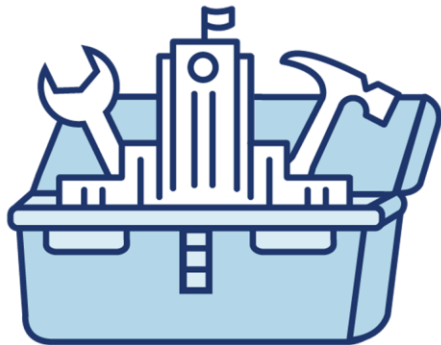




# YOUR CITY HALL

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CIVICS  
TOOLBOX



Government and  
How Decisions  
are Made

# Before we begin ...

Let's start by learning about the three levels of government in Canada



# Canada has three levels of government

1. Federal
2. Provincial
3. Municipal (city)



## **Canada's Parliament has three parts:**

- The Sovereign (Queen or King)
- The Senate
- The House of Commons

## **Canadian citizens elect political representatives at all three levels of government:**

- Federal
- Provincial or territorial
- Municipal

## **Elected representatives hold positions in:**

- The federal House of Commons
- Provincial and territorial legislatures
- City councils

## **Their duties include:**

- Passing laws
- Approving and monitoring spending
- Keeping the government accountable

The **Prime Minister** heads the federal government based in Ottawa. It deals with **national and international matters**, such as:

- National security
- Defence
- Military
- Citizenship & Immigration
- Money
- Banking
- International Relations
- Employment Insurance

A **Premier** leads each province and territory. The provincial and territorial governments have the power to **change their laws and manage their own public lands**. They are in charge of things such as:

- Education
- Health care
- Highways
- Provincial taxes
- Some natural resources

**Mayors** or **Reeves** lead municipal governments. Municipal governments **run cities, towns or districts** (municipalities). They are in charge of things such as:

- Libraries
- Roadways
- Local police
- Local land use (e.g. planning, zoning)
- Fire protection
- Parks and recreation
- Public transportation
- Water and sewer
- Waste management





# But keep in mind ...

In some cases there are overlaps and shared responsibilities between levels of government.

- Roads
- Laws
- Police
- Environment
- Parks
- Tourism
- Any many more!



Indigenous self-government is the formal structure through which Indigenous communities may control the administration of their **people, land, resources and related programs and policies**, through agreements with federal and provincial governments.

Across the country, **band councils** govern First Nations communities. Band councils are **similar to municipal governments**. Band members **elect the band council, which makes decisions that affect their local community**.

# Before we move on, let's review!

To review how the three levels of government in Canada work, watch the following video! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7C8uDuhLqvg>



# What happens in BC?



- **Legislation** empowers, guides, limits and affects BC's local governments.
- The ***Community Charter*** and the ***Local Government Act*** define the core authority of local governments and guide decision-making.
- The City of Vancouver is served by its own legislation, the ***Vancouver Charter***.

