

# Washington County 2007 Performance Report



**Innovation.**



**Cooperation.**



**Excellence.**



**Leadership.**





This Ninth Annual Performance Report reflects Washington County's continued commitment to high-quality service that meets and exceeds the needs and expectations of Washington County residents. Since the mid-1990s, Washington County departments have continued to track, report, and monitor performance measures to support decision-making and to drive continued improvement in its core functions and the services it provides.

As departments continuously improve their efforts to measure performance and verify outcomes, this Annual Performance Report likewise continues to undergo that same scrutiny and revision. This Annual Performance Measurement Report, which reflects county performance and improvement in 2007, is:

- shorter and more focused on broad measures than in recent years,
- contains information that is of greater interest and appeal to policymakers and residents, and
- focuses on measures by county goal rather than by department.

This annual performance reporting process is now moving toward an indicator type report that includes larger outcomes from departments as well as select community indicators for the county. Departments will focus on internal performance measurement more strategically than in the past and provide periodic updates to the County Board of Commissioners to show how each applies performance measurement in their work for the sake of continued improvement.

As Washington County's multi-departmental Performance Measurement and Improvement Team (PerMIT) continues to further institutionalize the use of performance measurement throughout the organization, we are confident that we will continue to see ongoing improvement in all of our service areas, as well as our ability to surpass the expectations of Washington County residents.

Amanda Hollis  
Management Analyst

Molly F. O'Rourke  
Deputy Administrator

# Acknowledgements

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- Members of the county's Performance Measurement and Improvement Team (PerMIT):

Nancy Brase	Administration
Rita Conlin	Public Works
Vicki DeFord	Human Resources
Sue Harris	County Attorney's Office
Amanda Hollis	Administration
Ann Hudson	Accounting and Finance
Kathleen Johnson	Information Technology
Stephanie Lenartz	Public Health and Environment
Joe Manion	Library
Wayne Minske	Court Administration
Jody Moran	Property Records and Taxpayer Services
Dan Pepper	Community Corrections
Julia Wallis	Community Services
John Warneke	Sheriff's Office

- Department management teams and staff who assisted PerMIT members in preparing individual department measures
- Office of Administration staff who contributed their time and talent

*For more information or questions regarding the 2007 Annual Performance Report, please contact:*

Amanda Hollis  
Management Analyst  
Washington County Office of Administration  
14949 62<sup>nd</sup> Street North, P.O. Box 6  
Stillwater, MN 55082-0006  
Telephone: 651-430-6021

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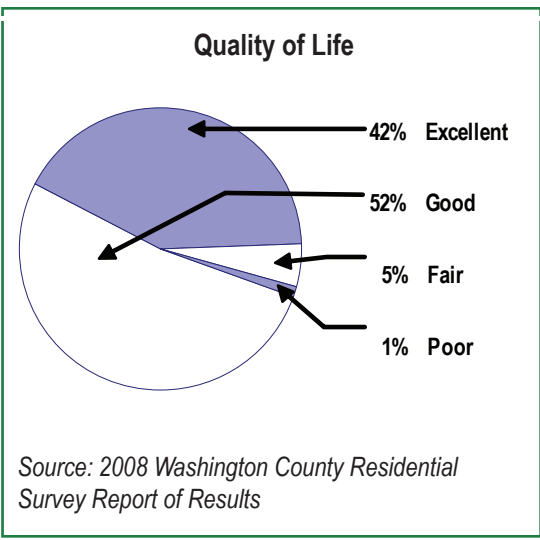
# 1 To promote the health, safety, and quality of life of citizens

The health, safety, and the quality of life of citizens is important to Washington County. Below are examples of measures the county uses to monitor and measure its citizens health, safety, and the quality of life.

### Quality of Life

In the 2008 Residential Survey, residents were asked to rate their overall quality of life on a scale of “excellent,” “good,” “fair,” or “poor.” Ninety-four percent felt the quality of life in Washington County was “excellent” or “good” and only 6% felt it was “fair” or “poor.”

Residents were asked to name the one thing that they liked most about living in Washington County in the 2008 Residential Survey. It was an open-ended question for which



respondents were able to give any answer. The top four most common answers were: location, rural, open space, and parks/lakes. These were also the top four answers that people gave in the 2006 Residential Survey.

### Median Household Income

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, Washington County has one of

the highest median incomes in the nation. It was ranked as one of the top 30 counties in 2000. Washington County has the second highest median income in the seven county metro area behind Scott County. The median household income continues to increase metro-wide.

### Health Insurance

Residents who participated in the Residential Survey were asked what their health insurance status was for the last year. Ninety-one percent of respondents were insured for the entire year, 5% were insured for part of the year and not insured for part of the year; and 4% were not insured at all during the year.

### Crime and Safety

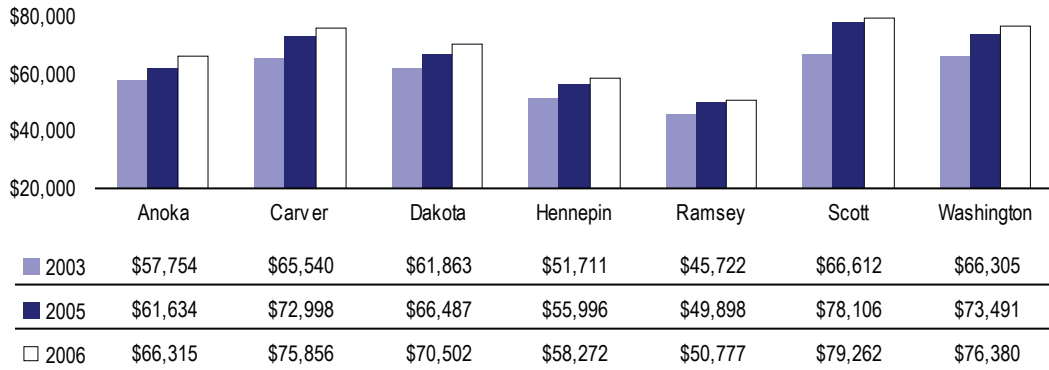
The Sheriff's Office mission is to provide quality public safety services

<b>What Residents Like Most About Living in County Compared by Year</b>			
<b>What one thing do you like most about living in Washington County?</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2008</b>
Location	21%	20%	17%
Rural		12%	16%
Open Space	*33%	10%	7%
Parks / Lakes	4%	7%	8%

*\*In 2001, the items “rural” and “open space” were combined into one category.*

Source: 2008 Washington County Residential Survey

### Median Household Income



Source: 2000 US Census, 2005 and 2006 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

by apprehending and assisting in the prosecution of criminals. By measuring criminal investigation rates, the Sheriff's Office can determine the effectiveness of its investigation efforts.

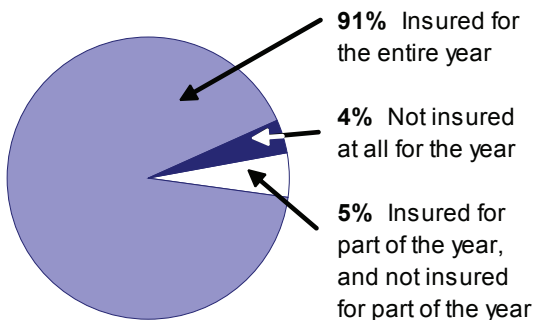
The cases consist of Part I and Part II crimes. Part I crimes are person crimes. They are homicide, sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny-theft (shoplifting,

pick pockets), motor vehicle theft and arson. Part II crimes are property crimes and are all other offenses except for driving offenses. They are other assaults, forgery and counterfeiting, fraud, embezzlement, stolen property (buying, receiving, possessing), vandalism, weapons (carrying, possessing), prostitution, sex offenses, drug abuse violations, gambling, offenses against the family

and children, driving under the influence, liquor laws, drunkenness, disorderly conduct, vagrancy, and any offense that does not fit into any other category.

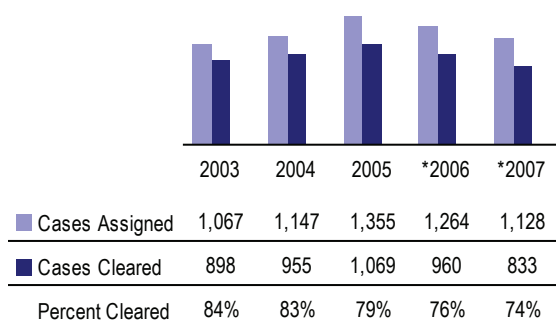
A case is determined cleared when an individual associated with the investigation is arrested or charged by a prosecuting authority. Cases can also be "exceptionally cleared." A case is "exceptionally cleared" for a variety

