

# UNIGOV HANDBOOK

A CITIZEN'S  
GUIDE TO LOCAL  
GOVERNMENT



*Prepared by the League of Women Voters of Indianapolis*



# UNIGOV HANDBOOK

**A BOOK OF FACTUAL  
INFORMATION ABOUT  
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA**

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This Handbook has been compiled by the  
League of Women Voters of Indianapolis

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The League of Women Voters (LWV) is a nonpartisan organization dedicated to the promotion of informed and active participation of citizens in government. It influences public policy through education and advocacy. Membership is open to women and men 16 and older.

The LWV directs its attention solely to matters of government and the individual's responsibility in that government. The LWV is active in voter education and provides impartial voting information.

The voicemail number of the LWV of Indianapolis is (317) 767-4187, and its website can be found at [lwvindy.org](http://lwvindy.org).

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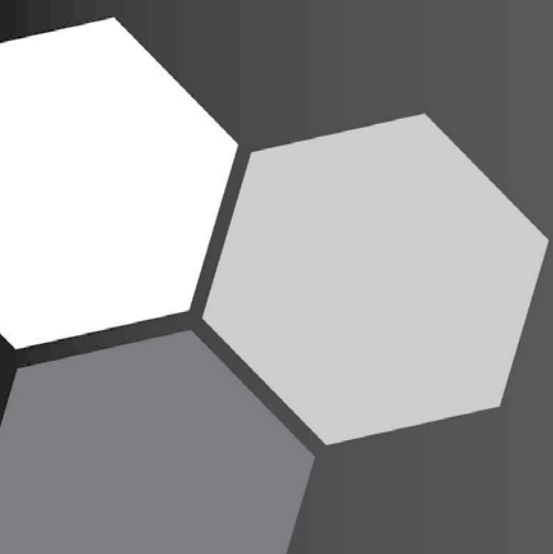
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# Preface

What is Unigov? How does it work? How can I participate knowledgeably in local government?

This Unigov Handbook was designed to inform you about the government in Indianapolis, Indiana. It was compiled, researched, and edited by League of Women Voters members and its community partners and is intended to provide accurate, nonpartisan information.

We hope the Handbook will contribute to the understanding and involvement of citizens and be a useful resource to students. As such, the LWV will make every effort to update its website ([lwwindy.org](http://lwwindy.org)) when changes occur between re-printings of the Handbook within Unigov.

Citizens are also encouraged to visit the city's website at [indy.gov](http://indy.gov) to locate current information on who is serving in an elected office or on an appointed board or committee. The city's calendar can also be accessed through its website which provides information on public meetings and hearings.

# Acknowledgments

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# PART 1



*Be an Informed Citizen*



# HISTORICAL OVERVIEW AND RECENT CHANGES



In the late 1960s, Richard Lugar proposed a series of changes to state law that restructured Indianapolis' city government. Lugar and others argued that such changes would prevent an erosion of the city's tax base which was being threatened by growth beyond the city limits. Under Unigov, as these changes were called, the city limits expanded to the county limits and many functions of city and county government were consolidated. Although Indianapolis is currently the only city in the state with the Unigov framework, Unigov is itself a set of state laws that automatically applies to any city that reaches the total population of 600,000. (The original population threshold was 250,000, but the General Assembly increased the number to prevent other cities from converting to the Unigov structure.)

On January 1, 1970, Unigov went into effect and transformed city and county govern-

ment in Marion County in two fundamental ways. First, the City of Indianapolis' city limits were expanded to include all of Marion County, with the only exceptions being the Excluded Cities of Beech Grove, Lawrence, Southport, and Speedway. Second, many different functions of city and county government were consolidated into a new municipal entity called the Consolidated City of Indianapolis. This consolidation was called unified government, hence the name "Unigov."

Unlike the 91 other counties in Indiana, where city mayors and city councils and county boards of commissioners and county councils all have differing executive, legislative, and fiscal powers, Unigov established a single executive, who is both mayor of the city and county executive, and a City-County Council, which is the legislative body to the city and county. As a result, the structure of Unigov appears

similar to the structure of our state and federal government, with a separation of powers among three equal branches of government: executive, legislative, and judicial. The executive branch consists of the Mayor's office, city departments, and county agencies. The City-County Council makes up the legislative branch, while the judicial branch consists of the court system.

At its inception, Unigov was a radical departure from the typical structure of local government in Indiana. Though much was consolidated, various entities within Marion County retained their autonomy. Therefore, despite the name "Unigov," not all functions of local government in Marion County were absorbed by Unigov. For example:

- The county-elected offices of Assessor, Auditor, Clerk of the Circuit Court (also called County Clerk), Coroner, Prosecutor, Sheriff, Surveyor, Recorder, and Treasurer remained separate elected offices and part of Marion County government.
- Fire service and school districts were maintained at their pre-Unigov borders, with the Indianapolis Fire Department providing service within the old city limits, the Excluded Cities (with the exception of Southport) providing their own fire service, and the townships providing fire service.
- City and county law enforcement, provided by the Indianapolis Police Department (IPD) and the Sheriff's Department respectively, remained separate, with IPD providing service within the old city limits and the Sheriff providing service outside of the old city limits and Excluded Cities.

- The Excluded Cities of Beech Grove, Lawrence, Southport, and Speedway each maintained their autonomy, with their own police forces, school systems, and mayors (except Speedway where there is a town manager who is employed by the town council). Nevertheless, citizens of these excluded cities still vote for the Indy Mayor and Council.
- Township government remained wholly separate.

Since the creation of Unigov 40-plus years ago, efforts to streamline have continued.

- City and county information technology services have been consolidated into a county agency known as the Information Services Agency (ISA).
- In 2001, the Department of Capital Asset Management merged into the Department of Public Works.
- In 2008, the Marion County Justice Agency was consolidated into the Department of Public Safety—which the City-County Council voted to eliminate in 2016 and re-organize into the Office of Public Health and Safety by 2017.
- In 2009, the Department of Administration was eliminated, with human resources transferring to the Office of Finance & Management.

The financial operations of the city and county have also been reformed.

- In 2005, the Auditor's duties relating to the county budget were transferred to the Controller and the

Controller's duties relating to city payroll and warrants were transferred to the Auditor.

- In 2008, state law provided for a referendum for voters to decide whether or not to consolidate the duties of the Township Assessor into the County Assessor. The referendum was held in all townships except Decatur, where the township assessor position had already been eliminated because the township had fewer than 15,000 parcels. Nearly two-thirds of voters in the eight other townships voted for consolidation, thereby eliminating the position of Township Assessor in Marion County.

City and county public safety functions have undergone significant changes in recent years.

- In 2007, Indianapolis Police Department (IPD) law enforcement officers and the Sheriff's law enforcement deputies were consolidated into a new Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department (IMPD) under the control of the Sheriff. In 2008, control went to the Mayor.
- Also in 2007, state law changed to allow for the voluntary consolidation of township fire departments into the Indianapolis Fire Department (IFD). All but three townships—Decatur, Pike, and Wayne—have since consolidated into IFD.
- In 2009, park rangers and, in 2011, the Metropolitan Emergency Communications Agency (MECA),

transferred to the then Department of Public Safety.

- In 2016, a proposal was passed to eliminate the Department of Public Safety and to create an Office of Public Health & Safety (full re-organization to occur by 2017). Mayor Hogsett signed an executive order in 2016 immediately delegating more responsibility to the police and fire chiefs making them the heads of their respective city departments and specifying that they report directly to the mayor.

Expansions and contractions in executive and legislative power have also changed since 1970.

- In 2001, charter school legislation was enacted giving the Mayor authority to charter a school anywhere within the consolidated city. Charters are overseen by a board with members appointed by the Mayor. Charter schools are secular, tuition-free public schools that are not subject to many of the regulations for traditional public schools. They control their own curriculum, staffing, organization, and budget.
- In 2013, state law eliminated the four at-large councilor positions on the City-County Council. These seats, which were elected by all voters in the County, had been a part of Unigov since its creation. Those positions were eliminated effective January 1, 2016.



# STATE CONTROL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT OVERVIEW



Throughout the United States, state control over local government is the norm rather than the exception. Local governments in Indiana are creatures of the state; their powers are granted through laws enacted by the General Assembly.

State law in Indiana gives cities, towns, and counties the power to perform certain services and to impose regulations on their citizens. Indiana cities are incorporated into three classes according to size. “First class” cities have a population over 600,000. Indianapolis is the only such city in the state.

State law establishes one form of government for all classes of Indiana cities, the Mayor-Council form, except that third class cities may employ a nonpartisan city manager. The administrative organization of cities, the manner of appointment, the term of office, and the powers and duties of various boards and agencies are all

established by state law. Cities have the power to levy taxes only when authorized to do so by state legislation.

Until 1971, it was assumed that cities, counties, and towns could not exercise a specific power unless that power was granted by the state. In 1971, a “home rule” bill was enacted allowing cities to exercise any power necessary for the public good unless specifically prohibited by the state or federal law. Similar legislation was enacted for counties in 1975 and for towns in 1977. These changes to state law also denied certain powers to the local governments. Interpretation of “home rule” by the courts and State Attorney General had been mixed. As a result, cities and towns believed it was more prudent to continue to seek changes to state law by continuing to work through the Legislature in order to make local changes.



In 1980 the General Assembly passed a new “home rule” law that consolidated previously separate provisions and was made uniformly applicable to counties and municipalities. It was intended to give a more liberal scope to the home rule concept in Indiana and specifically declares the policy of the state is to grant units all the powers they need for the effective operation of government as to local affairs. Any doubt as to the existence of a power is to be resolved in favor of its existence.

While the 1980 policy is certainly still subject to interpretation in particular instances, this statute does provide better guidelines in the event of judicial review. As with the previous home rule laws, there are still general and specific limits placed on the scope of home rule authority. Also, the “new home rule,” like the old, being statutory rather than constitutional, does not allow the “sovereign” operation of local governments without the consent of the Legislature, but is rather a grant of authority to them by the Legislature through implied consent.

## Local Government Overview

**The Executive Branch.** The executive branch carries out the day-to-day operations of the city. City government is managed by the Mayor’s Office. There are six departments under the executive branch: Department of Code Enforcement (DCE), Department of Metropolitan Development (DMD), Parks and Recreation, Indianapolis Marion County Police Department (IMPD), Indianapolis Fire Department (IFD), and the Department of Public Works (DPW). (As previously noted, the Department of Public Safety was eliminated in 2016, resulting in the police and fire chiefs each reporting directly to the Mayor.)

Each of the six departments has a director or chief appointed by the Mayor and approved by the City-County Council, and each department has an appointed board to oversee the operations of the department. These appointed board members are not paid and the board meetings are open to the public.

In addition to the six departments, several offices oversee the functions within their purview: Audit & Performance, Corporation Counsel, Education Innovation, Finance & Management (overseen by the Controller), Minority & Women Business Development, and the Office of Public Health and Safety. Directors of each office are appointed by the Mayor.

**The Legislative Branch.** The legislative branch is the City-County Council, which is made up of twenty-five members who represent specific districts in the county. Until January 1, 2016, there were also four “at-large” members who represented the entire county. The Council has exclusive power to adopt budgets, levy taxes, and make appropriations. The Council can enact, repeal, or amend local laws called “ordinances,” which in most cases are subject to the approval of the Mayor. The Council also has the power to appoint people to boards and commissions and to confirm some of the Mayor’s appointments of department and office directors and some of the appointments to boards and commissions.

**The Judicial Branch.** The judicial branch consists of a Circuit Court, a Superior Court with four divisions and 32 judges, and a Small Claims Court with nine courtrooms.

**Excluded Cities.** The cities of Beech Grove, Lawrence, and Southport and the town of Speedway were not annexed into the Consolidated City of Indianapolis and are called “Excluded Cities.” In addition to voting for the mayors and councils of their own respective cities and towns, residents of Excluded Cities are also able to vote for the Mayor of Indianapolis and for a council member representing their district. This arrangement was passed because residents are obligated to pay many county-wide taxes and because a variety of the powers of the Mayor of Indianapolis and the city departments extend to the entire county.

