

THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA HANDBOOK





The City of Washington, D.C.



- The stage was originally set in the Constitution of 1789 when an area of 10 Square Miles was set aside as the Federal Capital of the United States on the banks of the Potomac River.
- The Residence Act of July 16, 1790, established a site along the Potomac River.
- This federal area was first called Territory of Columbia and the federal city was called the City of Washington.
- Land was donated from the State of Maryland and the Commonwealth of Virginia.
- The 10 Square miles included all of present day District of Columbia which was donated from the State of Maryland and Arlington County, VA and a portion of the City of Alexandria, VA.
- In 1846, the Virginia territory was ceded back to the Commonwealth of Virginia.
- The recorded history of the District of Columbia dates back to 1802 when President Thomas Jefferson signed an act of Congress that established the Corporation of the City of Washington and the First Council.



The City of Washington, D.C.

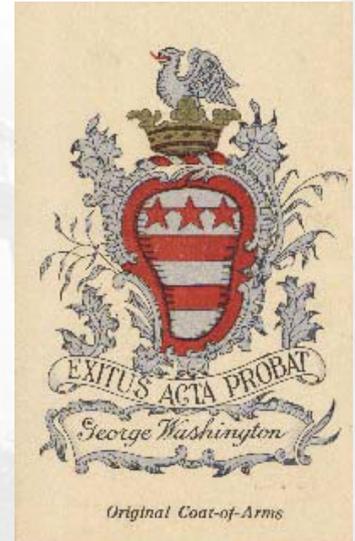


- In 1871, Congress amended the District's Charter by uniting Washington City, Georgetown, and the County of Washington under a Territorial Government.
- In 1874, Congress amended the Charter to abolish the Territorial Government.
- In 1878, Congress passed the Organic Act that established a 3-Member Board of Commissioners of the District of Columbia to govern the District which lasted nearly 100 years.
- In 1961, District residents were allowed to vote in presidential elections as a result of the 23rd Amendment.
- In 1967, the President established the Mayor-Commissioner form of government with a mayor and a council, all appointed by the President of the United States.
- In 1970, the District gained an elected, non-voting Congressman to the House of Representatives. (There is no representation in the U.S. Senate.)
- In 1973, the Home Rule Act passed in Congress, and District residents approved it in a special referendum the next year.

THE DISTRICT FLAG

The District Flag was adopted from the family coat of arms of George Washington by act of Congress, October 15, 1938

The District Flag



The Family Coat of Arms of George Washington

District of Columbia

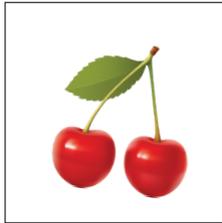
General Facts

Motto: "Justitia Omnibus" (Justice for all)



FLOWER

The American
Beauty Rose



FRUIT

Cherry



ROCK

The Potomac
Bluestone



TREE

Scarlet Oak



BIRD

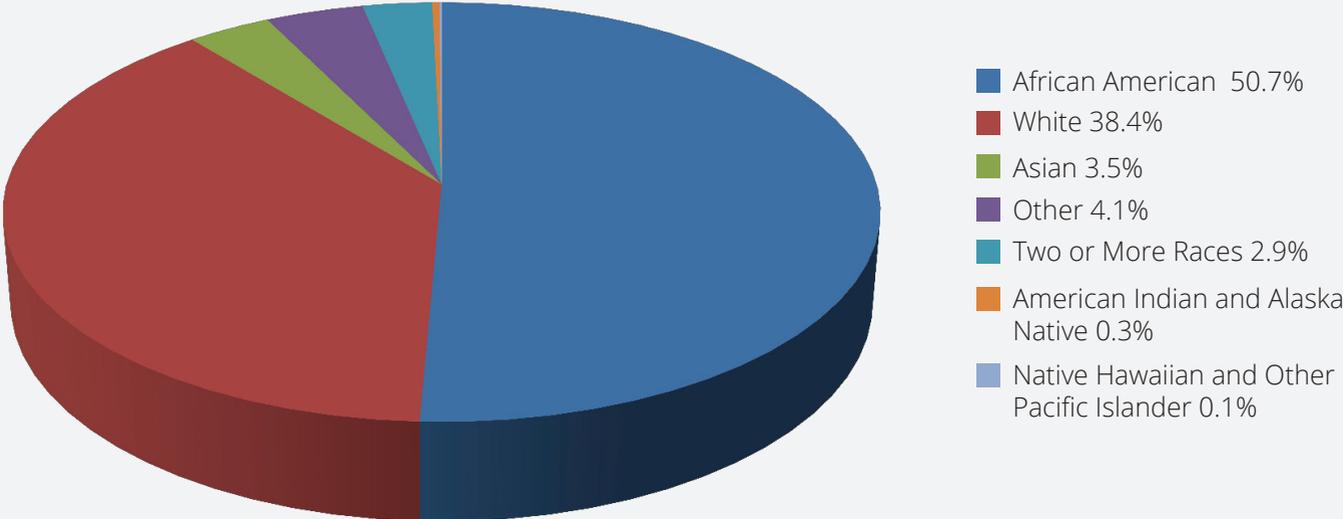
Wood
Thrush



COMMUNITY PROFILE

Race

Source: 2010 Census



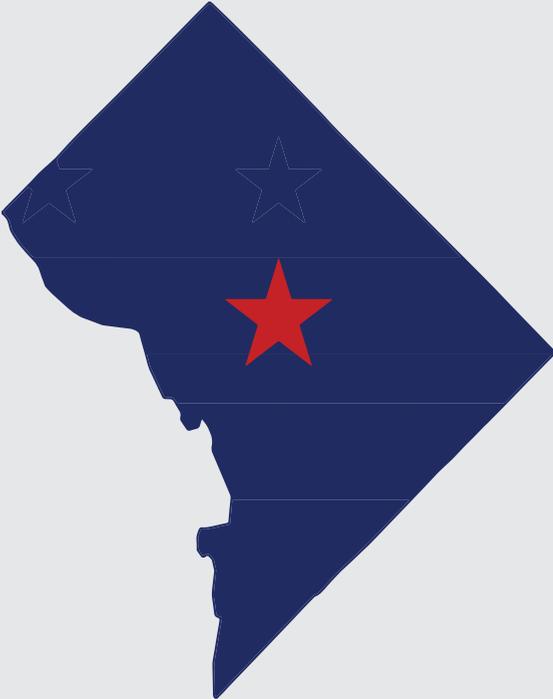
COMMUNITY PROFILE

Source: 2010 Census

Median household income 2008 – 2012: **\$64,267**

Median age: **33.8**

Population 65 and over: **11.4%**



Percentage of population 18 and over: **83.2%**

Male: 284,222 **(47.2%)**
Female: 317,501 **(52.8%)**

2010 Census population: **601,723**

Home Rule

The Home Rule Act is the result of the ongoing push by District residents for control of their own local affairs. The existing local government is the most expanded form of self-government since the establishment of the District as the seat of the federal government.

