

City Council: Districts, Elections, & Procedures

NOTE: Indiana Code 36-1.5 allows reorganization/consolidation committees a great deal of leeway in designing a new city government. They are not required to copy existing 2nd class or 3rd class city structures. The following is for informational purposes only.

	Indiana's Second Class Cities	Indiana's Third Class Cities	Selected Alternatives
Council's Members	Six members elected from districts & three elected at-large	Option One: Five members elected from districts & two elected at-large	Indiana county councils have four members elected from districts & three elected at-large
		Option Two: Four members elected from districts & three elected at-large	Indianapolis city-county council has 25 members elected from districts & four elected at-large
		Option Three: Four members elected from districts & one elected at-large (only in cities w/ less than 10,000 population)	Legislative power divided in London, England. Fourteen-member city council (elected from single-members districts) approves ordinances. However, four-member Board of Control recommends ordinances regarding personnel and financial matters
Council's	Council president (or vice-president) elected by council	Mayor elected by voters or president pro tempore elected	U.S. & Indiana senate president elected by voters;

Presiding Officer		by council	U.S. & Indiana House speaker elected by House members
Council's Clerk	City clerk elected by voters	City clerk-treasurer elected by voters	Indiana General Assembly chambers & Indianapolis city-county council select their own clerks
Council Districts	Composed of contiguous territory (except for non-contiguous city territory); reasonably compact &, as nearly as is possible, equal population; cannot cross precinct boundary lines (unless needed to maintain equal population in all districts)		Center Grove school board: all members elected at-large
Residency of Council Members	Members elected at-large must be residents of the city; Members elected by district must be residents of the their districts		U.S. House of Representatives: members must be residents of the state, but not the district, which they represent
Districting Powers	City council members write & adopt ordinance creating their own council districts		States of Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Missouri, Montana, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Washington: bi-partisan or non-partisan commissions establish congressional, state legislative, & some other districts; final approval varies
Quorum	Majority of all elected members		U.S. Congress: majority of all elected members Indiana General Assembly: 2/3rds of elected members

<p>Majority To Pass Ordinances</p>	<p>Majority of all elected members unless greater vote required by statute (e.g. to introduce & pass ordinance on same day)</p>	<p>U.S. Congress: majority of elected members voting</p> <p>Indiana General Assembly: majority of all elected members</p>
<p>Voting Power</p>	<p>All members of council have equal voting power</p>	<p>Roman Republic: depending upon time period, tribunes (representatives of the plebeian class) had authority to veto certain actions of the patrician senators, magistrates, & judges</p>
<p>Executive Veto</p>	<p>Mayor may veto an ordinance, order, or resolution. He may also veto separate items of an ordinance appropriating money or levying a tax. Council may override veto by 2/3rds vote of all members.</p>	<p>Indiana: Veto by governor may be overridden by a simple majority of elected members in each chamber of the General Assembly.</p>
<p>Legislative Powers</p>	<p>Council may pass ordinances, orders, resolutions, and motions for the government of the city, the control of city's property & finances, and the appropriation of money.</p> <p>Council may makes loans of money & issues bonds for refunding loans in order to exercise the powers of the city or for the payment of city debts.</p>	<p>Indiana: County councils powers limited to financial matters. Three county commissioners serve as both executive & legislative officials.</p>
<p>Non-legislative Powers</p>	<p>Council may investigate any department, officer, or employee of the city and may compel the attendance of witnesses & the production of evidence.</p> <p>Council may hire its own attorneys & legal research assistants.</p>	<p>Portland, Oregon: Each city commissioner serves as a member of the city's legislature, but also as administrator of a city commission or department.</p>

	Council may expel a member or declare a seat vacant.	Republic of Ireland & New England: legislative body of city hires & supervises professional city manager. Phoenix, Arizona, largest city in U.S. w/ manager-council form of government.
Power to Call Special Meetings of the Council	Mayor may call special meetings; council may establish rules for calling special meetings.	U.S.: Only president can call special sessions of Congress.
Regular Meetings	Council shall meet in January after its election &, at least once, in every subsequent month.	Indiana: General Assembly meets for only limited number days during winter & spring.

Sources:

Indiana Code 36-4-6: City Legislative Body
Indiana Code 36-4-10: City Clerk & Fiscal Officer
Constitution of the United States
Constitution of the State of Indiana
“Here Is Your Indiana Government, 2007-08 Edition”
Wikipedia