### Health Insurance Status



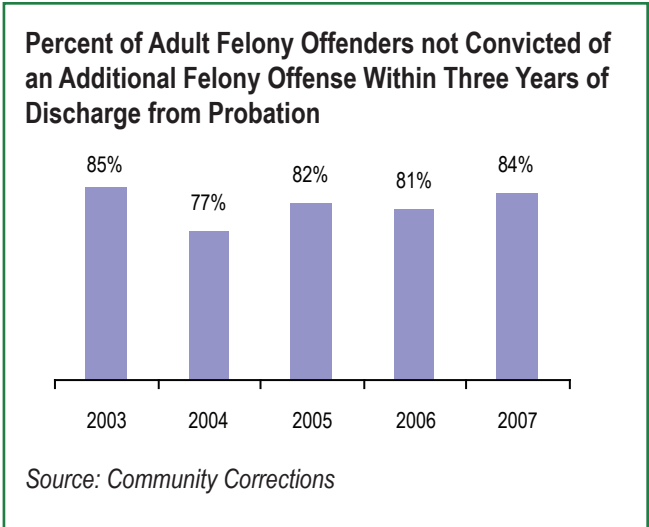
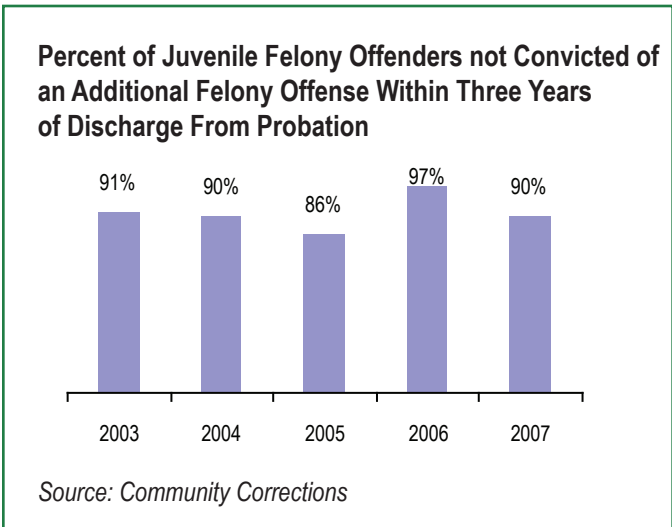
Source: 2008 Washington County Residential Survey Report of Results

### All Cases Assigned



\*As new information or evidence is discovered, prior cases continue to be cleared.

Source: Sheriff's Office



of reasons (i.e., the suspect died, victim does not desire prosecution once offender has been identified, etc.). The Sheriff’s Office continues to clear a large percentage of cases. In 2007, 74% of all cases assigned were cleared. As new information or evidence is discovered, prior year cases continue to be cleared. This information is not immediately recorded; thus the statistical accuracy is not immediately reflected. The Sheriff’s Office projects that 80% of 2007 cases will eventually be cleared. Compared to the Midwest region of the FBI statistical data, the Sheriff’s Office is significantly higher in cleared cases.

**Recidivism Rates**

The Community Corrections Department’s mission is to help build safer communities. In support of this mission, probation officers work with offenders to reduce their risk of committing new crimes. Measuring recidivism (conviction of a new

criminal offense by an offender) rates helps the department gauge how successful it is in reducing offender re-offense risk. To be consistent with the state’s probation outcomes, the department utilizes only felony-level offenders when measuring recidivism rates. The department tracks offenders (adult and juvenile) supervised on probation for a felony-level offense for three years following their discharge date. Offenders convicted of another felony-level offense within that three-year time frame are included in the recidivism measure. Recidivism rates for 2007 involve offenders that had a felony-level case discharged in 2003.

For juvenile offenders discharged from felony-level probation in 2003, 90% were not convicted of a new felony offense in Washington County within three years. It is important to note that juvenile recidivism rates only pertain to criminal convictions in Washington County.

For adult offenders discharged from felony-level probation in 2003, 84% were not convicted of a new felony offense within three years—a rate consistent with the recidivism rates historically seen by the department. In 2007, the state average was 68%. This was the first year that the state started collecting data for adult felony offenders.

**School Attendance Intervention Program**

The goal of the School Attendance Intervention Program is to divert children from the court system by providing information and services to families that helps identify and remove barriers to school attendance and by providing progressively intrusive intervention. The program in Washington County provides diversion services to students who are reported truant from school.

For students ages 12 and older, the first county intervention is a referral

	2002-2003 (pre-AIM)	2003-2004 (pre-AIM)	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
*AIM Referrals			1,091	1,253	933
Diversion Meeting Referrals	541	484	306	320	280
Court Referrals	46	37	29	35	26

Source: Community Services

for the student and parent to attend an Attendance Intervention Meeting (AIM), an informational meeting about truancy. The second county intervention is to refer children who are habitually truant to a Diversion Meeting. Students who continue to be truant after participating in these interventions or who refuse to participate are petitioned to court when no alternatives are available.

The results show that the School Attendance Intervention Program has helped divert children and families from court intervention. Over time, AIM meetings have reduced diversion and court referrals.

### Child Maltreatment

One of the core functions of the Community Services Department is

to provide for the safety of vulnerable adults and children. In 2007, 6% of children with a determined case of abuse or neglect had a subsequent case of maltreatment within six months. This is a significant decrease from 2006 and is below the federal standard of 6.1%.

Community Services continues to see an increase in the number of accepted reports of child abuse or neglect (acceptable meaning credible reports that result in the assignment of a county caseworker).

### Ageing Population

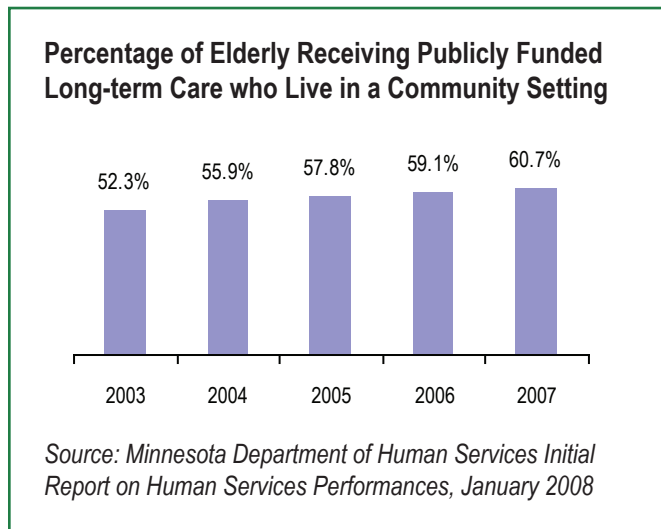
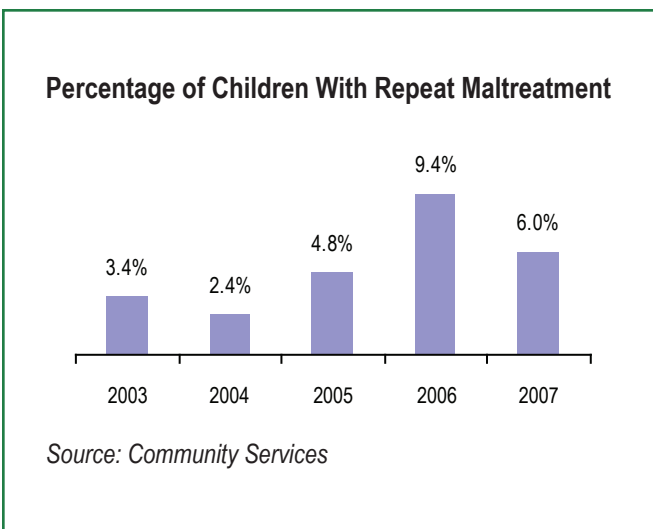
Washington County’s median age, like much of the nation, is expected to continue to increase. As a larger portion of residents continue to age,

interest and demand for services for the elderly rise.

According to the 2008 Residential Survey results, residents have a concern about the health of and support for the elderly and disabled—20% said it was a major concern, 48% said moderate concern, 23% said minor concern, and 9% said not at all.

### Elderly Living in a Community Setting

Serving elders (age 65 and older) who receive publicly-funded long-term care in community settings is an important goal for Washington County. Community-based care is often preferred by the elderly and is often more cost effective than institutional care. Elders remaining in the community receive services such



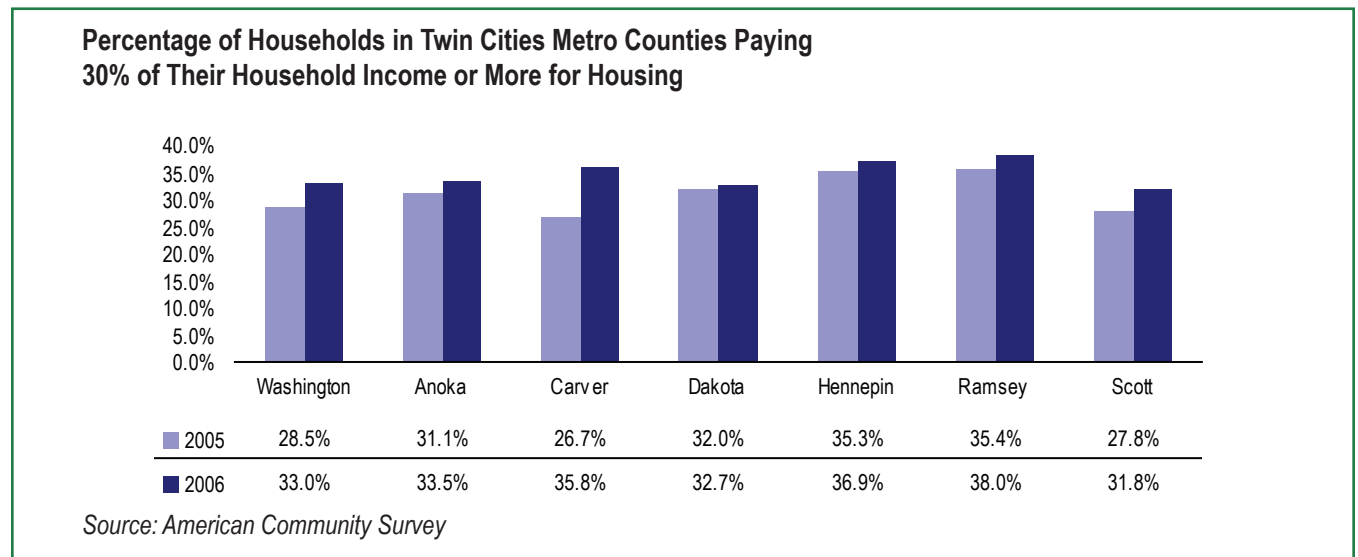
as home health aides, home delivered meals, and transportation, allowing them to remain in the least restrictive setting possible. In 2007, 60.7% of Washington County elders receiving publicly funded care remained in the community, which is above the statewide average of 56.7%.

