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Report on Regional Government in the Portland Metropolitan Area

City Club of Portland (Portland, Or.)

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REPORT
ON
REGIONAL GOVERNMENT
IN THE PORTLAND METROPOLITAN AREA

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Report On

REGIONAL GOVERNMENT
IN THE PORTLAND METROPOLITAN AREA

"It was concluded that the waste arising out of duplication of offices is not so important a factor in the situation as the splitting up of jurisdiction over functions of government which should be centrally administered and which provides a real handicap to good government. As our small cities have grown into metropolitan areas it has too often been the case that the political jurisdiction and the government organization have been adjusted too late after the growth has taken place to prevent many city planning evils. By looking ahead and adjusting political growth in advance of economic growth.....better government will result."

-Portland City Club Studies of
Government Simplification, 1924-25

To the Board of Governors,
City Club of Portland:

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Charge to the Committee

In May 1984, the Research Board and the Board of Governors of the City Club directed your Committee to study problems associated with regional government in the Portland Metropolitan area, with particular reference to the Metropolitan Service District (Metro). The Committee was asked to consider the history of regional government and the strengths and weaknesses of Metro. Your Committee was directed to develop conclusions and recommendations that address the long-term future of regional government and to consider the following subjects:

- a. The need for regional government.
- b. The optimum form of government for providing regional services.
- c. The desirability of eliminating or consolidating units of government.
- d. Changes to be made in Metro and other regional governments to achieve the goals identified by the Committee, with discussion to include the function, structure, financial resources, and boundaries of regional government agencies.

B. Scope of the Work

Your Committee decided early in its work to confine this study to what it termed the "big picture" in regional government. The Committee believed

that it could make suggestions regarding a better government structure in the region by attempting to resolve the question: What is the best form of government to provide regional services in the Portland metropolitan area?

Your Committee did not study in detail which services should be performed regionally and which should be performed by local government units, whether local government units should be restructured within the region, or the precise details of financing and organizing the governing body of a regional unit or units. Essentially, the Committee reviewed current government structures and functions, compared them to the needs, and suggested a framework for governing the region. Subsequent studies must determine service delivery responsibility, funding sources, and specific structure. (See Chapter V, Recommendations.)

C. Procedure

Your Committee interviewed persons with diverse experience and expertise in government and planning. (See Appendix A, Persons Interviewed.) It reviewed the reports of several study commissions on regional government and searched existing literature for examples of consolidation and regionalization of governmental entities. (See Appendix B, Bibliography.) The Committee asked witnesses to comment on regional government models developed by the Committee as well as on their own areas of interest.

II. BACKGROUND

A. History of Regional Government

1. The County as the Traditional Unit of Government

The county has been the traditional unit of government for providing regional services in Oregon and throughout the United States. Counties were established to provide services within a relatively compact geographical area of a state in what was, for the most part, an agrarian society. Counties still fill this role in the United States and continue to be the units of government with which many of a region's citizens are most likely to identify, whether they live in rural or urban areas of a county.

In large urban areas, increased population and industrial growth have brought about particular problems of governance that the traditional rural county governments are unable to solve. Single urban areas such as Portland have grown beyond city and county borders to form large and increasingly "ungovernable" regions, with growing needs for urban services and greatly decreased capacities to provide them.

Portland, like many major cities, has attempted through the years to make its boundaries and its governmental institutions keep pace with its population growth and its industrial and commercial development. In the years before 1906, when the urban area remained mostly within the confines of Multnomah County, the traditional approaches to urbanization were annexation and merger. The state legislature controlled annexation and the merger of cities. In Portland this allowed the merger of the cities of

Albina, East Portland, Sellwood, St. Johns, and Linnton - once independent cities - into Portland.

2. Home Rule Enacted

In 1906, the voters of the State adopted a constitutional amendment that granted home rule to Oregon's cities. The initiative to annex was then placed in the hands of suburban voters and cities became virtually powerless to annex adjoining territory. In order for any territory to be annexed, approval had to be obtained from at least 50% of the residents of the territory requesting annexation. Rather than voting to be annexed, however, the people adjacent to Portland often voted for separate, autonomous units of government when new urban services were demanded. Evidence of duplication and overlapping jurisdictions among governing bodies in the Portland area was found by Portland City Club studies in 1924 and 1925, which led to the creation by the state legislature of the Government Simplification Commission. To prepare the way for a "detailed study of the region's governmental machinery," the Commission proposed a constitutional amendment to permit consolidation of Portland and Multnomah County, but the measure failed at the polls in June 1927. (1)

By 1956, fifty years after home rule for cities was enacted, the urban area had grown into Clackamas and Washington counties, with 176 separate units of government operating in the three-county area (not including school districts and strictly rural service districts). This proliferation of local governmental units caused the 1955 state legislature to create an interim committee to study the problems of providing services to the urban fringes around Portland and seven other urban areas of growing governmental complexity in Oregon. One significant result of the study was legislation enabling the creation of county service districts, which allowed counties to create, eliminate, or take control of certain special districts, such as those providing street lighting or zoning. Twenty years later, in 1976, the number of separate units in the three counties had been reduced to 137, although nine new cities and five regional entities also were created during this period. (See Appendix C for a current listing of the taxing units in Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington counties.)

3. Early Regionalization Efforts

Efforts to address the problems of urban growth and services on a metropolitan basis began to accelerate in the 1950s. In 1955, in order to receive federal planning grants, the five planning directors from Multnomah, Washington, and Clackamas counties and the cities of Portland and Vancouver agreed to form a metropolitan planning staff to conduct studies and plans relevant to the whole region. The Metropolitan Planning Commission, composed of one elected official each from Portland and the three Oregon counties, was created in January 1957. Vancouver and Clark County participated in the Metropolitan Planning Commission, but they had no vote and did not contribute financially because of restrictions imposed by Washington state law.

(1) Portland City Club Bulletin, Vol. VI, No. 8, Nov. 20, 1925; Vol. VII, No. 14, December 31, 1926; and Vol. VII, No. 42, July 15, 1927.

Another regional planning body was the Portland-Vancouver Metropolitan Transportation Study (PVMTS), formed in 1959 to do transportation planning. All cities and counties within the metropolitan area, the Port of Portland, and both Oregon and Washington state agencies participated. This planning approach was required by the federal government to provide a coordinated plan for the use of federal highway and mass transit funds.

The same coordinated approach later was required by the federal government for all federal aid for housing, roads, urban renewal, sewer, water, and other development; and the formation of Councils of Government (COG's) was encouraged in metropolitan areas throughout the nation. The Metropolitan Planning Commission provided a foundation for a COG in the Portland region. In 1966, all assets, plans and staff were converted into the new Columbia Region Association of Governments (CRAG), which included Clark and Columbia counties. CRAG and PVMTS became the only two non-federal regional governmental entities that have operated with representatives from governments on both sides of the Columbia River.

4. Recent Regionalization Efforts

The Metropolitan Planning Commission, its successor CRAG, and its sister agency PVMTS, were responsible only for regional planning, coordination, and review and distribution of federal funds for the region. Except for an early unsuccessful effort to fund sewer planning on a tri-county basis, it was not until the formation of the Metropolitan Study Commission by the state legislature in 1963 that the operation of services by a regional entity was considered seriously. The Metropolitan Study Commission made a recommendation which resulted in the formation, by an enabling act of the state legislature in 1969 and vote of the people in 1970, of the Metropolitan Service District (referred to as "MSD" until January 1, 1979; now called "Metro"), whose boundaries at that time were coincident with the urban portions of the three Portland metropolitan area counties. MSD was empowered to assume certain regional services designated by the legislature.

The Metropolitan Study Commission also addressed the need for simplification of the metropolitan governmental structure. The Commission's recommendations led to the consolidation of five special service districts in East Multnomah County and the merger of the City of Portland and Multnomah County health departments. The work of the Commission also secured the creation of the Portland Metropolitan Area Local Government Boundary Commission, a state agency that passes on boundary changes in governmental units in the Portland metropolitan area.

When it became evident that mass transit in the region would no longer operate unless financed publicly, the state legislature passed enabling legislation resulting in the creation of the Tri-County Metropolitan Transit District (Tri-Met) in 1969. Tri-Met assumed the operation of Rose City Transit and the suburban bus lines. It continues to operate as an independent transit district in the metropolitan area.

