

# 1.0 Introduction and Background

The Metropolitan Council forecasts a continued trend of population, household, and employment growth in Anoka County and the entire Twin Cities Metropolitan region through the year 2030 (see Section 1.3).<sup>1</sup> This growth will generate increased demands on county and regional transportation systems. Other demographic trends, including a growing elderly population, and suburbanization and decentralization of where people live and work, will impact travel patterns and transportation needs. Figure 1-1 demonstrates the interrelatedness of the county transportation network (see Section 3.0), changing demographics (addressed in this section), and funding methods (see Section 8.0) to address future needs.

What does Anoka County need to do to meet the transportation needs of the future?

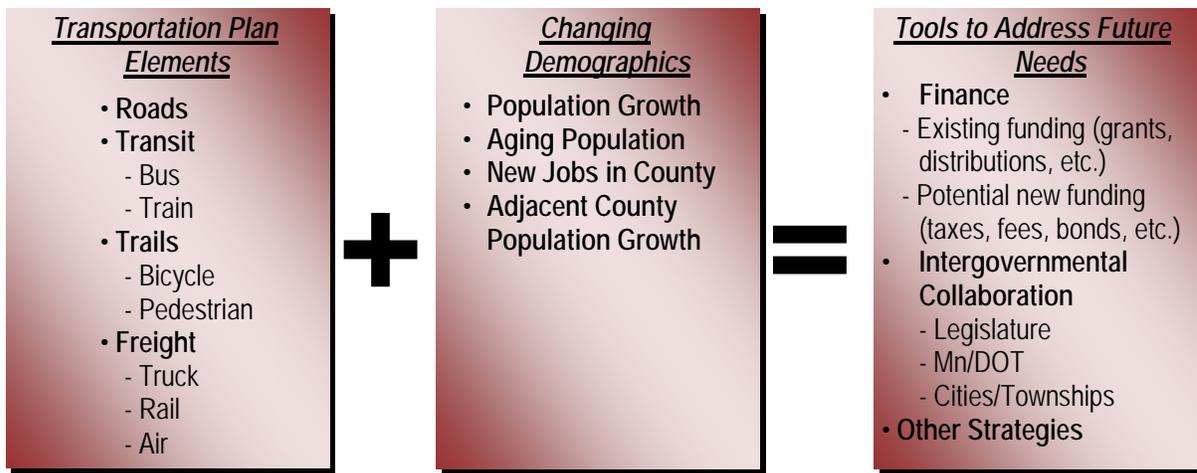


Figure 1-1  
**Anoka County Transportation System Components**

## 1.1 Context of 2030 Transportation Plan Development

### 1.1.1 State and Regional Requirements and Planning Documents

The State of Minnesota’s Metropolitan Land Planning Act requires communities located within the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area to periodically review and update their local comprehensive plans.<sup>2</sup> Plan updates must be consistent with the goals in the Metropolitan Council’s 2030 Regional Development Framework for the purposes of guiding the region’s development.

<sup>1</sup> In addition to Anoka County, the other six counties that comprise the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area include Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, and Washington. The Metropolitan Council conducts regional planning for these seven counties.

<sup>2</sup> The Metropolitan Land Planning Act was first passed in 1976 and has been amended several times since. For the current cycle, plans are due to the Metropolitan Council in 2008.

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The Metropolitan Council developed the Transportation Policy Plan (TPP, completed in 2004 and revised in 2006 and 2007) to supplement the Framework and assist with planning in the seven-county Twin Cities Metropolitan Area or region. The Metropolitan Council also developed the Local Planning Handbook (September 2005, updated April 2008) to guide and support counties and communities develop and amend their plans.

The 2008-2030 Mn/DOT Metro District Transportation System Plan (TSP) is also a key planning document within the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area.<sup>3</sup> The TSP serves as a guide for future investments to the state trunk highway system within the region, including trunk highways in Anoka County, and incorporates the direction set out in the Statewide Transportation Plan and Mn/DOT Strategic Directions.

Several highways within the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area that connect to Greater Minnesota are identified as Interregional Corridors (IRCs) by Mn/DOT. This includes US 10 and the I-35 corridor as high priority corridors within Anoka County.<sup>4</sup> These highways are recognized as important to the region's and state's plans. Improvements to IRCs within Anoka County and the rest of the Twin Cities region have been identified as key to meeting performance measures related to improving connections within and to regional trade centers. However, the fiscally-constrained planned investments outlined in the 2008-2030 Mn/DOT Metro District TSP, do not include the majority of these projects.

In addition to meeting the county's needs, the Anoka County 2030 Transportation Plan (the Plan) was developed to meet the Metropolitan Council's transportation planning requirements as identified in the documents discussed above. Additionally, the Plan was developed with recognition of future transportation projects identified in the Metropolitan Council's TPP and the 2008-2030 Mn/DOT Metro District TSP.