**Included Towns.** There are ten “Included Towns” in Marion County, characterized by a population of fewer than 5,000 residents that elected to retain town status. Those are: Clermont, Crows Nest, Homecroft, Meridian Hills, North Crows Nest, Rocky Ripple, Spring Hill, Warren Park, Williams Creek, and Wynnedale. Unlike Excluded Cities, Included Towns are within the city limits of the Consolidated City of Indianapolis and are not able to establish laws that conflict with those established by the City-County Council.

**Townships.** Marion County has nine townships: Center, Decatur, Franklin, Lawrence, Perry, Pike, Warren, Washington, and Wayne. In each of the townships, there is an elected Township Trustee, Township Constable, and a seven-member board that oversees the township budget.

**Schools.** Marion County has eleven school districts which are separate from the “civil city” (i.e., the consolidated city of Unigov). Each is a separate municipality with its own elected board. The school boards determine school budgets and policies within state law. With the exception of

charter schools, neither the Mayor nor the City-County Council has any authority over a school corporation. (In 2001 the state granted the mayor’s office the authority to authorize charter schools.) The Indianapolis Public Schools (IPS) is the second largest school district in the state.

**Municipal Corporations.** There are seven independent Municipal Corporations: Capital Improvement Board (CIB), Health and Hospital Corporation (HHC), Indianapolis Airport Authority, Indianapolis-Marion County Public Library (IndyPL), Indianapolis Public Transportation Corporation (IndyGo), Indianapolis-Marion County Building Authority, and the Local Improvement Bond Bank (Bond Bank).

**County Offices of Assessor, Auditor, Coroner, Prosecutor, Sheriff, Surveyor, Recorder, Treasurer, and Clerk of the Circuit Court (also called County Clerk).**

Except the Assessor, all of these offices are established by the state constitution and cannot be eliminated unless the constitution is amended—a difficult and time-consuming process. (Although the offices cannot be eliminated, the powers and duties of the county officials are set by state law, which is why the county auditor and sheriff have more limited powers in Marion County than in other counties.) Thus, though the Mayor is the county executive, Marion County government continues to exist as a separate entity. The Council is the legislative body, and other common functions between city and county government, such as information technology and human resources, are shared to reduce costs.

# EXECUTIVE BRANCH



## The City:

### Office of the Mayor

The Mayor's Office consists of the Mayor and the Mayor's executive staff which includes a Chief of Staff and one or more deputy mayors. The mayor appoints deputy mayors and, under state law, the City-County Council may create additional deputy mayors and specify their authority. Therefore, deputy mayor numbers, titles, and functions change with each administration. In recent years, deputy mayor positions have related to neighborhoods, economic development, education, and international and cultural affairs, among others.

The Mayor's cabinet, made up of the Deputy Mayors, Mayor's Office directors, and city department directors, meets regularly to discuss policy-making activity.

**Mayor's Action Center.** The Mayor's Action Center provides the public with

a central agency to contact for service requests, information, or complaints. Some of the reasons to call include weeds, potholes, trash, abandoned vehicles, malfunctioning traffic signals, and street maintenance.

### City Departments

\*Citizen-led oversight boards, commissions, and committees are in italics.

### Department of Code Enforcement (DCE)

The mission of the Department of Code Enforcement is to improve the quality of life in the City of Indianapolis through strategic application of civil code regulation; effective licensing, permitting, inspection, enforcement, and abatement practices; and local government oversight of property use, safety, and maintenance of the business, event, professional, and construction industries.

**Animal Care and Control Division.** The Animal Control Division is responsible for protecting the public from injuries, property damage, and disease caused by stray animals. The animal shelter located on Harding Street is managed and operated by this division. It also inspects businesses dealing with animals prior to their being approved for a license by the Department of Code Enforcement.

**Bureau of Administration and Financial Services.** The mission of the Bureau of Administration and Financial Services is to manage the department's financial and administrative matters, always promoting transparency and the overall financial health of the department.

**Board of Code Enforcement.** The Director of the Department of Code Enforcement chairs this five member board. Two members are appointed by the Mayor and two by the City-County Council for one-year terms. The board is the governing body of the department. It reviews the department budget and approves all contracts. Public meetings are held monthly.

**Bureau of Construction Services.** The mission of the Bureau of Construction Services is to provide government oversight and regulation of the building construction industry, including both residential and commercial construction, as well as all activities conducted in the public rights-of-way for safe and quality construction.

**Bureau of Environmental Services.** The mission of the Bureau of Environmental Services is to assure environmental protection for Indianapolis residents and to provide government oversight and regulation of air quality, soil control, illegal dumping, and forestry in the public

rights-of-way.

**Bureau of License and Permit Services.** The Bureau of License and Permit Services provides licensure or registration to construction contractors and regulated businesses. Through a comprehensive application, the Bureau conducts project and plan reviews for public and construction safety via enforcement of the applicable building code and ordinances in the City of Indianapolis.

**Bureau of Logistical Services.** The mission of the Bureau of Logistical Services is to provide the citizens of Indianapolis, Department of Code Enforcement, and other city departments and agencies with the address, fleet, technology, document, office, and facility management required for safe, efficient, and effective operations related to the department's core function and mission.

**Bureau of Property Safety and Maintenance.** The Bureau of Property Safety and Maintenance provides responsible government oversight and regulation of property maintenance, zoning, land use and development standards, regulated business licensed entities, and weighing and measuring devices.

**Contractor and Skilled Trade Boards.** These are boards that write policies and regulations concerning contractor conduct and requirements for securing building permits. Those Boards are the Contractors Board, Board of Electrical Examiners, Board of Heating and Cooling Examiners, and the Board of Wrecking Examiners. If there is some official business to come before a board, that board holds regular monthly meetings in city offices. Special meetings may be called by the chair or any three members of a board.

**Division of Administration, Logistics, Licenses, and Permits.** The Division of Administration, Logistics, Licenses, and Permits provides strategic application of civil code regulation through oversight of business and construction industries, urban forest practices, fiscal and administrative services for the Department of Code Enforcement, and other city departments and agencies.

**Division of Inspections.** The Division of Inspections provides strategic application of civil code regulation through inspection, enforcement, and abatement services related to property use/safety and maintenance, the building construction industry, and environmental concerns.

**License Review Board of Indianapolis and Marion County.** In all instances where the Code provides that a decision of the license administrator or other official may be appealed to the Board of Code Enforcement, the board acts by and through a committee. At its first meeting each calendar year, the Board of Code Enforcement elects three of its members, not including the chair of the board, as a committee for the purpose of hearing such appeals, and elects one of the committee members to serve as the chairperson. The actions of that committee, with respect to an appeal of a decision of the license administrator or other official, is final for the entire Board of Code Enforcement without any further action, review, or approval by the board. The person or entity appealing may submit evidence, cross-examine witnesses, and be represented by counsel.

## Department of Metropolitan Development (DMD)

From planning for the City of Indianapolis' future, to creating affordable homeown-

ership opportunities, to supporting the growth of jobs and investment in communities throughout the city—the Department of Metropolitan Development (DMD) works in partnership with other city departments to improve the city, neighborhood by neighborhood.

**Metropolitan Development Commission.** The Metropolitan Development Commission is the policy-making body of the DMD that adopts the Comprehensive Plan of Marion County. This plan is used by the commission and other units of government as a guide for orderly growth. The commission controls the establishment of redevelopment areas, manages tax increment finance (TIF) districts, and acquires and sells property in such areas in order to carry out a redevelopment plan. The commission has nine appointed members who serve one-year terms. Five are appointed by the Mayor and four by the City-County Council.

**Division of Community & Economic Development.** The Department of Metropolitan Development takes a multi-dimensional approach to enhancing Indianapolis' Community Economic Development by empowering each key component as its own division, resulting in three focus teams: Community Development, Economic Incentives, and Redevelopment. With guidance and oversight from the department's Administrative staff, each section works to promote economic development in Indianapolis by leveraging public and private resources to aid in the increase of affordable housing, job creation and retention, and the implementation of commercial, industrial, and retail developments.

### **Community Development Section**

Community Development administers community development grant programs awarded each year by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The section works to create community partnerships and provides funding to support initiatives focused on affordable housing, neighborhood revitalization, homeless assistance, youth activities and supportive services while helping project sponsors remain in compliance with HUD regulations.

### **Economic Incentives Section**

Economic Incentives assists with the implementation of commercial, industrial and retail development projects that create a variety of job opportunities, increase the tax base, and aid neighborhood projects that revitalize communities.

### **Redevelopment Section**

Redevelopment leverages staff expertise, funding, and other resources to transform unused and under-used properties in Indianapolis into assets for the economy and the community. The section targets brownfields, vacant and abandoned housing, and urban blight.

**Division of Planning.** The Department of Metropolitan Development approaches city planning with two lenses; one lens is focused on where Indianapolis currently is, in cooperation with the Current Planning Section, and the other is focused on where Indianapolis will be in the future, with the Long Range Planning Section. With guidance and oversight from the department's Administrative staff, each division works to strengthen the people and places of Indianapolis-Marion County

by serving as strategic planning resources for city government and neighborhoods.

### **Current Planning Section**

Current Planning supports the Metropolitan Development Commission (MDC), and the Metropolitan Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) by evaluating, administering and providing professional planning recommendations for all land development petitions filed. This section also updates and maintains all zoning ordinances.

### **Long Range Planning Section**

The Long Range Planning Section is responsible for Marion County's Comprehensive Plan, which is used by the Metropolitan Development Commission and other units of government as a guide for development, and serves as the basis for zoning decisions within the county. This section coordinates partners and stakeholders while serving as the catalyst in planning activities related to land use, transportation, parks, resiliency, and neighborhood housing.

### **Metropolitan Planning Organization.**

The Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is a regional body housed within the City of Indianapolis. The MPO is responsible for regional long range transportation planning according to federal regulations. The transportation planning function is governed by the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Council (IRTC) Policy Committee, which is comprised of the elected and appointed officials in central Indiana. Key functions of the MPO include the development of their eight-county (including Marion County) planning area's Long Range Transportation

Plan and the development and maintenance of the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Improvement Program, which documents how all federal transportation planning funds will be expended in Central Indiana over a four-year period.

### **Indianapolis Historic Preservation**

**Commission.** In 1967, the Indiana State Legislature established and empowered the Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission (IHPC) to preserve the character and fabric of historically significant areas and structures for all present and future citizens of Marion County. The IHPC accomplishes this task by protecting areas through local designation and through providing technical assistance on the restoration and rehabilitation of historic structures or areas.

The IHPC is a nine-member board appointed by the executive and legislative body of the consolidated city, with design and zoning review jurisdiction in the locally designated historic districts and conservation districts. Since 1976, the IHPC has had a professional staff that functions as a division of the Department of Metropolitan Development of the City of Indianapolis. The IHPC provides design and zoning review and approval for locally designated historic districts, conservation areas, and individually designated properties.

### **Metropolitan Board of Zoning Appeals.**

The Board of Zoning Appeals hears requests for variances in the zoning laws. It is made up of three divisions with five members each, who are appointed for a one-year term. Two are appointed by the Mayor, two by the City-County Council, and one by the Department of Metropolitan Development. All three boards have county-wide jurisdiction, not including the excluded municipalities of Beech Grove,

Lawrence and Speedway, which have their own zoning appeals boards of five members each. The Board is authorized to allow or deny a variance pertaining to development standards and use restrictions under various specific conditions. It also hears and decides on special exceptions to a zoning ordinance; these are administrative decisions and do not involve a change in the zoning law.

**Metropolitan Plat Committee.** The Metropolitan Plat Committee has five members appointed by the Metropolitan Development Commission for one-year terms. An individual must be a member of the Metropolitan Development Commission to be appointed to this committee. The Plat Committee approves all subdivision plats in Marion County and controls all vacations of streets, alleys, easements, and plats.

## **Department of Parks and Recreation**

The Department of Parks and Recreation provides recreational programming and facilities throughout Marion County and enforces all provisions of city ordinances and state statutes regarding public park lands and facilities use.

