

# Local Government

## CIVIC PARTICIPATION

Local governments provide citizens with the best opportunity for participating directly in government. Contact your local town hall or city hall for information on your local officials. Try to learn these officials' views on important issues facing the community. Find out what you can do to become involved in community affairs.

### Working in Your Community

When you have this information, choose an issue facing the community. Organize a meeting of friends and neighbors to discuss the issue. Draft a petition stating the group's ideas and recommendations for dealing with the issue. Circulate the petition in the community to gather signatures, and then present it to local government officials. ■

### Your Civics Journal

As you study this chapter, think about some of the problems facing your local government. If your community has a local newspaper, look through it for ideas. Write the problems in your civics journal. Note which level of government deals with the problem and what is being done.







# County Government

## FOCUS

### TERMS TO KNOW

charter, ordinance

### OBJECTIVES

- Describe the basic **organization of county government**.
- Identify and describe the roles of various **county officials**.
- Explain reasons for the **growth of county government**.

**U**nder our federal system, each city, town, and county has its own local government. Unlike the federal and state governments, which are basically similar, these local governments vary greatly in size and structure. The United States Constitution grants no power to local governments. In fact, it does not even mention their existence. Instead, the states establish all local governments. Usually, state constitutions describe the duties and powers of local governments. The only powers a local government has are those that the state gives it. Most often, a state grants these powers in a **charter**, or plan of government. This charter describes the local government and gives it authority over its affairs.

Because each state's history and geography are different, each has set up different kinds of local governments.

One type, county government, is found in every state except Connecticut and Rhode Island.

The United States has more than 3,000 counties. These counties vary greatly in size and in population. In some states counties are known by other names. In Alaska they are known as boroughs; in Louisiana they are called parishes. No matter what their size is or what they are called, however, these counties have one thing in common—they provide services for their citizens.

## Organization of County Government

A group of officials called a county board governs most counties. In some places this group is known as the board

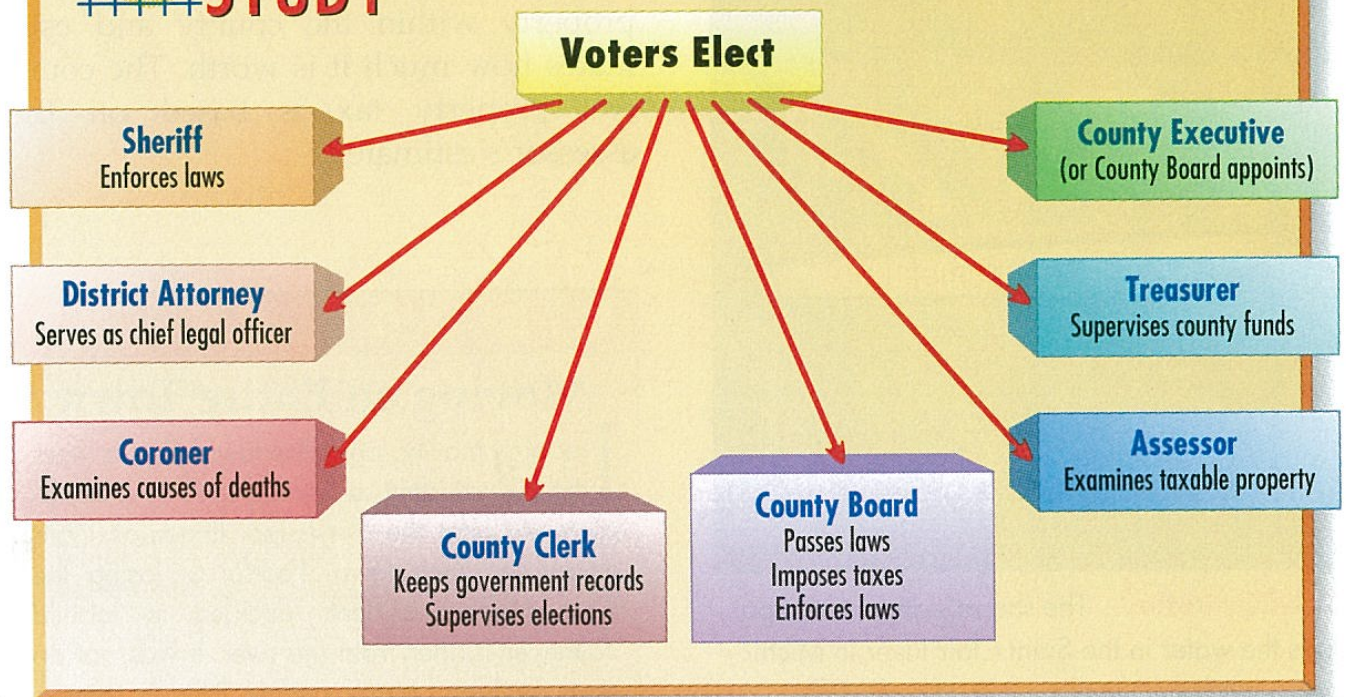
**County Government** A county board may have both legislative and executive powers. *How do county governments raise money for county facilities and services?*



## CHART STUDY

### Organization of County Government

Voters elect many county officials. Which county official supervises elections?



of supervisors, board of commissioners, or county court. The voters elect the county board members, who are sometimes called supervisors, commissioners, or freeholders. Usually, each board member represents a particular district within the county. While board members' terms of office vary, the most common term is four years.

The county board has legislative powers and can pass laws for the county. A law passed by a county board or other local government is often known as an **ordinance**. Ordinances may deal with such matters as regulating business, improving regional transportation, and protecting the health and safety of county residents.

A county board can also raise money by imposing property taxes or sales taxes. This money is used to pay county employees, to maintain county roads

and buildings, and to provide services such as law enforcement. In addition, many counties also provide recreation facilities, hospitals, and public libraries for their residents.

