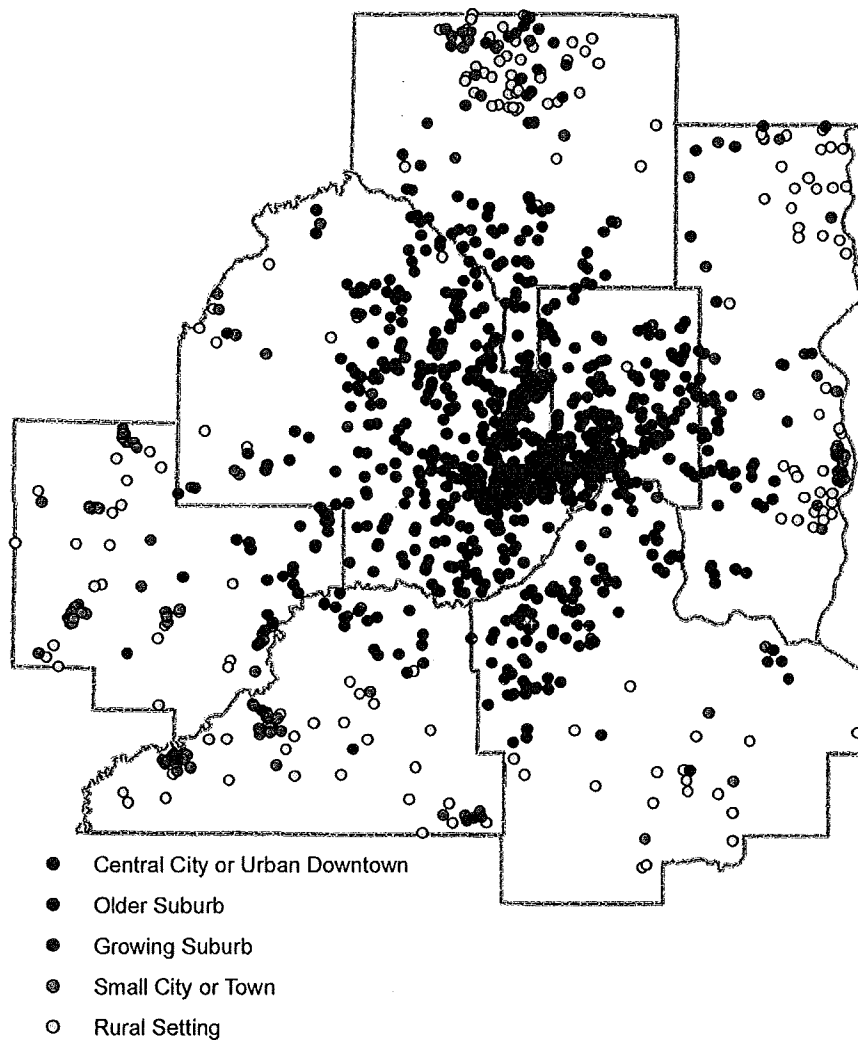
Where people would prefer to live

Survey participants were asked whether they would like to relocate to a different kind of area. Most Twin Cities residents are satisfied with their community setting. However, 25 percent said they would prefer to relocate to a different type of area (Table 4.01). Relocation interest was lowest among rural area residents (13 percent), small town, and growing suburb residents (24 percent each) and senior citizens (12 percent) (Table 4.02).

Table 4.03 and Figure 13 show preferred areas compared with where people currently live. A trend of rural or small town preference is apparent. If all residents who said they preferred a rural setting actually lived in a rural setting, the region would experience a

