



*Resolution*  
*of the*  
**Board of County Commissioners**  
*St. Louis County, Minnesota*  
*Adopted on: June 13, 2023 Resolution No. 23-327*  
*Offered by Commissioner: McDonald*

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**Minnesota State Auditor's 2023 Performance Measurement Program Report**

WHEREAS, Benefits to St. Louis County for participation in the Minnesota Council on Local Results and Innovation comprehensive performance measurement program are outlined in Minn. Stat. § 6.91 and include eligibility for a reimbursement as set by state statute; and

WHEREAS, Any city/county participating in the comprehensive performance measurement program is also exempt from levy limits for taxes, if levy limits are in effect; and

WHEREAS, The St. Louis County Board has adopted and implemented ten of the performance measures, as developed by the Council on Local Results and Innovation, and a system to use this information to help plan, budget, manage and evaluate programs and processes for optimal future outcomes.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the St. Louis County Board supports continued participation in the Minnesota State Auditor's Performance Measurement Program.

RESOLVED FURTHER, That St. Louis County will continue to report the results of the performance measures to its citizenry by the end of the year through publication, direct mailing, posting on the city's/county's website, or through a public hearing at which the budget and levy will be discussed and public input allowed.

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the St. Louis County Board approves submission of the 2023 St. Louis County Performance Measures Report found in County Board File No. 61972.

Commissioner McDonald moved the adoption of the Resolution and it was declared adopted upon the following vote:

Yeas – Commissioners Harala, Grimm, McDonald, Nelson, Jugovich and Chair Boyle – 6

Nays – None

Absent – Commissioner Musolf – 1


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**STATE OF MINNESOTA**  
Office of County Auditor, ss.  
County of St. Louis

I, **NANCY NILSEN**, Auditor of the County of St. Louis, do hereby certify that I have compared the foregoing with the original resolution filed in my office on the 13<sup>th</sup> day of June, A.D. 2023, and that this is a true and correct copy.

WITNESS MY HAND AND SEAL OF OFFICE at Duluth, Minnesota, this 13<sup>th</sup> day of June, A.D., 2023.

NANCY NILSEN, COUNTY AUDITOR

By:   
Clerk of the County Board/Deputy Auditor

# Measures for Counties

## St. Louis County Departmental Key Performance Indicators:

### 2023 Submission (2022 data, *unless noted*)

St. Louis County utilizes best practices in performance management and measurement. Annually, the County Board adopts the standard set of county performance measures proposed by the Minnesota State Auditor's Performance Measurement Program. Created by the Minnesota State Legislature's Council on Local Results and Innovation, this began as a standard set of ten performance measures for counties and ten performance measures for cities that would aid residents, taxpayers, and state and local officials in determining the efficacy of counties and cities in providing services, and measure residents' opinions of those services. Cities and counties that choose to participate in the new standards measure program may be eligible for a reimbursement in Local Government Aid, and exemption from levy limits.

Participation in the Minnesota State Auditor's Performance Measures Program is voluntary; however, St. Louis County is well positioned to participate by virtue of its continued efforts in performance measurement and citizen surveys. Counties that choose to participate must officially adopt the corresponding performance benchmarks developed by the Council, and report on them in order to receive a new local government performance aid, reimbursed at \$0.14 per capita, not to exceed \$25,000.

St. Louis County incorporates performance data in budget and business planning discussions and efforts. Each department does a budget analysis, establishes goals, identifies continuous improvement projects, and develops strategies that guide them for the next three to five years. As part of the budgeting process, Administration's discussions with departments include (but are not limited) to the following:

- **Who Are You?** This includes mission statement, primary lines of business (programs), organizational chart and significant trends and changes impacting the department.
- **What Do You Want To Achieve?** This includes a vision for the department and key initiatives aligned with St. Louis County's Strategic Plan.
- **What Resources Are You Going To Use?** Resource plans such as Finance Plan, Workforce Plan, Technology Plan, Purchasing Plan, and Space Plan.

St. Louis County continues to operate under its adopted 2016 Strategic Plan. The broader county-wide goals for a sustained business planning focus by departments' center on consolidating core organizational efforts and services in support of the following goals as defined by the St. Louis County Board of Commissioners:

1. Public Health and Safety
2. Sound County Infrastructure
3. Natural Resources Management
4. Community Growth and Prosperity

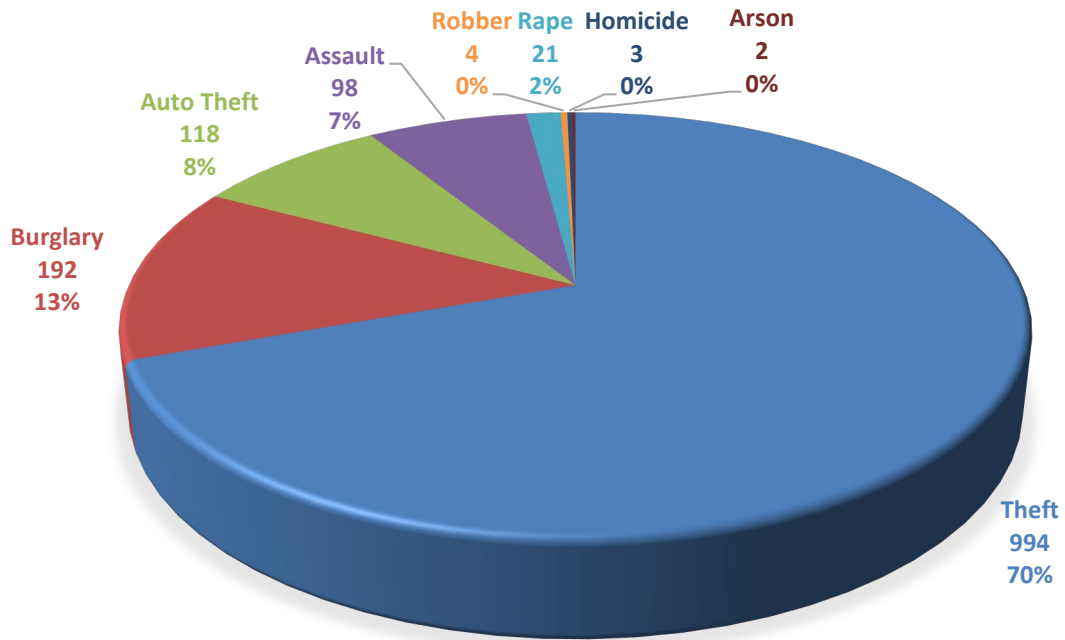
As the County strives for organizational excellence it is of paramount importance to continue to progress in linking departmental program and service initiatives to key organizational priorities and strategies.

Public Safety – County Sheriff	
Department Goal:	To protect and serve the citizens of the county and region with professionalism and pride.
Commissioner	Public Health and Safety
Priority Area:	

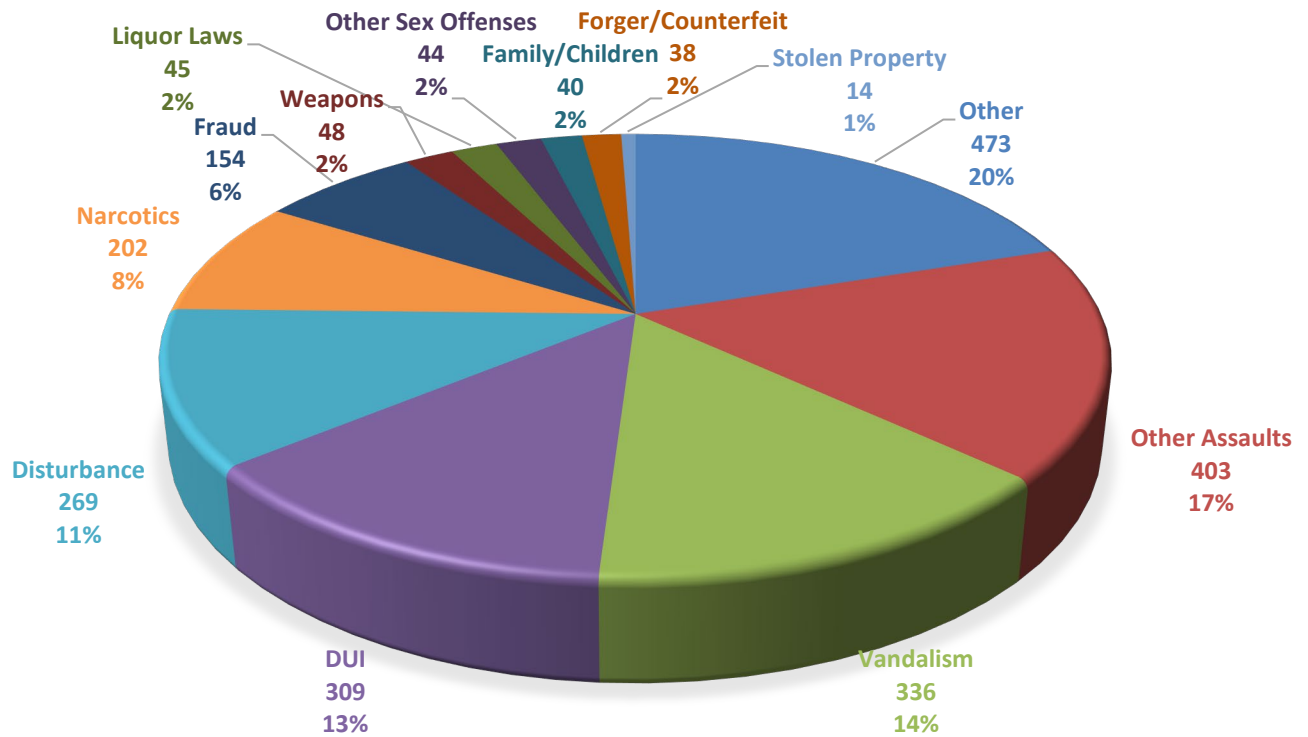
### Measure 1. Public Safety –Crime Rates/Citizen Survey

**Current Performance:** In 2022, St. Louis County (population 199,532, US Census Bureau 2022 population estimate) had 1,432 (vs. 1,817 in 2021) Part I offenses and 2,375 (vs. 3,056 in 2021) Part II offenses.

