**AT A GLANCE**

- 3.1 million residents in the seven-county area in 2017 (55 percent of total state population)
- 888,000 more people from 2010 to 2040 (31% increase) per Council forecasts
- 419,000 more households from 2010 to 2040 (38% increase) per Council forecasts
- 495,000 more jobs from 2010 to 2040 (32% increase) per Council forecasts
- 95.4 million transit rides in 2017
- 2.3 million rides on Metro Mobility in 2017
- 250 million gallons of wastewater treated daily
- 109 communities provided with wastewater treatment in 2017
- Eight treatment plants and 600 miles of regional sewers
- 58 million regional park visits in 2017
- 63 regional parks and park reserves totaling 55,000 acres in the seven-county metropolitan area
- 51 regional trails totaling 389 miles in the seven-county metropolitan area
- 7,200 low-income households provided affordable housing by the Council’s Metro HRA in 2017

**PURPOSE**

The Metropolitan Council is the regional policy-making body, planning agency, and provider of essential services for the Twin Cities metropolitan region. The Council’s mission is to foster efficient and economic growth for a prosperous region in partnership with more than 180 communities and seven counties.

We provide cost-effective transit and wastewater services, assist households with low and moderate incomes to find affordable housing, and support communities as they plan for anticipated growth.

As our region grows and its demographics change, the Council is working in partnership with communities to ensure we are prepared to support the continued growth of our region. As the economic engine of the state, the metro region’s health and vitality has a statewide impact. Through our planning activities and the provision of regional services, we contribute to the following statewide outcomes:

- A thriving economy that encourages business growth and employment opportunities
- A clean, healthy environment with sustainable uses of natural resources
- Sustainable options to safely move people, goods, services, and information
- A livable and attractive place for people of all races, ethnicities, incomes, and abilities to call home and be prosperous

The charts on the next page show appropriations to the Metropolitan Council recorded in SWIFT. The Council’s unified operating budget for calendar year 2018 is $1.1 billion. State appropriations for transit and parks operations and water supply planning provided approximately 38 percent of agency funding in CY18. The majority of our operating funding comes from charges for services (wastewater fees and passenger fares), federal funds, property taxes and local funds.
STRATEGIES

Our governing body – the 17-member Metropolitan Council – plays a key convening role, bringing together communities to develop policies and a shared vision for the region. To achieve our mission, we carry out planning initiatives and provide essential services to the region.

Planning Initiatives

• Our regional plan, Thrive MSP 2040, is the overarching policy and planning document that defines the regional vision, guides the development of the region through its land use policy, and defines the high level approach outlined in each related policy plans. Development of the document included several years of engagement with residents, local governments, and other partners to create a framework for a shared vision for a prosperous, equitable, and livable region.

• Regional planning initiatives include transportation, parks, water resources, community planning, and housing.

Transportation

• We continue to look for adequate financial resources to support the transit system. As the demand for service grows and service costs increase, revenue is not keeping up. We anticipate that transit demand will increase 80 percent by 2040. At the same time, forecasted growth in motor vehicle sales tax revenues, a major source of transit funding, has flattened and is volatile.

• Our Metro Transit bus and rail systems provide more than 80 million rides every year, getting people to work, school, and services. This contributes to managing road congestion by taking single-occupancy vehicles off metropolitan highways so businesses can move their goods efficiently.

• Our Metro Mobility and Transit Link services transport people unable to use regular-route transit service.

• Our transportation planners play a key role in collaborating with local communities to create our vision for roads, airports, and transit to ensure effective and cost-efficient investments.

Parks

• We partner with 10 parks implementing agencies to plan, acquire land, and develop facilities for regional parks and trails. Our goal is to preserve natural resources and provide recreational opportunities throughout the region.
Clean water and wastewater treatment
• We foster a safe and healthy environment through our award-winning and cost-effective wastewater treatment services, water supply planning, and water quality monitoring initiatives.

Planning and development
• Our Livable Communities grants help fund affordable housing; clean polluted land for redevelopment; and create new models for livable, walkable, connected neighborhoods and transit-oriented developments, stimulating and leveraging private investment and increasing communities’ tax base.
• We coordinate local communities’ comprehensive plans, providing technical assistance and resources, to ensure coordinated, orderly, and efficient development in the region.

