

# Effective Municipal Leadership A Guide to Leadership in Grantsville

**Grantsville City Council Retreat | 2026**



# Utah's Three Forms of Government

Utah Code § 10-3b-103 establishes three primary forms of municipal government. Understanding these structures is essential for effective governance. Grantsville operates under the Six-Member Council form, which has evolved through the addition of a City Manager.



## Five-Member Council (Traditional)

The most common form in Utah. Mayor serves as a voting member of the council, participating equally in all decisions with full voting rights on every matter.



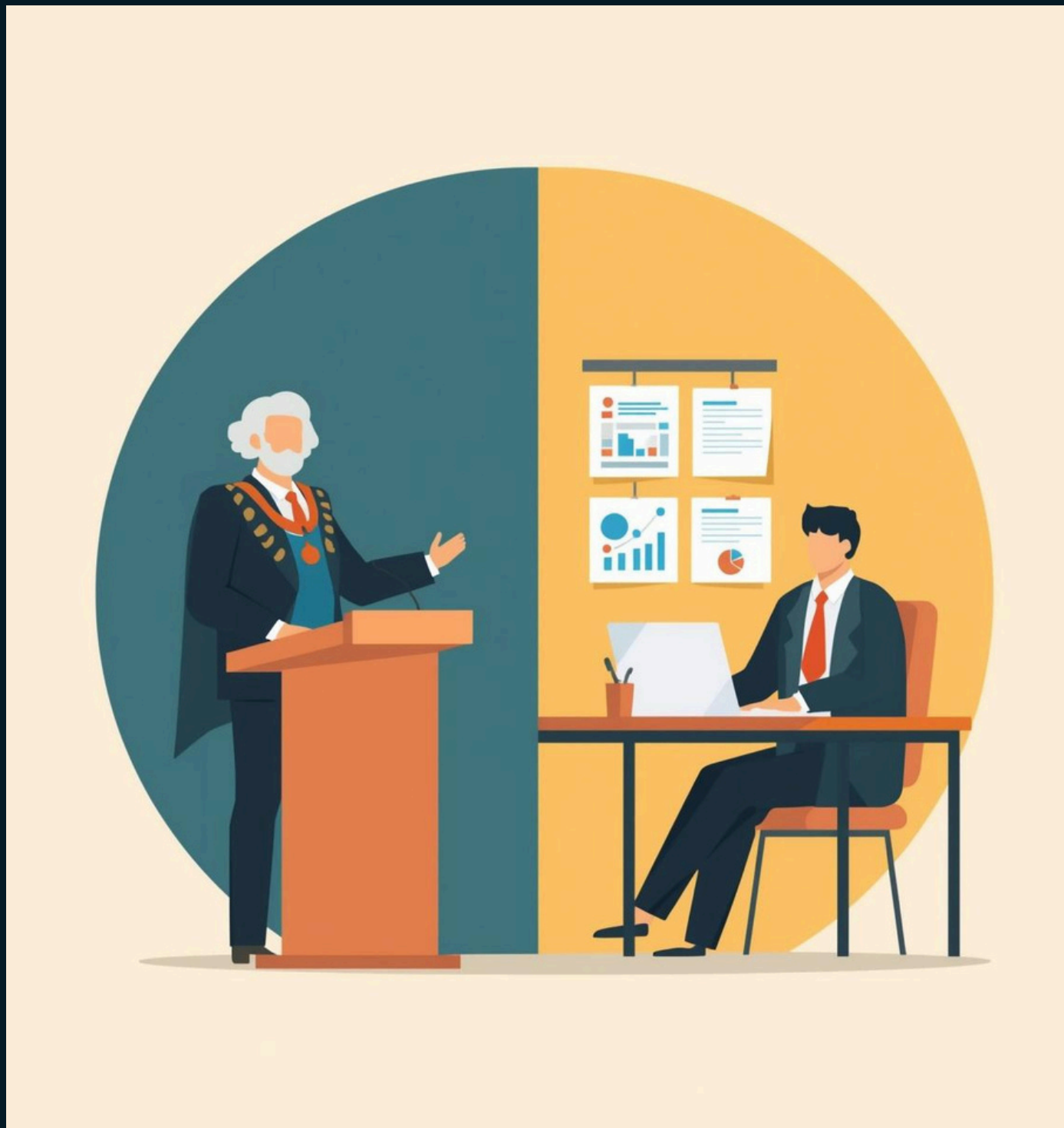
## Six-Member Council (Grantsville's Form)

Mayor presides but votes only to break ties. Council of five members handles legislative duties while Mayor focuses on ceremonial and presiding functions.



