

August 22, 1996

## Letter to the Citizens of Richland County:

The Richland County Study Commission, elected by the voters on November 8, 1994, present the final report to the citizens of Richland County.

The purpose of the study commission, as defined in state law, is "to study the existing form and powers of a local government and procedures for delivery of local government services and to compare them with other forms available under the laws of the state."

The commission has sought advice and information from present and past elected officials as well as from similar forms of governments as our present form and that of the proposed form. The commission has appeared before various community organizations, other elected bodies and to the government classes of county schools. Public meetings were held and viewpoints, ideas and concerns were solicited.

In this final report we present our recommendations for an alternative form of government that we feel will provide the governmental services expected by the people both today and in the future. Our concern has been to provide a form of government that will be responsive to local citizens and provide the opportunity for devising solutions to local problems. We feel the citizens of Richland County can achieve these goals by adopting the Commission-Manager form of government, with self-governing powers.

After an intensive study of almost two years, it is the decision of the study commission to recommend changes in the structure and power of county government that will provide a governmental framework to meet the changing needs of this county. Problem areas that were identified during the course of the study by research, discussion, public hearings, testimony of public officials, and citizen surveys indicate that in exercising its traditional functions, county government lacks the authority it needs. If county government is to play a wider role it must have adequate legal authority to act. County government must also have more control over its organizational structure so that it can effectively oversee the performance of county functions.

The following areas of concern have emerged during almost two years of study, meetings and solicited input.

- 1. Local control over local problems.**
- 2. Government that is responsive to citizens.**
- 3. Government that is efficient.**
- 4. Government structure that allows maximum participation by citizens.**
- 5. Government with adequate "checks and balances."**
- 6. Government that allows for long term planning and organized development.**

In its traditional role as an administrative arm of state government, the organizational structure of the county may have been adequate. The current structure of ten separate elective offices and a three member elected commission has weaknesses that do not allow it to adequately handle the increased responsibility facing county government. The existing county commission lacks the authority to determine county wide needs, priorities and set policies. The existing

government lacks an administrative head, a person responsible for supervising the functions and services provided by county government to see that the goals of the county are carried out as efficiently as possible. At present, these functions and services are provided by ten separate offices and twenty-two (22) boards, commissions, and special districts. No one in county government has the authority to coordinate these offices and boards or to supervise their programs. Many are substantially independent of any control.

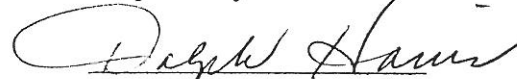
In the proposed form of government a commission of five members will act as a legislative body with the power to formulate county policy. The commissioners will have the authority to enact ordinances to carry out that policy. The responsibility of administering and enforcing these ordinances lies with the county manager.

The county manager, a professional administrator appointed by the commission "on the basis of merit only", is responsible for the administration of the programs and policies determined by the commission. Subject to the commission's general direction, the manager controls the hiring and firing of county personnel, directs and supervises the administration of all departments, prepares the budget, and is in charge of the business affairs of county government. The manager serves at the pleasure of the commission and may be replaced at any time.

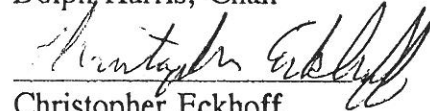
Creating a commission of five (5) members, elected from five (5) districts, districts established by area population, will assure the opportunity for individual representation with county wide perspectives.

The question of adopting this alternative form of government will be placed on the ballot November 5, 1996. We solicit your support for its adoption.

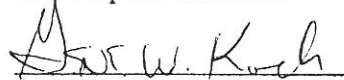
Respectfully submitted,



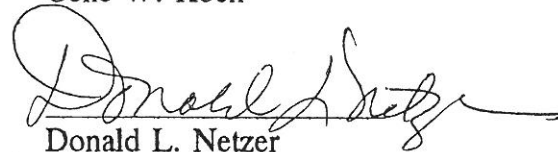
Dolph Harris, Chair



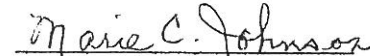
Christopher Eckhoff



Gene W. Koch



Donald L. Netzer



Marie C. Johnson

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Existing Plan of Government .....  | A |
| Proposed Plan of Government .....  | B |
| Plan Comparison .....  | C |
| Certificate of Apportionment with District Maps .....                    | D |
| Certificate of Date of Election .....                                    | E |
| Official Ballot .....  | F |
| Certificate Establishing First Primary & General Election<br>Dates ..... | G |

CERTIFICATE  
ESTABLISHING THE EXISTING PLAN OF GOVERNMENT  
FOR  
RICHLAND COUNTY, MONTANA

If retained by the voters, the government of Richland County shall be organized under the following provisions of MCA 7-3-111 which authorizes the elected county official form of government;

