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**1996-97 KING COUNTY  
CHARTER REVIEW  
COMMISSION**

**REGIONAL COMMITTEES –  
REPORT AND  
RECOMMENDATIONS**

**JUNE 1997**

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**1996-97**  
**KING COUNTY CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION**

**REGIONAL COMMITTEES —**  
**REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**JUNE 1997**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to compile in one document the relevant information gathered as part of the 1996-97 King County Charter Review Commission's review of the three Regional Committees of the Metropolitan King County Council. The Regional Committees were established by charter amendment as part of the merger of King County and Metro in 1992. The Regional Committees have been the subject of high expectations and close monitoring since their inception. The Leagues of Women Voters of King County, the Municipal League of King County, and the King County Consolidation Advisory Committee<sup>1</sup> have reviewed and reported findings on the Regional Committees. This report is intended to add to those reports another stepping stone for future reviews of the progress of the Regional Committees in meeting expectations of their role as an essential element of regional government for King County.

**Recommendations**

The 1996-97 King County Charter Review Commission had a three-part mission<sup>2</sup> which included the task of assessing King County's role as a regional government and recommending

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<sup>1</sup> The King County Consolidation Advisory Committee (CAC) was established in 1993 and sunsetted in December 1995. The purpose of the CAC was to advise the King County Executive and County Council on the implementation of the King County/Metro merger.

<sup>2</sup> The mission of the 1996-97 King County Charter Review Commission was to fulfill the requirement of Section 800 of the King County Charter that the Charter be reviewed at least once every ten years by an appointed advisory committee of knowledgeable citizens representing the diversity of the public that King County serves. The scope of the Commission's mission was to: (1) Review all existing provisions of the Charter and develop recommendations for any technical amendments to improve the operation of King County government; (2) review all existing

any amendments necessary to improve the County's ability to deliver regional services. The Commission established the Regional Issues Committee to carry out this task. The Commission conducted an outreach effort with the three Regional Committees of the Metropolitan King County Council and with the cities in King County to identify problems and possible solutions. The Commission found that many of the Regional Committees' problems could be solved by leadership in changing attitudes and procedures. The Commission also found that there were some problems that should be addressed in the Charter and recommended five changes to Section 270. Those changes would::

- (1) Allow the appointing body to designate alternates to the Regional Committees.
- (2) Allow the Regional Committees to select their own chairs and establish their own operating procedures.
- (3) Delete the term "countywide" to avoid confusion with the term "regional" which is also used in Section 270.
- (4) Allow the Regional Committees to initiate their own legislation.
- (5) Require the Metropolitan King County Council to respond to Regional Committee recommended ordinances within 90 days (amend, reject or approve) or the matter must be referred to the voters.

By unanimous vote, the Commission recommended these charter amendments to the King County Council for placement on the ballot in November 1997.

## **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The King County/Metro merger proposal was the product of considerable negotiations during the early 1990s between King County, the City of Seattle, and the suburban cities in what is often referred to as the "Summit" process. As part of the merger, King County voters approved several charter amendments requiring the County Council to establish three Regional Committees for transit, water quality, and regional policies. Membership in each of the three Regional Committees includes six County Councilmembers (one of whose district must include unincorporated area) and, in 1997, three elected officials (mayor or councilmembers) from Seattle and three elected officials (mayor or councilmembers) from the Suburban Cities (which may split a vote for a total of six appointments). For the Water Quality Committee, two special districts appointments replace two of the city appointments.

Each regional committee is to develop, review, and recommend ordinances and motions adopting, repealing, or amending county-wide policies and plans relating to the subject matter area for which a regional committee has been established. The Regional Committees have 120 days to act on matters referred to them by the County Council. If the Regional Committees do not act, the County Council can act with a eight-vote majority. The County Council can adopt a regional committee plan or policy proposal without amendment with seven affirmative votes. Prior to final approval, Council amendments shall be referred back to the regional committee for further review

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provisions of the Charter and develop recommendations for any necessary structural changes to improve the organization of King County government; and (3) assess King County's role as a regional government and to recommend any necessary amendments to improve the County's ability to deliver regional services.

and recommendation. If the County Council adopts a proposed policy or plan which differs from the Regional Committee recommendations, eight affirmative votes are required.

The Regional Committees were envisioned to be an essential part of what would make King County a truly regional government, i.e. regional not being defined merely as geographic coverage of services, but as bringing together the cities and the county to address mutual concerns. Because of the high expectations of the Regional Committees, they have been closely scrutinized by the Municipal League (1994), the Consolidation Advisory Committee (in 1995 and 1996) and the League of Women Voters (1996). A summary of this work is included in the appendix.<sup>3</sup> For the 1996-97 charter review process, outreach efforts included letters to the Regional Committee members asking for input. Following the letters, the Commission's Regional Issues Committee members met once with the Regional Water Quality Committee and twice with the Regional Transit Committee and the Regional Policy Committee. Additionally, Commission members met with the Suburban Cities Association, and the city councils of Bellevue, Renton, and Seattle where Regional Committees issues were raised. Several County Councilmembers, several cities as well as the Suburban Cities Association submitted written comments. The comments relevant to the Regional Committees are summarized in the appendix.

One important factor to note is that many of the people, especially key County Councilmembers, who were involved in the negotiations which brought about the King County/Metro merger and who designed the Regional Committees left the Council before the Regional Committees were implemented. The Regional Committees were implemented under a newly expanded Council with a majority of members being newly elected to the Council. These new Councilmembers brought with them their own perspective of how King County should function as a regional government and how the Regional Committees should function within that government.

## FINDINGS

The Commission found that there appears to be both structural and attitudinal problems that prevent the Regional Committees from achieving what had been originally envisioned for them as forums for regional issues. As a consequence, this has prevented King County from achieving the goal of being an effective regional government. The Commission made the following observations:

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<sup>3</sup> See:

- Implementation of the Regional Policy Committees (November 1993) (adopted by motion by the King County Council)
- Municipal League News, August/September 1994
- King County Regional Policy Committee—Second Year Performance Review, King County Consolidation Advisory Committee, March 1996
- King County Governance Study, League of Women Voters, December 1996

From the perspective of the City of Seattle and the Suburban Cities . . .

- The Regional Committees are perceived as being subordinate to the County Council. Seattle and the Suburban Cities do not feel that they are equal players with King County. The objective structural relationship between the Regional Committees and the Metropolitan King County Council as described in the charter support this perception. By contrast, the Growth Management Policy Council, a multi-jurisdictional group formed to oversee implementation of the Growth Management Act, is perceived as operating more effectively than the Regional Committees. The most frequently cited reason for this is that the interlocal agreement which established the Growth Management Planning Council includes a ratification process that is perceived to put all participants on the same decision-making level.
- The structural problems with the Regional Committees are exacerbated by the behavior of some King County Councilmembers who show poor attendance and lack of attention during meetings. This behavior is perceived by cities as reflecting disregard for the Regional Committees and those who participate on them.
- From a County Council perspective . . .
  - Some of the cities' problems with the Regional Committees are the result of differences in operating style. Much of the County Council's work takes place outside of committees. Councilmembers discuss issues with each other outside of committees to work out solutions which are acted on in committees. The Seattle and Suburban City members of the Regional Committees have the disadvantage of not being co-located in the Courthouse and not being able to easily participate in these informal discussions.
  - The cities want status that is not possible. The Regional Committees are participating in a policy review process that is at a lower level than the County Council committees and the former Metro Council committees. The Regional Committees cannot be on a par with the King County Council unless they have final decision-making authority including final fiduciary responsibility. The Charter language specifically limits the Regional Committees to a policy role.

The Charter Review Commission also observed that there is a "sibling rivalry" problem in the relationship between the cities and King County. The cities have a natural animosity towards the "big brother" King County government. The cities are effectively forced into relationships with the County by state law or circumstances such as having no other realistic alternative but to purchase services from King County. The County Council is naturally protective of their position as a regional government and are naturally reluctant to give up control in order to give the cities a greater sense of parity and ownership of the Regional Committees. The current "sibling rivalry" problems over the Regional Committees appears to have begun with the initial organization of the Regional Committees in the development of operating procedures as required by the charter. In particular, County Councilmembers objected to the notion of alternates, as



well as the method by which the suburban cities selected their appointments. These were perceived by the cities as unnecessary obstacles to the cities' participation.

