

Updated & Corrected 4/19

# 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 2<sup>nd</sup> class or 3<sup>rd</sup> class city structures. The following is for informational purposes only.**

	Indiana’s Second Class Cities	Indiana’s Third Class Cities	Selected Alternatives
<b>Council’s Members</b>	Six members elected from districts & three elected at-large	For cities of 10,000 or more residents:  Five members elected from districts & two elected at-large	Indiana county councils have four members elected from districts & three elected at-large  Indianapolis city-county council has 25 members elected from districts & four elected at-large  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
		For cities of less than 10,000 residents:  Option One: five from districts & two at-large Option Two: four from districts & three at larger Option Three: four from districts & one at-large Option Four: three from districts & two at-large	

<b>Council's Presiding Officer</b>	Council president (or vice-president) elected by council	Mayor elected by voters or president pro tempore elected by council	U.S. & Indiana senate president elected by voters; U.S. & Indiana House speaker elected by House members
<b>Council's Clerk</b>	City clerk elected by voters	City clerk-treasurer elected by voters	Indiana General Assembly chambers & Indianapolis city-county council select their own clerks
<b>Council Districts</b>	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
<b>Residency of Council Members</b>	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
<b>Districting Powers</b>	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
<b>Quorum</b>	Majority of all elected members		U.S. Congress: majority of all elected members

		Indiana General Assembly: 2/3rds of elected members
<b>Majority To Pass Ordinances</b>	Majority of all elected members unless greater vote required by statute (e.g. to introduce & pass ordinance on same day)	U.S. Congress: majority of elected members voting  Indiana General Assembly: majority of all elected members
<b>Voting Power</b>	All members of council have equal voting power	Roman Republic: depending upon time period, tribunes (representatives of the plebeian class) had authority to veto certain actions of the patrician senators, magistrates, & judges
<b>Executive Veto</b>	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.	Indiana: Veto by governor may be overridden by a simple majority of elected members in each chamber of the General Assembly.
<b>Legislative Powers</b>	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.  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.	Indiana: County councils powers limited to financial matters. Three county commissioners serve as both executive & legislative officials.
<b>Non-legislative Powers</b>	Council may investigate any department, officer, or employee of the city and may compel the attendance of witnesses & the production of evidence.	Portland, Oregon: Each city commissioner serves as a member of the city's legislature, but also as

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

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