# What happens in Vancouver?

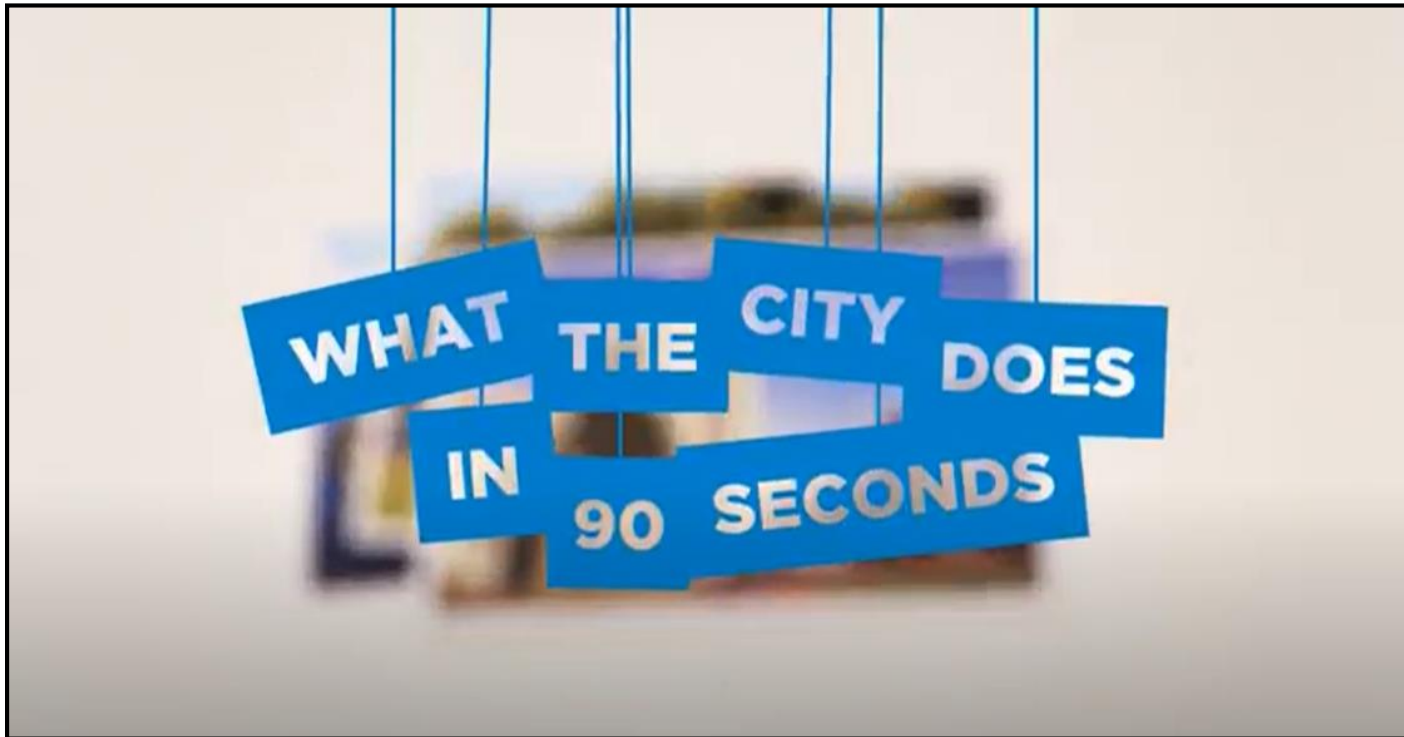


- The City of Vancouver, including the Vancouver Park Board, is regulated under the **Vancouver Charter**, a provincial statute.
- The Charter contains the rules that govern how the City operates, what bylaws City Council can create, and how budgets are set.
- Other provincial legislation, such as the BC Police Act, determine the responsibilities of other City boards and commissions.



# What the City of Vancouver does

To find out more about what the City of Vancouver does watch the following 90 second video! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RaQyyUymZy4>