#### Part 1 Crimes: 1,321

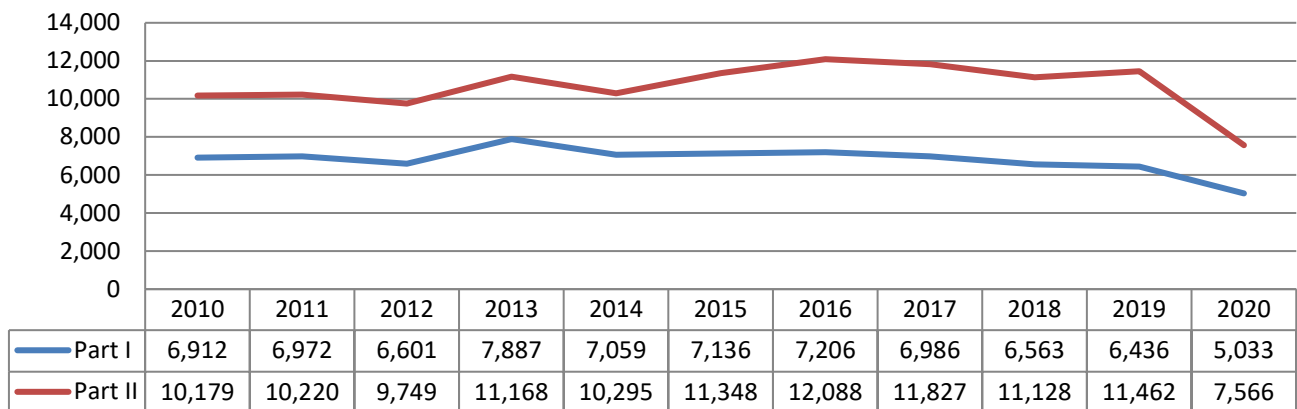


## Part 2 Crimes: 2,375



Please note that the Duluth Police Department (among other law enforcement agencies in St. Louis County) left the Shield system (from which this data is pulled) in fall of 2020, which artificially lowered the figures in 2021 and beyond. A more accurate way of tracking this information going forward is being determined.

## Part I and II Crime History



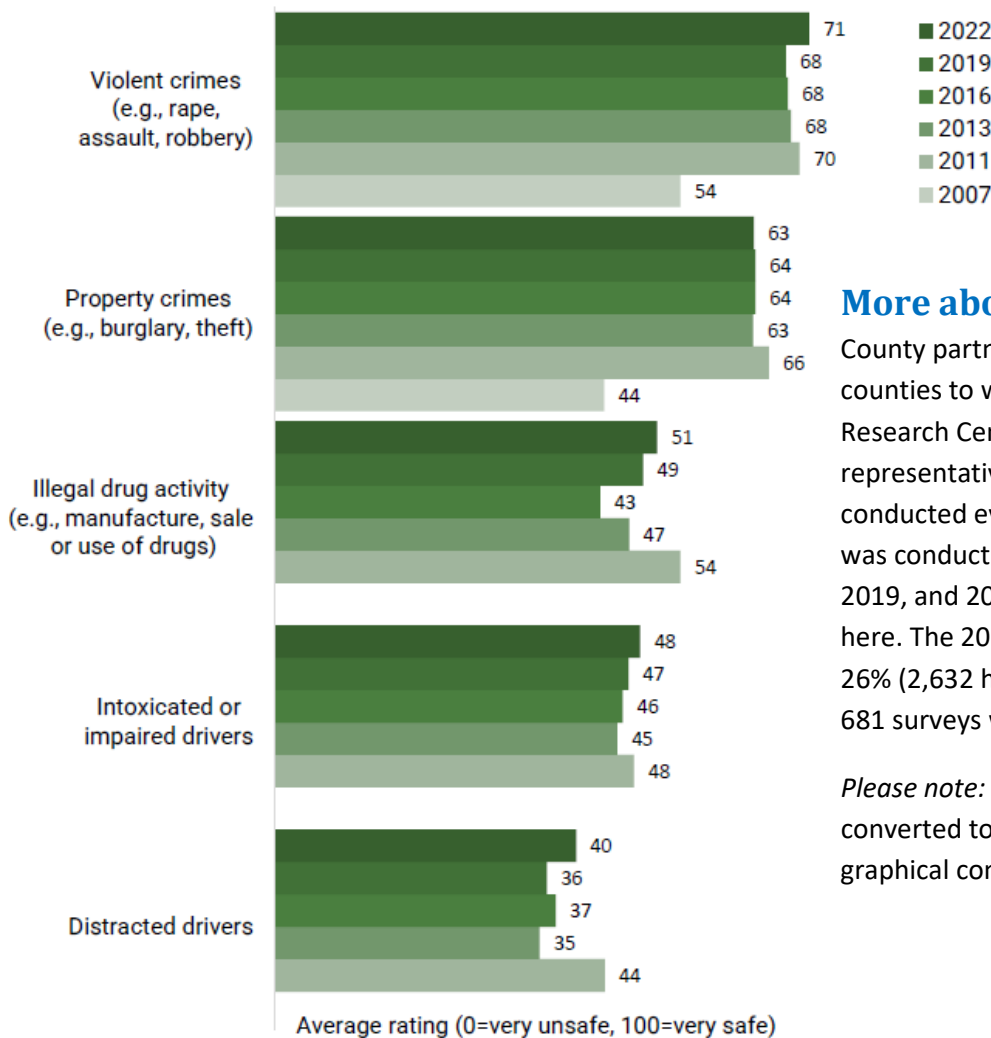
Data Source: MN BCA Uniform Crime Reports

## Measure 2. Public Safety – Citizen Survey

**Current Performance:** Residents felt the safest from violent (71 points) and property crimes (63). As shown below, ratings were similar to those given in past survey responses.

**Figure 4: Average Ratings of Feelings of Safety by Year**

Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel from the following in St. Louis County.



**More about our survey:** St. Louis County partners with other Minnesota counties to work with Polco-National Research Center on a statistically valid and representative residential survey which is conducted every 2-3 years. This survey was conducted in 2007, 2011, 2013, 2016, 2019, and 2022. The data is summarized here. The 2022 survey response rate was 26% (2,632 households received a survey; 681 surveys were completed).

*Please note:* Responses have been converted to a 100-point scale for ease of graphical comparison.

## Measure 3. Public Safety – Deputy Response Time

**Current Performance:** The average response time from time of dispatch to first unit on scene computes to **15 minutes and 38 seconds** (compared to 14 minutes and 35 seconds in 2021). St. Louis County is unique compared to other Minnesota counties in that it is over 7,000 square miles in size, the type and quality of our roadways varies significantly throughout the county, and great distances between calls often requires extra time to respond, thus impacting the efficacy of this measure as a standard in St. Louis County as compared to other counties in the state.

## Public Safety – Arrowhead Regional Corrections (ARC)

<b>Department Goal:</b>	To use evidence-based practices to provide community corrections services in a five county area of Northeastern Minnesota (St. Louis, Carlton, Cook, Koochiching and Lake Counties). ARC operates the (1) Northeast Regional Corrections Center (NERCC), an institution for adult males, (2) Arrowhead Juvenile Center, a secure detention and treatment facility for juveniles, (3) Court and Field (probation and parole) services and (4) contracted services for adult female offenders.
<b>Commissioner</b> <b>Priority Area:</b>	Public Health and Safety

### Measure 4. Public Safety – Recidivism

**Current Performance:** Arrowhead Regional Corrections’ goal is to maintain its client recidivism rate at 30% or lower, as defined by the Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC). The MN DOC defines recidivism as “a felony conviction within three years of discharge.” In 2021, ARC’s adult probation recidivism rate was 15% (compared to 16% in 2020).

**Data Source:** 2021 Minnesota Statewide Probation & Supervised Release Outcomes Report (MN DOC)

In 2022 Arrowhead Regional Corrections completed a recidivism study of 1,810 adult clients who were discharged from probation in 2018. Only 6% of probationers were convicted of a new felony offense within two years of discharge from Probation.

**Data Source:** Arrowhead Regional Corrections 2022 Adult Probation Recidivism Report.

Public Works	
<b>Department Goal:</b>	To provide a safe, well-maintained road and bridge system.
<b>Commissioner</b>	Sound County Infrastructure
<b>Priority Area:</b>	

### Measure 5. Public Works – Total number of fatal/injury accidents

**Current Performance:** St. Louis County experienced **6** fatal crashes (vs. 7 in 2021) and **14** major injury crashes (vs. 18 in 2021) on County State Aid Highways (CSAH), County Roads (CR) and Unorganized Township (UT) Roads in St. Louis County in 2022. The number of total fatal and injury-related crashes (not just those with serious injuries) was 108 in 2022 (vs. 126 in 2021) on CSAH, CR and UT roads within St. Louis County.