Because it is also the county government's responsibility to administer and enforce laws, a county board may have executive powers as well as legislative powers. For example, many county boards employ inspectors to check buildings for safety violations. Many also set up special departments to enforce liquor and food service laws.

## County Officials

The executive powers of a county board are often shared with a number of other elected or appointed officials. The



**Sheriff's Duties** The sheriff's department patrols the water in the Saint Clair River in Michigan. *What is the main role of a sheriff?*

roles of these officials are similar to those of executive officials in the state government.

The sheriff is the county's chief law enforcement officer. The sheriff's department, which usually includes deputies and uniformed officers, enforces court orders and manages the county jail. In some counties the sheriff's department shares law enforcement duties with a separate police department.

The district attorney (DA) is the county's chief legal officer. The DA investigates crimes, brings charges against suspected lawbreakers, and prosecutes the cases in court.

The coroner is an official who tries to establish the cause of unusual or suspicious deaths. The coroner usually works closely with the sheriff's department or the police department.

The county clerk is similar to the state government's secretary of state. The

county clerk keeps official government records and often supervises county elections.

The assessor examines all taxable property within the county and estimates how much it is worth. The county's property tax is based on the assessor's estimate.

## DID YOU KNOW?

### Moving an Entire Town

Imagine moving an entire town! That is what the 900 residents of Valmeyer, Illinois, decided to do after the Mississippi floods of 1993 devastated their town. Fearful of losing the town again, residents decided to rebuild Valmeyer farther from the river. It was not an easy decision. Many people lived in homes built by their great-grandparents. Some residents vowed to stay.

Those making the move have engaged in lively debates about streets, sidewalks, parks, and other aspects of planning a new town from scratch. They want the new town to be better than the old one. Moving Valmeyer is an enormous and expensive challenge. The move will cost an estimated \$25 million. Still, the people of Valmeyer see

it as an exciting opportunity to build a new town with the same pioneering spirit their ancestors had when they built the first Valmeyer.



**Mississippi floods**



**Levels of Government** Arizona has three levels of government—state, county, and city or town government. *What levels of government would you expect to find in the state capital of Phoenix?*



The county treasurer, like the state treasurer, supervises the county's funds and makes payments from the treasury. He or she may also be the chief tax collector. An auditor, who makes sure that none of the county's money is spent without approval from the county board, supervises the treasurer's work.

## Growth of County Government

County governments were first set up to provide a few basic services that residents could not provide for themselves, such as law enforcement and road construction. Over the past century, the

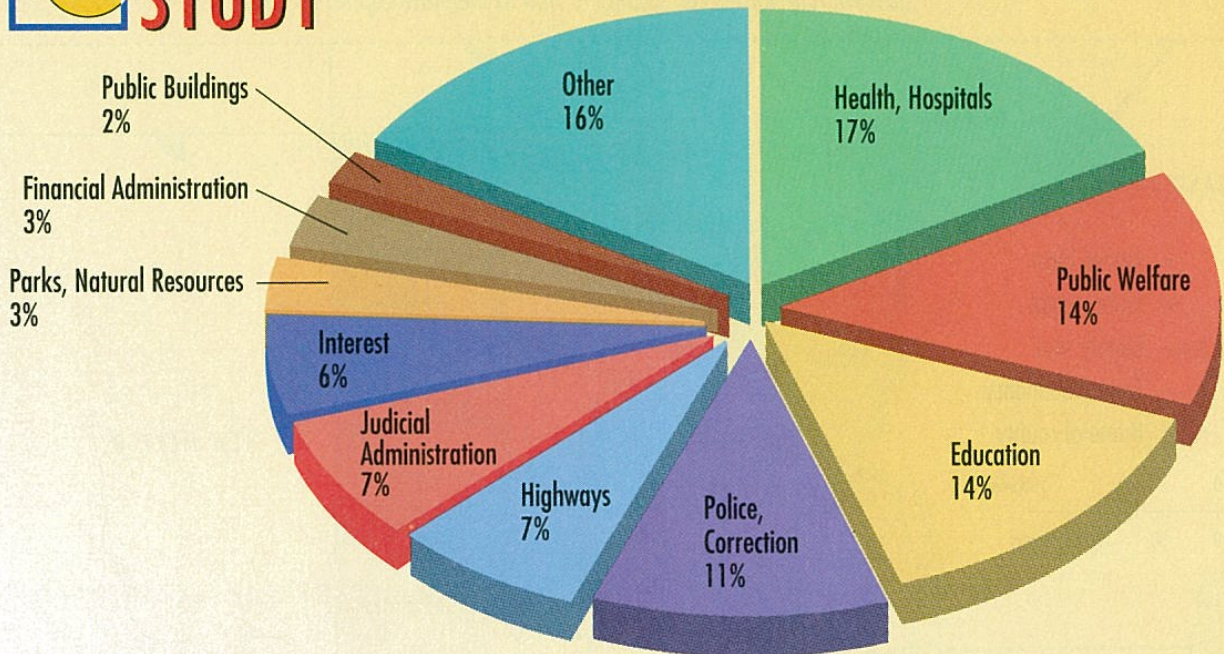
role of county government has grown enormously throughout the United States. As large cities became increasingly crowded, many of their residents moved into the surrounding counties. Many rural areas have turned into densely packed suburbs, filled with shopping centers, highways, and housing developments.

Because of this growth, county governments have been forced to provide more and more services. Most counties provide water, sewer, and sanitation services. Many also operate large, modern police departments and hospitals. To manage these increased services, county governments have begun to maintain large bureaucracies similar to those of



## GRAPH STUDY

**County Expenditures** About 14 percent of county funds are spent on public welfare. *What is the largest expense for counties?*



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census.

state governments. Among the government agencies found in many counties are the board of health, the welfare board, the hospital board, and the planning commission.

The increased demand for services has put a strain on many counties. The old form of county government, in which executive duties are divided equally among many officials, is often slow and inefficient. As a result, many county governments have been reorganized to operate more like state governments.