The Charter Review Commission observed progress in the development of the Regional Policy Committee. The Regional Policy Committee was given an intentionally broad mission. It was envisioned that it would provide critical leadership in identifying and moving forward issues of regional concern. The broad mission has caused the Regional Policy Committee to flounder a bit. First, it needed to determine what, of all the things it could do, it should do. Second, with the cities' high level of discomfort with the Regional Committees and unwillingness to move from the Growth Management Planning Council table and with the County Council's unwillingness to give up any of their power to the Regional Committees, the Regional Policy Committee has not been able to provide leadership on critical issues. It should be noted that after a difficult beginning, the Regional Policy Committee has made progress and is accomplishing work. However, it is still perceived as not yet ready to assume the leadership role envisioned for it.

To the credit of those involved with the Regional Committees, many constructive suggestions for improving the Regional Committees were offered to the Charter Review Commission. In considering the Regional Committees' problems, the Commission noted that the solution for one problem can cause other problems and that it is difficult to craft solutions for problems whose source is behavior rather than structural. For example, it was suggested that the Commission define the term "regional." It might be possible to define "regional" matters in the charter, but this would be at the cost of flexibility in responding to new situations. Regardless of how the term "regional" is defined and whether by charter or ordinance, it is possible to frame an issue so that it is not considered "regional" and therefore bypass the Regional Committees.

## **SUMMARY OF SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS AND COMMISSION RESPONSE**

- **Continuation of the Regional Committees:** *The issue is whether the underlying reasons for creating the Regional Committees in the first place are still valid and whether the Regional Committees, including the Regional Policies Committee, should be continued.*

**Comment:** The answer to this underlying question is that in spite of the problems with the Regional Committees, a majority of those involved with them believe that the Regional Committees should be continued and that efforts should be made to improve their effectiveness. The voices calling for an end to the Regional Committees believe (1) that there is not a meaningful role for the Regional Committees in County Council decision-making or lack of belief that it will improve or (2) that since the Regional Committee members are appointed and not elected, they cannot be held directly accountable for their decisions and therefore should be disbanded.

- **Attitude Problems:** *All parties should show leadership in seeking to make the Regional Committees reach their expectations and make King County a truly regional government*

**Suggestions:**

- Councilmembers should maintain good attendance at meetings, be attentive and refrain from telephone and other conversations during meetings.
- The Executive should exercise his ex-officio membership of the Regional Policy Committee. Seattle City Council members should maintain good attendance at meetings.
- Suburban Cities should interact with the County Council outside of the Regional Committees on issues of importance to them.

**Comment:** Attitudes cannot be easily or effectively modified by rule. There is little the Commission can do except to note that these behavioral changes are needed.

- **Structural and Procedural Problems:** *Changes to the committee structure and operations are needed in order to more effectively make the Regional Committees an integral part of King County government and therefore make King County a more effective regional government.*

**Suggestion:**

- The chair of the Regional Committees could be selected by the members and not necessarily be a member of the County Council as provided by the Charter.

**Comment:** The Charter is silent regarding the selection of the chair of each of the Regional Committees. This change could be mandated in the Charter (Section 270.20), but could be handled through ordinance or committee adopted procedures which would allow for adjustments to changing interests, committee membership preferences, and the nature of issues being addressed by the committees. The Commission's proposition is that the selection of the Regional Committee chair should be determined by each Committee and need not be a County Councilmember as is presently the case.

**Suggestion:**

- Revise the membership of Regional Committees to be 1/3 each King County, Seattle, and Suburban Cities to more closely reflect population distribution.

**Comment:** This was specifically proposed by one jurisdiction although there is general interest among Seattle and Suburban City representatives for this. The membership of the Regional Committees was a heavily negotiated point

during the Summit discussions leading to the Metro/King County merger. This is a matter for negotiations among King County, Seattle, and the Suburban Cities. No charter change is recommended at this time.

**Suggestion:**

- Eliminate or restrict the practice of dual referral of issues to both a Regional Committee and a County Council committee (e.g. solid waste issues are referred to both the Regional Policy Committee and the Council's Utilities Committee).

**Comment:** The Charter is silent regarding dual referral. This change could be mandated in the Charter (Section 270.30), but could be handled through ordinance or committee adopted procedures which would specify when dual referral could be used. Dual referral of issues can be used as an effective way of dealing with issues more efficiently and more effectively than sequentially, especially if time is a constraint. Even if prohibited by charter, this would not prevent the Council from finding other methods of circumventing the Regional Committees if that was the intent of the Council. This matter should be addressed through the Regional Committees' operating procedures ordinance.

**Suggestion:**

- Establish a time limit for the County Council to respond to Regional Committee recommendations or the matter would be enacted without Council action.

**Comment:** The Charter (Section 270.30) requires the Regional Committees to act within a specified time to matters referred to them by the County Council. The notion of balance of powers suggests that a similar limit be placed on the Council in response to matters referred to it by the Regional Committees. This can be done by charter amendment (270.30) or ordinance. It had been suggested that if this was required, the question of how to handle dual referral matters would be moot. It would not make any difference how the Council handled Regional Committee recommendations as long as it was within the required time frame.

**Suggestion:**

- Allow the Regional Committees to adopt their own work programs without being subject to Council approval.

**Comment:** The charter language is not clear on this matter (Section 270.30). The Regional Policy Committee can ask the Council to assign it a matter, but there is no language prohibiting the Regional Committees from taking on issues within their scope. However, the Regional Policy Committee's work program is adopted by the County Council, potentially limiting the ability of the committee to take on challenging issues the Council may not want it to. This problem could be addressed through a charter change (Section 270.30) or ordinance. The

Commission felt that all three Regional Committees should be allowed to establish their own work program. This is particularly important for the Regional Policy Committee.

**Suggestion:**

- Compensate the part-time elected officials for their participation on the Regional Committees.

**Comment:** The charter is silent on the matter of compensation. This could be addressed by charter amendment (Section 270.20) or ordinance. If this is an issue to cities, then the cities should propose an ordinance that would compensate those city representatives who are not compensated by their cities.

**Suggestion:**

- Clarify the method by which cities other than Seattle appoint their representatives to the three Regional Committees.

**Comment:** The Charter provides that the cities and towns determine the method by which the suburban city representatives are appointed. When the Regional Committees were organized, the Council imposed process requirements on the cities. It is not clear whether this matter has, in effect, been resolved or needs further clarification by ordinance or charter change (270.20).

**Suggestion:**

- Allow the designations of alternatives for the Regional Committees.

**Comment:** The Charter (Section 270.20) is silent on this matter. There has been disagreement as to whether alternates are permitted. Alternates would ensure that Regional Committees would have full attendance and would also allow elected officials who have a particular interest in the issue on the agenda to participate in those discussions instead of having a less interested or absent official. By tacit agreement, Seattle and the suburban cities have alternates. The County Council does not. It has been suggested that if the County Council had alternates, their attendance at Regional Committee meetings might improve. For 1997, changes in the County Council's meeting schedule and committee assignments were made to address attendance issues.

- **Regional Policy Committee Problems:** *The Regional Policy Committee should have expanded responsibilities if it is to assume a leadership role in regional issues.*

**Suggestion:**

- The Regional Policy Committee could oversee monitoring of Growth Management Act implementation.

**Comment:** As part of the negotiations in designing the Regional Committees, it had been expected that the Growth Management Planning Council work would be transferred to the Regional Policy Committee, but due to the cities' dissatisfaction with the Regional Policy Committee, this has not occurred. Currently, there are two bodies with potentially the same responsibilities. The Regional Policy Committee should eventually assume responsibility for Growth Management Act implementation but the committee is not yet mature enough to do so. In the future, a ratification process similar to that used by the Growth Management Policy Council should be considered for specifically identified Regional Policy Committee decisions.

**Suggestion:**

- The Regional Policy Committee should move substantive work into subcommittees.

**Comment:** This is for the Regional Policy Committee to address with the County Council. Allowing the Regional Committees to set their own work program would give them the flexibility to take on substantive matters.

- The Regional Policy Committee should expand discussions to include key participants on an issue by issue basis.

**Comment:** This issue has been raised by the Leagues of Women Voters of King County and the 1995-96 King County Consolidation Advisory Committee. There are a number of mechanisms by which the Regional Policy Committee or any of the regional committees could expand discussion participants on an issue by issue basis. The Regional Policy Committee, as well as the other two committees, should be encouraged to involve affected interest groups in the issues at hand.

