

Guide to Yokohama City Council



Chamber



City Council Hall

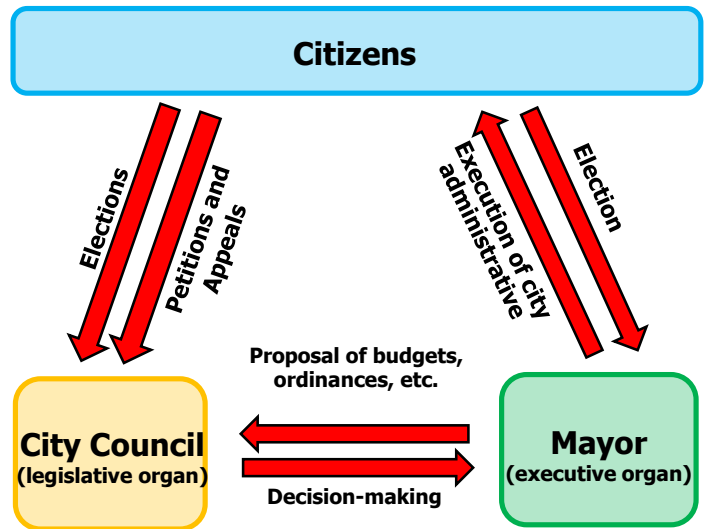
Yokohama City Council

City Council & Mayor

In local governments such as prefectures and cities, etc. there is a legislative organ that determines budgets and ordinances, deliberates and resolves municipal policies and there is an executive organ that actually manages municipal policies pursuant to the resolutions of the local assembly.

In the case of Yokohama, the City Council serves as the legislative 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.

On the basis of independence and equality, the City Council and mayor have a relationship like "the wheels of a car" assuming responsibility for municipal policies, ensure fair public administration by mutual checks and balances, respect the wishes of citizens and aim for the even better management of municipal policies.



Composition of the City Council

Wards and Designated Number of Members

Tsurumi	6	Kanazawa	5
Kanagawa	5	Kohoku	8
Nishi	2	Midori	4
Naka	3	Aoba	7
Minami	5	Tsuzuki	5
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 November 28, 2017)

political party or group	number of members	political party or group	number of members
Liberal Democratic Party of Yokohama	29	Independent (S. Inoue)	1
Democratic Party of Yokohama	21	Independent	1
Komeito of Yokohama	16	Independent	1
Japanese Communist Party of Yokohama	9	Independent (Toyota)	1
Yokohama Restoration Association	2	Independent	1
Independent Conservative Party	2	Independent (Kanagawa Network Movement)	1
Independent (Ota)	1	Total	86

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.

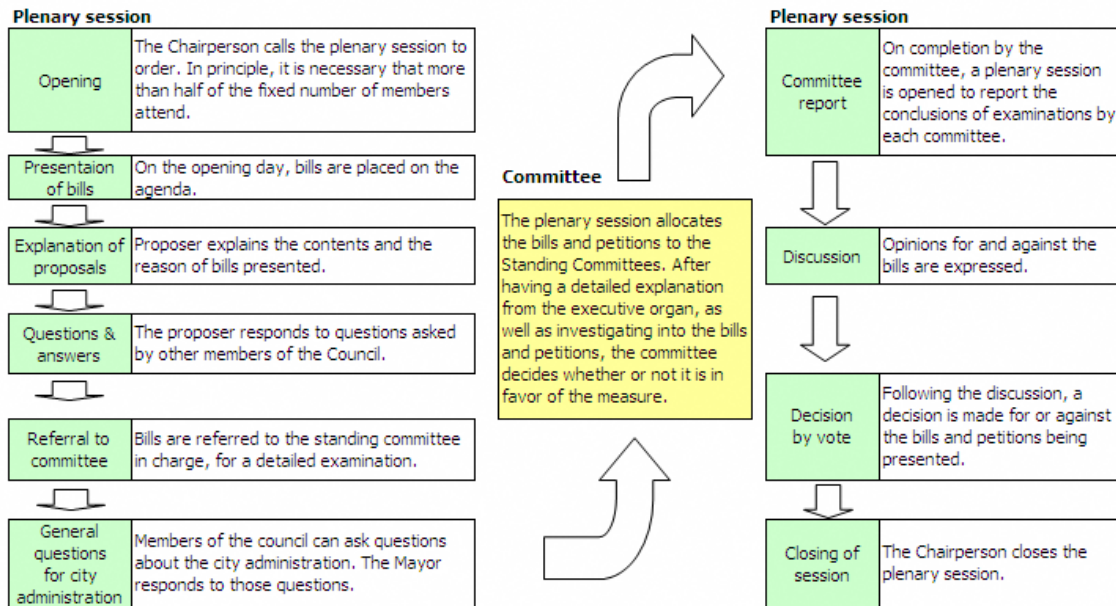
The deputy chairperson performs these functions in place of the chairperson if the latter is unable to attend to his or her duties due to work-related travel, illness or other such circumstances.

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 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

As the detailed consideration of all bills in the plenary sessions is not efficient, 8 standing committees have been established based on departments of the executive organ of the city for which they are responsible for undertaking examinations of bills as well as petitions and appeals, etc.