Housing
• Our Housing Policy Plan identifies regional housing needs and priorities, connects housing to other Council system plans, and provides guidance for local housing planning.
• Our Metro HRA provides rent assistance for more than 7,200 low-income residents in nearly 100 communities.

Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 473 (https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=473) provides the legal authority for Metropolitan Council.
AT A GLANCE

- In calendar year 2017
  - 95.4 million total regional transit rides
  - 81.9 million Metro Transit rides
  - 2.3 million Metro Mobility rides
- Metro Green Line (Central Corridor)
  - Service initiated June 2014
  - Attracted $2.7 billion in development within one-half mile of the line
  - Created more than 5,400 jobs
- Metro Blue Line (Hiawatha)
  - 15,000 housing units developed within one-half mile of the line

PURPOSE & CONTEXT

Transportation is the engine of our regional – and state – prosperity. A reliable, affordable, and efficient transportation system promotes a competitive economy, safety and security, a healthy environment, and a livable region.

As our region continues to grow and adds more vehicles to our transportation system, transit is an ever-more critical component to our transportation system. Transit provides a sustainable, efficient, and effective option to address increasing roadway congestion and improve air quality. It is one of the most important assets to businesses looking to attract and retain employees. Our transportation planners continuously look for new and innovative ways to provide more efficient service that meets customer needs and to leverage the opportunities of emerging technologies to enhance the customer experience and improve service performance.

Transit functions are funded by passenger fares, advertising revenues, state appropriations, Motor Vehicle Sales Tax (MVST), local (county) sales taxes, federal revenue, and other local sources.

SERVICES PROVIDED

The Metropolitan Council is responsible for the state’s largest public transit system, which provides nearly 100 million rides each year on bus and rail in the region. Metro Transit, which operates Northstar Commuter Rail, light rail, and bus services, provides the bulk of those regional rides. Metro Transit has been at the forefront of improvements in our regional transit system, creating communities that are more equitable, economically competitive and sustainable. The American Public Transportation Association (APTA) named Metro Transit the 2016 System of the Year, recognizing the service for its safety, vehicle and facilities maintenance and operations, and record ridership.

Metropolitan Council also operates several services for people unable to access or use regular bus or rail route service. Metro Mobility provides rides to certified riders who are unable to use regular-route buses due to a disability or health condition. Transit Link is the Twin Cities dial-a-ride bus service for the general public, where regular-route transit service is not available. The Council also offers a regional commuter vanpool program, Metro Vanpool, which provides financial assistance for vanpools of five to 15 people, including a volunteer driver. This program is targeted to commuters going to and from work destinations throughout the region in areas not well served by the regular-route transit network.
In 2017, the region provided 95.4 million rides, through Metro Transit, the Council’s additional transit options, and the suburban transit providers. Metro Transit provided 81.9 million of those rides, and Metro Mobility provided 2.3 million rides. The Council:

- operates and maintains bus, light rail, and commuter rail services;
- adds new and expands existing bus routes to meet growing demand, and adjusts existing routes when necessary to meet market needs;
- develops a network of rail and bus “transitways” with service mode and alignment selected and implemented based on an extensive alternatives analysis and local input. Transitways include bus and rail transit that enable efficient, reliable travel times and an improved passenger experience on high-demand corridors in the region; and
- work with MnDOT, counties, and cities to increase the travel speed of transit through initiatives including bus-only shoulders, ramp meter bypasses, and signal priority.

**RESULTS**

**Transit Ridership**

Ridership measures transit system accessibility, quality, and system growth. Growth in ridership is an indication that more people are able to meet their mobility needs using transit. Existing transit ridership shown below includes all transit providers in the region. The second chart shows Metro Mobility ridership that is growing at faster rates than other transit.