- **Regional Transit Committee Problems:** *Avoid duplication of effort and improve coordination in regional transit matters.*

**Suggestion:**

- Combine the County Council's Transportation Committee and the Regional Transit Committee.

**Comment:** A charter amendment (Section 270.30) would be required to expand the scope of the Regional Transit Committee for a full consolidation. Something less than a full consolidation would be possible through ordinance. The 1997 Council Transportation Committee membership is the same as the County Council members of the Transit Committee. The intent is to increase coordination between committees on regional matters. The concern is, however, the Council Transportation Committee also address as matters not appropriate to the Regional Transit Committee. There does not appear to be much support for this recommendation at this time. This should be decided by the County Council and the Regional Transit Committee.

**Suggestion:**

- Eliminate the Regional Transit Committee and work regional transportation issues through the three sub-area transportation groups—Eastside Transportation Partnership (ETP), SeaShore Transportation Forum (SeaShore), and South County Area Transportation Board (SCATBd).

**Comment:** This proposal was made by Councilmember Fimia as a means of reducing the number of meetings and duplication of discussion. It appears to need further discussion and development. Elimination of the Regional Transit Committee would require a Charter amendment. (Section 270.30). This needs further discussion between the Regional Transit Committee and the member jurisdictions.

**Suggestion:**

- Expand the Regional Transit Committee's responsibilities to include broader transportation issues.

**Comment:** There appears to be interest in pursuing this issue, but not at this time.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Commission found that many of the Regional Committees' problems could be solved by leadership in changing attitudes and procedures. The Commission also found that there were some problems that should be addressed in the Charter. The Commission approved by unanimous vote five recommended amendments to the King County Charter Section 270. These

amendments, if placed on the November 1997 ballot by the King County Council and approved by voters, would:

1. Allow the appointing body to designate alternates to the Regional Committees.
2. Allow the Regional Committees to select their own chair and establish their own operating procedures.
3. Delete the term "countywide" to avoid confusion with the term "regional" which is also used in Section 270.
4. Allow the Regional Committees to initiate their own legislation.
5. Require the Metropolitan King County Council to respond to Regional Committee recommended ordinances within 90 days (amend, reject or approve) or the matter would be referred to the voters.

By unanimous vote, the Commission recommended these charter amendments to the King County Council for placement on the ballot in November 1997.

## **APPENDICES**

- A. Text of Recommended Charter Amendments
- B. Summary Of Merger Implementation Reviews
- C. Table: Regional Committee Findings, Comments, and Recommendations Summary
- D. Table: Compilation of Elected Officials' Comments about Regional Committees



## TEXT OF RECOMMENDED CHARTER AMENDMENTS

### **230.10. Introduction and Adoption.**

Proposed ordinances shall be limited to one subject and may be introduced by any Councilmember, by a regional committee, by initiative petition or by institutional initiative. At least seven days after the introduction of a proposed ordinance, except an emergency ordinance, and prior to its adoption or enactment, the county council shall hold a public hearing after due notice to consider the proposed ordinance. Except as otherwise provided in this charter, a minimum of seven affirmative votes shall be required to adopt an ordinance.

### **270.20 Composition of regional committees.**

Each regional committee shall consist of twelve voting members. Six members shall be metropolitan county councilmembers appointed by the chair of the council, and shall include councilmembers from districts with unincorporated residents. The remaining six members of each committee except the water quality committee shall be local elected city officials appointed from and in proportion to the relative populations of: (i) the city with the largest population in the county and (ii) the other cities and towns in the county. Committee members from the city with the largest population in the county shall be appointed by the legislative authority of that city. Committee members from the other cities and towns in the county shall be appointed in a manner agreed to by and among those cities and towns representing a majority of the populations of such cities and towns, provided, however, that such cities and towns may appoint two representatives for each allocated committee membership, each with fractional (1/2) voting rights. Alternates may be designated by the appointing body and shall have the same voting rights as the member for whom the alternate is substituting.

The special purpose districts providing sewer service in the county shall appoint two members to serve on the water quality committee in a manner agreed to by districts representing a majority of the population within the county served by such districts. The remaining four local government members of the water quality committee shall be appointed in the manner set forth above for other regional committees. Allocation of membership of each committee's members who are city and town representatives shall be adjusted January 1 of each even-numbered year beginning in 1996 based upon current census information or, if more recent, official state office of financial management population statistics.

In the event any areas are annexed pursuant to powers granted to metropolitan municipal corporations under state law, the populations of any cities and towns in such annexed areas shall be considered as if they were within the county for purposes in this section with regard to regional committee participation on policies and plans which would be effective in such annexed areas.

### **270.30 Powers and Duties.**

Each regional committee shall select one of its members as chairperson, be responsible for its own organization, adopt rules of procedures, and supervise employees, as assigned by the metropolitan county council, necessary to assist it in performing its duties.

Each regional committee shall develop, review and recommend ordinances and motions adopting, repealing, or amending ~~county-wide~~ policies and plans relating to the subject matter area for which a regional committee has been established. The regional policies committee may, by majority vote, request that the county council assign to the committee proposed policies and plans concerning other regional issues including but not limited to public health, human services, regional services financial policies, criminal justice and jails, and regional facilities siting. Each regional committee may, by a minimum of six and one-half votes, introduce proposed ordinances and motions relating to regional issues, which shall be filed with the clerk of the council and shall be considered by the county council as provided in this charter.

The metropolitan county council shall assign each ~~such~~ proposed ordinance or motion relating to regional issues to a regional committee for review, except for proposed ordinances and motions introduced by a regional committee. When a proposed policy or plan or ordinance or motion is referred to a regional committee for review, a time limit for such review shall be 120 days or such other time as is jointly established by the metropolitan county council and the committee, which shall be confirmed in the form of a motion by both the metropolitan county council and the committee. If the committee fails to act upon the proposed policy or plan or ordinance or motion within the established time limit, the metropolitan county council may adopt the proposed policy or plan or ordinance or motion upon eight affirmative votes. The committee may request, by motion to the county council, additional time for review.

The metropolitan county council shall adopt, reject, or return with amendments a proposed ordinance or motion from a regional committee within ninety days after such proposed ordinance or motion is filed with the clerk of the council or such other time as is jointly established by the metropolitan county council and the committee, which shall be confirmed in the form of a motion by both the metropolitan county council and the committee. A proposed policy or plan or ordinance or motion recommended or introduced by a regional committee may be adopted, without amendment, by the metropolitan county council by seven affirmative votes. If the metropolitan county council votes prior to final passage thereof to amend a proposed policy or plan or ordinance or motion that has been reviewed or recommended or introduced by a regional committee, the proposed policy or plan or ordinance or motion, as amended, shall be referred back to the appropriate regional committee for further review and recommendation. The regional committee may concur in, dissent from, or recommend additional amendments to the proposed policy or plan or ordinance or motion. After the regional committee has had the opportunity to review all metropolitan county council amendments, final action to adopt any proposed policy or plan or ordinance or motion which differs from that recommended or introduced by the regional committee recommendation shall require eight affirmative votes of the metropolitan county council.

Should the metropolitan county council fail to adopt, reject or return with amendments a proposed ordinance introduced by a regional committee within said ninety-day period, the action by the regional committee to introduce the proposed ordinance shall be deemed to have satisfied the requirement for submitting petitions bearing signatures of registered voters under section 230.50 of this charter. After said ninety-day period, the metropolitan county council shall take no action on the subject matter of the proposed ordinance, except to adopt a substitute ordinance as provided in this section, and shall place the proposed ordinance on the ballot according to the procedures set forth in section 230.50 of this charter. The metropolitan county council may submit a substitute ordinance concerning the same subject matter on the same ballot with the proposed ordinance from the regional committee. Whether the proposed ordinance or the substitute

ordinance is approved shall be determined by which ballot proposition obtains the greatest number of affirmative votes.

The council shall not call a special election to authorize the performance of an additional metropolitan municipal function under state law unless such additional function is recommended by a regional policy committee, notwithstanding the provisions of Section 230.50.10 of this charter. Such recommendation shall require an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the membership of each of: (1) metropolitan councilmembers of the committee; (2) members from the city with the largest population in the county; and (3) other city or town members of the committee. Nothing in this section prohibits the metropolitan county council from calling a special election on the authorization of the performance of one or more additional metropolitan functions after receiving a valid resolution adopted by city councils as permitted by RCW 35.58.100(1)(a) and RCW 35.58.100(1)(b), or a duly certified petition as permitted by RCW 35.58.100(2).

