

RESEARCH AND OPINION

Creating Metropolitan/Regional Government: The Tales of Five Cities

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Overview

Recent developments in metropolitan Milwaukee have created renewed interest in the idea of metropolitan/regional government. This paper provides a backdrop for revisiting this issue, by both offering an overview and presenting five succinct case examples: Indianapolis, Indiana; Miami-Dade County, Florida; Louisville, Kentucky; Jacksonville, Florida; and Portland, Oregon.

Over the past several decades, Milwaukee, like other metropolitan areas in the United States, has experienced an increase in the number of local governments as people moved away from central cities to form suburban communities. The sprawl of urban populations into rural areas and the proliferation of local governments have together stimulated interest in the idea of metropolitan/regional government, both the opportunities and challenges inherent in such structures and in the forms they have taken in other metropolitan areas.

Urban America crossed into the 21st century amid many calls for local government reform, with significant focus on creating new forms of regional or metropolitan government. Pressing problems, fiscal constraints and the regional nature of urban life all have stimulated renewed

scrutiny of current patterns of local governance across the nation. New forms of regional collaboration and consolidation of smaller units of government into larger, metropolitan ones are among the recommendations being voiced as panaceas for contemporary urban ills.

Despite current interest, it is useful to remember that proposals for metropolitan or regional government are far from new. Indeed, reform proposals of this type date back more than a half century. Across the urban landscape, there are notable examples of communities that have embraced some form of metropolitan government. Five of these pioneers in metropolitan reform are described at the end of this report.

The pioneers are, however, few in number. As notable as these efforts to create metropolitan government are, in many more communities in the United States metropolitan government proposals were defeated at the polls or otherwise blocked politically by urban residents and leaders. Historically, the mantle of metropolitan reform has been more often rejected than embraced.

Given the recent resurgence of interest in and proposals aimed at metropolitan governance, it is timely to review past efforts at regional government (including an understanding of the actual

governmental structures created) and to examine the ideas that have propelled regional collaboration from idea to reality.

This report begins with an examination of the impetus for change and the historical roots of metropolitan government, and provides thumbnail sketches of the metropolitan and regional governance efforts undertaken in the five cities identified above. Sources for more information on these communities are also provided.

The Impetus for Metropolitan Government

The early 20th century saw a sharp increase in the number of local governments, as people moved away from central cities to form independent suburban communities, eventually creating what has been termed a “crazy quilt” pattern of local government. The proliferation of automobiles and highways and, more recently, the advent of new information and communications technologies, have stimulated growth farther and farther from the original urban core.

This pattern is familiar to residents of the Milwaukee area. As defined by the U.S. Bureau of the Census, metropolitan Milwaukee is now composed of four counties (Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Washington and Waukesha), with a combined population





of just over 1.5 million people. Milwaukee County, with a 2000 population of 940,164, is the core county of the metropolitan area and includes 19 municipalities (ranging from the City of Milwaukee, with 596,974 residents, to River Hills, with a population of 1,631).

Across the four-county metropolitan area¹, 191 units of government operate, including 58 cities (incorporated municipalities), 32 townships, 48 special districts (other than schools) and 53 school districts. These governmental units and the number of people they serve vary greatly across the metropolis, similar to the pattern of most American communities.

Multiple local governments govern citizens in metropolitan areas simultaneously, the exact number depending upon residential location. For example, a resident in the City of Milwaukee is governed (and taxed) by an array of local governing bodies that include Milwaukee County, City of Milwaukee, Metropolitan Milwaukee Sewerage District, Milwaukee Area Technical College and special districts created to support the Greater Milwaukee Convention and Visitors Bureau and the construction of Miller Park.

This pattern of urban growth in Milwaukee—from central city to metropolis—is typical of most major urban areas across the nation. This pattern creates a substantial challenge for governance at the local level. During the 19th century, urban governments arose haphazardly, with no clear governance model, in response to the pressures of large-scale concentrations of human beings living and working in very close proximity to each other. Population density gave rise to the need for police and fire protection, sanitation, streets and roads, street lighting and other urban infrastructure features. Later, these functions were expanded to include services to enhance public health and alleviate poverty.