7-3-111. Statutory basis for elected county official government. (1) For the purpose of determining the statutory basis of existing units of local government after May 2, 1977, each unit of local government organized under the general statutes authorizing the elected county official form of government shall be governed by the following sections:

- (a) 7-3-401;
- (b) 7-3-402;
- (c) 7-3-412(3);
- (d) 7-3-413(1);
- (e) 7-3-414(1);
- (f) 7-3-415(2);
- (g) 7-3-416(2);
- (h) 7-3-417(2);
- (i) 7-3-418;
- (j) 7-3-432(1);
- (k) 7-3-433(1);
- (l) 7-3-434(1);
- (m) 7-3-435(1);
- (n) 7-3-436(1);
- (o) 7-3-437(1);
- (p) 7-3-438(1);
- (q) 7-3-439(6);
- (r) 7-3-440(1);
- (s) 7-3-441(6);
- (t) 7-3-442(6) if the county has not elected an auditor;

(2) This form has terms of 4 years for all elected officials except commissioners who are elected to 6-year terms. The commission consists of three members.

These sections establish the following form of government which shall be called the COMMISSION FORM.

**7-3-401. Commission form.** The commission form consists of an elected commission (which may also be called the council) and other elected officers as provided in this part. All legislative, executive, and administrative powers and duties of the local government not specifically reserved by law or ordinance to other elected officers shall reside in the commission. The commission shall

appoint the heads of departments and other employees, except for those appointed by other elected officials. Cities and towns which adopt this form may distribute by ordinance the executive and administrative powers and duties into departments headed by individual commissioners.

**7-3-402. Nature of government.** Local governments that adopt this form shall have general government powers.

**7-3-412 (3). Selection of commission members.** The commission shall be elected at large and nominated by a plan of nomination that may not preclude the possibility of the majority of the electors nominated candidates for the majority of the seats on the commission from persons residing in the district or districts where the majority of the electors reside.

**7-3-413 (1). Type of election.** Local government elections shall be conducted on a partisan basis.

**7-3-414 (1). Chairman of commission.** The chairman of the commission shall be elected by the members of the commission from their own number for a term established by ordinance.

**7-3-415 (2). Administrative assistants.** The commission may appoint one or more administrative assistants to assist them in the supervision and operation of the local government.

**7-3-416 (2). Terms of the commission members.** Commission members shall be elected for overlapping terms of office.

**7-3-417 (2). Size of commission and community councils.** The size of the commission, shall be three, and community councils to advise commissioners may be authorized by ordinance.

**7-3-418. Terms of elected officials.** The term of office of elected officials may not exceed 4 years, except the term of office for commissioners in counties adopting the form authorized by Article XI, section 3(2), of the Montana constitution may not exceed 6 years. Terms of office shall be established when the form is adopted by the voters.

**7-3-432 (1). Legal officer.** A legal officer (who may be called the county attorney) shall be elected.

**7-3-433 (1). Law enforcement officer.** A law enforcement officer (who may be called the sheriff) shall be elected.

**7-3-434 (1). Clerk and recorder.** A clerk and recorder shall be elected.

**7-3-435 (1). Clerk of district court.** A clerk of district court shall be elected.

**7-3-436 (1). Treasurer.** A treasurer shall be elected.

**7-3-437 (1). Surveyor.** A surveyor shall be elected.

7-3-438 (1). **Superintendent of schools.** A superintendent of schools shall be elected.

7-3-439 (6). **Assessor.** An assessor shall not be included in this form as a separate office.

7-3-440 (1). **Coroner.** A coroner shall be elected.

7-3-441 (6). **Public administrator.** A public administrator shall not be included in this form as a separate office.

7-3-442 (1). **Auditor.** An auditor shall be elected if the county has elected an auditor.

7-3-442 (6). **Auditor.** An auditor shall not be included in this form as a separate office.

We, the Study Commissioners of Richland County do hereby certify that this is the existing Plan of Government as established by Section 7-3-111 MCA.

SEAL

In testimony whereof, we set our hands.

Done at Sidney this 22 day of August, 1996.

