



The Metro Council:

Narrowing the Agenda and Raising the Stakes

*public affairs
research and education
in the Minneapolis-Saint Paul
metropolitan area*

CITIZENS LEAGUE

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Narrowing the Agenda
and Raising the Stakes

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June 7, 1984

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SUMMARY

The Metropolitan Council, bogged down in meetings and details, must shake itself loose to concentrate on its primary mission: formulating policy on fundamental regional issues.

The Council was needed when it was created, has served the area well and will be urgently needed in the future.

But a disturbing pattern of events is eroding the capacity of the Council to exert a leadership role. Instead of limiting itself to a few fundamental issues affecting the future of the area, it has permitted its agenda to become cluttered with details of implementation.

If the Council does not regain its position as a premier policy leadership body for the metropolitan area, the region will lose its unique advantage over other metropolitan areas--the ability to deal with its problems and its opportunities as a true metropolis transcending the artificial boundaries which otherwise slice it to bits and pieces.

The Council provides the Twin Cities region with a special mechanism capable of developing intelligent strategies for maintaining the quality of life and economic activity which characterize the area.

The Council has not been aggressive in making proposals to the Legislature. The result, not surprisingly, is that the Legislature has turned less to the Council and more to its own committee structure for proposals that could appropriately have originated with the Council. In effect, the Council is failing to carry out its responsibility as an agent for the area's interests in the Legislature; the Legislature has responded by not using the Council.

The Governor, too, has turned to other devices, such as ad hoc committees dealing with the location of facilities of metropolitan significance, instead of looking to the Council for leadership and decisions. Meanwhile, city and county governments are concerned about their relationships with the Council.

The Council needs to rebuild its relationships with the Governor, with the Legislature, with the metropolitan operating commissions it oversees and with local government. It must redefine its mission and role.

The Council now is a mature organization. Its presence is felt in a host of urban issues, including solid waste disposal, land use control, transit, subsidized housing and telecommunications. Its Metropolitan Development Guide directs the long-range plans of metropolitan commissions, cities and other units of government. It has many ongoing activities supervised by its staff and by a large network of commissions, boards and advisory committees. Thus, no one can criticize the Council for inactivity. Its members are almost overwhelmed by the burden of material to read and meetings to attend. Outsiders trying to monitor Council affairs must rely on several Council publications simply to know what is going on.

It is precisely all this activity, however, that presents the difficulty: with so much to do, the Council seems unable to perform adequately its original central purpose--to identify emerging issues of the Twin Cities metropolitan area and to propose action for dealing with them.

The Council, once involved in a subject area, tends to stay there, instead of identifying issues, proposing solutions and moving on to other topics. Thus the Council might resist taking on new studies, even though new studies could be of vital importance, because of the press of other and older business.

Whatever the Council does of an ongoing nature, its schedule must be sufficiently flexible to permit it to respond to new opportunities or problems. If it is not, the significance of the Council will fade. The region will find it increasingly difficult to get ahead of issues before they become crises. Areawide problems will be handled on a less-than-areawide basis.

A reservoir of commitment to an effective Council remains. The Council can maintain the respect it has, regain whatever it may have lost, and be recognized as a true policy leader without fundamental change in its organization and structure. The framework established when the Council was created in 1967 and reaffirmed in 1974 in the Metropolitan Reorganization Act remains valid. In fact, that very framework makes it possible for the Council to provide areawide leadership.

The Council was designed as a policy body which would not involve itself in the direct operation of governmental functions. Those tasks are carried out by others, keeping the Council free to be a policy leader. The Citizens League supports this approach and believes efforts to involve the Council directly in operations should be resisted.

But several improvements short of major restructuring are required to restore the Council's credibility and respect and put it back in position to carry out its essential mission: developing, influencing and providing for the implementation of policies on fundamental regional issues.

First, the Council's responsibility to make proposals to the Legislature must be reaffirmed. The Council must recognize that a major, not incidental, part of its work is the identification, debate and decision on proposals to the Legislature. While its staff can be supportive, the task requires leadership and participation by Council members themselves.

Second, the Council must rearrange its agenda to permit substantial time for deliberation on issues identification and proposals for action. That means it must keep to a minimum its review of decisions made by metropolitan operating commissions, boards and advisory committees. The decisions of those groups should stand, except for selected cases where the Council itself determines that a specific decision needs review.

Third, members of the Council should be elected by popular vote of the people, not appointed. The Council should be elected because its policies have a profound impact on the Twin Cities metropolitan area. Moreover, elected bodies are not afraid to take new initiatives, while appointed bodies look first to their appointing authority.

Fourth, the Council's relationship with the metropolitan commissions must be strengthened, so that the Council can have confidence the commissions are committed to implement Council policies faithfully. This will make it possible for the Council to concentrate on policy matters rather than the details of commission work. We recommend, therefore, that the Council, not the Governor, name the chairs of the Parks and Waste Control Commissions and the Regional Transit Board (RTB) as well as the other members. The chair of the Council should appoint persons to serve, subject to confirmation by the entire Council. The chairs of the Parks and Waste Control Commissions and the RTB should serve at the pleasure of the Council chair. Other members should serve fixed terms.

Fifth, the Council's relationship with local governments should be strengthened. Council members should meet regularly with local officials at the local level.

Sixth, the Minnesota House and Senate should reestablish permanent formal committees or subcommittees on metropolitan affairs.

INTRODUCTION

A. The Metropolitan Council was established in 1967. The reasons included:

1. Several major issues of regional scope clearly could not be handled by less-than-regional units of government.
2. Both the metropolitan area and the Legislature needed a mechanisms through which the region could present to the lawmakers a credible consensus on major urban problems. Most prominent among them, and one which the Legislature had struggled with unsuccessfully for several sessions, was the need to expand the existing sewage collection and treatment system to serve growing regional development. Other issues demanding attention were solid waste, transportation and land use.
3. A regional entity was needed under federal law to review federal aid requests from units of government within the metropolitan area.
4. Several metropolitan independent special purpose districts either were in existence or were being created. No way existed to develop and pursue common regionwide pollicies for their direction.
5. It had become increasingly obvious that the metropolitan area was, in many ways, one community and that it needed an areawide unit of governance.
6. The Metropolitan Planning Commission, which preceded the Metropolitan Council by a decade, had not resolved growing regional problems. It had no authority. Because it was not organized on a one-person, one-vote basis, it was not regarded as the appropriate agency for developing regional consensus or even for reviewing applications for federal grants.

B. The Metropolitan Council has made, or been involved in, several significant decisions affecting the future of the region in its 17 years of existence. Among them:

1. Adoption and implementation of a strategy for providing and financing sewer service throughout the region.
2. Enactment of a Metropolitan Council recommendation for a major new zoological garden serving the metropolitan area and the state.
3. Adoption of the Metropolitan Land Planning Act to control growth in the region.
4. Action on major capital proposals of various metropolitan commissions, including vetoes of proposals of the Metropolitan Airports Commission for a second major airport, the Metropolitan Transit Commission for a rapid rail system, and the Metropolitan Waste Control for a pyrolysis plant to dispose of sewage sludge.
5. Adoption and enforcement of housing guidelines increasing the percentage of federally subsidized housing in suburbs, relative to central cities, from 10 to 41 percent in about a decade.

6. Establishment of a Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission and a large network of regional parks.
7. Enactment of a 911 emergency telephone system.
8. Passage of the Metropolitan Fiscal Disparities Act.
9. Passage of the Metropolitan Agricultural Preserves Act.
10. Controlling expansion of health care facilities in the metropolitan area.
11. Approval of major controversial freeway designs for I-35E and I-394.
12. Passage of the Metropolitan Reorganization Act clarifying the Council's relationships with metropolitan commissions.

C. The Metropolitan Council has always been controversial.

From the outset, it was viewed with concern and suspicion by other units of government in the metropolitan area. That remains the case.

How the Council members and chairman should be selected is a continuing matter of debate. Some interests want the Council to be named by local government. Others prefer direct election. Still others favor appointment by the Governor.

The exact role of the Council remains a key issue--whether it should own and operate the regional systems or whether it should be primarily a policy body.

D. New attention has been focused on the Metropolitan Council in recent months.

Early in 1983, Gerald Isaacs, then the newly-appointed chair, advocated the Council be elected and assume direct operating authority over regional functions.