In 1976, under a grant from the National Academy for Public Administration, a blue ribbon commission was formed, known as the

Tri-County Local Government Commission. It consisted of sixty-five persons selected to represent all sections of the tri-county area as well as various civic organizations, including the City Club of Portland. The Commission's purpose was to study the issue of regional government in the Portland metropolitan area and to make appropriate recommendations.

After nearly a year of studies and meetings, the Commission recommended that the Metropolitan Service District be redesigned with an elected council, an elected executive, and expanded authority to provide regional aspects of various government services whenever it became necessary or desirable to do so and the funding could be obtained. The Commission recommended that MSD assume CRAG's functions and that CRAG cease to exist. The 1977 legislature referred the Commission's recommendations, with numerous modifications, to a vote of the people in 1978. The plan was adopted, and the Metropolitan Service District was created in its present form.

Of the functional mergers which have taken place since 1906 within Multnomah County, two are significant. These include the absorption of the City of Portland Health Bureau by the Multnomah County Health Department in 1968 and the transfer of the Portland Dock Commission from the City of Portland to the Port of Portland in 1970. Despite more than a half century of continuing sentiment on the part of many people that little or no need exists for both a City of Portland and a Multnomah County, the voters defeated a proposal for city/county consolidation in 1974. Since this defeat at the polls, there have been no further efforts towards city/county consolidation as a means of achieving simplification of government structure in the region.

In early 1983, Multnomah County, facing large deficits and a growing need for services in unincorporated mid-Multnomah County, passed "Resolution A". Under Resolution A, the County would reduce by 1986 the provision of urban services, such as police protection, planning and parks. The cities of Portland and Gresham, since 1983, have proceeded with annexation programs, working toward providing these urban services to residents of the unincorporated area. To facilitate an orderly transition of services, a number of intergovernmental agreements have been adopted among Multnomah County, the cities of Portland and Gresham, Fire District #10, and the various water districts, including a joint sewer construction agreement among Portland, Gresham, Troutdale, and Multnomah County.

Although these steps towards coordinated regional government are significant, the transition from a divided metropolitan governmental structure to a unified general purpose unit has not taken place. The number of overlapping special service districts is decreasing, but some are being replaced by stronger and even more independent and competitive incorporated cities. Many county and city functions continue to duplicate and conflict. While in years past no metropolitan-wide units existed, the four that have emerged are independent and separately governed. Metro has managed some designated projects since its formation, and Tri-Met and the Boundary Commission continue to perform their assigned functions. The Port of Portland expanded to a fully regional agency in 1973, when the state

legislature broadened the Port's Multnomah County tax base to include Clackamas and Washington counties. Each of these metropolitan area units of government is described below.

B. General Description of Metro at Present

1. Metro's Powers

The legislature provided Metro with much of the authority that it would require to become a general purpose government. This included police power, as well as authority by voter approval to tax property up to one-half percent of true cash value, and power to levy an income tax. Metro has general and revenue bond authority. With approved funding, it can provide municipal services and facilities such as water supply, trunk sewers and treatment plants, jails, parks, libraries, exhibition and sports arenas, public transportation terminal facilities, and the Zoo. Metro has the power of eminent domain and the right to enforce its ordinances by injunction or civil penalty. (See ORS Chapter 268, Metropolitan Service District, for a comprehensive listing of Metro's authority.) Most of Metro's powers, such as the imposition of an income tax or issuance of general obligation bonds, may be exercised only with voter approval.

The Metropolitan Service District consists of the urban portions of Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington counties, as well as some adjacent undeveloped areas. Twelve councilors elected from geographic subdistricts govern Metro without salary. The full-time salaried executive is elected at large. Terms for the councilors and the executive officer are four years. Metro may act through its Council or create independent commissions.

Many of Metro's powers are exercised by other entities, primarily the cities and counties within the district. Metro's use of many statutory powers has been prevented or limited by lack of political and financial support for expansion of its activities. Metro is "boxed in" by older and more established political bodies: the three counties, several cities, and the service districts that are included in its jurisdiction. The creation of Metro occurred in large measure because it replaced the politically unpopular CRAG. Whether Metro's projects or administration have "succeeded" or "failed" by any particular standards, Metro has received most attention for its perceived failures in attempting to resolve controversial service problems.

2. Metro Funding

Metro has authority to charge the cities and counties within its boundaries per capita "dues" of up to \$.51 per year, which presently are fully assessed. For a four year period it may also collect from both the Port of Portland and Tri-Met 12-1/2% of their per capita shares of the dues. The 1985 legislature extended until 1989 the authority to levy these local government dues. All of this money goes to the Intergovernmental Resource Center, Metro's regional planning arm. In addition, Metro derives revenue from user fees for the services it provides (e.g., admission charge to the Zoo and solid waste disposal fees), a three-year serial levy dedicated to the Zoo expiring in 1987, and several state and federal

grants. On January 23, 1986, Metro voted to place a \$4.375 million property tax base measure on the May 1986 ballot.

In 1984, Metro allocated \$1.75 million to the performance of general government services (salaries of administrative and office staff, Council expenses, and support services). The source of this funding was a charge made against each of Metro's service functions roughly in proportion to the revenue generated by each. Transfers from each service function were: solid waste - \$700,000; Zoo - \$450,000; Intergovernmental Resource Center - \$597,000.

3. Metro Services

a. Transportation. Metro is designated by the Governor as the region's metropolitan planning organization and is responsible for approving the disbursement of federal transportation funds. It works with cities, counties, and other agencies to obtain and allocate funds providing mass transit, an expanded highway network, ride share programs, and bicycle facilities. The Joint Policy Advisory Committee on transportation (JPAC) provides a regional forum to assist in all transportation decisions and makes funding recommendations to the Metro council. Members of JPAC include elected officials from local governments and representatives from transportation agencies. The Transportation Alternatives Committee provides technical support to JPAC and includes similar staff representation as well as citizen members.

Metro has developed a coordinated regional transportation plan, which governments in the region have adopted to meet the growing transportation needs of the metropolitan area. The plan is used by local, state, and federal agencies to make cooperative decisions on building and funding highway and other transit projects. Metro and Tri-Met are studying the need for new light rail lines in the region as part of the effort to accommodate increased travel demands in the future.

b. Solid Waste. Metro shares responsibility with the local governments for the disposal or recycling of the region's solid waste. In April 1983, Metro opened in Clackmas County the region's first transfer station to serve the disposal needs of the southern portion of the region. Refuse brought to the facility is either recycled or trucked to the St. Johns Landfill. A second transfer station is planned for Washington County.

The primary disposal facility in the tri-county area is the St. Johns Landfill, operated by Metro under contract with the City of Portland. It is the last general purpose refuse facility in the area and is expected to close in July 1989. Accordingly, Metro is working to site a new landfill. It selected the 850-acre Wildwood site in Northwest Multnomah County from among forty-six proposed sites in the tri-county area. The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners, which held final zoning authority over the site, disapproved the necessary zone change required for the development of Wildwood. The 1985 legislature then adopted chapter 679, which is intended to give final siting authority

to the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality in the event that Metro and the appropriate local governments fail to reach a decision by July 1, 1987.

c. The Washington Park Zoo. Metro acquired the 64-acre Washington Park Zoo from the City of Portland. Under Metro's management, the Zoo recently began to undertake remodeling and construction of several new animal exhibits. The Zoo is significantly involved in the breeding of elephants, Humboldt's penguins, and chimpanzees, and in research programs on the behavior of many animals including monkeys, mandrills, orangutans, elephants, and red pandas. The Zoo enjoys the largest attendance of any paid public attraction in the state.

d. Intergovernmental Coordination. In addition to the transportation planning services discussed above, Metro operates the Intergovernmental Resource Center. The Center conducts regional studies and provides technical assistance to the cities, counties and service districts in the tri-county area, covering a variety of planning and coordination issues common to more than one unit of government.

C. Other Regional Entities

In addition to Metro, three major entities provide service in the Portland metropolitan area.

1. Tri-County Metropolitan Transit District

The most visible unit of regional government in the metropolitan area is the Tri-County Metropolitan Transit District ("Tri-Met"). Tri-Met was formed in 1969 when it became apparent that the several privately owned and operated bus companies in the region no longer were financially viable and able to operate. Tri-Met is a mass transit district formed under enabling provisions of state statute (ORS Chapter 267). The district boundaries are those of the Standard Metropolitan Service Area, and its actual service area currently is the same as the Metropolitan Service District. Tri-Met has authority to operate an integrated urban mass transit system that, at present, consists primarily of a large fleet of diesel buses. An electric light rail line between Gresham and downtown Portland is expected to begin operation in September 1986.