**SUMMARY OF MERGER IMPLEMENTATION REVIEWS**

Prepared for the Charter Review Commission, Regional Issues Committee, January 1997

Implementation of the County Council's Regional Committees was detailed in a November 1993 report entitled *Implementation of the Regional Policy Committees (November 1993)*. It was a product of the "summit" discussions among King County, Seattle, and Suburban City representatives leading to the King County/Metro merger and describes the agreed on expectations of what the Regional Committees' roles and responsibilities were to be and how they would operate. Attached is a summary of the expectations coming out of Summit I and Summit II.

For the most part, the Regional Transit and Water Quality Committees were organized and began functioning quickly and smoothly. In part, this is due to the fact that the two committees had immediate work before them—work that was a continuation of the Metro Transit and Water Quality Committees. The Regional Policy Committee had a very difficult beginning in large part because of its very broad mission. All three committees have been the subject of close review and critical comment.

Municipal League of King County, 1994: The implementation of the Regional Committees was closely watched. The Municipal League of King County and the King County Leagues of Women Voters were particularly interested in the three regional policy committees—Transit, Water Quality, and Regional Policy. In August 1994, the Municipal League issued a report that was highly critical of the first year's performance of new regional committees, particularly the Regional Policy Committee. (Municipal League News, August/September 1994). The report identified three problem areas:

- The political problem
  - Failure to meet the intent of the summit (sharing power)
  - Power struggle
  - Differences causing stalemate
- The procedural problem
  - Procedural ambiguity
  - Wasted time
  - Delay
- The substantive problem
  - Unclear scope
  - Lack of progress

The Municipal League recommended that:

1. The elected officials be statesman-like in cooperating and making progress.
2. There be a joint meeting of representatives of the three committee to work out procedural matters.
3. The Regional Policy Committee have a facilitated workshop to develop a work plan.

King County Consolidation Advisory Committee, 1994-95: The King County Consolidation Advisory Committee (CAC) was a citizens committee created in 1994 to advise the Executive and the Council on the implementation of the King County/Metro consolidation. In early 1995, the CAC took up the issue of the Regional Policy Committee's performance. By that time, the Regional Transit and Water Quality Committees seemed to be functioning without much problem, but the functioning of the Regional Policy Committee was still a matter of concern. After meeting with the Regional Policy Committee Chair Cynthia Sullivan and member Tom Weeks of the Seattle City Council (the Suburban City representative was not able to attend) and observing several Regional Policy Committee meetings, the CAC wrote a letter to the Regional Policy Committee dated April 14, 1995. In the letter the CAC stated its expectations for the Regional Policy Committee—the Regional Policy Committee was created to provide strong regional leadership in the development of a truly regional government.

The CAC was critical of the Regional Policy Committee's performance:

- The struggle over process resulted in a failure to accomplish anything worthwhile
- The CAC affirmed the Municipal League's 1994 review of the Regional Policy Committee as a succinct and accurate summary.

King County Consolidation Advisory Committee, 1995: During 1995, the CAC monitored the performance of the Regional Policy Committee and summarized its findings and recommendations in a report entitled *King County Regional Policy Committee—Second Year Performance Review (March 1996)*. The CAC established five performance measures that were used to evaluate Regional Policy Committee meetings and concluded the following:

Problems remained in two areas:

- **Attendance:** Attendance and attentiveness needed improvement, first by County Councilmembers and then by the City of Seattle representatives.
- **Level of Involvement of committee members:** Committee members from the different jurisdictions need to develop a better understanding of each other's point of view, problems, and circumstances.

Considerable progress had been made in three areas:

- **Regional content of matters under discussion**
- **Substantive content of matters under discussions**
- **Progress in moving issues forward**

The CAC recommended that the Regional Policy Committee should:

- Focus on decision-making items only.
- Include non-Regional Policy Committee stakeholders at the table for the issue at hand
- Establish subcommittees
- Find another way to do informational briefings
- Publish a regional issues agenda

The CAC concluded its report by noting that the Regional Policy Committee needed to be viewed as an experiment and that time and commitment would be needed to allow it to develop into an effective regional forum.

Leagues of Women Voters, 1996: Most recently, the Leagues of Women Voters of King County issued a report entitled *King County Governance Study* in which the Regional Committees were reviewed. They identified three major problems with the Regional Committees:

1. Dual referral of issues for study to a regular Council committee and to a Regional Committee at the same time
2. Irregular attendance by county council and City of Seattle representatives
3. Lack of follow-up by the Council on recommendations made by the regional committees

The report observed that opinions about the status of the regional committees ranged from elimination to wait-and-see.

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**ATTACHMENT: BACKGROUND—EXPECTATION AND UNDERSTANDINGS  
(Excerpt from First Draft Report to Consolidation Transition Committee, September 1993)**

*(Attachment taken from IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REGIONAL POLICY COMMITTEES A Report to the Metropolitan King County Council, November 1993)*

Summit I

The initial summit conceptualized a countywide, intergovernmental planning and policy development process described in its report. Intergovernmental committees of county and city councilmembers were to develop and/or review and recommend countywide policies and plans including the "comprehensive policy plan, transportation plan, transit plan, water quality plan, and surface water management plan."

An attachment to the report grouped this planning work into three broad areas: comprehensive policies, transportation, and water quality. Comprehensive policies spoke to most of the work subsequently covered by the Growth Management Act and the specific process developed to carryout its requirements. Transportation and water quality were defined broadly to include not only the mandated transit and water pollution control functions of Metro but other related areas such as road and surface water management.

It was envisioned that work would begin on these three subject areas immediately and that subsequently other subject areas would be identified for regional planning through this kind of intergovernmental process. The area of health and human services was identified as the most likely one to be taken up next.

Summit II and the Charter Amendments

Summit II focused more specifically on the consolidation of Metro and King County. The report recommends creation of three regional committees composed of six County Council members and six local elected officials appointed by local jurisdictions:

- The Regional Transit Committee:
- The Regional Water Quality Committee; and
- The Regional Policy Committee.

These committees are charged with developing, reviewing, and recommending action to the County Council on regional plans and policies in their assigned areas.

The first two committees are named and described in ways which focus them on the specific Metro functional areas of transit and water pollution control as opposed to the broader description of transportation and water quality (including surface water management) in the initial Summit Report. Examples of the kinds of policies and plans to be assigned to the first two committees include: long range transit and water quality plans and policies; financial siting policies; and more particular service design and service allocation and extension policies.



The Regional Policy Committee is assigned Metro transition issues and other regional service areas including such areas as health and human services, criminal justice, siting of regional facilities, and regional services financial policies. The Regional Policy Committee is clearly intended to deal with issues which arise in emerging regional planning areas while the other two committees focus on issues associated with the continuation and further development of plans and policies in two long established regional services areas. The joint membership of the regional committees is intended to provide a strong voice for local representatives in the development of regional policies affecting all citizens and communities throughout the County.