Elderly residents who receive both medical care and case management

gross monthly income on housing. Individuals and families are often left with fewer resources for food, clothing, child care, and other necessities. As demonstrated in the chart, the highest cost burdened household rates can be found in the urban centers of the Twin Cities metropolitan area (Hennepin and Ramsey Counties).

### Health Concerns

In the 2008 Residential Survey, residents were asked, “To what degree, if at all, is each of the following a health concern in Washington County?” Underage alcohol use (78%), drinking and driving (74%), and overweight adults and children (73%) topped the list of health concerns with three quarters



directly from their health plans no longer rely on the county for their case management needs. The trend from county to health provider case management is reducing county involvement in the care of elderly citizens. This trend also means that counties will have less control over where the elderly are placed and, subsequently, over this measure.

### Percentage of Cost Burdened Households

A cost burdened household is one that spends more than 30% of its

Washington County administers several housing grants and programs with assistance from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency. These programs assist county residents in locating, obtaining, and maintaining affordable housing. Since 2001, these programs have provided down payment assistance and educational programming to home buyers, built affordable ownership and rental units, and rehabilitated houses needing infrastructure improvements.

of respondents believing these were “major” or “moderate” concerns in the county.

### Obesity

Approximately 62% of Washington County adult residents are estimated to be overweight or obese. This figure is equivalent to state estimates of 62.3% and national estimates of 61.6% of the adult population. Those who are overweight or obese have significantly greater risks of developing chronic diseases, resulting in premature death and disability.

To what degree, if at all, is each of the following a health concern in Washington County?

	Major Concern	Moderate Concern	Minor Concern	Not at all a Concern
Physical inactivity	22%	38%	30%	10%
Overweight adults and children	29%	44%	20%	6%
Drinking and driving	30%	44%	21%	4%
Underage alcohol use	39%	39%	17%	5%

Source: 2008 Washington County Residential Survey Report of Results

Obesity is increasingly being defined as an “epidemic” by health experts and is one of the primary causes for overall increases in health care costs.

Obesity among children and adults ranked as the most serious health problem in Washington County according to the 2008 Community Health Assessment. The county plans to implement a health improvement action plan to address obesity within the next year.

### Underage Alcohol Use

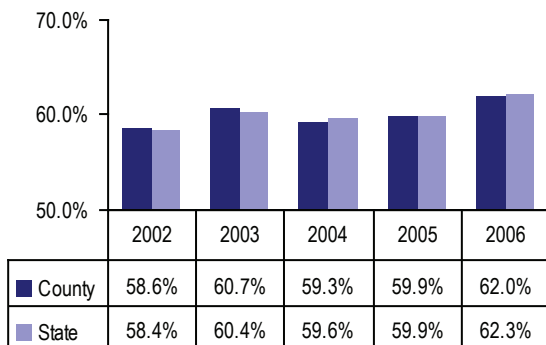
Over two-thirds of 12th grade students and over one-third of 9th grade students in Washington County reported “using alcohol one or more times in the past year” in 2007. Not only is alcohol use illegal for those under age 21, it can also pose high risks to the individual and to society. Behavior, physical and mental condition, and academic performance are just a few of the areas that can be negatively impacted by alcohol use. Individual safety and

the safety of others are also affected. More than one in four 12th graders reported driving a motor vehicle after using alcohol or drugs in the past year.

### Underage Binge Drinking

Binge drinking—consuming five or more drinks in a row on one occasion in the past two weeks—increased to 33.3% in 2007 from 31.5% in 2004 for county 12th graders. Recent national reports indicate that compared to non-drinkers, teen binge drinkers are

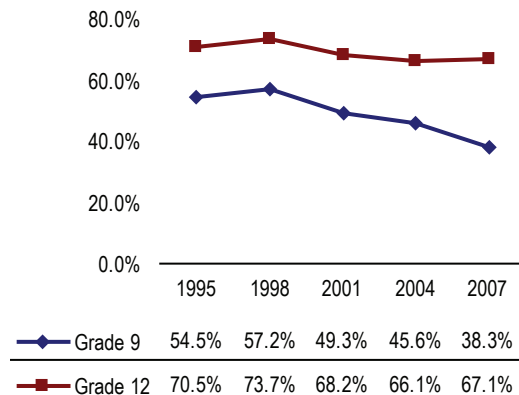
### Overweight and Obese Adults Washington County and State of Minnesota



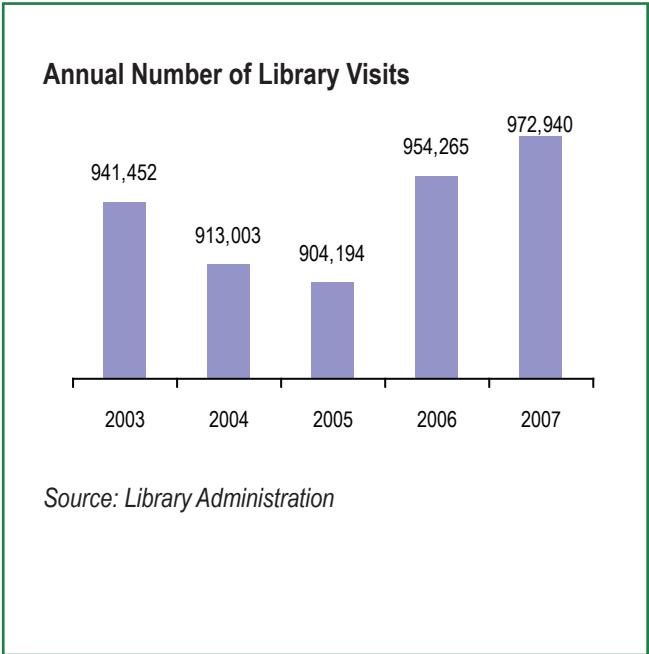
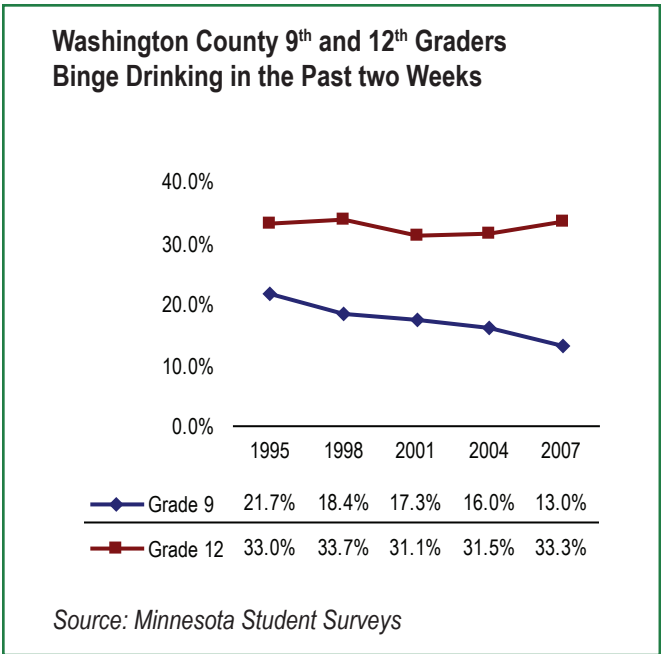
Overweight is defined as the percent of adults age 18 and older who report their Body Mass Index (BMI) between 25.0 and 29.9. Obese is defined as a BMI greater than 30.0.

Source: Minnesota Department of Health and Centers for Disease Control & Prevention

### Washington County 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Graders who Used Alcohol One or More Times in Past Year



Source: Minnesota Student Surveys



more likely to be current smokers; have been in a physical fight in the past 12 months; been subjected to dating violence in the past 12 months; have attempted suicide during the past 12 months; been sexually active with one or more persons during the past three months; and have ridden with a driver who has been drinking alcohol in the past 30 days (Centers for Disease Control & Prevention).

**Library Visits**

Literate, well-informed citizens with access to the world of information and ideas create prosperous and vibrant communities. According to the 2008 Residential Survey, 76% of county respondents had visited a Washington County Library within the past three months; 31% said they had visited a Washington County Library six or more times.

In 2007, residents made almost one million visits to Washington County Libraries. Almost 80% of Washington County residents have library cards, which is among the highest rate in the nation. According to the Public Library Association, in 2007, the national average for card registrations as a percentage of population was 54.3%. During 2007, 16,000 new cards were issued, and library card holders borrowed almost two million items. These statistics indicate that the library is a popular and useful county service.

**Water Quality**

All residents in Washington County obtain their drinking water from groundwater, including residents on city water systems. The groundwater in the county is vulnerable to contamination from a number of sources, including improper disposal

of solid and hazardous wastes; improperly designed, installed, and maintained subsurface individual sewage treatment systems; and over application of fertilizer.

The county encourages citizens with private wells to annually test the water quality from the well. Water samples are collected and sent to a laboratory for analysis through the county. Test results are then provided to citizens. Municipal system drinking water is tested regularly by the water treatment system operators.

