

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN REGIONAL PLANNING

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The purpose of this paper is to set forth and comment on some of the efforts to obtain citizen participation in the planning process in the Twin City metropolitan area during the past few years. I will give special emphasis to the regional transportation planning process.

I am a member of the Twin City Metropolitan Council. There is nothing particular in my background or that of my colleagues on the council that makes us professionals in any of the planning areas we deal with except perhaps, in my case, criminal justice. I suppose from one standpoint, therefore, that my appointment to the Metropolitan Council satisfied at least one citizen's aim for involvement in the decisional process. But that, of course, is hardly enough for those thousands of people in the metropolitan area who have been claiming some right to participate in regional planning decisions that they perceive as affecting them.

During 1972 I was chairman of the Development Guide Committee, which is the council's committee concerned with the production and formulation of the Development Guide, which happens to be our terminology for our regional master plan. At the present time, I am chairman of the Human Resources Committee, which was recently created in a council reorganization to bring together planning responsibilities in the human resources area such as health, criminal justice, and housing. The council as a vehicle for metropolitan decision-making has been receiving increasing national attention, and a brief review of its history and concept is perhaps in order.

Metropolitan planning came to the Twin City area through the Metropolitan Planning Commission, which was created in 1957. The commission had a large membership planning body and a high-grade staff that reported to nobody, held a lot of interesting meetings, and drew a lot of interesting maps. However, it had no political base and no clout and was unable to serve even as a convenient forum for the resolution of any of the metropolitan-wide issues, most notably, the sewer crisis that defied resolution in 3 legislative sessions.

In 1967, the Minnesota legislature created the Metropolitan Council as the planning and coordinating agency for our 7-county metropolitan area. It has 14 members appointed from 14 equal-population districts and a chairman appointed at large. All appointments are by the governor at the present time although a bill to make the mem-

bership elective has cleared the house but not the senate.

In 1969, the legislature created the Metropolitan Sewer Board as a dependent board operating under the council, which has appointment and budget authority over it. We are the A-95 review agency for the metropolitan area, and increased authority naturally flowed to the council through its exercise of review powers over a broad range of federal grants. The most notable and controversial exercise of this power has been in the implementation of our so-called Policy 31 under which we recommend denial of federal grants in nonhousing areas for communities that are not making an adequate effort to provide low- and moderate-income housing, i.e., no housing, no sewer grants or park grants.

There has been considerable debate as to what the council really is. Some claim it is another layer of government; others claim it is a council of governments gone wrong. It is clear to me, anyway, and I think clear to the Minnesota legislature, that the council is a regional agency operating as the legislature's metropolitan decision-making arm for the 7-county area on the problems that have regional magnitude and complexity and that would be virtually impossible for the legislature to study and resolve on its own. I think the unique perception of the Minnesota legislature was that there already was "regional government"; that occurred the minute it created a special purpose district with more than county-wide jurisdiction. The only issue was whether the "governing" of those special functional districts would be uncoordinated or coordinated. The Metropolitan Council in the legislature's perception is the agency that is supposed to "bell" the special district "cat" and to coordinate the separate functional agencies. But the role of the generalist coordinator is not an easy one. The special district cats do not like bells, and the future of the council as the planning, coordinating, generalist decision-maker for the region is not free from doubt.

We were challenged forcefully and directly in the recent legislative session by both the Metropolitan Airports Commission, a long-standing special district operating our major airport and satellite fields, and by the Metropolitan Transit Commission, which was created at the same time as the council but whose coordinating authority has been defined much less sharply than that of the Sewer Board, which is appointed by the council and which operates under capital and budget control of the council. The legislature adjourned without resolving any of the metropolitan issues, but impartial observers think that the council is behind at half time at least 20 to 0. The second half will be played in subsequent sessions, so in some ways this paper must serve as an interim report.

