

Your Local Government

how to get involved

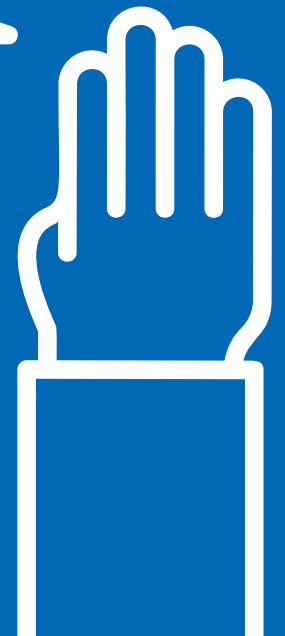
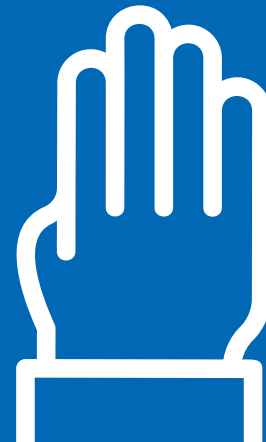
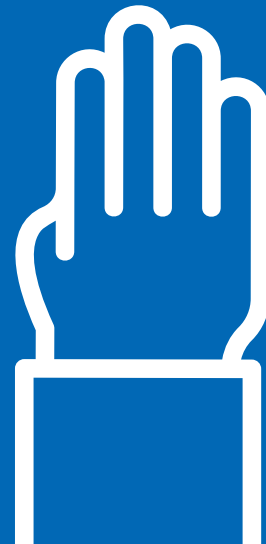


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1.1 Three Levels of Government

The City of Winkler is your local Government. We are known as municipal government. There are 3 levels of Government in Canada: federal, provincial and municipal. Each level of government has different roles and responsibilities. Very often 2 or even all 3 levels of government work together. Below are the different roles of the 3 levels of government.

Federal Government

The federal government is the Government of Canada. They are responsible for things like National Defense, citizenship, postal services, criminal law, employment insurance, census, tax regulation and more. The federal government makes policies that affect the nation as a whole.

Provincial Government

The provincial government is the Government of Manitoba. They are responsible for things like education, health services and welfare, civil rights, provincial highways, provincial court system, provincial prisons, drivers licenses and more.

The provincial government makes policies that address the needs of individual provinces.

Municipal Government

Municipal Government is your local city or RM. They are responsible for things like public transit, garbage collection and disposal, water and sewage, emergency services, property taxes, city parks, animal control and more.

The municipal government makes policies that affect the community economically, culturally, and socially.

1.2 Your City Council

City Council in Winkler is a group of elected representatives who make decisions for the municipality. City of Winkler Council consists of 1 Mayor and 6 Councilors.

4 Major Roles of Council

1

Decision Making - Council is responsible for making fair and transparent decisions based on relevant information, discussion and a majority vote.

2

Governance - Council is responsible for passing the local by-laws that govern people and their municipality on a wide range of topics, from animal control to zoning.

3

Representation - Council is democratically elected. As representatives of the community, council members are responsible to listen to and engage with the public, and consider the best interests of the whole municipality.

4

Stewardship - Council is responsible for the supervision and care of the municipality's resources. This means making sure that infrastructure, money and staff are used properly and effectively. This also means that planning strategically for the challenges and opportunities of the future.

Only Council as a whole can make decisions for the municipality, and all council members must respect the decision even when they did not vote in favour.