In March 1983, a special legislative commission on metropolitan governance urged better accountability, an improved appointments process, better legislative oversight of metropolitan agencies, better resolution of metropolitan-local disputes, and better organization of information on financing of regional agencies.

In late 1983, a special governor's commission recommended improvements to the Metropolitan Waste Control Commission in the wake of a series of articles in the St. Paul Pioneer Press reporting problems at the MWCC.

In February 1984, a legislative commission for metropolitan transit recommended reorganizing the delivery of metropolitan transit to improve service in suburbs.

Also in February 1984, the State Planning Agency recommended several changes in the structure of metropolitan agencies and operations, including a proposal that the Council, not the Governor, appoint the chairs of the Transit and Waste Control Commissions.

The federal government cut back its involvement in regional affairs considerably, not only in funding but also in authority. For example, it stopped requiring that a regional agency like the Council review requests for federal aids from units of government within the area served by the regional agency. While the Metropolitan Council continues to act pursuant to state law as the review agency for the metropolitan area, the number of programs subject to such review has been reduced.

Council officials in June 1984, several months after the federal government withdrew its requirement, said that they had not yet detected a reduction in Council influence over grant applications. They also said, however, that the relative importance of Council review of federal grant applications has diminished because the Council's authority over local actions of regional significance is exercised more directly through its legislatively-authorized power to approve long range comprehensive plans of localities.

Several bills relating to regional governance were debated during the 1984 legislative session, many of them dealing with proposals in the above-mentioned studies. Those bills would:

1. Create a new regional transit board, separate from the transit commission.
2. Remove some of the authority that the Metropolitan Council exercised over the Metropolitan Airports Commission's capital spending.
3. Create a legislative oversight commission on metropolitan affairs.
4. Have city, township and county officials appoint the members of the Metropolitan Council.
5. Shift the responsibility for appointing the chairs of the Transit and Waste Control Commissions from the Governor to the Council.

The first two bills passed; the others did not.

A significant change in leadership of the Metropolitan Council occurred in April 1984 with the appointment of Sandra Gardebring, who had been director of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, as chair following the resignation of Isaacs.

E. The Citizens League has a long-standing interest in the Metropolitan Council.

The League issued reports on metropolitan issues as early as 1954. In 1965 it conducted a major study on the Metropolitan Planning Commission, which was followed in 1966-67 with a second study recommending the Legislature establish a Metropolitan Council.

Key League recommendations in that study were that: 1) the Council have an office of chair separate from the other members of the Council, 2) the members of the Council be elected from districts of equal population, 3) the Council be primarily a policy body, making proposals to the Legislature, and 4) the Council be responsible for those areawide functions and services which could not be handled by local units of government.

In 1968, the Citizens League changed the fourth recommendation: that the Council would make policy for areawide functions with actual operations carried out by separate, but subordinate, commissions. The new position stressed that the Council should have powers only as specifically delegated by the Legislature.

- F. In early 1983, as the Metropolitan Council became the subject of increased discussion and it appeared changes in its structure and role might be proposed, the Citizens League Board of Directors decided a major study of the Council would be timely.

The Board created this Metropolitan Council Committee and asked it to review the challenges likely to face the metropolitan area in coming years and to determine whether the present system of metropolitan governance is adequate to meet them.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

- A. A Metropolitan Council was badly needed. It has served the area well. It will be urgently needed in the future.

Some Twin Cities area problems and issues are metropolitan by nature. They cannot be handled by units with smaller jurisdiction, such as cities and counties; they should not be handled directly by the Legislature, with its statewide jurisdiction. The region needs a unit of governance co-extensive with the real economic, geographic and political community.

The record of accomplishments of the Council is exemplary. Although its actions have been controversial and it has made some mistakes, it has provided leadership to assure that the Twin Cities area has adequate and sometimes superior urban services.

The Council's influence lies in the geographic scope of its involvement, the interests of the seven-county region as a whole. It has little authority over other units of government. Rather, it functions in an environment in which other legislatively-established bodies have power within their own respective spheres.

The state of Minnesota also needs the Metropolitan Council. The state has a real stake in a strong Twin Cities metropolitan area. Although the state's economy has many components, including an important agricultural sector, clearly the economic, educational, governmental and cultural activity of the metropolitan region is crucial to the state's success.

The metropolitan area faces considerable competition from others around the nation. Many of them have advantages which this area cannot match, such as a more moderate climate. The existence of the Council, however, gives this region an opportunity to develop intelligent strategies for maintaining the region's quality of life and economic activity. The Council has helped the area develop and respect its own identity. A loss of that identity could have serious effects on the region's ability to compete.

If the Metropolitan Council did not exist, the Legislature could not receive proposals on urgent metropolitan issues from a body which can legitimately claim to represent the interests of the entire area. The various metropolitan commissions, now coordinated through the Council, would continue to perform their functions, but without external guidance and coordination.

In comparison with regional organizations in other parts of the nation, the Metropolitan Council is almost unique in demonstrating how people can govern themselves in the real metropolis.

- B. Numerous public policy issues confront the metropolitan area or are likely to surface in the near future.

Although the Metropolitan Council might not be primarily responsible for addressing or solving all of these problems and issues, many of them will require the Council's involvement and regional perspective to assure appropriate solutions.

Among the problems and issues are:

1. How to finance regional services equitably, including transit, solid waste, sewage disposal and parks, and how to accommodate the shift from federal to local funding for regional services.
2. How units of government in the metropolitan area should conduct economic development, including whether, when and how to subsidize such development.
3. How the state can distribute aids fairly to the various units of local government in the area.
4. How to maintain the growing number of older residential dwellings in the area.
5. How the region can maintain its attractiveness as a place to live and do business in competition with other metropolitan areas of the nation.
6. How to use new technology in communications most effectively, for moving information around the metropolitan area and between this area and others.
7. How to arrange the structures of cities and counties in the metropolitan area and distribute governmental functions among them.
8. How to assure quality education for pupils throughout the area.
9. How to identify the likely problems the region must address because of changing demographics, including aging of the population and increases in the number of households.
10. How to cope with the possibility that the Twin Cities area will experience a drop in population in the 1980-1990 decade.
11. How to find a cost-effective, environmentally and politically acceptable way to dispose of solid and hazardous wastes.
12. How to make it possible for low- and moderate-income persons to have adequate transportation to job locations not easily served by public transit.
13. How to involve the private sector with the public sector in improving the quality of public services and in containing costs.

C. Considerable concern exists among public officials and others, and we share this concern, about the Council's ability and willingness to meet the challenges it is likely to face.

Some indications suggest the Council is experiencing burnout. Its members complain of long meetings with lengthy agendas in which policy discussion seems infrequent, if ever. It is encouraging, nevertheless, that members of the Council are concerned about this problem and trying to find ways to change it.

The Council is at a crossroads. If it goes in one direction, it will concentrate on policy matters and its position as a leader in metropolitan governance can be enhanced. If it goes in the other direction and continues to involve itself in mere details, it might grow in size but not in influence.

D. The mission of the Council is not clear.

It has a large organization, with a substantial staff and budget and an annual work program that touches on many public policy areas. It also is extremely busy, acting on a host of matters every week. But the Legislature and the Twin Cities community do not seem to have a clear idea of what the Council should be.

The Council itself recognizes this problem. One of its major committees is just now beginning an in-depth review of where the Council ought to place its emphasis in coming years. This is a change from the early years of the Council when it was widely agreed that its big job was getting regional services in place and in coping with urban growth. Regional services are now in place and growth has substantially slowed.

E. How the Council and others should exercise leadership on metropolitan affairs is uncertain.

When the Council was created, it had a clear mandate from the Legislature to take on certain issues, which it did. Such a legislative mandate is absent today. In the years immediately preceding and following the creation of the Council, both the House and Senate had formal committees dealing with metropolitan affairs. Those were dropped. The Council has not been as active in making proposals to the Legislature in recent years as it once was.

Moreover, the Twin Cities area community, the Legislature and the Council itself appear to be uncertain what it means for the Council to exercise leadership. Leadership on regional matters falls into a least three categories: 1) raising important issues with the community, 2) proposing solutions to these issues to the Legislature, and 3) seeing that adopted solutions are implemented.