### 1.1.2 Fiscal Context of Plan Development

Mn/DOT and the Metropolitan Council have operated under a fiscally constrained funding outlook for transportation improvements for the past several years. Planning documents for both agencies present "unconstrained" transportation improvement plans, aimed at identifying improvements needed to accommodate existing and future demand as well as constrained plans, which identify improvements based on reasonably anticipated funding levels. As such, this Plan was also developed using both an unconstrained and constrained outlook.

## 1.2 County Overview

### 1.2.1 Demographic Trends Affecting the Anoka County Transportation System

Anoka County is located in the northern part of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area (see Figure 1-2). The county includes 20 cities and one township, as shown on Figure 1-3. As shown in Table 1-1 and discussed below, the county has experienced considerable growth in terms of population, households, and employment. This trend is anticipated to continue through 2030.

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<sup>3</sup> Mn/DOT Metro District covers eight counties. In addition to the seven counties included in the Metropolitan Area recognized by the Metropolitan Council, Mn/DOT Metro also covers Chisago County.

<sup>4</sup> TH 65 is categorized as a regional corridor, however, a corridor study has not been conducted for this corridor.

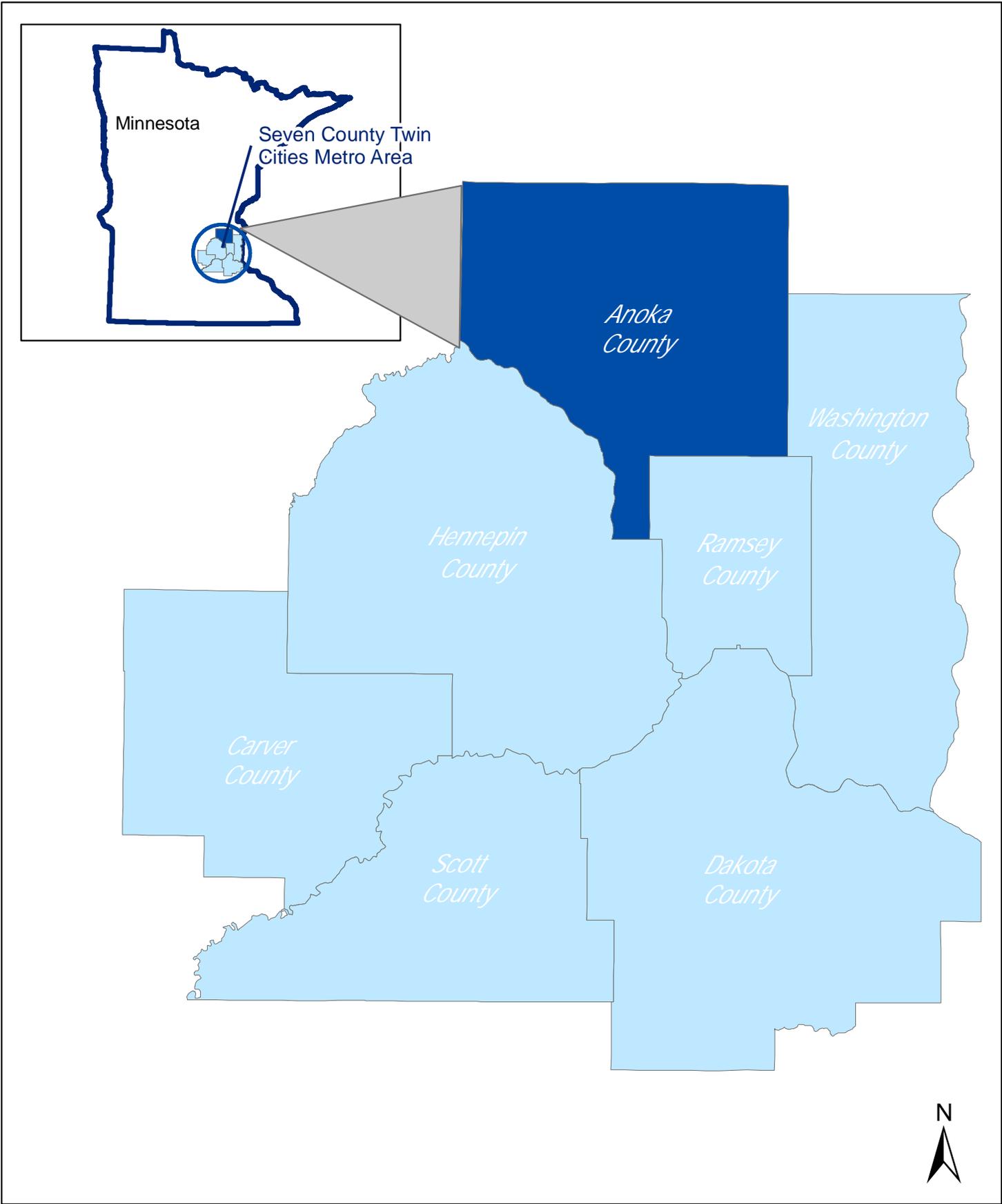


Figure 1-2  
**Seven County Twin  
Cities Metropolitan Area**

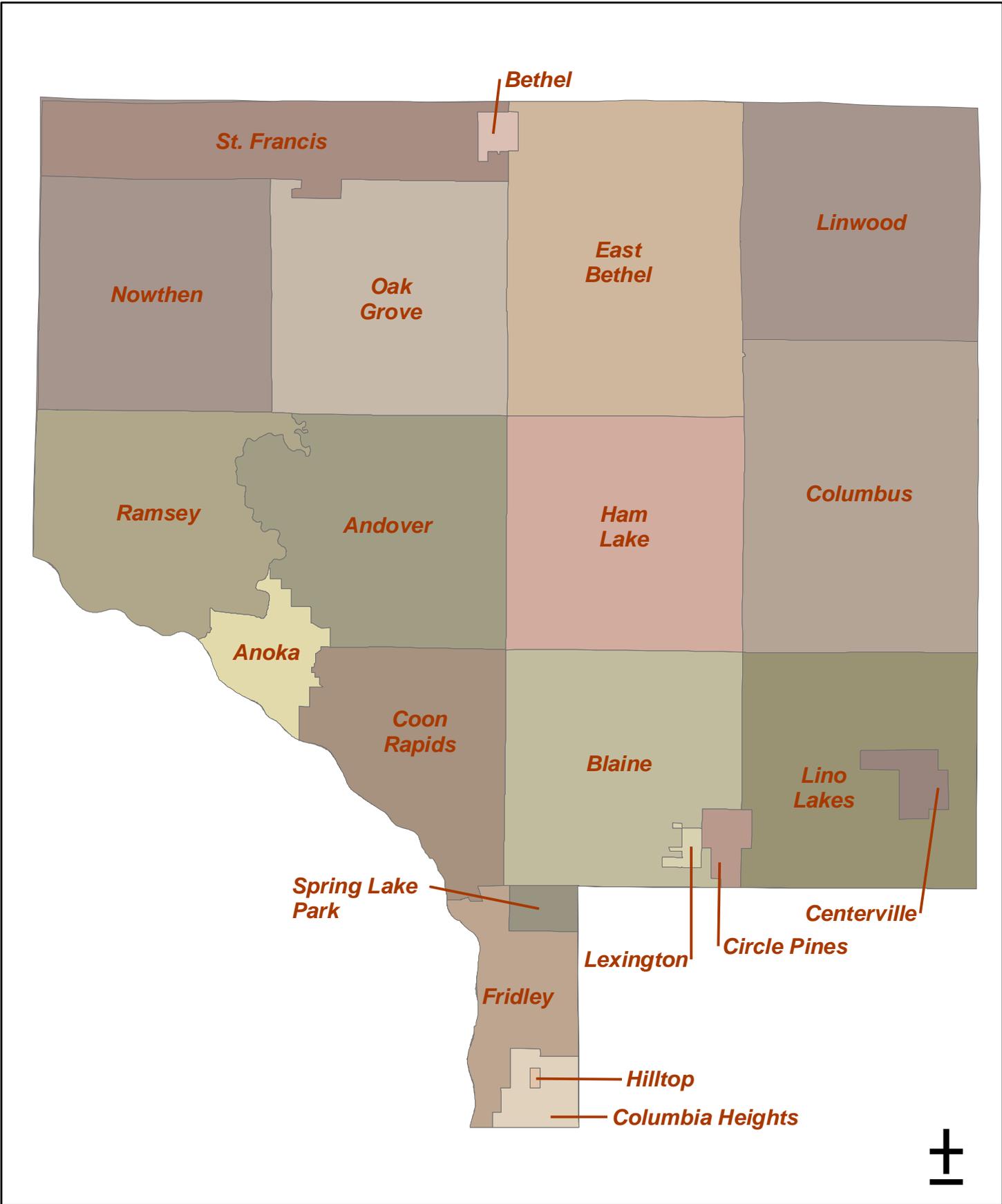


Figure 1-3  
**Anoka County  
 Communities**

TABLE 1-1

Anoka County Population, Households, and Employment Trends, 1990-2030

	1990 Census	2000 Census	2006 Estimate <sup>1</sup>	2010 Forecast <sup>2</sup>	2020 Forecast <sup>2</sup>	2030 Forecast <sup>2</sup>
<b>Population</b>	243,688	298,084	328,614	362,170	407,710	425,260
<b>Households</b>	82,437	106,428	119,138	136,370	157,760	168,690
<b>Employment</b>	81,132	106,814	n/a	127,050	141,730	153,810

1 —Source: Metropolitan Council estimate, April 1, 2006.

2 —Source: Metropolitan Council Revised Forecasts for 2030 Regional Development Framework, January 9, 2008.

### Population Trends

Anoka County is the fourth most populous county in Minnesota. As shown in Table 1-1, the county has grown substantially since 1990. The Metropolitan Council forecasts that by 2030, the county's population will increase roughly 125,000 over the year 2000 population.

