

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED CHANGES FOR CASCADE COUNTY BY THE CASCADE COUNTY STUDY COMMISSION

*Briefly, the proposed
changes include:*

CHARTER FORM

The Charter embodies a new Commission-Executive Form of government. The Charter would allow greater Local Control of local issues through Self-Governing Powers. However, the Charter is limited by state laws and by provisions in the Charter itself.

TAXATION LIMITS

The total (county) mill levy and mill value for Property Taxes would be Held at Current Levels, and a Review of the Taxation System would be Mandated. Also, No New Taxes could be imposed without approval of the voters.

REQUIRED ORDINANCES

The new County government would be required to enact ordinances concerning: a Plan of Operations, Purchasing and Inventory Policy, and a Personnel Policy and System.

COMMISSION-EXECUTIVE FORM

An elected 5-Member (part-time) Board of County Commissioners would be the legislative and policymaking body. An elected (full-time) County Executive would serve as the administrator of County affairs.

The County Executive could exercise Veto Power over the Commission, however, the Commission could override a veto with a majority-plus-one vote.

REPRESENTATION FROM DISTRICT

The county would be divided into Five Commission Districts. Each Commissioner would reside in his own district, but would be elected by a majority of all voters in the County.

This plan assures Rural Representation. One district is totally rural, and another is semi-rural with residents near and inside Great Falls. The other three districts lie completely in Great Falls.

SEPARATELY ELECTED OFFICIALS

This plan calls for 6 separately elected officials:

Auditor	Public Administrator
Clerk of Court	Sheriff-Coroner
County Attorney	Superintendent of Schools

All elected officials in Cascade County would continue to be selected in Partisan Elections.

APPOINTED OFFICIALS/DEPARTMENTS

Four previously elected positions would become appointive:

Assessor	Clerk & Recorder
Treasurer	Surveyor

The New Departments would be created to coordinate the activities of several existing departments and agencies:

Agriculture	Health & Human Services
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The appointments to these six positions would be made by the County Executive, with concurrence from the Commission.

Also, one county official could administer more than one department, at the discretion of the Commission.

The following article summarizes the changes proposed by the Cascade County Study Commission, and compares the changes to the present form of County Government.

1. The present form of commission government would be changed to a CHARTER FORM, separating the legislative and administrative responsibilities instead of being merged as they are now.

2. Presently, state law defines what our county government may do. The proposed

CHARTER would bring self-government powers to Cascade County and allow it to act in its own best interest.

3. In the present governing body, there are three full-time members. The recommended CHARTER would allow for five part-time members. This would allow more diverse representation, assuring view-point from all sections of the county.

4. At this time the term office is six years. The CHARTER would call for a four year term, which should cause the Commission to be more responsive to voters.

5. Presently, administrative powers are shared with other elected officials. The CHARTER would allow the Commission to be freed from administrative responsibilities to carry on the policy-making role and the County Executive would carry out the policy.

6. Currently there is no executive officer; the CHARTER calls for a County Executive elected to a four year term. This person would direct and supervise the administration of all departments except those of other separately elected officials. This would allow clear lines of authority, responsibility, and better overall coordination.

7. There are ten separately elected officials at this time; these would be reduced to six, eliminating the election of, Clerk & Recorder, Surveyor, Assessor, and Treasurer. These would be appointed positions.

8. The proposed CHARTER calls for the Clerk & Recorder, Treasurer, Assessor, Public Works Director, Health & Human Services Director, Director of Agriculture, and program heads to be brought under the direct supervision of the County Executive, and qualifications for these positions can be established by ordinance.

9. The Commission presently appoints department heads and other employees who are not elected; the CHARTER calls for the

County Executive to assume that responsibility.

10. The Clerk & Recorder prepares the budget at this time. The Study Commission proposes this duty be given to the County Executive, enabling this person to balance priorities set by the Commission with county-wide revenues.

11. Currently counties may levy property taxes by fund, up to the maximum limits specified by state law. The CHARTER would be able to limit and freeze the total property taxes that can be levied and increases must be approved by voters after a mandatory study.

12. Service delivery would be reorganized on the basis of function. For Example: All financial duties would be consolidated into one centralized office under the Treasurer. Currently, it is performed by elected officials and appointed boards, commissions, and special districts.

13. Under a CHARTER form of government amendments could be authorized by county voters, by citizen initiative or by Commission majority. This would allow changes to be made more easily when necessary.

14. The proposed CHARTER would also create mandated requirements for efficient County government operation. This would allow citizens, through ordinance process, to voice opinions.

MINORITY REPORT FILED

The Cascade County Study Commission adopted the Final Report by a unanimous vote. All Commissioners signed the report; additionally, a minority report was filed by two members of the Study Commission. The two members stated their objections to certain points of the total proposal while strongly supporting the Final Report as submitted.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Copies of the FINAL REPORT are AVAILABLE for public inspection at the following locations:

Great Falls:

Cascade County Courthouse — Election Department
Study Commission Office — 325 2nd Ave. N., room 104

County Surveyor's Office

Civic Center — City Manager's Office
Great Falls Public Library

Great Falls Public Works Department
Extension Office

State Highway Office

State School for the Deaf and Blind

Job Service Offices

Social Security Office

Great Falls Post Office

C. M. Russell Station Post Office

Great Falls School Dist. Admin. Building

Lewis & Clark Elementary

Mountain View Elementary

Chief Joseph Elementary

Meadow Lark Elementary

Morningside Elementary

Valley View Elementary

Longfellow Elementary

Riverview Elementary

Roosevelt Elementary

Sacajawea Elementary

Sunnyside Elementary

Whittier Elementary

Lincoln Elementary

West Elementary

Loy Elementary

North Junior High School

East Junior High School

C.M. Russell High School

Great Falls High School

Skyline Center

Vo-Tech School

Largent Education Center

Blessed Trinity School

Our Lady of Lourdes School

St. Joseph School

College of Great Falls

Native American Center

Black Eagle:

Black Eagle Community Center

Black Eagle Post Office

Ulm:

School District 85, Ulm Vaughn Road

Cascade:

Cascade Town Hall

Wedsworth Library

Senior Citizens Center

School District 3 & B

Vaughn:

School District 74

Vaughn Post Office

Sun River, Fort Shaw, Simms:

School District 97, Sun River

School District 6 & F, Fort Shaw, Simms

Sun River Valley Senior Center, Fort Shaw

Centerville:

School District 5 & C

Belt:

Belt Town Hall/Library

Belt Golden Agers Senior Center

School District 29 & D

Neihart:

Neihart Community Center

Deep Creek:

School District 95, Smith River Road

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452-VOTE