Name of Standing Committees	Number of members	Responsibilities
Committee on Policy / General Affairs / Finance	11	Formation and adjustment of important government policy, administrative reform, finance, others
Committee on International Affairs / Economic Affairs / Port & Harbor	11	International policy, incentives to attract companies, port and harbor operations/facilities, others
Committee on Civic Affairs / Culture & Tourism / Fire	11	Civic collaboration, tourism-related exchange, firefighting, others
Committee on Child & Youth / Education	11	Child welfare, in-school education, others
Committee on Health & Social Welfare / Medical Care	11	Welfare, medical care, hospital management, others
Committee on Climate Change Policy / Environmental Planning / Resources & Waste Recycling	11	Global warming countermeasures, parks, sewerage, waste management, others
Committee on Housing & Architecture / Urban Development / Road & Highway	10	City planning, urban development, roads, others
Committee on Water Works / Transportation	10	Water works, municipal transportation, others

Council Steering Committee

The Council Steering Committee functions to coordinate opinions among the political parties by providing a venue for discussion between representatives of party groups (comprising five or more party-affiliated council members) on 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	17
Special Committee on U.S. Military Installations Measures	17
Special Committee for the Promotion of Disaster Risk Reduction	17
Special Committee on Tourism, Creative City & International Strategy	18
Special Committee on Health and Sports Promotion	17

Special Committees

Special committees are established as necessary in order to consider, investigate and research agenda matters (specific issues of municipal policies determined by the resolutions of the City Council). Currently, 5 special committees have been established and in each special committee members exchange opinions, visit and inspect projects, and hear opinions from experts. Also, in addition to this, every year customarily the First and Second Budget Special Committee and the First and Second Settlement of Accounts Committee are established in order to examine the initial budget and settlement of accounts.

Citizens and Council

Petitions and appeals

Anyone shall have the right to express opinions and demands on city policies by presenting "Seigan" (petition) and "Chinjo" (appeal) to the chairperson

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

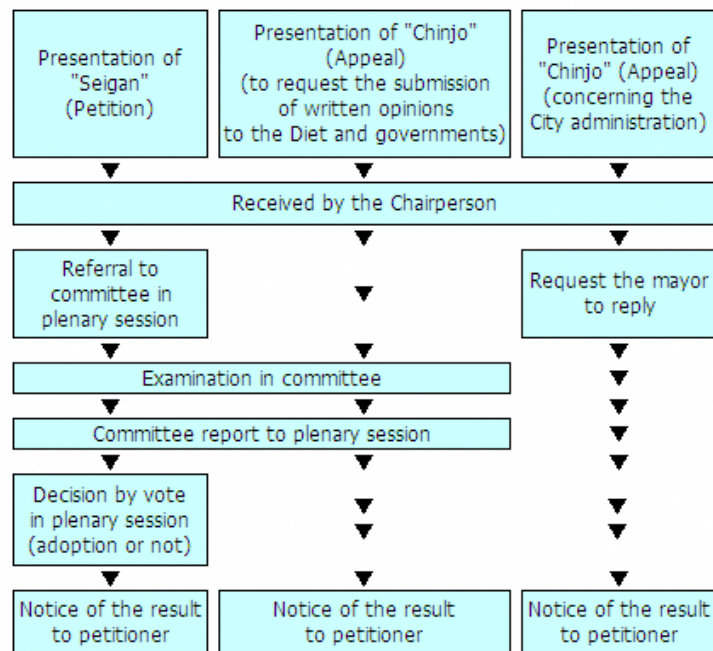
Final decisions on whether to adopt or reject the "Seigan" are made by the plenary session after it has been referred to, and examined by, an appropriate committee. The petitioner is then informed of the results.

"Chinjo" to request submission of the written opinions to a relevant government administrative agency or agencies, or other "Chinjo" related to decisions on city council intentions, are referred to the Standing Committee or other 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.

* Please note that, based on the content of the "Chinjo," there are cases when the relevant "Chinjo" will be handled as not requiring the investigation in a committee or a response from the mayor.

Flow chart of Examining Petitions and Appeals



Record

A summary of plenary session debates; "The Minutes of the City Council"; records of Standing, Council Steering and Special Committees; records from Conferences of all members; and other materials 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.

Guide to observe Council meetings

Anyone may observe plenary sessions. If you wish to observe a session, please ask for a ticket at the reception desk located on the ground floor of the City Council Assembly Hall in City Hall. (The assembly hall has 116 seats for observers, 4 of which are for wheelchair users.)

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 City Council plenary sessions; board meetings of the Special Committee on initial budgets/annual settlement of accounts; conferences of all members; and board meetings of Standing, Steering and Special Committees live on monitor at the City Council Hall. No formalities/reservations required.

Broadcasting on the Internet

Proceedings of City Council plenary sessions; board meetings of the Special Committee on initial budgets/annual settlement of accounts; conferences of all members; City Council welcoming ceremonies; Standing, Steering and Special Committee meetings; and board meetings of Special Committees are broadcasted on the Internet (both live and recorded).

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* The City Council's website contains information on City Council composition, session schedules, a list of members, an overview of bills, minutes of the plenary sessions, committee member records and reference materials, and more.