

Metropolitan Council 2007 Adopted Unified Budget Authority and Organization

History

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 183 cities and townships and 2.8 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.

Background

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 nearly 600,000 jobs, a half-million households, and one-million 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 *Regional 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 220,000 bus rides per weekday and 4,300 rides on an average weekday for people with disabilities through Metro Mobility;
- Collecting and treating an average of almost 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 open for public use.

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The Council is organized into three operating divisions: Transportation, Environmental Services, and Community Development - and supporting central administrative units. The operating divisions and other major units report to the Regional Administrator who, in turn, reports to the 17-member Council board. The Regional Administrator is responsible to ensure that policy decisions of the Council are carried out, to organize and direct the 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 2007 transportation budget focuses on maintenance of the existing transit system, yet oriented toward continuing reasonable growth once funds become available. The 2007 budget includes \$79 million from a State General Fund appropriation for transit support.

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

- **Metro Transit:** Provided roughly 64.4 million bus trips and nearly 9.4 million rail trips in 2006. The total of 73.8 million trips was the highest number of passengers since 1984.
- **Metro Mobility:** This program serves persons with disabilities that prevent them from using the regular transit system. This service provided over 1.3 million rides in 2005 to more than 30,000 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 2 million rides in 2005.
- **Community Programs:** Dial-A-Ride service is provided to rural areas and a number of cities through contracts with counties, cities and nonprofit organizations. In 2005, an estimated 500,000 rides were provided by this program through contracts for 11 rural and seven urban transit service providers.
- **Opt-Out Communities:** Thirteen 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 2005, these programs provided an estimated 4.2 million rides.

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DIVISION

Metropolitan Council Environmental Services (MCES) collects and treats an average of almost 300 million gallons of wastewater each day from 104 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 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 in the development of the 2007 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

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

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The Community Development Division conducts planning and policy development to support regional growth and reinvestment. 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 2007, Community Development will focus its resources, tools and incentives on implementation of the *Regional Development Framework*, the Council's 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 6,700 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.

REGIONAL ADMINISTRATION

The Council's central administrative units are organized as Regional Administration and, like the three operating divisions, report to the Regional Administrator. These units establish administrative policies for the 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 shared 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 2007 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

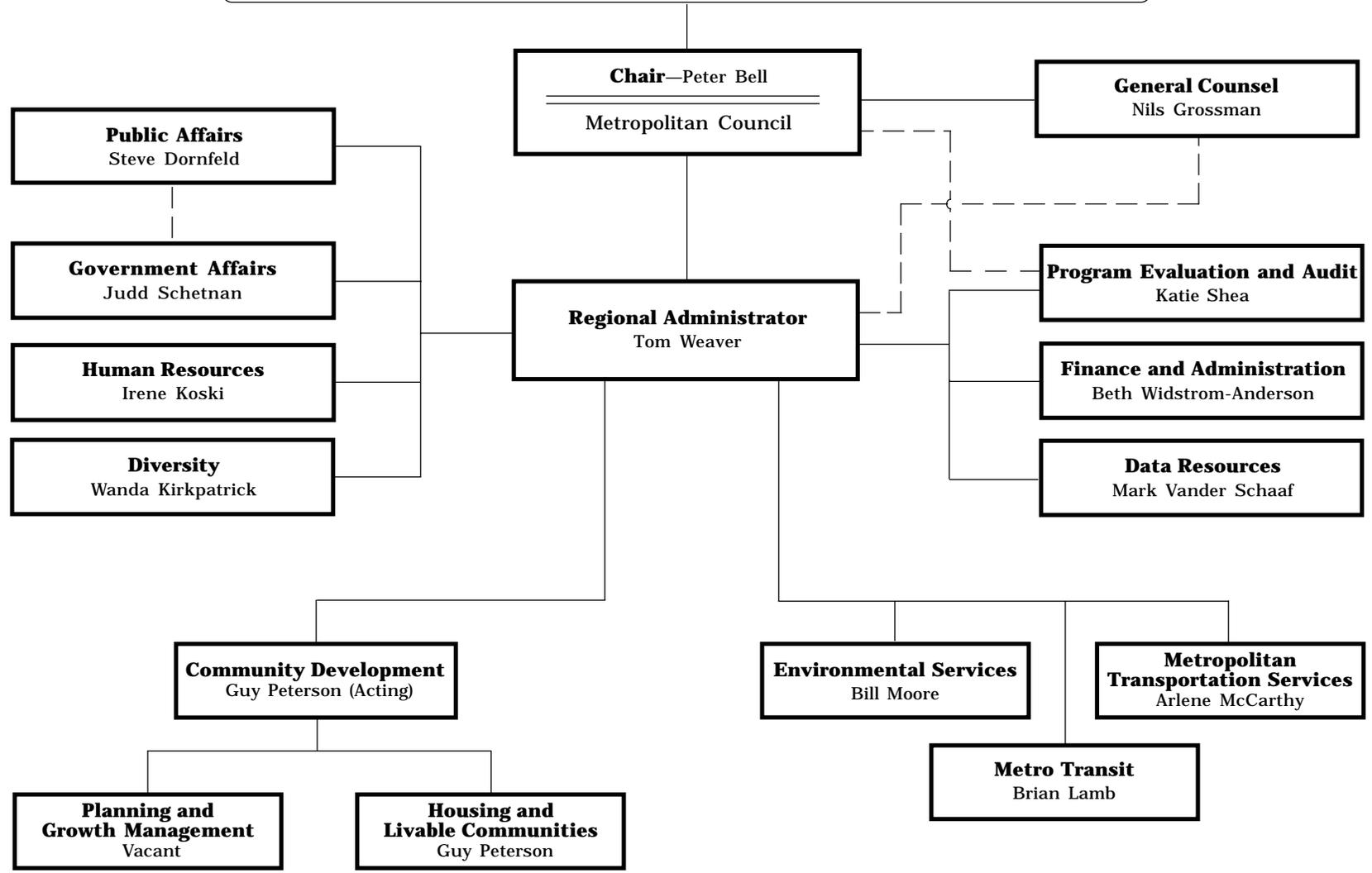
A Legislative Commission on Metropolitan Government, consisting of seven senators and seven state representatives was established by legislation in 2001. The legislation directs the commission to monitor, review, and make recommendations to the legislature and the Council on:

