

Guide to Yokohama City Council



Chamber



City Council Hall

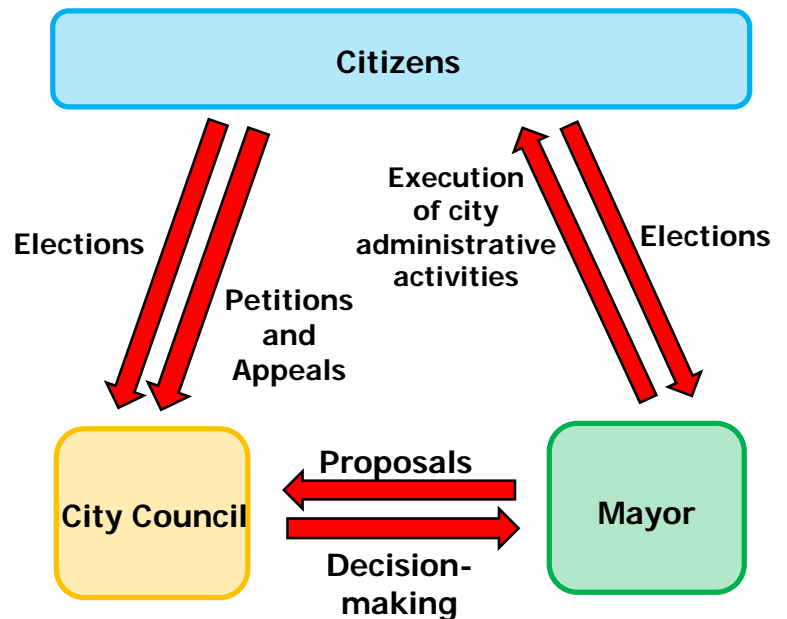
Yokohama City Council

City Council & Mayor

Japan's local government bodies include a decision making organ (the Council) to determine local laws, budgets and policies, and an executive organ to carry out practical activities based on the decisions of the Council.

In the case of Yokohama, the City Council serves as the decision making organ, while the executive organ is represented by the mayor, the board of education, the election administration commission, audit & inspection commissioners and the other administrative commissions.

Formally independent of one another and in positions of equality, the City Council and the mayor act through a system of mutual restraints to effect harmony and balance. It is their aim to constantly improve city governance by respecting the wishes of the citizens and performing their duties fairly and honestly.



Composition of the City Council

Wards and Designated Number of Members

Tsurumi	6	Kanazawa	5
Kanagawa	5	Kohoku	8
Nishi	2	Midori	4
Naka	4	Aoba	7
Minami	5	Tsuzuki	4
Konan	5	Totsuka	6
Hodogaya	5	Sakae	3
Asahi	6	Izumi	4
Isogo	4	Seya	3

Political parties and groups

The City Council members having similar views or advocating similar policies often join together in political parties or groups. The time to make a speech at plenary session is decided based on the number of members of the political party or group.

Number of members of each party/group (as of Nov. 27, 2014)

LDP	32	Minnano Yokohama	4
New Komeito	15	Yokohama-kai	2
DPJ	15	Group of Independents	2
United Future of Yokohama	8	Kanagawa NET	1
JCP	5	Total	84

※The City Council consists of 86 members. (Currently 2 vacant seats)

City Council members

The City Council is composed of members (four-year term) directly elected by the citizens.

The local law states that the City Council must have 86 members. City Council members are elected from each of the 18 wards.

Council chairperson and deputy chairperson

The chairperson and the deputy chairperson are elected among and by the council members.

The chairperson represents the City Council, oversees and manages all its various activities striving to maintain a good order and to assure the smooth functioning of the City Council.

The deputy chairperson performs the functions of chairman if the latter is unable to attend to his duties because of an accident or some other reasons.