### Measure 6. Public Works – Snow Plowing Time

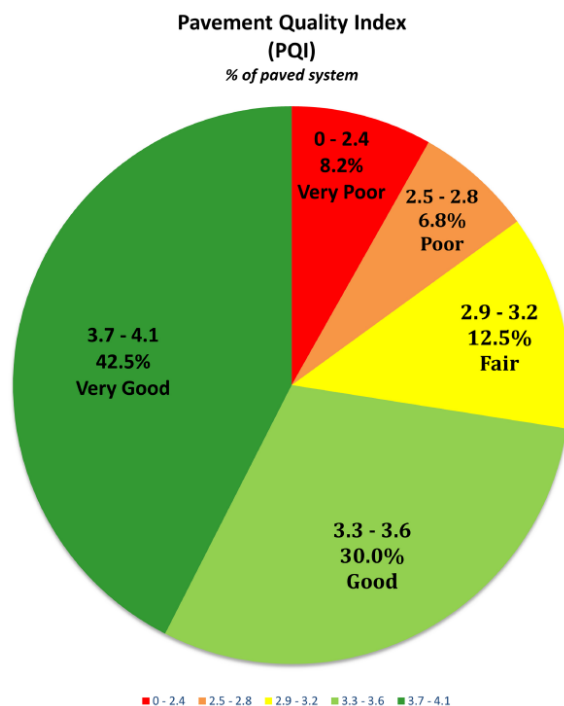
**Current Performance:** It takes the St. Louis County Public Works Department an average of **12 hours** to plow county roadways during an average snowfall event.

**Data Source:** Public Works. By using GPS/AVL software, St. Louis County is able to track its truck fleet, and gather tabular data as to location, travel time (overall, and while plowing), travel distance (overall, and while plowing), and material application amounts. In addition, the County is able to generate mapping showing the locations of its fleet and its movements at any given time.

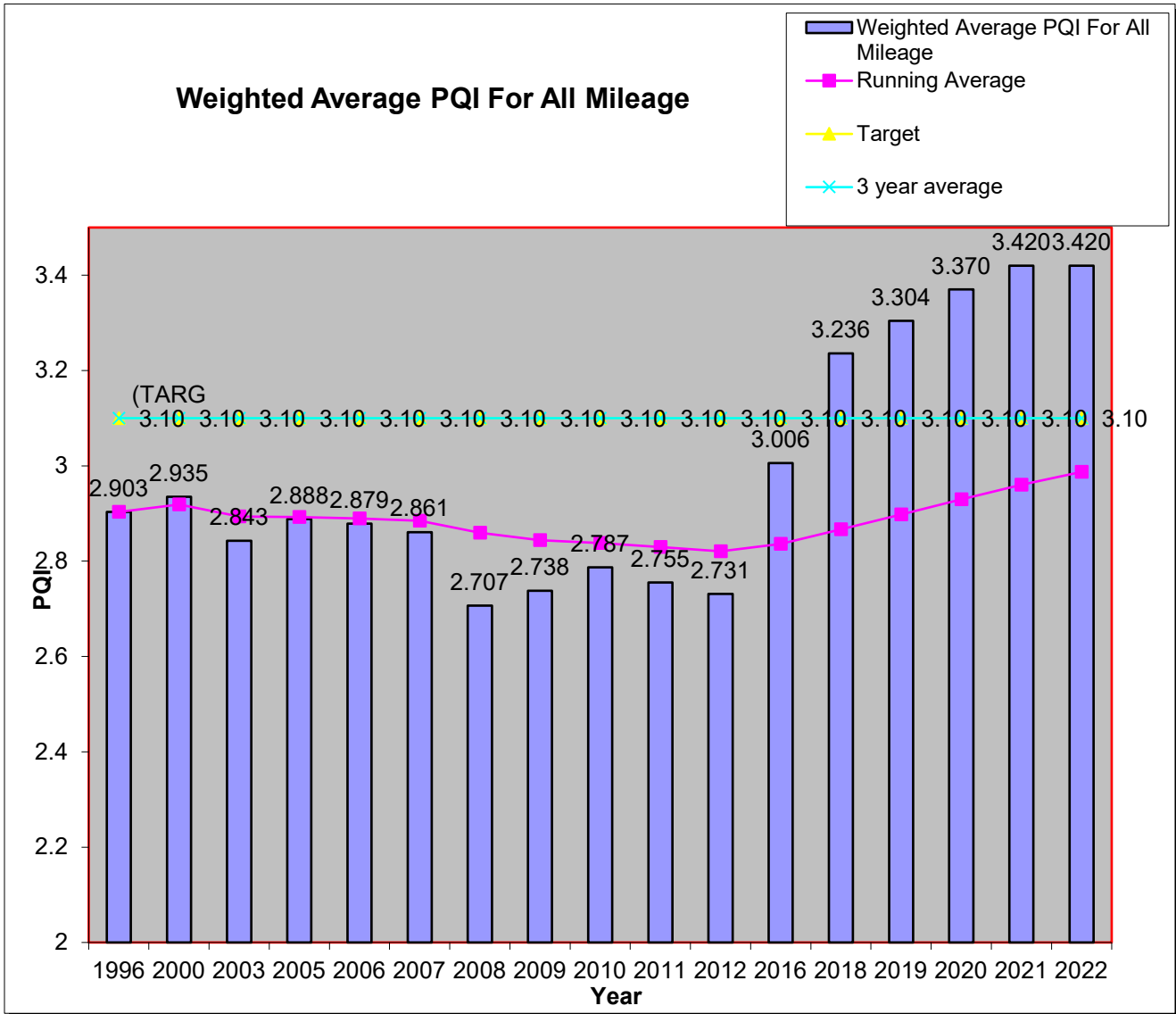
### Measure 7. Public Works – County Pavement Condition Rating (PCI/PQI)

**Current Performance:** To improve the overall pavement quality of the roads of St. Louis County jurisdiction (unorganized townships, county roads, and county state aid highways) to a level acceptable to the public, Public Works strives to maintain 75% of roadway miles with a Pavement Quality Index (PQI) of 2.90 or higher and the weighted average PQI for all mileage at 3.10 or higher. Pavements having a PQI of 2.90 to 3.20 are defined as being in "fair" condition. PQI's range from 0.00 (worst) to 4.0 (best).

The percentage of roadway miles with a PQI of 2.90 or higher is 85% (compared to 82.8% in 2021), which is over the target of 75%. The weighted average PQI for all mileage is 3.42 (the same as 2021), which exceeds the target of 3.10.



Description	2022 Weighted Average PQI	Rating Description
All Roads	3.42 (2021 = 3.42)	Good
CSAH Roads	3.48 (2021 = 3.46)	Good
County Roads	3.26 (2021 = 3.17)	Fair
UT Roads	3.06 (2021 = 3.13)	Fair



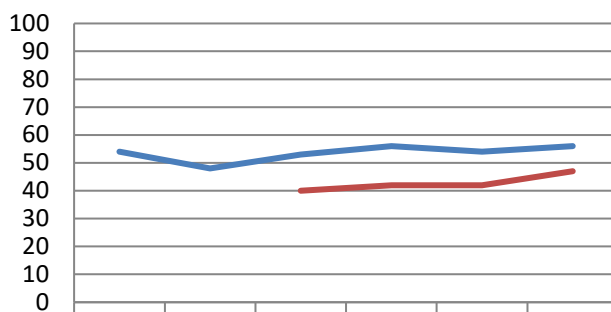
**What was changed to meet this goal:** The Department felt it was important to set targets that would reflect where the County’s system should be. Since 2012, it has made significant progress toward its goal, and has now surpassed it. A shift toward doing more preservation projects (such as, mill and overlays, reclaim and overlays and bituminous overlays), along with more preventative maintenance (such as crack sealing, chip seals and micro-surfacing) has continued to push the numbers in the right direction. St. Louis County Public Works continues to implement a pavement management system and will further refine its use as well as continue to evaluate all potential sources of revenue and establish a new target.



## Measure 8. Public Works – Citizen Survey Ratings

**Current Performance:** The condition of county roads and bridges was felt to be a moderate problem, or had an average rating of 63 points. The 2022 survey continued to separate snow and ice removal from general maintenance, which is reflected in the following chart. While low, these scores are in line with national trends done by the Polco-National Research Center.

**Please rate each of the following services provided by St. Louis County:**



	2007	2011	2013	2016	2019	2022
— Snow and ice removal on county roads	54	48	53	56	54	56
— Maintenance of county roads			40	42	42	47

### More about our survey:

St. Louis County partners with other Minnesota counties to work with the National Research Center on a statistically valid and representative residential survey which is conducted every 2-3 years. This survey was conducted in 2007, 2011, 2013, 2016, 2019, and 2022. The data is summarized here. The 2022 survey response rate was 26% (2,632 households received a survey; 681 surveys were completed).

Responses have been converted to a 100 point scale for ease of graphical comparison.

Please note: the “maintenance of county roads” was a new question in 2013.

## Measure 9. Public Works – Average Bridge Sufficiency Rating

**Current Performance:** St. Louis County’s average bridge sufficiency rating is **92.3**, slightly up from 91.1 in 2021. There are several factors to consider when it comes to using the Sufficiency Rating (SR) and setting an annual goal as Sufficiency Rating is a risk-based number (not a condition-based number) and has many factors. It may take some serious thought to determine the best metric to measure success.