Some people are fearful of the Council's becoming involved in new issues. Some believe the Council's agenda is already too full. Others don't want the Council involved, because they believe involvement means the Council actually would operate services. Still others believe the Council can study an issue, make recommendations and then move on to other issues, without having a continuing presence in the field.

F. Widespread concern exists with the process of selecting appointees to metropolitan commissions.

A common criticism of regional governance in the metropolitan area is that one appointed body (the Council) appoints other bodies (the metropolitan commissions). The critics say that system makes it impossible to hold anyone responsible.

Others are critical about the way appointments are made. Governors have been blamed for not consulting legislators, local officials and others sufficiently before making appointments and for making poor appointments. The Council has been criticized for delegating its responsibility to appoint commission members to the individual Council members who live in the geographic areas from which specific appointments must be made. Council members are often criticized for not taking the initiative to consult regularly with local government officials.

G. Cooperation and coordination between the Council and some of the metropolitan commissions is inadequate.

Rather than vesting direct operating authority in the Council to carry out regional functions, the Legislature set up metropolitan commissions, usually one for each function, and made them accountable to the Council.

The Council has clear, but limited, authority over these commissions. The Council names their members and it must approve their long-range plans and capital, but not operating, budgets. This relationship is not the same for all commissions. All commissions are supposed to follow the Council's policies as laid out in the Metropolitan Development Guide. But the Council makes no appointments to the Metropolitan Airports Commission and the Metropolitan Sports Facilities Commission. Also in the case of the Airports Commission, the Council must act upon only certain capital projects, not the entire capital budget.

Some persons believe a central problem between the Council and the commissions is that the Council does not appoint the commission chairs. Only in the case of the Parks and Open Space Commission does the Council name all members and the chair. The Council appoints members of the newly-created Regional Transit Board and the Waste Control Commission, but the Governor appoints the chairs.

The Council and the MTC have frequently disagreed over providing transit service to destinations other than the two downtowns. The MTC has not agreed with the Council's subregional transit policies, which call for service within but not between suburban subregions. The 1983 Legislature created a special study commission to look in depth at the issue of suburban service. Its proposal for a new Regional Transit Board to conduct transit planning and a separate MTC to run the public bus company operations was adopted by the 1984 Legislature.

The Council and the Waste Control Commission have not disagreed as frequently, yet there has been concern that the Council lets the commission operate too independently, particularly with respect to the level of charges which are imposed on metropolitan municipalities for sewer service.

Ever since the Council was created a particular sort of tension has existed between it and the Airports Commission, principally because leaders in the Airports Commission long have felt the commission is different from other commissions under the Council and should be treated more as an independent body. Officials of the Airports Commission do not quarrel with the principle that the Council is needed but fear that the

Council is attempting to exert more control over the commission than is warranted. In light of certain Council documents that appear to call for more authority, the commission in 1984 obtained approval of a bill to restrict further the Council's statutory powers over the Airports Commission.

One legislatively-imposed irritant from the perspective of the various commissions is a provision of state law which allows the Council to bill a commission for work done in the commission's area. Thus, for example, if the Council undertakes a study of a commission activity, on its own initiative, the Council is empowered to charge the commission for the cost of the study. This system of "charge-backs" has been an important source of revenue for the Council, but commissions feel the Council should use its own revenues for such work.

When commissions submit proposals to the Legislature concerning their activities or requests for funding, the Council as a rule has stayed on the sidelines, letting the commissions deal with the Legislature on their own.

In the case of some commissions, a further major problem has developed between the chief administrator and the chair of the commission. The roots of this role conflict are that, in some cases, the commission chairs believe too much authority has been delegated to the chief administrators. Some persons would like to change this situation by making the chair of the commission the chief staff person as well. This conflict also reflects the differences between chairs. Some of them see their jobs as full-time positions, while others feel they require much less time.

H. City and county governments are concerned about the role of and their relationships to the Metropolitan Council.

Part of the reason local officials are so concerned about the Council probably is that their main contact with the Council is in a power relationship.

Under the 1976 Metropolitan Land Planning Act, municipalities are required to present long-range comprehensive plans to the Council. The Council has authority to order the plans to be changed if it determines that the capacities of any of the metropolitan physical systems would be exceeded beyond the extent contemplated by municipalities' long-range plans. Therefore, a municipality may not plan for any more development than could be handled by the sewer capacity which has been assigned to it by the Metropolitan Council.

Passage of the Metropolitan Land Planning Act followed long negotiations between the Council and local governments. Many local governments supported the Act in the Legislature. Nevertheless, such a dominant presence of the Council in local government affairs is bound to have a major effect on Council-community relationships. Some of the concern has only to do with communication. In one Council district, for example, local officials complain of never even seeing the Council member from their district, even when the member is specifically invited to meetings with them. They are irritated over charges for sewer and transit service; this concern reflects on the Council as much as on the metropolitan commissions responsible for those functions.

On the other hand, the Council has not chosen to become involved in issues of deep interest to local governments where it might be of help. One of the most important of these is the distribution of state dollars to local governments. The Legislature urgently needs a position from the metropolitan area on how to distribute funds. However, instead of representing the metropolitan area's interest before the Legislature, the Council has chosen to retreat from the subject.

Another issue where Council leadership could help concerns how cities should provide financial assistance for economic development. The Council has debated its own role but has not suggested to the Legislature what role local governments might play.

Although the Council was established as a multi-purpose unit of government covering the seven-county metropolitan area, it often is seen by units of local government--especially cities--as being accountable to them, first, even before the public or the Legislature. A bill in the 1984 Legislature, for example, provided that elected officials of local government appoint the Council.

I. In general, governors have devoted little attention to the Council.

Governors are important to the success of the Council, because they appoint its members. But governors, in making their appointments, have not shown a great deal of interest in their impact on the Council. Also, governors have not usually asked the Council for help in developing their legislative proposals.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. The Metropolitan Council must concentrate its energies and resources on its primary mission: formulating policy and providing leadership on fundamental regional issues.

In contrast, the Council has tended to clutter its agenda with details of operation.

As a policy body, the Council must leave operations to others. The Legislature has given the Council real, but limited, authority over certain operating bodies. For example, cities and metropolitan commissions are required to design their plans consistent with the Council's Metropolitan Development Guide.

With its limited authority, the Council largely accomplishes implementation of its policies through influence, not direct control. It must rely upon relationships it develops with the various bodies which carry out its policies. The key is persuasion and negotiation. As a policy leader, the Council must continue to place high priority on its functions of data-gathering, analysis and sharing of information.

Leaving operations to others frees the Council to exercise policy leadership. Intermediate policy matters which are primarily operational in character, such as awarding contracts for construction or negotiating collective bargaining agreements, also should be left to operating bodies.

A minority of our committee believes the Council does not need the operating commissions. According to this view, the Council should function as a board of directors, exercising overall control over functions and hiring administrators to supervise operational details. Only then, the minority contends, will the Council be able to exercise leadership.

- B. The Council's authority should continue to be limited to those powers granted by the Legislature. But the Council also should study, analyze and make recommendations on whatever issues and subjects it deems critical to the future of the region.

Thus, the Council can be involved in many areas of public policy where it has no authority to act. Its sole role would be to provide information and analysis and make proposals.

Because the Council can study any subject or issue it chooses, setting priorities becomes extremely important. It cannot do everything. In fact, it probably can only do a very few things well. Thus the Council must concentrate on issues that are fundamental to the region's future, not peripheral.

The Council needs to discern and analyze forces significant to the future of the metropolitan area. Persons will differ as to whether any issue is fundamental or not. But, at the least, the Council can make its decisions on areas of its involvement in an open atmosphere following informed debate. Its agenda need not be confined to those items which are exclusively metropolitan-wide. The Council might wish to bring a metropolitan perspective to subregional or state issues.

The Council's agenda should not be a compilation of routine matters on which it must act, leaving to the end issues which are placed on the agenda at its own initiative. Rather, the Council needs to decide what it wants to do in the first instance and let other matters find their way onto the agenda as time is available. We envision a changed environment in which the Council accepts decisions made by operating bodies without injecting itself into the debate.

For the Council to function effectively in a policy role, its staff must not be overburdened with supporting the operational details of various functions. Some of its staff members need to be free for "leg work" to identify trends that are having an impact on the region and which could produce issues for Council consideration.

