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YAC RETREAT

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TEAM BONDING

THIS IS ME

How to Play:

1. Sit in a circle or around a table.
2. Place the “This Is Me” cards face down in a stack.
3. One person draws a card and reads the prompt out loud.
4. As soon as they start talking, someone starts a 30-second timer (use a phone, stopwatch, or sand timer).
5. The person has 30 seconds to answer the prompt however they want. They can talk fast, go off-topic, or be funny—but they have to stop when time’s up.
6. Go around the circle so everyone gets a turn. Keep playing until everyone has gone at least three times or time runs out.

Rule: Each person draws a prompt card and has 30 seconds to answer while the group listens respectfully without interrupting.

STORY TRAIN

Goal: Create a funny group story, one sentence at a time.

How to Play:

1. One person starts with a sentence to kick off the story. It can be as weird or normal as they like.
 - a. Example: "A goat just enrolled at our school."
2. Going clockwise, each person adds one sentence to continue the story.
3. Keep going around the circle for 2–3 rounds or until the story comes to a natural (or chaotic) end.
4. Pick a "title" for the story when it's done.

Rule: No repeating or undoing what the person before you said. Embrace the weird.



2

INTRODUCTION TO CITY GOVERNANCE

KEY TERMS

Charter

A legal document that establishes a municipality's structure, authority, duties, and key operating procedures.

Municipality

City, town, or other local government area that has its own governing body and the legal authority to make decisions, pass laws, and provide public services within its boundaries.

Cooperative Federalism

Model of government where the federal, state, and local governments work together to solve problems and provide services. Each may share responsibilities, funding, and decision-making.

Public Servant

Someone who works for any level of government to serve the needs of the community, making and enforcing policies, delivering services, and supporting daily operations. They can be elected, appointed, or hired.

Grant

Money given by one level of government (or even private organization) to another group (e.g., state, city, school, or nonprofit) to fund a specific project or purpose. Do not have to be repaid.

Are there any other terms you would like to understand better?

HOME RULE VS DILLON RULE

HOME RULE

- Local governments have broad authority to govern themselves as long as they don't violate state or federal law.
- Cities can pass ordinances, run programs, and make decisions without asking the state for permission each time.
- **"Act unless the state says no"**
- Power=flexible
- local governments have broader authority; encourages local innovation

Big idea: Local leaders know their community's needs best, so they should have more freedom to act, unless prohibited by the state/federal government.

DILLON RULE – VIRGINIA

- Local governments only have powers that are:
 - explicitly granted by the state legislature (e.g., Code of Virginia)
 - clearly implied by those powers
- **"Ask the state first"**
- Power=limited
- Local governments need permission; not spelled out? probably can't do it

Big idea: The state is the boss, and cities and counties are like employees who must ask permission before doing something new.

FORMS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

MAY VARY/BE COMBINED DEPENDING ON A MUNICIPAL CHARTER

Council-Manager

- City Council is elected by the people and sets policies/laws.
- Council hires a professional City Manager to run day-to-day operations (think: CEO).
- Most common, esp. in cities with over 10k+ residents.

**Martinsville, VA &
Phoenix, AZ**

Mayor-Council

- Voters elect the mayor and city council separately.
- **Strong Mayor** – chief executive/spokesperson of city departments, proposes budget, and has veto power.
- **Weak Mayor** – equal to other council members; the council controls most city operations.
- Second most common, esp. in older, larger cities or very small cities.

New York, NY; Los Angeles, CA; Minneapolis, MN

Commission

- Voters elect a small group of commissioners.
- One commissioner designated chairman or mayor.
- Each commissioner oversees a specific department.
 - e.g., police, fire, public works, health
- Least common – oldest form of government, existing in less than 1% of cities.

Portland, OR

Town Meeting

- All eligible voters gather to make policy decisions and choose elected officials to implement them.
- Viewed as “purest form of democracy” – less than 5% of municipalities.