- 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 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

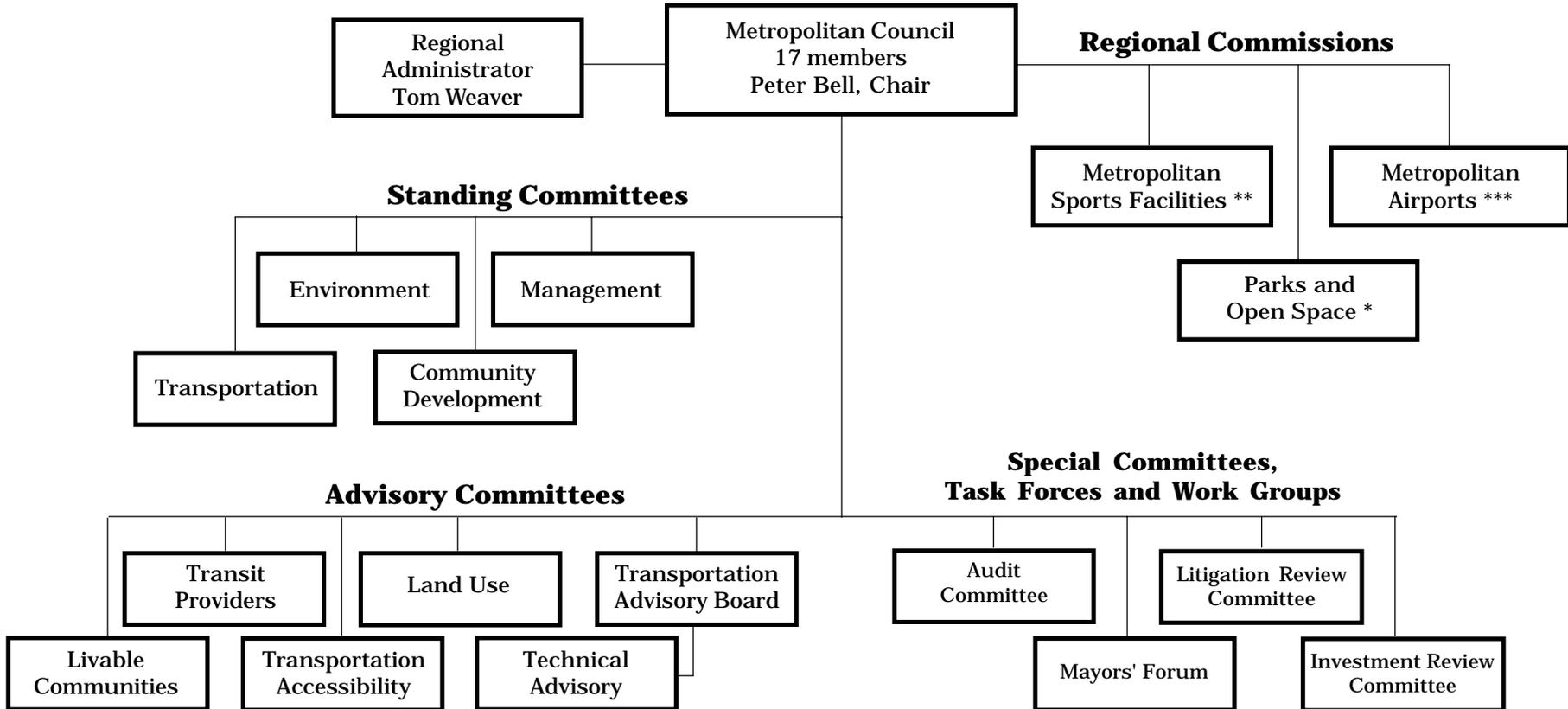
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<u>Council Members</u>	<u>Appointed</u>
<u>Chair</u> Peter Bell	January 9, 2003
<u>District Members</u>	
District No. 1 - Roger Scherer	March 10, 2003
District No. 2 - Tony Pistilli	March 19, 2003
District No. 3 - Mary Hill Smith	January 4, 1993
District No. 4 - Jules Smith	July 31, 1993
District No. 5 - Russell Susag	March 10, 2003
District No. 6 - Peggy Leppik	March 10, 2003
District No. 7 - Annette Meeks	March 10, 2003
District No. 8 - Lynette Wittsack	March 10, 2003
District No. 9 - Natalie Haas Steffen	April 19, 1999
District No. 10 - Kris Sanda	October 19, 2005
District No. 11 - Georgeanne Hilker	September 11, 2003
District No. 12 - Chris Georgacas	March 10, 2003
District No. 13 - Rick Aguilar	March 10, 2003
District No. 14 - Vacant	March 10, 2003
District No. 15 - Daniel Wolter	March 9, 2005
District No. 16 - Brian McDaniel	September 11, 2003

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL



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.



Metropolitan Council

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