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# A NEW GOVERNMENT FOR TRENTON'S FUTURE

A SUMMARY OF  
THE REPORT AND  
RECOMMENDATIONS  
OF THE TRENTON  
CHARTER COMMISSION  
JULY 27, 1961

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MAKE YOUR DECISION  
**VOTE** NOVEMBER 7TH

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## TO THE CITIZENS OF TRENTON

On November 7, 1961 the people of Trenton will vote on a new city charter. The question will appear on the ballot as follows:

**"Shall Mayor-Council Plan C of the optional Municipal Charter Law, providing for a division of the City into four wards, with seven councilmen, one to be elected from each ward and three to be elected at large, be adopted by the City of Trenton?"**

### Interpretative Statement

"A vote of **YES** is a vote to give Trenton a new charter with an elected mayor and council; a vote of **NO** is a vote to keep the commission form of government."

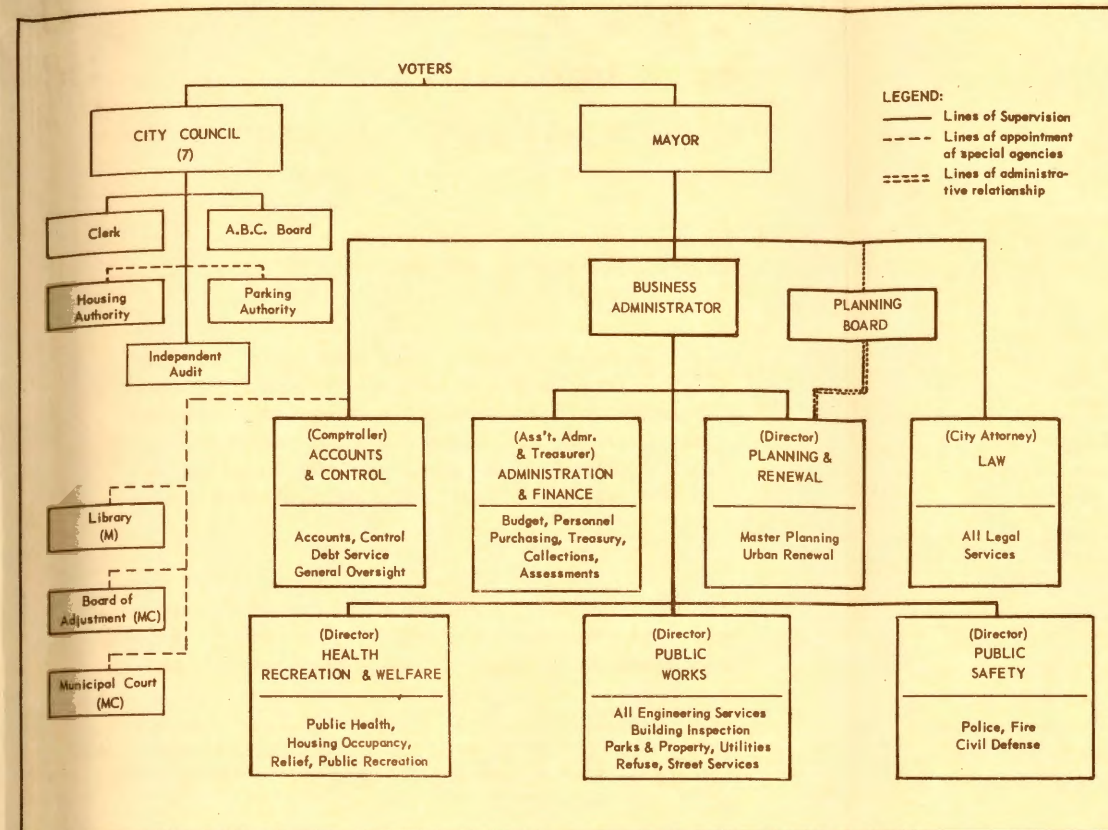
Your charter commission elected by the people on November 8, 1960 has filed its report with the city clerk, recommending a change in the City's form of government to the new Mayor-Council Plan C.

This folder is a summary of the Commission's report, explaining its findings and the reasons why it has come to the unanimous conclusion that it is time that Trenton should have a new charter.