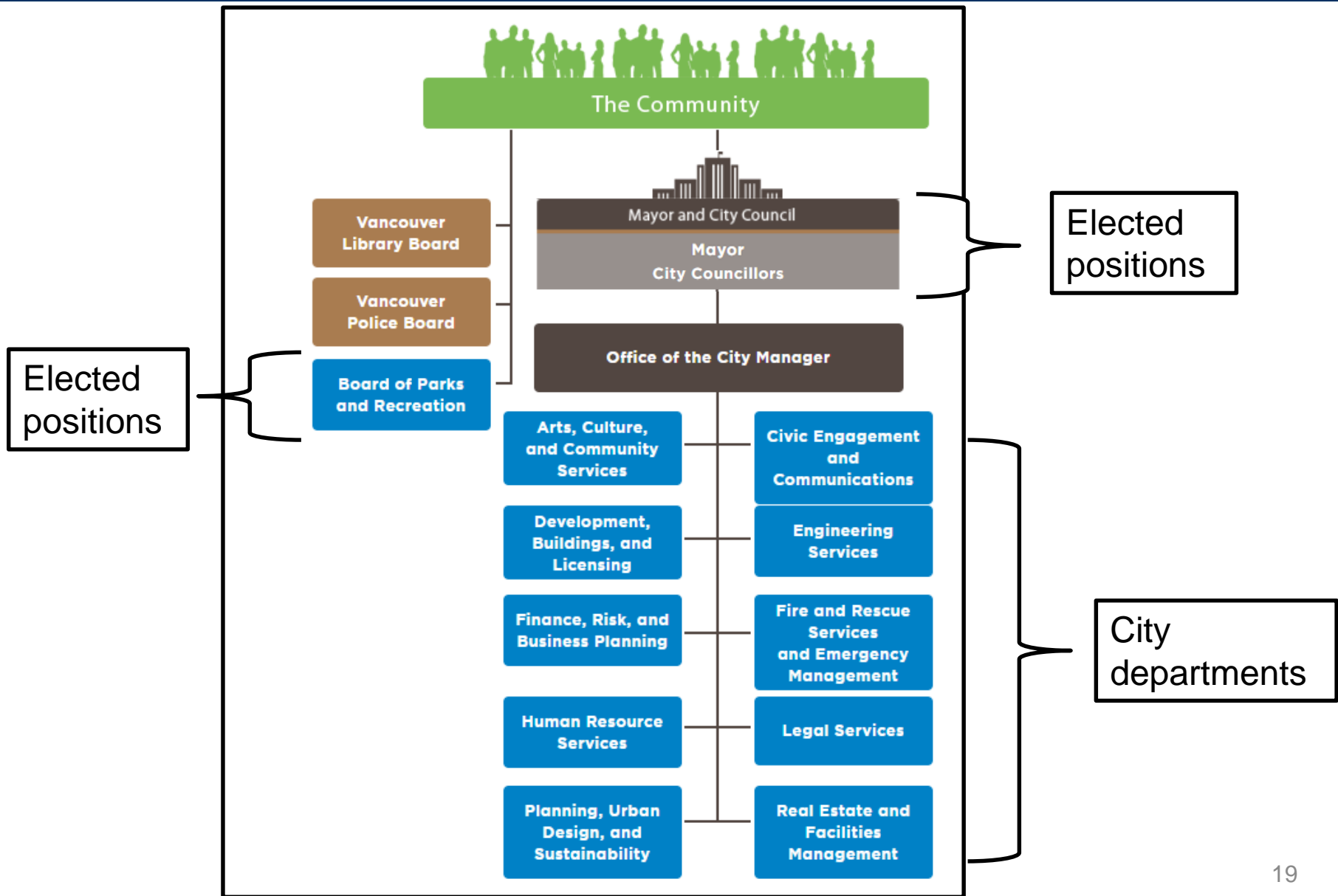


# What the City of Vancouver does

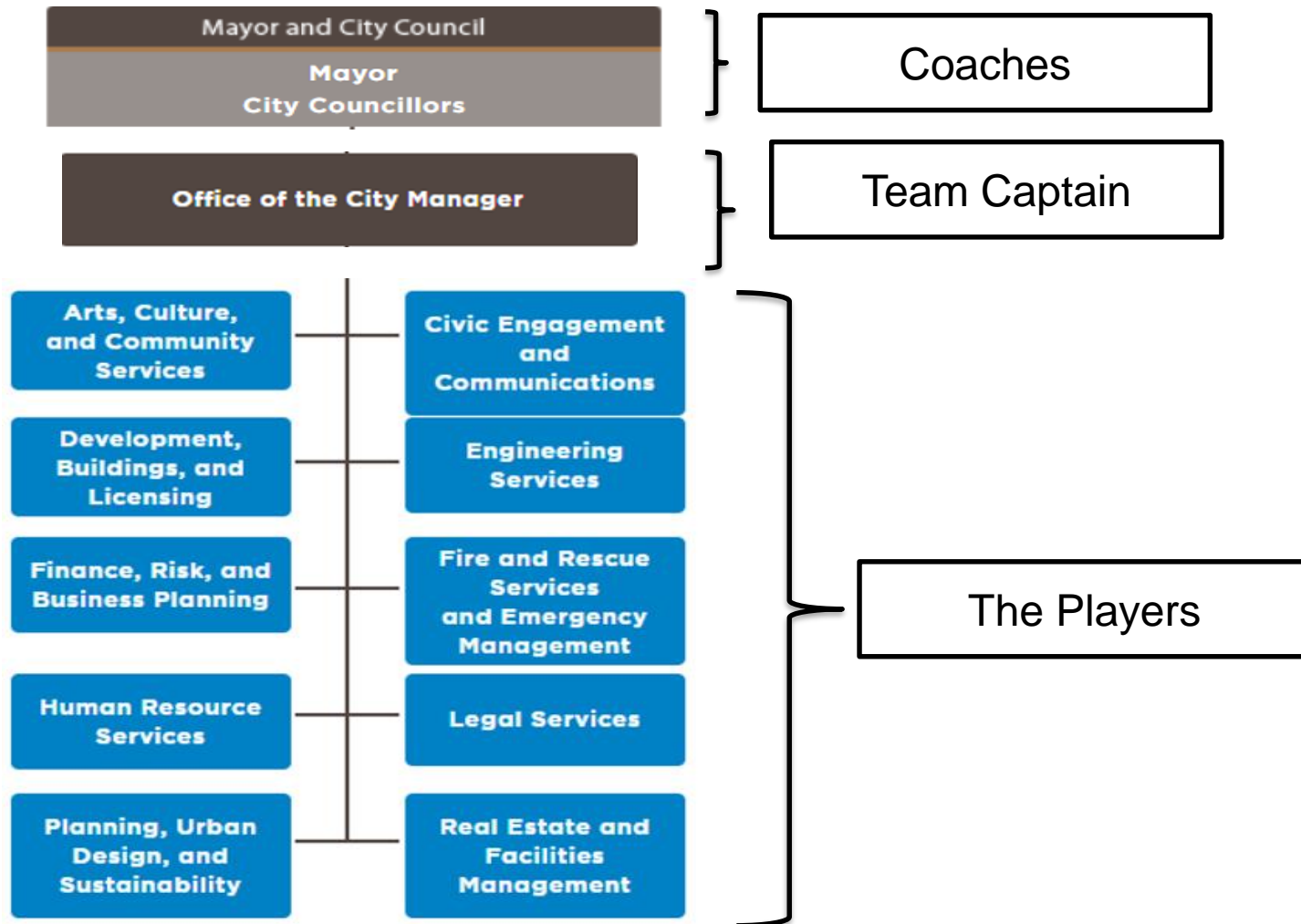
**This means that the City of Vancouver is responsible for a lot more than you might think! This includes:**