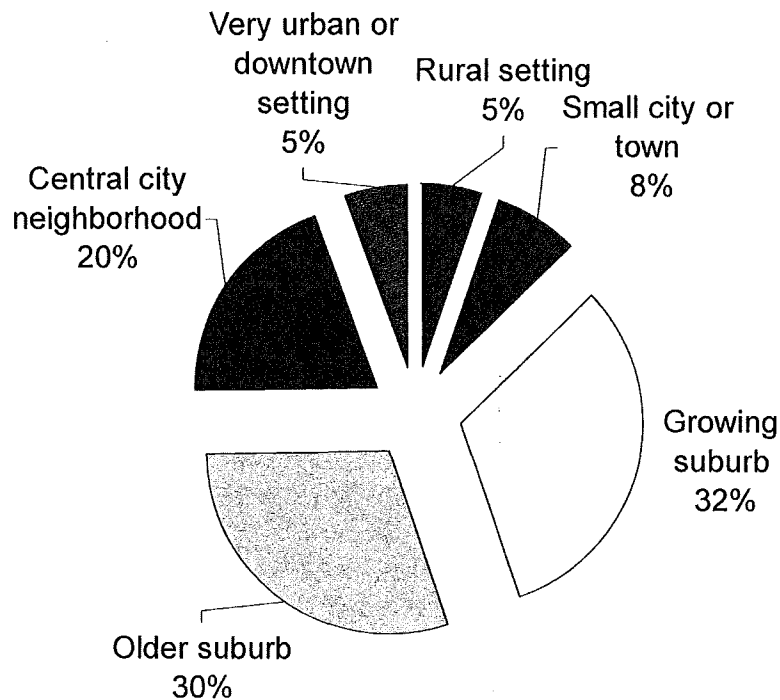
doubling of its rural population. The preference is problematic since greater population is what transforms rural areas and small towns into something else.

Figure 11:
"How would you describe the area where you now live?"



Source: Metropolitan Council's 2009 Annual Residents Survey
n= 1,389, confidence +/- 3%

Figure 12: “How would you describe the area where you now live?”



n = 1,389, confidence +/-3%

Table 4.01: “Would you prefer to live in a different kind of area?”

Currently living in:	No	Yes, prefer different area
Respondents living in:		
A rural setting	87%	13%
A small city or town	76%	24%
A growing suburb	76%	24%
An older suburb	73%	27%
A central cities neighborhood	74%	26%
A very urban/downtown setting	N/A*	
All areas combined	75%	25%

n varies from 165 to 329, confidence from +/-8% (small city or town) to +/-6% (growing suburb, older suburb)

- There were too few respondents to accurately represent very urban/downtown residents.

Table 4.02: Interest in relocation, by age cohort

	No	Yes, prefer different area
Age 65+	88%	12%
Ages 50-64	76%	24%
Ages 40-49	77%	23%
Ages 18-39	69%	31%

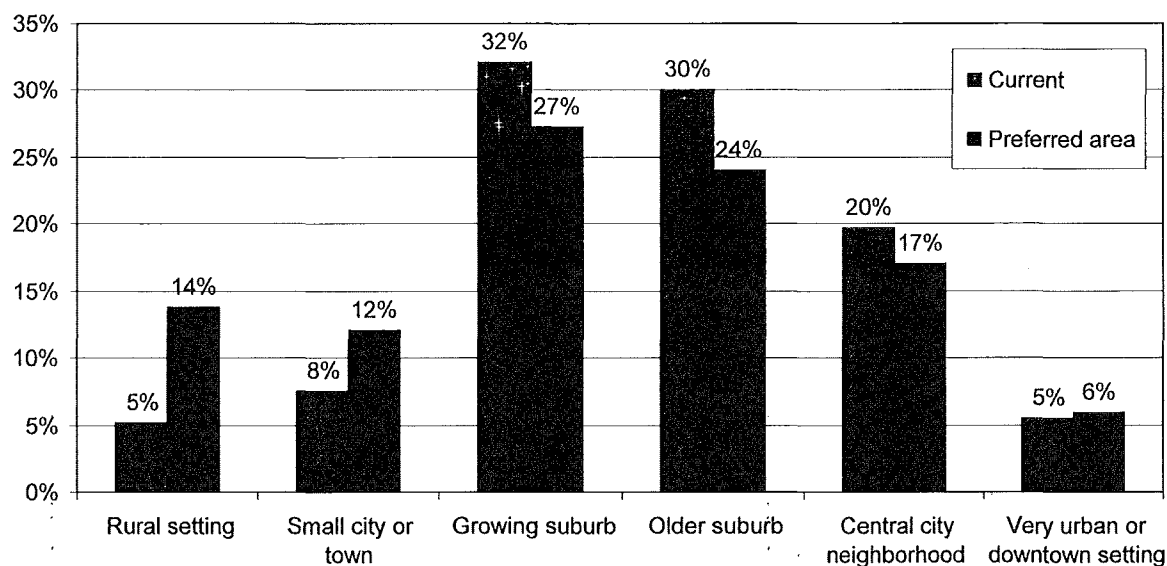
n for age cohorts varies from 267 to 491, confidence varies from +/-6% (age 18-39) to +/-5% (age 65 and over)

