

City Council

Department Description

Columbus City Council is the legislative authority and chief policy-making arm of city government, empowered by City Charter to exercise control over city expenditures. Citizens elect the seven-member council at-large to four-year terms of office. Council's primary responsibilities include: adopting the annual operating and capital budgets, authorizing certain contracts, and enacting amendments to the Columbus City Code. In addition to its fiscal control and regulatory authority, City Council establishes land use policy through its zoning powers.

The Council works closely with the administrative (executive) branch of city government in the formation of policy impacting public finance, safety, economic development and the delivery of core city services. City Council also initiates and facilitates on-going cooperative efforts with other government entities, the business community, and other institutions to improve the overall high quality of life for Columbus residents.

Legislative aides, legislative assistants, and the Legislative Research Office (LRO) provide City Council members information and guidance on public policy decisions impacting public safety, budgetary, economic development, and community matters.

Council appoints the City Clerk, who maintains the journal of City Council activity, codifying general ordinances and maintaining custody of deeds, abstracts, and titles owned by the city. Council also appoints the City Treasurer, whose duties include the investment of all city funds.

Department Mission

To provide high quality, responsive service to the residents of Columbus, and to demonstrate the utmost respect for the citizens and for each other in a workplace that highly values teamwork, personal integrity, and competence. City Council's overriding goal is to always do what is best for the citizens of the City of Columbus.

Strategic Priorities for 2013

Columbus City Council's 2013 strategic priorities will focus on four areas: working to better serve the needs of all Columbus residents, including maintaining public safety as the city's top priority; economic development and job creation efforts through effective partnerships; prudent financial oversight and the maintenance of the city's fiscal health; and keeping commitments to Columbus residents associated with the passage of the 2009 income tax increase. In pursuit of these priorities, Columbus City Council will:

- Continue to work with the administration to develop innovative collaborations to incentivize significant private investment. Prime examples include support for technology startups, the revitalization of commercial corridors, support for major hospital expansions, and continued investment in the downtown as the commercial and employment core of the region. Key project partners will include Columbus2020!, The Ohio State University, Nationwide Children's Hospital, Battelle, and TechColumbus.

- Continue efforts to retain Columbus-based talent, including: additional support for entrepreneurial startups; target investments designed to bring idle properties back into production; increase access to capital and seek funding for targeted economic development initiatives; and enhance the city's fiber optic network for utilization as an asset for economic development.
- Continue to work with the Department of Public Safety to address the need for additional safety personnel resulting from mandated retirements triggered by the Deferred Retirement Option Plan (DROP); specifically, the funding of additional fire and police classes needed to maintain critical manpower levels.
- Continue to work to identify and appropriate funds for additional safety vehicles and equipment, as well as expansions of supplemental safety strategies, including Community Crime Patrol.
- Continue to work with the administration to improve neighborhood stability through the creation of greater downtown and neighborhood housing opportunities and related investments. City assistance may include various incentives for developers, such as tax abatements or targeted use of city capital monies and infrastructure improvements to leverage private investment.
- Continue to work with community advocates such as the United Way, the Community Shelter Board, the Neighborhood Health Center System, and the YWCA to provide needed human services and accessible health care to low-income families and other populations within the community. Council will continue to support an effective response to homelessness through the Office of Homeless Advocacy.
- Continue to work with the administration to expand the city's environmental agenda, including improvements to city vehicles and facilities, and the promotion of "green" development strategies and incentives that encourage responsible, sustainable development.
- Continue progress made toward the goals outlined in the Reform and Efficiency plan which is designed to strengthen the city's long-term fiscal outlook, including: the continued implementation of cost-savings strategies and the restoration of the Economic Stabilization Fund, or "rainy day" fund. Council will also work with the City Auditor to continue sound fiscal policies to maintain Columbus' AAA bond rating.
- Continue to identify and implement policies and practices to make government more effective, efficient and accessible, including the implementation of new technologies that will increase citizen access to public information. Proactive communication with the public at-large and input from area commissions, civic organizations and community organizations will remain a high priority.

2013 Budget Notes

- The budget for City Council includes continuation of the annual maintenance on the automated legislation system and codifying services for the City Clerk's office.

Budget and Program Summary

DEPARTMENT FINANCIAL SUMMARY					
DIVISION SUMMARY	2010 Actual	2011 Actual	2012 Original Appropriation	2012 Estimated Expenditures	2013 Proposed
City Council	\$ 11,273,029	\$ 12,702,734	\$ 12,372,126	\$ 14,820,093	\$ 3,665,166
TOTAL	\$ 11,273,029	\$ 12,702,734	\$ 12,372,126	\$ 14,820,093	\$ 3,665,166

DIVISION SUMMARY BY OBJECT LEVEL ONE					
CITY COUNCIL GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES SUMMARY	2010 Actual	2011 Actual	2012 Original Appropriation	2012 Estimated Expenditures	2013 Proposed
Personnel	\$ 2,702,596	\$ 2,796,212	\$ 3,029,637	\$ 3,028,862	\$ 3,521,171
Materials & Supplies	15,559	15,484	21,544	21,544	20,500
Services	570,208	1,365,716	240,945	2,289,687	123,495
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	\$ 3,288,362	\$ 4,177,412	\$ 3,292,126	\$ 5,340,093	\$ 3,665,166

DIVISION SUMMARY BY OBJECT LEVEL ONE					
CITY COUNCIL HOTEL/MOTEL TAX FUND EXPENDITURES SUMMARY	2010 Actual	2011 Actual	2012 Original Appropriation	2012 Estimated Expenditures	2013 Proposed
Services	\$ 7,984,667	\$ 8,525,322	\$ 9,080,000	\$ 9,480,000	\$ -
TOTAL	\$ 7,984,667	\$ 8,525,322	\$ 9,080,000	\$ 9,480,000	\$ -

DEPARTMENT SUMMARY BY FUND					
FUND SUMMARY	2010 Actual	2011 Actual	2012 Original Appropriation	2012 Estimated Expenditures	2013 Proposed
General	\$ 3,288,362	\$ 4,177,412	\$ 3,292,126	\$ 5,340,093	\$ 3,665,166
Hotel/Motel Tax	7,984,667	8,525,322	9,080,000	9,480,000	-
TOTAL	\$ 11,273,029	\$ 12,702,734	\$ 12,372,126	\$ 14,820,093	\$ 3,665,166

DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL SUMMARY					
DIVISION	FT/PT*	2010 Actual	2011 Actual	2012 Authorized	2013 Authorized
City Council	FT	33	36	38	38
	PT	0	0	1	0
TOTAL		33	36	39	38

*FT=Full-Time PT=Part-Time

2013 Operating Budget
City Council

Program	Mission	Financial History by Program				Personnel by Program			
		2010 Budget	2011 Budget	2012 Budget	2013 Proposed	2010 FTEs	2011 FTEs	2012 FTEs	2013 FTEs
Administration	To approve all appropriations and laws for Columbus, and to provide a public forum for the discussion of issues by the citizenry.	\$ 3,450,309	\$ 3,243,084	\$ 3,292,126	\$ 3,665,166	35	35	38	38
Hotel/Motel Tax	To provide support for Experience Columbus and for expanding cultural services.	\$ 7,440,000	\$ 8,100,000	\$ 9,080,000	\$ -	0	0	0	0
		\$ 10,890,309	\$ 11,343,084	\$ 12,372,126	\$ 3,665,166	35	35	38	38