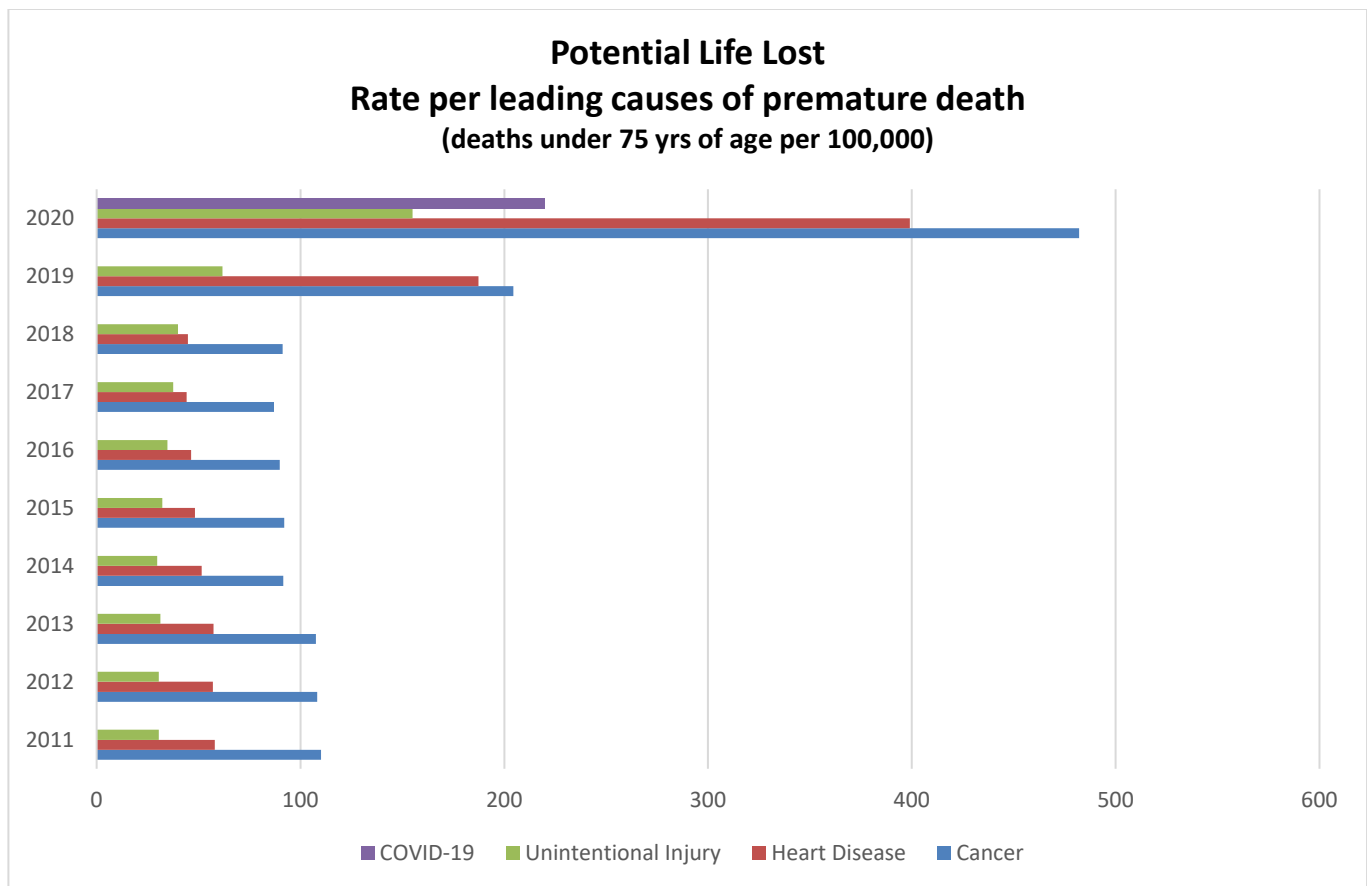
Considerations include:

- Establish a clear definition of the Sufficiency Rating (SR).
- Consider using ratings. NBI ratings are the federal portion of the condition ratings of various parts of the bridge (superstructure, substructure, deck, etc.) and are determined by our safety inspectors in the field.
- St. Louis County is responsible for approximately 600 bridges with ever changing condition values. It can be difficult to track and calculate any meaningful information without significant effort. The SR data from the State’s SIMS database is the only source for the current SR's and condition information that changes annually.

Public Health, Social Services	
<b>Department Goal:</b>	Children will be born healthy, live a life free from abuse and neglect, and will have a permanent living arrangement. Parents will be emotionally and financially able to provide for their children. Our community will make healthy life choices; have safe food, water, and air.
<b>Commissioner Priority Area:</b>	Public Health and Safety

### Measure 10. Public Health & Human Services – General Life Expectancy

**Current Performance:** The general life expectancy for males is 77.0, while the life expectancy for women is 81.5 years according to the most up-to-date County profiles (from 2014—<http://www.healthdata.org/us-county-profiles>). The premature death rate (PDR) for those under age 75 is the number of deaths to residents under age 75 per 100,000 persons age-adjusted to the 2000 U.S. standard population. The rate is per the top four leading causes of premature death in 2020 (the latest data available) is 482 for Cancer, 399 for Heart Disease, 220 for COVID-19, and 155 for Unintentional Injury for St. Louis County.



**Data Source:** *Mortality Table 4. Cause-Specific Death Counts for Ten Leading Causes, 1 by State/County/CHB, Minnesota Residents, 2020*

## Measure 11. Public Health & Human Services – Tobacco & Alcohol Use

**Current Performance:** The County Health Rankings & Roadmaps program is a collaboration between the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute. They believe America can become a nation where getting healthy, staying healthy, and making sure our children grow up healthy are top priorities. They have a vision of an America where we all strive together to build a national Culture of Health that enables all in our diverse society to lead healthy lives, now and for generations to come.

2018 Percentage of adults who are current smokers 18%  
 2019 Percentage of adults who are current smokers 18%  
 2020 Percentage of adults who are current smokers 21%  
 2021 Percentage of adults who are current smokers 21%  
**2022 Percentage of adults who are current smokers 21%**

2018 Percentage of adults reporting binge or heavy drinking 23%  
 2019 Percentage of adults reporting binge or heavy drinking 23%  
 2020 Percentage of adults reporting binge or heavy drinking 25%  
 2021 Percentage of adults reporting binge or heavy drinking 25%  
**2022 Percentage of adults reporting binge or heavy drinking 24%**

2018 Percentage of driving deaths with alcohol involvement 26%  
 2019 Percentage of driving deaths with alcohol involvement 26%  
 2020 Percentage of driving deaths with alcohol involvement 34%  
 2021 Percentage of driving deaths with alcohol involvement 35%  
**2022 Percentage of driving deaths with alcohol involvement 40%**

**Data source:** <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/>

The information below was collected in the Bridge to Health Survey (from 2020). Below is some general regional information.

Adult Tobacco Use	Bridge to Health 2020	Minnesota*	Wisconsin**	National**
<b>Current smoker</b>	15.8%	13.8%	15.4%	16.0%
<b>Attempted to quit in last year</b>	45.7%	45.7%	---	---
<b>Current smokeless tobacco user</b>	4.7%	3.2%	3.1%	---
<b>Ever used e-cigarettes</b>	16.3%	20.7%	---	---