APPENDIX C

SUMMARY OF REGIONAL COMMITTEE PROBLEMS, SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS, AND CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS				
PROBLEM	SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS	TYPE OF ACTION	COMMENT	RECOMMENDATION
<p>● <b>Existence of Regional Committees</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eliminate the Regional Committees entirely or eliminate the Regional Policy Committee.</li> </ul>	<p>Charter</p>	<p>The City of Bellevue recommended keeping the Regional Policy Committee. The City of Seattle recommended eliminating it on the grounds that it is not effective and there are other forums to do the work, specifically the Growth Management Planning Council. Bellevue recommended keeping the Regional Policy Committee and Growth Management Planning Council as separate forums. The LWV recommended keeping the Regional Committees and allowing them more time to work. One present member of the Regional Committees recommended eliminating them because they are ineffective. One past member of the Regional Committees and a city council member not on the committees recommended eliminating the Regional Committees because as appointed bodies, they are not directly accountable to the public.</p>	<p>The Commission recommended that the Regional Committees should be allowed more time to develop. The Commission's five recommended charter amendments are intended to address some issues. Leadership should address other needed improvements. No action to eliminate one or more of the Regional Committees is recommended at this time.</p>
<p>● <b>Attitude:</b> All parties should show leadership in seeking to make the Regional Committees reach their expectations and make King County a truly regional government.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Councilmembers should maintain good attendance at meetings and be attentive with distractions by telephone and other conversations during meetings.</li> </ul>	<p>Leadership</p>	<p>Attitudes cannot be easily or effectively modified by rule. There is little the Commission can do except to note that these changes are needed.</p>	<p>Make observations of comments in the final report for the record.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Executive should exercise his ex-officio membership of the Regional Policy Committee.</li> </ul>	<p>Leadership</p>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seattle City Council members should maintain good attendance at meetings.</li> </ul>	<p>Leadership</p>		

SUMMARY OF REGIONAL COMMITTEE PROBLEMS, SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS, AND CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS				
PROBLEM	SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS	TYPE OF ACTION	COMMENT	RECOMMENDATION
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Suburban Cities should interact with the County Council outside of the Regional Committees on issues of importance to them.</li> </ul>	Leadership		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Structural and Procedural Changes:</b> Changes to the committee structure and how they operate are needed to make the Regional Committees more effective as an integral part of King County government and therefore make King County a more effective regional government.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The chair of the Regional Committees could be selected by the members and not necessarily be a member of the Metropolitan King County Council as provided by the charter.</li> </ul>	Administrative or Charter	The Charter is silent regarding the chair of the Regional Committees. This change could be mandated in the Charter(270.20), but could be handled through ordinance or committee adopted procedures which would allow for adjustments to changing interests, committee memberships preferences, and the nature of issues being addressed by the committees. In meetings with Commission members, the Regional Policy Committees seemed most open to considering how this might be done.	A charter amendment is recommended to allow the Regional Committees to select their own chairs and establish their own operating procedures.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revise membership of Regional Committees to be 1/3 each King County, Seattle and Suburban Cities to more closely reflect population distribution.</li> <li>Refer to recommendations from the Regional Committees as ordinance and motions, not "messages."</li> </ul>	Charter	This was specifically proposed by one jurisdiction although there is general interest among Seattle and Suburban City representatives for this. The membership of the Regional Committees was a heavily negotiated point during the Summit discussions leading to the Metro/King County merger.	This is a matter for negotiations among King County, Seattle, and the Suburban Cities. No charter change is recommended at this time.
		Leadership	For the cities, referring to the Regional Committees' work as "messages" has negative implication about the value of the Committee's recommendations.	It was observed that this only requires a change in Council practices.

SUMMARY OF REGIONAL COMMITTEE PROBLEMS, SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS, AND CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS				
PROBLEM	SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS	TYPE OF ACTION	COMMENT	RECOMMENDATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Structural and Procedural Changes</b> (continued)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give the Regional Committees budgetary responsibilities.</li> </ul>	Charter	Budgetary responsibilities would give the Regional Committees a more meaningful role from the cities' perspective. The County Council has the ultimate financial responsibility which cannot be delegated. The Charter specifically limits the Regional Committees to policy matters. This was the subject of discussion during the Summit process.	No change recommended.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarify use of "countywide" and "regional" in Section 270.</li> </ul>	Charter	"Countywide" appears to mean all of King County. "Regional " can mean less than all of King County.	It was recommended that in the course of making other changes to the Charter in Section 270.20, the term countywide should be stricken.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminate or restrict practice of dual referral of issues to both a Regional Committees and a County Council committee (e.g. solid waste issues go to both the Regional Policy Committee and the Council's Utilities Committee).</li> </ul>	Administrative Charter	The charter is silent regarding dual referral. This change could be mandated in the Charter (270.30), but could also be handled through ordinance or committee adopted procedures which would specify when dual referral could be used. Dual referral of issues can be used as an effective way of dealing with issues more efficiently and more effectively than sequentially, especially if time is a constraint. Even if prohibited by the Charter, this would not prevent the Council from finding other methods of circumventing the Regional Committees if that was the intent of the Council.	If recommended charter changes requiring Council response to Regional Committees is made (Section 270.30), this should no longer be an issue. If the charter changes are not made, the Council and committees should address dual referral issues as part of the Regional Committee's operating procedures ordinance.

SUMMARY OF REGIONAL COMMITTEE PROBLEMS, SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS, AND CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS				
PROBLEM	SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS	TYPE OF ACTION	COMMENT	RECOMMENDATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Structural and Procedural Changes</b> (continued)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a time limit for the County Council to respond to Regional Committee recommendations (just as the Regional Committees are required to respond to the County Council within a specified time) or the matter will be enacted without Council action.</li> </ul>	Administrative or Charter	It has been suggested that if this was required, the question of how to handle dual referral matters would be moot. It would not make any difference how the Council handled Regional Committee recommendations as long as it was within the time frame. The Charter (Section 270.30) requires the Regional Committees to act within a specified time to matters referred to them by the County Council. Balance of powers would require a similar limit placed on the Council in response to matters referred to it by the Regional Committees. This can be done by Charter amendment (Section 270.30) or ordinance.	It was recommended that Charter Section 270.30 be amended to require the Council to act on Regional Committee recommendations within a specified time period .
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Require that the Council act on Regional Committee recommendations (accept, modify and refer back to committee, reject).</li> </ul>	Administrative or Charter	The Charter requires that the Regional Committees respond to Council initiatives (Section 270.30), but is silent regarding Council response to Regional Committee recommendations. The proposed change would balance the relationship between the County Council and the Regional Committees in that the Charter requires the Regional Committees to act, but does not require the Council to act This could be accomplished by charter amendment (Section 270.30) or ordinance.	The Charter should be amended to require some action by the County Council in response to Regional Committee recommendations.

SUMMARY OF REGIONAL COMMITTEE PROBLEMS, SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS, AND CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS				
PROBLEM	SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS	TYPE OF ACTION	COMMENT	RECOMMENDATION
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allow the Regional Committees to adopt their own work programs without being subject to Council approval.</li> </ul>	Administrative or Charter	The charter language is not clear on this matter (Section 270.30). The Council approves the Regional Policy Committee workplan effectively limiting the scope of the issues the committee can take on. The Regional Policy Committee can ask the Council to assign it a matter, but there is no language prohibiting the other Regional Committees from taking on issues within their scope. This could be addressed through charter change (Section 270.30) or ordinance.	It was recommended that the Charter (Section 230.70) be amended to allow Regional Committees to initiate their own legislation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Structural and Procedural Changes</b> (continued)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compensate the part-time elected officials for their participation on the Regional Committees.</li> </ul>	Administrative or Charter	The Charter is silent on the matter of compensation. This could be addressed by charter amendment (Section 270.20) or ordinance.	It was observed that if this is an issue to cities that they should propose AN ordinance to compensate those who are not compensated by their city.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarify the method by which cities other than Seattle appoint their representatives to the Regional Committees.</li> </ul>	Administrative or Charter	The Charter provides that the cities and towns determine the method by which the suburban city representatives are appointed. When the Regional Committees were organized, the Council imposed process requirements on the cities. It is not clear whether this matter has, in effect, been resolved or needs further clarification by ordinance or Charter (270.20).	No change was recommended.

SUMMARY OF REGIONAL COMMITTEE PROBLEMS, SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS, AND CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS				
PROBLEM	SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS	TYPE OF ACTION	COMMENT	RECOMMENDATION
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allow the designation of alternates for the Regional Committees.</li> </ul>	Administrative Charter	The Charter (Section 270.20) is silent on this matter. There has been disagreement as to whether alternates are permitted. Alternates would ensure that regional committees would have full attendance and would also allow elected officials who have a particular interest in the issue on the agenda to participate in those discussions instead of having a less interested or absent official. By tacit agreement, Seattle and the suburban cites have alternates. The County Council does not. It has been suggested that if the County Council had alternates, their attendance at Regional Committee meetings might improve. For 1997, changes in the County Council's meeting schedule and committee assignments were made to address attendance issues.	It was recommended that the Charter (Section 270.20) be amended to allow the appointing body to designate alternates.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Regional Policy Committee:</b> The Regional Policy Committee should assume a leadership role in regional issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Oversee monitoring of Growth Management Act implementation, i.e. coordination services.</li> </ul>	Leadership Administrative	As part of the negotiations in designing the regional committees, it had been expected that the Growth Management Planning Council work would be transferred to the Regional Policy Committee, but due to dissatisfaction with the Regional Policy Committee, this has not occurred. Currently, there are two bodies with essentially the same responsibilities. The Regional Policy Committee should eventually assume responsibility for Growth Management Act implementation but the committee is not yet mature enough to do so.	It is recommended that at some time in the future, a ratification process for Growth Management Act or other select decisions be considered. This could be accomplished by ordinance.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Move substantive work into subcommittees.</li> </ul>	Leadership Administrative	This issue has been raised by the Leagues of Women Voters and by the 1995-96 King County Consolidation Advisory Committee.	It was observed that this is for the Regional Policy Committee to decide.