The growth of urban populations and the corresponding rise in publicly-provided services and infrastructure created many opportunities for governmental abuse for private gain. A national reform effort, known as the Progressive Movement arose in the late 1800s, pressing for wide-scale reform to curb the power of political parties and machines and to advance the values of

fairness, efficiency and modern management in local government.

The second era of local government reform occurred around the midpoint of the 20th century, as concern arose about the wisdom of a local government system characterized by the proliferation of municipalities and other governmental units. Reformers argued that more governments meant duplication of services and less efficient governmental operation. Typical of this reform approach was the Committee for Economic Development (CED) in New York that issued a report in 1966 calling for a reduction by at least 80 percent in the number of local governments in the United States.² CED argued that very few local government units are large enough—in population, area or taxable resources—to apply modern methods in solving current and future problems.

The arguments in favor of metropolitan reform and more regionalized governance were compelling to many reformers and policy analysts, particularly those based in corporate cultures. To solve the problems of local government fragmentation, reformers proposed consolidation of governments within a county or region, thereby reducing the number of overlapping and redundant jurisdictions in an effort to streamline services and administration, enhance efficiency, rationalize patterns of service delivery, make government more “understandable” to citizens and create opportunities to shift resources from wealthier areas to poorer ones.

Metropolitan and Regional Governments: Variations on a Theme

The metropolitan and regional governments that have been created are not uniform—there is no one single model for reform. In fact, while sharing a general faith that metropolitan governance will generate positive results, each city’s efforts are in some ways unique. There are at least three major prototypes for metropolitan governance:

- **Single-tier governments** are the most comprehensive in terms of the scope and breadth of power concentrated in

a unit of government that consolidates the county, the central city and most, if not all, suburban jurisdictions in the county. For example, the consolidation of Jacksonville-Duval County in Florida in 1967 created a single governing structure at the county level. There is a single chief executive and legislature that passes and implements policy for the region as a whole.

- **Federated approach.** A second model uses a federated approach to governance. Two-tier governments are a form of power-sharing between localities and the county government. Individual municipal governments are retained, although the scope of their powers is generally diminished as the county government takes on expanded roles and powers. The Miami-Dade County consolidated government, for example, gives cities some power over zoning and planning, fire and police services, and parks and recreation. Former county services are now provided by Metropolitan Dade County, which has also assumed responsibilities for libraries, public transportation, public works, waste disposal, and water and sewer services.
- **Regional focus.** The third structural type is regional in focus, creating a new and large regional unit to provide services. For example, Portland’s Metropolitan Service District cuts across county boundaries to provide services to all urbanized cities in the Portland metropolitan area.

Metropolitan Reform Hits Roadblocks

Despite success in communities like Indianapolis, Portland, Jacksonville, and Miami, metropolitan and regional government reforms were not positively embraced in many other American cities. In referendum after referendum, a majority of urban residents said “no” to metropolitan government achieved through consolidation of existing units, including their own. Between 1921 and 1996, only 23 of the 134 referendums for consolidation have passed.³ Lawmakers



have found it increasingly difficult to convince the broader public that consolidation will have the impact that the reformers suggest.

Why were local residents resistant to reform? One answer relates to **local autonomy**. Residents typically identify strongly with their own community. They see its name on police cars, fire trucks and signs posted at transportation entry points. They often take pride in their community and serve as local boosters. They grow accustomed to their government's size, operation and scale. Consolidation threatened residents by proposing to eliminate their own unit and replace it with a much larger, unknown and difficult to imagine "metropolitan unit." In the face of uncertainty, the status quo often seemed preferable to many voters.

Another concern about metropolitan reform focused on **worries about government size**. Despite the logic that a larger, integrated governing unit would reduce duplication and create efficiencies, substantial doubts persisted about how much saving would be achieved. Large-scale governmental units, like the federal government, were not typically seen as models of efficiency, and images of a large, impersonal bureaucracy were not attractive. Building on these feelings, opponents of reform sometimes played the "tax" card, arguing that taxes would become higher under a metropolitan governing arrangement—even while advocates claimed that consolidation would create administrative efficiencies that would reduce governing costs.