In 1790 when the District was established on land ceded by Maryland and Virginia to the federal government only about 3,000 citizens lived in the area—far less than the 50,000 required to be a state. The people living in the federal district continued to vote in Maryland and Virginia respectively.

The Senate passed bills providing some form of home rule six times between 1948 and 1966, but, each time a similar bill died in the House District of Columbia Committee. The commissioner form of government was replaced in 1967 by a mayor-commissioner and a nine-member city council appointed by the President.

In 1963, District residents won the right to vote for President

and Vice-President of the United States with the ratification of the 23rd Amendment to the Constitution. Four years later, citizens won the authority to elect a School Board.

In 1970, the District gained a nonvoting delegate to the House of Representatives. While the fight for local autonomy proceeded step by step, Congress, particularly the House Committee on the District of Columbia, continued to exercise great authority over the local affairs of the District.

Finally, in 1973, the Home Rule Act passed in Congress, and District residents approved it in a special referendum the next year. In a historic leap for greater self-determination, District citizens elected a Mayor and Council in the fall of 1974.

Voters also approved the election of Advisory Neighborhood Commissioners who represent every 2,000 residents to advise the Council on neighborhood concerns.

Council-Mayor Form of Government

- Under the Charter, the Council-Mayor form of government requires that Council oversee the legislative branch and is the lawmaker for the city as a whole.
- The Mayor oversees the executive branch and serves as the chief executive and head of the city government.

The Council of the DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

The official name of the institution is the Council of the District of Columbia.

The Council simultaneously serves as the state legislature, the county council, and city council of the District of Columbia. We are a thriving and unique entity in the United States.



The John A. Wilson Building is under the control of the Council pursuant to statute.



The Great Seal of the District of Columbia

Mission

As the central and chief policy-making body for the District of Columbia, the Council's mission is to provide strong, innovative and effective leadership for the benefit of residents across the city.



The Council's Role

Duties of the Council

- Enacts laws and sets policies for the District of Columbia.
- Provides oversight of the performance of agencies, boards, and commissions.
- Reviews and approves the Mayor's fiscal year budget proposal.
- Holds public hearings or roundtables on legislative proposals and conducts public hearings on various matters related to the matters affecting the District.
- Reviews, and can disapprove, contracts in excess of \$1 million.
- Reviews, and can disapprove, any proposal by the Mayor to move funds during a fiscal year through reprogramming actions.
- Reviews and considers any reorganization plans, including the establishment of new departments or the abolishment of old departments, of the District government by the Executive.
- Considers, reviews and confirms Executive appointments through its "advice and consent," or confirmation function, including Mayoral appointments to some boards and commissions.
- To assist in its oversight, the Council appoints the D.C. Auditor who conducts statutorily required audits of government accounts and operations, and other audits as directed by the Council.



Council meeting in session

The Council's Role

Legislative Meetings

- The Council meets in legislative session on the first Tuesday of the month at 10:00 a.m.
- The Council meets in the Council Chamber at the historic John A. Wilson Building, located at 1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. Washington, D.C.
- Meetings are public; agendas are available to visitors and may be accessed via the website forty-eight (48) hours prior to the meeting.
- Meetings are broadcast live on the District Council Channel (Comcast - Channel 13) and vary in length depending on the agenda.



Council Chambers located in the John A. Wilson Building

The Council's Structure

Organizational Structure

- The Council is the legislature of the government of the District of Columbia, responsible for crafting laws for the nation's capital.
- The Council is composed of 13 Members – a representative elected from each of the eight wards and five members, including the Chairman, elected at-large; all serving four year terms. The terms of the at-large members are staggered so that two are elected every two years, and each D.C. resident may vote for two different at-large candidates in each general election.
- Work is conducted through a system of standing committees and special committees established as needed.

Legislative Path

- Once a Councilmember introduces a bill, it is assigned to one of the Council's committees to consider. Committees solicit comment through a public hearing and other means, giving the public an opportunity to voice opinions on the bill.
- If the committee recommends the Council adopt the bill into law, the bill is reviewed by the Committee of the Whole.
- Thereafter, the Council considers the legislation in two separate Council meetings, which must be separated by at least 13 days. Once a majority of the Council votes in favor of the bill, it becomes law, pending review by the Mayor and U.S. Congress.

The Council's Structure

Membership Qualifications

- According to the Home Rule Act, of the Chair and the at-large members, a maximum of three may be affiliated with the majority political party.
- To become a candidate for Council an individual must be a resident of the District of Columbia for at least one year prior to the general election, a registered voter, and hold no other public office for which compensation beyond expenses is received.
- If a candidate is running for a particular ward seat, he or she must be a resident of that ward.

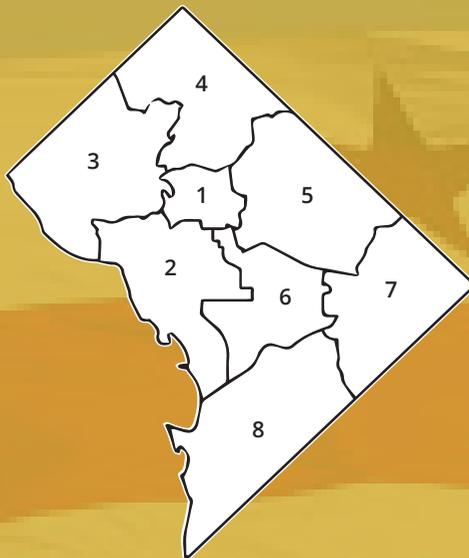


Vacancies

- If the position of Chairman becomes vacant, an at-large member of the Council is elected by a majority vote of the Council to serve until a special election is held to fill the unexpired term.
- If the position of an at-large member who is affiliated with a political party becomes vacant, the central committee of such party appoints a person to fill the vacancy until a special election. If an at-large member is not affiliated with any political party, a majority of the Council appoints a familiarly unaffiliated person to fill the unexpired term until a special election.
- If a ward position becomes vacant, a special election is held to fill the unexpired term. Unlike an at-large position, a ward vacancy is not filled until a special election.
- All special elections must be held between 70-174 days of the declaration of a vacancy.

MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

Council Period 22



Phil Mendelson
Chairman



Anita D. Bonds
At-Large



David Grosso
At-Large



Elissa Silverman
At-Large



Robert C. White, Jr
At-Large



Brianne K. Nadeau
Ward 1



Jack Evans
Ward 2



Mary M. Cheh
Ward 3



Brandon T. Todd
Ward 4



Kenyan R. McDuffie
Ward 5



Charles Allen
Ward 6



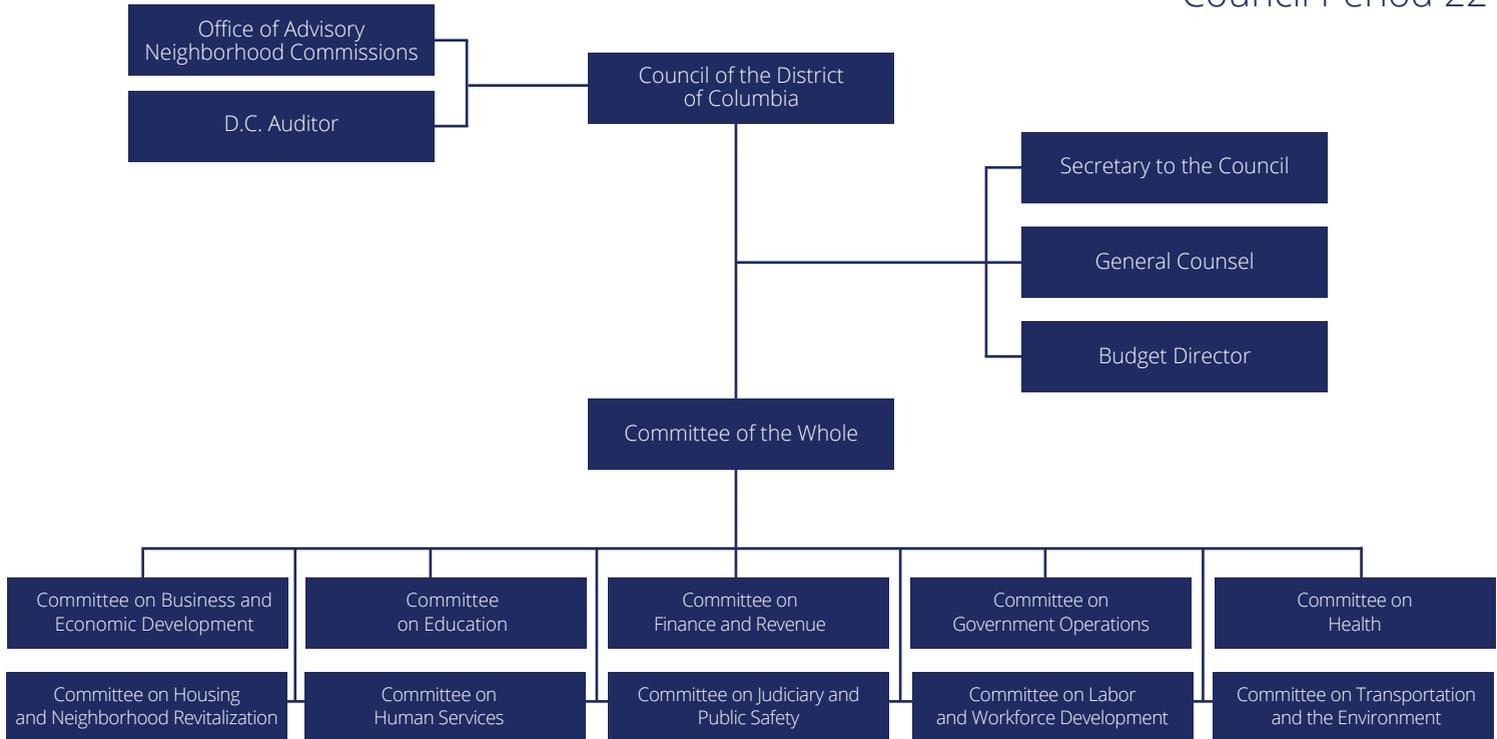
Vincent C. Gray
Ward 7



Trayon White, Sr
Ward 8

Organization of the Council

Council Period 22



Council Committees

For Council Period 22, the Council has 10 committees (excluding the Committee of the Whole) that consider legislation related to specific policy matters. Each committee is also responsible for overseeing the local government agencies falling under its purview.

Committee of the Whole

Business and Economic Development

Education

Finance and Revenue

Government Operations

Health

Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization

Human Services

Judiciary and Public Safety

Labor and Workforce Development

Transportation and the Environment

Committee of the Whole

Description

The Chairman of the Council is the Chairman of the Committee of the Whole (COW), and all Councilmembers are part of the committee. COW meets on the third Tuesday of each month, except during periods of Council recess, to consider measures pending in the committee and measures which have been reported and filed by other committees. During COW meetings, bills can also be introduced and referred to other committees.

Each bill and resolution reported by Council legislative committees are referred to COW to make sure the legislation is legally sufficient and complies with Council rules, and that its fiscal impact statement is sound.

Agencies under the Committee of the Whole

- Board of Zoning Adjustment
- Commemorative Works Committee
- Community College of the District of Columbia
- Community College Transition to Independence Advisory Board
- Construction Codes Coordinating Board
- Contract Appeals Board
- Council of the District of Columbia
- Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs
- District of Columbia Auditor
- District of Columbia Retirement Board, including the District of Columbia Police Officers and Fire Fighters' Retirement Fund and the Teachers' Retirement Fund
- District Retiree Health Contribution
- Historic Preservation Review Board
- Law Revision Commission
- Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority*
- Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments*
- National Capital Planning Commission*
- New Columbia Statehood Commission
- Office of Budget and Planning
- Office of Contracting and Procurement
- Office of Planning
- Office of the Statehood Delegation
- Office of Zoning
- Tax Revision Commission
- Tobacco Settlement Financing Corporation
- University of the District of Columbia
- Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia

* This entity is a federal agency or regional body. As such, the Committee does not have direct oversight but, rather, serves as a liaison for the Council in relations to this entity.

Committee on Business and Economic Development

Description

The Committee on Business and Economic Development is chaired by Councilmember McDuffie. It is responsible for matters concerning small- and local business development policy; matters related to economic, industrial, and commercial development; the disposition of property for economic-development purposes; the regulation of alcoholic beverages; public utilities; the operation of business-improvement districts (“BIDs”) and oversight of BIDs, but not including the establishment of BIDs; the regulation of banks and banking activities, securities, and insurance, including private health insurance, but not including the Health Benefit Exchange; and the regulation of for-hire vehicles.

Agencies under the Committee on Business and Economic Development

- Alcoholic Beverage Regulation Administration
- Board of Accountancy
- Board of Architecture and Interior Designers
- Board of Barber and Cosmetology
- Board of Consumer Claims Arbitration for the District of Columbia
- Board of Funeral Directors
- Board of Industrial Trades
- Board of Professional Engineering
- Captive Insurance Agency
- Commission on Fashion Arts and Events
- Department of For-Hire Vehicles
- Department of Insurance, Securities and Banking
- Department of Small and Local Business Development
- Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development
- District of Columbia Boxing and Wrestling Commission
- For-Hire Vehicle Advisory Council
- Office of Cable Television, Film, Music and Entertainment
- Office of People’s Counsel
- Public Service Commission
- Walter Reed Army Medical Center Site Reuse Advisory Committee



Committee on Education

Description

The Committee on Education is chaired by Councilmember Grosso. It is responsible for all matters related to public education, including authorizing public charter schools, but not including matters exclusively within the University of the District of Columbia or the Community College of the District of Columbia; truancy (jointly with the Committee of the Whole); and public libraries.



