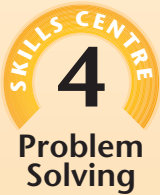


What is the structure of local governments in Alberta?

SKILLS at Work

Everyone in Alberta has a local government. Use the information in this section to figure out what kind of local government you have. This will help you with your chapter task.

- apply new ideas, strategies and options to contribute to problem solving

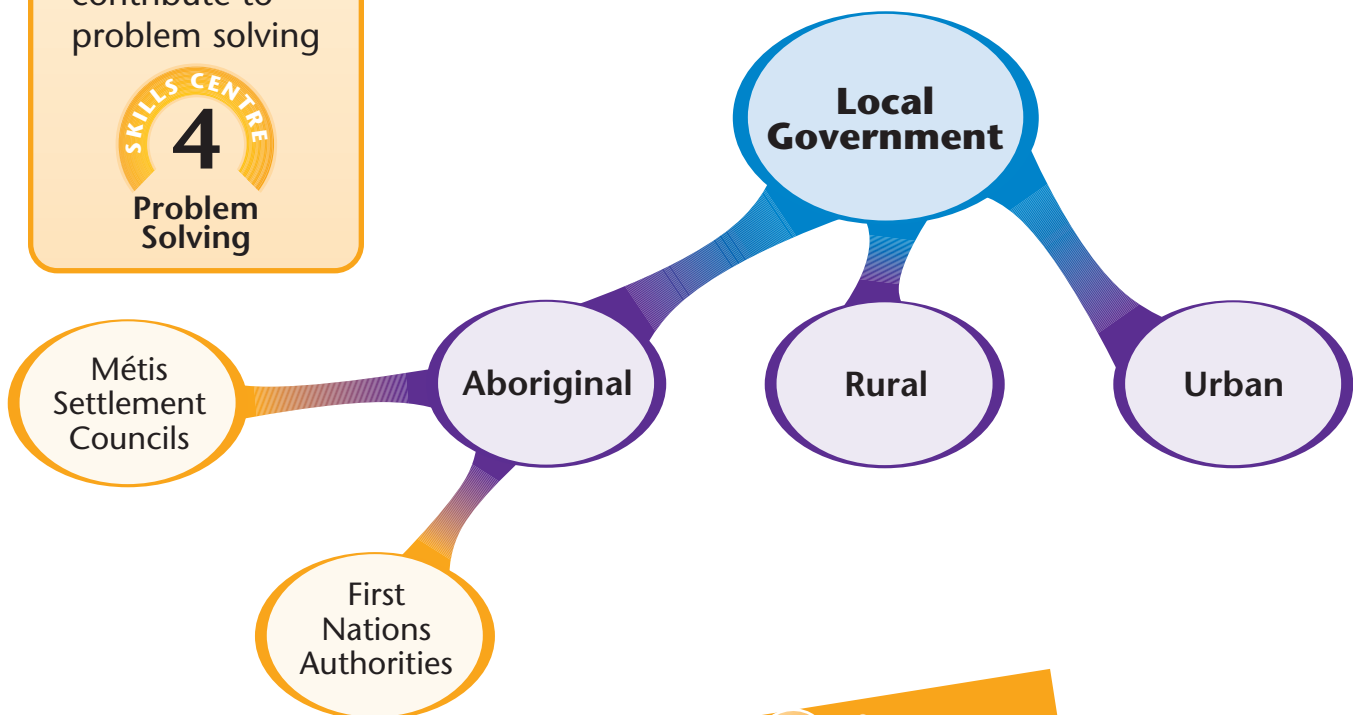


What's important?

Know that local governments are different for rural and urban areas, and for First Nations reserves and Métis settlements.

What forms of local government are found in Alberta?

People in Alberta have homes in urban areas, in rural areas, and on First Nations reserves and in Métis settlements. No matter where they live, Albertans have a local government that they elect. Local governments take care of local matters, such as roads, waste disposal, and housing developments.



Pause

How do the different kinds of local government in Alberta help create a well-functioning society?

Urban, rural and Aboriginal local governments in Alberta have different structures. Examine the examples on the next pages. How does each government meet the different needs of people in Alberta?



How do the different kinds of local government in Alberta reflect differences in where Albertans live and what they need? This photo shows a farm near the outskirts of Calgary.

Examples of Local Governments in Alberta

What's important?

Compare different kinds of local government.

City of Lethbridge



Population	82 000
Area	130 km ²
Local Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- All citizens vote for all local representatives, including a mayor and 8 councillors. The mayor is the head of the city government.- The structure of the government comes from the laws of Alberta.

Mackenzie County



Population	10 000
Area	80 000 km ²
Local Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- The district is divided into 10 zones, or wards. Citizens in each ward elect a representative. The 10 representatives elect a reeve from among themselves, who is the head of the district government.- The structure of the government comes from the laws of Alberta.

Loon River Cree Nation

Population	450
Area	52 km ² , including <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Loon Lake Reserve- Loon Prairie Reserve- Swampy Lake Reserve
Local Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- The people of Loon River Cree Nation elect a chief and 4 councillors.- The structure of the government comes from the laws of Canada, because of the historic rights of First Nations. The people of Loon River Cree Nation are part of Treaty 8, one of the historic treaties negotiated between First Nations peoples and Canada's government.



Pause

Local governments can vary in size, numbers of councillors and structure. How do these differences in government show fairness and equity?



What's important?

Understand that the structure of local governments in urban areas is related to population size.

Village, town or city?

You need a certain number of people in an area to become a village, town or city.

As your population grows you can change your status or you may choose not to.

