

Prefatory Synopsis

On November 6, 2001 the citizens of the City of Sheridan approved the formation of a nine-member Home Rule Charter Commission to draft a Home Rule Charter for the City. In conformity with Article XX of the Colorado Constitution and the Municipal Home Rule Act of 1971, as amended, the Sheridan Home Rule Charter Commission has spent the last several months drafting this Charter and hereby submit it to the people. The Charter was drafted utilizing public input, extensive research into past practices, and with the advice and expertise of legal and financial professionals.

We believe this Charter will allow Sheridan to capitalize on its existing strengths, while allowing for a future full of promise for our City. The Commission members have sought to prepare a charter which holds the City's elected and appointed officials to the highest ethical standards. The Charter also reserves and assures the absolute rights and power of the citizens for self-government under the Home Rule provisions of the Colorado Constitution. The Charter may be amended by voter approval if the need arises, and guarantees and vests the final voice of City government in the people of Sheridan.

The form of government provided for in the Charter is a "Council-Manager" form, with the manager's duties and responsibilities fundamental to creating a collaborative framework in which all Sheridan residents and City employees can maintain and enhance the quality of life in our City. The elected City Council will continue as a Mayor and six-member Council with four-year overlapping terms; and no change to existing boards and commissions will take place, although the Charter gives Council the authority to make changes in the future.

The Commission has provided in the Charter that the City Clerk and City Treasurer be appointed and supervised by City Council rather than elected. This will allow the City to employ a full time City Clerk and City Treasurer who have necessary qualifications and skills to provide the City with expertise needed in these positions.

We were careful not to infringe on the citizen's rights to vote on issues such as new taxes or term limits. We believe issues of that importance should be decided separate from this Charter.

It was the intent of the Commission that major City policies be decided by Ordinance, requiring a public hearing prior to adoption. In addition, the democratic techniques of initiative, referendum, and recall are also included in the Charter. By these rights, all citizens have the final voice in their government.

The adoption of this Charter gives Sheridan all the powers available to a Home Rule city, such as local control of local issues. The Commission has structured it to meet the present and future needs of the citizens of Sheridan.

The Commission members wish to thank the citizens of Sheridan for entrusting them with the responsibility of composing this Charter.