The challenge by the Airports Commission was not unexpected, nor is the problem of coordinating airports, in my opinion, fundamental to the creation of transportation plans in a 7-county area. The council has by statute veto power over the timing and site location of any new major airport, a power it has already exercised once and could exercise again if necessary. The council's conflict with the Transit Commission raises another set of issues that relate very directly to those of particular interest to this conference, that is, citizen participation in the planning process; and I intend to devote some time to the council's role in metropolitan transportation planning.

The old Metropolitan Planning Commission had engaged with the Minnesota Department of Highways in a joint transportation planning program, which generated a fair amount of data and kept a fair number of consultants reasonably occupied and solvent but, as far as I can see, had made little progress in solving any of the regional transportation issues. In 1967, the Metropolitan Transit Commission started transit planning in the 7-county area. Much of the Transit Commission's early life was taken up with acquiring the then privately owned bus company, renovating the bus fleet, and providing increased bus service to the people in the area.

The council had been involved mostly on a staff basis in the transportation decisions. In 1969, the council became a party to the so-called transportation planning program. As implemented in our area, it was not a runaway success if success is defined as the ability to arrive at a decision. There were, of course, a host of task forces and the 2 basic committees: the Policy Advisory Committee, composed of local selected officials, and a Technical Advisory Committee, composed of technical people. There was a fair amount of staff interaction, and people talked to each other; but, when the

Metropolitan Council decided to take up transportation planning in earnest starting in January 1972, there was no evidence, so far as we could see, that the transportation planning program had produced any decisions. Even participation was questionable judging from the miserable attendance at committee meetings. The inability of participants to arrive at any basic policy decisions was evident to all. What was lacking, we on the Council felt, was a metropolitan transportation planning group that could construct and decide on a coordinated transportation plan involving both highways and transit on a regional level. The decision was made to turn the Development Guide Committee into a transportation planning committee for the purpose of developing a metropolitan-wide coordinated transportation plan.

In 1971, the legislature passed a statute that directed the Transit Commission to implement the transportation sections of the Metropolitan Council Development Guide. In so doing, the legislature served notice on all parties that they were tired of talk and consultant studies (\$2 million worth). Decision on basic transportation problems, particularly the transit issue, was called for. In 1971, the Metropolitan Council did not have a transportation section in the Development Guide, and it was the job of my committee to produce one.

We commenced our work on January 2, 1972. We had no authority by state statute over the Minnesota Department of Highways (A-95 review authority, of course, existed), and I was assured by many that the highway department would refuse to cooperate with any regional transportation planning process that had a major transit component. It so happened that the commissioner of highways was an experienced high-level administrator with prior experience as the head of other state agencies. His basic decision was to delegate to the Metropolitan Council the responsibility for making the regional planning decisions involving metropolitan-scale highways. At the first meeting of our committee, he appeared personally to announce this and to pledge his full help and cooperation in developing a regional transportation plan. His statement has not turned out to be merely political puff. We have since then had full cooperation from the highway department in our regional planning effort. There is no question in my mind that, during a series of prior public hearings on freeway location, the highway department had learned a bitter lesson. The old coalition of local officials, technical people, and key legislators was not enough to get a highway decision made. There was no generalist political group of citizens supporting highways anymore. The highway department in Minnesota, like many others throughout the country, was finally starting to pay the price for long decades of practically unfettered construction of freeways. The commissioner's perception was that he lacked general planning and political support for highways in the urban area. True, the so-called highway lobby was still in evidence and there was still strength in various legislative subcommittees, but at no level, be it city council, county, or region, had the highway department achieved the status of much more than that of public whipping boy for whatever the citizens felt ailed modern society.

The first problem facing our committee was how to achieve a transportation plan, and that raised the question of how we could achieve this mysterious but wonderful thing called citizen participation in something so esoteric and long range as a chapter in the Development Guide on transportation. It is true that the professionals and major land developers could recognize the profound and long-range implications of such a guide and people experienced in the government knew that, in preparing the Development Guide, the council was not engaging in an exercise in futility or mapping just for the sake of mapping.