Table 4.03: Where people live and where they would prefer to live

	Rural setting	Small town	Growing suburb	Older suburb	Central cities neighborhood	Very urban/downtown
Area of <i>current</i> residence	5%	8%	32%	30%	20%	5%
<i>Preferred</i> area, including relocators and current residents	14%	12%	27%	24%	17%	6%

n= 1,389 for current area, n= 1,383 for preferred area, confidence +/- 3%

Figure 13: Where people live and where they would prefer to live



n= 1,389 for current area, n= 1,383 for preferred area, confidence +/- 3%

Section 5: Metropolitan Council

Key Findings

- Public approval of the Council's performance in addressing regional issues is at a historical high point: 47 percent think that the Council is doing a good or very good job; 38 percent think the Council is doing a fair job; and 15 percent think the Council is doing a poor job or worse.
- Rural residents in the region and those who expressed pessimism about the region's quality of life are the most critical of the Council's performance.
- When Council programs and responsibilities are specifically listed, 9 out of 12 are considered "very important" to majorities of Twin Cities residents. The highest ratings went to water supply and quality monitoring (82 percent said very important) and wastewater treatment (76 percent said very important).
- For some programs, perceived importance varies with geographic situation. For all programs, perceived importance is statistically associated with opinions of the Council's performance serving the region.

Discussion

Awareness of the Metropolitan Council

Seventy-one percent of Twin Cities residents have heard of the Metropolitan Council. This awareness or name recognition has fluctuated over the past decade (Table 5.01).

Familiarity with the Council in 2009 was highest among older Baby Boomers, ages 50-64 (86 percent recognition); and lowest among Twin Citians who identify as minority or multi-racial (57 percent recognition). There were not significant differences across geographic sectors or other demographic characteristics (Table 5.02).

Public opinion on the Metropolitan Council

The 71 percent of participants who indicated awareness of the Metropolitan Council were asked to rate the Council's performance addressing and resolving regional issues. Of that group, 47 percent think that the Council is doing a good or very good job; 38 percent think the Council is doing a fair job; and 15 percent think the Council is doing a poor job or worse. This is the highest level of approval measured in the years that Metropolitan Council has asked these questions (Table 5.01 and Figure 14).

Public approval can be analyzed by demographic segment. Generally, there were not significant differences across demographic characteristics. There was, however, a geographic factor: Rural residents in the region were less likely than urban and suburban residents to approve of Council performance (37 percent approval, 25 percent disapproval among rural residents).

More strikingly, those who expressed that the region's quality of life has diminished are the most critical of the Council's performance (28 percent approval, 29 percent disapproval). These were the only statistically significant differences uncovered in analysis of the survey data (Table 5.02).

Rating of importance of Council programs

Survey participants were asked about 12 Council responsibilities and program areas. Program importance was rated using a four-point scale: not at all important, slightly important, moderately important and very important.

Nine out of 12 Council programs were rated as very important to majorities of residents. The largest majorities in 2009 thought that water supply and quality monitoring (82 percent) and wastewater treatment (76 percent) are very important programs (Table 5.03).

Also enjoying a substantial public consensus: natural resources and land conservancy, planning to accommodate the region's growth, and the Metro Transit service network. These five programs received the highest overall importance scores in previous years as well.

For some programs, perceived importance varied with geographic situation. In particular, rural and developing suburban residents were less likely to consider important Metro Transit, LRT, and grants to develop and preserve housing.

