Dear County Clerk:

The International City/County Management Association (ICMA) has conducted the Form of Government surveys for many years. This survey gathers comprehensive information on county form of government, election systems, provisions for referendum/repeal, and term limits. A summary of the results will be available on ICMA's web site (http://icma.org) after the data have been tabulated. Please contribute to this significant body of knowledge by completing the survey and returning it within three weeks. Thank you.

- The term commission refers to an elected body whose members may be called commissioners, council members, supervisors, board members, or a similar title.
- The chief appointed official of the local government is often referred to as county manager, county administrator, chief administrative officer, county coordinator, or a similar title.
- The presiding officer of the local government may have the title of presiding officer, judge, board chair, or the like.

1. Please indicate which of the following best describes your current legal form of government as defined by your charter, ordinance, or state law. (Please read all definitions first and check only one.)

   1. a. Each elected commissioner or board member serves as director of one or more functional departments (e.g. Public Works Director or Director of Health and Human Services) in addition to his/her policymaking role. The presiding officer may be chosen from the board or elected directly (e.g., county judge). This is popularly known as the commission form of government.
   
   1. b. An elected board sets policy, adopts legislation, and approves the budget. The commission appoints an administrator to conduct the day-to-day county business, to prepare the budget, to oversee department heads, and to recommend policy to the board. This is popularly known as the council-administrator form.
   
   1. c. An elected board sets policy, adopts legislation, and approves the budget. The commission appoints a manager or administrator with broad executive authority to oversee and manage county departments, hire and fire most department directors, hire and fire county staff, prepare the budget, and recommend policy to the board. This is popularly known as the council-manager form.
   
2. The elected board is responsible for making policy. The executive, elected at-large, implements county board policies, prepares the budget, and acts as county spokesperson. The executive often has veto power, which can be overridden. This form fully separates the legislative and executive powers and is popularly known as the council-elected executive form.

Q2. How is your municipality's structure or form of government established? (Check only one.)

   2. a. Charter
   2. b. State law
   2. c. Local ordinance
   2. d. Council resolution
   2. e. Other (Please specify.)

Q3. Does your county have the position of chief appointed official (CAO)?

   3. a. Yes
   3. b. No

Q4A. If your county does have the position of chief appointed official, what action established the position? (This question refers only to the establishment of the position, not to the person or group that does the hiring.)

   4A. a. Charter
   4A. b. State law
   4A. c. Local ordinance
   4A. d. Commission resolution
   4A. e. Chief elected official created position
   4A. f. Other (Please specify.)

Q4B. If your county does have the position of chief appointed official, who appoints the chief appointed official? (Check only one.)

   4B. a. Presiding officer
   4B. b. Commission
   4B. c. Combination of presiding officer and commission
   4B. d. Other (Please specify.)

Q4. How is your presiding officer selected? (Check only one.)

   4. a. Voters elect directly
   4. b. Commission selects from among its members
   4. c. The commission member receiving the most votes in the general election becomes the presiding officer
   4. d. Commission members rotate into the position of presiding officer
   4. e. Other (Please specify.)

Q5. Is the presiding officer a member of commission?

   5. a. Yes
   5. b. No

Q6. How long is the presiding officer's term of office? (Important: If the presiding officer is a member of the commission, specify the term for the position of presiding officer, not of commission member.) (Check only one.)

   6. a. 1 year
   6. b. 2 years
   6. c. 3 years
   6. d. Other (Please specify.)

Q7. Does the presiding officer have the authority to veto commission-passed measures?

   7. a. Yes
   7. b. No

Q8. Since 1997, have any recall initiatives been filed against the presiding officer?

   8. a. Yes
   8. b. No

Q9. How many seats, vacant and filled, are on your commission? (Include the presiding officer if that position serves on the commission. If the presiding officer is a member of the commission, your answer to question 5 should be "yes.")

   9. a. Male
   9. b. Female

10. How many current commission members are (Total number of commission members should equal the total in question 9.)

   10. a. Native American
   10. b. Hispanic
   10. c. Asian or Pacific Islander
   10. d. White
   10. e. Black

11. How many current commission members are (Total number of commission members should equal the total in question 9.)

   11. a. Native American
   11. b. Hispanic
   11. c. Asian or Pacific Islander
   11. d. White
   11. e. Black
County government counts!

12. Does your county have a provision for any of the following? (Check all applicable.)
   a. Initiative Permits citizens to place charter, ordinance, or home rule changes directly on a ballot for approval or disapproval by the voters.
   b. Binding referendum Allows voters to determine the outcome on public issues by binding the governing body to act on voters' opinions.
   c. Non-binding referendum Allows voters to express an opinion on a specific topic without binding the governing body to act on voters' opinions.
   d. Recall A vote by the citizens to remove an elected official from office before the expiration of that official's term.
   e. Petition or protest referendum Allows voters to delay enactment of local ordinance or bylaw until a referendum is held.

13. Are the members of your commission elected? (Check only one.)
   a. All at large
   b. All by ward/district
   c. Combination of at large and ward/district.
      A. If you selected c, indicate the number of commission members elected by each of the following methods:
         1. a. at large
         2. b. by ward/district

14. Does the political party affiliation of commission candidates appear on the ballot in your local general elections? (Check only one.)
   a. Yes
   b. No

15. Are the following department heads appointed or elected?
   a. Assessor
   b. Prosecutor
   c. Civil attorney
   d. Sheriff
   e. Recorder
   f. School superintendent
   g. Treasurer
   h. Clerk of governing board
   i. Clerk of court
   j. Controller
   If appointive, please note whether any of these positions were at one time elective offices:

16. Is there a legal limit on the number of terms a commission member may serve? (Check only one.)
   a. Yes
   b. No
   A. If yes, what is the maximum number of terms allowed by law?
   B. When was the term limitation enacted?
   C. By what authority is the number of terms limited? (Check only one.)
      1. Ordinance
      2. Charter
      3. State law
      4. Other (Please specify)

17. How many incumbents ran for reelection to commission in the last general election? (Check only one.)
   A. How many incumbents ran unopposed?
   B. How many incumbents were reelected?

18. How is a commission member's seat filled if it is vacated before the term has expired? (Check only one.)
   a. Special election
   b. Appointed by commission
   c. Method depends on length of term remaining
   d. Appointed by presiding officer

19. When does your fiscal year begin? Month ——— Year ———

Name: ________________________________  Office telephone number: ________________________________
Title: ________________________________  E-mail: ________________________________

Please refold this questionnaire so that the postage paid reply side faces out, staple/tape closed and return to ICMA.

Attn: Data Services
431.200.47

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