\*Minnesota Adult Tobacco Survey 2018<sup>4</sup>

\*\*CDC BRFSS 2019<sup>5</sup>

**Tobacco Use—**

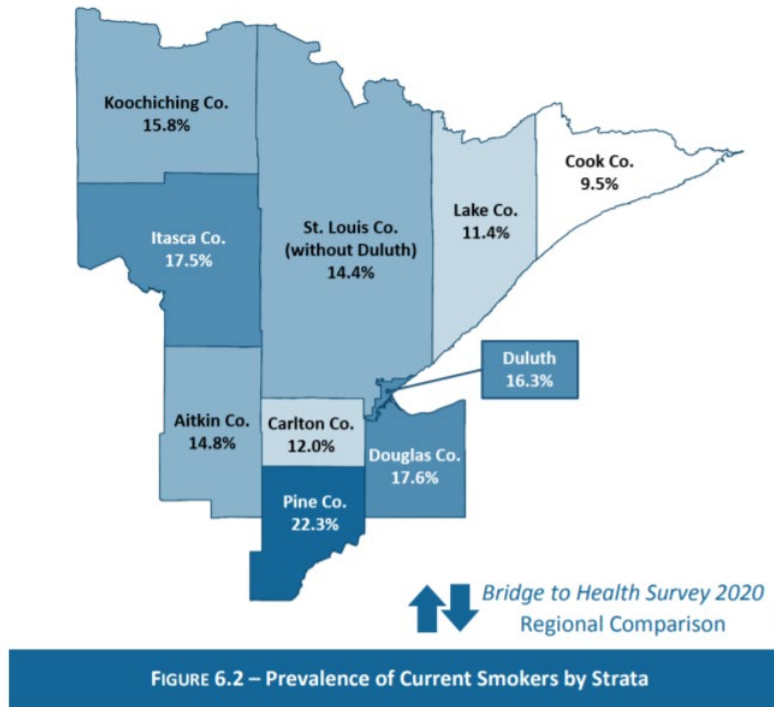


FIGURE 6.2 – Prevalence of Current Smokers by Strata

**Alcohol Use—**

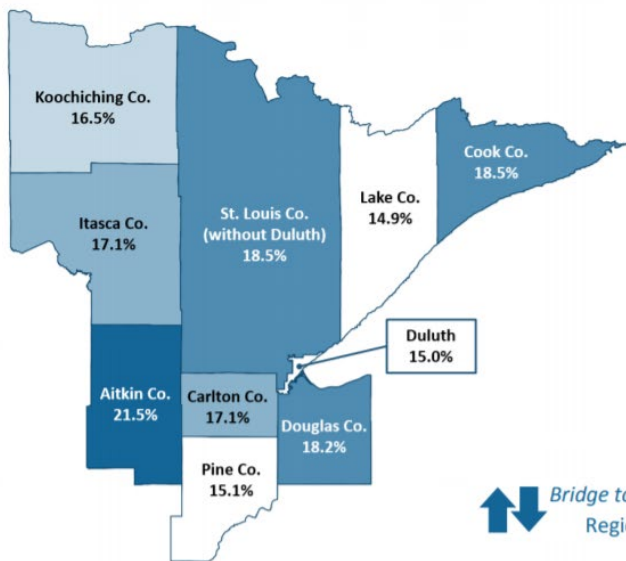


FIGURE 7.3 – Prevalence of Heavy Drinking by Strata

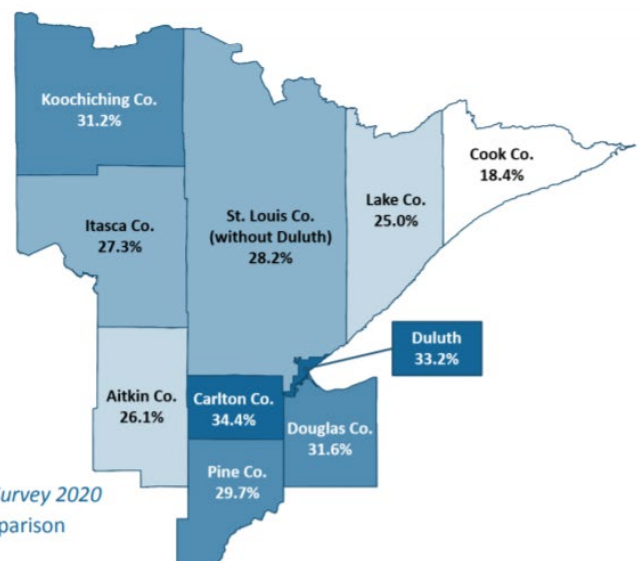


FIGURE 7.4 – Prevalence of Binge Drinking by Strata

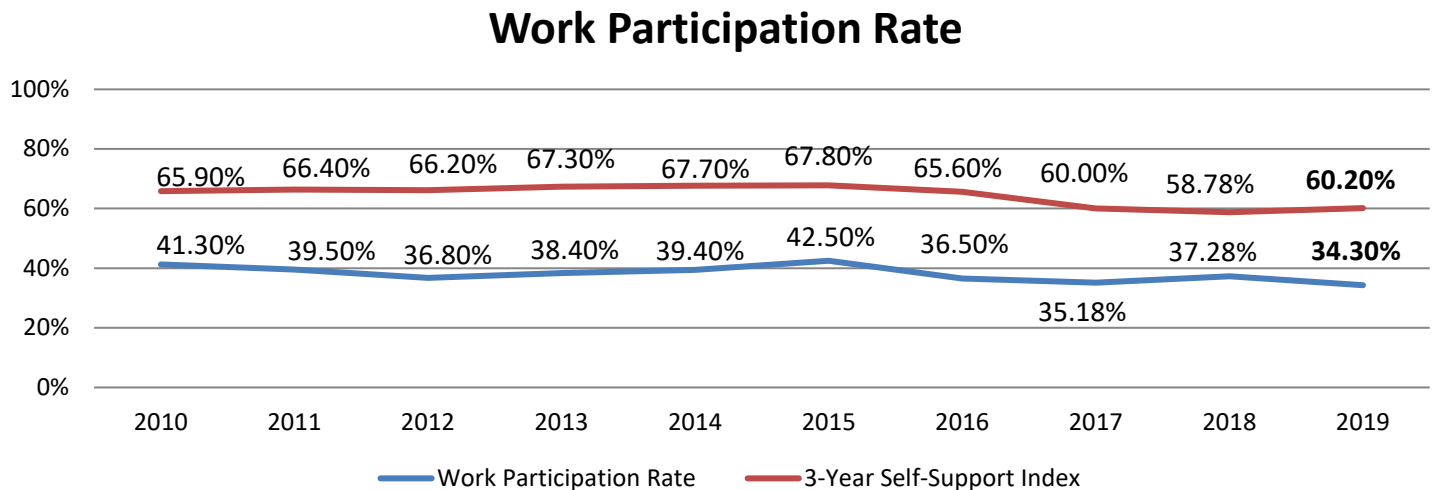
**Data Source:** Bridge to Health Survey—Completed surveys were received from 7,590 adult residents of the following geographic areas: Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, St. Louis and Pine counties in Minnesota and Douglas County in Wisconsin. St. Louis County was split into two strata: the city of Duluth and the remainder of the county. Additionally, two areas within the city of Duluth were oversampled: the Hillside and Lincoln Park neighborhoods. The overall response rate was 29.9 percent. The 95% confidence interval for the regional level data is approximately +2.6%, which is calculated taking into account the complex sampling design of the survey. 2,218 surveys from St. Louis County were received.

<http://bridgetohealthsurvey.com/index.php/reports>

## Measure 12. Public Health & Human Services – Work Participation Rate

**Current Performance:** The department’s work participation rate measures how effectively people are able to enter the workforce and gain economic self-sufficiency. PHHS’s goal is that MFIP and DWP participants will meet or exceed the state’s expectation of a work participation rate of 38.9%. The 3-year Self-Support Index measures whether eligible adults are working an average of 30 or more hours per week or no longer receiving MFIP or DWP cash assistance during the quarter three years from a baseline quarter. The required performance range for St. Louis County is 56.81% to 77.95%. Due to the pandemic, the 2021 rate of 14.37% is *not* an accurate reflection of the work St. Louis County does or the individuals the County serves. The 3-year self-support index for 2021 is 60.3%.

Below is a historical look at the Work Participation Rate and the 3-Year Self-Support Index.



**Data source:** 2020 Minnesota Family Investment Program Annualized Self-support index and Work Participation Report; 2019 WPR from 1/2019 – 12/2019, MN Department of Economic Development  
<https://www.lrl.mn.gov/docs/2020/other/201055.pdf>

## Measure 13. Public Health & Human Services – Maltreatment

**Current Performance:** A key federal indicator of child safety by which states and counties are measured is the absence of child maltreatment recurrence. Maltreatment Recurrence federal performance measure (from DHS Child Welfare Dashboard): *Of all children who were victims of a substantiated maltreatment report during the year prior, what percent were victims of another substantiated or indicated maltreatment report within 12 months of their initial report?*

**County performance is 16.6%**, compared to the state performance of **5.8%** and compared to the federal performance standard of 9.1% or less.

Summary—

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
<b>Minnesota</b>	8.90%	9.00%	6.20%	5.6%	<b>5.8%</b>	<b>5.8%</b>
<b>St. Louis County</b>	7.20%	5.80%	13.30%	11.0%	<b>14.5%</b>	<b>16.6%</b>

St. Louis County Historical Performance—

2016: 5.3%  
 2015: 3.4%  
 2014: 6.8%  
 2013: 6.3%

**Data source:** SSIS Analysis and Charting – Federal Indicator – Department of Human Services Dashboard ([Department of Human Services Dashboard](#))

## Measure 14. Public Health & Human Services – Child Support Program Cost Effectiveness

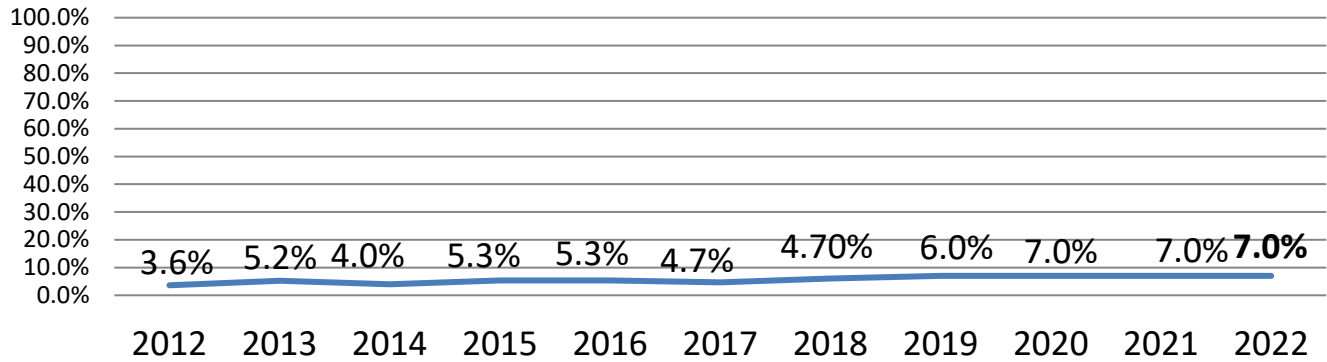
**Current Performance:** Child support is money a parent is court-ordered to pay to their child’s other parent or caregiver for the support of the child. The support may be part of an interim, temporary, permanent, or modified court order. Cost effectiveness is the Return on Investment realized as a result of this activity in our County; it is the total dollars collected during the federal fiscal year divided by the total dollars spent for providing child support services during the same year. It is also called the “CSPIA collections/expense ratio.”

