

INTRODUCTION

Saint Paul - Ramsey County Public Health (SPRCPH) provides a range of services to protect and improve the health of people and the environment in Ramsey County. SPRCPH is one of the largest local public health departments in the state. The department traces its origins to the appointment of the first public health officer by the city of Saint Paul in 1854. Saint Paul and Ramsey County's previously separate public health departments merged in 1997 through a joint powers agreement. The department is nationally accredited by the Public Health Accreditation Board. Through federal and state mandates, the department works with community partners to:

- Prevent the spread of disease
- Protect against environmental hazards
- Prevent injuries
- Promote and encourage healthy behaviors
- Plan and respond to health emergencies
- Ensure the quality and accessibility of health services

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This Community Health Assessment collects and analyzes health trends and concerns that can be addressed through public health programs, strategic planning, and community action. SPRCPH is pleased to present this Ramsey County Community Health Assessment snapshot of health in May 2025. To reflect Ramsey County's ever-changing, increasingly diverse population and its characteristics, the assessment selectively highlights emerging issues and trends in local population health.



What is a community health assessment?

A Community Health Assessment (CHA) is a study of local population health that identifies key health conditions and needs among county residents. This Community Health Assessment includes more than 80 health topics, organized into 13 topic areas, which describe conditions of health across Ramsey County.

This document is intended to:

- Serve as a reference for policy makers, residents, and community leaders to identify and understand local health issues
- Improve our understanding of community experience, particularly as it affects individual, family, and community health
- Engage the work of advancing health equity with hope for the future
- Share information that supports people and organizations in Ramsey County developing their own plans for improving health
- Guide county and department priorities, strategic planning, and quality improvement
- Address [Foundational Public Health Responsibilities](#)
- Meet [Public Health Accreditation standards](#)
- Fulfill state law - [MN Statute 145A](#)

This report includes the most recent data available for all sources, and demographic data are reported based on availability from individual sources (e.g., data are not available for all racial/ethnic groups and gender identities across all sources). When available, data are reported to the tenths place. Some data are combined across multiple years to avoid data suppression.



Limitations

This assessment provides selected data on a wide range of health topics from many different sources. Each source has its own limitations, which may include how indicators are defined (e.g., different ways of measuring adequacy of prenatal care), how data are collected (e.g., health provider data rely on the accuracy and completeness of National Provider Identification numbers assigned to providers), and how data are analyzed (e.g., whether rates are crude or age-adjusted). Additionally, availability of data varies. Some data may not exist at all, and some data are only available for certain years, certain geographies, or certain demographics. This report presents data for the most recent years available and prioritizes data by Census tract and demographics (when possible).

Terminology

This report uses several terms or acronyms with specific definitions, including:

Crude rate: Rates that do not consider age differences or other differences during analysis. These are calculated based on the number of events (e.g., deaths, cases of disease or condition) and the population within a certain geography.

Age-adjusted rate: Rates that consider age differences during analysis to eliminate differences between groups of people based solely on age. For example, cancer tends to be more prevalent among older people, so communities with higher proportions of older adults would have higher crude rates of cancer. Adjusting for age during analysis can address this concern and provide a more accurate picture of cancer prevalence when comparing geographies.

Incidence: The number of new cases or diagnoses of a condition, disease, or illness that occur within a certain period of time.

Metro-area counties: This term is used throughout this report to refer to the seven-county Twin Cities metro area. These counties include Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, and Washington counties.

Prevalence: The proportion of a population that has a condition, disease, or illness.

Race and ethnicity: This report uses racial/ethnic identity terms used by the original data source. For example, the United States Census Bureau uses the term “Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish,” while other sources may use “Hispanic or Latino” or “Latino/a/e.” Additionally, note that this report only includes data for racial/ethnic groups as available. For example, many data sources do not have sufficient data regarding Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander people. Accordingly, many of the charts in this report lack data specific to this population.

Gender identity and sex: This report also uses gender identity and sex terms used by the original data source. For example, some sources may use “male” and “female” (i.e., sex) and others may use “man” and “woman” (i.e., gender). Additionally, note that this report only includes data for other sex and gender identities as available, and many data sources lack sufficient data for these identities (e.g., intersex people, transgender people, non-binary people).