The growth taking place in Anoka County is reflective of regional trends. By 2030, the Metropolitan Council expects that the region will grow by nearly one million people, 470,000 households and 560,000 jobs. This growth is anticipated to generate an additional four million daily trips on the region's roadways—an increase of 37 percent.<sup>5</sup>

### Employment Trends

The Twin Cities Metropolitan Area includes eight major employment centers, all located in Hennepin or Ramsey Counties.<sup>6</sup> These centers are important to note, however, the general trend within the region is that most employment is occurring in decentralized areas, outside of the eight major employment centers, as shown in Table 1-2.

TABLE 1-2

Twin Cities Regional Employment Growth 2000–2030

Region	Growth (# of Jobs)		
	2000	Growth	2030
Eight Major Employment Concentration Areas	629,000	184,000	813,000
Seven-county Region—Other	933,000	403,000	1,336,000
Seven-county Region—Total	1,562,000	587,000	2,149,000

Source: Metropolitan Council, Factors Shaping Transit Success presentation.

Figure 1-4 shows the concentration of jobs by community, within the seven-county Twin Cities region. Within Anoka County, jobs are concentrated in the south, which is consistent

<sup>5</sup> Source: Metropolitan Council, Transportation Policy Plan, 2004, revised 2006 and 2007, p. 7.

<sup>6</sup> Employment Centers are defined as areas with over 50,000 contiguous jobs at 5.0 jobs per acre or greater density. The eight Employment Centers in the Twin Cities Metro Area that meet these criteria are: 1) Downtown Minneapolis, 2) Downtown St. Paul, 3) Midway/University, 4) I-494/Airport, 5) I-494/Highway 100, 6) I-494/Golden Triangle, 7) I-394, and 8) Roseville/NE Minneapolis (Source: Metropolitan Council, Factors Shaping Transit Success presentation).



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with closer proximity to the cities of Minneapolis-St. Paul, more urban land uses, and a higher population.

## Housing and Commuting Trends

Regional employment trends reflect a larger trend of increased suburbanization and decentralization.

“In 1970, 54 percent of the region’s households were outside of Minneapolis and St. Paul. By 2000, the figure had risen to 73 percent. Similarly, the share of the region’s jobs located outside of the central cities grew from 44 percent in 1970 to 69 percent in 2000. This share of regional employment is expected to reach 82 percent by 2030.”<sup>7</sup>

Relative to transportation, this population growth and decentralization means that people are making more trips and traveling longer distances. Suburb-to-suburb commutes exceed those from suburbs to the central cities. The trend of decentralization extends beyond the formal Twin Cities Metropolitan Area, as shown by population and employment trends beyond the region’s seven counties. Figure 1-5 shows that counties surrounding Anoka are anticipated to experience substantial growth through 2030.

Growth in surrounding counties is already affecting the Anoka County transportation system. In 2000, more than 40 percent of employed residents in Chisago, Isanti, Sherburne, and Wright Counties commuted to jobs in the Metro Area.<sup>8</sup> A high percentage of workers from these counties either commute to a job in Anoka County, or travel through Anoka County as part of their commute to a metro area job.

In addition to commute-to-work trips, overall daily travel for work, shopping, school, and other purposes has increased consistently since 2000. “Daily travel for work, shopping, school, and other purposes expands as the region grows. This trend is expected to continue as the region expands.”<sup>9</sup> Anoka County recognizes these trends in the context of transportation planning because growth in surrounding counties results in more trips on Anoka County’s roadways—for both work-related and other types of trips.

## Aging Population

The population of elderly people in the Twin Cities Metropolitan region will substantially increase as the baby-boom generation ages. “In 1970, 164,000 people in the Twin Cities were over age 65. By 2000, this had grown to 255,000. The Council projects that by 2030, over 600,000 people will be over age 65. The elderly will also be a higher percentage of the population. In 2000, 9.7 percent of the population was over age 65, but it is projected that by 2030, 16.3 percent of the population will be over age 65.”<sup>10</sup> This trend will affect where people live, and how they travel, as historically the elderly have used transit at higher percentages than other age groups.

