Create a City!

You and your group are responsible for creating a new city somewhere within the state of North Carolina. You must design this city from scratch, following many of the realistic steps that are taken when cities are incorporated. You will consider and plan many aspects of your city, including but not limited to all of the steps below. When finished, you and your group will attempt to convince citizens to move to your city.

I. Brainstorm:
What kind of city do you want? Be creative, but be REALISTIC! Assume you can create a new city anywhere in North Carolina. Begin to discuss and imagine these questions and others while jotting thoughts on notebook paper:

- What would your city look like? (Consider the physical, architectural, and environmental design of the city.)
- What activities will take place in your city?
- What do you feel is most important for a city to be successful and for residents to have a high quality of life?
- What would you like your city to be known for?
- What services will your city’s local government provide to its citizens?
- In what way would ideal citizens behave in your city? What do you hope they will value? What actions will your citizens take on a daily basis? How can the “ideal” be achieved?
- Where is your city located within North Carolina? Why is this the best location? What physical features do you want your city to have?
- What laws/ordinances will be important to initiate? (Remember, you cannot undo any law set by the state or federal government).
- What environmental qualifications do you want your city to meet?
- What is the name of your city?

II. Choose a Charter Type:
Your next task is to set up the outline for your city’s government. To do this, you must understand and explore local charters. Consider the pros and cons of each type of government described below. From that understanding, you will design a charter defining the government of your city.

A charter functions as a city’s constitution by outlining governmental actions, by defining the authority of officials, and by determining how officials will be elected; charters vary in how they define government.

The two most prevalent types of charters are the mayor-council charter and the council-manager charter:

1. **Mayor-Council Charter:** The oldest and most popular charter in the United States and in North Carolina (over 60% of NC cities use this format). City councils under this type of charter occupy a single chamber and are typically small, with a population generally under 2,500 people. The size of the council varies from as few as 2 members to as many as 50, though 7 is the median size in cities with more than 5,000 people. There are two basic variations of the mayor-council form, **weak mayor-council** and **strong mayor-council**:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics of the Weak Mayor Council:</th>
<th>Characteristics of the Strong Mayor Council:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mayor is selected by the city council rather than elected by the people.</td>
<td>Mayor is elected directly by the people and given fairly broad powers.</td>
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<td>Mayor’s powers are usually limited.</td>
<td>City councils generally possess only legislative authority.</td>
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<tr>
<td>City councils generally possess both legislative and executive authority.</td>
<td>Department heads are appointed by, and serve at the pleasure of, the mayor.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Department heads are directly elected by citizens, not appointed.</td>
<td>The mayor is the administrative head of the city.</td>
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<td>There is no single administrative head for the city, and power is fragmented.</td>
<td>The system calls for a mayor to be both a good political leader and an effective administrator.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Designed for smaller cities with simple governments.</td>
<td>Poorly suited for large cities where political and administrative leadership is vital.</td>
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2. **Council (City)-Manager Charter**: It is a system in which the city council hires a professional administrator to manage city affairs. The council serves as a “board of directors” that sets broad policies, while the city manager carries out (implements and administers) these policies in businesslike fashion. This charter type is adopted by the larger cities in North Carolina, with over 80% of cities with more than 2,500 residents using this system.

**Decision Time (answer on notebook paper):**
- Do you wish to have a **mayor-council charter** or a **council (city)-manager charter** to govern your city? Explain your reasoning.
- If the **mayor-council charter** was chosen, do you wish to have a **strong mayor** or **weak mayor** system? Why?
- How many members will compose your city council? What are the possible benefits and drawbacks from this number of council members?
- What type of citizen involvement do you hope to have in your city’s government? (i.e. perhaps your city council will hold bi-weekly citizen informational and comment forums, etc.; perhaps you’ll have a youth council to advise the city council, etc.)

### III. Determining Elections:
There are many ways in which city officials may gain office. Review the following election methods and decide which will be best for your city.

1. **Partisan and nonpartisan** elections:
   - **Partisan** elections are races in which the candidates run under a party platform.
   - **Nonpartisan** elections are races in which the candidates do not affiliate with a party.

2. **Elections by districts/wards** or elections from the **city at large**

**Decision Time (answer on your notebook paper):**
- Will you hold partisan or nonpartisan elections? Why?
- Will elections be determined by small districts/wards, large districts/wards, or from the city at large? Explain your choice.

### IV. Create Your City
Review all of your thoughts and create a city! Prepare a **3-5 minute presentation** to deliver to potential citizens in which you explain all of the above information regarding your new city, with the goal of getting them to move there. Your final presentation must contain the following:
- Develop a **sales pitch** to encourage people to reside in your city. Your pitch must describe your decisions regarding its **charter**, and **elections**, as well as include creative details (while maintaining realism). Your pitch should convince potential residents that your city is where they want to live. A pitch can be a speech, a commercial, a skit, etc.
- Develop a **visual aid** that will depict your city to potential residents & tourists (such as a poster, billboard, or flyer). Also, develop a **city motto or slogan** that is inviting and welcoming. This slogan/motto must appear on your visual aid.
- Create a **jingle/rap** that could be played on the radio to advertise your city and convince tourists to visit. Your musical creation should include details of your city that you feel are most important.

*Each group member must participate and convey information in the presentation, demonstrate a clear understanding of charters and elections, and participate in all of the above steps.*