As I have pointed out, the council is more than a planning commission; it is a political planning body with decisional powers, and in many areas, unless overruled by the legislature, its plans are going to stick. We attempted to do several things.

In addition to preparing our regional transportation plan, we agreed to participate as an active mediator in a corridor dispute for an unbuilt but planned freeway going west out of Minneapolis. There were citizen groups organized to the point of having bumper stickers with the slogan "No I-394" on them. A representative from the council, the highway department, the Transit Commission, and a citizen group became a steering committee to coordinate the consultant study of the various routes and alter-

natives in that particular corridor. That study is still progressing, and I would say that the effectiveness of that attempt to deal with citizen participation in the corridor level is still open to question. If innumerable and loud public meetings are a sign of effective citizen participation, then it is effective. If happy citizens or a consensus is what is desired, then the omens are not good.

Our major concern in developing the transportation plan, however, was not a corridor problem. I think it is safe to say that getting citizen participation is no particular problem when engineers start drawing on a map lines that represent highways that are at or near people's property. The difficult problem was and is the issue of the long-range planning process on a metropolitan basis and how you engage the citizen's attention in that. I have no final answers for you, but I can tell you what we did, where I think we achieved some success, and where we have been less than successful.

The question of citizen participation at a regional level presupposes some sort of implied supposition on what you want citizen participation for. A friend of mine on the Minneapolis City Council says he believes in citizen participation. He calls it the ballot, and he suggests that citizens who do not like what he does can participate by voting him out. Of course, he has been elected several times from a very safe district for a person with his political persuasion; and, barring a crime of moral turpitude or a surprise link-up to Watergate, he is probably safe in maintaining his position on the true nature of representative government. If the point of citizen participation is to legitimize or make possible the political decision, that is to say, to educate enough people so that the heat goes off the political decision-makers so that they can approve the functional project, that is another thing. That presupposes political decision-makers. Of course, that has been part of the problem in the past with transportation facility decisions. They were not in fact made by political decision-makers at all but by the engineers or their immediate superiors. This history may be viewed as a blessing and not a problem, but in today's milieu the inability of technical people in the big line agencies to get a decision on facility construction in urban areas is what I suspect brought us together in this conference.

The council was and is a political decision-maker. We are structured for trade-offs of a variety of types including geographic advantage or disadvantage. When a reporter asked me how in the world after 6 years of planning in transportation by others we on the Development Guide Committee even hoped to make a decision, I had a simple but I think correct answer. "We will vote," I said. "We will call the roll and take the yeas and the nays."

In the case of preparation of a metropolitan transportation plan, however, the need that I saw for citizen participation was that we policy planners needed help in arriving at the decision and in fact wanted citizen input into the decision process in order to make the decision better. I think all of us on the council by that time had developed a very jaundiced view toward the formal public hearing type of citizen participation. Under our council policy, every section of the Development Guide goes out to formal public hearings after duly published notice in the newspapers and the hearing is duly recorded by a court reporter. All kinds of people come before us to give their views on the particular section of the Development Guide that is being readied for adoption as well as anything else that comes to their minds. Almost all of the hearings have been very useful therapy sessions for the people involved and have, with few exceptions, contributed little to the understanding of the council in arriving at its final decision on the plan. There are some exceptions but not many. The public hearings apparently serve as an outlet for pent-up emotional frustrations or in many cases serve as a means by which the spokesmen for the various groups earn their keep. The last observation is based on a number of experiences as a policy "jury" at these hearings. If the point of the spokesman is to persuade the decision-makers to accept his point of view, then to call the jury senile, corrupt, and stupid before one even gets to the merits of the argument is a fairly chancy way, it seems to me as a professor of trial advocacy, to persuade the jury although it may make one's client very happy.