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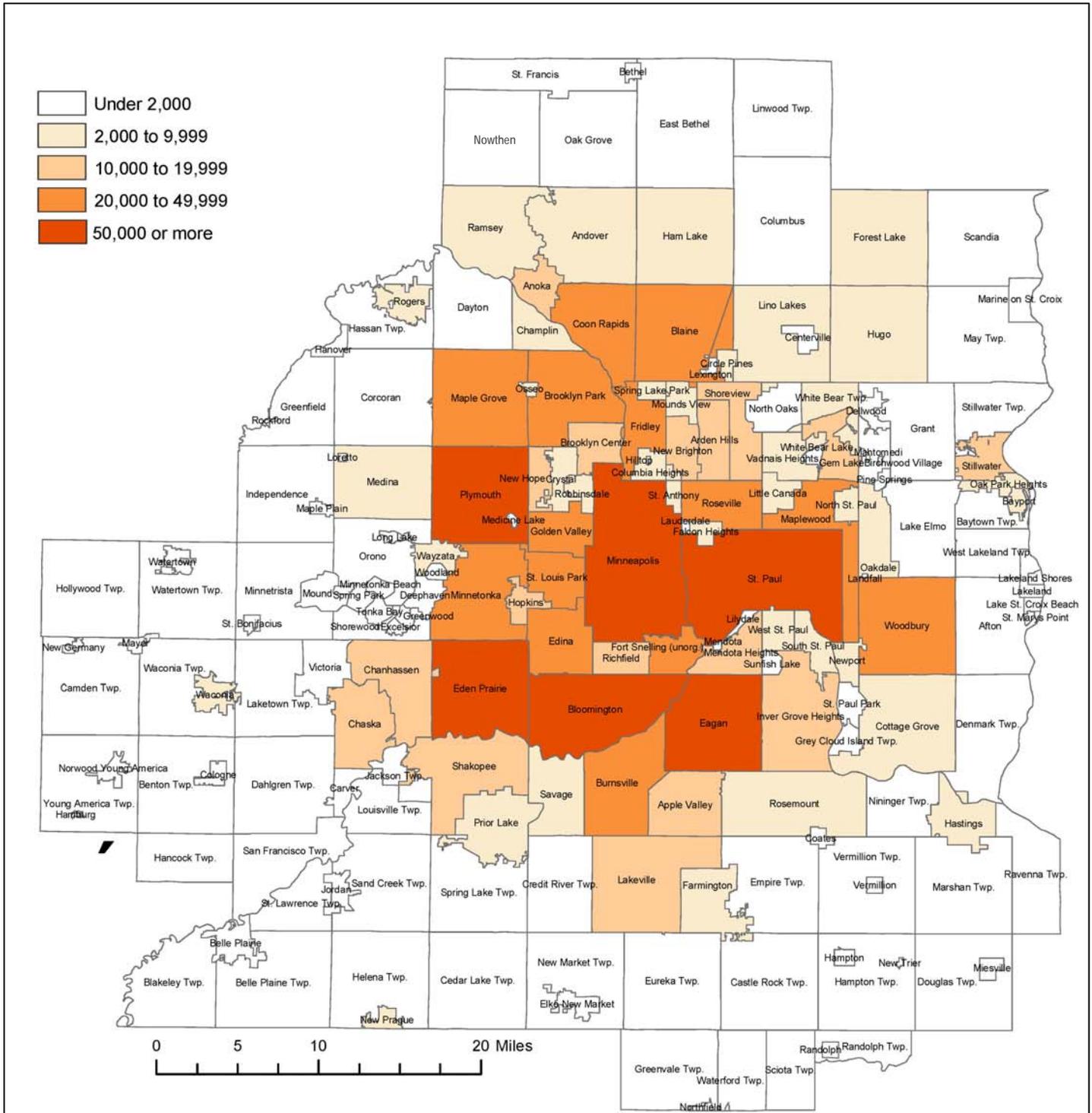
<sup>7</sup> Source: Mn/DOT Metro District 2008-2030 TSP, p. 16.

<sup>8</sup> Source: Metropolitan Council, 2030 TPP, 2004, revised 2006 and 2007, p. 7 and Figure 2-1, p. 9.

<sup>9</sup> Source: Metropolitan Council, 2030 TPP, 2004, revised 2006 and 2007, p. 7.

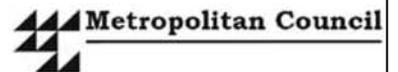
<sup>10</sup> Source: Metropolitan Council, 2007 Transit System Performance Evaluation, p. 17.





Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, Department of Employment and Economic Development

