

DIFFERENCES IN COMMUNITY GOVERNMENT STRUCTURES IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

REVISED April 2025

Body and Authorities	Charter Communities	Hamlets	Tłjcho Community Governments	Cities, Towns and Villages	Self-governments	First Nations (Designated Authorities/Reserves)
<i>* Definitions and Communities listed alphabetically on Page 2</i>						
WHO	Fort Good Hope	Aklavik, Enterprise, Fort Liard, Fort McPherson, Fort Providence, Fort Resolution, Paulatuk, Sachs Harbour, Tsiigehtchic, Tuktoyaktuk, Tulita, Ulukhaktok	Behchokö, Gamètì, Wekweètì, Whatì	Fort Simpson, Fort Smith, Hay River, Inuvik, Norman Wells, Yellowknife	Déljñę Got'ine Government (DGG)	Colville Lake, Dettah, Jean Marie River, Kakisa, K'atl'odeeche, Lutselk'e, Nahanni Butte, Samba K'e, Wrigley,
LEGAL STATUS	Municipal Corporation established under the <i>Charter Communities Act</i>	Municipal corporation established under the <i>Hamlets Act</i>	Municipal corporation established under the <i>Tłjcho Community Government Act</i>	Municipal corporations established under the <i>Cities, Towns and Villages Act</i>	Self-government established under the Déljñę Got'ine Final Self-government Agreement (DFSGA)	Where the First Nations (Bands) are primary authority in community to deliver municipal services.
CRITERIA FOR STATUS	Public request with minimum of 25 persons eligible to vote or Minister's initiative. 90 days public notice. 180 days' notice to change municipal status with 60% voter approval required.	Public request with minimum of 25 persons eligible to vote or Minister's initiative. 90 days public notice. 180 days' notice to change municipal status.	Implements obligations under the <i>Tłjchô Agreement</i> to create four Tłjcho community governments.	Council request or Minister's initiative and minimum assessment base. 90 days public notice. 180 days to change municipal status.	Self-government by Act of Parliament	First Nations through application of <i>Indian Act</i> .
ESTABLISHMENT	By Minister's Order following community vote (60 % approval) on Charter.	By Minister's Order	Establishment of new communities by agreement of the parties and amendment to the <i>Tłjcho Community Government Act and Tłjcho Agreement</i> .	By Minister's Order	By Act of Parliament when the Governor General signed the Order-in-Council, the Déljñę Final Self-government Agreement came into effect September 1, 2016.	First Nations established by Order-in-Council (OIC)
LANDS	Generally lands within municipal boundary – except lands set aside for Indians. Commissioner's Land available; in unsettled claims area, after consultation period with affected claimant group.	Generally lands within municipal boundary – except lands set aside for Indians. Commissioner's Lands available; in unsettled claims area, after consultation period with affected claimant group.	All community lands within the municipal boundary.	Generally lands within municipal boundary – except lands set aside for Indians. Commissioner's Lands available; in unsettled claims area, after consultation period with affected claimant group.	As of the Effective Date (September 1, 2016), title to Sahtu Municipal Lands began vesting in the DGG subject to any existing interest in such lands held by Canada, the GNWT or any third party.	Lands set aside for Indians or reserve lands under <i>Indian Act</i> or lands set aside by Act of Parliament under self-government agreement or land claim. May advise on disposal of Commissioner's Lands.
TAXATION	Property taxes paid to GNWT. Option to become Municipal Taxing Authority by Ministerial Order – no taxing Charter Communities at present.	Property taxes paid to GNWT. Option to become Municipal Taxing Authority by Ministerial Order – no taxing Hamlets at present.	Property taxes paid to GNWT. The Tłjcho community governments have the option to exercise rights of property taxation if they so choose – no taxing Tłjcho community governments at present.	Municipal Taxing authorities. Municipal Mill Rate Bylaw passed by all communities. Education mill rates set by GNWT, except Yellowknife.	The DGG has jurisdiction relating to direct taxation of DFN Citizens within Déljñę Lands.	<i>Indian Act</i> allows taxation of reserve. Claimant group may negotiate various taxation authorities.
FINANCIAL AUTHORITY	Extended authority to manage money on year to year, or long-term planning cycle. Extended investment authority. Extended ability to borrow on long term basis – limits set by regulation.	Extended authority to manage money on year to year or long-term planning cycle. Extended investment authority. Extended ability to borrow on long-term basis – limits set by regulation.	Extended authority to manage money on year to year or long-term planning cycle. Extended investment authority. Extended ability to borrow on long-term basis- limits set by regulation.	Extended authority to manage money on year to year or long-term planning cycle. Extended investment authority. Extended ability to borrow on long-term basis- limits set by regulation.	The terms and conditions by which funding is to be provided to the DGG shall be negotiated on a gov't to gov't basis and set out in a financing agreement.	First Nations (not on a reserve) - Budgeting, banking, charges for services, short term borrowing. Long-term borrowing restricted to areas where federal government guarantees lending. First Nations (on a reserve) - Indian lands unalienable, federal government guarantees and loans.
BYLAW MAKING AUTHORITY	Full bylaw authorities within spheres of jurisdiction pursuant to <i>Charter Communities Act</i> .	Full bylaw authorities within spheres of jurisdiction pursuant to <i>Hamlets Act</i> .	Full bylaw authorities within spheres of jurisdiction pursuant to <i>Tłjcho Community Government Act</i> .	Full bylaw authorities within spheres of jurisdiction pursuant to <i>Cities, Towns and Villages Act</i>	Self-government - authorities negotiated by self-government agreement.	First Nations (not on a reserve) - governance by resolution First Nations (on a reserve) - bylaw authority under <i>Indian Act</i> - similar to municipal powers