HEALTH INEQUITIES AND SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

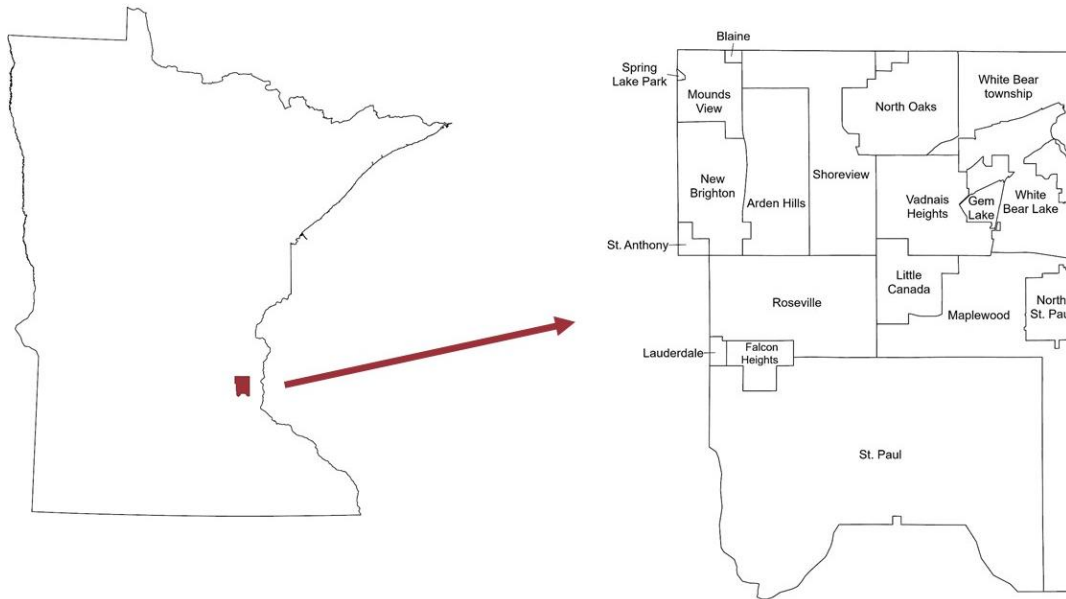
Social determinants of health refer to the social, economic, and environmental conditions and systems that impact health and well-being. They pertain to a wide range of factors, such as income and wealth, housing, education, employment, racism and discrimination, public safety, transportation, access to healthcare resources, social services, and social connection. Together, social determinants of health have a greater impact on health than health care services.¹⁶⁴

Social determinants of health are also shaped by current and historical systems, decisions, and policies regarding how power and resources are distributed. Many of these systems, decisions, and policies benefit specific populations of privilege (e.g., white people, people with higher incomes) while disadvantaging marginalized populations (e.g., Black, Indigenous, and people of color [BIPOC], people with lower incomes), leading to health inequities and disparities. This report includes data and findings related to health inequities and disparities that stem from discriminatory systems, decisions, and policies. Examples specific to this report's topic areas include:

- Access to medical care: Discriminatory policies that rely on false and racist reasoning to deny coverage among insurance companies and brokers have led to disparities in health insurance coverage for Black Americans.⁴⁹
- Babies, children, and families: Racism, the lack of culturally-specific and culturally-responsive care, and inequities in income, health insurance coverage, and access to high-quality of care all contribute to poorer outcomes for birthing parents and infants of color.⁷²
- Chronic disease: Racist residential housing zoning laws lead to wealth inequities, poor housing quality, and greater environmental health concerns among Black, Latina/o/e, and Indigenous communities, resulting in higher rates of asthma.⁸⁵
- Economic conditions: Homeownership is one of the most significant ways to accumulate wealth in the United States, but current and historical discriminatory policies and practices related to housing have disproportionately prevented access to home ownership opportunities for communities of color, particularly Black communities.¹⁸⁴
- Environment: Older housing is more likely to contain lead-based paint and cause lead exposure to children, and children living in poverty are more likely to live in older housing.¹⁰²
- Infectious disease: Racial and ethnic disparities in immunizations are due to how vaccines are distributed, lack of trust in health and medical systems due to racism, and inequities in health insurance coverage and access to care.⁷⁹
- Injury: Lower-income workers are more likely to live further from their jobs and have longer commute times, increasing the likelihood of experiencing a motor vehicle crash.⁶⁷
- Mental health: Racism and the pressure experienced by Black, Indigenous, and people of color to adapt to dominant white culture significantly contribute to poor mental health.⁶
- Mortality: People with higher incomes and more education have higher life expectancies, and Latina/o/e, Indigenous, and Black people are more likely to have lower incomes and less education.⁷¹
- Nutrition and physical health: People with lower incomes are more likely to be exposed to unhealthy food advertising and live in neighborhoods with less access to grocery stores. Access to healthy foods for people with mobility disabilities greatly relies on transportation availability.¹
- Substance use: Exposure to community violence and experiences of discrimination, victimization, and trauma are more common in underresourced neighborhoods and increase the risk of substance misuse.⁸¹
- Violence and crime: Income inequality, limited economic opportunities, and lack of access to social services contribute to violent behavior and crime.⁸