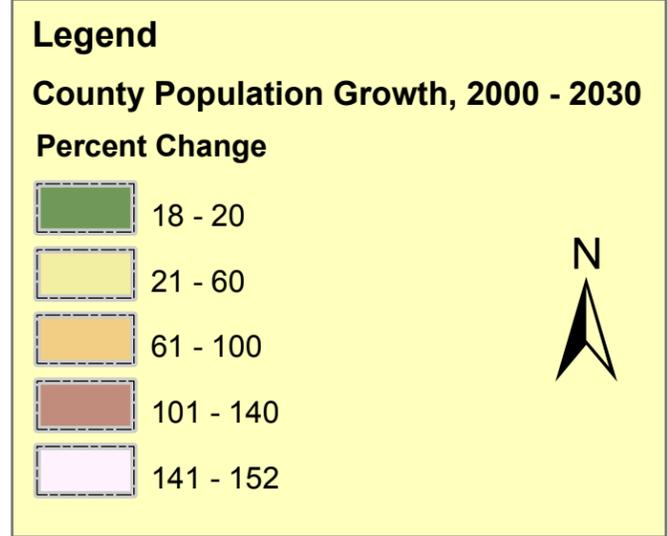
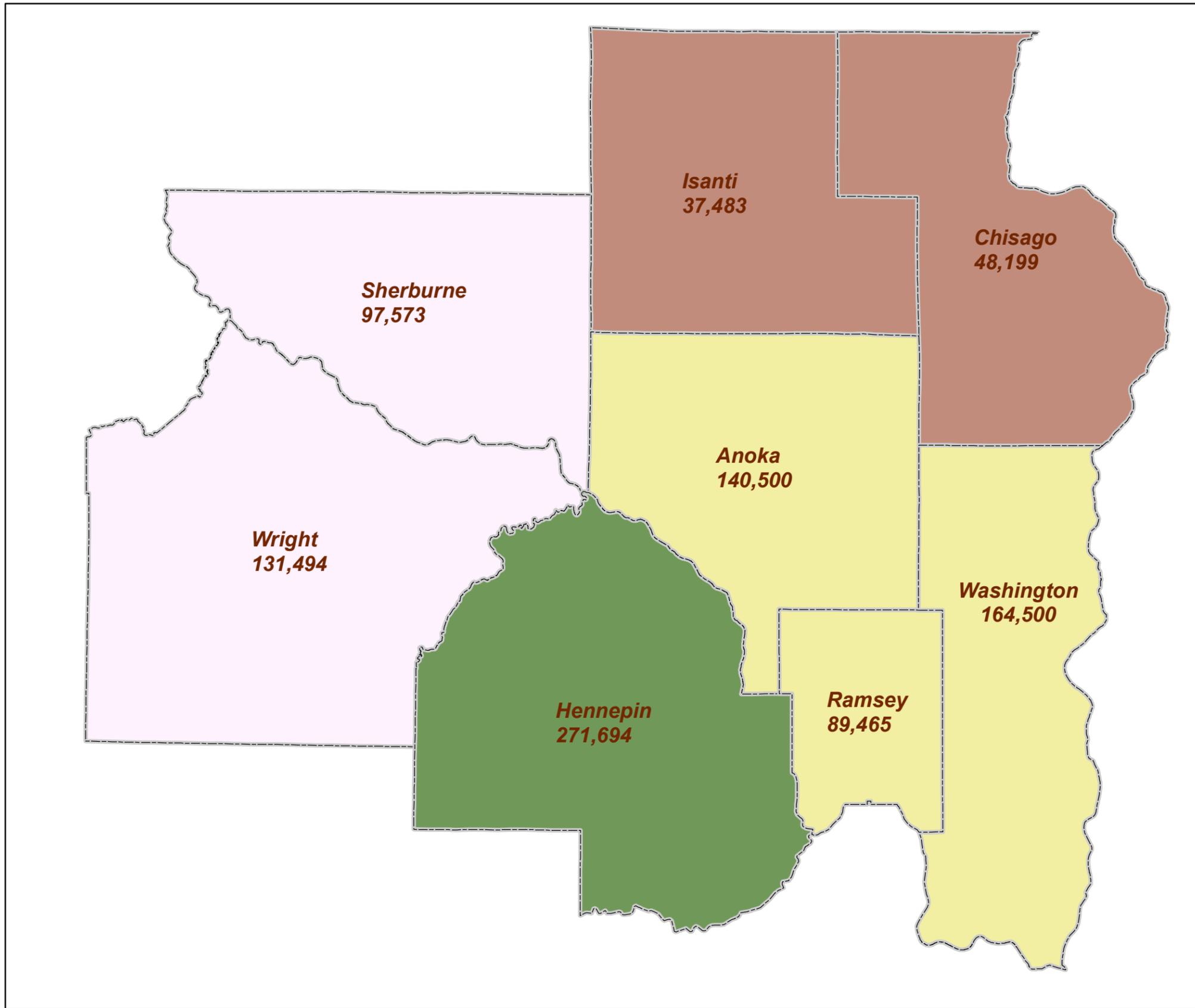
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Source of Map: Metropolitan Council, *Employment in the Twin Cities Region, 2000-2007*, July 2008, Figure 8



Figure 1-4  
**Number of Jobs by Community,  
Twin Cities Region 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2007**



Source: Metropolitan Council

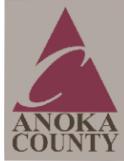


Figure 1-5  
**County Population Growth:  
 2000-2030**

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## 1.2.2 Land Use and Environmental Characteristics Affecting Transportation System Development

Land use characteristics in Anoka County vary considerably between the southern and the northern halves of the county. Urban development is concentrated in southern Anoka County, where most communities are within the Metropolitan Urban Services Area (MUSA). (Areas within the MUSA are considered to be developed or developing areas). Areas in the northern half of the county are generally more rural in nature and are not anticipated to fully develop by 2030. However, as noted above, the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area and adjacent areas are experiencing a trend of decentralization of population and employment. This decentralized growth is currently affecting the Anoka County transportation system, and this trend is anticipated to continue.

