

Close to Home

Analyze how Georgia counties and cities serve residents and make budget choices.

SS8CG6 "Analyze the role of local governments in the state of Georgia."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each service local governments provide, circle each source of revenue, and write C beside a county action or City beside a city action.

Local Decisions in Georgia

- ① Local governments bring public decisions close to Georgia residents. The two main types are county governments and city governments. Every part of Georgia is in a county, while cities are incorporated areas within one or more counties. A county commission, made up of elected commissioners, makes county policies and approves a budget. Cities can use a mayor-council form, with elected officials, or a council-manager form, in which an elected council hires a professional manager. Local governments operate under authority granted by the state.
- ② Consider a storm that washes branches across roads in an unincorporated neighborhood and floods a nearby city street. The county may send road crews to the unincorporated area and use its sheriff's office for public safety. The city may clear its street and maintain drainage there. Counties also conduct elections, assess property for taxes, and support services such as libraries or parks. A city can provide police, fire protection, water, or recreation. Counties and cities sometimes share services through agreements.
- ③ Local governments pay for this work with revenue from property taxes, local sales taxes, service fees, and grants from state or federal governments. Some local sales tax programs require voter approval and may be limited to listed projects, such as roads or public facilities. Leaders must balance needs against available money when they adopt a budget. If revenue falls, a government may delay a park repair, reduce a service, raise a fee or tax when allowed, or seek a grant. Budget choices show which local needs leaders consider most urgent.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Why can a Georgia resident live in both a county and a city?

2 During the storm, what is one responsibility of the county and one responsibility of the city?

3 Name two sources of local government revenue. Why might a local sales tax program have limits on how its money is used?

4 What does delaying a park repair show about the role of a local government's budget?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Imagine an unincorporated Georgia community where a busy county road has no safe walking path to a public library. Write 4 to 5 sentences recommending an action. Identify which local government should lead, name a realistic funding source from the passage, and explain one budget tradeoff or limit.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each service local governments provide, circle each source of revenue, and write C beside a county action or City beside a city action. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why can a Georgia resident live in both a county and a city?	Every part of Georgia is in a county, and a city is an incorporated area within one or more counties.
2	During the storm, what is one responsibility of the county and one responsibility of the city?	The county may clear roads in the unincorporated neighborhood or use the sheriff's office for safety. The city may clear its street or maintain drainage there.
3	Name two sources of local government revenue. Why might a local sales tax program have limits on how its money is used?	Revenue sources include property taxes, local sales taxes, service fees, and grants. A local sales tax program may require voter approval and may be limited to listed projects.
4	What does delaying a park repair show about the role of a local government's budget?	It shows that leaders must choose among needs when money is limited and decide which needs are most urgent.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The county government should plan a sidewalk along the road because the area is unincorporated. It could use a voter-approved local sales tax program if the project is listed, or seek a grant. The commission would need to include the project in its budget. Paying for the sidewalk might delay a park repair or require leaders to reduce another planned service.

Accept any accurately stated revenue source and service from the passage. For the open response, look for a county role, a realistic funding choice, and a clear explanation of a budget tradeoff or funding limit.