ATTEST: Elmina J. Cook  
Elmina J. Cook, Clerk & Recorder

Dolph Harris  
Dolph Harris, Chair

Christopher Eckhoff  
Christopher Eckhoff

Gene W. Koch  
Gene W. Koch

Donald L. Netzer  
Donald L. Netzer

Marie C. Johnson  
Marie C. Johnson

**CERTIFICATE OF THE PROPOSED  
CHARTER  
OF  
THE COUNTY OF RICHLAND**

**PREAMBLE**

WE, THE CITIZENS OF RICHLAND COUNTY, STATE OF MONTANA, maintain a vision of the future that will continually take into account the welfare of our people in the present day and for generations to come. This charter is the framing of that vision. We are grateful for our heritage, thankful for the present, and preparing for the future. With the adoption of this document, we take into hand self-governing powers with respect to the health, safety and welfare of all our citizens, as provided by Article XI, Section 5 of the Constitution of Montana.

**ARTICLE I  
POWERS OF THE COUNTY**

**Section 1.01 Powers of Richland County**

Richland County shall have all powers not prohibited by the Constitution of Montana, the laws of Montana, or this Charter.

**Section 1.02 Interpretation of Powers**

The powers of this self-government unit shall be broadly construed. Every reasonable doubt as to the existence of a county power or authority shall be resolved in favor of the existence of that power or authority.

**Section 1.03 Restrictions**

The mill levy shall be limited to that of Montana county governments with general government powers, except with the prior approval of a majority of the electors voting on the question in a general or special county election.

**Section 1.04 Charter Supremacy**

As provided by Article XI, Section 5 of the Constitution of Montana, provisions herein establishing executive, legislative and administrative structure and organization are superior to statutory provisions.

**Section 1.05 Oath of Office**

Before entering upon the duties of office, all elected county officials shall take and subscribe to the oath of office as prescribed in Article III, Section 3 of the Constitution of Montana.

**ARTICLE II  
LEGISLATIVE BRANCH**

**Section 2.01 County Commission**

The elected legislative body of Richland County shall be the board of county commissioners.

### **Section 2.02 Governing Body**

The governing body of Richland County shall be the board of county commissioners which may be called the county commission or the commission.

### **Section 2.03 Composition**

Richland County shall have a county commission of five (5) members who shall serve on a part time basis.

### **Section 2.04 Qualifications for Office**

Every resident of Richland County who is 18 years of age or older and a citizen of Montana is eligible to hold the office of commissioner. Commissioners shall reside in the district they represent for a period of two (2) years prior to taking office. Commissioners moving out of their district after taking office, shall be allowed to complete their term.

### **Section 2.05 Term of Office**

Members of the commission shall be elected for six (6) year overlapping terms of office.

### **Section 2.06 Election**

1. Commissioners shall be elected on a non partisan basis.
2. The Commissioners shall be elected at large from five (5) districts in which candidates must reside and which are apportioned by area and population.

### **Section 2.07 Division of the County into Commissioner Districts**

Following each decennial federal census, the board of county commissioners shall divide the county into five commissioner districts, as compact and equal in population and area as possible.

### **Section 2.08 Vacancy in Office**

The office of commissioner under this Charter becomes vacant as prescribed by law.

### **Section 2.09 Removal from Office**

A commissioner may be removed from office by:

1. A finding, adopted by the affirmative vote of three (3) commissioners, that the office has become vacant as prescribed by law; or
2. Recall of the commissioner by the electors of Richland County, as prescribed by law.

### **Section 2.10 Filling a Vacancy on Commission**

When a vacancy occurs in the office of commissioner, the position shall be considered open and subject to nomination and election at the next general county election in the same manner as the election



of any other person holding the same office, except the term of office shall be limited to the unexpired term of the person who originally created the vacancy. Pending such election and qualification the commission shall, by the affirmative vote of three (3) members of the commission, appoint a person within 30 days of the vacancy to hold the office until the successor is elected and qualified.

#### **Section 2.11 Chairman of the Commission and Presiding Officer**

The commission shall have a chairman of the commission who shall be elected by the members of the commission from their own number for a term established by resolution. The chairman of the commission shall be the presiding officer of the commission. In the absence of the chairman, the commission shall designate one of their number to serve as presiding officer.

#### **Section 2.12 Powers and Duties**

1. The Commission shall be the legislative and policy determining body of the county. All powers of the county shall be vested in the county commission except as otherwise provided by law or this Charter, and the commission shall provide for the exercise thereof and for the performance of all duties and obligations imposed on the county by law.
2. All members of boards, other than temporary advisory committees established by the manager, shall be appointed by the commission.
3. The commission shall exercise its governing power through the adoption of ordinances and resolutions.

#### **Section 2.13 Legislative Action**

The affirmative vote of three (3) members of the commission shall be required for all official actions of the commission. A minimum of three (3) commission members must be present when official actions are taken by the commission.

#### **Section 2.14 Procedure**

The commission shall establish its rules of procedure and time and place of meetings by resolution.

#### **Section 2.15 Compensation**

The compensation of commission members shall be set by resolution of the commission.