The governing body of Tri-Met consists of seven persons appointed by the governor and approved by the state senate, serving four year terms from single member subdistricts. There was very little turnover on the Tri-Met board until January 1986, when the governor replaced the entire board with new members. This action appears to have stemmed from some widespread public dissatisfaction with operating decisions made by the board and its lack of accountability to the electorate.

Tri-Met, like virtually all mass transit districts in the United States, has never supported itself solely from fare box revenues. In fact, fares provide an increasingly smaller proportion (now about one-third) of its overall needs. The remainder of the revenue is derived from a general payroll tax upon employers within the district and from various federal and state government subsidies.

By statute, Metro at present has the authority to take over Tri-Met by merger and to dissolve the transit district. Your Committee is aware of opinion that such a takeover would ensure that Tri-Met is held accountable to elected officials. Substantial technical obstacles, including questions about the call features of outstanding bonds, continuation of pension rights, and Metro's ability to assume Tri-Met's payroll tax, impede a Metro takeover of Tri-Met. (2) In addition, some people oppose a merger in the belief that it will decrease Tri-Met's efficiency of operations. As this report goes to press, Metro again is discussing the process of taking over Tri-Met.

Tri-Met has a large number of critics who focus on taxation and accountability issues. Tri-Met also recently has announced a projected revenue shortfall, which apparently will require either more revenue or severe cutbacks in service within the near future.

Despite its difficulties, Tri-Met has succeeded in preserving and enlarging the mass transit system in the metropolitan area.

2. Portland Metropolitan Area Local Government Boundary Commission

The Portland Metropolitan Area Local Government Boundary Commission is a state agency with jurisdiction in the Portland metropolitan area. It was created in 1969 by a state statute resulting from the recommendations of the Metropolitan Study Commission. The Portland Boundary Commission consists of eleven members appointed by the Governor from a list of names supplied by the governing bodies of cities, counties, and districts within its jurisdiction. Its jurisdiction includes all of Washington, Multnomah, and Clackamas counties. Its funding is derived from fees for service and assessments against local governments.

The Commission's primary purposes are the prevention of illogical extensions of local government boundaries, assurance of adequate public services if new units are formed, and provision of a forum for resolving boundary disputes, and determination of boundaries that are consistent with sound comprehensive urban planning. All proposed major changes in boundaries between cities, counties, and special districts in the metropolitan area must be submitted to the Commission for study, public hearing, and approval. Actions of the Commission are subject to judicial review by the Court of Appeals.

For the most part, the Commission has functioned quietly and apparently successfully since its inception. In recent months, however, it has come under fire following some controversial decisions that disallowed incorporation elections for cities in mid-Washington County and East Multnomah County. An effort in the 1985 Legislature to eliminate the Boundary Commission was unsuccessful.

(2) Upon merger, Tri-Met's outstanding bonds may be subject to immediate redemption.

3. Port of Portland

The Port of Portland is a municipal corporation, established in 1891 by the state legislature. Its first mission was to dredge and maintain a 25-foot-deep channel from Portland to the sea. In November 1970, by a vote of the citizens, the City of Portland Dock Commission was absorbed by the Port of Portland. In 1973, the state legislature approved, without a popular referendum, expansion of the Port district to include Washington and Clackamas counties.

The Port's policies are formulated and implemented by a nine-person Board of Commissioners appointed by the governor and confirmed by the state senate. The Port's funding sources for operations are 96% from fees and services and 4% from property taxes levied in the Port district.

The Port's primary functions are the management of air and water transportation and industrial land development on Portland. The Port operates or manages:

- Five marine terminals on the Willamette and Columbia Rivers;
- An aviation system, which includes Portland International Airport, general aviation facilities at Troutdale and Hillsboro, and a future facility at Mulino.
- A ship repair yard and drydocks at Swan Island;
- The dredge Oregon, responsible for maintaining a 40-foot navigational channel from Portland to the sea;
- Three industrial parks: Rivergate, Swan Island, and Mocks Landing.

The December, 1984 City Club study of "Economic Growth Through Cooperation Among Lower Columbia River Ports" noted that "the Port of Portland has a statewide impact and broad areas of expertise, but its mandate for activity and its base of financing are limited to a three-county area." The study concluded that there should be a statewide port authority in Oregon.

D. Regional Attempts Elsewhere

In growing urban and suburban areas of the United States, most attempts at reorganization into one-tier government have been through city-county consolidation. In other areas, people have attempted to cope with urbanization by widespread annexation to central cities and by forming regional special service districts. A two-tier government structure would consist of regional and city governments; three tiers would include regional, county, and city governments.

1. City-County Consolidation

Since World War II, 52 U.S. counties have held 76 elections on city-county consolidation. Only 17 such elections have been successful.

Of these, five were in non-metropolitan communities such as Butte-Silver Bow County, Montana, and Juneau, Alaska. Six others were in the far flung Hampton Roads, Virginia, metropolitan area, where the apparent objective was to convert five suburban counties to five independent cities, to prevent unification with each other or the central cities of Norfolk and Portsmouth.

The larger city-county consolidations that provide metropolitan government are listed below: (3)

	<u>Date</u>
Baton Rouge - East Baton Rouge Parish, LA.	1947
Nashville - Davidson County, TN.	1962
Jacksonville - Duval County, FL.	1967
Indianapolis - Marion County, IN.*	1969
Columbus - Muscogee County, GA.	1970
Lexington - Fayette County, KY.	1972
Anchorage - Anchorage Borough, AK.	1975

*Indianapolis was consolidated with Marion County by an act of the Legislature rather than by popular election because Indiana is not a home rule state.

City-county consolidation means that all powers and services are transferred by the city and by the county to the new unit of government, whose boundaries are coterminous with the county boundaries. A territory large enough to encompass all the urban and urbanizing area is created with a considerable margin of rural land for expansion into the future. For example, Indianapolis' area is now 352 sq. mi., containing a population of 701,000; compared to Portland's Urban Growth Boundary of 350 sq. mi., with slightly more than 1,000,000 residents. Duplication and conflicts are eliminated as special districts and other local units are terminated. Rural areas are exempted from taxation for urban services they do not receive. In cases of the larger consolidations such as Nashville, Jacksonville, and Indianapolis, pre-existing smaller municipalities opted to continue as enclaves within the new city-county. Thus, a strictly one-tier metro government has not been achieved in each consolidation to date.

Election measures for city-county consolidations have been difficult to pass. The Baton Rouge and Lexington measures are the only ones approved on the first attempt. It took three elections for the Anchorage measure to pass.

It is not well known that four unsuccessful attempts at consolidation have been made in Portland and Multnomah County - first in 1913, then in 1919, 1927, and most recently in 1974.

(3) Municipal Index, 1980.

2. Annexation

Many of the unsuccessful attempts at city-county consolidation have been followed by extensive annexation programs intended to include most, if not all, of the urban area within the central cities. In some states, suburban property owners do not have veto power over annexation by adjoining cities. Oklahoma City for example, increased its area to 604 sq. mi., with urban development covering only 40%. Like Portland, Oklahoma City lies in three different counties. Its population is just 20,000 more than Portland's, but its area is almost six times larger. It encloses five small municipalities and large portions of three others.

Houston, San Antonio, El Paso, Memphis, and Tulsa, by annexing ahead of urban growth, have prevented suburban incorporations within and on their borders. On the other hand, Dallas, San Diego, Phoenix, and Kansas City Mo., all over 300 sq. mi. in area, have experienced numerous suburban incorporations.

In general, annexation is no longer an option for most central cities, because they are locked in by suburban cities. Annexation does continue to be the primary tool for attaining governmental simplification in a few fast-developing sun belt metropolitan areas.

3. Two-Tiered Metropolitan Governments

Very few attempts have been made in metropolitan areas to create a second-level government to provide multiple regional services and direction to growth. In addition to Metro, only three other regional governments are known to this committee: Seattle, Twin Cities (Minneapolis-St. Paul), and Dade County (Miami, Fla.) Each differs from Metro in powers, services, and organization.

Seattle Metro is a two-function special district governed by representatives of local units within the district boundaries, and lies within the confines of King County. Established in 1958 to clean up pollution in Lake Washington, it now provides sanitary sewer interception and treatment to cities and unincorporated areas whose effluents would spill into Lake Washington. In 1968, Seattle Metro assumed operation of mass transit in the area.