Stated importance related to approval

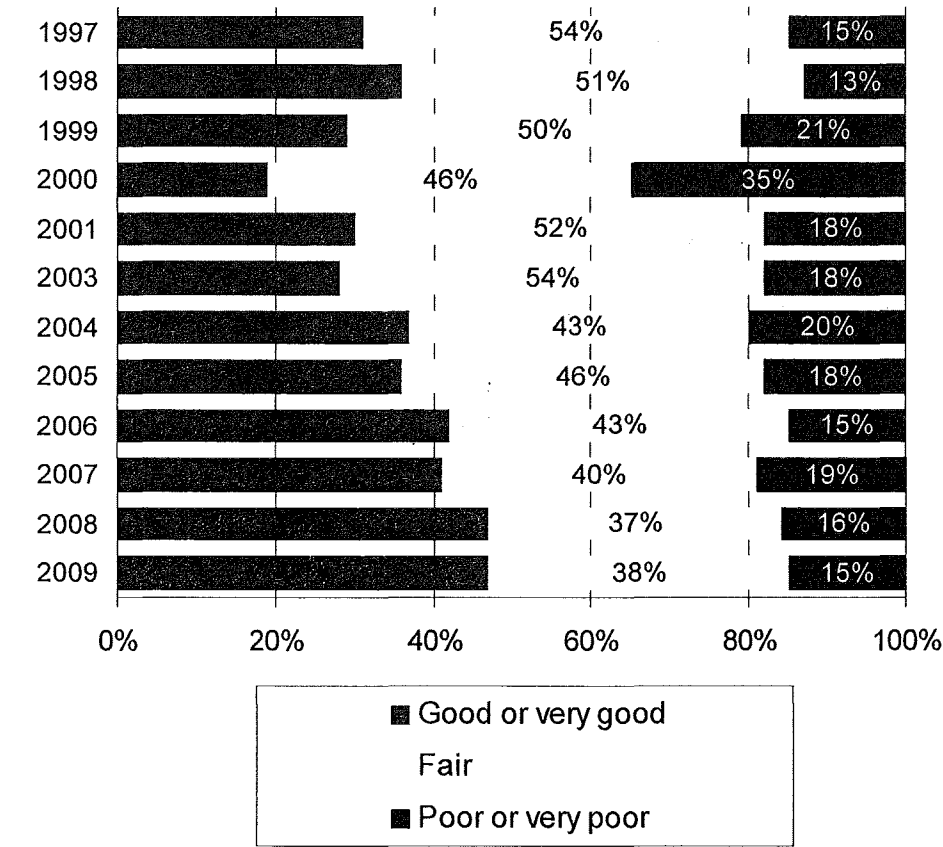
Public consensus around the Metropolitan Council's responsibilities is related to the Council's approval rating, discussed above. That is, one's opinion of the Council's mandate and responsibilities influences what one thinks of the Council overall.

The evidence of this relationship is represented with correlation scores, measuring the statistical association between opinion on the Council's performance and perceived importance of Council programs. The correlation between perceived importance of the Council's responsibilities (composite importance rating) and performance approval was calculated at 0.49 (on a scale of 0 to 1). Correlation scores are generally lower as programs are considered one at a time (Table 5.03).

These correlations can be interpreted as measuring the relative political weight of specific programs. For example, public approval of the Council may be slightly boosted by the popularity of, for example, regional parks and trails. This valorization is independent of the actual performance of the agency.

On the other hand, public valuation of wastewater treatment has lower correlation. While there is a solid consensus around the importance of the core responsibility of wastewater treatment, the importance does not seem to influence approval (or disapproval) of the Council.

Figure 14: Public opinion of Metropolitan Council performance, 1997-2009



n = 771 for performance approval, confidence +/- 4%

Table 5.01: Name recognition and public approval of Metropolitan Council performance, 2001-2009

	2001	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Name recognition	68%	74%	78%	69%	73%	74%	74%	71%
“What is your impression of the Metropolitan Council’s performance addressing regional issues?”								
Very good job	4%	2%	3%	5%	6%	6%	7%	9%
Good job	26%	26%	34%	32%	36%	35%	40%	38%
Fair job	52%	54%	43%	46%	43%	40%	37%	38%
Poor job	12%	14%	14%	14%	12%	13%	12%	9%
Very poor job	6%	4%	6%	4%	3%	6%	4%	6%

n = 1387 for name recognition, confidence +/- 3%

n = 771 for performance approval, confidence +/- 4%

- For comparison over time, the table excludes “no opinion/don’t know.”