### **ARTICLE III ELECTED COUNTY OFFICERS**

#### **Section 3.01 Other Elected County Officers**

The county attorney and sheriff, who shall have the powers and duties prescribed by law, shall be elected on a non partisan basis for four (4) year terms of office.

### **Section 3.02 Qualifications for Office**

Qualifications for the offices of county attorney and sheriff shall be as prescribed by law.

### **Section 3.03 Vacancy in Office**

The offices of county attorney and sheriff become vacant as prescribed by law.

### **Section 3.04 Removal from Office**

An elected County Officer maybe removed from office by:

1. A finding, adopted by the affirmative vote of three (3) commissioners, that the office has become vacant as prescribed by law; or
2. Recall of the elected County Officer by the electors of Richland County, as prescribed by law.

### **Section 3.05 Filling Vacancy of Elected County Officers**

When a vacancy occurs in the office of an elected County Officer, the position shall be considered open and subject to nomination and election at the next general county election in the same manner as the election of any other person holding the same office, except the term of office shall be limited to the unexpired term of the person who originally created the vacancy. Pending such election and qualification the commission shall, by the affirmative vote of three (3) members of the commission, appoint a person within 30 days of the vacancy to hold the office until the successor is elected and qualified.

### **Section 3.06 Compensation**

The compensation of elected County Officers shall be set by resolution of the commission.

## **ARTICLE IV EXECUTIVE**

### **Section 4.01 The Manager**

The manager shall be appointed by the commission for an indefinite term on the basis of merit only and removed only by the affirmative vote of three (3) members of the commission.

### **Section 4.02 Duties of the Manager**

The manager shall:

1. enforce laws, Charter, ordinances, and resolutions;
2. perform the duties required of him by law, Charter, ordinance, or resolution;
3. administer the affairs of the local government;
4. direct, supervise, and administer all departments, agencies, and offices of the local government unit except as otherwise provided by law or ordinance or this Charter;
5. carry out policies established by the commission;
6. prepare the commission agenda;

7. recommend measures to the commission;
8. report to the commission on the affairs and financial condition of the local government;
9. execute bonds, notes, contracts, and written obligations of the commission, subject to the approval of the commission;
10. report to the commission as the commission may require;
11. attend commission meetings and may take part in the discussion, but may not vote;
12. prepare and present the budget to the commission for its approval and execute the budget adopted by the commission;
13. appoint, suspend, and remove all employees of the local government except as otherwise provided by law or ordinance or this Charter;
14. appoint members of temporary advisory committees established by the manager.

**Section 4.03 Administrative Duties**

Employees appointed by the manager and his or her subordinates shall be administratively responsible to the manager. Neither the commission nor any of its members may dictate the appointment or removal of any employee whom the manager or any of his or her subordinates are empowered to appoint. Except for the purpose of inquiry or investigation under this Charter, the commission or its members shall deal with the county government employees who are subject to the direction and supervision of the manager solely through the manager, and neither the commission nor its members may give orders to any such employee, either publicly or privately.

**Section 4.04 Compensation**

The compensation of the manager and all department heads shall be set by resolution of the county commission.

**ARTICLE V  
JUDICIAL**

**Section 5.01 County Court**

There shall be such county courts as are provided by law.

**ARTICLE VI  
DEPARTMENT STRUCTURE**

**Section 6.01 Organization of Departments**

The organization of county departments shall be prescribed by ordinance.

**ARTICLE VII  
GENERAL PROVISIONS**

**Section 7.01 Amendment of Charter**

This Charter may be amended only as prescribed by law.

### **Section 7.02 Effective Date**

This Charter shall become effective on January 2, 1998.

### **Section 7.03 Recall**

Elected officials may be recalled by the qualified electors of Richland County as provided by law. No elected official may be recalled for performing mandatory duty of the office or for not performing any act that, if performed, would subject him or her to prosecution for official misconduct.

### **Section 7.04 Severability**

If any provision of this Charter is held invalid, the other provisions of this Charter shall not be affected thereby. If the application of the Charter, or any part of its provisions, to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the application of the Charter and its provisions to other persons or circumstances shall not be affected thereby.

## **ARTICLE VIII TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS**

### **Section 8.01 General Transition**

Transition to this charter form of government shall be as prescribed by law. The commission may provide for such transition by ordinance, rule or resolution not inconsistent with law. The provisions of this transition article shall not be published as part of the Charter after January 3, 2000.

### **Section 8.02 Initial Term of Office**

Those Commissioners elected at the General Election of November 4, 1997 will decide by lot those Commissioners to serve as follows: one (1) for a 1-year term; two (2) for 3 years; and two (2) for 5 years.

