

Key informant results:

After four key informant interviews, a range of perspectives regarding the county's current governmental structure and potential areas for change arose. While views differed on the need for structural change, similar themes emerged.

Governance Structure: Perspectives varied regarding the overall structure of county government. One viewpoint supported moving toward nonpartisan elections and appointing a county administrator to improve coordination and strengthen partnerships with municipalities. Conversely, at least one interviewee expressed satisfaction with the current structure and did not identify a need for significant change. These differing views suggest that while some see opportunities for change, others believe the existing system is functioning effectively.

Administrative Coordination and Alignment: Several comments pointed to the importance of organizational alignment and clarity in roles. The suggestion to establish a county administrator reflected interest in improving coordination across departments and enhancing the county's ability to partner with cities.

Accessibility: A contrasting but equally strong theme emphasized the strengths of the county's current small-town approach. Interviewees noted the value of face-to-face interaction with frontline staff and the ability for residents to easily identify where to go for assistance. This accessibility was described as a meaningful strength of the current structure. Some suggested that even more direct, in-person engagement could further strengthen public trust and responsiveness.

Role and Authority of Elected Officials: Another perspective raised questions about the balance of authority between elected County Commissioners and administrative departments. One interviewee suggested that Commissioners could exercise greater power and oversight over departments.

Public Engagement: Across comments, there was interest in improving resident engagement, particularly earlier in decision-making processes. This theme suggests a shared value around transparency and community involvement, regardless of preferred structural model.