**Administration Division.** The division provides management and support to the department, including human resources, staff development, grant coordination, information systems, marketing and communications, community relations, finance, partnership development, and volunteer services.

**Board of Parks and Recreation.** The Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation chairs this five member board. Two members are appointed by the Mayor



and two by the City-County Council for one-year terms. The board is the governing body of the department. It reviews the department budget and approves all contracts. Public meetings are held monthly at the City-County Building. (On occasion, by the decision of the director, these meetings are held at one of the Indy Parks facilities.)

**Community Recreation.** The division manages and operates programs and services at city parks and recreation facilities. Division staff organizes a wide range of offerings in sports, arts, play, social, environmental, and self-improvement activities.

**Resource Development Division.** The Resource Development Division guides the direction of the department through strategic planning of parks, greenways, and golf development. The division also administers the Capital Improvement Program and assesses park assets, infrastructure needs, and project development while overseeing construction activities. This Division, along with Park Maintenance, is now incorporated within the Department of Public Works.

## Indianapolis Marion County Police Department

Until 2016, the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department (IMPD) was a division of the Department of Public Safety (DPS). At that time, The City-County Council voted to eliminate the Department of Public Safety and to re-organize it by 2017 into the Office of Public Safety and Health. IMPD was elevated to its own independent city department with the police chief reporting directly to the mayor. Comprised of approximately 1,640 sworn officers and 200 civilian employees, the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department provides police services to Marion

County and is primarily responsible for maintaining order and protecting individuals' lives and property. It is charged with crime prevention and detection and the capture of offenders.

The department includes the Office of the Chief and the Divisions of Administration, Investigations, and Patrol. The IMPD's merit system and appointments are supervised by the Police Merit Board.

**Office of the Chief.** Includes executive leadership and their staff to guide the affairs of the IMPD.

**Administration Division.** This is a support division responsible for human resources, training, finance, procurement, and policy.

**Investigations Division.** This is a support division for crimes against persons (murder, rape, and assault) investigations.

**Patrol Division.** This division coordinates the patrol units within the six geographic districts as well as the activities of community engagement officers and property crime investigators. This division also guides the Bureau of Homeland Security.

**Bureau of Homeland Security.** This bureau is responsible for the response to and mitigation of critical incidents occurring in the city. It maintains a mobile command center and coordinates staffing for major emergencies and events. The Bureau of Homeland Security operates in consultation with the Office of Public Health and Safety and contains three branches: Tactical, Traffic Enforcement, and Traffic Investigations. The Tactical branch manages and deploys many of the IMPD's specialty units such as the



SWAT and bomb squads. The Traffic Enforcement and Traffic Investigations branches encompass traffic safety grant management, the reserve unit, and crash investigations among other responsibilities. Emergency Management—which is responsible for implementing the city emergency management and hazard mitigation plans as well as maintaining the county warning siren system—is also managed by Homeland Security.

#### **Community Engagement Unit (CEU).**

CEU is responsible for establishing and maintaining community partnerships to address crime and quality of life issues in Indianapolis's neighborhoods. The CEU focuses on youth and community issues not fully addressed through routine police patrol and criminal investigations.

#### **The Neighborhood Office Outreach (NOO).**

This office is responsible for proactively establishing and maintaining community partnerships to address neighborhood quality of life issues. NOO is made up of Youth Services Unit, Community Outreach Unit, Behavioral Health Unit, and Reentry Management Unit (inPACT). NOO's community work also addresses immigrant outreach and language services.

**Police Merit Board.** The Police Merit Board has seven members. No member may hold another elective or appointive government office or be a member of the Indianapolis Police Department. When possible, the members include a professional educator, a business or police administrator or criminologist, a personnel administrator, a physician or psychiatrist, and an attorney. The Chief of Police

serves as an ex-officio member with no vote. The board administers the merit system of the Indianapolis Police Department and supervises all appointments to the force.

## **Indianapolis Fire Department**

The Indianapolis Fire Department (IFD) had been a division of the Department of Public Safety (DPS) until 2016. Like IMPD, IFD was elevated to its own independent city department with the fire chief reporting directly to the mayor in 2016.

The Indianapolis Fire Department serves the entire city, either as the primary emergency response agency, or by providing automatic and mutual aid to the excluded cities of Beech Grove, Lawrence, Speedway and to Decatur, Pike, and Wayne townships. The fire district encompasses approximately 278 square miles and is divided into seven geographic battalions (districts) with 44 fire stations. (IFD “dual staffs” a 45th worksite with the City of Lawrence Fire Department.)

The Office of the Chief includes Media Relations, Chief Financial Officer, Indiana Task Force One, and Chaplain Services. The department is divided into four (4) functional bureaus: Operations, Administration, Logistics, and Technical Services. The Operations Bureau includes Shift Commanders, Battalion Chiefs, Safety Officers, Special Operations, and Emergency Medical Services. The Administration Bureau includes Personnel, Scheduling, Training, Pension, Planning, and the Performance and Compliance Section. The Logistical Bureau has responsibility for Support Services, Air Program Management, Fleet Services, Facilities, and Quartermaster. Technical Services

includes Fire Investigations, Recruitment, Communications, Emergency Management, Fire Marshal, Code Enforcement, Plan Review, and Public Education.

The IFD offers more than fire protection. The department provides first-response Emergency Medical Service (basic and advanced), fire safety education programs, fire prevention programs, dive rescue, top water rescue, hazardous materials response, vehicle and machine extrication, rope rescue, and several other technical rescue disciplines.

Fire prevention programs, such as the “in home” inspection/smoke alarm initiative, are also integral to IFD’s role in the community. On request, fire fighters will inspect homes in their battalion, install 10-year smoke alarms, if needed, and advise occupants of hazards found. Quarterly open houses at neighborhood fire stations, Safe Place/Safe House programs, escape plans, prescription drug take back locations, mobile food pantries, and other community-based projects are additional ways IFD serves the community.

**Fire Merit Board.** The Fire Merit Board is composed of six members; four appointed by the director and two by active members of the IFD, for two-year terms. Members are residents of the Fire Special Service District and cannot be members of the Indianapolis Fire Department or hold another elective or appointive government office. The Fire Merit Board administers the merit system and supervises appointments to the Fire Department.

## Department of Public Works (DPW)

### **The Division of Policy and Planning**

provides all the administrative functions of the Department of Public Works. These include Strategic Planning, Budgeting and Accounting, Legislative Liaison, Americans with Disabilities Act compliance, Public Information, and Administration. As an outgrowth of the Strategic Planning Section, the Office of Sustainability was established in 2008.

**The Office of Sustainability** has strong ties to the City’s environmental agenda. The charge of SustainIndy includes public-private coordination of environmentally responsible actions that influence community awareness, economic development, and quality of life in Indianapolis for today and in the future. The mission of the City of Indianapolis Office of Sustainability is to use best practices to create lasting environmental, economic, and community vitality—enhancing our quality of life in the present and protecting the quality of life for future Indianapolis residents. To achieve this, the Office of Sustainability coordinates and collaborates on neighborhood goals and establishes public-private partnership opportunities to build the vision of a more sustainable city.

**The Fleet Services Division** is responsible for procuring, managing, maintaining, fueling, administering, and selling vehicles owned, leased, and operated by various departments and agencies of the city.

**The Division of Engineering** includes the office of Systems Planning, Project Development, and Construction Services. This division assesses infrastructure needs within the city, develops projects, and carries out the construction.

**The Division of Operations**, and its various sections, maintains the infrastructure, including solid waste collection, snow removal, pothole patching, operation and maintenance of traffic signals, and other services.

**Solid Waste Management Section**

collects and disposes of trash in five solid waste districts and outsources two additional districts to companies—Waste Management (1 district) and Republic (6 districts). The waste is taken to the mass burn facility for incineration and generation of steam. The steam is sold to customers who need to heat and cool buildings downtown. This section also collects heavy trash, retrieve dead animals from streets, investigates illegal dumping, and provides fall leaf collection services. It manages the Tox-Drop program, providing locations for residents to discard materials not accepted as solid waste, such as paint thinners, fertilizer, and aerosol cans.

**Maintenance Operations Section**

provides crews responsible for day-to-day maintenance, snow removal, pothole patching, operation and maintenance of traffic signals, and maintenance of levees, alleys, and bridges. Other services include graffiti removal, planning for special events, demolition, and grass and weed control within the right-of-way. A “rapid response” team deals with problems on streets, with traffic, or in other areas.

**The Stormwater Management Section**

administers the contract and oversees maintenance and operation of the city’s stormwater system, which includes

neighborhood drainage, levees, and dams.

**The Park Maintenance Section**, is

responsible for providing stewardship of natural resources areas, managing and executing maintenance plans for parks assets, coordinating park beautification and land improvement services, and installing and maintaining athletic fields. This section also includes Forestry.

**Board of Public Works.** The Board of Public Works consists of seven members, three appointed by the Mayor, three by the City-County Council, and the Director of the Department of Public Works serves as the board chairperson. The board meets twice monthly and reviews the department budget, approves contracts and bids, and holds any hearings required by law.

**City Offices**

**(aka, Mayor’s Office)**

\*Citizen-led oversight boards, commissions, and committees are in italics.

**Office of Audit & Performance**

This office, which is a successor to the City-County Internal Audit Agency, must audit the internal operations of city and county government and measure and improve the performance of city and county government. The office uses Six Sigma and other process improvement techniques to streamline city-county operations and create efficiencies.

**Office of Corporation Counsel (OCC)**

The Office of Corporation Counsel (OCC or “city legal”) provides attorneys and support

staff for legal services to the Mayor, the city departments, the county agencies, the city and county boards and commissions, the City-County Council, and the courts. The OCC is comprised of three sections: City Prosecutor, Counseling, and Litigation.

**City Prosecutor.** This division is responsible for the effective prosecution of violations of the civil code. (The County Prosecutor prosecutes violations of the criminal code.) Such violations include animal care and control violations and zoning violations.

**Counseling.** The Counseling division provides legal advice to city and county officials, agencies, departments, boards, and commissions. It assists with public record requests, contract negotiation, and more.

**Public Access Counselor.** The Public Access Counselor is responsible for ensuring that the public access laws of Indiana—the Access to Public Records Act and Open Door Law—are followed by city-county government. The Public Access Counselor assists citizens when their access to public records or meetings is wrongfully denied and advises and educates city-county officials in their duties under public access laws.

**Litigation.** This division defends city and county officials, agencies, departments, boards, and commissioners in court cases.

The OCC trains all new and existing appointees and employees on the Ethics Code, Open Door Law, and Public Records Act. It also maintains yearly-filed Economic Statements of Interest on county-elected officials and their direct reports, appointees to city-county boards and commissions, city or county agency/department

directors and their direct reports, any employee whose employment is subject to the approval of the City-County Council, any employee designated by the OCC as having “final purchasing authority,” and all employees of the purchasing division of the Office of Finance and Management.

## **Office of Education Innovation**

The Indianapolis Mayor’s Office of Education Innovation (OEI) works to hold mayor-sponsored charter schools accountable. (As of this 2016 publication date, there are 41 public charter schools serving 14,000 students.) Not only does OEI monitor public charter schools, but it collaborates with the private, public and philanthropic sectors to lead multiple education initiatives seeking to ensure that every child in Indianapolis has access to a high quality education.

**Indianapolis Charter School Board.** This board has the authority to grant or reject charter applications submitted to the Mayor of Indianapolis. The board consists of nine members, six of whom are appointed by the Mayor and three by the President of the City-County Council. Board members serve four year renewable terms.

## **Office of Finance & Management (OFM) (Controller’s Office)**

The Office of Finance & Management provides internal services to the operating agencies of city and county government and carries out the general administrative functions of the city.

**Human Resources.** The Human Resource Division is responsible for the recruiting, employee training and development, bene-

fits, and workers compensation for the city and county. It also develops safety policies and procedures, conducts Occupational Safety and Health compliance inspections, monitors tort claims, and investigates claims of discrimination and harassment.

**Purchasing Division.** The Purchasing Division is a separate division of the Office of Finance and Management. It is responsible for procurement of goods, services, public works construction, and the disposal of fixed assets.

