County board eyes charter revision

Oakland County government -

Oakland County government —
the other cumbersome Institutions
— may be in for change.

A resolution is scheduled to be
introduced at today's Board of
Commissioners meeting calling, for
series of changes dealpried to
streamline county government.

The resolution — to be introduced by Republican Nancy
McConnell, Bloomfeld Hills, and
Democrat Lawrence Pernick,
Southfield – cells for a change in
state law to enable Oakland to restracture its government.

In short, it cells for considering a
new county charter.

"It would be the very first step in
a long series of change," and Pernick, who was efected in 1908. That
it's change that is overlare.

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OAKLAND

Assuming the state law was changed, other steps would include election of a commission to draft a proposed new charter that voters would accept or reject, possibly in-

proposed new charter that wices would accept or reject, possibly in-1994.

McConnell is optimistic. "We've talked about a new charter, but nothings ever been done. But the time may be ripe.

McConnell said county redisticting has already guaranteed some change, such as a reduction in the number of county countsistend districts from 27 to 25.

With change already in the wind, McConnell helices commissioners may be roady for serious change annually a new charter.

Essentially, McConnell and Pernick envision a charter that would

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give Oakland the same power and flexibility currently enjoyed by Wayne County.
Public Act 293 of 1966 enables counties with a minimum of 1.5 million residents to have more self-rule. Since Wayne County is the only one in Michigan with that many people, Act 293 only applies to Wayne.

McConnell and Pernick believe it would not be extremely difficult to

McConnell and Pernick believe it would not be extremely difficult to persuade the Legislature to lower the minimum number of residents to one million, thus making Oak land, eligible for a new charter and new structure.

A new charter would offer many possible changes. The new county commission, for example, could be nonpartisan, with significantly mure, or fewer, commissioners.

Most of the issues we deal with are nonpartisan anyway, said Per-

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nick. "But traditionally county commissions see themselves as smaller versions of the state Legislature or Congress. So were elected on a partisan basis, prompting needless conflet between Republicans and Democrats."

One change McConnell and Pernick would like to see is bringing the Road Commission of Onktand County — currently a semi-autono-currently as emi-autono-

County — currently a semi-autono-mous agency — under the control of county government. Roads are a major concern in vir-

tually every community, said McConnell. Yet the road commission — which has three appointed members — does not answer to the voters.
"Bringing the road commission

under county government would improve accountability and assure efficiency with tax dollars,

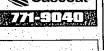


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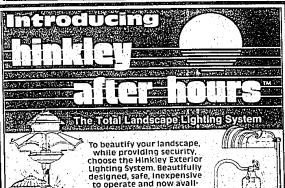




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