Under a new form of government that many counties have adopted, the county board operates only as a legislature. A powerful official called a county executive, or county manager, handles all executive responsibilities. Sometimes the county board hires the county executive. More often, however, the voters

elect the executive. The county executive appoints top officials, manages the bureaucracy, and submits proposed bills to the legislature.

## ★ SECTION 1 REVIEW ★

### UNDERSTANDING VOCABULARY

*Define* charter, ordinance.

### REVIEWING OBJECTIVES

- 1 What is the basic organization of county government?
- 2 What are the titles of various county officials, and what are their duties?
- 3 What are some of the reasons for the growth of county government?

# Great American Documents

## The Shame of the Cities

In the early years of this century, penniless immigrants poured into cities and lived in cold, dark firetraps. Whole families worked six or seven days a week to scratch out a living.

### Political Machines

#### Think About It

As you read the following excerpt, think about the importance of the media in exposing corruption.

In many large cities, powerful political machines arose that took advantage of the poor. Political leaders continued in office year after year, growing rich from tax-

payers' dollars. Voters could have broken the machine's power but did nothing. Often this was because they were bribed with jobs or money.

### The Muckrakers

Into this world stepped the muckrakers, a group of publishers, writers, and artists. They were called muckrakers because they raked the "muck," or filth, to expose political corruption and social ills.

One of the most famous muckrakers was Lincoln Steffens. Traveling from city to city, he exposed the corruption of politicians who were stealing millions from city treasuries while failing to provide basic services. Steffens's articles were collected in a book, *The Shame of the Cities* (1904), the source of the following quotation.



**New York City tenement**

**T**he great truth I tried to make plain was that bribery is no ordinary felony, but treason . . . [and that] corruption . . . is not an occasional offense, but a common practice . . . the effect is literally to change the form of our government from one that is representative of the people to an oligarchy [government by the few], representative of special interests.

Steffens and other muckrakers tried to educate the public and set a reform movement in motion. Soon people began demanding and winning changes.

### INTERPRETING SOURCES

- 1 Why was the work of the muckrakers so important to the American public?
- 2 What do you think Steffens meant when he said that bribery was treason?





# Town, Township, and Village Governments

## FOCUS

### TERMS TO KNOW

township, special district, user fee

### OBJECTIVES

- Describe the history of **town government**.
- Explain the organization of **township government**.
- Identify the basic responsibilities of **village government**.
- Identify three kinds of **special districts**.

Just as states are divided into counties, many counties are divided into smaller units. In New England, these units are called towns. In many other eastern and midwestern states, they are called **townships**. Each town or township also has its own government. Like county governments, local governments get their power directly from the state.

The relationship between county governments and local governments varies from state to state. In New England, town governments meet the needs of most communities, and counties are basically judicial districts. In some parts

of the country, county and township governments share power, but in the South and West, county governments tend to be more important than township governments. The two forms of government usually have a cooperative relationship, dividing responsibilities between them.

## Town Government

Town government is one of the oldest forms of government in the United States. It began in the New England colonies, where colonists generally settled in small villages and towns. In most cases, farmers living in outlying areas were also considered town members. From the very beginning, these New England colonists met regularly with their neighbors to discuss problems that involved everyone. A majority vote settled any disagreements.

Eventually, "town meetings" became the colonists' form of local government. Citizens rather than elected representa-

**Town Clerk** In some towns the clerk takes care of the day-to-day details of local government. *How are decisions made in town governments?*



## Firefighter

**P**utting out fires is hard, dangerous, dirty work. The hours are long and the working conditions are miserable. Nevertheless, many men and women become firefighters because saving lives and property is a vital and rewarding job.

### Working as a Firefighter

When a fire breaks out, seconds count in saving lives and property. Therefore, each firefighter must perform a specific job as part of a highly trained team. Some firefighters drive the fire trucks, others operate hoses, and still others search burning buildings for fire victims.

Some firefighters become fire inspectors or fire science specialists. These specialists inspect buildings to spot fire hazards and make sure the buildings have adequate fire-detection and fire-fighting equipment.

### Training

Most firefighters usually work for towns, cities, or private companies. In many small towns, firefighters are unpaid volunteers



**Fighting a fire**

who fight fires in their spare time. To become a professional firefighter, you should be a high school graduate. You must pass a civil service test and a rigorous physical exam. If accepted, you will undergo several months of apprenticeship training.



**F**ind out from your local fire department the exact requirements for becoming a firefighter. Present your findings to the class in the form of an oral report. Conclude the report by asking a firefighter to speak with your class about the job.

tives made all important decisions. Because each citizen had a direct say in the government, the town meeting was a form of direct democracy. You read about direct democracy in Chapter 1.

A number of small New England towns still hold town meetings today. These meetings are usually held once a year. The time and place and the topics to be discussed are announced in advance. All town residents who are registered to vote are encouraged to attend the town

meeting. One by one, the topics on the agenda are discussed and then voted upon.

Because town meetings are held so rarely, they are useful only for making broad policy decisions. They cannot handle the day-to-day details of government. For this reason each New England town elects a number of officials, called selectmen, to run the local government between meetings. (Despite the name, selectmen may be women.) The town

may also elect executive officers similar to those in a county government, such as a clerk, a treasurer, and an assessor.

Some New England towns have replaced the traditional town meetings with representative town meetings. In these towns the citizens elect people to represent them at the town meeting. Other towns have eliminated town meetings entirely. These towns are run much like counties, with a board of selectmen or a town council doing the job of a county board.

## Township Government

New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania were organized somewhat differently than New England. The counties in these states were divided into smaller units called townships, a term borrowed from Great Britain. These townships set up local governments similar to those of New England towns.