Fact Finder: Urban Municipalities

Urban areas all share one thing in common: people live close together. They have different populations, however, and this affects how they are governed. This page shows the different categories of urban **municipalities** in Alberta. These categories are created by Alberta's provincial government.

Cities

Population: more than 10 000

Number in Alberta, 2007: 16

Representatives:

- Mayor: head of government elected by all citizens
- Councillors (minimum 6): elected by all citizens (smaller centres), or elected to represent wards, or zones, by the citizens who live in the wards (larger centres)

Examples: Medicine Hat, Calgary

This is the city of Calgary.



Towns

Population: 1000 – 10 000

Number in Alberta, 2007: 111

Representatives:

- Mayor: head of government elected by all citizens
- Councillors (minimum 6): elected by all citizens

Examples: Magrath, Peace River



This is the town of Athabasca.

Villages

Population: 300 – 1000

Number in Alberta, 2007: 100

Representatives:

- Mayor: head of government elected by all citizens
- Councillors (minimum 2): elected by all citizens

Examples: Willingdon, Sangudo



This is the village of Cremona.

SKILLS at Work

How many cities, towns and villages does Alberta have today? Why might the numbers of cities, towns and villages change in Alberta over time?

- use examples of events to describe cause and effect and change over time



What's important?

Understand factors that affect the structure of local governments in rural areas.

Fact Finder: Rural Municipalities

The population of rural municipalities is spread over large areas.



Municipal Districts (also called Counties)

Number in Alberta, 2007: 68

Characteristics:

- Residents live on farms and in hamlets. Hamlets are centres with fewer than 300 people.

Representatives:

- Councillors (minimum 4): elected from wards, or zones
- Reeve: head of government elected by the councillors from among themselves

Examples: Cardston County, Greenview Municipal District

This is from Vulcan County.

SKILLS at Work

Why are rural municipalities larger in area than urban municipalities?

- identify geographic problems and issues and pose geographic questions



Geographic Thinking

Specialized Municipalities

Number in Alberta, 2007: 4

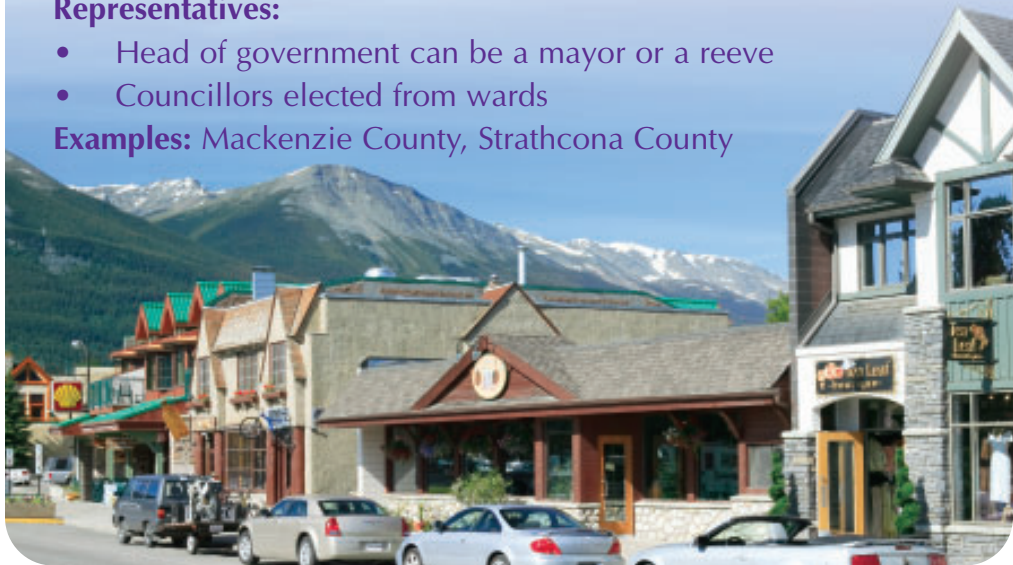
Characteristics:

- These are unique areas, such as very large areas with few residents, or large areas with a mix of rural and urban residents.

Representatives:

- Head of government can be a mayor or a reeve
- Councillors elected from wards

Examples: Mackenzie County, Strathcona County



The town of Jasper is a specialized municipality because it is in a national park.

What's important?

Understand that First Nations Authorities and Métis Settlement Councils reflect historical and other rights.

Pause

Think back to the rights of First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples in Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms. How do First Nations Authorities and Métis Settlement Councils reflect those rights?

Fact Finder: First Nations Authorities and Métis Settlements

Métis Settlement Councils

Number in Alberta, 2007: 8

Characteristics:

- Métis settlements are Métis lands established by Alberta's laws in 1990.
- Métis settlements reflect the rights of the Métis as one of Canada's Aboriginal peoples.

Representatives:

- Chairperson: head of government chosen by councillors from among themselves
- Councillors (5): elected by all members of a Métis settlement

Examples: East Prairie Métis Settlement, Elizabeth Métis Settlement



Buffalo Lake Métis Settlement is located near Caslan.

First Nations Authorities

Number in Alberta, 2007: 44

Characteristics:

- **First Nations Authorities (FNAs)** come from the Treaty rights of First Nations.
- Treaties are historic agreements negotiated between First Nations and Canada's government. There are three main treaties in Alberta: Treaty 6, Treaty 7 and Treaty 8.
- FNAs govern reserves for First Nations established by the treaties.

Representatives:

- Chief: head of government elected by all members of a First Nation
- Councillors (minimum 3): elected by all members of a First Nation

Examples: Siksika Nation, Bigstone Cree Nation

This is council office for Horse Lake First Nation.

