

2006

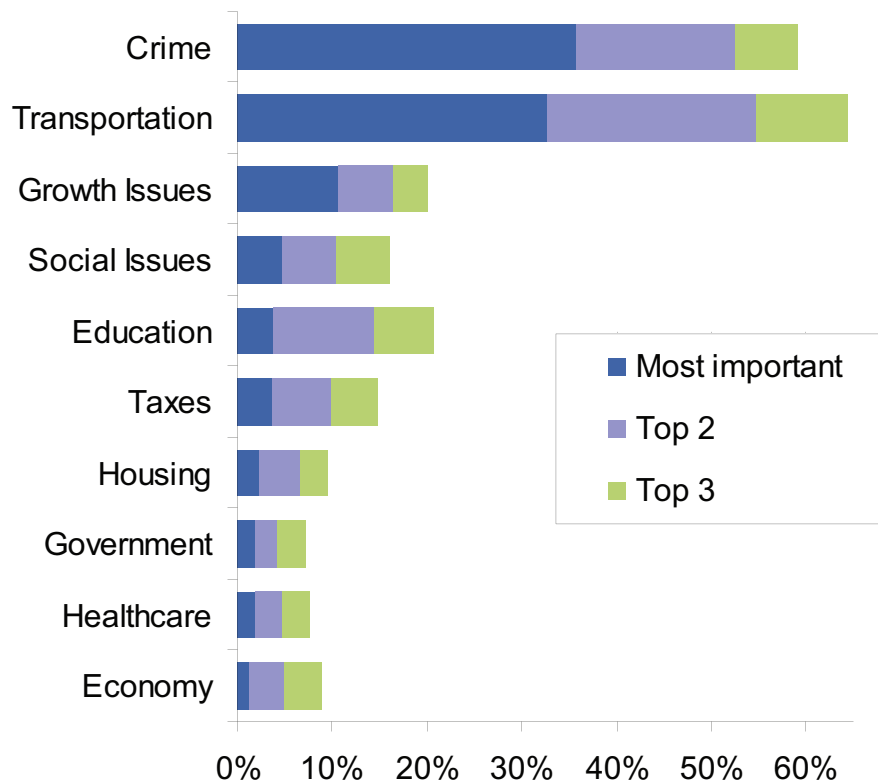
Metropolitan Survey

Crime and transportation top list of resident concerns in 2006 survey

In an annual survey conducted by the Metropolitan Council, residents identified crime and transportation as the region's most pressing issues. Thirty-six percent of people surveyed suggested crime, violent crime, gangs or a related concern as the region's single most important issue. Transportation, seen as most important from 2000 - 2005, ran a close second in the 2006 survey, identified by 33 percent of respondents as the region's greatest challenge. When asked to list multiple concerns, however, transportation held first place. Sixty-four percent of surveyed residents named a transportation concern as the region's first, second or third most important issue, compared to 59 percent who included crime among the region's top three problems.

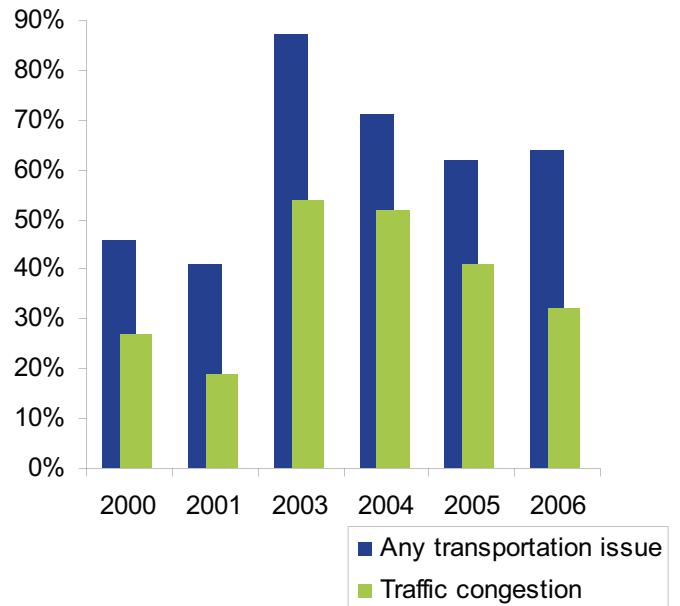
While public concern about crime has been on the rise in recent years, it trails levels observed in the mid-1990s. From 1993 to 1996, crime concerns dominated survey results, with a majority of survey participants (more than 50 percent) naming crime as the region's most important problem.