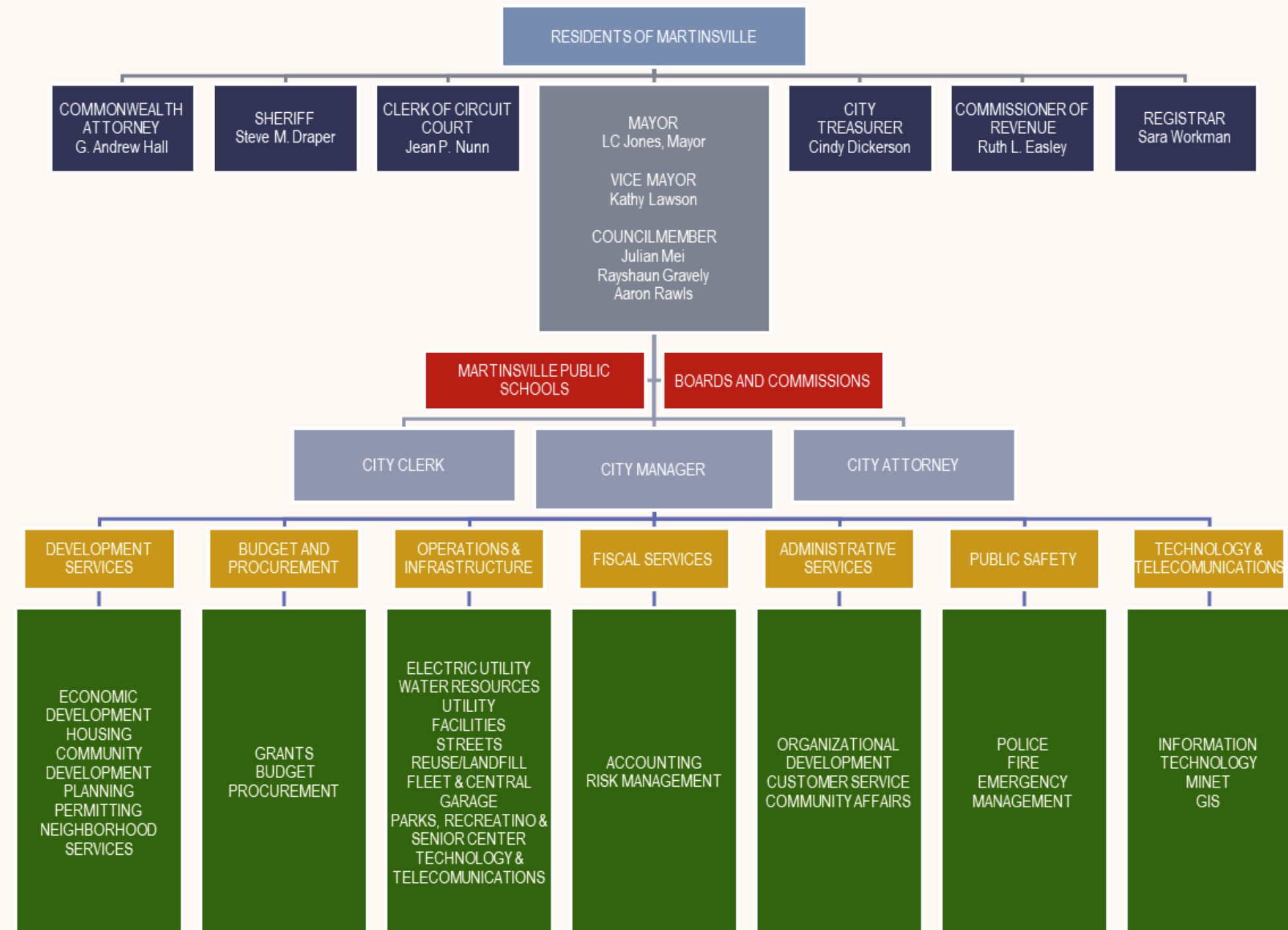
Marblehead, MA

Representative Town Meeting

- Voters elect representatives to vote at town meetings.
- Each meeting must be announced in advance with the date, time, location, and agenda.
- The selectmen carry out the policies.
- Found in <1% of cities, mainly in small New England municipalities.