### The Charter Commission of the City of Trenton.

Philip J. Albert  
George Brauning  
Peter W. Radice, Jr.  
Roscoe L. West  
Aaron K. Neeld, Chairman

You can obtain a copy of the Commission's 52 page complete report without charge from the City Clerk, City Hall, Trenton, N. J.



## MAYOR-COUNCIL ADMINISTRATOR PLAN • SAMPLE ORGANIZATION

This plan provides vital elements which are missing in Trenton government. These include:

- Direct election by the people of a mayor to serve as policy leader.
- A system of checks and balances between the mayor and an elected council.
- A professionally qualified chief administrative officer.

The chart is only an illustration. The elected City Council would be free to provide by ordinance for the best possible organization of the city departments under the mayor elected by the people.

## TO RENEW OUR CITY

This report is designed to help Trenton as a city government to capitalize on its assets, correct its weaknesses, and organize for more effective service to its citizens.

It recommends a new city charter based upon an appreciation of Trenton, its growth, its political values, and its experience with local government.

Trenton has great opportunities as a Delaware Valley industrial hub; a state capital; a metropolitan center. Although in its population class it is one of the smallest cities in area, it compares very favorably with the 42 cities in the United States which had between 100,000 and 150,000 population in 1950; ranking 6th in total employment, 4th in value added by manufacture, 6th in value added by manufacture per 1,000 persons employed, and 17th in the value of all new building construction per square mile during 1946-1959. While the surrounding communities have obviously grown much more rapidly in dwelling units and employment, Trenton has held its own as the industrial center of the metropolitan area.

Trenton's situation requires that its city government be prepared to provide much more than good municipal housekeeping. It must provide the leadership of an efficient, imaginative and courageous administration to resolve the complex problems of a metropolitan center, and to sustain Trenton as a city with a future.

## THE COMMISSION PLAN — A CONCLUSION OF FAILURE

Trenton's history marks the rise and fall of the commission plan of government. In city after city the commission plan has been condemned as inherently defective and inadequate in the face of modern city problems.

In Trenton the city commissioners have tried to make the plan work, but despite a variety of expedients the commission plan has —

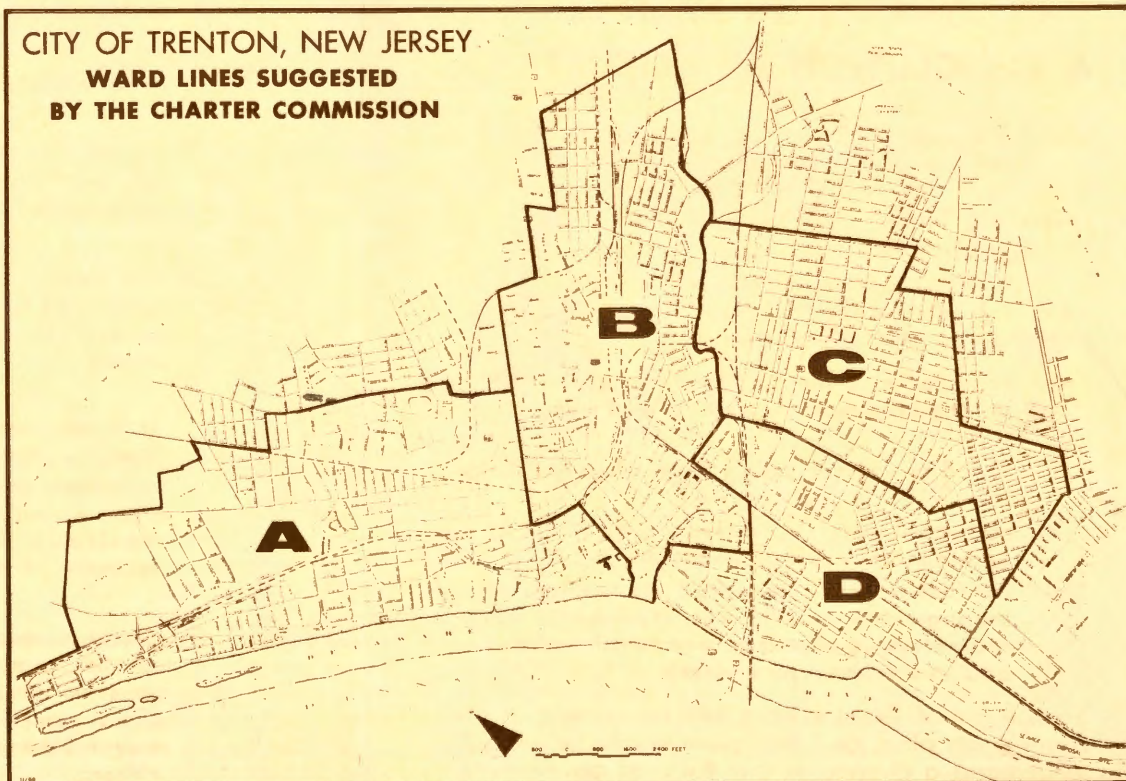
- Provided a system of "five mayors" which invites personality conflicts and competition;
- failed to provide policy leadership for the city;
- prevented unity of command, resulting in administrative disorganization;
- conflicted with accepted principles of management, resulting in inadequate coordination, budgeting, personnel policies and centralized purchasing.