How then do we get citizen participation if formal public hearings were too little and too late? The committee decided to get participation by conducting the planning process in the open in a series of scheduled public meetings during which we would discuss

and decide the relevant issues. There would be no private meetings and no showcase public forums with speeches for the record only when in reality the decision had already been made. We postulated that by doing this we could generate interest in the usual groups with professional interest in our deliberations and also generate media interest that would translate into widespread dissemination of what we were about and what the questions were we were trying to decide. We hoped this would generate public response.

To accomplish this required that we lay out a strict decisional schedule. That is, we had to and did decide what questions we were going to decide and when we were going to decide them. A staff memorandum (see next page) setting forth those questions and the decision dates was widely distributed. The mailing list contained about 1,000 names, including those of all government and citizen groups that we were aware of. We structured the process around finding answers to questions we had posed. We had decided that our area was burdened with answers and not enough thought had been given to framing the real questions for decision. We wanted citizens to help us shape the decision as we went along and not to react after we had prepared the answer.

We promised a tentative plan by July 6. We kept our promise although there were times when it was a close matter. There are always reasons why a problem can be restudied or one should or could make one more computer run. A further look at the questions posed for decision, the answers to which would constitute our plan, reveals nothing too remarkable. They are questions that need asking and that helped us and the citizens to understand the dimensions of the problem. We had excellent citizen input. It was excellent because it was generally informed, thoughtful, to the point, and in some cases thoroughly researched. We naturally had presentations from various affected government agencies such as the Transit Commission, Department of Highways, and county and city engineers. Our staff was instructed to work up pro-and-con arguments on all the questions. We applied what I termed the "straight-face" test to the formulation of questions. "Can a reasonable public figure in our area argue with a straight face on either side of the question?" If not, then we put the question in the platitude heap along with a lot of other material with which planners dearly love to sprinkle their documents. The council tries to avoid nondebates on the obvious if it can; all too often we cannot.

We generally had a full house at our meetings and a full compliment of newspaper and radio reporters and occasionally TV reporters.

One problem is having a decisional group with enough confidence to be willing to take chances on making fools of themselves publicly from time to time by asking dumb questions. The tendency of policy-makers to discuss things privately is natural and I am afraid endemic, but the decision here was that we could only involve the citizenry through full disclosure of the decisional process. Basically, we relied on the press and radio to report our meetings and the course of our decisions. We had extensive newspaper coverage, which did, of course, require structuring the meetings so important decisions got made when promised. The radio coverage was also extensive. Although this type of procedure is an open way to arrive at decisions, the difficulty is that it can be hard on the participants because one must do one's thinking out loud in areas where one is not by definition an expert. To those who are shy, timid, or worried about public images, this can be fairly traumatic. Actually, it worked very well in practice; the committee members felt freer and freer to really conduct a public debate in front of the people. I recognize that relying on the media as a means of getting broader citizen participation is chancy. Reporters do quote out of context in many cases. Many are not sufficiently informed about the background or data to write intelligent stories, and almost all, of course, are eternally searching for personality conflicts and other headline type of material rather than explaining the prosaic but crucial policy consideration involved at times in transportation planning. But that was our theory, and that is what we did with reasonably good results. We worked with the reporters, not the publishers. We did not want editorial support for a decision; we wanted news coverage with sophistication, and we usually got it.

Another technique we tried was to structure the questions so they would generate pro-and-con public debate. Sometimes we could rely on the various interest groups that had already taken positions to supply the pro and con on issues. Sometimes we

**MEMORANDUM REGARDING RECOMMENDED
DECISION SEQUENCE AND SCHEDULE FOR
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING**
January 28, 1972

We have revised the schedule presented at the January 20 meeting. The first series of meetings should be directed toward development of policies describing the role of transit. These policies should define the metropolitan objectives for the relative importance of transit over time and in different parts of the area.