**Budget Division.** The Budget Division prepares, manages, and monitors the city and county's annual operating and capital budget. In addition, it prepares monthly budget reports, works with agency and department CFO's on budget issues and reviews and prepares fiscal ordinances for the annual budget.

**Accounting Division.** The Accounting Division is responsible for compiling and issuing the city and county annual comprehensive annual financial report (CAFR), along with management of accounting policies and practices throughout city and county government.

**Collections Division.** The Collections Division is responsible for managing the city and county's outstanding accounts receivable program. The Division works with third party entities to engage those individuals that owe money to the city or county to make payments and reduce outstanding amount of accounts receivable.

## Office of Minority & Women Business Development

This office strives to enhance the City's growth and economic stability through the promotion of contracting and procurement

opportunities for the minority-, women-, veteran-, and disability-owned business enterprises it has certified. This office's primary goals are to promote meaningful business opportunities, build productive partnerships, and create successful integration of certified minority-, women-, veteran-, and disability-owned business enterprises within the business infrastructure of the City of Indianapolis. This office also monitors contract compliance and bid evaluations to ensure good faith efforts are made to meet the utilization goals in place for all city, county, and municipal agencies. The Office of Equal Opportunity is also housed in this office.

**Office of Equal Opportunity.** This office and its board are empowered to carry out the public policy of the State, as stated in the Indiana Civil Rights Law and the Indiana Fair Housing Law, within the territorial boundaries of Marion County, and the public policy of the City of Indianapolis as stated in the Human Rights Ordinance. It receives, investigates, and adjudicates community complaints with respect to any discriminatory practice occurring within the territorial boundaries of Marion County and which relates to (1) acquisition of real estate; (2) employment; (3) education; or (4) public accommodations.

## Office of Public Health and Safety (PHS)

Newly created in 2016 with full implementation to occur in 2017, the Office of Public Health and Safety (PHS) is meant to provide a holistic approach to crime prevention and mental health while also streamlining the bureaucracy in these areas. (Creation of this office followed the elimination of the Department of Public Safety and the elevation of Police and Fire

to their own city departments reporting directly to the Mayor.) The Office of Public Health and Safety will oversee Public Safety Communications, Indianapolis Emergency Medical Services, and Re-Entry services. The office plans to open the Albert G. and Sara I. Reuben Engagement Center for the city's homeless adults by the end of 2016.

### **Division of Public Safety**

**Communications.** This division is responsible for operating the emergency communication systems and computer facilities for all participating public safety agencies in Marion County. This division receives and reviews with comment and recommendation all reports, requests, and documents on public safety communications operations in Marion County and coordinates with participating governments and agencies all activities necessary to ensure compatibility of the public safety communications systems and computer facilities.

### **Indianapolis Emergency Medical**

**Services Division.** This division is responsible for providing transport emergency medical services throughout the fire special service district, and in those areas in which the Indianapolis fire department has contracted to provide transport emergency medical services. IEMS is administered by a chief who is nominated by the Indiana University School of Medicine, approved by the Health and Hospital Corporation of Marion County, and formally appointed by the Director of Public Safety. The IEMS chief is a physician, board-certified in emergency medicine and fellowship-trained in emergency medical services, and an employee and faculty member of Indiana University School of Medicine.

**Re-Entry Services.** The mission of

Re-Entry Services is to develop collaborative partnerships among government, businesses, faith-based organizations, and community members to leverage resources to decrease recidivism among ex-offenders. The Mayor's Re-entry Program does not conduct direct services; however, it utilizes all resources available to assist in the process and shape policy.

### **Albert G. and Sara I. Reuben Engagement**

**Center.** The Center will provide shelter, medical detox, case management, mental health evaluations and housing referrals to chronically homeless, substance-addicted, mentally ill individuals. The engagement center will provide a safe place for homeless individuals who are experiencing drug or alcohol intoxication to be diverted from jail, or an emergency room, and who are unable to gain access to emergency shelter options due to active substance abuse. The center will provide a safe place for medical detoxification to occur and an opportunity to engage in community resources and services aimed at recovery and permanent housing. The Engagement Center will work closely to enhance successful transition to permanent supportive housing and placement into treatment and long-term rehabilitation when individuals are ready for this step.

## ***The County***

\*Citizen-led oversight boards, commissions, and committees are in italics.

The state constitution establishes eight elected county officers: Auditor, Clerk of the Circuit Court, Coroner, Prosecutor, Sheriff, Surveyor, Recorder, and Treasurer. In addition to these, state law provides for an elected County Assessor. Each county official is elected to a four year term. There are no term limits for the Prosecutor,

Assessor, or Surveyor.

**Assessor.** Under the jurisdiction of the Department of Local Government Finance, the County Assessor's duties include the assessment of real and personal property for taxation. Assessments fall under three categories: real estate, business personal property, and personal property. Personal property includes vehicles not subject to excise tax, as well as trailers, campers, snowmobiles, and boats not subject to excise tax. The Assessor certifies the various assessed property values for the preparation of tax bills. The Assessor answers questions regarding ownership, description and value of property, deeds, and transfer of ownership. The Assessor also serves as Secretary to the Property Tax Assessment Board of Appeals (PTABOA). The PTABOA decides real estate and personal property tax appeals. The Assessor calculates inheritance taxes that are due and processes applications for property tax exemptions. Along with the Auditor and Treasurer, the Assessor is one of three County Commissioners.

**Auditor.** In Marion County, the Auditor is responsible for (i) accounting; (ii) payroll, accounts payable, and accounts receivable; (iii) revenue and tax distributions; and (iv) maintenance of property records for both the city and county. The powers and duties related to the fixing and reviewing of budgets, tax rates, and tax levies for the county are performed by the City Controller, who is the chief financial officer of both the city and county.

The Auditor is responsible for keeping all ledgers and records affecting city and county funds, as well as for ensuring that such funds are received and disbursed according to the law. Upon receipt of taxes collected by the Treasurer, the Auditor dis-

tributes funds to the local units of government for which the funds were collected. By August first of each year, the Auditor provides estimates of the assessed valuation of each unit of government in order to prepare the taxing budget for the new year, as well as the county operating budget.

The Auditor serves as a County Commissioner and as ex-officio secretary of several county boards as well as approving and issuing warrants for monies expended by all city and county entities. Before they are recorded, all property transfers are entered for taxation in the Auditor's office. The Auditor coordinates with the Treasurer in conducting the annual tax sale of real estate disposed for delinquent taxes. The Auditor also handles homestead, mortgage, disability, and veteran exemptions, exemptions for property owners over sixty-five years of age, and sales disclosure forms, as well as the real estate property tax abatement program.

**Clerk of the Circuit Court (County Clerk).**

This is a constitutional office that serves a dual role as state election law administrator and administrator to the judiciary. By statute, the General Assembly has assigned responsibility for many of the administrative functions of the County Clerk. The following is a brief description of the functions of the County Clerk.

**Election Related Functions:** Elections are fundamental to our democracy and the responsibility of making sure elections run smoothly is given to the County Clerks. County Clerks administer Indiana's election laws in a nonpartisan manner by making sure all polling sites meet state and federal guidelines and that election workers are trained. The Clerk also receives candidacy fillings from persons seeking



certain elective public offices and issues certificates of election to successful local candidates (except in the cases of constitutional officers, who receive their commissions from the Governor). The Clerk serves as an ex-officio member and secretary of the County Election Board and as a member and clerk of the County Board of Canvassers.

**Judicial Related Functions:** Access to the courts often begins in the County Clerks' office. The Clerk maintains all records of pleadings, motions, papers, evidence, and court rulings of the court. The Clerk also issues summonses and subpoenas to witnesses ordering them to appear in court. The Clerk issues and records marriage licenses, maintains oaths of offices, assigns election duties, and keeps a record of all judgments, orders, and decrees of the court. The Clerk also must certify and attest to complete transcripts of court proceedings involving title to property, the imposition of prison sentences and in all court cases where a complete court record is required. The Clerk collects court costs, fines, and money judgments levied by the court. In the case of a money judgment, the Clerk pays the money to the person or entity entitled to the judgment. In recent years, the collection of child support has become a major responsibility of the Clerk's office.

**Coroner.** The Coroner investigates all suspicious deaths, including homicides, suicides, accidents, child, and infant deaths. Assisted by the police and various laboratories, the Coroner attempts to determine the cause of death. After investigation, the Coroner completes a verdict and makes it available upon request. The Coroner deals directly with families, giving information and taking care of the personal effects of

the deceased. If the Sheriff is absent or disqualified from serving, the Coroner performs the Sheriff's duties.

**Prosecutor.** The Prosecutor is an office mandated by the Indiana Constitution. The Prosecutor is the senior enforcement officer in the county and is elected for a four year term. Representing the 19th Judicial Circuit, the Marion County Prosecutor levies lawsuits against those who violate state criminal and traffic laws within county boundaries. The Prosecutor's Office has 11 divisions.

**Child Support Division.** Responsible for the enforcement and collection of court orders issued by Marion County Superior and Circuit Courts for child support. Also, responsible for collection of child support orders issued by other states' courts issued to Marion County residents.

**Major Case Division.** Handles major felony cases, including homicides, in the six major felony courts of Marion County. Felonies are the most serious criminal violations and carry the most severe terms of incarceration. Each of these courts is assigned a Victim Advocate who has the responsibility of communicating information and support throughout the judicial process and of connecting victims with recovery resources.

**Strategic Prosecution Unit.** Formed in 2015, this unit is responsible for making criminal charging determinations on homicides, driving offenses resulting in deaths, child deaths, attempted murders and aggravated assaults. Crime data analysts assist in the strategic prosecution of offenders across all divisions.

**Special Victims Unit.** This unit is



comprised of Deputy Prosecutors who specialize in sex crimes, child abuse, and domestic violence. They also handle the prosecution of human trafficking. Additionally, deputy prosecutors are located at the Julian Center to facilitate onsite assistance for victims of domestic violence and investigation of potential criminal charges. The Prosecutor's Office manages the Marion County Child Advocacy Center where a child who may have been victimized or witnessed a violent crime can be interviewed by highly trained child interviewers in a private, child-friendly environment. Deputy prosecutors, Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department (IMPD) Child Abuse Detectives, Department of Child Services (DCS) investigators and caseworkers all collaborate under one roof at the Child Advocacy Center to coordinate a unified response to child abuse reports.

**Strike Team.** This division is responsible for three areas of crime—drugs, guns and gangs. Most criminal activity is rooted in one of these core areas of crime and vigorous prosecution is essential to the safety of the community. The Strike Team partners with various police teams to assist in investigations, arrests, charging decisions, and, ultimately, presentation of the case to the court.

**Grand Jury Division.** For most cases the Prosecutor depends upon the various police agencies to investigate criminal activity. However, for cases involving white collar crime, public corruption, tax evasion and other longer-term investigations, the Prosecutor has a staff of investigators employed by various police agencies and deputy prosecutors dedicated to the collection of evidence and prosecution of these cases. As an alternative to sending an investigation

through the Criminal Charging Division, evidence may be presented to a Grand Jury composed of six Marion County citizens to determine whether criminal charges will be filed by way of an indictment.

**Juvenile Division.** Files and prosecutes charges against children 17 years of age and younger. Exceptions for more serious crimes are handled by the adult courts. This division processes all cases from truancy to armed robbery.

**Level 6 Felony Division.** Handles the prosecution of all misdemeanor Level 6 felony criminal cases. Typical cases include driving while intoxicated, theft, shoplifting, battery, and prostitution, vandalism, moving traffic violations and trespassing. This division handles more criminal cases than all other divisions combined.

**Criminal Charging Division.** Police agencies present cases to this division for review. Deputy prosecutors determine what charges are to be brought and what additional investigation is necessary. The Prosecutor has complete discretion to file charges or not, as well as to determine which charges are to be filed.

**Community Prosecution Division.** Community prosecutors are assigned to the various police districts and special areas like the Indianapolis Housing Agency. These prosecutors work closely with district commanders and detectives to develop strategies to protect and defend the communities served by the individual police districts. Community prosecutors engage in community outreach programs to bring the criminal justice system and crime prevention

programming to as many Marion County residents as possible.