- Bike lanes
- Street food
- Public Bathrooms
- Graffiti Removal
- Animal Control and pet licences
- Streets and street lights
- Street Use Permits (block parties, festivals)
- Civic Theatres (Orpheum, Queen Elizabeth Theatre, Playhouse)
- Sign Maintenance
- The PNE
- Supporting community organizations that serve the social needs of Vancouverites (Neighbourhood Houses, etc.)
- Business licenses
- Parking spaces, permits
- Vancouver Aquarium, Vancouver Museum, HR McMillan Space Centre

# The City of Vancouver's structure



# The City as a sports team



# Electing a Mayor and Councillors

- In Vancouver, the Mayor and councillors are elected “at large.”
- This means that they represent the entire municipality.
- In an election, voters choose among all candidates who are running in the election.
- In Vancouver there is 1 Mayor position and 10 councillor positions. Each voter gets 1 vote for Mayor and 10 votes for councillors
- The candidates with the highest number of votes win the election and become the new Mayor and councillors
- In addition to city councillors, voters also elect 9 School Board Trustees and 7 Park Board Commissioners

**City Council is made up of the Mayor and 10 Councillors who are elected at large for a four-year term. The Mayor is the Chair of City Council. The City of Vancouver is governed by the Vancouver Charter and has the power to:**

- Pass bylaws regulating such things as businesses, building, noise, and land use
- Buy and sell property
- Collect property taxes and other taxes
- Approve major spending for all parts of the City government
- Take on debt
- Allocate funds for special activities, such as arts and community services
- Set up departments and offices for City services
- Hire staff for City departments and offices



# Mayor and Council



- The **Park Board** is made up of **seven commissioners**, who are elected at large for a four-year term.
- The commissioners set the vision and policy that guides the Park Board's services and programs.
- The Board listens to residents and acts as their voice to ensure that Vancouver parks and recreation remain accessible and sustainable.