1.3 Duties of Council

Head of Council

The Head of Council (the Mayor), is often the spokesperson for the municipality when expressing the municipality's position to the media or public, and when attending events. The Head of Council has some additional responsibilities beyond that of other Council members. The Head of Council's must:

- provide leadership and direction to council
- preside over all Council meetings and committee meetings when in attendance, unless the procedures and by-laws say otherwise.
- act as a signing authority for the municipality
- call a special council meeting if requested in writing by two other council member

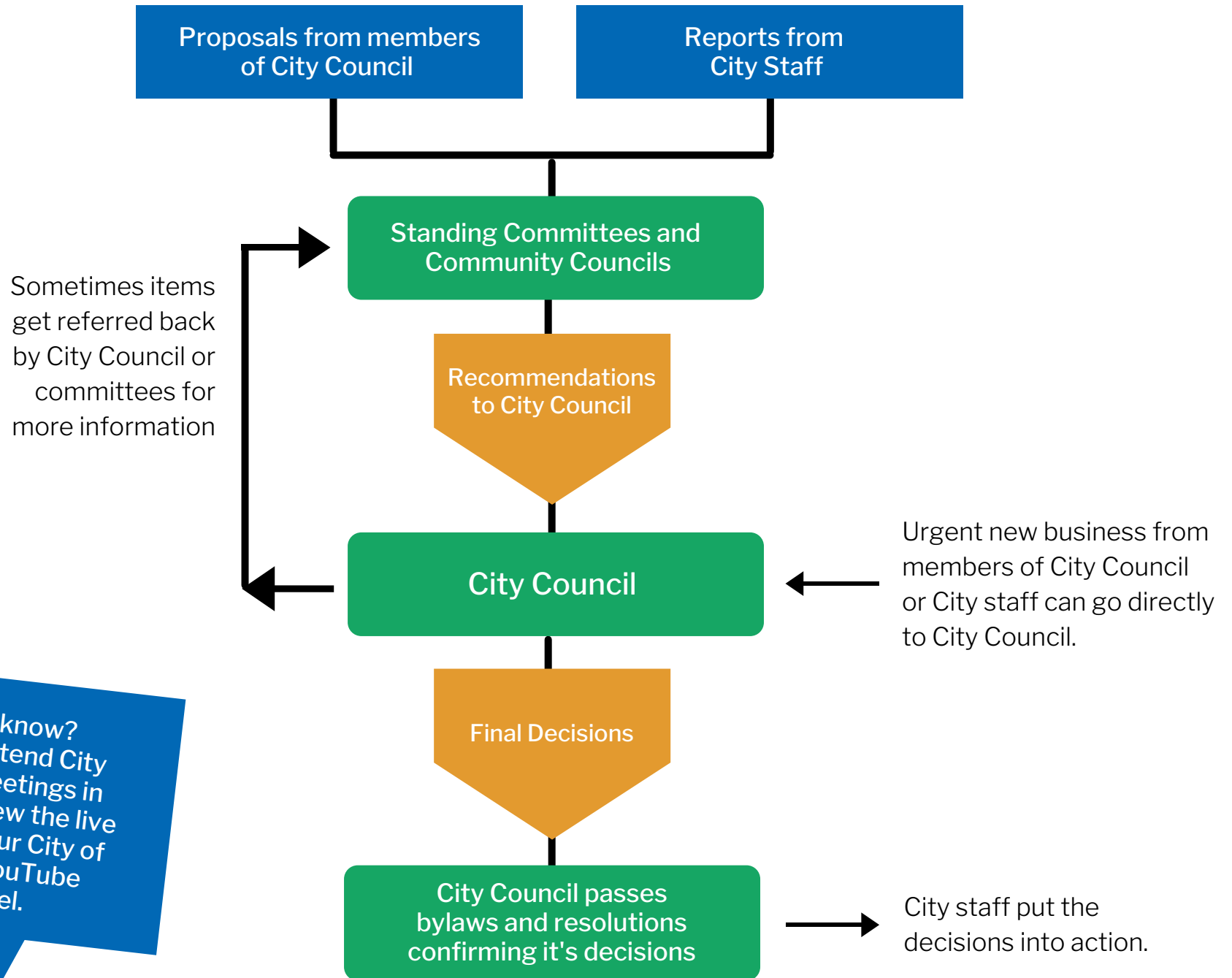
Council Members

Council members have an equal voice at the council table - every council member has one vote and must consider the needs of the municipality. All council members must:

- consider the interests of the municipality as a whole
- participate in developing and evaluating the municipality's programs and policies
- participate in Council meetings and other bodies you are appointed to
- keep municipal matters confidential
- comply with the Council Code of Conduct
- declare assets and avoid conflicts of interest

Individual council members cannot make decisions on behalf of the municipality, and may be held legally or financially liable if they do.