Top 10 concerns in the metro area - 2006



Traffic congestion leads transportation concerns

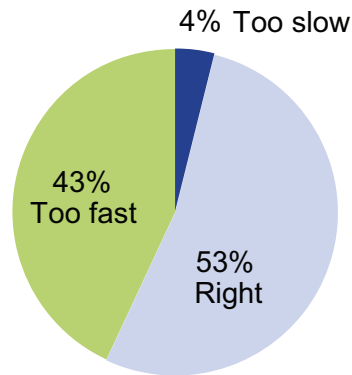
Transportation concerns peaked in 2003, when more than 50 percent of those surveyed named transportation as the No. 1 issue. The numbers have dropped slightly in recent years, perhaps because congestion may have leveled off since 2003, or perhaps because commuters have become more accustomed to traffic congestion. Still, survey results indicate commuters remain displeased. Sixty-four percent of Twin Cities area residents listed traffic congestion, transit availability, roads and highways, or multiple transportation issues among the region's top three challenges. Results closely mirror the recent election; most of the region's voters approved a 2006 constitutional amendment that exclusively dedicates motor vehicle sales tax revenues to transportation and transit projects.



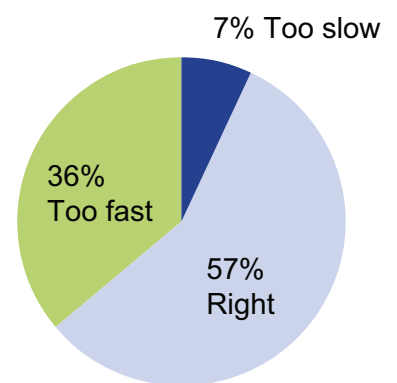
Shifting concerns about growth in 2006

Residents in the Twin Cities region remain divided on the issue of growth. Annual surveys by the Council find that a consistent minority (this year, 43 percent) thinks the Twin Cities region is growing too fast. Some objected to the outward spread of growth, or "sprawl," on the developing edge of the metropolitan region. A growing number (36 percent) believe their own communities should slow growth. Reflecting a trend that has been rising since 2000, an increasing number of suburban residents raised concerns about higher density, or "crowding," in developed and developing areas.

Public opinion on growth in Twin Cities region



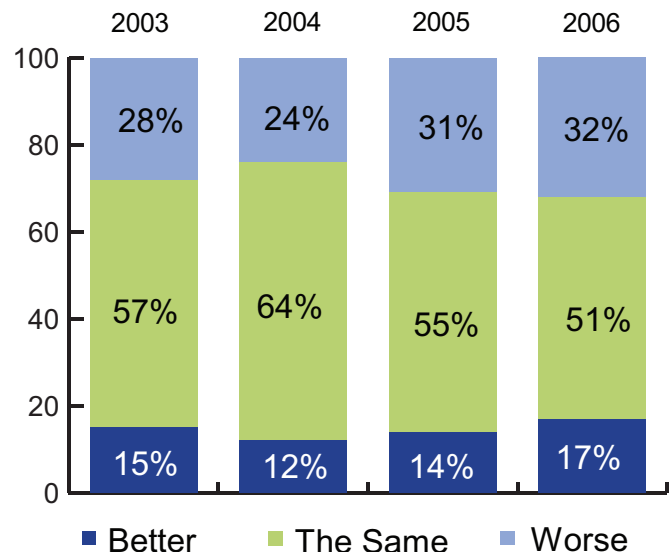
Public opinion on growth in their community



Regional quality of life good, but declining?

Positive feelings about the Twin Cities region have been consistent over 24 years of Council surveys. Ninety-seven percent of survey participants said the region is a better place to live than other metropolitan areas. Seventeen percent of those surveyed felt the region's quality of life improved during the past year, while 32 percent said it has declined.