COUNTY OVERVIEW

Ramsey County is centrally located in the Minneapolis-Saint Paul metropolitan region and is home to striking landscapes, a diverse population, and is the heart of Minnesota's state government. More than 500,000 Minnesotans make their homes in Ramsey County, almost 10 percent of the state's residents.¹³⁷ Eighteen cities and one township comprise the county, which is one of the most densely populated and racially diverse counties in Minnesota. The diversity of Ramsey County's landscape and population is one of the region's greatest strengths.



Saint Paul is the largest city in Ramsey County and is known for its walkable neighborhoods, the state capitol, and expansive views of the Mississippi River Valley. The city is a hub for transportation, health care, education and government. The suburban municipalities to the north are nestled amongst lakes and wetlands. Ramsey County includes all or part of the following cities: Arden Hills, Blaine, Falcon Heights, Gem Lake, Lauderdale, Little Canada, Maplewood, Mounds View, New Brighton, North Oaks, North Saint Paul, Roseville, Saint Anthony, Saint Paul, Shoreview, Spring Lake Park, Vadnais Heights, White Bear Lake, White Bear Township. Regionally important colleges, retail hubs, and corporate campuses contribute to the culture of Ramsey County.

The Ramsey County Parks & Recreation system encompasses more than 6,500 acres consisting of six regional parks including an aquatic center, a winter recreation area, Tuj Lub (traditional Hmong game) courts, swimming beaches, and the Tamarack Nature Center.^{153, 152} The system also comprises six regional trail corridors, nine county parks, nine protected open space sites, 11 indoor ice arenas and community hubs, four golf courses, and an indoor fieldhouse and turf facility.

There are seven hospitals located within Ramsey County including Regions Hospital, a Level I Trauma Center for both adults and children. The county is also headquarters for the M Health Fairview Health System, which operates four hospitals, 14 clinics, medical transportation and a variety of other outpatient services. Additional health systems with hospitals or clinics within the county include: HealthPartners, Allina Health, and Children's Hospitals and Clinics of Minnesota. There are six Federally Qualified Health Center clinics that provide medical, dental, and mental health services to primarily low-income, uninsured or under-insured residents, including Dorothy Day Place – Minnesota Community Care (MCC), McDonough Homes Clinic (MCC) Open Cities Health Center North End Clinic, Riverland Community Health (formerly United Family Medicine), Open Cities Health Center Dunlap Street Clinic, West Side Dental Clinic (MCC).

GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE

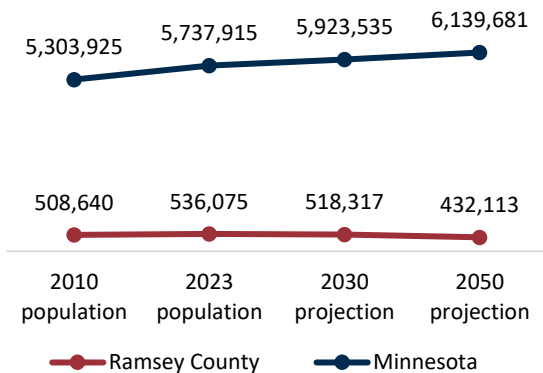
Ramsey County was established on October 27, 1849, one of the original counties of the Minnesota Territory. In 1990, Ramsey County citizens voted to become the first and only Home Rule Charter County in Minnesota. Adopted in 1992, the charter authorizes more autonomy to Ramsey County for local governance.

A seven-member elected Board of Commissioners governs Ramsey County. Commissioners are responsible for authorizing resolutions, adopting the annual budget, appointing committees, hiring a County Manager, and serving as the legislatively mandated Community Health Board (CHB). The County Manager is responsible for carrying out the policies and resolutions of the Board of Commissioners, for overseeing the day-to-day operations of the county, and for appointing the heads of the county's departments. The County Attorney and Sheriff are also elected officials.

