

# Future Role of Metro Creates Paranoia

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Many services now provided by metropolitan area local governments will probably be taken over by the Metropolitan Service District in the near future.

A committee is currently working on a new charter that is expected to give the regional government permission to involve itself in land use planning, urban growth, natural resource protection and parks, water management, and perhaps take over Tri-Met.

The committee will write a first draft of the charter, receive public input and reaction, write a second draft, hold another public hearing, then present a final charter to the region's voters in November.

Some in the community say a remodeled Metro with expanded powers will result in more efficient service and better planning at less cost.

"As we move towards consolidating government to be more efficient and more cost effective we are realizing that there are some things that make more sense to be done regionally than jurisdictionally," says Multnomah County Board of Commissioners Chair Gladys McCoy.

"We ought to get on with defining Metro's role and having it take its rightful place in the metropolitan area."

However others fear that a strong regional government might limit more local and direct control. That powerful areas or interests might be made subservient to more populous or influential areas.

These fears have had an impact on the decisions the committee has already made.

For instance, the committee's draft charter will state that a Regional Policy Advisory Committee must be created and allowed a degree of influence over what new functions Metro will take on.

The RPAC members will represent local jurisdictions and interests, and is being written into the charter with the hope it will ease their apprehensions.

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