The role of transit in transportation should be established first for several reasons: (a) Transit is the area of transportation in which the Metropolitan Council has most clearly been assigned responsibility; (b) until the role transit is to perform is defined, highway design and planning, both short and long-range, will be difficult and cloudy; (c) early guidance by the council can aid the Metropolitan Transit Commission in its current studies; (d) opportunities now available for transit implementation may be gone in a short time (for example, construction of busways, or reservation of rights-of-way, as part of completing the Interstate System, if we want to do it, would have to be decided quite soon); and (e) in our planning work during the next few months, definition of the transit role should lead logically to definition of the highway role.

Most of the questions in the January 27 memorandum are still included. There is a need for policy decision on the questions relating to capacity and travel demand. Questions on why we need transit and what we expect of it have been added. The staff recognizes that there are good issues not included here and that as we progress changes may be needed. More detail on the work after March 30 will be added later. The recommended sequence follows.

March 30—Adoption of policies describing the role of transit (why, what for, how much, where, when). The first 4 meetings are intended to lead toward March 30.

February 10—Why do we want a transit system of any kind? What is the policy for supplying capacity to meet travel need? Meet all forecast need? In total? For each mode? Policy modal split? What degree of congestion? Who should transit serve? Captive riders only? Current riders? Downtown employees? Diversified centers' destinations? Major corridors' destinations? Significant or major portion of peak-hour work trips? Goods movement? Would we install a fixed-guideway transit system if it would not remove the need for additional freeways in the central cities? If it would?

February 24—How is transit or highways or both to be used for influencing urban development patterns? Guiding new development? Total spread of urban growth? Major diversified centers? Downtowns? High density corridors? Others? What has happened in cities where transit was built during the automobile age (since World War II)? Can we influence transit usage through pricing policies? What have previous consultant studies said about the development impacts of transit? What do developers and financial institutions feel about the development impact of transit? What specifically can be done in the Twin Cities to influence development, with transit, or a combination of other public actions? High density corridors? Major centers? Downtowns?

March 9—What can improved transit hardware do to increase transit patronage? Enough to eliminate the need for additional central city freeways? When? What are the findings from previous transit studies? What are the findings of the current transit studies relative to the effect of hardware on patronage? When could various types of hardware be on the ground? What are the evolutionary (incremental) possibilities for improving our transit system?

March 23—When and where do we need improved transit? What priority? What do the 1980 and 1990 travel forecasts (presented on this date) suggest in terms of transit location, priorities, timing, and patronage, and the possible role of transit in specific corridors? What are the transit priorities by geographic area?

March 30—Policy presentation, discussion, and adoption on the role of transit over time and in different parts of the metropolitan area.

April 13—What is the role of highways over time and in different parts of the metropolitan area?

April 27—Staff presentation of a thoroughfare-transit plan, program, and cost estimates based on previous decisions.

May 11—How might we pay for transit and other transportation facilities?

May 25—Recommendations on transportation financing.

June 8—Review of Transit Commission Phase III-A-2 and Minneapolis downtown study results.

June 22—Further discussion of plan, program, and finance.

July 6—First draft of the Metropolitan Development Guide.

deliberately set our staff up to make pro-and-con arguments so that all the points could be brought out. I wish to say more about this type of adversary approach to planning a little later because I think it holds a great deal of promise in some areas in helping the decision-maker arrive at sound planning decisions. That technique was attempted with I think rather good success if the point was to get before the public body in a public way the various arguments surrounding the major issues.

We also relied on citizen participation in the meetings. I announced very early that, although I was highly interested in citizen participation, I was really only interested in informed citizen participation because I was not a psychiatrist engaging in therapy during the 3 hours we would meet each week concerning the transportation issues. We are fortunate in the Twin City area in having a number of broad-based generalist citizen groups with an interest in a broad range of issues. The foremost of these is the Citizens League, which has an almost unique status in the Twin City area. It is a 3,000-member citizen group with extensive research capabilities that it develops through the use of citizen committees. It is backed by professional staff and makes reports to public bodies on any number of issues. The Citizens League was very influential in the formation of the Metropolitan Council and in the transportation area has done a number of studies that gave it valuable perspective on the various transportation issues. Committee chairmen and other members of the Citizens League appeared constantly before us, raising questions and giving input from their studies on the various things their committees had done.