The Twin Cities Metropolitan Council generally is considered a state agency, and its members are not elected but appointed by the Governor. Its population comprises 53% of the whole state. In addition to the two major cities, its territory includes 7 counties, 25 cities, 105 villages, 20 special districts, and 140 other governmental units. Although the Council's charge is planning and coordination, it performs a variety of services and, in fact, supervises other independent metropolitan operating agencies such as those providing transit, airport services, and waste control. Thus the arrangement can be described as three-tiered rather than two-tiered. The Twin Cities Council is not considered a level of general government. Apparently its power to effectuate its plans and policies is limited, but it successfully has initiated and assumed certain functions where it had perceived a need. Functions range from cable television coordination and arts planning, to acting as a metropolitan housing

authority, issuing bonds for metropolitan park acquisition, and vetoing development of new shopping centers. The Council has gained a reputation as one of the nation's most innovative and successful experiments in regional government. Its survival seems secure, but it is also "beset by local governments jealous of their own authority and by a governor and state legislature with little memory of why the Council was created." (4)

Dade County, Florida, resembles Portland's three-county area in population and area, as well as in distribution of urban, agricultural, and government-owned land. After two unsuccessful efforts at consolidating Miami with Dade County in 1948 and 1953, the county electorate approved in 1956 a constitutional amendment establishing Dade County as a home rule urban county. Dade County can assume all functions of its constituent cities. These include municipal-type functions like police and fire protection, urban renewal and zoning, water supply and sewerage, hospitals, museums, and parks. Dade County operates one budget for county-wide functions financed by county-wide taxes, and another for municipal services to unincorporated areas which are financed by taxes only on those unincorporated areas.

The transfer of services from cities to Dade County was resisted strongly at first. Some of the smaller cities are beginning to give up services that clearly can be rendered more economically by the County. Despite several legal actions to reduce Dade County's urban powers, the voters have sustained the original charter by slim majorities. Charges do continue, however, that the County ultimately wishes to abolish all cities and establish a one-tier government.

Revisions of local governmental structure and the operation of services at the metropolitan level seem to be either too difficult to accomplish or of no great concern in the U.S. Of the 290 metropolitan areas with populations of more than 100,000, fewer than 25 are known to be grappling with the metropolitan tangle of governments. Experience in Canada is quite different.

4. Canadian Experience

Two-tier local government is common in Canada. Regional municipalities have been formed in both large urban centers and urban-rural areas. These municipalities are a federation of existing cities, smaller villages, and adjoining rural townships.

There are few unincorporated areas in the developed sections of Canada. Each local unit is responsible for all local governmental functions within its borders. When the local units cannot economically or effectively provide services or when problems develop that affect an area larger than the local unit, federated municipalities are formed. The new municipality is governed by a council of elected officials who already serve in the local units. The provincial legislatures facilitate the federation process, and there is no wrangling over home rule prerogatives as the local

(4) Whiting, Charles C., "Twin Cities Metro Council: Heading For a Fall?" Planning, March 1984, p. 4.

units continue functioning. In fact, formation of federated municipalities does not require local votes for approval.

The Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto was created in 1953. Its original services included wholesale water supply and sewage disposal, metropolitan park system, metropolitan highway system, mass transit, health facilities, welfare services, and bond financing for local units. Later police, solid waste disposal, library coordination, and traffic engineering were transferred from the local units. The number of representatives on the metro council grows as the populations of the local units increase. In the original organization, there was considerable disparity in representation between Toronto and the suburban townships and villages. Through combining 12 of these suburban units into 5, the resulting representation on the Metro Council is now more equal and Toronto representatives are in the minority. Montreal, Ottawa, Hamilton, Niagara Falls, and the other major urban areas also have been re-formed into metropolitan municipalities.

The two-tier metropolitan form of government came to Winnipeg in 1960 but lasted only 11 years. Unlike Toronto and the others, the Winnipeg Metro Councillors did not represent local units but districts which cut across the constituent unit boundaries. Thus Metro was viewed as a competing government. In 1971, a provincial act created "Unicity," one municipality for the whole metropolitan area, and abolished the prior cities and townships. To offset this recentralization, resident advisory groups (RAGs) were established. Although these have little power and interest in them has declined, their abolition has little support.

Edmonton and Calgary (each having a population almost double that of the City of Portland) are not regional two-tier municipalities. Their boundaries encompass all urban development. There are no suburban cities or even subdivisions beyond city limits. The same is true for the cities of Regina and Saskatoon. Apparently these four cities have utilized annexation and development controls to prevent urban sprawl and formation of suburban governments.

III. DISCUSSION

A. A Regional Approach to Government

1. Defining the Region

In order to deal with the issue of regional government, it is necessary to develop a working definition of what constitutes the region.

The urban portion of Clark County, Washington (Vancouver and its suburban surroundings) forms a part of the total metropolitan area. Your Committee excluded the Clark County area from consideration in this report for practical reasons. The political problems inherent in dealing with the complex and conflicting constitutional and legal systems of two states were beyond the ability of the Committee to address at this time.

In addition, portions of Multnomah, Clackamas and Washington counties are not in any way urban or suburban, and small portions of Columbia and

Yamhill counties have more in common with the Portland metropolitan area than with other portions of those counties. Again because of the need to reduce political complexities that would prevent meaningful solution to the issue, the Committee limited itself definitively to Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington counties. It will become apparent later in this report that the strictly rural areas of those counties should not be affected in any significant way by their inclusion in the metropolitan area under discussion.

2. Defining the Problem

Because of the substantial investment already made in certain regional approaches and services, your Committee believes that this community is not likely to retreat from its efforts at regional government to date. Some form or forms of regional government are necessary, and attempts to create regional government are likely to continue. Regional government concerns center in two areas: (1) what is the best form of government to provide regional services, and (2) which facilities and services should best be provided at the regional level and which locally.

In many areas of government service in the region, the City of Portland has been relied upon by the other cities, counties, and districts to provide region-wide services: the Memorial Coliseum, the Portland Civic Stadium, the Performing Arts Center, certain types of law enforcement, golf courses, the auto raceway, water supply, housing for the poor, fire protection, and tax-exempt locations for regional, state, and federal agencies. Today, however, the residents of Portland constitute only one-third of the tri-county population and only a slightly greater proportion of its tax base. As Portland's numbers decline relative to the whole population of the region, its citizens are becoming less willing or able to subsidize services provided to the other two-thirds of the region. In the case of the Zoo, for example, the City of Portland declined to continue funding, with the result that operation of the Zoo was turned over to Metro.

As the population of the region increases, and if Portland residents increasingly object to providing regional services, the choice must be made either to forego some services that affect the metropolitan area as a whole, or to provide those services regionally by means of one or more entities that have the ability to do so effectively and efficiently. An effective regional entity would enable the people of the region to act in a unified way on matters of common concern.

Continued balkanization weakens the entire area because public officials are concerned primarily with their own electorate or constituency, sometimes to the point that no one speaks, acts, or provides leadership for the metropolitan area as a whole. Without some ability to act in unison on matters common to the entire region, shared expectations for livability, cultural advancement, and economic progress will not be met. The decline in quality and quantity of urban services will continue, and chronic urban problems will be neglected. An effective regional government would provide an opportunity for citizens to act as a common community.

The long range development and protection of the tri-county area requires a regional approach to those concerns that have no political boundaries. Sewage and solid waste disposal are metropolitan-wide concerns. The Cascade and Coast ranges trap the air pollutants generated throughout the tri-county region. Industrial and commercial development is uncoordinated among the governments of the region, resulting in destructive competition, uncoordinated planning, and a mismatch of facilities with infrastructure. The tri-county metropolitan area, like almost all of Oregon, has not shared fully in the economic recovery and relative prosperity enjoyed by the nation as a whole in the first half of this decade. A regional approach could contribute to solutions to all of these problems.

Area residents often have succeeded when they have acted boldly with a regionalized solution to a problem. The formation of Tri-Met saved and enhanced the transit system. The Port of Portland has grown from a special service district in Multnomah County to a vital force in the economic development and well-being of the state. The formation of the Metropolitan Service District resulted in a vehicle by which a wide variety of urban services could be provided by one unit of government if and when it is selected to do so. Although this Committee, as noted below, sees a somewhat cloudy future for Metro, it has not disregarded Metro's significant accomplishments as a regional entity, particularly in the areas of regional solid waste management, preserving and enhancing the Zoo, coordinating transportation planning, and providing special services to local government units.

