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Essential Components of a County Charter Ballot Referendum

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Essential Components of a County Charter Ballot Referendum

Everything! Voters will vote on a ballot referendum regarding the adoption of a Charter. The Charter, which should be readily available for review, must specifically detail everything about the new entity, and the transition including, but not limited to:

- Which county elected officials will become appointed positions and which remain elected positions. Requirements for each elected office holder and the specific duties, including length of term, salary and succession procedure. Outlines duties and powers of appointed positions, too
- The Charter must specify when it fully goes into effect, and/or when components of the charter are phased in. For example, the Charter must specify when row offices will transition from elected to appointed, and when will newly formed departments (like a Department of Regional Economic Development) will become operational.
- Job Requirements, length of term, salary, succession procedures for elected County Executive.
- Outline specific administrative duties and legislative powers for the Executive and outline procedures for enacting legislation, whether proposed by the Executive or the County Council.
- Specify a process for resolving disputes between the Executive and County Council.
- Number of County Council members and election method; keeping in mind that Charter must specify the number of elected county commissioners or councilpersons---and whether to elect them by districts, by at-large seats, or a combination of both. *If we choose to propose a mix of both, no more than half may be elected at-large.*

- Process for investigating and/or removing elected officials.
- How cities, villages & townships may choose to transfer some or all municipal powers to the County.
- How outstanding debt of a jurisdiction transferring powers to the County is to be handled.