Population trends

- The population in Ramsey County is projected to decline over time, while the Minnesota population overall is projected to increase.

1. Population trends



Source: Minnesota State Demographic Center.¹³⁸

Age and sex

- Ramsey County has more younger people (under age 40) than older age groups.
- The median age is lower in Ramsey County compared to other counties in the seven-county Twin Cities metropolitan area.¹⁷⁹
- Age distribution patterns look relatively similar for males and females with one exception. A considerably higher proportion of Ramsey County residents age 80 and older are female.

2. Median age by metro-area county, 2023

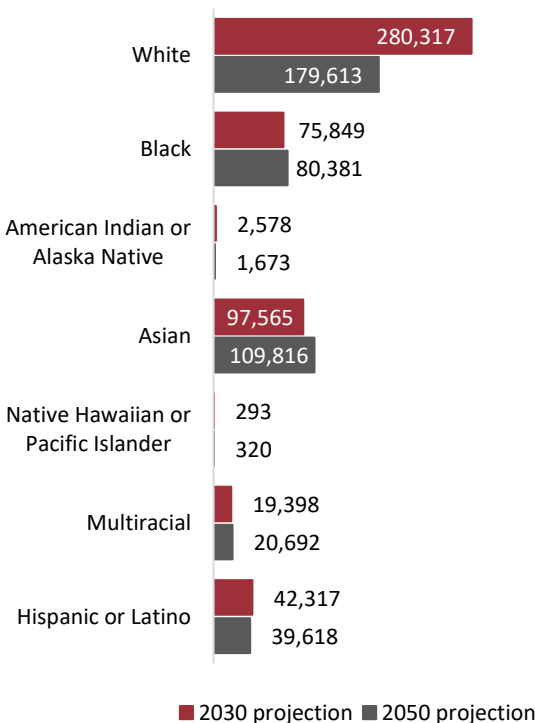
County	Median age
Anoka County	38.8
Carver County	38.5
Dakota County	38.4
Hennepin County	37.2
Ramsey County	35.7
Scott County	37.3
Washington County	39.8
Anoka County	38.8
Carver County	38.5
Dakota County	38.4

Source: Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development.⁹²

Race and ethnicity

- White people comprise the majority of the Ramsey County population, followed by Asian and Black people.
- The population of white residents is projected to decline significantly over time, while the populations of Black, Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, or multiracial residents are projected to increase.

3. Population by race/ethnicity, Ramsey County

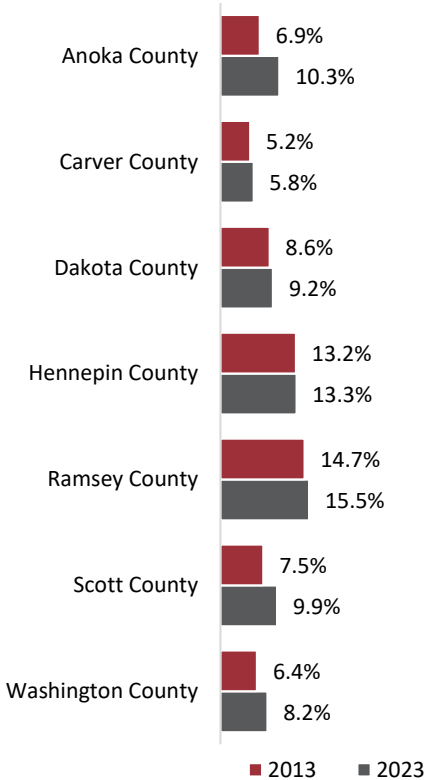


Source: Minnesota State Demographic Center.¹³⁸

Foreign-born residents

- Ramsey County has the highest foreign-born population compared to other metro-area counties.
- The percentage of Ramsey County's population that is foreign-born increased between 2013 and 2023.