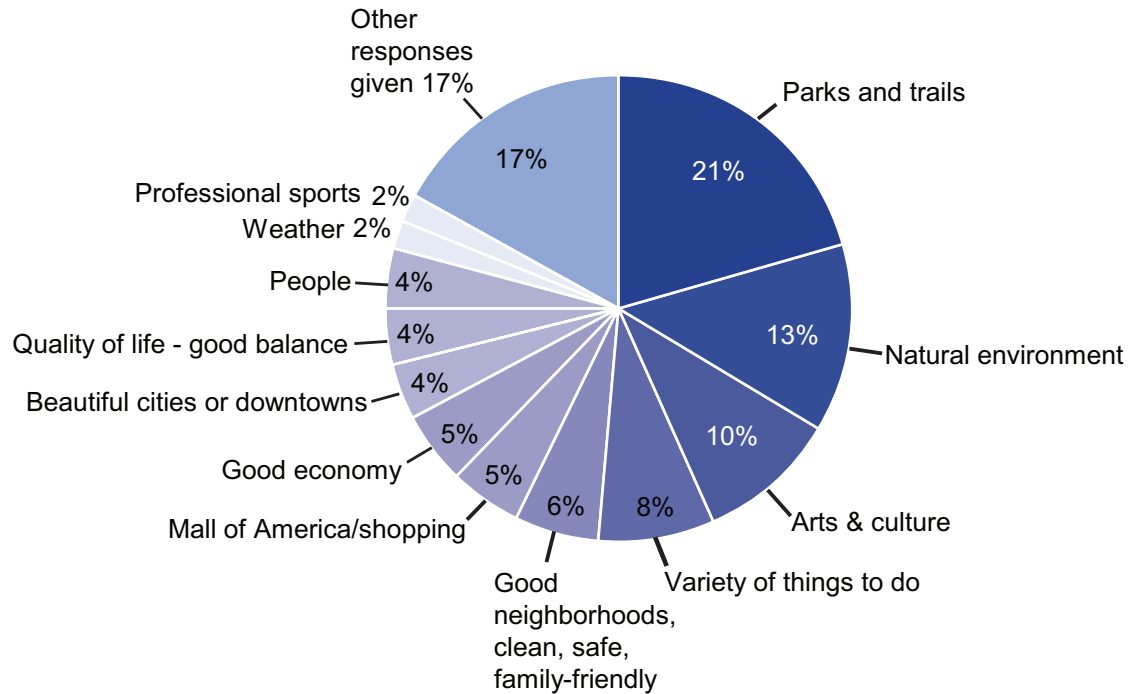
Do you think the quality of life has changed in the past year?



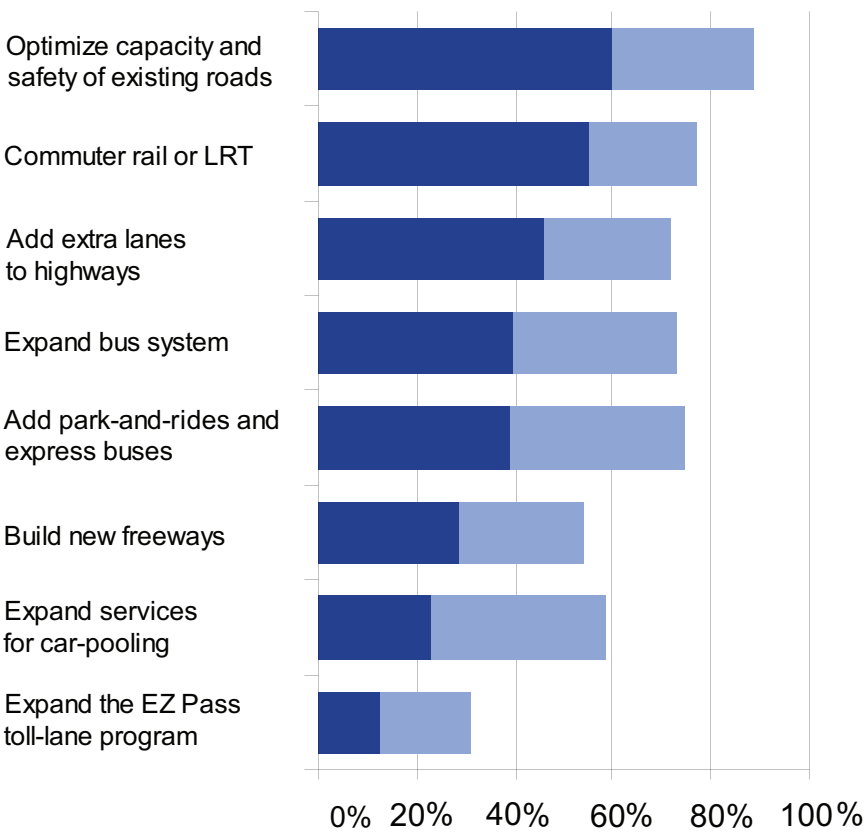
Parks and open space highly valued

When asked to name the “most attractive feature” of the region, 34 percent of residents identified parks, trails, lakes and the environment. The region’s arts and culture scene attracted 10 percent; 6 percent cited good neighborhoods. Another 8 percent of people surveyed expressed their appreciation for the region’s variety of activities and attractions.

Region’s most attractive feature

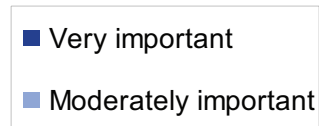


Transportation programs considered very important



Meeting transportation needs

A majority of the region’s residents say it is very important to expand the commuter/light rail transit system and improve existing roads. It’s not a matter of roads or transit; it’s roads AND transit.