## Midwestern Townships

Midwestern townships have a different history. As the United States expanded westward, it acquired new land that was not yet settled. As this land was obtained, Congress divided it into square blocks, which were called townships. Townships were sections of land, not units of government. As settlers moved into these areas, however, they set up local governments similar to those in the eastern states. These governments, called civil townships, generally kept the same borders that Congress had originally established. For this reason many midwestern townships appear perfectly square on a map.

Today some township governments are like town governments, holding township meetings similar to town meetings in New England. Most townships, however, have governments similar to those of counties. In most cases a small group of elected officials called a town-

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**Township Government** Some midwestern states have local governments known as civil townships. *What is the origin of midwestern townships?*



ship committee, board of supervisors, or board of trustees has legislative responsibilities. A township supervisor usually heads this committee or board.

## Township and County Responsibilities

Over the years county governments have taken over a number of responsibilities originally held by township governments. In some cases county and township governments work together to provide local services. Law enforcement duties, for example, may be divided between county and township police forces. Township officials may supervise county elections, and county officials may oversee the maintenance of township roads.

## Village Government

A village is the smallest unit of local government. Villages almost always lie within the boundaries of other governments, such as townships or counties. In some areas villages are known as boroughs. (These should not be confused with Alaskan boroughs, which are similar to counties rather than to villages.)

The population of some rural communities may be quite small—a few hundred people, or even fewer. Communities this small often have no need for their own government. County or township governments provide for most of their needs. Occasionally, however, community members find some reason to band together. They may be dissatisfied with the services the county provides, or they may want to set up their own school system. In that case they may organize the community as a village and



**Village Services** Village governments can collect taxes to spend on libraries and other projects for the community. *What is the main disadvantage of becoming a village?*

request permission from the state to set up a village government.

As in a township, the government of a village usually consists of a small board of trustees the voters elect. Most villages also elect an executive, similar to a town manager. This official is usually known as the chief burgess, or president of the board, or sometimes as the mayor.

The village board has the power to collect taxes and spend money on projects that benefit the community. Those projects may include building and maintaining roads, establishing schools and public libraries, or setting up recreation facilities. The board may hire officials to supervise these projects and provide other services.

Becoming a village has both advantages and disadvantages. The main disadvantage is that residents must often pay higher taxes to support the village government. In return, however, they



**Special Districts** Small communities often band together to create a school district. *What are some other types of special districts in local government?*

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often get better services. Becoming a village also improves the community's status. As a result, visitors, new residents, and businesses may be attracted to the village, bringing money and other resources with them.

## Special Districts

Local governments sometimes have special problems or needs. To deal with these matters, they may request permission from the state to create units of government called special districts. A **special district** is set up to deal with a single issue or provide a single service.

Special districts are sometimes set up for financial reasons. For example, one small village may not be able to afford a fully equipped fire department. By pooling their resources, however, several villages may be able to set up a fire department to serve the entire area.

In other instances a special district may be established to deal with a regional issue. For example, several communities may use the water in a reservoir. Managing this water is beyond the authority of any of the individual communities.

A board or commission, which may be elected or appointed, runs a special district. The board sometimes has the power to collect taxes from district residents to pay for the service it provides. Some boards levy **user fees** to raise money. For example, a water district charges residents a fixed price for every gallon of water they use.

One of the most common types of special district is the school district. Small communities often band together to build schools and hire faculty and staff. An elected school board or board of education usually runs a school district. The United States has about 15,000 school districts.

## ★ SECTION 2 REVIEW ★

### UNDERSTANDING VOCABULARY

*Define* township, special district, user fee.

### REVIEWING OBJECTIVES

- 1 How did town government begin in the United States?
- 2 What is the basic organization of township government?
- 3 What are the basic responsibilities of village government?
- 4 What are three kinds of special districts?



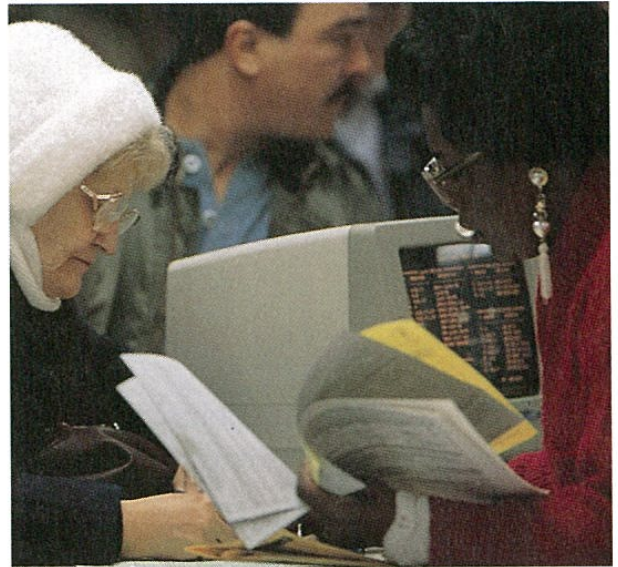
## How to Deal With Government Bureaucracy

**D**ealing with government bureaucracy can be frustrating and difficult. Sometimes you must explain your problem over and over again before reaching the right department or official. You may also have to stand in line for hours or come back another day because you failed to bring the right form or document.

### Planning and Preparation

You can take much of the frustration out of dealing with the government by doing as much planning and information gathering as possible beforehand.

- If you need to contact a government department, look up its number in a local telephone directory. Government numbers may be grouped together in a special section or listed alphabetically in the white pages. If no number is listed for a specific department, call the main number and ask for the department or briefly explain your business. With large government bureaucracies, you may be transferred two or three times before reaching the right person.
- After reaching the proper department, explain your problem and listen carefully for instructions. Have pencil and paper handy to take notes. You may be told to write to a certain official, to send photocopies of documents, or to send in an application fee. Be sure to get the correct names and addresses, and follow all instructions carefully.



**Dealing with paperwork**

- In some cases you will have to appear in person. Get the address of the office and find out when it is open. Make a list of the documents you need to take.

