

Chapter 8: Local Government Review

Local governments: The people elected to make decisions about affairs in a district or city by the residents of the district.

Local elections are held at least every **3 years**.

The 6 steps to an election are:

1. Nomination: candidate fills out nomination form and needs a certain amount of signatures to be eligible.
2. Campaigning: candidate creates campaign literature (signs/pamphlets). Debates and forums are held.
3. Preparing the Polling Stations: often located in gymnasiums/ places with ample parking.
4. Determining Voter Eligibility: must be at least 18 years old and live in the community.
5. Casting and Counting Votes
6. Declaring the Outcome

In Alberta, **urban, rural, and aboriginal** local governments all have different structures.

Urban Municipalities: people live close together.

Examples: Cities, towns, villages.

- The different categories of urban municipalities are based on population.
- Councillors are elected.
- The head of the government is the Mayor, who is elected by citizens.

Rural Municipalities: Counties, Specialized municipalities (Jasper/ Strathcona County).

- These are divided into zones or wards.
- Councillors are elected by the ward they represent.
- Head of government is called a reeve/or mayor.

Aboriginal Municipalities: Metis Settlement Councils, First Nations Authorities.

Metis Settlement Councils:

- councillors are elected by citizens.
- The chairperson is chosen among elected councillors.

First Nation Authorities:

- councillors are elected by citizens.
- Chief is chosen among elected councillors.
- Elders are often consulted when making decisions.
- On big decisions, every citizen will vote, not just council members.

Services Local Governments are responsible for:

- recreation centres
- municipal transit systems
- neighbourhood parks and libraries
- snow removal
- municipal road repair
- fire fighters
- water/ sewage

Local governments pay for services by collecting **property tax**.

Bylaws: are developed by local governments when they need to solve a problem in their communities.

An example of a bylaw would be a graffiti bylaw, noise bylaw, pet bylaw, etc.

The steps to create a bylaw:

1. Councillor writes a motion (proposal).
2. The motion is read 3 times.
3. Councillors vote on the motion.
4. If voted in favour, motion is now a bylaw and given royal assent.

Bylaws are enforced by government employees, such as police officers, peace officers, and bylaw officers.

School board: The people elected to make decisions about affairs in a **school** district by the residents of the district.

Elected officials are called **trustees**. They are elected at the same time as local/municipal elections.