



Metro Governance Transparency Initiative

***Bringing Greater Public Accountability, Openness
and Stability to the Metropolitan Council***

The Metropolitan Council: 1967

- Created to deal with regional issues that transcend boundaries
- Directed by the Legislature to:
 1. plan for the orderly and economical development of the seven-county metro area
 2. coordinate the delivery of services that couldn't be provided by any one city or county.

The Metropolitan Council: 2017

- The Met Council has evolved from its original focus on **planning** to include **operations** and **policy making**.
- However, despite its greater influence, the governance model remains unchanged, providing few, if any, opportunities for local communities to have a voice in decisions that impact them. The current model lacks democratic representation.



**To whom is the Metropolitan
Council accountable?**

**More important question:
To whom *should* the Met Council
be accountable?**



**Metro Governance
Transparency Initiative**

Restructuring the Met Council for Greater Accountability, Transparency, and Effectiveness

Who best represents local communities and concerns?

A political appointee or a local official elected by local communities and their citizens?

- As its reach and mission have steadily expanded, Met Council members are no more accountable to the public.
- Allegiance of the Met Council is to the governor and swings depending on election outcomes--policy and direction can shift from governor to governor.

Restructuring the Met Council for Greater Accountability, Transparency, and Effectiveness

The question is not whether to change the Met Council,
it's how to change it.

- An Outlier - The Met Council is the only MPO in the country (out of 402 MPOs) with members that are entirely appointed by a governor and does not include a majority of elected local officials.

Options for Reform: What are people talking about?

- Do nothing.
- But, most agree that reform of some kind is needed.
- *Citizens League* and *Office of the Legislative Auditor* Reports.
- Staggered Terms: maintain the status quo with minor revisions.
- Abolish the Met Council.
- **Align the Met Council with every other regional planning organization in the country**

MGTI Governance Proposal

- Elected Officials are representatives of and **accountable to the public.**
- Provide for **stability and continuity** for ongoing initiatives and priorities even if governor and ideology change.
- Local elected officials are already **engaged in their communities** and bring greater **awareness of issues and connections.**
- **Greater efficiency** by reducing the number of transit entities with overlapping planning and funding functions.

Our goal: a governance model that provides greater accountability to taxpayers, continuity and stability in regional governance, and responsiveness to local and regional concerns.

- Conforms Met Council district boundaries to the 7 counties it represents.
- Respects the current 16 Met Council districts, with Cities and Townships within each district appointing a local elected official as their representative.
- Mayors of Minneapolis and Saint Paul each appoint one member.
- Expands membership from the current 17 to 29.
- Includes 4 additional ex-officio members to meet Federal Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) requirements.
- Each County Board appoints its own representative.
- Members serve four year staggered terms.
- Chair is elected by and from the members.