### **Section 8.03 Continuation in Office**

Those elected officials, other than County Commissioners, County Sheriff, and County Attorney, holding office at the time this Charter is adopted become employees of Richland County, continuing in the performance of their existing duties and in accordance with the ordinances and resolutions as adopted by the commission.

### **Section 8.04 Review of Existing Ordinances**

All county ordinances, resolutions and rules of Richland County shall remain in effect until reviewed, revised or repealed by the county commission. The county commission shall review and, where necessary, revise or repeal all county ordinances and resolutions to provide for compliance and consistency with this Charter and law no later than January 3, 2000.

We, the Study Commission of Richland County do hereby certify that this is the proposed plan of government approved by the Study Commission of Richland County.

SEAL

In testimony whereof, we set our hands.

Done at Sidney this 22 day of August 1996.

ATTEST: Elmina J. Cook  
Elmina J. Cook, Richland County Clerk

Gene W. Koch  
Gene W. Koch

Donald L. Netzer  
Donald L. Netzer

Christopher Eckhoff  
Christopher Eckhoff

Dolph M. Harris  
Dolph M. Harris

Marie C. Johnson  
Marie C. Johnson

RICHLAND COUNTY  
COMPARISON OF SPECIFIC CHARACTERISTICS  
OF THE COMMISSION FORM AND CHARTER WITH A MANAGER FORM OF GOVERNMENT

| CHARACTERISTIC           | PRESENT FORM OF GOVERNMENT   | PROPOSED FORM OF GOVERNMENT   | EVALUATIVE COMMENTS   |
|--------------------------|--|---|---|
| Form of Government       | COMMISSION FORM<br>Merges legislative, administrative and executive functions in commission.   | CHARTER WITH MANAGER<br>Elected commission determines policy. Manager hired to administer policy.   | Separation of legislative and administrative responsibilities. Manager appointed on basis of qualifications.  |
| Powers                   | GENERAL GOVERNMENT POWERS<br>State law defines what government may do and specifically how it shall do it. Little power to pass ordinances.                                    | SELF-GOVERNMENT POWERS<br>County government shall exercise any power which the state does not deny. Legislative power is vested in the Commission.                          | Self-government powers bring to the county the power to act in its own best interest, and flexibility in shaping government structure. A charter would allow Richland County to govern itself more independently of the state government. |
| Governing Body Size      | 3 commissioners nominated by district, elected at-large.   | 5 part time commissioners nominated by district, elected at large.  | Nomination by district and increasing the size of the commission assures representation on the commission from all sections of the county.  |
| Election                 | Partisan.  | Nonpartisan.  | Local government issues are usually nonpartisan. Commission can concentrate on efficient delivery of services.  |
| Term                     | 6 year overlapping terms.  | 6 year overlapping terms.   | No change.  |
| Presiding Officer Duties | Chairman--Elected from own members. Commission is responsible for executive and many administrative functions. Administrative powers are shared with other elected officials.  | Chairman--Elected from own members. Commission is the legislative policy making body. Hires a full time manager to administer those departments not having an elected head. | No change.<br>Frees part time commission from administration responsibilities to concentrate on policy-making role and future goals.  |
| Other Elected Officials  | 8 elected officials:<br>Clerk & Recorder<br>County Attorney<br>Sheriff<br>Coroner<br>Treasurer<br>Superintendent of Schools<br>Clerk of District Court<br>Public Administrator | 2 elected officials:<br>County Attorney<br>Sheriff  | Independent offices except for county attorney and sheriff are brought under the supervision of the manager. Qualifications for office can be established.  |

RICHLAND COUNTY  
COMPARISON OF SPECIFIC CHARACTERISTICS  
OF THE COMMISSION FORM AND CHARTER WITH A MANAGER FORM OF GOVERNMENT

| CHARACTERISTIC               | PRESENT FORM OF GOVERNMENT   | PROPOSED FORM OF GOVERNMENT   | EVALUATIVE COMMENTS  |
|------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Chief Administrative Officer | None.<br>Administrative responsibility shared by commissioners, elected officials, and various boards.   | COUNTY MANAGER<br>Directs and supervises the administration of all departments other than county attorney and sheriff.                                      | Better overall coordination is possible. Clearer lines of authority and responsibility. Provides for administration of county government by a skilled and experienced specialist on a day-to-day basis. Administrator is accountable to elected commissioners. |
| Appointment Powers           | Commission appoints department heads not elected, members of boards, special districts.                  | COMMISSION: Appoints and removes County Manager, members of boards.<br>COUNTY MANAGER: Appoints and removes all non elected department heads and employees. | Non elected department heads responsible to County Manager. Members of boards continue to be appointed by the county commission. Provides uniform hiring and removal practices in compliance with state and federal laws.                                      |
| Budget Preparation           | Clerk & Recorder prepares budget with officials and departments. Modified and/or approved by commission. | Manager prepares budget. Commission modifies and/or approves.   | Manager can balance priorities set by commission with available county-wide resources, also balance needs of individual departments with overall needs and resources of county. Budget finally approved by the commission.                                     |
| Service Delivery Structure   | Performed by elected offices and appointed boards, commissions and special districts.                    | County activities could be grouped into fewer departments on basis of function. Services performed by departments under supervision of county manager.      | Most functions will be brought under supervision of a professional manager under commission control.   |