Agencies under the Committee on Education

- Bullying Prevention Task Force
- Commission on Out of School Time Grants and Youth Outcomes
- Common Lottery Board
- Community Schools Advisory Committee
- DC Trust (former CYITC)
- District of Columbia Public Charter School Board
- District of Columbia Public Library system
- District of Columbia Public Library Trust Fund
- District of Columbia Public Schools Education Licensure Commission
- Healthy Youth and Schools Commission
- Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education
- Office of the State Superintendent of Education (including Advisory Panel on Special Education, Early Childhood Development Coordinating Council, Non-Public Tuition, Special Education Transportation)
- Office of Out of School Time Grants and Youth Outcomes
- Public Charter School Credit Enhancement Fund Committee
- State Board of Education



Committee on Finance and Revenue

Description

The Committee on Finance and Revenue is chaired by Councilmember Evans. It is responsible for matters relating to taxation and revenue for the operation of the government of the District of Columbia; general-obligation bond acts, revenue-anticipation notes, and industrial-revenue bonds; tourism and cultural affairs; the establishment of business-improvement districts; and matters relating to the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority.



Agencies under the Committee on Finance and Revenue

- Board of Review of Anti-Deficiency Violations
- Commission on Arts and Humanities
- Destination DC
- District of Columbia Lottery and Charitable Games
- Multistate Tax Commission*
- Office of Finance and Treasury
- Office of Financial Management
- Office of Financial Operations
- Office of Tax and Revenue
- Office of the Chief Financial Officer
- Real Property Tax Appeals Commission for the District of Columbia
- Sports Authority Subsidy
- Washington Convention and Sports Authority/Events DC
- Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority*

* This entity is a federal agency or regional body. As such, the Committee does not have direct oversight but, rather, serves as a liaison for the Council in relations to this entity.

Committee on Government Operations

Description

The Committee on Government Operations is chaired by Councilmember Todd. It is responsible for matters relating to the conduct of Emancipation Day celebrations within the District of Columbia; grants management; matters relating to Latino, African, and Asian and Pacific Islander affairs; gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and questioning affairs; issues related to women; veterans affairs; matters affecting administrative law and procedure; matters relating to the general operations and services of government.

Agencies under the Committee on Government Operations

- Advisory Commission on Caribbean Community Affairs
- Advisory Committee to the Office of GLBTQ Affairs
- Commission for Women
- Commission on African Affairs
- Commission on African American Affairs
- Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs
- Commission on Fathers, Men and Boys
- Commission on Latino Community Development
- Emancipation Commemoration Commission
- Executive Office of the Mayor
- Serve DC, and the Office of Community Affairs
- Interfaith Council
- Mayor's Office of Legal Counsel
- Office of Asian and Pacific Islanders Affairs
- Office of Administrative Hearings (including the Advisory Committee to the Office of Administrative Hearings and the Commission on Selection and Tenure of Administrative Law Judges)
- Office of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning Affairs
- Office of Latino Affairs
- Office of Partnerships and Grants Services
- Office of Public-Private Partnerships
- Office of the Chief Technology Officer
- Office of the City Administrator
- Office of the Inspector General
- Office of the Senior Advisor
- Office of Veterans Affairs
- Office on African Affairs
- Public Access Corporation
- Secretary of the District of Columbia

Committee on Health

Description

The Committee on Health is chaired by Councilmember Gray. It is responsible for matters concerning health and environmental health; the regulation of health occupations and professions, and health-care inspectors.

Agencies under the Committee on Health

- Advisory Committee on Acupuncture
- Advisory Committee on Anesthesiologist Assistants
- Advisory Committee on Clinical Laboratory Practitioners
- Advisory Committee on Naturopathic Medicine
- Advisory Committee on Physician Assistants
- Advisory Committee on Polysomnography
- Advisory Committee on Surgical Assistants
- Board of Allied Health
- Board of Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology
- Board of Behavioral Health
- Board of Chiropractic
- Board of Dentistry
- Board of Dietetics and Nutrition
- Board of Long-Term Care Administration
- Board of Marriage and Family Therapy
- Board of Massage Therapy
- Board of Medicine
- Board of Nursing
- Board of Occupational Therapy
- Board of Optometry
- Board of Pharmacy
- Board of Physical Therapy
- Board of Podiatry
- Board of Professional Counseling
- Board of Psychology
- Board of Respiratory Care
- Board of Social Work
- Board of Veterinary Medicine
- Commission on Health Disparities
- Commission on Health Equity
- Commission on HIV/AIDS
- Committee on Metabolic Disorders
- Council on Physical Fitness, Health, and Nutrition
- Department of Behavioral Health
- Department of Health
- Department of Health Care Finance
- Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services
- District of Columbia Health Benefit Exchange Authority
- Health Information Exchange Policy Board
- Mental Health Planning Council
- Not-For-Profit Hospital Corporation

* This entity is a federal agency or regional body. As such, the Committee does not have direct oversight but, rather, serves as a liaison for the Council in relations to this entity.

Committee on Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization

Description

The Committee on Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization is chaired by Councilmember Bonds. It is responsible for matters relating to development, maintenance, preservation, and regulation of the housing stock, including rental housing; neighborhood revitalization, development, improvement, stabilization, and urban affairs; homelessness (jointly with the Committee on Human Services for purposes of oversight); and matters regarding Advisory Neighborhood Commissions; and the concerns of the aging.

Agencies under the Committee on Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization

- Advisory Neighborhood Commissions
- Age-Friendly DC Task Force
- Board of Condemnation of Insanitary Buildings
- Board of Real Estate Appraisers
- Commission on Aging
- Commission on Re-Entry and Returning Citizen Affairs
- Department of Housing and Community Development
- District of Columbia Housing Authority
- Housing Finance Agency
- Housing Production Trust Fund
- Interagency Council on Homelessness
- Office of the Tenant Advocate
- Office on Aging
- Office on Returning Citizen Affairs
- Real Estate Commission
- Rental Housing Commission

Committee on **Human Services**

Description

The Committee on Human Services is chaired by Councilmember Nadeau. It is responsible for matters concerning welfare; social services; youth affairs (other than juvenile justice); homelessness (for purposes of legislation, and jointly with the Committee on Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization for purposes of oversight); and disability services.