- C. As a policy body, the Metropolitan Council must provide more leadership on behalf of the metropolitan area before the Legislature. The Council should regularly develop a legislative program.

One of the main reasons the Council was created in 1967 was to develop and present to the Legislature a consensus on important issues affecting the region. The Legislature had repeatedly failed to resolve several critical areawide issues because the competing interests of the region could not reach agreement.

The leadership role in presenting solutions to the Legislature was readily accepted by the Council in its early years. However, since about the mid-1970s, the Council has played a far less significant role at the Legislature. That needs to change. A strong ongoing relationship with the Legislature is the only way the Council can fulfill its responsibilities as a policy body. Admittedly, the Council undertakes some risk in such an approach.

The Council needs to get beyond the idea that it only works on matters where it or one of its groups has an ongoing responsibility. The Council perspective would be extremely important on those issues demanding legislative attention. For example, suburbs and central cities compete with each other over the distribution of state aid. So far the Council has chosen to stay out of a recommendation on how state aid should be apportioned. Such a view is urgently needed.

Metropolitan commissions frequently advance their own proposals to the Legislature absent Council commentary. That should change. The commissions and the Council should consult informally, to increase the likelihood that the Council will support the commissions' proposals. During this period of informal consultation, commissions might make changes suggested by the Council. The Council ought to consider taking a position on significant matters brought to the Legislature by the commissions. That does not mean the commissions would not be working at the Legislature, too. It does mean that the Council would be offering its perspective on key matters to the Legislature.

If the Council is to operate effectively at the Legislature, it needs to modify its own work program. For example, with the Legislature meeting in January each year, the Council should be choosing the areas in which it

will be active as early as 12 months before the session. Currently the Council has a general charge to undertake studies and make recommendations to the Legislature. This proposal merely makes that requirement more explicit. The Legislature ought to look to the Council for comment.

D. The Minnesota House and Senate should reestablish permanent formal committees or subcommittees on metropolitan affairs.

Such committees existed for several years preceding and following the establishment of the Metropolitan Council.

Another proposal, debated but not passed by the 1984 Legislature, would establish a legislative oversight commission on metropolitan affairs. We do not support such a commission. It is a reversal of what we believe would be the most productive, positive Metropolitan Council-Legislature relationship. The Legislature has an ongoing responsibility to work constructively with the Council, rather than act as an after-the-fact watchdog.

Both houses of the Legislature should be organized to gain a metropolitan perspective on issues and concerns brought to them by the Council and the commissions.

E. Members of the Metropolitan Council should be elected by popular vote of the people.

Opponents of election frequently claim that "better people" will be selected if the Council remains appointed. Such an argument is a slam at the electorate and an insult to the elected persons serving at all levels of government in Minnesota, the Governor, the Legislature, county boards, school boards, city councils and town boards.

Some opponents of election believe an elected Council would be more parochial. It is likely elected members would be more sensitive to the needs of their districts, but this does not necessarily mean they would be more parochial than appointed members.

Some opponents fear that elected Council members would have more power and prestige than legislators because Council districts would be larger than legislative districts. But the Council derives all of its authority directly from the Legislature. It has no broad general grant of authority. It should be elected to assist it in carrying out responsibilities already assigned by the Legislature. If a Council district happens to be larger than a legislative district, that should pose no problems. Some elected county board members within the metropolitan area already have larger districts.

Some opponents claim the election ballot already is too long. Election would add two offices at most, the Council chair, if elected areawide, and the Council member from each district. But Council members need not be elected in even-numbered years with state offices, legislators and county boards. They could be elected in odd-numbered years when many city government elections occur.

Election is needed for several reasons:

-- It will do more than any other step to address a key problem identified in this report: the reluctance of the Council to be aggressive and take the initiative on solving problems. Appointive officials wait to do what their appointing authority tells them to do. Elected officials take the initiative on their own.

-- The Council's credibility will be enhanced vastly, which means that the Council is more likely to be listened to by metropolitan commissions and other groups carrying out its policies.

-- The Council is making policy that will have a profound impact on the Twin Cities area in coming years. Such decisions should be made by elected, not appointed officials. Some persons believe the Council should be made elective only when it assumes direct operating responsibility over functions. But operating responsibilities are largely administrative in nature, not policy. Administrative bodies don't need to be elected.

-- The election campaign is an essential process for Council members to educate the public about Council policies and for Council members to learn from the public. Appointed officials have no particular reason to have such contact with the public.

-- Election is an open process of selection of government officials; appointments, despite the open appointments law, are essentially secret, particularly campaigns for appointment.

-- Appointment has been tried for 17 years; it still is faulty, particularly when Governors fail to give appointments adequate attention.

Other ways exist to select members of the Metropolitan Council. One possibility debated and rejected by our committee would be to elect the chair of the Council while keeping the other members appointed by the Governor. Supporters of this approach said it would make possible a campaign in which regional issues are debated without the accompanying risk of having parochial campaigns conducted on a subregional basis. Opponents believe too much conflict could occur between an elected chair and appointed members.

From time to time suggestions are made that members of the Council be appointed by elected officials of local government. Thus, the appointments would be made from within the region rather than by a state official. However, this approach is deficient because the Council then would be chiefly accountable to units of local government. Local governments are a constituency, not the constituency. The areawide responsibilities of the Council could be severely diminished if city and suburban mayors, city council members, county board members and township officers dominated the election process.

- F. The Legislature should take advantage of the opportunity occasioned by making the Council elective to experiment with improved procedures for conduct of the election campaign.

We are familiar with problems common to political campaigns: that the process is too expensive, that special interests can dominate the contributions process, that elections focus on name-recognition, not issues, and so forth.

In setting up a new elective office with the Metropolitan Council, the Legislature would have an opportunity to try something different. For example, it might provide for a special brochure distributed to every household containing candidates' biographies, names of campaign contributors and candidates' positions on metropolitan issues. Public funding might be used to finance time on public or commercial television and radio for discussion of issues by candidates.

- G. The process for bringing good candidates to the attention of the Governor for Council appointment in January 1985 should be improved.

The Legislature will not have the opportunity to make the Council elective until the 1985 session, which means the earliest that Council elections possibly could occur would be in the fall of 1985. However, before the Legislature can act, in January 1985, eight Metropolitan Council positions will be up for appointment by the Governor. To improve the chances for high-quality appointments, organizations which follow the activities of the Council should seek out potential candidates and make their names known to the Governor. Some persons who could make excellent Council members might never submit their own names for consideration but would serve if recommended by others.

- H. The Metropolitan Council chair, not the Governor, should appoint all members of the Parks and Waste Control Commissions and the Regional Transit Board (RTB), including the chairs, subject to approval of the full Council. These chairs should serve at the pleasure of the Council chair. The other members should serve fixed terms.

A smoothly running system of commissions is essential to the success of the metropolitan area's governance system. If the commissions are willing and able to translate the policies of the Council into the direction required, then the Council will be free to concentrate on policy matters. Our recommendations are designed to promote trust and cooperation between the commissions and the Council, not suspicion and competition. The commissions must respect the policy positions of the Council, and the Council must trust the commissions to carry out their activities consistent with Council policies.

One of the more frequent criticisms of the present system of metropolitan governance is that the Metropolitan Council, an appointed body itself, is making appointments to another appointed body, a commission. Critics argue that this places the commissions too far from the people. Practically, we see no way out of this situation, save electing the Council.

Meanwhile, a broad consensus appears to be developing in favor of having the Council name the chairs of the commissions as well as the members. The proposal was first advanced by the Association of Metropolitan Municipalities on grounds the Council has been unable to implement its policies adequately. Then the State Planning Agency recommended the same change, and it was endorsed by the Governor. The Citizens League adds its support, along with another proposal. Our idea is that the commissions must feel and be responsible to the entire Council.

The existing system of "aldermanic courtesy" is the selection of commission members should be abandoned. It is common practice for the Metropolitan Council to delegate the responsibility for appointing commission members to individual Council members who represent the affected precincts. This practice means that commission members feel responsible only to the appointing Council member. But all commission members should have a responsibility to the Council as a whole, not to individual members.

These proposals would give the chair of the Council considerable authority. As a practical matter, however, because members of the Council would have the right to approve the chair's appointments, Council members could influence the chair's appointments.