Table 5.02: Name recognition and public approval of Metropolitan Council performance, by demographic segment, 2009

	Name recognition	Impression of Council’s performance		
		Very good or good	Fair	Poor or very poor
Optimistic outlook – believe quality of life has improved or stayed the same	68%	54%	36%	10%
Pessimistic – believe quality of life has gotten worse	78%	28%	43%	29%
Minority or Multi-Race	57%	N/A	N/A	N/A
White, Non-Hispanic	74%	48%	38%	14%
Senior citizens (65+)	77%	51%	39%	10%
Older Boomers (50-64)	86%	47%	40%	13%
Young Boomers (40-49)	71%	44%	40%	16%
Gen X and Gen Y (18-39)	67%	47%	33%	20%
Minneapolis and St. Paul	71%	48%	35%	17%
Developed suburbs	71%	50%	39%	11%
Developing communities	69%	45%	39%	16%
Rural areas	71%	37%	38%	25%
All residents of region	71%	47%	38%	15%

- n for name recognition varies from 128 to 1027, confidence ranges are +/-9% (minority or multi-race), +/-6% (age cohorts, planning areas, also pessimistic segment) to +/-4% (optimistic outlook)
- n for performance approval varies from 105 to 558, confidence ranges are +/-10% (for age 18-39), +/-8% (other age cohorts, planning areas), +/-7% (pessimistic outlook), +/-5% (optimistic)

Table 5.03: How important are the following Council programs for maintaining the quality of life in the Twin Cities metro area?

Council Program	Not at all important	Slightly important	Moderately important	Very important	Correlation with approval rating
Monitoring water supply and water quality	1%	3%	13%	82%	0.30
Wastewater treatment	1%	5%	19%	76%	0.26
Planning to accommodate a growing population	4%	10%	22%	65%	0.32
Natural resources and land conservancy	3%	10%	22%	64%	0.34
Metro Transit (bus system)	7%	9%	21%	63%	0.33
Regional parks and trails	3%	12%	24%	61%	0.36
Grants to clean up and reuse polluted lands	3%	10%	27%	60%	0.31
Development that connects housing, jobs and services	7%	11%	27%	55%	0.36
Light Rail Transit	10%	12%	24%	54%	0.32
Grants for transportation projects	6%	14%	31%	49%	0.37
Coordinating development across neighboring communities	6%	13%	33%	49%	0.38
Grants to develop and preserve housing	8%	16%	31%	45%	0.39

n for importance scores varied between 1292 and 1363 for the various programs, confidence +/-3%

Correlations between program importance and performance utilized 766 records. Correlation scores measure the statistical association, on a scale of 0 to 1, between perceived importance of each program and approval of Council's performance.

Section 6: Methodology

This report describes the findings of the 2009 Metro Residents Survey; 3,300 addresses in the seven-county Twin Cities area were randomly selected and residents were invited to participate in this study. Sampled addresses were stratified by zip codes to provide balanced numbers in four geographic sectors: Central Cities, Developed Suburbs, Developing Communities, and Rural Areas.

In October 2009, each sampled resident was sent a postcard announcing the coming survey. One week later (October 16), each sampled resident was sent a survey packet: a letter from the Council Chairman, a survey questionnaire to be completed, and a postage-paid return envelope. To encourage participation by recent immigrant groups, the questionnaire included instructions in Spanish, Somali and Hmong languages. The instructions offered the reader the opportunity to arrange an interview in another language.

Data collection began October 22. Throughout the process, received responses and returned mail were tracked by Metropolitan Council's survey contractor, Information Specialists Group Inc. One week after the October survey packet was mailed, non-respondents were flagged for telephone follow-up. Information Specialists Group Inc. conducted telephone interviews through December 4, and accepted mail-returned survey questionnaires for inclusion through this date.

Of the initial 3,300 sampled residents, 215 were determined to be unlocatable. This left 3,085 active records in the sample database.