Coliform bacteria and nitrate-nitrogen are two key measures of drinking water quality.

**Coliform bacteria** are used as an indicator of other disease-causing micro-organisms in a water sample. If coliform bacteria are present, it is assumed that the well has been

#### Private Well Water Sample Testing Data for Coliform Bacteria

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Number of samples collected	414	413	547	309	284
Number of positive samples	89	67	108	35	44
Percent of positive samples	21.5%	16.2%	19.7%	11.3%	15.5%

Source: Department of Public Health and Environment

contaminated, and disinfection of the well is necessary to protect health. In the past five years, an average of 17% of private well water samples have tested positive for coliform bacteria. If coliform bacteria are detected in a water supply, the well and plumbing system are disinfected. The water is then retested until it is safe for drinking and cooking.

**Nitrate-nitrogen** can enter the soil and groundwater from fertilizer,

individual sewage treatment systems, feedlots, and organic decay runoff. If nitrate levels in groundwater exceed 4.0 mg/L, it is assumed that the groundwater has been negatively impacted by human activities.

Nitrate-nitrogen in drinking water at levels of 10.0 mg/L and higher can result in negative health effects in infants under the age of six months by inhibiting oxygen transport in blood, resulting in “blue baby syndrome.”

If water tests positive for nitrate-nitrogen >9.99 mg/L, the county advises residents to use only safe water from a known low-nitrate source for infants under six months of age; to not boil high-nitrate water to reduce the nitrate level, as boiling actually increases the nitrate level due to evaporation of the water; and to seek medical help if the skin of an infant takes on a blue tone or tint.

#### Private Well Water Sample Testing Data for Nitrate-nitrogen

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Number of samples collected	343	355	475	294	262
Number of samples >9.99 mg/L	10	11	16	3	4
Percent of samples >9.99 mg/L	2.9%	3.1%	3.4%	1.0%	1.5%

Source: Department of Public Health and Environment

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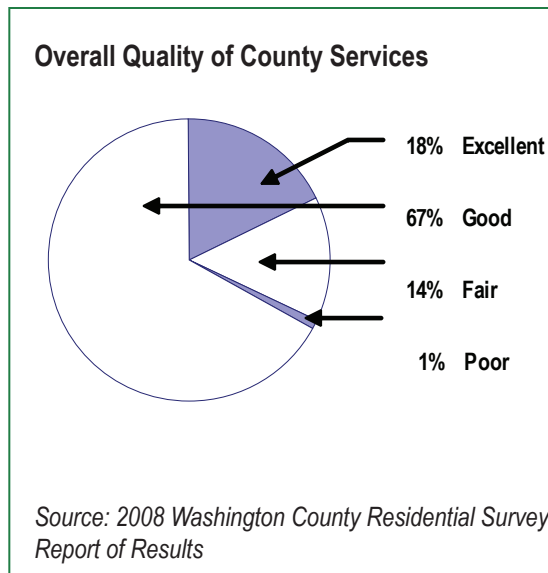
## To provide accessible, high-quality services in a timely and respectful manner

Washington County strives to provide high-quality services to residents. Service in a timely and respectful manner is necessary to achieve quality service.

The county uses different methods to measure quality service and satisfaction. Standards or benchmarks are set to achieve certain levels of service. Washington County also measures residents' satisfaction of services through focus groups and surveys. This helps departments and the county gauge satisfaction in administering services to make sure that residents continue to feel that Washington County has high-quality services that are delivered in a timely and respectful manner.

### Residential Survey Results for Overall Quality of Service and Impression of County Employees

One way to learn how residents rate county services is to survey them. Surveying residents provides the opportunity to rate the quality of life in the county. The county's 2008 Residential Survey asked



residents to rate the overall quality of services provided by Washington County. Eighty-five percent of survey respondents rated the overall quality of services as “good” or “excellent,” 18% felt it was “excellent,” and 67% said “good.” Washington County was rated higher than the national norm. The county ranked first out of 34 jurisdictions to which it was compared.

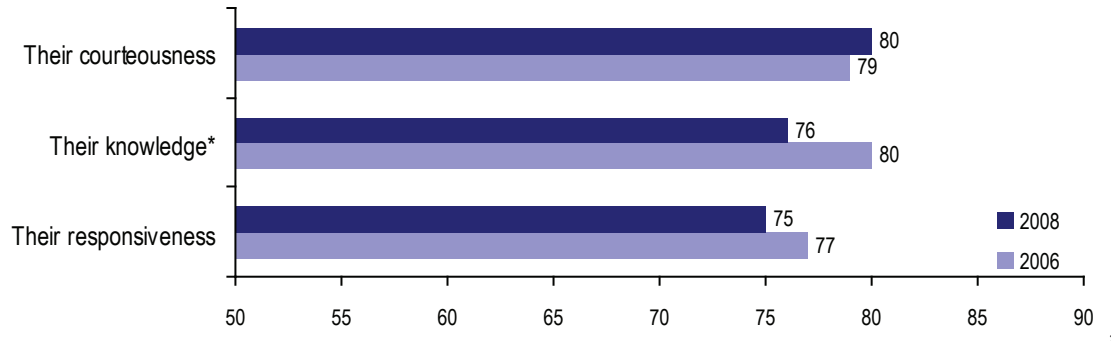
Over time, this question will help track progress toward people's opinions of Washington County's overall quality of service. Fluctuations will help determine if the county is moving in the right direction. It will also help gauge how residents

feel about the county's quality of service compared to other counties nationally and counties that we partner with in the metro area. (In 2008, it was Carver, Dakota, and Olmsted counties.)

The Residential Survey also asked respondents if they had visited or telephoned a Washington County government office in the last 12 months. Fifty-one percent of residents reported that they had. The respondents who had contacted a county government office were asked to rate the quality of their contact with the employee on the employee's courteousness, knowledge, and responsiveness.

Washington County employees continue to rank above the national norm in these areas. Of the jurisdictions to which the county was compared, it ranked first in employee courteousness (out of 7), knowledge (out of 28), and responsiveness (out of 26). Again, by comparing the results of the Residential Survey over time, the county can continue to determine if the county is meeting citizen expectations.

### Impression of County Employees by Year



Indicates statistically significant differences between 2008 and 2006.  
This question was not asked in 2001.

Source: 2008 Washington County Residential Survey Report of Results

### Quality Service to all Customers of the Court

Understanding how the court’s performance is viewed by customers is important to the improvement of the quality of service delivery. Court Administration conducts a customer satisfaction survey each year. This year, the results were compiled from Stillwater, Cottage Grove, and the Hearing Officer.

The Stillwater and Cottage Grove survey asked customers to identify their level of satisfaction with the following statements: court personnel were courteous and helpful; court staff provided me with information that I needed; the court facilities were adequate and accessible.

### Timely Resolution of Cases

The case clearance rate indicates whether the court is keeping up with its incoming caseload. Cases are resolved in a timely manner when the number of cases closed consistently meets 100% of the cases opened. The case clearance rate is the number of

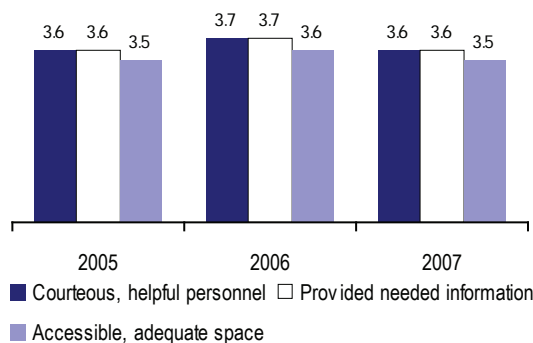
outgoing cases as a percentage of the number of incoming cases.

When cases are resolved in a timely manner, there are fewer telephone calls, fewer documents handled, and fewer hearings. Public trust and confidence is increased when the customer’s court business is

resolved promptly. When the clearance rate drops below 100%, a backlog of cases may develop.

The court migrated to Minnesota Court Information System (MNCIS), a new statewide case management system, in October 2007. A concerted effort was made to reduce the backlog of cases prior to MNCIS implementation. As a result, four of the five case types had a higher clearance

### Court Customer Satisfaction Rating Stillwater and Cottage Grove



The following scale was used in assessing customer satisfaction: 1 = Poor, 2 = Fair, 3 = Good, 4 = Excellent

Source: Court Administration

rate than the previous year because of this concerted effort.

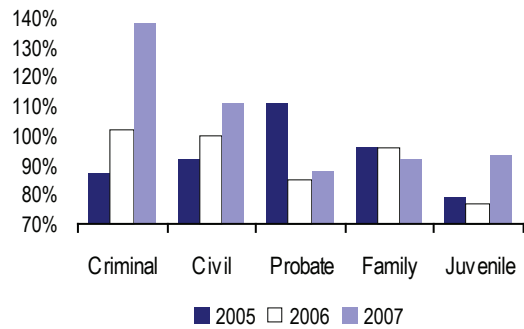
### License Centers

In the past year, the Property Records and Taxpayer Services Department increased staffing and adjusted processes to better serve customers in the license centers. Staff resources were allocated to individual centers in part based on the number and type of transactions in each center. In 2007, the number of transactions completed in each center increased.

The 2008 License Center Citizen Survey and the results from the customer comment survey cards are two of the ways the License Centers are able to measure customer satisfaction with their services. The license centers received high marks in both surveys.