Another factor working against regional reform and metropolitan government in many communities centered on **political representation and political power**. Creating larger governmental units threatened the emerging political power of racial and ethnic groups. Creation of larger governing units, and typically larger electoral districts, worked to dilute the political power of African American, Hispanic and other groups that proved capable of electing members of city councils in central cities. This issue worked against creation of metropolitan government in many communities, and has challenged the operation of such governments that have been created.

Metropolitan Reform Persists

Given the failure in the 1960s and 1970s of many communities to adopt governmental consolidation proposals, one might presume that the movement would be "dead," that this type of reform was not politically viable. However, just the opposite is true. Calls for "regional solutions," "metropolitan" or "regional" government and related reforms are growing once again. The current stimulants of governance reform at the local level are many; some are rationales used to justify past regional efforts, while others are more relevant to current conditions. The factors generating contemporary interest in regional and metropolitan collaborations, partnerships and government include:

- **Economic development and growth.** In a global economy, many economists believe that creating a strong local economy requires an effective clustering of regional industries that build on natural and historical bases, often coupled with public partnerships, which may support economic development, infrastructure, marketing and reform of regulatory policies that reduce corporate profits and economic investment in the area. The models of the Silicon Valley in California and the Route 128 corridor in Massachusetts—leaders in the emerging information technology industries—have shown that regional collaboration and identity can bolster the economies of suburbs and cities alike.
- **Urban sprawl.** By the last decades of the 20th century, the reality of urban sprawl was generally seen as a negative feature of urban life. The constant spreading out of urban populations had resulted in a significant reduction in green space and land for agriculture, negative ecological impacts like air pollution and traffic congestion. All of these generated questions about the wisdom of a system of fragmented local government that proved ill-suited to responding the environmental and life quality challenges that reach

beyond individual local government jurisdictions.

- **Governmental efficiency.** General citizen discontent with paying taxes has remained a strong feature of American politics for the past quarter century. Public dissatisfaction with tax increases has placed strong pressure on local governments to find new ways to reduce or hold the line on costs, an impetus to reconsider new forms of intergovernmental collaboration.
- **Inequities in services and outcomes.** Urban sprawl and the proliferation of suburban governments has increased the disparity between wealth and needs in urban life. While poorer citizens with greater service needs remain in the urban core—unable to afford higher priced homes in suburban communities and sometimes facing discrimination based on race, ethnicity or economic class—wealthier citizens live in suburban communities where service needs are much less significant.
- **Regional needs require regional solutions.** As metropolitan areas have grown and populations have decentralized across the metropolis, some regional, rather than local, challenges have emerged. Prominent in this regard is transportation. For businesses to operate effectively, they must be able to attract workers who can efficiently travel to and from the workplace. The decentralization of both population and commercial enterprises means that workers and the workplace are no longer in close proximity to each other. For a metropolitan economy to work well, an efficient transportation system is required. Creating regional transportation strategies can be a challenge in fragmented areas where no regional level of government operates to handle the transportation dilemma.
- **Shared responsibility for core facilities/infrastructure.** Even as urban populations have spread out, they still tend to rely on a limited set of important facilities and programs that, because of their nature, can only be offered in one or a few locations in



the metropolis. Sports arenas and stadiums, performing arts centers and museums are among the type of facilities that can be supported only in a limited number of venues. Typically, but not exclusively, these facilities are located in the central city of metropolitan area, while the patrons, users and beneficiaries are drawn from throughout the local region. In some communities, the recognition of the regional importance of facilities (and sometimes the regional economic impact of their operation) has stimulated the creation of governing arrangements that provide financial support from residents and/or communities throughout the local region. In our own area, the regional authorities created to support

the building of Miller Park and the operation of the Greater Milwaukee Convention and Visitors Bureau are examples of such regional authorities.