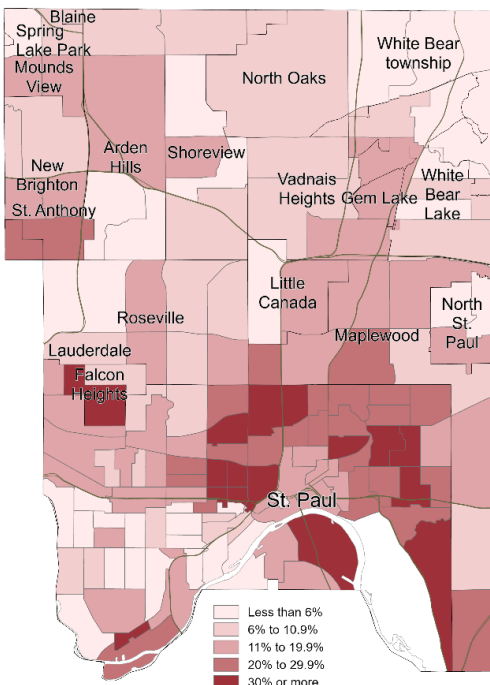
4. Foreign-born residents by metro-area county



Source: United States Census Bureau.¹⁷⁵

- The percentage of the population that is foreign-born is higher in Saint Paul and Falcon Heights compared to other areas of Ramsey County.

5. Foreign-born residents in Ramsey County, 2023

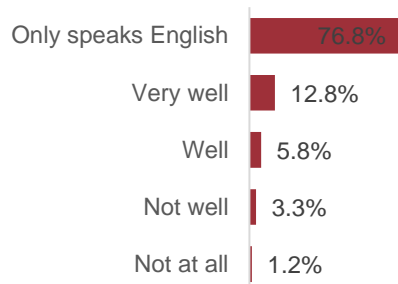


Source: United States Census Bureau.¹⁸⁰⁹

Language

- Most Ramsey County residents only speak English, while small percentages report that they speak English “not well” or “not at all.”

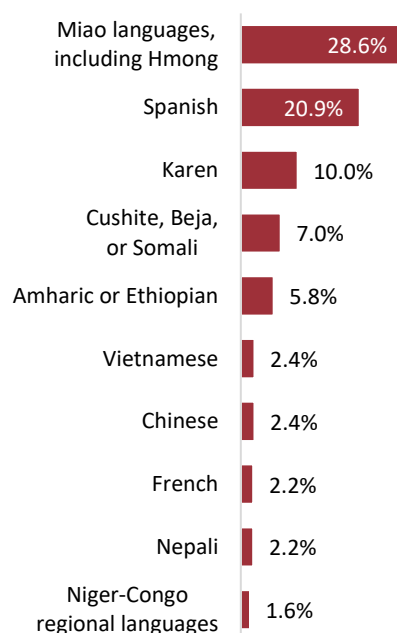
6. Self-reported English ability among residents age five and older, Ramsey County, 2022



Source: United States Census Bureau.¹⁷⁹

- Among non-English speaking households in Ramsey County, Hmong and other Miao languages, Spanish, and Karen are the most common languages spoken.

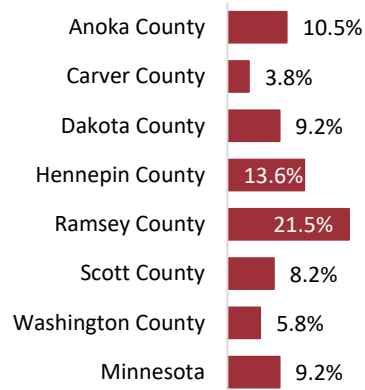
7. Top ten languages spoken in Ramsey County non-English speaking households, 2022



Source: United States Census Bureau.¹⁷⁹

- Ramsey County has a much higher percentage of students who are English language learners compared to other metro-area counties.

8. English language learners in schools by metro-area county, 2023

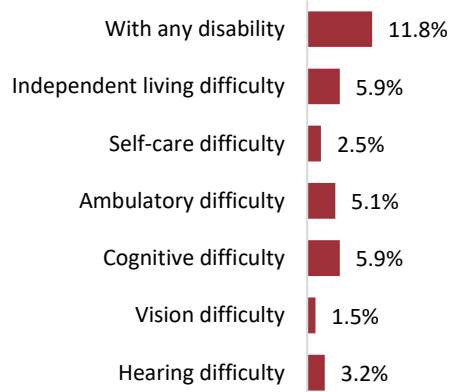


Source: Minnesota Department of Education.⁹⁰

Disability

- In 2023, 11.8% of the Ramsey County population had a disability.
- The most common disabilities are independent living difficulties and cognitive difficulties.