Maintaining and enhancing the quality of life require citizens of this region to begin to speak with one voice and make some joint decisions with new initiatives. This requires thinking and acting as citizens of a common community rather than a central city, rural county, suburban town, or single neighborhood. In addition, your Committee's research clearly demonstrates that the cities, towns, and suburbs outside Portland increasingly are facing urban problems they lack the resources to solve. A regional approach to many urban services would enable these problems to be addressed in a way that would serve not only the local communities but also the region as a whole.

3. Regional Government Services

No one interviewed by your Committee seriously questioned the need for or desirability of providing some government services on a regional basis in the tri-county area. On the contrary, the Committee found a substantial, and perhaps surprising, consensus that regional services are, in many cases, of higher quality and more cost-efficient than local services. A few existing regional services, such as mass transit and the Zoo, could not survive at their present levels were they not provided regionally. The Committee heard strong arguments in support of providing a number of services on a regional basis, including health services, libraries, regional parks, justice services, corrections, sports and entertainment facilities, and a convention center. A strong case has also been made for the economic efficiencies that would result from regional consolidation of administrative and financial government functions.

Those who advocate regional performing arts, sports, or convention facilities, for example, persuasively argue that a regional approach is financially more equitable because the cost would be spread among all the taxpayers in the region. Those who support regionalized justice services and corrections believe that significant economies of scale would be achieved and that resources would be used more effectively. Mass transit on a regional basis provides a better quality system. On the other hand, some people both in and out of government believe that certain services, such as police and fire protection, are best provided on a strictly local basis. They prefer to have certain services provided locally, whether or not the cost is greater, because of the desire for local control and easy access.

The current effort to plan a convention-exposition center and a domed stadium emphasizes the need for regional leadership. Most of those who have studied such proposals have recommended a regional approach to the planning, siting and funding of these facilities. Although Metro has provided staff to study this issue, it has been shunned as the lead agency to carry the project forward and no other regional agency has been selected as of this writing. Moreover, Clackamas County is considering construction of a "Clackodome", and discussions about a separate effort in Washington County have taken place.

A strong regional government with wide public acceptance and confidence would be in a position to move forward on such proposals in a way that would provide maximum benefit for the entire region.

4. Metro as a Regional Service Provider

As noted above, Metro has had some significant achievements since it blazed the trail in 1978 as a multi-purpose regional government for the metropolitan area. It inherited the planning and intergovernmental support function from CRAG and in the opinion of this Committee, it has performed this function well with minimum public visibility. In fact, the intergovernmental support unit has achieved a high degree of acceptance from local government officials who, by and large, publicly do not give it the credit it deserves.

Metro took over the troubled Washington Park Zoo (then called the Portland Zoo) from the City of Portland and has funded and operated that facility successfully. With respect to solid waste, Metro has done a creditable job of setting up and operating transfer stations, recycling centers, and a landfill.

On the other hand, an entity that runs a zoo, a garbage system and a shadow coordinating and planning function for local government, is not fulfilling its promise as a regional government agency. The Committee identified a number of factors underlying this failure.

(1) Lack of Citizen Identification with Metro

Metropolitan residents do not think of themselves as residents or "citizens" of the Metropolitan Service District. Rather, they identify with Clackamas County or Gresham or Hillsboro or St.

Johns or Portland -- anything but Metro. Even those people who identify themselves with the Portland metropolitan area are unlikely to think in terms of Metropolitan Service District citizenship. The Zoo and a solid waste system do not form a basis for personal identification. This lack of citizen identification seriously hinders Metro's ability to move ahead and particularly to secure funding.

(2) Metro is Perceived as Another Layer of Government

People generally want to simplify government, not make it more complex. Although Metro was created to replace proliferating service districts, it has not done so, and the public generally perceives it as just another layer of government. These people are not wrong. Metro, in fact, is an added layer of government.

(3) Metro Has An Insufficient Revenue Base

Metro has never had a permanent and dependable revenue source, other than user fees. The forthcoming proposal by Metro to obtain a property tax base in today's political climate is not likely to receive voter approval, in the opinion of your Committee. A recent effort in Eugene to establish a local income tax was unsuccessful, and the Committee believes that any such effort by Metro would be defeated. Approval of a regional sales tax is most unlikely in the near future, given the failure of the state measure at the polls in September 1985. Unless the legislature provides Metro with some taxing power, Metro has insufficient financial resources to move forward in any area to provide additional services.

(4) Metro is Tainted by Specific Failures In the Past

Metro has had to bear the legacy of previous efforts to form a regional government, as well as its own inability to solve the Johnson Creek flood control problem, site a new landfill, and build a garbage burner in Oregon City. The effort to locate a waste disposal site, only to have its decision overturned by another government, is an example of Metro's problems. Metro had responsibility to site a new facility, but lacked the legal authority to carry out its mandate. This complicated siting controversy reflects Metro's lack of a constituency, its dispersion of authority, and its lack of general support.

(5) The Governing Structure of Metro Contributes to its Problems

The governing structure of Metro is perceived by many to impede its effectiveness. The volunteer elected Council and the paid elected Executive constitute a policy making group which acts, on occasion, as though there were some doubt over who is in charge of making policy and who is in charge of carrying it out.

(6) No Real Leadership has Emerged Within Metro

Your Committee does not find fault with anyone in particular in Metro, but finds no real vision, program, or consensus emerging from the agency.

Although the problems described here have impaired Metro, your Committee strongly believes that Metro must be maintained and supported until an alternative is established. Until that time, Metro remains the only available vehicle for providing multiple services on a regional basis.

B. Identifying the Alternatives

1. Existing Structures

The current structure of government within the region consists of four levels: (a) Metro, the Port of Portland, Tri-Met, and the Boundary Commission; (b) the three counties; (c) 32 incorporated municipalities; and (d) single-purpose school, water, fire, street lighting, drainage, park, and road districts. (5)

Regional services can be provided in a number of ways. One approach is to resort to specific, need-based solutions to problems crossing jurisdictional lines, e.g., intergovernmental agreements. Special districts formed in response to specific identified needs are another attempt to meet extra-local needs. Also, municipalities can annex and merge.

But specific need-based solutions have contributed to the problem, rather than to the solution, by encouraging the proliferation of independent, uncoordinated special purpose districts not designed to deal with regional problems. Manipulation of existing structures, such as by city-county mergers or geographical expansion of city responsibility, generally has not been welcome and does not address the needs of the region as a whole. Furthermore, intergovernmental agreements are subject to political whims and confusion among government agencies over their respective responsibilities.

2. City-County Consolidation

The Committee heard little support for any further attempt to consolidate city and county governments in the Portland metropolitan area, presumably because of voter rejection of such a proposal as recently as 1974. A common interpretation of the voters' rejection of consolidation is that citizens wish to receive some services on a local basis and fear the loss of the traditional city structure. In any event, consolidating the City of Portland and Multnomah County would not address the regional problems of the entire three-county area.

(5) The Committee deliberately excluded school districts from its consideration because of the belief that their inclusion in a general purpose government in Oregon is inappropriate.

3. Expansion of City of Portland Government

The Committee also considered as an alternative the expansion of urban city government. For example, the City of Portland could expand to include all of the unincorporated area within the Urban Growth Boundary. The Committee considers this a political impossibility for a variety of reasons, and it supports the continued existence of the region's cities to continue to provide strictly local services. (See discussion of regional/local services in Section C. Proposals for Regional Government.)

4. Retreat from Regional Government

Another option is to eliminate any attempts at formal regional government, deferring instead to the three individual counties as principal providers of services affecting their citizens, with the state being responsible for intercounty and multicounty problems. As discussed throughout this report, your Committee has concluded that regional government is the optimum government structure for region-wide governance.

5. Regional Government

Your Committee believes that regional government as an effective, efficient, and acceptable form of government must be provided by a single entity with effective region-wide authority. This approach to regional government requires a willingness to move toward a truly regional, multipurpose governmental unit. Two possibilities are an expanded and enhanced Metro and a consolidation of Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington counties into a single county.

C. Proposals for Regional Government

1. Criteria for an Effective Regional Government

Certain criteria for regional government are readily apparent. Subject to the will of its electorate, a regional government should have exclusive authority over regional issues -- the ability both to make and to implement decisions regarding those issues. It must have a stable source of income. It must be accountable to an electorate, either through at-large or district representation. It must be responsive to its constituency, have the ability to address regional problems, and take the initiative for positive action. A regional government must generate effective leadership toward solving regional issues throughout its jurisdiction. Finally, a regional government should be designed to develop and encourage citizen involvement, identification, and acceptance.