The Challenge Today

The strategies for regional or metropolitan governance are many. The appropriate strategy for a given community depends on political considerations as well as on local and regional needs. As described in the pages that follow, past reforms have used different approaches, including consolidation of city and county government, two-tiered forms where city and counties create a federated governance system, and expanded use of regional

authorities created for specific purposes (e.g., economic development, regional transportation). Indianapolis, Portland and Jacksonville offer differing approaches—models that can be considered in Milwaukee as county government is re-explored.

The debates that surrounded the creation of metropolitan reforms and the work of public choice theorists remind us to question the assumptions that underlie reform. Earlier assumptions that service duplication was rampant, for example, were shown to be incorrect; rather, many governmental authorities operating in the same area were shown to have created rational plans for operating services without duplication. Those considering reform are wise to critically assess the arguments and rationales that underlie reform proposals to ensure that reform is based on a sound and real understanding of local conditions.

Two factors will loom large over any effort to create metropolitan or regional government: local autonomy and political representation. Residents in community after community have shown pride in their local government. Particularly in suburban communities, such pride and the belief that smaller scale means more responsiveness to citizen needs and preferences have been strong motivations to protect jurisdictions from being eliminated through consolidation. Many reform plans that initially considered elimination of municipalities abandoned this approach after experiencing strong citizen backlash. One can expect this preference for local autonomy to operate in Milwaukee-area municipalities, even if support grows for some form of regional or metropolitan action to resolve larger-scale problems and challenges.

Those who propose regional or metropolitan government must also be cognizant of the impact on various constituencies, particularly on African American, Hispanic and other groups whose political power within central cities, including Milwaukee, have grown substantially. Creating larger units can diminish the power of groups that have worked diligently to overcome discrimination and increase political power within the community.

Another View: the Public Choice Approach

Amid the debates about metropolitan reform, a group of scholars and analysts associated with the “public choice” approach raised significant questions about the wisdom of comprehensive consolidation of city and county governments.⁴ Several public choice theorists, notably Charles Tiebout, argued that the fragmentation of governments actually offered *advantages* to local residents.⁵ A large number of local governments was seen as providing residents with expanded *choice* about the type of community in which they can choose to live. Communities are seen as each offering an array of services and a tax package to finance them.

Given mobility within a metropolitan area, citizens have the opportunity to select the community that best meets their preference for taxes and services—what has been termed “voting with one’s feet”—while maintaining personal and family access to work and other amenities in the region. Further, because communities wish to retain their residents (and the tax base they support), communities will actually compete—that is alter service and tax packages—to attract or retain residents. In this way, governmental fragmentation is seen as enabling a marketplace of choices for urban residents and the operation of market works toward sustaining responsiveness to resident preferences about taxes and services.

Public choice advocates recognized many of the efficiency arguments put forward by the metropolitan government supporters, especially the recognition that some communities may be too small to benefit from the economies of scale associated with service delivery. The reform solution, according to public choice advocates, is not wholesale consolidation that would eliminate the advantages of the local government marketplace. Instead, communities would be encouraged to seek alternative arrangements for service delivery, such as contracting with another community or forming a service compact whereby two or communities create and operate a fire service jointly (i.e., the North Shore Fire Department in the Milwaukee area).



Finally, if reforms are enacted to create regional or metropolitan governance, it is important to recognize that the action represents an experiment. Urban America has witnessed only a few examples of metropolitan and regional government. Surprisingly little research has been conducted to examine what fiscal and political outcomes have been generated by reform, and the research that does exist suggests varied findings. For example, several studies have found that there is little relationship between governmental consolidation and expansion of economic growth. Other studies have questioned whether consolidated systems reduce costs of governance over the long haul.⁶ Although consolidated governments do allow more concise and regional development planning, the long-term economic payoffs are unclear.

Therefore, where regional or metropolitan reforms are activated, it is important that mechanisms be created to track the impact, both short and long term, of reform. Such tracking will enable citizens to understand how new forms of government operate and to assess the utility of these new governing arrangements. Short-term assessments also provide opportunities for mid-course corrections where shortcomings can be identified and strategic modifications made to aid reforms to achieve their desired consequences.

