

Summary Case Assessment

The purpose of this section is to summarize the nature of the transit planning and decisionmaking process in the Twin Cities region in light of the guidelines listed in the Introduction to the case assessments. The summary therefore is divided into two parts: (1) Assessment of the Institutional Context and (2) Assessment of the Technical Planning Process.

1. ASSESSMENT OF THE INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

- **Forum for Decisionmaking.**—The State of Minnesota Metropolitan Reorganization Act of 1974 clarified the roles of the Metropolitan Council and the Metropolitan Transit Commission in transit planning. Full resolution of competition between these two organizations will come only after the present process of selecting a transportation development program is worked out. On the other hand, the coordination between transportation planning and land use and development planning has been very effective due to the activities of the Metropolitan Council in both these fields. The Minnesota State Legislature has provided the Metropolitan Council with one of the strongest and most comprehensive sets of powers given a regional agency anywhere in the country.
- **Accountability of Decisionmakers.**—The Metropolitan Council and Metropolitan Transit Commission are appointed bodies. Since members of both have relatively long-term appointments and no immediate ties to local officials, these institutions have developed a more regional approach to problem-solving.

Ž **Public Involvement.**—Both the Metropolitan Council and the Metropolitan Transit Commission maintain citizen advisory committees. However, the bulk of citizen response and contribution occurs outside the formal institutions through several sophisticated and influential citizen organizations.

2. ASSESSMENT OF THE TECHNICAL PLANNING PROCESS

- **Goals and Objectives.**—The Metropolitan Transit Commission's series of long-range studies selected a comprehensive set of goals and objectives and applied them in evaluating each study alternative.
- **Development of Alternatives.**—The range of alternatives considered in the first phases of the Metropolitan Transit Commission's long-range studies was consciously limited to conventional transit technology; in order to fully consider "new technology" transit, the commission launched a third phase. The recent automated small vehicle guideway systems study also demonstrates a meticulous approach to defining and developing alternatives.
- **Evaluation of Alternatives.**—Although evaluation procedures in the first Commission study were criticized for lacking exact quantitative values and the second for overgeneralizing the systems considered, the Small Vehicles Study is regarded as thorough and highly competent,