2. Enhanced Metro

One approach would be to enhance Metro as the dominant form of regional government. For Metro to assume an enhanced role, the legislature would have to provide it with preemptive power over the government units within its area, to the extent required. The power to govern in connection with regional issues is not simply the power to address them, but the ability to reach decisions (which will not be popular with all voters) and to implement those decisions. A broadly-worded statutory definition of

"regional" could provide Metro the opportunity to assert jurisdiction over any issue it finds to be regional in nature. Once Metro asserted jurisdiction, the issue would be reserved for Metro resolution, which would be binding on local governments. Such a definitional and jurisdictional approach also would give Metro the power to take over functions of special purpose districts, so long as the functions or special services qualify as "regional."

Because enhancement of Metro into a general purpose regional government probably would require giving it power to make decisions immune to individual county veto, it would be necessary to refer some aspects of a Metro enhancement plan to the people. In addition, Metro tax revenue measures must be referred. However, it is unrealistic for the legislature or the governor to require Metro to go to the people for general operating funds. This Committee believes that few well-accepted and established governmental entities -- let alone Metro -- would be successful in any current efforts to adopt a tax base. Even public schools, which probably are the most readily acknowledged essential governmental service, continue to face closure in some areas before their levies are successful. The legislature could provide Metro a revenue source. Tri-Met, for example, has taxing authority, and the legislature would need to find similar sources of funding for Metro.

The remaining criteria are responsiveness, accountability, and citizen identification. If Metro were to acquire power and effectiveness, people in the region would notice Metro, identify with it, and expect it to be accountable. Given the variety and seriousness of Metro's problems, your Committee believes that it is unlikely that Metro will be enhanced. The Committee heard virtually no testimony that would support this possibility. Indeed, testimony was persuasive that, given the problems Metro has faced since its inception -- image, track record, lack of a constituency, lack of funding -- there seems to be no possibility that Metro will ever be permitted to function effectively as a general purpose regional government.

The overriding argument against an enhanced Metro as a general purpose government is its perpetual competition with the three counties and its central city for jurisdiction and the common perception (and reality) that Metro is another layer of government. The counties will always contend, with some justification, that they are regional governments in concept and organization, although none encloses the entire urban population.

To move toward a form of government that has a potential for advances in efficiency, acceptability, and responsiveness, this region will have to undergo some basic restructuring. The form of restructuring addressed most favorably by witnesses before the Committee is the combination of the three existing metropolitan counties into a single county, with cities within the consolidated area remaining essentially unchanged.

3. Consolidation of Counties

Consolidation of Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington counties, creating a single county within the current tri-county boundaries, is the form of regional government that your Committee recommends. The Committee proposes that the new consolidated county be named Willamette County, and

for ease of reference, will use that name in the following sections of the report.

Willamette County would assume the powers, responsibilities, liabilities, and revenue sources of each of the three existing counties. It would, by the act of consolidation, become a general purpose government. It would inherit the structure and ability to address regional issues as well as issues formerly addressed by the three individual counties.

Willamette County meets the criteria for an effective regional government summarized above. Because the combined county would have general purpose powers and geographically encompass the entire region, it would have authority over regional issues and the ability to make and implement its decisions regarding those issues. In order to provide an effective regional government, Willamette County should be given by the legislature the power to pre-empt the powers of local government entities in regional matters.

Willamette County, in the opinion of the Committee, is an improved option over the enhanced Metro model. By eliminating the present artificial county boundaries and by removing Metro as a separate layer of regional government, Willamette County would be in a better position to avoid the competition for jurisdiction with which an enhanced Metro would be forced to contend.

Each of the three counties has relatively stable funding and resources. Willamette County would retain current county funding sources. Existing revenue sources would be maintained and no new taxes would be necessary in order to effectuate a merger of the counties.

Perhaps more important, citizens historically have accepted and identified with the county level of government. The county level is not and would not be perceived generally as an additional, unnecessary layer of government. Moreover, specific identification with a municipality and a form of regional government, which already exists, would continue.

Finally, accountability and leadership should develop naturally. The prospect of serving an entire regional county, with responsibility and opportunity throughout the region, should provide additional incentive to attract well-qualified individuals who could provide the necessary leadership and accountability.

Willamette County would absorb Metro and its funding sources. Metro's reason for existence, in large part, would be served by the consolidated county. If more direct citizen input into the administrative process is desirable in connection with some of Metro's present functions, such as the Zoo, Willamette County could institute a commission structure or a comparable form of participation.

It appears that Tri-Met's regional functions could be managed successfully by Willamette County. If the transportation system could not be managed adequately through normal county structures, the function could be delegated to a board or commission under the control of the consolidated county. The Committee believes that placing Tri-Met under Willamette

County will meet the criterion of local accountability of Tri-Met's management, which is a valid and desirable objective.

The establishment of the urban growth boundary and municipal and district boundaries raise highly political issues. When they arise, they should be settled by the political process -- by elected officials -- rather than by the administrative process. Willamette County would appear to obviate the need for the Boundary Commission because its governing body could and should perform the boundary determination functions.

The history of the metropolitan area has been one of constant expansion, and projections are that this trend will continue indefinitely. Placing the responsibility for regional services in Willamette County allows for relatively easy adaptation to accommodate that growth. On the other hand, were Metro or some other unit of government to be defined and limited strictly by what is now or at some future time determined to be the urban growth boundary, the result would be constant unnecessary controversy over changing the boundaries of the regional entity as the metropolitan area expands in size. The consolidated county government can readily determine as needs arise what services should be provided in what areas of its jurisdiction.

The Port of Portland should remain separate for three vital reasons. First, the Port's service and relationship to the citizenry, in most instances, is indirect. The Port does not govern so much as it provides facilities for special segments of the public and, beyond the metropolitan area, for the entire state and region. Second, the Port's economic impact extends well beyond the metropolitan area. Third, although the same arguments can be made (as are made with Tri-Met) pertaining to the accountability of appointed commissioners to the voters, your Committee believes this argument is outweighed by the need for continuity and independence.

The Committee recognizes that a significant portion of the land area of Willamette County would be rural, and would not require regional urban or metropolitan services. This is not, however, a valid argument against consolidation of the counties for several reasons.

Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington counties currently include both urban and rural areas, and attempt to deal with the task of separating levels of services within their boundaries based upon need. So long as County government exists, this situation will be encountered. Insofar as your Committee can determine, however, the problem of delivering both urban and rural services has not been an insurmountable one. Further, the inclusion within the county of rural land surrounding the metropolitan areas would allow Willamette County to accommodate urban growth by altering the mix of services within its boundaries to best serve both urban and rural areas.

Finally, it is expected that Willamette County, as with the present three counties, would be a two-tier government with cities and towns continuing to provide strictly urban local services. Willamette County, then, would provide the traditional county services common to the entire

area of the County as well as those regional urban services which are required for the urban-suburban metropolitan areas.

The Committee expects that a form of tax apportionment can and will be devised that does not require rural residents outside the urban growth area to pay for urban services which they do not need or receive. The exact mechanics of accomplishing that apportionment necessarily must be left to those who will implement this plan.

D. Implementation of Consolidation of Counties

Implementing a plan for Willamette County will not be simple. This Committee recognizes that a most serious effort to inform the electorate and encourage its support will be required to accomplish a consolidation (or any other significant advance in regional government). The Committee recognizes that local interests and loyalties exist within the area and that substantial differing interests divide the subregions of the metropolitan area. As with any change of structure, some people will feel that their current interests and positions are more clearly protected within the existing structure.

Any serious move toward realizing the creation of Willamette County will require a focus on three areas. The first group is the electorate. Merging counties will require both legislative and voter action, and a structural change this significant must have grass-roots support. Although many approaches exist, a starting point would be the formation of a broad-based commission to study implementation and make appropriate recommendations. This commission should be able to accommodate expressions of resistance and concern, and to promote the process with the electorate and the legislature as well. Second, public officials within the area, some of whom have vested interests in the current system, must be persuaded. This second group includes elected officials as well as board members of Tri-Met and the Boundary Commission, notwithstanding the intent of the plan eventually to merge these groups into Willamette County.

Third, the legislature, particularly the local members, must become involved in, and committed to, the consolidation process.

Your Committee has not discussed the details of implementation of its proposal, nor has it attempted to define those services and responsibilities that are "regional" and those that are "local" in character. This was a deliberate choice made partly because of lack of technical resources and partly because many policy choices related to the creation of Willamette County will require public involvement.

