

January 15, 2024

**To:** Metropolitan Governance Task Force

**From:** Washington County Commissioner Karla Bigham in coordination with the AMC Met Council Advisory Committee

**Subject:** AMC Comments and Recommendations on Metropolitan Council Governance

**Comments and Recommendations:**

**The seven metro counties agree that increasing accountability, transparency, and proportional representation are the driving principles behind all recommendations.** These items are tied to shifting representation to the metro area from state-wide oversight and clarifying who Metropolitan Council members are ultimately accountable to. The information below represents the seven metro counties' desire to meet these needs.

- Council of Governments (COG) model
  - All seven metro counties support discussing the details of a COG model with the following general ideas:
    - All seven metro counties should have a Commissioner on the COG
    - Proportional representation is the top priority
    - There is not agreement on how many districts there should be or how the votes should be counted (weighted voting) but districts to the best of the ability should not cross county lines
  - Local elected officials would need to either serve on the COG or appoint those who would serve
  - The Chair of the COG should be determined via a process that has the region supporting the person as opposed to being someone who is accountable to the Governor or state-level governments
- Other models and changes
  - Direct election of members to a council is supported by only one county
  - There is no support from counties for the current nomination and appointment process
  - There is interest in staggered terms but not as a stand-alone solution
  - Any governance changes would not occur prior to January, 2027
- Council Core Functions and Performance
  - Transit implementation and operations should be separated from the MPO Transportation Planning Agency
  - Counties agree that a reformed Council would need to immediately address the funding structure and relationship between the Metro HRA and other regional HRAs related to administration of housing vouchers
  - Performance measures, especially related to funding for transportation and transit projects, should be part of any proposal to ensure member accountability and financial transparency

**Signed, the AMC Met Council Advisory Committee Members:**

- Washington County Commissioner Karla Bigham, Task Force Member
- Anoka County Commissioner Scott Schulte
- Carver County Commissioner Tom Workman
- Dakota County Commissioner Mary Liz Holberg
- Hennepin County Commissioner Kevin Anderson
- Ramsey County Commissioner Rafael Ortega
- Scott County Commissioner Jon Ulrich
- Washington County Commissioner Stan Karwoski