

Metropolitan Council 2005 Adopted Unified Budget Authority and Organization

AUTHORITY AND ORGANIZATION

The Metropolitan Council (the “Council”) was created in 1967 by the State Legislature and Minnesota Statutes as a governmental unit responsible for coordinating the planning and development of the seven-county metropolitan area (the “area”). The Council is not a state agency, but is defined by statute as a “public corporation and political subdivision of the state.”

The area over which the Council has responsibility consists of the counties of Anoka, Carver, Dakota (excluding the city of Northfield), Hennepin (excluding the cities of Hanover and Rockford), Ramsey, Scott (excluding the city of New Prague), and Washington. The area includes 188 cities and townships and 2.7 million people.

The 1976 Metropolitan Land Planning Act strengthened the coordination of local land-use planning with the Council’s planning for regional systems (transportation, wastewater treatment, airports, and regional parks). Under the act, local governments prepare comprehensive plans and Council reviews them with respect to their compatibility with the plans of other communities, consistency with adopted Council policy plans, and conformity with metropolitan system plans. The Metropolitan Reorganization Act of 1994 made substantial changes in the metropolitan regional government structure by merging the functions of three regional agencies (the Metropolitan Waste Control Commission, the Metropolitan Transit Commission, and the Regional Transit Board) into the Metropolitan Council.

The Council has 17 members, 16 representing districts and one chairperson. Council members are appointed by the Governor after consultation with the legislative representatives from the appointee’s district with the advice and consent of the State Senate. Members serve at the pleasure of the Governor. The Chair presides at meetings of the Council, serves as the principal liaison of the Council with the Legislature and local elected officials, and is the principal spokesperson of the Council. Current Metropolitan Council members are listed on page 2-4. The Council’s policymaking structure is shown on page 2-5.

The Council is responsible for planning and coordinating metropolitan development cooperatively with the local communities of the area. The Council forecasts the area’s growth, devises a plan to guide it (the *Regional Development Framework*), and makes decisions about developing transportation, wastewater service, aviation and parks to support it. Between 2000 and 2030, the Council anticipates an increase of 563,000 jobs, 471,000 households, and 966,000 people.

Regional planning saves millions of dollars that would otherwise be spent on inefficient delivery of public services or unplanned growth. The Council works with local governments and the private sector throughout the region to carry out the *Development Framework*.

In addition to planning and guiding growth and development, the Council is responsible for vital regional services, including:

- Operating a regional transit system that provides 200,000 bus rides per weekday and 4,700 rides daily for people with disabilities through Metro Mobility;
- Collecting and treating up to 300 million gallons of wastewater daily;
- Serving nearly 100 communities and about 6,800 households through Section 8 and other affordable housing programs; and
- Working with local governments to develop and maintain the area’s renowned regional park system, which has grown to 52,000 acres.

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The Council is organized into three operating divisions: Transportation, Environmental Services, and Community Development. The operating divisions report to the Regional Administrator who, in turn, reports to the 17-member Council. The Regional Administrator is responsible to ensure that policy decisions of the Council are carried out, to organize and direct work of Council staff, to prepare and submit an annual budget and to keep the Council fully apprised of the financial condition of the Council. The Council's organization structure is shown on page 2-6.

TRANSPORTATION DIVISION

The Metropolitan Council operates or provides funding to five types of transit programs.

- Metro Transit: Provides roughly 95% of the 73 million bus trips taken annually in the Twin Cities area, and operates the Hiawatha light-rail line.
- Metro Mobility: This program serves persons with disabilities that prevent them from using the regular transit system. This service provided over 1.2 million rides in 2004 to more than 24,000 certified riders.
- Contracted Regular Routes: Approximately 3% of regular route service is bid and contracted out to private and non-profit organizations. This service provided an estimated 1.9 million rides in 2004.
- Community Programs: Dial-A-Ride service is provided to rural areas and a number of cities through contracts with counties and non-profit organizations. In 2004, an estimated 400,000 rides were provided by this program through contracts for 11 rural and seven urban transit service providers.
- Opt-Out Communities: Twelve communities have chosen to "opt-out" of regional transit service and provide their own programs. The Council provides capital funding for these programs and passes through operating funds from the state. In 2004, these programs provided an estimated 3.6 million rides.