St. Louis County CSPIA Collects/Expense Ratio	
2017	\$4.50
2018	\$4.05
2019	\$4.03
2020	\$4.57
2021	\$3.77
2022	\$4.05
<b>Data source:</b> 2022 Minnesota Child Support Performance Report	

## Measure 15. Public Health & Human Services – Low Birth Weight Children

**Current Performance:** The Council on Local Results and Innovation recommended, as one measure of life expectancy, babies born with a low birth weight, as these children have an increased risk of dying. Approximately half of the St. Louis County public health nurses provide home visits to high risk maternal populations, seeing clients prenatally and post-partum, to provide support and education to prevent complications, including low birth weight.

### Low-Birth Weight Births



**Data Source:** County Health Rankings & Roadmaps

[St. Louis, Minnesota | County Health Rankings & Roadmaps](#)

Property Records, Valuation, Assessment	
<b>Department Goal:</b>	Inspect, value, and classify - for property tax purposes – all taxable parcels with new construction on an annual basis. Assessments meet Department of Revenue standards for level and consistency.
<b>Commissioner Priority Area:</b>	Effective and Efficient Government

## Measure 16. County Assessor – Assessment Ratio

**Current Performance:** The median assessment level for all classes of property based on sales adjusted for local effort falls within the Department of Revenue’s acceptable range of 90% to 105% with a coefficient of dispersion less than 20 percent. This means that assessments should consistently fall within 90 to 105 percent of sales prices.

The following are statistics from the 2022 sales ratio report used for study year 2022 for St. Louis County provided by the Minnesota Department of Revenue. The current St. Louis County level of assessment ratio, median ratio, falls between 90-105% for 2022.

2022 St. Louis County Sales Ratio Report for Taxes Payable		
PROPERTY TYPE	MEDIAN RATIO	DOR Acceptable Range of 90-105%
RESIDENTIAL /SRR	93.19%	acceptable
COMMERCIAL	92.89%	acceptable

**Data Source:** 2022 Assessment Sales Ratio Study Final Sales Analysis for the State Board of Equalization [SalesRatio - Report Viewer \(state.mn.us\)](#)

## Measure 17. County Recorder –Turn-around Time

**Current Performance:** MN Stat. 357.182 Subd. 3 requires a 10-day turnaround for paper documents and a 5-day turnaround for electronic documents. The average turnaround time for both paper and electronic was 3.37 days for abstracts and 4.44 days for torrens (compared to an overall average of 2.64 days in 2021), surpassing the requirement. The increase in electronic processing of documents allows the department to meet and surpass the turnaround time targets.



Elections	
<b>Department Goal:</b>	Maintain high election standards and public confidence in the election process in compliance with state and federal election laws (including the Help America Vote Act, HAVA).
<b>Commissioner Priority Area:</b>	Effective and Efficient Government

### Measure 18. County Auditor - Accuracy

**Current Performance:** For the 2022 Post Election Review, 2022 General Election vote totals for the Office of U.S. Representative and Governor / Lt. Governor were reviewed for six precincts. A total of 4,760 votes were hand-counted by election judges. The review determined that there was not any unexplained differences and votes were tabulated 100% accurately for the selected offices and precincts.

## Veterans Services

<b>Department Goal:</b>	To annually increase the number of veterans we work with and to serve them in a timely and customer-oriented manner.
<b>Commissioner Priority Area:</b>	Public Health and Safety; Effective and Efficient Government

### Measure 19. Veterans Service Office – Customer Service

**Current Performance:** Customer satisfaction surveys are used by this office to ensure customer satisfaction. 44 surveys were completed, noting they would recommend our office to other veterans. *Note:* 2022 data

### Measure 20. Veterans Service Office – Dollars for Veterans’ Benefits

**Current Performance:** For 2022, Federal benefits were **\$155,368,000** and State benefits **\$86,850.00** for a total of **\$155,454,850** for St. Louis County Veterans.

	Year	Amount
<b>VA Federal Benefits total for St Louis County</b>	2017	\$111,000,000
	2018	\$111,697,000
	2019	\$123,618,000
	2020	\$139,137,000
	2021	\$141,313,000
	2022	\$155,368,000

**Data Source:** VA posted 2022 expenditure data <https://www.va.gov/vetdata/expenditures.asp>

### Measure 21. Veterans Service Office – Percentage of Veterans Receiving Benefits

This measure was recommended by 2008 OLA report. There is currently no reliable data source for this measure. There were 9,004 documented communications with veterans throughout 2022 and our Veteran population continues to decrease.

	Year	Total
<b>Veteran population in St. Louis County</b>	2017	15,704
	2018	15,384
	2019	15,068
	2020	15,614
	2021	15,036
	2022	13,492

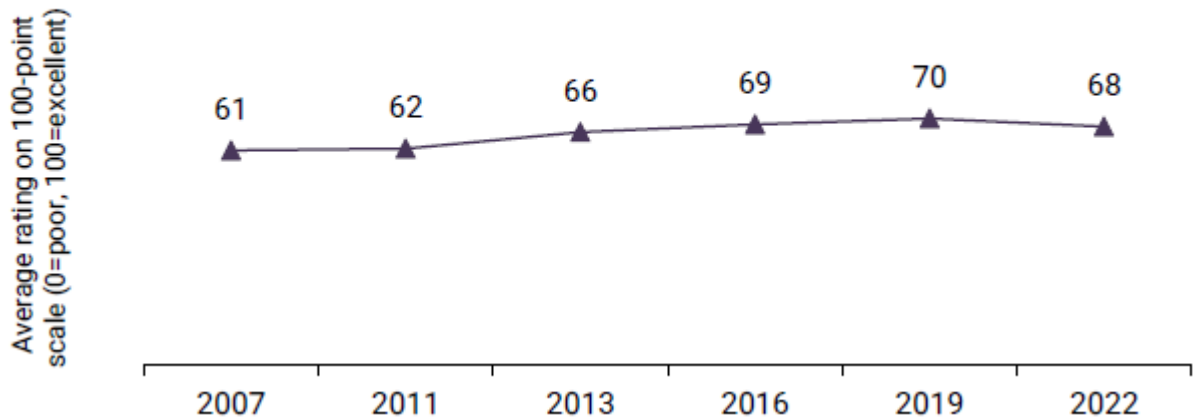
**Data Source:** VA posted 2022 expenditure data <https://www.va.gov/vetdata/expenditures.asp>

Parks, Libraries	
<b>Department Goal:</b>	N/A – St. Louis County does not provide parks or libraries.
<b>Commissioner</b>	Public Health and Safety; Community Growth and Prosperity
<b>Priority Area:</b>	

## Measure 22. Parks/Libraries – County Parks, Recreational Programs or County Facilities

**Current Performance:** Although St. Louis County does not operate county parks, some of the 2022 Residential Survey Data speaks to general ratings in this area. The overall quality of life was given an average rating of 68 points, or “good,” a similar rating compared to 2019. Quality of life ratings given to St. Louis County were also similar to ratings given to other counties across the nation.

**Figure 1: Average Ratings of Overall Quality of Life in St. Louis County by Year**  
Overall, how would you rate the quality of life in St. Louis County?



St. Louis County does operate the St. Louis County Heritage and Arts Center (Depot), which is a landmark cornerstone of arts and cultural organizations that entertains, educates, inspires, and provides space for a diverse group of guests. The St. Louis County Depot provides new, engaging experiences; is a destination and a community center; and fosters community through education and entertainment that enhances the quality of life for visitors. Its vision is to provide welcoming space and foster connections for distinctive educational and cultural activity. In the 2022 residential survey, nine out of 10 residents felt it was somewhat important, very important or essential to invest in the facility.

**More about our survey:** St. Louis County partners with other Minnesota counties to work with Polco-National Research Center on a statistically valid and representative residential survey which is conducted every 2-3 years. This survey was conducted in 2007, 2011, 2013, 2016, 2019, and 2022. The data is summarized here. The 2022 survey response rate was 26% (2,632 households received a survey; 681 surveys were completed). *Please note:* Responses have been converted to a 100-point scale for ease of graphical comparison.

## Measure 23. Arrowhead Library System (of which St. Louis County is a member) – Annual Visits

**Current Performance:** St. Louis County is a member of the Arrowhead Library System. As such, we do not have direct authority for their services. However, the Arrowhead Library System provided the following statistics for consideration:

Public Library	2020 Population	2022 Library Visits	Visits Per Thousand
Aurora	1,682	9,100	5.41
Babbitt	1,475	10,307	6.99
Buhl	996	2,997	3.01
Chisholm	4,914	15,116	3.08
Cook	545	6,336	11.63
Duluth	87,306	305,604	3.50
Ely	3,395	39,178	11.54
Eveleth	3,622	8,034	2.22
Gilbert	1,780	2,232	1.25
Hibbing	16,093	47,359	2.94
Hoyt Lakes	1,944	5,870	3.02
Mountain Iron	2,853	6,618	2.32
Virginia	8,374	48,356	5.77
ALS Bookmobile	64,091	3,814	0.06
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>199,070</b>	<b>510,921</b>	<b>2.57</b>

Note that the visits per thousand in 2021 was 1.36, while the visits per thousand in 2019 was 3.98.