SUMMARY OF REGIONAL COMMITTEE PROBLEMS, SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS, AND CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS				
PROBLEM	SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS	TYPE OF ACTION	COMMENT	RECOMMENDATION
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus on issues of major public concern , e.g. cable TV?</li> </ul>	Leadership Administrative	This suggestion was made BY a Regional Policy Committee member.	It was observed that this is for the Regional Policy Committee to decide.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Regional Policy Committee should expand discussions to include key participants on an issue by issue basis.</li> </ul>	Leadership	This issue has been raised by the Leagues of Women Voters and by the 1995-96 King County Consolidation Advisory Committee. There are a number of mechanisms by which the Regional Policy Committee or any of the regional committees could expand discussion participants on an issue by issue basis.	The Regional Policy Committee, as well as the other two committees, should be encouraged to involve affected interest groups in the issues at hand.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Regional Transit Committee:</b> Expand the Regional Transit Committee to avoid duplication of effort and improve coordination.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Combine the Council's Transportation Committee and the Regional Transit Committee.</li> </ul>	Administrative Charter	A charter amendment (270.30) to expand the scope of the Regional Transit Committee would be required for a full consolidation. Something less than a full consolidation would be possible through ordinance. The 1997 Council committee membership for the Transportation Committee is the same as the County Council members of the Transit Committee. The intent is to increase coordination between committees on regional matters while the Council Transportation Committee also addresses matters not appropriate to the Regional Transit Committee. There does not appear to be much support for this recommendation at this time.	This needs further discussion and should be decided by the County Council and the Regional Transit Committee.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Combine the Regional Transit Committee and the sub-area transportation groups: Eastside Transportation Partnership (ETP), SeaShore Transportation Forum (SeaShore), and South County Area Transportation Board (SCATBd).</li> </ul>	Charter	This proposal was made by Councilmember Fimia as a means of reducing the number of meetings and duplication of discussion. It appears to need further discussion and development. Elimination of the Regional Transit Committee would require a Charter amendment. (270.30)	This needs further discussion between the Regional Transit Committee and the member jurisdictions.



SUMMARY OF REGIONAL COMMITTEE PROBLEMS, SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS, AND CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS				
PROBLEM	SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS	TYPE OF ACTION	COMMENT	RECOMMENDATION
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand the Regional Transit Committee's responsibilities to include broader transportation issues.</li> </ul>	Charter	There appears to be interest in pursuing this issue, but not at this time.	This needs further discussion and should be decided by the County Council and the Regional Transit Committee.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Other Improvements</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make County Councilmembers non-partisan as city elected officials are.</li> </ul>	Charter	Cities expressed concern that the fact that the cities representatives are nonpartisan and the County Councilmembers are partisan has a negative impact on communications. Cities strongly urged that the County Council offices be changed to nonpartisan.	This issue was addressed by the Commission separately. It was recommended that the issue of partisan or nonpartisan County elected offices for the Executive, Council and Assessor be put before the voters.

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**COMPILATION OF ELECTED OFFICIALS' COMMENTS  
ABOUT REGIONAL COMMITTEES**

FM: (from): L = Letter M = Meeting T = Telephone

SOURCE: MO = Meeting Other CC = County Council CE - City elected official L = Letter  
FEO = Former Elected Official (note that cities are identified only for letters) (Note that if a source resulted in comments on more than one subject area, the source is coded to indicate multiple responses)

FM	SOURCE	COMMENT	TOPIC	IC
L	BEL2	RE: Do not change charter regarding activation of Metro's latent powers. RATIONALE: State law provides for voter approval of activation of Metro's latent powers. A regional summit whereby consensus is developed that there is a need for activation of a latent power should precede any proposal in this respect, and none has occurred.	Latent Powers	R
L	FW	King County should <u>not</u> have a Planning Commission. (From a follow-up phone call for clarification: The unincorporated area is very large and within it has communities with distinctly different needs. They cannot be adequately addressed by a single commission. A subarea approach is needed such as used for the development of community plans prior to the adoption of the Growth Management Act comprehensive plan.)	Plan Com	R
M	RC1	What was wanted was a synergistic plan for bringing all the jurisdictions together to benefit all. The Regional Policy Committee was intended to be the forum for issues deserving broad regional discussion. The LWV and Municipal League observers thought that the Regional Policies Committee would take on regional governance and finance, not the Growth Management Planning Council. They saw the Regional Policies Committee drawing in issues and working them through subcommittees which could draw on experts. Leadership makes the different. King County leaders during the Summit process had a vision of the Regional Policies Committee as providing strong regional leadership on issues, but those people are no longer involved in the committees. The new members of the larger King County Council had a different view of the County's role as a regional government and the regional committees' roles. There has been power grabbing, not power sharing.	Reg Com	R
M	RC2	The results of the Regional Policies Committee is not structure driven, but attitude driven. The attitude is territorial. The attitude cannot be changed [by directive], but structural things can be changed and that can help with attitude change. Part-time elected suburban city officials make the effort to do their homework, come downtown Seattle, park, and then have larger representation than King County and Seattle combined. Attendance is a problem and shows lack of respect, particularly by King County officials who are in the same building. This continues to be frustrating. The suburban city officials do their part and are dismissed. At the beginning, suburban elected officials had lots of enthusiasm for the regional committees, but it didn't take long to get the message that the Regional Policies Committee was not valued by King County. About 1 ½ years ago, Seattle and the suburban city officials would have walked away, but the "win" would have gone to the King County Council. Once having gone through a frustrating negative process, it is difficult to reinvest that process with any trust and enthusiasm.	Reg Com	R

FM	SOURCE	COMMENT	TOPIC	IC
		There is a natural animosity between Seattle, the Suburban Cities, and King County. Individual King County Councilmember do talk about "we", but overall, it doesn't feel like "we" even matter.		
M	RC1	The Charter created the Regional Policies Committee with the intent that it be part of a truly regional government, but it needs to be in environment where the participants feel that they are equal partners. The Regional Policies Committee is perceived as being subservient to the County Council. The Regional Policies Committee's workplan is adopted by Council ordinance. Regional Policies Committee recommendations can be overridden by an eight-vote majority. Chair must be from County Council instead of being elected by the entire group. The Regional Policies Committee is really advisory and not part of King County government. There is a sense of "us" versus "them," not "we."	Reg Com	R
T	FEO	Eliminate the regional committees altogether. Accountable government means that the elected officials need to be accountable and I do not feel that the regional committee are accountable to anyone particularly because they have appointed groups that are not necessarily accountable like the Suburban Cities Association. The CRC should bite the bullet and make the elected officials the elected officials the ones responsible for their decisions.	Reg Com	R
L	BEL1	There needs to be clarification about the level of policy that the Regional Committees address as well as how that policy gets translated in implementation. Some are concerned about what is going on at the next level or two down and who is overseeing Metro transit and how well it is functioning.	Reg Com	R
M	RC2	The Regional Policies Committee should hold evening meetings only when the nature of the issues under discussion are of public interest and require public input. Most Regional Policies Committee issues are technical in nature and address narrow points. Evening meetings are also a burden for part-time suburban city elected officials with full-time jobs whose jurisdictions hold meetings at night.	Reg Com	R
L	SEA2	Allow for designation of alternates. Currently the Charter is silent on the issue of alternates. Adding language which clarifies and formalizes current practice would assure that the past conflicts over this issue will not be resurrected in the future.	Reg Com Alternates	R
L	BEL2	Consider giving regional committees budgetary oversight power on certain regional enterprise funds, specifically, sewer; transit; solid waste. RATIONALE: This would significantly enhance the powers and duties of the committees and would create great motivation of active participation. There is precedent of this in that the existing solid waste interlocal agreements provide that the Regional Policies Committee make budget recommendations as part of its successor role as the "solid waste forum," but the power has not been effectively used by Regional Policies Committee.	Reg Com Budget	R
L	BEL2	<p>We believe it is vital that cities have a meaningful voice in regional policy decisions made by King County. King County's policy decisions regarding the delivery and financing of regional services have direct impact on city budgets and services. The regional committees were meant to provide a voice and vote for cities in these policy decision, but have fallen far short of our expectations from the merger discussion.</p> <p>We do not recommend eliminating the regional committees, in absence of alternative forums. However, if cities are to continue to invest in the regional committees, significant improvements are needed. We believe important improvements can be achieved through charter amendments. We recognize that political leadership and good will are also key to improving the effectiveness of the regional committees and that all jurisdictions have role to</p>	Reg Com	R