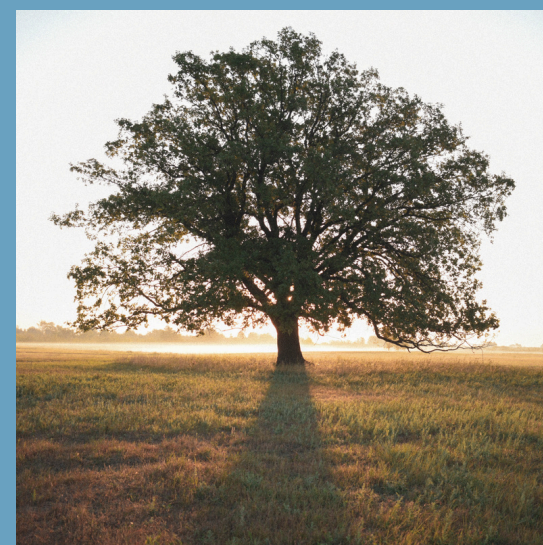
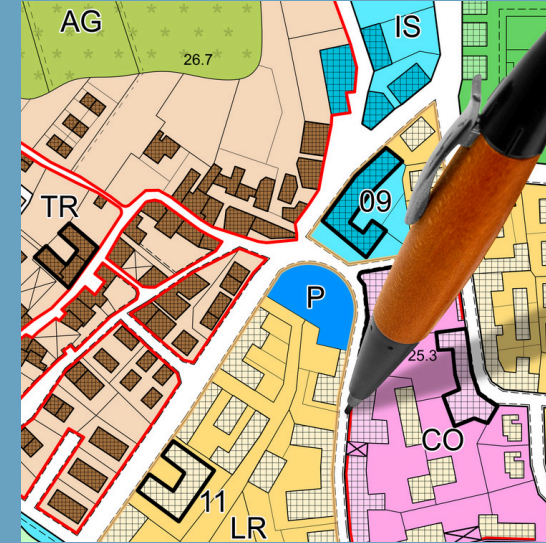
Lexington, MA

ORGANIZATION AT-A-GLANCE



BOARDS & COMMISSIONS

- Provide a platform for residents to participate in the City's decision-making process for specific areas of local government.
 - e.g., Arts & Culture, School Board, Planning Commission, Economic Development Authority (EDA), Tree Board, and 18 more.
- Composed of volunteers who are appointed by elected officials.
- Meet regularly to help ensure government decisions are informed by community input, expertise, and diverse perspectives.



COMMITTEE POSITIONS

– YAC Edition –

CHAIR*

Presides over committee, assists in setting meeting agendas, facilitates discussions, and serves as Co-Chair of Programming.

VICE CHAIR*

Presides over meetings in the Chair's absence and serves as the Community Service Chair, ensuring service projects are advancing.

CLERK

Manages records, takes minutes, tracks attendance, and serves as Advocacy Chair (policies and internal support).

FINANCE CHAIR

Oversees budget, tracks expenses, heads fundraising, and locates grants.

OUTREACH CHAIR

Manages social media, leads external communication efforts, and serves as Co-Chair of Programming.

*is eligible to serve another term as a committee member

3

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

DRESS FOR SUCCESS



Do's

- Ensure clothing is **wrinkle-free**.
- **Closed-toe** dress shoes or classic formal flats.
- **Simple** accessories.
- **Well-groomed** appearance.
- When in doubt, stick to **neutral or deep solid colors** like black, navy, gray, or beige.

Don'ts

- **Avoid bright colors, loud prints, or overly trendy styles.**
- **Avoid wearing sneakers or sandals.**
- **Avoid anything sheer, short, or overly tight.**
- **Stay away from flashy or excessive accessories.**
- **Avoid shorts and graphic tees.**



Be Clear & Concise

- Get to the point respectfully.
- Use short paragraphs, bullet points (if needed), and avoid overly complex language.
- Time is valuable!



Use a Professional Tone

- Match your audience.
- Keep greetings courteous ("Hello," "Good morning") and closings polished ("Best regards," "Sincerely").
- Avoid slang or emojis unless the context allows.



Proofread Before Sending

- Always check for grammar, spelling, and tone.
- Read it aloud if needed to catch awkward phrasing or unintentional emotion.



Mind Your Formatting

- Use a readable font, standard size, and professional formatting.
- Avoid bright colors, ALL CAPS, or excessive punctuation.