The 2005 transportation budget is focused on maintenance of the existing transit system, yet oriented toward continuing reasonable growth once funds become available. The 2005 budget includes \$57.3 million from the General Fund state appropriation for transit support. The state appropriation includes \$3.9 million for operations of the Hiawatha light rail line, which began revenue operations in June 2004.

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DIVISION

Metropolitan Council Environmental Services (MCES) collects and treats an average of almost 300 million gallons of wastewater each day from 103 communities, achieving near-perfect compliance with federal and state clean water standards. It also provides water resources monitoring and analysis for the region, and partners with numerous public and private groups committed to a clean environment. Wastewater operations and debt service are 100 percent funded by user fees.

The Environmental Services division's Annual Budget focuses on meeting the objectives and expected outcomes that align with the strategic goals of the Council and the division.

The following considerations were the top priorities during the planning of the 2005 MCES budget.

- Meeting regulatory requirements
- Retaining competitive fees and rates
- Meeting customer expectations for quality and level of service
- Addressing watershed capacity and pollutant load issues
- Fully funding the current cost of all programs

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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

The Community Development Division conducts overall planning and policy development to support the Council's mission. The unit awards grants to local governments and provides technical assistance to help them carry out their comprehensive plans. It also provides housing assistance to lower-income households.

In 2005, Community Development will focus its resources, tools and incentives on implementation of the *Regional Development Framework*, the Council's new regional growth plan. The *Regional Development Framework* is a comprehensive strategy for focusing regional policies and investments on integrating transportation, housing, development, and environmental protection to support the region's quality of life.

The Housing and Redevelopment Authority includes two major programs – the Rent Assistance program providing HUD Section 8 rental vouchers and the Family Affordable Housing Program, which rents 150 housing units owned and operated by the Council to low-income households. 2004 was the first year that the Family Affordable Housing Program achieved its full complement of 150 units. This program involves the Council in owning and managing affordable housing units and represents a small but important step in addressing the region's affordable-housing shortage.

REGIONAL ADMINISTRATION

In addition to the three operating divisions, the Council has central administrative units, organized as Regional Administration, that report to the Regional Administrator. The units establish administrative policies for the entire organization and support the three operating divisions. Regional Administration consists of functions such as human resources, finance, legal, purchasing, and risk management that provide Council-wide services to the operating divisions of the Council. The majority of the Regional Administration budget is allocated to the operating divisions of the Council.

Regional Administration's major priority for 2005 will be to continue supporting the Council's operating units by providing high-quality, cost-effective services. The Council's organizational structure is shown on page 2-6.

LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION ON METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT

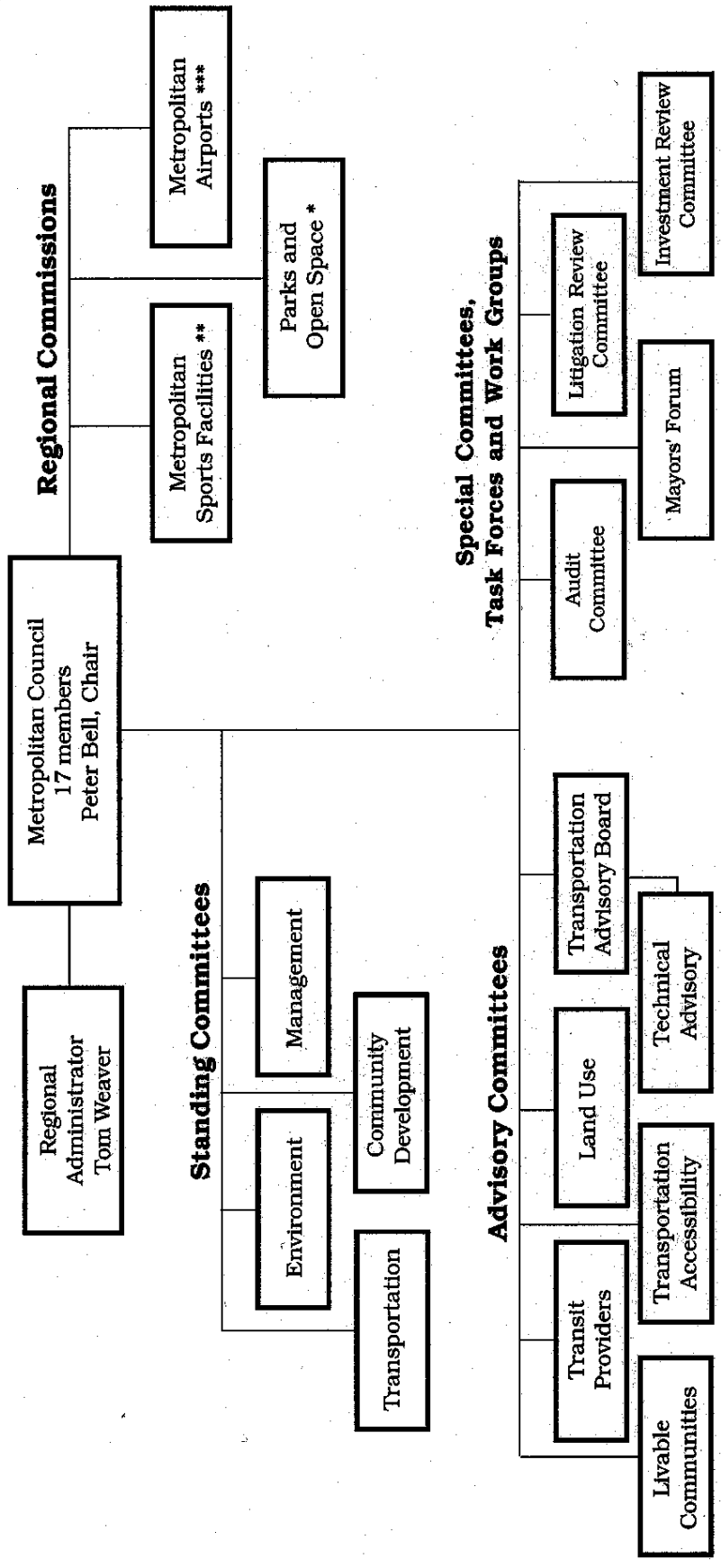
Legislation passed in 2001 established a Legislative Commission on Metropolitan Government, consisting of seven senators and seven state representatives. The legislation directs the commission to monitor, review, and make recommendations to the legislature and the Council on:

- The tax rate and dollar amount of the Council's property tax levies and any proposed increases in the rate or dollar amount of tax;
- Requests for an increase in the debt of the Council;
- The overall work and role of the Council;
- The Council's proposed operating and capital budgets, work program and capital improvement program; and
- The Council's implementation of the operating and capital budgets, work program, and capital improvement program

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<u>Council Members</u>	Term of Office	
	<u>First Appointed</u>	<u>End of Term</u>
<u>Chair</u>		
Peter Bell	January 9, 2003	Pleasure of the Governor
<u>District Members</u>		
District No. 1- Roger Scherer	March 10, 2003	January 2007
District No. 2 - Tony Pistilli	March 19, 2003	January 2007
District No. 3 - Mary Hill Smith	January 4, 1993	January 2007
District No. 4 - Jules Smith	July 31, 1993	January 2007
District No. 5 - Russell Susag	March 10, 2003	January 2007
District No. 6 - Peggy Leppik	March 10, 2003	January 2007
District No. 7 - Annette Meeks	March 10, 2003	January 2007
District No. 8 - Lynette Wittsack	March 10, 2003	January 2007
District No. 9 - Natalie Haas Steffen	April 19, 1999	January 2007
District No. 10 - Mary Krinke	July 21, 2004	January 2007
District No. 11 - Georgeanne Hilker	September 11, 2003	January 2007
District No. 12 - Chris Georgacas	March 10, 2003	January 2007
District No. 13 - Rick Aguilar	March 10, 2003	January 2007
District No. 14 - Song Lo Fawcett	March 10, 2003	January 2007
District No. 15 - Tom Egan	May 22, 2002	Resigned December 31, 2004
District No. 16 - Brian McDaniel	September 11, 2003	January 2007

