



LOCAL COUNCIL: THE BREAK DOWN

To understand our local government, it is important to know about the people who make up that government. This assignment will introduce these people.

PART A: The People of our Municipal Government

Prepare a list of your municipality's elected officials. Questions to think about include:

- Who is the mayor or reeve?
- Who are the councillors?
 - » If you live in an urban municipality, are councillors elected at large or by ward? If they are elected by ward, find a map that outlines each ward and match the wards to the elected representatives. If you live in a rural municipality, match the councillors to their divisions.
- Where and when do these people meet as a council?

Once you have made a list of the local council, prepare a brief profile of each representative. The profile should include any information you believe is relevant to their role as an elected representative of the community. This could include:

- What contributions do they make to the community?
- What is the representative's occupation outside of politics?
- What volunteer work is the representative involved in?
- What policies do they support or believe in? How do these policies help the community as a whole?

PART B: Our Community Representatives: Representing Our Community?

Look back to the community profiles created earlier in this unit. Compare the people of the community as a whole to the make-up of council. Characteristics could include:

- age
- gender
- cultural heritage
- occupation
- any other characteristic you deem important.

Once this is completed, consider the following:

- How does the local council compare to the community's diversity?
- If the council does not accurately reflect the community as a whole, why do you think that is?
- What barriers do under-represented members of your community face?
- Given the small size of a municipal council, is it possible for it to accurately reflect the entire community?
- If it is not possible for council to perfectly look like the entire community, why is it important that elected members understand the views of all people in the community?

PART C: Issues Important to You

Consider council's role in bringing awareness to issues important to you.

- Has anybody on your local council discussed issues important to you? If so, what has been said or done?