



# METROEAST

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## Officials lambaste proposal to give Metro more power

Charter committee member gives assurance that report merely suggestion for discussion

By STEVEN AMICK  
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**FAIRVIEW** — A proposal to give the Metropolitan Service District more governing power came under fire Monday when officials from five East Multnomah County cities gathered to hear a report on the progress of the Metro Charter Committee.

The 16-member committee, whose members include representatives from Multnomah, Clackamas and Washington counties, was formed after Oregon voters approved a

measure last year that permits Metro to go back to the polls and ask for home rule. Currently, only the state can decide what Metro can and cannot do.

The committee, which meets weekly, plans to present a home-rule charter to the voters in the November 1992 general election.

At issue during the meeting Monday was a one-page report, entitled "Regional Planning Powers and Responsibilities." The outline was submitted to the committee Oct. 10 by three of its members, Larry Derr, Frank

Josselson, and John Egge.

Derr, who represents Washington County on the committee, is a lawyer. Josselson represents the Clackamas County cities. He also is a lawyer. Egge represents Clackamas County. He owns a Milwaukie plumbing company.

Edward H. "Ned" Look, the Multnomah County cities' representative on the committee, told the east county officials and County Commissioner Sharron Kelley, who also attended, that the outline was merely a suggestion for discussion.

"Nobody's bought off on this report — nobody," Look said. As for coming up with a charter proposal, he said, "there's a lot of work to be done on it."

Despite Look's assurances, the proposal

raised some hackles Monday.

Barbara Wiggin, Gresham city councilor, said she was worried it would lead to regional government "so large and so far away that citizens can't get to it."

Under the proposal, there would be a comprehensive regional "framework plan" that would supplant much of the land-use planning and permit work now done by cities. Metro also would have planning power over a list of "regional responsibilities," including but not limited to water supply sources, regional transportation, housing densities, urban green spaces and locations for commercial and industrial development.

Cities and counties would retain planning responsibilities for police and fire services, local streets and transportation systems and "siting of developments, structures and fac-

ilities" — although how that would be reconciled with Metro's overriding responsibility for land-use decisions in the region was not clear.

Gresham Mayor Gussie McRobert said that among her concerns about the proposal was something its backers might not have considered.

"I don't think they understand the cost of putting together a regional comprehensive plan," McRobert said. "They're doing that in Toronto, and it's costing millions."

Troutdale Mayor Sam Cox said that he, too, was worried about costs. He also said he was not convinced a strong regional government was needed.

"It's never been proven to me that bigger is better or cheaper," Cox said.