**Special Assignments Division.** This division has various areas of interest to the Prosecutor. Currently there is a forfeiture unit that seizes property used in criminal enterprises, a prosecutor training unit that offers in-service training to deputy prosecutors, a post-conviction unit that responds to requests for sentence modifications after a person is convicted of a crime and requests for sealing and expungement of arrest and conviction records, and a check deception unit that prosecutes cases of insufficient funds checks.

**Marion County Public Defender Agency.** The U.S. and Indiana Constitutions mandate that indigent persons charged with criminal offenses shall be provided effective representation of trial and appellate counsel at public expense. The agency staffs all major felony courts, D felony courts, misdemeanor courts, Title IV D court, juvenile courts, termination of parental rights/children in need of services cases, and all criminal appeals.

**Recorder.** The chief function of the County Recorder is to preserve public records such as deeds, mortgages, liens, articles of incorporation, military service discharges, and assumed business names. All records pertinent to ownership of real estate must be recorded in order to establish and guarantee title.

**Sheriff.** The Sheriff's law enforcement deputies were consolidated into IMPD in 2007. In Marion County, therefore, the Sheriff is responsible for (i) county jail operations and facilities; (ii) emergency communications; (iii) security for city and county buildings and property; (iv) service

of civil process and collection of taxes under tax warrants; and (v) sex and violent offender registration.

A sheriff's deputy is authorized to issue tickets or to make an arrest anywhere in the county. Their duties include keeping the peace, apprehending law violators, keeping order in the courts, enforcing election laws, and maintaining the county jail and its prisoners. The Sheriff also serves all orders as directed by the courts, serves all legal processes of the County Election Board, and collects delinquent taxes. An arrested person is taken to the Arrestee Processing Center for identification and determination of bond. The family of an arrested person may obtain information about court appearances and bail from the Sheriff's Department.

**Surveyor.** The Surveyor has responsibility for measuring and establishing the boundaries of county land and for keeping county survey records. The Surveyor determines all section corners and verifies and maintains corner markers. This work is the basis of all land descriptions and locations in the county. The Surveyor is the most authoritative expert witness in survey related matters. The Surveyor's Office is able to supply plans, public domain locations, and right-of-way and other technical information for the benefit of anyone who has need of it, including individuals and developers.

**Treasurer.** The Treasurer's duties are to bill, collect, account for, and distribute all collected property taxes, and to manage and invest the county's funds. The Treasurer also provides financial analysis related to these functions, and is a member of the Board of County Commissioners. This official works to solve tax-bill problems brought forward by citizens, and collabo-

rates as needed with other offices, such as the Auditor.

## County Boards, Offices, and Agencies

**Board of County Commissioners.** The Board of County Commissioners is composed of the Assessor, Auditor, and Treasurer. It makes appointments to certain municipal corporation boards. The board meets once a month.

**Board of Voter Registration.** Consisting of two members, one from each major political party, this board supervises the registration of Marion County voters. It keeps a permanent record of registered voters, which is public information. Voters may be registered at the Board of Voter Registration Office during open registration periods. Citizens may also register in-person at the Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV), online at indianapolisvoters.com, or obtain a paper (mail-in) form at the public library.

**County Election Board.** The Marion County Election Board (MCEB) has three members—the County Clerk and two members, one from each major political party, appointed by the Clerk. Charged with the responsibility for conducting all elections and administering election laws in the county, the board takes care of the voting machines, prints and distributes the ballots, and appoints and trains precinct election officials. The board receives and maintains files of candidates' campaign financial reports. It interprets and clarifies election laws for the Board of Voter Registration and handles any question of a candidate's legal qualifications for a county or township office. Voters wishing to learn about in-person early voting and/or absentee-by-mail voting options should

contact the MCEB at (317) 327-5100 or visit the Election Board website at [indy.gov/election](http://indy.gov/election).

### State of Indiana Division of Family

**Resources.** Marion County once had a Department of Public Welfare which later changed to the County Office of Family and Children. The county is now served by a local office of the State of Indiana Division of Family Resources (DFR). The DFR is responsible for establishing eligibility for Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP—food assistance), and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF—cash assistance) benefits. It manages the timely and accurate delivery of SNAP and TANF benefits and provides employment and training services to some SNAP and TANF recipients.

### Indianapolis–Marion County Forensic

**Services Agency.** The Forensic Services Agency provides criminal forensic services from its scientific laboratory for agencies, departments, and divisions of local government. The agency is governed by a five-member board, which includes the Coroner, the Sheriff, the Chief of the Indianapolis Police Department, one person (who must have professional experience in forensics or a related discipline) appointed by the Mayor, and one by the City-County Council. The County Auditor serves as an ex-officio member of the board. The board sets policy, fixes rates, and recommends to the Mayor a director for the agency. The director oversees the daily operation of the agency and supervises personnel.

**Information Services Agency.** The Information Services Agency (ISA) provides computer and technology services to city and county government and is headed by the Chief Information Officer (CIO).

### **Marion County Information**

**Technology Board.** The Board hires the CIO, sets policies for the agency, and oversees technology expenditures. The Board is made up of the following: two technology professionals, one appointed by the Mayor and one appointed by the Council; the Assessor; three of the other four county constitutional officeholders; a representative for the Marion Superior Court appointed by the presiding judges; and two City employees appointed by the Mayor.

## **Municipal Corporations**



**Capital Improvement Board (CIB).** The CIB's responsibility has been the operation of the Indiana Convention Center and Lucas Oil Stadium, as well as the ownership of Victory Field, Conseco Fieldhouse, and complimentary downtown properties. Funding comes from hotel/motel taxes collected by the state, state cigarette taxes allocated to the county, a one percent food and beverage tax, and rentals and other receipts paid for the use of the facilities. Their nine member board meets once a month. The CIB's annual budget must be approved by the City-County Council and Mayor.

**Health and Hospital Corporation (HHC).** This municipal corporation operates the Marion County Public Health Department, Eskenazi Health (formerly Wishard Health

Services), and Indianapolis Emergency Medical Services. Its executive division provides fiscal and legal administration support for the corporation. HHC's annual budget must be approved by the City-County Council and Mayor.

A seven-member Board of Trustees, each appointed to a four-year term by the Mayor (3), City-County Council (2), and the County Commissioners (2) has the power to enact legislation and enforce the provisions of the legislation it enacts, in addition to its executive agency powers. Legislation enacted is in the general areas of environmental regulation, communicable disease regulation, and corporate and administrative matters.

### **Marion County Public Health**

**Department (MCPH).** MCPH deals with both traditional health problems (infectious diseases, reducing infant mortality, and improving immunizations) and environmental health regulations (illegal dumping, hazardous materials response and reporting, and rodent control). It issues birth certificates and death certificates, which may be obtained at 3838 N. Rural Street.

**Eskenazi Health.** Eskenazi Health provides the public hospital service for the county. Eskenazi Health's nationally recognized programs include a level I trauma center, regional burn center, comprehensive senior care program, women's and children's services, teen and adolescent care programs, Midtown Community Mental Health Center, and a network of primary care sites located throughout the neighborhoods of Indianapolis. Eskenazi Health partners with the Indiana University School of Medicine whose physicians provide a comprehensive range of primary and

specialty care services. In 2009, Marion County voters approved (with 85% support) construction of a new hospital. The organization, then known as Wishard, received a \$40 million gift from Indianapolis's Sidney and Lois Eskenazi, in honor of whom HHC named the new hospital and health system upon completion in December 2013.

**Indianapolis Airport Authority.** The Indianapolis Airport Authority is a municipal corporation that was created to develop, administer and operate an air transportation system for Marion County and Central Indiana. The Airport Authority Board, consisting of nine voting members, each appointed to a four-year term by the Mayor (5), the majority leader of the City-County Council (1), and the County Commissioners of Hancock (1), Hamilton (1), and Hendricks (1), and one non-voting advisory member from Morgan County, has executive and legislative powers to make policy and oversees the operations of not only the Indianapolis International Airport, but also the Downtown Heliport and four smaller airports in Central Indiana.

**Indianapolis-Marion County Building Authority.** This municipal corporation acts as a "landlord" for the City-County Building and 18 other city and county governmental properties, collecting rents and making necessary changes and improvements. Its budget is reviewed by the Administration Committee of the City-County Council. Its debt service is paid from rent collected from the City of Indianapolis and Marion County. The Building Authority has a five-member Board of Trustees appointed by the Mayor (3) and the City-County Council (2). The Trustees, in turn, appoint a five-member Board of Directors that is responsible for

all Building Authority properties, including the City-County Building and grounds.

**Indianapolis-Marion County Public Library, known as IndyPL.** A large Central Library downtown and its 23 branches serve the entire County except the City of Speedway. In addition, Frog and Toad, two full-service mobile units provide a regular schedule of outreach. The libraries offer online digital services through its website ([indypl.org](http://indypl.org)). The collections offer more than 1.7 million physical items as well as 200,000 eBooks, audiobooks, and online publications. Services include traditional reference as well as "Text a Librarian," and high speed internet access at all locations, including the mobile units. A library card is free to all residents and property owners of Marion County (except Speedway) as well as to students of Marion County schools.

The seven-member Library Board is the governing body of the agency. Members are appointed by the City-County Council (2), County Commissioners (3), and the Indianapolis Board of School Commissioners (2) to terms of four years each. This board may issue bonds and levy taxes with approval from the City-County Council and the Mayor. Its source of funds is primarily property tax, with some excise and financial institutions tax. Unlike most Indiana libraries, IndyPL does not have a statutory allocation of County Income Tax. Its board meets monthly and annual budgets must be approved by the City-County Council and Mayor.

**Indianapolis Public Improvement Bond Bank, known as the Indianapolis Bond Bank.** In 1985, with the assistance of the Indiana General Assembly, the City of Indianapolis established the Indianapolis Local Public Improvement Bond Bank, the first municipal bond bank in the country.

The Bond Bank is a municipal corporation that serves as the debt issuance and management arm of the City of Indianapolis and related “Qualified Entities.” These entities include special taxing districts, political subdivisions, and building/leasing authorities. Since its inception, the Indianapolis Local Public Improvement Bond Bank has issued nearly \$13 billion in bonds and notes on behalf of various Qualified Entities of the City of Indianapolis and Marion County.

The Bond Bank is governed by a five-member Board of Directors appointed by the Mayor. Directors serve three (3) year terms and may be reappointed provided they continue to meet the statutory requirements. The Bond Bank is funded by fees it is paid for the services it performs on behalf of its qualified entities. These services include advisory and management services in connection with the review and/or purchase and sale of securities. It has no taxing authority and its annual budget is approved by the Board of Directors.

**Indianapolis Public Transportation Corporation (IndyGo).** This municipal corporation is responsible for the public transportation system for the Indianapolis metropolitan area. Services include Fixed and Paratransit (“Open Door”— services for persons with disabilities). The corporation is governed by a seven-member board of directors, appointed by the Mayor (3) and City-County Council (4). Board members serve four year terms. The board has the authority to issue bonds and levy taxes with City Council approval. The corporation’s operating budget is funded from the fare box, federal, state, and local tax dollars, and advertising revenues. Annual budgets must be approved by the City-County Council and the Mayor.

The IndyGo Customer Service Center, which provides schedule information, sells bus passes, issues half-fare ID cards, and provides information in several languages, is located in the downtown Julia M. Carson Transit Center.



# LEGISLATIVE BRANCH



## The Council

The City-County Council is the primary legislative body of the Consolidated City and County. It has the exclusive power to adopt budgets, levy taxes, and make appropriations for the operation of the City. It enacts, repeals, or amends local laws called ordinances. It appoints some boards and commissions and confirms the Mayor's high-ranking appointments. The officers of the council are the President, Vice-President, the Majority Leader, and the Minority Leader. Staff includes a Clerk, Assistant Clerk, Research Director, Chief Financial Officer, and General Counsel, in addition to an Assistant Attorney to advise the minority party members.