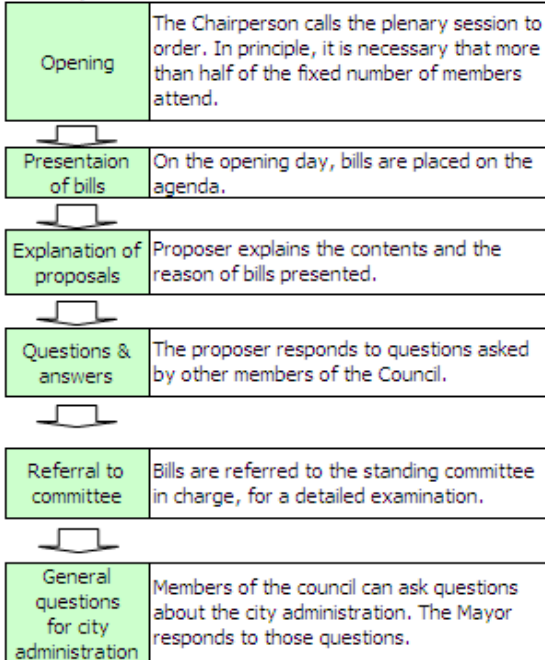
Regular and extraordinary sessions

The City Council is convened for regular sessions four times per year. Extraordinary sessions are convened as the need arises.

Operation of the City Council

Flow chart of bills

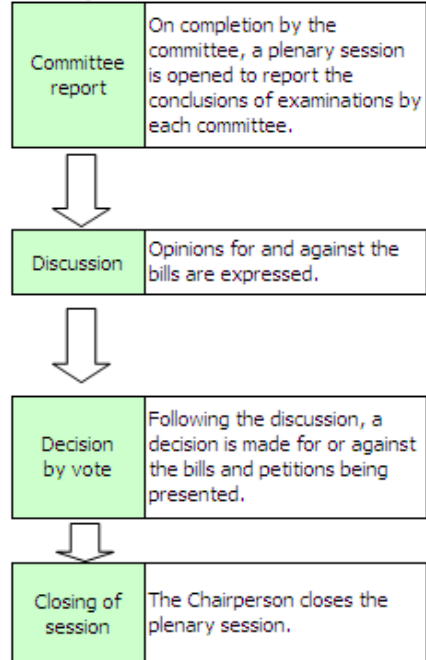
Plenary session



Committee

The plenary session allocates the bills and petitions to the Standing Committees. After having a detailed explanation from the executive organ, as well as investigating into the bills and petitions, the committee decides whether or not it is in favor of the measure.

Plenary session



Plenary sessions

Plenary sessions, consisting of all the council members, make final decisions. Here the Yokohama City Council expresses opinions and makes final decisions on bills presented to it.

Standing Committees

Standing Committees are established to examine bills, petitions and appeals efficiently. Council members are divided into committees according to their specialties.

The Yokohama City Council currently has 8 Standing Committees.

Name of Standing Committees	Number of members
Committee on Policy / General Affairs / Finance	11
Committee on Civic Affairs / Culture & Tourism / Fire	11
Committee on Economic Affairs / Port & Harbor	11
Committee on Child & Youth / Education	11
Committee on Health & Social Welfare / Hospital Administration	11
Committee on Climate Change Policy / Environmental Planning / Resources & Waste Recycling	11
Committee on Housing & Architecture / Urban Development / Road & Highway	10
Committee on Water Works / Transportation	10

Council Steering Committee

The Council Steering Committee coordinates opinions among the political parties and discusses various matters concerning the City Council administration to ensure its smooth operation.

It also examines and investigates bills, petitions and appeals about the City Council.

Name of Special Committees	Number of members
Special Committee on Metropolitan Administration and Finance System	14
Special Committee on U.S. Military Installations Measures	15
Special Committee for the Promotion of Disaster Risk Reduction	14
Special Committee on Community Building to Prevent Isolation	14
Special Committee on Tourism, Creative City & International Strategy	14
Special Committee on Health and Sports Promotion	15

Special Committees

Special Committees are established when needed to investigate specific agendas on city administration. Currently the Yokohama City Council has 6 Special Committees, where members exchange opinions, visit and inspect projects, and hear opinions from experts.

