Dear County Clerk:

The International City/Country Management Association (ICMA) has conducted a Form of Government Survey for almost thirty years. This survey provides the most comprehensive information available on form of government, election systems, provisions for referendum/recall, and term limits. In addition, information on characteristics of the local governing body is covered in this survey. A summary of the survey results will be available on the Internet after the data have been tabulated. Please contribute to this significant body of knowledge by completing the survey and returning it as soon as possible. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

Definitions:
The term commission, as used throughout the survey, refers to an elected body whose members are called commissioners, supervisors, council members, board members, or the like.

The term presiding officer, as used throughout the survey, refers to the elected head of the county government called the executive, chairman, judge, 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 by state law. (Please read all definitions first and check only one.)

   a. Elected at large
   b. Elected by ward or district
   c. Method depends on length of term remaining
   d. Appointed by presiding officer
   e. Position left vacant until next regular election
   f. Other (Please specify)

2. Does your county have the position of CAO?

   a. No
   b. Yes

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

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

4. How long is the presiding officer's term of office?

   a. 1 year
   b. 2 years
   c. 4 years
   d. Other (Please specify)

5. Is the presiding officer a member of commission?

   a. No
   b. Yes

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

   a. Yes
   b. No

   If yes, in what cases may the presiding officer exercise veto power? (Check all applicable.)

   1. Over ordinances
   2. Over specific sections of ordinances
   3. Over resolutions
   4. Over appropriations
   5. Over specific items of appropriations
   6. Other (Please specify)

7. Since 1991, have any recall initiatives been filed against the presiding officer?

   a. No
   b. Yes

   If yes, were any successful?

   1. No
   2. Yes

8. How many members sit on your commission? _____

9. What is the gender of the commission members? (Total number of commission members should equal the total in question 8)

   a. Male _____ b. Female _____

10. 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 by a majority referendum at the next regular election.

11. Indicate the number of commission members selected by each of the following methods.

   a. Elected at large
   b. Elected by ward or district

12. Is there a legal limit on the number of terms a commission member may serve? (Check only one.)

   a. No
   b. Yes

   If yes, what is the maximum number of terms allowed by law?

13. How many incumbents ran for reelection to commission in the last general election?

14. 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
   e. Position left vacant until next regular election
   f. Other (Please specify)

15. When does your fiscal year begin (i.e., 07/96)?

   Month _____ Year _____

Name: ____________________________________________
Title: ____________________________________________
Office telephone number: ____________________________

Please return the survey to Lisa A. Huffman
ICMA
777 North Capitol Street, N.E., Suite 500
Washington, D.C. 20002-4201

April 1997

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