Tales of Five Cities

Indianapolis and Marion County, Indiana—Unigov

Primary Source: James C. Owen and York Willburn, *Governing Metropolitan Indianapolis: The Politics of Unigov* (Berkeley, CA, University of California Press, 1985).

The City of Indianapolis expanded its boundaries to include all of Marion County beginning in 1970. The resulting consolidation, Unigov, is the only consolidation of a large city and county without a referendum to occur in the United States. It was facilitated by simultaneous action of the mayor's office,

the governorship and the Republican-controlled state legislature. The legislative environment did not require a referendum for consolidation of city and county governments.

The consolidation involved multiple units of the current city and county government, which were combined into one civil government, including the consolidation of the city and county councils, resulting in the City-County Council. The basic structure of Unigov is divided into three branches similar to the federal government: executive, legislative and judicial.

When Unigov was implemented, local government leaders, stakeholders in the community, business leaders and good government groups all favored plans for consolidation. Elected officials saw consolidation as a way of increasing the economy and efficiency of government, while business leaders saw consolidation as a way of cementing their interests in the decision-making process. Community stakeholders and good government groups perceived consolidation as a way to create a more responsible government with a region wide focus, rather than a parochial one.

Democrats were the most vocal group opposing the consolidation effort, fearing that the Republican-dominated county would diminish their power. African Americans feared consolidation would lead to a dilution of their power. Government officials in the excluded cities and towns were opposed to the consolidation effort because they did not want to lose control over local decision-making. They felt they could provide more cost-efficient services than under the proposed regional system. Anti-tax groups feared consolidation would increase property taxes. Rural residents who lived on the fringes of Marion County also felt consolidation would result in them paying for services that would primarily benefit city residents.

Jacksonville-Duval County, Florida

Primary Source: Bert Swanson, "Jacksonville: Consolidation and Regional Governance," in H.V. Savitch and Ronald K. Vogel (Eds.), *Regional Politics, America*

in a Post-City Age (Thousand Oaks, CA, Sage Publications, 1996, 229-48).

The Jacksonville and Duval County government is a single-tier, fully consolidated metropolitan government that merged Jacksonville and Duval County in 1967. The Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) is composed of Duval, Clay, Nassau and St. John's Counties, while the consolidated government is coterminous with Duval County. The Metropolitan Planning Organization, which addresses transportation issues across the region, is the sole inter-governmental agency and is dominated by Jacksonville. The state of Florida has established a number of agencies that regulate the use of water resources and reviews land use plans. The Jacksonville Municipal Electric Utility serves customers in adjoining counties. The relationship among the four county governments is mixed and may be characterized as generally cooperative, although not well coordinated, while the competition among counties for economic development still exists.

There were several factors behind the desire to consolidate Jacksonville and Duval County. The primary concern was the breakdown of several government services in the Jacksonville-Duval County area. Other reasons for consolidation were non-accredited high schools, high crime rates in the city, high government service costs, fire protection, racial unrest, property deterioration, high degrees of water/air pollution, slowing economic growth, garbage collection, poor land use (planning and zoning) and inadequate sewer and water facilities. It is important to note that the consolidation effort was **not** driven by a tax revolt. Reformers emphasized efficiency and the delivery of improved services for equal, or even increased, taxes.

Louisville and Jefferson County, Kentucky

Primary Source: H.V. Savitch and Ronald K. Vogel, "Louisville: Compacts and Antagonistic Cooperation", in H. V. Savitch and Ronald K. Vogel (Eds.), *Regional Politics: America in a Post-City Age* (Thousand Oaks, CA, Sage Publications, 130-158).



Louisville and Jefferson County originally pursued an incremental and pragmatic approach to metropolitan reform. The reform fell short of the desired one- and two-tier comprehensive government restructuring favored by advocates of metropolitan government, but still went beyond various formal and informal inter-local government understandings advocated by “public choice” proponents. Louisville and Jefferson County adopted a joint city-county compact in 1986 after failed attempts at consolidation in 1982 and 1983. As a result of the compact, a new city-county economic development agency was established, which resulted in a strong public-private partnership in the community. This partnership became institutionalized in a formal organization that tied the mayor, county judge and top business leaders into a corporate-centered regime.