All ordinances and resolutions must be introduced by Council members. Citizens may participate in this process by approaching a Council member with an idea or proposal for an ordinance or resolution. These proposals are introduced into the

Council and are assigned to the appropriate committee for consideration. The committee holds a public hearing to receive citizen input, then decides to table the ordinance or bring it before the entire Council, or to a Special Service District Council, if appropriate, with a recommendation to pass or not to pass. When an ordinance is passed by the Council, it is then sent to the Mayor for signature or veto. A citizen may write or call to influence the Mayor's decision. The Council may override a veto with a two-thirds majority vote.

The City-County Council may also hear an appeal of a favorable zoning decision made by the Metropolitan Development Commission. The Councilor for the district in which the land in question is located must agree to request a hearing and the council must agree to hold a hearing. A vote of 18 members of the Council is required to change a decision of the Metropolitan Development Commission.

**City-County Council.** The City-County Council is the legislative branch of Unigov. The Council has twenty-five members who are elected by the voters of their districts to four year terms. The county is divided into twenty-five council districts which must be as equal as practicable in population, compact in size and shape, and follow natural boundary lines, such as roads or creeks.

**Committees.** The City-County Council is organized through a committee system of three permanent committees and nine standing committees. It also has three Special Service District Councils and may establish investigative committees.

**Permanent Committees.** The Committee on Committees includes the President of the Council, the Majority Leader, and the Minority Leader. Its function is to name the members of the Standing Committees. The Committee on Rules and Public Policy has eight members, including the President, the Majority Leader, and the Minority Leader, who consider and recommend proposed changes to the rules of the City-County Council and function as a Standing Committee on any matter referred to them by the President or the Council. The Committee of the Whole Council includes every member of the Council. By declaration of the President or by a motion, the Council may form itself as a Committee of the Whole Council. This is done whenever the public is entitled to a public hearing.

**Standing Committees.** The Council has Standing Committees for each of the City Departments. These committees have power to review and investigate policies and expenditures of those departments. There are also Standing Committees on Finance, Economic Development, Independent Municipal Corporations, and Community

Affairs. The number of members on the committees is determined by the Committee on Committees. Each committee has no fewer than three members and at least one minority member. The Standing Committees consider all proposals referred to them by the Council and must hear a proposal within forty-five days. All committee meetings are open to the general public, except for those meetings or part of meetings that are permitted by the Open Door law to be closed. Each committee establishes at least one regular meeting per month.

**Special Service District Councils.** The Fire Special Service District Council, Police Special Service District Council, and Solid Waste Special Service District Council act on matters pertaining to their districts. All Councilors serve on the three Special Service District Councils.

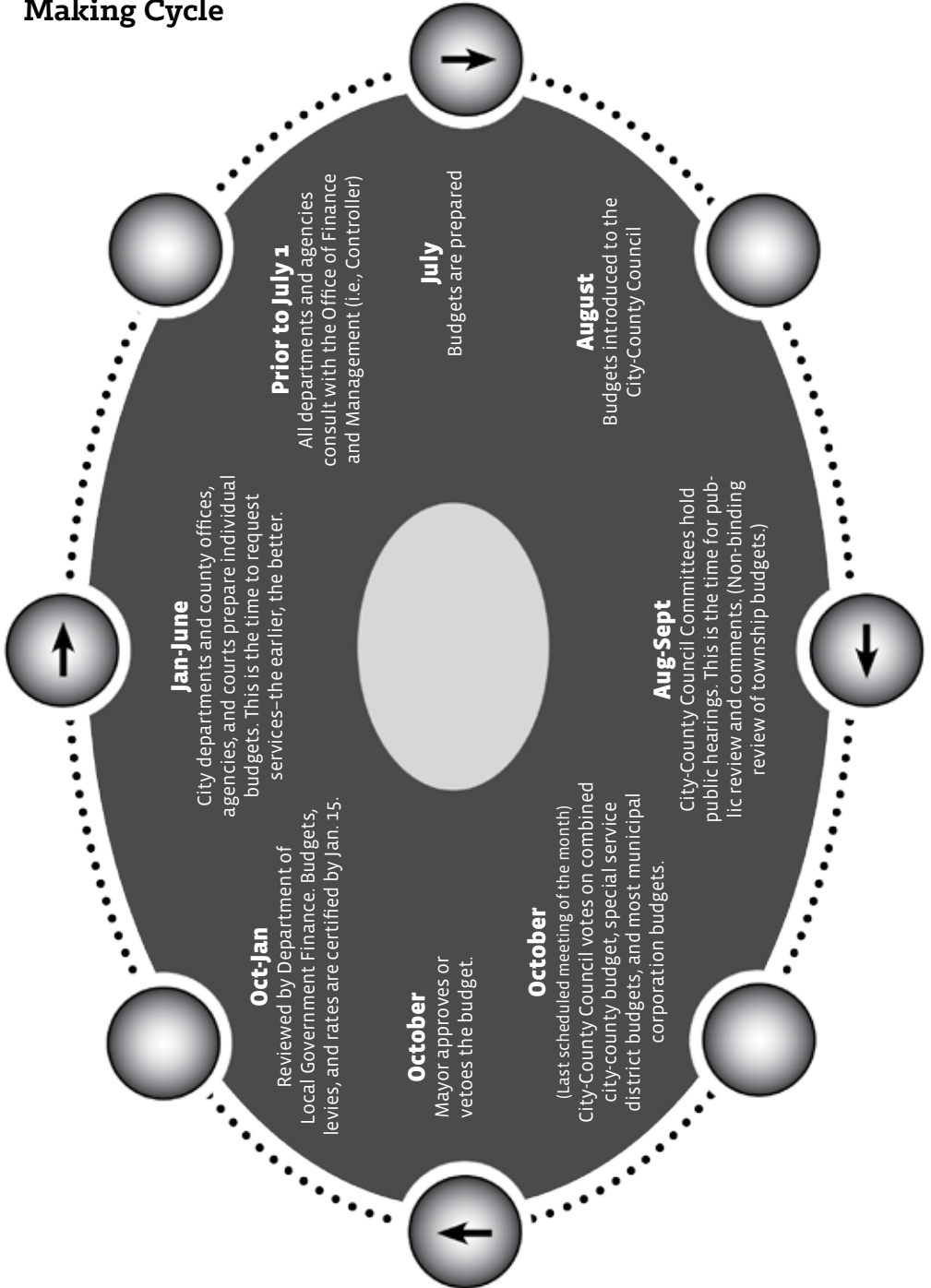
Budget ordinances pertaining to the Special Service Districts originate in these Special Service District Councils. Police and fire ordinances are considered by the Public Safety and Criminal Justice Committee of the City-County Council and solid waste ordinances by the Public Works Committee.

**Special Committees.** Special committees may be formed by the Council President or by a majority vote of Council members for any specific and proper purpose. They are to have an odd number of members with at least one from a minority party.

**Investigative Committees.** The City-County Council members may resolve to establish investigative committees for any lawful purpose. The resolution is to specify the membership of the committee, the nature of its investigation, and the power to subpoena witnesses, if that power is granted.



## Annual Budget Making Cycle



## Budget Process

In January, the various city and county budgets begin their journey through the budget process. City departments, county offices and agencies, and the courts prepare an individual budget which will emerge at the end of the process the following January (at the earliest) as a unified City-County budget. Prior to July 1, all city and county officials, departments, and agencies work with the Office of Finance and Management. Any citizen who wants to have a new service put into the budget should contact the Mayor's office early in the year.

At the first August Council meeting, the budget ordinances are introduced by the Mayor to the City-County Council. During August and September, each Council Committee holds public hearings on the budget of the department or agency for which it is responsible. This is another step in the process where citizens can be involved. A copy of the proposed budget, broken down into categories, can be seen at the City-County Council office or online at [indy.gov](http://indy.gov).

The city and county budgets are combined into one ordinance which is approved by the council at its last meeting in October. The budget is presented in the newspaper twice before this date. It is difficult to effect any change at this point, and the council may not pass a budget above the level advertised. In addition, there are separate budget ordinances for the three Special Service Districts and five of the six independent municipal corporations (Health and Hospital, Airport Authority, Indianapolis Public Transportation Corporation, Capital Improvement Board, and the Library Board). The Building Authority is included in the City-County budget. The

City Departments and the Council may reduce budgets and rates, but any reduction may be appealed to the Department of Local Government Finance.

The Mayor may veto single items in the City-County and Special Service District budgets with the exception of funds for a judicial office or officers, a constitutional office, or the independent municipal corporations. The council may override a veto by a two-thirds vote. The council has no control over the budgets of the remaining units of government, which go directly to the Department of Local Government Finance.

The final step for the budget is review and approval by the Department of Local Government Finance. The DLGF is the entity of last resort to set budgets for the coming year and, based on the DLGF's assessment of the budget, may amend a local unit's appropriation amount, tax rate, tax levy, or miscellaneous revenues. Except for debt service funds, it may not increase a budget or tax rate above the level originally presented by the local unit of government. The Department has various resources available by state law to address budget issues. The state DLGF normally certifies annual local units of government budgets early in the new calendar year.



## Financing City-County Government

When the Indiana General Assembly created a unified system of government in 1970, geographic boundaries and many administrative functions and services were consolidated and expanded county-wide. The tax base for some services was also expanded county-wide. However, many taxing units with unique geographic boundaries existed and were retained and since then more have been created. This proliferation of taxing units contributes to a complicated tax structure.

There are 43 different governmental units in Marion County that provide services and impose taxes. They are as follows:

- Marion County
- Consolidated City
- nine townships
- four Excluded Cities
- eight Included Towns
- two separate library boards\*
- eleven school districts
- two conservancy districts
- five independent municipal corporations

\*As of June 1, 2016, the Beech Grove Public Library merged with IndyPL. Beyond 2016, tax revenues from the Beech Grove Library District will be assumed by the Indianapolis Public Library District.

In addition, there are 17 more taxing units within the Consolidated City. All of these units levy taxes and provide services to one or more geographic areas. The location of an individual's property governs what set of governmental services it receives and what total tax rate it pays. There are 61 taxing districts in the county, each one receiving a unique combination of services and, therefore, potentially paying a unique total tax rate.

In addition to property taxes paid by those who live and own property in Marion County, those individuals who live in Marion County and earn income are subject to the County Option Income Tax (COIT). The income tax rate in Marion County is 1.77% of gross income (with some exceptions for non-taxable earned income) and all who live in Marion County pay

that rate, regardless of where in the county they live. Of the 1.77%, 0.50% is dedicated to public safety (police, fire, sheriff, courts, etc.), 1.00% is used to fund public safety primarily, along with city and county operations, redevelopment, etc., and the other 0.27% is used to support a property tax levy freeze. Those individuals who live outside of Marion County but work in Marion County, pay income taxes to the county they reside in. No income from those earnings comes to Marion County.

In 2007, the Indiana General Assembly enacted legislation to allow for a property tax cap referendum. In 2010, Indiana voters approved a referendum to insert property tax caps into the state Constitution. In 2012, those went into effect, basically reducing the income local units of government could get from property tax revenue and capping how much property owners would pay. The referendum capped property taxes at 1%, 2% or 3% based on the type of property owned by the individual or entity. Today, property tax caps have reduced the City of Indianapolis's and Marion County's annual budget by \$52 million, without any reduction in expenses.

Other units have been created to solve a problem created by the state Constitution's a two-percent debt limit on local government. One source of funds for local government is the sale of bonds. Each individual unit of government may borrow (sell bonds) up to two percent of its assessed valuation. There are a few exceptions. For example, the Indianapolis Public Transportation Corporation (IndyGo) has a debt limit of one percent and the Sanitary District has a twelve percent limit to allow for construction of large scale facilities. Thus, by creating new units of government,

more borrowing power through bonding is allowed. Bond financing is used for major capital projects that have a long, useful life. Other local sources of revenue for local government are the property tax, county option income tax, vehicle excise tax, county wheel tax and excise surtax, financial institutions tax, and fees and charges.

State sources of revenue coming to the local government allow up to a 20% (varies depending on tax district) property tax refund, plus a portion of the revenue the state receives from gasoline, alcohol, intangible, and inheritance taxes. The state dictates how most of these funds are to be spent.

