Chapter 5
How Does Local Government Work?

Inquiring Questions:
1. In what ways is local government part of a democracy?
2. How can citizens participate in local government?
3. How can people organize themselves to meet needs not met by government?

1. Why do we have Local Government?
   A. Local government provide services
      - services meet some of the needs of the citizens of a city/town/etc.
      1. Local Government Services
         - Senior’s facilities
         - Public transportation
         - Streets and roads
         - Libraries
         - Fire, Police, EMS
         - Animal control
         - City parks and recreation
         - Waste disposal (garbage)
   
   B. Local government collects taxes
      - services cost money and the government needs a way to pay for them all.
      How do they pay for it???
      - local government collect most the money from Property Taxes to pay for it all.
      - this is Revenue (making money) for our government
      Other sources of Revenue are:
        - user fees (transit, pools, parking, licenses (businesses & pets), permits, etc)
        - sale of goods
        - transfer payments (money from other levels of government)
        - Property taxes (owning a home or business)
        - Rental of equipment
      - governments spend money to maintain and run the city... this is called
      Expenditures which are:
        - roads
        - agricultural services
        - parks and recreation
        - protective services
        - administration
        - water and waste management

   C. Local Government Makes Laws
      - they make rules called bylaws which are enforced by bylaw officers
      - check out the City of Calgary Website to read about some pending bylaws and
        some of the bylaws have recently been passed
      - laws are discussed 3 times.

   D. Local Government gives People a Voice
      - contact the mayors office or alderman via email, phone, letter, fax, in person
      - Petitions, Rallies, demonstration, attending town hall meetings, voting, etc.
2. How Are Local Governments Organized?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Government</th>
<th>Top Elected Official</th>
<th>Elected Official</th>
<th>Council Made Up Of:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Mayor</td>
<td>Councillors</td>
<td>(alderman)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Reeve</td>
<td>Councillors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Nations</td>
<td>Chief</td>
<td>Council selected by</td>
<td>community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metis</td>
<td>Chairperson</td>
<td>Council of 5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

A. Making Decisions for the Community
   - council meetings to discuss and make decisions
   - they organize committees that are responsible for services
   - advisory committees

B. Delivering Services to the Community
   - many people are hired to work for the city – Civil Servants
   - all departments report to the “Town or City Manager”

3. How are Local Governments Elected?
   - elections occur every 3 years

Steps to an election
   1. Nomination – must be Canadian Citizen, 18 yrs, live in area for 6 months
   2. campaign – getting your name and ideas out there to the public
   3. election day – go to polling stations and ...
   4. vote – pick the person you want to be your mayor

4. How Can you Participate at the local Level?
   - Petitions, Rallies, demonstration, attending town hall meetings, voting, etc.

A. Getting Involved in the Community
   - start programs that collect and distribute food or clothing
   - bring meals to elderly people in their homes
   - organize cleanup campaigns to pick up litter
   - raise money to start youth or sports programs
   - helping with the homeless

5. Why do we have School Boards?
   They make decisions about educational services and programming in schools.
   They are familiar with needs and values of the community they serve.
   They have a superintendent and trustees who make decisions.

A. What are your choices of Schools?
   Public Schools – they are available for all citizens
   Separate Schools – Catholic faith
   Francophone Schools – run by Francophones (French)
   Charter Schools – same curriculum as public but with a special focus
   (Science, music, etc.)
   First Nations School – Run by the aboriginal groups
Passing a Bylaw

Bylaw motion **introduced** at community or council meeting

Councillor **makes motion** to pass bylaw at council

Council considers the motion for the **first** time

Community members and councillors who **oppose** the motion argue against it

Community members and councillors who **support** the motion argue for it

Council considers the motion for the **second** time

Council considers the motion for the **third** time

Members of council **vote** on motion

Motion **fails**

Motion **passes**

Motion **becomes bylaw**

In summary...

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Text Definition</th>
<th>My Definition</th>
<th>Symbol or Image or example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bylaw</td>
<td>Laws that are passed by a local government</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Motion</td>
<td>Is an idea or proposal discussed and voted on at a meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Councillor</td>
<td>Person elected to local government</td>
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<tr>
<td>Council</td>
<td>Is a group of elected representatives who make decisions for a local area</td>
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<tr>
<td>Forum</td>
<td>Is a meeting place where public discussions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Municipal Area</td>
<td>Is a region that has its own local government</td>
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<tr>
<td>Municipal District</td>
<td>Is a rural area that has its own local government</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Are places like cities, towns and villages</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Municipal district and counties</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advisory Committees</td>
<td>Groups of concerned citizens and members of government. They give advice to the council.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Departments of Govern.</td>
<td>In a local gov. departments provide various kinds of services to the community</td>
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<tr>
<td>Civil Servants</td>
<td>People hired to run or work in the gov. departments.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ballot</td>
<td>Piece of paper used for voting that lists the names of the candidates</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nominate</td>
<td>Identify a person as a possible candidate for an elected position</td>
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<tr>
<td>Petition</td>
<td>A written request that contains the signatures of people who support its content</td>
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<tr>
<td>Superintendent</td>
<td>Is responsible for running the schools in a jurisdiction.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Budget</td>
<td>List of items that show how much money will be spent on each item</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trustee</td>
<td>Person who serves on a school board</td>
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