The recommendation that the chairs of the commissions serve at the pleasure of the chair of the Council is designed to carry the concept of accountability one step farther. Nothing should stand in the way of a close relationship between the Council and the commissions. If there is a problem, the Council needs to have a way to act quickly to replace the leadership on a commission.

As a corollary, the existing authority of the Council over the commissions should not be diminished.

The Council's authority over all commissions is not the same. Previous Citizens League positions have been consistent on the point that no compelling reasons exist for not having the same structure for all commissions. However, the Legislature has been unwilling to grant the Council the same degree of influence over the Airports and Sports Facilities Commissions as it has the others. Some persons defend this arrangement by contending that those commissions are inherently statewide in character and should be treated differently. Others contend this is purely an artificial distinction and cannot be defended on the basis of logic.

The 1984 Legislature changed the structure under which transit service will be provided. A particular problem had developed because the MTC is a provider of service through its own bus company as well as a selector of other providers of transit service. The Citizens League supported the idea of separating the operating function of transit from overall transit policy and having a public corporation assigned the exclusive responsibility of running the bus company. All other transit policy matters would then be handled by another body.

The bill adopted by the Legislature creates the RTB for these other transit planning responsibilities. Earlier the Citizens League had recommended that these transit planning responsibilities be directly under the Metropolitan Council. For purposes of clarity, we prefer an approach in which the Metropolitan Council would be responsible for the planning that will be carried out by the RTB.

- I. To assist understanding in the metropolitan area of the financial dimensions of regional governance, the Metropolitan Council should assemble annually a summary budget document covering the major revenue and expenditure categories, both capital and operating, of the Council itself and the regional commissions.

A minority of the committee believes the Council's power over the commissions, not just the powers of appointment and approval of the capital budget and long-range plan, should be increased. It argues the Council should approve operating budgets of commissions. The majority view, however, is that, consistent with the concept of the Council being a policy unit, it must stay out of operational details. Review or approval of operating budgets would likely require the Council to become involved in program details even more than at present.

If a sense of trust exists between the Council and the commissions, the commissions themselves might see their role in carrying out the desires of the Council. By arguing that the Council should keep out of operations, we do not imply that the Council should stay out of policies which affect operations. For example, it is possible the Council might want to adopt policies concerning personnel matters in general that could affect the posture of the individual commissions in their negotiations with employees.

- J. The Metropolitan Council should continue to make strong use of advisory committees.

Currently these committees deal with Aging, Arts, Criminal Justice, Developmental Disabilities, Health Planning, Land Use, Transportation, Waste Management, and Housing and Redevelopment. In addition, the Council from time to time names task forces which carry out specific responsibilities and then disband. There are now three such task forces, on telecommunications, long-term care and aviation.

These groups bring a high degree of citizens participation to the Council. These also make it possible, of course, for the Council to delegate responsibilities to other bodies in order to keep its own agenda from being overloaded. Because it relies so extensively on task forces and advisory committees, the Council must see that appointments are broadly representative of the citizens and interests in the region so that a committee or task force is not co-opted by any particular interest group.

- K. The Metropolitan Council must listen more closely to the concerns of local government. It is not enough to summon local government officials to attend more meetings at the Council chambers.

Much has been done to give local governments the opportunity to come to the Council. Hearings are scheduled regularly with ample opportunity for testimony. Local officials probably could attend metropolitan meetings full time. But the Council rarely goes to local government.

The root of concerns of local officials is communication with the Council. In the past, some chairs of the Council have spent considerable time meeting with local officials in their own districts, but it might be impossible to sustain such involvement over a long period of time, particularly when only the chair is responsible for it.

Other members of the Council must become similarly involved. The Council should create a continuing and regular program of consultation with local officials in which individual Council members would be expected to travel to meetings with local elected officials throughout the region. The program should stipulate that Council members meet not only with officials from their own districts but also with those from other Council districts.

We are pleased that the Council in May 1984 reactivated the Chair's Advisory Committee, a group of local officials who meet regularly with the chair. For several months prior to May 1984 the committee had been inactive.

- L. In its relationship to state government, the Metropolitan Council must continue to be viewed as essentially a local body, albeit a regional one. It should not be regarded as a state agency.

The Metropolitan Council occupies a unique position in the structure of state and local government. It is, according to an attorney general's opinion issued shortly after it was created, neither a state agency nor a local unit of government, but somewhere in between.

Proposals that the chair of the Metropolitan Council sit with agency heads of state government in the Governor's cabinet do not violate the view of the Council as a local body nor make it a state agency. Nor does the recent establishment of a Governor's "subcabinet" consisting of the chair of the Council and the chairs of the metropolitan commissions. In fact, communications should be improved.

The Council should be transmitting to the Governor its own legislative program, for purposes of seeking executive branch support of that program, before it is submitted officially to the Legislature.

At the same time the Governor and the State Planning Agency should be offering their proposals on metropolitan affairs. The Governor's periodic messages to the Legislature, such as the State of the State message, should include the Governor's position on major metropolitan issues.

BACKGROUND

A. Metropolitan governance in the Twin Cities metropolitan area goes back more than a half century.

The first institution of metropolitan governance was the Minneapolis-St. Paul Sanitary District, created in 1933 to build a sewage treatment plant and halt discharge of raw sewage into the Mississippi River. The district was created by the Legislature. It had a governing board of three persons from Minneapolis, three from St. Paul, and one person appointed by the Governor.

Actually, interest in metropolitan affairs goes back even further. In 1927, a group of citizens organized a voluntary planning association for the metropolitan area. However, it lacked reliable financing and support and soon ceased operating.

The next regional governance body was the Metropolitan Airports Commission, established by the Legislature in 1943. It was structured similarly, with four persons from each of the two cities and a chair from outside the metropolitan area named by the Governor.

In 1956 a Metropolitan Sports Area Commission was created to build a stadium. That group included four persons from Minneapolis, one from Bloomington, and one from Richfield.

In 1955, through the efforts of C. C. Ludwig, executive secretary of the League of Minnesota Cities, a major effort was undertaken to create a planning commission for the entire metropolitan area. This effort succeeded in 1957, when the Legislature established the Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC). Originally the Planning Commission covered a five-county area: Anoka, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, and Washington. Scott and Carver Counties were added in 1959 at their request. The Planning Commission from the outset was given a small property tax levy.

The MPC had 30 members. The cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul each had two representatives, one appointed by the City Council and one by the mayor in each city. There were seven representatives of suburbs, selected by suburban mayors. Each of the seven counties had one representative, appointed by the county board in each county. There were two representatives of townships, appointed by the chairs of the town boards. School districts were given one representative, appointed by the chairs of the school boards in the metropolitan area. The governor appointed seven citizen members, four of whom were required to be residents of St. Paul and Minneapolis. The Metropolitan Airports Commission and the Minneapolis-St. Paul Sanitary District each appointed one representative.

One of the MPC's most ambitious undertakings was a cooperative planning effort with the Minnesota Highway Department, the planning departments of Minneapolis and St. Paul and the highway departments of each of the seven counties. This cooperative effort began in 1962, and was designed to prepare a Metropolitan Development Guide.

- B. The Legislature created the Metropolitan Council in 1967 -- In its 1961, 1963, and 1965 biennial sessions, the Legislature was unable to agree on how to settle a metro battle over sewage disposal facilities in the Twin Cities area. The rapid post-war growth had produced more development in the metropolitan area than the existing sewage treatment plant could handle. Septic tanks in some suburbs, particularly among the northern suburbs, were contaminating the water supply for residents. And the municipalities could not develop a consensus in the region on what to do.

Suspicious of Minneapolis and St. Paul, several suburbs wanted to build their own sewage treatment plants. Minneapolis and St. Paul had been selling sewer service to a limited number of suburbs. This approach was criticized because the suburbs were at the mercy of the central cities in terms of how much capacity would be allotted and what the charges would be.

The most serious controversy was whether the northern suburbs would build their own plant on the upper Mississippi River, discharging treated effluent which would then flow through the heavily populated part of the metropolitan area. It would have been discharged downstream from the point where Minneapolis takes water from the Mississippi for its drinking water. Nevertheless, the city feared that during times of drought, the river might back-up, so that sewage effluent might end up in the city's water supply. Technical experts on both sides besieged the Legislature with volumes of reports.

Meanwhile, other areawide problems were becoming more evident. The Twin Cities' privately-owned bus company's quality of service had been declining for several years. Ridership was going down and there seemed no way to make this system work effectively for the entire region.