The key to dealing with government bureaucracy is to expect delays and rerouting. Sometimes you may be surprised to find your problem quickly and efficiently resolved.

### CITIZENSHIP IN ACTION

- 1 What can you do to make it easier to deal with a government bureaucracy?
- 2 Why do you think it is difficult for a large government bureaucracy to serve the public efficiently?



# City Government

## FOCUS

### TERMS TO KNOW

home rule, mayor, ward, member-at-large, metropolitan area

### OBJECTIVES

- Describe the organization of a **mayor-council government**.
- Compare a **council-manager government** with the mayor-council plan of city government.
- Describe the organization of a **commission government**.
- Describe the organization and responsibilities of a **metropolitan government**.
- Identify and discuss several **challenges facing local governments**.

**C**ity government is the most common form of local government. When people think of the word *city*, they often think of skyscrapers, neon lights, and hundreds of thousands, or perhaps millions, of people. A city, however, can be as small as 2,500 people. Whether a community is called a city really depends on whether or not its residents consider it to be one.

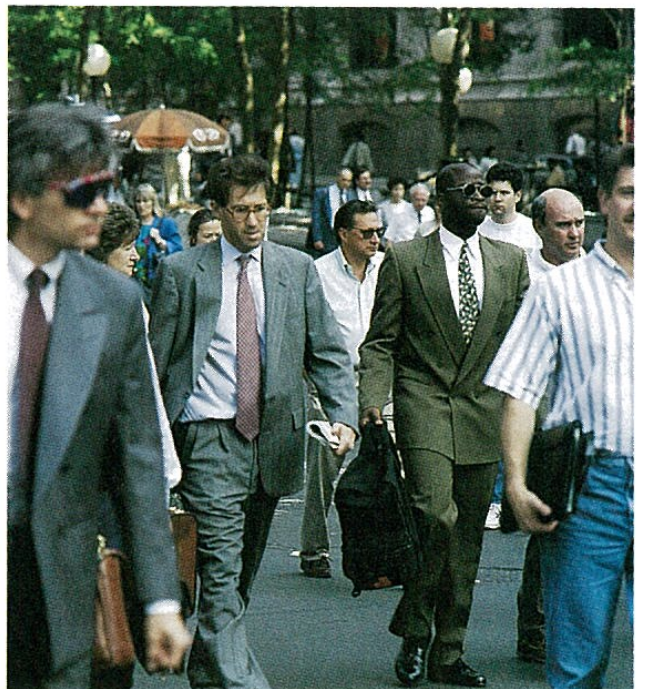
Most of the features that characterize a city cannot be measured or counted. Cities are usually important centers of

business, art, and education. Their residents often live more closely together than the residents of towns or suburbs. Cities frequently depend heavily on particular industries, such as manufacturing, high technology, or trade. They usually have special problems as well, such as high rates of crime or drug abuse, homelessness, and large numbers of people with AIDS.

For whatever reason, the people who live in a particular community sometimes begin to think of that community as a city. When that happens, they may apply to the state legislature for a city charter. As you know, a charter is a document that grants power to a local government.

A city charter is much like a constitution, describing the type of city government, its structure, and its powers. The state legislature still maintains control, however. It may change the powers granted to the city government at any

**Bustling Cities** Many cities are regional centers of business, education, and art. *What are some of the special challenges of cities?*



time. In recent years many state legislatures have begun to grant home rule to cities. **Home rule** allows cities to write their own charters, choose their own type of government, and manage their own affairs. Cities must still follow state law.

A city charter usually sets up one of four types of government: the mayor-council form, the council-manager form, the commission form, or the metropolitan form.

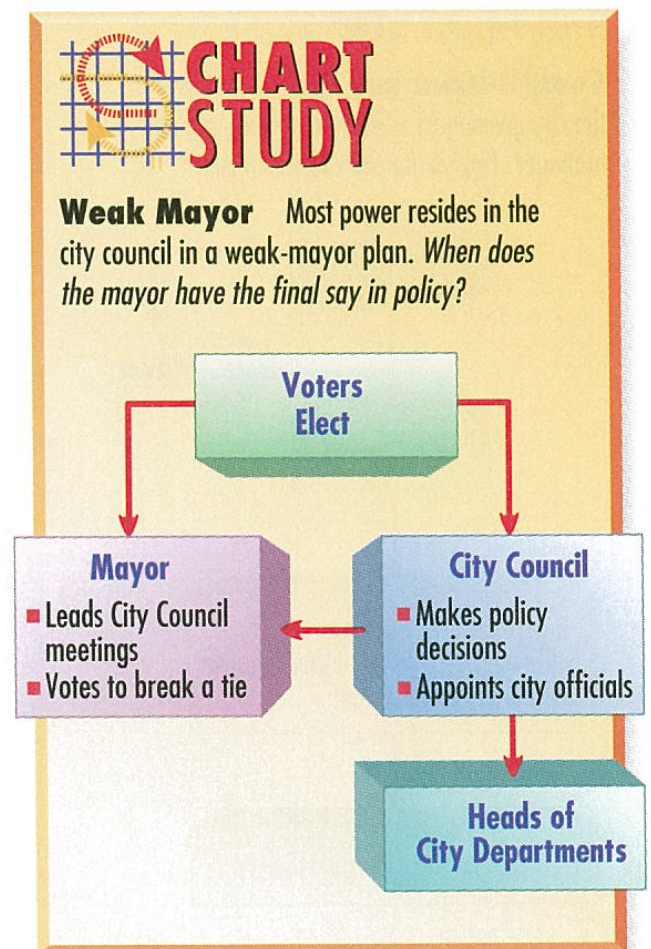
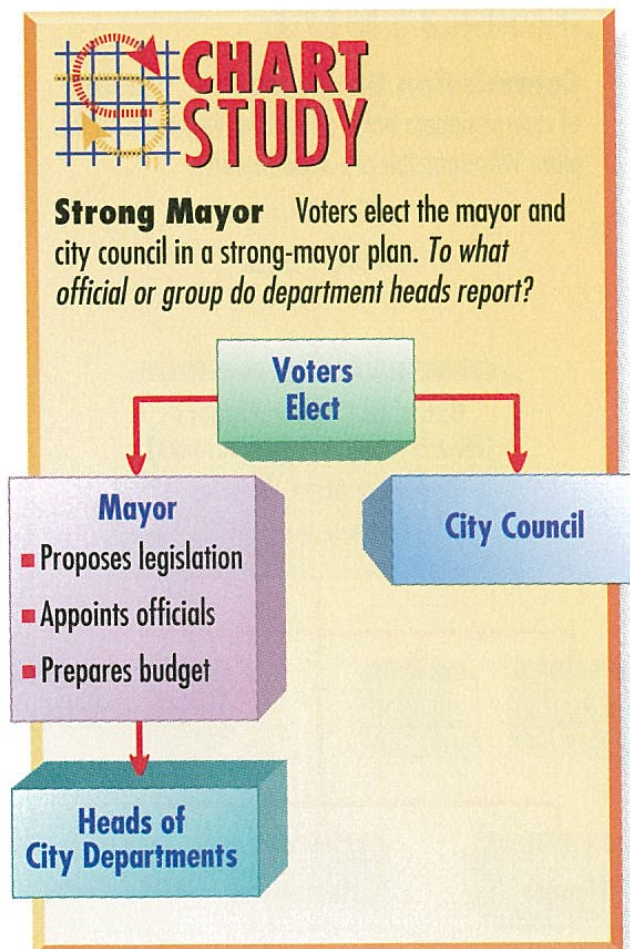
## Mayor-Council Government

