



# City Charter Primer



## What is a City Charter?

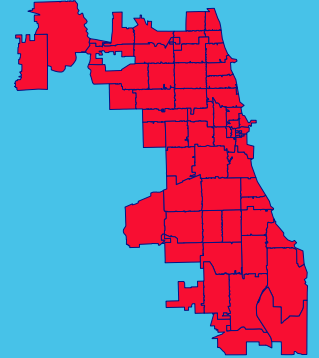
### A constitutional document that:

- Defines the role, authority, and structure of a city government
- Establishes standards and processes for transparent decision-making

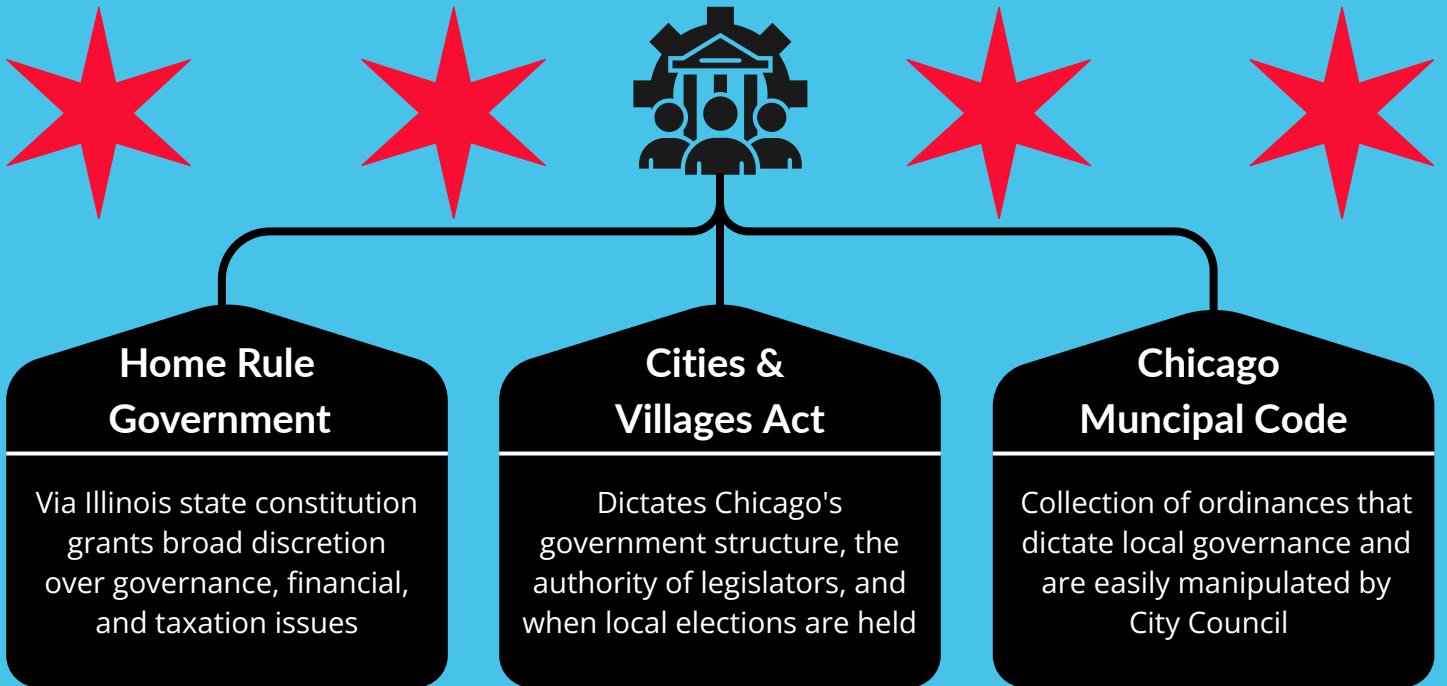


## Chicago

Only major city in the US that does not have a charter



## Chicago's Present Governing Framework



**UNCOORDINATED GOVERNMENT SYSTEM**

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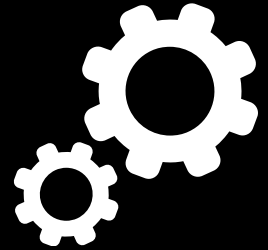


## Benefits of a City Charter



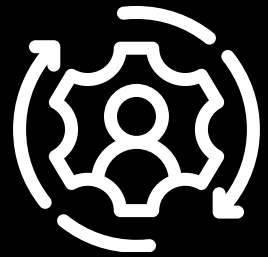
### Redefining structural components of government

Clearly define the structure of city government, including which leadership positions are elected or appointed, while establishing enforceable mechanisms for public participation and civic oversight.



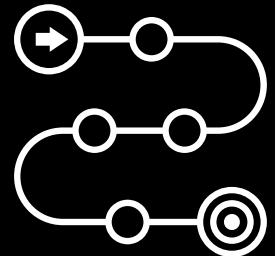
### Formalizing the authority of city officials and rules around election cycle

Formalize the powers, responsibilities, and limits of elected and appointed officials, while establishing more transparent and consistent standards for elections to encourage greater voter turnout.



### Establishing rules for the legislative and budget processes

Establish transparent rules and timelines for legislation, budgeting, public hearings, and major financial decisions to strengthen oversight, improve public input, and prevent rushed decision-making.



### Codifying accountability mechanisms

Create independent accountability and oversight mechanisms, including requirements for audits, financial analysis, and year-round review processes to strengthen transparency, improve information sharing, and support more informed decision-making, especially around the budget process.



**Scan here to read more**

<https://www.civiced.org/blog/what-city-charter-and-how-could-having-one-help-chicago>

