

Information Item

Metropolitan Council



Meeting Date: July 12, 2023

Topic

Bumps in the Road: Lessons from the 2022 Population Estimates

District(s), Member(s):	All
Policy/Legal Reference:	Minn. Stat. § 473.24
Staff Prepared/Presented:	Matt Schroeder (651-602-1513)
Division/Department:	Community Development / Research

Background

Under Minn. Stat. § 473.24, the Metropolitan Council is responsible for preparing local population and household estimates for the cities and townships in the seven-county Twin Cities region. These are the official estimates used by other government agencies to determine local government aid and local street aid allocations. Estimates also assist planners across the region in evaluating the need for future investments in transportation, wastewater infrastructure, and housing. For additional background, see metro council.org/populationestimates.

Key findings

Lessons from the population estimates for April 1, 2022 include:

- The region's population grew to 3.197 million residents, a 1.1% increase from 2020. This is a slower growth rate than the region enjoyed between 2010 and 2020. Drivers of slower growth include rising death rates, increased numbers of people moving out of the region, and losses of residents in college dormitories and state prisons.
- Despite slower *regional* growth, Minneapolis, Bloomington, and many suburban cities on the developing edge of the region continue to add large numbers of people, driven by new housing developments.
- While the U.S. Census Bureau has estimated large population losses in Hennepin and Ramsey Counties, it is difficult to reconcile that with the strong housing market.

Working with local governments

Cities and townships are key partners in the construction of population estimates. Local governments supply critical data on residential development, review preliminary estimates, and (if they wish) challenge the estimates. This year, eight cities submitted questions about and/or challenges to the preliminary estimates. Comments for four cities were resolved by clarifying how estimates are calculated. The Council revised estimates for the other four cities, which corrected Council estimates of the housing stock and/or provided additional data, adding a total of 998 people to the preliminary estimates.

At the Council meeting, staff will provide a more detailed analysis of 2022 population estimates and the process by which they are calculated.