Agencies under the Committee on Human Services

- Advisory Committee on Child Abuse and Neglect
- Child and Family Services Agency
- Citizen Review Panel on Child Abuse and Neglect
- Commission on Persons with Disabilities
- Department of Human Services
- Department on Disability Services
- Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services
- Developmental Disabilities State Planning Council
- Interagency Council on Homelessness
- Juvenile Abscondence Review Committee
- Office of Disability Rights
- State Rehabilitation Council
- Statewide Independent Living Council

Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety

Description

The Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety is chaired by Councilmember Allen. It is responsible for matters affecting the judiciary and judicial procedure that are within the authority of the Council; matters affecting decedents' estates and fiduciary affairs; matters affecting the Freedom of Information Act; matters affecting criminal law and procedure; human rights; juvenile justice; elections; government ethics; campaign finance; matters arising from or pertaining to the police and fire regulations of the District of Columbia; and other matters related to police protection, correctional institutions (including youth corrections), fire prevention, emergency medical services, homeland security, criminal justice, and public safety. The Committee shall also serve as the Council's liaison to federal partners in the justice system, including the United States Attorney for the District of Columbia, the Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia, the District of Columbia Courts, the Court Services and Offender Supervisory Agency, the Pretrial Services Agency, the Federal Bureau of Prisons, and the United States Parole Commission.

Agencies under the Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety

- Access to Justice Initiative
- Child Fatality Review Committee
- Child Support Guideline Commission
- Commission on Human Rights
- Commission on Judicial Disabilities and Tenure
- Corrections Information Council
- Criminal Code Reform Commission
- Criminal Justice Coordinating Council
- Department of Corrections
- Department of Forensic Sciences
- Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice
- Developmental Disabilities Fatality Review Committee
- District of Columbia Board of Elections
- District of Columbia Board of Ethics and Government Accountability
- District of Columbia Judicial Nomination Commission
- District of Columbia National Guard
- District of Columbia Sentencing Commission
- Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board
- Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department
- Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency
- Homeland Security Commission
- Juvenile Justice Advisory Group
- Metropolitan Police Department
- Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Commission
- Office of Campaign Finance
- Office of Human Rights
- Office of Police Complaints
- Office of the Attorney General for the District of Columbia
- Office of the Chief Medical Examiner
- Office of Unified Communications
- Office of Victims Services and Justice Grants
- Police Complaints Board
- Police Officer Standards and Training Board
- Science Advisory Board
- Uniform Law Commission

Committee on Labor and Workforce Development

Description

The Committee on the Labor and Workforce Development is chaired by Councilmember Silverman. It is responsible for labor relations; matters related to workforce-development; and employment and manpower development.

Agencies under the Committee on Labor and Workforce Development

- Apprenticeship Council
- Department of Employment Services
- Department of Human Resources
- Deputy Mayor for Greater Economic Opportunity
- Disability Compensation Fund
- Financial Literacy Council
- Labor/Management Partnership Council
- Occupational Safety and Health Board
- Office of Employee Appeals
- Office of Labor Relations and Collective Bargaining
- Office of Risk Management
- Public Employees Relations Board
- Unemployment Compensation Fund
- Workforce Investment Council

Committee on Transportation and the Environment

Description

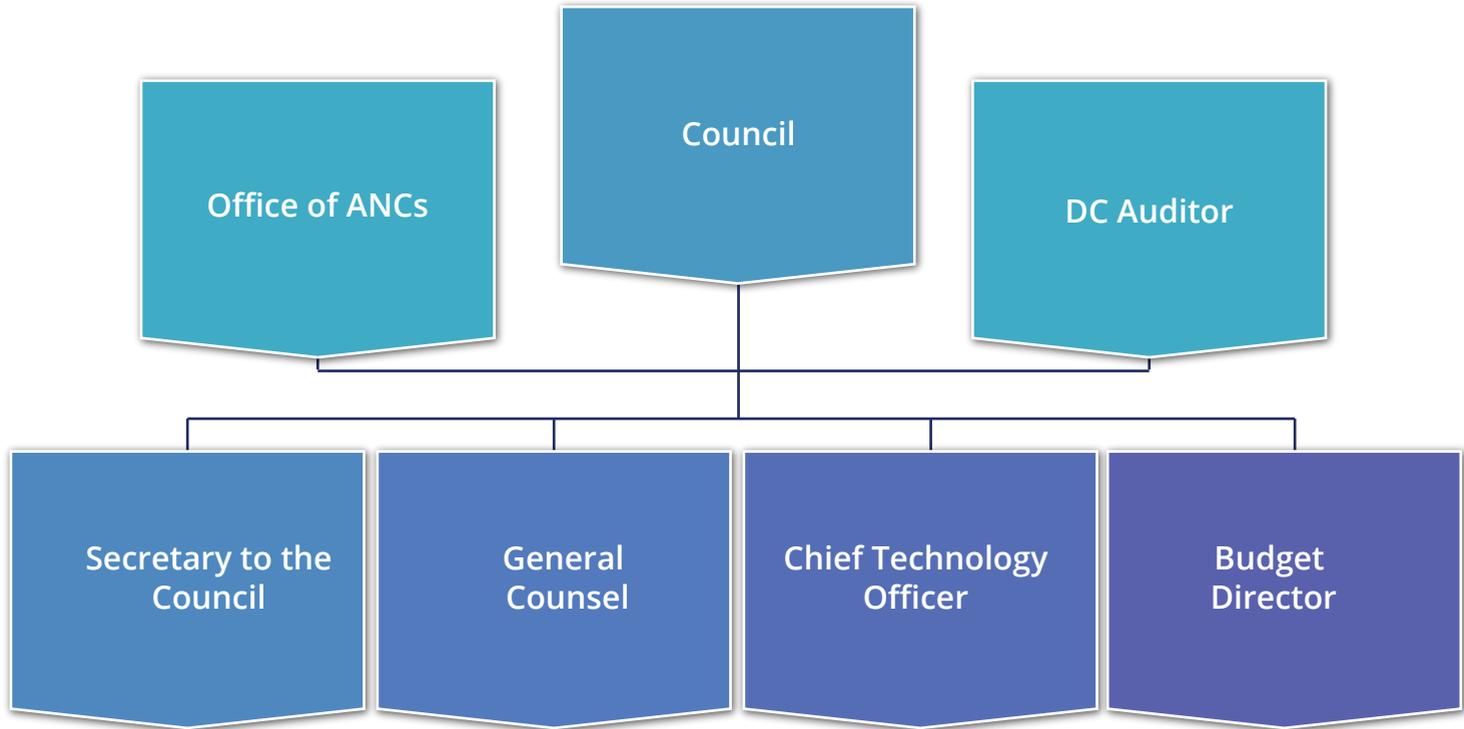
The Committee on the Transportation and the Environment is chaired by Councilmember Cheh. It is responsible for matters relating to environmental-protection regulation and policies; highways, bridges, traffic, vehicles, and other transportation issues; maintenance of public spaces; public parks and recreation; recycling; waste management; water supply and wastewater treatment; maintenance of public buildings; and property management, including the declaration of government property as no longer required for public purposes.

