

CASCADE COUNTY GOVERNMENT

COMPARISON CHART

CHARACTERISTIC:	PRESENT FORM OF GOVERNMENT:	PROPOSED FORM OF GOVERNMENT:	EVALUATIVE COMMENTS:
FORM OF GOVERNMENT:	COMMISSION FORM. Merges legislative, administrative and executive functions in Commission.	CHARTER WITH EXECUTIVE FORM. Commission determines policy. Elected County Executive administers county government.	The Charter separates legislative and administrative responsibilities.
POWERS:	GENERAL GOVERNMENT POWERS. State law defines what government may do, and specifically how it shall do it. Little power to pass ordinances.	SELF-GOVERNMENT POWERS. County government shall exercise any power which is not denied by the Constitution, state law or the Charter. Commission gains ordinance-making authority.	Self-government powers bring to the County the right to act in its own best interest, and greater flexibility in shaping government's structure.
GOVERNING BODY:	Commission consists of 3 full-time members nominated by district, elected at large.	Commission consists of 5 part-time members nominated by district, elected at large.	Increase in the size of the Commission will allow greater and more diverse representation. District representation assures the Commission viewpoints from all sections of the County.
TERM OF OFFICE OF GOVERNING BODY:	6 year overlapping.	4 year overlapping.	Shorter terms should cause the Commission to be more responsive to the voters.
ELECTION:	Partisan.	Partisan.	No change.
PRESIDING OFFICER OF COMMISSION:	Chair elected from own members.	Chair elected from own members.	No change.

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<p>DUTIES OF GOVERNING BODY:</p>	<p>Commission is responsible for executive and many administrative functions. Administrative powers are shared with other elected officials.</p>	<p>Commission is the legislative and policy-making body. The County Executive carries out policy.</p>	<p>The Commission is freed from administrative responsibilities to concentrate on the policy-making role.</p>
<p>COUNTY EXECUTIVE OFFICER AND TERM OF OFFICE:</p>	<p>None. Administrative responsibilities shared by Commissioners, elected officials, and various boards, etc.</p>	<p>County Executive, who is elected for a 4-year term, directs and supervises the administration of all departments, except those of other separately elected officials. County Executive has veto power, but Commission can override the veto.</p>	<p>Better overall coordination is possible. There are clear lines of authority and responsibility. Responsiveness of the County Executive is maintained through elective accountability.</p>
<p>OTHER ELECTED OFFICIALS:</p>	<p>10 separately elected officials: Auditor, Clerk &amp; Recorder, County Attorney, Sheriff-Coroner, Clerk of Court, Surveyor, Assessor, Public Administrator, Treasurer, and Superintendent of Schools.</p>	<p>6 separately elected officials: Auditor, County Attorney, Sheriff-Coroner, Public Administrator, Clerk of Court, and Superintendent of Schools.</p>	<p>The number of other elected offices is reduced from 10 to 6. Qualifications are set for these positions by state statute.</p>
<p>TERMS OF OFFICE OF SEPARATELY ELECTED OFFICIALS:</p>	<p>4-year terms.</p>	<p>4-year terms.</p>	<p>No change.</p>
<p>APPOINTED OFFICIALS:</p>	<p>Administrative assistants, and program heads.</p>	<p>Clerk &amp; Recorder, Treasurer, Assessor, Public Works Director, Health &amp; Human Services Director, Director of Agriculture, and program heads.</p>	<p>These offices are brought under the direct supervision of the County Executive. Qualifications for these positions can be established by ordinance by the Commission.</p>

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APPOINTMENT POWERS:	Commission appoints department heads and other employees who are not elected. The Chairman of the Commission appoints members of boards and committees with the consent of the Commission.	The County Executive appoints department heads who are not elected. The Commission also appoints members of boards and committees. All appointments of department heads are subject to confirmation by the Commission.	Department heads are appointed on the basis of qualification and are responsible to the County Executive.
BUDGET PREPARATION:	Clerk & Recorder prepares budget with officials and departments. It is modified and/or approved by the Commission.	County Executive prepares budget and submits to Commission. Commission must adopt a balanced budget.	County Executive can balance priorities set by the Commission with county-wide revenues. Also can balance needs individual departments and functions with overall needs and resources of the County.
TAXATION:	Counties may levy property taxes by fund, up to the maximum limits specified by state law.	The total maximum mill levy for property taxes would be limited. There would be one all-purpose mill levy not earmarked for any special funds. No increase in the property tax beyond the mills set in the Charter could be authorized without a majority vote of County electors. Fees could be raised or lowered by Commission ordinance.	The Charter limits and freezes the total amount of property taxes that can be levied. Any increases for any reason must be approved by County voters. Additional flexibility is granted by designating part of the levy an all-purpose mill levy. Citizens will have the right to vote on a property tax plan after a mandatory study.
SERVICE DELIVERY	Performed by elected officials and appointed boards, commissions and special districts.	Service delivery reorganized on the basis of function. For example: all financial duties will be consolidated into one centralized office under the Treasurer.	Provides greater flexibility of function and structure under a single County Executive and still provides for specialized functions of separately elected officials.

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AMENDMENT OF  
CHARTER:

None.

Charter amendments could only be authorized by a vote of the County electors voting on the amendment. Amendments could be placed on the ballot by 15% petition or by resolution of the Commission.

Charter amendments could be authorized by vote of the people of the County, by citizen initiative (direct democracy), or by Commission majority (representative democracy). Insures greater ease of change when necessary, retains the right of self-determination for people of the County. Currently, most County power and structure requirements are set by state law.

REQUIRED  
ADMINISTRATIVE  
ORDINANCES:

None.

County Plan of Operations.  
Purchasing and Inventory Policy and Procedures.  
Personnel Policy and System. Commission Rules of Procedure.

Creates mandated requirements for efficient County government operation. Allows citizens, through ordinance process, to voice opinions.