

Proposal for Met Council Reorganization

This proposes two organizations: a Met Council for metro-wide planning, coordination and collaboration among jurisdictions, and a new Metro Transit District for planning, building and operating transit. The proposal addresses these issues:

1. Accountability:
 - a. To local officials and to the public,
 - b. Via a system with checks and balances,
 - c. Ensuring that the organization building and operating transit would also pay for it (per OLA finding)
2. Competence: The two organizations would operate in areas of specific expertise
3. Conflict of interest: Removing the current conflict of interest between the Met Council and Metro Transit

1. The Met Council: A Council of Governments

The Met Council would be a council of governments responsible for cooperative and collaborative planning, coordination, and technical assistance on issues of mutual concern that cross jurisdictional lines, including transportation. The Council would continue to be the metro area's MPO.

Members would be mayors, county board and township chairs appointed by the governor according to specific legislative requirements that ensured balance and equity with respect to 1) population density, 2) geographic distribution and 3) type of jurisdiction (county, city, township). There would be an odd number of members, and they would serve staggered terms. The board would include two non-voting members, one from MnDOT and one from Metro Transit. The board would elect a chair from among its members. Committees would be established by vote of the council. Members would have assigned staff to adequately assist them in their duties.

The Council would be funded by the state legislature.

2. Metro Transit: A Special District

A Metro Area Transit District would be a Special District¹ with the sole function of building and operating a metro-wide transit system consistent with broad policy goals of the Met Council. It would have taxing authority and receive project funds from by the Met Council.

The transit district would be governed by a board of directors: 15 voting members would be popularly elected, three from Hennepin County and two from each of the other counties; there would also be one non-voting member from the Met Council and one non-voting member from MnDOT. The chair would be elected by the board from among its voting members.

1. Special districts are independent, governmental units with substantial autonomy that provide a specific service or services not provided by existing governments. Examples of special districts that exist in Minnesota are the Metropolitan Airport Commission, the Metropolitan Mosquito Control District, various watershed districts, Saint

Paul Port Authority and the existing Met Council. Since this transit district could levy taxes, its board would be elected.