9. Disability, Ramsey County, 2023

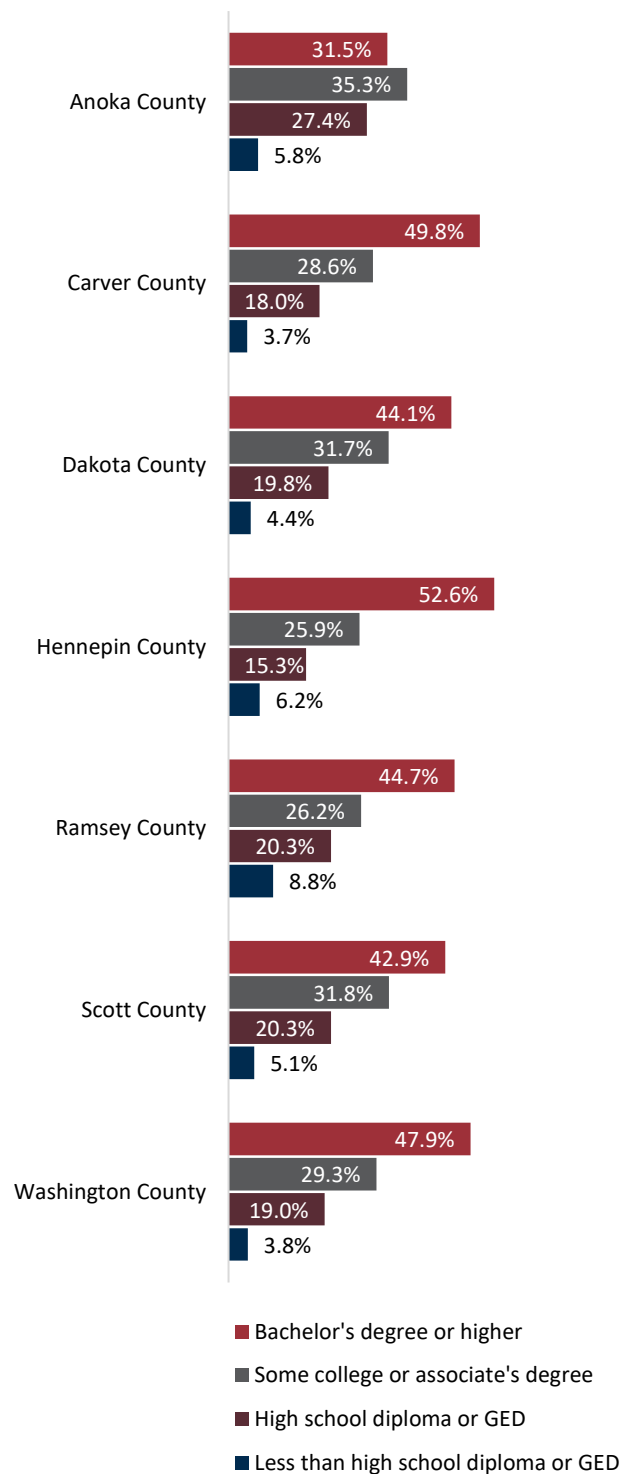


Source: United States Census Bureau.¹⁸⁰

Educational attainment

- The percentage of the population age 25 years or older with less than a high school diploma or GED is highest in Ramsey County compared to other metro-area counties.
- The percentage of people with a high school diploma or GED in Ramsey County is higher than the percentages in Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, and Washington counties but lower compared to Anoka County.
- The metro-area county with the lowest percentage of people who have completed some college or earned an associates degree is Hennepin County, followed by Ramsey County.
- The percentage of people with a bachelor's degree or higher is highest in Hennepin County, followed by Carver County, Washington County, and Ramsey County.