CERTIFICATE  
FOR THE APPORTIONMENT  
OF COMMISSIONER DISTRICTS

Districts described by census block with population and deviation from ideal are shown.

| DISTRICT | 1990 POPULATION | % DEVIATION<br>FROM IDEAL<br>POPULATION |
|----------|-----------------|---|
| 1        | 2225            | .04                                     |
| 2        | 2100            | .02                                     |
| 3        | 2214            | .033                                    |
| 4        | 1984            | .07                                     |
| 5        | 2193            | .02                                     |

NOTES:

1. Ideal population is calculated by dividing the total 1990 population of Richland County by the number of districts  
(10,716/5 = 2,143)

2. The 1990 population is derived from the U.S. Bureau of the Census and P.L. 94-171 Data Files.

We, the Study Commissioners of Richland County do hereby certify that this is the official apportionment plan for commission districts of Richland County, Montana approved by the Richland County Local Government Study Commission.

SEAL

In testimony whereof, we set our hands.

Done at Sidney, Montana this 22 day of August, 1996.

ATTEST: Elmina J. Cook  
Elmina J. Cook, Clerk & Recorder

Dolph M. Harris  
Dolph M. Harris, Chairman

Christopher Eckhoff  
Christopher Eckhoff



Gene W. Koch

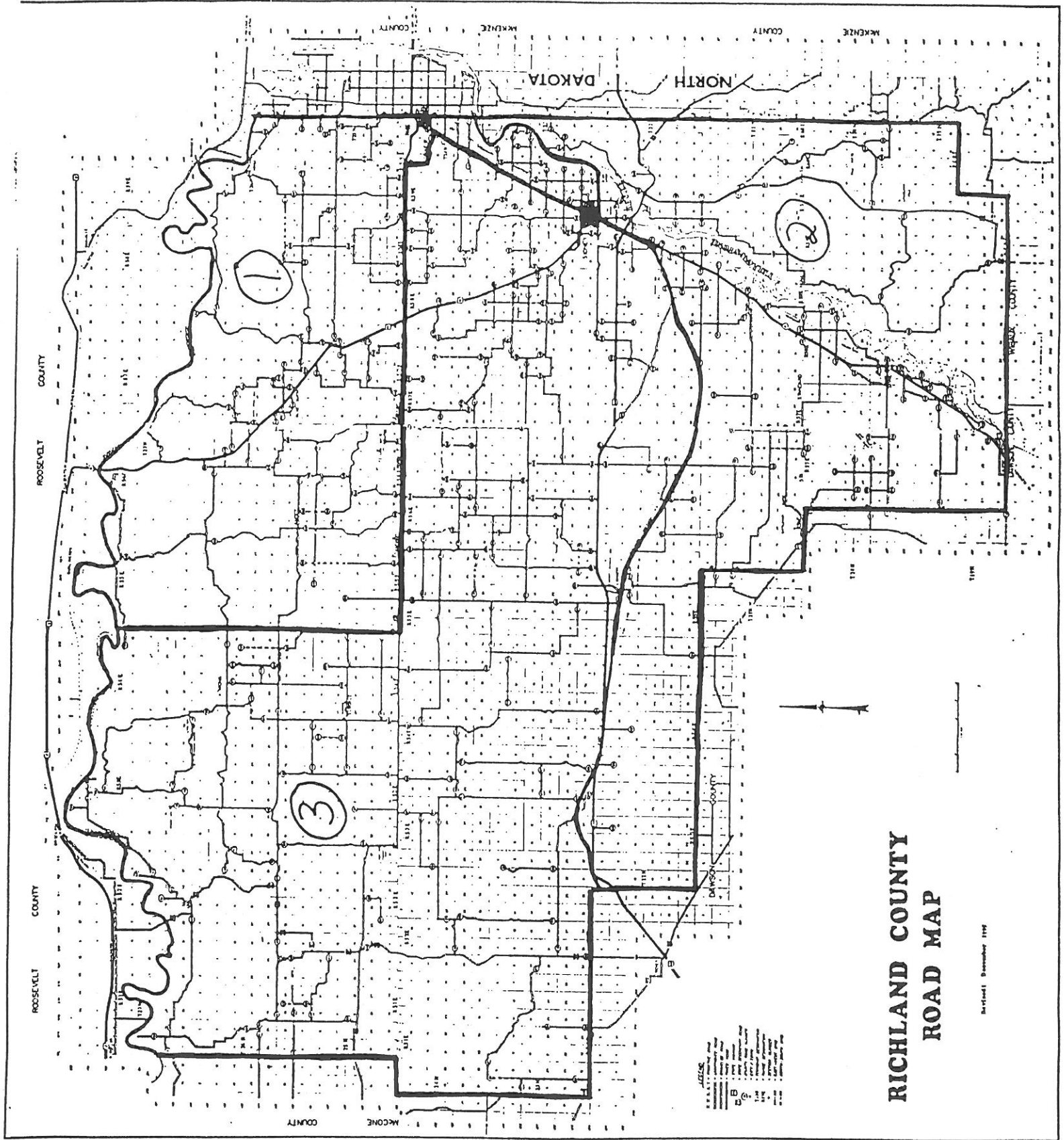
Gene W. Koch

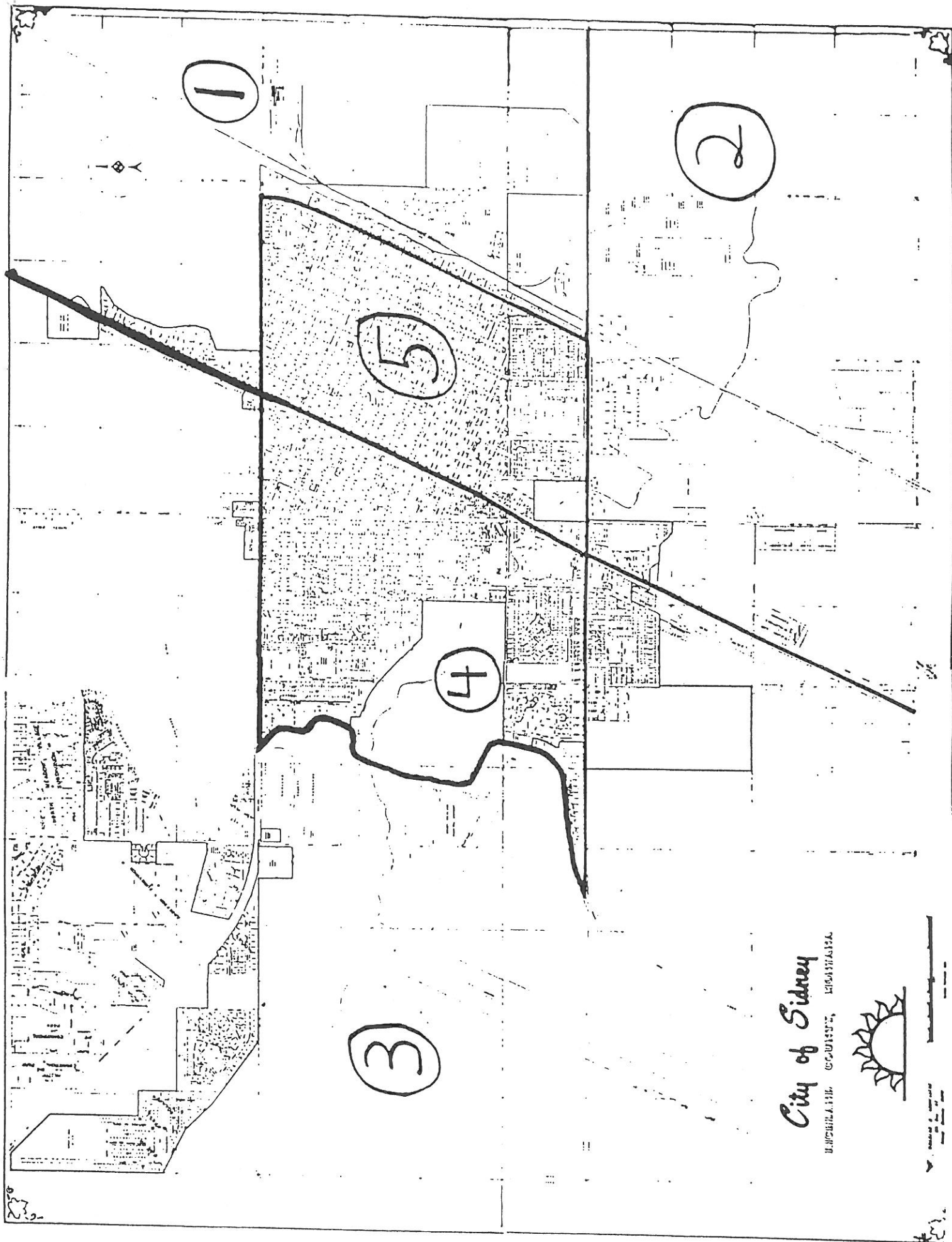
Donald L. Netzer

Donald L. Netzer

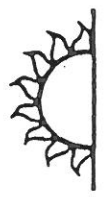
Marie C. Johnson

Marie C. Johnson





*City of Sidney*  
SIDNEY, MISSOURI



CERTIFICATE

ESTABLISHING THE DATE OF THE SPECIAL ELECTION  