Federal funds come to the local government through a variety of programs. Most federal funds are for specific purposes and their use must comply with stringent guidelines.

# JUDICIAL BRANCH



The Indiana Constitution provides for a Supreme Court, a Court of Appeals (both of these courts have state-wide jurisdiction), Circuit Courts, and “such other courts” as the General Assembly may establish as they become necessary.

Marion County, the nineteenth judicial circuit for the state of Indiana, has a Circuit Court, a Superior Court, and a Small Claims Court. The judge of the Circuit Court is elected for six years. In addition to having judicial powers, the Circuit Court judge makes appointments to some Marion County boards. The Superior Court has four divisions (Civil, Criminal, Probate, and Juvenile) and thirty-two judges who are also elected to six-year terms. No more than sixteen may be affiliated with the same political party. These judges elect a presiding judge and two associate presiding judges every two years and assign each judge to one of the courtrooms.

\*Citizen-led oversight boards, commissions, and committees are in italics.

**Circuit and Superior Courts.** The Circuit Court and Superior Court, Civil Division (11 rooms), have the same jurisdiction in all civil actions and actions for dissolutions of marriage. The Superior Court, Probate Division, has jurisdiction in probating wills, appointing guardians and executors, administering estates, and other similar matters. The Superior Court, Juvenile Division, has original and exclusive jurisdiction in all cases of persons under eighteen years of age. However, it may relinquish jurisdiction to the Criminal Division of Superior Court if deemed appropriate. The Juvenile Court judge has responsibility for the release and control of records and may destroy records, which is not ordinarily the case in other courts. The Superior Court, Criminal Division (19 rooms), has original jurisdiction in all misdemeanor and felony cases.

Vacancies in judgeships in the Superior Courts are filled through appointment by the Governor. Not only does a judge hear cases, he or she hires and supervises a staff of court reporters, bailiffs, clerks, and assistants. Judges also assist central administrative staff in compiling a single budget. The budget is sent to the Office of Finance & Management and becomes part of the budget process of the City-County Council.

Other functions of the court include a jury pool\*, which summons the hundreds of jurors the courts need each week and a Domestic Relations Counseling Bureau, which meets with families going through divorce or separation and recommends to the court options that are in the best interests of the children involved. (\*In the past, potential jurors were called using voter registration lists. These lists did not include all segments of potential jurors over 18 and, in some cases, caused a disincentive to vote. Since 2005, the Indiana Supreme Court and the Indiana Jury Committee annually compile a Statewide Jury Pool List based on data supplied by the Indiana Department of Revenue (DOR) and Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV).)

Specialized dockets with the Superior Court include the following:

**Environmental Court.** This court hears cases ranging from poor property upkeep to large-scale contamination of public land, air, or water.

**Community Court.** Brings residents and business owners of specific neighborhoods together to seek input on how law enforcement and the judicial system can make the neighborhood better. Those convicted of misdemeanors by the court

are immediately assigned to community service work in that neighborhood.

**Traffic Court.** Hears all traffic-related cases from speeding to driving while suspended. This court handles more than 100,000 tickets per year.

**Domestic Violence.** Three domestic violence courtrooms are dedicated to hearing cases involving violence among family members. The court also handles a huge number of protective orders.

**Small Claims Court.** There are nine Small Claims courtrooms, one in each township. Judges are elected by the voters in each township. This is not a court of record and only corporations are required to be represented by an attorney. These courts have jurisdiction in all civil cases in which claims are no more than \$6,000. There are no jury trials in Small Claims courts. Appeals from these courts are made to Superior Court, Civil Division.

**Grand Jury.** The Grand Jury inquires into all cases of persons imprisoned and not indicted, persons out on bail but not indicted, all cases of misconduct by public officials, cases concerning conditions and management of jails, and cases involving violation of state criminal laws.

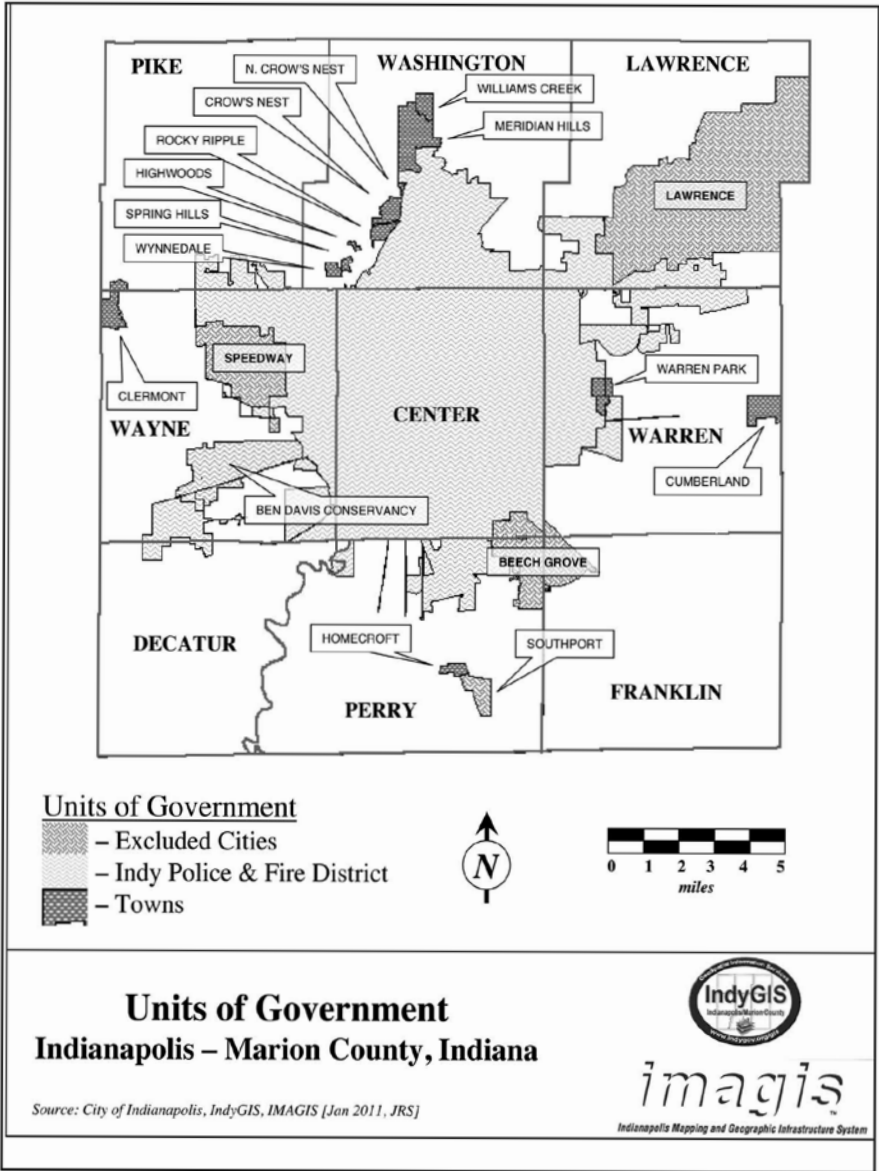
**Petit Jury.** A Petit Jury hears cases brought to trial. A prospective juror may be excused for a valid reason and those over 75 are excused if they choose not to serve.

**Public Defender Board.** This bipartisan board is responsible for policy decisions for the Public Defender Agency and for selecting the director of the agency. The Board was created by ordinance and includes nine members, four appointed

by the City-County Council, four by the Marion Superior Court, and one by the Mayor. The agency provides public defenders for criminal, juvenile, probation violation, direct appeals, extradition, child support, civil commitment, termination of parental rights, children in need of services, and any other legal proceeding where the right to counsel has been established by law.



# Units of Government Map





# OTHER UNITS OF GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

## Boards and Commissions

\*Citizen-led oversight boards, commissions, and committees are in italics.

***Citizens' Police Complaint Board.*** In its current form, the Citizens' Police Complaint Office and Board was established in 1999. The Board is authorized to accept complaints from the public, review Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department (IMPD) internal investigations, and adjudicate allegations of misconduct by IMPD officers. The board is composed of nine civilian members and two IMPD ex-officio members. The Mayor appoints four citizen members and one IMPD member and the Council appoints five citizen members and one IMPD member. The civilians serve three-year terms and the IMPD officers serve two-year terms. All are limited to two consecutive terms.

***Ethics Commission.*** The Ethics Commission, consisting of five members appointed by the Mayor for three-year terms, administers a code of ethics which governs city and county officials, appointees, and employees. The mayor and county officials, employees in specified positions, and members of boards and commissions of the city and county must file a statement of economic interest by May 1st of each year. The board meets when necessary, and the meetings, as well as statements of economic interest, are open to the public.

## **Indianapolis Housing Agency (IHA).**

The Indianapolis Housing Agency is responsible for the design, construction, maintenance, and management of housing for low-income, elderly, and disabled persons. It is financed by revenues received from tenant rents and an annual subsidy from the Housing Assistance Administration of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). A Board of Commissioners that assists in establishing public housing policy is made up of members appointed by the Mayor, City-County Council, and of members elected by the residents. IHA is online at [indyhousing.org](http://indyhousing.org).

## **Marion County Alcoholic Beverage**

***Board.*** The four members of the Marion County Alcoholic Beverage Board are appointed by the Mayor (1), the City-County Council (1), the County Commissioners (1), and the Indiana Alcoholic Beverage Commission (1). The Marion County Alcoholic Beverage Board holds hearings and makes recommendations to approve or deny applications for alcoholic beverage permits for all of Marion County except Lawrence, Beech Grove, and Speedway. The mayor of each of those municipalities appoints one person who sits with the other three to make recommendations for those municipalities. Recommendations of a local board are subject to approval of the state Alcoholic Beverage Commission. Remon-

strance may be sent to the board in care of the Marion County Clerk.

**Marion County Cooperative Extension Service.** The Extension Service provides information, programs and activities for Marion County residents. It reaches the community through extension agents in the program areas of Youth, Home Economics, Agriculture, and Community Development. The Extension agents work with young people, 4-H, women's groups, and various clubs and organizations in the central city, as well as suburban areas of Marion County.

**Public-Private Partnerships Citizens Energy Group.** Citizens Energy Group, a non-profit charitable trust, manages the City's chilled water, gas, and steam. In 2011, the transfer of the City's water and wastewater systems to Citizens was approved by the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission (IURC). Citizens Energy Group's Board of Trustees appoints its own members and appoints a Board of Directors. Its Board of Trustees appoints its own members and appoints a Board of Directors, which oversees the operations of Citizens. By state law, Citizens operates as the city's Department of Public Utilities. The non-profit charitable trust was established in the late 1800s to ensure that the city's gas system kept rates consistent and low. (Citizens operated a coke utility in the 1900s, which has since ceased operations.) In the 1900s, Citizens began operating the chilled water and steam systems. Learn more at [citizensenergygroup.com](http://citizensenergygroup.com).

**Develop Indy.** Develop Indy, a division of the Indy Chamber since 2012, serves as the economic development organization for Indianapolis/Marion County. It exists to help companies retain and create jobs.

Whether a business is considering relocating to or expanding within the city, Develop Indy can provide site selection services, access to government incentive programs, market data and research, networking opportunities, and assistance with permitting, zoning and infrastructure issues. Learn more at [developindy.com](http://developindy.com).

**Indianapolis Downtown, Inc. (IDI).** Indianapolis Downtown, Inc., established in 1993, is a nonprofit organization formed to develop, manage and market downtown Indianapolis. The organization works to make the downtown clean, safe, and convenient. It takes on broader management and economic development responsibilities than its predecessor, the Commission for Downtown. A 27-member board and 63-member advisory board direct IDI. The staff is led by a president. Learn more at [indydt.com](http://indydt.com).

**Indy Partnership.** The Indy Partnership, which is a division of the Indy Chamber, serves as the economic development agency for Central Indiana. Its mission is to attract new companies to the region for increased capital investment and job growth. Nine member counties form the Indy Partnership and collaborate on marketing opportunities (Boone, Marion, Johnson, Hamilton, Hancock, Hendricks, Madison, Morgan, and Shelby). Learn more at [indypartnership.com](http://indypartnership.com).