Agencies under the Committee on Transportation and the Environment

- Commission on Climate Change and Resiliency
- Department of Energy and Environment
- Department of General Services
- Department of Motor Vehicles
- Department of Parks and Recreation
- Department of Public Works
- District Department of Transportation
- District of Columbia Bicycle Advisory Council
- District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority
- Food Policy Council
- Gas Station Advisory Board
- Green Buildings Advisory Council
- Major Crash Review Task Force
- Multimodal Accessibility Advisory Council
- Pedestrian Advisory Council
- Soil and Water Conservation District
- Streetcar Financing and Governance Task Force
- Sustainable Energy Utility Advisory Board
- Transit Rider Advisory Council
- Urban Forestry Advisory Council
- Washington Aqueduct*

* This entity is a federal agency or regional body. As such, the Committee does not have direct oversight but, rather, serves as a liaison for the Council in relations to this entity

Council Staff Organizational Chart



CENTRAL STAFF ROLES

Council staff consists of the following offices:

- Secretary
 - Legislative Services
 - Support Services
 - Human Resources
 - Procurement
- General Counsel
- Budget Director
- Information Technology



Secretary

The Secretary to the Council is the chief administrative officer responsible for managing operations and the annual budget of the Council. Responsibilities include:

- Human resources
- Procurement
- Support services
- Legislative services
- Maintaining the official records of the Council

Hours:

🕒 Monday – Friday, 9:00 AM – 5:30 PM

Contact Information

Nyasha Smith, Secretary

📞 Main Office Phone: (202) 724-8080

📠 Fax: (202) 347-3070

Office Location

📍 1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
John A. Wilson Building, Suite 5

General Counsel

Provides advice to the Council on matters of:

- Parliamentary procedure
- Identifies legislative issues
- Provides members with alternatives in terms of policy options to solve those issues
- Represents the Council in any legal action to which it is a party
- Supervises the publication of the District of Columbia Official Code
- Prepares technical amendments and enactment bills
- Makes legislative drafting assistance available to all members
- Engrosses and enrolls measures
- Makes determinations about the legal sufficiency of legislation
- Serves as the Ethics Counselor
- Makes necessary technical and conforming changes in measures during enrollment

Hours:

🕒 Monday – Friday, 9:00 AM – 5:30 PM

Contact Information

Ellen Efros, General Counsel

☎ Main Office Phone: (202) 724-8026

📠 Fax: (202) 724-8129

Office Location

📍 1350 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
John A. Wilson Building, Suite 4

Budget Director

Provides advice to Councilmembers on matters:

- Related to the budget including the development of annual and multi-year budgets and financial plans
- Reviews contracts and reprogramming actions
- Analyzes the fiscal impact of legislation

The office also coordinates the submission of budget reports and the annual Budget Support Act; and provides the support needed for an efficient Council budget process.

Hours:

🕒 Monday – Friday, 9:00 AM - 5:30 PM

Contact Information

Jennifer Budoff, Budget Director

📞 Main Office Phone: (202) 724-8544

📠 Fax: (202) 724-7819

Office Location

📍 1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
John A. Wilson Building, Suite 508

Information Technology

Managed by the Chief Technology Officer, IT is the central technology resource for the Council and is responsible for:

- Developing, implementing, and maintaining the Council's technology infrastructure
- Developing and implementing major enterprise applications
- Establishing and overseeing technology policies and standards for the Council
- Providing technology services and support
- Developing technology solutions to improve Council services

The office is also responsible for editing and maintaining the Council website.

Hours:

🕒 Monday – Friday, 8:30 AM - 6:00 PM

Contact Information

Chris Warren,
Chief Technology Officer

✉ Email: webmaster@dccouncil.us

☎ Main Office Phone: (202) 724-8018

Office Location

📍 1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
John A. Wilson Building, Suite 13

Office of the Auditor

The Office of the District of Columbia Auditor is the legislative auditor of the District of Columbia. ODCA exists to support the Council in meeting its legislative oversight responsibilities and to help improve the performance and accountability of the District government. ODCA examines the use of:

- Public funds
- Evaluates District government programs and activities
- Provides analyses, recommendations, and other assistance to assist the Council in making effective oversight, programmatic, and budgetary decisions

ODCA works to improve the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of the District government through financial audits, program reviews and evaluations, special inquiries, and other services. ODCA's activities are designed to ensure the District government's accountability to the Council and the taxpayers of the District of Columbia.

Hours:

⌚ Monday – Friday, 8:30 AM – 5:00 PM

Contact Information

Kathleen Patterson, Auditor

✉ Email: odca@dc.gov

☎ Phone: 202-727-3600

📠 Fax: 202-724-8814

Office Location

📍 717 14th Street, NW, Suite 900
Washington, DC 20005

Office of the Advisory Neighborhood Commissions

Advisory Neighborhood Commissioners consider a wide range of policies and programs affecting their neighborhoods, including:

- traffic
- parking
- recreation
- street improvements
- liquor licenses
- zoning
- economic development
- police protection
- sanitation and trash collection

In each of these areas, the intent is to ensure input from an advisory board that is made up of the residents of the neighborhoods that are directly affected by government action. The Office of ANC supports this goal.

The ANCs are the body of government with the closest official ties to the people in a neighborhood. The ANCs present their positions and recommendations on issues to various District government agencies, the Executive, and the Council. They also present testimony to independent agencies, boards, and commissions, usually under the rules of procedure specific to those entities. By law, the ANCs may also present their positions to federal agencies.

Hours:

☒ Monday – Friday, 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM

Contact Information

Gottlieb Simon, Director

Executive Director,
Office of Advisory Neighborhood
Commissions

☎ (202) 727-9945

✉ Gottlieb.Simon@dc.gov

Office Location

📍 1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
John A. Wilson Building, Suite 8

The Legislative Process

Legislation is introduced at the Legislative Meeting or Committee of the Whole Meeting, or by filing with the Council Secretary

Council Chairman Assigns it to appropriate committee(s).

Committee considers legislation; if committee takes no action in Council Period, legislation dies. Committee may hold a public hearing or roundtable. Committee may report it out of committee.

Committee of the Whole reviews legislation and agendas it for regular session.

Council may override Mayor's veto with a two-thirds majority vote within 30 days.

Mayor has ten days to: sign bill – bill becomes an act;
Take no action – bill becomes an act; veto bill and return it to the Council.

Second reading: legislation must not be substantially altered at this consideration. Council takes second vote: Majority no – fails; Majority yes – passes, and is enrolled.

First reading: Council considers amendments, takes first vote: Majority no legislation – fails; Majority yes – legislation passes, and is engrossed

Council Chairman transmits act to Congress.

Congress reviews act for 30 days, except criminal acts which are reviewed for 60 days: May take no action – act becomes law: May pass a joint resolution by both houses disapproving act that must be signed by the President.

How a Bill Becomes a Law

Bills are introduced by Councilmembers for consideration by the Council. Often, proposed legislation is suggested by citizen groups. The Mayor and independent government agencies send bills to the Council, and the Chairman, as a courtesy, introduces them for Council consideration. Hundreds of bills are introduced each Council Period.

Filing and Referral

- When a bill is introduced, it receives a Bill number in the Office of the Secretary which is used to track the bill through the legislative process. The first number is the Council Period in which it was introduced, and the second number indicates its place in the numerical sequence of bills introduced (e.g. B20-555). The Chairman refers the bill for consideration to the proper committee(s) as designated by Council Rules.