AT WHICH THE ALTERNATIVE FORM OF GOVERNMENT  
SHALL BE PRESENTED TO THE ELECTORS OF  
RICHLAND COUNTY MONTANA

The alternative form of government proposed by the Local Government Study Commission shall be submitted to the voters of Richland County at a special election to be held with the general election on November 5, 1996.

We, the Study Commissioners of Richland County do hereby certify that this is the date of the special election approved by the Richland County Local Government Study Commission.

SEAL

In testimony whereof, we set our hands.

Done at Sidney, Montana this 22 day of August, 1996.

ATTEST Elmina J. Cook  
Elmina J. Cook, Clerk & Recorder

Dolph Harris  
Dolph Harris, Chair

Christopher Eckhoff  
Christopher Eckhoff

Gene W. Koch  
Gene W. Koch

Donald L. Netzer  
Donald L. Netzer

Marie C. Johnson  
Marie C. Johnson

CERTIFICATE

ESTABLISHING THE OFFICIAL BALLOT FOR  
THE NOVEMBER 5, 1996, SPECIAL ELECTION

Instructions to voters: Place an "X" in the box which expresses your preference.

OFFICIAL BALLOT

BALLOT ON THE ALTERNATIVE FORM OF GOVERNMENT

Vote for One.

- FOR adoption of the self-government charter with the commission-manager plan of government proposed for Richland County by the Richland County Local Government Study Commission.
  
- FOR the existing form of government.

We, the Study Commissioners of Richland County do hereby certify that this is the date of the special election approved by the Richland County Local Government Study Commission.

SEAL

In testimony whereof, we set our hands.

Done at Sidney, Montana this 22 day of August, 1996.

ATTEST: Elmina J. Cook  
Elmina J. Cook, Clerk & Recorder