10. Educational attainment among population ages 25 years and older by metro-area county, 2022

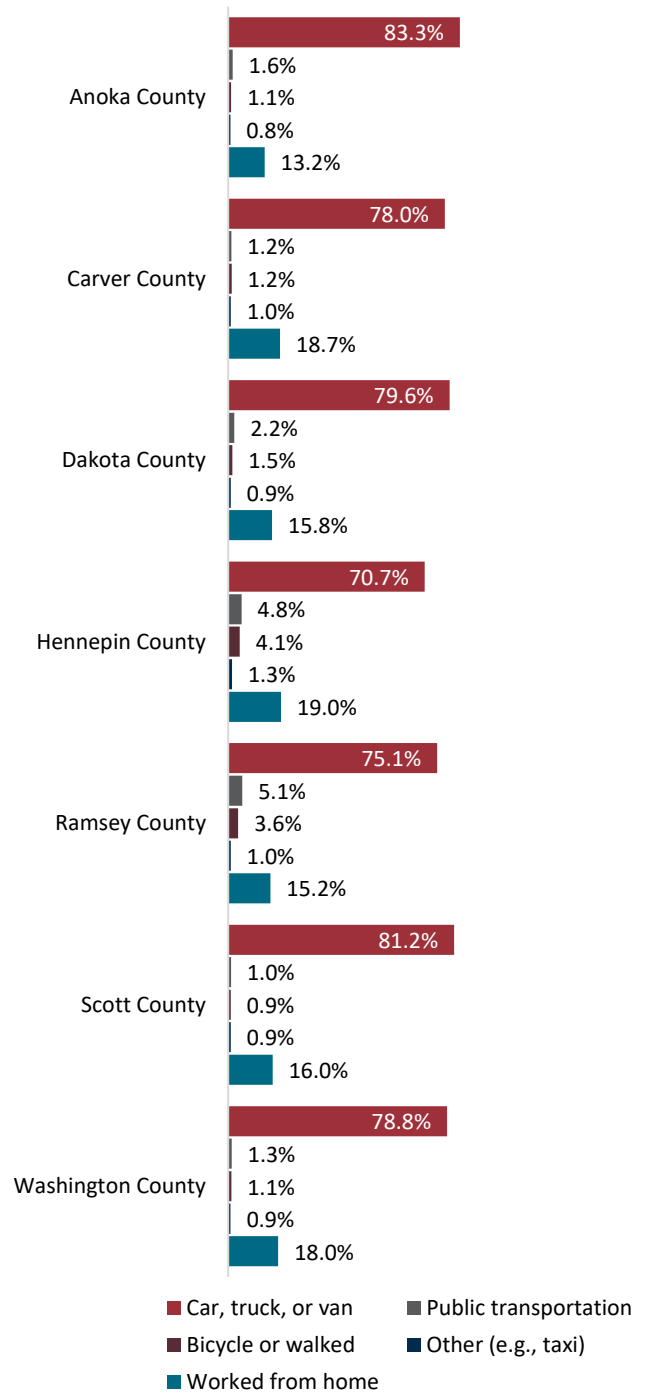


Source: United States Census Bureau.¹⁷⁹

Transportation

- In 2023, Ramsey County had the second lowest rate of people who took a car, truck, or van to work compared to other metro-area counties.
- Ramsey County had the highest percentage of people who took public transportation to work and the second highest percentage of people who walked or rode a bicycle.
- Ramsey County had the second lowest rate of people who worked from home.

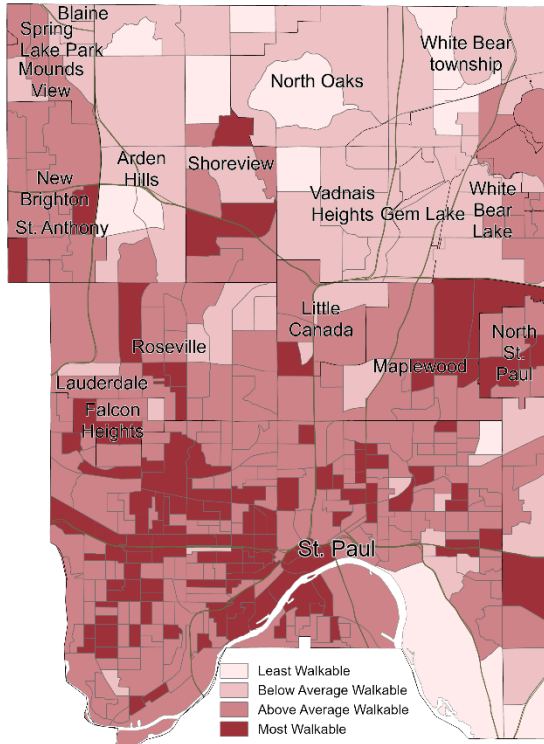
11. Mode of transportation to work by metro-area county, 2023



Source: Census Reporter.¹⁶

- The suburban neighborhoods in northern and southeastern Ramsey County are less walkable than the other areas of Ramsey County.