Metropolitan Council Policymaking Structure



September 2004

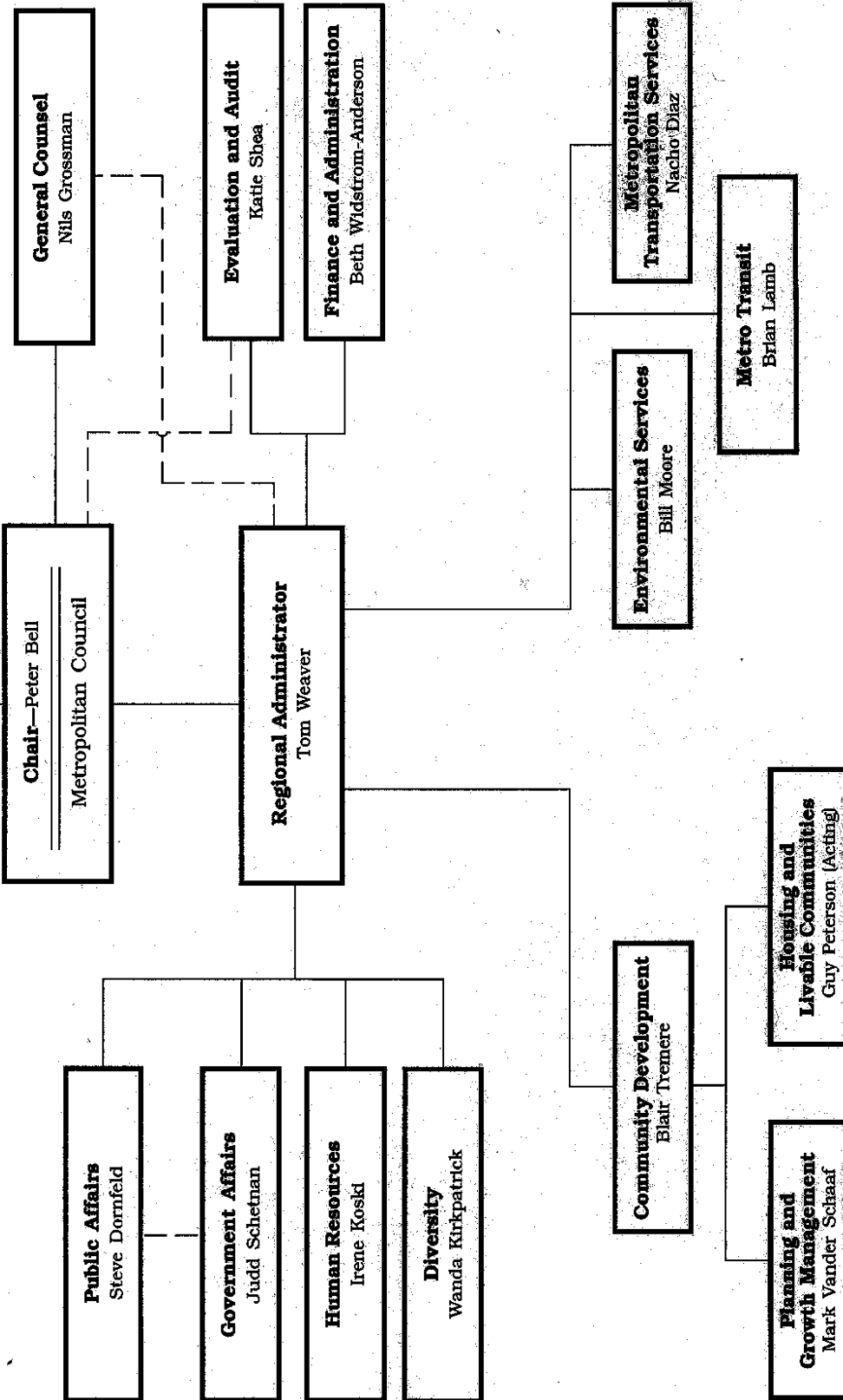
* Staff support provided to Commission by Metropolitan Council.
 ** The Metropolitan Council has budget approval and issues bonds for the commission.
 *** The Metropolitan Council reviews the capital budget and approves certain projects.

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Organization



METROPOLITAN COUNCIL



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