Dolph Harris  
Dolph Harris, Chair

Christopher Eckhoff  
Christopher Eckhoff

Gene W. Koch  
Gene W. Koch

Donald L. Netzer  
Donald L. Netzer

Marie C. Johnson  
Marie C. Johnson

CERTIFICATE  
ESTABLISHING THE DATES OF THE  
FIRST PRIMARY AND GENERAL ELECTIONS  
FOR OFFICERS OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT  
OF RICHLAND COUNTY, MONTANA  
IF THE ALTERNATIVE PROPOSAL IS APPROVED  
AND ESTABLISHING THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF  
THE PROPOSAL, IF APPROVED

The date of the primary election for officers of the new government of Richland County, Montana shall be held at a special election on September 9, 1997.

The date of the general election for officers of the new government of Richland County, Montana shall be held at a special election on November 4, 1997.

The effective date of the alternative plan of local government of Richland County, Montana takes effect when the new officers take office at 10 a.m., January 2, 1998.

We, the Study Commissioners of Richland County do hereby certify that these are the dates of the special primary and general elections and the effective date of the alternative plan of local government of Richland County, Montana approved by the Richland County Local Government Study Commission.

SEAL

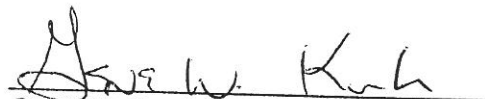
In testimony whereof, we set our hands.


Done at Sidney, Montana this 22 day of August, 1996.

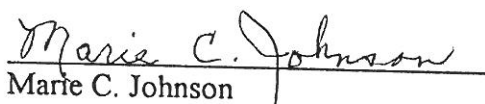
ATTEST: Elmina J. Cook  
Elmina J. Cook, Clerk & Recorder

Dolph M. Harris  
Dolph M. Harris, Chairman

Christopher Eckhoff  
Christopher Eckhoff

  
Gene W. Koch

  
Donald L. Netzer

  
Marie C. Johnson