## Council-Mayor (Strong Mayor)

Mayor holds executive authority separate from Council. Includes veto power, direct staff oversight, and administrative control. Council serves purely legislative role.



# Grantsville's Evolution: The City Manager Form

## The Choice: Professionalized Administration

Grantsville adopted the City Manager form to bring professional expertise to daily operations while preserving elected leadership.

## The Mechanism: Council Appoints City Manager

The Council appoints the City Manager as Chief Administrative Officer, creating clear accountability and specialized management.

## The Result: Focused Roles

Mayor serves as Chair and ceremonial head; Manager runs daily operations, allowing elected officials to focus on policy.



# Allocation of Authority

Feature	Strong Mayor Form	Grantsville (City Manager)
Hiring/Firing Staff	Mayor hires/fires department heads directly	City Manager hires/fires; Council appoints Manager
Day-to-Day Operations	Mayor directs all administrative functions	City Manager runs daily operations as CEO
Veto Power	Mayor may hold veto; Council can override	No veto power, Mayor votes in event of tie or if council is voting on a Manager; or ordinance that enlarges or restricts the mayor's powers, duties, or functions;

# The Mayor: The Presiding Officer

The Mayor serves as the presiding officer of Grantsville City with specific statutory duties and powers:

- Chair of Council Meetings – Presides over all City Council sessions, prepares the written agenda, maintains order, and guides procedural conduct
- Statutory Chief Executive – Serves as the official head of city government while delegating administrative duties to the City Manager
- Veto Power – Under 2-6-4, Mayor has no power to veto.
- Ceremonial Representation – Acts as the public face of Grantsville City at official functions and intergovernmental relations