Survey participation

In total, 420 telephone interviews, 786 mail-returned surveys, and 105 online user surveys were completed and received. The combined pool of 1,311 responses represents a 42 percent response rate among those receiving the initial 2009 survey questionnaire.

Ninety-nine useable cell phone interviews were collected as well. Cell phone users were approached through an independent, random sampling. Response rate within the cell phone user sample was 10 percent.

Both the sample size and response rate are relevant to the reliability of survey analysis. With a respondent pool of 1,410, the margin of error due to sample sufficiency is +/-3 percent, with 95 percent confidence. Margins of error increase where questions were answered by a smaller number of respondents. (Table 6.01)

The response rate is considered acceptable. However, Council researchers are concerned that the survey under-represents certain demographic segments. This concern is addressed through targeted over-sampling, through the addition of cell phone user survey interviews, and through weighting of response data.

Comparing the response distributions of the telephone interview and mail-return participants, there are some observed differences in demographic characteristics, behavior (for example, commute mode), and public opinion (for example, Metropolitan Council

name recognition). Some respondents are more likely to answer a mail-in survey, while others are more willing to respond in a telephone interview. Therefore, a multi-modal data collection method was employed to achieve a higher response rate and to more completely capture residents' views and experiences.

Preparation for analysis: weighting

Weighting of the data was necessary to correct for sample design – specifically the deliberate over-sampling of rural areas and the small size of an independent sample of cell phone users – as well as demographic imbalances in response and participation. Individual survey responses are given greater (or lesser) weight in order to represent population segments. The unadjusted pool of collected survey responses *under*-represented people under 40 and minority-identified residents. The raw, unadjusted pool *over*-represented senior citizens and people living alone.

Weight factors were independently calculated for age and gender combination, race, household size, telephone market segment, and geographic sector. For most of these variables the distribution of survey participants was benchmarked against 2008 American Community Survey statistics for adults in the Twin Cities region. For geographic sector, the distribution was benchmarked against the Metropolitan Council's own 2008 population estimates. The five factors were then multiplied together (age and gender weight X minority weight X household size weight X telephone market weight X geographic weight) to yield "case weights" for each of the 1,410 survey responses.

The end product is a survey dataset that fairly represents the region's demographic diversity: Survey participants from each age cohort fairly represent their share of the region's population; minority participants and white, non-Hispanic segments fairly represent their share of the population.

The survey instrument is found in the Appendix section of this report.

Table 6.01: Margin of error for various sample sizes

Sample of "n"	Margin of error, with 95% confidence
1,067	+/- 3%
600	+/- 4%
384	+/- 5%
267	+/- 6%
196	+/- 7%
150	+/- 8%
119	+/- 9%
96	+/- 10%

Table 6.02: Distribution of 2009 survey sample and regional population

	Unadjusted distribution of survey participants	Demographic distribution of region's adult population*	Weighted, valid distribution of survey data, <i>excluding blank responses</i>
White only, Non-Hispanic	89%	83%	83%
Minority or multi-racial	9%	17%	17%
Refused/ missing information	2%		
Male	51%	49%	49%
Female	48%	51%	51%
Refused/ missing information	1%		
65+	23%	14%	14%
50-64	35%	25%	25%
40-49	22%	22%	22%
30-39	13%	18%	18%
18-29	6%	21%	21%
Refused/ missing information	1%		
Live alone	23%	15%	15%
2 in household	34%	35%	35%
3 in household	13%	19%	19%
4 in household	16%	18%	18%
5 or more in household	10%	13%	13%
Refused/ missing information	4%		
Cell phone only (no land-line)	11%	23%**	26%
Cell phone + land-line in home	72%	63%**	62%
No cell phone (including land- line only)	14%	14%**	12%
Refused/ missing information	3%		
Central cities	28%	23%***	23%
Developed suburbs	25%	36%***	36%
Developing	24%	35%***	35%
Rural	23%	6%***	6%

* For race, age, gender, and household size, 2008 adult population distributions from Census Bureau's American Community Survey are used as benchmarks.

** For telephone market segments, a regional distribution was not available. National survey estimates provided the benchmark for weights adjustment.

*** For geographic sub-region, the 2008 all-ages population in households, estimated by Metropolitan Council, is used as the benchmark. The residents' survey's stratified sampling is designed to yield statistically significant data for each of the four geographic sub-regions.