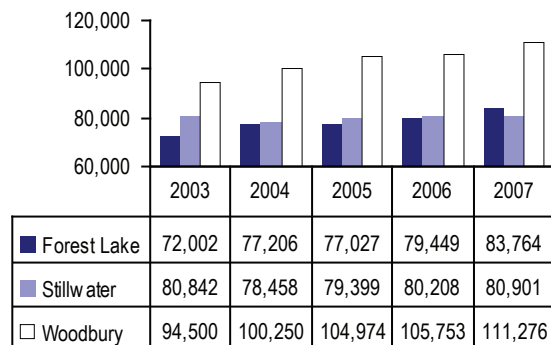
These are important indicators to know how the public perceives the services provided. It helps show if there is a need to increase staff levels in a specific center or provide additional training to staff.

**Court Case Clearance Rate\*  
Stillwater and Cottage Grove**



\*Clearance rate is the number of cases closed divided by the number of cases opened. Annual clearance rate on this chart refers to a 12-month calendar ending September 30 each year.  
Source: Court Administration

**Number of Transactions per License Center**



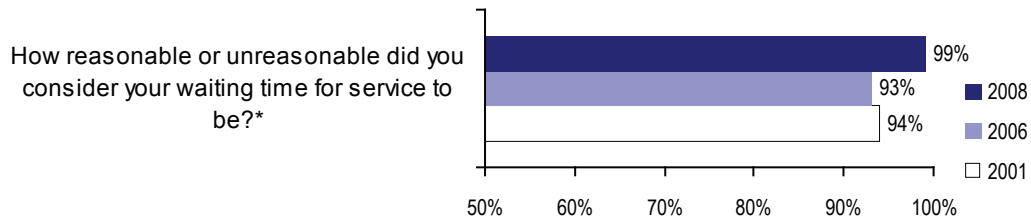
Source: Property Records and Taxpayer Services

**License Centers Random Customer Survey Comparison 2004 to 2007**

	2004	2005	2006	2007
Percentage of customers who agree or strongly agree the license center staff provided them with the adequate resources	99%	99%	99%	100%
Percentage of customers who agree or strongly agree the hours of service are convenient	95%	95%	97%	98%
Percentage of customers who agree or strongly agree that they were satisfied with the service provided during their visit	98%	98%	99%	99%

Source: Property Records and Taxpayer Services

### Reasonableness of Waiting Time at License Center Compared by Year



\* Indicates statistically significant differences between 2008 and 2006.

In 2001, the question read, "Did you consider your waiting time for service to be reasonable?"

The response scale was: "very reasonable," "somewhat reasonable," "somewhat unreasonable," "very unreasonable."

Source: 2008 Washington County Residential Survey Report of Results

### County Road Conditions

The Pavement Condition Index (PCI) is a measurement of the physical condition of county roadways. The PCI is based on the surface quality of the pavement. Measuring and monitoring the condition of the roadways allows the county to strategically plan its pavement maintenance program, which can extend the life of the county infrastructure.

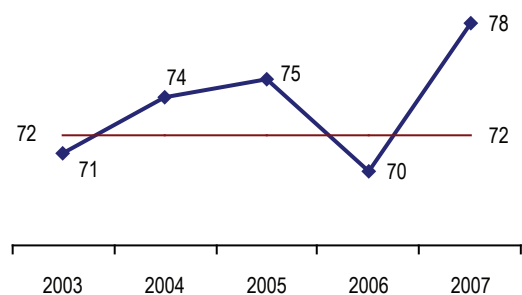
Pavement smoothness is widely recognized as important from a standpoint of both user satisfaction (no one likes to drive on a rough road) and long-term performance

(smooth roads last longer and are often higher overall quality than rough roads).

The Washington County Board of Commissioners has set an overall PCI ratio of 72 out of 100 as the goal for county roadways. The PCI of the county roadway system as of 2007

was 78, which exceeds the goal of maintaining the roadways at or above the level determined by the County Board.

### Average Pavement Condition Index (PCI)



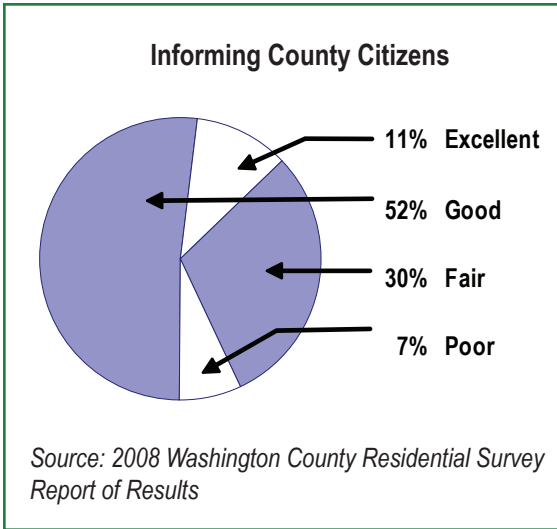
Source: Public Works

# 3 To address today's needs while proactively planning for the future

One of Washington County's primary goals is to meet residents' current needs while continuing to plan for future needs. Planning for the future ensures that the county will continue to make wise long-term decisions.

## Public Information and Communication with Residents

One way the county looks at addressing the future is how well it communicates with citizens. The county uses several different indicators to measure the effectiveness of its communication with citizens. By evaluating the results of these measures, the county

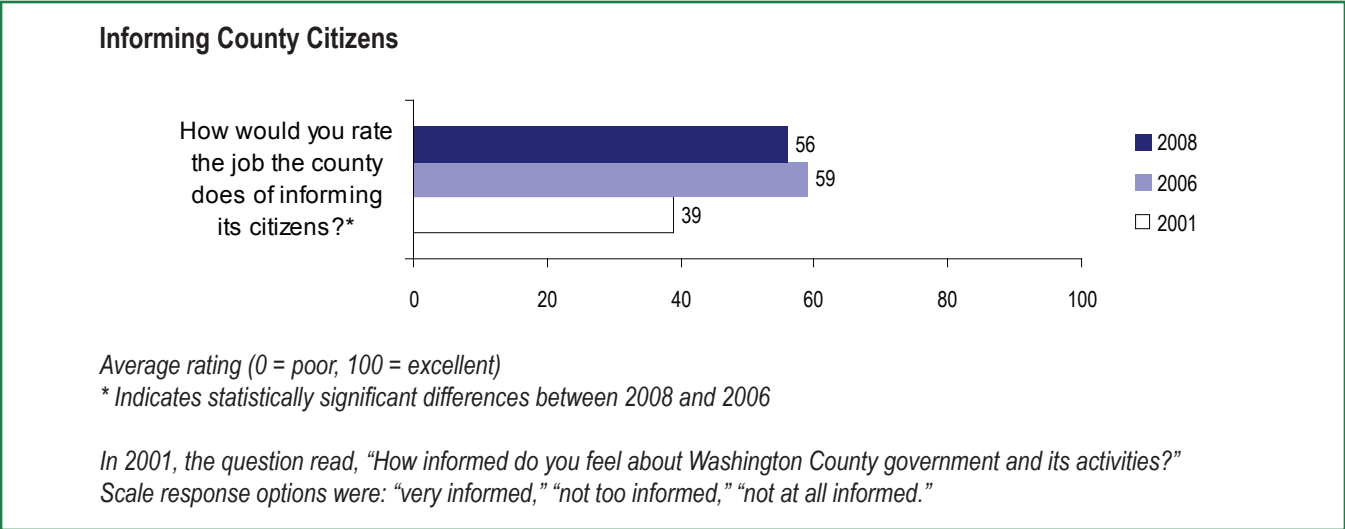


learns what communication tools are most effective in reaching residents.

The residential survey continues to be one of the main tools the county uses to gather feedback

about communication. About two-thirds of respondents said the county was "excellent" or "good" at informing citizens, one-third felt the county did a "fair" job, and 7% thought the county did a "poor" job informing citizens. The 2008 ratings were slightly lower than the ratings given in 2006.

In addition to asking citizens to rate the county's effectiveness in informing the public, the residential survey contains other questions related to communications. Residents are also asked to identify potential sources they use to acquire information about Washington County government. Other county residents, the internet, the county



**Potential Sources of County Information Compared by Year**

Please tell me whether you use each of these potential sources of information about Washington County government as a major or minor source of information or not at all?*	Percent using as a minor or major source	
	2008	2006
	Other county residents (e.g., neighbors or friends)	81%
Weekly community newspapers	80%	81%
Washington County newsletter, <i>Staying in Touch</i>	80%	81%
Daily newspapers	79%	77%
The Internet / the World Wide Web	75%	69%
County Web site on the internet	67%	60%
Cable television programming	59%	52%
Community meetings	50%	50%
Washington County employees	47%	43%

*Grey shading indicates statistically significant differences between 2008 and 2006.*

*\*This question was not asked in 2001.*

Source: 2008 Washington County Residential Survey Report of Results

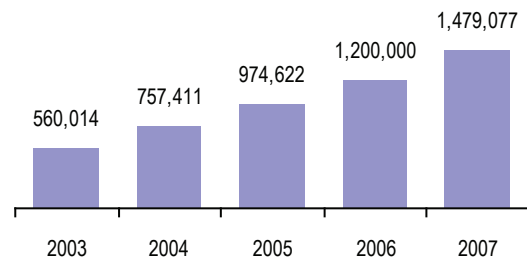
Web site, and cable television programming increased significantly from 2006 to 2008 as sources of information used by residents to learn about county government.