Special Committees are also established to examine initial budgets and the annual settlement of accounts.

Citizens and Council

Petitions and appeals

Anyone shall have the right to present opinions and demands through "Seigan" (petition) and "Chinjo" (appeal) to city policies.

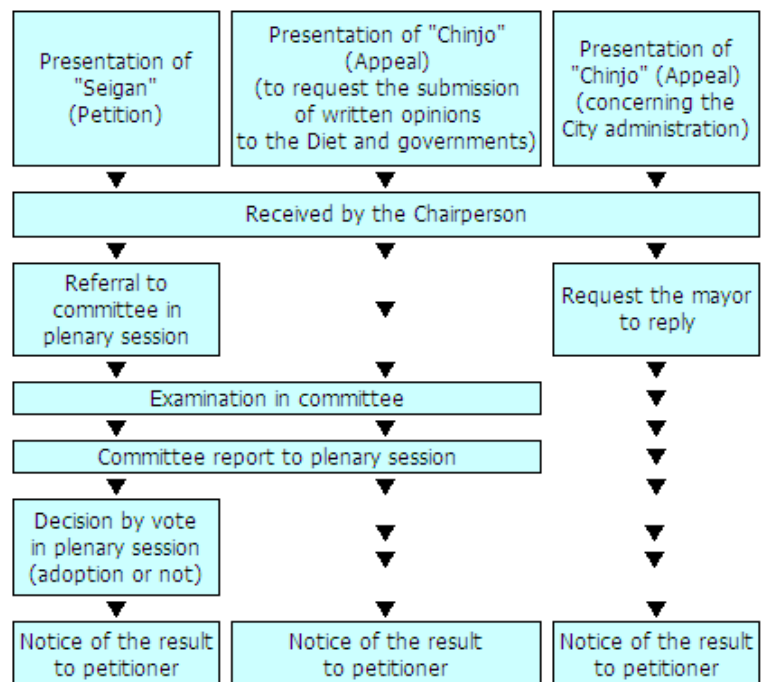
"Seigan" must be introduced by a council member, whereas "Chinjo" does not need such an introduction.

Final decisions on whether to adopt or reject the "Seigan" are made by the plenary session after it has been referred to, and examined by, an appropriate committee. The petitioner is then informed of the results.

"Chinjo" to request submission of the written opinions to the Diet, Prefecture, etc. are referred to an appropriate committee. Once the conclusions of the committee's investigation have been reported to the plenary session, the petitioner is informed.

The Chairperson requests that the Mayor respond directly to "Chinjo" regarding requests on city administration. The petitioner is then informed of the conclusion.

Flow chart of Examining Petitions and Appeals



Record

A summary of plenary session debates, "The Minutes of the City Council", and records of Standing, Council Steering and Special Committees as well as records from Conferences of all members may be viewed at the city's Public Information Center and the city libraries and on the Council's Japanese website.

Records for the board meetings of Special Committee on initial budgets and that on annual settlement of accounts are available for viewing at the City Council Bureau.

*All records are in Japanese only.

Guide to observe Council meetings

Anyone may observe plenary sessions. If you wish to observe, please ask for a ticket, distributed in the order of arrival, at the reception located on the ground floor of City Council Hall.

Also, you may observe examination sessions, conducted separately for each bureau, of Special Committee on initial budgets/annual settlement of accounts (max. 10 persons).

You can watch the proceedings of Standing/Special Committees, board meetings of Special Committee on initial budgets/annual settlement of accounts, Council Steering Committee and Conferences of all members, live on monitor at the City Council Hall. No formalities/reservations required.

Broadcasting on the Internet

Proceedings of plenary sessions, Special Committees on initial budgets and that on annual settlement of accounts, Conferences of all members, Standing Committees and Special Committees (including board meetings), Council Steering Committee are broadcasted on the Internet (both live and recorded).

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