An urgent need existed to acquire more open space as suburban growth continued. Valuable parcels were threatened. A park reserve district for Hennepin County only had been created in 1955. Earlier efforts to make the park reserve district a metropolitan organization had failed. Hennepin County was purchasing large tracts of open space, but similar actions were not taking place elsewhere in the region.

Controversies were growing over whether large new freeways as proposed by the state Highway Department should be built. There seemed to be no way for the metropolitan area to develop a consensus as to what was needed and what was not. Disposal of solid waste still was handled largely through open dumping at a variety of privately-owned sites around the region.

Late in 1966 the U.S. Congress passed the Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act which imposed a requirement for comprehensive metropolitan planning as a condition for receipt of federal aid. Metropolitan planning agencies would be the organizations to review such requests. In the Twin Cities metropolitan area, that responsibility would lie with the MPC. Because of its structure, there was deep concern that the MPC would be unable effectively to choose among competing proposals.

Moreover, the MPC had been thought of primarily as an advisory body, not a policy body. An earlier report of the Citizens League, for example, had

documented the irregular attendance records of many members of the MPC and also the fact that members did not really sense what their responsibilities were.

Throughout the 1960s the problems of local government finance were increasing for cities and school districts in the metropolitan area. Cities were engaged in cut-throat competition to convince commercial and industrial establishments to locate within their borders. Another common practice was "fiscal zoning" in which some suburbs would allow only the construction of more expensive homes, which "pay their own way in property taxes." Washington County was chided by other parts of the region for allowing the construction of a large power plant on the shore of the scenic St. Croix River. The county was lured by the prospect of gaining the property tax benefit from such a large installation, despite the environmental impact on the river.

Irrespective of the zoning and land use practices of Twin Cities area communities, it was gradually becoming evident that certain communities were destined to be "winners" or "losers" simply because of where they happened to be located. Thus it was possible for the per pupil spending in one school district to be double the per pupil spending of another school district even though the mill rate in the higher spending district was about one-half the mill rate of the lower spending district.

Late in 1966, several studies were under way, including studies by the Citizens League, the Association of Chambers of Commerce in the metropolitan area, and the newly-formed metropolitan section of the League of Minnesota Municipalities. The DFL and Republican party platforms in 1966 both called for action on an improved regional government structure.

A decisive meeting on governmental structure, sponsored by the Upper Midwest Research and Development Council, occurred November 10, 1966. This meeting came to be known as the "St. Thomas Conference" because of its location at the college campus. Coming out of that meeting was the identification of a consensus by a cross-section of people representing the Legislature, government, business, citizens, associations, and labor. The consensus was that the Twin Cities metropolitan area needed a policy body.

In the 1967 Legislature, the question was not whether a form of regional governance would be established, but what kind. One approach called for a directly-elected body, with operating authority over metropolitan functions. Another approach provided for appointment of the members by the Governor and with coordinating, not operating, power. The coordinating approach prevailed, along with appointment by the Governor.

The Metropolitan Council was set up in the summer of 1967, assuming all the functions of the old MPC, including its tax levy. The Legislature empowered the Metropolitan Council to review the long range comprehensive plans of the special districts, including the Airports Commission and the Sanitary District. The Council was instructed to prepare a Metropolitan Development Guide. Special district plans that conflicted with the guide could be indefinitely suspended by the Council. Each city and township was required to submit its comprehensive plans to the Council for review and comment, but the Council was not granted veto power.

The Council was authorized to participate as a party in any proceeding before the Minnesota Municipal Commission concerning local unit boundary changes. The Council was directed to appoint a non-voting member from its own membership to serve on the Airports Commission, the Mosquito Control Commission and the Sanitary District, plus any other metropolitan commissions to be established in the future. In addition the Council was charged with conducting studies on a variety of issues affecting the region. A list of those issues was included in the law for purposes of example.

The first Metropolitan Council was made up of 15 members, 14 of whom came from districts of equal population and the 15th, the chair, appointed at-large. All appointments were made by the Governor.

Some of the major actions and events involving the Council over the last 17 years include:

- Proposals to the 1969 Legislature to solve the metropolitan sewage problem, set up an open space system, develop a metropolitan zoo and solve other regional problems. The Legislature in 1969 acted on those recommendations.

- Passage of the Metropolitan Fiscal Disparities Act in 1971.

- Vetoing, twice, a proposal of the Metropolitan Airports Commission to build a second major airport at Ham Lake in Anoka County.

- Rejecting in 1972 a proposed rapid rail system for the metropolitan area.

- Approving several major highway proposals, including settling a major controversy over I-394 west of Minneapolis and I-35E in St. Paul.

- Creation of a metropolitan Housing and Redevelopment Authority.

- Passage in 1974 of the Metropolitan Reorganization Act, which clarified the roles of the Council and the metropolitan commissions. Also the Act enlarged the Council to 17 members including the chair.

- Passage in 1976 of the Metropolitan Land Planning Act which required that all municipalities develop comprehensive plans subject to approval by the Council. The Council's authority and approval dealt with whether the municipalities were planning for development which was within their assigned capacity of regional systems.

- Vetoing the proposal of the Metropolitan Waste Control Commission (successor to the Minneapolis-St. Paul Sanitary District) of a proposal to use a system of pyrolysis to decompose sludge and solid waste.

- Designation of the Mississippi River corridor in the metropolitan area as a critical area.

-- Establishment of a 911 emergency telephone service for the seven-county metropolitan area.

-- Passage of Metropolitan Agricultural Preserves Act of 1980, as recommended by the Council.

-- Assignment to the Council of the responsibility of assuring adequate system for disposal of solid waste.

-- Stimulating hospitals in the metropolitan area to reduce capacity.

-- Providing incentives to suburbs to permit subsidized housing so that the percentage of federally-subsidized suburban housing in the region increased from 10 percent to more than 41 percent.

The major authority of the Metropolitan Council comes through its Metropolitan Development Guide for the metropolitan area. The current guide has chapters on water resources, waste management, transportation, solid waste, recreation open space, protection open space, housing, health, airports, and law and justice, plus two general chapters which deal with a number of subjects, the investment framework and the development framework. Each chapter was adopted at different times. The Council updates the chapters from time to time. Currently, for example, a revision of the housing chapter is under consideration.

The staff of the Council is in the early stages of developing materials for a revision of the development framework. The development guide weighs several pounds. It occupies two loose-leaf notebooks and is about three inches thick. The impact of the guide varies depending upon the Council's authority over the body charged with implementation. In certain cases, such as the waste management chapter, the implementing agency is mandated to follow the guide. In other cases the Council may have no direct authority over implementing agencies, but is simply issuing recommendations. The law and justice chapter falls in this category.

Some parts of the guide are more notable than others. For example, the most widely-known policy probably is policy #39 in the housing guide which reads as follows: "in reviewing applications for funds, the Metropolitan Council will recommend priority in funding based on the local unit of government's present provision of housing for low-and-moderate-income persons and its plans and programs to provide such housing in the future." That is the policy which the Council has used to stimulate suburbs to provide for subsidized housing. The Council's development framework is the chief document used in controlling growth of the region. The development framework contains the boundary of what is known as the urban service area. The Council will not allow urban services to be provided outside that area.

- C. The Metropolitan Council today is made up of 17 members, 16 appointed from districts and a chair appointed by the Governor.

As of May 1984, members of the Council were: Sandra Gardebring, chair; Mary (Liz) Anderson, Joan Campbell, Phillip C. Carruthers, Dirk deVries, Carol Flynn, Alton Gasper, Mary Hauser, Ray Joachim, Michael

McLaughlin, Josephine Nunn, Dottie Rietow, Patrick Scully, Carol Wold Sindt, Don Stein, Gertrude Ulrich and Charles Wiger. These persons serve four-year staggered terms. Some terms will expire in 1985 and others in 1987. Appointments by the Governor are subject to confirmation by the Senate. The boundaries of each metropolitan district are specified in state law.