The League of Women Voters had also been active, and a number of environmental groups in our area had already taken the time to organize task forces to take a rather balanced look at the transportation planning issues. There were many more as well as individual citizens with a general fascination for transportation issues who took the time and did us the courtesy of making and preparing reasoned statements from time to time on the various questions as they arose. Each one of those groups had our decisional schedule and knew at which meeting we would be debating each of the issues. Very obviously, thousands of people were untouched by the process.

Pursuant to our schedule, we voted on preliminary transportation plans involving both transit and highways on July 6. The vote was unanimous on our committee although the 8 members had entered the process in January with widely divergent views on both highway and transit issues. The council then sent it back to us, and we had a series of 3 public meetings at night involving all aspects of the plan. We had a large attendance, and one night an hour of the meeting was broadcast live over the radio station. The broadcast had the largest listenership in the state; it concluded with an open-mike feature so that we could get as much input as possible. Our major concern, however, was to inform ourselves to help us with the decision rather than to attempt any political validation of our planning process by "consulting the area" so to speak.

One device that I had thought about using but did not bears mentioning, however, because I think it may prove useful under certain circumstances. Essentially, what I had in mind in the transit area was a major public debate before the council with the area legislators sitting in the background as observers (for the issue was bound to come to the legislature). This would give the legislators a chance to hear the arguments without having to commit themselves publicly prior to action by the council. The vehicle issue, i.e., Should transit be expanded by bus, PRT, or rail rapid? was on everyone's mind. It was my intent for the council to hire advocate lawyers to represent each of the positions. We put out a great deal of money in the council for planning consultants, and it seemed to me that advocate consultants with training in marshalling facts and arguments might be useful. As a teacher of trial practice, I think there is a lot to be said for the use of the adversary system of truth determination in situations as well as in the courtroom, particularly when you are dealing with areas where the truth is not revealed. All too often the viewpoints are presented in incompetent or inarticulate fashion by various untrained spokesmen. It seemed to me that this might present a new area for advocacy—not representing a client but a position before the decisional body. That body would retain the lawyer and tell him what position he was to represent and then give him enough money, time, and experts to prepare for the public hearing. He then can be in a position to cross-examine the experts and consultants for the

opposing positions and, of course, have his experts cross-examined also.

Particularly in the transportation planning area but in other areas too, some mechanism should be found to peel away the present slickness of some of the consultant products and get down to basics. Speaking of consultants, I might note that our committee used consultants a little differently from the way they are normally used. We did have a team of consultants to assist on the transportation planning process, but we used them basically as resource people. I told them we did not want 40-page reports and maps after the fact but wanted to use them as experts to assist us while we are in the process of making our decision. As you recall, we were making those decisions as we went along, and we had no intention of contracting the decision out to them or to our staff for that matter. We insisted that our consultants be present and respond verbally to the questions asked by the committee or to the audience. If they did not have the information that we needed, we would expect them to bring it to us at a subsequent meeting. It was a little nerve-racking at first for the consultants, but they soon adjusted to it and seemed to thrive on the challenge of being a resource participant in the decisional process. We also insisted that the consultants publicly criticize our staff product as we went along. This as you know poses a traumatic problem for consultants because they know that the future consultant recommendations generally come from staff not from the policy-makers. Thus, this may be fairly strong medicine to expect public consultant criticism of staff product. Our transportation planning staff happened to be the kind of people who enjoyed a debate and were not so stuck on their own ideas or theories that criticism was a threat and not a challenge. I suspect this is not always going to be the case.

After our 3 public hearings on the tentative plan, we then firmed the plan up a bit more and scheduled it for a formal public hearing. On December 14, the council adopted a final version of the transportation plan by a vote of 14 to 1. The formal public hearing in this case was not totally wasted, and in fact changes were made in the plan as a result of the hearing.