The compact was a process of inter-governmental cooperation that was institutionalized by local ordinances rather than a single document. Between 1985 and 1995, the community attempted to restructure its economic development efforts to make them more effective. Emphasis was placed on infrastructure projects and local government organization.

In 2000, Louisville and Jefferson County citizens voted to actually merge city and county governments. A countywide mayor and council of 26 members will be elected this year (2002) to replace existing alderman, county commissioners and the judge-executive. The newly elected government, which will take office next year (2003), will begin the task of streamlining various departments under the new administrative structure.

Proponents of consolidation believed it would reduce governmental squabbling, suburban sprawl and the population drain in Louisville while maintaining economic development. Supporters also believed consolidation would be a catalyst to the business community, allowing it to keep pace with Cincinnati, Indianapolis and Nashville. Civic ego would also be improved with a consolidated government by eliminating overlapping services and providing a single “voice” to speak for the community to corporate America.

Opponents of the consolidation efforts in Louisville were concerned with the reduction of services to small cities, especially police and fire. Contracts with private waste haulers were also an issue for small cities. Special interest groups believed that consolidation would dilute influence and increase the domination of suburbs in the metropolitan government structure. The merger would help businesses at the expense of the poor and minorities. Blue-collar suburban communities resented the idea of forced school busing and distrusted the urban politicians and affluent suburbs. Consolidation, they feared, would result in their community being overlooked, just as it had been in the past.

Miami and Dade County, Florida—Metro

Primary Source: Genie Stowers, “Miami: Experiences in Regional Government,” in H.V. Savitch and Ronald K. Vogel (Eds.), *Regional Politics: America in a Post-City Age* (Thousand Oaks, CA, Sage Publications, 185-205).

In 1957, Dade County created a modified two-tier system of government called Metropolitan Dade County, or simply “Metro”. The system is modified because the citizens in the unincorporated portions of Dade County receive all of their services from Metro (the upper tier) and therefore have only one tier of government at the local level, whereas citizens in the 27 incorporated cities remaining in the county receive services from both their city (the lower tier) and Metro.

The adopted charter left the county and 27 incorporated cities in existence. The consolidated school system, which was already in place, remained a separate entity, as did the judicial system. There are 13 at-large county commissioners with policy-making and legislative powers. The creation of Metro necessitated the creation of a county manager position, which included several duties, including county reorganization and budget preparation.

During the 1940s the local government’s inability to deal with current fiscal problems began to escalate and

leaders began consolidating some services. Cities faced the problem of two large waves of poor, Cuban immigrants. At the same time, the middle class residents of the cities were moving into the unincorporated areas of the county. Cities lost their tax base, and the county did not have the infrastructure, or the taxing ability, to adequately fund or deliver services to a larger population.

In 1954, a local government study confirmed the nature of the crisis, finding that the levels of services and taxes across the cities in Dade County widely varied and that the county services were also poorly managed. The study recommended creating a new government structure capable of handling area-wide disparities and resolving the fragmentation issue that was currently plaguing the county’s governing bodies. This new federated system allowed current cities to remain in existence, while an area-wide government also was provided.

The promotion of consolidation was met with few complaints. Cities needed the income gained from county taxes to provide needed services to a growing immigrant community, and new county residents wanted more services provided.

However, some recent issues came in the aftermath of consolidation. The most prominent was the lack of adequate representation of racial and ethnic minorities on the Metro board. A lawsuit filed under the Voting Rights Act in 1986, and the subsequent decision in 1993, forced Metro to reform its election system from an at-large to a district-based system.

Portland, Oregon—Metro

Primary Source: Arthur C. Nelson, “Portland: The Metropolitan Umbrella,” in H.V. Savitch and Ronald K. Vogel (Eds.), *Regional Politics: America in a Post-City Age* (Thousand Oaks, CA, Sage Publications, 253-71).