Committee Consideration

- In Committee, members examine the need for the bill and public policy implications, analyze the effectiveness of the proposed legislative solution, and determine its fiscal impact. The committee chairperson may schedule a public hearing on the bill to solicit public comment.

- The committee may mark up the bill, often making changes or adding amendments, and by a vote recommends that the Council approve or disapprove the bill. Or, the committee may choose to take no action on the bill within a Council Period allowing it to die in committee.
- When the committee votes on a bill, the committee considers an accompanying report that includes the legislative history of the bill, the purpose of the bill, a section-by-section analysis, the bill's fiscal impact, and that summarizes research findings, correspondence, public hearing and other public comments. The final version of the committee-sponsored bill is printed (called the committee print) and it is reported out of committee to the Committee of the Whole.
- The Committee of the Whole determines whether the bill is consistent with the approved budget and financial plan and Council Rules. Members of the Council do not debate the merits of the bill at this stage, but may ask for clarification or explanations. The Chairman places the bill on the agenda of the next legislative meeting with the approval of the Committee of the Whole.

How a Bill Becomes a Law

Council Vote

The bill now receives a first reading or vote. Members debate the bill and can offer amendments. A majority could table the bill or return it to committee for reconsideration. If a majority votes against the bill, it dies. If a majority of those present and voting approve the bill, it is scheduled for a second reading or vote at another legislative meeting at least two weeks later. A new copy of the bill, called the engrossed original, is then prepared which reflects any changes made to the committee print during the first reading. If the Council approves the bill on second reading, another copy of the bill, called the enrolled original, is prepared and includes any changes made at second reading. The bill is then sent to the Mayor for a ten-day review.

Mayor's Action

The Mayor has several options. The Mayor can:

- Sign the bill, in which case it becomes an act, and is assigned a chronological act number;
- Take no action, and the bill becomes an act at the end of the review period and receives a chronological act number;

- Veto the bill; the Council has thirty (30) calendar days to override the veto with a two-thirds majority vote. If it does, the bill becomes an act and receives an act number. If the Council does not override, the bill dies.

Congressional Review

Because of the unique status of the District of Columbia, no act may become law until it has completed a mandatory thirty (30) day review by Congress. Further, an act that changes criminal law is subject to a sixty (60) day review period. At the end of the Congressional review period which can take up to three months, the act becomes law unless a joint resolution disapproving the act is passed by both houses of Congress and signed by the President.

Emergency matters

Not all matters requiring Council action can wait sometimes several months or longer for the full Council legislative process and Congressional review.

How a Bill Becomes a Law

The Home Rule Charter enables the Council to enact quickly, measures to handle emergency matters by bypassing congressional review.

The Council may pass an emergency act if two-thirds of the members vote by an emergency declaration resolution that such an emergency exists. An emergency act does not go through the Committee process and is passed by a majority on a single reading. An emergency act becomes effective as soon as the Mayor signs it. If the Mayor vetoes it, the Council can override with a two-thirds vote. An emergency act remains in effect for ninety (90) days.

The Council can also enact an accompanying temporary act with the emergency act at the same legislative meeting. It must be substantially identical to the emergency act and remains in effect for no more than two hundred twenty-five (225) days. However, the temporary act must undergo congressional review.

Resolutions

The Council expresses its will through a resolution which

does not become permanent law. The most common is a ceremonial resolution which honors an individual or organization for special contribution to the community. The Council also adopts its own rules and procedures, establishes its committees, and appoints its officers by resolution.

In addition, some laws expressly call for the Council to act on certain matters by resolution, such as approving mayoral appointments to Boards and Commissions. The legislative process for passing a resolution is similar to that for a bill. A proposed resolution is treated like a bill, except that only one vote of the Council is required and it becomes effective immediately. A proposed resolution is filed, gets a PR number, is referred to committee, proceeds to the Committee of the Whole, and is finally reported out to full Council. However, a resolution does not require the mayor's signature or Congressional review.

A ceremonial resolution is not referred to a committee but requires a unanimous vote of the Council for passage. If a member objects, the resolution is given a PR number assigned to a committee and treated like a proposed resolution.

The Budget Process

- The Mayor begins the budget process by sending a proposed annual budget with a revenue certification to finance it to the Council. The Council, within 56 days, reviews the budget, holds public hearings, and approves the budget.
- By law, the Mayor must propose and the Council must adopt a balanced budget. The Committee of the Whole holds public hearings on the Mayor's budget request through the standing committees.
- Citizens are invited to testify at the budget hearing along with the government agencies. After the public hearing, each committee votes on recommended spending levels for agencies and programs under its oversight.
- The Committee of the Whole reviews the individual committee recommendations and proposes a budget that reflects the spending priorities of the Council as a whole. When the budget is approved by a majority of the Council, it is sent back to the Mayor.
- If the mayor vetoes the budget or any line item, the Council can override the Mayor with a two-thirds vote. If the Mayor signs the budget, it is transmitted to the President of the United States and Congress as required by the Home Rule Charter and District law.



Council Meetings

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING: On the first day of each Council Period that is not a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday, the Council shall convene an organizational meeting for the purpose of considering the adoption of Rules of Organization and Procedure, selecting a Chairman Pro Tempore pursuant to section 212, appointment of committee chairs and memberships, appointment of Councilmembers to regional bodies, and appointment of Council officers.

REGULAR MEETINGS: The Council shall hold a regular legislative meeting on the first Tuesday of every month except during a Council recess. When the day for a regular legislative meeting falls on a legal holiday, the meeting shall be held at the same time on the next day. Regular legislative meetings shall begin at 10:00 a.m. Regular meetings of the Council shall be held in the Council Chamber, Room 500 of the John A. Wilson Building, 1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. The Chairman may designate another time, day, or place for a legislative meeting at a prior legislative meeting or meeting of the Committee of the

Whole by circulating and filing notice with the Secretary at least 48 hours before the meeting. The Chairman may cancel a future regularly scheduled meeting. The Secretary shall circulate notice to each Councilmember and the public of a meeting cancellation.

ADDITIONAL AND SPECIAL MEETINGS: The Chairman may call additional legislative meetings of the Council. Any 2 Councilmembers may request that the Chairman call a special legislative meeting. The request shall be filed with the Secretary. Whenever an additional or special legislative meeting is called, the Secretary shall circulate notice to each Councilmember not less than 48 hours before the additional or special meeting. The Secretary shall provide timely notice of the meeting to the public. No matter shall be considered at an additional or special legislative meeting except those stated in the request and notification.

HEARING THE MAYOR: The Mayor has the right to be heard by the Council upon request and at reasonable times set by the Council.