Another way Washington County measures communication is through the frequency of use of the county Web site. Usage of the Web site continues to grow as evidenced by the 164% increase in the number of annual Web site visits from 2003 to 2007.

Washington County residents are informed of relevant county

information through the Web site. The county has over 2,000 pages of information updated on a regular basis for the public to access. The Web site will be upgraded in 2008 to offer more functionality. The county Web site has offered an e-mail subscription service since 2005. As a subscriber, citizens and employees receive immediate information, such as current job

**Web Site Visits**



Source: Office of Administration

postings, information regarding County Board agendas, county meetings and much more. E-mail

**E-mail Subscription Service Requests Completed**

	2005	2006	2007
Employment opportunities	37	1,524	3,786
County Board of Commissioners meeting agenda	12	157	456
<i>Staying In Touch</i> newsletter	19	222	415
County libraries		11	11
County parks		31	35
Land and Water Legacy Program			145

Source: Office of Administration

subscription services continue to rise at a steady pace.

### Early Literacy Programs

Children get ready to read years before they start school. Children who read up to three times a week or more do much better in later development. Children who have mastered basic reading skills by the end of second grade are more successful in school, have greater employment options, greater income potential, and have an enhanced quality of life.

Washington County Library plays a key role in providing early literacy information. The library uses a story-time model to teach the six essential early literacy skills. In 2007, 10,853 children and parents attended Baby LapSit, Preschool and Family Storytimes—all programs intended

to improve early literacy. Early literacy skills were promoted with more children and parents at each story time.

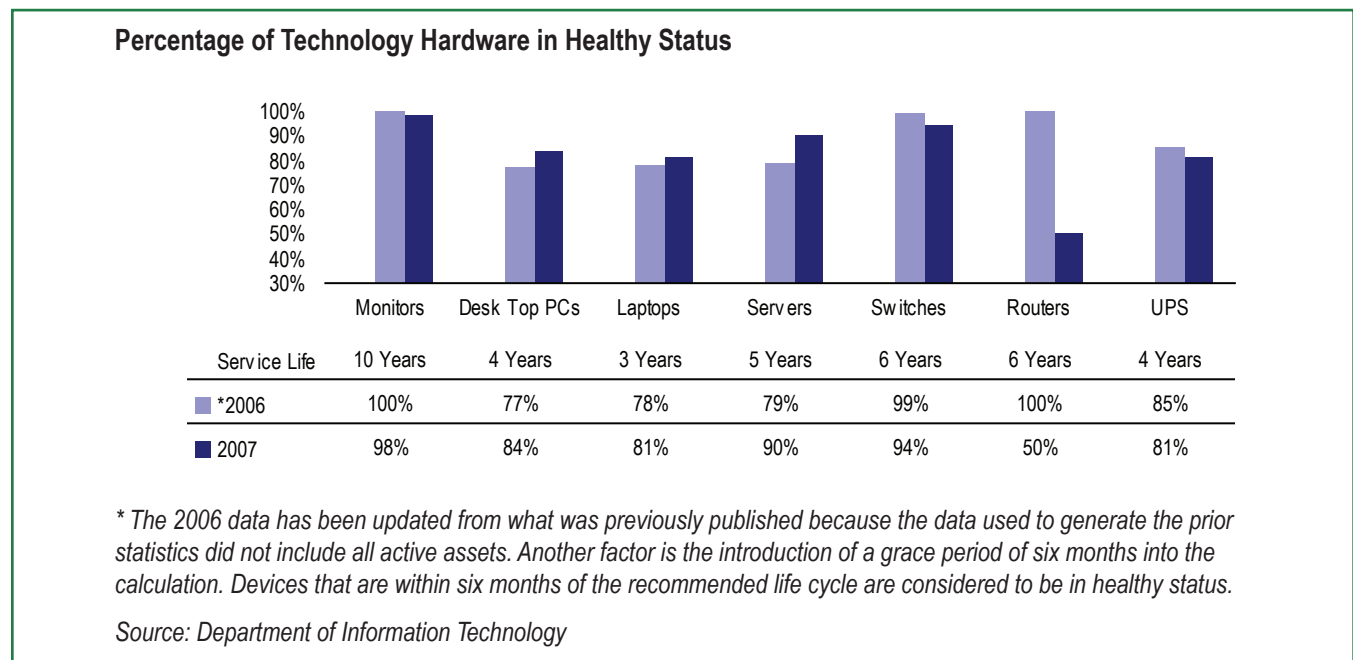
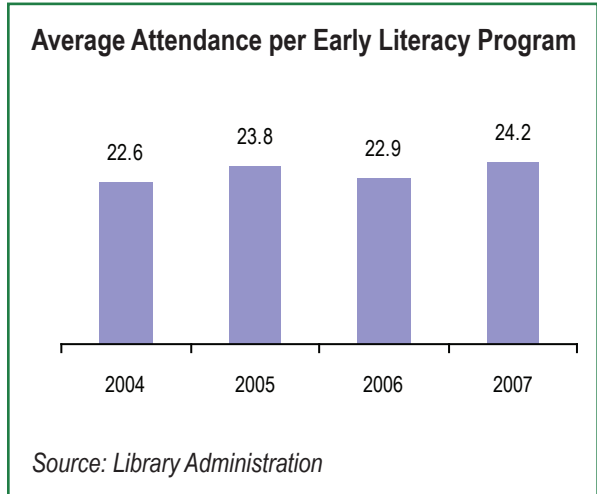
### Managing Computer Infrastructure

One the goals of the Department of Information Technology is to proactively manage Washington County’s computing infrastructure and replace components as needed to ensure that a healthy, secure, stable, and reliable environment is maintained.

The county’s technical hardware infrastructure consists of the following components: desktop computers (PCs), monitors, laptop computers, switches, routers,

servers, and uninterruptible power supplies (UPSs). Each has a life cycle recommended by industry standards.

The recommended life cycles are based on the Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) of these devices which takes into account the direct costs of purchasing the device and the indirect costs of supporting and operating them over time.



Research indicates that for the average organization, indirect costs may contribute 50% or more of the overall TCO. Industry studies indicate that it may increase the TCO by 18%-20% more per year to maintain these devices an extra year beyond their recommended lifecycle.

### Light Emitting Diode (LED) Traffic Signals

Washington County's goal on an organizational level is to conserve energy, meet federal and state environmental standards, and be environmentally responsible.

Washington County began installing Light Emitting Diode (LED) traffic signal indications as an alternative to incandescent fixtures in 1998 for all new county traffic signals and pedestrian indication lights. In 1998, the county retrofitted all existing red traffic lights and "Don't Walk" indications with LEDs that were purchased using rebates and an interest-free loan from Northern States Power Company (NSP), a subsidiary of Xcel Energy. The county used the annual savings from

the LED traffic signals to repay the NSP loan over time.

In 2004, Washington County utilized rebates and incentives from Xcel Energy to fund the retrofit of all county-owned signals with green LEDs. The county went further with the retrofit in 2006 by replacing all remaining overhead indications with LED fixtures to reduce maintenance and exposure to traffic.

The county currently owns 63 LED traffic signals and six overhead red flashers. The county estimates that energy costs for the traffic signals decreased by approximately 50% after retrofitting the red LEDs and "Don't Walk" signs in 1998 and the green LEDs in 2004. In 1998, the county estimated an average payback period of 4.25 years for the LED traffic signals.

The cost of purchasing LED traffic signal indications has decreased since the initial traffic signal retrofits began in Washington County. In 1998, a red LED was \$115, while today they are approximately \$37 per LED. In 2001, green LEDs were \$300,

while today they are \$79. With these decreased costs, the average payback period on LED traffic signals is now estimated at two to four years.

### Fleet Maintenance

As a result of decisions by the federal government in 2007, January 2008 ushered in a new federal mandate for diesel engines. This mandate states that all diesel engines will have a reduced emission of nitrogen oxide (NOx) and particulate matter (PM). This is the first stage of new standards that will lower emissions by 60%. The next stage will come in 2010 when NOx and PM will be almost nonexistent in the exhaust stream of diesel engines. The new requirements will result in changes in the costs to the county for vehicles, fuel, engine oil, engine coolant, and vehicle maintenance.

The county also entered into Project Green Fleet, a program of the Minnesota Environmental Initiative that aims to keep local air pollution under control.

# 4 To maintain the public trust through responsible use of public resources, accountability, and openness of government

The ability of Washington County to meet the needs of its citizens is directly related to its ability to achieve and sustain fiscal stability. Effective and efficient use of resources is necessary to achieve the goals and objectives of the county.

The following measures are an illustration of the many efforts within the county that improve the ways in which this goal is achieved.

percent “strongly” or “somewhat” approved.)

The table below shows the results for the 2006 and 2008 Residential Surveys. Over time, by asking these questions, Washington County will be able to establish a pattern or trend and determine how to continue to improve informing citizens and make responsible decisions.

maintain the quality of its financial management practices by ensuring openness and accountability for public resources.