Budget, Financial Performance	
<b>Department Goal:</b>	Provide professional finance and accounting services in keeping with best practices, ensuring that public dollars are used exclusively for authorized public purposes.
<b>Commissioner Priority Area:</b>	Effective and Efficient Government

### Measure 24. County Auditor – Bond Rating

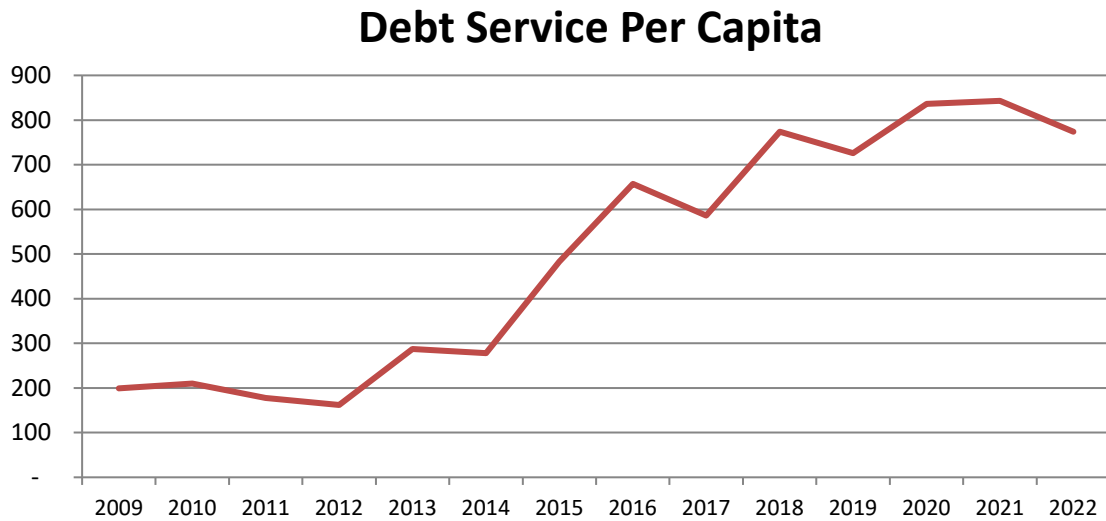
**Current Performance:** AA+ rating achieved in rating review as part of 2013 bond issuances. The County has retained this AA+ credit rating from Standard and Poor’s. This rating is just one step below the highest possible rating of AAA. The rating makes the debt offerings of the County more attractive to investors and lowers the cost of borrowing. This rating was retained by the County having sound financial policies, strong management, and a broad and diverse economy.

**Data source:** Standard & Poor's Ratings Services

### Measure 25. County Auditor – Debt Service per capita

**Current Performance:** \$774 per capita (vs. \$843 per capita in 2020)—St. Louis County’s debt levels are well below all established limits.

*Please note:* The bond sale in 2015 was to accelerate the county’s Transportation Improvement Plan and debt service payments are paid by the dedicated Transportation Sales Tax. 2022 data has not yet been audited.



**Data source:** St. Louis County 2022 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report

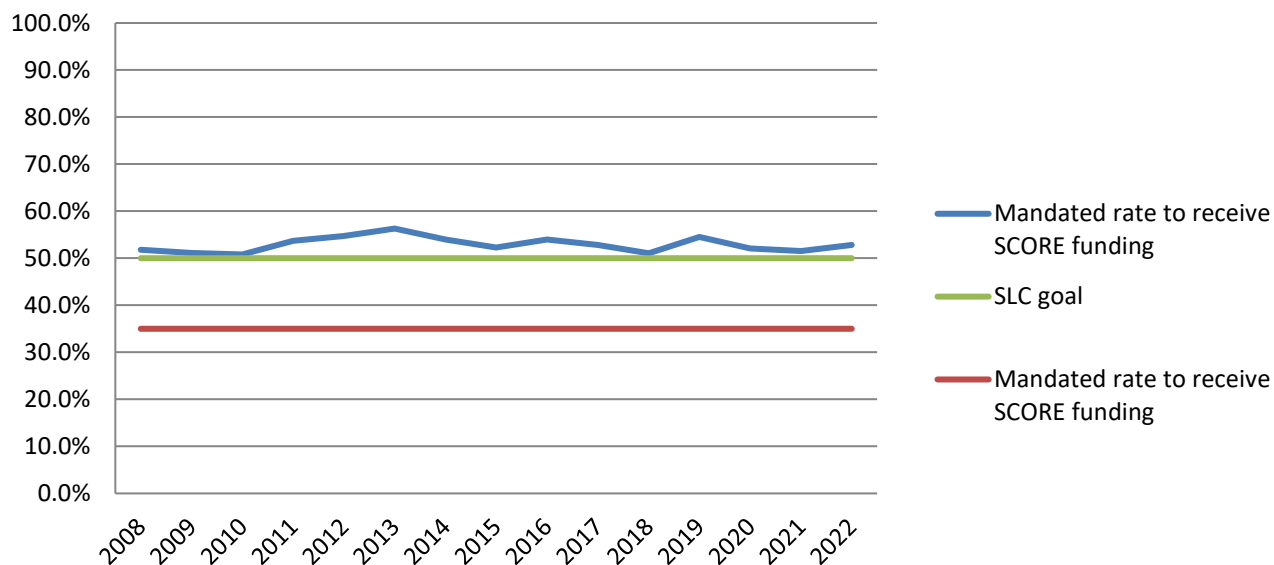
Environment	
<b>Department Goal:</b>	To act in a leadership capacity to ensure a sustainable integrated waste system. Further, to lead by developing public and private partnerships to focus resources on areas of greatest impact to the environment and economy of the County.
<b>Commissioner Priority Area:</b>	Public Health and Safety; Viable Natural Resources and Ecosystem

## Measure 26. Environmental Services – Recycling Percentage

St. Louis County Environmental Services works to maintain State of Minnesota Select Committee on Recycling and the Environment (SCORE) recycling levels at or above 50% of the total waste stream. The Environmental Services Department has received funding from the State of Minnesota for recycling programs through this fund. SCORE funds are generated through the State Solid Waste Management tax on garbage disposal. SCORE recycling tonnages are calculated annually. The mandated rate to receive SCORE funding for non-metro counties is 35%; the Department goal is 50% or higher.

**Current Performance: 52.80%** (vs. 51.50% in 2021)

### SCORE Recycling Percentages



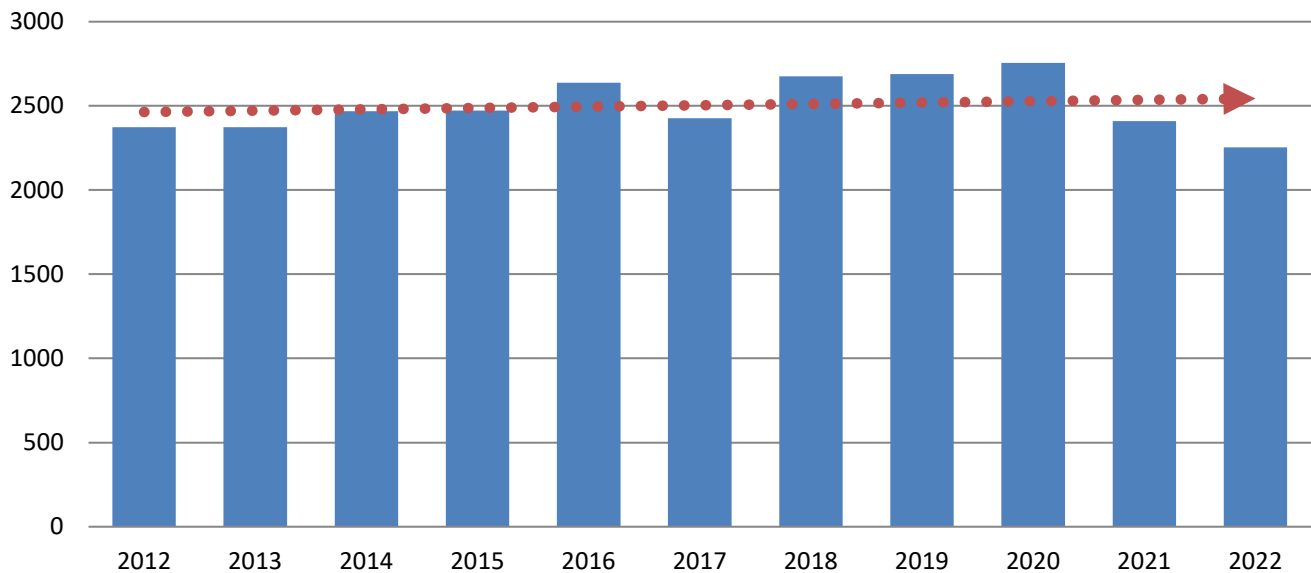
**Factors or Outside Influences Affecting Results** – The County has not adopted an ordinance for mandatory recycling within the SWMA. Current economic patterns influence the degree consumers manage their waste. Individual materials continue to get lighter as packaging industry standards evolve, thus reducing recordable weights. Score recycling percentage also dependent on number of respondents to County’s annual SCORE survey.

**Changes to Meet Target for 2023** – The ESD will continue public education efforts to encourage residents and businesses to recycle and reuse. Technical assistance is being provided to area schools and businesses to increase recycling rates.