Currently the Council is organized into four standing committees. They are: Metropolitan and Community Development Committee, Joan Campbell, chair; Metropolitan Systems Committee, Carol Flynn, chair; Environmental Resources Committee, Josephine Nunn, chair; and Management Committee, Patrick Scully, chair. The Metropolitan and Community Development Committee is responsible for the program areas of housing, health, developmental disabilities, arts, aging, communications, and criminal justice. The Metropolitan Systems Committee is responsible for oversight and review of the development programs and appropriate budgets of the Metropolitan Waste Control Commission, the Parks and Open Space Commission, the Metropolitan Transit Commission, the Metropolitan Airports Commission, and the Metropolitan Sports Facilities Commission.

The Management Committee is responsible for general internal management of the organization. This includes preparation of the Council's own budget and work programs. The Environmental Resources Committee is responsible for all Council activities in the development of its waste management policy plan, and the siting of county landfill inventories and the sludge ash facilities for the Metropolitan Waste Control Commission. The committee is also responsible for other environmental activities, such as surface water management, air quality, ground water and other environmental activities of the Council.

The Council has many advisory committees and boards outside of its own membership. They fall into several categories. One category are the statutory metropolitan commissions on parks and open space, transit, waste control, airports, and sports facilities. Next are advisory committees and boards which are set up under state law. They include the Transportation Advisory Board, the Metropolitan Health Planning Board and the Metro HRA advisory committee. Finally, there are advisory committees set up by the Council, but not pursuant to state law. They include the Advisory Committee on Aging, the Arts Advisory Committee, Criminal Justice Advisory Committee, Land Use Advisory Committee, Water Quality Management Advisory Committee, and Waste Management Advisory Committee. One other committee under the Council is the chair's advisory committee.

The Council has a staff of approximately 215 persons. As of May 1984 the staff was organized in 14 separate departments, as follows: health planning, human services, finance, planning assistance, comprehensive planning, parks and open space, research, housing, communications, personnel, administrative services, environmental planning, transportation planning, and information systems. The Council had two deputy administrators and one staff administrator.

The Council has a budget for 1984 of approximately \$10 million. The Council is authorized by the Legislature to levy a property tax of 8/30 of a mill. This is spread across all taxable property in the metropolitan area. It also receives funding from the federal government and from charges it imposes on commissions for work done for them.

Several documents provide good background on the Metropolitan Council. They include:

- Metropolitan Maze III, Council of Metropolitan Area Leagues of Women Voters, January 1981.
- The Twin Cities Regional Strategy, by Arthur Naftalin, Metropolitan Council, 1980.
- Inside the Minnesota Experiment, John E. Vance, 1977.
- Governing the Twin Cities Region, John J. Harrigan and William C. Johnson, 1978.

COMMITTEE ORGANIZATION AND PROCEDURES

- A. Background on formation of the committee -- The Citizens League has had an interest in regional issues affecting the Twin Cities metropolitan area since at least 1954, when the League published a report on metropolitan park area needs. Beginning in the early 1960s, the League conducted several studies on specific problems affecting the entire metropolitan area, including water supply and sewage disposal, solid waste, parks and open space, transit, metropolitan zoo, and the organization and financing of the Metropolitan Planning Commission.

In 1966 the Citizens League Board of Directors created the Metropolitan Affairs Committee, which conducted an intensive study of the areawide governmental problems of the region. The minutes of this committee were widely circulated among persons interested in the topic. Midway in the work of the committee the League distributed a summary of the various comments and proposals on areawide governmental problems.

The Citizens League issued its report in March 1967, recommending a Metropolitan Council for the Twin Cities area. Following the establishment of the Council, the Citizens League has issued several reports over the years on different aspects of metropolitan affairs. The first, issued in June 1967, provided suggested criteria for the chair of the Metropolitan Council. In the fall of 1968, the Citizens League issued a major report concerning how the Council should relate to regional commissions. The report urged that the Council be a policy body with the commissions organized separate from, but subordinate to, the Council. That report was the last major study the Citizens League did on the overall structure of the Metropolitan Council until this current study. In the meantime, though, the League has conducted several studies of topics of metropolitan concern, with recommendations to the Council. These covered airports, housing, transit, capital budgeting, transportation planning, regional revenues, and other topics.

In the spring of 1983 the Citizens League Board of Directors decided the time had arrived for the League to do a comprehensive study of metropolitan governance. A legislative commission had just submitted its report concerning the Metropolitan Council. There were discussions going on within the Council itself over how it should be structured.

- B. Charge to the committee -- The committee was charged by the Board of Directors to assess the nature of circumstances which are pressing on metropolitan governance for the rest of the decade and recommend a structure that meets the need.
- C. Membership of the committee -- The Citizens League asked individual members to volunteer for the committee. A total of 44 persons originally signed up. The following 30 persons were active in the committee:

William Johnstone, chair
Thomas Anderson
Gladys Brooks
W. Scott Carlson
Charles Clay
Earl F. Colborn, Jr.
Marianne Curry
Dennis Daniels
Joe Dixon
Ron Dody
John Harrigan
Jody Hauer
John Jamieson
Gayle Kincannon
Ted Kolderie

Todd Lefko
Thomas Luchi
Barbara Lukermann
Dean Lund
Steve Mosow
Arthur Naftalin
Martha Norton
Wayne Olson
Richard Person
Brad Richards
Joseph Schur
Gordon Shepard
Warner Shippee
Peter Vanderpoel
James Zepp

The committee was assisted by Constance Pepin (until January 1984), Paul Gilje, Donna Keller and Joann Latulippe of the Citizens League staff.

- D. Committee procedures -- As is customary with most Citizens League committees, the committee spent the first several meetings receiving background materials about metropolitan governance. The committee met with a wide variety of resource persons. They are listed below. A mailed survey was taken of some 60 public and private officials in the metropolitan area, seeking their views on the issues being discussed. Following the input from the resource persons, the committee reviewed a draft of findings and issues as presented to the committee. After that the committee debated for several meetings the issues that were presented. A steering committee was then named to work on the specifics of a draft of a complete report. Several versions of the draft then were prepared before the committee completed its work and submitted a final report to the Board of Directors. The committee met 27 times, beginning October 5, 1983 and ending May 21, 1984. In addition the drafting subcommittee met five times. A limited number of copies of minutes and background material used by the committee are available on request to the Citizens League.
- E. Action by the Citizens League Board of Directors -- The Citizens League Board approved the report on June 7, 1984. The Board first amended the report to give greater emphasis to election of the Council and lesser emphasis to improvements in the appointment process than had been present in the committee report.
- F. Resource persons who met with the committee were:

Howard Albertson, judge, Washington County
John Anderson, city administrator, Shakopee
Marcia Bennett, at the time of her testimony, member, Metropolitan Council

John Bergford, division manager, Government and Public Affairs,
Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce
John Boland, former Metropolitan Council chair
William Bond, director, Government Affairs, St. Paul Chamber of Commerce
John Borchert, professor of geography, University of Minnesota
John Brandl, state representative
Gladys Brooks, former Metropolitan Council member
Charles Clay, former CL president
Phil Cohen, former mayor of Brooklyn Center
William Colman, consultant, government affairs and former executive di-
rector, Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations
Dirk deVries, member, Metropolitan Council
Moe Dorton, staff administrator, Metropolitan Council
Robert Einsweiler, former director of planning, Metropolitan Council
Carol Flynn, member, Metropolitan Council
William Frenzel, congressman
George Frisch, at the time of his testimony, chair, Metropolitan Waste
Control Commission
Ray Glumack, chair, Metropolitan Airports Commission
James W. Hetland, Jr., former Metropolitan Council chair
Gerald Isaacs, at the time of his testimony, chair, Metropolitan Council
Ted Kolderie, senior fellow, Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Af-
fairs, University of Minnesota
Roger Moe, state senator
Connie Morrison, mayor of Burnsville
Josephine Nunn, member, Metropolitan Council
Robert Orth, Ramsey County commissioner
Wolfgang Penzel, mayor of Eden Prairie
Nancy Reeves, director, Housing Department, Metropolitan Council
Hazel Reinhardt, director of research, Minneapolis Star & Tribune
Carolyn Rodriguez, state representative
Martin Sabo, congressman
James Spore, city manager, Burnsville
Peter Stumpf, chair, Metropolitan Transit Commission
Tom Triplett, director, State Planning Agency
Elaine Voss, chair, Metropolitan Health Planning Board, Metropolitan
Council
John Voss, Dakota County commissioner
Jane Whiteside, director, Human Services, Metropolitan Council