Appendix: Survey Questionnaire

The questionnaire is an eight-page document with 30 questions. (See following pages.)

2009 Annual Residents Survey

Twin Cities Metropolitan Area

You've been selected to participate in a survey on life in our region.
Please provide your responses in this questionnaire booklet.
Your responses will be used only for research.
Thank you for participating.



Para informacion en Español, vea el reverso de este folleto.

Xav paub cov xovxwm no txhais us lus Hmoob, saib nraum qab daim ntawv no.

Warbixin ku saabsan Somali kafiiri dhinaca danbe ee form-kan.

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

- | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 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 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)*

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Gotten better | Stayed the same | Gotten worse |

Q3 What do you think is the single most attractive feature of the Twin Cities metro area today?

Q4 What do you think is the single most important problem facing the Twin Cities metro area today?

Q5 In your opinion, what is the best solution to this problem?

Q6 What other important problems are facing the Twin Cities today?

Please list up to three additional problems, in order of importance:

1.

2.

3.

Q7 Have you heard of the Metropolitan Council?

☐ Yes → Please go to Question 8

☐ No → Please skip to Question 9

Q8 What is your impression of the Metropolitan Council's performance addressing regional issues?
(check one)

☐ Very Poor ☐ Poor ☐ Fair ☐ Good ☐ Very Good ☐ No opinion/Don't know

Q9 The Metropolitan Council plans or manages a variety of regional programs. How important is each program to the quality of life in the region? (check one box on each line)

Council programs	Not at all important	Slightly important	Moderately important	Very important	Don't know
Metro Transit (bus system)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Light Rail Transit (LRT)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Planning to accommodate a growing population	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Coordinating development across neighboring communities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wastewater treatment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Regional parks and trails	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Natural resources and land conservancy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Monitoring water supply and water quality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Grants for transportation projects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Grants for development that connects housing, jobs and services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Grants to develop and preserve housing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Grants to clean up and reuse polluted lands	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q10 Do you work outside of your home?

☐ Yes → Please go to Question 11

☐ No → Please skip to Question 13

Q11 If you work outside of your home, how do you normally get to work?

- ☐ Drive alone ☐ Drive/ride with others or car/van pool ☐ Take the bus
☐ Walk ☐ Bicycle ☐ Take LRT
☐ Some other way

Q12 If you work outside of your home, how likely are you to try the following commute solutions to reduce your costs? If you have already made this change to reduce your costs, please check "Made change." (check one box on each line)

<u>Commuting solutions</u>	<u>Made change</u>	<u>Not at all likely</u>	<u>Slightly likely</u>	<u>Moderately likely</u>	<u>Very likely</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
Work at home or telecommute	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Change jobs to be closer to home	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Change homes to be closer to work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bicycle or walk to work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drive in a more fuel-efficient vehicle	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drive/ride with others or car/van pool	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Take transit (buses or LRT)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q13 Have you moved or changed address in the past 5 years?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Q14 Do you own or rent your residence? ☐ Own ☐ Rent

Q15 (A) What type of housing do you live in? (check one)

- ☐ Single family home → Please skip to Question 16
☐ Townhome, duplex, triplex or fourplex
☐ Apartment
☐ Condominium or cooperative
☐ Mobile home / Manufactured home → Please skip to Question 16
☐ Group housing, assisted living, or other institutional housing → Please skip to Question 16
☐ Other: _____

(B) If you live in a condo or apartment building or other attached housing, how many housing units are in your specific building (or townhouse block)? (check one)