As to the question of "regional" versus "local" services, the Committee believes that these are concepts that change constantly. Willamette County and the local cities and communities will need to redefine these over time.

Your Committee recognizes that there are many technical questions regarding implementation that must be addressed, many of which are beyond the expertise of this Committee. For example, the three existing counties have separate tax bases. Combining them may require legal or constitutional changes. It also will be necessary to insure that no sudden

shift in the tax burden from one segment of the region to another occurs. Although the current tax bases could be "grandfathered" for a time in their present location, the Committee's research indicates that spreading the combined tax base equally in Willamette County would result in no large shifts of the tax burden.

Although the state legislature may draw the boundaries of Willamette County, Washington and Multnomah counties are "home rule" counties. This means that their charters cannot be altered or repealed without a vote of the people. In order to accomplish the merger, the two existing home rule charters must be repealed and a new one adopted by the voters of the region. As previously indicated, there are legal problems in merging Tri-Met into another unit of government. Decisions must be made about whether Tri-Met should remain a separate legal entity, with Willamette County becoming the appointing authority for its Board, or whether Tri-Met should be merged into Willamette County. Either option would require legislative action.

The foregoing are only a few examples of the kinds of detail and policy decisions that must be made in order to create Willamette County. Your Committee believes that these are the decisions that must be made by the Commission that will deal with implementation if the concept of Willamette County finds acceptance. In order to address these issues, the Commission must have available the funding, the staff, and the technical expertise necessary to make the best and most careful choices.

E. Feasibility of Consolidation of Counties

It appears to your Committee that, functionally, Willamette County would better serve the needs of the region. A merger of counties, however, must be considered a radical step and one that may be met by considerable practical and political opposition. However, the positive prospects of consolidation, and the promise of more effective, efficient delivery of services, outweigh the political arguments directed against consolidation.

Given all of the relevant information, citizens can appreciate sufficiently the logic of consolidation of governments and, because counties are familiar and accepted, no unfamiliar and threatening concepts would be presented. Other than the formal elimination of the three existing counties and the adoption of a charter for Willamette County, no massive new government structure would be needed to accomplish the merger. Citizens already are familiar and identify with a "tri-county area". While certain necessary changes in personnel would result from a merger, no general dislocation would be necessary. Accordingly, opposition would be more general in nature ("I don't want to be swallowed up by the large government") than specific ("We are creating a new layer of government that will increase my taxes").

Your Committee appreciates that the task of generating the kind of support necessary from the legislature, elected officials of the three-county area, and a sufficient base of citizens, may cause actual implementation of a Willamette County to be politically difficult. Nevertheless, your Committee firmly believes, and would remind the reader, that the people are fully capable of changing and improving the political

institutions they create. Furthermore, there is much that should appeal to the voters, especially elimination of unnecessary (and sometimes unpopular) units of government, elimination of administrative duplication and, best of all, an enhanced ability to move forward with new ideas.

E. Transition to Consolidation of Counties

Although your Committee believes strongly that the best form of regional government would be a consolidation of counties, it recognizes that this will not occur overnight. Your Committee has advanced the concept, and hopes that leadership within this community will carry on from here.

In the meantime, regional government services must continue to be delivered and, in fact, enhanced. The three agencies now providing these services -- Metro, Tri-Met, and the Boundary Commission -- must be supported, properly funded, and improved until Willamette County is ready to absorb and replace them.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

A. The Need for Regional Government

1. Some metropolitan area problems and needs are regional in character and require regional government solutions.
2. Some services can be provided more economically and effectively when provided on a regional basis.
3. There is a need for strong, effective regional government to provide regional services to the metropolitan area.
4. Strong regional government does not now exist in the tri-county metropolitan area.

B. Existing Units of Government

1. Metro has achieved some degree of success in meeting certain regional needs, and it should be continued and supported until a better alternative is in place.
2. Metro is not likely to become a general purpose government and achieve its full potential due to structural flaws and lack of general public confidence.
3. Tri-Met and the Boundary Commission should be held accountable to a regional unit of government.
4. Many public services are local in character and should be provided by cities and other units of local government.

C. Optimum Form of Regional Government

1. The county is the traditional and accepted form of regional government.
2. The most efficient and effective form of government to provide regional services in the metropolitan area is a combination of Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington counties into one home rule county.

D. Implementation

1. Combination of the three counties is unlikely to be initiated by an act of the legislature or existing units of local government unless initiated and prompted by private citizens.
2. Implementation of consolidation of the counties will be realized only through the initiative of individual leaders within the tri-county area and the support of civic and community organizations.
3. The best manner in which to implement unified county government is through the formation of a citizens commission to proceed with the initiative process.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee makes the following recommendations for adoption by the City Club of Portland:

Consolidation of Regional Government Units

1. Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington counties should be merged or combined into one home rule county, for the purpose of providing regional services to the people of the metropolitan area. In such a consolidation:
 - a. The functions now performed by the Metropolitan Service District (Metro) should be assumed by the combined metropolitan county, and upon such transfer, Metro should be dissolved.
 - b. The functions performed by the Tri-County Metropolitan Transit District (Tri-Met) should be under the control or management of the merged metropolitan county. And if and when deemed advisable, Tri-Met should merge into the county and be dissolved as an independent entity.
 - c. The functions performed by the Metropolitan Boundary Commission should be under the control or management of the merged metropolitan county, and the Boundary Commission should be dissolved.
 - d. The Port of Portland should continue in its present independent status.
 - e. The consolidated county government should perform those government services identified from time to time as regional services; those services identified from time to time as local services should continue to be provided by other local units of government.

Implementation of Consolidation of Governments

2. As soon as possible, a special Task Force of the City Club of Portland should be appointed. The Task Force, in conjunction with other interested civic groups, should assist in the formation of a commission to implement Recommendation No. 1. Specifically:

a. The commission should be broadly representative of the entire geographic area of the three affected counties, and include members of units of county and local government, business, labor, citizen groups, and other interested and experienced persons.

b. The commission should draft and propose a charter, propose and seek necessary legislation, and draft and advocate an initiative ballot measure to be submitted to a vote of the people of the three counties.

c. Although determination of regional, as opposed to local, government functions will be an evolutionary process, the commission should attempt to identify major functions of government that can and should be performed regionally.

Transitional Phase

3. Pending merger of the three metropolitan counties, the Metropolitan Service District (Metro) should be given necessary financial and other support, and it should assume responsibility for additional regional services as required.

Respectfully submitted,

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 Ilo Boryhadi
 Richard J. Brownstein
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 Stephen B. Herrell, Chair

Approved by the Research Board on February 4, 1986 for transmittal to the Board of Governors. Received by the Board of Governors on February 24, 1986 and ordered published and distributed to the membership for consideration and action.

Appendix A

PERSONS INTERVIEWED

Anderson, Lloyd, Executive Director, Port of Portland
Bishop, Bruce, Columbia Willamette Futures Forum
Bonner, Ernie, Metro Councilor
Buchanan, Dennis, Executive Officer, Multnomah County
Caba, Maurice, Director of Grants Management, Portland Public Schools
Carlson, Donald, Deputy Executive Officer, Metro
Cease, Ron, State Representative, and Professor, Public Administration,
Portland State University
Clark, Donald, Former Executive Officer, Multnomah County
Drennan, Douglas, Engineering Manager, Solid Waste Division, Metro
Edner, Sheldon, School of Urban and Public Affairs, Portland State
University
Feeney, Richard, Executive Director, Public Affairs, Tri-Met
Frewing, John, Treasurer, Board of Directors, Tri-Met
Garlington, Rev. John, President, Albina Ministerial Alliance
Gustafson, Rick, Executive Officer, Metro
Gutjahr, Gil, Director, Tax Supervising and Conservation Commission,
Multnomah County
Higgins, Tom, former Publisher, The Business Journal and former Director,
Department of Human Services, Multnomah County
Kirkpatrick, Corky, Metro Councilor
Lindberg, Mike, City of Portland Commissioner
Myers, Hardy, Metro Councilor
Myllenbeck, Wes, Chairman, Washington County Commission
Olmstead, Deke, Director, Department of Justice Services, Multnomah County
Otto, Glenn, State Representative and Chairman, Legislative Task Force
on Regional Government
Rich, A. McKay, Assistant Director, Washington Park Zoo; and Director,
Portland Metropolitan Study Commission; Assistant Director, CRAG;
Executive Assistant to former County Executive Don Clark; and
Director, Tri-County Local Government Commission.
Rifer, Wayne, Program Coordinator, Solid Waste Division, Metro
Schumacher, Robert, Chairman, Clackamas County Commission
Siegel, Steve, Director, Intergovernment Resource Center, Metro
Tibbetts, Cecil, Executive Director, American Federal, State, County and
Municipal Employees in Oregon
Weil, Bob, Member, Portland Metropolitan Area Local Government Boundary
Commission
Won, Denise, Staff Executive Assistant, Boundary Commission

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Appendix C

TRI COUNTY AREA TAXING UNITS

CLACKAMAS
COUNTY

WATER
CITIES:
 Oregon City
 West Linn
 Lake Oswego
 Jt.
 Milwaukie Jt.
 Gladstone
 Sandy
 Estacada
 Canby
 Barlow
 Molalla
 Happy Valley
 Portland Jt.
 Tualatin Jt.
 Wilsonville
 Jt.
 Johnson City
 Rivergrove
 Jt.