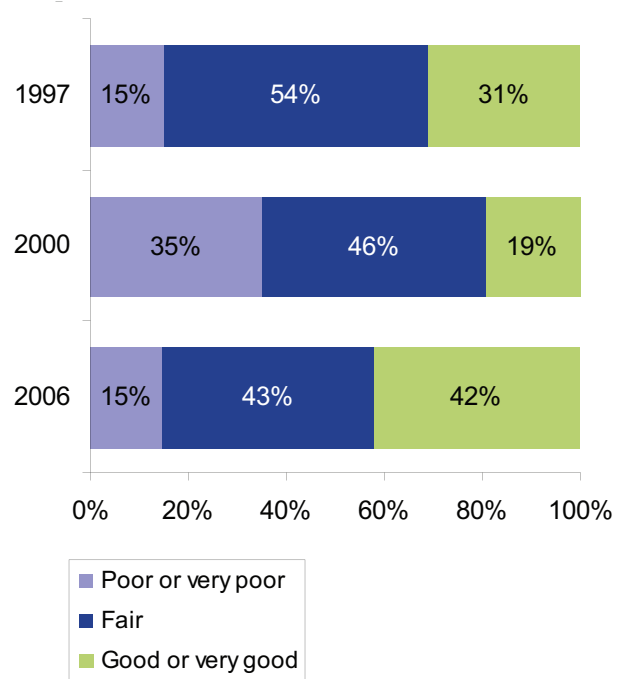
Metropolitan Council functions

The Metropolitan Council is the regional planning organization for the seven-county Twin Cities area. It 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 is appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the Governor.

Metropolitan Council performance

Positive public opinion about the Metropolitan Council has improved significantly over the 10 years residents have been asked about Council performance. Seventy-three percent of those surveyed said they have heard about the Metropolitan Council. Among that subset, 42 percent said the Council is doing a good or very good job, the highest rating the Council has received since this question was first asked in 1997.

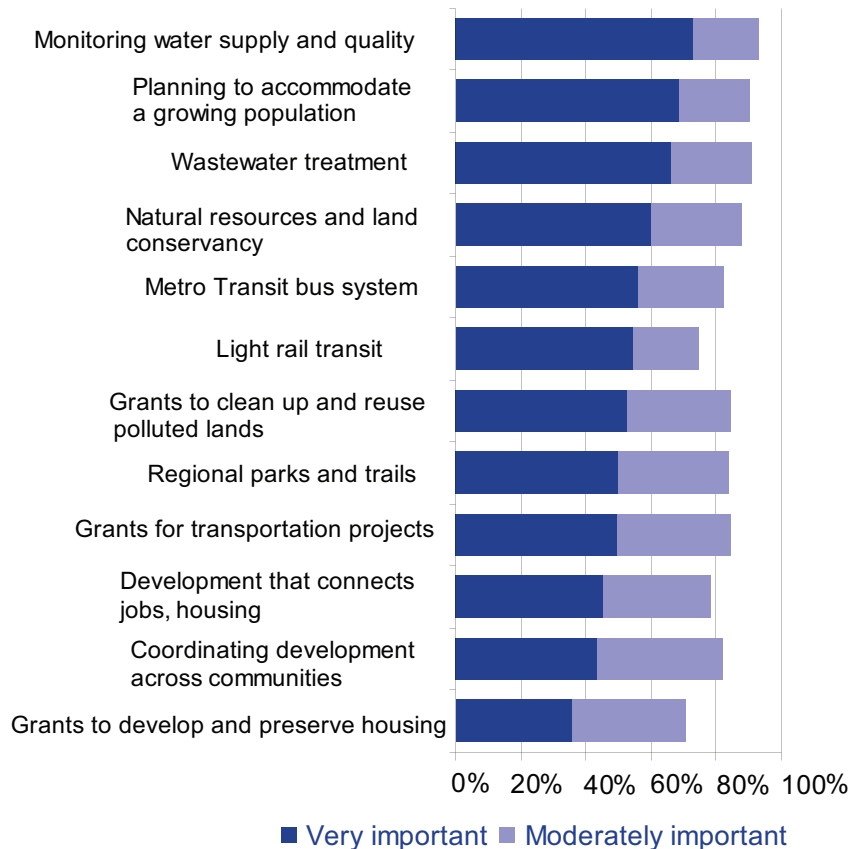
Public approval of Metropolitan Council performance



Importance of Council functions

At least 90 percent of those surveyed considered Council programs to monitor water supply and water quality, plan for regional growth, and treat the region's wastewater to be moderately or very important. Seventy to 90 percent of respondents gave similar ratings to each of the other Metropolitan Council programs considered by the survey.

Council programs considered very or moderately important



Methodology

Results are based on responses from 1,422 survey participants, collected in October and November 2006 by Metropolitan Council research staff and Information Specialists Group, Inc. Participants were randomly selected from adult residents of the seven-county region. Responses are weighted to reflect demographic and geographic distribution. Estimates presented here have a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percent.