FM	SOURCE	COMMENT	TOPIC	IC
		play in this.		
M	RC1	The Growth Management Planning Council is a good example of success and offers some examples of how things can work well, but it is not perfect. At the Growth Management Planning Council, participants try to put on a regional hat and set aside personal and local interests. The Growth Management Planning Council has worked, at least initially. The success is because the Growth Management Planning Council is not a body of King County and the ratification requirement gave all participants real ownership of the process. The first 1/1/2 years, the Growth Management Planning Council addressed the Countywide Planning Policies (CPP's) which was hard, tough work. People believed in the process and the product was good. However, there are some issues with what King County has done to interpret the CPP's. King County approved the CPP's, but has made land use decisions that are contrary to the CPP's. The second time around with an agreement, approval will be more closely scrutinized. For the last year, the Growth Management Planning Council has been twiddling its thumbs waiting for the regional finance and governance (RF&G) study to be completed. There is concern that this will end up being busy work because King County will dismiss the results if they don't like the results. For tough issues like RF&G, people will show their colors.	Reg Com Regional Policies Committee	R
M	CO1	The CRC is encouraged to look at the relationship between the regional committees and the standing committees of the County Council. On at least two occasions, the regional committee was not in favor of doing something that the County Council wanted, but the Council went through its own committee and passed the proposal as if the regional committee did not exist. We saw the fruits of the Council's labor in the newspaper while the regional committee was waiting for the issue to be returned to it for further consideration.	Reg Com - Recs	R
L	BEL2	RE: Super-majority requires by a regional committee should result in referral of an issue being required.	Reg Com - Recs	R
L	BEL2	re: All actions of regional committees should be forwarded to council either as motions or ordinances and subject to requirements of Section 270 (regional committees) of Charter. Eliminate "advisory referrals" and characterization of committee actions as "messages" to County Council. RATIONALE: Currently, regional committee actions are called "messages," something with no formal charter or parliamentary status, creating ambiguity as to application of Section 270 requirements.	Reg Com - Messages	R
L	BEL1	The Suburban City members of the Regional Committee do their homework, attend the meetings and they need to have budgetary rather than just policy level responsibilities. Funding equals power. It is essential that the Regional Committees have some budgetary control. The members spend too much time to be restricted to policy.	Reg Com Attitude	R
M	SEA	It was noted that several members of the CRC were part of the King County/Metro merger discussions. This is a good opportunity to consider where everyone thought the Regional Committees were going to go and how things have worked out, and to identify mid-course corrections. The cities would like to have some changes, but the County Council has effectively said that it doesn't have to listen.	Reg Com Attitude	R
L	BEL2	RE: Chair of regional committees should be selected from membership of committee. RATIONALE: This change would make the committee members more equal partners.	Reg Com Chair	R
M	RC2	Chair as Councilmember: It was agreed that the suggestion that Regional Policies Committee chair be someone other than a member of the County Council has merit, but needs further discussion. As a member of the County Council, the Regional Policies Committee chair is a natural advocate for	Reg Com Chair	R

FM	SOURCE	COMMENT	TOPIC	IC
		Regional Policies Committee issues. However, it would contribute to a collaborative process if the chair were selected from among the Seattle or Suburban City representatives. The Suburban City representatives, because they are part-time officials with full-time jobs, would not be able to assume all the responsibilities of the chair position such as the liaison with the Council. Perhaps a County Councilmember of the Regional Policies Committee could assume this function. Other alternatives are possible and should be considered further. It was agreed to continue this discussion at future meetings.		
L	BEL2	RE: Eliminate references to "county-wide plans and policies" in Section 270 of charter; replace with "regional plans and policies." RATIONALE: The use of both "countywide" and "regional" has confused the scope of Regional Policies Committee's role in past. An issue can be "regional" yet not affect everyone in King County.	Reg Com countywide/ regional	R
L	BEL2	RE: Dual referral of issues should be eliminated. RATIONALE: This change would streamline process.	Reg Com Dual Ref	R
M	SEA	A Seattle City Councilmember reported that that the 3/25/97 Regional Transit Committee meeting, there was discussion of an amendment to require that the Council act on all Regional Committee recommendations. It is very discouraging to have the Regional Committee recommendations ignored by the Council. The Council's practice of dual referral of issues was also discussed. This is used as away of ignoring the Regional Committee recommendations. In the merger discussions, it was expected that the Regional Committee would have a much stronger role, but the County Council's actions have prevented this from happening.	Reg Com Dual Ref	R
M	RC2	Dual Referral: There was general agreement that the issue of dual referral needs to be addressed. Dual referral is the practice of assigning the same issue to both a Council committee and a Regional Committee at the same time or sequentially. Several aspects of dual referral were discussed: The Council should be able to have the flexibility to make dual referral under circumstances where this makes sense for efficiency, but not to by-pass the Regional Committees. It might be appropriate for an issue to be assigned to both a regional committee and a Council committee, but they could meet jointly so as to avoid duplication of effort and to ensure that the issue was worked out collaboratively. If the Council were required to act within a specified time frame, the issue of dual referral may be moot (see below)	Reg Com Dual Ref	R
M	RC2	Full Participation: County Council attendance might be improved by making the changes regarding dual referral of issues, by requiring County Council response to regional committee recommendations within a specific time, and by having the Regional committees set their own agendas. However, it was noted that County Council members often do not attend their own committee meetings, except the Monday full council meeting. Attendance is usually an individual pattern. It was noted that the part-time suburban city officials take time from their jobs to attend the same meetings that the full time County Council member who work in the building do not attend.	Reg Com Dual Ref	R
L	SEA2	Eliminate dual referral or have regional committees the last committee of review before full council <u>action</u> . This change would ensure that the recommendations from the regional committees do not get diverted to standing committees where procedurally they could die from lack of action. If a dual referral is necessary then the standing committee should make recommendations first; and then the regional committee should review and	Reg Com Dual Ref	R

FM	SOURCE	COMMENT	TOPIC	IC
		recommend directly to the full Council. This sequence would ensure that the full Council deal with regional committee recommendations directly and follow procedure as outlined in the Charter.		
M	CO1	There are many good things in the Charter, but the people in the buildings downtown [Seattle] don't behave well. Don't blame problems on the Charter when we have elected officials who don't play fair.	Reg Com Leadership	R
L	FW	Shift the balance of power for voting on regional committees to 1/2 County, 1/3 Seattle, and 1/3 Suburban Cities. Further, the process and structure of the regional committees' decisions should not be rendered ineffective by dual King County Council committees review.	Reg Com Membership	R
M	RC2	Time frame for Council Response: There was support for the idea that the Council should be required to act within a specified time period on Regional Committee recommendations or the Regional Committee recommendation should be enacted without Council action. The Council's action could be to approve, reject or amend and refer back to the Regional Committee. With such a timeline, the Council could make dual referral assignments or otherwise handle the issue anyway it wanted to, but it would have to act within a limited time. One Regional Policies Committee member suggested that the ultimate solution was to have the Regional Committee actions be enacted without having to go through the Council. It was noted that there were some reasons why this could not be done including the Regional Committees' failure to meet the one person/one vote standard and the fact that King County has the ultimate fiduciary responsibility.	Reg Com Rec	R
M	RC3	It is hoped that the County Council will take the CRC recommendations about the Regional Committees seriously. The RTC has an important responsibility. The members have diverse interests, but work collaboratively. The RTC has done a good job, but there are continuing questions about the effectiveness of the RTC given the length of time that it takes to move issues forward. The County Council basically ignores the RTC or bypasses the RTC with dual referral.	Reg Com Rec	R
L	SEA2	Establish a time limit for the County Council to <u>act</u> on regional committee recommendations or the matter will be enacted without Council action. This new provision will strengthen the role of the regional committees by ensuring that regional committee recommendations are enacted if the full council does not approve, amend or reject per the Charter. This will guarantee that the work of the committee is seriously considered by the full Council.	Reg Com Rec	R
L	BEL2	RE: Establish a time limit for County Council to respond to regional committee recommendations (45-60 days). Failure to act should result in ordinance/motion going into effect (or being subject to ratification by cities and then going into effect.) RATIONALE: Many issues forwarded by regional committees are never acted upon by council. There is now no recourse available when County Council fails to act on regional committee recommendations.	Reg Com Recs	R
L	BEL2	RE: PRC has a separate and distinct role from the Growth Management Planning Council. Regional Policies Committee has continuing legitimate and important role in providing inter-jurisdictional policy oversight in issues such as solid waste, human services, and criminal justice/jail/court: these are all regional services provided by King County to cities. RATIONALE: PRC has a role to play in providing a forum for city policy and budgetary involvement in regional services provided by King County to cities — such as solid waste, jails, courts, and human services. This is a very different role from that of Growth Management Planning Council: GMOPC has a state-la based mission,	Reg Com Regional Policies Committee	R