FIRE
 PROTECTION
DISTRICTS:
 Clackamas
 County Jt.
 Oak Lodge
 Clackamas
 County
 Beaver Creek
 Lake Grove
 Monitor Jt.
 Boring
 Riverdale Jt.
 Scotts Mills
 Jt.
 Canby
 Aurora Jt.
 Tualatin Jt.
 Happy Valley
 Rosemont
 Clarkes
 Estacada
 Colton

DISTRICTS:
 Barwell Park
 Clackamas
 Mt. Scott Jt.
 Oak Lodge
 Wichita
 Park Place
 Mt. Hood Loop
 Colton
 Mossy Brae
 Forest
 Highlands
 Rivergrove Jt.
 Lake Grove
 Shadowood
 Clairmont
 Damascus
 Southwood Park
 Mulino
 Boring
 Mt. View
 Palatine Hill
 Jt.
 Pleasant Home
 Jt.
 Sleepy Hollow
 Alder Creek-
 Barlow
 Country Club
 Wildwood
 Annex
 Riverside

SERVICE
DISTRICTS:
 Clackamas
 County(1)
 Metro Service
 Dist.
 Tri City
 Dunthorpe-
 Riverdale Jt.
 Clack.Cty.(5)

MULTNOMAH
COUNTY

CITIES:
 Portland
 Fairview
 Gresham
 Maywood Park
 Troutdale
 Wood Village

SERVICE
DISTRICTS:
 Port of Portland
 Tri-Met
 Metro Serv.Dist.
 Skyling Crest
 Rd.Dist.

SCHOOL
DISTRICTS:
 SD1-Portland
 SD2-Gresham
 High
 SD3-Parkrose
 SD4-Gresham
 Grade
 SD6-Orient
 SD7-Reynolds
 SD19-Sauvie Is.
 SD28-Centennial
 High
 SD39-Corbett
 SD40-David
 Douglas
 SD46-Bonneville
 SD51-Riverdale

EDUCATION
SERVICE
DISTRICTS:
 Elem. School
 High School
 Mt.Hood Comm.
 College
 Portland Comm.
 College

WASHINGTON
COUNTY

CITIES:
 Banks
 Beaverton
 Cornelius
 Durham
 Forest Grove
 Gaston
 Hillsboro
 King City
 Lake Oswego Jt.
 North Plains
 Portland Jt.
 Rivergrove Jt.
 Sherwood
 Tigard
 Tualatin Jt.
 Wilsonville
 Jt.
 Tualatin
 Urban
 Development

SCHOOL
DISTRICTS:
 SD1-West Union
 SD7-Hillsboro
 SD13-Banks
 SD15-Forest Grove
 SD23-Tigard Jt.
 SD29-Reedville
 SD39-Groner
 SD46-Newberg Jt.
 SD48-Jt.-Beaverton
 SD49-Jt.-Vernonia
 SD58-Jt.-Farmington View
 SD70-North Plains
 SD88-Jt.-Sherwood
 SD101-Jt.-West Linn
 SD1-1-Jt.-Portland
 SD117-Jt.-Scapoose
 SD511-Jt.-Gaston
 Hills.Un.Hi. #3-Jt.
 Portland Comm. Coll.

CLACKAMAS
COUNTY, cont.FIRE
PROTECTION
DISTS., cont.Clackamas
Sandy
Molalla
HoodlandUNION HIGH
SCHOOLDISTRICTS:Canby
Sandy
Molalla
Gresham Jt.
Silverton Jt.COMMUNITY
COLLEGEDISTRICTS:Mt. Hood
Community
Jt.
Clackamas
Community
Portland
Community

SCHOOL

DISTRICTS:Portland Jt.
SD3-West Linn
Jt.
SD7-Lake
Oswego Jt.
SD12-North
Clackamas
SD13-Welches
SD25-Dickie
Prairie
SD26-Damascus
Union
SD29-Carus
SD32-Clarkes
SD35-Molalla
SD44-Boring
SD45-Bull Run
SD46-Sandy
SD53-Colton
SD62-Oregon City

WATER CONTROL

DISTRICTS:Shady Dell
Clack. Bend
Clack. River
Molalla R. Dist.
Improv. Co.

URBAN RENEWAL

DISTRICTS:Clackamas
Oregon City

ROAD

DISTRICTS:Oregon City
West Linn
Lake Oswego Jt.
Milwaukie Jt.
Gladstone
Sandy
Estacada
Canby
Barlow
Molalla
Happy Valley
Portland Jt.
Tualatin Jt.
Wilsonville Jt.
Johnson City
Rivergrove Jt.

LIGHTING

DISTRICTS:Southwood
Park
Woodland
Park
Fernwood
Monitor Jt.

SANITARY

DISTRICTS:Unifed
Sewerage
AgencyMULTNOMAH
COUNTY, cont.

WATER

DISTRICTS:Alto Park
Burlington
Corbett
Darlington
Gilbert
Hazelwood
Lusted
Palatine Hill
Parkrose
Pleasant Home
Powell Valley Rd.
Richland
Rockwood
Rose City
Sylvan
Valley ViewFIRE DISTRICTS:FD1-Jantzen Beach
FD4-Sylvan
FD10-Powellhurst
FD11-Riverdale
FD14-Corbett
FD20-Skyline
FD30-Sauvie Is.CO. SERV. DIST.CSD1-Dun.-River
CSD2-West Hills
CSD3-Central Co.
CSD14-Mid-CountyWASHINGTON
COUNTY, cont.EDUCATION SERVICE DIST.-Clack. Co. ESD
-Columbia Co. ESD
-Mult. Co. ESD
-Wash. Co. ESD
-Yamhill Co. ESDSERVICE DISTRICTS:Metro Serv. Dist.
Port of PortlandWATER DISTRICTS:Garden Home
Metzger Indeb.
Metzger Combined
Raleigh
Rivergrove
Tigard
West Slope
Wolf Creek Hwy.
Wolsborn FarmsSANITARY DISTRICTS:Unif. Sewer Agency Jt.
Metzger Ind.
Raleigh-Scholls Ind.
West Slope San. Ind.

FIRE PROTECTION

DISTRICTS:Cornelius RFPD
Forest Grove RFPD
Gaston RFPD
Tri-City RFPD
Tualatin RFPD
Wash. Co. RFPD #1
Wash. Co. RFPD #2RECREATION DIST.Tualatin Hills
Park & Rec.ROAD DISTRICT:Rainbow Lanes Special
Road Dist.

CLACKAMAS

COUNTY, cont.SCHOOL
DISTS., cont.SANITARY
DISTS., cont.

SD67-Butte Creek Jt.	Govt. Camp Oak Lodge 1
SD80-Shubel	Dunthorpe-Riverdale
SD84-Mulino	Portland
SD86-Canby	
SD87-Maple Grove	<u>RECREATION DISTRICTS:</u>
SD91-Ninety One	South Clackamas
SD92-Rural Dell	
SD107-Cottrell	<u>CEMETARY DISTRICTS:</u>
SD108-Estacada	Estacada
SD115-Gladstone	
SD116-Redland	<u>VECTOR CONTROL DISTRICTS:</u>
SD142-Monitor Jt.	Clackamas County
SD300-Orient Jt.	<u>PORT DISTRICTS:</u>
SD302-Centenn- ial Jt.	Portland Jt.
SD304-Tigard Jt.	<u>DRAINAGE DISTRICTS:</u>
SD305-Sherwood Jt.	Eagle Creek
SD306-Newberg Jt.	<u>PARK DISTRICTS:</u>
SD311-Scotts Mills Jt.	Lake Grove
SD315-Riverdale Jt.	

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