- ☐ 2 ☐ 5-9 ☐ 50-99
☐ 3 ☐ 10-19 ☐ 100 or more
☐ 4 ☐ 20-49 ☐ Don't Know

- Q16 What is the finished area size (square footage) of your home? (check one)**
- ☐ Less than 900 square feet ☐ 1,500 – 1,799 square feet ☐ 2,600 – 3,600 square feet
- ☐ 900 – 1,199 square feet ☐ 1,800 – 2,199 square feet ☐ Over 3,600 square feet
- ☐ 1,200– 1,499 square feet ☐ 2,200 – 2,599 square feet ☐ Don't know
- Q17 Do you think the Twin Cities area as a whole is growing too fast, at the right pace, or too slow?**
- How about the city, suburb or town where you live?**
- Growth in the Twin Cities area as a whole is... ☐ Too slow ☐ About right ☐ Too fast
- Growth in the city, suburb or town where you live is.... ☐ Too slow ☐ About right ☐ Too fast
- Q18 How would you describe the area where you now live? Please check the description that best describes your community or neighborhood. (check one)**
- ☐ A rural setting ☐ A growing suburb ☐ A central city neighborhood
- ☐ A small city or town ☐ An older suburb ☐ A very urban or downtown setting
- Q19 Would you prefer to live in a different kind of area?**
- ☐ Yes → Please go to Question 20
- ☐ No → Please skip to Question 21
- Q20 What type of area would you prefer to live in?**
- ☐ A rural setting ☐ A growing suburb ☐ A central city neighborhood
- ☐ A small city or town ☐ An older suburb ☐ A very urban or downtown setting
- Q21 Have you visited a regional park or trail in the last 12 months?**
- ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know/unsure
- Q22 How important is it to purchase land now for future regional parks and park expansion?**
- ☐ Not at all important ☐ Slightly important ☐ Moderately important ☐ Very important ☐ Don't Know

Q23 Are you male or female? ☐ Male ☐ Female

Q24 In what year were you born? _____ Year (e.g., 1977)

Q25 Including you, how many household members are in each of these age groups?

___ 0 to 17 ___ 18 to 39 ___ 40 to 64 ___ 65 and over

Q26 How many vehicles does your household have available for personal travel?

_____ # of Vehicles

Q27 (A) Do you have a cell phone for personal use?
☐ Yes ☐ No → Please skip to Question 28

(B) Is the cell phone your only phone or do you also have a regular telephone (landline) at home that you can receive calls?
☐ Cell is only phone ☐ Regular phone at home

(C) Of all the phone calls that you receive, about how many are received on your cell phone?
☐ All or almost all ☐ More than half ☐ About half ☐ Less than half ☐ Very few/none

Q28 What was your annual total household income before taxes, in 2008? (check one)
☐ Less than \$25,000 ☐ \$50,000 to \$74,999 ☐ \$100,000 to \$150,000
☐ \$25,000 to \$49,999 ☐ \$75,000 to \$99,999 ☐ Over \$150,000

Q29 How would you identify your race/ethnicity? (check all that apply)
☐ White/Caucasian ☐ Asian/Asian American ☐ Hispanic/Latino
☐ Black/African American ☐ American Indian ☐ Other

Q30 What city, ZIP code, and county do you live in?

City and ZIP code: _____

County: _____

Your survey responses will be used only for research.
Metropolitan Council will not share or release your personal information.

Thank you for completing this survey.

- ☐ Usted ha sido seleccionado para participar en una encuesta sobre la vida en nuestra region. Si le gustaría una traducción al **Español**, favor de llamar al 1-800-439-3185 para hablar con un entrevistador. Sus respuestas serían completamente confidenciales. Gracias por participar.

 - ☐ Waxa lagu doortey in aad ka qayb qaadatid tiro-koob ku saabsan nolosha oo lagu qabanayo gobolkan. Hadii aad rabtid in laguugu turjumo af **Soomli**, fadlan wac 1-800-439-3185 si aad ula hadashid qofka wareystaha. Xogwarankaagu waa sir aanay cid kale oganeyn.

 - ☐ Koj tau raug xaiv los koom hauv ib qho kev txog kev ua neej hauv peb cheeb tsam. Yog hais tias koj xav tau ib tug neeg nyeem daim ntawv no ua lus **Hmoob**, thov hu rau 1-800-439-3185 es nrog ib tug neeg nug cov lus nug no tham. Koj cov lus teb yuav muab khaws cia kom zoo uas tsis pub neeg paub. Ua tsaug rau koj txoj kev koom tes.
-

Please return the survey in the addressed, postage paid return envelope. The mailing address is:

2009 Metro Residents Survey, P.O. Box 5703, Hopkins MN 55343-7063

