

CODE HOME RULE FAQs

Will changing to Code Home Rule increase my property taxes?

No. **There are no additional costs imposed by Code Home Rule that would necessitate any tax increases.**

Will changing to Code Home Rule lower my property taxes?

It is unlikely to lower taxes by itself, but it could help hold the line on tax increases, since the county would be free to seek alternate revenues such as impact fees from homebuilders, which would relieve homeowners from having to pay the full cost of new infrastructure.

Why Code Home Rule and not Charter Home Rule?

Unlike Charter, Code Home Rule would allow us to have home rule by the end of 2008, whereas Charter is a much longer and more contentious process. The Charter process could not have been completed in time for this November's election.

Can we still switch to Charter government in the future?

Yes. First a county charter board would have to be appointed to write the charter, then it would have to be approved by voters.

How would Code Home Rule government differ from what we have now?

It would look and operate just the same, as the County Commissioners would still rule. However, they could make many local decisions without seeking approval from our state senators and delegates in the MD General Assembly in Annapolis as they must now.

Does changing to Code Home Rule mean we will have impact fees?

No, not necessarily. For example, neighboring Kent County has Code Home Rule but has not enacted impact fees. It would be entirely up to our Commissioners.

How do we get Code Home Rule?

Two-thirds, or 4 of 5, County Commissioners must first agree to put it on the ballot, then it would have to be approved by a majority of voters in November.

Does Code Home Rule create any new elected offices?

No, the structure of our county government stays the same. Charter Home Rule, by contrast, would create a County Council and either an elected or appointed County Executive.

What do other Maryland counties do?

15 of 23 MD Counties have adopted Home Rule (9 Charter Home Rule, 6 Code Home Rule). In the past, all counties save one have put a home rule referendum on the ballot at least once. All of our neighboring counties have some form of Home Rule.

Has Cecil County ever voted before on Home Rule?

Yes. Since 1968, twice on Code Home Rule and three times on Charter Home Rule. It was defeated each time.

Why home rule now?

BRAC is coming! If you prefer to pay for the roads and bridges and schools and waste transport and treatment on these newcomers' behalf, then keep the status quo – *VOTE AGAINST CODE HOME RULE!!*