Anoka County contains many natural and land use constraints which have affected development of the existing transportation system in the past and will continue to affect the transportation system in the future. These constraints include lakes, wetlands, major rivers (Rum and Mississippi Rivers), creeks, and parks (see Figure 1-6). Other factors that have affected and will continue to affect the location of the transportation network within the county include cultural resources (archaeological and historical sites), former landfills, and areas with soil problems (either contaminated or organic soils).

## 1.3 Relationship to Existing County Policies and Other Regional and County Plans

Existing programs and processes already in place at Anoka County also affect development of transportation system improvements; these are described below.

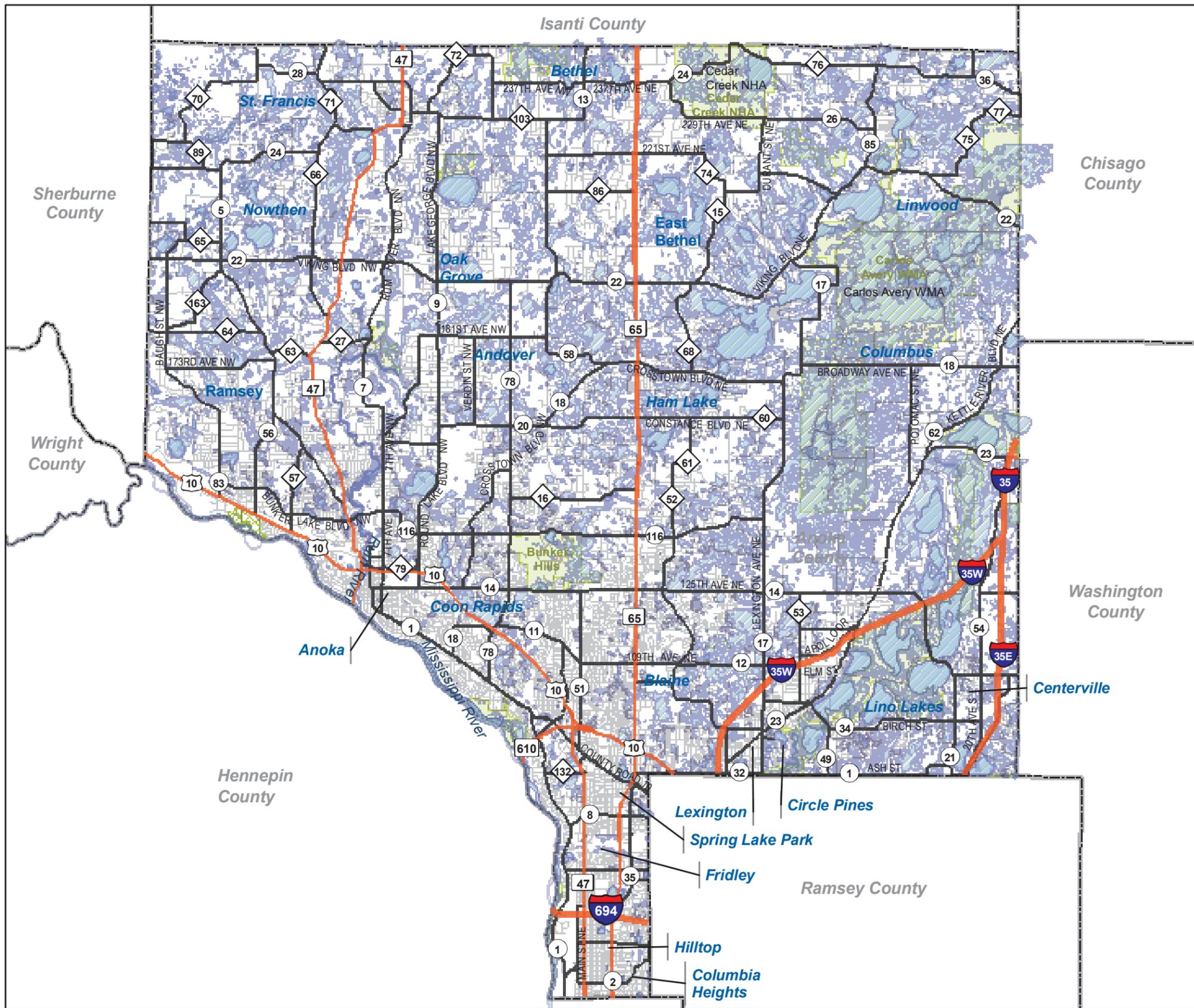
### 1.3.1 Anoka County Highway Department Plans, Policies, and Processes

#### Five-Year Improvement Program

The Anoka County Highway Department Five-Year Improvement Program (2008-2012) identifies upcoming projects. The document consists of three parts:

- Program Description and Definitions—Describes the various programs used to maintain the county's highway system.
- Five-Year Highway Improvement Plan—Identifies planned and programmed projects that will be built if funding is identified.
- Unmet Needs—Documents the existing conditions on the highway system, including any known deficiencies.

The goals and recommendations identified in this 2030 Transportation Plan will form the basis of future five-year improvement program documents.



