



In 2024, You Can Determine the Future of Charles County Government.

In June 2023, a Charles County Charter Board was appointed to meet regularly, consult with the community, and draft a charter document. The draft charter will propose a new administrative and legislative structure for county government, changing the county's form of government from Code Home Rule to Charter. Charles County voters will consider whether to approve the draft charter in November 2024.

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What is the Difference?

CODE HOME RULE GOVERNMENT (CURRENT)

Charles County has five members on its Board of Commissioners. Each of the four districts has an elected Commissioner who represents its residents. A Commissioner President is elected countywide and serves as the Board's chair.

Each Commissioner has an equal vote on both executive and legislative decisions for county government. An appointed County Administrator manages local government operations.

No power to impose new types of taxes or fees without the state enabling legislation, or to establish a tax cap. Bonding authority for debt on infrastructure projects (schools, parks, roads, etc.) is not capped.

Code Home Rule has broad authority over planning and land use decisions, and has been enabled by the state to enact school construction excise taxes, and impact fees on new development.

Corrections department, or warden, may be done through enactment by Commissioners of a public local law. Police department still requires General Assembly approval.



CHARTER GOVERNMENT (PROPOSED)

Charles County would have a County Council to enact local laws and oversee legislative functions of government. The charter will define its representation and composition.

A charter may require an elected County Executive to serve as the chief executive officer and oversee the day-to-day operations of county government.

Cannot impose new taxes. Can establish tax cap and enact regulatory licenses and fees. Bonding authority to cap (at 15%) debt on infrastructure projects (schools, parks, roads, etc.)

Charter government has similar broad authority over planning and land use decisions; however, it does not have the authority to impose development impact fees or excise taxes.

Ability to establish separate police and corrections departments established by Charter.