

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?

Type of Government	Top Elected Official	Elected Official	Council Made Up Of:
Urban	Mayor	Councillors (alderman)	
Rural	Reeve	Councillors	
First Nations	Chief	council selected by community	
Metis	Chairperson	Council of 5	

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)

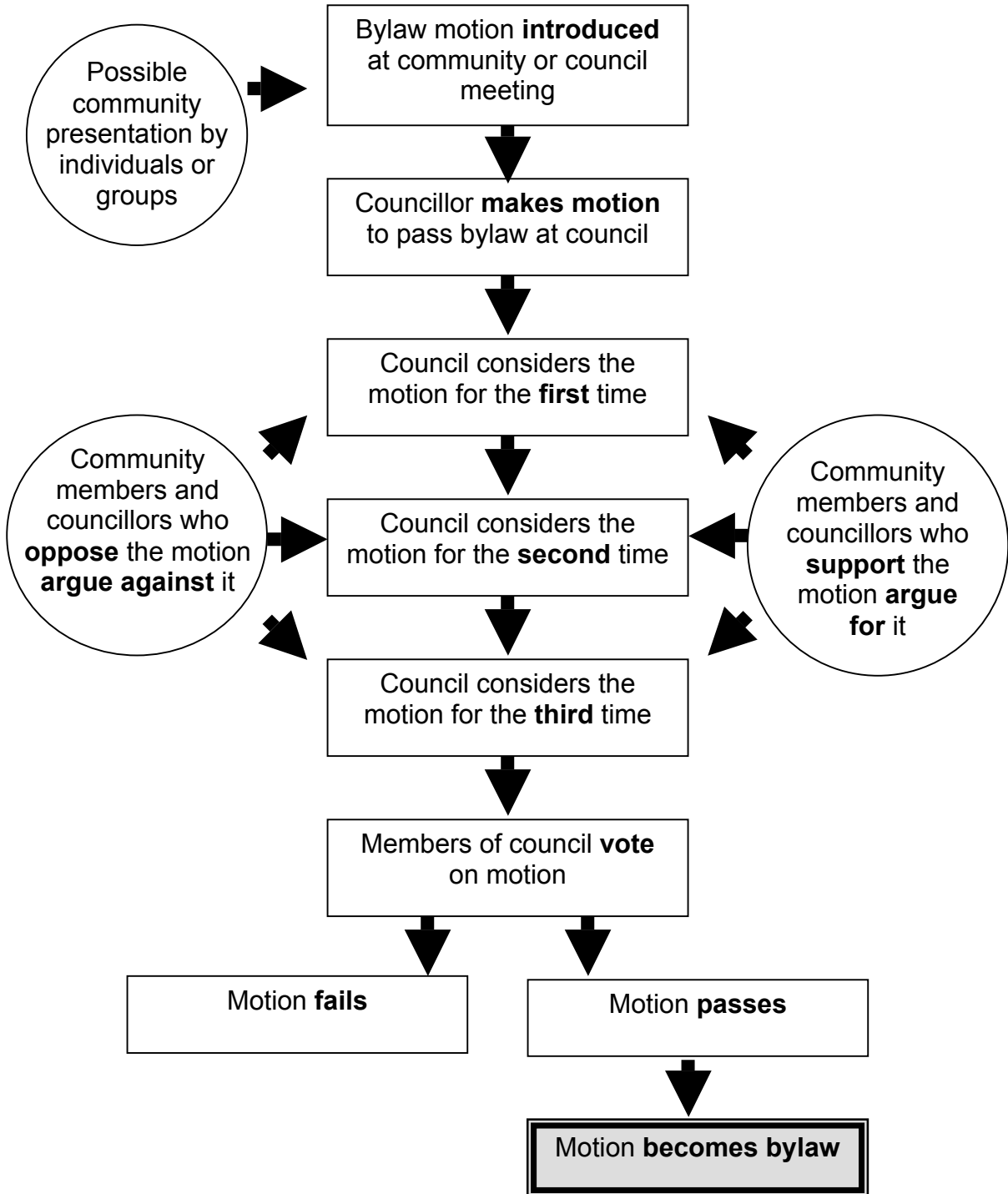
Charter Schools – same curriculum as public but with a special focus (Science, music, etc.)

First Nations School – Run by the aboriginal groups

Name _____

Date _____

Passing a Bylaw



In summary...