

Metropolitan Council - FAQs

What is the Metropolitan Council?

The Metropolitan Council is a regional government agency created by the Minnesota Legislature in 1967. It serves Minneapolis, St. Paul and 180 other communities spread across Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott and Washington counties, a land area of about 2,975 square miles with a population of 2.85 million. [More facts about the region.](#)

The Council establishes policies for the region's growth. Policy plans adopted by the Council address the region's forecasted needs for transportation, aviation, water resources, and parks and open space. The Council also provides essential regional services, including bus and rail transit, paratransit services for people with disabilities, and wastewater collection and treatment. [More about the Council's role in the region.](#)

Why do we need regional government?

Communities in the region can be more effective when they work together. Since its inception, the Council has successfully addressed significant challenges related to air and water pollution, polluted land, transit management and regional growth. Working together achieves economies of scale that cut costs; legislative mandates help the Council and the region more fairly distribute resources, solve problems that cross jurisdictional boundaries and share information. [More about the Council's history.](#)

Who makes governing decisions?

The 17-member Metropolitan Council board has 16 members who each represent a geographic district and one chair who serves at large. The current chair is Susan Haigh, CEO of Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity. All Council members are appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the governor. The State Senate confirms Council member appointments. [See biographies of current Council members.](#)

How is it funded?

Property taxes fund about 10% of the Council's operating budget. User fees provide about 45% of Council revenues, and state and federal funds are about 41% of revenues. (About 4% came from other sources.) The Council's 2010 operating budget was \$519 million. The Council held property taxes flat between 2003 and 2009.

When and where does the Council board meet?

The Council normally meets at 4 p.m. on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month at the Council's central office at 390 N. Robert St., St. Paul. [See a map with driving and parking information.](#)

Several committees of the Council also meet regularly. [See a current schedule of meetings](#), as well as upcoming public hearings and other events.

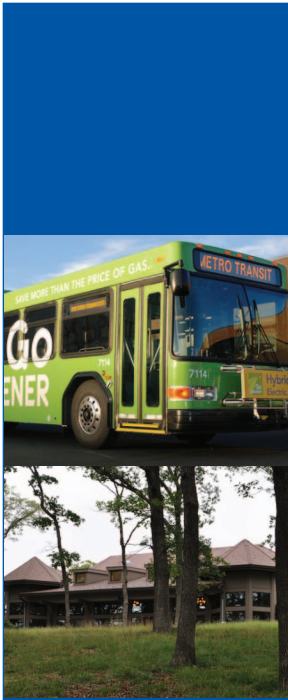
How can I get involved?

[Citizens can stay informed](#) about regional issues through the Council's publications, newsletters and website, attend Council and committee meetings, and serve on Council advisory committees.



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The Council works with local park agencies to acquire and develop parks and trails in order to protect natural resources and to provide outdoor recreation for public enjoyment.

The Council is charged with protecting public health and the environment by providing efficient wastewater collection and treatment services, and water resource management.

How do I contact Council members and staff?

Staff and Council members can be reached by e-mail using this model: name.surname@metc.state.mn.us. For phone numbers, call 651-602-1000.

How can I order maps and reports?

The Council provides a wide variety of reports, plans, maps, brochures, data, and expertise to the region's citizens and communities. The Council's Regional Data Center is open from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily at 390 N. Robert St., St. Paul. Phone: 651-602-1140. Email: data.center@metc.state.mn.us. Access maps and reports online.

How can I find out about jobs at the Council?

[Current job openings are posted on the Council's web site.](#)

Where can I find bus or rail transit near me?

Metro Transit, operated by the Council, provided 78 million bus and rail rides in the region in 2010. The Council also contracts with private providers for some regional-route bus service, and six other agencies provide transit service to 12 southern and western suburbs. *[Go online for transit schedules, online bus pass sales, an online trip planner and other transit information.](#)* Bus route and schedule information is also available by calling 612-373-3333.

Is there transit for people with disabilities?

All Metro Transit buses and rail cars are wheelchair accessible. If you use a wheelchair or have another disability, you may qualify for the region's on-demand paratransit service, *[Metro Mobility](#)*. Call the service center at 651-602-1111.

What if I lose something on the bus or rail car?

Metro Transit's headquarters, including the lost-and-found for items lost by transit customers, is located in the Heywood Building, 560 Sixth Ave. N., Minneapolis. Call 612-373-3333 for more information.

Where can I get regional park information?

The Council works with local park agencies to acquire and develop parks and trails in order to protect natural resources and to provide outdoor recreation for public enjoyment. Regional park facilities include 51 parks and park reserves, 7 special recreation features, and about 230 miles of regional trails. The Council publishes a *[map and guide to the regional park system](#)*. Order online or call 651-602-1140.

Where can I find out about affordable housing?

The Council's *[Metropolitan Housing and Redevelopment Authority](#)* provides affordable housing opportunities under the federal Section 8 program for about 7,000 seniors, families and people with disabilities annually. The Metro HRA operates in Anoka and Carver Counties, as well as most of suburban Hennepin and Ramsey Counties. Metro HRA can be reached at 651-602-1428.

Where can I learn about wastewater treatment and water quality?

The Council's *[Environmental Services](#)* division is charged with protecting the public health and the environment by providing efficient wastewater collection and treatment services and water resources management.

[Related fact sheet: About the Council \(pdf\)](#)