The present status of the council's transportation plan is, as I indicated in my opening, still in doubt. The 1971 law said that the Transit Commission should implement our transportation plan. The present Transit Commission has no intention of implementing our plan, and has gone to the legislature in an attempt to secure approval of its own plan. The Transit Commission members see the dispute in the terms of vehicle selection. They want a 57-mile automated rail subway system, and the council plan rejects this in favor of a vastly expanded bus service with busways leading into automated dual-mode operation when the technology becomes available. This is clearly not a vehicle decision at all but a basic system decision with profound implications in terms of the development and growth of the area. The Transit Commission in our area has substantial support for its plan. Rail transit is the glamour mode of the 70s in our area because many politicians believe it will solve all urban area problems, including environmental impact, air pollution, and traffic congestion.

I wish I could report that our effort at citizen participation in the regional transportation planning process was a success, but I cannot do so at this time. It was an immediate success as far as the council was concerned because it had a demonstrated impact on what we think was the quality of our decision. Suggestions from the citizens were incorporated in the plan and probably would not have been in the plan if citizens had not been present. The problem is that the final political decision has yet to be made, and we may merely have engaged in an interesting exercise in futility.

In addition to the I-394 study that involves the 4-member steering committee, the Twin City area has one other interesting attempt at citizen participation in our so-called Northtown Corridor Study. There, the consultant has held a number of public meetings presenting a number of alternatives alignments. This has involved a great number of local public officials and citizens. I think it is successful in creating a consensus on timing and routing in what could have been a very controversial highway alignment in our northern suburbs. This is not clear yet, for the study is not completed, but intensive effort by the consultants and particularly an attempt to present real alternatives rather than pat solutions seem to be instrumental in developing a good atmosphere in that particular corridor.

Thus far, I have discussed citizen participation in our transportation planning process. We are attempting to apply the same technique to our other regional functional planning areas. At the present time, the Human Resource Committee is trying to develop a metropolitan health plan. If you think that there are difficult problems in developing a regional long-range plan for highways and transit, then you should know that the problems in developing social plans, such as for health care, are staggering. Not only is there the lack of much government involvement in the system, but also there is the difficulty of the health planners to think in terms of problems or issues rather than of solutions. The necessity for citizen participation in the health area becomes virtually a religion for some, and we have attempted to apply the lessons we have learned in the transportation planning process to the health area. We recently held our first meeting on a set of questions developed in a series of previous meetings as to what the issues in health are. We have written to all the interest groups we could think of asking for debate and comment. We are, in fact, scheduling debates on each of the major issues in the health area and asking various lawyers to act as spokesmen for some of the positions. The media is, of course, invited again as are any of the interested people. The chambers were packed when we took up primary health care questions. The problem in this area, I am told, is that the providers, that is, the doctors, hospital, pharmacists, and nursing home operators, are prepared to debate this issue but that the average person interested in health care is not. However, there are some very interesting citizen groups, including a new student research group that was spawned from the Nader movement and that has taken a great interest in health and is in a position to provide a fair amount of advocacy for us.

Another committee in council is undertaking to develop a total development framework plan for the area; that is to say, What kind of growth policy or restraints on growth and land use and timing controls do we want or are necessary in the 7-county area? It is described as the Mt. Everest of planning, and no metropolitan area has scaled it yet. It has been much more difficult for us to formulate debatable questions in this area, but we hope that the process started in transportation can continue here.