Public Participation

- The Council believes that District residents are a critical part of its decision-making process.
- Council rules and procedures allow for citizen involvement at every step of the legislative process whether the decision is a new law, oversight of government service, or the annual budget.
- Citizens can voice their opinions at public hearings and roundtables, by mail or fax, by email or in person.
- The Council offers free subscription to the weekly mailing of the Calendar of the Week. In addition to the schedule of upcoming Council and committee meetings, the Calendar includes a list of bills introduced and committee referrals. To get on the mailing list, call 724-8000. The Calendar is available online at dccouncil.us.
- The also Council uses Twitter and Facebook to share information about hearings and roundtables. Find the Council on Twitter and Facebook @councilofdc.

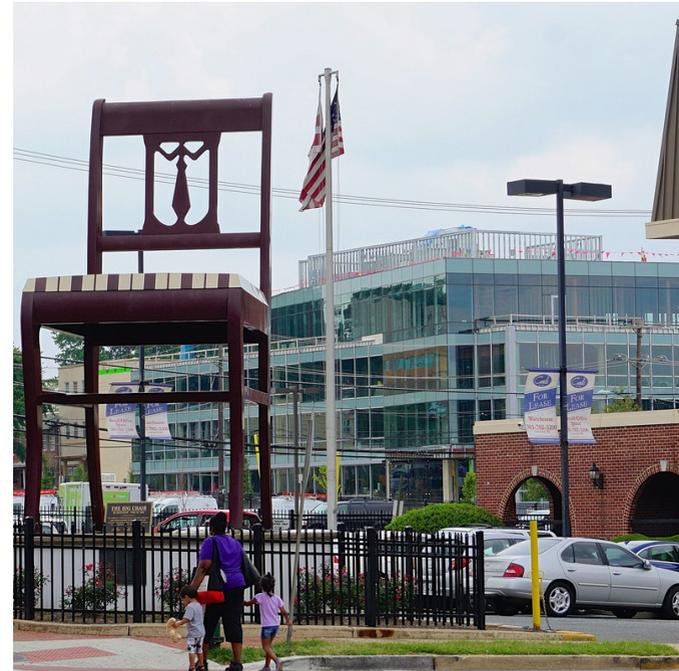
The following documents are available for examination 9:00 am to 5:30 pm, Monday through Friday, in the Legislative Services office, 1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 10; Washington, DC. Most are available online at lims.dccouncil.us:

- **Legislation** – Each bill as introduced in the Council is available. If action is taken by the Council, the version of the bill adopted by the standing committee, the version adopted on the first reading (first vote), and the version adopted by second reading (final vote) are also available. Older bills are available on microfilm.
- **Committee and Public Hearing Files** – The Secretary maintains a file on every action item taken by the committee, including the public hearing witness list, public testimony and correspondence received, government testimony, amendments, and committee vote.
- **Council Agendas** – The agenda shows action items taken at each legislative session.
- **Voting Records** – The Secretary to the Council maintains a computerized record of all votes since 1983.
- **Audio Tapes** – Legislative services can provide an audio tape of all committee meetings, public hearings or sessions from 1975 to the present. You must provide the blank cassette tape. Recordings of Council hearings and meetings are available on the Council website dccouncil.us

Public Participation

What to Expect at a Public Hearing

- The committee chair opens the hearing or roundtable, explains the purpose of the proceeding and provides the ground rules. The committee chair follows the order of speakers listed on the agenda circulated at least 24 hours before the proceeding. A committee chair may schedule government officials first to provide a status report to the public, or government officials may be scheduled at the end of the proceeding so that they may hear and respond to public comments. A committee chair may also have similar organizations testify together. The measure's co-introducer(s) may speak, and other Members present may make brief statements.
- Witnesses often use their time to summarize more extensive written testimony which is submitted for the record. The committee chair or Members may ask questions to elicit more information, or clarification.
- Please keep in mind that other citizens have signed up to testify. If you are asked to summarize your oral testimony, please comply with the committee chair's request. The committee chair maintains order in the proceeding and after issuing a warning may order the removal of a disorderly person.



Public Participation

Speaking at a Public Hearing or Roundtable

- When a bill or proposed resolution is introduced, the Council Chairman refers it to a committee to consider the policy, analyze its fiscal impact, determine its effect on existing law and recommend a public hearing or roundtable to solicit public comment.
- Anyone can sign up to testify by calling the appropriate committee or 724-8000 to be directed to the correct committee.
- Witnesses are encouraged to bring written testimony with them or provide it to the committee prior to the hearing so that it can be included in the official record. Please bring 20 copies for circulation to the committee members and staff. If a witness does not have testimony in writing, the presiding member may permit the witness to make a statement at the hearing. However, a written copy of testimony should be provided to the committee or the Office of the Secretary as soon as possible or in accordance with the deadline set by the appropriate committee for inclusion in the record.
- If a witness is unable to sign up with the committee before the hearing, the presiding member may permit an opportunity to testify. After scheduled witnesses have been heard, the committee chairperson may call for additional comments. Unscheduled witnesses should submit written testimony to the committee summarizing comments after the hearing.
- Requests for language and hearing interpreters should be made to the committee at least five business days in advance. Trained guide dogs will be admitted.
- The Council chamber is equipped with an assistive hearing system.



Public Participation

Guidelines for Speakers and Spectators

- Council rules protect your right to testify and be heard even if others in the hearing room disagree with you. Council rules also ensure that those attending the hearing can express their views as long as they do not interfere with the rights of others to see and hear the proceedings. At all times, order and decorum will be maintained in keeping with the dignity of the legislative process.
- You may wear badges, armbands or other articles of clothing that signal your point of view provided that they do not extend beyond the body or interfere with the vision of other persons at the hearing. **Placards and posters are not permitted.** They create a hazard of inadvertent injury to others, particularly when the room is crowded. In addition, the Council asks that you do not applaud, boo, cheer or make any audible expressions of agreement or disagreement to avoid delaying the testimony of others or disrupting the hearing. **The use of cellular phones is prohibited.**
- Signs are posted at hearing room entrances with these guidelines.



Public Participation

Alternative to Testifying

Written testimony may be submitted to the appropriate committee or the Secretary to the Council at the time of the hearing; or may be mailed to 1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 5; Washington, DC. All written material becomes part of the official record. You may also write, fax, or email all thirteen (13) members of the Council.

Attending Council Sessions

The Council encourages spectators at all Council meetings. Public comment is reserved for public hearings or roundtables. Keep in mind that all Council legislative sessions are broadcast live and are re-broadcast on the District Council Channel. Call the Cable office at 671-0044 or visit occtt.dc.gov for the cable schedule.

To verify the location and time of the public hearing, please call 724-8000 the day before the hearing.

Legislative Services

The Legislative Services Division maintains all Council records, including bills, laws, resolutions, committee reports, agendas, voting records, and special reports. Legislation is available online via LIMS. In addition, taped recordings of Council legislative sessions, committee meetings, public hearings and roundtables are available on the Council website. All records and documents can be reviewed from 9:00am to 5:30pm every business day. Call 724-8050 for assistance.