To fund our annual budget, the majority of the money we use to run the city comes from **property taxes** and **utility fees** collected from homeowners and businesses. The remainder comes from:

- User fees and parking revenue
- Development contributions such as Development Cost Levies, Community Amenity Contributions, and connection fees
- Partner contributions from senior levels of government, other agencies, non-profit organizations, foundations, and philanthropists
- Debt and investment income
- By-law enforcement

# Where do property taxes go?

About half of the property taxes collected funds city services; the rest goes to the Province and other taxing authorities including regional services such as transit via Translink, utilities like supplying drinking water and treatment of wastewater via Metro Vancouver, and the BC Assessment and Municipal Finance Authority

There are more than 80 programs and services funded by the budget

<b>Arts, Culture and Community Services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cemetery Services</li> <li>Cultural Services</li> <li>Housing and Homelessness Services</li> <li>Non Market Housing Development &amp; Operations</li> <li>NPO lease management</li> <li>Social Operations</li> <li>Social Policy and Projects</li> <li>Vancouver Civic Theatres</li> </ul>	<b>City Clerk's Office</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to Information and Privacy</li> <li>Board of Variance</li> <li>Business and Election Services</li> <li>City of Vancouver Archives</li> <li>External Relations and Protocol</li> <li>Legislative Operations</li> </ul>	<b>City Manager's Office</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business Planning and Project Support</li> <li>Civic Engagement and Communications</li> <li>Equity Office</li> <li>Indigenous Relations</li> <li>Intergovernmental Relations and Strategic Partnerships</li> <li>Internal Audit</li> <li>Sport Hosting Vancouver</li> </ul>	<b>Development, Buildings and Licensing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Animal Services</li> <li>Business and Vehicle for Hire Licensing</li> <li>Permit and Plan Reviews; Compliance and Enforcement Inspections</li> </ul>	<b>Engineering – Public Works</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creation, activation and use of public space</li> <li>Curbside Vehicle Management</li> <li>Engineering development services and land survey</li> <li>Fleet and Manufacturing Services</li> <li>Kent Yard Services</li> <li>Street cleaning</li> <li>Street infrastructure and maintenance</li> <li>Transportation planning, design and management</li> </ul>	<b>Engineering – Utilities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>False Creek Neighbourhood Energy Utility (NEU)</li> <li>Garbage and green bin collection</li> <li>Integrated Watershed Planning</li> <li>Non-City utility management</li> <li>Sewer and drainage utility management</li> <li>Transfer station, recycling centres and landfill</li> <li>Waterworks utility management</li> <li>Zero Waste</li> </ul>
<b>Finance, Risk and Supply Chain Management</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Corporate Risk Management</li> <li>Financial Planning and Analysis</li> <li>Financial Services</li> <li>Long-term Financial Strategy</li> <li>Strategic Planning and Program Management</li> <li>Supply Chain Management</li> <li>Treasury</li> </ul>	<b>Human Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compensation and Benefits</li> <li>HR Business Partnerships and Labour Relations</li> <li>Organizational Health and Wellness</li> <li>Talent Management and Organizational Development</li> </ul>	<b>Office of the Chief Safety Officer</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>City Protective Services</li> <li>Vancouver Emergency Management Agency (VEMA)</li> <li>Workplace Safety</li> </ul>	<b>Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Affordable housing</li> <li>City-wide and community planning</li> <li>Current Planning and Regulation Policy</li> <li>Economic Planning and Development Contributions</li> <li>Sustainability</li> </ul>	<b>Real Estate and Facilities Management</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Environmental Services</li> <li>Facilities Planning, Development and Management</li> <li>Real Estate Services</li> </ul>	<b>Technology Services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3-1-1 Contact Centre</li> <li>Application Development and Support</li> <li>Client Services</li> <li>Digital Platforms</li> <li>Enterprise Data and Analytics</li> <li>Enterprise Technology</li> <li>Program and Portfolio Management</li> </ul>
	<b>Vancouver Public Library</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collections and resources</li> <li>Information technology access</li> <li>Library public space</li> <li>Public programming</li> <li>Reference and information services</li> </ul>	<b>Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business services</li> <li>Decolonization, Arts and Culture</li> <li>Parks and green spaces</li> <li>Recreation services</li> </ul>	<b>Vancouver Fire and Rescue Services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Safety and Risk Reduction</li> <li>Fire suppression and special teams</li> <li>Medical response</li> </ul>	<b>Vancouver Police Department</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Police services</li> </ul>	<b>Legal Services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Legal services</li> </ul>

# Now it's your turn!



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- There are several activities that go along with this presentation, or you can make up your own.
- You can find the activities on the Civics Toolbox website