ELECTIONS AND TERMS OF OFFICE	Set by Establishment Order. Head of First Nation and specified number of councillors may sit on Council. Term of Office set in charter from 1 to 2 years.	Held 2 nd Monday in December. Option of 2 or 3-year terms, with staggered term option, may have 4-year term if approved by voters.	Held 2 nd Monday in June. 4-year term.	Held 3 rd Monday in October. Option of 2 or 3-year terms, with term staggered term option, may have 4-year term if approved by voters.	Election held in July. Term of office is four years.	Set by First Nation Code/Resolution. All First Nations in NWT set own custom election practices. None follow <i>Indian Act Regulations</i> .
FINANCIAL RESOURCES	Water/sewage services funding. Formula funding for other services based on population, cost of living and infrastructure indicators. Capital funding.	Water/sewage services funding. Formula funding for other services based on population, cost of living and infrastructure indicators. Capital funding.	Water/sewage services funding. Formula funding for other services based on population, cost of living and infrastructure indicators. Capital funding.	Water/sewage services funding. Capital Assistance for water and sewer infrastructure only. Grant In Lieu payments from GNWT/Canada. Property Taxation raises anywhere from 30 – 45% of budget needs.	Financing arrangements are as per section 28.2 of the DFSGA, in which the costs of providing programs and services that are reasonably comparable to similar programs and services available in other communities in the NWT of similar size and circumstances.	Funded by Federal and GNWT Departments to deliver specific services and programs. MACA provides funding resources to provide municipal services. Water/sewage services funding. Formula funding for other services based on population, cost of living and infrastructure indicators. Capital funding for infrastructure only where there is an Infrastructure Society to hold real property.
LEADERSHIP	Charter determines leadership. Generally, the Chief of First Nation Band is appointed to head the municipal corporate body. Mix of publicly elected and band councillor appointments.	Mayor and councillors on separate ballots, but candidates may run for both Mayor and Council.	Chief and council on separate ballots. Councillor cannot run for Chief. Guaranteed 50% minimum Tłjcho citizen participation.	Candidates cannot run for both Mayor and Councillor.	ʔekw'ahtidə (leader) and councillors on separate ballots, but *DFN citizens who are candidates may run for both ʔekw'ahtidə and Council. A non-DFN resident only runs as a Councillor.	Chief and councillors selected under Custom Election code.
DELEGATING/ AGREEMENTS/ ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	Establish Services, utilities, facilities. Boards or Commissions Enter agency agreements. Delegation agreements. Establish municipal businesses and encourage economic development	Establish Services, utilities, facilities. Boards or Commissions Enter agency agreements. Delegation agreements. Establish municipal businesses and encourage economic development	Establish Services, utilities, facilities. Boards or Commissions Enter agency agreements. Delegation agreements. Establish municipal businesses and encourage economic development	Establish Services, utilities, facilities. Boards or Commissions Enter agency agreements. Delegation agreements. Establish municipal businesses and encourage economic development	Establish Services, utilities, facilities. Boards or Commissions Enter agency agreements. Delegation agreements. Establish municipal businesses and encourage economic development	May enter into agreements with 3 rd parties for work/training/impact resources.

Definitions:

- **Charter Communities** - One community operating as Municipal Corporations, established under the *Charter Communities Act*
- **Hamlets** - Twelve communities operating as Municipal Corporations, established under the *Hamlets Act*
- **Tłjcho Community Governments** - Four communities operating as Municipal Corporations, established under the *Tłjcho Community Government Act*
- **Cities, Towns and Villages** - Six communities operating as Tax-Based Municipal Corporations, established under the *Cities, Towns and Villages Act*
- **Self-governments** - One community operating as a Municipal Corporation, established under the Déljñę Got'ine Final Self-government Agreement
- **First Nations (Designated Authorities and Reserves)** - Nine communities where a community government is governed by a First Nations' Band Council on or off-reserve, and is recognized by the Federal Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs. The First Nations are the primary authority in a community to deliver municipal services.

Communities:

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| 1. Aklavik - Hamlet | 12. Fort Simpson - Village | 23. Paulatuk - Hamlet |
| 2. Behchokö - Tłjcho Community Government | 13. Fort Smith - Town | 24. Sachs Harbour - Hamlet |
| 3. Colville Lake - Designated Authority | 14. Gamèti - Tłjcho Community Government | 25. Sambaa K'e - Designated Authority |
| 4. Déljñę - Self-government | 15. Hay River - Town | 26. Tsigehtchic - Hamlet |
| 5. Dettah - Designated Authority | 16. Inuvik - Town | 27. Tuktoyaktuk - Hamlet |
| 6. Enterprise - Hamlet | 17. Jean Marie River - Designated Authority | 28. Tulita - Hamlet |
| 7. Fort Good Hope - Charter Community | 18. Kakisa - Designated Authority | 29. Ulukhaktok - Hamlet |
| 8. Fort Liard - Hamlet | 19. K'atl'odeeche - Designated Authority | 30. Wekweèti - Tłjcho Community Government |
| 9. Fort McPherson - Hamlet | 20. Łutselk'e - Designated Authority | 31. Whati - Tłjcho Community Government |
| 10. Fort Providence - Hamlet | 21. Nahanni Butte - Designated Authority | 32. Wrigley - Designated Authority |
| 11. Fort Resolution - Hamlet | 22. Norman Wells - Town | 33. Yellowknife – (includes N'dilo) - City |