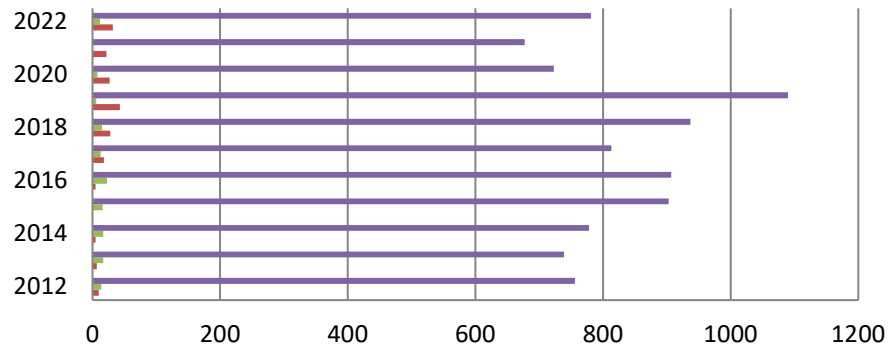
### Measure 27. Environmental Services – HHW and Electronics

**Current Performance:** 85.20 tons of Household Hazardous Wastes were collected/managed in 2022, compared to 87.45 tons in 2021. This includes nickel-cadmium batteries, sealed lead acid batteries, fluorescent tubes, and Product Exchange materials collected at the St. Louis County HHW facilities and remote collection sites. The St. Louis County Environmental Services Department (ESD) provides a comprehensive solid waste management system for that part of St. Louis County outside of the Western Lake Superior Sanitary District. The ESD works to maintain the number of customers utilizing free disposal at the thirteen HHW mobile collections, three business hazardous waste mobile collections and two year-round HHW collection facilities. The B-Clean Program disposed of approximately 13,015 pounds of commercially generated hazardous waste materials in 2022 compared to 3,530 pounds of hazardous waste materials in 2021.

### Households utilizing St. Louis County's HHW collection network



## HHW Collection Network Statistics



	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
■ Number of Users of Product Exchange	756	739	778	903	907	813	937	1090	723	677	781
■ Number of Very Small Quantity Generators (VSQG)	14	17	17	16	23	13	15	6	8	1	12
■ Number of Minimum Quantity Generators (MQ)	10	7	5	1	5	18	28	43	27	22	32

**Factors or Outside Influences Affecting Results** – ESD’s HHW program is free to all residential property owners within the department’s Solid Waste Management Area. Since the County’s adoption of the Minnesota PaintCare Program, businesses and homeowners have been utilizing free paint disposal opportunities through the HHW program and other local commercial vendors participating in the PaintCare program. In 2022, the Department received reimbursement of \$44,391.50 from the PaintCare Program to help offset collection, haulage and disposal costs associated with the department’s HHW program.

**Changes to Meet Target for 2023** – The HHW collection facilities in Virginia and Hibbing were completely open to the public in 2022. The Department notifies citizens through the department’s webpage, Facebook and print and radio advertising. In 2022, a targeted radio advertisement was designed to address the increasing number of rechargeable batteries causing minor fires on the Regional Landfill’s working face, encouraging recycling and proper disposal of these items. The current goal would be to have additional targeted hazardous waste advertisements based on the wastes, and the customers. The Department will continue to conduct three summer Very Small Quantity Generator (VSQG) remote collections through the B-Clean program, in addition to year-round scheduled appointments at the HHW facility located at the Regional Landfill.



**Measure** – Increase the number of tons of materials recycled and sold at the County Recycling Facility. Decrease the amounts of materials rejects from the recycling facility which goes to the landfill.

**Performance Target** – Measure the total tons that are rejected and decrease that amount by 1% per year. Increase recycling roll-off container weights per pull.

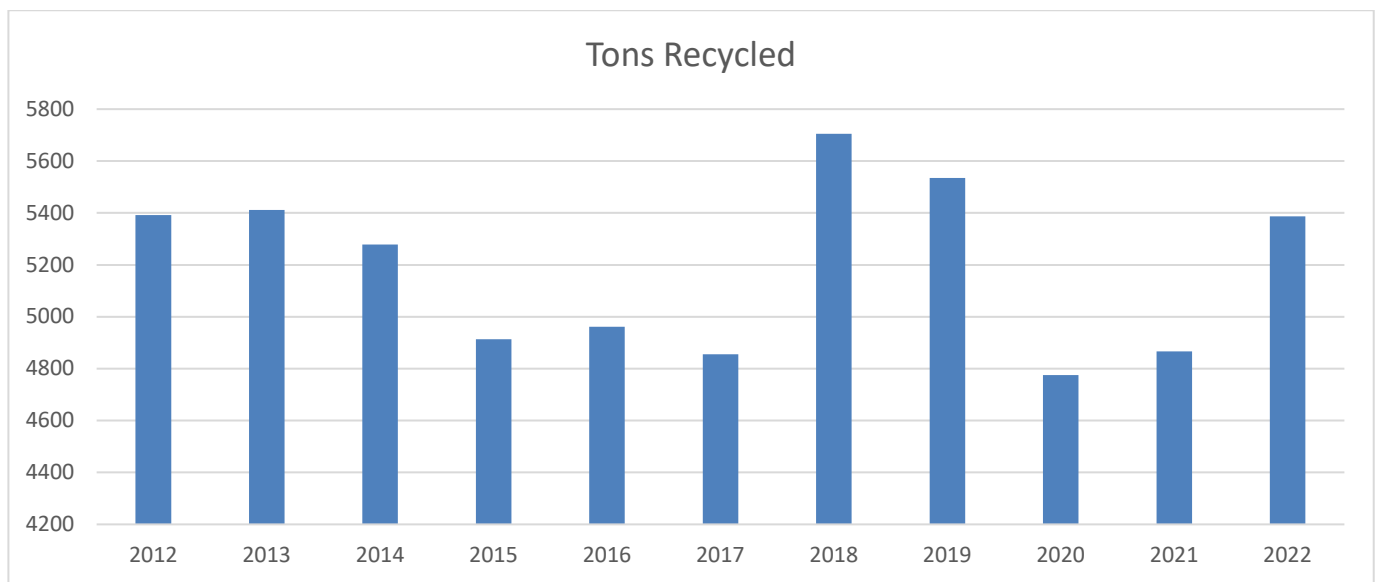
**Performance:** St. Louis County recycled **5,387 tons** in 2022 compared to 4,867 tons in 2021.

**Performance Data/Details** – Recyclables hauled and processed: 2006 – 6,796 tons; 2007 – 5,783 tons; 2008 – 5,620 tons; 2009 – 5,062 tons; 2010 – 5,646 tons; 2011 – 5,008 tons; 2012 – 5,392 tons; 2013 – 5,412 tons; 2014 – 5,278 tons; 2015 – 4,914 tons; 2016 – 4,961; 2017 – 4,856; 2018 – 5,705 tons; 2019 – 5,535 tons; 2020 – 4775 tons; 2021 – 4866.55 tons; 2022 – 5386.69 tons.

Roll-off container weights per pull: 1.35 tons in 2008; 1.50 tons in 2009; 1.4 tons in 2010; 1.51 tons in 2011; 1.41 tons in 2012; 1.65 tons in 2013; 1.35 tons in 2014\*; 1.61 tons in 2015; 2016 – 1.4 tons in 2016; 1.42 tons in 2017; 1.25 tons in 2018; 1.44 tons in 2019; 1.00 tons in 2020; 1.00 tons in 2021; 1.09 tons in 2022.

Rejects: 2007 – 13.5%; 2008 – 8.8%; 2009 – 8.22%; 2010 – 8.32%; 2011 – 9.04%; 2012 – 8.0%; 2013 – 8.23%; 2014 – 7.55%; 2015 – 10.7%; 2016 – 12.31%; 2017 – 9.12%; 2018 – 7.31%; 2019 – 6.0%; 2020 – 7.1%; 2021 – 8.0%; 2022 – 7.9%.

*Date Source:* LMS



**Factors or Outside Influences Affecting Results** – Although the volume of recyclables processed at the recycling facility remains high, industry standards for packaging have significantly lowered weights for aluminum cans and plastic bottles. Also, many food and beverage producers have replaced glass bottles and jars with lighter plastic containers, including plastic containers not compatible with the County’s recycling program (Plastics #3-#7). Additionally, newspapers and other print media are continuing to reduce the size of their publications. As the

weights of marketable materials decline, the percentage of non-recyclable materials (garbage) placed in roll-off containers has increased as residents continue to put plastics that are not acceptable in our program in the bins.

The Department started placing roll-off containers for cardboard at selected large volume locations. The average per pull weight per container of cardboard is approximately 1 ton, contributing to the reduction in overall average per pull weight.

While the Environmental Services Department (ESD) continues to remind the public of acceptable and non-acceptable materials in the County's recycling program through advertising, social media, websites, and public service announcements, possible confusion by the public related to non-acceptable materials in the County's recycling program may contribute to contamination issues.

In 2022 the domestic market for recyclables remained strong continuing from 2021 until October when commodities across the board began a steep decline. While the decline didn't result in market shutdowns like it has in the past when values declined, it did reduce the demand from end markets and resulted in depressed values.

**Changes to Meet Target for 2023** – ESD continues to integrate sustainable practices into local schools and government entities with a primary focus in increasing waste reduction, reuse, and recycling. ESD has provided financial incentives to cities providing curbside recycling to encourage increased recyclables collection.

The ESD will maintain and work to expand event recycling and 'away-from-home' recycling opportunities. The ESD continues to explore incentives for garbage haulers to provide recycling options to their customers. Increased emphasis is being placed on providing LGU websites with links to the ESD recycling information web page. Public education campaigns will continue to remind the public of acceptable and non-acceptable materials in the County's recycling program.