![Regional Transit Ridership: 2009-2017](image)
Transit ridership continues to break records on a monthly and yearly basis. In 2017, the METRO Green Line LRT, METRO Blue Line LRT, and Northstar Commuter Rail line all broke ridership records. Among those highlights:

- 2017 ridership includes a record 13.1 million rides on the METRO Green Line, which has seen ridership grow every year since its 2014 opening. Ridership increased 3.5% from 2016 to 2017.
- METRO Green Line broke a record for the highest single-day ridership ever on Aug. 31, 2017, providing more than 68,000 rides.
- METRO Blue Line ridership increased nearly 4% from 2016 to 2017.
- Northstar Commuter Rail Line ridership increased nearly 12% from 2016 to 2017.

**Rapid bus introduces a faster trip and an improved experience**

Metro Transit opened the region’s first arterial rapid bus line in June 2016. The A Line operates along Snelling Avenue, Ford Parkway and 46th Street, connecting the METRO Blue and Green lines and several other destinations. The corridor includes the A Line and Route 84 from Rosedale on the north end, to the A Line southern terminus at the 46th Street LRT station and the Route 84 southern terminus at Shepard Rd and Davern Street. Rapid bus is a package of transit enhancements that adds up to a faster trip and an improved experience. A Line’s ridership success has been driven by strong connections to the light rail system, shopping destinations, and colleges and universities on the corridor. Among those highlights:

- Corridor ridership for the A Line and Route 84 grew 32% in the first year of A Line operations, compared to the year prior to June 11, 2016 when A Line service was launched.
- A Line provided more than 1.5 million rides in 2017.
- A Line averages 20-25% faster travel times than the previous Route 84 bus route.

The A Line is the first of several planned arterial rapid bus lines that will bring faster, more frequent service to the region’s busiest transit corridors.

- In 2017, Metropolitan Council broke ground on the C Line which will substantially replace Route 19, running primarily on Penn Avenue and Olson Memorial Highway.
Metropolitan Council is currently planning for the D Line, which will replace Route 5, the region’s single busiest bus route. During rush hour, Route 5 buses make up less than 2% of vehicle traffic but carry more than 20% of people traveling through the Route 5 corridor by automobile or bus.

**Hours of Delay Caused by Congestion**

Transit is one of several system-wide options to help ease congestion and enhance ease of movement throughout the region for our residents and businesses. Transit benefits all road users, not just transit riders. Metro congestion affects metro-area residents, workers from outside the metro area, businesses shipping or receiving goods, and travelers moving through the metropolitan area.

The number of hours spent in congestion is an indicator of roadway performance and of transportation-related impacts to air quality. Traffic congestion causes problems for travelers and shippers including extra travel time, unreliable travel time, and increased fuel costs. Congestion also impacts air quality through increased carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions.

The table shows the percent of directional freeway miles considered to be congested and shows that this measure of congestion had increased over time. Congestion is defined as vehicle speeds less than 45 miles per hour. If vehicle speeds are less than 45 miles per hour northbound on 35W in south Minneapolis from 7:30am to 9:30am, that section of freeway is considered to be congested.

![Metro Area Congested Freeway Miles](image)

Source: MnDOT Regional Transportation Management Center

Minnesota Statutes 473.371 through 473.449 (https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/473.371) prescribe the Metropolitan Council’s roles and responsibilities in transit.
AT A GLANCE

- Serve 186 communities, 105 water supply providers
- 74% of residents use groundwater as their source of water
- Municipal Water Use:
  - Current: 350 Million Gallons per day
    - 250 Million from Groundwater
    - 100 Million from Mississippi River
  - Projected (2030): 450 Million Gallons per day
    - 330 Million from Groundwater
    - 120 Million from Mississippi River
  - Average per capita water use per day: 100 gallons

PURPOSE & CONTEXT

The purpose of the Metropolitan Water Supply Planning is to ensure that supplies of potable water are sustainable and adequate for the region’s current population and projected growth.

SERVICES PROVIDED

The data and tools generated and the projects implemented by the Council’s Water Supply Planning Program benefit communities by enhancing communities’ planning processes, and ensuring a more coordinated and regionally sustainable approach to water supply. Cities in the region are the suppliers of water to residents, but the Council plays a coordinating and technical assistance role.