1.4 How Decisions are Made



*Did you know?
You can attend City Council meetings in person or view the live stream on our City of Winkler YouTube channel.*

2.1 Ways to contact your local government

Contact Council

All Council members can be reached by accessing their contact information on our website www.winkler.ca

Sign up for 'Connect'

You can stay connected with city updates by signing up for Connect, our communication system. This system allows us to contact residents via push notification, email and phone calls for emergency situations. You can sign up for Connect on our website www.winkler.ca

Service Requests

If you have a question or a request for city staff you fill out a simple form on our service request form on our website www.winkler.ca

Individual council members cannot make decisions on behalf of the municipality, and may be held legally or financially liable if they do.

2.2 Ways to get involved in your local government

Now that you have a pretty good picture of how your local government works you may want to take the next step by sharing your voice, staying connected or getting involved. Here are the different ways you can do that:



Get Involved

Share your Voice

- Contact a Councillor
- Participate in a forum
- Vote in your local election

Stay Connected

- Watch Council Meetings
- Follow meeting agendas
- Sign up for 'Connect'
- Follow along on social media
- Check public notices

Serve your City

- Become a candidate
- Get involved in local organizations by supporting them or volunteering

2.3 Stay Connected



Watch Council Meetings Livestreams

You can watch Council meetings live on our City of Winkler YouTube channel



Follow along with Meeting Agendas

You can find Council Meeting agendas and minutes on our website at www.cityofwinkler.ca/p/city-council



Sign up for 'Connect'

You can sign up for our communication system 'Connect' at www.cityofwinkler.ca/p/connect-winkler



Stay updated on our Instagram page

You can stay updated on our Instagram page at www.instagram.com/yeswinkler



Stay updated on our Facebook page

You can stay updated on our Instagram page at www.facebook.com/cityofwinkler



Check Public Notices

You can find all of our local notices on our website at www.winkler.ca

2.4 Share your voice



Contact a Councillor

Something that many people are not aware of, is that Councillors and the Mayor are accessible to the public. You can talk to your Councillor about what's going on in the community and you can share your opinion about different things that happen in the City.

You can find contact information for our Councillors and our Mayor on our city's Facebook page at www.winkler.ca/p/city-council



Participate in a Forum

Occasionally the City of Winkler staff will host a public consultation to gather input from the public. A recent example of this was for our "Growing Winkler" open house that gather input from residents on future development planning in the city.

When forums are held they are always advertised on our website and our Facebook page.



Vote in your Local Education

Every 4 years there is a Municipal election. Eligible voters can vote for mayor, councillor and school board trustee.

A by-election can happen between general elections if a City Council seat becomes vacant.

You can vote in Winkler's municipal election if you are a Canadian citizen, at least 18 years old, a resident of Winkler, a non-resident of Winkler but you or your spouse own or rent property in Winkler, or if you are not prohibited from voting under any law.

2.5 Serve your City



Become a Candidate

You can become a candidate and run to be the next mayor or councillor. At the municipal level of government there are no political parties.

In order to become a candidate, during the nomination period, you need to file a Nomination Paper, provide identification and pay a filing fee.

To run for mayor or councillor, you must be:

- a Canadian Citizen; and
- at least 18 years of age; and
- a resident of the City of Winkler; or
- an owner or tenant of land in the City of Winkler, or the spouse of the owner; and
- not legally prohibited from voting; and
- not disqualified by any legislation from holding municipal office.

For more information on becoming a candidate visit www.winkler.ca/p/elections/candidates



Support local organizations or volunteer

There are many very important local organizations that the city supports such as Winkler Central Station, Winkler Food Cupboard, and more.

Volunteering with these organizations is one way that you can support and be part of healthy change in your community.

winkler.ca

