

**FINAL REPORT  
TWIN BRIDGES LOCAL GOVERNMENT STUDY COMMISSION  
November, 1996**

The Twin Bridges Local Government Study Commission presents this final report to the citizens of Twin Bridges.

The purpose of the study commission, as defined in state law, is "to study the existing form and powers of our town government and procedures for delivery of local government services and compare them with other forms available under the laws of the state" (7-3-172, MCA). If some change is deemed necessary, the study commission may submit such proposed change directly to the electors.

During the first round of local government review the following people served on the Twin Bridges Local Government Study Commission: Sylvan Donegan, Jr., Michael J. Phillips, and Marie McAlear. They placed a proposal on the ballot to alter the existing commission-executive form of government by having at-large elections, and nonpartisan elections. This proposal was adopted by a vote of 90 for the alternative and 41 for the existing statutory commission-executive form.

During the second round of local government review the voters of Twin Bridges opted not to undertake the government review process and no study commission was elected.

In 1994 the voters decided to conduct voter review and a study commission comprised of Linda Sutton, Dave Smith and Mel Peterson was established.

That study commission met and discussed the existing commission-executive (mayor-council) form of government. At present, the governing body is made up of five council members and the mayor, all of whom are elected at-large on a non-partisan ballot to serve four year overlapping terms. The offices of the mayor and three council members will be elected in 1997, while two council members will be elected in 1999. The following issues were discussed:

1. With a population of 400, Twin Bridges may not need five council positions.
2. Currently there are four positions on the ballot during the mayoral election and only two positions on the ballot at the next municipal election.
3. Whether the mayor should vote on city issues.
4. The number of voting abstentions by the council members.
5. The compensation of council members.

Pursuant to 7-3-190, MCA the Twin Bridges Local Government Review Study Commission makes and submits the following "supplementary report" to the town council rather than placing any proposals on the ballot.

**Supplementary Recommendations**

After discussion of the above issues the study commission recommends that the town council

consider these recommendations and react within one year.

1. Reduce the size of the town council by one position.
2. Allow the mayor to vote on all issues.
3. Increase the compensation of council members from \$10 to \$20 per meeting.

The Local Government Center at MSU-Bozeman has indicated that it is willing to provide technical assistance to the mayor and council in implementing any or all of these recommendations.

Respectfully submitted,

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Linda Sutton, Chair

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Dave Smith, Member