FM	SOURCE	COMMENT	TOPIC	IC
		is formed by interlocal agreement whereby members come together as partners policy development of purposes described in the state growth management act, not as service provider and clients.		
M	RC2	Continuation of the Regional Policies Committee: There were two views expressed about whether the regional committees should continue: The majority view is that the Regional Committees are only three years old and need time to evolved as does the County in its expanded regional role and cities which are also undergoing considerable change. One Suburban City member's view is that since the Regional Committees have no final decision-making authority and the Councilmembers do not participate, it would be as effective to disband the Regional Committees and have the cities lobby the County Council at its own meetings which they attend.	Reg Com Regional Policies Committee	R
M	RC1	<p>So many emergent issues are deserving of broad regional discussion. The Regional Policies Committee could be the ideal venue to discuss them and make King County, Seattle, and Suburban City representatives. The work needs to be meaningful to jurisdictions and citizens.</p> <p>The Regional Policies Committee has been perceived as not being productive largely due to a difficult start-up. However, the Regional Policies Committee has accomplishments. Sample Regional Policies Committee Issues and Outcomes was prepared to illustrate to the CRC the work that the Regional Policies Committee had done.</p> <p>Of the three regional committees two have specific tasks—transit and water quality—and the Regional Policies Committee is pot for everything else. The Regional Policies Committee should fill gaps when there are not other groups to take issue on. The Regional Policies Committee should monitor what is going on, identify emergent issues and figure out who should take on the issues—whether another group should be assigned to the issue or should the Regional Policies Committee take it on. This gatekeeper function was one of major functions for the Regional Policies Committee envisioned in the Summit</p> <p>The Regional Policies Committee agendas need something that captures the attention of citizens. The agenda must include issues that both the County and cities are actively engaged in.</p> <p>Committees get inbred. If other groups are brought to the table, the discussion is livelier and more informative.</p>	Reg Com Regional Policies Committee	R
M	RC1	The public invested in a regional partnership. They want the best value for their money whether it is the Regional Policies Committee or Growth Management Planning Council. When voters stop voting for bond measures, they are saying that they are not happy with the policy-making. From a LWV representative, the question was asked “how come we voted for the regional committees and the County Council cannot take them seriously?”	Reg Com Regional Policies Committee	R
L	BEL2	We would also note that we do not view the Regional Policy Committee, even if improved by charter amendments, as a substitute for the Growth Management Planning Council. We view their roles as appropriately separate and distinct.	Reg Com Regional Policies Committee	R
M	RC2	Ratification: The Growth Management Planning Council needs to reviewed to determined why it has been successful and how that can be applied to the Regional Committees. There was caution against applying the Growth Management Planning Council model directly to the Regional Policies Committee. The Growth Management Planning Council was focused on a specific task. The Regional Policies Committee has very different mission and responsibilities. As the Growth Management Planning Council has moved on to deal with regional finance and governance, it may not be as successful. The	Reg Com Regional Policies Committee/Growth Management Planning Council	R



FM	SOURCE	COMMENT	TOPIC	IC
		ratification process shares power but may be too cumbersome for the Regional Policies Committee.		
L	SEA2	Eliminate the Regional Policy Committee and replace it with the Growth Management Planning Council. The Regional Policy committee has struggled for three years to find an identity and function that is valued by all the member jurisdictions. Given that it has no past to help define its future and given the nebulous nature of its mandate, it appears the role envisioned for this committee is not realistically achievable. Additionally, many of the issues intended for the Regional Policy Committee, are being discussed in other, more appropriate regional forums. These other regional forums, e.g. Growth Management Planning Council, Health Board, encourage a more meaningful regional debate through attracting participants with interest and knowledge in the specific subject matter. These other forums also provide member jurisdictions with conclusive vote.	Reg Com Regional Policies Committee/G rowth Management Planning Council	R
L	BEL2	RE: Do not merge Regional Transit Committee with Eastside Transportation Program or South County Area Transportation Board. RATIONALE: The charters for these groups are too different to justify merger. ETC plays an important role in developing consensus on transportation issues in the East King County sub-region.	Reg Com Trans Com	R
M	RC3	Put greater reliance on the subregional transportation forums	Reg Com Trans	R
L	BEL2	RE: Do not merger RC with County Council Transportation Committee. RATIONALE: Merger would further dilute the power of the RTC by broadening discussions to include county roads and similar issues of little interest to Cities. The focus of RTC should be on Metro Transit.	Reg Com Trans Com	R
L	FW	Combine the two committees that deal with transportation (Regional Transit Committee and the King County Council Transportation Committee)	Reg Com Trans Com	R
M	RC3	Do not combine the Council's Transportation Committee with the RTC. The scope of the RTC and the Transportation Committee are different. The Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) has been an effective forum for coordinating regional transportation issues such as the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) ("ice tea") funding.	Reg Com Trans Com	R
L	BEL2	RE: Clarify that regional committees have ability to initiative work programs; eliminate requirement of county council approval of workplans. RATIONALE: This would significantly strengthen committees which must now get Council approval to take on issues.	Reg Com Work Plan	R
M	RC2	Work Plan: There was general agreement that the Regional Committees should be able to establish their own work program in addition to items referred to it by the Council. The County Council should be able to limit what the Regional Policy Committee does. This must be consistent with the definitions of the scope of responsibilities in the Charter. It was suggested that the Regional Policies Committee needs to identify signal issues that will grab the members' attention as well as the media. This would encourage a greater degree of participation. One concern raised by the League of Women Voters is that the Regional Policies Committee members might not have the expertise to deal with a particular issue. The Regional Policies Committee needs to be able to bring in those with expertise or involvement with the issue as part of the process.	Reg Com Work Plan	R
L	CC1	Should the Charter require regional equity in the provision of services by King County government? (For example, should the amount of public transportation expenditures, health and human services expenditures, and other service expenditures be distributed evenly through the county based on population?)	Reg Fin & Gov	R
M	OE1	There is concern about how unincorporated areas adjacent to cities are going	Reg Fin &	R

FM	SOURCE	COMMENT	TOPIC	IC
		to be served if they do not want to annex or incorporate. As a result of Growth Management Act, the cities are developing plans for these areas. The Growth Management Act says they should be served by cities, but if the citizens of these areas don't want them, how will they be served? There is interest in having cities participate in funding the infrastructure in these areas, but if the areas won't annex, it doesn't make sense for cities to participate in this funding.	Gov	
L	BEL2	RE: County should maintain separate budgets—one for regional services, one for local services RATIONALE: This is a core concept for the SCA regional governance and finance proposal.	Reg Fin & Gov	R
L	BEL1	<u>Regional/Local Finance:</u> The Bellevue City Council is concerned that King County is spending revenues generated within the city's boundaries to support unincorporated area services. The Suburban Cities have developed their view of what the outcome of the Regional Finance and Governance Study should be. The Suburban Cities believe that the County is charging the cities for services that are already paid for by revenues generated from within the cities. The subsidy is about \$10-\$31 million a year.	Reg Fin & Gov	R
L	CC1	Should the Charter provide a mechanism for King County and local cities to jointly fund transportation projects in potential annexation areas?	Reg. Fin & Gov	R