Portland Metro is the directly elected regional government that serves more than 1.3 million residents in Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington Counties and the 24 cities in the Portland, Oregon metropolitan area. Its primary mission is to manage growth in the region.



Metro was formed in 1979 when voters of the region approved the transition from an appointed council of governments (Columbia Region Association of Governments, or CRAG) to an elected body. In 1992, voters approved a home-rule charter that established Metro as having primary responsibility for regional land-use and transportation planning. The charter also outlines Metro's other responsibilities, such as solid waste disposal, operation of arts and cultural facilities, parks and zoos, and other functions sanctioned by the voters.

Metro officials are accountable to the citizens of the region. Metro is the only directly elected regional planning body in the nation. Its governing body includes the Metro Council (seven nonpartisan members elected from seven districts for four-year terms), which is responsible for Metro's policy formulation, legislation and budgeting. An executive officer, elected at-large, is responsible for daily management.

From 1950 to the late 1970s, the Portland metropolitan area saw the rapid proliferation of government units and special districts. Concerned local and state officials, and the general public, became increasingly concerned that the special districts were too small to provide adequate services and were draining local resources. This led to a number of changes in the early 1980s with the creation of a regional sewerage agency, a Metropolitan Service District (with limited powers and even more limited funding), and the Columbia Region Association of Governments. Additionally, the increasing number of residents in unincorporated areas of Multnomah County created a fiscal crisis. This called for some form of regional authority to monitor and control service delivery.

Metro has had both popular and political success over the years due to its rather limited authority. It operates in conjunction with a variety of other governments in the metropolitan area and, in comparison with other governmental bodies, has a miniscule budget. At the time of Metro's creation, there was little disagreement among government officials or the electorate. It was seen as a rational method of streamlining service delivery throughout the region.

Recently Metro has come under some attack. With the creation of an urban growth boundary around Portland, Metro and other agencies had hoped to reduce urban sprawl, clean up brownfields and add to the quality of city life. However, opponents have argued that it has artificially increased the prices of land, and property taxes, for commercial and residential purposes.

Notes

¹ The U.S. Bureau of the Census defines the Milwaukee "Primary Metropolitan Statistical Area or PMSA" as the four counties of Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Washington and Waukesha. The bureau has another, broader definition, the "Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area or CMSA", that includes Racine county along with the four counties in the PMSA. This report focuses on the four-county metropolitan area, while recognizing that other analyses define an even broader region around Milwaukee as relevant to collaboration and governance. For example, current efforts in regional economic development and affordable housing are focusing on a seven-county Southeastern Wisconsin region that includes the four counties of the Milwaukee PMSA plus Racine, Kenosha and Walworth Counties. Until the 1980s, Racine and Kenosha counties were identified as a single metropolitan area by the census bureau. Today, Kenosha County is considered part of the Chicago metropolitan area, demonstrating the growing interdependence between the Chicago metropolitan area and Southeastern Wisconsin.

² Committee for Economic Development, *Modernizing Local Government* (New York, 1966).

³ T. Blodgett, "Current City-County Consolidation Attempts." National Association of Counties (Washington, D.C., 1996).

⁴ A useful summary of the public choice response to calls for consolidation of cities and counties is presented in Robert L. Bish and Vincent Ostrom, *Understanding Urban Government: Metropolitan Reform Reconsidered* (Washington, D.C., American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1973). See also Vincent Ostrom, Charles M. Tiebout and Robert Warren, "The Organization of Government in Metropolitan Areas: A Theoretical Inquiry," *American Political Science Review* 55 (October 1961), 831-842.

⁵ Charles M. Tiebout, "A Pure Theory of Local Expenditures." *Journal of Political Economy* 64 (October 1964), 416-424.

⁶ See David R. Morgan and Patrice Mareschal, "Central-City/Suburban Inequality and Metropolitan Political Fragmentation," *Urban Affairs Review* 34 (March, 1999), 578-596.

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