

**INFORMATION FROM REGIONAL GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
TO CHARTER COMMITTEE
REGARDING FUNCTIONAL PLANNING**

November 7, 1991

The Regional Governance Committee appreciates the opportunity to offer the following thoughts regarding the framework for conducting regional planning.

HIGHLIGHTS OF INFORMATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This document concludes that:

- Regional planning will be conducted most effectively and efficiently if it builds on the existing system of preparing functional plans. A regional vision, goals and objectives, and performance benchmarks should be established to provide the needed context for the functional plans. A regional comprehensive plan would be very expensive and time consuming to prepare, and would be a less effective growth management tool than the approach proposed here.

FUNCTIONAL PLANNING PROCESS PREFERRED

The Regional Governance Committee (RGC) prefers that the functional planning process be used as the foundation of regional planning efforts. We support an approach to regional planning which includes the following primary elements:

- I. Preparation of long-range vision establishing values for the region
- II. Development of regional growth management strategy
 - A. Goals and objectives
 - B. Performance benchmarks
 - C. Functional plans

We believe that this approach will achieve the desired result of effective growth management more effectively and efficiently than the preparation of a regional comprehensive plan. To prepare a regional comprehensive plan which satisfies the standards for comprehensive planning in this state and is similar in scope to local government comprehensive plans would be a monumental task. Substantial amounts of time and money would be required to do it right. Given limited resources, it is more likely that neither the time nor the money will be available, with the result being an inferior product. The approach which we believe will work is briefly outlined below:

- We support preparation of a vision for the region. The vision should not be a legally binding document, but it should provide a useful analytical tool to help all of us to examine the long-term implications of choices and develop a regional consensus on the values which should shape future growth. The existing 2040 study being conducted by Metro will provide a good start.
- Goals and objectives provide the next level of detail to the planning process. The existing RUGGOs, at the very minimum, provide a useful starting point.
- Performance benchmarks, in a sense, are a part of the goals and objectives; the benchmarks would give the region specific, measurable targets to track over time. In this

way we will know whether we are achieving the objectives or not. The state's benchmarks are a good example.

- The functional plans provide the mechanism for the kind of detailed analysis which is required to successfully address today's complex planning problems.

The Regional Transportation Plan prepared by J-PACT is a good example of both a functional plan and a cooperative planning process. The Regional Solid Waste Management Plan is another example of a functional plan, and illustrates the difference between functional plans and comprehensive plans. That document is very detailed. It forecasts the region's future waste disposal needs and identifies specific facilities and programs for meeting those needs. An intensive two year planning effort was used to develop that plan, and major chapters, including the Washington County chapter, are still being added two to three years later. The Regional Solid Waste Management Plan (RSWMP) illustrates the analytical depth which is required to effectively plan at a regional level for any issue of significance. To attempt to treat every single element of a traditional comprehensive plan at that level of detail is, we expect, destined at the outset to fail. The RGC recommends building on the good work which has been done to date to establish the functional planning process in this region.

As with all recommendations at this point of the decision making process, RGC's support for a regional vision, goals and objectives, performance standards and functional plans is predicated on the assumption that the charter successfully establishes a true partnership between the regional government and local governments as the various elements of a regional plan are prepared. The experience of local governments working on the Washington County chapter of the RSWMP provides a good case study of why the RGC is so critically concerned about this process issue. In that process all Washington County local governments worked together, and with the Metro Executive Officer, her staff and several Metro Councilors, to develop a consensus solution to siting major solid waste facilities in Washington County. The consensus recommendation was found through numerous studies by Metro's consultants to be both technically and economically sound and in full compliance with the policies of the RSWMP. Nevertheless, the recommendation met strong resistance at the full Metro Council, and was passed by a 7-5 vote only after an extended period of acrimonious debate. While the votes of the 7 Metro Councilors were greatly appreciated, the extraordinary difficulty passing an RSWMP chapter which was supported enthusiastically and unanimously by so many key players provides a good example of why we are so committed to a Charter which provides for a true partnership as regional planning is conducted.

We very much appreciate the opportunity to provide these comments to the Charter Committee and look forward to discussing these and other issues with you at the appropriate time.

**REGIONAL GOVERNANCE
LAND USE SUBCOMMITTEE
MEETING NOTES**

Wednesday, December 4, 1992

Present at the meeting were: Mike McKeever and Greg Chew, RGC staff, Frank Josselson and Ned Look, Charter Committee members, and Gussie McRobert, Shirley Huffman, Marge Kafoury, Dennis Mulvihill, John Andersen, Dave Poese, and Bruce Thompson, subcommittee members.

Charter Committee member Frank Josselson made an introductory presentation setting forth the general principles in the Committee's current Planning Responsibilities outline. He indicated that the phrase "Regional Framework Plan" should be eliminated in Section II of the outline and that generally, the outline needed more work to clarify its intent. For example, he indicated that the regional goals and objectives called for in Section II A 1 of the outline would be limited to those topics listed in Section III of the outline. This type of cross-referencing is not clear in the current document. Frank indicated it was his desire to pass a charter which limited METRO's authorities to a shorter list of topics than in the current state statutes, and to then give them the authority to successfully execute this shorter list of responsibilities.

Most of the meeting was spent discussing the topic of the roles of LCDC and METRO in regard to reviewing local Comprehensive Plans. One proposal advocated by some Charter Committee members is to have METRO send its Regional Plan (regional goals, performance standards and functional plans) to LCDC for acknowledgement. Following acknowledgement of the Regional Plan, METRO would then have authority to review the 27 local government Comprehensive Plans and determine whether they were in compliance with statewide planning goals and the Regional Plan.

Several subcommittee members expressed concern that entirely eliminating LCDC from the process of reviewing local plans would create risks for local governments and, politically, would be impossible to convince the legislature to accept. Frank listed the possible benefits of such a system as follows:

- savings of money and time;
- less legal challenge;
- better staff competence;
- better accessibility and communication;
- more familiarity with local metropolitan issues; and
- foster regional and local cooperation.

Subcommittee members generally disagreed that there would be savings in money, time, or reduced legal challenges. They also were concerned that such a system might reduce regional and local cooperation rather than increase it. They agreed that it was possible that METRO staff might be more competent, have greater familiarity with local issues, and be more accessible.

Mike McKeever suggested that the group think about ways which the benefits of the proposed shift of local plan review responsibilities from LCDC to METRO could be achieved without triggering some of the problems. The group considered the merits of a suggestion to have LCDC delegate the staff review of local plans to METRO, with LCDC retaining authority for final action. John Andersen suggested that this idea had merit, but that more thought needed to be given regarding how METRO could use its current statutory authority to coordinate plans effectively under this system (that authority currently is not utilized by METRO). Frank expressed concern that this proposal would result in duplication of effort as local governments would have to stop at METRO on their way to LCDC.

Everyone agreed to continue thinking about the issue. The next meeting was scheduled for 9:00 a.m. Wednesday, December 18 at McKeever/Morris's office.