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Needed: A Policy for Parking	1-18-78
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Selective Control Is the Only Way to Protect Elms	3-2-77
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Reducing Property Tax Inequities Among Taxpayers and Cities	3-5-75
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Matching Pupils, Teachers, Buildings & Budgets	8-28-74
A River to Use and to Enjoy	6-17-74
A Better Role for Consultants	4-24-74
Local Government in a Time of Transition	2-20-74
Transit: Redirect Priorities Toward a Smaller-Vehicle System and Shorter Trips	1-21-74

RECENT CITIZENS LEAGUE STATEMENTS

(Statements, when available, are free)

Statement to Legislative Study Committee on Metropolitan Transit	12/15/83
Statement to Governor's Tax Study Commission	11/22/83
Statement to Minnesota's Highway Study Commission	9/29/83
Statement on the Metropolitan Council's Proposed Interim Economic Policies	8/29/83
Statement to Mpls. Charter Commission: Proposal to have Mayor as non-voting member of Council	8/11/83
Statement to Metropolitan Council and Richard P. Braun, Commission of Transportation on Preferential Treatment for Transit in Expansion of I-35W	7/21/83
Statement to Members, Steering Committee on Southwest/University Avenue Corridor Study	7/19/83
Statement to Commission on the Future of Post-Secondary Education in Minnesota	6/22/83
Statement to the Metropolitan Health Board	6/20/83
Appeal to the Legislature and the Governor	4/26/83
Citizens League Opposes Unfunded Shifts to Balance Budget	12/1/82
Longer-Term Spending Issues Which the Governor and Legislature Should Face in 1982	1/18/82
Statement Concerning Alternatives to Solid Waste Flow Control	1/12/82
Amicus Curiae Brief in Fiscal Disparities Case	filed 12/17/81
Statement to the Minnesota State Legislature Regarding the University of Minnesota Hospitals Reconstruction Project	12/14/81
Letter to the Joint Legislative Commission on Metropolitan Governance	11/13/81
Statement to Metropolitan Health Board re Phase IV Report	11/4/81
Statement to Metropolitan Council on I-35E	9/24/81
Statement to Minneapolis Charter Commission	7/6/81
Letter to Metropolitan Council re CL Recommendations on I-394	6/23/81
Statement to the Governor and Legislature as They Prepare for a Special Session	5-26-81
Statement to the Minnesota State Legislature Regarding the University of Minnesota Hospitals Reconstruction Bill, as Amended	5/8/81
Statement to the Governor and Legislature Concerning Expenditures/Taxation for 1981-83. Issued by Tax and Finance Task Force	4/28/81
Statement Concerning Proposed Legislative Study of the Metropolitan Council. Issued by the Structure Task Force	4/27/81
Statement to the Governor and Legislature Opposing Abolition of the Coordinating Function in Post-Secondary Education	4/24/81
Citizens League Statement on I-394	3/31/81
Statement on Budget & Property Tax Issues Facing the Governor and Legislature in 1981. Issued by Tax & Finance Force	3/31/81
Statement to the Minnesota State Legislature Regarding the University of Minnesota Hospitals Reconstruction Project	2/25/81
Toward a Better Understanding of Policy Choices in the Biennial State Budget. Issued by the Tax & Finance Task Force	1/28/81
Statement: Status Report on Spending—Tax Decisions Facing the Governor and Legislature in 1981. Issued by the Tax & Finance Task Force	12/3/80
CL Statement to the Metropolitan Health Board, Concerning the Rebuilding Proposal of University Hospitals	11/19/80
CL Statement on Three Proposed Amendments to the Minnesota Constitution	8/20/80
CL Statement to the Metro Health Board Re Phase III of the Metropolitan Hospital Plan	7/31/80
Letter for CL President to Mayor Latimer, St. Paul, Re St. Paul Refuse Disposal System	6-5-80
CL Recommendations on Housing & Neighborhood Maintenance	5/21/80
Statement on Veterans Administration Hospital, presented to the Metropolitan Health Board	4/30/80
Property Tax Relief	3-12-80
Letters from CL President, Re VA Hospital Replacement, to Max Cleland, Director, Veterans Administration; Patricia Roberts Harris, Secretary, Department of Health, Education & Welfare; & James McIntyre, Director, Office of Management & Budget	3/3/80
Ride-Sharing and Capital Facilities for Transit	2/27/80
Next Steps Toward the Implementation of our Recommendations about Hospitals	2-27-80
CL Letter to Metropolitan Councils Re Hospitals	12/12/79
Statement on Emergency Energy Assistance	11/2/79
Statement to the Metropolitan Health Board, re Fairview Hospitals	9/19/79
Comments by the Citizens League on the 1980 Metropolitan Council Work Program, given by Allan R. Boyce	9/13/79

For titles and availability of earlier statements, contact the CL office

WHAT THE CITIZENS LEAGUE IS

Formed in 1952, the Citizens League is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit, educational corporation dedicated to understanding and helping to solve complex public problems of our metropolitan area.

Volunteer research committees of the Citizens League develop recommendations for solutions after months of intensive work.

Over the years, the League's research reports have been among the most helpful and reliable sources of information for governmental and civic leaders, and others concerned with the problems of our area.

The League is supported by membership dues of individual members and membership contributions from businesses, foundations and other organizations throughout the metropolitan area.

You are invited to join the League, or, if already a member, invite a friend to join. An application blank is provided for your convenience on the reverse side.

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*John W. Windhorst

*Deceased

WHAT THE CITIZENS LEAGUE DOES

RESEARCH PROGRAM

- Four major studies are in progress regularly.
- Each committee works 2½ hours every other week, normally for 6-10 months.
- Annually over 250 resource persons made presentations to an average of 25 members per session.
- A fulltime professional staff of eight provides direct committee assistance.
- An average in excess of 100 persons follow committee hearings with summary minutes prepared by staff.
- Full reports (normally 40-75 pages) are distributed to 1,000-3,000 persons, in addition to 3,000 summaries provided through the CL NEWS.

CL NEWS

- Four pages; published every two weeks; mailed to all members.
- Reports activities of the Citizens League, meetings, publications, studies in progress, pending appointments.
- Analysis data and general background information on public affairs issues in the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS ACTION PROGRAM

- Members of League study committees have been called on frequently to pursue the work further with governmental or nongovernmental agencies.
- The League routinely follows up on its reports to transfer, out to the larger group of persons involved in public life, an understanding of current community problems and League solutions.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS DIRECTORY

- A 40-page directory containing listings of Twin Cities area agencies, organizations and public officials.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP BREAKFASTS LANDMARK LUNCHEONS QUESTION-AND-ANSWER LUNCHEONS

- Public officials and community leaders discuss timely subjects in the areas of their competence and expertise for the benefit of the general public.
- Held from September through May.
- Minneapolis breakfasts are held each Tuesday from 7:30 - 8:30 a.m. at the Lutheran Brotherhood.
- St. Paul luncheons are held every other Thursday from noon to 1 p.m. at the Landmark Center.
- South Suburban breakfasts are held the last Thursday of each month from 7:30 - 8:30 a.m. at the Lincoln Del, 494 and France Avenue South, Bloomington.
- An average of 35 persons attend the 64 breakfasts and luncheons each year.
- Each year several Q & A luncheons are held throughout the metropolitan area featuring national or local authorities, who respond to questions from a panel on key public policy issues.
- The programs attract good news coverage in the daily press, television and radio.

SEMINARS

- At least six single-evening meetings a year.
- Opportunity for individuals to participate in background presentations and discussions on major public policy issues.
- An average of 75 person attend each session.

INFORMATION ASSISTANCE

- The League responds to many requests for information and provides speakers to community groups on topics studied.
- A clearinghouse for local public affairs information.

Citizens League non-partisan public affairs research and education in the St. Paul-Minneapolis metropolitan area. **84 S. 6th St., Minneapolis, Mn. 55402 (612) 338-0791**

Application for Membership (C.L. Membership Contributions are tax deductible)

Please check one: ☐ Individual (\$25) ☐ Family (\$35) ☐ Contributing (\$45-\$99) ☐ Sustaining (\$100 and up)
Send mail to: ☐ home ☐ office ☐ Fulltime Student (\$15)

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CITY/STATE/ZIP

EMPLOYER/TELEPHONE

POSITION

EMPLOYER'S ADDRESS

CL Membership suggested by

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