The people of Trenton have lost confidence in the commission plan, and this alone would be enough to demand a change in our form of government.

## A VOICE FOR EACH SECTION OF THE CITY

A division of the city into four sections as shown on the map, each of which would be known as a ward, with one councilman to be elected from each ward, plus three councilmen to be elected from the city at large as provided in the Faulkner Act, would offer a more reasonable, more effective and more democratic basis of representation than the election of all councilmen from the city at large. The actual ward lines would be drawn by the county board of elections and the city clerk. Under the law, the wards so created may not differ in population by more than 10% of the population of the smallest ward created.

### CITY OF TRENTON, NEW JERSEY WARD LINES SUGGESTED BY THE CHARTER COMMISSION





# A NEW PLAN OF GOVERNMENT FOR TRENTON'S FUTURE

The Charter Commission recommends that Trenton change its form of government to Mayor-Council Plan C under the Faulkner Act, including:

**a separately elected mayor to serve as chief executive; and an elected council of seven members, three chosen from the city at large and one elected from each of four wards to be created for this purpose, with elections on a non-partisan basis to be held in May every four years.**

This plan, known as the mayor-council-administrator plan, represents a merger of the mayor-council plan with the council-manager plan combining the best features of each. It will give Trenton the advantages of policy leadership that come with the separate election of a mayor as chief executive, and administrative competence that comes with the appointment of a professionally qualified administrator or manager.

The mayor-council-administrator plan will give Trenton these

## Policy Advantages:

- 1) **An elected chief executive, with authority and responsibility to provide policy leadership for the city;**
- 2) **An elected council, to be concerned solely with local legislative matters and to serve as a check and balance upon the elected mayor;**
- 3) **A continuation of the system of non-partisan elections that we now have, without party politics, but strengthened with a provision for election run-offs where the candidates do not receive the necessary majority of the vote;**
- 4) **A new element of sectional representation on the council, so that each of the four sections of the city may have a more direct voice in the city government, and may in turn take a more active part in city affairs.**

Mayor-Council Plan C will also provide Trenton with these

## Administrative Improvements:

- 1) **Power and duty in the city council to adopt an administrative code so as to organize the city government in accord with modern principles of administration;**
- 2) **A professionally qualified business administrator who can be given general supervision and direction, under the mayor, of all city departments, and who is charged by the charter itself with responsibility for budgeting, personnel and purchasing;**
- 3) **An executive budget for all city departments which is submitted to the council by the mayor, and may not be increased without a 2/3 vote of the council, although it may be reduced by a simple majority;**
- 4) **The appointment of all department heads by the mayor with the advice and consent of the council, and the appointment and removal of subordinates in each department by the department head, subject to civil service requirements.**

## IN BRIEF

Your Charter Commission has come to these unanimous conclusions:

The Trenton city commissioners have tried to make the commission form of government work, but the plan is inherently defective and inadequate for operation of the city government in the face of modern problems; and

All things considered, a change to Mayor-Council Plan C (including its provision for a business administrator) offers this city the most promising opportunities for good government