The oldest and most widely used type of city government is the mayor-council form. Under this form of city government, responsibility for governing the city is divided between separate

legislative and executive branches. The legislative branch consists of a group of officials called the city council. A chief executive called the **mayor** heads the executive branch. It also includes officials such as a clerk, a treasurer, a comptroller, and a city attorney. Separate departments handle police and fire protection, recreation, roads and buildings, health and welfare, and other matters.

Some cities are divided into voting districts called **wards**. Each ward elects a representative to the city council. In other cities, however, some or all of the members of a city council are known as members-at-large. A **member-at-large** is elected by the entire city.

The voters elect the mayor, most often for a four-year term. The powers of the mayor vary from city to city. Some cities follow a strong-mayor plan, which





gives the mayor a great deal of power over city affairs. Under this plan the mayor has many of the same powers as a governor or the President. He or she can veto bills the city council passes and also appoint and dismiss different city officials. A strong mayor also submits an annual budget to the city council and takes the lead in proposing legislation.

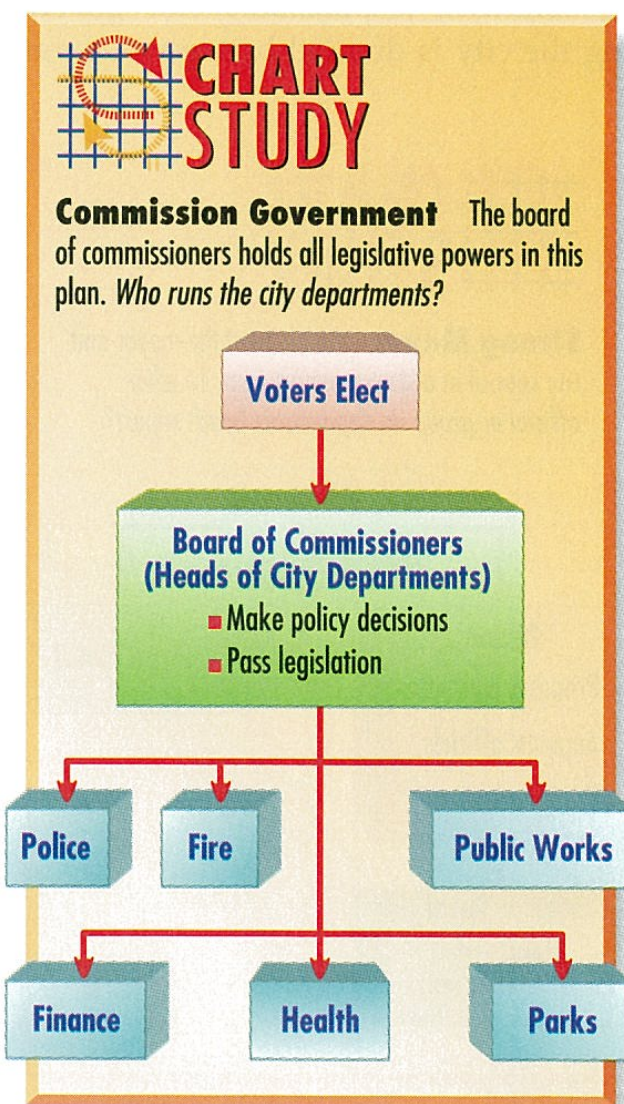
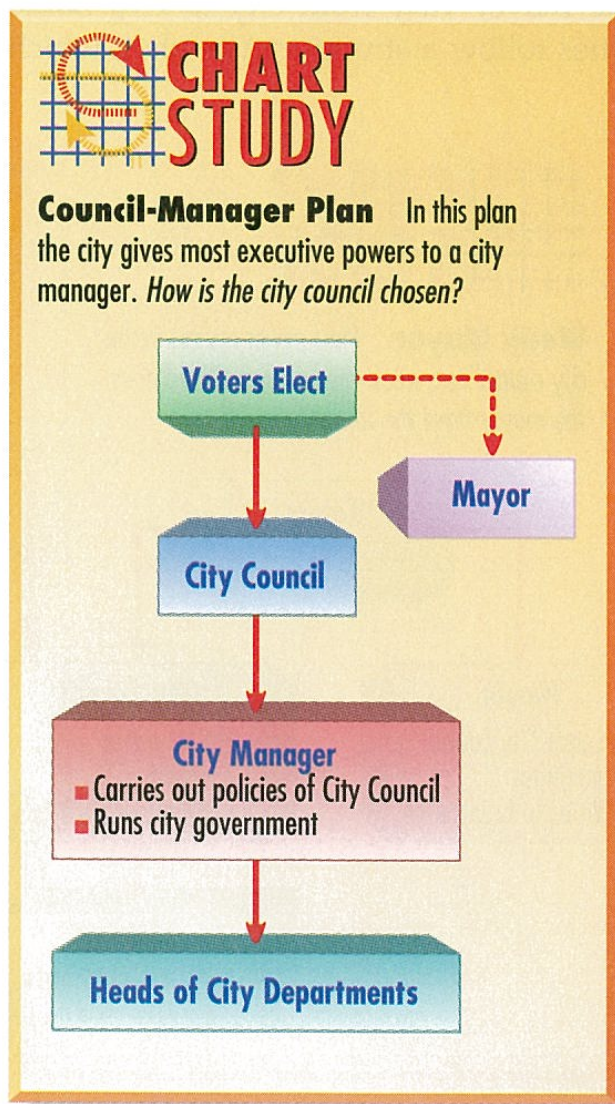
Many cities, however, still follow a weak-mayor plan. Under this plan the mayor has only limited executive power. The city council makes most policy decisions, and the mayor's veto power is restricted. In addition, the city council rather than the mayor chooses the heads of most city departments. The mayor