One of the programs in which the county participates is the Government Finance Officer’s Association Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting Program. The report produced for this program must adhere to the highest standards

	2006	2008
I feel I receive good value for the Washington County taxes I pay.*	68	62
Overall, I feel that Washington County does a good job of managing tax dollars.*	65	61
I feel Washington County government listens to citizens.	63	61
I feel I know about the work of the Washington County Board.	48	49

*Average rating (0 = strongly disagree, 100 = strongly agree).  
\* Indicates statistically significant differences between 2008 and 2006.*

*Source: 2008 Washington County Residential Survey Report of Results*

## Residential Survey of Public Trust

Public trust is essential for achieving the vision of the county’s future and its mission for county government. In the 2008 Residential Survey, residents were asked to rate their perception of public trust in Washington County government. Nearly nine in 10 respondents approve of the job the County Board is doing. (Eighty-eight

## Financial Reporting - Comprehensive Annual Financial Report

Independent audits and adherence to standard accounting practices assures the public that reports on the use of county resources are accurate and represent the financial activity fairly. Washington County participates in a variety of mandatory and voluntary reporting programs to help

in governmental financial reporting. The county was awarded its 22nd consecutive certificate for its 2006 report. This certification through the program affirms the county’s reports are accurate and represent its financial activity fairly.

## Bond Ratings

In the financial market place, the highest level of scrutiny is reserved for those organizations that seek to

**Awards and Audit Opinions for County Financial Reports**

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting	Award (19)	Award (20)	Award (21)	Award (22)	Application submitted
Auditor Opinions on Compliance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles	Unqualified*	Unqualified*	Unqualified*	Unqualified*	Unqualified*
Auditor Opinion on Compliance for Major Federal Award Programs	Unqualified*	Unqualified*	Unqualified*	Unqualified*	Unqualified*

*\*Note: "Unqualified" means that the auditor has tested the information presented and has found full compliance with the prescribed standards. The auditor then can issue an opinion without noting any exceptions or qualifications.*

*Source: Department of Accounting and Finance*

borrow money. Washington County's process for borrowing money in the financial markets takes the form of a bond sale. Each sale of bonds is subjected to a rating of the county's economic stability, management practices, and financial prospects by independent bond rating agencies.

Washington County has consistently received high credit ratings. In 2007, it received an upgrade for its new issue of general obligation bonds. The county now holds the highest rating available from Standard & Poor's Ratings Services and the second highest possible rating from Moody's Investors Services. The county is one of only 48 counties nationally to

receive the AAA rating from Standard and Poor's. Less than one percent of all rated General Obligation debt (excluding insured debt) fall into this category. The strong credit ratings are indicators of an adequate and diverse economic base, good tax-base growth, solid management of financial operations, and moderate debt levels with manageable future debt needs.

**Operating Costs and Property Tax Levy per Capita**

Operating costs per capita is an indication of Washington County's ability to maintain sound financial management while providing its

citizens with the services they value. The first measure reflects the cost of county government as it accommodates the increased service demands that accompany a growing county population. Between 2003 and 2007, there has been an 8.3% increase in the county's population and a cost per capita increase of 5.5%, as well as a national increase in inflation of 12.7%. While the cost of government grew, the cost to residents remained relatively flat, which reflects efficient and cost-effective management.

During 2007, the county's operating costs per capita were the lowest of the seven-county metro area. Controlling

**Bond Issue Rating by Credit Rating Agency**

	2000A	2001A	2003A&B	2005A*	2007A
Standard & Poor's Ratings Services	AA+	AA+	AA	AA+ (AAA)	AAA
Moody's Investors Services	Aa2	Aa2	Aa2	Aa2 (Aaa)	Aa1

*\*Bond issue insured resulting in upgrade to credit rating for bond sale.*

*Source: Department of Accounting and Finance*

**Actual Operating Costs per Capita**

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Actual Operating Costs	\$113,699,000	\$112,718,400	\$114,241,000	\$119,045,100	\$131,185,828
*Population	214,000	216,200	224,900	228,100	233,100
Cost per Capita	\$531	\$521	\$508	\$522	\$563

\*Numbers rounded to nearest hundred.

Debt service and capital expenditures are excluded from the calculation as annual fluctuations of debt and capital expenditures can be significant which would make comparisons less meaningful.

Source: Office of Administration

**Property Tax Levy per Capita**

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Certified Levy	\$59,505,600	\$63,042,600	\$66,497,300	\$70,310,200	\$75,895,000
*Estimated Population	214,000	216,200	224,900	228,100	233,100
Levy per Capita	\$278	\$292	\$296	\$308	\$326

\*Numbers rounded to nearest hundred.

Debt service and capital expenditures are excluded from the calculation as annual fluctuations of debt and capital expenditures can be significant which would make comparisons less meaningful.

Source: Office of Administration

the cost of operations is an important strategy for achieving efficient use of county tax dollars.

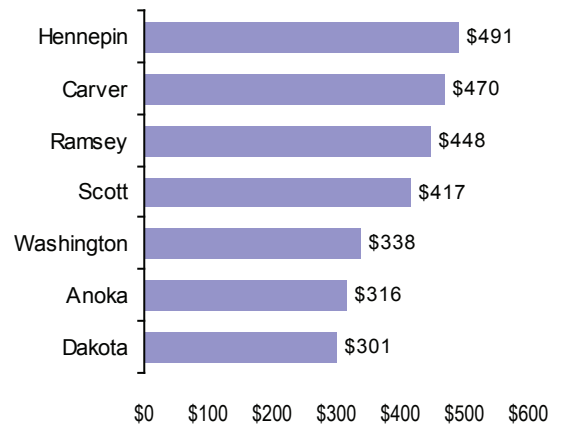
This trend reflects the amount of levy collected from each resident of the county. In developing a budget, the County Board seeks to limit the increase in the property tax levy while focusing on providing core services and programs. By maintaining a relatively flat levy per capita, the county is maximizing its use of other revenue sources whenever and wherever possible. Washington County's property tax rate has historically been one of the lowest in Minnesota (seventh lowest of 87 counties), and the county's 2007 levy per capita is the third lowest in the seven-county metro area.

**Full-time Equivalent Employee Ratios**

This trend shows Washington County's full-time equivalent (FTE) employees per 1,000 population. This is another indicator that emphasizes the county's ability to maintain sound financial management while providing its citizens with the services they value. While the population growth increased over 9% since 2003, the FTE count increased by

just over 2.5%. The county's FTE per 1,000 population count is the second lowest of the seven-county metro area. To help maintain a low

**Property Taxes per Capita – Metro Counties**



Source: 2007 Summary Budget Reports as submitted to the State of Minnesota; Met Council 2006 population estimates.

**Employees per 1,000 Population**

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Employee Count	1,056.76	1,075.70	1,019.61	1,059.32	1,085.24
Estimated Population	214,000	216,200	224,900	228,100	233,100
Employees per 1,000 Population	4.94	4.98	4.53	4.64	4.63

Numbers rounded to nearest hundred.

Source: Office of Administration

employee per capita rate, the county will continue to make investments in technology and explore alternatives to enhance and streamline the delivery of services.

The transactions per FTE measure is a tool used to help determine the appropriate staffing level for services. In 2007, the Property Records and Taxpayer Services Department reorganized their document processing system. This included transferring some staff from a division with less service demands to another area with growing service demands.

With the exception of 2007, transactions per FTE account for mortgage registration tax, deed tax, conservation fees, tax payment transactions processed, and telephone calls in the Taxpayer Services Division.

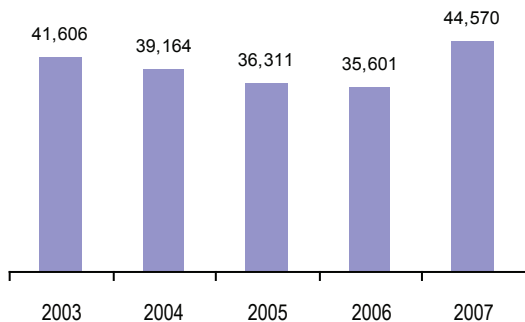
Looking at the number of transactions per FTE helps determine more efficient and effective staff placement. Transferring staff allowed document recording transactions to be processed in a shorter period of time.

**Child Support Program**

Washington County collects child support from non-custodial parents

and distributes it to the child's guardian or custodial parent to better provide for the child's needs. This program is a strong example of a program with a high rate of return. When children and families receive the support that they are entitled to, they are less likely to need other publicly funded assistance programs, such as food stamps, medical care, and child care assistance. As the chart demonstrates, in 2007, for every dollar spent on program administration, \$8.30 was collected for children in the county. This is well above the median ratio of \$5.57 for all Minnesota counties.