I should also mention in the transportation area the study conducted jointly by 3 municipalities and the Metropolitan Council involving traffic patterns around our most successful regional shopping area at Southdale. The historical transportation planning for the area has proved inadequate, and it turns out that in and around this particular regional shopping center the traffic patterns and other developments are behaving much like the central city. There was obviously great interest in determining what could be done about it. Suggestions included what sort of automated people-mover could be used in the area to help with internal traffic. The consultant study received a fair amount of local public attention. However, the study itself was prepared and presented by the consultants alone. In other words, the consultants had presented their solutions to the people for reaction. It seemed to me that this is fairly typical of the transportation planning process in the past and is what we on the council have been trying to get away from. We believe that generalist policy-makers should be making the decisions in each of these functional areas. They are obviously not expert in these areas, and they are at the mercy of the functional experts unless they get assistance. They need assistance that comes from the clash of ideas in terms of public debate by various advocates, and that requires, it seems to me, careful attention to shaping the basic questions for debate so that the decision-makers are not at the mercy of their staffs, the consultants, or their own preconceived emotional ideas on a given subject.

The council seeks citizen involvement in the planning process for another reason. Planning, like the law, should not concern itself with trifles. Important things are being planned, and these things have got to be political. The attempt of planners to remove themselves from political processes has given planning the lack of clout it often deserves. The problem with many politicians is that they are always worried about "they." "They" is often the last person to call or the last person they have talked to. A hundred people filling a room can intimidate and have in fact intimidated the council. Logic will tell you that 100 people can in no way represent the metropolitan area, and it is important, therefore, that the decision-makers have a broad enough contact with the public to understand the political implications of their planning decisions and not be

influenced unduly by aroused single-purpose constituents.

Several other ideas in terms of citizen participation are going on in the metropolitan area independent of the council, and I think they are worthy of brief note. The Citizens League has pioneered in a study that recommended "sub-urbs" in the city. It has set forth ways to expand the participation of citizens in Minneapolis government. The report basically makes note of the trends toward centralization and bigness at a regional level and the need for decentralization to the neighborhoods. The attempt is to generate experienced and elected general-purpose citizen groups in the neighborhoods as a means of advising city hall or anyone else including highway departments or councils as to the desires of the citizens of a particular neighborhood. Single-purpose or ad hoc groups do not present balanced neighborhood views. Many do not have adequate internal decision-making mechanisms. There needs to be a group with a broad enough interest or geographical base to achieve a balanced neighborhood view. Thus far it has not been implemented in Minneapolis. Although the Minneapolis City Council has given some support to it, many view it as a threat to their power even though the neighborhood groups would be only institutionalized advisory groups. In fairness to Minneapolis, it should be said that its city charter is one that political scientists can prove will not work. It does, but I think only because the structure is so bad that the only way that the government works at all is by a tremendous amount of citizen cooperation on seemingly hundreds of committees and task forces.

In contrast, St. Paul, the other Twin City, has had historically an oligarchical form of decision-making. That is to say, in Minneapolis 50 select people in one room can reach a consensus and still not guarantee a result, but in St. Paul, historically, 5 of the right people in a room can reach an agreement and guarantee almost any result. Perhaps as a result, St. Paul is now in the process of trying to get more citizen participation into its decision-making, and the mayor's office has issued for city council consideration a report that urges setting up a number of general purpose neighborhood community councils to involve citizens in the governmental issues of the city.

Citizen participation is the latest thing in public decision-making. I see no abatement of the claims of an increasingly well-educated population for a bigger role in governmental planning. Much has been made of the claims of the poor and the minorities for participation in decisions affecting them. These pressures will continue unabated. But I see additional pressures coming from our suburbs filled with educated but underused men and particularly women who seek a piece of the decisional action without necessarily paying the price of direct political and electoral activity. The ballot is no longer enough for more and more people. My perceptions as to what has happened in the Twin Cities are not necessarily shared by others in a planning role in our area. From a vantage point on the Metropolitan Council, I see that we are still grappling imperfectly with the challenge of trying to obtain citizen judgments in endeavors that have long-range and widely scattered effects rather than those that are short-range and localized. We think at this time that benefits are achieved by open planning that is widely publicized and involves full public debate before and by as many informed citizens as one can induce to participate.