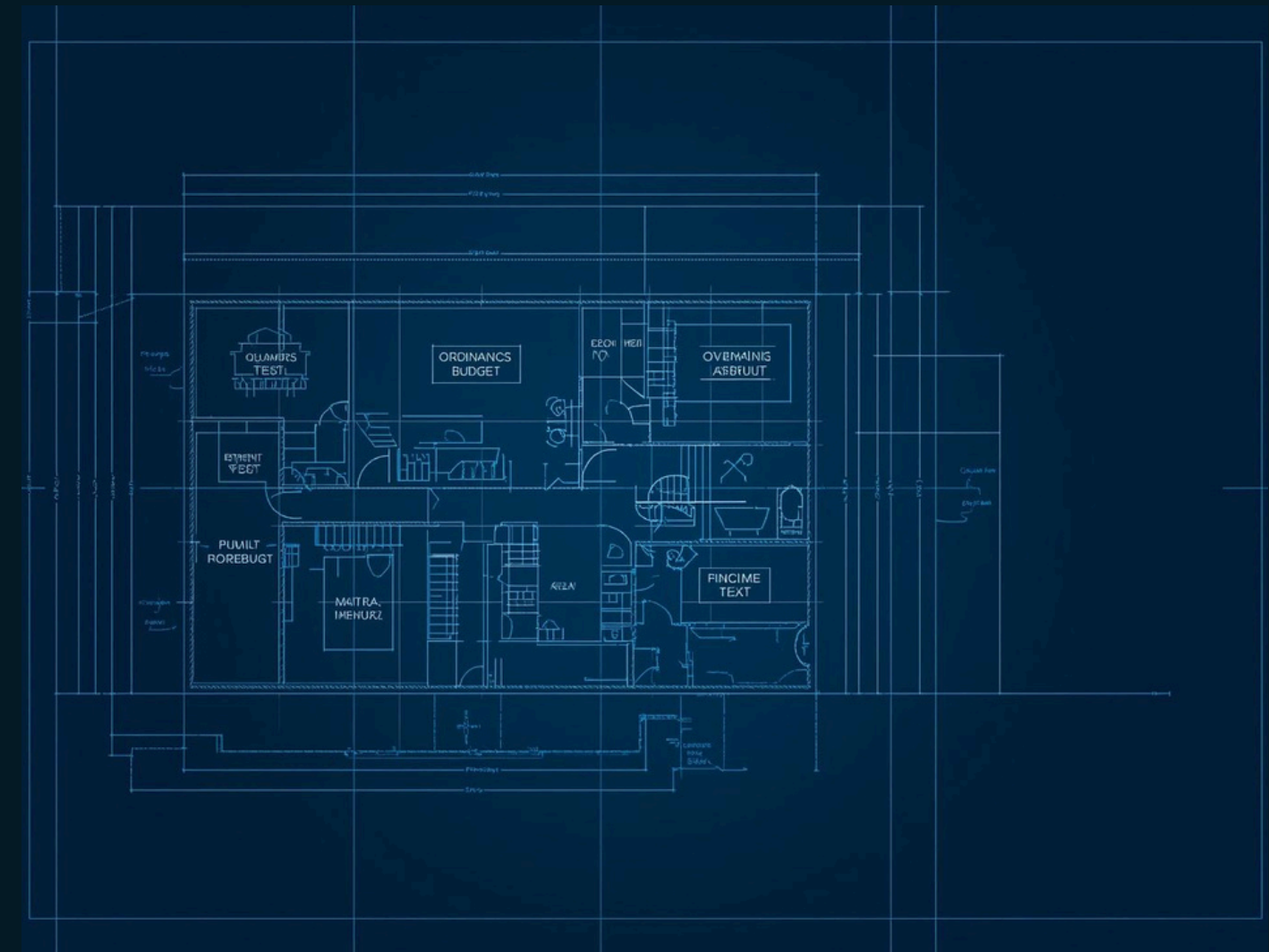


# The City Council -

The City Council serves as Grantsville's legislative body, holding exclusive authority over key governance functions:

- Exclusive power to pass ordinances – All local laws must be enacted by Council vote
- Final authority over the municipal budget – Appropriations and fiscal policy rest with the Council
- Land use legislative decisions – Rezones and General Plan amendments require Council approval
- Advice and consent on appointments – Key positions require Council confirmation

Remember: The Council acts as a unified body. No individual member holds executive authority over city staff or operations.



# The City Manager: The Chief Administrator

The City Manager serves as the Chief Administrative Officer, bridging policy decisions with daily operations.

- Executes Laws: Implements ordinances and resolutions passed by Council, contract administration
- Supervises Staff: Directs department heads and oversees all city employees
- Budget Preparation: Leads the development and presentation of the annual budget
- State of the City: Provides regular operational updates and reports to Council

The Manager acts as a buffer between politics and operations, maintaining a clear chain of command for effective municipal administration.





# The City Attorney: The Legal Guardrail

The City Attorney serves as the legal backdrop for municipal governance, fulfilling critical dual roles:

- Criminal Prosecution & Civil Advisory: Handles justice court prosecution matters (misdemeanors and infractions) while providing legal counsel to Council and staff on all municipal matters.
- Code Consistency: Ensures all ordinances and policies align with Utah state law and constitutional requirements.
- Risk Management: Proactively identifies and mitigates liability exposure, protecting the City from costly litigation.
- Specialty Counsel Coordination: Manages relationships with outside experts for complex matters including water rights, bond financing, and Public Infrastructure Districts.





# Attorney -Client Privilege

Under Rule 1.13 RPC, the City Attorney represents the organization. Individual disclosure of privileged communications can cause full waiver, exposing the City to significant litigation risk. All members must protect confidential legal advice.



## City Corporation as Client

The client is the City Corporation itself, not individual elected officials or staff members. This means privilege belongs to the entity and protects communications made for legal advice to the organization.



## No Unilateral Waiver

A single Council member can waive attorney-client privilege on their own. Disclosure by one member risks waiving privilege for the entire body, creating litigation vulnerability for all.



## Public Communication Framing

When discussing legal matters publicly, prefer framing such as "The law says..." rather than "Our attorney says..." This protects privileged advice while still communicating necessary information.



## Social Media: Hazards for Elected Officials Legal risks and best practices on social platforms

First Amendment risks from blocking citizens on official pages/quasi-official pages  
Legal privilege waiver risks from discussing strategy online  
"One City" principle: City corporation supersedes individuals or sitting Council  
Online disparagement undermines City's legal defense

# Caution

Public forum doctrine applies to official social media accounts. Strategic restraint protects the City.



# Land Use: The Statutory Split

Understanding the separation of land use authority is critical for proper governance. Municipal land use decisions fall into two distinct categories: Legislative decisions involve policy-making discretion, while administrative decisions require objective application of existing standards.

Legislative (Council - Code § 1-15):

- Rezones and zoning map amendments
- General Plan updates and amendments
- High discretion policy decisions

Administrative (Staff/Planning Commission - GLUDMC):

- Subdivision approvals
- Site plan reviews
- Conditional Use Permits
- No discretion if criteria met



# The ULGT & Uninsurable Risks

The Utah Local Governments Trust (ULGT) provides essential coverage for negligence claims, accidents, and common lawsuits that municipalities face. However, significant gaps exist that expose the City's General Fund directly. Uninsurable risks include intentional illegal acts by officials, Open Meetings Act violations, regulatory takings claims, and ethics violations. These exposures can result in substantial out-of-pocket costs that have bankrupted other municipalities.