Council Role In Water Supply

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Council Role</th>
<th>Outcome/Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide technical assistance: information and tools</td>
<td>Better understanding of water supply issues and trends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop and update Regional Master Water Supply Plan</td>
<td>Guidance for local water supply systems and regional investments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide assistance in plan development and review services to local and state entities</td>
<td>Consistency of local water supply plans with the regional master plan (MS 103G.291, Subd.3(b))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyze regional and local water supply emerging issues and providing solutions</td>
<td>Local government units make informed and effective water supply decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitate cooperation between communities and support local effort</td>
<td>Regional, cost effective, long-term, reliable and sustainable solutions to current and potential problems</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RESULTS

From 2005 to 2017 the number of communities that received technical support from the council through facilitated sub-regional workgroups increased from 20 to 72.

Minnesota Statute 473.1565 (https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/473.1565) directs the Council to carry out water supply planning activities including development of a Master water Supply Plan.

Minnesota Statute 103G.291 (https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/103G.291) require that all local water supply plans in the metropolitan area, must be consistent with the Master Water Supply Plan (http://www.metrocouncil.org/Wastewater-Water/Planning/Water-Supply-Planning/Master-Water-Supply-Plan.aspx).
AT A GLANCE

- 58 million regional park and trail visits in 2017 in the seven-county metropolitan area
- 63 regional parks, special recreation features and park reserves totaling almost 55,000 acres in the seven-county metropolitan area
- 51 regional trails total 389 miles in the seven-county metropolitan area
- Ten regional park implementing agencies own and manage regional parks and trails

PURPOSE & CONTEXT

The purpose of the Metropolitan Regional Parks System is to meet the outdoor recreation needs of residents and visitors and to preserve natural resources, including green space and wildlife habitat. Regional parks and trails complement state parks and trails in the Metropolitan Area. Parks are critical to the Metropolitan Area’s current and future livability, sustainability, stewardship, and prosperity.

SERVICES PROVIDED

Under state law, Metropolitan Council is charged with overseeing the acquisition and development of regional parks and trails. The agency partners that own and operate the parks are called regional park implementing agencies. Together, Metropolitan Council and the ten regional park implementing agencies plan and finance the Metropolitan Regional Parks System. The ten agencies are:

- Anoka County Parks
- Carver County Parks
- Dakota County Parks
- Ramsey County Parks
- Scott County Parks
- Washington County Parks
- Three Rivers Park District
- Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board
- City of Bloomington Parks (portion of one park reserve)
- City of St. Paul Parks

Metropolitan Council’s responsibilities include:

- Choose locations for new regional parks and trails to serve the region’s growing population and to protect natural resources
- Review and approve park and trail master plans and plan amendments that define a park’s or trail’s location and costs for recreation facilities.
- Survey park and trail visitors to measure what activities they prefer, how far they travel, and how often they visit a park or trail.
- Disburse state and regional funds to park agencies to finance operations and maintenance, land acquisition, recreation facility construction and recreation programs and staff in accordance with state law and Council allocation plans.

In the last three biennia, the Legislature has appropriated 40 percent of the Parks and Trails Legacy funding to the Metropolitan Council, 40 percent to the Department of Natural Resources for state parks, and 20 percent to Greater Minnesota, with 1 percent “off the top” for Coordinating with Partners activities.
RESULTS

From 2004 to 2016, annual visits to regional parks and trails increased 57%, or 4% annually. The 2017 annual use estimate was 58.3 million visits, which represents an increase of 22% from 2016. This increase is due in some part to new, more accurate attendance estimates, which demonstrate that more visits are happening in off-peak times of the year (winter) than previously thought.

Park surveys done in 2016 showed that respondents have very positive impressions of regional parks and trails facilities in terms of quality of facilities and services and recreation opportunities. Ninety five percent of respondents rated the quality of facilities, services, and recreation opportunities very good (64%) or good (31%). Less than 1% rated quality as poor or very poor.

Source: Metropolitan Council Park User Surveys

Minnesota Statutes 473.351 and Minnesota Statutes 297A.94 (e) (3) authorize funds for operating and maintaining regional parks and trails. Minnesota Statutes 85.53, Subdivision 3 authorize allocations of Parks and Trails Legacy Fund appropriations among 10 regional park agencies.