The Metropolitan Council’s housing-stock-based approach to estimating population involves answering three questions:

**HOW MANY HOUSING UNITS ARE IN THE COMMUNITY?**

- **Housing units in 2020** (U.S. Census Bureau)
- **Changes to housing stock since 2020** (Metropolitan Council surveys)

**HOW MANY HOUSEHOLDS OCCUPY THESE HOUSING UNITS?**

- **Occupancy rates** (U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Postal Service, and CoStar)

**HOW MANY PEOPLE LIVE IN THESE OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS?**

- **Average household sizes** (persons per household) (U.S. Census Bureau)

We start with the housing units from the 2020 Census, then we add units identified in our annual surveys of residential construction (building permits and other housing stock changes) and manufactured housing parks.

This results in the estimated number of housing units in each community, broken down by the type of housing.

Not all of these housing units are occupied; some are vacant.

To estimate the number of households, we examine occupancy rates in the community for different types of housing. These data come from the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey and Decennial Census as well as the U.S. Postal Service and CoStar.

This results in the estimated number of households in each community, again broken down by the type of housing.

Finally, we examine the average household sizes in the community for different types of housing. These data come from the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey and Decennial Census.

To arrive at the total population, we add in residents of “group quarters” (places like correctional facilities, college dormitories, emergency housing shelters, and nursing homes), measured by our annual survey of such facilities.

For more detail, see the estimates methodology, available from [https://www.metrocouncil.org/populationestimates](https://www.metrocouncil.org/populationestimates).