usually leads city council meetings and votes only to break a tie.

The weak-mayor plan dates from the nation's early days, when memories of unfair British officials were still vivid. Even today many Americans want to prevent any one official from having too much power. The weak-mayor plan achieves that goal, but it also makes a city government much less efficient.

## Council-Manager Government

Today a growing number of cities have adopted another type of city government—the council-manager form. In



this type of city government, the voters also elect a city council. They may even elect a mayor, but he or she has almost no power. Instead, most of the executive powers are held by an official called a city manager. This manager is responsible for carrying out the council's policies and running the city government.

## City Manager

A city manager is selected by the city council rather than the voters. City managers are almost always professional executives who know how to get things done. Because they are not elected, they are free from political pressures that might interfere with getting a job done.

A council-manager government operates like a large corporation. In the business world, a company's directors would probably fire an ineffective manager. In a city, the city council is likely to dismiss a city manager who does not run the city efficiently. Unlike the situation in a large corporation, however, money may limit the effectiveness of council-manager government. The top managers of successful corporations often receive millions of dollars in salaries and benefits. Most cities cannot afford to reward their executives this generously. As a result they often have trouble attracting the best managers away from the business world.

## Disadvantages

Although the council-manager form of government is usually very efficient, many Americans do not approve of it. They feel that any official as powerful as a city manager should be elected, not appointed. Otherwise, the needs and wishes of voters—especially minority voters—may not be taken into account.



**Commission Government** In this form of government, the voters elect commissioners, who run the city departments. *How are the executive and legislative functions handled?*

## Commission Government

A third type of city government is the commission form. A commission government has no separation of legislative and executive powers. Instead, separate departments, each of which handles a different set of responsibilities, govern the city. Some of the most common departments are police, fire, finance, health, and public works. The elected heads of these departments, called commissioners, perform executive duties for their particular department. They also meet together as a commission, with legislative power to pass city ordinances and make policy decisions.

In some cities either the commission or the voters choose one commissioner to be mayor. The mayor has no special powers and usually has only a ceremonial role. Still, he or she remains



**Transportation Needs** The Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) system serves the San Francisco metropolitan area. *How does a metropolitan government differ from a special district?*

an equal member of the commission and continues to manage a government department.

The commission form of government was developed in Galveston, Texas, in 1901. Nearly destroyed by a tidal wave, the city decided that a commission government was the best way to handle the emergency. Since that time, however, other cities have found that a commission government is not always efficient in running a city. Without clear leadership, a commission is often unable to set and meet goals. Each commissioner is likely to concentrate primarily on his or her own department, without considering the problems of the city as a whole.

## Metropolitan Government

The influence of a city does not stop at the city borders. Suburbs surround nearly every major city. Together, the city

and its suburbs form a unit called a **metropolitan area**.

The different local governments in a metropolitan area often have many needs in common. For example, because many people live in the suburbs and work in the city, a good transportation system is essential to people in both places.

Some metropolitan areas have begun to deal with these regional issues by forming metropolitan governments. A metropolitan government is similar to a special district in that it involves several local governments. However, a metropolitan government usually has more than one area of responsibility. It may, for example, handle the transportation, water, and energy needs of people in the area. An elected board usually runs a metropolitan government.

City and suburban residents may also form metropolitan councils to help them solve common problems. A metropolitan council is a regional organization made up of local elected officials, such as mayors and county supervisors. A metropolitan council does not have any special powers. It is simply an organization that discusses metropolitan issues, shares information, helps coordinate the policies of different local governments, and seeks solutions to regional problems.

## Challenges Facing Local Governments

The same financial problems that confront state governments also affect local governments. Community residents demand an increasing number of services but are unwilling or unable to support those services through increased taxes.

This problem is especially serious in cities. Crime, homelessness, drug abuse,



**Maintenance** Keeping bridges in good repair requires regular maintenance. *How do local governments handle the costs involved?*

AIDS, and pollution have been rising steadily in urban areas. At the same time, many of the industries and businesses that help provide cities with jobs and revenue have closed or moved elsewhere. In addition, as conditions in cities get worse, many people who can afford to leave move to the suburbs. Many of those who remain are poor and cannot afford higher taxes. As a result, cities are finding it increasingly difficult to raise enough money to solve their problems.