12. Walkability, Ramsey County, 2021

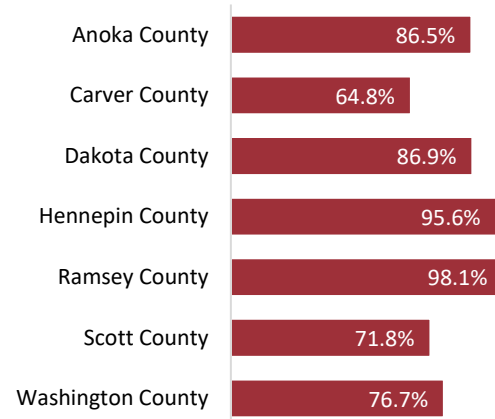


Source: United States Environmental Protection Agency.¹⁸¹

Park access

- In 2020, the percentage of residents that lived within 1/2 mile from a park was highest in Ramsey County compared to other metro-area counties.

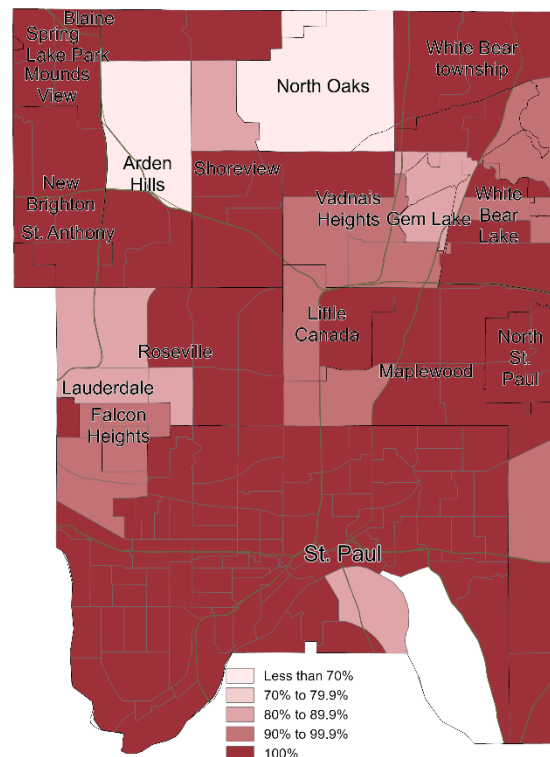
13. Residents that live within 1/2 mile of a park by metro-area county



Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.⁴²

- Residents of most neighborhoods in Ramsey County live within 1/2 mile of a park.

14. Residents that live within 1/2 mile of a park, Ramsey County, 2020

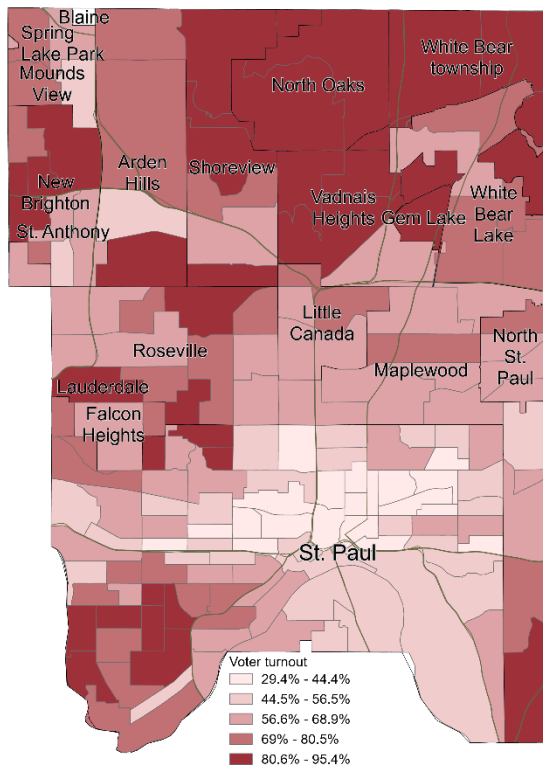


Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.⁴²

Voter turnout

- In the 2024 election, voter turnout varied widely across Ramsey County. Voter turnout was lower in precincts closer to downtown Saint Paul in the 2024 election. It was highest in the northern and southwest areas of Ramsey County.

16. Voter turnout, Ramsey County, 2024



Source: Ramsey County.¹⁵⁷

Note: The data presented here represent votes cast as a percentage of the voting-age population. These likely underestimate voter turnout, as not all people who are voting age are eligible to vote (e.g., people who are not U.S. citizens, people who have been convicted of certain crimes).