**Total Transactions per Full-time Equivalent (FTE) in Taxpayer Services**

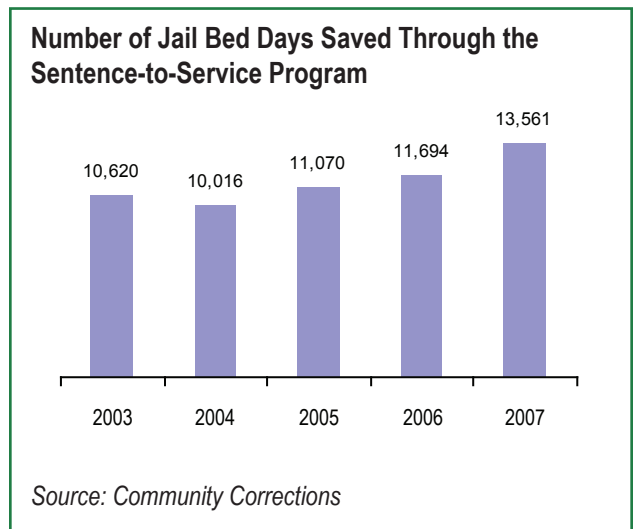
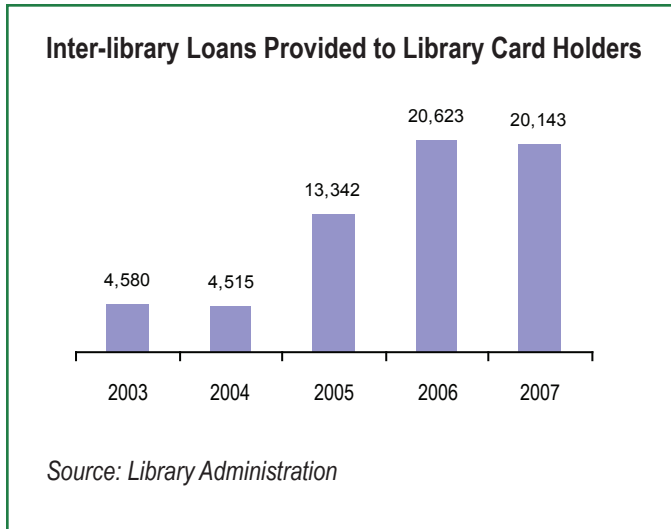


Source: Property Records and Taxpayer Services

**Cost Effectiveness Ratio of Child Support Program in Federal Fiscal Years**



Source: Minnesota Department of Human Services Initial Report on Human Services Performance, January 2008



### Inter-library Loans

The Washington County Library does not purchase every book, magazine, CD, or DVD that residents request. Instead, the library cooperates with other libraries to borrow items on behalf of card holders through inter-library loan. The library is a member of the Minnesota Library Information Network (MnLINK) which allows access to materials held by public, school, academic, and special libraries throughout the state. The library is also a member of the Online Computer Library Center (OCLC), which makes it possible to request items from libraries throughout the United States.

As the number of published materials and prices increase, there are more materials wanted than the library

owns. Resource sharing with other libraries allows the library to satisfy users without expending additional county funds. Ideal candidates for inter-library loan are materials that are out of scope for a public library such as textbooks, academic or professional materials, and older out-of-print materials. Through inter-library loans, 20,143 items were borrowed in 2007. At an average cost of \$12 per item, the library saved residents \$241,716. In addition, Washington County Libraries loaned 8,219 items to other libraries.

### Sentence-to-Service Program

Through Washington County’s Community Corrections Department’s Sentence-to-Service (STS) program, offenders perform work service in the community as

an alternative to serving time in jail. The program completes work service projects for various government, public, or private non-profit agencies throughout the county. In 2007, the STS program saved the county over 13,500 jail days. It costs an estimated \$117 per day to house an offender in the county jail. The STS program has consistently saved the county 10,000 or more jail bed days a year which saves the county thousands of dollars each year. Additionally, the jail bed days saved through the STS program allows the county to generate revenue by renting unused jail bed space to other law enforcement agencies. Washington County’s STS program is an efficient and cost-effective program that provides offenders the opportunity to repair harm and restore the community.

# Appendix

## Additional Washington County Measures

In order to maintain its strong focus on continuous improvement and benchmarking, Washington County tracks a number of items in addition to those included in the 2007 Annual Performance Report. A sample of these additional measures, organized by goal and department, is presented in the following pages.

### By County Goals

#### To promote the health, safety, and quality of life of citizens

- Health care provider response rate to Public Health and Environment's Health Alert Network
- Public Health and Environment response rate to Minnesota Department of Health's Health Alert Network
- Total household hazardous waste collected
- Number of child and adult abuse/neglect reports
- Community service hours completed through the Sentence-to-Service program
- Percent of adult and juvenile closed cases with a restitution where restitution was paid in full at the time of case closing
- Parks usage
- Public and staff use of library online catalog and digital resources (e.g., electronic books, downloadable audiovisual, and information databases)

#### To provide accessible, high-quality services in a timely and respectful manner

- Number, type, amount of time and resources used by Information Services Library staff to answer users' questions
- Percent of self-checkouts completed by borrowers at library branches
- Number of telephone calls in Property Records and Taxpayer Services
- Number of counter interactions in Property Records and Taxpayer Services
- Customer survey results in Property Records and Taxpayer Services
- Number of days to process property records in Property Records and Taxpayer Services
- Compliance turnaround times for Property Records and Taxpayer Services
- Turnaround time for criminal charging
- Turnaround time for juvenile charging
- Number of civil process papers

- Number of foreclosures served
- Number of 911 calls and total calls to the communication center
- Number of volunteer hours for the Sheriff's Office
- Court customer satisfaction rating for Stillwater and Cottage Grove
- Court customer satisfaction rating Violations Bureau/Hearing Officer
- Court case clearance rate
- Average number of offenders on a traditional caseload for adult division probation officers
- Dislocated Worker Program outcomes (e.g., did they find work, get a degree, etc.)
- Timeliness and efficiency of Help Desk issues in the Department of Information Technology
- Project Delivery: Time and budget actual vs. estimate for the Department of Information Technology (*new measure in 2007*)
- Department of Information Technology Network and systems availability (*new measure in 2007*)
- Actual days to pay invoices in Accounting and Finance

**To address today’s needs while proactively planning for the future**

- Amount of public and staff use of meeting rooms at library branches
- Number of absentee ballot applications processed and mailed
- Property Records and Taxpayer Services’ Web site usage
- Washington County Web site usage
- Rating of county newsletter *Staying in Touch*
- Amount of travel time on major routes
- Land parcel changes, maintenance, and costs
- Annual turnover rate for Washington County employees
- Annual number of Washington County employee training hours
- Percentage of Minnesota Family Investment Program and Diversionary Work Program clients who are still employed 30 hours a week and no longer receiving cash assistance three years later

**To maintain the public trust through responsible use of public resources, accountability, and openness of government**

- Number of Washington County Library cardholders using reciprocal borrowing privileges at other Twin Cities public libraries
- Human services administrative and total costs compared to other counties

- Costs and number of children in out-of-home placement
- Number of household hazardous waste facility participants and cost per participant
- Maintenance costs per lane-mile of road
- Total costs to maintain outlying government buildings
- Historic Courthouse grant, fundraiser, and donation revenues
- Number of Washington County Management and Compliance letters (Auditor’s findings on internal control and material weaknesses)
- Budgeted expenditures vs. actual expenditures
- Annual budget non-levy revenues vs. actual non-levy revenue
- Annual average investment rates
- Injury rate per 100 employees

**By Department**

**Accounting and Finance**

- Number of Washington County Management and Compliance letters (auditor’s findings on internal control and material weaknesses)
- Annual average investment rates
- Actual days to pay invoices in Accounting and Finance

**Administration**

- Washington County Web site usage
- Rating of county newsletter *Staying in Touch*
- Budgeted expenditures vs. actual

- expenditures
- Annual budget non-levy revenues vs. actual non-levy revenue

**Attorney’s Office**

- Turnaround time for criminal charging
- Turnaround time for juvenile charging

**Community Corrections**

- Average number of offenders on a traditional caseload for adult division probation officers
- Community service hours completed through the Sentence-to-Service program
- Percent of adult and juvenile closed cases with a restitution where restitution was paid in full at the time of case closing

**Community Services**

- Number of child and adult abuse/neglect reports
- Percentage of Minnesota Family Investment Program and Diversionary Work Program clients who are still employed 30 hours a week and no longer receiving cash assistance three years later
- Dislocated Worker Program outcomes (did they find work, get a degree, etc.)
- Human services administrative and total costs (comparison to other counties)
- Costs and number of children in out-of-home placement

**Court Administration**

- Court case clearance rate
- Court customer satisfaction rating for Stillwater and Cottage Grove
- Court customer satisfaction rating for Violations Bureau/Hearing Officer

**Human Resources**

- Injury rate per 100 employees
- Annual turnover rate for Washington County employees
- Annual number of Washington County employee training hours

**Information Technology**

- Timeliness and efficiency of Help Desk issues in the Department of Information Technology
- Project Delivery: Time and budget actual vs. estimate for the Department of Information Technology (*new measure in 2007*)
- Department of Information Technology Network and systems availability (*new measure in 2007*)

**Library**

- Number, type, amount of time, and resources used by Information Services Library staff to answer users' questions
- Public and staff use of library

online catalog and digital resources (e.g., electronic books, downloadable audiovisual, and information databases)

- Amount of public and staff use of meeting rooms at the library branches
- Number of Washington County Library cardholders using reciprocal borrowing privileges at other Twin Cities public libraries

**Public Health and Environment**

- Health care provider response rate to Public Health and Environment's Health Alert Network
- Public Health and Environment response rate to Minnesota Department of Health's Health Alert Network
- Total household hazardous waste collected
- Number of household hazardous waste facility participants and cost per participant

**Property Records and Taxpayer Services**

- Number of telephone calls in Property Records and Taxpayer Services
- Number of counter interactions in Property Records and Taxpayer Services

- Customer survey results in Property Records and Taxpayer Services
- Number of days to process property records in Property Records and Taxpayer Services
- Compliance turn around times for Property Records and Taxpayer Services
- Number of absentee ballot applications processed and mailed out
- Web site hits on Property Records and Taxpayer Web site

**Public Works**

- Parks usage
- Amount of travel time on major routes
- Land parcel changes, maintenance, and costs
- Total costs to maintain outlying government buildings
- Historic Courthouse grant, fundraiser, and donation revenues

**Sheriff's Office**

- Number of civil process papers
- Number of foreclosures served
- Number of 911 calls and total calls to the Communication Center
- Number of volunteer hours for the Sheriff's Office



Washington County, 14949 62nd Street North, P. O. Box 6, Stillwater, MN 55082-0006, 651-430-6001  
[www.co.washington.mn.us](http://www.co.washington.mn.us)