Because of their financial difficulties, many local governments cannot afford to pay for services and the maintenance of buildings, parks, and roads. When a problem arises, they look to another unit of government to solve it. This happens because of the overlapping jurisdiction of local governments. For example, most villages are located in townships, which in turn are located in counties. Under these circumstances, it is often difficult to

know which government is responsible for what. If a town bridge needs repair, for example, the town may ask the county to pay for the work. The county, in turn, may insist that the town should pay for the work. As the dispute goes back and forth, the bridge goes unrepaired.

Part of the solution to problems facing local governments lies in greater cooperation between the different levels of government. In some cases this cooperation may be purely financial. Cooperation between governments may also take other forms. Increasingly, local governments are getting together to discuss their regional problems and to work out solutions. The idea of a metropolitan government, which was described earlier, is an important step in this direction.

## ★ SECTION 3 REVIEW ★

### UNDERSTANDING VOCABULARY

*Define* home rule, mayor, ward, member-at-large, metropolitan area.

### REVIEWING OBJECTIVES

- 1 What is the basic organization of a mayor-council government?
- 2 How does a council-manager government compare with a mayor-council form of government?
- 3 How is a commission government organized?
- 4 What is the basic organization of a metropolitan government, and what are its major responsibilities?
- 5 What are some of the challenges facing local governments?

## Identifying Key Terms

Choose the vocabulary term that best completes each of the sentences below. Write your answers on a separate sheet of paper.

ordinance    special district  
home rule    metropolitan area  
ward    member-at-large

1. The city council included one \_\_\_\_\_, elected by all the voting districts.
2. The three neighboring towns applied for permission to create a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ to handle their water resources.
3. The city was granted \_\_\_\_\_, which allowed it to write its own charter.
4. The influence of the city had spread to its surrounding suburbs, creating a(n) \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Voters in the city's twenty-third \_\_\_\_\_ voted for the Republican candidate for mayor.
6. The town board passed a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ requiring all new house lots to be at least one acre in size.

## Reviewing the Main Ideas

### SECTION 1

1. Give two examples of a county board's legislative power and two of its executive power.
2. Why has county government become more important in recent years?

### SECTION 2

3. What are some advantages and disadvantages of establishing a village government?
4. Identify two reasons for a special district.

### SECTION 3

5. What is one disadvantage of the city commission form of government?
6. Identify and describe the two types of mayor-council plans of city government.
7. Why are many cities having financial problems?

## Critical Thinking

### SECTION 1

1. **Evaluating Information** What are the advantages and disadvantages of the county executive type of county government?

### SECTION 2

2. **Demonstrating Reasoned Judgment** Which do you think is more effective, state or local government? Give reasons for your answer.

### SECTION 3

3. **Identifying Alternatives** What do you think could be done to encourage cooperation among the local governments in a region?

## Focusing on Your Community

Find out about your local government and its leaders. If you live in a town, village, or city, find out who the chief executive is. Is the position a full- or part-time job? What are some of the main issues facing your community? How are local officials trying to deal with these problems? Prepare a short oral report.

## Cooperative Learning

Working with three other students, find a map of your county and locate the

# ★ CHAPTER 14 REVIEW ★

TAXPAYER'S RECEIPT				
COLLECTOR'S ADDRESS		STATEMENT OF COUNTY, TOWN TAXES FOR		1995
BANK			BILL NO.	
LEVY DESCRIPTION	ASSESSED VALUE	TAXABLE VALUE	TAX RATE	TAX AMOUNT
COUNTY GENERAL TAX	28,500	28,500	10.99118	313.25
TOWN GENERAL TAX	28,500	28,500	10.19789	290.64
TOWN HIGHWAY TAX	28,500	28,500	5.37885	153.30
FIRE	28,500	28,500	4.21016	119.99
LIGHT	28,500	28,500	.62177	17.72
WATER	28,500	28,500	11.02086	314.09
SEWER	28,500	28,500	5.80978	165.58
TOTAL **				1,374.57
JAN. INTEREST FREE	1ST HALF PAYMENT		2ND HALF PAYMENT	
	687.29		687.28	
INTEREST % PENALTY			TOTAL TAX	
FEB. 1 %	694.16		694.15	1,388.31
MAR. 2 %	701.04		701.03	1,402.07
APR. 3 %	707.91		707.90	1,415.81
MAY 4 %	714.78		714.77	1,429.55

boundaries for your town, township, or city. Then write five questions about jurisdiction for various regional services. For example, who maintains the roads in the middle of town? Contact your local government offices to find the answers. Share your results with the class.

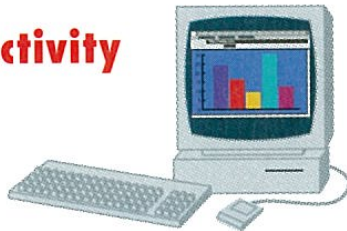
## Analyzing Visuals

A large part of a county's and town's revenue comes from property taxes. Above is an example of an annual property tax bill. Study the bill, then answer the questions.

## Technology Activity

### Using E-Mail

Search the Internet to find the e-mail address of a local television station or newspaper. You may want to use the following key words to focus your search: **television station call letters, city or town name, e-mail address**. Then review the entries in your civics journal on local government problems. Choose an issue that involves the question of jurisdiction. Write and send electronic mail to at least one local news outlet about the importance of cooperation among local governments. Share your e-mail letter with the class.



1. What are the special districts for which taxes are collected?
2. To which special district is the greatest amount of tax paid? The lowest?
3. How much in penalties does this resident pay if taxes are paid in May?

## Reinforcing Citizenship Skills

Think of a reason for which you would need to contact a government office, such as applying for a driver's license or a building permit. Outline the steps you would take and the information you would collect before calling the office. Include a few questions you would ask. Share your plan with the class.