Reply Promptly & Appropriately

- Respond within 24–48 hours when possible.
- If you need more time, acknowledge the email and give a timeline.



Use Subject Lines & Signatures Wisely

- Keep subject lines clear and specific (e.g., "Follow-Up: Policy Draft Review").
- Include a professional signature with your name, title, and contact info.

EMAIL ETIQUETTE

TIPS & TRICKS

SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

Know Your Audience

- Speak to youth, community members, and city leaders.
- Use inclusive, welcoming language and visuals.

Avoid Inappropriate Content

- Steer clear of personal opinions or controversial topics.
- Stay aligned with the committee's mission.

Be Respectful

- Use correct pronouns.
- Avoid stereotypes and assumptions.
- Celebrate all identities and beliefs.

Post Regularly & Use Hashtags

- Stay active.
- Create and/or use relevant hashtags.
- Always fact-check before posting.

DO'S

- Ensure **your personal information is current** and reflects you appropriately.
- **Review posts, comments, and tags on your accounts**—and promptly remove any inappropriate content.
- Be mindful of what others post about you.
 - **Your digital presence includes not only what you post, but also what others share about you.**
- **Choose photos carefully.**
 - Images should reflect your values and uphold a high standard.
- **Protect confidential information.**



martinsville_va

DIGITAL FOOTPRINT: DO'S & DONT'S



DONT'S

- **Avoid any form of online bullying, gossip, or disrespectful conversations.**
 - Treat others with kindness and respect—both in person and online.
- **Never post or share inappropriate messages, images, or jokes.**
- **Never post or engage with hate speech or discriminatory content.**
 - This includes any posts that target someone's race, religion, gender, sexuality, or background. Everyone deserves to feel safe and respected.

SAFE, KIND, & ON-BRAND

Protect Privacy

- Don't share private info or internal discussions.
- Get consent before posting photos — especially of other minors.

Ask Before You Post

- When in doubt, pause and check with a team member.
- Plan content when possible — don't post reactively.

Use a Warm, Inclusive Tone

- Be approachable and encouraging.
- Keep posts respectful and community-minded.



4

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Goal Setting

S

Specific

M

Measurable

A

Attainable

R

Realistic

T

Time-bound

STRATEGIC PLANNING

- Introduction to Strategic Planning
- SWOT Analysis
- Mission & Vision
 - Goal-Setting & Stakeholder Identification



DEVELOPMENT

Continue to expand our local economy and housing opportunities while taking pride in our natural landscapes; by supporting local businesses, providing ample opportunities for new businesses, and marketing ourselves as a City of Choice.



CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

Building community through celebrating our past, increasing access to recreational, educational, and cultural activities, and improving the relationship with our intergovernmental partners.



GOVERNANCE

As an employer of choice, deliver efficient and effective operations and services while demonstrating fiscal responsibility and transparency as a high-performing organization.



PUBLIC SAFETY

increased transparency, and responder visibility. Continue to prevent harm, protect lives, and respond effectively and proactively to potential and real threats.



INFRASTRUCTURE

As a safe and reliable city, sustain high-quality service delivery by investing in public infrastructure, including parks, buildings, equipment, roads, and technology.



THANK YOU



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Civil Rights, Sustainability, Sports &
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NEXT STEPS

Checklist				
Item	Status	Assignee	Due Date	Notes
Provide a list of transportation options	<div><div></div>Not started</div>	All members	24 May 2025	
Complete Budget Survivor Packet	<div><div></div>Not started</div>	All members	31 May 2025	Please complete by next meeting!
	<div></div>		<div></div>	

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- ICMA. (n.d.). *Council-Manager Form of Government*. International City/County Management Association, [https://icma.org/sites/default/files/Council-Manager%20Form%20Brochure%20\(FINAL\)%2010-2019.pdf](https://icma.org/sites/default/files/Council-Manager%20Form%20Brochure%20(FINAL)%2010-2019.pdf).
- Heath, Tre'Vaughn. (2023, January 25). *What You Need to Know About Local Government Boards and Committees*. GOVSTRATEGY. <https://govstrategymap.com/local-government-boards-and-committees/>