**Visit Indy.** Visit Indy, formerly known as the Indianapolis Convention and Visitors Association, markets the area as a destination for conventions, meetings, trade shows, special events, group tours, and pleasure travel. It is a private, nonprofit corporation funded by the Capital Improvement Board of Marion County and through membership of companies and

firms. (Visit Indy receives no direct taxes, rather it receives its funding from the CIB and the CIB funds Visit Indy from a variety of sources.) Visit Indy is governed by a board of directors. Its employees work in convention sales, convention services, tourism, membership and development, publications, and finance and administration. It works with the Capital Improvement Board, member businesses, and other organizations to market and promote the city. Learn more at [visitindy.com](http://visitindy.com).

## The Township

Marion County has nine townships: Center, Decatur, Franklin, Lawrence, Perry, Pike, Warren, Washington, and Wayne. Townships are an additional layer of government separate from city and county government.

**Township Trustee.** The Office of the Township Trustee provides direct general assistance to those in need. While the Division of Family Resources administers on-going programs, the Township Trustee gives immediate, emergency aid. The Township Trustee is obligated to provide food, clothing, heating fuel, medical help, utilities, and transportation for employment to those who meet the township's standards for assistance. The Township Trustee's office must help families in need to acquire basic furniture and utensils and try to find employment. The Township Trustee and the Township Advisory Board, elected for four-year terms, hold four yearly meetings, two on budget and two on year-end reports, and may call special meetings for which public notice must be given. Each Township Trustee has an office in the township.

The trustees in Decatur, Pike, and Wayne townships also manage separate fire

departments, as they have not elected to consolidate their fire departments into the Indianapolis Fire Department.

**Township Constable.** Elected for a four-year term, the Constable serves summonses, warrants, and subpoenas enforcing orders of the Small Claims Courts.

**Township Advisory Board.** This Board is elected by the township voters for a four-year term. Until January 1, 2017, township boards will have seven members, but after that time state law provides that those boards will have five members. It is required by law to meet on or before the third Tuesday after the first Monday in February. There is also an annual meeting for the adoption of the annual budget. Other meetings may be called as necessary.

# PART 2

*Be an Active Citizen*



# THE CITIZEN

## Voter Registration and Elections

A citizen must be registered in order to vote. You may register to vote in both the primary and the general elections if you are a citizen of the United States, eighteen years of age by the general or municipal election, a resident of your precinct for thirty days before the next election, and not currently in prison after being convicted of a crime. You do not need to declare a party affiliation when you register. You must be eighteen years old on the day of election in order to vote in any nonpartisan election, held at the same time as the primary.

Voter registration forms are available at public libraries, license branches, and county clerks' offices, among other places. Online voter registration took effect in Indiana on July 1, 2010. Online voter registration can be accomplished through the Indiana Statewide Voter Registration System at [indianavoters.com](http://indianavoters.com). In order to register online, you must have an Indiana Driver's License or State ID number.

Registration closes twenty-nine days before Election Day. If you have moved too late to transfer to your new address, you may still vote under some circumstances; contact the County Election Board (317-327-5100) with your specific situation.

You vote at your precinct polling place, which is open from six a.m. to six p.m. Locations are published in the newspaper or you may call the County Election Board at or political party headquarters. Polling site information can also be obtained via the

Marion County Voter Information Portal at [indy.gov/VIP](http://indy.gov/VIP). In some circumstances, you may vote absentee; contact the County Election Board for information or visit [indy.gov/election](http://indy.gov/election).

Indiana does not have initiative or recall but has passed state laws to permit referendums. For example, in 2008 the Indiana General Assembly changed the way capital projects funded by tax dollars are financed. Capital projects, such as school expansions, must be approved by the voters. In addition, restrictions apply on the ability of governmental entities to campaign on behalf of their referendum.

Ballots in the general election may include amendments to the state constitution. To be adopted, each amendment must pass in two consecutive sessions of the General Assembly. The same measure receive a majority of the popular vote at the next election.

## Be an Informed Voter

Study the candidates, the issues, and your own priorities. Obtain factual information on the candidates. Attend candidate meetings and watch televised forums and debates. Many organizations provide incumbents' voting records, at least on selected issues of interest.

Try to see beyond the emotional appeals and distortion tactics, such as guilt by association, twisted arguments, and labeling the opponent. Try to spot phony issues and evasion of the real issues. Pick candidates whose positions are most like yours on the issues you think are important. No candidate will agree with you on all issues.

## Communicate Your Opinions

As a voter, your opinions help determine how your elected officials may vote on a given issue or what kind of policy decision may be made. Let your representative in government know your views by card, letter, telephone, fax, or e-mail. Be brief and discuss only one issue at a time. Use your own words and identify specific legislation, if possible. Sign your name and address legibly. Begin early, before a bill has been introduced, if you want to see your ideas incorporated into legislation.

The United States Senators and Representatives maintain local offices listed online and in the telephone book. Local and state names, phone numbers, and addresses are available from the City-County Building, the State Capitol, or on their websites.

## Observe Meetings

Observing public meetings keeps you informed of the conduct of public business and the personalities of those involved.

With some exceptions, the Indiana Open Door Law states that all meetings of the governing bodies of public agencies must be open at all times for the purpose of permitting members of the public to observe and record them. The law dictates that: a secret ballot may not be taken; the agenda is to be posted at the entrance; records must be kept and available later; public notice, in most cases, must be given. Executive sessions (closed to the public) may be held only for the purpose of discussion of collective bargaining, litigation, purchase or lease of property, job performance of individuals, and interviews with prospective employees or with industrial or commercial prospects. All final actions and voting must be taken at an open meeting. Political party caucuses are not included in the Open Door Law and are not open to

the public. For more information on Indiana's Open Door Laws, contact the Public Access Counselor at (317) 234-0906 or visit their website at [in.gov/pac](http://in.gov/pac).

When testifying at a public hearing, it is a good idea to write your statement out and to give a copy to each member of the body you are addressing. Keep your statement brief. Tell why you support or oppose the legislation or action and give facts to support your position. Your statement might tell how the measure affects the public interest, who will benefit, how similar laws in other communities have worked, what other groups favor your position, and how much it will cost.

Be prepared to answer questions regarding your position. If you can, have other supporters attend the hearing even though they will not testify. Listen carefully to the statements of your opposition. If facts are misstated and you are given an opportunity to reply, do so in a calm manner.

## Other Skills of a Citizen

A Letter to the Editor can be an effective way to publicly discuss an issue and influence decisions of a legislative body. Your letter is more likely to be printed if you state your points directly and clearly. It is not necessary to type the letter as long as it is written legibly. However, many newspapers also provide online submission forms you can complete on their websites. You must include your name and contact information, but you may request that those not be printed.

Become a member of a group or a coalition to increase your influence. Groups may form around single issues or may be broad-based coalitions. If you find a group that is consistent in its policies and



practices with your beliefs, you often may be more successful working with it, rather than alone.

In order to lobby to pass an ordinance or law, get to know your councilor or legislator and party leaders in person. Attend their neighborhood appearances or other public sessions within the district. Go to them early; supply them with succinct, easy-to-read information and news clips; listen to their views.

One way to seek change is to work for administrative policy adjustment, rather than a change in law. Formal or informal complaints may call attention to a problem. If working through the administrative agency does not bring implementation of existing law and policies, it may be necessary to go to court in the public interest to get results. However, litigation is not necessarily a last resort. It may be the preferred technique from the beginning. It may be necessary to plan a campaign to build public opinion in order to improve the climate for supporting (or opposing) some action.

This might include developing a theme, distributing information, getting spokespersons on TV, radio, and in the press, operating a speaker's bureau, developing a website, staging demonstrations, developing a newsletter and lining up endorsements.

## Become a Candidate for Elective Office

To run for the position of precinct committeeperson or delegate to state convention is a simple process. One must file a declaration of candidacy on the proper form obtained from the County Clerk's office or County Election Board. The form must

be filled out, notarized, and filed with the County Clerk at least 74 days, but not more than 104 days before the May primary. The form may be filed in person or by mail, and no fee is necessary.

A citizen who wants to be a candidate for Mayor, City-County Councilor, or a county or township office must file a declaration of candidacy with the County Clerk. The candidate must be a registered voter in the geographic area he or she would represent.

A candidate for a state legislative office must file a declaration of candidacy with the Secretary of State's office. In addition, candidates usually work with the county party organization, pay a filing fee set by the party, and appear before a party screening committee which slates candidates.

Candidates for statewide offices nominated at the party conventions must file a declaration of candidacy with the state political organization and pay substantial fees, set by the party. At the convention, a candidate must receive a majority vote to become the convention's nominee for office.

The procedure to file to become a candidate for Governor, United States Senator, or United States Representative is the same for each office. The prospective candidate must file a declaration of candidacy with the Secretary of State within 77 days of the primary. In addition, seventy days before the primary, a nominating petition signed by 5,000 certified voters, 500 from each congressional district, must be presented to the Secretary of State by candidates for Governor and United States Senator. For most offices, filing a declaration of candidacy is the simple legal step that

must be taken to run for office. In addition, a candidate needs an organization, funding, advertising, and volunteers. Candidates for certain offices are required to submit periodic financial reports.

## Opportunities for Work within the Political Parties

The League of Women Voters urges you to work actively in the political party of your choice. Indiana is considered a strong political party state, and informed citizens need to understand the political party structure in order to effectively use it.

The **Precinct** is the basic political unit. Voters elect a precinct committeeperson every four years at primary elections. His or her first official duty is to appoint a vice-committeeperson of the opposite sex. If no precinct committeeperson is elected, the county party chairperson may appoint one. The position carries no salary, yet contributes to the very important and powerful county committee of each party. Other ways for a voter to participate at the precinct level are working at the polls on Election Day, being a block captain, helping to poll the neighborhood, and distributing literature.

The next level, the **County Committee**, is composed of all elected and appointed precinct committeepersons. This committee elects from its membership the county chairperson, vice-chairperson, secretary, and treasurer for four-year terms. All the county chairpersons and vice-chairpersons within a congressional district form the next level of political organization in the party, the District Committee.

Each of the congressional **District Committees** elects a chairperson and vice-chairperson who form the State

Central Committee. A district committee selects the candidate for United States Representative to run in the November election if, for any reason, the party has no candidate after the May primary.

The **State Central Committee** is the party authority. The Governor or gubernatorial candidate customarily indicates his or her choice for state chairperson of the party. The parties maintain permanent, year-round headquarters with full-time staff as well as other people hired during election periods. The State Committee is responsible for the state party conventions held in late spring or summer.

**State Conventions** provide the high point of a political party's activity in Indiana, as do the national party conventions for the nation. The conventions adopt platforms and nominate candidates for Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, State Auditor, State Treasurer, Attorney General, Clerk of the Courts, and State Superintendent of Public Instruction. In addition to electing delegates to the national party conventions, the state convention delegates also elect presidential electors for the Indiana representation to the Electoral College.

A vote for the presidential nominee in the presidential primary expresses a preference for the nominee, not a direct vote for him or her. Rather, the party nominee is chosen at the national party convention by delegates selected at the state party convention. In the May primary, the voters elect delegates to the state party convention who, in turn, elect the delegates to the national convention. These delegates to the national convention are obligated to vote for the voters' preference on the first ballot only. Because of the lack of available information about them, it is difficult for



the individual voter to make an informed choice of state convention delegates.

The State Central Committee of the party appoints national committee members, usually people who are able to pay their own way, since serving on a national committee is expensive. A national committee conducts the presidential and vice-presidential campaign and manages the party's affairs between national conventions.

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# INDEX

## Abbreviations Key:

DCE = Dept. of Code Enforcement, DMD = Dept. of Metropolitan Development, DPW = Dept. of Public Works, HHC = Health & Hospital Corporation, ISA = Information Services Agency, OCC = Office of Corporation Counsel, OFM = Office of Finance Management, PHS = Dept. of Public Health and Safety

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