# Summary Cheat Sheet: Who Does What?

Function	Responsible Party	Key Actions
Policy & Legislation	City Council	Pass ordinances, approve budget, land use decisions, advice & consent
Management & Operations	City Manager	Execute laws, supervise staff, prepare budget, daily operations
Leadership & Meetings	Mayor	Chair meetings, ceremonial duties, statutory executive



# A City Achieving Excellence

As we continue throughout this retreat, let us recommit to the principles that guide effective municipal governance. By honoring our statutory roles and maintaining procedural integrity, we serve Grantsville's residents with excellence.



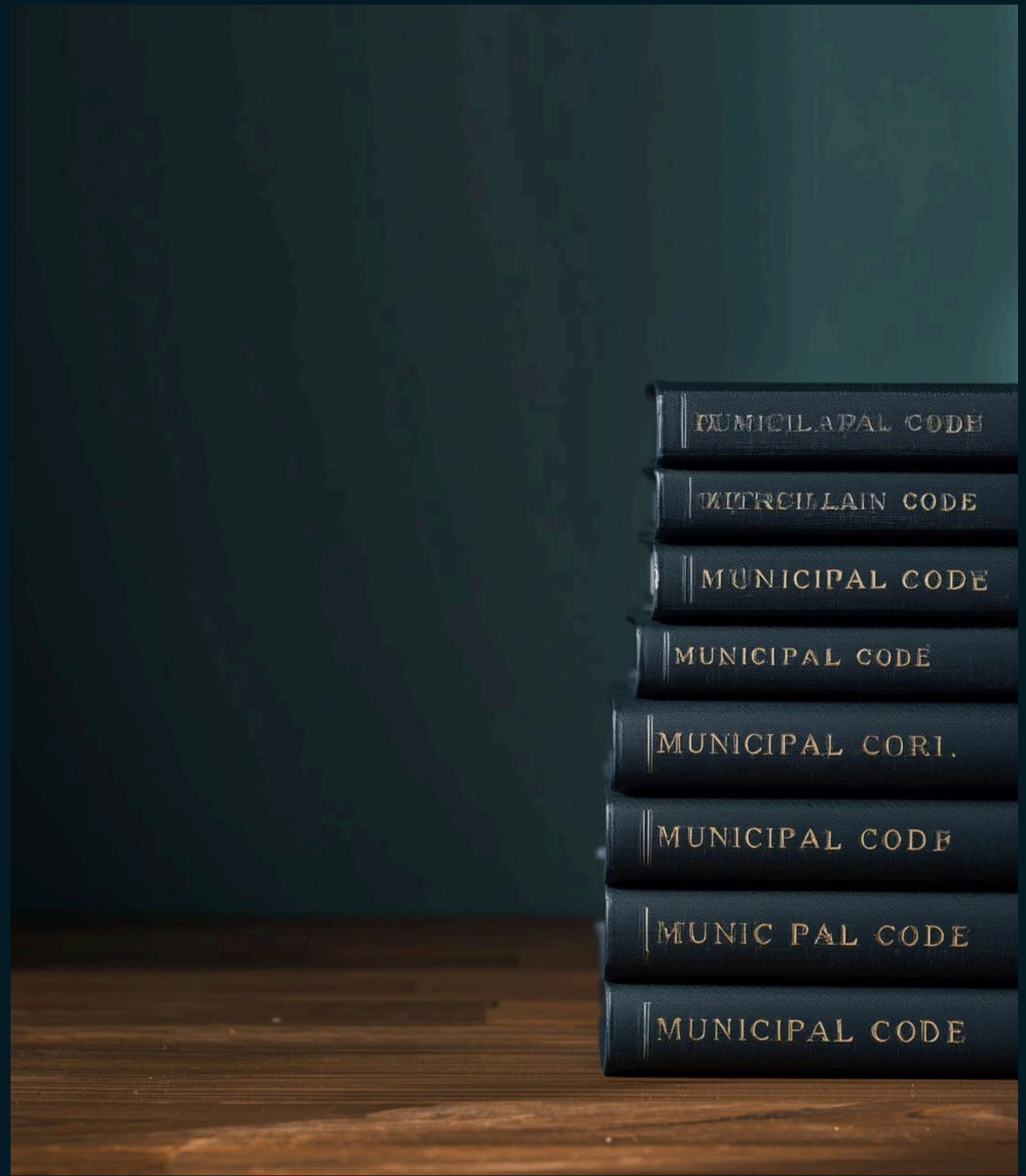
# Appendix: Statutory References

Utah Code § 10-3b: Forms of Government

Utah Code § 10-9a: LUDMA

Grantsville City Code Title 1: Administration

GLUDMC: Land Use Development & Management





# Thank You

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**Thank you for your attention and commitment to effective governance. We welcome your questions and discussion.**