**Legend**

- Regional Parks
- Regional Planned
- Water Features
- National Wetland Inventory Boundary
- Interstates
- US Highways
- State Highways
- County State Aid Highways (CSAH)
- County Roads
- Local Roads

N

0 1.5 3 6 Miles

1 inch = 3 miles

Source: Metropolitan Council, Minnesota DNR, and National Wetland Inventory



Figure 1-6  
Water, Wetland, and Parkland Constraints

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## Development Review Process Manual (2003)

This document provides guidelines for communities and developers within Anoka County to follow when developing or redeveloping land in their communities. These guidelines establish a process whereby communities and the county are able to collaborate on anticipated impacts to the county's infrastructure relative to a proposed development or redevelopment. Right-of-way dedications, access spacing, drainage impacts, and in some cases, minor road improvements needed to meet the needs of a development are considered during review. The goal of the development review process is to maintain the safety and capacity of the county's existing highway system, as well as to allow for future improvements.

### Access Management Guidelines

The Anoka County Highway Department's access management guidelines provide planned and managed access to land, including residential, commercial, undeveloped, and other land uses. The Access Spacing Guidelines are used by the county to consistently design highways and review development. County-specific access spacing guidelines are discussed in Section 3.0, Existing Transportation System.

### 1.3.2 Relevance to Other Regional and County Plans

#### Parks and Trails

The Anoka County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive System Plan, completed by the Anoka County Parks Department in 2006, documents the plans for the county's park and recreation system for 10–15 years. The Parks and Recreation Comprehensive System Plan incorporated findings and recommendations from the Metropolitan Council's Regional Parks Policy Plan. The Plan also identified opportunities for using regional trail corridors as a way to connect regional facilities within the county and to provide multimodal transportation options.

#### Transit

The Anoka County Transit System Plan, completed in October 2004, outlines a long-range transit vision for the county. The findings and recommendations from the Transit System Plan are incorporated into this Plan. Also, any changes to the county's transit system or the region's transit policies or funding sources that have taken place since completion of the county's Transit System Plan are reflected in this document.

The Metropolitan Council was updating the 2030 Transit Plan while this document was being developed. As such, the county coordinated with the Metropolitan Council throughout development of this Plan to ensure that the Council's most current findings and recommendations were incorporated.

## 1.4 Collaboration with Agencies, Communities, Other Counties, and Public

As demonstrated above, Anoka County's transportation system is affected by many factors—coming from both within and outside the county. Conversely, decisions regarding the county's transportation system affect transportation in the local communities,



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surrounding counties, the region, and to some extent, the state. Recognizing the context of this Plan, Anoka County staff collaborated with many different groups during plan development to ensure a final product that best serves the county, region, and state. This section provides an overview of this collaboration.

#### 1.4.1 Anoka County Communities

Communities were also required to submit updated Comprehensive Plans to the Metropolitan Council in 2008. In Anoka County, land use control is within the jurisdiction of the local communities. This requires communities and the county to work together to facilitate coordinated transportation facility planning. Local communities provided the county with demographic (population, households, and employment) data that was key to the travel forecasting task, which resulted in traffic level forecasts for the year 2030.

Throughout development of the Plan, Anoka County staff met with local communities to share the results of these analyses, as they were deemed to have a significant future impact on individual communities. These meetings were important in forming the Plan, as will be continued coordination with local communities relative to ongoing and future land use and transportation decisions.

#### 1.4.2 Neighboring Counties: Washington, Sherburne, and Isanti

Most communities within Anoka County are impacted by traffic originating in Sherburne, Isanti, Chisago, and/or Washington Counties. Given that this impact is anticipated to continue to increase through 2030, Anoka County coordinated with officials and staff from Washington, Sherburne, and Isanti Counties. Coordination with Washington County included discussions about Washington County's plan for a north-south roadway that parallels I-35.

#### 1.4.3 Public Involvement—Meetings and Project Web site

Three information meetings were held during development of the 2030 Transportation Plan. The first meeting, held on March 22, 2007, introduced the planning effort to representatives of all Anoka County communities. The project team and agency partners were introduced and their work on the Plan described. The second meeting on January 30, 2008, was focused on informing mayors and council members from within the county about the ongoing development of the Plan. The third meeting was held on February 12, 2008. At this meeting, the purpose and goals of the Plan and results of technical analyses completed to date were shared with City representatives and the public. Comments from attendees at all meetings were also collected and considered by the Project Management Team (PMT).

A Web page devoted to the Plan was housed on the Anoka County Web site. This page was updated periodically and also provided the opportunity to comment on the Plan.

#### 1.4.4 Project Management Team

Development of the 2030 Transportation Plan was guided by a PMT that consisted of participants from the following organizations:



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- Anoka County Highway Department
  - Anoka County Department of Parks and Recreation
  - Anoka County Transit
  - Metropolitan Council
  - Mn/DOT
  - Consultant Team

PMT participants representing Mn/DOT and the Metropolitan Council provided guidance regarding their agency's requirements and policies. A list of PMT participants is provided in Appendix A.

